AXES OF TENSION: NAVIGATING CRAFT, INSTITUTION AND INDUSTRY AS AN ART-RESEARCHER IN FILM AND NEW MEDIA

NADJA LIPSYC*
CAMILLA JALLER**
FREDERICK HOWARD***

* The Norwegian Film School, Centre for exclusive in film and interactive media arts (Norway)

** Aalborg University Copenhagen, Makropol (Denmark)

*** The Norwegian Film School, Storm Films (Norway)

Nadja Lipsyc

Experience creator and research fellow at the Norwegian Film School, Nadja Lipsyc has a background in larp, video games design, theatre, neuroscience and audio-visual production. Her current research revolves around roleplaying in Virtual Reality.

Camilla Jaller

Producer and Industrial PhD fellow at MAKROPOL (DK), Jaller is driven towards productions at the intersection of art and tech, creating intuitive, interactive, and immersive stories. She believes in combining different approaches across disciplines.

Frederick Howard

Acclaimed film producer, Storm Films' CEO, series creator, Howard is a research fellow at the Norwegian Film School. His research explores approaching artistic material as leaders, defining practices for arts management, communication, entertainment.

Corresponding Author:
Nadja Lipsyc
nadja.lipsyc@gmail.com
The Norwegian Film School
HINN - Lillehammer Postboks 400 2418 Elverum

Abstract

Artistic Research (AR) in collective, industrial arts can find itself to be an intense balancing act: film and new media are expensive forms that rely on commercial expectations and industrial integration, while artistic experimentation flourishes in independence and creative freedom.

Transposing the model of the independent artist to large-scale collective productions challenges our vision of art, affiliation and integrity.

AR researchers in film and new media can have radically different practices: from industrial creative producers to one-person camera documentarists, from VR designers to screenwriters and 3D artists. While our potential for creation and innovation is similar, our expectations and abilities are as diverse as the cost of our projects.

Our contribution spans questions of affiliation, authorship, production and speculation, with the aim to bring clarification on what can be expected for and of diverse AR researchers in film and new media, and to promote the concrete establishment of appropriate support and supervision.

Keywords: Production Affiliation Authorship Speculation Collaboration.

Introduction

> *(...) there is a sense that industry is related to new modes of manufacture, to mass production, consumption and communication and new networks of collaboration and exchange. Industry can operate as shorthand for – or at least is often perceived to be inextricably bound up with – commercialism, capitalism, or economics altogether. All three of these broad categories have had problematic relationships with art when it is understood as a creative process distinct from the profit motive.*[1]

Art versus industry? (2018)

Edited by Kate Nicholds, Rebecca Wade and Gabriel Williams

Multi-disciplinary industrial arts do not easily slide into the common framework of Artistic Research. More than a balancing act between funding bodies, commercial expectations and artistic agency, the axes of tension that stretch the film or new media AR researcher in countless directions are pushing us to take stances on what we want art, practice, research and integrity to be.

Drawing upon the experiences of industrial PhD candidates and art-researchers in film and new media, we will address the overlap between institutional, artistic and industrial worlds, what institutions can expect of an art-researcher and vice versa, to finally draw the axes of tension between independence, collaboration and production.

We believe that a finer understanding of these axes of tension will help institutions in formulating their roles, as well as supervisors understanding what type of support is required to keep their mentees on the rails of Artistic Research (AR) – with as little alienation as possible.

In this sense, by observing the vast assemblages of bodies and participants involved in new media projects, we must ultimately deploy new methodologies, new ways of thinking about materials, new ways of thinking through and with materials, even if thoughts and ideas are not yet realised or actualised.

More widely, we believe that the questions addressed are, to some extent, global questions regarding the power dynamics between academia, the art world and industry, which are crucial for every AR practitioner to address and reassess throughout their research.

Artistic Research and Industrial Research: Juggling between creative utopias and societies of control

In plain terms, it seems that the contract between the arts institution and the art-researcher is the following: the arts institution shields the art-researcher from the constraints of the commercial world that vastly prevent experimentation, so she can produce fresh, highly qualitative material and disruptive knowledge, knowledge that can ultimately be reinjected in education, and at the same time add momentum and acceleration to the growing field of practice.

However, in film and new media, the creative utopia can appear to be a house of cards, ready to collapse as soon as the question of production is raised.

---

1   Nichols, K., Wade, R. & Williams, G. (2018). *Arts versus industry?: New Perspectives on Visual and Industrial Cultures in Nineteenth Century Britain*. Manchester, Manchester University Press.

In June 2020, the most influential organizations dealing with Art-research published the Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research[2], which specifically mentions that transdisciplinary fields could require a combination with other research traditions, including R&D enterprises.

The declaration directly echoes the experience of many art-researchers in film and new media: our artforms are deeply enrooted in the industrial world, and our peers expect our projects to be fulfilled with standards of high international quality.

In film, and with greater reason in new media, high international quality is, more often than not, entwined with expensive; or at least, substantially more costly than what basic research budgets can cover. Furthermore, the career of many filmmakers and new media artists depends on frequent participation in high standard productions. In that regard, spending several years on an AR project that is not tied to a production could jeopardize their future opportunities.

Can we reconcile that primary vision of independence with the expectations of high-quality industrial arts? Are our institutions in measure of assisting us throughout this process?

In his 1987 conference at La Fémis, French philosopher Deleuze announces that *"the creative act is always an act of resistance, against power",* exhorting young filmmakers to adopt a critical stance in their practice. Deleuze's announcement can be interpreted in many ways, and, in this article, we will scratch the surface of the powers in the fields of art institutions, academia, as well as in the industrial worlds. We will refer to them as "doxas", as following Bourdieu's interpretation

of the Platonist concept[3]; as a dominant social belief that appears to be common sense.

Those doxas are deeply connected to the notion of *attractivity*, itself connected to *mimesis*: what we find to be attractive, or to be a "good idea", is what the dominant forces in our fields have praised before. AR in film and new media thus require us to juggle with the doxas of the arts world, the academic world and, more remarkably so, the industrial world.

Industrial doxa in Artistic Research

The tension between the academic doxa and the artistic doxa has been extensively discussed in AR literature, notably by Borgdorff in *The conflict of the faculties* (2013). The author warns us against generalisation and simplification, but also against creating a destructive AR doxa by trying to oppose another, namely the "academisation":

> Artistic research should exemplify an alternative culture of knowledge. The problem with this type of criticism is that it fabricates its own object of criticism. It begins by constructing a caricature of artistic research in academia – it is disciplining, homogenising, restrictive, conformist, naive. After that, it is no longer difficult to field a whole line-up of post-Nietzschean witnesses to lambast those pernicious practices, which are inimical to art and which, under pressure from an equally maleficent education policy, are seen to have infected the art world under the label 'academisation' in order to subject art practices to their disciplining forces. Such argumentation often follows the same pattern: first you create an antithesis between (inadequate) academic research and the

---

2   The Vienna Declaration is co-written by AEC, CILECT / GEECT, Culture Action Europe, Cumulus, EAAE, ELIA, EPARM, EQ-ARTS, MusiQuE and SAR, and can be found on the websites of these organisations. https://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2020/06/Vienna-Declaration-on-AR_corrected-version_24-June-20-1.pdf

3   Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

liberating cognitive practices of artists, and then you go on to defend the latter from unwarranted institutionalisation and normalisation."[4]

Repudiating the academic world in AR is, to some extent, necessary to the establishment of an identity shift with traditional research. However, in industrial art forms such as film and new media, dismissing the academic doxa can consolidate a bridge towards the industrial doxa; a natural alliance forged in a kindred rejection of the theoretical, in favor of the practice.

Within us, as film and new media professionals, the artist and the industrial find common grounds to oppose scholarly elitism. A more insidious power play begins, which can allow the industrial doxa to take over the artistic stance and erase the intangible value of AR.

The 2020 Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research states that "AR is aligned in all aspects with the five main criteria that constitute Research & Development in the Frascati Manual.", a methodology for R&D, realised and published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.[5]

Not only does this consolidate the alliance between AR and the industrial world, it subjects it to its 5 constraints: the projects must be novel (no imitation, copy or reverse engineering), creative (presenting original and non-obvious concepts), uncertain (unpredictable cost and time), systematic (planned and budgeted), transferable and/or reproducible.

While the relevance of all these criteria to AR can be praised or debated, we want to look more closely at the "systematic" criterion as defined in the Frascati Manual, p. 47.

In this context "systematic" means that the R&D is conducted in a planned way, with records kept of both the process followed and the outcome. To verify this, the purpose of the R&D project and the sources of funding for the R&D performed should be identified. The availability of such records is consistent with an R&D project that is aimed at addressing specific needs and has its own human and financial resources. While the management and reporting structure just described is more likely to be found in large projects, it can also apply to small scale activities where it would be sufficient to have one or more employees or consultants (providing that a researcher was included) charged with producing a specific solution to a practical problem.

This logic of constant identification and reporting, similar in many ways to the requirements for media producers to tweak their funding plans and budgets and report to their funding bodies, leads us to question: must we all become producers, in order to lead our AR film and new media projects? What role does the institution hold in guaranteeing that our projects can check the "systematic" box?

If we are indeed to take on the role of producer of our AR project, are we entering what Deleuze, borrowing from Foucault in the same conference at La Fémis, was defining as "a society of control"; a system where, instead of following the rules of institutional confinement (schools, universities, prisons, hospitals, etc), we must report our fragmented activity to more pervasive power structures?

4   Borgdorff, H. (2013) *The Conflict of the faculties, On theory, practice and research in professional arts academies.* (p.5) Leiden, Leiden University Press

5   https://www.oecd.org/sti/inno/frascati-manual.htm

Monodisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Art Researchers navigating the feeling of Ownership

Of course, not all AR projects in film and new media do require that level of planning and budgeting: a screenwriter working on writing methodologies, an editor developing a technique around several film projects that she is hired for, a VR director or a creative director with an ambitious project will not be confronted by the same opportunities, nor the same walls.

While there are many ways to categorize the different types of art-researchers in film and new media, the main distinction that we look at in this article is the one between monodisciplinary and transdisciplinary functions. To understand the nuances in the challenges that those two - however porous - groups are facing, in particular in relation to maintaining an "artistic stance", which Deleuze describes as "an act of resistance", we need to touch on the delicate question of authorship and the feeling of ownership in collaborative arts.

How much of a wider project constitutes one's artistic research, when producing a series or when composing the score for a videogame? While the question can be legal or ethical, we're interested in taking a first look at its subjective and symbolic root: when do we feel ownership over our project or research, should we be working with a singular or a transversal craft?[6]

Stoic's ethics conceptualises the perception of what is relative to ourselves as *oikeôsis:* represented as circles of "attachment"[7], *oikeôsis* starts with the attachment of the self (mind

& body), then affiliates it to the family, the citizens, etc, until covering humankind and the full realm of the living.

We borrow that circular, centripetal growth, to explore the tension in the feeling of belonging and ownership in collaborative creation.

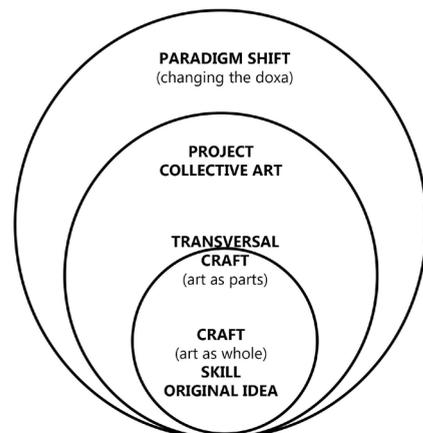**CIRCLES OF ATTACHMENT**
(oikeiôsis)

Fig. 1 Schematization of the feeling of ownership in collective arts practice

In this figure, each circle constitutes a new challenge of attachment and ownership. The first one, common to all artists, is the attachment to one's own craft. Similarly, the original idea can also be a strong hook towards the feeling of ownership, especially for creative producers. In the case the artist has a transdisciplinary function (director, creative producer, game designer, etc …), their feeling of ownership can span the two smaller circles without too much friction.

---

6   We use craft following on Richard Sennet that revisits Plato's ideal of Hephaestus. Sennet, R. (2008) *The Craftsman*. (p.23), New Haven & London, Yale University Press,

7   Mostly studied from Hierocles writings, "oikeôsis" is often translated to French "appropriation". In her online publication « La part du propre (oikeion) dans la constitution du concept stoïcien d'appropriation (oikeiosis) », Charlotte Mugier also refers to "attachment" as an alternative. More rarely, it is translated to "sense of belonging".

For monodisciplinary artists, the first challenge is to make the collective project their own; only when this feeling is ensured, can they break free from a commissioned task towards a wholesome artistic process.

In AR, and as their career progresses, monodisciplinary artists can find themselves caught in an uncomfortable web of expectations, and pressured to take on a transdisciplinary function. Not only does the AR model seem to carry expectations tied to the figure of the independent-one-person-orchestra artist, which provides little assistance regarding the challenging reflection on collaborative ownership and authorship, but classic social expectations also lead us to believe that the natural progression of a successful career is to be taking more and more responsibility.[8]

Furthermore, by expecting art researchers to take charge of every aspect of collective and technically advanced art forms such as film or new media, we perpetuate the regressive idea that performing a craft is insufficient of a contribution to society to be deserving of fundings and recognition. Through that lense, the artist must be gifted with divine multiple talents and abilities in order to earn the privilege of contributing to the AR field, to the point of mastering all the crafts involved in a film or new media project.

Finally, the last circle of attachment schematizes the paradigm shift; an attachment to a posture, a discourse, a movement, that aims to create a disruption in the artistic doxa.

Such idea of paradigm shift also echoes what transmedia artist and researcher Christy Dena called, in her 2018 speech at the Swedish game conference[9], "going from paramount reality to metamorphosis", encouraging world builders to break free from the external reality and to deploy a new one. Dena mentions that creating those metamorphosed realities "seeks to transform paramount reality ", reminding us of the performative impact that arts have on our world, and repositioning the artists' role as an actor of societal change.

Questions of integrity and authenticity follow the same centripetal progression; first in relation to our own perception of our craft and to our original idea, secondly in relation to the group, thirdly in relation to the institutions, and finally in relation to the wider arts field - and, in research, to science.

As art-researchers, we can secure our reflexive stance by continuously questioning our own attachments to these circles, from our feeling of belonging in our practice, to the frictions within the collaborative spaces, and towards aiming for a paradigm shift, beyond the mere practice of our craft.

When recruiting and supervising art- researchers, it is also crucial for institutions and mentors to be aware of those pressures and distinctions, as to accompany the struggles met in each of these levels of attachment rather than reinforcing them.

Discussing attachment and ownership in art-research should of course build up on the widely researched question of authorship, in arts as well as in humanities While our approach in this article has been to provide keys to art-researchers in film and new media to understand their individual sense of ownership, we can question whether authorship altogether should disappear in favour of collaborative production and publication.

---

8   In a world shaped by the enterprise mindset, and with the ambiguous relations to authorship and hierarchy collaborative arts, our imaginary naturally connects the work of a 2D artist or the one of a sound designer to that of an employee, and the work of a director or a creative producer to that of a manager and a CEO.

9   https://www.christydena.com/2018/11/my-sweden-games-conference-talk-worldbuilding-our-world/

Ede and Lunsford, in *Collaboration and Concepts of Authorship (2001)*[10], challenge institutional stances on individualism, the understanding of knowledge, careerism, and politics, with questions that are particularly relevant to transdisciplinary artforms and that we will touch upon when further discussing institutional collaboration in AR:

> What might it mean, for instance, to acknowledge the inherently collaborative nature of dissertations and the impossibility of making a truly original contribution to knowledge? Would the sky fall if, on occasion, PhD students wrote dissertations collaboratively? And why has the ideological function of the single- author book-a virtual necessity for promotion and tenure in most research universities-not received the same attention from scholars that the author construct has received? Questions such as these remind us that, despite vigorous debates over theories and methods surrounding issues of subjectivity and authorship, ideologies of the individual and the author have remained largely un- challenged in scholarly practice.

Axes of Tension in the AR Model

By transdisciplinary art-researchers, we refer to the individuals whose AR project depends on a production, and whose art practice exists, in essence, through and with other artists (directors, creative producers, game designers, etc).

The monodisciplinary art-researchers, whose main work is to focus on one specific craft (screenwriting, sound design, 3D animation, level design…) will, most of the time, also adopt a transversal approach to creation, but will remain more focused on their field and less accountable for the global results in case of a production.

Arguably, only monodisciplinary artists could aim for the model of the independent artist that is self-sufficient and free from production pressure.
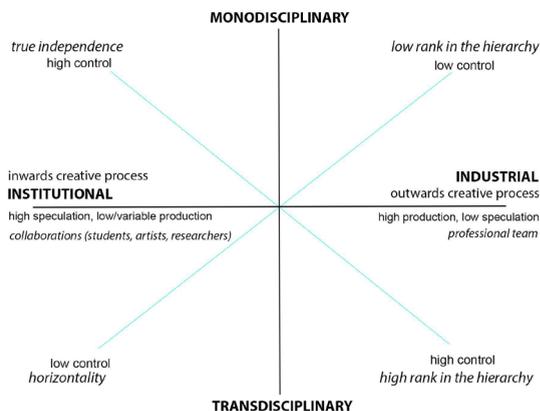

Fig.   2 Axes of tension in film and new media AR

In this section of the article, we will explore the two main highways that AR researchers in film and new media can primarily engage with: the industrial world and the institutional world.

This scheme represents general axes of tension, without detailing the many potentialities of funding and without transcribing the nuanced roles that art-researchers can take during a production. We acknowledge that the international artistic context differs greatly, and that artists at various stages of their careers are presented with radically different opportunities. In particular, several countries, especially in Europe, do offer dedicated funds for experimental films (a rising number of those widening their scope to new media), which allow a lucky few to gain more production independence and allow artists to juggle institution and industry with greater comfort.

---

10   PMLA , Mar., 2001, Vol. 116, No. 2, (pp. 354-369), published by the Modern Language Association

The art researcher in the industrial world

Art researchers in film and new media often conciliate their research with their full artistic and professional activity, tied to industrial production.

For transdisciplinary practitioners, in particular, the art form in itself, as a whole, is the means of expression, and managing a multi-disciplinary group of professionals is, in itself, the primary work-form. Their creative act is socially constructed through encounters with others – it is from friction with materials, as well as from the everyday rubbing of human minds, bodies and events, that imaginations are stimulated and prone to go beyond what is current and tangible as to materialise ideas. In our field, during that process, the transversal creatives offer necessary friction to the other creatives, through a balancing of withdrawal and participation.

Should it be because of those interactions with the professional creative team, or because of the need to generate enough interest to receive funding, the creative process of both transdisciplinary and monodisciplinary artists working around an industrial production is *outwards* and *production oriented*.

The transdisciplinary art-researcher in the industrial world is highly ranked in the hierarchy, which ensures them high control and accountability on the quality of the production and the artistic vision. However, that vision is particularly subjected to the industrial and commercial doxa, and the ability to change course in the middle of production is small.

On the contrary, the monodisciplinary art-researcher in the industrial world generally has little impact on the general vision of the project and is not held accountable by the industrial world for its completion and quality. The AR world, however, born from non-collaborative artforms, might not make this

distinction, and could criticize the art-researcher based on the quality of the full production.

Should we be transdisciplinary or monodisciplinary artists pursuing AR in the industrial world, we ought to aim for a paradigm shift: as defined earlier, challenging the doxa of our fields is part of creating the feeling of artistic appropriation and of maintaining an artistic stance.

However, it would be unrealistic to demand of those of us depending on industrial production to succeed in funding an ambitious film or new media piece of art that would be equally as experimental and creatively free as the work of an artist that maneuvers outside of the industrial world, and does not have to insure the revenues of a team of professionals.

Recruitment and supervision of industry-oriented art-researchers and PhD students

Recruiting such profiles thus require the awareness that they will not be able to simultaneously navigate the industrial maze (sometimes leading the production of their project) and free their mental space from material thinking; to be oiling the machine while observing it with fresh eyes is an impossible ubiquity act.

A potential, although imperfect solution to that issue could be to clearly frame the timeline of the research: favoring longer periods of research that will allow the artists to distillate more of their critical reflection while still ensuring a quality production.

That configuration also raises the importance of dissociating intent from result, pointing at what came out of a production necessity and what would have been realised in a creative utopia.

Such differences with self-reliant artists must be reflected in the way industrial AR researchers present their work, and they must be properly accompanied in that process: with relevant literature, relevant seminaries, and with supervisors and moderators that are familiar with outwards and production oriented creative processes. Those specificities are rarely accommodated on the international AR scene, still dominated by traditional arts, and could require to breach more systematically from arts institutions to the industrial world.

Finally, arts institutions must address fully and honestly their own political stance regarding the impact of the industrial doxa on AR, their necessity to be affiliated to high-standards productions, and whether the lines with industrial research are fading away.

Bridging to industrial research

Conducting research that is relevant and useful to industry has a long tradition within health and biotechnology application but is slowly spreading into the areas of arts and humanities. Industrial research or research with industry community application within the arts finds its funding in bigger initiatives including Creative Europe but also from national programs. In Denmark, it includes Innovation Fund Denmark and its Industrial Researcher Programme that invests in industrial PhD and postdoc projects. The program is described as *(…) a formal research initiative characterized by co-creation between a university and private corporations with regards to conceptualization, funding, and project outcomes intended to meet the needs of both academia and the practitioner community.* (Nielsen et al., 2017, p. 9).

In a news post on LinkedIn, the foundation especially notes its interest in increasing the number of projects within humanities and social sciences as part of its new strategy (Innovationsfonden, July 2020). The mere fact of being funded by an "innovation" foundation frames the research towards a

tradition of knowledge as innovative, R&D and increased revenue and as a type of research that goes "beyond academia".

This way, and comparable to the situation of the artistic researcher, the industrial researcher is placed in a potentially tense dual position between the academic and the industrial doxa, which tends to favor practice over theory, but in a way that still aims to reconcile the two.

Rooted in a collaboration between a private company and a university, the industrial researcher in this setting is expected to span the academia-practice boundary while producing innovative knowledge that has an impact in both places. This is often framed as "double-impact" research and research that is collaboratively produced not only between the two worlds but by the flexible position of the researcher and her interactions with people, structures, and tensions within and between them.

Thus, we return to the questions of ownership, but also to questions of identification issues. At each moment in the project period, the student will need to ask herself: At this moment, Am I acting as a researcher or a company employee? While in general, she is always both. In the literature, to successfully fulfill this position, "*(…) the PhD student must bridge and transcend different institutional logics.*" (Nielsen et al. 2017, p. 16). Others describe this position in more critical terms as a "double hurdle" (Pettigrew, 2008). Creating 'useful practice-oriented' research in this in-between landscape has sparked a number of discussions (founded in academia…) about the academic-practitioner relationships (Crosina & Bartunek, 2017), co-production of research by scholars and practitioners (Pettigrew, 2008), other modes of anti-hegemonic knowledge production that aspires to be *"socially distributed, application-oriented, trans-disciplinary and subject to multiple accountabilities."* (Greenhalgh et al. 2016), and the types of research competencies necessary for conducting such work (Nielsen et al. 2017) - but also how, once

the research is done, to evaluate the non-academic research impact (Gunn & Mintrom, 2017).

Industrial research in the arts brings perspectives on what AR in film and new media could evolve to be: positions where the researchers are freed from the pressure of having to secure production fundings to lead their AR project, and that clearly discusses industrial doxa and institutional doxa.

This can appear desirable, when many AR researchers in film and new media find themselves in the hazy position of having to put together a professional production, while developing experimental ideas, and with little to no assistance from their institution in that hazy balancing act.

As to offer more clarity to AR researchers, perhaps is it important to clearly distinguish Industrial Art Research from Institutional Art Research, and recalibrate support, expectations, research budgets and timelines accordingly.

The Art-Researcher in the Institutional World

The second main highway for the art-researcher is to remain as independent as possible from the industrial doxa.

While more and more art institutions open new media branches and receive governmental or industrial innovation branches, we identify three different roads: fulfilling the entirety of the artistic, financial, legal and technical charge on one's own (which is extraordinarily rare and heavy for transdisciplinary artists, but a promise of true independence for monodisciplinary artists), developing a speculative project as opposed to a production, or relying more heavily on institutional options.

With institutional support: ambiguous hierarchy and outwards creative process

Those options, that are not always arranged in the arts institutions, are: internal production, collaboration with students and collaboration between researchers.

• Internal grants and guidance for project development and production (potentially including in-house producers and project managers and established arrangements with national funding bodies and major national studios and channels)

While we cannot expect arts institutions to be able to fully fund the production of audiovisual works, in absence of their financial contribution, the researcher is bound to either work theoretically/ speculatively or on such a low level of technical achievement that it is next to impossible to reach production greenlight in the industrial world, or generate a high quality work according to international artistic standards.

The pressure to produce and the need for legal, financial and practical coordination can be a threat to any AR, which also echoes the difficulties of the scientific research world, that is subject to private funding and its deontological consequences. We exhort arts institutions that expect AR projects to be fulfilled media works of art to invest in creating a supportive environment that ensures their AR researchers enough budget and support to alleviate their precarious hunt for funding, and makes their practice and research conditional.

• Collaboration with undergraduate and graduate students

Collaborating with students is an established tradition in scientific research which is known to virtuously reinject knowledge freshly developed by researchers into education.

However, arts institutions vary tremendously in pedagogical approaches, and we can find that collaboration between students and PhDs or researchers to be a risky prospect. For instance, some approaches in training the individual artistry of the students rely on maintaining high degrees of artistic freedom and encouraging individual experimentation and failure, which could be greatly inefficient and complex to handle for an art-researcher, unless they renounce their vision and personal organization.

It is also important to consider the ethical implications of student's engagement in research or other forms of mandatory institutional labour; a controversy, even in other research traditions where it has been customary for centuries. Hayes (2014), following on (Zepke 2014: 698), alarms us on the risks of using students' labour as "exchange value", or "invisible labour", which supports neoliberal ideology:

> Marx distinguished between 'use value' and 'exchange value' (Marx 1867). 'Use value' relates to the human social necessities a technology might fulfil in conjunction with a person's labour. On the other hand, 'exchange value' takes the human labour involved for granted to realise a profit in an economic market. In the same way that new technologies can quickly become subordinated to narratives of exchange value, it would seem that the human labour of student engagement is subject to similar fluid expression within policy language. In relation to students, many of the examples (…) seem to be about promoting the phenomenon of student engagement as a form of exchange value for the institution. In relation to staff activities, student engagement is said to have powers to enhance quality, learning and teaching and university processes, but little is said about the many hours of human labour that connects these areas of work.

Her article also points at the invisible labour of the academic staff that is engaging students. Those tasks constitute invisible labour as they "do not bring career reward", which AR researchers, in their hybrid positions, could be particularly vulnerable to.

> The labour of academic staff in engaging students also appears to be unaccounted for. In addition to teaching and research, academics undertake a range of activities such as personal tutoring, writing references for students seeking employment, sitting on programme review committees and acting as external examiners that can be described as 'academic citizenship' (Havergal 2015). While important to maintain quality and support pastoral care that universities now commodify and sell to students this labour is undervalued by institutions and does not bring career rewards.

To ensure ethical collaboration and to protect the AR quality of projects that rely on students' participation, arts institutions must clearly frame the AR within the curriculum and discuss expectations with both the pedagogical team and the researcher. We find transparency to be especially important in this configuration, in which proper communication is all too often neglected: addressing and acknowledging the limitations of an institutional production must be clarified upon recruitment of the art-researcher as to prevent invisible labour and misaligned expectations.

- Collaboration with other art-researchers and/or research centers, potentially internationally

Nurturing collaborative practices is widely overlooked, as it can be administratively and politically complex. However, achieving a high level of artistic quality in collective art

forms while keeping the industrial doxa at bay might rely on recruiting teams to work on projects, or in facilitating joined research by art-researchers from complementary fields and practices.

In all these options, the institution must initiate a solution to help develop the AR project and clearly frame the expectations.

Other approaches rely on the strict transmission of the artistic tradition as well as the doxa of the industrial world, as to create future successful professionals. In this case, an art-research project which would oppose the doxa and aim for experimentation and novelty would also be antithetical with the institution's pedagogy.

Whether she collaborates with students or other art-researchers, the transdisciplinary art-researcher is likely to have an ambiguous position in the hierarchy, perhaps even to be aiming for horizontality. Such ambiguity directly affects her control over the quality of the production and the artistic vision; which needs to be addressed and accepted from an early stage.

Similarly, this configuration can lead to various degrees of invisible labor, should it be because it leans on free collaborations with other artists, or because of a loose frame in collaboration with students.

The arts institution in this case has a responsibility to create a positive culture of collaboration, that is clearly communicated to the pedagogical team, the Artistic Research bodies and the students.

Finally, should it be through an internal grant or through collaboration with other institutional bodies, the funding of the AR project are likely to be closer to those of pilot, a

short-piece, or a low fi prototype in new media, than to a finished work of international standards.

Without institutional support: speculation and independent thinking

If the institution cannot provide or organize any of the above options, then, the art-researcher will either turn to the industrial world and shift categories or remain in the realm of speculative AR.

Speculative Artistic Research, similar in many ways to established fields such as Future Studies or Design Fiction, is a non-official practice that is emancipated from the needs of production. The collaborative and industrial aspects of our fields only exist as fictional parameters, allowing the art-researcher to push her ideas and vision as far as her speculative power permits her to.

It allows for an *inwards creative process*, which brings us closer to the traditional view of the individualistic artist, erases entirely the question of the hierarchy and relegates industrial and institutional doxas to the ranks of thinking habits.

Design fiction and speculative design outside of AR

Outside the context of artistic research, design fiction has emerged as a notion and field within Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and interaction design research. Prominent HCI conferences dedicate focused tracks, journals produce special issues, and there is an increased number of papers and books on the topic (see: Bleecker, 2009; Grand & Wiedmer, 2010; Tanenbaum et al. 2012; Blythe & Wright, 2006; Johnson 2011; Hales, 2013; Rostami et al., 2017). The focus on design fiction has been described as a 'speculative turn' within contemporary design practice (Hales, 2013), but the notion is open to a number of interpretations and aims. Is it fiction

about design? Is it science fiction? Is it speculative design? (Tanenbaum, 2014).

While some have argued for design fiction as a removal of the designer from commercial constraints and corresponding normative design processes (Auger, 2013, p. 11), others have highlighted how 'diegetic prototypes' might engage with the design discourse itself (Kirby, 2010).

As a methodology, design fiction might be characterized as 'fictions of non-linear narrative, the achronological and asynchronous' (Hales, 2013, p. 2) and as such they can be seen as central to contemporary media design and media art – or even to technology in general (ibid.) Therefore, some researchers have shown how design fiction might also be employed for learning in order to help students reflect on the role of technology (Rapp, 2020). While it might be argued that fictional utopias have always been in the toolbox of artists and designers (Sargent, 2010), what is new is that fiction is now increasingly accepted outside of the arts as a valid knowledge producing methodology (Grand & Wiedmer, 2010; Markussen & Knutz, 2013).

While design fiction is gaining recognition as a methodology, we can question whether it can be the main artform of a film or new media AR project, or, if by erasing the question of the collaboration and of the production, which many of us consider to be indissociable from our artistic practice, we are stepping out of AR and back into theoretical research.

In that regard, a final piece that would appear to be mostly creation around the artform for practical or ethical reasons (not enough budget to pay a team of professionals, to rend the proper material, to get the adequate technology, a disproportionate use of resources, etc) could resemble Frayling's definition of "research for the arts" as quoted by Malterud in her article "Artistic Research – Necessary and challenging" (2012, p.3):

Artistic research is conducted on the basis of and through artistic practice, and it is thereby based on approaches and experiences that are specific to this perspective. One of the most important early references for the phenomenon is from 1994, when Christopher Frayling, then rector of the Royal College of Art, introduced a distinction between 'research into art, research through art or research for art' (Frayling, 1993/1994). Here, research into is understood as art history/theoretical research, research through as something the artist him or herself is in a position to engage in, and research for as technical development work in materials and tools. In research through art, it is the artist's distinctive experience and reflection that is communicated. Recognising research through art challenges the traditional division of labour whereby artists produce art and art historians and other theoreticians talk and write about art and are those who engage in research.

While there is no doubt that the research, conception, spotting and narration that we find in fiction design is part of the artistic practice, the reactive and reflexive dialectic specific to collaboration, production, technicality (especially if the project points towards new techniques or technology) will be, at best, fictionalized.

However, it is important to stress that in times of ecological discourse and social critique, it might be worth revalorizing artforms that do not rely on extensive use of resources, and to open *research for the arts* positions that specifically address those issues within arts institutions.

Conclusion

The level of institutional support in film and new media AR is often insufficient to allow art-researchers to virtuously develop a practice that does not either sink in the industrial doxa,

lead to a purely speculative final artwork or does not rely on the invisible labor of students or professionals.

Because art-researchers are navigating three doxas: industrial, institutional, artistic, which all come with their own injunctions and jargon (or sociolect), it is necessary to accompany the art-researchers by developing a positive and diverse culture that supports critical stances and juggles between sociolects (the art world, the academic world, the industrial world, the innovation world).

Whether the final results of the AR project are meant to be an industrial production, a speculative design or an institutional collaboration, the options and strategy should be discussed and challenged at the opening of each AR position. In particular, we must be careful of favoring cultures where art-researchers' critical stance does not vanish in navigating too many doxas – the industrial requirements, the institutional deliverables and the artistic jargon all at once.

During our own research, our positioning on the axes of tension diagram has evolved; some of us went from speculation to production, or vice versa. Tracing those categories does not aim to confine the AR research experience, but to provide a frame for discussion, support and validation.

In particular, and because of the weakened role of the academic tradition in our field, we find it important to be remembered to theorize and challenge the critical artistic stance of the art-researcher in film and new media, as well as her relation to ownership and authorship.

Despite the need for art-research to reinject its findings into education, it is crucial that we do not confuse artistic innovation and excellence with mastery in acculturation. In other words, AR cannot be the exploration of how to be professionally successful, although it leads to creating knowledge, insights, understanding and skills.

We encourage arts institutions to reassess whether they are truly in the capacity of supporting AR in film and new media, as a field that both embraces artistic experimentation, artistic practice and a critical stance, or whether they should diverge towards opening industrial research positions or include research for the arts and speculative design to their branches.

References

Auger, J. (2013) *Speculative design: crafting the speculation*, Digit. Creat., vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 11–35, 2013.

Borgdorff, H. (2013). *The conflict of the faculties. On theory, practice and research in professional arts academies*.

Bleecker, J. (2009). *Design Fiction: A short essay on design, science, fact and fiction,* Future Lab., vol. 29.

Blythe, M.A. & Wright, P. (2006) *Pastiche scenarios: Fiction as a resource for user-centred design*, Interact. Comput., vol. 18, pp. 1139–1164, 2006.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Nice Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Crosina, E., & Bartunek, J. M. (2017). *The Paradoxical Mystery of the Missing Differences between Academics and Practitioners.* In The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Paradox (p. 472). Oxford University Press.

Ede, L. & Lunsford, A. (2001), *Collaboration and Concepts of Authorship*; Mar., 2001, Vol. 116, No. 2 (Mar., 2001), pp. 354-369 Published by: Modern Language Association

Foucault M. (2001). *L'herméneutique du sujet*, Paris, Hautes Études/Gallimard/Seuil.

Grand, S. and M. Wiedmer, "Design Fiction: A Method Toolbox for Design Research in a Complex World," in proceedings of the DRS 2010 conference: Design and Complexity, Montreal, 2010.

Greenhalgh, T., Jackson, C., Shaw, S., & Janamian, T. (2016). *Achieving research impact through co creation in community based health services: literature review and case study.* The Milbank Quarterly, 94(2), 392-429.

Gunn, A., & Mintrom, M. (2017). *Evaluating the non-academic impact of academic research: design considerations.* Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, *39*(1), 20-30.

Hales, D. (2013). *Design fictions an introduction and provisional taxonomy.* Digital Creativity, 24(1), 1-10.

Hayes, S. L. (2018). *Invisible labour: Do we need to reoccupy student engagement policy?* LATISS, 11(1), 19-34.

Johnson, B (,2011). *Science Fiction for Prototyping: Designing the Future with Science Fiction.* San Francisco: Morgan and Claypool.

Kirby, D. (2010). *The future is now: Diegetic prototypes and the role of popular films in generating real-world technological development.* Social Studies of Science, *40*(1), 41-70.

Malterud, N. (2012). *Kunstnerisk utviklingsarbeid – nødvendig og utfordrende.* (pp. 57-68) Nordic Journal of Art and Research

Markussen, T., & Knutz, E. (2013, September). The poetics of design fiction. In *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Designing Pleasurable Products and Interfaces* (pp. 231-240).

Nielsen, R. K., Buono, A. F., & Poulfelt, F. (2017). *At the knowledge interface: Developing co-created research competency.* In

Academy of Management Proceedings (Vol. 2017, No. 1, p. 11156). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.

Pettigrew, A. (2008). '*Scholarly impact' and the co-production hypothesis.* Global Focus-European Foundation for management development, *2*(2), 8.

Rapp, A. (2020). Design fictions for learning: A method for supporting students in reflecting on technology in Human-Computer Interaction courses. *Computers & Education*, *145*, 103725.

Rostami, A., Rossitto, C., McMillan, D., Spence, J., Taylor, R., Hook, J., ... & Barkhuus, L. (2017). Glimpses of the future: designing fictions for mixed-reality performances. *interactions*, *25*(1), 46-51.

Sargent, L.T. (2010), *Utopianism.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Sennet, R. (2008). *The Craftsman,* Yale, Yale University Press

Tanenbaum, J. (2014). *Design fictional interactions: why HCI should care about stories.* interactions, 21(5), 22-23.

Tanenbaum, J., Tanenbaum, K. & Wakkary, R. (2012) *Steampunk as Design Fiction,* in Proc. CHI'12, Austin, Texas, pp. 1583–1592.

Wright Mills, C. (1959), *On Intellectual Craftsmanship*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Zepke, N. (2014), *Student engagement research in Higher Education: questioning an academic orthodoxy,* Teaching in Higher Education 19, no. 6: 697–708.

Webography

Denmark Innovation Funds, URL: https://innovationsfonden.dk/da/nyheder-presse-og-job/innovationsfonden-efterlyser-flere-humanistiske-og-samfundsvidenskabelige (Accessed, July 26th 2020.)

Dena, C. (2018) *Worldbuilding our world,* blog post and video, URL: https://www.christydena.com/2018/11/my-sweden-games-conference-talk-worldbuilding-our-world/

Diesen , T. A, *Being the Director – Maintaining Your Vision while Swimming with Sharks* – AR project, URL: https://vimeo.com/channels/409201/41409054

Deleuze, G. (1987)   Conference at La Fémis (1987), video URL : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OyuMJMrCRw

Murgier, C (2013) *La part du propre (oikeion) dans la constitution du concept stoïcien d'appropriation (oikeiosis),* Methodos [Online], 13 | 2013, URL : http://journals.openedition.org/methodos/3030