Sustainability, Research in the Arts and Serendipity: a longstanding confluence

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This is the English translation of the Artistic Research part (the first one) of my text.

We can justifiably speak of artistic research (research in the arts) when that artistic practice is not only the result of the research, but also its methodological vehicle, when the research unfolds in and through the acts of creating and performing. This is a distinguishing feature of this research type within the whole of academic research [...]. The discourses about art, social context and the materiality of the medium are in fact partially constitutive of artistic research, nevertheless, derives from the paramount place that artistic practice occupies as the subject, method, context and outcome of the research.

Henk Borgdorff, The Production of Knowledge in Artistic Research

In those days we had never heard of passing up a chance to kill a wolf. In a second we were pumping lead into the pack, but with more excitement than accuracy: how to aim a steep downhill shot is always confusing. When our rifles were empty, the old wolf was down, and a pup was dragging a leg into impassable slide-rocks. We reached the old wolf in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes. I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes – something known only to her and to the mountain. I was young then, and full of trigger-itch; I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But after seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain agreed with such a view.

Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanach
Les Grecs n'ont pas commencé par apprendre des phénomènes naturels ce qu'est la \( \varphi\iota\omicron\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\varsigma \), mais inversement: c'est sur la base d'une expérience fondamentale poétique et pensante (dichtend-denkend) de l'être, que s'est ouvert à eux ce qu'ils ont dû nommer \( \varphi\iota\omicron\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\varsigma \).

HEIDEGGER, La question fondamentale de la métaphysique

What, then, does \( \pi\omicron\omicron\iota\omicron\varsigma \), poetry mean? What does it mean that man has on earth a poetic, that is a pro-ductive, status? [...] Every time that something is pro-duced, that is, brought from concealment and nonbeing into the light of presence, there is \( \pi\omicron\omicron\iota\omicron\varsigma \) as well. To the extent that in it everything brings itself spontaneously into presence, even nature, \( \Phi\omicron\omicron\varsigma \), has the character of \( \pi\omicron\omicron\iota\omicron\varsigma \).

GIORGIO AGAMBEN, The Man without Content
Sequence of themes:

- (I) On Research in the arts;
- (II) What we can expect from sustainability
- (III) Previous experience and serendipity

I. On Research in the Arts

Preliminary remarks

Our main concerns regarding the problem of research in the arts are the following: the first has to do with the receptiveness by universities of the artistic element in research as a possibility just as legitimate as all the others that currently comprise the academy. After forty years of all sort of disputes, justifications and reciprocated acknowledgements, the academic relevance of research in the arts (namely theoretical-practical dissertations) is no longer questioned, but now we are interested in observing and acting upon the greater or lesser dignity of the experience of cohabitation with other fields, whether in the sciences and techno-sciences or in the social sciences in general: "The creative arts are potentially at a disadvantage in this context since their main modes of communication are non-traditional, leading to difficulties in the effective communication of their value and outcomes using traditional means. [...] Furthermore, the arts may be seen as essentially transgressive, and therefore their potential contribution risks being overlooked or marginalized in a normalized pan-disciplinary culture."\(^1\)

The second concern is also linked with the problem of dignity, and it is focused on the artists themselves: how do they find their place within the academic world as they claim for themselves the status of researcher and dissertation proponents at the graduate, doctoral or post-doctoral levels.

On the positive side, all the cases of search for original artistic paths for art and the academy by means of dissertations that consist in the installation of art works which can be the object of discussion and argumentation, as well as the formulation of problems that can equally be an object of discussion and argumentation, and thus dissertations which are accompanied by an elaborate conceptual production based on the artistic process and materialization, including the ability to establish parallelisms with other artists, researchers in and on the arts. Thus, the scope of our concerns touches upon some common points with Henk Borgdorff's claim when he refers to research in the arts in a broad and retrospective sense, even if we need to point out the fact that in the past this kind of research has lacked the academic practice, massive inflow and technicity of evaluation currently in place: "Artistic research has both historical and systematic affinities to a range of philosophical and scientific research traditions. A historiography of artistic research (which remains to be undertaken) might show that, from the Renaissance to the Bauhaus, there has always been research conducted in and through artistic practices. The fact that such research in retrospect often does not qualify as 'academic research' may say less about the research itself than about what we currently understand by 'academic' [...]. The emergence

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of artistic research is consistent with this movement to no longer subordinate the faculties of the human mind to one another, either theoretically or institutionally.”

On the negative side, those cases (which are plenty and widespread, whether in Portugal, New Zealand, the UK, Denmark, and many other places) where someone naively intends to propose a dissertation on research in the arts based upon a model that does not abide by academic argumentation, namely those conceived with the intent to produce an exhibition rather than a discussion with a specialized jury in the experimental fields or in the critical fortune on the themes in question.

Three arguments for the academic sustainability of artistic research

We see it happening year after year, emerging with the semblance of impetuosity, almost as a cyclical response to the question: what is the fundamental reason driving us once again to delve on the theme of research in the arts? What is it about this question that gives us so much to reflect and act upon? Is there actually “so much”, or is it just a cover for an exercise in rhetoric, derived from an incessant questioning with traces of heideggerianism? From our point of view, there are three arguments that guide the need to keep continually questioning the meaning of research in the arts.

The first argument has an intrinsic nature, and is connected to the continued characterization of artistic research and its variations, as well as the respective differentiation from other forms of research found in the field of art such as research about art and research through art. As such, the artistic ideas underlying research in the arts stem from a practical root, in which the reflux of practice acts as a specific and distinctive matrix. As Henk Borgdorff has also stated “Characteristic of artistic research is that art practice (the works of art, the artistic actions, the creative processes) is not just the motivating factor and the subject matter of research, but that this artistic practice — the practice of creating and performing in the atelier or studio — is central to the research process itself. Methodologically speaking, the creative process forms the pathway (or part of it) through which new insights, understandings and products come into being.”

This first argument has a more extensive justification that the other two due to the fact that it provides the basis for research in the arts, or better still, for artistic research based on itself. We started out by mentioning Darren Newbury’s positioning regarding the differences between a kind of research in the arts with academic ambitions and one that does not make such pretenses:

Academic research, of which the PhD is a particular subset, brings with it a particular set of values, at the heart of which are commitments to methodological transparency and communicability. Academic researchers are required not just to present their findings, but to account for the research journey; in some cases as a well-documented set of experiments or exercises in data collection, in others as a series of intellectual engagements with ideas, theories and practices. It is at this point, rather than in the act of research itself, that the culture of arts and design practice often has difficulty accommodating to the culture of the academy. The commitment to opening up and accounting for the re-

3 Ibidem, loc. 1944 de 14650
search process and, related to it, the collective project of building the knowledge base and scholarly discourse of the subject, whilst an explicit commitment for the academy, is not of equal importance for professional practice."

In our opinion, research in the arts can also serve the production of objects or artistic situations for public display without any academic purposes: (i) it can be a research developed within the framework of the academy for debate amongst peers, whose merit is acknowledged but does not seek validation or an academic degree; (2) a research in the arts may be conducted with the aim to obtain a degree or to apply for a teaching position in the academy; (3) An artistic research may yet lead to academic recognition, or similar, other than a PhD, as mentioned by the editors of The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts: "In response to the demands of the arts community for something distinct from the PhD that would facilitate modalities more common in the arts, one can find various non-PhD Doctorates such as DArt, DMus, etc. A Doctor of Music degree will usually require a portfolio of works, with or without accompanying analyses, reflections or comments, but generally does not imply or require a research supervision. [...] One example of a non-PhD doctoral-level course is the Norwegian Research Fellowships in the Arts. This is a unique three-year program, ending with the exam title 'First Amanuensis' which is claimed to be equivalent to the PhD and qualifies the holder for an academic post as Senior Lecturer / Associate Professor." But let us look at some structural differences that distinguish research for exhibition purposes ("professional practice", according to Darren Newbury) from research in the arts for academic purposes with a view to obtaining an academic degree, which in turn can also include the installation of art works for a specialized audience and discussion.

In conceiving a set of art works, there is always some degree of research involved. As far as artistic creation is concerned, there will always be an exhaustive and passionate research into a given theme, objects and context, even if you choose to term this task "investigation", both expressions – research and investigation – implying a specific stage in the working process given over to studying other works of art already in existence, relevant references, "elective affinities", available technological possibilities, potential methods of experimentation, or in sum, the relevance of a life taking form. In fact, whenever artistic originality is sought, the need for research, and even research into extra-artistic domains, becomes immediately paramount.

However, we must admit that in a typical conversation with an artist in a café or at an art fair about what he/she is working on at the moment, the answer will hardly be that they are conducting an artistic research. It wouldn't be a natural answer, not to say a pretentious one. At most, one might expect something like: "I'm researching a particular problem involved with the creation of a new working process", or "I'm researching material on a new theme for a solo show I'm having in two years' time", or something to that effect, in which the element of artistic creation or experimentation takes priority over a specific mode of reflection that nurtures on the successive creative moments – both favorable and unfavorable. Except in very rare cases, a person who decides to become wholeheartedly devoted to the artistic experience (artistic production without inebriation, unreason,

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5 Michael Biggs e Henrik Karlsson, "Evaluating Quality in Artistic Research", op. cit., loc. 11810 de 14650

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or excess – even if it is only an excess of method – is not an authentic artistic experience), or in other words, anyone who wishes to produce work and display it before the gaze of the generalized Other, does not become at the same time so enthusiastically engrossed in a reflection that must be carried out within a categorial environment, guided by working criteria that collide with those of plastic immersion, given that the phased procedures of research and the adequate rhythms for its recording usurp creative freedom, stifle the author's time and readiness to be radical in his/her installation of an artistic sense for the works being created. Even if one were to suspend the time of creative action to do research on artists doing works belonging to the same family of objects or poietic situations; even if a derivational is sought to establish a comparison between data and ideas in literary, laboratorial, scientific, journalistic or any other environment; even if you experiment, compare methodically and assess the most adequate material and technological solutions for the execution of a work; and even if the artistic production is alternated with the consultation of specialists in areas linked with your projects, what ultimately stands out and conditions all these ancillary activities is the finality which guided all the methodological operations underlying the creation of the works x, y and z, and their subsequent public installation for the general aesthetic fruition of the worldview they convey. This is the gift that is at stake and this is the form of authenticity which drives the author, and not the investigative kind for academic ends.

Since it is a gift in terms of its own creation and exhibition, or in other words, of a complex artistic creation deriving from a strong inner appeal to become a symbolic and collective link, such an artistic research is based on three forms of dialogue. (1) A Dialogue with the artistic tradition that implies an immersion into practices and ideas of authors who have produced something similar, within the same "kinship", insofar as we can perceive that an artist strives to be original based on a notion of what has already been produced in the same area – motivations, processes, exhibition performance, technological use or experimentation; (2) an interior dialogue comprised of periods of pleasure and displeasure – a dialogue motivated by a kind of personal sting which lets the author know whether there is relevance to the repetition and persistence in a given system or way of doing that has already been tested, or whether, after productive experimentations, it is really necessary to give concrete form to an artistic idea which is presumed to be innovative in its meaning and in its plastic and spatial involvements; (3) a dialogue with the world of art and with the imagined audiences of the projected exhibition, through the emotional and mental mechanisms that work on the premise of an "as if" and which are so familiar to artists (who dominate and are dominated by them), gauging in anticipation the actuality of what they intend to materialize before those audiences, amongst other characteristics of the artistic proposal being offered at a given moment.

All these three dialogues imply — whether more deliberately or randomly, more explicitly or implicitly, but always acting within a long, tense and demanding time-frame (whenever it is an authentic artistic process leading to the production of several works) — artistic research, albeit not intended to disclose the goal of the works (the famous question of letting "the works speak for themselves", and indeed, in this particular case they actually do), without the need to prepare an argument about the work produced and without striving to obtain any kind of academic degree through a discussion with a specialized jury.
In contrast, in the case of academically oriented research in the arts, that is, in an investigation for a practical-theoretical thesis, in which the theoretical element may be acquire greater or lesser density, but is always subordinated to the results emanating from the artistic production being defended, the dialogues multiply. Thus, we will continue to have the three kinds of dialogue mentioned above, but now added to another three which give rise to very different kinds of concerns: (4) A dialogue with the critical fortune, that is, with the tradition of ideas and authors who have already reflected upon similar themes, or which are at the root of the theme we have chosen to investigate; (5) an interior ethical dialogue connected with the chosen theme and its essential motivations, also linked with the methods used to put the research plan in place over a period of time, including all the modifications and inflexions resulting from discussions with supervisors; one that is marked by the inclusion of objections by the latter as well as by other sources which may reveal themselves antagonistic yet necessary to the practical-theoretical thesis being argued; (6) an anticipated dialogue with the jury, intended to extend, by simulation, the horizon of foreseeable objections, anticipating and building different arguments for specific members of the appointed jury, and therefore dialogues construed on a principle of verisimilitude with a view to the contrast between the convictions of the candidate regarding the theoretical production and the profile of the various jury members (without excluding personal idiosyncrasies, since in all jury panels we will find them, more or less veiled).

The distinctions we are making fall entirely within the sphere of research in the arts, without contemplating as yet other forms of research that emerge from the specific nuclei comprised by research about the arts and research through the arts. In fact, the specific nucleus of research in the arts already contains different modalities that may fluctuate between being predominantly theoretical-practical or practical-theoretical (two apparently saturated, but not negligible poles), and even within the more practically driven, there are many lines of investigation to consider.

There were times when many debates around research in the arts and the science they produced became suspended on the question of the "peculiarities" of artistic reflection and the "specificity" of artists' knowledge, having now become clear to us that these deadlocks were largely due to the overlapping of the three basic methods of inquiry in the world of art pointed out by Christopher Frayling: research in the arts, research through the arts and research about the arts. Today, finally, we find that it is of little use to appeal to the particularities underlying research in the arts if these do not emerge together with a strong explanation based on arguments, making it more complex and resistant to the classification of simply artistic, or merely scientific, as something oscillating between the poles of description and ineffability. Thus, if the question is simply to talk about the peculiarities of a given investigative activity that aspires to be part of the Human sciences, in his characterization of metaphysics Kant himself already referred to the problem of its "distinguishing features" and of the different "objects", "sources of cognition", as well as "type of cognition" for their respective justifications.

If one wishes to present a body of cognition as science, a then one must first be able to determine precisely the differentia it has in common with no other science, and which is therefore its distinguishing feature; otherwise the boundaries of all the sciences run
together, and none of them can be dealt with thoroughly according to its own nature. Whether this distinguishing feature consists in a difference of the object or the source of cognition, or even of the type of cognition, or some if not all of these things together, the idea of the possible science and its territory depends first of all upon it. ⁶

Therefore, to consider the three above-mentioned distinguishing features (object, source and type of cognition) as essential features in the characterization of a given type of research, is so indispensable to the human sciences, namely to philosophy, as to other forms of scientific production, in the case of research in the arts needing an additional substantial distinction so that this sphere of experience and cognition – considering the totality of its possibilities – may distinguish itself from all the rest, to wit: the distinguishing feature that comes from being an eminently practical-theoretical research that is ambivalent regarding its object, its sources and its type of knowledge, albeit not being equivocal regarding the importance of its practice and presentation-description within its own fora of debate.

Thus, it’s absurd to annex this typology of research to the group of the sciences of art, or to ever designate it as a science, since this group already exists and has own method of functioning as research about art. We will name it, as several specialists in the field have done, with a designation that reflects its ambivalence: Artistic research, or as PaR (Practice as research), or ABR (Art-Based research), allowing for the aspiration to the production of specific and ambivalent knowledge through the exploration of all the intended subtleties, maintaining that beyond the scientific and cognitive attributes, this kind of research possesses unique artistic and aesthetic potential which ultimately, as an artistic and performative endeavor that establishes an aesthetic-speculative game, can exhaust, or momentarily question the appreciation of cognitive attributes themselves, thus giving a very special contribution to the densification of meanings in an artistic situation ("meaningful situation") as Darren Newbury claims.

"My argument is not dissimilar to that offered by Mark Johnson who, following John Dewey, puts forward a definition of research as: ‘ongoing inquiry aimed at the transformation of a problematic situation into one that is more harmonious, fluid, expansive, and rich in meaning’. The ‘problematic situation’ here might be recognised as troubling evidence in search of ideas; the work of research is the struggle to bring ideas to bear on the situation and to derive meaning from it; the process should be conceived as proactive, it is one of making the situation meaningful, rather than simply discovering meaning that is latent in the situation." ⁷

We conclude the first argument for the academic sustainability of artistic research with a critical analysis of some hypotheses suggested by Darren Newbury regarding research in the arts and design, namely the problematic question of "ideas and evidence". Even though this author reveals himself a more sensitive and profound connoisseur of the specificity of artistic research, the central guideline of his discourse focuses on theo-


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tical-practical models rather than to existing practical-theoretical models. An example of this is the fact that on several occasions he emphasizes the need for "ideas and evidence". "It is important to recognize the interdependence between ideas and evidence. I am not sure I would name something as research in which I could not perceive both of these components"). In light of this, in the case of artistic research, it would be extremely useful if Darren Newbury would present differentiated views on "ideas and evidence" (he could even substitute the notion of "evidence" or demonstration for other less orthodox forms of clarification and description). We believe that ultimately, even acknowledging that certain aspects of artistic research are on occasion being justified with arguments from aesthetic philosophy, we could turn to the well-known distinction made by Kant between aesthetic ideas and transcendental ideas⁸, making the necessary adjustments to contemporary thinking.

Our goal would be to start by imbibing ourselves with the distinction made by Kant between these two types of ideas, which would be followed by proposing a more specific view on artistic ideas, extracted from the continuity from aesthetic ideas, but only overlapping with them in some of their features. Let us perform a short demonstration of our proposal: after introducing the rational ideas, both in the Critique of Pure Reason as in the Prolegomena for Any Future Metaphysics and in the Critique of Judgement, Kant will bring together some features which he finds are common to this typology of ideas and to aesthetic ideas, later establishing their proper distinction.

Ideas, in the broadest sense, are presentations referred to an object according to a certain principle (subjective or objective) but are such that they can still never become cognition of an object. There are two kinds of ideas. One of these is referred to an intuition, according to a merely subjective principle of the mutual harmony of the cognitive powers (imagination and understanding); and these ideas are called aesthetic. The other kind is referred to a concept, according to an objective principle, but these ideas still can never yield cognition of the object; they are called rational ideas.¹⁰

As representations referring to strong and multiple intuitions of the imagination arisen by an object for which there is no adequate intellectual concept, an occurrence that doesn't leave space for the determination and transformation of the object into knowledge of the same, aesthetic ideas are exacting images of the imagination which are placed above the limits defined by concepts to determine the objects we are have in mind. Therefore they expand our way of thinking, as in the claim reiterated by Kant that "they prompt much thought" and "animate the mind", being characterized by the presentation of multiple and indeterminate representations of the object or the prevailing aesthetic situation: "Spirit [Geist] in an aesthetic sense is the animating principle in the mind (...) Now I maintain that this principle is nothing but the ability to exhibit aesthetic ideas: and by an aesthetic idea I mean a presentation of the imagination which prompts much

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⁸ Idem, ibidem.
⁹ "Finally, in CJ, Kant makes a further distinction between the transcendental and aesthetic ideas. The former are 'referred to a concept according to an objective principle and yet incapable of ever furnishing a cognition of the object,' while the latter 'referred to an intuition, in accordance with a merely subjective principle of the harmony of the cognitive faculties (imagination and understanding). While the transcendental ideas stimulate the extension of the understanding (...) the aesthetic Ideas is to stimulate the harmony of understanding and imagination through vividness and unity in variety, and thus contribute to the augmentation of pleasure.'"

thought, but to which no determinate thought whatsoever, i.e., no [determinate] concept. can be adequate, so that no language can express it completely and allow us to grasp it. It is easy to see that an aesthetic idea is the counterpart (pendant) of a rational idea, which is, conversely, a concept to which no intuition (presentation of the imagination) can be adequate.\textsuperscript{11} (The bold highlights are ours).

In a post-transcendental sense, that is, outside the sphere of transcendental philosophy advocated by Kant, but intended to open up a possible contiguity between artistic research and this author’s reflection on aesthetic judgements, we believe that artistic ideas remain affiliated to a subjective principle. However, contrary to Kantian doctrine, they are ideas which, besides putting us in touch with the general principle of all possible knowledge, can also allude artistically to a knowledge of situations whose determination is complex but nevertheless may be identified as contributing to the enrichment of human experience; situations that allow description and discussion regarding their potential to provide our faculties with the opportunity to enter a “free and harmonious game”, or instead, a “serious occupation” and the incessant search for a “scheme” for our mind’s supra sensitive animation.

Artistic ideas are a derivation of aesthetic ideas, albeit extracted from our experience of the objects in the art world, which may or may not involve the actual execution of art works. Therefore, artistic ideas emerge as representations with an origin in human expression and the plasticity of materials and languages, whose main function is to guide the processes developed within the sphere of art. Given the circumstance that they are already the result of a subjective and symbolic reconfiguration of reality, these representations are situated on a very different plane from their referents (even though they are rooted and are derived from that same reality), and are never confined to a specific object or situation, but on the contrary, provide the object or particular situation with a broad set of transfigurations, now directed at a parallel artistic reality which adds to them dimensions that allow unforeseen judgements and perspectives on everyday life. The matura-
tion of artistic ideas, being tested and reflected upon for a considerable amount of time, enables a creative mediation between an author’s interiority and the effective production of works, revealing their exteriorizing strength on a broad horizon of exchange with multiple spectators.

For these reasons, research in the arts possesses a specific feature that distinguishes it from the production in certain fields of philosophy such as aesthetics, philosophy of art, sociology of art, anthropology of art, and other names virtually designating the same thing but more attractively presented within the contemporary academic world. “This means that art practice is paramount as the subject matter, the method, the context and the outcome of artistic research. That is what is meant by expressions like ‘practice-based’ or ‘studio-based’ research.”\textsuperscript{12}

The second argument for the academic sustainability of artistic research regards its recent arrival to the academy and the institutional “novelties” which it implied, that is, the disturbance it brought to the academic institution due to the distinctive features of this new form of research which is predominantly practical-theoretical. Due to this “orig-

\textsuperscript{11} Idem, § 49, p.182.

\textsuperscript{12} Henk Borgerhoff, op. cit., loc. 1950 de 14650
inality”, we are launched into an inexhaustible quarrel featuring arguments that may be more favorable or unfavorable to authors with a theoretical-practical, practical-theoretical or purely practical approach.

The “disturbance” we allude to has a long history of debates, misunderstandings, and experiences in mediation, namely between the so called “two cultures” identified more or less sixty years ago by C.P. Snow: “I have had, of course, intimate friends among both scientists and writers. It was through living among these groups and much more, I think, through moving regularly from one to the other and back again that I got occupied with the problem of what, long before I put it on paper, I christened to myself as the ‘two cultures’. For constantly I felt I was moving among two groups — comparable in intelligence, identical in race, not grossly different in social origin, earning about the same incomes, who had almost ceased to communicate at all, who in intellectual, moral and psychological climate had so little in common that instead of going from Burlington House or South Kensington to Chelsea, one might have crossed an ocean.”

This “disturbance” has also gained new arguments coming from very different perspectives, such as those presented in Jerome Kagan’s *The Three Cultures: Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and the Humanities in the 21st Century*, or James Elkins’ *Aesthetics and the Two Cultures: Why Art and Science Should be Allowed to Go Their Separate Ways*. “Several times I have started and abandoned a book project with the title *The Drunken Conversation of Science and Painting*. The title was meant to conjure a comedy of errors and misunderstandings, and the drunkenness was to imply that the two sides have some infatuation with one another, which compels them to keep talking without really connecting or making too much sense. The book never materialized, mainly because interest in art-science collaborations (or “art-sci,” or “sciart”) continues to grow exponentially, and most participants are enthusiastic about the expressive potential of unusual communications between the fields.”

Very briefly stated, by demanding reflection anchored and conditioned by effective artistic practice, artistic research exposes itself to two complementary, but very different situations: producing art to involve the other aesthetically in the presented objects; and to build arguments supported by artistic and aesthetic categories that favor the understanding and discussion of the artistic objects under appreciation. Thus, being obvious that we are dealing with two experiences – one practical and the other theoretical – that are hard to combine, insofar as it will always imply associating expression and poetic evocation with a justification for its respective eruption, and ultimately the ambivalence that comes from determining an artistic production, or in other words, all that is and tends to remain “without concept”, these two fields (producing art/understanding and discussing the categories at stake) will always demand the need for more explanation and “doctrinal” justification of what is meant by artistic research.

As a new field of research subjected to an ongoing stage of academic integration, it needs a careful, dense and updated justification of its foundations and its place within the academic sphere. The same exactly happened to other fields of knowledge that in the past reclaimed their investigative status and which we now consider *natural* and *irreplaceable* in the academic world. Based on their conventions and processes, which have their own

rhythms of transformation and assimilation of the “new”, these circles have resisted for some time, but have eventually dilated their perimeter for defining knowledge and the preservation of human experience.

The third argument for the academic sustainability of artistic research is connected with the need to give new forms to the above-mentioned artistic and aesthetic dimension of human experience, so the academic world is not dangerously driven into a kind of research that discourages criticism and the artistic, aesthetic, literary or philosophical reconfiguration of the world around us: “Mais on ne tarde pas à retomber dans le même ennui désertique si l'on ne réussit pas de l’intérieur, à partir des fondements mêmes, à transposer pour l’école le monde de l’esprit, c’est-à-dire à introduire dans la scolarité non pas une atmosphère scientifique, mais une atmosphère de pensée. [...] Mail il est nécessaire en outre d’effectuer une véritable révolution dans le corps enseignant, ce qui demande à son tour une transformation de l’Université, don’t le premier devoir serait de comprendre la tâche qui lui incombe, au lieu de se pavaner dans une multitude d’activités insignifiantes.”

The erosion of the Arts and Humanities has been recently addressed by several authors, namely by Martha Nussbaum in her works Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach (2011), Not for Profit. Why Democracy needs Humanities (2010), Cultivating Humanities (1997), and the excesses of science had already been a theme in the past for philosophers such as Husserl, in Krisis, or Heidegger, in his 1953 Munich Conference, Science and Meditation, or in his essay Introduction to Metaphysics:

“Si l’on désire appeler ‘Université’ l’organisation d’un enchaînement entre les sciences spécialisées selon les exigences de l’enseignement théorique et de la recherche, soit! Mais ce n’est qu’un nom, ce n’est plus une puissance de l’esprit originairement unifiante et qui nous engage. Ce que je disais ici en 1929, dans ma conférence inaugurale, vaut encore aujourd’hui pour l’Université allemande: ‘les domaines des sciences sont séparés par des vastes distances. Elles traitent chacune leur objet d’une manière foncièrement différente. Cette multiplicité de disciplines ainsi émiettées doit le peint de cohésion qui lui reste à l’organisation technique d’Universités et de Facultés; et le peu de signification qui lui reste aux objectifs pratiques des spécialités. En revanche, l’enracinement des sciences dans leur fondement essential est bel et bien mort. La science est aujourd’hui, dans toutes ses branches, une affaire technique et pratique d’acquisitions et de transmission de connaissances. Elle ne peut nullement, en tant que science, produire un réveil de l’esprit. Elle a elle-même besoin d’un tel réveil.’

We know that the current state of universities and the porosity of science to the surrounding world are not exactly the same as they were described by Heidegger. This applies to 1929, as the author himself observed, but also to 1935, the year in which he organized a course at Freiburg University to address themes serving as the basis for the work Introduction to Metaphysics. However, together with other contributions (some pointing in an entirely different direction, as those from the advocates of the Practical Turn), his warning

16 Ibidem, pp. 59-60.
regarding science’s lack of grounding on a more primordial ontological basis, also helped towards the reconfiguration of what is currently being done and discussed within the sphere of scientific thought and academic circles. In fact, the reiteration of the dangers in this lack of roots – which should be strengthened according to the spirit of each period –, as well as of the dangers of a research alienated from a strong sense of “human community”, which has prevented excesses with similar features to those we have witnessed in certain periods in the history of academic research. Similarly, they have contributed to stand up to systemic and acritical trends (or to interested instrumental simulation of critical thought) which should make us wonder what we “may expect” from certain “performances” of research planning, both at the national and international levels.

In this context, the cyclical return of artistic research is linked to the fact that belongs to the domain of the arts and humanities, always keeping in mind that artistic research is characterized as a form of reflection that requires constant and agile positions, whether to view itself in the production and effectiveness that comprise it, whether to differentiate itself from “competencies” belonging to the other margin of the academy, to wit, the scientific, techno-scientific, legal, economical-financial fields, amongst others.

Similarly to other positions witnessed in the Field of Humus studies, the “specific features” of artistic research we have already identified project the strength of questioning, reflection and radical criticism of the academy and research – and of the world as a collective whole – inviting us to a creative suspicion of the almost narcotic state under which certain specialists in logometrical rules define the general guidelines of research, obviously linked and subjected to predominantly hegemonic research policy bent on “flirting” with the “industrial belt”, the “business fabric”, the dynamism of “entrepreneurs”, in an academic game which takes as its common denominator the homo economicus that inhabits us all, fortunately more is some than in others. (Regarding the homo economicus, alienation, zombies, and general European policies, which we also believe to contribute towards conditioning research policies, see the article by Habermas, of which we transcribe a small excerpt as a footnote).17

For these reasons – the endogenous and pertaining to the continued perfection of knowledge, and those pertaining the organization of this knowledge within the academic world – it is always appropriate to develop some degree of anamnese with the disciplines involved in the task of research, rethinking the links between current thought and activity and the critical fortune reaching us through the efforts made since the 17th century on the “science of man”, but also the growing autonomy of the art and aesthetic spheres enacted by many artists, poets, aesthetes and philosophers. By dealing with the state of intersubjectivity, creativity and sustainability of contemporary man, we are enabling the critical continuance of “research” on those authors. Reverberating from David Hume’s words in the introduction to A Treatise of Human Nature, we must tirelessly return to it, for

17 "La discutible actuación del Gobierno griego no suaviza un ápice el escándalo de que los políticos de Bruselas y Berlín se niegan a tratar a sus colegas de Atenas como políticos. Aunque tienen la apariencia de políticos, solo se permiten hablar en su condición económica de acreedores. Esa transformación en zombis busca presentar la dilatada situación de insolvente de un Estado como un sucesor apolítico propio del derecho civil, un suceso que podría dar lugar al ejercicio de acciones ante un tribunal. Pues de este modo es tanto más fácil negar una corresponsabilidad política. [...]. Pero no se trata de una puntilladilla moral, sino del núcleo político: las élites políticas de Europa no pueden seguir ocultándose de sus electores, escamoteándolos incluso las alternativas ante las que no sitúa una unión monetaria políticamente incompleta. Son los ciudadanos, no los banqueros, quienes tienen que decir la última palabra sobre las cuestiones que afectan al destino europeo.” Habermas, “El gobierno de los banqueros. La crisis griega es otra prueba de que son los ciudadanos, y no los acreedores, quienes deben decidir sobre el futuro de la UE”, in El País, 28 Junio, 2015, https://elpais.com/internacional/2015/06/28/actualidad/143549365_052772.html
it is here that we find a core for the permanent observation of the revelations of the human being in its most diverse forms and in conformity to its multiple historical manifestations: "Tis evident, that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature; and that however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another. Even Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Natural Religion, are in some measure dependent on the science of Man; since they lie under the cognizance of men, and are judged of by their powers and faculties."  

To this concern regarding the "science of man", or in other words, the investigation of its nature and activities, David Hume further adds the "authority" of "experience" in the most diverse fields of thought and human action: "But if this impossibility of explaining ultimate principles should be esteemed a defect in the science of man, I will venture to affirm, that 'tis a defect common to it with all the sciences, and all the arts, in which we can employ ourselves, whether they be such as are cultivated in the schools of the philosophers, or practised in the shops of the meanest artizans. None of them can go beyond experience, or establish any principles which are not founded on that authority." Almost three centuries later, the potential extension of those sciences and arts, now in an environment which benefits widely from the phenomenon of The Practical Turn, we can add to them the distinguishing features of an artistic research based in an art practice.

Due to being a research derived from the "science of MAN" with marked peculiarities, artistic research always embodies a multiple and creative character of human becoming, it is always connected to the symbolic diversity of its actions, whether the radical and incandescent or the more mediated ones. As an academic research, there must always be one or more "niches" for the thematicization of Man in the fields of art and the humanities, even if just to allow its cyclical return as a creative and artistic subject:

"Only by forgetting this primitive world of metaphor can one live with any repose, security, and consistency: only by means of the petrification and coagulation of a mass of images which originally streamed from the primal faculty of human imagination like a fiery liquid, only in the invincible faith that this sun, this window, this table is a truth in itself, in short, only by forgetting that he himself is an artistically creative subject, does man live with any repose, security, and consistency. If but for an instant he could escape from the prison walls of this faith, his "self-consciousness" would be immediately destroyed."

Artistic research is developed precisely from that ruin-like space of excessive belief in the "juggling conscience", which constantly produces apollonian and uprooted science, outside an artistic and creative idea of nature. Ultimately, artistic research, in the good and inimitable Greek fashion, is made effective and surfaces to visibility as a production that bursts into the core of another type of production: nature's interior itself, and its double possibility of manifestation as extremely recondite or exceedingly involving.

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19 Ibidem, p.11

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To this concern regarding the "science of man", or in other words, the investigation of its nature and activities, David Hume further adds the "authority" of "experience" in the most diverse fields of thought and human action: "But if this impossibility of explaining ultimate principles should be esteemed a defect in the science of man, I will venture to affirm, that 'tis a defect common to it with all the sciences, and all the arts, in which we can employ ourselves, whether they be such as are cultivated in the schools of the philosophers, or practised in the shops of the meanest artizans. None of them can go beyond experience, or establish any principles which are not founded on that authority."9 Almost three centuries later, the potential extension of those sciences and arts, now in an environment which benefits widely from the phenomenon of The Practical Turn, we can add to them the distinguishing features of an artistic research based in an art practice.

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