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**ÉCOLE
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**How research and art can be intricate in the co-production of spatial knowledge?
Methodological perspectives and lessons
from the IEAC (ecological, artistic and cultural intermediation) project.**

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Data Stories Workshop

The use of research creation and arts based methods in studying housing, planning and the built environment

9th-10th September 2025

North Campus, Maynooth University



CVH, a carry in Marquise, Pas-de-Calais, in the North of France, on may 2023, © Léa Donguy

**« An insider in the field »
as a researcher in geography of art and urban planning,
as a practitioner and
as the president of Groupe A, cultural cooperative which is producing the project**

As academic researchers, we are always in the field, never mere spectators, or scribes of others' practices. A separation of home and field, I have argued so far, is untenable. Instead, as researchers who study the processes, patterns, and peopling of the world, we are always in the field. Furthermore, field-workers are involved in the politics of any place we study. (HYNDMAN, 2001)

Flying in the face of all that good advice, some researchers, like me, find topics close to home, or close to our hearts- topics so compelling we can't leave them alone and we try to find ways to use our "insider" status to help, not hinder, insights. (DELYSER, 2001)

What is research-creation ?

"artistic research," "practice-based research," "practice-led research," "practice as research," "performance as research," "practice through research," "research through practice," etc ?

Research-creation is not :

- research on artistic creation,
- nor research for creation, in the sense of research that simply provides artistic materials,
- nor research in creation, i.e. the research necessary for any artistic process that would definitively erase the distinction between research and creation, between practice and theory.

The research-creation in question here approaches the so-called "art-science" approaches, while at the same time emancipating itself from the issues of dissemination and valorization of scientific research through artistic media.

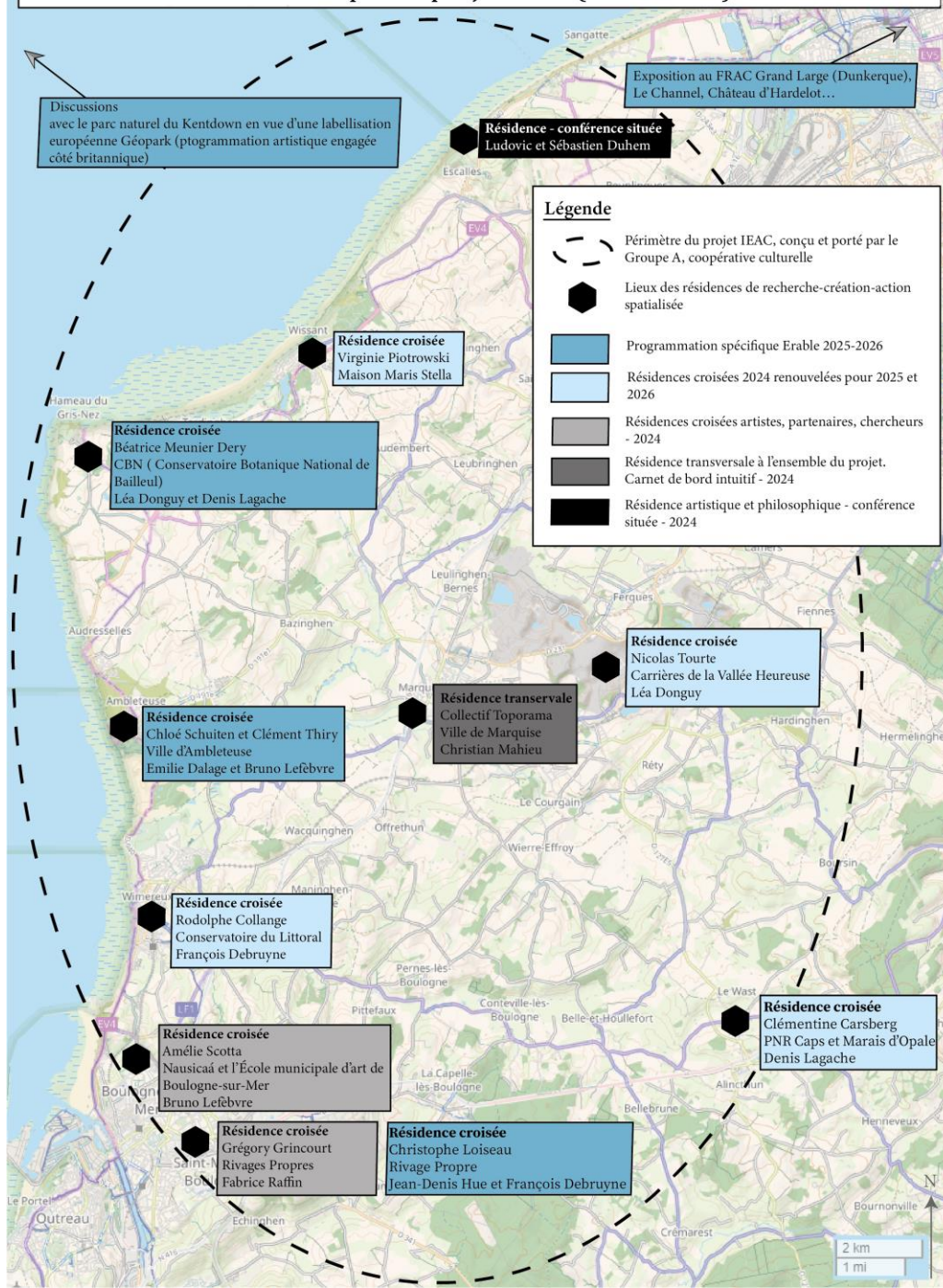
It is thus understood as **a set of parallel, joint, but also mutual practices that are recomposed through contact with one another.**

So, how and why research and creation can be intricate ?

How research and art can be intricate in the co-production of spatial knowledge?

1. An environmental aesthetic (BLANC, 2008) project called IEAC (ecological, artistic and cultural intermediation)
2. Usual and unusual methodological tools to study a research-creation project
3. Research-Creation: what is the nature of the hyphen? Initial empirical findings to understand the conditions conducive to cooperation

Chronotopie du projet IEAC (2023-2026)



1. An environmental aesthetic (BLANC, 2008) project called IEAC (ecological, artistic and cultural intermediation)

2024 Programme

16 main stakeholders involved in the project

PNR caps et Marais d'Opale / Géopark / Fond vert (France nation verte) / Agence de l'eau / préfet du Pas-de-Calais / Kent Down / Rivages Propres / Nausicaá / Conservatoire du littoral / Carrières de la Vallée Heureuse (CVH) / École Municipale d'Art de Boulogne-sur-Mer / Maison Maris Stella (petit frère des pauvres) / Ville de Marquise / Ville d'Ambleuse / la SAP / les Blongios.

16 associated stakeholders

Le Chênelet / Les Archives Municipales de Boulogne-sur-Mer / Le Château-Musée de Boulogne-sur-Mer / Cohose / Pique&presse / Le LAP de la Ronville / Sous l'Opalétuvier / MetrOpale / Eden 62 / CAUE / Les Communes de Wissant, Rinxent, Tardinghen, Audinghen, Wimille / Le Ministère de l'éducation Nationale

9 researchers involved

Christian Mahieu / Jean Denis Hue / Bruno Lefebvre / Loïc Leprêtre / Léa Donguy / François Debruyne / Emilie Da Lage / Fabrice Raffin / Ludovic Duhem

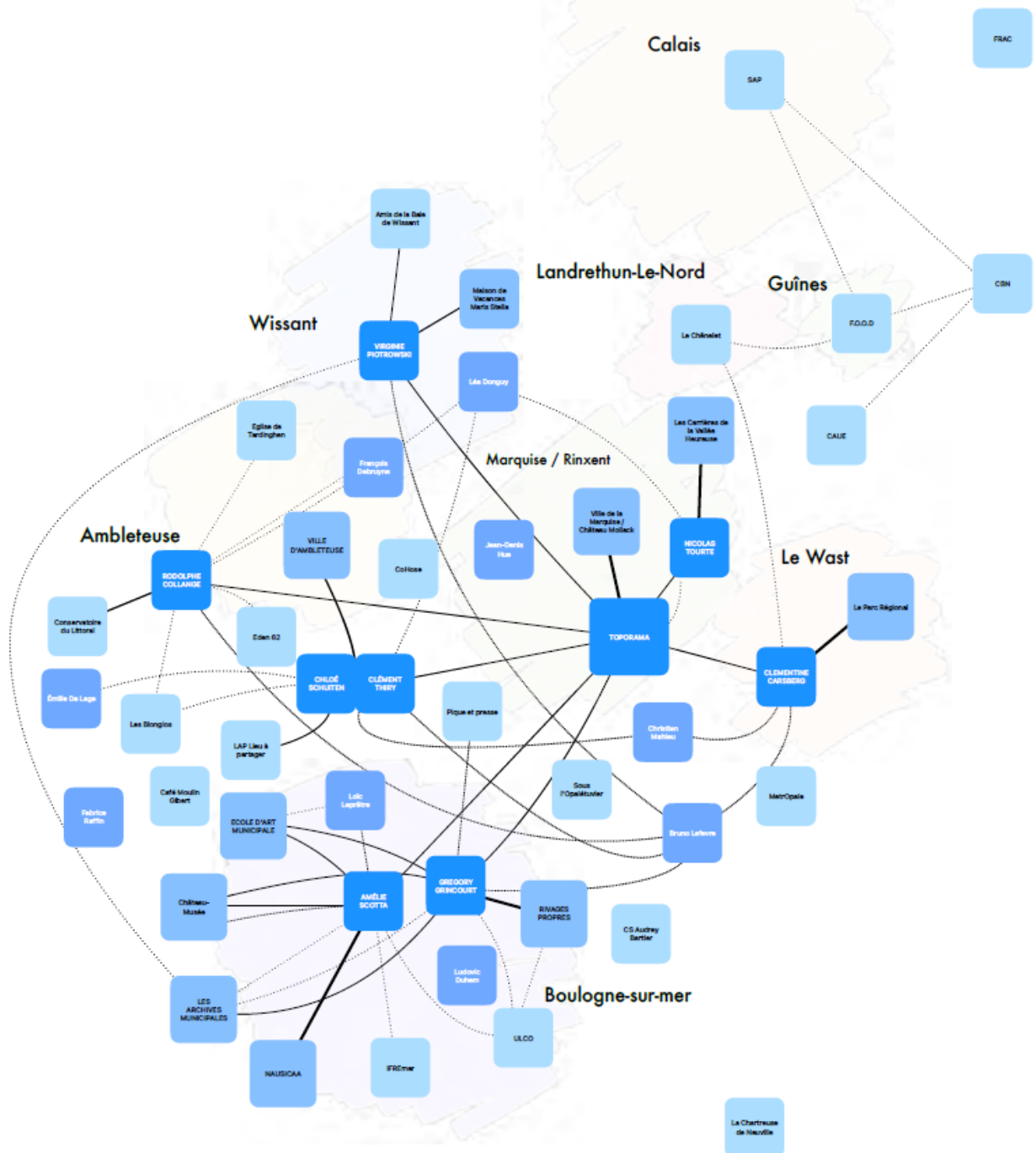
10 artists

Nicolas Tourte / Clémentine Carsberg / Grégory Grincourt / Chloé Schuiten / Clément Thiry / Virginie Piotrowski / Amélie Scotta / Pascal Marquilly / Rodolphe Collange / Ludovic Duhem

20 events

- 1 banquet (125 participants)
- 5 opening receptions and exhibitions (968 participants)
- 6 conferences (118 participants)
- 8 guided walks (132 participants)

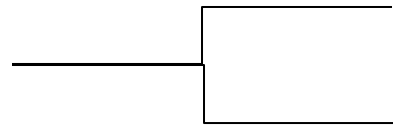
Écosystème des acteurs du projet



An intermediary as a project leader

The artist as an intermediary (or the negotiator)

A production intermediary (or
the practical orchestrator)

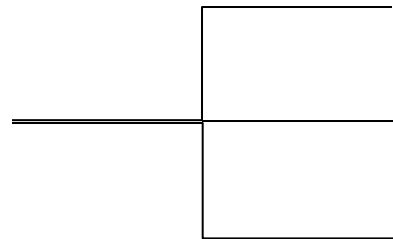


- A co-orchestrator and designer
- A spatialized art curator



GROUPE A
COOPÉRATIVE CULTURELLE

A influential intermediary



- The facilitation officer
- The essential gatekeeper,
- The distribution intermediary



Photographie : Hugo Miel



Laurent Prum
<http://www.printempssauvages.com/>









Photographie : Hugo Miel

Clémentine Carlsberg's exhibition on July 2024, PNR caps et marais d'Opale 24, rue principale 62142 Le Wast
Recherches associées : Bruno Lefevre, Jean-Denis Hue, Christian Mahieu



Amélie Scotta and Ludovic Duhem's exhibition on septembre 2024, École municipale d'art et Nausicaá, 62200 Boulogne-sur-Mer
Recherche associée : Christian Mahieu, Ludovic Duhem



Photographie : Hugo Miel

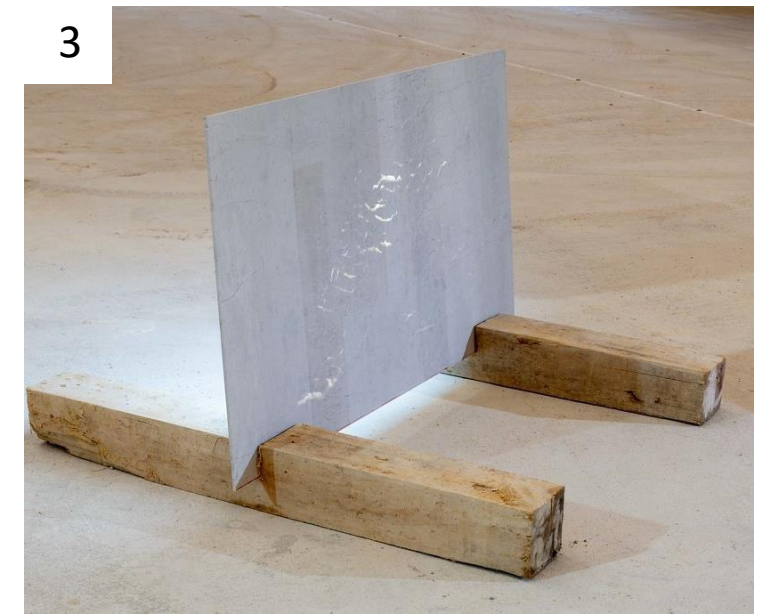
Virginie Piotrowski and Rodolphe Collange's exhibition on october 2024, Église de Tardingen – Route de la Motte au Bourg, 62179 Tardingen, Recherche associée : François Debruyne, Jean-Denis Hue



1 *Fin de carrière*, 2024, Sculpture, marbre Lunel mi fleuri, 100 x 100 x 56,5 cm, exposed at the marble workshop in CVH, on the 25th of July 2024, © Hugo Miel



2 *Ondes stéréoscopiques*, 2024, Sculpture, Lunel marble diptych, 2 pieces de 100 x 100 x 3 cm, exposed at the marble workshop in CVH, on the 25th of July 2024, © Hugo Miel



3- *Transparence (titre provisoire)*, 2024, Video system, thickness < 5 mm, exposed at the marble workshop in CVH, on the 25th of July 2024, © Hugo Miel

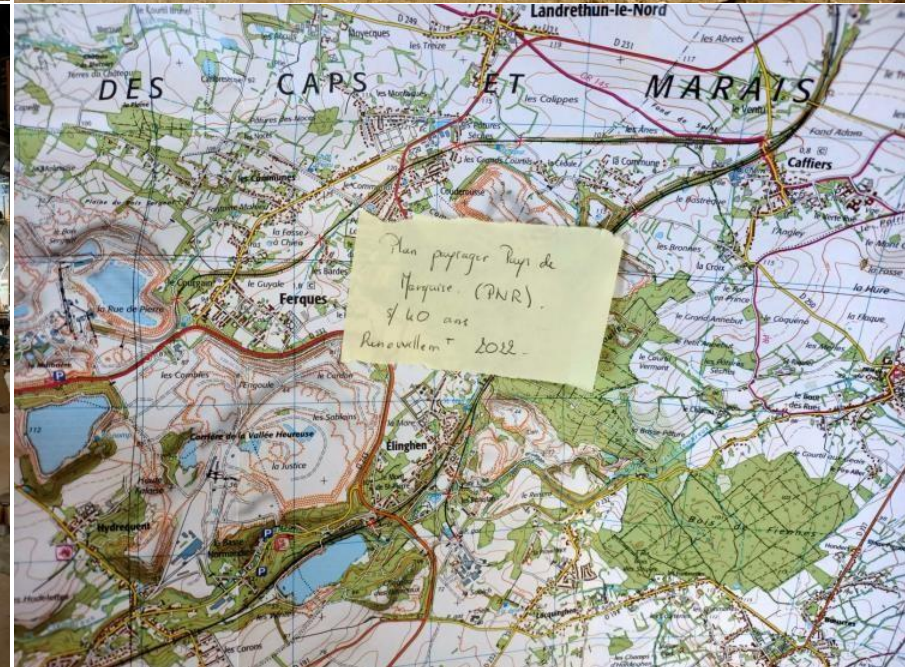
2. Usual and unusual methodological tools to study a research-creation project

- a. Informal discussions with artists and researchers, before, during and after the cross residencies
- b. Interviews with some of the artists and researchers involved in IEAC project (biographical and exploratory interviews, open interviews, semi-structured interviews, self-confrontation interviews ...)
- c. Analysis of the texts written by researchers during or after the cross-residencies
- d. Discussions with researchers involved in other research-creation project
- e. Involvement in a cross residency with one of the artist (Nicolas Tourte) and one of the stakeholders, CVH (quarry called CVH, Carrières de la Vallée Heureuse)

Interviews

Name	Date	Profil	Type
Rodolphe Collange	06-19-2024	Artist (sound art, acousmatic)	biographical and exploratory interview
	09-10-2024		self-confrontation interview
Chloé Shuiten and Clément Thiry	06-19-2024	Artist (visual arts)	biographical and exploratory interview
Ludovic Duhem	06-25-2024	Artist (film maker) and philosopher	biographical and exploratory interview
Pascal Marquilly	09-21-2024	Artist (visual arts and theater)and curator	biographical and exploratory interview
Nicolas Tourte	06-23-2024	Artist (visual arts)	biographical and exploratory interview
	07-21-2024		reverse interview
	01-06-2024		self-confrontation interview
François Debruyne	02-05-2025	Researcher (information and communication science)	open interview
Christian Mahieu	02-12-2025	Researcher (sociology)	semi-structured interview
Bruno Lefèbvre	02-13-2025	Researcher (sociology)	semi-structured interview
Emilie Da Lage	02-21-2025	Researcher (information and communication science)	open interview

The artist, the quarryman and the geographer: the cross-residency



Photographs taken during the residency weeks, May 2023 and June 2024 © Léa Donguy

The artist, the quarryman and the geographer: the cross-residency as a methodological tool to capture or perform the sensitive?

Artistic, political and scientific issues of spatialised creation-action oriented research

(to be published in *Norois*, a French scientific journal specializing in the environment, urban planning, and society)

Abstract

Groupe A, a cultural cooperative, is offering an artistic programme of residencies for artists/partners/researchers throughout the Terre des Deux Caps area, between Boulogne-sur-Mer and Calais. The project is called IEAC (Intermédiation Ecologique, Artistique et Culturelle). One of these residencies brought together a visual artist, Nicolas Tourte, a quarryman, the Carrières de la Vallée Heureuse, represented by Alban Hénaux and all the employees of the marble-making workshop, and myself, a geographer. This paper aims to question this specific mechanism, in line with micro-analysis in geography and 'non-representational' or 'more-than-representational' approaches. This field situation is fundamentally exploratory and questions the foundations of research-creation in its ability to work on the sensitive dimensions of space, in other words, the collection of spatialised data that integrates physical, sensory, perceptual and/or emotional dimensions. The fieldwork conditions have not been fully mastered and the results presented here are still in their infancy. This situation raises a number of theoretical, epistemological and methodological questions: what is research-creation? What are the artistic, political and scientific issues involved? What are researchers, artists and partners looking for in such a project? What is the status of the (co)produced knowledge? What kind of knowledge is it? Is it a matter of capturing this sensitive dimension or of performing it?

Key words : spatialised art, research-creation, sensitive geography, cross-residency, Côte d'Opale

3. Research-Creation: what is the nature of the hyphen?
Initial empirical findings to understand the conditions
conducive to cooperation

- a. To accept instrumentalization as a “form of cooperation”
- b. Two ways to hybridize: inquiry and writing
- c. *Spatial turn and habitability* : the political keystones to build a true research-creation project

3. Research-Creation: what is the nature of the hyphen? Initial empirical findings to understand the conditions conducive to cooperation

- a. To accept instrumentalization as a “form of cooperation”

An instrumental way of conceiving scientific research

“To feed the project”

“There is a difference between technical, practical knowledges, and scientific knowledges”

Giving up postures : a co-production of knowledge

Interdisciplinary profiles

Researchers used to research as action, research as practice

The will to build new “politics of the field” in scientific fieldwork

A place for intense reflexivity : one of the main reason to “get on board”

3. Research-Creation: what is the nature of the hyphen? Initial empirical findings to understand the conditions conducive to cooperation

b. Two ways to hybridize: inquiry and writing

The encounters between artistic and geographical practices seem to take place in two places :

- **The writing of scientific knowledge**, which emancipates itself from traditional academic writing
 - all researchers wrote non-academic texts during or after cross-residencies
 - Texts are written for the use of the artists or stakeholders
 - To speak directly to the people concerned
 - As a methodological tool to enable hybridization between research and creation (shared logbook for example)
- **The inquiry** or a new way to collect data
 - Conversational practices between artists, stakeholders and researchers
 - To learn from artists attentional ways to build new “politics of the field” to produced a “situated knowledge” (Haraway, 1988)
 - “Indicative paradigm” (Ginzburg, 1980) and micro-analysis : focus on the details
 - Research and creation are **“two activities that contribute to the building of new representations of the world”** (

The Main Difficulty : thinking of new “politics of research” and “politics of the field” through writing or inquiry is hard because of the system of constraints related to research : evaluation, fundings, time etc.

3. Research-Creation: what is the nature of the hyphen? Initial empirical findings to understand the conditions conducive to cooperation

c. *Spatial turn and habitability* : the political keystones to build a true research-creation project

The main reason to get involved in the IEAC project is the same for artists, researchers and stakeholders :

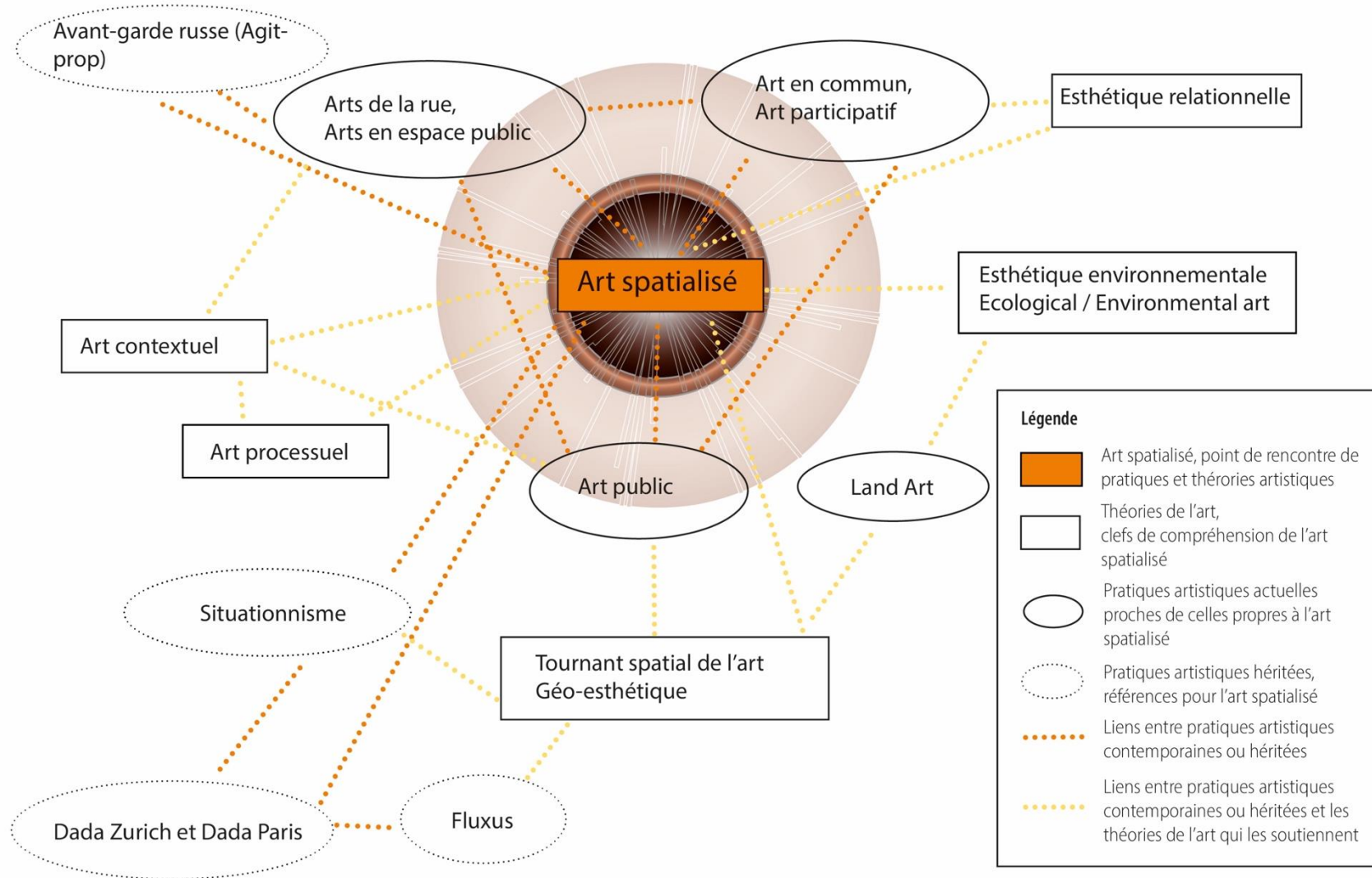
- questioning **the habitability of the planet Earth** through a local project
- and **advocating for environmental causes**
- **Including a new kind of data** that integrates physical, sensory, perceptual and/or emotional dimensions (such as in “emotional geographies” BONDI L., DAVIDSON J., SMITH M., 2007)
- Considering the « **partition of the sensible** » as a political project

A twofold movement but of the same kind :

All the words that are used to explain the reasons for the commitment are linked to spatial issues thus epitomizing the “spatial turn” in sciences and in the arts (SOJA, 1989)

A spatialized art

Définition de l'art spatialisé, inspirée de plusieurs pratiques artistiques et théories de l'art



To work in the gaps : the need of intermediaries



"Hybrid actors, who combine and mix these skills in still flexible forms, may be at the origin of new professions and will form themselves into trades with their own codes and rules. It is possible that they will remain enlightened avant-gardes, flexible and mobile mediators, feeding their disciplines of origin in art, geography, architecture, planning or urbanism, before disappearing under the pressure of other hybridizations".
(GWIAZDZINSKI, 2016, p.328)

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