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Creative Data Lab

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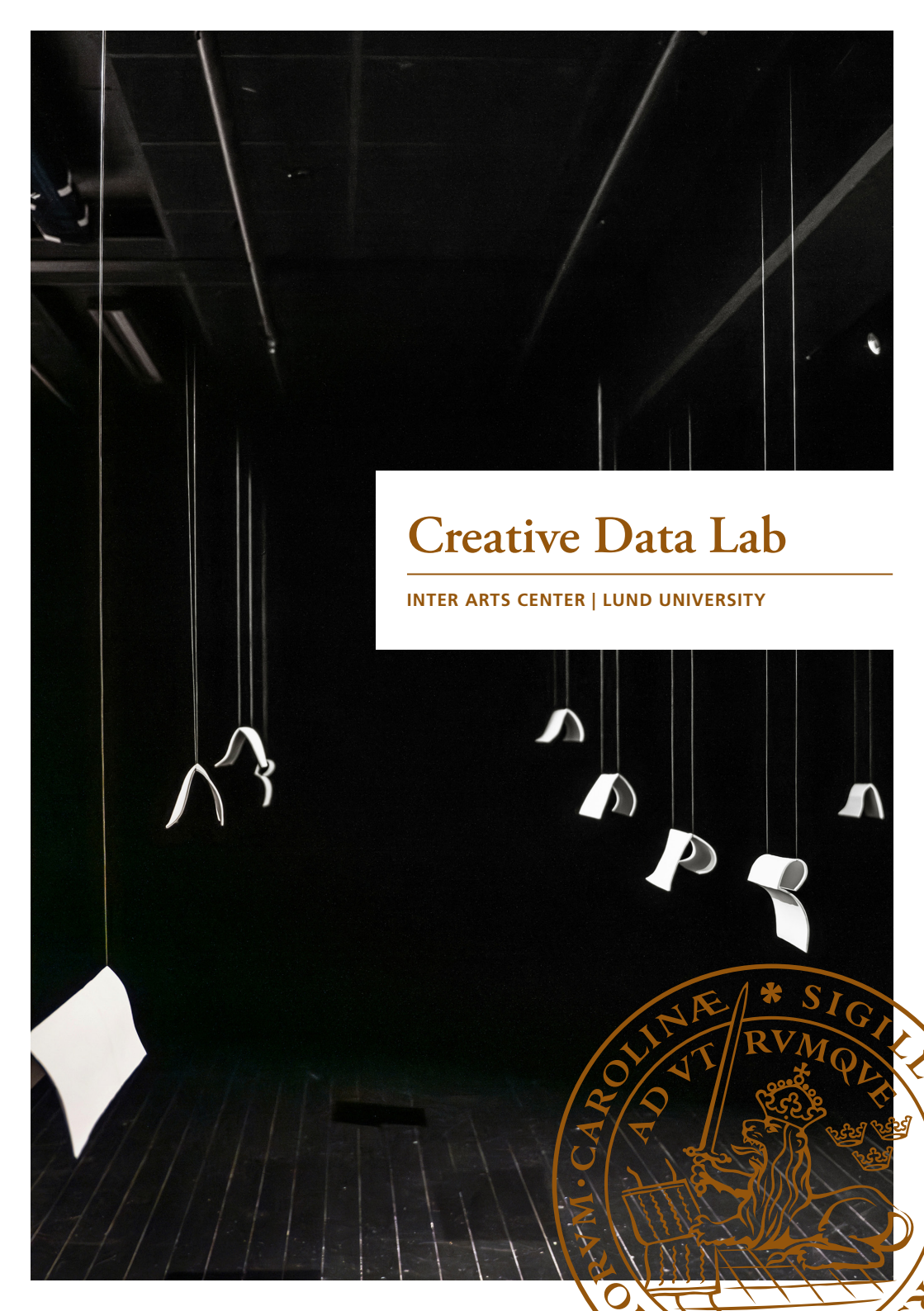
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Creative Data Lab

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CREATIVE DATA LAB

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Hedvig Jalhed and Carolina Jonsson Malm (eds.)



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**Inter
Arts
Center**

PUBLICATIONS FROM INTER ARTS CENTER
AT LUND UNIVERSITY REPORT NO. 2

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Carolina Jonsson Malm holds a PhD in History and is engaged in interdisciplinary and experimental research at the intersection of critical heritage studies, storytelling, and creative writing. She is currently the research coordinator at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts at Lund University, working with practical research support and strategic research development within artistic research contexts.

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Karin Westin Tikkanen, senior advisor at the Swedish National Data Service (SND), is the project leader of the ART<3DATA project, about artistic research data. She has a background as a classicist and historical linguist and is also active as a freelance journalist, interested in the general development and spread of human knowledge, from the Classical period onwards.



Figure 1. Exterior, Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, Lund University.

Introduction

By Carolina Jonsson Malm

Artistic research has always been rich in materials: rehearsals, sketches, recordings, notes, conversations, prototypes, unfinished drafts, and live events. Yet the systems designed to support research data management¹ – repositories, guidelines, metadata standards, and policies – have largely evolved in dialogue with scientific and technological disciplines whose materials behave very differently. As open research agendas gain momentum, the gap between what artistic research produces and what existing infrastructures can meaningfully accommodate has become more visible. The Creative Data Lab (CDL) emerged from this gap: from a sense that the field is ready for the next step, but that this step requires careful thinking, experimentation, and a shared language. The purpose of CDL was twofold: to better understand the challenges and possibilities of *artistic research data management* (ARDM), and to begin shaping approaches, concepts, and infrastructures that respect the particularities of artistic practice.

Within Europe, infrastructures for artistic research have grown in important ways: platforms such as the Research Catalogue have made it easier to publish and disseminate artistic outputs.² Yet the underlying data – the materials, processes, and iterative stages that lead to these outputs – remain far less well supported. These materials are often multimedia, multisensory, high-resolution, and sometimes deeply context dependent. They resist simple categorisation, and they do not always sit comfortably within established definitions of “research data”. Nevertheless, they are central to artistic enquiry:

1 Research data is all material created or collected during a research process, regardless of format. Research data management refers to the planning, organisation and care of research data throughout its lifecycle, from creation and active use to sharing, preservation and archiving.

2 The Research Catalogue (RC) is a non-commercial, collaboration and publishing platform for artistic research provided by the Society for Artistic Research (SAR). Society for Artistic Research (2026).

they hold method, process, and ideas; they trace how artworks come into being. Managing them is not merely an administrative task but an intellectual, creative, and ethical one. CDL sets out to explore what this might mean in practice.

Hosted as an Advanced Study Group at the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies at Lund University,³ the initiative gathered a diverse group of artist-researchers, scholars, and support staff from across Lund University and Malmö University. We were joined by colleagues and invited researchers from other institutions, as well as experts from the Swedish National Data Service (SND) and the Swedish Research Council. Over the course of 2025, the group met regularly to discuss topics ranging from the conceptual (What is artistic research data?) to the practical (How do we store a multi-channel audio work without compromising quality?). These meetings combined presentations, collective readings, and speculative discussions with people developing real infrastructures, such as *Art Files*,⁴ a platform for long-term archiving and presentation of artistic research materials. The atmosphere was deliberately open and exploratory; participants were encouraged to bring their uncertainties, contradictions, and half-formed ideas. This was part of the work: ARDM is still an emerging field, and it needs space for ambiguity as well as structure.

A similar sense of openness and exploration shaped the group's engagement with the ongoing national and international debate on artistic research data. Internationally, a key point of reference was ELIA's *Towards a Manifesto for Critical Openness in Artistic Research*, a multivocal intervention that questions "the acceleration of open ideologies in digital culture and the practical implication of these developments for artistic research and its distribution", which served as an important springboard in our discussions.⁵ In a national context, SND's symposium *Art, Knowledge, Context*⁶ in October 2025 offered a valuable forum for examining these issues jointly with researchers and experts from other institutions. It was through this interplay between local enquiry and the wider debate that the themes we returned to throughout the year took shape, sometimes as practical concerns, sometimes as conceptual puzzles, and often as something in between.

3 Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies (2025).

4 Inter Arts Center (2026).

5 ELIA (2025).

6 Swedish National Data Service (2025).

This introductory chapter addresses some of these themes and sets the stage for further discussion. These themes were never treated as separate boxes to be ticked but emerged as intertwined questions about what artistic research data can be, how it is handled today, and how it might be cared for in the future. Rather than addressing these themes as isolated topics, this text approaches them as overlapping threads that together form a picture of a field in motion – one that is experimenting with new practices while negotiating inherited structures, technological constraints, and artistic values. What follows, then, is not a comprehensive guide but a reflection on the questions that mattered to us, as they unfolded in conversation, speculation, critique, and collaborative enquiry.

One of the starting points for our work was the seemingly simple but persistently difficult question of what artistic research data actually is. It became clear early in our discussions that any attempt to develop methods or infrastructures for artistic research data management must begin not with technical specifications but with an understanding of the materials themselves – their forms, their roles within artistic processes, and the kinds of knowledge they carry. At the same time, we were reminded that not all artistic research produces what might meaningfully be called “data” at all. For some projects, the traces of the process are abundant. For others, the work unfolds in ways that resist documentation or leave behind materials that are inseparable from the finished artistic output.

This raised a recurring difficulty in our discussions: the shifting boundary between what counts as data and what constitutes the artistic result itself. Through the year it became evident that no single, fixed definition could adequately capture this diversity. Artistic research is too heterogeneous as to its questions, its materials, and its methods to be contained within a formula. At the same time, we recognised that certain forms recur and have become characteristic of the field – audio and video documentation, photographs, annotated scores, choreographic notes, process journals, design files, workshop recordings, interactive prototypes – and that any future solution will need to support both these familiar formats and the unpredictable, experimental, and yet to be imagined forms that new artistic practices will generate. Rather than seeking a rigid definition, we came to understand artistic research data as something relational and situated: shaped by the enquiry that produces it and therefore requiring systems flexible enough to honour the known while remaining open to the uncertain and unforeseen.

Questions of *storage* became unavoidable once we began considering the material realities of artistic research data. Much of what artistic research produces is not only conceptually complex but technically demanding: multichannel audio that loses depth if compressed; high-resolution video whose colour and texture are integral to its meaning; software-based works dependent on specific runtime environments; choreographic or spatial documentation whose value lies in nuance rather than summary. Storing such materials is not a neutral act but a negotiation with formats, fidelity, and technological change, and every choice – codec, resolution, file structure, metadata, platform – affects what will remain possible for future interpretation. We often found ourselves discussing storage not as an afterthought but as an extension of artistic intent, since decisions about what can be kept shape the afterlife of a project as surely as the methods used to create it. At the same time, storage involves practical limitations: institutional systems built for text and numerical datasets rarely accommodate the size, variety, or interdependency of artistic files, and researchers must navigate mismatches between what their work requires and what available infrastructures permit.

If storage raised questions about the material conditions for preserving artistic research data, the question of sharing opened up a different set of challenges and possibilities. Within artistic research, sharing data is still relatively uncommon, not because the materials are irrelevant to others but because many projects have not historically imagined their afterlives in terms of reuse, scrutiny, or collaborative development beyond the immediate research context. Yet when we spoke about sharing, it became clear how much potential there is in making artistic research data accessible. Sharing can support dialogue within a project, allowing collaborators to revisit materials, compare interpretations, or develop ideas in parallel; but perhaps more importantly, it creates the possibility for others – researchers in different environments, later in time – to engage with the material, learn from it, build on it, or reframe it. In this sense, sharing is not simply a matter of openness for its own sake but a way of extending the life of artistic processes, allowing methods and insights to circulate beyond the singular moment in which they were produced. At the same time, the rarity of data sharing in the field reflects genuine uncertainties: how to convey context so that materials remain meaningful, how to respect the integrity of artistic work, and how to balance access with the ethical and legal considerations that follow artistic practice. These questions made it clear that sharing is not an automatic good, but when done thoughtfully, it can become a catalyst for new perspectives, unexpected connections,

and further artistic research that draws energy from the traces others have left behind. In many ways, these questions about when and how to share opened directly onto the broader landscape of open research.



Figure 2. Interior, the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies.

Over the past decade, research ecosystems in Europe and beyond have moved decisively toward *open research*, accompanied by rapid digitisation of both processes and outputs. While this transition has generated powerful incentives and infrastructures for sharing publications and – progressively – research data, its implementation within artistic research has revealed both friction and opportunity. A recurring theme across the year was openness – not as a slogan, but as a practice. Open research policies emphasise *findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability* (the FAIR principles).⁷ Artistic research certainly benefits from this, yet it also runs up against limits where intellectual property, artistic integrity, sensitive and personal data, collaborative authorship, and the moral rights of creators complicate any simple prescription. In our conversations, questions of ethics were inseparable from questions of access and presentation: what to disclose, to whom, and under what conditions. CDL therefore approached openness as something to think with,

7 Swedish Research Council (2025).

shape, and adapt to artistic contexts: *as open as possible, as closed as necessary*. In practice, this means that openness may be full, partial, delayed, contextual, or negotiated – so that it supports artistic creation and collaboration rather than constrain them.

Against this backdrop, it became increasingly clear that questions of storage, sharing, and openness could not be separated from questions of perspective. The way materials are preserved, contextualised, or made available reflect disciplinary discipline-specific approaches and the values embedded in particular practices. If one conclusion from the year stands out, it is the value of approaching artistic research data through genuinely interdisciplinary work. The group brought together perspectives from music, musicology, visual art and comics, creative writing, literary studies, and architecture. The most productive conversations arose when these views circulated together, informed one another, and set new ideas in motion. Bringing together aesthetic sciences, artistic practice, data stewardship, and digital technology did more than pool expertise – it bridged the everyday gap between artistic and scientific research, creating a setting where problems could be reframed and solutions sketched in ways none of us would have arrived at alone. Participants consistently described this cross-field exchange as the most valuable aspect of the work, deepening our understanding of different methods, needs, and constraints, and fostering an environment that supports creativity and collaboration across disciplinary lines. In this sense, interdisciplinarity was not a backdrop but a method: a way of thinking that allowed the specificities of our respective disciplines to shape how we imagine infrastructures for artistic research data and the kinds of futures those infrastructures might sustain.

If one thing unites the contributions gathered here, it is the way different disciplines and professions refract the same questions into distinct but complementary insights. The year's conversations did not converge on a single model so much as assemble a shared vocabulary for practice. What follows reflects that variety: chapters that approach artistic research data from different angles, some through examples drawn from practice and others through broader reflections on methods, infrastructures, and conditions for artistic research. Karin Westin Tikkanen situates artistic research data within the Swedish regulatory landscape, tracing why “data” can feel alien in the arts while arguing for dialogue-driven, field-sensitive ways of making the concept workable without forcing artistic research into inherited scientific templates. Madeleine Bergquist writes from the vantage point of data stewardship, showing how policies, infrastructures, and everyday research realities meet in a

“buffer zone” of translation and mediation, where relational notions of data, and the practical ethics of openness, become central to supporting artistic researchers. Karin Johansson uses the image of artistic research as an archipelago to argue that ARDM can function as a field-building practice that supports shared knowledge formation through referencing, cross-professional collaboration, and proactive thinking. Gunnar Krantz explores the legal, practical, and artistic consequences of drawing the line between data and art, using his own practice-based research in visual communication to show how some artifacts hover in a dual state – simultaneously potential data and potential artwork. Hedvig Jalhed follows an intermodal collaboration between opera and cognitive science to demonstrate how the same datasets can support knowledge production across artistic and scientific modes at once, and how shared documentation can generate new questions, methods, and ethical reflections. Henrik Frisk examines the archive as an active and shaping force in artistic research, arguing that the meaning and future usefulness of research data depends on who documents it, in what context, and with what forms of metadata, rather than on the data alone. Lars Gustaf Andersson turns to the archive as a site of latency and discovery, suggesting how access to well-described artistic research data can enable new aesthetic scholarship – not only about finished works but about processes, thresholds, and the productive value of what remains unresolved. Our hope is that these chapters will contribute to the ongoing dialogue on artistic research data management and the various practices and challenges that come with working in and across artistic research contexts. In doing so, this conversation can help articulate shared questions, highlight workable approaches, and support the development of infrastructures that can meet the field on its own terms.

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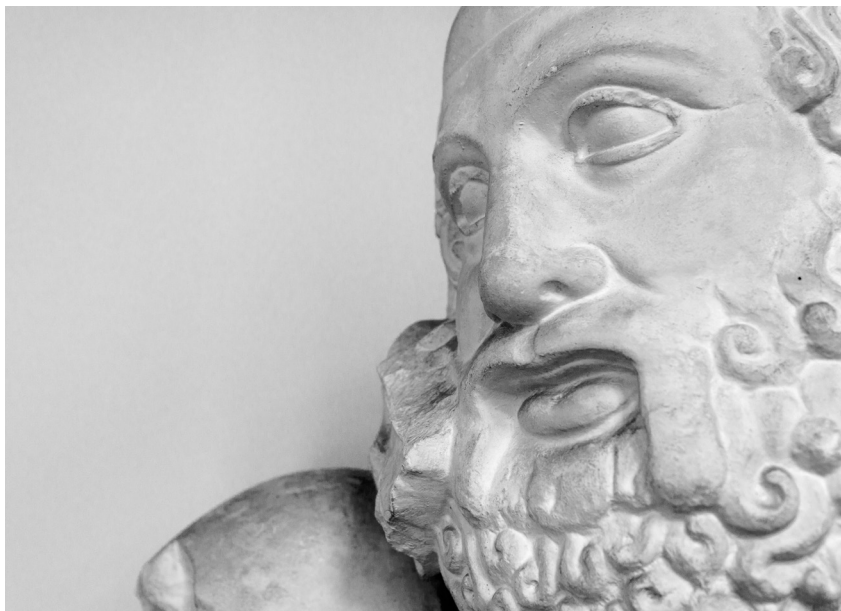


Figure 3. Interior, Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, Lund University.

ART<3DATA:

Artistic research data – in theory and in practice

By Karin Westin Tikkanen

Introduction

Data has become something of a buzzword. Everyone goes on about data and all one can do with “big data” in terms of technological development and innovation, not to forget the topic of user targeted advertising.

There is an equal amount of discussion concerning the topic research data, meaning data used as the basis for analysis and research results. Research data can be collected, created or generated within a given research project. And since many universities in Sweden are also government bodies, there are plenty of rules governing the ways in which researchers are expected to manage said data. One such law (SFS 2022:818) governs the re-use of public sector information. This law states that universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEI) are to apply this law to research data, meaning that Swedish researchers are required by law to make the data they work with available to the extent that this is possible. Research data can be deposited in data repositories, of which there are plenty, for all different varieties of research. In such repositories, researchers can search for and find data that may be of use for them in their own research.

And since research data form part of the researchers’ work within a government body, this is also considered public records and should therefore be archived in accordance with the Swedish Archives Act (SFS 1990:782). And in the case of sensitive data, for example personal data, there are additional rules that guide how they must be managed, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

In other words, researchers need to be aware of existing rules that determine how one must deal with research data within a given project, considering management and archiving. However, the thing most usually discussed

is the first item mentioned in this text, the requirement to make research data available for re-use. It must be stressed again that not all data can be shared (e.g. sensitive data, copyright protected data, and so on), but the main idea is that research that is produced with the aid of state funding should be made as available as possible. Many researchers are already familiar with the concept of Open Access when it comes to articles and books, but this requirement holds also for the data that forms the basis for the analyses presented in said articles and books.

In the following I will consider only the aspect of making research data available in a data repository. For other aspects of data management, see the chapter by Madeleine Bergquist.¹

The ART<3DATA project

The requirements mentioned above concern *all* different kinds of research. I work at the Swedish National Data Service (SND), a national research infrastructure that helps Swedish researchers in their research data management and in making data accessible, for example through the data catalogue *Researchdata.se*.² At SND we work with data from all kinds of different research areas, from natural sciences to humanities, from medicine to agricultural research. The topic of artistic research, however, has long been neglected. To change this a project was launched, ART<3DATA. The plan was to investigate artistic research with a focus on artistic research data: do artistic research data exist, and if so, what do they look like and where can one find them?

Within the framework of this study I have spoken with artistic researchers and personnel at many different HEIs, among them several of the artistic academies in the Stockholm area – the Royal Institute of Art (KKH), the Royal College of Music (MKH), as well as Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH) – but also artistic faculties at different universities, for example in Umeå, Borås, Gothenburg and Lund. I have also organised two one-day seminars on the topic of artistic research data. The first seminar took place at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, on October 15, 2024.³ This seminar was aimed mainly at administrative personnel and dealt with the overall treatment of artistic research data – where should they be stored, and how does one locate them in a research project. The second seminar

¹ See page 32–43.

² Swedish National Data Service, *Researchdata.se*. (n.d.). <https://researchdata.se/en>.

³ Swedish National Data Service, *En dag om konstnärliga forskningsdata*. (2024). <https://snd.se/sv/en-dag-om-konstnarliga-forskningsdata>

took place on October 2, 2025, and was organised in collaboration with the Artistic Faculty, University of Gothenburg.⁴ This seminar was aimed at researchers and discussed the concept of sharing artistic research data as a way to strengthen this field of research in itself. A third seminar will take place at Lund University in the autumn of 2026.⁵

In these different contexts I have encountered a wide range of research projects, within areas such as textile design, free art, musical interpretation and performance, sloyd, opera, architecture, performing arts and photography. Some of the researchers I have spoken with find it easy to distinguish data in their research, but to others this is more difficult, not to say impossible. Many wonder: “Research data, isn’t that something you work with in a lab? Why should someone like me, working with art, have to bother with it?”

The simple answer to this question is outlined above and pertains to the current regulations. As already mentioned, the law governs all research areas, and artistic research is not excluded. Artistic researchers need to be aware of the regulations, and they need to learn to navigate them.

The matter of the *definition* of artistic research data is another, much wider and more difficult, topic. The goal of ART<3DATA has not been to arrive at an ultimate and final definition of what artistic research data are, in the sense of determining precisely what they might look like. One rather more allowing definition could be: “Artistic research data is data from research using artistic methods.” And it is precisely the aspect of “artistic methods” that makes the defining of data appear complicated. Artistic research is a wide field and artistic researchers work with many different methods and materials. Therefore, the aim of ART<3DATA is rather to investigate how those of us working with research data management can best help artistic researchers manage data in accordance with current regulations.

About artistic research

Artistic research remains a rather young field of research, and one might claim that the field is still in the process of creating and establishing an identity. An early example of this is the conversation between Mikael Nanfeldt, Nina Bondeson, Magnus Bårtås and Tina Carlsson, recorded by Magdalena

4 Swedish National Data Service, *Konst, kunskap, kontext*. (2025). <https://snd.se/en/art-knowledge-context-symposium-artistic-research>

5 Swedish National Data Service, *Artistic research data – practices, perspectives and potential*. (2026). <https://snd.se/en/artistic-research-data-practices-perspectives-and-potential>

Dziurlikowska in 2011.⁶ The mere existence of public debates concerning the to-be or not-to-be of artistic research is one element of this, as for example the ongoing discussion in the online magazine *Parabol*.⁷ One way of viewing the “critique” of artistic research raised in these debates, as well as the difficulty many artistic researchers mention when it comes to defining research data in their own projects, is to consider the difference between traditional, scientific research and artistic research. One could for example envisage a distinction whereby scientific research is about exploring the world and arriving at new knowledge, whereas artistic research can be said to be about exploring artistic professionalism and the creative process. According to Alva Noë, art is itself a method of research that illuminates our perceptions of the world.⁸ Seen in this light, artistic research is taking this one step further, making this inner research method – the creation of art itself – visible to the outside world, but following the reasoning and the experience of the artists themselves, not the art historians or art collectors.

Artistic research can take many different shapes, and the point here is not to over-simplify but rather to arrive at a simple enough description to establish the contrast. In any case, many of the researchers I have spoken to declare that they use a methodological framework that differs from that of scientific research. However, in my perspective, artistic research is not as diametrically opposite from scientific research as many, on both sides of the presumed divide (in the debate concerning the pros and cons of artistic research), would like to describe it. Research usually begins with some kind of question – you want to explore something – and then you look for ways to answer this question. Depending on the research field and the chosen method, you then collect information that will form the basis for the exploration you do. In other words, there is no real difference between “scientific research data” and “artistic research data” – there is “data from research”, irrespective of how the research itself is done. And to be clear: when I speak of *collecting* I mean the collection of information, in one way or another, from the world around us, whether in situations that the researchers manufacture themselves by way of setting up interviews, doing experiments, arranging a scene for a photograph or visual representation, but also that of making use of our own inner experiences, putting them into words on paper.

6 M. Dziurlikowska, “Bastarden”, *Konstnären* 1 (2011), 28–33.

7 See e.g. K. Westin Tikkanen, “Är konst kunskap?” *Parabol* 12 (2024). <https://www.parabol.press/ar-konst-kunskap>

8 A. Noë, *Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015).

Within scientific research is fairly easy to point at this *collecting* as a process that makes research data evident within the project, whether you look at things through a microscope at very small things in a laboratory, or through a telescope at very large and very distant things in a space observatory, or at things everywhere in between these two extremes in the world that surrounds us, at present or in times distant. In short, you collect information that you then analyse to arrive at an answer to your research question.

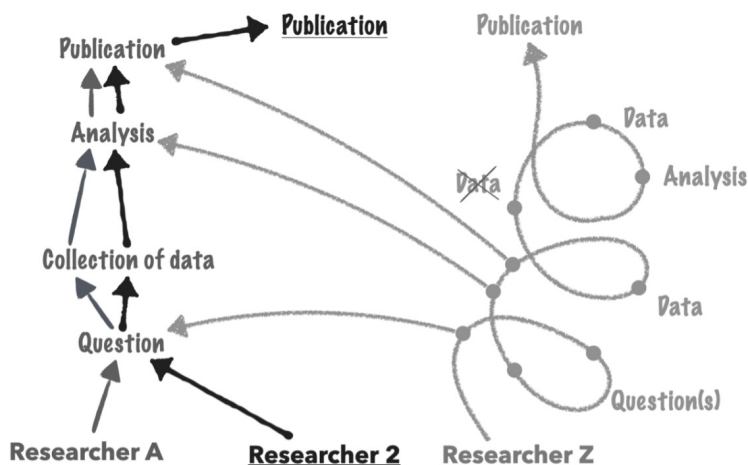


Figure 1. Examples of different possible research processes. Researcher A begins with a research question, collects data in order to do an analysis, and the work results in a publication. Researcher 2 does a replication study and follows the same process as Researcher A, starting from the question, looking at the data collection and the analysis and the published results, arriving at a separate publication. Researcher Z works in an entirely different way. They are inspired by the question posed by Researcher A but starts off with other research questions. Researcher Z also considers the analysis and the final publication by Researcher A, but makes use of other types of data, found or collected at different stages throughout the research process, and not all of the found data is considered relevant for the subsequent analysis.

Considering artistic research, this *collecting* is not always that evident, since the elements collected are not framed or used as “evidence” for the research results in the same way as is done within scientific research.⁹ The artistic process is not made manifest through easily measurable data points, unless it concerns a form of craftsmanship knowledge: “first I do stage 1, then I do stage 2...”. One should however keep in mind that this kind of practical knowledge – *techne* in the words of Aristotle and the “know how” following Swedish philosopher Tore Nordenstam – is rarely transmitted from a master to a student by way of written, theoretical knowledge only, but that the focus is on practical training.¹⁰ Many artists are also well aware of the concept of *flow*, meaning when you enter a series of thoughts that are not easily articulated into an accessible manual. In the words of Borgdorf: “The a priori of the body assumes the place of the a priori of intellectual knowledge, making the pre-reflective bodily intimacy with the world around us into the foundation of our thinking and acting”.¹¹ In other words, you simply create. The really true images come from the hand and not from the head, to quote Nils Claesson.¹²

Artistic research and data

This “a priori of the body” may make the extraction of the precise collected elements that function as data in the context of artistic research more difficult to narrate, and it might take some practice to arrive at clear image of what “data” might actually be. In many cases, however, I sense that many artistic researchers express aversion against the very expression *research data*. Some consider it an expression of “too scientific terminology”, or they think that arts education in general and artistic research in particular are forced too close to the traditional academies.¹³ Similar thoughts are expressed in the manifest presented by ELIA (European League of Institutes of the Arts), as a response to the new demands of Open Science and the sharing of research data: “The idea of data itself brings with it a particular framework and perspective that doesn’t always apply to artistic research, and in artistic research,

9 M. Bärtås, E. Røed & J. Landgren, *Om öppen vetenskap och forskningsdata* (Konstex, 2022), p. 5.

10 H. Bohlin, “Tyst kunskap: ett mångtydigt begrepp”. In *Vad är praktisk kunskap? Södertörn studies in practical knowledge 1*, eds. J. Bornemark & F. Svenaeus (Huddinge: Södertörn University, 2009), p. 59.

11 H. Borgdorf, *The Conflict of the Faculties. Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia*. (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), p. 169.

12 N. Claesson. *Spökmaskinen. Sju förändringar och förflyttningar. Gestaltungsprocesser i animation och film*, doctoral dissertation (Stockholm: Stockholms Konstnärliga Högskola, 2017), p. 146.

13 See e.g. J. Holm. “...för vetenskap sysslar vi inte med.” *En diskursanalys om forskningsdata och öppen tillgång inom konstnärlig forskning*. Master’s dissertation (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2023), p. 32–33.

we might not even have ‘only data’. Data is always ‘sticky’, or comes with the form of performativity, or is intrinsic to a form of practice.”¹⁴

To answer the question “Does artistic research involve data?” as simply as possible, the answer must be yes, it does. Not all researchers have data, but it is also not the case that there are no data at all within the entire field. It all comes down to the process of collecting done in the research: *What* do you *collect* and *how* do you do it?

In the following, I will disregard information collected from previous publications in a particular field – all the books and articles you read – and also the many important conversations you have when doing research, with colleagues or fellow students in seminars or at coffee tables. Let’s instead consider different situations where a researcher stages a particular situation for the sake of finding material for their research.

Take for example research projects that involve studying how humans describe the feeling of different kinds of cloth on their skin (e.g. textile research), or human reactions in different situations, for example how different light settings affect the perception of a performance (a potential question within performativity studies) or a piece of art (in settings of fine art, or perhaps curatorial research). In such cases the researcher may do interviews or surveys, or might record situations as videos, *collecting* material that may be reworked into an artwork, and that may also form the basis for the analytical, written argument. If so, both the video clips as well as the interview and survey material are examples of research data.

Or consider research that involves different kinds of experiments, whether to do with music, painting or performance. What will the piano sound like *if I do this*? How will the oil paint react *if I do this*? And how will the acrobatic movement change *if I do it like this*? All such studies involve *collecting* knowledge (whether in the form of mere impressions or in the shape of documented, precise facts) that can be used to further develop the sound, the paint and the movement. Any such knowledge could in theory be labelled “data” but when it comes to the concept of *research data*, we prefer to consider only information made manifest in the form of different modes of documentation, whether by annotation or recording. Again, this collecting may not necessarily provide “evidence” for the research results, but what is collected can be seen as jigsaw pieces in the larger context of the artistic creative work.

¹⁴ ELIA. *Towards a Manifesto for Critical Openness in Artistic Research*. SCORE – Version #1. (2024) https://cdn.ymaws.com/elia-artschools.org/resource/resmgr/elia_library/Towards-a-Manifesto_for-Crit.pdf

A major difficulty also lies in determining what of that which has been *collected* might be considered as data that could be made available in a data repository, and a first line to draw is the differentiation between digital and non-digital. When we speak of making research data available, we mean only data that is already digital in form.

The second step is to distinguish *what* of all that is already digital that might be re-used by other researchers, if found in a data repository. If a folk singer experiments with her voice and tries out different expressions,¹⁵ and also records the experiments – is everything data? If a performance artist studies the presence of begging on the street scene by recording human movements in the vicinity of the beggar¹⁶ – is everything data?

On the one hand one can follow Konstex, the Swedish national network of HEIs that are entitled to award qualification in the fine, applied and performing arts. In a report from a Konstex workshop on Open science and artistic research data, it is suggested that it should be up to the artistic researchers themselves to decide what elements of their own work might be identified as research data: “Det måste i så fall identifieras av forskaren själv utifrån dess betydelse för resultatet.”¹⁷ This places a heavy burden on the researchers to first identify data and then also to develop strategies for documentation.¹⁸

On the other hand, one might consider the fact that researchers within traditional, scientific research sometimes make a distinction between “raw data” and “structured data”. Raw data means all the unstructured data collected from tests and surveys, including data from test drives, from corrupted tests, and so on. Structured data is the cleaned-up, sorted, categorised and described data, meaning the data that was deemed relevant for the analysis. In many cases only the structured data that was actually used in the project is considered worth making findable in a data catalogue. The performance artist in the example above may have a large number of movie clips of people walking in streets but may choose to make use of only a small number of them as the basis for what will become the final work of her project. In a similar way, the folk singer may have many hundreds of hours of recorded voice experiments, but only a small set of them features the quality they are after.

15 E.g. S. Rosenberg, *Kurbits-ReBoot. Svensk folksång i ny scenisk gestaltning*, doctoral dissertation (Helsinki/Stockholm: Sibelius-Akademien/Kungliga Musikhögskolan, 2013).

16 E.g. C. Parsberg, *Hur blir du en framgångsrik tiggare i Sverige? En undersökning av tiggandets och givandets bilder 2011 till 2016*, doctoral dissertation (Umeå: Umeå University, 2016).

17 M. Bårtås, E. Røed & J. Landgren. *Om öppen vetenskap och forskningsdata* (Konstex, 2022), p. 6.

18 Holm 2023, p. 44–46.

To put it in different words: not every single small sketch or note you make needs to be categorised as research data meant to be deposited in a data catalogue for the benefit of other researchers, but if you for example make recordings of iterated movements in a performance, there will definitely be something there that will bring you closer to your final work, and those elements are precisely what we speak of when we mention “data” – if only in the shape of a warning example: “This is NOT how to do it”.

Conclusion

As a final comment, I would also like to nuance the rhetoric concerning the requirement to make research data available.

For starters, research projects without research data are far from an anomaly and exist in many different kinds of research areas. Also, research data must never be seen as the ultimate mark of research quality – that a researcher does not work with research data should never be used as a criticism of the research itself. This must be communicated in a very direct way: Not all research involves research data, but the research that does must to adapt its data management in accordance with existing regulations.

Secondly, the current regulations first emanated from research within which replication and verification studies are deemed important. These fields of research are also more likely to render results that may further technological and economic development. This prospect may well feel alien to an artistic researcher, and it may seem more natural to instead consider one's own research and ask: In what way can the work that I have done be of aid to another researcher asking similar or other questions about the world and/or the creative process? What of my material could be reused by someone else? It may also be worthwhile thinking of possibilities outside of one's own kind of research. For example, the above-mentioned recordings made by a folk singer and a performance artist could be re-used by someone who explores hand and body movements in different contexts, whether by a pantomime performance artist, a linguist analysing hand gestures as a mode of communication, or a medical researcher studying human anatomy. But for that kind of re-use to take place, for the pantomime artist, the anatomist, or the linguist to realise that there are interesting data that could be reused, the data must first be shared in a trusted data repository and made accessible for other researchers to find and re-use. This is what data management advisors do, we help researchers bring the data out into the world, in a curated and trusted way.

Research data may very well be re-used in projects that are entirely different from those where they were initially generated, and this is the very point of making data available – data can come to strengthen research over a very wide scope, irrespective of where they were initially collected or generated or composed, and in all such re-use it is extremely useful to get access to as much data as possible, not only to the selection made accessible within and through the artwork or the accompanying text.

Research data, although a buzzword and on the tip of many people's tongues, remains foreign and new to some. It is not only researchers within the field of artistic research that find it difficult to define and categorise the different elements of one's own research as "data".

What is needed is a continual dialogue where researchers are invited to share their thoughts and to actively help shape the instruments and tools developed, and the manuals written, to help them manage data within their projects. Ventures such as the Creative Data Lab is an excellent way forward, and I hope to see many more such enterprises in the near future.

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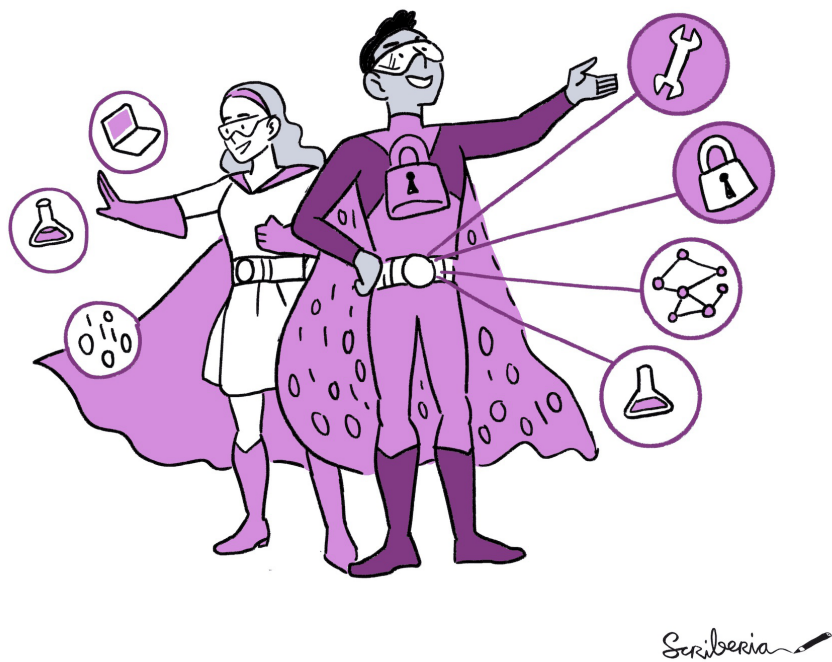


Figure 1. The Turing Way Community. This illustration was created by Scriberia with The Turing Way community, used under a CC-BY 4.0 licence. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5706310>

Stewarding artistic research data: Mediating practices, policies, and processes

By Madeleine Bergquist

As a librarian and data steward positioned within the evolving research landscape, I am increasingly struck by how current technological, political and regulatory shifts shape the conditions under which research is conducted. At a time when the development of artificial intelligence is causing concern about the integrity of research as well as of art, provenance and transparency have gone from being ideals to becoming necessary foundations for credibility. At the same time, geopolitical tensions around the world make the vision of a completely open research landscape difficult to realise. Add to this the policies of research funders and universities, which are increasingly requiring conscious data management, alongside a publishing landscape that profits from the concept of openness in research. There is also a multitude of national laws¹ and requirements that affect you as a government-employed researcher in Sweden and elsewhere. It is not surprising that some feel that it takes a full-time job just to understand the ecosystem in which research now operates. When will researchers have time to... do research?

Data Stewardship – a new role in research support at Lund university

The idea of data stewardship becomes relevant in this context. Issues of open research and support for data management have previously been handled by research support librarians at the University Libraries, but with EU directives and national requirements around data management a new administrative position has emerged. In many places where this new role is being establis-

1 For example: Data Protection Regulation, Freedom of the Press Act, Copyright Act, Ethical Review Act, Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act, Archives Act, Open Data Act, etc.

hed, it is regarded as essential for realising the vision of open research.² The Netherlands has had a network for practising data stewards for almost ten years³ and at the European level, a minimum skills profile for the profession has been developed via the European Science Cloud (EOSC) stating that a data steward should work with stakeholders to collect, quality-assure and make research data usable, support its transformation into research outputs, and guide decisions on openness in line with ethical, legal and social requirements.⁴ Despite the growing recognition of the importance of this role at both national and international levels, the practical implementation of data stewardship varies considerably across institutions and contexts. This variation highlights the complexity of the role and the challenges faced by those working within it. In the article “In the data steward’s shoes: An autoethnographic exploration of everyday challenges”, the authors describe their role, based on four case studies, as operating in a “buffer zone”, where they mediate between top-down rules – such as the FAIR principles, national policies for data sharing, and legal restrictions – and the concerns of researchers who prioritise knowledge production, academic freedom, and project-specific needs.⁵

A new unit has been established at Lund University, the Research Data Office, which funds a data steward for each faculty to at least 50%. In the summer of 2024, I was appointed data steward for the Faculty of Arts, and the idea is that my responsibility is to be the mediating link between the unit and the research environment at our faculty, as described above. In addition, it is our task to make the Research Data Office aware of the needs of researchers and to convey essential information from the unit to the faculty. At the same time, we data stewards act as a bridge to other units that researchers need to engage with during a project, such as IT services, university ethics advisors, the data protection officer, the legal department, and so on.

I personally also see the role as a kind of “translator” and “guide” between practice and guidelines, and as a coordinating hub regarding data manage-

2 M. Jetten, M. Grootveld, A. Mordant, M. Jansen, M. Bloemers, M. Miedema & C. W. G. van Gelder, *Professionalising Data Stewardship in the Netherlands: Competences, Training and Education. Dutch Roadmap Towards National Implementation of FAIR Data Stewardship*, (Zenodo, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4623713>

3 Thematic Digital Competence Centres, *Data Stewards Interest Group* (n.d.), <https://tdcc.nl/dsig/> (Accessed 9 March 2026).

4 K. K. Hansen, A. White, L. Horton, B. Koteska, P. Rauste & N. van Leersum, *Data Steward: Minimum Viable Skills Profile* (Zenodo, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16760455>

5 A. Marmier, S. Stepanovic & T. Mettler, “In the Data Steward’s Shoes: An Autoethnographic Exploration of Everyday Challenges”, *IASSIST Quarterly*, 49:4 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.29173/iq1172>

ment support, where personal contact with researchers is perhaps the most important thing. It has been very valuable for me that, after two decades of working as a librarian at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, I have a reasonable understanding of both artistic research and its institutional context. The relatively small structure of the faculty has also facilitated the work required in connection with this form of interpretation. I would argue that it has been an extra layer of “translation” for me – between scientific and artistic practice. Because how do you proceed when there are no established metadata standards, no subject repositories for data sharing, and very little knowledge in general about, for example, data management plans, storage, how to handle personal data, and archiving? And above all, how can you support researchers working in fields that are grounded in knowledge traditions beyond the scientific?

This does not differ significantly from working as a librarian; however, we have always had an interpretive role.

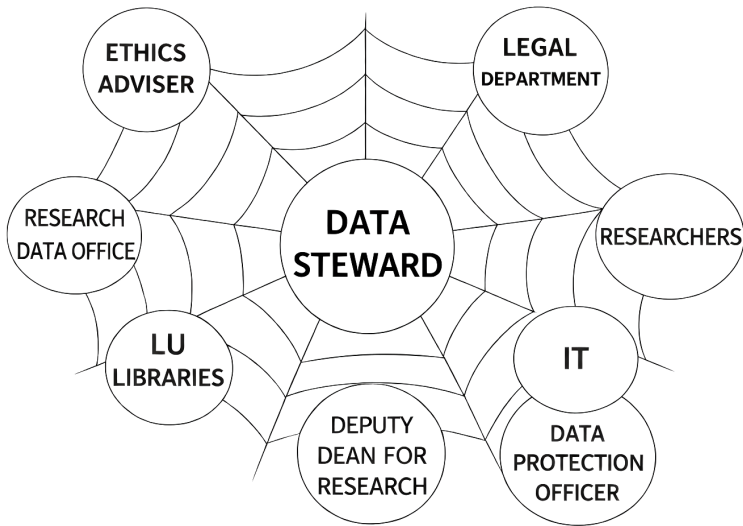


Figure 2. Organisational overview of the data steward function. Illustration generated with the assistance of the AI tool ChatGPT Edu (OpenAI), 2026.

Some thoughts on research data in artistic research

I had hardly heard the term “data steward” before I took up my position, which was maybe not surprising since the definition of research data has been subject to debate in artistic research and, to date, there is no consistent definition within the field.⁶ In the discourse on research data in artistic research there has been, especially within certain art forms like visual and performing arts, concerns about getting closer to the premises of scientific research. For example, in a report by Konstex⁷ on open science and research data in 2022, the argument is made that systematisation and standardisation are perceived to result in undesirable consequences for the field, including an increase in unnecessary bureaucracy.⁸ In addition, issues of copyright, co-creation, and sensitive content are often raised as obstacles to data sharing in artistic research. At the same time, there is an awareness that we do not operate in a vacuum, and both Konstex and the Swedish Research Council⁹ are calling for clarification and adapted infrastructures to meet existing requirements.

In trying to make sense of this tension and how “research data” can be understood in artistic research, I have found philosopher of science Sabina Leonelli’s relational understanding of data particularly helpful. She argues that research data should be understood as relational, meaning that it has no neutral fixed value, and should not be seen only as facts for evidence. Instead, data gains significance only in the context of a specific research question. With this view, the definition of research data comes from the interaction between the researcher, the process, and the material. What constitutes data in one project may be something completely different in another.¹⁰ Material that functions as documentation in one context may function as analytical basis, research results, or a starting point for new artistic production in another. Given the variety of methods in artistic research, I believe this is why it is so difficult, if not impossible, to reach agreement on one clear definition. At the same time, however, this approach means that artistic research does not need to adapt to scientific ideals to appear legitimate, but can develop its

6 Cf. J. Holm, “...för vetenskap sysslar vi inte med. En diskursanalys om forskningsdata och öppen tillgång inom konstnärlig forskning” (Master’s thesis, Uppsala University 2023), <https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-512276>

7 Konstex is a national network for higher education institutions in the arts.

8 M. Bårtås, E. Røed & J. Landgren, *Om öppen vetenskap och forskningsdata* (Konstex, 2022).

9 Swedish Research Council, *Research Review 2023: Artistic Research* (Swedish Research Council, 2023), <https://www.vr.se/english/analysis/reports/our-reports/2023-01-26-research-review-2023-artistic-research.html> (Accessed 9 March 2026).

10 S. Leonelli, What Counts as Scientific Data? A Relational Framework, *Philosophy of Science*, 82:5 (2015), p. 810–821, <https://doi.org/10.1086/684083>

own ways of understanding, using, and creating data. Instead of imposing a notion of research data as something objectively verifiable, researchers therefore need to define for themselves what material is informative in relation to the project and the method.



Figure 3. The Turing Way Community. This illustration was created by Scriberia with The Turing Way community, used under a CC-BY 4.0 licence <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5706310>

Navigating openness in artistic research

A common misconception is that FAIR data is equivalent to open data. This is a recurring theme in the documents I have read, which assume that artistic research data, in general, cannot be shared in accordance with the FAIR principles.¹¹ In this context, it is important to remember that the FAIR principles are guidelines, not strict requirements that must be fulfilled in every single case. Technically, it is possible to publish sufficient FAIR metadata in a repository to describe a set of information data without publishing sensitive material and that is fully accessible online. Other disciplines do this all the time. However, it is not certain that all research material *should* be shared simply because it *can* be shared technically and legally, and this is where the ethical aspect that is missing in FAIR, but included in the CARE principles,¹² becomes so important. While the FAIR principles focus on how data can be made technically reusable, the CARE principles emphasise ensuring that data are used in an ethical and equitable manner. These two sets of principles should be understood as mutually reinforcing and complementary.

If data first acquire meaning in a context and are then transferred between actors, the ethical and legal issues surrounding the material also change. Open data that are harmless in one situation may, when combined with other data, create risks or undesirable situations that the researcher who published or shared the dataset may not have considered. This is relevant in artistic research, where information from artistic processes can easily be misunderstood if taken out of context. In this setting, a data steward can provide support for researchers in addressing ethical considerations related to data management and sharing. This may include contributing to the preparation of ethics review applications, clarifying data management and governance practices, identifying potential risks associated with data use and re-use, and ensuring that ethical, legal, and regulatory requirements are considered early in the research process.

Sabina Leonelli argues that openness is not merely about improving technical capacities for sharing resources, but about sustaining meaningful research relationships and fostering connections without reinforcing epistemic injustices. She calls for an open research movement that embraces diverse perspectives and contends that social and ethical practices are more

¹¹ Cf. Bårtås, Røed & Landgren, *Om öppen vetenskap och forskningsdata*.

¹² Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics. Cf. Research Data Alliance. International Indigenous Data Sovereignty Interest Group, *CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance* (Global Indigenous Data Alliance, 2019), <https://www.gida-global.org> (Accessed 9 March 2026).

crucial than technical standards for achieving genuinely shared knowledge production. A purely technical view of openness, she warns, can undermine equitable access and epistemic diversity by excluding researchers who lack the resources to meet technical requirements; therefore, openness must be grounded in social and ethical commitments to support, rather than marginalise, diverse research communities.¹³ In this sense, her statements can be read as articulating a sociotechnical perspective on openness.

I find this particularly applicable to artistic research, where collaboration and joint processes are key elements, and where the work is often difficult to fit into conventional scientific frameworks and standardised models. However, technical tools that support searchability and findability are essential for new relationships to emerge, and this could generally be improved to reach beyond the immediate community, including within the field itself.

Reflections on becoming a data steward in the arts

So how does one work in practice as a data steward at an arts faculty? Well, perhaps this is precisely what makes my new position so fascinating, that it is in flux, that the role is not “finished”, not fixed, not yet standardised. This is currently emerging in an ongoing dialogue and mutual learning between myself, researchers, infrastructures, and stakeholders, and I imagine that this may be the case everywhere. We have only just begun. At the national level, symposiums have started discussing these issues in the context of artistic research, and within our national network for research support librarians in the arts, we also share experiences on supporting data management. The other day I had a meeting with two data stewards that support artistic research in the Netherlands, and we agreed that there is a need for an international network for us who support data management in the arts. However, the discussion is, so far, very general and I feel a bit lonely sometimes in daily practice.

Despite this, I believe I have had both a more difficult and an easier time than other data stewards at Lund University. For example, the fact that there is no strong tradition of data management in the field of artistic research allows flexibility for customised ways of working with the issue, where it is a matter of thinking together with the researchers. How can we address this within existing conditions, without compromising the unique nature of artistic research?

13 S. Leonelli, *Philosophy of Open Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), p. 52–65.

And if that is not possible, how can we “translate” practices or even create new tools?

Marmier et al. (2025) argue that a data steward should work closely with institutional decision-makers to promote more flexible, context-sensitive frameworks for data management to avoid ending up in a grey standardised area between top-down and bottom-up perspectives.¹⁴ And something that has really been valuable for me is having close access to our research dean and having the right to attend, speak, and make proposals in the Research and Research Education Committee at the faculty. The fact that we immediately engaged in a major project in the form of developing a subject-specific repository and tool for data management, Art Files, where I work together with active researchers and other support staff to tackle challenges, has been essential. Both for our collective learning and for how the form of my role is emerging and finding its place in the faculty. The same applies to our Advanced Study Group at Pufendorf, Creative Data Lab, where I listened to how artistic researchers think about data management, but also tried to provoke questions from my perspective and that of the Research Data Office, to drive the discussions forward. I have also followed a couple of projects at the faculty where I met with researchers at different stages of the process to talk about the phases of data management to understand what needs arise where.

From my point of view, growing support for data management is certainly needed at our faculty. This may take the form of check lists, examples, and subject-specific manuals, but I really think that personal guidance is particularly valuable in our research environment right now. This could be in the form of discussions about artistic control and ethical considerations related to openness and publishing, as well as broader conversations about how to conceptualise data in a certain project or straightforward guidance on metadata documentation or advice on a data management plan. During recent years, I have received extensive training from the Research Data Office, which has significantly strengthened my competence in research data support. But I am still very much in the learning process myself.

I have also spent a lot of time adapting existing templates and support materials, such as the Lund University README template and guidelines on how to present GDPR information to research participants, to better suit the research conducted here. Together with the University Archive, I am also currently adapting the Lund University disposal plan for research documents for the faculty, which in turn raises new questions about selection and power in

¹⁴ Marmier, Stepanovic & Mettler, *In the Data Steward's Shoes*, p. 13.

archival practice, a discussion that requires its own text. None of these tools should be seen as static, but rather as test documents that are intended to be revised in response to evolving knowledge, needs and practices.



Figure 4: The Turing Way Community. This illustration was created by Scriberia with The Turing Way community, used under a CC-BY 4.0 licence. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3332807>

Conclusion

Finally, I would like to emphasise once again that provenance and transparency in good research practice are more important than ever. At the same time, the field of artistic research needs to develop its own practices, articulate its needs, and take ownership of the issue rather than treating data management as irrelevant to the discipline. Otherwise, there certainly is a risk that it will be pushed into the already established norms of data-intensive fields. In this context a data steward can facilitate dialogue, highlight best practices, and help ensure that digital objects – whether they are regarded as data – are intelligible, ethically handled, and preserved over time. I believe the aim, both in my own role and with the Art Files project, is to make it as easy as possible for researchers to comply with laws and policies and reduce the administrative burden. But I also hope to support researchers in making data management an integral part of the research process, in ways that are meaningful to them, their practice and the discipline in general. I am confident that the work of data management within our faculty can contribute to strengthening the quality, transparency, and long-term sustainability of the research conducted here and hopefully contribute to supporting artistic research in positioning itself as an ethical, strong and credible field.

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A field of possibility: Artistic research data in context

By Karin Johansson

My starting point for this text is that artistic research management (ARDM), as in making artistic research data accessible and assessable, involves more than accounting for the research process and adhering to formal demands; it's an important part of a pro-active development of the field of artistic research.

Artistic research: A shared field?

I have followed and taken part in the discussions around artistic research as a discipline for some decades now and will start out by briefly revisiting the National Artistic Research School (Nationella Konstnärliga Forskarskolan – NKF). The research school was in operation in Sweden 2010–2015 with around 20 PhD candidates and a continuous seminar for all active supervisors. I was one of the participants in this seminar and one of the editors of the resulting anthology *Acts of Creation*.¹ Åsa Lindberg-Sand and Anders Sonesson, with many years' experience of educating supervisors in all LU faculties, headed the development of the NKF supervisors' seminar during five years. In the concluding chapter of the anthology they stated that their impression of what was being created was not a common, shared field of artistic research. Rather, they saw the development of many different fields and referred to the image of an archipelago where “the research projects could be perceived as small, well-defined islands in a vast sea of artistic practice”, and where “each PhD candidate inhabits their own island”.² In my experience, this archipelago-like nature of the artistic research field was demonstrated

1 H. Frisk, K. Johansson & Å. Lindberg-Sand., *Acts of Creation: Thoughts on Artistic Research Supervision*. (Ågerup: Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 2015)

2 Frisk, Johansson & Lindberg-Sand 2015, p. 196.

many times during the NKE, where discussions often illustrated, and even seemed to widen, disagreements between the art forms concerning method, theory development, and other research-related issues. In my view, these differences are not necessarily a problem – they might be seen as illustrating the complexity and richness of a new kind of interaction in artistic knowledge production. A perhaps more difficult feature concerns the issue of how individual projects often do not interact outside of their own contexts. Lindberg-Sand and Sonesson also observed a one-to-one relationship between the artistic practice and the artistic research outcome, which they therefore described as “singular”, in the following sense:

For the artist as a researcher, exploring and crowning their professional practice with conducting research, the outcomes do not have to pass a judgment neither of the quality of research nor of how they could be transformed into and benefit the collective development of professional practice in the next stage. Instead the outcomes may be immediately applied in the local context of the artist and, as works of art or of research, judged primarily by the influential participants in the social practice of this kind of art.³

This singularity has been a topic for debate from the start of artistic research. One of its effects is that individual artistic research projects contribute only very moderately to the building of a common research culture – that is, if there is one. While the emergence of journals such as *JAR (Journal of Artistic Research)* and *VIS (Nordic Journal of Artistic Research)* have created fora for the sharing of knowledge, the notion of a unified field of artistic research might still only be a construction. As such, it served the beneficial but slightly top-down purpose of creating a formal doctoral degree in the arts (2010), but perhaps this “field” is developing more towards the archipelago observed by Lindberg-Sand and Sonesson than towards becoming one entity. The remark made by Frisk in 2018 does not yet seem out of date:

Due to the novelty of the field of artistic research there is no solid agreement as to what artistic research data actually consists of, let alone how it should be documented, and it remains a very important but largely unresolved question.⁴

3 Frisk, Johansson & Lindberg-Sand 2015, p. 202.

4 H. Frisk, “The archive that writes itself: Tracing the roots of solipsistic sound culture in the digital age”, *Svensk Tidskrift för Musikforskning Swedish Journal of Music Research*. 99 (2018), p. 37.
<https://doi.org/10.58698/stm-sjm.v99.33625>

Considering the singular character of individual artistic research projects described above and the novelty of the field as stated by Frisk, a relevant question concerns how a common, shared field of knowledge may be developed. If we stick to the archipelago metaphor, I suggest that the inhabitants of different islands do not need to agree on everything, but they need to relate to each other, that is, to communicate between islands and to highlight each other's existence. This means referencing others who are active in the same discipline in one's research outputs.

My impression is that this practice of referencing is underdeveloped in artistic research. Traditional research disciplines are probably built more on referencing each other's research than by agreements on definitions. Here, ARDM presents an opportunity both to highlight the unique and singular character of artistic research projects and to open up for common knowledge development.

ARDM: an asset in field development?

Since a discussion of what research data "is" must be anchored in and exemplified by actual research projects, and since common or established guidelines are lacking, situated decisions concerning data have to be made in every specific project. This necessary situatedness of ARDM may be seen as reflecting a complexity and a richness rather than a deficiency, and the collected knowledge will grow and expand when researchers engage with each other's results. That is, if, and when, artistic researchers apply a proactive mindset and take the initiative concerning research data, outputs and products.

In their study of how the academic discipline of social work was established and developed in Sweden from the 1970s onwards, Peter Dellgran and Staffan Höjer⁵ describe how the discipline was initially largely characterised by knowledge import, theoretical pluralism and paradigmatic openness. They also picture how, from a meta perspective, research products may be theorised as simultaneously mirrors of and tools for individual and discipline development: *coronation works*, *socialisation instruments* and *paradigmatic reflectors*. This may be transferred to a discussion of the role research data management plays in the development of artistic research as a discipline. In the same way as when it concerns research products, the discussion and handling of research data mirrors past and present states of knowledge bases, power

5 P. Dellgran & S. Höjer. *Kunskapsbildning, akademisering och professionalisering i socialt arbete*. (Gothenburg: Gothenburg University, 2000)

structures and aesthetics, and provides tools for personal, educational and institutional development.

Here, a dialogue between librarians' and archivists' extensive experience of data terminology and the practices of individual researchers related to the conceptualisation, treatment and sharing of data may interrelate individual and collective levels. This kind of dialogue has been an important part of the Creative Data Lab and continues both locally and nationally, with, for example, the Art Files platform at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, Lund University, and the network meetings of the Swedish National Data Service. The importance of common contexts and infrastructure cannot be enough emphasised, when the aim is to support and encourage collective knowledge formation processes where artistic researchers have the opportunity both to gain from and contribute to field development.

I will give a brief example from my own research practice of what was not such a case: Ten years ago, I conducted the project *Musical rhetoric in contemporary rituals: discourses in and on new music for the organ*⁶ where I commissioned compositions for the organ (I'm an organist) from four composers. Organists' performance practice still contains two distinct relationships to notated works of which the first one is historically the youngest:

- the score as the composer's individual piece of artwork, to be interpreted and realised, and
- the score as a starting point for copying and further development by the performer, and as a tool for promoting improvisatory skills.

The task given to the composers in this project was intentionally somewhat vague; I wanted to see how they interpreted the request to deliver a piece with (i) a relationship to historical repertoire, and (ii) any degree of collaboration with the performer (me). The four compositions as well as the rehearsal processes turned out to differ in interesting ways, and to display a spectrum of views on composition, performance, notation and interpretation. All parts of the project (my individual work and the performer-composer interaction) were documented and the compositions were finally performed at a live concert.

6 K. Johansson, "Musical rhetoric in contemporary rituals: Discourses in and on new music for the organ". *Proceedings of Det tredje örat*. (Lund: Inter Arts Center, Lund University, 2017)

In total, the project generated the following types of documented outputs, listed in the approximate order of when they appeared in time:

- Sketches of artworks
- Recordings of individual rehearsal sessions
- Recordings of interactive sessions
- Annotations, general notes and logbooks
- Final versions of artworks
- Concert performance
- Concert recording
- Analytical outcomes

All documentation was stored and analysed in relation to the research questions, but in this project I did not reflect in a structured way on questions like:

How can the integrity of the research data be preserved in an artistic research project that may contain a number of different kinds of data, as well as raw material from the artistic process?⁷

I did also not discuss the issue of research outcomes as data, while several interesting questions concerning data duality, definitions and treatment would have been on my agenda today. This data was stored on my computer, on my private hard drives and in desk drawers where no one else had access to them. While the articulation and conclusions of the project were presented and discussed, I missed the opportunity of categorising and sharing them as data – and of inviting others to participate in them as such. Today, I would more easily have had access to tools and support for taking such actions and for conducting discussions on meta levels.

Even though the attitude towards the term “data” continues to be ambivalent in the field of artistic research (see for example the Konstex report⁸), the general topic of ARDM is more on the table nowadays. So, if “data” might still be a difficult concept, and if overall agreement on definitions of concepts such as method, theory and data is still a utopia, my strong impression is that discussions are always productive and beneficial to the field.

⁷ Frisk 2018, p. 38.

⁸ Konstex Arbetsgrupp. “Om öppen vetenskap och forskningsdata: Rapport”. (Lund: Lund University, 2022)

ARDM: an open field

In conclusion, my main reflections from the work done in the Creative Data Lab concern the importance of (i) referencing inside the field and connecting to relevant artistic research projects that discuss ARDM, (ii) cooperating with librarians, archivists and data stewards by presenting cases of ARDM, and (iii) applying a proactive attitude towards ARDM.

Building practices around ARDM for purposes of co-operation, evaluation and creative inspiration also means continuing to build the discipline of artistic research as an open and interactive field – an archipelago with a well-developed transportation system.

With reference to Umberto Eco⁹, the image of the open work as a field of possibilities has been used both by Frisk and Östersjö¹⁰ and by Nilsson¹¹ in connection with musical performance and data treatment. On the topic of the relationship between a particular piece of work and its individual performances, Nilsson writes:

A performance of an open work is compatible with playing a game, and one single performance actualizes the game, but is only one singular outcome of all possible outcomes of that particular game.¹²

I would like to conclude by comparing this to the relationship between general ARDM and individual artistic research projects. In the field, or archipelago, of artistic research where common definitions are hard to establish, each individual project constitutes one example, or one implementation, of ARDM as an open work – but not its totality. Questions and problems concerning data are treated in different ways in different projects, and, over time, the collective knowledge concerning artistic research data and its management will become increasingly rich, in an open field of possibility.

9 U. Eco, *La struttura assente* (Milan: Bompiani, 1968)

10 H. Frisk & S. Östersjö, "Negotiating the musical work: An empirical study", *ICMA, Proceedings of the International computer music conference 2006* (San Francisco CA: Computer Music Association, 2006), p. 242–249.

11 P.-A. Nilsson, *A Field of Possibilities: Designing and Playing Digital Musical Instruments*, doctoral dissertation (Gothenburg University, 2011) <https://gupea.ub.gu.se/items/5d5af699-dbc7-48c0-bd4e-5c9bc87e9240>

12 Nilsson 2011, p. 108.

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Distinguishing data and art in artistic research

By Gunnar Krantz

In my research I have used the lithography printing technique to better understand how comics were developed in the mid 19th century by Swiss artist, writer and schoolmaster Rodolphe Töpffer (1799-1846). He not only created and published what today is considered to be the first comics in the modern sense but also reflected on and published two essays about his findings.¹ An advancement in lithography called *autography* (i. e. transfer lithography) was crucial to Töpffer's publications. I had identified a lacuna of knowledge of this technique in contemporary comics research, which I hoped to fill by conducting an artistic research project called "Autographic double exposure – the narrative characteristics of the inked black line", funded by the Swedish Research Council. What interested me was the practices of drawing and writing in relation to autography with a focus on the aesthetic embedded in the technique – the thin clear lines, the combination of image and text created with the same tool, and the relatively fast workflow from drawing to printed result, compared with other printing techniques at the time.

During my research, I gathered materials of various kinds: collected, copied, downloaded, photographed, bought and borrowed. I also produced materials of my own: notes in notebooks or on pieces of paper, Word documents and pdfs, as well as photographs, drawings, prints and physical artefacts. This material contributed to the results of the project, which I have presented at scientific conferences, in scientific articles and articles in trade magazines, in public presentations, lectures and exhibitions. The material is stored in folders, binders and boxes, on hard drives and cloud services. Some of it is at my office at Malmö University, another part in my studio, and some at the facilities of our comics research platform – Malmö University Comics

1 D. Kunzle, *Father of the Comic Strip: Rodolphe Töpffer*, (Oxford MS: University of Mississippi, 2007).

Hub/MUCH. Most of it is documentation, consisting of copies, pdfs or printouts of articles from books, journals and other sources. Some of it comes from communication and interaction with practitioners and scholars. Some could be labelled art, and some might be categorised as *research data*. The last category differs from the others, since it is the only one that I am legally obliged to archive and publish. And this is where the problems begin. What of the material in this cluster of things is data, and how does this label affect the material in relation to storage, ownership and possible artistic value?

According to *Guidelines for research data management*, research data at Malmö University shall be “handled in accordance with good research practice, relevant legislation and the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity”,² a statement that presents some interesting problems in relation to the production of artistic research. Research data are generally not protected under intellectual property law and thus cannot be owned, but the medium that carries the data (paper, servers etc.) is in this case owned by Malmö University. Research data are official documents and should therefore be stored and be possible to request by others. Research data are generally not covered by the *teachers’ exemption*, but the result of the research is. Research data must also be retained for at least ten years, before they can be destroyed.³

What is data?

Defining data within the context of artistic research is difficult, since most of the time this is being taken as settled and seldom problematised. But a closer look at the literature suggests a wide variety of perspectives, ranging from the position that everything is data and that data surround us like water surrounds fish to a reluctance to even use the word. Brinkmann criticises the former attitude by commenting that “if everything is data, then nothing is data”⁴. Becker describes data (in the social sciences) as observable physical objects: traces or marks made by humans or machines, which are recorded and preserved as part of the process of gathering evidence in order to understand something.⁵ Blaikie states that in the social sciences, data “are simply regarded as something we collect and analyse in order to arrive at research

2 Malmö University, *Guidelines for research data management at Malmö University* (Malmö: Malmö University, 2024) <https://mau.app.box.com/s/dx2ot18iuy6dlv83abjihpngtlhdq91w>. (Accessed 2026-01-29).

3 Ibid.

4 S. Brinkman, “Doing Without Data”, *Qualitative Inquiry*. 20:6 (2014), p. 720–725. DOI: 10.1177/1077800414530254.

5 H. S. Becker, *Evidence*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

conclusions”⁶ and that they are often equated with empirical evidence produced by “the products of systematic ‘observations’ made through the use of the human senses”.⁷ Blaikie argues that how data “are viewed depends on the ontological assumptions about the social phenomenon being investigated”.⁸ Data distances the researcher from the phenomenon being researched on three levels: *primary*, *secondary* and *tertiary*. Primary data are generated by the researcher in charge of how a study is designed and conducted and are new in the sense that they are produced to answer specific research questions. Secondary data are raw data, collected by someone else, either for general information purposes or for research projects. Finally, tertiary data are the result of an analysis of primary and/or secondary data.⁹

Within the social sciences, data are either quantitative or qualitative, or as Blaikie says “numbers or words”.¹⁰ Brinkmann refers to three general forms of qualitative analysis: *induction*, *deduction* and *abduction*. Induction is based on the idea that the collection of data in itself “leads to theory”.¹¹ In deduction, “theory determines data in the sense that hypotheses are articulated on the background of data”.¹² This is then used within different theoretical frameworks. After having problematised the first two, Brinkmann introduces the notion of abductive data, as something produced by a tool-user, a bricoleur, or craftsperson. Abduction is neither driven by data or theory, Brinkmann states, but by *breakdowns*.¹³ Alvesson and Kärreman discuss the concept of breakdowns as a form of reasoning that can be used in uncertain situations where the researcher needs to understand what is happening. “It is the unanticipated and the unexpected – the things that puzzle researchers – that are of particular interest in such encounters.”¹⁴

These definitions of data and different methods for their use, as explained in the literature on research methods, are today accepted as common practice both within contemporary art and artistic research (c.f. Brinkmann’s tool-user, bricoleur, craftsperson). So how then make a clear distinction between research and art practices in relation to research data?

6 N. W. H. Blaikie, *Analyzing quantitative data from description to explanation*, (London: Sage, 2003) p. 15.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., p. 20.

9 Ibid., p. 18–19.

10 Ibid., p. 20.

11 Brinkman 2014, p. 721.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid., p. 722.

14 M. Alvesson & D. Kärreman, *Qualitative research and theory development mystery as method*, (Los Angeles: Sage, 2011), p. 15.

The definition of art

Since much of my research has been conducted by artistic practice, and the result of this (i.e. drawings and original prints) can be exhibited at art galleries or art institutions, the notion of depositing them in an archive is not that appealing. As research data they would be freely accessible to anyone, thus contradicting the current norms of artistic practice, where selection, limited output, uniqueness and consecration (in the Bourdieusian sense) are tools for increasing cultural capital and hence pecuniary value. To consider one's art as research data and store it in an archive, creates a conflict, both with the doxa of the field and (perhaps) with one's own personal artistic values. Then again, artistic research implies something other than artistic practice. Research is not about creating new art; it is about creating new knowledge. The result should therefore relate to the research questions formulated within the project. Being an artist who has accepted the position of researcher might therefore result in a division that creates friction on both personal and professional levels. But even full immersion in the research practices of academia does not rule out that data could also be considered as art. The *institutional theory of art*, as formulated by George Dickie, states: "A work of art is an artifact of a kind created to be presented to an artworld public."¹⁵ All research data can thus be transformed into art, given the right context and circumstances.

Experiments with autography

In my project I tried to find out how Rodolphe Töpffer created drawings, which were possible to reproduce by the lithographic printing technique called autography. To be able to use the same materials – in this case, specially prepared paper and ink – as described by Töpffer in his reflections of the practice¹⁶ I had to manufacture them myself. This was done by using manuals and recipes found in the books by the inventor of lithography, Alois Senefelder¹⁷ and one of its early adopters, George Hullmandel¹⁸ as well as

15 G. Dickie, "The New Institutional Theory of Art", in *Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art: The Analytic Tradition: An Anthology*, eds. P. Lamarque & S. H. Olsen, (Malden MA: Blackwell, 2004), p. 47–53.

16 R. Töpffer, (1842). "Notice sur les Essais d'autographie, Courriere de Genève 1842-07-02", in *Töpffer: L'invention de la bande dessinée*, eds. T. Groensteen & B. Peeters (Paris: Hermann, 1994), p. 172.

17 A. Senefelder, *Vollständiges Lehrbuch der Steindruckerey enthaltend eine richtige und deutliche Anweisung zu den verschiedenen Manipulations-Arten derselben in allen ihren Zweigen und Manieren, belegt mit den nöthigen Musterblättern, nebst einer vorangehenden ausführlichen Geschichte dieser Kunst von ihrem Entstehen bis auf gegenwärtige Zeit*, (München: Bei Karl Thienemann, 1818).

18 C. Hullmandel, (1820). *The Art of Drawing on Stone: Giving a Full Explanation of the Various Styles, of the Different Methods to be Employed to Ensure Success, and of the Modes of Correcting, as Well as of the Several Causes of Failure*, (London: Longman, 1820).

in a recipe from a manual on lithography from the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm.¹⁹ By using these, I managed to manufacture all the necessary materials and could then test them by creating drawings to produce matrices on lithographic stone. By documenting both the process of manufacture and the use of the material, I gathered more documentation and artefacts. The results (the actual printed proofs) could then be compared with Töpffer's own original editions which created even more notes and photographs.



Figure 1. Collecting data at Bibliothèque National de France, Paris (2024).

To manufacture autographic ink, I used Senefelder's recipe²⁰ consisting of: Shellac, wax, tallow, mastic, soap and lampblack. The ingredients were heated to burning in a kettle on a propane gas stove until the mass was reduced by half. The burning of the ingredients produced a thick black smoke that eventually caught fire, resulting in blazing flames. The remaining residue was then shaped into sticks, similar to wax crayons.

¹⁹ F. A. Frohm, *Kompendium i litografi*, n.d.

²⁰ Senefelder 1818, p. 169.

The research data thus collected consisted of documentation of the process in notes, photographs and videos, the sticks of ink, and some drawings made on paper.



Figure 2. Manufacture of autographic ink. (2024).

To manufacture transfer paper, I used Frohm's recipe²¹, where sheets of paper were coated with an organic glue consisting of water, flour, rice starch and gelatine. When the glue dried, it resulted in a hard and glossy surface that was easy to draw on with a steel nib pen and lithographic ink. When dampened, the glue became mucous and released the ink to the lithographic stone, after pressure was applied. The stone was then prepared into a matrix and proofs were printed.²²

²¹ Frohm n.d.

²² G. Krantz, "Tusch, stålstift & autografi: Om serieestetikens ursprung", *Bild & Bubbla* 45:4 (2025), p. 68–77.



Figure 3. Ingredients for the preparation of transfer paper (2024).

The research data thus collected consisted of my documentation of the process in the form of notes and photographs, sheets of transfer paper, drawings made on the transfer paper with autographic ink, the discarded transfer paper after application to the stone, with only traces of the drawing left, first proofs and some prints.



Figure 4. Lithographic stone with transferred drawing (2024).

Conclusion

In this experiment I manufactured all materials needed to produce autographic prints. I then used them in accordance with documented statements in the literature to create matrices and print proofs, hence using secondary and producing primary data.

The experiment was overall successful, and the outcome of it demonstrated that there exist some important differences between traditional drawing materials (i.e., pen, ink and paper) and drawing materials used for transfer lithography, and that these could possibly explain some of the characteristics of Töpffer's drawings and his narrative style. This result would not have been possible to obtain without the self-fabricated tools and materials and the embodied experience of using them. The primary data that were produced during this experiment consisted of a combination of artefacts, notes, lithographic prints, tools, materials and photographs. When reviewing this, it became evident that it was possible also to identify some of it as works of art, especially the drawings and lithographic prints. As mentioned above, research data cannot be owned, only the medium on which they are created, and then not by the researchers, but by the universities they work for. However, such ownership does not contradict that these data can also be categorised as art. This does not mean that all research data qualify as art – or that all artworks produced during artistic research necessarily are data. But some are arguably suspended, over a period of time, in a state where they can be both.

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Data duality: When artistic and scientific research overlap

By Hedvig Jalhed

In parallel with the discussions within the Creative Data Lab group at the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies and the work on the Art Files repository at Inter Arts Center, I participated in an interdisciplinary research project under the Art Collab initiative at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts at Lund University. Art Collab is a platform that brings together artistic and scientific practices in dialogue and cooperation with societal stakeholders and communities.

Although all my previous artistic research projects have been distinctly data-driven and scientifically informed, this was the first time I formally collaborated closely with scientific researchers and engaged with an industry partner – an institutional opera house. While the project encompassed many dimensions, its core lay in the dynamic interplay between my own artistic interests in interactivity and immersivity, Sara Wilén's artistic and operatic focus on improvisation and stage direction, and Ingar Brinck's perspective based on philosophy and embodied cognition.

From our collaborative process, I trace how art and science created spaces for mutual exchange. My aim here is to demonstrate how the same data could serve as a foundation for knowledge production in both domains simultaneously, and how these two realms can intersect and enrich one another.

Background and scope

The project *First Person Singer: Pilot Study and Prototype* brought together a diverse team of artistic and scientific researchers from Lund University, with a primary focus on opera and cognitive science. The project involved a partnership with Malmö Opera and the topic was connected to previous research

by the individual team members.¹ We had not been working together on a research project before. The research involved data collection across four phases during 2025, resulting in four distinct datasets: two capturing actions and two capturing reflections (see Figure 1).

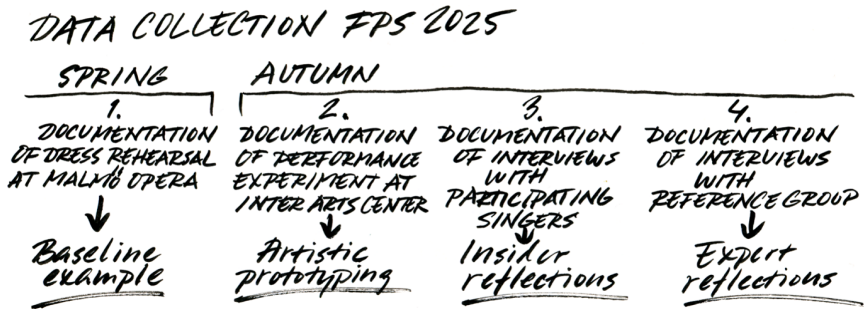


Figure 1. Data collection phases in the First Person Singer project 2025.

The project design was grounded in a practice-led methodology,² beginning with the artistic practitioners’ challenges and a curiosity-driven quest for artistic transformation. Two research questions framed the inquiry:

1. How can new technology contribute to qualitative deepening and enrichment of the opera experience alongside quantitative measurability?
2. How can new technology be used to utilise and develop the roles and creative agencies of opera singers and directors in new opera?

1 I. Brinck, *The Indexical “I”: The First Person in Thought and Language*. (Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media, 1997); H. Jallhed. *An Operatic Game-Changer: The Opera Maker as Game Designer and the Potentials of Ludo-Immersive Opera*, doctoral dissertation (Gothenburg: University of Gothenburg, 2022); S. Wilén. *Singing in Action: An inquiry into the creative working processes and practices of classical and contemporary vocal improvisation*, doctoral dissertation (Lund: Lund University, 2017)

2 L. Candy & E. Edmonds, “Practice-Based Research in the Creative Arts: Foundations and Futures from the Front Line” *Leonardo*, 51:1 (2018), p. 63–69.

The case of the First Person Singer project illustrates how scientific and artistic research both converge and diverge in terms of their affordances and focus. By juxtaposing excerpts from the researchers' notes, the different approaches can be outlined.

The creative concept implemented in the project was rooted in the idea of experimentally establishing the prerequisites for a new operatic format experienced from the singer's first-person perspective. In the future, this format could allow audiences to access first-person viewpoints of individual characters through personalised streaming, potentially incorporating interactive features. By equipping opera singers with body cameras (see Figure 2), audiences can be invited to experience the narrative through the eyes, ears and voices of individual performers.



Figure 2. Opera singer Alexandra Orrgård Solén carrying an action camera in the performance experiment at Inter Arts Center in October 2025.

This approach enables multiple musico-dramatic experiences to be derived from one total work with multiple entry points, where performances can be revisited sequentially from different perspectives, offering new empathic insights and emotional depth over time. At the same time, it introduces new artistic challenges and opportunities of a technical, practical, and/or organisational kind.

Notes from the process

I have drawn on existing notes and later added comments from the research process to gain an overview of what Ingar Brinck, Sara Wilén, and I identified as useful information within the data collection for scientific as well as artistic purposes. We shared our notes on the data after the documentation had been finalised and distributed among us, but our correspondence also includes personal observations made during the on-site data collection and reflections afterwards. These notes formed part of our ongoing joint discussion spanning the entire year. I have kept the excerpts verbatim in order to retain our individual “voices” before commenting in greater depth.

First, the need to verbalise the conceptual idea informing the performance experiment and the specific, artistic function of the action cameras is expressed in this note:

The idea [of First Person Singer] came from the opera binoculars. How can the desire to see the opera spectacle up close and enter the singer's sensory world be reinterpreted through today's technology? The art of opera is the opposite of Aristotle's thesis that characters drive the plot forward – when I experience opera at its best with an ‘effect’ of its own is when a restrained plot highlights the characters as if they end up in a portrait, framed by multimedia. It is that framing that is my tool for ‘catching’ the characters in golden cages and where they can be turned inside out (author's own notes and translation from Swedish)

Ingar Brinck provided comments on the recordings of the artistic experiment, focusing on both the experiential position of the beholder and the singers' embodied interaction with the action cameras worn on their bodies (see Figure 3):

The camera draws me (the viewer) straight into the discussion and by being in the middle of those involved I experience how the ongoing events in the opera emotionally affect the characters present. Here I become a participant through the camera. [...] I experience that the camera gives access to a personal sphere in the closed room where the characters meet as individuals. In these clips, mobility contributes, it reflects the attitudes and perspectives of the participants/characters, and I want to see from all perspectives. (Ingar Brinck's notes, author's translation from Swedish)

Camera recording with [head] lamp [is] an incredibly effective move, in all ways. Without a lamp, the singer's camera perspective works in a certain way for the audience: as a kind of observation from the outside, like looking from a distance without others knowing or noticing that they are being observed. The lamp highlights the character's vision, and as an observer, I end up in the background, and the vision becomes significant, a particularly important kind of action. (Ingar Brinck's notes, author's translation from Swedish)

Although the singers can certainly learn to operate the cameras, it takes some of the attention away from the musical aspect. I don't want a technical presence, but a musical one. [...] Extremely stiff and uncommunicative camerawork during the Falstaff scene. Later the camera becomes an integral part of the communication between the singers/characters instead. Brilliant! The cameras gain more of a musical presence in the performance. (Ingar Brinck's notes, author's translation from Swedish)



Figure 3. Opera singers David Hornwall, Ulrika Skarby, Agnes Wästfelt, Alexandra Orrgård Solén and Samuel Jarrick with head lamps together with pianist Conny Antonov, in the performance experiment at Inter Arts Center in October 2025.

Sara Wilén emphasised how the research process itself, as well as the data, helps us articulate our artistic agency, and creativity:

I think we are approaching what we as different persons expect to be possible or 'succeed' to communicate via the cameras. That in itself is very interesting! It says something about what we as individuals expect from the art form itself today and in the future. For me, it is an ethical artistic perspective, where we make visible our own starting points, mindsets, value matrices and values of what we see [as vocal performers]. (Sara Wilén's notes, author's translation, and her added comments, original English)

For me, the interesting thing is always to communicate intentional bodies on stage or via the cameras (it can be in vocal as well as musical personae) on a stage, up close and from afar. The intentions can lie in different dramatic/choreographic/musical dimensions. This deals with dimensions of place/space and time. [...] The data collection from the FPS project, in video and image captures from the IAC sessions, as well as the stimulated recall sessions with the singers, brings new potential to how artistic performance research can be designed, and analysed. This has sparked a number of new ideas regarding new research and artistic projects. It also shows me what has always [been] my own, overarching artistic research goal. Moreover, the data gives new possibilities to communicate auto-ethnographical perspectives of the partaking performers. (Sara Wilén's notes, author's translation, and her added comments, original English)

From a more theoretical point of view, Ingar Brinck's scientific and philosophical perspective became evident in her comments on the reference group's tendency to take the conventional communal presentation format of opera houses and cinemas for granted and to transpose it onto the screening of the first-person perspective:

It was hard for the group to forget the traditional format of watching the singers at a distance, choosing what to look at on the stage as you wish and what to explore visually, and additionally just letting your eyes wander while you listen to the singers/music: This is the power of the objectifying gaze that was frequently discussed especially in art theory (and generally, in the theories of visual, musical, and performative arts) by the turn of the century. (Ingar Brinck's notes, original English)

Likewise, her theoretical framework from cognitive science is reflected in her comments on the physical and embodied aspects of the concept:

There are two, apparently opposite, forms of physical and bodily closeness at play: the first-person perspective of the singer, and the singers that move and locomote in the vicinity of the singer; both might be experienced stronger in future work with the concept. (Ingar Brinck's notes, original English)

Furthermore, Ingar Brinck commented on the artistic experts' preoccupation with the issue of audience facilitation in relation to streaming in the reference group interviews:

All these worries about how the audience would manage – it makes me wonder, wouldn't the audience swiftly learn how to use a new kind of streaming? People are very good at picking up new technical possibilities and most people are curious and like to explore, at least as long as the atmosphere is playful, there are no No-No's, and they cannot be accused of doing the wrong thing. (Ingar Brinck's notes, original English)

From the artistic perspective, practical constraints in relation to artistic affordances became evident through the experiment:

The challenge of having only one room with one event became apparent. Dramaturgically, the next step must be to work with parallel events in different rooms, preferably connected, to build multi-linearity with 'forking paths' for the characters. Now everyone sees and hears everything all the time, which creates redundancy and does not make enough sense to view from different character perspectives. (author's own notes and translation from Swedish)

Meta-commentaries were also put forward regarding the situation faced by the artistic researcher as an active intervener in the artistic process in real time:

For future sessions, I need to be much clearer about my screen setup preferences during the recording sessions, with three large screens where the feeds of the different cameras are streamed. It is necessary to see what is happening through the lenses in order to be able to provide meaningful directorial input between takes. That could create new creative and artistic interfaces – and dialogues – between authors, directors, conductors, scenographers, technicians, and researchers. (Sara Wilén's notes, author's translation, and her added comments, original English)

My takeaways

Even though the distinction between artistic and scientific research does not mean that artistic researchers are ignorant about science and vice versa, I will for the sake of comparison categorise Ingar Brinck as a philosopher-scientist and Sara Wilén and myself as artistic researchers, in accordance with our professional titles. All conclusions below are my own.

As we can see, the comments were shaped by the researchers' subjective reflections and interests, irrespective of the researcher's scientific/artistic status. Looking at the notes in total, broadening contextualisation and referencing theory and literature was also done by both scientific and artistic researchers in relation to the data collection. While Ingar Brinck, from her scientific point of view, more often adopted the vantage point of the audience or commented on the artistic performance in terms of achieved presence as experienced by the audience, Sara Wilén and I tended to focus on how the data provided keys to conceptualising and verbalising artistic ideation, including the artistic effects of work ethics and subjective experience. Ingar Brinck appeared to think of the next step in terms of deepening theorisation and connecting to established knowledge, whereas Sara Wilén and I focused more on refining technical and practical application and extending conceptual exploration. Sara Wilén also reflected on the research process and on her own position within it, seeking underlying structures in the research design itself, as though viewing it from above and beyond the information in the collected data.

On the one hand, treating art as a category of product (as operas or operatic events) and processes (as making things in an operatic way) fits well with a scientific approach. On the other hand, the *artform* (n.b. not the *artwork*) itself – in this case, opera – can at the same time be treated as an evolving problem that needs to be redefined, explained, confronted, and resolved by artistic and creative means when placed in a new technological or cultural environment.³ Sara Wilén noted how our different relationships to the cameras, which are put into an operatic setting and alter the conditions for operatic performance, may tell something about our expectations of the art form itself. We – the artistic researchers – are in this case extrapolating what we can expect from opera (and from operatic practitioners) when the art form is compelled to integrate streaming technology.

3 Cf. the notion of “field of problematcity”. See P. de Assis, *On Research Questions Objectives* [Video]. (YouTube, 2020). <https://youtu.be/ludtnq1LSG0?si=lke7w09DILJQysNu>

Here, it is the artists' relationship to the artform that is key and the research is about seeking altered conditions and increased complexity for us who try to keep opera "alive and kicking". In this way, we can get to know both new innovations, their cultural implications and consequences, and ourselves.

That is to say that problems underpinning this kind of artistic research are artistic ones for artists, not aesthetic ones for audiences, which of course may exist simultaneously and interconnectedly. This is an important observation: artistic practice is not necessarily the research method, but in some cases rather the crux itself – generating new challenges and demands in an ever-changing world that the artistic researcher must seek to address and respond to, unless the artform is to be sheltered and preserved from external influences. In this line, one can argue that artistic research might add to the "antifragility"⁴ of art forms in that it submits them to minor "trauma" that makes them grow instead of keeping them safe from disturbances.

The overlap and the distinct drivers in this model, as I understand them, can be visualised in a Venn diagram (see Figure 4). Even though the division might seem counterintuitive at first glance and compared to how we usually conceive of artistic research in relation to artistic practice and scientific research, I do not see any actual conflict in combining – and distinguishing – art-as-problem with art-as-product-and-process in this way. While scientists may focus on behaviours and audience perspectives in artistic contexts and in dialogue with artists – a focus that aligns with many artistic practitioners' aim to present artistic products and productions in industrial and societal settings – the idea of artforms as artificial problems, systems to maintain and develop in a volatile situation and sources of challenges that stimulate new artistic probing lies outside the realm of given, unchosen, and forced predicaments of everyday life. For me, as an artistic researcher, this definitely makes sense: *As an artist, opera is something I know how to do with known things; as a researcher, opera is something I don't know how to do with unknown things – yet.* The shift from artist to artistic researcher, which for me is foundational, lies not in making opera as a new product, but as new problems for us to deal with artistically. When we work together with industry partners and scientists, we employ a dual mindset while inviting others to share the problem view of art.

4 N. N. Taleb. *Antifragile: Things that Gain from Disorder*. (London: Penguin Books, 2013)

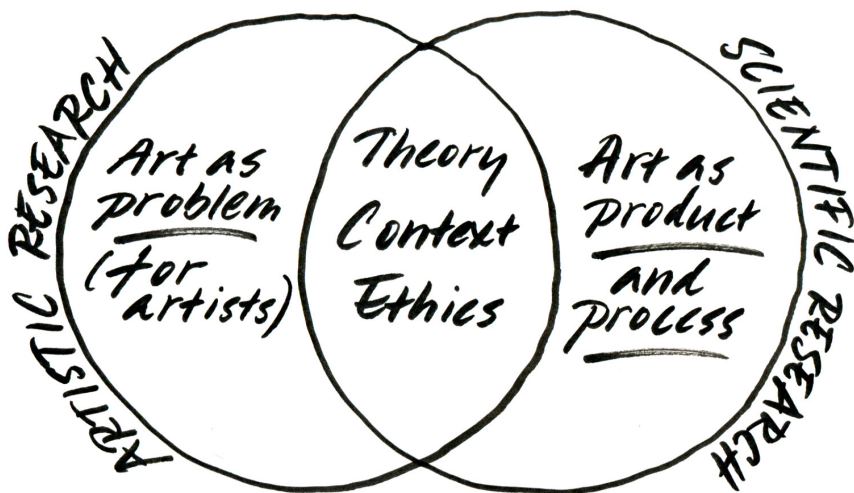


Figure 4. Venn diagram with observed overlap between approaches to art in the collaborative project.

Based on the researchers' notes and my own experience of the research process, I would regard engagement with defined research data as a way of heightening our self-awareness as artists and of pushing our disciplines in new directions through documented action and reflection. With this in mind, it may be more appropriate to speak of art and science as modes or mindsets of approaching shared objects and situations in the world, rather than as rigid disciplinary protocols or representatives of "two cultures"⁵ (Snow, 1961). The First Person Singer project demonstrates how the same data can serve dual purposes and how an interdisciplinary – or perhaps more accurately, inter-modal – research design can accommodate the prerequisites and development of both science and art. The present project was centred on art, and another project could obviously have a more general topic to investigate intermodally and hence place the issue of art as a problem in another light.

The fact that this project combined opera and cognitive science naturally gave rise to a specific constellation of interests that may not be directly transferable to other projects involving other sciences and arts.

5 C. P. Snow. *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961)

However, it may serve as a starting point for comparable insights from other projects and contribute to the broader puzzle of how to produce and interpret research data – and the world we share – together.

Acknowledgements

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Archives of artistic research as potential fields for new research

By Lars Gustaf Andersson

In my research on contemporary experimental filmmakers and video artists I have studied how the artists themselves have used the archive as a creative source.¹ They have not been involved in artistic research in a strict sense but their archival work is analogue to such practices: they have collected data in order to create films and other art works and have used their archives in the creative process.² This has led me to an interest in the new findings which will be possible as results of artistic archival research. The discussions and presentations we have had in the Advanced Study Group *Creative Data Lab* during 2025 have further fuelled my interest in the artistic and scientific processes and how traces of them can be found in the archives. I am myself not engaged in artistic research but am interested in this kind of research as an aesthetic practice. As a scholar within the aesthetic disciplines – principally film studies – I hope to be able to investigate artistic research data under several aspects.

Art as process and work

In traditional aesthetics the scholar tends to study the finished work: the painting, the novel, the film etc. But there is also the possibility of studying the sketch and the process towards the final work.

1 Examples of filmmakers I have researched so far are Carl Slättne and Lena Mattsson. See L. G. Andersson, "In the light of the province: Carl Slättne and his films", *Journal of Scandinavian Cinema*, 2:2, 2 (2012), p. 121–134; L. G. Andersson, "Film och antifilm: anteckningar om Carl Slättne", *OEI*, 69–70 (2015), p. 137–139; L. G. Andersson, et al, *Lena Mattsson: The Window Opens to the World* (Berlin: Kerber Verlag, 2020).

2 The filmmakers or artists in question are not or were not connected to university departments, nor funded by e.g. the Swedish Research Council or with an explicit research intention related to the academic field of artistic research.

In Lund there is a specific tradition of this kind of work, connected to the work of art historian Ragnar Josephson and his creation of the museum of sketches, “Museum of Artistic Process and Public Art”, as well as his seminal publication *The Birth of the Work of Art*.³ When we have access to the archives of artists – both as artists *per se* and as artistic researchers – we can however go beyond the teleology inherent in this tradition and, instead of seeing the process as the way towards a final goal, study the process in itself and its multiple possible directions. The process of artistic research is a field of latency: several ways are possible, several outcomes. The tools of traditional aesthetics and the common ideas of the creative process can thus now be integrated with a study of the process itself, its movements and moments, its scientific and artistic potential.

With access to new archival resources and new research data it is possible for the aesthetic disciplines – in my personal case film studies – to get research results beyond the individual artists or the individual artworks. Hopefully several old questions will now receive new answers.

Art and its aura and consecration

A main problem, when dealing with artistic research as such, is the blurred line between artwork and research material. Much of the discussions around the institutionalisation of artistic research are concentrated upon this issue. When does the art research turn into art? When – to speak with Walter Benjamin – does the “aura” appear?⁴ This question can be understood as a set of sub questions.

Is it for instance possible to trace the consecration of the artwork – or rather the conditions for its consecration – in archival data?⁵ Theoretically we can see the research data as linear developments in time, but of course there will be a lot of irregularities in the material, due to mistakes, obstacles, restarts, new ways of thinking that emerge during the process. Is there a point, during this more or less linear process, where the research turns into artistic work, where, so to speak, art is possible to discern from the research?

3 R. Josephson, *Konstverkets födelse* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1940); Josephson, R. (ed.), *Bilden på muren: studier i Arkiv för dekorativ konst* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1965). See also L. Qvarnström, “Ragnar Josephson and the Skissernas Museum: Museum of Artistic Processes and Public Art in Swedish Art Historiography: Institutionalization, Identity, and Practice”, eds. B.-I. Johansson, & L. Qvarnström. (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2022), p. 57–64.

4 W. Benjamin, *The work of art in the age of its technological reproducibility, and other writings on media*, (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008).

5 P. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Using the terminology of Pierre Bourdieu's cultural sociology we can ask when the artwork inherent in the research is accepted in lines of *doxa* by the field of cultural production.⁶

This in turn leads to the question whether there are aspects of the archival material, only connected to the research process, that may have a value or status as art, even though never completed? That is, can aspects such as a threshold of originality and artistic merit be applied to archival data? This is a challenge that transcends the question whether the art produced during artistic research has any artistic merit at all – see e.g. the discussion concerning “Edu-art”.⁷ Instead, with a new perspective on the process itself, leaving aside the aforementioned teleology, is it thus possible – with access to archival data – to find a new theoretical perspective on the relationship between process and work? This is a question that transcends the limits of artistic research and could have an impact on the choice of study objects for the aesthetic disciplines such as art history and film studies.

The artistic process

A question related to this is whether the archival data resulting from artistic research can be approached by means of the branch of *unproduction studies* within film studies?⁸ That is, could it be possible to expand and develop this special interest within film studies to art studies in general, through access to artistic research data? Unproduction studies are mainly developed to understand the more industrial processes of filmmaking, e.g. within the Hollywood studio system, but there is a potential here for turning it towards the production of art and maybe to artistic research. How should we value and understand – and maybe use - the uncompleted work? What can it tell us about dominant aesthetic profiles or ideological conditions?

The final and overarching theoretical question is whether access to archival data resulting from artistic research could lead to new knowledge and insights concerning the creative process as such? We can of course return to the problems formulated by pioneers like Ragnar Josephson, dealing with the

6 P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

7 “Edu-art” is a pejorative term, referring to art which is conditioned by artistic research and – according to some critical voices – without relevance outside this field of research. See B. Szyber, *Fauxthentication: Art, Academia & Authorship (or the site-specifics of the Academic Artist)*, doctoral dissertation (Stockholm: Stockholm University of the Arts, 2019).

8 J. Fenwick, *Unproduction Studies and the American Film Industry*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022); A. Beston & S. Solomon, *Incomplete: The Feminist Possibilities of the Unfinished Film*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 2023).

artist's vision and its relationship to the completed work of art, and we can also transcend the teleology and investigate what the process means for the individual artist in terms of e.g. knowledge production or enhancement of skills. A more productive way would maybe be to see this as an opportunity to develop the pedagogy of art, i.e. to invite art students to evaluate and re-search a specific creative process and relate it to their own endeavours. When investigating and trying to understand archived data resulting from artistic research made by someone else you have to be open minded, as has been said about the philosophy of creativity, *to know what we don't know*, that is, to be prepared for the unexpected.⁹

Metadata and access

All these possible research questions are conditioned by the quality of the research data files, or, rather, the organisation of them. They need to be searchable through a set of keywords, but most importantly, through valid *metadata*; this is probably the most important prerequisite for successful and systematic research. If I look back on my own efforts to find archival material and get into it, often in physical archives but to some extent in digital ones, I can clearly say that most of the time was spent in trying to get to know the width and depth of the material, to sort it chronologically and to get to know what each and every item really covered.

If we consider the present and future state of the art, most of the material we will be able to access is digital, but that does not change the importance of systematics, chronological order, and not the least metadata. The production of metadata – selection of keywords, descriptions of content etc. – has to be pursued in dialogue between the individual artistic researcher and a data steward or a corresponding agent, responsible for the archive in question. We have to demand order and systematics of the archive as such, at the same time as we have to grant the artistic researcher – or the artist – freedom within that order. The archive and its framework of routines must not create restrictions and difficulties that obstruct the research, artistic or not.

That is probably the most complex question to balance when establishing an archive for artistic research.

9 N.-E. Sahlin, *Kreativitetens filosofi*, (Nora: Bokförlaget Nya Doxa, 2001).

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Who is archiving what, where and when?

By Henrik Frisk

Introduction

What is data and what is an archive of data? What kind of information does a piece of artistic research data contain and who is equipped to decipher it? I do not think that artistic research data is necessarily different from, say, research data in the humanities, at least not in principle. I do think, however, that the specificity of artistic research data sometimes makes it more difficult to handle, which in turn makes it is easy to mistake the raw data for information, as if the data itself is enough. Any data stored always points to a situation, and while it is true that one of the fundamental thoughts behind open data is that any researcher can take any piece of data and use, modify, and share without restriction, it is reasonable to ask what the meaning of the data is in artistic research without its context. Also, the downside of this openness is that any kind of strange and superficial correlation can be validated with a sufficiently large collection of data even if originally this data may have had a completely different meaning.

Even before approaching the question of what a piece of data signifies by itself, the question of how something becomes data is of relevance and in this essay the examples that follow are from the field of artistic research in music. Today the digital domain is almost ubiquitous, and it is easy to forget the often irreversible process of digitally encoding a real-world sound for example. The attempt to document a musical practice nearly always also involves a transformation into the digital realm at some point – both in the ways that the actual process is encoded, and in the way it is archived, and meta-data is applied to it. Unless the performance already was completely digital – which is hard to imagine being possible – these transformations are made through several different pathways. However, the encoding of the object of documen-

tation must be preceded by the most central question: *what* do I document? Often the documentation involves a reduction of the thing documented. For example, an excerpt in the form of an audio file may be documented and archived to prove a point in the research, leaving parts of the performance, the instrument played on, and perhaps even the context aside. Clearly, not everything can be discussed at the same time. Even so, without proper meta-data about where and how this sound was recorded, and by whom, I doubt this piece of research data can be useful to anyone except maybe the researcher from whose practice the excerpt was extracted.

Memory and meaning

The argument that I will pursue in this short essay is that there is an important connection between the person collecting the data, the time and place it was collected, how the data is encoded, and what it can possibly say about either of those things, or in and of itself. A composition that is a part of an artistic research project will undoubtedly generate a lot of material that has no obvious connection to the artistic result, perhaps not even to the artistic process. When the decision to document is made, what happened that gave rise to the impulse of documenting a particular instance? Whose impulse was it? Whoever came to think about documenting this instance may have information about it that may or may not be part of the actual documentation. It is not obvious that the documentation itself reveals this information. From this follows an even larger question: What kind of knowledge does the researcher need to possess, about research, research data, or artistic practice to make the judgement that a particular sketch or output is a valuable piece of research data for a particular project? Obviously, a thorough research method will be of great help here, but what happens to this sketch when it is documented, transferred to the digital domain, and archived? How can the researcher be sure that the correct information is stored for the data to reveal something about the process? As mentioned at the beginning of this essay, the fallacy here is to mistake the data in and of itself for information. An argument could be made that if only enough of these sketches are collected and documented they will reveal something important about the process, but how are the readers of the archive, they who re-collect the data, going to disentangle this knowledge from the collection?

Cultural critic and philosopher Walter Benjamin discusses the challenges of documentation in his work "Excavation and Memory". He does so

in a broader sense involving memory, history, and understanding, but it is nevertheless of relevance to the discussion in this text. In an attempt to go beyond the simple cataloguing or logging of knowledge he emphasises the importance of both the *what* and the *how* of documentation:

And the man who merely makes an inventory of his findings, while failing to establish the exact location of where in today's ground the ancient treasures have been stored up, cheats himself of his richest prize. In this sense, for authentic memories, it is far less important that the investigator report on them than that he mark, quite precisely, the site where he gained possession of them. Epic and rhapsodic in the strictest sense, genuine memory must therefore yield an image of the person who remembers, in the same way a good archaeological report not only informs us about the strata from which its findings originate, but also gives an account of the strata which first had to be broken through.¹

In fact, Benjamin highlights not only the *how* and the *what*, but points to the impact of who remembers through this archive. He considers the thing found as something that has an inherent value, but the *meaning* of this object is dependent on other perspectives, such as the place, and more specifically, the strata in which the object was collected. It is of crucial importance for the reader of the archive to be able to connect past to present, that is, connecting the time of the collecting to the time of the reading. I can have knowledge of the object, but failing to reconnect it to its origin will result in a failure to realise the value of it in its past and present context. Objects can be stored and accumulated *ad infinitum* without really generating new knowledge. The “richest prize” that Benjamin is referring to is won when we manage to synthesise the past with the present and integrate history in the current world.

Returning to the artistic research example above, the sketch that was derived in the process of composing is collected from a stratum of data of all kinds. Following Benjamin, the position of this sketch in relation to the mass of material from which it originates is of crucial importance. In a wider sense this location can be understood as the context of the research process, but it goes beyond merely collecting information about the situation. There needs to be a proper understanding of what was before and after it, what its relation to the whole is, and what else happened in its proximity. Furthermore, the person storing the data should be present in such a way that when, at a later stage, this piece of

1 W. Benjamin, *Selected Writings, Volume 2, Part 2, 1931-1934*. (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 576.

data is accessed this person has a role similar to that of an author to a text. They should leave a trace in the data that is accessible but which does not define it.

Perhaps the similarity with Benjamin's thoughts on the meaning of memory through history is not great enough to draw wide-ranging conclusions when thinking about research data. I nevertheless believe there is merit in the idea that both the archivist and the context of the thing archived influence the value of an artistic research data archive as a repository of knowledge.

The musical archive

There are some striking examples of what happens to an archive when these properties are ignored. The commercial music streaming services are a contemporary example of the predominant focus on the collection of objects at the expense of context and meta-data. As a consequence, the data made available to the consumer through these services, out of which any one listener will only encounter a fraction of the objects collected, propagates the false image of listening to music as an activity that only involves the ears. That music is self-sufficient, a form of communication beyond language, is a recurring idea but the experience is the result of many other impressions other than just the heard music. Imagine for example how knowledge about the origin of a piece of music can alter the listening experience. In the past the record cover served as a proxy through which this extra information could be accessed.

The very idea of collecting large amounts of data without order or consideration – more is more – is of course consistent with the rest of the internet, probably the largest “archive” ever created, and, as such, with a complete absence of structure. In fact, this modernist, or rather post-modernist concept of a structure without centre is at the very heart of the internet. It was the governing feature that built this humongous digital pandemonium only paving the way for the next brilliant idea: to sell the service that brings structure to the unstructured. To create structure where there is none has been very lucrative for the big internet search companies and similar ventures that gather loosely structured information and present it in user friendly ways. These companies were the archaeologists of contemporary media, and the new large language models (LLM) used by the many AI services merely exploit and breed on the data. Neither of these need to establish the precise origin of their findings as long as the information appears valid to the user.

An archive of musical material most often archives representations of musical content, and to be meaningful it must go beyond a mere collection

of musical resources such as recordings and scores, where origin is of great importance. For the right reader, an archived score can relatively easily give an accurate impression of the music but is a poor representation of the actual sounds. A recording of a performance is a more accurate representation of the sound, but a poor representation of the material and embodied performance. Furthermore, it is not easy to deduce to what extent a recording is an accurate description of what was played in the moment, or if it is a version that has been edited and, from a certain point of view, improved. There is a continuum between the two categories of what we might call the raw documentation and the edited recording. Both are reductions of the materiality of the performance made to fit the archivable documentation format, but with extensive editing the documentary aspect of the concert recording is gradually lost. However, an edited recording that also includes a detailed documentation of how the editing was done along with *all* of the recordings can reveal details about the performance as well as the recording that were not there before. This requires that the archive is constructed to allow for this. The archive, however, structures itself and demands the kind of recording it needs to fulfil its own goals and only that which *can* be archived will be archived. How, then, could an archive of musical data be structured so that it permits an understanding of the thing archived, considering the context in which it is read? How can we avoid being cheated of the richest prize, as Benjamin puts it?

The French philosopher Jacques Derrida points to the dangers of the structures of the archival process:

[...] the technical structure of the archiving archive also determines the structure of the archivable content even in its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future. The archivization produces as much as it records the event.²

Even the *wish* to archive and to make content accessible in a structured format creates delimitation and determined articulations that exclude as much as it makes available. In a related discussion on photography Derrida asks the question: “How to imagine an archive that is somehow immediate, a present that *consists* of its own memory or its own reproduction?”³ This question resonates well with Benjamin’s exploration above. Setting aside the fact that, in the age of AI the photograph will never again be an unambiguous

2 J. Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 17.

3 J. Derrida, *Copy, Archive, Signature: A Conversation on Photography* (Stanford University Press, 2010), p.1.

reproduction, nor will it consist of its own memory, it is possible to imagine how the act of documenting something creates an archive that is a snapshot of an event. Be it a photograph or an audio recording this archived object is a trace of what happened in that precise moment and when the moment has vanished the impression remains in the archive:

If the archive is constituted by the present itself, it is therefore necessary that the present, in its structure, be dividable even while remaining unique, irreplaceable and self-identical. The structure of the present must be divided so that, even as the present is lost, the archive remains and refers to it as to a non-reproducible referent, in irreplaceable place.⁴

Following this line of thought both the thing archived and the place from which it emanates are at the very core of the structure of the archive, in a way that is not dissimilar to how human memory works. Time moves on and changes the imprint over time. Hence, Derrida's deconstruction of the archive is situated in a psychoanalytical framework that rests on the notion of the impression, inscription and recording of the unconscious. In that sense the archive, in an act of repression, may also restructure that which it archives. Say that the composition from the artistic research process above is archived, both in its components and its sketches, along with all the background information. There is no guarantee that all this material, even if it has been captured with the appropriate meta-data, produces a work that even partly resembles the original work. Even if the non-reproducible referent is present, even if the present is segmented, so is the current present and it will always have an important impact on the possible ways in which the data may be understood. However, that artistic practice is not reproducible is a quality and not a problem and it would be futile to attempt to build an archive for exact replication. Contrary to what one may initially believe, the more extensive the archive of an artistic research process archive that documents the musical practice, the more manifold the possible interpretations of this data—more data does not necessarily result in higher resolution. The archive's foremost quality is that it participates in the restructuring of the ontology of the work it documents, and nurtures new works rather than reproducing old ones. This idea of a (false) memory machine leads us into a discussion concerning the inscription and printing of the different capacities of the human psyche. In what ways do we consider this archive to be different from our own memory?

⁴ Derrida, 2010, p. 3.

The argument of this essay has been that in the context of documenting an artistic research practice it matters who collects data, in a way that is similar to how it matters when and in what context the data was collected. This would allow a reader to understand the information through the lens of the archivist, that is the researcher, and the place, which could potentially increase the meaning of the archived thing. The impact of the moment of documentation can be understood by thinking about a recording of a rehearsal where a passage is repeated over and over again. Not knowing the precise time of the excerpts in relation to the original time distorts the message greatly. Listening to these recordings with hindsight adds a new present to them, which will alter the impression of them and of their original time and place. Finally, the importance of the location may perhaps best be understood as it was described earlier, as a piece of stratified documentation.

Concluding remark

The structure of the archive is of great importance. The archive writes itself to a certain degree and it builds and develops its structure over time. Or, as put by Derrida: “Archivable meaning is also and in advance co-determined by the structure that archives. It begins with the printer”.⁵ He brings together the printer with the printed in a similar way to how Benjamin puts the focus on the archivist. It is a mistake to view the archive as a neutral repository for research data. Successful archiving requires acknowledging that the archive actively shapes its content, necessitating the inclusion of comprehensive meta-information with the archived material. This is some of the knowledge a researcher needs to have about the process of documenting and archiving artistic research data.

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5 Derrida 1998, p. 18.



Responding Arches by Anja Cecilie Petersen. Make Sound Residency at Inter Arts Center, October 2024.

Art Files:

A media repository for artistic research

Art Files is the flagship project for 2025–2026 of the Swedish National Data Service at Lund University, planned for launch in 2026.

Art Files is being constructed as a secure and sustainable repository, designed to support the entire life cycle of artistic research data. It shall provide a trusted environment in which material from ongoing projects can be safely stored, processed and shared, while also facilitating the structured description and publication of data and outputs from completed artistic research projects.

Art Files aims to provide a database and presentation platform designed to support the needs of various artistic practices. The intention is to enable high quality display and playback, helping to ensure that complex, multisensory, or technologically demanding works can be experienced as intended. The project is guided by the FAIR principles and requirements for open research, while carefully considering the relevant legal and ethical aspects.

The repository is being developed with the intention of providing alignment with Lund University's existing digital infrastructure. The goal is to ensure compatibility with systems such as LUCRIS and the Swedish National Data Service's portal, researchdata.se, so that research materials may more easily circulate within national and international frameworks.

Navigation within Art Files allows exploration of various media formats, including video, audio, images, documents, and 3D data, with infrastructure for additional formats also available.

Art Files is primarily intended for artistic researchers and other arts researchers, but also for archivists, librarians, research support staff, external scholars, curators, funders, and other stakeholders who engage with artistic research data.

The project is run by Inter Arts Center, which is Lund University's local artistic research infrastructure, and forms part of the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts at Lund University.

Further information about Art Files available at <https://www.iac.lu.se/art-files>



The following persons were members of the advanced study group at the Pufendorf Institute of Advanced Studies during the year:

Lars Gustaf Andersson, Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology, LU
Madeleine Bergquist, Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, LU
Hedvig Jalhed, Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, LU
Karin Johansson, Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, LU
Carolina Jonsson Malm, Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, LU
Sandra Kopljär, Faculty of Engineering, LU
Gunnar Krantz, Faculty of Culture and Society, MAU
Sanne Krogh Groth, Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology, LU
Anna Petersson, Faculty of Engineering, LU

The following guests visited the advanced study group at the Pufendorf Institute of Advanced Studies for presentations and discussions:

Nevra Biltekin, Swedish Research Council
Henrik Frisk, The Royal College of Music
Kristina Hagström Ståhl, Swedish Research Council
Karin Westin Tikkanen, Swedish National Data Service

The ASG group also attended the symposium “Art, Knowledge, Context” in Gothenburg on 2 October 2025 and took part in discussions with other researchers at the event.

Creative Data Lab (CDL), hosted as an Advanced Study Group at the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, Lund University, brought together artist-researchers and research support staff to explore artistic research data management (ARDM) in relation to documentation, storage, sharing, and use. Working across disciplines and in dialogue with national and international debates, the group examined how artistic research data resist fixed definitions, raise questions of ethics and rights, and require infrastructures that can accommodate high-quality, context-dependent materials. The contributions in this publication build on the work initiated in CDL to advance ongoing discussions and support the development of practices and infrastructures on the artistic field's own terms.



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