



**RECONSIDERING
RESEARCH AND
SUPERVISION
AS CREATIVE
EMBODIED
PRACTICE:
REFLECTIONS
FROM THE FIELD**

Artistic Doctorates in Europe:
Third-cycle provision in
Dance and Performance

Jane Bacon & Vida L Midgelow



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PREFACE

The aim of this text is to focus primarily on the undertaking and supervision of movement-based research in a doctoral context; and to offer innovative approaches for its processes. It seeks to open up the potential for thinking and enquiry through practice in all aspects of the research journey. It will be particularly relevant for candidates seeking different ways of working, academics seeking to improve their own supervisory practices informed by the experiences of colleagues in the same field and those in the cultural arts sector looking for insights and ways to better support and enable artists in the undertaking and making public of their research work. The notion of 'practice' and 'practising' as informed by somatics and choreography runs throughout. We illuminate, and hopefully inspire, ways of going about and supporting research as a creative, co-relational, collective and networked process. Throughout you will find tasks, provocations, activities, scores and other actions to illuminate ways in which this model can be activated.

In speaking to and across the needs of candidates, supervisors and the cultural sector, what follows reflects our commitment to the productive interface between sectors in the advancement of artistic research. This is in line with an understanding of, and emphasis toward, the value and impact of doctoral knowledge beyond the academy.

This text arises from the 'Artistic Doctorates in Europe' (ADiE, 2016-2019) project, which addresses the development of artistic doctoral research in dance and performance, investigating the delivery, undertaking and manifestation of doctoral studies across arts and university sectors. In 2017 ADiE completed a survey of candidates, supervisors and the cultural sector in order to understand the experiences and perceptions of Artistic Doctorates from these different perspectives. Respondents described a mixed quality and confidence in/of supervision and some frustration in terms of the readiness of the academy to fully appreciate the implications of artistic research. Supervisors expressed a sense of isolation with no support networks available, plus some feelings of insecurity in their ability to supervise an Artistic Doctorate. In particular, we found an ongoing tension between embodied artistic processes and conventional academic approaches which both candidates and supervisors struggle to manage. The survey also revealed a desire for better cross-sector working with candidates describing 'being torn' between professional practices and the requirements of research whilst wanting to 'bridge the

gap between artistic research and audiences'. Similarly, arts venues and promoters expressed concerns as to ways to meaningfully support artistic researchers and set out a challenge as to the ways in which Artistic Doctorates might address the wider culture and society (and indeed 'the market') more purposefully. There was also true zeal for the power and capacity for Artistic Doctorates to make a significant challenge to and impact on the academy and the professional sector, and on the other hand, a lingering concern that an Artistic Doctorate has no significance for the professional sector. This 'guidance' goes some way in responding to such concerns (download the survey report at: www.artisticdoctorates.com).

The main authors, Prof Jane Bacon (UK) and Prof Vida L Midgellow (UK), are both movement-based artist-researchers and have between them supervised and examined more than 30 PhDs mainly in the UK, but also internationally. Together they direct the Choreographic Lab, as a site for critical research practices and have been at the fore of practice as research debates in the UK (www.choreographiclab.co.uk). They also collaborated to develop the '[Creative Articulations Process](#)' (2014, CAP) which is a model for the development of artistic research. There are extracts from CAP inserted throughout what follows. They have been supported in the development of this resource by the ADiE partners, in particular Stefanie Sachsenmaier (UK) and Kirsi Heimonen (FI), who supervise artistic doctorates at Middlesex University, London and Teak, UniArts, Helsinki respectively. The tasks and activities you will find in the text come from the practices used by members of the partnership in their own work, alongside invited contributions from current and former candidates, as well as borrowings and adaptations from other named sources. Note all unnamed or unreferenced tasks / prompts are offered by the main authors.

As notes from the field, it is written largely from the lived experience and hands-on practices of supporting and undertaking doctoral research. That said it is also important to locate the many texts that are well-established resources and that readers may also find useful. These texts can be grouped into core types - those focused on supervision, those focused on completing doctoral/PhD projects and those addressing artistic research methodologies/methods.

To name but two general guides to supervision: Stan Taylor, Margaret Kiley and Robin Humphrey's (2018) *A Handbook for Supervisors*, offers a thematic and case study approach, enabling self-interrogation of supervisory practice, while the much-cited *Successful Research Supervision* by Anne Lee (2012) sets out a framework for different modalities of supervision which she describes as functional, enculturation, critical thinking, emancipation and relationship development. There are also a handful of books/articles that consider supervision in arts practice: Brent Allpress et al's edited collection *Supervisory Practice for Postgraduate Research in Art, Architecture and Design*, Julian Hamilton and Sue Carson (2015) *Supervising Practice: Perspectives on the supervision of creative practice higher degrees by research*, and the specifically movement-related *Choreographing Research: Supervising the Dancing Thesis* by Cheryl Stock (2009), which appears in a special issue of TEXT, Supervising the Creative Arts Research Higher Degree. For those wanting to explore such literature further Stan Taylor compiled *The Research Supervisors Bibliography* (see www.ukcge.ac.uk).

For candidates' handbooks and guides are plentiful, ranging from Gina Wisker's (2001, 2008) *The Postgraduate Research Handbook* to the pocket study series published by Palgrave, including *Planning your PhD* (2010) and *Completing your PhD* (2011). These types of text are generic in that they attempt to speak across disciplines in support of the typical research journey. They offer handy hints and insights into ways of approaching doctoral studies.

There are also more discipline and methodology focused texts on artistic research. We mention a selected few here: Robin Nelson's *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (2013), Estelle Barnett and Barbara Bolt's *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (2010), Iain Biggs' *Art as research: creative practice and academic authority: A project-based examination of the politics of art-led research in a doctoral context* (2009), Ludivine Allegue, Simon Jones and Baz Kershaw's *Practice as Research in Performance and Screen* (2009), and Annette Arlander et al's recent *Performance as Research: Knowledge, Methods, Impact* (2018).

ADiE have also published [Researching \(in/as\) Motion: a Resource Collection](#) (2019), which addresses artistic research methods directly and creatively. The work acts as a companion piece and we link to this resource throughout where longer articles and additional tasks and scores can be found.

A final note on terminology: We use the term Artistic Doctorate (AD) wherein the defining feature is a degree programme in which the research is by, or includes, a substantive element of creative practice in the undertaking and final presentation of the research. We include in the term Artistic Doctorate, advanced research degree awards that might be named Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Arts or otherwise. We have also chosen the term artistic research as a term that best reflects the practice as experienced across the European countries involved in ADiE (UK, Sweden, Finland). However, in the UK more widely, Practice-as-Research, Practice-led Research and more recently, Practice Research, are terms more often used.



I. INTRODUCTION

To undertake and support an Artistic Doctorate or Practice-as-Research PhD in Dance and Performance is both the same as and also very different to a more traditional (text-based or wholly written) thesis. The emphasis here is on the unique nature of researching in and through artistic practice and the way in which the process of giving and receiving supervision informs and shapes that process.

The approach to the Artistic Doctorate set out here is a practical and creative engagement requiring some 'know-how'. It draws on the philosophy of Gilbert Ryle whose text *The Concept of Mind* challenged Cartesian thinking. He suggested '[m]y performance has a special procedure or manner' (1949/2009: 20) suggesting there is a kind of knowledge in practice that has its own value and, we would suggest, its own requirements for the study of those procedures. So we posit that a supervisory system that does not take account of the practical and creative approach but only focuses on language that expresses that the research was achieved or is related to a particular discourse will itself be unable to attend to the potential knowledge contained within the artistic research itself. As such the emphasis here is on somatic/choreographic approaches within the doctoral study itself and also as the basis for supporting such studies. This is our unique offer to the field.

This resource acknowledges the similarities across research degrees in different disciplines, but offers ways to respect the differences, enabling candidates, supervisors and others in supporting roles, to focus on the unique features of artistic research, which places the embodied creative practices of the researcher at the centre of the process. This offering to the field is both idealistic and fundamental. *Idealistic* because in most current institutions undertaking any or all of the suggestions offered in this document will have resource implications (time, space, money) and can be understood as a political challenge to the status quo. *Fundamental* because we suggest that without these practices undertaking and supporting an Artistic Doctorate via the mechanisms embedded in the academy does a great disservice to the

artwork and does not allow the field to fully develop the potential new knowledge embedded in artistic research. We propose, therefore, that artistic researchers (both candidates and supervisors), are able to make a difference through the creation, location and implementation of creative practice not only as a focus for the research itself, but also as the basis for a fundamental revisioning and realising of doctoral programmes. In this context we ask:

How might artistic practice inform not only the research itself, but also the design, delivery and resources of and for doctoral programmes and vice versa?

In what ways does 'placing artistic practice at the centre' change the nature of research process? For example, how can research questions be developed and refined through embodied means?

How might artistic and somatic knowings/doings afford practice-sensitive modes of supervisory engagement?

How might artistic researchers engage with and address ethical processes?

How might we activate spaces that recognise the interface between Universities and the cultural sector in ways that are generative to researchers and to publics?

Our intention is to give doctoral candidates, supervisors and cultural sector partners stimuli, calls to action and provocations to help keep the artistic practice at the heart of that process. We seek to draw those that are supporting the research process (whether supervisors and/or cultural partners) and candidates together into a shared understanding of doctoral processes, such that the 'in-relation' nature of the research journey is foregrounded in processes and practices. This challenges conventional models and offers new perspectives. In particular, we propose that new ways of going about doctoral studies are possible when the insights of creative practices are employed across the doctoral space. Implicitly therefore we seek to change the often hierarchical, supervisor/supervisee relationships, replacing it with a vision for a *co-created research space wherein creative and somatic practices are activated in and across all aspects of the journey of doctoral studies*.

This co-created and collaborative space will be a challenge to most current institutional practices and yet there are excellent models in undergraduate and postgraduate dance and performance programmes where practice is at the heart of the curriculum. Undergraduate studies have developed and the procedures and systems have been adapted to facilitate practice as core to the curriculum. At doctoral level conducting artistic research as a substantive element of the final thesis is a major shift in the academies' concept of 'new knowledge'. But at this advanced research level, in most cases and perhaps especially in the UK, there has been little change in the systems of support, training and assessment of Artistic Doctorates.

This proposal is made in the knowledge that we are now at a time in the development of artistic research where it is possible for the supervisor to have either completed a research degree by practice or to have a practice which they understand and undertake as research. As such, both supervisor and candidate can and should be viewed as embodied and creative practitioners who apply their knowings to the doctoral experience. It is also true that doctoral projects may need different types of input and that a team, or collective, approach means there are different perspectives available, including perhaps those from other academic disciplines and those from the wider cultural / arts sector. Envisioning such approaches, we might usefully learn from models where resources have been developed and implemented in terms of; collaborative learning and teaching, studio/technical resources, modes of assessment suitable for practice, as well as collaborations with the cultural sector and beyond.

There are also of course many different types of doctorate and different regulations / HEI's across the world (there are some examples of different HEI regulatory frameworks in the ADiE Regulations comparison chart, see www.artisticdoctorates.com). Even with these differences we believe that the uniqueness of artistic research in Higher Education asks us to challenge and question what tertiary level education is for. We suggest that Doctoral level artistic research is potentially changing the landscape of what it means to be a professional dance or performance artist and what it means to be an academic. Holding a doctorate may historically have implied the individual as 'not being a genuine artist' and at the same time artistic researchers may not have been considered 'real academics'. We contend that these are outdated myths that the Artistic Doctorate is starting to challenge. If doctoral researchers are to be part of an intersecting and fluid landscape, then we hope that the provocations found in these pages will support, develop and enrich this new landscape, such that artistic research is held at the centre of the process - becoming core to the wider systems and expectations across sectors.

Terms that appear throughout this document such as research questions, aims, methodologies, research outputs, literature review are used even though many artistic researchers may find them out of step with their own artistic terminology. They are terms however that are a recurring feature of all research and will need to be negotiated in relation to the generic expectations of 'doctorateness' in the academy. By weaving these together with concepts and tasks that may (perhaps) feel more attuned to artistic and somatic processes, there is a recognition of artistic research as both part of, and potentially other than, conventional models.

We hope the action-focused tasks in the resource will help clarify how artistic and academic terminologies may intersect - offering new insights into the relationship between the two increasingly inter-related worlds. Finding terminologies and ways of going about research that sit in-between or draw together these worlds, we offer ways of researching / supervising that are akin to somatic, choreographic and curatorial processes, viewing both candidates and supervisors as creatives. They are expert practitioners that can bring to bear their somatic awareness and other practice knowings to their research / research pedagogy.

II. ENTERING AND BECOMINGS

Becoming an Artist Researcher and/or Supervisor

Artistic research is undertaken by people with established or emerging creative practices and it is this practice that will be central. This means that people commonly entering research degrees by or including creative practice will, in some way, think of themselves as practitioners and for some, but by no means all, academically framed research may be a new challenge through which to rethink their practice. It is worth noting that research is not for everyone (artistic research or otherwise), for the doctorate is quite a particular undertaking. There are many ways to develop artistic research that are not framed by a doctoral qualification and the examination processes required to attain the title 'Doctor'. It is useful to recognise from the outset that the process of becoming an artistic researcher or supporting someone to complete an Artistic Doctorate entails, perhaps, developing skills and ways of being and doing that are uniquely challenging and rewarding, and will, if undertaken wholeheartedly, change many things. For all involved, it may change the thinking and doing of research. At its best, the process will enrich practice and develop critical acuity. Expanding academic and artistic expectations, it is likely to require the development of, perhaps, new artistic approaches and, for the supervisor, new creative pedagogies. This is a journey of discovery, leading to the production of performative works, artefacts and insights that will contribute to the field of dance and performance (and beyond). But transformations are never easy and the process of completing and supervising a doctorate is long and often frustrating. It may at times be greatly rewarding and at others be painfully arduous.

The various lists and questions below are not the ones that will commonly be articulated by universities. Indeed, these shifts and increased capacities will rarely, if ever, be directly discussed, let alone explicitly taught. Candidate training will often include navigating the regulatory processes and the supervisor may be provided training which will focus on systems and regulations and often there may be no training. To date we know of no formal training to become a supervisor specifically for Artistic Doctorates. Yet the lists we offer are fundamental to the process. These may be helpful to consider and reconsider throughout the process as they develop, alter and become more clearly articulated.



What it takes to become an artistic researcher:

An ability to be increasingly self-reflexive, critical and self-challenging;

A shift, perhaps, from implicit tendencies toward more explicit thinking and doing;

An awareness of rigour and clarity of purpose in your approach (even when being open to not knowing and intuitive processes);

A letting go of 'innocence' (and the perhaps common illusion of (your own); 'idiosyncrasy?') through an increasing awareness of and ability to name connectivity to artists and theorists intersecting your field;

An ability to recognise the uniqueness (and sameness) of your work;

An ability to narrow and deepen in focus, while staying attuned to wider contexts
- working with the micro and the macro, zooming in and out;

An increased ability to track, record, articulate and present your work to others;

A heightened awareness of strategic modalities and criticality;

A willingness to reconsider and approach anew your creative practice - perhaps changing and challenging your own expectations of how, what and why you engage with practice/ make work.

Institutions are likely to focus on more directly accountable milestones to be reached in the doctoral journey - such as the completion of credit-bearing courses (depending on your programme and location), registration, upgrade from MPhil to PhD, final submission, viva voce - in other words, the meeting of processes and standards set out for the award. These milestones or degree requirements (and perhaps others defining when, what or how much of the research has been presented at specific stages of your doctorate) are generic and often shared by all candidates in all fields. These shape the research planning by giving supervisor and candidate markers along the way.

It is part of the role of the supervisor to know how these systems work and to help candidates through these systems. This potentially unequal power dynamic might be made more conscious by both in the processes of becoming an artistic researcher and supporting an artistic researcher. Supervisory activities might then encompass bringing to bear the specialist insights and practices, awareness of internal systems and regulatory frames, abilities to question, shepherd, mentor and respond critically to materials (of whatever type), and knowledge of expectations/external 'standards' for doctorates in the discipline. Supervisors may be very experienced in these things or be new to the processes. They may feel more or less confident in these activities and may have more or less support. Re-thinking supervision as (part of) creative practice and as an extended pedagogy will be new to many (and if not new - it is a practice that needs practising like any other).

Artistic research journey

What support have I received in other contexts?

Name your own support practices

What are the (artistic) research pedagogies I might develop or seek out?

What kind of supervisor do I need?

Am I a novice or expert?

Do I feel a lack of confidence / self-doubt about researching?

What is unique about my own approaches to learning through doing?

What support do I want that will help me develop as a researcher?

What it takes to be an artistic research supervisor:

- A willingness to reconsider and approach your supervisor/mentor/facilitator practice - perhaps, changing and challenging your own expectations of candidates;
- An ability to apply and be self-reflexive in relation to artistic practice;
- Knowledge of your own strengths and weaknesses;
- Interest and commitment to embracing criticality;
- Willingness to both a challenge and champion;
- An understanding of the different time requirements and inherent tensions between artistic practices and university regulations;
- An understanding of embodied practices and commitment to the logics of practice;
- A capacity to hold rigour and clarity of purpose as potentials in the candidate rather than imposing them;
- An interest in the practice of the candidate and the candidate themselves;
- Embodied knowledges and specialist insights
- An ability to stay attuned to wider contexts, working together with micro and macro, zooming in and out.
- An ability track progress while allowing an openness and trust in the process
- An awareness of, and ability to challenge if needed, the institutional regulations

Because the process is long and, as we have said, often arduous, there are some personal traits that might be useful to bring to bear because the very point of doing an Artistic Doctorate is to develop a highly specific area of expertise. This takes energy, commitment, resilience, trust and belief (in your capacities and in the research) in abundance in order to enable and facilitate the process. Engaging in research is commonly an iterative act in order to enable deep and thorough process. To try again, think again, do again - may feel frustrating, confusing and at times disheartening. Processes that happen again and again throughout the Doctorate require a love of the chosen topic, a commitment and unswerving attention that may far exceed what is given to many other relational aspects of life. But, maintaining a life balance and practising self-care, whilst enabling enough space/time for the research to evolve (in organic, perhaps unknowable, ways) will be important. This will also have to be managed against the pressure to complete the Doctorate as will be evident in the systems and processes the university.

Supervisor reflects on own research journey

What support did I receive?

What support practices do I have?

What are the (artistic) research pedagogies I may/can employ?

What kind of supervisor am I?

Am I a novice or expert in supervision?

What are my doubts about the supervision process?

What might I offer the candidate as approaches to learning through doing?

How will I develop as a supervisor and researcher?

**Early questions for the candidate before we begin...
and to be returned to throughout...**

What practices do you have that will help you stay the course?

How do you practise working with the contradictory pulls of complexity, elusiveness and the pragmatic?

How do you feel about repeating, revisiting, recalling, reinvesting, redirecting, letting go, getting lost, moving and moving on, moving back, not moving, staying with, dwelling in, dwelling, become the 'indwelling' (Heidegger, 1962)?

How will you keep track of the research materials you amass?



Dear Practice...

*Take up a pen and paper.
Write a letter to your practice
as if it were your lover.*

*What might you want to tell
your practice as you enter the
doctoral / supervision process?
What experiences do
you want to share?
How do you feel about your
(supervision) practice?
What promises will you make?*

Adapted from
Vida L Middelton (2011)

A Small Nudge Before the Real Start

*For candidates and supervisors
before meeting (at any stage
of the Doctoral process)*

*Bob: What are the ways in which we
might begin, before beginning?*

*Katerina: My first thought was
how it is one of the enshrined;
twelve principles of animation,
called 'anticipation'; the idea
is that, by including a slight
inversion first - the backswing
of the golfer is given as an
example - the audience is
prepared for the main action
that is about to happen.*

*Bob: I have a sense that I'm
already doing a thing before
I've begun. US theatre director
Robert Wilson discusses how
the dog does not think before
jumping, and for me the thrum
of artistic research is already
in my body before I have
words, before I have images,
even before I have thoughts.
There it is nestled somewhere
between my fingers, ready.*

Katerina Athanasopoulou
and Joanne 'Bob' Whalley,
University of Plymouth

Artists and the Academy

Cultural critic and art historian Tom Holert (2009) has argued:

The problem is, once you enter the academic power-knowledge system of accountability checks and evaluative supervision, you have either explicitly or implicitly accepted the parameters of this system. Though acceptance does not necessarily imply submission or surrender to these parameters, a fundamental acknowledgment of the ideological principles inscribed in them remains a prerequisite for any form of access, even if one copes with them, contests them, negotiates them, and revises them. Admittedly, it is somewhat contradictory to claim a critical stance with regard to the transformation of art education through an artistic research paradigm while simultaneously operating at the heart of that same system. (Holert 2009: section 2)

An implicit (but perhaps unconscious) contestation or resisting of ‘the system’ that we often hear from artists who choose the Artistic Doctoral process is ‘I’m an artist - I’m not really a researcher’. Let this go before it takes hold - not because it isn’t important to engage critically with ‘academic power-knowledge system’ - but because it can become a block to embracing the richness of the research journey. Look deep and closely to see how willing you all are to embrace your complexity. This applies to candidates and supervisors who self-identify as artists. Do you think of yourself as artist, researcher, artistic researcher? We invite all to embrace the complexity that is inherent in artistic process and practice. Leave your labels at the door, bring yourself.

Stepping into an unknown territory, which is what research is (an interest in what we do not yet know), means taking one a step at a time without knowing the final outcome and to continue to have confidence that these steps will lead you on a journey that you cannot yet know. And yet to be able to hold or contain the research within a definable set of parameters called ‘research questions’. This is one of the paradoxes of this process - the encouragement toward forms of articulation (in theory and practice) while not knowing yet what to articulate (often on the page as well as in the studio).

You will get lost along the way (at least once). When that happens, and throughout, it is important to rest and to set up good practices of self-care. Without these (and time management) there are dangers in the depths of the journey. As supervisors it is worth trying to recall such experiences and needs, accounting for and giving space for the alien landscape to become (at least somewhat) familiar, whilst also acknowledging that each candidate and each project is unique and requires the process of supervision to be fashioned accordingly.

It is also worth noting that individual motives for entering a Doctorate can often be different from the that of the university. The traditional rationale for undertaking doctoral study was to become an academic, to pursue a career in academia. But artistic researchers are developing new trends, and whilst perhaps interested in academia, they often state that the doctoral research is for artistic discovery and reflection rather than for the qualification and outcome.

A helpful practice to remind us of our artistic imperative

Take a breath. Take a moment. Remember a time of great artistic/creative or personal fulfilment, let your eyes move around the space you are in as you cast your mind back through time. Take another breath.

Enjoy this moment as you sit or lie here. When you are ready, steady your gaze on a point in the room that seems to allow you to feel and sense this memory strongly. Now move your attention from that point in the room toward an internal felt sense of how you are right now, right here.

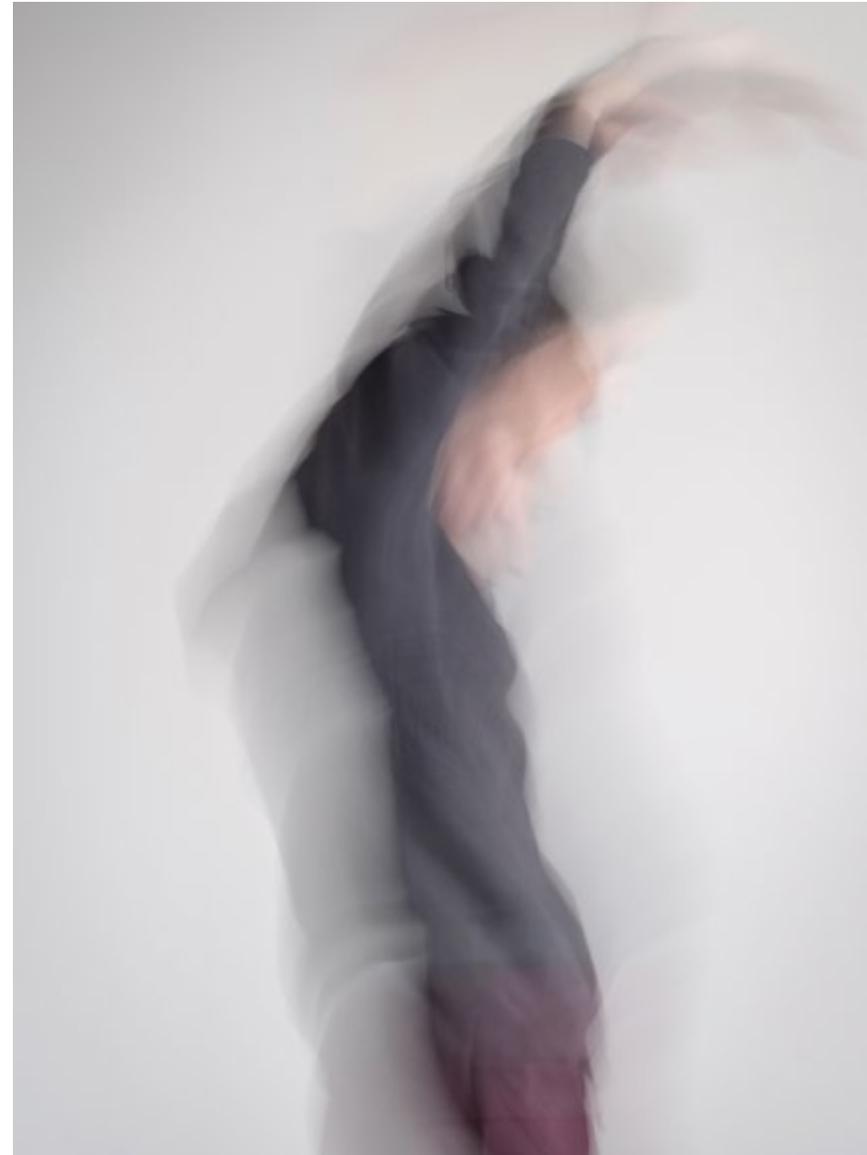
Attempt to move your gaze back and forth between these two points - internal and external (eyes open/eyes closed) - noticing differences and similarities.

Once you have established the rhythm of back and forth eye movements and you have a steady and deep breathing pattern, continue with these eye movements and allow your mind to freely imagine whilst keeping your breath rhythmically steady. Note or draw all that arises without judgement or interpretation.

Adapted from Jane Bacon (2017)

There may be a tension here most often revealed in the supervisor and university regulatory system that makes certain demands on the artist researcher which do not feel in step with the individual's chosen artistic pathway. And too, while valuing the experiential and artistic journeys in research, both candidate and supervisors need to retain at least one eye on the requirement of the doctorate to 'create new knowledge' and that, whilst supervisor and candidate may be (collectively and individually) shifting the fields and processes, the doctorate is in the end a qualification and with that comes regulatory, time-limited, boundaries and judgements of attainment.

Universities, whether small and discipline-specific, or large and multidisciplinary, are institutions that have particular protocols and procedures. This may seem a self-evident thing to say - but in our experience, many practitioners working within, or entering academic institutions for the first time, find such procedures tiresome and push against them. Whatever your feelings, understanding the system within which you are working - taking time to attend induction events, read handbooks and meet core staff and fellow researchers - will help the degree experience be navigated more effectively, and, after all, the process requires working in the university for at least three years (the shortest UK registration period) and most likely many more.



III. WORKING TOGETHER

Reconsidering Supervision

We are aware that there are implicit and inherent hierarchical structures in the processes of supporting or undertaking an Artistic Doctorate. As Lisa Mansell (2013: 299) states:

The narratives and nomenclature which surround doctoral supervision reflect inherited metaphors of hierarchy. Traditional doctoral theses in the humanities show, in addition, a conservative adherence to certain modes of discourse which serve these inherited narratives that assume a certain fixedness in identity constructions of the 'supervisor' and 'supervisee', or the 'supervisor'/'student'; worst of all, perhaps, the 'master'/'apprentice' schema.

Professional artists also have narratives of hierarchy and power but the artist practitioner, soon to be artistic researcher, may have, deliberately or not, chosen to work outside these power structures. To add to the heady collision of cultures, narratives and metaphors, the artist becoming researcher may believe that the Doctorate is the last (at least temporary) bastion of freedom providing (in some countries) funding to undertake artistic practice and an idealised notion of free studio time and space and a break from the pressures that constitute the never-ending professional life of funding applications, marketing, production and touring schedules.

At the centre of this complex clash of worlds is the supervisor- candidate relationship. As established artists enter research environments, the active reality of the supervisory relationships can more often encompass complex levels of attainment where a candidate (as well as the supervisor) can be simultaneously expert and novice. In Artistic Doctoral study there is more often than not a different set of processes at play than Mansell (above) indicates. And this means we need to dismantle inherited mythologies in the supervisory discourse - instead placing the doctoral candidate and supervisor in co-relation who can employ creative methods to shape and inform the journey they will take. This generative focus is crucial for all artistic research (and indeed all research). We propose that all involved place practice at the heart of the process and commit to generating a space where the

new, the innovative, the unexpected might arise in an embrace of the knowings and doings of artistic practice. This is not to shift the responsibilities or inappropriately burden candidates, nor to undermine the significant experiences and expertise that a supervisor may bring - but to promote a co-relational and co-generative understanding.

Supervisors hold the frame of systems and (institutional) connectivities. They carry a responsibility to operate on behalf of the institution and in support of the candidate. These 'holding' roles may encompass:

- the reviewing and selection of candidates
- working knowledge of (and ability to perhaps negotiate) regulations, systems, requirements, milestones (whilst nudging and participating in reviewing such things)
- working across arts and academic expectations and networks
- assisting in access to facilities, technical support and equipment
- a conduit to university support departments - student finance, international office, disability support, learning support etc.
- overseeing time management/duration, including monitoring progress
- managing and supporting examination processes

These aspects of supervision are expected and often upheld by the institution and also include aspects of the supervisory relationship such as agreements between candidate and supervisor as to when, how often and how long you might meet, what work the supervisor might expect in preparation and in what timeframes, when and how the candidate can expect to be in contact, who will keep records of meetings etc. For example, the Guidelines for PhD study at the University of Chichester UK, Research Supervisor's Handbook outlines a minimum number of tutorials per semester (2), (but not a length of time or nature of such tutorials), that it is the supervisor and candidate's responsibility to annually complete a review of progress and that it is the candidate's responsibility to complete a progress log following each tutorial. Each institution will have their own specific guidelines for both candidates and supervisors for all stages of the Artistic Doctoral journey.

And yet the supervisory relationship encompasses much more than the practicalities named above and the particular pedagogic approaches and needs in that relationship can provide unexpected challenges. Understanding the expectations and considering different learning / pedagogic styles of all involved may be a vital part of artistic research supervisory relationship, for, attending to this can at least give a space for everyone to articulate and understand any fundamental differences in learning/pedagogic style. For all involved to know their predilections, stuck attitudes, hidden expectations can help both supervisor and candidate to be open and focused on the research itself.

Answering the questions below will help supervisors and candidates to be in an honest and constructive relationship to each other and the university systems regulations. Another way to ask these questions would be to place them directly in relation to practice - to embody them or to place them directly in correlation with the supervisor.

Do you like structure or openness?

Are you rule and regulation focused or otherwise?

Are you a 'planner' or an 'in the flow' person?

Are you person focused or task focused?

Do you tend toward a directive or laissez-faire mode? (See Annie Lee, 2012: 19)

Are you goal or process oriented?

Do think best through speaking, writing, reading, moving, drawing...?

Are you detail or big picture focused - zoomed in or out?

What levels of uncertainty are you comfortable with?

Do you tend toward complexity or clarity, expansiveness or concision?

And, the same questions reframed in relation to creative practice:

Is your artistic practice focused more on structure or openness?

Do you structure and set material or are you an improviser?

Are you a director, choreographer, dramaturg, are you a dancer, performer, what kind of maker are you?

Are you interested in the final product of the process of researching / making?

Do you know how you best capture the artistic research processes
- through speaking, writing, reading, moving, drawing...?

Is it easier to envision a final product or do you get stuck in the detail of the work - zoomed in or out?

What levels of uncertainty are you comfortable with?

Does your artistic research tend toward complexity, clarity, expansiveness, concision, etc.?

Similarly, there are also 'learning styles' used by educationalists to help students learn more efficiently. These can be prompts to encourage you to explore your strengths and weaknesses. It can be useful for both candidate and supervisor to name their preferred styles as these may be stumbling blocks in the process (when the supervisor wants a chapter outline but the candidate does not know the structure at the outset). For example,

Active (do, try it out, testing) v reflective (think it through, plan first)

Sensing (practical, concrete, procedural) v intuitive (conceptual, innovative, theoretical)

Visual (graphs, pictures, diagrams) v verbal (see and hear)

Sequential (linear and orderly) v global (big picture first, fill in details later)

Adapted from www.mindtools.com

These reflections seek to reveal tendencies and preferences and they can all be advantages and disadvantages, for there is a place for flow and a time for planning, a role for didactic intervention and a space for openness. The tricky part of working together is being aware of these tendencies and when they may or may not be (still) useful. As each project, each candidate and each supervisory team is different, there is no right way. But there is a need to commit together to find a helpful, reflexively-informed and changeable way of working, for everyone is interested in the same goal - a positive experience and a rigorous thesis (by which we mean all elements of the submission, including practice), leading to a successful outcome.

The Imaginary Mentor

Purpose:

This task can be shared at any stage, but it lends itself to be introduced at an early stage in the process. The aim is for researchers to train the ability to self-assess and evaluate their work from a somewhat different perspective than their habitual one. Arguably each researcher has the ability to look at their own work from different angles, but this is not always readily practised. The idea for this exercise is not to replicate the work of a different practitioner or writer, but rather to self-develop new points of view and generate new ways of seeing and doing, emerging from ideas on and responses to work they find inspiring.

Activity:

1. Identify your imaginary mentor(s) from any of the following areas:

- *Whose practice are you particularly inspired by?*
- *Whose writing do you respect very much?*
- *Whose research practice do you value highly?*

(Note: This could be anybody – alive or dead, near or far, real or fictional.)

2. Write a short list of constructive qualities you identify in the practice/writing/research of your imaginary mentor.

3. Run 'tutorials' with your imaginary mentor. At key stages during your research process (at the beginning, during moments of confusion or crisis, after a breakthrough, or simply whenever you feel lonely or lost with your work...), make space for a 'meeting' with your imaginary mentor. Invite them to sit in the studio with you, read your writing, perhaps take them on a walk... letting them offer you ideas on ways of moving forward. You could begin by asking questions such as:

- *What would my imaginary mentor suggest to me now?*
- *What has my imaginary mentor done that I could learn from?*

It might be worthwhile to log any ideas or impulses in a research diary.

Stefanie Sachsenmaier
Middlesex University, London

Perhaps the word ‘supervision’ itself is problematic as it implies the hierarchy we have mentioned above, as well as an implicit oculo-centric bias. To challenge both ‘super’ and ‘vision’ we can look to other models of practice for alternative ways of thinking about and approaching the process. In proposing a model of co-relationality we might usefully draw on insights developed in psychotherapy practices. For example, Jungian Analyst Lionel Corbett suggests developing an alternative to the supervisor model as parent-child for a mentor relationship. He writes that supervision in the process of training Jungian Analysts may create ‘an unnecessary infantilising...when their teachers utilize inappropriate pedagogic models’ (Corbett, 1995: 60-61). Thinking of the supervisor-candidate relationship as a process of mentoring affords the supervisor the role of a transitional figure who will be outgrown rather than a difficult parent-child relationship. In this model both consciously work with the candidate being and becoming the expert and allow for the weaknesses of the supervisor to become springboards for the candidate’s future knowledge (Corbett, 1995: 63). Wilke (in Corbett, 1995:64) offers the following; ‘supervision as assistance’, ‘supervision as seconding’ (taken from the sport fencing where the second plays a protective role), ‘supervisor as adjunct’ (the one who collects manifold information such as tutorial reports). Dance Movement Psychotherapist Penelope Best offers a possible structure for supervisory sessions; ‘somatic engagement’, ‘transitional awareness’, ‘positional shifting’, ‘reflective conversations’ (Best, 2008: 142-147).

What is it we are en-visioning?

How do we generate shared vision?

How to see differently?

What is embodied seeing?

If the process of supervision were a co-created model emerging from supra-vision, under-vision, inter or intra-vision, then how might this shift the interpersonal relationship?

Applying a somatic orientation to the supervisory process means a shared emphasis on bodymind approaches that value the role of intuition, imagination and embodied knowing and knowledge. This opens space and time for the engagement in research from the perspective of one’s lived experience, encompassing the whole person - body, psyche, and spirit. For, as Tim Ingold evocatively notes, ‘to move, to know, and to describe are not separate operations that follow each other in series, but rather parallel facets of the same process – that of life itself. It is by moving that we know, and it is by moving, too, that we describe’ (2011: xii). Through somatics we might within supervisory encounters seek to employ such bodily practices to activate perception and heighten receptivity, such that we note internal and external worlds in a fully sensate mode wherein the corporeal and intercorporeal, moving, knowing and describing, are experienced holistically.

Focusing on the whole person, somatically-based modes of supervision might resist didactic exchanges or fixed models for doing things, offering instead, frameworks for research through critically-embodied, experiential and sensate modes. Here the ‘body becomes the teacher’ (to borrow from dancer Deborah Hay). The ability to listen to and learn from one’s

Witness Practice

Context/Purpose:

Influenced by Authentic Movement - the candidate offers the supervisor a piece of practice for viewing

Activity:

- *One person guides a ten-minute meditation such as mindfulness or focusing.*
- *Do this lying on the floor.*
- *Be comfortable. Allow your mind to wander, notice the felt sense of this moment as you recall the performed moments.*

From this place of recline anyone may begin to speak from, with, for the practice, as a witness you share the felt sense of experiencing (both the doing and the viewing) you name your own felt and lived experience in the presence of the practice avoiding judgement and interpretation.

fully embodied experiences and that of others, may guide researchers and supervisors to find their own ways of working, beyond established procedures and established models of knowledge formation. In this way exploration and discovery are supported in a non-judgmental framework. Candidates and supervisors may be encouraged to pay attention to being present, and how they are present each day, and in each moment. As such we all work toward 'a state of mind in which there is knowledge of one's own existence and of the existence of surroundings' (Damasio 2012: 167). Through such states Damasio proposes there is the potential for agency and ownership, and we might add transformation.

The insights of somatic movement forms also give us practices through which the ocularcentric, and indeed the tendency to move, (perhaps too quickly) toward explicit knowledge, can be diverted and repositioned. Shifting positions and reflecting a move to a new position offers the team a possible new way of seeing, doing and being in relationship to the research. If a supervisor is stuck wanting the candidate to focus more on the theoretical writing and the candidate wants to stay focused in their practice, then moving the theoretical perspective inside the practice, might be enough of a position shift to disrupt the established inter-personal dynamic. Equally asking the same candidate to take a concept or theory into the studio might also generate new ways of experiencing the research.

And, what happens if a positional flux exists, not only like a mobius strip for the candidate in relation to the artistic research, but also in the supervisor candidate relationship? Allowing flux may be easier earlier in the research process because as the thesis begins to take shape and form, but as things progress so candidate and supervisor attitudes and expectations can become fixed. Perhaps this a moment for a counter-intuitive process. Instead of closing down, now might be the time for new ways of being in the supervisory relationship. Now might be the time to return to the studio to play with complexity of materials. Now might be the time to bring in new voices.

If such practices are explored and used to frame an artistic research / research pedagogy then it becomes possible to push and ease out of inherited metaphors and expectations - changing spatial metaphors toward the circular, evoking forms like the mobius strip, instead of imaging fixed points there might be processes of weaving or felting, such that there is an attending to of all the senses and ways of knowing rather than only the visual and the cognitive.

So we entice you to embrace supra, under, inter, intra and embodied vision as somatic moves away from the more singular sense of 'vision' to a more inclusive embodied awareness. Above all, remembering and activating within supervisory practice the knowledge that we are all embodied and these embodiments are at work in everything we think and do. This revised co-relational and embodied supervisory relationship holds creative, critical and ethical concerns and places this within a set of principles based within a shared appreciation of an integrated bodymind, alongside trust, relational enquiry, space holding, connectivity and nourishment.

In embracing these principles, what other modes of supervisory experiences might emerge?

What happens if we foreground allowing, attuning, waiting, non-doing, listening, improvising?

What happens if we make space time for (repeated) meta-reflections on the experience of experiencing (in) the research journey?

What happens if we re-configure supervision as a witnessing practice? Perhaps being with and a holding space for mindful self-observation and quiet reflecting, tracking processes and emerging articulations.



Defining and redefining research terms in and through the dance studio

Purpose:

To work with candidates who are grappling with the articulation and definition of the terms they are using in their research. To forge a deeper understanding of how the terminology the candidate chooses is expressed and redefined in the dance studio. It can be an interesting method to use in an early-stage of the research, when the candidate is developing their research methods.

Activity:

During a supervision meeting outside the dance studio supervisor suggests the candidate identify some key terms they have been using to situate their research or to articulate their methods (for example; “third space”, “affect”, “in-situ”, etc.). The candidate and the supervisor might decide on terms that need to be more deeply understood and/or personally defined within their research process. After the terms have been chosen discuss where they come from, how they have been used/defined in the past, and how the candidate is thinking about their use within their own research. Then meet in the dance

studio to approach understanding how the terms get translated into or out of practice. Supervisor asks the candidate to prepare some methods for the studio for both participate in.

The idea is not that the methods reflect the terms (or vice versa), but that all are working within the framework of research in relationship to the terms. In the studio, the candidate to guides the process. The practice is about getting the candidate to articulate verbally and physically an entry-point into methods that at any given moment are in relationship to the terms they are using in their research. Time is dedicated to moving and not talking, and some time is given to just talking. The candidate and the supervisor can challenge the definitions of, experiences with, and uses of the terms in question in the hope that we might come into a share understanding and more enlivened and embodied relationship with them, together.

Juliette Mapp
Stockholm University of the Arts

An invitation for a walking discussion

Purpose:

Tutorial outdoors, either supervisor or doctoral candidate can propose a route or meeting point for a walk during which tutorial happens. This suits different phases of the research and whenever a spacious quality could be helpful, e.g. in focusing research, in considering ethical situations.

Activity:

Walking outdoors side by side (supervisor and doctoral candidate) and talking about the research enables the issues at hand to become more evident by the rhythm of walking, pauses, and the absence of a face to face position. Either of the walkers can plan the route, or it might be that this will be revealed through the common decisions while walking. At times, the candidate may clarify some aspects of the research by stepping aside from the route and moving and talking simultaneously e.g. the structure of the research and paying attention to the possible pauses, since they may show the unsolved matters as the candidate lives them through the body. Researching itself is put into a larger frame outside the academia allowing the environment around to affect to the discussion.

...many directions are open and yet each step confirms the chosen path.

Kirsi Heimonen, Uniarts Helsinki

Materialise your PhD!

Purpose:

Useful for communication between candidate and supervisor every once in a while, to gain a general sense of overview or a better understanding of a particular aspect. Can be instigated by candidate or supervisor.

Activity:

Think of a suitable space that stands in relationship to the research practice (a studio, a media art lab, an outdoor site, a meditation room etc.). You need to have easy access to the space and enough time to work in it.

The candidate prepares the room with the idea of laying out, materially, either “the whole PhD” or a particular issue / method / question / aspect.

Things to ask yourself in preparation:

If my PhD was made of things, objects or materials, what would they be?

What are the things, objects and materials that I am around when doing this research?

What of the things, objects and materials that I have so far engaged with in my research has most resonance for me, most strongly activates my thinking / feeling / doing in relationship the particular aspect I am focusing on right now?

Gather some or all of the above in a space with you and begin to build a structure in the space that you are in. Is it three-dimensionally built into the space

or does it occupy the floor, one or several walls, the ceiling (alone)?

Can someone enter it or is it better to be looked at from outside? What sensory qualities play a role in reading and being with this work – smell, touch, sound – etc.?

Does what you make here ‘feel’ like your doctoral research?

When you are ready, invite your supervisors to enter the space, alone or with you.

You can give them a specific task or score, something to focus on or post-it notes for comments. You can work with your supervisors in silence (all the way through), chat during a guided tour, discuss afterwards – whatever works.

Important: include the materials in your decision making, especially if you are not sure what goes where. Cultivate a sense of play. Imagine: all of your PhD is already here.

Or: all you need to answer this question / clarify this particular aspect, is present in the room. Think about what you expect from your supervisors before you invite them into your space. What kind of engagement would be helpful for you, right now? Think about what you expect from your supervisors before you invite them into your space and let them know. Duration: 2 - 3 hours.

Paula Kramer, Uniarts Helsinki

Creative practice in/as feedback

Continuing the emphasis on developing alternative models of supervision, here we consider the ways in which feedback is undertaken. We look again to practices beyond the academy for our inspiration - for dance, somatic and therapeutic practices can too inform the giving and receiving of feedback. Models such as Liz Lerman's 'Critical Response Process' (2003), Goats Island's iterative creative practice (2000), Vida Midgelow and Jane Bacon's 'Creative Articulation Process (CAP)' (2014), alongside processes of witnessing in Authentic Movement and various reflective dyadic models as developed by Hincks (2014) who was (influenced by Eugene Gendlin's *Focusing* process for working with the 'felt sense' (1978), offer felt, embodied and art-centred ways of engaging in feedback. They enable a shift away from the often useful, but generally only functional, 'track change' comments, wherein feedback is focused in activities of writing and limited to (often negative) critique in a reactive mode. The processes described may take more time, one thing among many that is currently problematic for supervisors, but testing out new and innovative approaches to feedback can shift the candidate-supervisor relationship - as well as potentially altering university supervision practices and perhaps in turn, the policies relating to doctoral processes more widely.

Making a critical response can be usefully seen as a way of continuing the flow of ideas, perpetuating the development of practices - be they manifest in writing, image or movement - in ways that open possibilities or focus attention, rather than reduce or confine. Reflecting on feedback, Goat Island write, 'we want to keep the creative mind engaged as we engage the critical mind. Critical does not mean negative. It means discerning, or able to separate into parts', they invite us to 'focus on a miraculous moment', suggesting delightfully, that in doing so 'we become one who is defined by the perception of the proliferation of miracles' (2000: 25).

Feedback requires attending to and negotiating the purpose, situation, and recipient of the feedback, and may entail verbal, physical, drawn or other ways of critically and supportively engaging with the work of another. It might encompass bringing to bear attentive, supportive, challenging, gentle, dialogic, playful, directive, reinforcing, opening, timely, multimodal, appreciative, reflective, multi-directional, interdisciplinary, focused, particularized and contextualised knowledges, in individually-focused processes.

Above all, the processes offered here emphasise the central importance of being with and experiencing the artistic research. And they take time and energy to move out of the university timetable constraints and expectations that a 'tutorial' will take place for a certain amount of time (one hour?) in a certain place (supervisor's office?). Thereby we implicitly challenge such time, space and roles to offer alternative modalities.

Task in pairs

One speaks, one listens.

Speak about and describe your creative practice

Listen to the speaker and reflect back only the words they use

Resist interpreting or asking questions yet,

Work on being fully attentive to what the speaker is saying and trying to say

Both write what has been spoken.

Compare notes.

Notice what has been forgotten, The difference between what you thought you said and what the listener tells you was said.

Swap roles and repeat.

Jane Bacon and Vida L Midgelow (2014)



Feedback as narrative

Give your feedback as a narration of experience....

Tell a story, offer an account...

Avoid judgement, but describe deeply and richly, putting yourself into the story.

What was your 'howness' with the material?

What, for example, were your levels of focus, what called your attention?

What stayed with you or what gave rise to uncertainty?

Artistic Researcher as Questioner

Artistic researcher begins with their questions about their work.

The facilitator/supervisor/colleague/audience helps to 'hone' these into clear areas of questioning. The key here is that all are giving feedback which is intended to enable the artistic researcher to further develop their own work.

The focus here is on questions which arise from the artistic researcher and the role of the facilitator/supervisor/colleague/audience is to find ways to discuss these topics rather than topics which may only reflect our own concern/interests.

Adapted from Liz Lerman (2003)

Peer-to-Peer Feedback Chain

Context:

A group activity to prompt peer exchange.

Activity:

Form into a circle - ideally, on one side you will have a person you consider to be 'close' to your work and, on the other side - someone whose research is (in some way) contrasting. Move in, out and around the circle until you all find a suitable place.

Form pairs with the person on your left and on your right, such that everyone is in two pairings. In these pairs you will give and receive feedback. Arrange one-to-one time / spaces to meet in each of your pairings - you will need two 45-min slots.

When you meet remember that you are both responsible for ensuring equity in the giving and receiving of feedback. Note that you are working to develop creative, critical and importantly reflexive modes of engagement in your pairs. It takes practice, care and attention to yourself and your partner to avoid judgement or resist offering 'solutions'.

Step 1 (10 mins)

Partner 1: Shares something of their work (an extract of writing, an image or performance for example).

Partner 2: Describes what they have experienced.

Describe without judgment.

Simply describe / list / summarise what you have seen/read/heard in thickly descriptive language.

What stands out? What was meaningful / memorable / stimulating / surprising / difficult to you?

You might offer this in a list of words or perhaps as a narrative.

Step 2 (10 mins)

Partner 1: Situates themselves in the work and suggests two topics / questions they would like to pursue and that would assist the process.

Today I have been working on...

I am thinking about.... What is significant to me is... What I have been tussling with is...

Partner 2: Offers a response to these topics / questions.

Offer reflexive, non-judgmental comments in relation to the questions asked – remembering to locate your own bias and position (or indeed lack of knowledge).

Step 3 (20 mins)

Partners 1 and 2: Swap roles and follow Step 1 and 2

Step 4 (15 mins)

Both partners Discuss what will be useful to take forward to the next conversation.

Note that you are working to develop creative, critical and importantly reflexive modes of engagement in your pairs – this takes practice and real care / attention to yourself and your partner and avoids judgement or offering 'solutions'.

The feedback chain borrows and adapts the first stages of Liz Lerman's 'Critical Response Process' (2003) and was developed for a summer research intensive at Middlesex University for arts and communication candidates.

Vida L. Midgelow
Middlesex University, London

Advice:

A rule of thumb on feedback - give/get it early, often, and a lot ... (from colleagues, collaborators, co-researchers and your supervisory team).

More advice:

Reflect on the model(s) of supervision you are working with ... are you debunking the master-apprentice model? - this is a two-way process.

Even more advice:

Stay in the practice. Speaking from and with practice may help all to manage and focus modes of critique. Keep showing and seeing work, keep practicing together.

Collective effort and research communities

The process of undertaking a doctorate, especially through artistic research, is a collaborative and networked one. So whilst in the above the focus was largely on the co-relational nature of supervision and feedback, here we reach out to and reflect on the significance of research environments and all those that carry responsibility for engendering positive working contexts, wherein individual practices are seen to be supported by more extended networks across and beyond academic contexts. Christine Halse and Peter Bansel (2012) have called this the 'learning alliance', writing:

The concept of the learning alliance shifts the focus from the individual student or supervisor and their dyadic relationship, and foregrounds the role and relationships of the multiple agents involved in doctoral education across the university community [...]. The learning alliance recognises that all participants in the doctoral process bring resources to and make demands on each other but defines their relationship as a cooperative endeavour of reciprocal responsibilities and obligations. (2012: 384)

Lynn McAlpine, calls for supervision to be considered a 'collective institutional responsibility' in which the 'experience of supervision is situated in student

Creative response**Context:**

This feedback process is inspired by the performance work of Goat Island. They write that their work is a series of responses 'to the exercises we give ourselves, to our surroundings, to the events of the world, but mostly, to each other. We perform responses for each other back and forth. The conversation goes further than were we just talking. At the end of the conversation we have a piece in front of us and it's ready to show. These conversations take place over a long period of time. As in a chess match, each response is carefully considered. Time, and therefore, dreams and reverie are part of the conversation'.
www.karenchristopher.co.uk

Activity:

This can be done by colleagues or candidate and supervisor at any stage of the research process but uniquely allows the supervisor a creative response rather than positioning the supervisor as the one who only gives verbal or written feedback and in this way nullifying the supervisor's artistic contribution to the candidate.

*Partner 1: Present a small task, improvisation, selection of a work, etc.
Partner 2: Make a performed response to what you have experienced.*

Repeat, set the time limit for each part of the task depending on what is available today.

'Think of a creative response as your own work that would not have existed without the work you are responding to. Start with the most obvious miraculous moment that you see in the work. What is obvious to you may not be obvious to anybody else.

You may have an association with that moment. You may want to echo it, multiply it in some other way. Work out from that moment. The moment may have been intentional or accidental. Instead of a moment, your starting point might be a structural element, a visual element, a spatial element - anything. We want to destabilize the boundaries between critical modes and the creative modes to enrich them both.'

Adapted from Goat Island (2000: 25)

desire to be agentive, to draw on a range of relationships that support progress' (2013: 259). We are naming such learning alliances and collective responsibilities, 'collective effort' (hooks, 1994). In citing hook's term, our approach to 'collective effort' can also be understood to reflect a radical feminist/pedagogic position. This is a place in which all are empowered, diversity is respected, there is an increased attention to the agency of the candidate and peer to peer support in a mutually generative environment. This is a challenge to established paradigms (especially in the humanities) wherein the 'lone researcher' and primacy of the supervisor-candidate relationship still reside.

Effective environments in which such alliances and individual agencies are fostered are not something that can be readily or solely provided by the university or venue. Instead it is a co-generated and atmospheric thing. It requires systemic changes within organisational structures, as well as commitment, engagement and generosity from everyone in order to flourish. Through such collective effort, spaces to explore, take risks, to (not) know, question and critique are made. Below we outline some of the ways the Artistic Doctorates in Europe has been exploring how to create spaces of/for collective effort.

For example, during 2018 ADiE hosted two research intensives in which workshops, conversations, working groups, and presentations were curated for an international gathering of movement-based candidates. The intensives invited the participating researchers to share concerns, test practices and to think, talk, move and question together. During the week-long intensives candidates were given time and space to work with questions both in discussion and in practice.

In designing these intensives, we asked:

What are the feedback processes that might best support and/or propel our personal research practices? How do we create the contexts/cohorts/conditions needed in order to contribute critically to the research practices of our peers, colleagues and fellow artists? How are we working to articulate, materialise and communicate our artistic research to the broader dance community, to other institutions, other fields, fellow artists and audiences? (see research intensives documentation at www.artisticdoctorates.com)

Through these weeks we found the need to carefully consider the relationship between collective support and joint concerns, with the interests of individuals and the particularities of each person's specific research. In other words, how create a community that understands the benefits of, and is invested in, collective effort? We also sought to develop awareness and skills for all the participants of good practice in feedback - such that all have a voice and are heard.

Design an artistic research intensive

Purpose:

To develop dedicated time and space for supervisors and candidates to work intensively and relationally.

Activity:

Design a research intensive with the following questions in mind:

Who is it for?

What space and other resources can you provide?

What is the focus of the shared time?

Is it part of the academy or hosted by the cultural sector? If the former,

then is it appropriate to invite cultural sector professionals to one or two events of the week?

If so, what are they looking at, why are they there, what do you want from them?

What skills, frameworks and conditions will be needed, and how will these be generated?

Such shared communities in which collective effort can be forged may be framed as part of taught or credit bearing elements within a Doctoral programme. Whilst mostly in the UK such taught elements are not required, offered as options for candidates rather than assessed re-requisites, other countries do have courses or modules that are credit-bearing. Below are two examples of the type of courses devised to support the development of artistic doctorate studies that indicate the type of topics Artistic research candidates may find useful:

Joining the Research Community

Approaches to Artistic Research

- Artistic research as a research field
- Methods in artistic research
- Techniques and means in artistic research

Foundations of Theory Formation in Artistic Research

- Philosophy of artistic research
- Neighbouring disciplines of artistic research
- Field-specific theories in art

Traditions, History and Current Trends in Performing Arts

- Approaches in art history and cultural history
- Historical dimensions of the research topic
- Current phenomena and future prospects in performing arts

Social and Pedagogical Dimensions of the Performing Arts

- Art pedagogy and university pedagogy
- Artist-researcher as an expert and a contributor in society

Specific Studies on the Research Topic

- Theories, artistic techniques and tools supporting the research

There are two obligatory modules:

Joining the research community, and Approaches to Artistic Research.

(Doctoral Programme of Artistic Research in Performing Arts
The Theatre Academy, University of the Arts, Helsinki)



Knowledge Development in Artistic Research

Method and Methodology in Artistic Research

Processes of Documentation in Artistic Research

Exposition in Artistic Research

and

Doctoral Seminars (PhD candidates have to attend and write a summary of all the percentage seminars which they are required to attend over the duration of their PhD)

(General syllabus for Third-Cycle Studies in Performative and Mediated Practices leading to a Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Fine Arts, Stockholm University of the Arts)

There are now also established communities for artistic research through which doctoral projects can be shared and supported, providing an international fora and interdisciplinary exchange. In *Getting Started with Networking and Presenting Doctoral Artistic Research*, Laura Gröndahl and Leena Rouhiainen (2019) offer useful suggestions as to how to find, participate and benefit from such communities, writing:

by participating in networks and attending platforms of artistic research you yourself grow into a recognized member of the community. Additionally, it is in the networks of artistic research [...] that topical challenges are discussed, research findings are introduced and collaborations are initiated amongst peers. It is centrally through them that the domain of artistic research is maintained and critically developed.

The group environments and practices we foreground here echo the tendency toward collaborative working and shared practices that are part of movement and performance practices more widely and are in contrast to the lone scholar model that still arguably reflects approaches to research in some (but by no means all) disciplines. Research and arts communities that are networked, co-created, sometimes self-organised, maybe informal, and increasingly digital, may offer rich and generative spaces through which distributed and collective effort can take place. There is a need to find or make such communities of practice in which peership within the practice of 'doing a PhD' can be fostered. Supervisors, as we mentioned in the preface, are also in need of such support networks, training events and for events where artistic research is shared more widely ([ADiE survey](#)). Such communities and peership allow much-needed connectivity and may act, 'in part, as a challenge to the academy's (and the economy's) investment in individual achievement, which typically neglects opportunities for reflection and empathy' (AGA collaborative, 2018: 367).

Design an artistic research seminar series

Supervisors and candidates co-design (a real or imagined) seminar series for a group of Artistic Doctoral candidates.

- *consider the rationale for your emphasis*
- *establish a structure and weekly contents*
- *develop a reading / viewing list*
- *set out a pedagogic approach*
- *devise an assessment*

A research residency, a practice research 'seminar' series, an online group or other environments can be a space for explorations to take place wherein co-enquiry and empathy may emerge. They require acceptance of and a working toward an ethics of mutual and reciprocal responsibility. The key features of such relationships, Christine Halse and Jane Malfroy write, are: 'respect between all parties; flexibility in accommodating personal and professional circumstances; clear communication and explicit strategies for progressing towards common goals; and active, meaningful and productive facilitation of this relationship by all involved' (Halse & Malfroy, 2010).

Further it is useful to name - as a reminder - the significance of, and respect for, diversity, noting and celebrating the wide range of backgrounds, values, beliefs, experiences and expertise that artistic researchers bring to the academy. For perhaps, the opportunities for different ways of being and doing that artist research promotes, might also give rise to an expanded engagement from those that have in past be under-represented.

Negotiating Different Contexts

Extending collective effort, a growing number of cultural sector organisations have experience of, or are becoming interested in, working with and supporting artistic doctoral candidates. In this collective model artistic research exists beyond the walls of academia and is part of the professional arts world. Indeed many supervisors and candidates themselves cross sectors, having established or emerging practices and relationships, wherein their identities are more less hybrid and the doctoral context/agendas may be more or less explicit. For some the doctoral process builds on a long-established professional artistic practice, but others are developing their artistic research and are perhaps interested in building a professional profile simultaneously.

Recognising the importance of reaching beyond academia, such cross-sector working is formalised in some countries (Finland and Sweden, for example), as one supervisor can be a professional artist with no affiliation to the university. In this way a precedent is established with all involved understanding the role and purpose of the artistic research in the wider

Give collaboration a chance: Understanding and creating space and time for collaboration to have a chance

Purpose:

For supervisors, candidates and other collaborators interested in developing collaborative partnerships and practices. Acknowledging the creative and collaborative research environment as a productive space for supervisions. Through learnt experience an office, a meeting or a coffee shop aren't conducive for supervisions, well not all the time. For peers (candidate and supervisors) to engage in a collaborative discourse to support the development of the research projects and the researcher's skills and activities following some simple, but important principles in how to meet can deeply affect a positive direction of travel for the candidate and their project as well as the cultural sector collaborator and supervisors.

Activity:

- I. *Ask how can everyone arrive ready to collaborate? (This action is vital for facilitating rich critical dialogue, collaboration and a peer-to-peer relationship). Perhaps, all arrive having completed a shared task, with a question, with an offering to each other*
- II. *Meet in the studio or the research environment (e.g. a dance studio, gallery, public space) Make a collaborative agreement about how to work together today with what you have brought, Give time and space to listen to one another, perhaps using a device such as a 'listening stick' to ensure each has the time and space they need.*

Paul Russ
Dance4, international Centre for
Choreography, Nottingham

professional context. In other examples, such as the UK, collaboration may be established by the university who is interested in developing research in a particular subject. The Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK, fund such collaborations, stating that they provide ‘opportunities for doctoral students to gain first-hand experience of work outside the university environment and enhance the employment-related skills and training a research student gains during the course of their award.’ Further, according to the AHRC, they ‘can have long-term benefits for both collaborating partners, providing access to resources and materials, knowledge and expertise that may not otherwise have been available and also provide social, cultural and economic benefits to wider society’ ([AHRC website](#)). A dance example of two such AHRC awards offered by Dance4 and Middlesex University can be found as a [case study](#) on the ADiE website.

Such cross-sector collaborations are though not without their challenges and are currently largely dependent on individual connections, and the capacity and commitment of those involved. The field is shifting and programmers, producers and artist researchers are often making a point of developing ways to work together. We have heard producers and other cultural sector partners asking how they can be involved and questioning how artistic research can be supported and brought to a public. In such questions the complexity of artistic research needs continual articulation, such that partners might understand the research needs and that researchers attend to the complexities of public engagement.

It is not always that the research will need a venue or that there will be a finished work that will draw a large audience. Yet collaboration and communication between the varying potential partners requires that everyone finds a shared language or agrees to acknowledge differences while looking for congruencies. It might seem that there is a gulf between the two that seems insurmountable with producers feeling the artistic research is not intended for a public audience and the artistic researcher feeling a lack of support for the development of their artistic work in the public realm. The collective process invites all involved to come into the research in ways that make clear to all what the research is and what it needs, as well as what might be possible when positioned in a professional, community or other specific context.

Paula Kramer and Emma Meehan interrogate such dilemmas in their essay *About Adequacy: Making Body-Based Artistic Research Public* (2019). They note that

Non-academic settings also often provide spaces and communities for sharing artistic research that stems from doctoral projects. We therefore think it relevant for the positioning of artistic research to divide less into academic and non-academic, and look instead for other qualifiers such as the clarity and scope of research questions or a transparent and productive engagement with research methods.

Pursuing how the public presentation of artistic research can be developed such that they are experienced by artists, venues and the public alike as ‘co-productive and mutually influential configurations’, they reach out to Tim Ingold, writing

that the joint ‘like the rest of the skeleton, was never actually assembled but has rather grown with the person to whom it belongs’ (Ingold 2016, 12). This equally happens in the development of adequate formats for sharing, where elements of the research and presentation situation all meet, forming joints and support structures that together grow into a format. In this sense, the concept of correspondence encourages the artistic researcher to allow the format for sharing to grow incrementally with the materials, environment, collaborators and audiences.

Addressing the topic of meeting audiences, they ask:

How do you offer your work to the public and what is the role of the audience?

Is your work accessible?

Are you interested in physical and psychological security or in destabilising comfort zones?

Do you meet the audience before or after, move or talk with people in groups or one to one?

Do you want to use guides through the work, a performer or volunteer, or employ written materials to provide guidance?

Are you interested in generating responses that feed back into the investigation, and if so, what kind of feedback is useful and how will you gather this?

(Kramer and Meehan 2019)

Z-Free: Opening up the artistic research process or engaging with audiences outside the academy

Could - or should - the audience have a role in an Artistic Research process? To further explore this with audiences, Zodiak (Helsinki, FI) created a laboratory named Z-free, an initiative that emerged from artistic researchers’ increasing needs to try out ideas, present unfinished work and test limits. A rehearsal space was provided by the organisation, as well as a small amount of economic support. Researchers were offered a test audience whose reactions and presence the artist could observe in relation to the work-in-progress. This body-to-body experience established a direct conversation between the artistic ideas and their receptors. At the same time, the artistic researcher operated in an area free from the pressure to produce something finished and polished; an environment that for itself encouraged taking greater risks.

In this way, the audiences of Z-free provided an experience for the artists to reflect on how the heterogeneous bodies react to the artistic outcome under construction.

Could artistic research — often unfinished and in process be shared the same way, in order to experience the connection with the audience? A sharing of artistic research in process, perhaps several times during the process could also inform the (non-professional) audiences on the development of a research question and on the research mentality in dance and movement. A body-to-body experience with unfinished artistic research would also introduce the audiences to an environment of bodily discourses: into an embodied research-thinking. Still, we must ask, is experiencing artistic research meaningful both to the artistic researcher and the spectator, or does the experience of the audience even matter: are they just employed to reflect on the researcher’s process? And, is there something a production house or a theatre could bring to the research, maybe in relation to the audiences, that for the academic field is challenging to provide?”

Laakso Riikka, Zodiak Centre for New Dance, Helsinki

It is also useful to note how formal collaborations in the support of artistic research and to the benefit of publics might be built. As formal collaborations, it might be that cross-fertilisations and mutual benefits reach beyond an individual research practice to operate in a more systemic mode. As noted above, the inclusion of supervisors beyond the university and the establishment of collaborative doctoral projects, that may respond to the cultural sectors interests and/or the wider social sphere, offer examples of such formal relationship being forged.

Further considerations for research collaborations have been usefully discussed by the Beyond the Campus research network which brought together academics and cultural providers to consider collaborations across higher education and the creative economy (www.creative-campus.org.uk). They posit that shared communities of practice stimulate the development of 'creative human capital' and enable 'third spaces' for research and innovation. Third spaces, they suggest, are 'neither solely academic spaces nor solely creative and cultural production spaces but an open, creative and generative combination of the two' (Comunian and Gilmore 2015: 18). These spaces might be physical, virtual, event-based or a mix of different exchanges across time and space. These spaces enable the development of adaptable, creative and innovative human capital.

In order to develop upon and formalise such third spaces - while enabling and celebrating the organic and dynamic potentials they embody - there is a need to acknowledge power relationships and to establish common, or at least transparent and mutually beneficial, agendas and goals. Further, in the undertaking of such work there is a need to ensure all have suitable time and skills, and that the financial implications and systems are understood and planned for. In other words: 'For relationships between universities and local communities to prosper they need to be nurtured and built on trust and reciprocity, challenging the tendencies towards naked instrumentalism, and reductive processes of supply and demand' (Comunian and Gilmore 2015: 14). If such partnerships can be developed, it is clear that Artistic Doctorates and the cultural partners that engage with them, can, in the best of cases, enrich and cross-fertilise each other in a sharing of creative knowledge.

Reaching too, beyond the cultural sector, increasingly artistic doctoral research is inter/trans-disciplinary in outlook. Engaging deeply with important issues such as the environment, wellbeing, and migration. Supporting research and enabling the impacts to be realised, requires environments and training that can facilitate inter/trans-disciplinary supervision and networks wherein the mutual benefits of artistic research are recognised. Such environments support both the research development and the presentation / sharing of the artistic practice, assisting researchers to make a difference, to audiences and local communities and beyond to health, education, technology, science and in time to the creative economy.

Describe your work for different audiences

- An academic conference*
- An arts programmer*
- A local media outlet*
- A charity*
- A local community group*

The Coach Tour

Purpose:

To demonstrate the necessity for artistic intervention, better resourcing and/or increased provision in a site or context of your choice. For a mixed group of cultural leaders, council decision makers, funders and artistic researchers. The mix is necessary to ensure cross-sector awareness, support and collaboration.

Activity:

Host a tour of your proposed site or context of enquiry with a mixed group that may have the decision-making power, finances and/or skills to ensure deep and meaningful cross-sector collaboration to support your practice. It is important that this tour is in and of itself an artistic offering. For example, hire a coach and have it driven around your site, hosted by performance artists in an absurdist take on the holiday coach-trip, complete with group songs and games.

This playful participation will disarm your group, which is intended to encourage informal discussion in which incidental conversations may take place inspiring ideas between tour guests who may not have otherwise met. Your example might be subtler or contemplative, or offered through a different medium, but the key is to ensure that the group can have a shared experience through artwork which becomes the platform from which you go on to discuss your site.

This practice was developed by Tracing the Pathway, with the specific example cited commissioned by Tracing the Pathway for Groundwork in Milton Keynes and presented by artist duo Hunt and Darton.

Tracing the Pathway
Independent, UK

An Aquarium in Kiasma Theatre

Context:

Kiasma Theatre organised an Artistic Research Day with doctoral candidates from Uniarts Helsinki in 2018. The day was co-curated with two of the candidates and included several lecture performances and many talks, plus dialogue with the audience.

Activity:

On a stage place 'an inner circle' / 'an aquarium' of about ten chairs where audience members / doctoral candidates can enter to discuss the day, and explore artistic research in general. The rest of the audience listens. Whenever somebody leaves the stage, a new person from the audience can enter.

Jonna Strandberg
Kiasma, Helsinki

Mediating artistic research processes and outcomes

Purpose:

Facilitating the practice of artistic research by curating adequate and flexible spaces for sharing with the public and the artistic field.

Artistic research projects hosted for expositions by independent art-spaces, venues, and institutions with various possibilities to mediate processes and outcomes through elaborative formats for sharings, discussions and dialogues through adequately curated events.

Activity/Prompts:

Plan to present candidates' on-going artistic research through a cross-disciplinary approach including expositions of artistic material, e.g. films and video installations, durational live actions, public talks, invited guests, circle discussions, and lecture performances.

Consider different forms that activate collegial as well as audience engagements, dialogues and discussions that may function as research inputs within curated symposium-like formats.

If possible, produce a printed catalogue where the artworks/performances in question are presented with texts and images.

The event schedule should be available for easy access and to give an overview of the content.

A milieu is created, a variety of formats to access the work.

How might you, for an ongoing durational event, ensure there is time and space for contemplation and discussion. Create space to allow the viewer/participants to be inside the work as a critical space for reflection.

Candidates should look for a flexible space, an open-minded venue, technically equipped with strong technical support and PR.

The curatorial space/time/mediation aspect could be made in collaboration - this is an exchange process between researcher and curator of the venue/art space.

To curate an exhibition/performance/symposium time is key.

To also pay attention to the time in between events, make time for food and social encounters.

Anna Koch
Weld, Stockholm



CAMPUS – an example of a ‘third space’ in visual arts

CAMPUS is a year-long and city-wide independent study programme in curatorial, visual and cultural studies, based on collaborative knowledge production and innovative research practices.

CAMPUS is a porous, non-homogeneous, polyvocal forum for debate and the sharing of ideas and practices. It is designed to welcome participants from different backgrounds and disciplines, ages and interest areas (from artists to curators, historians and sociologists, economists and geographers, writers and dramaturgs, archivists and tutors, performers and architects, etc.) who wish to engage in conversations about contemporary debates, critical thinking and cultural studies.

As part of CAMPUS, participants devise and deliver a collective curatorial project and attend closed seminars and public lectures, with a guest artists/curators supporting the participants.

The level of the programme is equivalent to a postgraduate degree and participants are expected to continue developing their independent research while simultaneously engaging with Nottingham Contemporary discursive input and support structure.

Nottingham Contemporary

www.nottinghamcontemporary.org

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Here we give some brief (and some not so brief) responses (if not answers) to frequently asked questions that we commonly experience in supervisory conversations.

What do research questions look like in/for an Artistic Doctorate?

For artistic researcher's the process of asking questions, or tussling with problems, is not unfamiliar, yet these things are perhaps more commonly framed as areas of curiosity in which you might 'wonder what might happen if...' or you have a sense that entering this or that site might give rise to a 'something'. The generating of questions from such curiosities may feel forced but, in refining questions, there is also a refining of the focus and approach to the research. The research questions will also be formed and informed, both explicitly and implicitly, by the individual's field of practice and in turn, the questions will shape the research methods and be in some way 'revealed' and made present in/through the resulting outcomes.

Developing research questions is an imaginative task and iterative process. What is required is the following and 'testing-out' of the questions in a circular action. There is also need to be able to 'map' in a rational, or at least traceable, way from questions to research context and to research design. A key thing to look out for when developing questions is the extent to which a practice imperative is held within them - if the question could be undertaken without the researcher's own practice at the centre then they are likely to need revising!

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An overarching assessment of the usefulness of questions might be found through asking:

Do the questions inspire and inform the practice?

Do they help develop new insights and/or approaches in practice?

Are the questions ‘worth’ asking? Why?

In whose interest are the questions being asked? Or, in other words, who will the research make a difference to?

Here are some choreographers whose words might inspire the development of questions:

‘How do we come back . . . to a position of passionate ignorance, enough to choose something, instead of knowing everything?’ (Jonathan Burrows, 2010: 139).

‘How to practice with all your hundred trillion cells all at once?’ (Deborah Hay, www.deborahhay.com).

Consider (each and every day) the question: ‘How do you want to work today?’ (Jeroen Peeters, 2007: 112).

Being true to these questions (within ourselves and our practices) requires particular ways of being. For example, choreographer Deborah Hay prompts us to note how our ever-changing bodies both ground and forever expand our practices through the connection of cellular structures to the world. While dramaturg, Jeroen Peeters brings the situatedness of each day and the particularities of each context to the fore, asking that we challenge our ingrained ways of working and look again to consider what is ‘needed’ by the researcher and the research.

Does the thesis have to include a literature review?

Yes and no!

Many doctorates, especially by practice, might not have a section or chapter called the literature review, but that doesn’t mean this work isn’t important to undertake. In fact, it is critical. Indeed, part of the unstated requirements of a doctorate is that the research is located and the things that have gone before or sit alongside the research practice are made evident.

Also, because artistic research works from an individual practice and embraces both theory and practice in a variety of ways and means often eschewing the separation of such things. The otherwise commonly termed ‘literature review’ may need to be more encompassing hence the term ‘field review’ might be used because the locating of the ‘field’ is a ‘situating’ and it has the researcher in it!

Delving from the Creative Articulations Process

We ask (I wonder) what interests me? Allowing ourselves to be open to what we might be interested in today. What possibilities are you drawn to? We work to do this without judgment and without knowing where this will lead.

Ok, take a breath, a pause, a moment. Set aside your questions and forward carrying thought processes. Allow yourself to trust that these happen whether you choose them or not.

*What is drawing me?
What am I noticing right now in my practice?
What are my questions?
What am I curious about?
List them.*

*What do I want to investigate?
– theme, issue, idea, image, concept, experience, movement, relationship, etc..
Name as much as I know now.*

Jane Bacon and Vida L Midgelow (2014)

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The process of situating artistic research foregrounds connectivity to the fields of practice (that is who else makes work using a similar process or ‘skill’ set, whose work shares conceptual, aesthetic or thematic interests etc.) and areas of enskillment (what training techniques inform the artistic work, what methods are in use in the making process). Working to articulate, in whatever modality is right for your project, these fields of practice will situate your research in particular contexts and will help situate the questions posed.

All the tasks below seek to aid artistic researchers to articulate the fundamental tie to the situatedness of our embodied selves, for as Erin Manning suggests, ‘a body is not separate from its milieu’ (2013: 26).

What is the relationship between the writing and artistic practice?

Articulating the practice in written form takes time and academic conventions can feel stifling; John Paul Zacarrini calls it ‘a constipated process’ (2019) and Alys Longley notes how in ‘some circumstances, traditional academic forms of writing and the values underpinning them – of proof, explanation, analysis and rational linear argument, may constrain, rather than enable, creative research’ (2019).

Writing practice for the Doctorate requires the artistic researcher to develop a unique voice and structure that helps naming and ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of doings. Yet, there can be a danger that artistic practice becomes an illustration of, or gets lost in, the processes of writing and the engagement with theoretical concerns, rather than the necessary articulation of the doing of things which is inherent to artistic research. Often artistic researchers forget to name the most obvious (for example; what and how do I do what I do? what decisions have I made?), and become entangled with theorising an area of interest. Of course, such entanglements can be very interesting, and might be your very aim. But this takes time, clarity of purpose and practice.

As Longley reminds us ‘writing, like most creative work, is an embodied practice, riding on a vast ocean of techniques. We can choose which techniques we employ at any given moment’ (2019). In writing the practice,

Situating from the Creative Articulations Process

These are my contexts...

AND/OR

This is the context of my practice...

AND/OR

This is the context of this moment/ this work...

This is the body I have (trainings, physical memories, capacities, etc.)

...

These are the tools I have (genre, discipline, camera, editing software, etc.) ...

These are the people I am with...

This is the time I have...

This is the place I am in...

These are the things that I bring...

These are the ways I work...

This is the ‘howness’ of how I am here...

Jane Bacon and Vida L Midgelow (2014)

Scoping the field, developing awareness

Start with an identification and visual mapping of your fields - histories and lineage, current artists engaged with similar concerns or in a similar form, theories that are informing your practice and vice versa.

Identify and create your pre-histories, unquestioned traces and unspoken or unknown lineages.

Give attention to these unspoken lineages and make present current connectivities.

Be part of a situation that is greater than oneself, greater than one’s practice, to form a being in relation as part of the situation.

Be in conversation

Start (imagined or real) conversations with those multiple people that inspire you, or you wish to take to task or are informing your work (in any way).

Dance, walk and write alongside others.

Be in dialogue.

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reflective and poetic writings are useful. They may reveal things about the practice to the researcher as the work develops. It might be useful to set tasks to develop lots of ways to write - using different registers, forms and approaches - in order to give voice to the practice. How such writings find their way into the thesis needs careful consideration, but the incorporation of such writings are now commonplace within Artistic Doctorates.

It is also important to remember (particularly as the thesis develops and the writing practices becomes more directly focused on completion), that;

you are carrying out research for someone (as well as yourself), somewhere (a doctoral as well as a performance space, and one that is also a research set-up, within which writing plays its part), and to a particular end (or set of ends, one of which might be new creative work, but another of which is your own contribution to knowledge). (Melrose with Sachsenmaier, 2019)

With this in mind, it might be useful to remember that the writing is a dialogue with your practice, your inner witness and importantly, your reader.

write for yourself,
write for your collaborators,
write for your mother, brother, friends,
write for your examiners,
write for your readers,
write for all those unknown future readers
(...who, it is useful to remember, may never have the opportunity to experience the art practice)

From Creative Articulations Process

*... what leads from what to what?
how does a 'thing' emerge?*

*... track back and forth, noting the
back stitching or over stitching of
one question/step/idea in relation
to another...*

*Notice the 'whatness' of this
practice...*

Allow the 'whatness' to be 'felt'.

*You might write about this
'whatness'...*

*what does it look, feel, taste, sound
like?*

*Raising what you have (made)...
articulating through rending.*

What do I have? What can I name?

*What can I say now? What do I
know?*

Jane Bacon and Vida L Midgelow
(2014)

Smudge Skittle

*Use modes of writing that move
between 1) the immediate sensory
reach of your body in the specific
spaces of this practice, 2) the
abstract potential of what the
work can possibly do and 3) the
conceptual fields your project
touches. Try to cover each of these
three points in a single writing
session.*

*Thinking of scale in terms of
proximity and distance. What is
possible in your research now?
What is impossible, but imaginable
now? How might elements of the
imaginable impossible move into
the realm of the possible?*

*Telescoping awareness – from
immediate sensory detail to the
abstract principles that define a
field of practice. From a broad
abstract principal to a specific
moment - experienced, felt and
remembered.*

Extract from Alys Longley (2019)

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I don't think I have a research method!

Although there are no standard methodologies and related methods in artistic research there are a number of publications that offer various approaches (see the list of methodological texts above). Perhaps this is because the individual's artistic research already has a process and methods inherent in it, for artistic research is deeply informed by the movement, choreographic and performance knowledges at the intersection with reflective research processes.

John Freeman notes:

Research through practice might demonstrate resistance at source to any and all attempts at hedging the complexities of creative endeavour into something manageable... preferring instead to leave the edges unsecured and open to endless interpretation. There is something symptomatic of the creative process here. Creative makers are after all defined as much by their desire to seek problems out as their willingness to solve any extant problems that get in their way. Practitioners are quite logically drawn to the ambiguous, the marginal and the in-flux. (Freeman 2010: 115)

Freeman observes here a tendency in artistic research toward complexity and a resistance to processes that might be seen as reductive or that seek, too easily, to 'solve' problems. It is then perhaps not surprising that the terms methodology and method often seem to engender a level of mistrust by artistic researchers. Somehow the words may feel removed from practice - suggesting a fixed, even linear, approach, rather than an organic one, removing ambiguity and flux. However, it might be that, whilst the terminology is off-putting to some, the focus of how we go about researching/making/writing is at the very core of much artistic research. For, methodology is about the lens and approach through which you investigate or explore and methods are the how you do a thing.

These things might of be implicit and go unstated - such that the naming of a methodology or method might seem unnecessary. But undertaking Doctoral research requires a more coherent articulation of methodology such as why a particular way or method of doing has been selected over another, and how these are a suitable way to address the research questions. To our way of thinking, these are very much part of the artistic researcher's territory and foregrounds an investment in processes - rather than 'end-gaining' and the production of products.

An embodied process of naming

Do something, then name what you do. Say as much as you can about the skills, practices, aesthetics or other aspects that inform what you are doing.

Then ask yourself why this choice at this time. Your answer may reveal deeper aesthetic interests, trainings and even ideological and political biases.

These are brought into the light of day by naming them. When you have what you are doing - your methods - and why you are doing or using that particular method, then you have the capacity to articulate your methodology.

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Multiple Voices of Authorship Purpose:

To assist artists in benevolently acknowledging the materials they work with as active, agentic contributors to their work. These actions may support the development of more materially aware artistic practice. This action is best placed with another task or score that has already been tried and enjoyed.

Activity:

1. Set yourself a task or score and gather the materials that are involved in working that through.

2. Identify the materials you are working with, listing each material individually. Do not dismiss anything – the pencil, the shoes that surround your feet, the coffee you ingest – identify them all as co-conspirators who will shape the work.

3. Conduct an introductory conversation with each of the materials you have identified.

Ask your materials:

- What do you bring to this practice?*
- What potential do you have to give more to this practice?*
- Why can't I complete this practice without you?*
- How do you want this practice to start today?*

4. Answer these questions in turn for each of your materials. Deeply consider their answers by noticing their individual qualities and what that can offer the practice. Think about how they can impact the work or change the direction or dynamic of the work.

5. Conduct your task or score with these thoughts in mind, always noticing how and where the materials are actively shaping the practice alongside you.

6. Continue your conversation with your materials as you complete the task or score – address them directly, out loud or in writing, whichever best suits you all. Tell them what you are doing, have them tell you what they are doing.

7. Document how you have affected one another through the task, capturing particularly poignant moments of conversation.

In doing this task you are seeking to understand what the materials you work with offer to your practice rather than solely acting as instruments to a detached, non-material, human practice. This task embraces the idea of anthropocentrism in order to find common ground with materials, and to engender the sense that the world is filled with a multiplicity of material agents.

Ashleigh Bowmott
University of Chichester

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It is also common in an Artistic Doctorate to employ a mixed-method approach, drawing upon and adapting various methodologies/methods that encompass experimental, philosophical, hermeneutic and participatory approaches, that are placed within or alongside the practice. And these might in themselves be inflected through a practice approach - such that interviews, for example, are undertaken within the frame of improvisation or in meditative state. Knowing the purpose and place of such methods - what role each serves in helping the development of the research overall is key here so as to avoid what can be confusing and over-complicated.

It is also possible for art practices themselves to offer research methods - such that rather than reaching to other (established) research disciplines - we can consider what happens if practice methods are also the research methods. How, for example, might the witnessing process of Authentic Movement become not only a movement practice, but be itself a method for dialogic research and reflection? Or, how might Bartenieff fundamentals give rise to a structural model through which to work?

I'm reading all this theory, but I'm not sure what to do with it

Artistic research is not generally based on abstract argumentation but draws upon practitioner knowledge. Established theoretical or philosophical materials can help deepen and articulate the artistic work. Yet ways of working with or applying such conceptual knowledge, while retaining the centrality of the creative processes, can be difficult and feel overwhelming.

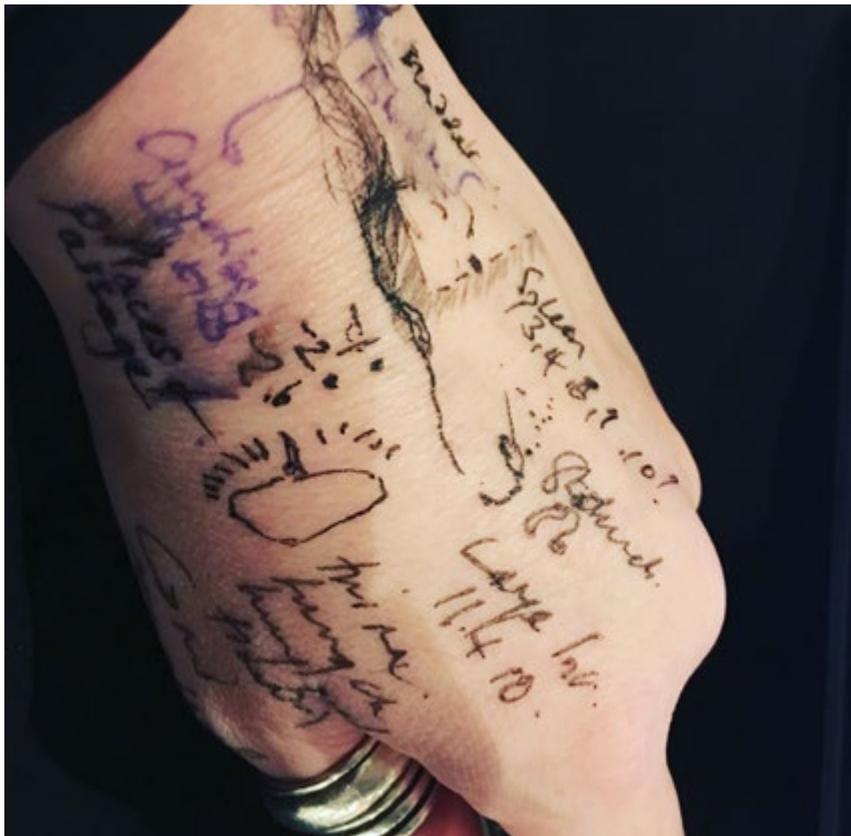
Susan Kozel describes the relationship of theory and practice in the following terms:

At first glance practice seems so heavy, and the theories so ephemeral yet in reality, ideas are felt, touched and lived, and breathed; practice is ephemeral, changeable, invisible and disappearing. Writing and thinking are practices, just as moving and making are highly conceptually driven. By diluting the strong duality, changing the terms of the debate and making them fluid, it is possible to escape old value judgments and to appreciate the terrain that opens. (Kozel 2011: 206)

Barbara Bolt suggests a 'double articulation' (2010: 29) with theory emerging from a reflexive practice, while at the same time practice is informed by theory. In Bolt's approach, and in the one implied in this document, theory and practice are intertwined and enmeshed. The articulation of one shifts, alters and informs the other. It is also important to keep remembering that the artistic research is the heart of this and so theoretical interests must in some way emerge from, fold back into, or in some other way relate, to the artistic practice. A good rule of thumb is, if you find yourself caught up in trying to articulate dense theory but can't tell how the theory relates to the practice, then we advise heading back to your practice to find answers rather than searching in the books.

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One final thought: sometimes but not always, focus on articulation of the theory gets tied up with finding your voice or how to write. It may be in this stage of the process that you find yourself more concerned with detail of 'track change' comments in order to help get the writing to a certain academic standard. This might be needed - but - notice it. Take time to consider if more creative ways to enable the development of an appropriate writing style could be found. This is a red alert moment. A moment perhaps to return to creative practice for solutions.



Thinking through theory You might...

Remember that, when you talk about your work with others or reflect on it in writing - you are already engaging in an act of theorising your practice.

Embrace the pleasures of reading, hearing, absorbing, applying and owning theory as part of your practice, not separate to it.

Allow theories to enter as a deepening of that everyday process of thinking about work - your own or others - widening the references that complement your own thinking.

Give time and space to extending and advancing your theoretical references.

Imagine theoretical materials residing in you like an embodied archive.

Engage in processes of iterating and reiterating, appropriating and repositioning, agreeing and disagreeing.

Attend to processes of improvisation, conversation and composition, becoming aware of how you are encountering, unpacking, selecting, and applying theory as you go.

Take pleasure in the theories themselves.

And remain open to the fact that theorising practice is always a simultaneously creative and critical act.

Slightly adapted from Josephine Machon (2019)

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How I can talk about everything that is going on in the practice?

You can't and that is ok!

One of the pleasures and difficulties of artistic research is that the practice will always in some way exceed the boundaries of the research questions and remain outside of the scope of what it is possible to frame and articulate. Celebrate this excess!

At the same time, the requirement in a doctorate to fully consider and be cognizant of (all) the implications of the emerging research practice, also means that these 'excesses' have to be recognised and in some way managed. So whilst not everything that is present in practice will be the subject of the thesis - knowing and deciding what has to come into your frame (for it is too loud or too pressing to ignore it) and what can be 'bracketed off' (as something to note but not to be explicitly explored further) - needs thought.

This topic is also related to the way in which the written aspect of the thesis might be structured. Often artistic researchers write in a linear fashion following the temporal processes undertaken in the research but asking if this is the best way to speak to the reader or for the reader/viewer to engage with the insights and knowledge in the thesis is an important consideration. Making this decision is also to do with knowing where the originality and the real emphasis of the research is. Is it in the process, in the product, in the interaction with an audience etc., and how best to foreground that new knowledge and insight?

How might the practice be represented?

The question of documentation in artistic research has been extensively debated within the practice-as-research community (see for example Robin Nelson 2013, Caroline Rye 2003, Marisa Zanotti 2019, Simon Ellis and Rebecca Hilton 2019 as well as many of the other practice-as-research texts which each consider the role of documentation) and what is clear is, again, there is no one set way to document and present the work for final examination or to represent the practice within the final thesis. It might be that the question of documentation arises in discussion between candidate, supervisor and cultural sector partners throughout the process or it might not. But the Artistic Doctoral process will be lengthy and you will need evidence at the end of the process for the purposes of examination. Simon Ellis and Rebecca Hilton (2019) usefully ask

when, in which context and by whom shall it be considered or determined to be knowledge? How might practices of documentation and acts of documenting a performance or a

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practice frame or situate the ‘knowledge object’? Might documentation help provide a research project with the context, the conditions and even the criteria for its own assessment?
(Ellis and Hilton, 2019)

To add to those questions we offer possible provocations for all to consider:

Is gathering hours of unwatched video useful?

Will the examiner watch hours of rehearsal footage (probably not) or find specific moments on a longer video that corresponds to a particular section of writing (probably not)?

But on the other hand, you may need, particularly early on in the research, to video a lot of material until a more tightly focused aim or research questions arise. But for the purposes of examination, imagine the person reading needs a lot of help and support, so make the connections for them, use images as well as video to exemplify moments of written articulation.

How does documentation help the reader/viewer know what I want them to know?

How does the documentation hold and convey the research questions?

Have you thought about the format and clarity of presentation across multimodal forms including the longevity and accessibility of digital formats?

I want to incorporate a work I am being commissioned to make, is that ok?

In principle this is fine and it can provide valuable a context and resources for the research, but in practice it may also give rise to other issues. The requirements of the commissioner, the presentation context, the audience and perhaps your collaborators may pull your research into different directions. This may be a good thing! Or, it may mean that the research agendas are difficult to hold on to and that can feel compromising to the research. For example, the work might be made and performed according to the commissioner’s time frame and this could perceivably be a long time before the final examination. In the UK for instance, it is possible to have examiners present at performances at more than the final stage but in practice this means the examiner has to hold in mind the performance without very much context and with no opportunity to ask the candidate questions. Yet managing different contexts and audiences as part of research, attending to both inward and out-facing aspects is very much part of the artistic research experience. Ideally through engagement with the commissioner or programmer how the artistic research exists ‘in the world’ will be enriching for everyone.

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Can I do this? (Am I allowed to... Is it ok to...)

This is a question we quite often hear from artistic researchers. The assumption is that the supervisor and the institution have 'rules' that must be adhered to regarding the how, when and what of the artistic research. But in very many instances the how, when and what of practice is not pre-determined or regulated. This means that what you want to do must be discussed with supervisors and other partners for viability, resource implications and validity of the choice in relation to the research questions.

What we are really saying is that the power is most usually with you rather than with the institution and so you can discuss the needs of the research with your team. Perhaps this question is also symptomatic of particular stages in the research when the candidate is not yet feeling fully confident and so looks to the supervisor for support and approval.

As such, in responding to questions as to whether this or that is possible (or allowed), the concerns are commonly to do with the rational, the fit or coherence, the pragmatics of time and finance, and, as ever, the effect on, or link back to, the research questions.

How much practice needs to be submitted?

In some institutions, the number of performances as well as when they will be presented is fixed. In other places, there is more fluidity. For example, some state that the written part of the thesis must be no less than 35,000-word thesis but make no mention of amount/timing etc. of the practice element. This leaves the question about 'how much' practice to disciplinary differences and the requirements of your research. So - if you are working largely in live performance or in film, or exploring through a series of one to one encounters, or developing iterative/durational practices, the answer will be different. The question has to be asked in relation to the appropriateness of the practice to the thesis overall. Core to this is not 'how much' as an equivalence to a word count - but a judgement of significance, rigour and depth. Is the practice you plan to present 'enough' in relation to the 'claims'? Does it 'speak' strongly to the research questions? Is there 'enough' for your examiners to understand and appreciate the strands and depth of the research enquiry?

Perhaps more pragmatically, does it feel like three years of work (using the UK doctoral time frame)? And, if you review similar completed thesis in the field - does the practice component feel to be less or more than what you have. (Noting again that universities have different regulations and each submission is unique).

In contrast - it is useful to ask if there is too much practice. If not carefully selected and curated, the practice can feel as if it lacks focus or is inconsistent in its level of development. Is all the work to be submitted for examination 'final' or 'complete' or might some of the mass of material developed be more suitably be incorporated to provide insights in to process? And this may or may not be the 'work' that is suitable to examine - this will depend of the nature and focus of the research enquiry.

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How can I pay my performers? Can I get technical support?

Each institution will have established practices around technical and financial support. But often there is no funding for actually making work or paying for performers. This is only one of several unresolved resource issues. This leaves artistic researchers needing to apply for funding from other sources or restricting the practices they can undertake due to these financial restrictions.

Every institution will have their own unique allocation of resources for Doctoral candidates and many will have created a hierarchy of need with undergraduates claiming the largest portion of the resource. You will need to find out who to speak to (administrators, technicians, help desk staff) in order to gain access. And you will need to plan ahead. In the UK, Doctoral candidates often find they must use the studios during holidays or late in the evenings as daytime access is restricted.

Building relationships with other partners and considering how your research might be a good fit with and perhaps be supported by other programming contexts can assist here (whilst noting the same provisos that come in relation to incorporating commissions practice).



V. RETHINKING ATTITUDES TOWARD ETHICS PROCEDURES

Ethics are an inseparable part of doing research, of making art, of living with others and in the world. Yet it is, in our experience, fairly common for artistic researchers and supervisors to find university ethics procedures difficult to negotiate, sitting at odds with creative practices and shrouded in off-putting and confusing language. Ethical codes of conduct and the application questions universities use have their beginnings in the Nuremberg Code (1947) and the subsequent Helsinki Declaration (1964). They have largely been developed to reflect scientific approaches and medically based models of research. They seek to ensure that all research is undertaken responsibly, respecting the rights of participants, and does no harm. These core principles frame the following statement and questions by the UK Research Councils:

1. Research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity and quality. Is the research study worth doing? Can you ensure the integrity and quality of the research?
2. Research staff and subjects must be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved. Some variation is allowed in very specific and exceptional research contexts for which detailed guidance is provided in the policy guidelines. Can you ensure that any potential participants will be fully informed of the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research? If not, are you sure you can convince an ethics committee that your project is justifiable?
3. The confidentiality of information supplied by research subjects and the anonymity of respondents must be respected. Is it possible to maintain participant confidentiality and anonymity within the study?
4. Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from any coercion. Can you guarantee that your participants' involvement in the research is truly voluntary?

5. Harm to research participants must be avoided.
Can the research guarantee the absence of harm to the research participants? Remember that in social science research, 'harm' is taken to mean more than just physical harm, and can refer to emotional harm and risk of upset, as well as to reputational damage.
6. The independence of research must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.
Will the research design enable the researchers to remain independent throughout the process? Are there any conflicts of interest?

The spirit of these core principles is important to uphold, yet it is useful to consider what this means for artistic research in movement and performance (within and beyond formal approval processes)? Possible tensions arise wherein emergent creative approaches and the desire of the artist to take risks, to challenge audiences, to make provocative work, to tackle taboos, engage with bodies, to touch, to cut, to bleed - become difficult to frame, and can be seemingly at odds with ethics approval processes.

Barbara Bolt and Robert Vincs, in their survey of artistic doctoral researchers found: 'For many, the ethics process is a tedious bureaucratic process, one that, as we have seen, is considered antithetical to the avant-garde spirit' (2015: 1310). They describe how ethical approval processes in universities can give rise to artistic researchers perceiving ethical committees as a 'silent regulator of conduct' (2015: 1307) that render, at times, the carefully formed relationships and co-generated (often implicit and generous) consent – into form filling and protectionist exercises, or even worse, generating disjuncture's and mistrust that can adversely affect relationships with participants, collaborators, institutions, venues, promoters, and audiences - as they are repositioned as 'research subjects' or gatekeepers.

Further Bolt and Vincs report a 'belief that ethics is something one only has to negotiate if one is 'doing' research in the institution' (2015: 1310) and express their concern that this view implicitly suggests that artists perceive ethics to sit outside of art practice. Clearly and importantly this is not the case. Whilst understanding the frustrations that university ethics processes can give rise to, in line with Bolt and Vincs, we look to offer ways through which we can 'we engender an investment in the ethics of research on the part of the artistic researcher (whether they are a supervisor or a graduate researcher)' (2015: 1310).

It may be that the resistance to, and mistrust of, ethics processes is bound to the perception of it as a solely administrative, risk management, cyber security, activity that protects only the university. We have found that bringing forward the 'ethos' - discussing the core values, beliefs and attitudes that are embedded in the research - and contextualising ethics procedures can enable the wider scope of a practice to come forward, making the otherwise procedural task feel and be more purposeful, clarifying the position, rationale and approach taken to research in meaningful and significant ways.

These ethical questions of artistic research beg that we consider more deeply how research is conducted, such that in reaping benefits of research, we don't also create losers, or that in following our research agendas, we forget to attend with care and with love to the worlds we share.

As members of ethics review committees, our experience is that applications are most often returned for revision - not because of the topic or the nature of the artistic work, but because the research design and the stated engagement with participants (and the 'data' gathered from them), are not clearly articulated enough such that the committee are led to question the research methods and ethics of the process. This is often a matter of language. The struggle is to translate the complexity of practice into language that can be understood by an ethics committee, while also showing understanding of ethical concepts and processes. Such committees may well be populated by academics from other disciplines and so the task is both cross-disciplinary and working with the terminologies embedded in ethics. Together all involved can support these 'translations' to clarify terms and methods (in both directions), avoiding overwriting or (self)censoring the nature of the practice research.

Most ethical questions are not ones of right or wrong. They are considerations between options that are difficult to rate or judge in terms of rightness or betterness. Ethics are also not something that are just attended once through an application procedure. Rather ethics resonate deeply through artistic practice and require an attentive, responsive and ongoing reflection / action as the researcher, the research, people, context and communities change. Embracing ethics opens imaginative capacities and allows for empathetic engagements with a range of different perspectives. Developing such ethical awareness can enrich the research, the researcher and those which the work touches, enabling new insights and a more encompassing, generous, practice to emerge.

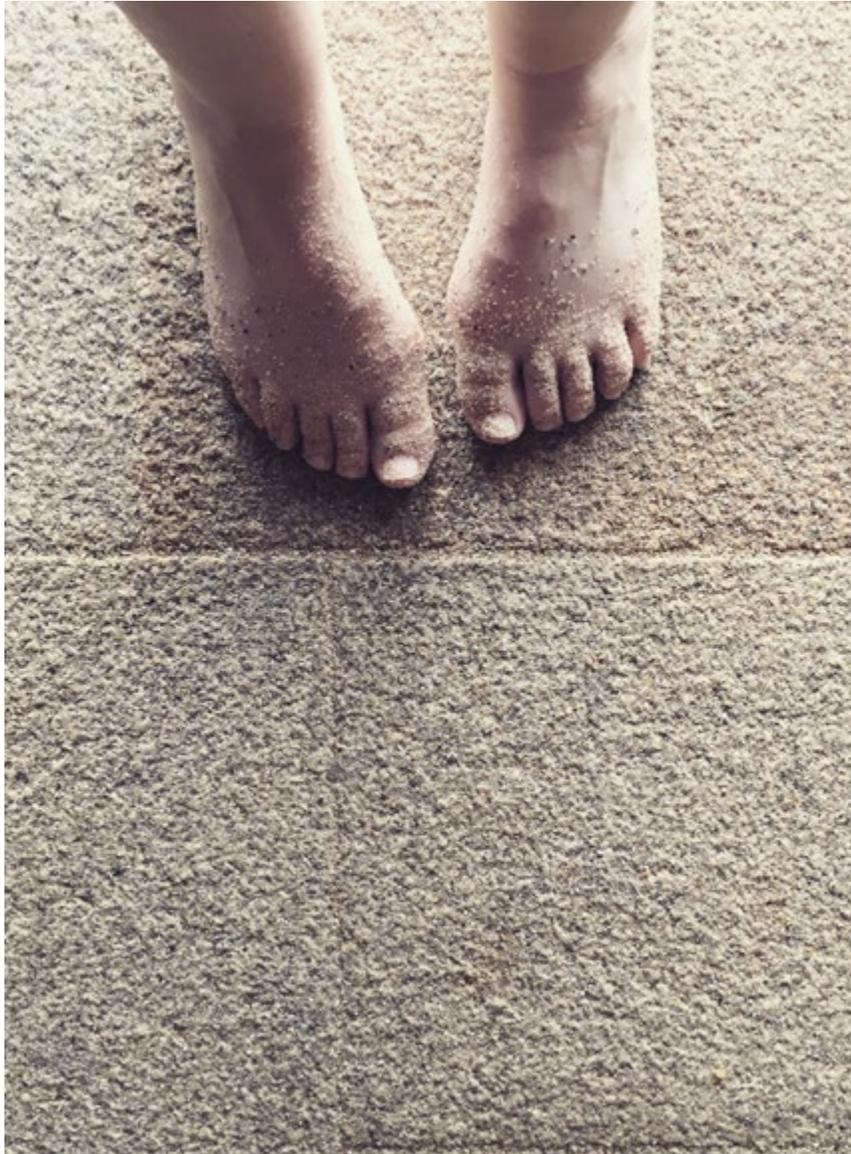
Ethos

*By whom, where, and in what ways is the research practice being generated?
Which bodies are at work, and what role in the research do they play?
What are implicit and explicit values, belief systems, ideologies in/of the practice?
How is this work valued?
What is research practice 'doing' — with and/or to whom?
What does it require (in material, intellectual, emotional, and physical terms)?
Who stands to benefit? Who might be at risk of losing out?*

Trust me, I'm an artist

Stage a debate in which a real (or imaged) project is presented to four people playing the role of the ethical review committee. The ethics committee will then debate the proposal and come to a decision, the artist will then be informed of the ethics committee's decision and, alongside the audience, they can enter into a discussion about the result.

Inspired by [Trust Me I'm an Artist: Towards an Ethics of Art/Science Collaboration](#)
Anna Dumitriu, Bobbie Farsides and Lucas Evers (2018)



Steps Towards Ethical Practice

To cope with difference, as ideas emerge and collide.
To put yourself in the place of another.
To attend, to wait, to allow for emerging ideas and response.
To look for interconnections between differing perspectives.
To allow for the possibility of unexpected outcomes.
To sustain your attention.
To wait without rushing to results.
To give and to take responsibility.
To attend to the detail of ideas shared by others.
To unsettle what you think you know.
To recognise changes in your attitude.
To be aware of the impact of your study on those involved.
To avoid harm or detriment for those with whom you work.
To not overpower the voice of participants.
To be a responsive witness.
To hold on to the possibility of what seems impossible.
To acknowledge constancy of reinvention.
To hold processes in review with time to remodel.
To recognise the impact and contribution of collaborators.

To be appreciative of the 'messiness' of experience.
To show respect for the well-being of others and of yourself.
To ensure the safety, security, and privacy of partners in the work.
To learn to find comfort existing with tension.
To allow yourself to migrate, to shift your point of view.
To allow yourself to trust and to suspend any rush to answers.
To ask yourself how you acknowledge those you work beside.
To recognise and utilise your resourcefulness.
To cultivate perspective through the experiences of others.
To ask yourself how you might think differently.
To sustain responsiveness.

Extract from Fiona Bannon (2019)

VI. ENDINGS – PREPARING FOR EXAMINATION AND BEYOND

Preparing for examination

Throughout the process of the Doctorate there is a need for all involved to consider the final outcome in a way that is perhaps different and new. Academia is predicated on the word and on translating ideas into the written word where future generations can read and know. In artistic research this paradigm is challenged and so we all must work through how best to meet this challenge. This challenge will include how to show and what artistic research to show for final examination. Discussions will facilitate the right resources such as time and space are available and the choice of presentation format is best suited to the research overall. It is likely (not but always the case) that there will be some kind of presentation of a final work or series of works as part of the final examination, plus documentation of the process of research. At this stage the supervisor will have prior knowledge of other doctoral examinations that will help the candidate navigate this complex final stage.

The artistic researcher must continue to ask:

What is the relationship between the process and final product created?

What is the process of documentation both for final examination and for future readers/viewers?

How and what is the relationship between the written and practical element?

Of course these are questions evident throughout the research. But finalising how to best present the research for examination, when and how they will experience the practice, requires particular consideration. These considerations are variously controlled by different university regulations which may explicitly require practice to be presented at certain stages in the process, for others it may be an open for discussion.

What do you want the examiners to experience?

Is it important that it is a live encounter?

How is the practice best experienced? What audience, venue or environment is conducive?

What will, or do you want, the examiners to know about your research before they experience the practice?

Do particular aspects of the practice 'speak' more or less to particular threads of the research overall? How might this be framed?

How might research practices that are largely experiential, or internal, be shared with examiners? How might you, for example, make available for 'view' forms aligned with therapy, meditation or training practices?

At this stage there may be iterations tested or it may be that final works are completed, or it may be that this is the time when process-driven artistic research really has to face processes of selection, shaping, forming. Test your ideas. Get feedback on iterations. Supervisors will now have the whole of the thesis, both the personal and research process, and will be able to offer clarity and insight from a slight remove in a way that the candidate may not. The supervisor's skills as considered throughout this resource, and their capacity to hold a clarity about the whole submission, will potentially come into sharp focus now as the candidate strives to reach the final end goal.

One of the usual requirements and design of a viva voce (defence) is the ability to verbalise (defend) the premise of the thesis. This can be with two examiners or a panel in a private or public setting. In some countries this is not called a viva (In Finland this is 'public examination with two examiners') In this process the question of and role of the practice arises once again. This is a moment to speak to and from the practice. Examiners too need to reflect on how the questions keep all involved in this final event in the practice rather than expecting the artistic researcher to be an expert in a particular aspect of theory. For example, the thesis may offer an articulation of Heidegger's 'indwelling' but this may be most evident in the practice and the practice will be enhanced by the articulation of this theoretical aspect of the artistic process.

Practise your viva/public examination

Challenge the process of the viva/public examination

Practice in the viva/public examination

Beyond the examination

When we finish, we do something for the last time and in the doctoral process this last can seem to be not ever quite last - after the final viva or examination there may be rewrites, once the final submission is complete it may be many months before a graduation ceremony. But 'last' is important and we wonder if those involved in the supervisory process might find meaningful ways to celebrate and mark a 'last'. Last is what makes events eventful and elevate things beyond the everyday. What happens at the end marks its closure and what occurs in this 'last', somehow essentialized into the last scene, the last piece, the last day, the last gesture, encounter, movement will form significant memories of the process undertaken. The last moment. A poetic image compresses into a snapshot a particular moment characteristic of a larger whole, capturing its depth, complexity, and importance. The last time is outside serial time, transcendent, this kind of moment is hard to bear and hard to relinquish. Do we hold on to achieving the best at the last? In no succession of events do we imagine any one moment to be the very last. And yet each day we are striving for the last day, to achieve our best practices. And yet the doctorate is finished.

Finished means over and done with, as at the finish line in a horse race. Finished also means finely wrought, highly polished, like the sheen on worn well-waxed wood. What is left after leaving is the actual state of character, the way the years have put a finish on it not merely to it.
(Hillman 1999: 199)

Perhaps now, with the finely-wrought artistic research you will enter the academy as an artistic researcher and join other supervisors in supporting the future generations of Artistic Doctoral candidates. Perhaps you will continue with your professional practice which will have changed and developed during your research process. Perhaps neither of these but something as yet unknown will emerge.

Artistic Doctorates are still relatively new in the academy and, as such, the impact of those with these degrees on the arts sector or academic department staff recruitment is unknown. What we do know is that many completing a doctorate do not choose to work in academia, but often look for careers that cross sectors. Additionally, as yet there are very few funded opportunities for post-doctoral research. How these individuals change the landscape of the professional arts sector more broadly is not yet known but increasingly there are artists, arts administrators, curators and producers with doctorates. What we can say is that the Artistic Doctorate is developing a new breed of artist and a new breed of academic. These are creative intellectuals that are able to bring to bear innovative and strategic thinking that can link academic and artistic paradigms. As such when an individual completes an Artistic Doctorate they become part of a small group of individuals who have the chance to make significant changes.

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Authors

Vida L Midgelow is Professor in Dance and Choreographic Practices based at Middlesex University where she leads the doctoral provision for the Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries. As an artist scholar she works on PaR methodologies, improvisation and articulation processes and has published widely in these areas. Her practice includes somatically informed improvisational works, performative lectures and installation/experiential performance practices/ video works. She is editor of the *Oxford Handbook of Improvisation in Dance* and is principal researcher for the *Artistic Doctorates in Europe* project www.artisticdoctorates.com (Erasmus + funded). Selected public works include: *Skript* (NottDance Festival), *Scratch* (In Dialogue, Nottingham Contemporary), 'Some Fleshy Thinking' (ed. George-Graves), 'Improvisation as paradigm for phenomenologies' (ed. Fraleighly) and 'Practice-as-Research' (ed. Dodds). Vida was the founding editor of 'Conversations across the field' for Society of Dance History Scholars (now DSA) and chair of DanceHE. She is currently Deputy Chair of the Board at Dance4.

Jane Bacon, Emerita Professor University of Chichester, is a Jungian Analyst, Focusing Trainer and Teacher of the Discipline of Authentic Movement. She was part of the UK Higher Education development of practice-as-research in performance including being a regional organiser for Practice as Research in Performance and Screen and a contributor to the book of the same name. She is interested in the development of unique methodological approaches developed by artist researchers through and by practice. Recent publications include: 'Informed by the goddess: Explicating a processual methodology', *Dance, Movement & Spiritualities*, 4:1, 2017; 'Authentic Movement: a field of practices', *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices*, vol 7.2, 2015; 'Authentic Movement as wellbeing practice', in *Oxford Handbook for Dance and Movement for Wellbeing*, 2017, pp.149-164; 'Embodied and Direct Experience in Performance Studies', in *Contemporary Ethnography and Performance Studies*, 2013.

As long term collaborators, Jane and Vida developed the Creative Articulations Process, co-edit the hybrid peer reviewed journal, [Choreographic Practices](http://ChoreographicPractices), co-direct the Choreographic Lab www.choreographiclab.co.uk and are associate researchers at iC4C / Dance4.

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