

**Research as a Skill for Artists: Artistic research and Higher Arts
Education**
**Case study on University of the Arts Utrecht (HKU) Fine Arts and
Design Master Program**

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Abstract

The motivation of giving artistic research a concrete definition or contributing the theory of it is not only based on the concept of interdisciplinarity. The term artistic research, which appears in academic discourse, is also highly connected with the societal and political circumstances of today. There was not an acute inherent artistic necessity to engage in a practice that we now call artistic research. Instead, it was the academy that saw new opportunities for creating new programs, and new possibilities to get funding by introducing a new discipline called artistic research.¹ Just as regarding art as a part of a creative economy, naturally entrepreneurial, art education has become a major industry. This change would have a substantial influence on the institutional situation of art and design production – The role of the institution should be re-considered as artistic research is, or might be, regarded as a discipline or enquiry in art production.

In this study, the master program of Fine Arts and Design at the University of the Arts Utrecht is selected as a research object.² To find out the reason how the academic discourse in the field of artistic research reacts to the curriculum design in the postgraduate program. The central discussion would be based on the question of “How can artistic research be included in curriculum design and program assessment?”; more specifically, I will look at how at the master of Fine Art and Design at The University of the Arts Utrecht (MaHKU), and how an analysis of both the course and program design and the assessment of the program by the NVAO bring insight in the possibilities, the complexities and the potential of including artistic research in higher education. This study aims to provide critical reflection on the translation of research from academic discourse to educational material.

¹ Danny Butt, *Artistic Research in the Future Academy* (Bristol: Intellect Ltd, 2017), 74.

² HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "MA PROGRAM FINE ART." *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (accessed on January 20, 2020 <https://www.hku.nl/Home/Education/Masters/MAProgrammeFineArt.htm>).

Introduction

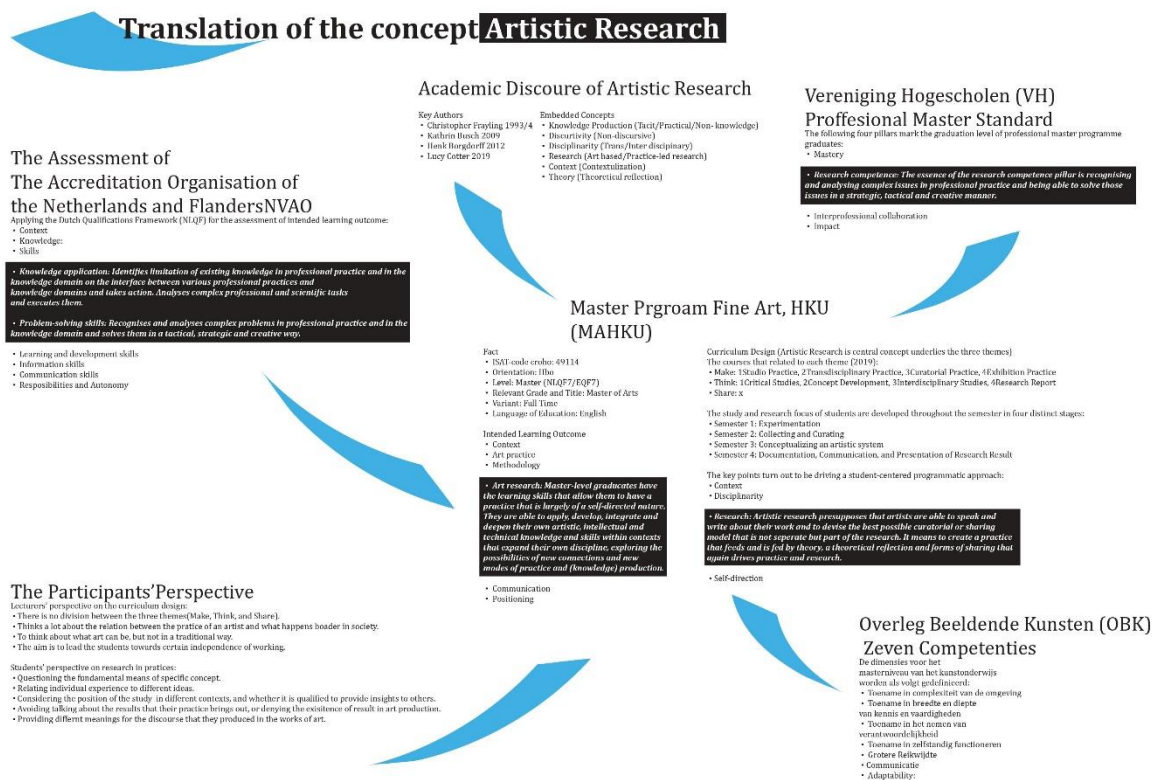


Fig. 1. The Translation of the Concept Artistic Research to Curriculum Design of Master Fine Art Program

HKU

Legitimacy has been a recurring topic in the debate about artistic research. More specifically, the discussion has been about the conformity to academic research, e.g., in standards of methodology, verifiability, replicability, and ways of reporting.³ These types of questions are exemplary for the belief of some and the disbelief of others in art's capability of knowledge production. People who endeavor artistic research believe that the creative process in art potentially carries out knowledge, and as a result, artistic research is potentially a field of possibilities that allows for new ways of knowing. This is what artistic research and scientific research might have in common. What differs is the interfaces that they cut in the common cultural space, riding on different vehicles to lead them to either the new knowledge or understanding they aim for.

With the introduction of the three-cycle structure (bachelor-master-doctoral) in the Bologna process, the discussion of the relationship between artistic practice and research has put these debates mainly on the demarcation of artistic research and artistic practice, artistic

³ Henk Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*, (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), 22.

research and scientific research, and artistic research and academic research.⁴ The belief of artistic practice's epistemic potential brings the contributions on artistic research kinds of over-associated for its right to cohere with academic research, and whether it appropriately belongs at the doctoral level of higher education. Accompanying this has been a good deal of interest in ways to employ their professional and creative practices as instruments of inquiry, just as previous disciplines have developed research methods that employ their specialist skills and knowledge.⁵ Academics have also taken this to create new programs and new possibilities to get funding by introducing the discipline called artistic research. Thereby, it provides spaces for different art disciplines to input their “research attitude” in an artistic manner.

Artist-researchers that work in academic institutions need to find ways to turn this discipline into a practice that may be productive for both the artists themselves and the academy. For instance, the Master Program of Fine Art and Design at The University of the Arts Utrecht (Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht, HKU) is an art program that interlinks two specializations, Fine Art (MaHKU) and Scenography, has been evaluated by The Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)⁶ as an experimental research driven platform for artistic practice.⁷ The main distinction between the BA Fine Art program and the MA Fine Art program at the HKU are the competencies students obtained when they graduate from the program. The BA aims to train students to become visual artists and focus more on training their capability of translating concepts/ideas into images (Visualization).⁸ For instance, the bachelor's program students take general Fine Art courses such as Painting, Drawing/Print, Sculpture, and Digital Media supplemented by theoretical courses such as Art History and Cultural History.⁹ In contrast, the master program aims to develop/shape students' critical stance on the contemporary artistic debate. The training focuses on guiding students to create their own research concepts/artistic knowledge by consolidating cultural practices, research

⁴ Even there is a huge common when we refer to scientific research to academic research at present. I still would like to make a distinction between scientific research and academic research. This distinction relies on the belief that science, in a broader sense, leads to systematic/structural studies that provide knowledge through observation and experiment. In this sense, science does not directly connect to academia. I intended to use the term academic research to refer to universities' connection (or educational structure) while using the term scientific research in a more general sense.

⁵ Vytautas Michelkevicius, *Mapping Artistic Research: Toward Diagrammatic Knowing* (Vilnius: Vilnius Academy of Arts Press, 2018), 303.

⁶ The NVAO a national organization in the Netherlands that accredits existing and new programs and assesses the quality assurance of higher education institutions.

⁷ Hobéon Certificering, *Assessment report Extensive programme assessment hbo-masteropleiding Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design* (Den Haag: De Kracht van kennis, 2019), 3.

⁸ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. “Fine Art. The programme”. *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 17th January 2021, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/fine-art>).

⁹ Ibid.

activities, and artistic writing.¹⁰ Rather than the explicit knowledge that traditionally links as the outcome of a series of scientific investigations, the artistic researcher seeks the epistemological potential of art that provides a specific articulation of the pre-reflective, non-conceptual content of art.¹¹

As a research-based master program, MaHKU translated the educational aims formulated by Overleg Beeldende Kunst (OBK)¹²¹³ in 2017 into the following competence regarding context, art practice, methodology, art research, communication, and positioning.¹⁴ These intended learning outcomes were further molded into three themes: Make, Think, and Share, that interrelate around the central underlying concept of artistic research in the program's instructional design – The concept of artistic research has transformed into an educational material applied in art education and diverged into different aspects for the educational aims. What fascinated me the most in this translation of the concept into a curriculum design is that it provides chances for students to explore the fundamental means of research in art activities that are important and related to themselves. Besides, the phenomenon of implementing the concept of artistic research in higher art education also brings out an argument that the translation/interpretation of the notion could have deviated from the fundamental means of artistic research.

In this thesis, I aim to develop an understanding of how research is implemented in the curricula of higher arts education programs, answering the question how artistic research can be implemented in the higher education programs for artists, and how this implementation relates to a more theoretical exploration of the concept and practice of artistic research. As my case study, I choose the Master Program for Fine Art at the HKU in Utrecht, the Netherlands (MaHKU). By including a case study, this research allowed for a way to gain a more practical insight in the relationship between art practice and research, to better understand how artistic research is implemented in an actual program, and to explore more in depth what professional

¹⁰ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. “Master of Fine Art. What you will you learn in this course?”. *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 30th November 2020, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art>.)

¹¹ Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*, 143.

¹² “Overleg Beeldende Kunst (OBK) is an association that endeavors to provide professional profiles for the art academies developing their professional training within an outlined framework. The association has been together with the Vereniging Hogescholen (The Association of Universities of Applied Sciences) and signed a covenant in 2011 containing the agreement to be responsible for maintaining the profiles jointly.” — Translated from Dutch to English.

¹³ Overleg Beeldende Kunst (OBK), *BEROEPSPROFIEL EN OPLEIDINGSPROFIELEN BEELDENDE KUNST EN VORMGEVING* (Groningen: Tienkamp Groningen, 2014), 12-16.

¹⁴ Hobéon Certificering, *Assessment report Extensive programme assessment hbo-masteropleiding Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design* (Den Haag: De Kracht van kennis, 2019), 3.

training in research is given to artists in higher arts education. At the beginning, the study focuses on how the educational institution translated the concept of artistic research into educational material. With a sub-research question of “What are the research components that are being discussed in the context of artistic research?”, this study begins by investigating on articles, books, and journals established in artistic research to get a basic understanding of what it is about in the academic context at present. It is an approach for this study to frame a supposition of what the research could look like in higher arts education. The contribution of Henk Borgdorff and Kathrin Busch helped on building up the backbone for this thesis, getting a fundamental understanding of how the relationship between artistic practice and research is being discussed in academic discourse. — They provided different points of view for the relationship between theory, research, art practice, and academic. After the observation on scholarly discourse, I started an investigation on the MaHKU to discover how the research components in academic discourse are related to the program descriptions with a sub-question, “How does the program interpretate the meaning of research from the academic discourse?”. Most of my data collection for this case study was gathered from the official website of the program. Including program description, course description, and its expectation for the new candidates. The website is the main medium for the program presents its vision and the learning environment that it offers for students. Besides the online sources, I also included flyers and other forms of curriculum representations as materials to investigate on. My observation of the program's discourse is conducted through the process of discourse analysis. By grouping sentences into different catalogs, the findings are retracing back to the concepts derived from artistic research's academic discourse. I will further elaborate on the absence of research components, limitations, and fruitfulness that this transformation of concept to curriculum brings about in chapter 3.

As this study focuses on the interpretation and translation of artistic research in a master program, it is indeed to include other perspectives that might influence the program's development/position in its relationship to academic. In the Dutch education system, the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) represents as a dominant presence. This organization monitors the internal quality of the research universities and the universities of applied science and the quality of their programs.¹⁵ Since 2002, the NVAO has been responsible for recognizing all degrees in The Netherlands and Flemish-speaking Belgium, by checking thoroughly every course upon its introduction and then once again every six years.¹⁶ Besides ensuring the quality of higher education in the Netherlands, which maintains the students' learning environment, the assessment of the NVAO also potentially becomes a

¹⁵ The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO). “About us”. *NVAO*. (assessed on 24th December 2020, <https://www.nvao.net/en/about-us>).

¹⁶ Study In Holland. “Accreditation of Dutch Universities”. *Study In Holland*. (assessed 24th December 2020, https://www.studyinholland.co.uk/ranking_reputation_and_recognition.html).

limitation/threat for programs to develop new possibilities within the education system as the program should remain positive in the assessment report to consolidate its degree-awarding power. In 2019, the assessment report of NVAO shows that the master program of Fine Art and Design at HKU meets all the standard of quality assurance at master-level, which also includes the ability of conducting art research. It is completely reasonable to do a textual analysis on this paper based on the hypothesis that the power structure of academic may influence the development of a new program that relies on the field of artistic research. Another perspective that this study considers as necessary to discuss is the professional master standard provided by the National Platform for Professional Master Programs (LPPM) of Vereniging Hogescholen (The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Science, VH). This professional master standard describes the profile of the professional master and aims to paint an unambiguous and clear picture of the master level within the context of the professional orientation of higher professional education.¹⁷ Besides functioning as a quality framework for developing new professional master programs, the standard can be used as a quality assurance tool, for instance as a reference tool in preparing for an accreditation process by the NVAO.¹⁸ With the intertwinement between the three parties (the NVAO- the MaHKU- the VH), it is evident that the presented discourse by the program could be highly affected by the authority caused by the hierarchy of the social structure in the Dutch academic. The observation on the assessment report that the NVAO processed in 2019 and the professional master standard provided by the VH will then be answering another sub-question, "How do the government qualify as master-level research in art?". With the result of this question, the study further develops a textual analysis of the program's discourse, seeking to reveal the limitation that the academic framework brings to this translation.

Due to the educational program provides implement with the concept of artistic research, the participants' voices in the program are also perspectives that are indeed to include in this study, as the lecturers and students are the one who are experimenting this translation in an actual practice. To include the opinion on the curriculum design from teachers for this study, I interviewed Falke Pisano¹⁹ on 25th October 2019, who is a teacher teaches in the program. The questions that are designed for the interview are based on my curiosity for certain concepts applied in the program. For instances, the purpose of the three themes (Make, Think, and Share) in the course structure, and the interdisciplinary approach of the master program. The interview aims to gather some opinions on the program's curriculum design from a teacher's perspective.

¹⁷ Vereniging Hogescholen, *The professional Master standard*, (Den Hag: Vereniging Hogescholen, 2019), 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁹ Falke Pisano is a lecturer who teaches in the MA program Fine Art. I asked her opinion on the instruction design of the program. She is an artist as well as a lecturer based in the Netherlands.

Besides the teacher's point of view, it is also necessary to include the students' opinions within their studies. I designed an online questionnaire for students to fill in at the end of May in 2020. The purpose of the survey is to collect the students' perspectives on research in their practices. Fortunately, I received two responses from Julie Yu and Sol Lee²⁰; two students enrolled in the academic year of 2018-2020. As the program had centralized artistic research in its curriculum design, my questionnaire is designed with a supposition that students consider themselves researching with their practice in their study. The questionnaire contains four questions, asking about the content, intent/motives, methodology, and research value of their practice. Differs from the program; the lectures and the students' point of view provide a practical idea of research in their practices. Research becomes an attitude/relative activities/fragments of concepts that live in their practices (for lecturers, teaching). With a sub-question of "What kinds of research activities or components are being applied in a valid practice of art and education in the program?", the analysis afterward will compare the answers with the program's description to see what concepts in research and practice are achieving the pedagogical goal of the program. This investigatory intended to bring out some reflections from the program participants on the education setting of the master program. Thereby, it aims to discover the program's perception and effectiveness of its educational setting.

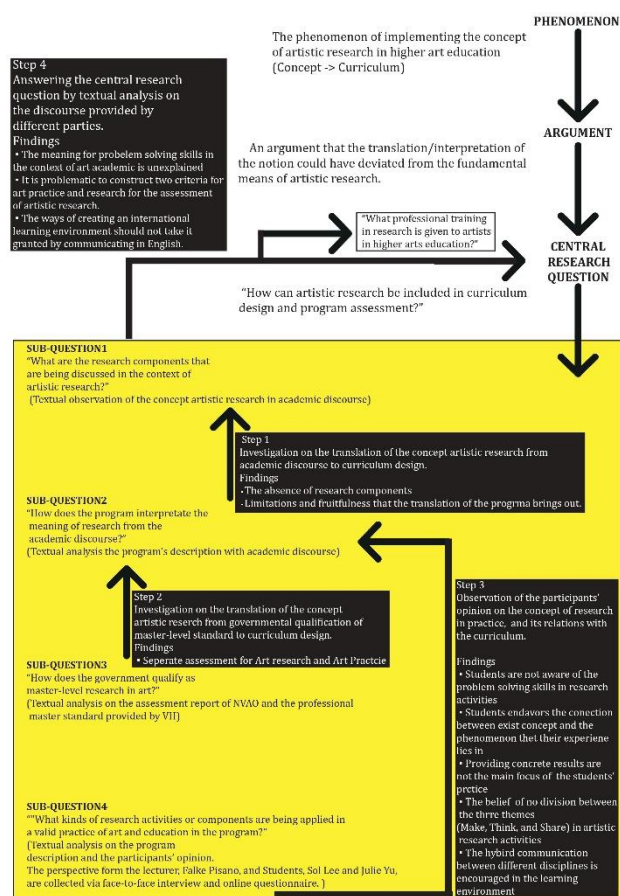


Fig. 2. The Schematic Step-by-Step Breakdown on Sub-questions and research path of the thesis

²⁰ Julie and Sol are the two students out of twelve that helped me filled in the questionnaire.

In brief, this study is conducted through investigations on different perspectives on the relationship between artistic practices and research activities. Focuses mainly on three groups of people, which refers to the program (educational institution), the NVAO and the VH (dominant presence in higher education), and the participants (students and lecturers that are physically engaging in the courses). It aims to discover what artistic research could mean by textual analyzing different types of discourse that it is surrounded with. This thesis will conclude by providing possibilities for educational programs, significantly higher arts education, to develop its research concept further. It focuses on translating research from art knowledge to academic terms and academic terms into artistic-material input. In this study, four sub-questions are applied for collecting perspectives on artistic research/research from the academic discourse (scholarly papers), educational institution (program description and curriculum design), the Dutch government (the assessment report of the NVAO and the professional master standard provided by the VH), and participants in lectures within the learning environment of higher arts education. By analyzing the interpretations of research from the different parties, a clear picture of what professional research training is given to artists in higher arts education is provided. Thereby, being supportive on responding to the central research question, “How can artistic research be included in curriculum design and program assessment”. At the end of the thesis, I would summarize the observation results and conclude this dissertation by providing a critical reflection on the series of translations. This study aims to reveal the potential of research development in higher arts education.

Theoretical Exploration: The Relationship between Artistic Research and the Academia

2.1 Indication

To elaborate and provide evidence for such a new research realm as artistic research, contributors mainly focus on giving points of view on the relationships between art and research to strengthen its place in academia. As artistic research's approach focuses mostly on drawing its attention to the schematic of knowledge production in art, the relationship between theory and art is also a common topic to discuss in the region of artistic research. This chapter of the thesis will introduce some existing types of art research Kathrin Busch released in her scholarly paper, “Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge”, in 2009²¹ and its connection to the kinds of relationship between theory and practice that Henk Borgdorff provided in his contribution, *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*, in 2012.²² The connection between the two contributions will then offer a general idea of artistic research. Including its potential in the knowledge society, and the characteristic research direction. Before I delve into the part of matching the different discourse in the academic context, I would like first to introduce the differences between art practice-in-itself and art practice-as-research. Since students in art school are familiar with physically engaging in art production, which mostly focuses on visualizing concepts, it is important to keep in mind that practice does not thereby become research, just as research does not become artistic practice.

Henk Borgdorff, a philosopher and music theorist based in Leiden, raises a point of view of the difference between art practice-as-research and art practice-in-itself in his book—*The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*, published in 2012.^{23,24} He claims that artistic research should enhance knowledge, and the investigation should be intended as research. The motivation of conducting artistic research differs from artistic practice-in-itself by their expectation for the purpose, and the rigorous attitude on the

²¹ Kathrin Busch, “Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge,” *ART & Research A Journal of Ideas, Contexts, and Methods* 2, no.2 (2009).

²² Henk Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*, (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012).

²³ Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, 53.

²⁴ The full text: “Art practice – both the art object and the creative process – embodies situated, tacit knowledge that can be revealed and articulated by means of experimentation and interpretation. Art practice qualifies as research if its purpose is to expand our knowledge and understanding by conducting an original investigation in and through art objects and creative processes. Art research begins by addressing questions that are pertinent in the research context and in the art world. Researchers employ experimental and hermeneutic methods that reveal and articulate the tacit knowledge that is situated and embodied in specific artworks and artistic processes. Research processes and outcomes are documented and disseminated in an appropriate manner to the research community and the wider public.” – The explanation provided by Henk Borgdorff in 2012.

documentation of procedures that is required in the practice. The former, which refers to those who aim to conduct artistic research, claims new understanding with the belief that practice in its process embedded knowledge that can be revealed. In contrast, the latter focuses more on the artists' visual expression in an emotional, philosophical, and performative sense. Another difference between the two is the way of documenting and disseminating artistic activities. For artistic research, the study's research questions and problems, including the project will make and how the study will relate to other research areas, should also be addressed in the documentation (and/or) presentation of the research. The results and methods applied within the research study, including the research process, must be appropriately documented to communicate with the broader public. The documentation and dissemination of the result distinguish one from the other by the form that it should be translated or transformed. The non-discursive form of knowledge embedded within the making process and the knowledge that obscure in the works of art should be translated from artistic terms, phenomena, and events to academic expertise and vocabularies related to research when it is being discussed in the academic context. In sum, the works of art, including the procedures that are being taken in the process/practice must be explained in ways that can be understood by the artistic or non-artistic communities and the academic world as well when it is considering itself as a type of academic research. This is the prior standard for art students to consider whether their works of art are positioned in the field of artistic research or not.

2.2 Encounter and Constellation

In 2009, Kathrin Busch proposed three types of artistic research concerning the relationship between philosophy and art in *Art and Research Journal* in “Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge”. Art with Research, Art about Research, and Art as Research are the three forms that she considered as examples for the intersection of art and research. Besides, these three types of art research contributed by Kathrin Busch, the four perspectives of the relationship between theory and practice in the arts that Henk Borgdorff released in 2012 also provided his view of how the theory performs practices. The instrumental perspective, interpretive perspective, performative perspective, and immanent perspective are the four viewpoints that Henk Borgdorff addressed in his book *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*. These perspectives interpret the uniqueness of art into possibilities of theoretical reflection that emerge in the making process. It also presents the benefits and capacity of providing knowledge from different aspects of intervention in the artistic process.

2.21 Art research that ties in with already existing research traditions

In the trichotomy that Kathrin Busch provided in 2009, art with research is a category that regards theory as an implement in the practices of art. In other words, theoretical knowledge is being used to develop artistic works in this sense. For instance, scientific knowledge such as optics, anatomy, natural science, physics, geometry, and physiology are absorbed by artists as a matter of course and reflected in their artwork. Relevant contemporary theories and discourses re-emerged in artistic production and influence its forms of representation, as well as its content.²⁵ Henk Borgdorff also introduces likewise as the instrumental perspective of the relationship between theory and practice. The instrumental perspective suggests that theory serves the creative process or performance in the arts. Theory as it were, furnishes the tools and material knowledge that are applied to the artistic process or product.²⁶ An interesting viewpoint that I want to introduce here is that they both mentioned that the theory which they refer to is not restricted to the technical know-how and professional knowledge often referred to as theory in art disciplines²⁷, but also the theories or theoretical research of an exploratory or applied nature. For example, the current fad of applying information technology in artistic practice, or the referencing science of linguistic in conceptual art are all in the scope of discussion. It creates an atmosphere that the concept of transdisciplinary or interdisciplinarity is vigorous in the construction of knowledge production in the arts, and this tendency is a presence that could never be neglect in nowadays. Regard to the instrumental value that theory plays in practices, theory in this domain is understood as a conscious reception of contemporary theory, and it is regarded as one of the materials applied within the practice.

Art about research sees the practice as a way of representing science, and the theoretical reflection emerges from interpreting a specific scientific scene, phenomenon, or knowledge. It includes works that focus thematically on research and its genuine procedures and conclusions. In this sense, research is the object of an art practice that does not restrict itself to functioning as an object of science. For example, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*,²⁸ an oil painting on canvas in 1632 by Rembrandt, in which Rembrandt portrayed the surgeons in action for the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons. In this work, Dr. Nicolaes Tulp is pictured explaining the musculature of the arm to medical professionals. This early masterpiece of Rembrandt does not serve painting as a documentary instrument. He rearranged the object's elements, which is the anatomy lesson, interpreted the content by his thinking, and then fulfilled his fiction on the

²⁵ Busch, *Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge*, 1.

²⁶ Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, 18.

²⁷ For instance, the theory of editing film, the theory of harmony and counterpoint in music.

²⁸ Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, "The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp," Oil on canvas, 1632, Mauritshuis, The Hague.

canvas. In a typical anatomy lesson, the surgeon would begin by opening the chest cavity and thorax because the internal organs there decay most rapidly. Yet, in this painting, the chest and the thorax of the corpse remains uncut. To take another close look at this work, the highly-contrast color applied in the painting makes the painting itself not just a portrait but a dramatic *mise-en-scène*²⁹ – Rembrandt's image is a fiction, but a fiction constructed on observation of science research. This example implies a space that belongs to the art of science, which subscribes to a genuine artistic explication of scientific appropriation of the world and its systems of representation. Here, science is translated into art, and artistic knowledge is generated about science – without admitted scientific methods being claimed for art, to the extent that scientific claims to truth and objectivity are qualified by artistic reflection.³⁰ The work, which represents a specific scientific phenomenon, transformed the scientific knowledge into various forms of presence. Still, within the transformation process, the maker's aesthetics and reflexive also merge within the practice and are embedded in art. The artist adds new insights or knowledge to the existing corpus through the practice, applying diverse methods and thinking. The scientific expertise or phenomenon is being interpreted through artistic practice in this sense. Here I would like to mention the value of the interpretive perspective and the immanent in Henk Borgdorff's discourse. The interpretive perspective holds that theory provides reflection, knowledge, and understanding with respect to artistic practice and its product. In other words, theory always involves reflexively with the makers experience. In this sense, theory basically involves any form of reflection on artworks, or on the production or the reception of art, that rises above the level of the craft.³¹ The immanent perspective hence that there is no such a thing as 'innocent practice'. Every practice, every human action, is infused with theory.³² Either the interpretive or immanent perspective provides the point of view that theory indeed appears within the artistic process and result. Yet, the former elaborates more on the potential of representation and interpretation in art. The latter featured the knowledge that is embedded within the process and the product.

2.22 The Border Between Research and Artistic Practice No Longer Seems to be Clear

Another form of artistic research is the art that understands itself as research. In this type of artistic research, scientific processes or conclusions become the instrument of art and are

²⁹ Wikipedia contributors, "The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia* (accessed on 18th January 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=The_Anatomy_Lesson_of_Dr._Nicolaes_Tulp&oldid=995056400).

³⁰ Busch, *Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge*, 2.

³¹ Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, 19.

³² *Ibid.*, 20-21.

used in the artworks. Kathrin Busch refers to a phenomenon in contemporary art, particularly in institutional-critique, whereby research is considered a part of the artistic process and carried out by artists themselves.³³ Institutional-critique seeks critical reflection from the observation of a specific societal phenomenon. The work of art no longer restricts itself to integrating with previously known concepts. It aims to develop and disseminate new concepts, knowledge, and understanding of the wider public. In this catalog, Kathrin emphasizes that the research no longer stands for implementing scientific knowledge or applying theoretical ideas into practices but being interpreted as a constitutive element of the artistic practice itself.³⁴ The performative perspective of Henk Borgdorff presents theory itself as practice, and what theoretical approaches always partially shape the practice they focus on³⁵. The performative power of theory not only alters the way we look at art and the world, but it also makes these into what they are. Both researchers claim that not only do thinkers and doers need each other, but in a certain sense, thinkers are also doers, and vice versa.³⁶ This form of artistic research emphasized that the artistic process is internalizing the insights to provide new understanding on the existing corpus.

2.3 Phenomenon1: Prepositions between Art and Research

Besides Kathrin Busch (Art with Research, Art about Research, *and* Art as Research), in 1993, Christopher Frayling also distinguished different types of art research by categorizing them into three types (Research into Art and design, Research through Art and design, and Research for Art and design). Beyond the four perspectives of the entanglement between practice and theory, Henk Borgdorff also released a trichology of art research based on Christopher Frayling's contribution (Research on the arts, Research for the arts, and Research in the arts) in 2012. As the debates in the concept of artistic research has not yet arrive on a suitable definition, researchers who endeavor in artistic research are still interested in observing how art practice and research activities could merge. It always turns out to paraphrase similar descriptions about the relationship between practice and research. In the statement of Christopher Frayling, Kathrin Busch, and Henk Borgdorff all presented something in common.

Firstly, describing that theory can be view as an instrumental feature being applied in artistic research. Examples like historical, cultural, and perceptual studies are the most common to see in academic discourse.

³³ Busch, *Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge*, 3.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*, 20.

³⁶ Ibid.

Secondly, artistic research draws its focuses really on the way it explains things. The reflexive aspects of the arts and the continual process of interpretation are always discussed mainly because researchers believe that these are essential elements that make art to be considered another approach for knowledge production. Kathrin Busch refers to this belief as art's capacity for self-reflection and auto-theorizing is referred to as the core aim of turning it into science. It assumes that art is based in theoretical knowledge, that art can be learned, and that it can be further developed through scientific practice.³⁷ Henk Borgdorff holds his belief that art knowledge is always also embodied in form and matter. Creative processes, artistic practices, and artworks all incorporate knowledge that simultaneously shapes and expands the existing world's horizons – not discursively, but in auditory, visual, and tactile ways, aesthetically, expressively, and emotively. This 'art knowledge' is the subject, as well as partly an outcome, of artistic research as defined.³⁸

Thirdly, the tendency of playing with prepositions. Since researchers are trying to characterize artistic research, providing a paradigm for artistic research, the usage of the preposition is a significant phenomenon created. As I mentioned above, Christopher Frayling, Kathrin Busch, and Henk Borgdorff introduce their perspective on the distinction between types of art research, which they all considered relevant in artistic research. The contributors are still considering art (practice in this sense) and research (science or theory) as two different concepts. The preposition's meaning could stand for connecting, bridging, merging, or other tones of combination. What I am looking for is how the educational institution interpreted this sense of combination, and how it differs or alike to the academic discourse.³⁹

I am curious about the effect these categories could bring into the future development of this research type after sorting out the academic discourse that is applied in this study. By reading through these scholarly reports about artistic research, it provokes me to think about the necessity of classifying different art research forms. It has been at least two decades for 'clarifications' to speak, but what does it, in artistic manners, encourages or influence artists to rethink their practices practically is still a discussion need to be focus.

2.4 Phenomenon2: Questioning the Relationship between Science and Academic

Art as Science and Art about Science are another branch of thinking the capability of art on the academic basis which Kathrin Busch released in 2009. In these catalogues, she brings about the reason that leads artistic research to become problematic when it is being discussed

³⁷ Busch, *Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge*, 3.

³⁸ Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, 21.

³⁹ The problem is mostly focusing on the difficulties for the "emerge" of the two concepts.

in academic-scientific basis⁴⁰. To regard art as science, the art educational program is intended to convey knowledge about society and culture, as well as history and art theory. The declared aim is to establish a theoretical informed artistic practice that considers the claim of scientific methods through methodic rigor and the transfer of basic knowledge. Here, the self-reflection and authorizing are referred to as the core aim of turning it into science, which will above all be reflected in PhD programs.⁴¹The notion of regarding art as science is derived from the assumption that art can only be considered as a form of knowledge if it conforms to scientific standards – This tendency is obviously based on an idealization of the sciences and of academic structure. The catalogue of Art about Science is derived from the notion of Art as Science. The increase of artistic research with recourse to theory or even the claim of scientification must lead to a deeper reflection and examination of scientific knowledge production and its institutions. It would need to always practice an art about science with critical intentions, rather than practicing a mere scientification of art that has subjected itself to the forces and power structures of academia or the universities.⁴²In these catalogues, Kathrin Busch questions about why has not artistic research as research practice earns its right to be taken seriously enough without subjecting itself to the norms scientific research, and why should the assumption that art is a form of knowledge already include turning it into science.⁴³ Because why should the assumption that art is a form of knowledge already include turning it into science?

The theoretical exploration of this study shows a significant feature of tendency in the field of artistic research to provide paradigms. This trend is based on the explanation of the research that may differ in the art world and the academic world, continually discussing the possibilities to reach a consensus. Art practice, a priori, is always a self-initiated production of art. How the artists approach their interest is something that we should not, or even try to interfere with the assessment in an educational environment, because it is the treasure of art, the unique form, and ways of emerging thinking and making altogether, where artistic research's nature appears. If we keep trying to position artistic research in a place that tries to please the academic world and art world simultaneously, the educational module will perhaps turn out to reluctantly shape the practice to something that is doing with research, but not research, or merely about their own practice. So, the assumption of conforming science to prove art knowledge perhaps a bit over-associated with the academic-led research. As for today, artistic research is still struggling to confirm its position in academia. This attitude of fighting

⁴⁰ Kathrin Busch refers Art as Science in the sense of an academic scientific discipline.

⁴¹ Busch, *Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge*, 3.

⁴² Busch, "Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge," 4.

⁴³ Ibid.

for its legitimacy limits the potential of artistic production, in this sense, it also confuses the artistic criteria with the research criteria.

Data Collection and Analysis

3.1 Summary of the study objects

The Master program in Fine Art Design at the University of the Arts (HKU) consists of two programs: Fine Art and Scenography. In this study, the Fine Art Program is selected as the main research object to investigate on. This master program presented a new configuration of artistic research by transforming artistic research as a concept into educational material—the curriculum design, which centralized artistic research has applied to the Fine Art and Scenography program. Under the concept of artistic research, MAKE, THINK, and SHARE are the three themes interrelated in the concept of artistic research and are the divergence of the curriculum to develop courses.

In this chapter, I would like to discuss about the definition of Make, Think, and Share that the program provided on its website then elaborate my observation by implementing the assessment report of the NVAO, the professional master standard provided by VH, and the master-level competences that OBK provided. Besides, the study inputs some personal voices (students and teachers) to see how people work within this framework think about it. The textual analysis on the information mentioned above will then become evident to provide a systematic breakdown on the power structure in academic. To make the progress of my investigation clearer for you to understand, I will also mention about the full text of the descriptions and definitions as footnotes in below.⁴⁴

3.2 The Curriculum

3.21 MAKE / MAKING

In 2019, Making is a theme addressed along with two subtitles, Experimentation and Critical Transdisciplinary Practice.⁴⁵⁴⁶ The idea of making potentially represents that artistic practices are not activities that equal to expression in a superficial way. The making which it means in the curriculum design is presented closer to the idea of praxis. For instance, by adding the concept of transdisciplinary in the program's educational aim, the students need to have an

⁴⁴ Fig. 2. diagram in the introduction may also help you on realizing the framework of the analysis part of this study.

⁴⁵ The full text of the definition of making is as below: "MAKING: Experimentation, Critical Transdisciplinary Practice. Starting from an experimental attitude, the goal of this course is to profoundly deepen skills, themes, and discussions relevant to Fine Art practice."

⁴⁶ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "MA PROGRAM FINE ART." *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (accessed on January 20, 2020 <https://www.hku.nl/Home/Education/Masters/MAProgrammeFineArt.htm>).

in-depth understanding of their own practice to further finding its relationship between different fields. To achieve this educational aim, students are going to ask critical question to the fundamental means of their practices. The definition of this theme did not emphasize the importance of practice in art, but also implies that there are some essential, and critical issues that (may/or may not) underlies these links of action. The definition of making intended that the program is trying to train the students to develop their own ways of practices by taking experiments in their working process. The process of making, or the meaning of making something that we so-called artistic practice (praxis), is what the program are trying to delve into. In other words, practice here stands not only for doing or taking actions on visualizing their expression, but to engage in-depth thinking/reflections on every detail/moment within their artistic practice. The program believes that through the process of making and experimenting, students can develop their own skills/artistic knowledge, which is suitable and ideally fitting in their artistic production. These skills and artistic knowledge are deriving from the working process, again and again form and re-formed through the individuals' practice. This probably has some connection with the belief of "there is a non-discursive knowledge emerging throughout the practice", Kathrin Busch has also mentioned about the capability of artistic knowledge, and how it differs by the production from the scientific ones:

Art is given the additional role of referring to the nonrepresentational, and of helping to participate in the fissures and new formation of knowledge structures. This different knowledge, one that questions the tight limitations of modern rationality by articulating — in contrast to objective, absolute, consistent scientific knowledge — knowledge that is equally ambivalent, incommensurable, and singular. Or, formulated in another manner, science and theory are also part of a power system, and not an apparently neutral point of reference for science-based culture production.⁴⁷

Yet, in the case of this curriculum design, the knowledge seems playing its role by serving artists' own creative production, but not developing basic knowledge or supplemental knowledge, or theories that can easily be understand and being supportive in other fields or other individuals' practices. In short, the presence of making in the curriculum design stands for the believe of knowledge production in practice, but more on the aspect of benefiting artists' own practice.

3.22 THINK / THINKING

The theme thinking is described as a training skill that is able for students to develop their own research concepts and their own perspectives, being supportive in writing a research

⁴⁷ Busch, *Artistic Research and the Poetics of Knowledge*, 4.

report.⁴⁸⁴⁹⁵⁰⁵¹ The term research has been emerging a couple of times in the institution's discourses, by being discussed separately from the idea of practice. The courses that are designed under the theme of thinking are aiming for students to cultivate a critical attitude towards artistic practice "and" research, and this will further be useful for them in writing their research report.⁵² In this statement, it is obvious that the program claims to look at the concept research and practice as two different skills in art, and the research report seems to play its role by integrating the studies that are all above undertaken.

Under the theme of thinking, research implies an importance of critical thinking skills in documentation. The ability of accurately documenting seems to be emphasize around the notion of thinking that the program presents. Here, research does not stand for an attitude that facilitates the students' practice nor stands for a way of practicing their creativity, but for conducting research papers. I noticed that there are some possibilities for students to position their research report in their practice. Firstly, the research report ended up for explaining their works of art. Secondly, the research report serves as an interpretation of the works of art. Thirdly, the research report serves as a part of their artworks, which their works contains arrangements of words, and visual presentation at the same time. Lastly, the research report is the result of practice.

The main difference of my first and second supposition are the difference between explaining and interpreting. Explaining and interpreting are two different skills in dealing with language if this report intended to discursively frame/document the procedure that are requiring in the artistic practice/praxis. Explanation requires highly sufficient in using language, by applying the terms precisely with consideration, fluency in organizing the grammar that are

⁴⁸ The full text of the definition of thinking in 2019 is as below: "THINKING: Contextual Studies, Artistic Research

This course focuses on the development of a critical stance in intellectual and aesthetic investigation. This will prepare you to develop your own research concepts, apply topical theoretical texts from your own discipline, and use those from other disciplines. The course aims to inspire you and help you to write a research report discussing innovative insights in your discipline as well as help you develop your own perspective."

⁴⁹ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "MA PROGRAM FINE ART." *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (accessed on January 20, 2020 <https://www.hku.nl/Home/Education/Masters/MAProgrammeFineArt.htm>).

⁵⁰ The full text of the definition of thinking in 2020 is as below: Thinking. You develop a critical attitude towards artistic practice and research. You learn how to write a research report in which, while founded in your own domain, you reflect within a broader sociocultural context, drawing inspiration from other disciplines as well. MaHKU Master of Fine Art, "Master of Fine Art, What you will you learn in this course?", *MaHKU Master of Fine Art*, assessed on 30th November, 2020, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art>.

⁵¹ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "Master of Fine Art. What you will you learn in this course?". *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 30th November 2020, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art>.)

⁵² *Ibid.*, 50.

being used in the elaboration, and the even the writing style should be familiar to average readers. The aim of explanation is to deliver messages accurately to receivers, and this also includes the format, and the layout of the discourse – It must be readable for non-artistic communities. Interpretation emphasized the unique part of the individuals much more than writing an explanation. It gives the flexibility for artists/students to develop their own writing style, and chances of breaking through the formal academic layout. Yet, it can also become an excuse of the insufficient in applying English writing as artistic practice output, and these errors could also be accepted and legalized under the name of interpretation. My third supposition is my belief that language is something that goes along the practice, and what students have responsible is the accuracy of documentation. As every human action is infused with social phenomenon, the language engagement in our daily life is really a significant one to speak of. Terms are existing throughout the process of thinking, and even also in making or creating with conscious. Sentences and dialogues are existing and essential in the process of making, no doubt that the results of practice obtain spoken languages within it, it is natural and cultural at the same time. My last supposition relies in the belief that Kathrin Busch presents as “art as research”. For me, this is more about the intent of creating knowledge. To see practice as a research skill, and regarding the research report as the result. Yet, whether the research report is ideally suitable in the academic framework is another topic to talk about, and I will elaborate on this discussion in the later chapter that is about the power structure of academic.

In brief, students who study in the Fine Art program are required to write their own research report aside their practice, and the program assessed this assignment separately with their final exhibition. The program drew a certain line between research and practice in this theme. Research in this theme shows an equality to writing skills, documenting their reflection from practice to the wider society. The cultivation for students is more on supporting students to have a clearer understanding on how research report should be look like in academic by teaching them the notion of critical thinking and reflection.

3.23 SHARE / SHARING

In the theme of sharing,⁵³⁵⁴⁵⁵⁵⁶ the program focuses on creating an open dialogue to artistic and non-artistic communities. What this theme aims is to create a bigger conversation that might leads to an interdisciplinary approach. For instance, the collaboration with BAK and the workshop that both students in the Scenography and Fine Art program joins together discuss about their works. Sharing is the theme that was distinct from the two others, the only theme that courses are not derived from. For instance, Studio Practice, Transdisciplinary Practice, Curatorial Practice, and Exhibition Practice are the four courses that is developed from the theme of making. On the other hand, Critical Studies, Concept Development, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Research Report are the four courses developed from the theme of thinking. Sharing is a catalogue that independently appears on the website, and shows that sharing stand for an environment that the program provides for students to exchange their perspective, and this space is where making and thinking meets each other—a place trying to contains as much diversity of voices as it could to create interactions. Sharing in the curriculum design also stands for a believe that dissemination is also a teaching goal for the program. The works that are being complete in the duration of the students’ study must withstand the debate and the discussion of other voices, and this can also refer to the idea that the program is trying to make positioning and theoretical-context as main concepts in teaching.

⁵³ The full text of the definition of sharing in 2019 is as below: “The MA program Fine Art offers a stimulating and supporting environment for experimentation with multiple modes of production and collaboration. This creates an open but also critical community that maintains a continual dialogue about what we create, how we create it and why. Every semester various dissemination projects take place that provide a distinct platform for this engaged interaction between thinking and making. These projects can take the shape of excursions, interventions, public discussions, research screenings, as well as the festival-like final presentation. For this final presentation we will collaborate intensively with MA program Scenography, and with the program at BAK/Research Centre for the Contemporary, Utrecht.”

⁵⁴ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "MA PROGRAM FINE ART." *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (accessed on January 20, 2020 <https://www.hku.nl/Home/Education/Masters/MAProgrammeFineArt.htm>).

⁵⁵ The full text of the definition of sharing in 2020 is as below: “We believe in the importance of continual open dialogue about what we create, how we create and why we create. Interaction is a key part of the programme. You work together with others, present your work and conduct discussions in various public and semi-public forums with your fellow students, professionals and institutions.”

⁵⁶ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. “Master of Fine Art. What you will you learn in this course?”. *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 30th November 2020, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art/>).

3.24 The Absence of Miracles

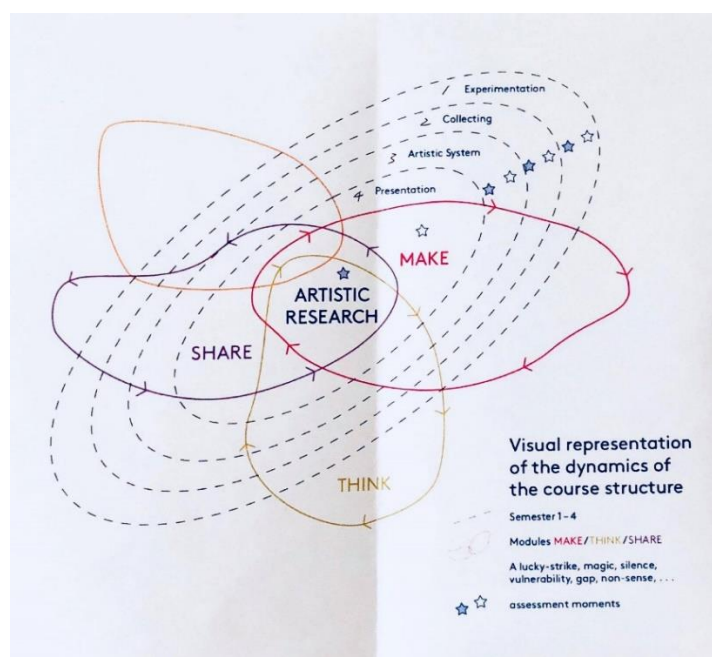


Fig. 3. Visual Representation of the Dynamics of the Course Structure⁵⁷

Another interesting interpretation of the curriculum design of the Fine Art program is the diagram that illustrated the dynamics of the course structure. The image above is a diagram presented by the program. It is one of forms that the program presented how they have transformed the concept of artistic research into a curriculum design. Differs from the program and course description on the website, this form of representation of artistic research does not wrap up itself with sugar icing to be fascinating. It properly shows that make, think, and share are the three interfaces for the activity of artistic research, and in the two-year master program, each semester has its own focal point for the research activity. In this diagram, experimentation, collecting, artistic system, and presentation are the four focal points for each semester.⁵⁸⁵⁹ It shows that the focuses for each semester simultaneously consists the notion of make, think, and share, and so as artistic research itself. Taking the curriculum design as an explanation of artistic research, the program has translated this type of research as a study that contains connotations of thinking, making, and sharing activities that themselves defined. This is also the description the official website represents, which, artistic research is being discussed under

⁵⁷ Fig.3., the diagram was provided by Annette Krause on the open day of the Fine Art program in 2019 to me when I pay a site visit to the Loods. (The studio/classroom of the Fine Art program students).

⁵⁸ The study and research focus of students are developed throughout the semesters in the following four distinct stages: 1. Experimentation, 2. Collecting and Curating, 3. Conceptualizing an artistic system, 4. Documentation, Communication, and Presentation of research results.

⁵⁹ Hobéon Certificering, *Assessment report*, 14.

these three aspects throughout the duration of study. What differs is that there is a part in this diagram presenting as ‘a lucky-strike, magic, silence, vulnerability, gap, non-sense,...’. Which is unexplainable in the program description on the official website. It seems that program itself is also welcoming and inviting accidents and surprise to encounter within the course structure, providing a flexibility between students, lecturers, and the learning environment itself. This phenomenon may refer to the significant sign of the artistic research. Presenting itself as a field of possibilities, and perhaps, a bit idealistic and unstructured at the same time. I personally think that this is the most accurate version for the course structure, with the diagram, the dynamics of make, think, and share is illustrated in a proper way to read through, and perhaps, the discourse of the website seems addressing this visual presentation uncomplete. Instead of using English as a material to disseminate information to readers and audiences, they interpretes those pleonasm in description into visual language that is also perceptible for spectators. It reminds me about something that naturally makes artistic research different from scientific research – the potential of visualization in dissemination of artistic research.

3.25 Context of the Research

On the official website of the Fine Art program in 2020, it is obvious to see that the program is looking for cultural workers and visual artists that are interested to put their works in social-political context. The focus group (target students) of the program are people who is caring about societal issues of today, and how they are going to position themselves, and their works within the scope of world in the 21st century.⁶⁰ The program even listed several questions for candidates to think about before they think that they are suitable in this program. For instance, how do we connect to today’s sociopolitical struggles? What can we learn from feminist, queer, decolonial and postcolonial, Black and indigenous, and disability studies and practices, while acknowledging their specific cultural expressions and struggles? What does it mean to shape artistic expressions with a clear focus on difference and sociocultural context?⁶¹ These are the three questions out of eight that the program listed for candidates to picture their idea about the study environment. Instead of mentioning artistic research directly, they chose to imply that the students’ study should be questioning the positions of themselves and their practice in a bigger context then they expected. It also implies that artistic research is a type of research that shows strong connection with a bigger phenomenon that is going on in the world.

⁶⁰ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. “Master of Fine Art. Welcome to the Master Fine Art”. *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 30th November 2020, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art>.)

⁶¹ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. “Master of Fine Art. What you will you learn in this course?”. *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 30th November 2020, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art>.)

This is something new, something that is being ignored when people keep thinking too obsessed about the relationship between theory and practice, which is reflected on the academic contributions when it comes to artistic research. The program is trying to connect the idea of research with artistic practice by positioning practices as a reflection on societal or political issues. Yet, the idea of positioning artistic research in socio-political context also limits my imagination on thinking about how artistic research could look like. It seems that the program is trying to create an environment that teaches student to ask questions that is useful and efficient in explaining their position within a certain or combination of social phenomenon, but how this start of a research/thinking can be further develop into a new form of knowledge is still a procedure that needed to be question.

The program declares that the master-level graduates are capable to make an original contribution to the development and/or application of ideas, by formulating specific questions, dilemmas, or currently relevant themes. They understand the broad cultural framework in which they operate.⁶² This is the intended learning outcome regards to context that the program given to the NVAO, and the assessment of the organization marked positive on this, but with an expectation on a more explicit profile for the next period.⁶³ The context that the program elaborated here is turning out to become a capability of explaining when, where, why, and how the research (artistic research) is conducted and related to. In other words, the questions in the description above are being asked for making the research background clear and at the same time make the whole process of artistic research coherent discursively documented. Yet, it does not refer to the idea of putting artistic practices in a socio-political context, which the program mentions on in the discourse of their website. So, what the research context means in artistic research is still something debatable.

3.3 The Power Structure of Dutch Academic System

3.31 The Assessment of The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flander (NVAO) and the Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF)

As in the introduction I mentioned that the NVAO decisions serve as the basis for the recognition of degrees and titles, and wherever applicable, public funding of programs,⁶⁴ the assessment standards may also orient on the development of programs. In the assessment report that the NVAO processed in 2019, the overall judgement on the Master of Fine Art and Design

⁶² Hobéon Certificering, *Assessment report*, 9.

⁶³ Ibid., 10.

⁶⁴ The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) "About us," *NVAO*. (assessed on 14th December 2021, <https://www.nvao.net/en/about-us>).

(Scenography and Fine Art program as a whole) of the University of Arts Utrecht (HKU) reads: positively meeting the requirements.⁶⁵ The organization provides criteria regarding the evaluation on intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning environment, teaching staff, facilities and information, quality assurance, assessment, and achieved learning outcomes of the program.⁶⁶

This study draws its focus on the observation of the assessment of learning outcomes to answer the question, "How can artistic research be included in curriculum design and program assessment?". As for judging whether the program's intended learning outcome meets at master-level, the organization considers applying the Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF) as a standard in execution, which implies that the program is required to discursively frame their educational goal that meets the education system's expectation. In below, I would like to introduce the content of the intended learning outcome that the program provides for the NVAO assessment with an elaboration on the connection to the NLQF7 standard.⁶⁷

The intended learning outcomes of the program are derived from the very recent OBK-framework⁶⁸. The translations of educational aims are presented as relative competencies regarding context, art practice, methodology, art research, communication, and positioning.⁶⁹ In general, the listed competencies are qualified at a master-level in the NLQF standard, but a mere focus on the problem-solving skills that link to contributions on solutions of complex problems by identifying and using data.⁷⁰

In the description of context, the intended learning outcome meets the standard of NLQF level 7 (Knowledge application and Knowledge) by intent of providing an original contribution to the development and application of ideas,⁷¹ and possessing critical understanding of some important current topics.⁷² The representation of the intended learning outcomes for art practice and art research meets the standard of NLQF level7 (Knowledge and Knowledge application) that aims at possessing a critical understanding of a range of theories, principles

⁶⁵ Hobéon Certificering, *Assessment report*, 5.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 3-5.

⁶⁷ The Dutch National Qualifications Framework (NLQF) consists of eight levels and one entry level. The master level is shown under level 7 of the NLQF.

⁶⁸ Hobéon Certificering, *Assessment report*, 10.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 9-10.

⁷⁰ Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF), "NLQF_levels_English_description_2020". *NLQF*. (accessed on 13th January 2021, https://nlqf.nl/images/English2015/NLQF_levels_English_description_2020.pdf).

⁷¹ Ibid., 8.

⁷² Ibid., 3.

and concepts,⁷³ and reproducing, analyzing, integrating and applying knowledge, also in other contexts and handles complex matter.⁷⁴ The intended outcome of communication and positioning meets the standard of NLQF level7 (Communication) by showing its focus on communicating with peers, specialists, non-specialists, based on conventions that apply to the context and professional practice.⁷⁵ These connections above are evident that the discourse of the program is firmly related to the structure of NLQF.

Besides the above descriptions of intended learning outcomes that shows various approach in common with the assessment's standard, the only intended outcome that I found it difficult to link with the discourse of NLQF is the Methodology.

The description of methodology is in below:

Master-level graduates have developed a demonstrable critical awareness of the methods, work processes and techniques, which they apply in the approach to their research. They are able to evaluate their steps and decisions in the process and to create/organize feedback loops, thus deepening their understanding on the basis of experience.⁷⁶

The reason why I found it difficult to position this discourse within the Dutch Quality Framework is that the content of the framework does not mention about standards for methods. The framework focuses much more on the originality, knowledge, and dissemination aspects of the intrinsic in research. Besides the finding of the strong connection with the Dutch Quality Framework (NLQF), the NVAO proved that the program's intended learning outcome is at master-level with applying the Dutch Quality Framework in the assessment. It appreciated on the educational environment that supported artists on developing critical reflections within the practice, but still, consider artistic practice and research as two different concepts that requires different direction in professional training, all standards of assessment are regarding art practice and art research as different notions, including the program evaluated the final exhibition and the research report as separate assessment.

⁷³ Ibid., 3.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 17.

⁷⁶ Hobéon Certificering, *Assessment report*, 9.

3.32 The Professional Master Standard of the Vereniging Hogescholen (VH)

Fig. 4. The four pillars of the Professional Master⁷⁷

The standard serves as a guideline in the development of (national) professional oriented profiles and study program profiles, and for incorporating them into the curricula of the individual study program.⁷⁸ The professional master standard does not take the place of the level descriptions of the Dublin Descriptors, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the Dutch Qualification Framework (NLQF) and the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) standards. These standards were, however, used to validate the professional master standard.⁷⁹ Besides the NVAO that plays a pure dominant presence in the education system with its authority, the VH asides play a role in assisting both universities and government in the program's quality assurance. In this study, the observation on the professional master standard is going to be compare with the online discourse of the program, seeking the transformation of certain principles to the actual presentation of an institution.

The standard of mastery draws its focus on the competence of making judgements based on incomplete or limited information. The master graduates have the ability to critically view their own conduct and the conduct of others based on moral values.⁸⁰ In general, this standard stated that master graduates of a university applied science should be able to provide critical reflections on the data and information that they applied or perceived. This is a standard that more illustrated on a study behavior then a practical skill. This is significantly reflected to the description of making and thinking on the 2020 version of the MaHKU's official website. The

⁷⁷ Vereniging Hogescholen, *The professional Master standard*, (Den Hag: Vereniging Hogescholen, 2019), 8.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

theme making represents as experiment and work critically, based on transdisciplinary practices⁸¹; the theme thinking aims to develop a critical attitude towards artistic practice and research⁸²—Both of the themes are emphasizing the importance of critical reflection in the study. For the standard of research competence states that master professionals have the ability to deal critically with the variation of different kinds of knowledge and reach a logical and workable synthesis of available knowledge on the basis of robust practical theory.⁸³ Refer to this standard, the program introduces that in the first semester of the students' study, they will be asked to respond to and work with the input, collaborative methodologies and support structures from the Master's program.⁸⁴ They will also be introduced to a wide range of theoretical discourse in order to conducting artistic writing.⁸⁵ It shows that the master program is trying to provide within the education environment to meet this standard. As the professional master standard mentioned the ability to pinpoint important, complex issues together with and based on different disciplines, stakeholders, perspectives, and points of view as interprofessional conduct⁸⁶, many of the programs chosen to conduct an interdisciplinary approach regarding this standard. The master program of Fine Art (HKU) implementing this interdisciplinary approach by the collaborations within HKU and with other institutions, collectives and (art) communities.⁸⁷ Besides, the theme sharing also shows an intimate connection with this standard, which focuses on the value of interaction and communication that brings into research fields.⁸⁸ The standard of impact states that the manner in which master professionals take action has an impact on the professional practice and contributes to innovation.⁸⁹ In other words, the professional master graduates are able to conduct a research

⁸¹ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "Master of Fine Art. What you will you learn in this course?". *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 11th January 2021, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art/>.)

⁸² Ibid.,

⁸³ Vereniging Hogescholen, "*The professional Master standard*," 9.

⁸⁴ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "Master of Fine Art. What you will you learn in this course?". *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 11th January 2021, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art/>.)

⁸⁵ Ibid.,

⁸⁶ Vereniging Hogescholen, "*The professional Master standard*," 10.

⁸⁷ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "Master of Fine Art. Why choose the master of Fine Art at HKU?". *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 11th January 2021, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art/>.)

⁸⁸ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. "Master of Fine Art. What you will you learn in this course?". *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 11th January 2021, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art/>.)

⁸⁹ Vereniging Hogescholen, "*The professional Master standard*," 11.

that is based on the exit corpus, and the research is further be able provide an innovation of knowledge. The Fine Art program at HKU endeavors in questioning their practices in the existing phenomenon but did not provides the information on whether this attitude of questioning is able to provide an innovation in the exist knowledge.

In brief, the professional master standard provided by the VH show coherence with the online description of the Fine Art program (HKU), but the standard itself more illustrated on the cultivation of study behavior instead of practical skills training, and this is also a feature that shows in common with the program description.

3.4 Perspectives of Student and Lecturer

3.41 The Questionnaire answered by Julie Yu and Sol Lee

The questionnaire that I designed for enrolled students to fill in is based on the supposition that students view their practice as a kind of research (research in art/art as research). This questionnaire design holds the belief of research in art that Henk Borgdorff released and art as research in Kathrin Busch's discourse. The aim of this questionnaire is to gather the students' points of view on the concept of research in their studies, and to evaluate on the efficiency of the curriculum. Before introducing the my observation on the response from the students, there is a general problem that is happening in these answers — The insufficiency of English language use in sentences. Typo and grammar errors frequently appear in their answers. It is something that I would also like to discuss about since students are required to hand in a research report with artistic writing skills as an assignment for their graduation.

The first question in the survey is aiming to find out what is being studied through their practice. In which, I focus on what is being questioning in their practice. This question is designed for find out the applied theory, and the societal issues/phenomenon that the students' works are related to. The formulated question and the responses from the students are given in below:

Are there particular issues, theories, concepts, or materials your work is based on? Can you elaborate a bit about your work?

1. Sol Lee, "Give to the body to things that cannot articulated by language using broaden sense of translations."
2. Julie Yu, "My work touches multiple political tensions, such as institution power and post-colonial issue through the eyes of tourism. I try to figure out these topics and the trajectory of it in my personal experience. and I try with different mediums like performance, events, installations, and virtual platforms."

They show different focuses and research directions in their practice, which implies the self-directed learning path is considered a fact in the program. One of the students develops the practice by questioning the fundamental means of sensation, language, and translation; however, the other focuses more on how individual experience could be relating to different ideas/concepts (institution power and post-colonial). Another feature that the two responses show in common is the idea of exploration and experimentation in practice. For instance, through the practice, Sol Lee explores the sensation of bodies to develop her practice, while Julie Yu experiments on the different mediums in visualizing her relationship of experience to theoretical concepts. There is a clear picture and research direction in their practices, but I tend to find and not be answered is the explanation of the material they applied in/play within their practice.

As the research intends to gain new understanding or knowledge, the considerations that shape the form of the works of art and a possible/imagined appearance of the outcome will be evident in the ways that artistic research can enhance the knowledge society. The formulated question and the responses from the students are given in below:

What are the questions that mostly underly your decision in your practices?

1. Sol Lee—”How I can I involve the senses of others and myself within the process of my practice, make translation process as a medium, not methodology.”
2. Julie Yu—”Is it inspiring and appropriate, for the audience, for me, for politics, for space, for sounds, for visual, for the time right now, for the weather.....and what stands out if it's not inspiring and appropriate? actually too many to list... and.”

The first response above shows that the questions are often be driven by how her practice can be further develop in a direction that touches upon a boarder sensational affect. The latter offers more consideration on positioning the works of art in different contexts and whether it is qualified to provide insights to others. None of the student questions about whether their practices are qualified as research in standards of artistic research. For instance, questioning the relationship between the theory and practice, or the position of their practice in an academic context. The questions mostly are asked for facilitating the development of practice, not for approaching a certain research format or standard. It makes me think about whether the students are considering themselves doing an artistic research, and whether it is something important in their study. It seems that students are doing something more like research-oriented practice, but not artistic research with the intent of innovating existed knowledge.

As methods serves as a research vehicle in academic research, which is the ways/steps of dealing with the research components in order provide a concrete result, it is also essential

to ask about questions that refers the methodology aspect of artistic research. I expected the students to provide answers that include an elaboration on the research process, so that I can further discover the methods that are being applied in their research process. The formulated question and the responses from the students are given in below:

How do you articulate the knowledge and experience within your working process?

1. Sol Lee — "By leading my pieces of practice converting to performative elements in space to make temporalities, also involving other people, using their interpretations."
2. Julie Yu — "Not sure how to answer this question."

The first response shows that the methodology of the practice is shaped by the translations from practice to performative elements then to the experimentations on whether these elements are capable of being manipulate by others' interpretations. To conclude on the observation of this response, it is hard to understand and picture the procedure of Sol Lee's practice with her description as an outsider.

The last question of the questionnaire is to gather their opinion on what is the research result of their practice capable of? As the program has taken research report as one of the assessments, I also included a question that ask about turning their practice and its result into discourses. The formulated question and the responses from the students are given in below:

How do you think about the outcome of your working process? How do you think about turning the non-discursive, performative, and artistic qualities into discourses?"

1. Sol Lee — "I against the concept of outcome within my practice, they are always in process. I think discourse inevitably follows when the practice is there, and I think in some extend discourses are necessary but since that cannot contain the nuance of the practice, I shell consider the occurring discourse is one part of my practice, regarding as one interpretation."
2. Julie Yu — "For me to join a discourse, the most important part is to perform. it doesn't mean as the typical performance. But to get involved, to make, to live the way you believe. I don't know how I feel about my outcome now. it is not yet done, and even it is, I think the true evaluation will show a few years later."

Both students consider that outcome is something that is not going to or not yet existing. Yet, what I mean as an outcome is what is being expected for the research process/result to bring to the broader public. The first response shows that the students view the discourse as

one part of the practice, regarding one interpretation. It implies that the discourse can't be established independently, thereby, it also implies that the research report indeed but join some other elements besides arrangements of terms with grammar. The tendency of avoiding talking about the result shows that the students are more focusing on the questioning approach in their practice than for problem solving.

In brief, the students' works of art are mostly based on material experimentation relating their own experience with specific concepts. The motivation for doing artistic practice is not merely developing a new understanding of an existed corpus applicable in other disciplines. Their practice is driven by questioning the present stage of their development and often requires some uncertainty within the process. This may link to the lucky-strike, magic, silence, vulnerability, gap, and non-sense, which shows the course structure's visual representation.

3.42 The interview with Falke Pisano⁹⁰

With an understanding of the curriculum design, I planned to interview a lecturer that teaches in the Fine Art program to gather another point of view of considering research as a central concept in artistic practices. The questions that I asked are composed of the course structure, aims to discover the curriculum's interpretation from a teacher's point of view. This interview is looking at the essential elements that teachers include in their teaching for professional training, and how these are related to the discourse of the program.

As the Fine Art program's curriculum design is related to the three themes (Make, Think, Share) with a central concept of artistic research, I asked questions about whether the three themes can be divided, since the program has offered each theme a different focus direction in teaching. For instance, the theme making aims to provide exercises on working and experimenting based on transdisciplinary practices⁹¹ and the theme thinking for professional training in learning writing a research report.⁹² In the beginning, I suppose that there are gaps between each theme, and especially between making and thinking when I consider that presenting and conducting research as two stages in doing studies. However, Falke Pisano denies that there are gaps between make, think, and share. She answered the question regarding the division between the three parts with a firm tone in the interview. She explained, “the first thing to say about this division in three parts, making, thinking, and sharing is that they can't be divided. These all happens at the same time within an artistic practice. The reason why we divided is to have areas that we can pay more attention to one side of this triangle.” The answer

⁹⁰ Interview with Falke Pisano, 25th October 2019. See the full transcript in Appendix.

⁹¹ HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. “Master of Fine Art. What you will you learn in this course?”. *HKU University of the Arts Utrecht*. (assessed on 11th January 2021, <https://www.hku.nl/en/study-at-hku/fine-art/master-of-fine-art>.)

⁹² *Ibid.*,

implies that each course in the program has a focal point in teaching, but the professional training in all courses all reoccurs to each other in practice and research activities. Yet, what is not being defined is the intertwinement between the themes and between the courses, which means that the methods/procedure to integrate these elements into artistic research as a concept as a whole is still something that the program needs to clarify.

Another question that I asked about is the reason for bringing social-political issues into the discussion in courses. The intent of asking this question is that the program has mentioned on its website that students are going to experiment with artistic approaches that are anchored in sociopolitical contexts. Falke thinks that this master seeks active engagement with politics, science, and theory due to how they look at the works of art. The program's focus is always looking at the relationship between an artist's practice and what happens broader in society, just like there is no division between the theme of making and sharing, there is no gap either between artworks and the world it is part of. The introduction of connecting the individuals' practice within a broader social-cultural context is the educational aim for the courses derived from the theme thinking, but it seems that the critical thinking training for students in this domain serves as furnishing the tools to write a research report. In this sense, the meaning of artistic research seems to be interpreted as a research activity aiming to position and contextualize the practice with particular relation to a societal phenomenon in this program.

Another educational approach that I am interested in to know more about is the interdisciplinary approach in the program. For Falke, the workshop in which the Scenography students and Fine Art students join together is an experimental pedagogy, which she thinks that benefits both sides of students by sharing the students' practices to both Scenography and Fine Art students. In the workshop, students are able to develop a critical awareness of complex issues concerning their field of study and the interface between various study fields. I asked her about the opinion on this collaboration because, in academic discourses, interdisciplinary mostly turns out to be an educational approach that shows various positive effects. I was wondering whether Falke will provide some improvement or weakness in this collaboration, but her answer all remains with a positive attitude on this pedagogical decision.

In brief, the lecturer's perspective in this interview shares the same vision with the program's curriculum design, which considers the make, think, and share is not separated in artistic practices. As a lecturer and an artist, Falke believes that the artistic practice contains a sense of worlding. The interdisciplinary/collaboration approach in this program brings a fruitful discussion between different study fields. Besides, it surprises me that Falke relates to the term 'practice' when she mentions the activities that are processing in an artistic manner; however, the term 'research' did not even appear in the whole conversation.

Discussion and Conclusion

4.1 Indication

The discussion on artistic research inevitably seems to boil down to a discussion on the different relationships between artistic practice and research activities. The contributions of Kathrin Busch and Henk Borgdorff on artistic research, which have been at the core of the theoretical exploration of this thesis, both try to provide categories to distinguish types of art research from one to another. The core of their definition of artistic research, either 'research in art' (Henk Borgdorff, 2012), or 'art as research' (Kathrin Busch, 2009), implies that there is no clear border between research and artistic practice, but that the two are intertwined. However, the hypothesis of 'research in art' and 'art as research' proves to be challenging when put to practice in the actual curriculum design in higher arts education, since the educational system's assessment framework regards art practice and art research as different educational aims.

The aim of the study was to provide a critical reflection on the translation of the concept of artistic research to a curriculum, both on a more conceptual level and on the level of a specific case, by doing a case study on the Master program of Fine Art at the HKU. Below, I would like to conclude this study with a summary of this study's results, alongside a brief discussion on the improvement of methodology and the limitations that should direct future research.

4.2 From Academic Discourse to the Curriculum Design of MaHKU

The Fine Art master program at HKU is a research-based master program that, in its course structure, centralized the concept of artistic research with three interrelated themes: Make Think and Share. The notions regarding disciplinarity, theory, and context are significant features that the courses derived from the three themes, show a commonality with the academic discourse. However, the concept of research seems to deviate. As above, I mentioned that the ideas of research in arts (Henk Borgdorff, 2012) and art as research (Kathrin Busch, 2009) are difficult to effectuate in the curriculum design of a national educational institution. The HKU has chosen to focus on artistic writing as a primary pedagogical approach to fulfill the research concept, which pays more attention to the quality and development of documentation. Besides considering artistic practice itself as research and assessing the practice itself as a qualification for research ability, it evaluates the students' research report instead. The program expected its enrolled students to provide a written dissertation for the assessment of art research course with content about their practice—The report stands for another interpretation of research, instead of research itself.

The method for investigating the program's discourse highly relies on the effectiveness of

gathering information online. Reacting to COVID-19, I have not been able to do fieldwork or site visits for data collection in 2020.⁹³ The only site-visit that I paid to the Loods, which is the studio and classroom of the master students, was on the Open day of HKU in 2019. Except for some flyers and photos that I collected on that open day, most of the program's data collection was from the assessment report of the NVAO and the program's official website. Without a data collection on the actual learning environment, this study cannot obtain a fully comprehensive understanding of the program. This research stage will need an improvement on the diversity of data collection for future research to consolidate the foundational understanding of the research object.

4.3 Shaping the Curriculum by the Power Structure of the Education System (The Relationship between the NVAO, the MaHKU, the VH, the OBK and the NLQF)

The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) applied the master level standard of Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF-7) as a criterion for assessing the intended learning outcome of the MaHKU. The assessment report conducted in 2019 shows that the program's educational goal meets all the master-level standards, including six competencies regarding context, art practice, methodology, art research, communication, and positioning. These competencies are derived from the educational aims formulated by the Overleg Beeldende Kunsten (OBK), which is an association that signed a covenant in 2011 containing the agreement to be responsible for maintaining the profiles jointly together with the Vereniging Hogescholen (The Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, VH). As the professional master standard of the VH can be used as a quality assurance tool in preparing for an accreditation process by the NVAO, the decision of translating the educational aims formulated by OBK into the program's discourse is evidently to meet the assessment standard since the OBK and the VH are both providing profiles for programs for self-censorship before the assessment of NVAO is done. Besides the above mentioned, the NVAO has considered the intended outcome that the program provided as positive, in which the assessment framework of art research and art practice is different. In the list of intended learning outcomes, the description for art practice draws more attention to the learning and development skill of the NLQF standard 7, which the art research based more on the knowledge application of the NLQF standard 7. The professional standard provided by VH also considered research competence as an independent norm – In all assessment frameworks, art practice, and art research are being regarded as a different educational aim.

The discourses of the NVAO, the VH, and the description of NLQF are all gathered through the internet. Textual analysis is the only research method applied in the study of these discourses as the aim is to describe and compare the content, structure, and functions of the

⁹³ I returned to my home country in March 2020.

different standards. The method used in this stage of the research shows its effectiveness in a breakthrough of the education system's power structure. As a case study on a Dutch program, the difficulties often lie in the translation from Dutch to English. For instance, the discourse of the OBK is all in Dutch without any English version. My suggestion for future research is to apply textual analysis to investigate the arts' educational system in different regions. Every country has its well-formulated standard (For the Netherlands, it is NLQF) for varying education levels. It may bring out another point of view of art research from another cultural background.

4.4 Perspective of the Participants

In general, the students are not aware enough of the functional aspect of their practice result, which means that the practice's intent may be merely about developing a new understanding of an existing corpus. They focus on the relationship between their artistic practices and self-experience by questioning the concepts inherent in their artistic development. It also reflected in the NVAO assessment report that the program's focuses are stronger on a questioning approach than on problem-solving ability. The lecturer's perspective on the curriculum design is identical to the program's expectation of its artistic research scheme, which believes that the three themes (make, think, and share) cannot be divided in the underlying artistic research. The reason to use the division in three parts is to be able to distribute the specific skills over different courses, thus enabling the training of different skills. The lecturer also encourages the program's interdisciplinary approach, in which students from different disciplines share their practice and exchange insights, and believes the current curriculum design is working well.

The methods applied in this stage of the research were a mixture of qualitative research methods and textual analysis. Both observations on the participants' perspective were analyzed textually compared to the programs' discourse of the educational aims and the course structure. For gathering the opinion from students on research in practice, I formulated an online questionnaire for the enrolled student to fill in. Unfortunately, only two out of twelve students responded to my survey. The reason for designing the questionnaire was that due to the epidemic I did not stay physically in the Netherlands. Perhaps future study needs some improvement on data collection methods; possibly a focus group could be a valid method to collecting points of views. As for the lecturer's perspective on the curriculum, I interviewed the lecturer Flake Pisano in my early research stage. a future improvement could be a series of interviews, since I e.g. did not ask her very specific questions about artistic research in the curriculum design. Yet, I still think that the face-to-face interview with the teacher is a valid method for collecting her perspective.

Appendix I

The Transcript of the Interview with Falke Pisano

Date: 25th October 2019

Interviewer: Chin Pu, Hou

Interviewee: Falke Pisano

Place: Academiegalerie

Time: 22 min 34 sec

Chin Pu: Most of my questions are about the instructional design of the course in this program, and I separated it in course structure, the course context, pedagogical consideration, and after graduation.

Falke Pisano: Okay. I have to say I'm not the course leader, and so for the whole overview of the course is best to talk to Annette. So, I will talk on my personal title.

Chin Pu: How do you think about the knowledge articulation across from Studio practice to curatorial practice in the course arrangement, because I have known that the course structure is about “Making”, “Thinking”, and “Sharing”, and the sharing part is about curatorial practice. Do you think that there is a gap between studio practice and curatorial practice?

Falke Pisano: Well, I think like the first thing to say about this division into three parts, making, thinking, and sharing is that they cannot be divided. So, these all happens at the same time within an artistic practice. The reason why we divided is to have areas where we can pay more attention to one side of this triangle. So, we do not necessarily see “share” only as curatorial practice. It's not all about works become in public in the context of an exhibition, but it is also the participation in conversations, workshops, presentations such as the experimental presentations within the course. Students come in exchange with the outside world, peers, or other people around the course, so this gap that you're talking about should “actually not be there”. Because, speaking from my perspective, the making always takes place in a direct relation to the context that it will be exhibited in. I think this is also how the course looks at it. But at the same time, it's complicated. Often, there is still the idea of an artist with an individual practice. Who makes something and then exhibits or presents it in some form. And this can create the idea that there is a difference between thinking, making and sharing. But for instance, curatorial practice is taught by Katia Krupennikova and she teaches students what it means to think about their work in a curatorial context. It's not that she is giving them the context, but she helps the students to think about the work as

something that they can curate themselves as well.

Chin Pu: So, is it like leading to training artist-curator?

Falke Pisano: No I do not necessarily mean artists as curators, but there is a curatorial aspect in artistic practice. Where you imagine or think about the context that your work will be exist outside of your studio. Where you think about how the work can be mediated. Where you think about the relations between your work and other people's work. It's not official curatorial practice, but the curatorial is part of artistic practice.

Chin Pu: My next question, is about... Can you talk about the course context related to the connection between art and societal issues? Because as I had a conversation with Tammie, she told me that in courses you discuss about political art, about nature, about thinking different kinds of technologies. A little bit like the idea of Donna Haraway's "becoming-with". Why to bring this kind of concept into courses?

Falke Pisano: In this course, this master, we think a lot about the relation between the practice of an artist and what happens broader in society. To see artistic practice as a space where you can think about your relation to the world, but also the relations within the world. The idea of the autonomous artwork, the work that is separated from society is not something that we focus on, and this is also something that I see as a fiction. I think this is the reason why the master seeks active engagement with politics, but also with science and theory. We think about the world. How things exist, how things could be thought. So, in a similar way, there is no distinct or gap between making and sharing. We do not see a gap between the artwork and the world it is part of.

Chin Pu: Okay, it's really nice.

Chin Pu: I have another question. Because I know that there are workshops that students in Fine Art program and Scenography participated together. What is the purpose of sharing the same workshop together?

Falke Pisano: I think at the start, it lies in a practical issue where the Scenography and the Fine art Master are one master with two lines of research. There is a policy or a way of looking that goes through both masters. What I like but I have not been in is the workshop that we do every week now. There is a share of your practice with students of either Scenography or Fine Art in both groups. And what I think is very valuable is that there are different perspectives on the same work. So, when students from Fine Art looks at a Scenography work or work proposal, they look at different things. They look maybe

contextually or politically about what this would mean. Well, from Scenography, maybe they have more sensitivity to a spatial arrangement, or organizational structure of a work, or having another theoretical reference. I think this is the reason. And because Scenography is thinking about “what can scenography be?”, not in a traditional way but how can it become an expanded practice of scenography. We also think what art can be, but not in a traditional way. It makes the conversation bigger.

Chin Pu: My next question is what do you think about artistic success in the contemporary art world?

Falke Pisano: What do you mean with the...

Chin Pu: Because I have seen the course description online, and it wrote that after graduation, they have skills to artistic curatorial and spatial practice or PhD research teaching a combination of these activities. Does it mean that the courses are for supporting them to engage in this cultural field? Is it for this purpose?

Falke Pisano: Well, this course is quite specifically focusing on people that want to continue. But there is so many factors that play a role if a student is able continue and wants to continue in curatorial, artistic practice, spatial practice, or PhD practice. The master course is different than the bachelor course. We try to lead them towards certain independence of working. The idea is that when they graduate, they can continue by themselves, and think about what they want to do and continue to think about what they want to do. If you look at artistic careers or artistic practices, the master is really a beginning point. There is a lot of years of struggle ahead when difficult decisions need to be made. “What is success?” is also a question. We can think of success when you have museum exhibitions and sell a lot of work. This is not necessarily the success that we are thinking about in this master. I think we are thinking more about how you can create a context around yourself and your work that you feel good in and which makes sense to the work. It can be PhD research, but it can also be a practice that is collective, for instance. That does not produce objects that can sell or things that can be in museums. So, I think in art world, it's a very subjective idea of what is working, I don't even want to talk about success.

Chin Pu: I will ask you some questions, but this is not a part of my... .

Falke Pisano: Okay.

Chin Pu: I'm just curious. Because from Tammie, she gives me some insights on the concept of unlearning and alternative education. I'm really curious about how do you think about

putting the concept of unlearning into lecture practices, how to make students unlearn something?

Falke Pisano: I think within the course, Annette is the expert on unlearning. For me, like what I usually try to do is to help the students look at what is underlying the decisions that they make, and to question "what is the framework". The implicit framework is sometimes not recognized, which makes you take one decision over another. Basically, what I do is make everything very problematic. When it comes to learn, it's based a lot on my own practice, which is looking at certain concepts for me to feel very natural or I have grown up with. Then I try to see.... Okay, maybe they are not as stable as I think they are. Maybe they are more cultural than natural. This is what a lot of my work is based on, but I think maybe what Tammie was talking about is a specific way of unlearning that is more related to what Annette is doing at Casco. So, maybe it is something to ask her.

Chin Pu: Another question is what do you think about difference between education in and out of institutions?

Falke Pisano: Teaching within an institution you have to keep learning yourself in relation to the institution. It is easy, also for students, to become institutionalized very quickly. What I try to do is to find the balance between questioning my position as a lecturer and wanting the students to question their position as a student. Because if we depart from what we have been taught about lecturers and students, it implies a very specific range of action and relation. So, what I think the extra work in an institution is that you have to think about "Am I still being alert of how much institutional frames I reproduce?". "Do I help the students to de-institutionalize themselves?" It's quite difficult, too much de-institutionalisation and maybe they also do not get everything that they could get out of this context. So, it's about a balance. Outside of the institution, it works more on a personal exchange level. I like to talk to younger artists, do studio visits or mentorships. It's about what interests them and how can I help them, but it is not the same inside the institution. Inside or outside the institution, I learn a lot myself as well, about what it means to teach and what it means to learn.

Chin Pu: Okay, my final one.

Falke Pisano: Okay.

Chin Pu: How do you feel as an artist teaching in an institution?

Falke Pisano: At the moment, I have to say that it is the thing that gives me the most joy. My

practice is quite solitary and consists of a lot of thinking and sitting behind the computer. This can be very stressful. To teach or to talk to other people is to be a part of the dynamic of learning. The dynamic of learning is very important because I learn a lot as well. I try to advice or show students what I have done and what my experience has been. I can't tell them how to do things. What to do is to try to help them understand their own perspective. This is the only thing. By helping them to understand their own perspectives I learned a lot about my perspectives as well. And the fact is that many students come from many different places is very important for me, too.

Chin Pu: So, for you, the interaction between you and students are really important for you to know more about your own perspective?

Falke Pisano: Yeah. Definitely! Sometimes, I put aside my own perspectives because I learn new things that I did not think about before.

Chin Pu: It's really nice.

Falke Pisano: Then we can have a look at the work there. Did you have a look at the exhibition?

Chin Pu: I'd look at some pieces of work, but I haven't finished.

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