

With Unease as Predicament

On Knowledge and Knowing in Artistic Research on Music

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Introduction

We are still in a state that Henk Borgdorff – one of the most distinguished scholars discussing artistic research – calls 'unease' regarding the relation between ordinary and practice-based research. You should always use the pronoun 'we' with care, avoiding both the majestic plural and any false generalization. This time, however, it seems reasonable that the pronoun includes all parties involved, not only the community of traditional scholars (with their scepticism about new principles of research) and the advancing groups in the field of artistic research, but also the world outside academia. Of course, there is an optimistic outlook in journals of the field, such as *Journal for Artistic Research*, *Art Et Research*, and the Swedish *ArtMonitor*, but even if these periodicals show great confidence in their work, they are opposed to the 'business as usual' of the university. Yet, when the results of artistic research have been disseminated outside academia, expectations have often not been met, since the common notion of research is that of the natural sciences (and a quite old-fashioned one, for that matter). Researchers, so it seems, are not expected to be too creative.

This article has its point of departure in that unease. The state can also be called 'dissatisfaction', as suggested by two other important names in the field, Michael Biggs and Daniela Büchler (2011). But can such a vague, emotional state be the starting point for an article in a scientific journal such as *STM*? This question has become obsolete, twenty years after the emotional turn of the humanities and sciences. 'Unease' should not be seen as merely an irrelevant feeling; instead it is a most telling state, pregnant with inner conflicts and contradictions. There is reason for Borgdorff to say that the state of productive and reflective unease should be preserved (Borgdorff 2012 p. 73). If artistic research has a contribution to make to the research community at large, it cannot be just more of the same – and that requested 'something else', whatever it is, is likely to be disturbing.

As we shall see, the uneasy relation has much to do with different conceptions of knowledge among the aforementioned parties and in diverging ideas of what we can come to know about the creative process. In our case, with music in focus, the investigation of unease will bring us first into the historical background to the current relation

between science and music (section 1), then to the elucidation of keywords like 'creation' and 'invention' as well as the 'knowability' of these two phenomena (section 2), leading to the pivotal question of knowledge in artistic research in comparison to scholarly studies (sections 3 and 4), and a final attempt to answer the question what the uneasiness really is about (section 5). Except for the historical overview, all these matters concern artistic research in general, and they are treated in relation to the international discussion, however with examples from research on music with special attention to the Swedish situation.

A historical perspective on the relation between music and science

If there were an art where the relation to science and research would be less likely to give birth to unease, then it would be music. In the twentieth century, the sometimes more, sometimes less literally understood notion of the composer (and at times musician) as researcher has been frequent. In the 1930s, John Cage exclaimed that the future of music was an experimental activity to take place in centres where the latest technology was used to produce new works, new material, new art. Electroacoustic music was in many ways the consequence of that urge. Publicly, institutionally financed studios were built, where composers were allowed to investigate all the possibilities that the technology afforded them with, or where they took part in the development of new technologies. These studios even embodied aesthetic principles. The RTF (Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française) studio in Paris served as the experimental workshop for *musique concrète* with its beginnings in the late 1940s, and the NWDR (Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk)¹ studio in Cologne was the playground for *elektronische Musik* from 1953 on. Further, the French word *recherche* can even be found in the name of the most influential modern music institution of the last few decades, namely IRCAM, or Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique. Again, the development of technology goes hand in hand with the avant-garde; a rigorously institutionalized avant-garde, however.²

The notion of the composer as researcher, or at least in close cooperation with scientists, has been ridiculed. In the last few years, musicologists have investigated discursive, ideological and intellectual aspects of the post-war modernism in Sweden as well as its reception (see Broman 2007 and Arvidson 2007). With a notable delay compared with France and West Germany, in 1968 Sweden too saw the birth of an electroacoustic studio (EMS), financed by the Swedish Radio. In the proposals to the broadcasting institution, it was suggested that a research group should be formed, consisting of a composer,

1 From 1956 WDR, Westdeutscher Rundfunk.

2 The standard reference, although still a controversial one, is of course Georgina Born's ethnographic study of IRCAM (Born 1995).

a technician, a scientist (psychologist or neurophysiologist), a mathematical statistician, and a philosopher (Broman 2007 p. 62). Some years earlier, when the first concerts with electroacoustic music had been arranged, the response from the music critics had been devastating. The first reviews were almost always extremely critical, and one of the complaints was precisely about the close connection between music, technology and research. It was bluntly called a 'dehumanizing of music' (Broman 2007 p. 96–108).

However, music as science is an ancient idea. We should travel much further back in the history of music to find the roots of the unease. A first stop is the inclusion of music in the *quadrivium* of the medieval organization of the university, i.e., in the numerically based disciplines. Instead of treating music as a part of what was called *trivium* (grammar, logic and rhetoric), the mathematical aspects of music placed it in *quadrivium* (consisting of arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy). *Trivium* and *quadrivium* taken together were the liberal arts (*artes liberales*), in contrast to the practical or mechanic arts like medicine. It is the theoretical aspects of music that made it into a liberal art at all, not any other characteristic. This in turn had a theological motivation. In St. Augustine's *De Musica*, crucial for the prevalent views on music of the Middle Ages, the importance of music is dependent on its relation to reason, not on its sensual or affective aspects. In the second chapter of the first volume, Augustine writes: *Musica est scientia bene modulandi*, a phrase that can be understood as saying that music is the science (or knowledge) of proper movement (or measure). Music is a science since it is rational, but its sensuality may also transform it into an instrument of the Devil; music as sound may deceive man, make him fall into sin and perdition.

We know that behind Augustine's discussion there is Pythagoreanism at work. This school of thought has long been acknowledged as one of the roots of modern science (for instance by Popper 1963 p. 84) with its foundation in mathematics and its theoretical inclination. In its origin, Pythagorean thought had harmonized the double character of music, its mathematical and affective traits, but that unity was lost later on, or, in the case of Augustine, denounced. In the mathematical foundation of the Pythagorean investigation of music there was a bond between their concept of harmony and the soul. The Italian aesthetician Enrico Fubini describes it in a pertinent way: according to the Pythagorean philosophy 'la musica ha un potere particolare sull'animo grazie all'affinità con la sua essenza costitutiva; non solo, ma la musica può ricostituire l'armonia turbata del nostro animo'³ (Fubini 2002 [1976] p. 22). Here Fubini even alludes to the concept of *catharsis*. However, in Friedrich Kittler's gigantic but unfinished undertaking of an

3 '[M]usic has a special influence over the soul because of the affinity [of music] with its [i.e. the soul's] constitutive essence; what is more, music may reconstitute the disturbed harmony of our soul.'

investigation of the relation between music and mathematics, *Musik und Mathematik*, the German media theorist traced a first break between the sound and the mathematics of music, between the senses and sense, already in the first generations after Pythagoras himself. Around 500 B.C. the 'acousmaticians' were separated from the 'mathematicians' (Kittler 2006 p. 252–53).

This sketchy genealogical exposition has no pretention of being original, but it definitely has to do with an origin that should be taken into account when we try to understand the unease or disharmony focused upon here. The conflict appears to be crucial for science itself, not only in its modern sense, but also in earlier conceptualizations. It serves as background for periods when the study of music had more to do with abstract principles, be they cosmological or compositional, than with sound, music-making and the act of listening. But the origin also serves as corrective to the tendency to ground musical research in a mathematical matrix or a purely theoretical attitude.

Knowability, creation and invention

We have already touched upon some words, vital for the argument, but with a clearly unstable meaning. The medieval *scientia* is not modern science – in Augustine it means that it belongs to reason, not to the instincts or senses (Fubini 2002 p. 63). 'Research' is an attractive and legitimizing word, but it is notoriously ambiguous in the discourse on artistic research. There are, however, more obstacles.

Another problematic expression is that of being creative. An artist should of course be creative, but a scholar can be creative too, as well as a mathematician and a scientist. We are creative even in our daily life. What is, then, the relation between creation and invention? That is not a simple question, and we cannot expect to find any consensus between scholarly and artistic researchers on this matter, not even within the two milieus respectively. So let us leave the current debate on artistic research for a moment. Some years before the emergence of our field, in 1990, the scholar and literary critic George Steiner held a series of lectures which was reworked and, a little more than ten years later, published as *Grammars of Creation* (2001). The title is deceiving; at least if you think that Steiner tries to outline a kind of Chomskyan 'generative grammar' for creativity. No, it has much more to do with grammatical elements like the future tense, the subjunctive and the optative, namely forms of verbs pointing at something non-existent that may or may not come into being.⁴ Creation brings something that did not exist into being.

4 It should be mentioned that Steiner does define grammar, albeit in a slightly surprising way: 'I take grammar to mean the articulate organization of perception, reflection and experience, the nerve-structure of consciousness when it communicates with itself and with others' (2001 p. 5).

According to Steiner creation is a singularity. And the greatest singular creation is, of course, Creation itself. What man creates is always, Steiner says, a response to God's creative act. Steiner's definition is exact but demands comment: according to him, creation is '*that which is enacted freedom and which includes and expresses in its incarnation the presence of what is absent from it or of what could be radically other*' (Steiner 2001 p. 108, emphasis in the original). The act of freedom does not mean that the artist creates totally out of nothing (only the First Maker did that, in the *creatio ex nihilo*), but that the ensuing work of art could as well not have been at all, or that it could have been something else. This way of letting a work come into existence is dependent on a religious matrix, and even if such mental structures are not easily abolished, the notion of the artist being 'god-like' does not seem to be relevant anymore. He or she may be a star, but not similar to a god.

Contrasting to, but not always clearly separable from creation, *invention* is much more common when artistic works are produced, at least according to Steiner. Creation is what Shakespeare and Dante dealt with; ordinary artists invent – if they do not just copy. Invention adds something to an already existing body of work, sometimes due to a new technique or practice. It may be a technique in itself, like the sonnet or the fugue, but inventiveness 'maintains an unbroken dialogue with the extant, psychological as well as material' (Steiner 2001 p. 151). Inventions are not singularities, and others can repeat them. Therefore, whereas creation is a leap or flight (the unpredictable flight of a butterfly), invention is a step or a series of steps. We cannot follow the leap or flight in our earthbound investigations, but we may follow the steps taken, one by one.

The contrast between creation and invention is obvious, and it matters in the relation between art and scholarly research. Research can say how an artist has worked his or her way to the work through studies or sketches; it can show similarities with other works. Research can put the work into a historical context, and it can show how the inventiveness of that work has influenced other artists. But research cannot penetrate the moment of creation; it cannot explain the singularity, since all explanation ends in normalising that which was singular.

It is a question of knowability, of what we can come to know. We must remember that only in the religious notion of a creation out of nothing is there something like a purely creative act. Authors deal with that used and abused material called language. Composers have to do with musical styles, and they may develop new techniques, or perhaps invent new sounds. Choreographers may develop traditions or introduce movements from daily life. All of this is possible to investigate, and a researcher can communicate the knowledge to others. The *creation* lies out of reach (and studies of creativity cannot penetrate it). Steiner illustrates this in another context and with music, being an art op-

posed to language (Steiner 1989 p. 20). Once, we are told, Schumann played an *étude* on the piano, and afterwards he was asked to explain the piece. Without saying a word he played the piece from the start again. That was the only way to know the piece; no knowledge could be extracted from it and further communicated.

Giving voice to tacit knowledge

Here we have another option, namely artistic research. Not being called 'research in the arts', it is included in both the second and third kind of research that Borgdorff has specified under the heading of 'arts research': (1) *research on the arts*, the traditional study of the arts in the humanities, where an artwork (or a more general matter) is the object of an investigation; (2) *research for the arts*, where art is not the object but the objective of the research, possibly leading to new practices; (3) *research in the arts*, where no distinction between investigating subject and investigated object is upheld, but where 'the artistic practice itself is an essential component of both the research process and the research results' (Borgdorff 2012 p. 37–38, cit. p. 38).⁵

The crudest difference between scholarly studies *on* the arts and research *in* the arts is that of a theoretical orientation and a practical inclination respectively. In the first case, a clearly described method and a theoretical underpinning are supposed to guarantee the demands of a scientific investigation leading to knowledge about the object. In the latter case, the method is perhaps only possible to discover in retrospect (if at all), and 'theory' is that which may be reflective in the documentation of the research, or even in the artwork in itself. However, there is clearly practice in 'theoretical' research as well as theory in 'practical' research. If musicology, on the one hand, was for long a discipline where empirical research and musical analysis dominated, things have changed radically with the New Musicology of the 1980s and the theory of performativity. On the other hand, already the assumption that artistic research is opposed to theory is a theoretically grounded stance, however blurred in its formulation.

The core conflict is the question of what kind of knowledge is produced in the different fields. One way of treating this question is to deliberately change the sense of 'knowledge'. If knowledge is understood not as necessarily propositional, but also including 'know-how', then it is obvious that research in the arts produces knowledge. But another option is to give up all claims on knowledge and instead use a notion like 'knowing'. Such a position is forwarded by the philosopher Mark Johnson – also engaged in theoretical questions on artistic research – when developing a theme in John Dewey's

5 Borgdorff refers to an earlier threefold distinction by Christopher Frayling, namely that between 'research into art', 'research for art' and 'research through art' (Frayling 1993).

philosophical pragmatism: 'we must emphasize the *process of knowing*, as contrasted with *knowledge* as a body of true statements' (Johnson 2011 p. 145).

According to Johnson and many others (for instance Biggs and Borgdorff) the production of non-discursive, non-conceptual knowledge is pivotal for arts research in its relation to traditional studies on the arts. In Johnson's terms, this knowledge ought to be called 'knowing', and one of its major instances is the 'embodied knowing': 'we must recognize the role of the body, especially our sensory-motor processes and our emotions and feelings, in our capacity for understanding and knowing' (Johnson 2011 p. 145). He exemplifies this by describing how a painting of a horse may make the beholder realize, through felt qualities, something about the animal that scientific studies cannot afford him with: 'only within this background qualitative unity are we able to select out the specific objects and structures that shape our experience, understanding, and response to the situation' (Johnson 2011 p. 148).

Johnson's foundation of this embodied knowing is described in an earlier work of his, *The Meaning of the Body* (2007). There, Johnson may start out his discussion as a phenomenologist and pragmatist, but in the second part of his book he turns to cognitive science and neuroscience. Since the phenomenological descriptions do not reach into the non-verbal unconscious, Johnson argues, there is a need for another approach. That is found in 'neural maps' having 'topological features' which give rise to patterns for our interaction with the environment (Johnson 2007 p. 135). These patterns are 'image schemes' that bind body and mind together, and they lie behind the rich variety of bodily founded metaphors existing in both everyday language and philosophy: 'From a neural perspective, the conceptual metaphor hypothesis states that neural mapping is the basis for the conceptual mapping that constitutes a conceptual metaphor' (Johnson 2007 p. 167). Language is full of such metaphors. We cannot avoid them. The problem is that Johnson discusses *meaning* in his book on the body, the process where man is able to attach meaning to things around him, whereas in his article he speaks about knowing. What we know is, then, that which has a meaning for us. Is that really all there is to say?

The question of knowledge is crucial for artistic research, definitely when it is labelled 'research in the arts'. If one of its characteristics is an orientation into the field of 'non-discursive and non-conceptual knowledge', then there is a general problem to be found. It is one thing to reflect (discursively) on the conditions of possibility of a non-discursive phenomenon, but it is another thing to show the presence of such non-discursive knowledge. And it is one thing to demonstrate that any scientific investigation is influenced by something like an agreement on what truth is and that all knowledge has a perspective, but another thing to say that research is everything called 'research'.

Actually, we are back in the Schumann example: if the only way to approach a piece of music is to make it present, to demonstrate it, then music would be out of reach for any kind of investigation. That is clearly not the case.

Explicit knowledge brought to aesthetic practice

The notion that artistic research first and foremost has to do with some kind of esoteric knowledge or knowing, lying outside rationality and beyond language, is of course an illusion. However, George Steiner claimed that *creation* lies outside the knowable, and that we can only approach it in the presence of the work. What is more, he also insists that there is no development within the reign of creation: one work of art does not make another work invalid in the same way a scientific theory can replace another one (Steiner 2001 p. 200–15). Even if Beethoven in many ways expanded the field of possibilities in music, his Piano Concerto in C minor did not replace Mozart's Piano Concerto in C minor. There are, of course, ups and downs on the stock market of music. The canon is no stable construction. But at least the author of this article finds Steiner right in his supposition: one singularity does not outdo another. In this sense, creation is out of reach.

Nevertheless, there are already many instances of artistic research where explicit knowledge definitely has been expanded as well as used, even long before the term 'artistic research' was born and the field was declared to be opened up. For instance, we have the boom of early music in the 1970s, where the notion of authentic performance was made possible through research outside the academy. Nicolaus Harnoncourt wrote articles and books. More often, conductors, ensemble leaders and musicians just combined a study of sources for performance practice and other documents with a new aesthetic evaluation. Reinhard Goebel's and John Eliot Gardiner's re-readings of works in the mainstream repertoire of the Baroque were no mere whim. Christopher Hogwood has indeed written scholarly works, but he does not hold a PhD. However, one could say that the great change in the early music movement, which happened when 'authentic performance' was replaced by 'historically informed performance' in the 1990s, was a consequence of a confrontation with the academic world. Richard Taruskin's outbreak in the article 'The Pastness of the Present and the Presence of the Past' had a great impact. (I may be mistaken, but I do think that the aesthetic impulses could have been tamed by too great a critical reflection on the impossibility of playing in an authentic way. Research, well-grounded academic research, can definitely be a straightjacket on creativity.)

Another example of artistic research outside the discipline is Charles Rosen's great work *The Romantic Generation*. Rosen was indeed an academic, but he took his PhD in Romance languages. His study on Romanticism would have been impossible without his

activity as a pianist. So many of his reflections and observations seem to have appeared when he played the piano. Already in the first chapter of his book, Rosen discusses the importance of pedalling and fingering for the Romantic piano sound (Rosen 1995 p. 1–40). Of course, it should not be forgotten that many a distinguished musicologist, perhaps a majority, has a significant competence in playing instruments, in composing or in singing alongside the scholarly skills – leading to insights into the musical works that would have been impossible without this practical experience.

If we proceed to the composers, it is hard to separate the compositions of Arnold Schoenberg from his intellectual work, spanning from *Harmonielehre* to *Style and Idea*. Pierre Boulez's long series of articles, Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Texte* are extraordinary examples of a musical thinking turning into some kind of research, formulated in an exact prose. Milton Babbitt's development of set theory brought about a both compositional and analytical procedure – but he had to wait until 1992 for his PhD, gained by the paper 'The Function of Set Structure in the Twelve-Tone System', written in 1946.

These are only examples. An exhaustive list on research in music and innovative musicology would lead to a new branch of the history of music.

But let us turn to an instance of artistic research in Sweden, just to see what kind of knowledge it has produced. Again, a complete inventory would be out of place. Since the composer has been the kind of musician focused upon in this article, we should look for the composer as researcher. The only Swedish composer to have obtained the doctoral degree in artistic research is Hans Gefors,⁶ Sweden's now internationally most renowned opera composer. At his public defence in 2011, he presented the 'car radio opera' *Själens rening genom lek och skoj* and the dissertation *Operans dubbla tidsförlopp. Musikdramaturgin i bilradiooperan 'Själens rening genom lek och skoj'* (The Twofold Rhythm of Duration in Opera: The Musical Dramaturgy of the Car Radio Opera 'Cleansing of the Soul through Fun and Games'). In the dissertation we find two important contributions that not only shed light upon Gefors's musical aesthetics and compositional technique, but that could also be useful in the aesthetic and analytic reflection on opera in general. Firstly, he adopts the screenwriter instructor Robert McKee's notion of 'beat', meaning 'an exchange of behaviour in action/reaction' in the dramatic structure, developing a beat analysis (*steganalys*) for opera where layers in music and plot are interconnected (Gefors citing McKee's book *Story* in Gefors 2011 p. 80). Secondly, introducing the con-

6 That is the situation when writing this article, but there are other Swedish composers doing artistic research as doctoral students, such as Kim Hedås, Fredrik Hedelin, Kent Olofsson and Staffan Storm. Furthermore, the musician and composer Henrik Frisk should be mentioned in this context, having written a thesis on the interaction between computer and musician (2008), as well as Anders-Petter Andersson's thesis on interactive composition (2012). *Andersson's thesis is reviewed on p. 139-141 of this issue of STM. (Ed.)*

cept of second-order melody (*melodi²*), meaning a phrasing not of a series of notes, but a series of sections (a parallel to the large-scale rhythms), Gefors outlines a method of both controlling what he has achieved and a way of structuring the work dramatically.

Both methods are possible to use in the creative process, even if Gefors himself says that they are of help only in the last phases of his work. The compositional process is then not just a question of producing musical structures, but also of choosing between different possibilities – Beethoven's sketches are a well-known example. Therefore, the step from conventional study of sketches to artistic research on the work process is not far. This may be offensive to the more radical proponents of artistic research. When the authors of the manifesto *The Artistic Turn* exclaim that in relation to the ordinary field of research, artistic research is a 'deterritorialization' (a concept taken from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, meaning the dismantling of an order), this is only partly true. They write: 'Artistic research resides in the recording, expression and transmission of the artist's research trajectory: his or her knowledge, wanderings, and doubts concerning exploration and experimentation. It is only through the artist that certain new insights into otherwise tacit and implicit knowledge can be gleaned and only through the artist-researcher remaining an artist while pursuing these insights that he or she will be able to enrich the existing inquiries carried out by scientific researchers' (Coessens et al. 2009 p. 88). The great difference is of course that the researchers are the artists themselves, but both kinds of researchers – artistic and scholarly – have to reflect on the traces of the creative process. They have to objectify.

Aisthesis as unruly element

In an interesting article, the philosopher Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback argues that the discussion on art and research was intensified at the same time as Europe was redefined as a knowledge-based society (2008 p. 18). She is worried about a tendency to submit the humanities to the techno-scientific image of reality, i.e., to see the procedures and foundation of the natural sciences as the only valid ones. Judging by the positions accounted for in the present article, this does not seem to be the main problem among the theoretical attitudes within artistic research. Even if Schuback warns about the academization of art, her major concern is to save theoretical thinking from the dangers that appear in research of any kind – namely the urge to be totally contemporary, alongside with the world growing more and more scientific. Instead she sees a parallel between theory and art: 'Both begin in the intensity of an *Auseinandersetzung* with the eventful character of life in a life's event. This *Auseinandersetzung* unites "art" and "theory" in a thought event, that can provisionally be described as a *thinking-feeling*, or *pensar-sentir*, to recall an expression of the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa' (Schuback 2008 p. 24).

So, thinking and artistic creativity can be unified, when the circumstances are good. It would further not be far-fetched to assume that artistic research should have an element of creativity. However, artworks may be important elements in the investigation, crucial for the results, but it does not have to be an artwork that is praised in the art world (that is, different institutions in a wide sense, from audience and critics to museums and market).⁷ Artistic research has not as its objective to produce good artworks; that may only be a side effect. It does not suffice to only produce an artwork, be it full of reflective levels, be it full of insight. Such an activity should take place outside academia. It is understandable, to some extent even legitimate, that artistic research is a way of creating new works of art, not least in the field of contemporary music, where the repertoire played in concert halls is growing smaller and older, where there are fewer commissions made, where grants have been reduced.⁸ In the US, the advanced art music might have been extinguished without the shelter given by higher education and universities (remember Babbitt's parallel between composition and scientific research in his famous essay 'The Composer as Specialist' 1958). Even though most authors in such a milestone in artistic research as *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts* (2011) still see the written text as a necessary part of the research along with the artistic practice, much of the theoretical discussion on the 'essence' of artistic research (here, research *in* the arts) concerns its non-discursive and non-conceptual traits. In other words, we can expect that voices will soon be heard, calling for a release from writing texts. An alternative is that the textual part consists of a documentation of the artistic practice, or a portfolio where one finds an artist's journal along with other documents.⁹

Such a development would be very unsatisfying, not only from a point of view where research is understood in a restrictive way, but also because of the loss of legitimacy. Instead, one of the great tasks of an activity that is not only meant to investigate a reign beyond language (or even beyond meaning), but which also wants to call itself research, would be to expand the scope of language and to find new ways of letting the world

7 In 2010, the exhibition 'Modernauställningen 2010' at the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm gave an overview of new Swedish art and included then a room for artists that were engaged in artistic research. The reviews were most often negative, even hostile in their judgements of the 'research room', even if the reviewer in the biggest morning paper, *Dagens Nyheter*, was quite enthusiastic. This is, until now, the major example of the reception of research in the arts in Sweden, with a clearly negative tendency, only to be followed by that notorious criticism in the newspapers concerning anything academic.

8 In Sweden, several institutional changes have worsened the prospects for young composers. The Swedish National Concert Agency (Svenska Rikskonserter), for decades one of the most important commissioners of new music, was shut down in 2010 (with some of its functions taken over by Music Development and Heritage Sweden, Statens Musikverk). The lifelong guarantee income for extraordinary artists, authors, composers etc. ceased to be renewed in the same year. Both changes were consequences of the Swedish Committee of Inquiry on Cultural Policy, *Kulturutredningen*, appointed by the Swedish Government (centre-right) in June 2007 (see *Betänkande av Kulturutredningen*, SOU 2009:16).

9 For a discussion of this problem, see Henrik Karlsson 2002. His description of the field is still relevant.

come into word, be formulated in language. Schumann's return to the piano, explaining his piece of music through playing it a second time, is not the act of a researcher but of a composer. However, where the relation between music and language is concerned, Schumann did not only know how to put music to words; he also knew, in his criticism, how to put music *into* words.

Schumann's orientation was true to the first formulation of aesthetics as discipline, namely in Baumgarten's aesthetics, which was a plea for sensuous knowledge, *cognitio sensitiva*. Such knowledge had its greatest manifestation in the arts, but it was not incompatible with language – after all, poetry is one of the arts and it was the main example in Baumgarten's formulation of the new discipline. The current tendency in philosophical aesthetics to return to the earliest phases of aesthetics (for instance Böhme 2001 and Wallenstein 2008) has repercussions on our understanding of artistic research. When the philosopher Sven-Olov Wallenstein comments on Baumgarten's notion of a 'beautiful plenitude' (*venusta plenitudo*) in the aesthetic presentation of things, then he points at an aesthetic field that is primordial in relation to reason but not separated from thought (Wallenstein 2008 p. 69). This has to do with the new ways of the world's coming into word: at this point, there is no essential difference between thought and creativity; the rift between reflective thought and sensuous presentation has not yet occurred.

It is therefore not by chance that references to Baumgarten have appeared in the discussion on artistic research of late (see Kjörup 2006 and Borgdorff 2012). Here, the key is Baumgarten's notion of aesthetics as an *ars analogon rationis*, an art of thinking in analogy with rationality. Sensuous knowledge is, then, seen in analogy with logical knowledge, but this analogy does not necessarily imply only a lower level, instead it can be described as a parallel structure in its own right (Wallenstein 2008 p. 69). One may add that it is not some kind of irrational knowledge, either, if such a paradox may be allowed.

The other opposition put out of play, namely that between reflective language and the sensuous, should also be commented on. Language is not opposed to sensuous ideas, even if the relationship must be said to have poetic characteristics. For research in non-linguistic arts, this circumstance is not an obstacle; on the contrary, it makes possible an approach to writing that in itself harbours the sensuous knowledge otherwise put beyond reach in the mode of logical thought.¹⁰

10 The author may perhaps be excused for mentioning that exactly such an approach can be found in the 'attuned verbalization' suggested in Wallrup (forthcoming), where the relation between linguistic interpretation and the musical work of art is discussed (Chapt. 3).

If we would like to find out why there is an uneasy state, and not just see it as something that we can be released from when we have grown older and wiser, then there is reason to dwell upon the role of the aesthetic. *Aisthesis* has brought unease into the different systems: to conventional research since it is non-conceptual, to the emerging theory of artistic research since it does not mystify the knowledge production, but also to an art world where the artist sometimes looks more like an investigator than someone who deals with creation or even invention. Here we find the different and competing concepts of knowledge, the never ending questioning about what we can know about creation, but also the possibility of keeping the search of research and artistic activities alive in a primordial state that is characterised by a conflicting harmony. 'Opposition brings concord. Out of discord comes the fairest harmony', Heraclitus said.¹¹ Let us stay uneasy.¹²

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11 This is Heraclitus' fragment no. 8, to be found in English translation in Wheelwright 1966 p. 77.

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Abstract

With Unease as Predicament: On Knowledge and Knowing in Artistic Research on Music

The point of departure is Henk Borgdorff's characterization of the relation between the communities of traditional scholars and of artistic researchers as uneasy. With a short look at the relationship between music and science historically, this unease is revealed to be recurrent, but the origin in Pythagorean thought can serve as a corrective to a purely theoretical attitude. The question of knowledge is pivotal. George Steiner has suggested that the springs of creation lie beyond reach for research. However, artistic research seems to promise a better understanding of the creative process. This kind of research is often, by the researchers themselves, said to fathom tacit, non-discursive, even ineffable knowledge, as opposed to the explicit knowledge of ordinary research. In the article, it is however argued that such an opposition cannot be upheld: artistic research gives voice to tacit knowledge, making it explicit; scholarly studies on music are not closed to the aesthetic impulse; in both fields, explicit knowledge has excited aesthetic expression. Finally, instead of seeing reflective discourse as a problem in artistic research, it is suggested that new ways of letting the world be formulated in language should be striven for. Here, the aesthetic impulse brings a productive unease to both theory and practice.

Keywords

Artistic research, sensuous knowledge, knowability, creativity, innovation, aesthetic singularity.

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