ORPHEUS MANIFESTOS

Artistic Intelligence: Before and Beyond Knowledge Production

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O/I
Orpheus Instituut
Advanced studies and research in music

To mark the thirtieth anniversary of Orpheus Instituut, this series of manifestos reimagines knowledge through music as an essential form of understanding. The eight statements, written by the institute's principal investigators with rigour, humour, and artistic verve, situate musical knowing in the spaces between music-making and reflection. They trace the entanglements between performers and technologies, and the confrontation between archived fragments and virtual entities. Musical understanding here emerges as a makers' knowledge, built upon recursive feedback between minds, bodies, interfaces, and sound. What artistic research in music generates remains multifaceted, provisional, and alive: it can always be produced differently.

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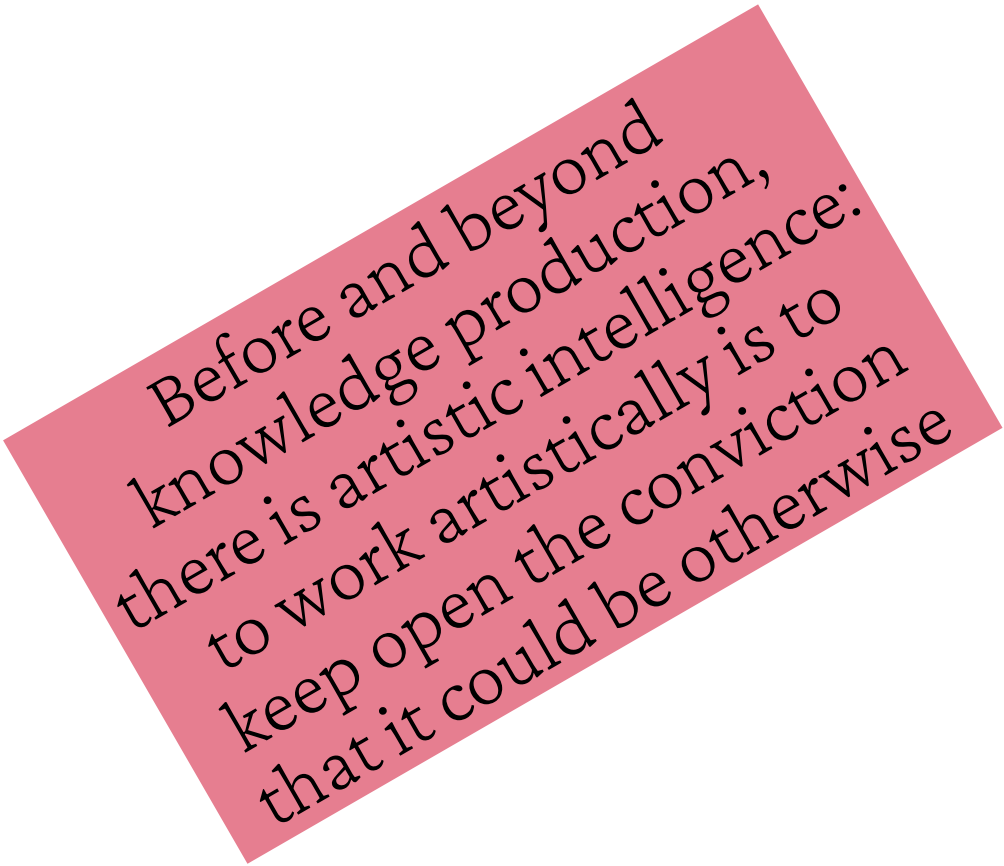
Before and beyond
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In a time when artificial intelligence performs knowledge as a radically disembodied operation; in a time when thinking in and through the arts risks being captured by systems and institutions; and in a time when artistic research has already proven that it can generate credible, valuable, and consequential knowledge, what matters most now is not to ask about knowledge production but to affirm, expand, and investigate, in the arts and beyond them, the radically embodied modes of thought and action-in-the-world carried by the human body as a complex arrangement of heterogeneous, disparate, and even contradictory elements. By *intelligence* I do not mean a measurable intelligence, nor a computational one, but a biologically wired, vitalist, and profoundly adaptive one: the capacity to invent new problems, to activate previously imperceptible forces, and to make the unthought graspable—an intelligence that connects the human, the non-human, the more-than-human, and the post-human, and gathers them into a body acting in the world, a body in its fullness, before and beyond its organs.

I. KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND BEYOND

The question of *knowledge production* has been a topic of central importance for artistic research in the last three decades, a period that—in the aftermath of the Bologna process—witnessed the wider implementation and institutionalisation of artistic research in universities, art and music

schools, research centres, and funding agencies. Beyond well-established definitions of knowledge production from the sciences and humanities, other definitions were explored by artist-researchers and their institutions, especially in view of the establishment of high-level educational programmes in the arts in which the practitioners themselves conducted research in-and-through the making of art. Given the focus on *practice* and the centrality of corporeal actions, notions like tacit knowledge, embodied knowledge, practice-based knowledge, or situated knowledge have been adopted by many authors and researchers as an alternative or extension to prevailing modes of propositional knowledge that prioritised analytical, documentary, historical, organological, and interpretative approaches. While propositional knowledge remained important—not least because writing a thesis, a book, or a paper continued to be central activities and outputs of the research—many authors have contributed novel definitions for the kind of knowledge artistic practices were supposed to generate and convey. Authors working at the intersection of different epistemologies (such as Henk Borgdorff, Helga Nowotny, Michael Gibbons, Michael Biggs, and Henrik Karlsson), but also from within the field of artistic research itself (such as Michael Schwab, Barbara Bolt, Esa Kirkkopelto, Marcel Cobussen, Mika Elo, Robin Nelson, Darla Crispin, Kathleen Coessens, Anne Douglas, Paul Craenen, and Falk Hübner) discussed and suggested a wide range of concepts, theories, and approaches that could accommodate and substantiate knowledge claims made by practitioners. Inclusion of perspectives from science and technology studies and from contemporary epistemologies (Hans-Jörg Rheinberger) that decentre the classical division between practice and theory has been embraced and carefully transposed to the arts. Without all these contributions, many of the achievements of artistic research in the last decades would not have been possible. Thus, the question of knowledge and the question of knowledge production have been foundational, highly relevant, and influential.

Today, however, we find ourselves in a different epistemic and institutional context. On the one hand, a great number of outputs from artistic

research, across diverse fields of practice, have been positively recognised as making substantive contributions to knowledge; the first goal of those foundational debates on knowledge production in-and-through the making of art seems to have been (at least sufficiently) achieved. On the other hand—and far more disruptively—both artistic practices and the very definition of knowledge have been thrown into question by the rapid emergence of more-than-human "thinking" machines and the widespread usage of artificial intelligence tools. Information, once scarce and controlled by restricted communities, had already become abundant and retrievable by anybody with an internet connection; but it is the arrival of machines that appear to process knowledge, to combine it, and to generate new content that most sharply reframes the question, destabilising millennia-old assumptions about knowledge processing, combinatorial thought, and creative agency. What knowledge is, who or what produces it, and what remains specific to human artistic agency are no longer settled questions. New definitions of knowledge and new modes of knowledge production are now being discussed, and they require active participation from the broad field of artistic research practitioners. This is an open, ongoing debate—and it is this rupture, more than the achievements of the past, that makes the shift of focus proposed in this manifesto urgent.

Precisely because "intelligent" machines can now process, combine, and retrieve what passes as knowledge, the question once put to artistic research—whether and how the making of art produces knowledge—is no longer the most relevant one. The central claim of this manifesto is that what most pressingly matters today for artistic research is the understanding and active discussion of artistic intelligence. What, if anything, is specific to the way in which an artist relates to materials, to their body, to tacit and experiential knowledge? How does an artist use and appropriate tools and machines, including the most advanced generative AI systems? How does an artist relate to concepts, theories, and scientific and philosophical accounts? What are the specific features of the evolutionary, biologically, and socially wired human body that

makes it act-in-the-world with a distinctive kind of purpose, intensity, and directionality? More than materialising pre-existing schemas or ideas, artistic processes are primarily triggered by sensori-motor drives that put human bodies in action, making new things appear in the world. Thus, emphasis shifts from mediated aesthetic experience and reflective cognitive apprehension to the instantaneous and immediate powers of bodies moving and acting in the world. Where the question of knowledge production gives primacy to the brain and the central nervous system, the focus on artistic intelligence opens up the discourse to pre-conceptual experience, activating other organs and tissues such as the decentralised sensorimotor system, the connective tissue, the fascial network, and, changing register, the *matrix* in Bracha L. Ettinger's sense—the matrixial, prenatal space of co-emergence and shared affect.

This shift of focus might contribute to the development of a radical empiricism of the body—a term I partially borrow from William James, though extended, with Deleuze, to the virtual as well as the actual. Expanding on notions of embodied knowledge, the human body appears neither as a vessel for mental content nor as an instrument operated by a sovereign subject. It operates as a lived structure, a dynamic and pre-reflective openness to the world, a system of sensorimotor capacities that continuously orients itself within a field of affordances, trajectories, obstacles, and invitations. The body, in this horizon, is not something one *has* but something one *is*: a metastable assemblage of gestures, tensions, equilibria, and virtual postures through which sense is disclosed long before conceptualisation stabilises it. Expertise—whether that of the pianist, the swimmer, the hiker, the dancer, the cyclist, or the artisan—is not the mere application of internalised rules but a form of embodied attunement, a responsiveness that anticipates rather than follows thought, a motor intentionality that "understands" far more than the subject can explicitly state. These sensorimotor capacities and their inner tensions and contradictions are foundational to a mode of intelligence that is at work in artistic processes.

Crucially, artistic intelligence is a mode of intelligence that is not exclusive to the arts. There are manifestations of artistic intelligence in science, technology, and philosophy. The great French mathematician Henri Poincaré described several moments of discovery that occurred suddenly, unexpectedly, away from his working desk (the most famous one while stepping onto a bus in Coutances). Henri Bergson stressed the centrality of his own notion of intuition, understood as a temporal process, for philosophical and scientific methodologies. Gaston Bachelard (later echoed by Michel Serres) emphasised the importance of "anexact sciences," and Gilles Deleuze repeatedly insisted upon the central operative function of creativity across the arts, sciences, and philosophy. The creative act, understood as a fundamental act of resistance against common sense and opinion, and of vital creation of other possible worlds, can happen in different areas of practice; it is not a prerogative of artists. *Artistic* here names a mode of acting and thinking, not a profession or an institutional category: it may be at work in a laboratory, on a mountain, or at a workbench as much as in a studio, and it is frequently absent from much that passes institutionally as art. The arts are, in this respect, internally heterogeneous—much artistic work is disciplined by propositional knowledge, notation, numbers, and verbal articulation—and artistic intelligence names one dimension this manifesto foregrounds, not the whole of what artists do. What creative acts across different disciplines may share is a rooting in a generative and projective mode of acting in the world—a mode of intelligence that this manifesto proposes to call *artistic intelligence*. And it is precisely in view of its wider relevance to other fields of practice that the notion of artistic intelligence—before and beyond questions of knowledge—can operate as a major conceptual anchor for artistic research in the coming years. Thus, emphasis should move from *knowledge production* to *artistic intelligence*. This expansion of the debate includes the question of knowledge production but crucially situates it as a consequence of the coming together of different modes of intelligence, *a polyphony of intelligences* that could blow new wind and afford new directions into artistic research.

II. SEVEN PROPOSITIONS ON KNOWLEDGE FOR ARTISTIC RESEARCH

Before turning fully to the question of artistic intelligence, it is helpful to clarify what is meant by *knowledge* in the context of artistic research. The propositions that follow do not constitute a theory of knowledge, nor do they aim at taxonomic exhaustiveness. They are seven concentric apertures, each opened from a different angle, through which the kind of knowing that artistic practices generate becomes thinkable—not as a stable possession but as a transient effect of processes that exceed traditional categories. Read together, they prepare the conceptual displacement this manifesto wishes to perform: from *knowledge production* as the defining horizon of artistic research to *artistic intelligence* as its operative core.

Knowledge as projection

Artistic knowledge, as understood here, relates not so much to the recognition of what already exists but to the invention of new possibilities. It results from speculative, open-ended, practical, and conceptual experimentation, and in this sense it is generative rather than descriptive, projective rather than archival. *Intelligence*, then, could be provisionally defined as the capacity to activate the generative and projective potential of knowledge—whereas *erudition* would relate more closely to its archival, analytical, and descriptive face. Transposed to musical or artistic practices, this means that knowledge is produced when artistic processes operate as experimental systems in which materials, instruments, technologies, performers, composers, and conceptual frameworks interact to generate unprecedented epistemic things—including non-conceptual, emergent, materially grounded phenomena that open new possibilities for thinking, creating, performing, and understanding. Such knowledge is not extracted a posteriori from musical phenomena; it is produced in the radical here-and-now of composing, performing, listening. It is embodied, future-oriented, and unfolds as event rather

than essence, requiring a displacement from hermeneutics, analysis, and interpretation toward invention, synthesis, and experimentation.

Knowledge as emergence

To speak of knowledge as emergence is, in the first instance, to speak of processes of individuation—material, mental, artistic, social. Following Gilbert Simondon, individuation is neither the unfolding of a pre-existing form nor the self-expression of a sovereign subject; it is a process of becoming, a resolution of tensions within a metastable field in which matter, energy, and form co-constitute one another. Artistic processes are precisely such metastable fields. The artist does not "apply" knowledge to materials—the materials participate in the co-individuation of the artistic object and of the artist's own intelligence. Actions, gestures, resistances, failures, resonances: each act of engagement reconfigures what can be known and what can be thought. In this sense, knowledge is not content but trajectory. It emerges through transduction—those operations that propagate from one domain into another, from a gesture into a texture, from a sonic event into a structural reconfiguration. Knowledge, in this Simondonian register, becomes the by-product of self-organising artistic systems in which materials, tools, bodies, and contexts collectively shape the evolution of an idea.

Knowledge as experimentation

The historian and philosopher of science Hans-Jörg Rheinberger provides a third, equally crucial conceptual apparatus: his multilayered description of experimental systems. Originally formulated for the life sciences, these systems name the material and operational frameworks within which *epistemic things*—entities embodying what we do not yet know—can emerge. When transposed into artistic practice, experimental systems acquire a new physiognomy: they include technical objects (instruments, media, digital or analogue devices), spatial and environmental conditions, procedural constraints (set-ups, iterations, dramaturgies), and embodied operators (performers, collaborators, audiences, ecologies), as well as historical layers, archives, and conceptual triggers. An artistic

experimental system, in this view, is not a metaphor borrowed from science; it is a generative infrastructure, a dynamic assemblage in which unexpected phenomena—sonic, visual, conceptual, somatic—emerge and demand to be taken seriously as knowledge. Epistemic things, in this artistic context, are not hypotheses or data points; they are emergent forms, configurations, events—a new sonic texture, a spatial perception not previously felt, a conceptual shift triggered by a gesture. They are not yet conceptual, not yet stabilised into theory; they are proto-knowledge, the raw material of thought and practice.

Knowledge as multiplicity

Knowledge is neither univocal nor singular. From a Deleuzian perspective, it is not representational but eventual: it arises when a configuration of forces (material intensities, temporal modulations, movements of sense) becomes actualised out of a broader virtual field of possible states of a system. Artistic practice and artistic research operate precisely at the intersection of what could be and what really is. A compositional act, a performance, a sketch, a sound—each is a haecceity, a singular event in which a multiplicity is momentarily stabilised, and which, in its second-by-second progression, functions as a series of fast-moving transductive micro-haecceities. Knowledge, then, transcends the event itself: it is the manifestation of the capacity of any given artistic system to continue transforming itself ceaselessly. It encapsulates the potential to generate further unpredictable configurations—for every configuration contains points of potential rupture, disruption, and rearrangement of its constitutive parts, what Deleuze and Guattari call "lines of flight." Thought in these terms, knowledge is not a state but a vector.

Knowledge as sensorimotor acting-in-the-world

A fifth proposition concerns the inscription of knowledge in the moving, sensing body. Michel Serres offers a productive point of orientation. In *The Five Senses*, Serres elaborates a philosophy of mingled bodies that challenges Western philosophy's long privileging of language and abstraction over sensory experience: knowledge severed from bodily

experience is, for him, sterile, and the senses describe reality with a precision that language is structurally incapable of attaining. The point is not to invert this hierarchy or to set the body against discursive thought, but to restore to thought a bodily dimension that abstraction alone cannot reach—a contrast that is structural, not adversarial. What is at stake is a radical empiricism that contests the dominance of vision and discursivity in most Western thought, displacing the philosophical centre of gravity toward touch and toward the skin—at once interior and exterior, the very site where body and world become indiscernible. In *Variations on the Body*, Serres extends this argument as a homage to teachers of physical education, athletes, and dancers, celebrating the body in movement and its capacity to reconfigure itself in the most unexpected ways. Serres's account of corporeal metamorphosis—of dancers, athletes, and climbers undergoing admirable metamorphoses—illuminates a crucial dimension of artistic intelligence: that the human body is capable of inventing new capacities, new lines of force, new gestural vocabularies. The body is defined not by fixed functions but by an extraordinary amplitude of postures and movements, by its openness to self-transformation—a capacity shared with many other animals, from the octopus to the corvid. When a climber stretches toward a hold that appears just beyond reach, the body extends itself, discovers a new articulation, and realises a capacity that did not exist a moment earlier. This extension—this micro-invention—is knowledge in its most primordial form: the discovery of a possibility that had been virtual, dormant, untested. Knowledge, in this Serresian horizon, is sensorimotor acting-in-the-world: it is produced not by a contemplative consciousness positioned over and against an inert material, but by a body that knows by moving, by touching, by being touched, by metamorphosing itself through contact with materials, instruments, and other bodies. For artistic research, this proposition names the very texture of the practice: the pianist's hand learning a fingering, the horn player finding a new position of the lips, the dancer's spine reorganising itself in mid-gesture—each is a site at which knowledge is constituted prior to, and in excess of, any propositional formulation.

Knowledge as cultivated uncertainty

A sixth proposition concerns what Helga Nowotny, in the book of that title, calls the cunning of uncertainty. The formulation reactivates a much older figure of intelligence, the Greek *mētis* analysed by Detienne and Vernant: a situational, sidelong mode of knowing that operates within the unstable rather than against it. Uncertainty is not a deficit to be eliminated but an inherent and generative component of every research process. In Deleuzian terms, uncertainty functions as the pressure of the virtual upon the actual. The body imagines multiple possible outcomes of the system, knowing that some will occur and others not—a tension between certainty of actualisation and its unavoidable unpredictability, generating fear and anxiety, but also hope. Uncertainty becomes a positive and creative condition for the emergence of the new. This perspective fits artistic practice because the practitioner works precisely within transient, shifting, and ambiguous configurations. This reveals a mode of intelligence that operates obliquely rather than along a direct line, attentive to serendipity and to the openings that emerge only in the course of practice. Artistic research does not aim at the elimination of the unknown but at its cultivation, transforming uncertainty from a limit into an epistemic medium. To work artistically is to keep open the conviction that *it could be otherwise*. Uncertainty, so understood, is one of the most precious cultural resources a research culture can foster, and the artistic field, more than any other, depends upon its careful cultivation.

Knowledge as planetary practice

The seventh and final proposition concerns the planetary scale on which knowledge today must be thought. The epistemic horizon of artistic practice has long been the exclusive domain of human agency, but it can no longer remain anthropocentric. Contemporary artistic practices operate within expanded ecologies—technological, environmental, biological, digital, machinic—that are not passive backdrops but active participants: they exert agency, impose constraints, and shape the generativity of the work. Following post-Latourian planetary thinking and

the ethics of coexistence articulated by Achille Mbembe and Felwine Sarr, knowledge becomes planetary in a precise sense: it is a mode of inhabiting the world rather than of extracting from it. In such a planetary co-existence of agencies, knowledge appears as distributed across human bodies and their affective, perceptual, and cognitive apparatuses, but also across non-human actors—materials, technologies, infrastructures—and ecological actants. Artistic practice and artistic research thus emerge as deeply interconnected post-human epistemic assemblages, where knowing is the shared product of multiple agencies entering into relation. In this view, to know is to co-exist, to know is to co-produce, to know is to attend to the world's capacity to transform itself through our common practice and reflection.

Toward an operative definition of knowledge in artistic research

To summarise, the seven propositions above can be condensed into a tentative operative definition of knowledge in and for artistic research. Knowledge in artistic research is the emergent, material, and distributed effect of processes of experimentation, individuation, and transformation that unfold within artistic practices. It is not representational but generative—a form of thinking-through-doing in which epistemic things arise from experimental systems and open new modes of practice, apprehension, and reflection. It is plural, situated, and revisable, oriented toward effects rather than toward correspondence alone. Knowledge, in this register, is eventual, future-oriented, more-than-human, and planetary: a mode of intelligent becoming embedded in the material, social, and ecological textures of creative practice—and, precisely as such, it already gestures beyond itself, toward the question of intelligence with which the next section of this manifesto will engage.

III. EIGHT THESES ON ARTISTIC INTELLIGENCE

If the question of knowledge has been necessary, it has also become a trap. To ask whether art produces knowledge is to accept knowledge as the horizon of legitimation, to submit artistic practice to a tribunal whose criteria remain epistemological. What this section proposes is not the negation of knowledge but a displacement of the question: from knowledge as the product of artistic practice to intelligence as its operation.

A first clarification must be placed at the threshold. Artistic intelligence is not a cognitive capacity housed within the artist-as-genius—that Romantic interior from which the ineffable is supposed to flow into form. The dismantling of the sovereign creative subject has been one of the central achievements of post-humanist thought, and the intelligence proposed here belongs to no such interiority. A second clarification is forced upon us by the present historical moment. Artificial intelligence has emerged as an active participant in artistic processes, and naming the distinction between artistic and artificial intelligence has therefore become a necessary part of the contemporary discussion. The distinction is not a refusal—the two modes are not at odds—but a difference of orientation that the eight theses of this section will develop. Artificial intelligence can operate as a catalyst for reconsidering what intelligence is in the first place, and on that ground both modes can be welcomed. Etymologically, *intelligence* names not calculation but *inter-legere*—a gathering and choosing among, a reading-between of heterogeneous elements. Heard in this register, the word points away from detached cognition and toward operation. What artistic intelligence does name is the individuating assemblage—an arrangement of forces, materials, bodies, instruments, technologies, and histories within which something genuinely new comes into existence. The primary site from which this assemblage operates, the ground without which none of what follows would have any traction, is the body. The theses follow from there.

1. Artistic intelligence is an intelligence of the body

The body that performs artistic intelligence is not the body of anatomical textbooks—not the central nervous system surrounded by peripheral apparatus, not a vessel carrying mental content into expression. It is the distributed body of the fascial network, the connective tissue, the matrix of myofascial tensions through which proprioception circulates before any conceptualisation arrives. The fascial network—increasingly recognised in recent research as a sensory organ in its own right, in the work of Carla Stecco and Robert Schleip—names here not a new seat of the self but the distributed, intentional character of bodily knowing. It is the body of motor intentionality, in Merleau-Ponty's sense, but pressed further toward what one might name a metastable assemblage of tensions—a field of equilibria, virtual postures, anticipatory gestures, in which sense is disclosed long before language stabilises it. This is the body of the pianist learning a fingering, the dancer reorganising the spine in mid-gesture, the painter pressing a brush against a surface, the sculptor reading the grain of a material, the live-electronics performer shaping a feedback loop with hands and breath, the performer improvising inside a responsive motion-capture field, the swimmer catching and pulling the water, the mountain hiker negotiating an uneven slope, the artisan whose hands know more than the maker can say. Across all these, intelligence operates without first passing through the cortex of representation. Michel Serres gives this embodied knowing its sharpest formulation. For Serres, the senses describe reality with a precision language cannot attain, and it is the moving, touching, metamorphosing body—not the contemplating mind—that holds the world in thought. In artistic intelligence, then, the body becomes an epistemic interface in a literal and non-metaphorical sense: a transductive operator that propagates transformations from the corporeal domain into conceptual, material, and temporal architectures. The resistant surface of an instrument, the friction of a tool against a material, the weight of breath, the constraint of posture—each of these bodily negotiations triggers shifts in perception, intention, and thought. To learn is to modulate one's bodily schemas, to refine perceptual worlds, to reconfigure one's vectorial relation to matter

and space. This knowing emerges not after the fact but in the very moment of corporeal engagement; it is not the reflection upon an action but the becoming of an action into its own intelligibility. It is a mode of *knowing*, not a deposit of *knowledge*. What is specific to the artistic body is that it operates deliberately—it cultivates this pre-conceptual operation as its medium, makes problematisation rather than execution the centre of the practice, and exposes the very thickness of embodiment to its own transformation. This is the precise place where the contrast with artificial intelligence becomes operative: the disembodied character of computational processing complements, rather than replaces, an intelligence whose mode of being is the felt, moving, breathing body.

2. Artistic intelligence is born from encounter, not recognition

There is a long-standing image of thought, dismantled with particular force by Gilles Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*, by which thinking is reduced to recognition—to the harmonious exercise of the faculties upon a supposedly identical object. Against this image, an alternative is proposed: thought is not the result of method but the consequence of an encounter, and "something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*" (Deleuze 1994, 139). The encounter is not gentle. It carries a certain violence—the violence of what can only be sensed, of what arrives without protocol and bends the faculties beyond their accustomed limit. Artistic intelligence operates at exactly this threshold. Performers who confront a score not as a solved problem but as an epistemic thing do not recognise; they encounter. Composers who return to a sketch, a found constraint, or a material resistance do not apply a procedure; they are forced to think what they were not prepared to think. The painter before a surface, the sculptor before a block, the choreographer before a body moving in space, the artist before a generative model that answers back: in each case, what unfolds is not the application of method to material but the capacity to sustain that initial violence and to allow the not-yet-known to produce new thought. The encounter is the figure across all these. Artistic intelligence is its embodied inhabitation.

3. Artistic intelligence captures forces, not forms

The form-matter couple—*hylomorphism*, in the Aristotelian sense that Simondon devoted his career to dismantling—conceals the energetic conditions under which individuation actually occurs. A different formulation operates in its place, and Deleuze, in *The Logic of Sensation* (2003, 56), gives it a precise wager: "in art, and in painting as in music, it is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms, but of capturing forces." The substitution has major consequences. Where the hylomorphic schema imagines form imposed upon inert matter from above, the force-material couple names a continuous reciprocal modulation in which force and material assume one another. Music renders non-sonorous forces sonorous; painting renders invisible forces visible; sculpture renders the tectonic and gravitational forces of a material perceptible in their resistance; film renders temporal forces—duration, anticipation, rhythm—sensible; architecture captures forces of mass and inhabitation. The work, across each of these registers, is not a representation of prior content but an individuation—a haecceity defined not by substance or identity but by its longitude and latitude, its speeds and affects, the specific gradient of forces it makes perceptible. Artistic intelligence is the capacity to detect, engage, and render perceptible these imperceptible forces—and to produce from this encounter a sensory haecceity that did not exist before and that is irreducible to any proposition.

4. Artistic intelligence counter-effectuates

The contrast with artificial intelligence is structural, not adversarial; it concerns the direction of movement. Science, and with it the generative algorithm, operates downstream. It moves from a virtual distribution—the latent space of training data, or the chaotic continuum of the real—toward an actualised state of affairs, formalising and slowing down what already circulates. Art and philosophy move upstream, in the opposite direction: from the actual back toward the virtual conditions from which actuality was generated. Miguel de Beistegui (2004, 333) captures this with precision: "scientific thought moves from the virtual to the actual by slowing down the real; philosophical thought

(along with artistic thought) moves from the actual through the virtual, or from states of affairs to events, through acceleration." Artistic intelligence is counter-effectuating intelligence—it does not produce more actuality, more outputs, more content, but returns to the virtual conditions of what already exists and extracts new events from them. The "new" here is therefore not *creatio ex nihilo*—neither the demiurgic flourish of the artist-genius nor the marketable "creativity" of the corporate workshop—but the actualisation of what was already virtual: difference drawn from a field that no actual state exhausts. This is what occurs when an experimental performance treats a Beethoven sonata not as a monument to be reproduced but as a supersaturated solution awaiting a seed crystal; what occurs when an archival document, opened inside a research-creation project, becomes a virtual field from which new events can still be drawn; what occurs when a traditional repertoire—Western or non-Western—is reopened by its own practitioners as a metastable charge rather than as a closed inheritance. The actual is reopened to the virtual it never exhausted.

5. Artistic intelligence fabricates concepts

Artistic practice does not only make artefacts; it produces, in the same gesture, the conceptual instruments through which what it makes can be thought at all. New categories, new distinctions, new operative tools that did not exist before the artistic act are not philosophical commentaries added afterwards to the work but constituents of the work itself. *Experimental performance practices* names one such fabrication: a performative assemblage that does not reproduce a given musical work but activates the metastable charge of a tradition and triggers further processes of permanent becoming. *Particalisation* names another—the decomposition of musical entities into their pre-individual constituents, a movement neither analytic nor synthetic but transductive. *Hypermusic* names a third: an operative space in which performance, technology, archive, and theoretical reflection enter into a single experimental system. Comparable fabrications occur across the wider field—a choreographer who invents an operational vocabulary that had no prior

existence, an architect who develops a working concept that the project itself first makes thinkable, a sound artist or filmmaker who forges the operative terms by which their material can be understood. Each of these concepts emerges from a practice and remains internal to it, even as it acquires a wider philosophical reach. Artistic intelligence is, in this register, conceptual labour at the site of making—and it is one of the principal reasons why artistic research has consequences beyond the precincts of art itself.

6. Artistic intelligence is distributed

The Romantic model placed intelligence inside the artist, as a property of an interior subject who then expressed it in material form. The entire trajectory of posthumanist thought—from Donna Haraway through N. Katherine Hayles, Rosi Braidotti, Cary Wolfe, and Francesca Ferrando—has dismantled that model, showing that the subject is constituted in and through its technical, material, and social entanglements rather than prior to them (this insight traces back to André Leroi-Gourhan, and forward to Bernard Stiegler). Artistic intelligence is not something the artist possesses; it is something an arrangement enacts. The arrangement includes the body of the practitioner, with all its sensorimotor sedimentation; the instrument or the tool, with its history; the work-in-progress with its materials, sketches, and archives; the studio, the rehearsal room, the exhibition space, the site; the technology, whether ancient or computational; the audience, the collaborator, the community of readers or listeners; the tradition against and through which the work operates. None of these elements alone is intelligent per se, and none of them functions as mere instrument or support for an intelligence located elsewhere. Intelligence is an emergent capacity of the assemblage—what circulates among its parts when they enter into dynamic interactions. The artist is one node within this circulation, with a singular position and responsibility, but not its origin.

7. Artistic intelligence sustains productive unknowing

Artistic intelligence operates at the interface between what can be formalised and what cannot—between built generative systems and the irreducible singularity of the aesthetic event that emerges from them. At this interface, decisions arise for which no protocol exists, for which no method can be prescribed in advance, because the situation in which they occur has never existed before. Such decisions are not matters of taste, in the humanist sense, nor of statistical probability, in the computational sense. They are operations of a situated, material, embodied intelligence that works from inside the practice itself and produces new individuations from within it. What sustains this kind of operation is not certainty but its opposite—a productive unknowing, an active inhabitation of the not-yet-determined. To work artistically is to cultivate this condition, to keep open the conviction that *it could be otherwise*, and to refuse the closure that would convert practice into the mere application of solved problems.

8. Artistic intelligence is not exclusive to the arts

What the preceding theses describe is not the cultural location of art but the structure of a kind of creative act—an act that proceeds through encounter rather than recognition, that captures forces, that counter-effectuates, that fabricates the concepts internal to its own operation, and that sustains productive unknowing as its medium. Wherever this structure unfolds, artistic intelligence is at work, regardless of whether the activity is institutionally located within the arts. As already signalled, there are manifestations of artistic intelligence in the sciences, mathematics, philosophy, sports and athletics, craft, and embodied expertise. The thesis is therefore not that the arts are everywhere, but that artistic intelligence names an operative configuration that may emerge in any field in which thought consents to sustain the violence of an encounter and to produce what was not given in advance. From here a final reframing becomes possible.

IV. CODA. BEYOND RESEARCH, THERE IS THOUGHT

The word *research* has done foundational work for the establishment and institutionalisation of artistic research. It has also begun to operate as a constraint. In a register that recalls Michel Foucault's diagnosis of the blackmail of the Enlightenment—the false alternative by which one is asked to accept rationality wholesale or to escape it altogether—artistic research today risks being held within a comparable blackmail of epistemology and method: either it conforms to inherited protocols of validation, and consents to remain a junior partner among disciplines, or it forfeits its claim to be heard at all. The refusal of this alternative does not mean abandoning rigour; it means relocating the question. Beyond research, there is thought. Beyond artistic research, there is artistic thought—and it is artistic thought, more fundamentally than artistic research, that artistic intelligence enacts: artistic intelligence names the capacity; artistic thought names its exercise. As the painter and philosopher Kamini Vellodi argues, it is through the notion of *research* that art secures its proximity to other disciplines, its intellectual value, and its standing within the university; yet that same notion risks binding artistic practice, as thought, to a single and peculiarly strong image of thought. Artistic intelligence is the disruption of every such image: it never stops proposing others, and lets none become final. To speak of thought rather than of research reduces the pressure of epistemological and methodological demands without dissolving them; it returns the activity to its proper element. This is not a closure but an opening—an invitation to build, in the coming years, the methods, institutions, and pedagogies adequate to artistic intelligence as it has been sketched here. At thirty, Orpheus Instituut is well placed to take up such an invitation: what we have practised for three decades under the name of research has always already been, in its most generative moments, artistic thought. Let us continue to think, to experiment, to construct—and to do so in a register at the height of what artistic intelligence can be.

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Orpheus Manifestos editor
Bruno Forment

Lay-out and cover design
Theo van Beurden Studio

Published in 2026 by Orpheus Instituut with support from the Flemish Government and in collaboration with Leuven University Press

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ISBN 978 94 6165 413 7
eISBN 978 94 6166 833 2 (ePDF)
eISBN 978 94 6166 841 7 (ePUB)
https://doi.org/10.11116/9789461668417
D/2026/1869/42
NUR: 664

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With support from the Flemish Government

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Artistic research no longer needs to prove that it produces knowledge. What matters now is artistic intelligence: the embodied, creative, vitalist, generative thought and action through which the genuinely new comes into the world—in the arts, and beyond them.

Paulo de Assis is a Senior Research Fellow at Orpheus Instituut, Ghent, and Principal Investigator of the ERC Advanced Grant "Posthuman Music: Creative Practices After AI and Blockchain."

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