

# no\_faq. Artistic Research and the Potentials of Displaying as a Collective Research Tool

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## 1 ABSTRACT

no\_faq sees itself as a research collective linking scientific and artistic research methods. In particular, no\_faq is interested in a performative practice oriented towards artistic research. It is intended herewith, to create a space for both independent and collective research practice. Allowing therewith the reflections and exploration of these processes. The relationships in this case between students and teachers are not to be subdivided hierarchically but to undergo a process of interacting reflection.

The research seminar no\_faq explores the strategies and methods that artistic research holds for architecture education. The artistic procedures should not appear as purely aesthetic-design features, but become an essential component of a critical research attitude within the wider educational aspects of the architect. The resulting materials (microstudies) describing the research process will be made accessible to the public in form of a discursive exhibition display.

Due to the complex but also open and process orientated nature of the seminar, I arrived out two central questions for my own research to take a critical and reflective perspective by looking at the processes of the seminar:

The first question addresses the contextual level: How can spacial structures of an institution be explored on the basis of artistic-performative practices? Specifically, to analyse the institutional space of the Badischer Kunstverein Karlsruhe.

The second question focusses on the didactical level: Which methods can we discover in order to develop a critically orientated collaborative attitude within the research process? Collective actions in my eyes are more process oriented, open-ended, have nothing to do with effectiveness and are not purely a group activity.

Keywords: spatial production, curating, artistic research, collective research, visual arts

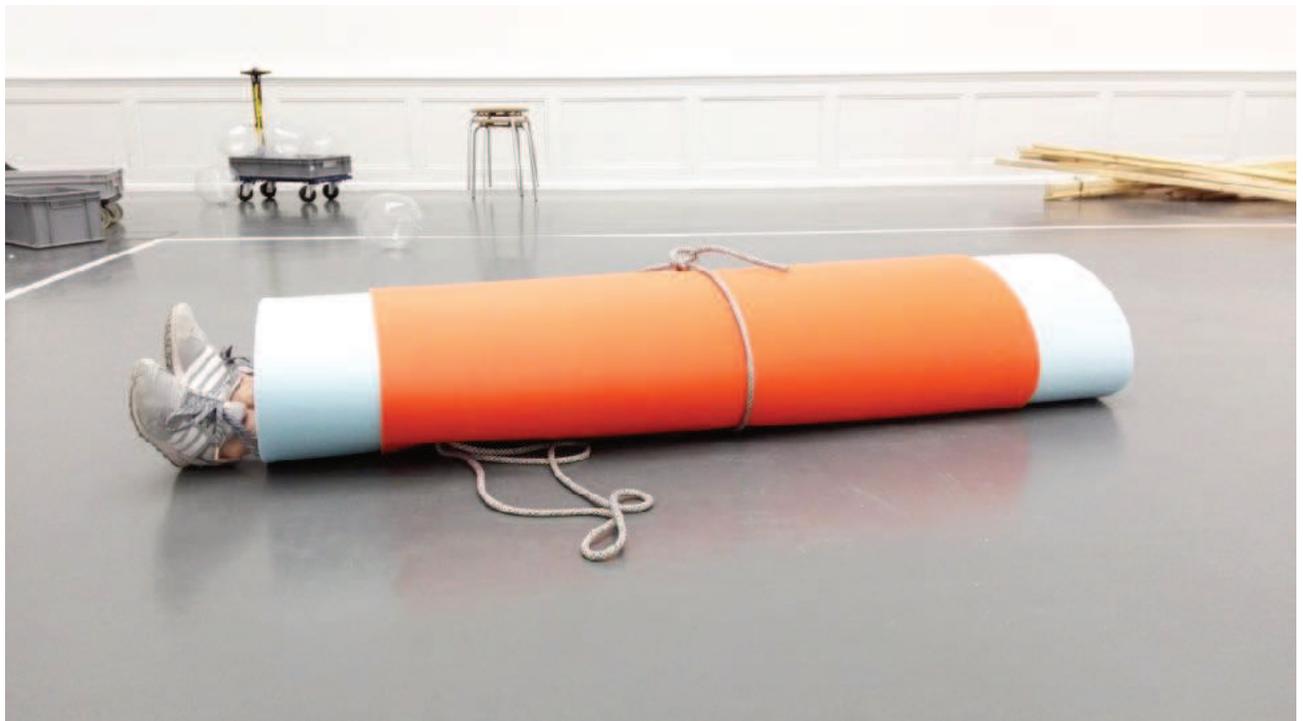


Fig. 1: Performance by Fanny Kranz at „Pausenraum“, a project by fortda ([www.fort-da.eu](http://www.fort-da.eu)) at Badischer Kunstverein Karlsruhe (Germany), 2018. Photo: fortda

## 2 NO\_FAQ: ARTISTIC RESEARCH AND DISPLAYING AS A COLLECTIVE RESEARCH TOOL

### 2.1 The structure of the research-seminar no\_faq. artistic research as an input for architecture

After having taught and worked in various institutions and companies for several years in the field of „critical art education“ (Kritische Kunstvermittlung<sup>1</sup>), graphic design and curatorial practice, I have been working as a research associate and lecturer at the department of visual arts at the architecture faculty of KIT in Karlsruhe for two years now.

In this capacity I have recently developed a seminar concept for master students called no\_faq. artistic research as an input for architecture, which is also affiliated to the research platform arch.lab<sup>2</sup> of the faculty since April 2018. The title of the seminar refers to the well known helping sections in the digital realm: faq - frequently asked questions. Following the title no\_faq the focus is now put upon the field of the usually not asked questions.

Looking at contemporary and also avant-garde art and architecture there could and can still be felt a strong desire to work together as a collective - so I suggested as a starting point that all the participants of the seminar should act, think and work as the no\_faq\_collective. Apart from these group dynamic collective processes, the aim of this seminar was to explore space from an artistic-performative perspective.

As a research working method I suggested the concept of microstudies (Fig. 2) to the students. The aim of the microstudies was to initiate small actions, work more processually and reflect single small steps. The goal was to emphasise the curatorial practice (with the accent on knowledge transfer) as an essential artistic element within the whole process.

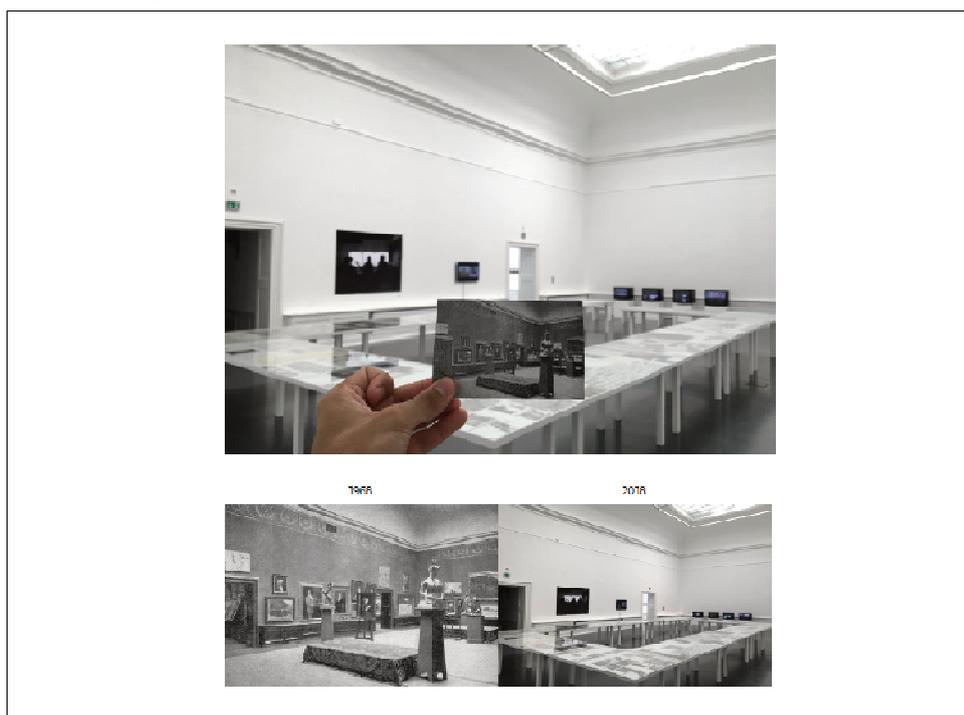


Fig. 2: Microstudy by the master student Nils Machowski, photo-research project at Badischer Kunstverein Karlsruhe, 2018. Photo: Nils Machowski

### 2.2 Inventing collective research tools

Starting the Seminar with an input of reading and analysing texts, I suggested a collective reading method (see Fig. 3), meaning all the seminar members should develop and create a collage of important quotes, notes

<sup>1</sup> cf. Carmen Mörsch (Ed.): Kunstvermittlung 2. Zwischen kritischer Praxis und Dienstleistungen auf der documenta 12. Berlin, Zürich 2009; Schnittpunkt (Jaschke, Beatrice/Sternfeld, Nora) (Ed.): Educational turn: Handlungsräume der Kunst- und Kulturvermittlung, Wien 2013; Sternfeld, Nora: Verlernen vermitteln, Kunstpädagogische Positionen Bd. 30, 2014 (Ed. Sabisch, Andrea/Meyer, Tors-ten/Sturm, Eva).

<sup>2</sup> The project is part of the 2nd funding period Teaching Research at KIT under the funding code 01PL12004 of the BMBF.



figuring out what was essential and what was not, finding a guideline for the presentation for the purpose of elaborating the communication structure. Additionally we faced the necessity of finding an exhibition space outside of the campus area, eventually finding one in the city centre - in a currently disused commercial premises. Collective curating also meant transforming the different bits and pieces of the research process into a new narrative to be communicated to a new audience. So the openness and transformative aspects of displaying the research material was a very important element for the whole working process and also important in the last instance as a generator of artistic content.

“The new always happens against the overwhelming odds of statistical laws and their probability, which for all practical, everyday purposes amounts to certainty; the new therefor always appears in the guise of a miracle.“ (Hannah Arendt, 1958)



Fig. 5: Collective Curating Method: Exhibition views DON'T CALL IT RESEARCH, 2018. Photos: Christoph Engel

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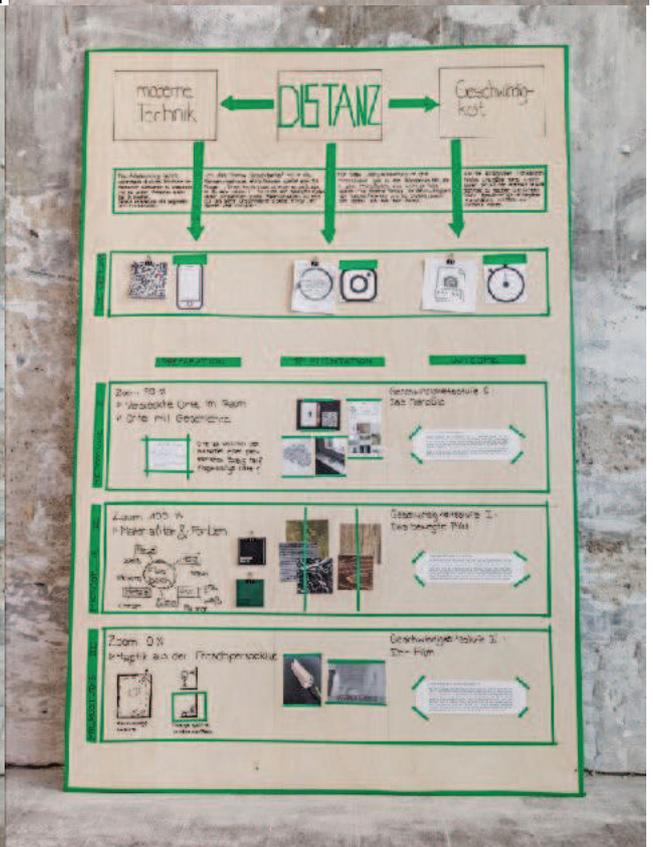
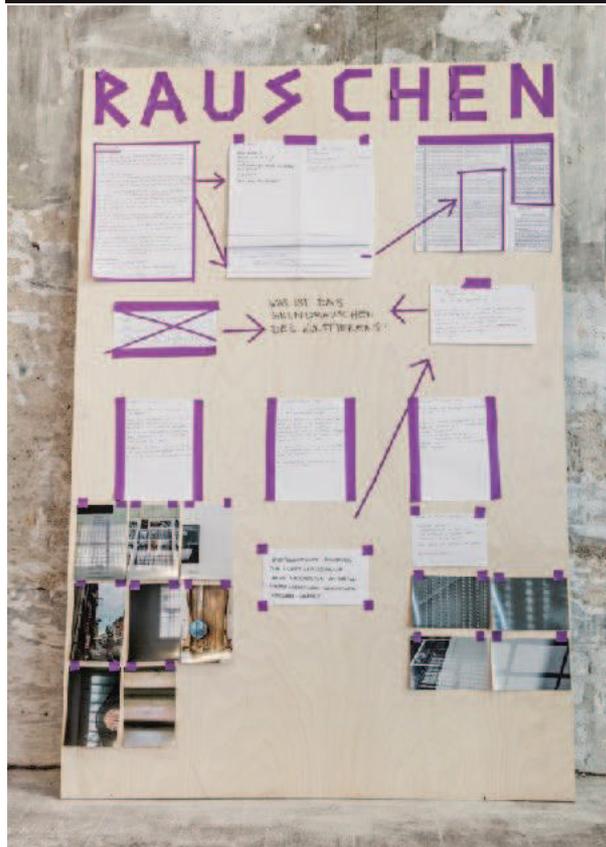
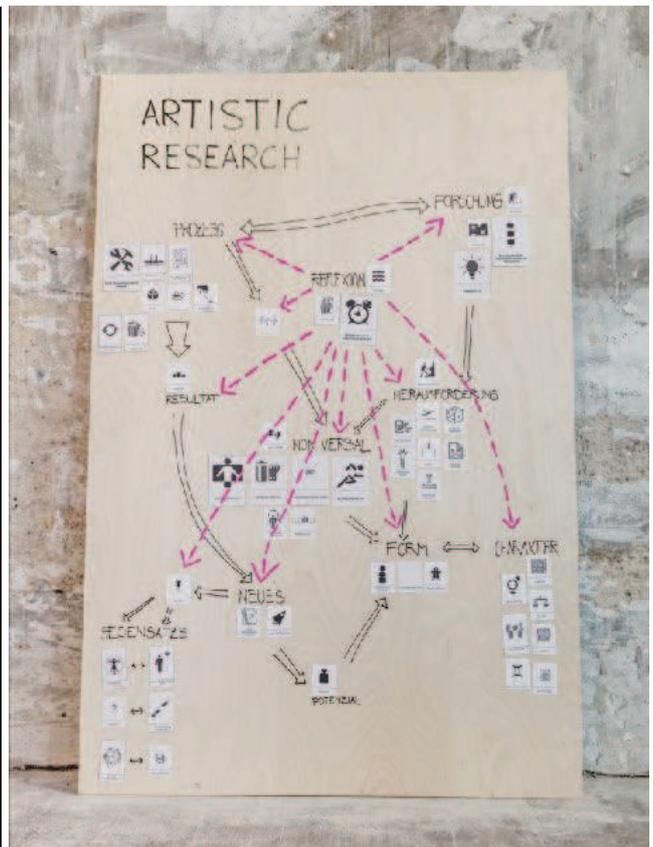


Fig. 6: Collective Curating: Flyer of the exhibition, Research-Boards from the seminar and by the Master Students Vanessa Neumeier and Lisa-Marie Possberg, 2018. Photos: Christoph Engel

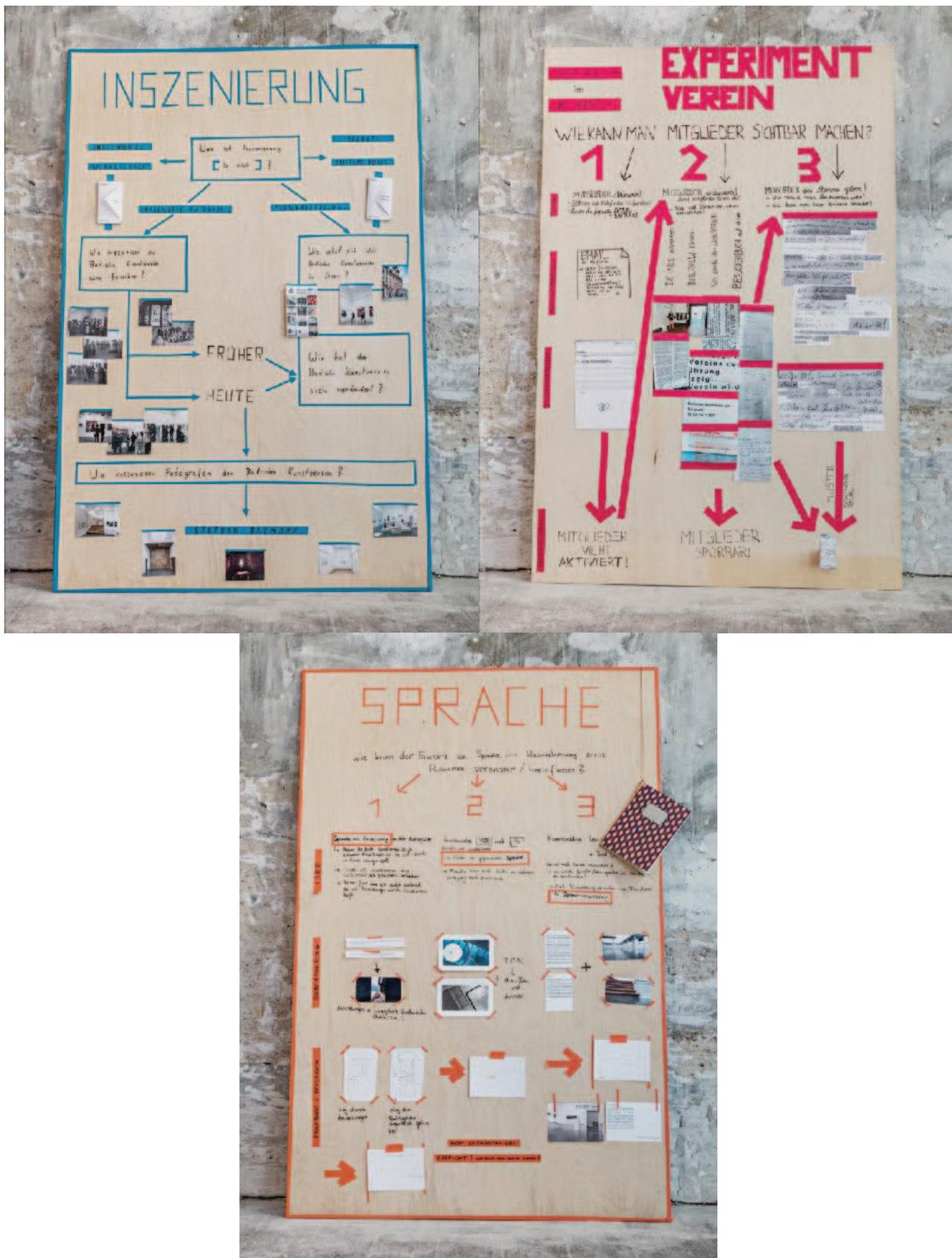


Fig. 7: Collective Curating: Research-Boards by the Master Students Nils Machowski, Laura Amon, Julia Mues, 2018. Photos: Christoph Engel