The Manifesto on Artistic Research of The Hamburg University of Music and Theatre

05.03.2021

Primary Author: Dr. Samuel Penderbayne
Co-Author and Project Initiator: Prof. Dr. Georg Hajdu

1. Artistic research must contain artistic practice

Of all the points in our manifesto, this may the least controversial, since it receives almost universal agreement within our particularly manifold scene. In short: the production of art must be central to the methodology of artistic research projects, so that not only the results but the very epistemological nature of such results would not be possible without this methodological element.

2. Artistic research is auto-analysis

Every artists seeks to improve throughout their studies and career. If they are producing original work, then some level of self-analysis and self-improvement must go on, since work based exclusively on external perspectives becomes derivative. Artistic research seeks to make this process of self-analysis and -improvement more visible and accessible to others for mutual benefit. It is about discovering one's hidden agendas - attempting to shine a light on the darkest corners of our creative minds - making intuitive artistic decisions more cognitive and giving them a form which can be communicated to others.

3. Artistic research must include 'toolmaking'

We believe in the inevitable impact of the 'tool' - a term which we define broadly, so as to encompass intellectual techniques alongside physical or digital instruments. This belief is based on the inseparable relationship between the 'how' and the 'what', even the 'why'. It includes not only the creation of 'tools' for creating art but also the discovery of those that one wasn't aware of, even whilst using them. Such 'tools' can be used by the artistic researchers themselves to create more effective art with more efficiency, as well as by third parties, that may want to adapt and innovate with them in their own work. We label this ontology research 'for' art.

4. Results must be kept in open enduring media

For us, the ethical nature of research is that it be open and accessible to all, regardless of geography or chronology. This means that the gained knowledge and results of artistic research should be infinitely available to those from a different time and place. Such documentations are naturally not limited to text, but could include multimedial and interdisciplinary documents. For this reason, we use the term 'code' to describe the process of encoding knowledge onto open enduring media, which can be 'decoded' and 'recoded' by others in a process of reference, citation and falsification.

5. Validation occurs via intersubjective resonance

In order to measure a process of validity within a peer-network of artistic researchers, we draw a psychological analogy to the phenomenon of acoustic resonance and place this within peers via intersubjectivity (which we define as the intellectual agreement and/or artistic adoption of the idea or 'tool'). In other words, the extent to which an idea of one artistic researcher 'resonates' with another can be measured twofold:

1. on one hand quantitively via the breadth of reception; which is to say, how many receivers the idea or 'tool' has reached,
2. and on the other hand qualitatively via the depth of reception; which is to say, how deeply the receiver was impacted by its reception.

This applies not only the footnoting of text - which demonstrates intellectual resonance - but also to the evidential adoption and adaptation of artistic practice, which we see as artistic resonance - or indeed artistic citation - where it can be convincingly demonstrated.

6. Artistic research needs a workshop

On a purely practical level, the production, storage and dissemination of artistic knowledge in open enduring media requires institutional support. On a softer level, processes of experimentation that lead to results with strong resonance benefit from workshop-style environments of peers that give feedback, share ideas and help in manifold ways. As such, we draw on the concept of the 'renaissance workshop', which supported not only the production of art but also of the materials of artistic production - be it the metals, paints or concepts and craftsmanship techniques - as well as a process of apprenticeship and pedagogy. We are of the opinion that artistic research flourishes in such an holistic environment.

7. Artistic research is a third space

Artistic research is neither a threat to, substitute for nor replacement of the humanities or artistic practice. As such, programs for artistic research (and their funding) should not be misused for substitute technical or cultural development nor their funding. Instead, the discipline is a 'third space'[1] drawing on and hybridising elements of these disciplines whilst also complementing them: one which is opened up via an epistemological paradigm shift in academic and artistic thought.

---

[1] See: Bhabha, H.K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge: London.