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Entre pliegues: pensar y hacer investigación artística y basada en las artes

Folds of In-Betweenness: Thinking and Doing Artistic Research and Arts-Based Research

Coordinadoras: Ivet Farrés-Cullell y Judit Onsès-Segarra

Tercio Creciente



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Folds of In-Betweenness: Thinking and Doing Artistic Research and Arts-Based Research

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Hace más de tres décadas que la investigación artística (IA) y la investigación basada en las artes (IBA) se introdujeron en los contextos científicos y académicos con el objetivo de reivindicar el potencial de las artes para generar conocimiento. Surgidas en contextos y comunidades académicas distintos, ambas admiten genealogías diversas (Hernández-Hernández y Onsès-Segarra, 2020). Desde la arteterapia hasta la investigación narrativa, pasando por la conversión de artistas de oficio en académicos. En todos los casos, su entrada en el ámbito académico respondió a la búsqueda de nuevas perspectivas y de formas transdisciplinares de expresión y comprensión. Con el objetivo de fomentar vías plurales, múltiples, alternativas y diversas hacia el conocimiento por medio de las artes, la IA y la IBA permiten ampliar la conciencia de lo que nos rodea y alcanzar comprensiones más profundas de la realidad y de los fenómenos, incorporando dimensiones desde lo sensible (Barone y Eisner, 2012).

En el contexto español, la investigación artística, tal como se entiende en la actualidad, surge en gran parte cuando la mayoría de las escuelas de arte se integran en el sistema universitario y se convierten en facultades de Bellas Artes (Calderón García y Hernández-Hernández, 2019).

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> Aparece, así, la necesidad de dotar de sentido investigador la práctica artística, . . . [no desde la consideración de que] toda práctica artística es investigación, sino desde una perspectiva que dé cuenta de un proceso, que desvele recorridos y trayectorias en el proceso de creación e interpretación artística (Calderón García y Hernández-Hernández, 2019, p. 12)

El diálogo entre arte e investigación es, no obstante, anterior: ya a finales de los años setenta, George W. Ladd (1979) reivindicaba el papel de la imaginación, la intuición y el azar en la investigación científica, y Klein (2010) sostendría después que la experiencia artística es, en sí misma, una forma de reflexión y, por tanto, de generación de conocimiento.

Por su parte, la IBA ha mostrado desde sus inicios identidades diversas: ha sido descrita como perspectiva, metodología, enfoque o paradigma (Barone y Eisner, 2012; Hernández, 2008; Leavy, 2020). En este monográfico se parte de una concepción de la IBA como modo de investigar. Próxima en sus inicios a la investigación narrativa y al paradigma cualitativo (Hernández, 2008), se ha desplegado posteriormente en direcciones como la a/r/tografía (Irwin, 2013; Springgay et al., 2005) y los enfoques postcualitativos y performativos (Espinosa y Onsès-Segarra, 2022; Wainwright y Stevens, 2026), que han ampliado sus modos de pensar, hacer y decir.

Como señala Patricia Leavy (2018), aunque toda investigación requiere un marco ético y una reflexión rigurosa sobre el propio sistema de valores, esta necesidad cobra especial relevancia en la IBA debido a su potencial para promover el florecimiento humano, crear espacios de relacionalidad y encuentros dialógicos, oponerse a la opresión y fomentar la participación democrática. En esta línea, Shaun McNiff (2018), la describe como un proceso igualitario y universalmente accesible: una investigación, construida de manera colaborativa y comprometida con el cambio y la transformación social, abierta a todo tipo de conocimiento que hace tangible lo desconocido e invisible, atendiendo a cuestiones como la diversidad y la inclusión. En los últimos años se han desarrollado nuevas formas de llevar a cabo la IA y la IBA, cumpliendo siempre con el fundamento ético de promover una investigación democrática y diversa.

Pensar con las artes implica aceptar que el conocimiento no siempre avanza en línea recta, sino que se dobla, se repliega y se despliega en capas que conservan la huella de lo vivido. Uno de los rasgos compartidos por la IA y la IBA es, precisamente, su capacidad para situar a quienes investigan y a quienes participan en espacios intermedios: entre el hacer, el enseñar y el investigar; entre la palabra y la imagen; entre lo ya sabido y lo que todavía no puede enunciarse (Irwin et al., 2006; Leggo et al., 2011).

Gilles Deleuze (1993) propone el concepto de pliegue para pensar la realidad como un continuo en el que la materia y el alma no constituyen ámbitos separados, sino niveles que se pliegan uno sobre otro. Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2013) entiende este concepto como una vía para proponer alternativas en la teoría y la investigación: plegar consiste en llevar la teoría hasta el fondo de su potencial creativo. Se trata, así, de un concepto que invita a estudiar los encuentros en la investigación como posibilidades de conectar "una infinidad de puntos que permiten perspectivas" (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2013, p. 60, traducción propia). El pliegue permite pensar los espacios del

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conocimiento no como fronteras entre ámbitos separados, sino como zonas de continuidad y contigüidad en las que se avanza "mediante oscilaciones pendulares y desplazamientos rizomáticos" (Chiarella, 2011, p. 63).

Del 20 al 22 de noviembre de 2024 se celebró en la Universitat de Girona (España) la 8.ª Conferencia Internacional sobre Investigación Artística e Investigación Basada en las Artes. Más de un centenar de académicos de todo el mundo participaron y compartieron sus conocimientos y experiencias en estos campos, exponiendo las novedades de los últimos años y presentando enfoques y temas de diversa índole. Fue un evento creativo en el que los participantes pudieron experimentar, imaginar, reflexionar, aprender, sorprenderse y aventurarse en formas de investigación tanto actuales como novedosas.

Las personas investigadoras abordaron temas relacionados con la transdisciplinariedad, la intermedialidad, el pensamiento crítico, el «ser-con» la tecnología, la democracia, el compromiso y la investigación comunitaria, la diversidad y la investigación basada en las artes en el ámbito educativo.

A raíz de la conferencia y las contribuciones presentadas, se detectó la necesidad de seguir compartiendo actualizaciones en relación con la IA y la IBA. Por su condición inventiva y su versatilidad intrínseca, ambas se reconfiguran a medida que surgen nuevos paradigmas, perspectivas y discursos en el campo de la investigación. Por ello se decidió publicar este monográfico, que recoge algunas de las ideas y debates actuales en torno a la investigación artística y basada en las artes, especialmente en el campo de la educación.

El presente monográfico se presenta como un territorio de pliegues, el cual reúne, en este sentido, distintos pliegues de la investigación artística y basada en las artes. Abarca desde los interrogantes sobre sus genealogías y su rigor hasta la formación del profesorado de arte en entornos digitales, y aborda también la práctica artística como acontecimiento investigador y como forma de desobediencia.

El número se abre con una conversación entre Anita Sinner (University of British Columbia) y Fernando Hernández-Hernández (Universitat de Barcelona), conducida por Karo Kunde (Universitat de Girona), que adapta la mesa redonda inaugural del congreso. El diálogo reconstruye las genealogías del campo, distingue entre metodología y métodos y aborda de manera explícita sus tensiones: el riesgo de que la adopción acrítica de estrategias artísticas genere un arte y una investigación de menor calidad, y la necesidad de interrogar las tradiciones occidentales sobre las que se asienta el campo.

La contribución de Carlota Blasco Aguirre, Montserrat Calbó Angrill (Universitat de Girona) y Panagiotis Dafiotis (Universidad Aristóteles de Tesalónica) responde a la cuestión del rigor mediante una propuesta de investigación a/r/tográfica, desarrollada en escuelas de educación primaria de Grecia. El artículo formula una tríada de explicitación: una lógica de indagación argumentada, un sistema de evidencias multimodales y unos criterios de rigor coherentes con los presupuestos de la IBA. La propuesta se articula mediante dos metáforas: el telar, que ordena la arquitectura metodológica, y la estratigrafía cartográfica, que permite triangular sin reducir la complejidad.

Miriam Peña Zabala, Alaitz Sasiain Camarero Núñez, Estibaliz Aberasturi Apraiz y Regina Guerra Guezuraga (Universidad del País Vasco) presentan una experiencia basada en una exposición que, lejos de presentarse como cierre de investigación, invita

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a investigadores y público no familiarizado con la investigación a reflexionar sobre los resultados surgidos, deviniendo así una exposición que funciona como acontecimiento investigador. Al mismo tiempo, se reivindica la doble condición de investigadora y artista de quienes la conciben, a través de piezas que dan cuenta de la investigación más allá del registro académico.

Elpida Karaba y Valia Papastamou (University of Thessaly) plantean el arte basado en la investigación como un paradigma fundamentado en la desobediencia, desde la teoría feminista y las pedagogías críticas. Los talleres entre pares, los grupos de lectura y las prácticas de archivo y prototipado especulativo analizados se presentan como praxis instituyente frente a la captura institucional.

La contribución de Melissa Lima Caminha traslada esta desobediencia al ámbito autoetnográfico. A través de la figura de la payasa-madre-bufona y de tres piezas poéticas, el artículo explora la docencia, la maternidad y la permanencia en la universidad, y propone la ternura radical como puente entre el amor y la queja, en diálogo con Sara Ahmed y bell hooks.

Los dos últimos artículos se centran en la formación en educación artística. Elly Yazdanpanah (University of British Columbia), Samia Alsheikh y cuatro estudiantes de la Universidad de Helwan (Ahmad Alaa, Noor Ashraf Nasr, Jackline Gerges y Osama Alshannaf) presentan, a varias voces, un proyecto de Aprendizaje Colaborativo Internacional en Línea (COIL) entre Egipto y Canadá. En él, la escritura creativa se constituye en método de indagación y las herramientas digitales de uso cotidiano sostienen intercambios transculturales.

Por último, Panagiotis Dafiotis describe el modo en que la IBA informa la formación del profesorado de arte en la Universidad Aristóteles de Tesalónica: los cuadernos de artista buscan integrar las identidades de artista y docente, y proyectos europeos como CREAMS exploran las posibilidades de las exposiciones virtuales con realidad extendida.

En conjunto, las siete contribuciones no resuelven las tensiones planteadas en la conversación inaugural, sino que contribuyen a desplegarlas. Junto a propuestas que reivindican la deriva, la opacidad o la desobediencia, se sitúan otras que ofrecen criterios para sostener y comunicar el rigor. Esta coexistencia, entre pliegues, presenta una imagen que funciona como metáfora de un campo que reflexiona sobre sí mismo sin renunciar ni a la apertura ni a la exigencia.

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Thinking with Arts-Based Methodologies for Educational Research: A Conversation between Anita Sinner and Fernando Hernández Hernández

Pensar con metodologías basadas en las artes para la investigación educativa: una conversación entre Anita Sinner y Fernando Hernández Hernández

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Abstract

This conversation is an adapted transcript of a roundtable held during the opening session of the 8th International Conference on Artistic Research and Arts-based Research, which took place at the University of Girona from November 20 to 22, 2024. The session aimed to provide a historical contextualization of artistic and arts-based research, while also examining its methodological frameworks, inherent tensions, and potentialities. Contributing to the dialogue, Professor Anita Sinner from the University of British Columbia offered insights from her transdisciplinary approach to research, which integrates qualitative methodologies across various forms of artistic inquiry, particularly in relation to curriculum studies and socio-cultural issues in education. Emeritus Professor Fernando Hernández-Hernández of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona contributed perspectives grounded in his expertise on educational innovation, curricular reform in the arts, and equitable access to culture, learning, and education within contemporary society.

Keywords: Arts Based Research, Artistic Methods, Performative Paradigm, Genealogies.

Resumen

Esta conversación es una transcripción adaptada de una mesa redonda llevada a cabo durante la sesión inaugural del 8.º Congreso Internacional de Investigación Artística e Investigación Basada en las Artes, que tuvo lugar en la Universidad de Girona del 20 al 22 de noviembre de 2024. La sesión tuvo como objetivo ofrecer una contextualización histórica de la investigación artística y basada en las artes, al tiempo que examinó sus marcos metodológicos, tensiones inherentes y potencialidades. En su contribución al diálogo, la profesora Anita Sinner, de la University of British Columbia, aportó reflexiones desde su enfoque transdisciplinar de la investigación, el cual integra metodologías cualitativas a través de diversas formas de indagación artística, especialmente en relación con los estudios curriculares y las cuestiones socioculturales en la educación. Por su parte, el profesor emérito Fernando Hernández-Hernández, de la Facultad de Bellas Artes de la Universidad de Barcelona, aportó perspectivas fundamentadas en su experiencia sobre innovación educativa, reforma curricular en las artes y acceso equitativo a la cultura, el aprendizaje y la educación en la sociedad contemporánea.

Palabras clave: investigación basada en las artes, métodos artísticos, paradigma performativo, genealogías.

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The genealogies

Karo Kunde: This opening session was planned to situate the current state of artistic and arts-based research. Do you think it is important to talk about tensions which could arise, as well as about possibilities and methodologies?
Fernando Hernández-Hernández: The issues you've raised, Karo, require our attention, particularly because the field of Arts-Based Research (ABR) has evolved significantly over the past 30 years (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin et al., 2025). We need to consider various aspects, such as terminology, positionalities, and funding perspectives. Most importantly, we should establish frameworks to help us better position ourselves within this field. Currently, any artistic action that involves a process of inquiry is often labelled as "artistic research," while any research or teaching project that employs artistic strategies is classified as "arts-based research." This broad categorization diminishes the clarity and understanding of these research frames, making it challenging to grasp the phenomenon we are discussing. To situate ourselves, we need to consider a possible genealogy of the field. We should ask ourselves, as in Gauguin's painting: where do we come from, where are we now, and where do we want to go? Although we may not resolve all these questions, our goal is to situate our thoughts, approaches and research practices on this matter.
Anita Sinner: When we think about the genealogies of ABER (Arts-based Educational Research), we can begin by thinking of the maturation of the methodology. It is an emergent disposition, and we can be mindful to value and receive ABER on different aesthetic planes, with all the qualities of the different approaches that we can bring into this conversation. And I refer to Gerard Genette when I make that reference, specifically, the aesthetic relation to works of art, and in this case to methodology, and that methodology requires all forms and levels of engagement. So translating this to our context, ABER is a process. It is 'becoming.'

We can begin with the debate between Gardner and Eisner at an AERA (American Educational Research Association) in 1997. Can a novel be a dissertation? This is something that is still being debated today. And of course, then we have just a short time after that, Rishma Dunlop (1999) wrote *Boundary Bay: A novel as educational research*, at the University of British Columbia, and we see the beginnings of what part of our methodological inheritance is today. We are also reminded of the commitment to the arts which bring different responsibilities to the debate: O'Donoghue (2009) discusses this at length; we do have bigger questions to consider as we move forward.
Karo Kunde: When talking about genealogies in ABER aren't we somehow deviating attention from the specific methodologies, those which bring art as a method of research into practice?
Anita Sinner: By attending to the genealogies, we are not overlooking and flattening methodologies, we are coming, in effect, to embracing arts-based and artistic research as an emergent 'post' methodology in its own right. We need to be very thoughtful

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about the historical antecedents that are needed for the theoretical dispositions and the methodological propositions. The question then becomes: Can anything be art? And thus, can anything be researched?

Fernando Hernández-Hernández: These questions lead to others in the field of fine arts: What does it mean to do research in the field of arts? Therefore, the discussion needs to centre firstly on what research is. Is research the practice of the artist? Or is it something more? Or is research about explaining the process of doing, and how do we make this process visible? Or is research based on practices? What is our research and how can this research be assessed? How is artistic research part of academic life? All these debates are underway in scholar institutions.

And yet there is another genealogy: when art is introduced into a scholar context, let's say in a College of Arts, one needs to start communicating and preparing projects to be assessed and evaluated. This brings up questions as: What does research mean in the arts? Does research have to be about the intricate practice of art, or, is research something external that you could give as an account of the process of the artmaking? Or is the process about practical arts? Basically, research in art is research based in these practices. All these questions lie at the heart of the genealogies surrounding Artistic Research (AR) and Arts-Based Research (ABR). The answers to these questions outline the paths followed since art institutions were integrated into universities in the 1970s. This change raised important questions about what constitutes a thesis, the nature of research in the arts, and the process of peer review. By retracing the debates and proposals related to these issues, we can sketch a genealogy of AR. Regarding ABR, as Anita has pointed out, there is a genealogy emerging from the discussions between Gardner and Eisner within the American Educational Research Association (AERA) that focuses on the "nature" of research in general and educational research in particular. This perspective situates genealogy within the onto-epistemological methodology of research (Barone & Eisner, 2012). Additionally, another genealogy is linked to the evaluation of artistic methods in research (Leavy, 2025), applicable not only in the arts but also in fields such as health, economics, and geography. The common thread here is the role of artistic methods in revealing what might otherwise remain invisible. These three genealogies provide a foundation for situating ourselves and proposing new lines of inquiry.

Anita Sinner: I recently read a book by Clive Cazeaux (2017), called *Art, Research, Philosophy*. And Cazeaux writes that art is research when it persists as a series of forms, objects, events, conversations, commissions, publications, and so on, and poses the question, what is after the end of art? It becomes a research situation. And I think this is a launch point: art is an infinity of forms, and the obligation of the researcher is to recognize all the elements that may become their practice as concepts, and that we need to surrender the sense, or the understanding of the singularity or the uniqueness of art, and move with concepts to create the conditions of speculative discourses. As we think about object, space, and body, and we start to expand the concepts that are involved, we can think differently about relationality and agency and how we create novel forms in relation.

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Other ways of inquiry

Karo Kunde: In the specific case of educational research, do you think the arts can open new ways of inquiry?
Fernando Hernández-Hernández: Looking back at the debate that began with Eisner, who served as president of the AERA from 1992 to 1993, we can reflect on an important discussion. Eisner hosted a debate regarding whether applying the scientific method was the only valid way to conduct research, or if it was feasible to conduct research grounded in artistic practices. At that time, this was a significant issue. We were beginning to think differently about qualitative approaches. However, we still held fixed notions of what research should entail.

From this debate emerged the idea that it was possible to create a different form of research based on artistic practices and strategies. Fast-forward to today, just ten years after the concept of the performative paradigm (Østern et al., 2023) entered academic discussions. We can see that the performative paradigm has evolved beyond merely relating to performative artistic practices. Instead, it serves as a framework for understanding research results through a different lens. This approach emphasizes that research unfolds not through pre-defined designs or predetermined outcomes, but rather through the process of conducting the research itself. Thus, the essence of the research cannot be established in advance. When we provide an account of our research, we are describing what occurs during the research process. Additionally, the performative paradigm contributes to the organization of current conversations centred around arts-based research.
Anita Sinner: And just following on that, regarding the performative paradigm, Erin Manning (2015) writes against method. Erin argues for the importance of creating choreographic thinking, which lends to what you were just discussing Fernando. This is not a method, but a dynamic. It is about opening and shifting from repetition and engaging in ways in which the body changes and ecologies in relation are composed.
Fernando Hernández-Hernández: To conclude this first issue on genealogies, you can find many different names and different approaches, but what is important is to pay attention to the onto-epistemological foundations of a given approach, and therefore, to the methodological foundation. What can this approach offer to you? So what is important is not the name, but the foundation of the name. So here the real question is: What are the foundations of the names? Because names guide into different directions, so we need to focus on the histological foundation, and the methodological decisions that follow.
Anita Sinner: Yes, the workshops for the Textile Cartographies project illustrate these shifts and the histories and the potentials of the art research. Teresa Eça and her team from Portugal have established this remarkable international community-based initiative where we are making 10x10cm squares, and we exchange them all around the world, coordinated by scholars such as Samia El Sheik from Egypt or Celia Matsunaga from Brazil, just to mention a couple of contributors. It demonstrates the process of making with materiality, of making as part of our larger discussion that we're having.

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On methodology and methods

Karo Kunde: So, can we understand the name as the artistic approach on which each research methodology is based?
Fernando Hernández-Hernández: It is important to differentiate between methodology and methods, which are often confused. For us, the methodology is the glasses you use to see reality in some way. It is a lens into reality. And the methods are the strategies you use to catch part of this reality.
Anita Sinner: Methodology can be thought of as applied theory, and we talk about methodological ecotones, in the sense of a continuum, beginning with arts-based educational research, practice-based approaches, a/r/tography as the nexus, if you will, of the approaches, followed by artistic research and research-creation. And it's on that continuum of conversation that we situate research. In the Canadian context, we're often moving in between and across, and borrowing and blending and overlapping with our different approaches. However, if the notion of methodology stands as the aesthetic grammar of art as research, we need to know the rules before we can break the rules. And that's something I still adhere to.

And perhaps it's because I come from the social sciences that I'm still very firm on methodology. Now, of course, method has become quite controversial, and we have theory-practice, with debates that are ongoing around what method is in terms of the creative arts, and the creative approaches to research. One of the propositions that I like to suggest is that we think beyond method, which is one approach, to think about the norms, the modes, and a mode of the act of doing, a mode as an act of thinking. So instead of adhering to this notion of ordered steps that are required in a particular sequence, we start to think more about the coherence between the methodology and the modes of inquiry.
Karo Kunde: Does this then mean that there can be research without methodology?
Anita Sinner: Coming back to Erin Manning, who has been a leader in this conversation, we can think about how art activates and constitutes a practice that thinks. I'm not sure I can agree on discarding methodology just yet. It may be a matter of asking some different questions, as Donal O'Donoghue suggests, are we asking the wrong questions? And perhaps we are asking the wrong question if we are going to argue that methodology and method is not something we necessarily need in the future for art as research. And this is something I think a lot about, and there are many different perspectives on this. But if we think about the event as the yet-not-thought and the unthought-without-thought itself, we move our conversation to a space of rhythm.

As we move to a space of new ecologies of practice. I'm reminded of Colebrook (2016) who talks about engaging in the experimental, the playful, in creative enactments of non-recognition, and that not knowing comes with the essential risk of stupidity. And I love that because how many of us are willing to undertake a project, an inquiry, a study, and accept that there is a potential of our own stupidity embedded within that. Now, this was something we discussed at length in my class recently, and students seized on this notion of stupidity. And I thought this was fascinating. It was fascinating to me that as a

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generation of incoming emergent young scholars, learning about artist research for the first time, they took comfort in the notion that they could take that risk, that they could undertake an experiment. And I think perhaps that comes full circle to Erin's argument, but in a slightly different way. We begin to think about usefulness and uselessness, and what does that then constitute in the ways that we proceed-in with our research.

Karo Kunde: This reflection on the possible absence of methodology makes me think of a previous comment of Fernando, where he mentions that one of the genealogical issues is the fact of writing arts-based research projects, which have to be assessed. Is this even possible if there is no methodology?

Fernando Hernández-Hernández: This issue highlights the relationship between epistemology, ontology, and ethics. Naturally, the question arises about whether research can be conducted with or without established methodologies and methods. We must consider what might lead some researchers to pursue research without methodologies and methods. This perspective may be "disturbing" to some researchers. However, the essential point is to question whether research is a process that follows a series of predetermined steps and decisions, or if it is something that evolves organically as a research phenomenon. When we adopt a methodological perspective or method, we shape a specific type of reality (Koro-Ljungberg, 2015).

By adopting this viewpoint, we can temper our fixation on defining research methodologies and methods in advance, understanding instead that they are not fixed but rather develop over time. When we become overly focused on methodology, we may define reality too rigidly and become closed off to what reality can reveal. By prioritizing methodology before engaging with reality, we risk framing and shaping that reality in a way that limits our understanding. Research based on our relationship with the phenomenon can also transform us. This connects to the performative paradigm, where methodology is viewed as the process of documenting the decisions, movements, engagements, and shifts that occur during the research.

Anita Sinner: I agree. And you know, thinking about arts-based research, artistic research, arts-related research, we have different methodological entry points, and there is a question of antagonism between the different approaches and what does that then constitute. And one of the ways that I try to articulate that is, thinking about artistic research as a micro practice. It is material based. It is studio based. We have arts-based educational research being the meta- or the macro practice, so that is looking at the pedagogic implications. And then the third I would suggest could be the meso practice. And here I'm referring to the work of Taguchi and St. Pierre, and concept as method. I keep coming back to this notion of concept as method, and concept of acts of thoughts. Mieke Ball writes about traveling concepts in a parallel way, but we also have to be mindful that not all concepts are words, as Cazeaux suggests.

And so, what then does a concept constitute? And when we think about these intensive orientations, as Fernando describes, these are forces, these are qualities. They bring us into the more-than-human. We are reconfiguring concepts as radiances and ambiences and vibrations and tones. And so, in this sense, we can then learn something different about every event in the educational situation, in the artistic situation, in the

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research situation. And the potential of this particularly with the notion of the trans-, not just transnational and transdisciplinary, but translanguaging and transmedia, but the notion of trans- potentially holding the rupture point to opening inquiry in ways that methodology cannot even be thought of yet.

Fernando Hernández-Hernández: What you are saying, Anita, is particularly important because arts-based research is becoming increasingly prevalent across various fields such as nursing, health, sciences, management, education, and the arts (Chemi & Dum 2018; Lupton & Leahy, 2021). You can utilize artistic methods in any way you choose, as their purpose is to reveal insights that may remain hidden when using traditional methods. The effectiveness of these artistic approaches also stems from a growing commitment to transparency in results. This ensures enhanced trustworthiness and promotes inclusivity and participation. However, we often create distance between ourselves and the participants in this process, which can hinder these objectives. The methods we select should align with our intentions. When we employ artistic methods, the individuals we work with become active participants in the research. Artistic strategies facilitate collaboration, allowing us to shift from merely researching people to conducting research with people. This represents a significant shift in approach, and arts-based methods play a crucial role in advancing this conversation and moving us forward.

Anita Sinner: But also with a cautionary note, because adapting the tenets of creative arts as part of an inquiry could also generate lesser art. So yes, it is participatory, and yes, it does enact the intent.

This concerns me because there are claims being made under the guise of arts-based research that are not just lesser art, but potentially lesser research. And I think that we do have some responsibility now to rethink some of the 'anything goes' approach. There has to be a cautionary note always with all research, and what does that then constitute? Having been part of the generation who were essentially at the beginning of ABER, 20-25 years ago, where we were adventuring in and we were learning the way, there is a need to mature methodologically. It is a different time now. And I think that is the part where I'm starting to flag, when students have no qualitative background, they may take up arts-based approaches in a historical and methodological vacuum, and that has ethical implications. There are different ethical implications when we engage with art as research. We have to be very attentive to that in a different way.

I have some cautionary notes at the same time, as much as I'm a supporter and a promoter and an advocate for art as research, I also have some concerns, and those concerns are growing. For example, should it be a prerequisite to have taken qualitative research before undertaking art as research? And I ask myself this question repeatedly again, in part because sometimes we take up art practice in a very problematic way. I say this of my past work also. This is reminiscent of early ABER debates, and the argument that Patricia Leavy offered if I draw a stick person, I'm doing arts-based research. Well, technically that is correct. But is that what we want to see as the defining, or the potential of what we are dedicating our scholarly lives to, when creating a paradigm that is unfolding now?

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Fernando Hernández-Hernández: A key tension in arts-based and artistic research is its foundation in a Western tradition, where knowledge is primarily intellectual and rational. However, in other traditions, knowledge can be sensorial and sensitive, tied to the body and emotions. We are also defining the nature of the knowledge we create and the methods we use to generate it. Another important tension concerns the type of data and evidence we gather. What constitutes data in arts-based research (ABR)? What kinds of data and evidence do we produce as part of the research process? We need to engage in discussions about these questions and invite others to participate in them.

Anita Sinner: And if I can build on that notion of a post medium, if we think about research always as a work in progress, as we think about an artwork as a work in progress, we are defining what it means to create art and when is an artwork, rather than what is an artwork. This is now about openings and open-ended constellations of thought, about co-creating in the ways that we're generating discursive spaces as artists-researchers-teachers. This is a continuous sense of becoming. So in terms of an a/r/tographic lens, I think that's one of the reasons that a/r/tography has had such an international appeal and been taken up by many different fields of study, in many different ways, because it operates theoretically, methodologically, as a practice-based approach, and it entwines all of those potentialities. I often describe a/r/tography as the centre of the approaches. If you think about them as a knowledge cluster, a/r/tography is very acrobatic. It is a flow. It is about movement. And it encapsulates the spaces within which we can operate within research situations.

Fernando Hernández-Hernández: Another question to consider is how we define rigour. What does rigour mean in the context of ABR and artistic research? In more traditional forms of research, such as realistic or interpretative research, rigour refers to the consistency among our objectives, methods, analyses, and the narrative we provide about ourselves and the research process. This concept is currently under debate, as we understand rigour in various ways, and these interpretations are linked to ideas of fluidity, predictability, and our overall conception of rigour. However, discussions around rigour must be contextualized, as different levels of rigour can create distinct environments for ABR and artistic research.

Anita Sinner: Yes, and just following on the a/r/tography discussion, Imag 17 is a special issue that just was released and the theme is sensorial a/r/tography (IMAG_issue_17_v3.pdf). This issue came out of a course I taught last year on walking with public art. The invitation was for students to think about art and public space differently, because generally, in the Canadian context, we don't think about public art as a source of pedagogic potential. So, this was the invitation for the graduate students. Some of their essays are included in the issue, and we also have essays from around the world. We have an essay from Japan, walking in Korea, by Koichi Kasahara and Sunah Kim. In their work you see the aesthetic potential of working in an a/r/tographic context. This notion of the sensorial as a concept beyond words was in fact the impetus for this special issue.

Fernando Hernández-Hernández: The question we need to consider is how to evaluate the sensory experiences between people. It might be necessary to revisit the discussion

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from a different perspective. As we near the end of our time, we are just starting to uncover connections, links, and tensions that will help us continue the conversation.

Anita Sinner: Yes, I want to come back to something you said earlier Fernando, and it's about the notion of the hotspots in the world where this work is leading our current conversations. As arts researchers, we must be very mindful because if we don't situate our work historically, we inherit and we contribute to the colonizing dynamic that is inherent in our spaces of research. We are inevitably reproducing histories by virtue of where the hotspots reside. For example, Canada, we think about Europe, we think about Australia, and this is where a lot of the artistic and arts-based work is edgy and dynamic. However, western art practices are underpinning a lot of that discussion. And if we don't attend to that, we're not mindful of that inheritance and that genealogy bringing us back to the beginning, what are we doing? What do we fail to do as researchers in the context of equity, diversity, inclusivity, and decolonization? And as a new generation of emerging scholars come to this work, they will initiate the next iteration, that is the next conversation, perhaps the next panel that will be on this theme.

Fernando Hernández-Hernández: In conclusion, this raises a debate between those who possess the truth and those who hold power. Behind the truth lies power as well. Reality has multiple facets, and we are continually approaching a new understanding of it. We are exploring just one aspect of reality, and we have never had a complete view of it. Therefore, if we engage in this type of research—be it through artistic practice, sensory responses, or a/r/tographic approaches—we will not conduct our research in isolation. We are continually shaping our understanding through various perspectives. It's not solely about power or whether someone has the right answer; the key question is about our contributions. Are we expanding knowledge and providing new perspectives in our processes and practices?

Anita Sinner: I can end on one final question about speculative futures: How are we preparing ourselves for 21st century creative research relevant for living in the world today? So, I think that's also part of the task ahead.

Karo Kunde: Thank you, Anita. Thank you, Fernando for the reflections, which opens the discussion we can have here. There were a lot of ideas, a lot of things. And each of those ideas, each of those tensions are worth an account for themselves.

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Estratigrafías cartográficas y telar metodológico: cómo una tesis a/r/tográfica explicita lógica, evidencias y rigor en la investigación basada en las artes y la investigación artística

Cartographic Stratigraphies and the Methodological Loom: How an A/r/tographic Thesis Makes Inquiry Logic, Multimodal Evidence, and Rigor Explicit in Arts-Based Research and Artistic Research

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Resumen

Este artículo, derivado de la tesis doctoral *A/r/tografía para explorar transformaciones educativas con el Art Thinking: innovación en la educación artística básica en Grecia* (Blasco Aguirre, 2024), propone un marco metodológico operativo para sostener la validez de la Investigación Basada en las Artes (IBA) y la Investigación Artística (IA), sin forzarlas a emular protocolos de corte positivista o cuantitativo. Se argumenta que su legitimidad epistemológica se consolida cuando la investigación hace explícitos: (a) una lógica de indagación argumentada; (b) un sistema de evidencias multimodales —texto, imagen, objeto, acción y registro sonoro— comprendidas simultáneamente como dato y como pensamiento; y (c) criterios de rigor coherentes con sus presupuestos epistemológicos. Desde una posición de investigadora bricoleur (Denzin y Lincoln, 2011; Blasco, 2024), se presenta la a/r/tografía como una arquitectura metodológica capaz de entretejer práctica artística, investigación y docencia en procesos de indagación rizomáticos. El artículo describe la construcción y la comunicación de una tesis a/r/tográfica mediante el telar como metáfora metodológica, el uso de recursos visuales como dispositivos de pensamiento y la estratigrafía cartográfica como metáfora operativa de triangulación. El texto se orienta a ofrecer criterios transferibles sin renunciar a la exigencia académica.

Palabras clave: a/r/tografía, investigación basada en las artes, investigación artística, rigor, evidencias multimodales, estratigrafías cartográficas, art thinking.

Abstract

This article, derived from the doctoral thesis *A/r/tography to explore educational transformations with Art Thinking: innovation in basic arts education in Greece* (Blasco Aguirre, 2024), proposes an operational methodological framework to support the validity of Arts-Based Research (ABR) and Artistic Research (AR), without forcing them to emulate positivist or quantitative protocols. It argues that their epistemological legitimacy is consolidated when the research makes explicit: (a) a logic of reasoned inquiry; (b) a system of multimodal evidence—text, image, object, action, and sound recording—understood simultaneously as data and as thought; and (c) criteria of rigour consistent with its epistemological assumptions. From a bricoleur researcher position (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Blasco, 2024), a/r/tography is presented as a methodological architecture capable of interweaving artistic practice, research, and teaching in rhizomatic inquiry processes. The article describes the construction and communication of an a/r/tographic thesis using the loom as a methodological metaphor, the use of visual resources as devices for thought, and cartographic stratigraphy as an operational metaphor for triangulation. The text aims to offer transferable criteria without compromising academic standards.

Keywords: A/r/tography, Arts-Based Research, Artistic Research, Rigor, Multimodal Evidence, Cartographic Stratigraphies, Art Thinking.

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1. Introducción: el telar de la investigación como problema metodológico

La educación contemporánea atraviesa crisis superpuestas: económicas, sociales, políticas y sanitarias. En ese paisaje, la escuela sostiene inercias que a menudo no dialogan con la complejidad del mundo, ni con las demandas de una sociedad tecnológica, ecológicamente tensionada y culturalmente diversa. En esta tesis doctoral, esta constatación no aparece como diagnóstico exterior, sino como necesidad vivida: cómo activar en contextos formales capacidades que el arte potencia y promueve desde siempre - creatividad, pensamiento divergente, empatía, juicio crítico y trabajo colaborativo - para que el aprendizaje no sea solo acumulación de contenidos, sino experiencia que transforma (Blasco, 2024).

La pregunta metodológica que atraviesa este artículo es: ¿qué ocurre cuando la investigación no se deja contar solo con palabras?; ¿Qué ocurre cuando el dato es también gesto, materia, relación, imagen, silencio; cuando la evidencia se despliega como serie, como collage, como cita visual, como artbook?; ¿Y qué ocurre cuando, además, la investigación no se sostiene en una identidad única, sino en la fricción productiva entre artista, investigadora y docente? En ese cruce, la a/r/tografía se convierte en una arquitectura posible para sostener indagaciones educativas, artísticas y ecoeducativas (Irwin et al., 2006; Irwin, 2013a).

Desde el inicio de la tesis se utilizó una metáfora que aquí se toma como guía metodológica: el telar[1]. El telar no es un adorno retórico o imagen decorativa; es una forma de ordenar la complejidad sin reducirla. Urdimbre y trama hacen visible cómo se entretejen los tres proyectos eduartísticos que se investigó, los dos estudios de caso, tiempos, materiales, subjetividades y contextos.

2. Cuantitativo y cualitativo: del dualismo a la adecuación

Durante décadas, la conversación metodológica se organizó como un dualismo (Hernández, 2006): cuantitativo frente a cualitativo. Lo cuantitativo se asoció a medición, control, generalización y contraste de hipótesis; lo cualitativo, a comprensión situada, significados, procesos, relaciones y experiencia. Esta distinción puede ser útil siempre que no se convierta en frontera, porque en educación - y, de manera más concreta, en educación artística o visual- muchas preguntas nacen de lo vivencial, de lo relacional y de lo material, y exigen métodos capaces de captar matices que se pierden cuando la realidad se reduce a variables.

De ahí que, como sostienen diversos autores (Eisner, 1998; Hernández, 2012, 2019), sea imprescindible reconocer que "la investigación científica es un tipo de investigación, pero que no puede considerarse como la única forma de investigación" (Hernández, 2006, p. 18). En esa apertura se inscribe la investigación cualitativa como un campo múltiple, atravesado por tensiones, giros y tradiciones (Denzin y Lincoln, 2012), y también el surgimiento de enfoques que entrelazan artes e indagación cualitativa.

1 Las "urdimbres" sostienen los estudios de caso (dos escuelas de primaria del noroeste de Grecia) y las "tramas" despliegan tres proyectos ecoeducativos y artísticos creados por mí (Blasco Aguirre, 2024).

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Los cambios en el campo académico y científico, las transiciones sociales y políticas de la modernidad a la postmodernidad (Ruiz Bolívar, 2011, p. 29), la creciente "complejidad de la existencia humana" (Barrett, 2007, p. 1) y la situación del arte y, en particular, de la educación artística (Acaso, Ellsworth y Padró, 2011) han favorecido la proliferación de posiciones que reconfiguran los modos de conocer. En este marco, las nuevas propuestas ontológicas, epistemológicas y metodológicas "están cambiando el rostro de la investigación en ciencias sociales, abriendo posibilidades para perspectivas, modos, medios y géneros alternativos a través de los cuales comprender y representar la condición humana" (Knowles y Cole, 2008, p. xi).



Figura 1. Carlota Blasco Aguirre (2024) *Enfoques cuantitativo, cualitativo e Investigación Basada en las Artes*. SERIE SECUENCIA compuesta por tres FOTOGRAFÍAS de la Autora (2023), de izquierda a derecha, material vegetal seleccionado en mis caminatas (Walking Art) de 2022 en *Montaña Negra y Profitis Elias* (Kastoriá).

Entre ambos polos, el giro postcualitativo (Hernández y Revelles, 2019) ha cuestionado la separación rígida entre ontología, epistemología, metodología y ética: lo que investigamos, cómo lo investigamos y cómo cuidamos el campo no son fases independientes, sino un mismo entramado una unión de tramas y urdimbres que generan una tela (investigación). En la tesis, este giro aparece ligado a la necesidad de investigar con la vida real de las aulas y con la materialidad del territorio, aceptando que lo humano, lo no humano y lo cultural se afectan mútuamente (Ingold, 2012; Blasco, 2024). Ese desplazamiento es especialmente relevante en investigaciones ecoeducativas: cuando el hábitat es parte del problema, también debe ser parte del método[2].

En ese campo aparece la figura del *bricoleur*: quien compone con herramientas diversas para responder a problemas reales, contextuales, no domesticables. Según Denzin y Lincoln (2012), una investigación cualitativa como bricolage, entiende la figura del

2 Leggo et al., (2011) hacen una referencia interesante para entender los espacios o hábitats de esta indagación. Por un lado, la investigación es un hábitat de búsqueda, de entablar conocimiento mediante prácticas y metodologías regladas que justifican el rigor y exigencia que precisa la academia. Por otro lado, encontramos el *habitat* de estudio, que corresponde a los dos estudios de casos (empleados en mi tesis), que son espacios particulares compuestos por niñas y niños de caracteres y sociedades distintas.

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investigador/a como un *bricoleur* "en el sentido de que utiliza una variedad de técnicas y recursos para construir su investigación, en lugar de seguir un método preestablecido y rígido" (Blasco, 2024, p. 56).

En esta tesis, optar por una investigación como un *bricoleur* no fue una elección retórica ni una declaración estética: fue una necesidad metodológica, casi una respuesta inevitable a lo que estaba investigando y a cómo lo estaba viviendo. Trabajar con experiencias -con formas de estar en el mundo- obligó a aceptar que no había un único camino limpio y lineal, sino "un territorio hecho de cruces, retornos, capas y fricciones" (Blasco, 2024, p. 242). En ese marco, el rigor no se juega en la pureza de un método, sino en la coherencia del diseño multimétodo y en la transparencia con la que se explicitan las decisiones que lo sostienen.

Se entiende el bricolaje como una arquitectura operativa: no se trata de sumar técnicas por acumulación, sino de ensamblar estrategias y recursos -a veces como *collage*- para construir una comprensión densa, reflexiva y situada, un montaje que permita que el conocimiento emerja (Denzin y Lincoln, 2012; Given, 2008).



Figura 2. Carlota Blasco Aguirre (2024) *"Esculpo" no descubro mis herramientas y estrategias de investigación*. COLLAGE FOTOGRÁFICO compuesto a partir de seis FOTOGRAFÍAS superpuestas de la Autora (2024), de izquierda a derecha, *artbook, cartografía de indagación, cartografías estratigráficas y formas diversas de redacción que ejemplifican mi forma de expresar y plasmar el hecho investigado*.

En educación artística, cuando investigamos transformamos (cambios en el modo de colaborar, de empatizar, de pensar críticamente, de imaginar soluciones) pues trabajamos e indagamos con comportamientos y subjetividades donde se valora la diversidad de voces y experiencias (Giroux y McLaren, 1998; Eisner, 2008; Lather y St. Pierre, 2013). Que sean subjetivos no los vuelve inválidos; los vuelve complejos. Y la complejidad requiere dispositivos metodológicos que la sostengan sin simplificarla.

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3. IBA e IA: conocimiento cuando la forma también piensa

Hernández (2008) nos invita a repensar la investigación educativa desde metodologías basadas en las artes, no como un gesto ilustrativo que adorna resultados ya obtenidos, sino como un modo específico de producir conocimiento. En la misma línea, Barone y Eisner (2012) sostienen que la investigación científica es un tipo de investigación, pero no el único al que podemos recurrir; y que las artes pueden activar formas de comprensión que otros lenguajes no alcanzan. Este planteamiento no funciona como un permiso -como si el arte pudiera "saltarse" la exigencia investigadora-, sino al contrario: es una demanda. Si el arte investiga, debe explicitar cómo investiga. Por eso Leavy (2020) insiste en que el trabajo basado en artes debe poder evaluarse en términos de calidad, y propone criterios vinculados al propósito, la coherencia, la resonancia, la ética, la claridad comunicativa y la contribución. Barone y Eisner (2012), desde otro vocabulario, hablan de coherencia, generatividad, significación social, evocación e iluminación.

En este artículo se adopta la terminología Investigación Basada en las Artes - IBA como un paraguas metodológico que incluye estrategias artísticas dentro de diseños de investigación educativa y social; e Investigación Artística - IA como un campo donde la práctica artística se reconoce como investigación cuando produce conocimiento comunicable y contrastable. Ambas investigaciones dialogan en un cruce inevitable. En la tesis, la investigación no era solo basada en artes; también era un arte basado en investigación (Barrett, 2007; Blasco, 2024). En esa frase se condensa una posición: el arte no es un instrumento añadido a la investigación, ni la investigación un apéndice justificativo del arte, se coproducen.

4. A/r/tografía: identidad triple, rizoma y cartografía

Irwin et al. (2006) describen la a/r/tografía como un enfoque de investigación situado en la intersección entre artes y educación, que recurre a las artes para re-escribir y representar el mundo potenciando así la comprensión. En este mismo hilo discursivo o camino, Irwin (2013b) la define como indagación viva: no separa hacer, enseñar e investigar; los reconoce como relaciones rizomáticas que se alimentan. Como dialogan Leggo et al. (2011) es permanecer en espacios liminales: esos lugares donde no está todo resuelto, donde la indagación vive, se recrea y va mostrando caminos diferentes.

En la tesis, la a/r/tografía fue el suelo metodológico. Pero no actuó sola: se enlazó con investigación basada en artes, con estudios de caso, con pedagogías críticas, con enfoques postcualitativos y con una sensibilidad ecoeducativa y artística. Esta mezcla no es eclecticismo es coherencia con el problema. Por eso se configura como una arquitectura metodológica: una estructura que permite sostener un cuerpo de evidencias heterogéneo sin perder dirección.

La palabra cartografía aparece como método y como metáfora. Cartografiar no es dibujar un mapa cerrado es la herramienta que permite registrar trayectorias, ritmos, direccionalidades. Cartografiar es reconocer que una investigación no avanza en línea

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recta, sino en nodos, retornos y derivas. Este carácter rizomático no excusa la falta de rigor, todo lo contrario: obliga a explicitar cómo se eligieron los nodos, cómo se registraron las derivas, cómo se interpretaron las bifurcaciones. En esta investigación, como apuntan Hernández y Sancho-Gil (2021) la cartografía es "una herramienta epistemológica y una estrategia de investigación rizomática" (p. 61). A través de la cual se busca comunicar, aclarar y construir conceptos, pero al mismo tiempo se convierte en un código autoral de la investigadora/artista donde agrupar y aunar los trasvases de conocimiento, lo que la convierte en una potente herramienta que se dinamiza y fluye desde la práctica artística.

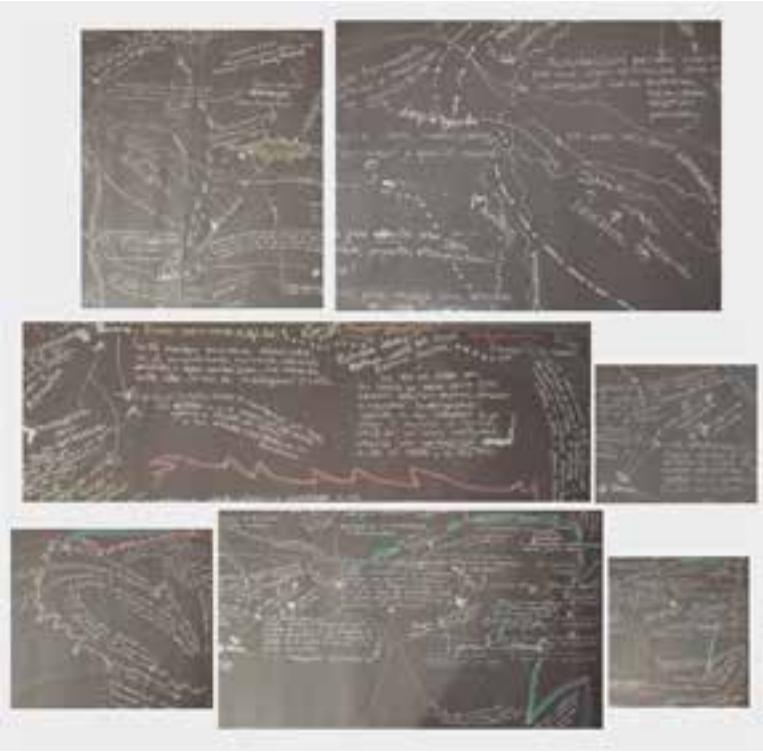


Figura 3. Carlota Blasco Aguirre (2024) *Coordenadas cartográficas: formas, ritmos y direccionalidad*. COLLAGE FOTOGRÁFICO compuesto a partir de siete FOTOGRAFÍAS superpuestas de la Autora (2024), de izquierda a derecha y de arriba abajo, *relaciones entre metodologías, teorías y categorías de análisis*. Medidas: 100x140

5. La triada de explicitación: lógica de indagación, evidencias multimodales y rigor

Proponemos aquí un criterio operativo para escribir y en un momento dado revisar trabajos IBA/IA: la triada de explicitación. Que se ha construido a partir de un proceso autoral de la tesis en diálogo con autores del campo. Funciona como pregunta para quien investiga y como pauta para quien lee.

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5.1. Lógica de indagación (por qué, para qué, cómo)

Explicitar la lógica de indagación es declarar la brújula: preguntas, objetivos, contextos y posicionamientos. En la tesis, analizar y evaluar Art Thinking como enfoque educativo en el currículum artístico griego implicó situar el problema: una educación artística escolar con prácticas tradicionales, y una necesidad de desarrollar metodologías que activen las capacidades del arte (Blasco Aguirre, 2024). Implicó también declarar desde dónde se investigó: como docente implicada, artista y diseñadora de proyectos educoartísticos.

La lógica incluye decisiones de diseño: elección de dos estudios de caso (K y M[3]), definición de tres proyectos ecoeducativos y artísticos como tramas, y articulación de esas tramas con la urdimbre de los casos. Incluye, además, una decisión ética: investigar con comunidades educativas exige cuidado, consentimiento, atención, anonimización y reciprocidad.

Explicitar el cómo no es crear una lista de técnicas es justificar su adecuación a la forma y método en que se investiga. Por qué entrevistas y no cuestionarios. Por qué observación participante. Por qué artbook. Por qué collage. Por qué caminar. Por qué detenerse en una imagen y no en un número. El rigor empieza cuando estas decisiones se argumentan y se vuelven rastreables o justificables (Lather y St. Pierre, 2013).

5.2. Evidencias multimodales (qué cuenta como dato)

HIPERTEXTO *"Investigadores cualitativos en educación en todo el mundo que utilizan teorías y metodologías extraídas de la antropología, la sociología, la filosofía y las artes y las humanidades no están de acuerdo en cuanto a si son científicos que 'transforman lo desconocido en lo conocido,' artistas que atraviesan mares desconocidos, o alguna combinación de ambos"*. (St. Pierre y Roulston, 2006, p. 673).

En metodologías basadas en artes, la evidencia no es solo verbal es multimodal. Puede ser un registro visual, una secuencia de acciones, una pieza de barro, un mapa, un texto breve, un silencio, una conversación, un archivo sonoro. Pero no todo lo sensible es evidencia se vuelve evidencia cuando se sitúa y se relaciona con la pregunta de investigación.

En la tesis se trabajó con un sistema de evidencias[4] que incluye: documentación de procesos artísticos y ecoeducativos, registros de aula, entrevistas, observación participante, diarios de campo, fotografías, artbook, hipertextos[5] y composiciones visuales (collage, cita visual ...). Estas evidencias se tratan como datos, pero también como pensamiento: la

3 Siglas correspondientes a las localidades de Korisó y Mesopotamía (Grecia).

4 Engloba los métodos y herramientas del telar (herramientas de investigación) así como las herramientas lingüísticas que ayudan en la redacción escrita de la tesis.

5 Los *hipertextos* se convierten en un recurso metonímico que expresa las ideas que van apareciendo en el texto explicativo que lo precede. Los he nombrado así al funcionar como pequeños inputs de la investigación pues son grandes ideas en un pequeño párrafo. Además ayudan en el análisis interpretativo de ideas, conceptos y nociones que a veces son difíciles de insertar en el texto general.

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imagen no adorna sino que argumenta y ofrece un prisma diferente desde donde ofrecer la información que se investiga.

Marín Viadel, Roldán y Caeiro (2020) ofrecen un marco útil basado en el enfoque a/r/tográfico, para comprender cómo los recursos visuales pueden operar como metodología investigadora y didáctica. En la tesis, la distribución de las imágenes crea un relato visual de la tesis por sí mismas, al recurrir a; *Collage* fotográfico, pares fotográficos, serie secuencia, serie explicativa, fotoensayo y citas visuales que junto con la construcción de pies de imagen ofrecen otra forma de relatar, expresar y contrastar la documentación. Por ejemplo, el par fotográfico no se justifica por el número, sino por la intensidad de su relación: que el conjunto produzca un sentido cualitativamente distinto al de cada imagen aislada (Marín Viadel et al., 2020). La serie secuencia y la serie explicativa permiten describir fases de un proceso y comparar situaciones; el fotoensayo organiza un argumento visual. Todo esto son decisiones metodológicas, no ornamentales.

5.3. Criterios de rigor (¿podemos evaluar la calidad?)

El "rigor" en IBA/IA se orienta a la credibilidad, la coherencia interna, la transparencia de proceso, la densidad interpretativa, la resonancia y la transferibilidad situada, una forma en la que la ética atraviesa toda la práctica (Springgay et al., 2008; Irwin, 2013b). A este respecto Barone y Eisner (2012) proponen criterios de calidad que ayudan a evaluar si una investigación basada en artes ilumina y no solo describe; si es generativa de conocimiento; si posee significación social; si su forma es coherente con su propósito.

En la tesis, el "rigor" se construyó de tres modos: (1) trazabilidad de evidencias (qué se produjo cómo y cuándo sucedió y en qué contexto), (2) triangulación por capas (estratigrafía cartográfica y cartografías como plano físico y metáfora que agrupa una *efervescencia de contenidos*) y (3) coherencia narrativa (el telar como arquitectura que mantiene dirección). El rigor se sostuvo también en el cuidado y la atención: investigar en escuelas implica proteger identidades y devolver valor a la comunidad. Es decir, las explicaciones y relatos que aparecen en la tesis no son el resultado del mundo mismo, sino que derivan "de nuestra inmersión en una tradición de prácticas culturales" (Gergen, 2007, p. 246). Estas explicaciones son "construcciones particulares del mundo" (Gergen, 2007, p. 247), que proceden de las relaciones que se ha establecido dentro de las "comunidades interpretativas" (Gergen y Gergen, 2000) en las que he vivido. Con todo ello, se quiere dar a entender que es muy difícil, que mediante el lenguaje[6], podamos exponer años de intrigas, vicisitudes y prácticas. ¿Qué se pretende con todo este relato? Pues dar a entender que lo que Denzin y Lincoln (2012) llaman "crisis de la validez", es una realidad tal cual (Denzin y Lincoln, 2012; Gergen y Gergen, 2000; Sullivan, 2005). Esto se debe a que estamos expresando y hablando acerca de experiencias y acciones humanas, y éstas debido a sus complejidades son difíciles de extrapolar a un lenguaje o forma de expresión y por extensión, pues ¿cómo se posibilita su evaluación? Lo que nos lleva a afirmar que este relato (la tesis) y los que se especifican y redactan a lo largo de él (de todas las implicadas e

6 O la explicación de 300 hojas de una tesis (St. Pierre y Roulston, 2006).

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implicados), surgen de la *experiencia*. En suma, son los resultados de "historias textuales/culturales particulares" (Gergen, 2007, p. 248), que deben ser entendidas como "procesos de creación de sentido de comunidades histórica y culturalmente situadas" (Gergen, 2007, p. 248) en un contexto[7], por lo tanto, estamos creando conocimiento a través de todo ello. No podemos medirlo, pues no estamos creando una base de datos, sino que en este proceso de exposición de información estamos creando nuestra propia forma de validar el estudio, mediante experiencias, vivencias y ambientes.



Figura 4. Carlota Blasco Aguirre (2024) *Construcción de la cartografía, Caso M* COLLAGE FOTOGRÁFICO compuesto a partir de cuatro FOTOGRAFÍAS superpuestas de la Autora (2023), de arriba abajo y de izquierda a derecha *diferentes momentos de la construcción*.

6. Cómo construir una tesis a/r/tográfica: decisiones y pasos transferibles

Ofrecemos aquí una guía en ocho movimientos que pueden o no ser extrapolables a otras investigaciones. Pretendemos con ello transferir una suerte de mapa de decisiones de más de cuatro años de indagación en "comunidades en prácticas" (Atkinson, 2021; Sinner et al., 2006).

(1) Situar el problema como experiencia. En a/r/tografía, el tema no se elige solo por interés académico; se elige por cómo nos atraviesa. La tesis se inicia desde una forma de estar en el mundo y recorrerlo (Ingold, 2009; Steil y Carvalho, 2018), una sensibilidad ecoeducativa, una práctica artística vinculada al territorio y una docencia situada en Kastoriá (Grecia).

(2) Formular preguntas que acepten complejidad. Las preguntas deben permitir explorar transformaciones, no solo constatar hechos. En este caso, el foco fue cómo el

7 Que no hace referencia solo al espacio físico o ambiente sino que son contexto la comunidad educativa que articula las actividades y sus practicantes (Sumara y Carson, 1997).

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Art Thinking puede fomentar capacidades del arte en Educación primaria, y cómo se manifiestan esas capacidades en las prácticas artísticas y sus relaciones.

(3) Diseñar el telar. Nombrar urdimbre y tramas obliga a ordenar la arquitectura: cuáles son los ejes estables (casos, currículo, contexto) y cuáles las tramas móviles (proyectos, procesos, materiales). El telar se vuelve índice de lectura para el lector a la par que guía para nosotras como investigadoras.

(4) Definir el multimétodo bricoleur. Seleccionar técnicas cualitativas y artísticas coherentes con la pregunta: observación participante, entrevistas, registros visuales y sonoros, artbook, producción artística con alumnado, caminatas, cartografías. Denzin y Lincoln (2012) ayudan a entender que el bricolaje no es mezcla aleatoria, sino composición situada; como subraya Kincheloe (2001) "el investigador bricoleur no tolera la diferencia sino que la cultiva como una chispa para su creatividad" (p. 687).

(5) Protocolizar la documentación. La multimodalidad necesita orden: fechas, contextos, descriptores y decisiones. Sin protocolo, la evidencia se vuelve archivo caótico; con protocolo, se vuelve material analizable, descriptible e interpretable.

(6) Analizar como tejido. El análisis en a/r/tografía se produce en el hacer y en el escribir. Se construyen categorías, pero también resonancias. Se comparan escenas, se detectan recurrencias, se atienden tensiones, es por ello que el análisis es también un montaje.

(7) Triangular sin reducir. Aquí se introduce la estratigrafía cartográfica como metáfora operativa. Triangular no es confirmar una verdad única; es hacer dialogar capas. Cada estrato conserva sus huellas y sus vacíos.

(8) Escribir como fase metodológica. La escritura no es posproceso. En IBA/IA, la forma de narrar es parte del método y consecuencia poética de cada uno o una, es decir, la legibilidad y la honestidad metodológica se construyen en la edición: qué se muestra, qué se oculta, qué se protege, cómo se guía al lector. En este caso una de las decisiones importantes es que aparezca el "yo" de la investigadora, en primera persona y no en tercera persona como se hace habitualmente. Escribir desde esta posición, plasmar situaciones determinadas[8], expresar de forma visceral pensamientos y vivencias e incluso, redactar lo acontecido desde un plano que roza la autoetnografía, son las estrategias que han permitido mostrar de forma clara y precisa, todo el hecho investigado. Éste, es un enfoque a/r/tográfico autoral, comprendido como una reforma de las estrategias investigadoras mediante la práctica (Leggo et al., 2011).

8 Puede ser entendido como un sesgo a la hora de investigar u ofrecer una visión parcial de los hechos acontecidos. Pero en todo momento he plasmado las vivencias y situaciones como han surgido, es decir, no he eliminado aspectos o situaciones que han provocado una crisis o una parada en la investigación. Todos los eventos, positivos y negativos han fortalecido y creado los momentos de reflexión necesarios para dirigir la investigación a un resultado real, demostrable y válido. Son las derivas que han ido apareciendo en la investigación y que la justifican como evento a/r/tográfico que vive y se regenera dependiendo del contexto, los y las participantes y sus inmersiones, tiene su propia vida.

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7. La estratigrafía cartográfica como metáfora de la triangulación

En la tesis, la triangulación se formula en la quinta parte como compactación de suposiciones, artefactos y vivencias investigadoras. Allí se propone la estratigrafía cartográfica como metáfora, y también como herramienta simbólica (Blasco, 2024, p. 242-245). Esta sección es central para el presente artículo porque transforma una palabra muchas veces usada - triangulación - en un dispositivo que se puede imaginar y, por tanto, construir.

La idea nace de una pregunta doble. Por un lado: si la investigación científica es un tipo de investigación, pero no la única (Hernández, 2008, p. 89), ¿cómo sostener rigor en una exploración alternativa donde los datos se exponen en otros registros sin perder exigencia? Por otro: ¿cómo reconocer que incluso en campos altamente protocolizados como la arqueología, las interpretaciones dependen de mecanismos de control, de métodos de análisis y de decisiones colectivas?

En la tesis se presenta el ejemplo del Yacimiento Lacustre Neolítico de Dispilió (5.750 a. C.). Antes de determinados resultados de dendrocronología se presuponían tres fases temporales de habitabilidad; tras el avance metodológico se identificaron doce. Se hallaron flautas, ídolos, vasijas de almacenamiento, y el espacio se interpretó como gran salón o centro de reuniones. Es decir: los datos no hablan solos; emergen de interacciones interdisciplinarias, de métodos, de cambios en la recogida y de lectura contextual (Blasco, 2024, p. 243). Y emerge la indagación de que si otro equipo habría interpretado igual los datos hallados.

Por extensión, la excavación, y más concretamente la estratigrafía, se convierte en modelo visual de resultados y herramienta simbólica de triangulación. La estratigrafía es disposición vertical de capas depositadas con el tiempo. Traducimos metodológicamente cada corte estratigráfico corresponde a una Trama. Cada estrato pertenece a un período específico y para nosotras, engloba mediante la escritura y mis códigos de dibujo (visual thinking) el análisis de los acontecimientos vividos. La figura de la arqueóloga/o corresponde simbólicamente a las cinco capacidades del estudio[9]. Las herramientas de excavación equivalen a las herramientas metodológicas: observación, entrevista, registro visual, artbook, montaje. Lo extraído - huesos, cerámicas, piedras, maderas - se convierte en vivencias, experiencias, competencias y subjetividades. Los huecos entre estratos son derivas e imprevistos. La interpretación de cada estrato proporciona información sobre ocupación humana, cambios culturales y evolución del entorno; y la superposición revela la secuencia temporal de eventos vividos (Blasco, 2024, p. 244).

La metáfora tiene una consecuencia ética y epistemológica: la parte superior del corte es la comunidad educativa. Hacia abajo se acumulan capas de experiencia. No podemos eliminar un estrato sin eliminarlo todo; del mismo modo, no podemos extraer un dato confirmatorio sin afectar el conjunto de relaciones donde se produjo (Blasco, 2024, p. 245). Esto no es relativismo; es responsabilidad metodológica: reconocer la

9 La creatividad, el pensamiento divergente, la empatía, el juicio crítico y el trabajo colaborativo.

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interdependencia de evidencias y contextos.

En el mismo tramo de la tesis aparece un hipertexto del antropólogo inglés Tim Ingold (2012), donde el diseño se piensa como tensión entre esperanzas y fricción material. En versión abreviada: el diseñador se aproxima a un atrapador de sueños, "y es en el encuentro con la materialidad donde la imaginación se prueba" (Ingold, 2012) (citado por Blasco, 2024, p. 242). Esta imagen ayuda a comprender el propio rol de la investigadora como diseñadora de prácticas educativas y de un dispositivo de análisis: ir paso a paso atrapando sueños - del alumnado, de la comunidad, de los proyectos - y confrontarlos con el mundo puro de lo posible.

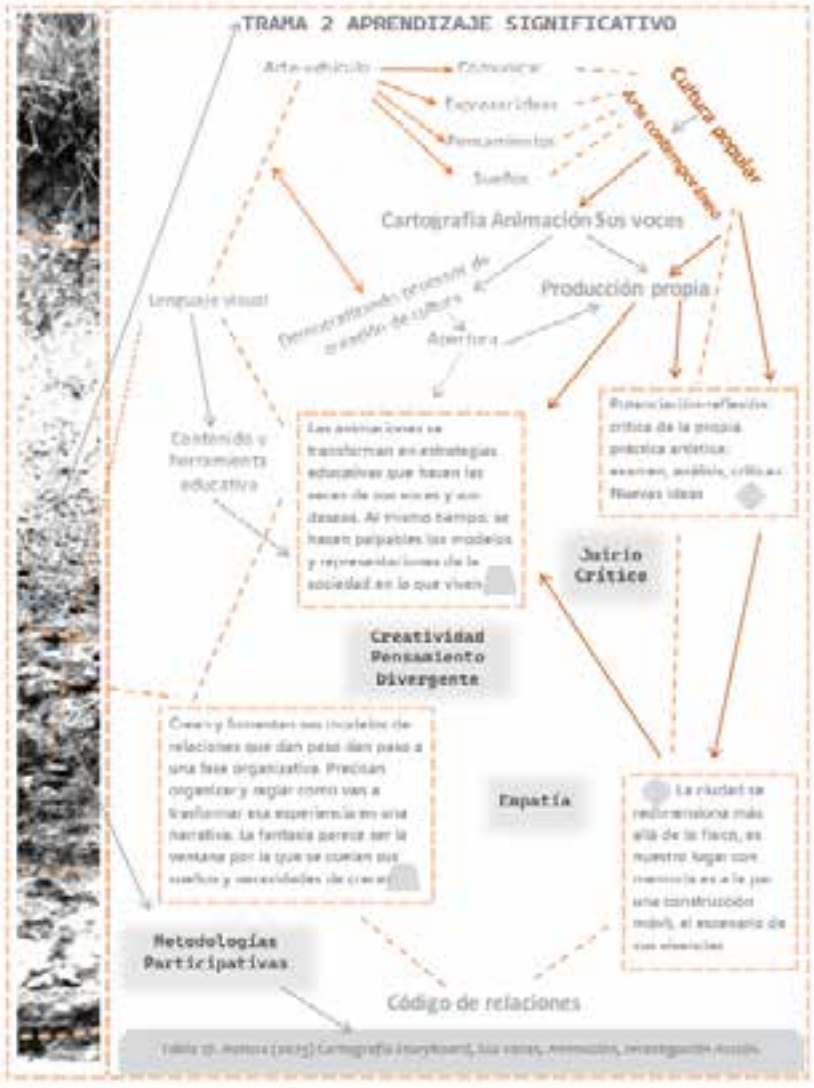


Figura 5. Carlota Blasco Aguirre (2024) *Estratigrafía cartográfica de la Trama 2 (Blasco Aguirre, 2024, p, 253)*.

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8. Relatar sin ilustrar: recursos visuales como estrategia de conocimiento

Una investigación basada en artes se juega también en su modo de relato. En la tesis, el texto produce urdimbre; la imagen produce trama. La relación no es jerárquica. Para sostenerla, es necesario tratar los recursos visuales como operaciones de investigación: describir, comparar, secuenciar, argumentar es abrir resonancias.

La cita visual introduce un texto-imagen como detonante de pensamiento. En la tesis, estas herramientas se usan para describir procesos educativos y artísticos, pero también para analizar: cambian el modo de leer la experiencia.

Este artículo, aun sin incluir tantas imágenes como en la investigación original, insiste en una condición: la multimodalidad requiere descripción rigurosa. Si una imagen funciona como evidencia, debe ser situada y leída. No basta con mostrar. Hay que decir qué se muestra, desde dónde, con qué intención, y cómo se vincula con la pregunta. En este sentido, los pies de imagen en la tesis funcionan como microargumentos: no describen superficialmente; justifican.

9. Innovación metodológica: tecnologías, inclusión y estrategias adaptativas

El número especial que convoca este artículo pide enfoques innovadores que amplíen límites incorporando perspectivas emergentes, nuevas tecnologías y estrategias inclusivas. En el campo de IBA/IA, la innovación no se reduce a añadir herramientas digitales. Consiste en diseñar formas de evidencia que amplíen legibilidad y acceso. Finley (2005) defiende la IBA como herramienta para inclusión comunitaria y activismo; en la presente investigación, esto se articula con prácticas educoartísticas que abordan problemáticas ecológicas desde una perspectiva empática y de comprensión real, buscando compromiso de la comunidad educativa (Blasco Aguirre, 2024, p. 55).

Desde ahí, se propone tres criterios para integrar las tecnologías sin perder sentido:

1. Coherencia con la lógica de indagación: una herramienta digital no se usa por novedad, sino porque permite registrar, analizar o comunicar algo que de otro modo se pierde.
2. Ética de circulación: toda tecnología aumenta la capacidad de difusión; por tanto, aumenta la responsabilidad sobre consentimiento, anonimización y cuidado.
3. Accesibilidad: la multimodalidad puede abrir la lectura a personas con diferentes modos de percepción y aprendizaje, si se diseña con intención.

Ejemplos de integración coherente pueden ser: repositorios audiovisuales acompañados de descripciones, códigos QR hacia procesos (con cuidado ético), cartografías digitales que dialogan con cartografías manuales, o archivos sonoros que acompañan el relato de aula. La innovación es, en última instancia, una estrategia adaptativa: ajustar el método a la vida real del campo, no a un ideal de laboratorio.

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10. Conclusiones del tejido investigador: sostener el conocimiento sin cortar el hilo

IBA e IA no necesitan justificarse por parecido con el paradigma cuantitativo. Necesitan, en cambio, mostrar su arquitectura: por qué investigan así, qué cuenta como evidencia, cómo sostienen rigor. La triada de explicitación propuesta en este texto busca ofrecer un modo de escritura y revisión que haga visible esa arquitectura.

La a/r/tografía, entendida como indagación viva, permite entretejer la práctica artística, investigadora y docente sin disociarlas. El telar organiza la complejidad. La estratigrafía cartográfica ofrece una metáfora operativa de triangulación: leer por capas, reconocer huecos, sostener tiempo, aceptar que no se puede extraer un dato sin afectar el conjunto. Y los recursos visuales, trabajados desde una perspectiva a/r/tográfica, convierten la representación en método: no ilustran; piensan.

Si algo queda como propuesta para la comunidad académica es esto: evaluar IBA/IA exige leer con criterios coherentes con su epistemología. No rebajar exigencia, sino desplazarla hacia coherencia, trazabilidad, densidad, resonancia, ética y significación social. En un mundo que pide transformaciones educativas y ecológicas urgentes, investigar con y a través de las artes no es un lujo; es una necesidad. Pero solo lo será plenamente cuando sepamos explicitar, con claridad y poética académica, cómo el conocimiento se teje.

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Lo prepositivo de la exposición artística y sus derivas en el enredo investigador

The Prepositive Aspect of Artistic Exhibition and its Drifts in the Investigative Entanglement

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Resumen

El presente artículo reflexiona sobre la aplicación de la Investigación Basada en las Artes (IBA) y la Investigación Artística en el proyecto TRAY–AP "Trayectorias de aprendizaje de jóvenes universitarios: concepciones, estrategias, tecnologías y contextos" (PID2019-108696RB-I00. 2020-2022), liderado por los grupos de investigación Elkarrikertuz (EHU) y Esbrina (UB). Las autoras toman como eje la exposición "¿Cómo aprendes en la universidad?" (Sala de exposición Txillardegi, 05/2024, EHU) para reflexionar sobre

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el posicionamiento investigador y la idea de proceso vinculado a este. La exposición no es vista como una conclusión, sino como un acontecimiento investigador, que funciona a modo de mecanismo catalizador para adquirir nuevas visiones de la realidad y desafiar el predominio del formato texto-palabra en la investigación empírica. La praxis artística se entiende como un acto performativo que ofrece nuevas maneras de ver y comprender la investigación misma. Se introduce el concepto de proceso prepositivo (proceso *sobre, durante, con, para*, etc.) con la intención de clasificar la experiencia no por fases, sino por sus relaciones contextuales con la investigación, permitiendo que la creación artística adquiera agencia y resignifique la investigación, proponiendo una línea de fuga rizomática de estructuras rígidas. Se busca problematizar la investigación educativa, entendiendo que desde procesos y acciones artísticas hay lugar para pensarse desde otros lugares más vivenciales y afectivos.

Palabras clave: investigación basada en artes, investigación artística, exposición, proceso prepositivo.

Abstract

This article reflects on the application of Arts-Based Research (ABR), and Artistic Reasearch in the project TRAY–AP "Learning Trajectories of Young University Students: Conceptions, Strategies, Technologies, and Contexts" (PID2019-108696RB-I00. 2020-2022), led by the consolidated research groups Elkarrikertuz (EHU) and Esbrina (UB). The authors focus on the exhibition "How do you learn at university?" (Txillardegi exhibition hall, 05/2024, EHU) to reflect on the research positioning and the idea of process. The exhibition is not viewed as a conclusion, but rather as a research event that acts as a catalyst for acquiring new perspectives on reality and challenging the predominance of the text-word format in empirical research. Artistic praxis is understood as a performative act that offers new ways of seeing and understanding research itself. The concept of a prepositive process (process *on, during, with, for*, etc.) is introduced with the intention of classifying the experience not by phases, but by its contextual relationships with the research, allowing artistic creation to acquire agency and redefine the research, proposing a rizomatic line of escape from rigid structures. The aim is to problematize educational research, understanding that from artistic processes and actions there is room to think from other more experiential and affective places.

Keywords: Art Based Research, Art Research, Exhibition, Prepositive Process.

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1. Introducción ¿Cómo nos posicionamos ante la investigación?



Figura 1. Visión general de la exposición. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

Desde 2020 y hasta 2023 el grupo de investigación consolidado Elkarrikertuz (EHU), junto con el grupo investigación Esbrina (UB), hemos investigado en torno a cómo aprenden las y los estudiantes universitarios en el proyecto, "Trayectorias de aprendizaje de jóvenes universitarios: concepciones, estrategias, tecnologías y contextos, (PID2019-108696RB-I00. 2020-2022) con un corpus que se construye a través de 4 encuentros realizados con 50 alumnos universitarios que han compartido sus Trayectorias de Aprendizaje.

El artículo que presentamos pretende dar cuenta del lugar que ha ocupado la Investigación Basada en la Artes (IBA) y la Investigación Artística en esta investigación, buscando el sentido de la deriva investigadora, sus relaciones y transferencias siempre en relación con los temas que articulan el proyecto TRAY-AP. El grupo tiene una identidad multidisciplinar, pero las que abordamos este texto somos Licenciadas en Bellas Artes y desde esa identidad emana en nosotras una necesidad de corporeizar plásticamente las dialécticas que emergen en la investigación. Desde lo que la praxis artística puede aportar abordamos la investigación buscando un equilibrio entre la idea del otro investigado y un nosotras que aprende en relación, repensando constantemente el complejo entramado de relaciones que se establece con aquello que estudiamos y el modo en que la investigación se aborda, cuestionándonos desde sus múltiples posibilidades y dando agencia a cómo transitamos por ella. Buscamos por lo tanto reflexionar sobre el posicionamiento investigador tomando como eje la idea de proceso y cómo los diversos modos en los que acogerse a la IBA y la investigación artística transita por una multiplicidad de formas de relacionarse con el conocimiento, con las maneras de pensar y con la investigación.

Si se aborda la investigación desde un paradigma epistemológico positivista, corremos el riesgo de caer en un modo unidireccional de transferencia del conocimiento, normalizando un único modo de transmitir, de nuevo categórico, y que presenta una visión inequívoca del mundo. Nuestro posicionamiento pretende alejarnos de esa única forma de pensamiento y busca ir más allá de los modos de comunicación texto-palabra que

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han dominado la investigación empírica. La investigación basada en las artes sirve como catalizadora para la acción, para adquirir nuevas visiones y percepciones de la realidad en la que la propia praxis se convierte en un acto performativo, donde pensar desde las artes nos aporta nuevas maneras de ver y de comprender tanto lo que nos rodea como la investigación en sí misma (Vidiella 2019).



Figuras 2 y 3. Encuentro el día de la inauguración. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

2. Expandir la investigación a través de la Investigación Basada en las Artes

Este posicionamiento investigador converge en la exposición *¿Cómo aprendes en la universidad?* que se llevó a cabo en el marco de la EHUkultura, en la Sala Txillardegi. La exposición se consolida a través de diferentes piezas realizadas por miembros del grupo de investigación, formando una muestra de once piezas dispuestas a lo largo de la sala.



Figuras 4, 5 y 6. Fragmentos de la sala expositiva. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

Como primera idea vinculada a la exposición emerge una necesidad de poder establecer un diálogo no solo con lo que la investigación ha dado al final del trayecto, a modo de conclusión, sino con lo que las artes como método investigador deben reivindicar en lo que ocurre mientras esta se desarrolla. Es esencial desplazarse de la idea de la pieza que "ilustra" un concepto al final de su recorrido y poner la atención en que las artes pueden intervenir también antes, durante o al final de un proyecto de investigación.

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Alejarnos de la pieza que actúa como actriz secundaria, subordinada al dogma narrativo que predomina en la academia. Por lo tanto, proponemos abordar la idea de exposición no como un continente que alberga lo creado para mostrarlo, sino como el preámbulo de un acontecimiento investigador que recoge, desde su antesala, un mecanismo de Investigación Basado en la Artes. Esto como investigadoras nos permite pensar en los diferentes modos que nos han permitido acercarnos plásticamente a la investigación.

Las creadoras sabemos que nuestro trabajo se hará visible en una exposición y este objetivo permite trabajar con tiempos y decisiones espaciales que tienen que ver con el conjunto del tema que nos ocupa, pero es esencial plasmar la idea de que la investigación vehiculada a través de las artes no sólo da cuenta de lo que la investigación materializa a modo de conclusión, sino que las artes como método investigador pueden reivindicar también lo que ocurre paralelamente al objeto investigado.

Como segunda idea, otra de las tesis nucleares de este texto reside en pensar la agencia que adquiere la propia exposición como artefacto investigador y por lo tanto como un nuevo proceso que resignifica la investigación. Resulta sugerente poner atención a los posibles modos y métodos no estancos de deriva investigadora y su forma representativa a los que se recurre para transferir y desvelar lo que la investigación ha posibilitado pensar en la fisicidad del espacio expositivo. Apoyándonos en la noción de rizoma de Deleuze y Guattari (1993) la exposición se acoge a la deriva como consecuencia del modo fluido y de movimiento de la investigación La exposición por lo tanto es la deriva, un nuevo detonante, es la forma en la que nos vamos desplazando desde una investigación que no se cierra a destinos fijos. En éste sentido la exposición se propone como línea de fuga permitiendo salirnos de las estructuras rígidas que plantea un proyecto de investigación que se inició hace cuatro años y que se abre a otros posibles territorios donde compartir y seguir generando pensamiento.

Se difumina la línea entre lo que debe o puede ser investigación y/o transferencia al compartir inquietudes y posibilidades de un espacio donde la estética posibilite una relación comunitaria en torno a lo que implica aprender en la universidad. En este contexto la exposición adquiere sentido ya que posibilita la analogía, sin querer ahondar en datos cuantitativos ni conclusiones certeras. Propicia la metáfora situada que te atraviesa e interpela hacia una *co-construcción del conocimiento* (Riera *et al.*, 2021) donde lo no conocido se convierte en una oportunidad de divergencia (Atkinson, 2012) en la que emergen posibles derivas con las que seguir cuestionándonos.

3. El proceso artístico como acción prepositiva

Cuando pensamos en la idea de proceso de creación artística, nos identificamos con la idea de un estado de inmersión, donde la interacción cerebro- mano se sumerge en un itinerario de producción, y las normas del tiempo y entorno pueden llegar a alterarse perdiendo la consciencia de estos. Nos referimos a unos estados mentales conectados con un *flujo* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) que adquiere estructuras mentales propias difíciles de acotar. Estos procesos activos se retroalimentan y generan una reflexión y un deseo de

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acción en constante (Schön, 1983) y posibilitan una dialéctica casi instantánea entre el creador y objeto. En este estado la idea de creación que acontece en el proceso, capacita a las personas a establecer conexiones sensibles consigo mismas y con lo otro que le rodea (Abad, 2021), ofreciendo vías análogas de comprensión del conocimiento vinculado a procesos de reflexión excéntricos (Peña et al., 2018), sin necesidad de acogerse a una retícula estanca.

En consecuencia, cualquier anhelo de definir lo procesual en la práctica artística puede resultar contradictorio a su naturaleza, ya que parece imposible acuñar una definición taxativa que capture su significado. Embarcarse en la creación rehúye de las etiquetas rígidas, y aun cuando elijamos un modo de trabajo, este siempre está abierto a nuevas derivas.

En esta tesitura, y ante la necesidad de identificar algún modo que permita dialogar en torno a lo que hacemos en IBA otorgando un rigor investigador, encontramos una vía al fijarnos en lo prepositivo del proceso. Una vía conceptual que nos permite clasificar la experiencia no por sus fases, sino por sus relaciones contextuales.

Lo procesual se presenta, entonces, como un continente dialógico del investigador, cuya misión es dar forma al elemento estético en diálogo con la cuestión investigadora, que recoge, aúna y vuelve a recolocar ideas, permitiéndonos dialogar sobre las diversas preposiciones que hacen posible su co-existencia: un proceso *sobre*, proceso *durante* proceso *con*, proceso *para* (…)

Lo prepositivo del proceso adquiere entonces un sentido profundo en relación con el espacio-tiempo-objeto, posibilitando abordar el proceso artístico en momentos diferentes de la investigación y desde perspectivas también diversas. Esta licencia estilística nos advierte que la creación puede concebirse desde múltiples prismas, posibilita infinitas maneras de dialogar con y sobre la investigación a través de la praxis artística y se muestra como ejemplo de formas colectivas de diversas subjetividades que adquieren un sentido al unísono, un enredo que se presenta como una fortaleza en la deriva investigadora.

4. Narrativas prepositivas

> “Entre realidad y pensamiento todo se juega en el ‹‹mientras›› y en el ‹‹entre››”
> (Ruiz de Velasco y Abad, 2011, p.15).

Abordamos esta narrativa de la exposición *¿Cómo aprendes en la universidad?* desde lo que el proceso ha supuesto para las investigadoras y abogando por una reflexión estética sobre el proyecto de investigación TRAY-AP.

La propia naturaleza del grupo priorizó la fluidez, y la investigación careció de un diseño metodológico basado en IBA predefinido, haciendo uso de este en diversos momentos del trayecto investigador.

El enredo investigador converge en la exposición. Esta acoge paneles de archivo que buscan desvelar el recorrido multimodal que ha caracterizado los métodos de diálogo con las y los estudiantes que han aportado sus trayectorias de aprendizaje a la

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investigación. También se incluyen piezas creadas para congresos y jornadas utilizadas por el grupo como mecanismos de diálogo e interlocución en torno a TRAY-AP.

Es interesante destacar que algunas de las obras presentadas han discurrido en paralelo al desarrollo del proyecto investigador, enfocándose quizá más en la investigación artística como una deriva propia y no tanto como una propuesta vinculada a la Investigación basada en las artes. Además, se han creado piezas creadas *ad hoc* para la exposición, las cuales ofrecen una analogía plástica de conceptos trabajados a lo largo de estos cuatro años.

La propia exposición adquiere también un carácter procesual tanto por su ubicación como por las actividades dialógicas que propone mientras la exposición este abierta al público. Estas actividades están creadas para generar nuevos puntos de fuga, fomentando un diálogo continuo en la apertura de líneas de pensamiento.

4.1 Proceso [en]: la localización de la exposición

Entendemos la exposición como un agente cultural que propone un espacio de relación mostrando al espectador un itinerario plástico en el que vivir una experiencia visual y dialógica. Nos interesa abordar la idea del propio espacio y su localización como una entidad con agencia, de aprendizaje situado y relacional dependiendo la localización en la que se sitúe.

La muestra se sitúa en la sala expositiva dentro de un edificio de la EHU. Se trata de un espacio universitario de tránsito estudiantil. Se ha rotulado el cristal que divide la zona de paso como con la sala expositiva, y todo el que pase por allí encuentra una pregunta que le interpela: ¿cómo aprendes en la universidad? Esta idea de aprendizaje situado y relacional nos acerca al concepto de la mediación situada como un lugar de "experimentación colectiva, de saberes compartidos e interconectados entre las personas implicadas, situarnos en esa mediación no como profesores ni estudiantes, sino como aprendices, un laboratorio ciudadano de pedagogías activistas del arte, expandidas más allá del aula. (Mesías, *et al.*, 2021, p.230)



Figuras 7, 8 y 9. Entrada y localización en el centro Carlos Santamaría, EHU. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

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Situar la exposición en el ámbito universitario ofrece una estructura de retroalimentación con otros agentes y se expande la posibilidad a diferentes derivas. Compartimos la intencionalidad de la exposición con el personal de la biblioteca anexa a la sala y nos ofrecieron incluir un listado de lecturas/referencias sobre aprendizaje en la universidad, ampliando conexiones con el espacio expositivo.

Entendemos este tránsito como un elemento que renueva el sentido de la investigación. El aprendizaje situado y relacional se abre a nuevas reflexiones, y convierte la propia exposición en un elemento procesual que continúa la apertura a nuevas derivas investigadoras.



Figuras 10 y 11. Biblioteca anexa a la exposición con temática vinculada a esta. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

4.2 Proceso [sobre]: archivo de registros multimodales

La multimodalidad (Mannay, 2017) ha sido una estrategia neurálgica de TRAY-AP, centrada en acercarnos a cómo aprende el alumnado universitario. A lo largo de cuatro años, hemos reivindicado narrarnos de otros modos alejados de métodos más empíricos que ponen en cuestión la retícula estanca del conocimiento (Ellingson y Ellis, 2008). Las estrategias multimodales han favorecido relatos en los que emergen las subjetividades, modos que acarician la idea de dialogar con discursos visuales que aportan otros matices, y otro encuentro en la relación de las diferentes personas que articulamos la investigación.

El visitante puede adentrarse en la exposición y observar diversos materiales gráficos que posibilitan situarse en los tránsitos e itinerarios de la investigación. Los diferentes paneles referentes al archivo muestran una selección de trayectorias de aprendizaje visualmente significativas, cuadernos de campo, y diverso material gráfico creado para dialogar con las y los estudiantes.

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Figuras 12, 13 y 14. Paneles del archivo investigador y detalle extraído de estos. Fotografía: Autoría propia.



Figuras 15 y 16. *Rastros visuales de las derivas de TRAY-AP*. Silvia De Riba. Fotografía sobre lona. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

En las figuras 15 y 16 podemos observar un relato visual del simposio realizado en septiembre del 2023 titulado *Es hora de que hablemos sobre cómo aprenden los estudiantes universitarios* (Fundación Tapies, Barcelona), donde se podían rescatar las voces de los participantes, a través de unas imágenes evocadoras. Este proceso sobre, nos sitúa en otra capa de posibilidad en la que no solo recogemos para mostrar, sino que resignificamos un momento investigador generando un rastro visual estéticamente delicado, donde las personas ocupan un primer plano de contrastes en blanco y negro. Son imágenes que rozan lo pictórico, alejándose de lo meramente documental, elevando las imágenes a una experiencia estética donde personas en una acción comunicativa y espontánea son cuidadosamente tratadas.

Los relatos contienen un código QR que permite el acceso a fragmentos de la conversación ocurrida en el simposio. Las imágenes aluden a tres momentos de narrativas profundamente ligadas a lo que el proyecto ha significado y a lo que ha acontecido en este. La pieza pretende dar voz a momentos transitados en la investigación a modo de archivo audiovisual donde el espectador se sumerge en diálogos que ayudan a comprender la investigación.

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En la parte 1 se le da voz a una mesa redonda donde se habla sobre lo que ha supuesto el itinerario investigador, en la parte 2 las y los estudiantes que colaboraron en la investigación participaron en una mesa redonda hablando sobre lo que les supuso colaborar en la propia investigación. Oír de primera mano a los colaboradores hablar sobre cómo aprenden y perciben la universidad aporta a la pieza muchísima cercanía y sitúa al espectador en el centro de la investigación donde la pregunta ¿Cómo aprendes? está siendo abordada. Finalmente, en la parte 3, en el cierre de las jornadas, parte del equipo investigador ofreció un relato que tejía lo vivido en las jornadas. La relatoría intenta escapar de lo eminentemente descriptivo y aboga por un meta discurso de interacción y afección con lo acontecido en el encuentro.

Entendemos que la producción documental de la investigación genera una materia prima con la que reescribir lo que significa aprender, en una deriva constante que no tiene fin, creando nuevas narrativas. Cuando exponemos estos documentos o archivos de la investigación, lo hacemos como una práctica intencionada convirtiendo este material en un acto público que permite abrirse a la posibilidad de un archivo metafórico con forma artística. Esta idea está presente en lugares como el MACBA (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Barcelona) donde se conserva la documentación generada en el museo a modo de archivo y se muestra al público a través de exposiciones. O el Museo San Telmo de Donostia-San Sebastián, donde a partir del programa "Museo Doble" se propone a los artistas contemporáneos una intervención y relectura de la colección y relato museográfico.

4.3 Proceso [durante]: Intra-acción a través de la práctica pictórica

La exposición como proceso nos enseñó que existían diversas propuestas vinculadas a la investigación artística que podían encontrar un espacio en diversos momentos del trayecto. Siendo así, surge la pieza *Intra-acción* (Aberasturi-Apraiz, 2024) que indaga en los conceptos de relación en los procesos de aprender. Es una pieza que se realiza en paralelo a la investigación TRAY AP y que dialoga con las ideas clave que emergen de esta. De acuerdo al acercamiento de Deleuze a Spinoza (1976), tenemos el poder de afectar y de ser afectados. En este sentido, la pieza ha sido afectada por la investigación y es creada con la idea de afectar a otros, forzando una maraña donde el observador y lo observado, sujeto y objeto se enredan. La pintura por tanto recoge los afectos de la investigadora en una relación entre cuerpo y materia, a partir de la cual dar sentido y abrir grietas al entendimiento, a la resignificación, al aprender. Somos parte de la investigación a través de la pieza de creación artística que adquiere su forma a través de la práctica pictórica.

Se desarrolla así una investigación pictórica en paralelo a los encuentros con las y los estudiantes y el diálogo con sus trayectorias de aprendizaje, desde donde se trabaja en torno al concepto de intra-acción (Barad, 2023), sobre la posibilidad de mirar la realidad como algo que interactúa y no como algo que actúa de modo dualista. No hay entidades preexistentes, las entidades (o "agencias") emergen y son constituidas a través de la intra-acción.

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Figuras 17 y 18. *Intra-acción*. Estibaliz Aberasturi-Apraiz. Acrílico sobre lienzo. 150 cm x 100 cm. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

A partir de esta idea, la artista se pregunta si la vaca no es el resultado de una dinámica relacional con el acto de recoger la leche con el Kaiku (objeto tradicional para recoger la leche en el País Vasco). Somos vaca o granjera en esta intra-acción. La pieza busca acercarse a esta noción de la que nos habla Karen Barad y que se pone en relación con lo que va emergiendo de las trayectorias de aprendizaje de las y los estudiantes universitarios de grado. Resulta complicado pensar desde la no dualidad, ni desde la causa y efecto cuando nuestro pensamiento se ha constituido a partir de una forma de entender de causa y efecto cartesiano. La pieza artística se plantea en éste sentido como una forma de pensar y dar sentido a lo que acontece, como búsqueda desde la vivencia artística.

En esta posición de proceso durante, se sitúa también la obra presentada por Fernando Herraiz. La imagen es una invitación para pensar en las agencias que afectan y son afectadas en una investigación que, más que una separación epistémica que las comprende pre-existente, se activan desde una porosidad enredada allí donde la continuidad y la parcialidad puede llegar a emerger a través de la intra-acción.



Figura 19 y 20. *Entanglement-enred*o. Fernando Herraiz. Ilustración digital sobre papel de 50 x 50 cm. Figura 19, original; figura 20, detalle de la pieza.

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4.4 Proceso [tras]: Devenir-investigación

Encontramos otro modo de respuesta y seguir dialogando con la investigación en la propuesta Devenir-investigación (2024) de Judit Onsès.

En tanto que artista e investigadora, y desde la intención de crear relatos artísticos para difundir los procesos investigativos vividos en TRAY-AP, Judit sintió la necesidad de expresar su recorrido a partir de esta pieza. Es un modo de compartir procesos y momentos de la investigación más allá del artículo científico, qué la atravesó en ese devenir-investigación desde el dibujo.

De este modo, la obra propone hacer esa devolución a la sociedad desde la propuesta plástica. De acuerdo con Deleuze y Guattari (1976), en el devenir no se trata de imitar o "hacer de manera de" sino de "captura de código", de surgimiento. Hacer visibles los procesos de desterritorialización y reterritorialización en la investigación, en este caso a través del dibujo.



Figura 21. *Devenir-Investigación*. Judit Onsès Segarra. Dibujo sobre papel de 29,7 x 42. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

4.5 Proceso [para]: piezas creadas ad hoc

El pronombre *para* nos sitúa en ese deseo de comprender y crear obras generadas *para* la propia exposición que se han creado a partir de ideas emergentes identificadas en la investigación. Las piezas relatan o hacen alusión a lo vivido en la investigación mostrando piezas que permiten generar nuevas poéticas a partir de obras abiertas, alejadas de la literalidad y en diálogo con lo que nos ha permitido pensar el proceso de investigación.

La pieza *Ritmos, silencio, suspiros* (Sasiain, Peña y Guerra, 2024) intenta generar una analogía con los documentos infinitos de transcripciones que recogen las voces de las y los estudiantes que nos han regalado sus relatos. Adheridos en la pared, se muestran fragmentos de las transcripciones de la investigación superpuestas dificultando su lectura, donde el texto se intuye y se lee entre líneas, transmitiendo una sensación de partitura no resuelta donde lo que se dice y no se dice deja intuir los rastros de las conversaciones (melodías) mantenidas con los colaboradores de la investigación. Las transcripciones,

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material indispensable para adentrarnos en la investigación, en esta obra toman voz como fragmentos cosidos entre sí donde una especie de patchwork de letras crean un nuevo relato donde el ritmo, los silencios y los suspiros de la investigación se entrelazan y se intuyen para mostrar lo complejo, lo inabarcable, lo universal, o desgranar el ruido del todo para rescatar lo sutil de la persona.

Es una pieza que adquiere sentido después del trayecto, en un estado mental barroco que nos lleva a cuestionarnos lo complejo y profundo de la pregunta investigadora después de habernos acercado a los relatos íntimos de las y los estudiantes sobre lo que puede significar aprender en la universidad.



Figuras 22 y 23. *Ritmos, silencios, suspiros*. Alaitz Sasiain, Miriam Peña y Regina Guerra. Pieza sonora, técnica mixta. Fotografía: Autoría propia.



Figuras 24 y 25. *Lo que nunca sabremos*. Miriam Peña, Regina Guerra y Alaitz Sasiain. Instalación artística. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

La pieza *Lo que nunca sabremos* (Peña, Guerra y Sasiain, 2024) es una pieza de suelo realizada con bolsas que contenían escrita la pregunta de investigación *¿cómo aprendes?* las cuales dentro contienen libros de arte. Unas 30 bolsas de algodón, apiladas ocupando un fragmento de suelo simbolizan alumnos sentados en el suelo, como conquistas de territorios efímeros en las zonas comunes de la universidad. El encuentro grupal ocurre, comparte y se desvanece. En su precariedad, son encuentros íntimos a los que el profesorado rara vez puede acceder.

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Las bolsas invitan a la acción, a la espera de que alguien quizá la coja, se atreva a dialogar con las bolsas y su contenido oculto. Aunque la pieza yace en el suelo apelotonada, despojada y arrinconada, en su haber hay un deseo por ser descubierta, por ser tocada, por ser visible… El objeto repetido forma una masa, una forma de unidad que habla de un colectivo callado que representa al estudiante.

La pieza nos ha permitido reflexionar sobre cuál es el lugar y la voz de las y los estudiantes que colaboraron en la investigación en qué contextos (Cole, 1996) plurales aprenden y el lugar de las contexturas (Jornet y Erstad, 2018) y la importancia de incorporar las ecologías de aprendizaje (Barron, 2004; Barron, 2006) a los discursos en relación a cómo se aprende.

4.6 Proceso [desde]: Investigador investigado

Elegimos un proceso *desde* para referirnos a un tránsito que nace desde nuestro propio cuerpo con un deseo investigador de ser atravesadas por conceptos con los que dialogamos. Nos interesa activar un proceso más permeable e instintivo, desde un emplazamiento más cercano y encarnado. La pieza *Mi nosotras poliédrico* (Guerra, Sasiain y Peña, 2024) se materializa en dos fases: una en la creación de los cubos y en una segunda fase a modo de performance que se ha ejecutado en diferentes momentos a lo largo de estos cuatro años.

En cuanto a la primera fase, la pieza busca que nosotras mismas hagamos un ejercicio introspectivo y busquemos en nuestras fotografías personales momentos y espacios en los que hemos aprendido. El ejercicio nos interpela y nos sirve como elemento de búsqueda interior. En el proceso aflora la dificultad y el reto de ejecutarlo y lo comentamos entre nosotras. Esto nos vulnerabiliza y nos lleva a prestar atención al alumnado parte del proyecto TRAY-AP, con los que desde nuestro rol investigador proponemos que nos regalen sus trayectorias de aprendizaje.

La práctica nos ayuda a sumergirnos en procesos que nos recuerdan todo lo no resuelto que reside en nosotras (Sasiain, *et al.*, 2022). También evidencia lo complejo de la tarea del alumnado a que comparta lo que le interpela de su trayectoría de aprendizaje en un proceso de tantas sesiones. A su vez nos ha llevado a reconocer la generosidad del que comparte lo íntimo de su vida con unas desconocidas.

En una segunda fase los cubos forman parte de una performance que nos posibilita revivir lo investigado, ocupando el lugar de los participantes de la investigación, desdibujando el rol del que propone y el que ejecuta o devuelve la experiencia. Empleamos la performance como recurso para dialogar con el conocimiento encarnado, y esto nos ubica en un escenario donde conviven los procesos de confección del pensamiento crítico (Kaplún, 1998), donde nos abrimos a la interpretación, a dar cabida al cuerpo investigador y al espacio o a lo que surge en la interacción de ambos.

Existe a su vez un deseo de cambio en nuestros modos investigadores y nos aproximamos a la performance como algo que nos formula y nos ubica dentro pero casi fuera (o en la periferia) de lo aceptado por la academia. Por este motivo las autoras de este texto apoyamos la trascendencia de lo vivencial en relación a la investigación, como una reivindicación en relación a “hacer” en conexión con la verdad y lo esencial

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(Faxedas, 2020). Transitar los márgenes implica arriesgarse y emplear la performance como vehículo para compartir lo que deriva de la investigación y esto nos compromete a pensar a través de la intervención del cuerpo, como algo que trasciende lo meramente físico y se percibe como parte esencial e intrínseca de la persona.

En el momento de escenificar la acción ante el público nos encontramos indefensas, desde un ser situado en los márgenes, y lo acogemos como la oportunidad que nos ofrece un nuevo escenario de relación. Todo movimiento nos deja en evidencia y no nos queda más remedio que entregarnos.

Ejecutar la performance con nuestros cubos introspectivos abre la puerta al pensamiento abstracto del que nos mira y por eso nos ha parecido pertinente volver a realizarla como parte del programa dialógico de la exposición que explicamos en el siguiente proceso de este texto (proceso con). Aquel que conversa con la performance genera anclajes con otros medios estilísticos, emergen analogías y metáforas que posibilitan pensar de otro modo, más sensible quizá, desvinculándose de un discurso más homogéneo, a menudo unido a lo descriptivo y literal.



Figuras 26 y 27. *Mi nosotras poliédrico*. Regina Guerra, Alaitz Sasiain y Miriam Peña. Performance frente a estudiantes de universidad a partir de la obra. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

4.7 Proceso [con]: un espacio de relación

Por último, en este último proceso de la mano de la preposición *con*, hacemos alusión a la exposición en relación y subrayamos los diálogos y conversaciones que se dieron a lo largo de 3 semanas de exposición, para reflexionar sobre el sentido de deriva investigadora, relaciones y transferencias. Buscamos profundizar en el sentido de la investigación, que vuelva a su inicio, como compromiso con la comunidad educativa. Identificamos diversos momentos pensados para que la comunidad educativa tomara parte activa de la exposición y posibilitara a través de ella:

En un primer momento pusimos en relación la investigación en el espacio expositivo, el equipo investigador comparte desde una posición de investigación una

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tertulia dialógica que empieza con la pregunta: ¿Por qué no empezamos la investigación por una exposición?

En un segundo momento volvemos a escenificar la performance *Mi nosotras poliédrico* con un grupo de estudiantes. La acción nos permite dialogar sobre conceptos vinculados al aprender y al ponernos en relación con las y los estudiantes, les formulamos la pregunta: ¿Cómo aprendes en la universidad? A través de lo observado y vivido en la acción realizada por las investigadoras, el espectador crea sus propias conclusiones sobre lo contemplado aportando a la investigación un entramado de contexturas y múltiples capas sobre lo acontecido, que a su vez genera nuevos análisis de lo mostrado. La performance tiene el potencial de generar imágenes vividas en aquel que la observa. Un entramado de significados poliédricos Zweig (2015) que derivó en un intercambio dialógico y aportó de nuevo un acercamiento al estudiante universitario, ofreciendo una visión sobre conceptos tratados en la investigación a través de la performance presentada, pero buscando un feedback, un pulso con el propio alumnado donde de nuevo la pregunta atravesaba el espacio expositivo.

Y por último, en la actividad final realizada en la sala expositiva, ponemos en relación la investigación con la comunidad de aprendizaje Artikertuz (www.artikertuz.es) mediante la pregunta: ¿Qué posibilidades se abren a través de la exposición en la Educación? Este encuentro busca el diálogo con las docentes acercando los procesos de investigación y compartiendo, que, desde esta también se puede cambiar la docencia. El espacio en el cual nos encontramos influye y determina la conversación, la "temporalidad y espacialidad son producidas e interactivamente reconfiguradas en la materialización del fenómeno y la (re)creación de los límites material-discursivos" (Barad, 2007, p.234).

La comunidad de profesorado de Educación Infantil, Primaria y Secundaria pudo aportar a la investigación sus percepciones, sus intuiciones, sus experiencias en el contexto de cómo creen que aprenden sus estudiantes y cuál es el camino que transitan antes de llegar a la universidad.

En estos encuentros con la comunidad educativa buscamos compartir dudas y posibilidades de un espacio donde la estética posibilite la relación comunitaria y los procesos prepositivos nos conecten con las derivas y caminos por recorrer que alberga la propia investigación siempre en proceso y en un estado inacabado.



Figuras 28 y 29. Conversación con maestras de la comunidad de aprendizaje ARTikertuz. Maestras de Educación Infantil y Educación Secundaria. Fotografía: Autoría propia.

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5. Algunas ideas para continuar

Hacer una apuesta por reflexionar sobre los procesos investigadores en relación a la praxis artística y su deriva expositiva desde un contexto prepositivo ha supuesto en sí mismo un ejercicio de búsqueda interpretativa en el deseo de clarificar por qué y para qué nos relacionamos con el conocimiento a través de las artes.

La necesidad de identificar si un proceso es *en, por, para, durante* (…) vuelve a acariciar la retícula estanca de delimitar el proceso artístico en la investigación. En esta tesitura emergen nuevas cuestiones sobre las que seguir pensando.

El factor tiempo y objeto adquieren una impronta esencial a la hora de situar lo preposicional en un contexto u otro. En este caso se ha elegido una arquitectura tiempo-objeto que gira en torno al momento en que se sitúa la exposición como punto de inflexión neurálgico en el término del proyecto de investigación. Esto evidencia que lo prepositivo nos sirve para situar todas las piezas en base a una misma direccionalidad para estructurar un discurso, pero quizá resulte más interesante entenderlo como una ficción sensible de ser articulada bajo otros criterios que fuesen válidos para ensamblar el sentido de la investigación. Esto es, si por ejemplo tomáramos como referencia el inicio de la investigación las preposiciones cambiarían y también las reflexiones investigadoras derivadas de esta decisión.

Asimismo, identificar un proceso con una preposición estanca ha generado tensiones en la contextura que es inmanente a estas. Un proceso *sobre* puede ser inherente a un proceso *con*, cuando se pone en relación con el resto de piezas, o con las personas que dialogan con ellas, o, o, o… En este sentido también resulta esencial entender lo propositivo como algo que puede ser superpuesto con cualquiera que sea lo otro que adquiera un sentido discursivo.

Estas ideas se sitúan en un posicionamiento postcualitativo, donde convergen significados poliédricos y nos ubica en un entorno de investigación en movimiento, en devenir (Calderón y Hernández, 2019) inconcluso y susceptible de ser repensado de manera distinta sobre los datos, lo que podemos hacer con ellos, y de qué modo, entendiendo que, aunque se puedan abordar desde diferentes prismas son inherentes a nosotras mismas (Correa, *et al.*, 2020). Es por ello que nuestra contribución se ubica en un posicionamiento onto-epistemológico que busca movilizar otras hendiduras del conocimiento, transitando por nuestras experiencias y aportando un formato en movimiento, abierto, objetual y corporeizado.

En lo que se refiere a la primera idea del artículo, defendemos que tanto desde la exposición y las piezas artísticas, así como con el archivo del proyecto TRAY-AP se crea una relación recíproca y activa con lo que observamos. Aquello que vemos ejerce influencia que va más allá de una mera contemplación (Hernández-Hernández y Aberasturi Apraiz, 2025, p. 11) que moldea nuestras subjetividades. Las personas que entran a la exposición no son meros receptores pasivos, sino que a través de las dinámicas propuestas pasan a ser agentes activos posibilitando que se generen otras concepciones sobre el aprender que entran en diálogo con aquello que traían. Bien es cierto que todo ello se dio casi al cierre del I+D pero consideramos que ha quedado abierta la posibilidad

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de cómo decidimos en relación a la segunda idea, plantear la exposición como escenario investigador. Asumiendo que esto supone aceptar los cambios de paradigma y situar el giro afectivo como eje donde poder atender a las relaciones que se abren para una otra relación con el conocimiento.

Atender al lugar expositivo como lugar donde la propia exposición adquiere una identidad investigadora, supone apostar por una investigación planteada como evento (Atkinson, 2012), como una experiencia investigadora que se abre a nuevas formas de pensar, actuar y aprender. Consideramos importante poder explorar el potencial de una investigación educativa más abierta a abordar la condición afectiva buscando generar presentes y futuros menos disciplinados y más abiertos (Trafí-Prats, 2024). Se trata de escapar a los modos prescriptivos de investigar para poder problematizar la investigación educativa, entendiendo que desde procesos y acciones artísticas podemos pensarnos desde otros lugares más vivenciales y afectivos.

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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.

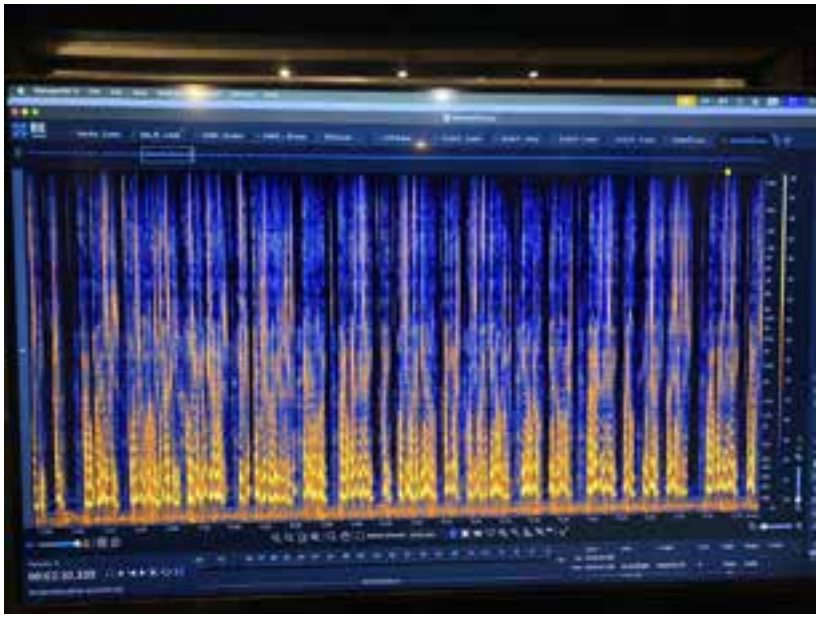


Image 6: A Guiding-guided device (2026)

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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From Love to Complaint: Haunted Archive of a Clown-Mother-Buffoon in the Ivory Tower

Del amor a la queja: archivo embrujado de una payasa-madre-bufona en la torre de marfil

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Abstract

This paper performs an autoethnographic and arts-based inquiry into what it means to teach, mother, clown, and persist within the university—a space where the embodied pedagogies of care and love described by bell hooks (2000, 2003) encounter institutional hierarchies that shape who is allowed to belong. Drawing from a personal experience, the work unfolds as a feminist creative critique in which the clown-mother-bouffon becomes the keeper of a haunted archive, gathering the affects, violences, erasures, and relational labours that institutional documents may fail to capture.

Guided by Sara Ahmed's (2017, 2021) thinking on the feminist killjoy and complaint, bell hooks's (2000, 2003, 2009) work on love, pedagogy, and belonging, and Avery Gordon's (1997) theorisation of haunting, the research presents the university as a haunted structure in which unresolved histories and relations of power—including coloniality, gendered labour, and epistemic injustice—continue to shape the present. Through autoethnographic and arts-based inquiry (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Holman

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Jones, 2005; Leavy, 2015), contemplative witnessing, poetic inquiry, and clowning and bouffonery, I gather fragments of a long lived and documented institutional experience and transform them into living ghosts that can return to haunt university life.

Contemplative practice operates here as a methodological disposition of sustained attention and presence rather than as the primary theoretical framework of the inquiry. It supports the recognition and gathering of traces that are subsequently revisited through complaint, archiving, poetic inquiry, and artistic transformation. Through these recursive practices, the paper develops the killjoy loop as a way of understanding how returning to memories, documents, complaints, and artistic traces can resist disappearance while producing different forms of recognition. The resulting poem, hip-hop manifesto, and prayer-spell mobilise the shifting energies of the clown, mother, and bouffon to transform institutional traces through vulnerability, laughter, exaggeration, care, and refusal to be silenced. Moving from love through complaint does not entail abandoning love; rather, complaint becomes one of the practices through which a politics of love can refuse domination and demand accountability. From this movement, radical tenderness emerges as an ethical and affective possibility: a tenderness capable of remaining vulnerable without disappearing.

Keywords: Arts-based Research, Complaint, Feminist Killjoy, Clown-Bouffon, Haunted Archive, Poetic Inquiry, Radical Tenderness.

Resumen

Este artículo desarrolla una investigación autoetnográfica y basada en las artes sobre lo que significa enseñar, maternar, payasear y persistir dentro de la universidad: un espacio donde las pedagogías encarnadas del cuidado y del amor descritas por bell hooks (2000, 2003) se encuentran con jerarquías institucionales que condicionan quién puede pertenecer. A partir de mi experiencia personal, el trabajo se despliega como una crítica feminista y creativa en la que la payasa-madre-bufona se convierte en guardiana de un archivo embrujado, reuniendo afectos, violencias, borramientos y trabajos afectivos y relacionales que los documentos institucionales no llegan a registrar.

Inspirada por el pensamiento de Sara Ahmed (2017, 2021) sobre la aguafiestas feminista y la queja, por los trabajos de bell hooks (2000, 2003, 2009) sobre el amor, la pedagogía y la pertenencia, y por la teoría de Avery Gordon (1997) sobre lo espectral, la investigación presenta la universidad como una estructura embrujada en la que historias no resueltas y relaciones de poder —incluidas la colonialidad, el trabajo generizado y la injusticia epistémica— continúan configurando el presente. A través de la autoetnografía y la investigación basada en las artes (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Holman Jones, 2005; Leavy, 2015), el testimonio contemplativo, la indagación poética, la payasería y la bufonería, reúno fragmentos de una larga experiencia institucional vivida y documentada y los transformo en fantasmas vivos capaces de regresar para embrujar la vida universitaria.

La práctica contemplativa opera aquí como una disposición metodológica de atención sostenida y presencia, y no como el principal marco teórico de la investigación. Sostiene el reconocimiento y la recopilación de huellas que posteriormente son revisitadas

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mediante la queja, el archivo, la indagación poética y la transformación artística. A través de estas prácticas recursivas, el artículo desarrolla el killjoy loop como una forma de comprender cómo el retorno a recuerdos, documentos, quejas y huellas artísticas puede resistir la desaparición y, al mismo tiempo, producir formas diferentes de reconocimiento. El poema, el manifiesto hip-hop y la plegaria-hechizo resultantes movilizan las energías cambiantes de la payasa, la madre y la bufona para transformar las huellas institucionales mediante la vulnerabilidad, la risa, la exageración, el cuidado y la negativa a silenciarme. Poner el amor y la queja en relación no implica abandonar el amor; por el contrario, la queja se convierte en una de las prácticas mediante las cuales una política del amor puede rechazar la dominación y exigir responsabilidad. De este movimiento emerge la ternura radical como posibilidad ética y afectiva: una ternura capaz de permanecer vulnerable sin desaparecer.

Palabras clave: investigación basada en las artes, queja, aguafiestas feminista, payasa-bufona, archivo embrujado, indagación poética, ternura radical.

Introduction

For many years I have worked in higher education. During this time, I carried out the expected duties of a scholar — teaching, researching, community weaving — while performing the impossible choreography of precarious contracts, multiple jobs, early motherhood, and the emotional labour that institutions never count but always demand. My teaching was grounded in what bell hooks (2000) understands as an ethic of love: I taught with love, built programs with care, collaborated with my students with tenderness, and kept showing up even when sleep was barely a rumour and the demands of breastfeeding and motherhood intertwined with working days, meetings, and academic responsibilities. This love ethic should not be understood as sentimental attachment or the avoidance of conflict, but as a practice inseparable from struggles against domination. As hooks (2003) writes, "I began to think about the relationship between struggles to end domination and love" (p. 130). Within education, this ethic brings together care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and trust, orienting teaching towards forms of relation that resist rather than reproduce domination.

But behind the bright curtains of the Ivory Tower, another script was quietly being rehearsed — a script that, as I lived it, was stitched with hostility, gendered inequality, and the penalisation of motherhood (Llorens et al., 2021; Samper-Gras et al., 2021). Over the years, I came to experience what I recognised as a sustained pattern of hostility: precarious and unequal working conditions, the sense that teaching evaluations were being used against my credibility, and the feeling that my academic profile was valued mainly to satisfy accreditation ratios, as if I were a decorative sticker, a stopgap, a plug-in body rather than a scholar.

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The peak of this pattern erupted during the pregnancy, childbirth, and return from maternity leave. In that fragile time, I experienced pressures that I perceived as placing my professional integrity, my wellbeing, and my health at risk, and I felt discouraged from seeking institutional support. The experience exposed the distance between institutional commitments and what institutions actually do when someone asks those commitments to be enacted — a contradiction central to Ahmed's analyses of institutional diversity work and complaint. As Ahmed (2021) writes, "A policy can create the illusion of doing something without doing anything" (p. 59). In such circumstances, the distance between institutional promises and lived experience becomes a space in which bodies are left to absorb the consequences.

The harm I experienced was not the work of a single person or body. It was sustained by an institutional climate of omission, sideways glances, and silence — of looking away — which I came to experience as a form of complicity. Here, Gordon's (1997) understanding of haunting becomes important: what has been suppressed, concealed, or rendered absent does not simply disappear. It continues to make itself felt. Silence and omission therefore became part of the spectral life of the institution, traces through which something unresolved kept announcing its presence.

And I, a clown-mother-bouffon, found myself performing survival: juggling care, complaint, and resistance; a choreography painfully familiar to those whose bodies resist the norms of institutional belonging.

Throughout this long process, I sought protection and accountability through the official channels available to me within the university. My complaint wandered through corridors, committees, and commissions, suspended in the bureaucratic air like a lost red balloon drifting inside the Ivory Tower —visible enough to be noticed, never enough to be held.

This experience also unsettled my sense of belonging within the university. Belonging, as hooks (2009) suggests, is not simply a matter of inhabiting a place, but of finding the conditions in which one can be fully present within it. I had inhabited the university for years — as a teacher, researcher, colleague, and mother — yet increasingly found myself questioning whether I could still belong to an institution in which parts of my embodied and political existence seemed to become a problem.

The account I share here is one of the ways I have been unfolding, through artistic autoethnography and arts-based research (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Holman Jones, 2005; Leavy, 2015), the facts, affects, and traces of this institutional maze in careful, lived detail. It forms part of a broader chronicle — an embodied, haunted archive of what happened and how I lived it. Some of these experiences affected me professionally and academically; others cut deeper, touching my safety and health.

This narrative is therefore not merely personal testimony. Following autoethnography's commitment to making the personal political (Holman Jones, 2005), it becomes an embodied archive: a haunted record through which individual experience can be read in relation to the institutional structures and relations of power that produced it.

And so I tell it here, through my clown-mother-bouffon voice: not as vengeance, but as a way to take my space of enunciation, survival, and an experiment in radical

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tenderness. I tell it as a way of refusing to disappear, of keeping the archive alive, and of giving form to the ghosts that refuse to be silenced within academic life and the university system.

Methodology

This study is situated within Arts-Based Research (ABR), understood as an umbrella methodological approach in which artistic processes do not merely illustrate or disseminate research findings but operate as modes of inquiry, interpretation, meaning-making, and knowledge production (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2015). As Leavy (2015) argues, the development of ABR entails more than incorporating artistic techniques into conventional research; it involves methodological practices and ways of knowing that constitute a broader "paradigm shift." Within this framework, the present inquiry brings together autoethnography and poetic inquiry through clowning.

Autoethnography provides the movement through which personal experience becomes a site for examining cultural, political, and institutional relations, making the personal political (Holman Jones, 2005). Here, the autobiographical "I" is inseparable from the embodied clown-mother-bouffon who experienced, witnessed, documented, and now artistically revisits the institutional events explored in this paper. The body is therefore not incidental to the inquiry but one of the sites through which experience is remembered, interpreted, and transformed.

Poetic inquiry provides a means of working with the traces of lived experience. Poetry can operate not simply as representation but as a way of producing, exploring, and analysing research material, particularly the tensions and complexities of lived experience that may escape conventional academic writing (Leavy, 2015). As Neilsen (2008) writes, "lyric inquiry creates a place for the knowing of felt experience" (p. 95). In this inquiry, memories, affects, documents, silences, and fragments of institutional experience are condensed and reconfigured through poetic language, allowing analytical and affective forms of knowing to remain in conversation. Poetic writing thus participates in the inquiry itself rather than illustrating findings produced elsewhere, bringing fragmented memories, embodied sensations, documentary traces, and affective residues into relation without forcing them into a single explanatory narrative (Leggo, 2008).

Within this arts-based framework, the inquiry unfolds through two interconnected movements. The first gathers the traces through psychotherapy, contemplative witnessing, complaint, and archival practice; the second transforms these traces through poetic inquiry with the embodied energies of the clown-mother-bouffon. These movements are recursive rather than sequential: documentation provokes interpretation, artistic creation can return me to the archive, and poetic or embodied experimentation can make previously unnoticed meanings perceptible.

For this reason, the two methodological sections that follow do more than describe how the inquiry was conducted: they also attend to what became knowable through conducting it. Rather than separating creative process from analysis into a subsequent

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discussion, I approach interpretation as immanent to the arts-based inquiry itself. The methodological account therefore moves between process and reflection, making and meaning-making, tracing how lived experience is witnessed, documented, artistically transformed, and returned to the university through poetry, clowning, and laughter-based resistance.

Ethical considerations. Autoethnography inevitably implicates others who have not chosen to appear in the researcher's story (Ellis, 2007). For this reason, institutions and individuals have been pseudonymised, identifying details have been removed, and no person is named or described in a way that would make them recognisable. None of the documents or testimonies in my personal archive is reproduced or quoted in this article. The account presented here is my experience and interpretation of events; it does not claim to establish facts in an administrative or legal sense (Tolich, 2010).

1. Contemplative Witnessing, Complaining, and Archiving: Gathering the Traces

The first movement of this inquiry begins not with artistic creation, but with the difficult work of becoming able to face, recognise, and narrate what happened. The institutional experiences explored in this study were not lived as a single, clearly bounded event. They accumulated over years through fragmented gestures that I lived as discrimination, humiliation, erasure, exclusion, silence, and pressure. Experienced at different moments and across different institutional spaces, these fragments did not initially constitute a coherent story. Their connections became perceptible gradually, through sustained processes of remembering, revisiting, attending, and integrating.

Psychotherapy has been fundamental to this process. I do not treat psychotherapy as a research method, nor do I use therapeutic sessions, clinical material, or the therapeutic relationship as research data. Rather, it provided a supported relational space in which I could face painful experiences, work through their traumatic effects, revisit events that had remained fragmented, and gradually integrate them into a narrative that could be spoken and written. In this sense, psychotherapy became one of the conditions that made this inquiry possible. This experience resonates with Ahmed's (2021) attention to the difficulty of giving testimony from experiences of complaint and trauma: complaint narratives do not necessarily arrive already coherent or chronologically ordered, and remembering can make past experiences affectively present again.

This process of psychological integration had concrete consequences for documentation and testimony. As connections between experiences became recognisable, I became increasingly able to reconstruct chronologies, return to emails and other records, identify repetitions and contradictions, and put events into words.

Alongside psychotherapy, contemplative witnessing names another dimension of this process. I understand contemplation here not as withdrawal from institutional conflict but as a practice of sustained attention and presence: remaining with an experience, memory, document, silence, contradiction, or bodily response long enough to perceive

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what might otherwise be normalised, minimised, or forgotten. The conjunction of contemplative and arts-based practices is significant in this regard, as Walsh, Bickel, and Leggo (2015) locate in their interrelationship possibilities for awareness, care, and personal and social transformation.

Witnessing does not imply that I stand outside these experiences as a detached observer. As an autoethnographic researcher, I am simultaneously the person who lived them and the person who now returns to them, attends to their traces, and attempts to understand their meanings. I therefore use contemplative witnessing as a form of self-witnessing: the difficult practice of becoming sufficiently present to what happened to me to recognise, name, document, and eventually transform it. Psychotherapy and contemplative witnessing are not equivalent practices, but they operate alongside one another in this inquiry. The former provides a supported relational space for working through experience and its effects; the latter describes a disposition of sustained presence and attention through which I remain with its traces and allow previously obscured connections to emerge.

From this movement between presence, attention and integration, complaint and archiving emerged. Drawing on Ahmed's (2017, 2021) work on the feminist killjoy and institutional complaint, I understand complaining here as more than the activation of bureaucratic or legal procedures. Complaint requires returning to what happened, putting experiences into words, producing and preserving evidence, insisting on connections, and refusing to accommodate what has become perceptible as wrong. What could be recognised could begin to be named; what could be named could be documented; and what could be documented could be placed beside other traces.

Throughout this process, I gathered a personal archive of institutional experience composed of emails, documents, notes, timelines, images, written testimonies, memories, and other traces of encounters and harm. These materials allow particular events to be revisited, contextualised, connected, questioned, and remembered. Artistic autoethnography allows me to approach them not only as documentary evidence but as affective traces of how institutional relations were lived and registered through a particular embodied and situated position — that of an artist, educator, researcher, complainant, clown-mother-bouffon.

Archiving and complaining therefore became, for me, practices against disappearance. But institutional records do not necessarily preserve everything that matters. Gestures, affects, feelings, emotions, silences, omissions, informal pressures, bodily experiences, and the cumulative effects of apparently disconnected events can easily escape or exceed official documentation. Producing my own artistic and academic archives became a way of leaving traces: of insisting that these experiences happened, that they can be returned to, and that their absence from an official administrative or legal account does not make them absent from lived history. Across administrative, legal, academic, and cultural spheres, I have generated different forms of documentation, testimony, complaint, and artistic record. In constructing and preserving these archives, I also refuse to leave institutions with exclusive authority over what can be recorded, remembered, and narrated about my experience.

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Returning consequently became an important part of the inquiry. Reading again, listening again, remembering, reorganising, documenting, complaining, and returning once more formed what I call a killjoy loop. Drawing on Ahmed's feminist killjoy (2017) while extending it into my own artistic and autoethnographic practice, I use the term to describe the recursive movement of returning to what institutional procedures attempt to close, contain, or leave behind. This resonates with Ahmed's (2021) account of complaint as work that is rarely completed through a single action: complaints often have to be made repeatedly and in different forms in order to be heard. The loop refuses the institutional assumption that what has been administratively closed, ignored, silenced, or left unanswered has therefore ceased to exist. It is contemplative and disruptive at once: the persistence of the clown-mother who keeps attending, the sharp eye of the bouffon who notices contradiction, and the feminist killjoy's refusal to smooth over a problem so that institutional life can comfortably continue as it is.

Such continuity can be sustained precisely through what Ahmed (2021) calls "strategic inefficiency," where "inefficiency is not just the failure of things to work properly but is also how things are working" (p. 94). Complaint, then, becomes a practice of interrupting this reproduction by noticing, naming, and leaving traces of what the institution might otherwise allow to disappear. As Ahmed reminds us, "you have to record what you do not want to reproduce" (p. 288). For Ahmed, then, complaint can be understood as a form of nonreproductive labor within the university: the work undertaken by those who refuse to reproduce an institutional inheritance and who struggle, instead, to transform the institution.

The significance of the loop is not repetition alone, but the possibility that return produces difference. Repetition can also become a practice against forgetting. As hooks (2009) writes, "hearing the same story makes it impossible to forget" (p. 3). The killjoy loop works through such recursive return: revisiting memories, documents, complaints, and artistic traces not simply to reproduce them, but to resist their disappearance and allow different relations to them to emerge. A remembered experience can send me back to a document; a document can alter my understanding of a memory; psychotherapy can enable previously fragmented experiences to be connected; contemplation can sustain attention to what might otherwise be overlooked; complaint can generate further documentation; and placing traces beside one another can make relationships between apparently isolated events perceptible. Ahmed's (2021) description of collecting as bringing together material from different places and periods of time is particularly evocative here: to collect can involve going back in order to bring something back. Each return therefore carries the possibility of recognising something that could not yet be recognised before.

Together, these practices constitute what I understand as the gathering of traces. They allowed me to preserve what might otherwise disappear, but preservation alone is not the purpose of this inquiry. I refuse to let my experience remain contained within institutional archives. The documents, memories, silences, contradictions, and complaints gathered here become materials for further transformation.

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The archive insists: this happened.
Complaint insists: this matters and demands acknowledgement and accountability.
The artistic gestures that follow add another insistence: this is not finished.

It is at this threshold that archival traces become materials for haunting. In the next movement of the inquiry, I transform my spectral fragments into artistic presences — living ghosts that can leave the institutional archive and re-enter the university imaginatively and symbolically. If archiving and complaining are practices against disappearance in the institution, artistic haunting becomes a refusal to remain confined within its archive.

2. Clowning Around with a Poem, a Manifesto, and a Prayer-Spell: Haunting and Laughing at the University

The second movement of the inquiry begins with a return to the traces gathered through the first. Documents, memories, complaints, silences, contradictions, bodily responses, and fragments of institutional experience are revisited, but no longer only in order to reconstruct and document what happened or to register a formal complaint. They become materials for poetic inquiry. Through writing, rhyme, rhythm, repetition, humour, exaggeration, and the embodied imaginaries of clowning and bouffonery, I ask what these traces can become when they are allowed to leave the documentary register and enter artistic form.

This movement does not follow a linear progression from data to analysis and then to artistic representation. Artistic creation is itself part of the complaint process. A phrase encountered in a document may return as a rhyme; a remembered gesture may become comic exaggeration; an institutional contradiction may acquire another meaning when spoken through the voice of a bouffon; an experience of vulnerability may become perceptible differently through the wobbling body of a clown. Transformation is therefore not what happens after interpretation: it is one of the ways interpretation takes place. In this sense, the creative process described in this section is simultaneously a process of inquiry into what the gathered traces can reveal, disturb, and make newly perceptible.

This recursive transformation of autobiographical experience through artistic personae has precedents in feminist performance practice and also continues a trajectory developed throughout my own artistic research. In Adrian Piper's *The Mythic Being* (1973 – 75), autobiographical material drawn from personal journal entries was repeatedly reworked through a performative alter ego, allowing private experience to enter public artistic space. Other feminist artistic practices offer important resonances for this transformation. Martha Rosler's *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975), for instance, turns familiar domestic signs into feminist critique through parody, repetition, and exaggerated gesture, while the Guerrilla Girls have mobilised humour, visual exaggeration, statistics, and irony to expose inequalities within cultural institutions.

These practices differ substantially in context, aesthetics, and political histories, but they share an understanding of humour and performative transformation as capable

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of making relations of power perceptible by rendering their codes strange, excessive, or absurd. They provide artistic interlocutors for my own attempt to return institutional experience through forms that refuse the supposedly neutral and serious language through which universities frequently represent themselves. My previous arts-based research has similarly explored the clown body as more than an object of study: as a situated and embodied site through which autobiographical experience, feminist and queer inquiry, humour, and artistic experimentation encounter and transform one another (Caminha, 2016; Caminha & Vidiella, 2019). The present inquiry extends this trajectory towards institutional complaint, asking what happens when the mother-clown-bouffon-researcher returns to an archive of harm.

Laughter is central to this return. In my previous work, I have used the term laughter-resistance to think through laughter as a feminist practice of resistance rather than as an escape from political seriousness (Caminha, 2020). Here, that practice is redirected towards the institutional space itself. Clowning and bouffonery allow me to exaggerate its contradictions, disturb its claims to seriousness and neutrality, and return institutional language in altered forms. Laughter changes how I can approach and transform the traces of this archive. The clown-mother-bouffon can mourn and laugh, remain vulnerable and become disruptive, carrying complaint beyond the administrative and legal forms through which institutions attempt to receive, process, and close it.

Within this process, poetic inquiry became the principal compositional practice through which the gathered traces were artistically transformed. The inquiry generated three interconnected poetic outputs: a narrative poem, a hip-hop manifesto, and a prayer-spell. These are not three separate methods, nor do they correspond to three discrete or stable identities. Rather, they are three manifestations of the same embodied artistic inquiry, each foregrounding a different energy within the composite figure of the clown-mother- bouffon: the poem is animated primarily by the clown, the manifesto by the bouffon, and the prayer-spell by the mother who holds clown vulnerability and bouffon resistance together. These energies remain porous, contaminating and transforming one another across the three pieces.

The first piece, the poem *The Wobbly Mother Clown and the Big Ivory Tower*, works primarily through clown energy. Its rhyme, repetition, playfulness, fragility, and deliberately unstable movement allow me to revisit the university through a figure who enters the Ivory Tower carrying love, enthusiasm, creativity, and a desire to belong. As institutional relations are perceived as increasingly hostile, however, the clown begins to wobble. Her comic instability becomes a way of approaching vulnerability without resolving it into either victimhood or heroic overcoming. The clown does not become invulnerable in order to resist. She resists while wobbling. Her cracked laugh, persistence, and repeated adjustments make perceptible a form of survival in which vulnerability and resistance are not opposites.

The second piece, *The Bouffon Mother's Killjoy Cypher*, shifts the dominant energy from clown vulnerability towards bouffon confrontation. Written as a hip-hop manifesto, the piece works through rhythm, rhyme, repetition, exaggeration, accusation, and refusal. If the clown exposes instability through her wobble, the bouffon deliberately

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enlarges what institutions would prefer to minimise. She speaks too loudly, repeats too much, points at contradictions, refuses decorative inclusion, and interrupts expectations of gratitude and institutional politeness. In this sense, the bouffon gives another body and another voice to the feminist killjoy (Ahmed, 2017): she refuses to smooth over the problem so that institutional comfort can be restored.

The manifesto also transforms the complaint process developed in the first movement of the inquiry. There, complaint required collecting traces, reconstructing events, documenting, returning, and insisting upon what had happened. In the cypher, those practices are translated into rhythm, repetition, and public-facing speech. Complaint moves from documentation towards declaration. The bureaucratic complainant who must repeatedly explain herself becomes the bouffon who deliberately repeats, amplifies, and performs what was not heard. The killjoy loop therefore enters the artistic process: repetition no longer serves only to produce evidence or seek institutional acknowledgement but becomes an aesthetic strategy capable of returning the complaint in another form.

The third piece, *A Short Clown-Mother-Bouffon Killjoy Prayer-Spell*, foregrounds the mother while holding clown and bouffon energies together. Its register shifts from the accusatory force of the manifesto towards care, protection, transmission, and address to the "little ones." Yet the movement towards tenderness does not undo what the clown and bouffon have learned. The mother who speaks here has witnessed harm, recognised it, documented it, complained, resisted, and returned. Her care therefore carries vigilance and boundaries alongside gentleness. When the prayer asks the little ones to be sweet but not silent, gentle but still seen, tenderness is no longer synonymous with accommodation or disappearance.

This movement is significant to the wider argument of the inquiry. The trajectory from love through complaint does not necessarily culminate in the abandonment of love. Instead, complaint changes what tenderness can mean. The tenderness that begins to emerge through the prayer-spell is less innocent than the loving disposition with which the clown first entered the Ivory Tower: it has memory, boundaries, recognition, and a voice. I understand this emerging configuration as pointing towards radical tenderness — not as a methodological principle imposed in advance upon the inquiry, but as an ethical and affective possibility becoming perceptible through the creative process. Its fuller implications are taken up in the final considerations.

The movement among the three pieces is consequently neither a progression from weakness to strength nor a replacement of one persona by another. The clown is not left behind when the bouffon appears, and the bouffon does not disappear when the mother begins to pray. The clown's vulnerability remains within the bouffon's refusal; the bouffon's capacity to recognise and confront harm remains within the mother's tenderness; and motherhood provides a relational and protective register through which both can coexist. Clown-mother-bouffon therefore names a composite and shifting artistic position rather than a fixed character. Moving among these energies enables different aspects of the same institutional experience to become perceptible without requiring them to resolve into a single emotional or analytical register.

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It is through these artistic transformations that the living ghosts introduced at the threshold between the two movements of the inquiry begin to take form. They are not ghosts discovered waiting inside the archive, nor straightforward representations of past events. They are artistic presences produced through acts of return and transformation. In this sense, artistic haunting is not the reproduction of the archive but its transformation.

This understanding resonates with Gordon's (1997) account of haunting as the troubling persistence of what has been suppressed, unresolved, or made absent. Yet the living ghosts produced here are specifically an arts-based response to that persistence. Through poetic and prospective performative inquiry, I give artistic form to traces of institutional experience so that they can return differently. The archive insists that something happened; complaint insists that it matters and demands accountability; artistic haunting insists that it is not finished. What institutions might file, close, forget, or leave unanswered can re-enter the university through poetry, laughter, exaggeration, vulnerability, and embodied imagination.

The clown-mother-bouffon therefore returns to the Ivory Tower not simply to reproduce the story of what happened there, but to trouble its closure. She returns wobbling and laughing, complaining and exaggerating, mourning and caring, transforming traces into artistic presences capable of moving beyond the institutional forms that first contained them. If the first movement of this inquiry gathered the traces, the second gives those traces bodies, voices, rhythms, and comic forms through which they can haunt.

Artistic Outputs

The three poetic works presented below emerged from the arts-based process described above. Together, they constitute interconnected expressions of the clown-mother-bouffon, moving across vulnerability, complaint, resistance, care, love and tenderness. Presented here in their current written form, they function both as artistic outputs of the present inquiry and as poetic scores for future public performance. They are reproduced now without further analytical commentary, allowing the poetic forms themselves to carry the traces, tensions, affects, and transformations generated through the inquiry.

Piece I - The Wobbly Mother Clown and the Big Ivory Tower

Once there was a mother clown with shoes that went *pip-pip*,
who carried love in every step and joy upon her lip-lip.

She came to the Big Ivory Tower with colors in her hair,
not knowing that its hallways hid a cold and ghostly stare.

"Oh look, a funny clown!" they said, "so squishy and exotic!"
They clapped their hands with sugar smiles — so sweet, so patriotic.

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They put her on their posters, they paraded her around,
they loved her silly sparkles… as long as she stayed *their* clown.

She taught breathing, love and tenderness, the wisdom of the heart,
while shadows crept behind her, slowly tearing her apart.

They whispered, "She's too wobbly… too motherly… too soft.
Let's place her in the attic room — the one far up the loft."

The doors began to shrink on her, the hallways grew too tall,
smiles slipped beneath the floor; the lights flickered in the hall.

The greeting voices vanished and the air turned tight and thin,
and sometimes she could swear she heard the walls breathe from within.

They pushed her to the corners where forgotten things decay,
they used her warmth and tossed her out when they had had their day.

Her nose grew dim and shaky like a candle losing flame,
her laughter, once so bubbly, felt too fragile to reclaim.

But tiny clowns have secrets — yes, the kind that monsters fear:
their courage grows in silence when the bullying draws near.

So when the Big Ivory Tower tried to swallow her in gloom,
a trembling sound escaped her throat and echoed through the room.

And though her voice was squeaky-small and wobbly in its fight,
it carried all her children's dreams and burned a stubborn light.

So here she stands — still tender, still brave, still profound —
for even hunted mother-clowns can shake the coldest ground.

And every time they try to crush her colors into dust,
she laughs a tiny clown-laugh saying, "I'm still here. I adjust."

A laugh so cracked, so brave — so fragile and so dear —
that even monsters in their suits lean close enough to hear.

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Piece II -The Bouffon Mother's Killjoy Cypher (*a hip hop manifesto*)

HOOK
I rise, I speak, I break your mold,
I'm done being your patch, your plug, your hold.
You tried to use me, bruise me, keep me controlled
But I'm the mother-clown-bouffon,
and I won't do what I'm told.

VERSE 1 — "I'm Not Your Clown Prop"
Nah, I ain't your decoration,
your poster-child vibration,
your cute exotic addition
to your Tower reputation.

I ain't your stopgap clown
filling holes you won't fix,
your hollow celebration
for political optics.
I'm a worker, a thinker, a mother with heat
respect my craft,
respect my beat.

VERSE 2 — "My Shaking Voice Still Cuts Through Stone"
Yeah, my voice shakes
but it slices like steel,
every tremor is truth,
every crack is real.

You call it noise?
I call it proof.
You call it drama?
I call it roof
the ceiling I hit
when I tried to speak,
the silence you fed
week after week.

So I rhyme, I repeat,
like a scratched-out track
if you didn't hear the first time,
you'll hear me on the back.

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VERSE 3 — "I Protect What You Tried to Break"
My kids - born and taught -
my name, my art, my history,
my breath in the classroom,
my research, my mystery.

These are my creatures
and I guard them with teeth,
you tried to shrink them down
but they rise beneath.

I'm the mother-lion clown,
the bouffon with claws,
protecting every child
from your institutional jaws.

VERSE 4 — "My Softness Is Fire You Can't Extinguish"

Yeah, I was wobbly,
yeah, I was sweet
but don't get it twisted,
I can bring the heat.

My tears are tactics,
my laughter is blade,
my tenderness triggers
the systems you made.

I rise from the cracks,
I spit from the pain
you tried to break my body,
but you sharpened my brain.

VERSE 5 — "Justice Is Not Optional"
I'm not asking for favors,
I'm calling for repair,
for truth that's spoken,
for wounds laid bare.

For safety.
For dignity.
For stories made clear.
For the next ones who'll enter
without trembling in fear.

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Justice ain't a whisper
it's a beat, it's a flame.
Write it down, Tower:
remember my name.

FINAL HOOK
I rise, I speak, I break your mold,
clown-mother-bouffon, fierce and bold.
You tried to crush colors,
turn my story cold
but I flip the script
and reclaim control.

Yeah.
I'm here.
I resist.
I unfold.

Piece III – A Short Clown-Mother-Bouffon Killjoy Prayer-Spell

Hush now, little ones,
come closer, take my hand.
Tonight I teach a tiny spell
to help your hearts withstand.

Be sweet,
but never silent.
Be gentle,
but stay seen.
Let kindness walk beside you,
let courage keep you keen.

Listen like a dreamer does,
speak when truth must land.
Be curious,
not careless,
and learn where lines must stand.

If harm comes near your footsteps,
may your eyes catch it first,
may your voice rise like a lantern,
may your bravery come first.
Little ones, you carry light

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that no one else can claim.
Keep it close,
keep it shining,
keep it steady in your name.

And remember, little darlings,
as the tall tower sways above:
a tiny clown can shake the world
when she breathes her truth with love.

Final Considerations

This arts-based inquiry began with the difficult work of gathering traces of institutional experiences that had remained fragmented across memory, documents, bodily responses, silences, and complaint. Through contemplative self-witnessing, archival practice, poetic inquiry, and the embodied imaginaries of clowning and bouffonery, these traces became available not only for documentation but also for artistic transformation. The movement from archive to complaint and from complaint into poetic forms does not resolve the experiences explored here. Rather, it allows them to return differently: as words, rhythms, laughter, exaggeration, vulnerability, care, and what I have called living ghosts.

One methodological contribution emerging from this process is what I call the killjoy loop. Drawing on Ahmed's feminist killjoy (2017) and her work on institutional complaint (2021), the killjoy loop names the recursive practice of returning to what institutions attempt to close, contain, ignore, or leave behind. Its significance lies not in repetition alone, but in the possibility that return produces difference. Revisiting a memory after encountering a document, placing apparently disconnected traces beside one another, rewriting an experience through poetry, or returning to a complaint through artistic form can make previously obscured relationships perceptible. The loop therefore describes both persistence and knowledge production: a refusal of disappearance and a way of recognising differently through return.

The inquiry also extends a trajectory developed through my previous arts-based research with feminist and queer clowning. Here, the clown-mother-bouffon emerges as a shifting epistemic and artistic position through which institutional experience can be approached from different embodied registers. The clown brings vulnerability, permeability, failure, play, and the capacity to wobble without disappearing; the bouffon brings exaggeration, confrontation, irony, and refusal; the mother brings care, protection, memory, and transmission. None supersedes the others. Their coexistence makes it possible to hold vulnerability and resistance, grief and laughter, tenderness and confrontation within the same inquiry. Through their encounters, archival traces become living ghosts: artistic presences that refuse to remain contained within the institutional forms through which experience may be documented, processed, filed, or closed.

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This inquiry also brings bell hooks's politics of love into conversation with Sara Ahmed's feminist politics of complaint. For hooks (2000, 2003), love is not reducible to affection, softness, or harmonious relations. It is an ethical and political practice inseparable from care, commitment, responsibility, respect, knowledge, and the demand for justice. Such an understanding of love does not require overlooking conflict or preserving harmony at the expense of truth; rather, it demands opposition to domination and accountability for harm. Ahmed's (2017, 2021) feminist killjoy and her work on complaint approach these ethical demands from another direction, attending to what happens when harm is named within institutions: when speaking about a problem becomes disruptive, when the complainant is treated as the problem, and when persistence is required because institutional procedures fail to provide acknowledgement or repair.

Read together through this inquiry, love and complaint therefore do not represent opposing ethical positions, nor does complaint provide a political toughness absent from love. Complaint can instead become one of the practices through which a politics of love refuses to accommodate harm. The movement from love through complaint names a passage from an ethical commitment to care, justice, and relationality into the difficult practice of insisting upon those commitments when they are violated. Complaint, in this sense, does not necessarily mark the failure or abandonment of love. It can emerge precisely because love, understood politically, requires truth-telling, accountability, and resistance to domination.

It is through this passage that radical tenderness emerges as one of the situated propositions of the inquiry. It names something that became perceptible through the embodied and artistic trajectory of the clown-mother-bouffon: a tenderness that has passed through harm, recognition, complaint, and resistance without relinquishing its relational orientation. Radical tenderness holds care and boundaries, vulnerability and discernment, love and truth-telling, tenderness and refusal together. Complaint does not make tenderness political; tenderness, like love in hooks, is already political. What complaint does in this inquiry is transform the conditions under which tenderness can continue to be practised.

The maternal dimension of the clown-mother-bouffon gives this transformation a further pedagogical orientation. In the prayer-spell, what has been learned through witnessing, recognition, complaint, and resistance is addressed to the "little ones": *be sweet, but never silent; be gentle, but stay seen*. Survival becomes, therefore, not only resistance but also transmission and pedagogy. The mother does not teach invulnerability. She transmits the possibility of remaining open to care while learning to recognise harm, establish boundaries, and speak when something is wrong. Radical tenderness becomes, in this sense, not only a way of surviving institutional harm but an embodied knowledge that can be carried forward and offered to others.

These propositions also raise questions about academic institutions themselves. What might change if complaint were approached not as irritating noise to be managed but as knowledge about institutional relations? What forms of university life might become possible if vulnerability, embodied knowledge, motherhood, artistic inquiry, laughter, and care were not positioned against academic seriousness? The present study cannot answer

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these questions institutionally or universally. It offers instead the situated knowledge produced through one clown-mother-bouffon's encounter with the Ivory Tower and an arts-based practice for staying with what institutional procedures may fail to resolve.

Finally, this inquiry remains deliberately open. The poem, hip-hop manifesto, and prayer-spell presented here are artistic outputs of the present research, but they are also poetic scores for future public performance. Their passage through voice, gesture, rhythm, costume, comic timing, space, and encounter with audiences may produce meanings that cannot yet be anticipated and are therefore not claimed as findings here. The living ghosts remain capable of transformation as they acquire bodies and enter other spaces. In this sense, incompletion is not simply a limitation of the study; it is consistent with its methodological proposition that return can produce difference.

To move from love, through complaint, then, is not to leave love behind. It is to follow some of the difficult practices that a politics of love may demand when care, dignity, and justice are violated. Complaint becomes a way of remaining with those demands rather than surrendering them for the sake of institutional harmony. And what emerges on the other side is neither the restoration of an earlier innocence nor the hardening of the vulnerable body against the world. Radical tenderness is not a return to the tenderness with which the clown entered the Ivory Tower. It is tenderness that has passed through complaint and learned how to remain tender without disappearing.

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Crossing Digital Frontiers: Hybridization and Transversal Learning in COIL-Driven Arts-Based Inquiry

Cruzando fronteras digitales: hibridación y aprendizaje transversal en la investigación basada en las artes impulsada por COIL

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Abstract

This article explores the transformative potential of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) as a borderless space for hybrid artistic and pedagogical practices, drawing on an arts-based research (ABR) study involving undergraduate art students from Helwan University, Egypt, and collaborators from a Canadian institution. Reframed through concepts of third space theory, border thinking, rhizomatic learning, post-digital hybridity, and transversal pedagogy, the study examines how digital tools—such as Zoom, WhatsApp, and multimedia exchanges—facilitate knowledge exchange, interrelation, and hybridization across geographic, disciplinary, and social boundaries. By positioning creative writing as a generative inquiry (Leavy, 2017), we co-created narratives that disrupt normative discourses in art education, fostering emergent, collective thinking and social intervention. The findings illustrate COIL's role in community engagement, where digital hybridity enables transcultural artistic transformations and empowers future educators to address global challenges like cultural equity and environmental advocacy. This contributes to the "Without Borders" theme by highlighting digital technologies as catalysts for educational and social change, offering methodological insights for post-digital art pedagogies. Implications extend to broader fields, advocating for inclusive, hybrid models that transcend traditional borders in higher education.

Keywords: Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL); Digital hybridity; transversal pedagogy; Border thinking; Reimagining art practice; Rhizomatic learning.

Resumen

Este artículo explora el potencial transformador del Aprendizaje Colaborativo Internacional en Línea (COIL) como un espacio sin fronteras para prácticas artísticas y pedagógicas híbridas, basándose en un estudio de investigación basada en las artes (ABR) con estudiantes de pregrado de arte de la Universidad de Helwan, Egipto, y colaboradores de una institución canadiense. Reenmarcado a través de conceptos de la teoría del tercer espacio, el pensamiento fronterizo, el aprendizaje rizomático, la hibridez posdigital y la pedagogía transversal, el estudio examina cómo las herramientas digitales —como Zoom, WhatsApp y los intercambios multimedia— facilitan el intercambio de conocimientos, la interrelación y la hibridación a través de fronteras geográficas, disciplinarias y sociales. Al posicionar la escritura creativa como una indagación generativa (Leavy, 2017), co-creamos narrativas que alteran los discursos normativos en la educación artística, fomentando el pensamiento colectivo emergente y la intervención social. Los hallazgos ilustran el papel de COIL en el compromiso comunitario, donde la hibridez digital permite transformaciones artísticas transculturales y empodera a los futuros educadores para abordar desafíos globales como la equidad cultural y la defensa ambiental. Esto contribuye al tema "Sin Fronteras" al resaltar las tecnologías digitales como catalizadores para el cambio educativo y social, ofreciendo perspectivas metodológicas para las pedagogías del arte posdigitales.

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Palabras clave: Aprendizaje Colaborativo Internacional en Línea (COIL); hibridez digital; pedagogía transversal; pensamiento fronterizo; reimaginando la práctica artística; aprendizaje rizomático.

To begin-with

In the fluid weave of digital threads that traverse continents, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) emerges as a nomadic pedagogical space that facilitates dynamic movements between artistic practice and educational inquiry (Rubin, 2018). Drawing on an arts-based research (ABR) project between undergraduate art students at Helwan University in Egypt and their Canadian collaborators, this paper moves through liminal zones where experiential dialogue and experiential writing blur established boundaries and generate unexpected hybridizations. It is an assemblage of voices—a weaving of digital and material realities shaped through platforms such as Zoom and WhatsApp. Resonating with third space theory (Bhabha, 1994), these encounters are reframed as generative borderlands in which rhizomatic learning (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) and transversal pedagogy (Giroux, 1992) intersect with conditions of post-digital hybridity (Cramer, 2015). Within this context, creative writing operates not merely as a reflective tool but as a mode of living inquiry (Leavy, 2017), co-producing narratives that challenge normative exchanges in art education. As we proceed, each fragment of writing operates as a trace of our collective becoming, capturing the unexpected connections—from object itineraries to transcultural resonances—that inform our pursuit of a borderless art pedagogy attuned to global imperatives of equity and environmental relationality.

Draft One: The pen begins

In this essay, we investigate the potential of a creative writing process with four undergraduate students from Helwan University, Egypt, as they engaged in a collaborative online international learning (COIL) initiative. By reimagining their art practices through a creative writing inquiry, we sought to understand how COIL shaped their perspectives as future art educators. Our research curiosity explored the perceptions of the COIL experience, its affect on normative processes, and the nature of our learning process: 1) How has this experience been perceived and actualized from various points of view? 2) How does COIL expose, disrupt, displace, or dispose of normative discourses as future art teachers? 3) Discuss our learning experience in terms of responsiveness, emergent, collective, and attuned thinking-making-doing processes; what were some of the unanticipated connections and relations that emerged in this project? How did those unanticipated moments help us grow differently?

Drawing on Leavy's (2017) concept of generative inquiry and Skains' (2018) framework of practice-led research, we approached writing as a generative process where the act of writing itself drove our inquiry. Our conversations, drafts, and feedback

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constituted a new research space, where the act of writing itself became a catalyst for exploration. Our writing became a unique collaboration, both responding to and shaping the process of our correspondence, which was not just a reflection or presentation of art practice, but as a creative space, allowing us to explore its potential in innovative ways linked to our previous experience of COIL.

As their mentor, I was present throughout the students' writing journey and worked to transform their experiences and emotions into English expressions. Through ongoing discussions, I familiarized them with the essential elements of English writing, including criteria and structure. I further supported them by editing their stories, solidifying this experience as an inseparable collaboration where our contributions were interwoven. As their mentor, I transcended the traditional role, becoming an integral part of their writing process, blending my body and mind with theirs to enhance their correspondence and creativity. We attempt to reimagine our experiences and encounters not only through a reflective writing process but also as a provocative and speculative practice of writing to explore the potential of arts-based approaches in fostering generative thinking, even in reimaging of our art practices. Inspired by our Zoom meetings, ongoing WhatsApp conversations, and feedback on students' step-by-step drafts, different sections of our essay have been categorized under draft titles to illustrate our inquiry from idea to this final essay.

This ABR methodology aligns with third space theory (Bhabha, 1994), positioning our collaborative writing as a hybrid borderland where local and global knowledges intermingle, fostering interrelations that challenge epistemic hierarchies. By integrating post-digital hybridity (Cramer, 2015), we frame digital tools as mediators of transversal pedagogy (Giroux, 1992), enabling non-linear, rhizomatic learning (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) that expands boundaries in art education.

Draft Two: Re-imaging art practices through words

To contextualize the multiplicity of students' experiences, it is crucial to acknowledge their participation in a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) (Banerjee et al., 2023; Fulco & Goldsmith, 2023; Naicker et al., 2022) art practice initiative undertaken last year in collaboration with graduate students from a Canadian institution. This COIL project focused on the theme of object itineraries, and we were immersed in two distinct, yet intricately interwoven, experiential learning engagements. The first phase entailed a self-directed exploration of cultural and artistic materials, assembling the collections of local museums around the Canadian institution and Helwan University, where students were engaged in an exchange of their local art-crafts and creation of art responses as the result of this exchange. These conversations have been facilitated by the establishment of WhatsApp groups, fostering a collaborative learning environment where students were able to communicate synchronously and asynchronously, bridging time zone differences and language barriers.

WhatsApp's multimedia capabilities allowed for the exchange of photos of their

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local crafts, sketches of their evolving art pieces, and even short videos and audios showcasing their creative process. This constant exchange of ideas and visual inspiration within the WhatsApp group became an integral part of students' artistic journey, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose despite the geographical separation. These encounters and experiences are translated into various text formats through discussions, meeting sessions, and reflections shared within the WhatsApp group. Students documented their creative process, exchanged ideas about their artwork, and provided feedback on each other's work, all through text-media-based communication on the platform.

The second phase of the project unfolded within the virtual realm, transcending geographical constraints to converge at the Time-Based Media Exhibition hosted by MAMBO (Modern Art Museum of Bogota). Leveraging digital platforms, students engaged in a collaborative exploration of time-based media art, resulting in a series of podcasts that served as a demonstration of the transformative potential of virtual collaboration. This exploration culminated in the creation of a series of podcasts, where their artistic experiences were translated into a new format – spoken word and audio editing. This progression from visual and textual communication in the WhatsApp group to the creation of audio pieces in the second phase reflects the ongoing transformation of experiences into various forms of expression throughout the project.

In a similar vein, our own formation as a group writing about our experiences over these past six months exemplifies this ongoing translation process. We are now collaboratively documenting our artistic journeys through written text, mirroring the way our initial encounters with objects and virtual exhibitions were rephrased into various forms of communication within the WhatsApp group and ultimately these podcasts. This project operates as a fertile space for the potential of COIL initiatives in fostering creative exchange and artistic exploration across geographic and cultural boundaries. Reframed through border thinking (Mignolo, 2000), this phase illustrates how digital hybridity blurs Global South-North divides, creating third spaces for knowledge co-creation (Rubin, 2018). The multimedia exchanges embody rhizomatic learning, where unanticipated connections emerge, aligning with the journal's emphasis on hybridization and interaction for social transformation.

With the project's digital framework now established, under the mentor's presence, let us drift into the personal narratives where individual voices emerge as distinct inflections within a shared creative field, revealing how collective interactions extended and reshaped their respective artistic horizons.

Draft Three: Stepping into a world of unexpected friendships (Author 4)

The pixelated image on my phone screen sparked a chain reaction. It wasn't just a poster advertising a COIL program; it was a portal to a world of unexpected friendships, artistic exploration, and a newfound confidence in my own voice. Stepping out of my comfort zone, I enrolled in the English-language art education class, keen to delve into this unknown territory. Little did I know, the journey would not only reshape my understanding of art

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education but also transform the way I saw myself as a learner and future educator.
Joining the WhatsApp group felt like stepping into a lively exchange of ideas. Messages buzzed with greetings in different languages, underlined by photos of museum exhibits and sketches of evolving artwork. I was initially hesitant to contribute - my English wasn't perfect, and the thought of expressing myself in writing felt daunting. However, the warmth and encouragement of my peers were contagious. Soon, I found myself exchanging messages, sharing my thoughts on the intricate weavings in the Cairo Museum of Fine Arts and the captivating stories woven into them (Binder, 2022). It was as if the limitations of physical distance disappeared, replaced by a vibrant online community, mirroring the "behind the scenes" space Venter (2020, p.7) describes.

Mentor Author 1's guidance encouraged us to document our experiences. Initially, the task of translating our artistic encounters into written narratives felt overwhelming. We weren't just describing objects; we were capturing the emotions they evoked, the connections we made, and the way they challenged our perspectives. But as we delved deeper, words became a new means of exploration. Describing the textures of ancient artifacts or the soundscapes of our virtual exhibition helped us relive those moments, deepening our understanding of them, and aligning with research suggesting the benefits of purposeful engagement in collaborative learning (Suarez et al., 2020).

This process wasn't always smooth. There were moments of frustration when the right word seemed elusive, and the nuances of our experiences felt lost in translation. But through ongoing discussions and feedback, we learned to refine our language, becoming more comfortable with expressing ourselves through writing. It was a slow dance between capturing our artistic exploration and crafting a compelling narrative, similar to the transformation Binder (2022) describes when discussing COIL as a space for "meaning-making, storied lived experiences, and community" (p. 60).

As I reflect on this transformative journey, the impact of COIL extends far beyond the pages of this essay. It generates a deep appreciation for the power of collaborative learning and the importance of fostering transnational understanding. This experience sparked a passion for integrating technology and storytelling into my future teaching practice. Imagine a classroom where the walls dissolve, replaced by boundless virtual connections. This echoes the "dynamic virtual space of learning" Palulis (2022, p.132) describes, where students can explore museums across the globe and collaborate with peers from diverse backgrounds, nurturing the "gift of friendship" that Binder (2022, p.60) emphasizes. This is the vision COIL has instilled in me. By weaving together technology, artistic expression, and storytelling, I hope to create a learning environment that empowers students not only to appreciate art, but also to discover their voice and share their unique perspectives with the world, fulfilling the goals of COIL initiatives as outlined by Banerjee et al. (2023) and Fulco & Goldsmith (2023). This narrative exemplifies transversal pedagogy, crossing pedagogical borders to foster emergent interrelations, while post-digital hybridity in WhatsApp exchanges creates rhizomatic pathways for personal growth and community engagement (Giroux, 1992; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). As one collaborator's reflections recede into the resonances of prior engagements—sustained in part by the mentor's supportive presence—another emerges,

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articulating cultural perspectives that extend the inquiry into a hybrid assemblage in which artistic practice operates as a tacit dialogue across spatial and conceptual borders.

Draft Four: Threads of culture woven through art (Author 5)

COIL has been an eye-opening experience for me, knitting together threads of different cultures and artistic expressions, transcending geographical boundaries, and enriching my understanding of art and its various contexts to understand the "why, how, and why" of the process of making-meaning-doing (Beelen & Doscher, 2023). This resonated deeply with the struggle of navigating the vast amount of information available today. While resources are plentiful, the pursuit of truly diverse knowledge can feel inaccessible amidst the daily confusion. As an artist and educator, I desired a broader understanding that encompassed Art History and Criticism alongside pedagogical methodologies and emerging artistic experiences. COIL emerged as a fertile space, offering a unique space for ongoing exploration and intellectual growth that transcended traditional methods, I was familiar with.

One such exploration involved delving into the creative process of my Canadian peers, fostering a deeper appreciation for the social, historical, and cultural contexts that shape artistic expression, which encompass a vibrant tapestry woven from countless threads. Shary Boyle's evocative sculpture "Sea Change" (Boyle, 2014) operates as a particularly powerful visual illustration, unraveling the complicated relationship between Indigenous cultures and the Canadian ecological environment (Boyle, 2014). The way the artwork highlighted the impact of external forces resonated deeply with Egypt's own rich heritage, prompting me to embark on virtual museum walks and share the resulting images and information within our WhatsApp group. This exchange became a bridge, transcending the conventional narrative of Egypt's ancient past, and illuminating the complex cultural artifacts that continue to thrive today. As we exchanged artistic experiences, the lines between "us" and "them" blurred (Rubin, 2023, p.73). The traditional notions of ownership and cultural belonging dissolved, replaced by a spirit of collective exploration. Art became the common language, fostering a vibrant cultural dialogue that exceeded the constraints of nationality, ethnicity, and geography.

This wasn't just about artistic expression; COIL's impact extended far beyond and instilled valuable experiences in collaboration and affective communication. Navigating diverse viewpoints and equitably distributing tasks within the group provided insights into teamwork and leadership. These studies, I realized, extended the confines of academic experiences and were applicable to real-world scenarios where adaptability and cooperation are paramount. Moreover, the exchange acted as a potent reminder of art's capability to move beyond mere aesthetics in being a powerful means for societal contemplation and environmental advocacy. Shary Boyle's "Sea Change" embodied this perfectly, shedding light on pressing environmental concerns. It inspired me to delve into such impactful narrative in my own work and to appreciate the transformative power of art to foster positive change within my community. This sensation mirrored the insights

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shared by Deardorff (2023), who emphasizes the importance of knowledge mobility in COIL initiatives, an advocate for "not only communication across national borders but also communication within human diversity that is inclusive of age, race, genders, religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, physical abilities, ideological beliefs, and so on" (p.275).

The COIL program has greatly reshaped my perspectives on art, education, and collaboration. It has facilitated a deeper comprehension of cultural contexts, artistic methodologies, and the interconnections of global challenges. This experience has offered a practical platform for exploration, urging me to dismantle barriers and embrace the diversity of teaching and learning. I now, comprehend that the language of art has the remarkable potential to transcend geographical boundaries. As I progress in my artistic and educational endeavors, I carry with me the insights gained from COIL as demonstration of art affects in virtual exchange, fostering comprehension, cooperation, and constructive change across borders. Through border thinking, this thread-weaving disrupts colonial narratives, creating hybrid assemblages that promote social intervention and educational equity (Mignolo, 2000; Cramer, 2015). From these interconnected encounters, we proceed toward the digital infrastructures that mediate transnational exchange, spaces in which informal WhatsApp communications coalesce into shared aesthetic and pedagogical formations, guiding the reader into subsequent layers of this unfolding inquiry.

Draft Five: WhatsApp as a bridge between languages (Author 6)

The initial Zoom meetings initially felt awkward due to the time difference between Egypt and Canada. While our team in Egypt endured late nights, our Canadian counterparts were just starting their day. However, despite these initial challenges, a sense of community grew within our WhatsApp group. We exchanged images of the detailed metalwork from the Mohamed Ali Museum, encouraging discussions that transcended language barriers. Through the use of emojis, we expressed laughter and enthusiasm, juxtaposing these common visual expressions with the contemporary installations at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Additionally, we shared evolving artwork sketches, each stroke capturing a distinct interpretation of the "object itineraries" theme. Our communication extended beyond visuals, as we used brief videos to capture the sound of hammers shaping metal and the rhythmic brushstrokes on canvas, providing insights into our creative processes. The asynchronous nature of WhatsApp (Venter, 2020) facilitated deliberate responses, even if they were delayed by a few hours. We offered comprehensive feedback encompassing both technical and emotional aspects of each other's work. A single "wow" emoji represented deep opinion, while detailed suggestions contributed to the refinement of our artistic vision. This ongoing exchange transcended mere artistic collaboration; it was an organ in forging meaningful connections. It felt akin to a collaborative effort to create a resilient, continually evolving mural, with each contribution adding a distinctive layer.

In line with the progression of our exploration of art forms from physical objects

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to virtual exhibitions, our approach to documenting experiences has similarly evolved. The preliminary discussions and reflections within the WhatsApp group provided the foundational material for this collaborative written work. This process involved the translation of our online shared emotions and experiences into the framework of a formal essay. Author 1 took on the role of guiding us, affectively acting as a bridge to facilitate our expression in English. It encompassed not only grammatical considerations but also encapsulated the significance of this project to each of us. The essay depicts the culmination of extensive late-night discussions on WhatsApp, the collective enthusiasm for artistic exploration, and the affective role of COIL in nurturing creative exchange (Banerjee et al., 2023). It operates as an affirmation of the notion that, despite geographical barriers, collaborative efforts can lead to truly meaningful outcomes. The participatory nature of this learning experience, where we actively contributed our thoughts and efforts to create something meaningful, underscored the value of "giving value" rather than merely "receiving value." This sense of purpose and importance made the learning process deeply rewarding and worthwhile. This bridge-building embodies post-digital hybridity, where multimedia tools create third spaces for transversal interactions, fostering rhizomatic growth in linguistic and cultural hybridizations (Cramer, 2015; Bhabha, 1994). Crossing these linguistic and communicative bridges, we then move into the broadening of discourses, where initially localised understandings expand into global frames of reference. This transition carries the reader along rhizomatic trajectories marked by exprientation, contingency, and creative disruption.

Draft Six: From limited discourse to global perspectives (Author 7)

As we engaged with each other in the WhatsApp group, the range of voices and knowledge in the educational discourse broadened, and the challenges increased, yet my normative discourse of art education expanded on a global scale. As an undergraduate student, this was a new experience, but in recent years, universities have increasingly become more proactive in broadening the scope of their international activities to prepare students for what O'Dowd (2017) describes as an intrinsically digitalized, globalized, and multicultural world. Initially, my experiences in art practices were constrained to a specific methodology and methods. However, through the COIL project, particularly the art response and podcast collaboration, I discovered multilayered approaches to contemporary art education on a global context.

My exposure to a wider range of art perspectives has challenged my limitations, prompting a deeper understanding of diversity, inclusion, and exploration. Through the COIL project, I not only learned from my peers but also from the professors, discovering various methods and methodologies in contemporary art education. Collaborative online learning supports the co-creation of knowledge, and the development of skills related to interactions, such as critical thinking, leadership, problem-solving, and intercultural communication (Vahed & Rodríguez, 2021). This integration of multiple perspectives, experiences, and artistic traditions led to an inclusive and thorough educational experience.

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COIL overturned my typical way of working with peers, which, in my experience often tended to face challenges or have a limited impact on my perspectives. It offered a different form of agency and empowerment through which we were able to express our ideas without hesitation or compromise. We embraced our differences, overcoming any boundaries to reach a middle ground of understanding one another. During my first project, making a visual art response to my teammate's walks in The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, I realized that learning about other cultures and artistic traditions can be accessible and engaging through fruitful conversations. Our conversations, according to Farley and Hillyard (2023), became a familiar research method to collect, interpret, and analyze received data. It was also understood to be a methodology "in which the sharing of knowledge and the growth of understanding occurs through meaning-making processes" (Feldman, 1999, p.197). This way of collaborating gave us a different form of agency in our learning, making me recognize the value of expressing my voice and opinion in discussions without any filtering.

Through these collaborative experiences, I've realized that as a student, I have the ability to make decisions, set goals, and actively participate in shaping my educational experiences innovatively. This experience has empowered me to believe in the positive impact I can make as a future educator, gaining a deeper appreciation and understanding of the importance of art education from a global perspective. Reframed via border thinking, this expansion disrupts normative constraints, promoting transversal pedagogy that hybridizes global discourses for social and educational transformation (Mignolo, 2000; Giroux, 1992).

Last Draft: An assemblage of words and experience

This investigation of the COIL art practice has been a dynamic interplay between past experiences and present re-imaginings, and re-viewings of encounters and experiences through an extended collaboration. The initial spark came from our year-long collaborative project, centred around the theme of Object Itineraries within a COIL framework. The project, as detailed in the "drafts," acted as a fertile space for examining our experiences through a critical lens. Each "draft" denotes a stage in our inquiry, moving from initial questions about COIL's impact to the final piece you hold in your hands. Throughout this journey, words played a central role. They were not just tools for communication, but dynamic forces shaped by and shaping our collaboration. We explored the potential of creative writing collaboratively to capture the essence of artistic expression, a process that exceeded mere reflection and entered the realm of creative exploration. Looking back, this project stands as an illustration of the transformative power of COIL initiatives, fostering exchange, challenging perspectives, and pushing us to reimagine the boundaries of art education. From the initial spark of the COIL project to the final written word, this journey has been a tapestry of experiences woven together through communication and creativity.

As an assemblage, this final reflection synthesizes rhizomatic learning across

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drafts, highlighting digital hybridity's role in community engagement and the "Without Borders" theme. It contributes methodologically to ABR by demonstrating how transversal pedagogies enable hybrid knowledge production, with implications for decolonial art education and scalable digital interventions (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; O'Dowd, 2022). Within this multiplicity of drafts and drifts, where digital boundaries dissolve into collaborative imaginaries, we move back to the generative potential of COIL: a pedagogical space without specified borders that hybridizes perspectives, unsettles normative assumptions, and cultivates transversal formations of learning and practice (Giroux, 1992). The narratives arising from everyday digital interactions, from WhatsApp "whispers" to Zoom-mediated encounters, disclose not only individual shifts but also collective rhizomes oriented toward equity and advocacy (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Released into the dialogic space of this research, these accounts invite continued engagement, urging art educators to recognize post-digital hybridity as a catalyst for border-transgressive pedagogies in which unexpected connections persistently emerge, reconfiguring both practice and relationality (Cramer, 2015).

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Arts Based Research and Digital Technologies as Fulcrums for Educational Transformation

La investigación basada en las artes y las tecnologías digitales como puntos de apoyo para la transformación educativa

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Abstract

This article outlines the ways in which Arts Based Educational Research (ABER) has informed the art teacher training program in the Aristotle University (AUTH) School of Visual and Applied Arts in Thessaloniki, Greece. ABER informs my research, as well as my teaching practice in which I employ methods such as art sketchbooks in a quest to encourage a lasting synergy between the Teacher and the Artist identities. This article also presents the theoretical underpinnings of such arts-based approaches employed both in educational research and teaching methodologies. The main goal is to build a mentality in which the sensibilities and methodological advancements gained through the art students' artistic practice will form the basis for their future arts-based educational approaches as teaching artists, and moreover, researchers. Furthermore, I present instances of EU-funded projects, (namely, Come2Art and CREAMS) in which the integration of new

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media, or digital technologies, such as extended reality (XR) with the aim of enhancing art students' creativity and consequently, serve as pedagogical tool. In CREAMS, art students are provided with XR-based tools and applications that enable them to create virtual art exhibitions, exploiting the capabilities of digital environments to foster interactive, meaningful engagement. This is achieved primarily by adding multimodal contextual resources linked to artworks. The main digital application is inspired by the visual narratives explored during the art teacher training and in a symbiotic manner, in turn, inform my teaching practices. The article concludes with a third research project (FIREFLY) and finally summarises the findings and possible insights gained to provide useful inspiration in the wider field of arts education researchers and practitioners.

Keywords: Art Education, Arts-based research, Educational methodology.

Resumen

Este artículo describe las formas en que la Investigación Educativa Basada en las Artes (ABER) ha informado el programa de capacitación de maestros de arte en la Escuela de Artes Visuales y Aplicadas de la Universidad Aristóteles (AUTH) en Tesalónica, Grecia. ABER informa mi investigación, así como mi práctica docente en la que empleo métodos como cuadernos de bocetos de arte en una búsqueda para fomentar una sinergia duradera entre las identidades del Maestro y el Artista. Este artículo también presenta los fundamentos teóricos de tales enfoques basados en las artes empleados tanto en la investigación educativa como en las metodologías de enseñanza. El objetivo principal es construir una mentalidad en la que las sensibilidades y los avances metodológicos obtenidos a través de la práctica artística de los estudiantes de arte formen la base de sus futuros enfoques educativos basados en las artes como artistas docentes y, además, investigadores. Además, presento ejemplos de proyectos financiados por la UE (a saber, Come2Art y CREAMS) en los que la integración de nuevos medios o tecnologías digitales, como la realidad extendida (XR), con el objetivo de mejorar la creatividad de los estudiantes de arte y, en consecuencia, servir como herramienta pedagógica. En CREAMS, los estudiantes de arte reciben herramientas y aplicaciones basadas en XR que les permiten crear exposiciones de arte virtuales, explotando las capacidades de los entornos digitales para fomentar un compromiso interactivo y significativo. Esto se logra principalmente agregando recursos contextuales multimodales vinculados a las obras de arte. La aplicación digital principal se inspira en las narrativas visuales exploradas durante la formación docente de arte y de manera simbiótica, a su vez, informan mis prácticas docentes. El artículo concluye con un tercer proyecto de investigación (FIREFLY) y finalmente resume los hallazgos y las posibles ideas obtenidas para proporcionar inspiración útil en el campo más amplio de los investigadores y profesionales de la educación artística.

Palabras clave: Educación Artística, Investigación basada en las artes, metodología educativa.

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1. Introduction

This article conveys and elaborates on the main points of the presentation made at the 8th International Conference on Artistic Research and Arts Based Research under the auspices of the University of Girona (Girona, 20-22 November 2024). It outlines the ways in which Arts Based Educational Research (ABER) has informed the Art Teacher Training program at the School of Visual and Applied Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts, Aristotle University (AUTH) of Thessaloniki, Greece. ABER has been employed in my research, notably during my doctoral research which resulted to one of the very first arts-led PhDs in Art Education (at the Institute of Education, University of London, 2011). This experience informs, as a point of reference my research and practice as University Lecturer responsible for the Teaching Training Program that concerns Art Students. Therefore, an outline of its underpinnings and methodology is offered in this article.

My main concern, based on my own research interests and teaching approaches, is to enhance a synergy between the Teacher and the Artist identity and foster respective methodologies for learning, and meaning making in the field of art education. I therefore present furthermore in this article, the arts-led methodology employed at the AUTH School of Visual and Applied Arts, that invests in the creation of Art Sketchbooks with a strong personal, autobiographical dimension. This is an integral part of art students' hands-on training in respective methods in art education, alongside other approaches in which their artistic practices and research converge with their nascent educational methodology.
The main goal is to build a mentality in which the sensibilities and methodological framework, gained through the art students' artistic practice, will form the basis for their future arts-based educational approaches as teaching artists. Moreover, I focus on the ways in which art students explore through their artistic creativity, connections between art and pedagogy. In this context and as part of EU-funded research projects (namely, Come2Art and CREAMS) I present the integration of new technologies and especially Extended Reality (CREAMS project) as tool for the enhancement of art students creativity both as a tool for their own advancement and as prospective means for supporting their future school students' own creative journeys.

In this specific project (i.e. CREAMS) Art Students are provided with Extended Reality (XR) tools and applications that enable them to organize art exhibitions that do not only use ICT to show their work but most importantly exploit the capabilities of XR as fulcrum for generating more meaningful audience engagement, with the inclusion of digital resources that show their research and artworks in context through the use of multimodal material. The way digital tools are developing has been informed and inspired by the arts-based often autobiographical visual narratives explored during the Art Teacher Training that is based on ABER and influenced by A/r/tography. In fact, art students who at the same time are trainee art teachers provided constant feedback and most importantly shaped much of the final functions and form of the tools through their input.

The article concludes with an overview of the actual outcomes of these research programs with reference made to the insights gained that may be useful for the wider art education community, as well as to the possible direction for future research.

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Arts led research in art education: Instances of research and practice

> "[Practice] is unaware of the principles that govern it and the possibilities they contain; it can only discover them by enacting them, unfolding them in time"
>
> Bourdieu, P. (1990)

Arts-led research in both art and art education strongly relates to theoretical frameworks that underpin the very concepts of knowledge and practice. t Pierre Bourdieu, a sociologist who exerts major influence in the field of arts-based research mainly through his conceptualisations of the two key terms, cultural capital (Bourdieu 1985) and embodied practice (Bourdieu 1990). I see fit to make a couple of introductory remarks, initially, on the importance and relevance of Arts-led research today using this quotation. His contention draws attention to the importance of practice as a form of knowing, and of producing knowledge, as well as a way of thinking - Bourdieu says that practice can discover what it is unaware of, by enacting it. He therefore seemingly gives to practice the status of a thinking subject, pointing towards its capacity to act as a vehicle for thought; this quote has often been brought forward by the proponents of a paradigm shift that has added legitimacy to practice-led or arts-led methodologies of research initially in the field of visual arts.

In a recent lesson, I used this quotation to highlight the fact that art students can enrich their pedagogical practice, or for that matter, the educational research that they may undertake in the future, by using the ways they generate knowledge as artists; that is to say, by means of creative, highly personal, exploratory journeys. As Bourdieu shows, art practice is a vehicle for heuristic knowledge, a term that describes the process of learning through discovery. Bourdieu eloquently explains that art practice discovers the principles that govern it through unfolding them in time. Time is an essential dimension, and this quotation highlights the importance of the creative process rather than its result.. Emphasis on the temporal, procedural aspect of unfolding the possibilities that govern practice shows that knowing is doing, enacting, (or, making, in the arts); something that contradicts the tenets of result-driven educational curricula which reflect the sectors of business, production, and more widely, economy where efficacy is judged by the end result and immediate turnout while stigmatising mistakes[1]. Exploring educational practices in the ways teachers with arts background explore possibilities in their artistic research, as a process, necessitates time, affords instances where things can go wrong, and aims at discovering the possibilities that art practice contains through discovery, even by trial and error.

At this point I would like to draw attention to another aspect of this conceptually dense quote; namely its reference to the 'possibilities that the principles which govern practice contain' (emphasis added). Here, art practice, and more specifically artworks, through which it materializes, are seen not as end points of a procedure but as bearers of

1 As Ken Robinson (2007) eloquently puts it in a now famous TED talk about creativity and (art) education. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9CE55wbtYCt=346s

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infinite possibilities to be discovered and disseminated. This brings to the fore the notion of the prototype as formulated by Graeme Were (2010). Graeme Were (2010, p.267-272) delineates the nature and significance of the prototype as a nexus of relations, ideas and intentions which functions as agent:

> One of the crucial issues raised by prototypes is how they present us with the capacity to generate variation. Such questions have been tackled head on in anthropology in the work of Alfred Gell (1998), who examines artefacts and prototypicality. For Gell, artefacts are agents capable of acting in ways analogous to persons through their facility to engender social relations. They are designed with complex intentionalities in mind, so much so that the design of an artefact cannot exist in isolation; rather, Gell argues that an artefact encompasses a set of ideas that are carried through the various possible forms it can take on.

The temporality of the prototype is ambiguous: it encapsulates the preceding instances of practice, while it points to its own future modifications. In effect, it functions as the agent that will bring these advancements about, by providing itself as the platform for their realisation. This is the function and intention of art practice, and by extension of arts-led educational research in the field of art education: to generate ideas, reformulations, and above all, social relations as fulcrums for advancement.

In the same vein, art teachers can learn through discovery about the principles that govern teaching and learning through the arts, by enabling arts-led methods to unfold in journeys of self-reflexive practice.

Starting the delineation of my practice I see fit to provide some context in relation to my own background. After training as an artist, I had the opportunity to study at a postgraduate level at a very encouraging environment that promoted and still promotes the concept of Practice-led educational research: namely, the Institute of Education, University of London -now part of UCL. There, at the end of each year students following an optional art-based route will show their work, often installations, that are the visual component of their research that also has a theoretical aspect, interrelated with the artworks produced during and as result of their educational research. I was encouraged to do my PhD following an arts-led route moving into almost uncharted territory as I started several years before, a time when Arts based educational Research (ABER) as a methodological paradigm was not well established and its legitimacy remained under question especially in the domain of social sciences.

My practice-led research there (MA, PhD, Postdoc) took the form of a synergy between theoretical investigation and art installations, reflecting and amplifying my theoretical investigations which in turn brought new energy and confidence into the creation of installation artworks. So, this was a two-pronged effort of two symbiotically related methods: thinking through art and thinking through language on the principles that govern art education.

The opening statement of a book chapter that related to my doctoral thesis, that also reflects the main concerns of the tutors supporting the PhD (Nicolas Addison mainly, and Lesley Burgess) is the following:

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> All too often art teachers in schools find that their art practice falls away as the demands of teaching take over from their own creative practice. But is this separation inevitable? The teaching artist' might prevent this disjunction by crossing the borders between art and art education. What I propose here is a hybrid field in which the hierarchical distinctions, for example between teacher and learner, word and image, are questioned and the voices of students legitimised. (Dafiotis, 2012)

The hybrid identity of the teaching artist as a concept, is pivotal in my research and practice as an academic working at a School of Visual and Applies Arts preparing future generations of art teachers who are at the same time, visual artists. The teaching artist is envisaged as an active agent, who adapts, incepts, and re-configures arts-led methods according to his or her aims and sensibilities. A teaching artist who uses the methods that allow art to keep certainties and dogmas off balance can create open, dialogic as well as reflexive spaces where art practice, art pedagogy and art education meet. Mörsch (2007), who managed 'documenta 12' (2006) arts-led educational projects, favoured co-authored, 'team-based' research approaches. Such dialogic, non-hierarchical approaches incorporate a reflexive element, as they investigate 'not only the limits to the concept of the voice but also its deconstruction via manners of presentation' (p.39). Although significant time has passed form such calls from the early period of establishing arts-based educational methods as valid, there is still the need to defend, promote and foster the inclusion of such methodologies.

Before proceeding with presenting instances of art education-related research in which new digital media and emerging technologies such as extended reality applications, I think it is important to better situate my educational practice and philosophy with reference to one arts-led doctoral/postdoctoral research at the institute of Education, University of London.

The practice-led methodology employed encompassed a series of installations that have been constructed as 'sites for meaning making'[2] vis- à-vis art education. These installations have embodied, communicated as well as reshaped my understanding of relevant theory. Furthermore, my studio practice evolved in such a way that it has allowed me not only to discern art's pedagogic potential but also to break new ground in my own artistic practice. People can learn from an artwork when it is evident that its maker has learned in the process of making it; when it embodies learning. In other words, arts-led methods in education necessitate that artists enrich and advance their ability as artists in the process.

The last installation (The Benevolent Trap', 2010) marked a turn towards relational aesthetics. It became a hub where postgraduate students from several departments converged and held discussions, exchanged opinions or simply spent time. This space had initially been envisaged as a hybrid between a relational artwork and a collaborative installation in which viewers were encouraged to intervene, reconfigure the space and

2. A principle that is explained by a key educationalist and practising artist, Nicholas Addison as follows: '… the art work is not a repository of meaning but a site for meaning-making' Addison (1999, p.36).

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give new directions to the project. As the installation progressed over a period of four weeks, it became a relational space. The constellation of visual texts instigated numerous conversations within an environment which functioned as a 'discussion machine'. It was an un-decidable space inviting participants to revisit methods, roles, and thereby, think on their subjectivities. In this perplexing but also convivial space, participants made their own connections. They often left a mark, by means of making or by conversing.

Several discussions took place within this ambivalent space, due to its existence. There was a widespread sense amongst the users of the space that the 'The Benevolent Trap' provided and embodied physically, conceptually and institutionally a place where things happened differently. As an un-classifiable, yet thought-provoking and emotionally 'charged' space, it left open the question of whether it was a happening, a prototype, an installation/relational artwork, -or all of these at the same time.



Image 1. Installation The benevolent trap. Institute of Education Studios, 2010. Photographer: Peter Thomas

The benevolent trap doubled as a relational space for reflection, as discussions were held there over a month, and as an installation artwork that mapped out concerns relating to art education. Small drawings, sketches items created a nexus or a rhizome to use the term Deleuze and Guattari introduced, (1988) and that influenced heavily Arts Based Educational Research (ABER) and in particular A/r/tography (Irwin et al. 2006). This rhizome of points of interest invited the viewer or participant to connect, reflect upon and even contribute. It was seen as a discursive space that encouraged dialogue but also a space where affects circulated as numerous small instances of drawings and other visual material were meant to elicit both emotional and cognitive responses.

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Image 2. Installation The benevolent trap. Detail. Institute of Education Studios, 2010.

In this eloquent drawing on the cardboard lining the walls, created as a contribution by Nicholas Addison, the central figure is Deleuze whose notion of rhizome underpins this effort to bring together the methods of art practice and those of educational sciences in a hybrid continuum. At front Socrates, a tribute to the Socratic method of proving a context for people to think rather than dictating what to think. As O'Sullivan (2010) puts it, Art as opposed to other domains of human activity, and especially sciences, is not focused on knowledge -something that clearly relates to the core differentiation between art education and other school subjects as well.

> Art is not, I would argue, ultimately concerned with knowledge – or, at least, with what passes for knowledge…Art, it seems to me, might be better thought of as an event that interrupts knowledge – that breaks information. In fact, art is one of the very few things we have left that is able to creatively make this break (O'Sullivan, 2010)[3]

Empowering future artist/teachers in tertiary education: methods and theoretical underpinnings

At this point, I turn to the ways in which art practice is involved as an integral and core part, of the way I work with new artists who aspire to become art teachers. I will present as example, the arts-led methodology employed that invests in the creation of Art Sketchbooks. This method which is widely employed especially in English speaking countries and introduced in Greek formal education (mainly secondary schools) as well, is characterized by its emphasis on process as it unfolds in time following the entire school year as a

3. See https://www.simonosullivan.net/articles/stuttering-and-stammering.pdf

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reflexive matrix as students use its pages to record, annotate, comment on and visualize their concerns, efforts and achievements. They do so by employing a multimodal approach combining texts, symbols, imagery drawings, studies and other visual/textual notes. Thus, they explore the possibilities of putting diverse modes of representing and elaborating meaning together, in synergy, in pages that are both aesthetically and conceptually charged. Thus, art sketchbooks are not the epitome of multimodal visual texts but also of the notion of intelligent making, i.e., the concomitant exploration of aesthetic solutions with the conceptual elaboration of issues outside the arts, through the arts. They have a strong personal, autobiographical dimension as part of art students' hands-on training in respective methods in art education, as an approach in which their artistic practices and research converge with their nascent educational research and practice. The main goal is to build a mentality in which the sensibilities and methodological advancements gained through the art students' artistic practice will form the basis for their future arts-based educational approaches as teaching artists. The following three pages come from an art student's art sketchbook in which she explores notions of built environment, e.g. urban landscapes. These are addressed as both indicators and active agents that reflect but also inform specific (social) mentalities, starting from organically developed, grass- roots, improvised architecture that has no prior planning, to carefully orchestrated city plans that are strict and geometrically stratified. She investigates, comparatively, and through artistic means and in writing, the structural, compositional as well as sociological aspects of cityscapes elaborating on their origins and impact.

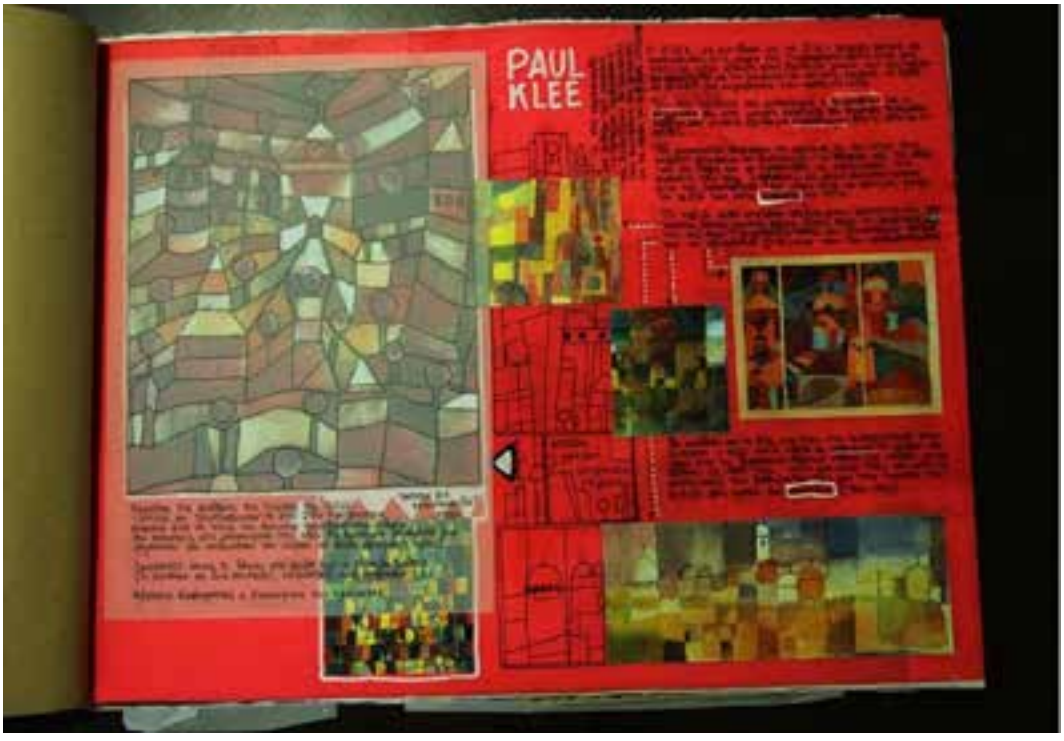


Image 3. Art sketchbook page. Art Student: Sofia Spirliadou. Photo:Dafiotis, P.

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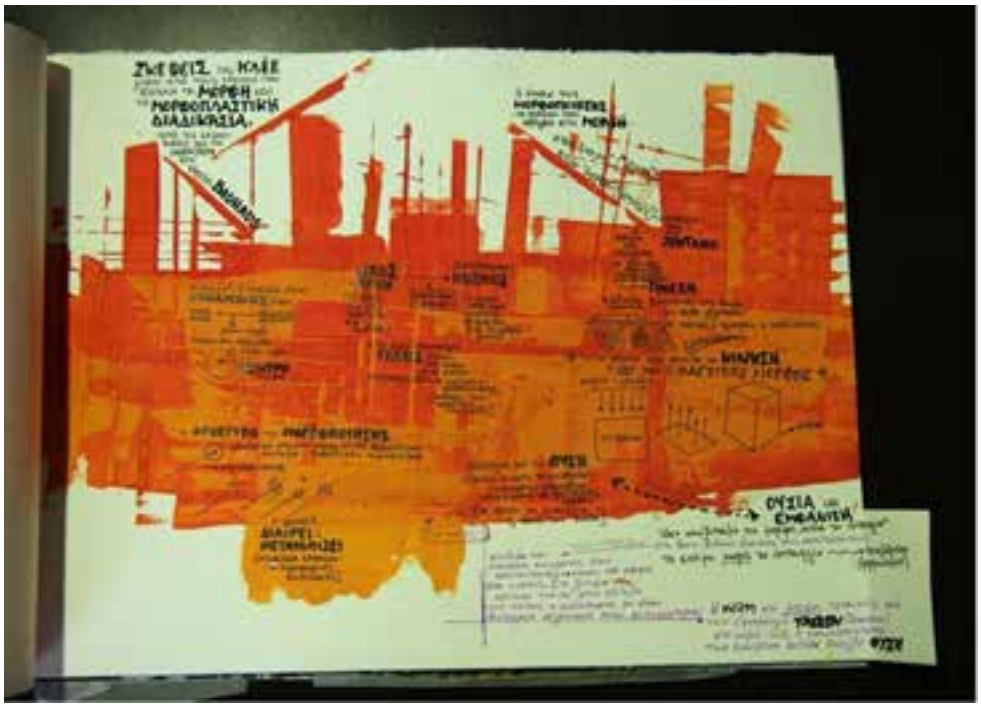


Image 4. Art sketchbook page. Art Student: Sofia Spirliadou. Photo: Dafiotis, P.



Image 5. Art sketchbook page. Art Student: Sofia Spirliadou. Photo: Dafiotis, P.

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A different thematic, artistic and investigatory approach is reflected on (and embodied in) the following two indicative pages of another art sketchbook in which the art student elaborates on family photos as artificial, constructed visual accounts and narratives that according to her comprise a distorted projection of family.

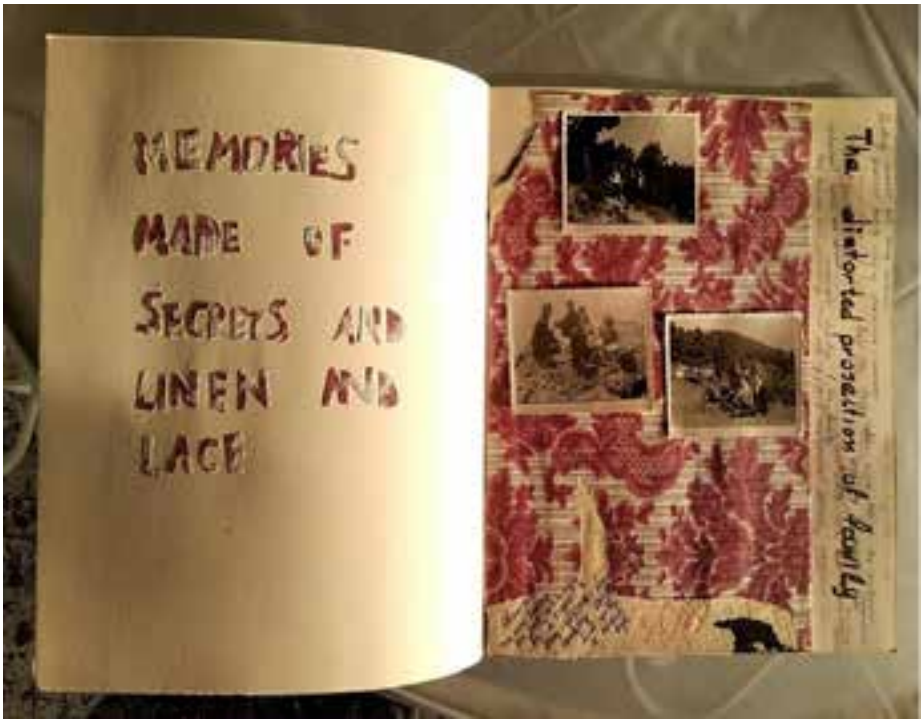


Image 6. Art sketchbook page. Art Student: Kozakopoulou Michalitsa. Photo: Dafiotis, P.



Image 7. Art sketchbook page. Art Student: Kozakopoulou Michalitsa. Photo: Dafiotis, P.

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She adopts a rather poetic and ambiguous yet affective stance, while notably in both cases there is a palpable effort to expand quite literally into the third dimension through unfolding papers with drawings, or semitransparent elements that add layers of meaning.This aspect is important as it provided inspiration for the research projects in which art sketchbooks inform digital platforms and applications in which art students frame their art practice into three-dimensional space using extended reality (augmented and virtual reality) and employing additional layers of information, texts, imagery, in an interactive and multimodal way, documenting and presenting their artistic research in the form of virtual exhibitions as will be explained in the following section.

Educational Research Projects in the field of Art Education and Cultural Heritage

In this section three research projects will be presented, the first of which in greater details, given that it relates more directly with the use of new technologies as fulcrum to empower art students in their learning as well as providing them with methodological inspiration in their practice as future art teachers. The first research project bears the acronym CREAMS (https://www.creams-project.eu/) and its full title is 'Scaffolding Creativity of Arts Students: Framework, Toolchain, and Educational Material on how to Create their Own Virtual Exhibitions'. The project's stated aim is to educate and create awareness of various stakeholders in the Higher Education domain with regards to scaffolding creativity of arts students and deploying a robust and innovative framework and open-source tools for virtual exhibition creation.

The artworks in these virtual exhibitions are regarded as sites for meaning making for the viewers and artists. They were encouraged to further frame them with additional multimodal and interactive resources that become almost part of the artwork given that these can be also emotionally, aesthetically and conceptually charged. This is inspired by the methodology and philosophy of the art sketchbook in which artworks correlate in the hybrid space of the spaces with annotations, commentary in written text as well as preparatory sketches, visual notes, studies. This approach, that in virtual exhibitions expands into the third dimension, is strongly related to the notion of in-depth description, inspired in turn by the concept of thick description (Clifford Geertz, 1973).

Art students who also train as art teachers are invited to exploit the ability of new media to support a dynamic and in-depth interpretative/explanatory presentation of their artworks, in a digital space which itself acquires aesthetic, semantic and conceptual characteristics. This approach aims to make the encounter with the artists' work more attractive, meaningful and educationally beneficial. The works are treated as visual texts for which the approach of thick description, a term introduced by the prominent anthropologist Clifford Geertz and which has had an influence on the ways of approaching texts.[4] According to this approach, cultural texts are described with numerous

4. See term thick translation: Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "Thick Translation". In Ed. Lawrence Venuti. The Translation Studies Reader. London: Routledge, 2000. 417-429).

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footnotes and explanations with reference to their details (and the connections between them), in order to map their meaning in the most complete way possible. The student's artworks are, likewise, approached and treated as visual texts, which with the use of the technological means available, can be presented using many different media and ways of communicating meaning in accordance with the preferences, priorities and sensibilities of each art student. In these virtual exhibitions, art students can map meanings, connections, information, references, thoughts that enrich the contact with their artworks and offer an in-depth dimension of more substantial contact with them. For Geertz, as Sturge (2007, p. 80)[5] explains,

> Each detail is worth studying and each detail is important in order to understand the other details and the contextual whole. If such complexity is difficult to interpret, it is also difficult to convey in the linear and skimpy medium of the written word (emphasis added)

This reference shows the inability of speech alone to convey the semantic richness of texts, let alone visual texts/works of art, and foregrounds the necessity of non-logocentric, multimodal approaches especially in art education (be that secondary or tertiary as is the case in a School of Fine Arts) or for the same matter in art teacher training.

Art sketchbooks are used by art students during the teacher training not only to learn, by employing it, a state-of-the-art method but also to bridge their artistic research and by extension identity, with that of the nascent art teacher methodology of researching and enriching teaching approaches. They are now invited to expand these reflexive practices not the digital milieu. They hitherto document and advance their process of artistic practice and research, through a multimodal synthesis of notes, sketches, drawings, photos, and symbols. Albeit typically 'analogue' these sketchbooks inspired digital apps developed through the CREAMS project, in which the principles of connecting artworks with influences, aspirations, pertinent issues and each artworks process of development as an idea, can now be interactively approached by online viewers and users of portable devices. An example of interactively accessed additional visual/textual material that literally surrounds an exhibit, providing more context than the typical (and existing) description on the (virtual) wall, is provided in the images below, the first (image 8) shows the artwork as shown in a virtual galley and the second (image 9) illustrates the additional resources that emerge once the user clicks on it.

5. Sturge, Kate. Representing others: Translation, Ethnography and Museum. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2007. Pp. 80-83.

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Image 8. Screen shot from a virtual exhibition created on the CREAMS platform. Artworks by Panagiotis Dafiotis.



Image 9. Screen shot from a virtual exhibition created on the CREAMS platform. Artworks by Panagiotis Dafiotis.

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This approach empowers art students to reflect, present and disseminate their work but also offers a strong tool that can be used to scaffold art lessons as well, thus fostering methodologically, trainee art teachers. Art students can therefore explore the possibilities offered by a specifically designed platform and tools, tailored around their needs, not only as a fulcrum for their own learning, but also as something that can be used in their practice as art teachers as well.

As mentioned, this toolchain and main platform is built around the art students' needs, in its development was based on itinerary, formative as well as summative evaluation that took place through diverse means, namely, focus groups, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, usability hands-on tests, thereby leveraging their input and assessments.

This was a complex task undertaken across a range of participating Art Schools, that involved planning and designing the Evaluation Methodology as well as delivering User Evaluation Studies. As leading institution for this part of the research project, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) and in particular the School of Visual and Applied Arts, undertook the main effort to assess the tools and methods for scaffolding virtual exhibitions of art students as these tools developed (formative evaluation) and in their final form (summative evaluation). Formative User Evaluation Studies and the Summative User Evaluation took place on the basis of the Evaluation Methodology that accrued mainly from (the undertaken during the initial stage) literature review/desk research, as well as from findings and conclusions drawn from early Focus group Studies (Dafiotis et al., 2025).

More specifically the main objectives of the key, validation and assessment processes were the following:

- Verify and validate results from the literature through real-world case studies with key stakeholders at different European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
- Define quantitative and qualitative metrics for user acceptability.
- Set the specifications of the CREAMS Platform framework assessment.
- Design and deliver formative as well as summative evaluation user studies with participating HEIs.

An example of a method that was used as it was deemed apposite for arts-related digital tools and platforms, is a thorough questionnaire that measures user experience (User Experience or UX) in interactive digital environments; namely the User Experience Questionnaire (UEQ) developed by Laugwitz et al. (2008). Its key feature is that it measures pragmatic (i.e., usability related) as well as more personal, subjective aspect such as the degree of novelty or pleasure gained from the online experience a fact that render this evaluation tool more adequate for arts content. Another distinctive characteristic compared to most related questionnaires, is that it measures user experience based on different scales corresponding to areas of interest. Specifically, the 26 questions of the

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full questionnaire[6] are divided into 6 scales, which are as follows: overall attractiveness, efficiency, perspicuity, dependability, stimulation and innovation. In turn, scales belong to broader fields. More specifically: the first broader field relates to pragmatic or practical qualities (pragmatic qualities), which are related to efficiency (ease of use), perspicuity that in fact, relates to the (degree of) ease of getting used to the system, and dependability (degree of control). The second field concerns the so-called hedonic qualities. These include the scale of stimulation, i.e., how exciting and motivating the use of the application is, and that of innovation, which concerns how creative, inventive and innovative the digital interaction environment is.

Main suggestions from focus groups and questionnaires that were incorporated into the platform/tools are indicative of art students' priorities and concerns:

- Improvement of visual appeal, realism and ability to manipulate the virtual spaces, as well as in relation to functionalities such as log-in.
- Provision of guidance in real time, through error messages and problem resolution suggestions, as well as creation of simple and targeted manuals preferably in the form of short videos, and tutorials similar to those found in e.g. games.
- Ability to add context, i.e., text, visuals, multimodal material as additional layer(s) that provide viewers with more information and background knowledge on the artworks, the inspiration and the creative process behind them, and issues they elaborate on.

An indicative proposal from a user experience evaluation participant (initials: K.K.) suggested that access to additional resources could take the form of floating interactive, i.e., clickable or selectable texts, multimodal resources that may surround the viewer in a virtual space in which they will find themselves once selecting an artwork -as opposed to a static menu. This opens up the possibility of teleportation into a spatial environment dedicated to contextual resources that may function as a space within a space (gallery of artworks) that in effect adds a further layer and extends existing virtual art rooms. In this envisaged resource, dedicated space texts (as suggested by K.K.) could be animated, i.e., the text could be unfolding as if being typed in real-time. In contrast, the aesthetic aspect of both the letters and the overall appearance of the text should be given prime importance. Likewise, other resources, e.g., visuals, would ideally acquire some aesthetic appeal not only in terms of their actual contents but also in the way they appear to the viewer. Participating art students see the viewers' aesthetic experience as something that is not limited to the actual extents of their artworks but as encompassing the space in which these appear. Moreover, the same applies to contextual resources: Their visual appearance and rendering as well as the virtual environments that host them should be visually appealing.

6. Note that there is also a short version of UEQ available.

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In this three-fold interactivity approach, artworks, additional resources/material, and (respective) spaces of their presentation all acquire an aesthetic aspect and function that, in turn, conditions the visitors' experience. This extensive reference to an instance of participants' input in the evaluation highlights the specificity of assessing an extended reality (XR) experience based on interactivity within contemporary art exhibitions. A key aspect of contemporary arts is that, as described by the highly influential theorist Rosalind Krauss (1999), artists operate in the zeitgeist of the post-medium condition; that is to say, the pervasive hybridization of diverse media (e.g., photography, installation, video, drawing). This affects the virtual exhibition spaces as young artists see digitised (uploaded) or even more, born-digital artworks as form of practice that transcend traditional stratifications between media. These digital/digitized artworks are not seen as something that is simply presented in a virtual spatial context, framed by additional (interactively accessible) multimodal material. Art students, conversely, perceive all these elements and factors as constitutive of a holistic XR experience that is coextensive with the artwork -as a digital hybrid form that unifies artwork and contextual resources. This brings to mind the derridean (Derrida, 1987) notion of the "Parergon" i.e., something that surrounds the artwork e.g., a physical frame that nevertheless becomes also to an extent part of it, and therefore has an ambiguous role, both a framing device and a coextensive aspect of it.

In the era of the so-called crisis of representation, especially regarding the visual arts, the shift is towards presenting the unforeseen, and, in this respect, tertiary art education is a very distinctive field: The educational culture of measurable learning objectives gives way to a precedence of scaffolding art students creativity in ways that may empower them to generate new artistic ideas and frame them with contextual resources through imaginative, or groundbreaking uses of the new digital modalities available to them. In this approach emergence and negotiation of new possibilities takes center stage (Addison, 2014).

However, this article does not wish to glorify XR technologies and hybrid approaches as panacea, as indeed contradictions and issues arise through investment in new technologies that may mediate but can also diffuse rather than amplify direct contact with the artwork. An academic and widely acknowledged practicing artist at the AUTH School of Visual and Applied Arts has shown reservations about using XR experiences to showcase one's work or in fact her own. This is not to be seen as a technophobic mentality but as a stance, which relates to a skepticism towards what can be seen as an overinvestment in mediating artworks, especially through technological means, thereby deducting the encounter with the physical artwork from its direct, bodily, sensuous and even emotional aspect.

The question that arises is in what ways XR art exhibitions, instead of functioning as mere mediating devices under the economy of representation, could conversely embody in their digital form the presentation of a new rhizome of affects, thoughts, sensations and interactions. This is an aporia that points towards futurities in which the new technologies which inevitably become part of the ways we construct and communicate meaning can

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empower learning through and about the arts in ways that the equilibrium of gains and losses[7] is positive rather than negative.

Another example of empowering young adults through familiarizing them with contemporary art by way of a month-long series of theoretical as well as hands-on seminars that culminate in a participatory artwork that takes the form of an temporary installation in public space as an intervention under the notion of Creative place making is presented at this point . This research project, named Come2Art (https://cultureactioneurope.org/projects/come2art/) prioritised the empowerment of young student who did not have an arts background but did have manifestly a strong interest in the arts. The participants, with the help of experts, built a capacity to both engage with and produce artworks thereby enriching their Cultural Capital (a term introduced by learning about Bourdieu as mentioned) . I co-developed the theoretical framework and taught modules of this project, supporting as well, trainers and trainees throughout the process. Building social and community resilience was key in this project's aims, and while the inclusion of digital technologies for the most part was limited to the use of MOOCS and online resources, it nevertheless was underpinned by a curriculum developed especially in the project as well as diverse uses of digital media used in the artworks produced, ranging from digital photography-based installations to video pieces projected in public space.



Image 10. Detail from one of installations created through Come2Art in Thessaloniki. Screenshot from one of the partner's (namely ActionAid, Greece) site: https://actionaid.gr/ta-nea-mas/come2art-dimioyrgontas-anthektikes-koinotites-me-ohima-tin-tehni

7. See a text by Gunther Kress (2005) a key figure in the field of Multimodality in which he explains that every different choice of modality entails gains and losses: Gains and losses: New forms of texts, knowledge, and learning.

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In this context, and with these questions in mind, this article turns its attention to ways in which cultural education and the arts can be empowered into a very different audience, namely elderly users who wish to relate to heritage through extended reality. Another funded research project namely, 'Fostering virtual heritage experience for elderly' (FIREFLY) , in which I had also a role, albeit peripheral in this case, investigates the Importance of XR technologies in cultural heritage for engaging older adults. Its main focus is on the following two aspects:

- Developing interfaces and immersive experiences suited older populations, enhancing engagement and accessibility.
- Exploring the specific requirements of older adults using XR in cultural heritage contexts.

Moreover, its main goal is to address the gap in research and technology design tailored to the needs of the elderly, assess the impact of XR-based cultural resources with a view to improving pertinent tools and thereby empower them in their quest for meaningful engagement with arts and culture through emerging technologies such as virtual reality. This is an indicator that non typical education in the arts, is a continuous effort and a challenge, that societies that wish to be truly inclusive, need to address given the ever- increasing portion of the population that is comprised of senior citizens.



Image 11. Screenshot from the research project's site

In all three projects, albeit to differing degree, digital platforms ranging from VR installations, to simply MOOCS or XR experiences, have clearly the potential to empower, foster and sustain long-lasting engagement with arts and culture. This can be achieved on the condition that integral characteristics of the digital media are leveraged to the full. However virtual exhibitions are not treated as simulacra of a direct encounter with an

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artwork in the physical space, but as ways to expand the ability to interactively gain access to a constellation of pertinent contextual resources in an exhilarating and meaningful ways. This approach can both attract viewers, and offers another tool for artists to present, frame and eventually reflect on their artistic practice and research.

A common denominator of art sketchbooks, the CREAMS project (which is influenced by them), as well as practice-led forays in the context of Come2Art, is the confluence of multimodality and arts-led approaches in learning through art education. Digital media offer a new pathway for engagement in all the above instances as well as in community empowerment as manifested in the projects Come2Art, and to degree, in FIREFLY. These projects showcase how learning, culture and social resilience are aspects that are inextricably related as the notion of cultural capital illustrates.

Dichotomies between image and text, art and science as well as emotion and cognition are kept off balance in meaningful uses of new media in a quest to leverage digital technologies for Community engagement through formal and non-formal educational settings and concomitant learning experiences.

Overview of insights gained and concluding remarks

This article presents a spectrum of art-led approaches and teaching methods inspired by them, offering a rather kaleidoscopic overview of my personal research and practice trajectory. The aim is not to showcase my work in a self-referential way, but conversely to offer instances of practice that may offer inspiration or serve as a toolkit for ideas for the wider art education community. Therefore, in this section, summarises the insights gained, providing an overview of the findings with emphasis on what elements can be useful takeaways for fellow practitioners in the field. Firstly, the employment of art sketchbooks as a methodological platform at the art teacher training programme, has managed to achieve two key things: art students felt that the acquisition of knowledge in methods that can be employed in art education can also help them reflect on (and advance) their own artistic investigations and development. As they were encouraged to situate their practice, and elaborate on their priorities, influences, aspirations/research objectives through a highly multimodal milieu, they felt according to their own words, a much better sense of orientation amongst possibilities, and were empowered in their quest to give shape to their artistic investigations through a reflexive use of the methods provided. Art students involved are typically in their fourth year of study, just before the demanding phase of structuring and consequently presenting their final degree show (fifth year). While investing time and effort in studying pedagogical matters in the field of art education initially could be seen as a divergent task, that can be even antagonistic to their main effort that is focused on their artistic work, methods of acquiring methodological knowledge in art education, while simultaneously employing and advancing elements of their own arts-led research, resulted in a synergetic relation between acquiring strengths as art teachers and as artists. This enables a more functional and positive relationship between the artist and the art teacher identity as these facets demonstrably, do not have to

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be antagonistic. In their own words, art students very often express how their experiences during art teacher training empowered them as artists as well, and a tangible result is the increased effort they put into investigating in more depth the field of art education, many undertaking postgraduate studies in Greece or abroad, aspiring to become researchers.

The research projects outlined had also a positive impact as they involved heavily trainee art teachers/art students (CREAMS) or more peripherally (Come2Art) offering nevertheless a point of reference for socially engaged practices in informal, adult art education. CREAMS opened new digital dimensions in the creation of virtual presentations of the art students' work that enabled them to tap into the potential of XR to generate engagement, sense of presence in the virtual environment, and most importantly enhance meaning making through interactive means (Dafiotis et al., 2025; Koukopoulos et al., 2022; Sylaiou et al., 2024). Students who used these digital tools despite early usability problems managed to employ XR applications fostering curatorial, contextualisation, and communication skills while familiarising themselves with technologies that can help them to interact with their supporting tutors (using the platform as a learning aid), show their work to a wider public (communicate their work efficiently), and last but not least, use such means a teaching tool for their own students as future art teachers. The results have been very encouraging in terms of their ability to support their creativity, reflexivity and overall artistic development, as the use of these tools were evaluated constantly throughout the process, by art students (Dafiotis et al., 2025). As was the case with art sketchbooks (that heavily inspired CREAMS), multimodality was key: the use of multimodal communication expanded into the digital and virtual modalities offering means to situate one's artistic research and practice beyond logocentric or traditional ways of structuring the presentation of a body of artistic work through an exhibition. This ability projected into contexts of typical education (e.g. secondary schools), in an analogous way, has the potential to greatly foster the respective creative journeys of the students of the trainee art teachers, who went through the experience of employing such methods. This is the subject of future research in which uses of such tools by trainee art students can be introduced in public schools within the context of already established cooperation frameworks and protocols.

Come2Art, involved several young members of the public, in the framework of informal adult art education resulting in the creation of strong social bonds, amongst the group of participants, who employed the newly gained language of contemporary art with emphasis on creative place-making to convey their outlook within the fabric of the urban environment. More specifically, participants acquired theoretical as well as practical skills, that enabled them to create site-specific installations elaborating on gender-related issues regarding notions of safety, inclusion as well as self-image and identity. Through a developing investigation of possible means and artistic media, the elaboration of conceptual, social, gender-related issues developed in parallel in a way in which arts formed the base for highly personal investigation. At the same time their trainers some of them postgraduate students were themselves trained through a specifically created curriculum. Therefore the project had a two-fold positive social impact in providing means for social resilience: it provide a group of young participants (mostly

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undergraduates in non-arts related schools) with advanced skills increasing, so to speak, their cultural capital (Bourdieu,1985), while at the same time providing valuable teaching experience and pertinent accreditation to young trainers on the basis of an essentially arts-led philosophy of learning about and through the arts.

Lastly, FIREFLY as a research project successfully investigated ways to enhance the sense of inclusion for the elderly, as they were provided with the opportunity to enjoy virtual experiences related to cultural heritage (Sylaiou et al., 2025). Albeit not an arts-led project per se, FIRLEFLY underscores the ability of digital, multimodal means that include visual representations and experiences of exceptional high quality and sophistication. In FIREFLY, the digital reconstruction of cultural heritage sites was based on meticulously acquiring geospatial data (Stylianidis et al., 2025) on the basis of which an accurate and quite crucially, visually appealing and affective reconstruction of heritage buildings in an immersive virtual word. The instance on detail, as well as on aesthetics generated a virtual experience of the past through the means of the future synergized scientific accuracy with affect. The participants, according to findings through interviews as well as via monitoring brain activity and other physiological indicators, were demonstrably engaged, gaining from the experience on cognitive as well as emotional levels, while at the same time feeling more socially included. It has to be stated that the creative element invested in digital representations of the past resulted in visual renderings that could be deemed bordering to artistic production.

This latter instance of research shows the importance of supporting learning in the wider field of culture and the arts, with emphasis on methods that foster inclusion but at the same time put in synergy different media, technological means. It shows along with the other research initiatives the importance of bridging diverse domains ranging from artistic practice to educational sciences, or the wider cultural field in a comprehensive manner that widens the scope of arts-led educational research. Directions for future research include a further investigation of the impact of arts-led research through methods that relate to A/r/tography, with the use of XR in a two-fold effort to enhance art students' creativity while at the same time providing them with tools to inspire respective creative investigations to their students. This is a quest based on the constant need to ensure that the artist persona and the art teacher identity are put in synergy rather that antagonistic, and this quest can only be addressed with the creation of methodological toolkits that can help achieving the triangulation of the artist/researcher/teacher identities that underpins much of the contemporary arts-based educational research. XR and other, emerging technologies cannot be ignored without the peril of missing the opportunity to enrich and expand methods that in turn can support inclusive, creative trajectories shaping the landscape of art education in the future.

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