

## Artistic Research – Editorial

**Martha Tupinambá de Ulhôa, Editor**

**Art Research Journal (ARJ)** emerged as a result of the construction of the so-called **artistic QUALIS** by the area of arts linked to the Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), a foundation of the Ministry of Education (MEC).<sup>1</sup> The artistic QUALIS consists of a series of external criteria, developed by committees of researchers-artists in charge of assessing the artistic production of the graduate programs in the arts in Brazil. In this evaluation process, procedures were adopted that are comparable to the established principles in academic channels, i.e., the same criteria of indirect qualification used in the construction of the existing bibliographic QUALIS (at the time, the classification of journals by category and impact). The concern in the construction of the criteria is that they might be clear enough to allow the formation of an intersubjective consensus among researchers and artists and, at the same time, be understandable by other areas of evaluation of CAPES.

In the attribution process of the artistic QUALIS the intrinsic quality of the product is not considered; rather, its context of creation and dissemination is considered. The intention is to enhance the articulation of graduate academic research with artistic creation. Thus, the artistic QUALIS does not evaluate the individual artist's production, but, in having lines of research related to creation

---

<sup>1</sup> This text is based on the documents published in the area of arts at the CAPES website, as well as on the reflection about the specificity of research in arts. I take responsibility, as editor of ARJ, for its authorship, and am thankful for the discussions and contributions of several colleagues, especially of Antonia Bezerra Pereira and Maria Beatriz de Medeiros.

or artistic practice in the graduate program, estimates the proportion of faculty-artists-researchers producing qualified art. Graduate programs and not the individuals are evaluated within the scope of CAPES.

The artist certainly does not need a university education to exercise creative practice. However, by opting for teaching in higher education, and especially in devoting oneself to training personnel to operate at this level, he or she is committed to dialogue with the arts community and with the academic community as a whole.

The great difference between the formation of the artist by traditional methods (apprenticeship through imitation and individual training under the mentorship of a master) and the formation of the artist at the university is research. And, in this context, research in the arts in academia requires acting in a system that permits the production, exchange, partnership, discussion and dissemination of the knowledge produced. Especially in the domain of postgraduate studies in the arts, *stricto sensu*, artistic production is valued that has thematic, conceptual or methodological links with academic research.

What remains to be discussed and consolidated is what this "research" in the arts is. Not only a delimitation, always provisional, of the object "art", but, principally, the implications that this unpredictable nature may have in methodological and theoretical terms. The artistic object, being unique, cannot always be defined *a priori*; it is constructed as the artist learns to deal with their materials. Sometimes even the very idea that lies behind the "theoretical" conception of the artist is only clear *a posteriori*, after the work is finished.

If the object cannot be demarcated *a priori* - except in a provisional form, because the artist himself professes an aesthetic angle or uses specific materials and techniques - the same can be said of hypotheses, of the theoretical framework, of the final presentation of the product. It is worth remembering that in the case of research-creation at the university, in the context of academic courses, *stricto sensu*, there are two products, a text and a work, both publishable and archivable.

The artistic product presented in the form of live performance or audiovisual recording renders tacit knowledge, understandable to the group or community that shares its semantic codes. A work of differentiated art will be a proponent for going beyond the most widespread ways of making art. On the other hand, there is no denying that the artistic process undergoes reduction when described and interpreted through a written text. Art traverses all the senses and its meanings - because there is never only one meaning for art - cannot be fixed by written language that it is incapable of encompassing its totality.

An article, a thesis or dissertation on art is only an interpretative extract of something more complex and, above all, polysemic. For this reason it is necessary to insist that in the case of artistic research the artistic product should be publicly available in its most comprehensive form, preferably by a *link* to a stable, open and non-commercial site.

The major difference between research in the arts and in science, even in the social sciences and humanities - whose methodology manuals serve as a model for the courses where our graduate students learn about research projects and academic writing - is to achieve a certain distance from an object with which we have, by enculturation as practical artists, a visceral relationship. Hence, the most difficult task is to establish a research "question", because it can only become clear when we consider the investigation finished.

The paradox is that even when it comes to something "concrete", as in art criticism (which deals with specific repertoires, finished artistic works) or in art history (which addresses specific artists or artistic traditions, locatable in time and space) there is no escape from an artisanal methodology, exploratory and immersed in the particulars of the object or artistic process in study. Art is at the same time a historical (inserted into a temporal or geographic context) and aesthetic (with relative transcendence and intrinsic value) object. So art is explained with art, when it makes sense by comparison in a chain of objects or artworks.

Art history made from the point of view of History is different from an art history written from the point of view of Art, because the "art" object is not just a

document - although it may be made one for the purposes of analytic treatment - but most especially an event/aesthetic object. Thus, while historians by trade write about identity and socio-political organization using art as an illustration (an explanatory angle), art historians write about style and concern themselves with processes (in an interpretive, perhaps more philosophical angle). And, when building an "artistic method," they comment on the functioning of creative or artistic-interpretative processes by a fundamental comparison (the most coherent and consistent possible) with other existing creative processes or artistic-interpretative processes (i.e., recognized as legitimate by the artistic-academic community).

Research in the arts is a relatively new area of knowledge in academia. Conservatories and schools of fine arts were only incorporated into the university in the mid-twentieth century. In Brazil, doctoral programs in the performing arts, visual arts and music only appeared in the 1990s. Because they are academic courses, not professional ones, there is a legal requirement (graduate school in the country is governed by federal laws) of the existence of a written document (dissertation or thesis) along with the artistic product (when the line of research involves creation or practice - some lines are, on account of their object, of historical or systematic research).

There is no way to teach creativity. Art (in the sense of originality and creation) is not something teachable – the same could be said of science in terms of innovation. One can only insist on the need to seek in-depth knowledge of the artistic languages and to learn about how artists-researchers deal with delimitation of the object, subject-object relationship, objectivity-subjectivity, and practice and theory, among other issues.

Texts already published in previous issues of ARJ began mapping some of these questions. In the current issue, preceded by an essay on praxis and reflection and another about theatrical laboratories, we have some examples of how to handle artistic research from various angles, in dance, theater, the visual arts, and music. The totality of the articles emerges from reflection on artistic practice.

In the opening article, **The Art of Research in the Arts**, philosopher Kathleen Coessens - using the binocular, prism and room of mirrors metaphors – comments on the characteristics of artistic research, reflecting on the notions of experience and action; theory and experimental theorizing; reflection and reflectivity.

Next, Marco De Marinis writes about **Research, Experimentation and Creation in the Twentieth Century Theater**, where he analyzes theatrical laboratories of artists-researchers Decroux, Grotowski and Barba, clarifying notions of progress, development, discovery and demonstration in theatrical research.

Gilbertto Prado, in **Recent Projects of the Digital Poetics Group**, presents the experimentations *Desluz* of 2010, *Amoreiras* (Blackberry Trees) of 2010/12 and *Encontros* (Encounters) of 2012, conducted by the group of artist teachers, researchers and students of the Department of Fine Arts at ECA-USP, linked to interactive installation, network art and media art.

Cristina Capparelli Gerling, in **Barcarolle Op. 60 F. Chopin**, deals with the partnership between musical performers and cognitive musicology, taking as a case study the account of the processes of memorizing of the emblematic piece of the piano repertoire. In the process, decisions taken during practice are transferred to the act of interpretation, without stifling musical performance, always renewed with each presentation.

In the article entitled **Somatic-Performative Research**, Ciane Fernandes seeks to configure open paths of creative investigation, contaminated by what she calls the throbbing nature of the scene. Considering research as a process, experience, integration, and transgression, the author approaches an autonomous methodology, unpredictable and, therefore, consistent with the notion of artistic research.

Marcia Strazzacappa deals with **Poetic Immersions as a Formative Process of the Artist-Teacher**, a process of research of/in art, where poetic-academic interventions are promoted/provoked by an artist, integrating students, teachers and community members in the process of scenic-choreographic creation.

Renato Ferracini and Antônio Flávio Alves Rabelo, in the article **Always Recreate**, take the actor's work as a focus, reflecting on the question of creativity in the play *Café com Queijo* (Coffee with Cheese), of LUME – the Interdisciplinary Center for Theatrical Research of UNICAMP - in theaters since 1999. Using the concept of **thinking with**, the authors develop the text from the speech of actresses Ana Cristina Colla and Raquel Scotti Hirson.

This issue on Artistic Research closes with the text of Ivani Santana, **Presence in Digital Dance Distributed in a Network**, where the author argues in favor of the *embodiment* of the remote body, positioning herself against post-human discourses, of *disembodiment* or of the dematerialization of the body in the digital age.

Although the next two volumes of ARJ, planned for 2015 and 2016, should contain Dossiers dedicated to Music, Visual Arts and Performing Arts, in this order, other original articles arising from doctoral or post-doctoral research in **any area of creative arts** can be submitted at any time through the open call system. We emphasize that the texts sent featuring thematic, methodological or conceptual links with lines of research in creative poetics and interpretive practices will be particularly welcome.