PaR for the course

Issues involved in the development of practice-based doctorates in the Performing Arts

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by Professor June Boyce-Tillman

This project originated in a Development Award from PALATINE (the Higher Education Academy’s Subject Centre for Dance, Drama and Music (2000-2011)). The role of the subject centre was to provide, for our communities of practice in dance, drama and music higher education across the UK, high quality support, information, expertise, and resources on good, successful and innovative learning and teaching practices. This report is designed to enhance teaching and learning practice in the area of practice-based doctorates referred throughout the document as PAR – Practice as Research. This grant was supplemented by funding from a Learning and Teaching Fellowship from the University of Winchester.

The Project’s Aims and Objectives

Aim:
To produce an overview of the issues involved in developing practice-based doctorates.

Sub aims:
(a) To review current theoretical thinking in the area of Practice as Research.
(b) To compare regulatory procedures and practices of a range of HE institutions offering practice-based doctorates.
(c) To compare practices in the performing arts.
(d) To examine supervisory practices when creative practice is included in the doctoral programme.

Objectives:
(a) To review current theoretical thinking in the area of Practice as Research.
(b) To produce a comparative chart of regulations in a range of institutions.
(c) To identify issues in examination procedures, including timing, submission procedures, archiving of material.
(d) To identify issues in supervisory practices.
(e) To produce a report that will inform future developments in the area.

Rationale

As the theorisation of Practice as Research progresses in academic journals and debates in theatre conferences, this is a developing area in doctoral studies as artists of various kinds see their work as having the characteristics of the traditional thesis. The field has, in general, not developed in a structured way as various HE institutions (universities, conservatoires, art schools and so on) have adapted the structure of the traditional PhD thesis to include creative practice. There were few precedents except music doctorates involving the submission of musical scores. This area was helped by the development of an internationally recognised notation system and
audio-recording techniques. The field is not so easy for the other performing arts because of the inadequacy of the DVD in capturing the totality of the experience. Issues such as word limits and how to examine in a way that gives examiners access to the event itself are reflected in a variety of regulatory procedures and practices to ensure the valuing of creative work as research in its own right. This project, therefore, has the potential to enhance and support learning and teaching in dance, drama and music in higher education. It maps what is going on in the area rather than offering prescriptive advice or making attempts to standardise practice. It is hoped that this report will enable people working in this field make choices and understand the decisions they make.

**The Context**

The research is based in the University of Winchester which has been developing these procedures and practices over the course of the last ten years. This has led to a number of successful supervisions in this area, the development of a Professional Doctorate and a PhD by Works in the Public Domain, which can include creative work (the performance equivalent of a PhD by publication).

The Faculty of Arts has a strong research base with practitioners and theoreticians working together in a mutually supportive environment. The various aspects of the project will be led by researchers drawn from members of the faculty with this experience.

**Structure of this Report**

Chapter One presents an overview of the landscape in which the report fits. It acknowledges the developing nature of the area which despite regular calls for standardisation has remained varied in its philosophies and regulatory procedures. As the theorisation of Practice as Research progresses in academic journals and debates in theatre conferences, this is a developing area in doctoral studies as artists of various kinds see their work as having the characteristics of the traditional thesis. The field has, in general, not developed in a structured way as various HE institutions (universities, conservatoires, art schools and so on) have adapted the structure of the traditional PhD thesis to include creative practice. There were few precedents except music doctorates involving the submission of musical scores. This area was helped by the development of an internationally recognised notation system and audio-recording techniques. The field is not so easy for the other performing arts because of the inadequacy of the DVD in capturing the totality of the experience.
It examines the variety of different names for doctorates in this area – practice-led, Practice as Research, Performance as Research (PaR), studio-based, arts-based and so on. It will show how practice-based doctorates relate to the general criteria for doctoral study:

• The undertaking of systematic research.
• The ability to relate this to the chosen field (which here means relating it to other practitioners in the chosen field).
• The requirement for originality.
• The ability to articulate this which can be in written or other form.

It will examine different modes of knowing (Birdsall et al 2009) and the valuing of embodied knowledge (Knorr et al 2000).

Chapter Two by Dr Yvon Bonenfant constitutes an overview of how authors have interrogated knowledge that is generated by means of creative practice and the developing field of theorising Performance as Research.

Chapter Three by Dr Inga Bryden surveys various institutions offering practice-based doctorates and the regulatory procedures used by them. The 11 institutions to be covered in the final report have been selected to represent a range of institutions - to include conservatoires, smaller and larger institutions and those with recently acquired research degree awarding powers, along with more established institutions.

Chapter Four by Professor June Boyce-Tillman and Tiago de Faria is an analysis of the data from the interviews conducted as part of the study and shows how a variety of practitioners are negotiating the terrain set out in the preceding chapters. Current research candidates and people with recent experience of doctoral study were involved in these interviews which were analysed with a Grounded Theory methodology. Some sessions were videoed and the edited DVD is included as Appendix Three. This data illuminates the previous sections showing how people are managing the practice including the supervision process.

A final summary highlights the main issues raised by this report.

I am very grateful to PALATINE and the University of Winchester for the funding. The team has worked well together and is grateful to Rohan Brown for her administrative and editorial help and Karl Ellison for his work on the DVD. The team is also very grateful to the people listed in Appendix One who were prepared to give so generously of their time and expertise in the service of this project.

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May 2012
Chapter One

MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE

by Professor June Boyce-Tillman

Introduction

This chapter will examine the underpinning values of Western culture and how these have shaped the nature of the ‘traditional PhD’. It will examine some of the underlying issues of current developments. Having examined a number of developments, this will concentrate on practice-based doctorates in the area of performing arts and the problems of standardising practice in this area, examining this from a UK and a European perspective. I will then examine the problems that have been identified in the development of this area.

The Values of the Western world

This chapter is written from a social constructionist perspective which begins with radical doubt about what contemporary society takes as ‘givens’. It challenges the objective basis of conventional knowledge.

‘The terms in which the world is understood are social artefacts, products of historically situated interchanges among people.’ (Gergen 1985: 267)

This perspective us enables to see the way the myths about truth governing contemporary society have been constructed and show how the rise in interest in doctorates containing creative practice may well signal an attempt at the transformation of these myths. Gergen points out how the philosophy of knowledge has been marked by a continuous series of pendulum swings:

- Between Plato’s pure forms of knowledge and Aristotle’s concern with sensory experience.
- Between the authority given to experience by Bacon, Locke and Hume and authority of rationality granted by Descartes, Spinoza and Kant.
- Between the stress on passion and will given in Schopenhauer and Nietzsche and the logical positivists stress on observables (Gergen 1985: 270).

How we consider knowing is firmly based in how we construct systems of what it is to be human and where essential truths reside. Within this is the concept of mind. ‘The mind (Coulter 1979) becomes a form of social myth; the self-concept (Gergen 1985a) is removed from the head and placed in the sphere of social discourse.’ (Gergen 1985: 271) This paper will show how the constructs we have in place for the mind, based firmly in the work of Descartes have governed the growth of the Doctor of Philosophy Degree:
Constructionism reasserts the relevance of moral criteria for scientific practice. To the extent that psychological theory (and related practices) enters into the life of the culture, sustaining certain patterns of conduct and destroying others, such work must be evaluated in terms of good and ill. (Gergen 1985: 273)

It is clear that many critics see the prevalence of Cartesian values as having negative effects on Western society in general, and education, in particular. This paper seeks to examine these in relation to music education. The psychologist, Antonio Damasio describes Descartes' error:

> Descartes imagined thinking as an activity quite separate from the body, it does celebrate the separation of mind, the “thinking mind” (res cogitans) from the “non-thinking body”, that which has extension and mechanical parts....Yet long before the dawn of humanity, beings were beings. At some point in evolution, an elementary consciousness began....And as for us now, as we come into the world and develop, we still begin with being, and only later do we think. We are, and then we think, and we think only inasmuch as we are, since thinking is indeed caused by the structure and operations of being. (Damasio 1994: 248)

He goes on to show how Descartes has been discredited in many areas but that this is not the case in the area of the PhD which is firmly rooted in the Cartesian mind with its concentration on rationality. For many in Western society Descartes' views are regarded as self-evident and in no need of re-examination (Damasio 1994: 250). He goes on to detail the effects of this error on the development of medicine and psychology and their separateness, adding:

> The success of some 'alternative forms of medicine, especially those rooted in non-Western traditions of medicine, is probably a compensatory response to the problem.' (Damasio 1994: 257)

Claxton, Lucas and Webster outline how Descartes' error has governed the development of education in western culture. They describe how this was born in classical Greece, endorsed by the Church and turned by the philosophers of the Enlightenment into ‘irrefutable common sense’ (Claxton, Lucas and Webster 2012: 3). Rationality became the highest manifestation of our humanity. The advent of practice-led doctorates represents the surfacing of embodied cognition. The original meaning of the three R's was reading, wroughting and arithmetic. Wroughting only changed in the 1850's with the Great Exhibition into writing (Frayling 2004). Here there is a relation between the material and the thinking – material thinking in response to research questions may be exemplified through music-making activities, and if so, how then this is to be most effectively progressed as portfolio for authentic multi-component exegesis (Draper and Harrison 2011: 98).

An example of this was a thesis I supervised on the harpsichord works of Elisabetta da Gambarini. One of the original aims of the project was to produce a critical edition of these previously unpublished pieces. The doctoral candidate who was a well-established harpsichordist gained a contract for the recording these pieces. On the basis described above, the recording itself – in which all sorts of decisions had to
be made of the ‘correct’ reading of these scores – was in itself a critical edition, indeed was an embodied version of the written score with its various readings that also formed part of the thesis. The CD was inserted as a chapter in its own right (not consigned to an Appendix).

**Definitions in Practice-based Doctorates**

This section will examine definitions in the area of doctorates with a creative element as part of them. It will draw on writings by practitioners and also official documents and reports. We will examine the variety of definitions in this area - research which incorporates an element of practice into either the methodology or research output. There has been increasing interest in this area reflected in a number of publications and internet and conference discussions. Several authors have shown how knowledge can be generated by means of creative practice (Brien 2006) and have been concerned with different modes of knowing and their capacity to contribute to the body of knowledge (Hintikka 1975). Artists of various kinds wish to see their work as having the characteristics of the traditional thesis. In this context, practice appears in the following forms:

- A way of expressing findings of a more traditional research project carried out by more traditional methodologies like a literature review and philosophical enquiry such as the creation of a performance. An example of this is a thesis combining theological and philosophical enquiry supervised by a professor of theology and a professor of creative writing. In the end the format of the final thesis which had been arrived at by theological and philosophical reflection was an epic poem.

- A social intervention to examine the efficacy of projects in the arts in development studies such as a drama programme in an oppressed community. An example of this is a NGO worker in the Philippines who runs drama programmes for disadvantaged communities in his country for the purposes of empowerment.

- A performance/musical score/novel/art installation seen as a research project in its right. An example of this is a Russian composer who submitted an opera and two books of piano pieces with accompanying commentary as an MPhil project.

The field has, in general, developed in a piecemeal way as various HE institutions (universities, conservatoires, art schools and so on) have endeavoured to adapt the traditional PhD thesis to include Practice as Research. Some like the music conservatoires have a tradition of awarding a musical score the status of a research project; others have struggled to find ways of including a performance installation as an essential part of a submission and not merely an Appendix presented on a DVD (often unable to capture the totality of the event) as a mere appendage to the discussion in the 75,000 words or so of the traditional thesis. Issues such as word limits and how to examine in a way that gives examiners access to the event itself are reflected in a variety of regulatory procedures to ensure the valuing of creative work as research in its own right. It has found recognition from the AHRC (2009) which includes in its Guide to Student Eligibility:
This definition of research provides a distinction between research and practice per se. Creative output can be produced or practice undertaken as an integral part of a research process. The Council would expect this practice to be accompanied by some form of documentation of the research process, as well as some form of textual analysis or explanation to support its position and to demonstrate critical reflection. Creativity or practice which involves no such processes is not eligible for support from the Council. (AHRC 2009)

The debates in this area are filled with a variety of terminologies: Practice-as-Research (Mock, Chamberlain, Ellis, Nicholas and Whelan 2004), Performance as Research, practice-based, practice-led, mixed-mode research practice, studio-based, arts-based, performance-based, research by creative practice, practice-focused and practice through research (Smith and Dean 2009), for example. For the purposes of this report I am dividing them into two types: practice-based and practice-led. Practice-led research concerns the nature of practice and is concerned with originality in the understanding of practice in a particular area. These theses are usually expressed in text form although the methodology will normally include practice and often take the form of an action research methodology or ethnography of some kind. These include the Arts as social intervention where questions such as the efficacy of the Arts as social intervention, the role of arts in social projects, and community building, the relationship between activism and action and the artistic processes in transformation and transgression (Elin 1996) may be addressed; these can also draw easily on social science methodologies. Projects in the Arts as well-being can also use both quantitative and qualitative methodologies from Social Science (Clift, Hancox, Morrison, Bärbel, Stewart and Kreutz 2001). They would also include the arts as pedagogic tools (Saxton and Miller 1998). Christopher Frayling summarises these:

Subjects with a “practice element” in them, and this includes subjects such as teaching, medicine and engineering, can give rise to doctoral study in traditional forms – by research, in a taught mode or via publications – as indeed can art and design. These are not practice based doctorates, although the focus of the research can be to advance knowledge about practice or to advance knowledge within practice. (Frayling 1997)

An example of this is a thesis which examines the efficacy of music programmes with the parents and children of asylum seekers and refugees in improving self-confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy. The thesis uses a Grounded Theory approach to interviews with the participants, the journaling of the workshop leader who also employed participant observation.

The development of Professional Doctorates has also made this area more complex. As we have seen in the philosophy at the opening of this section both the development of PhD’s include creative elements and the Professional Doctorates are developments stemming from a dissatisfaction with the concept of disembodied knowing. Biggs (2000) provides a helpful chart in this area which will be developed further later in this section:
The UK government’s so-called Harris Report (1996) also differentiates between the research PhD and the taught/practice doctorate. One of its recommendations is the description of the doctorate (and other higher degrees) according to its aims rather than the means by which these may be achieved. It classifies four main ‘aims’ for a postgraduate degree and three ‘types of study’. What the Harris Report does not say is whether one can satisfy any aim by any type of study.

Practice-based research includes the practice as part of the submission which would be incomplete without the inclusion of the practice outcome. This was also well formulated in Biggs (2000) who defines the differences between the professional doctorate and the PhD:

We should perhaps begin with a careful description of the degrees to which we are referring. Doctoral degrees are of two main types: the PhD, and awards bearing titles such as DMus, EdD, DDes, etc. The former are exclusively research degrees, in which the student may undertake a programme of research training but is mainly working independently on a research project with a supervisor. The latter are taught or professional degrees, in which the student will be taught for at least one-third of the programme (Harris Report 1996). In parallel with this distinction, but frequently confused with professional degrees, are practice-based projects or submissions.
Practice-based projects are those which include as an integral part the production of an original artefact in addition to, or perhaps instead of, the production of a written thesis. They are naturally of great interest to practising artists and designers, but they are not confined to these disciplines. One may find examples in music, in software design, in engineering, in law; in fact in any subject where the result might be an artefact generated in laboratory or workplace. (Biggs 2000)

This report is concerned primarily with practice-based doctorates that include a creative element, although at Winchester University because of our expertise in Applied Theatre there are a number of practice-led projects and a project may change its nature in the course of supervision and require a change in the form of submission. Usually these creative elements are shared with a wider community in the form of performances or exhibitions and this fulfils the requirement that aspects of the thesis are worthy of publication which is here expressed as appropriate for public sharing (the equivalent of publication for text-based work):

That individuals have pursued practice in art, media and design and in so doing have developed new knowledge, ideas, perceptions, techniques etc is an uncontested fact. From Vasari’s ‘Lives of the Artists’ through to the notebooks of Paul Klee and the manifestos published by representatives of groups such as Arte Pobre, Fluxus, the Futurists etc, one can find plenty of evidence from across the span of creative arts disciplines to demonstrate the value of creative practice as a tool for the generation of new knowledge and ideas. (UWE Regulations for Practice-led Doctorates 2011)

An example of this is a doctoral candidate who has her roots in the visual arts but is also a musician. This project based in her own Iranian background and drawing on her Baha’i faith tradition looks at the trace lines that we draw in our journey through world and how these can be translated into visual works that can be combined in installations with movement and moving images.

There have been several calls for standardisation in this area. The first was from Professor Sir Christopher Frayling, former Rector of the Royal College of Art and Chairman of the Arts Council who in 1997 produced a report for the UKCGE. This report served three functions:

- To review existing practice.
- To establish artistic practice as a valid part of the research process.
- To call for the establishment of comparable practices in HE institutions in the UK.

A recent document from the QAA (2011) has called for equivalence between doctoral qualifications:

One of the objectives ... is to emphasise the need for equivalence in the different types of UK doctorate. One of the ways in which this can best be achieved is to demonstrate that doctoral candidates face similar intellectual challenges, both during their programme and at the point of final examination.
The UK doctoral assessment (thesis and viva together) provides the evidence of equivalence at the end of the programme in that all doctoral candidates experience a similar format, i.e. assessment of the thesis followed by the closed oral examination, with two or even three examiners (some institutions routinely use three examiners, two of whom are external if a member of staff is being examined). External examining is a key feature of UK quality assurance processes and at least one external examiner is required at each oral examination. (QAA 2011)

Recent reports on HE like the Browne Report (2010) concentrated on undergraduate programmes but stressed the need for courses that reflect public interest and clearly the creative and performing arts are directly related to the booming economy in the arts in the UK. The Smith Report (2010) included the need for postgraduate courses combined with employment which is clearly the case for part-time PhD courses which involve creative elements that are being placed in the public domain in some way, for most of these involve candidates who work in this field. It calls for flexible delivery which can easily be achieved by the practice of one-to-one or two-to-one supervision in PhD programmes.

There is increasing interest in Europe in innovative developments in the UK. The Bologna Follow-up group advised the 45 Ministers at the London Ministerial Conference on the Bologna Process:

Programmes known as “Professional Doctorates”, or practice related doctorates, are doctorates that focus on embedding research in a reflective manner into ... professional practice. They must meet the same core standard as “traditional” doctorates in order to ensure the same high level of quality. It may be appropriate to consider using different titles to distinguish between ... professional doctorates and PhDs. In order to develop a real discussion on this topic, it will be important to ensure the dissemination of information from those European countries that have experience in this area, and particularly the UK where the number of professional doctorates is growing rapidly across the higher education sector. (EUA 2007)

There are considerable developments in the area of practice-based doctorates in Europe (Fell and Haines 2011: 12-13). These will be developed in Chapter Two. Between 2001-6 the development of practice-led doctorates in the performing arts was reviewed by Professor Baz Kershaw at the University of Bristol in a PARIP (Practice as Research in Performance) funded by the AHRC. This was an investigation into research in the areas of performance media: theatre, dance, film, video and television. The network established included European as well as UK institutions and endeavoured to set up national frameworks based on the best practice in this area (PARIP 2011).
In terms of assessment, Christopher Frayling suggests that:

By contrast ... the practice based doctorate advances knowledge partly by means of practice. An original/creative piece of work is included in the submission for examination. It is distinct in that significant aspects of the claim for doctoral characteristics of originality, mastery and contribution to the field are held to be demonstrated through the original creative work. (Frayling 1997)

Here he sets out clearly that the submitted creative work must be judged by the same criteria as the written text. However, he also sets out a notion of competencies that should be demonstrated in practice-based submissions:

- To undertake a systematic enquiry, creation or design.
- To apply methods and techniques appropriate to the subject, in self-critical and rigorous ways.
- To grasp contingent areas of knowledge, context and performance/production
- To document the process of origination in a way which is communicable to peers in a permanent and reproducible form.
- To develop a sustained and logical argument contextualised to relevant discourse.
- To justify actions and decisions relating to process and product.
- To perform/produce a work which is valid and original – arising out of the above – and of high quality. (Frayling 1997: 11)

Sophia Lycouris makes a similar plea:

It is clear that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive review of Practice-led Doctorates in AD & A, informed by the outcomes of the QAA review on doctoral degree characteristics (2011) and supported by a fresh consultation among academic institutions, staff and students conducting research in this area. This overdue review should revisit definitions and assumptions about the nature of Practice-led Doctorates in AD & A – to focus on the specificity of the contribution to knowledge in this area, plus the relationship between academic research and artistic/creative. The organisation and procedural arrangements involved in the delivery of this form of doctorate in AD &A should also be considered – from recruitment to examination, including issues of supervision, research training, general support and the quality of the research environment. (Lycouris 2011: 68)

It is this which this report is hoping at least partly to address.
Application of the Criteria for Doctorateness to Creative Products

To some extent these competencies map onto the four established criteria in the UK for the examination of a doctoral thesis. We will examine these one by one as they apply to PhD theses in which some aspects of the knowledge are embodied in an artefact of some kind – such as a performance, piece of visual art or piece of creative writing. The first is:

The creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline and merit publication.

It could be said that any new work of art is new knowledge but here are some of the questions raised here:

- Does a new interpretation of Beethoven’s Piano Sonatas constitute new knowledge?
- Does an interdisciplinary installation using recorded sound not composed by the candidate but applying it in a new way in its alliance with movement constitute advanced scholarship?
- Does a contemporisation of a Shakespeare plot completely transformed in terms of context constitute original research?

The regulations of the University of Western England state:

In relation to creative arts the creation of new knowledge is generally taken to mean “new readings”, “approaches” and “interpretations” of existing data, processes and/or practices which is supplemented by the contribution of your own work in your chosen field. …

The statement does not demand that you come up with “new knowledge” which is unrelated to existing knowledge, but rather that you may choose to make a different interpretation or response to a set of ideas/practices which extends the thinking around a set of artworks/processes/theories or practitioners etc. In this sense original research makes reference to the way in which you select, position, contextualise and theorise you own work and that of others. When considering “making a contribution to new knowledge”, the university does not accept that your artwork alone can be accepted as new knowledge simply because it is original and new to you. (UWE Regulations for Practice-based Doctorates 2011)

This sets out quite clearly that the innovation here refers to cultural innovation and not personal innovation. So it demands that candidates are up-to-date with developments within their own field. As most universities require a text based component within this a candidate needs to demonstrate where their own research fits into devilsments within their chosen area. This means that the traditional review becomes more a review of current developments in a field of artistic practice rather than a review of text based sources alone. This, however, does set a problem for cross-disciplinary work where a number of different disciplines are brought together
and the problem for all interdisciplinary research – the time and in this case words required to keep abreast of developments in two or more fields.

Within this area the setting of aims and intentions can often create problems for an artist who wishes to follow their own creative impulse and finds this process potentially constricting and limiting; there is also the possibility that the end point may be very clear in an artistic project where the route itself may well be one of ‘unknowing’. However, it is in the awareness of the current field of artistic practice and its interaction with the inner world of the candidate that the formulation of fluid aims and intentions that will stop the project being simply a new personal exploration by the candidate lies.

The second criterion runs:

A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or an area of professional practice.

This follows on from the interpretation of the first criterion and is often difficult to persuade a lone creative artist used to following their own creative desires to undertake. It involves knowing and investigating in some depth the creative domain in which they are working as well as being able to position their own work within it. Either they are unwilling to spend time investigating the field or they wish to make an exaggerated claim to originality ion behalf of their own creations. All creative practice is drawing on strands of previous practice and this involves a knowledge of the ways these practices have developed through history and in the contemporary world. This needs to be demonstrated in the written part of the submission:

You can use your practice as a research tool, but in order to understand how it can function as effectively, you need to be absolutely certain that you are aware of the key debates surrounding your work. (UWE Regulations for Practice-based Doctorates 2011)

The third criterion concerns:

... the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems. (UWE Regulations for Practice-based Doctorates 2011)

Here we return the ideas at the beginning of this section. And creative artists are particularly well-placed here in that each completed art-work demonstrates to conceptualise, design and implement a project in a material form of some kind and not merely in the form of a written text. Usually that also involves encountering problems often at the level of the materials used and their ability to contain the initial concept in a concrete form of some kind. These will be related to the valuing of embodied knowledge (Lakoff and Johnson 1995) and the use of journaling as a way of valuing artistic processes (Csikszentmihalyi 1990), and an analytical tool (Knudsen 2003) are essential here. The keeping of journals and sketch books and the ability to articulate the decisions often made intuitively by more established artists and
question the basis of these intuitive judgements often makes practising creative
artists gain a great deal from the process involved in submitting their work for a
doctorate. One of the unforeseen problems in any doctoral project is that someone
else unknown to the candidate is working on the same ideas and completes their
project before the submission of a doctoral thesis. Here, as seen, above, the
candidate needs to keep abreast of developments but it is less likely the field of
practice-based doctorates that the project will be identical. It does mean that the
candidate’s ability to evaluate their decisions and judgements in the light of the
developments in the field in which they are working is key. Success is:

... heavily dependent on the ability of the student to extrapolate from their
own practice the development of new ideas, attitudes and perspectives
inherent in their work which can contribute to a broader debate. (UWE
Regulations for Practice-based Doctorates 2011)

There is much debate in this field of criterion 4:

... a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and
advanced academic enquiry.

Because the field is relatively new there is, as yet, no shared body of opinion about
appropriate methodologies. Many theses use a mixture of methodologies combining
data collection from within and outside the project itself illuminated by critical
reflection and evaluation. Christopher Frayling places the original artefact as:

The production of original pieces of work is an integral part of the process as
well as its product. (Frayling 1997: 17)

He goes on to challenge the centrality of scientific method in the word of the PhD.
He suggests that ‘it is no longer possible to polarise subjects as conforming – or not
– to the scientific method’ (Frayling 1997: 8). He elaborates his views on
methodology further:

For this reason, the acquisition of relevant data, the exercise of critical and
analytical skills, sustained and coherent argumentation, and clarity and
(relative) permanence in presentation ... [is more important than the]
formation and testing of hypotheses; research questions often arise from the
context. (Frayling 1997: 15)

Later, he elaborates this further:

As a research project, such decisions and directions typically would be
consequential upon a systematic application of a process and level of self-
reflection, critical analysis and synthesis, evaluation, conceptual frame-
building, acquisition and application of contextual knowledge and an
understanding of the ways the practice is related to theory, in relation to the
specific work being undertaken. (Frayling 1997: 16)
This combination of strategies had already come about in the area of education which developed the notion of the reflective/reflexive practitioner. Here, because of the nature of the progress of a creative practice the Action Research model developed in the area of education to encourage reflective/reflexive practice sits well in that artists regularly make a work – reflect on it – and then make the next work in the light of that reflection. The practitioner is at the centre of the research here. The spiral models favoured by this approach, in my experience, sit well with artists’ own natural processes of creation and reflection alternating. This methodology makes this process of enhancement clear as outlined by Melissa Trimingham (2002).

This draws on the idea developed in *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (Schon 1983). The development of auto-ethnography as a methodological strategy has also proved helpful here. Current developments in such areas as Actor-network theory which concentrates on the interface between the various players in the act of creation including the natural world may also prove useful. There is, however, considerable debate in this area and some would wish to make subtle distinctions:

**Although much music-making involves research, the latter does not necessarily qualify all music making as research. Not every rehearsal is a research project. And not all performances are research outcomes. If we follow the OECD definition that research and experimental development comprises creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge to devise new applications ... then much of what musicians do may certainly be high-level practice, but all does not necessarily constitute research.** (Schippers 2007: 2)

Such writing raises more questions than it answers. Baz Kershaw (2002), as part of the PARIP project, started to develop such methodologies. Elaine Thomas acknowledges the appropriateness of the use of a variety of strategies:

> “Practice” denotes the exercise of appropriate skills in the creation of an original work in the field or fields of creative and performing arts and design (e.g. drama, dance, music, fine arts, graphics, fiction, poetry, design).

> “Research” refers to the activity pursued and the procedures followed in the PhD in toto and presented either by means of practice or by means of recognised text-based methods of inquiry in the humanities, or both these things. (Thomas 2001: 10)

However, later in the same report this appears to be contradicted in which she commends an eclectic approach to methodology but sees the ‘unconsidered’ use of methodologies from other disciplines as potentially problematic (Thomas 2001: 18). There is a real need for the development of methodologies and strategies specific to the arts, particularly in relation to the handling of the actual materials that are involved in the construction of art works. This is the point where the knowing becomes embodied in some form and because of the disembodied nature of the PhD (as discussed at the opening) established methodologies often deal in the generation of abstract ideas.
It can also be seen as including the particular processes involved in the handling of particular materials – bronze or stone in relation to sculpture, the human body and its possibilities in relation to dance, the range of vocal possibilities in projects involving voice-work, to give just three examples. Many creative artists do ordinarily keep quite detailed journals like Beethoven’s sketchbooks which document these effectively. In this light, Beethoven would have scored well here whereas his contemporary Schubert with the intuitive facility to write a tune immediately on a cloth after dining would score relatively low!

One interesting area here is how far audience reception should form a part of the evaluative process. People are divided about this. Post modern theorists have shifted debates about ‘meaning’ in art works from the creator to the recipient. How far then is collection of data from them in the form of questionnaire, interview or emailed comments essential?

Ethical issues in these proposals arise where the audience and other performers might be involved in the creation and reception of events. But then in works that break down the ‘fourth wall’ ethical issues are often raised as they can be by those which retain the fourth wall and the separation between performer and audience members. Unlike work in the area of Education or Health Care there are no clear ethical guidelines specifically relating to issues like these in performance events and supervisors have often to resort to guidelines developed in other disciplines.

However, a practice-based doctorate still usually requires at least some of the claims to originality to be expressed in text form in most institutions. This accompanying text will also need to identify the elements required by the Arts and Humanities Research Board in 2000 – the problems or questions addressed, the context (Kaye 2000) and the methodology. One essential part of this is to link the writing of the ‘critical-analytical’ tradition with the mastery of the tools of a particular discipline as displayed in the creative element. Here practice and theory are not seen as a dichotomy but as mutually enhancing (Martin and Willmar 1995).

Different regulatory frameworks have adopted fixed or fluid approaches to the amount of words required. In Winchester this is part of the progression process from MPhil to PhD which involves both assessment of the research so far and the discussion of the final format that the thesis might take. The Thomas report commends flexible practices in this area:

The term “thesis” should refer to the totality of the submission (including all practical and theoretical components) and specification of a word length or a proportion between the written and practical component is unnecessary and unhelpful prior to the formulation of the idea. (Thomas 2001: 15)

There are at least two institutions that offer a PhD in musical composition that do not require an accompanying written text. (One of these will be examined in more detail in other parts of this project). The argument here is that the score itself constitutes a debate of ideas (Boyce-Tillman 2009); it is musical rather than in the form of words. Music here has an advantage in this debate over performative art forms in that for the western classical tradition it has a widely accepted system of notating it. Although many musicologists see the system used as limited and flawed,
nonetheless there is wider acceptance of its efficacy in both academic and wider circles. As a musician, I can see the argument clearly. If we take the form of Baroque Fugue, for example, a small musical idea is announced (usually called the subject) and could be seen as the main aim in a text based PhD. This is allied with other small ideas which could be regarded as sub-aims. The rest of the piece represents the working out of the possibilities of these ideas which broadly relates to a traditional written thesis.

**Research Contexts**

Clearly the development of these practice-based methodologies is best done through debate amongst practitioners. Clearly there is a need for supervisors to be both trained appropriately but also willingness to engage such dialogues around methodology. Elaine Thomas is clear about the characteristics of an effective research training programme, which is the central aim of her report:

- The characteristics of a research environment which involves flexibility, access to specialist courses with a grounding in relevant issues and research skills, links with the professional community and safe setting in which artistic possibilities can be explored.
- The necessity of a critical mass of research students and how this might be achieved in smaller institutions.
- The relationship between established and emerging centres of research.
- The possible need for consortia and collaboration in providing research training programmes.
- The relationship between research training and employability.
- The need for a continuing evolution of research methods in the arts through national debate. (Thomas 2001: 20-3)

She identifies problematic areas in the current scene:

- The tension between subject specific and generalised research training.
- How to cater for the needs of part-time students in terms of schedules and attendance.
- The diversity of the needs of candidates.
- The lack of models for ‘practice-based research’ submissions. (Thomas 2001: 23-5)

What is clear here is the need for debate amongst candidates and staff but there are problems in establishing these when most candidates are working and part-time. The need for the establishing of national standards by processes of consultation is made increasingly difficult.
**Forms of Submission**

The widely accepted Western classical notation makes music in the Western classical tradition as an easier subject here than pieces which are based in movement, drama or dance.

There is a real problem concerning how different forms of creative practice can be accommodated and submitted (Melzer 1995) which includes a variety of uses of technology including such internet resources as YouTube as well as live performance. There is the problem here of the ephemeral nature of these works. The availability of technology which enables the examiner to access small parts of the work by web links has been an excellent development in the illumination of critical aspects of a dramatic project. This involves submission of at least part of the project on disc.

Live performance raises issues in the examining process and the potential role of examiners including the timing of their appointment and their responsibilities in relation to the creative elements especially when this might involve a touring show of some kind. Sometimes a live element is incorporated close to a viva; but to access the process it is often helpful to have examiners appointed very early and able to go to a sequence of live performances. It is interesting how Christopher Frayling describes it as (relative) permanence.

**Summary**

This discussion raises more questions than answers:

- *How far can other ways of knowing from the purely rational be validated at doctoral level?*
- *How far can the traditional shape of a thesis be challenged?*
- *How far does a whole thesis have to be in a permanent form?*
- *How much text should accompany the artefacts?*
- *What methodologies are most appropriate for practice-as-research?*
- *What is the relationship between a PhD and Prof Doc in this area?*
- *How are set criteria applied for practice projects?*

It is hoped that how a variety of universities and conservatoires have addressed these issues will be revealed through the other chapters.
Chapter Two

A portrait of the current state of PaR: Defining an (In)Discipline

by Dr Yvon Bonenfant

PaR has Arrived

Practice as Research (PaR) and PaR-like paradigms have emerged and evolved as formal entities within academic environments in various territories since roughly the mid-1980s, beginning in Finland, with significant international acceleration in the late 1990s and the 2000s (for a ‘map’ of these developments, see Gislén in Kershaw 2009: 105-106). While we, for simplicity’s sake, use the term PaR in this report, similar research paradigms have emerged in Francophone Canada (where the term research-creation is used, and the University of Quebec has graduated more than 60 PaR-based PhD candidates), in the Nordic countries and elsewhere continental Europe, especially in the Netherlands and Belgium (where the term artistic research tends to be used), France (where the term artistic sciences is used) and in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States (where PaR tends to be used, for either for the more discipline-specific ‘Performance as Research’ or the cross-disciplinary ‘practice as research’). The international proliferation of these paradigms, as supported by research funding bodies (the UK, Australia, Finland, Sweden, Canada) and universities offering PaR based PhD programmes in various artistic disciplines, shows that their once marginal status is rapidly diminishing and becoming a more accepted, if contentious, research option for artist-thinkers. The boom in very recent publication of a number of works that attempt to delineate the parameters of PaR both within and across disciplines demonstrates a definitive and established, formal, and sanctioned (by the ‘disciplining machines’ of monograph and edited collection publications with mainstream academic publishers) arrival of PaR onto the academic scene (Allegue et al 2009; Barrett and Bolt 2010; Bruneau and Villeneuve 2007; Freeman 2010; Gosselin and Le Coguiec 2006; Kershaw et al 2011; Leavy 2009; Macleod and Holdridge 2006; Riley and Hunter 2009; Smith and Dean 2009).

Underpinning Distinctiveness: Philosophies and Practices of PaR

As a research paradigm, PaR is pregnant with radical and fecund potential in societies that increasingly rely on ‘creatives’ for economic and social growth, ecological transformation and regeneration, because of PaR’s ability to integrate logics that are other than linear, embodied activity, and creative unpredictability within one field. Research has always been focused on the generation of new knowledge. PaR both integrates this quality of research, and simultaneously problematises and moves beyond it, with a particular creative twist. PaR, through its reliance on creative, artistic processes, targets the invention, synthesis and discovery of alternative and innovative methodological perspectives and practices across disciplinary boundaries in often unlooked-for ways. In other words, in PaR, one has the freedom to invent
new means of experimentation and to adapt unique strategies for the articulation of the results of these experiments (such as through metaphor, artistic product, artistic process, experience, and sensation). This freedom sits directly alongside more traditional strategies for the generation of new knowledge. The juxtaposition of these approaches does have to evoke either/or relationships with the theory/practice ‘divide’. While PaR might sometimes participate in the Cartesian mind-body split, PaR does not require it and actively encourages movement away from it; PaR transcends and knits together ‘body’, ‘experience’, ‘mind’, ‘sensation’, ‘analysis’, ‘articulation’, ‘memory’ and ‘argument’, often in idiosyncratically designed frameworks.

Indeed, Kershaw (in Kershaw et al 2011) points out that the evolution of PaR charts the transformation of the poet-scholar of the nineteenth century into a new practice of being and doing thanks to the advent of ‘the so-called ‘post-modern moment’ of the late-twentieth century, happening sometime between 1950 and 1990, [that] radically upset the philosophical applecart to create a mash up world in which binary habits of thought and practice were challenged profoundly’ (63).

In so doing, the PaR paradigm has much in common with a wide variety of qualitative research methodologies that emerged from the larger realm of post-positivist thought and action during the later 20th century. In the universe of qualitative methodological standpoints, feminist (in feminism’s many evolutive waves), queer, auto-ethnographic, post-structuralist, rhizomatic, post-modern, and altermodern methodologies of ‘indiscipline’ share many characteristics; they feed and nourish PaR. The bent of these realms of knowledge is to deeply problematise the assumptions that underpin the ways we think we reason and draw conclusions: these approaches (among others) ask us to notice the Foucauldian disciplining of mind and body that regulate our abilities to conceptualise the unknown and the unimaginable, and to move beyond their limits within research processes and outcomes. PaR also shares much with methodologies derived from action research and performative social science; indeed, it forms a part of what is ‘sometimes called the “practice turn” …[a] trend [that] was widespread across many discipline … and characterised by post-binary commitment to activity (rather than structure), process (rather than fixity), action (rather than representation), collectiveness (rather than individualism), reflexivity (rather than self-consciousness) and more’ (Kershaw in Kershaw et al 2011: 64). In addition to its affinities with this practice turn, PaR is also the act of doing and being within processes of creative, artistic invention and action. In addition, similarly to grounded theory, the PaR paradigm facilitates the drawing of conclusions from what we might call ‘found’ rather than ‘directed’ qualitative data. This permits conclusions to emerge from methodical analysis of rhizomatically explored pathways and experiences. This avoids the need to force forward a research process that begins from a targeted imperative. PaR can explore what emerges. The imperator of the dissecting, Cartesian eye does not have to be in the driver’s seat of the PaR vehicle.

This Cartesian eye of authority – the eye that attempts to detach observation from subjectivity, and create ‘objective’ scientific knowledge, has been crucial to supporting the development of the scientific method that has sat on the throne of judgements of research quality. This eye has certainly been of use to humanity, helping us develop scientific and social scientific methodologies that have aided
humanity in developing the miracles of scientific discovery and observation that have
cured diseases, developed technologies, and transformed our ability to survive in
large numbers. However, this eye has also become a kind of Bourdieuan habitus, a
lens and a container through which culture trains minds and bodies to ‘see’ (and
thereby understand) the world. Pallasmaa calls this the ‘ocularcentric tradition and
the consequent spectator theory of knowledge in Western thinking’ (2005: 19). He
iterates David Michael Levin’s observation that the ‘autonomy-drive and
aggressiveness of vision … haunt our ocularcentric culture’ (in Pallasmaa 2005: 17).
He cites Levin’s contention that:

The will to power is very strong in vision. There is a very strong
tendency in vision to grasp and fixate, to reify and totalise: a tendency to
dominate, secure and control, which eventually, because it was so
extensively promoted, assumed a certain uncontested hegemony over
our culture and its philosophical discourse, establishing, in keeping with
the instrumental rationality of our culture and the technological
character of our society, an ocularcentric metaphysics of presence.
(Levin in Pallasmaa 2005: 17)

The PaR paradigm’s focus on moving away from exclusive reliance on this kind of
metaphysics of presence opens up other worlds of knowledge to academic, and thus
‘official’ (rubber-stamped by the establishment) social discourse. In so doing, PaR
moves beyond and outside of many of the other contemporary, critical research
methodologies – because PaR’s strategies for research process and research product
can deeply engage metaphor and move beyond the limitations of logical, academic
language, thanks to the inclusion of artistic product in its research processes and/or
outcomes. PaR engages with a kind of Merleau-Pontian phenomenological interest in
sensation (beyond that of sight) as a ‘unit of experience’ (Merleau-Ponty 2002: 3-14).
However, it also makes space for us to understand sensation as an aesthetic and
metaphorical parameter of creative knowledge generation. This means it can be used
to begin to express the hitherto academically ineffable.

**PaR, Variability and Specificity**

Though Kershaw (2011: 63-4) conceives of PaR as a methodology (albeit a widely
ranging and infinitely variable one), it is disputable that it is a methodology in and of
itself. The range of possible approaches to conceptually framing PaR based research,
and reporting on its outcomes, is so wide that it is probably reductive to view it as
one methodological standpoint. Within just three edited collections, Allegue et al
(2009), Smith and Dean (2009) and Bruneau and Villeneuve (2007), methodological
approaches are proposed that involve divergent strategies and that embody widely
varied academic value systems. Let’s take three examples from these collections.

On what might seem like one end of the spectrum, Costin Miereanu (in Allegue et al
2009) traces the development of the ‘artistic sciences’, a French variation on PaR, to
a specific Parisian context: the work of his own research institute¹ as it developed
from the experimental aesthetics the early 60s (Mieranu 2009: 136). He insists,

¹ The Institut d’Esthétique des Arts et Technologies (unité mixte de recherche du Centre National de
Recherche Scientifique), University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne.
basing his argument on assertions by Deloche and Revault-d'Allonnes (in Miereanu 2009: 137), that:

… [A]rtistic creation contains its own “science”, an embodiment of intuition, inherent to its own knowledge’s technicity, instrinsic and irreducible to any borrowed or enveloped extra-artistic model that would come from science or even social sciences…

He then moves on to cite Damisch (1993: 176) to claim that ‘[t]his manifestation of knowledge that constitutes the intrinsic science in art, ‘would [then] constitute, under constantly renewed as well as always formally and historically defined forms, one of the permanent aims of knowledge, if not of science per sé’. Thus for Mieranu, artistic practice in and of itself both contains and articulates knowledge – though that knowledge might be expressed metaphorically. It is precisely the fact that artistic ‘understanding’ is expressed, at least in part, uniquely through artistic modes of expression, that gives work its meaning and value – and this is partly vehiculated by technicities that form alternatives to established methodological routes.

Haseman and Mafe (2009, in Smith and Dean 2009), on the other hand, insist that practice-based research projects should express their outcomes in formalised research terms. ‘Research training needs to prepare each student for the complex task of transforming the familiar language and methods he or she has as a professional practitioner and repurposing them to suit the language and protocols of research’ (Haseman and Mafe 2009: 224). They insist that their research candidates understand their creative output as ‘data’, which is a means of developing reflexivity (Haseman and Mafe 2009: 224). The assumption here is that reflexivity cannot, or will not, emerge unless PhD candidates’ linguistic engagements with their practices are ‘repurposed’ in this way. This is an evident contrast with Mieranu’s contention that the reflexivity engendered by artistic research processes are necessarily articulated by the works themselves (and by the idiosyncratic ‘languages’ the works invent due to their technicities) and that it is precisely this reality that makes PaR unique and different from other modes of enquiry.

Taking formalised processes further, Bruneau and Burns (in Bruneau and Villeneuve 2007) map out a wide range of methodological options for PaR PhD candidates, which they group into two categories: general methodologies and specific methodologies. The general methodologies are those that are systematically constructed from useful component parts while the candidates move through their research processes (Bruneau and Burns in Bruneau and Villeneuve 2007: 84-89). The specific methodologies (Bruneau and Burns in Bruneau and Villeneuve 2007: 83-84) are formally constituted, pre-designed methodological processes that are imposed upon research doings and act as containers and channelers of artistic or research process, product, and the nature of the mode of articulation and analysis of the eventual creative research outcomes (in other words, they function more like research methodologies in the classic sense). Bruneau and Burns insist on the necessity for clear, well-worked-through and specific research questions, more or less regardless of the mode of enquiry, and propose clear methods for ensuring and testing these questions’ utility (in Bruneau and Villeneuve 2007: 96-104), while numerous other approaches insist that PaR might be lead from intuition rather than conscious formulation. For these writers, these ‘requirements’ form part of a social
contract – ‘research’ as a paradigm is facilitated by funding and thinking systems that require it to fit into specific disciplines of thought and articulation, and one of the tasks of the research-practitioner is to find means of doing so – this is almost a social obligation (Bruneau and Burns in Bruneau and Villeneuve 2007: 36-7).

Miereanu is a renowned PhD supervisor in a notoriously challenging examination system, involving large professorial juries and public, open viva voce examinations; Haseman is a well-known speaker on PaR PhD processes internationally and has supervised many Australian PaR-based PhDs, and Bruneau and Burns work in an institution that has diplomaed more than 60 PaR PhD candidates with success. Thus, all of these approaches to methodological design, ranging from the most radical, where the art ‘is’ the ‘philosophy’ or knowledge innovation expressed by the PhD or research project, to the more conservative channelling of creative impulse into carefully construed, contained research design, co-exist. Juries, examiners and funding bodies across cultural and linguistic boundaries accept and verify the rigour of the outcomes and products of these approaches. How can these divergent approaches be consistent with a PaR paradigm that could have some inter-institutional, and international, cohesion?

The best explanation of this pattern perhaps comes through accepting and celebrating that PaR is a collection of related approaches that, in varied ways, have creative, generative, and artistic processes at their core. There is no single philosophical tradition or lens or methodological container into which PaR can be comfortably fit. This is, in fact, what makes PaR unique, special, and what gives it something to add to the realm of academic enquiry. Annette Arlander, a driving force in PaR within Finnish higher education, cites Nordic scholars of comparative research methodologies to assert that PaR is often ‘a tapestry-like weave of many factors – the read, the known, the observed, the created, the imagined and the deliberated – where the author does not so much strive to describe reality but to create a reality for her work with its own laws.’ (Hannula, Suoranta and Vadén 2005, in Arlander 2008: 31) She points out that these authors identify that ‘[t]he starting point for artistic research [PaR] is the open subjectivity of the researcher and her admission that she is the central research tool of the research. While this may seem narcissistic, it is also what generates individual and unique research outcomes, and helps PaR contribute new means of generating knowledge to academic circles. This is also perhaps what enables artists to both design and describe the methodological containers they use to channel their research processes in rigorous directions.

In addition, the notion of the creation of a reality for an artist’s work within its own laws knits together into an interlocking webwork the seemingly disparate approaches which are described above. It is precisely this process of rigorous and vigorous knitting, the yoking together of seemingly unrelated practices, strategies, and both literal and metaphorical, sometimes poetic and sometimes embodied articulations of innovation and originality, that is unique to PaR. This means that to some extent, every PaR PhD and every PaR research project is inventing a methodological approach. While many other fields of qualitative enquiry roam, the specificity of PaR is that it always includes creative, artistically situated processes and outcomes within that roaming remit – this requires a kind of commitment to explore the unpredictable that is largely unparalleled across other methodological fields.
Plurality as Rigour, or: So, Where does the Demonstration of Refined and Advanced Research Process and Products Come into Play?

A number of commonalities emerge from the ways that writers currently construct PaR research processes and products, be these situated at PhD or post-doctoral level. As Kershaw (2011: 66) states:

If, in its rigour, PaR presents fundamental challenges to the academy… what is the basis of that potential? Short answers can be derived from the centrality of creativity to its research methods, and especially from the capacity of creative acts to embrace contradictions … the source of PaR’s fundamental troubling of the epistemology/ontology binary, of unsustainable bifurcations between becoming and being.

Kershaw lists the particular and unique strengths of successful PaR research projects as the following:

1. Starting points, or in other words, the hunch or intuition that drives research processes where clear research questions don’t always exist. Even where expressed as question or imperatives, artistic processes underpin and highlight the potential of such intuition to generate originality (Kershaw 2011: 66);

2. The projects necessarily act as aesthetic drivers and push aesthetic innovation forward (Kershaw 2011: 67), and thus aesthetic innovation on some level forms a strong part of all rigorous PaR projects;

3. The locationality of artistic practice, in particular time-based practice, forms a part of a kind of nexus that makes it difficult to pin exact meanings down, leading to an unusually wide potential for interpretive generativity (Kershaw 2011: 67). In other words, the fact that contexts have so much to do with the way art is generated and interpreted means that rigorous PaR processes and products highlight how much fecund space for interpretation a given research outcome might have.

4. The multi-modal nature of what is transmitted by PaR, both experientially and intellectually, means that outcomes are always experienced across registers of the senses and the mind-body split (Kershaw 2011: 67); this is very unusual in other research paradigms, even within the qualitative realm.

5. Quality PaR always throws up key issues, which arise from what is usually a ‘powerful parade of binary formulations: theory/practice, process/product, ontology/epistemology, artist/academic, resources/infrastructure … its key issue becomes how to fall into contradiction without only contradicting itself’ (Kershaw 2011: 67-8).
We might see the above commonalities as facilitating the various aspects of PaR that Leavy (2009) sees as particular strengths of this kind of research. She claims that PaR-style research processes:

1. ‘… [A]re particularly useful for research projects that aim to describe, explore or discover’ (Leavy 2009: 12). Indeed, in cases where these are goals, PaR can integrate the potential of a wide variety of interpretive angles and seemingly contradictory positions to generate meaning.

2. ‘… Where there is a congruence between subject matter and method’ (Leavy 2009: 12). In other words, when that which is studied and the act of studying (often reflexive, immersive doing) either resemble, or metaphorically are, or literally are, one another.

3. ‘Where the “arresting power” and “immediacy” of art products create powerful engagements.’ (Leavy 2009: 12) She highlights here the potential of PaR to ‘grip’ the ‘readers’ of research in ways that move beyond spectatorial/analytical engagement, and to throw up interesting challenges, dilemmas, and problematisations thanks to this.

4. ‘Where existing research questions need to be posed in new ways.’ (Leavy 2009: 12) In other words, she highlights the potential of PaR to ‘explode’ or ‘blow open’ the actual drivers of research and to query and reconstruct research objectives and indeed, desires.

5. Where identity work of some kind is involved, due to the arts’ capacity to explore complex, multifaceted issues (Leavy 2009: 13). Since PaR often yokes together opposites and explores the spaces where conflicting ideas and activities rub up against one another, questions around identity can be explored in less reductive fashions.

6. For similar reasons to (Leavy 2009: 5), when exploring subjugated identities and power dynamics (Leavy 2009: 14), again, thanks to PaR’s ability to explore alterity without falling into the need for polarised research outcomes – layers of sometimes conflicting, sometimes complementary material, ranging from thought to action to praxis, can be explored.

7. Where meanings are best explored by being evoked, rather than merely described (Leavy 2009: 14). Here, she underlines PaR’s ability to express complex ideas through metaphor and other ‘non-linear’ expressive means which are less reductive.

8. Where outcomes are likely to have multiple, complex and multi-faceted or multi-layered meanings (Leavy 2009: 15). Artistic-inclusive processes that do not always rely exclusively on the use of formalised language can transmit multiply-faceted meanings across registers of experience.

When we read Kershaw’s and Leavy’s assertions together, potential patterns for the evaluation of rigour in PaR emerge. Thus, PaR’s ability to explore what research intends to do in new, exciting, original ways helps us understand how academics have
been able to credit PaR PhD and PaR research project outcomes with originality, rigour, and methodological innovation.

Leavy also points out that these kinds of explorations and research trajectories, facilitated by the PaR paradigm, do need a certain reconception and renegotiation of the kinds of approaches to evaluation of quality and standards that are usually applied to other sorts of qualitative research, and do thus pose many challenges to the ways academics have been trained to value knowledge creation. In particular, she highlights the areas of aesthetics, heightened interdisciplinarity, different kinds of subject-object relations between the 'studier' and the 'object of study', other ways and means of using theory in research processes, literature reviews (or explorations of research contexts), analysis cycles, and ethics as all posing a challenge to traditional evaluation systems for PhD and research project quality (Leavy 2009: 16-20).

Making 'rigour' judgements regarding aesthetic qualities has been troubling since at least Kant, and indeed, in Western traditions this struggle reaches back to antiquity; it is functionally impossible to be objective, since judgements around aesthetics are subject to changing values of taste as well as to changing and culturally-situated notions of sophistication. Interdisciplinarity, though a fashionable buzzword with funding councils in Canada, the UK, Australia and the EU, means almost anything to anyone – or at least, something different to different territorial entities and agencies - and within universities, is rarely manifest in radical forms. The exploration of alternative kinds of subject-object relations has much kinship with the many waves of feminist, queer studies-based, post-structural and post-modern concerns about research methodologies, but takes them further, into the question of real, felt embodiment of these relations rather than the theorisation of them. The lateral logics revealed through such exercises as the equivalent of 'literature reviews' (such as reviews of bodies of performance, for example) and analysis cycles (which can be extraordinarily multiply layered and resonant of the notion of 'plethora') pose severe challenges to traditional methodological approaches.

We might consider, however, that the academic establishment’s willingness to negotiate these unusual, and modified, parameters of quality judgement for academic work has been strongly facilitated by the potential of PaR to generate other kinds of outcomes and other kinds of genuinely innovative, new knowledges which have cross-applicability to other academic spheres.

We all know that the ways we have been exploring knowledge have not been ‘enough’ to solve society’s most pressing problems. To seek other knowledge paradigms in the academic system is to seek means to create other, better futures. The wide range of now extant, formally published literature exploring case studies of PaR projects and PhD work attest to the fact that legitimately recognised research outcomes follow from these varied but rigorous frameworks. These outcomes challenge the establishment while exciting it. They make space for the birthing – in the living, breathing form of academic research outcomes resulting from different kinds of subjective engagements with sensation, emotion, aesthetics, value judgements, identities, and even the interaction between these and the ‘hard sciences’ – into life.
A Note on Discipline

It is important to note that the majority of literature on PaR addresses issues in performance practice (live art, theatre, performance art, dance, hybrids of these), visual art, media art and creative writing. Due to the historical acception of composition practice in the music field at PhD level in the Anglo-Saxon world, the problematisation and theorisation around compositional practice for scored musics has not been a significant concern of writers in English.
Chapter Three

Managing the Field - A Survey of practices in a variety of institutions

An Overview of Regulations for Creative or Practice-based Doctorates

by Dr Inga Bryden

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<td>Both Spas</td>
<td>Upper Second Class Honours degree and Masters degree required. Must submit a paper of 5,000 words to demonstrate ability.</td>
<td>Progression assessed by Director of Studies at 9 months for full-time MPhil and 18-24 months for part-time. For full-time PhD, assessment after 12 months and at 24-36 months for part-time. Assessed via research papers and viva.</td>
<td>Director of Studies, a 3rd Supervisor, and Subject specialisation. Provides guidance and constructive criticism.</td>
<td>In creative fields it is appropriate that a significant part of the submitted work should take the form of materials derived from practice. Especially Creative Writing, Musical Composition and the making of images or forms. An application to submit a thesis in another format must be made to the PGR/CR on the designated form for consideration by the committee and must have the support of the Director of Studies.</td>
<td>If involves creative practice: PhD 40,000 max MPhil 12,000-20,000. Should be a balance between creative materials and written thesis within the maximum word count. Not dual requirement, emphasis on integration.</td>
<td>Creative works sent to the examiners with the thesis. Candidates and Supervisors must arrange an examination of the artefacts or production of the performance in a way that allows examiners to view and reflect together with written thesis before the vivavoce.</td>
<td>Sufficient copies of the final thesis shall be submitted and supplied to the University Library, the library of any collaborating institution. In the case of a PhD, the final thesis shall also be accompanied by the British Library doctoral thesis agreement form duly completed.</td>
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<td>Brunel</td>
<td>Practice-based candidates are required to submit a statement of intent indicating the topic to be investigated and the balance between practical and written elements. Admission requirements: a bibliography, a portfolio of previous work.</td>
<td>PhD Full-time: 26-48 months. Part-time: 48-72 months. Full-time MPhil: 12-24 months. Part-time: 24-48 months. Each candidate is required to attend lectures, courses and colloquia as specified. Candidates may be required to pass all or part of a taught postgraduate programme or formal training in research methods.</td>
<td>Each candidate has 2 supervisors appointed by an authorised member of staff. Candidates work away from University must have a local supervisor and a supervisor based at the University or an Associated Institution.</td>
<td>Degree of PhD may be awarded on the basis of a thesis and creative work which provides evidence of significant contribution to scholarship. The standard of work submitted should be the same as that expected for the award of a MPhil. The submission of the thesis but can include performance.</td>
<td>The thesis will vary in length according to the discipline being researched and whether it is to be submitted for a PhD or MPhil. Word length should be discussed with Supervisors.</td>
<td>70% practice and 30% theory. Candidates are normally required to be present for a vivavoce. Such examination is essential but any doctoral degree may be awarded. Permission of Senate should be sought if an alternative examination is recommended. PhD may be awarded on basis of published works.</td>
<td>These will be published as being stored electronically in the Brunel University Research Archive and the British Library will be electronically harvested and theses stored in this manner. All submission involving creative work should include a means of storage, access or retrieval of work.</td>
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Central and Goldsmiths

Applicants must demonstrate a proficiency in their field from previous degree or practical experience. If converting from another discipline, they may gain an MA degree in the subject applied for.

Candidates are initially interviewed for an MPhil. To upgrade to PhD, a candidate must submit a substantial piece of work in progress no earlier than 9 months and no later than 18 months. Full-time MPhil: 2 years; Part-time: 4.5 years. Full-time PhD: 1.5 years; Part-time: 3.5 years. All students are required to attend a weekly seminar in research methodology.

Main Supervisor is normally the point of contact. Also a Second Internal Supervisor. There can be an additional external supervisor if required. Second Supervisor can act as an Academic Supervisor, Associate Supervisor, or Reserve Supervisor.

Candidates can submit both written and practical work, which will be assessed by the Main Supervisor. All performance material is to be submitted in the format of the thesis and should be made available to the examiner and examiners for the written component.

Word count is variable across disciplines from 30,000-100,000, depending on the practical component. MPhil varies from 20,000-40,000, depending on the practical component. Ideally 30,000.

Written and practical-based components will be placed together to present an integrated argument. Practical-based research is split between practical and written, typically 60% practical, 40% written. The college may prescribe lower word counts in certain subject areas.

The examiner, after reading the thesis, shall examine the candidate orally by written paper and or practical examination.

Presented work must be accompanied by an adequate and approved form of documentation and deposited in the library in a digital format. Thesis for the purpose of public access.

East Anglia

Candidates should have considerable experience of their subject area or should be able to demonstrate this experience through publication. Applicants seeking to complete a PhD so that they may apply for teaching positions in universities. Other candidates are looking for employment in publishing or editing. 

Candidates should already have gained a Masters degree in a relevant subject.

Full-time PhD: 36-48 months; part-time: 72-96 months. Full-time MPhil: 24-36 months; part-time: 48-72 months. Within the first three months of registration, the candidate and supervisory team should agree on a provisional working title, objectives, and a timeline.

Candidates attend a research training course and graduate work in progress to Critical and Creative PhD programmes of seminars.

Candidates are allocated a Primary and Secondary Supervisor. Primary Supervisor is responsible for administrative arrangements. Supervisors provide guidance in defining the research topic. Full-time candidates should expect 5 formal meetings each year and at least 8 informal meetings (half for part-time). Candidate will undergo a first-year review.

With the permission of the Learning and Teaching Committee, candidates may submit recorded material as supporting evidence. However, this must be in addition to a written thesis and not as a substitute. The School of Music expects material to be submitted in a digital format. The School of Music is only able to exist in recorded form.

Phil between 80,000-100,000; PhD in Professional Practice, 40,000-50,000.

Variable. Critical and Creative Writing, the critical component should be 20%-50% of the whole. In Creative and Critical Writing, the creative part will usually be longer than the written; the ratio can be anything from 50:50 to 80:20. 

Research degree is awarded upon the basis of a thesis and an oral examination conducted by two or three examiners. The viva usually takes place within 2 to 3 months of submission. The purpose of the examination is to give an opportunity to discuss and defend the thesis.

Examiners may require candidates to deposit copies of recorded material with the thesis in the Library and in the appropriate School of Institute. Work submitted in book-based materials should be in a durable form suitable to preservation over long periods.

Edinburgh

Applications welcome from candidates with professional qualifications and experience. Creative research programmes will attract those who wish to carry out research within the theoretical model, those who wish to deepen practice through research, and those who wish to document systems for their practice.

Full-time PhD: 1 year; part-time: 2 years. Full-time MPhil: 1 year; part-time: 2 years. All candidates undertake a research methods training course. Candidates undertake a first year review with supervisory teams varying from 1,500-3,000 word report, to a composition, or creative practice portfolio with commentary.

There is always more than one supervisor to provide academic guidance and support. Sometimes, it is appropriate to work in collaboration with the PhD supervisor, one on one, or a second supervisor, one on one, depending on the final output.

In Creative Practice, the final output is a combination of textual and audiovisual outputs in the form of:

- Creative Music Practice: 50,000;
- PhD in Art and Design: 50,000;
- PhD in Composition: 50,000.

The final output is presented in the form of a portfolio of work, including printed material, electronic material, and live performance.

The viva usually takes place within 3 months of the oral examination. Examiners will normally met prior to the arrival of the candidate. The viva usually takes place within 1-2 hours, but this depends on what examinations consider necessary to meet the examination criteria. The intention is to ensure that the examination is coherent and that the candidate is well-prepared to answer questions.
Rochester

Candidates are expected to hold a good honours degree in the subject area relevant to the proposed research. Candidates are expected to have formulated an outline research proposal at the initial application stage.

The Full-time MPhil: 21-26 months; part-time: 33-48 months.
The Full-time PhD: 33-48 months; part-time: minimum 4-50 months.
All candidates must complete the online application form by year 1. Students transfer from MPhil to PhD in year 2 (part-time students: year 3).
Candidates are required to make an oral presentation of their research, prepare a written progress report, and one chapter of the intended thesis (approx. 10,000 words) to undergo a transfer interview with Supervisors. Students attend Research Student Development Programmes.

The Director of Studies is ultimately responsible for the proper management of the candidate’s supervision, including the development of the candidate’s programme of study and the research and welfare of the candidate. As part of the supervision team, all candidates have at least one Co-Supervisor to bring additional expertise. A Supervisor may require a candidate to attend seminars as part of the programme of study, indicated through the annual reporting process.

A candidate should present a thesis or portfolio, which for MPhil consists of a detailed and rigorous exposition of the candidate’s research work. For a PhD, it should form a distinct contribution to current knowledge of the subject. The thesis or portfolio should also include a systematic study of the subject and originality shown by the candidate. The candidate must explain the theses and projected word length at the examination study.

The PhD word length should be agreed with Supervisors, but no longer than 70,000 words (normally within the range of 50,000 to 70,000) and a projected word length for the theoretical component at their point of registration. Particular proportions are negotiable between candidates and the supervisory team as the project emerges. Candidates must clarify the practice library ratio and projected word length at the examination study.

Candidates for practice-based research projects should propose an exhibition or practice project to be developed. Works shall be accompanied by notes on each item and an extended analysis of a related theme. Candidates are examined by viva voce. The viva voice examination is concerned with the content of the thesis or portfolio and any matters that the examiner deems to be relevant thereon.

For examination by portfolio, copies of works or the form of photographs included in the bound copies.

Trinity Laban

Candidates undertaking RDP must have either a relevant Honours degree, or a Taught Postgraduate degree, or a professional qualification obtained by examination, or appropriate professional experience and a demonstrable reputation in a named area. Applicants must submit an outline research proposal (2,000 words) detailing the

The full-time PhD: 2-3 years; part-time: 3-5 years; PhD by Prior Publication: 1-2 years; Full-time MPhil: 1-2 years; part-time: 2-5 years. Research degree candidates register initially for an MPhil to develop methodology and refine their topic. There is an assessment of the project at a midway stage when registration is considered for transfer to PhD.

Research degrees include shared elements such as induction, research skills training, and seminars. Regular meetings with two members of staff. Full-time candidates should have supervisory meetings, lasting two hours, twice a month (half day for part-time). The difference between PhD and the requirement PhD with Practical Component: 20,000-25,000.

Candidates are required to present a written text. The relationship of practice to any theoretical consideration should be shown in the form of a combination of practical and/or theoretical documentation. In addition to a written document, candidates whose theses are based on a substantial practical component should aim to submit a written dissertation and, the requirement.

The relationship of the practice components to the written text should be shown in the form of an exhibition or published piece of work. Upon written confirmation from the examiners, candidates are limited to submit one hard-bound copy of their thesis to the examiners. They are also invited to submit an electronic copy of the thesis for inclusion in the institutional repository and the British Library.
| Nature and objectives of proposal project and the practical/technical relationship. Candidates are required to submit a professional CV and portfolio of practice with their application. The transfer is assessed by a written and oral presentation. | Second Supervisor is flexible, designed in consultation with all parties. The title of the proposal may be 30, 40, or 50 words, as appropriate. Supervisors should use notes to clarify their annual review for each candidate. In passing is the written thesis of publishable standard, with the practical component serving to assist the examiner in reaching their judgment. Usually the First Supervisor is normally present. |

| UWE | Proactive research candidates are required to undertake 60 credits of relevant MA/MPhil level modules, or demonstrate equivalent experience. The application for registration shall be on the form of the candidate's intended submission and of the proposed methods of assessment. Full-time PhD: 18-36 months; part-time: 30-48 months. Full-time MPhil: 24-36 months. Candidates are required to take two 36-credit MA level modules in preparation for the formal Progressions Examination (one of first year of study or project equivalent). A progression report (3000-6000 words) shows the scope, aims of research and methods and timeframe. Not included in word count are critical reviews of the literature and copies of public output. An application to appoint two Supervisors. Frequency of supervision sessions, seminars and other work for at least the initial year. Distinct from the University will appoint two Supervisors. Application of the supervisor's role and the processes of supervision. Supervisors will complete a log sheet of meetings for yearly review. |

| Winchester | The requirements for candidates normally are normally a First or Second Class Honours degree and a Master's degree in a suitable subject, or whatever award level of experience might be deemed equivalent by the Interview Panel or the results of the PKEQ. Candidates are normally required to register for the degree of MPhil. Candidates are required to take part in a postgraduate candidate Research Training Programme. Full-time MPhil: 12-18 months; part-time: 24-36 months. Full-time PhD: 24-36 months; part-time: 36-48 months. The total time of study is at least three years. Every candidate shall be allocated a supervisor, normally by the Research Degree Awards Board. Candidates in creative practice may submit original creative or practical work in fulfillment of the MPhil or PhD requirements. The published work or service dissemination of creative outputs must be broadly comparable to a PhD dissertation. The published and or written material associated with dissemination of creative outputs must be accompanied by a PhD: 75,000; MPhil: 20,000; (Agreed equivalent for thesis involving creative practice). The relative weighting of practical work and written thesis is variable and depends on the nature of the individual research project. In each case, the weighting will be agreed at the upgrade between the supervisory team and the candidate. Candidates for PhD and MPhil will normally be required to attend a viva voce examination. A viva is arranged to assess students who demonstrate creativity, imagination and generation of new knowledge, through original research, extend the frontiers of the discipline, and most publication and or public performance and or public dissemination. For MPhil, a dissertation must be presented in a permanent binding of the approved type before the degree may be granted. The candidate shall confirm that the contents of the permanently bound thesis are identical with the version submitted for examination, except where amendments have been made. In the case of a PhD, the final thesis shall also be accompanied by the British Library (ETDOS). Any material unsuitable for binding in the text, such as large maps, diagrams, CD, DVD, tapes or films, must normally be attached securely to the thesis indicating clearly their relationship to the main body of text. For material that cannot be secured to the thesis, candidates must seek the advice of the supervisory team. Hard-bound copies and the... |
| York | Creative practice PhDs are aimed at working professionals who wish to reflect critically on their own and others' work, to pursue teaching or research in Higher Education, or further develop their careers through an original work. Candidates need a First or Upper Second Honours degree, a Masters degree or at least three years professional experience. Applicants submit a proposal setting out research questions, methodology, and or aspirations and creative ideas that the PhD will address. Writing samples and examples of relevant practice-based work also required. | Progression varies between degree and undertaken within timeframe specified by supervisory team. MPhil Level requirements: A play, performance, script, or an audio clip of between 10 minutes and 1 hour. A reflective log on the development of the creative output and a 5,000 word critical essay pertaining to the work and its intellectual contexts. Responsibilities of Supervisors include providing advice and guidance on the conduct of the research and on the preparation of the thesis, and monitoring the progress of the student's research programme. Supervisors must maintain regular contact with research candidates. Three main components: an academic dissertation, a portfolio or reflective journal and a portfolio of creative work. | PhD: 20,000. 10% Creative and 30% Theses | Every candidate for the MPhil or PhD degree is required to attend an oral examination on the subject of the thesis and on related matters. Exceptionally, the Boarding Committee on Assessment may grant exemption from the oral examination on recommendation of the Examiners who must provide a full exploration of the particular circumstances. In creative practice, the combination of creative work, a portfolio and academic dissertation ensures that candidates prove both their critical and practical skills. These learning outcomes are intended to augment the written dissertation and creative practice in a manner similar to that of detailed appendices on questions of context and methodology included in orthodox academic doctoral theses. | Electronic copy shall be deposited by the candidate via the ERE. The copyright of the thesis is vested in the candidate. |
Comparisons

The table above provides a comparative survey of the regulatory procedures used by various Higher Education institutions offering practice-based doctorates. The 11 institutions (though 10 sets of regulations, as Central and Goldsmiths come under the same set) have been selected to represent a range and variety of institutions whose regulations are easily available in the public domain. The list includes conservatoires, smaller and larger institutions, and those with recently acquired research degree awarding powers along with more established institutions. Together the regulations articulate differences and points of similarity, and allow reflection on the philosophies set out in the first section of this report. A comparative analysis leads to a variety of solutions to the inclusion of embodied performance in the context of a doctoral programme (section two deals solely with MPhil/PhD regulations).

The available material from the following Higher Education institutions has been surveyed:

1. Bath Spa University
2. Brunel University
3. Central and Goldsmiths
4. University of East Anglia
5. University of Edinburgh
6. University of Roehampton
7. Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
8. University of the West of England
9. University of Winchester
10. University of York

Following this survey, 8 headings were selected under which to extract and organise information and to allow for focused comparison. The headings are: Admissions; Progression; Supervision; Submission Procedures; Word Length; Relation of Text to Practice; Examination Procedures; Archiving.

Issues such as word limits and how to examine in a way that gives examiners access to the event itself are reflected in a variety of regulatory procedures and practices to ensure the valuing of creative work as research in its own right.

At the University of Winchester, doctoral work involving creative practice is focused in the areas of creative writing (which developed first) and the performing arts. The procedures and practices relating to these kinds of research projects and the supervision of them have been established over a number of years. To date, supervisory teams at Winchester have supervised 6 'practice-based' doctorates to completion.
From this experience and from research undertaken by Professor June Boyce-Tillman and colleagues at Winchester, regulations for a Professional Doctorate were developed. Within this framework, a D Creative Arts with pathways in creative writing and the performing arts was validated in 2011. At the same time, the PhD by Works in the Public Domain, which can include creative work (for example, the performance equivalent of publications), was a logical development of the interface between Winchester and other HE institutions (for example, through conferences) and of wider national debate concerning doctoral-level research, supervision and assessment in the area of the creative arts.

**Admissions**

The regulations for MPhils/PhDs with titles often include suggestions as to the qualifications, previous experience and aspirations of candidates suitable for admission.

The University of York, for its PhD in creative practice, indicates the following about candidates applying to study:

- Candidates already working professionally in theatre, film or television who wish to take time to reflect critically on their own and others' work.
- Candidates already working professionally in theatre, film or television who wish to make a career move into teaching and research in Higher Education.
- Candidates working in theatre, film and television who wish to develop their careers with the production of a substantial and appropriate original work.
- Candidates who wish to reach a professional standard of practice and research and to pursue a career in either Higher Education or professional theatre, film or television.

For the PhD in creative music practice, the University of Edinburgh describes its programme demographics as:

- Composer-theorists who wish to carry out research into and practice of particular compositional models.
- Performers who wish to deepen their practice through musicological research.
- Computer music composers who wish to develop documented hard/software systems for their music.
- Performers with a need to study the techniques and organology of period instruments.
- Instrument builders/researchers needing historical techniques found from evidence on the original instruments.

The majority of the admissions guidance is designed to require a degree of experience on the part of applicants and attempt to identify what might in academic terms be an MA in written terms but is much less easily identifiable in practical experience. This is particularly important for full time candidates who have in some institutions to complete their progression from MPhil to PhD during their first year.
In terms of entry requirements, an MA in a relevant subject area, or equivalent, demonstrable (professional) experience is usually required (the University of York sets a minimum of 3 years professional experience; the University of East Anglia asks for considerable experience in the subject area, or as established through publications).

The candidate submits a research proposal (Bath Spa asks for a 3,000 word paper), and at 5 of the institutions would be expected to provide evidence (specified in the regulations) of practice before the interview. Brunel asks ‘practice-based’ candidates to provide a bibliography, filmography and a portfolio of previous work; Central and Goldsmiths ask for ‘examples of practice’; Trinity Laban requests a portfolio of practice, and York asks for a ‘sample of writing and examples of relevant practice-based work.’

All candidates would be expected to be able to articulate their proposed methodology, even if, as explained by the University of the West of England, ‘this is related to the role of your practice as a research tool. The methodology can be further developed during the Research Methods module.’

This last statement raises the broader issue of training in research methods, what constitute those ‘research methods’, and the level of competency expected of candidates before embarking on doctoral level work.

The student handbooks sometimes contain some indications about practice-based research methodology, as in the handbook of the University of the West of England’s Faculty of Creative Arts:

We cannot assume that all students putting forward proposals for PhD study will produce artworks of such quality and influence as to stand alone as their contribution to the advancement of the discipline. It is quite often the case that students opting to study at PhD level do so because they are particularly interested in the broader implications/theories/processes/techniques and ideas arising from their practice when compared or contextualised in relation to the work of another group of carefully selected practices/practitioners/theories/ideas etc. It is also often the case that the ‘sum of the parts’, a combination of practice, theoretical positioning, critical reflection, data gathering and evaluation, is precisely what brings new insights and ideas to an area of practice. ….

To summarise, practice-based research is a mode of enquiry which accepts creative practice as a valid tool for the exploration of a research proposal. There are a number of different ways in which the practice of a student may be used to research.

It is clear that most universities require candidates to have experience in their chosen area of creative practice before commencing on the programme. Undertaking the programme allows the candidate time to reflect critically on their processes and to situate their work in the context of other practitioners. It can also be associated with career advancement. However, when we consider the description
of the candidates for these degrees the boundaries are blurred between the Professional Doctorate and the practice-led PhD:

One promising way of reaching a satisfactory definition of a PhD for practice-based work would be start with the intentions of the candidate. This involves distinguishing the activities of the artist/designer/performer in their professional practice role from that academic research perspective they need to bring to bear on their creative work if they wish to submit the results for a PhD award. (Frayling 1997)

**Progression**

The processes for progression (from MPhil to PhD) are, in general, the same as for wholly written PhDs. The timings for part-time and full-time modes are normally specified in the regulations. The question of who is doing the assessing of material or 'work-in-progress' submitted is an interesting one – this varies from the Director of Studies, to a review carried out by the supervisory team or peers, to a more formal assessment or progression point (as in the Upgrade at the University of Winchester, for example) involving an assessor who is external to the project.

The material submitted for assessment (or review) of the candidate’s progress varies:

- a research paper and viva (Bath Spa);
- a substantial piece of work in progress (Central and Goldsmiths);
- work in progress presented to a creative-critical PhD programme of seminars (East Anglia);
- a report (maximum 3,000 words) or composition or creative practice portfolio with commentary (Edinburgh);
- a viva and sample chapter (c.10,000 words) of the intended thesis (Roehampton);
- work in progress (typically written, but including creative practice) plus a viva (Trinity Laban);
- a progression report of between 3-6,000 words (University of the West of England);
- creative output, reflective log and critical contextualising essay (York).

At some of the institutions the candidate has to demonstrate the fulfilment of research training requirements before he/she can progress. The elements of 'research training' again vary: for example, Central and Goldsmiths have the requirement to attend a weekly seminar in research methodology; at Brunel the candidate has to have attended colloquia/lectures as specified; at Winchester, specified modules of the research training programme need to have been completed.

In some handbooks there is specific reference to the ways in which a review of progression is adapted for MPhil/PhDs which involve practice in the area of the arts. For example, the UWE student handbook gives a detailed description of what the progression report should include – in this case, statements about the nature and
context of the intended practice, and evidence of knowledge of practitioners working in similar domains. Allowance is made for projects with different kinds of creative elements, so that an exhibition, for example, may be part of the progression procedure in addition to the progression report and viva. Guidance on the ethical issues which may be of particular relevance within the creative arts is also given.

At Winchester guidance is given regarding the literature review to be submitted for assessment; that it should include a critical commentary on the relevant figures in the candidate’s chosen artistic field.

**Supervision**

Overall, there is little indication in the institutional regulations for research degrees of any new styles of supervision necessary for practice-based doctorates, or of the dilemmas of appropriate spaces for the examination of creative products. The regulations tend to define the roles of a Director of Studies and/or supervisors and offer guidance on the timings and regularity of supervisions.

**Submission Procedures, Word Length and Relation of Written Text and Creative Practice**

The main problem to be addressed in the presentation of the final thesis is the equivalence of creative practice to written text. Entwined with this is how much the creative works can speak for themselves and how far they need a written commentary of explanation.

The word length of the written component of a submission is specified in some institutions’ regulations, and left more open and flexible in others. Where a word range is specified, this varies greatly, from a maximum of 20,000-50,000 for an MPhil, and from a maximum of 20,000-80,000 for a PhD. East Anglia’s regulations advise on a word length for a PhD in Professional Practice. Other regulations acknowledge, without specifying a word-length/range, that the written component varies according to the discipline and depending on the extent of the practical element. At Brunel and Roehampton this is to be discussed with supervisors (as made explicit in the respective regulations). Notably, there is no required written thesis for a PhD in composition at Edinburgh.

While a ratio for the balance between the ‘critical’ (written) and ‘creative’ (practice) parts of the final submission is specified in some regulations (for example, 70% practice and 30% theory, Brunel and York), it is interesting to note that there is explicit reference to the need to *integrate* the critical and the creative (for example, in the Bath Spa, Central and Goldsmiths, and Trinity Laban regulations). Institutions are clearly making efforts to articulate the relationship between the creative and the critical (or the practical and the theoretical) whilst stressing that the thesis should not be regarded as a ‘dual requirement’. Ongoing debate surrounding ‘Practice-as-Research’ and the extent to which the artwork can stand alone is highlighted in Edinburgh’s regulations, where it is stated that all submissions require evidence of the processes involved in the final creative output. The timing involved in
determining the balance (or interaction) of creative and critical components becomes significant in a practice-based doctorate. The balance between the practical and written elements may be stated at the admissions stage (Brunel; Trinity Laban), or the weighting agreed at the upgrade viva and then adhered to for the final thesis (Winchester). In addition, the role of the candidate and/or supervisory team has a degree of flexibility with regard to this matter: candidates may propose a practice-theory ratio, decided with the supervisory team.

The handbook of the Faculty of Creative Arts at the University of the West of England offers some useful models of the final research submission: ‘comparative models that may lead to a new understanding (new knowledge) of selected groups of practitioners of whom you are one.’

**Examination Procedures**

Interestingly there are no particular regulations for the examining of the thesis with a creative practice element except at Winchester. Here the examiners are appointed immediately after the progression from MPhil to PhD to enable examiners to attend performances over a longer period. In most of the other regulations it appears to be assumed that the exhibition/performance will be close to the final viva.

Christopher Frayling (1997: 16-17) states that the characteristics of the assessment are different for a PhD and a named PhD. Unspoken in many regulations is that the viva will often involve attendance at a performance or exhibition of some kind which might be at the same time or a different time.

**Conclusion and Archiving**

All the institutions examined agree that the area of research in/through creative practice (at an advanced level) is an exciting one which has much to contribute to society and culture in their broadest senses. Most have struggled to find ways of accommodating creative practice within the frames established for the traditional PhD. Some, like Winchester, have allowed for a stage (the progression to PhD from MPhil) when this fluidity will be codified in the context of a particular project, while other intuitions have felt the need to provide a variety of matriculations and accompanying models to standardise the submission. However, there is clearly a will to progress and to recruit candidates with knowledge and experience who have demonstrated their ability to embody their cognition in material form.

Elaine Thomas identifies as a crucial issue ‘the role and status of an exhibition or performance in the examination and its relationship to the permanent reference for subsequent scholars.’ (Thomas 2001: 15-16). Indeed, the question ‘how far does a whole thesis have to be in a permanent form?’ has only been addressed superficially when we consider the survey of institutional regulations. There is acknowledgement of electronic storage in only some of the regulations, and this tends to be in general reference to ‘forms of retainable documentation.’ The level of detailed guidance regarding the submission, documentation and archiving/storage of final submissions which may comprise different media and formats is very variable. This is clearly an
area for further development, particularly bearing in mind the wider, ongoing preoccupation with adhering to open access policies (and the related issue of copyright). Further investigation may usefully include the Sage Handbook of Digital Dissertations and Theses (Andrews et. al (eds.) 2012) which sets out the processes and products of digital and multimodal research, with a focus on advances in arts and practice-based doctorates and how these can be applied in other fields. Part 5 is on archiving, storage and accessibility, including a chapter on the ‘Cybertextual in Practice-based PhDs’. 
Chapter Four

Navigating the Landscape:

Analysis of the interview data

by June Boyce-Tillman and Tiago de Faria

Introduction

This chapter represents an analysis of all the interviews carried out in relation to the project. The interviews were conducted differently by two separate interviewers. They shared the set of questions which had been generated by the literature and the experience of the group of researchers:

1. If you use PaR in the context of your doctoral programmes, how do you use PaR? If you don’t why not?
2. What kinds of data can be generated by PaR in the context of your doctoral programmes?
3. How do you document PaR in the context of your doctoral programmes?
4. Is PaR a method, methodology, neither or both?
5. What are the values of PaR with regards to the kind of knowledge that you generate? This is with respect to 1) the subject community; 2) the wider society?
6. Is creative practice an example of embodied cognition? If it is, is PaR relevant?
7. What do you think the role of virtuosity is in PaR?

Although this was essentially a structured approach to interviewing, the interviewees were allowed to develop their ideas freely in a more unstructured or semi-structured way. Some interviews were conducted by phone and others on videotape (and these were used to produce the accompanying DVD) and the different media used had an impact on both the way the interview was conducted and the way each subject responded. The telephone interviews tended to concentrate on areas like ‘Assessment/Validation/Examination’ and ‘PaR PhD Regulations’ but the videoed interviews were more rhizomatic in character and tended to veer towards more unstructured approaches that in the end (see below) produced codes like ‘PaR as a Tool for Generating New Knowledge through Innovative and Fresh Outcomes’ and tended to look outside of the HE context to the wider issues. The linking of the data with Chapter Two enabled the grounding of the theory generated by the diverse approaches of the interviewers.
The Analytical Tools

Since the initial developments of ‘Grounded Theory’, in the late 1960’s, diverging understandings and perspectives have come to light addressing the problematic relation between data and theory. The founding fathers of Grounded Theory, Glaser and Strauss, after an initial suggestion for a peaceful coexistence of the two conflicting if not paradoxical notions of ‘data emergence’ and ‘theoretical sensitivity’ (Glaser and Strauss 2006), diverged in the way that each understood and consequently advanced with methods for reducing the fissure that Grounded Theory revealed.

Following the critique of Udo Kelle on the empirical problems of Grounded Theory and the summary of its recent developments (Kelle 2005), Glaser and Strauss subsequent publications (Glaser 1992; Glaser 2002; Strauss and Corbin 1990), and given the specific aspects of this project, namely its diffuse nature and diversity of approaches, I felt that I could use Yvon’s theory review bringing together the first analysis into a more grounded hypothetical inference. I devised a complex coding system borrowing from Glaser’s ‘family coding’ and Strauss’s ‘axial coding’. Both coding systems were used at the same time eliminating all the redundant codes while keeping contradictory ones. Contradictory codes helped reveal the weakness of hypothetical inferences by bringing to light different explanations for the same phenomenon. This is why it is imperative that they figure in the final theoretical network, as they remind us ‘that empirical research can never provide a final proof for theoretical propositions but only cumulative and always provisional evidence.’ (Kelle 2005).

The analysis was carried out using the programme Atlas.ti.5.5. The first set of codes was produced from the interviews producing its own network of relations. These were discussed and revised and more codes generated as the processes of transcription and analysis progressed. These were further revised when the text of Chapter Two was coded which gave greater depth to the analysis. This chapter explores the codes and the way they are cross-linked with other codes. The map is presented as Appendix Two. This reveals the amount of cross-referencing within the codes. The quantity of this reveals the fluidity of the field. Examples of this can be seen in the differences between the codes ‘PaR different approaches’ and ‘PaR different roles’. The first appears more regularly in the material than the second; but there appears to be some confusion surrounding this subject and its relation towards the wider academic community. Similar confusion appears around PaR as method or methodology, or to embodied philosophy or cognition; here contradictions abound in the data and reveal the variety of conceptual views among the participants in this research. To highlight the above Professor Kelleher’s view shows a particular positioning of himself: ‘To an extent we don’t have such a thing as Practice as Research. I think sometimes that I’ve moved beyond it.’

Some of these debates such as that around the prevalence of embodied cognition rather than embodied philosophy seem to be related to the greater confidence in producing and receiving information rather than exploring the conceptual underpinning of the process in which they are engaged. PaR is largely seen as a tool for generating new knowledge mainly through its ability to move across disciplines, its creative
drive. Hence, the notions of ‘Originality’ and ‘Innovation’ combined with the notion of ‘Rigour’ make PaR, under the participants’ scrutiny, relevant both to the wider and subject communities.

Other characteristics of PaR like ‘Virtuosity’ and ‘Complexity’ are less often discussed and reveal conflicting understandings when discussed. ‘Originality’ as a characteristic becomes more apparent in Yvon’s text, perhaps indicating that it is an inferred and implicit aspect when discussing the more practical aspects of PaR.

‘Complexity’ and ‘Dissemination’ are both characteristics that are part of ‘Assessment / Validation / Examination’ which in turn is associated with ‘what’s relevant for PaR PhD’. However, when relating to ‘PaR as a Tool for Generating New Knowledge through Innovative and Fresh Outcomes’ these two characteristics have different weights with the latter being more apparent than the first. ‘Complexity’, not only contradicts ‘Dissemination’, but also when in context of ‘PaR as a Tool for Generating New Knowledge Through Innovative and Fresh Outcomes’, it shows a more questionable value.

The polysemic aspect of PaR becomes evident when discussing it in the context of the doctoral programs with a slight tendency to rely on its use as a tool for documenting creative research rather than a research methodology. The rest of this chapter will concentrate at looking at the codes more carefully by using quotations from the interviews. They are ordered hierarchically. The first codes are those which are most evident. It is of course clear that it was the nature of the questions asked that to some extent dictated this ordering. The rest of this chapter deals with each code in detail. The quotations (highlighted by a different typeface) are attributed to the people in Appendix One by means of the initials set out there.

1. **PaR as a Tool for Generating New Knowledge through Innovative and Fresh Outcomes**

   This is clearly the central issue in PaR in PhD programmes and relates to criteria used by national funding and regulatory bodies:

   ... one of the key concepts of that is, insight or new knowledge being created and the way in which that can be done, and the new knowledge and insights that are created are almost as variable and multiple as the approaches that are used to create that. (JBu)

   Tiago de Faria sees performing as generating and interpreting knowledge simultaneously:

   ... for instance, Georges Méliès directed this film about going to the moon before going to the moon was even a thing, an idea, and of course we can’t be sure about this, but was it Art that inspired a scientific revolution or not? (TF)

   Practice is embedded throughout the process; the data gathering is gathering the documentation which leads onto other parts of the process and may, of course, be valuable in itself. (RC)
The definition of knowledge varies according to the way we approach it. In this context it means the valuing of oracy as well as literacy:

So the oral communication of truth which uses the body, whether that’s the word being spoken, rather than written, or whether that’s the gesture of the hands and the movement and so on, or the sound of the voice singing, that was never regarded so highly because the values of the society which generated it valued literacy higher than oracy. (JBT)

My interfacing body ... sensorially receives this data through aural means, through visual means, through tactile senses. (CB)

Potentially as PaR becomes more established within doctoral programmes, it will be resolved in the future as embodied knowing becomes accepted. It can be seen as creating new forms of knowledge particularly by interdisciplinary practices:

Stelarc is such a good example ... the implications of the work he’s doing, the exoskeleton and all those sorts of things, are massive, and for the general public are massive. It’s only through trying to forge these links that we’re going to start gaining insight into our understanding of this body, the body and how it works as a document and how it could be a document. (JBu)

As we have seen in chapter two, innovation is present where research questions are asked in new ways in both process and product.

This acceptance of new forms of knowledge might have implications for the wider academic community and have cross-applicability to other academic spheres. This we have seen further elaborated in Chapter Two. There is the potential for redefining knowledge as enriching the discourse of wider society. This area is concerned with where innovation is located:

I would have to say in terms of Composition, about a very beautiful set of piano pieces, “what is this piece exemplifying in terms of new knowledge, new understanding, new experience?” It may be very pretty, but unless there’s something driving it intellectually it is not in itself PhD worthy. (NT)

In the area of musical performance it can be to do with surrounding research such as historically-informed performance with new editions, as in one supervised at Winchester on the harpsichord works of Elisabetta da Gambarini:

It’s about generating new knowledge of musical style, musical ability, instrument ability. It even could be something that would generate new meanings, new possible musical meanings, in the way that music can mean as well. (HM)

Helen Minors sees new knowledge in the form of understanding and relationship to context such as a thesis examining:

[How] the use of professional concerts within school education can bring professional musicians closer to the student, and thereby the student can identify what it means to be a professional musician or what Performance means, what it is. By bringing issues of education into the concert hall the idea is to break down effectively the false wall, break down barrier between the audience and stage in disseminating something about style, context, or an invitation for the audience to participate in some way. ... The end new knowledge might be (we are still working on this) a new educational model, a strategy or suggestion of how Performance might be better integrated within the education system in high school. (HM)
Charlie Broom on the accompanying DVD talks about new forms of knowledge led by intuition. Johannes Birringer sees the knowledge as generated both from inside and outside of the project (on the DVD). Yvon Bonenfant sees his development of performance as the development of a new virtuosity. The documentation of art (as we shall see below) is part of this area linked with constructing new narratives:

We don’t need this narrative anymore; we can construct new narratives, without the using of previous and existing narrative. (TF)

Interdisciplinarity is associated with the area, as we shall see later, along with the sometimes contradictory area of complexity.

In the PhD in composition in Edinburgh the score is central to the submission and revisions are asked of the scores:

Things that don’t work or don’t balance properly, or things that clearly haven’t reached their full potential. The truth in art is something reaching the full realisation of its inspiration, its potential, and that’s always very clear from art materials. So, when things don’t realised that, we will ask people to do that, if they want to have a doctorate for that work as a composer, then it has to be fully realised. ... One of my other PhDs ... ended up doing some fairly substantial revisions to a major opera he has written, and indeed an extra piece for the portfolio, because the examiners felt that there was an area that related to his work that was not fully explored. (NO)

This PhD is based on the oldest model of PaR: the degrees in composition:

It’s survived goodness knows how many changes in world view, from Renaissance to Enlightenment, to the Cartesian Revolution Enlightenment to Max Planck. It’s survived all of those and only seemed to run aground in the bureaucratic baby dreams of academics in the 70s and 80s, that it starts to founder. ... it seems to me that insufficient arguments were produced to suggest that this thing, that survived the revolutions of Newtonianism and relativity, was somehow suddenly on the basis of some such lack of information, suddenly seemed to be no longer worthy of it. And why PhD?! Because that is the central doctorate, and it always was. (NO)

At the same university, Peter Nelson describes developing a new PhD in creative practice (as described in Chapter Three) after a merger with the College of Art:

The PhD involves research that combines textual and musical outputs, for example, Composition, Performance of either original or pre-existing repertoire, Installation, Sound Design, Interactive Music Software etc ... the PhD in creative music practice. (PN)

However, in other practice-based PhD’s most revisions seem to relate to the theoretical:

The tricky bit of that is that it is usually very difficult to ask people to revise practical work, whereas it’s quite easy to ask them to revise theoretical work. So, the most common situation is that, even if essentially one is not quite happy with the practical outcome, one asks the person to address what one sees as those problems in the thesis. You point out what you think the problems are and then you say ‘can you give some kind of justification for why you chose to do it this way’, or whatever. (NT)

In summary, this is a central area in the debate and has a variety of links both causal and by association with the further areas to be explored.
2. **Assessment/Validation/Examination**

This was one of the main focuses of telephone interviews and it illustrates well the findings of the issues in the regulations discussed in Chapter Three. The regulations are part of this area alongside complexity, the weighting of different aspects of the submission, dissemination, the producing of knowledge relevant to the wider community and the subject community, virtuosity, mature critical thought and rigour. The different approaches to PaR cause the variety apparent in this area. Originality is central to assessment. Problems arise with the relationship between the different aspects of the submission as with a singer examining breathing mechanisms who submitted a recital:

She just began her recital with a little presentation, like a conference presentation of her thesis, and then she gave a recital, and it was very nice, but it didn’t demonstrate anything. (JG)

Rigour is part of it in relation to the given criteria but the problem of ephemerality arises:

Where things have to be able to stand up to being tested in some way and in order to be able to stand up to be tested; in our discipline that’s difficult because things disappear and whatever’s left are ghosts and traces and remnants - you never have the thing anymore. (JBu)

The onus at Roehampton University is on the candidate to justify how the elements fit together and vary from project to project:

They might include theoretical writing; they might include analysis of materials; they might include fieldwork; they might include Performance Practice; they might include other forms of Creative Practice. In any particular PhD they would have to make a case for the balance of the different elements, how they contribute to the argument, how they are presenting them; it might be the case that in somebody’s PhD the Performance-related material functions as documentation of a practice which was encountered live, in another PhD the Performance Practice might actually form a part of the argumentation, it’s just going to depend on the individual PhD. (JK)

The format of submission is part of it and at the Royal Northern College of Music in the regulations:

“"The series of substantial performances are about three hours, the performances must normally be submitted", but this “normally” means so that it is documented, but they can be live and/or studio. (JG)

All the submitted parts must be of doctoral standard both separately and in their linkage together:

I’ve externally examined PhDs in this country where there is a so-called Practice portfolio element, and I’ve had problems with it when it is designated as being something separate. When for example, there is a 40% or whatever Practice element, and it stands alone, and you’re thinking “well stands alone as what?” (JK)
We have already seen the variety and fluidity in regulations. Word counts are sometimes set for commentaries but some PhD’s in composition do not require any other documentation. The interrogation will be part of the viva:

I have to say as an examiner, I feel much more comfortable reading the composer’s intentions from a written text, than from reading the score. (JBT)

Virtuosity is part of it as Yvon Bonenfant says on the DVD, seeing how complexity and virtuosity interface in his work:

I’m asking examiners, the academic system and culture in different ways, to reflect biophysically on what’s troubling about my work and it is what’s troubling about my work that reveals its complexity, and its complexity and the different layers of complexity of that work are what replaces the classic notion of data. (YB)

Problems in examining live performance are evident here:

... it is not always possible to have identified an examiner and got him or her along at an early enough stage, as it were, to see work that is being presented. But that is an issue. (NT)

Institutions are revisiting the issue of appropriate examining teams:

We’ve been exploring which external examiners to go for ... if performance is involved, particularly if it is interdisciplinary. What we’ve agreed is that we are inviting an external examiner to the live performance even though it is being filmed ... some nature of the research question would be lost in the documentary potentially. (HM)

In summary, the examining processes of various institutions as we have seen in Chapter Three vary considerably and need to be constantly being critiqued and reviewed by those working within them as different approaches are conceptualised.

3. PaR as a Tool for Generating and Interpreting Data

I think when you decide to use Practice as Research it’s as a method for you to generate more data for your research. (TF)

This was accepted much earlier in the area of musical composition since the Middle Ages (NO); but in many areas it means redefining what is meant by the term data:

Data perhaps, in terms of creativity, is about observations of embodied Practice, about issues to do with cognition and a phenomenological process, which actually reflects back on the actual Practice itself. (RC)

Practice as Research ... challenge[s] the very notion of what data is and it can send us, what it can do is make us, force us to explore what else we can know. (YB)

The interdisciplinary nature of much of the work in this area means that there is great potential for this. The new knowledge is often in the area of embodied philosophy and cognition and its acceptance as a way of knowing within the academic community and that is where the originality may reside. This necessitates in supervisory teams a variety of roles and the development of new methods. Some of which can incorporate ambiguity and paradox so that new data may be found intuitively rather than sought directly as we have seen in Chapter Two by new
juxtapositions. Katy MacLeod describes how in this area data can be generated spontaneously:

Isn’t it interesting how when you’re doing work certain things come together? I had to read Seamus because I’m in a little philosophy group and I wanted to turn them towards his Oxford lectures, because I thought there was something incredibly restorative and healing, and humbling about his approach to poetry. It just triggered all sorts of connections for me, even though I hadn’t thought about it before; that in this poetic form, there is a vehicle for political readdressing, that is turning back to our experience with renewed insight sufficient to make redress to our worlds – and that comes through the careful forming of the poem. (KM)

This reflects areas from the first code in which different forms of data need validating in academic contexts and PaR is a way of doing this.

4. **PaR as Embodied Cognition**

Johannes Birringer (on the DVD) sees the notion of ‘embodiment’ being an academic invention because all human activity is embodied including writing:

I mean if we take cognition at its most basic level, which is thought, like brain activity, how could it not be embodied cognition? (YB)

It seems to me that there is no knowledge that is not embodied. One of the things Colwyn and I are going to be writing on is this, presently. If we look at the earliest functions of human communication, babies and so on, then it’s very clear that the initial knowledge and the understanding is embodied from the start ... what we know about the human brain is, that when we think and understand we are activating a number of systems running right the way from the top, the abstract top, to the biological bottom of our brain. ... It seems to me that creative work is an exploration of that very terrain, and good creative work is precisely about the passage of knowledge between thought, imagination and embodiment.(NO)

But writing enables ideas to be separated from the body of the creator, and musical notation is as good at this as written words:

The value of literacy is that the mind of the person can be separated from the body of the person and of course we do that in examining PhDs; the mind of the person is over here and the university’s somewhere and they send us their mind in the form of a thesis and our minds then engage with their minds through the means of this written text, and we assess whether that mind is worthy of a PhD. When it comes to examining Performance as Research, we can’t do that, our body, the body of the examiner has to be in some sort of relationship with the body of the person who is being examined. We have to have that interface, it’s no longer possible. (JBT)

Once choreography entered within doctoral programmes, embodied cognition entered the conceptualisation of doctoral study:

I co-supervised a PhD with the Dance department. ... A very accomplished choreographer ... was making work and showing it throughout the time of her PhD, working (this is more of a classic version) a theoretical PhD around questions of Contemporary Dance and theory. The work that she made, we engaged the examiners about a year before the examination, so that during the final year they saw some live performance at agreed dates. We then submitted, with the written PhD, a DVD documentation of some of those performances. The DVD documentation, if you will, didn’t cover the performances, it was more indicative. (JK)
The notion of embodied cognition is often caused by interdisciplinarity. It is also associated with mature critical thought. We have already seen it as a tool for generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes and a tool for generating and interpreting data. It is associated with and often confused with embodied philosophy. Sometimes the inclusion of embodied elements results in a variety of roles in the supervisory process. This area results in a reconsideration of methodology:

Then you start to interrogate the methodologies that are being used in the making of the work, and the theoretical ideas in that case, obviously, also are going to be informing the practice, or you hope they are. That's what one tries to encourage, but people don’t actually perceive theory and practice as occupying separate spaces, that each is responding to the other and each are driving each other. That sort of process. (NT)

And so it becomes more circular and reflexive:

In general that gradually comes to birth, meets some sort of embodied form, you then ask people what they thought, you look at it yourself, you do it a few times, and then on the basis of what you thought, how it went, your next piece of work is being formed in your mind; that notion of the spiral of action and reflection, action and reflection works extremely well. (JBT)

One doctoral candidate sees the process in this way:

It’s neither solely intellect through which I receive data, nor solely through the body, but it is in fact through the two; it’s the body/mind and the mind/body. (CB)

For some candidates it is a driver to use PaR:

Experiencing the movement is experiencing the creation of the lines. (PF)

The body becomes knowledge and the experience of the body in a live or even a digitalised situation… We are embodied and that knowledge and our experiences are constituted through and by our body engaging with the world around us. (J Bu)

It includes experiential knowing:

Any Performance Research has to have a somatic experience; we have to feel, it has to be embodied. (HM)

It can include digitisation:

It might be networked practice. ... I think there are people making digital works that metaphorically embody ideas but not literally. (NT)

In summary, embodied cognition is distinct from embodied philosophy insofar as it represents the use of bodily movement of some kind to produce knowledge; philosophy which we shall address later is more concerned with the concepts of knowledge that underpin our value systems.
5. **PaR as Embodied Philosophy**

The development of a philosophy of embodiment has been driven by the development of interdisciplinary performance practices and the development of PaR as a tool for generating new knowledge and interpreting data. The ability to develop it is associated with mature critical thought, idiosyncratic practice and originality. It has caused the development of new and creative methods of research documentation and its development has challenged notions of assessment:

> We offer specialisms in electro-acoustic compositions which can be diffused, disseminated in different ways. ... That could be submitted with a recording. We would accept scores, whether the performances of the scores are then assessed, or whether that is performed for the improvement and the feedback of the research, would go on a case by case basis. (HM)

> There's one which I can see where the actual form of the PhD is a box of materials, of discreet elements, it's like an artist's object. This particular person is somebody who was coming from a Print Art and Graphic Design background moving into Performance. So, we have here a whole set of cards, visual elements; there is a lot of actual Performance work that was done. Duration Performance is here documented in still images and whole sets of traces, and then there are large substantial theoretical essays presented as micro-books and instructions for performing, for the renewing of the event for the future. That's one example. (JK)

Research candidates talk about the process of redefinition:

> I am also coming to understand, through my process, that philosophy doesn't just apply to intellectual philosophy, but there is kind of cellular philosophy, a corporeal philosophy as well, as a product of culture ... I also interface with that philosophy through tactile senses (CB)

> I decided not to use my own experience and my own work up until now for the research; it's embodied knowledge, so I've got it, I know it, so I think if I'm going to use it, I'm going to use it as a reference rather than generating data for research.(TF)

It is often confused with embodied cognition but this can be resolved in the area of rigorous debate. This probably because people initially bring embodied cognition into the doctoral frame before they start to theorise what is happening. Then debates that we saw in the first code resurface:

> What Practice as Research ... enables, in terms of the subject community, is to dispel hierarchical importance of intellect over body/mind experience and instinctual and creative impulses. (CB)

It means the inclusion of experience and subjectivity within doctoral submissions:

> The body becomes knowledge and the experience of the body in a live or even a digitalised situation, because for me Cognitive Science is a really important shift which has impacted on the way we understand things and the way potentially we might read things. (JBu)

Practitioners are often enacting an embodied philosophy without being able to articulate about it:

> Even if the practitioner denies that they're doing anything other than, 'oh, I'm just doing stuff, I'm not actually reflecting on it', that still is, I think, embodied philosophy because they're going in and making it. (RC)
I feel quite strongly that that is giving a language to what I am actually experiencing, it is not just an intellectual philosophy that I am experiencing. (CB)

Sometimes this articulation is the centre point of a more practice-led submission:

Although he is very much a performer, very much a maker, in his case, [what] he came out with was an essentially theoretical project which was evidenced by his practice. (NT)

This is, of course, one of the major reasons from the variety and complexity of the field as charted in this report. The development over a similar period of Professional Doctorates has also meant that debates in this area are being developed outside the Doctor of Philosophy:

I would say that's a really interesting area and it brings us into that really interesting area where we've got a rise in Professional Doctorates alongside the PhD, the so called Doctor of Philosophy and so on and so forth. I suspect there are some people who would say “ok, develop your Professional Doctorates over there, do what you like with that, but let's have a PhD with a written component.” “Let’s forget about the PhD in Practice as Research, you can’t just do that, you create your Professional Doctorates as we have here, a Professional Doctorate in the Creative Arts, where you can produce works of art without a commentary.”(JBT)

So there's that, if you want a PhD you must be articulate in words, there's that bit there. On a wider philosophical front, I go back to what I said about the Enlightenment; the Enlightenment said, “I think therefore I am” and I often ask students to imagine if Descartes had said “I dance therefore I am”, or “I sing therefore I am”, how Western society would have shaped-up, because it would have shaped-up rather different, and the notion of the loss of embodiment. ... So, in fact what we have in our society now is that those people that have minds, in general, are paid more highly than those who have bodies; if we take the average work structure that we have, we have managers doing minimal embodied movement, just moving their fingers to transmit their minds, and then we've got a million people like street cleaners, sales people, tube drivers who are operating somebody else's mind and they're paid less than the people sitting doing very little than a lot of those other jobs need a lot of body. The society itself is fractured, with jobs which require minds and jobs which require bodies, and the people who have bodies often can't use their minds and the people that have minds often don't use their bodies, although they might go to the gym, but it's not part of their work. I think that's the dangerous position that we're in now and we've never been so fractured. (JBT)

In summary, this is a developing area, as we have seen in Chapter Two. Here the nature of philosophy is being redefined to include metaphor, experience stored in the body and the development of a critical language in which it can be articulated.

6. Virtuosity

We have already seen how virtuosity is part of the Assessment/ Validation/ Examination insofar as it is potentially a criterion for the performance elements within the submission. Nigel Osborne links it with virtue and simplicity/complexity:

If we think of virtuosity in performance like ... people playing music, then it comes from the origin of virtue; it means “showing your worth”; and so, we would expect composers to show their worth... For example, that candidate this morning, did have a kind of tangible virtuosity; there was a great complexity in her work which demonstrates real technical virtuosity of handling detail of that, which I felt was necessary, in my opinion, for the mission of the music, that the music required great detail of working and therefore the virtuosity was
appropriate and well placed. Whereas, obviously similar detail and attempts to impress with huge complication, which were masquerading as real complexity and were simple-minded, would not be interesting. Therefore, it’s quite possible for a composer to do well with a PhD with very simple non-virtuosically notated scores, if the musical value is such that the simplicity and straightforwardness of expression was the correct way in bringing forward that music. (NO)

So it creates some paradoxes and contradictions within the code of PaR as a tool for generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes. It is involved in the differences in weighting between written and performed elements in a submission. Helen Minors talks about the dilemmas around this part of the submission and the need for further definition here, particularly when trying to explain what is required of practice in the submission to candidates. It is associated with PaR as method insofar as different embodied traditions have their own methods associated with them and then it links with technical skills:

What I would say is, if Practice as Research-led PhDs are not technically virtuosic, then they should be inventing potential for virtuosity or a new virtuosity and I think my work does that. I have very virtuosic training, but I’m using it in a very peculiar way and it’s a very difficult way for other people to try and imitate; I’ve never even tried to train people to imitate it. ... So I’ve been troubled sometimes because of my place in IFTR [International Federation for Theatre Research] PaR Working Group… one will say: ‘Practice as Research just leads to shitty practice. All this experimentation, how do people get good at anything?’ I’m sort of sympathetic with that, because I have seen some PaR PhD students that don’t show skill and don’t know that they don’t show skill, and if we’re talking about refined embodied discourse, if you don’t have a language to express something … some refined psycho-corporal way of engaging with the process of creativity on an intimate physical level, or physical and conceptual level because you might be a composer an architect of work….I think it’s difficult to argue that the “data” that PaR is generating is refined, if there isn’t some kind of perception of technical prowess underpinning the discourse.(YB)

In this view, PaR needs to be part of the admission process to programmes, as we have seen in Chapter Three:

Students have been accepted, I’m not just talking about Music, but in Music as well, but in other areas, who turn out not to have quite the levels of skills that they should have. (NT)

I think I do value virtuosity in ways that some people, especially from the live art or theatre world, would find sometimes provoking and offensive because some of the aesthetic that people from those domains are working with is an aesthetic lack of virtuosity … I straddle that world interestingly, if I had a student come to me now that I doctorated, I would say: ‘I want to do a Practice-led PhD with you where Practice is the core, I would say: "send me a portfolio and I’ll tell you whether I’ll work with you.”’ (YB)

It also makes particular demands of supervisors:

Artists apply for PhDs using all sorts of different means, jpegs, CDs, original works, journals, theoretical exegeses etc. They certainly have to produce substantial evidence of pertinent and preparatory work….we need to see work which attests to the quality of their art practice because they need to be robust, reflexive and sophisticated- to carry through what they propose. They have to be well grounded in their various practices. (KM)
It is associated with complexity and rigour in the examination process:

So a question comes up for an examiner… which is that ‘this person is obviously technically virtuosic, why the hell have they chosen to do this thing with the virtuosity?’ And ‘why the hell’ is because I’m asking examiners, the academic system and culture in different ways, to reflect biophysically on what’s troubling about my work and it is what’s troubling about my work that reveals its complexity, and its complexity and the different layers of complexity of that work are what replaces the classic notion of data. (YB)

At a conference about performance virtuosity and Practice as Research … I remember an eminent Professor of Composition who said “I can tell when someone’s got the technical ability, and whether there’s a complexity in their work” and so on. And someone turned around and said, “well how would you judge a John Cage piece?” and he said “well, he wasn’t a composer was he?” So, I had to sort of bite my tongue at that point. But I think there is still that kind of notion of what a Composition PhD should be. (NT)

Failure and virtuosity are linked in the area of clowning:

I also would say that part of being a clown is not having virtuosity quite deliberately and then producing virtuosity at the end, so it appears that all is a mess but then you do reveal that you can walk the tightrope after you’ve fallen off fifty times or something, constant deferment of the trick or the act of the clown. So, perhaps this is absolutely right for the researcher. … There are some forms of Performance itself, which make a virtue out of saying “we are not interested in acting”, “we are not interested in virtuosity”; “we’re not interested in being good at the skills and techniques”, but I think perhaps this is a virtuosity in itself. … There is a sense in which I do have to be in two places at once. (RC)

Is this an alternative virtuosity?

Now, that doesn’t mean that someone couldn’t work with failure, or couldn’t actually create a PaR paradigm where it’s actually about the lack of virtuosity, but what I would argue is that, that now becomes through the PhD process, as alternative virtuosity because you actually become a very refined conceptual thinker, as composer of what it means to work without skill, and that itself can be a very refined conceptual skill. Every once in a while though, someone comes to me casually who is taking a PaR PhD, or is experimenting with PaR in other ways, and says: “I think my supervisor hates me because they say my work isn’t good enough”, or they say “I’m not doing enough work” and I say: “well how much work have you done”, and that often just gives me an indication; if somebody has made twenty minutes of work in four years, I am very suspicious about whether that person is really functioning on a technically refined level, even if they came to me and said: “I’ve done four hours of shit work in three years”, already I would be saying, whatever shit means to them, “well, you have a sense that you’re in a process and you are reflecting on the results of your working, and deciding whether it’s where you wanted to arrive at or not”, again demonstrates some level of virtuosity. … What I would say is, if Practice as Research-led PhDs are not technically virtuosic, then they should be inventing potential for virtuosity or a new virtuosity and I think my work does that. (YB)

It can be linked to contextualisation:

One goes back to the Composition thesis; can you submit a simple set of piano pieces or do you have to have used an orchestra and written a four hour opera and demonstrate your capacity to handle large resources? And in most of those PhDs in Composition, there does have to be a major work of some kind, there can be a lot of other works and sketches, which may well be piano sketches for a wider thing and so on, but there does have to be that, and so on. I think I’m torn because I like to produce music for meditation which is very simple because I think if you are asking people to meditate to music, then the music texture needs to be thinner to allow their thoughts to have a place in it, whereas if you’ve got say for
an example, a Wagner opera, where you’ve got hundreds of leitmotifs knocking around the orchestra, massive stuff going on on the stage and so on and so forth, but you can only be a spectator, there is too much already there, so you can only observe the interplay of what the composer’s put there. …Is there a virtuosity in being able to write brilliantly for children, is that not a virtuous? I think of the piece I’m working on, the “Song of the Earth” for Winchester Cathedral; you’ve got four hundred children aged 6-11 is it not a virtuoso to write a performance to know what children of that age are likely to be able to do? And to be able to write, that they’ll be able to do that that fits in a large orchestral score? That is not the way virtuosity has been regarded, because virtuosity has been regarded as being able to do very difficult things well; the question is doing very simple things beautifully and for a purpose, and that’s where in the Arts we’ve often lost the sense of intention. … That, in a sense, is the tension; if something is right for purpose, is that not a virtuoso piece? (JBT)

In order to get the audience to participate, I had to build a level of excellence in the nature of that kind of performance, which I had also developed through the nature of reflecting on earlier Practice, to get to a point where I could create an environment where the audience were comfortable in participating; but to do that I had to be excellent at performing, I had to have technical skills to get them to do that. … But within that space, I had to operate in a way that would make the audience comfortable, so I had to have virtuosity in both of my fields to even pull that off. (JBu)

There is a virtuosity in self-reflexivity in good auto-ethnographic work:

I don’t know what virtuosity is. I mean is virtuosity someone who is absolutely knowledgeable in terms of dance techniques and is perfect, but actually he is not auto-reflective; he doesn’t think about what he is doing, he is just considering being this pristine dancer that you cannot touch - he knows everything, he knows every step. Or a composer that is, a composer is more tricky, like this violin player, who can play a Bach to the extent that it’s brilliant ... or is virtuosity someone who is not as good as these people, but in a way he’s actually messy in the way that he’s presenting, but you can see there is complex thoughts there and again you can feel that there is more to it, what he is presenting is something that carries this complex way of seeing the world and what he’s doing. (TF)

The interface between real life and art is explored when virtuosity is associated with identity construction:

You could say that identity needs to be virtuosic because we need to keep up roles. ... However I’m looking at multiple identities, so these identities sort of go in and out of virtuosity; I am better at some roles than others and some of my multiple identities are very pedestrianised and everyday. ... So therefore, there’s a kind of flux for me between going in and out of virtuosic performance of my identities. Also Burlesque, the field of Practice is very much in terms of virtuosic practice, so for some it is very much about just performing their everyday selves, while for others it’s about embodying and inhabiting a more virtuosic identity as well - playing out fantasy, playing out performers such as Dita Von Teese, and replicating these types of personas, who do have a virtuosic skill in Burlesque. (CB)

Here it links with wider cultural issues and respondents were interested in the work on virtuosity of Paolo Virno:

Some of the more recent theoretical works on labour and exploitation are built around questions of virtuosity. ... Maybe the virtuoso is somebody who exists in an arena of anecdote, who makes something that doesn’t have a final end, the way that some of the Italian post-Marxist philosophers have latched onto virtuosity of a way of thinking of the contemporary post-industrial societies. Virtuosity exists as one of those really fascinating and problematic areas of thinking about what it is literally to work and make work in contemporary economies. (JK)
Johannes Birringer on the DVD makes similar links developing them in the area of wider cultural needs. He sees some of his virtuosity as nurturing a group of people which raises issues of relationships and politics, which describes as an ‘existential necessity’. It is a technique to deal with the situation of only being temporarily employed and fragility of the present moment.

In summary, the interviews present a number of differing definitions of virtuosity – some concentrating on the traditional techniques of performance artists but others on new ways of using and developing techniques around these.

7. **Originality/Innovation**

We have already seen how this is part of ideas around PaR as a tool for generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes. Yvon Bonenfant sees it in the area of the ability of performance practice to contain and delight in paradox and contradiction. On the DVD he talks of holding together the soothing and challenging in his work; this contrasts with scientific data which tries to eliminate paradox. Johannes Birringer sees it in the combination of new elements and is working with the designer Michele Danjoux to create wearable suits that can both create and receive sound or be exhibited, as seen on the accompanying DVD. Perhaps one of the main functions of PaR in the Academy is to be speculative - to explore new areas of knowledge (YB). PaR can produce art that is not very interesting in the area of aesthetics but is very interesting in its conceptualisation. As Johannes Birringer states:

> I am making use of university research contexts for artistic work/labour, experimenting and developing new aesthetic and technological techniques through collaboration, thus also - in the process - forming or helping to build relations and community, that may, or may not be so possible under the competitive and often inhospitable or underdeveloped academic infrastructures (and with underdeveloped I am referring to digital performance research) - we are working on new ground and thus are also shaping the relations of production, and I find the relations to the outside existing world (the non-academic world), more important, more relevant, and more crucial for the sustainability of new thinking, and new practices in the arts. Hybrid production is common in the world, but for academic disciplines, derived from 19th century, this is often still news. (JB)

Its association with the area of embodied philosophy makes it, as we have seen in Chapter Three, an important part of PhD regulations which involves, as we have seen in Chapter Two, new methodologies and complex and interdisciplinary definitions of what constitutes knowledge. We have already seen how it plays out in ideas of virtuosity and it can be linked with dissemination:

> In that instance the new knowledge relates to experience, relates to judging students’ and audiences’ experience, but also the performance experience within that. (HM)

It is sometimes at odds with the notion of self-reflection and here it is part of the arguments around what’s relevant for PaR PhD where the central question is ‘new to whom?’:

> One of the main properties of any doctorate that distinguishes it from other work is that it is original, that it is innovative in some way and as an examiner that is the main box that you have to tick. Here, I think it’s interesting because any work of art that you bring into being is
new, it hasn’t been there before, so it is new, but in a sense every new pop song, for example, in the charts is new, but to get to that position in the charts you have to be pretty derivative, so in a sense it’s not particularly innovative. (JBT)

It can also be defined in relation to culture:

To me, Art in general is just a language, it’s a more expressive language, it’s a language of a different kind, it’s a language which brings the barriers down ... because ... Cultural connotations basically become[s] paralysed in a way, and Art in general is ... a language [that] brings all those barriers down.(PF)

Candidates themselves push the boundaries of a discipline and the re-writing of criteria for admission and examination:

And indeed this has arisen over someone who had applied, who doesn’t have a conventional literate music background, but who does appear to be producing quite conceptually and technically interesting electronic sonic work ...

That’s part of why we’re are revising the criteria at the moment, because it has become evident to us that the sorts of people that are wanting to pursue higher level sound composition, or whatever you want to call it, aren’t necessarily just writing for conventional ensembles and so on. (NT)

In summary, originality is clearly central to doctoral level work but is defined in a variety of ways which will be elaborated under some of the following codes.

8. Mature Critical Thought

This is regarded as very relevant to PaR PhDs. We have already seen this as part of Assessment/Validation/Examination and results in PaR generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes. It is linked with the word philosophy in the title of the degree:

There was this kind of assumption that as philosophers you look at the world and then you produce this kind of narrative, your own narrative of your perception of world; art does exactly the same thing, you have this perception of the world and you create the narrative and this narrative is your performance. (TF)

Even if Art is an embodiment of philosophy, it is not always a rigorous critical embodiment of philosophy and that is what knowledge demands - that we ask how and why those things work in the way that they do. (JBu)

We have seen in Chapter Two the need to challenge well-established binary patterns of thought – to ‘think outside the box’.

If you just make things, no matter how you push your skill and your profession, your craftsmanship, you are creating Craft, as soon as you try to question yourself, you put thought into it, your perception changes and your expression is interlinked with that perception and intention, then you pass from craftsmanship into Art; that is where the philosophy is coming into it. (PF)

I would suggest that, yeah, all artistic practice is philosophically driven, of course it is, but is it necessarily critical? (JBu)
Reflexivity in PaR as methodology needs to include criticality:

The process of developing the project ... is the process whereby we hope to teach them the necessary critical and practical skills that they need to bring their work to PhD level. (NT)

What I did was, I employed empirical measures to start to think of those things but measured philosophically; so “Cognitive Materialism”, which is this mix of empirical rigour, but also thinking about it in a philosophical critical nature. ... You would still have to use critical frames to start to talk about it and to start to theorise and conceptualise the nature of it. (JBu)

However, there is a complex relationship to the language used in this process:

The ones that really piss me off are ... people with Classical academic backgrounds who do a little artistic experiment and then feel that because they have a very refined philosophical discourse or theoretical discourse, that their PaR is without question, advanced level PaR. (YB)

The result of mature critical thought is the production of knowledge relevant to both the subject community and the wider community. Complexity is part of it:

You can feel that there is more to it, what he is presenting is something that carries this complex way of seeing the world. (TF)

Associated with it are embodied cognition, embodied philosophy and rigour especially in the relationship between theory and practice it:

But to do Practice as Research ... you have to be very technically skilled in what you do in order for your insights to be taken seriously in a way, as practice first, and then you also have to have technical skill in that critical reflection and have an understanding of those underlying structures...It's that reflection and that critical knowing, and reflecting on knowing of practice that makes it rigorous. (JBu)

You want someone who has a kind of mature way of perceiving, thinking, referring, so he had read, so there is material there and not just someone that can present a perfect performance. (TF)

Sometimes the regulations demand to see it as the driving force of the programme:

Let's look at a PhD in performance: “a series of substantial performances and a critical text which will take the form of a dissertation on a subject closely related to the performances.” ... "To enable students to develop further the critical and analytical skills required in earlier stages of the programme and apply them with sophistication and discrimination in their reading of musical texts; To consolidate the advanced critical skills pertinent to their individual aspirations as performers and/or composers; To develop further students' skills in delivering structured verbal presentations on their work, thus expanding and consolidating a range of transferable and key skills in relation to focused and in-depth studies; To encourage students to reflect critically on the reciprocity of their practical studies and Musicology.” (JG)

In summary, it is clear that the crucial element of criticality is associated with maturity both as an artist and as a philosopher and these need to be manifest in any submission. It is often in this area that examiners' reports base their judgement of doctoral worthiness of a submission and is a frequent area where substantial revisions are called for.
9. **PaR PhD regulations**

The different approaches cause the difference in the PaR PhD regulations, although, as we have seen there are areas of broad agreement. It is clear that some supervisors find their particular regulations difficult; this is often more so when an institution is validated by a different institution and they do not feel they have control of the regulatory procedures; they fear that the validating institution has no grasp of the practice-based doctoral world and wants to make it conform to expectations in other areas. Sometimes they are regarded as clear, sometimes unclear:

The 40,000 words is set in the regulations. ... But the expectation is that they would be musically literate, and we, I think, have to be more explicit. (NT)

Sometimes the use of the word ‘normally’ makes them more flexible:

I mean looking at their regulations, they have within them, where the thesis is accompanied by material in other than written form of the research, or the research involves Creative Writing, or regulations describe “the written thesis should be normally within the range ...” (JG)

Differences in weighting PaR’s written elements are apparent and sometimes regarded as acceptable and sometimes as unacceptable. Often they are under regular discussion as the field develops:

We are talking about that at the moment. As it stands now, it is discretionary on the faculties and then on the Schools, because obviously we have got Performance in different capacities in each one. ... There are various different criteria that impact on the balance between them at the moment, whether that is an external funding body, whether it is an employer (because we do have some students at the moment that are funded by employers as well), we look to have enough text that we can discuss contexts, aims and objectives. I am not aware of anybody that is writing less than 20%. (HM)

There is a clear demand everywhere for originality, with the different definitions that we have explored above, in which rigour is required in the area of reflection and criticality although the PhD’s in Composition sometimes do not require critical commentary (although require it in the viva) and have different criteria from other PaR PhDs.

The requirements for Composition really don’t specify that any substantial theoretical, critical theoretical work, has to be undertaken in relation to a composition project. Whereas for the Music Theatre, and indeed, for all of the other practical-based ... Because I’m director of Doctoral Studies for the whole School of Media, Film and Music, so we also have, I’m also looking after film-makers and Media-practice students who are working various areas of digital media production. For all of those, there is a requirement for substantial theoretical, critical theoretical, component and therefore a fairly substantial thesis, which is. Broadly speaking given that a full-length PhD thesis would be 80,000 words, for a practice-led project it is 40,000 words. So it is kind of a half and half, in other words, half theory and half practice. (NT)

These clearly are associated with debates about what is relevant for PaR in relation to REF (Research Excellence Framework) formulations and requirements of funding bodies. The supervision process and stages in the regulatory process are clearly relevant here, as it allows for careful interchange between regulations and thesis. These processes sometimes involve people from other disciplines:
It’s professors and readers. But it’s a committee, the University’s Research Degrees Board working at a departmental level, which scrutinises these things. They have to be very tough in terms of methodology, materials, why you’re doing this, timeline of completion, the description of the field etc. etc. etc. This is the major hurdle. By the time it gets to upgrade, upgrade is less of a hassle to be honest. Anyone who is using Practice elements, portfolio elements, they are going to be, they might be say doing a performance but there might be people in, I don’t know, Sports Sciences, Education, Psychology, who are judging how this hangs together ... (JK)

We shall see later that the inclusion of live performance in a submission poses problems for making regulatory procedures in this area difficult to be the same as for other PhDs:

In the case of two of them, it worked that we were able to appoint the examiner early enough for them to see, in one case the complete finished project, and in the other case, one out of the three finished projects. ... [The regulations] say there must be a live component, I mean as part of a project, and that that must be documented. They don’t say in the regulations “and that the examiner must see the live performance.” (NT)

In summary, supervisors are finding ways to negotiate the world of PhD regulations and ideally are being given a place in debates around them. The process of supervision must involve the shaping of the thesis to conform with them.

10. What is Considered Relevant for a PaR PhD

Most of all the other codes are subsumed in the discussion here as people struggle with their varying approaches and what makes them up. Here is the development of mature critical thought:

It might well be if you have set yourself a set of research questions around technique and, whether using different quantities of primer or something can achieve different quantities of luminosity, or whatever it might be, then yes that is. I would always ask, “I want to know why that matters.” (NT)

Here is the requirement for virtuosity in a particular discipline:

There are people who finished their BA, go on to do an MA and then decide they want to do a PhD. So that’s one model. Then of course there are, it’s probably about half and half, there are the other people who have maybe got sometime a quite substantial amount of professional experience under their belt, who then want to do a PhD, and we do certainly look at their work, and they not only have to submit a proposal, a fairly well developed research proposal, but examples of work. (NT)

Some participants, as we shall see below, feel that the term PaR is an academic invention to enable different forms of knowing to be acceptable within the Academy:

If you look at method, the methods, and methodology going to the actual meaning of the word, as the “study of the method” - a kind of methods discourse - then speaking, for instance, in Performance, which is a very self-reflective method, then it can become a methodology as well because it can generate a meta-discourse about itself. I think it really depends on how we see methodology and method, and then you come with this question of “how do we frame it in the academic world?” “How do we frame it?” Wouldn’t the question be, “how does the academic world want to frame this?” Because I think that that’s different. (TF)
Some participants in the research felt that the key arguments concerning PaR have already been won and do not need revisiting:

In my impression, in several areas of the UK field, and in my university, there is an extent to which arguments for or against PaR no longer seem to be in play as they used to be, that some of the key arguments, for example, including substantive Creative Practice in PhD content and as RAE/REF returns etc. have been won, to the extent that ‘PaR’ might not even need to be cited as a category of research. Rather, one can talk about research as such, and the various approaches to research, which might include Creative Practice alongside other forms of Practice (fieldwork, archival work, theoretical practice, whatever) as appropriate to the particular project and its research questions. That is not to say that it is ever easy or simple to resolve how distinct research methodologies relate to each other. (JK)

In summary, here we have a range of issues that people consider significant for PaR with at least one participant feeling he had moved beyond it. Where people place themselves in terms of their experience in the area is significant in explaining the variety of approaches evident in this report.

11. PaR as Method

The academic world requires all PhD’s have to have a method and it is helpful, if simplistic, to call it PaR. Yvon Bonenfant attacks this need as being an attempt to justify it in terms that the Academy understands and sees the development of the term Performance as Research as part of the process of justification in a potentially hostile academy used to a certain defined set of methods linked to and validated by various disciplines. This area is associated with virtuosity, interdisciplinary and PaR as a tool for generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes. It is part of PaR as methodology, different approaches to PaR, the production of g knowledge relevant to the subject community, research documentation and PaR as a tool for generating and interpreting data. Charlie Broom elaborates on the DVD on all the strategies she uses, including journaling, photography and reflective writing. Clearly it needs distinguishing from methodology. Indeed a better word than method here might be a strategy within a wider methodology. The interviews encapsulate this struggle with terminology:

... it’s like whisking egg whites is a method and you get meringues, but there are several different ways in which you can get meringues; there are several different ways in which you can research and there are different methods, and Practice as Research is a method of achieving that same goal. (JBu)

The method is Practice as Research ... [and] would need refining onto the research question. It would be a strategy within a wider methodology ... The method in its own right is needed for Practice as Research, but within this there would be more refined strategies such as Action as Research. (HM)

Practice as Research, defined in terms of Practice, becomes a method in that case. What’s interesting, I think in Melissa Trimingham’s article she ... proposes her “Hermeneutic Interpretive method” - a methodology for Practice as Research itself. It’s almost like a Russian doll, where you get Practice inside practices and you get reflections on that. So, the point I’m making is that I think it can be both a method and a methodology, but I think it’s also broader in the sense that it maybe the appropriate way to think about the project. ... I think it can be all of these and I think it depends on the context, and sometimes I think it can’t be any of those. ... It’s a way of doing and understanding a research project. In that sense, it is a methodology; it’s an overarching methodology because it shows a way of doing a project. (RC)
My Practice is my method, but it’s also my methodology because my methodology is to allow my creative and instinctual impulses to lead the research and to lead the work, so that is my methodology, and in order to capture that then I need these disparate and multifarious methods. (CB)

Nigel Osborne compares practice-based and practice-led PhDs:

I have supervised and joint supervised many doctoral theses in the area of Science, [Medicine] and Biology, and Psychology, in those fields, I’ve not as yet encountered a kind of creative application. In theory, our doctorates by Practice could well involve, as it were, the elaboration of Practical Creative Therapies at work, but I have not, so far, supervised any of that kind.

The ones that I’ve supervised and examined usually have some form of ... musical examples or types of musical notation. For example, in our quite now well-known work in Mother/Infant Communication, we developed a computer graphic notation for notating pitch prosodic related communication amongst children, and we involved a computer graphic related notation for that. ... We have the tradition of European Western notation with bar lines and durations of song, which we use and we would still regard as the core, perhaps, of the Composition course ... but notation in a very shifting and evolving sense. (NO)

In summary, the relationship between method and methodology here is similar to the one outlined above in embodied cognition and philosophy. Most people in the area of PaR would use it as a method or strategy either within the context of a wider methodology or without being to be articulate, at least in the early stages of their doctoral studies, about the methodology into which it fits. However, this is a fluid area where practitioners are struggling to define terms.

12. PaR as Methodology

This is associated with interdisciplinarity for a synthesis of other methodologies may be necessitated. Candidates may need to make choices appropriate to their own idiosyncratic practice or project:

A large number of them have a practical or portfolio element in the actual research that they’re doing. ... There is a whole range and variety of approaches. (JK)

It is associated with mature critical thought, often concerning the articulation of artistic processes. This may involve the application of existing theoretical frames to aspects of interdisciplinary performance. Sometimes the methodology itself may be the focus of the PhD which presupposes methodological skill:

I think I have a number of different approaches to this because I think that performance or practice, if we want to talk about other kinds of practice, can be seen as a methodology which may not necessarily be the actual eventual outcome of the project. In other words, you could have a largely theoretical project for which practice has been a methodological component, but in the end you are not actually presenting a fully realised piece of work. (NT)

It is part of how knowledge is produced that is relevant to the subject and the wider community and links with ideas of creative in our society working in areas such as advertising where creative thinkers used unusual methodologies to produce new
ideas. Nigel Osborne sees embodiment itself as a potential innovation in classical music traditions but shows how these explorations are implicit in the product:

This particular candidate was very interested in using in the human body as a sound generator and as a surface, and so that’s apparent from the scores and recordings that we had. So, we were in a very interesting discussion as to what, as in method, “how do you access that material?” “What is it?” “What is that material?” “How do you use it and process it?” And methodology, in terms of “how does that fit in to a broader compositional aesthetic?” ... for example using the sound of rubbing of the skin, of hitting the flesh, things like that. Now, that all sounds very primitive but the composer concerned, they’ve gone very very profoundly into this, and including recording the inside of the body, the surface of the body in very scientific ways, and so in other words there is a whole part of the method and methodology that here is a scientific one; “which mini-microphones were you using?” “How did you attach the amplifier to the stethoscope?”, and all these sorts of things that become as it were implicit in the creative material. The point I’m driving towards is, that we don’t necessarily need to have long essays about this, the material itself, if it is done well and professional, will declare its method and its methodology and open it up for discussion and scrutiny. (NO)

The notion of embodied cognition requires complex methodologies which have already see in the different role required of candidates and supervisory teams:

Basically what I might say to a student is, that depending on their particular project they are going to have a set of research questions, and therefore they’re going to have to devise a methodology that’s a set of things to do, a range of approaches that are going to address those research questions adequately, and those approaches can include all sort of things. They might include theoretical writing; they might include analysis of materials; they might include fieldwork; they might include Performance Practice, they might include other forms of Creative Practice. In any particular PhD they would have to make a case for the balance of the different elements, how they contribute to the argument (JK)

You can recommend students that they read these theories, and I think something like Grounded Theory can be very useful, but we don’t start up that way ... there were earlier institutional discussions about Art and Design research, that students had a portfolio of methods and selected one. (KM)

Its close relation is with PaR as method and we have already discussed as for many people it is first of all a method that is really a strategy in a wider frame that may as yet not be fully defined. We hear this is Charlie Broom’s interview as she struggles to see a methodology led by intuitive processes located in the body.

At present research methodologies are divided into qualitative and quantitative. Yvon Bonenfant explores this on the DVD, but comes to no certain conclusion describing it as a cousin of qualitative research or possibly developing as a third methodology in its own right. He sees research candidates in this area as being asked to do more than candidates in other areas in that they have often to be articulate about their own innovative methodology as exemplified by their processes. This takes us back to the variety of roles involved in the supervision of these projects and the complexity of them. Some practitioners have drawn on other disciplines for an overarching methodology. Yvon Bonenfant sees a parallel in the ‘found’ data of Grounded Theory. June Boyce-Tillman links it with her composing processes:
So, I have no problem because that’s the way the artist works, but I found myself asking about Musical Composition, “how far is a symphony and the creating of a symphony a methodology?”, and I think there’s an interesting parallel here. One of the methodologies used for practice-led research, like the asylum seekers and refugees, is Grounded Theory; what you do in Grounded Theory, you collect a whole load of data from a variety of sources and gradually you pull the main threads out of it to create a theory which is the end of the process ... I've got little ideas forming in my head and in my own mind I've got a mass of data flying around my head including, what size the orchestra is, how many children there’s going to be, all of that’s data in the same way the Grounded Theory is, and in a sense the Titanic piece is the theory, out of that mass of data I have constructed a coherent piece, or if one wants to have a parallel, it’s a very good parallel that you have loads of data and often far more data than you’re ever going to use in the piece, and you’re selecting and rejecting stuff to produce and you could say that a work of art of some kind is a theory. (JBT)

There is a call for flexibility:

We’re very positive about exploring what the students want to do, what their ability is and how they are presenting the research objectives and their central question, because their central question determines what their research methodology is, and therefore determines how it should be seen. (HM)

Theory and practice interface closely in more circular forms of process and this circularity leads naturally to the use of Action Research’s cycle of action and reflection and associated with this is auto-ethnography, although later we will see some criticism of the inexpert use of this methodology. A contentious area is whether PaR needs the clear research questions we associate with more traditional PhDs:

I think it depends how it is framed. I think that a purely intellectual notated composition project can be, could be a methodology if it is being guided by very clear research questions, and that you have found the appropriate method for engaging with those questions. I think the crucial thing for me always, what are your research questions and what is the necessary methodology for those research questions?!! To some extent methodology is always something that has to be apt to that project. I don’t think there are, certainly in the area of Creative Practice, I don’t think there are pre-packaged methodologies. (NT)

There can be a struggle to find appropriate methodologies and strategies:

One of the guys I've just worked with, who in the end has come up with something that I think really is very good, but very long hard struggle; he said it took him a very long time, a couple of years, to find a voice, and by that he simply meant that he felt he had to stick with the integrity of how he worked in the face of other options being offered to him on a regular basis. For instance, he was the guy who got the first artist residency at the Library of Congress, and was due to study Martin Luther King Archives, and then instead of staying in the designated Library of Congress cubicle, to undertake a comprehensive literature search on the Martin Luther King archive, he decided to research into it in a different way: he undertook research into the Mies van der Rohe building which housed the archive, the politics and history of its construction. He began to research into the various and disparate contexts of the Martin Luther King archive, for example, Resurrection City, the protest city for the dispossessed; he interviewed the widow of the architect responsible for building the temporary protest shelters involved and subsequently built his own in the Mies van der Rohe, Martin Luther King library building. He rallied walks between the Library of Congress and the Martin Luther King library to mirror current problems of homelessness and so on and so on. He used Duchamp’s “Ephenerides” as a kind of model for how to approach the distractions involved in encountering and researching into the archive deploying the first person singular in a Duchampian objectivised mode. (KM)
In summary, new approaches to methodology are developing in this field. Some emphasise the development of new methodologies in this area and the other that far from embracing a single methodology rooted in other disciplines such as education and sociology to make new syntheses of strategies drawn from other disciplines. The process of choice itself in this area will demonstrate the maturity of the candidates thinking about PaR.

13. Different Approaches to PaR

The differences in approach to PaR underpin the variety of practices in this area. It dictates what is considered PaR and causes complexity:

But I have examined a PhD that was under the heading of Composition but was in fact really Music Theatre, and although there were scores submitted, and I could make perfectly good sense of the scores in relation to the visual documentation, essentially I was working off the visual documentation. Although there was some quite interesting issues raised about different kinds of scores relative to different modes of performance and that was an important part of the process … (NT)

What roles are involved in PaR is associated with it and the debates already opened up around method and methodology are part of it and have led other countries to reject this area in PhD programmes. The place of PaR in different theses also varies considerably, especially when the PhDs in Composition meet the developments in other Performing Arts:

I have a huge disagreement with my colleagues in Composition about aspects of a Composition PhD because of this question about submitting different modes and things. Our Composition PhD is extremely conservative, it is a score, it’s as exemplified craft, and skill and technique. (NT)

However, he continues by outlining how particular projects cause the blurring of the apparent boundaries in the world:

A student who was interested in some aspects of proxemic theory in relation to performance, body-focused performance or body art focused performance, with using sonification of bodily sounds and things. And, he had a theory that there was going to be a relationship between how close the viewer would want to come to his physical body relative to the location and volume of the sounds that he was actually electrifying, if that’s the right word. For that particular project, the only way of really testing that theory was to carry out a series of practical tests, done in quite a schematic way. In other words, “if I stand here and I amplify my heartbeat and place that over there at that volume, how do people behave? If I then amplify my bowel movements, and so on.” In that case he did do a series of tests. Now, this then had some impact on the choices he made about the piece he made, but it was also to some extent theoretical; it was an attempt to come up with some empirical testing of a theoretical premise. (NT)

The presence of PhD’s in composition have already revealed a very different approach, based firmly in history and people’s experiences of doctoral supervision provide them with different approaches. Jane Ginsborg describes how different staff shape the courses in relation to what they experienced and whether they thought it helpful or not. She describes the problems of subjectivity in examining processes with no commentary:
But, the examiner who says “I don’t like this piece, and therefore I want the candidate to do something else”, that is not an examiner that I think a Programme Leader would invite again. It has to be on the strength of the candidates, the extent to which the candidate meets his or her own aims. I think I’m on the side of our PhD, the PhD by Practice model, because I think that helps the examiners understand what the composers’ aims actually are. (JG)

In summary, it has already been seen that there is no agreed definition of PaR. This report applauds the presence of variety of approaches so that applicants have a variety of possibilities; the fluidity enables philosophy to emerge from practice rather than be imposed from above. It is an approach to the field affirmed by Yvon Bonenfant and the IFTR: ‘Consensus’ he says ‘could be dangerous’.

14. Different Roles in PaR

This is an area where a candidate might be required to fulfil a variety of roles:

His different identities ... are quite important, the performer, the educator, the composer, the musicologist, the umbrella one: the researcher with the question. (HM)

This is part of PaR as a tool for generating and interpreting data:

Another one was a PhD which (it was somebody who works in a small regional theatre company in the UK, who developed a PhD thesis about essay questions of Cultural Memory and Archiving) had parts of particular material which was actually from a clown performer from the 40s, and investigated this figure and investigated questions on basically recovery of cultural memory after certain situations of trauma; the particular trauma they were investigating there was the bombing of Coventry in the 1940s. And what this student did, as a professional theatre maker, was divide the clown persona, so actually part of the viva was performed as this clown, part of the viva, and many of the interventions into public academic space like international conferences was done in this persona. There was a substantial written element, but this existed as a website, and the website was organised like a walk through an area of Coventry. Instead of if you were going from chapter to chapter in a sort of sequential way, you went from place to place and therefore you were hyperlinked to videos of performance events that happened in forms of public space; you saw this at the same time you were reading theoretical text. (JK)

This clearly is part of the debate about documentation in the area of embodied cognition. The results of this clearly have implications for supervision:

I think in the early days….talking about the early 90s, from my point of view, I think there was huge pressure on all of us… to take on an MPhil student and mercifully, I suppose, I found it absolutely fascinating and decided a lot more work had to be done on how to supervise, and that’s when my research started. I felt ill-equipped really to take on the complexity of the role. ... It was so different from tutoring an Art History student where, in a quite a straightforward way, certainly the Art History students I worked with, you expected them to have comprehensive knowledge, and from that comprehensive knowledge to have carved out a little area where they either discovered an original source or you already knew they had an original contribution to make within a field that’s very well demarcated. Then, you simply use those tools that you’re very well equipped to use, the libraries and research archives and you plough away, in a way that lends itself to a particular kind of methodological structure. Whereas, what I found when I was allotted an MPhil student in Fine Arts, was that process was thrown up into the air because what he wanted to do was to really examine the context appropriate to what he had made, and so each time he came to writing he had to start from zero; he really couldn’t build up an accretive bank of contextualisation because the work had to freshly address what he was formulating in artistic terms, and I still think that that kind of process is still not fully understood ...(KM)
In a single department there can be a variety of different roles and projects and managing staff expertise can be complex:

We do have a student who I don’t work with who is working on Balkan folk music revival in context of nationalism and post-nationalism. I mean, there are people doing such work in our department, but I don’t know them well. (JK)

In some places the role of supervising the PaR element is in the hand of a different person from the written elements (which may be in the hands of the validating institution which has little expertise in PaR):

The supervisory team consists of, ideally, a Primary Supervisor at RNCM [Royal Northern College of Music] and most likely a Secondary Supervisor at RNCM, and a Director of Studies at MMU [Manchester Metropolitan University which validates the PhDs at RNC. (JG)

Potentially there are problems in resolving the different academic positions within the supervisory team.

In summary, supervising in this area demands a variety of skills on the part of the supervisory team and these roles may change as the project develops. The development of the field has meant that some supervisors felt ill-prepared and attention needs to be played to identifying the variety skills needed within the supervisory team and addressing this complexity.

15. Differences in Weighting PaR’s Written Element

This clearly is part of issues in Assessment, which, as we have seen, are sometimes clear and sometimes more flexible in this area. This is especially true of when PhD’s in Composition do not include a commentary which Nigel Osborne vigorously defends:

I’m thinking of one or two examples of the past, we have had one or two portfolios that have been very close to being entirely acoustic. …. The fact that we are an exception and not a norm, though I expect we are going to get closer to the norm in the future, but for the moment the Edinburgh model is exception, so I feel that I have to defend it against the thesis boys. (NO)

However, there are other degrees in Edinburgh using the norm:

We have striven for a degree of flexibility, given that creativity is nothing if not flexible. However, the standard understanding is that there will be a thesis, bound as a thesis, of about 50,000 words, and that will be intertwined in a very clearly determined way with whatever practice is involved in the other part of the work. (PN)

In this area the concept of valuing is significant if one takes the view that PaR’s main purpose in the Academy is to value performance as a way of knowing. The word counts identified can dictate the valuing of various elements within the thesis. This varies in different subject areas:
I think what’s interesting is, if you’ve only got a 20,000 word written section, the bulk of the work is in the performance and the composition. (JG)

My husband is a composer and does an enormous amount of external and internal examining, and they work from the scores. (JG)

I think that as the PhD by Practice evolves, I think that there will be a clear dividing of the ways between project and enterprises that will benefit greatly from reflective written texts and those that don’t. In my experience of supervising Composition PhDs, there are sometimes occasions when a written text is a very good thing. I would encourage that, and have done in the past when that is suitable ... I don’t know ... having to write sometimes about things that carry profound messages within themselves, or should, and that have sophisticated languages of their own, it can sometimes be a dumbing down exercise, I find. Alongside a very inspiring one when it’s right; I would anticipate, when I say that the future of PhD is by Practice, I’m certainly sure will vie for a case in view of those kinds of projects and areas that benefit from written reflection and those that don’t. There’s too much time wasted for those that don’t, we need that for the art itself. I mean, Mathematics is the one quoted; you don’t have to write an essay about your discovery in Mathematics or even in physics for that matter, so why should inventive and creative work in Music always have to have an essay written about it? (NO)

In these are examples we are talking about a 40/60 split and this tends to be quite common but it’s not the only way – 60% words and 40% performance. ... There have been other examples in the different subject areas, the other way around, but I’m not directly in contact with those. The thesis length is 80,000 words. The most common examples I am aware of in Music is the 60/40 here at the moment, but that isn’t a rigid amount. (HM)

Some of the issues here involve the integration of practical elements into the thesis and whether a formal split of this kind is appropriate, as we shall see in the area on documentation. Sometimes special performances are prepared for examiners:

Those performances were structured, if you will, as performances for examiners. Instead of showing the work that she might show at a dance venue for a dance audience; the work which was shown in this context was structured different, if you will, to show some of its process, because it was the process that was at stake in this particular PhD. (JK)

Usually there will be PaR elements in both process and product and are bound up with dissemination and the wider community:

There does have to be, according to the rubric, documentation of and reflection on the process and the product. (JG)

Two of these PhDs currently in progress, which are under my supervision. ... One is a performer on the violin whose research question, and it is a research question, is: “what is the nature of the relationship between composer and performer with new work, and what is the importance of that relationship from both of the players in that relationship”, the composer on one hand and the performer on the other. So she’s set up a series of commissions with willing composers and she’s going to work on those compositions with the composers, rehearse them and eventually give performances, then all of this work is being documented from an observational standpoint. So the final submission will consist of performed work and then a reflection on that quite specific research question: “what is the nature of that relationship and how does it affect the final outcome.” (PN)
The use of the documentary format can blur the distinctions between process and product and written and practical elements:

Within the application he applied to say that the performance would be part of a DVD that’s becoming a documentary, and I think (if memory serves) that’s 60/40; sixty is the written component and forty is the documentary. (HM)

We saw above how people’s experience colours their approach and leads to different regulations: PaR PhD regulations. The place of virtuosity is in here and whether it is more likely for the writing or the performance to be addressed in any revisions that are requested:

The tricky bit of that is that it is usually very difficult to ask people to revise practical work, whereas it’s quite easy to ask them to revise theoretical work. (NT)

In summary, as we have seen, regulatory procedures can have inbuilt weighting in them or depend on the supervisory team to establish this. Examiners seem to vary in their practice as to where their main concentration lies and what is required when revisions are asked for.

16. **Rigour**

This is part of or associated with practically all the other areas identified. It links PaR with more traditional forms of PhD study:

How do we hold the body up to rigour in that doctoral structure? ... For example, I document experiences using website and people’s own personal recording of experience of what’s happened and that can be pictorially, orally, it can be memories, all sorts of things, and put them together to make something performative, but then that becomes, in itself, a new primary document that has to undergo the same rigour in analysis as the Practice as Research did before it began in the first place. (JBu)

It is associated with complexity and mature critical thought as we shall see in its use in self-reflexivity:

It’s that reflection and that critical knowing, and reflecting on knowing of Practice that makes it rigorous - it has to have rigour in order to be classed a new knowledge within that doctoral structure. (JBu)

In summary, the rigour demonstrated has to be demonstrated in all aspects of PaR and links it with the more traditional PhD. The area needs to develop criteria for subjecting embodied practice to rigorous documentation and scrutiny. This will give it the acceptance it seeks in the wider academic community.
17. **Interdisciplinarity**

The interdisciplinary nature of developments within the performing arts caused embodied cognition and embodied philosophy to enter PhD study. It has enabled PaR to be a tool for generating and interpreting data of an innovative kind. It has exerted real influence on the development of the area of creative research documentation. It is associated with both method and methodology as we have seen above. It is a significant part of original ways of producing knowledge relevant to the subject and the wider community:

> The universe, living it, leaving marks behind - with Practice as Research I have become more aware and employ more techniques, more methods, to register the line of thoughts and lines of understanding that I come across. (PF)

Debates about what is relevant to a PaR PhD often include dialogues across disciplines:

> Practice as Research ... attempts to tease out much more depth and detail beyond the individual; it’s looking at the whole conversation or is attempting to understand the ongoing stream that makes up the conversation that is pertinent to this particular art form, discipline, relating it to other disciplines. (RC)

It is associated with dissemination, and the generation of new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes:

> We need to start to work with people, people like Stelarc, obviously, ... taking our knowledge communities and starting to take that to the wider knowledge communities within academia, but also the wider public as well because in this sort of interdisciplinary approach, there is lots of potential for insights to be discovered. (JBu)

There is ambivalence and difficulty in this at conceptual and institutional levels:

> With a PhD, I do feel that there has to be a very exact formulation the work, because otherwise what are we doing? Are we producing sub-standard Art Historians or Critical Studies theorists who haven’t quite grasped the Critical Studies they’re addressing or examining? Or are we producing people who are attempting to go into some interdisciplinary field, where the disciplines haven’t been sufficiently interrogated? ... I think what we all want from our PhDs is depth. ... It’s hard enough in one discipline ... it just occurs to me, that something very simple that one could recommend ... which is if you work within a faculty, as my Director of the PhD Research Programme does, and go to all the research meetings and take an active part, and you start to negotiate very vividly over the generic programme and then trans-plan your monitoring, your mock vivas, submission, examination and follow-up and all the rest of it, you get that interdisciplinary input. (KM)

So we can say that it produces complexity in the area of supervisor and research training:

> I have been involved in [supervisor] training in the past, which was supposedly specialist, but I think you can maybe do it more effectively if it’s one discipline rather than several. (KM)

It’s funded in-house within the faculty with a focus within the school, but the aim is to cover as many subject areas across the University as is necessary. So, for example, the School within the faculty, the School of Screen and Performance Studies includes Music, Dance, Drama and Film, but we have invited speakers from Creative Writing as well. (HM)
We work across the two departments, so often students are supervised in both departments. (JK)

Well, by registering the Practice as Research, using and employing different technology; the technology that I employ is very much interdisciplinary or multimedia. (PF)

It could be that we are establishing a new discipline here which has resulted from the invention within the Academy of the term PaR:

For me that was really challenging because I had to learn a whole new discipline to be able to understand my practice and the practice of the audience that were there. (JBu)

In summary, for most performing arts PaR PhDs interdisciplinarity is significant and causes many of the developments we have already seen. It poses dilemma both for supervisor and research training with the problems of keeping abreast of developments in a variety of disciplines.

18. Skills in Using Methods Employed in Research

This is associated with rigorous methodology which is necessary to challenge of the traditional values in this area; is part of what is relevant for a PaR PhD. In some areas this means skills in creative practice and the candidate’s technical skills need to be established before admission; certainly in the PhD in musical composition is part of the supervisory process:

We need to see that they have a good level of skill and a good idea of where it is they’re going with their own creative practice. I think that anybody who is not able to satisfy us on either of those counts … we’re probably not going to accept them until they … we are expecting them to develop their Creative Practice; it’s part of what I do anyway. (PN)

Supervisors need to develop two sets of skills both creative and theoretical. Another skill is the integration of the various elements:

I think one has to recognise that, whether we call it virtuosity or whether we call it technique or skill, will manifest itself across a number of different areas of art making. I think one has to recognise that in knowing how to run a workshop and get results, or their skill in knowing how to write computer programmes if you need to be able to do so, or to solder certain circuits if you need to be able to do so. I think technical skill does have to be manifested across a number of, well across all of the methods that want employing. (NT)

What is clear is that there are range of skills required both of candidates and supervisors in this area. The methodological ones we examined earlier but added to these are those associated with the various arts disciplines. This brings up the idea of artistic communities at work and the need for a cohort of candidates who can share work and ideas. This can be facilitated by the establishment of phenomena like Johannes Birringer’s lab at Brunel University where different practitioners are brought together to develop both old and new skills.

Our lab has carved out a space of relative autonomy, which I complement with the off side operations of the Interaktionslabor in the German coal mine where we founded, in 2003, an independent laboratory and academy. (JB)

Doctoral candidates can be brought into such vibrant creative communities.
In summary, a variety of skills are required both for candidates and supervisors. These include the ability to use techniques from a variety of artistic areas as well as techniques associated with more theoretical methodologies and the ability to synthesise and combine effectively.

19. Producing Knowledge Relevant to the Wider Community

This is an important driver of mature critical thought and dissemination associated as it is to notions in the Research Excellence Framework of IMPACT. It is this part of the examination (particularly in the area of potential publication), PaR as methodology, interdisciplinarity, and the generation of new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes where there is a problem with what constitutes new and how that fits with commercial pressures in the wider community:

It’s like birthday card verses, you know, there are a variety of birthday card verses, but none of them one would regard as innovative, you know, each one is new in a funny way, but it isn’t new in another way, and I think that’s where the tension between the academic community, the so-called subject community, and the wider public sits, because if you are highly innovative, it’s often difficult to get the wider public to follow you or to make any sense of it at all and so on. And in that area of the wider public, you have to take ... where the audience is, how much further you can take the audience, before they cease to understand it, whereas the academic community often will be led further into that area and show interest in it. Here I think, you have a real tension between what is innovative in the wider world and what is innovative ... to the academic community, that there’s almost in each of the art forms an academic version of the art, which actually bears very little relationship with art in the wider world. (JBT)

It is associated with rigour but sits uneasily with the self-reflexive tendency of some project which makes their interest to the wider community limited. Some projects have considerable impact built into their process, especially practice-led PhDs:

I spoke to her and said “look, maybe this is your audience, maybe your audience isn’t actually an academic audience, it’s an audience of people who are asking themselves questions about the sustainability of experimental arts, in particular locations.” When I said that to her, who, as I say, was occupied with others at a theatre in Athens, which they made sustainable, and then drawing the community into this place in the context of everything that’s going on in that country, she goes “ah, yes.” I said, “now you can understand why you might bring a particular theorist or particular framework to what you are talking about, if you think about who this knowledge is actually for.” (JK)

Sometimes techniques developed have clear educational possibilities:

We have a student who is completing now, who is working on questions, let’s say of sound (it’s quite specific), and it has to do with deafness as well, which is part of what he’s doing. That’s relevant because in the situation of deafness and tinnitus, and the relationship to actual physical space, he uses drawing (literally drawing) as a methodology of mapping space. There’s a very interesting chapter on drawing itself as a methodology of practical work. In terms then of actual practical work he’s doing; he makes performances but for the PhD it’s not so much making performances, but making workshops because where the work has gone. It has gone in the direction of thinking about a pedagogy of sound ... Of ways of using sound to reorient people’s relationship to space, particularly when they might be hearing impaired through for example, visual use as well, such as drawing. So you have a thing here where somebody at day one might have thought they were going to make a bunch of performances and instead what they’ve done is constructed a series of workshops,
documenting those workshops as a set of pedagogical techniques which have a transferable use. (JK)

Sometimes the project feels to have little relevance more widely:

Well, I am trying to ask myself what it is by having invented Practice as Research in an academic context, what it is we can possibly be adding or contributing to what actually I suspect has been going on outside of that framework. (NT)

Perhaps academic speculation comes first and only later do artists see how that might be useful for the wider community. Some projects actually directly ask these questions or begin to ask them as the project progresses:

I think it’s in the ability to identify and conceptualise, and to some extent theorise, what the possibilities and what the problems are inherent in creating artworks that are able still to communicate freshly and originally, and communicatively. It’s in asking and problematising, asking questions and problematising and conceptualising the terrain, and doing that through practical investigation as much as through theoretical enquiry. (NT)

In summary, this is a contentious area. Some projects often in the applied arts will have direct relevance and most of those located in the definition explored in the introductory chapter as practice-led will have applications. Sometimes the project will have a local effect in its execution with the associated ethical clearances.

20. Producing Knowledge Relevant to the Subject Community

This is part of assessment, interdisciplinarity, PaR as method and methodology where it is to do with new conceptualisations and theorisations. It is associated with debates about self-reflexivity and its rigour:

I do think that one should make a claim that practice can produce knowledge about the world, can actually be a mode of intellectual enquiry about the world, and not just a mode of enquiry about his own processes. But an awful lot of the questions that are asked about Practice as Research tend to be questions about, you know, documenting the moment when you realised how to achieve this particular gestural effect or whatever it is. It is very much about a sort of self-reflexive thing, and so that’s one area I think still has to be tackled a little bit. (NT)

It is caused by critical thought and has links with dissemination. Johannes Birringer sees the art works generated by PaR as being of more relevance to the subject community than the wider one. Indeed its function in the Academy may be primarily to be speculative about questions.

In summary, this code relates to the relationship of the Academy to the wider community and acknowledges that some PaR outcomes will only be relevant to the subject community and some performances for the wider community will not find a place in PaR. The requirement for originality and the appointment of examiners from within the subject community will measure its relevance to the subject community in which it needs to be contextualised.
21. Dissemination

This causes the production of knowledge relevant to both the subject and the wider community. These two areas interface with one another. Richard Cuming sees an increasing dissemination of techniques of critical understanding:

[N]owadays ... critics are very much more engaged with the public anyway and disseminating their understandings, and they too have come through universities much more and so are aware of these debates and discussions. It's not uncommon now to read the critics in the Sunday papers and come across such terms as post-structuralism or semiotics, whereas it wouldn't have been twenty years ago, I think. But it isn't uncommon and it is assumed that the public is au fait with these kinds of terms and terminology, so I think that dissemination is happening anyway. (RC)

It is part of interdisciplinarity, assessment, PaR as a tool for generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes which is sometimes in the area of audience reception:

I'm very interested in the role of the audience from a phenomenological perspective and of course if it's about the lived experience of the people in that room at that time; no form of documentation can stand in for that ... I know there's massive contention about this issue, but for me that's how I feel about it, at the moment, in order to participate in the wider community of dissemination and knowledge structure, you have to put the frame around it, you have to contextualise it, it has to be disseminate-able to the community. (JBu)

It is associated with rigour and differences in weighting PaR's written element. PaR with a strongly self-reflexive element is not conducive to it. Johannes Birringer says on the DVD that his task is to create work with people and for people. There is in our own institution a rise in community music making based projects; the area of Theatre for Development has produced many PhD's although usually in practice-led models. Roehampton University requires an academic paper to have been read as part of the progression process even for PaR projects.

In summary, dissemination has been a problematic area in PhD study. Institutions range in their requirements in this area between advising and insisting that candidates at least present papers to the wider academic community during their period of study. Publication is often a topic in vivas but in the PaR area there is more possibility that the practice has been disseminated in some form (even if this is the trialling of ideas) as part of the process.

22. PaR as Creative Research Documentation/Score

This is affected by interdisciplinarity and embodied philosophy. It is an area where PaR becomes a tool for generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes. It is part of PaR as method and contributes to the number of different roles involved in PaR. At the very beginning of the project decisions need to be made:

My ideal future would be where there was a dividing of the waves in PhDs which have a Practice by, between those subjects for which a thesis is appropriate and helpful, and those for which it is not. (NO)
Traditional theses are stored in a durable form but embodied works are ephemeral. Some institutions require all of it (whether seen by the examiners live or not) in digital form and the technical requirements for this vary considerably. The British Library is working in this area at present. Web-based material presents particular problems:

The thing that’s live that we’re using, we make sure we record so that if we want to go back to it we can, but also that there is a document of that having taken place. (HM)

In musical composition there is a variety of practices about whether the notated score needs to have been performed:

It doesn’t have to have been performed, though the majority of our students have in the end managed to have their music performed one way or another, yes. ... It is possible that it only exists in score format and in fact I am just about to examine, as an internal examiner, a PhD from a student where the major component, which is indeed a small opera, does not exist in performance. That’s the first time in twelve years I think. (PN)

Their argument is totally that it is the composition that is being assessed and the documentation is … superfluous. (JG)

This sets music apart, which is possible because of the acceptance of the literate score as a representation of sound; leads to questions as to whether the PhD’s in musical composition are PaR projects:

I think that if you’re going to be strict in your understanding of Performance as actual sounding music, then written scores clearly have a slightly odd relationship to that. There’s no question about that! (PN)

Music theatre straddles across into the interdisciplinary area of PaR:

Well, it’s I think understood that certain kinds of Music Theatre, Composition for Music Theatre, is engaged with more than writing notes for people to sing or play, that the work might be conceived in which gesture or visual aspects or space might be an integral part of what is perceived as the composition. But at the moment the modes of notation for that are not as conventionally recognised as modes of notation for straight forward musical composition. That was one of the issues that was raised by that project. (NT)

This coloured the way that a new degree in the area of PaR was developed, following an institutional merger. The Reid School of Music in Edinburgh University merged with the School of Art and encountered degrees in creative practice;

That’s right. They’re now part of something called the Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, ESALA, which must be one of the biggest Architecture departments in the UK now, which subsumed Architecture in the old Edinburgh College board, because there was architecture there and Architecture in the University of Edinburgh. Their Sound Design courses which were put together with Music staff and with Music collaboration, even though it is not actually in Music organisationally, we all kind of share in those activities anyway. ... I think that absolutely coloured the way the new degree went. The new degree, I suppose, had two particular sorts of vectors pushing it along; one was the understanding from some of our students that a written component was an interesting part of their project. For example, we have had Composition students who have been very interested in computer software, for whom writing about the algorithmic nature of their work is really a part of the enterprise and something that they really wanted the examiners to take account of, that there was no way of enshrining that in the normal PhD in composition requirements and regulations. The new PhD clearly speaks to that need. (PN)
Other submissions challenge notions of academic writing and examiners have to be able to make decisions about assessment which can take time when the work is highly innovative:

Well, I've examined an extremely interesting PhD a couple of weeks ago at the RCA, and I found that this student had produced a PhD which was, in many ways, devoted to writing; she said that the thesis about sculptural practice, “is writing” ... it was a series of interconnecting texts which collided at times elided and at other time abutted onto each other. Out of this series of complicated layerings and collisions she produced a methodology, a methodological structure, which presented the creative process itself, rather than being a literal exposition or a critical commentary. She produced what it is to formulate ideas within this troubled arena of context conflicting, so she had a text which was very strictly academic and didactic, which was an imagined series of seminars; she had a very highly charged set fictional texts around an idealised institution, and she had then some critical writings which were addressing the nature of Art in writing and they all, as I say, either elided or collided or abutted one against another, and it took me literally three goes to even begin to understand what was happening. (KM)

We have seen how they challenge the shape of a thesis. The justification for the shape can rest either with the regulations or with the candidate:

Yes, we’ve used the web. It’s also the case that whether what the material is, is documentation. So, documentation would be a particular relationship to the material, i.e. it’s documented, it happened, here’s a record that it happened. Or it could be that the material itself is constituted, in a sort of way. One would be saying to one’s student, “in the introduction to a PhD, you’ve got a job to do to make the case of what it is you’re asking the examiner to do with this material.” If the examiner is going to receive a bound thesis and some DVDs, it’s not obvious what they should do with that DVD when they put it into their computer; are they examining it? Are they just checking that it’s there? You’ve got to make a case, and you might a case that this is documentation of a particular event, and therefore maybe in your writing draw or trace what that relationship is. You might be saying to the examiner, “this thing you’re putting into your laptop is to be examined.” It depends. (JK)

Live performance is a contentious issue in this area but in recorded form we have the representation of one art form by another:

So already you’ve got sound being represented by picture and now you’ve got Dance and Drama being represented by film, and in a sense where the examiners eyes may range over a performance is very different from where the person behind the camera may point the camera, so you’re not capturing the whole of the event which is why I say, usually, that if there is a Performance as Research component, then there must be the actual bodily presence of the examiner at the embodied performance, so that they can see the totality of it and that their eyes are selecting rather than the eye of a camera and a person behind a camera. (JBT)

We have already seen the practical problem with examiners’ attendance at live performances. Sometimes special performances are laid on for examiners near and this was included in Yvon Bonenfant’s PhD by Works on the Public Domain:

Mine was a PhD by Work in the Public Domain; it was a pretty exhaustive portfolio of work; I’ve now examined a few PaR-based PhDs and I actually produced a much larger quantity of work than most PaR PhDs do, but I think in part that’s because I was asking the examiners to make themselves engage with my work on the multiple levels of complexity and mixed messages that it sends, and I think that a lot of the value of my work to the academic world actually lies in the very mixed message the challenges and problems that is throws up, rather than findings. I don’t make easy work, audiences find my work troubling, but I have an
advantage, which is that from a virtuosity perspective, it’s very difficult to argue that my work is technically underachieving. (YB)

Sometimes the process of documentation is the focus of the project as in Yvon Bonenfant’s work:

My work has engaged with documentation for many different reasons, some reasons are 1) I’m interested in attempting to talk about Art in the languages of Art and not in the languages of Language, and so not all, but some of my documentation tries to find ways to embody, document, or regenerate for a listener or a watcher, the sensations, or distil some of those targeted sensations and the complexities of those sensations that my live works attempt to evoke. (YB)

In summary, this is a highly contested area in the literature and practice ranges from control by regulations and control by candidates on whom the responsibility rests for deciding on and justifying the shape of the thesis. Live performance is desirable but also not attainable and many places require a digital form of embodied performance for storage and archiving. Yvon Bonenfant is very critical of what he calls ‘Archive Fever’ (on the DVD) and draws attention to the links into curatorial practice. This is undoubtedly an area which will change rapidly as technologies change and offers increasing opportunities. There will be much work for archivists to ensure that storage in digital form keeps pace with technological developments.

23. Complexity

Complexity has been apparent throughout this report. It is part of the issues in assessment in this area:

I do think there has been a sort of a fetishism in the British academic world [you can quote me] about complexity, and about worthy detail, and that’s not what Music’s about, and it’s not what deep reflective thinking is about, embodied thought; things can sometimes find their way into the world in very direct and simple ways, and we should be ready to recognise the knowledge value of that, and the creative value of that as well. So, whereas I’m the first person in the world to applaud beautiful refined complexity when it’s in its right place, like this morning, it was great. (NO)

Mature critical thought, virtuosity, PaR PhD regulations, what’s relevant for PaR PhD and virtuosity are all linked with this area. We have seen its association with originality and rigour. We have already seen how Yvon Bonenfant saw paradox as essential part of the newness of performance. He quotes Gertrude Stein: ‘My writing is as mud but out of mud flow rivulets and streams of clear water.’ He calls this aspect plethora.

Much experimental art does this, it sends out registers of information that might seem to be confusing or multiple and the scientific method does everything it can to eliminate those kinds of outputs, those kinds of data, and we know now, for all kinds of interesting reasons, that even from extremely mercantile reasons; governments bang on about knowledge economies and people now identify creative from, advertising agencies for example, or people starting shops. There are whole discourses created, well creative thinking may be inspired by hard science which has its role, or use hard science, but actually finds way of combining what already exists into forms that challenge progress or create new models of doing. So even mercantilist right wing governments want that kind of innovation right now and PaR, one way or another, does actually provide models for how that kind of information can be generated, or those kinds of conclusions can be generated. (YB)
Different approaches to PaR causes differences in handling complexity and it has a contentious relationship with PaR as a tool for generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes. Views on the desirability and handling of complexity vary:

I would not say that we demand or decree that things have to be complex because in many ways by reducing complexity we are left with the clarity of the issue, whatever that research issue might be. I would say that comes down to the notion of voice, the composer’s characteristic language, whether that is an orchestral language, whether it’s an attempt to generate something new with the acoustic world, or whether... somebody’s working on electro-acoustic composition with acoustic instruments, they are combining two. So in a sense, the combination of different parameters is complex in itself. ... I think complexity is a problematic issue. I think if complexity is demanded the result is not necessarily going to meet the criteria of what is virtuosic. ... We are looking for something more; “what is it meaning?” “What is its purpose?” “What is its question?” “What is its research question?” It’s more than just performing the notes in tune. (HM)

You could look at my work in lots of other ways, I mean there is a lot of obvious innovation in my work, for example, from an interdisciplinary perspective, you can look at what it’s aesthetically trying to do and that would be a simple way of saying: “this PhD contained a lot of data or findings that were analysed.” You could look at the aesthetic boundaries that were pushed, you could look at psychosomatic components of the work and the balancing of the kind of emotional somatics that I bring to the work and to the final result, but I think that’s what’s more specific to my work. Generally, it is the troubling nature of my work and the complexity of that troubling nature that argues for its PhD level validity. (YB)

In summary, this produces much of the debates in this area. In the final product people differ as to whether they think that mature thinking results in the simplification of the complex or that that process ignores the essentially complex nature of reality in the performing arts.

24. The Self-Reflexive Tendency in PaR

This is contentious area and often is at odds with PaR as a tool for generating new knowledge through innovative and fresh outcomes and the production of knowledge relevant to the wider community. It must be wider and more rigorous at doctoral level than simple reflexivity:

I have a sort of concern that in some areas of practice-led, practice-based research, there is a tendency for the investigation to be very self-reflexive, to sort of suggest that the only kind of knowledge that we can produce is about our processes. (NT)

If artists basically can do that anyway or should be doing that anyway, what is it that we’re adding by doing it in an academic context? It’s a slightly self-questioning investigation. (NT)

It causes idiosyncratic practice. It is associated with producing knowledge relevant to the subject community where it is linked with the development of the methodological area of auto-ethnography and criticality. Yvon Bonenfant refers to Joan Bacon’s theses in this area that explore auto-ethnography. It is sometimes seen as getting in the way of wider dissemination and originality in any sense other than ‘new to the person themselves’. It can cause the development of virtuosity.
In summary, the adoption in the area of methodologies such as Action Research placing the artist at the centre of the thesis lay themselves open to charges of being too subjective and generating knowledge only relevant to a particular artist’s story. The development of well-defined criticality in the area of auto-ethnography have started to balance these tendencies within the area of PaR.

25. PaR as Idiosyncratic Practice

This has causal relationship with self-reflexivity. It is associated with PaR as embodied philosophy and as methodology. We have already seen in Chapter Two how this is articulated in the works themselves; it has always been prized in Western artistic history as innovative figures like Beethoven are seen as moving a tradition forward. Katy MacLeod describes how she steered a candidate from what she calls self-diary tendencies:

'... It's so fiendishly difficult to write about ... I can't stand all this diaristic business, unless it's done with a scalpel. I have actually worked with a student who, I think, has done a fascinating study of a series of encounters with an archive, but chose to approach it as a series of encounters and distractions, as a form of institutional critique, and I suppose what I really wanted to say, not to you because I hadn't envisaged it would go this way, but I do have quite strong reservations about how we might move too soon to give a theoretical explanation to PhDs which are very complicated. When we use a word like embodied, all sorts of theory flashes into my mind, I'm sure it does to yours, and you think very much, I do, of gender specific theory: Butler, Écriture féminine, which I think has lent hugely to ways of writing about embodied creative work. But it still doesn't quite get at what I think happens when an artist really does grapple with a PhD, because they're using conceptual schematas which of course have been influenced by whatever they've been reading and encountered, but they kind of tease it. (KM)'

Here we see an attempt to locate idiosyncrasy within the work art created rather than simply in the journaling of a process (although this may be part of the submission as well).

Summary

We have seen in this chapter how staff and research candidates are responding to the regulations and contexts outlined in the previous chapter and how the trends outlined in chapter two can be charted in these. They are arranged in order of significance within the collected interview data. The data charts the advent of a new form of knowing within the confines of the Academy and the processes that drive its motivation and its management. So we can see at the outset how the desire in the minds of most people engaged in this area to produce innovative and fresh outcomes is sometimes seen to be constrained by regulatory and examination procedures and how these can be made to work flexibly especially when one institution is validated by another. Alongside these are the problems associated with the submission of PaR outcomes and the relative weighting or requirements for different aspects of the submission – like practice and written elements. Examples of highly innovative practices in this area have been explored especially in institutions that have built up greater confidence within the area. The need for durability sits alongside the desire to have assessment of at least some elements live and the representation of one art
form by means of another. This results in problems of the availability of examining teams in ways unnecessary in other doctoral programmes.

Redefinitions of what constitutes data results from bringing into the academic arena notions of embodiment. Cognition is a term more widely used than philosophy but this may well be because of the youth of the field and people have not had the time to articulate theorise philosophy fully. Virtuosity and originality are important aspects of the field interfacing with one another and associated with the development of mature critical thought. In the entire world of the PhD a lack of criticality features highly in reasons given for failures at doctoral level and in this study rigour is widely thought of as essential although the term is applied to a variety of aspects of submissions.

Defining the area of PaR is problematic (but seen by some as necessary for its full acceptance into the Academy) and some people wish to resist all attempts to do it as it might obliterate the variety of approaches that we have seen in this study. The development of performing arts and its associated interdisciplinarity contrasts with the well-established area of musical composition constructed within the discipline of Music. This, however, is being challenged by mergers of institutions and the development of technologies such as electro-acoustic music. These developments call on participants in the area to fulfil a variety of roles and sometimes these are split in supervisory teams and even across institutions when one institution is validated by another. It demands the development of a variety of skills both in practice and theorisation. This complexity is lauded by some practitioners and sets the field apart from many well-established disciplines. It is in this area that debates about methods and methodologies lie and participants are more at ease with practice-based methods alongside other strategies such as journaling and photography than defining methodologies. Practitioners are divided in this area between those who are content to draw these from other disciplines especially sociology and education (often in combination and tailor-made to particular projects) and those who wish to see the development of a theorisation of practice itself as a methodology.

Dissemination is a problem across the PhD world as a whole and the relevance of PhD outcomes to the subject community is uncontested, although challenged by the subjective tendencies within theses which centre primarily on the development of the candidate’s personal practice. This ideally produces idiosyncratic practice manifest in innovative artworks. The relevance of the knowledge to the wider community is less certain and as the academy is seen as a place of speculation and experiment and these may not necessarily result in aesthetically satisfying or commercially viable artworks. Indeed PaR in the academy may be seen as an escape from commercial pressures on the part of artists.

The variety of practice is as clear here as it has been in the other three chapters and it is hoped that this analysis will help others in the field to find their way through this exciting and developing field by developing their own strategies and tools.
Chapter Five: Conclusion

by Professor June Boyce-Tillman

The rise of practice-based doctorates represents an attempt to validate ways of knowing in the Academy and we have seen the variety of strategies required to do this. A review of the existing edited collections and monographs in English and French that attempt to define, describe, and map PAR shows that there may be some level of common consensus emerging about what is problematic about PAR, and about the kinds of research quandaries that PAR-based methodologies help to address. However, there is much less consensus about almost every other aspect of it as a methodology, ranging from consensus on the rules that might govern PAR practices, to the ways that PAR alters examination practices for PhDs, to the ways in which PAR might evidence rigour and originality.

Above all, the chapter of this report that reviews this literature reveals that a range of different research authorities across different countries have attempted to ‘lay down rules’ about how PAR, and PAR PhDs, should function, but these rules are widely divergent. PAR is established within PhD supervision and study processes in a wide array of territories, but the application of strict methodological rules is inconsistent, and most probably impossible. Indeed, we postulate here that this impossibility, this ineffability, this unease with being able to fit PAR PhDs and PAR outcomes into moulds is what makes PAR special. Rather than being ‘a’ methodology, PAR is an artistically-derived space, inclusive of poetics and metaphor, within which unique, and sometimes idiosyncratic methodological frameworks dance. The choreographies that result from these dances both excite and challenge traditional knowledge generation systems, and the surveillance to which they are subject. These choreographies are syntheses of methodological viewpoints that help researcher-creators go where the other methodological standpoints cannot go: into the artistic space. This space is valued by institutions and examiners.

A review of institutional regulations has revealed a variety of practices reflecting the variety of approaches revealed in the literature and found later in the interview data. The analysis of this data has revealed how people are navigating their way through the varied approaches and the regulations which are often constructed by academics with no experience of Practice as Research.

Despite all these difficulties the motivation to value PaR by including it in doctoral awards remains very strong and this will enable creative solutions to some of the dilemmas presented in this study, as people navigate the complexity of the landscape. This report celebrates and commends the diversity. The developments in this area may have exciting implications for other areas of academic study such as liturgy in Theology or museum curation in the areas of Museum Studies. It also opens areas of dialogue with the developing area of Professional Doctorates who also have professional practice at their heart. Above all, it restores a holistic dimension to academic ways of knowing.
Bibliography


Appendix One:
People Involved in the Interview Material

NOTE: The initials after each name indicate those used in quotations from their interviews.

1. Antonia Batzoglou, Central School of Speech and Drama, London University, Visiting Lecturer in Drama and Movement Therapy. (AB)
2. Dr Anna Birch, Manchester Metropolitan University, Research Fellow in Theatre. (ABI)
3. Professor Johannes Birringer, Brunel University, Chair in Drama and Performance Technologies. (JB)
4. Dr Yvon Bonenfant, University of Winchester, Programme Leader of MA Devised Performance. (YB)
5. The Rev Professor June Boyce-Tillman, University of Winchester, Professor of Applied Music. (JBT)
6. Professor Susan Broadhurst, Brunel University, Professor of Performance and Technology. (SB)
7. Charlie Broom, University of Winchester, Research Candidate. (CB)
8. Dr Joanna Bucknall, University of Portsmouth, Lecturer in Creative Arts. (JBu)
9. Dr Richard Cuming, University of Winchester, Lecturer in Performing Arts. (RC)
10. Michele Danjoux, Nottingham Trent University, Senior Lecturer in Fashion, Textiles and Applied Design. (MD)
11. Tiago de Faria, University of Winchester, Research Candidate. (TF)
12. Parvaneh Farid, University of Winchester, Research Candidate. (PF)
13. Professor Jane Ginsborg, Royal Northern College of Music, Associate Dean of Research and Enterprise. (JG)
14. Richard Hougham, Central School of Speech and Drama, London University, Senior Lecturer in Drama and Movement Therapy. (RH)
15. Professor Joe Kelleher, University of Roehampton, Head of Drama, Theatre and Performance. (JK)
16. Dr Katy MacLeod, Kingston University, Reader in Fine Art. (KM)
17. Dr Helen Minors, Kingston University, Senior Lecturer in Music. (HM)
18. Professor Peter Nelson, Reid School of Music, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, Professor of Music and Technology and Head of Music. (PN)
19. Professor Robin Nelson, Central School of Speech and Drama, London University, Director of Research. (RN)
20. Professor Nigel Osborne, Reid School of Music, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, Reid Professor of Music. (NO)
21. Professor Nicholas Till, University of Sussex, Professor of Opera and Music Theatre. (NT)
Appendix Two: The Network of Grounded Theory Codes Relationships
Appendix Three – A DVD of Examples of Practice
by Dr Olu Taiwo, Karl Ellison and Tiago de Faria

(limited number available via the Higher Education Academy)