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# SISYPHUS 1

# CRITICAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ARTS EDUCATION

Edited by Catarina Martins & Thomas S. Popkewitz



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Sisyphus – Journal of Education aims to be a place for debate on political, social, economic, cultural, historical, curricular and organizational aspects of education. It pursues an extensive research agenda, embracing the opening of new conceptual positions and criteria according to present tendencies or challenges within the global educational arena.

The journal publishes papers displaying original researches—theoretical studies and empiric analysis—and expressing a wide variety of methods, in order to encourage the submission of both innovative and provocative work based on different orientations, including political ones. Consequently, it does not stand by any particular paradigm; on the contrary, it seeks to promote the possibility of multiple approaches. The editors will look for articles in a wide range of academic disciplines, searching for both clear and significant contributions to the understanding of educational processes. They will accept papers submitted by researchers, scholars, administrative employees, teachers, students, and well-informed observers of the educational field and correlative domains. Additionally, the journal will encourage and accept proposals embodying unconventional elements, such as photographic essays and artistic creations.

# The «Eventualizing» of Arts Education

Introduction by Catarina Silva Martins & Thomas S. Popkewitz (Editors)

To write this editorial is a challenging task as it is the moment to think about the process through which this special issue emerged. As editors we invited a group of international scholars to contribute to this theme, but we knew from the beginning that the final object would be much more than an issue inscribed within a single disciplinary academic field. Most of the authors do not know each other, but they all share a common space of questioning and looking to social objects of schools as historical practices and effects that inscribe systems of reason. Knowing this, we totally ignored the final image. We took Michel Foucault's statement: «If you knew when you began a book what you would say at the end, do you think that you would have the courage to write it? What is true for writing and for a love relationship is true also for life. The game is worthwhile insofar as we don't know what will be the end.» (Foucault, 1988, p. 9)

The idea of event in the title is taken as the possibility of thinking about arts education as something that is made up of historical and contingent layers. If we can play with the idea of social and educational research, art education is taken as an object to study its effects. As the origin of study, research seeks to understand how children learn it, how it serves social purposes, or how it comes into being as a school subject to provide for the changing needs and purposes of society, research objects we later talk about further. When we speak about «eventualizing» art education, we are reversing the questions of its study. It is to ask about the historical conditions that make art education as a school subject possible. What is taken for granted

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and given metaphysical and essentialist ideas about the subject viewed, in contrast, as a monument. That monument is not merely there as a heroic act of the past but embodies a range of cultural, social and political principles that come together. The assemblage 'acts' to make possible a particular 'seeing', thinking, and act on through its representations and identities.

A simple analogy is possibly useful here. We can think of arts education like a recipe and the outcome. When we go to the bakery, we 'see' and think about the cake in the display case. It is an object that has an identity all on its own that triggers our imagination of taste and culinary joys. The cake becomes a determinate object-a metonym-something that is representable and has an identity whose effects we project (what would it taste like if we had a piece), and also calculable (we buy it and taste it to decide if it «works»). But the cake is produced from a number of ingredients that have different qualities, capabilities, and characteristics. When assembled and connected, those elements are no longer seen. The cake becomes an object with its own identity and productive of desire. Art education is like the cake, only not an intentional object given its determinacy but one that is historically produced through different events. To «eventualize» the recipe of art education is to make visible the different practices that make it possible to think about schooling, art, teachers, children and difference in people in the governing of the present.

Thus, «eventualizing» art education is to ask about it as an effect of historical practices and power relations—what Foucault spoke about as knowledge/power relations. The «eventualizing» also assumes differences, fissures, and multiple lines that compose what today is called art education. As such, this eventful space is used as the terrain of a history of the present. It is an event of today that is analyzed simultaneously by the emergence and by the regularities that are installed.

Our «eventualizing» in this volume is making a conversation that breaks conventions in thinking about arts education as an event that engages a broader and simultaneously focused theoretically discussion around problems that directly affect today's arts education disciplinary field. Theoretical yet at the same time historical and 'empirical' through detailed attention to things of the world; an 'act' that itself has repercussions into the very tissues of contemporary thinking about method as distinct from theory; and the real as somehow a distinction field that separates and makes the material as in opposition rather than in relation to language and discourses. The initial point was to construct an issue around the theme of critical, cultural and historical themes on arts education. It was an easy enough idea. One of us is in an arts school and the other likes visiting Portugal and artists. The idea of opening the title to 'arts education' was important as a way of decentering the more common analysis centered on the visual arts. The titling of this special issue 'Critical', 'Cultural' and 'Historical' was to engage in a counter narrative that creates an arena that challenges and scrutinizes presentist views of arts education and the studies of the school. A close look at cross Atlantic research done under the label 'arts education' is an enterprise that maintains assumptions about the curriculum and the arts that are not commonly questioned.

The presence of the arts in education, for example, embodies narratives of salvation about the hopes of the future and its promises of a more progressive and human society. The salvation narratives are given as empowering children and youth. The salvation narratives are also expressed in relation to political theories about the kinds of people to be actualized through the processes of education. In the United States prior to and after World War Two, for example, art education was to protect the political ideals of the democratic citizen. Art therapy was introduced, for example, to create the free expression, creativity and freedom thought necessary to prevent the fascism and authoritarianism rearing its head in Europe. The salvation themes of the arts in school are taken to govern, from within, the students. And that hope of creating particular kinds of people also provides narratives of redemption among those populations feared as dangers and dangerous to the desired future. Art education is given as a means to social equity through attending to poor or problematic families and contexts, the ones considered 'at risk' by their dissident behaviors, or those that are also classified with several medical labels, such as a therapeutic.

Another narrative of arts education is one of exceptionality. In a world that seems to stress rationality, science and the abstract relations of modernity, the arts are seen as a counter mode of being. It is to give visibility to the uniqueness of humanity that poetry, music, painting and literature emerge. The arts become a different and highly symbolic world that has to be shared as such by all and from which differences can be celebrated among different times and spaces.

A different salvation narrative perceives the effects of the arts on other academic subjects, or in students' general and social competences. Justified to

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achieve better results in mathematics, reading or science, the arts are used as disciplinary instruments that will make the child more attentive, motivated and even performing better in tests. Art education is not about artistic competences but about the making of a certain kind of person and about achieving a desired future. This rhetoric is not only present in school but also within the so-called knowledge economy. The latter is framed in the rhetoric of entrepreneurship that is inseparable from creativity and innovativeness. Art becomes one of the most variable techniques of governing one's own conduct. The creative child is the future creative citizen and worker who will believe that his/ her interiority and autonomy are the expression of his/her independence, his/her success or failure.

When the different salvation narratives are viewed historically, they highlight a number of trajectories of the modern school that are elided in studies of teaching, learning, curriculum and policy.

Firstly, schools are places where people are made. The founders of late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries' republics recognized this. Education was necessary to make the citizen whose moral dispositions, responsibilities, and obligations were different from those of being a subject of the monarchy. Pedagogy entailed political catechisms that (re)visioned heavenly themes of salvation in the afterlife as notions of human progress and the earthy pursuit of happiness and freedom.

Taken at a very simple and seemingly obvious level is why create the spaces of schooling for children if not to create particular kinds of people. The modern school is no different from the earlier church schools were children were taught to read the bible so they could learn how to be moral and faithful parishioners. The modern school maintains this concern with making people, with today's soul talked about as 'the mind' and the interiority as the product of culture.

It is easy to develop an historical amnesia as the languages of the arts education are about learning and human self-betterment that obscures schooling as a social and cultural practice. Again a simple exercise in reflection on the models of the school curriculum can help to provide a critical, cultural and historical mode of thinking about schooling. When looking at curriculum of schools, they are alchemies. That is, children in schools are not historians or musicians. To make these fields of knowledge into school subjects requires ways of transporting disciplinary and conservatory cultures and knowledge systems into pedagogical practices. Yet when examining the alchemic models of the curriculum, the selection, organization and evaluation of the curriculum were in the emergence of the modern 20<sup>th</sup> century school by principles of educational psychologies—expressed through the Americans Dewey and Thorndike, the Swiss Claparède, the Belgium Delcroy, and the Portuguese Lima.

The alchemy of school subjects is to normalize and govern the student's conduct (Popkewitz, 2004). They had little interest in understanding art, science, mathematics or music as fields that produce knowledge. The central organizing principles embodied cultural theses about modes of living. The cultural theses were about the dispositions, sensitivities and awareness that linked individuality to collective belonging and the morality. Today, this is evident in the American standards movement. The standards of music education and mathematics education, at one level, seeming different modes of knowing and appreciating the world, have similar standards (Popkewitz & Gustafson, 2002). They are expressed through psychologies of education about the child's ability to make informed decisions or problem solving, developing communication skills, and recognizing and acting on responsibilities as a citizen. The standards of mathematics education are also organized by psychological research on learning. The psychologies are systems of governmentality, more so than with anything that current studies of arts education believe.

But this alchemy also entailed a comparative style of reason that excluded and abjected in efforts for social inclusion. The inscriptions of divisions separate the world in two non-balanced slices. One contains a particular population minority that has the capacity to produce the great works of art and the others that are the spectators of these great feats. In school, the child is faced with a gallery of great masters, those that are there to be admired. But there is distance that separates the child from the masters as the representatives of a totalizing knowledge and the space between them is an abyss. However, the child believes that he/she has to learn about the masters through moving from the simple to the complex, from the part to the whole, and through an ordered progress that decides whether the child is more or less capable or incapable. This gesture of schooling expresses the hope about the child who is a responsible agent of social life. That gesture also embodies fears about the child who is not responsible, lacks motivation, lacks creativity and inventiveness and thus differs from others.

Speaking about people in this manner has particular historical trajectories that make art possible as a category about people (the artist) and education as sets of distinctions and differentiations to order and classify its pedagogy.

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The shaping of a gallery of notables, representing the top of the race and the nation, for example, was constructed during the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the site of eccentricity and abnormality. Today and under different designations it is present by the topoi of exceptionality and at the same time by the rarefaction of those that are able to produce artworks (Ó, Martins, & Paz, 2013). From this perspective, the genius as a technology of government, from a biopolitical perspective, allows for the definition and government of the normal citizen and the others who are outside and 'different' (Martins, 2014).

The double gestures entail a comparativeness that is not merely about art education but about schooling and the making of differences and divisions in kinds of people. The distinctions and classification that order children are often placed in a mixture of biological and psychological characteristics that are 'natural' to the child, such as the child's potential, creativity, and inventiveness. Schools, as the narrative goes, are to nurture their inner qualities while recognizing that only some have the capabilities to embody. This entails the problem of artistic learning as an impossibility.

Our assumption in this special issue is that arts education can represent a field of resistance to power, but only if it pays attention to its own historicity in a critical way. This was our critical gesture of dislocation through deploying questions of political and historical nature in this issue. The volume wishes to open the space to more than the visual arts while focusing on the visual. It is to address the visual in a more heterogeneous way. It refers, therefore, to the visual arts as an object that is to be understood also as sensory vision and the visuals in research as a productive practice through ordering what is seen, thought and acted on. The discussions take the disciplinary field of arts education less as an institutional structure or as an origin to explain what people do or its changes. Rather the papers explore arts education as historical constructions that order what is known and 'the self' that have repercussions in the present. The latter, history as understanding the present, is not to think of the evolution of practices by tracing it from a single origin. It is to explore particular clusters of historical practices as they are assembled over time and understand how they leach into the present as the buzzword of creativity or the contemporary hot topic of artistic research.

This treating arts education as an event to understand the conditions that make it possible is exemplified in the idea of creativity. It is a word of current reforms that travel across continents to talk about how nations can become «knowledge societies» through making children become inventive and innovative. It might even appear as merely something one has to «be» when in arts education. Since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, arts curriculum was to teach children to express their individuality, spontaneity and innovation. This creativity was both meant to free the child's soul and to create what today is called 'entrepreneurial'. But when examined historically, it is a word encased with different sets of distinctions and classifications that design kinds of children and relegate other as different—not creative, not innovative.

Focusing on Spanish music education, Antía Ben's article focuses on creativity as a phenomenon that configures the taken for granted issues about schooling as a site of making kinds of people. Often education is about learning, helping children become adults and productive members of society. This language of education is often put into psychological framing of learning theories or social-communication and activity psychologies. Yet when thought of as a historical phenomenon, schools change children into something that they would not be if they did not «live» there for 8-13 years. Creativity is a critical ingredient for the shaping of the child as the citizen of the future; from China's new primary educational reforms to European and North American notions of childhood and learning. While the word might be the same, it is important that such words be put into particular cultural practices to understand how its objects of reflection and action are assembled. Creativity is neither neutral nor a natural concept in thinking about the individual. Ben addresses the contingent and arbitrary side of creativity as a cultural construct attached to a particular set of ideas and values as it moves into Spain in the 1960s to «act» as a way of seeing music as a form of study and the child as the object to change. Borrowing on Michel Foucault's notion of what constitutes a regime of truth, the article examines Spanish discourses and the effects in pedagogical practices. This movement, inscribed in a history of the present, analyses the potential of the tensions that creativity embodies.

Ironically, the idea of creativity is often connected with the argument of art for art's sake in the historical discourse that seeks to defend the arts in the curriculum. Today this kind of argument is given renewed vigor, as many countries seem to want to emphasize STEM fields as the expense of humanities. Thanh Phùng and Lynn Fendler, however, provide a unique and historically important argument to consider how there coexists with its counterpart, the instrumentalization that moves into the very principles generated in the arts. The relation of the curriculum, the formation of the modern citizen, and contemporary discourses about preparing the child for a growing

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industrialized world of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, or for today's workforce in the socalled knowledge-based economies, are just some of the questions that can be unfolded from their text. Thanh Phùng and Lynn Fendler take art for art's sake and instrumentalization as two sides, first, inscribing the notion of art for art's sake at the heart of DBAE curriculum, with the shift from a selfexpression/creativity perspective to the idea of art as a kind of knowledge; to the question, through Jacques Rancière, of how DBAE's theoretical apparatus is founded upon inequality/equality and the extent to which it makes room for the redistribution of the sensible. Their conclusion draws on how the DBAE taken for granted hierarchies reproduce spaces of inequality, through an instrumental meaning of art for art's sake. They introduce the idea of an aesthetic regime inscribed as art puts in crisis the representative order of art within education.

The historical realm of arts education in Brazil is explored through Rita Bredariolli's presentation of four acts. For those familiar with the historical making of schooling, the relationship between the sciences of education and psychology is not new. The educational and social psychologies are inventions that aim to govern those that supposedly they are just describing. The idea of a natural tendency of the child to draw, and the correspondent belief that when devoted to artistic activities the child is expressing his/her interiority, is just one example on how psychology acted in the world making its constructions coincide with the natural. The study of artistic development in the child was part of children studies in Europe by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. And by the middle of the century, the official language of arts education curriculum propagated the language of modern art: natural, expressive, spontaneous, and colorful. Those were given as some of the characteristics of both children's art and the child (Martins, 2013). In Brazil, it was not much different. Bredariolli's study is interested in how the concept of free-expression was driven by psycho-pedagogical studies and the interest of artists, critics and educators in the making of a certain kind of child. The acts are to analyze the association between art, education and freedom. The analysis of children's graphic expression became thus not only the best example for picturing this freedom but also the spot of interest of several studies in the comparison established among these and 'primitive' art or 'crazy' people.

The issue of instrumentalization, but now explored through the idea of transaction, is questioned in John Baldachinno's text. Where Ben, Fendler

and Bredariolli focus on the historical and political/philosophical principles that order art education, Baldachinno's goal is to ask about what we speak of as art education and its pedagogical location through its hermeneutics. The formula Art ± Education is presented in four scenarios in which the force that appears is the making sense of art as the accident. The entanglement of art and education is not per se the guarantee of a critical opening of possibilities. Together or separately what remains to be analyzed are the expectations held by those who see this relationship as a necessary practice and which kind of alchemies produce art in education. The reduction of their dimensions to measured values becomes paradoxically the site of resistance for both the artist and the educator. Artists ± Educators is the final formula in Baldachinno's proposal. It is to rethink the historical and present relationship of art and education as a critical form to how we imagine each one's roles within these relationships. It matters, therefore, how we imagine what learning in the arts is because there is a risk that rather than speak to everyone and no one, we create formulas on how we speak to each other.

The making of the observer through visual technologies is a fact of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that authors such as Jonathan Crary (2000) deeply studied. This making was shaped through the capacity of 'paying attention', which implied the disengagement from a myriad of attractions. His interest lays in how a subjective vision was dependent upon the incorporation of vision within the materiality of the body. In doing this, and stating that subjective vision was more dependent on the body rather than in external stimuli, vision is transformed into a field under exploration and open to normalization, quantification and governing. At the same time, the shaping of the scientific self was part of this same device of visuality. As Daston and Galison (2010) claim, the making of a scientific image is the making of a scientific self and part of objectivity's historicity, but also of the history of subjectivity. It is in the sensory and perceptual vision and in the making of objective perceptions that Karin Priem's text is situated. Priem pursues further the school alchemy in which psychology becomes the translator and principles through which art is made into an educational subject. The author explores this interest by examining child development studies formed with photography as a mode of 'objective' display. Focused on the materiality of things and facts, the photographic techniques became a tool to foster new ways of seeing within the domain of education, new ways of producing and presenting science, new ways of producing spectators, and a mode of organizing the objects of social change.

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Not only photography, but also drawing, were some of the techniques used to represent a world that science wants to make objective and transparent, thus, open to intervention. What Ebony Flowers develops in her visual essay is an association of teaching and learning, but taking the challenging exercise of undoing this relation through the form of a comic. Her comic essay describes two images of the body—affected and unaffected—circulating in curriculum reform efforts, trying to analyze how body discourses and the idea of drawing align with a common-sense logic of formal schooling. In its format this visual way of presenting research is relatively new in academic journals. A very recent and popular case is Nick Sousanis' thesis «Unflattening», in which the author tries to discuss visual thinking in teaching and learning through the use of comics. Only a question of form or, perhaps more than that, the idea is to push the limits of what seems (im)possible to do in academia.

In terms of its 'eventful' space, Ebony's visual text is inscribed within the ambiguous space of arts based and artistic research, which is the question of Catarina Almeida's paper. Historically inscribing the emergence of artistic research field, her study tries to recover the questions of the marriage of the arts with the academic world. Within this institutionalization, however, remains an always repeated state of artistic research as excusing itself of further explanations. In a way, artistic research discourses inscribe the state of exceptionality of the world of art itself and even if within a world with different protocols from the arts world, and being there, the refusal appear as its 'natural' being. Locating artistic research in the field of higher arts education, Almeida takes artistic research as an object of inquiry, acknowledging these forces and power relations that are responsible for giving us the perception of events and the shape reality. These forces are not seen as autonomous and essential things with inner significance, but as the result of the action of these power relations.

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### FACTS FOR BABIES:

### VISUAL EXPERIMENTS AT THE INTERSECTION OF ART, SCIENCE AND CONSUMERISM IN EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

The paper takes as its point of departure a particular photography book, The First Picture Book: Everyday Things for Babies, first published in 1930 and aimed at young children. The book's origins can be traced back to a collaboration between Edward Steichen, his daughter Mary Steichen Calderone, and the Bureau of Educational Experiments. Founded in New York in 1916, the latter focused its work on developmental child psychology and progressive educational practices. The paper analyses how the materiality of things and artefacts, sensory vision, and science-based concepts of child development were forming a conceptual alliance with photography as a mode of 'objective' display. In addition, it explores how photographic techniques became a tool to foster new ways of seeing within the domain of education while at the same time aiming at societal transformation.

### **KEY WORDS**

Photography; Visual observation; Child psychology; Progressive education; Consumerism.



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# Facts for Babies: Visual Experiments at the Intersection of Art, Science and Consumerism in Education

Karin Priem

Experimenting is one of the epistemological fundamentals of modern science, a «machine for making the future» that is constantly assuming new forms under changing conditions.

Rheinberger, Epistemische Dinge, 2003, p. 377

### INTRODUCTION

At the centre of this essay is a particular children's book, *The First Picture Book: Everyday Things for Babies.* It will be analysed in view of associated norms underpinning science-based approaches in education and a specific ethos of progressive educational praxis. Designed for young children, *The First Picture Book* was initially published in 1930. Its origins can be traced back to a collaboration between Edward Steichen, his daughter Mary Steichen Calderone,<sup>1</sup> and the New York City-based Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE), founded

<sup>1</sup> Mary Steichen Calderone (1904-1998) from the late 1950s onwards became a well-known physician and US American activist for sex education, the legalization of abortion, and planned parenthood. She was the first director of the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States and author of several books on sexuality and sex education.



in 1916 by Lucy Sprague Mitchell<sup>2</sup> and others.<sup>3</sup> The BEE focused its work on developmental psychology and progressive education, both of which aimed to promote «effective autonomous individuality», «social commitment», and a world based on rational humanity, participation and cooperation (Biber, 1984, p. xiii; see also Bank Street). In one of its first bulletins, in 1917 the BEE described itself as an institution that «is made up of a group of persons who are engaged in first-hand efforts for improving the education of children, and who have all shared in the general movement that has brought about a more scientific study of them» (*Experimental Schools*, 1917, p. 3).<sup>4</sup>

A 1928 book entitled *Children in the Nursery School* described the theoretical and pedagogical framework of one of the BEE's initiatives in early education for under-three-year-olds, which had been set up in 1919. The book's author, Harriet Johnson, had been the BEE Nursery School's director since 1920, and the book was meant to provide a comprehensive overview of the daily pedagogical praxis and built-in research on children's development. Teachers and researchers scrupulously recorded the conduct and growth of the children on a daily or weekly basis, including their food consumption, physical condition, weight and height, social contacts, language development, levels of crying, and uses of play materials. Within this framework, children were understood as growing and developing organisms actively pursuing and seeking experimental body-oriented, thing-related and social activities and were said to gradually progress from one stage to the next, thereby extending experience and control. In her book, Harriet Johnson explicitly mentioned physical enactment and development as a profound «preparation for our complex social life»:

Whether or not we find that children need positive and corrective procedure, we regard the free and experimental use and control of their bodies as the first desideratum for physical and mental health. Ability to put out energy effectively, to assume and hold any position desired, to poise themselves with

4 More bulletins of the BEE are available as reprints, see Winsor, 1973.

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<sup>2</sup> Lucy Sprague Mitchell (1878-1967) made her career as a teacher educator emphasizing research-based progressive classroom interaction and community-oriented curriculum design. For more information, see Bank Street, and Antler, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> In 1917, the Working Council of the BEE consisted of the following members, in addition to the chair Lucy Sprague Mitchell: Evelyn Dewey, Frederik W. Ellis, Harriet Forbes, Laura B. Garrett, Arthur M. Hulbert, Jean Lee Hunt, Elisabeth Irwin, Eleanor Johnson, Harriet Johnson, Wesley C. Mitchell and Caroline Pratt; John Dewey was one of its honorary members (*Experimental Schools*, 1917, p. 4).

a minimum of support, to throw, to jump, to skip, to hang, to swing, to balance, to recover balance when disturbed and then to carry on these activities with materials and in association with children is a fair beginning toward complete physical functioning. (Johnson, 1928, p. 6)

On a normative level, the BEE Nursery School, according to Johnson, was indeed concerned to develop «an attitude of readiness to act», which was said to be «characteristic of the creative, dynamic personality» (p. 11). Nevertheless, children had to follow strict temporal routines of eating, sleeping and playing, accompanied by a basic set of rules to prevent fights, attacks and injuries: «In fact, freedom in the sense of lack of direction would not be education» (p. 45). As for play and outdoor activities, children were encouraged to make choices and were helped to orient themselves within a certain range of activities provided according to their developmental stage. The equipment for play included «wagons and kiddy kars, slides, steps and packing boxes, blocks, dolls, crayons and clay» (p. 69) designed to stimulate the handling and manipulation of toys and playthings without necessitating the help or intervention of adults. Johnson's book provided an entire list of indoor and outdoor play material (pp. 75-80) which did not include picture books. At the invitation of his daughter, Mary Calderone, who as a mother of two children supported progressive education, Edward Steichen, one of the best-known fashion and commercial photographers in the 1930s (e.g., Brandow & Ewing, 2007), therefore felt inspired to contribute to «a new venture in the field of books for babies» (Calderone & Steichen, 1991, p. 7). In fact, the book was designed to perfectly match the progressive experimental practice in education as pursued by the BEE Nursery School (e.g., Biber, 1984, p. xiii).

This paper will analyse how the materiality of things and artefacts, sensory vision, progressive education, and science-based concepts of child development were forming a conceptual alliance with photography, which was then perceived as a mode of 'objective' display. Science-based approaches to childhood not only have stressed the objectivity of educational research, but, on a normative level, were also meant to foster advancement, innovation and reform related to educational practices and societal change. Within this experimental framework, observation and seeing became key: (I) they functioned as basic modes of research to support the intended production of 'factual' knowledge about the child and his or her developmental stages, and (2) they were considered central aspects of children's ability to develop intellectually and to contribute to societal transformation. There thus emerged a strong alliance of photography, science-based developmental psychology, and ideas of societal reform through educating children's ability to observe and act. Photographic techniques such as framing, cropping and enlarging (used in commercial and artistic photography as well as in scientific laboratories) not only helped to exclude contextual information and define what should be seen 'objectively', but also suppressed the normativity of what was perceived as 'factual truth' in progressive approaches to education.

In what follows, the paper (1) introduces the 'philosophy' and photographic structure of *The First Picture Book* itself; (2) relates this to visual and material strategies within the framework of progressive education; and, finally, (3) discusses and analyses the normative impact of what has been put on display. In conclusion, it (4) looks at the interrelationship and interconnectedness of art, science, and consumerism within the domain of education.

### THE FIRST PICTURE BOOK: FACTS ON DISPLAY?

In her preface to The First Picture Book, in 1930 Mary Steichen Calderone promoted photography as a medium perfectly suited to children's environment and age-related interests. Photography books for young children, in her view, were therefore very much «in line with modern educational theory» and, at the same time, «had the seal of approval of the children in a progressive country nursery school» (Calderone & Steichen, 1991, p. 3). Black-and-white photography, in Calderone's opinion, was much less deceptive as a medium than traditional children's books with their fancy designs such as coloured drawings and other supposedly misleading visual effects. Photography books, by contrast, were expected to stick to the facts and to depict reality, which in turn was said to match the 'objective' observing gaze of children. Accordingly, she saw traditional children's books as endangering young children's development: «Fanciful tales or pictures having for basis nothing the baby knows may lead to a later inability to distinguish between fact and fantasy» (p. 4). In her introductory remarks following Calderone's preface, Harriet M. Johnson, the already mentioned director of the BEE Nursery School, praised photography's capacity to visualize familiar things and to help reinforce images the child has already identified and formed. As such, photography could become a tool of progressive education and developmental psychology.

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figures 1-10: the first picture book, 1991 © edward steichen, 1930, 1958.



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In The First Picture Book, all things and artefacts, indeed, seem to appear in their pure presence and form. The book includes twenty-four black-and-white photographs without text. The photographs are supposed to present simple everyday objects, most of them closely connected to the experimental sphere of the BEE's educational initiatives (figs. I-IO): a mug filled with milk and two slices of bread on a plain white plate; a teddy bear and a ball; a clock; a hairbrush and a comb; a toothbrush in a glass next to a piece of soap; a telephone; a coat and a hat; fruit; daisies in a glass vase; and, finally, a number of toys (such as balls, building blocks, a tricycle and a wooden train).

All objects on display appear staged and at the same time isolated from their environment. The individual photographs in The First Picture Book are reminiscent of the close-up shots of commercial photography and the precision of traditional still-life paintings, both of which put a set of objects on stage and expose it to the gaze of the viewer in a supposedly appealing way while placing an analytical emphasis on the objects' form and material texture. Edward Steichen's photographs were carefully crafted. Similar to his commercial photography, he used artificial light to avoid distracting shades while stressing the texture and form of the depicted objects. It seems as if the photographs had a presentational character. They were made to attract the eye, provide an exercise to see, observe and recognize forms and a material quality that appealed to children's other senses and called them to action. As such, the photographs also stressed the material and sensual quality of the artefacts: the feel of a metal cup; the colour and taste of milk; the softness of fur or a baby's hairbrush; the smooth surface of balls, pieces of fruit and porcelain dishes; the movement of wheels and balls; the material quality of wooden toys; the handling and feel of things; the sounds of a telephone; the ticking of a clock; the smell of daisies; and, finally, the aesthetic quality of simple objects and things. The First Picture Book therefore does much more than try to present mere objectivity: it is a book on how to see, experience, arrange and appreciate the neat simplicity of everyday life in an average middle-class children's environment in the United States. In fact, The First Picture Book depicts the objects and artefacts which were at the centre of the material-sensory curriculum of progressive education; it referred to indoor and outdoor activities such as block building, storytelling, washing and hygiene, managing time, putting on clothes, setting lunch tables, and taking care of flowers (e.g., Pratt & Stanton, 1926). Like photography, these activities were aimed at creating forms and patterns of behavior and handling.

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### ENCOUNTERS OF ART AND SCIENCE: NEW WAYS OF SEEING IN PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

In 1926, Caroline Pratt and Jessie Stanton published a book recording the everyday experimental praxis and observations at the BEE in the context of progressive education. As indicated by its title, Before Books too is a contribution to early childhood education. In their introduction, the authors drew a clear line between traditional education and progressive education in early childhood. In their view, progressive education in early childhood builds on the development of the organism and bodily senses by means of experience. Therefore, education is defined as an art comprising the entire body, its physiological functioning and related intellectual development. Education thus not only included artistic activities like music, rhythmic education and drawing, but also simple everyday practices. Teachers were responsible for arranging and providing an experimental space, and for helping children orient themselves within this space so that they could explore and experience art, play and everyday activities, including trips into the city. As mentioned earlier, the findings and developmental processes were thoroughly observed, described and thereby objectified. Teachers were seen not so much as educators offering specific training in music, the arts and other fields, but as observers, researchers and promoters of an overall organic developmental process:

The assumption of the old pedagogy that anything, music, drawing, sculpture, dramatics, literature is merely a combination of its elements lies at the bottom of most of our educational difficulties. Art is not produced through an intellectual nor yet a feeling nor to use the old psychological term a willing process, but from the getting together of all these. It seems to spring out of something which analysts call the 'subconscious' and which behaviorists do not mention at all. Straight physiologists may be the first to name this inner process, such schools as ours are producing an abundance of corroborative evidence. (Pratt & Stanton, 1926, p. 24f.)

Nevertheless, a main problem of science-based educational research—that is, the visual observation of an inner process—remains unresolved and further increases if the perspective of research is not output—but processoriented. The answer of experimental education was to put even stronger emphasis on observation and to record every detail of what could be seen and observed in the classroom. Children were literally seen as experimenting entities in an experimental educational setting, observed by educators who acted as researchers and took notes of every single observation they made in the classroom. As such, experimental education produced a tremendous amount of information, which was to corroborate objectivity by means of visual evidence and observation. In addition, the children themselves were seen as observing and experimenting individuals. In her introduction to Lucy Sprague Mitchell's Here and Now Story Book, Caroline Pratt referred to children as almost 'natural' if not 'automatic' observers and explorers. Their «method», she writes, «is the method of art and science—the method of experimentation and inquiry. We can almost say that children are born with it, so soon do they begin to show signs of applying it» (Mitchell, 1921, p. ix). An alliance between experimental education and photography as a mode of observation and a new way of seeing and exploring therefore manifested itself almost inevitably.

Photography in this context seems not to have been perceived primarily as an artistic practice, but rather as an optical technology to observe reality, allowing for investigating and detecting forms, including social ones. Progressive concepts of early education and related visions of societal transformation are, therefore, closely connected to scientific strategies of the visualization of knowledge. In his 1947 essay «Schauen, sehen, wissen» (Looking, Seeing, Knowing), Ludwik Fleck (1983) provides an impressive description of how, following the invention of the microscope, the scientific definition of bacterial groups at first oscillated between different possible classifications, shapes and forms, before one scientifically accepted visual image asserted itself and became firmly established, which in turn determined subsequent research. Optical devices—including photography—undoubtedly were key instruments of research within many experimental systems (Rheinberger, 2014), and the images produced were processed into paradigmatic patterns or forms, thereby resulting in different forms of knowledge, be it astronomical, chemical, biological, medical, physiological, psychological or educational knowledge (see Heintz & Huber, 2001; Daston & Galison, 2007; Bredekamp, Schneider, & Dünkel, 2008; Bruhn & Hemken, 2008). Similarly and also aiming at the discovery of patterns, Pratt & Stanton (1926) described the core principle of their new concept of research on early childhood as a mode of «thinking about thinking» and connected this to the fine arts and the sciences:

All creative artists have always used this method [«thinking about thinking»] presumably but they are just becoming conscious of it and beginning to analyse it and sustain it. What is more interesting still is that science or to speak more explicitly psychology is beginning to support it as against the logical method of thought. The psychologist in discovering patterns produced by organisms has admitted a new way of thinking about thinking. Pattern forms are what artists have been working on since the first one began to work but no one has been willing to give them credit for thinking. (Pratt & Stanton, 1926, p. 4)

«Thinking about thinking», therefore, was based on discovering patterns and forms and subjecting them to further analysis through research, which perfectly matched the functioning of photography and other optical instruments as technical devices within the sciences and the arts. In an article on «The Image as Cultural Technology», Bruhn & Dünkel stress that the main impact of images, be it within the sciences or the fine arts, has to do with «the definition and description of form» (2008, p. 166; see also Priem, 2015). They explicitly mention that «form» is a «key term for several different scientific methodologies and disciplines» (Bruhn & Dünkel, 2008, p. 166). In their view, form «can imply the structure and evolution of organisms or the significant elements of language (as in morphology), and is central for those disciplines that apply comparative and descriptive means to their visible objects (like archaeology and history of art)» (p. 166). The analysis of forms and patterns and related imaging techniques like photography, therefore, is situated at the intersection of art and science. Seen from a historical perspective, the rediscovery of pure, non-ornamental form and related ways of seeing at the beginning of the twentieth century, indeed, seems to have been an overarching trope of design, art, education of taste, consumerism and scientific epistemologies. The aesthetic avant-garde from the 1920s onwards developed a huge interest in fields such as photography, typography, innovative design, and photomontage, all of which aimed at the creation and invention of new forms of presenting and seeing. It was no coincidence that Edward Steichen in 1929 was one of the participants of the circulating international exhibition «Film und Foto» (Film and Photo),<sup>5</sup>



<sup>5</sup> Many thanks to Ulrich Hägele for bringing the exhibition «Film und Foto» to my attention and introducing me to the reprint of the original catalogue.

initiated by Alfred Stotz in Stuttgart, which combined and connected artistic experiments, journalism, advertising, commercialism, consumerism and science, and thus attracted a huge public audience.<sup>6</sup>

### WHY DOES PHOTOGRAPHY MATTER? NORMATIVE IMPLICATIONS OF FACTS

New ways of seeing and observing were, indeed, a wider issue at the beginning of the twentieth century, especially in the late 1920s. These explorations of visual experiments sought to link visual strategies of the artistic, commercial and scientific sphere. While progressive education did not reflect on commercialism and consumerism, Pratt & Stanton (1926) in *Before Books* also stressed the close experimental relationship of seeing, observing, recording and research as a key element of pedagogy and educational research:

It is possible for the artist teacher to record what has gone on in his group. Inadvertently one gets his activity and that of the children in terms of motor living [sic!], but his object in recording is to project something for study, something which will help him to check his own and the children's activities which have taken on certain forms. Just in so far as these formulations and in so far as he is experienced in seeing them he learns to record what are significant or typical. (p. 8)

The discovery of significant or typical patterns under conditions of experimentation builds on scientific principles like repetitive observation that is usually said to underpin the objectivity of research. With regard to children and their organisms, developmental patterns imply a certain automatism of growth and progress that can be well defined and interpreted as «motor living» or mechanical evolutionary sequences (see, e.g., Herman, Priem, & Thyssen, 2015) that occur and are formed within a specific environment. In each case, children were exposed to specific indoor and outdoor environments to stimulate their senses and to inspire them to explore, observe and develop. Children were also

<sup>6</sup> Other participants included László Moholy-Nagy, El Lissitzky, Sigfried Giedion, Alexander Rodchenko, Edward Weston, Piet Zwart, Imogen Cunningham, Albert Renger-Patzsch, André Kertész, Hannah Höch, Aenne Biermann, Man Ray and Eugène Atget (Hermann, 1929).



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taken on trips into the city, and a photograph (fig. 11), printed in the BEE Bulletin in 1917, shows a group of children observing the loading of a truck while being themselves observed through the eye of the camera.

Like their teacher-researchers, the children were expected to discover a scheme or a pattern they would apply and further develop in their play.

Another image in the same book (fig. 12) shows «building for a purpose». The wooden blocks seem to be arranged to resemble a farm or a stable for animals, whereas the child is involved with some kind of cart, which can be loaded and unloaded. In both cases, the photographs are used to objectify a certain style of thought, that is, of experimental education and research, implying that children orient themselves and develop intellectually and socially «through their observation as well as through former experiencing» (Experimental Schools, 1917, pp. 16-17), while being observed by researchers, who un-



figure II: on the docks (experimental schools, 1917, p. 2)



FIGURE 12: BUILDING FOR A PURPOSE (experimental schools, 1917, p. 15)

dergo very similar processes. As mentioned earlier, *The First Picture Book* was meant to support the curriculum of progressive education and it was, therefore, no coincidence that building blocks, transportation and movement also appeared in its photographs (figs. 13 and 14).

All in all, The First Picture Book simply served as another tool within this experimental space of seeing and observing. It resembled a device for further observation and visual training (and as such could have functioned



figures 13-14: the first picture book, 1991 © edward steichen, 1930, 1958.

like a scientific atlas) rather than a children's book (Bruhn & Dünkel, 2008). Because of its lack of rich and ornamental decoration-fabulous designs and colourful drawings are indeed absent from the book-, it most probably did not appeal to or inspire children's imagination.<sup>7</sup> With regard to both its make and purpose, The First Picture Book was located at the intersection of new visual technologies, science, advertisement and art. At the same time, showing sharply focused and analytically staged facts for babies, it put on display archetypical forms that were designed to train children to observe their environment, to learn to classify their own experiments, and to develop forms and patterns within educational spaces. Furthermore, the book was a circulating object of training and display that could disseminate the educational concepts of the BEE, champion new ways of seeing within the domestic sphere and, at the same time, also reach out to a wider public. As such, The First Picture Book became an «evocative» object to observe and see with (e.g., Turkle, 2007), to talk about, to interact with and to structure behavior: in sum, a material-visual agent or player within the social sphere of children and adults.

<sup>7</sup> The First Picture Book obviously failed to attract a big audience and «was not a big success» (John Updike in Calderone & Steichen, 1991, p. 62).



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According to Elizabeth Edwards (2012), the meaning of photographs is affected by «the fluid relationship between a photograph's production, consumption, material forms, ownership, institutionalization, exchange, possession, and social accumulation, in which equal weight is given to content and use value» (p. 223). This also applies to photography books for children. The question remains how the content as well as the practical and educational value of the images interact and relate to each other. How do the content, aesthetical composition, framing and visual techniques of Steichen's photographs intersect or interact within the fields of art, consumerism and science, and how could the book and its photographs become educational agents? How can we describe and determine the relationship of epistemology, design and the social life of things such as children's books (Appandurai, 1986)? And why does photography matter (Fried, 2008) within the framework of progressive education?

The art historian and philosopher Gottfried Boehm (2007a; 2007b; see also Prange, 2005) draws upon deixis to distinguish images from texts as conveyers of knowledge and meaning. Images, in his view, operate with a specific visual repertoire of intentional gestures that prompt and explicitly point to specific action while deliberately excluding other contents or actions. Following Boehm's argument, one can argue that The First Picture Book was a result of a careful selection process: the photographs included in the book intentionally pointed to specific ways of seeing, acting and handling, which explicitly excluded other ways of seeing, other actions and other choices that in turn corresponded with other norms or criteria of decision-making.

The normative aspects of the book can be traced aesthetically and socially, also in relationship to consumerism. John Updike, in his epilogue to The First Picture Book, describes the objects on display as «items of inexpensive mass manufacture» and as «quite conservative in design» (Calderone & Steichen, 1991, p. 58f.). In addition, he called Steichen's mode of photography «absolute» in its «definition» of artefacts and things, precise, «unironical», strictly selective, and orderly (p. 64f.). «This is a no-nonsense baby's world» he concluded, adding that the photographs presented «flat semiotic realities» (p. 62) and demonstrated the «gravity and power» of children's perception (p. 66). The latter may also have been due to the impact of the materiality and high-end (commercially and artistically oriented) photographic quality of The First Picture Book, which certainly served to enhance its status and significance. The scientific rigor of observation and recording and the eminent importance of seeing seem to have invaded the children's world and eliminated fun, enter-

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tainment, nonsense, myth and imagination. Indeed, *The First Picture Book* addressed children as fact-oriented, focused, experimenting and observing organisms that would act accordingly and step-by-step develop associated forms and patterns. If we look at *The First Picture Book* from a presentational perspective, children were looking at photographs of aesthetically poor, mass-manufactured everyday objects that nevertheless could achieve functional value through the use of photographic high-end technologies as new models of seeing and observing at the intersection of art, commercialism and science. The gap between the aesthetic quality of the content and the aesthetical and technological production of Steichen's photographs may, indeed, give priority to seeing, the creation of forms, and behavior while putting less emphasis on educating taste.

Unfortunately, only little is known about the educational effects, related oral exchanges and the 'real' social life of the book and its photographs during the 1930s. Nevertheless, it is worth looking at the book's career as a travelling object. Once launched as a picture book presenting facts for babies, *The First Picture Book* was republished in 1991 by the Whitney Museum in New York with an afterword by the American novelist John Updike. Originally situated at the intersection of art, consumerism and science and intended as a tool of sciencebased progressive education, the book, in its later edition, having travelled through time and space, entirely moved away from the domains of science and education and became for the most part an artistic relic of the past.

### CONCLUSION: THE INVENTION OF THE FUTURE AT THE INTERSECTION OF CONSUMERISM, ART, SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

Progressive education was mainly focused on developmental patterns of physiological organisms. Experimenting materials and new ways of observing, seeing and recording within this framework functioned as a kind of «machine for making the future» (Jacob, 1988, p. 13). By adopting experimental models and methods of education along the lines of the BEE, future societies would be built on and by rational, creative, dynamic, effective, autonomous and socially committed individuals, who in turn would be able to act in a cooperative spirit, distinguish between «fact and fantasy» (Calderone & Steichen, 1991, p. 4) and perform with a «readiness to act» (Johnson, 1928, p. 11). Most publications of the BEE therefore emphasized the high potential of its initiatives to create a new mankind and a new society. This adventure of inventing the future was said to start at the intersection of art and science. Not only were experimenting and observing building on the physiological apparatus of children and adults, but the discovery and invention of forms within the arts were identified with objectification, scientific observation, recording and developmental patterns of human organisms.

The First Picture Book, published in 1930, was part of the BEE's «machine for making» a better future. The period was characterized by the discovery of photographic technologies as hybrid visual and epistemological strategies to experiment with, to train new ways of seeing, and to implement new ways of presenting and observing. When Steichen was working on The First Picture Book, he was actively and successfully involved in photographing consumer objects, and the photographs he took and that were intended to depict presumably important facts for babies explicitly refer to his commercial photography. There, like in The First Picture Book, objects and things were depicted in serial graphic patterns by stressing their form and material presence. The Bureau of Educational Experiments may not have been fully aware of Steichen's affinity for commercialism and consumerism, domains in which new ways of seeing and acting also were playing a key role. But it was mainly because of this relationship that The First Picture Book could function as an object that explicitly corresponded with the curriculum of the BEE, its play materials and their handling. According to Baudrillard (1968), «any object immediately becomes the foundation of a network of habits, the focus of a set of behavioral routines» (p. 7fn). Of course, this also works the other way round, and he adds: «Conversely, there is probably no habit that does not centre on an object. In everyday existence the two are inextricably bound up with each other» (p. 7fn). As such, The First Picture Book certainly is a good example of how consumerism, art and science formed alliances within the field of education.

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### (PRE-)SCRIPTED CREATIVITY: AN EXAMINATION OF THE CREATIVITY MOVEMENT IN SPAIN'S CONTEMPORARY MUSIC EDUCATION LITERATURE

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#### ABSTRACT

Creativity is a pervasive topic in current discourses on music education in Spain. Creativity is commonly seen as universal. Also, the construct is often seen as entirely positive and as a desirable personality trait. This paper challenges these premises. It unpacks creativity's contingency as a cultural construct attached to a particular set of ideas and values, and it examines this notion as part of a particular regime of truth. The paper begins by contextualizing the Spanish creativity movement within music education and by delineating the socio-political and economic coordinates that surrounded its emergence in contemporary Spain. Then, the paper approaches creativity as a pedagogical object, and it explores this construct's ambivalent association with long-standing tropes about curriculum design and the social role of education. Discourses on creativity in Spanish music education ultimately contribute to the fabrication of an ideal type of student and, by extension, to the «creation» of a particular kind of Spanish citizen. The paper ends by examining potential dissonances between creativity's hoped-for outcomes and its actual effects.

> **KEY WORDS** Creativity; Music education; Spain; Critical discourse analysis.

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### (Pre-)Scripted Creativity: An Examination of the Creativity Movement in Spain's Contemporary Music Education Literature

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Current Western globalized societies tend to regard creativity as a highly desirable personal trait, and to associate it with social and economic growth. For example, the United Nations (UN) presents creativity as key for so-called developing countries to move ahead in the current global economic system. As a result, the UN encourages and supports the establishment of «creative economies» across the world (UN, 2008, 2010, 2013). Similarly, the European Union declared 2009 as the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, claiming: «The world is moving to a new rhythm. To be at the forefront of this new world, Europe needs to become more creative and innovative» (Adrià Acosta, et al., 2009, p. 1). Within this trend, endeavours commonly labeled as «artistic», such as music making, stand as privileged venues to foster creativity. There is, for instance, a push to substitute the acronym STEM, which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, with STEAM. STEM was meant to draw attention to the significance of the four above-mentioned academic disciplines in the new global knowledge economy. STEAM, on the other hand, incorporates the Arts into the former equation, under the following rationale: «We simply cannot compete in the new economy unless we do

<sup>1</sup> My sincerest thanks go to Dr. Ronald Radano and to Dr. Thomas Popkewitz for their feedback in earlier drafts of this paper.



something now about creativity and innovation» (Christenson, 2011; Spencer, 2012).

Notwithstanding creativity's capacity to produce desirable outcomes, discourses on creativity seldom interrogate critically this construct's various effects, nor do they examine its potential limitations. The present paper addresses this perceived gap by critically examining the notion of creativity as it appears in Spain's contemporary music education discourses. Firstly, it describes some of the circumstances that favoured creativity's emergence as an academic construct in Spain's contemporary music education literature two decades ago, and which also bolstered its rapid rise as a popular topic of study. Secondly, the paper gets into the multiple sources from which the Spanish notion of creativity draws, and it analyzes the effects that some of these elements produce for music education. Thirdly, the paper examines the transmogrification of creativity into a pedagogical object within Spanish music education, as well as the impact that creativity has had in the configuration of the field of music education. Fourthly, this paper interrogates some of the assumptions in which the Spanish construct of creativity rests. It addresses a number of questions related to the circumstances that surrounded the emergence of creativity: What perceived needs and anxieties did the notion of creativity respond to? What conditions of possibility made creativity such a productive construct for the field of music education in Spain in the mid-1990s? Discourses on creativity in music education ultimately contribute to the fabrication of an ideal type of student and, by extension, to the «creation» of a particular kind of Spanish citizen. A fifth section problematizes creativity as an all-positive and boundless construct, a general conception that prevails in Spanish music education literature. The paper suggests that creativity has inherent limitations by exploring how Spanish music education scholars make a selective usage of the notion. It also explores some of the socio-political circumstances in which creativity emerged both in Spain and in the United States (U.S.). Next, the paper argues that Spanish music education literature on creativity is rooted in long-standing pedagogical tropes about curriculum design and the social role of education, notwithstanding creativity being portrayed as a radical break from traditional music education practices. A concluding section reviews and expands on some of the main points previously made, ultimately urging music educators and music education scholars to continue interrogating the notion of creativity as it currently exists in Spain's music education discourses.

#### CREATIVITY AS A «NATURAL KIND»

The first academic paper on creativity in music education published in Spain appeared in 1996 (Domeque i Buisan & Flores Sánchez). Since then, creativity has become a pervasive construct within Spain's contemporary music education literature. To give an example, out of a total of 246 publications that match the descriptor *educación musical* (music education) in Spain's ISOC database, a database focused on humanities and social science research, 50 entries (i.e. 20%) also match the descriptor *creatividad* (creativity) (CSIC, 2014a, 2014b).<sup>2</sup>

Spanish music educators often treat creativity as putative and universal. Contrastingly, this paper approaches creativity as a culturally and historically situated construct. Spanish music education literature on creativity draws predominantly on the notion of creativity that emerged in the U.S. in the 1950s within the field of psychology (Gilford, 1950). Spain's educational discourse started to draw on this construct from the mid-1960s onwards (Martínez Beltrán, 1966; Martorell Pons, 1968). Given that the final push for the incorporation of general music in schools did not take place until the early 1990s, Spain's music education followed education's general trend of incorporating the notion of creativity only three decades later (MEC, 1990; Eurydice, 1997; Rusinek & Sarfson, 2010). Despite this delay, creativity quickly became, to use Ian Hacking's (2007) terminology, a «natural kind» within Spanish music education literature. That is, Spanish music education scholars soon started to approach creativity as an entity that had always existed. Shortly, this literature approached creativity as a ubiquitous human personality trait, assuming its presence across time and space. As a result, Spanish authors sometimes apply the concept of creativity retroactively to describe events and works that predate the 1950s. For example, the documentary Creativity: Its Meaning and Timeliness argues that the Spanish Baroque writer Félix Lope de Vega (1562-1635) was a very creative man of letters (Marín Ibáñez, Lebrero Baena, Marín Viadel, & Martín González, 1991). It is, however, unlikely that Lope de Vega (or any of his contemporaries) used the contemporary psychometric notion of creativity that this documentary later presents. Likewise, Spain's literature on creativity in music education sometimes extrapolates



<sup>2</sup> Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, ISOC database's manager, is the largest public institution devoted to conducting research in Spain and the third largest in Europe. The search reported here included peer-reviewed publications published between 1996 and 2014.

this construct to peoples and cultures very unlikely to conceptualize their reality as creative/non-creative, or to treat creativity as a valuable personal, social and economic trait. For instance, Spanish educator Francesc Busquets established «foster[ing] musical creativity among students» as one of three key objectives for a collaborative music education learning project to be carried out between a group of Catalan (Spanish) and Japanese middle schools (Domeque i Buisan & Flores Sánchez, 1996).<sup>3</sup> The lack of rationale accompanying these objectives suggests they are self-evident for the two parts involved. However, journalist W. David Marx, editor-in-chief of the website Néojaponisme, points out: «artistic tradition in Japan has always been about following Old Masters» until the point when «creative confidence is reached. There is no penalty for being seen as 'copycat' or 'derivative.' In fact, that's exactly what brings legitimacy» (as cited in Reynolds, 2011, p. 164). The lack of contextual information on Busquets' objectives raises the question of whether creativity became a desirable learning outcome for the participating Japanese schools as a result of this collaborative project, or if creativity was already a central concept for the participating Japanese schools prior to this program.

#### SPANISH CREATIVITY: CREATIVIDAD

The current Spanish notion of creativity is a composite of both foreign and local elements, combined in a singular way. Following Popkewitz (2008b, ix), Spanish literature on creativity in music education may be described as a «traveling library». The notion of traveling library is meant to highlight «how ideas are constructed in a field of 'global' and local authors whose resultant patterns of 'thought' are not merely the sum of its parts or a variation of a constant theme.» In this sense, Spain's literature on creativity in music education consists of a body of knowledge in which foreign ideas merge with local elements specific to the Spanish context to produce a singular, idiosyncratic understanding of creativity. On the one hand, Spanish music education literature on creativity relies heavily on scholarly work produced since the 1950s in the Anglo-Saxon world, and in the U.S. in particular. Spanish authors rely on these sources to define creativity from various perspectives, psychology being

 $_{\rm 3}$   $\,$  All quotations originally written in Spanish have been translated into English for linguistic coherence.



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the preferred one (García Calero & Estebaranz García, 2005; Latorre Latorre & Fontes del Valle, 1997; Malbrán, 2007a, 2007b). On the other hand, there is also a significant number of music education publications that present creativity-fostering curriculum materials. These texts are highly attuned to Spain's socio-cultural and economic circumstances (Alsina, 2007; Dios Montes, 2003; Higuera, 2004; Mayol i Puentes, 2013; Pérez Aldeguer, 2012). Spanish music education scholars have thus both adopted and adapted the notion of creativity, making it into an indigenous idea within Spain.

Spain's music education literature on creativity differs in some fundamental ways from its U.S. equivalent, even as it is still heavily dependent on the psychometric notion of creativity first developed in the U.S. half a century ago. This selective embracement eased some of the inherent contradictions that exist between the psychometric construct of creativity and Spanish music education's own purposes, ultimately making creativity more serviceable to the latter. For example, most Spanish music education literature on creativity rests upon the assumption that creativity is a transferable human trait (Díaz Gómez & Frega, 1998; Frega, 1997). Unlike other musical abilities, such as the sense of pitch, which music educators commonly describe as dependent on the music-making process, Spain's music education literature conceptualizes creativity as a more comprehensive construct that may be fostered though various channels. Artistic disciplines in general, and music education in particular, emerge in this literature as privileged venues to foster creativity. In other words, Spanish authors portray music education as a privileged venue to develop people's creative skills. Once developed, these skills could then be transferred to other realms. This assumption about creativity's cross-disciplinary nature contrasts with Guilford's initial conceptualization of creativity as a context-dependent construct. For Guilford, creativity was a multifactorial personality trait composed of different types of «creative abilities». Different areas of human activity, such as technology, science, government and the arts, supposedly mobilized different types of creative abilities. In consequence, «[w]hat it takes to make the inventor, the writer, the artist, and the composer creative may have some factors in common, but there is much room for variation of pattern of abilities» (1950, p. 451). According to Guilford, the factors involved in creative behavior in one area were not necessarily the same as the factors involved in any other creative areas. That is why, for Guilford, creative skills were not readily transferrable from one creative area to another. Guilford's context-dependent assumption is still relevant in the



Anglo-Saxon world at the present time (Gardner, 1990; Robinson & Aronica, 2009). However, Spain's music education literature downplays this aspect, as do other artistic disciplines, both in Spain and in other countries. Instead, these countries subscribe to preceding philosophical arguments about creativity, which assert: «creativity is the same wherever you find it» (Guilford, 1950, p. 451). Spain's music education thus strategically embraces some aspects of the U.S. psychometric construct of creativity, whereas it draws from previous philosophical understandings of creativity for other matters.

The strategic integration of certain aspects of the Anglo-Saxon construct of creativity within Spanish discourses of creativity in music education is charged with tactical productivity.<sup>4</sup> Firstly, creativity tends to be seen as key for Spain's social and economic progress (more on this later). Thus, when music education stands as a privileged venue for the development of students' creativity, people are prone to regard music education as indispensable. Secondly, when authors establish strong connections between the construct of creativity and music education, some of the prestige and good press associated with the former gets transferred to the latter. As a result, Spain's music education, which is often in quite a precarious position, sees its public image strengthened. Thirdly, the notion of creativity enjoys significant academic legitimacy due to its links to the field of psychometrics. Psychometrics is moderately well established within nowadays' dominant regime of scientific truth given its quasi-quantitative status. In this regime, exact sciences represent the gold standard of good science (Porter, 1996). As in the previous case, music education's association with the notion of creativity benefits from the partial transfer of this construct's academic legitimacy into music education. Finally, Spain's academic community tends to associate referencing foreign sources with good scholarly practice. Music education literature on creativity, which draws heavily on literature from the Anglo-Saxon world, also benefits from this.

Yet the incorporation of the notion of creativity within Spain's music education literature also produces effects that may potentially be harmful to the field of music education. More specifically, music education adopts a depend-

<sup>4</sup> I am using the phrases «strategic integration» and «tactical productivity» in a Foucauldian sense (1976/1990, p. 102). Foucault coined these two phrases with the aim of stressing the reciprocal effects of power and knowledge, as well as the circumstances that make the utilization of a notion (in this case, that of creativity) necessary in a particular place (for our purposes, Spain) at a particular point in time (i.e. the recent past).



ent role vis-à-vis creativity when it is seen as just a means to foster creativity (creativity would then be transferred to other areas). In other words, music education's instrumental use of creativity for advocacy purposes ultimately makes music education dependent on creativity's general support—or lack thereof. Spanish music education's engagement with the notion of creativity thus responds to multiple purposes, and it has various (both desired and undesired) effects.

#### CREATIVITY AS THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

As creativity became increasingly prevalent in Spain's music education discourse, it impacted people's understandings of and approaches to music education in fundamental ways. Historically, Spain's music conservatories organized their curricula according to music's internal logic (Longueira Matos, 2011). The structure of the discipline took precedence over students' learning demands. Contrastingly, the psychology of individuals now governs the configuration of Spain's general school music, and the notion of creativity, along with other psychological constructs, such as aptitude and critical thinking, act as signposts in this process.<sup>5</sup> Popkewitz's (2004, p. 248) notion of «alchemy of school subjects» provides an interesting lens to examine this issue. Popkewitz argues that school subjects are not simply designed to deliver technical knowledge. School subjects also constitute technologies of power aimed at fabricating ideal future citizens. Therefore, similarly to the sorcerer of the Middle Ages, who sought to turn lead into gold, the alchemy of school subjects illustrates the transmutation of knowledge of the disciplines into social spaces of schooling. Psychological constructs such as creativity help schools achieve this end.<sup>6</sup> Hence, the analogy between creativity and the philosopher's stone that opens this section. Spanish music education started using various psychological constructs, such as creativity, when it expanded its reach from music



<sup>5</sup> Spanish music conservatories are currently taking steps toward the adoption of the construct of creativity as a central curricular and instructional technology (García Calero & Estebaranz García, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> I use the word «technology» here in a Foucaldian sense. Foucault (1980) uses the term «technology» to highlight the ways in which power relations operate, and to challenge the belief that power relations have no effects *per se*.

conservatories into the public school system.<sup>7</sup> As a result, psychology's episteme—i.e. its ways of looking at and interpreting the world—now shapes music education as a school subject.

Spanish general music education's main purpose is not to understand music per se, but nor is it to develop students' creativity for its own sake. Its ultimate goal is rather to produce creative citizens ready to support Spain's social prosperity and economic growth. Latorre Latorre and Fortes del Valle (1997, p. 11) write: «Indeed, creative contributions have a high social and economic value.» In a similar vein, Díaz Gómez (2007) quotes U.S. business management writer Tom Peters in order to advocate for the fostering of creativity in Spain's music classrooms. She portrays creative music education as a way to achieve «business excellence in a disruptive age.» Creativity within music education thus becomes associated with the prosperity of the Spanish nation within a global capitalist social and economic order. Creativity-fostering music education serves to govern and differentiate children through the teaching and learning of music. In other words, contemporary Spanish general music education seeks to help students acquire technical music knowledge and skills, but only insofar as it also contributes to the fabrication of creative Spanish citizens. Creativity shapes the modes of making music and being musical in nowadays' Spanish schools. Psychology in general, and creativity in particular, shape the dominant style of reasoning within Spain's music education.

#### FABRICATING A CREATIVE NATION

Spanish music education scholars sometimes provide rationales about the origins of the notion of creativity. In these narratives, they tend to frame creativity's emergence in Spain as a natural consequence of the social, cultural and economic conditions of contemporaneity. To give an example, Aróstegui Plaza (2012, p. 31) prefaces a literature review of scientific literature on creativity in music education with the following words: «The field of creativity and its role in the curriculum is growing, certainly due to the need to provide an answer from the field of education to a world that is constantly changing

<sup>7</sup> The field of educational psychology did not emerge in Spain until the mid-1970s (Yela Granizo, 1994). The construct of creativity became prevalent in Spanish educational discourse around the same time.



in unforeseeable ways.» Likewise, Pérez Rebollo (2007, p. 31) frames and justifies a creativity-fostering music education curricular proposal quoting Spain's 2006 Education Act as follows: «[U]nder changing circumstances, societies face different challenges, and education should try to address such challenges.» In these texts, creativity emerges as a solution to the perceived uncertainty and turmoil which characterize the present time.

Spanish music education scholars are prone to equate change with challenge. They portray instability as inherently harmful. Likewise, they presume that teachers can help improve Spain's current social and economic situation through creativity. It thus becomes both a professional and social (national) imperative for teachers to fabricate creative citizens through the development of students' creative skills. Students must leave school being creative; that is, being ready to face Spain's constantly shifting and unpredictable social and economic challenges. Ultimately, Spanish music educators' rationales indicate yearning for a long-gone time of relative social and economic equilibrium. Creativity will supposedly help to bring that time of stability back, or at least establish a new normality within a constantly changing reality. Creativity is thus inherently contradictory. It embodies notions of unpredictability and rupture, while at the same time carrying people's longing for a less uncertain time. Through creativity, Spanish music educators embrace notions of openness and ambivalence, they agree to relinquish to some of their existing control over students' behaviors and learning products. Yet teachers do so only insofar as this leads to a time of strengthened social and economic stability: i.e. to a time of greater control. This whole rationale prevents alternative understandings of conflict and of change. It prevents, for instance, an understanding of change as a positive event, filled with potential for alternative realities to emerge.

Spanish music education's narratives about the instability of Spain's current social and economic situation, and about creativity's potential to impact this situation, are not arbitrary. They bear tactical productivity. These narratives echo dominant contemporary discourses on globalization and the new economy (Baudrillard, 2002/2012; Bauman, 2000; Castells, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Žižek, 2002). Thanks to that, they sound commonsensical to the reader, and are able to mobilize people's fears and anxieties about the future. Ultimately, these narratives help to justify and legitimize proposals of social reform, making them sound both necessary and urgent (Agamben, 1995/1998; Hardt &r Negri, 2000; Nancy, 2002/2007). The above-mentioned arguments help



Spanish scholars justify the need for creativity-fostering initiatives in music education, and also the need for their scholarly articles on this topic.

#### ALL-ENCOMPASSING CREATIVITY

Spain's music education scholars tend to treat the notion of creativity as a school reform technology that has potential to help Spain reach ever-higher levels of economic growth and social progress. Within this literature, creativity emerges as an entirely positive and seemingly limitless construct. And yet, the notion of creativity has inherent limitations. Drawing on Thomas Popkewitz's (2008b, p. 169) notion of «double gestures,» I will expose some of the ways in which creativity operates both as a mechanism of inclusion and as a mechanism of exclusion in Spanish music education. That is, I will point out ways in which creativity produces abjection through mechanisms which are supposedly inclusive.

As a positive personal trait, creativity is paired with other positively valued traits such as open-mindedness, tolerance, spontaneity, imagination and self-actualization. Conversely, creativity tends to be pitted against a similar, although opposite, set of personal attributes such as stereotyped thinking, rigidity, narrow-mindedness and intolerance toward ambiguity. Some authors may venture to point out certain constraints and obstacles regarding the implementation of creativity-fostering curricular designs. For instance, Giráldez (2007) mentions the presence of musical composition in Spain's music education is still «almost negligible,» and also that music teachers' computer skills are oftentimes quite limited. However, there is a lack of discordant voices exposing potential risks embedded in the notion of creativity itself.

Although creativity commonly evokes ideas of unbounded freedom, openness and pluralism, the construct often gets actualized in quite narrow forms. The dominant picture of creativity as limitless starts to fall apart if we look at individual behaviors and their inclusion—or absence—from the category of «the creative.» It is in these instances that creativity's limits emerge. The ideal creative subject is, according to the literature, a socially-integrated individual that makes significant contributions to the Spanish economy and society. For instance, García Calero and Estebaranz García (2005, p. 17) quote the following words from Spanish education scholar Ángeles Gervilla Castillo: «Creativity depends not only on originality, but also on social recognition.» Similarly,

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García Calero and Estebaranz García (p. 46) highlight Saturnino de la Torre's definition of creativity. For de la Torre, creativity is «the human potential to generate and communicate new ideas within a value framework.»<sup>8</sup> According to these authors, creativity must, by definition, help people achieve an ideal state of constantly adaptive productivity and functionality in which individuals are neither a burden nor a threat to their society. Yet, if creativity is actually circumscribed to socially-sanctioned actions, any actions that, at face value, may represent acts of freedom, open-mindedness and flexibility, but which challenge is some way the terrain of the socially-sanctioned, are not labeled as creative. Stated somewhat differently, creative actions that pose a potential threat to the existing social and economic order are left out of the discourse on creativity. To give an example, all Spanish music education literature that focuses on fostering creativity among students with so-called special needs portrays creativity as a normalizing tool for social inclusion (Bermell Corral & González Álvarez, 2008; Campo San Vicente, 2007; Prause-Weber, 2007; Trallero Flix, 2013). None of these texts envision difference in ability, which falls out of the terrain of «the normal,» as being creative in itself.

Creativity's inherent boundaries also become evident in the way in which Spanish music education literature treats displays of «too much creativity.» Creativity in excess is often punished through social exclusion. For example, Spanish scholars make a distinction between creativity and eccentricity. The main difference between these two concepts being that creativity stays within the realm of the socially-sanctioned, whereas eccentricity moves beyond the limits of normalcy. Latorre Latorre and Fortes del Valle (1997, pp. 10-11) write: «[C]reativity is related to the original, the new and the surprising. Therefore, we may think that anything unusual and unlikely can be attributed to a creative action. However, creative products differ from 'odd' ones in that they have a certain quality, effectiveness or utility.» When creativity becomes a means of social and economic transgression, it is not labeled as creative anymore. In sum, although the literature under analysis likes to portray the notion of creativity as unbounded, non-socially sanctioned creative actions and over-creative behaviors are *de facto* excluded from this very definition.

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<sup>8</sup> Spanish authors give slightly different definitions of creativity. These definitions typically contain a reference to the production of something new, and a reference to the social recognition of these products.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the notion of creativity flourished historically within societies with marked socio-political and cultural containment. This happened both in the U.S., where the contemporary notion of creativity first emerged, and in Spain. According to Cohen-Cole (2009), creativity emerged in the U.S. in the 1950s within the field of psychology. This coincided with the Cold War period, a time of strong political, cultural and social containment. The U.S. feared that the excesses of both far-right fascism and far-left communism might spread through its society. Thus, it monitored any domestic actions that might resemble them, while simultaneously portraying creativity as the epitome of a free democracy. Spain, for its part, saw the emergence of the notion of creativity as an educational construct in the late 1960s. Studies focused on creativity in education started to appear in the mid-1960s, and creativity made its definitive entry into Spain's educational policy through the 1970 General Education Act.<sup>9</sup> This process coincided with the final years of Spain's Francoist dictatorship, a time characterized by strong public opposition to the regime, and also by continuous and severe displays of repressive force by the Francoist government. According to Pereyra, González Faraco, Luzón & Torres (2009), the 1970 educational reform acted as a tool of strategic legitimation for the dictatorship. The reform's progressive-sounding rhetoric, of which creativity was a part, created a façade of educational progressivism that responded at least partially to protesters' demands, while leaving the régime's foundations intact. In both the U.S. and in Spain, creativity discourses created bounded spaces for experimenting freedom within the limits of highly contained socio-political and cultural environments. Paradoxically, creativity helped to produce the very conformity against which it was pitted.

Creativity's limitations connote fears of social and political fragmentation, and economic stagnation. The risk of falling apart/behind is a conspicuously absent constant in creativity's discourses of economic growth and social progress. Creativity is meant to place Spain in a leading position within nowadays' so-called «global war for talent» (Brown & Tannock, 2009). However, for Spain to become socially and economically prosperous, other countries

<sup>9</sup> Spain's 1970 General Education Act was a spinoff of a series of reports produced in the 1960s by the UNESCO, the OECD, the World Bank and the Ford Foundation. These international organizations provided Spain with guidelines and recommendations on how to strengthen its economic and social development (O'Malley, 2008). The appearance of «foreign» constructs, such as the notion of creativity, is understandable within this context.



need to fall behind. Inherent to this seemingly all-encompassing discourse is therefore a rhetoric of winners and losers, as well as a deceiving narrative of possible harmonic conviviality. Creativity stands as a prescription to create a cohesive society and not to fall behind in the current global economy. Any behaviors that do not follow such prescriptions are thus to be proscribed. Through allegedly inclusive processes, creativity re-inscribes difference and produces exclusion in music education.

#### CREATIVITY AS A PEDAGOGICAL PANACEA

Spanish literature on creativity in music education often portrays itself as a radical breakthrough from traditional ways of doing music education. However, behind this façade of novelty, creativity relies on age-old approaches to teaching music in schools. Spanish music education texts that present creativity-fostering curricular proposals tend to follow a tradition of curriculum studies known as «social efficiency model» (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1995). The social efficiency movement, which still pervades Spanish contemporary pedagogical discourse, envisions the curriculum as a closed design whose intervening factors can be accounted for, and whose outcomes can therefore be reasonably predicted. Curriculum proposals within this tradition are expected to produce a pre-scripted set of learning results. Thus, a sufficiently-well articulated school system will ultimately produce a particular kind of ideal student and, ultimately, a particular type of society (in this case, a creative individual capable of living a productive life in an ever-changing society). By articulating creativity as a pedagogical object within this tradition, Spain's music education literature not only establishes limits in the ways in which creativity might express itself; it also fabricates—it «creates»—ideal kinds of students and citizens that music teachers should seek. Ultimately, creativity acts as a technology that conditions the ways in which people may think, feel and act in the world.

When turning creativity into a pedagogical object, Spain's music education scholars simultaneously encourage and restrain creativity. As previously mentioned, a significant number of texts that talk about creativity in Spanish music education provide creativity-fostering curricular suggestions. On the one hand, these curricular proposals encourage teachers to become more creative in their daily teaching practices. They prompt music educators to lead by example. However, these texts that exhort teachers to come up with personal solutions to

their daily classroom challenges also provide curricular proposals that music educators are expected to follow closely. For instance, Pérez Rebollo's «Coplas de Ciego Workshop» (2007) encourages teachers to lead by example, carrying out creative teaching practices that will inspire their students to be creative, as well.<sup>10</sup> Pérez Rebollo writes: «If we want our students to become creative, we must start by being ourselves creative in our day-to-day practices» (p. 32). Also, the article stands out due to its «creative» format. Pérez Rebollo makes a visible effort to walk his talk by choosing a non-conventional structure for his curriculum proposal. It is worth reproducing his proposal at lenght here (pp. 34-35, emphases in the original):

Upon medical prescription (by way of summary)

- Composition: Any story (narrative text) that includes where, when, who, what did she/he do, with whom, why, etc., and how everything ended.
- Excipients: ... any kind of versification works. Of course, you can use any of the school languages.
- Side effects, interactions and incompatibilities: None have been described.
- Dosage: A dose every now and then is recommended, both for children and for elder people, as well as for middle-aged people.
- Preservation: It is advisable to have this drug at hand, at room temperature. Do not store in a memories' freezer.
- Expiration date: It does not expire.
- Overdose: No cases of topic overdose have been reported. However, this drug may cause addiction. If creatures become creative after this therapy's normal use, if they become poets in an etymological sense, the responsibility falls on you. The manufacturing company will not do other than feel proud and content for it.
- Warning: Caution! This drug should be kept within children's reach and sight.

«Coplas de Ciego Workshop»'s curricular proposal is formally transgressive: it resembles the structure of a pamphlet accompanying medication. How-

<sup>10</sup> I draw repeatedly on Pérez Rebollo (2007) in this section in order to make my argument cohesive. My ultimate intention in doing so is not to judge the quality of Pérez Rebollo's work, nor to question Pérez Rebollo's worth as an author. I rather draw on this piece due to its conventionality, i.e. «Coplas de Ciego Workshop» has many elements in common with other pieces within Spanish music education literature on creativity. I envision Pérez Rebollo's piece as an entry point to the systems of reasoning on which Spain's music education literature rests.



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ever, the proposal is still inscribed in a traditional way of reasoning within pedagogical discourse." «Coplas de Ciego Workshop» follows a quite conventional recipe-like structure that teachers are supposed to follow closely. Pérez Rebollo's drug-like proposal positions teachers neither in the role of doctors (i.e. providers of a diagnosis) nor in the role of druggists (i.e. drug preparers), but in the role of mere drug-administrators. As a result, teachers appear incapable of coming up with their own creative solutions for the professional challenges that they encounter in their daily teaching practice (Apple, 1986). Music teachers are the targets of a teacher-proof curricular proposal written by a «truly creative» individual—Pérez Rebollo. «Coplas de Ciego Workshop»'s ultimate message is thus contradictory. It aims to foster teachers' creativity, while simultaneously atrophying their creative abilities. Although paradoxical, «Coplas de Ciego Workshop»'s approach to promoting the teaching of creativity through a highly scripted curriculum is quite common in Spain's literature on creativity in music education. Indeed, although its presentation may be quite unique, many elements that conform this particular proposal run through similar texts.

Pérez Rebollo's proposal also speaks to the socio-economic analysis laid out in previous sections of this paper. «Coplas de Ciego Workshop»'s drugpamphlet format creates the impression that there is a problem, a pathology (i.e. social and economic uncertainty) threatening an otherwise healthy organism (i.e. the Spanish nation). It also presumes that, if music educators were to properly administer the drug that Pérez Rebollo prescribes (i.e. creativity), Spain could go back to a previous «healthy» state. Creativity thus emerges as a panacea, as the ultimate solution to restore balance in Spain's «sick organism» and attain an ideal future social and economic state/State. Creativity becomes a token for the re-establishment of a stable society in which outcomes can be easily predictable. Bringing back this paper's title, Pérez Rebollo's proposal not only prescribes a creativity-fostering curricular program; it also scribes (i.e. fabricates) a series of desirable social and economic outcomes for the Spanish nation. Inevitably, these outcomes obscure alternative socio-economic realities that could equally emanate from Spain's current state of affairs. As evidenced by «Coplas de



<sup>11</sup> Here I draw on Hacking's (1982, p. 10) «styles of reasoning». Hacking defines «styles of reasoning» as the particular ways in which people reason about propositions. According to Hacking, these ways of reasoning determine not only if propositions are true or false, but also whether they are up for grabs for people in the first place—or not.

Ciego Workshop,» most music education creativity-fostering curricular proposals are deeply embedded in a social efficiency model, despite its claims to novelty and originality.

#### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

A

The dominant notion of creativity present in Spain's music education literature is rooted in a series of baseline epistemological assumptions upon which creativity initially emerged in the 1950s in the Anglo-Saxon world. From this perspective, creativity's prevalence in Spanish music education might be interpreted as a form of cultural imperialism (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1999). However, creativity did not remain completely circumscribed to those initial conditionings for too long. Instead, the construct took on a new set of purposes particular to Spain's educational and socio-political context. Creativity became a useful analytical tool to think about contemporary music education in Spain. Its burgeoning popularity within the academic field of music education evidences it.

Over the past two decades, Spain has developed a reasonably large body of literature focused on creativity in music education. Sometimes, these texts provide an analysis of creativity's factors and characteristics, drawing primarily on the field of psychology. More often, they provide classroom suggestions which draw primarily on the field of curriculum design. Although Spain's music education scholars tend to portray creativity as a groundbreaking approach to music education, their creativity-fostering curricular proposals often rely on old curricular tropes about curriculum design and about the social role of education.

Creativity, as it is articulated in Spain's music education literature, helps to shape what is thinkable, what counts and what is overlooked within Spain's music education, and also in Spain's society in more general terms. On the one hand, creativity provides a generative viewpoint from which to approach Spain's contemporary music education and the country's broader socio-economic situation. On the other hand, creativity's all-positive and comprehensive-sounding discourses also foreclose a whole array of alternative viewpoints. In other words, creativity discourses may preclude an endless range of possibilities of thinking and expression that fall out of the limits of what it is currently understood as «the creative.» Creativity's all-embracing appearance makes the mere idea of an «outside» beyond creativity tricky to grasp. Creativity's reported advantages may also shadow the option of rejecting discourses of creativity altogether. In short, creativity produces certain ways to imagine oneself in the world and the world itself. Yet, at the same time, creativity casts out alternative ways of knowing, feeling and being in the world.

Creativity has become so ingrained in Spain's present-day «episteme» that current creativity talk seems almost a pre-requisite to engage with contemporary Spanish educational discourse.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, it is perfectly possible to do so without relying on this dominant pre-scripted notion of creativity. Interesting new possibilities may indeed arise when venturing into less (pre-)scripted understandings of the construct. For that to happen, it is necessary to first recognize in which ways current discourses on creativity in music education limit the range of possibilities of what is thinkable. The present paper represents an attempt to unpack some of the often-overlooked limits of the contemporary construct of creativity, in order to point out the possibility of alternative discourses. My goal is thus not to provide ready-made solutions to fix current educational problems. In other words, this is not a prescriptive article. Contrarily, it tries to open up some spaces for dialogue on the characteristics and implications of the creativity movement in music education in Spain. Ultimately, I leave it to each Spanish music educator to decide whether and how they may want to challenge existing discourses on creativity. In that sense, this paper is far from apolitical. On the contrary, it constitutes a political act in itself by presenting an intervention to challenge how people think of themselves and of their world in relation to the notion of creativity. Finally, I must point out that there are surely other versions of how discourses around creativity in Spanish music education unfolded in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Such alternative approaches to this topic could and should be told.



<sup>12</sup> I am using the word «episteme» here in a Foucauldian sense (1980, p. 197), as «the strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the statements which are possible those that will be acceptable within ... a field of scientificity».

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#### ART ± EDUCATION

#### THE PARADOX OF THE VENTRILOQUIST'S SOLILOQUY

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#### ABSTRACT

When we speak of art education, are we trying to make sense of something by means of something else, just as a ventriloquist speaks with the mouth of a dummy to make us believe that he is having a dialogue with someone else when in effect he is speaking to himself? This paper discusses how art education could only flourish as an act of approximation as it rejects the incremental and constructivist assumptions that have turned art and education into transactional instruments. Discussing art and education's immanent relationship, this paper argues that art education is only necessary by force of the accidents that characterise it. Four scenarios, here identified in what the author calls the paradox of the ventriloquist's soliloquy in art education, illustrate this argument. In discussing how this comes about, this paper makes reference to Herner Saeverot's concept of indirect pedagogy and Charles Garoian's prosthetic pedagogy.

#### **KEY WORDS**

Art; Education; Immanence; Paradox; Ventriloquism; Approximation; Indirect pedagogy; Prosthetic pedagogy; Unlearning.



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## Art ± Education: The Paradox of the Ventriloquist's Soliloquy

John Baldacchino

It might even be possible that what constitutes the value of those good and honoured things resides precisely in their being artfully related, knotted and crocheted to these wicked, apparently antithetical things, perhaps even in their being essentially identical with them. Perhaps!—But who is willing to concern himself with such dangerous perhapses! For that we have to await the arrival of a new species of philosopher, one which possesses tastes and inclinations opposite to and different from those of its predecessors—philosophers of the dangerous 'perhaps' in every sense. Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, 2003 (§2, p. 34)

The approaches taken on the whys and wherefores of a convergence between art and education in the contexts inhabited or created by what we call art education remain distinctly divergent and contingent on many a «perhaps». In its contingency, this divergence is implicit and explicit in equal measure in that it reflects a sequence of *dispositions* that are externalised as *habits* (Dewey, 2008) by which we often project a sense of identity and legitimation on how we regard the arts and where we locate them pedagogically.

Dispositions and habits could be said to emerge from where we stand, who we are and how we think and practice the relationship between art and education—a relationship that is not clear and less so predictable. Yet there



remains a context by which this relationship is often invested *a priori*, where more often than not, art and education converge on a transactional horizon where an exchange comes to presume a cultural consensus that is often regarded as intrinsically good, *beautiful* and somehow true.

Here it will be argued that this presumption of consensus often comes at a high price, where both art and education's separate immanence and the dialectical position they hold in their respective spheres are seriously distorted by the same transactional condition that schools them.

#### TWO FORMS OF IMMANENCE

To start with, one needs to locate where and what constitutes the *agency* of the art educational transaction. The centrist view that customarily appears to be liberal and social-democratic, gets to the point of art education by asserting this agency within the identification of social and individual needs as measured against what society and the individual could contribute to the ever-changing constructs of the economy and the polity. The critical approach, which is somewhat on the left of the liberal and social democratic centre, would extend this state of affairs to a form of emancipation through the arts, where art and education seem to provide forms of critical growth and social empowerment.

While both the left and centre appear to articulate the convergence of art with education as a critical-pragmatic opening of possibilities, in and of itself the identification of a benefit or need does not guarantee that we capture the agency by which art and education are exchanged or even made to work together. As we have to ask why and how we choose to go along with such instances of convergence, we must also find out the real nature of the agency that brings about this relationship. To start with, is this a matter for artists, educators, both, or someone else—such as the democratic right to engage with the arts and to have an education, or indeed the interests, vested or otherwise, by which the market is said to be driven?

We come across such questions in a variety of ways and circumstances. At the same time, the sense by which we put across the arts and education—together or separately—invariably moves beyond the expectations held by those who see this relationship as a necessary practice found in institutions such as schools or museums, while somehow claiming that such venues need to retain a place for equality, freedom and democracy. There is a danger that in the haste to assume a democratic and emancipatory horizon for the arts in education, art's immanence is lost by the fact that education is confronted by a degree of unfreedom when in its claims for emancipation it gets entangled by the conditions therein. Thus one needs to be careful not to close the possibility that in art education the agency of convergence resides in what is immanent within art and education in their distinct and specific dimensions, and not in what they could bring to each other for the sake of what appears to remain true and good. This raises the immediate question as to whether art and education would implicitly inform each other, or whether any possible convergence would need clear mediational mechanisms that could be identified with structures like the school, religion, the state, or anything that deems the arts as pedagogical, institutional, instrumental and therefore political.

This prompts at least two takes on immanence and the relationship between art and education. The first invests immanence in the relationship itself. This means that its value and measure of function (as a transactional form of convergence) is intrinsic to the relationship between the two, and not from one being the expression of the other. The second instance would locate immanence in the separate *dimensions* of art and education. This would need to pay attention to both art and education in terms of what they are (their *being*) and their ways of doing (what they *make* and therefore make *known*).

While it could be inferred that any separation between art and education remains historical inasmuch as their relationship remains openly instrumental (and therefore inevitably manufactured by the varying consents and interests that lie beyond their respective spheres) a case for mutual immanence—located in the separate dimensions of art and education—stands opposed to an immanence attributed to their manufactured and consented relationship. In the latter case, by externalizing art and education's function, the polity mandates a relationship that leads to the inevitable reduction of their dimensions into measured values by which they are then assessed. On the other hand, the former context presents a relationship which predicates an identification and empowerment of art and education in their autonomous dimension—meaning that in their relationship, art and education would have to find ways to conform to, as well oppose, each other dialectically.

This is where both the educator and the artist would need to resist those quick assumptions made by the notion of art education as a *koiné* that comes *naturally*. If there is anything *natural* about art education, this is found in the



haphazard and thereby self-elective ways by which anything assumed to be artistic or educative is marked by chance, a continuous struggle to find and make, and an unbroken string of contradictions and *aporiae*.

#### THE VENTRILOQUIST'S ACT

While the nature of art and education's inherent relationship is of primary concern, this cannot be established unless one locates its agency—i.e. what brings art and education together. It is easy to argue that agency and immanence inform each other. However, in this quick conflation we often fail to recognise the agency that makes of art education a commonplace koiné. This confusion comes from a lack of attention to the performative values by which an agency is expediently confused with immanence. In terms of the performative expectations, by which knowledge is often externalised into a measured outcome (Lyotard, 1989; Illich 2009; Illich 2010) agency is easily distorted by an external voice whose deception is akin to a ventriloquist's. This voice imposes an agency that appears immanent in form (as it plays the part of art education—the dummy) though it remains entirely extrinsic in its content and intent (as it serves the external needs of those who sponsor the transaction—the ventriloquist).

Here I am drawing an analogy from the ventriloquist and the dummy because I would argue that the convergence of art with education often betrays a false hermeneutic which conceals a deliberate strategy of a voice posing as a form of agency. Being neither artistic nor educational, this strategy is political as it fulfils the prerequisites of instrumental reason, which Horkheimer (2012, viii) identifies with «the self-surrender by reason of its status as a spiritual substance» leading to «the socially conditioned tendency towards neo-Positivism or the instrumentalization of thought, as well as the vain effort to rescue thought from this fate.»

When we speak of instrumental reason, we are not simply assuming a hegemonic mechanism that betrays the presumed consent of common sense. Rather, instrumental reason presents itself as commonsensical. Here it appears to pertain to the logic of attainment, which in the process of gaining results, seeks to neuter the dialectic that characterizes the *dimensions* by which art and education express their singular immanence. This appeal to «common sense»—often backed up by unquestioned assumptions of art's pres-

ence in schools as a tool for growth—clearly demonstrates how instrumental reason seeks legitimation for art education as a means to an end.

Back to the ventriloquist analogy, to neuter the dialectic one must first eliminate the other. Posing the fallacy of another voice that is effectively the same is one way of doing this. One could conceal the other by convincing him or her that one is being given a voice, while in effect one is exerting power upon the other by putting words in his or her mouth. As a false representation of otherness this is a fabricated hermeneutic that (a) precludes the difference and alterity that are intrinsic to art and education, and (b) creates a false sense of equivalence between such dimensions with the specific intent to eradicate the dialectical nature that sustains the separate specificities from where art and education emerge as autonomous dimensions.

Through art education, instrumental reason could assume ventriloquism as a mechanism where the contexts by which we pose or locate art and education's autonomous identities (as what they are) and functions (as what they do) become compromised by how the ventriloquist's voice serves as an agent of both.

This false appearance of difference (with an appearance of two separate personae, as dummy and actor, that are effectively the same) results in the effective elimination of the paradox that characterizes how art and education emerge together in their incommensurate and incongruent dimension. More so this fallacy goes on to proscribe the intrinsic dialectic by which art and education could relate with each other. Instead, here the ventriloquist's voice presents art education as a koiné of settled convergence, as a coherent state of affairs, (where dummy and actor are a mere spectacle) which is singularly and permanently synthesized. As I have argued elsewhere (Baldacchino, 2015), this is symptomatic of a prosthetic synthesis that proscribes any further dialectical possibilities. This leaves us with art education as a unified discipline that causes art and education to self-surrender the original immanence that gives them autonomy.

#### WHO IS «SPEAKING»?

However, there is a further dimension to this state of affairs, which equally requires recognition and attention, as it is one of the few possibilities by which art education can move out of its instrumental predicament.



By suggesting that the ventriloquist's voice is foisted on art education it does not simply mean that neither artist nor educator have any more voices left. There are further voices or, to use Garoian's (2013) notion of prosthesis as a possible fourth loop in the dialectical process, the chain of contradictions could be extended by artistic and pedagogical possibilities that would offer a further paradoxical iteration which, contrary to the above scenario, would remedy the dilemma of a permanent synthesis.<sup>1</sup>

Often the question revolves around whether the artist's or the educator's voice would act to the detriment of the dialectical relationship that art education comes to represent at the point of its convergence. This initially raises at least three scenarios of ventriloquism.

In the first place, the ventriloquist is external to artists and educators alike. Here, ventriloquism is an attempt to instrumentalise art education for specific means to measured ends. As we have seen above, this forms part of the larger instrumental context by which reason and with it knowledge are being assumed as quantifiable means towards an end.

Secondly, the artist becomes a ventriloquist where, rather than articulate art's immanence, he or she seeks to impose art's ways of doing on the pedagogical sphere. I would argue that this form of ventriloquism not only fails to understand and bear art's *formative* possibilities, but it impairs art's own pedagogical immanence by reducing its gnoseological values into an epistemological hierarchy. The distinction between gnoseology and epistemology returns to how art relates to truth where, being intrinsic to knowledge, it belongs to the truth of art as a gnoseology, as a philosophy of knowledge; while epistemologically speaking, the knowledge of art belongs to an extrinsic discipline, or an epistemological structure by which it seeks validity and value against other disciplines. This distinction implies a further context: when we speak of art's pedagogical immanence, we also touch on how art's philosophy of knowing (as gnoseology) relates to truth as a claim for freedom.

A third form of ventriloquism occurs when educationalists view the arts as instruments of learning in a context where art's immanence is neither

<sup>1</sup> The background to the problematic relationship between a synthesis and the possibility of an extended prosthesis is initially conceived and presented in Charles Garoian's brilliant volume The prosthetic pedagogy of art: Embodied research and practice (2013), which I discuss at length in my paper «The Métier of Living: Art, Genocide, and Education» published in a special edition of Qualitative Inquiry that puts Garoian's book to the test of various approaches and analyses in art education (Baldacchino, 2015).

afforded its specificity nor considered in its autonomy, thereby externalising art into an educational means to a political end. Here art's place is located on an epistemological structure where it is seen as a form of knowledge whose claim for freedom is externally conditioned.

As one begins to look closer at what these three forms of ventriloquism could mean and where they would leave art education as a dialectic, two basal questions emerge: As educators what do we want the arts to say, do, or be? and As artists what do we want education to say, do, or be? Slightly reworded, we can pose these questions as: Who is «speaking» when education «speaks»? and Who is «speaking» when art «speaks»?

Speech must be regarded as an attempt to converse by dint of a presumed convergence. However, we know that «speaking» in art and education is only one way of conversing. There are many other ways of conversing without ever aiming to reach agreement or settling a dispute. This open-endedness is cue to other forms of engagement by which «speech» is a continuous assertion of positioning—knowing very well that what is sought is not ending the conversation, but recognising and valuing difference.

In this way, the analogy of speaking retains its relevance by means of a shift in its intent and import. By its intent, one continues to speak. By import, we begin to identify the immanent spheres of art and education where speaking doesn't have an *outside*. While this might not make much sense beyond the spheres of art and education, when we teach art the concept and practice of speech have to widen and take on meanings that they never had while unlearning others which are assumed in common parlance. More importantly, speech widens because teaching art implies *being thrown* into the being of art, where gnoseologically speaking art as *knowing* is begotten and never made, because neither narration nor explanation would teach us what art is.

Being thrown implies an immersion by which we are often led to believe that this resolves the dispute in which a dialectical relationship is sustained. However here the point of being thrown—or indeed throwness per se—raises a number of questions: In what and with whom are we immersed? Is this an immersion into knowing, meaning, doing, learning, unlearning ...? In other words, what does this immersion really imply?

Just as a ventriloquist speaks with the mouth of a dummy to make us believe that he is having a dialogue with someone else when in effect he is speaking to himself, could we argue that we are doing something similar with art and education? In view of the three scenarios mentioned above, this



could mean that ventriloquism, far from being just a form of manipulation, represents an immersion in meaning through a conversation that remains indirect.

This raises a fourth scenario for ventriloquism. In the other three scenarios there is a situation that one could identify with the ossification of synthesis where the ventriloquist's act becomes a prosthetic synthesis that has nothing further to offer because it forecloses the dialectic between art and education. However, in a fourth scenario, we have the possibility of what I call a synthetic prosthesis (Baldacchino, 2015)—a concept that I develop in response to Garoian's dynamic notion of art's prosthetic pedagogy (2013). In this case, the ventriloquist's voice begins to mediate this synthetic prosthesis as an open-endedness by which art education speaks indirectly, and where the chain of contradictions is re-opened—and in turn left open—to further paradoxical possibilities.

#### SPEAKING WITH WHOM?

While there is a serious issue with how a ventriloquist's immersion in art's relationship with education directly affects the immanence of art and education—whether separately or in conjunction—the indirectness of a ventriloquist's «conversation» also raises some very interesting questions about agency in this very relationship, especially in terms of practical pedagogical issues.

One wonders whether the practices of art and education are actually speaking to each other or to themselves. Likewise one could ask whether art and education are forced to be each other's dummies or whether one takes control of the other. This opens the possibility for the analogy of the ventriloquist to be used as a way of critiquing and thereby problematizing the mechanistic approach to art pedagogy. One possibility by which the ventriloquist analogy could be turned on its head and regarded (as well as used) as one which benefits the relationship between art and education has to do with the intent and agency of speaking *per se*, and how in terms of art—and more so art teaching—this dialogue could potentially take a character of indirectness by which art education is somehow deconstructed.

This pertains to the question of knowledge and to how art as a form of knowing—rather than a form of knowledge—comes closest to a gnoseological

approach. This articulation of art education as a possible gnoseology might need some adjustments in terms of how we are used to and expected to perceive art education both in terms of how it is schooled and how it is taught. The difference is very evident in how an approach to art education from within the immanence of its relationship would intrinsically reject the restrictions of an epistemological structure, such as those found in contexts where knowledge becomes a curriculum.

From a gnoseological perspective, when we speak of art education, more than a matter of control, we must continuously return to how as a form of knowing, it pertains to the truth of teaching and that of art. More often than not, as teachers and artists we are challenged by questions over what pushes and controls whom: is the dummy an artistic or an educational performance? It seems to me that such a question falls back on an instrumental assumption that renders ventriloquism to mere manipulation.

One could see how a different approach to the question would alter the stance from which we would then regard art's own pedagogical immanence. This altered position would pose questions like: Could we really separate art and education or should we even try to separate them once their *ventriloquised* voice begins to open up the possibility of indirectness and within it the possibilities of an *indirect* pedagogy?

As Herner Saeverot succinctly put it, an indirect pedagogy is «a form of existential education rather than a locked method». He goes on to explain that an indirect pedagogy «is opposed to the pedagogic language used by the kind of teacher who likes to explain things, including how to exist as a human» (Saeverot, 2013, ix). More so, Saeverot goes on to show how this indirectness takes several forms, some of which pertain to spheres and practices that would be deemed as problematic by liberal and social constructivists, such as elements of seduction and deception. While teachers «must not reprimand the students but take them seriously», it must enrich the experience by giving them something that «ensnares the students» into thinking differently. «This seduction therefore has consequently a slight connection to education as it can lead the students into an educational process that questions their present attitude» (Saeverot, 2013, p. 21).

In refusing to explain, art education must take on the indirect mechanisms by which it seduces while it introduces the student to new avenues whose allures would prompt learning to reverse itself and undo what it supposedly constructs. Art's immanence is the first cause of any deception that


takes place in such an indirect pedagogy, while being thrown remains neither gentle nor didactic. This is not that different from Kant's grammar of judgement, by which, he tells us, we have to find ways of bridging reason with the incongruence of beauty and the sublime.

By using and adapting the tools of pure and practical reason, the immanence of the relationship between art and education can only hold if, like judgement, it operates on borrowed grammars—indeed borrowed from that which attempts to bridge the disinterestedness of the aesthetic and the meaningful aims of a teleological approach. By adapting tools that are never meant to be used in this way, art and education act as each other's ventriloquist. The deception here is not intent on manipulation, but to double-cross the same instrumental reason which, under the guise of constructivism, remains alien to both art and education.

This means that the only way to approach a «want of accordance» between the imagination and reason (Kant, 1974, §27, p. 119) by which art and education could construe an immanent relationship, would imply a form of indirectness that preserves art education from becoming an extrinsic connection. To illustrate how an indirect pedagogy works, one could argue that by dint of our teleological reasoning we come to realise that art's pedagogical practice cannot be other than a refusal of teleology; a paradox that comes closest to articulate art's specificity.

## HOW ARE WE SPEAKING?

So with whom are art and education speaking, and how? The answer could go in every direction, though this often appears as if it is going nowhere. Art and education may well be seen as if they are speaking to no one, as frequently they appear to speak to each other, like a dummy and ventriloquist having a conversation. Yet we know that while this is not a conversation, but a soliloquy, the deception is purely performative, as it is meant to address an audience—hence the ventriloquist's paradox. At this point we become spectators, just as we become students, we form part of society, we enter the polity, and we consider ourselves as a community of practitioners. In other words, as indirect communicators, we witness art and education as a performing soliloquy that speaks to everyone, and in whose indirect existence we are also thrown.

72 ART ± EDUCATION: THE PARADOX OF THE VENTRILOQUIST'S SOLILOQUY

An image that could be seen as being prompted by art's ability to speak to everyone by speaking to itself is Carlo Carrà's *L'idolo ermafrodito* (The hermaphrodite idol, 1917). The idol's body remains without features. Yet in its solitary and magisterial pose it claims to represent life, while at the same time we are taught nothing of it.

Carrà's work confronts us with an enigmatic vision that could only attract one's attention by its sense of deception. As it remains indirect in Carrà's depiction, the idol's claim to being—or in what it is immersed—has to be deceptive. The deception is found in the illusion of peace by which the idol's hermaphrodite form bears no difference of gender, disposition, symbol, or any other metaphor or identifier that might cause conflict. Likewise, the space inhabited by the hermaphrodite idol bears no indices. It fails to indicate a specific time or an actual space. At best, the space is ideational because it transcends its formal values in prototypical ways, and yet this space remains neutral, as it does not even suggest a guide of sorts. Even colour remains subdued.

What Carrà's humanoid figure seems to suggest could be everything or nothing at all. Yet for those interested in a pedagogical lineage the magisterial pose is important because a magister is a teacher, and his or her perspective is privileged by what is given in terms of the epistemological space that knowledge is supposed to «fill» or «inhabit». Being magisterial, the pose is expected to impart and thereby share that knowledge with those who want to listen or partake of it.

Yet in this assumption of non-speech done in magisterial pose, Carrà's hermaphrodite gives us nothing of the sort. The magisterial is only suggestive in the sense of alluring one to assume that there is more to its nothingness. It seems to entertain the idea of a pose by which art could not simply suggest but also affirm knowledge by its metaphysical claims of equivalence between the physical and its beyond. More so, this magister entertains the idea of knowledge from its sense of being as a further sense of ambiguity that could only find accommodation within a gnoseological approach where knowing and being curiously conflate.

We know that in the art of Carlo Carrà and Giorgio De Chirico the metaphysical is radically distanced from Surrealism. It gives itself a special space where the equivalence of the now with the beyond suggests the actuality of what is outside. This actuality is deeply immanent and thus the outside is also a referent of an inside that is never distinct from it. Again, to say nothing by saying it all remains elusive, though not that distanced from the hermeneutic edifices



by which the metaphysical is used as a means of explaining the actual. Even when dubbed *metaphysical*, art is not implied as an otherness beyond the physical but as that which is arrived at—perhaps by «ask(ing) oneself first: what morality does this (does *he*—) aim at?» (Nietzsche, 2003 §6, p. 37).

#### ARTISTS ± EDUCATORS

We know that the claim to morality in Nietzsche is a claim to move beyond it, «where a philosophy which ventures to do so places itself, by that act alone beyond good and evil». This comes from how such a philosophy recognizes «untruth as a condition of life» and resists «customary value-sentiments in a dangerous fashion» (Nietzsche, 2003 §4, p. 36). Those familiar with the layers of interpretation by which Nietzsche sustains his non-identitarian narrative, would also recognise how just like Carrà's idol, he or she who seeks to privilege the interrogation of one's morality is in effect doing nothing by assuming that he or she is doing everything.

In this structure we would also have to ask how art turns us into a community of learners and doers, while at the same time it invites us to reject these kinds of definitions. Quick answers to what artists are or do effectively reinforce those constructivist assumptions that coach artists and educators into the role of earnest builders. Given that education has been assumed in primis as a building project, the constructivist assumptions that come with it in liberal and progressive pedagogies seem to retain a loyalty to the Bildung of which, more often than not, a concept of criticality is expected to be a natural attribute.

As I have suggested earlier in this essay, the danger lies in how hasty assumptions often mistake a democratic and emancipatory horizon for the arts in education as a passage into the morals which art, in its deceptive and indirect pedagogy, must seek to avoid in order to exit the polity's instrumental rationale. This is why, notwithstanding the critical argument for emancipation, art education often signals a loss of immanence where art finds itself constructed on the unfree grids of epistemological teleology; a teleology assumed on the patterns by which a sociology of knowledge was meant to task education «not merely to develop people adjusted to the present situation, but also people who will be in a position to act as agents of social development to a further stage» (Mannheim, 2000, p. 234).

If we build learning (as constructivists sometimes argue in their unquestioned acceptance of student-centred processes) there is a risk that rather than speak to everyone and no one, we create formulas on how we speak to each other—thereby reducing speech into a moral imperative by transforming art's maybe into an ought, into an aesthetic imperative. In this respect, the sociologist of knowledge sustains a kind of Bildung that does not seek to negate the immediate to imagine possibilities from where one could, dialectically speaking, grasp the accident in order to save oneself from the assumption of necessity. On the contrary, the sociology of knowledge regards education as a means to avoid the accident. Hence, to a social constructivist like Mannheim, «the social relations governing everyday life are an important subject for research if it is desired to rescue more and more factors in the social education of men from the realm of 'accident'» (Mannheim, 2000, p. 234).

As Mannheim's progressive credentials invariably offer a kind of succour by which this kind of social constructivism seems to retain a hope for a rational outcome, it is not easy to simply dismiss such an approach to the sociology of knowledge as instrumentalist. Likewise Mannheim's take on how the so-called milieu of social constellations creates a firm ground on which one could build a possible plan for action (Mannheim, 2000, p. 234ff) is equally attractive.

However, albeit progressive, Mannheim's approach remains open to the transformation of critical practice into a measured end. Here, the critical Bildung which Hegel assumed as a simultaneous «process of self-transformation and an acquisition of the power to grasp and articulate reasons for what one believes or knows» (Wood, 1998, p. 302) is transformed into a progressive and incremental rejection of that «immediacy of substantial life» from where Bildung laboriously emerges (Hegel, 1977, p. 3).

Let's not forget that Hegel regarded Bildung as that which gives one the power «to support and refute the general conception [or universal thought] with reason» (Hegel, 1977, p. 3). If this approach to Bildung is transformed into an ability to be «rescued from the realm of accident» (Mannheim, 2000, p. 234) then all that this progressive approach would achieve is an elaborate grid of skillsets that proscribes the individual's creative refusal, thereby neutering the critical immanence of Bildung by reducing it to a form of incremental building.

The neutering of Bildung comes with the suppression of its dialectical nature. Dialectically speaking the accident retains its necessity as that which negates necessity per se. This might seem too abstract unless one revisits Dewey's own



approach to growth, which he sees as essentially rooted in immaturity. Here, Dewey's Hegelian foundations become pragmatic. As he succinctly put it, for a child growth is not something done to her, but something that she does herself (Dewey, 1966, p. 41). Likewise for Bildung—understood as a formative critical event that we often translate as culture or education—the accident cannot be rejected.

In the case of art education, to approach and indeed critique the sociological neutering of *Bildung* one cannot simply critique the assumptions of teaching as a choice between instrumental skill-sets and a creative construction of self-referential critical individuals (as we normally do when confronting traditional-conservative with progressive-liberal forms of education). Rather, we need to take a detour and approach art's pedagogical question from a disposition where art education implies that artists and educators are *more or less* equivalent—as *artists*  $\pm$  *educators*. At the same time, this approximation provides both a mean as well as an addition that is signified by its subtraction (and vice versa).

Thus rather than an equivalence between a creative artistic activity and a progressive form of education, here we have an approximation by which art education continuously signals a perpetual negotiation between that which it adds and that which it subtracts from the same *life-forms* that we call *art* and *education* (Wollheim, 1980; Baldacchino, 2013). One caveat is that this sense of approximation could only come into effect through an indirect pedagogical approach, which means that we might also have to indulge in a degree of ventriloquism.

#### APPROXIMATED SOLILOQUIES

By way of concluding, I would like to further unpack my claim for approximation and claim the averaging that signals *«art ± education»* in terms of what it might imply as a method—or poetics—of the more or less.

We know from basic mathematics that  $i \pm i = \text{either } 2 \text{ or } 0$ . Yet  $i \pm i$  is also i in that i is the mean, or average, of i and i. In trying to assume that there is some equivalence between art and education in the *koiné art education*, we have argued that this could imply a variety of possibilities. Often such possibilities reveal a paradox. These possibilities also refuse to affirm that one could progressively assume a solid definition for art education. This would directly contradict any constructionist approach to art education.

Instead of a secured accrual of definition or function, we're left with a state of approximation, by which we could affirm that art's method is marked by what might be, more or less. Any presumed convergence between art and education does not add up. Rather, it remains disjointed by the paradoxical nature that brings it together. This is evidenced by the historical contexts in which art and education have been conflated in any conceivable way.

More so, we experience this in terms of how, as forms of life, art and education have asserted a sense of autonomy in our ways of being by dint of the interiority that we attribute to them. Far from some metaphysical assumption, how we come to relate art with education pertains to the same sense of being by which many individuals or communities figured out how to think and do the impossible. The fact that artistic practice is often deemed to be either a form of genius or madness has nothing to do with some romanticised view of the errant artist who disdains the world. On the contrary, it is the artist's love of the world that has turned him or her into outcasts of society. After all, what artists do is never deemed to be certain, let alone measurable. And when this happened, as art became an institution, art had to gain value—be it as a form of learning or earning, by which the aesthetic was reinvented to sustain what could be deemed as true or beautiful.

While many would prefer to go with this institutionalised assumption of art education as the very avenue by which creativity prompts growth and meaning, the same argument cannot be sustained by the certainties by which those who want to claim legitimacy for art education go on to measure and instrumentalise such legitimacy. This is why current claims for the creative and culture industries as integral to the wealth and wellbeing of society convince only those who seek art as a form of certainty—indeed as a currency by which an economy or a state of being is assumed.

As one returns to the *aporia* of art, the question is rather simple: Is art education a necessity or a matter of contingent situations?

Devotees of order and progress alike, whether traditional or liberal, would be disinclined to leave this question unanswered and will tell us how art is there for us to learn and even earn, as indeed we have a wealth of literature to show. Yet in their earnestness to legitimise art education through learning and earning, these colleagues fail to explain why we must insist that both art and education are only necessary by force of their accident, and when forced into a structure, they fail. More so, to insist that art education is some kind of milieu that settles the question on firm ground—be it that of learning, earning or anything else—is to abort the state of immaturity in which growth retains its possibilities. Far from a romantic argument for a state of innocence, this is a call for an approach by which art and education would always provide ways of keeping an ace up our sleeves in order to win the perpetual game of contingency. This is what we learn from the paradox of the ventriloquist's soliloquy.

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# FROM PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL STUDIES TO FREE-EXPRESSION: STORIES RELATING ART AND EDUCATION IN BRAZIL IN FOUR ACTS

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#### ABSTRACT

The association between art, education and freedom takes place in speeches, discussions and Brazilian artistic and educational practices, with constant updates, from the early years of the twentieth century onwards, thus becoming part of the imagery about art and education. Such a concept was driven by psycho-pedagogical studies and the interest of artists, critics and educators in the «spontaneous» or «free» expression recognized in the graphic and plastic productions by children, associated with two other groups, the «primitive» and the «crazy».

KEY WORDS

Art; Education; Stories; Memory.

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# From Psycho-Pedagogical Studies to Free-Expression: Stories Relating Art and Education in Brazil in Four Acts

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It is said that pedagogy is the art of forging the souls of our children, the art of developing their knowledge, their speeches, their values, their feelings. It is therefore and inevitably, a battlefield in which submission of powers and the release of powers do not stop the conflict.

Georges Didi-Huberman, 2009

## $1^{\text{st}} \text{ACT}$

O Laboratório de Pedagogia Experimental [The Experimental Pedagogy Laboratory] is the title of a collection of essays derived from research conducted in 1914 during the course of Psychological Technique, offered by Ugo Pizolli in the Department of Anthropology and Educational Psychology at the Escola Normal de São Paulo [São Paulo Normal School], a symbol of republican Brazil, inaugurated in 1894 (Monarcha, 1997; Tanuri, 1994; Nagle, 2009).

<sup>1</sup> Interest recognized by the volume of theoretical and artistic productions on the subject from the mid-19th and 20th centuries, evolving in a certain appreciation which did not imply a change in the character of exceptionality associated with these categories, maintained as pariahs precisely for being on the margin of artistic-cultural canons the landmark to its definition, as well as being responsible for the magnetism that drove such an interest (Gombrich, 2002; Didi-Huberman, 1995).



Italian physician and associate professor in Experimental Psychology Ugo Pizolli arrived in São Paulo in May 1914 at the invitation of Oscar Thompson, director of the São Paulo Normal School, with the mission of updating and streamlining the psycho-pedagogical research in this institution. For Thompson, the state government of São Paulo had understood «the advisability of extending the theoretical and practical pedagogy» to open spaces for studies on the psychology applied to education (Thompson, 1914, p. 17-18). Such an attitude contributed to the introduction of the São Paulo Normal School into the modern educational outlook, following the external models, which together valued the «scientific study» of childhood and the «thorough examination of all children's energies» (Thompson, 1914, p. 17-18).

Pizolli's arrival in Brazil was announced by an article published on March 7, 1914, in the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo. The article was signed by Adalgiso Pereira, professor at the São Paulo Normal School and the author of «Notas sobre o graphismo infantil» [Notes on child graphics], one of the essays in O Laboratório de Pedagogia Experimental. This text presented his research on how the «figurative representation» was initiated and developed in «children's minds» (Pereira, 1914, p.40-41). For the author, this research would be of psychological and didactic importance. Psychological, because children's graphics would be a source of information on the «state of culture, value, an extension of the imaginary heritage of the child» (Pereira, 1914, p.40-41). It would be didactic, because it enabled teachers to acknowledge from stage one the «gaps and weaknesses» of their students (Pereira, 1914, p.40-41). Children of four to seven years of age were chosen for these studies. Isolated, they were instructed to draw «the man, the house, the animal, the plant» (Pereira, 1914, p.40-41). This was the only command given. After completing their drawings, they were questioned about them and their responses recorded as data for subsequent analysis of the representations.

Pereira enters his research in a context of ongoing studies on children's graphics since the mid-nineteenth century, establishing differences in references to James Sully, Conrado Ricci, Paula Lombroso and Earl Barnes, among others, on comparative studies of «children's art with the early Egyptians, the Chaldeans and even with the wildlife of current days» (Pereira, 1914, p.40). In common they had the «children's graphic language» as a «perennial source of psychological investigations» (Pereira, 1914, p.40). Nevertheless, for this teacher, while they went through «this phase of fragmentary elaboration», there was no harm in facing the «graphics upon equally interesting aspects

which do not cease to bring their small contribution to the great chapter of child psychology» (Pereira, 1914, pp. 39-41).

### $2^{ND}$ ACT

Along with this interest and echo, children's graphic and plastic production gains relevance among artists, critics and art historians,<sup>2</sup> especially among those immersed in the modernist avant-garde movements. It was an intermittent theme in relation to the «primitive» and the «alienated», manifestations of «the soul and thought cataclysms» («Crianças-artistas», 1933, p. 29) since time immemorial and of art in its origin, and as such being true revelations.

The Romantic Movement is mentioned by Jonathan Fineberg (1995) as a possible source of such interest. It would leave four notions associated with childhood, decisive for the fostering process of children's graphic and plastic production:

[F]irst, a more direct access to artistic inspiration; second, the ability to see things objectively [...] third, an ability to see beyond appearances to the 'truth' of things, a notion illustrated in the adage 'out of the mouths of babes'; fourth and finally, a privileged view into the mysteries of life (Fineberg, 1995, p. 119).

According to an article published by Paul Klee in the journal *Die Alpen* in 1912 (as cited in Werckmeister, 1977, p. 138), the «art origins» could be found in an ethnographic museum or at home in a child's room. The readers were warned to hold their laughter: «children can do it too» (as cited in Werckmeister, 1977), and it would not be devastating for art, quite the opposite. The fewer instructions they received, the more «art» could be offered, a parallel phenomenon to

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For example, Aby Warburg, recreated Karl Lamprecht's research in 1895, with the intention of observing the children's representation of lightning. The shape of the «snake-lightning of Hopi mythology» would emerge. Among fourteen drawings, two had the «indestructible symbol [...] the snake with a tongue-shaped arrow». According to Didi-Huberman, that reference would indicate the difference of Warburg's studies. He «understood the paradox implied by the form of appearance of that same 'primitivism': minor (two in fourteen drawings), impure and fragile, that is, symptomatic. Not the archetypal reflection of a phylogenetic source as Lamprecht desired, but one of the complex web of *tangled times*, 'indestructible symbols' and distortion resulting from the history, in the simple dynamic line of a snake-lightning shape drawn by a child's hand» (Didi-Huberman, 2002, pp. 222-223).

the drawings of the insane. All that deserved a very close attention in order to promote an effective remodelling of art.<sup>3</sup>

In 1930, in the seventh issue of its magazine Documents, Georges Bataille (as cited in Didi-Huberman, 1995, p. 257) broadened the theoretical ideas on Georges Luquet's body of work, *L'art primitif*, also published in 1930. Amid what was considered a negative review of Luquet's analysis, Didi-Huberman indicates Bataille's subtle fascination with one of the categories defined in that book, the «intellectual realism», integrated by the dialectical relationship between «images and language». The «highly *transgressive* figures—more than *regressive*—that 'children drew [on church walls]'», would demonstrate a certain preference for «forms susceptible to various interpretations, having the value of a pun» (Bataille as cited in Didi-Huberman, 1995, p. 257).

In 1933, *Minotaure* magazine published the graffiti photographed by Brassaï during his wanderings through the streets of Paris in 1920. These images are accompanied by «Du mur des cavernes au mur des usines» [From cave wall to factory wall]—a text written by Brassaï about the power of these manifestations, «the frenzy of the unconsciousness» (Brassaï, 1933). There, only «two steps away from the Opera», the walls would reveal «similar signs to those of the caves of the Dordogne, and the valley of the Nile or the Euphrates», signs drawn by the same anxiety that carved a «chaotic world of cave paintings». Expressions derived from the writing and mythology elements.

In Brazil, Flávio de Carvalho, modernist artist, an avid reader of Nietzsche, interested in psychoanalysis and accustomed to surrealism, organized that same year (1933), along with the psychiatrist Osório César, the *Mês das Crianças e dos Loucos* [Month of the Children and the Insane] or *Mês dos Alienados e das Crianças* [Month of the Alienated and the Children]. This event occurred during the months of August, September and October in the Clube dos Artistas Modernos, or CAM [Modern Artists' Club] in the city of São Paulo. Doctors conducted conferences on the relationship between art, psychology, psychoanalysis and psychiatry, and graphic and plastic productions made by interns from the psy-

<sup>3 «[...]</sup> there are still primordial origins of art, as you would rather find them in the ethnographic museum or at home in the nursery (don't laugh, reader), children can do it too, and that is by no means devastating for the most recent tendencies, but there is positive wisdom in this fact. The more helpless these children are, the more instructive art they offer; for already here there is corruption: if children start to absorb developed works of art or even to emulate them. Parallel phenomena are the drawings of the insane, and thus madness is no appropriate invective either. In truth all this is to be taken much more seriously, if the art of today is to be reformed [...].»



chiatric hospital Juqueri and by children were exhibited. In one of the conferences, Pedro de Alcântara advocated the teaching of drawing at school as a natural means of expression and, quoting Marcel Brauschvig's work, stressed the importance of children's artwork found randomly on fences and walls of the city as «spontaneity at its peak, natural, naive», free of «disturbing influences» which cause «expressive misrepresentations» (Alcântara, 1933). Pedro de Alcântara included projections of drawings on fences and walls from the streets of São Paulo as a visual complement to his speech. This lecture was then entitled «Ensaio de Psychologia e de Pedagogia do Desenho Infantil» [Psychological and Pedagogical Essay on Children's Drawing], published in *Rumo* magazine, one of the journals that opened space to this event, as well as the newspapers *Correio de São Paulo, Diário da Noite* and *Estado de São Paulo*.

The same magazine Rumo published «Crianças-artistas, doidos-artistas» [Child artists, crazy-artists], an anonymous article which presented the exhibition of drawings by «the alienated and the children» as a «beautiful» approach because it met «the two classes of people living in the most complete freedom» (1933, p. 29). After this laudatory introduction, the conferences to be held in this event were mentioned, and their topics articulated the approach between art, psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis, such as, «Interpretação dos desenhos de crianças e seu valor pedagógico» [Interpretation of children's drawings and their pedagogical value], «Psychanalyse dos desenhos dos Psychopatas» [Psychoanalysis of the drawings of psychopaths] and «Arte e psychiatria através dos tempos» [Art and psychiatry through the ages]. Flávio de Carvalho's excerpts on the value of the drawings by the children and by the crazy concluded the article that highlighted the «great honour» of this exhibition for being «absolutely spontaneous» and for a «complete lack of interest in the rigid forms of the academy» («Crianças-Artistas», 1933). That was Flávio de Carvalho's synthesis. The artist's claims revealed the controversy of the modernist's position in relation to academic standards. The productions of the children and the crazy represented the artist's freedom towards true art, something lost under the ruling of «the 'tricks' of the magicians of the fine arts institutes» («Crianças-Artistas», 1933). According to Flávio de Carvalho, children's drawings were not mere fanciful manifestations. Far from the «teacher's influence», such expressions would have «profound psychological importance», because they would be representations of the free association of ideas that reveal the «sequence of ancestral facts, the shapes of a faraway evolution», something similar to a «panorama of species» («Crianças-Artistas»,

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1933). To Flávio de Carvalho, a «child using a pencil freely» seems to unfold «all tragedies of life and of the world, all cataclysms of the soul and thought» («Crianças-Artistas», 1933). The child would be able to see the «painful caricature of everything» and dramatize a «pureness of shapes and colours» («Crianças-Artistas», 1933). The «true great artists», as Flávio de Carvalho would call them, would be similar to children because they had the same «unconscious spontaneity in colour and form» and insubordination to the rules preserved by «most often ordinary» individuals, responsible for «suffocating or ending any original outbreaks», making out teachers to have a «worn out and dusty personality» («Crianças-Artistas», 1933).

## 3<sup>RD</sup> ACT

Some other names linked to the Brazilian modernist movement joined the creation of this concept. The painter Anita Malfatti, for example, was also a drawing teacher. In 1930, the newspaper *Correio da Tarde* published an article about her students' exhibition. Her methodology was described as being "mechanical and intuitive", guided by "psychological observations" that induced the use of the "student's awareness" ("Mostrando às crianças", 1930). Tarsila do Amaral, another Brazilian modernist painter, also wrote about this exhibition. The text, entitled "Instrucção Artística Infantil" [Children's Artistic Education], was published in the newspaper *Correio da Tarde* on January 28, 1931. In that article, the painter praised Anita Malfatti's work, especially for providing her students with the "cultivation" of their imagination (Amaral as cited in Barbosa, 1983).

The same exhibition was also commented on by another modernist writer and teacher, Mário de Andrade, in his article «Pintura Infantil» [Child Painting], published in November 23, 1930, in the newspaper Diário Nacional. The spontaneity of the work is again exalted, confirming its value as opposed to copying. It also emphasized the great educational value of this exhibition for the theory of painting and psychology.

Exhibitions of children's drawings were not uncommon. The interest shown in the «spontaneity» of children's expression motivated these exhibitions from the mid-nineteenth century onwards (Osinsky & Antonio, 2010; Beuvier, 2009). Events continued throughout the twentieth century and gained semantic nuances in relation to their different performing contexts, circulation and reception, as was the case of the Exposição de Desenhos de Escolares da Grã-Bretanha [Britain's Exhibition of Drawings by School Children], shown in Brazil in October, 1941, first at the National Museum of Fine Arts [Museu Nacional de Belas Artes] in Rio de Janeiro, and then in other Brazilian cities, including São Paulo.

Having accepted the invitation of the British Council, Herbert Read organized this exhibition integrating about 200 drawings and paintings of children aged 3 to 17, as stated in the Brazilian edition of the catalogue. It came to Brazil with the support of the Ministry of Education and was sponsored by the National Museum of Fine Arts, the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies, the Brazilian Education Association, the Association of Brazilian Artists and the Brazilian Society of English Culture. Its broad repercussion was carefully planned by the publication of texts in newspapers and magazines, two of them signed by the poet and educator Cecília Meireles, all of them praising their educational artistic value, establishing the freedom of feelings and imagination, assured by the «methodology, acknowledged in the modern pedagogy lessons» which «allow children to act freely on their sketch and colours» (Teixeira, 1941). About 27,000 people visited the exhibition in São Paulo in just 15 days, according to the newspaper *Diário da Noite* of December 15, 1941 (Pedrosa, 1993, p. 421 f).

Due to its regularity in historical narratives, including historiography and the recollection of art education in Brazil, the Exposição de Desenhos de Escolares da Grã-Bretanha became a kind of founding myth of art education driven by the motto of freedom of expression. This exhibition was responsible, for example, for the urge to create the Movimento Escolinha de Arte do Brasil [Little Art School Movement of Brazil] (Rodrigues, 1980), founded in 1948 by Lucia Alencastro Valentin, Margaret Spencer and Augusto Rodrigues. This movement was largely responsible for the spread of what became known as «free-expression».

According to Suzana Rodrigues, a puppet theatre actress, journalist and founder of the Club Infantil de Arte [Art Kids Club] in the Museu de Arte de São Paulo, or MASP [São Paulo Museum of Art], the «British children's drawings» opened space for «freedom of expression», as if they had a «magic touch».<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Suzana Rodrigues (personal communication to the author, 2001).

## $4^{TH} ACT$

As part of the educational activities of the newly opened Museu de Arte de São Paulo, the activities of the Club Infantil de Arte began on April 3, 1948.

Dedicated to children, this space was created on the initiative of Suzana Rodrigues as a community and experimentation centre. Activities such as drawing, painting, sculpture, poetry readings, puppet theatre production, and even visits to exhibitions and reception of works that would be part of the collection of this museum, formed part of the work done at the Club Infantil de Arte.

These activities were the topic of at least four newspapers in the city of São Paulo: *Gazeta*, O *Estado de São Paulo*, *Correio Paulistano* and O *Dia*. Nevertheless, the main vehicles for advertising MASP's events were the periodicals published by the group Diários Associados of Assis Chateaubriand, founder of the Museum. We can find intersections in these texts, such as the emphasis on projects valuing the child's autonomy and encouragement to express their feelings and imagination.

Something was aroused by the memory of two students of the Club Infantil de Arte. Memories recorded in two statements. The first, a letter from 1998, sent to Suzana Rodrigues, exposing the unforgettable «mood of freedom, and experimentation due to the projects being performed with several materials, individually and in groups».<sup>5</sup> The second, an excerpt of Maria Amélia de Carvalho's thesis, when she mentions it as the «first school of art and 'freeexpression' for children in São Paulo», directed by Suzana Rodrigues «as a fundamental reference to her professional training» (Carvalho, 1999).

The works performed by children in the Club Infantil de Arte were first exhibited on September 28, 1948. The newspaper O Diário da Noite referred to this exhibition as a «demonstration of the vitality the Museum showed in that section dedicated to childhood», a testimony to the «educational opportunities» («Exposição dos Trabalhos», 1948) generated by a work aimed at free expression.

On March 24, 1949, another exhibition was inaugurated. This time, its release highlighted the lecture held by the psychologist, Betti Katzenstein, on April 5, 1949, on «Arte Infantil e Psicologia da Criança» [Children's Art and Psychology of the Child], based on the interpretation of the works exhibited. The newspaper Diário de São Paulo on April 2 of the same year (Arte Infantil,

<sup>5</sup> Elisa Landa Lahtermaher (personal communication to Suzana Rodrigues, March 10, 1998).

1949) disclosed the event highlighting «children's art» as a «powerful» means of expression of the «creative forces of the child».

In reference to Katzenstein's statements, another published article on April 5 («Precisa a Arte», 1949), highlighted the interest of that exhibition to the artist, who could «observe the relationship between children's art and art in general, from primitive to modern»; to the teacher, who could recognize the most suitable type of guidance by observing children's expression; to the psychologist, who could «find the child's personality development through design»; and to the mother, by simply «recognizing the outcome of her child's work». There were also listed items in this exhibition, related to «children's art», that could be pointed out:

r<sup>st</sup>, the child should be allowed wide-ranging freedom, the educator's job being to prevent them from getting hurt; 2<sup>nd</sup>, wide-ranging freedom of choice as far as materials are concerned and respect in relation to the child's world view should also guide their production; 3<sup>rd</sup>, the child knows how to express movement in their work; 4<sup>th</sup>, the child is able to construct a narrative about the drawing itself; 5<sup>th</sup>, the expansion of their creative skill; 6<sup>th</sup>, the possibility of expression of the individual, their personality, mood; 7<sup>th</sup>, the reinterpretation of the sensible world; 8<sup>th</sup>, the expression of family conflicts; 9<sup>th</sup>, the drawing as an index of dreams, desires, jealousies, as an indicator of the psyche, the unconscious; 10<sup>th</sup>, the personality outcome in their drafts and materials («Precisa a Arte», 1949).

This article was divided in two parts. The first, entitled «Relação entre a arte infantil e a arte primitiva e moderna» [Relationship between the child's art and primitive and modern art], the second, «Libertação de modelos» [Liberation of models], where freedom of expression was defended as a valuable educational tool. The «eloquent» drawings present in that exhibition would be revelations from the «children's subconscious», manifestations of «a complete unknown world, only suspected by most, only at its initial acknowledgement». Art began to be «used as a powerful tool suiting the child's education» («Precisa a Arte», 1949).

Betti Katzenstein, a well-known scholar in children's drawings, delivered a lecture on the same subject mentioned before, *Exposição de Desenhos de Escolares da Grã-Bretanha*, entitled «Problemas psicológicos revelados pelos desenhos das crianças britânicas» [Psychological problems revealed by British children's drawings]. This conference was quoted in «Desenho e

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Desenvolvimento» [Drawing and Development], a text of her own in which she addresses exhibitions of children's drawings held in Brazil since 1942.

Two invitations were made to share these works in two other international exhibitions: *Children's International Art Show* at the Denver Art Museum, and one for the International Council of Museums (ICOM), in the Children's Section, during the second biennial conference of London in 1950. In response to the ICOM invitation, Pietro Maria Bardi,<sup>6</sup> director of MASP<sup>7</sup> at the time, highlighted «total freedom» as a characteristic of the work developed in the Club Infantil de Arte.

Suzana Rodrigues' work was not limited to MASP. In 1949, for example, the newspaper *Diário da Noite* reported the opening of a Club Infantil de Arte in Santo André, São Paulo, again emphasizing the «immeasurable» value of the «psychological and pedagogical results» of artistic activities performed with complete freedom of expression («Fundado em Santo André», 1949). The multiplication of these «clubs» was suggested, among other documents, by a manuscript<sup>8</sup> found in Suzana Rodrigues' personal collection, where a definition of a Club Infantil de Arte is stated as one of «the children's property». The most important organizational condition of a Club Infantil de Arte was «absolute freedom».

Suzana Rodrigues left MASP in the early 1950's, but continued her work as a journalist, teacher and puppet theatre actress, spreading the ideal of freedom of expression in educational texts and artistic practices. In one of her texts, for example, she states that «respect and deference to all manifestations» of the child's personality, «must be our primary care». For Suzana Rodrigues «all drawings that are freely produced by a child are first and foremost a portrait of their soul, a discharge of emotions. Before judging it by the perfection of its forms, we should analyse it for its spontaneity».<sup>9</sup>

The term «free-expression» was not used in the mid-twentieth century, at least not among the researched documents. Not even in Suzana Rodrigues' statements of her own work during the same period was it reported. However, a movement in favour of using such a term could be noticed whenever there

<sup>6</sup> Pietro Maria Bardi (personal communication to Mme. Germaine Cart , 10 oct. 1949).

<sup>7</sup> Museu de Arte de São Paulo (São Paulo's Museum of Art).

<sup>8</sup> Suzana Rodrigues (personal communication, 1951). Handwritten text with the following inscription in the margin: «Lecture held for trainee nurses in Paris as conference to the letters received in Paris».

<sup>9</sup> Rodrigues, Suzana (n.d.). «A Criança e o Desenho» [magazine clipping]. Personal archive of Suzana Rodrigues [we can establish the date of the article around the later 1940s, by analysing hints present in the draft text belonging to the same collection].

was a description of the methodology of the activities of the Club Infantil de Arte. As a common point, we found a subtle guided freedom. To Lucie Call, for example, «the worst enemies of original and potent art are disruptive permission, abject submission, carelessness, negligence and superficiality» (as cited in Bagaglio, 1948).

In 1943, Education through Art, by Herbert Read, was published, a book that would become an important foundation for Brazilian art teaching. It also contains a definition of «free-expression» given by the distinction between an «expression portrayed for a specific purpose» and another one, an «indirect one» with no other aim «in addition to externalizing a more general feeling, such as pleasure, anxiety or anger» (Read, 2001, p. 119-120).

When describing the activities of the Club Infantil de Arte, Suzana Rodrigues mentioned the need for guidance, pointing out the subtlety and economy of words.

In 1971, the teaching of art, known as Educação Artística [Artistic Education], became a legal requirement in the formal Brazilian educational system. It was a controversial addition because it was linked to the educational policy carried out under agreements between the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Brazil was ruled by a dictatorial regime at that time and public education, following the MEC-USAID project, was that of the «theory of human capital», aimed at a technical education focused on «training of human resources for economic development within the parameters of capitalism» (Saviani, 2008). But it was also controversial because of the abrupt and indefinite way in which Artistic Education was imposed, replacing the specific subjects of «drawing», «music» and «crafts». Doubts about the specific content of the new «subject» originated some procedures that have association with «free-expression», although close to a sense which was criticized by Lucie Call, and distant from the grounds set out by Dewey and Read. As a result, this term acquired a pejorative meaning. As it was associated with neglect, it became a controversial agenda for critical review, and subsequently, advocated as a means of resistance and even subversion, in a context of limited freedom.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> To Joana Lopes, actress and art educator engaged in movements against the Brazilian dictatorship, «expressing yourself freely» was «fundamental», referring back to the dictatorship years and the 1983 event, in which Paulo Pasta along with other artists and educators—involved with the Movement of Art Education—took part in Brazil.

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# DRAWING BODIES/DRAWING STUDENTS: MAKING UP RELATIONSHIPS IN CURRICULUM REFORM

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#### ABSTRACT

Drawing has a unique and complicated association to teaching and learning. Much of this complexity stems from shifting definitions about the body. What drawing is and how it invokes certain pedagogical responses depend on certain ways of thinking about the body as in *relation* with the world. The following comic essay describes two images of the body—affected and unaffected—circulating in curriculum reform efforts. Drawing primarily upon Science, Technology, and Society (STS) literature, critical pedagogy, and cognitive research, this comic examines how body discourses and the idea for drawing align with a commonsense logic of formal schooling: changing the conditions of schooling occur through changing the child (and adult).

> **KEY WORDS** Drawing; Bodies; Objectivity; Vision; Teaching; Learning.



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\* Captions from www.baltimoresun.com

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1992; Knorr Cetina, 1999; LaTour, 2004; Hacking, 1992a). Vision determines what a person observes, knows, and validates (Myers, 2005; Daston & Galison, 1992; Amann & Knorr Cetina, 1988; Knorr Cetina, 1999). Rather than taken as a natural given, scholars unpack it as a cultural thesis with real ethical implications, particularly in life/death issues (Myers, 2005; Haraway, 1997). What drawing is and how drawing invokes a response depend in part on certain ways of thinking about the body as having a relationship (Su, 2011), along a spectrum of distal and proximal, with the world. Relation implies some degree of separation to help percieve certain notions of difference. If people do not perceive themselves as separate from their surroundings, then the idea of having a and being in relation with or to something would be nonsense. Any notion of difference and sameness would also seem strange. Recognizing a relationship and then how the relationship takes shape determine if and how hierarchical distinctions form, endure, or dissolve (ibid). The following describes two images of the body circulating in teaching and learning reform efforts: the certain body and the indeterminate body. These images determine what counts as drawing by delineating the borders around vision and objectivity.

#### UNAFFECTED, CLOSED BODIES

One kind of body consists of a pure material substance with a distinct and separate form (Taylor, 1989, 1997; Freire, 2000). Like a suitcase, the body's shelled encasement regulates the inside/outside movement of the invisible and visible such as emotions, ideas, material things, or images themselves. The body and the world relate to one another at a distance. This unique orientation of being with the world rather than of it highlights a number of specific human qualities. How some people come to learn about their world depends in part upon this belief. Distance transforms the human body with markers of difference to hierarchically separate humans and non-humans as well as living and non-living (Haraway, 2008). The distance proves, in one sense, that people differ from animals, plants, microbes, or rocks. Humans stand outside and a little above the rules of categorization that determine all other species and non-species. This orientation also organizes the spectrum of humanness (ibid).






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2000, 2004). They do not experience the world as separate from their being. This renders all their actions as extensions of themselves and the world. This is what «animals are of the world» (ibid) means.

Animal movements reflect activity rather than existence. They move to survive and proliferate rather than to critically reflect on the world, themselves, and others. Animals perceive a borderless world and lack the creative capacity to be transformative. This creative capacity constitutes existence and defines what counts as change. Animals cannot be thought of as individuals where activity belongs to them. Their action belongs to the species, «Because the animals' activity is an extension of themselves, the results of that activity are also inseparable from themselves... Moreover, the 'decision' to perform this activity belongs not to them but to their species. Animals are, accordingly, fundamentally 'being in themselves'» (Freire, 2000, p.97). Animals lack ownership over thought or action. This senseless relationship keeps them from participating in making meaning about themselves and about the world.

Unlike animals, people reflect upon the experience of their experience and commit to action in transformative ways. People transform the world and themselves through renaming, relabeling, and reimagining (Freire, 2000, 2004). Words logically separate humans from animals. The word provides evidence of people's capacity to critically reflect using multiple and distant perspectives. It also gives them a way of thinking about agency as what one can do when critical reflection and action intermix. Animals remain submerged and incomplete because they cannot use the word.

People also perceive the environment as being made available for them (Dewey, 1997). Once perceived as being separate from who they are, it becomes open for investigating, knowing, controlling, and manipulating. Unless people recognize their inherent possession of the environment, there is no sense of self (Taylor, 1989). To put it another way, the environment exists for people to get to know themselves through interaction and manipulation. For example, in teaching and learning practices, the five-step scientific method standardizes how people imagine themselves and the world (Rudolph, 2005). The relationship reduces





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excludes as it includes. This is the double gesture; and 3) Spatial-temporal alignments—If learning means to perceive the world and the idea of yourself at a distance, then peoples' lives unfold through a sense of movement towards, more often than not, something greater (Taylor, 1997).

## OBJECTIVITY IN RELATION TO A HAVING BODY AND ITS PARTS

Parts of the body such as the hands also matter. There is a close association with cognition and the hands (Goldin-Meadow, 2006; McNeil, 1992). This love affair with the hands stems from a certain understanding of the body and the relations it forms. In conjunction with the word, prehensile hands and opposable thumbs make people unique and allow them to stand apart from the rest of the world (Kittler, 1999). Man's hands assist him in experiencing himself outside of himself and separate from the rest of the environment. As hands move, manipulate, and transform they reassert that he exists with the world rather than being merely a part of it. They give man a creative capacity as well as a feeling that his actions belong to him. What he does with the world reflects how he thinks about it. In other words, hands also preserve the separation amongst species and hierarchical reasoning.

As with writing, drawing leaves an external trace of what is happening on the inside. It distracts from or adds to how ideas, inquiries, and practices read as extensions of the person who writes and draws. Drawing reveals the physical union of the hand with the idea and action. When perceived as conjoined they show what makes man amazing, «man himself acts [handelt] through the hand [Hand]; for the hand is, together with the word, the essential distinction of man. Only being which, like man, «has» the words, can and must «have» «the hand» (as cited in Kittler, 1999, p.198). Drawing can also be used to verify, make, and dessiminate knowledge. The hand matters because of how it puts a mechanized logic and degree of control onto the, sometimes, unruly act of drawing and writing by hand. Machines, such as the typewriter, computer, and camera, also carry a similar line of reasoning (Dason & Galison, 1992). This has implications for what kinds of images and drawings matter.

The process of drawing objects coincides with the shifting socio-cultural norms of objectivity (Daston & Galison, 1992). Being



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self-restraint (ibid). These relations center around discovering unbiased, purer truths. This kind of objectivity makes vision perfectible (Haraway, 1988). Vision technologies, particularly in the biological sciences, do the following: I) they resort to violent acts in order to see objects of study; 2) they manipulate time/space narratives so that dynamic, moving objects become static, frozen, and observable; and 3) they assume that technologies can create unbiased, disinterested scientists/researchers, students, objects of study, and technologies themselves (Myers, 2005). A person's presence is controlled by technology such as, in the literal sense, machines and also in another kind of literal sense, governing of the self (Dean, 2009). Objectivity means to be a reasonable distance away from unverifiable imagination, improvisation, and judgment (Daston & Galison, 1992). It also means to desensitize from the acts of violence (Knorr Cetina, 1999) and downplay gross manipulations of unique time-space narratives (Schrader, 2010) to affirm this notion of objectivity and coincide it with appropriate teaching and learning practices. With this sense of objectivity, drawing takes on narrow definitions (Daston & Galison, 1992). It only becomes recognizable when it aligns with the general consensus of being objective while making valid knowledge.

#### AFFECTED, OPEN BODIES

Another kind of body consists of a shifting, interdependent amalgamation of machines and species that share complex histories and responsibilities (Haraway, 1988, 1990, 1997, 2008). This body is dynamic, affected, entangled, rearranged, and relational as well as indeterminate (Barad, 2003). Its sensitivity transforms what happens to teaching and learning. The body moves by the subjective experience of being in this world and with aid of specific instruments to know, experience, and render the world without a definitive endpoint (LaTour, 2004; Myers, 2009, 2010, 2012; Myers & Dumit, 2011). This body is an interconnected space that takes shape as it «learns to be affected by more and more elements» (LaTour, 2004, p.2). They are fundamentally defined as sensitive. Their sensitivity opens up knowing the body, the world, and sensitivity itself, and puts them in constant formation. What matters, in addition to the mechanized approaches in teaching



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ethical practice (Casid, 2012).

Teaching and learning with sensitive bodies means in part to respond to everyday practices of care that also support the good death rather than solely fixating on the good life (ibid). With a commitment to practices of care, teaching and learning envisions life in death and bodies as interdependent and indeterminate. Distinctions, separations, and hierarchies make less sense with sensitive bodies. «We live in a moment of profound and compounded precocity in which social infrastructure support for care cannot, in any way, be assumed to have social value I call for close attention to the particulars of affective labor that are the (im)material support of care» (p.122). Opening up the body and extending it as profoundly dying matter makes the medical, Cartesian form seem strange. This other sense of the body needs practices of care that support a good death with the same vigor taken in striving for a good life. Destabilizing the human form also unpacks the limitations in certain teaching and learning discourses, particularly those where education is understood as a practice of rescue or an act of salvation (Popkewitz, 1998) rather than, for example, a practice of care.

In recognizing this affected and embodied form, teaching and learning interventions shift. For example, instead of the standardized five-step scientific method, affected embodiment molds in conjunction with specific tools to render the world in unique and less standardized ways of reasoning (Ainsworth, *et al.*, 2011; Hay *et al.*, 2013). Instruments vary widely and include the material (microscopes, pencils, books, people) and immaterial (imagination, pretend, play). Education scholars characterize these modes of learning as an essential yet immeasurable component of knowing. They mark these more artistic styles of reasoning as the rationale behind differences in expressions of expertise amongst people at various stages of formal schooling (ibid). By naming the *gap*, part of the purpose of schooling becomes effectively teaching affective and embodied knowledge.



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Intervention strategies involve fuller-body classroom experiences such as hand-drawing comic strips or engaging multiple senses such as the olfactory and haptic (ibid). To put it another way, when students make knowledge through affective and embodied experiences, they increase the likelihood of becoming, for example, responsible, innovative scientists and researchers.

As with teaching and learning, objectivity transforms with the affected body. Objectivity through the sensitive body means in part to close the distance and blur boundaries amongst people, objects of study, and their tools of inquiry (Barad, 2003). It also means to pervert the good sense put into selfcontrol and self-constraint. This term relies upon the lived, subjective, and interdependent experience amongst (non)species and (non)living (ibid) as it plays out against the backdrop of shifting, historical socio-cultural norms of an idealized public sphere.

Drawing also extends beyond the pen and paper as well as disseminates beyond the hand. It includes any act—dancing, writing, filming, and composing—that opens up a definitive form (Nancy, 2013), shows interdependency (Myers, 2011), and recognizes the perpetual unfinished states of bodies (LaTour, 2004). Students and teachers take concern over how they draw to renew the possibility of drawing again rather than the drawing itself. Perfecting the act of drawing to turn the student into the scientist, for example, is not the purpose of drawing. The idea of knowledge gained, produced, constructed, mixes with prolonging the attainment of these very notions associated with the act of knowing. Drawing aims to draw out indeterminacy. This, in many ways, is the purpose.

The affected body, in part, is an ethical response to vision (Myers, 2005; Barad, 2003; Haraway, 1988). Teaching and learning with a notion that the body includes complex interdependencies and responsibilities means to hope that «an embodied approach to ethics might be the best way to keep pace with our shifting relationships and responsibilities as we integrate these evolving [image] technologies into our practices» (Haraway, 2008, p.265).







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responsibility in making knowledge (Schrader, 2010). It also extends who and what counts as living a precarious life to the point where this question becomes nonsensical. If bodies are fundamentally open, sensitive, and interdependent, then there is also a sharing of suffering (Haraway, 2008). No one and nothing stands outside of precarious living.

There is a danger in applying different notions of the body in teaching and learning strategies such as drawing. Though body discourses may read differently, the idea for drawing aligns with the commonsense logic of formal schooling—changing the conditions of schooling occur through changing the child (and adult) (Popkewitz, 1998). Both bodies—unaffected and affected—normalize drawing as a practice of hope for pedagogical reform efforts. Whether certain or indeterminate, when bodies get taken up in curriculum reform narratives, both become knowable. They become the means for action in curriculum reforms efforts while also inscribing an a-historical sense to the present. In other words, they reaffirm a particular present, a local social order, and a certain projection of the future.

When drawing becomes part of curriculum discourse it turns into a vehicle for creating particular kinds of people. Drawing, what it is and what it can do, suddenly carries a fixed, universal meaning. People use drawing as a tool for making better students. Drawing exists to establish the rules and regulations for a finite range of what, how, and who people can be. This is the danger.

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#### THE PROBLEM OF ARTISTIC RESEARCH

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#### ABSTRACT

Although almost every debate about artistic research highlights its novelty in references to «uncertainty», »indefinability», and to its lack of identity whilst «bound to a tradition external to itself», this novelty has lasted for a few decades already. Many of the problems raised today are to be found back when research and art education began to relate within the academic context in the 1980s. So where is the speculative discussion on its uncertainty taking artistic research to? Is a solution intended to be found? Is there a problem to be solved?

Through 'productivitism' this text argues that the aprioristic idea that artistic research is problematic has been securing its state of pendency and increasing its fragility. The final part of the article suggests a creative potential and a challenging dimension in the process of institutionalization, and ends by pointing out possible topics of work for a shared agenda with contemporary art.

#### **KEY WORDS**

Novelty; Uncertainty; Pendency; Productivitism; Artistic research.

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# The Problem of Artistic Research

Catarina Almeida

### ARTISTS ARE BACK TO SCHOOL

The comeback of artists to art school is a phenomenon worth studying from a variety of perspectives, ranging from politics and art history to the inner developments of the art world. Some attempts and larger reviews have been done or are underway, taking one of these perspectives as a guiding line. We are not in a position to start one of that kind here and now, but only to share some possible directions. We certainly are in a position to say that art has dealt with inquiry at least since the 1980s, and thus to speak of a wholly novel field of activity is not only inaccurate and misleading, but also quite paralyzing. It is in the height of the sixties' conceptualism that the reflexive propensity in art more obviously finds its parentage; yet we can go back further and further and hunt up its roots in baroque art education and in the epoch's interest in publishing and treaties, and even more to the renaissance separation of craftwork and liberal arts.

Since the sixteenth century a slow and progressive intellectualization of art has been taking place, and not without its ups and downs. It is not a unidirectional pathway though, since there have been periods where the willingness of artists and of other relating agents was directed at the opposite side. Nevertheless, and in order to enlighten artists' comeback to school, an extensive historiography of that tendency can be weaved and made out, through the analysis of syllabi, of official decrees on arts and education and the attentive reading and interpretation of the discourses uttered by those in powerful

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positions within academies and universities. They are the ones who always define what arts education is to be like and the role of artistic research in the production of knowledge in the arts. This is the frame from where I see artistic research: as an academic reality, ontologically located within the institution of higher arts education. Yet I am not defending a sacred place for artistic research; the way I see the academy nesting artistic research has nothing to do with preserving authenticity or a certain level of pureness in the practice. It is, on the other hand, a way of providing me with the necessary terms for the observation of a particular phenomenon, setting up ontological conditions for it to exist. I hope this makes clear that, for me, the academic condition of artistic research is not about supporting the educational institution, but about acknowledging that reality is shaped by forces and power relations that are responsible for giving us the perception of events, not as autonomous and essential things with inner significance, but as the result of the action of these power relations. Reality comes as a constructed reality, in opposition to a found reality. Artistic research, to this extent, is but the result of these forces and power relations put into play, which is an understanding that obliterates any essential or unveiled sui generis mechanism of the field.

I've spoken of a historiography of the intellectualization of art, which comprises the phenomenon of artists returning to art school; this would also be leading to a historiography of artistic research. This is, however, a way to look at past things from present times. Artistic research is not a denomination you will find documented very often before the 1990s. Indeed reflexive dimensions and inquiry propensities have been in pace with artistic practice since long before that. And surely research-minded artists have worked on the field using that particular feature of their subjectivity in past times. The idea of artistic research as a concept and territory finally gains structure as soon as artistic practice and academy cross their ways again in the twentieth century, after a long history of disagreement, suspicion and friction.

Modernism is largely characterized by this hate relationship between the two territories, something collateral to the securing of the autonomy of art, artists would say. For clearer insight, this must be placed in the broader understanding of what it meant to be an artist at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth. Regarded today as one of the most remarkable writers living in that time, Charles Baudelaire assembles the characteristics of 'the painter of the modern life', in which a subjectivity of a free spirit and a *flâneur* is portrayed. His text was not only describing the world he saw, but, most importantly, it was suggesting the way artists should be, feel and act in the first half of the twentieth century. Although not recognized nor read by the masses of his time, Baudelaire was well connected with artistic circles in Paris and was read by his artist peers, who, in his writings, were being pictured as isolated, self-centred and sensitive people, in charge of a gift in artistry. This very easily falls into romanticism, yet it forcibly impacted the subjectivities of the artists on the rise. How could this kind of artist relate to arts education in an academic institution? How could they agree to exchange their beloved freedom for power-knowledge subjection? It was only around the 1950s that the friction entered an undermining process with repercussions to this day. Midway last century, after the Second World War, artists started to accumulate positions as teachers in universities, in order to accommodate the number of war veterans returning home and enrolling in further education. The consequences of the schism between artists from the academic world were crucial, and enabled their rapprochement. Fundamental to this turnaround was the fact that these abstract expressionist artists met with recognition and acclamation for their artistic careers in their lifetimes (something impressionists, surrealists, cubists, expressionists did not go through), making students interested in the work of their teachers. They could talk to and learn directly from successful artists in academies. This situation, lived more thoroughly in the United States although with European impingement, too, was elucidatory that the art world and academy did not have to walk separate paths. Despite the value of such evidence of circa fifty years, it is not rare even today to find strong disapproval regarding the merging of the two worlds.

Other events have contributed to the recent interest of academia in art and artists in academies. It is hard to tell which side led this approximation, for it seems more unanimous to consider that both sides have identified advantages and interests in the association of their territories. From the art world stand an increasing seduction has been visible, like an explorer's curiosity, in the riveting undertaking of entering the academy. Many contemporary artists have started seeing the academic environment as a territory of potential creativity<sup>1</sup> or, at least, as a place where certain endeavours can be



<sup>1</sup> About the new role of the academy, see Jan Verwoert's article at *Metropolis M*, «Lessons in Modesty—the open academy as a model»: «Nowadays art academies are no longer simply institutes for art education, but places where art is received, produced, collected and distributed. The idea of the open academy has consequences for art, the practice of exhibition making, and art education itself». Retrieved from http://metropolism.com/magazine/2006-n04/lessen-in-bescheidenheid/english

ambitioned in contrast with the current state of the art world. In this respect the 2012 MaHKU – Utrecht Graduate School of Visual Art and Design's project Temporary Autonomous Research (TAR)<sup>2</sup> for the Amsterdam Pavilion in the 9<sup>th</sup> Shanghai Biennale is very relevant. It was curated by Henk Slager, and at stake were concerns with the ontological conditions of artistic research as well as the possibilities it raised within the academic framework. About TAR, Slager has asked: «Is research perhaps a temporary thing that can only take place within the experimental sanctuary created by the institutional framework of art education? A space that generates a temporary autonomy where purely artistic research can take place free from instrumental and/ or calculating preconditions».<sup>3</sup> This temporality of research would then be the place for art to try out things in laboratory-style and speculation driven mode, removed from the profit-making art world in its exterior. I've verified this feeling among doctoral students in Helsinki during my brief passage as a visiting researcher in the University of Arts last January-February. In conversations we had, some have claimed to have enrolled in the programs because they needed time for themselves and their work far from the restraints of market and business. Simo Kellokumpu, choreographer, performance artist and doctoral student in the Theatre Academy, has interestingly suggested that the demand of artists for PhDs and artistic research could be regarded as a way found by contemporary artists to struggle against the power structures of the art world—ironically! Enrolled in a doctoral course in Aalto University, performer and environmental artist Saara Hannula talked about the temporality of artistic research, advocating the conditions offered by a doctoral program to the sustained development of artistic work.<sup>4</sup> She said, on her personal level, that it is a «... natural continuation for me to engage and work within an institutional frame, and to have a framework for what I'm doing, and a shared structure for the research process that I would be doing anyway. Also the fact that I can engage in a particular research process which I have to formulate beforehand, like I have to formulate my research questions and then follow them and I have to be disciplined about it; I think it helps me. Then I can delve deeper into something for a longer time, and then I also have external perspectives, outside help, or have others who can comment or

<sup>4</sup> These interviews with Simo Kellokumpu and Saara Hannula, and one other with Leena Rouhiainen, are recorded, but not yet fully transcribed nor made public in any way.



<sup>2</sup> Henk Slager writes more about TAR in his book The Pleasure of Research (2011).

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved from MaHKU website and accessed here: http://www.mahku.nl/news/998.html

support...». In line with Saara and Simo, Leena Rouhiainen stresses that the production of knowledge that distinguishes artistic practice from contemporary art, which she describes as «quite conceptual, quite explorative, quite investigative», is intimately related to the time spent with a research problem: «We think that this knowledge part is something that comes in and then, that you remain around one problem for four to six years makes a difference. They [artists doing art independently] might of course use their own methods but they have one project and they concentrate on this issue, and they have another project and they concentrate on a different issue. When you set out doing artistic research, you're setting out exploring a problem for quite a few years».<sup>5</sup> The proposed temporality is the potentially creative territory of artistic research within academy. What some see as limited and conditioned, others spot as «temporary autonomy», and where some see threatened freedom, others find absence of «instrumental and/or calculating preconditions». The sceptical are those who, still speaking in terms of temporality, consider research in the arts to be happening ever since art first existed and every time an artist is working. Hence they refuse to see any interest or advantage to the arts in an emerging field called artistic research, advocating instead the liberating cognitive practices of artists against normalizing artistic research. This field asks for a more mindful approach and for the surveying and problematization of the conditions under which artistic research happens beyond an empirical perspective of a generalized reflexive practice in the arts.

What seems to be most urgent and still missing in the proposed historiography is one concise study looking at artistic research from the sphere of the art world. That is to put in the foreground the events, tensions and individual contributions that, from the art world and through artistic processes, have impacted the circumstances and features of our current understanding of artistic research. To this effect we must consider the deep change that has taken place in the way to be an artist and which is indeed manifest in artists' talks, practices, scopes, exhibitions, studios and productions. This is a yet unexplored and challenging territory. The roles of curating, producing, teaching and making have merged in many cases to the extent that the way to be an artist in the twenty-first century is something either shapeless or still



<sup>5</sup> This is a transcribed extract of my interview with Leena Rouhiainen at the Theatre Academy Helsinki on 9 Feb 2015, during my stay as a visiting researcher of University of Arts. Leena Rouhiainen is a dancer-choreographer, dance scholar, DA in Dance (TeaK, 2003), vice-dean of TeaK and professor of Artistic Research there.

taking shape, experimenting in temporary subjectivities like artist-as-curator and artist-as-producer. Moreover, it is not by chance that some authors are aligned in suggesting that the outgrowth of a field eventually called artistic research is ontologically linked with concerns in the art world with regard to spectatorship, public presentation and discussion of works of art (Anton Vidokle; Henk Slager). This comes as the exacerbation of the already long lasting thinking on the changing roles of art audience in inter-relational aesthetics (Nicolas Bourriaud) and microtopian ethos (Claire Bishop), the expanding categories, the reconfiguration of art museums and exhibition halls, and their implied social functions, as political and pedagogical equipment. A great emphasis is placed on the pedagogical effects of art, considered here far more broadly than the life inside the academy building. The way pedagogy is being understood stresses its political dimension and, in turn, makes it more appreciable by artists. Such a pedagogical effect is more obviously related to two pressing interests of artistic research: in which conversation is my research engaging? What is the role I seek for art in contemporary society?

#### ... AND SCHOOL'S INTERESTED IN THE ARTS?

From the academic perspective, the interest in artistic practice lies largely in economic aspects. In truth, it is not a purely academic interest, but more of a social and political concern whose framing covers the scopes of academia. This has ultimately been treated as the instrument at hand of corporations and governments, whose political program in post-industrialism has been particularly fond of communicative and social capacities, affectivity and different types of individual competencies no longer dependent on arms and legs only. Political programs are compelled to avoid financial loss and generate profit, investing in what they consider the highest paying areas of activity and knowledge. Not surprisingly, art is not among these areas, and so the strategy of governments is to turn the artistic field from an open-ended and speculative territory, into more of a discipline of applicable outcomes. One resulting effect is the stir of creative industries popping up in urban areas and being covered by the epithet of creativity and artistry. It is, furthermore, a paradoxical nomination: there is no such thing as creative industries. In these hubs and in the capitalist environment underlying all this creative turn in economics circulates the huge risk of turning art into entertainment.

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According to governmental intentions, it should be more profitable this way and job opportunities are to be found, but art's political and social impact is irretrievably jeopardized.

This negativity has been outgrowing and contaminating other affected areas involved in the discussion. Partly the academy has been regarded by wary artists as a structure replicating such a relation with the art world, a relation mediated by interests anchored in profit-making, career investment and social status. This has been measurably carried out and become more and more patent with the commitments of the Bologna Agreement. Besides its apparently good intentions of mobility, networking, collaboration, interdisciplinarity and success, the Bologna reform ought to be read after uncovering the hidden interests behind such unanimously positive objectives. This is to say that it needs to be put against a neoliberal background, so that collaboration, success and the rest are re-read and re-understood as utilities for profitmaking.

Henk Slager points to what sounds more like entrepreneurship skills: «Because of the deconstruction of the boundaries between art education, science, and the domain of art practice—boundaries that were clung to in the former model for the sake of the principle of autonomy, curricular space is claimed now for novel components in the program such as critical studies, contextual studies, collaborative and interdisciplinary projects, experimental productions, and above all for communicative and curatorial competencies. What becomes abundantly clear is that today artists should especially be able to present and contextualize their projects» (2011). The afore mentioned new subjectivities of the artist are to be regarded not only as developments from within the artistic field, but as effects of the social and political context as well. Besides cultivating particularly cherished competences in the current post-industrialist society, Bologna has opened universities' decision boards to the influence of private groups. According to Stephan Dillemuth, «the company Bertelsmann for instance initiated the establishment of the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE), which is to influence study contents and university structures according to private interests under the pretence of a putative compatibility ensured by bachelor and master's programs» (2006).<sup>6</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Stephan Dillemuth, artist and teacher at the Academy of Fine Arts of Munich, is being quoted from a summary on a symposium of the Internationale Gesellschaft der Bildenden Künste (IGBK) in cooperation with the Akademie für Bildende Künste of Johannes Gutenberg University, occurred in Mainz from July 13th to the 15th, 2006, under the name «Reality Check—who is afraid of master of arts?»
In a way, such permeability of universities may be turning them into applied knowledge institutions, similar to polytechnics, risking their research vocation. An approximation felt in the field, although not officially set.

The picture isn't very pleasant. Operated by corporate and private interests in the worst cases and by neoliberal governments as well, academies and universities in general do not hail anything good for the developments of art. But a «third space»<sup>7</sup> is there too, a space for experimentation, waiting on artists to get through. The project «A Certain Ma-Ness» (2008-2010), curated by Jan Cools from Sint-Lukas Academy Brussels and Henk Slager from MaHKU-Utrecht Graduate School of Visual Art and Design, and a collaboration with EARN – European Artistic Research Network, has focused on the concerns of the institutionalization of arts education at higher level and the consequences of such a process for both the reception to art by academia, and the academic reframing of artistic practice. «A Certain Ma-Ness» ultimately developed into three different projects: besides itself, also «Becoming Bologna» (2009) and «The Academy Strikes Again» (2010). In «The Academy Strikes Again» workshops were organized and documentation exhibited regarding the work of three doctoral students in art, and at stake was «the specificity of the Academy as a research environment (...). How can artistic (doctoral) research contribute to the overall research environment at the Academy?» (readable in EARNS's website).<sup>8</sup> The second part of the project held a symposium on the institutionalization of artistic research where the questions being debated were «Can the academicized Art Academy still offer a viable space and platform for the experimental development of a critical art practice? Is there an affirmative relationship between institutionalized artistic research and the art scene? How transparent is 'peer reviewing' in the art world and what role can it play in academised art education? How can the outcomes of artistic research be disseminated?». In the end it is a matter of awareness and critical thinking. These days institutionalization is an unavoidable process for almost everything. In the case of art, it is not even a new one:

<sup>7</sup> More of Tuomas Nevanlinna on the third space of artistic research: «The problem of the studio model of research is that, while boasting of its individuality and freedom, it in fact creates an entirely unbuffered state in relation to the international system of star hunting. Students are not learning as much as being constantly displayed for the benefit of interested curators or headhunters. In the British model, artistic research is actually perfectly traditional scientific academic research. The Finnish Academy of Fine Arts avoids both these extremes: it created an entirely new 'third' space for learning and creative work» (2008).

<sup>8</sup> Retrieved from: http://www.artresearch.eu/index.php/2010/05/09/the-academy-strikes-back -4-5610/

it had already been institutionalized, in museums, galleries and the lot composing the institution of the art world—does anyone seriously believe that the art world is an unregulated territory?

To argue against the academy's claim for freedom and institutional critique does not help much and only recalls old phantoms of artistic ethos. Those artists standing against the damaging consequences of post-graduate studies to (their idea of) what art is, vaguely resemble the figures of guardians of sacred territories. They're right to the extent that art history has been written in the trail of marginal artists and their non-academic practices, but even then one should note that to be out of the academy was scarcely a first choice: even the impressionists fought heated battles to be accepted in the official Salon.

When I asked Leena Rouhiainen about why artists were interested in applying for the recent doctoral programs, she gave me the perspective of the Finnish Theatre Academy: «I think there is a pressure on artists to find ways of answering to the consumer culture, this liberal capitalism, and find new ways of dealing with being an artist. At least our institution is a place where you can truly experiment. You don't have the production demands or having to follow a schedule or certain kinds of formats in order to be able to produce your art, which affects the content of your art. That's one reason I think. But of course another reason is that this has become an interesting environment because there's starting to be programs like this, people start to acknowledge that something is being done here. What is it? Is it really something that can promote your career or arts in general?»<sup>9</sup> Touché.

Nevertheless, this text is not intended to promote academy in the future of artistic practice, or to praise its institutional status. The effects of institutionalization are real and sometimes the whole process of becoming institutionalized—as an artist who (again) enters the academy—is a bit risky. Almost like walking on thin ice. One should be aware of that, of the power relations at stake and regulations manipulating the subjectivity of the artist. It is not only about getting a research position in a university, being given an office, a computer and a grant; for an artist it means at the same time to engage in an agenda of publishing, of seminars and conferences, of assessment of outcomes and public discussion of these outcomes. Sometimes it also becomes a



<sup>9</sup> This is a transcribed extract of an interview I conducted with Leena Rouhiainen at the Theatre Academy Helsinki in 9 Feb 2015, during my stay as a visiting researcher of the University of Arts.

matter of changing the ways of writing, of talking, of thinking. Regulations, pressures and deadlines are all around. What's more, they are also in the art world. It would be enormously *naif* to believe institutionalization is not leaving its marks or is going unnoticed. Tuomas Nevanlinna comments that «transplanting the terminology of a science policy rife with 'doctoral theses', 'dissertations' and 'research' is not and cannot be an innocent, value-free process» (quoted from Balkema & Slager, 2004, p. 81). Tensions exist. However, the situation does not need to be a bad thing as long as one is aware of it. It is exactly at the top of this attentive conscience that the territory of creative potential that the academy can be turned into emerges. Otherwise, and without opposing forces to struggle against, what are the chances for resistance to be performed? «Where there is power there is resistance», wrote Michel Foucault in the first volume of *History of Sexuality* (1978) and this pretty much meets the landscape where the potentiality of artistic research stands. Without institutionalization that would be like «falling without a parachute».<sup>10</sup>

With regard to institutionalization it matters to ask: how can my research start a conversation (isn't research about starting a conversation?)? How can art draw positive inputs from a broader communication of its concerns and aims rather than from the lack of it? In this sense, it matters to note that despite all its references to creativity, productive aims and art world relationships, artistic research is not a place for artists to make statements. It is not the hermetic space of self-evidence which the art world gets into at times. On the contrary, it is a dialoguing space of construction. Assuming both the advantages and the risks of institutionalization of art academy, artistic research is installed and in the only place it could be in order to pursue these intents.

#### RESEARCH IN HIGHER ARTS EDUCATION

The first doctoral courses were introduced in Finland in the beginning of the 1980s, and the beginning of the 90s saw the emergence of the first doctorates in art in the country. The first title of Doctor of Art was awarded in 1991 from Aalto University School of Art, Design and Architecture (ten years after the

<sup>10</sup> These are words by Itay Ziv (Tel Aviv based visual artist and TAhTO researcher) reacting to Mika Elo's comments on narrowing effects of institutionalization of artistic practice, during TAhTO's seminar in January 2015, Finnish Academy of Fine Arts University of Arts, Helsinki.



program was introduced); the first title of Doctor of Art from the Theatre Academy (part of the University of Arts since 2013) was awarded in 1999 (the program started in 1988). The space of time separating the start of programs and the completion of studies of the first doctorates began to shorten in the late 90s. The Fine Arts Academy of the University of Arts introduced doctoral studies in 1997 and the first student defended his work in 2001. A curve is illustrated here: with more post-graduate courses arising in different art universities and academies, we go from an increasing number of applicants to a decreasing amount of time spent on the completion of their studies. Artists of the twentieth-first century are definitely engaged with post-graduate studies and are back at the academy. And artistic research is ultimately seen as the result of this meeting.

Finland is not alone in the journey. It was chosen as a model here for its pioneering spirit, but examples can also be given of other European contexts. The other scandinavian countries follow Finland's achievements attentively. Sweden is offering PhD programs in both Lund University and Gothenburg University. PhDs in art for students enrolled in the Malmö Art Academy have been possible since 2002 (the first doctors came out in 2006) and awarded by Lund University. Since 2010, Lund has also hosted a national research school in the arts, called Konstnärliga forskarskolan, aiming for a productive and stimulating environment for artistic research in Sweden. Gothenburg and Lund universities, together with other seven higher education institutions, form this national research school. In Gothenburg University, it is the Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts that houses the doctoral courses. This Faculty currently aggregates the Valand Academy (which merged four previous schools in 2012), HDK–School of Design and Crafts (resulting from two former schools) and the Academy of Music and Drama. Valand offers the options of Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of the Arts.

Norway is more hesitant and did not officially introduce PhD awards in artistic practice. Instead, since 2003 the Norwegian government has offered a third cycle program—in the style of a graduate school—that leads to a diploma equivalent to PhD level.

In Portugal, where I come from, most PhDs in the arts were prompted by reforms carried out or accomplished after the Bologna declaration was signed in 1999. Despite the opposite being announced, the reorganization of the three levels of studies made the binary model of university and polytechnic education become more obvious, not only in Portugal but also



in most European countries. As graduate courses became shorter, Master degrees became the most common degree and were no longer regarded as a final stage (as used to be practiced in most English-speaking countries). A report from 2007 states that Bologna has not yet been implemented in Portugal because the adaptation to the BA+MA has not implemented the necessary structural changes, but only a shift in names. Accomplishing a second cycle today in Portugal takes the same amount of time as the pre-Bologna undergraduate course (five-six years). Third cycles emerged as differentiating value in one's education as well as a strategic measure for institutions to legitimate disciplines and areas of research. In Portugal, as in many other European countries (Finland, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, Norway), universities known for their research teaching are the only institutions entitled to award research degrees as third cycle studies, making the appearance of doctoral courses after Bologna a predictable occurrence. The most artistic research-related third cycle Portuguese studies in the arts appeared in the late first decade of the 2000s. The earliest courses are focused on digital media and technology, like the Catholic University program hosted by its School of the Arts since 2008, and the digital media program of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto, launched in 2009. This same faculty established a third cycle studies in Art and Design in 2009, where a creative part in the final thesis is contemplated. In addition, the doctoral program in Arts Education, running since 2010, is open to individual proposals comprising relevant practical and creative components. The University of Lisbon has hosted the doctoral course in Fine Arts, in the Faculty of Fine Arts, since 2009, including a practical part, and since 2012 has also offered a doctoral study focused on performance and moving image, organized in association with the Polytechnic Institute of Lisbon. In 2010, doctoral studies appeared both in the University of Évora and the University of Coimbra.

In most European countries polytechnics are not awarding PhDs, although there are exceptions—and in some cases master degrees are being hosted in polytechnic institutions; however these are not considered as valid as those offered by universities, and if the plan is to follow up with a doctoral program, then the student from the polytechnic has to collect additional ECTS in order to match the requirements. In the Netherlands, the Technical University of Delft awards PhDs, although not in the arts; also the academies of art are keeping their autonomous status from universities, benefiting from this separation concerning teaching requirements—it is not compulsory that teachers in academies are PhDs—, and taking advantage of the possibility of associated courses that allow for doctoral programs. Even though these programs are initially designed stressing technical features of possible applications of arts, after official acceptance they are free to pursue more speculative dynamics. So the differentiation between polytechnic education and scientific education is 'technically' being preserved in the Netherlands. Scientific education is thus for universities and statutory equivalent associated schools. The Royal Academy of Art and the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague form the University of the Arts and, in association with Leiden University, they are the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts. This Academy hosts two doctoral programs: docArtes (since 2004 and together with the Amsterdam Conservatoire) for practice-based research in music, and PhDArts, a doctoral program for visual arts and design, running since 2008.

The binary model is kept open and, across Europe and since the implementation of the Bologna Agreement, there have been shifts and changes in trying to adapt to an also changing reality. A report on higher art education of 2010 commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Education" made some considerations on the binary model, suggesting not the extinction of such a system, but its reform. In the document, it was claimed that polytechnics should not try to look like universities, and instead should re-profile themselves in the open possibilities of research relevant to professional practice. This also leaves an interesting interstice for the higher art education institution to be placed upon: sometimes regarded as a 'polytechnic-plus', and widely known as not matching the scientific demands of pure research universities, post graduate arts education should also grab the chance given by the shifting environments prompted by Bologna, not to necessarily join university framings, but rather to claim a space for useful artistic research. In Portugal, the possibility of a university of the arts is something yet to be explored. And despite the Dutch report referring to the University of the Arts London as an example, no similar plans are mentioned for the Netherlands, although the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts is doing well exploring that role.

In the United Kingdom the tradition of PhDs in the arts goes as far back as the 1950s, with a dissertation on sculpture. After the 1970s the number



<sup>11 «</sup>Differentiëren in Drievoud», accessed in https://eliaartschools.wordpress.com/2010/09/06/ higher-arts-education-in-the-netherlands-two-reports/

increased, and by 1985 a hundred doctoral studies had been accomplished in the areas of fine art, design, architecture and visual communication, as shown in the data provided in the essay «Researching Research in Art and Design», by Judith Mottram (2009). These numbers can be deceptive, though, as they put together studies of quite different scopes, such as anthropological, educational, historical or developmental outlooks. As for those more openly relating to processes of art-making and undertaken from the perspective of practitioners, examples are fewer and are first signalled in 1980-85. Not all degrees were awarded by universities, and in the case of polytechnics and colleges of art (which held studio courses in fine arts and where the kind of PhDs this text is interested in first emerged), the degrees were recognized by CNAA-Council for National Academic Awards (abolished in 1992, when polytechnics were designated as universities). According to Timothy Emlyn Jones, «The first UK PhDs to be examined without a substantial written thesis emerged only in the late 1990s, and a DFA that is substantially different in more than name from the PhD has only recently materialized in the UK at Goldsmiths College, London (...)» (2009, p. 38). In any case, and looking more in depth at the research modalities offered at PhD level at Goldsmiths, they are adamant about assuring a written part in the doctoral plan.<sup>12</sup> And so say the regulations for doctor of philosophy in the Glasgow School of Art, Slade School of Fine Art, University of the Arts London (comprising colleges such as Wimbledon, Chelsea and Central Saint Martins, among others), Royal College of Art, Edinburgh College of Art and Ruskin School of Art, which enables a generalized UK overview on the importance given to the writing part in this kind of PhD.

The differences between PhDs and DFAs, although discursively important, are therefore to be relativised in the UK examples, since a written part is emphasized in all events. In turn, what is most unique in the Finnish approach is the significance assigned to the creative and practical part of the dissertation. In Finland, PhDs and DFAs, as well as DAs, are regulated and prosecuted in distinctive forms. A report of the Academy of Finland (the

<sup>12</sup> Consulted in Goldsmiths website on 23 Feb 2015 (http://www.gold.ac.uk/pg/mphil-phd-art/): «If you are registered for a practice-based research project you are expected to produce a series of artworks and/or documentation of a series of exhibitions or events developed whilst on the programme as well as a dissertation of 20,000 words (MPhil) or 40,000 words (PhD). If you are registered according to the normal provisions of the University your final text has a target of 40,000 words for an MPhil and 80,000 words for a PhD. All research students are registered first for an MPhil then may either transfer registration to PhD following the successful completion of an upgrade exam or finish their study at this stage by submitting their research for an MPhil exam.»



most important funding institution for research in the arts in the country) on research in art and design in their universities, dating from March 2009, stressed that «the doctoral degree at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts differs from most other postgraduate degrees in art and artistic research in that the main element of the prepared demonstration of knowledge and skill is the production part, with 60-80 per cent of the demonstration's credits yielded by creative work».<sup>13</sup> The Finnish pioneering spirit is definitely brought into play in the way practice was and is envisaged in these postgraduate degrees. Jan Kaila, who was among the first batch of DFAs of the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts (1997-2002), states that «the starting points of our education were radical, perhaps even Utopian; we had no practical experience of where it would lead... Subsequent events have shown, however, that had the Academy stopped to consider and wait instead of charging ahead with speed and taking risks, doctoral training in the Academy would not today be an internationally recognized institution and trailblazer for art universities setting up doctoral programmes of their own» (2008). The discussion on how to set up research work and dissertation in the confluence of academic restraints and contemporary art threads is a more influential discussion than it appears at first sight. I have approached it lightly before in the text and will definitely return to it more pointedly later.

## IN THE TRAIL OF ARTISTIC RESEARCH

The previous report-like approach to the doctoral degrees existing in higher arts education is of course incomplete. Indeed, it does not intend to be exhaustive, but merely indicative. It is not even a satisfying European overview, given that only a few countries were taken into account: Finland, Sweden, Portugal, the Netherlands and the UK. The idea was to verify at which point doctoral degrees in the arts effectively start to appear, and how to contextualize this data. To some extent, Bologna seems to have been very influential in the boom these programs experienced, despite the concerns the ELIA board showed on the Agreement proposals.<sup>14</sup>



<sup>13</sup> Accessed in: http://www.aka.fi/Tiedostot/Tiedostot/Julkaisut/04\_09%20Research%20in%20 Art%20and%20Design.pdf

<sup>14</sup> They seemed concerned with the direction announced by Bologna: https://eliaartschools. wordpress.com/2010/04/19/elia-board-critical-of-european-ranking-plans/

The acknowledgment of Bologna's decisive impact on the trend of PhDs in the arts allows for a period in time to be identified when higher arts education began to expressively embrace research. This is the first decade of the twentyfirst century, the period in which Bologna's proposals were in the process of implementation. Most of and the best-known bibliographic production on artistic research also originates from this time. A wide range of publications is to be named, and a key core set is certainly dating from the 2000s. Below are some titles that I consider in most of my bibliographic searches, in chronological order:

- SINGERMAN, H. (1999). Art Subjects—Making Artists in the American University. University of California Press.
- DERRIDA, J. (2001). A Universidade sem Condição. Coimbra: Angelus Novus.
- BALKEMA, A. & SLAGER, H. (Eds.) (2002) Artistic Research. Lier & Boog series. Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V.
- GALE, P. (Ed.) (2004). Artists talk 1969-1977. Halifax Nova Scotia: NSCAD The Press.
- MORAZA, J. (2004). A + y: Arte y saber. Sevilha: Arteleku.
- HANNULA, M., SUORANTA, J. & VADÉN, T. (2005). Artistic Research. Helsinki: Academy of Fine Arts and Gothenburg: University of Gothenburg.
- SULLIVAN, G. (2005). Art practice as research: inquiry in the visual arts. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- BORGDORFF, H. (2006). The Debate on Research in the Arts. Sensuous Knowledge 2. Bergen: Bergen National Academy of the Arts.
- KAILA, J. & KANTONEN, P. (Eds.) (2006). The artist's knowledge: Research at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts. Two volumes. Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Fine Arts.
- VERWOERT, J. (2006). Lessons in Modesty: the Open Academy as a Model. Metropolis M, 4, pp. 94-96.
- NOLLERT, A., ROGOFF, I., DA BAERE, B., ESCHE, C., DZIEWIOR, Y. et al. (Eds.) (2007). A.C.A.D.E.M.Y. Germany: Revolver.
- SCHMIDT-WULFFEN, S. (2008). The Artist as the Public Intellectual. Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien. Vienna: Schlebrügge.Editor.
- BORGDORFF, H. (2009). Artistic Research within the Fields of Science. Sensuous Knowledge 6. Bergen: Bergen National Academy of the Arts.
- BUCKLEY, B. & CONOMOS, J. (Eds.) (2009). Rethinking the Contemporary Art School. The Artist, the PhD, and the Academy. Halifax: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.



- ELKINS, J. (Ed.) (2009). Artists with PhDs: on the new doctoral degree in studio art. Washington: New Academia.
- MADOFF, S. H. (Ed.) (2009). Art school: propositions for the 21st century. Cambridge, MA: the MIT Press.
- NILSSON, P. (2009). The Amphibian Stand: A Philosophical Essay Concerning Research Processes in Fine Art. Umea: H:ström Text & Kultur.
- VIDOKLE, A. (2009). Produce, Distribute, Discuss, Repeat. New York: Lukas & Sternberg.
- artesnetEurope [Thematic Network for Higher Arts Education] (2010) Peer Power! The Future of Higher Arts Education in Europe. Amsterdam / Sofia: ELIA / NATFA.
- BIGGS, M. & KARLSSON, H. (Eds.) (2010). The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts. London: Routledge.
- Board of Artistic Research of the Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts of the University of Gothenburg (2010). The Art Text. Art Monitor—A Journal of Artistic Research, 8.
- FRIBERG, C., PAREKH-GAIHEDE, R. & BARTON, B. (Eds.) (2010). At the Intersection between Art and Research—Practice-based Research in the Performing Arts. Mälmo: NSU Press.
- · QUARESMA, J., DIAS, F. R. & GUADIX, J. C. R. (Eds.) (2010). Investigação em Arte. Uma Floresta, Muitos Caminhos (I). Lisboa: CIEBA.
- ROGOFF, I. (2010). Free. E-flux Journal, 14, 1-11.

These are, of course, references useful for a particular research work in progress. It means that some items are arguably not so obviously related to artistic research; I decided to include them nonetheless, because they had or are having a pivotal role in my outlining of the field. For this same reason, I have added a few publications focusing also on the academy, given that I see the academic circumstance as a necessary condition for artistic research to exist. They are, for instance, A.C.A.D.E.M.Y, Verwoert's, Madoff's and Rogoff's entries. I have limited the twentyish-item list to the years 2000-2010 (except for Singerman's book which, dating from 1999, is very helpful in describing the changing artists' subjectivities). Many more publications are to be indicated as we turn to the following decade. Among them are Henk Slager's *The Pleasure of Research* (2011); the book by edited Janneke Wesseling called *See it Again, Say it Again—The Artist as Researcher* (2011); Ritterman, Bast and Mittelstra's edition of *Art and Research—Can Artists be Research*; Henk



Borgdorff's The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia (2012); the compilation of essays Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances (2013), by Robin Nelson; and the handbook of SHARE published by ELIA (editors were Mick Wilson and Shelte van Ruiten) as recently as 2013.

For further quantified insight, I also add some numbers.

YEAR	QUANTITY
1988	1
1993	1
1995	1
1996	1
1998	2
1999	1
2000	1
2002	2
2003	1
2004	6
2005	4
2006	8
2007	7
2008	5
2009	17
2010	7
2011	5
2012	3
2013	5

TABLE I — A SAMPLE OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC PRODUCTION ON ARTISTIC RESEARCH

This is a rough quantification of outstanding published issues focused on artistic research. My criteria were not too strict, so basically I decided to include only those publications whose title pointed literally to «artistic research», either with the complete term or with equivalents (for instance «arts-based», «visual arts», «creative»), as well as very few examples with not so crystal clear titles but whose content I was familiar with beforehand. The points of departure from where I took most of these published references were the overview provided on the website of SHARE network,<sup>15</sup> a compilation by Henk

15 You can go to http://www.sharenetwork.eu/artistic-research-overview/bibliography for a more extensive list.

Borgdorff in the Swedish yearbook of artistic research (2010), and my own bibliographic resources.

The list includes authored books, edited books, special issues of journals and conference proceedings published until 2013.

Please note that, once more, this is not comprehensive. The collection of SHARE is based on an ELIA's original overview whose winning post was 2010. Borgdorff's article was written in 2010 as well, so from then until 2013 it's me, myself and I. I could have also added a couple of publications from after 2013, but I concluded that it would not give a thorough image of 2014-2015. Also, note that although the first entry is from 1988, I cannot warrant that before that and until the year 2000 any other items were not published. My impression is that from the twenty-first century onwards the list is made more accurately.

The scopes of these publications, of course, vary. What is to be retained from this information is that the years 2000-2010 are the outset for establishing PhDs in most higher arts educational institutions in Europe, as well as the time when most texts on artistic research are published. It is especially in the second half of the decade that numbers increase, giving a very prosperous indication for the following years. Particularly publishing houses and universities should be watching the tendency in awe and excitement.

By 'research' in the aforementioned publications I mean artistic research. Going back to the report-like summary on academies and degrees, I am also thinking of artistic research when I use the term research in such contexts, and not so much the investigation undergone in applied arts, architecture, design, digital media and technology. I am seeking speculative and open-ended artistic research in the context of university. Otherwise, earlier doctors of philosophy in architecture, art history and related areas could also be retrieved and accounted for in the hypothetical historiography of artistic research. Musicians were also not considered as, in general, their procedures at PhD level and the tradition of music higher education are quite different from those in fine, visual and performance arts. Some of the most remote examples given are to be taken as isolated events. The remarkable fact that Annette Arlander was the first doctor of art of the Theatre Academy (TeaK), back in 1998, has nevertheless to be relativised, as only years later is it fair to speak of a doctoral culture at TeaK. Reporting to a conversation I had with Leena Rouhiainen, it was not until 2007 that the staff of TeaK became aware and attentive to the existing field of artistic research, and provided a pedagogical and research structure



to deal with it.<sup>16</sup> Coincidence or not, Arlander has published intensively from 2008 to 2013. But, of course, before 2007 there was already a due notion of an emerging field in other Finnish institutions other than the Theatre Academy.<sup>17</sup> A department of research development was then set up and professorship of artistic research established, so that the 1990s' prevailing dichotomy between a work done with a more scholarly or a more artistic propensity finally began to break: «Today all new doctoral works have a research emphasis, contain artistic or practical parts, and undergo conventional academic procedure. All research undertaken at TeaK is considered artistic research, as befits an arts university», states Arlander (2009, p. 78).

The shift in the discourse from the division of scientific/artistic work to the umbrella term of artistic research is the point I wanted to reach. It's

Me: So all the students in the PhD are also researchers at Tutke? Is there an overlapping of positions? LR: Yes, they're all in Tutke. So there is a twenty year—more than twenty year—tradition, but the specific focus on artistic research started in 2007. You could do an artistic research from 1990s on as well, but then you also could do a scientific research. Now you can only do artistic research.

Me: And for any reason in 2007 to shift to artistic research?

LR: Artistic research became stronger and then the doctoral students were unhappy with the way scientific discourse was dominating the work, I think. So we heard them then and there was a shift, which I think is a really good shift. No scientific work here, it can be done elsewhere.» This is a transcribed extract of an interview I did to Leena Rouhiainen at the Theatre Academy Helsinki in 9 Feb 2015, during my stay as visiting researcher of the University of Arts.

17 It is what seems to be at stake with significant publications such as Paavolainen, Pentti and Anu Ala-Korpela (eds.) (1995). Knowledge Is a Matter of Doing (Acta Scenica 1). Helsinki: Theatre Academy; Strandman, Pia (Ed.) (1998) No guru, no method. Helsinki: University of Arts and Design Helsinki.; Ryynänen, Lea (1999) Arts, research and doctoral studies in Finland. Helsinki: Academy of Finland; Siukonen, Jyrki (2002) Tutkiva taiteilija—Kysymyksiä kuvataiteen ja tutkimuksen avioliitosta [The researching artist—Questions concerning the open marriage of visual arts and research]. Helsinki: Taide.; Kiljunen, S. and Mika Hannula (eds.) Tomi Snellman (trans.) (2004) Artistic Research. Helsinki: Fine Art Academy; Hannula, Mika, Juha Suoranta, and Tere Vadén (eds.) (2005). Artistic research—Theories, methods and practices. Helsinki and Gothenburg: Academy of Fine Arts, Finland and University of Gothenburg, Sweden; Kaila, Jan and Pekka Kantonen (eds.) (2006, 2008) The artist's knowledge: Research at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts. Two volumes. Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Fine Arts; Mäkelä, Marit and Sara Routarinne (eds.) (2006) The Art of Research. Helsinki: University of Art and Design Helsinki; Mika, Elo (Ed.), Tomi Snellman (trans.) (2007) Toisaalta tässä. Valokuva teoksena ja tutkimuksena / Here then. The photograph as work of art and as research. Helsinki: University of Art and Design Helsinki and Finnish Academy of Fine Arts; Buchanan, R. et al. (eds.) (2007) Research in Art and Design in Finnish Universities. Helsinki: Publications of the Academy of Finland, all published until 2007.

<sup>16 «</sup>LR: Since 1991 you were allowed to do a doctorate at the Theatre Academy. From 1989. Either. But about that. The first doctor was Annette Arlander in 1998. But then we had two different degrees: we had the scientific degree and the artistic degree. But since 2007 when we formed Tutke [the Performing Arts Research Centre settled in the Theatre Academy] to bring in all the doctoral students together in one unit all of our research has been artistic research. Previously our doctoral students were involved in the MA program departments and now the doctoral students no longer are with the MA program, they are in Tutke. So we have choreography, dance, pedagogy...

hard to say whether in the field the outcomes of this discursive change are manifest in a new type of work. This discussion has been taking place for a long time and is tied to concerns of knowledge production, assessment criteria, methods applied and other epistemological absorptions. Not that I see the discussion on the episteme of artistic research as unnecessary; it certainly is important to look at it from within in order to acknowledge its mechanisms, features and potentialities and, primarily, to identify and affirm its emergence as a new discipline. Leena Rouhiainen explains it in the following way: «It was of course important to have the conversation on what artistic research is in order to implement it on academic levels. The different organizations needed understanding, reasoning as to why to start funding or opening programs around it, but I think that phase is sort of over. And what we are actually producing I think it's a new field. People who come out from here [from the doctoral program in the Theatre Academy] are artist researchers. They have a dual expertise. And I think that their skills of articulation are useful in the field. They are sort of multitasked. They are artists, but they can work as curators, they can work as commentating experts, they can produce reflection on what's going on.»18

Regardless of the importance of epistemological inputs for the implementation of the field of knowledge of artistic research, there is certainly a lot more to investigate beyond, I would say, such a technical and administrative approach. Too much of the domain's body of work has been dedicated to roaming on those concerns, and the results are quite disappointing to say the least. If it is to look inside, then it is with eyes put on the documentation, presentation, discussion and distribution of such outcomes: in the pursuing of what within the TAhTO group<sup>19</sup> of Helsinki has been called «performative arrangements.»<sup>20</sup> This might be the missing link between disciplinary artistic

20 «LR: While TAhTO has been going on there's been I think a shift in artistic research here, then I noticed it also elsewhere. We're trying to promote students to explore what we call performative arrangements. So different formats of presenting your artistic research: performance lectures, video-documentary... And at the same time we managed to establish an internet based publishing system for our doctorates and the first one came out. So it has texts, video, sound, and it's on the internet. And this was quite a job to do because our PhD research needs to be archived, it needs to be locked—you can't change it afterwards—, so we created this kind of a system. And then another thing which was earlier and then it was lost a bit, and it has come back, I think,

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<sup>18</sup> This is a transcribed extract of an interview I did to Leena Rouhiainen at the Theatre Academy Helsinki on 9 Feb 2015, during my stay as visiting researcher of the University of Arts.

<sup>19</sup> TAhTO—doctoral programme in artistic research, an association between the University of Arts and Aalto University of Helsinki: http://www.artisticresearch.fi/tahto/

research and contemporary art. And the relation between the two is something to be preserved and cherished.

It is clear that much of the published material referred to before is made up of compilations and edited books. Some purposeful titles in authored books are also mentioned, although not enough in number to compete with a bibliography that is generally teeming with anthological items. I thus regard anthologies as an interesting type of literature in the sense of my argument on the newness commonly associated with the domain of artistic research. By saying interesting I am also holding to its problematic dimension. The publishing of anthologies lies in the motivation of construction of discourse in a certain area. And they're also due to memory of events, acquiring a certain degree of monumentality. Anthologies can thus be regarded as monuments of knowledge of a given field; they are statutory. Besides updating the existing notions to the present times, anthologies also pursue the idea of solid knowledge. It's there, among those pages, that the most revealing things about a discipline are to be found. And it's there, among the same pages, that a memory is being set up in respect of a discipline. It pays homage and it further develops the field. For sure the academic excellence pressures cannot be disregarded when analyzing the increasing numbers of published anthologies about research in the arts. As outcomes need to be registered, consulted and assessed, more and more events are resulting in subsequent publications, especially within the academic context, where seminars, conferences, open classes, debates, exhibitions, all take a later renewed form in print or in digital. Proceedings and commentaries usually end up compiled in the next cutting edge anthology of artistic research. The problematic aspect of the apparent cogency of such anthologies in the particular case of artistic research is that it is not accompanied by verifiable developments. This ultimately means that artistic research is affirmed and legitimized as a disciplinary field, to which academic recognition also contributes, besides anthologies and other publications, but still it is lacking a productive and artistically valuable effect. It is about time we shift from academic goals to non-academic goals in artistic research: «Whereas pure

it is the performative arrangements in relation to articulating the reflective dimension, the discursive dimension. We are back into creative writing founding alternative means of articulating different perspectives on the practice. These sort of have emerged partly due to TAhTO and partly as a shared ongoing process of the past four years». This is a transcribed extract of an interview I did with Leena Rouhiainen at the Theatre Academy Helsinki on 9 Feb 2015, during my stay as visiting researcher of the University of Arts.



scientific research often seems to be characterized by academic goal... artistic research focuses on involvement, on social and non-academic goals» (Slager. 2009, p. 52). While conferences and seminars spread around and publishers rub their hands with glee at the perspective of a few more anthologies, reflexivity and inquiry on artistic research should go to the next phase of effectively exploring what is being done as artistic research. What are the PhD students doing? What have the doctorates done and are doing after completion?

Despite the lack of agreement on what art is, there is no longer what could be called a debate on the epistemology of art. Its identity, boundaries, fruition and contemplation, meaning and methods are no longer making the artistic agenda, even though contemporary art has become increasingly more conceptual and investigative. However, the focus of its inquiry is directed to its place in the world, rather than itself. Art has abandoned the quest for autonomy and accepted the inter-relational dimension brought by post-modernism. In doing so, art no longer stands for self-evidence, for 'being' equalling 'meaning'; on the contrary, it has become reflexive and this reflexivity appears in practice as well. And the discussion it undergoes has gracefully and necessarily slipped outwards. It is about time that artistic research follows the same path.

Abundance in doctoral programmes, dissemination events and a prolific publishing industry, all prove that artistic research as a field of knowledge is a reality. We are no longer in the process of accepting it—or of consenting it!—, but rather of exploring it. It is time that the literature and documentation on the field is expanded by contributions of practitioners and by accessing their work. I agree with Timothy Emlyn Jones who, back in 2003, was already claiming that «Philosophy and art theory have much to contribute to this field, but practitioners have an obligation to contribute to the debate of thinking through art, no matter how meager an offering such as this» (2009, p. 32). Turning away and pretending it is not happening, like many artists and even university teachers still do to this day, is not the solution for it to disappear or become understood; this attitude only gives room to more distortion, babbling and appropriation by aesthetics, philosophy and human sciences and other outlandish thinkers. On the other hand it is exactly what sceptics need for fabricating their own object of criticism.

It is the work done in disseminating events, in DAs, and DFAs that will set up the object of study of artistic research. It is thus in their agents' hands to change direction. The more published are hesitant anthologies on what artistic research is, could be or is not being, the more invigorated is



the external fragile perception of the field. It is no longer acceptable that discussions about the episteme of artistic research are regarded as the core study of artistic research.

## PROBLEM: NOVELTY AS PENDENCY

In a text about «Art and Method» (2009), Henk Slager describes artistic research as «a form of idiosyncratic research» in terms that to me do not seem totally pacific. He says that «fundamental aspects such as indefinability, heterogeneity, contingency, and relativity color the trajectory of artistic research. Therefore, artistic research should explicitly request tolerance, an open attitude, and the deployment of multiple models of interpretation» (p. 53). Slager's report on a certain «indefinability» of artistic research is what I perceive as impersonating a certain ingrowing state in its potential developments. The first battle of artistic research was implementation and acceptance as a field of knowledge; that can certainly be considered a battle won, but since disciplinary legitimation was achieved that the outcomes resulting from institutionalization appear to be stuck in the same kind of discussion from the early days. And, to a large extent, these discussions are introduced with the idea of a 'new' and 'emergent' field, now and years ago.

In the preface of the proceedings of the pioneering symposium «Theatre and Dance Artist Doing Research in Practice», held at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki in 1994, Pentti Paavolainen writes that «it is time to open up a forum for the writings that will spring up from the rather new but stimulating research activity» (1995, p. 6). This is as old as twenty years. However, the situation today is that of also preparing a new kind of writing due to a renovated perspective on the way of perceiving what in 1995 was taken as a «new research activity». The author was careful in presenting the news: «The reader will meet devoted voices with a will to pursue a goal and readiness for the uncertainty and unexpected which are both the true signs of a person who is doing art as well as research.» (1995, p. 5) Moreover, then and now, «uncertainty» in this kind of research is a standing attribute, which makes Paavolainen's statement very timely even today.

In the revised version of his paper presentation in Los Angeles in 2003, Timothy Emlyn Jones also stresses the novelty and hesitancy at stake. He says that «the subject of where and how research thinking sits in art and design is a large one on which, relatively speaking, we have only just begun; although even now it is possible to suggest that a new research paradigm for artistic production and art education is emerging. In this context any contribution to the debate has to be recognized as provisional and conditional since to date no comprehensive overview has yet been published». And he goes on: «... I tease out key issues emerging from my own experience and knowledge of the field—the only feasible terms of reference at such an early time in the development of the subject—which have taught me that, whatever else, there remains a great deal to be done.» (2009, p. 31)

A very assertive Mika Hannula starts his intervention in Balkema & Slager's anthology Artistic Research (2004). He states: «Artistic research is a new area. It is a field within university studies that deserves to be called social innovation. Due to its freshness and newness, artistic research is both a possibility and a risk. However, so far it has proven to have a fair chance of survival. Thus, artistic research must be articulated and formed according to its own particular needs and challenges... What exactly is artistic research?» (p. 70) The highly perceptive and purposeful reading Hannula produced eleven years ago is almost disturbing. This could have been said today: «Obviously, artistic research is an area which is yet to emerge as a full program. During the last 20 years, there have been different artistic research projects and experiments in various countries. However, there has not been enough internal scrutiny and definitely not enough fruitful comparison and constructive criticism among all the different approaches... Since artistic research has been accepted and established as credible research within art education and art institutions, we have to keep its possibilities open and move towards a vision of artistic research which is self-critical and self-reflexive. Put differently, we must have the courage to be anarchistic and experimental.» (p. 70) Awkwardly—or perhaps not—, already in 2013 the same Mika Hannula writes with the same spirit of discovery in Artists as Researchers—A New Paradigm for Art Education in Europe: «After going through all these seminars, all these meetings and all these late afternoons trying to stay awake, desperately searching to find the escaping energy to focus and make sense of what artistic research could be or even should be? Was it worth it? Or: what is it good for—this emerging field of artistic research?» (2013, p.87)

Examples and citations on the youth of the undefined field are many. The Nordic Summer University group has published an anthology of essays in 2010, under the name At the Intersection Between Art and Research—Practice-Based



Research in the Performing Arts. The introduction, written by Sidsel Pape, accounts that «Practice Based Research (PBR), as an academic discipline predominantly practiced in the English-speaking world, is still new in the Nordic world» (2010, p. 9).

In a revised paper presented in the SHARE conference in 2011, under the name «Artistic Research in Performing Arts/The Body as a Medium of Institution», Esa Kirkkopelto, while referring to the elaboration of criteria for assessment of research in universities, informs that «it seems to me at the present moment that it would not be difficult to agree on common criteria, to write down a list of principles. For sure, several lists of this kind already exist and they are also used for different purposes. Yet, at least here in Finland, we have also so far abstained from agreeing on such criteria, from hurrying with it—not only because of the fear of disagreement, but also because of the early stage of the development of the research field».<sup>21</sup>

Embryonic states will eventually evolve. Meanwhile, I understand the pendency depicted in the assembled citations as being promoted by a discourse replete with forms of incompleteness, novelty, uncertainty, which ask for a solid structure before opening up and flourishing. This may provide an explanation on the lethargy felt and why most of these texts (not necessarily the ones quoted, though) were found stuck and pendant in inconclusive epistemological, methodological and regulatory digressions. For their part, these discussions welcome the next discussion. As an attempt to solve the uncertainty, a new trial is in print. And then another one. And so on. And in order to contextualize and legitimize the following attempts, departments and programmes are set up within graduate schools and universities. A conservative and self-feeding structure is the other reason for the state of pendency. In the sense that it draws money either to publishing houses, conference organizers, universities through tuition fees and from public funding to research, the structure will be vigorously preserved by those most directly benefiting from it. Mick Wilson warns: «The institutional imperative—to reproduce and conserve the institution—must not be overlooked. Educators, especially educators in self-proclaimed creative practices, are attracted to a vision of themselves as agents of dynamic change and critical renewal, as bearers of cultural values which are variously above the exchange system of the market place or connected to some essential human and humanizing propensity. However,

21 Accessed here: http://circostrada.org/IMG/pdf/Kirkkopelto\_Artistic\_Research.pdf

it is important to register the essentially conservative force of institutionalized education: education is a key apparatus in social reproduction.» (2009, p. 64). But is this self-feeding system a problem? In the path of the European tendency to instrumentalise public education and arts education, research creative potential is, of course, endangered. Imaginative speculation is thus ingrown, and what follows is the caricaturized image so often appropriated by the sceptical voyeurs of a «disciplining, homogenizing, restrictive, conformist, naïve» (Borgdorff, 2012, p.5) environment. But this misrepresented portrayal of artistic research is nevertheless about to change, or so indicate the most up-to-date discursive changes. Nonetheless, and while it residually lasts, it cannot be accused of being unproductive. Sterile, perhaps, yet very productive in the neoliberal sense of «productivitism—a compulsion to produce, to be sure, that not only pertains to the manufacture of objects, but also to the realm of discourse: 'discursivity' is easily exploited as a so-called alternative to 'productivism', when it is in fact anything but» (De Bare et al., 2006, p.7). So again one has to ask whether the state of pendency and subsequent self-feeding structure are, in fact, problems. From what I see, they are not to corporations, publishing houses, nor to some university departments and positions and a fragile, worn and failed conception of artistic research, while they definitely are to foundational groups of artist researchers and artists engaged in research.

Robin Nelson's anthology Practice as Research in the Arts—Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances, published as recently as 2013, is still not fully released from this 'newness' feeling on artistic research (or varying nomenclature, for instance 'practice-as-research'). Some of its collected essays, such as Susanne Little's and Veronica Baxter's, still point out the novelty of research practices in the arts in their respective contexts. The introductory chapter starts by saying that «people engage in research for a variety of motives but, ultimately, the rigours of sustained academic research are driven by a desire to address a problem, find things out, establish new insights. This drive is apparent in the arts throughout history, but it is relatively recently that it has been necessary to posit the notion of arts 'Practice as Research'». (p. 3). This may, however, signal a change in pace. Along with the emergence of doctoral programmes explicitly dedicated to artistic research, this may hopefully suggest we are ready to surpass the pendency which a raw and paralyzing novelty has pushed us into. After twenty years of generalized sterile literary 'productivitism', a slight difference in discourse is thus regarded with eagerness.

In the aforementioned publication of Balkema & Slager, Jan Kaila wrote that «artistic research is also bound to a tradition external to itself because, so far, there are not many Doctors of Fine Arts around. This being the case, we are in the paradoxical situation that a large portion of the educators, supervisors and examiners involved do not have practical experience in the way artistic research functions, but are basing their thinking on traditional research or, in the best case, on a vision of what artistic research might ultimately be» (p. 66). It might have been the case in 2004. Now, in 2015, we have plenty of DAs and DFAs, PhDs in the arts and teachers of artistic research, so that an effective change is in the making. A change not conducted in the claim for «tolerance» (Slager, 2009, p. 53), but as the courageous step of becoming «anarchistic and experimental» (Hannula, 2004, p. 70)—«And I think we've passed this phase of determining what artistic research is... It is, it exists. It just simply is. And now we are more in the phase of exploring distinct ways people do and the effects that it has».<sup>22</sup>

#### IF «IT JUST SIMPLY IS» THEN GO GRAB IT

In more recent times, some artists have enrolled in programmes that go under the name of «artistic research».<sup>23</sup> To my understanding, this signals a change of direction and is not to go unnoticed. There is an already long tradition of art and academy, and both meeting art and research. The first sporadic completions of doctoral degrees in the arts appeared, and historical and analytical research were the norm together with the adoption of methods of humanities, psychology, pedagogy and empirical research. Afterwards sparse

Me: Here in Helsinki?

<sup>22 «</sup>LR: Exactly. These kinds of anthologies and books on artistic research are problematic exactly because of this vision. They don't go and explore what is done as artistic research. So we have fifteen, twenty doctorates in artistic research; what is actually done there? It's two pages that people reflect, comment upon their approach to artistic research, then they go on about the actual project or process that they've been involved in. And I think we've passed this phase of determining what artistic research is.

LR: I think so. It is, it exists. It just simply is. And now we are more in the phase of exploring distinct ways people do and the effects that it has. This is a transcribed extract of an interview I did with Leena Rouhiainen at the Theatre Academy Helsinki on 9 Feb 2015, during my stay as visiting researcher of the University of Arts.

<sup>23</sup> For instance, the TahTO programme is called «Doctoral programme in artistic research»; the programme at the Finnish Theatre Academy is called «Doctoral studies in artistic research of performance arts».

and scattered Doctor of Arts titles were awarded. Only then, in the 2000s, was a culture of doctoral courses implemented in studio art. And it was only very recently that departments of research development, teachers of artistic research and programmes bearing the name 'artistic research' have appeared. To say that artistic research has a long tradition is not entirely true; research in the arts has a long tradition, but even though artistic research as a field of its own is something whose roots go far back in time, only by the end of the first decade of the 2000s did it effectively emerge.

In what will these students enrolled in artistic research programmes become experts? Will they be experts in artistic research? Albeit with the appearance of a minor objection, this distinction between programmes that are set up like doctoral courses in the arts and programmes that present themselves as doctoral courses in artistic research is spotting the light at a couple of critical topics. Does the different naming stress a difference in the aims of these programmes? Is artistic research dealing with expertise? If so, then to what extent? Hopefully an expertise not founded in methods, criteria, properties of the dissertation or knowledge physiognomy, but something else stepping from epistemology into ontology: the relevance, role and standing of artistic research, together with artistic processes and the documentation, presentation and discussion of outcomes. In his text «Four Theses Attempting to Revise the Terms of a Debate», published in James Elkins' Artists with PhDs, Mick Wilson insists on the contingent character of artistic research. He starts with a general idea: «... the PhD has been used as an instrument in constructing disciplinary legitimacy and distinction. Thus the accession of disciplines such as English literary studies or Area Studies to the status of discrete departments within university structures was bound up with the construction of a PhD process specific to these domains and the reciprocal construction of these disciplines as areas of appropriate application for the PhD award» (2009, p.61) only to end up discussing artistic research: «It is clear that the development of the PhD in visual arts practice may serve simply to consolidate disciplinary-territory construction» (p. 63). I agree with the contingency and legitimizing purpose of these PhDs. However, there's something else about them that should not be missed in order to promote the turning point we are expecting. The academic framing and resulting debates on how to set up the dissertation, and on what is at stake in the assessment and final defence, have met contemporary art subjectivities of artist-as-curator and artist-as-producer, eventually directing towards artist-as-researcher.



In his analysis of Research Degrees in Art and Design, Timothy Emlyn Jones mentions this concern with presentation when introducing a «third generation of practice-based PhDs emerged in 2000 at the Glasgow School of Art». Referring to those researchers, he writes that «a distinction was also made between the material submitted for examination and the documentation of it for the purposes of future reference to the research content. In this third generation it was possible to say that the difference between an art and design PhD and any other PhD is not in the type of doctorate, but in the ways in which the research outcomes are presented for examination» (2009, p.42). This statement is considered valuable for it gives hints of the concern with publicness that would become in the present time one of the key topics of artistic research. It already inhabits contemporary art. And it also is in line with what Leena Rouhiainen said about the «performative arrangements» explored at TAhTO, which are «different formats of presenting your artistic research». Henk Slager has also stressed the same point when speaking of his programme in Utrecht: «The research seminars also engage curatorial studies, because the experimental process of transmedial research has a direct impact on the reflection of models of presentation» (2009, p. 50). And in Conversations on Artistic Research, a seminar hosted by the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto in November 2014, the possibility of artistic research being concerned with, and so adopting as its object of study, forms of documentation of the research that allow for differentiation from artistic practice, was also discussed a few times. Back then, we were looking at Chris Burden's photography of his performance «Shoot» (1971), which is obviously embodying a separation of practice and research; the performance, which was the artistic work, has ended and is gone in time. Research about it will always regard the documenting image that is left. Back at TAhTO, in a research seminar of this group that I attended at the end of last January, Mika Elo referred to the need for students to be aware of the communicative dimension of research and suggested a line of escape: «Research is always about communication, about sharing ideas. One way of making research is designing an interface» (quoted from oral intervention during the seminar).

I would say that it is fairly acceptable to consider the topics of documentation, presentation and discussion of research work key studies in the present agenda and near future of artistic research. Once prompted as effects of institutionalization, these topics will remain interesting as long as contemporary art is also busy with them. As I've mentioned before, institutionalization isn't to be regarded as the devil at all levels and in full time; it is most likely to be a process that potentially generates challenging situations. A series of preconceptions, abusive overlays, blurred synonymy, and categories previously taken for granted are in need of being revised and questioned as this process develops. Among them are the *cliché* images of artist, researcher and institution that have strongly impacted terms of criticism and outright rejection of the field of artistic research. A more accurate gaze is needed, as «the problem with this type of criticism is that it fabricates its own object of criticism. It begins by constructing a caricature of artistic research in academia... After that it is no longer difficult to field a whole line-up of post-Nitzschean witnesses to lambast those pernicious practices, which are inimical to art and which, under pressure from an equally maleficent education policy, are seen to have infected the art world under the label 'academisation' in order to subject art practices to their disciplining forces» (Borgdorff, 2012, p. 5).

Inadequate idealizations apart, the link between the two worlds is of vital importance for artistic research, for it prevents it from falling into purely academic goals and at the same time gives it a scope, or a wider range of scopes. But also the opposite: artistic research is having more and more of an impact on the art world. The growing number of projects merging between the two domains confirms this. From exhibitions in galleries and schools to participation in biennales, the dialogues are being set. After the Venice Biennale in 2009 and Shanghai in 2012, the Spring-Summer of 2015 is still in time to bring something new research-wise.

Artistic research is there, «it simply is». And it's better to try to understand something that is there rather than inveighing against it. As much as the target of artistic research is somewhere in artistic practice and according links, all along there should be an active part of tacit reflection and self-criticism to keep work on track. Every artistic research project is a kind of proposition presented in the context of artistic research and a commentary on it. However, this 'grabbing' of the field should also not take this too strictly, or all of a sudden the act of questioning in artistic research would turn into artistic research itself. And then there we would go again.

Today and onwards, replicating what also happens between art and philosophy of art, it is of utter importance to distinguish between artistic research and research about artistic research.

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# A CRITIQUE OF KNOWLEDGE-BASED ARTS EDUCATION: ARS GRATIA ARTIS THROUGH RANCIÈRE'S AESTHETICS

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#### ABSTRACT

We are interested in contrasts between 'art for art's sake' and instrumental justifications for art in education. Surprisingly, it seems that current mainstream discourses of arts education tend to inflect the term 'art for art's sake' with instrumental qualities. This paper examines the scene of Discipline-Based Arts Education (DBAE) in contemporary United States and critiques the instrumental setup of 'art for art's sake' endorsed by DBAE. It also suggests an alternative framework to think about 'art for art's sake' in the education of art from Rancière's political and aesthetic theory.

> **KEY WORDS** Rancière; Knowledge; Aesthetics; Equality; Arts Education.

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# A Critique of Knowledge-based Arts Education: Ars Gratia Artis Through Rancière's Aesthetics

Thanh Phùng | Lynn Fendler

## INTRODUCTION

In 2013, OECD released a publication titled Art for Art's Sake? The Impact of Arts Education. The report explores the question of whether arts education helps to cultivate desirable attributes for the workforce in knowledge-based economies. It inquires into research databases in education and psychology in Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish. The kinds of arts education examined include arts classes (classes in music, visual arts, theatre, and dance) and arts-integrated classes (where the arts are taught as a support for an academic subject) in school as well as arts study undertaken outside of school (e.g., private music lessons; out-of-school classes in theatre, visual arts, and dance). The outcomes of arts education are categorized in three areas, academic skills in non-art subjects, thinking and creativity, and social and behavioral skills. Interestingly, the authors remind us that the primary justification of arts education should be in the intrinsic value of the arts and the important habits of mind that they promote.

In conclusion, we argue that, even though we find some evidence of impact of arts education on different kinds of skills, the main justification for arts



education is clearly the acquisition of artistic habits of mind—the current priority objective of arts education in the curricula of OECD countries. By artistic habits of mind, we mean not only the mastery of craft and technique, but also skills such as close observation, envisioning, exploration, persistence, expression, collaboration, and reflection—the skills in thinking and creativity and the social and behavioral skills that are developed in the arts. (Winner, Goldstein & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013, pp. 19-20)

The OECD slogan 'art for art's sake' points to a divide between art and non-art disciplines and the assumption that art disciplines allow students to engage with life in a different way. For instance, because arts do not force right or wrong answers, they free students to explore, experiment, and find their personal meanings in a way that non-arts do not afford. The OECD 'art for art's sake' argument asserts that art should serve life.

In the history of Western art, the slogan first surfaced in French literary circles in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and later became central to the British Aesthetic movement. 'L'art pour l'art' is often credited to Théophile Gautier (1811-1872), French art and literary critic, who defined it as follows: «Art for art's sake means for its adepts the pursuit of pure beauty—without any other preoccupation" («Art for art's sake», 1917, p. 98). This definition is Kantian. Kant's aesthetics holds that enjoyment of beauty is distinct from other sorts of pleasure and distinct from taste. If someone responds to Botticelli's Venus with an erotic desire, they are actually not appreciating the work of art for its beauty. To appreciate the beauty of an object, the viewer's response has to be disinterested. For Kant, making sense of an object can be done in three ways. In the first of these, the faculty of signification subordinates the faculty of sensation. This is the order of knowledge. It defines a certain view of the object. The spectator would ask what story the painting tells. In the second way of making sense, in contrast, the faculty of sensation rules over the faculty of knowledge. This is the law of desire. The third way of looking appreciates the object neither as an object of knowledge nor as an object of desire. The disinterestedness results from the harmony between the faculty of knowledge and the faculty of sensation. Kant also distinguishes 'the agreeable', the category of pleasures judged pleasures for me but not necessarily for others, from 'the beautiful', the category of pleasures judged pleasures for everyone. Only judgments about what Kant calls the beautiful are aesthetic judgments.

Proponents of 'art for art's sake' sympathized with Kant's aesthetics in a particular way. They assumed the aesthetic experience is stimulated by the form and design of the artwork and demanded the spectator have sufficient disinterest to distinguish between feelings provoked by an artwork's subject matter, and, in their view, its more important qualities as a work of beauty in itself. 'Art for art's sake' is commonly viewed as an attempt to divorce art from life and elevate it to an autonomous sphere of its own. Its legacy has been at the heart of 20<sup>th</sup> century ideas about the autonomy of art. If education is about life, and art is separate from life, how is 'art for art's sake' possible in education?

From our observation, 'art for art's sake' is the slogan of discipline-based arts education (DBAE), the currently dominant paradigm of arts education in knowledge-based economies. However, in light of Kant's aesthetics, the OECD 'art for art's sake' justifications are instrumental. As we were grappling with how to think about art, education, and their relationship so as to de-instrumentalise the value of art, we came across Jacques Rancière's philosophy and found it illuminating our intellectual problem. This essay is supposed to bear the fruit of this fortunate meeting. It sets out to examine the scene of DBAE in contemporary United States and redefine art and education in line with Rancière's conceptual innovations. It critiques the instrumental 'art for art's sake' endorsed by DBAE and suggests a way of thinking about 'art for art's sake' in the education of art from Rancière's political and aesthetic theory. Our analysis suggests that DBAE, since it is cast in terms of knowledge, perpetuates inequality. Equality, the logic of dissensus, is proposed as an alternative to knowledge. It connects art and education to the 'redistribution of the sensible' that works to introduce new subjects and objects into the field of perception. Consequently, art/education can be seen as an autonomous form of life, or a specific mode of experience, namely the aesthetic. This autonomy is paradoxical. In Rancière's vision of aesthetics, the aesthetic experience «grounds the autonomy of art, to the extent that it connects it to the hope of 'changing life'» (Rancière, 2010, p. 116).

## DISCIPLINE-BASED ARTS EDUCATION (DBAE)

In this section, we offer a critical reading of Discipline-Based Arts Education (DBAE), first with an overview of the ways DBAE constructs art in terms of knowledge, and then with a critical interpretation of the assumptions of



consensus and inequality that derive from such knowledge-based approaches to art. Both of these critiques are shaped by our reading of Rancière's philosophy of aesthetics.

# AN OVERVIEW OF THE DISCIPLINE-BASED ARTS CURRICULUM

In DBAE, art disciplines are classified based on art forms or art related activities. The arts outlined in the OECD report include music, visual arts, theatre, dance and multi-arts. In the United States, arts education standards use similar categories (music, visual arts, theatre, dance, and media arts). Literature, a distinct art form that works with words, is not usually named among the arts in arts education. Literature belongs to 'language arts', which is traditionally regarded a different realm in the structure of school curriculum, perhaps for the traditional significance of words as a means of expression. Culinary art is almost absent from the school curriculum, which is a curious case.<sup>1</sup> The partition of art into art forms corresponds to the theory of the autonomy of modern art as a process in which each art develops and progresses by becoming aware of its medium specificity. Clement Greenberg (1909-1994), a famous developer of the theory, argued that progress in the history of painting is identical with the conquest of 'flatness'. The partitioning of art into art forms provides arts with a knowledge base, and construes the arts as a discipline in terms of knowledge.

Another common way to divide the art field results in its four major disciplines:<sup>2</sup> art making, art criticism, art history, and aesthetics (the philosophy of art). Descriptions of the territories of arts education often combine the two classifications. Indeed, modern education has been partitioned in disciplines (school subjects): there are art disciplines and non-art disciplines. Each discipline is viewed as a structure or a domain of knowledge. Given a map of disciplines that define school subjects, two curricular approaches to art are

<sup>2</sup> The first advocates of DBAE used these four 'disciplines' to formulate their definition of DBAE. Later, when 'arts integration' becomes a buzzword, the art forms are featured. The use of the four disciplines makes 'art making' less prominent. The use of the art forms tends to emphasize active competences over propositional knowledge.



<sup>1</sup> This paper does not aim to explore the case. Insights into it might be gleaned from Fendler, L. (2012). The educational problems of aesthetic taste. *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 58, pp. 66-80. Special issue on Materiality and Education [Die Materialität der Erziehung: Kulturelle und soziale Aspekte pädagogischer Objekte]. Karin Priem, Gudrun M. König & Rita Casale, (Eds.).

named: the arts curriculum and the arts integrated curriculum. The former, currently understood as an 'art-for-art's-sake' approach, is dedicated to the study of the arts whereas the latter describes the use of the arts as vehicle for learning non-art contents. The national conceptual framework for arts learning of the United States published in 2014 by NCCAS (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, a task force organized by National Art Education Association, NAEA) expresses an ambition to implement comprehensive arts education so as to develop students' 'artistic literacy' in all the art disciplines. The document does not indicate explicit preference for the arts curriculum or the arts-integrated curriculum. Nevertheless, the arts-integrated curriculum is fundamental to arts-based education reforms. For example, the A+ Schools Program,<sup>3</sup> the largest arts-based school reform effort in recent history, aims to weave the arts into every aspect of a child's learning. The present arts integration movement emphasizes the study of art contents as an equivalent goal. ArtsEdge, the official website of the Kennedy Art Center, an important resource for arts integration in schools in the United States, distinguishes the arts integrated curriculum from the arts enhanced curriculum, where only the non-art contents are considered the goal. ArtsEdge defines arts integration as follows:

Arts integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area that meets evolving objectives in both. (AE, 2015a)

As evidenced in this example, the arts-integrated approach is derived from the conception of art as a distribution of art disciplines and the current arts based education reform calls for intensifying disciplinary knowledge of the arts in every aspect of education. Together, the arts curriculum and the arts integrated curriculum have formed a broader paradigm of arts education named 'discipline based arts education' (DBAE). In the paradigm, art consists in disciplines and the purposes and resources of arts education are described in terms of knowledge. References to art disciplines and the acquisition of

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<sup>3</sup> Over ten years and expanding to forty-two schools in North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Missouri, the reform works to increase arts instruction and arts integration in schools. Its proponents claim that it has been highly successful.

knowledge might have been incorporated in various paradigms of arts education, and the frame seems to have been quite an obvious choice for professionals in the arts since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The DBAE we refer to, however, extends to a general body of students. It claims arts for all. At present, the paradigm is influential in many countries in the world; within the scope of this essay, we focus on the context of the United States, where, historically, it has come to public attention since 1980s. DBAE joined the standards-based reform movement initiated by the U.S. Congress in 1994. It became associated with the discourse of global knowledge economy. The term DBAE, an acronym of 'discipline-based arts education' or 'discipline-based art education', gained prominence during the 1990s. It encompassed all the field of arts education. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 'arts integration' has become a buzzword, and DBAE appears less in the discourse of arts education. This essay adopts DBAE to refer to the dominant discourse of arts education from the 1990s to the present because we view the new arts-integrated curriculum as disciplined-based and aim to address both the arts curriculum and the arts-integrated curriculum.

If we look at the discourse from Rancière's point of view, we see that the discourse of DBAE is establishing a 'distribution of the sensible'. It circulates and naturalizes what is sensible about arts education. It seeks to replace the creativity/self-expression order of arts education, which is said to have thrived from early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The creativity/self-expression order attributes the value of art to the originality of the child's personal expression. On the surface of the sayable, the central tenet of the order is a theoretical caution against knowledge. This does not mean that the paradigm is against the development of knowledge. Instead, it means that creativity and the child's personal growth have more merit than what can be encompassed by knowledge. Knowledge always starts with rules and might hamper creativity. Dobbs (2004) offered the following description of the creativity/self-expression order:

Creativity and self-expression theory cherished the untutored and naive emanations of child art, which many art specialists believed would be contaminated by even talking about student work. Art's capacity to provide unique contacts with and learning about the works of art of mature artists was subordinated to art's capacity to reinforce the goals of child development. Few efforts were made to utilize the vast heritage of world art for such learning tasks as understanding its role in human history; nor were questions of aesthetic content or import raised with children lest art be «intellectualized.» A bias against reading or talking about art (basically against anything that seemed «academic» or made art resemble other subjects) caused defenders of the paradigm to retreat to soft stances regarding the mystique of art and its essentially non-academic character. (p. 705)

The creativity/self-expression order of arts education also draws the line between arts and non-arts and defines proper arts education. Its rule of propriety is different. The present DBAE paradigm does not reject the language of creative self-expression; it appropriates it into a framework that prioritizes knowledge over self-expression. To be educated in the arts implies the ability to do arts or to speak about the arts in a 'knowledgeable' way. DBAE displays the slogan 'art for art's sake' and puts the work of art, rather than the student, at the center of the art lesson. The work of art is placed at the center to develop competences. In national, state and district-level standards for each art form for prekindergarten through grade 12, the objectives and indicators prescribed for curricular programs are described in terms of competences and specific tasks that students should be able to perform successfully. To ensure quality arts education, it is mandated that teachers have certified knowledge of the relevant art forms and arts instruction. Presumably, the teacher is in a position by virtue of expertise to assist the student. Competence can be understood in terms of knowledge. From a pragmatic point of view, knowledge is an instrument of action. It is associated with the ability to do something well to the extent it equals 'skill', 'expertise', 'literacy', or 'competence.' Knowledge means the learned ability to carry out a task with pre-determined results within a given amount of time and energy.

The shift from the creativity/self-expression paradigm to DBAE could be understood as a project to reconfigure the space for arts education. According to Dobbs (2004), the creativity/self-expression paradigm took root in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century based on the effort of educators who advocated art for its value as relief from the rigors of the academic curriculum, its potential for nurturing children's expressive life, and the opportunities offered in art for 'making' and creative work. Other areas in the curriculum did not host these goals, so they went to art. However, schools did not necessarily value play and self-enrichment, and art occupied a modest partition in most school programs. The arts have been slipping from the curriculum to give space for the STEM, the academic disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. STEM

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is a prioritized choice to improve competitiveness in a knowledge economy. Whether starting from the marginalized position of the arts in the curriculum or not, proponents of arts education argue for the fundamental value of arts education and strategically associate the arts with the global knowledge economy. As much as it is a new invention, DBAE is a movement back to the 'foundations' so that art can be firmly rooted in education. In the new home, art adopts a different meaning.

Although DBAE is formulated based on the divide between arts and nonarts, it is influenced by the language of science, especially that of psychology. Education has established a steady relationship with behavioral, cognitive and developmental psychology (see, e.g., Popkewitz, 2002). Psychology has offered education formulas for effective instruction and rigorous, objective evaluation of knowledge. Within DBAE, artistic performances, appearing as sensory presentations, are attributed as competences through preordinate procedures.

The formation of DBAE in the United States has been made possible through the practices of various speakers including policy makers, philanthropic organizations, scholars, teachers, etc. Their speeches present variations of knowledge based arts education. Among the most prominent speakers about DBAE, Elliot Eisner (1933-2014) secures a position. We feature Eisner to showcase a particular speaker whose speech makes sense in the distribution of the sensible. Eisner promoted the term 'discipline based art education' as a reference to a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach that features systematic and sequential learning experiences in four distinctive domains of art (art making, art criticism, art history and aesthetics). Despite being skeptical towards standards-based arts education and indifferent to the economic benefits of arts education, Eisner passionately endorsed a cognitive vision of arts education that is compatible with DBAE. In this vision, the arts are different forms of representation that require different forms of intelligence to engage with. Different art forms demand the use of different techniques and an understanding of the materials and ideas to be used. Important is the competence that the artist develops in an art form. Eisner regarded competence as intelligence in the domain. Eisner's cognitive view of arts education makes the point that artistic work is not only about emotion and the hands but also about insight and the mind. When articulating the distinctive features and values of the arts, Eisner, like many other proponents of arts education, appealed to the embodied knowledge or somatic knowledge that the arts allow. The arts are associated

with empirical experience whereas hard subjects such as mathematics and science with technical rationality. Eisner also highlighted that the heterogeneity and unpredictability in the outcomes of arts education does not fit in predetermined objectives. The term 'flexible purposing' was borrowed from Dewey to refer to a characteristic of artistic work and a desirable feature of education that resembles or supports art. 'Flexible purposing' appears to us as a strategy of adjusting intentions more than the aesthetic appreciation of the unintended. Another contribution of Eisner's is to recommend using criteria as a means to provoke responses to students' works of art. Eisner called attention to three criteria: the technical quality, inventiveness, expressive power/aesthetic impact. In summary, although Eisner's version of DBAE is softer than policy makers', Eisner's argument in support of arts education is primarily couched in terms of knowledge and representation. It inscribes an instrumental meaning for 'art for art's sake' as well.<sup>4</sup>

The curriculum emerging in a particular classroom might be very different from the curriculum as dictated by policy makers, or the curriculum of the dominant discourse. From the beginning of the essay to this point, we have only discussed the discourse of DBAE as it is made available to us. Our presentation of DBAE is to show how it theorizes art and education as well as to problematize the theorization. Here, it should be restated that our critical reading of DBAE relies on Rancière's 'distribution of the sensible'. The discourse of DBAE is producing a new distribution of the sensible in the field of arts education. Rather than disturbing an existing normal order, it is molding a new social ethos of the arts. The problem is that in this new common world, only inequality is possible. Art and education become instruments of inequality, and the possibilities for genuine politics are suffocated.

### THE PRODUCTION OF INEQUALITY

Rancière's writings on politics and aesthetics examine the historical modes of intelligibility and visibility we live in. Rancière's critique of discourse elucidates how our thinking constructs hierarchies and how equality as a theoretical setup can transform the way we see and engage with the world. While Foucault is primarily concerned with knowledge as a status of statements in a

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<sup>4</sup> We acknowledge that Eisner's presentations may be using instrumentalist arguments for strategic rhetorical purposes.

historical episteme, Rancière attends to both the visible/perceptible and the sayable/intelligible in 'a distribution of the sensible', also a 'police order'. To critique in a Rancièrian manner is to question how DBAE's theoretical apparatus is founded upon inequality/equality and the extent to which it makes room for the redistribution of the sensible. We approach DBAE as a regime of identifying art and education. This section examines how the discourse of DBAE, as a representative regime of identifying art, assumes hierarchies and reproduces inequality. It also discusses the nature of education and the relationship between education and art in DBAE. These gestures point to the intelligibility of an instrumental meaning of 'art for art's sake'.

To provide a conceptual background for our critique, we insert here a summary of Rancière's theorization of the regimes of art, which not only sheds light on the problem of inequality in the way DBAE identifies art but also shows us an alternative regime of identifying art, 'the aesthetic regime of art'. In Rancière's language, a regime of art defines the configuration of various conditions that make it possible for words, shapes, movements, and rhythms to be felt and thought as art in an epoch. Rancière distinguishes three regimes of art: the ethical, the representative, and the aesthetic. In the ethical regime of art, which should actually be called the ethical regime of images, works of art have no autonomy. Viewed as images, they are questioned for their ontological veracity, the truthfulness with which they accurately represent an ideal model, and their effect on the ethos of individuals and the community. For Rancière, the conceptual apparatus of the ethical regime of images is most precisely articulated in Plato's *Republic*.

Aristotle's Poetics is Rancière's standard reference for the representative regime of art (the arts). In the representative regime, works of art belong to the sphere of imitation. Imitation—mimesis—does not mean the copy of reality. It is the representation of actions or ways of imposing a form on matter. The representative regime of art is governed by «the concordance between a form of intellectual determination and a form of sensory appropriation» (Rancière, 2010, p. 210). Art is the work of form that imposes its law on matter. The rules of art are supposed to align with the laws of sensibility. The pleasure experienced is seen as a verification of the adequation of the rules. *Mimesis* is the agreement between a productive nature—poiesis—and a receptive nature—aisthesis. The guarantee of this three-way agreement is human nature. This human nature is split: the fine arts distinguish people of refined sensibility from the coarseness of the masses. The aesthetic regime of art, staged in the modern period over the last two centuries, dismantles the intrinsic norms of the representative order. With the aesthetic regime, the knot between *poiesis* and *aisthesis* is undone. The aesthetic regime of art differs from ethical and representative regimes in that it offers no possibility of repetition or transferability, and no possibility for separating art from life.

Rancière emphasizes the historical nature of the material conditions and the thought patterns that characterize each regime. At the same time, since at the heart of each regime is a theory of art, the three regimes present three ways of identifying art that can coexist in the same historical period. There is no historical point of rupture on the basis of which it became impossible to do art in the old fashion and necessary to do it in a new mode. To make a distinction between regimes is «not to say that in 1788 art was part of the representative regime and, in 1815, part of the aesthetic regime» (Rancière, 2010, p. 210). The distinction defines not epochs but modes of perception and of intelligibility.

Returning to the discourse of DBAE, we see how it prioritizes the activity of the work of art by forcing it to display competences. The work of art is valued because it is actively created by the artist. The perception of the work of art traces back its production. Let's look at Eisner's guide for assessing art based on the three criteria (technical quality, inventiveness, aesthetic quality) in more detail:

By technical quality I mean the extent to which the material with which the students work has been handled with control and understanding. It also includes the extent to which the forms that are used display an intelligent use of technique. Put another way, do the techniques employed support what the work is intended to express; is there a consonance between the two?

By inventiveness I refer to the productive novelty the work displays: Does the work say something new or say something quite familiar in a new way? Put another way, does the work reflect a creative use of idea or process that relates constructively to its expressive intent? Is the work imaginative?

Finally, we are concerned with a work's expressive power, its aesthetic impact. The ability to create work that is satisfying aesthetically is and has been a prime artistic value. The achievement of such qualities is largely related to



the ways in which forms have been composed and technique handled. In assessing the quality of student work these three features can serve as criteria for assessment. Criteria are features that one can look for in a work; they are not fixed descriptions that obey some formulaic recipe. Technique, inventiveness, and expressive power can be realized in an infinite number of ways. Their identification here can serve as criteria to guide our search, not as pre-specified features that obey a fixed set of rules. (Eisner, 2004, p.183)

How the teacher perceives a work of art determines the student's competence. It matters to figure out what the work of art tries to say. Speech or intelligibility is privileged over visibility. The concordance required between the artistic techniques (form) and the message of the work of art (subject) assumes a stable relationship between the visible and the sayable. The teacher's aesthetic experience is linked to the active work of form. Eisner did present a fixed set of rules, and was positive about the infinite number of shapes artistic performances can embody in conforming to the rules. The student might know how chance rather than competence has participated in the artistic process. Nevertheless, as s/he thinks of it in terms of competence, at stake, there is a set of rules to attribute sensory presentations to competences.

Although our current art disciplines are different from those in ancient Greece and the medieval time in Europe, the discourse of DBAE presents a way of identifying art similar to the representative regime of the arts. At the heart of a representative order of art is a system of rules to govern artistic practices. We can say that a representative order of art is knowledge-based. These rules determine the sphere of art. In DBAE, art is seen in contrast with non-art, not with life. As a result, 'art for art's sake' means that the domain of art is also a significant domain of life. An important feature of DBAE is the intensified role of knowledge. Knowledge is valorized over the experience of pleasure in creating, appreciating and understanding art. While situating the need to develop artistic competences in the context of economic globalization, DBAE links the arts with creativity, but creativity in DBAE is a form of knowledge. Rather than a capacity to transform the world, it is a capacity to adapt to a given world. We also see within DBAE the acknowledgement of how art can change the world. Making reference to stunning achievements of art, Eisner (2004) talked about works of art that changed the world. It makes sense that knowledge is needed to change the world. However, if knowledge is used to frame the world, the world is a world of inequality and boundaries. Knowledge assigns competences and positions to bodies and orders them into a hierarchy, following the law of meritocracy. If education is to provide and certify competences, this qualification has the purpose or/and the effect of socialization. It inserts people into a hierarchy. Knowledge of the arts is helpful for disadvantaged groups to advance socially, but the logic of social mobility presupposes inequality. What matters is that «equality as well as inequality is never anything but the result of themselves», as Rancière put it, in Bingham and Biesta (2010, p. 11).

For Rancière, the only way to escape inequality is to assume equality, to be as if everything were equal. Equality relies on dissensus, the 'commensurability of incommensurables' (Rancière, 2009, p. 11). On the ground of dissensus, bodies that are assigned to 'proper' places and functions can appear or act as if they were free of order. Politics is the redistribution of the sensible on the assumption of equality, not the reordering of power relations between groups, as it is usually understood. From a Rancièrian perspective, the discourse of DABE is policing and depoliticizing the artistic experience. While developing common frameworks and rules to align diverse arrays of entities, it enforces a vision of a common world and strengthens the frame that defines boundaries and allocates competences and positions in this world.

# AESTHETIC REGIME OF ART: EQUALITY & ART'S SPECIFICITY

As art is connected to education through the notion of knowledge/competence, it is encapsulated in the logic of the representative order. This section portrays the aesthetic regime of art as an alternative to identify art. This is to illuminate the possibilities that are inhibited by the discourse of DBAE, the free invention of forms, the free invention of meanings, and the aesthetic free play, as well as to figure in an understanding of 'art's for art's sake' that strongly rejects the very idea of a pure art without committing itself to instrumentality. By opening up a gap between *poeisis* and *aesthesis*, Rancière's aesthetic regime of art connects art to life, and this connection does not signify the loss of the autonomy of art. The identification of art no longer occurs via a distinction of ways of doing and making, and art is now distinguished based on a mode of experience that is exceptional to the normal distribution of the sensible. The representative order, relying on a set of rules, is an order

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of knowledge whereas the aesthetic regime, starting from the assumption of equality between passivity and activity, enables the aesthetic experience.

Let's examine what happens when we untie the knot between poeisis and aesthesis. The work of art is freed from the active will of the artist and offers itself to our gaze as free appearance. Free appearance embodies the qualities of non-art. A substantial link between the immanent poeticity of the world and the work of art is formed. Images of the world have their expressivity, even when they are silent, temporarily suspended from concepts. It is possible for them to matter to us as themselves, not on the basis of representing any competence. The primacy of action in the representative order is opposed by the new primacy of expressiveness. The privilege of speech over visibility is shaken. Another consequence is that style becomes indifferent to subject. The arbitrariness of language is revealed, and the regime welcomes the principle of literariness: «the freeing of language and representation such that that everyone is now entitled to intervene in any form of discourse, use or be addressed by any language and be the subject of representation» (Corcoran, 2010, p. 17). Since representability is unlimited, it does not make sense to constrain the range of acceptable subjects. The stage of the equality of all subjects and the indifference of style in relation to subject depose the hierarchy of genres.

The aesthetic regime of art abolishes all the hierarchies characteristic of the representative order. This is not a dream. The aesthetic regime of art has come to play a critical role in the last two centuries. During the period, the diversity of objects introduced to the field of art as works of art has made it sensible to us that works of art are not defined by a predetermined set of intrinsic norms. Rancière's two favorite scenes of the aesthetic regime of art are Winckelmann's reinvention of Belvedere Torso in The History of Ancient Art published in 1764 and Flaubert's Madame Bovary published in 1856. Winckelmann turned a mutilated statue from ancient Greece into a perfect work of art. Instead of compensating for the accidental lack of head, arm, and legs, Winckelmann transformed it into a virtue: there is no action but pure thought. Pure thought is represented not by a head but by «a stomach that seems unfit for any digestive functions, by muscles that do not tighten for action, but whose outlines flow over each other like the waves of the sea» (Rancière, 2013, pp. 2-3). Flaubert's novel treated all things with the same care, making style become the only true subject of literature. How objects acquired their speech and how subjects acquired their visibility in surprising ways indicate the freedom of thought that the aesthetic regime of art has effected. Rancière, however, attributes the autonomy of art not to the work of art but to an experience that is made possible by the absence of pre-ordered structures and the expressivity of the world—the free play encounter with free appearance—the aesthetic experience.

As a spectator, Rancière has done a beautiful translation of the aesthetic experience described as disinterestedness by Kant and free play by Schiller by relating it to the notion of equality. For Kant, aesthetic experience implies a certain redistribution of the habitual conditions of sensible experience. It is captured in a double negation: the object of aesthetic apprehension is neither an object of knowledge nor an object of desire. This suggests that when doing the active work of form, an artist might do it by appreciating the matter aesthetically. In the aesthetic regime of art, an artist does not impose form on a given matter according to a function of knowledge. The artist's work of form does not determine the spectator's experience of pleasure. In fact, there is no qualitative difference between the artist and the spectator with regard to aesthetic experience. In a Bourdieusian interpretation of Kant, the aesthetic experience is an illusion from the mind of a petit-bourgeois intellectual, one that is locked to a social position and hence does not know how the oppressive structure of the society works to produce such an illusion.

For Rancière, the aesthetic experience is not a function of inequality but a function of equality, of an as if mode of being. We approach the work of art as if it were not a work of art and as if we were not fixed to a position that limited our perception. The as if mode is real, and it makes us the unaccountable in a given count. It demonstrates a dissensus, the commensurability of incommensurable worlds (inequality vs. equality). The aesthetic experience enabled by equality is equality by itself. The neutralization of the faculty of reason and the faculty of sensation signifies a distribution of the sensible that escapes hierarchy. As it starts from the abolition of the opposition between form and matter, between activity and passivity, aesthetic free play also erases the distinction between a full humanity and a sub-humanity. This is why «it bears within it the promise of a 'new art of living' of individuals and the community, the promise of a new humanity» (Rancière, 2010, p.176). Defined by the aesthetic experience, the arts become art, a singular process. Anything can become art, and this does not mean the common 'anything goes' that presupposes significance and its negation. Aestheticized art does not always exist. It is precarious, happening in unpredictable, unrepeatable moments.

To delineate the paradoxical nature of the autonomy of art, Rancière builds on Schiller's articulation: «aesthetic experience will bear the edifice of the art of the beautiful and of the art of living» (Rancière, 2010, p.116). The paradoxical autonomy of art could be summarized in three points. Firstly, the autonomy is not that of the work of art but of a mode of experience. The autonomy of art as the autonomy of art forms brings art back to a representative order as it is founded upon an assumed concordance between poeisis and aiesthesis. However, since 'art's for art's sake' understood as art divorced from life untied the link between form and subject, it liberated the artist from the responsibility of representing social, political and moral contents and allowed the artist to focus on form. Thus, it has been participating in collapsing the hierarchy of subjects and introduced new objects to the field of art. The problem is that the way it thinks about art installs dependence on the part of the spectator and posits a split between activity and passivity. In his writings, Rancière brings to view that despite the equality staged in the field of art, discourses of art keep adhering to the logic of inequality that makes the aesthetic experience theoretically impossible. The autonomy of art is not determined by the artist's agenda. Even in the case the artist wants art to become life, when art is perceived aesthetically, the aesthetic experience is a distinct mode of life.

Secondly, in the aesthetic experience, the spectator stands in front of 'free appearance', which bears no trace of will or aim. The work of art participates in the sensorium of autonomy inasmuch as it is not a work of art.

Thirdly, the aesthetic experience consists in the suspension of a certain autonomy, the autonomy of reason. The spectator who enjoys the free play of the aesthetic in front of the free appearance experiences a kind of autonomy that is strictly related to a withdrawal of power. The suspension of reason is possible by means of a supplement that neutralizes the faculty of knowledge and the faculty of desire. We can also imagine an excess in the relationship between the visible and the sayable. The obstinate silent thing visible to us cannot be fully captured into words. Two incommensurable worlds stand in relation to each other and radiate an enigma unavailable to our knowledge, our aims and desires. We are promised the possession of a new world by the free appearance that we cannot possess in any way.

In summary, art is autonomous only by means of tying art to non-art. The aesthetic experience communicates the realm of art with that of life experience. Art has the potential to generate an experience that is alternative to the ordinary, an exceptional experience that is freed from habitual hierarchies of perception. In Rancière's view, art's potential as an independent aesthetic configuration to interrupt the distribution of the sensible renders it political.

# CHANGING THE TERMS OF ART EDUCATION, PERFORMING THE ART & ENJOYING THE MOMENTS

Given how school subjects have been organized as bodies of knowledge, systems of concepts, generalizations, and procedures students must learn, and how qualification and socialization have been articulated as the main purposes of education, DBAE firmly fits in the established distribution of the thinkable about arts education in our time.

We can modify the distribution, if we wish to. We can always start a change of discourse. There will be a chance for our voice to be heard and equality to become sensible. We speak about art as a matter of experimentation and appreciation rather than knowledge application and representation. This does not mean a return to the creativity/self-expression paradigm of arts education, where the work of art is tied to the authentic self of the child, the child is regarded as a deficit being, and knowledge is considered a threat. Rather, in an aesthetic regime of art, knowledge manifests materially, invites aesthetic free play, and can be reinvented.

We also speak about education as a project of equality. Education then becomes a process of subjectivation rather than qualification or socialization. Subjectivation is the opposite of socialization, a way in which the individual is not a part of a consensual community. For Rancière, subjectivation is possible on the assumption of equality. It may occur in different ways. Education can be the moments of aesthetic free play in which the spectator ignores the possession and the destination of the work of art and his/ her own social position. Or it can be a process of political subjectivation, a process of becoming a collective subject through acting out of equality. Assuming the power of anyone/anything, the student/artist creates 'a new scenery of the visible' or/and 'a new dramaturgy of the intelligible' that reframes the world of the common objects and language. The student demonstrates the capacities denied by the police order, as we can see in the case of Winckelmann's *Belvedere Torso* and of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. This does not mean that one's competence to change the world is located safely within

oneself. Whether the student's performance makes a difference to the world depends on how it is received by others. From a Rancièrian viewpoint, the capacity for politics is not a matter of mastery. What matters is that the student acts as if s/he had the capacity to change the world, and, thanks to luck, can actually participate in refiguring the world. For another version of subjectivation, Simons and Masschelein (2010) proposed 'pedagogic subjectivation' as the verification of equal intelligence that does not necessarily involve a public demonstration of the capacities denied by a police order. Specifically, education is not a process of elevating incompetence to competence, which would construct instrumental relationships between art and life. Rather, education is a process of verifying one's 'potentiality', where the student can enjoy the experience of being able to do art. Speaking about education as subjectivation allows us to see how art, education, and politics can intersect and penetrate each other when they are conceived on the assumption of equality.

Finally, the discourse of art education may be aware of itself as an artistic practice. Scholars might think of their work as a project to inspire people by using a set of strategies anticipated to bring about the desirable effects on the part of a target audience predefined by a trait. However, this theorization falls back to the logic of the representative order. We can add an acknowledgement that no matter what we do, the effects of our labor are not within our control. We do our labor for how we experience it. There is delight in rearticulating, connecting between the current discourse of DBAE and Rancière's poetry. This essay, as much as it is a critique of DBAE, is a humble expression of how we appreciate Rancière's work.

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