

» Where are we today? The State of the Art in Artistic Research«

Henk Borgdorff, Amsterdam/The Hague

ANMA Copenhagen, 5 February 2009

# Where are we today? The State of the Art in Artistic Research

ANMA Conference  
Copenhagen, 5 February 2009

## » The Question of Artistic Research «

### Artistic research: a contested subject

- Opposition: in academia, in the art world
- Growing recognition and support
- Demarcation: artistic research – art practice/development  
artistic research – scientific research
- Legitimacy: practice-based research degrees (Ma, PhD)  
funding



Artistic research  
Research-Creation  
Performative research  
Practice-based/ -led/ as research  
Research in and through art practice

Dutch Advisory Council for Science and Technology Policy:  
'Ontwerp en ontwikkeling' **Artistic Research**

Norwegian 'Artistic Research Fellowships Programme'  
'Kunstnerisk utviklingsarbeid'

Austrian Science Board (Wissenschaftsrat):  
'Entwicklung und Erschließung der Künste'

## Artistic Research

Standard model of research and development, R&D

Basic research

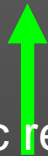
Applied research

Experimental development



Artistic research:

- Quest for fundamental understanding
- Development of practice





Emerging Paradigm →

A conceptual and institutional framework  
Practices, vocabularies, theories

**Artistic Research**

- ✓ Professional organisations
- ✓ Journals, books, editors, e-platforms
- ✓ Conferences
- ✓ Government agencies / Funding
- ✓ Higher education

Research institutes, ELIA, AEC, ...

Books:

- Gray, Carole, and Julian Malins. *Visualizing Research. A guide to the research process in art and design*. Aldershot: Ashgate 2004.
- Sullivan, Graeme. *Art Practice as Research. Inquiry into the visual arts*. Sage 2005
- Hannula, Mika, Juha Suornta, Tere Vadén. *Artistic Research*, Helsinki/Gothenburg 2005.
- Macleod, Katy, and Lin Holdridge (ed.). *Thinking through Art. Reflections on Art as Research*. Routledge 2006.
- Barrett, Estelle and Barbara Bolt (ed.). *Practice as Research. Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*. London, New York: I.B. Tauris 2007.
  
- Forthcoming: Biggs, Michael and Henrik Karlsson (ed.). *Handbook on Art-based Research* (2010?)



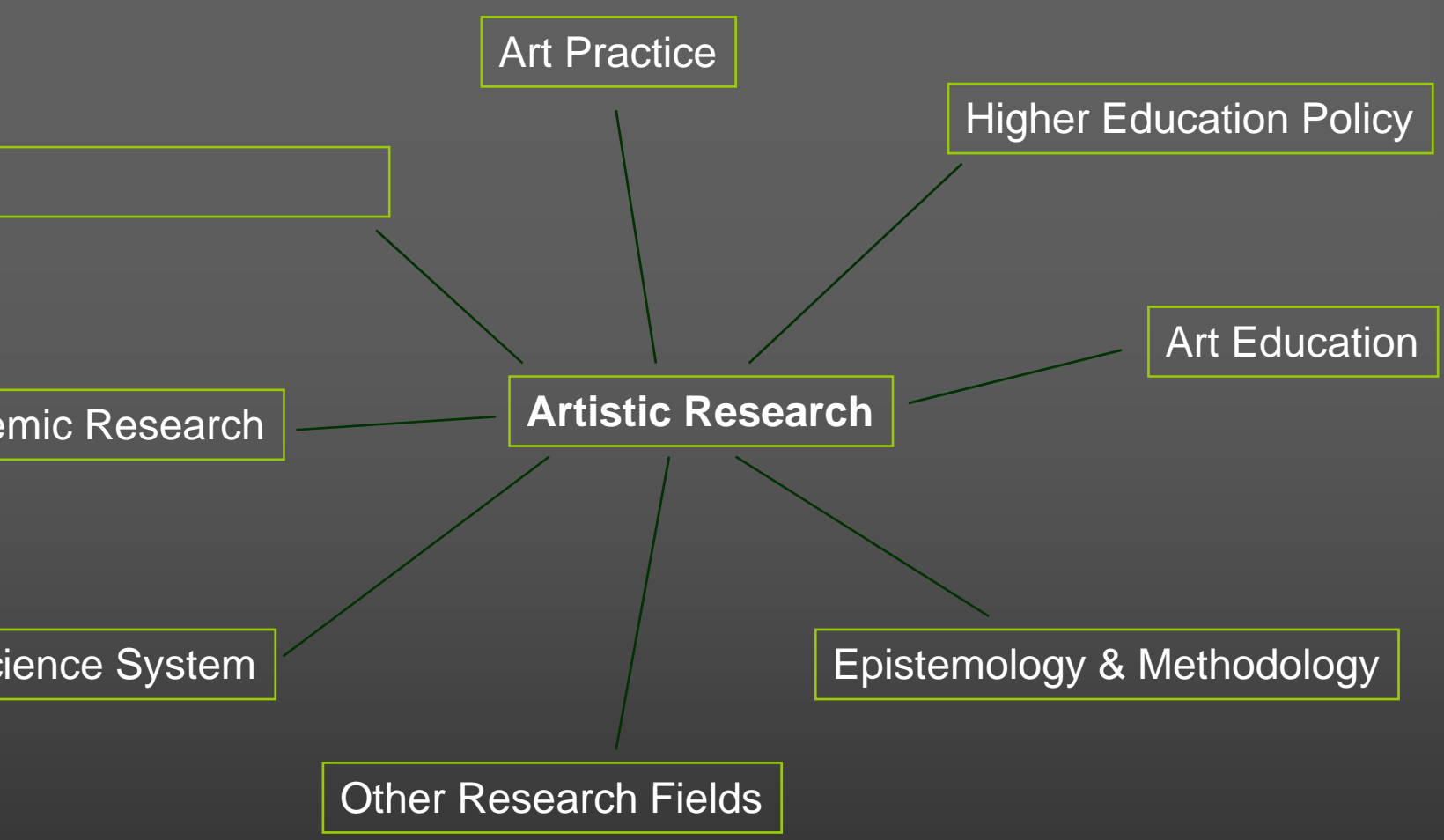
» Where are we today? The State of the Art in Artistic Research«  
 Amsterdorff, Amsterdam/The Hague ANMA Copenhagen, 5 February 2009



Conceptual and institutional framework  
 Practices, vocabularies, theories

Professional organisations  
 Journals, books, editors  
 Conferences  
 Government agencies / Funding  
 Higher education

- Sensuous Knowledge 5  
 Bergen, 24-26 October 2008
- Research into Practice 5  
 London, 31 October 2008
- ELIA Biennial  
 Göteborg, 29 October -2 Nov 2008
- Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research  
 (NWO) (art & science) projects, 24 November 2008
- National Science Research Councils  
 Staff research projects
- Research Fellowships  
 Vienna, 4 December 2008
- Artists in Residence  
 Association of Nordic Music Academies (ANMA)  
 Copenhagen, 5 February 2009
- Art allocated to art and research laboratories
- external funding, contract funding  
 Swedish Research Council (Forskningsrådet)  
 Stockholm, 12-13 March 2009
- Zürcher Hochschule der Künste (ZHdK)





Higher Education Policy

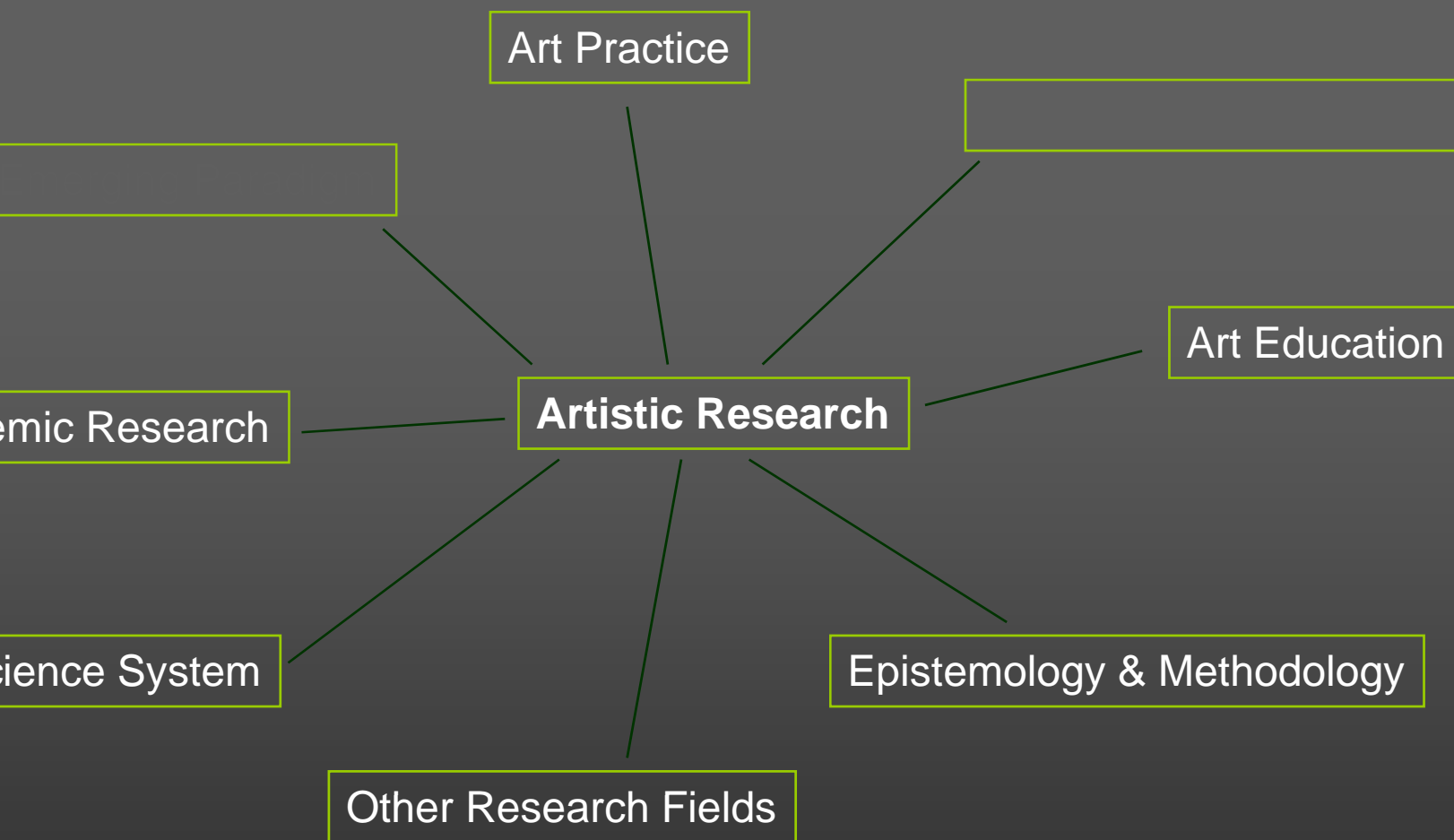
2010: European Higher Education Area  
➤ Bachelor – Master – Doctorate/3rd cycle

Higher education reforms  
**Research** ! in higher art education  
→ Different solutions in UK, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, ...

Bologna:

- Dictate and threat from outside art and art education?
- Chance and challenge for art and art education?

Artistic Research: "A free space within higher education for material thinking"



Art Practice



Research hype → scepticism

- Urgency
- Tension: art – academia
- Effect on academia – Effect on art

Artists : Reflective practitioners  
from outside: need to contextualise  
from inside: reflexiveness of art itself

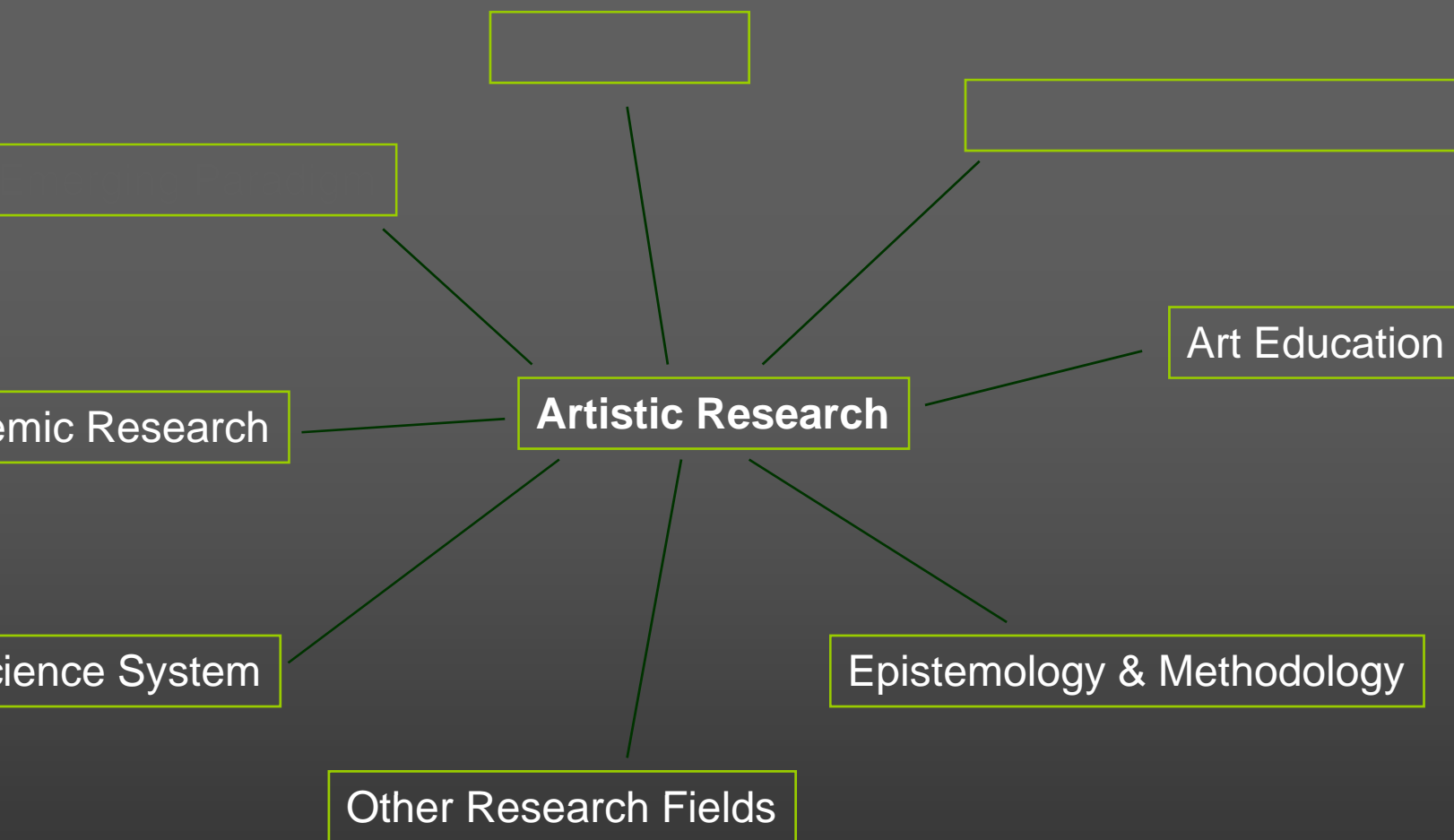
Artistic Research

“A free space to think”

market  
creative industries....  
strains of production

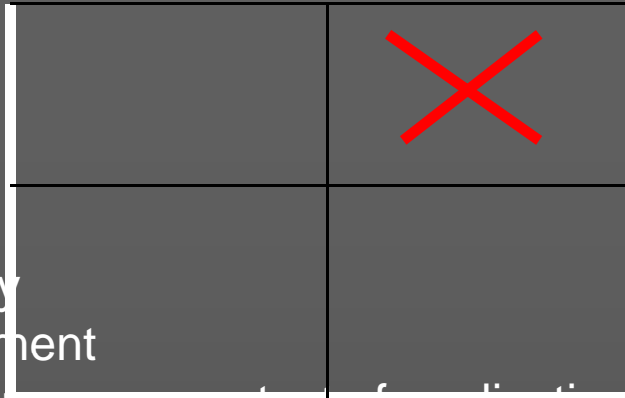
*Money (f)or the Arts:*

» Künstlerische Grundlagenforschung jenseits marktorientierter Kunstproduktion ist die Basis für die Zukunft der "Kulturnation Österreich". «





understanding



*Parascati Manual: Fields of Science & Technology*  
*Fields of Research & Development*

Mode 1 science – Mode 2 knowledge production:

Artistic research

Applied research

Experimental development

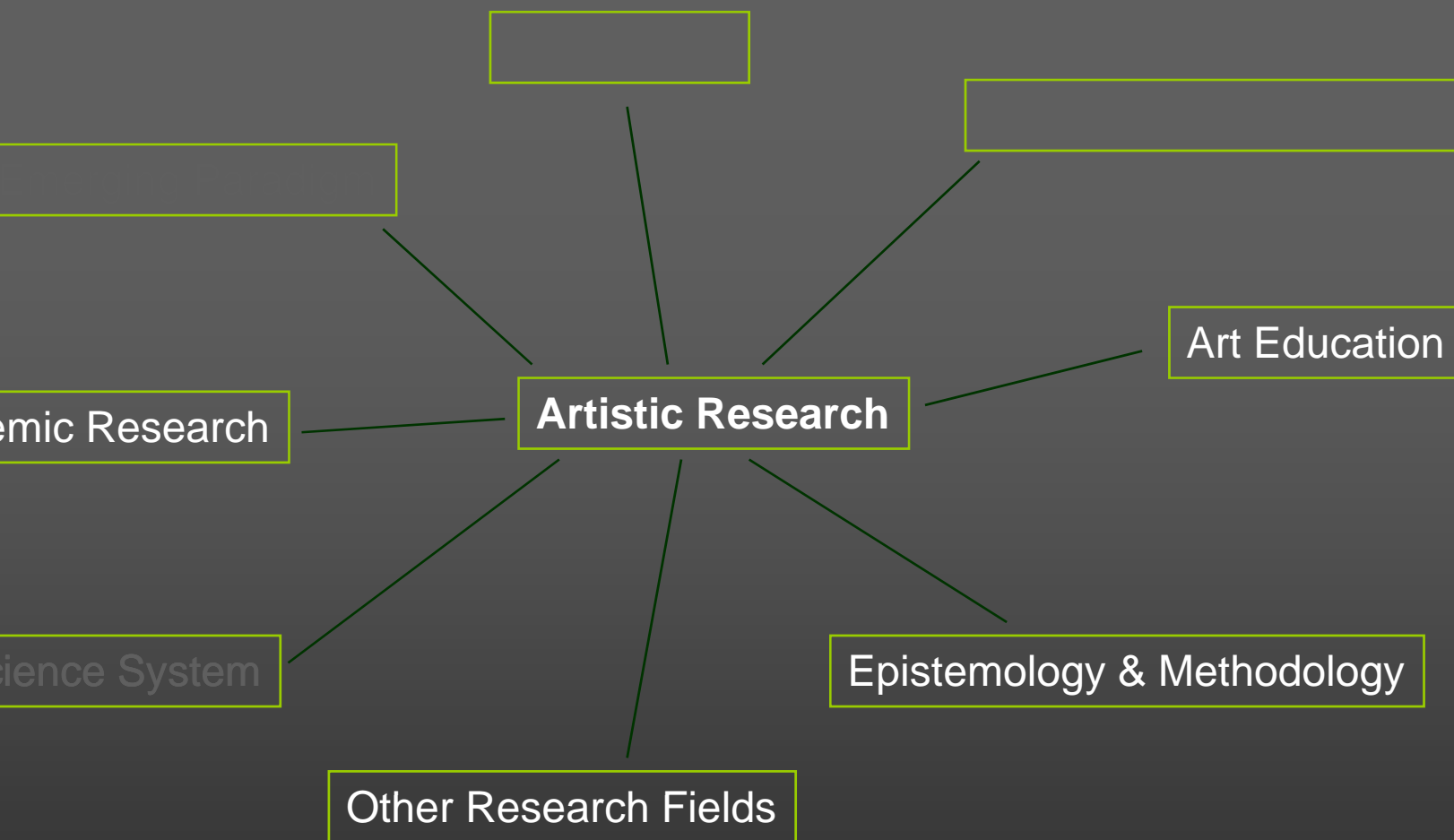
Quadrant model of research (Artistic Research)

1. quest for fundamental understanding
2. development of practice

- context of application
- transdisciplinarity
- heterogeneity
- accountability
- extended peer review

Artistic research

Science System







Research: 'Original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding'

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| ✓ Questions, problems, issues                          | What?      |
| ✓ Context (art world, art discourse)                   | Why?       |
| ✓ Methods  | How?       |
| ✓ Outcomes: presentation, documentation, dissemination | What form? |

**Artistic Research**

Liberalised understanding of 'research'

Dublin Descriptors (JQI):

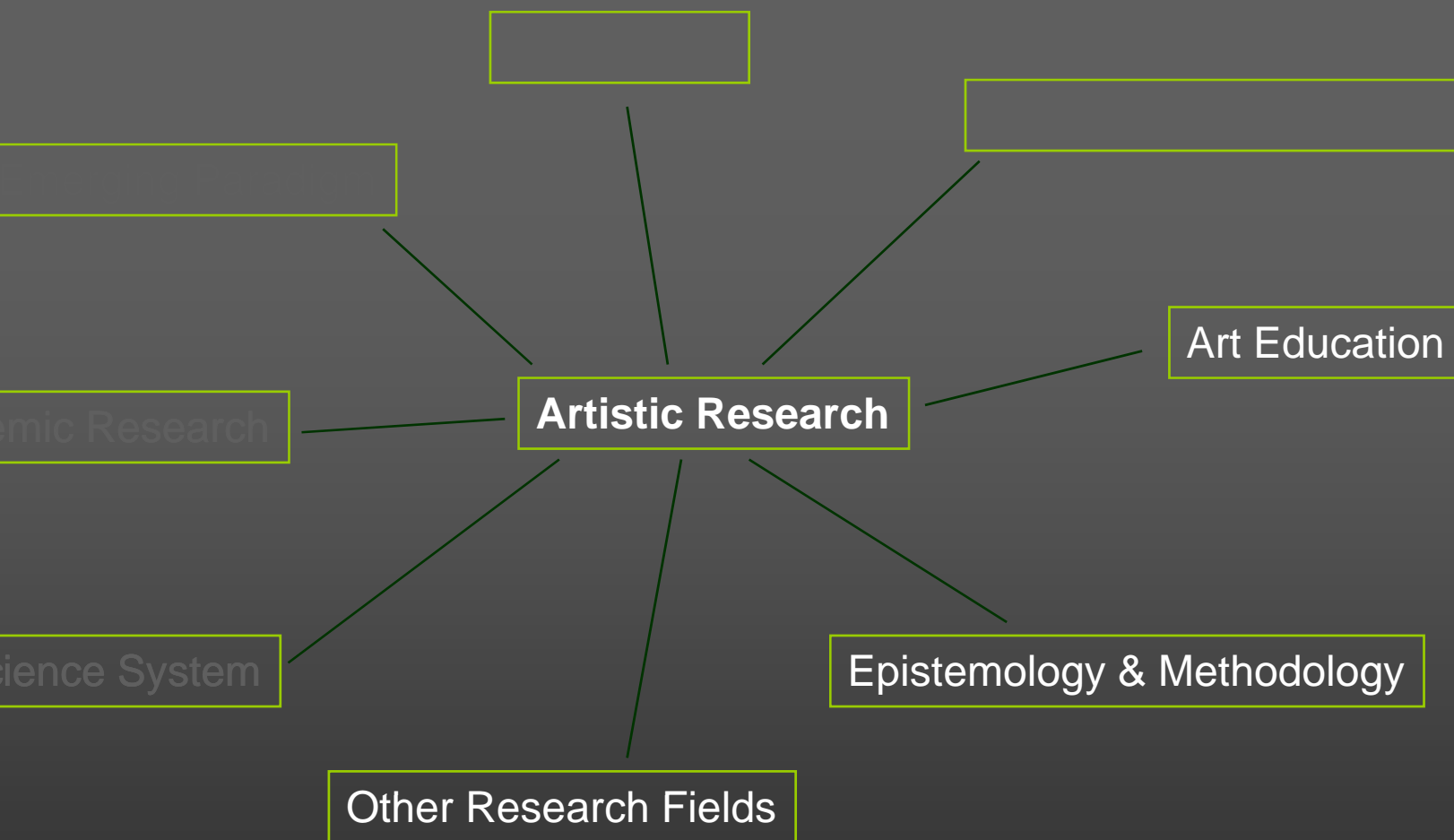
The word [research] is used in an inclusive way to accommodate the range of activities that support original and innovative work in the whole range of academic, professional and technological fields, including the humanities, and traditional, performing, and other creative arts. It is not used in any limited or restricted sense, or relating solely to a traditional 'scientific method'.

Artistic Research → Academic Research

Research: 'Original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding'

Artistic Research: Art practice is central !

question  
context  
method  
outcome





Knowledge & understanding, insight, comprehension → experience

- Theoretical knowledge - Practical knowledge
- Propositional knowledge - Embodied knowledge
- Knowing that ... - **Artistic Research** ...
- Explicit knowledge - Pre-reflexive knowledge
- Focal knowledge - Tacit knowledge

Artistic research is first of all an articulation of the non-conceptual forms of experience and knowledge in and through the creative method.  
Epistemology & Methodology

Articulation: the role of the discursive?  
the role of the verbal?

Let's start with the ...

Artistic Research → Epistemology & Methodology

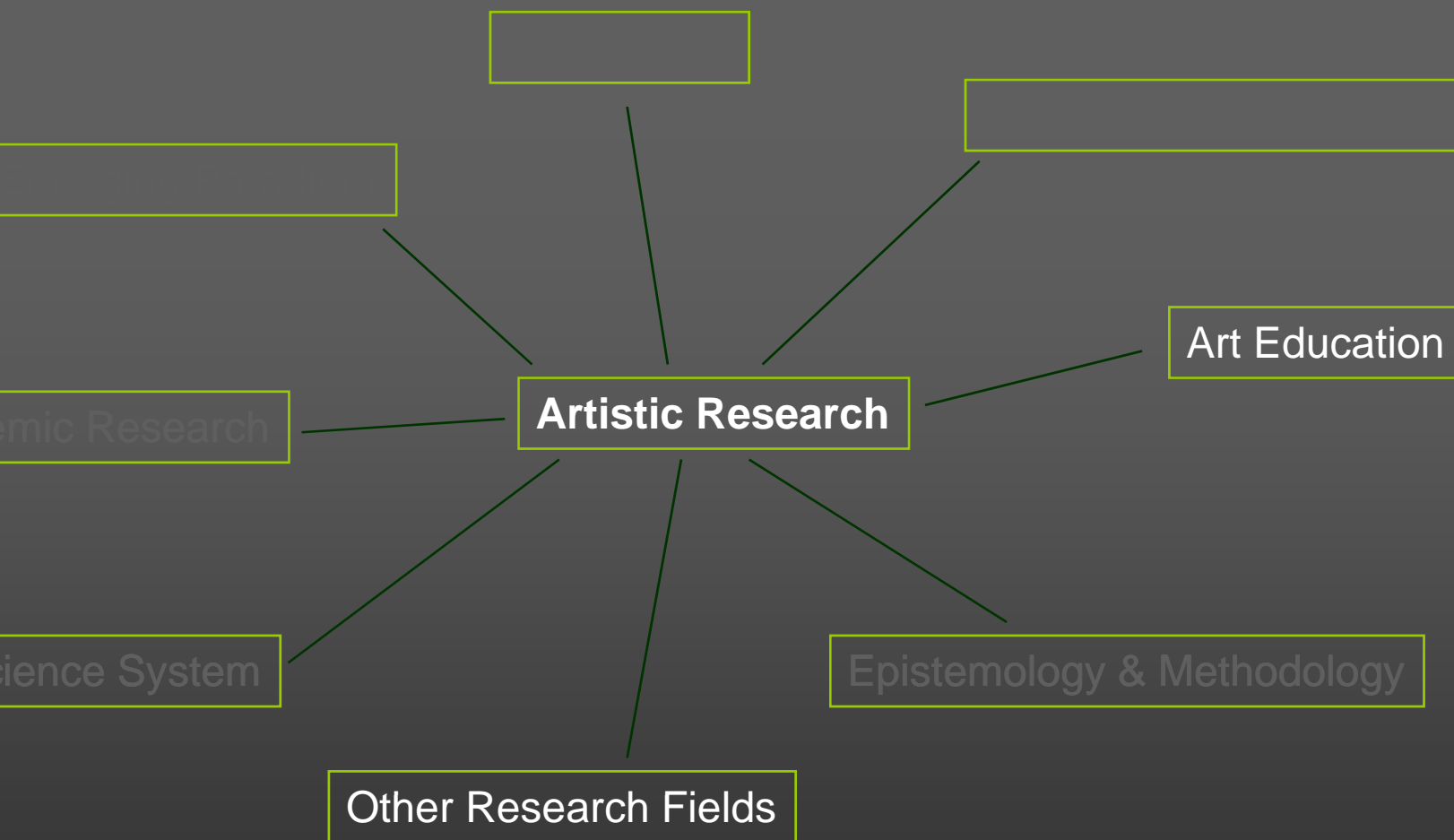
- Humanities research
- Scientific (technological / applied) research
- Social science research
- Art – Science collaborations

There is no distinct, exclusive methodology for artistic research  
→ Methodological pluralism

But:

- > The practice of the arts (creating, designing, performing) is central to the research process
- > Works and practices of art are partly outcomes of the research

→ Material Thinking





Realism  
Non-conceptualism  
Contingency

Art history, musicology, etc.

Aesthetics

Artistic research concerns and affects the foundations of our perception, our understanding, and our relationship to the world and other people.

Artistic Research

Cultural studies / performance studies  
Social (action) research / ethnography

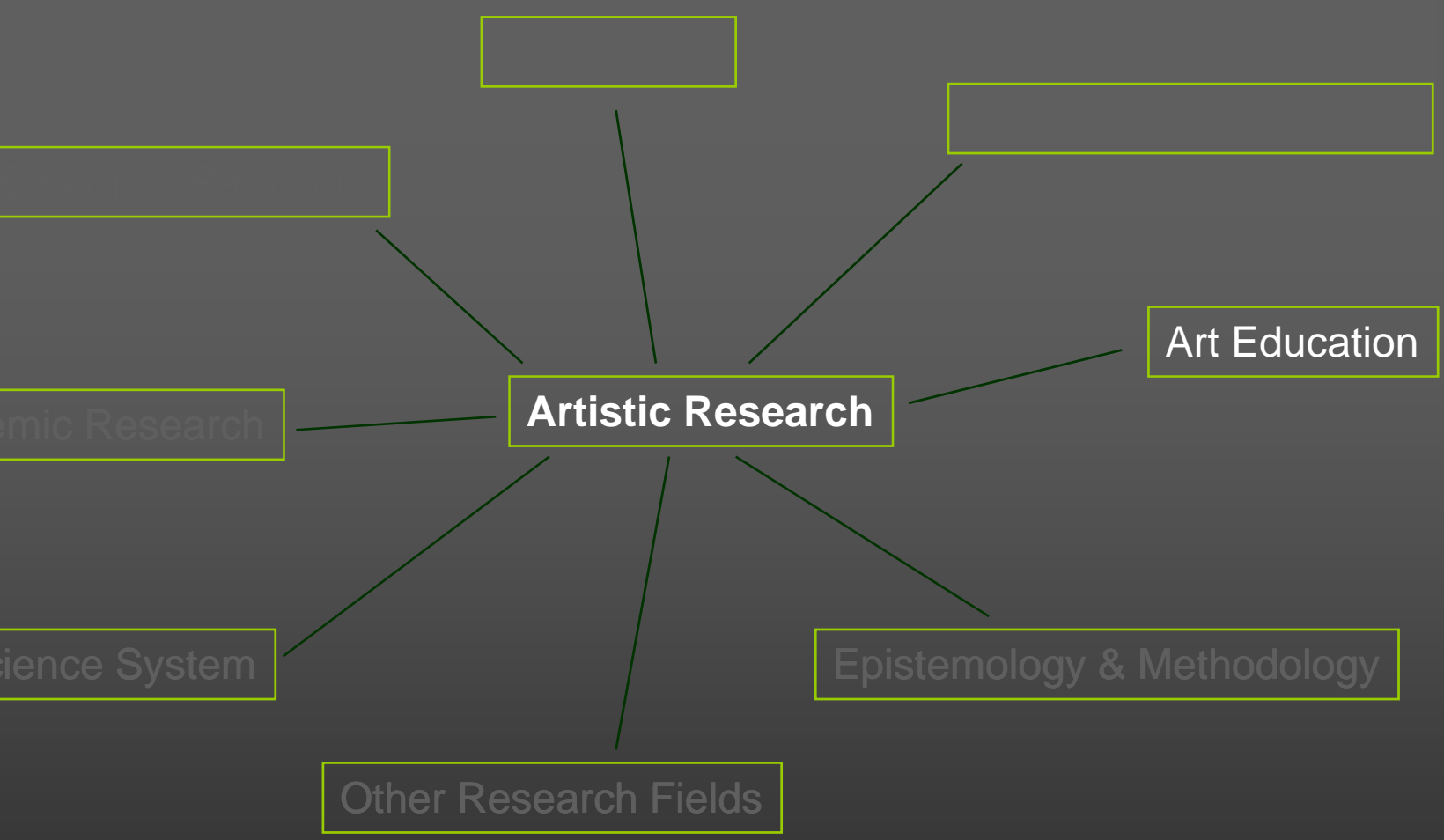
Artistic research is 'material thinking': the articulation of pre-reflexive knowledge and experience, embodied in art works and creative processes.

Phenomenology, cognitive sciences  
Engineering & technology

Artistic research is not about theory, but about thought. Not knowing that...., or knowing how...., but ...not knowing yet...  
It creates room for that which is unthought: the idea that all things

Other Research Fields

Philosophy



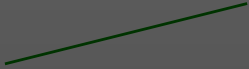




- > Research vs research training
- > Ba-, Ma- and 3rd Cycle level
- > Staff research
  
- > Institutional, regional, national, international
- > University / Hochschule
  - degree awarding power (ius promovendi)
  - research environment / opportunities

**Artistic Research**

**Art Education**





Universität der Künste, Berlin

Studienschule (Nov 2008)  
PhD research in 'traditional' fields  
and Cycle for artists  
focus on art – science collaboration

(AHRC) and Norway

Fellowships in the Creative and  
Performing Arts

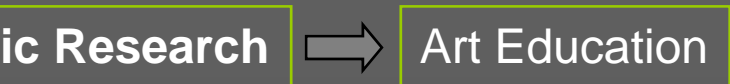


UK

- HEFCE (Staff research; RAE)
- AHRC: PhD research
- AHRC: schemes ('Beyond Text')

Netherlands

- Professorship (lectoraten)
  1. Research (groups)
  2. Innovation of education
  3. Relation with professional practice



Artistic research in higher art education programmes

Level of competence: bachelor, master, doctorate

Research Training in the Creative and Performing Arts and Design  
UKCGE 2001 ([www.ukcge.ac.uk](http://www.ukcge.ac.uk))

- Research Environment
- Research Seminars
- Research Training Programme Content
- Admission
- Supervision
- Assessment

Artistic Research → Art Education

Research environment

- ✓ A range of research **programmes** across the creative and performing arts
- ✓ Access to research **resources** (books, on-line text and images, artefacts, collections etc.)
- ✓ An active programme of **professional practice** (concerts, exhibitions, readings, performances and presentations)
- ✓ A range of opportunities for **presentation, discussion and debate** (lecture series, seminar series, colloquia, conferences etc.)
- ✓ Properly resourced **working facilities** (workstation, materials, IT provision, access to basic office and study requirements: e.g. photocopier, phone)
- ✓ Discussions with a range of **significant others**: practitioners in the field, peers, supervisors and individuals with expertise and experience at the interface between theory and practice
- ✓ **Collaborative arrangements** between departments or institutions

