

Understanding Artistic Research Together: About an exhibition on artistic research of getting together, on transforming understanding and understanding transformation to make a difference

By Alexander Damianisch

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This proposal addresses the call's outline, "how artistic research decolonises knowledge and practice", in but not only in Africa, as "artistic research can and must play a vital role in the development of a decolonised university" and the development of research, in but not only in Africa, and this "not simply by interrogating the inherited epistemological structures of the research university, but also through the deconstruction of many of the deep mythologies of western art"—and research: I want to showcase the concrete transformative work that has been taking place in pedagogy, research, and artistic practices via activities in institutional relevance and via and for the area of the practice of art and research, design and architecture in the immediate field and in a global context undertaken by the University of Applied Arts Vienna in the recent years: I will share our collaborative multilevel explorative exhibition setup environment experience of "Understanding Art & Research".

Thereby I will point out that everyone needs to transform modes of understanding everywhere and at all times. It is the core to develop the understanding of transformation. Institutions and practices constantly need to care for the change of modes of practice and existence. A continuous process of internal decolonization and deconstruction of the given is needed, a peer milieu of challenge and trust is required.

I will provide an exemplary exploration tour getting from enabling to caring and sharing artistic research at the Zentrum Fokus Forschung at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, following the three notions Transformation, Understanding and Attention guided by our specific educative and curatorial approach for Artistic Research.

It is my interest to learn from and about the artistic research developments in Africa/Global South in reflection to the practice, and provide an example of curatorial work on artistic research, that is equipped with experience from a tour around the world. The content of the projects involved in the exemplary exhibition touches upon many subjects of the conference: dissemination and archiving of artistic research, performance as research, artistic research in the medical humanities, research through material cultures, Art&Science, the spaces of unknowing, the body as a site of artistic research, tacit knowledge and artistic research, the challenge of peer review/assessment of artistic research, and insight reports on our postgraduate programmes in artistic research. The format of the exhibition enables a bringing together of individual critical approaches, and provide transformative insight.

Biographical note:

Alexander Damianisch is the director of the Zentrum Fokus Forschung, also home of the Artistic Research PhD Programme of the University of Applied Arts Vienna. He is member of the Society for Artistic Research special interest group on Artistic Research and Literature, and of the ELIA working group "careers in the Arts/CCIs". He was inaugural manager for the Austrian Program for Artistic Research (PEEK).