

MAPPING THE FIELD OF RESEARCH THROUGH PRACTICE

Maarit Mäkelä 19.10.2022

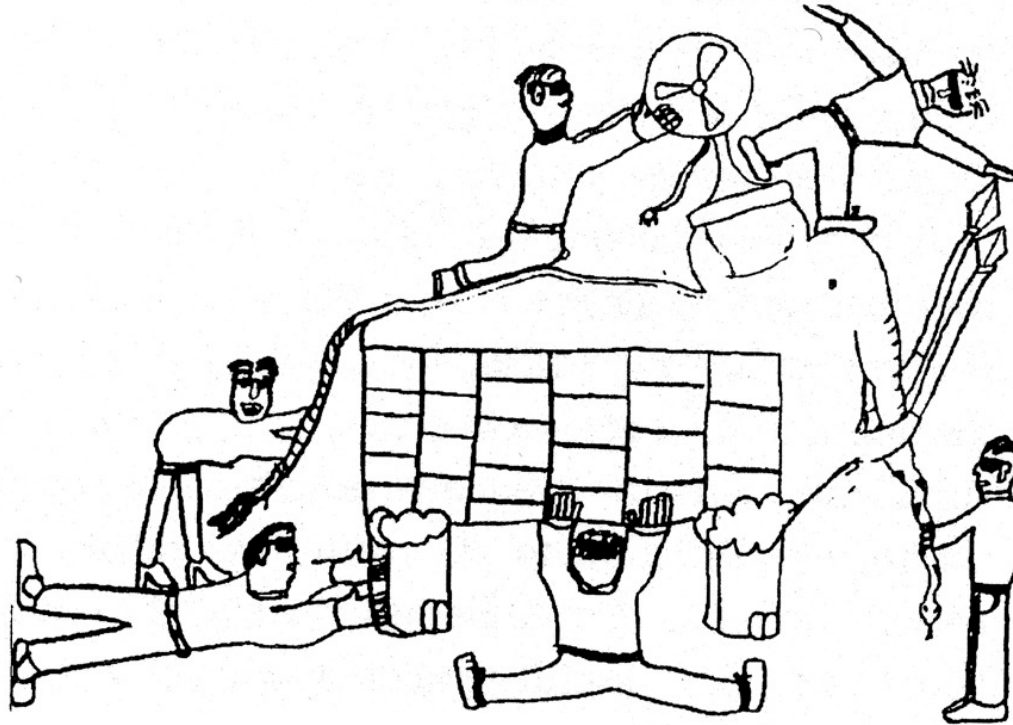
CONTENT

1. Situated knowledge
2. Mapping different discourses around the notion of research through practice
3. What is research?
4. Role of research question
5. Reflective practitioner
6. Tools for capturing the steps and ideas during the practice: documentation & reflection, autoethnography
7. Discussing the results gained through practice: retroactive look

SITUATED KNOWLEDGE



Haraway, Donna (1991). *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women. The Reinvention of Nature.* New York: Routledge.



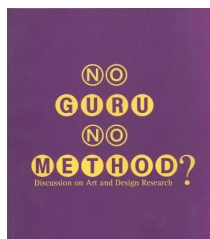
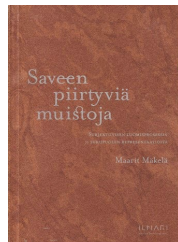
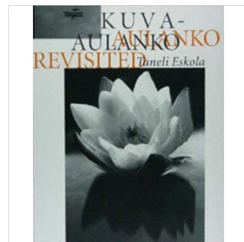
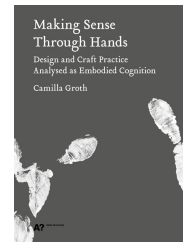
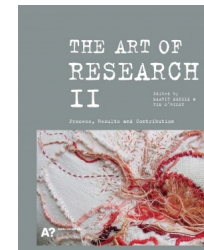
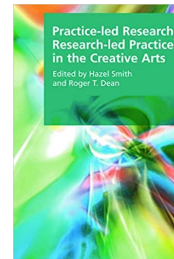
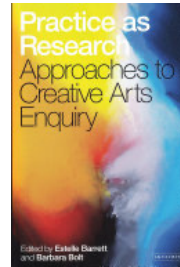
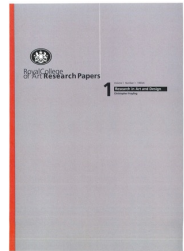
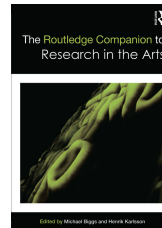
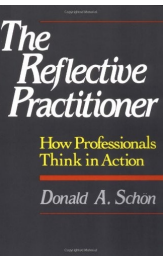
Carole Gray (1998). Inquiry through practice. In Pia Strandman (ed.) No Guru. No Method? Helsinki: University of Art and Design, 82-95.

PERSONAL EXPLORATION



Maarit Mäkelä (2003). *Memories on Clay: Representations of subjective creation process and gender*. Helsinki: University of Art and Design.

RESEARCH THROUGH PRACTICE IN ART AND DESIGN



2000

2010

2020

Aalto

RESEARCH IN ART AND DESIGN

Research into art and design (art historical research)

Art and design is the subject of inquiry to be looked into, a phenomenon to be studied from the outside.

Research through art and design (artefact and research)

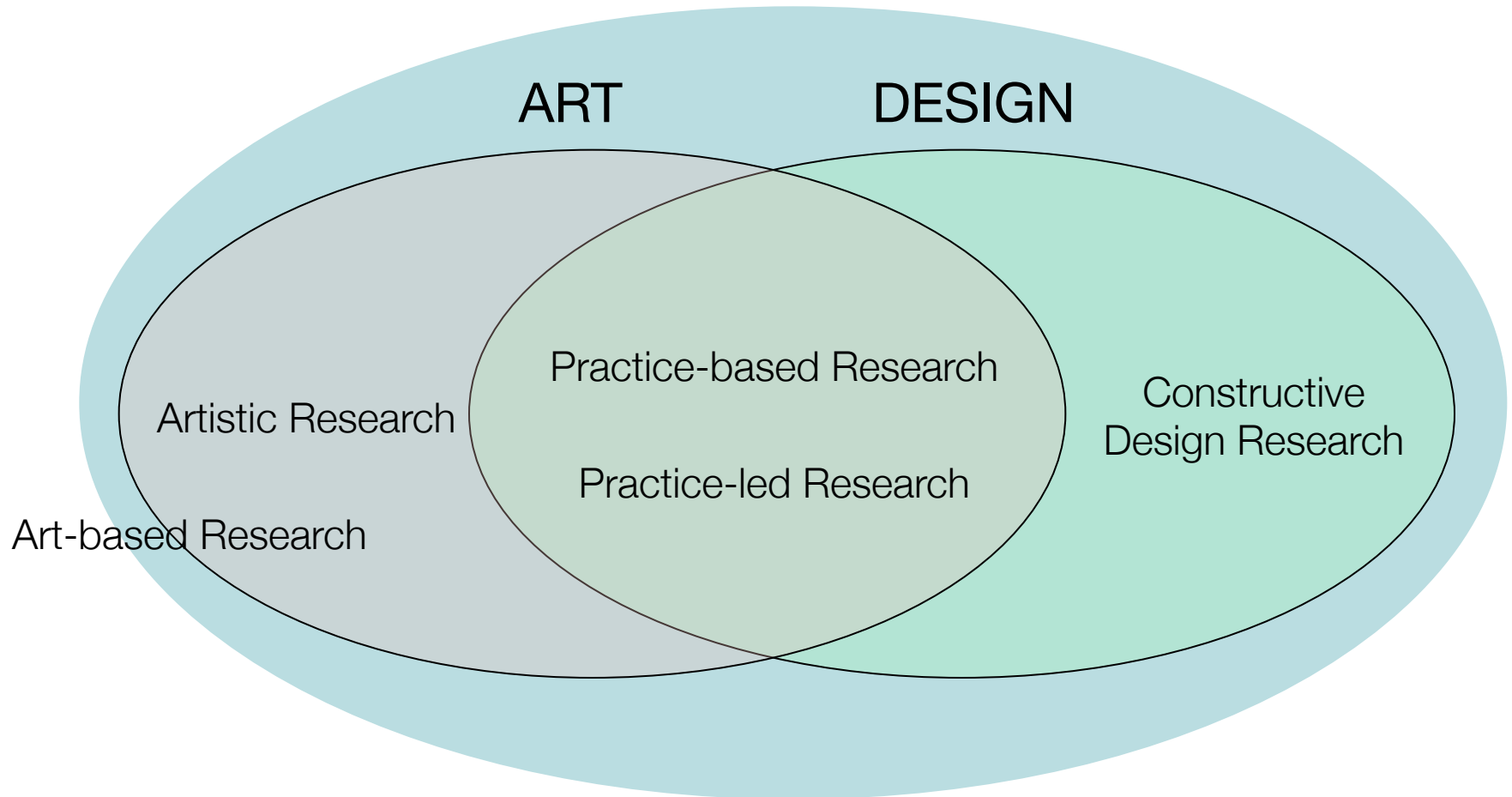
The creative production can be understood as a research method.

Research for art and design (artefact stands alone)

The end product is an artefact within which the thinking that led to its making is embodied.

Christopher Frayling (1993). Research in Art and Design, Royal College of Art Research Papers, 1(1), 1-5.

RESEARCH THROUGH PRACTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF ART AND DESIGN



RELATIONS BETWEEN ART / DESIGN PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

RESEARCH TYPES	RELATIONS BETWEEN RESEARCH & PRACTICE	SUBJECTIVE RELATIONS	RESEARCH OBJECT(S)	TYPES OF PRODUCED KNOWLEDGE	RESEARCH OUTPUT
ACADEMIC (SCIENTIFIC) RESEARCH	Research about practice	Researcher is not author of artefact	Artefacts, processes, ideas produced by other persons	Ideas, theories, methods, new data	Texts
PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH	Research is based on practice	Author of artefact = researcher	Artefact(s) produced by researcher	Artefact(s) & documentation of its production	Artefact & text
DESIGN RESEARCH	Practice is based on research	Researcher = author of design object	Production of design object & new knowledge	New technological solutions, methods & theory	Design object & text
ARTISTIC RESEARCH	Practice and research are inseparable	Author of artwork = researcher	Artistic practice	Artwork & ideas & theories	Artwork & text
ART-BASED RESEARCH	Practice as field research	Researcher is not necessary author of artwork	Effect caused by artwork(s) on social environment	Ideas, theories, methods, new data (social sciences)	Text

Andris Teikmanis (2015). Typologies of Research, SHARE Handbook of Artistic Research Education, (Eds.) Mick Wilson and Schelte van Ruiten, 162-169. (Modified by Maarit Mäkelä)

ESSENCE OF (RE)SEARCH

- (1) research with lower case **r** = careful search,
looking for something which is defined advance
- (2) Research with upper case **R** = work directed for
discovering new perspectives, or new information

Christopher Frayling (1993). Research in art and design. Royal College of Art Research Papers 1 (1), 1-5.

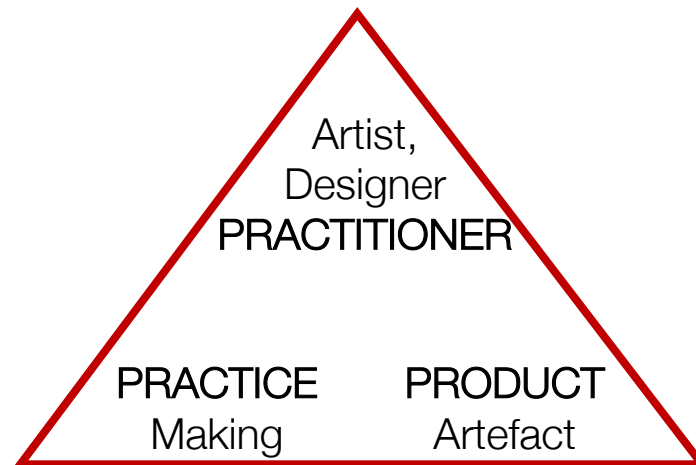
ROLE OF RESEARCH QUESTION

Artistic research is not 'hypothesis-led', but 'discovery-led' research, in which the artist undertakes a search on the basis of intuition and trial-and-error, possibly stumbling across unexpected outcomes or surprising insights or farsights.

(Henk Borgdorff 2009, 7)

Borgdorff, Henk (2009). *Artistic Research within the Fields of Science. Sensuous Knowledge 6*. Bergen National Academy of the Arts.

DESIGNERLY WAYS OF KNOWING



Knowledge of design resides in people, in the process and in the products.

Nigel Cross (1982). Designerly ways of knowing. *Design studies* 3:4, 221 – 227.

REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

Our knowing is in action, ordinary in tacit form and implicit in our patterns of action.

Starting from actual performance, it is possible to construct and test these kinds of models of knowing.

Donald Schön (1983). *The Reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action*. Arena: Hants, viii.

TWO STEPS OF REFLECTION

Reflection-in-action indicates a process in which practitioners encounter an unusual situation and have to take a different course of action from that which they usually do or have originally planned.

Reflection-on-action includes an analytical process in which practitioners reflect their thinking, actions, and feelings in connection to particular events in their professional practice.

Donald Schön (1983). *The Reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action*. Arena: Hants, viii.

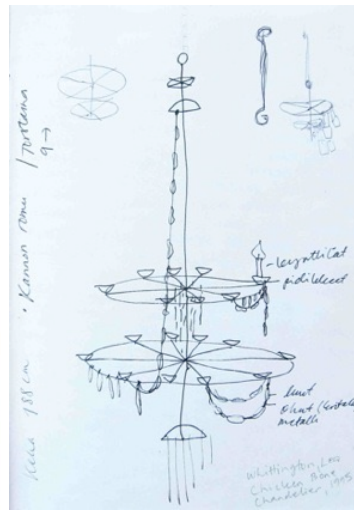
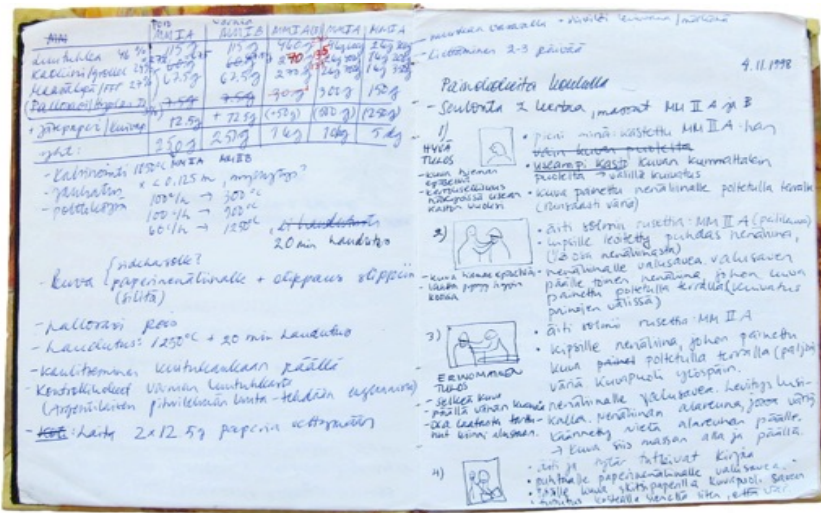
DOCUMENTATION

Documentation is not the foundation of research or theory construction (Freidman 2008, 157).

Rather, documentation makes reflection explicitly articulated in a form available for the practitioner-researcher to revisit and analyse in order to develop and construct design knowledge.

Ken Freidman (2008) 'Research into, by and for design,' Journal of Visual Art Practice, 7(2), 153-160.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY



Ellis, Carolyn & Bochner, Arthur (2000). Autoethnography, Personal narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed. Sage: Thousand Oaks, 733-768.



Day1



Day 2



Day 3



Day 4



Day 5

Groth, Camilla & Mäkelä, Maarit & Seitamaa-Hakkarainen, Pirita (2015). Tactile augmentation: A multimethod for capturing experiential knowledge. *Craft Research* 6 (1), 59-83.

DOCUMENTATION & REFLECTION

In practice-led research context, documentation can function as a **research tool** for capturing reflection on and in action.

When artist-researchers document their practice-led research processes, they consciously reflect on the current experiences during the process (reflection-in-action) and on the documented experiences after the entire process (reflection-on-action).

Mäkelä, Maarit & Nimkulrat, Nithikul (2018). Documentation as practice-led research tool for reflection on experiential knowledge. FORMakademisk 11 (1), article 5, 1-16.

REFLECTION AS RESEARCH TOOL

(I) Reflection-in-action

functions as an inherent method for collecting information about the creative processes related to the study. In practice-led research reflection is made possible by utilising e.g. diary writing, photographing and diagram drawing i.e. means of documentation.

(II) Reflection-on-action

is used in later steps of the study, when bringing the data in connection with the relevant research literature, the collected data elicit insights and understanding for the study.

Mäkelä, Maarit & Nimkulrat, Nithikul (2018). Documentation as practice-led research tool for reflection on experiential knowledge. FORMakademisk 11 (1), article 5, 1-16.

DOCUMENTATION AS RESEARCH TOOL

Documentation assists in capturing and recording the empirical aspects of practice so that practitioners can access their own experiential knowledge at a later stage of the research process (Mäkelä & Nimkulrat 2018).

Reflection allows practitioners to give critical consideration upon their actions in order to clarify their thoughts.

Ken Freidman (2008) 'Research into, by and for design,' *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 7(2), 153-160.

RETROACTIVE LOOK

Consist of closer observations of creative working process, works and meanings related to them, done retrospectively.

By using the 'retroactive look' the maker-researcher starts to build a dialogue between the gained **experiences and perceptions**, and the **literature** that discusses about the themes that are identified as central.

Mäkelä, Maarit (2006). Framing (a) Practice-led Research Project. In Mäkelä, Maarit & Routarinne, Sara (eds.) The Art of Research: Research Practices in Art and Design, 60-85.

POINT OF DEPARTURE

1. Explicit research questions
2. Specific methods for answering the questions
3. Specific context in which the research is carried out