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## INTRODUCTION

## Art and Research

**Irma Vilà i Òdena**

IT, Multimedia and Telecommunications Department (UOC)

**Pau Alsina**

Department of Arts and Humanities (UOC)

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Focusing on the relations between art and research, this single topic issue was the result of several conversations held over the last few years between members of the CAIRE, the Experimental Art and Research Cluster. Founded by four research groups at the UAB, UB, UPF and UOC together with the HANGAR artistic production and research between in Barcelona, the objective of the CAIRE is precisely to contribute toward artistic research by capitalizing on its specific and unique features. In this respect, taking advantage of the framework offered by the symposium Questioning Aesthetics: Arts Research & Aesthetics, which took place from 20th to 22nd June 2017 at the Palau Virreina in Barcelona, organized by the UAB, the Transdisciplinary Aesthetics Foundation and Banco Sabadell Foundation, we issued an open call for articles that focus on the relation between the Arts and Research, which, after the peer-review process, ended up as this node of the journal Artnodes. Therefore, the first five articles are written by authors who took part at the aforementioned symposium at the time, while the rest of the articles in the single topic issue come from other writers who share their experiences and reflections with us from a range of different perspectives and approaches.

The end result fulfils the desire expressed in the original open call for articles, in which we highlighted the diversity of approaches that exist in relation to the nature of the interrelation between art and research, including research for art, research on art, and finally, research in art, which is claimed by many to be the most genuine type of artistic research. Moreover, the selection of the articles published here in one way or another relates to the four lines specified in the open call, linked both to the theoretical perspective for and on artistic

research and the different organizational, institutional and political contexts for artistic research, as well as the evaluation of artistic research and, above all, the artistic research projects themselves.

In this respect, the opening article in this node, written by Gerard Velar, the Professor of Aesthetics at the UAB, gives us an insight into how and when we can state that certain artistic research projects represent cognitive progress of the same nature that we can find in the sciences. Such progress cannot be viewed with a linear metaphor, Vilar explains, but rather with a succession of concentric circles expanding outwards in all directions. In the following article, Henk Slager, a visual artist and Dean of the Utrecht Graduate School of Visual Art and Design, explores how academia as a sanctuary for experimental processes enable and even anticipate new aesthetic forms and critical thinking. Then, the artist and researcher Alex Arteaga tries to put forward a definition of aesthetics as a variety of cognition, characterized in his article through a notion of cognition based on the theory of autopoiesis, from which he derives his conceptualization of aesthetics and which he relates to the notion of aesthetic research itself.

In his article, Elo Mika, the artist, Professor of Artistic Research and Vice-Dean of the Academy of Fine Arts at the University of the Arts of Helsinki, gives us an overview of what he refers to as the “artistic research syndrome”, from which he aims to open up a new perspective on the field within a broader theoretical framework of culture. The following article, by Dieter Mersch, the Professor of Media Theory at the University of Potsdam and Director of the Institute for Critical Theory at the Zurich University of the Arts,

focuses on the multiple relations between art and research from the perspective of artistic thinking, separating it from the scientific production of artistic knowledge.

Meanwhile, the article by Teresa Marín, the interdisciplinary artist and lecturer in the Department of Fine Arts at (UMH), undertakes a re-evaluation of the discussions on artistic research within the Spanish context since 1978, highlighting the links between university policies and some of the significant debates during this period, as well as setting out the conflicts associated with the derived epistemological issues, the controversial evaluation and financing criteria, and the working conditions of the researchers themselves, as well as other contemporary challenges to be taken into consideration. Along the same lines and from a design standpoint, Jaron Rowan and Marta Camps, lecturers at the BAU Centro Universitario de Diseño, focus on thinking about design research without separating it from the political, social, ethical and aesthetic spheres, as a situated practice with its own specific materialities and research languages.

In addition, Maximilian Lehner, a doctoral researcher at the Institute of Art in Contemporary Contexts and Media, KU Linz,

analyses different collaborations between art and technology to discuss the criteria related to the production of artistic knowledge itself. Moreover, Meredith Tromble, an artist, writer and lecturer at the San Francisco Art Institute, presents and analyses different artistic research projects that have resulted from the collaboration between art and science. Then it is the turn of Willet, an artist and lecturer at the School of Creative Arts of the University of Windsor, whose article gives us an overview of the INCUBATOR project, that originated from a complex ecological relation between modern laboratory practices and planetary ecology as a case study to show research and creation processes in the laboratory. Last but not least, to bring the node to a close, the final two articles explore different cases of artistic research, the first looking at diffractive interfaces as methods of artistic experimentation, presented by the artists and researchers Belsunces, Benítez, Brandstätter, Escudero, Lamóncha, Pin and Tomás, and the second focusing on a case study of the work of Antoni Muntadas written by Pablo Santa Olalla, a doctoral researcher at the UB, in which he analyses the relation between mobility and artistic research.

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## Recommended citation

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## CV

**Irma Vilà Òdena**

Lecturer in the IT, Multimedia and Telecommunications Department (UOC)

ivilao@uoc.edu

UOC

Rambla del Poblenou, 156

08018 Barcelona

She has a Multimedia Engineering Diploma from the Universitat Ramon Llull in Barcelona and a Master in Curation and Cultural Practices in Art and New Media from the MECAD. She is the Director of the journal *Mosaic* and Executive Co-Director of the scientific journal *Artnodes*. She lectures on the Bachelor Degrees in Multimedia, Digital Design and Creation, and Art at UOC, specializing in the field of digital creativity, art and culture, sound art and design. She is a member of DARTS research group.

She is a curator, researcher, cultural producer and manager specializing in art, science, technology and society. Her career includes international projects that blend scientific or cultural research with curation, such as 'Atlas of the electromagnetic space. A chronology of the utopias of the radioelectric spectrum', and exhibitions at the Arts Santa Mònica Laboratory, such as 'Living Systems. Christa Sommerer & Laurent Mignonneau', with Josep Perelló (2011), and 'Cultures of Change' with Pau Alsina and Josep Perelló (2009-2010), as well as at institutions such as the CCCB and the ArtFutura festival (2006-2009).

She forms part of the creative recycling group Luthiers Drapaires (<<https://luthiersdrapaires.wordpress.com/>>) and the audiovisual artists collective Telenoika (<<http://www.telenoika.net/>>), and she has coordinated both groups and creative grants for several years. She is one of the founders of the cultural research and innovation laboratory ZZZINC (<<http://www.zzzinc.net/>>), where one of her key achievements, among many other projects for cultural institutions, was in the supervision of the activities involved in the exhibition 'Big Bang Data' at the CCCB's Estación Beta (2014), organizing activities on data and their social and artistic implications, as well as advising the centre on the creation of its Estación Beta laboratory.

## CV

**Pau Alsina**

Professor of Arts and Humanities (UOC)

Director of the journal Artnodes

[palsinag@uoc.edu](mailto:palsinag@uoc.edu)

UOC

Av. Tibidabo, 39-43

08035 Barcelona

He has a PhD in Philosophy from the Universitat de Barcelona and is a Professor of Arts and Humanities at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, where he coordinates and teaches courses on contemporary thinking. He lectures in the Master on Digital Art Curation at the Escuela Superior de Diseño, which is affiliated to the URL. He is the Director of the journal *Artnodes*, specializing in the intersections between Art, Science and Technology, and the co-founder and member of the coordination team of the YASMIN art science and technology network in Mediterranean countries, run by UNESCO Digiarts, Leonardo/ISAST, Olats, Artnodes/UOC and the University of Athens. He has worked with various public and private institutions to develop cultural policies related to digital art and cultures. He has also organized interdisciplinary events, such as the Sinergia conference and the International Congress on Art and Materiality. He has written several books, chapters and articles on the intersections between art, science and technology and contemporary thinking. He is currently researching the development of a neo-materialist approach to contemporary art and culture. Director of DARTS interdisciplinary research group.

