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Art to transform ecologies: report from the field

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Experimental methodologies combining art production, activism and science are increasingly accepted as stimulating transformative research, as it has been shown in the areas of urban agriculture and urban political agroecology. Several methodologies informed by contemporary art traditions, such as land art, conceptual art, and art in the public space, are developed and tested within my own praxis of art production and requisite visualisation and dissemination techniques are discussed in this presentation. Some of these artistic methodologies include *Radical Observation* (an embodied-learning, performance-based observation technique), and the use of soil chromatography, i.e. a visual data format, including the author's own technical innovation of magnifying of the soil organic horizon in the visual data. How and why art/activism-based methodologies are fundamentally different from scientific methods, and whether these methodologies are capable of yielding scientifically valid insights will be examined in the presentation. The examples will be juxtaposed with cases of scientific inquiry, such as the biodiversity study of the Urbaniahoeve plant typologies, and methodologies projected onto a 25HA area in *Amsterdam Nieuw West*, and a soil study of Urbaniahoeve's *DemoTuinNoord* topsoil (both conducted by/with Wageningen University and Research) are included in the survey of projects and requisite analyses.

Aside from accommodating different perceptions of biodiversity and soil fertility, it is shown how the freedom of the artistic practice yields new perceptions towards the relationship among humans with regard to the ecosystem species, and that can guide human behaviour. Perceptions yielded through this methodological lens are capable of forming a basis for new forms of policy and governance of, e.g., public space greens, such as in the case of the urban food forestry work of Solomon/Urbaniahoeve (the author). Experimental methodologies such as these have a legacy of empowerment, but are also forms of critical inquiry into neoliberal urbanisation and commodification

which strongly affect the public space, the various commons, and the ecosystems that inhabit these spaces.

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