Mika Hannula – Juha Suoranta – Tere Vadén

Artistic Research

– Theories, Methods and Practices

ISBN 951-53-2743-1

Published by Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, Finland and
University of Gothenburg / ArtMonitor, Gothenburg, Sweden 2005

Translation and proof-reading: Gareth Griffiths and Kristina Kölhi
Lay-out and cover design: Henri Tani

Printed by Cosmoprint Oy, Espoo, Finland 2005

Contents

Preface 5

Acknowledgements 7

1 Introduction 9

1.1 The Current Situation in Artistic Research 9
1.2 The Need for Artistic Research 19

2 Two Metaphors and Their Consequences 23

2.1 Metaphor One: Democratic Experiences. 25

2.1.1 The Demarcation of Scientific Research: Openness and Self-criticism 26
2.1.2 Democracy of Experiences to the Rescue 30
2.1.3 What is scientific maturity?. 34

2.2 Metaphor Two: Methodological Abundance 36

2.2.1 Methodological over- abundance and anarchy 38
2.2.2 Experience and art 42
2.2.3 Experience and Language 45

2.3 Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Ethical Encounters. . . 48

2.3.1 Ethical encounters 52
2.3.2 Openness, criticality and ethics: a methodological summary 58

3 Methodological Faces of Artistic Research 67

3.1 Conversation and Dialogue. 68
3.2 The Analysis of Art and Media Representations and Objects. 71
3.3 Collaborative Case Studies 88
3.4 Ethnography and Interventions. 92

3.4.1 Ethnography. 92
3.4.2 Interventions 95

3.5 Practice-based Research. 100

4 Artistic Research in Practice 109

4.1 Research Practice: Guidelines 109
4.2 Examples of Research Practices 119

4.2.1 Case study 1: OEI – A research collective 119
4.2.2 Case study 2: Jacqueline Donachie 125
4.2.3 Case study 3: Olafur Eliasson 130
4.2.4 Case study 4: Liisa Roberts 136

5 The Meaning of Artistic Research 151

5.1 The Relevance of Artistic Research 151
5.2 The Reliability of Artistic Research. 159

6 (Instead of) Conclusions 163

Bibliography. 169

Preface

The accumulation of knowledge in the artistic field is a form of research. Artists carry out research about the reality that surrounds them, about themselves, about their instruments of work, and about the complex networks linking these.

Subjects like poetics, aesthetics and composition – with their interpretive and empathic views on art – have been well established in universities for centuries.

Artistic research means that the artist produces an art work and researches the creative process, thus adding to the accumulation of knowledge. However, the whole notion of artistic research is a relatively new one, and, indeed, its forms and principles have yet to become firmly established.

It is of great importance that this kind of research is given a fair chance to develop free from excessive formalities, and that the basis for the systematic accumulation of knowledge in the artistic field can be built upon practice. Also, a specific artistic relationship to research can establish a dynamic relationship to other kinds of knowledge within the universities – from medicine to the history of fine art.

Gothenburg University has been involved with artistic research and development since the 1970s. Since the creation of the Faculty of Fine Arts in 2000, a unique and solid basis for multi-disciplinary

artistic research has been established. The University is very happy to be able to publish this book in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts of Helsinki, where a doctoral programme in artistic research has been operating since 1997. This book is a sign of the fruitful collaboration between the two institutes.

We hope that this book will stimulate artistic research and further its development, and it would make us delighted if it could promote discussion in the fascinating field of art in its theory and practice.

Hans Hedberg
Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Gothenburg University

Mika Hannula
Professor of Art in the Public Space, Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank The Society of European Philosophy (Tampere, Finland) for publishing (in Finnish) our first examination of the methodology of artistic research in their publication series 23°45. This gave us the opportunity to carry on with the project, and boosted our courage to expand its scope and audience.

The project has benefited greatly from various persons' contributions. Research Secretary Johan Öberg from the University of Gothenburg supported the project in a crucial way. Senior Researcher Seppo Aura and his methodological work in architectural research at Tampere University of Technology provided a fruitful conversation and research partnership. Architect and philosopher Gareth Griffiths not only translated our "Finglish" but also offered substantial comments and suggestions throughout the writing process. Finally, Henri Tani made a tremendous job in creating the look of the book.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Current Situation in Artistic Research

The plan might sound a bit strange and even self-indulgent, but that is not our fault. We are about to forge a path through what may be unknown terrain, a path along which we will have to get used to the strange and demanding role of the pioneer. What we have set out to do and write about is something which until now did not exist, or at least as far as we know. This book is the first full-length focused methodological analysis of the new academic *modus operandi* or discipline called 'artistic research'. It is framed by practice-based and practice-driven research within that large entity that is called 'contemporary culture'. Its attitude is to open and to include, not to exclude or to build barriers between mediums of expression and methods of knowledge production.

The present book surveys the whole scope of the still young field, in terms of its theoretical background, methods and practices. The idea is to provide an extensive methodological manual for all who are active and interested in artistic research. The book is addressed to all

participants across the domain, from practicing artists already doing research or starting to be interested in research practices to supervisors and professors crediting and tutoring these activities. But foremost this book is addressed to the potential students and researchers in this heterogeneous field, at both the Master of Arts and Ph.D. levels.

The main source for our examples and cases studies is contemporary art and visual culture. We are fully aware that each artistic field – from music to theatre and dance to design – has its own specialties that are not fully compatible with those in the other fields. However, while respecting these differences, we believe there is fruitful and meaningful common ground to be shaped and articulated, and valid for all approaches and mediums.

Our book focuses on the possibilities, challenges and demands of artistic research as an area that slowly but surely is articulating its own criteria of research based on its individual characteristics and practices. Our viewpoint comes from a combination of qualitative research approaches and particular characteristics of artistic practice.

We are analysing artistic research as a new opening for a wide variety of actors within contemporary art and culture. This whole issue is not about scientific research (as in art history or the sociology of art, for example), but about the self-reflective and self-critical processes of a person taking part in the production of meaning within contemporary art, and in such a fashion that it communicates where it is coming from, where it stands at this precise moment, and where it wants to go.

This book is an up-dated and extended version of *Otsikko uusiksi – Taiteellisen tutkimuksen suuntaviivat* [Stop the Press – Guidelines for Artistic Research, 2003] by the same authors. Our collaboration on artistic research has combined our different backgrounds. In his previous work, Mika Hannula has been especially interested in the ethical aspects of art and contemporary culture, as well as the larger context in terms of philosophy of politics. Juha Suoranta has concentrated, among other things, on questions of (qualitative) research methodology, critical

pedagogy, and political sociology of education. For his part, Tere Vadén has worked in philosophy of science, in general, and on the question of the identity and role of science in contemporary society, in particular. These interests all seem to converge around artistic research.

The reason for publishing an English version is very simple: since the publication of the first book, our original hunch has grown stronger and the evidence more credible. What we see and hear is a need for carefully argued for criteria, principles and guidelines that are situated in both qualitative research and artistic practises. We have to keep in mind that even though artistic research has certainly been produced at various moments over the last twenty years, the research methods in the different fields of art and artistic expression – from music via design to theatre and from the visual arts to visual culture – are still only in the process of evolving, both in themselves and in relation to other research traditions.

There are both risks and opportunities in the existing situation. The situation is best described as one of confusion; something which has been observed – and admitted with some embarrassment – at several international conferences. The meaning of the subject is understood, and is without doubt seen as being important. But the question is, how and within what framework should artistic research be carried out? Some recent examples seen as both impressive and popular (i.e. necessary and important) are the six-part conference series "Interrupt – Artists in Socially Engaged Practices" arranged by Arts Council England in 2003, the two-year project "re:search – in and through the arts" arranged by ELIA (European League of Institutes of the Arts) together with Berlin Universität der Künste, which will come to an end at the end of 2005, and the systematic and ongoing debating and studying of the matter in Gothenburg at several multidisciplinary conferences and events (such as ArtTech Sublime). Apart from these, there are a couple of anthologies on artistic research available, containing articles that certainly describe the expanse of the field, yet leave a rather vague and

indeterminate overall impression (see, for instance: Hannula 2004, Holridge & MacIeod 2005, Miles 2005, Kälvemark 2004). An accurate overall picture of the methodology of artistic research has yet to be published.

If and when the many institutes and artists in rather numerous countries have understood the potential and opportunity of artistic research, the new field – and the changes taking place along with it – will also create a negative reaction. The bureaucratization of art in order to make it an academic and stuffy 9-to-5 job, as well as pressures for change in arts education and its support structures, become a threat. There is naturally also confusion in the meaning and use of the central terminology – not to mention confusion about what is understood by methodology and the legitimacy of research and its critique.

In this book we want to see the existing situation as an opportunity. That opportunity entails, above all, actively participating in dispelling confusion, the process-like adaptation of the field, and developing a sufficiently resilient self-confidence. And as the contents page of the book indicates, our aim is to concentrate specifically on those very features which, unfortunately, are still ignored in the international debate.

At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that the prevailing situation not only is a concrete opening move for artistic research to articulate its own opinions on what it wants, but also presents new questions for the general methodology of the human sciences. It is high time to dare to open the window, to jump out of it, enjoying the flight, views and landing. Obviously the above issues touch just as much anyone undertaking science, or having an interest in it, as those who want to understand art and culture. The aim perhaps should not, after all, be the creation of some kind of greenhouse for improving intellectual fertility, where researchers could push and praise each other over the specific borders of science and art. Instead, it would be more meaningful to trust in a more realistic alternative, where transcending borders happens if and when it is meaningful and important for both

parties. At the same time, the individual and autonomous development of each field – which by its nature should be communicative and outward-looking – is prioritised, which requires time and resources. This implies that, instead of a top-down model or intervention, there has to be enough room, courage and appreciation for organic, content-driven development and growth.

Researchers and their communities need both tools to deal with artistic experiences (which would make the activity more scientific) and the opportunity to work in peace, to achieve peace of mind, and to trust in the meaningfulness of what they do. Such a trust is established when the research community ensures that it can define its own activities. The question is, in other words, about scraping together traditional academic autonomy. The scientific community's ongoing internal critique and debate creates the research tradition and the ways in which to assess research. The ideals of self-definition and self-maintenance are realised in the everyday life of the scientific community. The scientific community must both allow and value diversity, mutual criticism and critique which take shape both externally and internally. It is essential that any tradition, or a part thereof (i.e. any practice or institute), is able to perceive, as a real research aim, what kind of a collective and common stage it forms for the enactment of specific contradictions and interpretations.

Our contention is that the very fact that artistic research becomes commonplace will save us from the crushing weight of external ideals that are often alien to artistic research. This will give us the opportunity for a perhaps troublesome and even sticky path towards an increasingly mature and tolerant scientific-artistic culture. This way of defining scientific quality itself from the everyday viewpoint of research is quite a different matter than a methodological 'guarantee of quality'. The self-definition of the everyday occurs by throwing oneself on the mercy of the difficulty of the task, and consequently the possibility of failure. Through self-definition, traditional virtues (e.g. being

critical) and the importance of the time and place reserved for doing research, also become important. We argue in favour of methodological anarchy and tolerance. In our opinion, high-standard and mature research is characterised qualitatively by the specific features of tolerance and diversity. Thus we also aspire to a channel of communication that would more extensively support the ability to attempt and to err, to fail and to give value also to others, particularly in those fields of science concerned with the human being and people. We hope that a discussion about research can be carried out specifically in the field of artistic research – and on its own terms.

The discussion about artistic research has often been motivated by external reasons, the limitations of the administration and the various competing schools of thought. Even ugly consequences have not been avoided in the discussions and assessments. Various standard views of 'science' have usually guided the assessment by which people have sought for some one-and-only correct way to carry out artistic research. As we see it, however, there is reason to keep the doors open to experimentation and making mistakes, and in this way enhance conceptual understanding. There is no reason to present rigid and methodical guidelines, but rather one should strive for openness and encourage daring experimentation (see Hannula 2002, Jones 2005).

Researchers must have the courage to come to terms with the diffuseness and uncertainty of a new research field. Such boldness is not born within the vacuum or muteness of institutions. Therefore, we also encourage an institutional anarchy that nurtures and raises courageous researchers. What we want to understand with the notions of institutional and methodological anarchy will be articulated at length in chapter 2.2; but already here it is necessary to note that with anarchy we definitely do not refer to, or strive for, the institutional reality of full-scale uncertainty, poor job security, the large-scale usage of a part-time workforce, non-transparent decision making and a lack of overall responsibility. Thus, for us, in short, anarchy refers to method-

ological and research-based experimentation, pluralism and tolerance. In terms of institutions, it refers to the necessity to allow experimentation, pluralism and tolerance, while at the same time having coherent and openly stated policies and aims.

It is no surprise that courage is always needed when something – anything – is undertaken for the first time or when one strives to continue something new and different, something deviating from previous. We claim that at this very moment – when artistic research has been carried out for a period varying from a few years to a couple of decades, depending on the artistic discipline – one must be able to deal with uncertainty. Otherwise artistic research will be threatened by a negative kind of normalization, the accumulating repetition of habits that deny the space and need for questioning and self-reflective inner challenges. Courage is also needed because the results of artistic research are surprising in at least two different ways. Firstly, the results and end point should come as a surprise to the researcher. As an experiential and experimental activity, art leaves open the possibility for something unexpected happening. Secondly – due partly to the young age of the discipline and partly its very character – the contribution of the results of artistic research to the general scientific community is problematic. Nevertheless, these surprises are something worth cherishing.

Taking a wider perspective of the whole field and its current situation, internationally it has been developed furthest in the Anglo-Saxon countries, although, as the ELIA example proves, there is a wide-reaching interest in the topic across Europe. Particularly in England and Scotland, experimentation with different models has been going on already for several decades. The projects are still rather strongly set within the framework of a written and scientific doctoral thesis or rely on practice-based studio work, purposely leaving aside any reflective literary element. In Britain the formation of the character of artistic research is linked with the whole development of the university institutions, and in particular with the systematic quality assessment initi-

ated by the central state. These latter reports on educational standards strongly control the allocation of research money. Consequently, there is a hard internal competition within the system, which ends up differentiating and localizing the nature of research, as well as the results. For this reason, one should look for points of comparison between each individual instance and cases with a sufficient structural correspondence (see Payne 2000, Holridge & MacIeod 2005).

In comparison to the other Nordic countries, Finland is still clearly ahead in artistic research. One must keep in mind, however, that when it comes to numbers there are clear differences depending on the orientation of the institute. Scientific research is carried out by means of both scientific argumentation and artistic criteria. In the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki there exists a variation combining these two methods. According to the centralized Finnish Universities statistics, up to 2003 there were 27 doctorates completed in music, 2 in the visual arts, 11 in theatre, and 26 in design. While all Finnish art academies with university status have already for some time been working methodically in this new research field, other Nordic countries have only recently begun supporting artistic research, or are only in the process of picking up on it. Also, one should note the differences in both history and volume across the different fields of artistic expression and art academies.

Of the other Nordic countries, Sweden is clearly most active, Norway has followed a bit hesitantly behind since starting in 2004, while Denmark has by-passed the issue in the fine arts, but established a couple of years ago a research programme for design and the applied arts. Typically, following the example of Finland, music and music pedagogy are the most developed fields. Another area slightly more developed than the others is design. In the visual arts, doctoral theses have been systematically carried out in Sweden only since the beginning of the millennium, particularly in Malmö and Gothenburg. Activity began on a wider scale in 2001 and in the near future (2006–2009) several

doctoral theses in different artistic fields are expected to be completed. A corresponding peak in research, with a consequent domino effect on those completing their doctoral theses, can also be expected in Finland in the near future. What is particularly interesting is that research officials in Sweden have decided to recommend a research structure very close to the Finnish model, as used, for example, at the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki. The core contents of the model are: prioritizing individual authorship; source-based research and the personal, individual identity of artistic research; and selecting researchers that do not come directly from the Masters degree level, but who are selected on the basis of the combination of the quality of their already existing artistic experience and production and the quality of their research project (the latter meaning that most of the researchers resemble more the so-called postdoctoral researchers in other fields) (see Karlsson 2001).

The present book does not come from nowhere, but is essentially committed and localized. It has its background, of course, in the different viewpoints of the three authors. Each of us has followed the (artistic) research and the ongoing debate about its methodology, and has tried to outline an approach to the uniqueness of artistic research (see, e.g., Hannula 2002, Balkema & Slager 2004, Aura, Katainen & Suoranta 2001, 2002, Suoranta 2003, Vadén 2002, 2003). Our cooperation in writing this book has been guided by the idea that "science" is not one well-defined entity, but rather that there are many sciences – in other words, organised practices which increase our understanding, concepts and ability to critique – and that the sciences can sometimes have different and possibly even incommensurable goals. On the other hand, we do not see this diversity and pluralism as a sign of the weakness of science or a shortcoming in its definition, but rather as a tool and goal one strives for. We see it as a tool because pluralism and polyphony, as methodological goals, increase our possibilities for understanding and experiencing the world. In turn, we see it as a goal because true diversity is, in our opinion, a necessary starting point for ethics.

The structure of the present book is as follows. After the introductory first chapter we will look in some detail in Chapter 2 (Two Metaphors and Their Consequence) at those theoretical and philosophical starting points that, in our opinion, can act as the background for artistic research. Because there is a lot of uncertainty and suspicion towards artistic research, we will deal at some length with the issue of scientific "maturity". What makes a research practice mature? How can maturity be attained in the different scientific fields? What about artistic research? Our answer is simple: the decisive factors are methodological diversity and critical self-reflection. Together these lead to the decisive observation that artistic research always deals with ethics.

In Chapter 3 (Methodological Faces of Artistic Research) we look more closely at different methodologies applicable to artistic research. The presentation does not aim to be in any sense comprehensive, but is rather an opening move and an awakening: one can at least start with these methods. At the same time, the methodological diversity of artistic research provides an impetus for a wider methodological debate and anchors artistic research within the field of the social and humanistic sciences. The task of the book is also to open up this field for the general public and to outline its basic contents to potential new students and researchers.

Chapter 4 (Artistic Research in Practice) presents examples of artistic research. We start by presenting the basic model for artistic research in a schematic form, our theses for how to proceed with artistic research, and the practical demands of research from the point of view of the researcher. We then present examples of completed artistic research. The purpose of the examples is to shed light on different approaches, both successful and less successful ones. The underlining thought in this chapter is that central to a postmodern ethics committed to place is the power of the example: ethical work is best carried out through examples. Also, it is fruitful to study artistic research through the examples of pioneering works.

In Chapter 5 (The Meaning of Artistic Research) we return to general methodological questions regarding the reliability and relevance of artistic research. If the title of the chapter brings to mind the famous book series *The Meaning of Liff*, that is all well and good. The issues of the relevance and reliability of artistic research are in a sense also concerned with looking for new meanings for old words; meanings that still are in a state of becoming. Relevance is decisive, as it is in research generally. Our claim is that in the case of artistic research, the issue of relevance is particularly tightly and naturally tied to an ethical attitude, to the localization of the "me" and "us" of the researcher. We also present some basic conditions that we feel artistic research must fulfil in order for it to be considered reliable.

The book contains no final summary or conclusion, but instead ideas about where artistic research could be headed and what its meaning could be to art on the one hand and to research on the other. In this context, it is also worthwhile considering those practical actions that the institutions and their staff – tutors, professors, critics, researchers and financiers – could adopt in order to assist the first tentative steps ahead.

1.2 The Need for Artistic Research

The term 'artistic research' has many meanings, connotations and implications. It is characterized by its continuous search for a current and convincing definition. It is a search that is not problematic in itself but, on the contrary, the plain necessity of a fruitful, self-reflective and meaningful setup. At the same time as providing the researcher with intellectual challenges and learning experiences, artistic research also participates in the development of the theoretical basis of the field. It can also enrich life and professional practices and lead to a variety of knowledge and skills, the meanings of which transcend the borders of the disciplines and forms.

The question of the need and importance of artistic research can also be approached through those aspects that already unite those working in the field. Professional artists feel that it is particularly important for them to be able concentrate on a clearly defined theme over a longer period of time and with sufficient financial support to be able to work on it in terms of both depth and breadth. In recent years, in both seminars dealing with individual artistic research and more general seminars, a basic consensus over the nature of artistic research has evolved; a consensus which many of the researchers and trend-setters approve of and endorse (see, for example, Slager 2004, Biggs 2004, Jones 2005, Kiljunen & Hannula 2002).

At the core of the question of need and meaning are the personal and spontaneous. This entails the challenge to see the research from the researcher's viewpoint, and with the art work as the focal point. The artistic starting point offers a motor and motive, which both summarizes the totality and separates the details. In other words, it is possible to be rather of the same opinion about the general meaning of the essential characteristics of artistic research, but be rather strongly of a different opinion regarding the detailed contents and their effects. The following features seem at least to characterise most works of artistic research:

- The art work is the focal point. The art work tops the list of the priorities, from places 1 to 22, and still continuing.
- Artistic experientiality is the very core of the research, as is how it is transmitted and how it transmits a meaning.
- Artistic research must be self-reflective, self-critical and an outwardly-directed communication.
- The placement of artistic research in the historical and disciplinary context. The task is to continuously locate the research in relation to its own actions and goals, and at the same time to be localized in relation to the more focused context of the field.
- A diversity of research methods, presentation methods and com-

munication tools and their commitment to the needs and demands of each particular case.
- Emphasizing the fruitfulness and necessity of the dynamic research group situation, which in a collective effort provides the closest critical environment, the protective realm for experimentation and the ability to share thoughts and emotions.
- The hermeneutic, interpretative quality of research.

Consequently, artistic research has a loosely connected set of goals or purposes, through which its relevance becomes evident. These include, at least, the following:

- Producing *information that serves practice*; for instance, from ecological, psychological, social, cultural, economic, political, technical and functional points of view.
- Developing *methods* which are linked with, for instance, the processing of creative work, defining criteria for making evaluations or modelling and illustrating designs.
- Increasing *understanding* of the link between art and its social, cultural, and pedagogical context, helping to position the artist's work in a wider context, including the historical and political development.
- *Interpreting art works* as cultural, political, and pedagogical products.
- Producing knowledge about (among other things) the social, social-psychological and psychological as well as political and pedagogical meaning of art in order to develop *artistic activity* (e.g. *education, the living environment, the quality of life*).
- *Critically* analysing art and its current trends; the object being, among other things, an understanding of the relationships between art and technological development, and between art and economic development, power relationships, etc.
- Rethinking and questioning the role of the artist; the consequenc-

es not only of the death of the author, but also of the significant increase of collaborative artistic efforts, and the question of the role of an artist in society at large.

It is through such goals that art and research come together. Research requires concentration, in order to achieve a sufficient temporal perspective. This, in turn, offers the opportunity to withdraw oneself from the rapid and myopic cycle of making art, and instead to concentrate on a tenaciously and coherently chosen subject. The fact of artistic research becoming independent hopefully offers a fruitful opportunity for critical reflection among the research community – the community where, through creation and maintenance, the artists identify the contents, consequences and general directions of art through interaction, and by encouraging and supporting one another. The aim is to produce a new kind of information that is not introspective but combinative, outward-looking and seeking new connections. It is not a question of novelty for its own sake, but fresh connections and interpretations. In this way, artistic research can also have a meaning that is wider than its own narrowly conceived discipline. It produces social innovations by creating a new research trend in university education.

2 Two Metaphors and Their Consequences

There is no common philosophical-methodological basis for the things that have been done or are being done under the moniker of artistic research. This is actually a good thing. We are quite aware of and even happy with the current situation in which different examples of artistic research have different, incommensurable and even contradictory ontological, epistemological and practical starting points and commitments. Contrary to expectations, the intention of this theoretical chapter is not to outline a uniform or even universally desirable epistemological-ontological starting point for artistic research. Rather, the intention is to show why such a uniform starting point is not necessary and why the lack of one is not necessarily an indication of the immaturity of artistic research or any other methodological inferiority compared to the methods of more traditional research.

The intention of the following theoretical background to the artistic research is to show two things. Firstly, we wish to show that a uniform epistemological-ontological starting point is not necessary. Diversity and the consequent ethical challenge are positive things and, according to our understanding, promote the productivity of the research. Secondly, we wish to show that the theoretical background for artistic research is *intersubjective* and *scientific* – in many of those central senses that these two

words are employed (also) in present-day (natural) scientific research. In other words, the numerous starting points in scientific research do not (necessarily) result in an unscientific or subjective mess or a lack of principles. On the contrary, our intention is to show that artistic research can show the way towards scientific maturity.

The aim of the two metaphors of a *democracy of experiences* and *methodological diversity* is to show a *possible* starting point for artistic research. We do not claim that the starting point we present would be the only one, but merely that it is coherent. We accept physicist-philosopher Niels Bohr's demand for scientific objectivity, according to which objectivity means "coherent communicativity" (rather than arbitrary repeatability, non-subjectivity or an objectivity lacking a viewpoint).[1] The intention behind the theoretical starting point we present here is to provide one possible objective (in the Bohrian sense) epistemological-ontological framework for artistic research. We contend that a democracy of experiences and methodological diversity together characterise a possible mature, intelligible and coherent starting point for (artistic) research. In other words, the model we propose requires coherence only on its own terms, but does not claim that there would not be other coherent approaches. It also includes positive recommendations for the kinds of starting points and methodologies to be employed. In this sense, our proposed model is epistemologically and ontologically non-classical (see Plotnitsky 2002, ch. 1) and methodologically anarchistic (see Feyerabend 1975, 1999).

We feel that considerations having to do with the methodology of practice-based research might have an influence on the limits of practice-based research proper, especially when it comes to the interpretation of the ideals of science. This is because in practice-based research the ideals of openness

1 *The Philosophical Writings of Niels Bohr.* Ox Bow, Woodbridge, 1987, vol 3, p. 7; cited in Plotnitsky (2002, 23).

and criticality can not be achieved by the methods used in "traditional" natural science. By interpreting the ideals of openness and criticality from the vantage point of a democracy of experiences, artistic research may have an effect on other types of research.

2.1 Metaphor One: Democracy of Experiences

How is it possible, even in principle, to claim that the two terms, "art" and "research" go together, not to mention to claim that "artistic research" forms a practice that is viable and coherent? It is quite clear that there is a long and persistent tradition – with its occidental roots at least in the Greek classics – that has systematically pried art and research further and further apart. In this tradition – the heirs of which most of us are, whether we want it or not – it has been thought that fundamentally different modes of thinking, acting and being a human are at work in art and research. As a consequence, it has been considered best to keep the practices, teaching and results of art and research separate from each other. The result is a dualistic division in Western experience, not least inside the experiences of individuals. Cases where this difference is not evident (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci, Hildegard of Bingen, and the odd aesthete next door) are seen in one way or another as exceptions, if not even suspicious or abnormal.

Against this background, it is easy to guess how art and research can be pulled closer together. First of all, one must think that experience will not agree to divide itself up – and does not "naturally" divide – into the compartments of art and research. Secondly, one must show that the lack of such a division does not mean the watering down of the best aims of artistry and research. One must therefore strive to attain a situation where the non-dualistic and non-binary dialogue between the areas of the experience of art and research (and even other areas) is possible. And, at the same time, the important goals of art and

research – i.e. the influence of experience, objectivity or intersubjectivity, openness, and criticality – are preserved and maybe even strengthened. Put briefly, one must characterise the democracy of experience in order to give a coherently epistemological and ontological starting point and tell how and why artistic research can be part of a mature scientific practice.

2.1.1 The Demarcation of Scientific Research: Openness and Self-criticism

The special status and authority of science and research in general are typically justified by referring to the self-correcting nature of science and to the power of experience.[2] Science does not rely on authorities, and does not let any claim go without rigorous scrutiny and criticism. In a nutshell, science is open and critical – two criteria that set science apart from religion, technology and art, if not necessarily from philosophy.

Natural science and the connected scientific world-view include a more or less definite notion of how to achieve the goals of openness and self-criticism in everyday research. The special place given to experience is translated into naturalism: the idea that our experience of nature is best organised without assumptions of extra-natural creatures or phenomena. Being critical, on the other hand, is translated into the idea that scientific claims have to be constantly checked against the body of experience of nature that we have. Science is self-reflectively critical in that its day-to-day practice is about testing the claims and

2 Such is the falsificationist demarcation of science given, for instance, in Karl R. Popper's seminal *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (1959); the Popperian view is disseminated in a multitude of textbooks, e.g., Chalmers (1976); for contemporary philosophical discussions, see, e.g., Niiniluoto (2002).

discarding the erroneous ones. Here, one type of experience, namely theory, is checked against another type of experience, namely systematic perception. The ideal of testability seems to be one of the roots for the contention that the natural sciences are in some sense more scientific than social science, not to mention the humanities or "artistic research": it is relatively easy to see how claims in natural science can be tested and, if need be, discarded. The crucial thing is that one type of experience, systematised (quantitative) perception, is given a critical priority over other areas of experience.

When openness and criticality are interpreted as merely a correspondence between theory and experience, and experience is thought to be about one uniform nature, the result is often a hierarchical picture of science: physics, as the most general and basic of sciences, is the first field that sets conditions for others, such as chemistry, biology and so on. The problems with this kind of hierarchy are well known and widely discussed, from philosophical perspectives – such as phenomenology and hermeneutics – and from the perspective of the sociology of science. Since we will be moving in the terrain of radical hermeneutics, it is worth already presenting one of these criticisms, one that can be seen as grounding many of the others. The father of phenomenological philosophy, Edmund Husserl, is one of the thinkers that has presented a meticulous and sustained criticism of naïve naturalism. For our present purposes, the main thing to notice in Husserl's wide reaching critique is that, according to him, naturalism is in danger of misunderstanding the ideals that it sets for itself. Husserl's (see. e.g., 1981/1911) criticism is that when the ideals of openness and criticality are realized by comparing theory to perceptions of nature, one has to assume that nature, as an object of experience, consists of objects or things. The problem with this assumption is that it makes naturalism incapable of answering questions concerned with human experience, such as the questions of how is experience possible, how is it born (out of something that is not experience), and how does perception achieve objectivity.

The problem of naïve naturalism may appear in two different ways. First, there is a consistent variety of naturalism that says that no observation ever registered in natural science makes it necessary to assume that something like experience exists. Experience has never been observed or perceived: all observations we have (in natural science) concern objects and forces. No natural science, be it physics, chemistry, biology or the like, contains a body of data that would be explainable only by assuming the existence of experience (in the sense of conscious experience or meaning). Nothing in the natural sciences themselves points to the existence of experience or consciousness – nothing, one might add in a Husserlian vein, save for the existence of the natural sciences themselves. This leads to the second way in which the problem may make itself visible. Natural science can not explain how experience or consciousness is born, because it has to assume that consciousness and experience exist (and likewise perception, observation and theory building), in the same way that it has to assume that causality, time and space exist. In this way, the science that we (after Husserl) may call naïve, is always even in principle mute with regard to the nature and birth of human experience and consciousness.

Naïve naturalism has a further negative consequence: it cuts natural science apart from other kinds of science, not to mention other types of culture. It is by no means clear that Husserl's solution to this problem of division, his transcendental phenomenology, would be the best way in which to investigate experience, while at the same time being open and critical. Husserl's idea was that consciousness has a universal structure that can be revealed by using a specific method or skill and that the knowledge attained through this method – the phenomenological method – is transcendental, that is, beyond the criticism of any and all other types of inquiry. The problem with Husserl's transcendentalism is analogous to the problem of naïve, hierarchical naturalism. Both views assume a basis, a foundation, which is beyond the criticism of any other type of experience. In naïve naturalism

the basis is the assumed nature as a collection of physical objects, in transcendentalism it is the assumption of human consciousness and knowledge concerning it.

The presupposition of some kind of foundation or starting point is, of course, necessary. Not all beliefs and claims can be put under scrutiny or criticised at the same time. Something has to be assumed if research is to be possible at all. One of the merits of Thomas Kuhn's famous philosophy of science has been an argument for the necessity of a background for any kind of scientific research. Being committed to what Kuhn (1962) calls a paradigm is not only necessary but also rational. New knowledge can be produced only if one is willing to take the risk of assuming something that in effect can later be shown to be false. However, the problem of naïve naturalism and transcendentalism is that their presuppositions shut out areas of inquiry that they themselves consider important. For instance, a naturalist is fond of claiming that natural science is more rational and justified than any other way of organising experience. However, at the same time, a consistent naturalist has to contend that no reason or ground for justification has ever been found in our observations of nature. Transcendentalism, on the other hand, solves the problem of naïveté by referring to the a priori certainties of reason. Thus both naïve naturalism and transcendentalism blindfold themselves and fall short of the ideal of being critical.

The lack of critique in these views is connected to their notion of the unidirectionality of critique. According to (naïve) naturalism, all scientific claims can and must be criticised on the basis of observations of nature. However, the presupposition that a nature exists and that it can be observed – the presuppositions that make naturalism possible – are beyond all critique, be that philosophical, religious, artistic or, indeed, scientific. In this way, naïve naturalism falls short of the goals of openness and criticality. It brackets out a particular area of experience and states that claims about that area can not be questioned by

using the methods or means of any other system of experience and theory. In this view, critique is unidirectional in that it is directed from this foundation outwards. At the same time, the unidirectionality of critique implies that different areas of experience are not equal, they can not engage in a democratic discussion. This anti-democracy, however, is not argued for in a scientific or philosophical way, and it does not match very well with our everyday experience of how knowledge, skills and lives evolve.

2.1.2 Democracy of Experiences to the Rescue

How are we to carve out for artistic research a place that would simultaneously fulfil the conditions of openness and self-criticism or self-reflectivity and be able to talk about meaningful human experience? That is, how can the criteria of "research" and "experientiality" be upheld at the same time?

The ideals of openness and criticality can be interpreted in ways that do not make critique something unidirectional. Not all naturalism is naïve, and not all philosophy transcendental. Non-naïve naturalism and non-transcendental phenomenology could come together in a view that may be labelled *experiential democracy* or *democracy of experiences*. The democracy of experiences is defined as a view where no area of experience is in principle outside the critical reach of any other area of experience. The view could also be called *daimocracy*, if we widen Socrates' classic view, according to which an inner voice called *daimon* steers the path of a person.[3] So let us call *"daimons"* all of the more or less distinct areas of experience that can more or less separately inform us, such as the "experience of art" or "artistic experience" and "scientific

3 Socrates mentions his *daimon* in several of Platos's dialogues, for instance, in *Apology*, 31d-e.

experience", respectively. The idea in the democracy of experiences, or "daimocracy", is quite simple: art (or artistic experience) can criticize science (or scientific experience), not to mention the possibilities of intra-artistic or intra-scientific criticism. In this sense, experiential democracy is co-terminus with the multi-directionality of criticism.

In this way, we get a new interpretation of the criterion of (scientific) openness. We can define (epistemological) minimal openness as follows: a (epistemological) view is (minimally) open if, according to it, it is in principle possible to question and criticize any and all forms or areas of experience from the point of view of any other area or form of experience. This would mean, as we saw above, that art is free to criticize science, philosophy to criticize religion, religion to criticize science, and so on. It would also mean that there are no first philosophies or metaphysics that can not, in principle, be touched by empirical criticism (nor any scientific truths that could not be challenged by 'pure philosophy', or poetical understandings of being that could not be criticized by natural science, for that matter). Consequently, the criterion of openness does not apply only to individuals ("in principle, anyone can do science and there are no unquestioned authorities"). Rather, it is generalized: in principle, any area of experience can challenge any other area, and there are no fundamental hierarchies among fields or types of experience.[4]

Something like a democracy of experiences can be read in one of Paul Feyerabend's (1999, 33) dictums, according to which "every culture is possibly all cultures". Feyerabend wants to emphasise that there

4 The idea of democracy among experiences fits nicely with the views of experience presented by John Dewey (e.g., in Dewey 1958; see also Dewey & Bentley 1976, 69: "Our own procedure is the transactional, in which it is asserted the right to see together, extensionally and durationally, much that is talked about conventionally as if it were composed of irreconcilable separates.") and Georges Bataille (1988).

are no authentic forms of culture, if by authentic we mean something unquestionable or something not in need of justification. Analogously, there are no forms of experience that could not be questioned or that should go without justification. Thus, we can reformulate a maxim for a democracy of experiences: every experience is potentially all experiences. This is the "ontological" basis of a democracy of experiences. However, it is important to remember that *potentiality* does not entail *actuality*. Every experience is potentially all experiences, but the realisation of that potential might be historically closed, beyond a barrier of tradition that is insurmountable, at least during our lifetimes. Again, the criticality of research can provide an opening from such an impasse. Absolute universality is an illusion, but scientific research can, as a shared practice, create a justified commonality and a self-conscious tradition. Doing research is in itself a way of producing intersubjectivity with regard to an area of experience that has been void of ways of communicating in a shared language. An inquiry is not only positioned as a part of a tradition, but also points to new intersubjectively accessible experiences and their conceptualisations. At the same time, an inquiry lets other intersubjectivities and conceptualisations go unnoticed, marginalised, if not be covered up. This fact further emphasises the ethical dimension of practice-based research that we will have to return to.

A democracy of experiences also implies that a hierarchical picture of the sciences or the prioritised status of any one science becomes impossible to uphold. If all areas of experience can in principle be criticised, the falsifiability of the testability of claims in natural science does not guarantee that they are any more reliable than the claims made about other areas of experience. The reliability of claims in the social sciences and humanities are attained in ways other than those of the natural sciences. However, there exists no evidence to show that the criticality or openness of natural science would be greater than the openness and criticality of other types of research – no evidence that is independent

of the natural sciences themselves, that is. On the contrary, we know, at least from the critiques of Husserl and others, that there are serious reasons for thinking that the unidirectionality of critique in the natural sciences has produced severe problems that go deeper than the possible mistakes included in empirically corroborated theory.

A standard answer to these critical points goes, of course, that natural science, with all its presuppositions, has made possible the unprecedented advances in technology during the last centuries. This may be true, up to a point. However, these achievements owe something to other disciplines, as well. When we think about a field like medicine, it is obvious that natural science has contributed in a major way to its advancement. At the same time, it is clear that medical skills, the handicraft part of it, as well as social arrangements and even ethical thinking has contributed, as well. Experiential democracy may be a necessary ingredient of any successful practice.

Here we have to ask more precise questions about the positive achievements of natural science: how much (and which parts) of the achievements of natural science are dependent on the naïve presuppositions, and, accordingly, how much (and which parts) on its negative consequences? It is by no means clear how this balance is to be drawn. In any case, if the presupposition according to which nature is composed of physical objects is not necessary – and physical theory itself seems to be telling us this – then the presupposition of the unidirectionality of critique might be superfluous, too. In addition, if that presupposition is not necessary for the good effects of natural science, and is contributing to some of its least desirable consequences, there is even less need to be suspicious about the non-hierarchicalness and increased openness produced through its removal. The progress of science – when it is, indeed, progress – can hardly be dependent on the unidirectionality of criticism. On the contrary: there is reason to believe that multidirectional criticism works better. One of the strongest arguments for this is "pessimistic metainduction based on fashion".

Imagine how ridiculous the clothing fashion of 20 years ago looks today. Yet, it is hard to see what fashionable clothing used today will be just as laughable in another 20 years. Now it is clear that social norms, including the paradigmatic criteria of science, suffer from similar fashions and myth-making. That is why innovation more often than not requires an open mind, a brain that is not afraid of going in any direction. Tolerance and multi-directionality of critique go together; they are the cornerstones of experiential democracy.

In this very general sense, we hope that the idea of a democracy of experiences may help to produce an atmosphere where the knowledge situated and embedded in artistic practices can be "insurrected" in the sense described by Michel Foucault (see, e.g., 2003, 8–9). There is no reason to beat about the bush: in many ways, the information produced by artistic work has been the underdog in relation to scientific expertise and the truth produced by it. The strengthening of mature research can thus be one way to better recognise and acknowledge the importance of areas of non-scientific knowledge, and at the same time gain a better idea of the genealogy of scientific research.

2.1.3 What is scientific maturity?

The equality of the different fields of science and the wider experiential democracy that goes with it can be felt as threatening to the ideals of openness and criticalness, when understood in a particular way. Even Thomas Kuhn, whose philosophy of science has forcibly shaken the view of science as an entity with an essence and a direction, has written that the natural sciences are more mature than the social sciences, because in the natural sciences the research community converges around one shared paradigm (Kuhn 2000). The paradigms of natural science seldom change through dramatic upheavals, known as revolutions, in which the growth of science is, according to Kuhn, not cumulative. But outside the revolutions, natural science is driven on the basis of one paradigm, and this single-paradigm nature of the

sciences makes the cumulation of knowledge possible – until the next revolution. In comparison, the social sciences are always in a state of tumult, in a state of revolution and non-cumulation, where different paradigms attack each other. No paradigm gets the upper hand for a long enough period of time, and the cumulation of knowledge is impossible. The state of the social sciences is one of a continuous criticism of the very basis of research, unlike in the natural sciences. This, according to Kuhn, is a sign of the immaturity and, in a sense, the unreliability of the social sciences. Kuhn (2000, 222) writes that the social sciences are "limited" to interpretation.

However, from the point of view of experiential democracy, one has to ask why the fact that a research community is attached to one paradigm would be a sign of maturity? Could it not be rather that the existence of a multitude of openly critical paradigms promotes both openness and criticality? It is not clear that the "non-progress" displayed by the social sciences is produced by the fact that the researchers in the field have spent most of their time in internal struggles. Even if that was the case, it could still be possible that the time spent in internal criticism would be a sign of maturity, a sign of time well spent in the service of rationality and emancipation. At least from the point of view of democracy and tolerance, time spent in paradigm-rivalry might be rational. It might be more in line with the ideals of openness and criticality to have a multiplicity of rival paradigms than extended periods of research with only one paradigm. To strive for one paradigm only might be fruitful in some cases. As a methodological rule, the demand of "one paradigm" would, however, be counterproductive. The current situation in physics is a good example, in that the paradigms of doing the three types of physics – classical, quantum and relativity – are related in a family-resemblance rather than unifiable in a single paradigm. Would it be a sign of maturity to insist on only one paradigm in physics today? That is very doubtful. Moreover, quantum theory has led the way in physics towards a more symbolical, if not interpretative, way of research.

If we think that scientific research should be equal with respect to other areas of human culture, and if we think that they should be open to criticism from each other, then there is even more reason to think that an abundance of theories, interpretations and paradigms is a sign of maturity, and the adherence to a single paradigm possibly a limitation. The maturity of science, and of the scientific world-view in general, requires that we recognise the fact that science itself has several different goals and aims. These goals and aims might even be contradictory at various times or in some degree. To deny this one needs to constrain one's view of science into a caricature, an unearthly and unhealthy fiction. The worry over the unidirectionality of science and scientific critique is, of course, in part a worry over the special status and authority that science enjoys in our societies. This privileged status, in turn, is dependent on the ideals of openness and criticality. However, openness and criticality are not the same thing as unidirectionality or single paradigms. If science were to embrace something like experiential democracy, its status in the world might not be quite the status of the unidirectional and naively naturalist science, but it might show more openness, self-criticism and tolerance – in a word, maturity.

2.2 Metaphor Two: Methodological Abundance

We saw above how the self-understanding of science was for a large part of the 19th century governed by the idea that science is special because of the scientific method. This method supposedly provides the demarcation between science and other fields of research or experience. Correspondingly, it has been thought that specific scientific disciplines have their own methods, or at least a catalogue of methods, that are particularly well suited to the field in question and thus, in part, define it and set it apart from neighbouring disciplines. How-

ever, in the general case, defining what this scientific method precisely *is* has been proven to be a tall order. Any definition is riddled with historical counter examples, as well as theoretical problems. On a more concrete level, the scientific practices and methods of the human and social sciences in particular have seen a wide expansion, as new methods and approaches have constantly been innovated. Even physics, which in some sense is methodologically very conservative, has seen substantial methodological change in the last 100 years with the advent of new mathematical concepts, computer models, and philosophical interpretations. As a consequence, the idea of something like methodological anarchism or methodological abundance does not seem as far fetched as previous. It is our claim here that in the case of artistic research methodological abundance is a particularly fruitful productive approach.

This claim is based on the idea that experience plays a special and central role in artistic research. In a nutshell: artistic research is a way in which experience reflectively changes itself. Moreover, in the spirit of the democracy of experiences, all areas of experience are at play in this circular or spiral movement, in the hermeneutic of (artistic) experience. These areas of experience might include experiences that do not lend themselves to easy conceptualization, at least not if conceptualization is understood in terms of sufficient and necessary conditions. Consequently, the privileged form of writing and reporting research results, a scientific thesis (such as a doctoral dissertation), has to be approached with a particular emphasis and methodological attention. Writing, as a way of thinking, doing research and reporting it, has to find a way of treating language in a pluralist manner, so that the uniqueness of artistic experience is not lost when our thinking about it is communicated.

2.2.1 Methodological over- abundance and anarchy

The concept of abundance comes from Feyerabend (1999). According to him, the world is too diverse to be reduced to a single method or even a single philosophy of science viewpoint. Behind the methodological abundance are also the political upheavals that have occurred in the real world, or the so-called risk society, and what one could call the war and catastrophe-proneness of Western nation states.

In his magnum opus, *Against Method* (1975), Feyerabend argues that the world is so diverse, chaotic and surprising that the belief in one all-powerful and all-encompassing method is nothing more than self-delusion. According to Feyerabend, it does not follow from the richness of existence that methodological thinking should not be exercised or different methods used in order to achieve richness and to simplify things. The aim is, rather, to show and understand that all abstract structures – methods, including methodologies – have their limits and limitations. The richness of the features of reality is not organised according to beautiful models but requires, according to Feyerabend, an anarchistic starting point: "Anarchism, while perhaps not the most attractive political philosophy, is certainly excellent medicine for epistemology and for the philosophy of science" (ibid., 9).

It is worthwhile noting that Feyerabend's audience includes not only philosophers of science but also, moreover, natural scientists. The frozen methods or theories about rationality are based on a reductivist view of man and her relationship with the world. Therefore, the only principle that can be defended under all circumstances is "anything goes". Anything goes, yet anything that goes also leaves a trace and makes a shadow. The actors come from somewhere and end up somewhere, continuously enjoying the pressure imposed by the horizons of the past, present and future. In other words, anything is possible, but not everything possible is meaningful. Nevertheless, it is important to defend the idea that all methods and ways of perception are in their basic premise possible and nothing is excluded when aiming to under-

stand the world. This is also because in order for science to become a mature part of democratic society it is necessary for it to recognise its own ambiguity.

So why, then, does Feyerabend bother to overturn our belief in methodologies? In his autobiography *Killing Time* (1994, 179), he has explained his motives as follows: "One of my motives for writing *Against Method* was to free people from the tyranny of philosophical obfuscators and abstract concepts such as 'truth', 'reality', or 'objectivity', which narrow people's vision and ways of being in the world." A second motive is the concern for scientific change, that which (having one direction and one goal) is called progress. Feyerabend, like many other post-60s philosophers of science, claims that following one method leads to a standstill in science, no matter what the discipline in question.

Here it is worth inserting a small biographical diversion, conveying the message of a person who did not lack a sense of humour and who understood what enjoyment and pleasure meant. Feyerabend (1924–1994) tells how he had wanted to study astronomy as well as acting and singing and to practise all three professionally simultaneously (Feyerabend 1994, 252). His dream was to tour the international stages and live the good life in his penthouse apartments scattered around the world. Feyerabend never became a singer, but in a way part of one of his wishes came true, in becoming a university professor with the possibility to travel and live in the metropolises of the world. It is easy to see from the following quote that Feyerabend's goal was an open text, one could even say a divergent text, one which not only informs but also is a conscious and reflective action and, in the best case, speaks to us at the scale of pleasure:

"Writing has become a very pleasurable activity, almost like composing a work of art. There is some overall pattern, very vague at first, but sufficiently well-defined to provide me with a starting point. Then come the details – arranging the words in sentences and paragraphs. I choose my words very carefully – they must sound right, must have

the right rhythm, and their meaning must be slightly off-centre; nothing dulls the mind so thoroughly as a sequence of familiar notions. Then comes the story. It should be interesting and comprehensible, and it should have some unusual twists. I avoid 'systematic' analysis: the elements hang together beautifully, but the argument itself is from outer space, as it were, unless it is connected with the lives and interests of individuals or special groups. Of course, it is already so connected, otherwise it would not be understood, but the connection is concealed, which means that strictly speaking, a 'systematic' analysis is a fraud. So why not avoid the fraud by using stories right away?" (Feyerabend 1999, vii).

In the preface to the posthumously-published book *Conquest of Abundance. A Tale of Abstraction Versus the Richness of Being* (1999) Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend, Feyerabend's fourth wife, mentions that the unfinished work was for her husband a work that was close to his heart for many years. She writes: "He kept working at it for years, reading an immense variety of material, weaving stories and arguments, paying attention to form and style. He very much wanted the book to be pleasant to read, more a piece of craft than an intellectual product." Bert Terpstra, the book's editor, in turn writes that during the editing work he came to understood the worldview according to Feyerabend: "In place of a 'frozen', material universe, I could perceive an open and changeable reality, and I became able to see, and thus I was liberated from, all sorts of fixed ideas about 'the way things are'."

The idea of the "abundance of reality", developed and emphasised continuously by Feyerabend, belongs to a tradition of thought, according to which the research objects in the human sciences – Feyerabend would undoubtedly also add the natural sciences – are constructed by writing about them rather than first discovering them and then writing about them. Writing is simultaneously thinking and doing, both observing the world and creating it. All in all, the present state of academic writing seems to be that some people publish reports in

the manner of physicists, others write in a more essayistic style, even calling their texts "scientific prose", while the research of others again resembles more a biography or novel.

Let it be said, just to be sure, that the thought we want to defend by referring to Feyerabend's ideas does not prohibit writing about the existence of an external reality. Instead, the emphasis lies in writing itself as one of the forms in which reality is created. It is true that at its worst the rat of realism can bite: and thus arises the illusion of the sovereign supremacy of a particular language or presentational system. Not even realism, however, needs to be one-sided and dogmatic, as indeed many 20th-century philosophical and artistic schools of thought have shown.

When discussing artistic research, it is important to emphasise that there ways of perceiving the world other than writing, which is based on the use of language – not least the rich formal languages of music and the wondrous sensations they produce. Feyerabend (1999, 268) argues: "Our surroundings, the entire physical universe included, are not simply given. They respond to our actions and ideas. Theories and principles must therefore be used with care. Most of them exclude specifics and personal matters; speaking bluntly (though not untruthfully), we can say that they are superficial and inhumane."

In this sense, Feyerabend is, like Dewey and Marx, an Aristotelian thinker, for whom the measure of reality is a well-functioning human practice (Feyerabend 1999, 266), which can be created when several parties interact, begin to exchange thoughts and to trust one another. Wise human practices are not created if methodology is perceived as a policing activity, or if politics is perceived as an expert-substantiated lack of alternatives, or if art is perceived as territorial marking.

2.2.2 Experience and art

Experiential democracy and the abundance of theories and paradigms are well suited as a background to practice-based research for at least two reasons. The methods of natural science can not be used, for the very simple reason that the methods *expressis verbis* bracket out the thing that is studied in practice-based research, namely the experience of the artist, and the skilful conduct of the practitioner. Therefore, first, practice-based research needs access to experience in all its variety. Laborative or observed nature does not, even in principle, grant such an access, neither does the transcendental structure of reason. Second, the role of practice-based research in the wider artistic and scientific community demands that it, in a self-reflective and self-critical way, is aware of its own grounds and possibilities. Practice-based research, especially in the arts, has to take the existence of experience and consciousness seriously, even the existence of experience that does not live under the laborative lens. Furthermore, practice-based research has to take into account the possibility that it has a wider than academic effect, even when theoretical, practice-based research in the arts has an effect on future artistic experience, be it individual or collective. Practice-based research in the arts can not presume that it is neutral with regard to artistic practices or skills.

Practice-based research can not rely on the interpretations of either naturalism or transcendentalism, since it has to discuss forms of experience outside their reach. In naturalism, experience is structured by constructing artificial environments and by controlling the parameters of that environment. In an experiential setting, the environment (the laboratory) is controlled as precisely as possible, so that the repetition of the experiment becomes possible. Furthermore, the observations are expressed in an abstract form: the mathematical expressions are not intended to capture the experience in its specificity, but the phenomenon in its generality. The formalism describes the phenomenon *in abstracto*, not this or that experience in their concrete "thisness", *haecceity*. The

experimental setting is created for repeatability and against the richness of experience. The areas of experience thus created can be controlled, repeated, quantified, and manipulated. A kind of openness and criticality ensues: the repeatability of the experiments guarantee that in principle anyone can at will repeat them by trusting in observation only.

The repeatability at will and maximal control of the environment required by naturalist science can not characterise the research in the social sciences or the arts, not least because those fields are, by definition, dealing with something irrepeatable and possibly unique. The phenomena of culture, such as artistic practices or works of art, can not be purified of all of their specific properties: potentially, all the specific shades of meaning are important. Furthermore, these phenomena can not always be analysed into parts or repeated at will. Consequently, practice-based research in the arts has to attain an ideal of openness and criticality by other means. Experience as such has to be conceptualised in ways that are not in use in the natural sciences. Experientiality, openness, the possibility of sharing and communicating an artistic skill are not the same as the universality of facts in the natural sciences. Experience can be shared or common in ways that bypass the at-will repeatability of laborative observation. As was noted above, parts of natural science have also had to let go of the requirements of repeatability and predictability.

Experience includes parts that are neither observation nor perception. Experience in general is a continuum from the indistinct and flux-like torrent to the clear and precise structure of reasoning or controlled observation. The flux-like end of the continuum does not support a subject-object-distinction, an observer-observed distinction. This non-distinction is a good sign for practice-based research in the arts, since questions about the nature of the subject, the object, observation, individuation and so forth may be at the centre of artistic practices, skills and research. Therefore, it is good for practice-based research in the arts not to get tied into methodological views that in-

clude a decisive and absolute distinction between the (experiencing) subject and the (observed) object as a condition of inquiry. To make such an assumption would be uncritical.

The continuum of experience has to be approached in a way that is thoroughly hermeneutical: in practice-based research experience looks at experience and thereby produces new experience. This is the basic assumption underlying something like experiential democracy. In research, experience looks at itself in a circular way, thereby also reorganising itself. The ways of reorganising are the methods, and there are as many methods as there are types of experiential change. In principle, no area of experience is left out of the loop: not in principle, but in practice, of course, this happens where one has to choose some sort of starting points for the research. Everything in experience may, in principle, be scrutinized and reorganised, but not at the same time, and not at will. Through this approach, the ideals of openness and criticality are realized in new ways. The crucial question for the necessary criticality is how to conceptualise experience in its hermeneutical nature.

That experience is hermeneutical through and through raises not only questions of validity for the interpretation, but also for recognising that interpretations are not final, that experience has no end or ground and that, therefore, constant criticism is the only way to go forward. The hermeneutic circle starts from the given interpretation of the phenomenon to be investigated. The received view, the prominent interpretation, is the starting point, and the first task is to doubt and criticise this interpretation that always already is there. In the spirit of experiential democracy, this criticism can be directed to any direction: the objectives of the research give a clue regarding the best direction to be taken. Thus, the scientific ideal of being critical means in the context of experiential democracy a multi-directionality of criticism, methodological pluralism, and the admittance of the groundlessness and circularity of experience (taken together, these desiderata imply the recognition of the ethical dimension of hermeneutical research).

2.2.3 Experience and Language

In this context, language has to be understood in a wide sense, including meaning-giving activities beyond the spoken or written word. The openness of practice-based research may, in fact, demand ways of expression that are not exclusively propositional. This kind of research concerns skills and practices that can be criticised precisely enough only in the skills and practices themselves. The self-reflective reorganisation of the skill can be communicated and effected using the language of the skill itself, especially when constructed through the intersubjectivity and conceptual framework of research. The role of non-propositional expression does not necessarily mean a diminution of intersubjectivity, since the language of the skill might, in fact, be more open to the relevant community. This does, of course, mean that expression can not be an "individual creation", but rather a commentary, a criticism of the common and collective tradition.

The ideal of openness is achieved by making explicit the relationship between theoretical experience and artistic experience; the relationship has to be methodologically justified. Openness does not rely on the presupposition of universality, but has to actively strive for increased intersubjectivity. For instance, when doing research on a phenomenon that does not permit a clear and distinct subject-object distinction (such as quantum mechanical phenomena, learning a first language, falling in love, forgetting, etc.), the research itself can not be expressed in ways that are at the same time conceptually consistent and complete (a comparison to quantum mechanics is, once again, intriguing). The language has to be open, critical and intersubjective, not universal or complete. This is yet another methodological requirement arising from the self-reflectivity of hermeneutical research: one can not insist that the theoretical description and language must include conceptual categories and tools that destroy the experience they are about.

For practice-based research, the problem with language is to avoid the pitfalls of introversion, of hermetical traditions (including solipsistic individualism), and of uncritical repetition. Hermetic introversion is

avoided by being well acquainted with the tradition of the field one is working in, and by making clear why the research is relevant to the community. Uncritical repetition can be counteracted by the same means, as well as by not accepting the traditional, given interpretation. Being unhistorical is being uncritical, being repetitive is being unscientific.

The traditional interpretation can be questioned and the position of one's own research can often be shown in more precise terms by using non-propositional expressions. It is clear that visual representations, models, graphs, and so on have a high cognitive value when it comes to natural science. Furthermore, it is clear that the skill of visual knowledge presentation can be intersubjectively reviewed and developed. Therefore it should come as no big surprise that with regards to, for instance, artistic skills of the visual kind, a visual presentation of claims, even claims having a conceptual bearing, can be best done in a visual medium. The major difference in comparison to visualizations and the like in the natural sciences is that in practice-based research the point is not only to illustrate or represent pre-existing propositional knowledge, but to unveil and criticize non-propositional conventions and skills by using the medium itself.[5]

At the same level of language, however, one must see to it that the connection from artistic research to experience and its uniqueness does not disappear. If one wants to preserve the uniqueness of experience one must give up the aim of bringing experience under universal

5 As an example of research in which the non-propositional expression works in open and critical ways, one can mention Juha Suonpää's PhD dissertation *Petokuvan raadollisuus* ("The wretchedness of the image of the predatory animal, 2002). Suonpää discusses the impasse that natural photography faces if it relies solely on notions and definitions of "authenticity". The text of Suonpää's dissertation analyses the discourse on nature photography, while the photographs included in the book show how the traditions of nature photography can be criticized and its limits overstepped in photography itself.

commensurability and thus generally applicable for all people at all times. Any experience that can be arbitrarily repeated by anyone is no longer a unique experience. Thus, studying the unique experience is always inevitably anti-universal, local and case-relative. The universalities become commonalities, not for everybody at all times, but for each of us now, in this particular case. One must take seriously the possibility that the areas of knowledge, experience and research are in principle inter-subjective – they are, at least after a certain degree of effort, open to everyone who is willing and approachable – but they are not necessarily universal (see Vadén & Hannula 2003 with regards to such particularism and localism).

For instance, by following such philosophers as Richard Rorty and Alasdair MacIntyre, we can get to grips with very important viewpoints that criticise both universality and a rationality defined as generally applicable; that is, with ideas which are interlinked in a very essential way with the background and opportunities of artistic research. In his book *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1980) Rorty shows that philosophy, no matter what approach it takes, does not have an independent and neutral reference relationship. In other words, philosophy can not offer an ultimate certainty and means of solving disputes and claims – unlike what many people still sincerely would like to believe. Philosophers appeal to the elements and rules of their own language games, very rarely looking beyond these limits and limitations. The result is not one truth or certainty but a mishmash of different versions of reality competing with one another; a situation for which there is no solution other than linguistic arguments, and claims that can never guarantee the desired end result. Meaningful interaction, however, necessarily requires that the claims in each case are openly and transparently located and localised. The importance of MacIntyre, on the other hand, is evident in the critique of rationality. MacIntyre (1988) explains in detail how the concept of rationality is anything but obvious or neutral. Rationality, just like any other central concept, can be

strongly traced back to the value world supported by each version of reality. It can not be perceived without an interpretation of justice, and it is not meaningful without a clearly demarcated temporal and local context. Nevertheless, according to MacIntyre, this does not lead to relativism but to the acceptance that each tradition itself justifies its own deeds and values. It is particularly important to note that despite this, it is possible, desirable and sometimes even obligatory to compare different traditions and versions of reality. The criteria in use in each case, however, are always value-laden. The question is, yet again, about the ability to both believe in one's own starting points and understand them through comparisons and debates, as well as to create sufficient critical distance from them.

2.3 Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Ethical Encounters

It is clear that if and when research has its background in treating all areas of experience in a democratic way, questions of ethics become very prominent. Indeed, we contend that looking from a scientific-philosophical point of view there is a third alternative beyond petrified objectivism and toothless relativism: ethically-aware scientific and artistic research. A research that is aware of its own starting points and goals and has a critical view towards them, and which undertakes a debate also with other starting points without giving up its own or perceiving its own as superior, is the third and – so we would claim – most mature alternative for a theory of knowledge. In any case, recognising the ethical dimension and the conscious discussion about it is a necessary condition of scientific research.

Following Feyerabend's philosophy of science viewpoint, artistic research is encapsulated as a researching attitude, a question about what the relation of the researcher is to the object of the research. In

artistic research – and in no way do we want to exclude other areas of research either – the researcher seeks as openly as possible a relationship to the object of the research, with the aim of being aware of her own presuppositions, wishes, desires, interests and fears. Researching is thus an event that emerges relatively gradually, where one strives to perceive what and why the issues and things dealt within each case mean, and forcing the researcher to think who and where she is. This means also that the writer, researcher, listener and the one who experiences must have the courage to take a personal standpoint.

One should try to justify the viewpoint one is presenting. The multitude of interpretations and methods must not refer to anything beyond the interpretation and plurality. To quote a Finnish sociologist, Antti Eskola: "At the finishing line [the researcher] must have the courage to tell who, in her opinion, has won." (Eskola & Kurki, 2004, 223). The competition metaphor is perhaps not the best image for doing research, nor for seeking the truth, but the message is clear: the (artistic) researcher must present a substantiated viewpoint, which inevitably is contradictory and in a polemical relationship to other viewpoints.

But no interpretation or choice can ever be justified if one can not admit from what basis and with what needs and suppositions the interpretation is made. Natural science or philosophy, not to mention artistic research, can not be made from some God-like point of view. Therefore, one's own angle on the research object must be recognised and explained, and thus brought to the unfolding reality.

A part of the interpretational nature of artistic research is that it becomes possible only when it can turn out to be boring, stupid and delusional – in other words, bad and unsuccessful. There is also a risk linked with interpretationality, a risk that one must take. Without the risk any interpretation will remain floating, sometimes even grandly so, but still nevertheless without a touching point with the world. Research is then neither ethical nor localised. It is not any-

thing that one would take seriously. To quote Gianni Vattimo (1999): "The interpretation is characterised by its particular indecisiveness, which at the same time is the undefined opening up of the researchers towards abundance and failure." Arriving at the same point from another direction, Kuhn (1962) pointed out that the price of scientific discovery is the risk of being wrong. The question is ultimately about the researcher's duty to take a standpoint and present a substantiated view of the research object, whether it be the artists' own work or something else.

There is a story about the etymology and meaning of the word "ethics" which well describes the meaning of the localness, interpretationality and encounter for the Aristotelian good practice. It has been claimed that Homer used the word *ethos* to describe something that in Finnish can be called "elinpiiri" ("*circle of life*"), that is, a territory or habitat. *Ethos* is the area of interest and meaning which is defined by a particular way of human existence. It includes age, social position, sexual habits, ways of thinking – the whole palette of human existence. For instance, the *ethos* of a shepherd consists of sheep, the pastures, seasons, dew on the grass, the threat of wolves, etc., but particularly the birth of these concrete conditions of life, their coming together as understandable and functioning entities and good practices. The need for ethical considerations and justifications materialises because we are not all shepherds. Some soldiers wanting to cross the pasture have a very different ethos, aims, goals and way of seeing the world and assessing what is meaningful to them. The encounter of these two habitats, two different ethoses, creates a new third ethos, a habitat where the different ethoses of the shepherd and the soldier meet. The shepherd can no longer imagine that everybody lives as she does, her habitat no longer consists only of the life of a shepherd but also – possibly even reluctantly – the life of a soldier and his goals. Correspondingly, the soldier notices, in one way or another, the existence of the shepherd and the options afforded by it.

Through these two localities there is a state of shared experience, which is a third shared locality. This third place is the area of ethics (see Hannula 2001, Vadén & Hannula 2003, chapter 5). The third place offers the opportunity for listening, being next to and *being-with* and then also criticising. It is a question of tolerance and hospitality, but not *being-for* in one direction or another.

The first stage "ethics", in other words the commitment to one's own habitat and its formations and the frustration due to the difference of others, is not really ethics at all. Ethics, questioning, and justification only start in the second stage, when one's own ethos is challenged in the encounters with other ethoses. As a second stage phenomenon, ethics has its beginning and end in abundance.

Despite the ancient nature of the story, it is in fact a more recent one. We believe that this is the very thing that Zygmunt Bauman (1995) referred to when he spoke about postmodern morality at the individual level. She, the person we call an individual, a person who participates, not alone but always together as a part and party in a particular community, has awoken. She has become aware of the changed situation, which does not dissolve into relativism, but where finally personal responsibility and freedom are touched. And so too morality, which is full of difficult choices; choices nevertheless that cannot be avoided and from which one cannot hide behind secure answers. The only consolation in making these choices is that nobody makes them alone, but is always a part of a certain background, tradition and context.

Following Rorty (1991), the question indeed is: what communities and traditions does the person undertaking artistic research actively want to belong to? The sad thing is that sometimes we are happy with the context where we find ourselves – and yet again sometimes not. The politics of the everyday – and how we can cope with it – is how we specifically handle this conflict. But Rorty continues. The other decisive question is: What is our approach to loneliness? We can not

underestimate or despise such a question. It is useless to claim that one would enjoy one's existence maximally only if and when one is alone. Despite the journey and need to make decisions, the question is about being in the world, about the pressures and needs stemming from this and how this relationship is carried out.

2.3.1 Ethical encounters

Artistic research defined as a democracy of experiences demands numerous varied, challenging and experimental encounters, where the different parties can encounter each other reciprocally. The content and nuances of the encounter are created along the way: in the searches, while searching, when recounting, when listening, when clashing, when facing each other eye-to-eye, flesh-in-flesh. Leaning on the Aristotelian tradition, the good life is the search for the good life. Such a claim is not a tautology. On the contrary, it only takes for real (and admits) that the substance of the good life – or the third place – must be continuously created and repeatedly characterised, based on choices that continuously lunge at, or sneak upon, us. This is the politics of the everyday, where the self-image and view of the world of the actors – the being-in-the-world – is slowly formed.

The encounter occurring in artistic research must always be a little bit faltering, assailing essence and localisation. The faltering is in any research natural and a part of the research process itself. Even though the end result is unknown, the attitude and method through which research is carried out does not have to be ambiguous. The person undertaking the journey knows what she is doing. There is no reason to doubt the process itself – or at least there is no reason to apologise. Instead, the sleepy space opening up ahead must be taken possession of, and one must participate in the shaping of that space and place. Curiously and attentively. By being awake.

The everyday – its stifling, oppressing and redeeming presence – is needed for the encounter. And so, too, a sense of proportion and courage. Searching for an encounter, the untangling and developing, is an attitude. It is convinced, trusting. It is able to laugh at itself in its self-confidence, and to question its own starting point. It is never insolent or rude, though nevertheless undeniably slightly childish or over-keen and always busy, and ready to receive by listening and comparing.

For the sake of simplicity and economy of presentation, we can re-name the parties of the encounter with the boring but adequately ordinary pseudonyms A and B. Before the encounter, A and B are in a situation that they can not or do not want to escape. They can be in the same situation and in one way or another in the same space. A and B might know each another, or come from the same small town. On the other hand, it is very possible that A and B have never previously exchanged a word and only now meet face to face for the first time. A and B can, in other words, be from different parts of the same country or continent or from different cardinal directions. These details are important yet external to the basic principle itself, which, we claim, is meaningful in all encounters and in the perception of any type, shape or way of being together. A and B thus are figuratively speaking face to face. They do not yet meet but are aware that in one way or another they must live in the same space and situation. Putting things in proportion, making contacts, zigzagging and contacting begins.

In the background is always (in practice) a misunderstanding, the impossibility of putting oneself completely into the thoughts or ethos of someone else. You can not but misunderstand, and therefore the question is not really about understanding, but about the relationship between A and B, about what they achieve, and what kind of relationship they are able to form. The most important prerequisite is accepting that one must not try to understand the other one forcibly, thus trying to rule and control. It similarly follows that we neither understand nor control even half-completely ourselves – our desires, needs, wishes and anxieties.

In this sense, our view of ethical encounters and cross-cultural communication is dialectical and Hegelian rather than idealized and Habermasian.[6] In the Habermasian tradition, cross-cultural understanding is made possible by a shared universal goal (successful communication, rationality), and contains always the epistemological problem of not being certain if A has understood B correctly. In the Hegelian tradition, on the other hand, the basic situation is characterised by an ontological misunderstanding: A does not fully understand herself, and neither does B. But it is this ontological impossibility and impurity that makes the dialectical and open process of cross-cultural communication possible: particular epistemological processes of (mis)understanding are made possible by the shared ontological misunderstanding. To put it bluntly: A and B might want to try to (mis)understand each other, because they are not ready or complete.

On the journey itself what is essential is that one dares to free oneself from the already known tried and tested ways of perceiving oneself and one's relationship to the surroundings. It is a question of opening up slightly, activating viewpoints and the view of the world. It can not, and it must not, mean leaving behind all that one has learnt and all that one believes in, but rather a constructive detachment, a distancing and a courage to move from certainty to uncertainty; that is, to such a situation where you know roughly the direction of your journey but at the same time, nevertheless, you can not be certain where your journey will take you. A and B dare to take a risk. They step in to unknown territory; their movement has been filled with open, flexible suppositions. Both have to sense or guess that the chosen direction could be the right and meaningful one. Still, there is no certainty about it. By using a story as a crutch, A and B are clear about what kind of story framework they have

6 Here we follow the description in Zizek (1997, 49).

proceeded into. The style and scene of the events are known. What exactly happens in the framework and that specific time and place is left completely open.

A and B are able to move away, to free themselves from the accustomed way of perceiving themselves and their surroundings. This displacement itself is already unbelievably difficult and demanding. It means that both A and B admit that it is possible that they are maybe incorrect in their assumptions after all, that their earlier viewpoints were perhaps incomplete, biased and even completely erroneous, and that their ethos is not the only one available. Admitting this is a strange yet essential task. It is a shove and a push, the power that makes room for the contacts and discussion between A and B, for comparisons and friendly teasing. A connection is created, a launch-pad for a booster rocket, on top of which A and B seek a balance. But it is a precarious launch-pad; and to avoid falling off they have to seek the balance together. It is crude, everyday socialising, full of snags and annoyingly stuffy, where the inevitability of being together is already accepted. One need do no more than perceive those tools and methods, rules and social niceties of how being together is framed and sustained.

We speak, in other words, about a mutual understanding based on a common foundation. Through small and fumbling grips and strokes and with heaving stomachs, A and B can perceive basic issues that they share and think about in a similar way but about which they are not of the same opinion. It is a foundation that is continuously growing but does not, however, rise up into the clouds. The building is being built slowly, but the foundations give support and safety. Continuity is, in fact, the only thing that A and B have. In the best instance they experience the third locality, but it is not permanent. The mutual basic trust, the human factor, is permanent, more specified, and comparatively more permanent. There is a will and ability to respect the desires, needs and wishes of the other, so that one's own wishes and needs also are sufficiently acknowledged. Neither will probably ever get enough

attention, tenderness, esteem, jelly beans, compassion, respect and love. They will not at least get everything they want, but that is not the point. A very important role is played by the concept and attitude "good enough". It translates into a natural thought that you should not strive for perfection in anything you do, but that in relation to the circumstances the end result is adequate.

The same attitude concerns the shaping of the encounter. The basis for an encounter does not need to be a striving for "ideal communication" or a shared "universal rationality". One only needs a sufficient reason to strive towards "second choices" in the "third space". The area of ethics is not mine, nor is it yours. It is not the area of the first, inborn behaviour, but the shared, third area. At the same time, the ethical negotiations are not first choices but second choices. And finally, ethical second choices in the third area need "only" a sufficient reason.

The question of what is "sufficient" becomes crucial. We are inclined to follow Feyerabend (1999) in thinking that the grounds for this kind of cross-cultural claim-setting are often quite unprincipled and opportunistic, rather than the high-minded goals often presented by philosophers (such as coherence, consensus, rationality, and the like). This does not, however, mean that coherence or rationality would not be good goals, or that (minimal) openness would mean abandoning such criteria. Quite the contrary: it seems to us that the analysis of notions like experience, reason and justice presented by, for instance, John Dewey (1958) or Stuart Hampshire (2000) resonate very well with the idea of "sufficient" grounds for ethical encounters.

Perfectionism in itself can be worth striving for, if only it is connected with the individual herself. But perfectionism can be treacherous if and when it has a strongly limiting influence on habits and the opportunities to be together, to seek being together. One can take as an example the parties of almost any relationship. None of us can ever be a perfect father, mother, husband or wife, researcher or janitor. Even gazing at perfectionism can be blinding – the darkening of the

sun instead of the improvement of the lighting. Emphasis must be put on the word 'sufficient', which emphasises that the question is about practicality, the fact that the matter is dealt with and somehow keeps together, that one can live with the situation, and that later one must try to repair and develop it. One listens to oneself, one's surroundings, and fellow human beings. Before we even arrive at the port and the sea view opening up from it, there are a few limitations and conditions connected to leaving on and surviving the ensuing sea journey. They will not make the boat itself easy to handle but at least perhaps more seaworthy and sturdy, gutsy and full of stamina. One's travel bag should therefore contain, apart from the ability to question, at least: 1) a consciousness about the fact that the other party must not be objectified, and 2) the knowledge that the relationship must take place slowly, by waiting, hanging around, lingering, letting the dust settle and the discharges dissipate, letting the clashes of the skirmishes and debates smoulder. If A and B cannot avoid treating each another as objects, or if one of them treats the other like an object, the encounter comes to nothing.

Bauman (1995, 63) equates avoiding objectification with an emotional attitude. This time emotionality takes us comparatively far, while at the same time placing several limitations upon us. One gets a grip on emotionality by changing one's opinions, and seeing what objectification in itself is and means. The object is treated like an object. It is instrumentalised in order to promote its user's goals. It is moved from one place to another, analysed, cut up, defined, measured, and categorised. Many things are done with it, but there is always one thing that remains. Nothing in all likelihood is asked from it. It is observed and used. In other words, avoiding objectification means that the parties must listen and give each other a chance, let the opinions and claims be and breath without them being stunted, banalized or glued to stereotypes and prejudices – in advance or during the process.

2.3.2 Openness, criticality and ethics: a methodological summary

It is not very productive to carry out artistic research in such a way that a person is first the artist who does the art and then becomes the researcher in order to study that artist. In this case the experience and skill of the artist does not direct the research in anything than subconscious and opaque ways. The doctrine of two worlds cuts through not only the research work but also the researcher. In this way of thinking, the artist is seen as a practical subject that later becomes the object of the researcher-subject. The researcher and the artist that is being researched could just as well be anybody else. From a methodological point of view, in the model of two works and two worlds it is only coincidental that the artist and researcher are one and the same person.

Research that has been needlessly divided into two can lead to distorted results. There are two alternatives. The first is that the artist and the scientist are the same person, and this issue is considered to have no effect. If this is the case, artistic research, which has both an 'artistic' and 'scientific' part, has not brought forth any additional value. The artist-researcher has only piled work on top of work, and in the worst case scenario has blurred the character of artistic research. In the second alternative, the fact that the artist and researcher exist in the same person is seen to have some meaning. If in this case the work is divided into two parts it leads to a methodological failure: there is no conscious thematization of the relationship between the artistic and scientific research. It is not seen as an organic part of research or interpreted from the point of view of the research object. In both instances, the methodological aim of artistic research has not been achieved. In other words, the artistic experience has not guided research openly and critically, nor has the artistic and scientific experience touched or hurt each other.

The methodological aim of research based on the democracy of experience is specifically to show how the artistic experience and scientific theorisation interact with one another, guide one another and influence one another, and how this creates critically reflective research.

A part of the research must be concerned with how experientiality in this very specific case and moment guides the theoretical formation of knowledge, and vice versa, and how the theory born from reading, thinking and debate gives direction to artistic experience. Otherwise, the scientific and artistic experiences remain either detached or completely mute to one another.

As noted, questions about the subject and object, observations, individuality, objects and entities, and so forth, can be the central strengths of any activity and skill. Therefore, there is no reason for the methodology of artistic research to be tied to research by observation, where the separation of the experiencing subject and the observing object is presupposed and required already before undertaking the research. Such a presupposition would be uncritical. There is no reason to define or structuralise the concept of experience any more than this. As a starting point, everything can be the flow of experience, where you can not step into it even once with the same foot.

The experiential continuum must be approached hermeneutically: in the artistic research, experience studies experience, producing new experiences. Research is the circular way for experience to study, organise and change itself, and no areas or axioms of experience remain in principle outside this circular self-reflection – or at least in principle; but in practice, of course, there are such areas in every research.

In this way, the realisation of the goals of criticality and openness receive a new form. Central for criticality is conceptualising experience and understanding its hermeneutical nature. Hermeneutics means not only looking for the correctness and competence of interpretation but also recognising its ambiguity and need for continuous critique. The hermeneutical study of experience begins by looking at the interpretation that always already exists of some form of experience. The next thing is to cast doubt on that interpretation, its background and conclusions. With the democracy of experience this critical doubting must in principle be aimed in an arbitrary direction. Criticality in the con-

text of the democracy of experience means specifically: i) multi-directionality, ii) lack of ultimate foundations, and iii) admitting circularity and, therefore, also the ethical nature of the interpretation.

These three basic forms of criticality become evident in different ways depending on the object, demarcation and interest of the research in each specific case. Admitting circularity corresponds with the fact that in artistic research one must also tell others about the meaning of the presented information with regards to skills and artistic practices as well as their wider individual and social connections. This interaction between the research and research object forms the ethical dimension of the research. Artistic research is a part of its object and alters it. The lack of ultimate foundations requires participation in ever-new critical rounds, in order to increase the abundance of interpretations.

Multi-directionality gives artistic research not only the opportunity to emphatically question the practices of art and research but also the obligation to follow and hear the substantiated critiques of other scientific fields and life forms. This implies that introversion becomes impossible. In the research it must be clear how the understood and interpreted experience and the artistic experience are connected.

The radical nature of the democracy of experience lies in the fact that, among other things, the different forms of experience must be able to present to each other the conditions and demands regarding changes; for the reason that physics or some specialised science would not be in the position to set boundaries for the competence of other sciences, but also so that artistic research sets demands on the competence of physics. Our knowledge of what artistic experience is, what the skill and tradition linked with it are, can decisively influence what kinds of interpretations of the observations concerning the physical world are valid.

In order for the research-based interpretation of the experience to be possible, and in order for its consequences for other research and thinking to be as clear as possible, artistic research must take a standpoint with regards to the background suppositions of man, her

being-in the-world, and her way of experiencing and knowing. The methodology of artistic research must continuously be aware of the interweaving of the facts and values in a way which is impossible for naïve research methods. Interpretational research can not be sliced into 'real' pure research and its application.

By clarifying the relationship between knowledge and experience based on human understanding, one eventually also avoids the dualism of two works, that is, the separation of the researcher and artist. The distance may be needed temporarily, for instance when there is a wish to change – perhaps even thoroughly – artistic or scientific practice. Recognising such knowledge within a non-propositional presentation can, of course, be difficult and requires courage and discipline from the tutors and critics of the research. The author of the work does indeed do well if she eases as much as possible the understanding of these issues, particularly in the present stage of things, where tutoring and assessing research and even student work based on artistic practices are still in the initial stages in many educational institutions.

When experience interprets experience, organising it into new forms – in the case of research this means forms that are accessible to others – the one who carries out the research, the "I" or perhaps rather the "we", is always already present in the event. As artist and art researchers we can not divide our being or practices into two worlds: the experienced world and the "actually" existing world. The researcher and the artist are in a continuous way part of the same flux of experience. The artistic practice and the scientific practice take place in one world, one person, one being, even though we might imagine it otherwise. As Juha Varto (2000) so characteristically expresses it, as human beings, as interpreters of experience, through experience "we are put to the stake". Artistic research takes place at that same stake where art also takes place; otherwise the topic has been changed and the meaning of research has been betrayed. There is no cold distance between the two worlds, but rather the interpretation has fire under its tail.

Here, the criticality and self-reflexivity of research is a means towards openness. Making the relationship between artistic research and artistic experience conscious, methodologically justified and critically reflective, as well as showing this relationship to others, is the way by which the lock can be opened. The opening can not in this case rest on the assumed general applicability of the naïve founding methods of science, but it must create as much general applicability and divisibility as possible.

The challenge of the language of artistic research lies in accessing the commonality and openness of expression, while at the same time retaining the uniqueness of the experiential material. The risk is introversion and credulity; while these are counteracted by knowing the tradition and doubting, criticising, renewing and abandoning it. When experience interprets itself, organises itself into new forms, in the case of research into open forms that are accessible to others, the author of the research is always already included as its object. The subject of the research, with its collective background – the tradition, language, practices, and instruments of skill and research – are a part of that field of interpretation which must be critically doubted. This is linked not only with doubting the exactness of the hermeneutic interpretation as well as its profundity, but also with the way that artistic research implements the ideal of openness. Openness can not be about arbitrary repeatability or the universality of mathematical formulas, but rather the public domain linked with language, how "I" can say something that can be commonly shared in the language that opens up to "us".

Through the democracy of experience and the idea of abundance, the hermeneutic approach to both ourselves and our environment – as well as in regards to what we are interested in, how we research the object, and what our attitude to it is – becomes the starting point for artistic research.

As is well known, critical hermeneutics is two-pronged. It includes two thoughts and attitudes that proceed in order: 1) listening and 2) constructive critique. Critical hermeneutics starts with what is here

and now. First, the traditional interpretation is listened to in respect to how things present themselves, as if of their own accord. Second, the traditional interpretation – its goodness, exactness, and aptness – is questioned. The self-evident nature of things and phenomena, their assumed meanings, is questioned. A new interpretation is constructed through critique.

What does listening mean? The ethical encounter and the relationship to the Other begins from the rare ability, wish and need to listen to what is being said. Put another way, it demands (without giving an inch) that we give the other party the opportunity to present an argument, to reveal what they have to say in their own way and style. Of utmost importance, in any case, is that listening, given the opportunity, is grounded in the needs and means of the person who presents the message. The process should be described as the *politics of listening*, which has certain precise points of comparison to the *politics of representation*. What is essential in both cases is how the relationship is perceived; in other words, how any kind of relationship and relativity is manifested and articulated. Who does what and how – or just pretends to be doing something? Nevertheless, *the political* means that it is a question of contradictions and their practical solutions, the adaptation and turning over of opportunities.

The receiver thus must be prepared to listen. This means that one tries to be aware of those ways in which we always anticipate things. Prejudices must be revealed. It is quite unnecessary to uphold the illusion about ideal and neutral communication and encounters. Encountering otherness requires instead a critical gaze and the acquirement of distance from one's own starting points and needs. There must be air – airiness. At the same time, the difficulty of the situation elucidates the whole relationship and its disproportionality. Thinking in advance about the presuppositions of almost any encounter can not but lead to a situation where the listener is not capable of everything that the hermeneutic principle requires of her. But this failure is inevitably a

part of the issue itself. The people who participate in this game, who walk along this path, are not perfect. Something remains or does not leave a trace. Important, however, is the desire to be and to be exposed, and at least to try and listen to what the other one says. It is probably self-evident that this kind of openness cannot be only planned in advance. In the encounter one must retain space to let things happen. This is nothing mystical, only something thoroughly boringly practical. The relationship cannot be born if the space-time and energy it requires have already been used up or filled.

From pleasure, or a possible pleasure, we get to the other section of the hermeneutic starting point. The time for constructive criticism comes after the relationship – no matter how bumpy or fuzzy it might be – has opened up between the listener and the message, and simultaneously between the message and the one who conveys the message. Constructive criticism means above all that the received message is placed in the listener's own context and locality. This, again, means exactly the same as when one asks what this claim, work, harmonica break, or whatever, means to me – here and now. What does this proposed statement tell me about my life, my relationship with myself and my environment? The first part of the word pair 'constructive criticism' holds within it a continuum to the first principle of hermeneutics. The critique must be faithful to the starting point and aim to continue to maintain the relationship that has been begun with great difficulty.

That relationship should not and must not be maintained by just any old means. One must dare to give up and admit that it all went wrong. And so what! There will be another chance, and one after that. Frustration of the first degree leads to a new attempt of the second degree. But let us assume, nevertheless, that the relationship continues, that it continues critically, and that, as part of the process, the listener interprets how the message relates to what has been heard earlier. The aim is, thus, to dismantle and go through what and how something is being claimed. "The ethical" means trying to outline the ways and

means of how perhaps to proceed in the near future, starting from this situation, after what has been said, and after the results of the critical attitude towards what has been said. This is not a journey to the top of a mountain: one continues the journey in a spiral – also known as the hermeneutic circle.

In the best case scenario, listening and a constructively critical relationship have created an unusual and even surprising situation, where something unexpected has been born, something which only stems from the encounter of two parties;[7] in other words, from an encounter which involves taking turns. Vattimo writes: "The interpretation is not a description by a 'neutral' observer, but a dialogical event where those who discuss are equally involved and from which they leave changed; they understand one another to the extent that they have been included into the third horizon, which does not belong to either, but into which they have been placed and which puts them in place." (Vattimo 1999, 20).

How does the previously presented claim about the ethical starting point affect the journey itself? There is reason to openly admit that it is strongly limiting – though that would hardly be surprising, as we have come this far. The journey available, this time an exploration, is a typical ethical project. It requires almost too much. The distance between the need to listen and the time necessary for a critical approach can be excessively long. In the background lurks not the possibility but the probability of failure. The situation is not pitiful, but emphatically the prerequisite for ethics.

7 Philosophically, it is that which is unexpected and new that opens the ethical, third place (see Vadén & Hannula 2003; also Zizek 2003, Badiou 2002).

3 Methodological Faces of Artistic Research

Methodological pluralism is an epistemological starting point, grounded in the basic vision of a democracy of experiences. But what are the methods proper that could benefit artistic research? And how are they related to the methodological desiderata presented above?

Nowadays there is no single accepted view regarding what are the good or bad, or right or wrong ways of doing research. Therefore, artistic research, too, can be carried out in many different ways. The question about the ways and methods of research must, however, always be solved case by case for each research project. In other words, it is worth choosing the methods in accordance with what is being researched, what is being asked and what is required from the research. A suitable approach for artistic research is usually one in accordance with hermeneutical knowledge-constitutive interests. The goal of research guided by hermeneutical knowledge-constitutive interests is to open up new interpretations into some questions or phenomena. On the other hand, it is also possible to follow the interests of emancipatory knowledge in artistic research. In this case, the goal is the critical study of some phenomenon, raising the awareness of some societal or social injustice.

There exists an abundance of research methods and approaches suitable for artistic research. The researcher's methodological task is to assess their usefulness. When necessary, it is possible and acceptable to develop one's own research method. In this case, however, one must be particularly careful that the readers of the research can evaluate the usefulness of the developed and applied methods. Thus the research is also participating in the discussion about the methodology of artistic research and the development of this methodology.

In this context, we are here participating in that methodological debate by presenting five approaches that can be of use when developing new methodological tools for artistic research. The approaches are: conversation and dialogue, analysis of media representations and media objects, collaborative case studies, ethnography and interventions, and design-based research.

3.1 Conversation and Dialogue

The starting point of discursive writing as a form of ideological critique lies in the so-called "dialectic of the unattainable". This whole issue is about the story of Western culture, which refers to the attainment of some invisible aim that can be identified and sensed but which is not experientially present. In the dialectic of the unattainable the issue is about the tension between the unknown and the known, the unnamed and the named, the unconscious and the conscious and the uncertain and the certain. Representatives of the Frankfurt School and the classics of sociology, from Durkheim to Tönnies and Freud to Weber, have tried in their own way to understand this modern way of perceiving the world, constructed from a figment of the human mind.

The dialectic of the unattainable is an important concept from the point of view of artistic research in at least two senses. Firstly, it can be studied as one of Western civilization's fundamental myths, as the

moving force of Western man, as a striving to make known, name, be aware of, classify and map out man herself and the world, but above all reach continuously for something which is not here and now but rather escapes its pursuer. Cultural researcher Jari Ehrnrooth, who has written about the dialectics of the unattainable, states that civilizations produce and maintain those psychological structures characteristic for themselves. The dialectic of the unattainable refers particularly to a psychological property typical for European thinking: the moving force of the knowingly conscious self which creates, and from which is born, unique culture. Ehrnrooth (2004, 135) writes: "Metaphysical reaching and the feeling of unattainability, in other words an endless yearning for transcendence, are a result of a self-awareness that can never fully reach itself." The ideal of unattainability, which is evident in the sciences and the arts, as well as morality, politics and popular representations, comes, however, from Doctor Faustus: we have permission to proceed only as long as the striving for the unattainable continues (ibid., 47).

The idea of the dialectic of the unattainable can be applied as a tool in artistic research if one considers the fact that the way in which language is used determines what is being talked about, what is being looked at and how it is being looked at. This is the universal relationship presumed by the dialectics of the unattainable: the world is constructed linguistically. This way of thinking fits well with the field of the arts, where artistic objects inevitably end up in discursive treadmills, even though their meanings do not become simplified in these linguistifying processes. The use of language does not only describe things but also literally builds and changes the world, influencing the consciousness of people.

The dialectics of the unattainable and the ways in which it is implemented can be studied in the field of the arts in an approach which uses the first-person, confessional, probing text. With such a text one can look for not only the meanings of different representations but also

"the everyday life of the human individual as that kind of abundance of details that is lived in the shadow of all kinds of doctrines and ideologies." (ibid., 140). If one wants to study such an individual's experience, then a suitable "method is to go with it to the dialogue's zero level of experiential existence, which in practice requires comparing one's own individual experience" to the study object. Ehrnrooth suspects, however, that it is not possible to detach oneself from the seemingly objective classification work and typologization that goes on in the name of research, the task of which is to function as a legitimizing and differentiating practice in science. According to Ehrnrooth, one must probably settle for the fact that the experience of the individual is doomed to be lost in the researchers' intellectual diligence, or then "one must oneself write an individual history of the flow of life." (ibid., 144).

A research and writing style that values the individual experience can be called discursive literature. In artistic research the questions of *whom one wants to write for* and *how one wants to write* are what should influence the whole research process; each text is a standpoint towards not only the work but also the relationship between the text, the work and the reader/viewer/experiencer.

From this point of view, this kind of theory of writing can be perceived in terms of a methodological trinity made up of the ideas of contextuality, indexicality and autobiography. The trinity is also a methodological response to the question about the influence and politics of the text; that is, issues which have slowly moved the debate about the credibility of the research of the human sciences away from inflexible and limiting issues.

Contextuality refers to those contexts or frameworks of the activity through which the (social) reality is made clear, and where meanings are constructed. According to the idea of contextuality, writing also has a starting point in a certain time and place, which one remembers oneself, which one has lived and now thinks about, and about which one now tries to write. In indexicality, on the other hand, the question is about temporal-spatial and local expressions which can be under-

stood through the relevant historical and biographical data. One must know who is speaking, when and where the thing was said, what was said just before the issue, and what wider context the issue is linked with (Heritage 1984).

The third part of the methodological trinity, autobiography, links contextuality and ideality to a *narrative-experiential whole*. What is essential in the story is the whole, which is formed by both details and the relationship between them: i.e. consequence or contradiction, the plot of the story and how moving it is (which also, of course, depends on the reader) (Eskola 2001, 121). The influence and probative force of the story can be seen in "that which it creates in the listener: doubts or, on the contrary, the feeling that here is now something interesting, true and important" (ibid., 122). In the latter case, however, it is "difficult to precisely show which or what type of statements create an impression, or what their emphasis is in the overall impression" (ibid., 122).

In the discursive text it is possible to consider the basis for such artistic visions, where the time that is lived can be learned, perceived and evaluated by both comparing it to the old and searching for the new. The artistic research is aimed in this way towards the future, which is seen as too valuable to be left to the marketers and money-lenders. In the use of artistic research, the task of the discursive literature is indeed to develop the languages of critique and hope; in other words, to recognise problems and propose solutions for them.

3.2 The Analysis of Art and Media Representations and Objects

How should the artistic research view point respond to the claim that art is used in the same way as popular culture, above all for pleasure and therapeutic experiences? A response characteristic of artistic research is to analyse different media representations in a comparative study. Put briefly, nothing human is alien to artistic research: its theo-

retical and empirical research objects can include the rich world sliding from high art to popular culture, including performances, events, films, posters, animations, advertisements, comic strips, hobby magazines, tabloids, toys, computer games and trading cards. The value of studying the latter lies in the fact that they are perceived as representing and presenting that reality in which people live and which they produce through their own actions. Both art works and popular performances are that learning material – Marx's material circumstances which make up the human consciousness – that creates contemporary consciousness, attitudes, habits of thought and modes of action typical for contemporary culture.

Ready research data or material can be obtained not only from exhibitions and archives but also from video-rentals, second-hand bookstores, radio, TV, newsstands, street cafes, the Internet, the attic, mobile phones, and everywhere – if only you can keep your eyes and ears open. Experiential memories should also be included as data, because they do indeed sit there waiting for a collector and the one who remembers them. Sometimes, readily available data has been considered the purview of a lazy researcher or something that is not real empirical data. And sometimes, on the other hand, readily available data has been seen as useful building material for research, in which case the researcher has the opportunity to concentrate on theoretical interpretative work. Readily available data includes, for instance: archives; products of new media, such as chat groups on the Internet, web pages and articles; and products of old media, in other words printed products such as newspapers and journals, leaflets, adverts, photographs and other images, as well as, of course, films, TV and radio. One must, of course, not forget products of the culture aimed at children, such as toys, picture and fairy tale books, games, etc. It may feel exaggerated to claim that everything counts as empirical data for the artistic researcher as long as it generates thinking and activity – and light, peace and love. This is the idea, however, that we aim to promote through writing.

We speak about data as raw material or building material for research because data in itself does not have any meaning. What is critical from the point of view of how interesting and influential research is, are the analytical skills, the theoretical tools (concepts) and interpretational sensitivity. And in order to develop these one must read – and experience. One's own thinking is decisive. Anybody can learn the descriptive reporting of data, but conceptualizing it already requires something else than just strong muscles in the neck and shoulders; there must be something above them.

In different research traditions (taking so-called action research and quasi-experimental set-ups as the two extreme ends of the continuum) different criteria and bases are used when agreeing about the general meaning of research. It is almost impossible to know beforehand what kind of research and research theme will, with time, become an important contribution in each debate. Therefore, when considering the meaning of research and searching for research objects one should indeed favour robust experimentalism. One's motto should be "Let all flowers bloom" – as long as tending the garden, in the form of artistic research, is carried out in a way that is personal and convincing in its methodological rhetoric.

Popular culture has been a rather marginal research subject. Lawrence Grossberg is one of the central modern theoreticians of this field, whose background lies in the so-called Birmingham school of cultural studies. Grossberg is one of those academics whose texts are worth spending time on if one wants to use the phenomena of popular culture as a part of artistic research. One of Grossberg's basic insights is to emphasise the concept of pleasure as a factor organising the use and consumption of art and popular culture. Critical researchers have for a long time denied themselves and their profession the reality governed by pleasure, and the study thereof. According to Grossberg, studying popular performances can not be successful without the researcher being serious about her own connections to pleasure. Research of popular performances "presupposes perhaps other cultural fields" (Grossberg 1995, 52).

The most important data bases can be found specifically in poplar culture – for instance, visual or audio culture – where the general image of our times is being created, the folk tradition of the present which consciously moulds awareness in homes, workplaces, shops, gyms, hobby circles and everywhere where people gather together. The concept of pleasure has a connection also with aesthetics, particularly the concept of taste. Apart from Grossberg, also cultural researcher Henry Giroux (1999) has emphasised the importance of pleasure. He looks at culture particularly from the viewpoint of the mass entertainment industry aimed at children and adolescents. His angle is emphatically critical: the entertainment industry, such as the Disney Corporation producing animations and all its spin-offs, is above all a money-making machine which unscrupulously uses children and adolescents as tools of its activities. At the same time, it weaves a web into which the children (who are reduced to consumers) are caught, having been lured by pleasure.

Giroux's view of cultural representations is a contemporary-diagnostic one based on the tenets of critical pedagogy, according to which "The politics of representation" objectify and alienate people from one another. One could think, for instance, of advertising the advertising industry as a whole; something which first makes people pay attention, then makes them want and desire something and finally makes them purchase it.

Also *alienation* is a useful key word in artistic research. Marx used the concept of alienation as a part of his critique of capitalism, and in particular of private ownership. In their *Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels (1998/1848, 4) write: "Owing to the extensive use of machinery, and to the division of labour, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack, that is required of him." These words can also be applied to our own

time, and one indeed may ask whether anything essential has changed: Nike's sweatshops in Los Angeles and the countries of the Developing World, the use of child labour, the assembly lines for Nokia mobile phones, the pariah class of new media company code writers as the new proletariat, the ads and copy writers of advertising agencies which flow over with their own creativity and stumble upon the unbearable lightness of being, and the home-front couple working on the front line of working life and striving for a middle-class lifestyle by taking out bank loans.

The fundamental or first alienation occurring in the area of economic activity leads to an alienated lifestyle. This basic interpretation forms the basis for the assumption of alienation which claims that the power and pull of the media culture is based on a lifestyle that already is alienated from basic human needs. The consumer markets, with their numerous industrial branches, from the entertainment industry to the home appliance industry, define people as objects – as supplements to a media machine – and thus inventing a mass of unnecessary things through the advertising industry, be it mobile phones or adventure trips. If one is to believe the researchers and designers of the new media, the digital technology will develop such that, as appendixes to media machines, *we finally require only things that are as simple, monotonous and easily learnt as possible.* Take as an example a new slogan for Philips electronics, delivered in a recent TV commercial through the mouth of a small child: "Why can't technology be as simple as the box it came in?"

The birth of the concepts of objectification and alienation can also be considered in relation to representations, that is, the history of conveyed observations and representations. In the era of industrialization in the 19th century, in addition to the increase in technology, there was also an increase, for instance, in the forms of visual culture based on representations. Behind the representation is the so-called eye-witness principle, the division between the performer and the viewer, the stage

and the audience. The viewer is the eyewitness of performed events, of representations. The separation which lies behind the concept of alienation corresponds to the dichotomy between paid labour and capital. While the viewer sees something and the worker does something which is under neither the ownership nor control of either of them, both the presenter and the capital own and control their object.

Giroux (1999, 2) summarises his views about the meaning of popular culture as follows: "The organization and regulation of culture by large corporations such as Disney profoundly influence children's culture and their everyday lives. The concentration of control over the means of producing, circulating, and exchanging information has been matched by the emergence of new technologies that have transformed culture, especially popular culture, which is the primary way in which youth learn about themselves, their relationship to others, and the larger world." In the current state of media-consumption culture, this conception must be expanded to adults, too.

The aim of artistic research can be said to question the messages of popular culture by offering alternative viewpoints and tools for the analysis of media representations. The idea is that critical tools of analysis free people from their blindness by guiding them out from the cave of capitalistic consumer culture which objectifies and alienates them.

It is possible to differentiate between two large trends in the artistic research of cultural artefacts. On the one hand there is the analysis of the *reception* – or popular reading – of the products of popular culture, which means studying the meaning given by people to different artefacts, that is, man-created objects (e.g. TV programmes and commercials, advertisements, newspapers, video and computer games, toys, etc.). Even from an international perspective, there has been comparatively little analysis of the reception of the products of popular culture and its meanings, though from the point of view of artistic research such an approach would be commendable. On the other hand, there is the *data-based* analysis – or researcher reading – of the products of

popular culture. Research wise, it would be possible to proceed in two ways: either along the road of a thematic analysis that supports the researcher's own thinking or according to some ready-made theoretical framework. For instance, film researchers have adapted theories first developed in other disciplines by means of which they study their research object: e.g. semiotic analysis, the study of the rhetoric of visual narration, the aesthetics or genre-analysis of film, etc.

For the researcher of the world of art these latter approaches may remain somewhat alien and their theoretical productivity minimal. More interesting, however, seems to be thematic analysis. This entails looking at the data from an artistic viewpoint, or aiming the analysis at some specific theme coming from the viewpoint of the art world. According to Giroux (1999, 27) the interest in the thematic analysis aiming for criticality is not aimed at the aesthetic dimensions of the representations, whether it is good or bad as a film, commercial, music video or whatever, "but to the pedagogical work they are doing. That is, what knowledge, values, and pleasures do such representations invite or exclude? What particular forms of identity, agency, and subjectivity are privileged, and how do they help to reinforce dominant reactions, messages and meanings." In this region one is closest to the analyses of power which Michel Foucault (1980) famously described.

In the thematic analysis one deals, in other words, with the meanings of popular representations that construct reality. This does not mean that the meanings should be interpreted or seen as mirrors of reality. Reality is often stranger than fiction. A perennial question regarding theories of interpretation is whether the interpretations presented must in some way correspond with the interpretation of, say, the author, filmmaker or scriptwriter. The answer can be tested by making a small experiment: first go to the cinema alone (interpretation 1), then with a friend (interpretation 2), and then discuss the film with her (interpretation 3), then read a couple of film reviews (interpretations 4–5), then somehow acquire an interview with the director

(interpretation 6), and if possible read the book the film is said to be based on (interpretation 7). Finally, one can outline some kind of synthesis of the interpretations (interpretation 8).

Having done all this, one can think about which interpretation is the so-called correct one – in other words, which of the interpretations corresponds to the reality – and then, furthermore, answer the question of what reality the interpretation should correspond to. With this example we want simply to highlight that popular representations are in their basic premise open texts which can be interpreted in many plausible, less plausible or unbelievable ways. In any case, we hope that the example makes you conscious of what kind of simulation-culture human life is lived in today. In media-culture watching is not and cannot be only a matter of belief.

We would now like to give a few rules for making interpretations and for reading as applied to the analysis of popular representations. The first rule of interpretation highlights the subjective gaze of the researcher and its placement in the world. By this is meant the individualization of the choice of the research objects; in other words, that they have a personal meaning in some part of life. But do not textbooks on methodology and research courses stress that the research objects must be objectively distanced from the researcher and concern only serious issues? You can believe that if you want to! We think that such guidelines must be approached with a certain lightness, for the reason that they do not take thinking forward – and that is supposedly what research is supposed to be all about. Our advice is, take on a phenomena that interests only you yourself!

The second rule of interpretation concerns the worldliness of research objects. The question is about the fact that the research objects of art or popular culture do not only reflect the world but also can be seen as active factors shaping the world and us (and our views about them). The third rule of interpretation is comprised of the theme of difference: difference can be built up either from data or the viewpoint

of its conceptual thematization. From the viewpoint of data, difference means that one must aim to look at each different set of data in the most appropriate way. But that is easier said than done!

In this context one can talk about empathetic reading and interpretation, in other words respecting the texts on its own terms. What these 'own terms' of the text are is, of course, a tricky question. The idea is, however, that one does not reflect one's own assumptions or qualities on to the data, that is, assumptions which cannot be found in it. Similarly, one does not read data through some framework that does not fit it. From the point of view of reading/viewing, the principle of difference means approaching some object from different theoretical viewpoints without assuming a single correct interpretation.

In addition to the previously presented rules for interpretation, one can also highlight the knowledge of theory, in other words the importance of erudition. In practice, this means a circle of learning: in order to write impressive artistic research, one must tirelessly search for and read different secondary sources and trust one's imagination, which is then refined by these different texts. The importance of prose in giving rise to thoughts and interpretations must not be underestimated.

In order for the analysis of cultural products to be an important research contribution which would hold an interest beyond its immediate research object, some theoretical viewpoint should be developed for the object. If one does not take into account the ethnographies that adhere closely to the description of the research object, the research becomes research only through some conceptual insight or theoretical examination. We do not want to claim, however, that one must find some grand theory to test out, even though the use of such a theory would be possible as a tool for the analysis. A lesser conceptual insight than the monolithic theory usually emerges when one has begun to think and write and, parallel with these, to read other texts that are not always directly related to the research object.

In this case it is possible to have a conceptual insight similar to that of Kaarlo Laine (2000), who has studied school culture, for instance, the writings and drawings of pupils. In the analysis of pupils' drawings, Laine has used Roland Barthes' (1982) conceptual division of *studium* and *punctum. Studium* represents familiar, named and already-known knowledge. In the gaze guided by *studium* there are no blind spots, and the picture is unmoving: "the persons it portrays do not move", "they are drugged and pinned in place like butterflies". *Punctum*, on the other hand, "captures the gaze, but does it in a way that is difficult to name or code". It "raises interest, it pokes you in the eye. The inability to name causes anxiety." From this separation and conceptual insight, Laine (2000, 129–130) skilfully develops a strong and insightful interpretation of the pupils' drawings:

"The landscape opening up from the window in the picture titled 'pupils' work' is, in my opinion, a typical *punctum*. It brings into an otherwise closed field an external reality. The classroom in the picture is a *studium*, in accordance with generally-accepted knowledge, which does not articulate much. The window (or a colourful drawing on the wall) creates a tension between the inside and outside spaces. Inside are the motionless pupils, 'the pinned butterflies', outside the windows one can see the lush trees and lawns, as well as the clouds floating in the sky."

The interpretation could not be more striking. It succinctly describes many people's school experiences. Life is somewhere else, though the assumption of the misery and lifelessness and the butterflies pinned to the desks should empirically be studied in the location much more than is done at present.

In the thematic analysis of popular representations, it is presumed that they pose central questions and problems of the era. Thus, for example, the film *Levottomat* [Restless] (1999) by Finnish film director Aku Louhimies is not a film just about loose sex, even though the film reviews paid a lot of attention to the abundance of sex scenes. In order for the copulation, love-making and fucking to be understood as

something else than just sex – that is, so that it would carry some other meaning – it requires a context. The sign signifying intercourse, for instance fucking, must be put in some particular context, which gives it its actual meaning. In such an understanding, the viewer holds the key position because the context is always comprised of the viewer's own world of experience and different positions in the social reality. Apart from the family and life histories, it is also defined by such classic variables of social research as social class, gender, and cultural and educational capital, including (in this case) how much of a film-buff the viewer is. The meaning of the heterosexual sex in the film *Levottomat* is constructed in a context which on the one hand is formed by other contemporary films and on the other hand by various theoretical texts, in which the meaning of life is discussed from the point of view of specific techniques of the self. Excessive sex is, in our own understanding, just one way by which the leading character, Ari, tries to take control of his life, which has become void of meaning. Sex is one of the classic techniques of addressing the question of masculinity.

There is no longer any immediate material shortage, or some other great misery in Ari's life. Even though the basic human needs to a large extent have been satisfied, something essential, nevertheless, is lacking. Material over-abundance has not after all brought happiness but simply a lesser misery, which arises from the lonely scream of horror of Western individualism. Ari's problem can also be interpreted through Freud's cultural philosophy, according to which man has bought additional security with part of his achieved happiness. For Ari, the security and boredom of life is framed by the valued professional status he 'enjoys' as a doctor, but which, however, is described as numbingly boring. Laborious copulation functions as a counterpart to work and, as a technique of the self, follows the model presented by gay saint Michel Foucault. In regard to the question of techniques of the self, the film returns our culture to antiquity, where people knew how to value the various enculturating practices of human lifestyles.

From the point of view of the vacuousness of modern life, *Levottomat* is in good company. Stanley Kubrick's last film *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999) develops the same theme from the point of view of the American upper-middle classes. In this film, too, a man – who also happens to be a doctor – encounters a profound question posed in a sexual fantasy told by his wife – and the man's life accordingly changes in about thirty seconds. The wife acts as the authorizer by awakening the libido which the hopelessly banal lifestyle had frozen. Similar starting points can also be found in the film *Fight Club* (1999), by director David Fincher, which has become a cult film for various hate groups. A man representing the white collar poor builds his life around the apartment furnished with IKEA furniture, until one fine day the house explodes. The home decoration, which had become a life technique, is replaced by merciless bare knuckle fights at clubs founded for the purpose.

The film *American Beauty* (1999) by director Sam Mendes, also repeats the same theme. It shows with a slow motion tempo the setting of the middle-class American lifestyle and the mental landscape of a man being buried alive, until, that is, everything changes. The cultural code that the film repeats claims that the man, with biological unwaveringness, needs to kill or copulate, or rather both at the same time. The agent of change is his daughter's blonde classmate, towards whom he directs his lost and suddenly found sexual desires. All these and many other films show the flipside of the Western lifestyle; a bunch of techniques of the self (sex, fighting, the return to the virgin oils of lost youth, and an apathetic person at an orgy), through which people try to make their life happy, or at least worth living in the shadow of the everyday that keeps falling on top of them.

The approval of techno-capitalistic and individualistic societies is no longer produced through rigid ideological systems, but through spectacles of media and consumer culture (Kellner 1998, 11), of which film is also a part. Different "cultural formations" have a cultural force, and you can not escape their circle of influence. Therefore, the central

task of researchers is indeed to analyse the meanings of cultural products and through this to open new fields of vision and action, amongst which there should also be the possibility of denying or refusing popular culture. The key thought is, nevertheless, that one should make justifiable decisions one way or the other.

Zygmunt Bauman, along with other researchers interested in media culture, does not think it meaningful to differentiate between what is seen on TV and 'reality' but asks: "[w]here, except in the imagination, is that 'world minus television' that the entry of television could improve or make worse?" and replies himself: "The world makes itself present to the eye as a succession of recordable images, and whatever is not fit to be recorded as an image does not really belong in it. Holiday-makers arm themselves with camcorders: only when viewing their video-recorded exploits on a TV screen back home can they be truly sure that the holidays did indeed happen." (2002, 160). The desire that media or art should function otherwise than it now does tells above all about the desire to change the world.

"Television has conquered the earth and its inhabitants" (Bauman 2002, 158) and thus one should speak of a television society and televised reality rather than information or information technology societies. In the global coverage of the TV there are not many zones where transmissions do not reach. Wherever one goes it is quite likely that one's shopping will be accompanied by MTV thumping in the background. There is always some small pub where the male gender inhabitants of the world village gather to watch football and drink beer. "Particularly commercials, which in their wealthy countries of origin are easily understood as mere systems of signs without real objects of reference, are in the Second and Third Worlds interpreted as the reliable images of an obtainable lifestyle" (Enzensberger 2003, 28).

The televised reality is filled above all with commercials and programmes placed between them which look like commercials. In fact even people have turned into commercials: they must be remembered,

grab the attention and be more visible than the next person in order to preserve their potential to make it in the ever-more competitive markets of employment and education. TV commercials encapsulate what is wanted and desired from people: they are moral and social texts which express their own time (Kellner 1995, 248). They speak to people and entice them to identify with a variety of items, services and models of behaviour. They are, of course, full of pleasure and humour, but at a second glance this also makes them efficient tools for making you adapt (ibid., 249). In the market of meanings, advertising trains people to know how they should look, and how they should speak and think. If one thinks of morality essentially as the doctrine of the rules of our life together and about what is right and wrong, the TV commercials are good examples of the moral education offered by media culture. Here lies also the basis for their use as media-pedagogical material in classrooms and the media-critical study circles of the Open University, where the goal is to raise people's social critical skills. As an example, we can briefly analyse a commercial for a private insurance company shown recently on Finnish TV and cinema. The commercial is made in the format of a short music video using the old '70s song "Easy Living" by Uriah Heep.

> "This is a thing I've never known before, it's called easy living.
> This is a place I've never seen before, and I've been forgiven."

The central character in the commercial is a slim young woman, who during the course of the day has many low-paid dead-end jobs: in the morning she takes Yuppie-owned dogs that have been left in a dog crèche for a pee, she cleans and washes dishes with sweat dripping from her, works in a bar, gives erotic massages (this is implied in the commercial), and at the end of the day she rummages through the neighbourhood rubbish bins. The pedagogical-political message of the commercial is clear: this kind of work does not require an education or

information society. You land up with these jobs if you do not finish your formal education or come straight from the social security office. The "Nickel-and-Dimed" blues is played both in dear Finland and in the wonderland of the USA.

> "Waiting, watching, wishing my hard life away.
> Dreaming, fainting, ready for love every day
> and some easy living."

Even though commercials give lessons in life and inspire dreams, they seldom tell the price of the dreams. In the jobs depicted in the commercial there are no pay rises, nor do people climb the career ladder. Suitable for the present trends in advertising is also the viewpoint that the sexual harassment of women is seen as something self-evident, as reinforced by the laughter of the blokes. The mercilessness of the media culture lies in the fact that desires and needs produced from the outside increase, while at the same time the opportunities for satisfying them decrease. In this particular situation it is in a way a question about the problem of classical cognitive dissonance; that is, about the fact that one must live under the pressure of two opposite demands and expectations. Extensive schooling does not necessary help either, when the future promises uncertainty; working for minimum wages and at any price. In the real world one has to have two or three jobs like this, and even then there is no money left to save; the money goes for rent and the basic needs of life (see Ehrenreich 2003). The commercial, however, operates at a level which no longer exists. It promises that diligence and saving will be rewarded. When the woman returns late at night to her bed-sit she stashes her earnings under a floor plank, until the day comes when she pulls the money out, reclaims her surfboard from the pawnbrokers and heads out for the beach, for freedom.

"Somewhere along the lonely road I had tried to find you.
Day after day on that windy road I had walked behind you.
Easy living, and I've been forgiven,
since you've taken your place in my heart."

And what of the fact that she picks up the surfboard from the pawnbrokers rather than going to buy one? She has already surfed before, she is not "moving on". She has to do all these "dead-end" jobs just in order to *get back*. The situation is temporary: she can be indifferent towards her predicament, because she is not from a working-class background, this is not "where she belongs". In fact, maybe the commercial is playing on the increased middle-class fear of socio-economic fall and the corresponding wish to secure one's position: the commercial is, after all, for an insurance company!

The woman in the commercial is in every way healthy-looking, as if the poverty of someone doing dead-end jobs would not be visible. The woman's looks represent the ideal type of the modern successful woman, who is healthy and doing body pump and Pilates as a counter to the habitus of the typical working-class woman: obesity, white trash or a dark skin colour, skin parched with grime, teeth attacked by decay and the body suffering from both illness and nutritional deficiencies. Also notable is that the woman in the commercial is single. Where could she fit a family, even if she wanted to start one? There is nothing new in the form language of the commercial: it is a copy of the eroticised advertising campaign by Calvin Klein from 1995, where slim models in expensive clothes were taken to the dirty streets of South Central, Los Angeles, to be photographed.

The insurance company commercial is complemented by a Christian-capitalistic archetypal story about postponing pleasure. Pleasure is worth the trouble, and therefore it can and indeed must be postponed. Work is not done as an end in itself (why would anyone want do jobs like these?) nor for money (money is just a means to an end)

but in order to break free beyond work, maybe for ever. Freedom, however, does not come, attaining it is only postponed, or then freedom is temporary and forces people to hunt for work. The commercial lets us understand that life itself is a shitty job, but enduring and suffering it (may) lead to pleasure: life is surfing and fun. There is nothing between the extremes of shit and fun to remind one of what life really is, namely: pockets of happiness, agonizing boredom, ordinary everyday time without memories, everyday toil here and there, crying, laughter, farting and tears, a chain of events which leaves behind fleeting memories and a box full of fading photographs.

In the analysis of cultural artefacts it is a matter of more precisely researching man's relationship to the world, undertaking the digitally-recorded history of the present. An investigation of popular culture is important because the performances come and go unnecessarily fast. Even though popular culture in itself is not intended as teaching and research material but is intended to produce economic gain (i.e. money), it nevertheless compiles and builds, as if by itself and unnoticed, the cultural meaning system and the storage of tales.

Analysis is often also contradictory. Cultural products are usually not explicitly intended for educational purposes, unless it is a question of "edutainment", even though they teach us many different things. One must be on the watch for this "hidden" educational agenda. For instance, the brands are really clever in their aim for omnipresence. As Naomi Klein (2001) has discussed, in American schools the brands sponsor schools to the extent that science lessons become "the physics of a running shoe" and art lessons become "designing a new logo". On the one hand, analysis can produce a critical interpretation of the performance itself, for instance the human content of the film or commercial. On the other hand, the critical viewpoint can open up a "representation within the representation", into the "reality" portrayed in the film or commercial. One must learn to live with these contradictions, for therein lies maybe the ultimate meaning of the research

of popular cultural products and their absorbing nature. The analysis of popular representations can enrich both research as well as education, and at the same time promote thinking which breaks the artificial boundaries between the teacher or expert and student or layman. Apart from the analysis of popular representations, one should see to it that people would learn to use different tools and would understand the economic and political conditions for the use of the tools. Let us end with the words of Giroux (1997, 30–31): "If media culture is to become a vibrant sphere that enables debate, dialogue, and critical education, parents, educators, and other concerned citizens need to reclaim a progressive cultural politics that refuses to cede the terrain of ethical and educational discourse to right-wing conservatives. More specifically, it is crucial for artists, educators, and others on the cultural left to see that popular representations of children are social discourses grounded in public struggles and often tied to corporate interests. A critically informed citizenry needs to raise questions regarding whose point of view is being legitimated by such representations, what pleasures/desires are being mobilized, and what the limits of such pleasures might be in terms of how they play out in public life."

3.3 Collaborative Case Studies

Collaborative case studies is a name for such approaches in which one tries in one way or another to influence the research object and include people other than researchers in the research. Researchers involved in collaborative case studies study and develop together, for instance, their own work, analyse how it has historically developed to its present state, develop alternatives for solving problems and produce new information – in other words theories – about the activity. They try to find solutions for problems that have been observed in practice, and these solutions are continuously evaluated during the *development process*.

Collaborative case studies can be differentiated in at least three ways. One speaks of a collaborative participatory action research, participatory action research or simply action research. Traditional views of research objectivity do not apply in collaborative case studies. The demand for objectivity in research usually means that the researcher tries to observe her object without disturbing it in any way, as if secretly peeking at it. The idea is based on the principle that man's activities are not natural if some outsider observes them.

An opposite idea to the previous principle is to see research as an open activity, where the person being researched is openly told the intention of the research, she is asked to cooperate and there is veritably a striving to influence people's lives in a positive way. This is despite the fact that observing in this way is not in the same way "secret" or has no influence on the activity as in normal research practices. But here one tries, rather, to influence an issue which is also the object of the research. One does not maintain a distance from the research object. On the contrary; one meddles with it. Thus one talks about so-called *action research* or equally about *influence research*. One option is to talk about *participatory observation*.

There is no commonly accepted, unambiguous definition of a *collaborative case study*. It can be defined, for instance, as an approach where the researcher, by participating in the activity of the community she studies, strives to solve a certain problem together with the members of the community. In other words, the basic idea of the research is to include those people who are influenced by the research as full members of the research project, and to strive together to carry out set goals. Research definitions can be linked with both the intervention that strives to improve a situation and the subjectual nature of those being researched. A change for the better can be seen as the ideal of the research.

The situation in a collaborative case study can be, for example, about a researcher helping others to develop observation skills and the ability to reflect on their own actions. With the help of these skills,

first together with the researcher and later independently, the persons strive to develop their own professional practice. Of central importance is, on the one hand, solving a comparatively practical problem (which may often be relevant for the community) and, on the other hand, the exceptionally active influence of the researcher, and not only her external observations, on the events.

Action research is not a uniform research tradition and the dividing line between it and, for instance, the new types of evaluation research is not clear. In a collaborative case study the interaction between the researcher and the community being researched is not clearly defined temporally or thematically, but is permanent or at least long term. Essential in the permanence is the active interaction between the researcher and those being researched, as well as a commitment to certain commonly agreed goals. The researcher acts within the practice she researches, not alone but with others, together searching for solutions. The collaborative case study enables simultaneously both the scientific and practical approaches.

In collaborative case studies the researcher is an integral part of her research object. The activity and the changing of it are largely based on the reflections that the participants make regarding their own work. The changes implemented certainly do not have to come from the outside, but above all it is the activation of the participants. In collaborative case studies, research and change are tightly linked to each another. The goal is to improve the actual state of things through the activity of the participants, which is based on self-reflection and self-evaluation, on the basis of practical deduction.

The problem is, how are the researcher's activities separated from the research and other activities? That is, what in collaborative case studies is action and what is research? One can, in other words, ask in what sense is the researcher's activity actual research and to what extent is it action or participation, because the researcher is, in addition to carrying out the research, also the catalyst for the activity. Drawing

the dividing line, however, is difficult. How can an action researcher avoid excessive identification with her research object? What happens when the researcher and those being researched know one another too well? How can all this be compiled into a scientific report that will convince the sceptical scientific audience?

The object in a collaborative case study is always some particular community, for instance a local community or an existing group, some totality, and not an arbitrary assembly of observations and a population from which the observations are extracted. In the collaborative case study the research object is temporally and locally defined, that is, historical. The research object can be, for instance, some residential area, school class, work group, youth gang, etc. Even though the collaborative case study differs from traditional research, one must nevertheless keep in mind the principles of traditional research. Not all development work occurring in the community is research, not even action research.

There are always goals to be attained in the collaborative case study, and thus one must ask what kind of values these goals arise from, and who decides about them. These questions are important because in action research it is a matter of intervention, of interfering with the life of the community that is the object of the research. Who defines what is "in the interests" of the community? With what right does the researcher interfere in the life of those who are being researched, and how does one define what kind of interference is "instructive"?

Collaborative case studies can at their best be seen as research, where important information is received by freeing people to act. In this emancipation the responsibility for the activity lies with the participating group, not the individual researcher. The researcher is thus merely a visitor who, even in the best case, can only present constructive questions and rekindle a fire by blowing on the dying embers of the activities of the organization.

In collaborative case studies one can concentrate on one particular case, which can be selected for different reasons. It could be a case which is as typical and representative as possible. On the other hand, the case could also be some kind of border example or a unique and exceptional one. The case selected can also be unusually revealing and pedagogical.

Behind collaborative case studies lies the thought that even the most varied analyses of unique cases contain ingredients for generalisations; how well the case study has been *described* and how successfully it has been *conceptualised*.

3.4 Ethnography and Interventions

3.4.1 Ethnography

Ethnography is a form of observation which takes place within the natural circumstances of the social reality. The roots of ethnography lie within a form of anthropology that studies alien cultures. Ethnographic research has, from an international point of view, a long tradition. Research has been carried out starting from the theories and approaches of women's studies, lifestyle studies and occupational studies. Ethnography is above all learning through experience. In ethnography the researcher lives for a certain amount of time the everyday life of the community she studies. The aim is to learn the culture, its thinking and modes of action – from the inside, so to speak. The aim is to get into the community in order to learn from experiencing. *Learning from experiencing* means what it says: the researcher listens, asks, and observes in order to learn to see the world in the customary way of the community, and lives the everyday life of the community she studies.

The purpose of ethnographic research is to describe different functional practices. The viewpoint of different social practices means specifically the internal understanding of the practice, as opposed to, for instance, quantitative research which operates through different variables. In ethnography the functional totality is not cut up into pieces (into variables), but rather one tries to perceive the situation more comprehensively.

The perception occurs by the researcher participating in the situation itself and by presenting so-called *thick descriptions* of it (Geertz 1973). Within the comprehensiveness of such an approach lies also its problematic nature. The comprehensiveness can turn into simply relying on impressions and excessive subjectivity. Thick descriptions are a means to try and avoid this problem, by giving the reader of the ethnographical research descriptions about the various angles of the research object which are as exact and vivid as possible.

It is possible to summarise ethnography as follows: a person's activity is studied in everyday situations, as opposed to an experimental set up constructed by the researcher. The researcher spends a fairly long time within the culture she studies. The duration of the field work stage influences the reliability of the research.

- Research material is collected from many different sources; but different forms of observation as well as discussions and interviews are the major sources of information.
- Collecting data is initially rather undefined and unstructured. Likewise, ready classifications are not used in analysing data. Research is, of course, guided by the researcher's conscious or unconscious presuppositions regarding the research object.
- The research object is often only one situation or the activity of some group. In biographical research the object may be only one person.
- In the analysis of the data, the meanings it contains are studied, as are the purposes or goals of people's activities. The report presents the results mainly as written descriptions and explanations. Quantifying data and creating tables are less meaningful.

The tradition of ethnography is not a single trend, and several different schools of thought exist. Some emphasise a theoretically pure approach that must not be limited beforehand by theoretical understandings or concepts. The researcher must just go into the field and stay there. An indication of "real research" within this trend is specifically the duration and intensity of the field research. There is another trend, though, where the researcher indeed goes into the field and even stays there but the interest is in a specific angle of the research object. Such a viewpoint is supplied by theoretical erudition in the subject matter.

Ethnographical research is always unique. Each field situation requires its own solutions. Even though the following list (Bogdan & Biklen 1992, 232–243) is not exhaustive, a novice researcher may still get a preliminary understanding of where it is worth directing her observations. The list suggests objects on which she can concentrate her field observations. Even though the observation framework is directed towards the context of studying a school, it is possible to replace it with some other social institution – why not, for instance, one's own art school?

The school environment is, above all, the material environment; for instance, what the architecture of the school building is like and its room programme (i.e. the classrooms, cafeteria, teachers' rooms, gym hall, etc.). Secondly, the school environment should be divided into economic, social and cultural environments; for instance, the reputation of the school and its importance in the community. Thirdly, the school environment consists of the semantic environment; for instance, what kind of language the teachers use (spoken vs. literary expressions), what nicknames or terms of abuse the pupils use towards the teachers, what they call eating in school, and how everybody describes the school.

The human environment includes the teachers; for instance, what they complain about or praise, or what in their opinion are typical boys' or girls' activities. Secondly, the human environment includes the auxiliary staff; for instance what kind of employee groups there

are in the school, and what their status is. Thirdly, the observations can be directed at the interaction between the staff and the pupils; for instance, how teachers and pupils speak about one another, and what kind of school activities are sanctioned officially or unofficially. Fourthly, there are the pupils; for instance, what things they like or hate about the school, and what customs make up the school culture. Furthermore, the school environment includes the pupils' parents; for instance, what kind of communication the school and parents have, who participates in the parent-teacher meetings, and how visitors are regarded in the school.

The learning environment consists firstly of the learning and study situations; for instance, how the pupils communicate between themselves and with the teacher, who speaks, the class size, the class atmosphere, and whether teacher- or pupil-centred work methods are favoured? Secondly, the learning environment consists of the teacher-pupil relationship; for instance, how and in what kind of situation interaction occurs. And last but not least, there is the matter of order and control in the school; for instance, are there rules of conduct, and if there are, what are they, what conditions have been established for the pupils moving about the building and for breaks, what means of control are used, and what are the spoken and unspoken ways of punishment?

3.4.2 Interventions

The more or less direct influence of people's consciousness can be set as a goal in artistic research. Thus the question is not necessarily about case studies or ethnography but research interventions. An interesting form of intervention from the point of view of artistic research is urban art. Urban art is by its nature varied. It is not action and does not produce meanings but rather disperses them. The issue is about deeds that are essentially artistic, and which occur outside the white cube of the museum or gallery. Street performances are either long or

short in duration and they aim to be a part of the community, a part of the lived environment. Urban art occurs in a public space, taking into account the conditions of that space and negotiating its requirements and opportunities. This means, among other things, a complex tangle with permits and financing. Urban art can also be very spontaneous, with a social message and light in form. Examples of urban art include banderols, stickers, T-shirts and posters (see <www.loesje.fi>).

Interventions with a social message can also be focussed on public spaces other than the urban space. The activity of the media, conferences, political arenas and scientific publishing all offer the opportunity for research interventions. For instance, the "least and most wanted paintings" by Russian artists Komar and Melamid are interventions in the border area between research and art, providing much food for thought (see: <www.diacenter.org/km/>). The same concerns the Yes Men artist collective (see: <www.theyesmen.org>). When one of the Yes Men, pretending to be a representative of the World Trade Organization at a conference about the future of the textile industry, dressed in a golden suit endowed with an over one-metre-long penis, at the end of which is a monitor that allows the director to observe his employees everywhere and always (what he termed the "employee visualization appendage"), presents a fanatical vision of "the materials of the future" and the audience simply politely applauds something essential has been revealed in the logic of conformity.

Two very unusual projects can be highlighted from recent modern art. When in the spring of 2002 the new right-wing government in Denmark demanded stricter immigration laws, Danish art group Superflex did not want to take on any long-term actions or to activate the parties of the discussion, but instead presented a very straight forward and spontaneous critique of the government's actions (see: <www.superflex.dk>). The following spring the group participated in extensive exhibitions in Graz and Linz in Austria, and placed thousands of posters in the cityscape. The question also was about raising consciousness,

in other words to show that Jörg Heider is not only in Austria but also is in the minds of many European right-wing populists. A bright orange, typical for the Superflex Brand, had been chosen as the base colour of the posters and with the text in a basic black font. The poster read: "Foreigners, please don't leave us alone with the Danes!"

Another notable art project goes under the name of Håkki (see: <www.haakki.com>). It is about perceiving in a new way the rhythm of the changes occurring in the globalizing everyday reality. The central character in the project is a fictitious male by the name of Håkki, who always gives you what he promises: genuine goods, genuine trust and responsibility presented with sleazy-looking sideburns, sunglasses found in a petrol-station cafe, and long hair in the neck. There is also some level of reality behind the Håkki character, who comes from the town of Ljungaverk in central Sweden. Ljungaverk is a typical small town, the only factory in which was closed down in the early 1990s. The result was high unemployment, desperation and apathy. But it seems that it is always possible to influence things, this time it was three Norwegian art students who established their own brand – namely, Håkki. Håkki is sold as T-shirts, scarves, badges and all sorts of other items. The idea is simple and beautiful. The Håkki company has its factory in Ljungaverk, as well as shops in Ljungaverk, Trondheim and Bergen, where teens and other discerning clients can buy Håkki products. The major part of the profits is returned to the inhabitants of Ljungaverk. The profits are not staggering, but so far they have financed annual subscriptions of several small journals to the town library and football shirts for the local girls' junior team. In a typical green and yellow scarf, Håkki announces that the product "gör brallorna varma" [makes the pants hot] and a T-shirt text says "jag spelar disko för brudarna". [I play disco for chicks].

Faced with 2500 advertisements in one day can sometimes be boring. Amidst this firework display of brands lies the challenge of street art: to participate in the glitter, but in one's own way, in other words to

do something and have visible alterity. In urban art it is essential that one aims for a presence here and now, being exposed but not resignedly so. Urban art is an emerging force, not a limiting deterrent. Its aims are socialising and interaction, to question, awaken and encourage.

Let us take yet another example of an intervention applicable to artistic research, and which is also linked with the use of public space. In artistic research stemming from the interests of critical knowledge, one can ask what real opportunities people have to be heard and to have a social influence. The means are few and therefore the options must be increased. In this sense, street artistic actions are a part of the protests of ordinary people.

Naomi Klein's book *No Logo* (2001) highlighted well the basic principles of the commercial use of brands. The book also presented a number of ways in which one can play havoc with commercial branding. Apart from this, one needs what we call *sticker pedagogics*, in other words, moving away from graphic stalking (*no logo*) towards independent brand-making and use (*more logo*). An example of this is the above-mentioned Superflex group, which since 2003 has worked in cooperation with local guaran growers in the municipality of Maués in Brazil. Extract from the guaran plant is used in many soda drinks and it is particularly popular in South America. When multi-national corporations took over markets in Brazil the raw price for the substance dropped within a couple of years from over 20 dollars to under 5 dollars per kilo. With the help of Superflex, the growers are trying to fight their way out of the situation. The goal is to rise up in the pyramid of product manufacture from the producer of the raw material to the bottling and marketing of the drinks, to a brand in the market of images. So far several branding experiments have been made, one of which is called *Guarana Power.* The work is carried out favouring of local farmers, on the consumers' terms and against international monopolies.

An essential part in brand literacy is functionality, as well as doing things oneself and doing things together. Brand literacy can be

learnt from many types of representations (images, sounds, texts) from many contexts, and working with different kinds of people. Therefore, forums and study circles are required in schools, libraries and cafes, where the discussion and action can be started regarding what people are being silent about and what is being suppressed. What is needed is activism, being alert, and adapting the everyday existence individually and independently. This increases the quality of life, social capital, and real security, replacing artificial and technical illusions of safety. In these tasks, a modern art which comments on and shapes the urban space, being constructively critical by means of street art, offers precedents, provides assistance and increases hope.

During an international urban art event organised by the Helsinki Academy of Fine Arts in 2003, an art work was created on the wide steps of the Senate Cathedral in central Helsinki. The event was held in February, during a week which ended in mass demonstrations around the world against the war in Iraq. On the Thursday of that week, two students decided to make their own statement on the war on the cathedral steps, but in such a way that would not add any material in the snowy cityscape, nor would it be aggressive or destructive or boastful or vandalizing. The students stumped out large letters into the snow forming a two-word sentence: JUST WAR. Later on the same day someone else stomped a question mark after the words – JUST WAR?

Yet another form of research intervention suited for artistic research can be mentioned, Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal's "Theatre of the Oppressed". By this is meant community theatre and performances where the participants or the viewers are shown their own circumstances or those of their community, life circumstances and particularly their problems. One application of the Theatre of the Oppressed is the "Forum Theatre", which consists of a performance where after a dramatised conflict situation the viewers have the opportunity to participate in analysing it and solving it through debate and acting. Another application is the "Invisible Theatre", where peo-

ple ignorant of the special nature of some situation are activated and provoked by putting on scenes amidst everyday life which differ from normal (see Boal 1995).

3.5 Practice-based Research

In artistic research one always aims for, in one way or another, a direct reflective connection with the practices in the field. Therefore, in the remainder of this chapter we will outline a research method that runs parallel with the previously mentioned one, one which stems from artistic practices. Our view of the importance of this research method is based on the discussion that has become more common in several fields of science about the increase in the value of practice (Eskola 1997, 154). In this debate it is thought that the practices are varied and rich in meaning, and thus seemingly already theoretical. Furthermore, the very fact of the variety of practices makes them interesting objects of research. This challenges people to develop methods that would be suitable for describing and valuing the uniqueness of the practices (see, e.g., Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). Practice has occasionally been seen as the opposite of theory, without considering that the construction of theory occurs within some practice. Etienne Wenger (1998, 48) writes: "Some communities specialize in the production of theories, but that too is a practice. The distinction between theoretical and practical then refers to distinctions between enterprises rather than fundamental distinctions in qualities of human experience and knowledge."

The rise in value of practice goes back to Kant's transcendental philosophy as well as to ideas from information theory and philosophy about the *theory-ladenness* of observations and experience (Kuhn 1962, Hanson 1958). According to the latter position, we cannot reach outside our thought categories and concepts, and therefore we never make

observations about facts in themselves, but only about events, objects and processes. That which we at each instance consider experientially true and possible is theoretically defined or theoretically determined. Correspondingly, any practice, such as a doctor's, teacher's or architect's, is theoretically determined. Behind each practice lie different theoretical presuppositions that define how they are interpreted and how one functions within them. Practical activity is always linked with theoretical commitments and presuppositions that both define it and guide its construction. Such presuppositions are, however, often unvoiced and taken for granted. Therefore, practical theoretical observation is needed.

In many fields there have already been problematizations and re-evaluations of these practices. The clearest examples are the displacement from expert-centred social work to client-centred social work, and the displacement from problem-centred therapy to solution-centred therapy. Earlier the social worker or therapist listened to the clients and patients respectively to get an idea of their problems in order to apply their own theoretical knowledge based on the research of these problems. In the client- and solution-centred approaches, on the other hand, there is an attempt to find out from the clients how they themselves have been able to control the problems. The main part is no longer played by the scientific theories of the social worker or therapist but those means through which the individual client has managed to alleviate her problem, even if only for a moment. Similar issues are being discussed in schools. How do people behave in school these days? How does the teacher take into account in her own work the experiences of the pupils and fit together the different life-worlds? If the learning experiences of the pupils increasingly come from outside the school, then what kind of negotiation and communication skills does the teacher need? Answering such questions requires separating oneself from the limited theories of learning and an expert-dominated relationship to practice. The alternative is a negotiation-centred practice

relationship, where the teacher participates in the construction of the social reality of the school together with the pupils in their common yet different daily practices. In the negotiation the important resource is not so much a complete theory but the uniting experience that links together theoretical ideas and practice as a carefully considered world relationship between theories and practice. One can talk about practical increases in value as a new paradigm, a turn or an opening which penetrates several fields of science. In recent sociology or social politics one talks about *new citizenship*; in the study of journalism the idea of popular journalism has been brought in to the theoretical debate (e.g. Ridell 1998); and in urban and regional planning as well as in architecture the talk about different ways of taking into account the users' viewpoint has become increasingly vocal (e.g. Healey 1997, 2003).

From this viewpoint, the skill and practice of the artist can be seen to form their own area, their own 'regional ontology', which differs, for instance, from the practices of the doctor or teacher. In such an ontological sphere one starts from the assumption that in the human practice, in everyday life, there are several *practical areas* in which we function. These areas are such that we do not pay much attention to them other than when someone begins to consider such practices as skills. Then it may quickly be revealed that a group of skills gives shape to a particular practice. Around these core skills, a loose set of other skills, beliefs and thematisations form a circle, an identifiable ontological region. The core and the border areas together form, however, within the entity of the living world, their own area that can be defined, at least from a distance (Varto 2000, 174–175; see also Varto 1996). To quote Finnish philosopher Juha Varto: "It is thought that such questions of skill could form their own region that presents in its *own way* its own questions, and strives to also answer them in its *own way*. It does not use answers from other ways, and it is this way that specifically creates research. Ultimately it creates its own fields of science. The idea, then, is that the researched area is an ontological sphere: the phenom-

ena, events and entities included in it are defined and understood only within this sphere. They exist only for this sphere. This way of defining something creates, ontologically, its own area. […] A regional ontology can be considered as a way to perceive how some field of science is constructed, how the people, events, and phenomena influencing one field of science exist in a specific way when they constitute this very field." (Varto 2000, 175–176)

The artist's practice raises different questions when compared to, for instance, a teacher's practice. It consists of a certain way of doing things, a practice which often acts according to established modes of action that are considered self-evident and somewhat routine. But the other side of this should always be the organization of practice, scientific observation, and theorization; the intention behind which is to think, analyse and organise practice and its theoretical commitments and assumptions. Talking about theorization rather than simply theory is justified because it refers to the active, critical and creative skill of thinking.

In this way one can strive to renew practice, a kind of practice–theory/theorization–practice circle. At the same time, theory and practice reorganise themselves. Kurt Lewin's thought that "nothing is as practical as a good theory" becomes "nothing is theoretically as interesting as a well-working practice" (Eskola 1997, 155) – except a badly working practice. To again quote Varto: "Practice is what motivates research and science. Practice is also the goal for and background against which all attempts at systematisation exist. Our intention is to find something unexpected in relation to the earlier practice. […] The practical problems are usually solved: discussions, applications and justifications usually flow directly from practice. Solutions always and immediately change qualitatively our approach to practice. This is an essential starting point for all research attitudes." (Varto 2000, 159–160)

It is possible to differentiate between (a) practice-based research and (b) design-based research. In the former, practice is seen as interesting in itself, and is approached, for instance, through ethno-

graphic methods. The research objects are the theory-infused analyses, routines, methods and habits of the field, different ways of seeing, cultural forms and social structures. Such research is represented by those sociology of science studies in which, through the methods of ethnography, the practices of the natural sciences have been analysed (e.g. Latour & Woolgar 1979; Knorr-Cetina 1999). In the same way, the artist can approach her own practice, organising its theoretical (and other) commitments or ways of solving some design question. The basis for the thinking can be both general discussions (e.g. the philosophy of science, ethical discussions or discussions on philosophical anthropology) and earlier research in the field, as well as specialist knowledge (e.g. a discussion of study practices from an ecological, social, technical or other viewpoint). The actual research is comprised of these discussions, reflections and theorizations. One can also integrate a design section into the research, which shows what kind of new practice it is possible to arrive at on the basis of the research. Thus the general knowledge abstracted from the research is led back to the practice in the form of practical information.

In the study of the relationship between theory and practice, one can return to the differentiation made two thousand years ago by Aristotle. His starting point was that man's natural existence and virtues include both theoretical and practical thinking. They are linked by practical reason, or *fronesis*. According to the principle of *fronesis*, the beginning of a problem lies in the practice, which must be perceived conceptually, in other words, through tools and opportunities provided by philosophy and science. The approach must not, however, remain on this level of general theory. After theorization, the general knowledge abstracted from the research object must be retuned to practical knowledge from that practice from which it originated (see Varto 1992, 82). As Aristotle writes in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1141b): "practical wisdom is (not) concerned with universals only – it must also recognise the particulars; for it is practical and

practice is concerned with particulars. […] Practical wisdom is concerned with action, and therefore one should have both forms of it [general truths and individual particulars] or the latter in preference to the former."

The starting point in this way of perceiving artistic research is specifically the problematization of some artistic practice, rather than some ready-made theory or theoretical viewpoint. In other words, the practice is seen as something interesting in itself, and often the research of the practice does indeed require the application of ethnographical research methods. A teacher who deliberates upon and analyses her own teaching practices and the classroom situation can be taken as a reference point. In order to make an academic dissertation from her deliberations, she needs something else than the teaching and study plan as her data. Her data must include earlier theoretical discussions about teachers' practices, earlier empirical studies on the subject, an explication of the basis of her own thinking, a description and analysis of her own work and an analysis of the classroom and school context in which the action takes place. On the basis of this, she arrives at the theoretical analysis of her practice, and finally transferring her conclusions back into practice; for instance, in the form of a more developed and substantiated study plan. Analogically, a researcher of human-computer interaction can create an increasingly more functional interface based on her theorisations.

Correspondingly, the artist must rely, at least partly, on earlier debates and research on the subject in order to adequately analyse the practice of her field. She must also analyse the practical background suppositions and action context. In this way she ends up with results which redirect the practice. In a research with an emphasis on the practical aspect, the design part can receive different forms; for instance, carrying out design work and/or studying the designs of others, or working in a design group and studying the designs carried out therein, or drawing up one's own designs.

In the other practice-based research method, which we call *design-based research*, the object of the interest is the artist's practice; but unlike in the previous method, the artist-researcher does not concentrate only on the theorization of the practice of her field and a design part which might concretize its results, but rather uses the design section part as a research tool in order to attain a primary relationship with the researched phenomenon.

As a research tool, design can be justified from a sociological viewpoint of knowledge, in which the scientific research is seen as being constructed of conceptual elements (e.g. the theories, ideas and thoughts contained in a text and discussion) and material elements (e.g. test laboratories, research tools and questionnaires) as well as the varied interaction between these (see also Saari & Miettinen 2001). Accordingly, in design-based research, knowledge and knowing are formed from the dialogical relationships between conceptual elements (i.e. elements theorizing the practice) and material elements (i.e. the design or experimental design).

The artist's central tools – plans and sketches – thus become research tools or experimental tools. The artist uses her sketches as tools in the same way as someone doing empirical research uses, for instance, questionnaires. Here the design represents the empirical data of a design-based research, if and when the data is defined as an important tool for the researcher's thinking, and through which she has a relationship to the existing – or not yet materially existing – research phenomenon.

In practice, design-based research can proceed alternating between conceptual elements (e.g. theorizing practice) and material elements (e.g. a design), and be continuously problem-solving. A suitable comparison point is Bruno Latour's (2000) idea about research in the natural sciences, which is characterised by friction, surprise and the obstinate nature of natural objects. The experimental objects behave disobediently, disappear from sight and oppose presuppositions. Cor-

respondingly, the importance of design in design-based research lies in the testing of different theoretically-justified opportunities. In other words, a problem occurring in some artistic issue leads the researcher to consider different solutions, the basic cause of the friction and the theoretical bases for the unworkability of the idea. Consequently, the *conceptual* element – i.e. the theorization of the phenomena – returns the matter to a question requiring *material* perception – i.e. design – which in turn creates new questions. The question is about a reflective process similar to the hermeneutic circle between conceptual and material elements.

The importance of the dialogical development occurring *during* such a research process lies in the fact that it reveals problems, forcing the researcher to learn. The unworkability and friction of communal practices highlight themselves, producing something new.

4 Artistic Research in Practice

4.1 Research Practice: Guidelines

Let us cut to the chase and put the cards on the table. We have an artistic practice and we have an inquisitive attitude towards it. Also, we are doing research on the practice. What does all this actually amount to in real life? More precisely, how is it possible to bring forth our experiences of the practice in a relevant way? How is our thinking about practice made available, so that it can change the experience of other people, and in a way that merits the name of *research*?

The process of *bringing forth* is a crucial part of the practice of artistic research (Figure 1). The pattern is divided up into two segments. Internally, reading the pattern starts from the bottom, from research object through *bringing forth* to verbalization. The starting point of research is always an interest in some phenomenon, event, process, etc. According to an established custom, this interest is called the *research object*. In research something is brought out from this interest.

	External viewpoint	Internal viewpoint
Sphere	Social semiosis, the public sphere, politics	Research methodology, sphere of research
Rules of the sphere	• Persuasiveness, conceptual innovations • Relevance & effect, hegemonic interpretations • Reception of the research object	• Verbalization (reflection, abstraction, interpretation) • Bringing forth the object as a work of art, as a text... • The research object

Figure 1. Basic model for artistic research

The methods and expressions of *bringing forth* vary from a calibrated laboratory experiment to surveys, to visual, verbal or musical artistic activity. On the basis of these methods, different kinds of empirical observations and works are achieved. Visual artists use the means of visual expression, composers use musical composition and authors and researchers use written means of expression. From the point of view of artistic research, the central methodological questions are: 1. What kind of practical methods are used in the *bringing forth* (i.e. the research process)? 2. What means of expression are used in the *bringing forth* (i.e. the research product)? and 3. How do these two processes treat, encounter or deny one another? *Bringing forth* in itself, however, is not enough.

Research requires the verbalization of the *brought forth* to the extent that the requirement for communication is set for the research by the research community and publicity. This is in order for it to be evaluated, and in order for questions of principle to be asked about whether its own precepts are mistaken or not. With regards to verbalization, there is in principle no difference between scientific and artistic research. Differences may occur concerning the style and rhetoric of the verbalization. From the point of view of artistic re-

search, central methodological research questions are: 4. What kinds of ways and styles of verbalization are suitable in artistic research (i.e. the communication and evaluation of research); 5. What kind of conceptual innovations is it possible to create in artistic research (i.e. the persuasiveness of the research)?

On the external side of the pattern, in the churning wheels of public debate, the conceptual innovations created in verbalization take a central position when the question is about the persuasiveness and social relevance of artistic research. The pattern is now read from top downwards, from persuasiveness to effect. Apposite conceptual innovation may lead to us seeing (hearing) things, and ultimately thinking and understanding things in a new way.

Herein lies the politicality of the concepts (or the already-mentioned theoretical nature of observation). Persuasiveness can, in other words, lead to – the birth and change of meanings is, of course, always a complex event – social influences, a new kind of grammar, politics, social climate and so on. Less important in this respect are the processes and even products of research. One must, of course, note that artistic *bringing forth* can also have a direct influence without verbalization. In this way, the artistic *bringing forth* differs from the previously described naïve scientific observations, which always require interpretation. It is worth reminding ourselves, for instance, that from all forms of art there are works that have influenced how people think, feel, act and create: to take a few example: the Sistine Chapel, the Marseillaise, *Guernica*, *War and Peace*, and *Star Trek*.

It is often thought that science is an activity that is more methodical and critical, following publicly-declared procedures, compared to everyday thinking. Firstly, the research object must be precise and it must be defined so that others can also recognise it. Usually the researcher shows in what way her research is linked with the already existing information base regarding the subject matter, presenting what is already known about it. Secondly, the research must use publicly

declared methods, on the basis of which conclusions are drawn. The researcher must also explain how the conclusions have been arrived at. This enables a discussion about the results and their scientific importance; in other words, every conclusion comes under the scrutiny of others. As Jouni Häkli (1999, 13) writes:

"Even though there is no widespread consensus in the scientific community about what methods should be used to produce and acquire knowledge, there is an almost unanimous consensus about the fact that the basic nature of science consists of methodical regularity. The researcher must proceed following some method, because otherwise the research results cannot be compared or put in relation to earlier results, nor maybe even distinguished from other forms of cognition and knowledge, such as, for instance, rumours, news and everyday knowledge."

Secondly, for example, specifically Feyerabend (e.g., 1975) has defended the importance of free experimentation and creativity in the progress of scientific thinking. According to him, without experimentation and diverging from the familiar nothing new is ever born, and science thus withers and becomes routine-like fiddling with methods. Even experimental research must, however, fulfil certain flexible minimum requirements. This is the commonplace represented by the previously celebrated encounter and the everyday reality of research.

Thirdly, scientific research must present something new about its object, something which has not been said before, or it must present previously known facts from a new viewpoint. Research must, in other words, have a novelty value. Its author must justifiably feel she is the expert on the subject matter she has defined. At the same time, research must be useful for others. It can increase people's knowledge of the research field or it can be of use for the development of the practices of the field.

The scientific importance of research is formed on the basis of how it is referred to in later research and practices in the field. These general goals apply in all kinds of research. Additionally, each field of science

has its own established research practices. Different fields of science have a literature dealing with their own methodology, which guides the mastering of different research methods and other practical questions. There is also methodological literature that considers, among other things, the suitability of different methods for different situations and the commitments linked with these from the viewpoint of the philosophy of science. All these sources can be used "creatively" in artistic research when building one's own viewpoint to the work and to reality.

Artistic research is still in the process of developing, searching and demarcating its individual, disciplinary and working methods, the process-like nature of which – including the failures, false moves and false estimates – has to be accepted. Instead of adopting a ready-made package, we will in the following – based on the above-presented arguments and values – list those necessary preconditions which the activity called *research* requires – be it social or artistic. It should be noted that what we are presenting are general observations, which will always be lacking in some way other. Only the detailed knowledge of each research and research object gives the opportunity to sort out a local and detailed methodology.

The basic starting point of research is communication; that is, the wish and need to say and convey something about something to someone else. The next step, however, is not as clear. In research, communication is mainly of the literary and analytical kind. But this does not exclude other ways of communication. The prerequisites of communication always start from the fact that the researcher and the text produced are both part of their environment, parts of the world which they influence and which influences them. Knowledge is not independent of the knower, nor is the knower independent of her own socio-political or even epistemological world. Knowledge must, in other words, be looked at in relationship to something else, to be contextualised at least twice: the viewpoint of the subject of knowledge and its alternative competing viewpoints.

It is essential to state as openly and clearly as possible who carries out the research, what is being researched and why. In this case, the method is not a bunch of clear rules, the following of which produces the desired result. During the course of the research, the method is continuously flexible and adaptable. In artistic research the method can be seen as a sort of map that informs both the researcher and the one reading the research why and in what direction the research proceeded as it did. The map should convey the starting point, the progress and the end result of the research. And the end result cannot be a direct reply to some pre-established question, or even a definitive success, but rather presents productive additional questions and a tentative yet brave untangling of failures.

When starting the artistic research with the above hermeneutic attitude – and when the method is seen not so much as demarcating the research but rather as a tool that unfolds, guides and frames the research – the basis for the research, from the point of view of the researcher and the reader, is formed by at least the following six factors:

1) *Clarifying the subject and starting point of the research.* The basic requirement for any research is that it has a clear objective and approach. One must present what is being researched, why it is being researched, why it is of interest and what is the aim behind it. For instance, based on the preliminary experiences of the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki, the success or distortion of artistic research depends to a large extent on how precisely and carefully this first step is planned and, of course, implemented. Also at this stage, it is important to clarify why the research is being carried out in the field of art and, more specifically, contemporary art – and why not also in art history or sociology. "Why?" provides the precondition for answering the question "How?" In other words, the first step already maps out the chosen research methods and rules of the game with far-reaching consequences. The first step tries to

ascertain what independent and meaningful artistic research *is*. In this case, the precondition is that one dares to keep a distance from earlier viewpoints and to create a new research method and area. One must keep in mind that this does not happen of its own accord. The productive and tightly knit interaction within the research community is of prime importance.

2) *Unfolding the presuppositions contained in the subject-matter and viewpoint of the research.* The task is to choose and demarcate the discourse, as well as to commit oneself to it and to take critical possession of it. In practice this requirement (point 1 above) means attaching and linking the research to previous research on the subject. The question is, in other words, about defining with whom the research converses, what traditions it can be considered to be linked with, and what relation it has to these different traditions. This discourse must take place independently, utilising the opportunities provided by one's own field. As already mentioned, artistic research itself does not have very long traditions, yet this fact must not confuse or blur the importance of the theme. It is obvious that many kinds of artists, particularly in the 20th century, have produced a lot of texts and different claims and viewpoints. The background of the research may be found in what the artists have studied in their own work and with what methods – while at the same time taking forward the research of the subject. It could also be a specific research area or subject where one wants to bring in an independent viewpoint. The point is that the research is localised as part of a particular critical continuum, and that research attempts to find its own place in relation to what has already been said, and thus also to achieve what is necessary: to take possession of the place and locality of the interpretation.

3) *Possession of the chosen research tools and the subject matter*. First of all, it is important to ascertain how and why the tools have been chosen. This must be demonstrated by a sufficient knowledge of

how the subject has been dealt with earlier. One must also aim to justify – independently and poignantly – how the research differs, for instance, from philosophy, gardening or art education. It should not be based on the denial or exclusion of other points of view. Possession requires finding and justifying one's own focus and viewpoint in relation to what has been said and claimed previously.

4) *Literary presentations*. One must aim to present artistic research as logically, persuasively, honestly, economically and precisely as possible, using known literary styles and methods of presentation; that is, in a nuanced and disciplined way, carefully and sparingly. It must be outward looking, opening up for the person interested in it, rather than introvert; that is, open and transparent, brave and able to laugh at itself. One sees here a very important difference in how – almost involuntarily – subjective research can at its worst turn into narcissism and end up in an uninteresting vacuum, or how research can at its best start off with a particular individual experience but aim to express that experience and opinion such that anybody who is interested in the subject can communicate and create an interactive relationship with the research. If and when these different areas – i.e. subjective experience and a rather common (but not always discipline- or context dependent) way of using the language – fall simultaneously into place, the result is something special and regenerative, something that can, with a good consciousness, be called a personal view.

5) *Evaluation of the final result.* At the final stage of the "method as a map" it is necessary to gather together those experiences that have emerged during the research. It is obvious that artistic research cannot and must not give definite answers. Instead it must be able to bring new viewpoints and factual connections to certain themes in a fresh and notable way. It is essential in the research to also pose those follow-up questions and problems that arise from the research. This also guarantees the continuation of the research or research-

ing attitude. Or at least it enables further research stemming from it. It is essential that during the whole research, and particularly in the "final text", the researcher can and must take possession of the responsibility and freedom of the interpretation. One must be able to say something, to present an opinion that rests on certain preconditions about the research subject. One must, in other words, take a stand, present a substantiated opinion. This is very strongly linked with *being in the world*, to the fact that the researcher is part of the researched subject. Thus, one cannot have as a starting point the need for a complete understanding of the subject, or that the research studies some subject which exists on the outside, as something separate. In other words, the research must be carried out from the viewpoint of *being in the world*, as a process and strategy where the subject is studied together with the different parties of the subject and with issues linked with it. In other words, not *study something* but rather *study with something* – not to talk or read *about* something or look *at* something but always together *with* something, in a sharp, intense yet even beautiful, ever-continuing reciprocity.

6) *The applied re-perception of research practices and the independent study of the preconditions for the adequacy required by artistic research.* If and when the field of artistic research is comparatively new to the authors, it is also equally demanding and unknown to those who read and critique it. Thus the previously stated demands concern just as equally all persons acting within the field of artistic research, and thus all parties must return to point 1, in other words re-perceive the rules of the game. From all parties this requires cooperation, flexibility and a desire to perceive new modes of action and criteria through the preconditions, demands and opportunities of the field.

Kari Kurkela (2000), professor of research at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, notes that apart from the artistic skills, a person who has completed a doctorate degree within the artistic schooling programme

knows the following things. 1. She knows how to acquire information concerning her work as an artist; 2. She has a critical and constructive approach to information, which can be central to her work as an artist; 3. She can develop, conceptualise, test and apply her ideas, which are linked to her artistic activities; and 4. She can formulate and substantiate her views also verbally.

This kind of wish list perhaps justifies itself in the running of the academic administration. It has also always had its place when guidelines have been written for post-graduate students. But one can also justifiably ask whether they have any real place in that lifeworld where research takes place. The dangers in this kind of definition are two extremes which Petteri Ikonen describes in detail when discussing (as a researcher) the nature of the working environment defined by the institutions:

"In an environment based on collective experience (knowledge), too much homogeneity might become the problem, in which case the subjects are treated with a critiqueless patronising stance, without substantiated discussions (this usually happens in such institutions where there is also a lack of visible discursive tools). The other problem linked with the experience base of the institution can be too much heterogeneity, which can mean that finding a common language between different opinions can be impossible. […] I emphasise, in other words, the responsibility of the author of a doctoral thesis with an artistic emphasis to defend her own work. Tools are needed for it, the search for them is one of the most important tasks in young research environments." (Ikonen 2001, 3.)

4.2 Examples of research practices

It is now time to look at concrete examples of artistic research in order to get some idea of how the above proposed hopes, demands and dreams can be materialised, cultivated – whatever. The examples have been chosen in order to describe the problems and sore spots of artistic research, and not only cute solutions and successful opening moves. The intention is not to glorify something but to put meat on the bones and to show that – despite everything – it is possible.

4.2.1 Case study 1: OEI – A research collective

When addressing the issue of artistic research, one of the questions that soon arises is the theme of how to articulate and communicate the process of the activity. It is a characteristic dilemma of multi-disciplinary research that needs to confront the difficulty of in which form and language game the process and its results are pushed forward. In visual culture and contemporary art – in the widest possible sense of the terms – this comes down to the relationship between the normality, the often taken-for-granted written format, and the means more closer and inherent to visual communication, such as different sorts of visual symbols and combinations of means of expressions that are not (or at least not only) linguistic.

Thus, one of the main questions that, we believe, cannot ever be fully answered – yet is a question that always needs to be reflected upon and solved in each individual case – is whether proper research in this field can be done mainly or even only without words? If it is about artists self-reflectively and coherently expressing what it means to be an artist and what it means to take part in the production of meanings in this area, why is not the art work in itself sufficient to count as research? Why do we accept the hegemony of the word?

This classic dilemma might sound like an unproductive dead-end. But if and when research has its own unique content within contemporary art, it is bound to be taking place exactly in the middle of these wounds and opening clashes between what is done traditionally in, for example, social sciences, and what is seen as traditionally valid in the area of the arts. To put it another way: how much do we need to explain the research process and its results, and how far do we need to do this in a language that is not inherent to the artistic practice? We can follow up these questions and further ask: Who is the audience? What kind of a pre-knowledge is presupposed? Or, stated again from the other side: Would it not be reasonable to expect that the production of information and interpretation is found in the works themselves? This is a claim that must not be read naïvely, but as a claim that simply states that the rules of what is and what is not valid, of credibility and meaningfulness, are always contextual, contested and constructed.

Where this leaves us is the absolute necessity in each of the given cases of artistic research to pay enough attention to the three-fold character of the research, to face simultaneously the three time spheres of the past, the present and the future, and to articulate in terms of one's interests and specific type of content where you are coming from, where you are right now and where you want to move towards.

The Swedish research collective and editorial team of OEI (which has been in existence since 1999) provides us with a fabulous example of artistic research that is done innovatively, humorously and very seriously. We will focus on a recent product of the collective. It is a red brick of a book, that contains within its covers, under the title of *Textkonst, visuell poesi, Konceptuellt skrivande* [Textual Art, Visual Poetry, Conceptual Writing] (2004) four issues of their publication (nos. 18–21) in a single book. The book contains 616 pages, and is something that deserves the title *Gesamtkunsverk* – which obviously is pitched with a high enough octane of warmly felt irony. This version of OEI has a rather formalist economical quality answer in relation to

its length. They calculated very carefully the weight of the book: with 616 pages it weighs still slightly less than 2 kilograms, which, according to Swedish postal regulations, fits into the category of a letter, and therefore can be sent in the normal mail.

The funny thing about OEI is how dead-pan their way of working is. The quadruple issue is deliberately intended to shock. It is extremely heavy to handle, and is filled with a decisive overload of visual and written information. It is on the verge of being impossible to adjust in order to be able to read it. But the joke is that the book is a fantastic piece of visual research and knowledge production. For our current interests, the joke gains deeper nuances through two intertwined notions. OEI is not done within a university framework, and they have refused to even use the chance of writing a preface for the issue.

The book begins with the substance of the visual techniques that it is fascinated, even obsessed, with. There is no explanation, no contents page, just the massive and wild mix between past and present ways of how artists have used works, how they have experimented with the book format, next to which we find philosophical essays and fictional short stories – and so on and on and on. It is a format as a book which is used and seen both as a means of communication and as material.

However, we are convinced that this red devil of a book is one of the best examples of artistic research in practice. It is experimental, funny and enjoyable. It has the needed self-esteem and sufficient courage to trust its own vision and aims. It is not pleading for attention. It states proudly its case, and relies on the content of its messages.

What makes OEI a fruitful case for artistic research is that its practice combines three main features characteristic of any kind of credible and meaningful research: an awareness of history, of the relationships between expectations and experiences, and of book design. Firstly, it has a well articulated and understood awareness of the histories of the themes that it deals with. In the red book edition, for example, they have collected together works by artists who have used words. The se-

lection and examples begin with a well done and thoughtful interview with one artist active in the domain, Kenneth Goldsmith, and then continues with a selection of conceptual writings that include people like Vito Acconci, John Baldessari, Victor Burgin, Jochen Gerz, Dan Graham, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Sol Lewitt, Bruce Nauman and Martha Rosler, just to name, in alphabetical order, ten names that are included with works that are translated into Swedish and that date from the 1960s to the 1990s.

The editors of OEI clearly state that one of their aims is to do a historical review and analysis of the activities in this field, both internationally and especially in relation to what has been happening in the area in Sweden. They are among a small number of activists focusing on these very varied mixed forms of artists' books, book art, collage, etc. Borrowing from Johanna Drucker's (1995) seminal book on this issue, it is worth listing a comprehensive survey of the possible ways of labelling this activity. It is a list of what can be understood or seen as an artists' book: The Artists' Book as a Democratic Multiple; The Artists' Book as a Rare and/or Auratic Object (sub-groups: The Book as Private Archive, Fetish Books, Editioned Works with a RARE or Auratic Character); The Codex and its Variations (sub-groups: The Codex Form: Order to Chaos, Structural Investigations, Opacity and Translucence, Complex Structures, Non Codex Books, the Book in the Electronic Field: Immaterial Structures); Self-Reflexivity in Book Form (sub-groups: Self-Conscious Attention to Book Structure, Conventionism of the Page, The Literal Page, The Book as a Whole, External Determinants of the Whole Structure, The Book as Conceptual Whole, The Self-Referential Object of Production, Artists' Books about Making Artists' Books); The Book as Visual From (sub-groups: Photographic and Non-Photographic Images; Abstract Images; Color as an Element of Visual Structure; The Drawing or Drawn Line; Stamps and Standard Marks; Visual Narratives, Photo Images Without Narratives; Variations of the Photo-Roman); Books as Verbal Exploration

(sub-groups: Invented Writing; Scripts and Glyphs; Concrete Poetry; Typewriter Works; Found Poetry; Page as Field or Frame; Scale and Progression); The Book as Sequence: Narrative and Non-Narrative (sub-groups: Reliance on conventions; Photo-Narratives with Text; Complex or Polysemiotic Narratives`; Documentary Narratives; Non-Narrative Visual Sequences; Almost and Not-Quite Narratives; The Artists' Book as an Agent of Social Change (sub-groups: Personal Documentary Sensibility; Impersonal Information; Critical or Analytical Works; The Activists Book Examines Censorship); The Book as Conceptual Space (Performance and Exhibition); (sub-groups: Book as Performance; Book as Conceptual Work; Book as Exhibition; Book as Portfolio or Collection); The Book as Document (sub-groups: Diaristic and Personal Statements; Reproduced Records; Facsimile documents; Information); Metaphor and Form: The Artists' Book in the 20th Century (sub-groups: Artists' Books as Metaphor and Form; The 20th Century Art Form; the Future of the Book).

What is more, with their research into these wide fields of marginal or semi-marginal means of expression, they address and construct the altered state of contemporary art. It is well contextualized into its extremely heterogeneous domain, which at the same time has proven to be one of the main developments within visual culture and contemporary art. In other words, they materialize the idea and the development of the enlarged field of art that, as we may recall, was introduced by Rosalind Krauss in regard to sculpture already at the end of the 1970s. The OEI editors are fully aware of the development that has taken place ever since, a trend that, instead of just enlarging the possible means of communication, has imploded the field, arriving to a situation in which practically any means can be used to create a work of art.

OEI is about the hybrid mix. This mix is not primarily the end result, but awareness and respect for it is the necessary element at the very beginning of the process. It is about bringing together ways of expres-

sion that are rarely brought together. It is a strategy that can be given numerous different titles and names, such as inter-disciplinary, virus, laboratory, parasite strategies or viral means of interaction. Whatever the flavour of the month for the title, the content of the activity remains the same. The point is to experiment and to analyse and witness what happens when various kinds of things and means of expression are put next to each other and brought together in a new way.

Secondly, the work is about relationships between expectations and experiences. It is about what happens when two or more types of means of expression bounce off each other, interacting, getting involved and evolving. It is about a process that you can steer by starting in a particular way, but characteristically is a process that once started is no longer fully controllable. If and when it becomes a meaningful experiment, it produces something different; something that you cannot trace back to any of the actors in the starting position, yet a product that is shaped and made there and then during that unique site and interaction situation.

This leads us to the third point indicating how OEI is doing research in a credible and meaningful way. This has to do with what a book is and can be and, for example, how to use and define typography, logo types, digital text, etc. All the above-mentioned research traits still need, nevertheless, another element. It is clear to anyone who bothers to open this red book that these people are very serious. They are truly committed. They are systematic, with a clear sense of an ongoing process that keeps feeding itself, motivating itself, keeping up the search and the new opening that constantly is popping up, and which sooner or later materializing in terms of another publication.

And yes – you guessed right – the best way to round up this review of OEI is to fill in another list. This time it is a list of future activities that they have been planning to do under the framework of archives. The idea is to analyse the role and importance of archives as something that is not neutral, but rather structures and produces information. It is an

archive both as a place where things are buried and a place where things gain a new meaning. The publication will thus focus on a variety of forms of presentation of the work: materials used in performances, exhibitions and mini-museums in a textual form, transcribes, ready-mades, found poems, samples, conceptual work that is re-contextualized as literature, etc. It is an enterprise that highlights the core attitudes of the OEI collective. It is about a plurality of means brought together to create even more variations of form and content. It is a strategy that could also be called (instead of OEI) the process of ETC. And yes, the only reason they do not call themselves ETC is because there already existed a magazine with that name in Sweden before OEI started.

4.2.2 Case study 2: Jacqueline Donachie

Jacqueline Donachie is a Glasgow-based artist who since the early 1990s has produced a body of work that deal with issues of social and political space, communities, and ultimately questions of both collective and individual identity. She is a great example of a contemporary artist who starts off with an idea into which she digs and researches herself (see, for example, the book *Somewhere to Stand*, 2004). It is way of working that is initially content driven; where the form the art work is given follows in each particular case what the work is about. This is not to say questions of form, of how to communicate one's work, is of no interest to Donachie. It is simply to stress the marching order of her way of working.

Donachie was educated as an artist. She is not currently doing a Ph.D. even if she has for some years been continuously collaborating with scientists in various universities. Donachie does what she does under the broad umbrella of the concept of "contemporary art". However, what she does, for example, in her long-term project about the genetic disorder Myotonic Dystrophy (DM), which we will focus on here, is something that both describes and signifies what can be meant and done within the realm of artistic research.

Donachie's *Myotonic Dystrophy* project is a process that is inherently inter-disciplinary, and what it produces is something that cannot be traced back to any of its components. It is what all interaction ultimately can and even ought to be: a combination of aims, wishes and abilities that, when joined together, can produce knowledge that can go beyond the boundaries of each individual field. In other words, it is research that can create extra value by, for example, bringing together views and positions that share the same theme but which, for one reason or another, tend not to communicate with one another.

Donachie's most coherent and focused research is also a very good example of research practice that can combine, in a fantastically fruitful manner, a position that brings together a highly personal point of view and motivation with a perspective of addressing the same issue via more common and general views. When put into philosophical parlance, it is about how the particular is connected to the universal, how a detail connects to the whole, and how out of something subjective meeting something objective something unique and special can emerge. And yes, that special uniqueness is Donachie's currently ongoing project called *Myotonic Dystrophy* (henceforth DM), to which we will now turn.

The first part of the DM project is condensed in to a small but incredibly informative and moving book, called *DM*, which came out 2002. It is a book that tells in fine lucid language a very complex and difficult story of how a particular genetic disorder called DM has affected Donachie's whole family and how they first became aware of its existence. It is a difficult task for us to describe the contents of a book that should be left to speak for itself. But since that is not possible, please allow our version of the story and its connection to the larger field of artistic research to be heard.

What DM is all about are the tiny and huge things that simultaneously affect who we are, where we are, and how we are. One way of opening a door to articulate the issue is to talk about families. And in this case, it is done in a very moving way. As already said, the issue

of DM is as personal to Donachie as it can be. Her knowledge of the syndrome and its implications go back to the year 1999, when both she and her sister were pregnant. Her sister was due about three months earlier than her. What happened next was that her sister's baby was born prematurely. There were complications, a lot of different tests and even more anxiety and fear. What the doctors discovered was that the little new-born girl was carrying within her genetic system an inherited chromosome that caused problems with how muscles function. The syndrome can cause everything from weakening facial muscles, to problems with balance and co-ordination, to being easily infected with pneumonia. The chromosome was found to have come from the baby's mother, Jacqueline's sister, but after being tested herself whilst still pregnant it was found out that Jacqueline had not inherited this particular gene. It was, however, found in her father, brother, and in both of her sister's children. Quoting a page from the book that characterizes the way that DM surfaces in families:

"It grows and repeats itself throughout your lifetime, and the severity of symptoms multiply as it passes through generations; the type that my niece got from my sister is worse than the type that my sister got from our dad. The age of onset of symptoms gets steadily younger, although you can only inherit the congenital from, like my niece has, from your mother. So my dad's symptoms are appearing now that he's in his sixties, my sister and brother are developing problems in their thirties and my niece and nephew have problems all the way from childhood. Which means that three years ago we knew nothing, and now it's kicking in for them all at the same time." (Donachie, 2002)

The project is a research into the domain of DM. Donachie began to study the theme, first getting to know more about it and also making contact with people doing research into it. Since then, she has been given many scientific papers to read, and has travelled extensively from one place and country to another to meet and talk with both patients and practitioners involved in this rather rare and yet very under-diag-

nosed condition. On one of these trips she went with her sister to meet similar families in Canada. As a result of this travelling, and obviously through the many visits to different doctors and specialists that she and her family have had to attend, she has come to know a lot of people who are connected to DM, either as patients, family members or scientists. Here is a short description of her trip to Canada.

"We went on to meet families that were much better and families that were much worse than our own. The families that were worse scared the shit out of my sister and I and the families that were better made us feel good. One family had an unaffected sister who had given up her whole life to care for them all. My sister told the scientists that they'd better get working on their bloody cure and I just felt sick." (ibid.)

As already mentioned, the DM book in 2002 was the first part of the project, though it has moved on and developed since then. To date Donachie is still working with Professor Darren Monckton, a scientist specializing in research into the condition. Together they received a grant in 2003 and began working on another collaboration that this time was less specific to Jacqueline's own family. Now they have decided to change the focus from documenting what has happened, towards what will happen in the future. They are looking at the phenomena of anticipation, which unfortunately plays a big role in some types of inherited genetic illness. With some disorders, most notably DM, the severity of symptoms gets worse as it is passed down through generations. The end result of this new research will be a film and a DVD archive for the University of Glasgow. Her aim is to show the film within a contemporary art framework, whilst also touring with it to scientific conferences and patients group meetings. Donachie comments:

"One of our main interests is to find out if we can produce something that can stand alone as an artwork, not a documentary or text book. A work of art that would be of interest to all of the many groups involved in this area – patients, clinicians and scientists. What I have noticed is that none of them really speak to each other. My role as

an artist is often just to make them sit and listen to each other! The book *DM* worked very well in this respect. It was essentially about very little, but everyone could take something from it that related to their own experiences of genetic illness." (e-mail message to Mika Hannula, 2.3.2005)

The question of anticipation is also present when she considers how to pursue the theme and, more precisely, how long she wants to work with it. She is very aware of the oddness that is embedded within the subject for her, because, unlike the scientists she collaborates with, the theme for her is always bordered by her own family. Again, in her own words:

"I know that I will always be an artist, but I don't know if I will want to work with these issues in a very long term way, as I don't know how bad my family will become. It is definitely a 5 year not a 10 year plan. I am driven with it now. Maybe in 10 years time I will have to look after them all. I would like to do a Ph.D. though. I want to write all of this stuff down while I still have time to be fairly objective about it, and I think it would make a good dissertation." (ibid.)

And then to the corresponding question, how would she define research, Donachie replies:

"That is an odd question. I think I would have to say that it is the process by which I make work. Any art work I make starts with some kind of research, even if it just to find out how big a space is. The work I have been doing with scientists has been very interesting as the finished 'product' has always been a very small part of what we do together, although with this exhibition this might change. The research we have done in this instance has been a very interesting journey that has involved a lot of people and a lot of dinners. Sometimes that is the best kind of research you can do; it is less about what you read and a lot to do with relationships you build up in the course of developing an artwork. Then, of course, you have to make something out of it, which can be the hardest part." (ibid.)

4.2.3 Case study 3: Olafur Eliasson

There is something inherently uncanny about the projects of Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson. His works carry with them the weight of weightlessness. They are at the same time easy to grasp and accessible, and then again, they remain unsolvable. There is both clarity and mystery embedded within his accurate and acute installations.

Thus, it does not necessarily come as a surprise that when addressing his practice through the lens of research, this similar both/and sensation is strongly evident throughout. For instance, the act of being in contact with his works is a constant back-and-forth movement during which you watch something that watches back at you. This double act – affecting and being affected – is stressed in the way he actually conducts research. It is not a linear act of following a clearly stated and imagined path, but something quite different. It is a process that is aware of its path being constantly made and shaped during the journey in question. It evolves not only in-between events but also while they are taking place. It is an attitude not that unfamiliar to natural science and scientists. The notion dates back to the times of Bohr and Heisenberg, who were, so the story goes, the first ones to point out the fact that how what you measure with always affect what you are trying to measure in the first place. Or when put into a different language game, it means that what you find depends on what you are looking for.

Eliasson does not work alone. He has a studio in Berlin that, in fact, resembles more a mid-size industrial company. It is a proper working environment with all the necessary areas for cutting wood, metalwork, etc. On the other hand, there is the section of the studio with all the computers providing the digital powerhouse for the design and materialization of form – whatever that form might be. It is a set-up that employs daily 15–20 people. Eliasson calls his studio a laboratory. They study light, they study sound, they are fascinated by wind – and they carry out experiments. And while they do that, they are highly aware of what they are doing. It is not some meta-level of sci-

ence, as in asking what it is that we call science. Instead, they bounce back to practicalities concerning how things happen and how what we feel and perceive can be altered. It is about experimenting with what it means to do experiments while doing them.

At the centre of the enterprise is Eliasson himself. He acknowledges that his laboratory, as a network, is a fragile system. Sometimes the experiences lead to somewhere significant and yes, sometimes they fall apart. But that is the price one necessarily has to keep in mind and to accept if and when the character of your way of doing art and research is about how to make up the process as you go on, about and along. It is a complex platform that combines formal architectural and structural sculpture-like installations with questions of identity, culture, geography and psychophysical elements, just to name a few of the candidates that collide and intervene with each other.

When asked what his research into the basic elements (sun, light, water, soil, wind, etc.) of daily life is about, one gets a somewhat surprising answer. When pushed to articulate his motivations, out comes not reasons based on aesthetical values and reasoning, but arguments that rely on the aim of providing ethical discussions about the too often taken for granted value systems that we are completely surrounded and manipulated by. And yes, the reference to values systems is here linked to the most basic structures of how light is measured, how it is categorized, and what are its implications to our immediate environment, etc. The funny thing is that for Eliasson there is a direct link from these definitions and forces of normalization that lead to the question of democracy.

With an elegantly effective move, Eliasson paints a picture of human choices and tendencies of how to articulate who we are, how we are, and where we are. On the one hand, there is the common tendency to aim for generalities and sameness, and on the other hand, there is the counter tendency to stress individuality and difference. The former stands, in its most brutal version, for a monoculture that produces more of the same, and with the aim of commodifying our body and senses.

On the other side, we face a plurality of cultures and complexities that seek to maintain alternative ways of being and sensing. Needless to say, Eliasson himself chooses to stand up for the latter version. He remains highly sceptical about essentialist views and claims of authenticity regarding our lives and nature, which, in fact, often enough tend to hide how generalizations are manufactured and manipulated, and also, for example, how what we see and pay attention to is biased and conducted on the basis of aims and values that are not openly articulated.

But hold on: Olafur Eliasson as a *critic* of the manipulation of the senses and the construction of environments? Is not that exactly what he is famous for, and what he is also so good at? This leads us to the case of the sun and the steamy fog, that is, the work *Weather report*, which opened at the Tate Modern, in London, in the autumn of 2003, and which introduced to more than a million spectators an artificial but highly convincing situation of alternating misty clouds and a glowing sun. It is a project that *nobody* – and now we can really emphasise the notion of *nobody* – could claim that they did not understand. It is based on the most common denominator between all the possible people in or out of the United Nations building. It is about weather, and how it changes, and most importantly, that even if we talk about the same thing – for example, how this morning (23.2.2005) the temperature in Helsinki dropped to minus 16 – we sense it, feel it and act upon it differently. Some like to wear long underwear in cold weather, some do not. And what is perhaps most pleasantly inviting with this topic is how it makes us aware (perhaps perhaps perhaps) that at least with the weather we are able to allow a high degree of different views of the very same thing. In other words, talking about the weather provides and produces a joint platform in which we can cherish a plurality and difference of views and standpoints.

The sun at the Tate Modern was a force that initiated one of the cases of inter-disciplinary activity within the realm of Eliasson's laboratory. It was after seeing and sensing that work that Boris Oicher-

man, a colour science researcher at the University of Leeds, decided to contact Eliasson. It turned out that they have a common interest in how colours are comprehended and experienced. It is a project that runs with the working title of "Colour Depiction Machine" It is a huge experiment about a long-term colour matching experiment, to which we will return later on.

Before that, let us contextualize Eliasson's position and frame of mind with regards to research. He is very aware of growing up and studying in the midst of the collision between high modernity and postmodernism. What he means by this is not that much about styles, but rather about the question of values and attitudes. The finger can be pointed to the notion of the possibility of liberation and empowerment, and the differences between both of the above-mentioned attitudes to them. Whereas modernism was embodied with the utopian sense of being able to reach towards and even shape a better world (via rationality and technological development), postmodernism has realized that that kind of modernistic full-scale answer and utopia is not only impossible but also dangerous. The dreams of the full-scale control of nature and the human mind that eliminates all uncertainties turn into a nightmare filled with a wide variety of totalities. However, Eliasson claims that giving up all-encompassing utopian visions of a better world does not mean giving up the hope for smaller-scale changes for the better.

In other words, Eliasson still has hope. He still believes that even if we can never conquer or fully change the system, we nevertheless are able to do something with it. And that something is the reflexive consciousness of acknowledging the structures in which we exist in order to make these structures more transparent. It implies that we would also be able to work in and with them – using their inherent advantages for our own aims. Eliasson is very clear that our problem is not power or authority in itself. Some kind of a hierarchy of decision making is inevitable, but the problem is when this or that power does not

openly and transparently admit its power, but instead tries to claim that ”power” is natural, given and in itself truthful. Thus, we arrive at a strong distrust of essentialisms of any kind, and instead we move, step by step, experiment after experiment, towards an awareness of the construction of our aims, values, fears and desires. To quote Eliasson:

”What I see myself doing with my works is suggesting tools for the people to orientate themselves with. It is not about liberating them, but about being aware of where they are and how they are. It is about being aware of the construction of the next level of consciousness or awareness of where you are, or the level next to you. With these levels, I don’t refer to any inherent hierarchies, but to the different and alternative ways of perceiving and comprehending reality. It is not about a utopian answer or utopian idea of arriving at some haven. There is no utopia to be won over or achieved at the end of the tunnel, at the end of the process. However, the daily utopia, the daily chance, is within every moment, it is exactly where you stand, right here and right now.” (interview with Mika Hannula, February 2005).

Let us now return to the project called ”Colour Depiction Machine” that Olafur Eliasson is planning together with Boris Oicherman, a researcher specialising on the field of colour and psychophysics. In this collaboration, Oicherman’s role is to set up the exact rules for the highly specific experiment. The role of Eliasson is to imagine and build the actual structure within which it takes place.

But what ultimately is this project, which has been now going on for more than three years, all about? It is not in an everyday sense about something that spectacularly weird or complicated. What they want to research is how people in the same situation view the same colours they confront in a different way. It is as simple as that – at least on paper. The aim is to show that the way each of us perceives colours is individually nuanced and differentiated. Thus, it is a matter of interpretation. This is something we tend to accept when dealing with how we use and understand words and concepts, but a notion that so far has gone unacknowledged when focusing on the question of colours.

The background for the experiment dates back to the year 1916. It was already then, and only then, that a comprehensive survey about this subject was done for the first time. The results were significant, providing the basis for the categories of divisions of colours that we know in the scale of the colour fields. When the test was made, almost hundred years ago, 21 people took part in it and it was done with only 3 of the prime colours. This time around, Eliasson's and Oicherman's plans are rather more comprehensive. The aim is to do the experiment with all the seven prime colours and to do it with 2400 people.

But what kind of an experiment is it? Imagine a container that is built in a minimal fashion in order to cut out all other stimuli except two lamps on a wide wall. Let us say that the colour of one of the lamps is now red. The left-hand-side lamp is the static and constant one. Its colour remains the same. The right hand lamp, however, is adjustable. It is also presently red, and the participating person is asked to adjust the right-hand colour red to match the static red on the left. This is then repeated with all the other prime colours, and the series of experiments is repeated on and on through the different exhibition venues from, for example, Lund to Karlsruhe to Birmingham.

There is a rather peculiar reason why Oicherman was interested in collaboration with an artist. This dates back to his experience of the *Weather Project* at Tate Modern. What Oicherman saw there in action was something he has been trying to make use of, but which has been very difficult to obtain. We are talking about Oicherman's observations of the audience at the show. People were active and activated. They moved around, they got excited, and yes, they laughed and enjoyed themselves. In short, they became a meaningful and important part of the whole. In scientist's terms, it was an art audience as participants in an experiment that had the needed quality of being motivated. They wanted to take part in the experiment.

When asked what his motivation behind the project was, Eliasson does not need to dig deep. He aims to carry out coherent and committed research on the social and cultural dimensions of colour. Or put in other

terms, he wants to prove the relativity of how we experience colour. Or still from another angle, he wants to make people aware of their inherent potential for seeing and experiencing not the sameness but the difference:

"I am convinced that we don't generally understand our own possibilities. In fact, in every situation that we are facing, we have much more potentiality to realize a kind of freedom to shape the ways we are in the site and how we orientate ourselves with and to it. We are able to effect much more strongly how our worlds are constituted than we allow ourselves to recognize. Our body and senses are well equipped for a very detailed negotiation with ourselves and our environment." (interview with Mika Hannula, February 2005).

"What I am stressing are our abilities to use and create alternatives. Instead of accepting the commodification and instrumentalization of our bodies, senses, and in one word, our lifeworlds, we ought to use strategies of resistance. It is an open conflict in which we have simultaneously at work the forces that see the society based of sameness and then again other forces that see the fundament of the society based on difference. And yes, art is a vehicle in order to help us and to assist us to pay more attention to the differences." (ibid.).

4.2.4 Case study 4: Liisa Roberts

The project *What's the time in Vyborg?* carried out by American-Finnish artist Liisa Roberts in Vyborg, in Russia, in 2000–2004, was an event as a body of works of art which had not been done or planned or presented as artistic research in the academic sense. Nevertheless, it is an event with many levels, which effortlessly turns into research as a meaningful artistic act. It is an example of contemporary art, which by its nature is creative, investigatory, and strongly based on particular forms of cooperation.

The project was localised precisely both in the more general and more specific history and present-day situation of contemporary art as

well its discourses. The only thing that actually separates Roberts' work from artistic research is the lack of any encompassing written analysis tying together the different time levels and goals of the project. The question is about analysis, which this following case study in no way attempts to stand in for, but rather simply attempts to describe and contextualise Roberts' project as an activity that can also be viewed as artistic research, if one so wishes.

Roberts' Vyborg process has rather many parts and participants, as well as stages and dimensions. The project began in early 2000, when Roberts got hooked – and badly. From a contextual point of view, the initial motivation came from the only truly admissible place – namely, a library. Roberts leafed through a book describing the Vyborg Library (1927–1935) designed by Finnish architect Alvar Aalto, after which the game was already on the go. The final inspiration for the commencement of the project was got from actually visiting the crime scene in Vyborg.

The result is an unusually difficult multi-part, multi-year and multi-disciplinary project (from the practical, financial and content points of view), where she analysed and outlined how time behaves and is materialised in a place called Vyborg (or Viipuri in Finnish). The question was about temporal layers and clashes of different experiences. The binding force and framework that holds the project together is the city library designed by Aalto, which gave both a starting point and motive to study and untangle historical meanings, and specifically meanings in relation to time and place. Time-wise the project occurs simultaneously in the past, present and future, and spatially in relation to both physical and discursive dimensions.

For Roberts it was not a question of a locally executed work, or of a documentary about a place. It was a work in which the aim was to develop narratives tied and interlinked to the specific location; narratives which are something more, or something else, than just stories. They are committed narratives in which identities are formed and created – both

on the individual and collective levels. Roberts' project is thus indeed a very interesting and meaningful example of modern art that is discursively rather than physically localised. Its nature is that of a project that does not have a single clear goal with regards to the end result.

On the other hand, the work methods of the projects are goals in themselves. The idea was that by means of a conversational attitude varying and fresh viewpoints of Vyborg, as compared to the customary static images of the city, could be achieved. This is a project whose shape and content have grown and changed organically over time and with participant involvement; which in turn has been possible within the basic framework clearly outlining the project. The project does not actually end in a particular part X, even though one culmination of the project was the première showing of a documentary made of the project as a part of the *Whitney Biennial*, in New York, in May 2004. The film is in a sense, however, a very essential part of the project and its nature. Behind the film lies Roberts' desire and need to renew visual means of expression, and to observe as well as to participate in social processes. After the première, the project still lives on and continues, particularly in Vyborg, both on the narrative level and physically in the ongoing restoration of the library.

One can also congratulate the project for a very fine title: *What's the Time in Vyborg?* is what it promises and also what it asks. What happens in Vyborg now? In what time and space, and in what physical and discursive levels does Vyborg present itself, exist, and become an event? The project and its many levels become evident in Roberts' own description of her goals as an artist. The viewpoint is more general in nature, yet very clearly unfolds and links to the special project in question:

"For me the most central challenge is to develop a form of expression where, for instance, a film or documentary is not a ready-made frame inside which a narrative or picture is possibly placed. Instead, when it [the form of expression] creates an image at each moment of the process, it is a possible framework for future acts. This would be a

form of expression which would be simultaneously both the event and the documentation of it." (quoted in Hannula 2002, 50)

Our aim in this case study is to look at Roberts' project simultaneously through the aspects of temporality and spatiality, but also to consider how the development and realisation of the project in relation to the opportunities and problems of the presentation of modern art is evident in the two exhibition events tied to the project. These are the installation *The Secrets of Vyborg* in the exhibition *Faster Than History*, exhibited in Kiasma, Helsinki, in 2004, and the installation *What's the Time in Vyborg?* at the Berlin Biennale in spring 2004. But before we go any further, let us present some basic facts, which in certain cultures are usually called historical facts.

These facts can be lured out by asking why a building in Vyborg designed by a certain already dead Finnish architect is so extraordinarily interesting and exciting. This lame question opens the door on a place called history. Before World War II Vyborg (Viipuri) was a part of Finland, forming between 1917 and 1939 one of the most important economic and cultural centres in the country. It is known that Viipuri was, in comparison to the rest of Finland, very multi-cultural. It contained a special blend of Russianness and Finnishness, spiced with German and French nuances. According to a saying, it was a matter of honour to be able to crawl on all fours in the city – which did not refer only to the heavy drinking culture, but also to the linguistic skills in the city, which included Russian, German, Swedish and Finnish.

History tells us a crude story. The Soviet army conquered Viipuri on June 20th 1944. The loss of Viipuri was part of the bitter loss of the whole of the Karelia area in the post-war treaty, which led in turn to the rapid and extensive evacuation of the Finnish population. Viipuri was emptied of Finns, but the modern symbol of Finnish culture remained, namely the library, representing the cutting-edge modernism designed by Aalto. The library managed to escape major damage during the war, but fell into disrepair after being left abandoned and open to the elements for ten years.

After the war the Soviet government decided (in 1955) to renovate the main buildings in Viipuri, including the library. The project lasted until 1961, and the parties in Finland and the Soviet Union had rather differing opinions about the results. The Russian architect responsible for the renovation, Alexander Shver, tells how the project suffered from a shortage of funds, a lack of information (e.g. they did not have copies of the original Aalto plans, only poor-quality photos). Though the library had secured an international reputation as a key modernist work already soon after its completion, such architecture held no significance in the Soviet Union during the Stalinist era of socialist realism, and the library was approached by the authorities in the same way as any other insignificant building situated in the province. The value of the building is now widely recognised and there is a concern about its condition. The library is nowadays on a list of one hundred endangered world monuments (see Reskalenko 2002).

History also tells us that Aalto, who was known above all for his humanist world vision and place-sensitivity, designed the building in 1927 in a classical style typical of the Nordic countries at that time, but with the advent of a pure white modernism from central Europe the overall appearance of the design then went through a radical transformation – to state-of-the-art Modernism. The building was completed in 1935 to great critical acclaim – by those with the power to bestow such praise. The library is unanimously seen as a modernist masterpiece. The library is famous for its plan solution and lighting, and particularly its circular roof lights and the large glazed entrance hall that overlooks the adjoining park – not forgetting the building's most famous detail, the curved wooden ceiling in the library's lecture hall, which Aalto designed in order to achieve a "democratic" voice, allowing for a wide range of differing vocal activity throughout the auditorium.

Because Viipuri was no longer part of Finland it became the prime symbol of the war losses, of which, furthermore, Aalto's library was crystallized as one of the special symbols, an object for processing

the past on which many hopes and fears could be mirrored. In other words, Aalto's library became for many Finns much more than a physical place where books are stored and borrowed. At the same time, the importance of the library distanced itself with a dizzying speed from the concrete problem of the playing fields of the imagination, which are not at all less important and influential.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, an international committee was established in 1992 with the responsibility for the renovation of the library. The renovation is still in progress, and proceeds slowly under the shadow of a lack of funds. So far, for instance, the roofs of the auditorium and lending section, and glazed entrance hall have been repaired, but the curved ceiling of the auditorium still awaits reconstruction.

However, Roberts has not been in Viipuri simply pondering upon the importance of the library. There has even been a rush in the competition for the prime seat and "correct" version or use of the building. The library interests the local authorities and inhabitants, Finnish tourists, former evacuated residents with strong emotional ties to the place and their offspring, and Finnish parties propagating for the renovation of the library, as well as international architectural tourists. Roberts' excellent idea was to go to the centre of the cross-currents of the emotions directed at the library. She put into play all her energy and skill, her ability to negotiate and cope with difficult circumstances; always moving only forward for the benefits she was able to articulate regarding the differences, and causes and effects between the different versions of reality. The result is a really multi-dimensional view of Vyborg and its meaning.

But what is Roberts' own background and motivation? If the history of the location is multi-faceted, so is Roberts' own personal history. She was born in Paris in 1969: her mother is Finnish and her father American. Lurking in the background there is also a further influence – the fact that her father's parents came from Tsarist Russia. She at-

tended high school in Florida, went on to study at Chelsea School of Art in London at the age of sixteen and continued her studies at Rhode Island School of Design and the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki. It is no secret that Roberts is one of the most central makers of modern art in recent years, having participated in several theme exhibitions, as well as *Documenta X* in Kassel (1997), the Venice Biennale (1999), the Whitney Museum exhibition *The American Century: Art and Culture in America 1900–2000* (2000) and the *Whitney Biennial* (2004).

Roberts' artistic influences come from a wide spectrum, including Conceptual Art and Minimalism, but they often offer only a certain starting point, not the actual road or specification. Roberts:

"Taking into account the variety of historical versions of conceptualism and minimalism, and their meaning and role, which has a dominant position for my generation, and similarly for those who studied and developed at the same time as me in the US and Europe, it is clear that – whether consciously or not – both trends have influenced most, if not all, of what we have done. It is much more difficult to answer the question of how extensive and specifically in what form that influence has been. As a student, conceptualism offered me, in a very obvious way, the freedom to develop art as ideas and the freedom from craftsmanship." (quoted in Ricupero 2003, 101).

But what about the motivation that makes the artist change from working in a clinical studio, in a safe location, to a continuous uncertainty, travelling between Helsinki, Vyborg, St. Petersburg and other stops here and there? Avoiding the worst minefields of layman psychology, it is perhaps not wrong to suggest that the motivation is both curiosity as well as a wish to participate, to be a part of a wider project, which takes one along in its momentum and creates effects above all in the authors participating in the project. This becomes a project in which the city, history, the present, school children, colleagues, and so on all participate – both influencing and being influenced. Essential in the profiles of the participants was not only the number but their

diverse backgrounds: historians, architects, ordinary teenagers, writers, journalists and others. Roberts did not go looking to do something "great". Instead, the goal was to ascertain how visual means have a use value, how they can affect people's everyday life, and how people understand themselves in relation to everyday life.

Through the whole project Roberts has in a sense stood in the wings as an artist, in particular when it comes to doing workshops and putting together exhibitions. In other words, on a visual and aesthetic level she has not been the centre point but, of course, not completely outside either. She is the initiator, designer, active participant, a constructively critical observer and challenging commentator. Roberts' role has been an exemplary version of the artists' expanding work images. She has been an organiser and catalyst, inviting people to participate, and has, as a result, got them acquainted with each another. Instead of concerning herself with an art work that is an object standing sulkily in the corner of a gallery, Roberts' works are realised through thinking, developing and implementing ideas. At the same time, Roberts takes note of how, for instance, the role of teenagers changed decisively during the journey. From simply influencing the content of the project they became producers of form and content:

"It is rewarding to see how these young people have changed and how their relationship to personal expression and to their city has developed. It has changed from a certain kind of official version towards a more open and conversational attitude, which also allows space for negative and critical viewpoints. The project has become *their thing*, and I see myself as their equal. Through the project the library, and thus also the city, has become a theatre of the imagination. Perhaps also the library's international audience will see that, the next time they look through the library windows." (Roberts quoted in Hannula 2002).

In Vyborg Roberts was interested not only in differences but also in how the different viewpoints were justified. Indeed, it is particularly interesting that at the beginning the views of the different parties

could not be further apart from one another. The skirmishing point is a model example of a historical paradox, where the worlds do not meet nor do they want to meet, but where they, nevertheless – on the level of expectations and prerequisites – necessarily clash. If we take a closer look at the past, for Finns it is played out as a time of nostalgia, which in the past tense of memories is easy and even rewarding to gild and regret the loss of. For the locals it is a time of forgetting and standing on the side. In the Soviet Union Vyborg was a distant border town of minor importance. It was, however, close enough to the military bases of the border area to make it a pronouncedly closed city.

Looking from the present, Viipuri has mainly a sentimental value for Finns. It has once been lost and people hang on to it mainly only in their memories, but then emphatically so. The perspective of longing is rather strong in the building restoration process, where the Finnish parties desire the repair of an original building that is as 'authentic' as possible – even though there have been changes in their attitude due to the interaction. For the locals the building is still part of the forgotten, a part of the grey everyday. And specifically this property of the everyday – using the library as an example of how the everyday is perceived, and how stories are told in and about it – has from the very beginning been the credo behind Roberts' work. Roberts emphasises that "The library must not be perceived from the past, as if it were a distant object of desire. Instead it exists as a space that supports participation, which joins together a variety of places and thoughts, a variety of fictions and realities in the way they are lived and experienced today, both in Vyborg as well as outside it." (interview with Mika Hannula, April 2004).

Roberts' project is in no way only descriptive: on this point Roberts is very precise and acts very consciously. For her, the image is not a frozen picture but "a possible framework for future acts" (see Bauer 2004, 129). In other words, Roberts wants to look at the past and the present, continuously scratching the horizons of the future – delicately shaking them. Correspondingly, she is very interested in outlining and

articulating events, in relation to what happens at the site and behind the object and the gaze. Roberts has in fact already studied this strategy in several earlier projects:

"When making the picture, the acts taking place on the other side of the camera are as important as those being captured and performed. Thus the social space before the picture is taken is taken into account, which in that way – beyond the picture itself – fixes the space of picture-making to the social space of its reception. I want to try this fixing both by facing the picture which already exists and by creating another possible picture which comes about as a result of this exchange." (interview with Mika Hannula, April 2004)

This temporal three-dimensionality and the grasping of the simultaneity of the multidimensionality of events is possible to the extent that Roberts has been able to include so many separate parties and different – even dramatically different – versions of reality into the project. Roberts has closely cooperated with the Alvar Aalto Foundation, that has been promoting the renovation of the library, the local architect Aleksandr Shveri (who had been responsible for the repair of the building from 1957 to 1961), the media in Vyborg, former Viipuri inhabitants and, above all, school children. During the course of the project the views of the different parties have collided, but they have at the same time inevitably changed.

Furthermore, Roberts has consciously distanced herself from the formal rigidity of her earlier works and let the project lead both the execution and the presentation of the execution in a way where one does not worry too much about clearly demarcated and customary ways of approaching documentation, performance and, above all, the presentation of these in a normal art context. The reason for openness and experimentation is, above all, that Roberts' approach to "documentarism" is critical, wanting to question and experiment with assumptions and limiting values. She has not wanted to sink down to the level of a Yes-No debate, where instead of an earlier version, a more 'real' version of

the city of Vyborg is presented. Instead of underlining reality, Roberts underlines the character of different versions of reality, the values linked with them and the acts by which they are structured and made real.

One of the central stopping stations in the project *What's the Time in Vyborg?* was a creative writing course for young people held in the library in Vyborg in 2001. Roberts coordinated the event, together with St. Petersburg psychologist Olga Maslov and a Lithuanian translator Edgaras Platelis. A particular role was played by a group of Vyborg youths (Dina Grigorieva, Yana Klichuk, Liuba Mukhorova, Yulia Popova, Olga Fedotova and Anna Yaskina), that had condensed from a large group, and with whom Roberts has since worked with very closely. More specifically, the girls have through their participation and acts become if not the leading players then at least the central point of the project.

The goal of the workshop was simultaneously to study the concept of time and its complexity in the city and encourage the young people to tell their own version of their home city. Additionally, the goal was to see how far the first generation of youths since the break up of the Soviet Union could realise their imagination, and at the same time influence their context, and in this way challenge not only the Finnish version of events but also the Soviet version. After a little more than three months, the workshop participants decided to concentrate on a few symbols or ideas: invented narrative figures, such as a lost girl, an architect, a nameless wandering man, and a clairvoyant; and places such as crossings and staircases, to which different tones of the everyday could be highlighted. Roberts says: "I wanted the students to unfold the narrative of Aalto's library by writing within it their version of the city of Vyborg, and then to live in the unfolding narrative they'd helped create." (interview with Mika Hannula, April 2004)

The moving image was selected as the tool of narration, when in summer 2001 the workshop was led by St. Petersburg photographer Alexander Burov. The project developed during the following year, so that in spring 2002 a combined film and improvisation workshop was

arranged, in which performance artist Tellervo Kalleinen also participated. After this the project concentrated on producing a common event for the summer of 2003, which brought together its different parts and themes. The centre point of the event was the narrative *Vyborg Promenades*, arranged by the young people. Apart from locals, the art patrons and the local media, also Finns who had been evacuated from the city after the war participated in the promenades. The abovementioned young people wrote the following about their project in spring 2003:

"One of our most important achievements is that we managed to look at the city in a new way. We learnt that the city has numerous sides, numerous crossings and steps – both concretely and also in the descriptive sense. We find increasingly more ways to observe the city the more we work with the project. This is particularly clear when we share and compare viewpoints between ourselves. We would also like others to try and look at the city in a new way. We decided that the best way to achieve this is to arrange a walking tour in the city. During our walking tour it is possible to observe the world as touch, smell, sound, vision and taste. In addition to this, we have built characters within the walking tour from our coherent narrative about Vyborg; characters such as the lost girl, the architect, the man in the yellow raincoat and the clairvoyant. They helped to create connections between places. Furthermore, they also create connections between each another. These connections are a very important part of the walking tour. It is through these that it is possible to see and look at the whole city in a different way. " (Roberts 2003).

When moving from the actual execution of the project – its organising and management – to the presentation of the process to the art patrons within the art world, Roberts emphasises that the exhibitions are elements in the whole project. In other words, the exhibitions are part of an organic whole, rather than individual and separate opportunities to show the documentation of some complete project.

In examining the Helsinki and Berlin exhibitions of 2004, the process-like nature of the project becomes evident. The project had been intentionally flexible in its focus, which thus gained various degrees of meaningfulness. However, a direct comparison between the Helsinki and Berlin exhibitions is not appropriate, because it is a matter of two different places and two different kinds of exhibition situation. There is a difference, furthermore, in Vyborg's relation to the exhibition locations. In Helsinki the difference was rather concrete and "visible", while in Berlin the installation was just one part of the international Biennale of modern art.

In Helsinki the installation aspired to present a version of Vyborg which would be akin to a living room, and in that way linking itself to the nature of the exhibition location in Kiasma. The installation was born from the participating girls' stories of Vyborg, which encounter the version by architect-historian Juha Lankinen, a recognised authority on the same place (Lankinen has also built an extensive model of Viipuri as it was in 1939). At the core of all the attention was the city itself, and the different versions of reality stemming from it. The encounter was a collision, but not in any way a disruptive or negative one. It brought forth the communication of different views, an interaction, where in particular the architect-historian became aware that also his version had been emphatically coloured by emotions and imagination. In the encounter, Vyborg distanced itself from some authentic essence, from something limited to – yes – dreams, and the veils, delusions and opportunities of the horizons of the future.

Also a concrete encounter took place in Kiasma. Together with Kauko Sipponen (chairman of the Viipuri Centre), Roberts, Maslova and the girls arranged an exhibition, and through that a seminar about Vyborg – which created the desired effect. Particularly the Finnish parties were awakened to the fact that Viipuri is not only a memory, a part of the past. Essential in the openness of the response and the conveying of the message was that Roberts had convinced these two

Finnish authorities on Viipuri (Lankinen and Sipponen) of the importance of cooperation – for both parties. Roberts does indeed recount how the Finnish parties were rather sceptical towards the cooperation, but changed their sceptical attitude towards one of an eagerness for participation.

In Berlin the installation concentrated on the library itself, its history, repairs and present situation. The aim was to increase awareness of the library's situation and, above all, its upgrading, a theme which was centrally present also in Berlin. But the situation in Berlin resembled more an international trade fair, and was not an intimate interaction, as in Helsinki. The starting point of the installation was the exhibition panels, produced by the library restoration committee, which in a rather didactic way told about the building details and historical stages of the building. Apart from the girls, also, among others, Finnish architect (and head of the Museum of Finnish Architecture) Severi Blomstedt and the Russian architect responsible for the post-war repair, Alexander Shver, participated in the installation. The erudite exhibition panels conveyed the linear time line of the library, yet did not simply repeat official history. Through common discussions and the girls' stories, also the present time of the city was portrayed and present in the panels. The overlapping dialogue between the past and present opened up in both directions, lightly scolding, and questioning viewpoints at the point of encounter. Roberts states:

"One of the aims of the project is to raise public debate, which actively participates in building the future of the city. From this, it follows that it is important to note that the project does not really exist without these times and places, in which its different parts occur. The project lacks a centre; different institutions participate in its different sub-areas." (Interview with Mika Hannula, April 2004).

The project results included, among other things, further participatory group exhibitions, a one-and-half hour film, a very long list of TV programmes, memories of an unusual promenade through the city,

stories, an undefinable amount of human relationships (and their adaptation and development), learning and conflicts. And last but not least there is the encounter of two worlds that previously were alien to one another, where those responsible for the restoration of the library and the school children of the city meet each other, and discuss and debate with each other on a long-term basis – influencing each another.

The result is a change both in the attitudes of the restoration project – the trace result being the understanding that the library repair cannot only occur in relation to the past but also that it must have a meaning in the present – and in the creative stories of the school children about their home town; a frame-like narrative about how they learn to look in a new, differing way, at both themselves and their surroundings. But what about Roberts herself?

"I myself have also changed a lot during the project. My way of experiencing time is different. I have changed from a tourist into an essential part of this extensive community. And, oh yes, I have learnt to speak Russian." (quoted in Hannula 2002).

5 The Meaning of Artistic Research

5.1 The Relevance of Artistic Research

The question of whether doctoral programmes produce better artists is amusing to the extent that it is even meaningful to answer it. The question in itself reflects the deeply embedded worry or hope about mechanical research solutions. Behind it looms a peculiar idea where there lies between the goal and the deed space for nothing more than gratitude and a calculation of desired results. Instead of a mechanical and closed relationship, artistic research is a good example of an activity which by its nature is relative, uncertain and changing, but at the same time (in the best case scenario) experimental, an intellectual pleasure creating new knowledge. In other words, it is an activity which challenges and exposes, opens up and activates in order to consider who we are, where we are, and how we are.

Seriously speaking, the only answer to the question of whether it is possible to ascertain in advance the quality of the research is "maybe, maybe not". The answer depends on what each person does or does not achieve. It is nothing new to hear that all artists do not experience

research as a meaningful way to promote and deepen their knowledge and work. There is, however, a growing number of artists that experience artistic research as an important channel and tool for reflecting on their work and communicating with others. Artistic research is meaningful specifically at the point when it helps in both asking and focusing questions that seem important. The starting point is always research – opening up through the posing of questions – as a way to perceive oneself in relation to oneself and one's surroundings. Who are you? Where are you? How are you the way you are? Who are you with? And where would you like to go? Finally, the question remains "What do you want?" This links the action to both the thought about the value and meaningfulness of life and the idea of the pleasure of artistic research.

Apart from possessing meaningfulness and pleasure, it is important to emphasize that research by its nature is open, self-critical, explorative in depth, and all in all opening and inviting communication. One must note that meaningfulness always starts at square one – in other words the person carrying out the research. The research must be important to the researcher herself and, possibly following that, to others – in other words, to other researchers and the audience in the same field. The road leads from the specific to the general and back, to interaction and discussion. Producing artistic knowledge in the research occurs in relation to the location of the knowledge in question, localising it in discussion, where one encounters simultaneously the past, present and future.

A successful research specifies the localization and specific locality of the work, taking it forward, increasing its profundity. Research is a matter of looking for a critical place that nevertheless supports research and is, at the same time, meaningful to oneself and to one's work. One learns to become a good "sitter" on the bus by sitting there a lot. Similarly, you learn to become a good researcher and writer by doing these very things. The question is not about one particular thing but about plural strategies and work tasks. But sitting on a bus is not

the same thing as being a passenger: that is only one special part of it. Correspondingly, research requires demarcation and perception, collecting and selection, often case by case.

One can only wonder why it is that when talking about artistic research the first questions to arise concern the demarcation or restriction of the field of study. What is it and what is it not? But why not let it emerge, be disclosed, be constructed, be developed, or whatever? Probably because it is not considered to be under control unless walls have been built around it. Particularly good demarcators are those situated the furthest away from the research, from all kinds of research, from a researching lifestyle. Or are we just imagining all this?

The perennial or permanent problem is that of changeability, ambiguity and multi-disciplinarity, in other words the abundance typical for the nature of the field. The location, both on the discursive level and (above all) in the institutional sense, is not permanent, given or unambiguous. The question is ultimately about power games. Who gets to participate in the discussion, how, with what authorization and with what criteria? And how can institution X have contradictory opinions or emphases about what is desired and why? In this game, artistic research must dare to defend freedom, surprise, Hegelian *Aufhebung* – a process of dialectical creation, something new not fitting the standards being born and retroactively necessitating a change in the standards – and to tolerate contradictions: in a word, autonomy. The central point must be the contents and its production, participation in the process of forming meanings, rather than form or formalities.

If and when, on an abstract level, the research attitude can be roughly outlined in the above-mentioned way, attention is inevitably directed to the questions of what this attitude is and how it affects things in practice. So let us pose the questions in a different way: What is the relevance of artistic research? How can we answer the questions when thinking with and also thinking through already existing examples of doctoral-level artistic research?

The kind of an answer one provides obviously depends strongly on what kind of cases one wants to focus on and present. Earlier in this book we presented some cases from the field of contemporary art (4.2). The aim has been to purposely present both artistic research practices that have taken place within the university framework, and projects that have not been even labelled as artistic research, but which nevertheless fruitfully and effectively demonstrate the chances and even virtues possible with this type of research. Thus, keeping an eye on the content, it is decisively not about what something is called or labelled as, but about what you do under this particular heterogeneously-defined field that is important and worthwhile.

At the end of this section, it is necessary to choose another route. Instead of looking closely at the processes of research, we will focus on two distinguished examples of end results of the artistic research. These projects are Johannes Landgren's thesis *Music, Moment, Message. Interpretive, Improvisational, and Ideological Aspects of Petr Eben's Organ Works* (1997) done at the Department of Musicology at Gothenburg University, and Ylva Gislén's *Rum för handling. Kollaborativt berättandet i digitala medier* [Space for action. Collaborative narrative in digital media] (2003), done at Blekinge Institute of Technology. Both Landgren's and Gislén's dissertation proves how artistic research can produce credible and valuable results both as works of art or collaborative projects and reflective written documents. What is more, both cases are examples that are reachable and that open up meaningfully even to readers, listeners and viewers who are not that well accustomed, as in Landgren's case, to the world of organ music or, as in Gislén's case, to the domain of collaborations in digital media.

Taking up first Landgren's work, it is very easy to describe what it is about. It is not about secret knowledge, and Landgren states his position well. It is about how to write, make, compose, consume, play and listen to music made for and with organs. Landgren had decided to concentrate on the organ compositions of the Czech composer Petr Eben. Landgren analyses the content and structure of Eben's music,

and is especially interested in the interaction between improvisation and composition that happens in Eben's works. Landgren's aim is to "rehabilitate improvisation as a viable topic for both musical scholarship and creative expressions." (1997, 11) How well he succeeds in this, has to be left for professionals in this particular field to answer.

However, it is crystal clear that Landgren succeeds in the more general aim of testing and touching the limits of knowledge production in artistic research. Landgren is not an outsider or neutral observer. He is part of the process, producing interpretations of Eben's main works as a central element of the dissertation (a series of three CDs). Landgren gets closer and closer, and reading the written document makes most sense when listening to the recordings. There is a connection, but not only a straight-forward one. Landgren's text does not flatten Eben's music. It shapes a context within which it is truly enjoyable to take advance of the fact that the music is there, available, readily used and listened to. And it is available for those who are interested in artistic research with a reflective interpretation, a combination which becomes a kind of unforced meeting point across a variety of aspects of time (holding up and opening the simultaneous perspectives of past, present and future) and a variety of different wishes and desires.

What Landgren does particularly well is to articulate the content within which it emerges, while at the same time respecting the time-bound moment of his music. This is an understanding of music that cherishes the structure of the composition as something that allows for improvisation, but not as a-thematic or in any sense free, but as improvisation with a sensibility of the tradition of that particular music that is there and then adjusted to the particular site and setting.

"The advice given as to the stops to be used should be read only as suggestions, depending of course on the organ in question. They are merely intended as indications of my thoughts on the mood of the individual passages. Nor are the given metronome markings meant to be adhered to too strictly, since they too may have to be adjusted according to the acoustics of the building in which the organ is to be played." (Landgren 1997, 80)

Thus, it is as simple as that. We have a partial and contextually very situated artistic answer to the dilemma of composition and improvisation. Both are needed and both are necessary as starting points and continuous elements. It is only when both happen simultaneously that Eben's music achieves what it is after. It delivers a message that is both dependent and non-dependent on the particular time and space. It is a musical message that comes about only when happening in-between these different notions, forms and strategies that are not contradictions but partners in crime, which by necessity need each other to create something unique and different.

Turning to Gislén's dissertation, we can concentrate on the higher methodological awareness that is so central in the work, instead of the product of the dissertation as a work of art. It is a dissertation that both parades a variety of cases and especially illuminates a methodological progress and awareness. What Gislén does as a designer and artist is something that is called *collaborative narratives* in digital media. Her cases range all the way from *Runecast*, which is an installation with a video-projection based on an ancient Icelandic text, which works as a fortune-telling ceremony, to a large-scale design project with Swedish public service television called *Avatopia*, which is about building an avatar world directed towards its usage by teenagers and young adults. All in all, it is an interdisciplinary and inter-medium approach that brings together different techniques and participants. In her own words:

"This dissertation is about a collaborative narrative with the help of digital media and technologies. But it also comprises a statement about being able to design with the purpose of deliberately creating change through new things and milieus, and from this extract conveyable knowledge." (2003, 11)

Gislén starts off her thesis with the aim of combining the doing and the thinking, the actual making of artefacts and critical reflection with and about them. What for her seemed like an obvious approach

turned out to be much more complex and difficult task than she had first thought. The more she searched deeper into the theme of combining practical work and reflective analyses, the more insecure and unsure she became. What is more, during the process she comprehended this as a chance, as a fruitful dilemma, not as a horrible faith that ultimately leads to a cul-de-sac type of problem. She combines design theory with postmodern feminist epistemology in a fresh and innovative way. She does not hide her difficulties and the inherent uncertainty of her enterprises. Instead, she forces that wound and that dilemma into the core of the task.

Gislén sees herself as someone who participates in the process of doing design as research. She tries to distance herself from the awkward but still influential claims that research has to strive for objectivity, validity and to be free of bias. On the contrary, following especially the writings of Donna Haraway, Gislén searches ways for how to situate herself with her project and the research in design and social sciences. Her project is characterized by intuition, subjectivity and private (not public) views, desires, needs and wants.

The immediate result of her critical analyses of research methods is a list of demands and wishes that is worthwhile quoting at length. For her, this kind of research is by its nature something that admits to being contextual and partial, but not relativistic or nihilistic. It has a set of completely new demands embedded within it.

"They set new demands, a completely new character than the conventional theory of knowledge. They set demands, not for our knowledge production to be objective and free from evaluations, but for a critical inclusion and evaluation of our positions and directions in our search for knowledge. They set demands on personal risk taking, on a radical modesty and curiosity in the encounter with the object of knowledge we converse with, and on admissions of those controversies, value conflicts and uncertainties which fit into the political projects we all inevitably are involved with." (Gislén 2003, 43)

For Gislén, the process of research is about the task of being aware of "seeing something as something". It is to learn how to make differences, and to interpret them in a meaningful way. Gislén is very aware of the dangers of subjective knowledge production. Therefore, she stresses how the results do not have to be so certain as to be able to make general claims, but rather something that can be continued and taken further. What this also implies is that the results have to be available for further inquiries, and they have to allow for criticism.

Strategically, it is very interesting how Gislén, as a researcher in the domain of new complex technologies, stresses the abilities and chances that are still inherent in the written format for the self-reflective aspect. She believes that the work has to stand on its own, and it has to function as, for instance, a multimedia educational device. However, there is still a need for words: "I have, nevertheless, a profound faith in language, as both the most important material in, and the precondition for, social communities, both when it is spoken and when it is not spoken." (Ibid., 58)

Gislén finishes her dissertation with a warmly felt and credible belief that what she before thought to be a problem is in fact the possibility of artistic research. During the five-year period of carrying out the research, she seems to have come to terms, step by step, with the idea that her research cannot take place with a cool and neutral distance, but instead, she has to be involved, committed and situated within it. It is a process that one should not try to control. Instead one should learn how to trust the process and the procedure that have begun and are yet to emerge. What she refers to are concepts such as joy, playfulness and adventure.

For Gislén these concepts form the presupposition that enables people and works of art to communicate with each other, and to do so on their own terms, respecting each other's differences. It creates a new kind of situation for a collaboration that has indeed a mighty aim: how to live and to be with yourself, your surroundings and others within your inherently complex and conflictual daily realities. It is only then

that it is even possible to maintain that there is room for things to take shape and place without force and pressure, but with the guidance of – yes, let us repeat it – joy, playfulness and adventure.

5.2 The Reliability of Artistic Research

When artistic research is characterised by producing art works, theorizing, the dialogical nature of creativity, and the process-like nature of the work, the question then arises of how the reliability of such an academic dissertation can be assessed. The most natural starting point for establishing assessment criteria is found in qualitative research, which artistic research in many ways resembles.

The starting point for artistic research is the open subjectivity of the researcher and her admission that she is the central research tool of the research. The goal is not so much about measuring the research object but understanding it. Qualitative research is indeed usually personal in style and contains the researcher's own deliberations. The assessment of artistic research concerns the whole dialogical research and design process. In forming the assessment criteria for artistic research, it is therefore meaningful to refer to previous discussions concerning the reliability of qualitative research. In that discussion it is emphasised that increasingly the "function of the data is to be a source of ideas for the researcher and a catalyst for a (theoretical) discussion, not only a basis for the description of the reality. Data, in other words, accelerate the thinking of the researcher rather than banalize it" (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 216). Nevertheless, the research process must be assessable, and the evaluator must be able to follow the researcher's deductions. The evaluator must be able to see that the results are not only based on the researcher's personal intuition. Therefore, the researcher must, as clearly as possible, describe her data, the interpretation she has made of it, as well as the conclusions and interpretations.

Artistic research is often a tapestry-like weave of many factors – the read, the known, the observed, the created, the imagined and the deliberated – where the author does not so much strive to describe reality but to create a reality for her work with its own laws. The research thus always brings forth meanings and contributes to some theoretical or practically-linked discussion; in which case the first evaluation criterion for research – as art and language – is the convincingness of its rhetoric. The debate about the reliability of qualitative research establishes the central points that the researcher must pay attention to so that the future reader can assess the reliability of the work. The main meaning of reliability is, of course, that the research is intersubjective; in other words, it communicates coherently with the reader. The following five points are of prime importance in carrying out artistic research (see also Aura, Katainen & Suoranta 2001, 42–43):

1. *Presenting the research context and delineating the problems*. It is useful for the researcher, when already choosing the subject, to be aware of its relationship to a specific artistic tradition. In doing so, she brings out the relationship between her own approach to earlier results and prevailing practices. Delineating the problem also leads to the opening up of those problem points that are linked with present professional practices, and which are critical from the point of view of developing such practices.
2. *Credibility and explanations.* An integral aspect of scientific research is the presentation of the theoretical viewpoints, from which the researcher approaches her object and data, and upon which she bases her conclusions. When the researcher presents her data and accompanying interpretations, it must be possible for the reader to follow the progress of the work and the basis for the conclusions arrived at. Furthermore, it must be possible for the reader to follow the research process even when it contains intuitive jumps or inexplicabilities within the artistic creative process. For this purpose, the researcher

can divide up the process into stages that can be closely followed and which tell – for instance, through a sketch, analysis or design diary – about the journey that has led to her choices. Eeva Kurki (2001) has stated: "Publishing the results and putting them forward for assessment are matters where art and science differ from one another. In art the work, the end product, is a goal in itself. In research the road to the goal is equally important. In art 'how' we reach the goal is not important from the receiver's point of view. The artist has the right to preserve her secrets, and even to mislead. In research the author must subject to scrutiny not only her research results but also what road she took to her goal, the basis for presenting what she presents."

3. *The internal coherence and persuasiveness of the research.* The persuasiveness can be achieved by rhetorical modes of presentation such as writing. Thus, for example, at certain junctions of the artistic process, the researcher can include "authentic material" such as a work diary or design sketches, which give the reader the opportunity to formulate her own opinions regarding the interpretations and any conclusions and, if necessary, to respond to them. Furthermore, texts, pictures and other material must form a dialogical relationship to the theorization of the subject and the documenting of the solutions to problems.
4. *The usability, transferability and novelty value of the results.* In research one must consider how the results can be expanded or transferred to other situations, as well as how they renew the practices and skills at hand. The aim could be to find something which renews artistic practice, produces more reflected solution models than previously, and which can be shown to work in practice. The author must also highlight the artistic qualities pertaining to her work, qualities which are essential for the demarcation of the subject. The art work, situated in a certain kind of artistic ethos, where unwritten aesthetical style and taste habits prevail, can also be evaluated as an art work, that is, "aesthetically".

5. *The meaning and importance of the research results to the artistic and research communities.* The research should highlight the ways in which its own results connect back to the community's understanding of its own skill. The view presented in the research about the skill and its different dimensions means not only the increasing of theoretical knowledge (increasing of insight) but also organising skill in a new way (e.g. in practice, education, and institutions). The intersubjective assessment of these effects is an important dimension of the reliability of artistic research.

6 (Instead of) Conclusions

Before or even instead of proceeding to a conclusion, let us pause for a moment, and change the perspective. What would everything that has been said above mean from the point of view of the institutions, arts academies and universities offering artistic research? What kind of research and assessment practices should be developed in them? What kind of research attitude should be favoured? To complement the list given from the perspective of the person doing research (in chapter 4.1 above), let us present a list for the institutions:

1. The work of the institutions must be based on self-definition and self-critique. One must define the goals (e.g. the quality – not method – of the research) aimed for, and one must work to promote these in relation to other institutions (e.g. the financiers). One must create the framework for fruitful artistic research and an interaction coloured by research.
2. One must offer the opportunity for participation, experimentation and even failure, and similarly for taking risks and avoiding a final set-up of established research methods and ways of presenting research results. In other words, one must offer space for creative uncertainty, experimentations and errors. Criticality, openness and

tolerance do not concern specifically individual students but all levels of the institution.

3. One must encourage the doctoral students to cooperate closely, to question and discuss the basic principles (e.g. what is research, what is the point of it, and why is it done?). Questioning functions as a constructively critical opening move.
4. One must clearly explain what one's aims are: what, for instance, is the aim of the academic degree? And what are its consequences?
5. One must dare to trust the fact that the practice of artistic research creates itself, step by step. One must remember that research is a balancing act, continuously searching on the one hand for a common ground and trust and on the other for freedom and flexibility, as well as an ability to listen and criticise. Concretely, this means some sort of *unconcern for the results* prevailing in the institution. It does not require courage, but maybe more a sense of self-preservation.

We want to emphasise that co-operation is power. It would, for instance, be interesting to develop the reliability of artistic research by developing the practice of evaluating dissertations and other research reports. Dissertations could be evaluated more communally and socially than they have been (i.e. more communally and socially than through the system of external examiners). Such forms of assessment could comprise, for instance, public panels. Public panel assessment would be useful for artistic research in many ways. This would require from the expert a familiarity with the work being assessed and an ability for discussion, where the value of the work would be deliberated upon and decided. The publicity from the assessment would, furthermore, include a clear cultural function: it would teach a wider audience than the selected few to understand more profoundly the meanings of art and its basis for evaluation. The transparency of the assessment would also improve the researchers' rights by reducing the arbitrariness of the assessment or the influence of the debates between

different schools of thought occurring independent of the researcher. Furthermore, it would certainly raise the general appreciation, influence and social meaning of artistic research. All in all, this would be one new way to define the quality of research, because public debate about the basic nature of artistic research is part not only of academic reality but also of other realities; that is, it is also important for man's social existence.

Several factors will have to be particularly specified in the methodology of artistic research. How does the theorization of practice specifically take place? In what forms of presentation is such a research method to be made? It can hardly be a question about merely documenting the artists' work, because it is necessary to preserve, from beginning to end, the dialogicality between the research and the artistic. Contrary to standard research practices, artistic research can be considered from such a perspective where questions, thinking, discussions and many other forms of activity are evident, in order to make clear whether some issue or other is of relevance, and whether it communicates to more than just the community of the select few. We know that the following claim is problematic – and is perhaps methodologically the most problematic in the debate about artistic research. But let us nevertheless pose our claim, if nothing else, as an experiment to test reactions. The claim is thus: for something to be counted as artistic research, it must include (apart from everything else) a linguistic part, that is, a verbal account of what has been done, thought, invented and developed. When it comes to an academic doctoral thesis, one cannot hide from this task within the elitism of an all-justifying artistic attitude.

These issues can be better addressed when there are more examples of doctoral dissertations than there are presently. Progress in the matter also occurs from the starting points of each particular work and by discussing the goals. In order to draw up and discuss the common evaluation criteria, cooperation and a common forum are needed. To date, there has already been direct cooperation between different arts

academies, but there are still many opportunities to take advantage of, and much to do in the development of cooperation. Suspicion and prejudice between the different areas are sometimes understandable because they are rather young and still only in the process of taking shape. And doubt and suspicion at least indicate that artistic research has been able to learn from the territorial fights and debates about definitions from those fields – for instance, within the natural and social sciences – that have already progressed further.

Saying this also means acknowledging the fact that there is currently a battle for hegemony in the field of artistic research. In hegemony the question is ultimately about power and control. The battle for hegemony does indeed mean that there are parties and interests that would like to have the last word in some matter; in this case defining what artistic research is. There would be many contenders in the field interested in such a task, and therefore it is important to try and keep the initiative and power of definition in one's own hands.

There are few cases of research based on experiential practices. The fact that there are few precedents is a cause not only for worry but also for joy. There are indeed long traditions of assessing doctoral-type dissertations, but these are not necessarily nearly as long traditions as those for assessing the mastery of experiential practices. Nowadays, when research based on experiential practices is assessed – for instance, when handing out academic degrees – one must, of course, pay attention to critical reflection and the intersubjectivity of expression in quite a different way than, for instance, when handing out awards of achievement within the professions or guilds. The quality of expression and the ability manifesting itself within it to know the tradition and to question it, have a key position. This, of course, sets very specific challenges for the whole research community, which must trust its own judgement to a much wider extent than in those other fields which are more frequently practised. Here, as elsewhere, practice creates itself – first one step, and then the next.

In order for practice to create itself, and in order for the pacing to be possible, openness, tolerance and polyphony are needed both on the individual and (above all) on the institutional level. This means that institutional opportunities to be independent or to create something unique first have to be created for carrying out research. The institutional preparedness gives a chance to honour this opportunity through research which is committed and logical, and which communicates with the objects of research and the surrounding research community. It will also provide an opportunity to interact with communities of practice other than research communities. In this regard "the workplace, day-care centre, local church, youth centre, hospitals, movie studios, TV programs" (Giroux 1996, 153), as well as city streets and the Internet blogs are rich and varied cultural spaces, that is, sites of artistic expression and manoeuvres. In them people can engage in social and artistic "practices that create, and circulate knowledge, pleasure, and power" (ibid. 153). It is essential in the whole process of artistic research that the end result of the research is not defined before its implementation. Instead, a certain unconcern is cultivated in regards to such ends.

Maybe the worst thing that could happen in this whole open situation of methodological development would be that a tall science-and-research-political fence would be erected around artistic research, demarcating its 'own' area of research. We ourselves are, in fact, fascinated by the thought of the 'impurity' of artistic research as an area where the borders are not clear. Actually, we would like to talk about artistic research as non-science or 'anti-science'. This means that artistic research would not perhaps at all be worth thinking about in the traditional sense as a field of science but as a kind of praxis, in other words, a doctrine of study, in which one can deliberate and problematise different practices, including those in which also artistic research is produced. We think of artistic research as one particular "genealogical" practice, in which the basis for carrying out research is proposed in the same way as has been done by Michel Foucault:

"The question or questions that have to be asked are: 'What type of knowledge are you trying to disqualify when you say that you are a science? What speaking subjects, what discursive subject, what subject of experience and knowledge are you trying to minorize when you begin to say: ' I speak this discourse, I am speaking a scientific discourse, and I am a scientist.' What theoretico-political vanguard are you trying to put on the throne in order to detach it from all the massive, circulating, and discontinuous forms that knowledge can take?" (Foucault 2003, 10.)

The critical attitude concerning the basis of such activity and, simultaneously, the unconcern with regards to the end result are central features in artistic and all other research where something new is created. Artistic research must be given space and time to breathe and to develop, and this requires self-protection and self-definition. One must be able – even by bending the rules – to find or create courage for experimentation, for taking risks and, above all, for enjoying the uncertainty, detours and failures of research.

Bibliography

Aura, Seppo, Katainen, Juhani & Suoranta, Juha. *Theory, Research and Practice. Some Perspectives on Postgraduate Education in Architecture*. Tampere University of Technology. Department of Architecture, Publications 4, 2001.

Aura, Seppo, Katainen, Juhani & Suoranta, Juha. "Theory, Research and Practice. Towards Reflective Relationship Between Theory and Practice in Architectural Thinking." *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research* 15 (1), 2002.

Badiou, Alan. Ethics. *An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*. Verso, London 2002.

Balkema, Annette & Slager, Henk (eds.), *Artistic research*. Special volume of Lier & Boog Series of Philosophy of Art and Art Theory, vol. 18. Rodopi, Amsterdam 2004.

Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography.* Hill & Wang, New York 1982.

Bataille, Georges. *Inner Experience.* SUNY, New York 1988.

Bauer, Uta (ed.). *Exhibition catalogue.* 3. Berlin Biennial for Contemporary Art, Berlin 2004.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Society Under Siege.* Polity Press, Cambridge 2002.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Life in Fragments. Essays in Postmodern Morality.* Blackwell, London 1995.

Biggs, Michael. "Learning from Experience. Approaches to the experimental component of practice-based research". In *Forskning, Reflektion, Utveckling.* Edited by Kälvemark, Torsten. Vetenskapsrådet, Stockholm 2004.

Boal, Augusto. *The Rainbow of Desire*. Routledge, New York & London 1995. See also www.theatreoftheoppressed.org

Bogdan, Robert & Biklen, Sari Knopp. *Qualitative Methods for Education*, 2 ed. Allyn & Bacon, Boston 1992.

Chalmers, Alan. *What is this thing called science?* University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia 1976.

Dewey, John & Bentley, Arthur. *Knowing and the Known*. Greenwood Press, Westport 1976.

Dewey, John. *Experience and Nature.* Open Court, New York 1958.

Donachie, Jacqueline. *Somewhere to Stand.* Exhibition publication by University of Edinburgh, Talbot Rice Gallery, 2004.

Donachie, Jacqueline. *DM*. University of Glasgow, Glasgow 2002.

Drucker, Johanna. 1995. *The Century of Artists' Books,* Granary Books, New York 1995.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickeland Dimed. On (Not) Getting by in America*. Owl Books, New York 2001.

Ehrnrooth, Jari. *Kaksi syntymää ja yksi kuolema*. WSOY, Helsinki 2004.

Enzensberger, Hans. "Suuri muutto – 33 merkintää". In Lehtonen, Mikko & Löytty, Olli (Eds.), *Erilaisuus* (pp. 21–49). Vastapaino, Tampere 2003.

Eskola, Antti & Kurki, Leena. *Miehestä mittaa*. Kirjapaja, Helsinki 2004.

Eskola, Antti. "Tieto hyvä, usko huono". In Jussila, Raimo, Kalalahti, Aulikki & Rautoja, Sirkka (Eds.). *Tieto ja kirja* (pp. 115–126). Suomen Tietokirjailijat, Jyväskylä 2001.

Eskola, Antti. *Jäähyväisluentoja*. Tammi, Helsinki 1997.

Eskola, Jari & Suoranta, Juha. *Johdatus laadulliseen tutkimukseen.* Vastapaino, Tampere 1998.

Feyerabend, Paul. *Against Method.* Verso, London 1975.

Feyerabend, Paul. *Killing Time.* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1994.

Feyerabend, Paul. *Conquest of Abundance.* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1999.

Foucault, Michel. *Society Must Be Defended*. Picador, New York 2003.

Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews & Other Writings.*Edited by C. Gordon. Pantheon, London 1980.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic Books, New York 1973.

Giroux, Henry. *The Mouse that Roared. Disney and the End of Innocence*. Rowman & Littlefield, Boulder 1999.

Giroux, Henry. *Channel Surfing. Race Talk and the Destruction of Today's Youth*. St. Martin's Press, New York 1997.

Giroux, Henry. *Fugitive Cultures. Race, Violence, and Youth*. Routledge, New York & London 1996.

Gislèn, Ylva. *Rum för handling. Kollaborativt berättandet i digitala medier. Blekinge Tekniska Högskola, Karslkrona 2003.*

Grossberg, Lawrence. *Mielihyvän kytkennät*. Vastapaino, Tampere 1995.

Hampshire, Stuart. *Justice is Conflict*. Princeton University Press, Princeton 2000.

Hannula, Mika. "River Low, Mountain High. Contextualising Artistic Research". In Balkema, Annette & Slager, Henk (eds.), *Artistic research*. Special volume of Lier & Boog Series of Philosophy of Art and Art Theory, vol. 18. Rodopi, Amsterdam 2004.

Hannula, Mika. "Liisa Roberts". *NU- the Nordic Art Review, No.* 1–2, 2002.

Hannula, Mika 2002. "The Responsibility and Freedom of Interpretation". In Kiljunen, Satu & Hannula, Mika (eds.), *Artistic research*. Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki 2002.

Hannula, Mika. *Kolmas paikka*. Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki 2001.

Hannula, M., Suoranta, J. & Vadén, T. *Otsikko uusiksi. Taiteellisen tutkimuksen suuntaviivat*. Society for European philosophy, Tampere 2003.

Hanson, Norwood Russell. *Patterns of Discovery.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1958.

Healey, Patsy. "Collaborative Planning in Perspective". *Planning Theory* 2 (2), 2003.

Healey, Patsy. *Collaborative Planning. Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997.

Heritage, John. *Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology.* Polity Press, Cambridge, UK 1984.

Holridge, Lin & MacIeod, Katy (eds.).*Thinking Through Art*. Taylor & Francis, London 2005.

Husserl, Edmund. *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft.* Klostermann, Frankfurt 1981. (originally published 1911)

Häkli, Jouni. *Meta Hodos – Johdatus ihmismaantieteeseen*. Vastapaino, Tampere 1999.

Ikonen, Petteri. “Taiteillen taiteen tutkimukseen.” *Arttu*, no. 1, 2001.

Jones, Timothy. “A Method of Search for Reality: Research and Research Degrees in Art and Design”. In *Thinking Through Art*. Edited by Holridge, Lin & MacIeod, Katy. Taylor & Francis, London 2005.

Karlsson, Henrik. “Handslag, famntag, klapp eller kyss? Konstnärlig forskarutbildning i Sverige”. *Skrifter 4*. Sister, 2001.

Kellner, Douglas. *Media Culture.* Routledge, London & New York 1995.

Kiljunen, Satu & Hannula, Mika (eds.), *Artistic research.* Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki 2002.

Klein, Naomi. *No Logo*. Picador, New York 2001.

Knorr-Cetina, Karin. *Epistemic Cultures. How the Sciences Make Knowledge*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. & London 1999.

Kuhn, Thomas. *The Road Since Structure.* Edited by Conant, J. & Haugeland, J. University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2000.

Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1962.

Kurkela, Kari. “Sibelius-Akatemian jatko-opiskelijat tekevät taidetta ja tutkivat.” *Sibis, no. 1,* 2000.

Kurki, Eeva. “Taiteen taso vai tiedon hyöty? Taideteoksia sisältävien opinnäytteiden arvioinnin dilemma.” In *Ohjaus ja arviointi taidealojen jatkotutkintojen opinnäytetöissä.* Edited by Tuominen, Marja & Kurki, Eeva. University of Lapland, Faculty of Arts, No. C23, Rovaniemi 2001.

Kälvemark, Torsten. *Forskning, Reflektion, Utveckling.* Vetenskapsrådet , Stockholm 2004.

Laine, Kimmo. *Koulukuvia*. SoPhi, Jyväskylä 2000.

Landgren, Johannes. *Music, Moment, Message. Interpretive, Improvisational, and Ideological Aspects of Petr Eben’s Organ Works.* University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg 1997.

Latour, Bruno. “When Things Strike Back: A Possible Contribution of ‘Science Studies’ to the Social Sciences.” *British Journal of Sociology* 51 (1), 2000.

Latour, Bruno & Woolgar, Steve. *Laboratory Life. The Social Construction of Scientific Facts*. Sage, Thousand Oaks 1979.

Lave, Jane & Wenger, Etienne. *Situated Learning. Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *Whose Justice?, Which Rationality?* Duckworth, London 1988.

Marx, Karl & Engels, Friedrich. *The Communist Manifesto*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 1998. (Originally published 1848).

Miles, Malcolm (ed.). *New Practices, New Pedagogies. A Reader*. Routledge, London 2005

Niiniluoto, Ilkka. *Critical Scientific Realism*. Clarendon, Oxford 2000.

OEI. Special number "Textkonst, visuell poesi, Konceptuellt skrivande". *OEI, Nos. 18, 19, 20, 21,* 2004.

Payne, Antonia (ed.). *Research and the Artist. Considering the Role of the Art School*. Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, University of Oxford, Oxford 2000.

Plotnitsky, Arkady. *The Knowable and the Unknowable. Modern Science, Nonclassical Thought and the "Two Cultures",* University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 2002.

Popper, Karl. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery.* Hutchinson, London 1959.

Reskalenko, Kirsti. "The 1950's Renovation of Viipuri Library". *ptah,* no. 2, 2002

Ricupero, Christina. "This is not the End, My Friend… An Interview with Liisa Roberts, June 2003". In *Black Box Illuminated*, edited by Arrhenius, S., Malm, M. & Ricupero, C. IASPIS, NIFCA & Propexus 2003.

Ridell, Seija. *Tolkullistamisen politiikkaa*. Acta Universitatis Tamperensis, Tampere 1998.

Roberts, Liisa. *What's the Time in Vyborg?*, Malmö Konstmuseum, Malmö 2003.

Rorty, Richard. *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature.* Princeton University Press, Princeton 1980.

Rorty, Richard. *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991.

Sari, Eveliina & Miettinen, Reijo. "Dynamics of Change in Research Work: Constructing a New Research Area in a Research Group." *Science, Technology & Human Values*, 26 (3), 2001.

Slager, Henk. "Discours de la Méthode". In Balkema, Annette & Slager, Henk (eds.)*, Artistic research.* Special volume of Lier & Boog Series of Philosophy of Art and Art Theory, vol. 18. Rodopi, Amsterdam 2004.

Suonpää, Juha. *Petokuvan raadollisuus*. Vastapaino, Tampere 2002.

Suoranta, Juha. “Tekstin lumo ja maailman yltäkylläisyys.” In Varto, J., Saarnivaara, M. & Tervahattu, H. (eds.). *Kohtaamisia taiteen ja tutkimisen maastoissa.* Akatiimi, Helsinki 2003.

Vadén, Tere & Hannula, Mika. *Rock the Boat. Localized Ethics, the Situated Self and Particularism in Contemporary Art.* Salon Verlag, Köln 2003.

Vadén, Tere. “Kokemuksellinen demokratia ja tutkimuksen avoimuus ja kriittisyys.” In Varto, J., Saarnivaara, M. & Tervahattu, H. (eds.). *Kohtaamisia taiteen ja tutkimisen maastoissa.* Akatiimi, Helsinki 2003.

Vadén, Tere. “Openness, Criticality and Language. Observations on the methodology of practice-based experiential research” in Kiljunen, S. & Hannula, M. (eds.), *Artistic research.* Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki 2002.

Varto, Juha. *Uutta tietoa. Värityskirja tieteen filosofiaan.* Tampere University Press, Tampere 2000.

Varto, Juha. ”Uuden tieteenalan ongelmat”. *niin & näin* 4/1996.

Varto, Juha. *Kannettava filosofinen sanakirja*. Tampere University Press, Tampere 1992.

Vattimo, Gianni. *Tulkinnan etiikka*. Tutkijaliitto, Helsinki 1999.

Wenger, Etienne. *Communities of Practice. Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.

Zizek, Slavoj. *The Puppet and the Dwarf. The Perverse Core of Christianity*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA. 2003.

Zizek, Slavoj. *The Abyss of Freedom.* Published together with F.W.J. Schelling, *Ages of the World*. The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 1997.