



WHY YOUR ORIGAMI IS *NOT* ART ... AND WHY IT IS.

Lee Armstrong



WHY YOUR ORIGAMI IS *NOT ART* ... AND WHY IT IS - OVERVIEW

Is there a problem here? What is it?

Some opinions (not just mine)

Comparing art forms – how are they similar
folded paper art / origami and how are they
different?

Some possible ways forward?

WHY YOUR ORIGAMI IS *NOT ART* ... AND WHY IT IS

WHY THIS QUESTION...AGAIN?!

“We usually say that origami is an art but we do not really understand the implications this statement carries. Sometimes not knowing about art we do not understand what origami is lacking to be considered as such.”

Angel Morollon, Origami Sketchbook 2015

WHEN WE SAY “ART” WHAT DO WE MEAN?

The objects we create

The act of making

Things that people value

Things that people will pay money
for



WHEN WE SAY “ART” WHAT DO WE MEAN?

The objects we create

“Art is anything you can get away with.”

The act of making

Marshall McLuan, *The Medium is the Message*. 1964

Things that people value

Things that people will pay money
for

NOT EVERYONE DOING ORIGAMI AGREES...



“if I fold paper just for the fun of folding paper or create designs just for the pleasure of doing so that is indeed art, and art of the purest kind.”

Dave Mitchell, origamiheaven.com

MORE OPINIONS

“Not all Origami is art, but some is”

Toshikazu Kawasaki, at a Lecture in
London

““It seems clear now that the future of origami will divide: traditional notions of model making using Bases and conventional techniques will reside with the educators, therapists and commercial book/CD-rom publishers, but the creative emphasis will move to those creators who have a highly personal style that involves much manipulative finesse, extreme technical complexity or imaginative audacity. This creative work will remain difficult to contextualise as art, craft, design, model making, or puzzle solving.”

Paul Jackson, in an article on the BOS website, originally published in the exhibition catalogue of an exhibition “On Paper” 2001.

SO ORIGAMI CREATORS DON'T AGREE... HOW ABOUT A VIEW FROM A SHOP ASSISTANT

Do you sell origami paper?

“No! We are an art shop. That’s *craft*. You won’t find it here, try the stationery shop.”



A VIEW FROM THE ART WORLD?



THE ART
ESTABLISHMENT BE
LIKE....



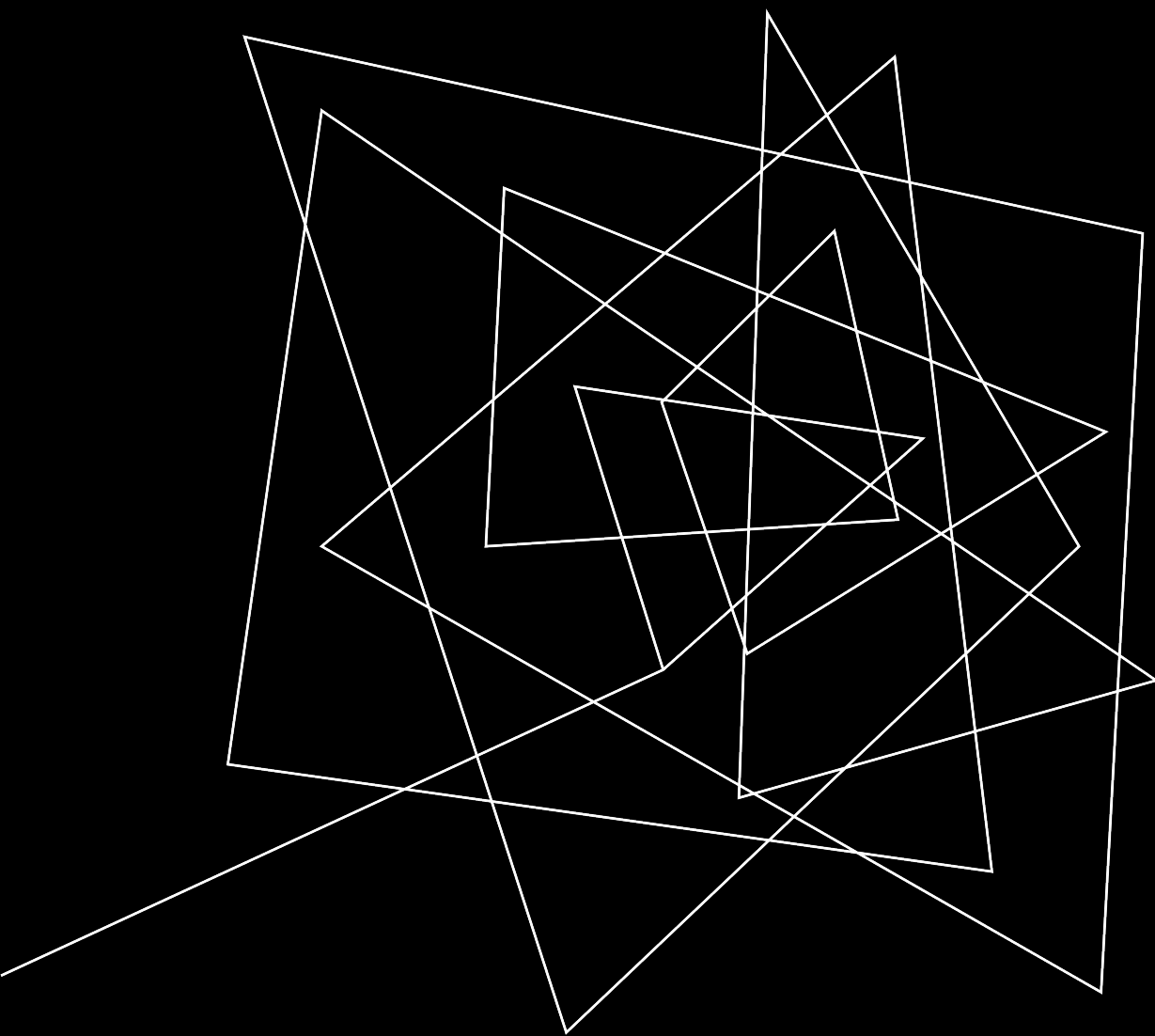
WHAT CAN OTHER ART FORMS TEACH US? WHAT ABOUT THEORIES OF AESTHETICS?

WALTER BENJAMIN – “THE WORK OF ART IN
THE AGE OF MECHANICAL REPRODUCTION”
1935

THE CONCEPT OF “AURA”

“Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element – its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place it happens to be... The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity.....”

That which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the “aura” of a work of art.”

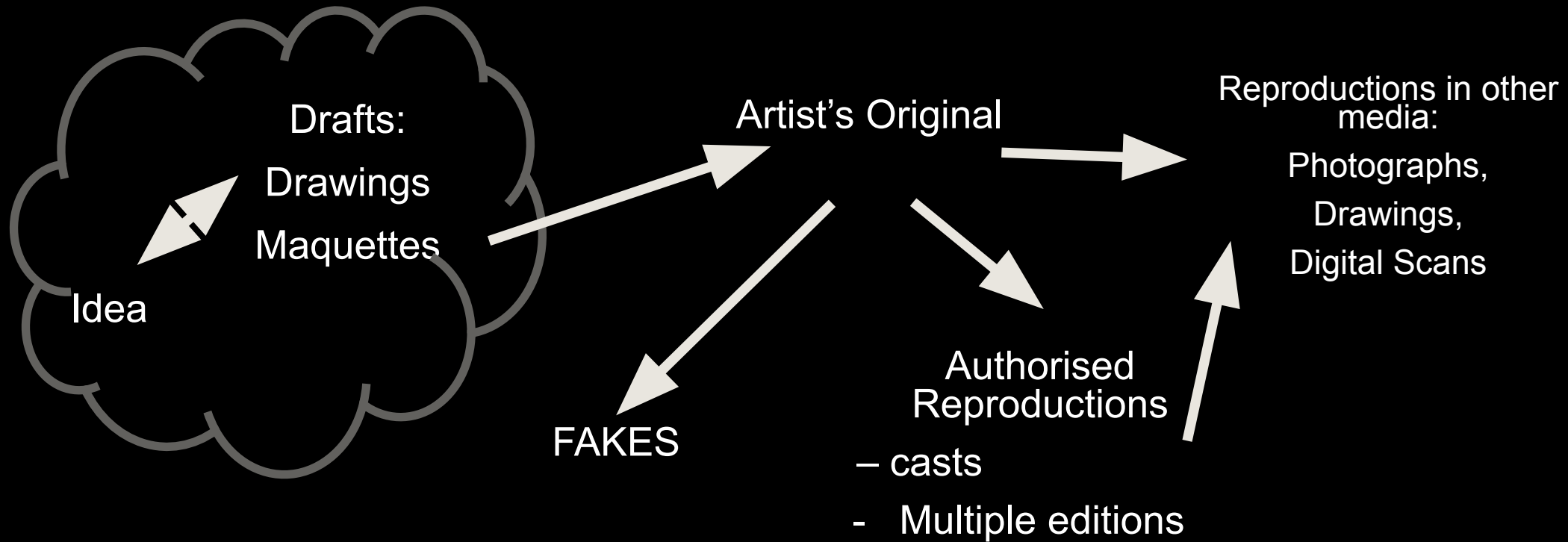


LETS COMPARE
SOME OTHER
ART FORMS WITH
OURS:

SOME
ONTOLOGIES OF
DIFFERENT ART
FORMS....

AFTER STEPHEN DAVIES:
"VARIETIES OF ART" 2013

SCULPTURE?

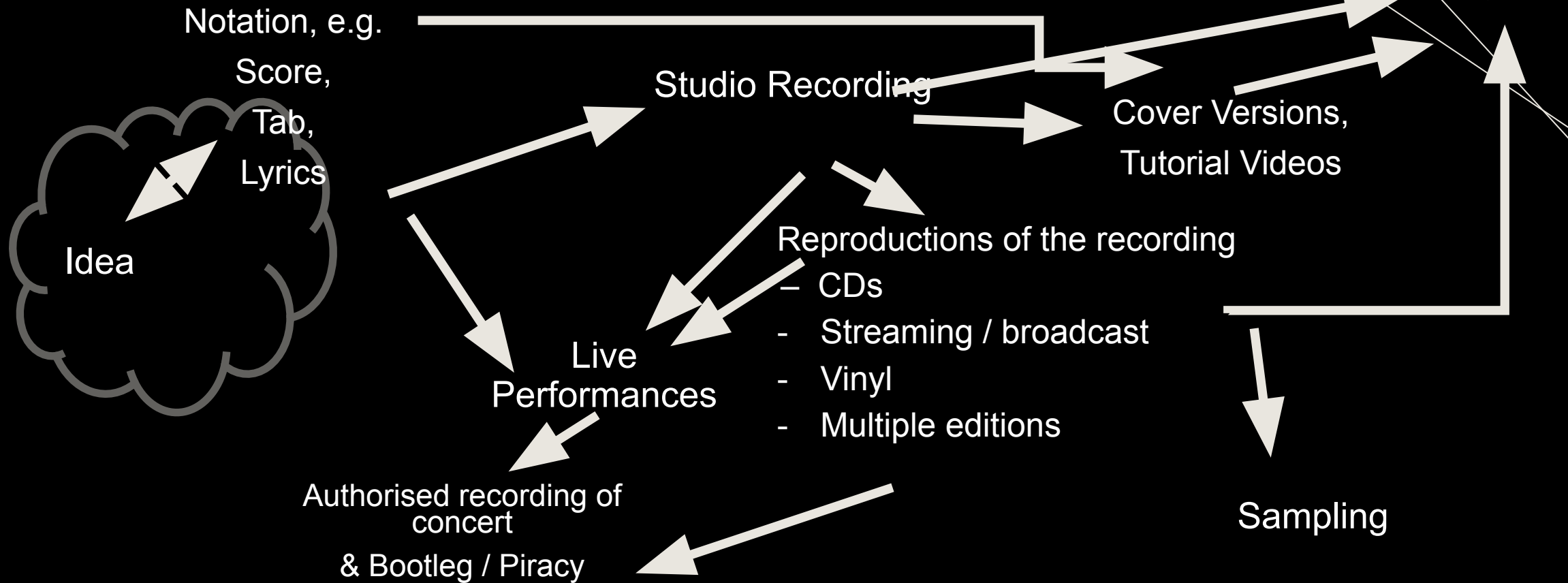


There are some things that have value throughout... But we can see the real “Aura” always resides with the artist’s original sculpture

HOW DOES AN ORIGAMI MODEL COMPARE TO CONVENTIONAL SCULPTURE?

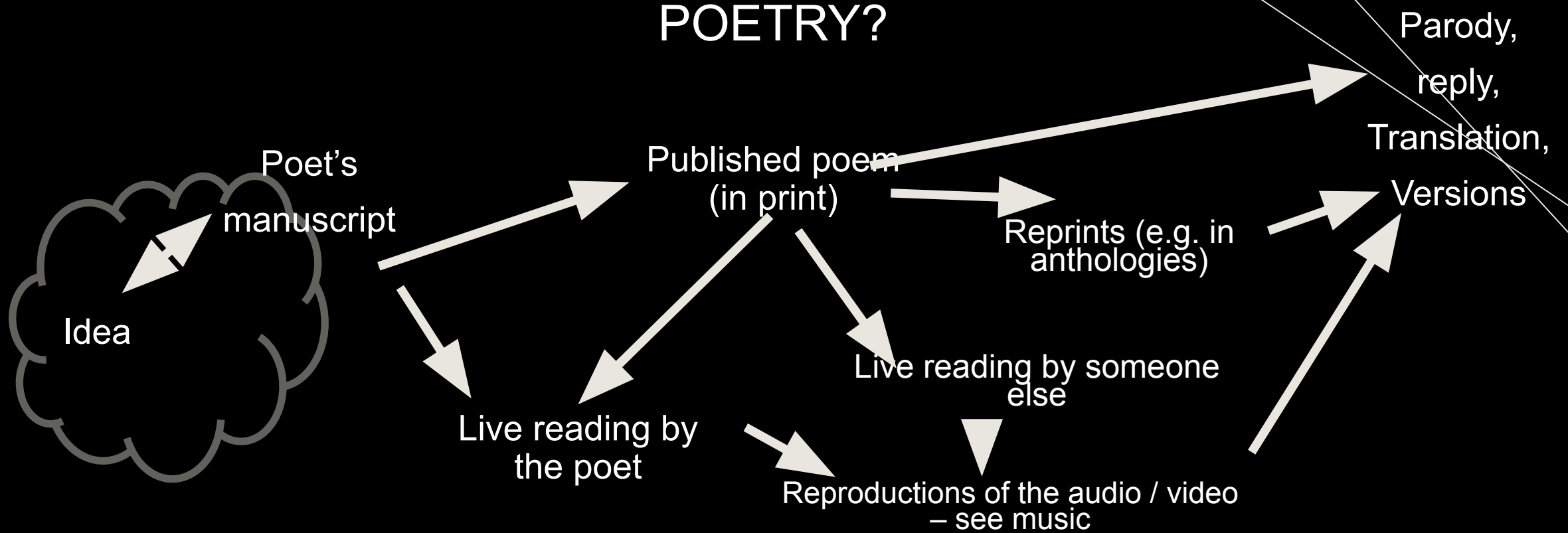
What might a gallery value?	Conventional Sculpture	Origami
From small up to Monumental Scale.	Yes	Very hard scale up - unless translated into another medium (like Kevin Box's Origami in the Garden)
Only very talented, skilled people can do this	Often	Everyone asks how can they make it themselves
Formalism is worth less than conceptual art, or any art with more complex meaning.	Often	Rarely
The original has a unique value – the “aura” – reproductions have lost the connection with the history of the original and so lost the “aura.”	Always	We encourage fakes! We want more people to make fakes! The creator will probably make copies themselves when one becomes worn.
Can be specific to a context – a response to a place and time.	Often	Rarely
Old things by dead people are prized and valuable – the museum preserves important cultural artefacts	Often	We have an archive of diagrams, but hardly any models...
Financial value in the art market	Often	Very Rarely;

MUSIC?



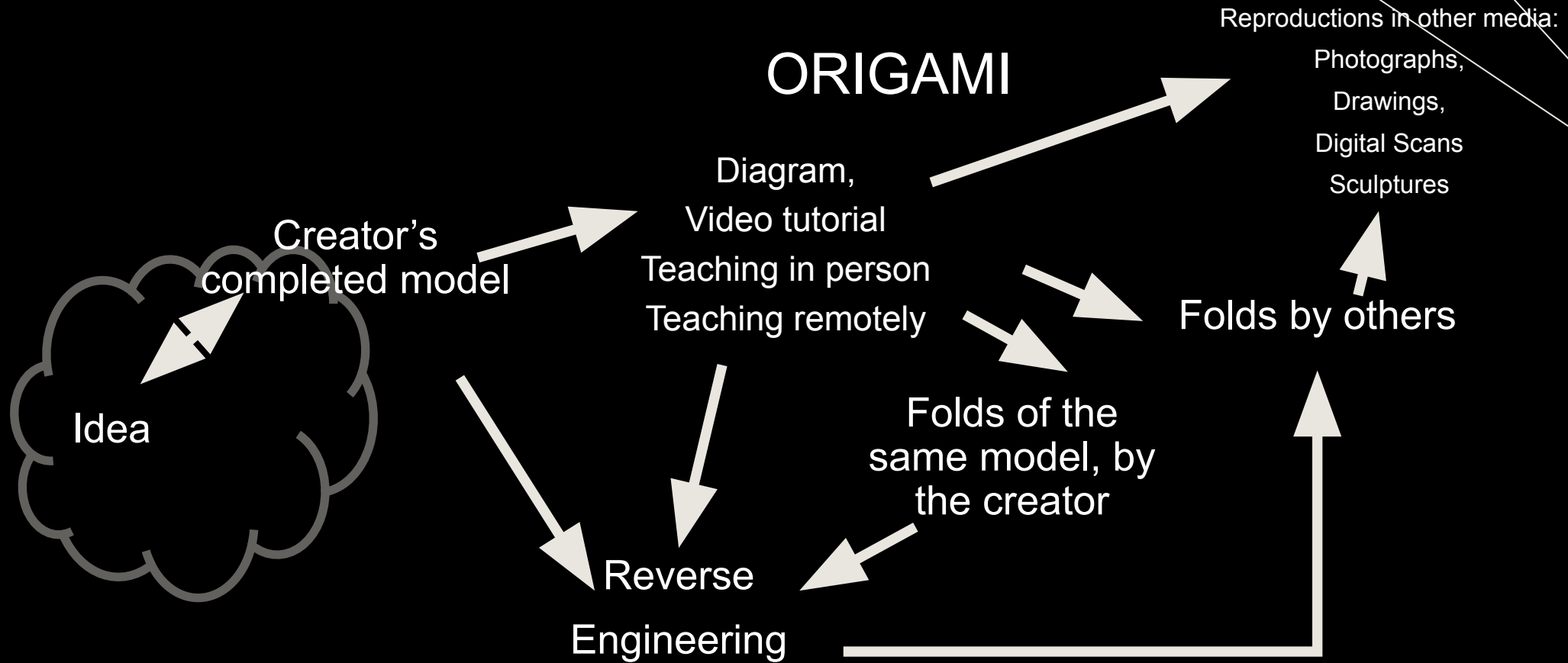
Value is more widespread, as the work can be mechanically / digitally reproduced but also we accept a cover can be better than the original

POETRY?



Value is more widespread, as the work can be mechanically / digitally reproduced

ORIGAMI



We actively encourage reproduction by others “fakes” and we get value from every part of this picture.

PERHAPS THE PROBLEM IS NOT HOW CAN WE GO ABOUT GETTING OUR ARTWORK ALONE RECOGNISED AS “ART”

BORIS GROYS – IN THE FLOW (2016, VERSO BOOKS):

“In 20th Century, the art and its institutions came under fire from a new democratic and egalitarian spirit against art museums and generally against the preservation of the art of the past... this led to the development of “direct realism” an art that would not produce objects, but practices ... that would not survive. But for more than a century now, every advance in this direction has been quickly followed by a means to retain art’s privileged position.”

Art Galleries are no longer focussed on preserving an archive, they are focussed on events.

“DO IT” AN EXHIBITION

“Curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, *do it* began in Paris in 1993 as a conversation between Obrist and the artists Christian Boltanski and Bertrand Lavier. Obrist was concerned with how exhibition formats could be rendered more flexible and open-ended. This discussion led to the question of whether a show could take “scores,” or written instructions by artists, as a point of departure, each of which could be interpreted anew every time they were enacted....”

“This open exhibition model has become the longest-running and most far-reaching exhibition to ever take place”

(From Independent Curators International Website)



MAYBE WE SHOULD DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY

**“That may be the best definition of art – that which
expands the definition”**

Hans Ulrich Obrist “Ways of Curating” 2014