

Artistic Research and Art Education: Singularity of Entanglement

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Biography

Joachim Kettel is a visual artist and a full professor of art and didactics in the Institute of Art at the University of Education Karlsruhe, Germany. He is member of Deutscher Künstlerbund, Westdeutscher Künstlerbund and founding member of European Council of Artists (ECA), Copenhagen. As co-founder of the concept of artistic education (Künstlerische Bildung) he organized since 1994 international conferences like „Imaginäres Hotel Leipzig“, Leipzig 1994; „Kunst lehren?“, Wolfenbüttel/Braunschweig 1997; “Mapping Blind Spaces: Künstlerische Bildung nach Pisa – Neue Wege zwischen Kunst und Bildung.“ ZKM Karlsruhe 2004; Internationaler InSEA-Forschungs- und Entwicklungskongress „horizonte/horizons in sea 2007 germany“ Heidelberg/Karlsruhe and „The Missing LINK 2016. Übergangsformen von Kunst und Pädagogik in der kulturellen Bildung. Künstlerische Kunstpädagogik im Kontext.“ Karlsruhe 2016.

Abstract

If art education and art didactics such as Artistic Education or Artistic Art Education are no longer based on educational thinking but rather on art, then it must relate to the gain of knowledge of artistic thinking and acting and the interwoven with them to gain knowledge and educational processes from the arsenal of the artistic forms of thinking and action used here. Artistic research, as a specific form of artistic thinking and acting, can help to broaden

and deepen our understanding of the social and personal relevance of this alternative view of the world and self and the repertoire of artistic investigation. It then forms a reservoir of methodological possibilities, which are of great relevance for art didactics and methodology.

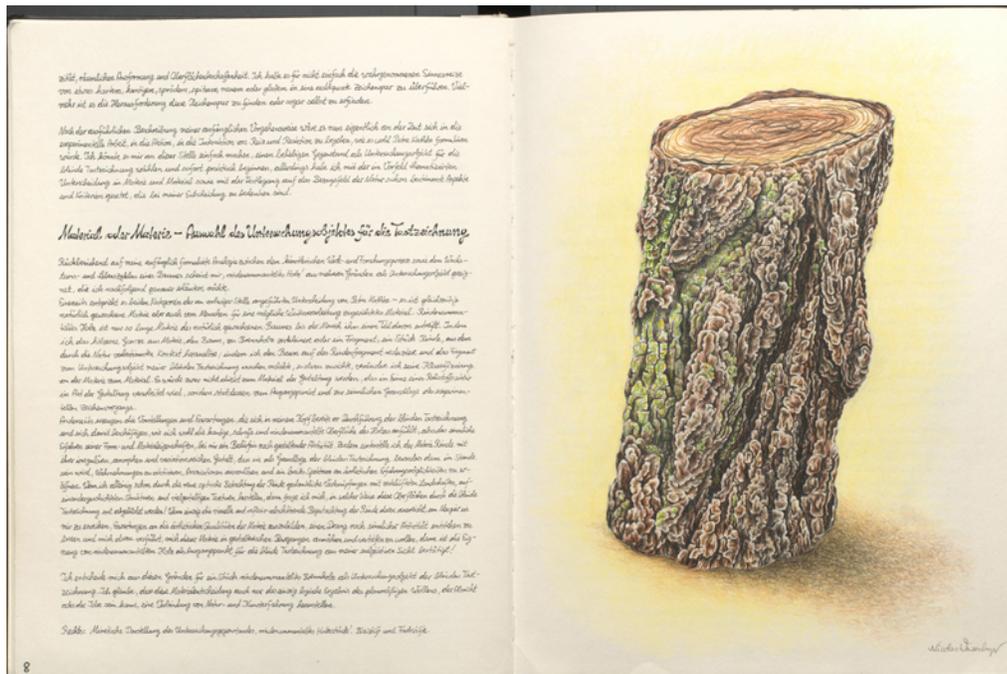
Keywords

Artistic education; knowledge of artistic thinking and acting; artistic forms of thinking and action; artistic research; relevance for art didactics and methodology; portfolio-work; intensive examination of own research question.

The epistemic thing

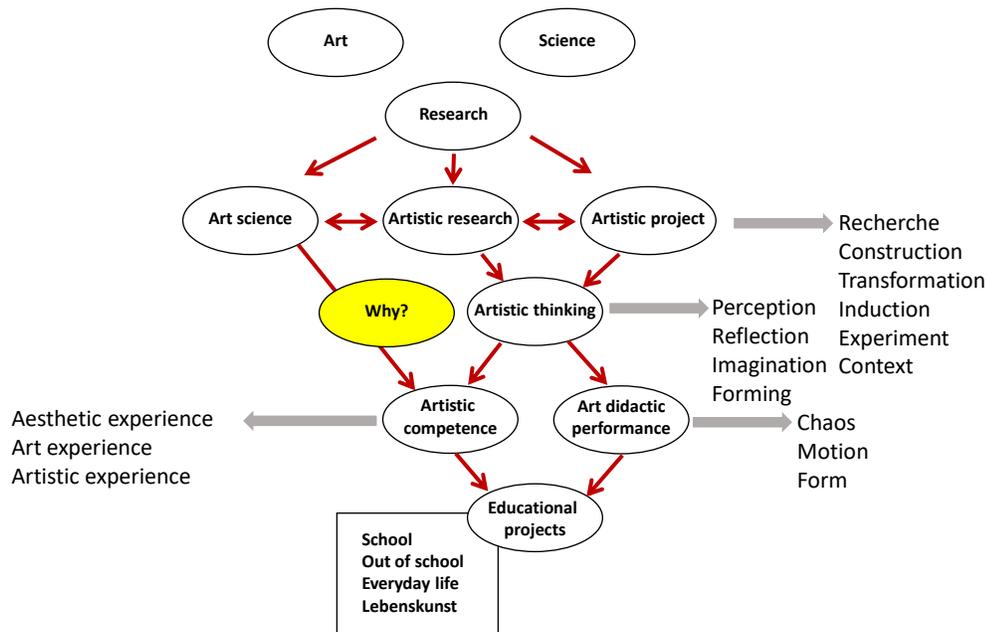
“[The epistemic thing] represents a physical structure, a chemical reaction, a biological function around which the 'Enlightenment' or 'presentation' of the research process revolves. What interests in such a thing is precisely what has not yet been determined. Thus it manifests itself in a characteristic blurring that can not be traced, which is unavoidable in that, paradoxically, it embodies what one does not yet know” (Rheinberger, 1992, p. 70.).

My contribution refers to the artistic portfolio work at the Institute for Art of the University of Education Karlsruhe. Here especially on an artistic research project of my student Nicolas Weisenburger which he carried out in the understanding of the art pedagogic and art didactic conception of Artistic Education. With regard to the discourse of art as a research, the contribution advocates the idea of a continuation of art as art research. He wants to make it clear that here very specific aesthetic and artistic qualities are visible that cannot be distracted. Instead, the potentiality of artistic thinking in art pedagogical contexts should be clarified and strengthened. In my presentation, I also refer to relevant voices in the current discourse of an art of research or research as art.



Nicolas Weisenburger fills with his diverse visual and textual considerations two portfolios, of which I would like to present the first volume here by way of example. He is dedicated to the intensive examination of his own research question “The artistic research process on the alienation of barks, tree and fragments in drawing, painting and printmaking” (Weisenburger 2018) mainly in the medium of drawing and painting. Volume II, on the other hand, extends the investigations into the field of printmaking, more precisely to gravure printing.

I show them here, therefore, to make it clear that artistic research and artistic thinking (and action) can be seen in a processual way and that occur in a process of different steps in a finding process as a tentative search process. This is characterized by a high degree of identification with the matter, the object of investigation and a non-linear course of investigation, which is open to coincidences, by-ways and abortions. In a specific way, which is by no means undisputed in the discourse on artistic research, research at the levels of the sciences and the arts is decisive. Artistic science, artistic research and artistic project work together form the further



levels of artistic thinking (and acting).

Within this process, artistic thinking has to pass through the essential four levels of action that can be repeated within the process. These are the phases of perception, reflection, imagination and design/form finding. The introductory diagram shows the interweaving of artistic thinking with forms of artistic project work but also with artistic research. This forms the core activity of an artistic education or artistic art education with its trinities of research, construction, transformation (operational elements) and induction, experiment, contextuality (structural elements). In addition, Aesthetic experience, Art experience, Artistic experience as three moments of artistic competence. Art education is based on a performative didactic that finds itself in (spiritual) movement. This is characterized by the principle of chaos, movement, form (processual elements). Artistic research is a transition zone between scientific research and artistic project work.

Coming back to the concrete example presented here, Nicolas Weisenburger, as we can see very clearly, is increasingly involved in his own artistic investigation process. After all, his

artistic research, including the intensive artistic project work and the contexts integrated in it, forms artistic thinking. This, in turn, makes it possible to increase artistic competence and art-teaching art didactic performance. This is essential in scholastic and extracurricular artistic educational contexts. Weisenburger subdivides the individual examination parts in his artistic portfolio or workbook. These range from “Aspects of my artistic personality - a self-reflection”, “experimental situations”, “expanding contexts” as “intermezzi”, to subsequent “reflections on the course of action”, to “didactic considerations” and to media changes (Weisenburger, 2018). In advance, the student sends a motto that frames his own research metaphorically: “With proper care, a small seed can grow into a large tree that can bear many fruits. All of these fruits will become seed for new sprouts, a dense forest over time” (Weisenburger, 2018).

The procedural actions Nicolas Weisenburger presents as follows [here](#).

1 Self-responsibility

The self-responsibility for this development process is taken over automatically by those students like Nicolas Weisenburger who are involved in it, and these are increased in the course of the rapprochement. However, this is not primarily about the well-known methods of art history (eg the iconological-iconographic method of Erwin Panofsky), which are to be found on the reception-oriented side, but much more concerned with the producing side of artistic thinking and action processes and the resulting outcomes. If, in the light of a dismantling of the concept of genius, it is not just about divine intuition, artistic intuition, or foreign beings who order to “paint the upper right corner black” (Sigmar Polke, ironically, underlining the understanding of the genius), becomes more or less uncovered conscious acts of aesthetic-artistic thinking and acting, which open up the production process itself, hold it for a long time and end it. Under this question, students can also relate to their own artistic thinking and action practice and further sensitize themselves to research awareness.

Art of the transition from the work to the event

Artistic education must make the forces of (contemporary) art that are critical of cognition towards their own reservoir of mediation and transformation processes to gain transferable possibilities of thought and action for an artistic art education of the present. Last but not least, design processes are always processes of form-finding as a form-process, in which it is not all that rare to find completely new forms or to find existing form constellations that are transformed into a meaningful structure. This applies to a shift from artwork to art documentation and to the art project as project art and to the positioning of contemporary art in the face of image machines. When artistic thinking occurs in artistic processes of action, the question arises as to the cognitive forces of an art of production as fundamental aesthetic research. With Dieter Mersch (Mersch, 2002; Mersch, 2015) and other authors, the potential of artistic research as an aesthetic epistemology of transcendence for artistic education in cultural contexts should be considered.

Artistic thinking and artistic production

If the „massive work category“ (Rebentisch, 2013, p. 45) is replaced by the “work in motion” (p. 32) and the “meaningful work of art”, (p. 32) then new constellations arise in the relationship of the viewer and the artist to the work. Boris Groys argues that an art “that practices the mimesis of thought [...] carries a shift of attention to the thinking and production process itself, which should lead to this result” (Groys, 2008, p. 125). In the replacement of the traditionally closed artwork by the open artwork or art project, the art is now “no longer understood as the production of works of art, but as a documentation of an art project” (p. 125). “The finding in this respect refers to the understanding of ‘artistic research’, as their ‘nature’ is so different from the scientific one, that it is difficult to subsume both under the same term” (Mersch, 2015,

p. 59). That art in the sense of artistic research is an epistemic practice.

The future of contemporary art

In pointing out the manufacturing process and the constant critical questioning, in the sense of scientific research, probably also the future of contemporary art, which does not want to be consumed by consumption and global production or solidify into formalism, “is a stronger focus the aesthetics of production” (poiesis) (Mersch, 2015, p. 14) in the sense of production aesthetics or aesthetic production rather than aesthetic experience, on design and creative practices that operate in the sensuous. For the transformation of the classical concept of knowledge and cognition in the sense of the abolition of discursive connotations, for the award of medial practices of operating and experimenting with a view to the aesthetic production, the “event” for a “knowledge” and its “production” with the respective production conditions in concrete manufacturing practices to be opened up (poiesis) (p. 14). Significantly, in these processes of art, the producing hand, with its diverse practices, and the obstacles, movements, material resistances, and technical difficulties that come in the art of making it, are called the “eventfulness of the performative”, i. E. that which you at the same time ‘miss’ and ‘befall’ (p. 14).

Thinking in other media

Mersch favors in his reflections on current practices of aesthetic knowledge education thinking in other media beyond the usual language action, that he understands as practice, as acting with, in and through materials: ‘Thinking’ is then understood as a practice, an action with materials in materials through materials - for example, through the placement of colors - or with media in media or through media - for example, through the brush, the stroke, through a specific medial arrangement or by the approach of sound, etc., - without this, however, already the tacit knowledge, as it has become relevant for science research, to give preference. From

his point of view, there is a wide range of strategies, methodological rigor and discipline in dealing with principles such as observation, material and field research, rehearsal and modeling, systematic study of different sources, experiments, self-built laboratories. Here, the meta-level of reflection is a necessary follow-up work that consists in researching research, investigating investigation methods, confusing objects, disrupting series of experiments, questioning work as a work, as well as the relationship between production and chance, including Modes of publication, documentation and exhibition (Mersch, 2015, p. 61).

No static information

Even if the production of the form of knowledge is closely linked to its presentation, the art scientist Johanna Platter argues that it can become a form of knowledge. Knowledge does not show itself as static information about the aesthetic object, not the final product of the artistic process is relevant, but the performative production as ‘release of knowledge’. In artistic research, Platter sees a focus on the specific way of dealing with the respective subject matter (Platter, 2016, p. 244). This art is about the induction of effects, jumps, instead of intentionalities and calculated uses as a result of a precise plan with previously imagined “finalism of the work genesis”, instead of the act of “unlocking” and “free-settling happening” (Mersch, 2015, p. 12) in the midst of aesthetic practices. It’s about openness, openness and impact, without knowing where to go. Production of art manifests itself in self-exposure as self-generation from something that comes before thought and to which no language can reach, in liminal zones of transition, in the no-man’s-land of the uncertain, in zones of the transitory.

Singularity of entanglement

“It is the singularity of entanglement in the world, its violence or subjectification that are under scrutiny, so that the meticulous work of art is to consider each of these aspects as well as the

unseen, hidden, to be heard first of all and bring in his visibility” (Mersch, 2015, p. 30).

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C) All pictures by Nicolas Weisenburger