




PHOTOGRAPHY IN ARTS-BASED EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

LA FOTOGRAFÍA EN LA INVESTIGACIÓN EDUCATIVA
BASADA EN LAS ARTES

Dr. José María Mesías-Lema

University of A Coruna  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8278-7115>

Dr. Ricard Ramon

Universitat de València  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1009-2589>

Abstract

This article discusses the use of photography as a pedagogical artefact and documentation tool for Arts-based Educational Research. Its implementation is accomplished through the collaborative project “Ways to make worlds”, developed by two Spanish universities. This project delves into the educational discourses, methodologies and thinking through performative actions using photography. These actions constitute a means of subverting the classroom and reflecting on it, above all, by focusing on the initial training of teachers in the visual arts. The results of the actions allow us to visualize the spaces of reflection and analysis that the participants develop with their own bodies, acquiring a new way of thinking and offering an instrument of artistic action to engage educationally in their future classrooms.

Key words

performative actions; Arts-based Educational Research; photography; art education; teacher training; visual culture.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza el uso de la fotografía como artefacto y documentación pedagógica de la investigación educativa basada en las artes. Su puesta en práctica se materializa a través del proyecto colaborativo “Maneras de hacer mundos”, entre dos universidades españolas. Este ahonda en los discursos docentes, sus metodologías y su pensamiento a través de acciones performativas mediante el uso de la fotografía. Dichas acciones constituyen una manera de subvertir el aula y reflexionar sobre ella, sobre todo, al centrarnos en la formación inicial del profesorado en artes visuales. Los resultados de las acciones permiten visualizar los espacios de reflexión y análisis que los participantes desarrollan con su propio cuerpo, adquirir una nueva forma de pensar y ofrecer un instrumento de acción artística para actuar educativamente en sus aulas en el futuro.

Palabras clave

acciones performativas; investigación educativa basada en las artes; fotografía; educación artística; formación docente; cultura visual.

1. INTRODUCTION

The creative research impulse over the last twenty years has been driven by the influence of critical, activist, feminist, participatory, democratic or ethnographic discourses, typical of pluralistic fields such as the arts (Janesick, 2003), and they configurate a more coherent approach to the exploration of social complexities in the contemporary world. Within the postmodern paradigm and liquid modernity (Bauman, 2003), the debate about the need for new ways to approach knowledge, also within the field of Arts-based Research, is booming, mainly within education and art therapy.

Conducting research by means of an artistic methodology involves the tension established between the divergent and non-conformist aesthetic vision of art and its contribution to educational processes. This approach demands that research be approached from a polyhedral, non-reductionist and fully integrated view of the means for art creation and production in the world of education. For this reason, we will delve into the intersections that enable the emergence of Arts-based Educational Research. Initially, it derives from sources of the qualitative paradigm, influenced by *Participatory Action Research* (James, Milenkiewick & Bucknam, 2008) and from the narrative urn in educational and artistic research (Denzin, 1989; Bolivar, Domingo & Fernández, 2001; Goodley, 2004).

Given the largely social nature of the Arts-based Educational Research, various handbooks have been published that demonstrate the impact of Arts-based Educational Research in contemporary educational and artistic processes (Mulvihill & Swaminathan, 2020); *Handbook of Arts-Based Research* (Leavy, 2018); *The Routledge International handbook of Arts and Education* (Fleming, Bresler & O'Toole, 2015); *The Oxford handbook of Qualitative Research* (Leavy, 2014); *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011); *The Routledge International Handbook of creative learning* (Sefton-Green, Thomson, Jones & Bresler, 2011); *Qualitative Inquiry: Thematic, Narrative and Arts-based Approaches* (Butler-Kisber, 2010); *Handbook of Public Pedagogy* (Sandlin, Schultz & Burdick, 2010); *Handbook of Emergent Methods* (Leavy, 2008); *Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education* (Eisner & Day, 2004).

2. ARTS-BASED RESEARCH

In art education research, the debate centers on the development of a new methodological approach based on artistic processes (Agra, 2005; Sullivan, 2005; Bresler, 2007, Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund 2008; Hernández, 2008; Irwin & Springgay, 2008; Butler-Kisber, 2010; Marín, 2011, Barone & Eisner, 2012; Mesías-Lema, 2012; Leavy, 2015). Arts-based research uses a methodology that is inherent to the artistic disciplines: dance, theater, performance, painting, photography, sculpture, ceramics... and goes beyond the textual, coherently employing the aesthetic, productive and discursive languages of artistic subjects being researched. Shaun McNiff (2004, pp. 49-50) states that Arts-based Research and scientific research share a commitment to innovation and creative imagination. "Scientism" is the one that distances itself from artistic methods.

The originality of Arts-based Research lies in the integration of introspective, autobiographical and personal methods without sacrificing deep discourse analysis. Research in the artistic field avoids aseptic laboratories that control all quantifiable variables because, among other things, art is immersed in life and life is anything but

sterile, quantified or predictable. Furthermore, if we refer to personal introspection as a mode of identity-based research, it stimulates the narration of life stories, experienced in the first person by the artist-researcher who, without a doubt, enables the advancement of theory derived from practice and not the other way around. Positioning oneself in the artistic research field is an extremely stimulating and especially discreet task. It is stimulating because of the passion and dedication to a field of knowledge characterized, mainly, by its innovation, originality and usefulness of the visual and textual contributions. It is discreet in the sense of professional responsibility. The criticisms that concern this mode of research coincide in understanding the personal narrative as subjective. This misinterpreted subjectivity produces scientific uncertainty and therefore, as researchers, we must face our work under the *ethics of risk*, assuming with the greatest professional commitment the complexity of this type of artistic inquiry.

3. ARTS-BASED EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Barone and Eisner (2006) claim that Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER) results from two inseparable criteria. In the first place, ABER intends to intensify human actions associated with artistic activity (visual, plastic, scenic, musical arts, etc.), but with an educational and, consequently, instructive character. Secondly, ABER is characterized by the presence of aesthetic qualities or design elements that accompany both the research process and the artistic object developed during the research. These aesthetic qualities are different depending on the artistic field where the researcher is located.

We can say that ABER is a way of researching educational contexts through procedures, techniques, documents, methodologies and artistic strategies. The purpose of ABER is to open new perspectives of artistic action that are much more situated in the educational phenomena being researched. The change in the research approach and in the presentation of results has creative, aesthetic and artistic dimensions. ABER generates questions that guide pragmatic knowledge by learning about artistic processes in education. ABER cannot be understood from a purely theoretical standpoint, detached from the educational reality. Both fields, the educational and the artistic, are characterized by organic and action-oriented contexts, therefore, theoretical research detached from practice has no place in this type of methodology.

This artistic vision of educational research requires the use of languages that are more in line with contemporary manifestations: installations, live-cinema, performances, happenings, net-art, body-art, video-art, land-art, etc. The researcher closely observes the educational context, not in order to analyze it superficially and predictably, but rather to encourage, with artistic methodologies, a creative attitude that enables an understanding of what happens in educational contexts. ABER has a number of advantages (cited in Agra, 2005, p.138; Marín 2005, p.253; Hernández, 2008; Barone & Eisner 2012, p. 41) namely: Reflexivity, through the introspection of our identity as researchers; Empathy, because we develop a deeper understanding of situational contexts and the people within them; Authenticity and sense of reality; Coherence with the educational and artistic complexity (ABER implies a complex learning process and the artistic material produced evocatively shows the complexity of the researched situational context better than other forms of academic discourse); Plurality and depth of questions; Holistic approach that expands the capacity and view of the researcher; Capability to be amazed, making the ordinary become extraordinary, insofar as it provokes, innovates and breaks down resistance, leading us to consider new ways of seeing or doing things; Community, making the personal, social and the private, public.

Similarly, there are also a number of drawbacks when it comes to developing this type of research. In the academic field, there is still resistance originating in the use of hybrid languages with the presence of non-textual elements that are not contemplated by a traditional system with rigid publication rules (doctoral theses, research journals or handbooks). Anything new raises questions, insecurities and doubts that collide with so-called scientific rigor. This does not mean that everything in ABER is valid. We are aware of the danger that, under the protection of this flexible methodology, shallow or low-quality research may be presented. But this should not hinder change, both in terms of academic thinking and in expanding the concept of research to other presentations of scientific work. Achieving full recognition of this type of research is a challenge that involves the entire community of Arts Education researchers.

In the artistic field, many artists express their reluctance regarding the fact that an artistic work or process can be adapted through the use of formulae or guidelines towards tailor-made scientific research. From their point of view, aesthetics already has its own language, discourse and corpus and therefore does not need to be constantly justified for approval in other fields of knowledge.

In the personal domain, research is associated with a presumed objectivity that collides with the philosophy of ABER researchers. The personal experience of the researcher is necessary because he/she is located within a situational context where he/she can observe and participate. The researcher is not on the sidelines, but as a participating subject, is filtered through the cracks in the research process. This can pose problems when it comes to giving scientific "validity" to ABER. Researchers, being part of a community as subjects, have to be especially careful about how their personal experience affects the process. Sometimes the vision of an event can be conditioned by *pollutants* of the unconscious.

4. PHOTOGRAPHY-EDUCATIONAL BASED RESEARCH (PEBR)

This type of ABER is a visual method that uses photography in educational contexts with a threefold approach (descriptive, interpretative and artistic) and responds, first, to the potential of photography as a specific type of image with its own character, defining and exclusive, whose practice, reflection and production for research on educational activities is photographic. Secondly, it conceives photography from a twofold perspective: on the one hand, as a contemporary artistic practice within the educational, formative and research context; and, on the other hand, as a reflection of the students' artistic learning process. This implies thinking about photography from an introspective viewpoint that questions how we observe, produce and interpret photographs, but also looks at the subject, asking how we are seen, how we see others and even recognizing the other's gaze in teaching and learning processes (Prosser, 1998). Finally, photography is established as a research method because it allows us to approach students' photographic narratives in an interpretative way, inferring new scientific and technological perspectives aimed at a more comprehensive knowledge of the relationship between research and practice in visual arts education.



Image 1. Student working on the project with her camera. Source: authors

We agree with Ricardo Marín's (2019) proposal to understand the image as a photography-based scientific argument in Educational Research, at the same epistemological level as text. It must be articulated as a photographic discourse, similar to the approach for explaining and quoting texts or text fragments in research papers. Regardless of the way in which the visual is presented in academic publications, photography has become a transcendent and revolutionary instrument in educational research. Its use is reflected in two ways, as visual documentation of pedagogical acts and as artistic creation that generates pedagogical actions in the art education classroom.

5. PHOTOGRAPHY AS VISUAL DOCUMENTATION OF PEDAGOGICAL EVENTS

Photography is essential as an instrument of analysis, reflection and self-evaluation of one's own teaching work, and allows for a greater integration of teachers with the work of their students. In addition, it enables the assessment of all classroom processes and a visual record of the educational practices developed, in order to improve their practice, update it and adapt their methodology. The visual documentation of pedagogical acts constitutes true ABER when it is capable of showing the process as well as constituting scientific evidence at a visual level, capable of opening new lines of teaching practice aimed at improving the quality of art education in the classroom. For this reason, this use of photography differs from a mere record-keeping function that we find in research where the teacher does not participate and where students are given total freedom, without any serious training behind the artistic actions carried out in the educational context.

Our proposal for the scientific use of photography understands that it does not work as a simple record or a mere testimony of the events, but it is integrated into the teacher's own practice, as a researcher and from an artistic standpoint. When teachers inhabit the classroom with their cameras, they become actors of this experience, and as a permanent part of daily pedagogical practices. This scientific methodology is completed with the visualization of the photographs and the knowledge shared between teachers and students, as a visual result of images understood as artifacts. This closes a permanent circle of collaborative learning where all the arts-based educational research participants are involved.



Image 2. A couple of students experimenting with photography in the classroom according to the proposed ABER project. Source: authors.

The visual narrative of teaching practices and learning processes is an active and fundamental agent, which participates in the process and is not limited to witnessing it as a mere observer. From the very moment that the action of taking pictures of the students' work and educational practices is established, the teacher is integrated in a much more intimate way and approaches the deep understanding of the work process with maximum interest. The objective should be to capture the essence of the practices and the thinking process of their own students with images. This way, the students perceive the teacher's interest and involvement in the teaching-learning process and their integration in a work that they perceive as a collective action. It also functions as visual inquiry and an artistic and aesthetic creation, in an essential and symbolic-signifying sense of the learning process. Photography, within this particular recording model, generates the possibility for students to see and reflect on their own work, along with their teachers, assuming the role of active researcher of their learning, thus remarkably amplifying the pedagogical possibilities of any teaching practice.

6. TEACHER TRAINING THROUGH CONTEMPORARY ART PHOTOGRAPHY

Using photography in teacher training is a fundamental and essential working methodology and should not be limited to the domain of art education professionals. We live in a society and a time where the use of images constitutes one of the main means of communication, information, learning and knowledge creation. Something that has been repeatedly stated, but is a necessary consideration, is that the use and presence of images in the social environment is not reflected in the classrooms.



Image 3. Ways to Make Worlds. Analog photography. 2017. Source: authors.



Image 4. Actions by some students within the ABER project "Ways to Make Worlds". Source: authors.



Image 5. Tatsumi Orimoto, 16 drums and 16 people, 2001-2002.

Furthermore, it is important to consider that working with images requires a visual literacy and a knowledge of how symbolic worlds are built, and this requires a previous training process. Knowledge of the photographic medium enables the application of the tools that artistic languages provide as instruments to amplify the fields and methodologies of work that can be activated in a classroom. This considerably enriches the entire learning process at any educational level.

The use of images as a teaching and research tool will be logically different from their social presence, understanding the latter as the unreflected daily practice developed by human beings in their social and cultural environment. On the contrary, the use of images in teacher training should generate processes of critical reflection, activation of thought and construction of thoughts from photographic images. Therefore, images, as training tools, must always be understood as instruments of knowledge, of meditated creation and of constructive narration.





Images 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Landscape I. Self Portraits, Levi van Veluw (<https://levivanveluw.com/work/older-works-portraits-part-i>).

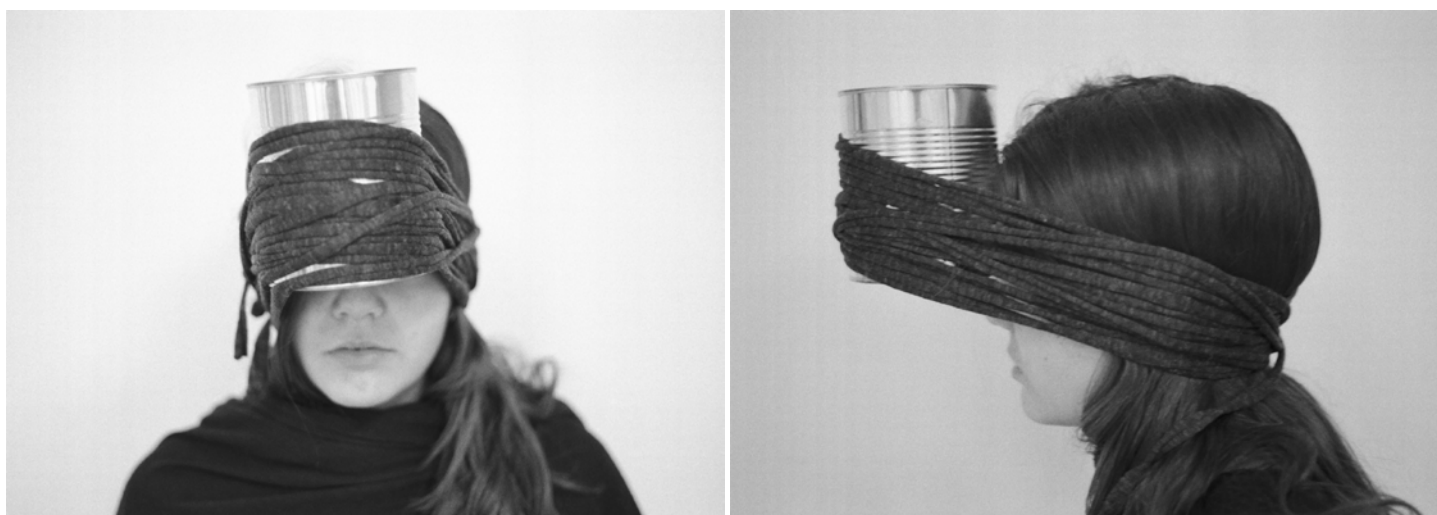


Image 11. Students representing their artistic actions for the project. Source: authors.

The fact that images themselves constitute a form of thought and knowledge construction, as valid as any form of textual narrative, is a concept that is still far from being embraced by a significant portion of teachers at all educational levels. This is one of the reasons that makes working with photography more urgent, since it is one of the main and most accessible tools for generating images, linked to contemporary social environments and practices.

In addition, we must contribute to the understanding of photography as a means of artistic creation, and comprehend the symbolic power, the creative potential and the ability to build narratives of estrangement from reality and the everyday environment. We are facing a medium that allows us to permanently question our position in the world, as art does.

From the perspective of photography as artistic creation in education, we will refer to contemporary narrative photography (Mesías-Lema, 2012, p. 143). Photographic productions pertaining to contemporary art focus on fictional accounts of events, on the capacity or ability to narrate through visual semiotics and on discourse, that is, on its rhetorical potential within the cultural context where it is produced. Therefore, we understand that contemporary narrative photography is that which problematizes its communicative functions within the field of visual arts and engages in the construction of its own discourses under activism that is based on communicative and political resistance. It is photography that questions itself.



Images 12 y 13. Ways to Make Worlds. Analog photography, 2016. Source: authors.

The project “Ways to make worlds” (<https://culturavisual.cc/waysofworldmaking/>) develops within these processes of research, reflection and educational practice that must be integrated into the experience developed in the classrooms, which are based on photography in artistic-educational research work. The aim of this ABER is to generate visual thinking, building a photographic discourse, from practice and artistic action, both aesthetic and performative.

The project is named in accordance with the main idea underlying the texts of the philosopher Nelson Goodman (1995) on the construction of new worlds as a form of learning and knowledge construction. It begins with a performative artistic experience whose concept of estrangement is a way of finding new personal stances with respect to the classroom, teaching and the role of teachers and students themselves, as well as their practices as agents of transformation. We understand that the educational process is essentially a process of creating new worlds, with the resource of creative imagination as a way to generate active thinking and build knowledge, because “worlds

are not only made by what is literally said but also by what is metaphorically said” (Goodman, 1990, p. 38).



Image 14. Tatsumi Orimoto, Clock Man, 1991.



Image 15. Tatsumi Orimoto, Bread Man Son Alzheimer Mama, 1996.

“Ways of making worlds” is an ABER that attempts to build models and investigative experiences to subvert the classroom with photography as a scientific method (Ramon, 2019a, 2019b; Messiah-Slogan, 2017), from strategies of estrangement, that challenge the student’s own inclination to see the classroom in a certain way and, consequently,

to conceptualize education in a very reductionist manner. This enables a change in the mindset of future teachers and a personal rethinking of the educational process at the methodological level. With this, a reflection is generated where photography has an enormous power of transformation as a learning tool in the inquiry process, from an aesthetic stance.

It also connects to a mode of scientific development based on self-study, a form of research that starts with self-reflection as teacher training. It enables a deeper understanding of the relationship between teaching and learning (Loughran & Rusell, 2002). In research based on self-study, collaboration and joint work with other teachers is fundamental, as part of the research process (Silva-Peña et al, 2017).

In this ABER, students construct a photographic proposal, from the actions and interactions of their own body as a participating and active referential element, in a performative action designed to be visually recorded. In this process, they must activate their imaginative and creative thinking to formulate a photograph that they must previously construct and visualize. This leads them to exercise a completely new and different vision, towards an environment that they perceive as a formalized space of education and that they must see with other eyes now, from this process of estrangement. They have to interpret, from their own bodily presence, and from the bodily presence of others and the objects that, by chance or in a meditated way, they have decided to use in their visual composition. Thus, estrangement functions as a transformative learning objective.

One of the most important consequences of this type of research practice is to confirm the necessary involvement of teachers in teaching practices. By becoming involved as an artist-teacher-researcher, the teacher manages to generate an interaction process, shared commitment and teacher-student cooperation. The teachers' commitment with the entire process, as an active part and alongside photography, completely changes the climate and the conditions of the environment, building upon the experience generated, a process of learning and dialogue between teachers and students about the practices they are carrying out together. The dialogue extends, in that same experience, to the teachers involved in a work that is necessarily collective.



Image 16. A student enclosed in a cardboard box during her artistic action in the development of the project. Source: authors.



Image 17. Tatsumi Orimoto, Art Mama, in the big box, 1997.

All of this is within the framework of pedagogical reflection that implies the understanding, for all the agents involved, that there are forms of teaching and learning practices based on the construction of creative worlds (Goodman, 1990, 1995) and co-participants, beyond the educational comfort zones that institutionalization tends to create. These research models break, through the process of estrangement generated, with the static and bidirectional conception of learning and encourage the use and educational reinterpretation of materials, environments, objects and everyday spaces. This allows future teachers to observe themselves in relation to these concepts and their future professional practice, under a different perspective, stimulating them to open pedagogical fields of action that have photography as an instrument of symbolic creation and the creation of new non-conventional knowledge that is much more enriching and significant.



Image 18. Ways to Make Worlds. Analog photography, 2016. Source: Ricard Ramon.

7. REFERENCES

- Agra Pardiñas, M. J. (2005). "El vuelo de la mariposa: la investigación artístico-narrativa como herramienta de formación". En Marín, R. (coord.). *Investigación en Educación Artística*. Publicaciones de la Universidad de Granada, 127-150.
- Barone, T. y Eisner, E. (2006). "Arts-Based Educational Research". En Green y Elmore (eds.). *Complementary Methods for Research in Education*. American Educational Research Association, 95-109.
- Barone, T. y Eisner, E. (2012). *Arts Based Research*. Sage Publications.
- Bauman, Z. (2003). *Modernidad líquida*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Bolívar, A., Domingo, J. y Fernández, M. (2001). *La investigación biográfico-narrativa en educación. Enfoque y metodología*. La Muralla.
- Bresler, L. (ed.) (2007). *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education*. Springer.
- Butler-Kisber, L. (2010). *Qualitative Inquiry: Thematic, Narrative and Arts-based Approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Cahnmann-Taylor, M. y Siegesmund, R. (2008). *Arts-based Research in Education: Foundations for Practice*. Routledge.
- Denzin, N. (1989). *Interpretative biography. Qualitative Research Methods*. Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K. y Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The sage handbook of qualitative research*. Sage Publications.
- Eisner, E. (1998). *El ojo ilustrado. Indagación cualitativa y mejora de la práctica educativa*. Paidós.
- Eisner, E. y Day, M. D. (2004). *Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education*. NAEA.
- Goodley, D. et al. (2004). *Researching life stories. Method, theory and analysis in a biographical age*. Routledge.
- Goodman, N. (1990). *Maneras de hacer mundos*. Visor.
- Goodman, N. (1995). *De la mente y otras materias*. Visor.
- Hernández, F. (2008). *La investigación basada en las artes: Propuestas para repensar la investigación en Educación*. *Educatio Siglo XXI*, 26, 85-118.
- James, E. A.; Milenkiewicz, M.T. y Bucknam, A. (2008). *Participatory Action Research for Educational Leadership*. Sage Publications.
- Janesick, V. J. (2003). *The Choreography of Qualitative Research Design: Minuets, Improvisations and Crystallization*. En Lincoln, N. K. y Denzin, Y. S. (eds). *Strategies of Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications, 379-400.
- Leavy, P. (2015): *Methods meets Art: Arts-based Research Practice*. Guilford Press.
- Leavy, P. (ed.) (2018). *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*. Guilford Press.
- Loughran, J. y Russell, T. (2002). *Improving Teacher Education Practices Through Self-Study*. Routledge.
- Marín-Viadel, R. (coord.). (2005). *Investigación en Educación Artística*. Universidad de Granada.

- Marín-Viadel, R. (2011). La Investigación en Educación Artística. *Educatio Siglo XXI*, 29 (1), 211-230. <https://revistas.um.es/educatio/article/view/119951>
- Marín-Viadel, R. (2019). Microteorías inestables sobre artes visuales y educación. En *Miradas Caleidoscópicas. Educación Artística visual en las culturas contemporáneas*. Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.
- Mesías-Lema, J. M. (2012). Fotografía y Educación de las Artes Visuales: el fotoactivismo educativo como estrategia docente en la formación del profesorado. Universidad de Granada,
- Mesías-Lema, J. M. (2017). Art Teacher Training: a photo essay. *International Journal of Education through Art*, 13(3), 395-404. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7203/eari.9.10927>
- McNiff, S. (2004). *Art-based Research*. Jessica Kingsley.
- Mulvihill, T. & Swaminathan, R. (2020): *Arts-Based Educational Research and Qualitative Inquiry: Walking the Path*. Routledge.
- Prosser, J. (ed.). (1998). *Image-based Research. A sourcerbook for qualitative researchers*. Falmer Press.
- Ramon, R. (2019a). Prácticas artísticas de visualización entre cuerpo y objeto en entornos de mediación pedagógica. *Arte, Individuo y Sociedad*, 31(13), 509-526. <https://doi.org/10.5209/aris.60881>
- Ramon, R. (2019b). La fotografía como forma de conocimiento pedagógico, frente a los otros y el mundo. *Invisibilidades. Revista ibero-americana de pesquisa em educação, cultura e artes*, 11, 20-27.
- Sandlin, J., Schultz, Brian D. y Burdick, J. (eds). (2010). *Handbook of Public Pedagogy. Education and learning beyond schooling*. : Routledge.
- Sefton-Green, J., Thomson, P., Jones, K., y Bresler, L. (2011). *The Routledge International Handbook of creative learning*. Routledge.
- Silva-Peña, I., Moreno Tello, P., Santibáñez Gómez, D., Gutiérrez Villegas, M., Flores González, M., Orrego Lepe, C., y Nocetti de la Barra, A. (2017). Self-study como proceso de formación de formadores/as: reflexiones en medio del camino. En G. González-García, I. Silva-Peña, C. Sepúlveda-Parra, & T. Del Valle Contreras (Eds.), *Investigación para la formación de profesores*. Santiago de Chile: Universidad Católica Silva Henríquez.
- Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L. & Wilson Kind, S. (2005). *A/r/tography as Living Inquiry Through Art and Text*. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(6), 897-912. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405280696>
- Sullivan, G. (2005). *Art practice as research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*. Sage.

José María Mesías Lema is Associate Professor of Art Education (tenured) at the University of A Coruña-UDC, Spain. He was Vice-Dean of International Relations, Deputy Vice- Rector and Director of Art Cultural Center NORMAL (www.istoenormal.org) in the same University. He is also head of the research group ArteFacto-UDC (www.artefacto.org), which focuses on contemporary art processes in diverse educational contexts. He is an activist educator and a promoter of sensitive learning for the defense of human rights, with a Ph.D. in Visual Arts and Education from the University of Granada. His educational research is based on contemporary art education and visual arts, exploring an activist pedagogical approach to the sensitivity of artistic education and its input in students' lives. It explores the sensitive power of transforming the potential of relational aesthetics in professional training and teachers' development. His latest research generates projects on schools, where inhabitant artists build spaces as experimental laboratories in Art Education.

jose.mesias@udc.es

Ricard Ramon. Universitat de València. Doctor in Aesthetics and Art Theory. Graduate in History of Art and in Fine Arts. Professor of Art Education in the Department of Didactics of Musical, Plastic and Corporal Expression, researcher at the Institute of Creativity and Educational Innovations, member of the CREARI research group, coordinator of the EFÍMERE Mixed Research Unit and member of the Arte-Facto group.

ricard.ramon@valencia.edu