

EDITORIAL

RENDERING RESEARCH

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What does it mean to render research? How does the rendering of research typically reinforce certain limitations of thought and action? We ask these questions in the context of more and more demands on researchers to produce academic outputs in standardised forms, in peer-reviewed journals and such like that are legitimised by normative values. So, then, how to render research otherwise?

To clarify what is meant by “rendering”, we are curious how research takes material forms, how it reaches its public, and is granted approval by academic gatekeepers. To render, then, is to give something “cause to be” or “hand over” (from the Latin *reddere* “give back”) and enter into an obligation to do or make something like a decision. More familiar perhaps in computing, to render is to take an image or file and convert it into another format or apply a modification of some kind, or in the case of 3D animation or scanning. To render is to animate it or give it volume.

These initial thoughts set the scene for a number of speculations on what it might mean to render research, to give it volumetric form. [1] In “Rendering Volumetrically, Rendering Queerly”, Vitor Blanco-Fernández argues for 3D/volumetric aesthetics as an ideal space for queer research. Rendering might also be described as a supply chain problem, something Miriam Matthiessen and Anne Lee Steele claim in the context of the current widespread shortages of goods, and the inherent difficulties of the supply of research objects. Or is part of the problem how we quantify research, what is considered to be research or not? According to One Research Collective (Andrea Macias-Yañez, Séverine Chapelle, Caterina Selva, Giovanna Reder, Sanjana Varghese) “waste pedagogy” can help draw attention to the ways in which academic waste can take collective and relational forms, remaining more open-ended and messy to amplify the in-between space

of thinking, feeling and knowing. Their contribution is suitably concise.

Contributors approach the rendering of research from a wide range of perspectives. Live-action role-playing gaming (LARP) can, according to Malthe Stavning Erslev, be understood as a practice of mimesis, as an effective way to render research (in this case relating to the design of artificial intelligence systems). Similarly (although in the context of security vision) Ruben van de Ven and Ildikó Zonga Plájás look to diagramming as a means to shift attention to process, and to “con-figure” complex, sometimes even incompatible concepts and narratives in a shared space. Sheung Yiu describes his “Hyperimage Index” in which collective indexing is offered as an alternative to academic publishing, suggesting new ways of knowledge making and community building to address the distributed nature of algorithmic image systems. There is a more explicit connection between research and social movements in Hanna Grześkiewicz’s case study of the 2020/21 Women’s Strike protests in Poland, questioning the purpose of archiving and to what extent artistic research can be a form of knowledge-development, and more importantly a rendering of research with political effects. In the context of the proliferation of everyday AI agents such as virtual assistants and chatbots, Alexandra Anikina introduces the term “procedural animism” to rethink the questions of governance and relationality unfolding between humans and non-humans, and ultimately to render political imaginaries that offer the potential for alternative futures, thus giving shape to a (socialist) AI.

Clearly there is space for more dynamic and messy forms of research than those developed in typical academic journals and the reputation economy of academic publishing. We hasten to add that this issue of APRJA (indeed all issues) is part of a longer process

of development and reflection, which includes an open call for participation, a live-streamed online event as part of transmediale festival in January 2022,[2] as well as a workshop taking place at École de recherche graphique (ERG), in Brussels, March 2022.

The performative qualities of rendering research are also evident in “Re:searching Together (in Two Acts)”, the visual “scriptal remains” of two performances presented by artist-researchers Clareese Hill and Elly Clarke from both the live streamed presentation at transmediale and at ERG. And, perhaps, rendering research is best exemplified by the working practices leading to this publication. For instance, in the use of a web-based collaborative real-time editor (or ‘pad’) through which participants — both presenters and the audience — publish their thoughts as a collective performance, attempting to define rendering research in real-time, and in silence (without the authority of the master’s voice), to unsettle static forms of research exchange.[3] Moreover, the workshop at ERG was part of the iterative process and resulted in a risograph publication produced within the time-frame of the workshop itself. [4] The rendering of research in this case makes explicit the process through which the publication was produced and made publicly available (using free software tools and scripts).

— Aarhus/London, Autumn 2022

Rendering Research was organised by Digital Aesthetics Research Centre, Aarhus University, and Centre for the Study of the Networked Image, London South Bank University, with École de recherche graphique in Brussels, and transmediale festival for digital art & culture.

Thanks to all workshop participants and contributors to the journal for their patience with the process, our peer reviewers for their help, and transmediale for their ongoing support.

Notes

[1] See *Volumetric Regimes: material cultures of quantified presence*, edited by Possible Bodies (Jara Rocha and Femke Snelling), Open Humanities Press 2022, available at <http://www.data-browser.net/db08.html>.

[2] A recording of the livestreamed event as part of transmediale 2022 can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MwCudCokIA&list=PL9oInMFdRIwSfNt2fgdj5WoQPpeK4Ch4B&index=1>. This includes short presentations by Alexandra Anikina, Clareese Hill, Elly Clarke, Sheung Yiu, Castillo, AMOQA (Athens Museum of Queer Arts), Malthe Stavning, Erslev Vítor Blanco-Fernández, The Re:Source Project (Anne Lee Steele & Miriam Matthiessen), Ruben van de Ven, Agnès Villette, Paul Bailey, Hanna Grześkiewicz, Rachel Falconer, Lee Tzu Tung, Cassandra Collective, Yasmine Boudiaf, One Research Collective (Andrea Macias-Yañez, Séverine Chapelle, Caterina Selva, Giovanna Reder, Sanjana Varghese), and Kyveli Mavrokordopoulou.

[3] Hosted by Varia, the pad used as part of the livestreamed event can be found at <https://pad.vvvvvaria.org/rendering>.

[4] The print publication can be downloaded from <https://archive.transmediale.de/content/rendering-research> and <https://darc.au.dk/publications/peer-reviewed-newspaper>. In addition to the contributions here, it includes Agnès Villette, Rachel Falconer, Lee Tzu Tung, and Kyveli Mavrokordopoulou.

defeating the fear of blank page by writing this thank you +1 +1 +1+1
 developing new or old paradigms that break out of tired instrumental forms of
 research – less problem-solving and more problem-posing
 speaking into the silence
 allowing a silence
 sitting with the silence completely difficult in urban settings. I find that
 there is broader need to empower people through "breath work" without sounding
 too "new age"
 learning from the silence +1, i often feel so much pressure to have constant
 speech and sound in the digital space, and to use a voice that feels like a
 odd, customer-service version of my own – yes! the service provider in a shop
 that is not our own, selling ourselves
 lurking with the silence yes also very much lurking.
 what is it to lurk in the digital realm? the default state
 at some point you need to pee. lol yes.
 ambient sound+1 in translation is like those youtube videos 'cafe working
 ambiance environment'yes! keys tapping. a hum... sounds from another era..
 'office sounds 4 hours' hehe. i reckon that'll have a following..tap tap click
 click
 From speaking aloud, to writing within
 to typing together. enjoying someones type/taps/texts. It's stopped.
 writing alongside people we do not know.
 a masked ball of the (post) pandemic 2020s.
 Creating (digital) space, savoring it
 Research rendering and trying to unseat how academia operates is an important
 issue as people are leaving these academic epicenters such as NYC, London, LA
 for a better quality of life and how life is not about the performance of it
 all but having the space to rest and not have to perform. How space impacts
 research, what is research it laying in the grass a sort of research?
 let's break out of the authorship nonsense – and reputation economic soft
 research; yes please !
 while acknowledgement and credit for intellectual work are important, it is
 also urgent to operate beyond the narrative framework of "the hero's journey"
 both as subject and object of narration in academic research i agree totally
 with this.+1
 How can we break out of academic engagement when the language of academia is
 one that often disenfranchises as much as it empowers? (what often feels like
 its innate inaccessibility)+1+1+1+1+1+1 +1+1
 Isn't it about introducing, or rescripting modes of articulation – beyond the
 presentation/slideshow/paper/conference, etc? Existing forms are encoded by the
 institutions.
 yes also at least choosing arxiv instead of academia.edu [need platforms that
 enable academic exchange freely] yes – platform use as a form of politics, pads
 instead of google docs, etc.?
 The restrictions of participating in academic / para-academic research means
 that compromises are made all over – linguistic, methodology, partnerships...
 it's self-censorship for economic survival... trying to creatively and secretly
 make spaces for moments of joy / resistance / justice.

Chat -

use of the pads: have a look at our website <https://varia.zone/en/> for more information about our collective and what we do :)

unnamed: thank you! 16:12
this is a great tool

unnamed: Bugger, i just 16:18
missed it

crunk: 16:20
<https://varia.zone/en/pages/collective-infrastructures.html>

unnamed: thank you 16:21
for your infrastructure labor & the pad!

mb: Your welcome! :) 16:22
Nice to have so many unexpected networked peers today

Write your message here

Figure 1 & 2: Extracts from pad and risograph cover print (overleaf).



