

Journal for Artistic Research (JAR)

Submission Guidelines Issue 0

Thank you very much for considering publication in JAR's inaugural issue 0.

JAR is developing a new, open access publication format for artistic research, which this guide will introduce to you. Since we are developing the software alongside the content, we cannot demonstrate precisely how it will work. Nevertheless we are confident that this new publishing format will be feasible and of interest to you.

Submitting an Exposition

We invite you to submit an article – or an exposition, as we call it – for publication in JAR issue 0, which is planned to be released towards the end of 2010. Given the short time and the novelty of the JAR software, one JAR editor will work closely with you to prepare content for approval from your ideas and material.

Keeping in mind that JAR wants to expose artistic research, the size of an exposition is not prescribed. More important than the size is that you have enough material to make the point you actually want to make. How you do this, however, is completely up to you.

We propose to develop your exposition using these following steps:

1. Identification of a project – the title of the exposition

This can be the name of a performance, composition, exhibition etc., but it can also be an issue you discovered across a number of works. Together with the title we require a short abstract and, optionally, a media file (image, sound, video) that can represent the exposition. (Thumbnail)

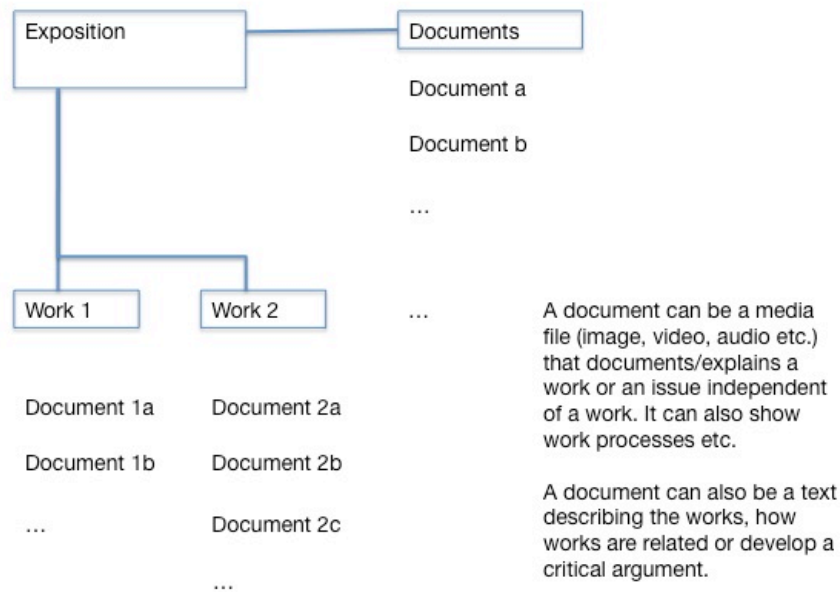
2. Identification of your material – works and documents

It might be easiest to first look at the art works you will need for your exposition. Name the works and put all documents that you require to convey the work into individual folders per work.

There might be additional documents that don't belong to any work. Place these in an extra folder.

You can create additional documentations or material, which bring out more of the research aspect.

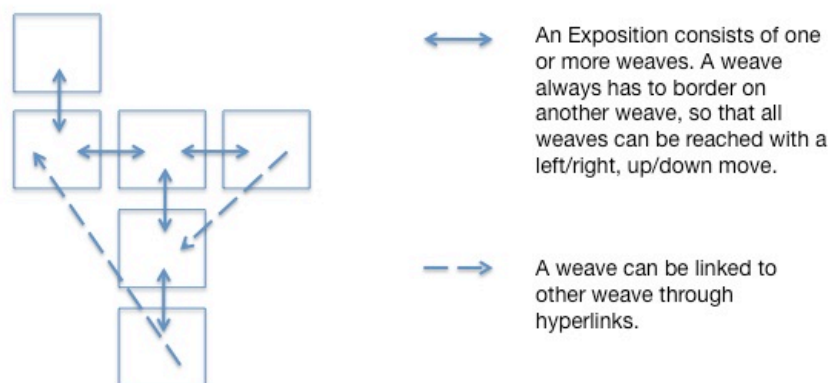
RC Exposition Data Structure



3. Weaving your exposition

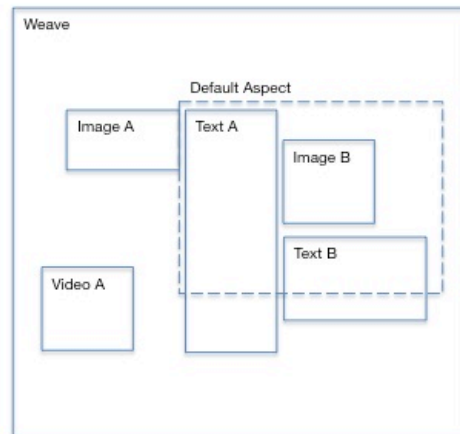
Each JAR exposition consists of one or more pages – called 'weaves' in the context of JAR. How many weaves do you need?

RC Weave Map



Imagine you take a blank sheet of paper for each weave and that your works, documents and textual elements are displayed in rectangular boxes anywhere on the weave (without overlapping). What would you place where?

RC Weave



Documents and texts are displayed on a weave through tools. The most common tool is the display tool.

Tools can be arranged on the weave at will as long as they do not overlap. They are always rectangular, but their size can be adjusted.

The Default Aspect indicates which tools are visible when the user navigates to a weave. Note: only the upper left corner of an aspect is fixed; its size may vary.

You can design your weave(s) on a sheet of paper (which you scan/photograph) or in Word, Photoshop etc. so that we understand what you want to have where.

4. Fine-tuning

When your editor has your exposition information, works/documents and your weave design(s), he/she will prepare a draft of your exposition for you. At this stage, the exposition will not be publically accessible and you will have the chance to feedback/change your exposition before it is made public. We will also supply questions in regard to more detailed aspects, which are difficult to raise beforehand.

Given that JAR is new and still in development, we, the editors, want to work closely with you – please feel free to ask any question or discuss options with your editor. Towards the end of this phase we will also be asking reviewers to give feedback on your exposition so that it can be improved and we can learn what to pay attention to for future JAR issues.

In case you are unhappy with our work or with the Research Catalogue software, please tell us about it; it is possible to withdraw from the project at any point if you feel the environment is not suitable for you and your work.

If you choose to contribute to JAR 0, please try to help us by submitting your work on time and by responding to our emails. Thank you!

Dates:

End August 2010: Agreement to contribute to JAR 0 with title and abstract.

End September 2010: Please have all material (1 – 3) ready by then.

During October/November 2010: Fine-tuning and reviewing phase.

December 2010: JAR Issue 0 published.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the editor who has approached you or the Editor in Chief, Michael Schwab, michael.schwab@jar-online.net

See www.jar-online.net for more information.

Questions & Answers

What is the point of JAR?

Many people in countless fields and disciplines, who carry out artistic research, find it difficult to reach out to a community of likeminded individuals. Although traditional formats such as exhibitions, performances or book publications offer valid ways to present research, the question of research in the arts is often not taken seriously enough.

Since the early 1990s artistic research has become accepted in the context of art academies and universities. Depending on the discipline and country in which a researcher is working, numerous and varied restrictions apply making it difficult to connect the kinds of research that happen within the academy to those from without.

The key problem is 'writing' and its authority. Academic researchers often feel that they have to write about their work, a process that is often not in keeping with their artistic intentions. Researchers outside the academy on the other hand often find that what they consider 'writing' may be accepted as art but not necessarily as research when it comes to an institutional engagement. In both cases, it is the notion of 'research' that suffers when it is either not artistic or not explicit enough.

The Journal for Artistic Research seeks to address this problem by offering a new format for the 'writing' of artistic research, where art works and practices can be much more integrated in or even replace traditional text while key academic requirements (such as quality assessment through peer-reviewing processes) remain in place. We hope that with JAR the potential and the relevance of research in art can be further developed.

If you see yourself as artist, musician or performer who works outside traditional academic research environments, we would like to ask you to think about ways in which you can foreground the research in your work, since artworks do not always speak for themselves; if you work in academic settings, we ask you to think 'outside of the box' and experiment with alternative, more suitable and more artistic modes of presenting your research than you would usually find acceptable. In both cases, however, it is not our intention to force anyone into exposing their research in a way they don't feel comfortable with; JAR does not want to be different for the sake of difference.

Who is behind JAR?

JAR is published by the Society for Artistic Research (SAR). The Society for Artistic Research was founded on March 6, 2010 in Berne, Switzerland. It is an independent, non-profit association set up for the sole purpose of publishing the Journal for Artistic Research.

All executive and editorial board members are listed here: <http://www.jar-online.net/people.html>

JAR is developed and sustained through SAR membership fees (both institutional and individual). A list of our current institutional members can be seen at the bottom of this page: <http://www.jar-online.net/>

Funding by the Dutch government (SIA, <http://www.innovatie-alliantie.nl/?id=492>) pays for the improvement of the software (DILPS), which is developed by the Hochschule für Gestaltung, Karlsruhe, Germany.

What is 'artistic research' in the context of JAR?

We chose to contact you, because we think that your work adds a relevant perspective to the field of artistic research.

'Artistic' in the context of JAR does not only mean that something is art; JAR sees artistic modes of working potentially in all disciplines and walks of life. Often these include questions of presentation or alternative, speculative logics that are required to develop and convey a particular idea. As long as such artistic modes of working are essential to the research, JAR is the place for their publication.

At the same time, JAR does not assume that all artistic production can automatically be understood as research; the notion of 'research' complicates artistic practice and opens up the relevance of such practice towards an enhancement or even a transformation of understanding. Without defining what 'understanding' can actually be, JAR features artistic practices that push, develop or question the limits of knowledge.

Why JAR is innovative?

Although JAR offers a sustainable environment for the publication of artistic research, it does not prescribe how this has to happen. We want to give you as much control as possible with regard the presentation of the research. This responsibility is both an opportunity and a burden.

In same way as a dance performance is prepared for a particular stage or an arrangement is made for a particular ensemble, research published in JAR needs to be prepared with JAR in mind. There is no default model for the publication of artistic research; every project needs a decision towards the best possible presentation of the material however implicit this may be.

Without wanting to say that existing material cannot be used or re-used in JAR, a 'passive' repetition of material prepared for another context is deemed questionable although, strictly speaking, not impossible. For example, the written part of a PhD thesis uploaded as pdf potentially engages very little with the various layers of meaning of the material, while working perfectly well in the context of a PhD exam; a recording of a performance made for television might 'gloss over' some of the more difficult passages rather than engaging exactly with those; an installation made for a museum might have to be changed in order to be re-made as JAR contribution.

As publication and dissemination environment, JAR has to be flexible enough to cater for the requirements of the individual research projects. The reviewing processes have to take the question of 'presentation' into account and accept that not all knowledge conveyed is propositional. The question of what counts as 'academic' and what counts as 'artistic' has to be re-addressed.

What are the aims of JAR issue 0?

The main goal of the Issue 0 is to present a rich and multi-faceted selection of high-quality expositions. Hereby, JAR aims at diversity in terms of gender, geography, approach and topics. Issue 0 will not merely launch the journal, but will simultaneously launch the discussion regarding what may be considered as artistic research. The goal is to open up discussion instead of closing it down. In this way we hope to communicate an open and inclusive image to our audience and future contributors – both in academia and the art world.

Issue 0 aims at including a representative balance of knowledge formats, such as non-textual contributions, be they visual, performative, multimedia, site specific, invisible, spatial etc. This multiplicity will help us in fine-tuning the innovative JAR technology and the editorial processes that will introduce new standards/structures for peer-reviewing in artistic research.

In the long run, the journal aims at becoming a highly esteemed publishing platform both for scientists and artists engaged in artistic research. JAR intends to support the development of artistic research and to increase its credibility as well as to distribute its findings worldwide.

What is the Research Catalogue (RC)?

The Research Catalogue (RC) is the software environment into which artistic research contributions are uploaded and within which their presentation is designed. The RC is a searchable, documentary database of artistic research work and its exposition. It is an inclusive, open-ended, bottom-up research tool that can function on its own without JAR and its peer-reviewing agenda. JAR merely indexes and links to those RC entries that it wants to flag up and publish.

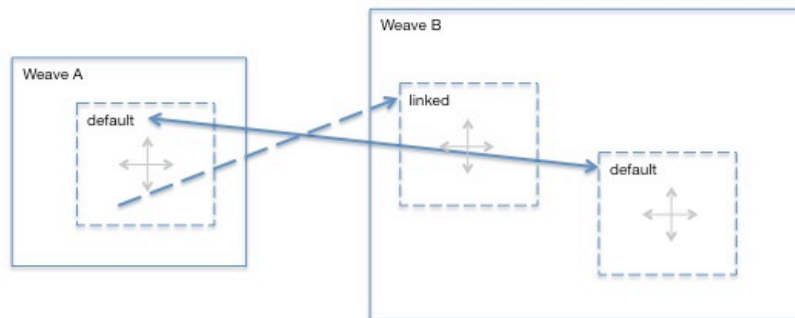
The RC will be launched with JAR issue 0, i.e. all RC entries will also be in JAR. Very quickly we expect the RC to grow exponentially as it is used for purposes outside of JAR, while JAR is set to feature the contributions that it considers best and most interesting.

How will the RC work?

The RC uses an enhanced version of a software for media repositories (Dilps). This allows for a detailed structuring of all material required for a publication. This is an unusual feature for academic journals and repositories, which tend to publish articles in a single file (pdf or html). As a consequence, the RC places much more emphasis on media files and their relation, which can be navigated even without the use of text. On the downside, the RC requires an explicit structuring of all material should it not just be used as illustration.

In the context of the RC, the equivalent to a journal article is an exposition. Expositions contain one or more weaves, the RC term for 'pages' that weave together multi-media content. The weaves can be navigated (up/down, left/right), but they can also be hyperlinked.

RC Weave Aspects



Weaves can be bigger than the window through which they can be seen in JAR. The visible part of the weave is called the **aspect**. Using the scroll bars the aspect can be moved around on the weave.

Each weave has a default aspect – this is the aspect that is first visible when the weave is navigated to.

Using a hyperlink, the aspect can be moved to any other place on the same or another weave.

The size of the aspect is dependant on the screen resolution and browser setting of the person looking at an exposition.

Aspects are defined through their upper left corner.

Any content (text, image, video, audio) is displayed in rectangular boxes called 'tools' that are placed on a weave – tools, because the content is displayed differently if a different tool is used or if a tool is configured differently.

RC Display Tool

Documents are displayed on a weave using the display tool.

Display Tool Options

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Media
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Subtitle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rights
<input type="checkbox"/>	Abstract
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Metadata
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Metadata in Window

The display tool offers a number of options that allow to choose which document metadata should be displayed on the weave. The metadata is part of the document and need not be entered again when the weave is assembled.

For instance, a media file may be displayed with all metadata underneath it; it may also be displayed without any metadata, while the abstract this time without the media is displayed in a second display tool to the right of the media file.

Because the RC software will allow the upload of media files and the creation of expositions, it will be at the heart of JAR.

The software is being developed at the moment. We expect a beta-version to be available from October 2010.

What is meant by 'exposition'?

The Journal for Artistic Research (JAR) works from the understanding that art on its own might or might not be research, but that for this research to appear some form of transformational work is required. A number of notions have been proposed to describe such transformation of artistic practice into research:

Exposure: In the RC, research aspects of works of art can be foreground or exposed, shifting an emphasis or highlighting particular aspects.

Staging: In the RC, artistic work is staged as research; staging implies that the form of the work is transformed into a 'stage form' that performs its research contribution.

Performance: Like 'staging', 'performance' indicates the utilization of a different register.

Translation: An artwork is translated into to language of a research catalogue; form and elements of the work might shift, whilst meaning is conveyed.

Reflection: What is invested in the work is reflected upon through additional ideas and concepts potentially 'dormant' in the work that increase the relevance and/or understanding of the work.

Unfolding: A research aspect is unfolded as the work is entered into the research catalogue.

Curation: Information is arranged on the exposition based on decisions one might also take when an exhibition is put together.

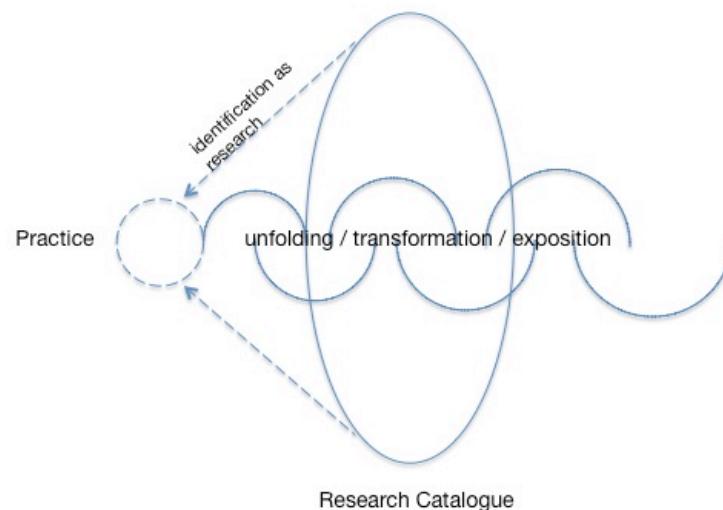
Visualization/Sonification: Engagement with a change in the presentation format that opens up new modes of understanding.

These and other ideas led to the conception of the Research Catalogue and its exposition format. The Research Catalogue software is meant to support as good as possible the creating of exposition, that is the staging, performance, unfolding... of artistic research.

Overall, the idea behind the Research Catalogue is that a simple documentation of a work in the RC does not suffice. 'Passive' documentation implies that the work 'speaks for itself' despite the fact that as document the work is strictly speaking not present and cannot be experienced in its full potential. Documentation is a limitation that has the benefit of making the work accessible in a removed place or in a different time. Only if the documentation engages with its 'limitation' can research be exposed, staged, performed, translated, reflected or unfolded.

JAR wants to go beyond traditional modes of (critical) writing that uses works of art as illustration without engaging artistically with its potential at the same time as some form of writing, or discursivity is seen as necessary in the context of research. (Such writing or discursivity need not be textual; it can take the form of visual collages, video recordings in which the work is handled etc.)

Exposing Artistic Research



Original works of art/practice cannot directly be featured in JAR. Rather, the way in which documents expose the work/practice as research is crucial, because from the vantage point exposed in the Research Catalogue can a practice be identified as research.

What are the limits imposed by the design of JAR?

Although JAR wants to engage with multimedia and the design of contributions, the software that is used is neither a web design tool nor can more complex scripting functions be used. This is due to the fact that JAR wants to be a sustainable platform that will work in the years to come independent of new browser generations.

JAR will use a default plain 'house style' throughout, although expositions, weaves and tools can divert from this. For example, a background image/colour can be used for each weave, font type and size can be adjusted and media files exactly positioned.

We want to work with you to get the best possible design for your exposition, but we ask you to understand that not everything will be possible. Like with any other medium, limitations are not necessarily negative – much can also be enabled with and against what seems to be sub-ideal.

What language can my exposition be in?

JAR supports multiple languages, and is committed to publishing the results of artistic research in the language of their creators. However, for the sake of access, it is our intention that JAR includes an English version of all expositions. Unfortunately, we cannot pay for any translations or subtitling of video/film works where this may be necessary.

How much support will I receive?

Each contributor for JAR issue 0 will work closely with a dedicated editor. Given that JAR is new to both you and us, close work with the editor will lead to the best solution for your research.

Please contact your editor as soon as you run into problems or when you require a sounding board.

How 'long' should an exposition be?

There is no prescribed 'length' to an exposition. The shortest possible exposition could be a single media file (such as a video) that contains all information. Longer expositions are achieved if (a) multiple weaves or (b) browse able document lists (such as slide shows etc.) are used.

Overall, for a publication such as JAR, we imagine a contribution that conveys a similar amount of information as journal articles in other fields. This is usually below 'book' size. One might say that a journal article should convey one or two 'arguments'.

If you are using too much material that does not further what you want to say/show, people might get a picture of what you do, but miss the specific point of the research. Reversely, they might not have enough material to understand what you mean if too little is shown.

How 'new' should an exposition be?

A journal usually assembles the most recent research in a given field. For us, this does not necessarily mean that the work you are going to show has to be of the last year or a work in progress even. More than the work, it has to be the exposition that is novel. It might even be that the exposition triggers new work or, rather, that new work might function as exposition. In this case work and exposition would not be sensibly separated.

What are the copyright implications?

'Copyright' is a serious issue for any publication, in particular if it is web-based. We are in the process of preparing a licence agreement, which we will send to you as soon as it is approved. We apologize that we cannot supply it at this point.

As a general rule, you should own the copyright of any material that you submit to JAR; alternatively, you should be able to obtain the copyright from the copyright holder. This can be a more complicated process, particularly if several people hold the copyright. The responsibility to clear the copyright lies with the author; we can only accept material for which a copyright agreement is provided. Unfortunately, we are unable to pay for any copyright at this stage. However, if you want to use somebody else's work and you have their permission to do so, we are keen to work with that person to properly archive the work so as to respect the context of the work and to allow it to be easily found in the RC and appreciated outside of your exposition.

We are working towards a licence agreement that allows JAR/RC authors to use and re-use material in the context of JAR/RC. This means that in time we hope to develop a database of material others can use/quote without having to hold or clear the copyright themselves. This would overcome one of the obstacles for artistic research: the inability to sensible work pragmatically with visual or acoustic material as a basis for one's own research.

Will I receive a fee?

Contributors to JAR will normally not receive a fee. For issue 0, however, since it is an invited issue that requires some work in understanding how it actually works, we decided to offer a small fee of 200 Euros towards any expenses that might be incurred.

How will JAR expositions be reviewed?

Peer-reviewing is important for academic research. At the same time, it has proved to be difficult in the context of artistic research, where criteria may not only be lacking but also impossible to define. Rather than pretending that traditional forms of double-blind peer-reviewing apply to artistic research, we are in the process of designing a reviewing system that is more suitable to our needs.

In general, we are aiming for a reviewing process that is more about 'engaging' and less about 'passing judgment'. This means that the reviewing process can be much more dialogical and that parts of it may be published alongside the exposition.

However, JAR issue 0, for which we invite your contribution, will not be peer-reviewed in any strict sense. Nevertheless, we imagine the editors to be supported by a number of reviewers in an attempt to help us and you understand how a novel medium such as the Research Catalogue might be employed. We assume that some of the reviewers' opinions will be of interest to you and potentially inform your exposition.

What media formats are supported?

The RC supports a number of file formats. On upload, the RC will convert the files to formats that can be displayed in web browsers (png/jpeg for images, h.264 for video, AAC/mp4 for audio).

Supported file formats:

Image: JPEG; JFIF; PNG; PSD; TGA; TIFF; GIF; BMP; DCX; XBM

Text: PDF

Video (preliminary):

Container formats: AVI MOV MP4 MPG Matroska (FLV)

Video Codec formats: DV1394; H.264; MPEG2; MPEG1; MJPEG

Audio:

Container formats: OGG; WAV; MOV; AU; MP4

Audio Codec formats: MP2; MP3; AAC; PCM A-law; FLAC

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