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MART AND THE LAB OF INVESTIGATION: ARTISTIC RESEARCH
AND THE HIDDEN SOCIAL LIFE OF ART RESIDENCIES

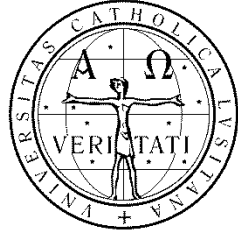
Report submitted to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to
obtain a Master's Degree in Culture Studies – Management
of the Arts and Culture

By

Federico Castoldi

Faculty of Human Sciences

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Under the supervision of Professor Luísa Santos and Professor Ana
Margarida Abrantes

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Abstract

The current internship report refers to an internship experience at the MArt, a space for learning and artistic experimentation, in Lisbon, between September 2020 and February 2021. During this six-month period, the Laboratory of Investigation, a program developed for the MArt residency program in Lisbon, was developed. The Laboratory of Investigation (LoI) is a place to share, problematize and implement artistic investigation within the context of an art residency. The program will be presented and analyzed in this report in its projecting, unfolding and implementation firstly from a more practical level, namely by exploring the institutional conditions that favored its creation and its implementation; secondly, at a conceptual level, drawing from the material collected from the LoI's two main activities, such as the research meeting and a collective installation which are presented and grouped by macro themes to show the general trends of interest. Thirdly, the results are analyzed through the lens of four main concepts, which are both the pillars of the laboratory as well as the conceptual tools that serve the analysis: affectivity, conviviality, materiality, and reflectivity. The LoI advocates for the importance of building a convivial environment in an art residency and it shows that one way to successfully do so is to reflect, share and document one's research practice. By doing so, the LoI attempts to tackle two different yet complementary dimensions of an art residency that artist can experience namely its hidden social life and its more artistic and research-oriented aspects. Ultimately, the LoI shows that research can be a useful tool to move beyond disciplinary boundaries and it can be a vehicle for building more convivial environments.

Keywords: art residencies; affectivity; conviviality; materiality; reflectivity; artistic investigation; research.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank both of my supervisors, Prof. Luísa Santos and Ana Margarida Abrantes for their time, work and support.

I would like to thank the artists that took part in the program so enthusiastically.

I would like to thank MArt for allowing me to develop my own project and believing in my ideas.

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List of acronyms

AiR: Artist in Residency (programs)

Lol: Lab of Investigation.

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Introduction

Art residencies are places where artists find themselves developing and advancing on their own artistic practice, either through the production of works or via research for a potential work. Art residencies are indeed creative spaces. Originally, residencies are places such as communities of studios, apartments where artists can find a safe environment to create, perhaps for a specific project in a limited period of time (Elfving & Kokko in Elfving et. Al 2019). Nowadays, residencies vary greatly in length, format and typology but one could safely say that they usually culminate in an exhibition/open studio depending on the nature of the project as well as on funding. Residencies often try to simulate the environment of an artist's studio; however the experiences are radically different because of residencies being time and space dependent: from the own-time and own-space of the individual studio to the social-time and social-space of the residency (Elfving & Kokko in Elfving et. Al 2019). Specifically, the idea of social-time and social-space is at the foundation of the upcoming internship report to the extent that the program developed for my internship explores the social dimension of AiR (artist in residency). Additionally, it is also of my interest to explore the potential of looking at AiRS as places where artists have the tools (and can acquire new ones) for problematizing and discussing their own creative processes.

At the foundations of more contemporary discourses on creativity there is an emphasis on processes, based on the assumption that creativity is “an active, experimenting flow within a network or assemblage of bodies, things, ideas and institutions which affect each other” (Fox 2013, 298). Such a take on creativity highlights the importance of becoming more sensitive towards artists' process and their ways of knowing. The recent spread of art residencies has happened in a specific moment in history where the dematerialization of art has led artists towards developing more complex artistic practices of which research is often a fundamental component. As a consequence, regardless of the context, art teaching has also shifted towards the creation of a body of work built on a well-developed process and investigative practice. This is true in the case of different art institutions; it can be noticed in the context of art residencies as well as in more formal academic fine arts training. As highlighted by Maria Hirvi-Ijäs and Irmeli Kokko, residencies are places where “informal gatherings and peer to peer meetings with other artists” (Hirvi-Ijas & Kokko in Elfving et al. 2019, 91) take place as a fundamental component for self-assessment and artistic development. Considering the increasing importance of art processes and their pivotal role in assessing the maturity of an

artist's practice, it seemed interesting to explore the kind of activities that could help develop artists' awareness towards their processes and beyond.

The current research attempts to answer (and intends to ask) several questions simultaneously. However, if one were to find the read thread running through the different questions guiding the lab of investigation, and the writing of this piece, it would be to investigate the kind of activities that AiRs can offer to artists in order to foster their awareness towards their creative processes; and the way in which these activities can prompt self-reflection and peer-to-peer observation. My work at MArt explores the actual role that AiRs can have in programming such activities and the extent to which they will be able to accommodate artists' needs while also being spontaneous within the frame they are working with. I intend to deal with these problems by studying MArt as an institution, while focusing on their residency program. Specifically, I want to analyze the results obtained from working with their residents for six months on a program aimed at enhancing artistic creation in the context of MArt. Therefore, the research question guiding this piece of writing is: how did the laboratory of investigation affect MArt' residents experience by focusing on documenting and exploring their artistic investigation? The Lab of Investigation, the main object of study of this internship report, was initially created based on an interest in artistic investigation and MArt request to dynamize their residency program. The LoI (Laboratory of investigation) wants to explore ways in which the context of an AiR can potentially be a place where artists sharpen their sensitivities towards their own investigative practices; and, in doing so, the extent to which such an effort can both help them advance in their own artistic practice and improve the social life of the residency.

The LoI rests on the assumption that by collectively problematizing one's process, presenting it to the group in its materiality, and allowing oneself to affect and be affected, artists can further develop their practice. Having followed closely the making and development of the LoI led me to formulate different hypotheses that in one way or another ended up informing the program. Firstly, it is important to create convivial and informal spaces for sharing and problematizing one's process in the context of an art residency; these convivial environments can be created on a practice of sharing and caring. It results that there should be activities that aim at making artists reflect upon their processes and direct the attention 'within' by building a communicable narrative out of his/her/theirs practices. Secondly, there should be places of ambiguity where the more production-oriented mindset is put aside in favor of experimenting with different mediums and techniques. Thirdly, creators working with different media, if given the space, can more easily affect and be affected by

other participants' processes. Lastly, artistic investigation (and research more in general) has a materiality to it, and it can be useful for artists in residency, to document and play around with the more material side of their research.

The LoI was developed following an intuition, however it was also inspired by the different activities that I had taken part in in other residencies around Europe. Every activity was conceived based on the four pillars that constitute the project' core, namely conviviality, reflectivity, affectivity and materiality. However, even prior to that, the focus was on investigation as a fundamental part of creative endeavor as well as on the creation of different spaces of ambiguity. In order to understand the feasibility of my ideas and to create something that was enriching for both the artists and I, I designed two main activities: the research meeting and the collective installation. Artists taking part in the program gave presentations based on a small set of questions aimed at highlighting and problematizing their investigative processes; additionally, as part of the program, artists worked on a collective installation. The LoI was an experiment whose outcome could not be foreseen and that shaped me along the way as much as it shaped artists and our surrounding material reality. As every experiment, it started with hypothesis, mere assumptions; the rest took form, and it was adjusted along the way.

This report has the following structure. In chapter one I introduce the world of AiRs and briefly analyze their development in the Western hemisphere during the last two centuries. In this part I focus on the kind of societal developments that brought AiRs to change in the way they have, as well as try to draft different types of residencies. I do this by discussing chronotopes in the context of AiRs i.e., the different ways in which time and space are allocated within that context. In the second part of chapter one I define the concepts that have guided the making of the program as well as the discussion of the results. These concepts are, as it has already been mentioned, conviviality, reflectivity, affectivity and materiality. Not just do I try to contextualize these highly charged concepts, but I also attempt to already inform the reader of the reasons why such concepts are pivotal for this research. Conviviality and affectivity are interdependent concepts in the context of this research, and it is by juxtaposing them that I intend to tackle issues related to the social life of residencies. Similarly, I make use of the concepts to look at ways in which we can think of residencies as affective environments and what that implies on the levels of activities. Furthermore, I discuss the reflective and material aspects related to artistic investigation advocating for the importance of reflecting on one's process to produce a communicable narrative out of it. Additionally, by borrowing from studies on practice-led research I argue documenting one's

process can enhance artistic creation while also suggesting that documentation can be carried out in different ways.

In chapter two I introduce MArt, my case study, by combining information retrieved from MArt's website with an interview conducted with the institutions' directors, who also supervised my internship. I try to individuate MArt's chronotope(s) to frame its mission and activities. Additionally, I focus on the residency program, its structure, admission requirements and pedagogical guidelines and use this information to situate my analysis. I proceed by discussing work at MArt which was conceived in response to a request from MArt's directors to dynamize their residency program. In this section I explain the way I worked around the institution's needs for dynamization while keeping my research focused on artistic investigation and creativity. Furthermore, I address the institutional collaboration behind the two internships I conducted for MArt and explain the way in which Universidade Católica Portuguesa facilitated the process.

In chapter three, I begin by discussing the LoI, its creation, structure, and impediments. In the first part of the chapter, I assemble a path, the one that led me to creating the LoI; to do so, I show the different steppingstones to its creation. For example, I bring to the fore *From theory to practice: Meta-Creativity* a residency program that I tried to set up with no success. Furthermore, I discuss *Fo(u)r Phenomena*, a project that I developed in collaboration with a Lisbon-based curator.

In chapter four, after having tried to show the way in which these activities make sense as a whole, I then look into the actual structure of the LoI; I do this while trying to draw conceptual and practical connections between its activities and the ones mentioned above. The two main activities of the LoI, the research meetings and the collective installations, are explained in their more practical side. To conclude this chapter, I discuss the pandemic-related issue that had me change some of the activities as well as the end of my collaboration with Mart.

In chapter five, I present the results of the LoI. This is done by explaining the research meetings and the collective installation through written material and visual material collected throughout the unfolding of the project. The research meetings section is articulated around the questions which artists were brought to reflect on, in this way answers could be clustered in macro themes. Additionally, since I deem it important to shed light on the more discussion-oriented side of the research meetings, the second part of chapter five focuses on explaining some of the discussion dynamics that followed the more structured parts of the meetings.

The last chapter works on three different levels. Firstly, it attempts to shed light on the hypothesis on which the LoI was created and if they turned out differently; simultaneously, it attempts to show the interdependence between theory and practice i.e., the way in which theoretical concepts affected my work for MArt and vice versa. Secondly, the chapter brings to the fore artists' experiences, and it attempts to frame their experience within the four pillars. Lastly, the chapter attempts to show the importance of considering the interconnectedness of the four-pillars in the context of the LoI.

1. Art residencies: Affectivity, conviviality, materiality, and reflectivity.

The AiR is an architecture or assemblage of opportunities related to artistic practice with generally open-ended outcomes. Artist residencies create affordances for experiment, learning and creation on the part of individual artists, social exchange and engagement, and/or cooperation among and between professions and disciplines”
(Lithgow & Wall 2017, 2)

Art residencies have gained increasing importance within the landscape of contemporary art; in fact, they have become crucial intersections for the development and internationalization of artists’ careers. AiRs provide different kinds of opportunities to artists taking part in the program. The following chapter attempts to provide the reader with a profile of AiRs in the contemporary artworld while also providing some historical context. Additionally, this chapter introduces the four pillars that have shaped and informed the creation and implementation of the Lab of Investigation. The four pillars are affectivity, conviviality, materiality and reflectivity; these four concepts are the guiding tools of the work developed for MArt residency program. Additionally, as it will be argued, they are the conceptual and practical foundations of the LoI as well as the theoretical lens through which the LoI will be looked at.

1.1. A Western brief history of art residencies in the 19th and 20th centuries

As it will be shown, art residencies have come a long way, but how did they actually begin? Before expanding on the shape of contemporary residencies, it is imperative to try to understand the development of art in residency programs. As Elfving and Kokko argue in their contribution to the volume *Contemporary Artist Residencies Reclaiming Time and Space*, not just have these programs affirmed their importance as turning points for artists’ careers, but residencies have become “infrastructures for critical thinking and artistic experimentation, cross cultural collaboration, interdisciplinary knowledge production, and site-specific research” (Elfving & Kokko in Elfving et al. 2018, 10). Although it is hard to point at the origins of residencies, the literature suggests that the first examples of art residencies, as we know them today, are artists’ colonies in the 1860s (Lubbren 2001; Elfving & Kokko 2018; Panevska in Elfving et al. 2018; Guevara in Elfving et al. 2018). Artist colonies and communities began at the end of the 19th century in Northern America, and they began as an attempt to turn artists' attention towards collaborative processes. Already at that

time there was a strong component of travel within the idea of artists colonies which were mainly located in rural areas. In fact, at that time artists colonies were places where artists could escape from the more urban areas and find each other to collaboratively work on projects. As we shall briefly see, these characteristics already embody an archetype of the more contemporary art in residencies programs. In the 20th century art residencies became gradually more embedded with the contemporary art landscape. Therefore, residencies changed accordingly to the developments that the art sector underwent. Even more so, residencies became places where the changes in art practice and politics were displayed vividly. An exemplification of this are avant-garde art movements in Europe, which created communities of artists in the center of major European capitals. Their programs, which from the rural areas were moving to more urbanized city centers “aimed to have an impact on the content of art, the relationship between art and society (life), art education, and the art institutions’ operational methods” (Elfving & Kokko in Elfving et al. 2018, 17). The 20th century type of residency was ideologically grounded on a return to the cities as a way of fostering the creation of new forms of artistic experimentation; this kind of residencies exemplifies a type of AiR in the artworld of today. It can be said that until the 1980s the idea of art production in art residences was built on the assumption that artworks were nomadic objects; in fact, the piece could be produced in a studio and then moved elsewhere to be exhibited or sold.

1.1.1. A closer look into art residencies from the 1990s to the 2020s

Starting from the 1990s up to nowadays, residencies have been growing rhizomatically: freed from constraints they flourished without boundaries and/or direction. Uncontrolled and unplanned, residencies “pushed the boundaries of the Western map of art allowing for the meeting of different cultures” (Elfving & Kokko in Elfving et al. 2018, 17). In the 1990s residencies, mainly in Northern Europe, resembled the more traditional guest studio centers where artists had their private workspace whereas the host made sure to provide the space and time for the residents to create. The growing interest for AiRs in the contemporary art world can be noticed, for instance, in the 1992’s first full guide to artistic residency, the *Guide of Host Facilities for Artists on Short-term Stay in the World*, published by the Association Francaise d’Action Artistique. This event marks a fundamental moment in art residency history, in an attempt to legitimize their role in the contemporary art landscape. Already thirty years ago the guide counted over 2000 residency programs spread in 29 countries. The guide, as made clear by Elfving & Kokko (2018), outlined a profile of an art

residency that constituted around the ideas of research spaces, artistic experimentation, and networking. Thus, the art spaces included in the guide were places that satisfied one or more of these criteria. Additionally, the guide also stressed aspects concerning accessibility and confrontation to the extent that residencies must promote heterogeneity over homogeneity (Quireyns in Elfving et al. 2018, 35). AiRs have ever since been expanding and emerging as a fundamental point of intersection between ideas, cultural capital, and expertise in the artworld (Lithgow & Wall 2017, 24).

Nowadays, residencies have prospered and evolved even more in terms of space, time and shape. Art professionals use residencies for a variety of different reasons depending on the program itself as it shall be shown shortly. Contemporary residences form “a global sediment of flexible, semi-public, semi-private organizations and studios (Elfving & Kokko in Elfving et al. 2018, 8). Since residencies have been growing consistently it seems imperative to ask oneself which are the conditions that provide such fertile soil for them to prosper. Following a growing interest for the relation between the site and the work of art in the 1970s, art institutions have been interested in exploring different forms of site-bound art. According to Claire Doherty (2004) this is one of the main reasons for the new wave of residencies; it is tied to the idea that the art object has its own situatedness, that it belongs to the place where it is created. According to such a view, the artists create on, in and for the site, and the artwork’s meaning is tied to the space of its creation. Following this shift from nomadic to situated, residencies have provided the framework for the creation and exhibition of situated artworks. Miwon Kwon (2004) goes even further claiming it was the minimalist current and its emphasis of connecting the artwork to the site and the spectator that fostered the creation for new spaces where site-bound art could be explored. An example of the way in which these three elements come together in the context of a residency is the open studios. In these events, artworks are exhibited in the residents’ studios, the site of their creation and the spectator is brought directly in the intimacy of the artists’ process, thrown in the middle. It is interesting that residencies explore the role of the studio, as a place of research and gestation. Open studios even bring the public inside the studio, that although it has been cleaned up, often rearranged for the exhibition, still holds the aura of the creation, the gestation, the struggle. Not just the artwork but the underlying not visible research becomes site specific.

Not only did residencies seem to grow in accordance with an increasing exploration of site-bound art, but they also proliferated in a context of extreme mobility and globalized artworld. Charlotte Bydler (2004) argues that residencies give the chance of being successful for artists goes hand in hand with their willingness to travel to different places. Responding to

this need, residencies formed that ultra-national network which provides that ready infrastructure for the new category of travelling artists (Bydler 2004, 50). Additionally, Bydler argues that the increasing number of contemporary art residencies is surely linked to the idea that art can be put in the service of urban politics. Functioning similarly to museums and art-biennials, residencies are at the very center of cities' creative hubs while remaining at the margins of the artworld (Bydler 2004). It has been a trend in the last ten years that AiRs have been increasingly shifting toward issues related to content. Hosts and guests have been trying to use AiRs as supportive institutions to conduct research on topics relevant to hosts, guests, and society at large. The underlying idea here is that residencies are turning into places that produce knowledge, a kind of knowledge that will interest society at large and not just the art world.

We have made clear that residencies vary greatly in their shape, time, and space, however researchers in the artworld have tried to find common denominators in order to study them. Pascal Gielen in his contribution to the volume *Contemporary Artist Residencies, Reclaiming Time and Space*, titled "Time and Space to Create and to Be Human: A Brief Chronotope of Residencies" (2018) tries to draft different chronotopes of art residencies. The concept of chronotope is borrowed from Michail Bakhtin's essay "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" (1937) and refers to the idea that in modern society, time and space are interdependent. Bakhtin argues that the whole of human activities, the way humans understand themselves and therefore their cultural production is organized based on this observational grid. For Bakhtin, who explored the relation of time (chrono) and space (topo) within different literature genres, careful attention should be paid to the complex combination of the two created meanings. Transposing Bakhtin's concept in the context of art residencies, Pascal Gielen argues that chronotopes are never pure in their sense, a single art in residencies program can have different chronotopes i.e., different ways of time and space division and organization; however, if we are interested in better understanding the dynamics of an art residency program, it is useful to have models as long as we are flexible in applying them in our empirical analysis. In the case of the following research, this idea of chronotope plays a fundamental role, considering that MArt does not necessarily fall in any of the chronotopes presented by Gielen but it rather falls into different ones simultaneously.

1.2. Chronotope: allocation of time and space

As we have already introduced in the previous paragraph different residencies provide time and space in very different ways, they provide a different chronotope in which cultural

production happens and where (a type) of knowledge is produced. Needless to say, the conditions and the framework offered from the program radically change both the experience of the artist in residence as well as his/her/their production. Gielen highlights four distinct, yet complementary, chronotopes based on the way in which a residency “makes time and space mesh in a certain way” (Gielen in Elfving et al. 2018, 44). The chronotopes are “chronotope”, “network chronotope”, “alter chronotope”, “embedded chronotope”.

My chronotope generally refers to those residencies which try to emulate a studio setting. These sorts of programs are based on a very specific idea of creation as something that happens in solitude, isolation; creation in this chronotope is understood as the process of dragging out something that belongs to our deepest self. In this setting “the artist has only his profane self to rely on for dragging his creation from his own innermost depths” (Gielen in Elfving et al. 2018, 44). My chronotope residence's archetype is situated in nature, away from distractions, noises where a conciliatory environment provides artists the silence needed for their genius to be liberated. One here is brought to question the implications of the kind of view of creation that my chronotope residencies uphold, not just of creation but also of the creator. In this chronotope what is stressed is artists’ fear is that if not given the right conditions (and most worryingly even if so), artists might fail in bringing to life his/her/their creation; additionally, the artists might not be able to bring his/her creation to light in the amount of time given by the residency.

If in the previous chronotope, artists and their residential settings are at the fringe of the world, because it is there the place where creation happens, in the network chronotope artists are injected right into the center of urban areas; right “where the nerve paths of art and capital cross” (Gielen in Elfving et al. 2018, 45) and intersect with the creative hubs typical of contemporary cities. Although empathizing with the individual development of the artists and the uniqueness of their creation, this chronotope acknowledges the importance of strong networks, by placing residents in the midst of a large network of different capitals, social, economic and cultural (Bourdieu in Richardson 1986). Here, the situation is no longer “characterized by introspection but rather by exhibitionism” (Gielen in Elfving et al. 2018, 46). Within the network chronotope, what is stressed is that artists’ creativity is acknowledged (and thus can thrive) by the network during their stay. The third chronotope is called alter chronotope, and it refers to residencies where artists apply for reasons of content. Ranging from ecological to scientific, political or social, regardless of the sphere of interest it is specifically the content that dictates and defines time and space in the alter chronotope (Gielen in Elfving et al. 2018). The reasons behind alter chronotope type of residencies differ

from the ones of the two previous chronotope both for the guests and the hosts. Artists that take part in this sort of residencies are most likely interested in the ‘theme’ of the residencies and its curatorial direction. Additionally, artists might have an established research practice which can be applied to different topics, they most likely hope to find inspiration in something that transcends them; something that is out there in the world (Gielen in Elfving et al. 2018). As Gielen makes clear, the key world in alter chronotope residencies is not introspection as in my chronotope, or exhibition as in network chronotope but it is rather exploration.

The last chronotope is called an embedded chronotope and in this case the time given to residents only depends on the time they need, regardless of whether they need it to get inspired, or get back on their feet and realize a specific project. At times, artists that attend residencies of this sort are attempting to transcend artistic creation per se and they are simply trying to immerse themselves in nature or a specific environment (Gielen in Elfving et al 2018).

Having outlined different chronotopes of AiRs sets a framework of reference to begin our study of MArt. Gielen has helped identify four residencies chronotypes, by doing so the author has provided us with tools to identify the kind of dynamics at play in this research’s case studies. By gaining a deeper understanding of the internal dynamics of a residency one should be able to identify strengths and weaknesses and ultimately adjust the program based on that.

1.3. On Art Residencies and Conviviality

AiRs, depending on the program they offer, can host several artists simultaneously as well as host artists one at a time. Residencies that offer programs to different artists simultaneously will have to further explore the more convivial aspect of the institution; it will be argued. Considering the artworld in the contemporary neoliberal context, it would not be surprising if AiRs ended up reinforcing individualism and competition (Elfving & Kokko, in Elfving et al. 2018, 23). Now more than ever it is imperative to explore the way in which residencies can become places for generosity, exchange and conviviality especially since their ancestors, artist colonies, were based on such values. A lot has been said on AiRs and community development (European Agenda for Culture 2011; Pinto et. al 2020; Lithgow & Wall 2017; Lehman 2017) however questions concerning the importance of building relationships based on mutual understanding, trust and generosity amongst residents – who often come from different backgrounds (cultural, gender, social, economic, and disciplinary)

- are generally avoided as are questions whether artists can actually benefit from exchange in the context of their own practice. Elfving and Kokko, suggest that: “Peer-to-peer structures are integral support for artistic practices and their development, and in residencies their role appears manifold as they form the ground for both critical dialogue and professional networks” (Elfving & Kokko in Elfving et al. 2018, 23). It will be part of our discussion to understand what it takes to build a convivial environment within a residency context and whether, when implemented, such a program can prove effective for the institution, the art-world and finally the artists.

As mentioned above, AiRs more often than not risk reinforcing individual competition between artists; not only do AiRs provide fertile ground for competition but also, they, at times, contribute to the creation of an alienating environment for artists. Dynamics such as the ones just mentioned rule most of the artworld so it is rather unsurprising that one can find them at play in the context of AiRs. However, it has been already shown that AiRs, mostly in their early days, had been places where collective endeavor and collaboration were strongly encouraged. More research-oriented residencies still tend to create a convivial environment mostly out of necessity; if artists are working on similar themes discussion and sharing are simply more likely to spontaneously happen as well as they tend to be encouraged from the institution. Nevertheless, different AiRs chronotopes are much more product/production oriented and their internal relationships tend to be more polarized. As Illich states in his *Tools For Conviviality*, it is a matter of fact that “the increasing demand for products has come to define society's process” (Illich 1973, 24) and it seems clear that it has come to define the AiRs’ process as well. In order to tackle this issue, we have introduced the concept of conviviality which, in the context of this research, finds its foundations on the “recognition of mutual worth, dignity and essential similarity” (Gilroy 2004, 4). Conviviality is, therefore, a set of interactions that foster mutual worth, dignity, and the celebration of essential similarities in society. It is of utmost importance to create new tools to enact conviviality in and across different realms of society as it will be shown in our analysis, the LoI represents an attempt to foster conviviality in the context of MArt and beyond. Specifically, acknowledging each other's dignity, struggle and similarities will be fundamental in the context of the LoI. Enacting conviviality is both the starting and the arriving point of the LoI; in a historical moment of division and alienation, the LoI attempts to reunite territories and draw connections.

Residencies can be places to experiment different ways of being, working together in an art world excessively leaning towards individual research and production. As suggested by Nina

Montmann in an interview given to Irmeli Kokko for the volume *Contemporary Artist Residencies Reclaiming Time and Space*: “As collective retreats they have the potential to reflect how people can organize as a collective to potentially transform an interest group into a collective production” (Montmann in Elfving et al. 2018, 109). Even though artists participating in AiRs are more often than not seeking inspiration for one specific project, the convivial dynamic is fundamental. In order to try and tackle the “individualistic competition and accelerated production while nurturing sustainable choices alongside experimentation, collectivity as well as complexity” (Elfving in Elfving et al. 2018, 128) it is pivotal to pay attention to the program’s activities. Badham (2017) refers to all the aspects relating to collectivity as the social life of residencies, which is, according to him, an often-overlooked matter. The author reinforces the idea that the relationships developed between fellow artists in residence should be cultivated carefully through activities specifically aiming at building meaningful and nurturing relationships. Additionally, the author brings to the fore concepts such as the ‘social turn’ in the arts, as articulated by Bishop as well as Maria Lind’s ‘collaborative turn’. These two concepts, which were developed separately by the authors, despite being extremely relevant in today’s contemporary artworld, seem to be focusing more on the expanded fields of collective art making and the landscape of community art (Bishop 2005; Lind 2007). Alternatively, as Badham does, the LoI is stressing the importance of convivial relations within artists taking part in the same residency; something along the way of a convivial practice. It results that the more attention will be dedicated to the way in which artists can relate to one another; relations in this case will not be exclusively interpersonal but also the relations can be created between materials, ideas and practices. The leading task is to create new tools to enact conviviality and to expand the way they interact with their practices and the ones of others.

1.4 On Art Residencies and Affectivity

To be sharing a place with different artists, curator, researcher and employees as well as to be immersed in communal spaces packed with art supplies, half realized art pieces, has doubtlessly a strong impact on residents. Environments affect us, they invite us to interact with them or, alternatively, they can feel hostile, almost unreachable; humans tend to organize their environments in order to not be surprised by them, to foresee the unforeseeable unfolding of life. AiRs offer to artists in residence the possibility of creating their own temporary environments, be it in a private room, a collective hangar or a corner in a warehouse. In light of what has been said about the need for more conviviality within the

context of AiRs, it is imperative to think of ways to positively affect participants, and in the next paragraph, I will clarify what is meant by that.

Affectivity is a concept charged with layers of meaning and a history that goes back to some of the greatest thinkers in western philosophy. Amongst the most influential thinkers that, in a way or another, worked with the notion of affects (in its different declinations) we should mention Baruch Spinoza, Henry Bergson, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari; affects have been a pivotal theme in western philosophical discussion which came to the fore in the last 30 years ultimately leading to a turn in the social sciences called “the affective turn”. For Spinoza, there is a correspondence between acting and affecting i.e., between our power to act and to be affected. As articulated from Michael Hardt in the foreword to the book *The Affective Turn* (2013), in Spinoza’s idea of affect “[...] the mind’s power to think corresponds to its receptivity to external ideas; and the body’s power to act corresponds to its sensitivity to other bodies” (Hardt 2013, 133). Such an understanding of affect brings into the picture both body and mind, reason and passion. Gilles Deleuze was heavily influenced by Spinoza’s view and defined affects the effect that a “given object or practice has on its beholder’s becomings” (Deleuze, 1998, 38) The nature of affects is immanent to matter, it determines the passage of intensity within the beholder’s body i.e., affect is the effect that another body or practice has on my body (Deleuze, 1988). If affects determine the rising or falling of one’s body, it follows that different encounters will necessarily affect the body in different ways (Deleuze, 1998). Therefore, there will be as many different affects, or combinations of affects, as there are subjects; each situation a different assemblage, every assemblage a different way of affecting and being affected. It follows that some encounters will be necessarily more productive than others. In both Deleuze’s and Spinoza’s work ethics is the science of affect: “the organization of one’s world so as to produce joyful encounters, or affects which are of the ‘joy-increasing type’, those which increase our capacity to act in the world” (O’Sullivan in Dennis 2010, 42). O’Sullivan here articulates a kind of ethicoaesthetics by which joy-increasing and productive encounters can happen through art. For Deleuze these encounters have the peculiarities of allowing for the creation of the so-called common notions (Deleuze, 1988). The latter are those concepts that are formed when the joy of bodies coming together is experienced. In Deleuze’s words, affects are: “an Art, the art of the Ethics itself: organising good encounters, composing actual relations, forming powers, experimenting” (1988, 134). There is indeed a strong relation between affect and art, Deleuze himself claims that affects are what in fact constitute the very essence of both life and art. The existing connection between art and affect is probably as strong as the one between affects and matter. One might

even say that affects connect us to the world around us: “It is the matter in us responding and resonating with the matter around us” (O’Sullivan in Dennis 2010,49). Looking at affects in such a way gives us reasons to believe that our bodies are affected not just by other bodies (here intended as the human body) but also by objects, beliefs, and practices. Considered the rather ambiguous and hard-to-grasp dimension in which affects operate, O’Sullivan suggests that to ask a “what”-question concerning affects would imply to be looking for an answer in the realm of signification, whereas, according O’Sullivan, “there is no rhetoric of affect but rather in terms of causes and conditions” (O’Sullivan in Dennis, 2010, 44). Affects are experienced directly, and if one wants to organize a practice around these experiences, one needs to pay attention to the conditions and the causes that allow affects to be experienced in the first place. The question here is not how to create an affective environment, as assemblages of bodies and objects environments are affective per se. What is interesting here is that by paying attention to it, it is possible to foster the creation of that joy-increasing type and curiosity-increasing type affects; those that render us more receptive and thus increase our capacity to act. Specifically, in the context of the LoI and AiRs more in general, affectivity turns out to be a very useful concept to reimagine relations within the assemblage of people, materials and practices. Affects are in fact a fundamental component to be considered when theorizing and working within an assemblage of people, practices and objects.

1.5. On Artistic Investigation and Reflectivity

Having underlined the importance of creating spaces for meaningful and positively affecting moments to rise, it is now imperative to explore ways in which an artist’s research practice can become a space of reflection and connection. In order to make one’s practice both a place for encounter and self-improvement it is fundamental to understand the sort of framework needed to sustain this, and this is the scope of the upcoming paragraph.

Not only do AiRs differ greatly amongst them because of their structures but they also depend on the institutional context in which they are placed; the context affects the kind of production carried out during the program. AiRs happen in studio-like contexts, public institutions such as museums or hospitals; they occur within science laboratories “industrial workshops, cemeteries, businesses” (Badham 2017, 112). The nature of the context radically affects the kind of artistic production expected as an outcome of the program. It seems that artistic production has thus a different function depending on the context of the residency. Depending on the institutional context artistic exploration goes from being self-directed to

creating “synergistic exchanges between artists and non-art-based workers and professionals in unique non-art-based institutional contexts” (Badham 2017, 110). The airs format seems to be indeed very effective into bridging the distance that still exists between art and other ways of producing knowledge. AiRs, with their fluidity, are indeed an effective tool to push an agenda that seeks to close the gaps between art and institutionalized knowledge. However, AiRs can also play a fundamental role in providing artists with the tools to advance in their own practice, to enrich their own investigative processes thus the way they relate to their materials, their ideas, and their environments. Ultimately, not only can AiRs stimulate artists in their production but they can be places where the experience of their production is enriched and enlivened.

The potential of reflecting on one’s process and ways of knowing has been extensively studied specifically in the field of education and teacher’s learning (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Zeichner & Liston, 1987; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Korthagen & Wubbels, 1996; Wellington & Austin, 1996; Leitch & Day, 2001); however very little attention has been dedicated to reflection in the context of artistic processes. Reflection in this case, is intended not just as a practice of self-assessment and critical approach to one’s process but also as a way to individuate patterns, similarities and affects around the phenomenology of the artist's investigation. As stated by Ruth Leitch and Christopher Day in their *Reflective processes in Action: Mapping Personal and Professional contexts for learning and change* “[...] cognitive and emotional self-examination and confrontation is at the heart of reflection [...]” (Leitch & Day 2001, 238). The authors individuate three different kinds of reflection, and they implement them in their empirical research; the one which is most interesting in the context of this research is called meta-reflection; this sort of reflection attempts to “record, share and evaluate their personal learning processes, preferences, styles and difficulties throughout the learning experience” (2001, 241). Such an approach can easily be translated to the context of processes more in general; what kind of difficulties do artists experience throughout their investigations? How can they record, share, and evaluate their processes, their ways of learning? These are questions that will be fundamental in the upcoming analysis. In fact, it seems that if we are searching for those communalities, those phenomenological similarities that run through human experiences, one needs to expose him/herself, unveil the processes, and show the struggle that underlines it. Conviviality, peer-to-peer bonding, might be more connected to reflective processes that it might seem at first sight; in fact, it might be the case that one is able to reflect on something mostly when sharing it with others. Additionally, one can benefit by building coherent and communicable narratives out of one’s practice. These

narratives can be created in different ways and through different types of languages. If some of the LoI's activities focus on spoken language, others attempt to facilitate the process of exploring one's processes in different ways. As it will be shown in the next paragraph, one way to enable practitioners to deepen the understanding of their process as well as the ones of others', is to explore the material dimension of it.

1.6. On Research and Material(ity) narratives

The material dimension of process and research is not something exclusively related to arts, in fact research has a material component to it, regardless of whether it is carried for social, scientific or artistic purposes. Generally understood as something of the mind, something belonging to the realm of ideas, research has also a fundamental material dimension to it, one that it is tangible. In the humanities there has been an increasing interest in bringing these material bits to the fore as if they could better witness the process that lies beyond the production of an academic work. Nevertheless, they are rarely given the space they deserve and if they do make it to the interest of the academics it is only to be shown in a context of an exhibition, an art exhibition. Whereas, in more practice-based and practice-led research, where the figure of the research-practitioner and the one of the artists come to the fore in a synergic relation, the material documentation of one's process has begun to be more frequently employed. Specifically, as articulated from Nithikul Nimkulrat in his text "The Role of Documentation in Practice-Led Research", "documentation of art practice can be a means to record that interplay [the one between the artist and the research-practitioner] and it can be used as relevant material in practice-led research" (Nimkulrat 2007,1). Nimkulrat argues that documenting one's artistic process, in the context of practice-based research, can be used as research material (Nimkulrat, 2007). We will argue that documenting one's process might be equally useful in the context of artistic practice. The author focuses on documenting her creative process by means of a diary and photographing the intermediate stages that lead to the creation of the final work. The aim of such an approach is to: "make the creative process somewhat transparent by capturing each step the practitioner-researcher takes in the process, both consciously and unconsciously" (Nimkulrat 2007, 4). The role of documentation may be underestimated in the context of AiRs and not just do we believe that it can help connect the world of practice with the one of research but also that it can foster change within the context of AiRs. Not just can one document, as in the case articulated from Nimkulrat, through diary writing and photographing, but documentation can happen in a variety of ways. As exemplified in Fernanda Fragateiro's *Materials Lab* exhibited at

Appleton space in Lisbon in 2021. (ibid) The archive is composed of wreckage and remains often used in Fragateiro's work and as Francisco Correia states in comment for Portuguese art's magazine UMBIGO:

“The studio as a work, the research as a purpose, the exhibition as a process of investigation. A project-based on tricky terrain. It seems to want to be an installation, invading the field of sculptural tradition (and not only that), while also affirming: I am nothing, a possible work, not yet consummated, feeding and defending itself through its ambivalence. *Materials Lab* lives between existing or not as a work; and it is a symptom of the aestheticization of thought, of the current fascination by the unfinished image of a work in progress (Umbigo 2020).”

In this case the process of research has turned into an aesthetic experience by being exhibited in its unfinished form. Such an approach to one's process materializes it by giving it a physical dimension; the most insignificant bits become significant through the expression of their “highly individualized presencing” (Miller, 2020, 33). Material matters more than we would tend to think, in fact social worlds are as much constituted by materials as the other way around (Bourdieu 1977; Appadurai 1986; Miller 1987). In Fernanda Fragateiro works her creative process was displayed in an exhibition room; her research was presented as an aesthetic experience. The artists' work led me to thinking how one could create an actual space for material interactions between different processes within the MArt.

In practice, material exploration is an activity central to the practitioner's research process and as articulated from Nimkulrat et al. the “Materiality of the artefact emerging in the material exploration not only affects the appearance and meaning of the artefact, but also shapes the experience of the maker during and after the exploration” (Nimkulrat et al., 2016, 4). This point is particularly significant in the context of the LoI as the latter does not necessarily aim at the betterment of one's artistic production but also on the way they experience their practices. As it will be argued in the discussion, working, interacting, and staging the materials that constitute our processes can be a way of documenting (and thus connecting) the world of research with the one of practice. Additionally, it is pivotal to explore the way in which the interaction of materials bits, experiments, and pieces of research belonging to different artists, may foster a convivial materiality or a material conviviality; in order to explore this dimension, it is imperative to set up places of ambiguity where materials are able to interact, mingle, create new connections and confront us with their unique presencing. In order to provide the methodological and theoretical framework for the creation and analysis of such a place of ambiguity, I need to introduce the reader to the concept that has led me to conceptualizing the collective installation, namely the concept of the rhizome.

1.7. Enhancing the creation of rhizomes

While running the program, I became interested in some of the most influential postmodernist theorists namely Gill Deleuze and Felix Guattary and, specifically, their book *A Thousand Plateaus: On Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987). The book has inspired a movement in the social sciences, connecting academic research to more practice-based research. At the same time, it contributed to the creation of new methodologies that accounts for a social and cultural world which is “mobile, sensory and affective, changing and open-ended sensory and affective” (Buscher & Urry 2009; Lury & Wakeford 2012). Such an approach accounts for the performativity of method, meaning it advocates those methods do not just serve to observe the world, but they are involved, to a certain extent, in the creation of it (Coleman 2013, 2). In the humanities, particular attention has been given to the utility of the Deleuzian-Guattarian concept of the rhizome in order to account for the complexity of the interactions at play within an assemblage of people, practices and materials. According to Gills Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987: 7):

“A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles. A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating diverse acts, not only linguistic, but also perceptive, mimetic, gestural, and cognitive [...]”.

As researchers one should aim to enhance the creation of rhizomes, and thus opening our world to the becoming, the univocity which can be unleashed through a rhizomatic reading of the world (Deleuze & Guattari 1987). The authors use the metaphor of the rhizome in order to promote an idea of research (and theory) that can account for multiple entries and exit points in data. Rhizome is compared and contrasted to the image of the tree, the arborescent. Rhizomes create connections and these connections are called line of flights; in fact, “There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines” (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 9). In the following research and interpretation of the data, following lines of flight means drawing links between thoughts, materials, practice that might seem implausible at first sight. Mapping line of flights means trying to follow the rhizomatic connections that have come to life during the LoI’s different moments and try to bring them to the fore. More specifically, it seems reasonable to use the concept of the rhizome as a metaphor to explain the way in which the collective installation, one of LoI’s activities, has developed and taken shape throughout the project.

This chapter aimed at shedding light on several key concepts and ideas for the upcoming discussion. Initially, it was imperative to explore the dynamics underlying art residency tackling their context, aims and structure. Having done that, allowed me to explore the way in which time and space are allocated and if different structural dispositions affect the artist's work during their residency time. Clearly, space and time are two defining factors in the context of AiRS however I decided to shed light on the third, and to me most determining factor, namely the experiential human factor. In order to lay the conceptual backbone of the following analysis I explored four concepts namely conviviality, reflectivity, materiality and affectivity. Clarifying these concepts while also situating them in the context of an AiR, has helped me understand the way in which not just AiRs should build more convivial environments but also that the sharing of ideas, through specific documentation of one's practice, can be a crucial tool to do so. Ultimately, I introduced the concept of the rhizome which will be employed as a conceptual metaphor to map the evolution of the collective installation. Having laid out the theoretical backbone of this research allows me to move to the more report-oriented part of it; in order to do so I intend to start from a thorough analysis of the institution in which my internship took place.

2. The institution: a brief portrait of MArt

MArt was designed as a space for learning and artistic experimentation. As such, MArt tries to offer heterogeneous teaching which will ultimately provide a kind of teaching that is adapted to each and every participant. (MArt website). MArt's team is composed of different agents from the cultural sector such as artists, researchers and other actors. By attending MArt's art school students are allowed to access a diversified kind of learning which combines practical knowledge and artistic experimentation with more theoretical components (history of art and contemporary artistic practice). MArt's school community is funded on several guiding principles, starting from "the promotion of artistic practice and the deepening of authorial work" to "its relationship with the artistic and cultural milieu, underling the skills for quality and professionalism needed in the development of creative work, research and presentation in public" (MArt). Furthermore, the development of MArt's activities begins from the assumption that art and creative practices are amongst the most privileged interdisciplinary practices that allow one to develop both social and personal skills. At MArt teaching is adapted to participant's needs and students can choose between different options. They can decide to take the full course of the chosen discipline or alternatively they can pick a course of their choice throughout the year, or even attend a single free workshop. This is thought to bring a more diversified group of people within the institution's walls. Regardless of what they choose, participants will be assisted, and they will receive full tutorial support; depending on their choice, they will be given the chance to set their objectives for the development of their practice in the context of the course they are undertaking. At MArt it is of utmost importance that the student group is diverse and mixed. This is to say that participants attending workshops, classes or ateliers are at different stages in their practices. By bringing together artists in the beginning, amateur and professional stage MArt attempts to establish connections between artists at different moments of their career and development.

Logistically, MArt's offer is structured on three levels that are, as mentioned before, connected but can nonetheless be attended singularly. These three levels correspond to three different phases of learning, beginner, intermediate and professional. In the beginner level, participants learn the fundamentals of the discipline at hand namely its techniques, practices and historical and contemporary context. This level aims at providing students with a well-

rounded understanding of the discipline. In the intermediate level, participants are asked to create and develop an autonomous body of work and a practice of research. This level aims at giving artists tools to find their own voice and to establish a solid practice of research. In the advanced level, the artistic residency, artists are invited to explore their practice in the wider context of a studio space and “its relationship with the artistic and cultural environment” (MArt). At the residency level, artists can participate in exhibitions and specific projects in museums, galleries and other exhibition spaces. One of the guiding principles underlying the creation of the residency program is that the practice developed in the studio “must be carried out in an open context and be available to interaction”; this is to say that MArt focuses on the moment of sharing experiences with other actors in the artistic environment, in this way residents have to work on improving their methods of organizing, presenting and communicating their work.

2.1. Interview with André Almeida De Sousa and Patricia Sasportes

What follows is a brief interview conducted with Patrícia Sasportes and André Almeida Sousa. The two are the founders and directors of MArt, as well as the ones who tutored me throughout my internships. Having outlined a profile of MArt based on the information I could collect in combination with MArt’s website and other sources, provided the reader with an understanding of how MArt operates. However, I deemed it important to let MArt’s directors speak for themselves and that is the reason why I hereby report the short interview in its unedited format.

F: How did MArt begin?

A&P: Mart started in 2013 in a hybrid cowork space, workshops and classes mainly in drawing and painting. The MArt project started at Rua Rosa Araújo in Lisbon. The school was co-founded by Patrícia Sasportes and Paulo Brighenti, the initial team to which André Almeida e Sousa immediately joined.

F: What’s its history?

A&P: At this moment, Mart has been running for 8 years uninterruptedly. Right from the start, we thought about this project so that it was not just a school that transmitted content,

but a space for sharing knowledge and experience. In this sense the team has been developing and transforming, naturally welcoming professional proposals from different areas that have integrated it in a punctual or permanent way. Currently, the team includes professional artists such as Francisca Carvalho and Mariana Gomes in its faculty, together with resident artists, or former resident artists, as is the case with artists Ana Natividade, responsible for the printmaking workshop, Carlos Ribeiro, responsible for Ceramics workshop or Filipa Pestana that is in charge of the design and communication of the school. This ability to welcome new work proposals is fundamental and an integral part of the project and its development, affirming our objective of teaching in addition to practical and theoretical, professionalizing, that is, in close relationship with a complex artistic environment and in constant change .Since the beginning, we have maintained an open and permeable functioning model, which in addition to being a structural value, we believe to be an asset, while allowing the constant evolution of the team, the project and the students and resident artists. An art school must be open not only to the various manifestations of the cultural fabric but also to seek to produce changes in it.

F: Where does MArt stand in Lisbon's cultural scene?

A&P: We believe that this question is partially answered in the previous question. However, we would like to reaffirm Mart's fundamental characteristic as an open and permeable model of school and artistic residency. In fact, the frequency of our training offer implies a constant negotiation with the Portuguese and international cultural fabric, not only being limited to Lisbon. We welcome students from different countries, as well as, we carry out projects in the city of Lisbon and in various areas of the country, namely, exhibition projects, artistic residencies and social inclusion projects in partnership with several institutions such as: Livraria Sá da Costa - Gallery; the São Roque Museum; the Casa Museu Medeiros e Almeida; the Fernandes Stationery; the Castro Guimarães Museum, Cascais; the EPAL Water Museum; CAVE (Mart's exhibition space at its old facilities in Rosa Araújo; the Casa das Histórias Paula Rego, Cascais; the Nogueira da Silva Museum, Braga; artistic residencies in Cortéx Frontal, Arraiolos; intensive artistic residencies with primary school classes in various schools in mainland Portugal under our protocol with the DGE's Office of Aesthetic and Artistic Education; or the protocol with EB 2/3 Manuel da Maia, where MArt is part of the pedagogical plan. (See link for more detailed information: <https://artemart.pt/historia-exposicoes-e-parcerias/>).

Since its foundation, Mart has produced and carried out projects in various areas of the country in a logic of decentralization. The *orto di incendio* project is an example par excellence of our philosophy as it not only brought together renowned artists and residents of Mart, but was also exhibited in Rome at the Istituto Centrale per la Grafica and later in Lisbon at MNAC. In addition, this project enabled its participants to represent various Portuguese institutional collections of merit, such as the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian and the Instituto Camões. In short, MArt assumes its presence in the cultural fabric of the city of Lisbon while affirming its presence in other places.

F: What kind of financial support does MArt receive?

A&P: At this time, we have no financial support, we sustain our activity through tuition fees for all courses and artistic residencies. However, we could not fail to mention our long-standing strategic partner, Livraria Sá da Costa - Gallery, which enabled us to access the current facilities of MArt and streamlined the protocol of the social inclusion project.

F: How did you develop the program?

A&P: As we have already mentioned, we tried from the beginning to combine practical and theoretical training in the teaching of the arts, with their professionalization. In other words, to combine training and the desirable construction of an autonomous body of work, with the dissemination and negotiation of the presentation of the work in a highly coded and highly competitive market. This teaching philosophy has always been and increasingly present in our training and, consequently, in the development of the programs presented.

F: Why did you decide to create a hybrid between an art school and a residency?

A&P: From the beginning, we decided that a complete training would necessarily have to include an artistic residency program. For now, and with the experience of the past 8 years, we have found that this working model is a good bet on a kind of training that wants to be plural and demanding.

This interview conducted with MArt's director helped me framed the institution through the voice of its very same creators. As they provided me with the necessary information of different aspects of MArt relevant to this report, I shall now focus on one specific element namely MArt's residency program.

2.2. Residencies

Having interviewed MArt's director confirmed some of my initial assumptions as well as brought new questions to the fore. However, for now I deemed it important to focus on the department in which my internship took place; in fact it is imperative to both outline the format of the residency more thoroughly as well as to show those small adjustments that I thought could make MArt's residency program a better place for artists to thrive.

MArt offers two autonomous semi-annual artistic residencies, which can be attended independently. Each semester-residency has different objectives with concern to the presentation and exhibition of the work carried out by the residents. MArt's residency considers applications coming from artists working with different artistic mediums ranging from painting, ceramics and engraving to sculpture, photography/video and installations. This will ensure heterogeneity within MArt's wall. During the residency artists are encouraged to explore new methods within their practice and research, the studio becomes the context of discovery and wonder. Furthermore: "The deepening of authorial work is promoted through an intensive regime of practical and theoretical research" (MArt's website). Most importantly, artists' projects are tutored and further discussed collectively and individually with tutors André Almeida e Sousa, Ana Natividade, Carlos Ribeiro, Cecília Costa, Francisca Carvalho, Mariana Gomes and guest artists. Residents' progress is followed closely by agents of the cultural milieu such as gallery owners and curators. In this way, not just the residency program fosters the development of an articulated body of work, but it also explores aspects more related to the production and dissemination of artworks. The residency ends with an exhibition at Galeria Sá da Costa and a presentation of the work developed in the open studios MArt. Whereas, in the second semester, the residency culminates in an exhibition at Cemitério dos Prazeres and with a presentation of the work developed in the open studios MArt. Residents are provided with a studio/workspace situated in MArt's pavillon. Thus, the studio space is at the same time private and shared considering that in most cases rooms host several artists simultaneously, each one settled in their own 'corner'. Residents can access their studios 24 hours a day. Finally, the residency program is not on invitation, this means that MArt accepts applications and then makes careful selections. MArt charges selected residents for a 50 Euro registration fee, 5.50 school insurance and 225.00 euros monthly fee. The MArt's residency program differs from what we usually would refer to as an art residency. In fact, residents at MArt do not live in the space nor do they come from foreign

countries (although applications from foreign students are encouraged). For instance, this year all the participants were either Portuguese or they already lived in Lisbon before starting the residency. This does not mean in any way that MArt is not an art residency, however it clearly means that the factors at play within the residency will be different. The majority of MArt's residents had family and work in Lisbon, this meant that their time needed to be split between work/family/studio space; this is something that does not happen in most art residency where artists travel to another country and thus can dedicate themselves fully to the making of art (metaphorically and practically). This aspect of MArt changes its chronopolitics quite consistently (Sharma 2017)

2.3. Identifying a need: internal dynamism

During my time at MArt, and my work for them in both the extra-curricular and curricular internship I worked for different departments of MArt. However, what I was most interested in was the residency department and the institution gave me the opportunity to devote most of my time to that. Acknowledging that when I started collaborating with MArt the pandemic had already begun proves that my first impression of the art residency program must have been distorted i.e., the residency was clearly not functioning at its best. However, after having seen the program of the residency, and the way they had planned to implement them I was left under the impression that it lacked a place where residents could reflect upon their practice outside of the tutorials with MArt's staff. Although sharing your work with professionals from the fields is fundamental, I thought that artists could benefit from more informal spaces and from activities carried out in presence of their peers. I perceived a need to create places of wonder within the art residency which were collectively shared. Places where the uncertainty faced in the studio could be brought to the fore, and collectively processed, and not, as it often happens, individually suffered. Considered that Art residency can be places that "reinforce individualism, in line with much of the world structures economy built on individual careers and names" (Elfvin & Kokko, 23), I started wondering how we could create internal connections through sharing individual processes; how one's experience of the common struggle of research, of practice, the common struggle of doing, could foster a sense of belonging and not alienation. As articulated by philosopher Hannah Arendt the studio "is the cradle of every creation and therefore of the unique experience of being human. In any case, the feeling that we can create something new is one of the fundamental characteristics of the human condition" (Arendt in Elfving et al 2018, 41).

However, the process of creating can become a not so human experience; if the humanization of life means being acknowledged by the other, creation, specifically in the context of late capitalism, can turn into a solitary gestation, a rather painful process of self-doubting and uncertainty. My work for MArt, as it will be explained shortly, came about also as a response to the individualism and alienation that can proliferate in the context of an art residency.

MArt staff members have been working hard to connect the institution with the Portuguese cultural scene. Curators, gallery owners and other agents of the cultural sector often collaborate with MArt in the making of activities tailored for the residency program. Not only do they work hard to introduce emerging artists to a more professionalized art world, but they also try to promote the new work of more established artists to important agents from the cultural field. In this sense, MArt does well in providing a strong network of professionals that can help residents to advance, share and promote their practice, regardless of how known they are in the field. However, when I first started collaborating with them it seemed clear that despite the great deal of connections they had managed to make in the cultural sector, MArt was quite disconnected from other residency programs in Lisbon, specifically the more international ones. It seemed relevant to understand the reasons for MArt not having paid attention to this, to my advice, an important aspect. Artists in residency are fundamentally artists that are being confronted with the struggle of the process of creating while dealing with specific time constraints and a shared environment. Lisbon hosts a great number of art residencies which vary in format and scope; however, they seem very poorly connected amongst them. When confronted with the issue, MArt's staff members seemed rather unaware of the existence of more international art residencies, and they were altogether very excited about the idea of collaborating with them. This was interesting on at least two different levels. Firstly, art residencies can have very different programs and the latter can work together using their diversity for questioning the institutional structure and pedagogical direction. Secondly, and I argue most importantly, art residencies are places of research, of articulation of one's practice, therefore, to connect artists that are undertaking these processes means to plug them into the very organism of creativity; it means to place them in the middle where everything takes speed and connections are made.

2.4. MArt and the Universidade Católica Portuguesa

The Lisbon Consortium of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa strongly encourages students that want to get closer to the worlds of arts and culturally more professionally and this is also allowed by the schedule of the MAs. Courses are during the evening which means that students can work during the day. While attending the second semester of my first year, I got interested in undertaking an internship. I wanted to begin with a curricular internship, however this was not allowed from Catolica's rules. Therefore, I opted for starting a shorter extra-curricular internship that lasted only three months. Just before the pandemic broke out, I decided I wanted to get involved in the context of an art residency. Through a Lisbon-based Brazilian curator, I got to know about MArt; the institution offered curricular and non-curricular internships. I started interning for them the last week of February, and the first week of March, Portugal, and the whole world, went on a lockdown. However, MArt reacted very well to the challenges of the pandemic and created "CARTAS" to adapt to the virtual dimension. "CARTAS" included seven strands: online artistic residency; Visual arts course for children; Visual arts course for young people; Visual arts courses for adults: Drawing, Painting, Printmaking and Ceramics; Cycle of conversations about sustainable artistic practices; a master class program managed to turn most of its program to the virtual. During this time working with MArt's staff I worked on CARTAS and helped edit for the final virtual exhibition in which the artist's creative output during the pandemic was exhibited. This allowed me to connect closely with the staff members and some of the artists. Needless to say that the trust we built at that time influenced positively my future work with them. Choosing to continue with the extra-curricular internship despite the adverse conditions, allowed me to begin seeing a window of opportunity to continue collaborating with MArt. Luckily, in order to graduate students are asked to develop a final work choosing out of three possibilities. Students can focus on a final dissertation, a project or an internship report. Considering my desire to get more involved professionally, and the fear of not being able to efficiently write an exclusively theoretical piece, I decided to undertake a curricular internship. At this point I was offered to continue collaborating with MArt for the first semester of their residency program and, after discussing the options with my supervisor, I decided to start again at MArt in September 2020. This decision proved to be the right one since MArt gave carte blanche and full support to turn my internship into a creative and professional challenge. In the following chapter I will first dive into the creative path that led

me to the creation of the LoI to then move to the more formal aspects of the program such as structure, values and implementation.

3. The Laboratory of Investigation: a creative path

Having outlined MArt's profile allowed us to lay out the institutional context in and for which the lab of investigation has taken place. Although this might have not been perceived by MArt's staff members, LoI's has a specific agenda: it follows specific guiding hypotheses. The latter questions some of MArt's guiding pedagogical guidelines while also questioning the boundaries between academic research, artistic research and method. The LoI was in fact conceived and shaped in order to challenge these boundaries; LoI was conceived as a future-making practice, something that had an agenda, something that had a theoretical backbone and a practical implementation; something that existed and flourished in between boundaries. The upcoming chapter might seem chaotic and unnecessary; however I believe it is perhaps the most relevant in the entire thesis. How can one ask questions without asking the very same questions to oneself? How can a researcher look into somebody's process without questioning his/her own first? The questions I intend to tackle with the following chapter are very similar to the ones I asked during the artists research meetings; in fact, I believe that if these questions were any meaningful to them and their research, they will prove meaningful to me and my research. This must be the premise for the upcoming chapter

Since we are discussing creative processes it seems reasonable to guide the reader through the path that led me to create the LoI. While taking the first semester at UCP Católica I had to take one elective course and I chose to take cognition and creativity. The course explored different cognitive studies of creativity which, from a cognitive perspective, tried to explain creativity in the arts and in life in general. Most of such theoretical approaches, stemming in great part from psychology, are deemed reductionist to cultural analysts. While taking the course and developing my final paper, I realized that, perhaps, the problem with these theories we had been confronted with was specifically the language they were being communicated with. It seemed clear that by exploring and explaining creativity by means of formal language something was missing. In my final work for the cognition and creativity seminar I tried to lay out a theoretical framework for a curated art residency program. The paper focused on specific conceptual metaphors used to explain creativity processes and what kind of imagery they prompted; conceptual metaphors, as conceptualized by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1981) in their *Metaphors We Live By*. When coming across Graham Wallas' Four Stage

Model of the creative processes first articulated in his *Art of Thought* (1926) I immediately realized that, even though Wallas himself started from phenomenological accounts of creativity, he could not resist the temptation of generalizing creativity into a linear, delineated model composed of four stages. We all are well aware that often theories or models cannot account for the complexity of certain human processes, and that simplifications are necessary, as certainly not everything can be included. If we are not willing to compromise, we will fall into the same error of José Luis Borges' cartographer who, while in the quest for accuracy, ended up drawing a map exactly the same size as his empire. To use Borges' words:

“The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no other Relic of the Disciplines of Geography”. (Borges, 2002, 45)

Yet, I was left under the impression that there was a way to explore creativity that would make more justice to some of its characteristics, without necessarily falling into the mistakes of wanting to say too much; here is when I came across Henry Bergson and his notion of intuition. Bergson in his *Time and Free Will* (1913) advances the hypothesis whether some of our most fundamental philosophical problems (in his case the problem of free will) are not tied to scientific language and space. Using Bergson's words “language requires us to establish between our ideas the same sharp distinctions, the same discontinuity, as between material objects” (Bergson, 1913: 120). Bergson redirected my research on two different levels; firstly, he stood against day-to-day language as an ever-reliable means to discuss complex processes. Secondly, Bergson's epistemological stance suggested that intuition, the simple act of sympathy through which we can grasp the uniqueness and ineffability of an object, as the absolute way of knowing (Bergson, 1913). I was left under the impression that his method could help me disclose a different dimension of creativity. Ultimately, the aim of that research was to reflect upon the language through which creativity research was conducted and by doing so I was hoping to create different paths for inquiring about creative processes. As the research showed I was initially more concerned with language, or it is just from one language that one is more likely to begin; either way that is the reason why I focused on metaphors and the kind of imagery they prompted. Particularly, Seana Morgan's organism metaphor for creativity interested me. In her words, “[organism metaphor] will change our focus from entities- creative works and people- to processes, not in terms of techniques or steps, but as continuous transformation” (Moran, 2009, 18).

However, I quickly realized that yet another fundamental aspect of creativity research that interested me was method. I was specifically interested in creating a framework for which we could create new research spaces to study creativity from within, creativity in the visual arts explored through the arts themselves. At the time, I believed, and I still do, that by employing more practice-based research methods while studying creativity in the arts we could show the more organic and ecological dimension of creativity; what I was looking for was that intuitive component that I felt lacking in more traditional creativity modules. Doubtlessly, the work that resulted had its own imperfections however it pushed my research in a very fascinating direction; I got interested in the concept of theme-based residency and their potential to tackle a specific issue and based on the problem at hand, inquiring the way we create by creating.

3.1. From theory to practice: Meta-Creativity

From theory to practice: Meta-Creativity was a two-fold project which I attempted to create in collaboration with a visual artist (painter) from my course. As it has been mentioned above, the idea was to materialize my theoretical research into something more tangible, while simultaneously collaborating with young visual artists. During the residency we wanted to critically look at how creativity plays out in the specific context of an art residency. The focal point of the project was to research and experiment with the creative process. Based on the relatively new approach of performative research the residency wanted to transcend its function as a place for artistic creation/ creative output only; in fact, it aimed at being a center for experimenting with diverse research designs. Ultimately, what was most appealing, from a performative research approach, was both the celebration of multiple realities as well as the interaction between the knower and the known. Through the project, we hoped to discover more about how an art residency can provide stimuli for the artists and contribute to the making of art. Unfortunately, after having struggled quite significantly in finding a location that would allow us to develop the project (with little or no funding at all), the Covid 19 pandemic broke out and the project was put on hold. Ultimately, the aim of project was to create a dialogue between artists, curators and more raw theoretical content concerning creativity; interestingly enough the artists I had contacted were keen to engage (and thus re-interpret) with those theories that problematize the process of creation, something very close to them indeed, The process of putting together the draft of the project directed my attention towards two aspects of research that I still carry with me today; firstly, the interest in exploring and developing new research design and secondly the fascination I developed for the more material side of research.

3.2. F(o)ur Phenomena

Just before the pandemic started, I had met a Brazilian curator based in Lisbon with whom I started collaborating on a project. The project was called F(o)ur Phenomena which I presented as a final project for one of the second semester seminars called Management of Cultural Projects. F(o)ur Phenomena was initially thought in order to develop a multidisciplinary network of professionals that converge around the discourse of phenomenology, ultimately contributing to the making and maintaining of the online platform - phenomena. The latter is an online platform/project/ itinerant place in which researchers—artists, curators, scientists and individuals of various fields are encouraged to approach their subject-matter through the lens of phenomenology. The research project focused on creating new tools for artists to conduct research; in the context of the project artists could engage with researchers coming from different fields. We thought that by enriching artists' research vocabulary we could empower them i.e., providing and creating new tools to engage with their own subject matter (in the case of the lab it could be research the subject matter). During the program artists would have been invited to cultivate a careful sense of observation towards their practice, and the practice of others. We thought that not just was it necessary for them to reflect upon their own practice but also that they would have greatly benefited from an encounter with phenomenological researchers. They could come together to share perspectives and jointly unveil resources to help enliven perception and empower artistic practice. This encounter would have unfolded during the dialogical lab-workshops; the workshops were fundamental in creating the space for contemplation, reflection and conversation. The dialogical lab-workshops would have become transdisciplinary spaces where artists and researchers could share and create while transcending the limits and constraints of their practices. While working on this project I became interested in exploring artists' ways of knowing in particular their research practices. I started wondering whether it was actually possible to empower them by sharpening their sensibilities towards their own research practices and the ones of others (the latter being professionals coming from different fields). Additionally, I grew into the idea that it was necessary to create spaces where research as such could be discussed and problematized as the object of interest, and not simply consider it as a means to achieve something else.

3.3. F(o)ur phenomena: transforming research paradigms

As we neared the end of the academic year, I started focusing on a specific element of F(o)ur phenomena, namely its questioning research legitimacy and epistemological boundaries. In a way, we argued that the project provided tools to transform traditional

research paradigm and include artistic research in more mainstream knowledge making processes; not just did we suggest that Fo(u)r phenomena would enrich artists with new creative research methods but that it also promoted a view of artistic research as future forming/ world-making practice. While researching for this seminar we came across three main concepts which became extremely relevant for my work at MArt and the Lab of Investigation. Firstly, I expanded on the idea of Transformative Research Paradigm as articulated by Anderson and McLachlan (2005); the latter stands in opposition to more positivists approaches to knowledge and in doing so it aims at mobilizing knowledge processes in a way that a close collaboration between professional researchers and community is encouraged; in this way, community actors are involved “co-enquiries as a part of a broader agenda for progressive social change” (Anderson & McLachlan 2005, 1). Secondly, I focused on the way in which the epistemic issue underlying communication between institutionalized and noninstitutionalized knowledge can be overcome. In the same study, Anderson and McLachlan articulated this problem as one tied to language; the authors suggest that there is a strong need for different knowledge mobilizers in order to facilitate communication between different knowledge departments. These connectors and/or mobilizers are layering, building bridges and using transmedia. Layering refers to the capacity of assessing the right level of complexity needed in order to facilitate accessibility to different epistemic systems (it tackles the question how much do I really need to know? (Anderson & McLachlan 2005). Building bridges refers to the necessity of building metaphorical pathways between different knowledge systems; these bridges can be built through community activity, laboratory and/or leisure time depending on the specific situation. Lastly, transmedia techniques are fundamental especially when working between groups that rely on very different means of creating knowledge, as in the case of artists and academics. For this reason, we stressed the importance of using different media in order to communicate their knowledge.

This internship report addresses creativity and its organicity and multidirectionality, therefore not just it seemed mandatory to try and answer the very same questions that I asked the residents, but I also attempted to show the importance of reflecting on one's path. It seems that at the beginning of this journey (assuming for clarity's sake that there is a beginning to this journey) I was mainly concerned with language; I had been focusing on the problem that existed between conventional day to day language and the representation of certain processes, in my case the process of creativity. However, I quickly realized that if another language had

to be developed that would have impacted not just the language of our answers (expressing findings) but also the language of our questions (methods). New methods require new research spaces (at least metaphorically), one cannot expect to be doing the new in the place of the old. From this urgent need I rapidly tried to set up a new space, a new research journey by pitching the Meta-Creativity curated residency idea. At this point, while explaining my ideas to a few artists I had encountered, I realized that I specifically wanted to work with them on this project simply because of their capacity of turning ideas into a material reality/object. I could foresee the potential of creating an artwork, as an alternative piece of knowledge, as evidence, when reflecting on something so peculiar as creative processes. At this point I was already caught up in the material flow of things while still being tied to the realm of their ideal representation.

Not all artists have a well distinguished research practice in the strict sense, yet they all conduct research. Therefore, I started wondering how often artists recognize their research practices as such or alternatively as merely a way of doing things that made no major difference in the bigger picture of their practice. How much do they know about their ways of knowing and how much are they still willing to learn? How can they be empowered by knowing more about their and others research practices? Fo(u)r phenomena, although strongly centered around the discourse of phenomenology, came about as an attempt to answer these questions. Additionally, as mentioned above, the project wanted to explore the commonalities between different epistemological systems and the importance of creating a platform for exchange. And then I arrived to research slowly, progressively yet intuitively. I always explored through my own creative (and non) writing that the research I conducted in my daily life was so much more than simply a practice of representation, it was re-representation. In fact, I believe that research being academic, artistic and beyond should be considered as a world-making practice. As Kenneth J. Gergen argues in her essay *From Mirroring to World-Making: Research as Future Forming* (2015) argues: “The aim of research would not be to illuminate what is, but to create what is to become” (Gergen, 2015, 6). The author believes that we should abandon a view of research as something that attempts to mirror the world and fully embrace research as a practice that designs the future. If we wish to “examine current and emerging practices with future forming potential” (Gergen, 2015, 298) we must create a new paradigm in which an unarticulated sensibility can flourish.

Finally, the journey presented me with the opportunity to take my internship at MArt and it was by observing MArt and its activities that I decided to create The Laboratory of Investigation, a program developed for the MArt's artistic residency.

4. The Laboratory of Investigation's structure

The creation of the Laboratory of Investigation was triggered by the impression the atelier needed some dynamism; creating a space to discuss one's processes highlights the importance of a collective space for sharing, problematizing, and understanding one's path. Additionally, I was under the impression that artistic residency, places where by definition, creativity happens could be a prolific place to observe, study and experiment with artistic processes. The residency and art school had several activities, but it seemed to me that the program lacked a place for discussing one process in a way that was detached from the final piece, from the final creation, so to speak. I was convinced about the affective potential of creative processes, the organic flow for which different research paths can merge, meet or change ours. It seemed fundamental at that point to create an informal research environment where artists could share the same pieces of different puzzles.

At its core, the LoI also challenges the idea of originality and creativity in the art as an exclusively solitary endeavor of developing an authorial investigative practice. Instead of trying to get to a general theory of creativity it explores the conditions that can favor it. In fact, it is by bringing artists together through the different activities that the LOI tries to challenge this assumption by creating a space for discussion, and reflection; a convivial space in which artists can freely experiment in discussing their investigative approach. An informal, safe and open-minded environment where artists can benefit from the conviviality of a group. The laboratory of investigation is a place to share, problematize and implement artistic investigation. The word "lab" shows the inquiring and experimental mindset of the kind of activities that will be carried out- thinking and action find their meeting place in the laboratory. By doing so I hoped to stimulate residents to have a more critical approach to their own practices and thus cultivate and create new investigative tools and methods.

4.1. Research meetings

The first activity of the LoI was a series of weekly research meetings. During the LoI's research meetings, residents were asked to present their practice and critically engage with it; participants have been fundamental in problem solving and contributing to the discussion. Not only were residents asked to reflect on their practice, but great emphasis was placed on their shared inquiry processes and investigative methods. The questions leading the presentations were six, although participants are welcome to work their way around it in whichever way it pleases them. The questions are: What is guiding your research at the

moment; how you move from one source to another; how your research is dependent/connected to your practice; what is your relationship with your studio/space. What is bringing your art/work together at the moment? The structure of the presentation was open, in fact the participants could choose a medium of their choice to present their work. Presentations were meant to roughly take half an hour so that enough time was left for discussants to ask questions.

As it has been already mentioned, the LoI, and thus both its core activities, were designed around four concepts/hypotheses: conviviality, reflectivity, materiality, affectivity. Firstly, having to present one's process by means of words demands from them the capability of conceptualizing, understanding and being able to explain their own processes. Having to prepare a presentation most likely means that they will have to dig deep in their materials to find those bits that witness their creations, to think about the material turning points of their practice. Materializing their practice into objects, preparatory drawings, transcend an immaterial vision of research. Furthermore, the group is, by definition, a place of wonder; the group is an assemblage where anything can happen when putting something out there (Deleuze, 1998). Ideas, materials, words can affect the members of the group in a rhizomatic way i.e., the group turns into something more than a place for feedback, it becomes a place where new connections have been created and will be created. In a way, the LoI does stress the unicity of one's path since it is exactly that the questions address. The questions aim at making the artists reflect on their own processes, disassemble them; the questions aim at highlighting the countless connections running and pulsing within their processes. However, it is by creating a space of peer-discussion that it also shows the importance of sharing one's path with others, to put it out there, to discuss it and to be willing to answer questions, justify it. Artists can and should be working together, across disciplines and media, in the context of an art residency.

4.2. Collective installation

In order to explore the more material and organic dimension of creativity, artists in residency had been working on a collective installation throughout their program at MArt. The idea of the collective installation was designed based on our four underlying hypotheses. In order to create and sit with a place of ambiguity artists in residency were to work on a white wall put at their disposal, a wall that stares back at them; thus this installation started from a blank wall, the draft of an idea and its in/non/development will be mapped. This

activity was thought to explore the material dimension of research and ultimately turned the wall into a liminal place, one where different paths cross and affect each other. The idea of a collective installation comes about as an attempt to materialize our investigative processes and the work we have done as a group or individually. The installation project was running next to the residency, and it ended when the residency programs ended (end of February 2021).

4.3 Impediments and reflections

Since the program was designed during a pandemic there are indeed things that could have gone better as well as activities that did not find their space due to restrictions and pandemic-related similar issues. I believe it is important to describe the limitation and the reasons for which certain activities did not end up happening. However, in this paragraph I will just refer to the latter in general terms whereas in the discussion part I will focus specifically on the influence that certain major changes, such as having our meetings virtually and having a rather empty atelier, actually meant for the program.

When I first presented the program at MArt one of the fundamental activities was the studio visit/residency visit. I found it rather strange that different residency programs in Lisbon were so poorly connected; the trend seemed to be that international and research-oriented residencies were well connected amongst them, but more Portuguese residencies were neither connected amongst them nor connected with the international environment. I thought that it was necessary for the residents to experience first-hand what other artists in residence were doing in terms of research as well as how programs of other residencies were structured. To this aim I had planned to visit one residency each month, the hosting artists would give presentations concerning their practice at the moment of the visit. Subsequently, we would host them at MArt and our residents would have done the same. By meeting directly in the studio space, the idea was to allow each other's to explore the intimate space of the studio. The studio being a "space par excellence of amateurish messing about, endless ambition, grotesque self-overrating, immense irritation, and always recurring self-doubt" (Taru & Gielen in Elfving et al. 2018, 112). I had arranged one visit at Hangar residency in Lisbon that was cancelled shortly before by the Hangar's residents, who did not feel safe to host people in their studios. Although I did try to contact other residences' directors, I quickly realized that most of them were just not willing to take the risk during these strange times.

There is another activity which did not take place although for different reasons than covid. While coming to an end, the Lab of Investigation felt slightly unfinished, I knew the installation had further life. Therefore, I had also designed a performative enactment of the installation which was not possible due to the internal decision of MArt. However, I deem it important to explain the reasons why I envisioned it originally. The Ambiguity of Research was meant to be a live-streamed performance where the installation would be dismantled-enacted. The performance was yet another space of wonder, ambiguity. By handing out a script to residents we would explain how the collective installations could turn into a space of performativity. Residents were then asked to go and collect what was theirs and place it back where it belonged. The space around the installation would be a space of wonder, different objects there for them to use (paints, scissors, lighters, markers). The questions surrounding the performance were: what material has ended up there and what has not? How have concepts, ideas, materials been travelling in and out of the installation? (From somebody's practice-into the wall- stays on the wall- into somebody else's practice). As it has been said, the performance was not allowed and thus did not take place.

Having explained the LoI and its activities as well as having shown the activities that could not be implemented has paved the way for the next chapter. In the following chapter, I introduce the results of the LoI in their written and visual format. Before starting I want to stress that I collected an immense amount of visual and written material which did not make it to the final cut.

5. The Laboratory of Investigation implemented

5.1. Research meetings

As it has been already explained artists at MArt are chosen after a careful selection, this means that artists change every six months; however, because of internal agreements, there are artists which have been at MArt for longer. These artists have also been helping and working for MArt in communication, design and also by giving classes. Clearly, artists who have been at MArt for longer, up to one year and half, have gotten to know each other and they know each other's work very well. Therefore, I would claim that within the group that participated in the LoI one could distinguish two different macro groups, the newer residents and the older residents; this distinction might become significant during our discussion. Furthermore, all the artists participating in the LoI are visual artists, having practices that ranged from drawing to painting and sculpture. The group was composed of thirteen participants of which eleven were artists and two students (myself as a graduate student and P taking her PhD). Thus, the group was predominantly composed of artists and only two non-artists, however myself and P took part in the activities fully; In my opinion this was both a statement concerning the transversality of research as well as a way to provide some diversity in our group. I will refer to them with their first name initials and in case there are multiple artists whose name starts with the same initials they will be numbered as well.

For what concerns the presentation's structure, artists tended to answer questions they were given very briefly and concisely to then move on to showing their work; this allowed the meetings leave room for discussion, questions and comments. It resulted that most of the presentation went by with artists presenting visual material about their research or final pieces shown in order to help support their answers. The initial idea was to make artists present in their studios, and up to the third round of presentations we successfully did so; however, from the third presentation onwards we decided to switch to virtual presentation only since the hybrid format was creating too much confusion within the group. As one can imagine, presenting one's practice remotely was rather hard and lacked altogether that experiential component of the studio; nevertheless, the group responded very well to the challenges posed by the new format and managed to deliver high quality presentations. In the following paragraph I present a short overview of the different questions, the reasons behind each question as well as a few brief comments in terms of the way in which each question was handled. Finally, since so much space was dedicated to discussing the presentations, and

a lot of great insight was given specifically there, I will provide an overview about the general nature of the comments, questions; the latter will hopefully provide further material for the upcoming discussion.

The first question that participants had to answer was: What is guiding your research at the moment? This question was meant to make participants reflect upon their research during their time in the residency. I deemed it important to shift their attention towards their research approaches instead than to their final creative products. With this question I intended to shift the discussion towards processes hoping that they could work on different aspects of their research such as its materiality (this is the what question) or the possible connections with any of the other participants' research. Several artists described their research as being driven by an exploration of materials. In one case the material (clay) required a thorough study of its limits and potentialities and C. was trying to explore the more technical sides of it. Exploration was mentioned by all the participants as something leading their research; for some it was material exploration, as in the case of the above-mentioned artist, for others conceptual exploration as in the case of myself and the only other academic in the group. Similarly, it was only P. and myself that brought precise written questions to exemplify the kind of tools that were guiding our research. For F. her research was guided by something that had to do mainly with curiosity; F. explained how she freed herself from the anxiety of production letting herself be driven by a genuine curiosity for the world that surrounded her. Whereas, A., who at that time was mainly working with charcoal, claimed that his research was mainly guided by a sensual component; his relation with the material charcoal was one of contamination in which his body played a fundamental part. For F.1 inspiration was a matter of concern, the artist tried to enumerate the number of sources from which he would usually draw inspiration from; for him, videos, books, music and its own practice constituted his research. Similarly, S1 claimed that her investigation at this consisted in taking pictures, collecting material of which, she claimed, probably 90 percent she would not end up using. On the other hand, F. and J. argued that their research was mainly directed by the changes in their personal life i.e., highly dependent on the emotional fluctuations and self-discovery processes. It is relevant to say that two artists claimed that they could not really answer the question because it was too early to talk about their ongoing research; these artists describe some previous research processes instead. Overall artists seemed to enjoy the question and successfully provided answers that varied greatly.

The second question that artists had to answer was: How do you progress/move from one source to another? This question was meant to explore the interconnectedness between sources and to get artists to try to map their research processes. This question was based on the assumption that artists work across a broad range of sources and I deemed relevant to make them think about the way in which they move around these different yet complementary pieces; I assumed that they would be interested since these bits of information and meaning find their arrival point in the final piece. J and F2 claimed that it was rather impossible to really map out the intricate way in which they navigate their sources. In fact, they argued that evolution is unpredictable, and thus untraceable. The way they progress is highly entangled to the unfolding of life itself. F2 added that this movement is sensual and impulsive, it is a game of connections and links; for her progressing meant movement and connection between points. F1 had a very similar opinion: she could not tell how she played around with different sources, but she preferred the idea of interference almost as if by just making different sources interfere with one another they would arrange themselves in new meaningful patterns. To F1, for whom practice is a very physical endeavor, the most interesting part is to understand the way in which her body interprets these new patterns. Similarly, A believed that the secret to his research lies in finding those intersections, overlaps and connections. Although both F3 and R also described this progression as never being direct, something more similar to a moving force, they also address the more aleatory dimension of it. F3 claimed that these connections are super arbitrary and tried to justify his claim by showing images, booklets and painting.

The third question that participants had to answer was: How is your research dependent or connected to your practice? This question was meant to bring artists to explore the dimension of research and practice simultaneously; I expected them to reflect on whether research and practice were two different endeavors in their opinion. Additionally, I was interested in looking at the way in which research varied according to the practice and vice versa as well as to explore the way in which they were connected. It seemed to me that either for poor formulation or for other unknown reasons they had somewhat of a hard time answering this question, thus answers were generally less articulated or not given at all. F claimed that for her there was no difference between research and practice, in her artistic practice the two were indiscernible. F1 argued something similar although she opted for a vision of practice as a mode of research. Alternatively, P1 claimed that her research did not depend on her practice, however the two heavily influenced each other and she showed how a single piece

of research gave birth to three different bodies of work. According to her, research is itself a step in the creative process and thus an integral part of practice even though it occurred that she produced work that did not require research whatsoever. For C. whose work was strongly tied to clay, research and practice were linked by a concern for materials and technique. On a different note, J. claimed that research is life's potential whereas practice is the body which gives life to this untapped potential i.e., the two are intertwined by a relation of dependency, they need one another to manifest themselves. Similarly, to other components of the group R. thought that practice was a way of doing research for her. And it was through practice that she aimed at bringing to light a type of work that came from within. For S. they are intimately connected, although she admitted that the amount of research that she does was enormous compared to the little part that made it to the final cut. When she moved across practices her research vocabulary gained autonomy as if it were a full lexicon.

The fourth question that participants had to answer was: What is your relation to your studio space? This question was meant to make artists reflect on the relationship they had with their studio space. I deemed it relevant to inquire about this matter considering that if they were taking part in MArt's residency program, they were also sharing their studio space with several people simultaneously. I had assumed that some of them had previously worked in their own individual studios and had now found themselves sharing space with other artists. Therefore, it was imperative to see whether and how their relationship with their studio had developed. However, as reported below, everybody but one single artist addressed this question with a specific focus on their relationship with their studio without addressing the more convivial side of it. For instance, for several of them their relationship to the studio is fundamental for their practice; however, it is not with the space itself but more a sort of affective relationship they developed for the place where their materials, research and scraps are stored and accumulated, even if temporarily. For instance, F claimed that she feels more and more that her practice takes place in any empty space. The studio is a random place where she landed. Similarly, for F2 the studio exists to the extent that he needs it to paint; oil paint requires a specific environment, and the studio becomes a way to be disciplined, a place where creation happens. The importance of having a separated environment seemed to bring artists to develop a more disciplined practice. Furthermore, S claimed that the space she worked in highly affected her practice, for instance in terms of size: smaller space, smaller work, bigger space, bigger work. F3 answered this question differently addressing the sort of changes that she went through when first moving to MArt shared atelier. In fact, she claimed

that in the beginning she struggled very much since everybody could see her work and she felt observed and self-conscious about her work. However, after some time she started feeling differently about these dynamics, noticing that the others became brothers and sisters in creation, and she started to receive help and give help. Although it can be very confusing at times, especially in her case since she drew on a wall her studio space was just at the entrance, it was fundamental for F3 to accept these dynamics and make the best out of it. She even claimed that some of her works came about as a consequence of allowing contagion with others, but this happened only after she allowed the other to enter her work and avoid closing in and keeping herself from being affected by her surroundings.

The fifth question the residents had to answer was: What brings your art/work together? This question was meant to bring artists to reflect upon the red thread that runs through their body of work. In a way I expected that, by making them reflect upon their own research methods, they would become more aware of their practice as a whole. Additionally, in today's contemporary artworld curators and art practitioners seem to be very interested with the integrity and coherence of one's practice, therefore I deemed it important to bring artists to reflect upon this aspect as well. This question, similarly to question number three, was one of the hardest for artists to give an answer to, at least directly. Nevertheless, I tried to extrapolate answers where I thought the artist was indirectly answering this question. P1 had a rather hard time answering this question, she said that the point of connection of her work was herself. She was also uninterested about the matter itself, even though well aware that her practice could benefit from something that rendered it more identifiable. F also preferred to answer this question indirectly, however the artists referred to a text from Ana Hatherly which she used to describe the process of killing the master. Ultimately, F pointed out that that ties her work together is this desire to kill the master and free her art from constraints. In my own presentation I answered that the red thread that ran through my work was a strong conceptual component and the tension deriving between theory and practice. For F2 and R the main connection running through their work is practice, F2 claimed she only believed in doing, whereas R claimed that it is by practicing that she was trying to find her voice. Finally, for S her visual imagery, those bits of materials collected were the ones connecting her art. This section attempts to report the kind of discussion that occurred during of the research meetings, one of the two fundamental activities of the LoI.

5.2. Questions, comments and line of flights.

Presentations took place in the friendliest of environments, artists knew each other mostly although, as they claimed themselves, this did not necessarily mean that they knew each other's work that deeply. As one can imagine it is a rather hard task to grasp the amount of fruitful interactions that occur during a meeting of this sort; in fact even if one pays careful attention one will never be able to truly assess the cosmos of affects that have occurred during an activity of this kind. However, in order to try to report what I noticed as both a coordinator and a participant to the research meetings, I will try to mention some of the comments, questions, and ideas that came up in the more discussion-oriented part of our meetings. In order to do so, I grouped comments into different macro themes so that one can get a clearer idea of the sort of topics that were being discussed. I want to stress that these macro categories often overlap each other, however I believe that this division makes the most sense in the context of our upcoming discussion. Additionally, if in the previous section I mentioned the different speakers, even though only with an initial, in the upcoming paragraph I do not deem it necessary.

The first macro category is the one I call “the inspiration category”. Under this label I wanted to group all the comments and questions that tackled inspiration. Most questions revolved around artists being interested in knowing through which channels other artists acquired information as well as the way in which these sources turned into inspirations for their work. Furthermore, artists discussed the loss of inspiration by giving each other advice on how to keep the spark alive. For instance, at the end of an artist’s presentation who admitted to be navigating troublesome waters in terms of inspiration, all artists participating in the meeting came up with their own ways of staying inspired even during times when it seemed impossible to be creative.

The second macro category concerns “contamination”. Under this label I grouped all the examples in which artists discussed the idea of contamination in artistic practices; discussion of this sort revolved around topics ranging from the shared atelier to the way in which their work other artists’ work had affected their practices. Contamination was a recurring topic especially considering the way in which MArt’s atelier is structured; it was something that residents had had to come to terms with.

The third macro category is called “research methods” and it can be considered as complementary to the second; discussion revolving around the topic of research methods were particularly relevant since the LoI attempted to bridge disciplinary boundaries through

the sharing of research processes. In this sense, artists working with different artistic mediums managed to find a common ground when discussing research topics. For instance, one artist working with clay and one working with paint spent a consistent amount of time discussing the different ways of making preparatory sculpture; this discussion ended with the oil painter recalling the way in which the Romans used three-dimensional sculpture as preparatory work for their drawings. The above addressed an example of discussion concerning research more based on a technical level, however artists wanted to understand how other artists conducted more theoretical research. In this case, the discussion over the research methods between participants working in academia and artists was very stimulating. Finally, artists discussed extensively their relation to text and how it managed to influence their more visual work; in this case the discussion focused on the use of text as a tool for research and the way text made it to the final product.

The fourth macro category is the one I called “research topics”. Under this category I grouped all the comments, questions and ideas exchanged that concerned specific research topics. Every participant had, to one degree or another, a different research focus; this diversity resulted in an enormous amount of interactions concerning specific topics ranging from art theft to the difference between pornography and art. These kinds of discussions took place very frequently and were tools for artists to get insights on the more conceptual nature of their practice.

The fifth macro category is a fundamental one as well as one of the main red threads of these research meetings and I called it “peer-to-peer support and bonding”. Participants showed an incredible amount of support for one another without ceasing to be critical and engaging. During the research meetings they continually stressed how little they actually knew about their peers’ work and how insightful their presentations had been. One of the participants who had presented his ongoing research described the meeting as a session of therapy. Generally, they stressed the difference between hearing about somebody’s work in an informal environment like the LoI’s and more formal meetings with curators and MArt directors. Finally, artists who did not know each other had the chance to gain a deeper understanding of each other's work and show support for their practice and struggle.

5.3. The collective installation.

As an activity running parallelly and complementary to the research meetings, I introduced the idea of a collective installation. As it has been explained previously, the collective installation was a fundamental activity, and it was initially presented to artists as an

opportunity to collectively collaborate on an installation that focused on their investigative processes and the work we were going to do as a group. In order to justify this activity to both artists and MArt's directors, I presented the installation as a way to approach research materially, convivially and perhaps aesthetically. I had no expectations in terms of outcomes; however I needed an idea to begin the wall. Since artists were already facing a white canvas in their own studios, I could not expect them to deal with yet another white wall. I decided to begin the installation myself with a piece of my own research. At the time I had been working on a mood board in order to organize the conceptual work for the internship report I was going to write, therefore I had post-it note sheets in my office (Fig.1). The installation began with a phrase, a post- it and it developed rhizomatically into something radically different. In the following paragraph I will map out some of the main changes by showing pictures I took during the time the installation was running. The pictures were taken with an iPhone which explains their poor quality. The picture featured in Fig. 1 was taken at the moment in which an artist had already intervened on it (as I shall explain shortly), however it also shows the place from where everything started. My first intervention on the installation wall was to place one of my post-it notes in the middle of the wall. The post-it said: "research as practice". I began taking pictures only when the installation had already been running for almost one month, therefore some developments might have been missed, however the material gathered still provides a thorough picture of the installation and its developments. This first picture (Fig.2) was taken on the 29th of October and it shows some of the developments that happened in the first month of the installation which started in the first week of October. In this first picture it is noticeable the different sorts of interventions which did not stop at the writings and drawings that appeared directly on the wooden wall on which the post-it had been initially placed. In fact, artists glued bits of drawings and intervened directly on the wall of the atelier, interacting with the elements already present such as pipes. Additionally, the post-it had been placed differently and its shape reproduced on a bigger scale both on the wooden plank, on the wall and on the floor. The second picture (Fig. 3) was taken on the 15th of November, and it shows some more interventions with more objects included in the installation. One can notice the hanging gun, the stool and the plant with an animal skull in the corner down right. I decided to present this picture because of the thread tied to the gun which is a detail that will be more noticeable in the upcoming pictures. The third overall picture (fig.4) and the fourth (fig.5) overall picture showed two different perspectives of the installation which at this advanced level took over a consistent part of the atelier. At this stage the installation shows at least three different details stressed to their

limits: the geometry of the post-it, the yellow coloring and the thread have expanded in the surrounding environment. At this point the installation had invaded the space around becoming almost forcefully part of the atelier. It is important to notice how, if one wanted to walk by the installation (and a good portion of the space surrounding it for that matter; see fig. 6) one had to walk across it and over it. Fig.6 was taken during the monthly tutorials in which the director and few collaborators visited the adjacent studio, as one can notice the interference was clearly there. The installation changed into something different with two major interventions as shown in fig.7 and fig.8. An easel for painting was added to the installation complex net of thread without any of the threads actually touching it, or being tied to any of its parts. As one can notice, fig.8 is a screenshot taken from a video that one of the artists posted on her Instagram profile; after having installed a mirror and a sign with the sentence “is the audience part of the work?” The artists took a video of it where she started from the sign slowly zooming out to the whole installation. The video was published on the 13th of January, the installation got dismantled more or less a week later from MArt staff members and I was not there to witness it, so this is the last image I have of it. These images were presented in order to provide the reader with a general understanding of the installation and its developments.

6. The laboratory of Investigation and the four pillars: impressions and discussion

The following chapter attempts to bring together the different elements of this internship report and it does so by looking at the way in which the four pillars -affectivity, conviviality, materiality and reflectivity- have affected the LoI unfolding. This is done by looking at the results discussed in the previous chapter and combining them with my own personal reflections as coordinator as well as the artists' short evaluations of the program; the latter were handed out shortly after the program ended and are presented in the following chapter as a way to better represent the artists' experiences. The questions that I asked in the small questionnaire attempted to tackle each concept individually, as it seemed reasonable to understand whether the interplay of affectivity, conviviality, materiality and reflectivity had any resonance with the way artists experienced the program. Ultimately, the aim of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, it aims to reflect upon my initial assumptions and the existing tension between theory and practice, namely the way in which theoretical concepts informed the more practical aspects of the projects while simultaneously providing a framework to observe it. Secondly, it tries to give space to the artists' points of view on the ways they experienced the program while providing them with a more thorough explanation of the concepts that guided the LoI. Thirdly, the chapter aims at showing the interconnectedness of the afore-mentioned pillars and it wishes to underline the importance of considering all of them simultaneously within a research-oriented environment.

As one can notice, key concepts have been grouped up in pairs of two, however this does not mean that the four pillars do not work in upholding the same structure, it is quite the opposite in fact as it will be argued shortly. For clarity's sake it seemed important to show that if conviviality and affectivity tackled a more relational aspect of the LoI, by specifically looking at the connections that were being created, reflectivity and materiality tackle a more cognitive dimension of research. In practice, these two spheres that were initially conceived as distinguished ended up complementing one another.

6.1. Conviviality and Affectivity

The social life of AiRs is an often-overlooked matter, as explained earlier, and the LoI stressed its importance. Badham (2017) advocates that AiRs programs should aim at creating a convivial environment where relations between fellow artists are carefully supported by activities, meetings and the creation of spaces of possibility. The LoI attempted to work on

this hidden social life of AiRs, which I believed, was had to be based on values of solidarity, generosity, exchange and a general practice of caring. For these reasons, conviviality turned out to be a pivotal concept in the creation and implementation of the LoI, as one can notice all the activities were thought to foster the creation of a strong group and to bring artists to support and recognize each other's dignity, mutual worth and similarities. Specifically, the recognition of similarities and mutual worth were guiding principles in the creation of the LoI and it showed to be predominant during our activities. Initially, I had conceived the LoI from the mere assumption that research and practice (regardless of the field or the kind of artistic practice) shared a similar sort of curiosities and preoccupations, and the kind of materials gathered from the research meetings suggested that artists did in fact share a lot among them. For instance, in the more discussion-oriented part of our research meetings, artists discussed inspiration (or its absence) and shared ways of staying inspired which often over-lapped and complemented one another. However, it became evident that artists tended to recognize those similarities and put them at the service of the other by providing feedback and coping mechanisms of different sorts. It seemed to me that by sharing a space of preoccupation, such as the one of the lacks of inspiration which for artists is indeed an unpleasant place to be, artists created a convivial dynamic for which the lack of inspiration was more positively addressed. As mentioned above, artists shared coping strategies and practical tools; for instance, several artists agreed on the use of a small sketchbook to keep drawing daily, that way it would be easier to start from something already sketched out rather than a white canvas. This exemplifies how individual problems related to practice and research that were often collectively shared, were addressed collectively. The group provided support by acknowledging the problems as being widely shared ones. For instance, if the lack of inspiration was something that affected the artists' self-worth, having to address it in a collective way seemed to help many of them to cope with the fear of remaining uninspired. A very telling comment was the one that A. made right after one of the first presentations. The artist stated that "the meeting almost felt like a session of group therapy and it was extremely helpful to hear everybody's opinion on my actual research process" The artist's statement seems to reinforce my impression that the research meetings became places to, as Badham exemplifies, practice more ethical models of relations based on practices of exchange instead of competition. The idea of working closely with artists and their research processes was meant to make artists step out of their comfort zone. They had to attempt to articulate and defend their practices in front of their peers. However, something I could not foresee was the amount of support and careful attention that artists dedicated to each other's practices

fostering a sense of mutual worth and understanding; it seemed that by having to expose themselves, their perspectives on practice and their viewpoints, artists were respected and uplifted in the context of the research meetings. In this setting, artists were not put in the position of being evaluated by professionals from the field, in fact it was quite the opposite. The research meetings were facilitated by me, and I tended not to intervene: peer to peer feedback has an autonomous rhythm and it was never the case that the meetings did not unfold naturally.

As it has been argued in the theoretical framework, advocates of conviviality argue that it is of utmost importance to create new tools to enact conviviality in and across different realms of society (Illich, 1973; Gilroy, 2004). The LoI attempted to create new tools for conviviality in different ways; for instance, even if not clear at first sight, not only did the research meetings and their structure were useful tools to enact conviviality but also the collective installation had been conceived as a convivial tool. The creation of a convivial materiality or a material conviviality was at the base of the installation, the artists had to allow their practices to meet and mingle with the ones of others; to accept and allow difference, to welcome contamination as a fundamental component of their practice. Artist's processes are hardly put in conversations with the ones of their peers, if not in the format of private conversations or commissioned projects, therefore the collective installation was a tool for enacting conviviality in a new way within the context of AiRs. As the installation grew bigger new interventions had to be put in context with the ones already present i.e., the language needed to be changed and adapted to the one articulated from the previous interventions, a certain degree of mutual understanding was needed even if unconscious or implicit. As F. puts it “the joint installation was an experience where territories united and in addition to a moment of sharing”. Artists were confronted with the overflowing of their processes outside of the limited territory of their studio spaces. In the context of the collective installation their processes took on a radically different meaning creating new signifying figures: contamination occurred purposely, deliberately.

In the context of this research conviviality and affectivity are two complementary concepts i.e., Convivial environments are affective, and affectivity comes along as a consequence of some kind of interaction. The LoI successfully created an environment where the kind of affects that were produced was empowering for artists. If affects can empower a body to act, think and change (Deleuze, 1988) one should carefully create *affective moments* where bodies can encounter and affect each other beautifully. Affects are precognitive and hard to grasp, almost impossible to measure, however one can safely say that the interaction

occurred during the LoI affected artists in a way that enabled them to act, reflect and produce. Artists themselves, when answering the survey's questions, addressed the activities of LoI, and more generally the environment created, as a place for learning about others' processes and experimenting with their own. As it has been addressed in the theoretical framework AiRs offer the possibility to create new temporary environments and the LoI was meant to improve the temporary environment created for MArt residency program; the LoI became a space to organise good encounters and composing actual relations which for Deleuze are two defining characteristics of affect. The LoI was a space that created affects of various kinds as exemplified in the following paragraph. However, one must notice that the research meetings, one of the activities conceived to enhance affective moments, could not be held in person. Only the first two research meetings were held in person and only the first one saw the artists in residence attending it in the space. I could not stress enough how much not being present in the space actually changed the dynamic of the meetings.

As it has been mentioned above, as a support to my experience and observation as a coordinator, I decided to ask artists individually to reflect once again, this time in light of the four main pillars, on the LoI. Out of the four questions, two directly addressed conviviality and affectivity. The first question was: how did you experience the more convivial activities of the LoI? Such as the group meetings and the collective installation? Did you feel that the convivial add anything to your residency experience? If yes, what exactly. Whereas the second question was: how did you experience the process of carefully listening to others' presentations? Did it affect your practice anyhow? If yes, in which sense? Several artists defined the LoI as a great opportunity to integrate within the large group of residents at MArt. As R points out "following my presence at Mart, as part of a community, the LoI helped to bring the work of the artists who were part of this artistic residency closer together" Similarly, J claims that "it was great that we had the opportunity to see the work of our colleagues and to be able to show ours. This allowed an opening to the other, an approach in relationships". As shown in the comments, the LoI became a place to cultivate sympathy for the other and empathize with each of the participants individually and collectively. As I had foreseen, residents agreed that the LoI provided a place for sharing, and observing other artists' practice, background story, and personal/professional concerns. For some of them, it was especially important to be immersed in a group, in a place like MArt's residency where artists don't get to confront each other very often in the studio. Considering that artists often have busy lives outside of the studio the LoI really provided a time-space for this exchange to happen. Additionally, according to artists it was fundamental to leave a consistent part of the

research meetings for discussion in order to prevent the meetings from turning into standard presentations. The remarks made by the artists who attended their peers' presentations were often inspiring and struck them particularly. S makes this point very clearly when saying “ Surprisingly, not only how artists explained their practice, but the remarks of the listener artists towards someone else’s work were also often very inspiring, I must say that until today I am still remembering fabulous references or even theorizations that really struck a chord” According to some, the LoI helped train them to be sensitive to different sensibilities and ways of working with materials and ideas; it allowed an opening to the other, and, by comparing their work with the ones of their colleagues, it led them to gain some distance from their practices. Specifically, being trained to sharpen their sensitivities towards others’ materials and ideas is something that shall be highlighted in the upcoming paragraph.

Working closely with the concepts of conviviality and affectivity since the very beginning, made me aware of the importance of building a safe, convivial and positively affecting environment for MArt’s residents. As it has been explained earlier, I started from the assumption that artists can experience stress, anxiety and alienation during their career and AiRs, as argued by Gielen (2018) can be places where these sorts of feelings are reinforced. Therefore, it is AiR’s responsibility to create spaces where these feelings are addressed and tackled. My personal observation, combined with the artists’ experiences, suggest that having programs such as the LoI can improve artist’s wellbeing, improve their awareness of themselves and others and ultimately positively affect their practice.

6.2. Reflectivity and Materiality

The very idea of reflection brings to the fore questions of cognitive and emotional self-examination about one’s processes, as highlighted from Leitch & Day (2001) and the LoI highly emphasizes the importance of such an action in the context of an artistic practice. Reflection can provide new tools to advance and enrich one’s practice and thus the way one relates to their ideas, materials and environments. As it has been explained earlier, it is by reflecting on his/her/their process that one is enabled to record it, share it and possibly evaluate it. The literature refers to a specific kind of reflection that can be helpful to analyze different learning and creative processes that is meta-reflection as exemplified by Leitch & Day. Practicing meta-reflection meant for artists that they had to dive into their learning and creative processes, record them and share them. Therefore, the questions presented for the research meetings specifically aimed at pushing artists in their direction while giving them a framework of reference. The artists responded very well to the challenges posed by the set of

questions. As one can imagine, such a reflective attitude is something that rarely happens within a group dynamic, especially in the artistic realm where originality and individualism seem to be a predominant attitude. As reported in the previous chapter, artists showed a high level of meta-reflective capacity, and their presentations showed their capability to respond to specific challenges. In the making of the LoI I quickly realized the potential of bringing artists to reflect on their practice in a convivial space that fostered mutual growth, and dignity. Therefore, both the questions and the collective installation became two different ways of recording, sharing and to a certain extent evaluating one's process.

As in the case of the previous two concepts, I deemed imperative to look at artists' experience in order to get further support for my discussion. The third question artists had to answer was: How did you experience the process of having to reflect upon your own investigative practice? Is it something that you have ever done? Did you find it interesting, useful or simply insightful? Whereas the fourth question was: How did the process of having to prepare the presentation and show the material bits of your investigative process help you conceptualize your practice? Did you find it easier to show your investigation in its more material dimension? The research meetings, which were clearly more straightforward than the collective installation in both their scope and unfolding, were perceived by artists as a great tool to take a step back and really see the direction of their practice. As J makes clear "the confrontation with the practice and the presentation of the work of colleagues allowed me to gain distance in relation to my work. By discovering new ways of thinking and painting, I can then take them into my practice, making it evolve and enrich it"

Some of them found themselves looking for similarities between their investigative methods and the ones of others and allowed the tools of others to become questioning toolkits for their own; this meant that as we progressed with the presentations the more tools we acquired. Although most artists already actively reflected on their practices, having to prepare presentations had them put into words their processes, which was, according to them, equally challenging and helpful. For instance, S states that "As I feel that my work already has a long process of maturation, I have not felt radical changes, instead I received small, very useful inputs which influenced in terms of ideas organization and in the chain work". It seems that for many of them the process of reflecting on their work was very much an opportunity to discover the lines of force that moved it and to organize it accordingly; an opportunity to search for that unity and coherence, or alternatively those differences and internal discordances. Overall, many of them admitted that they tended to avoid this reflection, at least in a more systematic way, and they benefited from the meetings as an opportunity to do

so. The presentation required them to do it systematically, to organize their studio space (at least metaphorically). Each of the artists considered it an important and insightful exercise; this exercise seemed to allow them to get in touch with the motives of their investigation. Thus, it is not just by reflecting on their practice that they acquired new knowledge on it but also through the very same exercise they managed to connect with their artistic drive.

As it has been mentioned in the previous paragraph, recording one's processes can be a useful tool not just to reflect upon one's practice but also to render it shareable. If during their presentations artists were challenged by having to put their practice into words, it was through the creation of visual presentation as well as through the collective installation that artists had to work on a different level of signification. In fact, it is in the process of visually documenting their practices and by intervening in the collective installation that artists were asked to work with their research processes on a more material level. Nimulkrat et. Al. (2016) specifies that the materiality of the product emerging from a more material exploration of it can heavily affect the experience of the maker i.e., the interaction of the makers with the materiality of their artefacts can alter the way they experience it. Similarly, I assumed that the interaction of the artists with the material side of their research altered the way they experienced it. However, even though most artists agreed on the utility of documenting their processes not all of them perceived the material dimension of research as a relevant element; I can assume that something that to me was initially so striking, namely the way in which research had a material component to it, for them was simply part of their practice. One reason could be that having had the chance to work on my personal research and having contributed to the installation was a radically new experience that transcended the kind of research I was most used to. Whereas for them it was the process of documentation, and systematization that was truly insightful.

As it has been explained earlier, the intention of making artists work around a notion of research that was multidimensional was aimed at making them engage with it with all the tools they had at their disposal. In fact, it occurred to me that a regular presentation might not be sufficient to tackle the different ways in which artistic research is carried out and manifested. Coming from the fascination I developed for the more material side of research I was mainly interested in exploring ways to make artists' research materials interact, in ways to foster a material conviviality or a convivial materiality. Driven by this idea I attempted to create places of ambiguity where materials were able to interact, mingle and confront us with their unique presencing (Miller, 1998) for these reasons I came up with the idea of a research-oriented collective installation. As I had never worked with a collective installation and

therefore I had barely any expectations about the development of the installation itself, I saw it as an opportunity for artists to work on something different than their production and perhaps unload some of the material tension accumulated from their practices; I also thought it would be a good place for them to work with their research practices in a way that was open-ended and explorative. In fact, if their experiments were more often than not aiming at the production of a piece of work, specifically in the context of a my chronotope or network chronotope as articulated by Gielen (2018), the collective installation represented an opportunity to anonymously experiment; a practice separated from their own and yet intimately connected to it. If the Lol's research meetings were already places of speculation, I envisioned the collective installation to go even further.

As it has been shown in the previous chapter the installation developed enormously. If in the beginning it did so at a slow pace, by the end of the semester it had started gaining speed before MArt's staff decided to dismantle it. The installation developed rhizomatically, meaning it created connections that cut across different semiotic chains and organizations of power (Deleuze, 1987); its structure had no points of position, it was constituted by lines of flights that connected different research practices, materials and bodies. Its rhizomatic characteristics managed to show artists' struggle with the over coded expectations of artistic creation by giving space to those old and new materials; it showed the tension between the kind of work that is expected from them and the multitude of possible fruitful interactions that can occur if solely given the space. The tutorials conducted monthly between artists and the directors aimed at directing artists' work towards a betterment of their production, and clearly that is one of the reasons for participants to choose MArt. However, the installation provided the container for these power relations to be overthrown, for meaningless connections to occur, for multiple entries and exit points to be created. The installation aimed at giving space to explore those lines of flights that had been tapped as a consequence of the art world's standards and expectations, a place to be playful and yet extremely serious. To a certain extent the collective installation worked in contrast with the research meetings where artists were asked to document (in Nimkulrat's sense) and build a coherent/communicable narrative out of their research and practice; artists were asked to find the roots of their work, to build an archaeology of their practice. The rhizome exists in opposition and yet complementary to the tree (Deleuze, 1988) so does the installation exist in relation to the research meetings. The two provide two different readings of research and treat it differently, the research meetings highlight the underlying connections of research to practice and vice versa whereas the installation tries to dismantle these connections and create newer ones.

Ultimately, the installation shows our process of problematizing and actively engaging with our own investigative methods and its peculiarities. The installation confronted artists with the more material aspect of their research while bringing some elements of their research to interact with the one of others; this interaction rarely happens in a moment where artists attention is directed to advancing in their practice. In the collective installation the residents had to fit their own pieces with the pieces of others, however these pieces spoke a different language and asked different questions. The installation camouflaged with the other studio spaces as if it were a studio space itself. Always finished yet always transforming the installation created connections and relations between artists, teachers, material realities and ideas.

This chapter attempted to present to the reader the impact that the four pillars had in the actual implementation of the LoI. Considering the extent in which they informed its creation it seemed imperative to look at the way they were played out. In order to do so I discussed my expectations and observations and some of the artists experience more thoroughly perceptions. Overall, it seems that the four pillars were fundamental in sustaining the LoI and its becoming and they became even more meaningful as the program unfolded. An aspect that needs to be highlighted is the interconnectedness of the four pillars which, as the four columns that uphold the temple, contributed equally to the success of the LoI.

Concluding remarks

In this internship report I started by exploring the historical developments of AiRs in the western world, particularly in the European context, in which the host institution of the internship is based; having gone through some of the main changes occurred in the world of AiRs allowed me to understand the reasons behind some of the most common AiRs' dynamics. Exploring some of the most influential theories on AiRs and how different programs make use of their time and space differently led me to question the way in which this time and space allocation can influence both artistic production and residents' experience. Departing from these two main points I proceeded to explore the way in which the laboratory of investigation had shaped, changed, or even improved both artist's experience of their residency time as well as their practices. Exploring the different kinds of AiRs and their different approaches to production and the kind of support they offer to artists provided a framework of reference through which I could better understand MArt and its internal and external dynamics. Having managed to understand the reasons behind MArt's program being mostly directed to creating a network for artists with the out-side art world brought to come up with ideas to dynamize their internal social life. And I attempted to do so on the basis of four main concepts- affectivity, conviviality, materiality, reflectivity- which became the upholding structure of the program as well as the conceptual tools through which the program was analyzed. These concepts were explained and contextualized so as to highlight their conceptual and practical usefulness. In fact, if every concept was highlighted in its conceptual dimension, I was mostly concerned in understanding the way in which the four pillars could actually be implemented within the context of the LoI; the way in which affectivity, conviviality, materiality and reflectivity could inform the formation of the LoI and its implementation. As it has been made clear, these concepts turned out to be not just the theoretical tools for my analysis but fundamental components of the program's evolution; not just looking at the LoI through this lens allowed me to evaluate and justify the LoI's different moments, but it also helped enormously to follow its unfolding with a clear idea in mind. Having explored the four pillars through their conceptual nuances enriched and articulated the activities themselves. Doubtlessly, having to ground the LoI in a conceptual framework helped my work as a coordinator in a way that I was able to provide artists with more material. Having laid the conceptual basis for my internship report allowed me to begin with the more report-oriented part of this research, therefore I explained MArt and its institutional profile through the voice of MArt's directors. Additionally, it seemed fundamental to explain

my journey with MArt, starting from the extra-curricular internship, and the unusual opportunity that was given me within its context. In fact, I want to stress that when signing up for the internship I was not expecting to have the freedom and space that I was given. To have such an opportunity was truly an experience that formed me at a human and professional level by redirecting my effort and interest in my professional career. In the same report-oriented part of the research I have tried to explain the way in which my line of research developed during my first year in Lisbon aligned with MArt's need for more dynamism. Specifically, the subchapter the LoI's creative path aimed at highlighting all the different steps that brought me to develop the LoI, which I then expanded on in the following part of the chapter. The LoI's activities, and that is stressed in chapter four, are the results of the different types of research that I conducted during the year previous to the LoI in and out of the MAs program. The research meetings steamed from an of convivial environments and the sharing of research tools, as well as from the experience I had gained from my work for other residency programs around Europe; whereas if the collective installation at first came about from a desire to aestheticize research and its materials, it then turned into a more speculative space of wonder to enrich artist practices and their residency experience. In the following chapter I attempted to show the sort of outcomes that the activities had. I attempted to do that by exploring the two activities separately, since the sort of material produced had a different language. For what concerns the research meetings I attempted to create a macro category which showed the general trend of the discussion that the group engaged with. These macro categories are inspiration, contamination, research methods, research topics and peer to peer support. Although it is impossible to report the real number of interactions occurring during the research meetings it seemed imperative to attempt to provide the reader with a general view of the kind of topics that had been covered. For what concerns the collective installation I attempted to show the way it developed, and through the use of images, the line of flights that were created and followed. In the last chapter, I brought to the fore the four pillars of the LoI considering the presented results. In the discussion chapter, it made sense to have concepts grouped in pairs of two to then show their interconnectedness. In this chapter I combined my own observations and the answers collected through the small survey and looked at them through the conceptual lens of the four pillars. From what I observed and from the way artists described their experience of the LoI, it seems that a convivial environment was successfully created, and artists felt positively affected from it. An environment based on caring and mutual understanding was created and it benefited most of the artists both in the way they experienced their residency time and in the way in which

they enriched their practices. Exploring research methods, in a way that both differences and similarities are acknowledged, showed to be an interesting tool to build a convivial environment in the context of an art residency. However, this exploration is twofold: on one hand it can enhance the creation of a convivial environment, on the other hand it can make artists advance in their own practice. This line of reasoning brought me to explore the usefulness of reflectivity and materiality as two different ways, for two different contexts, to explore one's research. In this case, if meta-reflectivity seemed to be an effective tool to share and expand on one's research practice, materiality was not necessarily perceived as such by artists. Finally, the rhizome, a concept that accompanied my research practice, was introduced as a conceptual tool to explore the developments of the collective installation. The installation, as shown in the figures, developed rhizomatically by creating space for new connections and line of flights, through means of processes of territorialization and deterritorialization.

This internship report brought to the fore my attempt to create new tools to enact conviviality through the exploration of artistic investigation in the context of an art residency. Ultimately, as a first experience moderating a program, I consider it to be an extremely successful experience: the knowledge gained from the LoI will be a useful tool not just in my professional life but also in my future relationships as a human. Finally, as I was nearing the end of the report, I discovered that MArt had changed into A-BASE which is a new residency program launched from MArt's directors. It was while browsing their new program, that I found out that the Laboratory of Investigation was kept as part of their new pedagogical offer. In my opinion, the fact that A-BASE decided to continue implementing the program, with all the due changes, means that the LoI was a successful experiment.

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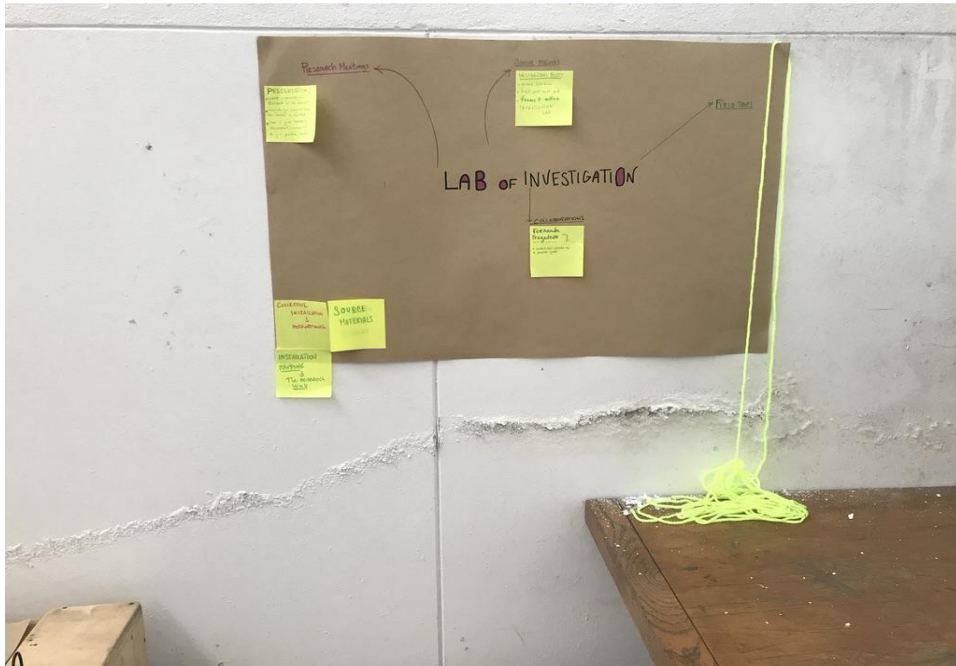


Figure 1: Office desk. Photo: Federico Castoldi

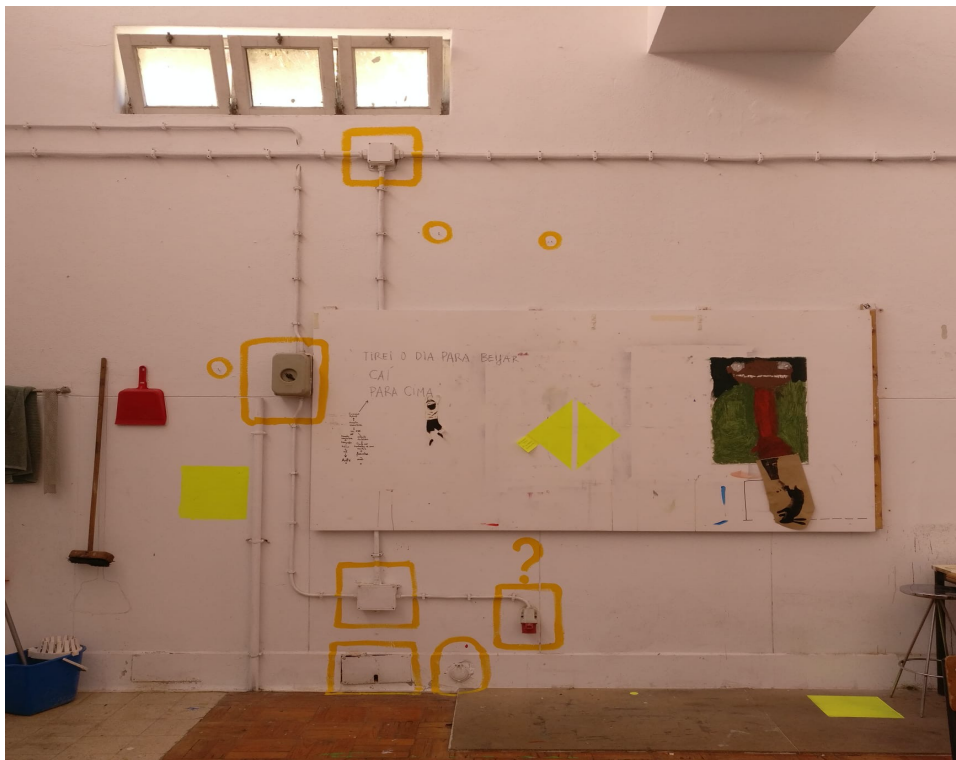


Figure 2: Installation in October 2020. Photo: Federico Castoldi



Figure 3: Installation in November. Photo: Federico Castoldi



Figure 4: Installation in January. Photo: Federico Castoldi

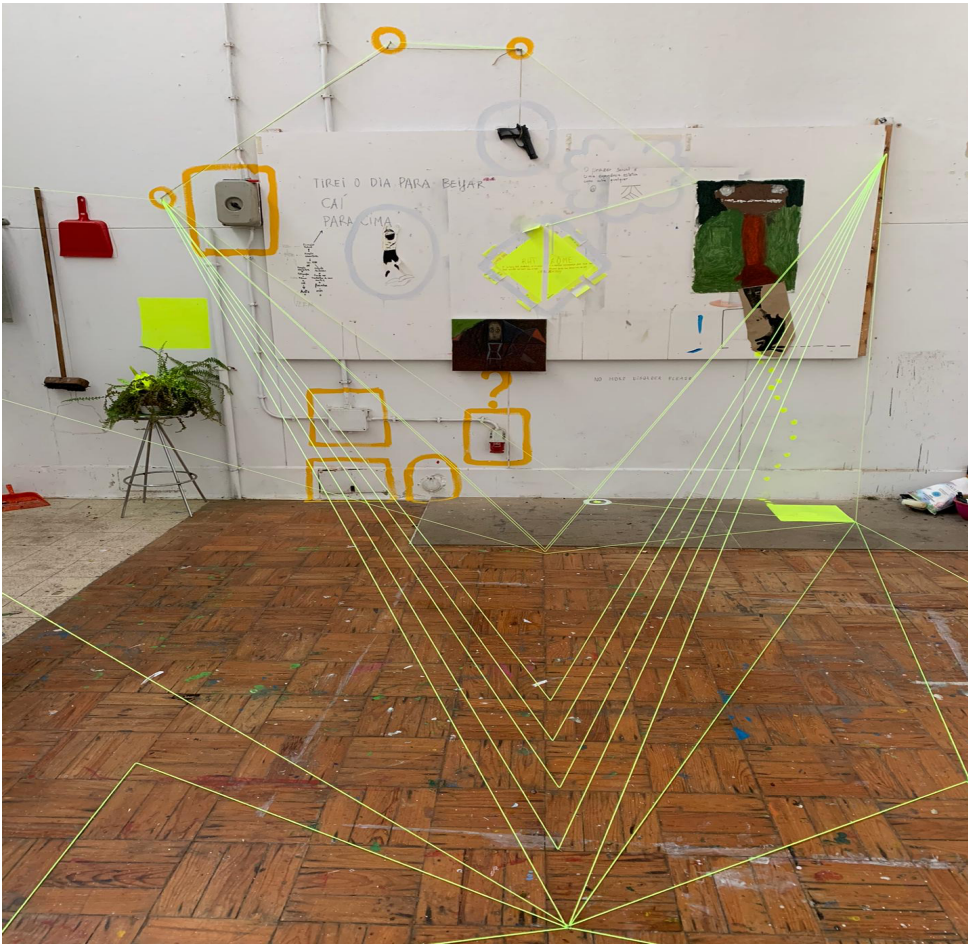


Figure 5: installation in January from a different angle. Photo: Federico Castoldi.



Figure 6. Thread being walked over during tutorial meetings. Photo: Federico Castoldi



Figure 7. Installation in february. Photo: Federico Castoldi



Figure 8: Snapshot taken from one of the resident's instagram posts. Photo: Anonymus

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