



**RESEARCH ETHICS AND ARTISTIC  
FREEDOM IN ARTISTIC RESEARCH**

**ARTISTIC  
RESEARCH  
YEARBOOK  
2017  
SWEDISH  
RESEARCH  
COUNCIL**

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# Foreword

You have in front of you the fourteenth edition of the Swedish Research Council's Artistic Research Yearbook. For the second year in a row, the publication has been issued only in English. This year the theme, or rather the core focus, is *Research Ethics and Artistic Freedom in Artistic Research*. Ethical issues are highly topical not least within medical research, but they also relate to other areas of science and research.

The first three articles are written by the keynote speakers at last year's symposium on artistic research at Linnaeus University in Växjö, with the same title as this Yearbook. The articles address ethics and freedom in artistic research from slightly different perspectives.

In the first article, ethics professor Nils-Eric Sahlin asserts that in principle the same rules apply to research in all areas – including artistic research. The question that this prompts is whether there is a difference between art and artistic research in ethical terms, since artistic freedom tends to be hailed as a linchpin of freedom of expression and democracy.

In the fourth article, Annika Åkerblom and Johan Öberg return with a study of career paths for artistic researchers with a PhD. The previous Yearbook

presented a quantitative study showing that around 75% of the more than 100 students who obtained a PhD in the field of artistic research in Sweden remained at arts-focused universities or equivalents within or outside the country. The hypothesis was, however, that only a few of these were able to continue with artistic research after graduating. To investigate this more closely, Åkerblom and Öberg have now conducted a more qualitative survey that includes in-depth interviews with postgraduate artistic researchers, in order to ascertain the extent of artistic research at the relevant higher education institutions in Sweden – and it makes interesting reading.

This is followed by an interview with the the author of this foreword about the field's development in the context of the Swedish Research Council's role. The interview was conducted by Helena Bornholm, communications strategist at the Swedish Research Council, in advance of my retirement from the Swedish Research Council in early 2017.

In this Yearbook we have omitted the reviews that were part of the previous editions in order to prioritise general articles, with and without a link to the theme, as well as project presentations.

This year we present five projects that have been funded by the Swedish Research Council/Committee for Artistic Research:

*Neglected Modernities: Design and Method*

*Uncertain Reading: Contemporary Poetry as a Writing-cum-Reading Act – A Critical Manifesto*

*Body and Space: An Investigation of the Relationship between Body and Space*

*The Anatomy of the Moment. Method and milieu for cross-medial theatre*

*Staging Baroque music? And shedding light on timeless gender issues*

The Committee for Artistic Research then makes its comments on the project reports.

The Appendices include a report on the aforementioned seventh symposium, plus presentations of the writers and other contributors.

It has been an honour to be involved in the development of a new subject area, although it has been a

long and winding journey from my perspective at the Swedish Research Council. Nevertheless, according to many commentators Swedish artistic research lies at the forefront of international research.

As I end my tenure as editor (and senior research officer), I would like to thank everyone with whom I have worked since the Yearbook was launched in 2004: the current committee and its predecessor, the editorial committee, all the writers, graphic designers, translators, printers and so on.

Over the coming year, the Committee for Artistic Research will be discussing what form and direction the Yearbook will take in the future.

*Torbjörn Lind*  
Editor

# Chapter 1

*When values come into conflict — ethics and liberty in artistic research*



By Nils-Eric Sahlin

There is a general misapprehension that only those involved in medical research need to have their research vetted by an ethical review board. That is most definitely not the case. The deciding factor is what, not who. Sweden's Act (2003:460) on the Ethical Review of Research Involving Humans states that approval is required for studies of, among other things, race and ethnic origin, political and religious convictions, and health and sexuality. The Act also explicitly applies to any research that is intended to affect a human subject physically or mentally *or* involves an apparent risk of injuring the research subject either physically or mentally *or* subjects a research subject to a physical intervention.

The Ethical Review Act defines research as “scientifically experimental or theoretical work intended to result in new knowledge and development outcomes on a scientific basis.” The Central Ethical Review Board has pointed out that this definition is not particularly explanatory, and in a memorandum (2007-10-08) it writes: “There are a number of definitions that are more illuminating than the one which is to be found in the Ethical Review Act. Irrespective of the definition one may wish to use, it should be

obvious that use of the term ‘research’ presumes that there is a scientific purpose, i.e. a relevant issue, within the scientific field which it is intended to illuminate in a systematic manner or, if one so wishes, using scientific methods. This is, in principle, both a sufficient and necessary requirement for a project to be characterised as research. In addition, as will be considered in more detail shortly, it is necessary that there be an intention to make the results accessible.”

In the wake of the research scandal that has shaken Sweden over the past year, the question “What is research?” has come under the spotlight. It has been suggested that the term “research” is vague and open to debate. It would seem that the Central Ethical Review Board considers that a scientific question, or systematic approach, is both necessary and sufficient for work to qualify as research. A term lifted out of its context might well seem vague, since the conceptual network that creates the term's meaning is lost. In isolation, expressions are often virtually meaningless. However, in the context of the Ethical Review Act “research” appears to have a reasonably precise definition.

The wording is the result of legislators being forced to address practical considerations. Reviewing all student

work, for example, would be an unmanageable task. The term “research” is not rendered vague by the proliferation of shifting scientific methods and strategies. Physicists, psychologists and those working in the field of artistic research have, to some extent, different scientific methods and strategies. What is more, the term “research” is not made vague by the fact that researchers are sometimes guilty of misconduct.

If the vagueness argument is being enlisted to create a space for research which can proceed without ethical review, it is reasonable to assert that, equally, it – the vagueness argument – has moral issues of its own.

The Swedish Research Council’s report *Artistic Research – A Subject Overview 2014* states that “artistic research refers to research in the artistic field.” The artistic fields are indicated ostensibly and include such areas as the visual arts, dance, architecture, applied art and film. The report’s authors writes that artistic research often “takes as its starting point the scope for the art to shed light on value-related and communicative questions concerning the creation of meaning and quality.” The report goes on to say that the research usually proceeds “in combinations of

systematic, exploratory, creative, experimental, action-focused and speculative working methods”, and that experimentation “can be employed more systematically to test a hypothesis, through analytical processes or in a more exploratory and speculative way.” The boundary between research based on art and research based on science is described as “fluid, varying between different artistic projects”.

The requirement for ethical review as set out in the legislation must surely apply. The fact that artistic research is research does not automatically mean that it should be ethically reviewed, but ethical review may be appropriate if the research represents empirical investigation of questions about values, communication and the creation of meaning. Researchers might well want to apply their techniques and methods to the study of issues such as race and ethnic origin, political and religious convictions, or health and sexuality. The art we encounter in everyday life often tackles these very issues. Nor is it unreasonable to imagine that artistic research might involve some kind of physical intervention on a research subject (an example follows below).

These observations are by no means earth-shattering. The sentences above are merely simple, almost

administrative, comments. We have an Ethical Review Act. It is there to protect us from violations and it is there to maintain respect for human rights. If research falls within the remit of the law, it should be ethically reviewed. And that includes artistic research.

But how does this actually play out? Is there a conflict between the requirement for ethical review and artistic licence? This is a rather more speculative, and perhaps therefore more interesting, question. Now and then an artist will create a work that causes offence, even anger. It prompts a moral debate. Some see the work as utterly immoral. Others see it as groundbreaking – perhaps both groundbreaking and immoral. Art, according to the latter group, is about exploding boundaries, and explosions will always have casualties. They will often assert the artist's right to do whatever he or she wants, referring to artistic licence – *licentia poetica*.

I have written before about artistic licence (in *Sans* 2014:3, pp. 46–49). In the following I recycle parts of my article, interspersed with reflections on this now topical theme. But although my examples are the same, there is a crucial difference between this text and my earlier writing. Here I will assume, hypothetically, that the works I mention were part of an artistic

research project. This is by no means a far-fetched assumption; it is entirely possible that this could have been the case. One might, for example, conceive that the artistic experiments were conducted as part of some doctoral thesis or other.

Artistic licence usually means the right to change, embellish or distort reality – the liberty in a painting, for example, which deviates from the facts. Already this poses a problem that I am going to duck. Is a researcher who deviates from the facts really a researcher?

Sometimes, for this licence to work, there has to be a tacit agreement between the artist and the observer that the depiction is a construct. Lund Cathedral is not taller than the Turning Torso building, it is not red, and it does not sit upside down in the middle of the Öresund Strait. But why should these simple facts shackle the artist's creativity? When Peer Gynt is told that “one dies not midmost of Act Five”, Ibsen is not only using his artistic licence but also winking at us and saying between the lines: “I know you know I have this licence, and I intend to use it.”

Another assumption sometimes made is that artistic licence is morally neutral – neither good nor bad. This

is true sometimes, but not always. Even the most harmless-looking art can have far-reaching moral consequences, affecting people both physically and mentally. And there are examples where artists, invoking artistic licence to a greater or lesser extent, do things that in a different context would be seen as distinctly immoral.

Artist One, from Spain, is world-famous for using vulnerable people in various ways in his creativity. In 2000 he offered to buy drug-addicted women the drug of their choice if they allowed him to tattoo a straight line across their backs. He then documented the act. The women are sitting in a row with their naked upper bodies turned towards a wall. The tattoo artist is wearing surgical gloves and is neatly running his ink-filled needle in a straight line across their backs. The suffering in the women's faces is unmistakable. Here the women are just a medium for the art, and not least for the artist's career. It requires an almost total moral tone-deafness not to notice that we have a morality issue here.

Let us, entirely hypothetically, assume that Artist One was conducting his artistic experiment as part of his thesis work. The second part of the thesis comprises a description of what happened during the experiment,

together with a theoretical analysis of the effects, emotions and states of mind that it provoked. There is no denying that an experiment of this kind could yield fascinating results. But should the research be subjected to ethical review? Ultimately, only our ethical review boards can determine which research projects will be vetted, but the research conducted here surely applies a method intended to affect the research subject both physically and mentally *and* entails a risk of the research subject being harmed both physically and mentally *and* involves a physical intervention.

This being the case, a conflict arises between the artist's absolute freedom and the requirement for ethical review. What the artist can do as an artist, he or she cannot do as a researcher. We have a conflict between two measures of morality.

Artist Two has made a name for herself by killing mice, rabbits and other animals. She once, for example, beat a cat to death with a stick. She cuts the heads off the animals and then sits them on a vase, or on a white porcelain angel, or on her own fingers. The macabre constructions are then photographed. One well-known photograph shows a hand with a mouse head on each finger. Beautiful photographs.

Aesthetically flawless. “It is very unpleasant. But as an artist, I work on questioning myself and my reactions,” Artist Two is reported as saying.

There is a system to Artist Two’s search for knowledge. The approach is not about an individual animal. It involves the systematic use of animals in a drive to achieve some form of knowledge. But in contrast to the previous example, there is no doubt here that, within the framework of a research project, Artist Two would not be able to do what she does as an artist. Sweden has strict animal welfare laws. Test animals – and if this had been artistic research the subjects would have been classified as such – must not be subjected to unnecessary suffering. There is a requirement of proportionality. Animal testing is permitted if suffering in a small number of animals can alleviate suffering in a large number of animals and humans. But this proportionality is not apparent in the “tests” performed by Artist Two. On one side of the balance sits the animals’ suffering, while the other side is empty, since no suffering is being alleviated.

Artist Two is not alone. There are other, very similar, examples – for instance, where artists have strangled puppies in front of an audience and stabbed animals.

These artists are not necessarily emotionally compromised. They feel the animals’ suffering, or so we hope. The apparent reason why these artists do what they do is a belief that it is impossible to describe, study or understand suffering unless you experience it first-hand. This may well be true, and it is a hypothesis that is open to exploration. But this type of research should surely be subjected to ethical review: citing artistic licence will not do.

Artist Three pretends to be mentally ill and suicidal on a bridge. An ambulance is called and the artist is taken to hospital. She is strapped down and medicated against her will. The performance is part of the artist’s Master’s thesis. The aim, according to the artist, is to expose different types of power structure. This art work quite rightly attracted a great deal of media attention. Some questioned whether it was art. Others, less patient, wondered what our universities were playing at. Many posed the obvious question: Is this legal? What is or is not art is irrelevant in this context. The question one should ask is whether such action is moral or immoral. And the answer is quite clear.

For one thing, Artist Three exposes others to danger by her actions. Imagine someone else is seriously ill and needs to get to hospital quickly. That person could die because the ambulance is otherwise engaged. This didn't happen. But conceivably it could have. Artist Three risked other people's lives unnecessarily and for morally reprehensible reasons.

Additionally, Artist Three is doing a disservice to a large group of sick people – those who really are in need of psychiatric care. Each year, around 1,400 people commit suicide in Sweden. Those of us who have had a close relative or friend take their own life struggle to see the point of this kind of exam project. Every penny is needed in the health service and not least in mental health. The fact that there was no intention to do anybody harm is irrelevant – the harm is done nonetheless. How the ethical review board would have addressed these moral issues is, however, unclear.

Artist Three's work was for a Master's thesis. Exam projects at undergraduate and postgraduate level are not considered research under the Ethical Review Act's definition of research as "Scientifically experimental or theoretical work intended to result in new knowledge and development outcomes on a scientific

basis, excluding work that is performed within the framework of higher education on the basic or advanced level" (Ethical Review Act, SFS 2003:460, Section 2, as amended by SFS 2008:192). But this does not relieve the student, or the university, of moral responsibility. Ulf Görman highlights this in his paper *Questions about the need for ethical review of research-related works performed by students*: "The Government assumes, however, that work performed by students within the framework of university education at undergraduate and postgraduate level is carried out under ethically assured and safe conditions. This responsibility lies with the education coordinator. For higher education institutions, this is spelled out in Chapter 1, Section 3 a of the Swedish Higher Education Act, which requires the HEIs to safeguard the credibility of science and good research practice (Government Bill 2007/08:44 *Vissa etikprövningsfrågor m.m. (Certain ethical review issues, etc.)*, p. 20)."

If Artist Three's work had been carried out as part of a PhD or other research project, it would presumably have been subject to review. It is impossible to know before a review has been carried out, and a decision made, but one can only hope that the presiding ethical review board would have said a clear No to a research project of this kind. Note that studies

expected to be published in a scientific context or as part of a thesis are usually considered research.

And so to sum up: The fact that research has an artistic basis or goal does not bestow upon it liberties that other, non-artistic studies do not have. The fact that there may be a fluid boundary between artistic and scientific research is irrelevant when it comes to requirements for ethical review.

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# Chapter 2

*Rites of life? Art between bios and zoe*



By Cecilia Sjöholm

## Zoe and ethical instincts

Over the last few years, we have seen a surge of interest in conceptions of life in the world of art. These conceptions thematise life considered as *zoe*, in Greek, or biological life, as distinct from *bios*, the life of the individual, narrative and history, to use a distinction proposed by Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben.<sup>1</sup> At the Modern Museum in Stockholm, the 2016 exhibition “Life Itself” carried the subtitle “On the question of what it essentially is; its materialities, its characteristics, considering that the attempts to answer this question by occidental sciences and philosophy have proven unsatisfactory.” As can be heard, this is an exhibition which occulted *zoe*, life itself, without wanting to go into the question of historical or individual *bios*. The exhibition could be seen through a philosophical and theoretical framework where the occultation of life itself is also an integral part of posthumanism, a movement deconstructing the binaries between human and animal, which has shown that human specificity is an inflated construction. The posthuman movement in the humanities often works together with the sciences and technology in order to overcome certain presumptions concerning human agency.

But is there really such a thing as life itself, and is art capable of making it appear as such? Without wanting to enter into a dispute with the exhibition at the Modern Museum or posthumanism, I will look at examples of art which indicate that life as such, *zoe*, also implicates its counterpart, *bios*, or individual life; an implication which also brings with it ethical issues that are not easily negotiable. Rather than attempt to answer the question of how art that works with biomaterial should relate to ethical limits, I would like to point to the fact that these ethical limits are often reflected in the artwork itself, and made into an aspect of its appearance.

The fascination with the cycles of life is often an aspect of artistic research as seen in conjunction with biology and medicine, so called bioart. An aspect of this is the idea that art should work together with the sciences in order to be at the forefront of innovation and creativity. From the millennium and onwards bioart has evolved, for instance in the form of genetic manipulation, most famously in Eduardo Kac’s phosphorescent rabbit from 2000, manipulated with a gene from a jellyfish. The widespread image of this rabbit is bioart nostalgia.

<sup>1</sup> See the distinction made by Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (London, Faber and Faber, 1961), 42 and Giorgio Agamben (*Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, transl. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1995), 179–193.

A more recent example is Koby Barhad, a British art and design student who bought hair from Elvis Presley on eBay for 22 dollars, and found a private lab whose ads said: we offer you mice that are 'genetically modified for your needs'. The aim of the project "All that I am" was to place Elvis-mice in "contemporary scientific mouse model environments, simulating some of the significant biographical circumstances of his life.", i.e. the life of Elvis.<sup>2</sup> However, the project was just a simulacrum; there are no mice present in the world that Koby Barhad built for the Elvis-clones. Barhad refrained from pursuing the experiment for ethical reasons. He does not say what these reasons were. But Barhad's project "All That I Am" takes us right to the point where the limits of the artwork coincide with its ethical limits – the idea that a dead person, through the hair of Elvis, should intermingle with mice. Of course we understand that this is not realistic, but that is beside the point – the ethical limit is also the limit at which the artwork realises itself; what we see is a construction devoid of living beings.

So where does the ethical instinct, involved in this work, derive from? To answer this question I would like to evoke Georges Bataille, and his speculations on the cave paintings in Lascaux, which could be related to the intrinsic tension between *zoe* and *bios*. Bataille

argues that art gives witness to an exuberant joy of life which has served to produce a strong awe of death. The joy of life, Bataille argues, induced such respect that its negation, death, could not be looked upon without a certain fear. Life, then, came to produce the prohibition of using the faces of the dead as casual objects. To Bataille, the faces of the dead represent an original version of a sacred object, an object looked upon with awe which serves as a kind of arche-object of art.<sup>3</sup> If exuberant life is *zoe*, then the face is *bios*, it is an individual, with a history.

Art, like sacred objects, often negotiates the limit between life and death. It is not by chance that bioart or art using biomaterial makes it necessary to return to that same limit. In evoking materials of biology and science, artists today continue to negotiate the limit that Bataille associated with the birth of art itself. It is not easily negotiable. What we find surrounding the edges of the limit cutting between life and death are not only aesthetic, social and legal issues. Ethical concerns interfere. Rather than marring the work to the detriment of the artist's intentions, however, these often add an aesthetic and intellectual quality to the depth and the complexity of the work. Biological material can barely be looked at on a purely ontological level, disregarding the ethical intuitions that surround it.

<sup>2</sup>[http://www.kn-studio.com/all\\_that\\_i\\_am.html](http://www.kn-studio.com/all_that_i_am.html), accessed 22.11.2016,

<sup>3</sup> Georges Bataille, *Prehistoric Painting: Lascaux or the Birth of Art* transl. Austryn Wainhouse (Switzerland: Skira, 1955), 31.

## Historical background – Art and Dissection

The relation between the theater of anatomy and art is often cited as a natural framework for the intrinsic bonds between the exploration of biological life and artistic research. Pioneers of this trend are, from the 1990s, the French artist Orlan, who staged operations on her face and body in order to resemble a new kind of creature, for instance in the series “Self-Hybridizations” (1994). This work evolved with biomaterial in *Le Manteau d'Arlequin* (2008), which took hybridization to a new level, where cells from Orlan’s body intermingled with cells from other humans, but also animals. Orlan herself has drawn on the title of this work to evoke co-existence rather than hybridization: Harlequin’s cape is talked about as multilayered with colors and qualities according to Michel Serres.<sup>4</sup> Stelarc, also, has evolved from bodyart to bioart and performed multiple manipulations to his body, for instance *Extra Ear. Ear on Arm Project* (2007), *Stomach Sculpture* (1993) and *Prosthetic Head* (2003). Helen Chadwick, in turn, in the 1990s, introduced the life sciences in a search for images of “raw physicality”, through enlarging images of cells from her ears, vagina, mouth and cervix in *Viral Landscapes* (1988–89) and the photographic series *Unnatural Selection* (1996), where rejected embryos from an IVF selection

<sup>4</sup> Sylvie Roques, “Les préjugés ebranlés par l’Art-Action”, interview with Orlan, *Communications*, Vol 92, 2013, 224 (221–229).

process were depicted as jewelry.<sup>5</sup> One may also mention the tanks by Damien Hirst, for instance that of a cut-up calf and a cut-up cow, called *Mother and Child (Divided)* (1993). In Chadwick’s images, as well as in Hirst’s sculptures, ethical issues are an aspect of the works themselves. To Chadwick, the waste of the embryos is questioned in the title itself: *Unnatural selection*, suggesting that biomedicine cannot claim any ground beyond ethics – the concept of natural selection refers to the doctrines of Charles Darwin on which biology rests. When that is transformed into the concept of unnatural selection, then the ethical question involved in the practice of IVF is immediately raised. In the work of Hirst, also, the question of ethics is involved in the work. The presence of animal bodies suggests human ones through their title, a presence which today I think comes across even more strongly as animal rights and posthuman currents have come to question the moral dualism between humans and animals.

The ethical injunction that imposes itself with bioart is to be found already at its historical roots. It is not by chance that the leading journal on the use of contemporary science and technology in the arts and music is called *Leonardo*. Leonardo da Vinci’s anatomical sketches were modeled after dissected corpses. His dissections were pursued according to his own desire

<sup>5</sup> Niclas Östlind: *Notes on the art of Helen Chadwick, especially the early works*, Liljevalchs katalog nr 468 (Värnamo: 2005), 27

for knowledge, outside of the legal frameworks.<sup>6</sup> This desire for knowledge, according to the legend instigated by Giorgio Vasari and continued by Sigmund Freud, interfered with his artistic ambition and ability. According to Freud, da Vinci increasingly became a riddle to his contemporaries through his turn to science, away from his artistic genius – he was said to engage in the “black art” of alchemists.<sup>7</sup> In Freud’s analysis, Leonardo’s fascination with dissection is conjoined to his asexuality and frigidity, and the fear of the female organ of procreation.<sup>8</sup> Looking at Leonardo’s own notes, however, he is motivated not only by curiosity, but also by his ambition as a painter; the painter who understands the way muscles and joints are conjoined is better at rendering the movement of living bodies, Leonardo argues.<sup>9</sup>

In the seventeenth century, the intersection between discourses of art, medicine and philosophy was widely explored in new ways. In drawings used for medical education, the torso of classical works of art such as the Greek sculpture of *Laocoon* was used as a model. The physical signs of pain of the convulsion of the torso were underscored, the mimetic renderings typically focusing on the movements of the muscles. The observations and practice of art, in this way, was

tied up with other discourses, studying the human body through art and science simultaneously. We are all familiar with Rembrandt’s *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp* (1632), in which body, science and art are simultaneously negotiated through the complex depiction of gazes.<sup>10</sup>

In the very same year that Rembrandt completed the painting, René Descartes, who was probably educated in medicine to some extent, pursued his own philosophical examinations with the same means. Discontent with the limits of metaphysics, he wrote to his publisher Mersenne that he was also pursuing dissections. But Descartes was not interested in finding anything that would advance our knowledge of the materials of life, or *zoe*. As he wrote to Mersenne: “Now I am dissecting the heads of different animals in order to explain what imagination, memory etc., consist of<sup>11</sup>. Descartes saw no distinction between physics and metaphysics. In *Optics* which was published a few years later (1637), Descartes describes the refraction of light in conjunction with the dissection of eyeballs. The aim of this work was not so much to present the anatomy of the human eye, as it pertained to the nature of perception: we cannot assume that perceptions are identical to external objects, Descartes

<sup>6</sup> Joseph K Perloff: “Human Dissection and the Science and Art of Leonardo da Vinci”, *The American Journal of Cardiology*, Vol. 111, 2013, 775–777.

<sup>7</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Leonardo da Vinci and a memory of his childhood”, *The Standard Edition* vol XI, ed James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1957), 65–66.

<sup>8</sup> Freud, “Leonardo da Vinci...”, 70–71.

<sup>9</sup> Leonardo da Vinci: *Skizzenbücher*, hrsg Anna Suh, (London: Parragon Books, 2005), 136.

<sup>10</sup> See for instance *Anatomy Live: Performance and the Operating Theatre*, (ed. Maaïke Bleeker, University of Amsterdam Press, 2008). This anthology brings together a number of theoreticians and artists who work further on the contemporary relation to anatomy in art and science after Rembrandt’s painting.

<sup>11</sup> Letter to Mersenne, December 1632, [http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1619\\_1.pdf](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1619_1.pdf), 27. Accessed 22.11.2016.

<sup>12</sup> René Descartes, *Optics*, in *Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry and Meteorology*, transl. Paul J Olscamp (Cambridge: Hackett, 2001), 90.

<sup>13</sup> *Optics*, 90.

argued; sensory impressions are, instead, prepared in the brain to become adequate occasions of perception.<sup>12</sup> With this insight, to which the dissection of dead bodies contributed in no small part, Descartes ended the philosophical doctrine of simulacra, i.e. the idea that the world is planting images in us that resemble that which is outside, or that perception would be a natural mirror of the external world. It is the soul that sees and not the eye, Descartes says, a proposition which is construed as much according to anatomical practices as metaphysical speculation. To come to this conclusion he reflects on the perception of engraved images, pointing to the fact that we see more sides of an object in an image than is actually represented – a fact that he used in his own books, filled with engravings.<sup>13</sup> He made the same argument with regard to painting, in *Discourse on Method*, which was published in conjunction with the *Optics*.<sup>14</sup> What Descartes is pointing to here, is the fact that perception cannot be accounted for only by research in the natural sciences; it must be related to the individual, and phenomena like art that touch upon the soul. Thus philosophy can never be substituted by anatomy, just like to Leonardo, art can never be substituted by anatomy.

<sup>14</sup> “...just as painters, not being able to represent all the different sides of a body equally well on a flat canvas, choose one of the main ones and set it facing the light, and shade the others so as to make them stand out only when viewed from the perspective of the chosen side; so too, fearing that I could not put everything I had in mind in my discourse, I undertook to expound fully only what I knew about light.” René Descartes, *Discourse on Method, in Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry and Meteorology*, transl. Paul J Olscamp (Cambridge: Hackett, 2001),

## The Aestheticisation of Death

What these examples point to is the fact that the question of the individual, the soul, the specific body in a work of art is present in the history of research on biomaterial in conjunction with art and thought from ancient times to early modernity. The ethical questions surrounding biomaterial in the form of dead bodies in art and philosophy are concerned not just with the framework of practice, but also with the intent of their use.

These ethical issues can be brought forward also in conjunction with the issue of aestheticisation. Art becomes autonomous and theorised in conjunction with or in parallel to the discipline of aesthetics during the 18th century and onwards. The aestheticisation of death, to Gotthold Lessing in the 18th century, was no less of a problem pertaining to ethics. Quoting Aristotle, he noted that “disgusting things such as dead bodies can be made beautiful through the art of ‘imitation’, mimesis.”<sup>15</sup> To the ancients, Lessing noted, the sight of the dead polluted the sphere of the living, and therefore they had to be made beautiful.<sup>16</sup> It was for that reason, Lessing argues, that the ancients wrote about death with

<sup>15</sup> G.E. Lessing, *Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Poetry and Painting*, transl. Ellen Frothingham (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1887), 155.

<sup>16</sup> G.E. Lessing, “How the Ancients represented death”, transl. Helen Zimmern (London: G.Bell and Sons, 1914), 184.

euphemisms: rather than depict the violent deaths that they often suffered, poetry and epics said that they had gone to sleep. Similar tropes were used in the visual arts.

The aestheticisation of the limit between death and life is also what propelled a project by Stelarc in 2005, *Blender*, together with Nina Sellars, in which they took fat and other tissue from their bodies and blended it. The project, they say on their website, is an outcome of their fascination with “alternative corporeal architectures” and bodily functions, but also an inquiry into new technologies of biomateriality: it is an “anarchic:an audible, visceral display of ‘ontological’ substance.”<sup>17</sup> According to Stelarc, this project is to be considered in aesthetic terms and no other. However, as art critique Julie Clarke has shown, the ethical issues here cannot be dissociated from the aesthetic: the human waste material of the artists remind us of the works of Christoph Boltanski as well as Joseph Beuys, where human waste products remind us of the way in which human experiments were conducted during the Holocaust.<sup>18</sup> Again, the ethical sensibilities that confront us at the limits between life and death with the use of biomaterial cannot be dissociated from the aesthetic experience of the work. The aesthetics of *zoe*, of the biomaterial that is used, cannot be disjointed from that of *bios*, the historical

connotations surrounding that of individual lives. Whereas the rights of all the living tend to be conceived of in similar terms, the rights of the dead tend to be differentiated; some have more rights than others. Sometimes we tend to accept their use as an aspect of an artistic necessity. Sometimes, no law may prohibit the use of the dead for art, but they may abuse our ethical instinct. The natural laws surrounding life are always inalienable; we cannot kill, rape or mutilate a living body as a component of a work in art, no matter where that body comes from, what gender it is, where its origins are located etc. We certainly cannot kill, rape or mutilate a living body for the purpose of art, no matter what gender or nationality that living body may represent. When it comes to corpses, however, these issues appear to become negotiable. Some corpses appear to have more value, more worth and more symbolic weight.

This question is evoked apropos the work of Teresa Margolles, who has taken an exam as a pathologist, and used body parts in her work. Having started her career in the morgue, literally speaking, Margolles has exhibited corpses of criminal violence, thus offering a kind of social critique. For instance in *Cards for Cutting Cocaine* (1998), where images of dead bodies are shown on cards, which refers to upper class kids of Mexico City who use them to abuse cocaine. Another

<sup>17</sup> <http://stelarc.org/?catID=20245>, accessed 22.11.2016

<sup>18</sup> Clarke, Julie, Corporeal Mélange: Aesthetics and Ethics of Biomaterials in Stelarc and Nina Sellars' “Blender”, *Leonardo*, 2006, Vol.39(5), 410–416.

work is the bloody sheet of *Dermis*, 1995 showing traces of two embracing lovers who have taken their lives. Ruben Gallo has argued that Margolles works in a context where corpses are treated with disrespect, Margolles' use of body parts must be understood in a context where the turnaround of body parts was part of the life of the city.<sup>19</sup> Again, this implies that the work, although it seems to be transgressing our ethical sensibility, has that very sensibility in mind through its display: the ethical issues are present in the execution of the work.

George Bataille has argued that the fascination with death implies a natural kind of prohibition. The dead are not "...ordinary objects, to be eyed casually or heedlessly neglected."<sup>20</sup> Just as life at the level of *zoe* can hardly be shown without the ethical implication of *bios* in a work of art, death cannot be displayed with any simplicity.

I would like to argue that we need to look at the way in which the limit between life and death is treated in art from a point of view where we understand not only the legal issues or the cultural ramifications, but also the ethical sensibility surrounding it. How are we to understand not only the rights of the dead, but the symbolic values surrounding their rights? We need to negotiate not only the immediate legal consequences

of the use of biomaterial, or the immediate disgust we may feel in visualising dead bodies, but also the ethical sensibility that surrounds their impressions, produced by the fact that beings, whether humans or animals, are not only *zoe*, or biological life, but also *bios*, individual life.

What is to be claimed, then, for an ethical staging of the limit between life and death in bioart or the use of biomaterial in art, is a respect towards the *bios* that it actually represents: *bios* as an individual life, as a name, or as history. Bataille argued that we cannot use the dead in a distracted manner. Neither can we bloat our own myth of creation through the artistic staging of biomaterial. If we do, we perform a kind of second killing, undoing the symbolic worth of life, undoing the *bios*. Having given these examples, I would like to point to the fact that the ethical issues surrounding these questions are often made part of the work of art itself. The contemporary investment in the life sciences as a new basis for art appears to be neither naïve nor unreflected; aesthetic issues cannot be dissociated from ethical ones.

<sup>19</sup> Rubén Gallo, *New Tendencies in Mexican Art: The 1990s* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 91–133.

<sup>20</sup> Bataille, Lascaux, 31



# Chapter 3

## *The ethics of unethical art*



By Sinziana Ravini

“There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written”, wrote Oscar Wilde in the preface to *Dorian Gray*, a deeply hedonistic book about the art of transforming life into art. But is the same categorical statement actually applicable to art itself? Yes, if you believe Rodin: “In art, immorality cannot exist. Art is always sacred.” Nietzsche went even further, declaring: “Morality kills what makes art alive.”

How free is art? How far can one go in the name of art? And how unethical can art be within the framework of state-funded artistic research? Can artistic research be equated with good, edifying art that seeks to contribute to social development, or is it precisely here that one can nurture morally questioning and self-interested art? In this text, I will return to a number of controversies and philosophical musings on the ethics of art, from postmodernism to the modern day, before examining the absolute bastion of the art world – artistic research and its relation to the (un)ethical discourses and artists of our time.

Art and ethics have found themselves in a love-hate relationship ever since modernity’s showdown with the

fine arts. But, paradoxically, it was not until the postmodern philosophers tried to subvert all values and major narratives that the ethical dimensions of art were brought back into the spotlight. The unfounded foundations of ethics came to take the place of both God and ideologies, but this postulated unfoundedness also came to create a wealth of new conflicts and jockeying for position.

Artists have always used their art as a political tool, whether they worked in the service of religion or the market, but it was not until the 1960s that awareness of the politics of art truly awoke, flourishing then in the 1990s and branching out into two diametrically opposed trends (which in order to enhance the ethic founding of all aesthetics, I would like to call): “feel bad art” whereby artists began to depict social injustices via miserabilist art that “reproduced” power structures (Santiago Sierra) and “feel good art” whereby artists began to “produce” social spaces via mystical dreamworlds (Pierre Huyghe) and Thai soup ceremonies (Rirkrit Tiravanija).

## Feel bad art

“Feel bad art” was analysed by theorist Hal Foster in his now classic essay: “The Artist as Ethnographer” (1995), which addresses the crisis of ethnography in relation to decolonisation and the significance of the artist in this crisis.<sup>1</sup> In this text, Hal Foster writes that embracing ethnic authenticity can conceal a form of reverse racism or ethnocentrism where the alterity provides for positive discrimination. In “The Return of the Real, the avant-garde at the end of the century” (1996) he conducts a psychoanalytical reading of artists’ fascination with the real, the unthinkable, the grotesque, the terrifying, and ultimately – death.<sup>2</sup> It is not just the other’s inconceivable pain that fascinates, but also the world’s geopolitical disasters, which now offer perfect bellevue panoramas for the art world’s jetset.

Feel bad art actually has its origin in a considerably more upbeat ethnographic romanticism that began with *Magiciens de la Terre* (1987) before coming into full bloom in Massimiliano Gioni’s Venice Biennale: The Encyclopedic Palace (2013). The artists who gathered in its cosmopolitan Tower of Babel were treated as noble savages who were expected to keep

their cultural specificity intact, but above all to honour the culture to which they belonged. “Can the Subaltern Speak?” asked Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak back in 1988, but it was only now that the postcolonial discourse broke through with thinkers such as Spivak, Edouard Said, Homi Bhabha and Edouard Glissant. But the artists who came to operate within postcolonial theory, who gained their absolute platforms in Catherine David’s Documenta X (1997) and Okwui Enwezor’s Documenta XI (2002), were expected to depict a dark, dejected world, where the gap between West and East, rich and poor, white and black, was practically unbridgeable.

After years of well meaning, but harmless feel bad art, Renzo Martens, the bad boy of postcolonial art, turned new romantic social art on its head. In *Enjoy Poverty* (2008), he poked fun at both the naive colonial master and the naive contemporary artist who sees him or herself as a postcultural, world-saving übermensch. When Martens’ alter ego realises that he is not going to be able to teach capitalism to the poor residents of a small village in Congo, he gives up and asks the Congolese to enjoy their poverty by partying away all their worries and concerns. Martens initially

<sup>1</sup> Hal Foster, “The Artist as Ethnographer”, in *The Traffic in Culture, Refiguring Art and Anthropology*, Eds.: George E. Marcus and Fred R. Myers, University of California Press, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real, the avant-garde at the end of the century*, MIT Press, 1996

symbolised a cynical change in art theory, which no longer believed in the ability of art to save the world. In his *Art Power* (2008), Boris Groys<sup>3</sup> suggested that Bin Laden was an excellent video artist, and that artists and terrorists had begun to imitate one another in a post-ethical logic with a fascination for violence. But in 2012 Martens took his art in a new direction. He decided to launch a five-year infrastructure project in Congo's plantations, in order to properly teach the Congolese how to obtain cultural capital. How? By producing art. But the neo-colonial hierarchy remained intact in this project. It is still through the Western artistic prism of Renzo Martens that we get to experience the works of the Congolese artists.

## Feel good art

The feel good art of the 1990s, on the other hand, was hailed by theorist Nicolas Bourriaud, who put aesthetics before ethics and form ahead of content, in a desire to “inhabit the world in a better way”.<sup>4</sup> If the avant-garde artists of modernism had rooted their art in a violent attack on social institutions, language and visual arts, these artists, with their tempting *Dolce Utopia*, were more interested in negotiations, bridge-building and solidarity. But the criticism, inspired

by Althusser and Guattari, that relational aesthetics levelled at the way capitalism reified the individual, came to fit hand in glove with the neoliberal service-driven culture. Artists organised alternative tourist trips to the North Pole (Pierre Huyghe), massaged art hall visitors (Suwan Laimanee), arranged parties (Philippe Parreno) and produced Marxist-organic guarana drinks (Superflex). In Sweden, the artists' collective Love and Devotion chose to beautify a mental hospital by putting up nest boxes in the garden while the Kultivator collective set up an agricultural utopia on Öland. Why try to save the world when one can cultivate one's own garden?

The institutionalisation of relational ethics soon branched off in two new directions: an elitist direction, critical of institutions, that had difficulty finding an audience in Sweden, exemplified by Lunds Konsthall under the leadership of Åsa Nacking, and a populist direction, positive towards institutions, that converted the exhibition space into a spectacular amusement park, as with Philippe Parreno's exhibition at Palais de Tokyo and Pierre Huyghe's exhibition at Centre Pompidou in 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Boris Groys, *Artpower*, MIT Press, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Nicolas Bourriaud, *Esthétique Relationnelle*, Les presses du réel, 1998.

With Hans Ulrich Obrist and Maria Lind, relational aesthetics gained a more discursive touch, but in Maria Lind's case she chose to enter into a number of unethical collaborations to which I will return later on. Let us first turn the clock back to 2004. That year saw theorist Claire Bishop write a highly polemic text attacking relational aesthetics for being too nice, too idealistic and to conflict-averse.<sup>5</sup> She used philosopher Chantal Mouffe's theories on antagonistic conflict<sup>6</sup> to assert that artists were at their most powerful when, like Santiago Sierra, they dared to put conflict at the heart of the social space by reproducing what he criticised, namely the exploitation of cheap labour. The more unethical, the better. Why make soup together and have a nice time, when one can place poor workers along a wall and tattoo a black line along their backs? Why look at Vanessa Beecroft's semi-naked mannequins when one can ask prostitutes to get down on all fours and have their blanketed backs sprayed with polyurethane spray? Unfortunately, Bishop misunderstood Mouffe's theories, since Mouffe never advocated the antagonism of the closed conflict, focusing instead on dynamic, structure-changing agonism. Advocating antagonism after reading Mouffe is like advocating the subjugation of the colonised after reading Spivak. In 2006, Claire Bishop wrote a

new text in Artforum titled "The social turn – collaboration and its discontents". According to Bishop, participatory art (which she used rather than relational art) was no longer sufficiently ethical, conflictual or aesthetic. Participatory art was simply too consensus-driven. The preferred model? That was less clear. It is hard to be critical and normatively edifying at the same time. In a conversation with Boris Groys a few years later, she praised the futurists' infantile games with the audience: tomato throwing, gross insults and glue on chair seats.<sup>7</sup>

What is worse? Feel good or feel bad art? Fortunately there are artists who have managed to extricate themselves from this "either/or" logic, such as Thomas Hirschhorn, who bridges the gap between a miserabilist representation of the world's injustices and a micro-utopian production of new realities. In *Crystal of Resistance*, an enormous synthesis of the arts that was unveiled at the Venice Biennale in 2011, images of bomb-blasted bodies existed side by side with a political manifesto for a better world. And at Palais de Tokyo, a few years later, he chose to create a platform for both activism and gentle ways of passing the time, with visitors able to choose between listening to political firebrand speeches, copying books,

<sup>5</sup> Claire Bishop, *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics*, October, Fall 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*, Verso, 2000.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/bring-noise>

sculpting with hardboard or slumping in front of a karate film. Why choose between Marx and Coca Cola, when you can have both?

Simon Chrichley writes in *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance* (2007) that the ethical individual is, rather, a “dividual”. It is only when we recognise the gap between reality and our ideals that we can begin to act ethically.<sup>8</sup> In her text *Cheaters and Believers* (2005), Keller Easterling goes even further and rightly asserts that integrity is a form of violence and that the more a political regime or an individual tries to do the right thing, the more they have to sacrifice someone or something to keep the regime or their image of themselves intact.<sup>9</sup> The disloyal needs the masquerade of the loyalist, but the loyalist must in turn be disloyal in order to survive. So what can one do? Where is the dividing line between right and wrong?

## The ethics of unethical art

It has to be said that unethical art is ethical, because what would all the transgressive artists be without the questioning and thus redrawing of the boundaries of morality, ethics and the law? Art and the law are like the brothel and the church were in times gone by – entirely dependent on each other. How else can one explain Gregor Schneider’s search for a dying person who is willing to die in his exhibition? Oleg Kulik’s zoophrenic sex games with animals? Guillermo Vargas’ stray dog that had to live without food and water until it eventually died in the gallery? The cannibalistic artist Zhu Yu, who took body art into a whole new dimension by eating a human foetus? Pål Hollender’s sex with Latvian prostitutes in a documentary film that was supposed to criticise Western sex buyers? Anna Odell’s simulation and infiltration of the closed corridors of psychiatric care? Lars Vilks’ cartoon of Mohammed as a roundabout dog, which poked fun at muslims and at the art world’s hypocritical praise of the fine arts?

Art would be nothing without the law or breaches of the law. Artists must reproduce injustices in order to

<sup>8</sup> Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance*, Verso 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Keller Easterling, *Believers and Cheaters*, Log 5 – 2005.

alert a dormant population to their own complicity and responsibility to take action. But what usually happens is the opposite; the observer misses injustices that the artist is pointing at and instead sees only the pointer. What we discuss is not the lives of the low paid, the dying, the mentally ill or the prostitutes, but the way the art depicts these lives. The spectacular transgression gets in the way of the social and political problems to which the art work is referring. Openly provocative art also tends to tackle a subject far too quickly and simplistically. Nuanced, ethically sourced art, on the other hand, can leave the observer unmoved. In my experience as a theory lecturer at art schools and universities, I have to say however that unethical art has a very important educational property in that it can provoke fascinating debates and, in the best case, inner ideological conflicts that can bring us into an ongoing dialogue with the wider world and with ourselves.

We are all fixtures in the discursive land of art, in this postmoralistic oasis beyond good and evil, where artists can escape as long as they can create a debate around the (un)ethical dimensions of their art work. But what happens when curators begin to test the boundaries of ethics and morality? Artistic freedom is all very well, but is there such a thing as curatorial freedom?

## The ethics of the (un)ethical curator

In the 2012 exhibition *Abstract Possible, the Stockholm Synergies*, Maria Lind chose to expose aesthetic, economic and social abstraction in three separate venues: Tenstas Konsthall, Bukowskis Auction House and Stockholm University. All would have been well if Bukowskis hadn't happened to be owned by Lundin Oil, a company that was accused of breaching international law in Sudan and was now trying to wash away its guilt by investing in "fine art". In the ensuing debate, Maria Lind responded that she was trying to criticise the phenomenon "from the belly of the beast", since we live in an age where "it's impossible to draw any ethical boundaries". I disagree. If there is one thing we need in a time when everything is so fluid, it is individuals who dare to draw ethical boundaries. One cannot criticise a phenomenon such as the commercialisation of art one moment, and then in the next moment help to perpetuate it.

Some commentators held that Maria Lind could not be attacked from a moral perspective, because "morality was a private matter". So what is the difference between morality and ethics? Some schools of philosophy argue that it is about practising (morality) what you preach (ethics). It is about finding a moral practice that matches one's ethical discourse. From this angle, Maria Lind's actions simply did not align with her accepted theories on strategic separatism and self-

regulating micro-economies. There is, however, another school of thought that posits morality and ethics as two words for the same thing: “the art of living”, and the art of living is tightly bound up with the political, and “the curatorial”, which according to Maria Lind’s own definitions, inspired by Chantal Mouffe’s theories, is a way of conducting politics.<sup>10</sup> According to the journal *tsnoK*, Maria Lind’s collaboration with capitalism was a systemic error.<sup>11</sup> Maria Lind’s intention was to criticise not Bukowskis but the cultural policy that forces institutions to collaborate with business. If that is true, then Maria Lind should not have chosen to work with business, relying instead on state funding, in order once again to “practise what she preached”. The journal also acknowledged the positives about her collaboration with Bukowskis, not least that it fired up the gallery owners who loathe the fact that Bukowskis has entered the first-hand market. In that case, it would have been more moral/ethical to ally oneself with the galleries, write articles for the newspapers and try to work politically through direct lobbying, in order to avoid setting a precedent, whereby the curator sells herself and her artists to both the market and the corporate world.

Morality and ethics are context-dependent, and the person is dependent on the system, but this does not mean that we should blame everything on the system

or play the concepts off against each other. The person has a choice, and choosing unethical collaborations creates a problematic precedent. As Chantal Mouffe writes in *On the Political* (2005)<sup>12</sup>, ever since Kant, morality has been associated with a universal consensus that provides no room for “rational disagreement”. This produces counter-productive pairings that convert the us-against-them dichotomy into an even worse form – good versus evil. This is why the notion of “morality” has gained a bad reputation. Mouffe prefers to talk about ethics rather than morality and about the criticality of art rather than the politics of art. She asks: how can we devise a set of values that recognises the deeply pluralistic nature of the world? Through jointly negotiated principles that refuse to accept today’s neoliberal hegemony as the only possible option. I would add: through an ongoing debate that questions both the art and the institutions, both the individuals and the structures, both artists and curators, based on the unfounded foundations of ethics, but also on a broader philosophical and psychoanalytical horizon. The geopolitical but also meteorological disasters of recent years have given rise to schools of thought and theories such as speculative realism, object-oriented ontology, post-anthropocentrism and accelerationism. The relational spectrum now reaches out to objects, animals, plants and minerals in a pantheistic, holistic world view that

<sup>10</sup> Maria Lind, “The Curatorial”, *Artforum*, October 2009. <https://www.artforum.com/inprint/issue=200908&id=23737>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.tsnok.se/sv/2012/och-annat/tsnok-sager-det-ar-ett-systemfel-att-hon-samarbetar-med-kapitalet/1549/>

<sup>12</sup> Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political*, in: *Thinking in Action*, Routledge 2005.



advocates the equal value of all life forms. But as Carolyn Christov Bakargiev commented in an interview as curator of *Documenta XIII*, which took up all these issues and more: “a wild strawberry can’t go and vote.” These new art practices also have their limitations, but it is in these limitations, mistakes and dips that hope of a better world can be found, namely in the recognition of the subconscious, the holy grail that becomes more distant the more we try to pursue it. Psychoanalysis is going to play a crucial role in the future of both art and politics, as it is the only practice that can teach us the most difficult thing of all – the humility of doubt – the characteristic that perhaps best sums up those people who are committed to exploring and investigating.

### Art and ethics in artistic research

Say what you will about art’s *enfants terribles*, one thing is for sure, none of the most radical practitioners would want to apply to the ivory tower of academia, and if they did it is highly unlikely that they would get the job. The unwritten ethics of artistic research remain just that – unwritten, and it is extremely difficult to put a finger on the ethical criteria of artistic research. The ethical requirements that are applied to research in general cannot be applied to art, because artistic freedom is the cornerstone of a democratic and free society, and art

cannot always be “good”. That said, there still seems to be a difference between ethics in art and ethics in artistic research. Most of the artists who have conducted research at the Swedish arts faculties seem to work according to an ethics of social improvement that involves trying to “do good by good means”. The result? Artworks that never risks causing us to choke on our coffee. This does not mean, on closer inspection, that all artists who conduct artistic research are ethical through and through.

Just look at Staffan Schmidt and Mike Bode’s thesis *Off the Grid* (2008) and the accompanying video material.<sup>13</sup> The thesis is based on the authors’ interviews with eight American “off-gridders” who live a self-imposed life of exclusion and eight people from the deprived estate of Husby outside Stockholm, whose exclusion is far from self-imposed. Schmidt and Bode compare these types of exclusion with each other, as if comparing apples and oranges, before, like contemporary versions of Don Quixote and Sancha Panza, tilting at the windmills of the market, the art institutions and the art academies. The authors raise doubts about all systems (without at any time mentioning any specific institutions or individuals, which is a typical form of classic desktop Marxism), but they never raise doubts about the most important point of all – the researchers’ power relations with their study

<sup>13</sup> Mike Bode and Staffan Schmidt, *Off the Grid*, Artmonitor, University of Gothenburg, 2009.



subjects. Consistently enough, the authors end with a utopian manifesto, in the belief that they find themselves outside the classic “us and them” paradigm, occupying instead a third space where everyone exists on equal terms. But the gulf between the authors’ academic complex and the social conditions of the excluded Swedes is enormous. The fact that, by the authors’ own admission, they spent a great deal of time with the estate residents, helping the children with their homework, drinking coffee and leaving their camera in its case does not help. The project is and will always be inscribed in a Western enlightenment project that seeks to plead the case of the weak, under the pretext that the weak are actually strong. The estate residents never receive concrete help in organising their own opposition, their own way out of misery, but are instead reduced to videoed talking heads – nice, subjugated models in a contemporary academic history painting.

In Magnus Bårtås’ thesis *You Told Me* (2010), we are presented with a similarly idealised panorama of Japanese cult figures such as Johnnie Walker, legendary filmmakers such as Chris Marker and the cultural phenomenon of “the cute” and its geopolitical consequences for society and politics.<sup>14</sup> Bårtås also took us to other parts of the world and legendary narrative figures in the hunt for stories, but despite being a solid

examination of the storytelling art’s significance for contemporary art and the fascinating concept of “work stories”, it lacked a critique of the researching artist’s power relations with his study subjects from a postcolonial perspective. Bårtås does, however, show a certain scepticism towards the truth-bearing function of storytelling. He writes: “They are stories that are barely stories. (...) It is talking that belongs together with what in French is called *civilité* – the art of living together.” Bårtås makes no mention of ethics. But what is the art of living together if not a form of ethics? Bårtås rather serves as a Freudian case researcher in pursuit of the subconscious, because as he writes: “The challenge is getting at the underside, the non-manifested, the unconscious. The political trip that takes place in the everyday (...) and not least in dreams.”

Cecilia Parsberg also produced a thesis that places the focus squarely on encounters between people. In *How Do You Become a Successful Beggar in Sweden? An inquiry into the images of begging and giving 2011 to 2016*, at Umeå University, she explored the relationship between begging and giving in Sweden, from both an activist and a participatory perspective that placed the focus on “the ethics of the place”, the sphere between myself and the other, in the hope of creating “the third” – a space where giver and begger can be

<sup>14</sup> Magnus Bårtås, *You Told Me*, University of Gothenburg, Artmonitor, 2010.

co-creators in a shared task.<sup>15</sup> The installation *The Chorus of Begging and The Chorus of Giving* was a challenge to take political action in these spaces that occur between begger and giver. Cecilia Parsberg's research project once again carried an idealistic faith in the ability of art to bridge differences. But the thesis contained a clear and well argued problematisation of the artistic researcher's power relations with her study subjects, and a reception analysis section where the participants were asked to comment on their own participation. Parsberg opens up a space for taboo phenomena, such as disappointment in the limitations of one's own engagement, where participants recognise that they still avert their gaze, because they feel they do not have enough power of their own.

Even artistic research has its more evident bad boys and bad girls, a gang who highlight the mutual desires of art and the law, but also the love-and-hate relationship between artists and artistic research. Malin Arnell recently presented her anti-logocentric thesis *Av\_handling/Through\_action*, in which action is put before words, as something that Hanna Arendt sees as having no end. Action can take a lifetime. Once again thinking and acting as one thinks is an ethical, political and, in this case, activist action. The activist element lies in the actions based on a space that recognises "collective aspects of knowledge produc-

tion as political forces", a space that "escapes binary logic" and that takes responsibility for "the force of becoming". In her highly poetic invitation to the 72 hour long defence of her thesis, Arnell writes that: "Av\_handling/Through\_action recognizes the force of ethico-onto-epistemological entanglements (of matter, history, politics, social relations, theory, and practice) through intra-action. It asks what happens to the notion of research objectivity when the researcher ("I") and the researched ("object") occupy the same location ("my body")?"<sup>16</sup> Arnell transformed the examination room into a space for choreographic experimentation, debates and forms of "un-hierarchized commitment", where people were invited to feel both how society's power relations materialise in their bodies and how one can actively create a different future here and now.

Arnell's thesis managed to break out of academia's constraints by getting away from the thesis text as such. The artistic duo Goldin + Senneby also managed to escape the straightjacket of academia, through their thesis project *Zero Magic*, whose intention was to play the financial markets by exploiting the strategies of what is known as "short selling", which involves betting on a company's shares going down in value.<sup>17</sup> During the defence of their thesis, they presented a performance that confronted the magical

<sup>15</sup> <http://beggingandgiving.se/index/>

<sup>16</sup> <http://dissertationthroughaction.space>

<sup>17</sup> Goldin + Senneby, *Zero Magic*, Shifting the value convention, Royal Institute of Art, 2016. <https://lup.lub.lu.se/search/publication/8870958>

“make-believe” structures of the art world, the world of finance and academia. Birgitta Rubin wrote in Swedish newspaper DN: “As part of the thesis defence, everyone was invited to invest in a short-selling campaign against an alleged listed meditech company (a speculation on a falling share price). The actual prospectus is the most concrete part of the doctoral work – and I promise it is a superb parody of the state of things. Magician Malin Nilsson did what she could to tempt the audience into investing and gave a show with all sorts of tricks on the theme of economic predications. The contention was that what we want to believe becomes ‘true’. Illusions and manipulations are the very foundation of magic, but also a substantial part of the capital and art markets.”<sup>18</sup> However, the greatest magic trick was reserved not for the financial markets, but for artistic academia. After all, what are artistic research and its intellectual castles in the air, if not an advanced form of financial speculation? Yes, the emperor has no clothes. Artistic research has no clothes. Is it free? Not yet. But it has come some considerable way.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/konst-form/disputation-konsten-och-kapitalet-sitter-i-samma-bat/>

# Chapter 4

*Research, PhD careers and the development  
of the arts as a research field*

By Annika Åkerblom and Johan Öberg

## Introduction

The field of artistic research has gradually expanded in Sweden, not least through the opportunities to actually enroll in artistic doctoral education programmes. This process started with the possibility for artists to go through the examination system within the traditional PhD system that was established at the universities in Gothenburg and Lund, and later on also in Luleå. The development culminated in the introduction of an artistic PhD in 2010 and the establishment of the national graduate research school, Konstnärliga Forskarskolan (2010–2015). Today the right to hold examinations at PhD level in artistic research is held by Lund University, the University of Gothenburg and the University of Borås, and since 2016 also by the Stockholm University of Arts. In parallel with the artistic PhD, there remains an opportunity to apply artistic methods within doctoral education in several other subjects, as an alternative for artistic practitioners. There is also an increasing interest in artistic research methods within traditional academic research, in the humanities, social sciences and technology. This means, on the one hand, that the artistic research

methods have proved enduring and interesting to a broader group of researchers, but on the other hand in the long term it may end up being difficult to define a clear and specific artistic research field.

In the Swedish Research Council's Artistic Research Yearbook 2016, we presented an outline study of the workplaces/institutions to which PhD holders in the artistic field were attached, plus an analysis of this group, based on the statistics compiled by the Swedish Research Council.<sup>1</sup> We found that, of the 104 PhD holders in the artistic field, almost half came from the area of design (48), followed by musicians (26) at almost a quarter. The third largest group was visual artists (15), while other art forms were represented by five or fewer PhD holders. Many were employed by or associated with academia in some way, but very few had postdoctoral positions. This follow-up study takes the analysis further and deeper through a survey of how the artistically focused PhD holders see their own situation, what scope they have/have had to continue their research and how they feel about their education.

<sup>1</sup> "What happens after a PhD? On likely and unlikely career paths for artistic researchers." Åkerblom, Annika and Öberg, Johan in *The Art university – political dream or broadened future for the Arts. Artistic Research Yearbook 2016* Swedish Research Council, Stockholm 2016.

## Purpose and questions

The overall purpose of this study is to investigate the real opportunities that artistic PhD holders have to continue their research, how they feel about their education, what it has meant for their own career development and how they see their current situation and future. We were also interested in finding out the extent to which they are continuing their research, formulated more specifically as follows:

- Is there scope for continued research in their current positions? If so, to what extent? What form does working life take for PhD holders with an artistic focus? What impact has their doctoral education had on their career development?
- What has their doctoral education resulted in – professionally and personally, and how do they feel it has benefitted them?

<sup>2</sup> *Doktorander och disputerade inom det konstnärliga området i Sverige 2014 (PhD students and holders of a PhD in the artistic field in Sweden 2014)*. Swedish Research Council, 23 January 2015.

<sup>3</sup> At this point it is worth bringing up an interesting problem concerning the statistics that became apparent when we sent out the questionnaires. Initially, many of those we contacted were doubtful about responding because they do not see themselves as holders of an artistic PhD, since their actual doctorate is in a different field. Having spoken to us, some did change their minds, but others declined to take part. It is clear that people do not necessarily see themselves as a representative of the artistic field, even though they have an arts degree. There is, in other words, a real possibility that people will see their research as “non-artistic” even if, to a greater or lesser extent, they have used and/or developed artistic methods in their research work. This in turn means that the statistics on which the study is based are associated with a

## Material and method

This follow-up study has once again taken as its starting point the Swedish Research Council’s summary of PhD holders in the artistic field.<sup>2</sup> The statistics cover the artistic field, which here comprises the art forms below:

- Design and craft
- Theatre, dance, music, literature
- Photography, film, digital media etc.
- Fine arts

The PhD holders include graduates from various subject areas, including technology, educational work, social sciences and the humanities – with doctoral suffixes such as Philosophy, Engineering and the Arts.<sup>3</sup>

fundamental problem which is indicative of the field’s relative immaturity as a research discipline. Far from being unique to this field, it generally happens when any new field of research is established. The statistics are thus of less value as a tool for describing and understanding the real-life situation.

Some of these PhD holders have undergone artistic education within the framework of precursors to the current artistic doctoral provision in the form of the creative variants that existed, for example, in the music field, while others have, albeit supported by their professional artistic knowledge, undergone entirely traditional doctoral education without artistic ambitions. There are also individuals who have used artistic methods in their doctoral studies in other fields, but who are not on the list. Naturally there are PhD holders from 2010 whose research was arts-based. In addition, the list of PhD holders includes people who formally obtained their qualification outside Sweden, although within the framework of collaborations with Swedish HEIs. Then there are

Information on what the “artistic” doctors are doing today and how they view their education has been gathered via a simple questionnaire. To achieve a little more depth, a number of interviews supplemented the questionnaires. Of the 104 doctors in the Swedish Research Council’s list of people with a PhD in the artistic field, 91 could be reached by e-mail, so 13 could not be reached. Of those invited to take part, 63 people (69%) responded to our questions.<sup>4</sup> The response rate can thus be said to be good. Eight people have been interviewed.<sup>5</sup>

What follows is firstly a presentation of the respondents’ working life, opportunities for research and how the holders of an arts PhD view their career development. Then comes a report on the personal and professional benefits that they think they have derived from their doctoral education, plus a discussion of the survey results.

people who obtained their PhD abroad and who now work at Swedish HEIs, but they are not on the list. It is thus clear that the compiled statistics are not entirely consistent, making the question of what is actually being counted and collated particularly relevant. When there are no specific criteria for what a set of data such as this should contain, there is an immediate risk of arbitrariness, something that is in no way good for the development and description of a new research field.

Against the background of the described problem, it would possibly be more relevant to the research field to talk about the interpretive and/or creative doctoral education programmes that are/were available and to include those who were examined at these, and naturally those who obtained an arts PhD. There is also a question as to whether those who formally took their exam in another country, albeit in collaboration with and/or funding from Swedish HEIs, should be included in the statistics.

## Working life, continued research and career for PhD holders with an artistic focus

A significant element of building up a research field is, of course, the research that is performed by people with a PhD. The opportunity for continued research generally comes in the form of a position at an HEI or a research institute, although one usually has to apply for external funding grants in order to do this. The extent of the position and its environment are other determining factors when it comes to the scope/opportunity to conduct research. Our simple questionnaire also shows that the majority (46) have a full-time position, while ten (10) have part-time positions of 26–75%. Six people work less than 25 % and one is unemployed.

Extent of position according to questionnaire responses<sup>6</sup>

Unemployed	25% or less	26 - 50%	51 - 75%	100%
1	6	5	5	46

<sup>4</sup> From the total number of doctors (104), this gives a response rate of 60%, which also counts as a good figure.

<sup>5</sup> In choosing the informants, the aim was to obtain as broad a spread as possible of subject backgrounds.

This aim has, however, had to partially give way to pragmatic considerations such as who was able to make time for a meeting. We do not believe that the sample has any critical significance for the outcome, since the questionnaire responses largely point in the same direction, as did the interviews.

<sup>6</sup> This report has not taken account of reduced hours/leave of a temporary nature.



When it comes to how much of the position is made up of research, the majority lie within the range of 5–50%.<sup>7</sup> Nine state that they have 51–75% and ten have 76–100% research, only eight state that they have less than 10%. The basis for research opportunities clearly varies. The picture is not entirely clear-cut, but it seems that it comes down to the individually agreed professional development time that the HEIs provide within the framework of the employment contract. Many have most probably also received specific funding for short-term projects from both in-house and external sources. Those whose position involves a greater proportion of research have explicit research posts such as post-doc/associate lecturers and professors or external research grants.

Research as percentage of position

None	5 - 25%	26 - 50%	51 - 75%	100%
10	17	17	9	10

Those who are employed at an HEI also provide teaching and supervision and have administrative and/or leadership duties, i.e. customary tasks within academia. The respondents appear to find it hard to balance teaching and duties with research, which tends to suffer as a consequence. Seven people have a full-time position outside academia, and some of those have

an opportunity for in-service research. The majority thus work in academia to a lesser or greater extent.

Most state that their doctoral education was fundamental to the position that they are in today. The doctoral education is also seen as a base and condition for the research profession, as a general foundation for work in academia (supervision, acting as an examiner) and as a basis for applying for research funding, although non-PhD holders can also apply for a grant from the Swedish Research Council's Committee for Artistic Research. Their years as doctoral students have also provided important resources in the form of networks and contacts. They have all acquired key experience of leadership, working processes and project management, not to mention supervision. Their doctoral studies have given an understanding of the role of the university and higher education, and the opportunities and significance of interdisciplinary knowledge, which forms an important condition for continuing to work in academia.

In the assessment of the doctoral education, the respondents mark it out as having been/being a key platform for their career. The education also creates a good opportunity for international exchanges and collaborations, and for some also employment outside of Sweden. It is emphasised that the title Doctor serves as a door-opener abroad.

<sup>7</sup> Many state that it varies or give a timespan within which it is possible to conduct research, which we take to mean that the research opportunities differ over the year, depending on the funding opportunities.



Although all the respondents stress their joy and gratitude at having the opportunity to complete their education, there are also signs of a perception of being underused and unneeded. It is seen as difficult to find employment outside academia – there is a risk of being considered overqualified.

### Professional and personal benefits from doctoral education

Without exception, the questionnaire responses describe the doctoral education as a highly valuable experience, despite it, in some cases, not turning out exactly as they would have wanted. Nevertheless, everyone judged the education to have been crucial and very rewarding, both professionally and personally.

The education provided significant professional development. A range of specific generic skills are mentioned, including know-how on writing applications, organisational abilities, the capacity to analyse and synthesise complex knowledge processes in artistic practice, educational planning, the ability and capacity to run projects, the ability to formulate strategies and plans in education and research, plus training in getting to grips with and relating to large fields of knowledge. It is also stated that the doctoral education provided a capacity to read and to understand contexts and the conditions for conducting research.

Knowledge of how to formulate questions, how to use different methods, ethics, the craft of writing, theories, critical perspectives, awareness of different knowledge traditions and their existence are listed as skills that the respondents gained – a solid theoretical and methodological basis for continued research and education within academia. The opportunity to work on material development and gain knowledge of the links between experiments, practice and theory has also been highlighted as important. In addition, the education provided the capacity, self-confidence and ability to venture into new fields in which the respondents needed to expand their knowledge. “The doctoral exam became a kind of proof of a particular capacity,” writes one respondent.

On a personal level – namely the question of specific individual development – everyone responded that the doctoral education programme was of vital importance. Their doctoral studies provided an opportunity to conduct thorough research over a long period. The studies opened doors to the whole world and paved the way for a comprehensive journey of discovery, plus a development of intellectual capacity and practical skills. Many describe huge joy in the way that their doctoral studies enabled them to explore something of interest to them. It is also clear that the doctoral studies changed the respondents’ way of

understanding the world and created opportunities to act within it. "... artistically productive processes have been set in motion within me, deepening my artistic creativity and expanding my awareness of the creative process." Many state that they became better writers with a greater ability to express themselves during their studies, and also that this has provided a kind of personal confidence. One of the interviewees put it this way: "... a great personal joy to have tackled issues in depth, expanded my way of working as an artist – research methods have become part of my expression as an artist."

There has also been some criticism of the doctoral education programmes, concerning the difficulty in placing one's own work in a context. Some would have liked to have seen more guidance and express a sense of being alone. Others would have liked more of an opportunity to lecture as a doctoral student in order to broaden their experience.

Many of the respondents state that their doctoral studies have led to a tangible development of their artistry: giving them more tools for artistic creativity, greater artistic capacity, enabling a process for finding words for knowledge, formulating knowledge, creating a greater whole, packaging their knowledge, understanding what it is they know. Their studies led

to the development of an additional creative form/creative expression through writing, enriching the original art form and prompting the exploration of another art form – text. The respondents experienced a broader artistic competence, a renewal of their artistry. Their time as doctoral students gave them an opportunity to do what they wanted and to develop their art, to attain a deeper aesthetic dimension.

## Summary and conclusions

This study follows up on the results from the previous study showing that the majority of PhD holders with an artistic focus are employed within academia, but some have also found work outside the higher education sector. Now we can see that a relatively large number have a full-time position, but that there is a wide range in the part-time hours worked. Among those who work part-time, one can probably assume that the position is combined with their own artistic creativity in various ways, as we know is the case for some of those we interviewed.

The majority also have research as part of their job, although the extent varies greatly. The proportion of the research varies across the year for the different individuals. The reasons for this are unknown, but there are good grounds to assume that it relates to the

overall workload and the funding opportunities within and outside academia. For those who hold explicit research positions, research may comprise as much as 100% of their work, but the majority find themselves somewhere in the range of 5–50%. Among those who work at an HEI, their duties primarily comprise lecturing, supervision and administration and/or leadership duties. As in all higher education environments, these tasks tend to take precedence over research.

There is a broad consensus view that the doctoral education programmes were fundamental to the position the respondents hold today. The doctoral studies are also seen as a basis and precondition for being able to conduct research – a platform for a continued career, with a title that serves as a door-opener, particularly in international contexts. The studies brought with them a whole host of skills and competencies: of a subject-related type (linked to the subject field), of a generic type (writing, reading, asking questions) and of a general type (leadership, project management, working processes). The PhD holders also gained a familiarity with and understanding of interdisciplinary contexts, higher education and academia.

Both professionally and privately, the doctoral studies are described as being (crucially) important. The professional know-how that was acquired is highly

valued, whether it is artistic development or other abilities that can best be summed up as a kind of intellectual capacity that the PhD holders had an opportunity to develop. The testimony is similar on the personal front, with the respondents citing improvements to their own creative process, productivity and an inner confidence about their abilities.

There are also a few critical comments about everything not turning out exactly as expected during the studies, a certain feeling of being alone and a lack of context. There were some comments that the doctoral education programmes with an artistic focus and the skills they develop are not understood with any clarity beyond the world of academia. There are also suggestions that the research knowledge obtained is also not much appreciated by the HEIs themselves.

Overall, there is a positive attitude towards the doctoral education programmes. Without exception, there is considerable gratitude and joy over the opportunity that the doctoral studies have provided on both a professional and a personal level. Many also explain that their artistry has grown and developed strongly and become more in-depth during the process that the doctoral studies entailed. Perhaps the results would have been different if the small group of 13 people who did not respond to the questionnaire had provided their

views, but it is impossible to know. Considering the clear consensus that is apparent in the results we did receive, there is nothing to suggest that the missing views would have been substantially different.

Doctoral education using artistic methods pushes the boundaries of what research can be, not to mention the forms/methods for knowledge creation. This study is part of a drive to follow up and understand the development of the artistic research field. Those who have used artistic methods in their thesis work constitute a key group in the development and formation of this new field of knowledge.

As referenced in the introduction, there is a tension within the artistic (research) field between those who see writing and theoretical work as developmental and rewarding, as a powerful supplementary tool in their artistic work, and those who see theory and writing as a threat to their artistic practice and thus to their professional identity. This tension also comes across in our survey, with many mentioning this tension as a problem. Personally, however, they see the act of writing as an asset, an aid.

In conclusion, we can report that the artistic doctoral education programmes have overwhelmingly produced good results for those who have completed them.

The growth and quality of the field now depends on the extent to which the higher education institutions are able to use the research expertise that has been gained.

There is an art to science, and science in art;  
the two are not enemies,  
but different aspects of the whole

Isaac Asimov

# Chapter 5

*The Swedish Research Council and artistic research 2001–2016*  
*Interview with senior research officer Torbjörn Lind*

By Helena Bornholm

In recent years, Sweden has become one of the world's leading nations in the field of artistic research. But the route to get here has been anything but direct, according to the Swedish Research Council's senior research officer Torbjörn Lind, who has worked in this area since 2001, when the authority began awarding grants for artistic research, and who is retiring after the publication of this Yearbook.

A battle for identity. That is how Torbjörn Lind sums up the history of the research field and the discussions that have taken place within the research community and at the Swedish Research Council over the years. The debate has largely focused on how one can conduct research in and through art and how artistic research should be defined and judged in relation to other fields of research.

The research issue was first raised in conjunction with the higher education reform of 1977, when fine arts education became part of the remit of higher education institutions. One of the reform's central tenets was that all higher education should be based on research. However, in the consultation for the new Higher Education Act, several respondents stressed the distinctive nature of artistic work. There was a fear that the fine arts courses would, through the proposed act's focus solely on *education* and *research*,

lose out when it came to the allocation of research funding. In their view, a perspective had been omitted, namely art's task of seeking out new forms of expression – constantly exploring the artistic processes. And so it was stipulated that HEIs should also conduct development work, which marked a first, tentative, step towards bringing artistic work closer to academia.

It wasn't until 2000 that artistic research had its first mention as research in a research bill (Bill. 1999/2000:81). That same year, five authorities were merged into one, and the newly formed Swedish Research Council was tasked with allocating specific funding in the field.

The authority set up a working group within the Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) to take responsibility for issues concerning artistic research and development work, AR&D. The working group comprised HSS researchers and arts experts. In 2006, the working group was replaced with a drafting committee, still within the framework of the Scientific Council for HSS.

“The fact that artistic research was grouped under humanities and social sciences may, to some extent, explain the quite heated debates that raged at times.





*Helena Bornholm in conversation with Torbjörn Lind (photo: Eva Högström)*



Grant applications within AR&D had to compete with all the other HSS research and it was not always easy to achieve an understanding of and respect for the way that artistic research worked with subjective knowledge,” recalls Torbjörn Lind.

In 2009, an expert group for AR&D was set up – answering directly to the board of the Swedish Research Council – with an official mandate to initiate and support initiatives in artistic research. The expert group was reshaped into the Committee for AR&D in 2010 and artistic research became a separate subject area.

“As the operation became more independent, so the dialogue between the opposing internal factions gradually became less dogmatic,” says Torbjörn.

## From networks to doctorates

The Swedish Research Council’s support for research and development in the artistic field initially focused on creating networks, known as “collegiums”, where artists and researchers from different disciplines could work together. Out of 16 applications over the period in question, seven collegiums were awarded grants.

The collegial grant ceased in 2005 for most of the collegiums, but some of the activities that took shape over the five years caused a ripple effect. Out of the Academy for Practice-based Research in Architecture and Design (AKAD) at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, for example, came several projects that were later awarded grants by the Swedish Research Council.

Since 2003, project grants have been the main form of support given to artistic researchers.

“The amount of the grant for artistic research gradually increased from SEK 5 million in 2001 to SEK 25 million in 2010. It has, however, remained practically unchanged since then. At the same time, the number of project applications has doubled since 2010,” stresses Torbjörn Lind.

In 2016, a total of 51 applications were submitted – slightly down on the record year of 2015 when the Swedish Research Council received 65 applications. The approval rate was 14 percent, compared with 2015 when only 8 percent were able to be approved, in part due to the sheer number of applicants. And that is how things have stood recently.

“Unfortunately we have seen the level of applications rise and fall over the years. My interpretation is that we lack a base for artistic research at the HEIs that would support stable development.”

The Committee for Artistic Research has asked for SEK 5 million in extra funding from the board to use specifically for research environments, but not yet got it. Torbjörn Lind feels that is regrettable, and sees this as a modest amount, considering that the board has SEK 70 million to make available to the Swedish Research Council’s various scientific councils and committees.

“We have so far attempted to promote a stronger base by encouraging project applications with elements that can build, or strengthen existing, research environments at the HEIs. The Committee has done this over the past two years, but with only limited success, which suggests that supporting research environments will require a targeted call for applications and additional funding.”

“Unfortunately, the government’s research bill for the next four years contains no proposals for further funding/grants for the Swedish Research Council to support artistic research. As ever, this means that the scope of the Committee for Artistic Research to obtain

funding to provide support for research environments lies in the hands of the board. We can only hope that the Committee has more success with any future lobbying than they have recently,” adds Torbjörn Lind.

The fact that Sweden is nevertheless at the very forefront of research internationally is due to the way artistic research has been built up from two directions, explains Torbjörn. In parallel with the state support in the form of collegial grants and project grants, several universities have gradually managed to introduce postgraduate education with the help of faculty grants.

In conjunction with the research bill of 2009, the Swedish Research Council received SEK 7 million in ring-fenced funding (included in the total funding of SEK 25 million) to help finance a national school of artistic research, administered by the arts faculties in Lund and Gothenburg. The aim was to create a nationwide model for postgraduate education in the arts field.

“Konstnärliga forskarskolan, as the school came to be called, was a collaboration between 11 HEIs over the period 2010–2015. It was not a physical school in the usual sense. Instead doctoral students were placed at various different arts institutions. Since at that time

there were only three HEIs<sup>1</sup> with the right to hold examinations at PhD level, doctoral students from other institutions were able to defend their thesis at one of these three.”

2010 saw the introduction of a specific doctoral degree in art, which helped to further cement art’s specific status. To date, over 100 people have obtained a PhD in artistic research and there are a similar number of current doctoral students. The first defences of arts-focused theses took place in 2006 at the universities of Lund and Gothenburg. Unfortunately, it appears that few have the opportunity to continue in their field of research after obtaining their PhD. The Committee for Artistic Research at the Swedish Research Council has therefore initiated a qualitative study into the extent of postdoctoral artistic research at a number of relevant HEIs. You can read more about the study in chapter 4 of this Yearbook.

## Quality and availability of the research

As has been mentioned before, the questioning of artistic research has focused to a large extent on the type of knowledge that the field generates and not least how one assesses the quality of the research conducted. Over the years, the Swedish Research Council, the Ministry of Education and Research and

other institutions have conducted studies aimed at answering these questions.

When the Swedish Research Council evaluated its artistic research initiatives for the period 2001– 2005, the judgment was that the work at the research collegiums had generated meagre results, but that the new field of research nevertheless held potential. The projects that had received support over the period received rather better reviews and were also considered to be better documented than the work associated with the collegial grants.

“Poor documentation is something that recurs in several reports and is therefore an issue that the Committee for Artistic Research and others will continue to have on their agenda. How can we improve the quality of artistic research? What does it mean to evaluate such research on both academic and artistic grounds? What criteria are used? Are they enough?” asks Torbjörn Lind.

Another priority issue for the Committee is how the research results are made available, which links in various ways to questions of both subject classification (Statistics Sweden codes) and infrastructure. The artistic field uses several reporting forms – such as

<sup>1</sup>University of Gothenburg, Lund University and University of Borås. Since June 2016, Stockholm University of Arts has also held the right to hold examinations at PhD level. When the research school closed in 2015, Malmö

Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts (Lund University) took over the administration.

exhibitions, performances and concerts – and this gives rise to particular requirements concerning analysis tools, archiving options, publication and transparency.

“The current classification is based on a European system which assumes that artistic research is organised differently in different countries. The Swedish situation, where we consider artistic research to be a separate field, is not well suited to this classification system, which generates unreliable statistics as a consequence. The art forms remain a sub-group of the humanities.”

The Committee also appreciates the need for a specific survey of the infrastructure within artistic research, including institutions’ funding responsibilities, funding needs and opportunities for co-financing.

“It will be a challenge to adapt the system to the circumstances of practice-based research,” predicts Torbjörn Lind.

## Strategy for the future

In 2014, the Swedish Research Council worked with active researchers to draw up a range of subject overviews, which together with a number of

structural analyses have formed the basis for the board’s recommendations on the direction of research policy over the next 5–10 years. All this material, which includes the final report *Future orientation of the Swedish research system – Goals and recommendations*, forms the basis for the data that the Swedish Research Council developed for the government’s 2016 research bill.

The subject overview for artistic research stated that the field underwent rapid development over the first ten years (2000–2010). But in order for the field to strengthen and develop over the long term, six types of strategic initiative are required. In addition to the need to survey and support the infrastructure for artistic research, and to deepen the discussion on quality development, subject classification and publication, the following recommendations have been put forward:

*Develop stable and distinguished research environments* – Research is currently driven forward via individual projects and there is a distinct need to develop both subject-specific and thematically multidisciplinary research environments and research groups. The academic institutions have a clear responsibility when it comes to these processes, but financial support is

also required. The suggestion is for a framework grant of sufficient size – and with a separate application process – to develop 3 or 4 research environments.

*Strengthen career paths for young researchers* – At this time, the field has a large number of new PhD graduates and numerous doctoral students coming through. However, there is a distinct lack of career paths for young researchers. There needs to be a focus on younger researchers through different forms of support, covering both short and long timeframes, from short development grants, mobility grants and postdoctoral positions (both nationally and internationally) for new graduates to longer-term career support for young researchers.

*Build up internationalisation* – Swedish artistic research has a leading reputation internationally. However, that international reputation varies across the different subjects and needs to be examined more carefully so that it can be further strengthened. Contact with the other Nordic countries is vital. Proposals include greater contact at authority level, an in-depth survey of networks and the need for internationalisation within HEIs and subjects, plus potentially a specific focus on increased mobility.

*Increase opportunities for collaborations with other fields of research* – Artistic research often has a theme that transcends disciplinary boundaries. Collaborations across academic subject boundaries are already occurring, but the forms of support for these need to be strengthened. There are mutual opportunities to develop partnerships between different artistic subjects, and with research in the humanities and social sciences, as well as in educational sciences, gender, natural sciences and technology, not to mention medicine and health. Themes that involve artistic research in particular should be identified and supported.

## A few concluding words

Torbjörn Lind, who is now bringing his career to a close, also picks out a few other issues that he feels are crucial for the field's scope to develop. One of these relates to the way that the Swedish Research Council's operations are organised.

“It is easy to understand from a political perspective why in 2001 the powers that be chose to merge the various research councils into one large authority. However, it is difficult for a small field such as artistic research to be noticed and to act in an large organisation, particularly when it is excluded from certain

forums. The Committee currently lacks representation both in the Swedish Research Council's executive and on the board."

As well as its diminutive size, the dual identity of artistic research also causes the field to "fall between two stools", he continues. "On the one hand it should come under research and so fall within the remit of the Ministry of Education and Research. On the other side is the artistic field, which is overseen by the Ministry of Culture. It could be an advantage to have dual identities, but as of today it is still mainly the ministerial responsibility that governs funding and status."

Torbjörn Lind's wishlist ahead of his retirement also includes a hope for greater diversity in terms of how applications are spread across different art forms. *Fine art* (visual arts) is currently the largest art form in the applications, followed by music. The *dramatic arts*, particularly *theatre*, are however increasingly being marginalised in terms of applications. In the area of *dance*, which is one of the smallest, applications are also down, and he would like to see a change here.

He has mixed emotions about leaving the agency that he has been with for 15 years. He has organised seven

annual symposiums on artistic research and has edited 14 editions of the Yearbook in total – a Yearbook that has reflected developments in artistic research, generated debate and also served as course literature for many arts courses. With this Yearbook, Torbjörn Lind bids a fond farewell to a fulfilling career.

It is the greatest of crimes  
to depress true art and science.

William Blake

# Chapter 6

## *Modernity Retired, an introduction*



**Text and photo: Staffan Schmidt**

Let us, for the sake of discussion, assume there is a practice or practices that have specific properties which merit being awarded an independent area of academic studies, and let us name these practices artistic research. A friend told me that he understood his role in the field as being similar to that of a theologian: you get to sit right in front of the altar, but you don't have to confess to the faith. To me artistic research was an uneasy hiding place, since I cannot reconcile this with the imagination, or rather the manifold meta-imaginings that somehow are inalienable from its construction.

I understand the term artistic research as an example of institutional constructionism. But the term was preceded by a host of reasons, some rights-based, some rhetorical, others structural-economic-expansionist, that made it gain currency in the academy. More importantly it reflects a widespread ontological uneasiness within the academy itself, flaring up with the critique of no-nonsense concepts: science, objectivity, truth, followed by the cumbersome critique of the art-ends dichotomy. This was an uneasiness that went far beyond my singularity-institutional qualms. If both sides were loosening their key concepts and a period of inverse symmetrical and mutual content-



*Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1943) IITRI Minerals and Metals Research Building, Chicago*

ment between “science” and “art” was coming to an end, baptizing emergent practices artistic research and inviting them into the warmth looked like an act of responsibility, and generosity.

According to the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ), particular practices may be understood as research if they are grounded in three categories: science, proven experience, and art. If they at first appear as distinct, there are fringes or fimbriated areas that are well known and travelled on the inside, but, in my opinion, hard to communicate outside a community of similarly fimbriated, and connectable practices, open as a sunflower. Partly this adverse situation is connected to the lack of institutional support, standard institutions based on mutually exclusive concepts, and hierarchies of departmentalization.

A PhD in artistic research delivers something other than a Fine Art PhD: instability. The “in” indicates an outside, distance, but also the possibility of other connections. This particle, “in”, indicated an othering to me, and a measure to start thinking, imagining and talking to colleagues about art on scientific grounds, and certainly about science on artistic grounds.

Today my daily work context is constantly shifting between fine art, arts and communication, visual culture, transition design, design theory and urban studies. The setting is more cooperative than competitive, more process than product-piece, and very much iterative. I am happy to be sideways. However, it is the context of artistic research, and I am content that the shape and form of practice may only be recognized as somewhat hors service within the institutional body. Friendly changes will be accepted. Fine. As for a personal approach, yes. And in collaborative efforts, great. This conclusion is not followed by a modern jump into an imaginary outside. I am comfortable inside the institution that has become my everyday work. Again, that is another reason why I am uneasy with artistic research: artistic and research belong to identifying practices, relations and conceptual imagination that on their own, and connected, appear as a double negation. Are

you doing... art? No. Is this – ethnography? No. History, perhaps. No. Philosophy? The game of difference continues until it is accepted as such. What is the constructive way forward, the less heroically individualist, a third, out of this oxymoron? I think artistic research is important precisely because it presents a formal, institutional and science-board-relevant obstacle: the problem of knowledge as (in)proper form. No seed to grow everywhere, no reduction in the last instance.

With the help of Donna Haraway, Sandra Harding, Karen Barad, Judith Butler, and many others, modern ideas of science such as detachment, objectivity, relevance and balance are at the same time extended and demounted from stabilizing hierarchical stratigraphies of ontological and epistemological surveillance. Being strongly objective is to fully accept the responsibility of being inscribed in situated relations, and particular contexts. To me, balance became the most critical concept. What is to be balanced? It is easy to understand as relational to the project’s material: gender balance, and balancing the different even contradicting opinions that the informants themselves express. The act of balancing my interpretation and intention with their interpretations in the floating

*Gertrud Kerbis, Chicago*

present while looking back to working life realities and impressions of the 1950s and 1960s. But there is also the presence of what must not become a checklist: a relationship between art and research, a balance which looks very different from the moment you no longer pay tribute to their separateness.

To me, the concept of balance is about imagination, and immanence. Artistic research as theoretical imagination is somehow steered towards and fostered by relations and contexts, some deliberately chosen, others made up as *mise en scene*, others just because

of yearning for something to understand, to believe in, romantically or not. Art, fundamentally unbalanced, opened up to the horizon of immanence through iteration after iteration unable to forfeit idealism, once art appropriated imagination it was inside and unable to eject from its self-reflective techniques and arrangements. No password or acquired qualification, no ivory key applies to such an institution, as it is constructed uniquely from exteriors. If you find artistic research as a practice in which not to recognize the very social separation of faculties? No, not art,

nor architecture, nor design. No, not science, at least not as a dull double. An outside not arranged in ranks and files. No optimization! The ubiquitous presence of imagination is what happens when institutionalized concepts – art, science, proven experience – fail to help out, and still being impossibly intertwined with institutions that since the 19th century have cared for these concepts.

*It differs from absenteeism in that the worker is officially on the job. La perruque may be as simple a matter as a secretary's writing a love letter on 'company time' or as complex as a cabinetmaker's 'borrowing' a lathe to make a piece of furniture for his living room. (Michel de Certeau, 1984:25)*

Balancing institutional imagination was my reason for making use of a *perruque* called artistic research.

## About the project

The moderns wished for something that was not yet fully there, that had been there but had been retracted if not erased, to become present. Yes, present, but that would not have sufficed. Present as materialized, tangible, livable.

Think of the inhabitable world as a group of adolescents in a schoolyard. Power is already there, but also love. Try to materialize desire.

Here's where we met. Differences in time and place are as unspecific as they are important. Theirs, mine too. Why? Because of modernity inserting a specifically abstract looking-forward-ness. Simultaneously revering the grandeur of classical antiquity and claiming it to become accomplished. Because modernity inserted inward and outward self-expansion as connectabilities, it would lead but not to accept followers. Impossibly stay immanent. Therefore modern hopes could not be materialized unless they were made to be constantly reshaped, alienated from everything except a highly contested impetus, renewed along a trajectory that would at the same instant invite and alienate.

But to think that demanded another ontology. Not reflection. Not a one-thing understandable as one, then fragmentation, then periphery. Not the eccentricities and timely demands. As malleable materials do, become, interpreted, and again: not one. As a modern city keeps to polymorph clattering and light, demanding attention and care, even as a shipwrecked illusion. The Grand Canyon of the Chicago Loop. Nothing is





*Edgar Silge, Jena*

explained, just new stories. Unless you look for what is not there, what is outside the image: modernity as ahead and unaware of itself, unfulfilled, becoming, prideful and shared, i.e. modernity as radical democracy and risk.

Hope. A Greek house where the stairwell points upwards, to an inbuilt floor. History. In Amsterdam centuries of houses stacked upon houses, all gradually sinking into the silt.

Houses, urban planning, designed objects. Visit a museum piece. Asking around. Trying not to be involved in the maps singling out historical importance. Whom to talk to? Groundwork before setting off came through responses, from marginal to super important, in email conversations. And from a handful of names, ending up with a generation shortlist. Yes, a generation. But, I did not corroborate the information given, I was not interested in introducing another canon from what was deemed right. My only pre-concern, already mentioned, was gender balance.



*Echart Schmidt, Bernau*

The intention was: to understand modernity from those who see it post fact. Not the aesthetically, economically or socially recognized importance of the informants. To start from, not to underline what was considered factual. Why? As you also belong to a generation, do you know it? Not so much. When (by a younger person) framed as showcasing this and this generational particularity, my immediate reaction will be disagreement.

I am colored by my academic context. An origo needs to be established. I have become grisailed by the misgivings of artistic research. However, steps are to be taken. Many lack scientific foundation, others are in want of persuasion. There needs to be a pilot, followed by comparative mapping, a who's who, followed by interviews. It has to be made public, or at least accessible through exhibitions or publications.

To do note: If you can still afford the shine of romanticism, these measures will not guarantee to get you out of the parade of similarities.

What already happened is not an image, it is contestable, unstable, not aspects of a whole but manifold and made in the present. Modernity as dependent on fossil

energy is the failure of the future. Looking retrospectively at history up until the 1970s it seem very different. Success pyramidal! And further back, to the interviewees: from dustbowl, to bomb hole, to hired pioneer. What else than fascination was possible? With the interviewees I must confess to atavism. Or hagiography. I must also appreciate, talking to those who went before, a moment of self-importance. Being there, with them. Accepted by those who once wielded power over the urban matrix that formed the memories of my childhood.

As serving a purpose modernity did not mean another system, but a world. Powerless substance is fine, as is the absence of presence. There are subtle traditions to inform you. A negative definition of a specific systemic function is only needed in the last instance, in the schoolyard. Modernity meant the possibility of one world view. And when that world developed and became impossible, it became a classic.

My accord of this was not to make one voice heard, and not to flatter. A postmodern response followed by a modern willingness to *épater les bourgeois*, even if I became the target. A strident modernity was inter-

mittently present in the interviews. To women it was fighting for real recognition, to men a matter of becoming achieved. A modern dissimilarity, convinced of a constant, change, with the impetus of a whole. A good.

I believed, from a Swedish horizon, that modernity, the construction and keeping of unrestricted social responsibility, was interrelated. Already present before the Lehman crash 9/15 2008, almost certainly an irreparable setback for trickle-down convictions, a greater national society would not suffice in a global context. I went looking for modernity as becoming liberal but capable of forming of a societal whole wider than a majority vote. Modernity as radically turning against irrational beliefs. Modernity offering an incarnated social body, yes, including the minute measures of body politics. Modern art, design, architecture preparing the stage to make it happen. The stage.

I wanted to find something more constructive than the disciplined pessimism of poststructuralism. Coincidentally, representation became in successive steps more distant. A different way soon became differing paths. Internally the structure of the material could not and would not claim a conclusive form, the choice

was either to accept the very social metaphysics of aesthetics, or to stay as inconclusive and improbable as a summative of the dialogues. Particularly outside the specific understanding in the actuality setting of a meeting, mostly in someone's home, walking for the first time through their garden, dog, plum trees. It would not exactly be misleading, but the fissures were a potentiality becoming family for an extended hour, the return of their lost adolescent. No deadweight incorporated history. But of course: a temporary friendship may be a very modern misunderstanding.

### **On leaving the project, and more**

Modernity, in its local European and ambitious form, was one-sidedly described by the motte-and-bailey highway rings and suburban slab blockhouses involuntarily protecting a city's higher ground. A description that drew from the storied difference between Marxism as Ideal and the Real Existing Marxism. Talking to those once active involved a narrative of defamation, and modernity under the shadow of its doppelgänger. The concept of modernity that influenced the project was based in if not biased towards the vision that Bauhaus somehow has come to symbolize: turning modernity's productive forces, i.e. capitalism, into





the service for the many. Capital and popular consent through the technologies of growth. History was on a path toward equality and individual freedom. Modernity was moving away from illiberal democracy – control state, trust capital, orthodox faith, tribal ethnicity or pure race. Adding Globalization we have come to believe that Capital, Nation and Democracy are not to be reconciled within the modern paradigm.

Now, we are somehow backlooped. The image that I followed through the process of leaving modern hopes aside, was that of the terrorist. The optimization of state, race, faith, social security and self-obsession, the modern terrorist that happened to be a Norwegian. Barring violence, I do not think the terrorist is very different from anyone in persuading others of their understanding of the world. As I do. With the modern terrorist died the idea of the individual able to process all information, all data, to create, envision a future, and make sense. Thanks to living its deficits we are beyond the human that the moderns believed in and understood as functional, obtainable and praiseworthy.

We need a new ontology for life, new values, and institutions to safeguard them.

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I'm convinced that art and science  
activate the same parts of the brain.

Frank Wilczek

# Chapter 7

## AN UNCERTAIN READING- POETRY AS A READING OF THE STRANGE AND A CRITICAL POSSIBILITY



By Hanna Nordenhök

## AH, THE OTHER

*Ah, the other, that is the name of the mystery –*

HÉLÈNE CIXOUS

The spark that lit this research study came in a dream about an arc between two types of writing – critique and poetry – two outer poles in my own literary practice. Throughout my work as a critic and a poet, I have been haunted by the intuitive feeling that it is the experience of writing poetry that has ultimately shaped my critical reading. Although I have also written drama, essays and prose, I have kept with the notion that I have in fact never left poetry, that it is as a poet that I continue to read and write and exist as a writer. This applies perhaps most in the context of critique, a writing genre that would seem to be diametrically opposed to poetry, imbued as it is with conventions and preconceptions, market forces and medial systems that poetry is not required to adhere to in the same way. The need to think about critique as a consequence of the existential work with language that poetry writing involves, has become the foundation to which I must return in order for the critical activity to have meaning, to set me in motion. A critical activity that can in no way be said to involve a poetic risk-taking seems to me to be pointless – if it does not, in some little corner of its being, open itself up to the same kind of vulnerability that a work of poetry often entails.

The vulnerability I am thinking of is about what could be considered some sort of basic conditions in the literary activity – really working with literature, as a poet, author but also as a critic, always involves in one sense or another entering into a relationship, opening oneself up to, reaching towards, the other. In other words: making oneself vulnerable and receptive to the unexpected. But this “other” to whom I turn in the act of writing rarely seems to coincide in a simple way with the actual other person, the one who is outside me and for whom I nevertheless always have responsibility. Rather, I understand “the other” as a much more fragmented addressee, restlessly shifting between many kinds of “you”, but also between me and you, you and it – strangers and unknowns like those that I also carry within me, outside my own reach, that I cannot always see or feel. But whose combined interest would lie in their capacity to be addresses of enquiry. It is essentially in this reaching towards the other, towards an unknown I do not yet recall as mine, that the writing, I believe, plays out. Namely, as an arduous preparation of space for the other, and thus also as an exercise in tolerating the unknown, the inconceivable, the contradictory.

The background to this research study lies, in other words, in a hypothetical and intuitive space – in insights acquired through practical experience. It is from here that the study derives its fundamental desire to investigate a link between two putatively disparate forms of writing, between two different ways of making language. The name, the overall metaphor, I want to use for such a link is: *reading* – if by “reading” one means reaching towards another *with a desire to understand*, an acquisitional process for achieving and producing new knowledge.

One could object that this notion of reading to some extent applies to all forms of art, that it is inscribed in the artistic drive as such. Nevertheless, reading particularly interests me as a metaphor in regard to poetry – not least because it comprises and thematises writing, and thus makes itself readable in a highly literal way. But also because, through its long history of being an explorative way of addressing someone or something (from ancient Greek epitaphs to courtly love poems to contemporary sampling writing practices), poetry can be said to have a distinguishing and inherent relationship to its own focus on, its apostrophising of, an “other”.

So here lies an instinctive base assumption: of poetry as a kind of outpost, a distinctive format, for reading – and letting oneself be read by – the other. Which I would suggest also has a bearing on a critical pursuit. At some point ahead of each critical assignment, I must believe that the book, the work always in some sense *reads me back* (whatever my own wishes or ideas about myself), that it bears knowledge about me that I didn’t know existed.

The word “read” in English, as in Swedish, German and Spanish – the four languages represented in the project – has the basic meaning of decoding, interpreting and understanding a text. Etymologically, however, the word has several other connotations: in all the languages there is the meaning of “collecting, “collating” and “picking” – and in English also of “showing”, “explaining”. The etymology suggests some core elements of the act of reading that I understand as essentially relational – they all indicate a movement that assumes the existence of an object. We interpret and understand, show and collate – *something*. Reading is thus understood as a relational modus for the seeking of knowledge.

Already at this point, an ethical dimension to the picture of reading can be discerned, an imperative stands out that concerns our relation to the other and to our world. For in the pursuit of understanding there is also a risk of annexing and diminishing the other. Reading then becomes the site for the realisation of a responsibility-imbuing knowledge process, a careful forecast of an understanding in movement – an understanding that does not domesticate the otherness of the other, does not tame the other, transform the unknown into something already known. Rather one that seeks knowledge through a watchful coexistence with the other.

It is thus not primarily about “factual reading” – interpreting the transference between given bodies and texts – but about poetry understood as a work in the language that allows an understanding to take place by presenting itself as movements *from one to another*. How then does poetry read? And how can poetry’s “way of reading” be understood as relevant starting points for a critical practice of reading and writing?

## READING’S WITH AND TO

In order to investigate reading interpretations in poetry, I set out a dialogical knowledge-seeking method that partly draws its impulses from a tradition of feminist writing, already in a stylistic borderland between literary and academic modes of writing. I am inspired not least by the genre-crossing French feminism of the 1970s, Hélène Cixous’ writing method and the concept of *écriture féminine*, and by Luce Irigaray’s related intellectual concept *parler femme*<sup>1</sup> – a way of thinking and relating to the traditions of thought that are founded in a subversive writing mode and through the recognition of difference, and the inscribing of corporeality and materiality in their thinking. I also turn to a broader field of feminist theory reflection which is based on the notion that all knowledge originates within ourselves – in other words every instance of knowledge production is a manifestation of a materially, corporeally and historically rooted horizon, and must therefore always be seen as partial and situated, and thus can never be neutral.<sup>2</sup> These reflections involve a view of academic writing and knowledge-seeking as being just as emotionally leaking, as influenced by the irrational and affective, as any other writing, where the style is always a result of interpre-

tive processes borne out of subjective, conscious or subconscious, choices.<sup>3</sup>

However, writing about and making oneself responsible for this fertile ground of feelings and emotions situated in a specific body, in specific spaces and times, as part of one's method of knowledge creation does not necessarily, to my mind, entail exposing an "I" in the text. Rather, my research seeks, through linguistic and compositional means, to highlight the text's observations as always being already existing interpretations. A strategy that in turn supports the idea of fiction creation as an inevitable element of both literary and academic narratives – if *fiction* is understood as a narrative process, as Donna Haraway writes, where "facts" and "credibility" are posited as inexhaustible functions in an attempt to make new knowledge emerge.<sup>4</sup> This does not, however, mean that I don't also want to situate myself as a researcher in relation to my material, particularly as regards the interviews and conversations I have had with Gervitz, Jäderlund and Utler (see description of this below).

The explicitly dialogical aspect of the research method builds chiefly on Irigaray's early thinking on difference, wherein what particularly interests me is

her conceptualisation of a "placental economy" and what bearing such a view might have on the form that the reading takes, but also on the reading method that I myself am exploring through my own examination of the three poets and their works and writing practices.<sup>5</sup> Through the relationship between mother and child *in utero*, a relationship in which the placenta constitutes a temporary organ, a transient biological coupling that governs a co-existence between bodies, Irigaray writes into being a dialogical knowledge production horizon, an actualisation of a *mutual knowing* through the placental system's inherent potential for recognition of, and negotiation between, two separate but indivisible subjects.<sup>6</sup> Alongside the placental figure, the method's dialogicity is also inspired by Irigaray's late thinking as regards using the language of love to write *to* rather than *about* someone or something.<sup>7</sup>

A "with" and a "to" thus stand out, wanting to achieve parity with the research project's overall theme of poetry as a reading of the other, and as a potential vision for a critical writing position.



## UNKNOWING, IMPENETRABILITY

The research study has taken the form of work on two book compositions, one of which is a cycle of poems and the other is a collection of reflective texts focusing on the works and writing practices of the three poets, and it is from here that the question of how poetry reads is intended to gain its specificity, its body. I call these “lyrical essays”, texts that apply a stylistically broad palette, where relatively different types of text can take shape.<sup>8</sup> They are all “experiments”, in the sense that they test writing forms that contrive themselves in the movement: “literary transformations of thought during the course of writing”.<sup>9</sup> The writing itself provides their compass, their investigatory method.<sup>10</sup> They are texts that foster passionate and exploratory essayistic writing – heretical experiments, in Adorno’s sense.<sup>11</sup> Their statements lack a longing to be proven, instead they are drawn towards the unfinished and open: they do not exhaust their subject, and make no claims to be a “mighty whole”, but seek out their results in the linguistic transfers.<sup>12</sup> Above all, they seek to be *readings*, with various creative methods for locating their respective kinds of reading in the work, and whose knowledge-creating potential lies in their

desire to push towards a “poetic” rather than conceptual “truth”.<sup>13</sup>

In this study, I make no hierarchical distinction between the theoretical and literary texts on which I draw: not in their function as potential sources of knowledge. The use, reading and function of theoretical terms and arguments instead moves, through the compositional format of the lyrical essayist, towards a theory’s “poetic implementation” in the texts, its performative impact, rather than towards conceptual contextualisation. In other words, I seek other forms for using theory *generatively*, with an inventive rather than verifying approach to the theoretical sources.<sup>14</sup> As such, the totality of the texts’ experiments seek to exist in “an ebb and flow between theory and practice” – while at the same time seeing the pendulum swing between the situated experience of being and living in a body and its particular inscription in the language.

In a similar way, I wish to actualise corresponding reading types in relation to the texts I examine – by approaching them via my own situated subjectivity and reading horizon. This methodological starting point thus cross-refers perspectives from academic

feminist writing with poetological texts written by poets and with purely literary material, i.e. with horizons acquired from within an artistic practice and with knowledge concepts and methods mastered through poetry's practical doing – doing where the knowledge produced and the associated performance often involve one and the same movement, one and the same form.<sup>15</sup>

The Danish poet Inger Christensen has described the poet's leap into writing as analogous with an attempt to "identify the landscape in order to draw the map, and to find a way through the landscape".<sup>16</sup> Christensen describes poetry as a form of understanding equated with philosophy and science, but with a particular capacity to create visionary knowledge since, unlike with "logical-practical" language, it can ignore aspects of reality, always moving across the border of the comprehensible.<sup>17</sup> An idea that is partially shared by the American poet Lyn Hejinian, but in terms of a poetic knowledge creation understood as the feminine and subversive twin of patriarchally Faustian knowledge, where the poet is at the same time the person seeking and making knowledge through a particular openness to uncertainty and the unexpected.<sup>18</sup> The poet's calling is "a craft of ignorance", as the French poet Claude Royet-Journoud has put it.<sup>19</sup>

"Un métier d'ignorance" were Royet-Journoud's original words in French. Which, for me at least, prompts a longing for the less becoming variants of uncertainty and unknowing: ignorance, foolishness, imprudence, idiocy, stupidity, essentially – *dumbness*.<sup>20</sup> So: to twist an imperative out of Royet-Journoud's characterisation of poetry's work on unknowing by extracting a little extra verve from the Frenchman's "ignorance", why not simply: *a task of dumbness*? If such a task could be seen as a dimension of poetry's writing practice, it could perhaps involve remaining in a state of productive foolishness, seeking an understanding without the "Faustian violence" of the thirst for knowledge – through a recognition of the other and the unknown. Borrowing from the poet and theorist Édouard Glissant, the dumbness (as an attitude to poetical and critical reading) is thus founded in the respect for the other's "right to opacity", understood as the opposite to a constraining transparency. This is achieved by encountering and embracing the impenetrabilities that challenge knowing and instead letting what is represented become a "source of unknowability that is also a sign of potentiality".<sup>21</sup>

The task of the foolish would thus coincide with a poetical method that is to some extent unable to comprehend its object or itself, in contact with its blind spots, its “unseeing back”<sup>22</sup> – but that at the same time can be, must be, a thought and a *critique*.<sup>23</sup> At once a task of separation and an exercise, to quote Foucault, in “the art of voluntary insubordination”.<sup>24</sup> But in the form of a critique whose critical imperative is actually to be found in a notion of “*sensitivity* as a critical faculty” and transformative power.<sup>25</sup>

## PRISMATIC AND INCOMPLETE KNOWLEDGE

Over the course of the project I have published various essays and critiques, many of which have been integrated into the research. At the beginning of the project, I published a book containing a selection of my critiques.<sup>26</sup> I see the selection work and the postscript to the publication as a preliminary stage of the research. I then set about work on the two-part book, which has a cumulative structure: many of its texts have, in one guise or another, been published in other contexts, such as journal essays or lectures. This gives the project some aspect of a constellation – it seeks to be a map of works that approach the overall motif of the study from different directions, and with different

means of interpretation. To some extent, the concept of the constellation refers back to what was described above – highlighting and problematising, through compositional cross-fertilisation of different styles, an always already “sullied” writing position, with all writing and knowledge production being an interpretation. But the form is also inspired by the qualitative research methods that promote a “crystallisation” of perspectives, of interdisciplinary and genre-crossing hybridisation of forms of representation<sup>27</sup> as a way of embracing the idea of multiple realities and truths.<sup>28</sup> And through this “an intricate fabric composed of minute threads, many colors, different textures, and many blends of material” might be able to form a prismatic and incomplete form of knowledge.<sup>29</sup>

The collection of already printed texts is, in addition, a way of bringing a temporality to the study, in a very concrete way “writing the day”.<sup>30</sup> For me, the moment’s way of being a limitation that is constantly “expanded towards the unlimited” is in many ways a view of poetry, and here it gets to act as metaphorical framework for the chronology of the research work, as its limited timeframe within the greater time.<sup>31</sup> The aim of implementing already published material is also, through the shift between contexts, to give the study an element of leakage, of openness to other

worlds. The focus is thus on a new assembly of separated parts,<sup>32</sup> which are essentially rooted in my own way of writing poetry, where citations and references to external text material have always been part of the writing method – less, in fact, as a result of a desire to “undermine the authority of the individual self, the ‘signature’ of the poet”<sup>33</sup> even though such an aspect is unavoidably written into all appropriating writing.<sup>34</sup> It is more as a consequence of a disturbingly flickering desire that the poem always makes me deal with: the desire for, or the reference to, an *un-self* – reading a question to “the self” through “the other”.

## A DOUBLE BOOK

The book of essays is divided into three chapters in which I explore the study’s questions by considering three lyrical authors: Gloria Gervitz (Mexico), Ann Jäderlund (Sweden) and Anja Utler (Germany), whose bearing as writing practitioners on the study manifests itself in my readings of their poetry, readings that are presented in the book by two stylistically and methodologically different essays in the two first sections of each chapter. Each chapter concludes with a methodologically reflective epilogue in which my three different roles in the research project – critic,

poet and researcher – are actualised. The opening essays of the three chapters offer a critical reading of aspects of the poets’ works that can be related to the study’s overarching question: “How does poetry read?”. The next essay is of a more literarily interpretive and experimental nature and is based on my discussions with each of the poets on their works and their writing practices, wherein my own role as an author and poet is activated in various ways. In the epilogue, I then reflect on the first two, with an emphasis on the conversation with the poets based on a feminist interview method, in which I try to situate myself as a researcher in relation to my material. Three sub-questions crystallise out of the lead question “How does poetry read?”, questions that are actualised through the readings that arise from the respective authorship and writing practice. The question put concerning Gervitz’s work and practice is thus “How does the poem read the self?”, the question for Jäderlund’s poetry is “How does the poem read ‘the thing?’” and for Utler it is “How does the poem read the place?”.

The first chapter opens with the essay *O MOTHER, WHERE ART THOU? MIGRATORISKA MODERSKROPPAR (O MOTHER, WHERE ART THOU? MIGRATORY AND MOTHERLY BODIES IN*

GLORIA GERVITZ),<sup>35</sup> in which I conduct a reading of Gervitz's "migratory poetry" refracted through Irigaray's notion of "retouche", in order to gain sight of the poem's way of reading anew a corporeal femininity – as demanding as it is critical. *RESAN I DET MEST ENSAMMA MÅSTE DELAS. GERVITZ-TRANSKRIPTIONER*<sup>36</sup> (*THE JOURNEY INTO THE MOST SOLITARY MUST BE SHARED. GERVITZ TRANSCRIPTIONS*) is a reading of Gervitz's poetological comments, which she made during the recorded discussion that I had with her in her home in the USA in the summer of 2013. The conversation was conducted in Spanish, which I then transcribed and translated into Swedish, alongside extensive editing and rhythmising work on the material – a "role-playing dialogical reading mode", in which Gervitz's words are interpreted through mine. In the epilogue *DET FRÄMMANDE HJÄRTAT* (*THE EXTERNAL HEART*), I reflect on my work on Gervitz's poetry and my meeting with her.

In chapter two, *VARFÖR ÄR VI INTE I PARADISET? VÄRLDEN SOM KÖTT* (*WHY ARE WE NOT IN PARADISE? THE WORLD AS FLESH – ANN JÄDERLUND*)<sup>37</sup> considers the italicised and i n t e r

s p a c e d poetic idiom that is seen in late Jäderlund, and examines it as an interpretation of what, through Maurice Merleau-Ponty, one might call a "reading of the flesh", refracted through Simone Weil's notion of ethical reading, and through feminist readings of Merleau-Ponty's philosophy. The second chapter's stylistically distorting mirror comprises *DICKINSONKÖTT. TRE BREV, ETT HAVERI*<sup>38</sup> (*DICKINSON'S FLESH. THREE LETTERS, A FAILURE*), which takes the form of three never-posted letters to Ann Jäderlund, a "dialogical monologism" that reflects on Jäderlund's translation of Emily Dickinson and the practice of the translation as a treacherous and demanding reading of another. The form is inspired by Dickinson's own letter writing, which had crucial links to her poetry. In the epilogue *DEN ANDRES KÖTT*<sup>39</sup> (*THE FLESH OF THE OTHER*) I reflect methodologically on my discussion with Jäderlund in 2014-2016, which resulted in a failed exchange of letters, despite this being the form that we had initially agreed on for our discussion. Instead it ended up in the above "monological" form – a car crash that also led to me reflecting on this failure as a potential form for new and unexpected knowledge.

The third chapter in the book of essays takes the poetry of German poet Anja Utler as its leitmotif, with the text *TOPOGRAFISKA LÄSAKTER. HISTORIEN SOM AKUSTIK (TOPOGRAPHICAL READING ACTS. STORYTELLING AS ACOUSTICS – ANJA UTLER)*<sup>40</sup> providing a feminist and partially ecocritical reading of her poem as poetic storytelling carved deep into the topography of the place – its spatialities, temporalities and sound landscape. *UTLERTOPOGRAFI. SPEL FÖR TRE RÖSTER*<sup>41</sup> (*UTLER TOPOGRAPHY. PLAY FOR THREE VOICES*) is in turn an experimental essay that approaches Utler's poetry via literary work on the transcriptions from my recorded conversations with her about the significance of place in her poetry, a conversation that took place during a walk along the River Naab in the town of her birth, Schwandorf in Bavaria, in September 2016. The epilogue *DELTA. DET ANDRA SOM ALTER-EGO*<sup>42</sup> (*RIVER DELTA. THE OTHER AS ALTER-EGO*) then reflects methodologically on the conversation and the collaboration with Utler.

The final part of the book of essays, *UTSIKTER FRÅN ETT BRINNANDE HUS (APPENDIX TILL EN DRÖM)*<sup>43</sup> (*VIEWS FROM A BURNING BUILDING (APPENDIX TO A DREAM)*) presents a longer, re-

flective essay that, based on my own writing, makes a last sweep back to critique, in an attempt to draw the contours of a dream of a critique scraped back to its smallest component: the relation – giving a name to a necessary vulnerability in the face of the other.

The second volume in the box, the book of poetry, has the compositional function of writing a poetic “outfit” for the essays – lyrical rather than “explanatory”, and definitely not illustrative, but a knowledge-producing text in its own right. Here I also play with the “costume” of the academic thesis as a text type, and split the sequence into the following titles: *ANTECKNINGAR OM EN UTSIKT (NOTES ON A VIEW – PURPOSE)*, *BARNSCENER (CHILDHOOD SCENES – PROBLEM)*, *UTKAST OM SÖMNEN (DRAFT OF SLEEP – METHOD)* and *LÄSNINGAR AV KÖTTET (READINGS OF THE FLESH – CONCLUSION)*.

I would like to think of the poems as the simultaneous beginning and end of the essays – as their terms and conditions, which is why a great deal of effort went into the design of the book, founded in an idea that the poetic expression exists in a multidimensional space where both the poem's external and internal textuality (in Genette's sense) come into play and into existence in relation to each other.<sup>44</sup> A guiding principle for the design, consistent with the vital role

of the poetry in the study, is to give both the volumes in the box of books the same tangible weight, size and dignity, in order to open them up to kinds of reading that do not project a value scale for the way the different types of text explore formats for seeking out knowledge – kinds of reading that do not push the poetry beyond its horizon.

*But what then is poetry?...*

This is not a research study in the strict sense of focusing on defining concepts. Instead it seeks to allow the core concepts – “reading”, “self”, “other”, “poetry”, “critique” – to achieve their meaning through the overlapping textual spaces that they occupy in the work, through the way they appear in the linguistic interpretation, without locking them down as fixed references. One could thus posit that each individual text (lyrical essay or poem) in the divided book seeks to be an open suggestion as to what poetry and reading might be. The dialogical, the cross-referencing and the prismatic also become part of the artistic research method, which is based on the linguistic work of the poetry never being allowed to be monological. Writing poetry always involves letting the writing go, which Rosemarie Waldrop describes as “the empty space I place at the center of each poem to allow an influx”.<sup>45</sup>

In other words, one must leave a space prepared for an addressee, a reader, another person – by trying to make the language at once sufficiently precise and sufficiently open so that someone (something) else can have (take) place.



<sup>1</sup>See e.g. Ann Rosalind Jones: "Writing the Body: Toward an Understanding of 'L'écriture Feminine'", *Feminist Studies* 7/2 1981; Susan Sellers (ed.): *The Cixous Reader*, Routledge 1994; Rachel Jones: *Irigaray. Towards a Sexuate Philosophy*, Polity Press 2011; etc.

<sup>2</sup>I refer here to a wealth of feminist thinkers who define knowledge as always being already situated, including Elisabeth Grosz and her argument about the supposedly universal knowledge ideal in the history of science and the dependency of knowledge production on the knowing subject in "Bodies and Knowledge. Feminism and the Crisis of Reason" in *Time and Perversion*, Routledge 1993; Donna Haraway on the opportunity for a new objectivity based on "feminist empirism" in "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective" in *Apor, cyborger och kvinnor. Att återuppfinna naturen* (Apes, cyborgs and women. Reinventing nature), transl. Måns Winberg, Symposium 2008; Lorraine Code on knowledge and subjectivity in "Taking Subjectivity into Account" in Linda Alcoff & Elizabeth Potter (ed.): *Feminist Epistemologies*, Routledge 1993; etc.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Annelie Brännström Öhman: "Show some emotion! Om emotionella läckage i akademiska texter och rum" (On emotional leakage in academic texts and spaces), *Tidskrift för genusvetenskap* 2008:2.

<sup>4</sup>Donna Haraway: *The Companion Species Manifesto. Dogs, People and Significant Otherness*, Prickly Paradigm Press 2005, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup>See Luce Irigaray: *Könsskillnadens etik och andra texter* (An Ethics of Sexual Difference and Other Texts), transl. Christina Angelfors, Symposium 1994, Maria Fannin: "Placental relations" in *Feminist Theory* 2014 vol. 15(3) & Margaret Whitford (ed.): *The Irigaray Reader*, Wiley 1992.

<sup>6</sup>See "On the Maternal Order" in *Je, Tu, Nous. Toward a Culture of Difference*, transl. Alison Martin, Routledge 1993, and corresponding dialogue in Swedish between Irigaray and biologist Hélène Rouch in *Könsskillnadens etik och andra texter* (An Ethics of Sexual Difference and Other Texts), transl. Christina Angelfors, Symposium 1994.

<sup>7</sup>See Luce Irigaray: *The Way of Love*, Continuum 2002.

<sup>8</sup>I have drawn the term "lyrical essay" from an American context, where it began to be used in the late 1990s as a genre title for a kind of essayistic writing that moved away from the more traditional free essay ("creative non-fiction") and more deeply into a poetic approach through such features as narrative breaks, associative imagery and montage. Examples of lyrical essayists include Anne Carson, Susan Howe and Charles Bernstein. See also John D'Agata & Deborah Tall: "The Lyric Essay", *Seneca Review* 2012; David Lazar: "Queering the Essay" in Margot Singer & Nicole Walker (ed.), *Bending Genre: Essays on Creative Nonfiction*. New York 2013.

<sup>9</sup>Gunnar D Hansson: *Var slutar texten?* (Where does the text end?) Litterär gestaltnings skriftserie no 10, Autor förlag 2011, p. 17.

<sup>10</sup>See Laurel Richardson & Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre: "Writing: A Method of Inquiry" in Yvonna S. Lincoln & Norman K. Denzin (ed.): *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications 2005.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Theodor Adorno: "Essän som form" (The Essay as Form), transl. Anders Johansson, *Glänta* 2001/1.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>The term "poetic truth" comes up in Nina Lykke's *Könsforskning – en guide till feministisk teori, metodologi och skrift* (Art research – a guide to feminist theory, methodology and writing, Liber 2009), where she uses philosopher and theologian Hywel D. Lewis' definition (in "On Poetic Truth", *Philosophy* 1946/79) to set out feminist knowledge methods. Lykke (via Lewis) is also referred to by Hanna Hallgren in "En queer introduktion till texten *Gränslösa hundar*. Om queerteori, performativitet och subversiva repetitioner i skönlitterära, kritiska och vetenskapliga texter" (A queer introduction to the text *Gränslösa hundar*. On queer theory, performativity and subversive repetition in literary, critical and academic texts), *Kvinder, kön & forskning* 2013/1), in which she writes: "I believe poetic, process-driven and reflexive academic writing offers particularly good conditions to study, formulate and poetically theorise the points at which 'intellect' and 'emotion' meet to create knowledge. A border language is opened up, a hand for thought, a theory of tears, a jubilation that rises from petals and chambers, a heart's memory. / Language that borders on chaos / A language for leaves."

<sup>14</sup>Here I draw support from Gregory L. Ulmer's concept of "mystory", a term that combines the idea of mystery, history and "my story", and which addresses a research method coloured by the way the hypertext produces knowledge by composing new and unexpected connections between different textual material (Ulmer cites the surrealists' implementation of Freud's theories in their artistic practices as one example). For Ulmer, "mystory" exposes the constructed nature of knowledge by turning it into an exploratory composition method that values discovery, invention and partiality. It is also a method that, rather than largely immersing itself in analysis and scientific precision, creates new and rhetorical-poetical methods for knowledge creation. A central question for Ulmer is how the theoretical source is composed and carried out, rather than what it says. Read more in Gregory L. Ulmer: *Heuretics: The Logic of Invention*, Johns Hopkins University Press 1994.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. Megan Simpson: *Poetic Epistemologies: Gender and Knowing in Women's Language-Oriented Writing*, SUNY press 2000.



<sup>16</sup>Inger Christensen: *Hemlighetstillståndet* (The State of the Secret), transl. Anna Hulthenheim, Ariel förlag 2011, p. 41.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Lyn Hejninian: "La Faustienne" in *The Language of Inquiry*, University of California Press 2000, p. 234.

<sup>19</sup>Claude Royet-Journoud, "Poesin i sin helhet är preposition" (The Whole of Poetry is Preposition) in *Teori om prepositioner*, transl. Jonas (J) Magnusson & Helena Eriksson, OEI editor 2003, loose sheet. Read more about Royet-Journoud's practice of ignorance in Jonas (J) Magnusson's afterword to Claude Royet-Journoud: *Omveltningen / Begrepet Hindring / Objektene inneholder det uendelige / De udelelige naturer* (Reversal / The Notion of Obstacle / Objects Contain the Infinite / Natures Indivisible), transl.

Gunnar Berge & Jørn H. Sværen, H Press 2009.

<sup>20</sup>Cf. Magnus William-Olsson (ed.): *Språk och oförnuft. Konstens kunskap, kunskapens konst* (Language and foolishness. The knowledge of art, the art of knowledge), Ariel förlag 2015.

<sup>21</sup>T.J. Demos: "The Right to Opacity. On the Otolith Group's Nervus Rerum" in *October magazine* 2009:129, p. 114. Read more about Glissant's notion of opacity in Édouard Glissant: *Relationens filosofi: omfångets poesi* (Poetics of Relation), transl. Christina Kullberg & Johan Sehlberg, Glänta produktion 2012.

<sup>22</sup>The phrase is inspired by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and refers to the unconscious body that exists beyond the observed subject's conscious movements: the dormant parts, the apersonal flesh we don't see or feel, but which for Merleau-Ponty is the part of my corporeality most deeply bound to the world. Read more about Merleau-Ponty's notion of flesh in Hanna Nordenhök: "Varför är vi inte i paradiset? Världen som kött hos Ann Jäderlund" (Why are we not in paradise? The world as flesh in Ann Jäderlund) in *Lyrikvännen* 2016/4 and Maurice Merleau-Ponty: *Lovtal till filosofin* (In Praise of Philosophy), transl. Anna-Petronella Fredlund, Symposion 2004.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Elisabeth Hjorth's view of literature's critical potential in her thesis *Förtvivlade läsningar. Litteratur som motstånd & läsning som etik* (Despairing Readings. Literature as Resistance and Reading as Ethics), Glänta produktion 2015.

<sup>24</sup>Michel Foucault: "Vad är kritik" (What is Critique?) in *Fronesis* 36-37, p.136.

<sup>25</sup>The phrase is borrowed from Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback's reading of Georg Hamann in "Från kritik till performerandets skeende. Några anteckningar" (From critique to the process of performance. Notes) in Magnus William-Olsson (ed.): *Performativ kritik. Konstens kunskap, kunskapens*

*konst*, (Performative critique. The knowledge of art, the art of knowledge), Ariel förlag 2013.

<sup>26</sup>Hanna Nordenhök: *Kritik 06-12* (Critique 06-12), Autor förlag 2013.

<sup>27</sup>See Laura L. Ellingson: *Engaging crystallization in qualitative research: An introduction*, Sage Publications 2009.

<sup>28</sup>John W. Creswell: *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among the five approaches* (2nd ed.), Sage Publications 2007, p. 16.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>30</sup>See Anders Olsson: *Att skriva dagen. Gunnar Björlings poetiska värld*, (Writing the day. Gunnar Björling's poetical world), Albert Bonniers förlag 1995.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Marjorie Perloff: "Uppfinnandet av collage" (The Invention of Collage) in *Differentiell poetik* (Differential Poetics), OEI editör 2012, p.132.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>For an overview of appropriation and sampling practices in contemporary poetry, see OEI 2003:3 – 2004:1.

<sup>35</sup>Published in Glänta 2014/1.

<sup>36</sup>Excerpts published in *Ord & Bild* 2013/5.

<sup>37</sup>Published in *Lyrikvännen* 2016/4 in September 2016.

<sup>38</sup>Work in progress, currently unpublished.

<sup>39</sup>Work in progress, currently unpublished.

<sup>40</sup>Work in progress, currently unpublished.

<sup>41</sup>Work in progress, currently unpublished.

<sup>42</sup>Work in progress, currently unpublished.

<sup>43</sup>Work in progress, currently unpublished.

<sup>44</sup>See Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* from 1987

(Cambridge University Press 1997), in which he presents the multiple ways that the book as an object creates meaning, with the *paratext* – i.e. the spectrum of communicating elements such as typography, paper type, illustrations, but also author's interviews, cover blurbs and so on – interacting with the text, in a swirl of meanings, all of which build up parts of the totality of the work's expression and way of producing meaning.

<sup>45</sup>Rosemarie Waldrop: *Äpplets vana att falla* (Curves to the Apple), transl. Ida Linde, Niclas Nilsson & Marie Silkeberg, Råmus förlag 2011, p. 6.

# Chapter 8

*Body and space: experimental and performative studies of dress*

## By Clemens Thornquist

### I.

The aim of this project is to look at dress from an interactive sculptural and architectural perspective in order to explore dress' fundamental relationship between body and space, and from there propose new aesthetic models of dress. To do this, the research has built on experiments and studies of dress as an interactive intermediary between body and space searching for new aesthetic possibilities.

Contrary to common linguistic and linguistic-inspired approaches to dress and fashion, where the meaning of dress and communication of dress is in focus, this research wanted to explore the rather abstract expressional relationship between body and space by looking deeper into the concrete form and material of dress. Hence, instead of exploring differing issues through existing types of clothing, this research explored the aesthetic potentials of relationships between body and space through form and material, and where dress is understood in its widest sense. The objective of the project was divided into three aspects, relating to the rather ontological, methodological and

epistemological aspects of alternative models of dress.

- To present new aesthetic models for new expressions in dress based on dress as an intermediary between body and space. Thus, the research challenges the understanding of dress beyond fashion design's garment archetypes.

- To challenge the institutions of craft (fashion design) through the appropriation of technology, in the same way as developments in science challenge the institutions of technology through the appropriation of art.

- To propose an alternative foundation for pure art and design research as opposed to applied art and design research based on the research's epistemological approach.

### 2.

To explore and demonstrate alternative aesthetic models for new expressions of dress, experimental research was conducted to explore the foundational and principal aspects of dress. Here the relationship between form and material has been essential in relation to definitions and categories as well as the system of such categories. These issues have been explored in the following series of works with the following results:



*Photo: Linnea Bågander*

– *Bågander, L. (2014-2015) “Body of Movement: Order of Form”.*

A series of 24 full-scale experiments that investigate in particular the interactive relationship between body and space, focusing on typical compositional elements such as point (marking important parts and position(s) of a shape, and points in relations to other points), line (directionality, typically between points, but not necessarily), surface (the 3D of line, giving rise to inside and outside and ambiguous surfaces between points and lines), texture (pattern building up the surface or even volume) etc. The experiments have moreover been applied and developed into *costume and set design* in several different performances, including:

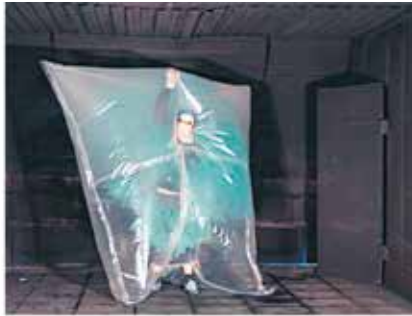
Tannfors, L. (2014/2015) *The blood of Alia* (film), Aloni, I. (2014) *Catharses* (dance), Brummer, L. (2013) *Of one and two* (dance/performance) and Aloni, I. (2013/2014) *Forbidden fruit* (dance).

– *Eklöf, A. (2013-2014) “Interior landscapes: constructing the architectonic body”* exhibited at Wear It 2015, Berlin, Germany.

In a series of 12 full-scale experiments, this project explored the structural relationship between archi-

tecture and clothing, focusing on interiority. The result presents suggestive definitions that very loosely prepare for determination of something that could be related to dress, to architectural structure, through the concept of interiority. As such the work prepares for cognitive definition of something related to dress but just about defined through the form and material itself, not in an articulated concept.





*Photo: Andreas Eklöf*

– *Dumitrescu, D., Landin, H., Kooroshnia, M., Dritsa, D., Heester, B., Slagter, E., Teeuw, B., Boloria, N., Chang, J.R., Laszlo, V., and Boquero, P. (2015) “Textrinium”. V2 Institute for Unstable Media, 2015, Rotterdam/ IMF 2015 Madrid: METATOPIA, Media Lab Prado, Madrid, /Synthetic 2015, Le Mans, France.*

This work is a Smart Textile-based installation, which interacts with its surroundings via tactile response to the proximity and movement patterns of people. Digital form-finding processes specific to architectural design have been merged with research in textiles, interactive surface design, colour changing and sensing knitted structures. The installation questions what a wearable space can be. The installation has colour changing abilities based on the levels of carbon dioxide in the environment and reacts via transformative light and sound transmission patterns. The structure embodies integrated sensing and actuation abilities as part and parcel of the same knitted fabric and is supported by a polymer exoskeleton. Based on a mathematical minimal surface condition – Costa – the current design is topologically a thrice-punctured torus, which is deformed until the planer end becomes catenoidal. Textrinium was developed at an MSc2

studio at Hyperbody, Faculty of Architecture and Built Environment, Delft University, the Netherlands and a project workshop at the Swedish School of Textiles (<http://stdl.hb.se/?p=3588>).

– *Larsen, U. M., Bågander, L. and Eklöf, A. (2015) “Wearing/Dressing” Arnhem Modebiennale 2013, peer-reviewed exhibition, The Netherlands / Momenting the Momentum. 2015, peer-reviewed live performance. Florence, Italy.*

Through a series of 20 live experiments based on self-instigated performances, this work explores dressing and wearing with a focus on how garments can inform and direct movement, choreography and performance, and in turn how movement may inform and contribute to the development of dynamic garments. In relation to the act of dressing and undressing, alternative types of garment and ways of wearing and performing were found where garments act as co-choreographers in the development of performances. Moreover, by having wearing and dressing as a form of choreography, these acts function as the co-creator of garments both in our everyday lives and on stage.

## 3.

The second part of this project approaches the logic of dress, particularly by looking at the relationship between technique and expression, especially in terms of material possibilities. With the focus on material at the intersection of body and space, the aim is to challenge current scientific knowledge and technical development through expressional exploration in order to turn these into design possibilities. These issues have been explored in the following series of works with the following results:

– *Dumitrescu, D., Kooroshnia, M., Landin, H. (2014)*. “Exploring the relation between time-based textile patterns and digital environments.” Proceedings Ambience '14, 7–9 September, Tampere Technical University, Tampere, Finland.

The research presented here looks into the area of time-based patterns and their relation to digital tools and textile structural techniques to define a sketching media for pattern and shape explorations. Thus, the aim of this work is to expand on the existing methods used by designers, and to explore ways of capturing and expressing the complexity and temporality of pattern changes in textiles. Furthermore, our result sketches a method for using dynamic colours to design complex surface patterns for textiles by utilising methods that facilitate the hiding and/or revealing of

multiple colours and shapes on the printed surface of the textile; this method is discussed in connection to the different expressions that can be achieved by using knitting as a medium for print.

– *Dumitrescu, D., Nilsson, L., Persson, A., Worbin, L., (2014)*. “Smart textiles as raw materials for design.” Proceedings Shape Shifting, Auckland University of Technology, Auckland.

In this project, we explore and start to define what smart textiles as raw materials for design can be, and look at how these materials can come into and add something to another form-finding design process. The foundation for this exploration is a number of textile examples from the “Smart Textiles sample collection” and our experiences when developing and designing with them. Our article and the research programme that it presents focus on the possibilities of smart textiles as explorative materials when designing, in terms of how the transformable qualities of traditional and smart textiles can be defined and used as sketching tools when creating artefacts. Accordingly, the perspective on textiles is here shifted, from materials with finished expressions to developable sketching media; at the same time, relating the design of textiles to research into interactive material-based sketching tools.



Photo: Andreas Eklöf



– Dumitrescu, D., Kretzer, M. (ETH), Kooroshnia, M., Townsend, R. (Aalto) “3D thermochromic prints and time-based bio-plastic expressions.”

The experiments aim to explore textile-printing methods using thermochromic inks together with 3D printing to design various surfaces. Examples of 3D digital printed samples developed in this project include embedding complex layers of information and design controlled by human interaction with the

surface; thus, subtle changes and unexpected expressions can be programmable inside the 3D module. The experiments demonstrate the design potential of bio-plastics to create 3D surfaces where colour and textures are variables for the design. Another intriguing result is the temporality of the design due to body moisture and heat, where human interaction can form and re-form the surface in an organic way.

– Dumitrescu, D. (2016) “Time-based matter: sugges-

ting new variables for space design” CAADence in Architecture, Budapest, Hungary, 16–17 June 2016, <http://caadence.bme.hu>

Based on a practice-based research methodology, this paper proposes a cross-disciplinary methodological framework where the notion of temporal scalability – enabled by the character of computation as a design material – is discussed in relation to form and material in architecture relating body and space.

The framework is illustrated by two examples, *Repetition* and *Tactile Glow*, and the methods behind their design – merging time, material, and surface aesthetics – are discussed.

–*Thornquist, C. and Bigolin, R. (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)* “Everyday performances: functional and dysfunctional body/dress/space compositions”, in Bigolin, R. and Thornquist, C. (2015) “Vital materialism design methodologies for social change.” Nordes, Stockholm, Konstfack.

This work in a series of four investigations, with design students from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, School of Architecture and Design and The Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås, explores the mutual conditioning of space and dress on each other. The results show how the poetics of

materials present new potential as a variable in design methodologies for social change and more sustainable ways of living. The material abstraction reveals the importance of understanding the functional imperative of textile materials, which are inbuilt with meaning and predetermined outcomes. Demonstrated in the series of installations, the exhibition shows how materiality can override formal prototypes. It shows the trajectory of how a construction of materials also has nothing to do with known finishing of particular garments, but whose form is about remaining logical to a material and being able to produce new types and new meanings for different ways of wearing and living. Being faced with the vitality of materiality, the results present a different kind of prototyping in fashion design, exploring the potentiality of each material in relation to a particular artefact abstracted from different categories within the fashion system. These prototypes aim to express the gestures and poetics of a photographic crop; an image often produced from performative strategies used in the design process. These too relate to strategies that disrupt the design process; bringing the live body, the act, into the design process as a precursor to other types of depiction of form. In this way, vital materials are explored. These types of images are proposed as

valid functions in privileging vital materials and complement the role of this new type of prototype, which acts like a 3D image from performative studies.

#### 4.

The final part of this project has been devoted to exploring alternative aesthetic foundations for basic experimental art and design research. A particular focus has been on epistemological issues such as developing, demonstrating and judging theoretic knowledge in the form of formal, syntactic and logical principles rather than theoretic insights and meanings. These issues have been explored in the following series of works with the following results:

– *Thornquist, C., (2014)* “Basic Research in Art: Foundational Problems in Fashion Design Explored through the Art Itself”, *Fashion Practice*, vol. 6(1): 37–52.

This paper explores the ontological and logical challenges in art and design through a series of works related to dress and wear. It demonstrates possibilities and significances of experimentally developing formal and syntactic theory in art and design through for the field’s own foundational development. It demonstrates possibilities and significances of basic experimental research in art and design in order to explore and define fundamental

principles (design variables) and methods (techniques) for developing formal and syntactic theory in art and design through for the field’s own foundational development.

– *Thornquist, C., (2015)* “Material Evidence: definition by a series of artefacts in arts research”, *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 14(2):110–119.

The possibility of the artefact in arts research holding formal knowledge is still very much questioned. This paper explores the potential not of a single artefact but of a series of artefacts to define and demonstrate formal knowledge in itself. Through a comparative analysis of a number of basic art research projects in e.g. painting, music, fashion design and photography, the paper explores how formal aesthetic principles may be not only defined through a series of artefacts but also equally argued for on the basis of the material evidence that the artefacts provide. The analysis of the examples shows how a series of artefacts can define and validate principle results of basic art research rather than narrate interpretative results of applied art research. The self-informed and self-referential character of the examples shows how formal aesthetic principles and their expressive potential can be validated in terms of fit rather than a justified

belief in relation to the aim of the research. In conclusion, the result demonstrates significant implications for theoretical conceptualisation of foundational knowledge in art research, based on a form of ostensive definition without significant use of text for theoretical reasons.

– *Thornquist, C. (2016) "Plot structure over character and drama: a new aesthetics for art research", Journal of Visual Art Practice, vol 15(2): XX–X*

Relativistic aesthetics have had a major impact on the development of art research and practice-based doctoral programmes in the arts. This paper explores research capabilities of arts practice for more propositional knowledge based on more formalist aesthetic qualities in artefacts, as opposed to more relativistic and non-formalist aesthetic qualities. It does so by tracing notions of formal aesthetics from Kant's natural sublime to Aristotle's notion of *mimesis* and *catharsis* in a number of research works. The examples show how formal aesthetic qualities in the results of art practice are able to demonstrate universal knowledge such as foundational principles, through consideration of a more formal logic in the artwork itself. Together, these works suggest a more formal research

agenda based on the capabilities of artistic practices, where formal knowledge proposed is rather relative – an aim that has purposiveness but without having purpose, as in Kant's natural sublime, rather than having a wider social or historic context. Here, non-formalist aesthetic quality of art practice points rather to the applied qualities of a work: that is, to the range of possible applications of the formal aesthetic qualities.



Photo: Linnea Bågander

# Chapter 9

## *The Anatomy of the Moment*



By Jörgen Dahlvist, Kent Olofsson and Erik Rynell

“The Anatomy of the Moment” was a two-year project at the heart of which were theatre and music. The title of the project refers to its general focus on the role of the *situation* in the creation of meaning and as the starting point for crossing the boundaries between theatre, music and other means of expression on stage. The project generated performances, seminars, exhibitions, symposia, contacts between art and scientific research, and networking across different artistic forms and fields of research.

It was conducted by two members of Teatr Weimar,<sup>1</sup> artistic director, playwright, director and filmmaker Jörgen Dahlvist, and composer and musician Kent Olofsson, together with Erik Rynell, holder of a PhD in the art of theatre, specialising in dramaturgy, lecturer and researcher at Malmö Theatre Academy and an affiliated researcher at the Centre for Cognitive Semiotics in Lund. Jörgen Dahlvist and Kent Olofsson approached the performances as an investigative activity, while Erik Rynell developed the links between fundamental aspects of the project and scientific research. This should not be seen as a division into an artistic/practical part and a theoretical part. All activities were based on the artistic practice, but in different ways.

<sup>1</sup>Teatr Weimar is a performing arts collective founded in 2003 and located in Malmö, Sweden. The group brings together playwrights, directors, actors, musicians and other artists to explore the boundaries and expressions of

## The work of the actor

A key element of Teatr Weimar’s productions is the work of the actor, and this also stands at the centre of Erik Rynell’s research. Within Teatr Weimar, this has been informed primarily by actor and director Linda Ritzén. The working practices are deeply rooted in established acting techniques, but also share similarities with site-specificity as a concept in performance and similar art forms. The essential approach is that it is not the text that provides the core point of departure for the actor’s work, but the situation, i.e. the situations that are successively assumed in the text of fictitious, representative theatre and that constitute the underlying concept with regard to non-representative theatre, such as performance art and forms of that nature. According to this approach, the work of the actor is governed in the first instance by the specific way in which she is *situated*.

In its performances, Teatr Weimar often works with fluid boundaries between theatre and the actual, performative events that are being played out here and now in the theatre space. It is a long-established truism that actors perform in a story that is a fiction, but that what they do is not fictitious in and of itself.

contemporary performing arts. The works of the collective are syntheses of traditional and experimental theatre, new music theatre, concert music, radiophonic art, video art and sound installations.



In the actor, the fictitious situation is blended with what is happening in the room right here and now. Where the text does not contain a fictitious story, as is often the case in Weimar's productions, the key is to work from the situation in the moment. "... then we use our immediate reality to furnish ourselves with working material," said Linda Ritzén in a talk she gave at one of the project's symposia (Ritzén 2016).

The talk was later included in a book that was published as part of the project *The Anatomy of the Moment: Vad en skådespelare gör* (What an actor does). The book contains texts by and about Radu Penciulescu, a relatively unknown figure in Swedish theatre today, despite him having been involved in and indirectly influencing the training of very many currently active Swedish actors. Before his exile, Penciulescu was a big name in Romanian theatre, both as a director and as Professor of Stage Direction at the Institute of Theatre and Film in Bucharest. He enjoyed an illustrious career internationally, both as a director and as a teacher. After some time as a professor at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and a few years teaching at the University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre in Stockholm, he became Professor of Stage Performance at Malmö Theatre Academy, where he remained for 14 years. The book is a collected documentation of stage work, workshops

and lectures by Penciulescu in Sweden and France. The book also presents the lifelong impression that Penciulescu's way of working made on theatre managers Petra Brylander and Anna Takanen, and director Andrei Serban. This way of working was based on a solid methodological foundation aimed at giving the actors their own tools to make them independent and creative parts of the production team. The investigative attitude that Penciulescu advocated is also seen as one reason why many of the students from Malmö Theatre Academy went on to form experimental theatre groups (Rynell 2016). Linda Ritzén shares this background with many of the actors who have performed in Teatr Weimar's productions over the years.

Penciulescu always took the situation as the creative engine for the actor's work, as evidenced in the quotation from him that concludes Linda Ritzén's contribution to the book: "The immediate reality is always around us to provide us with working material" (Ibid., p. 94).

## Acting as a way of understanding the world

This emphasis on the importance of the situation also links to the concept of *situatedness* in current consciousness and cognition research, as expressed in terms such as "situated action" (Suchman 1987,1990) and

The actor Linda Ritzén in the performance *Fält* by Teatr Weimar. Photo: Jörgen Dahlqvist



“situated cognition” (Gallagher 2005, 2009, Robbins, Aydede 2009, Brighton, Todd 2009).

Cognition research exemplifies the trend in modern science of coordinating research around thinking, experiencing, knowledge and communication. It is a broad research field that brings together disciplines

such as philosophy, psychology, neurology, language research, biology, robotics and artificial intelligence. The cognition research which the project *The Anatomy of the Moment* embraced was the *enactive* theory, according to which our surroundings are something we selectively create through our capacity to interact with the world. One book that has had a major impact

on this research is Varela, Thompson & Rosch's *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (1991, 1993). The enactive theory has also brought a new approach to knowledge acquisition and thinking: instead of seeing these as largely a question of processing in the central nervous system, the focus has increasingly shifted to the body and the individual's interaction with the world. Thinking and knowledge are also referred to as being *extended* and *distributed* in the world (Varela, Thompson, Rosch 1991, 1993, Thompson 2007, Fuchs 2007, Noë 2004, Hutto, Myin 2013, Shapiro 2010, Stewart et al. 2011).

Acting is primarily about fictitious interaction, presented through a real interaction between the actors. The view of human activity as primarily physical interaction and as an interaction with situations is well documented within theatre, when it comes both to shaping characters (see, for example, Strindberg's Preface to *Miss Julie*, Strindberg 1888, 1992) and to acting, e.g. in Stanislavski's notion of "the given circumstances" and the "magic if" (Stanislavski 1938, 1953, 2008). Towards the end of his life, Stanislavski also formulated what he called "the method of physical actions". One key aspect of this is what he referred to as "analysis on the rehearsal-room floor", which means that the actors tease out the meaning of

a scene through improvisation based on the given circumstances – a way of working that is commonplace in modern theatre. This form of analysis was further developed by Stanislavski's pupil and successor Maria Knebel (Knebel 1995, 2006) and so has exerted influence over many people, including director Anatoly Vasiliev (Vasliev 2006). Another example of the application of this method in contemporary experimental theatre is director Katie Mitchell's work across the boundaries between traditional drama, performance and installation (Mitchell 2009).

Another aspect of current cognition research that has influenced the project *The Anatomy of the Moment* is Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's ideas about "conceptual blending" (Fauconnier, Turner 2002). According to them, the creation of meaning often works through vital relationships being established between different domains in a subconscious thought process. The use of metaphors is one example of this. Fauconnier and Turner also mention the actors' work on their roles as such a blending of different domains: the character forms "in the blend" between the two domains of the actor's actions and those of the fictitious character (Ibid., 266). "In the blend" was also the title given to one of the symposia organised as part of the project *The Anatomy of the Moment*. This



*Ngô Trà My, Nguyễn Thanh Thủy and Stefan Östersjö of The Six Tones perform Arrival Cities: Hanoi at the National Tuong Theatre in Hanoi, Vietnam. Photo by Jörgen Dahlqvist*

included an in-depth presentation of another significant philosopher in the field of current cognition research, Mark Johnson. In his book *The Meaning of the Body. Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (2007), Johnson describes artistic practice as a source of knowledge on a par with scientific research, an idea that has underpinned this research project.

The link between cognition research and theatre has been highlighted in current theatre studies. A pioneer in this area is Bruce McConachie, professor at the University of Pittsburgh. The link has also been raised in a series of books printed by the publishers Routledge and Palgrave Macmillan. In this context, cognition research has been presented as a new theoretical direction for academic theatre research. McConachie and Hart (2006) compare its advantages with other established theories in theatre research: behaviourism, Freudian psychoanalysis, structuralism, poststructuralism, and so on. One of these publishers has shown a recurring interest in texts produced within the framework of the project *The Anatomy of the Moment*.

There is, however, a difference: in contrast to the situation in academic theatre research, within *The Anatomy of the Moment* cognition research is not a “theory for theatre”. Instead, the results of the cognition research are seen as *references* within another field of experience, scientific research, for experiences in the practical-artistic field, primarily acting. The starting point is the practice itself, as personally described by the practitioners.



*Arrival Cities: Hanoi at the National Tuong Theatre in Hanoi, Vietnam Photo: Nguyễn Giang Sơn*





## New methods for theatre

In the opening chapter of the book *Composed theatre* (2012: 19-51) director Matthias Rebstock describes a specific aspect of musical development in the 20th century, when various composers began taking an interest in the theatre and thus came to see the means of expression in the theatre as musical material. Rebstock writes about how the composers experimented with using voice, gesture, movement, light, sound, images and design based on compositional principles, applying a musical approach to the entire stage production. At the same time, practitioners from the world of theatre have sought out alternative dramaturgical models in order to find ways of expanding theatre's scope for expression. A key problem to which the texts in the book refer is how one can create links between music and theatre without one of the different forms of artistic expression dominating at the expense of the other.

As far as the joint artistic work that underpins the research project *The Anatomy of the Moment* is concerned, the practice has been based on two fundamental artistic questions on how to get the different art forms to integrate. One question is about how to gather and structure material in which all artistic expression is included, and the other is about how to

create meaning here and now in the space.

The artistic investigation was rooted in three artistic projects: *Fält* (Fields), *Arrival Cities: Hanoi and Champs d'étoiles* (later *I skuggorna/In the shadows*). The purpose of all three works was to create methods that allow the actor's performance, text, music and video to interact in various ways to achieve something "that is not one thing or the other, but something entirely new", (Aperghis, quote from Rebstock 2012, 230).

In *Fält*, which was premiered at Inkonst in Malmö in 2015, the audience was presented with ten different narratives in a fragmented story based around the brutal existence in a war zone. *Fält* can be described as a synthesis of theatre, audio play, video and concert. On stage were Linda Ritzén (actor), Zofia William Åsenlöf (singer), Kent Olofsson (musician) and Jörgen Dahlqvist (video/sound engineer). The performance was informed by a shared situation in the space where the different artistic expressions met. A running feature of the performance was the overlaying of several different situations, with various parallel events being presented at the same time. *Fält* therefore did

not offer a "reading" of a dramatic text, but instead opened up a space of polyphonic incidents and situations within multiple artistic expressions for the audience to interpret. Following its premiere, *Fält* was performed at CPH Stage in Copenhagen and in the side program at the Swedish Biennial for Performing Arts in Malmö.

The gestures of the musicians are also included in the shared situatedness. The music is imbued with meaning by the given circumstances. *Arrival Cities: Hanoi* had its premiere in November 2014 at the Inter Arts Center in Malmö, and was a collaboration between Teatr Weimar and the Swedish/Vietnamese group The Six Tones.<sup>2</sup> *Arrival Cities: Hanoi* is a tale of migration based on the fortunes of Vietnamese costume designer Luu Ngoc Nam, interviews with street vendors in Hanoi and the personal experiences of the three musicians in The Six Tones. The performance blends documentary film, storytelling, music, video and choreography.

<sup>2</sup> The Six Tones are Nguyễn Thanh Thùy (who plays đàn tranh) and Ngô Trà My (who plays đàn b u), two Vietnamese performers, and Swedish guitarist Stefan Östersjö (who also plays many other stringed instruments).

<sup>3</sup> Music in Movement (launched in 2011) is a multi-disciplinary research project funded by the Swedish Research Council (VR) initiated by the Swedish guitarist Stefan Östersjö. The project builds on an expanded notion of musical gesture and the concept of merging the practices of choreographer and composer in the production of musical works that are conceived not



At the research festival Tacit or Loud (a joint venture between the research projects *The Anatomy of the Moment and Music in Movement*<sup>3</sup>) which was held at the Inter Arts Center<sup>4</sup> in Malmö a few weeks after the premiere, Nguyễn Thanh Thủy, musician and doctoral student at the Malmö Academy of Music, related her experiences of developing the performance, in which she not only played her instrument but also stood on stage and recounted memories of Hanoi.

Telling the stories in the work is not divorced from playing my instrument. I don't feel that I am playing Kent Olofsson's music one moment and then recounting my memories of Hanoi the next. It is the same thing. It is my lived experience of Hanoi and my migration from the city. For me there is no difference between the words and the music in the work. (Nguyễn Thanh Thủy, 2014)

*Arrival Cities: Hanoi* also made guest appearances internationally following the premiere. In 2015 the production was performed in Vietnam, and later that year it was reworked to also include a chamber

merely as sonic entities but as compound units of sound and visual gesture. Music in Movement attempts to develop artistic strategies that allow musical composition and choreography to amalgamate and give rise to novel modes of expression.

<sup>4</sup>Inter Arts Center is a platform for artistic research and experimentation, part of the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts at Lund University. It acts as a meeting place and a work space for researchers and artists who use the facilities for short or long-term projects. IAC also offers four residency programmes in cooperation with partner institutions.

ensemble. This version was premiered in Vienna. The musical work *Champs d'étoiles*, which was a collaboration between Teatr Weimar and Ensemble Lipparella, had its premiere at R1 Reaktorhallen in Stockholm in 2013. Here methods of working with video and music in a shared space were explored. The performance was reworked in spring 2016 and given the name *I skuggorna* (In the shadows), the experiences from both *Fält* and *Arrival Cities: Hanoi* were used to create a work of dramatic art based entirely on the music's situatedness, with text and video complementing the story.

In the investigative work, the hierarchies of traditional theatre have been utterly changed and replaced with another, more inclusive and collaborative way of working. The project's artistic method development and theoretical framework have also formed an important aspect of the educational renewal work underway at Malmö Theatre Academy, particularly on the Master's programme<sup>5</sup> and the courses for conceptual practitioners.

<sup>5</sup>Malmö Theatre Academy's Master's programme encourages artistic practice that explores forms of expanded storytelling for the stage. The Master's programme discusses how theatre's traditional methods can be blended with interdisciplinary expressions that involve video, sound, music, choreography and various media forms to develop the field of dramatic art and communicate with an audience. The focus lies on developing artistic methods, dramaturgical structures and new concepts for the stage. The Master's programme places an emphasis on developing personal artistry through practical work, either individually or in groups.

## Artistic practice and science

The link between the scientific field and practical art has been rendered easier by the new way of looking at knowledge, the inclusion of the body and the first-person perspective that can be found in current cognition research. If the scientific field demonstrates that meaning arises in interaction, the work of the actor is then a concrete representation of how this happens. If knowledge and understanding are seen as being rooted in world interaction, this has far-reaching consequences for the way we define knowledge as it relates to artistic practice.

In December 2016, a conference titled “Body of Knowledge” will be held at the Claire Trevor School of the Arts, University of California, Irvine. The conference brings together an interdisciplinary group of researchers from the fields of cognition research, neurology, philosophy of mind, psychology, anthropology and computer science, along with artists and designers, to explore the interface between artistic practice and paradigms of body, enactivity and situatedness, plus extended and distributed cognition. In addition to active artistic practitioners in various fields, the list of keynotes includes some of the leading names in current cognition research. In his address at



*Arrival Cities: Hanoi at the National Tuong Theatre in Hanoi, Vietnam  
Photo: Nguyễn Giang Sơn*

the conference, Erik Rynell will present the results of the research he has conducted within the framework of the project *The Anatomy of the Moment*. The talk will be based on Rynell's familiarity with various acting methods and will reference a theory of “participatory sense-making” formulated by Hanne De Jaegher and Ezequiel Di Paolo (2007), who work at the University of the Basque Country in San Sebastian and specialise in the areas of cognition research,

philosophy of the mind and adaptive systems. Rynell will describe the work of the actor as a concrete manifestation of "participatory sense-making" and assert that the similarity between the actor's work and human interaction in general lies not in mimetic portrayal but in the application of similar ways of creating meaning. This also means that he can tone down the difference between representative, fictitious actions and non-representative actions, as described, for example, in papers published by the performance collectives Gob Squad and Rimini Protokoll (Freiburg et. al. 2010, Dreysse, M., Malzacher, F. 2008). The perspective of the actor's work as interactive sense-making additionally offers an interesting alternative to seeing acting as essentially individual-centric.

The conference not only provides an environment that fully embodies the described focus on the relationship between art and cognition within the project *The Anatomy of the Moment*. It also provides hope for a more enduring environment for continued exchanges between science and artistic practice.

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# Chapter 10

**Staging baroque music  
— and shedding light on timeless gender issues**  
*An interdisciplinary study of the exploratory artistic work of the Opera Bureau*



By Cecilia K Hultberg

The Opera Bureau (OB) is a small freelance company led by Christina Larsson Malmberg, soprano, and Catalina Langborn, violinist, who are also the leading performers, both of them specialized in baroque music. In the present project they are researching artists collaborating with the project leader/author, a researcher in music education and an experienced professional musician. OB creates original scenic productions mainly based on little-known baroque music, related to which timeless gender issues are problematized; a new artistic approach to equality is elaborated for each production. Equality permeates the artistic work, implying that instrumentalists are actors playing by heart to integrate instrumental music performance into the scenic narrative. Hence, OB is a platform for professional artistic development and contribution to the societal equality debate. The research project focuses on the two leaders' considerations made during the revision of an established production and the creation of a new one. In accordance with the expertise of the research team, the problem area is delimited to the domain of music. Drawing on experiences from the present project, this chapter addresses issues of ethics and artistic freedom.

## Artistic approach of The Opera Bureau

Continuous engagement regarding little known music of high quality and questions of equality constitutes the driving force of the OB leaders, who aim to awaken interest in this area by means of scenic performances that are deeply affecting both artistically and socially. They wish to present the music in a way that makes the performance of it “an experience” (Swedish: *upplevelse*), that is, an emotionally moving unit that leaves a lasting impression as a whole, in line with the idea of the American philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey (1934).

Each OB production begins with Christina and Catalina's individual search for music in historical sources and, related to this, ideas on a thematic content. After negotiating their suggestions, they agree on a preliminary selection of music and equality issues, as well as an approach for addressing this musically-scenically. Based on this, they invite colleagues representing different arts to collaborate with them in the creation of the new production, according to the framework they set for it. To Christina and Catalina this implies artistic collaboration with further musicians, as well as artists representing other forms of arts, for instance



scenographer and script writer – and depending on the approach, also composer, dancer director or translator. In turn, this collaboration informs the leaders about ideas that challenge them to develop new approaches in future productions.

Connected to the performances, the two leaders also develop forms for interacting with different audiences in informative handouts, talks, workshops and – recently – thematic festivals. Audiences are also invited to respond more privately to a performance in their preferred way, for instance in a guestbook available in the concert hall or on social media. In combination with audience responses and reviews, evaluation by the team of artists forms a starting point for revising an established production in order to enhance its qualities, when considered necessary.

## Research approach

Specific to the present research project is its focus on artistic processes representing an ongoing professional activity characterized by an innovative approach to artistic development and societal debate. Methodologically, we have combined research in and through artistic processes with scientific, practice-based research on artistic processes in music performance from a cultural-psychological perspective that, ac-

ording to the American psychologist Jerome Bruner (1996/2002), implies a focus on relations between individuals and traditions. Due to our partly diverging individual backgrounds, the research team shares an understanding of crucial, but not all, parts of the focus area, which allows deep exploration of a topic from points remaining close to each other. This approach is referred to as a special case of participatory action research by the Danish philosopher Søren Kjørup (2011), who emphasizes that scientific researchers may reveal aspects which artists do not recognize although they are, indeed, closer to their own nonverbalized knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

During the entire research project, artistic processes and considerations were documented in logs, thematic reflective writing, notes from rehearsals, video-taped rehearsals and public performances, as well as in repeated semi-structured follow-up interviews. Analyses carried out first individually and then collaboratively by the research team helped reveal analytic reflection that was integral to the nonverbalized dimension of Christina and Catalina's artistic approaches regarding what they seize upon (individual), how they cope with this (traditions: repertoires of actions) and, on an overarching level, their ideas of OB and its productions (conceptions).

<sup>1</sup>Described as a tacit dimension by the Hungarian philosopher Michael Polanyi (1967); because of its sounded character in music referred to as nonverbalized knowledge by Hultberg (2013).

## Ethical considerations brought to the fore

According to the Swedish Research Council's expert group on ethics (2011), research ethics may be described as responsibilities towards persons who have participated in the research, while professional ethics concern responsibilities towards research and the research community, such as accuracy and scientific integrity, which also includes the quality of the research. Consequently, to ensure that all aspects at issue are accounted for, it is important to elaborate a research method that enables this.

In this project, we tried to achieve this by following two parallel trails of exploration: the multi-artistic teamwork of OB and, related to this, the leaders' actions and considerations on which it was based and further developed, the latter being the research topic. Accordingly, regarding the parts of OB processes relevant to the research, we have obtained informed consent from the artists involved in these. Rehearsals are contexts in which the participating artists may act in ways they do not (yet) intend to present to persons beyond the team involved in the performance or connected to it. Because of this, we used only a few carefully selected excerpts from rehearsals in presentations and publications for ethical reasons,



*The Courtesan and her Love. Photo: Markus Gårder*

namely when the artists performing in these have given their consent after having watched them. Even if a rehearsal video is informative regarding the research topic, taken out of its context it may present an artist in a vulnerable way; if so, this requires strict confidentiality. This did not cause problems to the present project, though, since the selected rehearsal videos for which the artists have given consent represent significant considerations and performances of high artistic quality ready for public presentation. However, this exemplifies the need to adapt ethical considerations to conditions specific to the research topic and area, beyond clearly identified codes of ethics. In research including artistic processes this is important because of the nonverbalized and often emotional dimension of these.

In this project, the need to adapt ethical accuracy to the situation in question is exemplified in audience responses, which provided interesting material for the research reports. Such responses are problematic sources if informed consent has not been obtained, which is often difficult to achieve. This was, however, facilitated on the initiative of a teacher in the subject of Swedish. She gave her upper secondary school students the task of writing a letter to OB about their im-

pression of a performance of “The Courtesan and her Love”. She also informed them that she would send the letters to the company. This conceptual OB production is based on music by the Venetian 17th century composer Barbara Strozzi and her contemporaries. Inspired by Strozzi’s life, it problematizes the situation of an unmarried mother living in open relationships and claiming to be a composer. The four performers, Christina, Catalina, lutenist Jonas Nordberg and baroque dancer Karin Modigh, present the storyline theatrically with only a few spoken lines; all of them shift in presenting a fictitious Barbara and supporting characters by means of symbols and attributes.

The letters confirmed reviews and earlier audience responses and, in addition, the descriptions also provided thorough details about deeply moving impressions conveying understanding of the gender issue, which most of the students stated; in terms of Dewey each of these students had, indeed, *an* artistic experience of the performance as an entity. This was important to the leaders’ further artistic considerations, which made it interesting to refer to the letters in reports. Therefore, we obtained informed consent for this from students and their parents. In conference presentations and publications, we use fictitious names and

refer only to passages of high relevance to the research topic in ways that ensure students' anonymity. For instance, in a forthcoming publication on ways of addressing school audiences, a narrative based on letters presents a big picture of the event as experienced by students who described how they were spellbound by the performance although they entered the concert hall with very negative expectations. This kind of ethical consideration may not be strictly required but, because of the personal-emotional dimension of deeply moving impressions left by works of art, they are called for when researchers claim to approach participants in a respectful way.

## Artistic freedom

Representing a method for exploration *and* a research topic, artistic processes are crucial to the quality of all artistic research and, hence, related to the general research ethics referred to above. These fully concern the present project because of the artistic-scientific approach, which implies that artistic freedom needs to be related to responsibilities towards participants as well as research and the research community. The delimitation of the topic area to the two leaders' considerations, in combination with exploration following

two parallel trails (see above), facilitated exploration without interfering with the artistic work of OB or intruding on the artistic freedom of the two leaders. Besides ethical considerations, this was of utmost importance because the OB leaders' artistic considerations are the driving forces of OB, crucial for maintaining the quality of the company and, in the long term, its existence.

In their earlier work Christina and Catalina noticed that administration and problem-solving of various kinds beyond the artistic area required so much effort that little time was left for their own considerations regarding music performance during periods of multi-artistic teamwork. This brought to the fore the fundamental role of their introductory search for music and their individual exploration of its potential to convey emotions and ideas that might be at issue. The artistic freedom during this exploration contributed artistic understanding that allowed them to present convincing performances in spite of delimited time for elaborating these during the phase of larger team-work.



*"Etched into my Heart". Photo: Johan Westin*

The importance of their individual, thorough exploration of the music was confirmed during the revision of “The Courtesan and her Love”. Although it had, to a large extent, given rise to strong experiences, the OB team found that it lacked a dramatic peak, which was also indicated by some reviews and audience responses. To hone the dramaturgic curve, the two leaders consulted Helena Röhr, freelance director and trained classical singer, whose considerations challenged them to further integrate music performance into the theatrical presentation. Re-exploring in detail the musical structure combined with potential underlying meaning, they developed new scenic solutions by choreographing bodily posture and motion to enhance the presentation of the content at issue. This is exemplified by video clips of two versions of the peak scene in which “Barbara” withstands societal expectation and commits herself to composing in public, which is musically represented by the performance of “Adagio” from sonata “La Cesta” for violin and figured bass by G. A. P. Mealli (Catalina, violin and Jonas Nordberg, theorbo, with whom Catalina collaborated in the revision). In the first clip, from the first public performance, the music performance has the character of being a music intermezzo inserted into the theatrical performance rather than being integral to it. The second clip shows the revised scene (Bente

Rolandsdotter, costume design and scenography), in which music performance is an integral part of the gender issue, representing metaphorically a self-confident “Barbara” at the turning point, committed to professional musicianship.

*Video clips: see project website under KMH.se – Research – Research projects – “Opera Bureau VR yearbook.mp4”*

The following video clip exemplifies artistic freedom regarding the connection of music and lyrics in the contextual frame set by the storyline of the next OB production, “Etched into my heart” (Helena Röhr, director; Bente Rolandsdotter, costume design and scenography). It portrays Antonia Bembo (17th-18th century), who escaped a deceiving husband and managed to become a successful composer in Paris. The video shows the scene in which a disillusioned Antonia recognizes the true character of her husband: The aria “M’ingannasti in Verità” by Antonia Bembo, performed by Christina, Jonas Nordberg, theorbo and Kate Hearne, cello, – with new lyrics by Christina and Helena: “Å, vad jag har varit dum!” (“Oh, how silly I have been!”; in this scene Martin Vanberg and Catalina present the content theatrically).





*"Etched into my Heart". Photo: Johan Westin*



Exploring Bembo's arias for this production, Christina started out from the music as described above – without taking lyrics into account, after which she tried out effects of different baroque practices and explored the interplay between music and original as well as translated lyrics. During the inter-artistic team-work, she re-explored translations of lyrics and preliminary adaptations to the production. Her insight into the qualities represented by the unit of music and original lyrics made her re-revise the lyrics of certain arias in collaboration with Helena to achieve new corresponding units of these lyrics and the music, based on which she could prepare more convincing performances conveying the gender issue. This artistic freedom was necessary to fully take into account qualities she had recognized in the artistic material.

Compared with the earlier OB productions, more time was assigned to Catalina and Christina's artistic considerations during the research project because of the systematic exploration and collaborative analyses. Thus, these have, indeed, influenced their artistic work but in terms of deeper understanding that has supported further development rather than restricted artistic freedom. This is important to the research community, but as important is the relevance of the results regarding professional musicianship and education for this.

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# Chapter 11

*The Committee's comments on the project reports*

## Compiled by Torbjörn Lind

*Reports from completed projects that were granted funding must be approved by the Committee for Artistic Research.*

*The focus of the Committee is more on establishing that the work put in is reasonable in relation to the application, the amount of the grant and the time taken, than on verifying the quality of the research results.*

The Yearbook does not refer to final reports in the formal sense, but reports on completed or almost completed projects that have been funded by the Swedish Research Council. The projects provide examples of what the Swedish Research Council/the Committee supports and what artistic research can look like within different art forms. If possible, we also try to place the projects in a broader context.

The report titles in chapters 6–10 are not always identical to the original project titles given below. The Swedish titles are given in brackets.

## Neglected Modernities: Design and Method (*Moderniteter på undantag: gestaltning och metod*) Project manager: Staffan Schmidt

In an extended introduction about the very idea of artistic research, Staffan Schmidt exposes his own, and the discipline's, dilemma in establishing the field. A state of uneasiness emerges as soon as artistic claims are to be aligned with other academic enterprises, and “balancing” is held by Schmidt as the main virtue operative when this field's role in relation to other domains is carved out.

The constitutional difficulties tied to ideographical and institutional constraints, protectionisms, and eagerness, are part of the everyday business that forms this, and it is hinted, any other institutional background. What is balanced in the project that he answers to, “*Moderniteter på undantag : gestaltning och metod*”, are the expectations that we as modern beings have had on modernity, and how these

expectations – and outcomes – were presented by the experienced “representatives” or witnesses that were informants to this project.

The introduction is illustrated by the superflat architecture that via Mies van der Rohe was turned into a trademark of architectural modernity, and when Schmidt accounts for how the end of the project (modernity’s as well as the funded investigation’s), a seemingly haphazardly shot photograph of some traveller’s discarded bags is the visual metaphor. A pessimism as regards the recent economic and social effects of modernism (especially in Sweden) is expressed, indirectly referred to as being the experience also of the informants: that nothing much actually happened, that certain pride of being part of it all was a fact for sure, but also only a mere temporal excuse.

Schmidt’s review of his project ends – abruptly and puzzlingly, or perhaps simply as a gesture congenial with the claims of modernity – with an oxymoron: a positivist wish for the institutionalisation of the good, or at least relevant, values.

### **Uncertain Reading: Contemporary Poetry as a Writing-cum-Reading Act – A Critical Manifesto**

*(Det ovissa läsandet. Samtida poesi som skrivande läsakt – ett kritiskt manifest)*

Project manager: Hanna Nordenhök

This project takes key academic, theoretical and ethical inspiration from feminist theory. For example, there is an emphasis on the significance of situating oneself as a researcher, and on knowledge production being bound up with corporeality and emotion. Nordenhök gives particular prominence to the French sexual difference school and theorists such as Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous. This manifests itself in the study with regard to theoretical starting points, use of terms and a core interest in (writing) style as a component of meaning creation (*écriture féminine*).

The study, which focuses on the writings of three poets (Gloria Gervitz, Ann Jäderlund and Anja Utler), elaborates advanced methods for reading. At the heart of the study is a drive to connect reading and writing with extensive experience of the craft as a writer – indeed primarily as a poet – and a critic.

In Nordenhök’s project, writing and reading involve reaching towards – and opening oneself up to – the

other. Making oneself vulnerable, and also allowing oneself to be read back by the work. This openness creates an opportunity for a knowledge process that can embrace the unknown, the inconceivable and the contradictory.

A key aspect of the project is the “epilogues” which contain methodological reflections from the perspective of the researcher, the poet and the critic. This prismatic cogitation points towards deeper insights in the field of artistic research and literature.

**Body and Space. An investigation of the relationship between body and space**

*(Kropp och rum: en undersökning av relationen kropp och rum)*

Project manager: Clemens Thornquist

Dress is often seen as a cultural expression that manifests itself in familiar archetypes. Rather than investigating dress from a traditional perspective, the project seeks to explore dress from a more sculptural and architectural perspective. Here, through the wearer, dress is seen as an interactive intermediary between body and space. An underlying purpose is to seek alternatives to a pure understanding of terms such as theory, practice, basic research and applied research.

The project work involved a series of experimental studies that sought to achieve new expressions and alternative aesthetic formats. In addition, the project focused on the relationship between technique and expression in order thereby to explore the more fundamental properties and functions of dress.

Finally, the conditions for experimental research in art and design were addressed in an article format, examining starting points for knowledge theory where research into methodology and expression is interwoven with the field’s own theorising.

The project asks questions that are fundamental to our perception of what dress is and can be. A dimension of self-reflection also forms part of the project, with a focus on the conditions for the research and the practitioner in the field.

**The Anatomy of the Moment. Method and milieu for cross-medial theatre**

*(Ögonblickets anatomi. Metod och miljö för gränsöverskridande teater)*

Project manager: Jörgen Dahlgqvist

As the article describes, the project “The Anatomy of the Moment” focuses on “the role of the situation in the creation of meaning” at the intersection between theatre, music and other means of expression on stage. In exploring this, the practical stage work is placed in dialogue with trends in cognition research, where knowledge processes are understood as situated and enactive, i.e. the knowledge plays out in intersubjective situations and actions in relation to the wider world.

Many perspectives and questions are raised by the project’s investigations, as reported in the article. For example, it would be interesting to discuss further which types of “situatedness” different theatrical techniques are able to capture and transform into opportunities for action. Can different techniques transform different aspects of the situation, and what consequences does this have for the artistic process? Are there aspects of a situation that are ignored in

the work, and why? Is there a difference between the aspects of situated and enactive processes that are articulated through, for example, the actor/director/musician’s techniques and cognitive theory and how this can lead to new questions?

The project thus opens up a field that could contribute to an understanding of theatrical processes, developing new theatrical tools, while also contributing to a greater understanding of the cognitive processes that are at play in acting.

**Staging Baroque music? And shedding light on timeless gender issues An interdisciplinary study of the exploratory artistic work of The Opera Bureau**

*(Att iscensätta barockmusik? Och belysa tidlösa genusfrågor. En tvärdisciplinär studie av Operabyråns utforskande konstnärliga arbete)*

Project manager: Cecilia Hultberg

This project explores the opportunities offered by artistic work to problematise relevant social issues. More specifically, the project investigates the way The Opera Bureau tackles gender issues through its narrative theatrical performances.



Meetings between different horizons and experiences are a key feature of this project. As if shone through a prism, the research problems are refracted and reflected so that different colours are created, spread out, but also bound together by a common focus. The team of researchers comprises two musicians, who are also artistic researchers, and one researcher in music education, who also has a background in music. The team thus combines similar and different understandings that shine a light on an area from different, but closely-related positions. In the study, previously forgotten but high-quality music from the baroque period interacts with modern and changing audiences. Artistic interaction allows an exploration of the theatrical performance's core characteristics with a view to moving the listeners and arousing their interest. However, a linguistic dimension of the artistic endeavours is also implicit in the verbal reflection: through the musicians keeping notes of their considerations and strategies during the development of the performances; through the musicians problematising gender issues in workshops with the audience; through the audience writing about their experiences of the stage performances.

The method used in the study is inspired by participatory action research. The musicians write about their considerations in log books, and both the preparations and the performances are documented on film. Analyses of the material are conducted both individually and jointly by the whole research team.

*Closing remarks*

The Yearbook for 2017 sees Torbjörn Lind end his tenure as senior research officer for artistic research at the Swedish Research Council, as he retires in February 2017. It is hard to overstate how much Torbjörn has meant for the development of artistic research within the Swedish Research Council and in Sweden generally. In an interview in this Yearbook, Torbjörn describes the development of the area and how its status has been built up over time. In these concluding remarks, the chairs of the Committee past and present over the period 2010–2016 would like to thank Torbjörn for all the commitment he has invested in nurturing and developing our field.

Over the course of Torbjörn's career, artistic research has become established in the research world and really come of age at universities, both internationally and in Sweden. As for the Swedish Research Council, he was involved in the initial tentative phase ahead of the formation of the first collegiums, the forerunners of project support, national research schools, post-doc services, etc. But of all the work he has ever done, the Yearbook has a special status. Those of us who have worked with him on the Committee for Artistic Research (AR, formerly the Committee for Artistic Research and Artistic Development Work, AR&D) know how passionate Torbjörn has been about the Yearbook as a summary document of the research that

the Swedish Research Council supports. It is also a special feeling to see on the bookshelf a whole row of Yearbooks bearing witness to the fantastic collective development work that has taken a barely existent research field and given it a rightful place at the Swedish Research Council, the seat of basic research in Sweden. The Yearbooks have collected, and summarised, much of the key debate that has surrounded and underpinned the advancement of artistic research as an academic field over the past 15 years, from the early grants to research collegiums to today's project grants and doctoral examinations in artistic research. The Yearbooks have consequently come to serve a double purpose, both in summarising the roots of the current debate and in writing history. And with his feel for material quality, it is also to Torbjörn's credit that the Yearbooks have their own painstaking graphic design and a weighty presence in the hand and on the shelf.

In addition, the Yearbook has gradually become increasingly aligned with the symposium that the AR&D/AR Committee has organised for the past seven years. Here too, Torbjörn has been particularly active and as editor of the Yearbook he has ensured that the symposiums' discussions and themes have been documented and thus preserved as evidence of the Committee's more outward-looking work.

With his unique overview of the artistic research field in Sweden, Torbjörn has played a central role in the Committee's work and at the same time the dividing line has always been crystal clear between what is, and is not, the Committee's decision. All this has created a strong foundation for the preparatory work that is the main task of the Committee, in the preparation of different consultation responses and in the work of organising the annual symposium. It has always felt comforting to be welcomed by him to the Committee's meetings.

Torbjörn is indeed the editor of this Yearbook, but these closing remarks have been put together in complete secrecy and he has had no idea about their content.

**THANK YOU TORBJÖRN!**

**Lars Hallnäs, Catharina Dyrssen, Cecilia Roos**  
Chair and former chairs of the Committee



# *Appendices*





*photo: Marie Hillerby*





# The Swedish Research Council's Seventh Symposium on Artistic Research

Report by Torbjörn Lind

*The Swedish Research Council's Committee for Artistic Research held its 7th symposium at Linnaeus University in Växjö on 29–30 November 2016. Nearly 80 delegates attended, the highest number since the annual symposium was first launched in 2010.*

**Gunlög Fur**, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Linnaeus University in Växjö gave the welcome address. **Lars Hallnäs**, Chair of the Committee for Artistic Research at the Swedish Research Council then took over as moderator of the symposium.

The issues chosen to be raised at this year's symposium, **Research Ethics and Artistic Freedom in Artistic Research**, included:

Can current rules on research ethics be applied to artistic research?

What specific issues arise within artistic research in terms of research ethics?

How have ethical issues in art-related research been handled historically?

The symposium was split into one section focusing on the chosen theme and another dedicated to research presentations.

Opening speeches and panel debate based on the theme of the symposium

**Artistic Research and Research Ethics**

**Nils-Eric Sahlin**, Professor of Medical Ethics at Lund University and chair of the Swedish Research Council's expert group for ethics (abstract submitted in advance).

The lecture will focus on issues related to artistic research and research ethics. He will also talk about art's problematic freedom. A freedom that is important for the artistic search for knowledge but which may also be in conflict with generally accepted ethical principles.

In chapter 1, *When values come into conflict – ethics and liberty in artistic research*, Nils-Eric Sahlin develops his thoughts on the theme.

### **Rites of life? Death, Art and Ethical Instincts.**

**Cecilia Sjöholm**, Professor of Aesthetics at Södertörn University (abstract submitted in advance).

Georges Bataille has argued that the birth of art is intrinsically involved with death. In evoking rituals of death, objects of death and faces of death, artists today continue to negotiate the limit that Bataille associated with the birth of art itself. My question is: in art, how do we perceive the rights of the dead? Do they have rights? And if so, can they be likened to the rights of the living? Are we to conceive of the rights in legal terms, in ethical terms, or from a perspective that has to do with cultural memory? Using examples taken from the scene of contemporary art, as well as from projects of research in the arts, I will discuss the ethical instincts that the use of death in art awakens in us.

In chapter 2, *Rites of life? Death, Art and Ethical Instincts*, Cecilia Sjöholm develops her thoughts on death, art and ethics.

### **The Ethics of Art in Artistic Research**

**Sinziana Ravini**, art critic, curator and theory lecturer (abstract submitted in advance).

How free is art? How far can one go in the name of art? And how unethical can art be within the framework of state-funded artistic research? Can artistic research be equated with good, edifying art that seeks to contribute to social development, or is it precisely here that one can nurture morally questioning and self-interested art?

In chapter 3, *The Ethics of Unethical Art*, Sinziana Ravini develops her thoughts on the theme.

Debate moderator: Jan Kaila, academic advisor in artistic research, Swedish Research Council

### **Presentations of research projects**

(documented here on the basis of abstracts submitted in advance)

### **Den komiska våldtäkten (*The comical rape*) – Katarina A Karlsson**

The comical rape is a subdivision of the English lute song, 1597–1622. We may shake our head and wonder how on earth something like this can be comical.

But sexual violence in art is by no means a thing of the past. Since the 1990s, detailed violence has been depicted on opera stages. Few are outraged today, the reviewers and audiences seem to have become inured. But if a third of all women in the opera audience have experienced sexual harassment, if a fifth have been raped and if the perpetrators are sitting next to them, this is problematic. A rape culture has become established, with rape trivialised, normalised or joked about. “The comical rape” has been revived and shows those women who have suffered it that their experiences are irrelevant, their free will non-existent and their human rights sidelined. All power corrupts, and psychologists and researchers agree that rape is about power and control, not sexuality. Artists also have power. And they too can be corrupted. So is sexual violence in art corrupt?

*Katarina A. Karlsson is a singer, radio journalist and writer. Since 2015, she has led the research project “The ‘essentially’ feminine – a mapping through artistic practice of the feminine territory offered in early modern music.” This project highlights the cultural baggage that comes with the notion of “femininity” in early modern debate, with a view to understanding something of today’s power structures. The project is funded by the Swedish Research Council.*

### **Exhibiting and/or/Vs exposing research on Heterochronic Theatre? Closure and disclosure of art practice interpretation – Vincent Roumagnac**

The focus of my research is the question of what kind of alternative theatrical practice is generated from the permutation between the skene (the nonhuman ‘back-stage’ so far relegated to a function of surrounding ‘décor’ or storage or reserve of usable matters) and the proscenium (the place and time of human-centred production of representation, or what we used to call a ‘stage’). Through this research I intend to ponder what happens to theatre when processing this permutation as a potential line of flight out of anthropocentrism on the brink of ecological collapse.

At the symposium I present the outcome of my first doctoral artistic part which will happen in Helsinki in October 2016. The part will be displayed by means of two simultaneous ‘stages’: on one hand the exhibition of a chosen recent art project and on the other hand the exposition of the same project. In Växjö I would like to share and discuss this double-staging through the symposium’s orientations and by opening questions such as: What happens to art’s interpretational freedom in the shift from exhibition to exposition? What are the aesthetic, ethical and epistemological

implications? How can one maintain “free” artistry, i.e. a non-mastering of the interpretative output of the art practice, meanwhile articulating the latter for dissemination within the field of artistic research? How can exposition operate as a disclosing deconstructive methodology rather than a closing self-exegetical mode of control?

*Vincent Roumagnac is a theatre artist and a doctoral candidate at the Performing Arts Research Centre of the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki. His research, How to stage Heterochronic Theatre / Disruption and expansion of theatrical co-presences in time(s) of the anthropocenic question(s), focuses on what kind of alternative theatrical co-presence(s) might be generated from the agential permutation between the skene and the proscenium.*

### Folgen – Michelle Teran

Folgen is a transmedia storytelling project that looks at the publication of personal archives and the tension between the public and private experience. It explores the personal experience of what it is like to follow somebody, first by monitoring the videos people put online, then following this information to actual physical addresses within the city where these videos were produced.

A subjective approach combines fragments of images and sound from the videos with my own narration,

using the traces video makers have left in the public sphere of the internet to follow people throughout the city. The geographic locations encoded in the videos become waypoints for traversing an unofficial, unintentional map of Berlin.

In a 20-minute extract of a 50-minute lecture performance, I explore the performative act of reading as a live event, which becomes a polyphonic re-enactment of different mapping systems, voices, events and locations. The performance is a deliberate mixing between reality and fiction, an interweaving narrative about desire.

*Michelle Teran claims a hybrid practice that links political and social involvement to contemporary art actions. She critically engages media, connectivity and perception in the city, utilising the language of surveillance, cartography and social networks. She incorporates strategies of translation and contemporary archiving practices within social media. Her multidisciplinary works span film, text, performance, installation, online works, participatory events and interventions in public space. She completed her doctoral studies within the Norwegian Artistic Research Fellowship Programme (practice-based PhD) in 2016. Currently she is developing a series of works that examine crisis subjectivities within the scope of recent (post-2011) political movements. Born in Canada, she resides in Berlin.*

### **Follow the Money – Collaboration and Critique in Post-Fordism – Ida Börjel and Erling Björgvinsson**

Relational and participatory forms of engagement in art and design have for the last decades become more common. How such relations can be arranged and what forms of collaborative critique it can produce is contested. In Follow the Money, part of the City Fables art and design-lead research initiative, we study capitalistic place production. Specifically, how public narratives frame how Malmö is perceived and through counter-narratives. Our focus is on those that profit from the economy and their willingness to pay taxes, as taxes are a fundamental consensus-based social contract. Through interviews with politicians, bankers, a lawyer and an activist and analysing annual reports of 2,000 companies in a taxathon, the work has resulted in an economic dictionary, a manual, hand puppet plays and animation films. Through this we critique participatory consensus processes and argue that dissensus processes and negative critique are necessary at times.

*Erling Björgvinsson is Professor of Design at the School of Design and Craft, Gothenburg University. A Central topic of his research is participatory politics in design and art / Ida Börjel is a poet who, in "The Consumer's Purchase Law: juridical lyricisms" and "The Sabotage*

*Manuals", has staged multi-layered field work in authoritarian language in the form of legal language, prejudices and bureaucratise.*

### **Letters and Roots – Helena Fernández-Cavada**

The aim of Letters and Roots is to experiment with the organisation of knowledge and to practise a creative use of languages to debate with the hegemonic discourse of recent Spanish History. The research process is an epistolary conversation with my mother about daily life under Franco's dictatorship. The commitment regarding this context is due to the fact that there exists in Spain a strong institutional block against the historical memory of the Civil War and the effects of the dictatorship. But this project has inquired as well about which kind of language and temporality can be used to speak about the dictatorship. Therefore I have experimented with a kind of "epistolary drawings" to be sent to my mother. We have built a relationship where I draw to her and my mother writes a response, where the emotional grammars of drawing and text can be interchanged.

*Helena Fernández-Cavada tries to draw every day in order to launch questions and play with them, a process that ranges from conceptual nomadism to the questioning of established relationships and contradiction as an attitude towards life.*

### Message in a Bottle: Drift and Uncertainty – Ellie Ga

Ellie Ga has received a three-year fellowship from the Swedish Research Council to develop a history of messages in bottles: their use in oceanography, folklore and literature. However, over the past year she has been using the message in a bottle in order to pursue a more metaphorical line of thought about the circumstances that contribute to an object drifting and how a person interprets what they find on the shoreline. Objects drift, and human stories drift. Ga explores how flotsam on the shore engages one's own humanity and becomes a vehicle for action.

Ga's multimedia essays are part field dispatch, part artist's notebook, part home-movie, part poem. Her narratives are inspired by the indeterminacy of exploration and the human desire to contact and chart the unknown.

*Ellie Ga's projects often develop in collaboration with scientific and historical institutions such as The Explorers Club (New York), Tara Arctic Expeditions (France/Arctic Ocean) and The Center of Maritime Archaeology, Alexandria (Egypt). Her recent solo exhibitions were presented at Le Grand Café, Saint-Nazaire (FR); M-Museum, Leuven (BE) and Bureau, New York (US). Ga's performances have been showcased at The Guggenheim Museum and The Kitchen in New York.*

### Music and Knowledge – A Performer's Perspective – Per Dahl

Using a broad understanding of the concept “knowledge”, my project (ending as a book) presents several methodologies from science and the humanities and links them to a performer's situation. The deification of “tacit” knowledge so often associated with the practitioner's knowledge, not least among musicians, can partly be deconstructed by choosing an applicable method. Making the performer the researcher opens the way for new kinds of embodied knowledge (fading out the representational theories), but it also challenges the ethics of the research defined by traditional science. I will demonstrate that in classical music the performer, placed in the middle of the communicative chain, has to be aware of the difference between the sign/symbol and its expression in order to have a reliable and valid performance. This is because the construction of meaning is fundamental in artistic expressions and therefore artistic research is especially suited to studying the communicative dimension of knowledge acquisition.

*Professor Per Dahl, PhD, (b.1952) studied in Trondheim. He has worked at the University of Stavanger since 1979 (Department of Music and Dance) and written two books: Anvendt musikkestetikk (2008) and Verkanalysen som fortolkningsarena (2011).*



### Outcomes of The Club Scene – MYCKET

In our, that is MYCKET's, artistic research project The Club Scene, we stage new situations that take references from the queer, lesbian and/or feminist club world. We explore the (night)club as space, architecture and activity, which has been, and still is, crucial for people who have not been allowed to, or felt free to, act with their own bodies in the way they want to. Through fictions and aesthetic investigations, we develop methods and tactics for repairing the holes in the narrative of history and at the same time we construct new situations. In two different ways, through text production and through extensive interaction with audiences and participants, spatial sequences and disguises, the project investigates how the built environment can act defiantly, repairing and alternating, reformulating the habitual world. At the symposium we want to consider the format of two physical compositions from The Club Scene: one spatial, physically bound staging, and one multiple, nomadic publication. In various ways, both these materialisations of the project raise questions about artistic freedom and research ethics in the encounter with other practitioners, the public and the "community".

*MYCKET is a collaborative team comprising Mariana Alves Silva, Katarina Bonnevier and Thérèse Kristiansson.*

*They work with architecture, design and art. Together, they root around in the borderland between the lives we live – full of habits, follies and fantasies – and the built and designed world that surrounds us.*

### Performing Age(ing) – Susanne Martin

In my practice as a research PhD, I argue that specific approaches to a long-term, open-ended dance practice, alongside critical images and new imaginations of age(ing) in performance, allow dance to evolve as an age-critical arts practice. In my talk I will focus on strategies I developed in and through my performance practice that enable representations of age(ing) in ways that collide with, resist, or complicate normative expectations of age(ing). By discussing the performance outcomes of my research I argue for ways in which dance artists can articulate shifting perspectives and experiences, creating ambiguous meanings and disjunctive narratives of age(ing), and thereby make explicit a critical position towards dominant stereotypical narratives of age(ing). I will also take on the challenge posed by the conventional 20 minute time frame and will try to give a visceral/visual experience of my performance strategies within the time limit of my research presentation.

*Susanne Martin is a Berlin-based dance artist. In 2016 she completed a mixed mode PhD at Middlesex*

*University London with the thesis "Dancing Age(ing): Rethinking Age(ing) in and through Improvisation Practice and Performance".*

### **Personal Trainer in Art and Aesthetics – Matti Tainio**

The talk will present the artistic part of my current research project and show its connection to the academic part. The main part of the artistic work takes the form of an intervention in the world of sport and exercise. During it, I will contact hobbyist athletes in the role of Personal Trainer in Art and Aesthetics. The intervention is intended to develop alternative meanings for contemporary physical activities by suggesting that the regular ones, based on health, productivity and progress, produce an incomplete conception of today's physical activities.

In addition to the talk, I will provide the services of a personal trainer during the symposium. The service follows regular coaching guidelines, but focuses on the improvement of aesthetic experiences in sport and exercise instead of physical fitness. During the symposium, sessions with the personal trainer will be open to the participants.

*Matti Tainio (Helsinki 1967) is a visual artist and researcher currently based in Turku. At present, he works as a post-doctoral researcher at the School of Art, Design*

*and Architecture, Aalto University, supported by the Kone Foundation. His ongoing research project focuses on the aesthetic elements and creative practices within contemporary physical activities. The project continues the theme of Tainio's doctoral dissertation, which explored the connections between art and sport in contemporary culture (Tainio 2015).*

### **Physics and Metaphysics of Art – liberating research approaches in art – Clemens Thornquist**

Theoretical departures in research frequently start with a process of defining key concepts. More often, however, this so-called process of "defining" is in fact to be a process of "limiting" relating to fashion and taste in programmes and institutions. In other words, there appears to be a lack of openness regarding what concepts may mean and how these may be used in art research, and as a consequence of this, there also appears to be a lack of openness to different modes of making, thinking and knowing. The aim of this work is therefore to demonstrate the potentiality of concepts instead of their limits. Through a process of conceptual substitution, the work seeks to demonstrate alternative paths to, and ways of, knowing that exist in concepts and combinations of concepts that form a more generous and cogent physics and metaphysics of art and design.

*Clemens Thornquist is Professor of Fashion Design at the Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås, Sweden, where he is doing research in the intersection of art, fashion and philosophy.*

### **Pop into My Head – an inside perspective on the making and shaping of melodies in popular songwriting – David Myhr**

The purpose of this research project is to study my own artistic practice as a composer of melodies in the pop genre, in order to gain valuable insight into the creative processes involved in making and shaping melodies. Through auto-ethnographic self-observation, with video recordings as the main data source, and by using a methodology of qualitative case studies, my aim is to find out what methods or strategies are used for coming up with new melodic ideas and how ideas are evaluated; for which causes some ideas are used/accepted and others discarded. The result of this study will articulate tacit knowledge and uncover the creative process used by myself and my collaborators. Together with the artistic outcome, in the form of six new pop songs, it will contribute new knowledge to the field of creative studies within songwriting as well as strengthening my own practice.

*David Myhr is a senior lecturer at Luleå University of Technology, teaching songwriting and music production at*

*the School of Music in Piteå. He currently works part-time as a doctoral student with the aim of submitting a licentiate thesis in May 2017. His main artistic output during the 1990s was the internationally acclaimed power pop band The Merrymakers, with the albums No Sleep 'til Famous (1995) and Bubblegun (1997). Today he is a solo artist and his debut album Soundshine (2012) was released by the English label Lojinx.*

### **Post Nomadic Landscapes – Emma Göransson & Roland Ljungberg**

The artistic research project Post Nomadic Landscapes, funded by the Swedish Research Council, is based at the Swedish Centre of Architecture and Design in Stockholm. It investigates historic relations to and artistic representations of land and landscapes in the area of South Lapland from postcolonial feminist perspectives.

The project can be seen as an artistic, psycho-geographical “excavation” of the historical forest Sami landscapes in former Åsele Lappmark, linked together by a ski trip. This geographical area overlaps several contemporary and historical regional boundaries, and has traditionally been seen as a borderland between the South Scandinavian culture and Sami land/the wilderness.

Through the making of site-specific artistic actions, installations and objects in relation to the contemporary landscape, the tension between several fundamentally different “landscape attitudes” is explored. Present landscapes of capitalism (forestry, hydro power plants, tourism...) and of large scale reindeer herding collide and fuse with the past.

*Emma Göransson, artist MFA, PhD, mainly works with human relations to natural and cultural landscapes over time from critical perspectives. / Roland Ljungberg, artist MFA, PhD, works with painting, printing, film, photography and artist's books.*

### **The Amateur, The Lover – Sepideh Karami**

Sepideh Karami was unable to attend the symposium, but the abstract that she submitted in advance is presented below.

“Love is always the possibility of being present at the birth of the world.” (Alain Badiou, In Praise Of Love.) While a professional remains loyal to discipline and in turn receives instructions for speaking the right language, citing the right authorities, holding down the right territory, an amateur is moved – as is apparent in its etymology – not by the rules of a profession but by love. Starting from amateurism, in this research, I investigate practices of interruption; what it means to be a dissident while acting within the institutions,

to not only engage with them but to interrupt them by critically inhabiting them. Taking architectural projects as dominant and stabilised institutions, the question in this research oscillates between interrupting architecture, to interrupt architecture itself. This journey is thus a construction, similar to the project of love, transgressing the limits, constructing a practice not-yet-defined and never-to-be-defined, by employing different experiments of making and performing.

*Sepideh Karami is an architect and researcher whose work investigates new modes of practice, which she calls interruption. Her artistic research and practice moves between different fields and disciplines and stems from street politics, dissidence and the micropolitics of everyday life. Having been committed to practice, research and education in Iran and Sweden, she is now a PhD candidate at KTH School of Architecture in Stockholm.*

### **The Ethico-aesthetics of Vocal Co-attunement – Heidi Fast**

The theme of the symposium, “Research Ethics and Artistic Freedom” is fundamental for my artistic research due to it being situated at Helsinki University Central Hospital of Psychiatry and involving their inpatients. I use an artistic method, based on the attuning tendency of voice, to study the significance of the human voice as part of experience. The

purpose of my inquiry is to explore the possibility of shared non-verbal voice to induce relational tendency (sensitivity) and aesthetical-ethical vulnerability (sensibility) through the Hospital Symphonies series. The project actualises the context sensitively with the psychiatrically disabled people. It was approved by the HUCH Medical Ethics Committee. The first artistic part of my research, Vocal Nest (2015), was a participatory call to co-invent new conditions for sensibility in the midst of hospital life. 25 mentally disabled people from the hospital's closed wards sing with me in the artwork. The work is not part of psychiatric care, but oriented by aesthetical-ethical values.

*Heidi Fast is a singer, contemporary artist and Doctor of Arts candidate at Aalto University, Helsinki. Her work revolves around human voice and its relational capacities in the conditions of contemporary society, between art and science.*

### **The Ethics of (dis)Allowing Emotional Experience in Artistic Research – Lisa Erdman**

This paper explores the ethics of the emotional experiences in artistic research. It discusses situations in which institutional ethics protocols and legal dialogue aim to delimit the emotional range in the project. The authors consider whether it is unethical not to allow a range of emotional experience in (artistic) research.

The paper illuminates two artistic research projects that employ medical themes, including the depiction of female anatomy by medical students and fictitious pharmaceutical advertising in public space. The authors problematise the approach of working as artists within the “science fiction” genre, whereby scientific authority is temporarily claimed through artistic practice. The discussion draws from Mikhail Bakhtin's notions of carnival, dialogism and polyphony. Through an interplay of these concepts, the authors explore the ethical implications of generating embarrassment and false hope in the collaboration or audience/participant experience.

*Lisa Erdman is an artist and doctoral candidate working with socially engaged art at Aalto University, Finland*

### **The Images of Life and Death – Petri Kaverma**

This project explores the cultural and visual aspects of dying. It pursues new visual ideas and produces new material artefacts of death. Death is a theme with particular resonance in Finnish society. Presently, there are no updated images of death in our culture. The project will develop a new kind of coffin concept. During the owner's lifetime the coffin will function as a piece of art, and as the owner passes away, it will become the final resting place. The project creates a set of conceptual and visual tools that can give us a new

sensitivity about our life, a framework by which to ask ourselves how we feel today, how our life looks at the moment, whether it feels right and meaningful to us. In this sense, the project is extended from the artistic or visual realm to that of language.

*Petri Kaverma currently works as a postdoctoral researcher at the Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki. He also works actively as teacher, mentor, lecturer and foremost as a visual artist.*

### **The question of neoclassicism and presence of J.S. Bach in Igor Stravinsky's Concerto for Piano and Winds – Eveliina Sumelius-Lindblom**

Igor Stravinsky is considered to be one of the central figures of 1920s French Modernism in Paris. The Concerto for Piano and Winds from 1924 has a leading position among the neoclassical compositions from that era. After the première of his concerto, Stravinsky announced: "I go back to Bach, not Bach as we know him today, but Bach as he really is". Though Stravinsky has been criticised as too self-assured and self-promoting, the purpose of this presentation is to demonstrate the still obvious similarities between the musical gestures of Stravinsky and Bach. The practical questions are approached through comparison between the crucial theories given to neoclassicism and Stravinsky's own

intentions as a composer, and by discussing their affects on artistic solutions as a pianist.

*Pianist Eveliina Sumelius-Lindblom has made a career as a modern and inquisitive performing musician. She is a doctoral student on the Arts study programme at the Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, with a focus on French Modernism in the 1920s.*

### **To Unsettle Historical Language – Imri Sandström**

The presentation is part of Howe Across Reading – Performing the Past, an artistic research project in the field of literary composition. Through poet and literary theorist Susan Howe's texts, aspects of Västertotten and New England's histories and languages are read, listened to and explored. The project looks at, and listens to, how sounds, times and spaces are generated in ongoing translation and inter-historical reading and writing across geographies, religions and literatures. The research has been made available in three different formats, on the website The Pages, in performance and in print. Work within and between the different formats explores opportunities to write, present and distribute history.

The project examines power and performativity, as regards language and narratives, places such as the



page and the archive, plus media and methods. The presentation, which exists in interaction with The Pages, specifically addresses ethical and aesthetic aspects of working in colonial history and in contemporary linguistic landscapes. It considers what “unsettling” can mean in relation to pioneer colonialism, decolonisation and literary practices.

*Imri Sandström is an artist, born and brought up in Umeå, who now lives in Malmö. She is currently a doctoral student in literary composition at Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg.*

### **Words and Thinking – Khashayar Naderehvandi**

Artistic research within the field of literature can be seen as the merging of a literary and a non-literary language-practice. Thereby (at least) two different modes of operations for words, as material, are put in play. In a non-literary language-practice, language can be used to form and present arguments and thoughts. The relationships between words and thoughts are, then, in some regard, contingent upon each other. That is, the same argument can reasonably be formulated with other words, or in another language, without the argument itself being essentially changed. This creates conditions for reproducibility and transparency. In a literary language-practice, on the other

hand, the same material – words – is mobilised in a manner that transforms the meaning of the text with every translation or re-formulation of that very text. In this presentation a few reflections will be given on the consequences of this double property of words, within research.

*Khashayar Naderehvandi is a poet and doctoral candidate within artistic practices in literature at Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg.*

### **Workshop practice with migrant workers, Finnish expats and Spanish workers in Andalusia – Tero Nauha**

In a collaborative project with the Polish artist Karolina Kucia in the region of Andalusia, our aim is to investigate the possibilities of schizoanalysis in the context, which is both economically, socially and artistically demanding. This project of ours is part of a larger project, “Strawberry Desert”, which we have started with the German documentary filmmaker Dirk Hoyer. The context of the workshops, among the seasonal migrant workers, various groups of Spanish and the Finnish expats in the region of Costa del Sol, reflects the contemporary situation of late capitalism and neoliberal structures. Social, environmental, mental and economic strata are connected with

each other, on individual and social levels. Through schizoanalysis as the method of research, the aim is to regard how a subjectivity made through the intricate conjunctions or disjunctions, may develop a transformation in the lived territory of each person and group. The workshops develop a base for the further development of a performance and exhibition later in 2017 with these groups.

*Tero Nauha is an artist and a postdoctoral researcher. He defended his thesis at the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts in Helsinki, in January 2016. His research takes a critical approach to schizoanalysis as applied to artistic practice in the context of immanent capitalism. In 2015 he published his first fiction book Heresy & Provocation for a Swedish publishing house, Förlaget. His artistic practice has been presented at the Frankfurter Kunstverein, Theatrediscounter in Berlin, Manifesta 10, CSW Kronika in Bytom, Performance Matters in London, and at the New Performance festival in Turku.*

#### **CONTEXTUAL CHOREOGRAPHY: CHOREOGRAPHY AS A READING PRACTICE TOWARDS CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENT ECOLOGY – Simo Kellokumpu**

This artistic research project focuses on the relations, interconnectedness and reciprocity of choreography, movement, human body and context. One of the star-

ting points is the question: how does a chosen cultural context operate as a choreographic apparatus? The primary research method is choreographic practice. I will present the ongoing research project, focusing on its part 'Choreography as a reading practice'.

'Choreography as a reading practice' relates to the history of choreography in which choreographic practice is understood as a writing practice. In the research I approach choreography as a reading practice based on the artistic, experiential and political shift that has happened in my choreographic practice when it comes to thinking about the relations between movement, materiality, corporeality and embodiment. As a choreographer I do not recognize myself working as a writer but as a reader. In the research this means developing an embodied decoding process for the surrounding movements in order to study the question: What are the choreographies that the human body is part of? This inquiry extends from a cellular to a planetary level.

In order to respond to the contextual parameters of the symposium in Väjö, I present my research through the question of 'artistic freedom in artistic research'.

*Simo Kellokumpu is a choreographer and a doctoral candidate at the Performing Arts Research Centre of the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland. His artistic research project 'Contextual Choreography: Choreography as a reading practice towards contemporary movement ecology' investigates how chosen cultural contexts operate as choreographic apparatuses.*

## Concluding panel debate on the theme for the symposium

**Ellen Johanne Røed**, Professor in the profile area of Art, Technology, Materiality at Stockholm University of the Arts.

**Hans Knut Sveen**, Associate Professor of Harpsichord and Early Music at the Grieg Academy, University of Bergen, Norway

**Sinziana Ravini**, Art critic, curator, lecturer located in Paris

**Mick Wilson**, Head of Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg.

Panel moderator: **Ole Lützow-Holm**, Guest Professor at Stockholm University of the Arts and Professor of Composition at University of Gothenburg

## Concluding remarks on the symposium

The theme of the symposium throws up interesting but also complex questions. Artistic freedom is fundamental to freedom of expression and democracy.

At the same time research funded by state grants is subject to ethical rules. The examples of artistic deviations from an ethical norm that Professor of Ethics Nils-Eric Sahlin addressed at the symposium and expanded on in chapter 1 are not primarily about research, but about individual works of art.

Not surprisingly, a range of views were expressed at the symposium about where the ethical boundary lies with regard to both artistic practice and artistic research. As can be seen above, ethical issues were dealt with not only by the keynote speakers and debate panel but also by many of those presenting their projects.

We hope the symposium has helped to keep the discussion about research ethics and artistic freedom in artistic research active and alive.

# Writers and other contributors

(In order of chapters)

1. **Nils-Eric Sahlin** is Professor of Medical Ethics at the Faculty of Medicine, Lund University. He was a keynote speaker at the Swedish Research Council's Seventh Symposium on Artistic Research in Växjö in 2016.

Linking back to his lecture, he writes here about ethics and freedom in artistic research.

2. **Cecilia Sjöholm** is Professor of Ethics at Södertörn University. She was a keynote speaker at the Swedish Research Council's Seventh Symposium on Artistic Research in Växjö in 2016. Based on her lecture, she writes here about the theme of the symposium. She previously contributed to the Yearbook in 2008.

3. **Sinziana Ravini** is an art critic and curator who lives in Paris. She was a keynote speaker at the Swedish Research Council's symposium in Växjö in 2016. Referring to her lecture, she writes here about the theme of the book. She previously contributed to the anniversary edition of the Yearbook in 2013.

4. **Johan Öberg**, research officer at the Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts at the University of Gothenburg, and **Annika Åkerblom**, research supervisor at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, write here about a continuation of a study, begun in last year's Yearbook, on postdoctoral career paths for artistic

researchers. This year's survey is a qualitative study of the scope of postdoctoral research at Swedish higher education institutions.

5. **Helena Bornholm**, communication strategist at the Swedish Research Council and former journalist, has interviewed **Torbjörn Lind**, senior research officer and editor of the Yearbook (see below) about the Swedish Research Council and artistic research. Helena Bornholm has previously contributed articles to the Yearbook (2007, 2009 and 2011) on artistic projects funded by the Swedish Research Council.

6. **Staffan Schmidt** has a PhD in Artistic Research and is a university lecturer in design at the School of Arts and Communication, K3, Malmö University. In this year's book he writes about his project *Neglected Modernities: Design and Method*, which received funding from the Swedish Research Council for the period 2011–2013.

7. **Hanna Nordenhök** is a poet, playwright, literary critic and doctoral student at Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg. She writes here about her project *Uncertain Reading: Contemporary Poetry as a Writing-cum-Reading act – A Critical Manifesto*, which received funding from the Swedish Research Council for the period 2013–2015.

8. **Clemens Thornquist** holds a PhD and is Professor of Fashion Design at the Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås. He writes here about his project *Body and Space: An Investigation of the Relationship between Body and Space*, which received funding from the Swedish Research Council for the period 2013–2015.

9. **Jörgen Dahlqvist** is a playwright and Artistic Director of Teatr Weimar in Malmö, as well as being a lecturer at Malmö Theatre Academy (Lund University). He writes here, along with two collaborators, **Kent Olofsson**, composer, and **Erik Rynell**, theatre researcher, about the project *The Anatomy of the Moment: Method and milieu for cross-medial theatre*, which received funding from the Swedish Research Council for the period 2013–2015.

10. **Cecilia Hultberg** is Professor of Music Education at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. She presents her project *Staging Baroque music? And shedding light on timeless gender issues*, which received funding from the Swedish Research Council for the period 2013–2015. She has previously contributed articles to the Yearbook on projects awarded funding by the Swedish Research Council (2005 and 2012).

## Other contributors

**Torbjörn Lind** is an art historian and was senior research officer at the Swedish Research Council from its foundation in 2001 until his retirement in early 2017. He was also editor of the Yearbook from its inception in 2004 plus secretary and coordinator of the Committee for Artistic Research within the Swedish Research Council.

**Nimbus Communication** in Stockholm is responsible for the book's graphic design. Translation into English is the work of a translator supplied by **Semantix** in Stockholm.

**The Committee for Artistic Research** within the Swedish Research Council decides on grants and initiates and drives strategic debates in its field, as well as serving as the Yearbook's editorial committee. The members of the Committee for 2016–2018 are listed on page 158.

**Jan Kaila** is an artistic researcher at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki and part-time academic advisor in artistic research at the Swedish Research Council.

# The Swedish Research Council's funding for artistic research: project grants, etc.

The Swedish Research Council's funding for research in the artistic field began in 2001 with what were called collegiate/network grants aimed at creating a network of collaborating artists and researchers. The majority of the funding for the seven collegiate networks ceased in 2005. Since 2003, the council has instead focused on issuing project grants for artistic research. 2010 saw the formation of the Committee for Artistic Research within the Swedish Research Council, and it is this body that has been responsible for allocating grants in its field ever since. In principle, the funding is applied to all forms of art and various multi- and cross-disciplinary constellations.

The projects starting in 2017 are listed below, with the original Swedish title in brackets after the English title/translation where appropriate. Projects commenced

before 2016 only have the English title – to search by the original Swedish title, see the Yearbook for 2015.

## Projects starting in 2017

(in a alphabetical order by Project managers name)

**Performing with Plants**, until 2018  
(Att uppträda/samarbeta med växter)  
Project manager: Annette Arlander,  
Stockholm University of the Arts

**Systematic Improvisation – computer-mediated interaction models for decentralized music-making**, until 2019 (Systematisk improvisation....)  
Project manager: Palle Dahlstedt,  
Göteborgs universitet



**Loving Others, Othering Love: A Toolbox for Postcolonial and Feminist Artistic Practices** until 2019 (Kärlek och Andrefiering....)  
Project manager: Maria Gerdin Lee (Mara Lee),  
Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm

**Work a Work**, until 2019 (Arbeta ett arbete – tvärdisciplinärt om begreppet arbete)  
Project manager: Karin Hansson, Royal  
Institute of Art, Stockholm

**Refuse to kill – narratives about the Unarmed Men**, until 2019 (Vägra döda – historier om de vapenfria männen)  
Björn Larsson, Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm

**Tele Scope (about architecture photography)**, until 2019 (Tele Scope; om arkitekturfotografi)  
Project manager: Emma Nilsson, LTH,  
Lund University

**Give me my perspective – Traces of the race biologists into the Sámi peoples home**, until 2019 (Att ge mitt perspektiv – Rasbiologernas språk i det samiska folkhemmet)  
Project manager: Katarina Pirak Sikku,  
Uppsala University

## Projects supported to date

(in alphabetical order by Project managers name)

**Haptica** (the role of the haptic in food design), until 2018 (Haptica (haptikens roll i måltidens gestaltning) Project manager: Professor Cheryl Akner Koler, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design (Konstfack), Stockholm

**Interdisciplinary Studies in Complexity and Transformation ‘Art and Physics in Collaboration’.** (until year-end 2005)

Project manager: Professor Cheryl Akner Koler, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm

**Nanodesign through Haptic, Aesthetic Practical Exercises** (until year-end 2011)

Project manager: Professor Cheryl Akner Koler, Örebro University

**Situ-action: Rhythm, Atmosphere and Identity** (planning grant, 2011)

Project manager: Dr Ricardo Atienza, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design (Konstfack)/ Swedish Museum of Architecture, Stockholm

**In-situ Action: Resonance, Improvisation and Variations in Public Places** (until year-end 2014)

Project manager: Dr Ricardo Atienza, Swedish Museum of Architecture, Stockholm

**Art Through the City – an Artistic R&D Project.** On images of and in towns and cities (until year-end 2008)

Project manager: Professor Karin Becker, Linköping University

**Stretched – Expanding Notions of Artistic Practice through Artist-led Cultures** (until 2017)

Project manager: Artist Jason Bowman, Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg

**Writing about Handicraft: Intimate Knowledge of Textile Handicraft Converted into an Academic Format** (planning grant, 2006)

Professor Lise Bender Jørgensen, Swedish School of Textiles, University College of Borås

**Neo Circus as a Boundary Crosser**

(planning grant, 2007).

Project manager: Professor Tilde Björfors, University College of Dance, Stockholm

**Boundary-crossing Aspects of Neo Circus**

(until year-end 2010)

Project manager: Professor Tilde Björfors, University College of Dance, Stockholm

**Narrative Terrains: Spatially and Temporally Distributed Narratives in the Urban Environment** (project planning grant, 2012)

Project manager: Erling Björgvinsson, PhD, Malmö University

**City Fables – collaborative storytelling in the cityscape** (Malmö) (until 2016)

Project manager: Dr Erling Björgvinsson, Malmö University

**The Club Scene** (“investigating and reshaping the built environment from a feminist and queer perspective”) (until 2016)

Project manager: Dr Katarina Bonnevier, Swedish Museum of Architecture, Stockholm

**Composition and Use of Interactive Music** (until 2005)

Project manager: Professor Sture Brändström, Piteå School of Music (Luleå University of Technology)

**Heavenly Mechanics – Mysticism and Inspired Movement ‘Dance and New Technology’** (until 2008)

Project manager: Professor Sture Brändström, Piteå School of Music (Luleå University of Technology)

**Music, in cooperation with choreographer and doctoral student Åsa Unander-Scharin, LTU**

**Microstories: The Video Essay as an Art Form** (until 2015)

Project manager: Professor Magnus Bårtås, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm

**Mediality, Gesturality and Reciprocity: Choreography as the Weaving Labour of Politics** (until 2014)

Project manager: Professor Cristina Caprioli, University College of Dance and Circus, Stockholm

**Anatomy of the moment. Method and milieu for cross-medial theatre** (until 2015)

Project manager: Director/Dramatist Jörgen Dahlqvist, Malmö Theatre Academy (Lund University)

**Potential Music ‘Variable Musical Works’** (until 2008)

Project manager: Palle Dahlstedt, PhD, Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg

**Creative Performance – Computer-aided Creativity...** (until 2013)

Project manager: Palle Dahlstedt PhD, University of Gothenburg

**Mnemonics and Automation ‘History of Mnemonics – Theatre etc.** (until year-end 2007)

Project manager: Karl Dunér, director (in cooperation with Dialogue Seminar, KTH, etc.)

**Transmission ‘Urban Experiments in Sound Art’** (until 2006)

Project manager: Associate Professor Catharina Dyrssen, School of Architecture, Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg

**Into the Noise. Formative Musical, Architectonic and Acoustic Investigations in Contemporary Sound Space** (until year-end 2010)

Project manager: Catharina Dyrssen, Senior Lecturer, Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg

**DESIGN ARTICULATIONS – in the Encounter with Well-Articulated Notions and Unarticulated Self-Understanding** (until year-end 2008)

Project manager: Håkan Edeholt, PhD,  
Malmö University

**The Theatre of Bureaucracy (on bureaucracy as artistic practice)** (one-year grant/planning grant 2014)

Project manager: Artist Andjeas Ejiksson, Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm

**Research and New Media**

Royal University College of Fine Arts (KKH), Stockholm, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Karolinska Institutet and Södertörn University College. (Network Grant 2001–2005)

Project manager: Professor Marie-Louise Ekman, Rector of KKH, Stockholm

**The Visual Silence – in search of a non-voyeuristic film** (until 2017)

Project manager: Lecturer Mia Engberg, Stockholm University of the Arts

**From Vision to Chiming Music – Organ Intonation as an Artistic Process** (planning grant, 2011)

Project manager: Professor Hans-Ola Ericsson, Academy of Music in Piteå, Luleå University of Technology

**The Haptic Interface of a Picture**

(one-year grant for 2010) Project manager: Birgitta Eriksson, artist, School of Architecture, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm

**The Grey Atlas. Book and Exhibition (on “fictitious characters and events that are treated as if they were real”)** (until 2016)

Project manager: Professor Aris Fioretos, Södertörn University

**(Innovative) Approaches to Improvisation in and through Music** (until year-end 2011)

Project manager: Professor Göran Folkestad, Malmö Academy of Music (Lund University)

**Urban Materiality – Towards New Collaborations in Textile and Architectural Design**, until 2018 (Urban materialitet – mot nya samarbeten i textil design och arkitektur)

Project manager: Dr Kristina Fridh, University of Gothenburg

**The Materiality of the Surface** (until year-end 2008)

On Building Materials and Different Cultures' Conceptions of Space, with Focus on Glass.

Project manager: Kristina Fridh, PhD (Eng.), University of Gothenburg

**Message in a Bottle. Drift and Discovery** (until 2016)

Project manager: Artist Ellie Ga, Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm

**Transversal writing: a means for advancing methods as aesthetic form for research on the complex ecological registers of architecture** (until 2016)

Project manager: Dr Catharina Gabrielsson, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm

**Critical Texts in Architecture, Art and Design Research** (until year-end 2008)

Project manager: Associate Professor Katja Grillner, KTH School of Architecture, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm

**AKAD – the Academy for Practice-based Research in Architecture and Design** KTH, Stockholm, LTH, CTH, etc. (Network Grant 2003–2005)

Project manager: Katja Grillner, PhD (Eng.), KTH School of Architecture (part of the Royal Institute of Technology), Stockholm

**Autopoiesis and Design – on Instigation and Self-Generating Design Strategies**

(until year-end 2007)

Project manager: Rolf Gullström-Hughes, PhD, KTH School of Architecture

**Post Nomadic Landscapes (on “collisions in attitudes to land and landscape”)** (until 2015)

Project manager: Dr Eva-Marie Göransson, Konstfack, Stockholm

**Dialogue Seminar**

KTH, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Royal University College of Music and Royal Dramatic Theatre, all in Stockholm. (Network Grant 2001–2005)  
Project manager: Professor Bo Göransson, School of Industrial Engineering and Management, Skill & Technology, KTH, Stockholm

**Events, Conflicts and Transformations (complex systems)** (until year-end 2011)

Project manager: Professor Peter Hagdahl, Royal University College of Fine Arts (KKH), Stockholm

**Writing as a Method: a Study of Poetry, the Writing Process and the Potential of Reflexive Academic Writing** (until year-end 2013)

Project manager: Hanna Hallgren, PhD, Södertörn University

**Recycling Space: Explorative Design Analysis of Renewal of the Existing** (until year-end 2007)

On renewal in existing buildings

Project manager: Professor Elisabeth Hatz, KTH School of Architecture

**ArtTech Sublime**

Faculty Board of Applied and Fine Arts, University of Gothenburg and Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg. (Network Grant 2001–2005)

Project manager: Professor Hans Hedberg, Faculty Board of Applied and Fine Arts, University of Gothenburg

**Climatic Perceptions: Artistic Expression and Climate Research** (film and photography, until 2014)

Project manager: Professor Hans Hedberg, Head of Research, Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg

**Acoustic Design Artefacts and Methods for Urban Sound Landscapes** (until year-end 2010)

Project manager: Björn Hellström, PhD (Engineering), University College of Arts, Crafts and Design (Konstfack), Stockholm

**Cine-scape: Intermediary Urbanism and the Filmic Imagination** (up to and including April 2008)

Project manager: Maria Hellström Reimer, artist and PhD in landscape architecture, Malmö University, School of Arts and Communication

**The Truth of Fiction – a Survey of Fiction as a Research Method and Tool for Social Change** (until year-end 2009)

Project manager: Oscar Hemer, University Lecturer, Malmö University School of Arts and Communication

**The Double Blind: The Novel as (Peace) Negotiation** (until 2017)

Project manager: Author Elisabet Hjort, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design (Konstfack), Stockholm

**Processes of Musical Interpretation** (until year-end 2005)

Project manager: Cecilia Hultberg, PhD, Malmö Academy of Music (Lund University)

**Development of Instrumentalists' Musical Knowledge in a Culturally Multifaceted Society**

(until year-end 2009)

Project manager: Professor Cecilia Hultberg, Royal University College of Music, Stockholm

**Staging Baroque music? And shedding light on timeless gender issues** (until 2015)

Project manager: Professor Cecilia Hultberg, Royal College of Music, Stockholm

**At the conceptual limits of composition. A shrinking emptiness – meaning, chaos and entropy**

(until 2017)

Project manager: University Lecturer Anders Hultqvist, Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg

**Undiscovered Areas of Music – Studies in the Interface between Written and Improvised Music**

Department of Musicology, Uppsala University and Piteå School of Music (Luleå University of Technology) (Network Grant 2001–2003)

Project manager: Professor Anna Ivarsdotter, Department of Musicology, Uppsala University

**Focus on Listening: Counterpoint in Dance and Music in a Listening Attitude**

(project planning grant, 2010)

Project manager: Professor Susanne Jaresand, Royal University College of Music, Stockholm



**Listening to the Counterpoint in Dance and Music**  
(until 2015)

Project manager: Professor Susanne Jaresand,  
Luleå University of Technology

**Sami and Swedes: a Documentary Film about  
Boundary-crossers in the Early 20th Century**  
(until year-end 2011)

Project manager: Ingrid Jonsson Wallin, Lecturer,  
Dalarna University, Falun

**Room for interpretation: musical performance  
interacting with room acoustics** (until 2016)

Project manager: Professor Sverker Jullander,  
Luleå University of Technology

**The ‘essentially’ feminine – an investigation through  
artistic practice and early modern music** (one-year  
grant/planning grant 2014)

Project manager: Dr Katarina A Karlsson, Academy of  
Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg

**The ‘essentially’ feminine – a mapping through  
artistic practice of the feminine territory offered in  
early modern music** (until 2017)

Project manager: PhD Katarina A Karlsson, Academy  
of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg

**Architectonic Operative Systems – Prototypes for  
Performative Design** (until year-end 2011)

Project manager: Professor Ulrika Karlsson, School of  
Architecture, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH),  
Stockholm

**An Investigation of the A4 Sheet** (until year-end 2012)  
Project manager: Artist Emma Kihl, Royal Institute of  
Art, Stockholm

**Reconfigurations of Identity in a Deterritorialised  
Setting: Visual Presentation of ‘Tamilness’ in  
Diasporic Websites and in London** (until year-end  
2014) Project manager: Anna Laine, PhD,  
Museum of Ethnography, Stockholm

**Research through Interpretation** (until year-end 2009)  
Project manager: Professor Johannes Landgren,  
Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts,  
University of Gothenburg

**The Apple – Five Chapters about Music ‘Processes of  
Interpretation’** (until year-end 2006)

Project manager: Professor Dan Laurin,  
Royal University College of Music, Stockholm  
(in cooperation with Dialogue Seminar, KTH, etc.)

**Public Speaking – Art and Public Discourse**  
(up to and including 2010)

Project manager: Professor Marysia Lewandowska,  
University College of Arts, Crafts and Design,  
Stockholm

**Movement as the Memory of the Body ‘Dance and  
Ageing’** (up to and including 2006)

Project manager: Professor Efva Lilja, choreographer,  
University College of Dance, Stockholm

**Queer Moving Images: Their Fragility and the Fleeting Nature of their Existence** (until 2015)  
Project manager: Anna Linder, producer and filmmaker, Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg

**Artistic Experience Park for Sustainable Development** (until year-end 2012)  
Project manager: Roland Ljungberg, artist, PhD, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm

**Research on Stage: Intersections between Theatre Performance, Teaching and Academia** (until year-end 2013) Project manager: Anna Lundberg, PhD, Gender Studies, Linköping University

**To perform the duration of life-researching – the interpretation of time in Olivier Messiaen’s music** (until 2016)  
Project manager: Musician/Organist Jonas Lundblad, Lund University

**Artistic Research Processes**  
Malmö Colleges of Art, Umeå Academy of Fine Arts and University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm. (Network Grant 2001–2005)  
Project manager: Vice-Chancellor Håkan Lundström, Malmö Colleges of Art, Lund University

**Place and Memory: Tracking Life Flows** (until year-end 2014)  
About and at Slussen, Stockholm  
Project manager: Mikael Lundberg, artist, Moderna Museet, Stockholm

**Centre for Mask Research. Stage Interpretation and Knowledge Formation** (up to and including 2009)  
Project manager: Professor Per Lysander, Principal, University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre, Stockholm

**The Working Languages of Dramatic Arts**  
University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre, Stockholm, Södertörn University College and National Academy of Mime and Acting, Stockholm. (Network Grant 2001–2005) Project manager: Vice-Chancellor/Professor Per Lysander, University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre, Stockholm

**Towards an Extended Field of Art Music** (until 2010)  
Project manager: Professor Ole Lützow-Holm, Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg

**Rephotography: a Dialogue with History in an Arctic Landscape** (until year-end 2012)  
Project manager: Dr Tyrone Martinsson, School of Photography, University of Gothenburg

**Music In Disorder – Counterplay, Complexity and Collective improvisation**, until 2018 (Musik i oordning – motspel, komplexitet och kollektiv improvisation)  
Project manager: Klas Nevrin, musician, Royal University College of Music, Stockholm

**Research Processes in Art** (until year-end 2005)  
Project manager: Per Nilsson, PhD, Umeå Academy of Fine Arts, in cooperation with Professor Elin Wikström, artist, Umeå University

**Amphibian Decreation in Choreography and Philosophy** (until year-end 2014)

Project manager: Senior Lecturer Per Nilsson, Umeå Academy of Fine Arts, Umeå University

**Uncertain Reading: Contemporary Poetry as a Writing-cum-Reading Act – A Critical Manifesto** (until 2015)

Project manager: Hanna Nordenhök, author, Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg

**Practical Methods in Artistic Research in Theatre** (until year-end 2006)

Project manager: Per Nordin University Lecturer, Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg (within ArtTech Sublime)

**Practical Methods in Artistic Research in Theatre, Part 2: Action Space** (one-year grant, 2007)

Project manager: Per Nordin, University Lecturer, Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg Department of Drama

**Passion for the Real – on Documentarism and Art** (until year-end 2008)

About the 'poetics' of various art forms and the interplay among them

Project manager: Professor Eva Nässén, University of Gothenburg

**As the Word Transcends. On the Sensuous Language and Writing as Relation** (until 2016)

Project manager: PhD Linnea Pedersen, Umeå University

**Investigating, Revealing and Shaping the Question: What Choices Do Actors Face in the Moment of Creation?** (project planning grant, 2010)

Project manager: Anna Pettersson, actor and director, National Academy of Mime and Acting, Stockholm

**The Language of the Becoming City** (until 2017)

Project manager: Professor Henrietta Palmer, Royal University College of Fine Arts, Stockholm

**Forms of Sustainability** (until year-end 2011)

Project manager: Johan Redström, PhD, Interactive Institute, Kista, Stockholm

**A Study of Practical Terms in Filmmaking** (until 2012)

Project manager: Professor Göran Du Rées, School of Film Directing, University of Gothenburg

**Narrative processes in between – the practice of comic-strip drawing** (until 2016)

Project manager: Illustrator/Comic-strip artist Emma Rendel, Konstfack, Stockholm

**From Movement out of Reflection in the Making: Dancers and the Creative Process**

(until year-end 2012) Project manager: Professor Cecilia Roos, University College of Dance, Stockholm

**Urban Public Space as an Artistic Laboratory – Dark Spaces, Illumination and Over-illumination**

(planning grant 2011) Project manager: Artist Monica Sand, PhD, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design (Konstfack)/

Swedish Museum of Architecture, Stockholm

**The Evolutionary Periphery. Architectonic  
Visualisation of Affordance in Urban Peripheries**

(until year-end 2013)

Project manager: Associate Professor Gunnar Sandin,  
LTH (Lund University)

**Howe Across Reading/Performing the Past**

(until 2016)

Project manager: Artist Imri Sandström,  
University of Gothenburg

**Professionalisation of Authors in Academic Life and  
Popular Education** (until year-end 2009)

Project manager: Cristine Sarrimo,  
University Lecturer, Malmö University School of  
Arts and Communication (K3)

**Participatory Mapping? Studies for Spatial Practice**

(one-year grant for 2010)

Project manager: Meike Schalk, PhD,  
School of Architecture,  
Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm

**Trust and the Development of Dialogue**

(until year-end 2013)

Project manager: Professor Esther Shalev-Gerz, artist,  
Valand School of Fine Arts, University of Gothenburg

**Neglected Modernities: Design and Method**

(until year-end 2013)

Project manager: Staffan Schmidt, PhD,  
Malmö University

**Cinésense – Development of Interactive Film**

(until year-end 2008)

Project manager: Professor Ingvar Sjöberg,  
Linköping University

**Dialogue as a Tool in the Working Processes of  
Dramatic Art** (planning grant 2011)

Project manager: Professor Barbro Smeds,  
Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts

**Creative Keyboards. “Old” Instruments and New  
Affordances**, until 2018 (Kreativa klavér. “Gamla”  
instrument med nya affordanser)

Project manager:  
Dr Joel Speerstra, University of Gothenburg

**Expanded Choreography: Choreography as a Generic  
Skill** (until year-end 2012)

Project manager: choreographer and Senior Lecturer  
Mårten Spångberg,  
University of Dance and Circus, Stockholm

**Los Angeles Islands – a Research Project on Architec-  
tonic Americanisms in a Swedish Region**

(until year-end 2007)

Project manager: Associate  
Professor Lars-Henrik Ståhl,  
School of Architecture, LTH, Lund University

**Placebo: the Aesthetics of Substitution in Hospital  
Architecture** (until year-end 2011)

Project manager: Professor Lars-Henrik Ståhl,  
Lund Institute of Technology (Lund University)

**Writing Space – on the Poetics of Discussion and the Essay as Form of Knowledge** (until year-end 2008)  
Project manager: Professor Staffan Söderblom, University of Gothenburg

**Body and Space: An Investigation of the Relationship Between Body and Space** (until 2015)  
Project manager: Professor Clemens Thornquist, Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås

**Performative Strategies and Participation on Network Fringes** (until year-end 2014)  
Project manager: Palle Torsson, artist and teacher, Department for Studies of Social Change and Culture (ISAK), Linköping University

**Intervention – Art in Urban Life and Development** (until year-end 2009)  
Project manager: Professor Peter Ullmark, School of Design and Crafts, University of Gothenburg

**No Worries, No Limits: Systems of Communication that Resemble Art** (one-year grant for 2006)  
Project manager: Cesar Villanueva, artist and doctoral student, Växjö University

**Visual Worlds 2 ‘Colour, Light, Form and Movement’** (Until year-end 2005)  
Project manager: Professor Gösta Wessel, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm

**Methods of Engagement: a Project on the Epistemological Relationship between Social Science and Art** (until year-end 2008)  
Project manager: Professor Elin Wikström, artist, Umeå Academy of Fine Arts, Umeå University

**Architectural Convertibles (about interactive architectural environments)** until 2018 (Arkitektoniska konvertibler (om interaktiva arkitektoniska omgivningar))Project manager: Dr Malgorzata Zboinska, School of Architecture, Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg

**Art, Politics and Daddy. Storytelling through Other People’s Voices and Transgressing Genres** (until year-end 2013)  
Project manager: author and film director Maria Zennström, Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts, Stockholm

**A Millennium with God – A Second on Earth** (until year-end 2006) Dance–Theatre–Opera  
Project manager: Professor Margaretha Åsberg, choreographer, University College of Dance, Stockholm

**Music in Movement: New Artistic Strategies for Fusing Choreography and Musical Composition** (until year-end 2014) Dance–Theatre–Opera  
Project manager: Stefan Östersjö, PhD, musician, Malmö Academy of Music, Lund University

# The Swedish Research Council's Committee for Artistic Research

## Members from 2016–2018

Professor **Lars Hallnäs**, Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås, Chair

PhD, head of PhD-education **Camilla Damkjaer**, Stockholm University of the Arts

Artist, head of Institute **Markus Degerman**, Tromsø Academy of contemporary art, Norway

Professor **Eva Georgii-Hemming**, Örebro Academy of Music, Örebro University

Author, Professor **Hanna Hallgren**, Valand Academy, University of Gothenburg

Associate Professor **Gunnar Sandin**, Department of Architecture, Lund University

Professor **John Sundholm**, Cinema Studies, Stockholm University

Scientific advisor AR: **Jan Kaila**, Swedish Research Council

Secretary of the committee: Senior research officer/Editor **Torbjörn Lind**, Swedish Research Council (until 2016)

Art is what you can get away with.

Andy Warhol



# Previous editions of the Yearbook

## 2004 Konst – Kunskap – Insikt

– texter om forskning och utvecklingsarbete på det konstnärliga området

(Art – Knowledge – Understanding  
Writings on Research and Development  
in the Arts)

## 2005 Metod & Praktik

– texter om forskning och utvecklingsarbete på det konstnärliga området

(Method & Practice  
Writings on Research and Development in the  
Artistic Field)

## 2006 Konstnärlig forskning

– artiklar, projektrapporter & reportage

(Artistic Research  
Articles, Project Reports and Art Journalism)

## 2007 Konstnärlig forskning under lupp

– utvärdering, artiklar och projektrapporter/  
reportage

(Artistic Research in Focus  
Evaluation, Articles, Project Reports and  
Commentary)

## 2008 Autonomi och egenart

– konstnärlig forskning söker identitet

(Autonomy and Individuality  
Artistic Research Seeks an Identity)

## 2009 Konst och forskningspolitik

– konstnärlig forskning inför framtiden

(Art and Research Policy  
Future Prospects for Artistic Research)

## 2010 Forskning och kritik

– granskning och recension av konstnärlig  
forskning

(Research and Criticism  
Investigation and Review of Artistic Research)

**2011 Form och färdriktning**

– strategiska frågor för den konstnärliga forskningen

(Design and Direction  
Strategic Issues Facing Artistic Research)

**2012 Dokumentation och presentation  
av konstnärlig forskning**

(Documentation and Presentation  
of Artistic Research)

**2013 Konstnärlig forskning då och nu – 2004–2013/  
Artistic Research Then and Now: 2004–13****2014 Metod – Process – Redovisning/  
Method– Process– Reporting****2015 Från konstnärlig högskola till universitet/  
From Arts College to University****2016 The Art University – political dream  
or broadened future for the arts?**

The art and science of asking questions  
is the source of all knowledge.

Thomas Berger



# Artistic Research – Yearbook 2017

**Research Ethics and Artistic Freedom in Artistic Research** is the Swedish Research Council's 14th Yearbook on artistic research.

The first three articles were written by three keynote speakers at last year's symposium on artistic research at Linnaeus University in Växjö, which had the same theme and title as this Yearbook – ethics and artistic freedom in artistic research.

The fourth article continues on from last year's article on the career paths for artistic researchers with a PhD in Sweden. This time the writers follow up with a more qualitative study which highlights the scope of postdoctoral research at relevant HEIs.

The next article is an interview with the editor for this Yearbook about the Swedish Research Council and artistic research in 2001–2016.

There are also five reports on artistic projects that have received funding from the Swedish Research Council. These offer reflections on modernity, contemporary poetry, studies of dress, crossing boundaries between expressions on stage and finally baroque music. Comments are then made on the project reports by the Committee for Artistic Research within the Swedish Research Council.

In his Closing Remarks, the chair of the Committee and two earlier chairs, thank the departing editor for his sterling work.



**Vetenskapsrådet**