

RUUKKU Taiteellisen tutkimuksen kausijulkaisu
Studies in Artistic Research
Tidskrift för konstnärlig forskning



Issue 8 (2018)

CONDITIONS OF SHARING

Editorial

ruukku.journal.fi

Conditions of Sharing

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RUUKKU – Studies in Artistic Research issue 8 has been collated under the theme of *Conditions of Sharing* to supplement the *Please Specify!* conference organized by Uniarts Helsinki together with the Society for Artistic Research in April 2017. The issue explores new perspectives on conditions of sharing research in the artistic field and thus offers a peerreviewed platform related to the conference theme. In line with the conference, the call for expositions asked, among other things, how specific interests, methods, discourses, positions and ways of knowing can be disseminated more widely and more adequately. It was argued that traditional frameworks for sharing research have been built around conventional ideas about the object, method, context and medium of research. The call asked whether and how the conditions of sharing research could be thematised in different terms. What if these conditions relate to such things as provocation, excess, limited resources, reduction, *mise en abyme*, absurd argumentation, populism, conspiracy, amateurism and the like? How could these invented specificities inform artistic research and how could they be shared?

These questions were addressed in the conference through presentations by five keynote addresses and 43 other presentations with cross-artistic and contextually divergent points of view. Attended by more than 200 delegates from 22 different countries, the program involved several strands: performative presentations, text-based working groups, collaborative sessions, and interventions.

This issue of *RUUKKU* brings together three commentaries and seven expositions that are based on presentations offered at the *Please Specify!* conference.

Two of the expositions explore different approaches to writing. In *The Silence Ensemble*, Kirsi Heimonen, Petri Kaverma and Anu Vehviläinen share their cross-artistic and open-ended collaboration. They set up the task to explore silence together through sharing spaces in which they improvised. The improvisation was based on their relationship with silence and drew upon their artistic practices, namely dancing, playing the piano as well as drawing. They also wrote about their experiences and practice. The exposition introduces their encounter and process through the written and drawn materials they produced as well as photographs taken and video-recording made during their explorative sessions. *Various Writings: Chapter 1* by Dion Star, Lizzie Ridout and Maria Christoforidou take a very different kind approach to writing by experimenting with acts of writing. Drawing inspiration from Vilém Flusser's essay *The Gestures of Writing*, acts of writing are

here approached through variegated systematic and structural constraints. As a suggestion for an approach to artistic research, the exposition experiments with disassembling conventional forms of writing. While introducing performance acts, personal texts and studies into the problem of writing related to the project, the exposition presents new kinds of mobile translations and objects of writing.

In her exposition, Assi Karttunen explores the sensory qualities setting the tone for a whole tradition of Arcadian art works. Her main point of reference is her music performance *Et in Arcadia ego* that thematised some key aspects of this tradition. Stemming from this tradition, the title of the performance evokes associations of *memento mori*, a cautionary reminder of the transitory nature of life and the inevitability of death. The exposition presents the key elements of this Arcadian project and outlines the ways in which Karttunen and her collaborators explored new performance practices of classical music by subtly varying the performative parameters.

Pilvi Porkola's *Pyykkiä – Näkökulmia uusmaterialismiin ja performanssiin* is based on the performance *The Laundry Case* held at the SAR 2017 conference. Porkola says that new materialist and post-humanist themes tend to focus on the ungraspable and the other, such as microbes, plants and animals. Here she instead positions new materialism in the context of the mundane, everyday life, examining the presence of objects and persons on a stage. As a part of the *How to Do Things With Performance?* project, the research is concerned with what is given within a performative event, both in its making and reception. This opens up how the given conditions determine and specify our relation to things and objects around us.

Katri Hirvonen-Nurmi, Lea Kantonen and Pekka Kantonen combine performance and video art practices with visual anthropology in exploring Wixárika knowledge together with the practitioners and scholars. The exposition *Miten voimme antaa museoesineiden puhua? – osallistavan esityksen käsikirjoitus* discusses the role of art researchers in presenting, documenting and translating practices that have their origin in a pre-colonial era. Wixárika build objects for their ancestors, and the objects speak to their makers, becoming active participants in this social environment. This means that within the museum practices of Wixárika, the artefacts are not rooted up from their genuine environment, but continue to speak. The exposition becomes a script and dramatization of the presentation of Wixárika artefacts, combining multiple voices. Do the artefacts speak to outsiders at all? What conditions do the Wixárika beliefs bring to the exchange, presentation and possible sale of the objects?

The issue also features two expositions that address the institutional art research output more explicitly. Andrew Bracey and Steve Dutton, in their exposition *An Obstract for Midpointness*, take a critical standpoint towards art research conference submission and presentation practices, using the SAR 2017 event as a

starting point. Forgoing an abstract for an “obstract”, the exposition relates various experiences and reports from the conference around a midpoint, framing the conference events, presentations, speech and reception as a kind of universe in itself. Through this exposition the authors argue against dividing this universe, instead experimenting with midpointness. Centrality and finality, virtues of traditional conference reporting, are critically examined, both with the exposition format and in the central – or peripheral – account.

Alexander Komlosi’s *Performative Well-Being: Conditions of Sharing* ostensibly presents a case from the author’s pedagogical performance practice of interacting with the inner partner, presented with a questionnaire and a video. Yet the exposition is also a narrative about the journal submission process itself, using the RUUKKU submission process and the interactions in and around it as material for inquiring, debating and probing into the realm of institutional publishing. Komlosi reveals the conditions of sharing from inside the process, providing first person snapshots of the practice architecture of a journal. Komlosi’s conversational tone belies a critical approach towards institutionalized academic publishing, allowing readings both direct and between the lines. Using snippets from e-mail correspondences and relating encounters with colleagues, the work also exposes the sometimes quite small world of peer reviewed art research publishing.

ERRATUM 10.1.2019:

Lea Kantonen, Pekka Kantonen, Katri Hirvonen-Nurmi

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Katri Hirvonen-Nurmi, Lea Kantonen, Pekka Kantonen

28.8.2018

RUUKKU – Studies in Artistic Research. Publisher: The University of The Arts Helsinki, Aalto University, University of Lapland. www.ruukku.journal.fi

This editorial was originally published in a webpage format. This PDF, created in 2026, has a different layout and visuals.

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