

José Quaresma

The Motivation that gave rise to RIACT Journal

The following lines are intended to introduce the RIACT project and share the reasons for its emergence. RIACT is a new Journal about Artistic Research (A.R.), Creation and Technology which covers a wide range of artistic expressions and is prepared to receive and disseminate articles and artistic manifestations related to the specificities of A.R.

RIACT is a platform, designed to receive two sorts of proposals: on the one hand, papers that are rooted in artistic practice, deriving creative notions from experimentation and producing reflection and public discussion about them. In this sense, RIACT does not receive texts which design is exclusively related to aesthetics, art philosophy, or art history, unless these extra-artistic approaches are actually embedded in a practical, expressive and experimental proposal.

On the other hand, RIACT is also prepared to receive and disseminate artistic manifestations engaging with the intertwining of research and creation. Contributions that project and emphasize a central issue of A.R., namely the transformation and the unfolding of a certain artistic proposal in two complementary activities: an artistic expression which is a sovereign and self-sufficient proposal (allowing us to say that an art piece 'speaks for itself'); and at the same time a research plan to be exposed and discussed with others through written and spoken languages. RIACT is an editorial and exposition space which oscillates between the art production and its possible explanation, appealing to the presentation of projects which are ambivalent and creative, while neither exclusively a creation nor exclusively discursive and documental.

RIACT also has the characteristic of emerging in the university environment, thus dealing with A.R. proposals that are potentially meant for academic assessment and possible discussion with the 'generalized other'. In addition, in RIACT we also consider A.R. as an activity that publicly exposes an intense process of practical research. This means that RIACT also accepts proposals which are not meant to be assessed by academic procedures, and that we have a deep respect for artistic experimentation that projects and emphasizes the idea of an endless search for parallel, dissonant and complementary expressions in a creative process.

So far I have been referring to some of the fundamental guidelines of the Journal, some of which were already supporting the ten books that I had the pleasure of coordinating between 2010 and 2020. It happens that this uninterrupted set of editions was characterized by the confluence of multiple contributions in practical and artistic fields, while simultaneously providing a space for proposals from art philosophy, aesthetics and art history.

With RIACT I want to establish an essential difference in relation to what has been previously done. Until this moment, under the general 'label' of Research in the Arts, the editions were a blend of Artistic Research proposals and texts from the disciplines listed above, amongst other theoretical fields. In RIACT those extra-artistic texts will not be mixed with A.R. proposals anymore, unless they appear as parallel to, or inserted into, the A.R. projects, under the creative conditions of A.R.; whether in the field of the visual arts, the performing arts or the interlacing of both.

There are further reasons that help to explain why this change occurred, that is, why I am leaving the book editions and changing to the digital Journal RIACT, supported by an interactive website. Four months ago, in a dialogue with one of the experts invited to RIACT's Scientific Committee, the following question arose:

Why did I intend to develop a new Journal in the A.R. field, if there were already several excellent publications such as JAR, MaHKUscript, VIS, RUUKKU, among others? Wouldn't it be redundant to make this effort and involve so many people in an activity that risks being superfluous?

The answer was not easy to find. Not only because the question was asked with courage and conviction, but also because I felt that it was necessary to look once again at the underlying motives for the emergence of this new Journal. Therefore, I take the opportunity generated by that crucial question to better characterize RIACT. One of the main reasons why this Journal emerges is intrinsic to the very academic and artistic environment from which RIACT emerges.

Currently, although in the Faculty where I work (FBAUL, Lisboa) one can verify a significant increase of interest related to A.R., it is no less true that many mistakes still remain to be discussed and overcome, both with professors who have a more theoretical background, and with those who have a more practical and artistic profile. Therefore, the academic environment where RIACT emerged still requires a deep debate about the identity and the difference between artistic creation and artistic research and this reason alone would justify a new editorial project.

But there are other reasons why I felt the need to develop this Journal:

- 1) Provide free, fast access to A.R. editions.
- 2) Encourage proximity and sharing of artistic, creative and technological interests with some experts of the other journals and platforms mentioned above, providing more network interaction and mutual understanding of editorial differences.
- 3) Promote new ways of exploring A.R. in the midst of academic and university life as a whole.

Finally, as stated in the first RIACT editorial, the main purpose of both Journal and website:

- 4) Launch an unremitting effort to reconcile the exploration of intervals between artistic creation and artistic investigation, searching for the creative and reciprocal combination of these activities, oscillating between two or more sets of conditions discovered between both fields. An oscillation and scrutiny “between what is most intersubjective in approaching artistic situations and pieces of art, through a communicational delivery and an argumentative work (written, spoken, or both), requiring a certain technical formalization, either in the consistency of notions or in the density of discourse. But on the other hand, perhaps being ‘possessed’, experiencing a certain state of mania, swayed by an incessant and pendular rhythm that makes us return to the pre-predictiveness of our sensibility, always there to renew the silence and disturb us with states of discursive impotence, thus reshuffling everything we seek to utter about our access into artistic phenomena.”

Biography

José Quaresma is a Portuguese Visual Artist and Art & Aesthetics Researcher.

He is Assistant Professor at FBAUL (Lisboa), where he currently teaches Painting, Models, Printmaking and Pictorial Thinking. Alongside taking part in individual and group exhibitions, he has curated numerous artistic projects and edited or co-edited several books. His curatorial and editorial work focuses on the fields of Painting, Installation Art, Art in the Digital Sphere, Research in the Arts, Artistic Research, Contemporary Printmaking and Public Art. He is the author of *Dwelling and Installing in the World. The Contemporary Painting in the Thaeus Boat*, Lisbon, 2016 and editor-in-chief of RIACT, a digital publication about Artistic Research.

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