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Artists with PhDs

On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art

Edited by James Elkins



Washington, DC

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Introduction

If you're a young artist, and you are wondering about how to land a secure teaching job, there is an interesting—I should really say frightening—new possibility. It appears that before too long, employers will be looking for artists with PhDs rather than Masters or college degrees. For the best jobs, it will no longer be enough to have an MA or an MFA. The best universities and art schools will increasingly be looking for candidates with one of the new, PhD-level degrees, sometimes called “creative-art doctorates” or “practice-based doctorates.” It may even happen that the PhD degrees become the standard minimum requirement for teaching jobs at the college level.

That may seem unlikely, but consider what happened in the United States after the Second World War: returning soldiers signed on for the new Master's in Fine Arts degrees, and by the 1960s those degrees had become standard across the country. At first the MFA provoked resistance. It was said that it would lead to the academization of fine art, turning artists into scholars, and requiring that they produce impossible amounts of writing. Now, at the start of the twenty-first century, MFAs are ubiquitous and effectively devalued. A recent job search for a plum position at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill attracted almost 700 candidates, the vast majority of whom would have had MFAs. The degree, by itself, has come to be little more than a requirement for competition on the job market, somewhat akin to the requirement of a high school or college diploma. To compete, job candidates need to have the MFA *and something else*, such as an exhibition record or a second field of expertise.

If history has a lesson to teach here, and I think it does, then the PhD in studio art will spread the way the MFA did a half-century ago. The resistance to it will subside, and it will become the baseline requirement for a competitive job teaching studio art. The MFA will

20 These and other figures were presented by Sandra Kemp, Director of Research at the Royal College of Art in London, during her lecture at the aforementioned symposium in Leuven (2004): see S. Kemp, 'Critical Practice: The Development of Studio-based Research at the Royal College of Art,' in H. Van Gelder (ed.), *Practise-based PhD in the creative and performing arts and design*, e-publication (cd-rom), proceedings of an international conference on the subject at STUK, Leuven (10 September 2004).

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On Beyond Research and New Knowledge

James Elkins

There are three arguments in this chapter: first, that the paradigms of *research* and *new knowledge* are artificial imports from UK administrative terminology and should be abandoned or rethought from the ground up; second, that it is necessary that the new PhD degrees, whatever shape they take, be fully at the level of PhDs in the fields to which they make reference; and third, that the studio-art PhD degree is an opportunity to rethink not only the place of visual arts in the university, and not only the place of creative arts, but the coherence of the university as a whole.

My principal example will be the book *Thinking Through Art*, the second book on the subject of studio-art PhDs.¹ *Thinking Through Art* can be read—although this wasn't the editors' intention—as a barometer of thinking about the university in general. I wonder if there is an academic relation more vexed, less satisfactorily theorized, and more seldom solved than the relation between studio art departments and other departments in the university. The kind of abstract talk about theory, discipline, knowledge, research, and method that is used to articulate the parts of the university feels stretched and distorted when it is applied to studio art. Those distortions have a lot to say about the coherence of the university in general, because they reveal the kind of work that words like *theory* are normally intended to do. Hence the studio-art PhD degree is an ideal place to begin to reconceptualize the unity of the university.

Why Research and New Knowledge?

To a reader outside the UK, New Zealand, Australia, and the countries influenced by them such as Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Singapore, and Malaysia, it may seem strange that in order to validate studio art within the university it is necessary to speak about the production of visual art as a kind of *research* that re-

sults in *new knowledge*. In the Introduction I mentioned that Timothy Emlyn Jones gave a paper—a version of Chapter 2—to an audience of the deans and presidents of North American art schools in Los Angeles in fall 2003. When it came to the concepts of research and new knowledge, some in the audience were incredulous: Why, one asked, do we want to start thinking about visual art as if it were a science? And what, another wondered, is the new knowledge produced by an artist like Picasso? Jones's paper (Chapter 2) reviews the curious literature that has sprung up to justify, adapt, and amplify the concepts of research and new knowledge. And Jones is right, as he says in Chapter 6, that in the years following that 2003 conference art schools and art departments have become more sanguine about the studio-art PhD. He doesn't mention what I consider to be the insidious consequence of that sanguinity: talk about *art as research* and *art as the production of new knowledge* are now commonplace in committees in the US and Canada. We are adopting the UK administrative terminology.

It needs to be said that the initial impetus behind the terms *research* and *new knowledge* is purely economic—a point well made by Charles Harrison in Chapter 10. In the UK, Australian, and Irish systems (and I assume in others as well) university departments receive money and allowances to hire more teachers based on the levels of their students. Undergraduate students count relatively little, MPhil students more,² MA students still more, and PhD students most of all. It therefore makes good fiscal sense to implement PhD programs in every department of the university. Studio art departments have been able to do this by subscribing to the standardized language that governs the addition of new disciplines: any new discipline in a university has to be conceptually independent, and must endeavor to add to knowledge through new research.³ That last term, *research*, also has an institutional meaning: budgets and hiring are quantified not only by student numbers, but by the number of conference papers, books, and essays each faculty member produces. (It will surprise readers outside the UK system that departments actually keep track of the total number of pages each faculty member has generated. New hires are even considered partly on the basis of the page count of their publications. The bookkeeping involved is monumental, and so is the periodic Research Assessment Exercise, RAE, that compiles the results—see Harrison's chapter in this book for the grisly details.) So research itself carries the specific denotation of a quantified volume of production in refereed journals, academic presses, and conferences. In the UK the RAE and the Arts and Humanities Research Board

(AHRB) have formally adopted *research* and *new knowledge*, making them unavoidable in the working of the university.

As Jones documents in Chapter 2, a cottage industry of theorizing has sprung up with the intention of adapting *research* and *new knowledge* to fit the studio context. This literature has been around for some time—it first appeared in the 1970s—and so it has come to seem natural, as if research and new knowledge were as necessary to the consideration of studio art as terms like *technē*, *eidos*, and *mimesis* are to theories of representation.⁴ Writers like Graeme Sullivan and Donald Schön provide examples of the apparently natural uses of words like *research*—uses that are actually driven by institutionally-motivated uses of those words in art education, administrative documentation, grant applications, and university self-descriptions. For example, although it seems unobjectionable when Schön says “intuition” makes practice into “creative practice,” surely it stretches the meaning of the word *research* to conclude that intuition also makes “creative practice (but not all practice) research, that is to say, the programmatic generation of new knowledge in a defined field.” I think it would be a good idea to try to avoid torturing existing uses of words like “creative” and “intuition,” just so they can fit better with the bureaucratically-motivated senses of words like “research” and “defined field.” The naturalization of *research* concerns me—it has become ubiquitous, and can be found in most chapters of this book.

Several years ago, I was invited to a university in North America to help advise on the creation of a new studio-art PhD program. The words *knowledge* and *research* were used frequently, and without comment. At one point I asked a faculty member if she thought her own artwork produced knowledge. She said, “Yes, and in general I think artwork brings new knowledge into the world.” I asked her what knowledge is produced by a Mondrian painting. She said, more or less, “That isn't a fair question, because Mondrian did not have a rigorous research program.”

To me that epitomizes just how deeply ingrained the UK administrative jargon has become. I assume that instructor finds work less interesting if it is made without a “rigorous research program.” I don't think so, but I didn't ask her, and I can imagine that in time, work done without palpable research might well come to seem less interesting.

The Relation Between Research As It is Used in Studio Art, and Research As It is Used in Other Departments of the University

There are several consequences to the naturalization of *research* and *new knowledge*. First, their naturalization prompts authors to distort their own arguments to fit *research* and *new knowledge*, even when those concepts are incommensurate with the authors' own ideas. Second, among authors who set out to avoid the model of art as research, there is still a tendency to identify research with science—an unhelpful proclivity that is nicely epitomized in a book called *The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*.⁵ (This conflation of research with science is also unhelpful because it crushes the sciences, social sciences, law, medicine, and engineering into a methodological monolith, perpetuating the idea that research is itself a well-defined term.)

In the question-and-answer session at the 2003 conference, it was pointed out that *research* usually means work that is verifiable (or falsifiable) and repeatable. Frayling makes the same point, starting in a common-sense fashion with the dictionary definitions of research. The identification of research with falsifiability, hypothesis, and experiment is made, I think, mainly by scientists and people in the "harder" social sciences such as economics. In literary studies and other humanities, it would be difficult to find people who would describe their research in those terms. Someone else in the audience at the 2003 session pointed out that in the history of modern art, *research* is a debated term. Picasso disputed the claim that his work was research; he presumably hoped to escape from the early twentieth-century scientific paradigm for modern art.⁶

I agree with Jones when he stresses, in Chapter 2, just how much work needs to be done if *research* in the ordinary, scientific sense is to be adopted in the new degrees:

In this early stage of development we need to clarify what is not yet known but necessary to the further development of art and design research. Such an agenda for the development of art and design research, in my view, could usefully include the following: a full literature review; a review of examples of inquiry through artistic endeavor in modern history; a sociology of artists; a theoretical basis for intuition; an advanced theorization of how knowledge may be embodied in or represented by a work of art; an aesthetics of artistic method as distinct from one of artistic style; a comparative methodology of artistic production across cultures; and an international consensus in the definitions and boundaries of those subjects loosely bunched as art and design, so that debate of specialization and interdisciplinarity might be better facilitated.

I wouldn't produce the same list, but I couldn't agree more that work needs to be done: without concerted effort of a kind that has not yet begun, *research* in fine art will not be respected by people elsewhere in the university.⁷

In Chapter 6, Jones advocates looking to the sciences as a model for research in the humanities. I don't agree with that, first because I don't think the majority of artists would find such a model useful (Jones's artistic practice is unusually methodic and experimental, very much like research), and second because I don't think the arts can come up with an understanding of research that will be plausible to scientists—and if the ultimate purpose of thinking about research isn't to foster conversations across university departments, and to promote the new degree as a PhD, then there is little reason to retain the concept of *research* at all. As Victor Burgin says in Chapter 5, "the word 'art' does not appear in dictionary definitions of the word 'research.'"

The Concept of New Knowledge

The idea that studio work produces *new knowledge* is equally problematic. One way to defend the idea that the studio produces knowledge is to invest the materials of art with an intellectual or conceptual status. Donald Schön's interest in "research in action" (described in Chapter 2) is a way of acknowledging that intellectual work is involved in materials. Fair enough, but that also has its vexed history in modern art. It comes, first, from phenomenology as in Husserl (and later, Merleau-Ponty and Bachelard) and from anthropology as in Claude Lévi-Strauss, and it was imported into art history by Hubert Damisch and *October* contributors such as Yve-Alain Bois who have been interested in materiality. The idea is being revived, in an "animist" form, by W. J. T. Mitchell.⁸ Younger scholars in art history, such as Hanneke Grootenboer, have explored the idea that painting, or paint, is a kind of thought. Jones looks elsewhere for criteria—he mentions Gilbert Ryle and Paul Hirst, and it would also be possible to cite Mark Johnson and his phenomenological approach.

There are many possibilities, some from fine art, others from anthropology and phenomenology. But all of them stretch the meaning of *knowledge*, and they are therefore all special pleading. In order for "the production of new knowledge" to make sense as a justification for PhDs in art, it would be necessary to have a university-wide consensus about the expression *new knowledge*. And that, I propose, would be impossible, both because the potential sources within the humanities are so diverse and so poorly correlated, and

because when artists do say their work produces knowledge, they they don't often use that word in a sense analogous to the way scientists and other use it.

Legitimate Uses of Research and New Knowledge

My purpose in this chapter is not to stop all talk about research and new knowledge. For some artists, those terms fit very well. Frayling's examples of artists who conduct research includes Leonardo, Stubbs, and Constable (and Victor Burgin also enlists Constable in Chapter 5) but the idea of research also fits a number of contemporary artists. There are some artists, like the Yes Men or the Critical Art Ensemble, whose work creates knowledge, but even there the purpose is more empowerment and social action than knowledge per se. I have met some studio instructors who think of their work as research in a number of very interesting ways, and I have met a smaller number of studio instructors who think the purpose of their work is to produce new knowledge. (There are other artists—I have met a number in meetings on the new degree—who believe their work produces knowledge but do not want to put that knowledge into words. I will discuss them below.)

In theory there would be places for such art practices in studio-art PhDs. But for the majority of artists, *knowledge* isn't what art produces. Expression, yes. Emotion, passion, aesthetic pleasure, meaning. But not usually knowledge... so do we want to write that concept into the official statements of purpose of the new programs, when it may fit only a tiny minority of students?

No one outside the arts is likely to be persuaded by *any* of the formulations of *research* and *new knowledge* that have appeared in the art literature. No long-term dialogue between the arts and the sciences is likely to be built on the foundation of a shared method of research or a shared purpose of the creation of new knowledge. Second is the fact that for *most studio artists*, the operative words *research* and *new knowledge* are an awkward fit. These new programs deserve better: they deserve a language that is at once full, capacious, accurate, and not borrowed from other disciplines.

In the following sections I briefly survey a half-dozen strategies for avoiding *research* and *new knowledge*. I have numbered them; they are the beginning of an open-ended list. Afterward, I will make some observations about the opportunity this confusion affords for reconsidering the unity of the university.

1. Using *Understanding* Instead of *Knowledge*

Jones mentions *understanding* briefly in Chapter 2, as a synonym for *knowledge*; but the concept was distinguished from knowledge and rejected by Frayling in 1993, as Judith Mottram notes in Chapter 1. As far as I know, there has been no discussion on the differences between knowledge and understanding. The concept of *understanding* is promising because it has a much deeper and broader intellectual history than the current administrative uses of *research*, going back to nineteenth-century German discussions of *Verstehen* in Wilhelm Dilthey and others. Even so, the words *understanding* or *Verstehen* have their own problems: what does not add to our understanding of the world? Even if I repeat what someone else has said verbatim, I am still adding to our cumulative understanding of the world.

It would be good to have a concerted discussion of understanding, beginning with Dilthey's definition, and continuing on to critiques of Dilthey by Heidegger and Gadamer. One issue that would be helpful to raise in this context is Dilthey's use of *Erlebnis* (significant lived experience) alongside *Verstehen*. *Erlebnis* has resonance with current interests in phenomenology and performativity, and might conceivably provide a bridge back to Dilthey's humanism. Perhaps then it would be possible to arrive at a revised sense of *Verstehen* that could underwrite contemporary studio-art programs: but without serious inquiry, it would not be a good idea to adopt *understanding* because it would be likely to become an ill-defined stand-in for *knowledge*.

2. Using *Interpretation* Instead of *Knowledge*

In *Thinking Through Art*, Iain Biggs offers another way to redefine *new knowledge*, citing Paul Ricoeur's idea that "metaphoric language... provides new knowledge, but in a way that makes us arrive at it through the work of interpretation." Interpretation has been widely theorized in hermeneutics, and also in legal theory, so it is a plausible alternate to knowledge.⁹

A problem here might be that the genealogy of Ricoeur's hermeneutics, which includes Gadamer and Dilthey,¹⁰ is used in the humanities but is not an uncontested way of thinking about interpretation; a model based on Ricoeur would therefore be in need of further argument.¹¹ But *interpretation* is significantly broader than *understanding*, and has a much more wide-ranging literature to accompany it. If I were asked to make a choice, it would be interpretation, because it would keep dialogue with other fields open.

3. Using Writing Instead of Research

Kerstin May's excellent essay in *Thinking Through Art*, called "The Gesture of Writing," tries to rethink other basic terms of art education, especially writing (using a little-read book by Vilém Flusser¹²) and the nature of the essay. This, it seems to me, is very promising: aside from asides to Hélène Cixous and Mark C. Taylor, her essay reads like the first two entries in a glossary of studio art instruction. It is conceivable that a sense of studio-art instruction as performed narrative could substitute for the uses of *research*.

The drawbacks here are clear, however, because narrative theory is only a part of literary criticism, and it is not widely used outside of literature. Narratology per se has not been a current concern in literary criticism since the 1980s.¹³ It is not surprising that May has to cite Flusser and Taylor, because most of the writing on essay-writing was done before the poststructuralist critique that is mainly associated with Barthes and Derrida. After poststructuralism, it has seemed impossible to write in a non-fiction way about the essay as a non-fiction genre, because the foundational claim of poststructuralism in this regard is the indissolubility of "creative writing" and "expository writing," or "writing" and "philosophy."¹⁴ Cixous is a central choice, and I could imagine using Gregory Ulmer as a source for a more performative (he would say "heuristic") sense of writing and its involvement in the making of sense.¹⁵ My colleague in Chicago, the artist and theorist Joseph Grigely, puts ideas of Ulmer's to very good effect. Carol Mavor and Joanna Frueh are other writers who are deeply involved in making sense through narrative.¹⁶ Mavor and Frueh are especially pertinent because they write about visual art: Mavor is an historian, and Frueh is an artist. But aside from work like theirs, most theorization of writing is not about visuality.

4. Finding a New Theory to Replace *New Knowledge*

Another possibility is to reject the forced choice between *research* and any single term, and try instead to build a theoretical position for studio-based academic work that could be comparable to theories used in other fields. This happens throughout the book *Thinking Through Art*.

Naren Barfield's essay "Spatial Ontology in Fine Art Practice" is an example; her purpose is to demonstrate that a wide range of concepts of space are relevant to creative practice research. Another is Ken Neil's résumé of some concepts of the Real in Slavoj Žižek and Hal Foster; another is Jim Mooney's meditation on Lacanian and

Levinasian concepts, titled "Painting: Poignancy and Ethics." One purpose of each of these essays is to find a voice for studio art in the university, and to that extent they share a problem, because the concepts they utilize tend to apply to several disciplines but not specifically to visual art. The Real, as Neil expositis it in his essay "Entity and Ground: Visual Arts Practice as Critical Differentiation," is to some degree native to the criticism of visual arts, but psychoanalytic theories of the Real have been deployed in many fields. Mooney's vocabulary is very adventurous, but it has also been used in literary criticism and theology.¹⁷ It is not that these essays aren't tailored to visual art, but that the theories they exposit cannot be used to define studio art specifically.

It has been a trope in art history from the 1970s to the present that the discipline borrows theories from other fields, and that it borrows them after other fields have abandoned them.¹⁸ There is truth to that, and any collection of theories from other fields, brought into studio art instruction, is likely to suffer the same fate: it may be widely useful, but it will not provide the indigenous accounting that is required, according to the logic of the university, of every field.

5. Avoiding *New Knowledge* by Talking about the Nonconceptual

One difference between what happens in studio art and in, say, physics, is that it appears that more of the content of the studio is outside conceptualization: it is nonverbal, uncognized, tacit, extra-linguistic, nonconceptual. Perhaps, then, a theory of advanced degrees in studio art should try to incorporate some sense of what happens outside language and logic. At its least successful, this strategy for avoiding *new knowledge* is the principal example of what Harrison calls "defensive and poorly argued assertions of the difference of artistic concerns and priorities"; but at its best, this strategy can engage one of the foundational properties of art—its visual, non-linguistic nature.

(I am talking here about theories of the *outcome* of artistic work, of the artwork itself, and how it is understood. It is a different matter to ask how artists think about their work, which often involves the idea of uncognized or nonconceptual action. My colleague in Chicago, Frances Whitehead, theorizes artist's knowledge as *tacit knowledge*. That project is different in kind from the claim that the *product* of artistic work is tacit knowledge.¹⁹)

If the nonconceptual experience of visual art is taken as aesthetic, then the problem of the place of studio art can be posed as a version of Kantian aesthetics, and so distinguished from conceptual

judgment. This form of the conceptual / nonconceptual divide is played out in various ways in *Thinking Through Art*. Kenneth Hay's well-researched essay "Concrete Abstractions" describes the Italian philosopher Galvano Della Volpe, who argued for the unity of aesthetic and conceptual by means of a hybrid concept, the "determinate" or "concrete abstraction."²⁰ The relation between Kantian aesthetics and conceptual judgment can be relevant in discussions of studio instruction, but perhaps mainly in contexts where the aesthetic has a central role in the conceptualization of art instruction—and that is not often the case.

A second approach to the nonconceptual is to emphasize its complementary relation to ordinary logical or instrumentalized discourse. The interest may then be in showing the compatibility, interpenetration, interdependence, or fundamental unity of what Jean-François Lyotard called *discours* and *figure*, discourse and the figurative element that accompanies and disrupts it.²¹ Texts that argue this way tend to begin from Derrida's sense of *écriture*, as in Jeff Collins's essay "Derrida's Two Paintings In Painting: A Note On Art, Discourse and the Trace" in *Thinking Through Art*, which summarizes the main arguments.

A third approach might be to draw on theories of nonsense, insanity, and madness as they have been elaborated by Foucault. Perhaps the best author here is the under-utilized Jean-Jacques Lecercle.²² By borrowing from Foucault's analysis of madness, the discourse of art could be positioned as an outsider in relation to norms of society. That would not entail tarnishing art with the old stereotypes of the mad or Saturnine artist: it would be an analysis of what is taken as sense and nonsense. Art instruction could be repositioned in those terms, with interesting results.²³

Those are three possibilities. Authors who work in one way or another across the conceptual / nonconceptual divide cite a very wide range of authors to support their proposals. Hay shows the relation between Della Volpe and Marx, Gramsci, Lucàs, and Croce. Also in *Thinking Through Art*, Clive Cazeau cites Kant, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Sartre in his essay "Categories in Action: Sartre and the Theory-Practice Debate," although it could be argued that again his principal source is really Heidegger. In his essay "Hybrid Texts And Academic Authority-The Wager in Creative Practice Research," Iain Biggs concentrates on "material" versus "meaning" or "thought." Cazeau mentions several pairs of opposites he means to critique: conceptual versus aesthetic, theory versus practice, verbal versus visual, mental versus physical, and objective versus subjective.²⁴

Certainly one challenge for adjudicating the conceptual and the nonconceptual is reining in the synonyms to which they give rise. A more difficult obstacle, I think, is answering accounts of the visual that decline to posit *any* dialectical pairs such as sense / non-sense, for example W.J.T. Mitchell or, in a different way, Gottfried Boehm.²⁵

6. Redefining Research So It Is Not Dependent on the Sciences

Some writers have tried to rework the concept of research specifically so that it responds to the concerns of the humanities, and avoids the empirical, epistemologically limited protocols of its normal usage in the sciences. In this book, the most extensive attempt along these lines is Chapter 3, written by Henk Slager. He argues that artistic research transgresses scientific, humanistic, and social-science kinds of research, taking elements from each and reworking them into a new, unpredictable whole. That is true, but it does not help a university-wide dialogue on research because it will sound incomplete or evasive to people in the sciences and social sciences. It is definitely true that "artistic research seems to continuously thwart academically defined disciplines," and also true that "art knows the hermeneutic questions of the humanities; art is engaged in an empirically scientific method; and art is aware of the commitment and social involvement of the social sciences." (Although I would have said art "sometimes knows," is "sometimes engaged," and "sometimes aware.") But I do not think it is helpful, on the public stage of the university, to propose that "the most intrinsic characteristic of artistic research is based on the continuous transgression of boundaries in order to generate novel, reflexive zones."

This is a problem that is external to the concerns of a self-determining, intellectually independent art department, or an independent art academy or art school. In those terms, configurations like Slager's can be immensely helpful. But it is a serious issue when it comes to the university. I am afraid I agree with Charles Harrison's formulation in Chapter 10: "As a consequence of the fact that science generally provides the most rigorous paradigms of research, claims for rigor in research in the arts tend to be couched in one of two manners: either they are weak imitations of scientific proposals, or they are defensive and poorly argued assertions of the difference of artistic concerns and priorities." I don't find Slager's account "defensive" in the least: it is buoyant and inventive. But it would be seen by people in the sciences as inadequately argued. If studio-art PhDs are to be integrated into university life in North America, and if the road to that integration includes a redefinition

of *research*, then it will be necessary to be very careful about what is meant by “continuous transgression of boundaries.” Not because academic values exclude transgression! —but because it is not clear what a *continuous* transgression might be. What kind of enterprise defines itself as being in continuous, unpredictable motion against other discourses? The closest I know is a kind of simplified reading of Deleuze, in which one hopes for more-or-less continuous vectorial deterritorialization and nomadism, to borrow Deleuze’s terms. In practice, even the most determinedly fluid and transgressive agendas settle down, and it’s an account of that settling that is missing from the hopes of some writers in the arts.

Slager ends with an admirable claim: he says visual art research foes not have a fixed methodology, but “entails a strong belief in a methodologically articulable result founded by operational strategies that cannot be legitimized beforehand.” Perhaps the most promising kinds of redefinitions are those that can achieve a persuasive articulation of their unpredictable results, together with a solid theory demonstrating that their results will, in fact, be unpredictable.

7. Avoiding New Knowledge and Research by Emphasizing Practice

Some of the authors in *Thinking Through Art* are untheoretical in the specific sense that they are interested in providing examples of practice rather than reconceptualizations. Tim O’Riley’s essay called “Representing Illusions” is an example: he mixes descriptions of artworks (Marcel Duchamp’s neglected *Stéréoscopie à la main*, Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rear Window*, Ilya Kabakov’s *The Man Who Flew into His Picture*) literary criticism (Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin), analytic philosophy (G.E. Moore), Russian formalism (I.S. Shklovskii) and film criticism (David Bordwell) to justify the proposition that “a work’s meaning is found neither in the work itself, nor in the hands, eyes or minds of the artist or viewer... it is apparent only in the space between them.” This thesis has been argued, using different points of reference, by Heidegger, Benjamin, Adorno, Arendt, Lacan, and most recently Kaja Silverman. O’Riley’s paper is thus an example of the problems of idiosyncratic citation that concern me in some of the literature defending the studio-art PhD; I will have more to say on that in a moment. But because it is an artist’s statement and not a contribution to visual theory, it would not make sense to describe his mixture of sources as a fault.²⁶

Writing that proceeds by examples, building old arguments using new materials, is an interesting way forward: provided, I think, that it does not present itself as a contribution to theory—because

then the eccentric range of references, and the absence of crucial sources, the interest in performativity and practice over the construction of durable theories, would again put such writing at the margins of academic interest.

I was very glad to see Elizabeth Price’s essay “sidekick” in *Thinking Through Art*, because it is a brilliant example of a particular kind of artist’s writing.²⁷ It is a pure research report. She describes herself building a “boulder” of tape; when she says “sometimes I am not sure myself if the boulder has been made in the way I claim,” she is writing just as a scientist would in a lab notebook: that kind of doubt rarely has a place in publication, but it is definitely in the spirit of scientific research. There are times and places when studio art instruction really does become research-based practice, as opposed to practice-based research. Timothy Emlyn Jones’s own artistic practice works along these lines, because he sets himself carefully framed problems (for example, making sprayed-ink drawings of certain dimensions, in a certain amount of time) and there are other examples, of which Bridget Riley is perhaps the clearest and best known. That particular kind of art practice—I think it derives ultimately from the Bauhaus—is an example of work in which the research and new knowledge models fit nearly perfectly... except that they don’t fit at all, because the result is a *practice*, not a *knowledge*. Writing like Price’s is conceptually clear and rhetorically persuasive even though it does not aim to be a new or reworked theory of any sort. Anyone who has heard Riley talk about her paintings knows the strange feeling her accounts produce: she says things like, “What would happen if I painted in four colors, using barber-pole patterns, in stripes two centimeters in width, and placed the barber poles four centimeters apart?” —and then she answers those apparently scientific questions by simply showing the resulting painting. Riley has a *practice* that mimics research, not a research program that produces knowledge. Her accounts of her work are compelling, but they will not wash on the other side of the university, except as an entertainment, because her use of concepts like *research* is nonsensical from a scientific standpoint. Her *practice*, on the other hand, is fascinating, and so is Price’s.

Practice is a tricky word, because in the US it can signal performative, creative, material-based activity, but in the UK it resonates with the common name for the new degree, “practice-based research.” In that sense I am also in agreement with Jones when he suggests, in Chapter 6, point number seven, that we avoid *practice*, as in the UK expression “practice-based research,” because it seems to echo practice in medicine, law, and nursing. Like any other word that’s going to be made to do a lot of work, *practice* would have

to be examined to see if it can bear the meanings we want to assign to it. If *practice* is to make sense as a substitute for research or new knowledge, it will have to be developed as a series of acts. Otherwise practice is susceptible of being reduced to the artwork itself, which will then appear *as* the practice, as in my next entry.

8. Avoiding New Knowledge and Research by Proposing The Art Object Itself as Knowledge and the Product of Research

In this case, *research* doesn't mean the procedures and methodologies of inquiry, hypothesis, and testing, but the result itself—and that result is, by its nature, non-verbal. The artwork or art event *shows*, as Wittgenstein said, instead of *saying*.

Here it is helpful to use Christopher Frayling's categories of research *into* art and design, research *through* art and design, and research *for* art and design. I will discuss these more fully in Chapter 11, because Frayling's schema assumes the word *research* from the beginning—exactly what I am trying to avoid here. But his schema applies well in this case. His first category, research *into* art and design, is the typical business of art history. The second, research *through* art and design, is the usual configuration of studio-art PhDs, and it involves working with visual art in order to achieve a communicable result. The paradigm of research *through* art requires that the result be articulated *as* research: hence the requirement of a PhD dissertation to accompany the artwork.²⁸ The third category, research *for* art and design, is the one that troubles Frayling. As he puts it, "thinking is, so to speak, *embodied in the artifact*." The goal is no longer knowledge in the way that the university recognizes it but "visual or iconic or imagistic communication."²⁹ As Judith Mottram notes in Chapter 1, this third category had still not appeared in the mid 1990s, and it remains both problematic and rare.

Although Frayling does not cite it, there is a large literature on the idea that thinking can take place *in* and *through* works of visual art. Paintings, in particular, have been said to embody thought, or to have a kind of thinking proper to themselves. Writers as different as Gaston Bachelard, Hubert Damisch, David Freedberg, Louis Marin, Jean-Louis Schefer, and W.J.T. Mitchell have proposed ideas along these lines.³⁰ It wouldn't quite be right to say this field is contested, because I do not think anyone has attempted to correlate the different theories. There is some talk in visual studies about Mitchell's notion of *picture theory* (that pictures produce theory, that they are theory), and some talk in art history about Marin's ways of reading images (that they elicit thoughts about reading, even though they are not legible). There is also talk about the agency of visual art, but

so far those conversations are disconnected. If the art object itself is to be the *new knowledge*, instead of the dissertation, a great deal more work will have to be done to define what kind of thought inheres in the object itself, and what might be said about it.

Notice a distinction here: in this theory, it should not be possible to articulate the pertinent thoughts or arguments that are embodied in the artwork. If that were possible, then the claim would not be that the artwork embodies thought, but that it enables thought—and then the discussion could return to Frayling's second strategy, research *through* art and design, and there would be no need to insist on the artwork itself as the end point of research. Here the claim is that whatever counts as knowledge or research (or any other source of sense or meaning) simply *is* the artwork. No instructor can come along with a clipboard and extract that information.

In my experience, many artists want to believe a version of this claim, because it means that what they produce cannot be reduced to words: but at the same time they are willing to write dissertations about their work, and read what others may write about it. That misunderstands the radical nature of the claim itself.

The Importance of Talking to Everyone in the University

These last few pages suggest some of the ways of working around *research* and *new knowledge*. Before I return to the list, I want to expand a little on the third theme of this essay, the idea that these kinds of questions might help re-ignite discussions about the unity of the university as a whole. One purpose of the contributors to *Thinking Through Art* is to find a force, an imprimatur or status or intellectual weight for the theory of visual art instruction that will be analogous to the operation of theory in neighboring disciplines such as literary studies, philosophy, European sociology, and anthropology. For that reason it is important that each new theory connects to existing theories in other fields. It will matter a great deal that the new theory appears well-researched to specialists in that theory, and that it be shown to be connected at pertinent points to existing writing. To put it in practical terms: the authors in *Thinking Through Art* should expect, or want, to be cited and discussed by scholars in the relevant disciplines, not because such a response would be the best measure of the new work (the new work will form its own public, and adapt to its own purposes), but because interest on the part of the wider university is a condition for being taken to have a position—and finally, a discipline—that speaks to existing concerns.

Idiosyncratic or inadequate citations are a liability. An example of this issue is Gavin Renwick's essay, "Spatial Determinism in the

Canadian North." In suggesting that unnoticed "forms of knowledge" in among the First Nations of Canada exist as alternatives to "the dominant worldview," Renwick cites James Clifford but not the larger literature of compatibility or incompatibility of world views, which began with Nelson Goodman and Benjamin Whorf.³¹ In his introductory section, Renwick quotes Clifford about the possibility of being "freed of the notion of the 'field' as a spatialized... site of research," but that may sound implausible or unhelpfully utopian to scholars in the humanities who work on disciplinarity.³² Renwick's essay depends on a Heideggerian sense of language and meaning and a Heideggerian opposition to what Renwick calls "Technical Rationality." His source is the design theorist Clive Dilnot—not especially widely read as a philosopher—who is himself deeply dependent on Heidegger. To connect Renwick's concerns with ongoing conversations in other disciplines, it would be necessary, I think, to cite Heidegger directly and to bring in pertinent secondary sources. Otherwise Renwick's contribution risks appearing under-researched and therefore less than fully engaged. Several of the most imaginative essays share this difficulty, for example Siun Hanrahan's piece called "Poesis: Making Meaning," which discusses confusion, conversation, and incompleteness, or Mooney's essay on lamella, the sting, and the caress, or Milos Rancovic's essay "Frozen Complexity," on statistical fractals, lossy compression, and algorithmic complexity: they are independent-minded and poetic, but it might be hard to find them a hearing either among academics unconvinced of the place of studio art, or among specialists in the scattered sources they both employ.³³

These essays are, in the usual expression, artists' statements: the very genre that writes its own exclusion from "serious" academic discourse. My sense is that scholars or artists who set out to locate concepts that might be apposite for visual art instruction need to be especially careful that their contributions are specific to visual art instruction, and that they are researched at the level of the pertinent journals and disciplines. Here is how Victor Burgin puts it, and I entirely agree: "Most damagingly, there are widely differing conceptions of the quality of intellectual argument and written expression that is acceptable at PhD level—not only between different departments, but between different faculty within the same department. If this current state of affairs continues that can only undermine student morale and public confidence in the value not only of research degrees in visual arts but of PhD degrees in general."

The Difficulty of Knowing How to Judge the New Theories

One consequence of a new field, whose writing does not yet

have the pliable constraints provided by disciplinary conventions, is that it can be hard to know how the work might be defended or justified. Naren Barfield, for example, sees concepts of space as appropriate contributions to the ontological content of fine art research, complementing its often strong epistemological content. Yet how can she know that it is "desirable" to balance the artist's traditionally high quotient of "epistemological" findings with ontological ones (contributed by spatial concepts), or that "significant and meaningful practice-as-research is contingent on successful reconciliation of the 'epistemic' and 'ontic' states of the practical research project"? Why couldn't it be equally successful to let the ontological languish, or to play off an imbalance between the two sides? I am not disagreeing with the adoption of spatial terms or ontological concerns, but I wonder where the theory comes from that justifies Barfield's interest in reconciling or balancing the two sides. That theory, the one that drives the theory explicit in her text, is elusive: as it well might be given the elusiveness of the entire project of theorizing art practice in these ways. (The project makes sense differently when it is in context of her own art practice.³⁴)

Another missing piece of the jigsaw puzzle is the theory of these theories. So far, the university hasn't had to come to terms with competing versions of self-descriptions of *research* or *new knowledge*. The studio-art PhD might well enjoin those conversations.

9. Replacing *Research* with Doubt Instead of Theory

I want to close with two ideas I find especially promising. Reading *Thinking Through Art*, one can get the impression that a critical mass of writing might help re-attach studio art practice to the university. Yet it is important to guard against the assumption that new discourses, concepts, theories, or methods can meliorate the problem. I find that universities, as they are embodied in actual faculty committees, do not resist studio art because of its lack of theory, even though university rhetoric can make it seem that is the case. In my experience university administrators resist any subject that appears to lack hierarchical instruction: an enterprise does not appear *as* a field or discipline unless it demonstrates a hierarchy of learning from primers through surveys and on to specialized, monographic texts. What keeps studio art on the margins is its apparent lack of stepwise, graduated instruction in college-level courses—knowledge that could be "assessed" (in the UK term) or "graded" (in the North American term) rather than being judged exclusively in studio-art critiques. It seems suspicious that there are relatively few prerequisites in studio art curricula. Can a field really be a legiti-

mate academic discipline if you can jump in at sophomore or junior level, or skip entire media and techniques?

As Stanley Fish has argued, the university wants knowledge—or any reasonable substitute for that concept—that is amenable to academic values of coherence, plausibility, connectedness, fruitfulness, and that is susceptible to concerted, analytic inquiry. None of that seems to pertain to studio-art instruction. This means it may be misleading to say that universities are waiting for Theory, or resisting creativity per se, or devaluing visuality. What they want is hierarchical instruction and academic coherence.

It's true university administrators are sometimes dubious about studio art departments because they seem to lack something that could be called theory; that can be addressed not by discovering new theories but by acknowledging the issue is an open problem whose negotiation can form the very basis of a studio art department. I find it heartening when Biggs calls for "an open acknowledgment of our 'inevitable inadequacy.'" Something of that kind could be a viable starting place for a new discipline—one that would be engaged in questioning its place more systemically than in some established disciplines. Taking doubt of that kind as a founding gesture, a studio art department that grants PhDs could find a very broad consensus among the humanities and sciences—a consensus that might be dramatically reduced or eliminated if the department were founded on any number of specific theorists or theories, from Nietzsche to Della Volpe.

10. Replacing *Research* With the Disjunction between Making and Studying

Like the authors in *Thinking Through Art*, I am engaged in finding ways to argue that art production has a place in the university. The problem is immensely difficult, as the essays in that book testify. As a token of that difficulty I note that not one of the authors addresses the conceptual disjunction between making art and studying it. Most of the contributors are interested in how the making of art can be theorized, but there is another problem that is prior to any talk about art: the experience of making—its exact pedagogy, its methods, knacks, and skills, its feel. In *Thinking Through Art*, only Rancovic and Price mention anything exact about the experience of making, but that experience, rather than conceptualizing the art, is at the root of the incommensurability of studio art production and university life. The essays in *Thinking Through Art* could be taken as a description of a strange activity *that is finished* and requires conceptualization. But in studio art classes, in the university, the

process is not finished—and in fact the process itself is the subject of the classes.

This is a simple point, and each of the authors in *Thinking Through Art* is well aware of it, because they are all art makers. But I think this is where the real conceptual difficulty lies: it is hard enough to find the right words for visual art, but harder still to take the making along with the talk about the making. Let us continue to think about the studio and the university, but not imagine that the problem is adequately addressed until we have found ways of addressing the relation of university life and the act of making art, as opposed to the variegated and often fascinating ways of talking about the relation between the university and finished art.

Three Conclusions

First concerning *research* and *new knowledge*: if you live in the UK or Australia, and the RAE and AHRB are inescapable, and you are interested in setting up a program that grants the DCA (Doctorate in Creative Arts) or PhD, then provide the university with the appropriate texts and then simply ignore what you've written. (If you live in a country that is influenced by the UK—such as Ireland—then do the same.) Words like *research* and *new knowledge* should be confined to administrative documents, and kept out of serious literature. The field is too large, and too full of promise, to be hobbled by narrow and inappropriate administrative jargon. I would be interested to see degrees conferred in any of the configurations named in *Thinking Through Art*; but I do not think it is promising to import the technical language of administrative quality control into the theorization of the studio.

Second, concerning the level of scholarship in the new degrees: no matter how the new degree is configured, it is essential either that the scholarship in the dissertation is at the same level as scholarship that is produced in whatever fields (anthropology, philosophy, art history) the dissertation addresses, or that the dissertation addresses its use of the scholarship of other fields, defending idiosyncratic readings and incomplete research. There is no simple way to make this choice, because it is wholly legitimate for a new field to turn an existing body of scholarship to new and unexpected uses. It can be argued that the art world has already produced its own versions of several discourses; parts of Lacanian psychoanalysis, for example, have been largely remade as film theory, so that the kinds of references to Lacan made in film classes and in studio conversations cannot usually be correlated with the primary texts as they are known to specialists in psychoanalysis. But if a creative-art PhD

thesis cites existing discourses in a manner that would not seem acceptable to a PhD-granting committee in the fields in question—as many in *Thinking Through Art* do—then it is absolutely essential to build in a commentary on the writer's purposes: a commentary that would ideally also demonstrate that the author knows the discourses and chooses to ignore or distort them. Otherwise creative arts PhDs will become isolated within the university.

Third, regarding the challenge posed to the university: I think the new degrees can conceivably become the focus of university-wide debate about the unity or fragmentation of the contemporary university. It would be good to revive those debates, which have lagged slightly after a renaissance in the 1990s.³⁵ My own uncertainty about the concepts or strategies that might replace *research* and *new knowledge* is a reflection of how tricky this subject is. Universities have not been set up to think about the confluence of making and studying, understanding and knowledge, practice-led research and research-led practice, writing and seeing. Studio art practice could be the place to carry those discussions forward. Or it could be just another extension of threadbare concepts from UK pedagogy, twisted to fit the instrumentalized academic practice of contemporary art.

Notes

1 There's a story behind this chapter. It was originally to be published in Katy Macleod and Lin Holdridge's edited volume called *Thinking Through Art: Critical Reflections on Emerging Research* (London: Routledge, 2005). The editors had asked me to write the Afterword, and I read the book in manuscript and wrote a 5,000 word essay. I sent it to them, and I was amazed to hear in response that they thought it was too critical of the contributing authors. I have to say they behaved impeccably: we exchanged several emails, in which I expressed my surprise and suggested that the field of creative-art PhDs needs criticism. Eventually they decided to publish an abbreviated version, shorn of my detailed criticism. Everyone interested in the field should read *Thinking Through Art*; it even contains a different version of Jones's essay (Chapter 2 in this book). Macleod and Holdridge then edited my Afterword as they saw fit (I had nothing to do with their editorial decisions), and printed the shortened version in their book. For the full text of the original version, with more detailed comments on the authors in MacLeod's and Holdridge's anthology, see *The New PhD in Studio Art*, no. 4 in the occasional series called *Printed Project*, edited by James Elkins (Dublin: Sculptor's Society of Ireland, 2005). That publication is hard to find outside of Ireland; I can provide copies on request.

2 For the MPhil, see "A Glossary of Terms" after the Introduction.

3 For an introduction see www.ahrb.ac.uk/research. It is pertinent that the documents that serve as the guides for studio-art PhD departments are often very brief. In 2008, I saw the document that spells out what *research* means in

the Visual Research Centre at the University of Dundee, Scotland: it is a half-page long.

4 A good example of how naturalized the concept of research has become is the collection of papers theorizing the MA and MFA degree, produced in Utrecht in 2008. The editorial introduction to that collection, by Henk Slager, mentions "research" in the third sentence—it's taken for granted that MA programs are about research. Slager uses the word "research" automatically, in sentences like this: "The question of the position of one's own artistic research leads us also to the theme of the research environment." This is despite Slager's own position, articulated in Chapter 3, which corresponds more with several of the alternates I list in this essay. See "A Certain MA-ness," edited by Henk Slager, special issue of *Makhazine: Journal of Artistic Research* [Utrecht School of the Arts] 5 (2008), 3, 4. It is interesting that the word "research" does not occur in the North American definition of the MFA, adopted by the College Art Association, online at www.transartinstitute.org/Downloads/MFA_standards.pdf, and also discussed in Chapter 2.

5 Gibbons et al., *New Production of Knowledge* (London: Sage, 1994).

6 The interview with Picasso is discussed, in context of research in the studio-art PhDs, in Christopher Frayling's "Research in Art and Design," cited in the Introduction.

7 When Jones argues that "a research question may inquire into a problem to be solved; a creative opportunity to be explored or exploited; or an issue to be examined, whether any of these be technical, procedural, philosophical, theoretical, or historical. Whichever of these a research question may be it must also take the form of a query such as: what; what if; how; when; why; why not; for whom; by whom; or any other form of question," I do not think he has a formulation that would provoke assent among philosophers of science—but this is exactly the kind of elaboration that is necessary. (See Chapter 2.) I would say the same of Henk Slager's formulation in Chapter 3: "research as such could be described most adequately as the methodological connection of questions and answers... indefinability, heterogeneity, contingency, and relativity color the trajectory of artistic research. Therefore, artistic research should explicitly request tolerance, an open attitude, and the deployment of multiple models of interpretation." This kind of exploration makes good sense in the humanities, but it does not bring practice-based research closer to research as that concept is understood elsewhere in the university.

8 This is developed, for example, in *What is an Image?*, edited by James Elkins and Maja Naef, in the series Stone Theory Institute, vol. 2 (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, forthcoming).

9 For interpretation in law see for example J. C. Coleman and B. Leiter, "Determinacy, Objectivity and Authority," in *Law and Interpretation*, edited by A. Marmor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), and T.A.O. Endicott, "Putting Interpretation In Its Place," *Law and Philosophy* 13 (1994): 451-79. There is a good introductory article on hermeneutics online, on the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/, accessed September 2008.

10 For Dilthey see *Hermeneutics and the Study of History*, edited by Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); for Gadamer, see *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, translated by David E. Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); for Ricoeur, *The Conflict*

of *Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, translated by Willis Domingo et al. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974).

11 In addition, Biggs ties Ricoeur's formulation to a pseudo-Nietzschean version of the Apollonian-Dionysian duality and to an allegorical reading of Greek modalities—Zeus as “legislative and executive power,” and so forth—which would be hard to square with Ricoeur's hermeneutics.

12 Flusser, *Gesten: Versuch einer Phänomenologie* (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuchverlag, 1994).

13 Mieke Bal's *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, translated by Christine van Boheemen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985) is, as far as I can tell, no longer read, and neither are books like Ihab Hassan's *Paracriticisms: Seven Speculations of the Times* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975).

14 A good source here is *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present*, edited by Philip Lopate (New York: Anchor, 1995 [1994]).

15 For Cixous a good starting place is “Coming to Writing” and *Other Essays*, edited by Deborah Jenson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991); for Ulmer see *Heuretics: The Logic of Invention* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

16 For Mavor see *Reading Boyishly: Roland Barthes, J.M. Barrie, Jacques Henri Lartigue, Marcel Proust, and D.W. Winnicott* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); for Frueh see for example *Erotic Faculties* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996).

17 See further Mooney, “Praxis-Ethics-Erotics,” PhD dissertation, Royal College of Art, 1999, unpublished.

18 The references are in my “The Unease in Art History,” *Qui parle* 6 no. 1 (fall/winter 1992): 113–33.

19 Whitehead and I are co-organizing the third annual Stone Summer Theory Institute, in 2009, on the subject “What do Artists Know?”—we will produce a book with the same title, vol. 3 of the *Stone Theory Institute* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, forthcoming c. 2010). The contributors will include theorists of extra-linguistic, tacit, and otherwise unarticulated knowledge, such as Philip Johnson-Laird and Roy Sorensen. See www.stone-summertheoryinstitute.org, accessed September 2008; Johnson-Laird, *How we Reason* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Sorensen, *Thought Experiments* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

20 Della Volpe, *Critica del Gusto* (1960). Questions might be raised both within and outside this project. In the project's own terms, it is unclear how successful Della Volpe is in distinguishing among media or in finding a concept that might have direct effects on existing ways of talking about studio practice, art theory, and art history. (Form and content remain problematically distinct in many parts of art history: but can the concept of concrete abstraction mend their difference?) In larger terms, it might be asked whether a reconciliation of form and content, or aesthetic response and cognition, is sufficient for understanding the current forms of studio art instruction.

21 Lyotard, *Discours, figure* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971). (The book is famously, notoriously, untranslated.)

22 Lecercle, *Philosophy Through the Looking-Glass: Language, Nonsense, Desire* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court Press, 1985).

23 As far as I know, no one has pursued this possibility. I argue for the nearly complete lack of sense in studio art instruction in my *Why Art Cannot be Taught: A Handbook for Art Students* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001).

24 He cites Schopenhauer on the universal and particular, but interprets the passage as a matter of objectivity and subjectivity, and soon after as an instance of the conceptual and the aesthetic.

25 This is developed in *What is an Image?*, co-edited with Maja Naef, vol. 2 of the *Stone Theory Institute* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, forthcoming), with contributions by Boehm, Mitchell, and others.

26 See O'Riley, “Representing Illusion's Space: Narrative and the Spectator in Fine Art Practice,” PhD dissertation, Chelsea College of Art and Design, The London Institute, 1998, unpublished.

27 See the full report in Price, “sidekick,” PhD dissertation, University of Leeds, 2000, unpublished.

28 The other theoretical source here, aside from Frayling, is Donald Schön, whose notion of *thinking through art* corresponds with Frayling's *research through art* in that both entail written communication of results. See the section “Art and Design Practice Considered as Research” in Chapter 2 for more information on Schön.

29 Frayling, “Research in Art and Design,” 5. Frayling epitomizes the difference by citing something E.M. Forster's aunt said to him: “How can I tell that I think until I see what I say?” Frayling says that exemplifies *research into* art and design. He proposes this sentence to epitomize *research through* art and design: “How can I tell what I think till I see what I make and do?” And he exemplifies *research for* art and design with the sentence: “How can I tell what I am till I see what I make and do?” I am not entirely happy with these three sentences, because *research through* art and design, as well as *research into* art and design, are also about subjectivity. It is also not quite right that the first sentence is “that I think”; it should be “what I think.” And most important, the third and most problematic sentence does not capture the confusion of subjectivities that is often important to claims that artworks possess thought—for example, it would not always be right to say that once an artist sees what she produces, she can then say what she thinks.

30 This is the subject of a work in progress, titled “Can Pictures Think?” (2006).

31 See Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford, 1984). There is also an anthropological literature on this subject beyond Clifford; see for example *The Post-Development Reader*, edited by Rajid Mahnema and Victoria Bawtree (New York: Zed Books, 1997).

32 For further bibliography see my “Nine Modes of Interdisciplinarity in Visual Studies,” reply to Mieke Bal, “Visual Essentialism and the Object of Visual Culture,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 2 no. 2 (2003): 232–37.

33 See Hanrahan, “A Combined Philosophic and Artistic Research Methodology,” PhD diss., 2 vols., University of Ulster, 1996, unpublished.

34 Barfield, “Integrated Artworks: Theory and Practice in Relation to Printmaking and Computers, and the Influence of ‘Non-Euclidean Geometry’ and ‘The Fourth Dimension’ on Developments in Twentieth-Century Pictorial Space,” PhD diss., Camberwell College of Art, 1999, unpublished.

35 References and discussion are in my *Visual Practices Across the University*, with contributions by 35 scholars (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2007).