

The Spider and the Crab: Ways of Being with Practice-as-Research

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This text has emerged from a dialogue between two generations of Practice-as-Research (PaR) scholars. Through it, we seek to identify and address some of the motivations with which individual artists might enter into academia, and the tensions that often arise from their misaligned relation to a university's values and processes. Rather than offering an (other) argument for the epistemological validity of the now-established field of PaR, we draw on various anecdotes and experiences to make sense of the sensibilities and attitudes of artist-scholars, particularly in regards to the shifting conditions of UK universities over the past two decades, and with reference to debates within institutional critique, decolonisation and immaterial labour.

Keywords: practice-as-research, institutional critique, academia, ethics, decolonisation

INTRODUCTION

This text arises from a dialogue between two artist-scholars. One of them entered university about twenty years ago, at a time when Practice-as-Research (PaR) was first being developed. Her doctoral thesis was supervised by a team of non artist-scholars. It took her six years to complete her PhD project, and she kept applying for (and being granted) extensions on the basis that practice needed more time. She used the time to establish herself as an emerging choreographer in the UK experimental dance scene. The field of PaR did not have much clarity, and its methodology and legitimacy as knowledge-producing was being developed across the country. How rigorous could practice be? How does practice evidence knowledge? And how do we know it is an original contribution? How could one assess practice at doctoral level? Entire conferences were dedicated to new epistemologies of PaR, frameworks for the assessment and evaluation of PaR, embodied ways of understanding, tacit knowledge, and the expert-practitioner's instinctive ways of working. At the same time, more

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traditional scholarship started focusing on artistic process, collaboration and ways of making, through the perspective of the practising artist. The feeling in universities was one of excitement, curiosity, and perhaps also some scepticism.

The other entered university more than ten years later, when PaR had become a significantly established and accepted field. He did a module on PaR as part of his MA and was awarded an AHRC scholarship for his PaR PhD, which he embarked on having already undertaken a sustained period of professional practice within the field of UK experimental dance. He is supervised by a previous generation of two artist-scholars and is often in dialogue with other PaR PhD peers at his university. Most arts departments in the country have artist-scholars on their permanent staff, yet the conditions of their employment are increasingly precarious. Academics with permanent positions are having to take on more administrative responsibilities, and ensure taught courses recruit enough students in order to survive, while hourly-paid staff are doing the heavy-lifting in terms of teaching and supporting students. Universities are undertaking mass redundancies across the arts and humanities, and departments are shrinking. It is not the case that a PhD, let alone a PaR PhD, will lead to an academic career (if it ever did). Discourse is growing on topics related to the neoliberal conditions of working in the arts and in higher education, the role of universities within the ongoing legacy of British imperialism, and the dire futures posed by environmental devastation. The feeling is one of burnout and institutional collapse.

Let us think of the first artist-scholar as a crab; with a tough exterior that protects a soft underbelly, seamlessly weaving between the sea and shore. It crosses between contrasting environments, sensing undercurrents and avoiding direct conflict by walking at an angle. Let us think of the second as a spider, who moves by alternating between two sets of legs, jumping and walking fast on the sand and on water (because it doesn't have bones). The spider systematically constructs its web which we can perceive – as the artist Harun Morisson reminds us¹ – as an extension of the human-built house (the institution) rather than an architecture for the spider itself; which in turn means that the spider can be in the house (the institution) without being part of the household, never at the dinner table and yet always in the room.²

This text seeks to articulate and scrutinise some of the ambitions, hopes, and strategies that individual artist-scholars might hold in undertaking Practice-as-Research while situating themselves within (or negotiating their relation to) academia. Rather than identifying a singular or representative position, or advocating any particular route, we are interested in identifying a cluster of tensions and contradictions which each individual will find their own way to sustain, resist, critique, or on which to compromise. Alongside widespread writing – our own and others' – on artistic research, we draw on more informal anecdotes and gossip, to illuminate elusive yet widespread feelings and received wisdom we have experienced within ourselves and among our colleagues, peers, mentors and students.

BEING IN IT FOR THE MONEY

The landscape of publicly-funded arts in the UK is relatively inhospitable for experimental artistic practice.³ Over the past decade, austerity policies have dramatically reduced available funding and the kinds of social welfare (affordable housing, healthcare, free or subsidised education, unemployment benefit with fewer conditions), which enabled practitioners from previous generations to ‘get by’ while devoting their time to artistic practice.

PhD studentships are a substantial source of funding, and one of the few ways that artists can acquire the economic stability to spend a few years experimenting with practice. Therefore, the PhD artist-scholar who seeks to secure a scholarship for their doctoral project may well have a strategic disposition towards the institution. They might be entering the academy ultimately to access this money, rather than because of their interest in the values and processes of artistic research. They may well regard the processes, values, and contexts of academic research as a regrettable burden attached to these financial conditions. This aspiration and disposition may continue on to a salaried position in a university post-PhD.

Different artist-scholars have different strategies, but the notion that they might be ‘in it for the money’ need not be regarded as anything dramatic. Many people undertake their jobs for the wages, rather than having a vocational investment in their work. Some artist-scholars might use their university work (which will typically include teaching and administrative responsibilities) as a job, while maintaining their artistic practice as a separate activity that develops through freelance work. Others might use the university structures, including time allocated to research as well as funding opportunities, to develop their artistic work further. This might sometimes be aligned with the university’s aims, while at other times it might collide. The artist-scholar will probably need to be highly adaptable, and even secretive, in relation to the university’s processes. Sometimes, the university might adapt to the needs of the artist (researcher).

PhD studentships are highly competitive. People are differently able to apply for and to acquire such institutional funding depending on their social, educational, class, and racial capital. Surely, some artists are better able to satisfy the institutional demands of artistic research; primarily, one would expect these to include those who have a strong ability to write and to read and wield theory, and those able to navigate evaluation frameworks and systems of accountability in universities. And certain artistic practices are possibly more suited to such frameworks: those that start with an enquiry, those which might question forms or histories or traditions, those that involve or generate writing, those that lead to new ways of working and collaborating. Not all practices do this.

Is it possible for the artist who works inside academia to keep making work as they would have done if they had not entered this workplace? How might artist-scholars engage with institutions as a way of surviving (of earning income), while remaining conscious of their positioning within its systems? The contexts we enter into can change us. One challenge of the ‘take the money

and run' approach is posed by the playwright Mark Ravenhill: 'Have we really spent all this time speaking in any-language-that-will-get-us-the-money without it corroding our own language, our own sense of who we are and what we do and our relationship with our audiences?'²⁴ How might a temporary or prolonged entry into academia change the artist-scholar and their practices? Returning to the image of the spider or crab, how are each of us maintaining and embodying the tension between being 'in it' (even if only for the money), and relating to it sideways – from the position of an aside⁵ – and what might such a misaligned relation enable?

THE ART OF WORKING WITH INSTITUTIONS

Artistic work can undoubtedly benefit immensely from the frameworks and demands of Practice-as-Research within the academy. There are great potentials to be experienced by the artist-scholar at any stage of their career – whether they are in the role of a PhD researcher, the supervisor, or the examiner. One of the things that might happen through PaR is that the practice becomes deeper and stronger and leads to further practice because of the way it is led by questions, because it can stay in the unknown for a bit longer perhaps than in other contexts. Or, more possibilities might open up in terms of the forms the practice will take to meet a public – or different kinds of publics – and the modes of presentation might become more diversified. These meetings could happen with other systems of knowing, other languages, other ways of working, and might lead to profound shifts in the artist's understanding of work, of making, of sharing, of knowledge.

At the same time, some other things might also happen. The artist-scholar might find themselves spending a long time with administrative processes (e.g. an ethics form) that asks them to justify their methods in terms that are quite foreign to the collaborative ways of making that are common practice in the arts. Or, resources might not be there for the development of practices which require a group of people to work together in a live space, with materials, with technologies, and so on; which means again that significant amounts of their time will be spent on finding resources that the university is unable to provide but which are in fact integral and necessary to the conditions required for the development of PaR.

The artist scholar will probably face the demand to make clear predictions about the activity they are undertaking, and the kinds of knowledge this will produce, and how this sits in relation to other artists' work, and to concepts, questions, ideas and intentions. This will take time, and will sit in sharp contradiction to the kinds of open-ended and process-led modes of working in which they have become an expert. Sometimes this language will feel readily available and integral to the work, while other times it might feel contrived and hastily applied for the sole purpose of legitimising it. In a private conversation, a professor of dance research once commented that in their many years of supervising and examining PhDs, they had never once heard of a student being

asked to undertake corrections on the artistic materials they had submitted; only ever the written materials. This suggests that within the current university culture, artistic practice is often neglected as a category that requires feedback in each own right with the same rigour of examination. The artist-scholar's artistic work may remain free of challenge or scrutiny, while they are implicitly and explicitly encouraged to spend increasing time on written materials that anticipate, frame and insist on epistemological validity for such work. In this situation, it takes a determined effort to ensure that artistic materials maintain some kind of 'rigour' (however that is defined by the tastes and values of the artist-scholar), and do not become wholly overwhelmed by the need to illustrate or correspond to existing theory.⁶

The existing systems of evaluating research are often not fit for PaR, so the artist-scholar needs to find equivalences, translations, and ways of meeting or avoiding those systems. All this is expected. And the artist can be 'warned' somehow, or at least be asked the question of whether the academic institution is really a suitable home for their practice. This engagement with a system that is not exactly made for the artist-scholar might be exciting (both for them and for the system). It pushes them to ask questions about what they want to make visible and what to keep invisible (non-shareable), how this fits with developments in the field or not, how to work with others (on the level of invitations, conditions, expectations, power dynamics). One might begin to understand how this is not just a question of sustaining one's practice within this institution, but how the inconsistencies and problems that that practice proposes might also be generative in making shifts and proposals within this wider institution. All this can feel satisfactory, and a form of artistic practice itself. It can be generative to push and renew ideas, practices, and ways of working. In fact, whole careers have been built on this need to think, shape and refine how PaR meets the expectations of the academic institution.

The tensions we have evoked here between academia and art are contingent. Which is to say that they could be resolved under a different regime of university leadership, processes and values. However, it is worth noting that Western art history has an enduring investment in the idea of a troubled relation between the artist and the commissioning context of their work. This is articulated in a variety of ways: that artistic practice is inherently antithetical to forms of organisation, administration, and reason; the common depiction of the artist as an 'errant', 'wild', 'trickster' figure; Walter Benjamin's argument for the artist/artwork to have a critical relationship to its means of production⁷; or the mantra often associated with Andy Warhol: 'Art is what you can get away with'.

In this sense, one of the constituent factors of contemporary art – the things that make art 'art', or one of the ways its value can be determined – is the degree of its critical or distant relationship to the context in which it arises or is situated. Different works may vary in terms of how much they foreground or make explicit these conditions; and only some viewers might recognise these structures, and read how they are being stretched or subverted. Still, the artist-scholar might

feel compelled as part of their *artistic* practice to deliberately challenge or eschew the institutional norms of scholarship in the university. It is not that ‘art’ and ‘academia’ just happen to have inherent tensions – but rather that the artistic practice is itself constituted through how it finds, exploits and reveals the tensions in whatever context it happens to be, including that of UK universities today with their institutional demand to produce knowledge and so on.

Can there be a point at which Practice-as-Research is fully articulated and legitimised as a methodology, or is it necessarily an ‘unruly’ discipline⁸ that might necessitate continual disruption and re-conceptualisation? How necessary or indeed exciting is it for the artist-scholar to be questioning and challenging the university, and resisting and redefining its structures? Not all artistic enquiries are compatible with questions about how knowledge is generated or what its relationship is to institutions. For some practices, an expectation or demand for institutional questioning or innovation may well work against the work (the artistic practice) itself. For example: many young artist-scholars can feel the strong need to insist on ‘creative’ ways to present their research, when in fact more simple methods of introducing and articulating their insights might serve them just as well.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ‘BAD ART’

In an event that took place at a non-academic arts organisation in London sometime in the early 2010s, an artist-scholar introduced themselves by saying that they were an artist, and by describing their artistic practice. ‘Oh, and yes, by the way’ – they followed – ‘I also have a title that goes...’, and they shared their academic title. In this professional context, this title – which represents the job which ‘pays the bills’ and was probably gained through much hard work – was being downplayed. It was as if the title is not that important, or as if it does not affect the work that the artist-scholar undertakes in contexts outside academia, or as if they felt they needed to hide their academic profile in this context. Perhaps they feared a judgement that any art produced within or associated with a university is of lesser quality or value than something produced in the professional field.

Whatever motivated this distancing, this anecdote suggests a reluctance that has been present from the very start of PaR to embed artistic practice fully in academia and vice versa to unpack academic structures in the wider professional artistic field. It also reveals the complex ways in which we can be embedded in organisations (e.g. working in full-time roles within them, for many years, in not-insignificant positions of responsibility) while maintaining a sense of self that is deeply separate from them. The artist and educator Andrea Fraser cautioned against this trend: ‘Every time we speak of the “institution” as other than “us,” we disavow our role in the creation and perpetuation of its conditions. We avoid responsibility for, or action against, the everyday complicities, compromises, and

ensorship – above all, self-censorship – which are driven by our own interests in the field and the benefits we derive from it.⁹

One possible consequence of such an institutional disassociation is a position that Mick Wilson refers to as ‘bourgeois revolt’, in which an individual might denigrate the institution in which they work, and refuse to make any effort to transform it positively because they declare it as ‘irredeemable’, all while maintaining their position there (enjoying its privileges and helping to sustain it).¹⁰ Wilson’s suggestion is that anyone in receipt of institutional resource seems to carry some responsibility to uphold, challenge and transform that organisation.

There is a complex question here of how to delineate responsibility of any individual for the institution they work within. Even those who hold significant positions of leadership within a university might feel relatively powerless when dealing with, for example, government policy, senior management decision-making, and workplace cultures of competitiveness or bullying within academic departments. The PaR scholar Simon Ellis describes his ‘naivety’ in undertaking a PhD, without realising the effects this would have on his artistic practice. He notes that despite the asymmetry of the exchange (between the young artist-scholar and the huge university they have entered into), the effects are not one-way. Individuals – artist-scholars, and others – do have the capacity to make a mark on the universities within which they work.¹¹ However, it is often unclear how much any of us can achieve; and, in the face of the many recent disappointments and frustrations within our universities, how much effort is ‘enough’ to satisfy our institutional responsibilities?

If artist-scholars are to transform their institutions, we must ask: what values might we want to hold on to? Which contexts do we want our work to be situated and regarded within? What must we most urgently try to protect? In a text written as part of the project *6 Months 1 Location*, Mette Ingvarlsen insists on an experimental practice that is important in itself, beyond the results it might reach.¹² She asks: ‘How badly do you really want to make a GOOD piece, if a good piece would be the end of reflection, of searching, the finishing of a process that fixes the performance into an object?’. And answers: ‘I guess it depends on the alternative. If trashy, dysfunctional and bad would be the other option – then yes, I would prefer to make a GOOD performance. But, if the alternative would be the risky, the not-yet-established, the exploration of different modes of presentation, I would definitely prefer that, and sometimes that might even be the trashy, dysfunctional and bad’. Following Ingvarlsen, our desire and taste is that if PaR is to survive as a field led by enquiry (regardless of its relation to various contexts and institutions), we suggest it is through the value of experimentation as *important in itself*. We advocate for PaR (and the university more broadly) as a space for facilitating, sustaining and promoting experimentation, regardless of whether that might lead to work that is trashy, dysfunctional and bad – and avoiding the complete domination of a kind of ‘good-ness’ that is about self-affirmation, or a repetition of the already known.

As such, we might return to the artist-scholar we introduced at the start of this section, who disavowed their position with the university, possibly through

some shame about the perceived inadequacies of ‘university art’ in comparison to professional practice. Let us imagine that they entered the university to develop and sustain their professional work strategically. We could wonder about how their time in the university, perhaps surrounded by and contributing to the field of PaR, might have led to their values shifting over time – a betrayal of the apparent ‘desirability’ or ‘quality’ of professional practice, for example – and how they might have begun to recognise such shifts within themselves.

ON THE ‘DECOLONISING POTENTIAL’ OF PaR

To think further on this ‘institutional’ position of the artist-scholar, we can consider not only their responsibilities or investment within the discipline of PaR, but also how their position within the university leads them to inherit its wider politics. And given the particularities of PaR – of its hybridity and its epistemological uniqueness – we can ask how it occupies certain social, political and economic structures and rub against them. How might an artist (especially one who is involved in speculative collaborative making or testing the limits of research) start questioning what knowledge is and how it is generated – and for, with and without whom?

A number of dance scholars have made the claim that dance scholarship – particularly artistic research – holds some ‘decolonising potential’: that it might open up the university to ways of knowing that it has otherwise marginalised and excluded.¹³ Indeed, artistic research has shown a potential to innovate and transform the university by questioning or undoing some of its underlying structures – for example, its emphasis of ‘embodied knowledge’ – and these transformations may well support the entry of epistemologies of the Global South. One could claim then, that PaR might challenge the traditions of knowledge production that represent and sustain British/Western imperialism. Indeed, it might; and yet one wonders why progress in this area is still so slow.

However, we note the risk when these aspirations for de- or anti-colonial epistemologies become divorced from the other kinds of material and economic structures that constitute the neo-colonialism of UK universities, and determine the conditions of working for those who enter. We can note the aggressive policing of Black and global-majority students, the Home Office’s strict monitoring of student attendance and the financial investments universities make in companies found to be complicit in land occupation and human rights abuses, as some examples.

As Tuck and Yang argue, decolonisation is not a metaphor, and should not be seen as ‘an approximation of other experiences of oppression’.¹⁴ Most importantly, as they point out, ‘[d]ecolonization is not a swappable term for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools’. Rather than purely appealing to the capacity of PaR to acknowledge diverse forms of knowing, let us also remember that our use of the term ‘decolonisation’ should remain tethered to the persisting and material conditions of colonisation that include

the university (and other institutional structures where PaR often grows). It is the awareness and undoing of those realities and material conditions that is also a key part of the responsibilities of those involved in Practice-as-Research. We cannot simply be content with the corners of academia that we have made for ourselves—but we must pay close attention to the wider operations of the universities in which we have positioned ourselves. Without this, the rhetoric of decolonisation merely becomes a strategy to elevate and sustain this institutional context for the privileged few who have already been granted entry.

THE VALUE OF OVERLAPPING CONTEXTS

In the early 2000s, Susan Melrose drew a distinction between two different economies: that of performance-writing, which relates to a spectator's point of view and theory of knowledge, and that of performance-making, which relates to the artist's expertise.¹⁵ We can now speak of a third economy: that of a practice in which critical writing and performance-making function as an extension of one another, not only within but also outside academia. And we might suggest that this artist-scholar is a third thing, too. They are the non-standard artist, as well as a non-standard researcher.¹⁶ They might sit on the periphery of artistic production – engaging in longer processes and not producing work as frequently, while supporting themselves (and perhaps some aspects of their practice) through university funds. They might also not fit within models of evidence-based or applied research, which have their own ways of demonstrating their usefulness or 'worth'. Rather than insisting on their legitimacy through comparison to one or the other, we suggest that the artist-scholar's currency might rely on their uniqueness. That they might either develop or sustain some special status in academia – differentiating themselves both from the professional artist, and the traditional researcher (theorist, scholar, philosopher) – and insist on their capacity to expand traditional modes of understanding and doing both art and research.

Artistic research is possibly always happening inside the institution – or perhaps within an ecology of institutions, that includes dance houses, residency centres, theatres, museums; what could be broadly described as the 'arts market', or an 'art world'. We might then question the value of artistic research happening within an *educational* institution (a university, a conservatoire, a research institute), which can have agendas that are different to these other arts institutions.¹⁷ However, what is more complex is to recognise how artistic research becomes part of a number of different kinds of institutions, so for example finds a home within a university while also belonging to the (maybe not as tangible or well-defined) institution of an 'independent' arts scene, or a network of arts centres. How do we begin to approach the questions around artistic research holding on to this complexity of potentially belonging to different institutions simultaneously?

Practice-as-research and the various types of activities the artist-scholar engages with – especially as they belong to all those different even if overlapping institutions – rely on certain qualities such as agility, flexibility and adaptability, responsiveness and readiness. Working across contexts requires practices of translation, creativity, listening and inventiveness. It can also lead to modes of self-organisation, and a great degree of autonomy and independence on the part of the researcher. Most importantly, apart from needing time, this type of work requires tremendous skill, and is often invisible. It goes beyond what is sometimes described simplistically as somebody ‘working across academia and the industry’, or having an impact ‘beyond’ the university.

There is something to be celebrated here: a potential perhaps for every form of research to be understood as a practice in this very sense, always open to its others, ready to be pursued and articulated in alternative ways, for and with different people, through distinctly different processes and structures. And yet we should also question these inherent virtues of practice research. This is, after all, the inextricable (and dangerous) link between flexibility and precarity, or agility and contingency, as Bojana Kunst would remind us when she speaks of the dance artist (and we would argue also the artist-scholar in this case), as embodying all these flexible qualities and adaptive ways of working.¹⁸ But could we recognise and insist on this being a very particular value the artist-scholar and their work bring to the various contexts in which they operate?¹⁹

As the philosopher Paolo Virno has argued, that which is really productive from an economic point of view is not the sum of individual labourers’ outputs, but the context of collaboration and interaction; and what counts in collaboration is not so much the separate contributions as the network that unites the collaborators.²⁰ The qualities required to produce intelligence and collaboration, Virno continues, are not connected to expertise or technical requirements. These are not skills that people learn at the workplace, but by living, by gaining aesthetic experiences, having social relationships, creating networks. Workers learn all these specifically outside the workplace and so this is about a socialisation that exceeds all classic bounds of labour.

The artist-scholar could be exemplary in this respect. This might be an opportunity then for the university, and other institutions and funders across different arts markets, to support practice research whilst acknowledging and enabling everything that the artist-scholar does and contributes to the institution(s) more broadly, precisely through their ability to pursue flexible multi-contextual work. This means, not only in terms of outputs or products, but in terms of the qualities they bring to institutions, the ways they move and work across contexts and across languages as cultural value itself. It is crucial then that the artist-scholar is supported to undertake activities related to such work – attending festivals, networking with other artists, being given budgets to sustain collaborative work. And furthermore, what would it mean for artist-scholars who practice through collaboration and sustain their profession by working across contexts to lead departments and develop leadership models

based on such expertise? Perhaps this remains the most significant unexplored potential of PaR at an organisational or institutional level.

THE SPIDER AND THE CRAB: CLOSING NOTES

Recent shifts in how UK universities are being managed mean that artistic practice is increasingly unsupported within this context. The time for open-ended studio experimentation feels whittled away in increasingly unrealistic workload allocations. Artist-scholars might start to feel that universities are increasingly indifferent or hostile to the needs, values and processes of artistic practice, and that the frictions between practice and institution are no longer productive. In this situation, it is up to each of us continually to assess the potential transformations and futures of this encounter between practice and institution – and whether the university, to any degree, remains a viable space for experimentation, learning and thinking (or any other values we might be working towards).

In the face of all this, where do we find ourselves?

One of us – the spider – is in the late stages of his PhD. He feels content with his self-perceived invisibility, concerned about his boneless fragility, and makes continual efforts to sustain his agility. He feels that the raising of the caps for tuition fees in 2012 marked the ‘beginning of the end’ of the university in the UK as a place of learning, thinking or experimentation – and he feels doubtful about the likelihood of his securing one of the few remaining academic jobs, particularly in competition with more senior peers who have faced redundancies. Loath to return to the precarity of freelancing in publicly-funded arts, he is retraining to secure work in an entirely different field. He wishes to be able to sustain himself financially, and keep one or two days a week free for unfunded artistic practice. To him, this feels the most promising way of sustaining practice for the next decades of his life. He still moves through certain institutional houses (artistic and academic) – building webs here and there, and catching the occasional fly – but spends more and more of his time ‘outside’. He pours his energy and attention into local and unfunded networks, forming and sustaining friendships and community with practitioners, activists, neighbours and subcultural scenes.

The other – the crab – left her previous job during a redundancy process, and since then has found a new role at another educational institution. She has moved away from teaching, to now leading a newly developing area at her new institution that includes research. Undoubtedly, it is her understanding of practice, networks and skill in collaborating with both artists and academics that she draws upon daily. In this sense, she finds that any work that involves strategic thinking and directing teams of educators and practitioners feels like an extension of her more artistic choreographic practice – enabling others, giving direction, establishing frames, rules, processes, structures, limitations. She finds herself still moving between sea and shore, structure and possibility; pleasure is still to be found in the softness and tenderness of the underbelly – the working

relationships, the slowness of practice, the (self-)doubt, the resistance to a one-directional way of walking. This is PaR, moving at an angle. And when lucky, she finds herself being reminded of these qualities both through institutional leadership and in the studio with other artists.

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NOTES

1. Morrison, Harun (2020), 'When and where to become a spider?', *internationaleonline.org*, 1 July, <https://www.internationaleonline.org/opinions/1038_when_and_where_to_become_a_spider/> (last accessed 12 January 2023).
2. The metaphors of the spider and the crab emerged during the creation of a presentation by Eylül Fidan Akıncı, Konstantina Georgelou, Efrosini Protopapa, and Tamara Tomić-Vajagić, at the VI Eastap conference 'Dimensions of Dramaturgy', Aarhus Denmark, June 2023.
3. See Industria (2023), *Structurally F-cked*, a-n The Artists Information Company. <<https://static.a-n.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Structurally-F%E2%80%93cked.pdf>> (last accessed 24 August 23).
4. See the Freesheet distributed at *TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN?*, an event about ethics, funding and art, hosted by LADA, Artsadmin, Home Live Art, and produced in collaboration with Platform. Toynbee Studios, 2015. <https://www.artsadmin.co.uk/media/documents/takethemoneyfreesheet_.pdf> (last accessed 17 March 2023).
5. The notion of 'the aside' is borrowed here from the collaborative talk between Panagiotis Panagiotakopoulos a.k.a. Taka Taka and Hypatia Vourloumis, DasArts, Amsterdam Netherlands, September 2022. More info here: <https://dutchartinstitute.eu/page/18669/moving-laterally-~ta-1-king-aside-this-collaborative-talk-between>
6. This is not to suggest that artistic practice outside of academia is not a wholly opened process, and not, for example, subject to the pressures of institutional agendas, funding policy, capital, etc. It is also worth noting that other forms of scholarship can also suffer from overbearing bureaucracy of research management. 'To deprive thought of the moment of spontaneity is to annul precisely its necessity. [...] a hierarchy of importance is creeping into theory-formation which gives preference to either particularly topical or particularly relevant themes, and discriminates against, or indulgently tolerates, anything non-essential.' Adorno, Theodor (2020) *Minima Moralia: Reflections from a Damaged Life*. Translated by Jephcott, E. F. N. London: Verso. p. 124.
7. Benjamin, Walter (1934). 'The Author as Producer'. In Newton, K.M. (ed) (1997) *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory*. Palgrave, London.
8. 'We are thinking here for example of dance studies as a field that entered the academy relatively recently and has been tasked with renovating an already-existing house of knowledge. The "un" in undisciplining in this context might be less a force of negative opposition than a turning, corkscrewing, spiralling action that rotates, releases and reconfigures our critical and creative "homes.'" Brown, Carol and Longley, Alys. (2018) '(Un) Knowing Dancing', in Brown, C. and Longley, A. (ed.), *Undisciplining Dance in Nine Movements and Eight Stumbles*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. pp. 1–14. <<https://www.cambridgescholars.com/resources/pdfs/978-1-5275-0621-3-sample.pdf>> (last accessed 25 August 23).

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16. Laura Cull's proposition in her keynote at a Performing Knowledge event, Paris 2018.
17. The question of whether and how institutional infrastructures can either advance or inhibit the development of artistic research within different international contexts was discussed at the 'Bridging Research in Dance' event, organised by the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp and the CoDa (Cultures of Dance) Research Network, 21 May 2022. See here: <https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/projects/coda-cultures-of-dance/activities/research-day/> and <https://www.ap-arts.be/sites/default/files/Programme%20Research%20Day%20%232%20Bridging%20Research%20in%20Dance.pdf> (last accessed 4 August 2023).
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19. This question of the value of practice research was discussed as part of the *Dance Research Matters* launch event organised by C-DaRE (Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University) and the AHRC (Arts and Humanities research Council) in May 2021, and was specifically addressed in Panel 2: 'Why practice matters—if practice is part of dance research, then what needs to change to reflect the value of practice as an epistemic system?'. See https://danceresearchmatters.coventry.ac.uk/?page_id=139 and <https://soundcloud.com/user-235484908/sets/dance-research-matters> [accessed 4 August 2023].
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