

Is there comfortability in risk; do we as artist acknowledge the supposed idiom of risk taking as a way towards rewards, or is the actions already taken as an artist is by nature a risk against the norm? What can be defined as an artistic risk, or is there even such a thing; can artistic risk only be seen as a self-serving mechanism that artists utilize in order to justify specific actions in their own practice? Is there even a possibility for such action to take place if the outcome has no reliable method of determining the risk taken? Can an unknown artist engage in or take an artistic creative risk other than making works that are morally risky?<sup>1</sup> Is it even possible to produce artistic works that explores the subject of risk in art without becoming a self-reflective exercise for the ego? In its most basic form risk is an activity that exposes the participants towards danger, within most situations we apply the assessment of risk to different decreeing factions in our daily lives; we therefore apply risk in order to look for the possibilities of loss and gains, it is a formative action that helps individuals to either take action or stay reserved. An example of using risk to assess danger is the process of risk assessments and management for things such as exhibitions or public works; whereby it is done in order to protect the public as well as the organisers of the event by determining the specific risk involved within the event or exhibition allowing for people to create solution to problems that might arise. We can utilise such concepts in order to gain a better understanding of risk as an observable entity.

Example: Jumping out of an aeroplane.

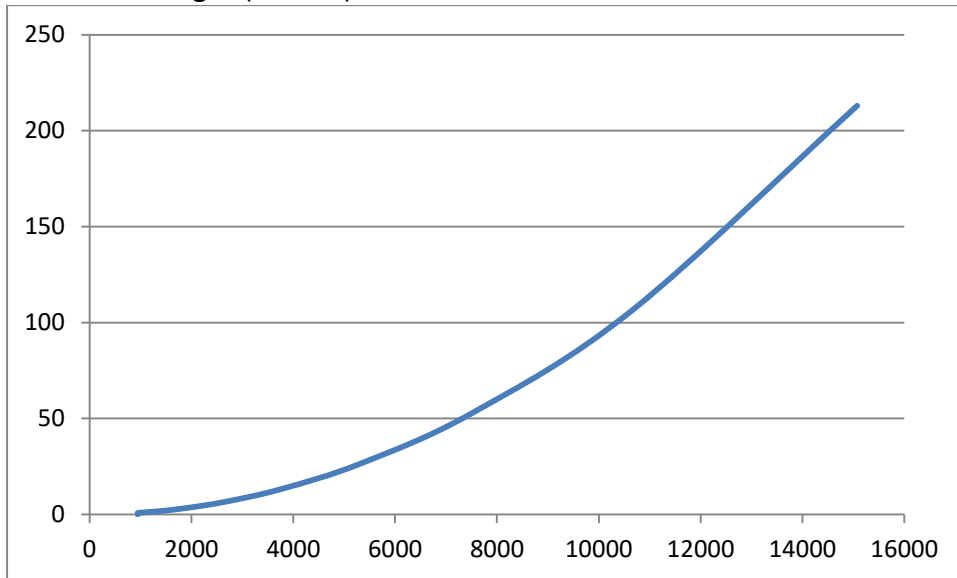
There is risk in jumping out of an aeroplane, the highest one being death, we can use the creation of a graphical observation to quantified how the distance from the ground effects the likely hood of death. Within this case we should observe firstly the velocity relationship between height the jumper is falling and their final velocity, than the amount of change in moment exhorted onto the body when it hits the ground will affectively cause the damage as the moment goes from positive to negative in a very short amount of time. If we take the assumption that about 4,000N to break a bone; than we can observe the risk of death by the observation of two graphs. One being force exhorted on to the body whiles the other is an observation of velocity when hitting the ground. The height of the fall is on the y-axis.

---

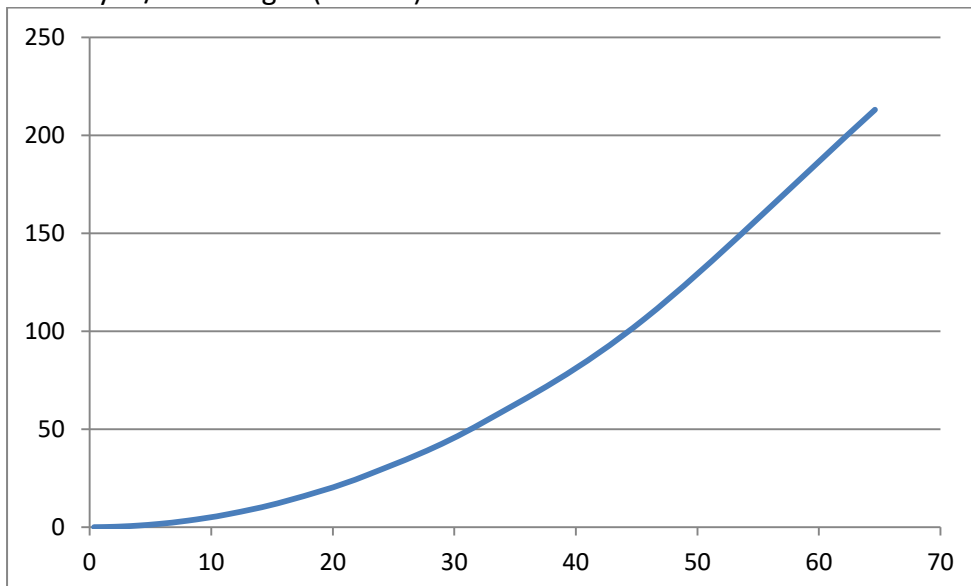
<sup>1</sup>If the success of art is defined by the economic gains of the artists than risk or the action of taking a risk can only be applied to those artists who have something to loss, any artists who does not succeed in sales or financial gains can therefore not take a risk when they change their work or explore different subject matters since their loss will be the same as before. Risk as a subject for exploration or as an artistic investigation becomes problematic as long as there are viewers or people who see risk via a finical gains or loss. We can see how this notion of risking ones artistic economical gains stifle the progression of artistic work within any system of art since the artists who are making money are less likely to engage in practice that will remove those funds; whiles those who haven't yet become finically stable or notice by the establishment has the choice of either following the stream of the economically driven market or develop independently.

This system is also prevalent within art schools and universities whereby the lecture devises the opportunity of the students depending on their works and such students are bound by either developing a unique artistic expression or follow the leader. The risks within these cases are inclusion and exclusion from the collective of the art group or the lectures favour. One can see this lecture driven action by the outcome of the works produce by the students within the school and how their expression or aesthetical structures are the same; just like how YouTube stars use the same rhythm, actions, voice tone and pitch when v-logging.

Newton vs height (meters).



Velocity  $m/s^2$  vs height (meters).



Both results will move towards a constant gradient due to terminal velocity. How does one use these graphs in our context as observing risk based assessment; by knowing that any force about 4,000N will result in unacceptable damages, we can use this information to calculate the height and then the velocity at which one should be at for a safe landing. Thus we use risk to calculate our own acceptable differentials of jumping out of an aeroplane or from a cliff. These sort of simplified applications are often the bases to navigate risk in specific activities that are easily defined. We can also create things such as risk diagrams or risk management for businesses.

The application of risk, in most cases, when placed against an observable action or concept will produce outcomes that will follow a specific pattern in relation to the risk observed. When risk is applied towards an individual life choices such patterns are based on that individuals economic, social, and mental statuses; an investment banker is far more willing to

risk others people money than their own to maximise profit, such people who are very successful in the banking sector are often able to drive themselves towards taking larger and larger risk with money since the outcome is either massive monetary gains or prison time though only if the individual has engaged in fraudulent activity or actual white collar crimes; the risk of being caught when committing a crime is therefore highly based on a person's social, moral and economic situation. The outcome of a specific action becomes less noticeable or risky the higher such action follows a change in the outcome.

Risk as an artistic observation or action is problematic due to arts indefinable property; unlike jumping out of an aeroplane; gambling with your own or other people's money; committing criminal acts; where there are defining aspects of risk. Art has no defining boundary that allows for the specification of risk to be observed unless one defines the application of art to be based on economic gains, anything that is produce by people who don't make money or gain grants for such work cannot be defined as works of art. We can state that artist continually take risks by producing and showing their works however such statement is false; for an artists to be successful they need to have some sort of knowledge or mastery over their chosen form of expression or understanding of the topic matter, we shall demonstrate this with an example.

A painter taking risks.

A painter decides to explore the subject matter of risk within their working methodology. We can create three different alternative routes for this exploration.

1. Painting same way but more loosely or changing specific applications methods.
2. Changing their method of painting completely, going from realism to abstract.
3. Changing their way of expression either changing the materials used or conceptual form of expression, such as deciding to express their paintings through the medium of dance.

Point three would be defined as being the most risky activity since it removes the artists from a comfortable zone of work into something new, we should be aware that comfortability is not the same as risk and whiles the painter might express their work through dance we cannot definitively state that such action is more risky than just changing their application of paint. We see the work as risky because the artists expressed that the works meaning and place is within this bracket of interpretation. It is for this reason that exhibitions that attempt to deal with the subject matter of risk as an artistic activity can become implicitly dull—for the viewer—due to such exhibition can end up looking more like formulations of artistic ego rather than a proper study on the subject matter, the idea of risk as an element of research.<sup>2</sup> Therefore exhibitions that attempt to demonstrate the notion of risk will undoubtedly end up with a heavy reliance on the written texts; one page generically formatted describing things such as: *"I changed my painting style"*; *"I worked differently this time..."* et cetera. We as viewers will therefore put our prier onto the statement written in order to facilitate the necessary outcome of the designed aesthetic experience by the

---

<sup>2</sup> In order to define the research the artists would need to define specifically what art is or the boundaries of art after doing so, the works need to reflect the action of risk in a visible way, the difficulty comes from the fact one is converting a theoretical observation into an aesthetical idea that should not references anything else that are bound within the defined specification of art.

gallery or the artists, even when the artist express a statement of intent that their risk is dexterously applied the constructed statement only value is determined by our willingness to assume it holds a sort of value since the prier for the completion of the aesthetic experience will require it to hold to be true. Without the statements the artistic work on display cannot hold the defining characteristic of risk since the viewer will not have such pre-signifying construct thus artistic risk lies in part with the statement made by the artists in relation to the work when observed by a viewer. Thus the action and research by artists or exhibitions create the problem with the outcome of risk in relation to art.

In order to move away from the prier and thus a reliance of text based interpretation of artworks based on the application of risk; we need to create a system of viable observation that defines the artist's action in relation to a specific formulation of risk that can be applied to artistic works; so our observation and analysis does not require the artists own input whether they are engaging in such activity or not. We shall do this by creating a categorisation using the term Indirect-creative risk and Direct-creative risk. Indirect-creative risk (ICR) is when the artists creates an internalised risk where works are either created through an exploration of subject matter or change in working system et cetera, this sort of risk is determined by the artist own categorised risk. Direct-creative risk (DCR) is focused on how the outcome of the work affects the artists standing either within their own group, society, economically etc. this sort of risk is related to the perception of such work or the artists action; works that goes against the agreed upon narrative.

Using these two terms we can move forwards in the observation of artistic risk specifically in the creation of artistic works. So if the artist is pressuring an ICR path then actions such as change in their painting techniques or colour pallet can be seen, the artists will be creating work using mediums they understand and know but explore new areas or method of application. Simple example would be Monet's continual yet subtle changes in his paintings from direct observation of the landscape towards the capturing of light on several different canvas; these changes offers a lot less risk to Monet's life than what he did at the starting of the Impressionist movement a relation to the Parisian society. Contemporary examples could be Gerhard Richter or David Hockney or something like Michael Landy work *Break Down*<sup>3</sup>. ICR is often where we find ourselves in the problem of observing risk within the arts due the perceived action of the artist's own statement or a cultural understanding of such action that invites the viewer into the activity of risk taking; we no longer recognise the Impressionist as revolutionaries but see them as colourful images that can brighten our homes.

DCR is more difficult to assess since such risk can also inhibit ICR elements but function as a more drastic change within the artists creations of work. The example could follow: a painter becomes a conceptual artist who verdantly denies all those around them the right to exist as artistic practice other than their own performance based conceptual construct. Even then such action is not a true risk due to the fact that one can always return to one's original ideological belief and such actions has occurred already in some form thus in our social sphere it is not new. This would be different if there is an economical effect on the artist, even then one can argue that such artists is already established enough to negate such

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20160713-michael-landy-the-man-who-destroyed-all-his-belongings>,  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAJg7rH\\_EMI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAJg7rH_EMI)

economical burdens as they will be praised within the established art world for their courage; (whiles any economic changes to an artist's life is only present with established and well-known artists). An example could be Picasso Les Demoiselles d'Avignon<sup>4</sup> however this would only apply to when it was created and no longer can be seen as such; a better example are artists who are making works that criticises regimes/political systems or religious beliefs whiles still being part of such a system. This leaves us with a position that DCR could be more related towards personal risk rather than an observation of artistic change, since if a critical artistic work by an artists against a regime can lead to death does such action if done by an artists still using the same style and operation as their works before fit into the idea of artistic risk or is it a personal risk?

So on the one hand we have ICR which though is perceived to be a change in the artist's creations and thus is a form of self-inflicted risk, vs DCR which is a risk but such risk is more towards the artist's well-being rather than a practice based application or observation. The differences between making an observable action of risk and exploring risk is still prevalent even since the categorisation only gives a narrowing on the specific of risk within art. Artist who therefore engages in a specific thematic presentation of their works as a form of risk taking can only achieve success when the viewers who choose to explore it without a prier semiotic understanding of the artists' works; though as the bases for aesthetic experiences relies on priers to allow for the experience to be valid.<sup>5</sup> We can either chose to ignore the problem and decided that at any instant an exhibition or artists attempts to explore risk it is an acceptable and noble exploration one whereby the viewer will always be supportive and surprised by the outcomes of the works. Or we can attempt to quantify within an expression of artistic risk in relation to the artists themselves bringing it more closely towards a defining observation yet still allowing for the indefinability of art.

Let's start with that risk should be consider to be a general identifying number by which an artist's decisions when creating works is based on this can included ICR or DCR. We shall denote this with the letter ( $R$ ), since ( $R$ ) can be anything within a set boundary we shell define specific parameters in the outcome of applying risk. In most cases this shall be in relation to the created work and thus we shell focus on two things, economical and artistic risk.

Economical is defined by the letter ( $e$ ) whiles artistic is ( $q$ ). The first formula we shall write is as follows.

$$(\pm\Delta e)(\pm\Delta q)$$

Unlike sky diving or finical investments etc. art is a personal experiences and thus the formulation needs something to dictate the individuality of an artist. We shall call this the artists constant and denote it as ( $a$ ).

---

<sup>4</sup> Pablo Picasso; Picasso Les Demoiselles d'Avignon, 1907, Oil on canvas, 243.9x233.7 cm; Museum of Modern Art, New York

<sup>5</sup> When discussing the validation of an aesthetic experience it is within the reference of our internal process of manging experiences. These are the agreement of something in references to another previous experience. I know an apple is an apple if I have seen one before, thus the prier is the previous apple. The more complex an experience is the more priers a person uses to utilise such an experience.

So how does one define the artist constant, we can do it by applying starting with what specific aspect of an artist benefits their ability to succeed within the art world, standards are nationality, gender and what kind of art is being produce in relation to the artists current place of resident; though often this can be expanded on therefore a is by application undefinable but must contain specific parts.

$$a = ((\pm g) + (\pm n) + (\pm s) \dots)$$

We can therefore say that.

$$R = \frac{(\pm \Delta e)(\pm \Delta q)}{((\pm g) + (\pm n) + (\pm s) \dots)}$$

$$R = \frac{(\pm \Delta e)(\pm \Delta q)}{(\pm a)}$$

$$a, e, q \neq 0$$

Reason for dividing by  $(a)$ :  $(a)$  can contain any form of conditions and therefore we can introduce  $(\pm \Delta e)(\pm \Delta q)$  into  $(a)$ .

$$R = \frac{(\pm \Delta e)(\pm \Delta q)}{((\pm g) + (\pm n) + (\pm s) + (\pm \Delta e)(\pm \Delta q) \dots)}$$

$$R = \frac{1}{\pm a}$$

We know the shape of  $f(R) = \frac{1}{\pm a}$  graph and since  $\frac{1}{x}$  is a negative integer, we can utilise the graphical structure to introduce a specific observation.

Art risk can be seen to fit within a negative integer graphic function and thus it usefulness for an artist's is limited. As  $(a)$  increases or decrees  $(R)$  change will become smaller and smaller thus the perceivable change becomes less and less; artistic risk can therefore be placed within the worldly application of a variation of the Weber-Fencher law of perceivable change from a stimulus. Art is an aesthetical stimulus and thus we can define the risk taken by an artist as the change by such experience upon the viewer, utilising the Weber-Fencher law there will be a point when an artist's actions and exploration that they define as risk will become less and less noticeable upon the viewer. Once such place has been reached the artist can no longer make work that will significantly affect them or thus around them either economically or artistically since the change of the aesthetic experience becomes so small it becomes unnoticeable.

Risk within the art can either be viewed as a non-existing entity, there is no such thing as artistic risk, the risk is either a finical or social and such the action cannot be a valid justification for the creation of artistic work. On the other hand we can view risk through a limiting set of parameters since we are all endowed by priors; in this case risk can be viewed from a position that risk is not defined by the individual artists but rather by the

behaviour and prior need of others who define the artistic history or cultural stand point of the time; like most human endeavours the outcome is not defined by those who make it but rather by those who have the power to define its place within their developed society. For artists the action of risk can only be applied as a method of observing how far an artist can make works before such actions outcome becomes redundant due to less positive outcome. We would like to view artistic risk as self-observation or action, a risk of showing something different from that of an everyday object or individual work; something that gives us legitimation when our artistic actions are either failures or feeling of change; though often it is more to do with feeling of shame, being incomplete or unimportant in the cultural sphere; we take risk because it is a comfortable action and it is through this comfortability that we exist in creation of objects and works.