

Some thoughts on Artistic Research and the making possible of what has hitherto seemed impossible – written from my point of view as an artist and professor of choreographic composition, and from my current perspective as Vice-Chancellor of the University College of Dance in Stockholm.

Efva Lilja, September 2007

There is a Cow on the Ice!¹

For many years I have been working through dance to implant and develop a form of trust in that aspect of our communicative capacity which operates beyond words. And now this has to be described in both speech and writing. Why?

To get you to come closer, to make you want to know more, to draw attention to what is being developed within the artistic process while also illuminating the methodology that is simultaneously evolving as part of it and creating space for the theory being brought into being through this work. As an artist I know that I possess knowledge about and in my work. In seeking to develop my work as a form of research, I am also embarking on a process that has something to teach both me and others. This process is documented, and just like its outcome, is open to criticism by the world around me, for which it also serves as an object of reflection.

How can I say anything specific about what I know intuitively? Here we have to trust in the processes of our minds. Our entire “inner world” is made possible by our capacity to think, to imagine and even conceive of what we have never before thought of, seen or experienced. Received knowledge is the basis of our conventions. Through art we are able to break up those conventions and make way for new ones. This is the way we always make progress.

Consciousness builds a wall between ourselves and what is other. The fabric of our social lives requires us to act and behave rationally but for this there is a price to pay. The only possible response has to be to soldier on. We look around us and try to understand what is going on, who other people are, what they are like... We are all thrust helplessly into loneliness. That solitude is our home which we make bearable, or even pleasurable, in all kinds of different ways. Existence can be like perception or resemble a problem formulated by our conscious minds.

Our awareness of the world and other people, our capacity to convert sensory impressions into action and growth demand creativity. That creativity in turn is based on a sense of dissatisfaction with what is and a desire for change. Reality has to be examined critically and reshaped, but that questioning of what is felt to be inadequate has to be carried out with a certain degree of self-confidence. Creativity fails where there is not enough faith in one's own capacities. Curiosity, expectation, feeling and intuition are the key to survival, as they are for that desirable thing we call creativity. Individual ability and knowledge develop in relation to the trust one has in this very principle.

¹ This is a variation on a Swedish folk saying or proverb, indicating that a matter is very urgent. (Translator's note)

This is why, when people start talking about knowledge, I often start to feel uneasy. The concept of knowledge is often used as a pretext for justifying all kinds of things. Frequently it is carelessly expressed as something objective, as though the person in question looked it up in a dictionary and simply accepted the definition without a moment's thought. This is not what I do. I doubt, I question and I try constantly to re-examine the concept. Questioning prevailing ideas is the foundation of change and growth. Knowledge should be put to the test and it needs to be re-evaluated in order to provide it with new nourishment.

If this is not something you are already aware of, I want to raise your expectations of this "something" and hence enhance your delight in, your curiosity about, the insights that can be gained by exploring our creative processes through research. Have faith in our abilities! That 1.2% of our genetic endowment that separates us from the chimpanzees and the gorillas. We are our own greatest challenge. What is important? Our task is to reshape reality, to express it, to get others involved... How do you know what you know? What does knowing mean?

We are all on the move. This is my way of sharing my thoughts with you.

The Current Situation

In the performing arts of contemporary society, the performer is both the agent and the object, the interpreter and the finished work. The artist is her or her own instrument. The artist also represents thought, movement and the events that when presented have extensive ramifications for entirely separate forms of expression. The body is of vital significance in terms of its physical representation, a form of representation lacking in so many of the forms of expression digital society offers. Body and mind, the corporeal and the intellectual – the artist is a key actor in the development of new knowledge.

Creative art disrupts normality and brings into view other values that were previously concealed. Creative art cannot be made to conform to social expectations nor can it be controlled. It breaks with convention and tradition in order to get us to re-examine the ways in which we see ourselves and reality, to question what is called normal or good. In encountering the work of art we encounter both ourselves and the world around us. Our ideas and experiences carry us onward to new insights and attitudes to what is going on. This is where we find the source of meaning. You contribute to this by participating in it. You see, experience, interpret, consider and criticise... You tread your path among memories and experiences, you leap forward to create new ones.

At the University College of Dance in Stockholm, we work to promote and develop artistic education and research into art. In our college, tradition and history confront creativity and experimentation. Art, pedagogy and science are brought together to form part of the development of new bodies of theoretical knowledge while also taking account of established theories. New forms of artistry are being developed whose aim is to change our ideas about what we think we know. We are in motion. Society is currently defined through the performative. Our interest is in active individuals, who develop a sense of responsibility, who produce communicative resources and who participate fully.

What the University College of Dance creates is the means to understand and conceptualise the conditions under which non-material values are produced. We

provide space for history and cultural tradition, but we also help to provide a sense of “the sky’s the limit” for those who want to use what we already know and feel as a launching-pad from which to explore new ground. We make possibilities available. What does this involve in relation to the development of society? What role do we want to assign to art in today’s world? In the world of the future?

Below is an extract from our strategic plan:

The world is changed by curiosity. Expectation and anticipation make us look forwards. This looking beyond what is already known is the precondition for all artistic endeavour and research. Our aim is to make the University College of Dance in every possible way an open and exciting forum for education and for artistic and scientific research while contributing to the development and renewal of ways of working in dance and the new circus.

Higher Education

What role does an institution for artistic education play in drawing attention to, and in justifying, art as art; the artist as part of a collaborative process with art as its goal; artistic research in parallel with scientific research; and the social values represented by skills and abilities, those so-called “products of experience”?

Any discussion revolving around questions such as these serves to clarify both the need for further development and the arguments for doing so. It is these needs and arguments which will determine the organisational/practical design of educational and research programs. They, in their turn, will affect the development not just of the future of artistic performance but also the terms of employment and the relationship to commerce and cultural policies which will provide us with new venues, able and highly-motivated organisers, and committed politicians while stimulating the curiosity, respect and willingness to get involved of the wider audience. They will also help enhance the labour market in our sector.

Higher education should operate with working methods which open up new ways of seeing, making space for the vision of the audience and laying the groundwork for a creative dialogue between the performer and the person encountering the work in performance. We need to facilitate the creation of more advanced artistic and pedagogical processes, which afford time and space for work of quality and for the formation of knowledge and new insights. Processes which integrate contemporary social and environmental perspectives and create both understanding and legitimacy for the opportunities art alone affords.

Another important aspect of our work is to develop the socially accepted definition of knowledge to encompass bodily/physical experience so that it is seen as generative of meaning. This can provide a sense of confidence in an alternative way of knowing and thus help to advance and develop our concept of knowledge.

As a choreographer I am interested in how other artists deepen and extend their skills and abilities and their capacity to portray and communicate their particular vision. What are we seeking to discover in our creative process? What issues drive us on? Many prominent artists possess a unique form of knowledge which is communicated through the finished work. Were the path they take to reach their goal to be

documented, and the questions arising as a result to be made available to others so that they could follow the process, examine it critically and learn from it, more people could acquire greater knowledge and be inspired and stimulated in their own work. This is how knowledge develops in the arts. A body of knowledge that can contribute to the development of individual forms of artistic expression and which can be shared with the world around us both as part of the process and through the work of art itself.

It is vital to draw attention to art as a means of attaining the knowledge and insights we would otherwise not acquire. Demonstrating the ways in which art operates helps to develop our communicative resources and can contribute to the creation of greater awareness about the importance of culture for the development of a society. An awareness that art can in fact be both fun and frightening and that it is absolutely essential that art as art has its place in our everyday lives since in so doing it provides a voice for what would otherwise not be said.

Defining Artistic Research

Artistic research is an exploratory and investigative process aimed at acquiring knowledge of and understanding about what the artist is seeking to achieve through the creative process, while also developing methodological insights. The “work of art” represents the outcome of this process, which serves to locate the insights gained in a wider social context, as part of which others are able to criticise it, make use of it and store it through the documentation of the research undertaken and by reflecting on the process in terms both of the product and the work. This should not be taken to mean that we have to read the “work” as performance/exhibition/display and so on in the conventional sense. I mean the word in a wider sense, which provides scope for whichever form of presentation the artist chooses.

Definitions of what we mean by artistic research are being developed not only by the very same artists who are interested in the methodology of a more advanced creative process, but also by theoreticians who seek to defend the arts in a scientific context. One such individual is Henk Borgdorff of the Amsterdam School of the Arts. The following definition of artistic research derives from his work and is shared by many others:

*In research **about** art, the work is left undisturbed. The work becomes the object. In research **for** art, it is the instrumental perspective that is developed, knowledge as skill. In research **in** art, there is no distinction between subject and object. The artist carries out research into his or her own artistic process, starting from questions of relevance to the development of the work/art/process.*

It is on the basis of this latter definition that we are currently seeking to develop the concept of artistic research. Research in art is carried out by the artist and can be subdivided into practice-based research, practice-led research and artistic practice as research.

Artistic research is defined as the research carried out on an artistic basis by artists of proven artistic skills and experience.

On Stony Ground

We need more artists to express their views on the matter, to draw attention to the need for research in art. We need more artists who express and describe a variety of views, a variety of working methods, a variety of issues that can be encompassed by the advanced process we call research. Who are the individuals with needs of this kind and with the skills required to carry out artistic research projects of quality?

There are a large number of stones strewn across the ground for us to stumble over in any discussion focusing on this issue. By tradition, it is the originator who considers him or herself to be the creative artist, while the interpreter does so more rarely. In the fields of dance and circus, this role is primarily assigned to the choreographer and much less frequently to the dancer and the circus artist, in music it is usually assigned to the composer and rather less often to the musician. How can those of us working in higher education ensure that we provide our students with the tools they require so that they can make an informed choice about an artistic method and an artistic identity? How can we do this without contributing to a hierarchical ranking of their choices of profession such as dancers, pedagogues, teachers, therapists, artists or choreographers? How can we facilitate the development of an advanced methodology in the field of endeavour they have chosen?

We need to provide a voice for those artists who are actively engaged in trying to develop the possibilities artistic research has to offer, and we need to make a space for them. We can do this by creating a range of possibilities that are complementary to those already on offer to artists to work within our universities, where artistic research is carried out on the basis of a different definition and then usually as research about and for art.

As an artistic institution within higher education, we have a particular responsibility to make space available for research in art by artists themselves.

What Are the Sources of Legitimacy for Research in Art?

In its evaluation of the funding it gave to artistic research projects in the period 2001-2005, the Swedish Research Council states that the projects were “*characterised by relatively experimental and unstructured designs*” and “*in some instances by poor and patchy outcomes*” (pp.8-9). The projects are subject to negative criticism throughout, even though the evaluators declare that they contain “*striking insights and tangible potential*” (p.8). The Swedish government’s bill on research of the year 2000 contains the following proposition, “*Through the interplay between art and science, new and unconventional methods can be developed for the acquisition of new knowledge in all the areas of science.*”

Many universities are avidly searching for artists prepared to work across the boundaries of various disciplines, as doctoral students to join research institutes or to form part of reference groups or similar bodies. They are so keen to ensure our participation because our ways of working are different, our ways of tackling problems are different, our ways of looking at everyday life, reality, existence... are different. We are considered to be capable of inspiring others in a powerful way, to be prodigious creative talents and to be exciting people to work with. This is all very well and good for those artists whose work falls within, and can be developed and adapted within, these frameworks. Our primary purpose in such contexts is not,

however, to work for the sake of art but for what we can bring to the disciplines of science.

As long as the arts are not considered to have their own field of knowledge and their own right of examination, collaboration with the world of science will remain an option for gaining access to resources and to an environment and framework for research. All too frequently in my experience, however, projects are adapted to fit into an artificial context. Grant applications are written the way they are “supposed” to be written and partners and collaborators chosen the way they are supposed to be chosen. Could this be one of the explanations why many of the Swedish Research Council’s projects are criticised for not complying with the original project description, and for not documenting or reflecting the issues under consideration in the prescribed way?

What follows also forms part of the evaluation I quoted by way of introduction to this section: *“The possibility cannot be excluded that the development of an appropriate method would have attained a quite different and more constructive standing, if the precondition of a collaboration between an institution for the arts in higher education and a university had been abolished, i.e. that the project had been carried out entirely within the arts institution and on the basis of the fundamental premises of the art-form in question, In many institutions, the condition laid down of a collaborative enterprise has been felt to be a form of “forced marriage” or “guardianship”. When it has worked best in practical terms, it has taken the form of a harmonious division of roles between the “commissioning body” and “consultants”, in which the input of the latter has been fairly limited and could be described as a form of “alibi” or “a sounding board” (p. 106).*

The current situation for artistic research in Sweden is patchy; there is little debate on the subject and it is often poorly formulated. There is no one body at the national level to collate artistic research, to enable discussion of conditions and requirements, to lead debate on a higher plane about what artistic research could achieve and how to develop it, about the methodological problems that arise from it, about how it can link together the various professions, about the ways in which it differs from the rest of the research world and the debates conducted within it, etc.

The Swedish Research Council (SRC), which was hitherto considered to be the umbrella organisation for artistic research, has clearly indicated that it is unwilling to serve in that role. In March 2007, the SRC’s Interdisciplinary Committee for the Humanities and Social Sciences implemented drastic changes in relation to the future conditions to be imposed on Artistic Research and Development (ARD). ARD is now to be subsumed within the Interdisciplinary Committee for the Humanities and Social Sciences at the SRC, and the specialist team for ARD which operated between 2001-2006 is to be abolished and will be replaced by a drafting committee. With effect from this year, ARD will have to compete with other disciplines within the remit of the Interdisciplinary Committee in line with criteria to be decided by the Committee. This will impose significant limitations on any research projects to take place within the arts.

So how can we move forward with our commitment to artistic research? How are we to describe (in writing or speech) how we want what we are doing to be seen? As of now, there are no longer any options available for training in artistic research or research in one’s particular art-form for those artists who are unwilling to work within

a scientific discipline, nor for those artists who do not wish to adopt scientific method or take part in interdisciplinary collaborative projects.

Asserting the necessity of research in developing art as art requires us to be able to express what the difference is between research and the exploratory process most artists use in their work. What differentiates artistic production in general from research? Where does the need for it arise? Why do we need to use the word “research”?

It is of vital importance that we safeguard the various operational forms, organisational solutions and authorities that make research possible. In Sweden it is primarily the universities in Gothenburg, Lund and Umeå that carry out artistic research according to their own definitions and in an academic context. The arts institutions within higher education in these places have been integrated into the arts faculties of the universities. The arts colleges in higher education in Stockholm remain autonomous institutions. As such, we have a unique opportunity to develop a new environment for a joint program for research education. We can create a complementary space, focusing on artistry at an advanced level and those issues it is important for artists to explore.

What we currently need is to find a broad definition for artistic research: one that is not exclusive but rather inclusive, and one in which artistic quality counts for more than a traditional, academic and scientific notion of quality. A definition that is neither propped up by, nor legitimated by, already established models of scientific research and which does not seek to compare itself with the latter. This means we have to find a way of expressing what we mean by quality.

Protecting the Pasture

The scientific world measures quality in terms of a number of parameters, such as the proportion of external funding and staffing (e.g. the number of professors and teachers with doctorates) but above all by the number of published articles in recognised academic publications. Research findings are made available primarily through publication.

In the contemporary arts that fall within our area of education, the extent of external funding and the existence of teaching staff holding professorships, or whose merit as artists has been formally recognised, may constitute relevant criteria of quality, but different yardsticks are required for public presentation. Theoretical representations cannot serve as a means of qualitative evaluation in the arts. We might be able to use instead major international art forums of various kinds, depending on which field and “subject” the research in question is deemed to represent. The various artistic genres have different forums in which they are represented and which provide a number of different avenues for presentation.

Although artistic research has to be presented *sui generis*, it is important to maintain an open mind as to what constitutes a relevant form of presentation; this should be based on the underlying concept of the research project, its goals, process and outcome(s). This should not be taken to mean it is performance that is primarily being referred to as product, but that the presentation of the research can be received in the

form of a documentation of the process and reflection on the outcome of research in the particular guise chosen by the artist.

Within dance and neo-circus (the arts fields that fall within the remit of the University College of Dance), the Swedish Dance Biennial could be adapted to include a section for presentations, seminars and workshops bringing together artists who do research in their art-form and who are interested in finding out more about other artists' working methods and artistic research projects. The Close Encounters series organised by the University College of Dance could also serve as a forum for international exchange. CCN Montpellier Languedoc-Rousillon or PAF in Reims could fulfil the same function in France; and in England, there is The Place Choreodrome and ResCen at Middlesex University in London.

Cows on Good Grazing Land Do Better

In the Nordic countries, various traditions and systems exist that regulate and provide for higher education in the arts, programs for research education and research itself. This is a situation I have been in a position to acquaint myself with more fully since being appointed Professor at the University College of Dance and subsequently Vice-Chancellor. Both within my own institution, and during the three years from 2003 to 2006 I served as supervisor on the Norwegian national Programme for Research Fellowships in the Arts (www.kunstipendiat.no); as well as my participation in the Finnish "Challenge the Notion of Knowledge" project (2006) run by the Department of Dance at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki, for which I served as a "source of inspiration" and as someone capable of reflecting the aspirations of students. I have also taken part in an artistic research project in London: Holds No Memory (Choreodrome, The Place, 2005-2006) and carried out research of my own.

The Norwegian programme is being developed to encompass and promote advanced artistic processes, to encourage reflection and consideration of the issues involved and to create awareness of the new insights being gained in relation to artistic method and praxis. The focus of the programme is on the work of art. A kind of hybrid form is being developed in Finland, in which a number of projects are presented in artistic terms, while others are presented on a theoretical basis, with the relevant proportions being determined by the commissioning body. Our current situation in Sweden is that we are in a unique position to develop a model for a joint program for research education and for artistic research, which could take advantage of the best developments to be gained from previous experience, both nationally and internationally. What is best? For whom? To what ends?

An amalgamation of the arts institutions in higher education in Stockholm is recommended in a report (2007:31 R, pp. 31-57) published by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education. The arguments underpinning the recommendation relate to the alleged success of artistic research within the framework of the organisational models implemented by the Universities in Lund and Gothenburg. The recommendation is based solely on organisational arguments and lacks any element that relates the aims of research to artistic quality. In my view, we, the arts institutions within higher education in Stockholm, can best safeguard the quality of the education we provide by retaining our autonomy; this would also provide the best foundation for collaboration when such a process is called for, as for instance in our collaborative efforts as part of the KU-project² and in the setting up of a joint program for research

² Translator's note: KU refers to artistic development work .

education. The establishment of a research education program of this kind would mean we would be able to develop in concert criteria of quality and excellence that would raise the level both of examination projects and of artistic research. For this to happen, we would need to enjoy the right of examination and to benefit from a system of financing which allocates funds on the basis of artistic merit.

It is both vital and legitimate that we should separate off the concept of artistic development work to cover development work as such while asserting our right to use the term research for that process in the creative arts which is comparable with the processes of scientific research. Both because this would provide the outside world with an insight into the nature of our aims and to raise the status of the arts, while putting them on an equal footing with the sciences in terms of a common need to discover new forms of knowledge.

There follows an extract from the evaluation by the Swedish research council: *“Ultimately though, it is also about a respect for the various fields within the arts and the fact that they need to be integrated and placed on an equal footing with the other fields of knowledge in the development of today’s knowledge society.”* (p. 117)

What Is Knowledge? What Creates Meaning? What Do All the Words Mean?

Many of the key questions of philosophy have a bearing on the arts. If philosophy deals with them on a theoretical basis, art tackles them in practical terms. Many artists try to find the right words to make their art comprehensible, both to themselves and to a wider world. Like philosophy, art is a means to understand life.

The role dance plays for me is that it allows me to create an image of what I want life to be, of what I think it is, or of what other people say it is. Art is a means of making existence comprehensible and of living life more intensely. Purely as a concept, art has no genres. Defining it in a particular way, as for example when I choose to work within dance is the choice I make. For me dance is the closest I can get to clarity.

And as far as I am concerned, knowledge in art is what I have to know as an artist to achieve what I set out to do, to express my ideas and communicate them to a wider world. But it is also what I get from the experience of art itself, a development of communicative capacity, information about the world from a different perspective than that of everyday life, a process of reflection that raises my awareness and the making visible of the significance of the subjective experience/interpretation.

Words are read as a matter of subjective interpretation like other forms of expression in our communicative register. Meaning is constructed from contexts, words are composed/choreographed and offered to the recipient to enjoy, to be provoked by, to be revolted by or quite simply to be seduced by. Our existence is being designed – which brings us back to my introductory statement about the way society defines us in performative terms, an experience common to us all. No one will ever be able to provide us with a definitive interpretation. You have to make your own mind up as you take part and by taking part.

How Might It All Work Out?

How about the following description of “real life”? In the next government bill on research, the arts are assigned their own field of knowledge and artistic research is awarded its own funding body for supporting research projects (outside the Swedish Research Council). A collaborative body is established for a joint program for research education bringing together the various arts institutions within higher education in Stockholm. Arts institutions are awarded their own right of examination and an exam of their own corresponding to the degree of doctorate in the arts.

Participation by professional artists in the activities of the arts institutions in higher education increases and the awareness of students about the various forms of artistic expression in both the traditional and contemporary arts is raised. Higher education gains prominence as a resource for artists who are interested in advanced working processes and the formation of knowledge and new insights. Interdisciplinary projects are implemented and collaboration with other intellectual disciplines intensifies as the arts acquire their own platform – a launching-pad for greater risk-taking.

Prominent artists are offered guest professorships, personal chairs and research resources. Research projects are carried out under the auspices of arts institutions within higher education; the documentation of the process and the fruits of reflection are made available to both the educational authorities and the profession. Artistic works/presentations (as the outcome of research processes) are co-produced with leading national and international arts bodies/venues/festivals/organisations/institutions/networks. Swedish Television (SVT) and other television channels regularly commission documentary films and films about dance/circus/the arts and their relation to research projects in co-production with international companies. The results of artistic research are, as a result, made available both to educational institutions and to society as a whole.

The University College of Dance produces regular reports on both artistic and scientific research projects within our educational fields. These are produced in both Swedish and English for international dissemination. Together with the other arts institutions in higher education in Stockholm, the College produces joint publications: periodicals and editions in book form. These are stimulating and provocative and help to intensify discussion and debate. A jointly maintained database for artistic research is established so as to ensure that the documentation of the research process is made available.

Each term seminars are held at the University College of Dance dealing with current projects, while every other year the joint program for research education convenes an international “gathering” tackling current issues in the field. Performances and events relating to the research processes are presented at various venues, festivals and art forums. The arts institutions who sit on Stockholm’s KU-committees collaborate on various long-term strategic development projects and regularly stage joint events open to both students, staff, the professions and the wider world. A series of seminars particularly oriented to the media is established and helps to increase skills-awareness among critics and other journalists who write a greater number of articles (not just reviews) about the various art forms in both the daily papers and specialist publications at both the national and international level.

Attention is paid to the arts in public debate and in the field of cultural policy; active policies for the arts are developed. The scientific world acquires respect and understanding for the knowledge being developed within the arts. There is an ever increasing amount of research being carried out in the arts within various intellectual disciplines and an ever greater number of collaborative projects of real quality are developed between the arts and sciences.

Knowledge of what it is to be a human being is extended; the balancing-act between the rational and irrational is more strongly emphasised and, quite simply, we all get a better society to live in.

Does all of that sound good? A great deal of reflection is required in relation to what would actually be the best way of implementing what we want to see happen. I need your ideas to bounce mine off... Our experiences in exchange for those of others. I am only giving you here a small part of what I am imagining might happen. But one thing I am convinced of is that more artists need to be actively involved in developing the future shape and conditions of artistic research. If we do not force this issue, the academy will, and then we will lose our one focus-point capable of placing the artistic process at the heart of the matter and of considering the issues involved from the artistic point of view.

How Can We Make It Happen?

At the University College of Dance we are working to develop our arguments further and to clarify what we mean by artistic research. We are developing criteria of quality, while strengthening our links to research at all levels including the foundation courses. We are also developing new strategies for research and education, intensifying our commitment to work on the KU-committee and also seeking to create a higher profile for both development and research projects in the various activities of the College. All the money we do not have has to be found somewhere.

At the same time as we are creating a major long-term plan for research, we are also extending our collaborative efforts with other fields of intellectual endeavour both by means of the joint research centre we run with the Royal Institute of Technology (KHT) and with other colleges and universities. Recognised and certified expertise underpins all the work we carry out within the College, as do the principles of artistic or scientific rigour.

The process of quality control takes a different form in the arts to that of the sciences. Since we are not in a position to count the number of publications in scientific periodicals, we have to count the number of performances /events/films or some other form of “performativity” in relation to the various artistic genres in major international forums. It is for this reason we are intensifying efforts aimed at internationalising our work and encouraging our colleagues to attend international conferences, education forums and festivals. Co-producers are becoming part of our external financing instead of academic foundations and grant-making bodies and the traditional forms of commercial sponsorship from trade and industry. For this reason we are redefining trade and industry to include our own commercial sphere – the market-actors behind our production and distribution, a sector in which we are attempting to find a considerable level of co-financing.

We also work together with other arts institutions within higher education and within universities, both at the national and international level. We are currently clarifying our development strategy in this regard. Our aim is to highlight a variety of needs by bringing a variety of ideas and concepts together. If we are to reach agreement, we have to find our way towards a common understanding as to what the aims of our work should be – which brings us back again to that question about what is the source of meaning, what creates it. This is the point at which the cow on the ice suddenly appears before our eyes. We need to use all our skills, knowledge and willpower to solve the problems we have in common. We need to construct an entire farmyard for that cow – and not just a stall.

Efva Lilja

The evaluations I quote from:

Vetenskapsrådets utvärdering av anslag till konstnärlig forskning och utveckling 2001-2005: Kontext – Kvalitet – Kontinuitet, Vetenskapsrådet 2007

Rapport 2007:31 R, Hur har det gått? En slutrapport om Högskoleverkets kvalitetsgranskningar åren 2001-2006

I also quote myself:

Antologi om kunskapssyn, Lärarförbundet 2007

Forskarhandledares robusta råd: Till dig utan namn – till dig jag inte känner men gärna vill möta, Studentlitteratur 2007.

For anyone wanting to read more about artistic research, I can recommend various books and articles I have read:

Konstnärlig forskning under lupp, Vetenskapsrådets årsbok KFoU 2007

Navigating the Unknown, Rescen Middlesex University Press 2006

The Debate on Research in the Arts, Henk Borgdorff Amsterdam School of the Arts, lecture 2005 eller som publikation Konsthögskolan i Bergen 2006

The Conflict of the Faculties, Henk Borgdorff Amsterdam School of the Arts, Boekman journal 58/59 2004

Artistic Research – theories, methods and practices, Mika Hannula, Juha Suoranta, Tere Vadén, Göteborgs Universitet 2005

”Handslag, famntag, klapp eller kyss”, om konstnärlig forskarutbildning i Sverige. Henrik Karlsson, SiSTER förlag 2002

Forskning Reflektion Utveckling, Högskolans konstnärliga institutioner och vägval inför framtiden. Rapport från Vetenskapsrådet 2004. Redaktör Henrik Karlsson

Konst Kunskap Insikt, texter om forskning och utvecklingsarbete på det konstnärliga området. Vetenskapsrådets Årsbok 2004 för Konstnärligt FoU. Redaktör Torbjörn Lind och Jesper Wadensjö.

Metod och Praktik, texter om forskning och utvecklingsarbete inom det konstnärliga området. Vetenskapsrådets årsbok 2005, redaktör Torbjörn Lind

Dokumentation, Kollegiet Konst och nya media, Kungliga Konsthögskolan 2002

Konsthögskolan i Oslo, Årsbok 2004

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