

## Curatorial Research-Creation. Unsustainable Anomalies in Organization Studies.

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Photo P.Mairesse

New arts total in our times, as the pioneers did by end of XIX. Century in Nancy and Europe, must reconnect to other disciplines and join forces in order to act against the unsustainable, the unbearable (Citton, 2012; Moriceau et al., 2023). This stream focuses on « research-creation », a recent trend in teaching and research, aimed at integrating the arts and the sciences including social sciences, with an equal (il-)legitimacy and dignity, for fostering a holistic knowledge, research and practice. Our endeavour is to think/play/design about how research-creation can act as a poison/remedy in the face of the unbearable/unsustainable of standard organisational research and teaching, which are not designed to combat the unbearable in organizations.

Sustainability concerns appear partly because the positive heuristic of our sciences, technologies and social theories are weakening and lacking effectiveness to an unexpected extent. Many elements of the contemporary unsustainable and unbearable result from the research weakness in adapting, understanding and solving the challenges of our times and the excesses of the human development at the expense of Earth. They might also result from the continuous attempt to maintain such unsuccessful positive heuristics in face of a growing number of anomalies.

We claim for a research-creation having the power to undermine what sciences epistemologist Imre Lakatos (1970) calls the 'hard core' of research programs: "accepted by convention ..., the hard core ... joined with a 'positive heuristic,' ... defines problems, outlines the construction of a belt of auxiliary hypotheses, foresees anomalies and turns them victoriously into examples, all according to a preconceived plan. ... It is primarily the positive heuristic of the programme, not the anomalies, which dictate the choice of the problems. Only when the driving force of the positive heuristic weakens, may more attention be given to anomalies." (Anderson, 2011).

Research-creation has the potential to deal with anomalies by linking art practice and sciences to the interpretive and pure sciences, in order to generate knowledge through social, material and performative practices. The researcher conducts a creative process, critically analyses it, and invents

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news forms for its transmission: partly an artefact or an artistic performance and partly a theoretical write-up in conversation with scientific literature<sup>6</sup>, producing “critically affective performative texts” (Linstead 2018). Research-creation turns each of us into researchers and creators in search of solutions to reverse the unbearable (Citton, 2018). It aims at turning theorizing into what Goethe called higher contemplation or perception (Uebel, 2022). It questions the ontologies grounding the old-fashioned normative quantitative approaches, in order to “curate” contemporary economies and cure the instrumental rationalisation that has taken the floor in place of reason (Guillet de Monthoux, 2020).

Curatorial research-creation allows to sketching out gestures. Gestures: the seeds of thinking in the act and thoughtful action (Manning & Massumi, 2018; Citton, 2012, 2018), that will then be disseminated and hopefully reproduced, expanded and reinterpreted, passing from head to head, from body to body, via affective and intellectual relationships, during events and encounters. Research-creation then acts as a minor activism, subverting the foundations and initiating gestures (of thought and action). “Making or creating reality “ (Guillet de Monthoux in Mairesse, 2021), pointing at new directions without claiming to rebuild an alternative hard core, research-action could provide a “reason to believe in small miracles in everyday aesthetic surprises” (Guillet de Monthoux, 2020:23). May its power not remain hopelessly on the fringes without occupying a place or becoming legitimate.

Curatorial research-creation is subversion. It fundamentally implies sharing, and takes place through the creation of one or more communities of interest around the objects and processes of art and research (Pluta and Losco-Lena, 2015). It might concern topics that could not be addressed without engaging in some form of creative practice. It implies a creative process, an experimental aesthetic component, or an artistic work as an integral part of the study (Sawchuck and Chapman, 2012).

However, developing research-creation programs outside the art institutions, and especially in the field of organizational research and practice meets five major resistances and barriers. First the attachment to the positive heuristics of natural sciences by scholars and even practitioners in organization. Second the still active depreciation of art and artistic activity as childish play, entertainment, or innovative creativity at the best. Third, the political resistance to approaches that could question and destabilize the dominant paradigm and evaluation criteria. Fourth, the disciplinary paradigm in research, preventing cross-, inter- or trans- disciplinary research. Fifth, the reluctance of artists to mix and interfere with the field of organization, that they identify with the producers of unsustainability and profit oriented thinking.

The stream aims at undermining the barriers from inside and outside. We expect tran-disciplinary participants in the stream, reseachers-artists-practitionners-scientists, who should tackle how to include creation into research: not only the creation of concepts, but also the process of artistic creation as research leading to knowledge.

Anderson in 2010 stated “the intellectual construct of research programs, and the quasi-autonomy of its selective incorporation of externalities, can bring intellect and design and art to bear on societal conditions”, aimed at “a more constructive, projective role of influencing future global practice.” More than ten years later, these terms remain valid.

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<sup>6</sup> “Research-creation”, *Performascope: Interdisciplinary Lexicon of Performance and Research-Creation*, Grenoble: Université Grenoble Alpes, 2021, [online]: <http://performascope.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/fr/detail/177883>

Thus, we call for actions, theories and proposal of multiples kinds: Experiments, accounts, staging, workshops, outdoors activities, discussions, exhibitions, ... dealing for example with the following but not limiting list of themes:

- research-creation accounts in the most varied format
- artistic research bringing in knowledge of different kind, or undermining the hard core
- art-science dual experiments on organizational issues
- empirical studies pointing at anomalies in the organizational life that cannot be tackled by the classical positive organization science heuristics
- theoretical critiques of organizational research programs and heuristics
- comparisons with, and challenges from the pioneers in Art Nouveau, Bauhaus, Black Mountains and other approaches
- proposal of research-creation programs and action at the intersection of the arts and organization sciences
- workshops

We conceive of this stream not only as a place for thoughts but a platform for future actions.

Submission format:

Please submit a 750-word proposal, as a Word.doc, wherever possible, in size 12 font, Times Roman. Proposals are due by 02<sup>nd</sup> December 2023 and should be sent to [aomo2024nancy@gmail.com](mailto:aomo2024nancy@gmail.com), copying in the stream convenor Philippe Mairesse at [philippe.mairesse@icn-artem.com](mailto:philippe.mairesse@icn-artem.com).

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