

FORUM⁺

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS:

Research Methods in the Arts: Challenges and Opportunities

Research in the arts has expanded significantly in recent decades: the reformulation of artistic practice as a research practice (“all art is research”) has increasingly paved the way for the active deepening of art as a specific form of knowledge production that leads to new insights and experiences. Despite this evolution, methodology remains a barrier for many artistic researchers, an often elusive concept that is nonetheless essential for the design of the research. What methods, procedures and strategies can artists use to tackle their research questions? This question has increasingly been at the centre of attention in the discourse on artistic research.

In the world of science, knowledge and research, each discipline has its own methods, procedures and practices that are used to acquire knowledge and to advance science. The interplay of these different steps form together the methodology of an investigation. Methodology - from the Greek *meta* (after), *hodos* (path, road), *logos* (word, reason) - literally means ‘reason behind the road to travel’. It comprises the different steps that need to be taken to find an answer to the questions at hand. In addition, methodology is also understood as the theoretical underpinning and justification for the set of methods that are applied to a specific case. In this sense, methodology is both fundamental and concrete; it offers both the theoretical framework and the practical tools for research.

Researchers in the arts often combine experimental and artistic approaches specific to their domain with methods from the social and human sciences. This broad variety of methodologies – or what Henk Borgdorff describes as “methodological pluralism” (2017) – leads to new challenges and opportunities. This new FORUM⁺ dossier aims to provide insight into the multitude of methods, procedures and strategies used by artist-researchers in the field of the performing arts, visual arts and music. Besides this, the dossier wants to examine to what extent the dialogue between these different domains can be productive, and can generate or stimulate new methodologies. As such, the starting point for this dossier is interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary and transdisciplinary.

In order to explore a broad spectrum of approaches, the editorial team invites contributions that respond to current methodological challenges and opportunities in the field of the arts. We welcome short reviews of research projects that pay explicit attention to the used methodology (2500 words); theoretical contributions on methodological issues (3000 and 5000 words) or visual contributions (3 spreads / 6 pages).

We invite contributions on the following questions (not exhaustive):

Which (combination of) methods, research strategies or theoretical frameworks does the artist-researcher use in the design of the research project?

What is the specificity of the methods used within the various subdisciplines of artistic research (performing arts, music, visual arts)? And to what extent can they mutually fertilize each other? How do generic methods (literature study, archive research, experiment, statistics, etc.) relate to more specific creative or artistic methods (sketching, listening, practicing, collecting, artistic experiment, etc.)?

Can the artistic experiment be regarded as a nexus between scientific and artistic research?

What forms of knowledge and impact are generated by artistic research? How are certain methods related (or not), and to what result?

What role does “emergence” play as that what “comes up”; the unexpected of which we only know that it will occur at a certain point during the research, but of which we do not know when or in what form?

To which kinds and forms of knowledge do artistic methodologies, the artistic experiment, or various forms of reflection in the arts lead?

To what extent is reflection and planning an inseparable element of artistic practice and from what point does it become a method for research?

Which visual or physical forms of research design are imaginable conceivable, possible or already a part of the actual practice?

Which possibilities do artistic research methods create for presenting and communicating about research?

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Proposals can be submitted by email to art&research@ap.be by 15 December 2019 at the latest. Contributions are subject to peer review. Copyright guidelines and a template for articles can be downloaded from www.forum-online.be/publicceer-in-forum.