

Re-enactment, Replication, Reconstruction
Performative Methodologies in History of Science, Archaeology, Conservation,
Musicology and Anthropology
12 – 16 June 2017 @Oort

This workshop's goals were to reflect on reconstruction, re-enactment and replication (RRR) practices across the fields of history of science, archaeology, conservation, musicology and anthropology research, and to learn from each other. Until now, disciplinary connections have been a rare exception, approaches to RRR having been developed within the disciplines themselves. In the RRR workshop, they were made accessible to the other disciplines, and experiences were exchanged.

Partly funded through the ERC Artechne project, the workshop brought together specialists and junior researchers (PhD/Postdoc level) from these fields. Three additional places for junior participants were advertised and candidates selected based on their CV and motivation. Three interdisciplinary themes helped link the disciplines: typologies of RRR, use of sources for RRR, and archiving and reporting.

The workshop had a varied program, consisting of a keynote lecture from each discipline, demonstrations and excursions to sites of RRR practices, such as the Museum Boerhaave and the Amsterdam Ateliergebouw. Workshop participants *made* and *experienced* RRR together in reconstructions, replica making and re-enactment activities. A well-attended public lecture, held at the Hortus Botanicus and introduced by the director of Museum Boerhaave, focused on virtual reconstructions and 3D technology.

During the first days of the workshop, emphasis was placed on informative sessions, as we needed to acquaint ourselves with RRR practices across the different disciplines. Participants expressed their amazement and enthusiasm about the ease with which researchers from other disciplines understood their methods and the issues they faced; even though each of the disciplines has developed its own methods and may ask different questions, experience with performative methods proved to be a strong binding factor across the disciplines.

During the week, the focus of the program gradually shifted from 'providing information' to 'hands-on experience', as interactive activities took up a larger part of the program. Such activities were received with enthusiasm and led to discussions about documentation styles and methods, disciplinary characteristics and practices. The last day of the workshop included a session on communicating RRR to a wide audience using film, exhibitions, re-enactment in open air museums, etc.

The RRR workshop proved to be an important step towards an improved and broadened context for the application of performative methods in different disciplines. An immediate and important result is the establishment of an informal interdisciplinary network of researchers employing RRR. This network is open to all RRR workshop participants; other researchers are welcome to join. After an initial phase, we consider applying for a network-funding to boost activities. A website will be set up connected to but independent of the website of the Artechne project for communication, exchange and visibility. We have also started a mailing list and a newsletter via email, that network members can use for announcements that fit with our purpose of connecting researchers who use performative methods when they organize interdisciplinary activities/publish material of a similar scope, etc. Finally, initial steps have been taken towards the publication of a selection of papers from the workshop.

All in all, we consider the RRR workshop a great success and intend to organize more joint activities in the future, possibly applying for another Lorentz NIAS workshop. Based on our experience organizing the RRR workshop, for our next workshops we will reserve even more time for practical activities

Organizers

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