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Research-Based Artmaking to Transgress: Feminist Deviations

La producción artística basada en la investigación para transgredir: desviaciones feministas

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Abstract

This article proposes research-based art as a paradigm of artmaking grounded in undutifulness, through feminist theory, and expanded critical pedagogies; an approach that resists the institutional, epistemic, and market-driven frameworks that increasingly shape contemporary artistic production. The diverse methodologies developed within the Centre of New Media and Feminist Public Practices, such as peer-to-peer workshops, reading groups, feminist guided tours, collaborative mapping, and speculative archival and digital practices constitute both aesthetic materials and critical agents. The article proposes artmaking not as mere institutional critique but as instituent praxis, as sites of a(nt)agonism towards institutional capture, capitalist accelerations, and hierarchical knowledge regimes. It further argues that the examined methodologies claim opacity and conflict as central to contemporary artistic practice. Hence, care, agonism, and shared literacy form an intertwined continuum.

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Keywords: Research-Based Art, Undutifulness, Feminist Techno-Aesthetic Practices, Pedagogy.

Resumen
Este artículo propone el arte basado en la investigación como un paradigma de producción artística fundamentado en la desobediencia, a través de la teoría feminista y pedagogías críticas expandidas; un enfoque que resiste los marcos institucionales, epistémicos y orientados por el mercado que configuran cada vez más la producción artística contemporánea. Las diversas metodologías desarrolladas en el Centro de Nuevos Medios y Prácticas Públicas Feministas (Centre of New Media and Feminist Public Practices), tales como talleres entre pares, grupos colectivos de lectura, recorridos feministas guiados, cartografías colaborativas y prácticas especulativas de archivo y de medios digitales, constituyen tanto materiales estéticos como agentes críticos. El artículo propone entender la producción artística no como mera crítica institucional, sino como práctica instituyente, como espacios de a(nt)agonismo frente a la captura institucional, las aceleraciones capitalistas y la producción jerárquica del conocimiento. Asimismo, sostiene que las metodologías analizadas reivindican la opacidad y el conflicto como elementos centrales de la práctica artística contemporánea. Por lo tanto, el cuidado, el agonismo y la alfabetización compartida forman un continuo entrelazado.

Palabras clave: arte basado en la investigación, desobediencia, prácticas tecno-estéticas feministas, pedagogía.

The paper foregrounds diverse strategies and methodologies operating between artmaking, feminist theory, and expanded critical pedagogies that bridge the academy and the art field, stressing their entanglements and learning from their convergences, tensions, and potentialities. Activities that we practice on the framework of our work in the Centre of New Media and Feminist Public Practices (CNMFPP)[1], such as micro-archival gestures, speculative prototyping, or feminist guided tours, serve as experiments that reveal how practices of making, thinking, and relating intertwine into modes of artmaking and cultural mediation. The emphasis on these practices, rather than on exhibition apparatuses or models of grand spectacles, aims to develop a methodology for understanding how appearance is intertwined with the ways of making art. All the above are proposed as "techno-aesthetic practices", as practices that attempt research-based artmaking through expanding the relationship between the technological and the aesthetic in their interrelation with feminism. The examined activities are situated in the genealogy of artistic research

1 The Centre of New Media and Feminist Public Practices (CNMFPP) is an institution dedicated to research, discourse, pedagogy, and practice at the intersection of art, technology, and feminism. It seeks to develop new methodologies, forms, and ethics of working across these three axes. Initially conceived as a funded program in the Department of Architecture at the University of Thessaly, the CNMFPP now operates as a spectral institution sustained through a kinship-based economy.

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practices that aim to bridge theory and art with the contribution of plural epistemologies, speaking from eccentric geographies. They are discussed as practices that generate spaces of critical experimentation, enabling new modes of subjectivity, collectivity, and imagination to emerge. At the same time, they embody a spatial and temporal imbalance, unfolding in non-linear rhythms that resist the accelerative logics of cognitive capitalism and corporatized production. By reflecting on some paradigmatic examples, we focus on the dual condition of research-based artmaking within the cultural field and the persistent tension between institutional demands and its potential for critical, oppositional inquiry that attempts to be undutiful through forms of feminist deviation.

Artmaking redefined: Techno-aesthetics and pedagogy

Through the convergence of techno-aesthetics and pedagogy, artmaking is redefined as research driven and process oriented. In this way, emphasizing artmaking as a form of inquiry shifts attention away from abstract conceptualizations of research toward the situated, experimental, and surrounding conditions of the creative praxis.

The techno-aesthetic emerges from a constellation of theoretical and artistic trajectories that examine the entanglements between technology, perception, subjectivity, institutions, and material infrastructures. It describes the ways technical systems, artistic practices, and forms of social organization co-produce modes of sensing, inhabiting, and relating to the world. It unfolds the complex ways through which technologies develop and disrupt understandings of the world through evolving modes of perception and representation. Art in dialogue with the technological provides an expanded insight into what fieldwork entails, creating awareness of the fields they enter, transform, and move within. Also, the techno-aesthetic in dialogue with radical epistemologies, understands technologies as micro and macro systems of power relations. It operates simultaneously on technical, biopolitical, and systemic levels, remaining inseparable from regimes of power and knowledge.

Such a techno-aesthetic formation echoes the work of Gilbert Simondon (1982) and his conception of technical objects and techno-aesthetics, where technology is perceived as embedded within culture and extending beyond instrumental functionality. Technical objects possess their own modes of existence, relationality, and processes of individuation. Unraveling, though, the term “techno-aesthetic” does not only bring forth what Gilbert Simondon (1982) has coined to trace the “continuous spectrum” and the “intercategorial fusion” of the aesthetic and the technical. Simondon’s notion of the techno-aesthetic challenges the separation between technical operation and aesthetic experience, proposing instead that aesthetics emerges through encounters between human and technical milieus. The techno-aesthetic, therefore, concerns a mode of attunement to processes, mediations, and material relations through which technical systems participate in shaping the conditions of life.

Within globalized technological and economic imperatives, digital infrastructures and market-driven modes of production reorganize artistic knowledge, its circulation, and

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modes of participation. In this framework, it is crucial that the subject of artmaking, rather than appearing as a fixed, coherent, and fully self-consistent entity shaped through the unique creativity and imagination, emerges as a relational formation through the interplay of discourse, embodiment, self-understanding, and social belonging. By engaging conditions of precarity, exclusion, and commodification, collaboration, situatedness, and experimentation emerge as forms of resistance, as techno-aesthetic modes which are inherently pedagogical. Their structures of exchange, relational formats, and material engagements already constitute forms of learning, orientation, and shared knowledge. At the same time, these relationalities are not understood as neutral, harmonious, or universally formations, but as contingent assemblages shaped by uneven positionalities, frictions, and negotiations of power. Collective practice, therefore, entails processes of position-taking and confrontation, acknowledging that every articulation emerges through forms of agonism and antagonism. Rather than seeking consensus or the erasure of difference, these practices recognize tension as constitutive of political and pedagogical engagement itself. However, agonism alone is insufficient without the political literacy necessary to consciously engage with conflict.

These conflictual negotiations demand expanded notions of techno-aesthetics, through intersections between artmaking, technological practice, and critical thinking that redefine how knowledge is developed, circulated, and sustained. In this context, thinking techno-aesthetics along with their pedagogic activations and formations is crucial. Pedagogy exceeds institutional structures, operating across artistic, curatorial, and techno-social practices as an immanent force within processes of making. Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (2000/1970), where education is theorized as a critical praxis grounded in the inseparability of reflection and transformative action, opposing the hierarchical "banking model" of knowledge in favor of dialogical and emancipatory modes of learning, is key to an understanding of the expanded pedagogical perspective of artmaking. Also, bell hooks' racially conscious notion of "engaged pedagogy" (1994) and education as a location of transgression oppose the imperative of the victimization of the unprivileged. In bell hooks' understanding, transgression is a critical and liberatory practice through which individuals become conscious of the ways race, gender, sexuality, and class structure are experienced and learned. hooks argues that education should challenge institutional forms of domination rather than reproduce them by building on an oppositional gaze. Marginalized subjectivities are not merely excluded positions but sites of radical epistemological insight and political possibility. Transgressive pedagogy entails risk, discomfort, uncertainty, and confrontation with difficult truths; yet these moments of instability also open collective spaces for hope, ethical transformation, and the imagining of other ways of living.

Radical pedagogy and artistic practice, therefore, form a continuum, functioning as spaces in which such literacy can be activated, where education as a reciprocal and affective process is rooted in participation, embodiment, and care. Together, these pedagogical frameworks position learning not as the passive acquisition, but as a discursive and relational process continuously constituted through interaction, lived experience, and

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political agency, always dependent on the formative conditions from which they emerged and crucially informing the shapes, materiality, and forms they inhabit. In this sense, artistic pedagogy itself operates as a creative, critical, and politically situated practice, as transgressive.

Through the pedagogical and techno-aesthetic mesh described, artmaking is redefined, cultivating a systematic convergence of radical pedagogy and techno-aesthetics. Within this framework, forms and materialities emerge as intrinsically connected to the social, technological, and epistemological environments that shape them, generating works that remain critically aware of their own modes of becoming. Rather than diminishing the poetic potential of art, this attention to process expands its capacity to propose new forms of perception, embodiment, and collective imagination. The techno-aesthetic dimension operates as a generative field in which technology, affect, materiality, and political agency interact, enabling artmaking to function simultaneously as both critical inquiry and speculative force. Artmaking in dialogue with critical pedagogy, feminist theory, and contemporary discourse on the technological challenges opens up emancipatory spaces for the reconfiguration of aesthetic and social relations. Feminist methodologies that experiment with archiving, coding, collective authorship, and working together are not only proposed as technical or aesthetic operations, but they are acts that generate shared vocabularies and literacies integral to artmaking redefined.

In the following sections, we will refer to cases we developed within our programs, in which pedagogical methodologies were altered and twisted into artistic practices as deviations from normative understandings of what is considered art, aesthetic, and technological.

Peer-to-peer workshops and reading groups as acts of undutifulness

The peer-to-peer workshop "A workshop of peers—an index of undutifulness" emerged within our quest to transgress uncertainty, disorientation, and self-doubt into generative tools. The workshop designed on the framework of our participation in the conference "Diversity Matters: Unfolding Novelties in Artistic Research and Arts-Based Research"[2], reflecting on a spectrum of forms and techniques which unfold on the intersection of art, feminism, and pedagogy.

Peer-to-peer practice is one of the ways grounded in reciprocal knowledge exchange and oriented toward creating affiliations and articulations. The workshop becomes both a tool and a performative gesture, a convergence of diverse methodologies and modalities. It foregrounds processes over products, relations over hierarchy, and experimentation over individual mastery. In this horizontal format, knowledge is not delivered but co-constructed through shared inquiry. Participants contribute situated perspectives and embodied experiences that circulate laterally. The workshop becomes

2 The 8th International Conference on Artistic Research and Arts-Based Research was held in Girona from 20th to 22nd of November 2024.

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a temporary infrastructure for exchanges of thinking-doing, where tools, technologies, and media act not only as instruments but as agents that mediate, challenge, and expand modes of working together.

Our intention was to work through a collective reading of selected texts regarding the indexical and archival potentialities of research-based art and to form an archive of such references. More specifically, Sara Ahmed's "Find your Way", the Introductory text from Queer Phenomenology (2006), was catalytic in initiating our reading and discussion around navigation, orientation, and disorientation as methods of the never neutral constituting of our being, moving, and knowing in/of the world. The selected excerpt "Language. Teaching New Worlds/New Words" from bell hooks' book *Teaching to Transgress. Education as a Practice of Freedom* (1994) enabled us to think about language as a field of struggle through emancipatory learning practices and tools. Moving towards transgressing through artistic research, Hito Steyerl's "Aesthetic of Resistance? Artistic Research as Discipline and Conflict" (2010) contributed to imagining how the field of artmaking is rooted in forms of political resistance. In dialogue with the notion of 'aesthetic resistance', an excerpt from Rosi Braidotti's "The Society of Undutiful Daughters" (2012) along with Doreen Mende's "The Undutiful Daughter's Concept of Archival Metabolism" (2018), introduced the concept of *being undutiful* as a feminist methodology when thinking through archives and research through art. From another perspective, Saidiya Hartman's text "The Plot of her Undoing" (2008) encouraged the undoing of archival silences through 'critical fabulation' as a means of narrating otherwise. In these convergences and divergences between the index and archives, reading Rosalind Krauss's references from "Notes on the Index: Part 1" (1977) & "Notes on the Index: Part 2" (1977), fueled the discussion towards the ways that the index emerges as a form of artistic practice, where diverse mediums perform indexicality instead of representation. The collaborative archive and published book of Mindy Seu's "Cyberfeminism Index" (2022) was also discussed as an exemplary feminist techno-aesthetic practice of indexical method that bridges activism, theory, feminism, and art.

Along with the reading list, we distributed an online questionnaire to the workshop's participants. The questionnaire addressed the question "What do you/we claim/reclaim in your/our research?" and acted as a starting point for building the workshop's aligned consciousness and navigating along the proposed bibliographical list references. Through this gesture of exchange, we fostered the responses in whatever format and medium one chose (written, audio, audiovisual, etc.) and in a shared folder. The folder aimed to activate an online space for introducing ourselves to others, by claiming our places of interest and desires, preparing for the workshop, and using it during the workshop as a common ground. We also pointed emphatically to the criticality of the term "research" as a continuum that addresses the transferences between the individual and the collective, between artistic research, research-based practice, and art-based research. By working to dismantle what these phenomenally small differentiations stand for, we aimed to also address the late focus of the art field and its institutions, from museums to academia, and further, to artistic practices.

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Though the thinkers and texts that shaped and keep on shaping our reading groups do not necessarily speak directly about artmaking, which was also the case for the peer-to-peer reading list, their concepts, forms of disobedience, and practices of waywardness thinking reorient how we understand and approach artistic practice. Rather than treating art as a neutral, universal, or consensual field or as something confined to inherited disciplines and institutional apparatuses such as museums, galleries, and exhibitions, their ideas open different modes of making and knowing. Their political and methodological orientations act as tools that reshape our imaginaries, enabling alternative forms of artistic practice. Taken together, their work cultivates the conditions for a different paradigm of artmaking to emerge.

Working through the formats of workshops and reading groups, we develop a shared archive of materials, texts, and artistic propositions, some of which emerge as realized artworks, while others function as impetus to produce new artistic forms and trajectories. This archive operates not as a fixed repository, but as a dynamic and relational space of ongoing exchange where ideas, references, and practices remain open to reinterpretation, recomposition, and activation. In this way, archival tools act as systems of disruption, in addition to acknowledging how our ways derive from a feminist genealogy of diverse practices and perspectives.

Deviating from what is conceived as pedagogical and artistic, reshapes methodologies in the cultural field. The workshops and seminars, as well as the reading groups, organized during the period of the CNMFPP's forced digital operation due to COVID-19 measures, became practices of unsettling normative forms of art education and institutional art, foregrounding interpretation and situated and shared experience. Drawing on the genealogies of feminist reading clubs, we expanded them through collaborative artmaking and readings as forms of peer-to-peer practice through workshops during the Reading Group series "Feminist Practices in the Age of Globalized Technology II".

In the Reading Group #2, for example, the invited artists Peggy Zali, and Panagiotis Lianos, along with their collaborators Aggelos Akritidis, Vasilis Barbinis, Kostis Damoulakis, Domna Degaita, Paulo Doda, Alexandros Economou, Ilias Mokas, and Vasilis Zacharakopoulos, presented their ongoing project "Hollowceneman: The Trap" (2020) (image 1). The project was based on their collection of texts that suggested ways of resistance to the gendered, class, or other forms of exclusion reproduced during the three months of the COVID-19 measures. The texts served as material to train a text-generation algorithm, which created a new, mingled text that poetically functioned as the lyrics for a trap music track and further led to the creation of the "Hollowceneman: The Trap" video. In the presentation of the work, the artists shared insightful observations on coding methodologies and on how, although the selected texts were critical and engaged with the multifaceted challenges of quarantine, from economic and social issues to broader political concerns, the texts generated by the algorithm remained rather conservative and largely aligned with dominant narratives surrounding conditions of restriction and confinement. At times, the algorithm even reproduced reactionary rhetoric, thereby revealing its biopolitical and regulatory role in shaping discourse and mediating collective experience.

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Image 1: Hollowceneman: The Trap (2020)

This issue raises important questions in relation to AI-generated content and its digital materiality, particularly concerning popular culture and its role in shaping collective consciousness and conditioning modes of critical thinking and practicing. It points to the ways algorithmic systems may reinforce dominant ideological frameworks, normalize specific social values and institutional behaviors, and subtly guide forms of perception and subjectivity through seemingly neutral or automated material processes. Therefore, shaping and sharing our own referencing maps also works against automated orientations of references, knowing, and artmaking. Working with speculative prototyping engages with possible future scenarios, both dystopian and utopian, addressing subjects' insights, fears, and hopes in order to cultivate forms of visionary agency. As opposed to passively anticipating an inevitable future beyond intervention, speculative prototyping operates as a critical and imaginative practice oriented toward the construction of alternative worlds and futures we actively seek to realize.

In another paradigm, also entailing speculative prototyping, the project "Untitled (Don Quixote)" (2020) (image 2) by the artist Panos Sklavenitis, which was presented in the Reading Group #1, we read a draft of his adaptation based on Don Quixote by Cervantes. Skalvenitis proposed a shifted hybrid narrative and drew a digital portrait of Panza's donkey, which acted as an alternative creature, model, or post-human experiment based on the heroes in the original version of Cervantes' novel. Through a provocative technique, it proposed different reading enactments and exposed the persistent and often internalised positions of masculinity in the dominant patriarchal discourse.

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Image 2: Untitled (Don Quixote) (2020)

Conceived during the conditions of pandemic quarantine, the long-distance residency "Digital Enclosure and its Revolutionary Other" (2020) (Image 3) by philosopher Luce de Lire transforms the residency itself into a critical site of inquiry. As physical mobility, institutional access, and social interaction became increasingly mediated by digital infrastructures, the residency unfolded within the very technological environments under examination. De Lire's exploration of digital enclosure, the privatization and governance of online commons by platform economies, resonates with broader questions of institutional capture, asking how cultural production, knowledge exchange, and collective life are shaped by systems of control that often remain invisible. Bringing together perspectives from feminist theory, political philosophy, and contemporary art, the residency approached technology as a contested terrain where power, desire, labor, and visibility, production, and reproduction (as a concrete control of bodies and further) are continuously negotiated. In this sense, the quarantine residency served as a practical framework for investigating how alternative forms, even in conditions of forced confinement, of gathering, learning, and artistic exchange might emerge within —and against— the enclosed architectures of the digital age.



Image 3: Digital Enclosure and its Revolutionary Other (2020)

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In another way of mediating digital mechanisms, the sound piece "Undoing the Glossary (a future sample)"[3] (2019) (image 4), by Valia Papastamou, emerged from the research on linguistic analysis of affect. Delving into Saidiya Hartman's "*The Plot of Her Undoing*" (2008), it questioned how a speculative glossary could perform otherwise as an artistic inquiry on the relationship between language and affect. For that purpose, it used an API (application programming interface) assistant for the linguistic analysis of affect and collected data relevant to affective ways of speaking from Hartman's text. A new speculative text-script through the voice of a digital bot proposes indexicality as a means of speculation. The indexical becomes a method for undoing and an artwork that, through voicing, reconfigures the trace into a material and affective entity, opening a fissure in representation.



Image 4: undoing the glossary (a future sample) (2019)

The paradigms examined, shared reading, discussion, the peer-to-peer workshop, and artmaking via exchange of bibliographical notes, can be understood as modes of collective authorship. As such, they are trying to read undutifulness and be undutiful toward hierarchical positionalities insofar as they disrupt institutionalized models of authority, expertise, and knowledge transmission that traditionally structure both academia and the art field. Rather than reproducing vertical relations between teacher and student, expert and audience, or participant, the peer format cultivates horizontal processes of exchange grounded in reciprocity, situated experience, and shaping queries and art. Undutifulness, as articulated through Rosi Braidotti's unlearning, functions as a generative force that disrupts normative epistemic, institutional, and socio-technical orders while enabling alternative modes of relation, authorship, mutual becoming, and forms of art and theory-making. Distancing from privileging expertise and authorial voices, undutiful artmaking operates as a methodological stance that resists obedience to inherited disciplinary structures and normative forms of participation. It further invests in modes of collective authorship, sources, and experiences through offering a temporary

3 Undoing the glossary (a future sample)

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space in which knowledge is co-produced instead of delivered, allowing participants to negotiate shifting positionalities and forms of agency together.

Feminist (Un)Learnings and Guided Tours Against Institutional Capture

The growing prominence of research in contemporary art signals a significant change in artistic production, opening new possibilities for interdisciplinary inquiry, methodologies exchange, and critical engagement within institutional and academic contexts. Terms such as artistic research, art-based research, and research-based practice signal a move toward codification, where practices, once grounded in ambiguity and resistance, become increasingly governed by regimes of evaluation, institutional legitimacy, and credentialism. Early critiques[4] already diagnosed the "Bologna condition" in which art and art education are folded into technocratic frameworks of learning outcomes and accountability.

Supporters of artistic research emphasize its epistemic richness and its capacity to generate situated, politically engaged knowledge through not only logocentric or logic-based approaches but also affective and sense-based understandings. Yet remains insufficiently acknowledged the profound debt these frameworks owe to feminist theory: concepts such as situated knowledge, embodied cognition, epistemic pluralism, and the refusal of objectivity, as well as mere one-authorship and referencing, originated as insurgent feminist interventions against patriarchal regimes of knowledge. Their institutional circulation, stripped of their feminist genealogies, neutralizes their critical force and enables their absorption into neoliberal cultural policy, where art is reframed as a creative industries asset and precarious artistic labor as entrepreneurial innovation. Institutions extract the aesthetic and conceptual value of critical and activist forms of co-learning without altering their own structures, turning critique into scenography and situated knowledge into immersive branding. Rather than redistributing power, such processes reproduce existing hierarchies of knowledge, access, and symbolic capital.

Under these extractivist conditions, institutional capture tests itself continuously and artmaking risks becoming a simulation of criticality; more a logistical asset than being a site of non-aligned, counter-hegemonic knowledge. Hence a(nt)agonism, as embedded in politically conscious positionalities, becomes visible in the appropriation of research-based and community-based practices by dominant cultural institutions. Similar practice does not carry the same political implications across different institutional contexts; it unfolds within an antagonistic rather than neutral terrain.

4 The anthology "Curating and the Educational Turn" (2010), by Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson, is a key reading that in many ways shaped the discussion on "educational turn" in art. The publication itself was partially organized via workshops and seminars around the theme before its writing, being itself a product of a pedagogical methodology. It contains text by important writers on the subject, presenting projects that shaped an alternated approach to art and curating, which manifests divergent scale, purpose, modus operandi, value, visibility, reputational status, and degree of actualisation. At the same time, many of the contributors to this volume begin by problematizing these very terms against a political background increasingly dominated by the rhetoric of culture-as-service, knowledge production, the creative economy, immaterial labor, and educational outcomes.

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The field of institutional critique in contemporary art[5] extends this line of inquiry by exposing how artistic production is conditioned by museums, archives, educational systems, and cultural governance. Practices associated with institutional critique shifted attention from the autonomy of the artwork toward the material and ideological conditions of its circulation and legitimation[6]. In engagement with the Foucauldian concept of the apparatus (dispositif), which names the heterogeneous assemblage of discourses, institutions, administrative measures, technologies, and epistemic structures through which power operates. In this sense, the techno-aesthetic appears as inseparable from the regimes of power, knowledge, techniques, and infrastructures through which forms of perception, relation, and action become possible. Its apparent openness remains conditioned by the material and institutional arrangements from which artistic experiments emerge.

To resist these processes, instituent artmaking through techno-aesthetics and pedagogy reclaims opacity, contingency, and critical positionality as modes of refusing the spectacularisation and commodification of practices originally forged to unsettle the very institutions that deploy them.

The theorist Gerald Raunig, in the book *Contemporary Critical Practice* (Raunig, 2009), offers a useful rethinking of institutional critique in art, expanding it toward broader forms of practice. Raunig argues that critical artistic practices should move beyond merely defensive positions or counter-strategies and toward what he calls *instituent practice*. For Raunig, instituent practice does not imagine spaces completely free from power or control. Instead, drawing on Foucault's idea of "governmentality," he argues that political

5 Institutional critique emerged during the 1960s and 1970s as a distinct artistic genre that challenged the promises of the Enlightenment and the institutions that claimed to sustain a healthy public sphere, exposing the political, economic, and ideological interests embedded in the production of public culture. Conceptual artists such as Daniel Buren, Marcel Broodthaers, and Martha Rosler turned against the established institutions of the art world and the capitalist mechanisms they embodied, rejecting conventional exhibition formats and reframing spaces such as museums and galleries. At the same time, museums themselves came under scrutiny as institutions structurally tied to patriarchal bourgeois society and the exclusions and power relations it reproduces, despite presenting themselves as democratic spaces of learning and historical memory. During the 1980s, institutional critique expanded through feminist and postcolonial perspectives, with artists such as Andrea Fraser and Fred Wilson, as well as collectives including Guerrilla Girls and ACT UP in collaboration with Grand Fury, addressing questions of representation, systemic violence, and racial, gendered, and class exclusions, articulating broader denunciations of injustice, inequality, and the entanglement of cultural institutions with economic exploitation and structures of power. Museums and images thus came to be understood as "battlefields" where the possibilities of resistance, negotiation, and the radicalization of artistic practices are constantly tested against the mechanisms of art and its institutions.

6 The work of Marina Vishmidt (2018) provides important insights into the relationship between art, labor, value production, and institutional governance under contemporary capitalism. Vishmidt's analyses of speculation, reproduction, and artistic labor reveal how aesthetic practices are deeply implicated within financial, managerial, and extractive systems. Through this lens, artistic practices emerge as sites where the contradictions of institutional dependency, immaterial labor, and reproduction are actively negotiated and contested.

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and artistic struggle should not be understood simply as resistance against institutions. The struggle is not directed only against institutions but operates through processes of introducing and establishing new forms of practice and relations, opening possibilities for interventions in the conditions of the present. Rather than merely critiquing existing institutions, instituent practices participate in the production of alternative modes of organization and collective agency.

The methods, strategies, and tools explored in the following sections consider how artmaking might be sustained under conditions of precarity while resisting institutional, gendered, racial, sociopolitical, and technological exclusions. Rather than reproducing market-driven or museum-centric models, they approach aesthetics as a political practice oriented toward forms of agency, social transformation, and institutional intervention. Situated knowledge and feminist perspectives transform self-doubt into a creative aporia. Rethinking what counts as legitimate within the knowledge and culture economy, we seek to unsettle the belief that artistic research is inherently scientific, objective, and universal. Instead, we propose thinking of artistic research as a spectral field grounded foremost in the acknowledgment of peers rather than institutional legitimization. To approach this question, we developed the methodological schemes of feminist (un)learnings alongside a series of guided tours through which concepts such as situated knowledge, embodied cognition, the refusal of objectivity, and the rejection of singular authorship and referencing were explored methodologically as spatial and temporal practices for discussing exhibitions, projects, and artistic outcomes. This method emerged through a creative and hybrid expansion of the workshop apparatus, as through the peer-to-peer workshop, both conceived as spatial and temporal practices of collective inquiry process embedded in institutional frameworks. For example, informed by feminist methodologies of situated narration, collective reading, and embodied knowledge, the workshop apparatus expanded further and developed as a hybrid guided tour in order to propose forms of narration that could mediate the typical exhibition formats of the institutions.

Two paradigms of this expansion that took place in museum spaces are the performative guided tour “The Tools and the House”* in the permanent collection of the National Museum of Contemporary Art (2022)(image 5), based on seminal texts of modern feminist theory, and acted as an alternative reading on our book “Feminist Theories, Aesthetic Practices and Globalized Technologies” and the feminist guided tour “Undutiful dots” in the context of the exhibition “HerStories. Photographic Practices, 1974-2024 “MOMus-Experimental Center for the Arts, in Thessaloniki, Greece (2024). These methodologies refer to feminist critiques of universal knowledge, institutional authority, and extractive models of expertise, operating under an antagonistic field of capture, as described above, opposing a neutral understanding of educational formats. In this way, they also stay critical of simplistic interpretations of radicalism, which consider “un-learning” as a linear or easy process for resolving contradictions.

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Image 5: "The Tools and the House", National Museum of Contemporary Arts (2022). Photo credits: D. Tzamtzis

Our approach aimed to create a tension between the mainstreaming of feminist art, which continues to be understood primarily through the statistical inclusion of women artists, whose work is approached through the rhetoric of écriture féminine or through the recognition of their value in comparison to the production of their male counterparts, and the reproduction of dominant formalist canon through which artworks are commonly mediated, particularly in large-scale, audience-oriented museopedagogical formats such as guided tours. For that purpose, we invited museum curators and museopedagogues to collaboratively develop the guided tour. During the tour, they introduced audiences to conventional art-historical readings of the works through established institutional modes of mediation, while our use of selected texts from the book proposed an alternative engagement with both the artworks and the institution itself. This dialogical and discursive approach differentiated and challenged the reception of the works by shifting attention toward the ideological, historical, and institutional frameworks through which feminist art is interpreted and presented. In doing so, it exposed the institutional limitations that often shape the mediation of feminist art within museum contexts, while simultaneously opening space for more critical, situated, and plural readings of the artworks. The project foregrounded feminism as a methodological and epistemological framework, extending its role beyond that of a merely thematic category.

A recent iteration of the feminist guided tours took the form of an audio work titled "A Guiding-Guided Device" (2026) (image 6). The work was developed following an invitation from curator Akis Kokkinos to create a sound intervention for the exhibition "Everything I Know is a Borrowed Map" with selected works from the collection of collector I.P. Panagopoulou. The Guiding-Guided Device unfolds as a guiding engine, functioning as a form of implantation in the collection's narrative. Through critical reflections on selected artworks from the exhibition, the machine via various detournements

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raises broader issues of gender mainstreaming within the art field, while also challenging the authoritarian structures that often underpin archives, collections, and the exhibitions built around them. In doing so, the work interrogates how acts of guiding and being guided are performed within the contemporary, market-driven economy of art.

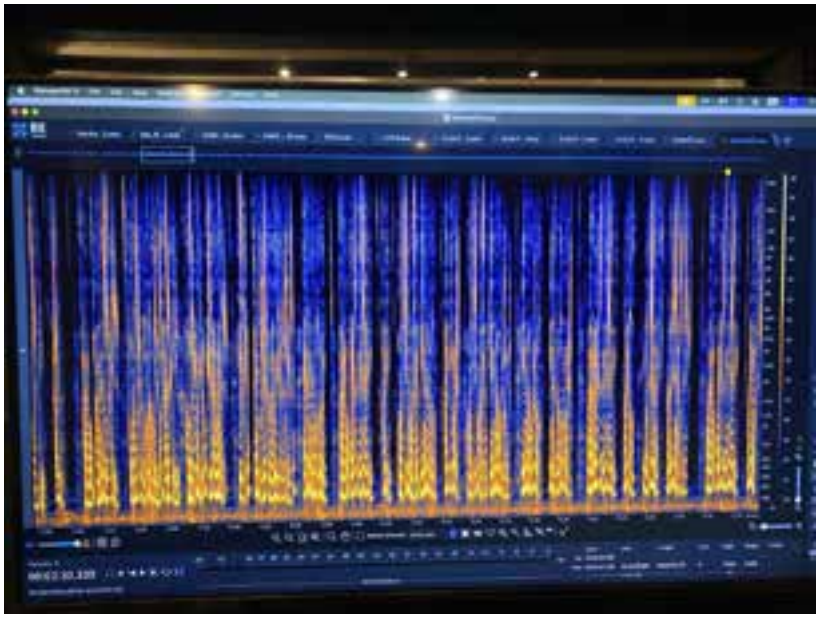


Image 6: A Guiding-guided device (2026)

In a differentiated way, the format of the workshop expanded as the (un)learning process "What we (didn't) learn from others: Making soy*[7] as a feminist-aesthetic tool" (2025), which acted as an open discussion in dialogue with the Akin exhibition by Céline Condorelli and Angela Melitopoulos, in Tavros Project Space. Both artists engage forms of subjectivity that challenge anthropocentric and centralized modes of thinking. Through methodologies rooted in artificial intelligence, non-human technologies, and Indigenous knowledge, they seek alternatives to the top-down systems that sustain capitalism and environmental destruction, while drawing on feminist theories to critique their consequences for all forms of life. In dialogue with the artists' work, the (un)learning project relied on feminist epistemologies through discussion, embodied participation, sharing of life experiences, and, again, the troubling of art's historiographical canon, to shape tactics of insightful vision and oppositional gaze.

In addition to these mediations, the workshop resurfaced once again as a performative lecture regarding care practices. In our book launch event for the publication "Care in Conflict: Artistic Reflections on Broken Worlds / Words" (2025), E. Scourti performatively addressed issues of care regarding the representation of subjectivity, self-

7 We used the term "soy" as analogous to kin as proposed by anthropologist and historian Svetlana Slapšak. Soy is a word (originally Turkish) used for kinship and biological strain in Balkan countries, that Slapšak uses to deconstruct the biases, essentialism, and patriarchal connotations that it carries, but also inviting us to make use of a situated vocabulary.

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narration, and consumption in everyday life through the digital mediations, materialities, and limitations of the post-digital era. These issues have emerged in different ways in the Workshop #4 about the technological, web, and social media mediated body that Scourti has held in the series of CNMFPP's Seminars/Workshops in 2019. Scourti, in an ongoing process of self-observation and self-narration, forms a personal biography that meets the collective, and the real meets the fictional. Via a systematic recording of daily life and digital habits, the artist forms a voyeuristic witnessing continuum of themselves and the viewers. Through these schemes, questions of care, mediation, embodiment, and subjectivity were worked as practices of critical reflection and performative inquiry through speculation and fictional archives.

In this context, practices of exchange, function as micro-institutional spaces and as a testing ground for alternative modes of organizing, distributing and mediating art and art-theory and the labor around it, while introducing shiftings of forms and models: a reading becomes a performative lecture, a guided tour becomes a reading, cultural mediation becomes a shared and situated process and art work becomes a workshop and vice versa. These transformations operate mostly in order to shatter authority, knowledge-holding, and fixed roles under otherwise mainstream schemes of making and knowing. By refusing extractive notions of expertise and rejecting competitive models of professionalization, peer-to-peer practice enacts forms of feminist undutifulness. It interrupts institutional norms of instruction, authorship, and evaluation, fostering instead a common field of attention where doubt is embraced as generative.

A Testing Ground for Feminist Deviation

The examined techno-aesthetic practices approach knowledge and artmaking as a situated and transgressive process through which new conditions of appearance, relation, and imagination emerge. Feminist deviation functions as a mode of reorientation that cultivates expanded epistemic relations, shared conditions of participation, and politically accountable modes of learning and artmaking. From this perspective, research unfolds as a living field of exchange where artistic practice, pedagogy, theory, and social experience continuously shape one another, generating spaces for plural visions, experiences, and forms of knowledge to enter into public appearance[8].

Practices of undutifulness in their plurality, critical thinking, speculative mediation, guided tours, reading groups, peer-to-peer workshops, collaborative archives, and artistic interventions, are inquiries for the processual and material parameters of artmaking.

8 The notion of appearance, as elaborated by Hannah Arendt (1958), is central to the understanding of the political as the space where subjects become visible to one another through action, speech, and collective presence. Through feminist, Black, and anticolonial epistemologies, and particularly through Sylvia Wynter's (2015) critique of the overrepresentation of dominant humanist subjectivities, appearance is approached here as the active creation of material, aesthetic, pedagogical, and institutional conditions through which plural worlds, experiences, and forms of knowledge can become perceptible, shareable, and collectively inhabitable, resistant to becoming *dyselected*-in Wynter's term-from the dominant imperatives and systems of gate keeping and exclusion.

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Artistic production unfolds through the entanglement of aesthetic, technological, institutional, and social processes, opening spaces where new modes of co-working, participation, and political imagination can emerge. These practices therefore function as critical artistic interventions that reshape the ways visibility, mediation, knowledge circulation, and cultural participation are organized.

Hence, artmaking becomes a space for grounded experience, embodied understanding, collective authorship, and epistemic plurality. Where critical reflection, aesthetic experimentation, and political imagination converge. Their pedagogical dimension becomes inseparable from their aesthetic force, generating forms of critical literacy through which participants negotiate together tensions, solidarities, positionalities, aesthetic value, and forms of belonging.

At the same time, the practices developed foreground slowness, methodological testing, relationality, and care as temporalities for artistic and theoretical work. Through collaborative methodologies and process-oriented forms of engagement, they create infrastructures of exchange that sustain alternative ways of making, learning, and inhabiting cultural production. Workshops become performative encounters, guided tours become reading groups, archives become living locations, and mediation itself becomes an artistic and political act of appearance.

By claiming feminist epistemologies through art and expanding the relations among technology, aesthetics, pedagogy, and institutional critique, the CNMFPP proposes artistic research as a location of appearance for new visions, new affinities, collaborations, and new forms of cultural practice. Artistic research emerges as an evolving field of collective inquiry through which feminist methodologies and aesthetic experimentation generate possibilities for social transformation, knowledge exchange, and emancipatory political imagination.

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