

**ART-PRACTICE-LED AND
ARTISTIC RESEARCH
METHODOLOGIES IN FILM,
SCENOGRAPHY AND
COSTUME**

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Maker, Researcher, Researcher-Maker.

What do we aim to "know" through and within practice?

What is the aim of the "knowledge" we create?

What "type" of knowledge we are after?

Different "types" and definitions of knowledge:

A Priori "from before". What we know without experiencing. Knowledge based on reasoning. Theoretical knowledge.

A Posteriori "from what comes after", inductive (empirical knowledge)

Explicit Knowledge (to know what)

Tacit Knowledge (to know how)

Propositional Knowledge (also Descriptive or Declarative Knowledge) what can be declared or argued for.

Non-Propositional Knowledge (also Procedural Knowledge) acquired by doing, does not exist as truth claims.

Methodology: finding the right path to get where we are trying go.

- **WHAT? WHY? HOW?**

Artistic or practice-led research questions?

- Recognizing the questions behind the research questions.
- Recognizing **in the questions what type of answers** we can imagine finding by asking them.
- In practice-based, practice-led and artistic research:

Understanding what kind of a role the processes of art making, practice or critical praxis has in the whole of the research project is the key question.

THE COMPONENT OF PRAXIS: Is it a starting point? A cumulative process? A culmination point of the whole research process? An **experiment or series of experiments** in which we test something within certain artistic research parameters? Material within which we propose, think, reflect and think (art as another language of philosophy).

What is practice? What are the parts and parcels of maker's knowledge.

- To recognise the artistic or art-practice-based research question requires understanding what **particular** *question in artistic or design process we are focusing on.*

- *Any "authorship" or practice does not exist in a vacuum.*

"Practice" is a cumulation of tradition and collective tacit knowledge + "ideologies" of praxis.

- *Convention = an invisible set of rules affecting any particular "practice" , "how it is usually done". These rules are historically formed and re-enforced by education, industry & communities of practitioners.*
- **Doxa.** *Conventions also conceal their discursive nature. "A way of seeing the world".*

They Call it (Art)-Practice-Based Research, Artistic Research, Art Research, Practice as Research (PAR), Art-based Research...

How to Navigate the Terminological Jungle?

- What role the practice has in the whole of research is a key question when answering “how”, methodologically, the research questions can be answered.
- Practice-led research questions **stem** from the practice.
- (Art) Practice as research (PAR)
- Art- based research
- **Artistic research**: artistic processes, art making and artistic experimenting have a paramount place as a research inquiry. Research with and within art.

Epistemological roots

- Postmodern turn from the 1960s on. Post-structuralism.
- Situated knowledge.
- The idea that all forms of knowledge reflect the particular conditions in which they are produced.
- **Embodied knowledge.**
- Embodied knowledge situates intellectual and theoretical insights within the realm of the material world. Embodied knowledge is sensory; it highlights smell, touch, and taste as well as more commonly noted sights and sounds. Knowledge grounded in bodily experience.

- **Michael Polanyi (1891-1976):** *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (1958). *Tacit knowledge: The Tacit dimension* (1966).
- **Background in Engineering, Physics, Chemistry, Social Sciences** (the latter in Britain after 1930s)
- **Opposition to positivism, acknowledging the role of tacit knowing and personal investment in knowledge production** (note: in Natural Sciences!)
- **Embraced the idea of objective truth but opposed the mechanistic idea of scientific method.**

- **Notion of tacit knowledge as a precursor for Thomas Kuhn's idea of scientific paradigms.**
- **PRACTICE TURN:** Theodore R. Schatzki, Karin Knorr-Cetina, Eike von Savigny. *Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* Psychology Press, 2001.

FREUD:

”Cases which are devoted from the first to scientific purposes and are treated accordingly suffer in their outcome; while the most successful cases are those in which one proceeds, as it were, without any purpose in view, allows oneself to be taken by surprise by any new turn in them, and always meets them with an open mind, free from presuppositions”.

(Freud, 1912/1958, p. 114)

WHAT IS AT STAKE?

- Epistemological challenge: artistic research challenges the established notions of INSTITUTIONALIZED demarcation of what is “making” (and where it belongs) and what is “thinking” (and where it belongs) , what is knowledge, and how we “know” (higher and lower: sensual, experiential vs. conceptual)
- A division of labor, of status already in Plato’s ideas: those who “make” and those who “think”.
- THE POLITICS **KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION.**
- AND THE “**POETICS**” OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION. Rancière: poetics of knowledge.

- Aristotle:

three human activities

Theoria (Thinking, Contemplating, Speculating, Looking at)

Poeisis (Making)

Praxis (Doing)



ARTISTIC RESEARCH

Artistic research: formulations

Scandinavia, continental Europe.
Society of Artistic Research (SAR), Annual conference.

Online platforms, Artistic research journals JAR (international), Ruukku (Finnish) VIS (Nordic). EXPOSITIONS INSTEAD OF ARTICLES.

Henk Borgdorff: *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia* (2012).

Boundary Work bw. art field/s and Academia

-Artistic research provides a specific articulation of the pre-reflective, non-conceptual content of art.

-Invites: 'unfinished thinking'

-”It is **not formal knowledge** that is the subject matter of artistic research, but **thinking in, through, and with art.**”

-Artistic research is different from all the other forms of “research” that are always, an integral part of art –making: artistic research as boundary work impacts both the domain of art and the domain of academic research.

-Artistic research, as defined by Borgdorff, **differs from art practice in itself.**

-In both domains : border violations.

- Artworks as an **“outcome”** not just an **“object”** of research as in humanities (art research)
- **The method, the content, the context, the outcome.**
- **Research on the arts (art as an object), Academic art research**
- **research for the arts** (art as an objective...technical, e.g.how to serve its betterment). Practice-led research?
- **research in (or within) arts art practice. Arts not just as the object or objective but a method of research. Artistic research.**
- **”The distinctiveness of artistic research, nevertheless, derives from the paramount place that artistic practice occupies as the subject, context, method, and outcome of the research”.**
- **“Methodologically: the creative process forms a pathway though which new insights, understandings, and products come into being”.**

- **Henk Borgdorff, Peter Peters, and Trevor Pinch (2019)**
- **“Artist-scholars in this field focus on the knowledge, understanding, and experiences enacted in creative processes and embodied in artistic products such as artworks, compositions, and performances”.**
- **“To demarcate artistic research from other types of research it is generally agreed in the field that artworks, varying from concrete, material artefacts to ephemeral performances or artist interventions, should be part of the outcome of the investigation.”**
- **“Even the documentation of the research outcome, varying from audio or video registrations of performances to exhibition catalogues and so-called ‘artist-books,’ does not suffice as an account of the research.”**
- **Additional work has to be done to articulate and communicate the research, to show that it involves ‘a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared’ (Research Excellence Framework, 2011, p. 48).**

Mika Hannula, Juha Suoranta, Tere Vadén: Artistic Research: Theories, Methods and Practices.

(See also: Mika Hannula, Juha Suoranta, Tere Vadén: *Artistic Research Methodology- Narrative, Power and the Public.*

- **The art work is the focal point.**
- 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 communication 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.**

Goals and purposes (why):

- **Producing information that serves practice**; for instance, from eco-logical, 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, so-cial-psychological and psychological as well as political and peda-gogical 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 consequences 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.

- “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.”

*practical virtue, wisdom relevant in practice.



ARTISTIC RESEARCH
AS
CRITICAL PRAXIS
OR/AND
A CATALYSIS OF NEW
POETICS?

CRITICAL THINKING
(THEORY) + FILMMAKING
(PRACTICE) = CRITICAL
PRAXIS.

CATALYSING NEW RATHER
THAN CATALOGUING WHAT
ALREADY EXISTS.

EARLY CINEMA

**EARLY THEORY OF CINEMA HAD AN ORGANIC
RELATION TO FILM PRACTICE. THE GAP
SEPARATING FILM PRACTICE AND FILM
THEORY DIDN'T EXIST.**

FILMMAKERS' THEORY

FORMULATIONS OF ARTISTIC PRINCIPLES

**INSTITUTIONAL DIVISION OF LABOR:
FILM STUDIES & FILM PRACTICE.**

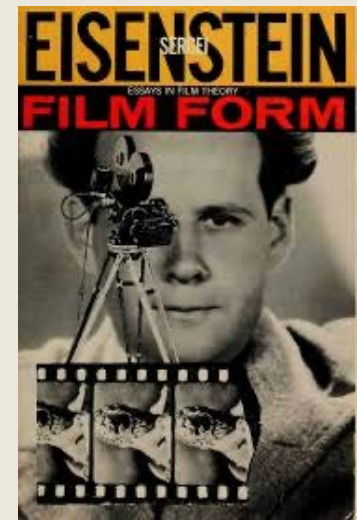
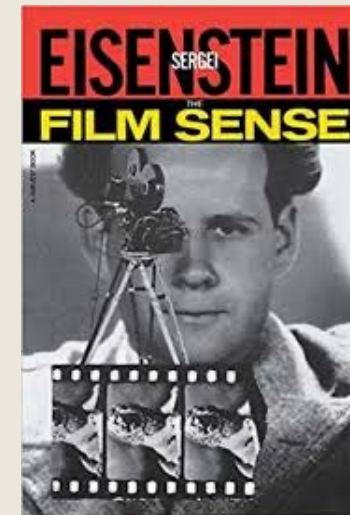
Sergei Eisenstein as a filmmaker theorist.

Theory of montage as one example.

CREATING THE POETICS OF MONTAGE & OF THE NEW ART FORM THROUGH FILMMAKING AND THINKING (THEORIZING).

Tested, expressed and promoted his montage theory through his theoretical essays and films.

THEORY ALSO EMBEDDED IN HIS FILMS.



Hermeneutic circle of artistic re-search

Politics of representation.
Challenging the conventions of representation
(performative aspect of representation).

Proposals in representation

Practice

Theory

Theory

Practice

Practice

Experiment
Art work
Method

Theory

Politics of practice
Contextualizing the practice
as a convention.
The community of practitioners.
Field. Traditions.

Poetics:
Methods,
forms.

Experimenting, proposing,
testing new styles, methods=poetics
"INNOVATION" (Kirkkopelto).

New forms

New practices

Practice

Practice

WHY THEORIZING WITHIN PRACTICE: CRITICAL PRACTIS

- Praxis?
- as an Ancient Greek term: activity by free people.
- Theoria aims at truth, poeisis aims at production, praxis aims at action.
- Aristotle: Praxis expressed as politics, economic, ethics. (Theoria=aim is truth, Poeisis= making aims at production)
- Praxis as an essential concept in Western philosophy, referred to by Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Marx, Arendt, Gramsci, Freire.
- Karl Marx: **Praxis**. Emphasis in the reflective human capacity to alter the natural and social world, **dialectic relation of theory & practice** in order to make visible the historical specificity and structural foundations of the reality we live in, the ideological formations it conceals, and the conditions in which antagonisms take root.

■ **CATALYZING CHANGE IN THE MODES, PRACTICES AND FORMS OF ANY GIVEN ARTFORM, CONVENTION OF PRACTICE.**

■ **SMALL FRACTIONS. THE “NEW” FOR THE NOVELTY’S SAKE IS NOT THE AIM.**

HOMO ECONOMICUS. HOW THE PARADIGMS WE ARE ENTANGLED WITH CAN BE CHALLENGED.



(ART-)PRACTICE-
LED-
RESEARCH

(ART-)PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH & (ART)-PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH & STUDIO-BASED RESEARCH

Practice-related research is an accepted methodology in medicine, design, and engineering (where it is often called **'action research'** [Reason and Bradbury 2001], referring to **field-based research** and **participatory experiments** as **opposed to laboratory tests**).

"As such, practice related research in the arts and design is referred to in many different ways; 'the terms "arts-based research", 'practice-based research', 'practice-led research', 'practice-centered research', [and] 'studio-based research' are **more or less used synonymously**' (Niedderer and Roworth-Stokes 2007, 7).

The identification of research questions and, problems, but the research methods, contexts and outputs involve **a significant focus on creative practice**. (Sullivan 2009, 48).

The outcomes: intended to **develop** the **individual practice** and the **practice of the field**, to build theory related to the practice in order to gain new knowledge or insight. (Niedderer and Roworth-Stokes 2007, 10; Sullivan 2009,

What new knowledge/understandings these methodologies generate that may not have been revealed through other research approaches?

ALSO the capacity to promote a more profound understanding of **how knowledge is revealed, acquired and expressed**.

In design research, for example, where the nature of practice is a major research topic and is often conducted by research specialists rather than design practitioners, the emphasis is on achieving new knowledge about the nature of practice and how to improve it, rather than creating and reflecting on new artefacts.

In the visual arts:

-the emphasis is on creative process and the works that are generated from that process.

-the artefact plays a vital part in the new understandings about practice that arise.

(ART-)PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH

The creative artefact is the basis of the contribution to knowledge.

Seeking new knowledge through practice and its outcomes.

Claims of originality are demonstrated through the creative artefacts and artworks.

The creative **artefact is accompanied by a critical discussion** of the significance and context of the claims, and a full understanding can only be achieved through the cohesive presentation of the creative artefact and the critical exegesis.

Practice element= Experiment/s.

What emerges= the **exegesis accompanying the creative work.**

Implicit knowledge becomes explicit. What has remained implicit within the artist, becomes explicit and put in relation to the academic theory.

(ART-)PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH

Focus on the creative/artistic/design practice, leading to new knowledge which is valuable **for that practice**, in order to advance the field.

Similarities with development research

knowledge *about* or *within* practice.

The results communicated in a critical exegesis often **without inclusion of the creative artefact as such, BUT the creative practice is an integral part of the research process.**

Differences between practice-based and practice-led research:

If the **research** leads primarily to new understandings **about practice**, it is **practice-led**.

In our context: tacit knowledge about practices in the communities of practitioners.

Qualitative research methods (interview data) meet practice-led (based) perspectives.

Practice-based research is an original investigation undertaken in order to gain **new knowledge** partly **by means of practice** and the outcomes of that **practice**.

Note: both Hannula & al. + Borgdorff use practice-based synonymously with artistic research.

Term practice-led has been used by some authors in preference to the term

practice-based in order to acknowledge the change in emphasis from the production of original artefacts to the integration of artistic practice into the research process (Lycouris, 2011, pp. 62-63).

Practice as Research in the Arts (PAR)

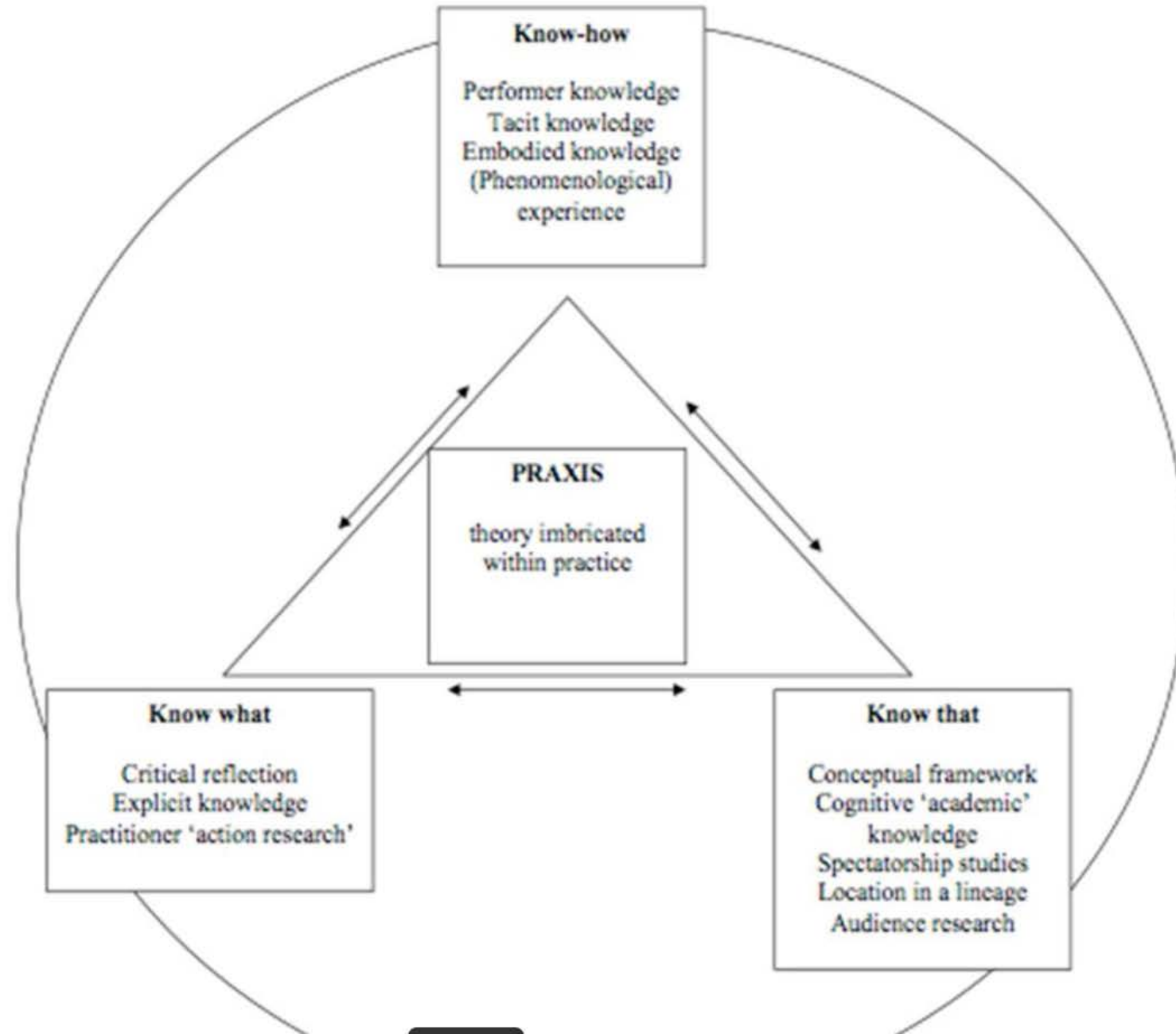
Robin Nelson 2013

- Praxis. Intelligent practice.
- Doing knowing.
- Consists of the following types of knowledge:
 - **Know-how**, procedural knowledge in contrast to propositional knowledge (know that).
 - **Know-what**...pausing , critical reflection of know how.
 - **Know-that** . Reflection in relation to theory. Other fields, knowledge that goes beyond the know-how and particularities of any given practice.

- **Iterative** process of doing-reflecting-reading-articulating-doing.
- The logocentric tradition of the Western intellectual tradition... danger is privileging theory over practice.
- Resonances with other research inquiries.
- “Something has gone wrong in the PAR inquiry if a practitioner-researcher feels that she needs to grasp at the theory to justify the practice”. P.32
- Theory imbricated (overlap) **within** practice instead of his earlier formulation: practice is informed by theory and vice-versa. To resist the separation of the two and the possible a temporal relation of precedence.

- **Literary sources (theory): the rigour of PAR lies in syncretism, not in depth-mining.**
- **Knowledge in the field should be up to date in order to claim new “knowledge”.**
- **In PAR: the **location of work in a lineage of practice more appropriate** than a literature review (though typically `both-and`. P.35**
- **Language: Nelson proposes a combination of a plain style (within the conceptual & theoretical framework) + first person address (when writing about the process)**
- **Gestural poetic modes “to articulate words what is ultimately better danced”. P.35**
- **Prefers the term **complementary writing** when referring to the written element of PAR.**

Robin Nelson (2013) Modes of knowing: multi-mode epistemological model for PAR



PaR Submission is likely to include

A product (exhibition, film, website, performance, score) with a durable record (DVD, CD, video)

Documentation of process (sketchbook, designs, photographs, DVD)

“Complementary writing” which includes locating practice in a lineage of influences and a conceptual framework for the research.

(after Nelson)