

# MA Track Artistic Research (AR)

Artists of the 21st century create a rapidly changing art world. They work in zones of exchange between different artistic disciplines that traditionally seemed separate domains. Perhaps as a result of this, more and more artists define their work as a form of research, one aspect of this being the ability to connect different conceptual worlds. They present their art to networked publics, using new media. To be successful in this innovative atmosphere, artists will have to find new ways of situating their work in historical and social contexts. They have to relate their disciplinary training to new techniques and new concepts. And they will have to bridge the realms of art practice and art research. Starting in September 2010, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences offers a new master track: Artistic Research.

Students of the master track Artistic Research will become better artists. Why? Because they have learned how to work on the artistic problems they encounter in their own art practice and the surrounding world. Because they have learned to use the reflexive tools that enable them to create new art products and document the making of this new art. And finally, because they have found new ways to make the results of their artistic research public.

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- AR offers students offers art students the possibility to develop their artistic skills in confrontation with non-artistic knowledge and insights.
  - AR gives a unique opportunity to further develop your creative fascinations in the intellectually rich context of a liberal arts programme.
  - AR builds on the faculty's outstanding research programmes in art and literature, anthropology, science & technology, and political philosophy.
  - You will work with interesting artists and will discuss your work with academics from different scientific fields
  - AR is organized in cooperation with the Theatre Academy, the Academy of Music, and the Academy of Visual Arts in Maastricht.
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NEW

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# MA track Artistic Research

**Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**  
**Maastricht University**

## General Aims

The MA Track Artistic Research, embedded within the MA program Arts and Science, offers you the possibility to develop your own artistic practice by means of **intensive and focused artistic research**. You will learn to formulate interesting research problems, to design a challenging artistic research track, to determine the adequate parameters (collaboration, location, production, coaching, etc.) for your work, to develop an adequate research strategy and to communicate the insights gained by your research in the form of a fully-fledged art work, whatever its nature may be. And, finally, you will be offered the possibility, as a future artist, to obtain an academic degree.

Within this MA Track you will be confronted with the work and research of different artists and scientists. The **encounters** in workshops or with guest lectures will allow you to develop your personal research track. This new MA track offers you an **interdisciplinary laboratory** for artistic experimental research. You will be challenged both by scientists and artists to investigate research questions for which neither science nor art can provide adequate answers. Most importantly, you will challenge the conventions of your medium of expression, you will work at its fringes or you will willingly transgress them.

You will develop your work, as an artist, within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in collaboration with the arts faculties in Maastricht (Theatre Academy, Music Academy and Academy of Fine Arts) and with Maastricht-based cultural organizations such as the sound art centre **Intro In Situ**, the theatre production house **Huis van Bourgondië** and the centre for contemporary culture **Marres**, who will facilitate, coach and, if relevant, present the intermediate or final result(s) of your artistic research. Your work in the MA track will be embedded in two academic traditions that are at the heart of our Faculty's research: the practice of **anthropological** and **ethnographic research** and **science and technology studies**. The combination of these two paradigms and a sharp focus on the development of individual artistic research tracks constitutes the quintessence of this MA track.

## **Overview of the curriculum**

**Period 1:** September-October 2011

### **Make it new! Problems of cultural (re)production**

In the first module of the master's program you will be introduced to the worlds of art, science and its intersections. This joint module provides insight into the various ways in which cultural scientists and artists are active in society, against the background of major shifts in the 'knowledge society', the 'creative society', and the 'society of citizens'. This module combines various methods, such as tutorial group meetings, skills trainings and master meetings. You will learn how to design and contextualize research processes, both scientific and artistic. You will also be introduced to the basic concepts of philosophy of art, offering you the necessary conceptual tools and frameworks to interpret and analyze your own work and that of others, on an historical, social and philosophical level.

**Period 2:** November-December 2011

### **Travel companions: Doing artistic research**

In the second module you will learn how artists – both historical and contemporary – design and develop their own artistic research and you will be introduced to concrete methodologies for artistic research. The first part of the module focuses on specific oeuvres (e.g. Van Gogh, Pasolini, Cage): you will analyze how these artists developed their personal research track and their artistic universe. In the second part of the module you will be offered an introduction to concrete methodologies for artistic research. The academic traditions of anthropology and ethnography will serve as a starting point (think of, for example, the importance of oral history in community arts). How can I develop a personal fascination into an interesting problem? What methodology should I use? How can I document my own artistic research track? How can I make the results of my research public? Simultaneously you will be asked to take the first steps in the design of your own research project. During both the first and the second period you will also be offered the opportunity to partake in practice-based workshops with other artistic researchers.

**Period 3:** January 2012

### **Criticism and (self-)reflexion**

In the third module your research project will be the starting point for a discussion with a tutor and your fellow-students. During several discussion sessions students will present

their research projects to their colleagues. These presentations will act as a starting point for a critical discussion of the research design and its contextual embedment.

**Period 4 & 5:** February-June 2012

### **Artistic Research: practice and dissemination**

The final part of the MA track is devoted to the concrete realization of your own research project and of its artistic end result. You will receive coaching both by a faculty staff member and an artist-mentor of your choice. You will be offered the opportunity to work at one of the partner institutions.

### **Application procedure**

The MA Track is open to students who obtained a Bachelor degree at a university or an art school. Candidates will be selected on the basis of their previous artistic work, whether this work was developed within or outside an art school.

The application guidelines for the MA Track Artistic Research can be found on the website of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences under the heading of the MA Arts and Sciences: <http://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/web/Faculties/FASoS/TargetGroups/ProspectiveStudents/MastersProgrammes/ArtsAndSciences.htm>

In addition to the standard procedure, candidates are asked to submit an artistic portfolio that offers an insight in the candidates' artistic curriculum, a letter of motivation, and a short research proposal (max. 700 words) in which you describe your research question and research plan.

Further details concerning the application procedure or the program can be obtained from dr. Peter Peters: [p.peters@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:p.peters@maastrichtuniversity.nl)

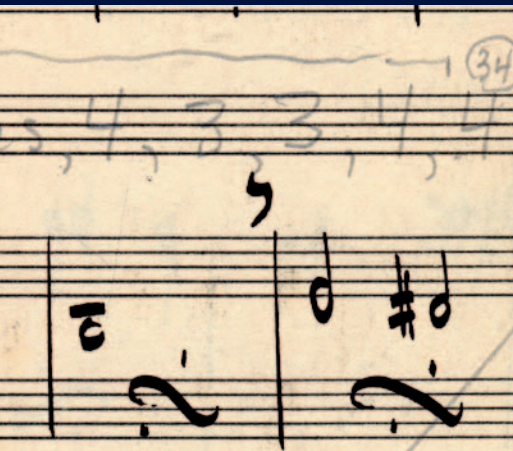
The new paradigm of artistic research has gained importance in the art world. Artists develop their own practice through different research steps, each step enriching their own track as well as the final artistic product. In 2009, for example, the Belgian actor and performance artist Benjamin Verdonck started his Antwerp-based research project Kalender 2009. Object of his research was, amongst many other aspects, the role of art in a complex urban reality. Verdonck set up different kinds of artistic interventions, from small-scale activist interventions to fully-fledged public performances. The insights generated from this research project constituted the basis of an exposition and a theatre production, serving both as the final step in an elaborate research project and as a starting point for new research for the artists himself, for other artists and for all kinds of urban actors. Or take the work of Paul D. Miller aka DJ Spooky, a Washington-based musician, turntable wizard and academic author. Throughout his musical career Spooky investigated the intersections between all kinds of avant-garde music, hip-hop and electronic music. His research resulted in an elaborate (and still expanding) collection of records and intellectual writings, music and academic reflection shaping one another. Through his artistic research Spooky developed into a key-figure in the ever-evolving electronic music scene. In both random examples, artistic research is never a goal in its own right, it is an instrument, a strategy that enriches, deepens and contextualizes the artistic work itself. It offers the artist a toolbox to develop his own personal artistic track in permanent confrontation with the surrounding local and global context and with the work of artistic peers.

## Admission

The Artistic Research track is open for graduates of art schools, or for comparable bachelor's programmes in the fields of humanities, social or cultural, if they have a sufficient level of artistic development, proved through a portfolio. Professionals whose position or professional artistic development requires postgraduate training are also encouraged to apply.

## Accreditation and degree

Students who complete the MA track Artistic Research will receive a Master's degree in Arts & Culture. The quality of this Master's programme has been assessed by the Accreditation Organisation of The Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO).



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