

PAPERS FOR THE SESSION:

***Suspensions – Mobilizing Art and Aesthetics in Cultural Research.* Convenor: Robert Willim. As part of: ACSIS Conference 2017 : Mobilising Cultural Studies. June 14-15 2017, Norrköping, Sweden**

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Developments in research in, on and through (arts &) craft

To talk about research in, on and through craft, art or design is a common way to describe three possibilities. By discussing some of the latest artistic research that has been developing in Swedish institutions in terms of these categories, I want to highlight some strains or hang ups or suspensions in which it leaves different researchers. I will take the field of Craft as my point of departure. Craftspeople doing research from within their professional fields, means for example doing research *in* craft, its materials and its methods. To do research in the same field but from an art historian's or an ethnologist's point of view usually means to do research *on* craft. To talk about research *through* craft could be to start by examining the processes of crafting relating it to corresponding perspectives and knowledges. But is this what the field has provided?

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The margin of uncertainty and a mouse nest

Correctly performed empirical and/or experimental studies are considered to produce scientific truths. Notably, this is the basic reason for trying to identify scientific fraud. Although obviously an important aspect, ethics is not needed for the production of such truths. Both empirical and experimental methods can however be used for showing oblique, perhaps thought-provoking results, which can be used for artistic and educational purposes. I present two examples: my study of the bodily geometry and aspects of empiricism in Leonardo's Vitruvian Man and my empirical study of the remnants of a mouse nest plotted onto a Cartesian coordinate system. The former example deals with the multitude of interpretative possibilities residing within the narrow margin of uncertainty of the measures of Leonardo's drawing. The mouse nest plot results in a curve, which defy reverse interpretation but share similarities with the distribution of wealth.

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Art-based investigations of the aesthetics and politics of synthetic voices

What are the politics and aesthetics of synthetic voices? Synthetic voices are artificial voices generated by algorithms in computers. Most of the synthetic voices we hear in our everyday life have one vocal identity. In the project *Multivocal* we question the aesthetic as well as representational modes of the synthetic voices and ask: since voices from machines are not limited to a single vocal identity, then why do most synthetic voices have only one gender, one age, and one accent? At the panel, *Suspensions – Mobilizing Art and Aesthetics in Cultural Research*, we would like to discuss the problems and possibilities of combining artistic practice and cultural research (Knowles and Cole 2008; Lury and Wakeford 2014; Sheikh 2006). Here we would specifically focus on the suspensions that occur when having an exploratory approach in combination with a systematic mode of production and evaluation.

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More-Than-Academic Practice. Movements between art and cultural analysis

This paper grapples with the ways that art can be related to research practice within cultural studies, and draws on examples from entanglements between artistic practice and ethnology. I take the point of departure in ideas about more-than-academic practice, which stems from an academic context, to then move beyond disciplinary confines forming a practice that is more than multi- or cross-disciplinary and more than applied academic research. The paper will bring up some methodological challenges and opportunities, and it draws on my work with something I call art probes. These work as instruments of evocation within a more-than-academic practice.