

CONCEPTION OF ARTISTIC RESEARCH IN EDUCATION: HOW DO THEY (ARTISTS) KNOW BETTER AND DEEPER?

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This paper defines the contours of artistic research in education which is one of its three manifestation contexts. Starting with the different models of PhD dissertations for artists and their problems, the paper is later enriched by short reports from visits to several different PhD programmes in UK, Finland, and the USA. Fieldtrips help to analyse the conception of artistic research in different PhD programmes and understand its nature and anatomy. A more in-depth analysis is carried out on relatively new regulations for art doctorate in Lithuania, including its origins. Among other issues, the questions of (new) knowledge, knowing, and contribution to the field are discussed. Basically, the paper analyses how artistic research is being instrumentalised in PhD studies.

KEYWORDS: third-cycle education, theory and practice, practice-based research, academization of art practice, professional development.

While trying to define the conception of artistic research¹, I concluded that a singular definition is not possible. At the same time, there are at least three parallelly existing definitions in three different contexts: contemporary art, academic research (mostly in humanities and social sciences) and education.

The goal of this paper is to discuss how the definition of artistic research is being conceptualised and performed in practice – art academies and universities with third-cycle programmes for artists. Here the differences of application and various conceptual approaches will be revealed during the discussion of several doctoral programmes around the world and in Lithuania. These analyses will help to understand the anatomy of artistic research in education practices, for example, the role of theory and practice in the dissertation, the need of the dissertation for an artist and different ways to approach it and present it.

1 Vytautas Michelkevičius, „Meninio tyrimo sampratos ir kontekstai: paini pradžia ir atspirties taškai“, in: *Acta Academiae Artium Vilnensis*, t. 79: *Meninis tyrimas: teorijos ir praktikos*, Ed. Vytautas Michelkevičius, Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, 2015, p. 31–43; Idem, *Meninio tyrimo suvesti. Žinojimo kontūrais*, Vilnius: Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, 2016.

Although the phenomenon of artistic research was born in contemporary art practices, it was and still is being developed and designed up to the smallest details in art academies and universities.

MODELS OF PHD DISSERTATIONS FOR ARTISTS

What essentially brings art and research together is education, as the academy accommodates scientific resources which research art and trains the “practical” resources that go out to create art. In their turn, a PhD in arts introduces new identity options, because its practitioners find themselves in-between roles as creators of research and art. The PhD thus fundamentally changes the conception of third-level education as such. Artistic research, its practices and its issues all manifest themselves most fully in the domain of doctoral studies; one might say these studies lead the development of the conception of artistic research. Surely, no single model exists, and artistic research is integrated into PhD studies in very different ways. In some countries and higher education systems, artists are integrated into pre-existing systems with their requirements, and are granted a usual scientific degree (PhD – Doctor of Philosophy, or Lat. *Philosophiae Doctor*), while in others, new doctorate systems, referred to as art doctorates and granting a DA (Doctor of Arts) degree, are based on MFA (Master of Fine Arts) programmes. However, the DA degree they provide is not always considered equivalent to the scientific doctoral degree (PhD).

Henk Borgdorff proposes a PhD model based on three perspectives on the relationship of art to academia, and provides examples of each²:

1) the academic perspective, prevalent in anglophone countries, usually employs traditional

2 Henk Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*, Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012, p. 148.

academic criteria to distinguish artistic practice as research from regular artistic practice;

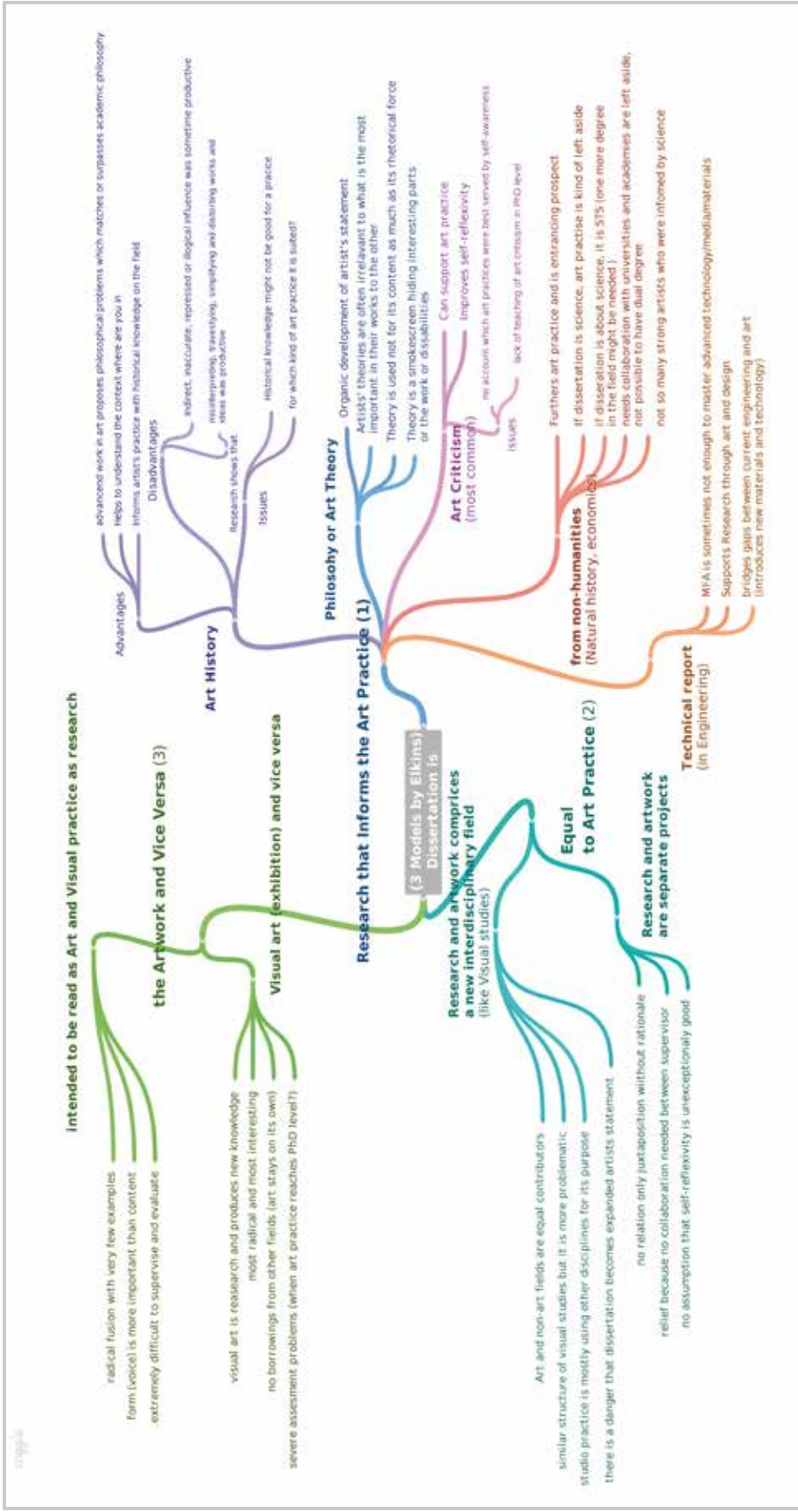
- 2) the *sui generis* perspective, prevalent in the Nordic countries, relies primarily on artistic values in the evaluation of research in art. For instance, Sweden introduced a new PhD in arts in 2010, while in Norway the artistic research grant programme has existed since 2003, and in Finland even earlier;
- 3) the critical perspective, associated with the opposition to the Bologna process (particularly in German-speaking countries), emphasises the critical or even subversive power of research in art, directed at the neoliberal tendency to pack diversity and deviations under one roof. An example is the PhD in practice programme at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, introduced in 2009.

This classification points out the general tendencies of the systems employed by university-level schools, yet it is nevertheless more interesting how the elements of theory and practice interact in the dissertations themselves. James Elkins identifies 3 models of artist dissertations³ (which I have visually mapped). A dissertation is:

- 1) research that informs the art practice;
- 2) equal to the artwork;
- 3) the artwork and vice versa.

The map shows the details and advantages as well as shortcomings of the different models. The first model is prevalent in the world, the second model dominates in some regions (e. g. the Nordic countries), and the third one is a rarity, but, according to Elkins, also the most intriguing, as it poses the most challenges, philosophical questions, and issues of research assessment.

3 *Artists with PhDs. On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*: first edition, Ed. James Elkins, Washington D. C.: New Academia Publishing, 2009, pp. 7–19.



1. Three dissertation configuration models according to James Elkins (2009; 2014). A map by Vytautas Michelkevičius
 Trys disertacijos konfigūracijos modeliai pagal Jamesą Elkinsą (2009; 2014). Vytauto Michelkevičiaus schema

In the first type, research supports, guides, modifies, or validates art practice. It can belong to the spheres of art history, art theory or philosophy, and art criticism (which is the usual case, according to Elkins) alike. In exceptional cases, the dissertation may belong to spheres outside the humanities, such as the natural sciences or economics, but this requires close collaboration with the departments or professors in that domain. The latter type occurs in technical universities that invite artists to do research and receive a doctoral degree in order to expand the methods of knowledge production and seek innovation. This type is also related to the dissertation as a technical report (usually in engineering studies). The principal problem of the first dissertation model is that artists tend to write such dissertations quite amateurishly compared to scientists from the appropriate field. Although this dissertation model is the most popular, it forces artists to conform to the established academic rules of other faculties, and encumbers research through practice.

The second type approaches a dissertation as conceptually or experientially equal to a work of art. A dissertation is implicitly contained in a work of art, or is even considered a work of art in itself occasionally. Here, research does not so much inform as it complements art⁴. In this configuration, Elkins distinguishes two possibilities: either research and art form a new interdisciplinary field, or the research and the artwork are completely separate projects. The concept of interdisciplinarity can also signify postdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity, and nondisciplinarity. An example of the first case could be the following: a dissertation consists of elements combined into an integral project, e. g. a film, an anthropological study, and an artwork, and could thus be classified as a mixed-media dissertation. However, there is risk that the artwork will be marginalised for its entirely different rhetoric and accused of “lack of concept” or “lack of newly

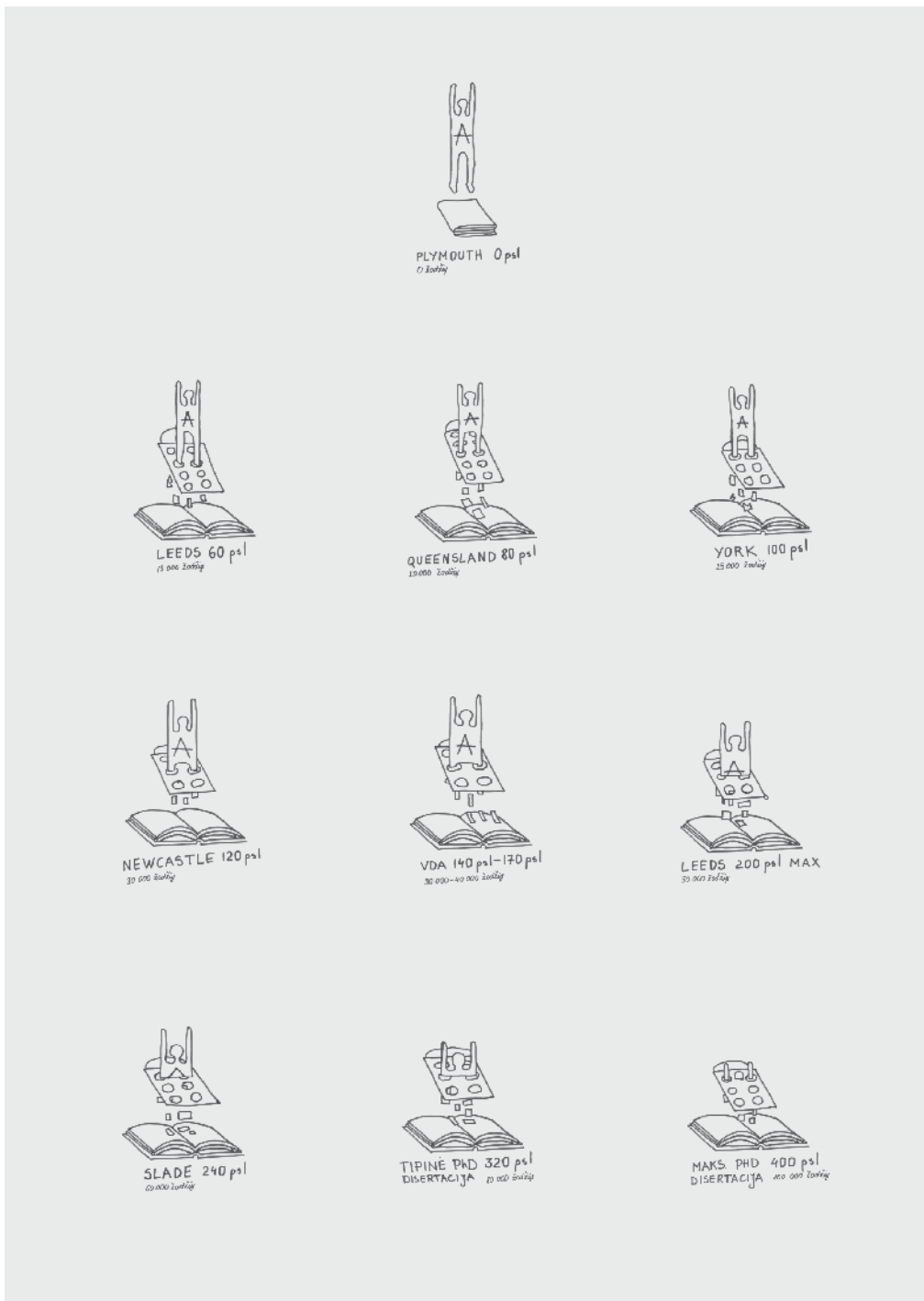
produced knowledge”. It is still a challenge to validate an artwork as at least a partly equivalent substitute to a dissertation, because it brings us back to the old problem: how to extract knowledge and contribution to the field from an artwork? Elkins admits that dissertations of this kind are rare because of this difficulty.

The second case, in which research and the artwork are considered to be completely separate albeit equivalent projects, is the least interesting. Although it exists in the practice of the PhD in arts (Elkins provides the example of the Canberra School of Art in Australia), the purpose of such dissertations is unclear: why should an artist write a work in one field and create an art piece on a completely different topic, without seeking links between the two activities? In this case, a PhD student essentially has to produce two dissertations.

In the third configuration, the dissertation is an artwork and vice versa – the artwork is scholarly, while scholarship is creative. Elkins⁵ mentions examples of students turning dissertations into art by printing them in unconventional ways, incorporating elements of fiction or experimental writing, combining images with text, or otherwise violating the expectations of what scientific argumentation is supposed to look like. Such an example is the dissertation *Reality Flickers: Writing With Found Objects And Imagined Sculpture* (2012, covered in more detail later in the text) by Katrina Palmer, a sculpture student from the Royal College of Art in London, which could be read both as research and as a work of art (literature and/or conceptual sculpture). However, it was defended at a visual arts academy, making the possibilities of positioning it in different genres even more ambiguous. There are also examples of research in artistic practice being presented through text, diagrams, tables, and numbers. The artist Jorinde Voigt and her drawing-based data, numbers, and knowledge may be one such

4 *Ibid.*, p. 318.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 321.



2. This visualisation presents one of the requirements for doctoral students – the volume of the dissertation and how it affects an artist-defendant who is expected to produce an enormous written dissertation to no written text whatsoever. All examples present minimum volume of the dissertation, except Slade which is the norm for practice-based PhD in the UK, whereas typical PhD dissertation in the UK is 320 pages

and maximum 400 pages. The requirements at Vilnius Academy of Arts are approximately in the middle. “Psl.” means pages, “žodžių” means “words”. Pijus Cicėnas, Rokas Cicėnas

Vieno reikalavimų doktorantūros studentams – disertacijos apimties – vizualizacija, Pijaus Cicėno, Roko Cicėno piešinys

example, although she has not turned her works into an art dissertation, at least not yet.

Elkins again divides this configuration into two subgroups⁶: a dissertation should be approached as art while visual practice should be perceived as research, or, alternatively, research and visual art merge into one, with no separate dissertation. In the first case, a doctoral student either suggests reading the entire dissertation as an artwork instead of claiming that it contains experimental fragments, or proposes that his or her artwork series or exhibition should be evaluated as research and dissertation in themselves, rather than outcomes or products of research. In the second case, Elkins suggests going back to the essence of the art practice and the concrete employed medium with its specific purposes, and avoid borrowing anything from other academic fields⁷. One of the principal arguments of this direction's adherents is that PhD in arts programmes usually require artists to complete two works: a PhD-level academic work and a PhD-level artwork. Some schools, including Plymouth College of Art and Design (UK) and University of the Arts Helsinki, have tried to solve this issue by radically reducing the written part, but that increases the significance of the defence process, which must be properly documented to give the interested audiences access to the doctoral student's results.

Ideally, this radical configuration should be the most meaningful, as it allows the artist to stick to his or her competencies and further develop them without intruding into other fields, but Elkins notes that it is also the most challenging not only to the artist but to the evaluators of such dissertations as well. Hence, while this option is the most interesting both philosophically and from the perspective of the art process and result, it also gives rise to the greatest number of the aforementioned practical ambiguities. How can one read from an artwork the extent to which it

contributes to the existing body of knowledge? How does one form a defence committee that could deduce it without a textual dissertation supplement? How should one convince universities, regular scientific researchers, and scientific bureaucrats that the defended work corresponds to the PhD, and not MA or BA degree? Sure, one could attempt to determine the criteria and list them in the regulations, but every art dissertation and artwork are unique, and do not yield easily to criteria which claim to be universal; thus, at least for now these evaluation issues should be left to the judgment of competent defence committees in anticipation of theoretical, methodological, and methodical works by theorists and, most importantly, art doctors, which define the problems and offer possible solutions. Elkins summarises the issues posed by this configuration with an open question: how can one perceive a single object – an artwork in an exhibition – as simultaneously a visual object, knowledge created by that object, and research via which the object created this knowledge?⁸

Regardless of all of these issues and questions, successful PhD in arts or PhD for artists programmes have been functioning worldwide for more than two decades already. Some of them grant more freedom to the artists, avoiding squeezing them into the traditional framework of doctoral requirements (this is usually the case in autonomous art academies not attached to universities), while others only provide the artists with an opportunity to enrol in PhD programmes, though later they are expected to produce a dissertation equivalent or almost equivalent to that written by theorists.

Here I will briefly overview the programmes I visited and took part in first-hand. They were chosen based on the particular professors, differing dissertation cultures, and experience in the field: from the biggest in the UK and Finland to the smallest in the USA⁹.

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 321–323.

7 *Ibid.*, pp. 322–323.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 323.

9 I have also visited several institutions in the Netherlands. Although intense artistic research and related discussions

One of the most experienced countries in the sphere of providing PhD programmes for artists is the United Kingdom, where Timothy Emlyn Jones distinguishes as many as three generations of PhD in arts programmes¹⁰:

- 1) the first-generation “practice-based” PhD opportunities for artists emerged in the mid-1980s, and followed the norms of the humanities and the social sciences. Although the students in these programmes were allowed to write dissertations of smaller volume, these were still assessed as the same value as the artistic results, and both types of results had to separately comply with the requirements of two different spheres. Thus, there were suggestions of employing double standards or even defending two dissertations, because neither of the defence committees wanted to lower their own criteria. For this reason, defending such dissertations was particularly difficult, and took up to 10 years;

(Henk Borgdorff, Henk Slager, etc.) have been taking place for decades there, only a single PhD programme in visual arts has been active for a longer time – PhDArts.eu (a collaboration of the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts and the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague – KABK with Leiden University); several more students are studying at the Utrecht School of the Arts (HKU, in collaboration with the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) under the supervision of Henk Slager. The main reason why there are still almost no third-cycle doctoral programmes in the Netherlands is the country’s education system, as the art academies are separate from the universities and have no right to offer PhD studies at all. Hence, a PhD in arts is essentially possible only in partnership with a university. However, there are two quite promising artistic research MA programmes in the College of Humanities of the University of Amsterdam and in the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague, in collaboration with the Royal Conservatory.

- 10 Timothy Emlyn Jones, “The PhD in Studio Art Revisited”, in: *Artists with PhDs. On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*: second edition, Ed. James Elkins, Washington D. C.: New Academia Publishing, 2014, pp. 116–117.

- 2) the second-generation practice-based PhD studies for artists (e. g. the one launched in 1994 at Wimbledon School of Art – Wimbledon College of Art) had no strict requirements for the number of words, but employed a sliding ratio between the portfolio and the text, which was obligatory nonetheless. The text and the artwork could increase or decrease at each other’s expense. This solved the issue of “two dissertations” and made it possible to meet the writing deadlines, because the artwork or exhibition was granted the right to (partly) function as the dissertation, and occupied the centre of attention. However, the function of the text remained ambivalent, as sometimes it was just a comment on the work while at other times it became a parallel discourse or served yet another purpose. This second generation demonstrates the increasing acceptance of the idea that artworks embody knowledge which the doctoral student does not have to “extract” by writing a complementary text;
- 3) the third generation, according to Jones, emerged around the year 2000 (e. g. Glasgow School of Art); it combined the productive and reflective aspects of the dissertation in different proportions in the PhD project, and allowed the students to choose the model most suited to their research. Furthermore, different material was presented for the defence than for its documentation for future reference to the content of research. With the third generation, it became possible to claim that the difference between the art and design PhD and any other PhD lay not in the type of research but in the ways in which it was presented for examination: a grounded combination of portfolio and text (documentation showing new knowledge). According to Jones, the less the written dissertation is presented during the examination, the more weight is given to the defence procedure, and the more difficult the latter becomes;

4) it is also possible to distinguish the fourth-generation dissertations (although there is no direct evidence that they are an outcome of the development of UK art doctorate programmes) that focus primarily on the artwork or exhibition complex, while the written part contextualises the latter and explicates the achievements, reflecting on the process and the results in detail. Dissertations of this type, Jones observes, are defended in the Nordic countries (particularly Finland) and in some places in Ireland, yet in my view studies of this kind are (and have been) provided at art academies as opposed to universities hosting PhD in arts programmes. The reason for this is that this model naturally emerges from the academies' MFA study process and the needs of the artists themselves.

Today one can also speak of fifth-generation dissertations that follow even more liberal evaluation systems and criteria. Examples include the aforementioned RCA sculptor Katrina Palmer's dissertation *Reality Flickers: Writing With Found Objects And Imagined Sculpture*, produced and defended (2006–2012) solely in textual form, namely as a literary work. This dissertation employs a complex, self-reflective structure, and blends academic requirements with fiction writing, transferring sculpture to narrative writing. The artist herself, who has a degree in sculpture, claims that this (textual) piece is in fact her very artwork (sculpture). It was also published as a literary book titled *The Dark Object* (Book Works, 2010).

Another radical example (from a completely opposite context) can be a graphic novel defended as a dissertation in the field of education studies. Nick Sousanis defended his dissertation *Unflattening: A Visual-Verbal Inquiry Into Learning in Many Dimensions* at the Columbia University. The thesis work, later published as a book titled *Unflattening* (Harvard University Press, 2015), received a number of awards, including the most

surprising – the R. R. Hawkins Award for Excellence in Humanities. The dissertation and the book study how the connected comic strip elements open up new creative and learning spaces not accessible through writing alone. The researcher himself calls this book a compilation of philosophical essays that employ images and metaphors. Critics claim that it “defies conventional forms of scholarly discourse to offer readers both a stunning work of graphic art and a serious inquiry into the ways humans construct knowledge.”¹¹ The book is classified under the following fields of social sciences and the humanities: visual perception, theory of knowledge, imagery (psychology), and communication methodology. This is utterly untypical for a book of this type – a compilation of comics, also classified as a graphic novel. It must be noted that this dissertation was defended as a PhD in social sciences rather than in arts, but it can still be called a practice-based dissertation.

Nevertheless, this division of dissertations into generations is limited, as it only focuses on the academic requirements and not on the work itself and its relationship with research – e. g. why a particular work is equivalent to research or vice versa. Surely, the academic system needs criteria that simplify the problem and make it solvable at least formally. Furthermore, the evolution of the approach to artistic research in doctoral studies also shows the development of the issue of knowledge and knowing in art practice – from the requirement for artists to write an almost full-fledged dissertation (comparable to that in the humanities) which would prove the contribution of their practice to knowing in a particular field and demonstrate what kind of knowledge (or something else) was created, to the permission to defend only the artwork, accepting that it embodies knowledge, “extracted” and demonstrated during the defence.

11 Colin Marshall, “Doctoral Dissertation as a Graphic Novel: Read a Free Excerpt of Nick Sousanis' Unflattening”, in: *Open Culture*, [online], June 23rd, 2015, [accessed 07-07-2017], <http://www.openculture.com/2015/06/doctoral-dissertation-as-a-graphic-novel-read-a-free-excerpt-of-unflattening.html>.

I had an opportunity to visit the Royal College of Art (RCA, London), which has been offering PhD programmes in art and design for more than 20 years, and analysing this field even longer – one of the most cited texts in the artistic research discourse is *Research in Art and Design* by Christopher Frayling, a professor and former rector of the RCA. An interview with RCA professor David Crowley (2015) has led me to summarise their programme as follows. The main aim of a doctoral student is an “original contribution to knowledge”, but the meaning of *original* and *knowledge* is not specified in more detail in any of the school’s documents. According to the professor, the college has accumulated a sufficient store of knowledge and experience (both explicit and tacit) in the field of doctoral studies to enable the internal instruments and the professors to determine what an “original contribution to knowledge” is.

The “practical” doctoral students are normally required to write a dissertation of 25 000–40 000 words and present a practical work which can be “a work or works of art, design or communication, or a group of interrelated works of art, design or communication, presented as appropriate in the form of original(s), prototype(s), scale model(s), drawings, CD-ROM, photographs, film(s), or sound and vision recording(s)”¹². Meanwhile, the “theoretical” PhD students must write an original scholarly work of 60 000–80 000 words. The *RCA Research Student Handbook* briefly specifies what a PhD candidate must demonstrate. Among other things: the contribution of the PhD to the advancement of knowledge, and the understanding and clear structural and intellectual links between the textual and practical components of the project (where appropriate) are distinguished¹³.

RCA divides its PhD studies into *PhD by thesis* and *PhD by practice* (RCA, 2013). However, an interview

with Crowley (2015) revealed that recently the tendency is to refer to practice-based dissertations as *thesis by project*, thus rejecting the complicated division of dissertations into theory and practice and seeking to emphasise the project carried out by the candidate, which may directly connect theory with practice.

In the British system, dissertation defence is a closed process that involves the candidate, the head of the committee, and two external examiners, while the final result is never predictable.

When asked whether the external examiners include both an artist (practitioner) and a theorist, Crowley responded that they strive to make no distinction between theory and practice, and select the examiners based on their competencies and correspondence with a particular dissertation and project.

The only general compulsory subject for all PhD students is the Research Methods Course in the first study year, which has all students talk about their research methods and share experiences. Still, sometimes very wide conceptual gaps may emerge between, for instance, the methods of an art historian and a ceramics artist. There are no more compulsory courses except for consultations with the supervisors and the periodical presentations of the students’ research processes. The students indeed enjoy quite a bit of freedom, and show remarkable initiative in organising seminars, inviting guest lecturers, and holding biannual exhibitions. RCA programme fluctuates between the first and the second configuration of PhD, listed by Elkins. Some of the dissertations are very close to art history and art criticism; however, some of them are more experimental where one piece counts both as art and thesis¹⁴.

Studies at the RCA are essentially different from the usual practice-based dissertations in the UK, first and foremost because it is an art academy with long-standing traditions where the need for PhD studies stems from the practice of art and design itself and

12 *RCA Research Student Handbook*, [online], p. 35, [accessed 07-07-2017], <https://www.rca.ac.uk>.

13 *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

14 Most of the dissertations could be accessed in the online archive: <http://researchonline.rca.ac.uk>.

the professors' research. It grants the students considerable freedom compared to the usual context of art dissertations in the UK, where artists often have to comply with the dissertation standards based on university guidelines.

THE PRACTICE OF FINLAND: FROM ACADEMY TO UNIVERSITY

My first research fellowship visit brought me to Finland, where Aalto University School of Arts, Design, and Architecture¹⁵ (former the University of Art and Design Helsinki – TAIK, since 1981) and the University of the Arts Helsinki (former Academy of Fine Arts – KUVA, since 1997) have been offering art doctorate programmes for several decades. In addition, Finnish professors have written quite a few monographs and guidebooks based on their practice of administrating PhD in arts programmes¹⁶.

One of the leading visual art education institutions, the Finland Academy of Fine Arts (KUVA, now called the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of the Arts Helsinki), launched its doctoral programme in arts in 1997 with six students, and later accepted only several students each year (due to limited funding). That was the early stage, while the main axis of the PhD in arts, followed to this day, developed in 2004–2005. The aim of the programme was to create new knowledge based on artist practice. From the very beginning, the focus was on artistic practice, without attempts to directly

borrow the models of scientific university PhD programmes or apply the principles of UK practice-based PhD programmes.

The purpose of the programme is now stated:

Doctoral studies pursued at the Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Helsinki provide the means and opportunity to engage in the independent and creative activity of artistic research. Artistic research is multidisciplinary research grounded in the artists and their art. The doctoral programme at KuvA produces artist-researchers specialised in fine art. Artist-researchers develop and renew the arts and their practice, research and instruction. They engage in pluralistic and critical dialogue with the various actors in society. As specialists in their respective fields they practice art and produce knowledge, skills and comprehension based on art practise that can be utilised and applied in both the arts and other areas of society. Doctoral studies at the University of the Arts develop the artist-researchers' ability to apply the proficiency he or she has obtained as an artist, researcher, pedagogue and specialist.¹⁷

Formally, the programme consists of 240 ECTS credits, of which 70 correspond to postgraduate studies and 170 to the doctoral thesis. The programme extends to 4 years of full-time studies.

In 2013 the Doctorate in Fine Arts curriculum comprised research seminars (working, essay, and theory seminars, 18 ECTS each), symposium (7 ECTS), and optional postgraduate studies (9 ECTS).

The research seminars are designed to aid the students in their artistic research. Each student hosts a working seminar (a practicum) once a year, presenting the new components in production and theory in a group session, organised together with PhD students

15 For more on Aalto's doctoral programme in arts, design, and architecture, see: <https://into.aalto.fi/display/endoctoraltaik/Degree+Structure+of+Doctoral+Studies>.

16 E.g. *Artistic Research – Theories, Methods and Practices*, Eds. Hannula Mika, Juha Suoranta, Tere Vadén, Helsinki and Gothenburg: Academy of Fine Arts, Finland and University of Gothenburg, Sweden, 2005; *Artistic Research Methodology: Narrative, Power and the Public*, Eds. Hannula, Mika, Juha Suoranta, Tere Vadén, New York: Peter Lang, 2014; Juha Varto, *Basics of Artistic Research: Ontological, Epistemological and Historical Justifications*, Helsinki: University of Art and Design Helsinki, 2009.

17 "Doctoral studies at the Academy of Fine Arts", University of the Arts Helsinki, <https://www.uniarts.fi/en/doctoral-education/academy-of-fine-arts>.

from the Theatre Academy. The comments on the progress of research received from the professors and fellow students help develop the research further.

In the course of the essay seminars, each student must write at least three essays and improve his or her writing and theorising skills. In the theoretical seminar, the students focus on their field of research and research methodology (choosing certain modules) in order to create new knowledge in their dissertations.

Towards the end of their studies, the students must host a public symposium intended to disseminate the new artistic knowledge related to a particular research field. It can also include a publication, an exhibition, or some other collaborative activity. In this way, the students independently test the formats of new knowledge creation and communication, and create discourses around them.

In 2015 the requirements were slightly updated and elaborated¹⁸. The artistic research seminars now include modules related to methodologies and interfaces of artistic research, which introduces the students to the social effects of artistic research and the agency of the artist-researcher. The symposium module is complemented by the conference and publication modules, which introduce the students to these two formats of research results presentation, their cultures, and various forms of participation, organisation, and reviewing.

My interview (November 2013) with the artist and artistic research professor Jan Kaila, who has headed the programme since 2004, revealed the programme's key aspects and distinctiveness. Kaila emphasised that the programme mostly attracted mature artists, although recently increasingly many young ambitious artists – recent MFA graduates – have been enrolling. He listed the following motives for enrolment:

- 1) the wish to critically reflect on and contextualise an accumulated body of work;
- 2) the need for a research community, because the PhD programme works as a community for fellow researchers' discussions (including the professors, doctoral students, and visiting guests – artists and curators) which facilitates orientation in the multitude of creative streams and sharing of insights about others' work;
- 3) the need to become a part of the academic community, teach at the academy (as the PhD degree is increasingly becoming a prerequisite for teachers, albeit so far an unwritten one), carry out individual research, or participate in inter-field research groups together with the scientists.

Kaila emphasised that they avoided accepting mature artists who sought to analyse their entire work and write (as well as possibly publish) a monograph about themselves, as this was the task of the commercial publishing market.

This programme differs from others in that it organises active interventions and events in the art field. These have included seminars and publications at the DOCUMENTA exhibition or events in the framework of the Venice Biennale (e. g. the Research Pavilion titled *Experimentality* in 2015 and *Utopia of Access* in 2017). It has also participated and continues to participate in the SHARE international artistic research network, where it holds seminars, symposia, and summer schools together with international partners.

The KUVA programme is close to Elkins' second model, which regards the dissertation as amounting to art practice. It is distinctive in its reliance on the needs stemming from the art practice and the academy tradition itself, and avoidance of application of university scientific research requirements.

¹⁸ "KUVA Doctoral Degree requirements 1.8.2015 ENG.pdf", University of the Arts Helsinki, <https://www.uniarts.fi/en/media/5843>.

DOUBTS IN THE USA:
FROM PRACTICE-BASED TO PHILOSOPHY-BASED
DOCTORATES FOR ARTISTS

In the USA, the PhD for artists is still met with scepticism, and is offered only in 6 or 7 schools. One of the reasons is that the documents regulating the studies specify the visual arts MA (MFA) as a terminal degree. The second one is economic: due to paid studies and high costs, artists find it challenging to complete the MA studies, which makes PhD studies virtually unaffordable. The third reason is the particularly strong art market, where it is often jokingly questioned whether a PhD degree drives up the prices of an artist's works.

During my research trip to the USA in 2014 I visited three different institutions – School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts (IDSVA). The first one was considering opening a PhD programme for artists, but had not yet decided how to accomplish this, as the administration believed such a programme is only possible with scholarships, and the funds were insufficient for that thus far. Yet James Elkins, whose insights about artistic research and art education were valuable for orientation in this sphere, had taught and carried out his research here.

The second institution I visited was the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the town of Troy, New York. It had launched the first PhD in arts programme in the USA (PhD in Electronic Arts) in 2006, and is a curious example of a PhD in arts in a hi-tech, innovation-oriented school rather than arts one. This programme is mostly geared towards artists working with media art and electronic music who are interested in technology, biology, engineering, architecture, and other fields taught at the university. The institute emphasises that it is an interdisciplinary arts PhD seeking to integrate art practice with theoretical and historical research¹⁹.

19 See: "Doctor of Philosophy in Electronic Arts", Rensselaer Department of the Arts, <http://www.arts.rpi.edu/pl/doctor->

At the time of my visit (2014), the programme was headed by the art theorist Prof. Mary Anne Stanisze-wski and the composer and interactive performance artist Prof. Curtis Bahn. The students are practicing artists who either live in New York City or arrive from other big cities in America to concentrate on their research and creative work, as well as to take advantage of the institute's impressive research base and faculty. Students also benefit from the unique architecture and acoustics of the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC)²⁰, a music and performance space constructed in 2008. The centre's website states that it brings the arts, sciences, and technology under one roof to breathe the same air, while the institute itself calls the centre "an icon of the New Polytechnic, a new paradigm for cross-disciplinary research and education"²¹. It is home not only to artists' and musicians' performances but also activities directly related to research, such as tests and experiments. In addition, EMPAC runs a residency and new work commission programme which gives the doctoral students working there access to the professional art context (as the institute itself is located in a remote small town).

The handbook for PhD students²² presents this doctoral programme as practice-based and aiming to gain new knowledge. The original contribution to knowledge in the thesis can take the form of artworks publicly presented through performances, installations, and exhibitions. The textual part of the dissertation must contain a detailed report on the research process as well as analysis and critical reflection of its position in a particular field. The precise ratio of

philosophy-electronic-arts.

20 See: "A membership program for Rensselaer students", EMPAC. The Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, <http://empac.rpi.edu/>.

21 *Ibid.*

22 "Ph. D. Graduate Student Handbook", Rensselaer Department of the Arts, 2017, <http://www.arts.rpi.edu/files/373>.

writing and practice is determined in consultation with the supervisor, aiming to ensure sufficient focus on both parts yet at the same time retaining flexibility and adaptability to a particular artist's practice. No fixed length for the written dissertation is specified. Thus, we are dealing with an example of what Elkins called a dissertation as a technical report, typical of PhD programmes in the natural and technical sciences. During their studies, the doctoral students must take one or two methodological modules as well as modules related to the research topic, attend the PhD students' group seminars, and participate in an exhibition, review, or audition, followed by group discussions (*Crits*), in the end of each semester.

A completely opposite model of PhD for artists is practiced at the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts (IDSVA²³), where artists write solely textual dissertations in art history, aesthetics, and philosophy. This institute employs the principle of part-time studies: the doctoral candidates gather for several intensive study weeks annually. These weeks are held in cities like New York or Berlin, and are often coordinated with major art events (e. g. the Berlin or Venice Biennale) to introduce the students to important art contexts. This global travel part of the programme is referred to as topological studies intended to explore and critically (as well as intertextually) evaluate the particular locations based on their relationship with the history of art and ideas (e. g. the Antiquity in the case of Rome, late Neoclassicism and early industrial era for Berlin, post-industrial era for New York, and East/West transhistoricity for Athens, etc.). Like most art study programmes in the USA, these studies are paid, and require more than 100,000 dollars to complete and write a dissertation, if no scholarships are available. Such amounts of money clearly reveal the main problem of the PhD for artists in the USA – huge costs and investments.

23 See: IDSVA. Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts, <http://www.idsva.edu>.

The aim of the institute is to train artist-philosophers, as artists have been philosophers historically and by nature, according to the founder and main ideologist of the institute, George Smith. Hence, the programme seeks to reclaim this status for them and acknowledge the MFA degree as equivalent to an MA in philosophy, granting the right to enter a doctoral programme in humanities and seek a PhD degree²⁴. Here one may ask why, if we recognise artists as philosophers and their activity as philosophical, should we not allow artists to continue their artistic practice in the PhD studies and receive a PhD degree for it, instead of squeezing them into the dissertation requirements of the humanities? Defining the artist as a philosopher, George Smith argues that all prominent artists were philosophers, and vice versa, as they aestheticized ideas from the times of Plato²⁵. However, modern specialisation since Immanuel Kant separated the activities, particularly in the institutional sense. Thus, today the aim should be to bring both activities back into the academy as equally leading to a PhD degree. Indeed, this is the aim of quite a few PhD in arts programmes around the world, but many of them pursue it in different ways, more adequate for artists' activities and competencies.

According to one of IDSVA's professors, the artist Dr. Simonetta Moro (Interview, 2014), an artist's practice is involved in these doctoral studies indirectly: for instance, a performance artist writing a dissertation on the problems of performance art approaches the research object from a practitioner's perspective and emphasises practice-related issues, therefore her dissertation is fundamentally different from that of an art theorist or historian. Moro claims that the

24 See: Stephen Knudsen, "PhD in Philosophy for Artists: A Conversation with George Smith", in: *ArtPulse*, [online], [accessed 07-07-2017], <http://artpulsemagazine.com/phd-in-philosophy-for-artists-a-conversation-with-george-smith>.

25 Smith George, "The Artist-Philosopher and the New Philosophy", in: *Artists with PhDs. On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*: second edition, Ed. James Elkins, Washington D. C.: New Academia Publishing, 2014, pp. 129–158.

institute wants to ensure that artists' dissertations are evaluated in the same way as those written by traditional researchers, thus the students are discouraged from self-reflection on their creative work, and are instead motivated to follow the existing culture of PhD in humanities and join the global community of researchers. Nevertheless, the philosophical and theoretical curriculum studied in the programme²⁶ is quite oddly composed, and is not necessarily well-matched. Furthermore, contemporary philosophy and visual culture theories that could help the students relate their contemporary practice with the dissertation are fairly underrepresented in the curriculum. The programme clearly separates the artist's dissertation from his or her practice, which is left out and not evaluated; in my view, this is unproductive (especially after numerous discussions and arguments for the necessity of a synergy between theory and practice).

To sum up, even though the few active doctoral programmes in the USA emphasise such benefits for artists as increased competitive advantage in the market of art teachers/professors (as the number of artists with PhDs grows), new opportunities for conducting research in interdisciplinary teams, and new articulation competencies, academies and universities in America have not yet reached a breakthrough in the creation of doctoral programmes for artists – most likely, due to legislation issues and the financial burden of PhD studies.

DEVELOPMENTS IN LITHUANIA: FROM ARTS LICENTIATE TO ART DOCTORATE

The new Law on Higher Education and Research²⁷ was passed in Lithuania on April 30, 2009. Instead of the

26 See: "Course of Study", IDSVa. Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts, <http://www.idsva.edu/course-of-study/>.

27 See: Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research, Mykolas Romeris University, April 30, 2009, https://www.mruni.eu/mru_lt_dokumentai/direkcijos/studiju_direkcija/teises_aktai/Lietuvos%20teises%20aktai/Law_on_Higher_Education_and_Research.pdf.

previous PhD studies of a single type, it now specified two – PhDs in science²⁸ and PhDs in arts. In 2010–2011 Vilnius Academy of Arts (VAA) and Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LAMT) accepted the first doctoral students in arts (the first PhD defences were held in 2015–2016). Before the summer of 2017, 6 art projects had been defended at LAMT, with 25 more (20 in music and 5 in theatre and cinema) still in progress²⁹. At VAA, 20 doctoral students in arts and 17 in design were studying at this point, while 10 art dissertations had been defended³⁰.

Before the PhD in arts was legally certified in Lithuania, the system in place had been that of the two-year arts licentiate studies – a legacy from the Soviet education system. According to the regulations, "arts licentiate is third-level university studies designed to train teachers of art subjects for university-level schools and provide specialisation to artists, culminating in the defence of an art project"³¹. It can essentially be viewed as a postgraduate professional degree for artists seeking to teach at university-level schools. Yet it is difficult to say what is meant by "specialisation" provided to artists, all the more so because starting with the MA studies, at least according to the current situation of education and its objectives, students are encouraged to create interdisciplinary networks and expand their horizons through singular art projects instead of specialising in one field (which is perceived as pertinent to crafts and college-level studies). In 2008, a study titled *Arts Licentiate (Arts PhD) Organisation and Financing*

28 The word "science" ("mokslas") in Lithuanian, like in many other languages (e.g. German "Wissenschaft"), includes all the sciences: natural, social, humanities, etc.

29 See: "Research Projects", HARPS. Artistic Research and Performance Studies, LAMT, <http://harps.lmta.lt/en/projects/>.

30 See: "Doctoral Studies", Faculty of Postgraduate Studies, VAA, <http://www.vda.lt/en/faculty-of-postgraduate-studies>.

31 "Vilniaus dailės akademijos Dailės krypties doktorantūros studijų ir meno daktaro kvalifikacinio laipsnio teikimo reglamentas", Faculty of Postgraduate Studies, VAA, <http://www.vda.lt/lt/aukstuju-studiju-fakultetas/doktorantura/doktoranturos-studijos-/doktoranturos-dokumentai>.

Models was conducted as part of drafting the legal base for PhD in arts³². The study reviewed the current situation of the arts licentiate system and recommended to transform the latter into PhD in arts based on Western and Nordic countries good practice with the aim of integration into international networks of third-level university arts studies.

Arts licentiate was legally validated in 2000 with the passing of the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education. However, according to Antanavičius et al. (2008), it had been de facto functioning since 1991 (at LAMT) as a continuation of the Soviet-era assistantship/internship system³³. During the post-Soviet period, arts licentiate programmes at LAMT and, later, at VAA trained many of today's acclaimed artists and progressive art educators who approach artistic work not only from empirical but also artistic research methodological positions.

The scientific methodological essays written by VAA's arts licentiate graduates can be divided into three groups (Antanavičius, 2008: 18):

- 1) *philosophical, theoretical essays* – these are distinguished by their direct relation to the experience of creative work; research becomes an instrument which provides answers to the relevant conceptual questions associated with one's creative work. Usually artists engage in reflection on the ideas of authoritative philosophers and theoretical substantiation of the themes in their work;
- 2) *analysis of creative and technological processes*; such texts are a great methodological aid. This kind of symbiosis between research and creative (practical) work is significant in several respects: first, it begins to document the practical experience accumulated in Lithuania, expanding the

limits of this experience and the conditions directly governing it; second, it encounters the problem of deficient Lithuanian terminology and creates a pretext to solve it.

- 3) *art historical research*. Numerous aspects of the history of Lithuanian art have not been researched yet, thus artists naturally take up personally relevant topics that have so far been omitted from the academic purview, or remain under researched. Historical research conducted by artists is very different from the works of art theorists and historians. The difference is that while the latter essentially rely on analysis of sources and literature, artists approach history from the perspective of "practitioners". This perspective is particularly valuable.

This classification does not stray too much from the dissertation models identified by Elkins (although it does gravitate towards the first one), which makes it possible to infer that certain criteria of third-level studies are universal and recur throughout the world. If we analyse it through the lens of a different relationship between research and art, we will see that the first one corresponds to Frayling's (1993) typology "research about art"³⁴ which is usually conducted by art historians and artists do not (or are not able to) contribute much to the field unless they clearly identify their personal position and methodology and show how it is different from a theoretical one. The second one might be either research through or for art, and this type of research can be conducted mostly by artists. The third one is a twisted version of the first one as it embodies research about art, and reveals the possibility for artistic research to contribute to humanities, albeit we do not have many successful examples. There is a chance that artists will bring new knowledge to the field from their practical perspec-

32 Juozas Antanavičius, Ieva Pleikienė et al., *Meno aspirantūros (meno doktorantūros) organizavimo ir finansavimo modeliai*, Vilnius: Studija, 2008.

33 *Ibid.*

34 For more, see: Vytautas Michelkevičius, *Meninio tyrimo suvesti. Žinojimo kontūrais*, pp. 33–35.

tive; however, their skills of writing and argumentation are often weaker. Therefore they should find ways to conduct research and write in appropriate genres.

The Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research reads: “The purpose of doctoral studies in the field of art shall be to prepare artists-researchers who would be able to create, interpret and develop the research based on art practice.”³⁵ Therefore, at first sight it would seem that the law recognises artistic practice as the principal research method, yet a closer look at the regulations of PhD in arts approved by the schools themselves reveals that they are heavily based on the methods of the humanities (most likely art history and theory). They require the research work to be based on scientific methods rather than artistic practice:

The theoretical doctoral work must contain: a relevant problem, a clearly defined object, aim, objectives, novelty, an overview of Lithuanian and international research on the topic, a well-articulated research methodology, the obtained results, substantiated reliability and correlation with the results obtained by other researchers, analysis of the components of the research object/problem, and formulated research conclusions.³⁶

The VAA study regulations (approved on January 16, 2013) define artistic research as: “the whole of creative activity and methodical organisation of knowledge resulting in an artwork and a written text as well as documentation of the research material in other forms”. Thus, it is quite abstract, and one can only wait for the reflection on the first successfully defended doctoral projects. If we take a look at the arts licentiate projects defended earlier and their authors

who continue successful artistic careers (Ugnius Gulguda, Eglė Karpavičiūtė, Dainius Liškevičius and others), it is safe to assume that there is potential for positive development of PhD in arts in Lithuania as well.

The regulations³⁷ describe the purpose of VAA's PhD in arts programme as follows: “to train artist-researchers who would be able to create, interpret, and develop research based on artistic practice”, and divide the final art project into two “equally significant creative and research parts”. The regulations read:

The creative part of the art project consists of artworks created, performed, and publicly presented as part of the doctoral studies. Their entirety must reveal the doctoral student's professional improvement, diverse artistic individuality, and creative maturity. <...> the research part of the project sums up the research conducted by the student as part of the doctoral studies. It must demonstrate the skills of methodical research work as well as the capacity for independent interpretation and well-grounded analysis of the relevant issues related to artistic and cultural processes.

This shows an evident divergence from the aims of the former arts licentiate programme, and shifts the focus from professional development of an arts educator and artistic specialisation to development as an artist-researcher. Nevertheless, it also instantly provokes a philosophical question of the separation of the artist's activities: why cannot research be creative work, and vice versa? It seems that the heated global debate regarding the controversy of dividing the PhD in arts into the scientific (research) and practical components has lost to the binary opposition between the two, dictated by bureaucratic logic. Or is it just a formal requirement intended to appease the science watchdogs and fellow institutions? The regulations

³⁵ Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research.

³⁶ “Vilniaus dailės akademijos Dailės krypties doktorantūros studijų ir meno daktaro kvalifikacinio laipsnio teikimo reglamentas”.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

seem to suggest that no synergy is possible between the two parts, let alone recognition of the artwork as equivalent to research. They display an obviously instrumental perspective on the relation between theory and practice, which further increases the divide between these two spheres of activity and prevents their integration. Still, most likely the vocabulary employed in the regulations and the division between the creative and the research part have been automatically inherited from the arts licentiate regulations, without conceptual rethinking and adaptation to the contemporary needs of artist-researchers and the international practice of PhD in arts programmes.

The recommended volume of the research part of the work (thesis), as specified in the VAA PhD in arts regulations, is 30,000–40,000 words (the same as in LAMT PhD in arts regulations). The volume of a scientific dissertation is 4–10 quires (1 quire = 40,000 characters) according to a 2003 provision of the Research Council of Lithuania (which has also been adopted by most other universities) or 6–15 quires according to Appendix 1 of the Regulations of Doctoral Studies of Art History and Theory (Humanities) of VAA and the Lithuanian Culture Research Institute³⁸. The volume of one quire is estimated at 5,000 words, thus a doctoral student in the arts must write around 6–8 quires. This means that the minimal requirements for the written text are even higher for artists than for scientists, and equivalent to those for art historians and theorists. This provision may be interpreted as a requirement to submit two dissertations – a written one in accordance with the academic requirements, and an artwork which has to be made at a level of PhD (one can presume that it could be treated as a dissertation on its own). Meanwhile, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research does not specify the size of a dissertation, and leaves it to the universities to stipulate it in their regulations.

38 *Ibid.*

This essentially means that the schools themselves set higher requirements for artists than those prescribed by the law, and thereby hamper the artistic research process, demanding a sizeable written work along with an artwork.

In fact, the gist of the problem is not the volume of the dissertation as such, but rather the nature of an artist's text; clearly defined criteria could make the aim of the research work more obvious, but in their current form the regulations provide but a few formal already above-mentioned criteria.

The criteria can be described as typical of a dissertation in any branch or field of science, hence they are not specifically geared towards an artist-researcher. In addition, further on the same document invokes the concept of a *theoretical doctoral work* – i. e., the research work is positioned completely differently, implying that the textual part of the art project is theoretical in nature, even though this is rarely the case in practice, as the competencies of an artist are not conducive to theoretical reflection; rather, they enable research through practice, or overview of existing theories. Few artists who defend dissertations in arts write theoretical works – most settle with art criticism or history. According to these regulations, artists sometimes must paradoxically produce even larger dissertations than art historians.

The regulations go on to list the possible forms of the research work:

The research work may take several different forms: comprehensive and multifaceted study and substantiation of one's own creative and (or) interpretive method; analysis of relevant issues in artistic practice; theoretical/methodological research. The research work involves a study of the sources, scholarly literature, and other information (in Lithuanian and other languages) from a perspective of choice. Interaction between the practical and theoretical activities as well as interdisciplinary insights are encouraged.

According to Elkins' typology, it is obvious that the dominant conception here is that of the first type of an arts dissertation, where research (in)forms art practice, and the dissertation falls into the field of art history and theory, art criticism, or philosophy, as it presents either a reflection on one's own work and its context, or a theoretical/methodological study. Even though the regulations declare that interaction between the practical and theoretical activities is encouraged, the rigid division of the art project into the research and the creative part contradicts that. Thus, even though the law stipulates that a doctoral student has to conduct research through practice, elaborations of the students' activities omit that stipulation and restrict the conception of research to study of scholarly literature and sources.

Based on the regulations, the VAA PhD in arts programme can be ascribed to the second-generation type (compared to British ones), and only the further practice of development and defence of art project will show (or prove) how far it is possible to diverge from the approved regulations in the academic sphere, and how strict is the separation of the two dissertation parts.

As this paper is being prepared for print (summer 2017), only 10 art dissertations³⁹ have been defended – 5 in fine arts and 5 in design – thus so far it is impossible to generalise the reflections on the nature and types of Lithuanian art dissertations. A few more years have to pass before it is possible to define the distinctive character of Lithuanian dissertations and compare them with the international context. Examples of writing by artists preparing to defend doctoral dissertations can be read in their articles (in Lithuanian with English abstracts) based on individual artistic research, published in a 2015 compendium titled *Meninis tyrimas: teorija ir praktika / Artistic Research:*

39 See: Apgintos doktorantūros disertacijos / meno projektai, Aukštųjų studijų fakultetas, VDA, [online], [accessed 07-07-2017], <http://www.vda.lt/lt/aukstuju-studiju-fakultetas/doktorantura/apgintos-doktoranturos-disertacijosmeno-projektai>.

Theory and Practice (Ed. Vytautas Michelkevičius, Vilnius: Vilniaus dailės akademijos leidykla, 2015).

One problem that is already evident is the international level, as in such smaller countries (e. g. Finland, Estonia, Sweden etc.) dissertations are usually defended in English, which is also predominantly the language of studies. This helps ensure the quality of studies as well as the expertise and sufficient insight of the supervisors and the defence committee, and avoid insularity, as the institution, the PhD studies council, and the defence committee must be confident that all the participants of the process are well acquainted with the current state of a particular sphere or issue to make sure that an artist's dissertation contributes to the existing knowledge and presents new insights. Meanwhile, when research is conducted and disseminated in the national language and only nationally, in a narrow field or problem range chosen by the artist, it is inevitable that it will be isolated in a hermetic situation, and the exchange of ideas will be out of reach for the potentially interested colleagues conducting research in related spheres internationally.

* * *

To sum up the conception of artistic research, in the educational context it can be detected quite accurately by identifying its particular functions and expressions, but it is impossible to define it with one sentence, as there are too many different educational cultures and practices. Furthermore, it is a fairly new and underdeveloped field of education, open to experimentation and frequent change. Quite a few theorists of artistic research have already claimed that the rapid and rigid institutionalisation and regulation of this experimental field has already subverted its flexibility and productivity, or will do it in the near future⁴⁰.

However, the art doctorate still remains a fairly free and flexible space for artists to develop their

40 Henk Slager, "After Bologna", in: *Volume*, Issue 48, 2016, pp. 131–135.

work independently from the market, and to investigate topics they are concerned with. It also presents a possibility (especially if it is established at schools specialising in other fields or at bigger universities) to collaborate with researchers and tutors in other disciplines and faculties, and to promote interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary innovation in both art practice and research.

The art doctorate is obviously the most institutionalised form of artistic research pursuing the most concrete aims, which grants a doctoral degree equivalent to the scientific one (PhD, Doctor of Philosophy) in some countries (doctoral cultures) and a specialised doctoral degree in arts (DA – Doctor of Arts; DFA – Doctor of Fine Arts) in others. The latter are recognised as equivalent to the PhD degree in some places, while in others they are not. Yet, quite a few research councils in Western or Northern Europe and Australia fund doctoral research projects in arts on par with those in science, and encourage their collaborations.

An evident trend is that if a school itself (e. g. the RCA in London or the University of the Arts Helsinki) launches a PhD in arts programme, it tends to be more flexible and focused on the artists' practice and needs. This is also manifested in the more flexible requirements for the written part of the dissertation, as well as more experimental study and defence procedures. In contrast, when an art academy launches such a programme in collaboration with a university, or a bigger university itself launches one, the conception of the art doctorate itself and its organisation and requirements are more academic and influenced by other sciences' culture. Technology universities might be an exception, as they usually provide artists with sufficient freedom and do not raise the same requirements for the written dissertation as the humanities (e. g. art history and theory) departments do, promoting a completely different culture of dissertation writing. In the domain of the technological and natural sciences, practice-based research akin to artists' research

is usual, and such dissertations are often essentially technical reports or overviews of practical experiments with conclusions (much shorter than those in the humanities and social sciences).

It is very difficult to compare various doctoral programmes for artists due to very different PhD cultures in each institution. The number of words in the theses and the ratio between practice and documentation (mostly in words) are the easiest means to compare them; however, it brings us to a very formal mode of comparison. It is obvious that most of the programmes struggle with the same issues: how to extract knowledge from art works and properly document the research process in order to communicate the results to academic, artistic and wider audiences.

Artistic research in the educational context is described as an intermediate state between art practice and academic research. A doctor of arts possibly remains an artist but simultaneously becomes a researcher, and this identity may be called a hybrid one, opening up new opportunities and facilitating adaptation to the changing conditions of creative work. Artistic research has brought and is still bringing new possibilities for artists' education and changes not only art education, but also the third cycle of studies in general, because it is being challenged by the fundamental questions what research is and how to document and present it in proper ways. This situation also generates new insights about what academic research is and what kind of methodologies we can employ to carry it out.

The legitimisation of artistic research in university-level schools helps solve the hitherto controversial issue of the qualification of an arts teacher when he or she become an associate or full professor, because until now the principal criterion was either the evasive status of an acclaimed artist or the preparation of methodical material and prolonged teaching of the latter (which does not necessarily mean a qualification upgrade). In this case, a doctor of arts is perceived as a professional qualification (allowing teaching and

facilitating career development) much like a medical residency or a doctorate in law. However, we should not ignore a much more intriguing prospect – of becoming a recognised researcher capable of collaborating or competing with researchers from other sciences or fields of practice. Naturally, this will trigger (and already has triggered) fiercer competition between researchers with PhD degrees, yet at least so far, the aim has been partly reached – practice and research carried out by artists has been acknowledged as equally valuable compared to that conducted by researchers in other disciplines.

This form of artistic research also encounters numerous problems, including the most notable ones – creation (and extraction during examination) of knowledge through an artwork and evaluation of art practice as research. Analysis of these issues will take quite a few more publications, monographs, artworks, and artistic research projects. At the same time there is a pressing need for discussions and arguments for the benefits of a PhD in arts and its problem-solving capacity, as in some countries or institutions critical attacks throwing the debate back to zero point still recur.

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MENINIO TYRIMO SAMPRATA EDUKACIJOJE: KAIP IR KADA JŲ (MENININKŲ) ŽINOJIMAS YRA GERESNIS IR GILESNIŠ?

Vytautas Michelkevičius

SANTRAUKA

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: trečiosios pakopos studijos, teorija ir praktika, praktika grįstas tyrimas, meno praktikos akademizavimas ir instrumentalizavimas, profesinis tobulėjimas.

Meninis tyrimas gali būti apibrėžiamas mažiausiai trijose srityse: šiuolaikiame mene, edukacijoje ir akademinuose (moksliniuose) tyrimuose. Šiame straipsnyje analizuoju vieną iš svarbiausių meninio tyrimo pasireiškimo kontekstų – edukaciją ir atskleidžiu meninio tyrimo sampratos „anatomiją“ santykyje su doktorantūra.

Pradžioje aptariu conceptualius meno doktorantūros modelius, kurie atskleidžia skirtingus santykius tarp tyrimo ir meno praktikos ir per tai matosi esminės tokios doktorantūros problemos. Pirmajame modelyje disertacija yra tyrimas, kuris informuoja meninę praktiką, antrajame – disertacija yra tolygi meninei praktikai, o trečiajame – disertacija yra meno kūrinys, ir atvirkščiai. Pastarasis modelis yra įdomiausias teorine ir praktine prasme, tačiau jis labiau egzistuoja kaip siekiamybė, o ne reali praktika.

Antroje straipsnio dalyje aptariu įvairias meno doktorantūros ir doktorantūros menininkams programas, remdamasis „lauko tyrimu“ – vizitais į edukacijos institucijas Jungtinėje Karalystėje, JAV, Suomijoje ir Nyderlanduose, ir analizuoju, kaip modeliai veikia praktiškai. Galiausiai aptariu meno aspirantūros transformacijas į meno doktorantūrą Lietuvoje ir pagrindines jos problemas: nuo reglamentų iki praktinių klausimų.

Meninio tyrimo sampratos edukaciniame kontekste analizė padeda išskleisti aktualias viso reiškimo problemas: ar menininkai kuria žinias, kaip ir kuo jų disertacijos prisideda prie žinojimo, koks skirtumas tarp tyrimo ir meninės praktikos ir t. t.