

Why, What And How Should I Document?

- An examination essay in Methods of Artistic Research II

by

Alexander Lindman

Institutions Name: Stockholm university of the Arts

Level of Degree and scores: Master degree, 7,5 hp

Programme / Course: Master program in fin arts Acting / Methods in Artistic Research II

Term and year: VT 2022

Supervisor: Martin Sonderkamp

Examiner: Ulrika Malmgren

STOCKHOLM | STOCKHOLMS
UNIVERSITY | KONSTNÄRLIGA
OF THE ARTS | HÖGSKOLA



STOC
KHOL
MS
DR HÖGS
AMAT KOLA
ISKA

INDEX	Page
1 Title page	1
2 Index	2
3 Why/What documentation strategy is important for me?	2-7
3.1 Why/What documentation is important for me?	2-6
3.2 How	6-7
4 Challenges	8
5 Similar Artistic research project - Why?	9
6 Bibliography	10-12
7 References	13-14
8 Attachment: This is a Piece of ART [PDF, unpublished reference]	14

3. Why/What Documentation Strategy Is Important For Me?

3.1 Why/What Documentation Strategy Is Important For Me?

I want to research the ADHD-actor and find out what being a neurodiverse actor means in the current, *neurotypical*(?), system of academia; different acting work methods; places; systems; etc. and do this through ARTistic¹ (Lindman 2022) research.

But, why document at all?, might be the first question?, *Isn't acting a craft* (Craft 2022)? *Something you do with your body and the knowledge that is stored in the body is the documentation* (Schindler 2015)? While yes, of course it is! *And isn't acting a system for creating ART* (Lindman 2022) *and not Science* (Vetenskap 2022)?. Yes! And no!

As I wrote in my last examination if:

“ART is to dream collectively on your own/together with others[/in relation with something other]² at and beyond the precipice of your own/the groups/audience/society's/the world's/etc.'s knowledge.”

(Lindman 2022)

¹ Lindman, A. (2022). *This is a piece of ART*. (Master course ARTistic essay 15 hp VT2022). Stockholm University of the Arts: Unpublished material. [PDF is attached to this document for further reading].

² Author's own edit for this exam

Then, what this means is that ART is not something exclusive to the ART schools, ARTist or even the ARTs themselves. ART and ARTistic processes are happening ALL THE TIME, everywhere, and in every field of human knowledge (and here I mean 'knowledge' in a broader sense not just the things we already have deduced to scientifically be knowable but also things known emotionally, mentally or bodily and on other planes that we haven't yet got the tools to explain) and even more ART is happening for us in the fields we ourselves aren't yet proficient in. Like Science: Everyone can do and experience it at their level.

What we must understand is that many of the Arts still lack a sufficient language to properly document the findings of the ARTistic processes of the ARTist. We have traditions, stories, analogies and words, transferred experiences, video taped recordings and audio recordings etc. trying to convey the truth/knowledge of what happened during, say, a video taped dance performance - and we hope through taking part of that material we can get inspired ARTistically and that maybe some part of the body/mind understands the material better than what was showed or explained with the insufficient language of documentation.

But, like math, that is like trying to explain/document mathematically how an aeroplane would crash against the water surface without using the language of math (and with it probably physics/chemistry/biology/etc.) - yes you could film it but that doesn't mean the next plane will behave exactly the same. Yes, you could set yourself in an aeroplane and experience the crash but that doesn't mean you understand it better mathematically. You can photograph a crashing plane or one that has crashed and describe it in detail from an audience's or driver's perspective. But without the actually counting and language of math it is very hard to get a precise understanding of the mechanics of the crash and why and how it happens. Meaning a more useful documentation that can lead to further findings in the field because other persons can read the language, understand it and take-off from where the last researcher left. And maybe even say, with a much closer margin of error what will happen in the future under the given circumstances - because it will actually be possible to do the numbers and figure out the breaking-points (probably never exact, but sufficient to evolve the aeroplane industry better than only using anecdotes and pictures) and show how a possible future crash may look like.

The same thing I think is the responsibility of the researchers of ARTistic fields trying to document their findings whilst trying to create ART or being in ARTistic-processes or having ARTistic experiences. So that others in the same field can read it/take part of it and understand it and incorporate it in their ARTistic works not as a fussy inspiration to create (which is fine when when it's "just"³ ART) but as actual knowledge to build upon and move on/through/with/etc which is the purpose of higher education and ARTistic research whit in the ARTs:

ARTistic research⁴ (Konstnärlig Forskning 2019) and documentation must lead to the advancement of knowledge about the ARTists field that can be understood and/or used by others to create more ART or entertainment⁵ (Lindman 2022) in that field⁶

Now, a freelance ARTist might object here and say that *ART should be valued for its own sake and that that is what should be studied and given place at the universities*. But, by treating everything as being capable of producing ART we also need to see that everything can be studied as science and if it can't it just means we don't have the proper language for it yet and then that is what needs to come first (at the universities! Not whilst trying to create ART outside of academia) - in this regard the ARTs are millenniums behind the science in one way because we lack the proper words to even describe some things (even the ART itself, so people have to invent new words and definitions for it all the time) and from another perspective the sciences trying to be separated from the ARTs are lacking an understanding of one of humanities greatest tools - namely ART.

Now with this said, *Why should I document?* is quite obvious, because then that is the whole purpose of being in the higher education system.

And, maybe, contrary to what Bogdan Szyber tried to say about universities creating Edu-art (Szyber 2019) (a term I read as 'less good' art or not-art/not-ART, whilst reading his ARTistic research/aimed site specific education-ART) - the purpose of higher education can't ever be to create "just" ART...

³ I will use the word encapsulated in ("") like this — "Just" — several time and it's never intended to mean — merely— or something less good, just that it's standing alone apart from something else.

⁴ I reference Vetenskapsrådets definition of artistic research here because that is the one Stockholm University of the Arts is currently using at their homepage to define artistic research: <https://www.uniarts.se/forskning/om-forskningen/20220524>].

⁵ Entertainment is here derived from A. Lindman*s (2022) definition of ART and is everything used or/and experienced inside the already known aiming for entertainment (but that can generate ARTistic experiences through the relation/context of the person taking in the entertainment).

⁶ Is my own definition of artistic research at this point derived from my definition of what ART is that encompasses the earlier one from Vetenskapsrådet

In other words: To claim that any ARTistic field is to be allowed to do science, and be let in to the warm embrace of the state funding of the Universities to do so, we also have to understand that ART is universal for all sciences and all things we do and the only difference between an ART-istic researcher and a “normal” researcher is that the ARTistic researcher’s goal/aim is to produce tools and methods to enhance the chances of more ART happening in said science/field/ART-form (and maybe that is not even a difference when you think about it...).

NO ARTist - wants to document for the documentations sake. ARTists, of any field, wants to be in ARTistic processes deeply involved of solving a puzzle or emerged in the ARTistic experiences or entertain themselves or others with it.

“I just want to do math! [I don’t want to spend time to make others under stand me/it!]”⁷

a famous mathematician allegedly said because I guess that part is so much harder and more bothersome... And unrewarding in the moment (Which makes it even harder for myself and others with ADHD to focus our attention on, too because of the dopamine deficiency (Blum, K., Chen, A. L., Braverman, E. R., Comings, D. E., Chen, T. J., Arcuri, V., Blum, S. H., Downs, B. W., Waite, R. L., Notaro, A., Lubar, J., Williams, L., Prihoda, T. J., Palomo, T., & Oscar-Berman, M. 2008).

What this all leads to is ARTistic research/ers should focus MORE on developing the language/tools/methods/science/etc in the ARTistic field helping the development of it not on making “just” ART and being an ARTist - that can happen along the way as a byproduct or be the focus outside of academia with said research. Because being an ARTist doesn’t mean you will produce ARTistic research, not making ART for your field either because the ART you are making might already be done by others and is only ART for you or your small group and not for the entire field of ART you are studying - because creating something that is ART at our own level is all we as ARTists can ever strive to do (Alexander 2022)

And ART universities should not only focus on determining the ARTistic level of the field when choosing ARTist/ARTistic research/ers whom can hold/s up to the task of developing said field — the ART universities also need to focus on bringing the understanding of the universality and the important function of ART and ARTistic processes in all fields of scientific research:

⁷I Havn’t been able to find this quote anywhere, but I am certain I have heard it - but I list it here as a quote from my past. Maybe the author will pop up in the future. In the meanwhile it is a nice allegory that proves a point...

Because there can't be any ground breaking science with out ART or ARTis-tic processes or ART-experiences happening...

Science has to go through ART and ARTistic processes and from there we have to evolve the instruments of documentation methods to understand what's happening - or create new ones: otherwise we might end up thinking that some things can't be studied, learned or known at a certain level - like we have told ourselves for a very long time about ART. I mean shouldn't the right answer always have been like:

— No, we can't understand and document the LIVE Poetic-ART-experience of a dance performance properly with documentation strategies — OF TODAY, YET —> but let's invent a way that can or come up with a language that can more properly, so future dancers and audiences can know at least a little bit better at a time ??

— So, I hope calling the ARTs Universities not being scientific will be as preposterous in the future as to saying doing science has nothing to do with ART.

3.2 How

Now, 'How' is the tricky question. But if the research should be able to be read and understood by others and the research have to be creating or advance the knowledge about the fine ART of acting then the documentation has to create some kind of knowledge that can be transferred via the method(s) of documentation. Otherwise it will be a historical document over ART that has been, inspiration, and not knowledge that can be used in future acting processes to create said ART.

Like the difference of taking a picture of someone throwing a ball and saying it happened, and actually trying to understand and explain how/why/what/etc in a way that makes someone else much likelier to be able to throw a ball with the tools and methods explained (and maybe, in this example, it's more possible through documenting/creating a game in VR than through explaining it in a written text or mathematically?? because the information has to be "written" in an understandable or as close to understandable language for the specific science (or/and knowledge transferal) to be performed) — And, acting is a very complex ART of many different sciences and scientific languages, some most likely not even thought of or invented/combined yet, which means that for some knowledge to be documented there might be a need to create new or use other scientific languages to properly document what is happening.

With that said: I don't want to make it too complex for me in the beginning so I hope to actually be able to use video documentation, along with questionnaires, interviews, acting labs with several different participants (with and without ADHD) to be able to see if there can be things learned about ADHD-acting on the floor through already known methods and techniques and from there draw conclusions and further hypotheses of my own. And then, from there, trying to find methods and techniques that can help ADHD-actors (and all other kind of actors) function and perform better/different/in a more diverse/in another way/etc under given circumstances. Also using these techniques myself ARTistically in the pursuit of making ART preferable on social media to get a larger impact of the research.

2. Challenges

Having ADHD myself puts some extra layers to the documentation and the organising of it because the organising part is one of the ADHD diagnosis' main dysfunctions (Kofler, J., Sarver D.E., Harmon S.L., Moltisanti A., Auden P.A., Soto A.F., Feretti N., 2017). And many of the other executive dysfunctions and regulating dysfunctions of ADHD comes into play whilst writing, planning, editing, etc.

Apart from the ADHD-ones: One challenge I face is my own lack of knowledge about how I can scientifically document the artistic research I want to do in a way that actually helps me and others develop new acting tools from it and at the same time do that ARTistically on a high ARTistic level sufficient for a master program in acting. Because from my own set standards it's not enough being in an ARTistic process at my level on my own or with others it has to produce some kind of understandable knowledge in a language that can be read and understood by my peers now or in the future to help produce ART or entertainment.

Another is my understanding of art/ART and what the ART of acting is to be able to properly understand what being an ADHD-actor is. Like, If ART is connected to dreaming, then having a day-dreaming brain (Liddle, B., Hollis, E., Batty C, M.J., Groom M.J., Totman J.J., Liotti M., Scerif G., Liddle P.F., 2010). might be advantageous at certain stages in the acting process, as in being in a creative mode and seeing things from a lot of angles and being associative (to the brink of exhaustion for others) and disadvantageous in other processes when a more normalised focus (Liddle et al. 2010) is required, like studying lines and listening to long (boring for the mind) conversations etc (Liddle et al. 2010).

Another is the ethics about conducting research on myself (Codex 2022) and also the ethics about conducting research on a minority group that the society determines to be, 'not functioning normally' (Bommenel 2006). So I might need to take some precautions, that I yet don't know about. Especially, maybe, when trying to get information via internet questionnaires and whilst filming acting labs.

Another thing with ADHD and ethics is the ableism especially in the ARTs because ADHD can be thought of as a super power by others (Kropp & Sjö 2017) and even the ADHD-person themselves (Kropp & Sjö 2017) not giving room for a discussion about the actual non-functioning parts that makes it a psychological and medical diagnosis of dysfunction living in today's society. And as I want to research: the diverse functionality and dysfunctions inside the ART of acting.

3. Similar Artistic research project - Why?

THE PEDAGOGY OF THE ANARCHIVE (Francisco Trento, 2019)

I came across this project whilst scanning the research catalogue late for projects that named acting or neurodiverseness and this was one of the very few that mentioned neurodiverseness.

And I liked the phrasing:

“The boldness of the proposal relies on making visible underrecognized modes of perception and relationalities in arts education and artistic research, critically approaching them with pedagogies that deconstruct the archival neurotypical tendencies”

(Francisco Trento, 2019)

And:

“The distribution of the components into a space in a way that does not conform to the neurotypical orientations, therefore, helps to engender awareness of the existence of modalities of perception that are under-recognised”

(Francisco Trento, 2019)

The research might hold similarities to what I want to research about acting/acting techniques being neurotypical or performed/trained in/with in neurotypical places/institutions/mind sets/etc...

So, I'll have to keep an eye on this research not just about the neurotypicalness part but also about trying to reform the way of thinking about art/ART-documentation through the Anarchiving (Doruff 2022). Which is super interesting and even if it would not, for some reason, in the end hold up to the standards of future ARTistic research documentation it helps widen the understanding of what ART and ARTistic processes is (how I like to define ART, at the moment). So, I hope to be able to follow lots of different ARTistic research documentation projects that deals with the Anarchive to see how they apply the concept as a way to document (or even if they use it to avoid documenting in any way to “just” be able to show ART or ARTistic processes with in the system of academia).

4. Bibliography

1 In “What masking really looks like” (McAbe 2022) the actor and YouTuber Jessica McAbe talks about ADHD and masking, which is a phenomenon I am trying to research what it means for the ADHD-actor... And also what it might do to our ability to perform under certain circumstances.

2 In the actor and TikTokker's TikTok video (Connordewolfe 2021) Connordewolfe talks about renaming ADHD, into DAVE, because the actual diagnoses letters don't say what the diagnosis is. This is also a way I'd like to show or perform my research for a larger impact in the general public and I'd also like to research the Social Media Actor and how that profession is affected by having ADHD.

3 In “readings on diffraction” (Barad K. 2017) from a pdf handout we got during a seminar with Sher Doruff.

4 And The ANARCHIVE - WORKING PRINCIPLES (Massumi B. 2014)

5 And “For a Pragmatics of the Useless” (Manning E. 2020) I found much food for thought about the ARTistic researcher and about what ART is and ARTistic research could be and I've derived my own definition of ART, the part of the *collectiveness of the* dreaming part, in parts from the Anarchive thinking about the quantum physicality of Intra-connection witch Sher Doruff also spoke about in her seminar with us (Doruff 2022). And this is a beginning to start evolving documentation methods or at least start asking the right questions in the future that can deal with the complexity of the ARTistic research documentation.

6 On Caitlin Reily's TIKTOK (Reily 2021) she is performing as an actress on SoMe mirroring her surroundings and commenting on her followers and the behaviours of the people she meets in the world - much like Shakespeare's (Shakespeare W. 1603) purpose (trough the voice of Hamlet) of acting/theatre is (where in essence he says) “to hold up a

mirror to the world in where the fictional mirage can tell or imagine more truths about the real world mirrored”⁸

7 In this youtube video an actor D.P. Green (Green D.P., 2020) tries to give tips to other actors with ADHD and uses the words “You can only do things that your brain finds important” (Green D.P., 2020) but the consensus is that part of the dysfunction is that you struggle to do things that IS important BUT boring to the brain (Sweitzer 2021). And I think this is what he means but it comes out wrong, maybe? And this is where I would like to have more research and a larger base of information from actors with ADHD about how they deal with different acting techniques to analyse and study and then find techniques that have more grounding in research.

8 In “Brian Eno on the purpose of art”⁹ (Eno 2020) Brian Eno defines art as “everything we don’t need to do” like in stuff that doesn’t have a clear function other than being art like a haircut. But, like many other definitions, that doesn’t hold as telling us what art is. And it also tells us that art is meaningless by default. If we instead use ART then the ART of expressing oneself with a haircut is easier to understand and define, also when it’s not ART, when it’s entertainment, when it’s conforming to norms, and when a haircut is something else completely...

9 So I had to watch another video with Brian Eno (Eno 2021) where he talks about art. And in this video he says,

“If you get away from the notion that there is something permanent resident in a piece of art (...) a permanent value (...) you then start [to] think well maybe something could be art for somebody a couple of minutes on one Sunday in January and never again for anybody else again”

(Eno 2021)

Which works super fine with my definition of ART and in relation to this video what trying to define art as ART means and does is giving me a set of tools to understand not-

⁸ My own shorter academic translation without rhyme...

⁹ Got the tips from Ulrika Malmgren to watch this - Thank you!

ART that is equally important: And also when he says that one definition of the purpose of art is

**“to safely simulate our emotions and ideas of different futures/
to increase our palette of emotional choices”**

(Eno 2021)

I’m a bit confused because that sounds like A purpose of some kind of STORY-ART like Theatre, Film, etc. that is a bit too specific to encompass ALL ways to conduct ART how I see it. But also in some way feeling very similar to my definition of ART through the choice of words...

10 In Ellen Nymans 50% seminar (Nyman 2022) she talks about “Vilka strategier en omgärdar för att möta den vita blick en möter varje dag” (Nyman 2022) a kind of “Double acting” (Nyman 2022) where you “perform for a consensus” (Nyman 2022) and “diminish yourself” (Nyman 2022) and “Nursing a norm of whiteness[vithetsnorm]” (Nyman 2022) and this might be very similar to the masking of neurodiversness in a neurotypical society and where strategies and methods to counter this performed witness/masked neurotypicalness in self taping, auditions, rehearsals (where we finalise characters as she says in the seminar (Nyman 2022)), directing and acting techniques can include and allow lots of more perspectives and become like “the decolonised acting/direction room” (Nyman 2022) mentions as a safer, better and richer room to start telling stories from.

Reference list

- 1 Barad K. (2017) READINGS ON DIFFRACTION, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, pgs 88-91 (no emphasis in actual title)
- 2 Blum, K., Chen, A. L., Braverman, E. R., Comings, D. E., Chen, T. J., Arcuri, V., Blum, S. H., Downs, B. W., Waite, R. L., Notaro, A., Lubar, J., Williams, L., Prihoda, T. J., Palomo, T., & Oscar-Berman, M. (2008). Attention-deficit-hyperactivity disorder and reward deficiency syndrome. *Neuropsychiatric disease and treatment*, 4(5), 893–918. <https://doi.org/10.2147/ndt.s2627>
- 3 Bommenel, E. (2006). *Sockerförsöken i Vipeholm, [närtartikel]* <https://www.forskning.se/2006/03/29/sockerforsoken-i-vipeholm/#> [20220530]
- 4 Codex 2022. *Forskning på människor* [internet page] <https://codex.uu.se/forskning-pa-manniskor/> [20220530]
- 5 Connordewolfe, (2021) *Renaming ADHD*, [tiktok], https://www.tiktok.com/@connordewolfe/video/7029471347285806342?is_copy_url=1&is_from_webapp=v1&lang=en [20220522]
- 6 Craft. (2022). on *The free dictionary* ed. 2022. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/craft> [20220524]
- 7 Dorruf, S. (2022). Thinking anarchically with the cut, the cleave and the uncapturable in documentation [zoom seminar] [lärobjekt] <https://uniarts.instructuremedia.com/embed/feb698a1-6bd0-47b7-859a-537c-ce088b51> [20220302]
- 8 Eno, B. (2020). *Brian Eno on the purpose of art* [youtube] Design Indaba <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvHY5BFgniW> [20220518]
- 9 Eno, B. (2021). *Why do we make art & why are humans creative?* [youtube] thought economics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lc1QUVsDcM> [20220522]
- 10 Francisco Trento, 2019 (on going) The University of The Arts Helsinki, Research catalogue: <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/659630/659631> Read: 20220522
- 11 Green, D.P., (2020) “*HOW TO Become an Actor: ADD/ADHD and Acting*”, [youtube] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpv9crL3DaQ> [20220523]
- 12 Kofler M.J., Sarver D.E., Harmon S.L., Moltisanti A., Auden P.A., Soto A.F., Feretti N., (2017) Working memory and organizational skills problems in ADHD, *The journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* July 17 2017, pgs 57-67, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.12773>, [20220523]
- 13 Konstnärlig forskning, (2017). Vetenskapsrådet 2019. <https://www.vr.se/om-vetenskapsradet/organisation/amnesrad-rad-och-kommitteer/kommitten-for-konstnarlig-forskning.html> [20220523]
- 14 *Kropp & Sjä*l (2017). ADHD – funktionshinder eller superkraft? [radioprogram]. Sveriges Radio, P1, 7 Nov
- 15 Liddle E. B., Hollis C., Batty M.J., Groom M.J., Totman J.J., Liotti M., Scerif G., Liddle P.F., (2010). Task-related default mode network modulation and inhibitory control in ADHD: effects of motivation and methylphenidate. *The journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* ed.7 pgs 761-771. November 12 2010, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2010.02333.x> [20220524]
- 16 Lindman, A., (2022). *This is a piece of ART*. Master course ARTistic essay, VT 15 hp [unpublished - PDF is attached to this document for further reading]. Stockholm: Stockholm University of the Arts.
- 17 Manning E. (2020) *For a Pragmatics of the Useless*, 2020, pgs 83-86 (PDF handout) [Lärobjekt]
- 18 Massumi B. (2014) *The ANARCHIVE - WORKING PRINCIPLES* (PDF handout) [Lärobjekt]
- 19 McAbe, J. (2022). *What masking really looks like* [Youtube]. <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/xFGw-V502rPw> [2022-05-19]

- 20 Nyman, E. (2022) *Adoption som skådespeleri, skådespeleri som adoption*, 50% phd seminar [zoom meeting] <https://www.uniarts.se/aktuellt/evenemang/evenemang-vt-2022/ellen-nymans-50-seminarium> [220523] Stockholm: Stockholm University of the Arts
- 21 Reily C. (2021) Tiktok account: https://www.tiktok.com/@itscaitlinhello/video/6980796585902984453?is_copy_url=1&is_from_webapp=v1&lang=en [20220522]
- 22 Referenser enligt Harvard KAU, (u.å). [homepage] Karlstad university <https://libguides.kau.se/harvard> [220530]
- 23 Schindler, J. (2015). *Expertise and Tacit Knowledge in Artistic and Design Processes: Results of an Ethnographic Study*. Journal of Research Practice ed.11. December 2015
- 24 Shakespeare W. (1603) *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (Act 3, scene 2 pgs 17-24.
- 25 Szyber, B., (2019). *Fauxthentication – Art, Academia & Authorship (or the site-specifics of the Academic Artist)*, Diss. [but not approved] Stockholm: Stockholm University of the Arts
- 26 Sweitzer, L. (2021). *Bored at Work? Motivation to the Rescue*, [internet article] Additude 2021 May 28 <https://www.additudemag.com/boredom-at-work-with-adhd/> [20220530]
- 27 Vetenskap, (2022). Nationalencyklopedien ed. 2022, <https://www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/enkel/vetenskap> [20220523]

Attachment sent at the same time as this document:

Lindman, A., (2022). *This is a piece of ART*. Master course ARTistic essay, VT 15 hp [unpublished - PDF]
Stockholm: Stockholm University of the Arts.