

# RESILIENCE AND THE CITY

ART  
EDUCATION  
URBANISM

# **RESILIENCE AND THE CITY: ART, EDUCATION, URBANISM**

## **Selected Presentations from the Thematic Mobile Sessions 15th ELIA Biennial Conference**

The 15th ELIA Biennial Conference, *Resilience and the City: Art, Education, Urbanism*, was hosted by the Willem de Kooning Academy and Codarts University of the Arts from 21 to 24 November 2018. Taking place in Rotterdam, a city experiencing rapid developments and challenges on a social, political, economic, and environmental level, the conference explored four wide-ranging and intersecting themes: *Shifting Centres, Shifting Margins; Art and Social Cohesion; Art and Economy; and Art and Innovation*. Each theme provided a framework to examine how the arts can potentially play a vital role in building resilience, especially in urban contexts.

After the initial call, an unprecedented amount of proposals was submitted and subsequently peer-reviewed by experts in the fields of art, design, education, and the performing arts. What was most striking about the selected presentations was how the four themes were interpreted, embedded in local situations, generated from different learning environments, or manifest in unique artistic approaches. In many respects, the conference, which was attended by over 460 delegates from art academies across Europe and beyond, provided

an opportunity to swap notes, compare strategies, establish common ground, and on some occasions, plot plans for future collaborations.

Reflecting upon the diversity, urgency, and vibrancy of these contributions, and being aware of the ongoing need for knowledge exchange within the ELIA network, an invitation to publish was extended during the event. While this publication by no means represents the sum of the conference, which included performances, keynote speakers and panels, it nonetheless offers an impression of the Thematic Mobile Sessions which took place at different venues across the city.

In terms of the publication's structure, submissions have been organised in relation to the original four themes in which they were presented, and alphabetically ordered according to authors' surnames. While the contributions are not narratively woven together as cohesive chapters, there are numerous overlaps in issues, methodologies, concerns, and contexts. For this reason, an indexical view has been provided where terms link together different contributions across themes. With the Index, words such as resistance, tactic, poetic, education, or intervention become threads that bind. The aim is to provide cross-references and perhaps even unexpected connections that illuminate another path of understanding these contributions in relation to each other.

While this collection presents insights into some of the topics addressed during the 15th ELIA Biennial Conference, it is far from comprehensive, as not all presenters submitted

contributions. It also does not capture the various workshops and discussions, the walking tours, the vibrancy of the city, and the unique atmosphere of the locations where the Thematic Mobile Sessions took place. Nonetheless, it serves as a reminder for those who were present, a reference to return to, and a glimpse into other sessions which might have been missed due to parallel programming. Most of all, hopefully for those who were unable to attend, it is an incentive to attend the next ELIA Biennial Conference in 2020, which will take place at the Zurich University of the Arts.

The editors would like to thank all the contributors for trusting us, and extend gratitude to the editorial coordinator and ELIA Conference Manager, Janja Ferenc, as well as to Barbara Revelli, ELIA's Head of Membership and Communications, for organising the framework and resources to publish this volume.

Finally, the editors would like to dedicate this publication to the conviction that RESILIENCE has an equally powerful twin, which is also life-saving and instrumental to societal and individual well-being: RESISTANCE!

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# NAVIGATING OPEN SYSTEMS: ARTISTIC RESEARCH BUILDS RESILIENCE

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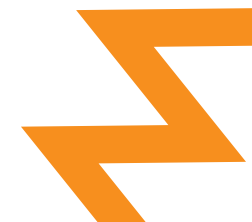
## **Keywords:**

artistic research  
open systems  
non-cooperative game theory  
intervention art  
social cohesion

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## **ABSTRACT**

The paper describes the city space as a self-organising, open system that can be co-designed by artistic research to be a breathing web of heterogenous groups. In its core competence of drifting and navigating, artistic research thus contributes to the current transformation of societies and counters the manifestations of non-cooperative game theory. The paper considers artistic research on city spaces by Nduka Mntambo and looks at intervention art by eL Seed and Theaster Gates. In the conclusion it is shown that autonomous artistic interventions using space itself as a time-based medium are able to open up new forms of social cohesion and resilience in the tradition of the "social sculpture."





# 1. ARTISTIC RESEARCH IN ITS IMPACT ON THE URBAN SPACE

“When approaching Lagos by plane shortly before sunset, one still has an overview: approximately in the bend of Africa, on the shore of the Gulf of Guinea, up to the horizon a sea of flickering lights. In the middle, a bundle of skyscrapers. In between, a network of canal arms, islands, harbour basins, bridges and bays... Once you are inside it, you lose your orientation. There are strict rules, sophisticated orders, highly differentiated organisational systems according to which the city functions for its inhabitants. But they are not easy to recognize.”<sup>1</sup> And they are negotiated and renegotiated on a daily basis... In a way, the same is also true for the cityscape of Johannesburg, a raw space of experience, full of vibrant energy, in which atmospheres can abruptly change from one street to the other. All these urban spaces mirror and express the transformations that our networked societies go through in all their areas and layers: in their knowledge cultures, their economic systems, their media landscape, and their social fabric. And coming back to Europe with an experience that is exorbitant, beyond the *orbis* of our European view, sharpens the focus on our European situation.

In Europe we witness that the three knowledge cultures of our tradition—sciences, arts, and technologies—which had been separated for a long period of time, are now approaching each other again, and intertwine again. At the same time there is a growing realisation that our complex questions of orientation require dialogues between arts, sciences, and technological development. If they cooperate at eye level, they achieve novel results and can assume their responsibilities in society more effectively.

In their new dialogues, arts, sciences, and technologies introduce their own ways of research and their own modes of knowledge. Artistic research works in its own languages, uses its own tools and procedures, follows its own laws and criteria of knowledge. In its autonomous profile, artistic research provides indispensable impulses for shaping the transformation of society, on the macro level as well as on the level of individual existence. It contributes three competences to the process.

**1. Analysing and criticising.** Artistic research illuminates the structures and processes of society. It questions ways of thinking, attitudes, and forms of behaviour. It analyses forms of perception and desire. It asks how the identity of individuals is built. It reflects on the media and the means of artistic work.

**2. Projecting and designing.** Artistic research opens up new horizons. It sets up new spaces. It creates new meanings; it builds cultural and aesthetic identities. It projects new ways of being in the world. It creates a knowledge of the possible; it thinks in scenarios.

**3. Drifting and navigating.** The transformations in which we participate increasingly take on the form of non-linear motion, of turbulent flow—that is, we encounter an unknown future that is not already determined in advance by the laws of the past. In breaks and leaps, unforeseen spaces of possibility, chance, and risk—of adventure—open up. Art has experience with movements of this kind; it constantly deals with the unknown, it is constantly in dialogue with something that calls for form. In its daily experience, art builds a knowledge of how we can move in turbulent currents.

In its competences, artistic research can create visual worlds and narratives that lead to new social practises or perspectives. In the big picture, societies worldwide adopted neo-liberal paradigms in which societal cohesion vanishes. Medial stagings, imageries and narratives, self-images, and strategies of behaviour are elements of this set-up. Win-lose is the game of the day that often delivers a lose-lose result. We can characterise neo-liberal societies by three elementary traits.

**1.** Everything becomes part of a market. As Michel Foucault pointed out, in American neo-liberalism the logic of the market gets generalised into non-economic areas. The grid of common economic concepts serves also as a matrix for interpreting the areas of culture and of politics, the public sector, and the realm of social practices. A new type of governing power no longer subjects and disciplines individuals, but instead “activates the trace elements of market form in the totality of individual practices, projects, objectives and decisions.”<sup>2</sup>

**2.** Game theory, as it first appeared in John von Neumann’s essay from 1928, provided economics with a new mathematical basis. On this basis, it was able to develop strategies on how to behave in competition, on how to anticipate the future. Game theory could have been developed in two directions: non-cooperative (I win, you lose) and cooperative (I win, you win). Unfortunately, only the non-cooperative variant was developed. As a scenario, this is the arena which is medially staged almost everywhere these days. An example is the TV series *Game of Thrones*, a vast retrojection of the neo-liberal world into some medieval time. In all three phases of game theory’s development, however, there were counter-movements in the arts.

**a.** The goal that directs all the strategies of classical game theory is to obtain “a maximum of profits” or “a maximum of utility or satisfaction.” In order to reach that goal, game theory tries to anticipate the future, that is, to strategically master all the meanings that could possibly occur. In return, the Dadaists and Surrealists opened themselves up to unknown

<sup>1</sup> Sievers, F. (2013), Lagos. *Spex*, 349, 56.

<sup>2</sup> Vogl, J. (2010). *Das Gespenst des Kapitals* (p.136). Berlin: Diaphanes.



Figure 1. Nduka Mntambo, *Asymmetries*.  
Source: Nduka Mntambo

new meanings. In the surrealist game *cadavre exquis*, each player sketched something on a folded paper that was passed on, and in the end, the group marvelled at unforeseen forms that emerged in a win-win teamwork.

**b.** In World War II, game theory migrates from the economic to the military context, the opponent now becomes the enemy. Up to the end of the First Cold War, game theory in its “winner takes all” version is developed in think tanks that pertain to the military context. The strategies are now directed by the goal to control a territory, to define a space in all its meanings. In return, performance art and situationism constantly opened up spaces, welcomed the incidence of chance, and let unexpected meanings emerge. As the situationists drifted through the body of the city, they constantly redefined urban space.

**c.** After the First Cold War, game theory returns to the economic field: the traders’ workplaces are transformed into symbolic theatres of war, the stock exchanges into simulated battlefields, the investment banks into strategic military commands. The strategies of game theory now consist in bluffing and setting up wrong tracks, in order to strip other economic players of their assets.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, art in the sense of artistic research opens new spaces, gives shape to unknown meanings, and creates win-win situations.

**3.** In the last instance, the winner-takes-all strategies are structured by the death drive. And the death drive is, in its last instance, a relationship to time that wants to immobilise its movement; that wants to reach a final point that does not move any further. A culture marked by the manifestations of the death drive can be termed a death culture, and a society that is informed by it is a homogenised society. In contrast, as philosopher Merleau-Ponty pointed out, a society consisting of heterogenous groups will remain in an

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Schirmacher, F. (2013). *Ego. Das Spiel des Lebens*. Munich: Blessing.

open and unfinishable process of change.<sup>4</sup> The constant exchange of perspectives and the constant negotiation of shares means constant movement in the breathing tissue of society. The condition for this is a logic of the heterogeneous, in which the elements are not enclosed in any overarching static unity. Artistic research contributes to build and maintain that logic in its concrete forms. It designs the social environment as an open space that we share with others. This is the space of resilience.

A fundamental artistic reflection on urban space is offered by our colleague Nduka Mntambo, from the Wits School of Arts in Johannesburg. In his installation *Asymmetries* he showed hanging objects that resembled rudimentary house forms, or even pixels or crystals. On the rear wall of the gallery an experimental film was projected, and on the side walls projected text strips appeared from time to time. In combination with the projection the hanging objects appeared in different light conditions in which their plastic quality changes. The soundscape consisted of dialogues, speeches, monologues, recited text, and singing. Visitors had to locate themselves in the space, and from each individual position the spatial events appeared in a different way. The cinematic narrative multiplied, exploded, and in the heterogeneous space that emerged from it, each individual was called upon to enter his or her contribution into the collective space.

The individual moves in an open system that is continuously changing, and the knowledge on drifting and on navigating that artistic research offers can support urban planners and developers, architects, politicians, and inhabitants in creating vibrant, open spaces and in shaping them from day to day.

(Stefan Winter)



Figure 2. Nduka Mntambo, *Asymmetries*. Source: Nduka Mntambo

<sup>4</sup> Merleau-Ponty, M. (1955). *Les aventures de la dialectique*. Paris: Gallimard.

## 2. HOW ARTISTIC RESEARCH BUILDS RESILIENCE

In European art we can look back on a rich tradition of intervention art. Particularly in our modern understanding, art itself is a cultural intervention method in many respects. By using different media and aesthetics, art creates new interfaces of perception that intervene in all areas of life as aesthetic meditation and experience. It questions familiar perspectives and enables possibilities of interpretation that can change or create patterns of knowledge. Today, due to the change of digital media, art communicates within a global community and can therefore generate far greater transnational attention and effects than ever before.

But how exactly do the arts navigate within open systems, how does intervention art generate resilience and social cohesion? The following examples will serve as models to illustrate the effectiveness and thus also the relevance of the arts within turbulent paradigmatic transformation processes. The thesis is that the relevance and effectiveness of intervention art depends on the force with which it disturbs and interferes. Research processes in the arts can generate not only this force but also change.

If one analyses the logics of intervention art that aims its will to change at political and social systems, one can in principle extract two aesthetic intervention practices from diversity. The first arises from the idea of the image, while the second focuses on sculptural, three-dimensional, and time-based structures. They are geared to various effects.

### 1. Image-based interventions

The French-Tunisian street artist and activist eL Seed (b. 1981), UNESCO-Sharjah Prize winner for Arab Culture 2016, has been investigating the potential of intervention projects as a way for political critique and influence.

As a mixture of Arabic calligraphy and verse tradition paired with Western street art, he “posts” iconic signatures and narrative codes in public space with his “calligraphis”–interventions in social, economic, and political crisis areas around the globe.<sup>5</sup>

While the aesthetics of the image attract the viewer’s attention, the underlying narrative provokes political and social dialogue. Through their poetic and iconic condensation, the wall works of eL Seed create new symbolic references and complex connotations

<sup>5</sup> eL Seed: “I always make sure that I write messages, but there are also layers of the political and social context and that is what I try to incorporate into my work. The aesthetics are really important, that’s what attracts your attention, but then I try to open a dialogue based on the place and my choice of text.” Retrieved 4 January 2019 from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EL\\_Seed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EL_Seed)

to the space in which they intervene. But he always questions its cultural, political, and social significance in the understanding of space as a global place we share (no arena). The disturbing contradictions call for a change in conventional attitudes, perspectives, and images, not from a national but from a global perspective. In 2012, for example, eL Seed sparked a fruitful global debate with a huge piece of wall on the highest Tunisian mosque in Gabès. The changed view was a highly political act. The artistic intervention infiltrated the logic of win-win systems into a political, social, and cultural space understood as a global sphere, questioning the underlying national codes.

With *Perception* (2016), eL Seed realised a graffiti in Manshiyat Naser, the poorest district of Cairo, known as “Garbage City,” where the Copts earn their living by collecting the garbage of the Egyptian metropolis. *Perception* enables us to examine the effectiveness of image-based interventional methods in more detail, and shows another way in which images work on social change.

The so-called “Zabbaleen” are known worldwide for their effective system for collecting and sorting garbage. As Coptic Christians and garbage collectors, however, they are a wrongly stigmatised and completely isolated minority community.

*Perception* was eL Seed’s reaction to their political situation. In the logic of artistic social interventions, he transformed artistic practice into social practice. By painting over 50 of Manshiyat Naser’s dilapidated residential buildings, they created collectively a kaleidoscopic image of a huge calligraphi expressing a Coptic proverb: “Anyone who wants to see the sunlight clearly, needs to wipe his eyes first.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Ted Summit (2016, June). *eL Seed: A project of peace, painted across 50 buildings*. Retrieved from [https://www.ted.com/talks/el\\_seed\\_a\\_project\\_of\\_peace\\_painted\\_across\\_50\\_buildings#t-20710](https://www.ted.com/talks/el_seed_a_project_of_peace_painted_across_50_buildings#t-20710)



Figure 3. eL Seed, *Perception* (2016), “Anyone who wants to see the sunlight clearly, needs to wipe his eyes first.” Photo: Ouhahidb Berrehouma, Creative Commons licence CC BY-SA 4.0



Figure 4. eL Seed, *Perception* (2016), "Anyone who wants to see the sunlight clearly, needs to wipe his eyes first." Photo: Ouahidb Berrehouma, Creative Commons licence Ouahidb, Tacapes verso, CC BY-SA 3.0

The meaning of the emblem can only be read from a central position in front of the Coptic Church above the Garbage City.<sup>7</sup> *Perception* is an impressive eye-opener for the effects of image-based art as social intervention: the work constructs and deconstructs the central perspective, thus showing the relationship between observation and cognition as concrete experience. *Perception* makes it perceptible that every image, every representation, and thus every meaning, depends on perspectives, and that knowledge is always the result of accumulated subjective perspectives.

Only by changing one's own position can we discover with *Perception* a quasi-holographic, 3D image with deeper layers of meaning beyond the surface. It visualises the relationship between cognition, knowledge, and reality. *Perception* exemplifies the multi-layered relationship between image and identity, and shows that social or political images are stereotypical representations of power constellations (restrictive control perspectives) and expressions of political will.

By changing the manner of perception, eL Seed changed the perspective on the Zabbaleen and created the possibility to introduce a different political view which could rewrite the stereotypical narrative of the Coptic community. *Perception* could not redesign the entire urban space, but intervened into its political and social coding. At the level of ideas and concepts it generates productive contradictions for fruitful debates. Image-based interventions open possibilities for political dialogue and social change, but

<sup>7</sup> The church was carved into stone to protect it against religious opponents.

they are not real drivers for structural transformation processes, as they do not change social and political practices.

## 2. Interventions as "social sculpture"

The American artist Theaster Gates uses interventional artistic practices that go beyond the surface of images and iconic representations and use sculptural, three-dimensional, and time-based aesthetics. In Chicago he came across the abandoned Stony Island Savings & Loan Bank. The building had been crumbling since the 1980s. Gates transformed it into a place that serves various functions and houses exhibitions, archives and collections, research, artist residences, public programmes, and performances shaping a new neighbourhood identity.<sup>8</sup>

The essential aesthetic difference to eL Seed's projects is that the media interface to the public sphere is not primarily an image. Pictures work with references, showing or representing, but remain fiction in themselves. Gates turns the urban space into a theatre of the real. A network of different micro-spaces providing a new social infrastructure reconstructs social references. The public space itself is a productive medium that intervenes directly in social practices and thus organically changes the self-image and identity of the inhabitants through shared experience.



Figure 5. Theaster Gates, *Community Building Project* (2015), Chicago, *Neighbourhood Network Plan*. Source: Rebuild foundation

<sup>8</sup> Ted Conference (2015, June). *Theaster Gates: How to revive a neighborhood with imagination, beauty and art*. Retrieved from [https://www.ted.com/talks/theaster\\_gates\\_how\\_to\\_revive\\_a\\_neighborhood\\_with\\_imagination\\_beauty\\_and\\_art#t-440891](https://www.ted.com/talks/theaster_gates_how_to_revive_a_neighborhood_with_imagination_beauty_and_art#t-440891)



Figure 6. Theaster Gates, Community Building Project (2015), Chicago, Writers Workshop. Source: Rebuild foundation

Gates's Chicago project is a very concrete implementation of Joseph Beuys's conception of art as social sculpture. The comparison with Cairo's Garbage City once again makes it clear that every existential representation also reveals the logic of social and political power structures. What was possible in Gates's project of transforming the social infrastructure materialises the economic and political will that is necessary for all transformation processes, and also a condition for the effectiveness of intervention art.

Artistic research is now precisely the part of artistic practice that is based on the idea of autonomy that first arises through it and that must insist on it. It is the reaction to the fact that art today is more and more the product of an economic system and less and less cultural practice. Artistic research is the resistant formulation of the need for free artistic expression. Artistic research shapes and preserves the autonomy of the arts as a status and as a demarcation against dominant and overpowering structures. For, as already explained, art can only be effective at all in its autonomy—and this applies to intervention art, in particular.

(Fee Altmann)

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# DISABILITY ON STAGE: A PILOT PROJECT ON INCLUSIVE DANCE AND PERFORMER TRAINING IN SWITZERLAND

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## **ABSTRACT**

*DisAbility on Stage* is the first comprehensive examination of theatre and dance practices by and with artists with disabilities in Switzerland. In this paper, two of its sub-projects will be presented. *Disabled Bodies in Discourse*, conducted by the Accademia Teatro Dimitri, investigates the connections between physical theatre and theatre made by disabled actors. Points of enquiry in the linking of these fields are the actors' training and the development of original dramaturgy by performers. The sub-study *Creation Processes in Theatre by and with Disabled Actors and Directors* is linked to the long-term performance project Freie Republik HORA, an artistic experiment that started in 2013 and is set up for five years. In this process-orientated project the members of the Theater HORA ensemble, the only theatre ensemble in Switzerland with professional actors with intellectual disabilities, developed their own directing projects.

### **Keywords:**

inclusion  
physical theatre  
performer training  
autonomy  
audience discussions

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## DISABILITY ON STAGE

The interdisciplinary research project *DisAbility on Stage*, with its sub-projects, is an important step in the political discussions in Switzerland and in many other countries. The Federal Office for Equality of the Swiss Federal Department of Home Affairs is working on ways of promoting autonomy for people with disabilities through a programme that in English could be called “Self-determined life.”<sup>9</sup> Politicians are understanding that devised work is an answer to how one might promote autonomy. From a theatrical point of view, devising is a method of making performance that “includes the collaborative participation of the whole creative company in all stages and aspects of performance-making.”<sup>10</sup> Moreover, devising gives a performer (with or without disabilities) the opportunity to shift from being object or tool to being subject/author of an artistic discourse.

But, even when the politics are on our side, for real changes we have to go deeper in the matters of power dynamics and standardising (“normating”) tendencies. Because of that, challenging authorities and norms are at the centre of our project. As the artists involved in *DisAbility on Stage* proved through their work, there are many ways of thinking, questioning, experiencing, feeling, and achieving things (inside and outside art).

*DisAbility on Stage*,<sup>11</sup> directed by Yvonne Schmidt and Anton Rey from the Institute for the Performing Arts and Film (IPF) of the Zurich University of the Arts, is a cooperation between the IPF, the Accademia Teatro Dimitri (SUPSI - University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland) in Verscio, the Universities of Basel and Berne,

9 See <https://www.edi.admin.ch/edi/it/home/fachstellen/ufpd/politique-nationale-du-handicap.html>

10 Allain, P., & Harvie, J. (2014). *The Routledge companion to theatre and performance* (p. 172). New York and London: Routledge.

11 See <https://blog.zhdk.ch/disabilityonstage/>

Theater HORA, and Teatro Danzabile, and is financially supported by Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), Stiftung Corymbo, Oertli-Stiftung and IntegrART. It is the first comprehensive examination of theatre and dance practices by and with artists with disabilities in Switzerland.

The main aims of the project are, first, to encourage a discourse on disability at art schools and universities and, second, to put the resulting insights into practice by developing crossroads between educational practices and the presentation of productions by and with artists with disabilities.<sup>12</sup> The research is based on methods and theories from theatre studies and disability studies, artistic research, and (video-)ethnography.

## DISABLED BODIES IN DISCOURSE

The sub-project *Disabled Bodies in Discourse* investigates connections between physical theatre and the theatre made by/with performers with disabilities. In November 2016 an inclusive practical workshop took place at the Accademia Teatro Dimitri; the group of participants was composed of a class of MA students in the physical theatre programme, a group of performers with diverse disabilities from Teatro Danzabile, and one member of the research team as a participant observer.<sup>13</sup>

In the first phase of the project, as we were dealing mainly with literatures from disability studies and physical theatre, the biggest issue we met was concerning definitions: how to properly talk about persons with disabilities? How to address the art they make? How to distinguish an artistic process from group therapy? Every formulation we found sounded like “labelling” and was establishing an intellectual distance which we were apparently not able to overcome. Although having a certain distance may be considered an effective attitude in a research process, at that stage we realised that it was telling more about the blind spots in our way of thinking and our implicit categorising attitude than about the way performers with disabilities approach theatre and develop their strategies.

In order to avoid a categorising perspective, and to enhance our knowledge about performers with disabilities, we needed to “shake” our world through a concrete and peer-to-peer encounter with them. Therefore, we decided to put as much emphasis as possible on the two weeks of practical inclusive laboratory and to try to fully trust and articulate the outcomes and reflections brought out by working through the body.

Through this practical approach we could observe that categorising is the very first act that transforms differences into something problematic. Our minds are conditioned to set

12 Schmidt, Y., Marinucci, S., Bocchini, S., & Quadri, D. (2018). *DisAbility on Stage – Exploring the Physical in Dance and Performer Training*. *Synny/Origins: Finnish Studies in Art Education*, 2, 74–87.

13 See <https://vimeo.com/216864689>

up clear borders. Because of this we can easily begin considering our mind as something clearly separated from our body. Physical theatre's understanding of the body-mind relation led us to develop practical and valuable tools to overcome these intellectual hurdles. The majority of current training approaches aim to overcome this dichotomy by understanding the performer as a psycho-physical continuum of body and mind and rejecting the idea of the body as a tool at disposal of the mind. Thanks to the intense physical work brought by the workshop leader, Emanuel Rosenberg, we could experiment and observe the dissolution of difference-as-a-limitation and its transformation into a singular and specific flair, which became the feature of each encounter between the performers.

Because the workshop took place in the frame of a physical theatre academy, we discovered the necessity of re-discussing the role of skills in physical theatre education and our understanding of them. In this respect the field of physical theatre is a little "tricky." On one hand, it poses itself as an alternative to a traditional and hierarchical way of doing theatre, questioning the predominance of the spoken text and the singular guidance represented by the director and/or the author of the piece. On the other hand, given the centrality of the body, the training methods tend to put a strong emphasis on acquisition/accumulation of physical skills, which often leads to the concept of the actor as a "movement virtuoso," and performance as a "display of abilities." The history of the development of major training practices reveals the bias of a skilled, strong, capable body and its right to be on the stage, while bodies that do not conform to such criteria, and to the "tyranny of neutral,"<sup>14</sup> are considered as unsuitable for the stage.<sup>15</sup>

Being confronted with the extra-ordinary bodies<sup>16</sup> of the Danzabile performers has meant, for the MA students, addressing a larger range of skills which are not classifiable on an objective basis. Each encounter must be assessed individually. Slowing down was necessary, as well as facing unpredictable reactions and searching for a deeper and subtler level of listening. For the majority of the MA students, used to working at high rhythm and intensity, this led at the beginning to a certain frustration. As researchers,

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14 Sandahl, C. (2005). The tyranny of neutral. In Sandahl, C., & Auslander, P. (Eds.), *Bodies in commotion: Disability and performance* (pp. 255–267). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

15 The establishing of academic institutions from the second half of the 16th century reinforced this categorising attitude by clearly stating artistic standards, which had to be accomplished in order to achieve an artistic status. On this topic, Smith, O. (2005). Shifting Apollo's frame. In Sandahl, C., & Auslander, P. (Eds.), *Bodies in commotion: Disability and performance* (pp. 73–85). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

16 "Rosemarie Garland Thomson offers 'extra-ordinary' versus 'normate' bodies as a way of capturing the dynamic between disabled and non-disabled. These terms provide a good starting place, in particular since 'normate' is less transparently 'value-free' than the statistical term 'normal': 'normate speaks of categories, of practices to keep people in place". In Koppers, P. (2003). *Disability and contemporary performance: Bodies on the edge* (p. 7). New York and London: Routledge.

we realised that, in an inclusive workshop, we tend to underline the augmented level of autonomy experienced by the performers with disabilities, but we rarely take into account that *all* the participants are challenged to enlarge their artistic and creative proposals, because to work inclusively doesn't mean, for an "able" performer, to fall into the assistant role. The challenging, subversive element brought by the inclusive modality in the context of physical theatre academic education urged all participants to enhance their artistic autonomy and to extend the borders of their creative quest.

The participants' diversity also led to some urgent questions about the feedback methods. While we were able to collect a wide range of diverse feedback from the MA students, the Danzabile performers were, in this respect, quite shy, either not talking at all, or addressing mainly the level of feelings, with statements such as "I liked this exercise very much" or "Doing this I felt good/bad." The question is how to create the conditions not only for inclusive practical work but also for inclusive reflection, which takes into account all the individual contributions each participant can bring. How to provoke the shift from inclusion as an object of research to inclusion as a means of research?

### **Freie Republik HORA - From speaking about to speaking with actors with intellectual disabilities**

The long-term project *Freie Republik HORA* (in English: *Free Republic HORA*)<sup>17</sup> is a theatre experiment of the Theater HORA from Zurich. The Theater HORA is the only professional theatre in Switzerland whose actors all have an IV-certified, so-called cognitive disability. *Freie Republik HORA* has been running for several years and is made up of several phases, pursuing two central goals. The first is to ensure that artists with so-called intellectual disabilities receive artistic authorship not only as actors but also as directors. This includes both the promotion and support of HORA actors with regard to their artistic autonomy, and leads to a rethinking of power structures within the theatre business. On the other hand, the exchange with the audience explores the question of how theatre can be adequately criticised not only with but also by artists with cognitive disabilities.

In the first phase, the members of Theater HORA worked together to create a collective staging without the artistic participation of the artistic direction of Theater HORA.

The second phase began when the HORA actor Gianni Blumer expressed the wish to lead his colleagues from the ensemble as a director for his theatre piece. Within a few days the ensemble members developed various smaller directorial works on themes of their

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17 Within the framework of the SNSF project *DisAbility on Stage*, the rehearsal processes of *Freie Republik HORA, Phase 3* were examined ethnographically by camera (Silke Andris and Pascale Grange), scientifically by theatre (Yvonne Schmidt), and from the perspective of assistance (Nele Jahnke). The result is the film *Six Directors – One Republic*, several articles, and a hybrid media publication (planned for summer 2019).



own choice, which they wanted to deal with intensively and which were then performed in front of an audience in the form of try-outs.

The third phase took place between January and June 2016. The ensemble members each developed an individual direction concept, which was sent to an external jury of experts. There were four equal conditions for all, and a fifth, individual condition. First, what was not prohibited was permitted. Only sexual assaults, violence, or destruction of other people's property were prohibited. Second, one week rehearsal time on the stage was at their disposal. Third, a title and a description of the director's idea were required before the beginning of rehearsal. Fourth, a maximum production budget of 5,000 CHF was available per director and per week, and for a minimum of one to a maximum of three professional, non-HORA actors and/or set designers, costume designers, etc., including the equipment budget, individually determined by the director. The fifth, individual condition was tailored to the artistic profile of the individual director and determined by the artistic direction of Theater HORA.

As in phases one and two, also in the third phase a discussion with the audience after the performance was an integral part of the project. Also, as before, the artistic directors of Theater HORA did not express an opinion, criticism, or praise, but acted as assistants and moderators. The external jury of experts finally selected six concepts, whose directors then worked out six of their own directorial projects with a fixed budget and partly with the participation of external artists.

But the aim of this long-term project is not only to give all Theater HORA ensemble members the opportunity to exercise artistic self-determination and self-responsibility but also to ensure that the audience has the necessary maturity. The fact is that, in all three phases, only the audience was allowed to give feedback on the respective pieces, mainly in the form of audience discussions. The artistic direction of the Theater HORA had imposed on itself the rule not to judge or evaluate the artistic works. This judgement or evaluation could only be experienced within the format of a public discussion.

In phases one and two, however, these discussions turned out to be not very fruitful and were therefore not constructive in terms of successful communication. The HORA management was dissatisfied and asked why it is so difficult to talk about the art by and with artists with disabilities. Michael Elber, the artistic co-director of Theater HORA, suspected that people did not dare to comment critically on the production, precisely because the artists had a mental impairment.

For several years now, theatre studies have been dealing with the problem of communication between artists and audiences. Patrice Pavis,<sup>18</sup> one of the leading representatives of audience research, emphasises that viewers are the partners involved

18 Pavis, P. (2011). Zum aktuellen Stand der Zuschauerforschung. In *Forum Modernes Theater*, 26(1), 73–97.

in the theatre, as they reconstruct the system of staging and thus decide on the success of communication. Consequently, the audience has both a hermeneutic and a creative function, which requires complex reflection. Communicating this reflection in the form of feedback is in many ways a challenge, as theatre scientist Erika Fischer-Lichte has discussed using the term "autopoietic feedback loop" (*autopoietische feedback-Schleife*).<sup>19</sup> In her view, it is not possible to passively participate in a performance. Thus, she assumes that the individual participants of a theatre evening become co-creators of the event, whereby the spectators assume a kind of co-responsibility which makes the formulation of criticism immensely difficult.

The reaction, both from Theater HORA and from the research project *DisAbility on Stage*, was that new formats of audience discussion were developed during a workshop at the Zurich University of the Arts in December 2015, testing five different formats of audience discussion—from the classical podium to playful formats based on more than just linguistic exchange. The four less verbal communication-oriented formats were *The positioning and throwing the ball*, *The shifting double circle*, *The walk for two*, and *The letters as written feedback*.<sup>20</sup>

The development of the formats was an important step in dealing with the challenge of giving feedback. The fact is, however, that in the third phase of *Freie Republik HORA* all six HORA directors refrained from using one of the newly developed discussion formats following the presentation of their plays. They were free to choose their favourite form, and all preferred the classical audience discussion, which was already very familiar to them. However, the problem with this type of conversation is that viewers are expected to leave their seemingly passive role, take the floor and thus actively express themselves in a public setting. This extends the conventions of the spectator role that were established in the 18th century in the context of the beginning of disciplining of the audience.<sup>21</sup> The question here is whether the audience can deal with this expected maturity, or whether they want it at all.

19 Fischer-Lichte, E. (2004). *Ästhetik des Performativen* (pp. 61, 77). Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

20 *The positioning and throwing the ball* requires a small installation on stage: a sign with the word "YES" attached to the left wall and the word "NO" attached to the right. Every audience member chooses a position on a line between YES and NO after hearing a statement or question regarding the piece. A moderator throws a ball to a spectator to let them explain their chosen position. In *The shifting double circle*, the audience is formed in two circles, one inner and one outer. Now, two persons are facing each other, and they have to discuss a statement or question regarding the piece. In *The walk for two*, every spectator has to find a discussion partner after the play and to start a first conversation in a more personal space. *The letters as written feedback* enables every spectator to give written feedback to the people involved in the performance, if they wish, anonymously.

21 Meyer, R. (2012). Von der Wanderbühne zum Hof- und Nationaltheater. In Pernerstorfer, M. J. (Ed.), *Schriften zur Theater- und Kulturgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (p. 113). Vienna: Hollitzer.

It is precisely here that *Freie Republik HORA* and the research team of *DisAbility on Stage* are starting, by opening a space so that this very maturity can be tested. This opening was realised in summer 2016, during a retrospective of the third phase of *Freie Republik HORA*. Over six evenings, all six directorial pieces were shown again, followed by a discussion with the audience. But this time the artistic direction of Theater HORA determined the format of the discussion round and decided on a new, not yet tested form. The basis was the classical audience discussion, but the discussion was introduced by two invited *Speakers of the Evening*, who worked in the theatre and dance scene or were otherwise connected to this scene. The guests each had twenty minutes to talk to the audience about the play and the question "What did you see tonight?" Afterwards the conversation was opened both for the director and the actors involved, as well as for the audience, with the artistic direction of the Theater HORA moderating. In addition, a video booth was installed in the foyer, enabling spectators to express their thoughts on the respective production away from the public if they wished to do so.

The reactions of the retrospective visitors regarding the subsequent opportunities for discussion were thoroughly positive. Many considered it fruitful to first listen to a conversation about what they had seen and then to enter the discussion with reference to it, as well as to express their own thoughts within the framework of a private retreat.

The insights gained within the framework of *Freie Republik HORA* show that experimenting with various spaces and formats of public discussions is profitable: on the one hand, for the way in which criticism is expressed, and on the other hand, for the general reflection about the different possibilities for discussing art and developing fruitful communication between artists and audience.

## PROVISIONAL CONCLUSIONS

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The projects *Disabled Bodies in Discourse* and *Freie Republik HORA* considered in this paper have explored, both through successful experiments and failed attempts, the complexity at all levels of an inclusive approach to theatre and research. An evaluation of the experiences of *DisAbility on Stage* is, at the time of writing, still in progress, so it is not yet possible to propose real conclusions. What is clear, however, is that many of the limits of inclusion can be overcome, more than by focusing on the limits themselves, by seeking new ways forward in practice as well as in theory. As Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote, "A main cause of philosophical disease—a one-sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example" (*Philosophical Investigations*, § 593).

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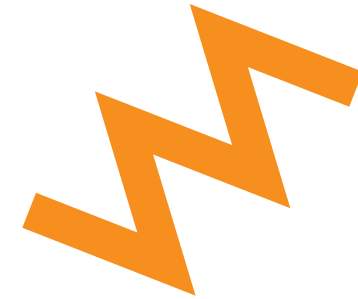
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# UNITY THROUGH PICTOGRAMS

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## Keywords:

pictogram  
dialogue  
equality

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**Pictogram-me** was presented as part of the Pecha Kucha session at the ELIA conference. This document contains the text that describes the visual story.



**Image 01:** *Pictogram-me* is an artistic research project developed at the Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen.<sup>22</sup> The project has been supported by the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme.



**Image 02:** Pictograms are conventionally accepted as simple and fixed visual messages designed for maximum functionality to convey information. The *Pictogram-me* project investigates if pictograms can be used to tell more complex and personal stories.



**Image 03:** The goal has been to conduct a visual examination of various life experiences and perceptions. The *Pictogram-me* project's main inspiration is a symbol system developed in the 1920s and later called Isotype.<sup>23</sup> The system was developed by Otto and Marie Neurath and a team of collaborators including Gerd Arntz and Rudolph Modley (Annink & Bruinsma, 2008). Otto Neurath wanted to explain and illustrate social and economic issues to the general public and was inspired by how Egyptian hieroglyphs made language pictorial. Neurath's vision was "words divide, pictures unite."



**Image 04:** The project is based on research *through* design, which means that *making* is one of the most important methods when seeking new insight and experiences (Borgdorff, 2006). New knowledge is expressed through the artistic result itself and reflection.

<sup>22</sup> Before 1 January 2017 at the Bergen Academy of Art and Design.

<sup>23</sup> ISOTYPE (International System of Typographic Picture Education) is a method for showing social, technological, biological, and historical data with pictograms. Retrieved 1 November 2013 from [www.designhistory.org/Symbols\\_pages/isotype.html](http://www.designhistory.org/Symbols_pages/isotype.html)



**Image 05:** During the project period there were eight pictogram development courses, involving Visual Communication bachelor students at the Bergen Academy of Art and Design (later Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design).<sup>24</sup>



**Image 06:** In *Pictogram-me* we also cooperated with non-designers through workshops. Prototyping, testing, and reflecting on outcomes along the way became important ways of working. We also cooperated with the *Megafon* street magazine, the Church City Mission, and Bakkegaten Care and Housing Community in Bergen, amongst others. We sought to develop pictograms that could express how it can be to face challenges like being homeless or feel as an outsider in society.



**Image 07:** As part of developing the project we held several work-in-progress exhibitions. One of these included five workshops where we invited the public to use different materials to develop pictograms, seeking to express emotions and stories.



**Image 08:** Through these events we investigated how visual tools could help encourage communication, and we considered apps, clay modelling, interpretive dance, image projections, books to comment in, cards to draw stories on, and paper pictogram figures to draw on or re-form.



**Image 09:** One important question in *Pictogram-me* is whether Isotype's philosophy that every picture tells a story can be revitalised and expanded, not just to convey information, but to aid dialogue.

<sup>24</sup> Pictogram developed by former student Johan Jose Odfjell, Bergen Academy of Art and Design.



**Image 10:** During the project our focus changed direction from using pictograms to visualise stories about challenging life existences to developing tools to empower people to communicate their own stories. As part of arranging an international seminar in Bergen, the Visibility venue, we did have the opportunity to invite and start a dialogue with relevant illustrators and artists like Lars Arhenius and the design collective Migrantas.<sup>25</sup> Migrantas works with migrants from very different national, cultural, and social backgrounds. Through drawing-based workshops their aim is to reflect on migration, exchange experiences, and express these to the general public through pictograms.



**Image 11:** One occurrence that changed the project was not planned. While working with the cut-out pictogram figures, we rested a figure in front of the computer screen. Looking at the pictogram in front of the screen, we realised the possibilities of combining both the physical and digital worlds.



**Image 12:** This initiated the development of a small and very simple mobile pictogrammatic theatre. The first prototype was a piece of paper on the keyboard of a computer, allowing us to use the screen as a backdrop and physical pictograms as actors.



**Image 13:** When testing the early prototype, one of our participants told us how he had to present his life story over and over again to different social workers. As the *PictoTheatre* is so compact, it is easy to photograph the stories for future use. The next prototype was built around an iPad. The iPad created a backdrop with a choice of photos and videos, and the cardboard box held the iPad in place and created a stage in front of it.

<sup>25</sup> VISIBILITY, an illustration venue in Bergen, Norway, 5–7 November 2014.



**Image 14:** Some participants added new pictograms by cutting out pieces of paper or using clay. We encouraged the participants to reflect on the process of telling stories with the toolbox, rather than focusing on the content of stories.



**Image 15:** Because we are surrounded by pictograms every day and everywhere, it seemed like the participants felt familiar with them and were comfortable expressing themselves through pictograms. Pictograms are also not as childish as, for example, dolls.



**Image 16:** *Pictogram-me* is based on the trust in a shared visual language. The project has been presented and discussed at a local conference arranged by the Bergen Drug Clinic and a feast by the Church City Mission, but also internationally through conferences by the Society of Artistic Research and Cumulus.<sup>26</sup>



**Image 17:** As a result of migration, people settle down in new countries without knowing the native language or having proper skills in English. With inspiration from Isotype, in *Pictogram-me* we have tried to develop tools for richer communication between people without a shared verbal language, especially people facing challenging life situations. In addition to the *PictoTheatre*, a beta version of an app has been developed by students from Western Norway University of Applied Sciences.<sup>27</sup>



**Image 18:** Read more at [www.pictogram-me.com](http://www.pictogram-me.com) or <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/157238/157239>, where tools are also available for testing.

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<sup>26</sup> "Røst, the voice of the user," Bergen, Norway, 10 May 2015; Feast by the Street Church Mission, Bergen, Norway, 10 June 2017; "Please Specify!" Conference by Society of Artistic Research, Helsinki, Finland, 28 April 2017; Cumulus, Paris, France, 12 April 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Martin Fure, Nicolai Spinnangr, and Idar Syslak.

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# @.AC – THE RESILIENT ART SCHOOL

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**Keywords:**

democracy  
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neo-liberalism  
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art

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## **ABSTRACT**

The 15th ELIA Biennial Conference, Rotterdam, brought into question the relation of art, education, and urbanism around the theme of resilience. We contend that such questions are inescapably political, returning in the final analysis to the current neo-liberal conjuncture. The paper below critically reflects our contribution to the conference, which took the form of an anarchic workshop or anti-paper. The paper also briefly outlines the contexts and politics of this anarcho-pedagogic intervention, before reading the work produced by delegates attending our session as critic-creative commentaries on the current socio-political conditions of arts education. This paper and the workshop intervention to which it relates both commit to making visible the voice of conference participants rather than our own, thus inverting hegemonic institutional power models. We forward this model of non-hierarchical art education as a form of politics, which we contend could be the foundation of a resilient, 21st-century art school.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*Thanks to the University of Central Lancashire for supporting our participation in this conference and the Precarious University project from which it emerges. Also, @.ac would like to express our solidarity with the various art school occupations and autonomous art schools which have emerged in the United Kingdom following the Browne Review (2010).*

# 1. INTRODUCING THE RESILIENT ART SCHOOL

Since 2010, neo-liberal reforms to the higher education sector in the United Kingdom have rapidly accelerated what Andrew McGettigan (2011) has called the “commodification” and “financialisation” of the university. Commodification, in the sense that a university degree is now advertised and consumed in the same fashion as any other commodity; financialisation, in the sense that university strategy is determined primarily by monetary and fiscal logic. The headline effect of the Browne Review (2010) of UK student finance was the trebling of undergraduate tuition fees, presently £9,250 per year. Less noticeable effects were the complete removal of state funding from art and humanities degrees and a reframing of university education into a privately funded human capital investment in oneself. At the level of teaching, other side effects of this “economisation” have been rampant grade inflation (Weale & Duncan, 2018), as universities seek to avoid upsetting their “customers” and preserve their image of “value for money,” and increased litigation and appeals, as students demand the consumer rights and protections generally afforded to all customers. In the midst of this, enrolment on arts and humanities courses has fallen as students, wary of a £50,000 graduating debt (Coughlan, 2017) turn to more lucrative STEM subjects instead. These factors, amongst numerous other secondary effects, are gradually forming an existential threat to the UK art school.

Writing more recently, Wendy Brown’s (2015) *Undoing the Demos* warned that universities in the United States, like many other liberal institutions, may not survive the effects of its already more advanced neo-liberal “economisation” (Brown, 2005: 17). Similarly, the Edu-Factory Collective (2009) published an important series of essays, each identifying some form of neo-liberal ruination of the university (Readings, 1996). Whether it is because of the “pedagogy of debt” that Williams identifies as its hidden curriculum (Williams, in Edu-Factory Collective, 2009: 89-96), or the creeping managerialism of both its administration and pedagogies, recognised by Bousquets (97-105), Sahasrabudhey (42-45), Newfield (179-183) and others, all founder members of the Edu-Factory Collective were in agreement that the neo-liberal university was beyond salvation for progressive educators. Stefano Harney and Fred Moten were forced to conclude that “the only possible relationship to the university today is a criminal one” (Edu-Factory Collective, 2009: 145). Equally, all agreed that the best response to the neo-liberal assault on the university was the formation of a “global autonomous university” (1-17), collectively managed by an international community of educators and students in the interests of teaching, research, and learning. This new institution would represent a new form of the university as political resistance.

Neo-liberal hegemony has produced what Jacques Rancière (1999: 95) has called the “consensus system”; a production line of centrist politicians incapable of imagining any other society than the status quo, thus reproducing it endlessly via policies determined firstly and lastly by the management of the money markets. This consensus system logic also applies to the neo-liberal university and its managerial classes; perhaps many of its educational labours also. The *Edu-Factory* project implies that the neo-liberal university is an Althusserian “Ideological State Apparatus” (1971: 143), beyond salvation. Following this reading, the art school, incorporated within the machinations of the corporate university ISA could be no more than its affective handmaiden or visual marketing department. Certainly, it is difficult to think what a political arts education, in the sense imagined by Giroux (1983), Freire (1970), hooks (1994), and others could look like in this context. Yet that is precisely the task which is required if progressive educators wish to salvage art from its “economisation.” For us, questions concerning resilience sound too much like rear-guard actions which implicitly accept the neo-liberal status quo. Instead, we wish to foreground a politicised idea of art education which is “transgressive” (hooks, 1994), “resistant” (Giroux, 1983), and “emancipatory” (Freire, 1970). This type of art education would, as Beech (2014) has suggested, remind sociological pessimists of the challenge of art. This strategy would employ the methods of art and art education as weapons against neo-liberal hegemony, rather than as defensive or reactive cushions against its cultural barbarisms.

In the UK, one of the clearest manifestations of this politics, or the new criminality of which Harney and Moten (in *Edu-Factory Collective*, 2009) speak, has been the wave of autonomous art schools that have emerged following the increases in tuition fees. Institutions such as London’s School of the Damned (2015–present) and AltMFA (2010–present); Open School East (London/Margate, 2013–present); Islington Mill Arts Academy (Manchester, 2007–present); and TOMA (Southend, 2015–present), amongst others, have all responded to the “economisation” of the art school by forming spontaneous and self-organised economies of pedagogic exchange, embodying “temporary autonomous zones” (Bey, 1991), if not functioning anarchism. The unifying characteristic of these educational institutions is that all teaching is offered free of charge and therefore not a commodity exchange. Therefore, these institutions are not simply resilient against neo-liberalism, but embody transformative political practice contra its hegemony and ideology; perhaps this is the only viable form of contemporary resilience. This art education as politics achieves a dual victory against the corporate university, stealing potential students and thus hitting its profit margins, and creating united communities of radical teaching and learning, whose “pedagogy of defiance” is the antithesis of the pedagogy of debt.



In the same time frame, the artists' collective @.ac was established, dedicating itself from the outset to opposing the economisation of art education and developing a criminal pedagogy within the "undercommons" of the neo-liberal art school. Our name is appropriated from the suffix of the generic UK university staff email addresses, thus expressing solidarity with the anonymous academic precariat. It can be pronounced phonetically as "attack," connoting a politics of resistance rather than retrenchment. @.ac projects aim to critically intervene into "striated spaces" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988: 474–500) of art education and transform them into dialogic spaces of horizontality and multiplicity. Alternately, @.ac projects aim to force art education out of the ivory tower and into the public sphere. A key aim of these interventions is the production of democratic, pedagogic spaces which contest the enforced stultification, passivity, and regulated nature of the traditional academic conference or "white cube" exhibition through their participatory and relational form. @.ac projects propose art education as a form of art practice, whilst also representing the textual materials and ephemera of art education as aesthetic objects. We think of our practice as an ongoing and internal auto-critique of the histories, ideologies, and discourses of the art school; each project aims to politicise and ultimately transform the apparatus of art education. Our website ([www.attackdotorg.com](http://www.attackdotorg.com)) is an archive of these projects, including our most sustained critical investigation of the art school, entitled *The Precarious University*.

*The Precarious University* (2013–present) is a nomadic and autonomous art school, formed by @.ac as a political and aesthetic response to the commodification, financialisation (McGettigan, 2013), and economisation (Brown, 2015) of art education. *The Precarious University* exists and is realised through temporary, interventionist moments of pedagogic *détournement* within institutional spaces otherwise governed by hierarchy, capital, and spectacle (Debord, 1967). Following the Beuysian "pedagogic turn" in contemporary art (Rogoff, 2008), we regard each manifestation of *The Precarious University* as an educational experiment, employing techniques of militant co-research to test models of an art and design school-to-come. Overall, the project is an ongoing and evolving social sculpture, working towards the formulation of an "anti-oedipal" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1972) aesthetic education. *The Precarious University* has taken place at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield (2015), Chorlton Arts Festival, Manchester (2016), BALTIC gallery, Newcastle (2017), Coventry School of Art (2017), and Hanover Project gallery, Preston (2018). Our contribution to the 15th ELIA Biennial Conference, Rotterdam (2018), is the first European manifestation of this project.

## 2. CONJURING THE RESILIENT ART SCHOOL

### 2.1 Methodology

At the ELIA conference, *The Precarious University* was scheduled as a "workshop" within the official programme. However, we believe "workshop" connotes "consensus system" pedagogic method, and prefer to think of this contribution as an anti-conference paper, where the "ignorant schoolmaster" passively facilitates the co-authoring of session content by delegates. We sought to think beyond the parameters and behavioural codes of academic conferences, raising alternate questions of "resilient" and "democratic" education whose frame of action embodied both. To this end, delegates were invited to produce answers to the question "What does a resilient art school look like today?" All answers had to utilise some, or all, of a series of enlarged A1 quotes from Wendy Brown's *Undoing the Demos* (2015: 18, 44–45, 220–221) and Jacques Rancière's *Dissensus* (2010: 68, 69), in some way. This could have been in the form of a direct citation, a scrawled redaction or defacement, or some other creative response (or non-response) determined by the participants. Scissors, markers, highlighters, and adhesive tape were provided. The quotes were chosen by @.ac as source material because, collectively, they narrated the psycho-social effects of neo-liberal "economisation" on education, whilst also suggesting ways in which democracy could be figured as a form of political education or subjectification contra the neo-liberal "consensus system" (Rancière, 1999: 95). Furthermore, though not explicitly cited, the autodidact hypothesis of Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991) informed the "flipped classroom" dynamic of session. To minimise what Rancière would refer to as "explication" and "stultification" (1991: 6–8), only a cursory introduction to the task was offered; its precise nature and aims were negotiated by participants dialogically as the session played out. The outcome of this workshop was a series of manipulated text objects produced by participants and presented to the group in the space of the activity.

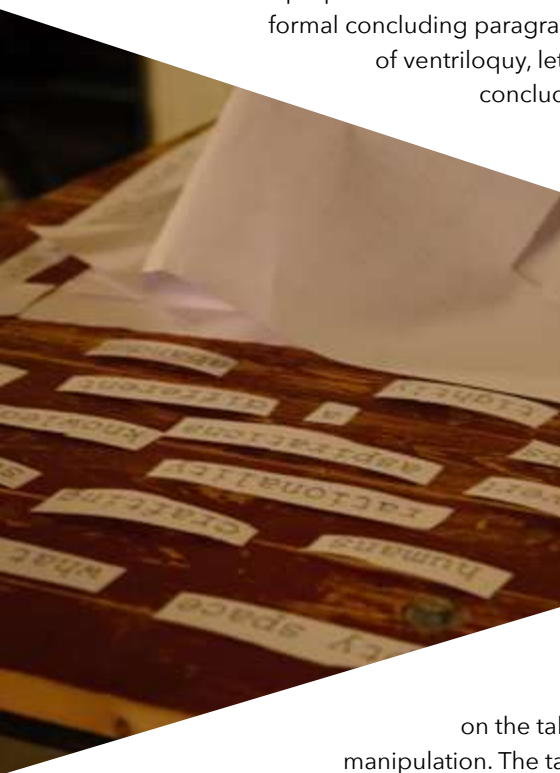
### 2.2 Aims

Our activity served as an introjection within conference debates, substituting the conference theme of resilience with the end of democratic education. To our mind, aiming to be resilient is a strategic mistake. It assumes a previous purity or "excellence" (Readings, 1996) within the sector which circumstances now deny. We do not want art education to recover its prior form; in 1996 Readings had already recognised that the neo-liberal university was already "in ruins." We demand an alternate form of art education which contests the neo-liberal conjuncture and its austerity. By democratic education we mean pedagogic activity that enacts *demos/kratia* or "people's rule." Following



Rancière (2010), we view democratic education as the process which makes visible the “democratic paradox”; the incompatibility between “democracy as a form of government [and] democracy as a form of social and political life, and so the former must repress the latter” (2010: 47). This “democratic paradox” should be familiar enough to those who currently work in education and have tried to facilitate genuinely inclusive student-centred or peer-to-peer learning, or witnessed and seen the contrived managerial methods for demonstrating democratic institutional reflexivity by incorporating and quantifying, often very selectively, the so-called “student voice.”

We are acutely aware that our workshop is also a manifestation of this “democratic paradox.” Our aim was to foreground this problematic in the workshop and use its contradictory forces as a space of production, in which dissensual viewpoints could proliferate. The process of co-authorship extends to this paper. We present participants’ contributions as photo-documents which speak alongside/against our readings. Though the codes and conventions of an academic paper might foreground the authority of our voice and relegate the images to illustrations of our analysis, we state that our readings are only additive and a continuation of the co-authorial process initiated within the context of the workshop. Through our activity we aim only to make this paradox visible as a propaedeutic for other educators. To this end, we waive our right to a formal concluding paragraph to this paper and, even if only through an act of ventriloquy, let the works produced by the group have the final, concluding word.



## 2.3 Results

### 2.3.1

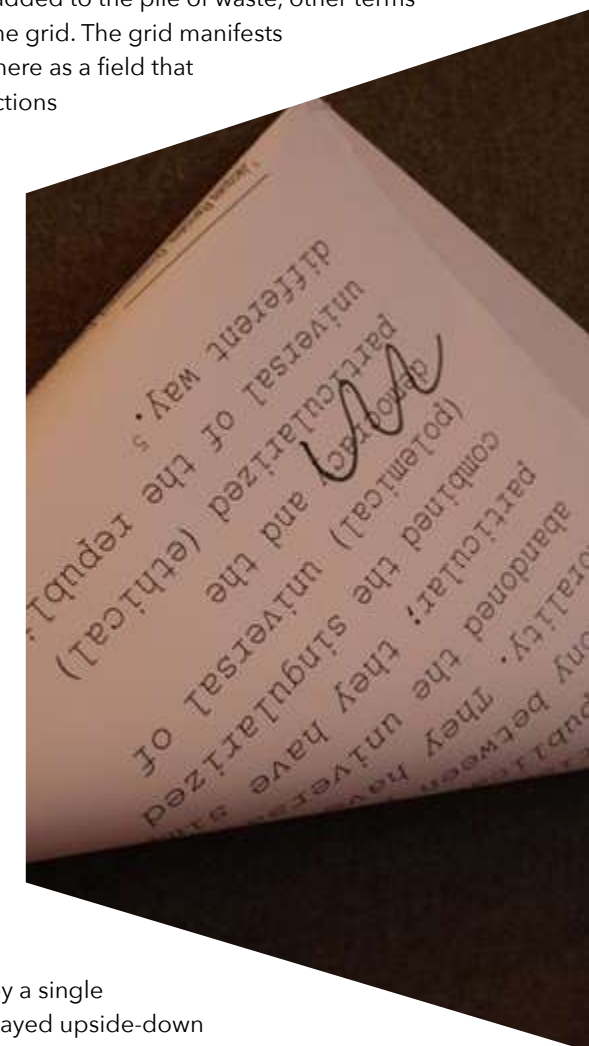
The first example is a wooden table on an industrial iron frame and mounted on casters that dramatises an edit of page 68 of Rancière’s *Dissensus* (2010). It aligns selected text alongside rejected material, which is present as a crumpled mass of waste paper. Cut-out words and phrases are presented as a series of rectilinear units in grid formation. The sequence begins, “empty space,” “what is ugly,” “the good city,” “humans,” and continues to form a list of keywords addressing themes of spatial practice, governance, humanity, and the disagreeable. The arrangement lies unfixed

on the table, and is therefore provisional and open to further manipulation. The table is a machine of textual selection mounted on

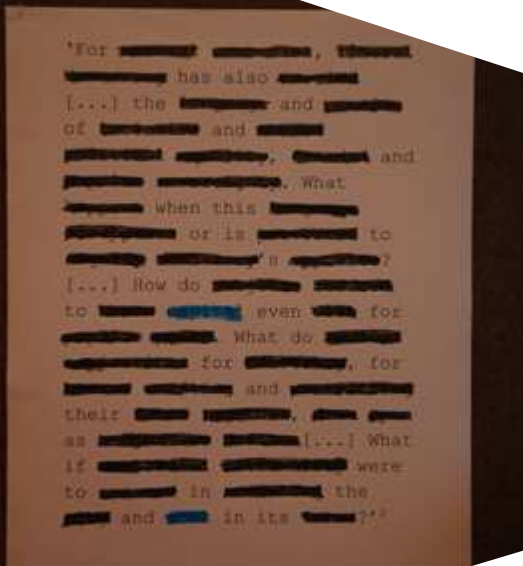
a portable display apparatus. It foregrounds discontinuity as a trigger for reconnection, dissemination, and co-authorship. In the context of the workshop, we can imagine these as being principles of democratic educational practice. Yet it also demonstrates how democratic paradox situates the apparently significant as provisional and contestable. Words or phrases can always be screwed up and added to the pile of waste, other terms can always be recovered, cut out and isolated in the grid. The grid manifests an order (rationality or “consensus”), yet is shown here as a field that can accommodate arbitrary selections and connections grounded only in the power of the executor—here simply the one who holds the scissors. The waste paper is the unconscious of this process; its disregarded content and potential.

### 2.3.2

The second example is the result of a conversation between a member of @ac and a participant who asserted “teaching is not democratic” in a perfectly dissensual manner. For him, teaching proceeds from a fundamental inequality between teacher and student, or it could not proceed at all. To make the sheet an object of discussion the participant held it out by the bottom left and top right corners. To articulate his negation of the presumptions of democratic education, the participant isolated the word democracy in the text and drew a single wavy line through it. He then brought the corners together by which he had held it and pinned them onto the wall, so that half of the text was facing the wall and hidden from view. The intention was to redact, but when displayed the object democratically accommodates contradictory readings. The sheet is hung from the wall affixed by a single drawing pin. Pinned by its corners, the text is displayed upside-down and diagonally. The participant has also taken the step to curve the footnote reference to Rancière back under the shape, anonymising the visible aspects of the text. Whilst the text was previously the primary signifier, the objecthood of the sheet is now primary; the text is now the supplement of a non-functional, wall-based object. The result of these actions is to make the sheet a non-functional object and to highlight or redact the word “democracy.” This has the paradoxical effect of calling attention to the word and



making the piece appropriable as the object of a playful gaze. We can read the piece as a statement that seeks to separate notions of democracy and education, or we can read it as foregrounding aesthetics and politics. It also foregrounds the compatibility of contradictory interpretations as methodological principles of democratic education.



### 2.3.3

In this instance the sheet of paper is pinned from the top two corners in portrait format, articulating the object as a page of text—a citation from Wendy Brown's *Undoing the Demos* (2015). The participant has used a black marker to delete all the of the nouns, adjectives, and a selection of verbs from the text. The remaining verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and pronouns are isolated on the page surrounded by black marks. Except for the words "capital" and "soul," which are highlighted in blue, all reference to places, people, things, and ideas have been removed, leaving only functions of connection and relationship. When the text is read in sequence, there are only isolated terms

and incomplete phrases, which manifest as formal units without reference. For example, the final section reads

"What if ... were to ... in ... the ... and ... in its ...?" It is a language whose

connection to the world and our lives has disappeared. If we focus on the removal of text through redaction and the unreadability of the remaining terms, the object appears as a conceptual articulation of one of Brown's statements (2015: 44), present on the sheet in redaction: "For several centuries, liberal democracy has also carried... the language and promise of inclusive and shared political equality, freedom and popular sovereignty. What happens when this language disappears or is perverted to signify democracy's opposite?" On this understanding, the object conveys a disappearance of lived relations and use values into a demagogy of economic abstractions and profit imperatives. By extension, we can also view the sheet as the narration of education's disappearance within the neo-liberal conjuncture, as it slips irresistibly into the language of excellence, the logic of the audit, "financialisation," and "commodification." However, an alternate reading is also available. If we focus on the fact that the remaining text primarily consists of conjunctions and prepositions, we can view their visibility within this field of redacted text as indicative

of the primary significance of these terms, and we can start to see their shared linguistic functions as kind of instruction. On this interpretation, they appear as a staccato chorus calling us to "Go connect and relate these abstractions! Create new subjectivisations and pedagogic trajectories!" The crux of both readings is the connection of the words "capital" and "soul"—highlighted on the page in blue. Brought together in this way, the terms articulate the production of personhood as subjectivisation, and the capture of learning within a system of measurement. We can read the sheet as either articulating education's impossibility within the neo-liberal conjuncture or as a call for the rhizomatic reconfiguration of education as subjective deterritorialisation. We can start this process by reconnecting phrases at all points across the sheet. An example is "What if ... when this ... capital .... has also ... soul...?"

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# HOW DO WE DO IT?

## ACTING AND REACTING IN

## CHANGING CITIES

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**Keywords:**

art  
design  
politics  
visibility  
action

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## **ABSTRACT**

Political proportions are shifting. Cities are on the move, housing prices are going up, migration, integration, and crime rates are common topics amongst residents. Identity becomes a question, history doesn't seem to be based on collective experiences any more. A term like democracy sometimes requires explanation or even argumentative defence; it doesn't seem to be a common ground any longer. The text identifies exemplary projects which apply contemporary art and design strategies as a reaction to political challenges in an urban context. It focuses on visible political changes, growing radical movements, questions of freedom of art, and the connection of art and politics. Observing current developments subsequently leads to the conclusion that cultural protagonists and institutions need to be more visible, need to be bolder and louder.

## HOW DO WE DO IT?

# ACTING AND REACTING IN CHANGING CITIES

My perspective is that of an art educator at a university of art and design, educating future art teachers. Central questions of my teaching are: What do we pass on? And how? What do students nowadays need to know to be able to teach in the future? What experiences do they need to make? What is and will be their critical approach to societal developments at the interface of art and education?

Art education is about interrelations between people, about designing communication. It is about interactions, using material and inventing innovative formats. Art educators are mediating between practice, theory, and cultural contexts. This makes a university of art and design a special—and maybe already in itself a resilient—place to discuss controversial societal developments. They need to be discussed controversially, using not just words but all means of communication. An aim should then be to turn these discussions and questions into practice, to make them visible in an enlarged radius.

Halle (Saale), the city I live in, with its 240,000 inhabitants, is the largest city in the federal state of Saxony-Anhalt in Germany. The right-wing to far-right party, the AfD (“Alternative for Germany”), has the second largest number of seats in the federal parliament. The right-wing movement Identitäre Bewegung (“Identitarian Movement”) bought a house in the centre of Halle, just opposite the campus entrance of the Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg. It is the new centre of that movement in Germany, and is supposed to become a training centre for right-wing activists.

Political proportions are shifting.

The city is on the move, housing prices are going up, migration, integration, and crime rates are common topics amongst residents. Identity becomes a question; history doesn’t seem to be based on collective experiences any more. Terms like democracy and basic human rights sometimes require explanation, or even argumentative defence; they don’t seem to be a common ground any longer.

In this text, I use the current situation in the city of Halle and other German cities as examples, introducing projects which apply art and design strategies for political challenges in an urban context. These explorations started off as a search for quiet actions, small steps, soft interventions, and ongoing dissent. I wanted different people—designers,

artists, cultural protagonists, educators—to describe their idea of resilience. Soon visible political changes were focused, growing, radical movements, raising questions of freedom of art and the connection of art and politics in an urban environment.

Observing current developments subsequently led me to think that there is a need for cultural protagonists and institutions to be bolder, to be louder. Maybe we need to be even more visible, as artists, designers, and educators.

### Visibility in Public Space: Making Statements

Manaf Halbouni, *Monument* (Dresden, 2017)

<https://www.manaf-halbouni.com/work/monument/>

Manaf Halbouni’s works often develop in the context of his own biography. Halbouni was born in Damascus, Syria. He studied art there, as well as in Dresden, Germany. Nowadays he lives and works everywhere, as he states on his website.

In the city of Dresden, Halbouni built the huge installation *Monument* right in front of the reconstructed baroque Frauenkirche (Church of our Lady). *Monument* is a contemporary memorial using discarded urban buses. It refers to the barricades made from buses in the war zone of Aleppo. When the installation was first shown and opened in Dresden, there were protests by supporters of the right-wing Pegida (Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the Occident). The installation is explicitly site-specific. It was placed right in front of the famous reconstructed church, which serves as a constant reminder of the destruction of the city of Dresden during World War II. It thus connects the situation in Syria with Europe—it is about suffering, about loss, but it also incorporates hope towards reconstruction and peace.

What happens if artists engage themselves actively in topical issues and political debates? Sometimes we need to make bold statements.

### Visibility in Public Space: Mindfulness and Braveness

The Bauhaus in Dessau (UNESCO World Heritage Site, 2018)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bauhaus\\_Dessau\\_Foundation#/media/File:Bauhaus.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bauhaus_Dessau_Foundation#/media/File:Bauhaus.JPG)

The Bauhaus School (1919–1933), based first in Weimar and then in Dessau, was a centre for new ideas in architecture, art, and design, and consequently attracted progressive practitioners and thinkers. The Bauhaus has become *the* symbol of modernity—its buildings, its products, and its theories.

In 2018 the German band Feine Sahne Fischfilet was invited by a large German public TV

station to play a concert in the historic auditorium of the Bauhaus in Dessau, just like many other bands before in a well-established series of concerts. The musicians actively work against right-wing radicalism.

Shortly before the concert, the AfD and the conservative party in Dessau asked the Bauhaus Foundation to call the concert off. Which they did.

This started a public discussion about freedom of art. In an open letter to the cultural minister of Saxony-Anhalt, it says:

*The Bauhaus Dessau Foundation's press release of 18 October 2018 lists reasons for the ban that suggest the band advocates for "politically extreme positions" that "divide and thus endanger democratic society—on which the historical Bauhaus is also based." The cancellation allegedly aims to prevent the Bauhaus from "once again becoming the venue of political agitation and aggression." This is directly in response to the mobilization of right-wing extremist circles for protesting the concert. The argument the Foundation concludes with—that the Bauhaus is an apolitical institution—testifies either to a lack of knowledge or to an ahistorical understanding of its own institution.<sup>28</sup>*

The concert did take place after all, but at a different cultural space in Dessau.<sup>29</sup> This was an adequate compromise.

The people responsible for the prohibition of the concert put forward arguments in the course of the discussion that referred to the preservation of the Bauhaus building, its windows and the historic auditorium. This seems understandable, but didn't seem to have been a problem in the concerts which had already taken place. Also, a fear of having pictures in the press that would show political actions in front of historic buildings was articulated—thus making current conflicts in society visible. The question needs to be asked if making these conflicts visible is not one of the functions of art. By giving in and prohibiting something that could provoke right-wing radicals, freedom of art is directly endangered.

As the example shows, the discourse is shifting. Right-wing populists influence cultural activities and institutions. A learning process is needed. The Bauhaus acts in an international network; it cannot take itself out of these socio-politically relevant situations. It needs to bravely position itself and needs to develop strategies to act mindfully in difficult situations. When right-wing groupings—which are nowadays in parliament and

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<sup>28</sup> Quoted from the open letter to the cultural minister of Saxony-Anhalt. Retrieved from <https://www.change.org/p/herrn-rainer-robba-kulturminister-und-vorsitzender-des-stiftungsrates-der-stiftung-bauhaus-dessau-offener-brief-zum-auftrittsverbot-der-punk-band-feine-sahne-fischfilet-am-bauhaus-dessau>

<sup>29</sup> Video of the concert and the interviews which are part of the television format: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MejhRDeb0gg>

thus have a voice—apply pressure, there needs to be a reaction that clearly demonstrates freedom of art in an open and liberal society.

### **Visibility in Public Space: Building Community**

*meyouwedo* (Leipzig, 2017)

<http://meyouwedo.de/>

A temporary installation in Leipzig, *meyouwedo* aimed at translating the theoretical discourse of an open and transcultural society into practice. It formed a space for interaction and showed the possibility to change societal structures. The project was an open, interactive space for communicating, learning, playing, cooking, making music—everyone's ideas to shape the space and the actions taking place there were welcome.

*Rolling Picnic Blanket* (Halle [Saale], 2017)

<http://www.burg-halle.de/kunst/kunst-lehramt-kunstpaedagogik/kunst-lehramt-kunstpaedagogik/studienarbeiten/project/die-rollende-picknickdecke/>

A group of art education students started a picnic on the central market place of Halle and invited passers-by to join them. The more people took part, the longer the picnic blanket became. The students used simple devices, such as cutlery that was tied together with strings at the end. This forced people taking part in the picnic to talk to each other or to communicate in some other way—otherwise they couldn't reach the food. This made them share time and attention.

Building community by using artistic strategies is connected with something very important, which I would call cultural togetherness.

### **Visibility in Public Space: Cultural Togetherness**

This implies that resilience is built by cultural institutions like theatres, operas, art universities, and others working closely together to form a space for discourse and communication. We need networks that become explicitly visible in urban space and whose participants act and react when situations come up that challenge our democratic stance—or our understanding of democracy. We have to support diversity and allow controversy. Sometimes controversial moments and dissonance lead to a productive togetherness: people start thinking, they start changing perspectives or questioning given structures. Art and design provide strategies for making these processes visible to the public as a basis for reflective practices and discourse—or as their concentrated outcome.

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# PERFORMING, CLEANING, AND DRAWING LONDON'S GRANARY SQUARE

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**Keywords:**

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## ABSTRACT

This paper addresses critical performance practice for public space, presenting my performance *The Disappearing Garden* (2016–2019), a project tailored to Granary Square, the flagship public space within the King's Cross redevelopment in London, United Kingdom. The paper is an extract of one of the chapters of my current practice-based doctoral research, *Taste Untold*. It argues that the physical and social structures of contemporary models of public space such as POPS (Privately Owned Public Spaces), are controlled and sustained through cleanliness via both maintenance protocols and sanitised architectural design. By describing and reflecting on some aspects of one of my performance projects, the paper suggests possibilities for fostering social resilience in the face of shifting and often exclusive notions of urban public space. Indirectly, it also teases out subdued connections between programmes of use and aesthetic narratives in architecture.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Innovation and Businesses CSM, Argent LLP and King's Cross Estate Services KCES. In different capacities, they all supported and made possible The Disappearing Garden performance project discussed in this paper. Very special thanks go to my dedicated and skilful group of collaborators/performers: Benjamin Gonzales, Khalil Ibrahim, Marcelo Samaniego, Andres Alvarez, and Cem Iskender, all maintenance workers for KCES.

And John Shmulevitch, Matthew Brown, Daniel Wilkins, and Amy O'Shaughnessy, graduates from the MA Architecture programme at CSM.

## PERFORMANCE

When people clean, water traces are left behind which usually produce patterns similar to those traced with ink, graphite, or paint when the hand draws. But water evaporates, so traces of cleaning labour fast disappear. My project *The Disappearing Garden* (2017–2019) conceives of cleaning as a form of drawing, and subsequently, following the work of Mierle Laederman Ukeles, of maintenance labour as a kind of art.<sup>30</sup> This approach allowed me to contextualise and articulate the idea that

30 See Laederman Ukeles, M. (2015). *Seven work ballets*. Leipzig: Kunstverein Publishing and Steinberg Press. See also <https://www.arnolfini.org.uk/blog/manifesto-for-maintenance-art-1969>



Figure 1. Water traces left by ride-on sweeper after cleaning shift, *The Canopy*, King's Cross (autumn 2017). Photo: Adriana Cobo

maintenance practices could, paraphrasing Chantal Mouffe, “play a role in the constitution and maintenance of a given symbolic order.”<sup>31</sup>

The library where I do research is located in the Granary Building at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design. Inside, room A102 has been assigned as the PhD office. The room has a window overlooking Granary Square. The square has four water fountain bays, each with 270 automated water jets, which provide the square its distinctive visual identity and soundtrack. Children, artists, and cleaners collide and perform different daily routines in and around water on the square, without necessarily interacting or regarding each other.

## HABITUS

Perhaps as a habit unconsciously carried through from childhood visions of washerwomen working in my home city's river, the Cali River, I found myself spending a considerable amount of time observing cleaners at work on Granary Square from room A102. What I have come to see is a group of uniformed men unknowingly re-enacting the wills of the architect, the developer, and the operations manager; a sight informed by my studying Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the Habitus.<sup>32</sup> Aiming at reviewing architectural professional codes through his insight, I began to craft a picture where a desire for cleanliness emerges as the scaffolding that supports the last century's project on architecture. Day in and day out, I see how the modernist architect's defining gesture, his cleaning habitus—passed onto 21st-century urban developers and managers via privatisation—relies and falls heavily on the maintenance workers' hands. And how the constant presence of cleaners on the square, however subdued, acts as a reminder of class struggles and unequal power and labour structures of public space.

31 Chantal Mouffe argues that “artistic practices play a role in the constitution and maintenance of a given symbolic order, or in its challenging, and this is why they necessarily have a political dimension.” See Mouffe, C. (2017). *Agonistics: Thinking the world politically* (p. 91). Kindle Edition.

32 For a detailed description of Bourdieu's concept of the *Habitus*, see Book 1: Critique of the theoretical reason. In Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The Logic of Practice* (pp. 23–143). Cambridge: Polity Press. Specifically, Numeral 3: *Structures, Habitus, Practices* (pp. 52–66).



Figure 2. First rehearsal for the disappearing garden project (November 2017).

Photo: Catarina Heeck

Figure 3. Granary Square (summer 2017).  
Photo: Adriana Cobo



The concept of habitus was developed by Pierre Bourdieu in his book *The Logic of Practice* in 1980.<sup>33</sup> In general terms, he describes the habitus as a practice acquired through lifelong exposure to specific social and professional structures and contexts. According to Bourdieu, the habitus is produced by, and produces, practices. He explains that the habitus “is the system of structured, [and] structuring dispositions which is constituted in practice, and is always oriented towards practical functions” (1990: 52). These practices, embodied in our gestures, our use of language, our skills, or what Bourdieu calls a *feel for the game*, become most obvious when top-level athletes play a football match or perform a gymnastics routine at the Olympics, for example. The habitus—our lifelong set of practices—structures our dispositions, including aesthetic ones, and makes us who

we are: a football player, an architect, a cleaner. In

the context of my doctoral research, the habitus is explored and played out as the invisible *modus operandi* embodied within any professional individual and/or group, though mostly focused on architects, a habitus group that has traditionally performed the profession by embodying the persona of a *man of taste*.<sup>34</sup>

## ARCHITECTURE

In his manifesto *Towards a New Architecture* (1923), Le Corbusier, the man born to be modern architecture made flesh,<sup>35</sup> defined the modern architect’s grand gesture, his habitus, by uttering a cry: “We have got to wash!” (2014: 15), he wrote. Right there, he signalled cleansing, clearing, and sanitation as the prime motifs of the modern project on architecture, and of the modern architect’s persona, establishing cleaning as modernism’s leading aesthetic strategy.<sup>36</sup> On Granary Square, cleaning as a leading aesthetic strategy is performed daily.<sup>37</sup> A group of maintenance workers is trained to deliver tightly controlled maintenance protocols, aimed at conveying the thought that “a clean environment is perceived as an environment safe from crime.”<sup>38</sup> This agenda has been documented on the Public Realm Strategy Report, made in 2004 for the King’s Cross Central regeneration project. The report commits to the idea that “world-class new city quarters demand an equally world-class standard of management and regime of maintenance.”<sup>39</sup>

## MAINTENANCE

Maintenance workers—a habitus group other than that of architects and developers—inhabit the public realm of King’s Cross Estate for hours longer than any other dwellers, caring with them dedication for its well-crafted, clean aesthetic. In the words of Le Corbusier, *they have got to wash!* A lot. Their practice, however, is not visualised as a daily contribution to the cultural capital of the estate, but devised, controlled, and managed as a service. In one of a series of conversations with maintenance workers for the King’s Cross Environmental Services that I have had as part of my research, Benjamin Gonzales, one of the project’s collaborators, explained, “Usually, the person who trains you says:

35 I paraphrase Bourdieu when describing Le Corbusier here. In *The Logic of Practice*, Bourdieu eloquently describes the habitus as “the social made flesh” (1990: 57), a description I consider extendable to professional fields, where the habitus could be considered *the professional made flesh*. In that sense, we can describe Le Corbusier himself as the institution of modern architecture made flesh.

36 In the chapter *The Engineer’s Aesthetic and Architecture*, Le Corbusier describes relationships between science, harmony and beauty, in connection with ideas of cleanliness. In *Le Corbusier* (2014). *Towards a New Architecture* (pp. 9–20). Eastford, CT: Martino Publishing.

37 This idea can be transferred to buildings, homes, and even public spaces generally. However, cleaning in these other spaces would be performed with a set of codes and protocols different from those active in this specific location.

38 EDAW, Townshend Landscape Architects, GPA, ADC 2004: 72.

39 *Ibid.*, 76.

33 *The Logic of Practice* was first published in French in 1980 by Les Editions de Minuit. The first English edition was published in 1990 by Stanford University Press, translated by Richard Nice.

34 On Monday, 15 June 1835, the Opening General Meeting of the Members of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) was held in London to first establish the institute. In the *Report of the Proceedings, the Address to the Members* by acting secretary, architect T. S. Donaldson, was published. He called for all architects—present and future members of the institute—to “up-hold in ourselves the character of Architects, as men of taste, men of science, men of honour” (1835: 31).

'Ok. Now you got to do things like this, not like that. Only, like this...' and yes, I know, there is health and safety, and it is important. But, when you have to go on with your everyday routines 'like that', only 'like that'... it is... boring. Very boring."<sup>40</sup> It was in the early days of the project when I interviewed Benjamin. Little did I know that he was going to appropriate the project as a form of self-practice, where the idea of drawing while cleaning played out as an alternative way of working which could be... well, fun?

## SPIDER

One morning, at the start of his daily shift at six in the morning, Benjamin was cleaning The Crossing with a Combi 400 Ride-on Sweeper. The space is a "public" passage as long as Granary Square, roughly 100 metres. He set off to draw an image of a spider covering the whole of the floor's surface using the Combi 400, with the water traces it leaves behind as his drawing tool, in the manner we had been rehearsing drawings of lines, circles, and some complex curves the weeks before. When he finished, he took a picture of his drawing with his mobile phone. A week later, I held a drawing workshop with the project's collaborators. Our task was to draw together as architects do, on tables, with pens, pencils, markers, and precise measurements, to decide what image to draw for our first water-drawing performance. Halfway through the workshop,

Benjamin interrupted us and said, quietly but proudly, "Adriana, I made this for you and for everyone." He then handed his mobile phone to me, the picture of the giant spider on the screen.

<sup>40</sup> Recorded interview no. 002. *Taste Untold* – Adriana speaking with Benjamin. 2 February 2018.

He had cleaned The Crossing his way, clearly drifting off efficient protocols. He had, that is, for some minutes, gone off his controlled cleaning habitus, and he was happy. Staring at that phone, I tried to digest the moment and thanked him. I understood that carrying on with the drawing workshop was now irrelevant. I decided to move on to stage and draw Benjamin's spider collectively on Granary Square. After some days rehearsing with the whole group, he requested we now call him Pablo. As in Pablo Picasso.



Figure 5. Water traces left behind sweeper machine while performing disappearing garden. Photo: Susan Trangmar



Figure 6. The spider drawing disappearing through evaporation. Photo: Catarina Heeckt

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# SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY-CENTRED ART PROJECTS AT VILNIUS COLLEGE

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**Keywords:**

social responsibility  
sustainable development  
global education  
environmental education  
hairstyle design

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## ABSTRACT

The article deals with strategic priorities and principles of sustainable development, and highlights the importance of social awareness and environmental education. It presents examples of good practice regarding how the principles of sustainable development are implemented in studies of Hairstyle Design at Vilnius College, Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies.<sup>41</sup>



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<sup>41</sup> In the official documents in English, the title of the programme is translated as “Coiffure Design.” However, in this article a more informal translation (“Hairstyle Design”) is used.

# INTRODUCTION

The main goal behind the idea of sustainable development in contemporary society is to combine the increasing well-being of the population with the task of sustaining nature's resources and ecosystems at the same time (Pauw et al., 2015). Economic and environmental challenges make this goal more difficult to achieve (Jackson, 2012). Sustainable development emphasises integration between three systems: economy, society, and ecosystem. These three systems are interconnected, complementary, and mutually interdependent (Peeters, 2011, 2012; Jackson, 2012).

Contemporary society faces many economic, social, intercultural, interpersonal, and consumer-related problems. One of the most relevant issues is consumer society and consumer culture, which pervades all aspects of our everyday lives (Jančius, Gavenauskas, & Pekaraskas, 2018). This highlights the importance of social awareness amongst members of society, that is, the ability to understand processes undergoing in society, how they are interrelated and how they affect me, others, and the world, as well as the ability to take on the perspective of others, empathy, acknowledgement of social diversity, and taking responsibility for others. Social awareness rests on the ability to think critically, as well as on the involvement of people in public actions, while the key tool to promote social awareness is dissemination of information, including visual communication.

In response to economic and environmental challenges, Lithuania has adopted a series of important documents addressing sustainable development, for example, the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (2003, updated in 2011), and a national strategic document, "Lithuania 2030" (*Lietuvos pažangos strategija*, 2012).

Research methods used in the article are: (1) analysis of research literature; and (2) examples of good practice, collected from the experience of the authors working at the Vilnius College with students in Hairstyle Design.

Research literature offers various models that describe ways to influence and change people's behaviour towards sustainable development. Educational programmes are one of the most important tools to help people to overcome difficulties, to better understand situations in life and how they are related to their environment, and to develop abilities and skills that enable people to consciously change their attitudes and behaviour—to consume responsibly, to preserve natural resources, to lead a healthy lifestyle, etc. Another benefit of these programmes is their networking effect; they bring people together and help create networks that may lead to structural changes (Peeters, 2011). Most popular adult education programmes target social economy, that is, the creation of sustainable products and services that contribute to social goals. Younger generations are addressed with global education programmes. Recommendations for the Conception of

the National Policy of Development Education (*Rekomendacijos nacionalinei vystomojo švietimo politikos koncepcijai*, 2012) emphasise education on globalisation issues that promote the development of a fairer world, where everyone's human rights are protected. It is education that aims at shaping and developing a person's knowledge, attitudes, and skills, needed to better understand and respond to the challenges of the 21st century.

Education for sustainable development requires participatory approaches and learning methods that are capable of motivating and enabling learners to change their behaviours. This type of education is focused on critical thinking, collaborative decision-making, and similar competencies (Pivorienė, 2014). Global education is a process of active learning, based on solidarity, equality, inclusion, and collaboration values. Its objectives are to provide knowledge on sustainable development, to help understand global challenges and their causes, to recognise the influence of local factors on global processes, and to enable people to get involved in the achievement of international goals of sustainable development. Global education aims to promote active civic engagement and adds to the development of social capital. The "Global Education Guide" (2009) describes the methodology of global education. Global education is understood as a creative approach to societal changes, as an active learning process, which starts from a simple informing about concrete problems and encourages learning more about the subject. It encourages people to reflect on how they possibly contributed to the emergence of a problem or how they can take part in solving it, as well as how to change their attitudes and behaviour. In this way, global education motivates and enables people to be active and responsible world citizens. It is emphasised that global education is an active, learner-oriented, partnership-based, and reflective way of learning. The values of tolerance, solidarity, equality, and responsibility lie at the heart of global education. Global education and education for sustainable development are very important for strengthening social capital; there is a clear interconnection between global education and other dimensions of sustainable development.

The United Nations Environment Programme has acknowledged environmental education as one of the main tools we can use to strive for a sustainable relationship between humans and nature. It is said that it can help people understand the extent and the threats of the present environmental situation, which has reached a critical level.

At the present state, education is the most appropriate means of building ecological culture in contemporary society. Environmental education is one of the most effective ways to inform society about environmental issues and develop its skills of solving environmental problems while sustaining or improving the quality of life and one's environment at the same time (Rajalakshmi, 2016).

# IDEAS OF SUSTAINABILITY IN TEACHING

## HAIRSTYLE DESIGN

The study programmes implemented at the Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies of Vilnius College (Image Design, Management of Cultural Activity, Fashion Design, Fashion Technologies and Business, Musical Theatre, Popular Music, and Hairstyle Design) fully align with the strategical priorities and principles of sustainable development laid out in the Lithuanian strategy for sustainable development. Studies aim at developing student competencies related to social equality and include teaching on the principles of sustainable development. Students are oriented towards principles of justice and social awareness; studies pay considerable attention to developing respect for and maintenance of cultural diversity, ecological integrity, and smart consumption. In most courses, students are encouraged to think in a critical and self-reflective way, to take on responsibility for their own actions, to analyse value-related, cultural, social, and economic aspects of what they do, and to set priorities. The faculty explicitly supports interconnections between different study programmes, when students from different study programmes work on different sides of the same creative project; some of them are seen on stage during the presentations of projects in public spaces, some of them are managed in the backstage, and some take place in the college and some outside of it.

The study programme in Hairstyle Design, which was acknowledged as a unique study programme in Europe by international evaluators, aims to combine a search for creative artistic ideas with the principle of social awareness during lectures and practices. In their creative assignments the students are encouraged to use old packaging, fabric remnants, scraps of paper, plastic, and other materials, and to create original sham constructions of hairstyles, wigs, and costumes that communicate messages to the public. Thus, the course incorporates and highlights issues from our consumer society that are closely related to the socio-economic and artistic-cultural context. Students, together with teachers, take part in public events where they present their original costume and hairstyle collections and, in this way, creatively convey the ideas of social awareness (fig. 1). An artistic and creative approach to the idea of sustainable development is represented through images and has an educational effect on society, and possibly also influences ecological behaviour.



(A)



(B)

Figure 1. Models from the collection of alternative costumes and hairstyles. Materials: (A) packaging paper; (B) the main frame is made from cardboard boxes and is decorated with paper cubes created in the Graphic Design course.

Excessive consumption, holes in the ozone layer, hormonal “leaps,” oncological diseases, “synthetic” nutrition, and tsunami-like growth of cosmetic-formaldehyde industries result in a wide prevalence of hair loss, standardisation of personalities, and loss of identity of a person as a conscious individual. Students analyse these and similar issues related to personal identity, morale, and culture of the consumer society in their final theses. Fashion collections developed for the final theses are an artistic and creative means of expression (fig. 2) that are meant to make an effect on society and the student. Work on final theses actively utilises the 4E model, as developed in UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (*Securing the Future*, 2005). The four E’s stand for “Enable, Encourage, Engage, and Exemplify”: to **enable** students to choose alternative materials and original technological solutions in the development of their collections, so sustainable solutions become a norm; to **encourage** students in their choices of sustainable behaviour; to **engage** students and bring them together in a search for creative solutions; **exemplification** is the main result of the artistic-creative process, which encourages critical thinking and social awareness—the results of students’ work become examples of good practice, are presented to the public, and have an influence on society’s behaviour.





(A)



(B)

Figure 2. Creative results of the final theses. Creative ideas behind the final theses: (A) "Future perspectives of consumption"; B) "Invisible"

Hairstyle designers have found an original solution on how to turn paper into a hairstyle, how to make an interesting, original, and personally tailored wig, which not only has a certain form, colour, or texture but also encodes an artistic idea and reveals a hidden creative process, which represents the person as a socially responsible personality. Creations and artistic ideas of students send a message to the wider society that we have to act here and now, in every possible way, if we want to solve environmental, ecological, and sustainability problems. Artistic information conveyed in a visual form emphasises the non-verbal, emotional dimension of this message and helps to reach the subconscious level of people's minds. Art helps people to get closer to beauty, develops sensitivity and critical thinking, and encourages social awareness. Art is a way of language that stimulates emotions and develops positive personalities.

## CONCLUSION

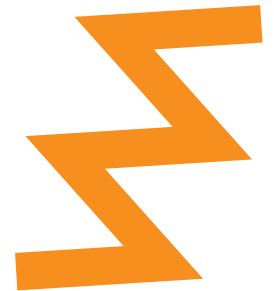
The art projects within the framework of the study programme in Hairstyle Design involves students from other study programmes of the Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies for the dissemination of ideas related to social and ecological awareness. Socially responsible art projects, which are presented to the general public through easily understandable emotional messages, are meant to influence development of social awareness, spread the ideas of sustainability, contribute to the preservation of cultural identity, and promote tolerance in society.





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# UAL CREATIVE MINDSETS: DEVELOPING GROWTH MINDSETS TO ADDRESS ATTAINMENT INEQUALITIES IN ART AND DESIGN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**Keywords:**

attainment  
inclusivity  
pedagogy  
mindsets  
resilience

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper highlights key areas of the UAL Creative Mindsets project that were explored during a Mobile Thematic Session at ELIA Biennial 2018 as part of the Art & Social Cohesion strand.

UAL Creative Mindsets<sup>42</sup> is a research intervention project that involves both staff and students to address attainment differentials by developing growth mindsets to reduce the self-limiting effects of stereotype threat (Osbourne & Walker, 2006) and implicit bias (Staats, 2014; Devine et al., 2012). Based upon Dweck's research on implicit theories of intelligence, a growth mindset is the belief that ability can be developed through effort and by embracing challenge. Through subject-specific workshop design and inclusive pedagogy, UAL Creative Mindsets aims to tackle the inequitable outcomes in student experience, progression, academic attainment, and employability experienced by students studying art and design in higher education in the United Kingdom.

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<sup>42</sup> UAL Creative Mindsets Blog. See <http://ualcreativemindsets.myblog.arts.ac.uk/>

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## INTRODUCTION

In the higher education sector in the United Kingdom, across all subject areas, there is a persistent gap between different groups of students who are awarded a “good” degree (students who gain a 1st class or 2:1 degree). The greatest difference in outcome is predicated on ethnicity. This attainment gap is increasingly referred to as the awarding gap, to shift responsibility towards the institution and to avoid a student deficit model. University of the Arts London (UAL) attainment differentials between home white students and home black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) students has reduced from 22% in 2016/17 to 16% in 2017/18. UAL states<sup>43</sup> that by 2022 the percentage of first degree home BAME students achieving a first or 2:1 will be the same as for first degree home white students. BAME is a contested term, as it homogenises groups but is commonly used in the UK for data analysis.

UAL Creative Mindsets developed from Changing Mindsets, a research intervention funded by the Office for Students (OfS).<sup>44</sup> Led by academics in the Psychology Department at the University of Portsmouth, Changing Mindsets is a partnership between

43 UAL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2018. Retrieved 09 January 2019 from [https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0021/89211/UAL-Equality-Diversity-Inclusion-Report-2018.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/89211/UAL-Equality-Diversity-Inclusion-Report-2018.pdf)

44 Changing Mindsets Project Website. See <http://mindsets.port.ac.uk/>



Figure 1. *What is Talent, What is Failure?* opening event. Photo: Gareth Johnson

the University of Portsmouth, University of the Arts London (UAL), the University of Winchester, and the University of Brighton. During the pilot year 2017/18, three courses across three different UAL colleges (Camberwell College of Arts, Central Saint Martins, and London College of Communication) participated in the intervention. The pilot year comprised staff and student workshops, quantitative and qualitative data collection, and peripheral events, such as the student-led exhibition *What Is Talent, What is Failure?*<sup>45</sup> at the Wilson Road Galleries in February 2018, and *UAL Changing Mindsets with Grayson Perry*.<sup>46</sup> Emerging findings of the pilot year can be found in the Changing Mindsets Mid-Project Report.<sup>47</sup> The research work in the pilot year informed the subject-specific approaches that were tested and developed in subsequent workshops.

The fifth strand in the UAL Learning for All Attainment Programme, UAL Creative Mindsets is supported by the Teaching and Learning Exchange. Drawing upon research presented in the HEFCE report, *Causes of differences in student outcomes* (Mountford-Zimdars, Sabri, Moore, Sanders, Jones, & Higham, 2015), the intervention supports staff and

45 UAL Creative Mindsets interview with Graduate Intern, Daisy Young, curator of *What is Talent, What is Failure?* Retrieved 12 January 2019 from <http://ualcreativemindsets.myblog.arts.ac.uk/what-is-talent-what-is-failure-changing-mindsets-at-ual/>

46 Retrieved 12 January 2019 from <http://ualcreativemindsets.myblog.arts.ac.uk/ual-changing-mindsets-workshop-with-grayson-perry/>

47 Changing Mindsets Mid-Project Report. (2018, June). Retrieved 12 January 2019 from <https://bit.ly/2RH8dw6>

students to explore psychosocial and identity factors that influence differential outcomes. This is defined as the “extent to which students feel supported and encouraged in their daily interactions within their institutions and with staff members... as such interactions can both facilitate and limit students’ learning and attainment.” (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015: ii)

## GROWTH MINDSET WORKSHOP DESIGN



The Growth Mindsets workshop opens a space to consider the relationship between Dweck’s theories of intelligence and the art school concept of “the crit”—focusing on risk/failure, talent/intelligence, and language/feedback. The crit is often a contested space within art education; historically derived from asymmetrical power relations between students and teacher, it can be stressful and problematic, particularly for those from widening participation and international backgrounds, as it can be seen as an assessment of cultural capital and oral skills (Blythman, Orr, & Blair, 2007). To demonstrate a growth mindset (and to build resilience when faced with risk/failure), students are invited to identify a challenge they have faced in their first term at university and to discuss, in pairs, strategies that were applied to overcome it. This builds an inclusive sense of belonging in the lecture theatre or studio and acknowledges prior knowledge and lived experience, just as Biggs (2014) reflects on the importance of identifying behaviour and experiences and linking these to the context in which they are to operate.

Figure 2. UAL Creative Mindsets logo, design by Andreea Stan

Before asking for feedback, one of the UAL Creative Mindsets Team (a paid group of students and alumni who have been trained in workshop theory and facilitation) shares their experience of challenge in the first year. This draws upon work by bell hooks on inclusive pedagogy (hooks, 1994) in that, by valuing every voice in the classroom, power is challenged. The opportunity to share ideas draws upon experience outside the academic environment to acknowledge that “difficult experiences may be common” and to demonstrate the importance of “integrating theory and practice: ways of knowing with habits of being.” (hooks, 1994: 43).

Student feedback suggests that self-reflection on risk/failure occurs and can impact positively upon future approaches to learning and considerations of the crit. According to

one student participant, “To realise that anxiety and worrying about the challenge is the biggest obstacle of a challenge.”

The second aim of the session is to challenge notions of intelligence/talent being static, fixed, or biological concepts. This was informed by filmed research interviews with Dr Gurnam Singh, Principal Lecturer in Social Work at Coventry University and Visiting Fellow in Race and Education at UAL: *Critical Pedagogy Bites 1,2,3 &4*<sup>48</sup> and *From Implicit Bias to Unconscious Non-Bias*<sup>49</sup> and *Navigating with the Birds Series* (Vikki Hill with Dr Gurnam Singh).<sup>50</sup> Students were asked to consider how to define “talent” and to then anonymously post it on Menti (an online learning tool). The responses clearly fell between two positions: those who thought talent was something innate, something “you are born with,” and those who considered it to be something that developed through practice and perseverance.



Figure 3. Student responses to Menti activity. Credit: Vikki Hill

Students were then presented with Dweck’s mindset theory, including evidence on neuroplasticity to demonstrate physical transformations in the brain when learning occurs. This is followed by an opportunity for critical dialogue where students are able to discuss their responses to the theory. The feedback demonstrated a successful approach to achieving learning outcomes through the chosen pedagogical approaches. “Interesting and thought provoking, some of the questions I felt really made me think about something I’d never considered,” commented one student participant.

48 *Critical Pedagogy Bites 1,2,3 &4*. See <http://bit.ly/2GaMLY0>

49 *From Implicit Bias to Unconscious Non-Bias*. See <https://youtu.be/vsFsaRLT8DU>

50 *Navigating with the Birds Series*. See <https://youtu.be/nC57wFpZr3U>



Figure 4. UAL students and staff completing online survey. Photo: Gareth Johnson

To explore language/feedback, the discussion centres on growth mindset language and the “power of yet”—positive message but fixed mindset language and fixed mindset language. The UAL Creative Mindsets Team facilitators share examples of how language used in both formative and peer assessment practices can develop a growth mindset or produce a fixed mindset position which can either encourage resilience or, conversely, elicit feelings of failure or inadequacy. Students are then asked to identify areas of their own life and learning where they could apply theory to practice, once again drawing on engaged pedagogy (hooks, 1994). Students are offered the opportunity to share this with the whole cohort.

The final activities of the workshop include a final group design task to complete the learning cycle (Kolb & Kolb, 2005), with opportunities for converging, accommodating, diverging, and assimilating knowledge. Experiential learning can be an effective teaching and learning approach to challenge entrenched beliefs, and this encourages students to work with the theory and design a subject-specific growth mindset product or activity for students on their course to address risk, challenge, failure, or language. The concepts that are shared range from app designs to VR activities, marketing campaigns, peer support tasks, and small modifications to language or behaviour in the crit, to evidence challenges faced and strategies employed, to further reflect on the process.

## CONCLUSION

In Year 2 of the intervention (2018/19) the UAL Creative Mindsets Team has so far delivered over 60 workshops to both staff and students across five colleges (Camberwell College of Art, Chelsea College of Arts, Central Saint Martins, London College of Communication, and London College of Fashion), and has worked with approximately 30% (1,500) of the Year 1 students at the university. The current model has been to deliver two workshops to each course team that is participating, one workshop on growth mindsets and the other on stereotype threat and implicit bias. Work is underway to evaluate the efficacy of this model and to create an embedded approach to eradicating the 16% that symbolises the inequalities that face our students of colour.

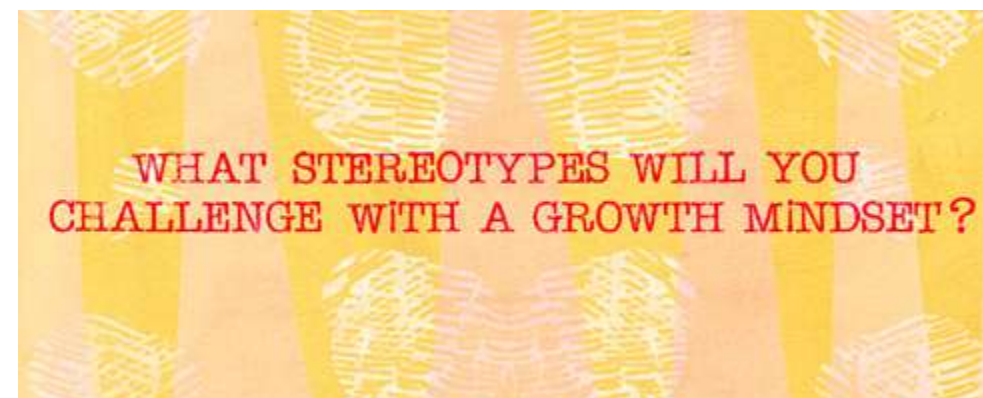


Figure 5. Creative Mindsets takeaway question, design by Andreea Stan

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# ARTSEQUAL POLICY WORK: TOWARDS RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL COHESION WITH CULTURAL RIGHTS AND CULTURAL WELL-BEING

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cultural rights  
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## **ABSTRACT**

In Finland, ArtsEqual Research Initiative has produced research-informed policy recommendations to communicate to decision-makers about equal access to the arts and arts education. This paper presents two such policy briefs that strive to enhance cultural well-being: one on the actualisation of cultural rights in social and healthcare settings, the other on the expansion of the percent for art principle. By drawing from the Constitution of Finland, Bourdieu's concepts of cultural and social capital, and Nussbaum's capability theory, the paper explicates the argumentative leverage that the concepts of "cultural rights" and "cultural well-being" have provided in the policy briefs. In addition, the paper explains the interaction that has taken place in the project to inform decision-makers and implement the recommendations. The paper concludes that research-informed policy recommendations, together with collaboration with strategic interaction partners, can open doors for the arts in health and social care settings.



# INTRODUCTION

In Finland, a Nordic welfare state with extensive public services, there has been discussion about the end of the Nordic welfare state expansion (see, for example, Julkunen 2011; Julkunen 2017). A growing sustainability gap, the social exclusion of young people, and the unsuccessful integration of immigrant groups calls for new actions for more resilient and socially cohesive cities to safeguard the well-being of people in the post-expansive welfare state. Hence, a new impetus for well-being has been sought from the arts.

The ArtsEqual Research Initiative is a six-year multidisciplinary research project coordinated by the University of the Arts Helsinki.<sup>51</sup> As one of the most extensive research projects into arts and arts education in Finland's history, ArtsEqual understands the arts as a basic service which needs to be available to all people and enhance well-being in a wide range of life domains. The project investigates mechanisms that sustain unequal participation in the arts and arts education in a number of contexts, including arts organisations, schools, the basic arts education system, elderly care, youth work, prisons, refugee work, disability services, and so on. By understanding the state-funded services in the arts as a public service, ArtsEqual also studies the benefits of participatory arts for well-being. In the project my team focuses on the relationship between the arts and well-being in health and social care contexts. We aim to ensure the realisation of cultural rights and cultural well-being of all people, regardless of their age, their abilities, or their situation in life.

Funded by the Academy of Finland's Strategic Research Council, ArtsEqual is expected not only to produce socially significant research but also policy recommendations for research-informed decision-making. The funding body expects from the project strategic interaction with societal partners. To meet such expectations, to date, ArtsEqual has published nine research-informed policy briefs. These recommendations address a range of societal topics, from cultural rights in healthcare and social services to the expansion of the percent for art principle, from comprehensive schools as Finland's largest cultural centre to accessibility as the premise for basic arts education, and from arts for well-being at work to arts against loneliness.<sup>52</sup>

In this paper my focus will be on two of the policy briefs that I have contributed to: one that deals with the realisation of cultural rights and cultural well-being in health and social care contexts, and another that proposes the expansion of the percent for art principle. My aim is to explain the argumentative leverage that the concepts of cultural rights and

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51 This work was supported by the Academy of Finland's Strategic Research Council [293199/2015].

52 For more information, see <http://www.artsequal.fi/en/policy-briefs>

cultural well-being have provided in the policy briefs. I will do that by drawing from the Constitution of Finland, Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of cultural and social capital, and Martha Nussbaum's capability theory. First, however, I will provide a brief overview of Finland as a post-expansive welfare state, and highlight some of its challenges. Finally, I will explain the interaction that has taken place to inform decision-making and implement the recommendations.

# FINLAND IN THE AGE OF AUSTERITY

The current population of Finland is 5.55 million, based on the latest United Nations estimate. In Europe, Finland ranks third in the old-age dependency ratio (Eurostat, 2018). Specifically, 21.4% of the population was at least 65 years old at the end of 2017 (Statistics Finland, 2017). Over the next few decades, a growing life expectancy paired with low birth rates will mark a shift towards a significantly older population structure, an increase in the relative amount of very old people, and a growing sustainability gap.<sup>53</sup>

While the cost of ageing has been discussed a lot recently (see, for example, Lee & Manson, 2017), the social exclusion of people and the unsuccessful integration of immigrant groups also generate societal and economic challenges for countries. Unexpected changes in life can bring about a negative spiral of troubles and, as the American sociologist Robert Putnam (2015) has pointed out, unequal opportunities due to increasing class and income differences can strengthen the negative impact of life changes. For an individual, such a negative spiral is, of course, a tragedy, but it can also generate costs to society. The State Audit Office has estimated that the loss of national income due to a single excluded person is approximately €700,000 if the exclusion lasts for the whole of the expected working life (approx. 40 years). The equivalent loss for public finances is about €430,000. The costs of incapacity for work for young people consists of the lost labour input as well as care and social benefit costs. The value of the lost labour input for a person who is granted the disability pension at the age of 30 is over 1.5 million euros (Allianssi, 2016). Hence, to prevent health problems, loneliness, social exclusion, and mental health problems resulting from changes in life is not only humanly important but also economically wise.

In Finland the government has declared that the economic situation is difficult and the public sector debt is increasing (Valtioneuvosto, 2018). Due to the sustainability gap, there is today less public money to cover the growing need of health and social care

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53 Sustainability gap—or fiscal sustainability, as it is called in economic policy—is a concept that refers to the difference between the resources a population consumes and the resources available to support them (Oksanen, 2014).

services (Julkunen, 2017). The economic challenge has brought about a national health, social services, and regional government reform (HSR reform), which entails that the responsibility to organise health and social services will be transferred from municipalities to 18 counties from 1 January 2021.<sup>54</sup>

In a country where the arts have been regarded as a central condition for the existence of a relatively young nation (Oesch, 2008), the reform has opened up a window of opportunity for the arts to introduce arts-based services to the health and social sector to keep people socially engaged, healthy, sharp, and integrated, and to help them keep their lives meaningful. Research has indeed suggested that participation in the arts can in many ways provide means to tackle the challenges of well-being (Westerlund et al., 2016) and, hence, build resilience in cities. To disseminate information on the benefits of the arts to decision makers is needed, because many things maintain inequalities and counteract well-being in cities in Finland.

## CULTURAL RIGHTS AND CULTURAL WELL-BEING: KEY CONCEPTS IN TWO POLICY BRIEFS

*People's right to participate in the arts and culture as well as to develop themselves and their communities are basic cultural human rights... [that] need to be secured for all people to learn, participate in culture, and express themselves in all their life stages and situations.*

*(Lehikoinen & Rautiainen, 2016: 1-2)*

*Equal opportunities to participate in the arts and culture, as a part of cultural basic rights, are not realised in the lives of many people today. Real equal opportunities would make it possible for all people to pursue cultural well-being.*

*(Lehikoinen, 2017: 3)*

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<sup>54</sup> Preparations for the implementation of the regional government, health and social services reform were discontinued on 8 March 2019 due to the resignation of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's government. The next government will decide about the continuation of the reform and how to utilise the work done already. (Press release, Ministry of Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 8 March 2019) The underlying reasons for the policy recommendations discussed in this article have not changed and they bear relevance for the actualisation of cultural rights and cultural well-being also during the next government term.

As the excerpts above indicate, in ArtsEqual we understand the right to participate in the arts, to develop oneself and one's community through the arts, and to express oneself freely are basic cultural rights safeguarded by the UN Declaration of Human Rights and several human rights conventions that oblige Finland and its Constitution (Lehikoinen & Rautiainen, 2016; see also Lehikoinen & Vanhanen, 2017). According to the Constitution of Finland, it "shall guarantee the inviolability of human dignity and the freedom and rights of the individual and promote justice in society" (Section 1). It establishes the constitutional premise for basic cultural rights, the realisation of such rights and, consequently, the realisation of cultural well-being. While the basic cultural rights are protected by the Constitution, the Constitution also includes the requirement of equal treatment. Therefore, the claim for equal opportunities also has a constitutional premise. According to the Non-discrimination Act (1325/2014, Section 8), "age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, state of health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics" shall not affect people's access to different services. Hence, the claim for equal treatment in ArtsEqual policy briefs means that everyone should have equal opportunities to participate in the arts, enhance one's cultural and social capital, and strive towards well-being and a good life.

The policy briefs recommend the realisation of cultural rights in health and social care contexts to enhance the actualisation of cultural well-being in society. The concept of cultural well-being refers to "an individual or communally shared experience that culture and art add to or are related to well-being" (Lilja-Viherlampi & Rosenlöf, quoted in Taikusydän, 2018). Hence, cultural well-being refers to opportunities to satisfy one's cultural needs in ways that generate personal or collectively experienced well-being. In the ArtsEqual policy brief 1/2016, we have linked the concept of cultural well-being to Pierre Bourdieu's ideas on cultural and social capital and Martha Nussbaum's notion of capabilities. Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural capital as forms of knowledge, skills, education, and advantages that people have in various degrees and which help people gain a particular status in society. Social capital refers to resources based on group memberships and relationships, as well as networks of influence and support (Bourdieu, 1986; see also Putnam, 2000). Thus, in the policy brief, we claim that cultural well-being stems from participation in the arts and culture in ways that increases the participants' cultural and social capital. Consequently, this may improve their capabilities to act in their lives in ways that generate subjectively experienced well-being and contribute towards the common good. Drawing from Nussbaum's capabilities theory, capabilities can be understood as people's "real opportunities to do and be what they have reason to value" (Robeyns, 2006). From a neo-Aristotelian perspective, Martha Nussbaum (2011) has proposed a list of ten capabilities which she regards as crucial for the constitution in every country. While there is no space here to introduce the capabilities in detail, it suffices to suggest that many of them are put in use, and are also enhanced, as people participate

in the arts and culture (e.g., senses, imagination, and thought, emotions, practical reason, affiliation, and play). In reference to cultural well-being, however, in order for people to gain cultural and social capital from the arts, they need to have opportunities to participate in the arts. Further, in order for cultural and social capital to do any good, they need to be understood as the very stuff of capabilities and they need to be turned into action in life.

Yet we know that cultural rights that enable cultural well-being do not actualise equally for everyone in today's Finland—or elsewhere in the West, for that matter. Not everyone can engage in the arts and arts education in ways that result individual or collective well-being.<sup>55</sup> This observation has underpinned our objective as we have prepared the policy briefs so that marginalised groups such as elderly people, excluded young people, immigrants, people defined as disabled, imprisoned people, and people confined in other institutions could have equal opportunities to strengthen their capabilities to strive towards well-being in their lives.

## MEASURES PROPOSED IN THE POLICY BRIEFS

From the position described above, in the first policy brief, we have proposed four measures that counties in Finland should undertake as part of the HSR reform: first, the counties should “prepare an action plan to secure people’s cultural rights and maintain cultural well-being... [and also] monitor the enactment of the plans and the level of cultural well-being” (ArtsEqual Policy Brief, 1/2016: 2); second, the counties should ensure that professionally organised artistic and cultural activities “are included in social and health care structures [in a way that] “builds up well-being and prevents social exclusion” (ibid.), and that such activities need to be organised in a sustainable way with adequate resources, rather than on a short-term basis in projects that begin only to abandon the participants as they end; third, the counties should “ensure that culture-based methods are taken into account as part of rehabilitative approaches” (ibid.). Yet, “rehabilitation should not be the only grounds for organizing art and cultural activities in social and health care units” (ibid.), because providing access to arts and culture in such contexts is also “a question of securing cultural rights for all individuals” (ibid.). Finally, as the HSR reform positions the counties as supervisors for health and social care service providers that need to meet county-defined criteria, we propose that counties should include a requirement on cultural rights and cultural well-being in their quality criteria for service providers.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, Vismanen et al. (2016) on the unequal distribution of basic arts education in Helsinki.

The second policy brief proposes the expansion of the percent for art principle in order to locate financial resources for the arts in health and social care settings. The percent for art principle has traditionally meant the operating and financial model, where a share from construction costs is spent on art investments. The idea of the principle came to Finland already in the 1930s, and by the 1980s many municipalities had agreed to use it in their building projects. While the principle ceased almost entirely during a recession, it made a remarkable comeback in the new millennium. The idea to extend this principle has evolved since 1990s. (Pulkkinen & Hannus, 2015; Karttunen & Herranen, 2013; Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö, 2017). Drawing from the constitutional premise of cultural rights, the policy brief proposes that people in care institutions have limited opportunities to benefit from art and cultural services and the cultural well-being they contribute to. This alone is a reason why the reach of these services needs to be extended to the health and social care settings. To do so requires permanent funding, which can be available by expanding the currently employed percent for art principle in accordance with the programme of the current Finnish government. Hence, the policy brief proposes that a small percentage of the operation costs of social and healthcare institutions should be allocated to participatory arts in social and healthcare contexts.

## INTERACTION WITH KEY PARTNERS AND SOCIETAL OUTCOMES

From the very beginning, ArtsEqual has invested in collaboration with now more than 50 partners, such as Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Arts Promotion Centre Finland, Finnish National Board of Education, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, and Regional State Administrative Agencies, as well as number of cities, NGOs, and research communities. Such interaction has resulted a place for two researchers from ArtsEqual in an inter-ministerial task force on arts, culture, health, and well-being. The task force aims to get health- and well-being-oriented arts and cultural activities better integrated into different sectors of society. The task force has, amongst other things, applied research results and policy recommendations from ArtsEqual in its national policy work in 2017 and 2018 to reach its objective, which, according to the letter of appointment, has been to make conclusions on the availability of arts and cultural services and identify key areas of development for future social and healthcare service solutions (OKM/41/040/2016). The task force has also utilised ArtsEqual policy briefs, for example, in the guidelines that were devised for the regional officials in charge of the practical implementation of the national health, social services, and regional government reform. Moreover, the policy recommendations were referred to in the inter-ministerial recommendations on arts and culture in health and social care that Ministers

Sampo Terho (Blue Reform) and Annika Saarikko (Center Party) published towards the end of 2018.

At the Ministry of Education and Culture, ArtsEqual's policy briefs have been considered by a task force that has prepared key objectives for Finland's new art and artists policy. Through the task force, ArtsEqual has managed to include ideas on equality and cultural well-being, for example, in the revision of the Municipal Cultural Activities Act, which came in force on 1 March 2019. The Municipal Cultural Activities Act aims to strengthen the health and well-being of the population, and also the inclusion of marginalised groups through arts and culture. The idea on equal participation is highlighted in the new law, which states that in municipalities the inhabitants should have a right to participate in and influence cultural matters, and that the municipalities need to engage in systematic collaboration (E. Pirnes, personal communication, 15 May 2018).

ArtsEqual's impact on regional policy making has taken place so far in three counties that have prepared or are in the middle of preparing their regional action plans for cultural well-being. In Pirkanmaa, ideas from the first ArtsEqual's policy brief (1/2016) were included in the regional well-being plan that was piloted in nine municipalities in 2017 (Pirkanmaan sairaanhoitopiiri, 2017). The Regional Council of Southern Savonia in south-east Finland hired a doctoral candidate connected to ArtsEqual in 2017 to work on their regional well-being plan, which was published recently (Etelä-Savon Maakuntaliitto, 2018). In south-west Finland, ArtsEqual's liaison with the regional office of the Arts Promotion Centre Finland, the Taikusydän network, and the Regional Council of Southwest Finland has resulted a transprofessional working group on cultural well-being to support the health, social services, and regional government reform in the region (A. Rosenlöf, personal communication, 14 January 2019).

## CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, I have contextualised two ArtsEqual policy briefs that provide research-informed recommendations for counties in Finland to include the arts in health and social care contexts. I have introduced two key concepts—cultural rights and cultural well-being—that have been used to justify the arts in health and social care settings. Moreover, I have described how social interaction with key stakeholders has helped ArtsEqual get its recommendations into national and regional decision-making. To conclude, research-informed policy recommendations together with collaboration with strategic interaction partners at the top level can open doors for the arts in health and social care settings. In Finland, a lot has been done in the past three years to enable equal participation in the arts regardless of age or situation in people's lives. However, considering the counties where the process of constructing cultural well-being plans has not started, a lot remains to be done.

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# SUPPORTING RESILIENCE OF MULTIPLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN THROUGH CITY/UNIVERSITY ART PROJECTS

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Institute of Visual Arts is a co-founder of an artists' colony focusing on local heritage protection, and of the Creative Partnerships programme in Pécs, Hungary. Art students work in disadvantaged regions of the city, with local inhabitants and disadvantaged children coming from ghetto areas. Their aim is to show how art can support the protection of historic centres of the settlements and how art mini-projects can strengthen the self-identity and school achievement of children and teenagers.

### **Keywords:**

artists' colony  
heritage protection  
creative partnerships  
socially disadvantaged students  
artists as creative practitioners  
policy brief



# INTRODUCTION

The faculty of History and Theory of Art of the University of Pécs and its research group works within the frame of the Faculty of Music and Visual Arts, not the Faculty of Humanities; an art degree requires theory of art studies; without theory of art studies, a humanities degree is granted. Everyday experience highlights the advantages and disadvantages of the organisational/institutional structure, primarily in terms of teachers rather than students. It is definitely an advantage for the art faculty that it is embedded in the university's structure, and therefore carries out and realises the expected scientific activity. It is believed that the theoretical and scientific activities of the theory of art teachers and the practical artistic activities of the artist candidates can be associated.

Two unique enterprises serve as an evidence of the exercise of implementation and its variants, and even changes in roles. One is an artists' colony in Senta, Serbia, which comes to life every summer since 2011; the other is the implementation of the British-born Creative Partnerships programme in Hungary.

## ARTISTS' COLONY OF ART AND HERITAGE PROTECTION IN SENTA

The Hungarian Cultural Institute of Vojvodina, with its headquarters in Senta is the host for the Art and Heritage Protection artists' colony for students of the University of Pécs and students of the Art Academy of Novi Sad, joined by their peers from Budapest, Hungary, and Bratislava, Slovakia.

However the association of science and art is only a "by-product." The main objective is mapping and protecting the cultural heritage. More specifically, mapping cultural heritage from a scientific perspective and protecting it with artistic tools. The protection of the mainly architectural heritage, which consists of civic buildings from the 19th and 20th centuries, is carried out by artistic tools—it is a call for attention. The target group of this awareness is mostly—however, often undeserving—heirs in Senta, but this call for attention also targets the management of the heritage. These are local, competent, urban architecture and heritage protection institutions, which, in reality, are impotent and have a damaging impact. The products of the scientific action are formulated in publications, which are easily unnoticed, but the closing event of the artists' colony, an annual art exhibition—and also street performances and actions during the time of the summer

colony, as well as its remaining "relics" on the buildings—are hard to miss. They catch the eye. They provoke. Or, on the contrary, they consolidate, or even motivate.

The bilingual (Serbian and Hungarian) plates stating "HERITAGE" on the walls of these buildings serve as evidence of these happenings. By placing the plates on them, we inaugurate two or three buildings to a heritage category per annum. The inauguration is an artistic action, when the results of our scientific research, the history of the house, and its artistic value is presented to the public, and we also place the plate. The plates substitute the official plates (made and authorised by the Office of Heritage Protection). Although their appearance is not similar to the official plates, their impact is effective and deceptive. Experience shows that passing pedestrians (also) consider these plated buildings as a heritage, and the town management is also called upon to focus on heritage protection. The call for attention is not always successful, or, on the contrary, it induces a counter-reaction. The authorities do not fear demolition, however, the fear of the plates placed on these buildings and their counter-reaction made us decide to use a digital version of the plate during inauguration, which is projected on the wall of the building.

One of our first heritage buildings was the Ignjatović house. The plate placed on the house had previously scared a property speculator away who intended to demolish the building, however, probably due to an official demolition permission, the building was eventually demolished. Protesting against all, this year we opted for another version of inauguration, which can be called a heritage seize and/or heritage picnic. The future of these houses as a part of the built heritage—notably their heritage category—can be questioned by many, however, their past, their artistic value, and their intellectual heritage are beyond doubt. We drew attention to two ruinous buildings not by plates, but by art performances, when we temporarily seized the buildings. Then we placed furniture and action to their uninhabited spaces, which were in accordance with the original functions of these spaces. On the terrace of the Lolin house, an art nouveau building facing the main street, we had breakfast with furniture and porcelain from the given period. Behind the Neo-Renaissance facade of the Homolya house we consumed a four-course dinner, also reconstructing the milieu of the era. The dining table discovered in the house contributed to the authenticity of the reconstruction. The guests were pedestrians and descendants of the former residents of the building. The edited video of the event can reach many via the internet.

Buildings that retain their mass and spaces can still lose those details which are important as heritage: original architectonic details, such as window and door structures that disappear during a reconstruction, replaced by plastic ones even in the case of a professional intervention compatible with heritage protection. The Madam Plastic character, made of plastic bottles, was invented as a protest against plastic. The character had a spectacular entry into Senta. Before her entry, she had welcomed the public from

the tower of the town hall, and had published a poem in the daily newspaper of the region. She marched towards the opening event of the exhibition of the Art and Heritage Protection artists' colony in the museum. However, after the public celebration (with cash hand out and taking photographs), she was not let in; she was destroyed in front of the exhibition area—in the name of plastic-free heritage protection.

## CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMME – PÉCS, HUNGARY

A Creative Partnerships programme is focused on the long-term relationship between creative practitioners and schools. Creative professionals from various branches (of arts) help students master different types of knowledge and skills. Creative practitioners bring new expectations, which clearly challenge students. But it is not only students that are jerked out of the rut of daily routine by the new learning process—schools as a whole are also affected. Creative Partnerships has developed a pedagogical approach known as the “high-functioning classroom,” which encourages teachers to change their classroom practice so that lessons are replete with challenges that relate learning to real-life situations where students are engaged physically and socially, as well as emotionally and intellectually, and where students’ own experiences, observations, and questions take centre stage. The transformation of teaching and learning is based on creative processes which are channelled into classrooms and school life. Techniques applied in the methodologies of teaching various subjects are derived from artistic practices. Whilst working in the classroom with the students, the artist remains an artist, and the teacher remains a teacher. The programme does not offer arts education. What the Creative Partnerships programme does is to prepare artists to work with teachers and students to bring about sustainable changes in teachers’ teaching practice.

In Hungary the artists and art students participating in the programme are selected by the staff of the Theory and Art History Department of Pécs University's Faculty of Music and Visual Arts.<sup>56</sup> They complete a 40-hour training course which incorporates training of the teachers from the participating schools. The training sessions are led by experienced trainers of the British host organisation, Creativity Culture and Education (CCE)<sup>57</sup> and T-Tudok Inc.<sup>58</sup> Exploration of the institutional problems of the schools and preparation of problem maps are led by T-Tudok experts. One form or student group of one or two

56 See <http://www.pte.hu/?language=en>

57 See [www.ccengland.org](http://www.ccengland.org)

58 See <https://www.t-tudok.hu/en/?page=en/introduction>

years per school are involved in the programme, which means that the so-called local mini-projects are conducted by two trained teachers and two creative practitioners, each pair working in close cooperation. The mini-projects focus on tackling local difficulties highlighted by schools and teachers (e.g., reducing the risk of attrition, development of cooperative skills, managing disruptive behaviour, strengthening of a positive image of the future, improving the “visibility” of the school in the local community), or knowledge transfer specific to school disciplines and trans-disciplinary competence development. After an on-site observation session and two planning sessions the local projects were implemented in 10 to 12 three-hour (3 x 45 minutes) modules, and were concluded by detailed evaluation and presentation. The modules can be incorporated in the structure of curricular classes, as well as school-based extracurricular afternoon sessions.

In order to test if this innovative method can narrow the gap between socially disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, and support the equal access to quality education of Roma people in heterogeneous learning environments, empirical research has accompanied the programme since its very beginning. Students were surveyed at both the input and the output ends. They were divided into a pilot and a control group; both groups were broken down further by family income and type of educational institution. Results revealed that the self-image of the students participating in the pilot improved, as did their social competence, to an extent that exceeded the improvement of control group students. The improvement in the reading level of students in the pilot group exceeded that of the control group. The improvement in their rate of correctly solved mathematical exercises also exceeded that of the control group, and their mathematical confidence increased. Students from more affluent backgrounds gave significantly more correct answers in the output test than upon input, but is conspicuous that student with more disadvantaged backgrounds also tried harder and had greater confidence when faced with the maths test, even if they could not solve the problems correctly.





# INDEPENDENT ARTISTIC STRUCTURES AS A CHALLENGE FOR CONSOLIDATING THE SOCIAL CONTEXT IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. WARSAW: DZIEKANKA GALLERY / SALON OF ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS /COMING OUT (1972–2018)

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## Keywords:

independent academic places  
new artistic platforms  
critical and creative analysis

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## ABSTRACT

The contemporary art created in independent academic places has a chance to become a response and a proposition to the ongoing processes of conservatism, intolerance to cultural diversity, division, and even lack of dialogue in society.

The conviction about the need to create new artistic platforms (structures), interdisciplinary spaces, and a critical and creative analysis of social differences is the basis of practices used for years by students and professors at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. Referring to the tradition of the Dziekanka Gallery (1972–1998), we analyse contemporary activities used in the Salon ASP Gallery (2008–ongoing) and as part of the annual *Coming Out* show (2008–ongoing).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Adam Gut, Archive of the Dziekanka Gallery, Archive of the Association of Friends of Akademia Ruchu, Tomasz Sikorski*

# INDEPENDENT ARTISTIC STRUCTURES AS A CHALLENGE FOR CONSOLIDATING THE SOCIAL CONTEXT IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

The practice of creating alternative exhibition-debatable places, open to innovative education, for interdisciplinary and multicultural projects, has existed at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts since 1972.

## Dziekanka Gallery

The first such place was Pracownia/Galeria Dziekanka (1972–1998). The most important artists debuted and worked there, such as Akademia Ruchu, Zofia Kulik, Ewa Partum, Janusz Bałdyga, Leon Tarasewicz, and Mirosław Bałka. At this point in Warsaw, Allan Kaprow, Julia Saramento, and Carsten Höller were presented at the beginning of their careers. Dziekanka made it possible to present in its space the areas of new art that were not known then. Visual arts coexisted with musical and theatre activities; painting, sculpture, drawing, and installations were presented on an equal footing with photography, performance, and video art, and often multicultural presentations of, for example, artists with Eastern Orthodox roots took place, such as at the *Ex Oriente Lux* exhibition in 1984. This student platform was available to everyone.

Systemic, urban, and social changes in the 1990s halted the process of reflective and discursive practice. However, in 2007 the Salon of the Gallery of the Academy of Fine Arts was opened, which became an open place for exchange between students and professors, and later with exhibitions, international presentations, and workshops. One year later, the professor of the gallery, Professor Paweł Nowak, initiated *Coming Out*—an interdisciplinary review of the best student diplomas from all faculties of the university. At present it can be considered as the most anticipated and popular show in the city, subjected to wide public debate every year. Each year it is organised outside the academy walls, in original places presenting the various and socially difficult aspects of the transforming city, and involving the local audience.

In today's political situation in Poland, undertaking independent artistic activities gains a unique dimension: responsibility and protection of artistic freedom and critical thinking.

## The Salon Academy Gallery

Cultural and culture-forming activities are the areas in which innovation and creativity are often a guarantee of success. The Programme Council of the Salon Academy Gallery, while constructing the exhibition repertoire, aims not only at satisfying the cultural needs of society, but also at provoking a dialogue with the art recipient—recognising their needs and responding to them. The contemporary recipient of culture does not want to be just a recipient, but wants to be able to participate in its creation. The Programme Council and the team of the gallery have a bold, open, and creative approach to new challenges that are significant determinants of growth, innovation, and building the prestige of the place. It is based on going beyond the narrow, exclusive activities, straight towards creating multifunctional spaces, open to diverse audiences.

In recent years, there were projects of an innovative character in the programme of the Salon Academy Gallery—they actively involved the recipients of the show. We presented exhibitions touching on problems of the modern world and their possible solutions through the latest design. We organised meetings, discussion panels on various aspects of art, and various generations of artists, from exhibitions of famous artists and art groups to the youngest, most promising artists (including students).

Innovation is also development in providing wider possibilities to the curators, artists, and designers. A gallery with technological facilities has the ability to organise projects on a bigger scale, more complex in arrangement and execution.

Ever since the Salon Academy Gallery was created, we have implemented around 100 exhibition projects; over 20 book promotions, and over 200 artists, 50 curators, 40 graphic designers, and 20 exhibition designers have collaborated with the gallery. The gallery has cooperated with around 40 cultural centres from all over Poland and Europe.



### Coming Out

Over ten years, the academy, like all tertiary education, was subject to many changes resulting from the Higher Education Act, which usually caused considerable confusion in the academic environment, from the research and teaching staff to students.

The one constant was the fact that an inviolable and unique summary of the period of study was *the degree piece*. It was, is, and will be. Whether a degree piece from the last decade or earlier, from the 1990s, it is always the most important element of education at the academy. This is the moment when every degree candidate presents their own vision of art, an innovative approach to design, contemporary conservation issues, and selected aspects of history and theory of art. For many years it has also been a public presentation, a symbolic beginning of the dream of a *career*, in a broad sense, coming true. It is also the beginning of hard work and the sacrifice of many aspects of life on the way to achieving one's own artistic priorities. There are no marked trails, no patterns; everyone has to find their own path.

The specificity of education at our academy is to provide students with an opportunity to search for and define their individual creative path. Partner master/apprentice relations help in achieving best results on this path. In my opinion, the claim that every generation has the right and the obligation to look for and define their own artistic expression is still valid.

This year's exhibition, *Coming Out: Best Degree Pieces from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw* (2018), is the tenth presentation of achievements of the graduates of the academy in Warsaw. Over the past decade we could see works by nearly 300 representatives of the youngest generation of our pupils. For teachers, every year it is the time for reflection on whether the young generation of artists and designers has developed a message suitable to their time.



## CONCLUSION

Such a form of the existence of a place for direct discussion between artists in dialogue with a society—*the site of artists created by artists*—which allows for the development of an artistic personality, is very unique in the Polish reality since over 20 years. But in the face of the current discourse about the role of the artist in society and its depreciation, about the brutality and sterility of the contemporary art world, about other alternative forms of financing culture, wouldn't it be worth rethinking such a formula? We leave the answer to you. All the more so, because in the present intellectual emptiness it has become very topical. For today and for the future—locally and globally.

# FISH LEATHER SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP: A COLLABORATIVE EXPERIENCE AMONGST NORDIC FASHION UNIVERSITIES

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## **ABSTRACT**

Creating impact through sustainability, industry, and education is becoming a major concern globally, and it is reflected in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a common vision for future generations.

Last March the author and Icelandic tannery Atlantic Leather co-produced a fish skin workshop with the participation of students from the Iceland University of the Arts, Boras University, Aalto University, Royal Danish Academy of Arts, and Central Saint Martins.

The workshop encouraged Nordic design students from areas with a history of fish skin production to develop fish leather designs. Students learnt Sami fish skin traditional skills with Swedish craftsperson Lotta Rahme.

The workshop tested ideas through teaching and learning, observing students' design approaches using fish skin as an alternative material for the fashion industry.

The indigenous fish skin knowledge, in partnership with sustainable design strategies, demonstrated the connection of people to their culture, communities, and the environment.

### **Keywords:**

sustainable fashion  
arctic craftsmanship  
material innovation  
fish leather

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Fish Leather Craftsmanship workshop was organised by the author, Elisa Palomino, BA Fashion Print pathway leader at Central Saint Martins (London), and Katrin Karadottir, Programme Director in Fashion design at the Iceland Academy of the Arts, in collaboration with Atlantic Leather tannery and with the participation of students from Iceland University of the Arts, Royal Danish Academy of Arts, Boras University, Aalto University, and Central Saint Martins.

In order to provide an inspiring environment in Arctic higher education, the author designed a workshop encouraging design students to produce fish leather designs using traditional skills developed over generations by Arctic indigenous peoples. The aim was to promote the knowledge and skills that the North possesses, developing sustainable design in areas with a history of fish skin leather production, such as Iceland, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, as well as preserving and using fish skin cultural heritage and strengthening networking activity.

The workshop blended the highly qualified skills of a Swedish craftsperson, Lotta Rahme, with cutting-edge sustainable design education from the United Kingdom, provided by the author.

The development of sustainability within the curriculum has been identified as a high priority for students (Reid, 2011), and the project outcome will inform existing courses on fashion sustainability.

## BACKGROUND

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### **University of the arts**

Through this workshop, the author, a PhD candidate at the London College of Fashion, Centre for Sustainable Fashion, has brought its commitment to using fashion to drive change and build a sustainable future, using human and ecological resilience as a lens for design in fashion's practice (CSF, 2015).

The workshop specifically supported four of the seventeen United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2018):

- SDG 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- SDG 12 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- SDG 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- SDG 14 - Conservation and sustainable management of the oceans, seas, and marine resources.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Making leather from fish skin is an age-old craft historically used by many societies along rivers and coasts around the world. There is evidence of fish skin leather production in Scandinavia, Alaska, Hokkaido (Japan), north-east China, and Siberia.

Before synthetic fibres were invented, people clothed themselves with natural materials available in the surroundings where they lived, such as fish skin (Jiao, 2012).

The shortage of raw materials and omnipresence of modernity have challenged the preservation of the fish skin craft. Better access to the modern world meant that Arctic peoples were able to access textiles like cotton and silk to create their clothing, leaving fewer people to develop the traditional fish skin craft. There are currently only a few craftspeople left who know how to create fish skin garments (Campbell, 2010).

Overfishing and water pollution have caused fish stocks to drop, and many Arctic aboriginals have turned to farming and tourism to make a living, leaving fish skin craft aside (Lin, 2007).

For centuries, Icelanders wore shoes made of fish skins processed using traditional tanning methods. Each shoe was cut from a single piece of fish skin, providing soft, supple, flat-soled footwear (Mould, 2018). Contemporary accounts of travels around Iceland in the mid- to late 18th century describe men wearing traditional fish skin shoes (Hald, 1972), suggesting the working man wore them on a daily basis.

Icelanders used wolf fish skins to make their shoes, and they measured distances by how many pairs of fish skin shoes would be worn out walking over the path.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

The workshop was designed to build community knowledge around material culture and bring participants' voices together to promote understanding of fish skin craft, as well as to address sustainability issues in the current fashion industry through education, inculcating in fashion students the values of sustainability. The workshop aimed to develop new fashion practices, taking students out of the classroom and into nature, contributing to the learning experience about fashion sustainability. The workshop aimed to improve the awareness and protection of traditional Arctic fish skin culture. Students learnt traditional fish skin handcraft heritage to integrate it in their fashion practice.

Participatory design is key to changing fashion systems and fostering lasting relationships between makers and final product (Fletcher, 2008).

## METHODOLOGY

The aim of the workshop was to explore the link between sustainable materials (fish skin, a by-product of the fishing industry) as a new, raw material for fashion and to transfer the intangible heritage skills of fish skin craft from Arctic ethnic minorities to fashion students from Nordic universities.

To reflect upon the interaction of fish skin using traditional craft techniques, a bibliographic and documentary research was initially done:

- Enquiry [Theory]. Following the workshop, data was collected through primary and secondary sources to reveal areas of potential development.
- Contextual and visual analysis.
- Making [Practice]. Higher education students produced fish skin samples in collaboration with an Arctic craftsman. Photographic documentation was used for illustration and classification of results.
- Sharing [Dissemination]. Feedback has been sought through activities such as conferences, published articles, teaching, and communication via the author's website (<http://www.fishskinlab.com>).



Figure 1. Sun-drying fish skins.  
Photo: Nathalie Malric

## METHODS

Action research was used during this study. The data was collected through:

- Mapping traditional fish skin craft to validate its technical feasibility.
- A field trip covering the area around Sauðárkrúkur, on the north-east coast of Iceland.
- A workshop on fish skin leather craft, to test ideas through teaching and learning, observing students' design approaches using fish skin as an alternative material.
- Photographs and video recording.
- A documentary filmed during the workshop, featuring interviews with the craftsman, students, and curators, to observe students' development of fish skin finishes as a form of design research.
- Sketchbook development.
- Literature review.
- The programme included a preparation, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up phase for both students and members of Atlantic Leather tannery.

## DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

### Project creation

The workshop's aim was an experiential learning process, based on sustainability values, where the students could create fish skin samples as a practical educational model of sustainability in action.

The project was created over a period of 10 months.

A young CSM graduate, Joseph Boon, was involved in this phase. He contributed with his expert knowledge on fish skin leather tanning, which he achieved during the final year of his BA. He learnt about traditional fish skin leather to create his own material for his final degree fashion show. He experimented with many different types of fish skin waste from Billingsgate Fish Market, including brill, Dover sole, sea bass, flounder, and salmon.

The workshop's main objectives were to:

- Map existing traditional knowledge of fish skin craft from the Sami ethnic minority.
- Build an interdisciplinary collaborative network which intersects Arctic craftspeople and higher education students to study fish skin ancient traditions.
- Preserve and disseminate Arctic cultural heritage connected with fish skin, promoting sustainable development of this unique craft culture.
- Help higher education students develop fish skin leather samples as an environmentally responsible alternative material for fashion.
- Bring together sustainable methods from fashion design and traditional crafts to foster an international knowledge exchange that will develop the capacity for practice in these fields.

### Recruitment

The author was interested in developing an immersive, experiential learning process at the fish skin tannery Atlantic Leather as a practical educational model of sustainability in action.

Over a period of 10 months the author engaged with the Swedish craftsman for the delivery of the workshop and with the Nordic universities for the recruitment of students specifically engaged in sustainable fashion.

A total of 10 students from universities in the circumpolar area (Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland) and the UK benefited from the workshop. The Swedish craftsman Lotta Rahme delivered the workshop and shared Sami ethnic minority traditional fish skin tanning methods, passing down the endangered fish skin craft to the next generation of Nordic students from fashion universities. Lotta has learnt traditional tanning crafts with different minority groups and communities all over the world (Rahme, 2006).



Figure 2. Swedish fish skin traditional tanner Lotta Rahme. Photo: Nathalie Malric

### Workshop location

The workshop took place in Sauðárkrókur, Iceland, combining traditional knowledge on fish skin with the technological progress of Icelandic tannery Atlantic Leather, which has been turning local fish skin into highly sustainable leather since 1994.

### Workshop programme

The author developed an experiential learning process to explore design for sustainability through teaching methods that support a mutual learning environment. The Swedish craftsman interacted with the fashion students through practical and theoretical fish skin lessons.

The workshop was five days long and included:

- Sustainability background introduction
- Lectures on historical fish skin artefacts at international museums
- Visit to a local museum
- Fish skin tanning and dyeing
- Sketchbook development

### Sustainability background introduction

The group was briefed at an introductory session providing inspiration, basic information regarding ethics, and sustainability of fish skin leather. Suggestions for further reading and research were given to students.

The focus here was on using a raw material that has been used by Scandinavian aboriginals to produce their garments and accessories for centuries.

The workshop involved using skins from salmon. These are by-products of the food industry and have not been farmed for the sole purpose of use in the fashion industry. They are not an endangered species. The workshop did not involve the use of elements that may cause harm to the environment, animals, or plants.

### Visit to Atlantic Leather tannery

On the first day, students and tutors visited the Icelandic tannery Atlantic Leather.

The fish skin tanning facilities consist of four tumbling drums used to soak the skins in

specific enzymes and pH concentrates, as well as to dye the skins.

We were shown the drying racks where the fish skins are stapled down to be dried.

We learnt the foiling techniques used to give fish skins holographic, mirror, and patent effects.

The students took part in a sewing workshop, where they learnt how to use the different leather sewing machines and the different panelling techniques used to create swaths of fish skin leather.

The panelling of the skins is done in two ways: either the raw edges of the skins are left intact and layered over one another, creating little waste, or they are cut into rhombus shapes with a cardboard stencil and sewn together along perfectly straight lines, wasting the natural perimeter of the skin. Both techniques used double-sided tape to secure the leather before sewing. In an adjacent room we were shown examples of unusual items that had been tanned at Atlantic Leather, including bull scrotum, cow udder, and polar bear and shark skins.



Figure 3. Atlantic Leather dyeing lab.  
Photo: Nathalie Malric

### Fish skin tanning and dyeing

Lotta directed the students to create their own experimentations in dyed and tanned fish skin. We scraped two or three skins each, in order to remove any residual flesh that would potentially rot. In order to soften the skin we used a variety of traditional and contemporary tools that Lotta had brought from Sweden, ranging from handmade wooden implements to the jaw of a moose. Whilst scraping the skins we explored the different layers and thickness we could achieve, in some cases removing even the top, two-tone layer of the fish skin.

We used two different methods to tan the skins: one with a solution made from boiled sallow bark (the bark was collected in the Dalarna woods in Sweden during the spring, when it contains more tanning acid); the other method was oil tanning with rapeseed oil, egg yolk, and soap.

Lotta had previously bark-tanned two skins for each of us for ten days before coming to Blönduós, since the process takes several more days than we had.

Because fish skin has a low degradation temperature, the tanning solutions were less than





Figure 4. Bark-tanned and naturally dyed fish skins.  
Photo: Nathalie Malric

20 degrees Celsius as the skins entered them. The tannins from the bark or the unsaturated oil binds chemically to the collagen proteins in the skin, making them more flexible, less water soluble, and more resistant to bacterial attack.

In order to dye the fish skins, we boiled onion skins in water, to make a yellow dye, and cochineal, to make a red dye. When the oil-tanned skins were dry and soft, we put them in the solutions for three to four hours, or longer if we wanted a darker colour. Then

we rinsed them in water and dried and softened

them again. For the bark-tanned skins we mixed a strong bark solution with the onion skins, cochineal, and blueberries, and when it was under 20 degrees Celsius, we put the skins in. We left the skins in the liquid to dye overnight and re-oiled and softened them the next morning. They became a more yellow-brown and red-brown colour.

Some of the students experimented with dyeing the scales they had collected after scraping the fish, which was very successful. In addition, Lotta showed us how to make traditional thread with the sinews and tissue of the fish. We used traditional sewing techniques and learnt how to twist two pieces of sinew together to create thread to stitch with.

At the end of the trip the students and teachers had a wide array of full salmon skin samples, ranging from purple and red to brown and white. One of the students had brought his tattoo gun and tattooed the fish skins, developing a new surface decoration method.

### Sketchbook development

The workshop included a training session on sketchbook development. Students documented the journey and workshop through observations in sketchbooks with drawings, research images, and the design process.

On the last day of the workshop we held a critique where the students presented their fish skins, research, and design development.

Figure 5. Sketchbook development.  
Photo: Nathalie Malric



## FINDINGS

The workshop developed a collaboration framework between industry and education, and managed to:

- Create new cooperation between education and industry.
- Improve employability of students, thanks to acquisition of new craft skills.
- Share resources between different educational institutes and industries at an international level.

The workshop demonstrated how relevant the indigenous fish skin knowledge, in partnership with sustainable design strategies, can be to connect people to their culture, communities, and the environment.

The workshop reflects on the dialogue amongst Arctic craftspeople and Nordic fashion students on common Arctic issues, in particular, issues of sustainable development, sustainable material innovation, and Arctic environmental protection, in order to restore some of the damages that have already happened to the Arctic indigenous culture related to fishing rights and fish skin clothing traditions, thereby helping to build resilience amongst the Arctic communities.

This project is also important because it engages communities and traditional fish skin knowledge holders, laying the groundwork for an assessment that is co-produced by both traditional knowledge and fashion education.

## CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

The workshop brought together a craftspeople with knowledge about traditional Arctic fish skin techniques and higher education fashion students in order to explore the roots of Nordic fashion design traditions linked to fish. The project created a space to share wisdom, skills, and techniques around fish skin processing and to co-produce new work using both traditional skills and sustainable design methodologies.

The workshop promoted sustainable material engagement through a fully immersive experience in a teaching-in-the-field approach. The students and craftspeople had the chance to attend a multidisciplinary and locally immersive experience; we created a collaborative network for further projects and set up an international design environment for sharing knowledge.

The workshop methodologies are reflected the geographical contrasts of the area. The harshness of the weather, isolation, and limited availability of materials formed a unique source of creativity and inspiration for the students during the workshop. Fish skin was the only available material, urging students to think creatively and seek new design possibilities. Students created innovative design solutions from fish skin. Eco-consciousness played a fundamental role in the students' designs using remnant materials.

The object of the workshop was the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage connected with fish skin. In order to achieve this, the collaboration and cooperation amongst different Arctic universities and professionals provided a key element in the project. This is a fine example of an innovative way of linking the preservation of traditional knowledge and culture and the development of culturally relevant programmes for students, community involvement, and conservation of resources.

The workshop provided a case study for working across Arctic universities to develop their cultural identities and foster narratives of social sustainability. The cross-disciplinary project has created a new structure to demonstrate how much Arctic communities have in common.

The workshop seeks to inspire fashion lecturers involved in the development of sustainability and craftsmanship within their curriculums to implement this transformative teaching and learning experience in their own practice. Hopefully the workshop will inspire new ideas across the student and staff communities that were involved, which in turn may contribute to public debate on sustainability issues in the fashion industry (Fletcher, 2010).

The author has advanced knowledge on fish skin craft and has been able to deliver two more workshops developing traditional methods of tanning fish skin in areas where traditionally fish skin was developed:

- Nibutani Ainu Culture Museum, Hokkaido, Japan. Workshop on Ainu fish leather craftsmanship with fashion students from Japanese universities: Bunka Gakuen, Osaka Bunka, and Kyoto Seika University. Funded by the Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture (FRPAC), the Japan Foundation Endowment Committee, and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation.
- Jiejinkou Hezhen Village Museum, China. Workshop delivered in the city of Tongjiang, where experienced Hezhe craftspeople passed down the endangered fish skin craft to the next generation of Chinese students.

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# CITY, ART, AND CULTURE IN THE EYES OF LORCA: *BLOOD WEDDING* AS A MODEL OF SOCIAL RESILIENCE

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**Keywords:**

Blood Wedding  
acting  
performance  
theatre  
Lorca

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## **ABSTRACT**

Centro Universitario de Artes TAI and London South Bank University developed a scenic project that revisits the iconography of Lorca's *Blood Wedding*, with Madrid and London as a uniting axis between countries, students, and artistic institutions inspired by Lorca's message of freedom and social conscience. It was conceived as vehicle to join art students of today's Europe in an artistic, cultural, and social integration experience.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*Gill Foster, dramaturge and Performing Arts department director at London South Bank University*

*Ed Richards, teacher in Performing Arts department at London South Bank University*

*Juan Ollero, theatre director and teacher at Centro Universitario de Artes TAI*

*Directing boards of Centro Universitario de Artes TAI and London South Bank University*

*All the great actors and actresses participating in this project.*

*Federico García Lorca, who inspired us.*

# CITY, ART, AND CULTURE IN THE EYES OF LORCA

## 1. Introduction

Look at them. They are Alba, Carlos, Esther, Helena, Luis, Natalia, Nicole, Susana, Dan, Ben, Nika, Eleanor, James, Jacob, and Shalei.

Do you think that these 16 young actors can unite Europe?

We think so. We will see how.



## 2. The Project

*Blood Wedding* arises from the collaboration agreement between Centro Universitario de Artes TAI in Madrid and London South Bank University (LSBU) as an opportunity for its drama students to live a unique artistic, cultural, and life experience through the vision and message of freedom of Federico García Lorca.

In times of Brexit, populism, right-wing conservatism... we agree with this year's ELIA Conference subject: "The Arts enable us to express and develop our cultural identities, and reveal the diversity within our society. Cross-disciplinary projects create new structures that can pinpoint social tensions, address differences, and demonstrate how much we have in common."

Our 16 protagonists are people from all over the world, ready to share their effort, feelings, energy, and happiness to live a unique artistic, cultural, and life experience through the vision of Lorca.

Project presentation video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RklfGqYLKLE&feature=youtu.be>





Photo: Ruben Aranda

### 3. Two Languages

The theatrical project is based on physical experimentation, gestural creation, and textual experimentation uniting the expressive richness of two languages, English and Spanish. Lorca's work has been adapted by Gill Foster, dramaturge and director of the LSBU performing arts studies, and directed by Juan Ollero, avant-garde theatre director and performing arts teacher at TAI, and Ed Richards, teacher in Performing Arts department at LSBU. It is not intended to be a simple interpretation of Lorca's texts, but rather a revisit by Gill, Juan, and Ed, aiming at showing the author's message of freedom.

*"As a director and dramaturge, Gill Foster has been developing experimental bilingual adaptations of classic texts in countries across Europe for several years, yet each individual project feels like a completely new creative venture developing its own innovative and unique aesthetic language. Working with an amazing trans-national cast and creative team, this adaptation of Blood Wedding is a real step into the unknown. Our exploratory creative process is based on a shared appreciation of the musicality and poetic rhythms of Lorca's text, which resonates in both Spanish and English, and which, in turn, has led us to a new theatre language that goes far beyond the spoken word. Each individual brings their own artistic agency to the project, and using the body, or a group of bodies, we explore the visceral imagery of this powerful work. This is where we start, the rest develops in the room. Where we will end up, we don't know yet, the ride is as important as the destination, but we hope that wherever we go, we will bring our audience with us on our journey into the heart of Lorca's unique play."*

Gill Foster & Ed Richards

*"This international lab made from Blood Wedding is a two-sites trial to find something that remains uncertain for both independently. Up to this moment, the creation work has been combined, but in the distance, connected by the means of technology. Madrid's work in progress is the first stage that brings us together in a project that will carry on*

*in London. Our cast is the creative agency in this piece. We have given them proposal to convert it in something of their own, something personal. To develop our Wedding, working with the cleavages leaven open by the author and forcing ourselves to let the body indicate where does the text fit. Visiting again the legend."*

Juan Ollero

Our actors revisit Lorca's texts in order to explore the author's iconography, as well as his ideal of creative, social, and personal freedom.

*"Let's go to a dark corner  
where I can always love you.  
For to me people don't matter,  
nor the poison they pour on us."*



### 4. How Was the Process?

The development of this project includes student rehearsals throughout the year in their respective cities, and the sharing of experiences between both universities during a week of joint intensive rehearsals in Madrid and another one in London. The work has been performed twice, in Madrid on 19 May 2018, and in London on 9 June 2018.

The relationship between the students, paired for the whole process, first online and then living together for a week in both cities, is one of the key points of the project. In complex times young artists have known how to make virtue of their differences and create friendships forever.

Fundamental to the experience is the cultural, artistic, and social exchange in the spirit and vision of Lorca, with the cities of Madrid and London as catalysts of emotions and examples of how the urban environment can be dynamic and key in the artistic experience. The students will be paired for the whole process, living and welcoming their colleagues during their visit and participating in an immersive cultural exchange programme, guided by the vision of freedom of Lorca.



Photo: Alonso Valbuena



Photo: Rubén Aranda

### Madrid and London

The cities of Madrid and London are catalysts of emotions and examples of how the urban environment can be dynamic and key in the artistic experience.

It all started in Madrid, with one intensive week of meeting each other for the first time, rehearsing, and giving the students the proposal to convert Lorca's message into something of their own. We even had the chance to visit the Student Residence where Lorca, Dalí, and Buñuel lived. A work in progress performance was celebrated in TAI Auditorium.



Photo's: Alonso Valbuena

The journey continued in London. New rehearsals continued developing the project. The musicality of Lorca's text, which resonates in both Spanish and English, has led us together to a new theatre language that goes far beyond the spoken word. A final London performance showed the great accomplishments of this incredible team.



Photo: Alonso Valbuena

### 5. Cultural and Social Experience

Beyond the rehearsals, social and cultural activities strengthened ties. The energy, personality, and feedback of the cities of Madrid and London, and the very idea of Europe, were crucial, and that's where differences became friendship.

From San Isidro's verbena, to Shakespeare's *Glove*, the Ministry of Sound, dinners, parties, barbeque... above all that, respect, confidences... even love.





Photo: Alonso Valbuena

## 6. A New Documentary

*Playing Lorca* is a documentary that wants to show the lives of 16 young actors developing this project, a representation of new generations of artists, their motivations and emotions, and how a theatrical project is able to unite feelings in today's Europe.

The documentary does not only reflect the theatrical project but also the cohabitation of the actors in Madrid and London, their desires and personal motivations. It will show the rehearsals, the living together in their homes during those weeks, the cultural and social activities organised in both cities, and of course the two final performances, one in each city.

## 7. Lorca's Message

We live in a period where conservatism threatens the arts and minorities, similar to what the author suffered in his life. This project allows us, today more than ever, to give Lorca's message a new lease of life.

*Blood Wedding* intends to bring together students, cities, and artistic visions with the author's creative and life freedom, using his work as guide and inspiration.

Photo: Rubén Aranda

Creative process video  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ggdr6YVtWyl>



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# FINDING THE SELF IN THE CITY OF MULTITUDES – A SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH BEHIND THE CREATIVE NON-FICTION SLIDE/TEXT AND WORKSHOP, 22 NOVEMBER 2018

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper offers a concise glimpse of the research that lies behind the creative non-fiction presentation “Finding the Self in the City of Multitudes,” the full detail of which is available in the author’s book *Education as Mutual Translation – A Yoruba and Vedantic Interface for Pedagogy in the Creative Arts* (Brill, 2018). In the research, Hindu Vedantist (Ancient Indian) and Yoruba (West African) philosophical concepts of self and mutuality with others are shown to have resonance with each other, with Paulo Freire’s critical consciousness, and with Ronald Barnett’s student being. These sources are placed in theoretical dialogue with each other in the context of art school environments, which expect high levels of individuality. It is proposed that a more resilient original voice emerges from awareness of society and community, and that genuine pedagogic exchange changes student, tutor, and the work of both.

### **Keywords:**

art pedagogy  
Ronald Barnett  
Paulo Friere  
Walter Benjamin  
postcolonial pedagogy  
African philosophy  
critical autobiographical  
reflection  
critical consciousness  
mutual translation

self in education  
Vedanta education  
viveka  
will-to-learn  
Yoruba education



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### *Slides:*

*All photographs Ranjana Thapalyal, taken between 1983 and 2018, with the exception of the final two slides: slide 31: Paul Hyland, 2017; slide 32: online sources credited within the slide.*

### *Spoken Text:*

*Three lines extracted from Rabindranath Tagore, verse 82 of "Gitanjali," written in 1910 (Papermac, 1986: 76).*

*With thanks for translation of the French lines to Vibha Thapalyal, and to Anjana Rajan for context of Tamil language posters.*

This paper follows a presentation given at the 15th ELIA Biennale in Rotterdam. Through images accompanied by creative non-fiction spoken text, preceding a brief workshop that invited speculation on the nature of the self, the presentation was a demonstration of possibilities, rather than a description of the research and interdisciplinary theory on which it was based. That pedagogic theory for the arts is published in book form, titled *Education as Mutual Translation - A Yoruba and Vedantic Interface for Pedagogy in the Creative Arts* (Thapalyal, 2018). This paper summarises the main arguments and findings recounted in the book that were the inspiration for the presentation.

The performance element of "Finding the Self in the City of Multitudes" was a reflection on what the individual *is*, in relation to the group in the multiple interactions of the contemporary city. It suggested that only when we know ourselves can we behave fairly with others, and that the self exists at social, cultural, political, and also metaphysical levels. For creative pedagogy, the challenge is to address not only ourselves, but also our students (tomorrow's artists in the field) in more meaningful and comprehensive ways that recognise difference and the need for wholeness. A series of projected images from cities in various countries captured fleeting glimpses of other lives, unknown yet familiar backdrops, the momentary intimations of peace, isolation, or communion that are the everyday stuff of living in cities. Delivered for the most part in English, two other languages, Hindi and French, were unexpectedly woven into the spoken text; this multilingual delivery meant that it was at times comprehensible to all in the audience, at others only to some, and at moments to none. It played with our ability to know and yet not know each other, and questioned how we can take for granted the efforts of others to translate themselves to us, and not expect to translate ourselves to them.

In my research, mutual translation, a phrase used by Walter Benjamin (1999) in his deliberations on language, and the translatable emerged as a significant metaphor for the complexities of learner- teacher exchanges, especially in the context of the theoretical sources employed. Vedanta is a circa 8th century BCE school of Hindu philosophy originating in ancient India (Radhakrishnan, 1989: 430-444). Yoruba philosophy is recognisable in West Africa from 5th century BCE to 5th century CE (Fagg, 1982: ix). Paulo Freire (1996) is the well-known 20th-century education theorist and social reformer whose work has influenced such significant contemporaries as Henry Giroux and the fields of education and social work across the world. Ronald Barnett (2007) is a contemporary education theorist whose ideas on higher education and universities themselves deal with the very core of these institutions and their reason for being.

The question arises, how can a cohesive, and contemporary creative arts pedagogy emerge from these seemingly disparate sources? And why should any existent theory or philosophy be applicable to creative education, which deals with the latest and most up-to-date creative enterprises? Art schools in particular specialise in encouraging unique, personalised visions, and the cultural climate of an art school tends to value high levels of

individuality. Rule breaking is encouraged, and often a modernist privileging of newness and celebration of "artist genius" perseveres. The answer lies in an observation made over many years of teaching, that art school environments expect a high level of individuality, and yet seem ill-equipped to nurture the self that is consistently asked to expose itself to critical judgement. A quest for a kind of pedagogy that could combine freedom with support and encourage resilience, led to the realisation that contemporary creative pedagogies rarely address the ontological self. It was there that a source for the required resilience could lie, and ancient philosophies had ample theory and practice aimed at recognition of the metaphysical in our make-up. A short foray into this direction revealed that placing Vedanta, Yoruba, Freire, and Barnett in theoretical dialogue with each other produced astonishingly resonant readings applicable to art education.

The critical inquiry required in each of these theoretical spaces, aimed at instilling mutuality, seemed facilitated by personal autobiographical reflection. What I came to call "critical autobiographic reflection," CRD, or *retrospection* worked in most interesting ways. It became a tool for locating cultural, political, and ontological self, by sifting through personal and external influences in one's life, and clarifying a way forward. In the research process this phenomenon was discussed with students in a project called 4Minds, alongside their views on the experience of being an art student and being a person with specific history in art school. From this mix of self-reflection and exposure to theory new to them, deeply insightful observations emerged from the students, and exciting possibilities for art school pedagogy found expression. Ultimately the research suggested that more resilient original voices emerge from awareness of society and community than from individualism, and that genuine pedagogic exchange changes student, tutor, and the work of both.

Apart from a potential danger of too many and too different sources as base, and the need for constant reappraisal of differentiation between self and group, another area of concern had to be thought through from the outset. This regards the origins and nature of Yoruba and Vedantist ideas. Beyond the lack of familiarity with these thought systems within the research and pedagogic environment in which the research was conducted, (especially when Vedantic and Yoruba ideas were coupled together), a further complication lay in the fact that both have cosmogonic and spiritual aspects. This made their incorporation into a contemporary educational paradigm an act of deep contradiction, since it may appear to strike at the very heart of modern, postmodern, democratic, and secular impulses in education. The latter tend (quite rightly) to be wary of proselytising missions and undue influence on individual beliefs. By contrast, the theories and practices of Yoruba and Hindu philosophies operate in what appear to be simultaneous streams of mythology and religious faith, as well as critical analysis of a rigorous kind.

This research, however, began in the first place with the remarkable engagement by art students to the complexity of Yoruba and ancient Indian thought and their arts, introduced to them through an eight-week elective course. Apart from responding with interest to such different worldviews, and to notions of the self not normally encountered at art school, student comments in feedback questionnaires, tutorials, and extracurricular voluntary discussions also often strayed into critique of social, and specifically art educational power structures. Such conversations, recurring over a period of ten years (in which the course was delivered eight times), provided an indication of students' own awareness of some of the problems within art education; they also shed light on several factors in the art school experience in general. These include the place of skill-based learning and teaching, or the imparting of discipline-specific skill sets and material knowledge; self-esteem in relation to tutor student relationships, grading systems, and professional practice; the relationship of studio practice to the academic component of art school degrees; and the ways in which these are perceived by students and tutors.

The purpose of this research, however, was not to critique art school pedagogy and current practices as a whole. The objective was to acquire in-depth understanding of how a group of students had harnessed their own energies and passions to extract, construct, or reveal meaning from both the positive and the problematic pedagogies they had encountered. Having in common their attendance of the Yoruba/Vedanta course, their case studies demonstrate how ideas from these thought systems resonated powerfully with them, and could consciously be used in contemporary pedagogy. At later stages, Yoruba and Vedantic principles were applied to analysing student and staff narratives, leading to the identifiable aspects of their transferrable principles.

Vedanta and Yoruba philosophy both contain another key tool for this research and provide more widely recognisable context. This tool is criticality, and an expectation that it will be employed to determine correct action at any given time. This expectation is embedded in the concepts of mind and self found in the two thought systems, and evident in their linguistic and metaphoric vocabulary.

In Vedanta, the Sanskrit term *viveka* means discernment between Real and unreal.<sup>59</sup> It also applies to the ability to distinguish difference between different actions, in order to make ethical, analytical, and relational judgements.

In Yoruba thought, an expectation of criticality is exemplified by its perceptions of civic governance and education. Moses Oke sheds light on "tenure ethics" (Oke, 2007: 85), or declared expectations of behaviour that shape the conduct and tenure of those in

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59 The Real in Vedantic discourse, capitalised here for clarity, refers to causal consciousness, beyond the mundane sensory world. It is called *Atman*, or Brahman; this self-emanating "Sole Reality" (Nikhilananda, 1978, p. xii) "Pure Consciousness" (p. 42), formless and omnipresent, is beyond the laws of causation that bring about the experiential world we perceive as real.

powerful functionary positions of traditional Yoruba custom. Customs and restrictions that go hand in hand with holding traditional Yoruba religious or civic positions of power over others are embedded, explicitly and implicitly, with expectations of self-criticality and reminders of the limits and temporal nature of their roles. Similarly, Fayemi and Macaulay-Adeyelu demonstrate that the nuanced Yoruba vocabulary on education is replete with applications to contemporary times (Fayemi, 2009). This is exemplified by differentiation between the accumulation of facts, and wisdom, which includes an ability to interact with others in a meaningful way. True to this multiplicity of purpose,

*The word "education" in Yoruba is eko [which] has a broader meaning than imo (knowledge). Ogbon (understanding), iwe (literacy), ile-iwe (schooling) and oye (wisdom). ...eko means the actual display and consistent demonstration of the epistemic features of knowledge, understanding, wisdom and other ethical values (Fayemi, 2005: 45).*

Thus the Yoruba concept of socially related individual, personal self is entwined with the imperative of maintaining power balances by making those with power open to critique by those without; the function of education is to prepare individuals for this engaged and dynamic citizenship. In Vedanta, the *jiva-atman* engaged in *karma*, or work done for its own sake without attachment, is faced with the same challenges throughout society, whether those faced by the monarch or the humble citizen. Work done with detachment, *karma-yoga*, leads ultimately to the individual *jiva-atma* realising that it is, in fact, part of the Real that is unaffected by everyday events and emotions, and that all fellow beings contain this same kernel. Therefore, rather than such self-awareness moving the individual away from others, it can heighten their sense of connection and shared humanity.

*Hence all... are entitled to our respect. The divinity of the [jiva-atman] is the unshakable spiritual basis of democracy, self-determination, freedom, and other aspirations of modern minds. Even a noble ideal, when guided only by expediency, can be an instrument of oppression and exploitation (Nikhilananda, 1978: xviii).*

In less religious parlance this idea translates to a right to dignity and freedom for all in a pedagogic environment, and a need for distance from immediate emotional responses to a given situation. This aspiration is enshrined in equalities legislation and embedded in expectations of all schools and universities in Britain. Vedanta and Yoruba philosophy, then, turn out not to be so foreign to us after all.

Within a pedagogy that draws from Yoruba and Vedantic influences, therefore, the individual can be supported in rigorously questioning, while at the same time being nurtured by the very systems they critically engage with. Is this not what an educational environment should aspire to do, in any case? Thus the metaphor of mutual translation extends also to the capability of contemporary users of ancient ideas to filter and/or

challenge those ideas that may belong to outdated convention, or to contextualise and analyse those that may have been misunderstood or oversimplified through time.

Comparing Yoruba and Vedantic ideas with progressive education theories of Freire and Barnett opened many possibilities and formed a bridge to Yoruba and Vedantic thought. In this highly condensed summary of the research, it is possible only to highlight the terminology from these sources that allowed for a comparative analysis and correlation with data that came from dialogic conversations with students who formed a student research team. Barnett develops the idea of "student being" from a Heideggerian perspective (Barnett, 2007), paralleling the way in which this research utilises Vedantic ontological theory. Freire's "conscientisation" (Freire, 1996: 17), developed throughout his work as critical consciousness,<sup>60</sup> like Yoruba thought, cites agency in determining our relationship with others and with history, and points to the role of education in bringing this about. Reading the sources with such intercultural and interdisciplinary perspectives serves to underline the relevance of Yoruba and Vedantic thought to contemporary education, and vice versa. For creative education, relying so much on self-motivation and self-presentation, these juxtapositions and comparisons offer a viable way to discern in the creative student a different and emergent sense of who one is, beyond the all too easily damaged ego, and to introduce nuance to expectations of originality and individuality. For any of the above to be successful, however, students and teachers have to be open to challenges to their own perceptions of disciplinary boundaries, of worth attached to various intellectual traditions, and to questions of freedom and individuality in the acquisition of knowledge and its relationship to society. The methodology of pedagogy of mutual translation has such active reflexivity built into it.

Such pedagogy would also instil an ability to read complex motifs in a multidisciplinary manner; both traditions employ a multifaceted layering of linguistic and visual metaphor that are often belied by the apparent formality of their artefacts; a cross-referencing of visual, textual, and historical and philosophical data is required in order to read them. Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, such a pedagogy would instil a desire to come to terms with the other and with plurality; within the language of Yoruba and Vedantic thought is evidence of discourse, disagreement, and recognition of the significance of individual agency. Such cultural signs are encountered at different sites, ranging from myth to detailed intellectual analysis and discourse, depending on the contexts of specific purpose.

The brief workshop that followed the slide/text performance was a sharing of one that students had responded to in very interesting ways, and which, in turn, elicited thoughtful responses from the ELIA audience. It is a simple two- to three-minute experiment aimed at introducing the idea of the self as constituted of many parts, some more evident than

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<sup>60</sup> Critical consciousness as applied in this research refers to the entirety of Freire's aspiration for education, and not specifically to *Education for Critical Consciousness*, first published in 1973.

others. This was conducted early in the Yoruba/Vedanta course, since a basic grasp of the concept is necessary in order to understand Yoruba and Indian art and thought. The students are asked to sit up straight, close their eyes and relax. They are asked to become very aware of the textures of the chair they are seated on, the clothes they are wearing, and the weight of their bodies on the chairs. They are asked, in other words, to become viscerally aware of their physical presence. They are then asked to visualise themselves seated in this position as though seen from the ceiling. A rich silence fills the room as these visually astute individuals are able to take quite naturally to this mental exercise. After a minute or so they are asked to return to the earlier awareness of their physical bodies seated in particular ways in particular chairs. Next they are invited to slowly open their eyes and resume a normal stance. They are then asked if they all managed to “see” themselves seated on their seats, as if from an aerial view. In the various groups with which this has been tried, the general consensus has been affirmative. The students are then asked, “Who was watching you in a seated position, if you were seated in the chair?” Responses are given such as “the imagination,” “the mind,” etc. These are all accepted as valid, and the Yoruba and Vedantic idea of the mind being one part of a composition of physical, psychological, and metaphysical aspects of the self is introduced. Students are told that much of the philosophical quests of these cultures are aimed at understanding and defining the mind, the self, and a metaphysical self; that this quest has spawned many analytical traditions in the case of ancient India, and great discourse embedded in myths and artworks of both. The concept of a multifaceted self and its expression in art and literature is therefore introduced early on, and present in the backdrop of all the lectures.

Many of the students would refer back to this brief exercise and comment on how it introduced another way of thinking in a very embodied way. Similarly, at the ELIA presentation it was heartening to find that a great deal of shift had occurred in these few moments, including some participants becoming aware that, in order to understand certain types of work, they would have to recalibrate their entire conceptual framework; and this was not a threatening, but a thought-provoking revelation. This observation seemed to underline the ideas of mutuality that the performance had aimed to evoke, and seemed to invite further exploration of the ideas and findings of the book in wider contexts.

Within the confines of this short paper, this introductory synopsis is all that is possible. If colleagues would like to look into the book and/or discuss further, I would be happy to hear from you. The final word here goes to a student, who asserted simply and profoundly:

*As an art student, I am a person (Thapalyal, 2018: 207).*

It is this whole person that pedagogy of mutual translation addresses.

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## CHAPTER 2

# ECONOMIES, LOCALITIES

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# LOCALITY AS SUBJECT AND SETTING – OUR PAST AND OUR FUTURE

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Quimper site, France*

**Keywords:**

locality  
sense of place  
imagination  
instantiations  
movement  
knowledge

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## ABSTRACT

In 2016 I created *Locality*, a three-school international residency programme employing art and design students to examine the qualities of locality from temporary residency in several regions within three European countries: Finistère, France; the north-eastern coast of Scotland; and Brussels, Belgium.

Exploring the qualities of *Locality* in such differing and particular geographical and social climates reawakens a sense of place. It allows for a gradual process of identifying the complex and multidimensional qualities of shared space, contesting the macro context of an increasingly impersonalised globalised economy.



## LOCALITY: LE GUILVINEC, FINISTÈRE, SOUTH-WEST BRITTANY, APRIL 2016

During the first edition of *Locality*, situated in Finistère, Brittany, the aim was to both explore and reflect the daily “instantiations” (Giddens, 2013) of the “lifeworld” (Habermas, 1970; Carr, 1977: 202-212) of the people of Le Guilvinec, situated in its particular historical and spatial context, and further, to place this unique experience against the wider context of the globalised economy, to which Le Guilvinec is networked through its fishing industry.

On the morning of 27 April 2016, in the meeting room of Le Guilvinec’s Haliotika Centre, the largest remaining artisanal fishing port in France, 19 undergraduate and postgraduate art students gathered from Belgium, France, and Scotland. They listened to

the Breton wife of a retired fisherman recounting the experience of receiving monthly radio telegrams from sea, informing her of her husband’s well-being whenever the fishing trawler reached radio signal waters. Her story was translated between students, from French to English to Flemish. Her husband and son sat next to her, talking in turn of life at sea, present and past. The testimonies we heard that evening informed and transformed our understanding of the port and the people of Le Guilvinec, and of the Atlantic Ocean as an economy, a battleground, a cemetery. They fuelled our desire to wake up at 3 a.m. the next morning and observe the line of fishing trawlers leaving the port of Guilvinec in silent succession.

A sharp, piercing south-westerly wind hits us as we disembark upon the beach of Tréffiaget. We are a group of 22, led by Alain, woodwork technician and on this day our Breton map reader, departing from the Pointe de Léchiagat, direction Lesconil, treading upon the sands of Treillen, Lehan, and Le Reun, passing Le Menhir. This legendary littoral path was created during the French Revolution to help in the fight against smuggling. After looking out we now look inwards, moving towards the Steir estuary waters, an ancient

natural shelter, a site of the sacred standing stones of Lanvar. Our backs to the Atlantic, enclosed in the saline valley, we are in opposite direction to the tide. Riverbed sediments temporarily exposed, we realign our senses—the soon invisible landmarks reminding us of the temporal limits of passage.

The sand looks the same everywhere,

Sand is just sand.

White is just white.

And things are things.

It’s the 28th of April, a quarter to three in the afternoon.

I am here.

I walk on the beach from Le Guilvinec towards the Eckmühl lighthouse.

‘Eckmühl’, with an umlaut on the ‘u’...

Maybe locality is installed by a moment.

When a moment takes its place. Becomes a place.

Becomes a beach, or some sand, or a pebble, or this whiteness.

Just outside Le Guilvinec, a few miles to the West.

Maybe locality is a lighthouse, the flickering of a moment in time.

Firm, on solid ground.

Maybe locality is a mark in space.

Maybe ‘locality’ is an umlaut.

Mark Luyten, 6 September 2017. Extract, participating artist at *Locality I*, Le Guilvinec

Our sense of place can manifest in these solitary moments when we are absorbed in the



Figure 1. Le Guilvinec, Finistère, Brittany. Photo: Jean Marc Stefani

space we occupy. It is within these singular and unique meetings, between our continual perception of place and the present time, that we are pulled into becoming, within the space we share with our immediate environment.

"*Locality* can be best described by things which seem oppositional, but are all at once true nevertheless. It was an investigation into a place—a landscape, a community and, for me, memories of places nearby in geographical terms and somewhat further away in time. The residency evokes, for me, a strange sense of standing outside of— perhaps beside— regular time and, rather contrarily, of being in a very particular moment."

Jodi le Bigre, participating artist at *Locality I*, Le Guilvinec (Master of Fine Arts Practice, Print Media, Glasgow School of Art)

"Dwelling is said to consist of the multiple 'lived relationships' that people maintain with places, for it is solely by virtue of these relationships that space acquires meaning. (Thus, as Heidegger [1977: 332] himself put it, 'spaces receive their essential being from particular localities and not from "space" itself.')

Basso, K. (1996). *Wisdom sits in places* (p. 106). Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Figure 2. Walking in the direction of Lesconil, *Locality I*. Photo: Eimer Birkbeck



"C'est au moment de la promenade de groupe avec Alain, le long de la plage, que j'ai mis en place un dispositif photographique : une caméra fixée à ma ceinture et dirigée vers le sol prend en photos de façon automatique toute les 5s pendant toute la durée de la marche. Cela donne lieu à une succession d'images de sol, d'objets, de pieds, de texture..."

Translation: "Arriving in an unknown environment urges us to put aside our habits and to rethink the way we work. From my viewpoint, the interest in our experience existed mainly in an immaterial way, for the group and passing through the group. I remember a meeting around the table in Le Guilvinec, asking ourselves if it was necessary to preserve what we had just lived, and thereby how?"

Côme Lequin, participating artist at *Locality I*, Le Guilvinec (Diplôme National Supérieur d'arts Plastiques [Mentions] École Européenne Supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Quimper)

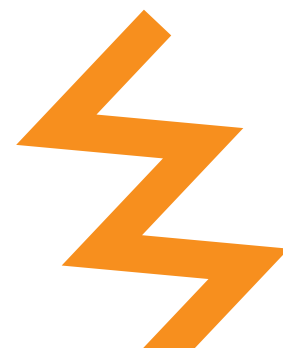


Figure 3. Finistère, Brittany. Photo: Jean Marc Stefani



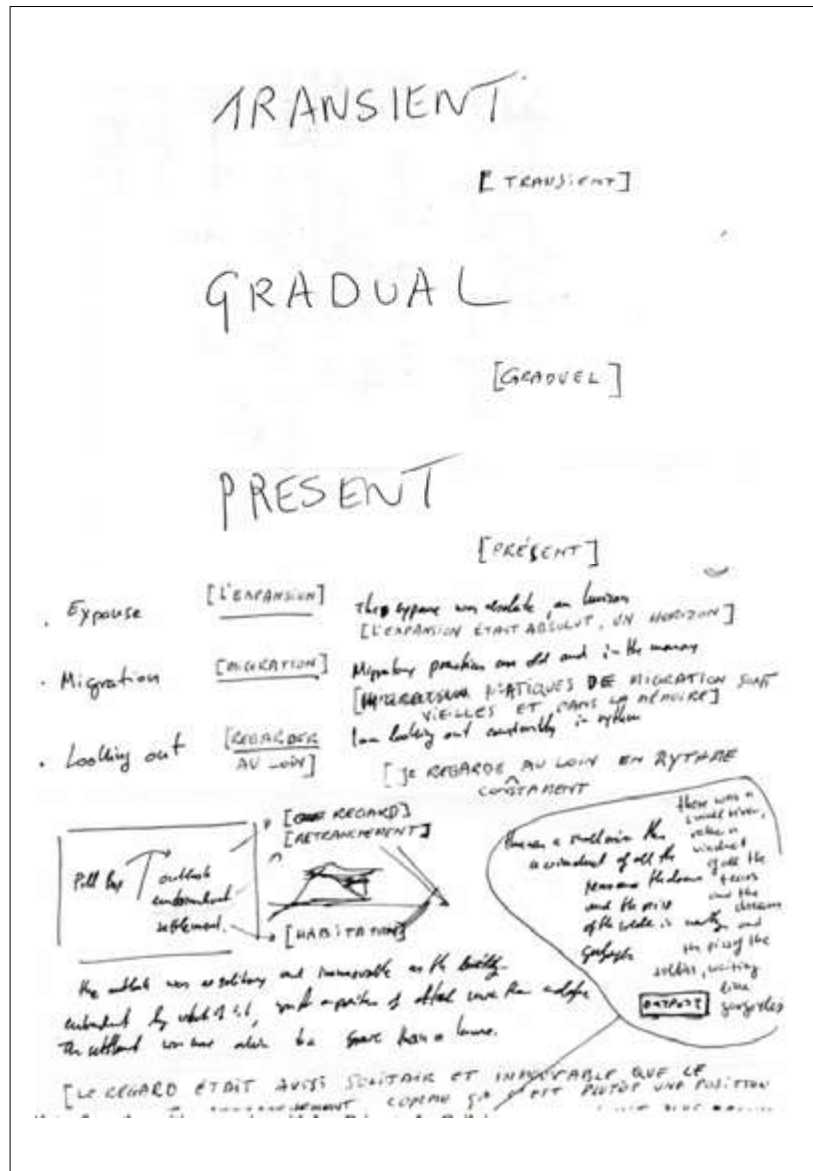


Figure 4. Notes from the writing exercise with Les Brisants, Le Guilvinec.

I chose Le Guilvinec as subject and setting for our first *Locality* due to its unique acoustic soundscape, which has already been the research focus of the World Soundscape Project, co-founded by R. Murray Schafer at Simon Fraser University, Barnaby, during the late 1960s in Canada.

In 1975 an acoustic research group, led by Schafer, created a detailed soundscape analysis in Europe titled the "Five Village Soundscape." They chose the fishing port of Lesconil, which neighbours Le Guilvinec, as one of their five places of interest.

"Lesconil is surrounded on three sides by the sea and is subject to an onshore-offshore wind cycle known as 'les vents solaires.' Distant sounds are carried to the village in a clockwise sequence, beginning from the north at night, moving to the east and south during the day, and finally to the west in the evening. Every fisherman and every fisherman's wife knows how to read the nuances of these acoustic signals, and the life of the community is regulated by them."

Schafer, R. M. (1993). *The soundscape: Our sonic environment and the tuning of the world* (p. 216). Rochester, VT: Destiny Books.

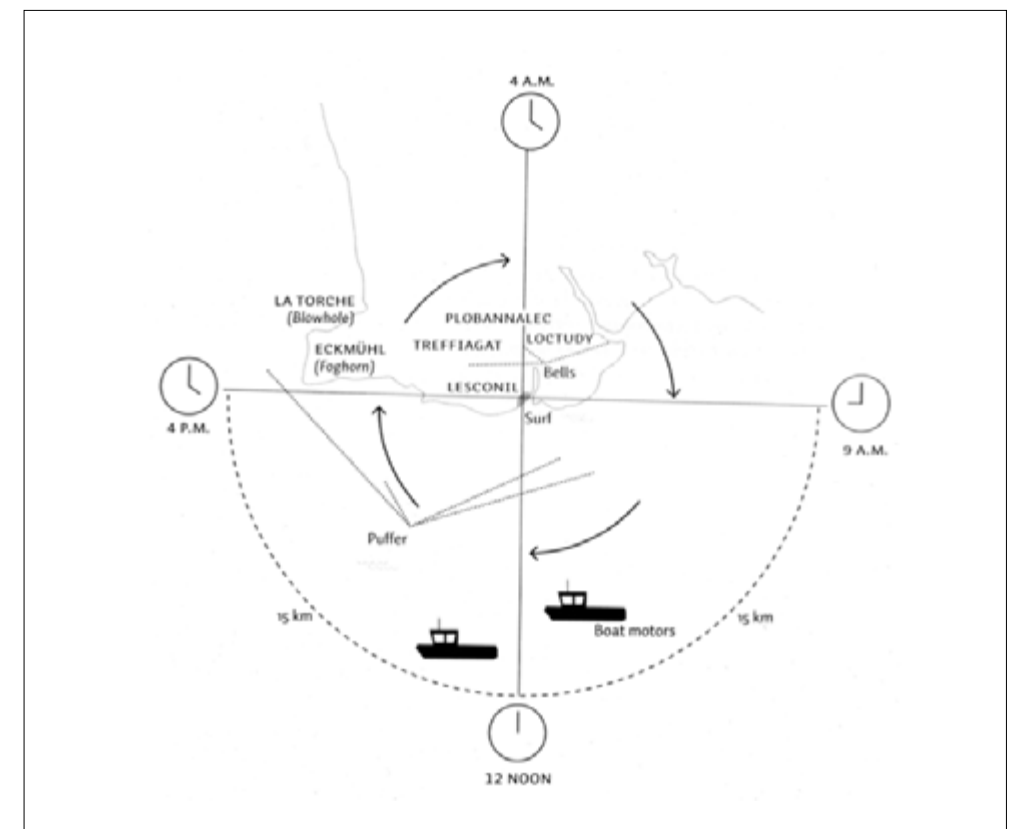


Figure 5. Daily pattern of the solar wind cycle in Lesconil, showing the sound sources brought by the winds to the community throughout the day. Source: Schafer, R. M. (2010). *Acoustic environments in change & five village soundscapes* (p. 363). Tampere: TAMK University of Applied Sciences.



Figure 6. Notes describing the group walk outdoors towards Lesconil during Locality (April 2016).

“The experience of *Locality* as a whole highlighted the transience of a ‘locality’; so, the only thing that would feel valid to me would be a description of what is happening at this exact moment.”

Nina Macpherson, participating artist at *Locality I*, Le Guilvinec (BA Fine Art, Glasgow School of Art)



It is when a place becomes the object of awareness that we merge into existing within its visual and sensory limits. We can define a community by its social demographic, age and gender, and political majority and minority, but we can also define a community by its acoustic characteristics, or its soundscape, which is composed of three sources; the geophony, the biophony, and the anthrophony. The geophony refers to the non-biological sounds occurring in a natural habitat, such as wind, waves, and water. The biophony accounts for all the sounds generated by organisms in a given habitat at one time and in one place, while the anthrophony refers to all human-made sounds, either controlled or chaotic.

Schafer refers to the local “ways of knowing,” the acoustic signals that identify changes in the acoustic atmosphere, distinguishing one community and its acoustic environment from another. The 2005 UNESCO and CRS reports privileged the experience of rural and indigenous peoples, increasing awareness of these unique “ways of knowing” developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural environment, highlighting important facets of the world’s cultural diversity and acknowledging that they provide a foundation for locally appropriate, sustainable development.

Where we are from—geographically or nominally—carries one experience of belonging, but we are bound to many other experiences of dwelling and attachment to place. As experienced by the participants of *Locality* in Le Guilvinec, when presented with the unfamiliar as subject and setting we invent our own mechanism for recording our passage. We do this through imprinting the locality upon ourselves, or externalising our sense of place through our visual or oral capacities. I believe exploring locality against the backdrop of an increasingly impersonalised globalised economy can re-externalise our sense of place, and support our tentative reawakening of the importance of inheritance, of ancestry, of how we uproot, face the unknown, and engage in the process of “being placed.” This is the duality of “knowledge which is both ancestral and innovative” (Schegel, UNESCO).

The Palaeolithic cave paintings, which represent the oldest remaining communicative trace of *Homo sapiens* dwellings, do not describe a permanent residence of place. Instead they transcribe the narrative of an existence that was nomadic, representing a particular awareness of a time and place that was understood uniquely by those who coexisted. The cave is a porous environment, one of passages and thresholds. This experience of locality is porous, and its language transcends time. The anthrophony, geophony, and biophony of a community continues to resonate here, after 40,000 years. In such situations the experience of place occurs in the body, becoming the total object of our awareness.

“When knowledge and feeling are orientated toward something real, actually perceived, the thing, like a reflector, returns the light it has received from it. As a result of this continual interaction, meaning is continually enriched at the same time as the object soaks up affective qualities. Each quality is so deeply incorporated in the object that it is impossible to distinguish what is felt and what is perceived.”

Sartre, J.-P., as cited in Cumming, R. (Ed.). (1965). *The philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre* (p. 89). New York: Vintage Books.

“On the second day of the residency we met a local writer, Michel Suzzarini. He spoke of the tragic circumstances living in this area can provoke. Michel changed my perception of locality. He recited his passages in French and he did not want to translate into English. Over the next few days, Nina and I collaborated and mapped the area collecting artefacts, reassembling the objects to make new meanings.”

Myra Ostacchini, participating artist at *Locality I*, Le Guilvinec (MLitt Drawing Pathway [Distinction], Postdoctoral student, Glasgow School of Art)



Figure 7. Work by Myra Ostacchini and Nina Macpherson, *Locality I*, Le Guilvinec (April 2016). Photos: Myra Ostacchini and Nina Macpherson

Our sense of place and our relationship towards locality is simultaneously horizontal and vertical in its construction, moving outwards and stemming upwards with us as we move from one place to another.

Within the project *Locality*, the act of arrival and entering an unfamiliar place becomes a common act—the potentiality of change an equalising proposition. The “locality” becomes a porous environment where, through lingering on the threshold, we construct a passage, a temporary residency wherein our separateness from a particular community can become arbitrary. Locality exists in our exchanges with specific identities formed in relation with our new surroundings, singularities which interconnect to form a common space, a community. The act of exploration requires acknowledgement and intelligence towards incertitude, improvisation, and negotiation to understand the peculiar and particular qualities of place.

The artist Iwan Coic, who participated in the first *Locality* project in Le Guilvinec, returned to the fishing port to create a moonlit, black-and-white 16 mm film based on the act of rowing out to sea, and using the historic Breton row technique *la godille*, indigenous to Breton seafarers. Coic wrote an accompanying synopsis for his film, *Leaving Island*: “It is a question of leaving one’s island. Giving up your zone of comfort by activating one’s experiences to get in touch with the surrounding imagination. The actor replays the movement of the *godille*, the sculling stroke taught by his grandfather, and takes advantage of the last rowing boat, borrowed for his advance towards the unknown.”

Iwan Coic, October 2016



Figure 8. 16 mm film still from *Leaving Island* by Iwan Coic (Diplôme National Supérieur d’arts Plastiques, École Européenne Supérieure d’art de Bretagne, site de Quimper), participating artist at *Locality I*, Le Guilvinec (October 2016).



Figure 9. Photograph by Léa Conteau (Diplôme National Supérieur d'arts Plastiques, École Européenne Supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Quimper), participating artist at Locality I, Le Guilvinec (October 2016).

"One crucial characteristic of this sailors' art, this ancient navigating art, is that it is constantly on the move, it is a kind of mobile art. And to be mobile is to be always different from oneself, inventively different. This is the art of changing to cope with change. 'Metis' is taking hold of the situation facing the alterity of otherness. 'Metis' as it was called, was a kind of inventive competence acquired in practise, immersed in the universe of social practices, moulded through practise."

Stavrides, S. (2001, September). Navigating the metropolitan space. *Journal of Psychogeography and Urban Research* 1(1).

Figure 10. 35 photographs of the sea from an aerial point of view, Mael Deveautour (Diplôme National Supérieur d'arts Plastiques, École Européenne Supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Quimper), participating artist at Locality I, Le Guilvinec (June 2016).



"I had the need to come back to Le Guilvinec because I had this feeling that we touched the edge of something during *Locality*. 35 photographs from an aerial point of view, representing the movement which was a constant in the *Locality* project, the movement of the sea which created the group, gave a materiality to the chaos and pull of the sea—I remember referring to the mythology of Calypso and Odysseus whilst describing the relationship we hold with the sea, desire, and mortal fear.

*On ne peut pas tracer une route dans la mer on ne peut pas définir la mer par le langage, on peut juste la représenter."*

Mael Deveautour, participating artist at *Locality I*, Le Guilvinec (Diplôme National Supérieur d'arts Plastiques, École Européenne Supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Quimper), June 2016

## LOCALITY: ANTWERP, ST LUCAS SCHOOL OF ART, NOVEMBER 2016

"A locality is characterised on one hand by an openness of interaction and social relations, and on the other by an interdependency of activities taking place within the locality."

Korff, R. (1990). City, space and meaning: Theoretical perspectives of urbanism. *Working Paper* No. 140 (p. 7). Bielefeld: Southeast Asia Programme.

Following on from their participation in *Locality* in Le Guilvinec, three participating art students from St Lucas School of Art Antwerp, Dex, Anne, and Josja, went on to create the project *Arriving Stranger* in Borgerhout, Antwerp, in November 2016. Their shared aims were as follows:

- *Arriving Stranger* is an attempt to get to know the other (better), and to give time to make ideas more mature.
- We believe that the extrapolation of the same group to another place made visions amongst us clearer and strengthened a new locality, our locality.
- We produced a group exhibition, as a common ground.



Figure 11. Documentation of *Arriving Stranger*, Antwerp (November 2016). Photos: Omar Wilssens

All former participating members of the first *Locality* residency made their way to Antwerp, to reform the group and research further, together. We were based in the neighbourhood Borgerhout, Antwerpen-Noord, which has more than 40,000 inhabitants reflecting more than 90 different nationalities. Borgerhout is divided in two parts by the

ring road that encircles the city. The part of Borgerhout within the ring road is known as "Borgerhout intramuros," whereas the part outside the ring road is known as "Borgerhout extramuros." Borgerhout intramuros is more densely populated and contains a large and ethnically diverse shopping street called the Turnhoutsebaan. We visited this area during the process of preparing an Arabic meal hosted by the artists Ramon Pino and Chloé Dierckx, whose artistic practise researches food and collective cooking workshops to question the identity of a city and its inhabitants.



Figure 12. Exhibition of *Arriving Stranger*, Antwerp (November 2016). Photos: Omar Wilssens

Another organised outing involved visiting the social shelter Samenlevingsopbouw, where we met with some residents of Borgerhout and Antwerpen-Noord, who shared their experience of living in the diverse community and the hardships of integration when living alone.

How does our sense of place migrate with us, and in this sense allow us to construct multiple homes throughout one's course of diaspora? In Europe people living and working outside their country of origin count for a significant part of the population; therefore belonging to multiple places other than our country of origin or ancestral homeland has become commonplace. Its commonality is its binding factor, belonging to numerous localities repeats the act of exploration and integration, facing the unknown, and engaging in the process of "being placed."

## LOCALITY: THE LIVING SOUNDPRINT

In springtime of 2014, after arriving in Paris to live, I created the ongoing project *Les Marches* between myself, a sound artist, and the members of the Café Social Ayyem Zamen, situated in Belleville and Château Rouge. The association Café Social Ayyem Zamen de Belleville (Café Social) was created in 2003 to accommodate the elderly migrants who continue to live between Paris and their homelands in North Africa.

The Café Social has around 160 members. A vital place of meeting and listening, the café welcomes retired and elderly persons, living alone or in precarious situations, to get them out of their isolation and into a social context alongside fellow “Chibanis” (Algerian and Tunisian elderly migrants).

*Les Marches* is an ongoing project which explores the idea of the walk as a way of revealing and forging an individual’s sound portrait, articulating our relationship to our acoustic environment and our ongoing sense of identity and place, narrated through the act of walking through the city. The route chosen by each wayfarer marks the unique and unfolding performance of the individual’s sense of locality. The microphone allows their portrait to take form. The narrator navigates the journey as they situate themselves, recounting their past in the present and the future itinerary.

Following the seasons, *Les Marches* continues between Belleville and Château Rouge, deambulations as narratives, recounted from one to another and inscribed by the act of remembering, passing through one’s acoustic habitat, and describing our relationship to the immediate environment.



Figure 13. (left) Belleville, rue Pali Kao; (right) Tahar listening to his portrait, Château Rouge, Paris (September 2016).

*Les Marches* is presented back to its authors in a constructed listening environment in the Café Social, and the act of hearing the sound portrait repeats the original act of the journey, retracing the aural-inscriptional lines of storytelling, situating our past and present, integration, and survival. These occasions are affirming and emotional, memories move along with the body as the voice and the story transmits, receives, and vibrates in order to exist in the world.

I am exploring the living “soundprint”—wherein I understand the soundprint as a unique sonic signature composed of physical, environmental, and socio-cultural properties understood by, preserved, and emitted by an individual.

Inscribing the narrative “selfhood” in its acoustic environment is bound to the timeless aural traditions in our social histories that exist in order to transmit the micro-level of the localised experience of our lives.

## EPILOGUE

*Locality II* was held in Forres in April 2017, hosted by the Glasgow School of Art and with participating students from the École Européenne Supérieure d’art de Bretagne and St Lucas School of Art & Design, Antwerp. I have selected the following quotes and documented work produced by participating students Léah Geay and Owen Cole to give their representation of the project for this paper.

“The work of the imagination allows people to inhabit either multiple localities or a kind of single and complex sense of locality, in which many different empirical spaces coexist.”

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

“Having spent a few days within the area of Findhorn during the *Locality* residency, I found a disused and broken stairway on the beach, almost completely buried in a sand dune. My project consists of bringing this small landmark back to life, first by unearthing the old, creating an archaeological procedure, and then by building a new one in form of a renovated sculptural representation based on its embedded nature within the dune.”

Owen Cole, participating artist at *Locality II*, Forres (Diplôme National Supérieur d’arts Plastiques, [Félicitations] École Européenne Supérieure d’art de Bretagne, site de Quimper), June 2017



Figure 14. Disused beach stairway, Findhorn. Photos: Owen Cole



Figure 15. Beach Stairway, Owen Cole, École Européenne Supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Quimper (June 2017).



Figure 16. Ground A293349, Leah Geay, École Européenne Supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Brest (June 2017).

"Ground A293349 is located in the natural reserve of Glencoe (West of Scotland). It is a territory of one square foot that I acquired on 23 April 2017, thanks to the organisation Highland Titles. By the acquisition of this piece of land, I became a lady.

Without being official, of course, this title is a way for the organisation to interest buyers, to bring them to Scotland with tourist benefits and also to preserve this territory in future years. Although the land purchased belongs to the buyer, the organisation imposes a primary rule: it is forbidden to build. What can we do there, except to possess it?

In this installation, through a series of drawings, I propose fantasies. I put objects, forms, useful or useless items in my *Ground A293349*. A 'welcome' doormat, a hen sent in my ground to know if it is good to live there, a tent, a flag of a potential future nation, archaeology excavation... These propositions question a freedom that now, perhaps, has become utopian and a fantasy of possessing a surface of the Earth. Location: 56.6294959 -5.306066."

Léah Geay, participating artist at *Locality II*, Forres (Diplôme National Supérieur d'arts Plastiques, (Félicitations) École Européenne Supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Brest), June 2017



Figure 17. Ground A293349, Leah Geay, École Européenne Supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Brest (June 2017).

## LOCALITY III, BRUSSELS, APRIL 2018

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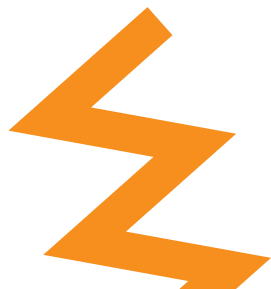
The third instalment of *Locality* took place in Brussels, where our focus was turned to exploring Brussels as a city with plural cultural identities, with a population of nearly 1.2 million and 62% of its residents as foreign-born. In the city, locality becomes a critical question concerning the geographical, historical, institutional, political, and mental localities that shape our passage. Tactics of exploration included invited guest speakers from specific political institutions within the city, a discussion around lobbying as a democratic practice, “hacking” as a metaphor for revisiting and enlarging democratic practices and civil disobedience (opening the black box by Michael Mersinis), the current refugee situation and voluntary action in Brussels, postcolonialism, and the branding of a European identity.

We visited European institutions and organisations and invited experts on the European Union and artists and designers who shared methodologies and practices with us.

## EDITION LOCALITY

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During 2018–2019 Eimer Birkbeck and Karine Lebrun will commence the project *Edition Locality*. This edition will be created as a collective work between all schools and students who participated in *Locality* between 2016 and 2018. The concept and creation of this edition will be led by Eimer Birkbeck, Benjamin Rivière, and Karine Lebrun (École Européenne Supérieure d’art de Bretagne, site de Quimper).





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# ART AND DESIGN IN NEW ECONOMIES: SPECULATIVE SCENARIOS FOR REAL-LIFE INNOVATIONS

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**Keywords:**

new economies  
participatory design research  
speculation  
inclusive innovation

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## **ABSTRACT**

The programme of the Commercial Practice, Willem de Kooning Academy Rotterdam, explores possible approaches for art and design education in times of economic and industrial transformations. This development is fused by digitalisation and technological innovations, but also by a bottom-up, participatory drive from consumers and citizens. How can we relate to these rapidly changing developments from the perspective of art and design education? Which skills, attitudes, and methods are needed to equip art and design students for this future landscape in order to be able to position themselves in it? This article discusses the relevance of relating creative approaches, like speculation, to real-life innovations. Based upon examples from the curriculum, it proposes an interdisciplinary, participatory design approach to arrive at new innovations that are inclusive.



# ECONOMIC PARADIGM SHIFTS: A POSSIBLE ROLE FOR ART AND DESIGN EDUCATION

The current economic and industrial landscape is transforming rapidly. On a daily basis, new products, services, platforms, and markets are emerging, fused by technological innovations and digitalisation, and increasingly driven by consumers, citizens, and communities. There are many perspectives on this landscape in flux, such as the 'sharing' economy (Benkler, 2004),<sup>1</sup> the horizontal economy, or the Next Economy (Rifkin, 2017).<sup>2</sup>

These concepts redefine traditional models of production, transaction, distribution, and, accordingly, authorship and ownership. In today's economic spectrum we can see an emergence of initiatives that express a bottom-up or *DIY/DIWO* mentality and a shift from mass production to markets of one. The maker culture, for example, fosters collaborations between amateurs and professionals through networks and accessible, high-end technologies (FabLabs, maker spaces) to create new markets for specific communities and individuals. According to the ideology of "free innovation," consumers develop innovations themselves and give them away for free (Von Hippel, 2017).<sup>3</sup> "Jugaad innovation" is based upon frugal innovation from emerging communities in countries like India, China, and Africa. This method has meanwhile been developed into a strategy for mainstream innovation (Radjou Prabhu, & Ahuja, 2012).<sup>4</sup> These practices show that what has traditionally been perceived as innovation (a top-down, highly structured process) is changing into a more unruly, bottom-up and inclusive way of developing new products.

In this transforming economic and industrial environment, the traditional hierarchies between industries, companies, producers, designers, and consumers are radically changing. This paradigm shift transforms the way we design, what we design, and for whom.

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1 Benkler, Y. (2004). Sharing nicely: On shareable goods and the emergence of sharing as a modality of economic production. *Yale LJ*, 114, 273.

2 Rifkin, J. (2012). The third industrial revolution: How the internet, green electricity, and 3D printing are ushering in a sustainable era of distributed capitalism. *World Financial Review*, 1 (March/April). His views on the Next Economy are referred to in the Roadmap Next Economy (2017), Rotterdam.

3 Hippel, E. (2017). *Free Innovation: How citizens create and share innovation*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

4 Radjou, N., Prabhu, J., & Ahuja, S. (2012). *Jugaad innovation: Think frugal, be flexible, generate breakthrough growth*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

How can art and design education equip students for this transforming socio-economic environment? Which indispensable skills and attitudes enable them to respond to an economic culture of digitalisation, bottom-up initiatives, inclusive innovation, markets of one, and ever-emerging technologies?

## NEXT ECONOMY, NEXT DESIGN?

The programme of Willem de Kooning Academy's Commercial Practice explores and questions the aforementioned developments and investigates their relevance for art and design students. Its point of departure is the paradigm shift in hierarchies and the way in which this affects future modes of production and consumption, markets, consumers, and, accordingly, the future practices of designers and artists.

To equip students for these "next" economic scenarios, the programme proposes a form of "next design" aimed at future commercial contexts that are driven by people, not mass markets. One of the objectives is to enable art and design students to position themselves as creative practitioners towards the strategic use of design in current managerial perspectives, expressed in, for example, design thinking.

Hence, in relating to the current economic transformations, the programme specifically departs from methods that originate in aesthetics, imagination, and critical reflection. For example, students conduct provocative design research for innovative products, explore participatory ways of storytelling through online platforms in data design, question traditional market research aimed at masses instead of individuals in branding, and design experiences, services, and interactions for and with consumers, citizens, and other stakeholders for future markets.

### Speculative scenarios for real-life innovations

One of the perspectives in the programme includes the relation between speculation, innovation, and consumers in real life. Speculation is investigated as a creative approach to achieve imaginative and more extreme forms of innovation. It relates to the field of speculative design as defined by Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby (Dunne & Raby, 2011).<sup>5</sup> Their "what if" scenarios propose radical narratives for possible, often imaginary futures. As such, speculative design is positioned as design for debate rather than design for reality.

But what if this future increasingly involves emancipated consumers and citizens? Within this context we investigate how speculative, sometimes radical concepts and designs can be connected to the real world. Therefore, we do not address speculation in isolation

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5 Dunne, A., & Raby, F. (2011). What if.... In *The First Beijing International Design Triennial* (pp. 233–285). Beijing.

as an expression of authorship or as design for debate, but rather connected to “real-life” innovations in an exchange process with “real people.” As a possible perspective, we expanded the “what if” scenario with the question “how else,” relating to Ahmed Ansari’s inclusive view on design: “‘How else’ emphasises a connection to current systems and structures where the principle project is framed not as an aesthetic, exploratory, intellectual exercise, but as a political, transformative, active enterprise” (Ansari, 2015).<sup>6</sup>

Integrating speculation and real life, the “what if/how else” approach aims at challenging students to both experiment with a radical speculative attitude and to exchange their concepts in reality. Through this scenario we intend to encourage inclusive, potentially more valuable innovations with prospective consumers.

### **From “What If” to “How Else”**

To arrive at the realistic “how else” as a “transformative enterprise” (Ansari, 2015) from the speculative “what if,” the role of design research with users and consumers is crucial. The design research we introduced in the programme focuses on developing creative, critical ways of conducting user and consumer research. As opposed to the anonymous data- and fact-driven market or user research, art and design students are able to use their unique artistic skills and imagination to unveil the personal stories, desires, dreams, or fears of users as input for more profound and valuable designs (Sanders & Stappers, 2012).<sup>7</sup>

An example is the “Confrontation Piece,” a design research approach aimed at user engagement. It is derived from the cultural probe (Gaver, Pacenti & Dunne, 1999), a method developed for interaction design: “a technique used to inspire ideas in a design process... a means of gathering data about people’s lives, values, thoughts. Probes can be any sort of artefact (map, postcard, camera, object, diary, etc.) along with evocative tasks, which are given to participants to allow them to record specific events, feelings or interactions.”<sup>8</sup>

The Confrontation Piece is a less directly applied interpretation of the Cultural Probe. It encourages students to elicit stories from possible future consumers. In this process, they confront consumers with their concepts using tactics such as unexpected interventions or (un)familiar objects and visuals, in order to get less predictable, less factual feedback.

For the assignment “Secret Stories about Hidden Local Crafts” in Rotterdam-West, students used the Confrontation Piece to collect stories from craftspeople. One project

focused on forgotten weaving techniques. As an intervention, students installed a public loom of extreme dimensions at the local market. A provocative form was used to incite specific stories about weaving from the neighbourhood. The giant loom succeeded as gathering place for collecting narratives. However, the stories did not only relate to weaving but much more to the daily lives of local people. This unexpected outcome changed the function of the final design. Based upon the responses the loom became a new product—a public storytelling tool.

In the project “Memre” (“Memory” in Surinamese), another student intended to discover secret stories about forgotten Surinamese crafts. He interviewed people using items like kernels, shells, and wood, mementoes from their past in Suriname. His Confrontation Piece eventually became an incentive for deeper storytelling. The responses inspired him to make a new product for this community, a memento kit that included an empty book for collecting personal histories.

By allowing the “how else” to the design process, the Confrontation Piece resulted in unexpected outcomes that reflected the stories of the people involved. Their feedback was used to create innovative products that did not yet exist. The process showed how a less strictly defined form of research into unknown needs could be used as a strategy for inclusive innovations and new, specific markets.

### **From probe to provocation**

Working with the Confrontation Piece provided valuable information about the process of designing a new product as the result of personal, intimate user feedback. Based upon the possible potential of this inclusive design process, we decided to expand the spectrum of the cultural probe from the “how else” user-oriented Confrontation Piece to a more extreme “what if” artistic approach: the “Provocation Piece.” This research intervention focuses on testing radical scenarios in real life through a provocative design, in order to receive feedback about consumers’ desires, dreams, or fears. In the Provocation Piece, the speculative “what if” merges with the realistic “how else.”

The Provocation Piece was introduced in a course that focused on the design of a future “Internet of Things” product. Students developed several design research interventions, varying from role-play and disguises to presenting alienating objects to the people involved. The project “Itranscom” focused on future care. What if we could get access to the thoughts of people who cannot communicate anymore, for example, because of dementia? For this purpose, the student proposed a data transmission system, represented by a small, round, flickering electronic object. Testing the “how else,” she used her alienating prototype in interviews with possible patients and caretakers. Her object incited profound conversations about life and death, providing her with new insights. An important outcome was the fear of privacy, which she eventually embedded in her final design concept.

6 Ansari, A. (2015, July). Design must fill current human needs before imagining new futures. MIT Media Lab Summit.

7 Sanders, E. B. N., & Stappers, P. J. (2012). *Convivial toolbox: Generative research for the front end of design*. Amsterdam: BIS.

8 Gaver, B., Dunne, T., & Pacenti, E. (1999). Design: cultural probes. *interactions*, 6(1), 21–29.

“Real-Life Terra Fictions” was another assignment in which students explored the Provocation Piece. The course required a design for future landscapes and unknown territories and challenged students to make these extreme scenarios real for possible consumers.

The project “Re-embodiment of Human Treasures” focused on a selected group of 100 people who were nominated for a trip to Mars. The students used a provocative question: which earthly objects would they miss on Mars and how would they reproduce these with local Martian resources? To collect feedback they designed a kit containing a letter, together with pictures and objects of sentimental value. One Mars nominee returned the kit, including objects like a shell, a pinecone, and a violin, as well as a promise to collaborate in the project. By intertwining their “what if” speculations and the Mars nominee’s “how else” reality, the students were able to relate “terra fiction” to real-life “terra facts.”

## HOW ELSE?

The projects and methods described above show a possible approach in art and design education towards a transforming economic environment. We focused on the current shift in hierarchies between producers and consumers and the emerging bottom-up, participatory attitude from consumers and users. Taking into account the aesthetic context, authorship, and artistic capacities of the students, as well as the stories and needs from consumers and users, we developed a design research approach that connects radical speculation with real-life scenarios. The examples given show that students came up with imaginative, innovative, and not yet existing products designed with and for their prospective consumers. However, seeking contact with the people involved proved to be difficult at times.

How can we further develop the “what if/how else” scenario in order to enable students to bring speculative ideas to real life? We propose *in situ* design labs that are interdisciplinary and participatory. These public field labs facilitate students’ research, experiments, and collaborations on urgent future questions together with engineers, scientists, advanced industries, local initiatives, and, not least, consumers and users. As such, these labs can expose students to real life and at the same time show their distinctive position as creative practitioners, collaborators, and innovators to an economic field that is in flux.

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# ART, TRADE, AND ARTISTIC DIVERSITY IN EVENTFUL AND INNOVATIVE CITIES

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**Keywords:**

contemporary art market  
art fairs  
diversity and innovation



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## **ABSTRACT**

We consider the major international fair for contemporary art, namely Art Basel, and to which extent it contributes artistic diversity to the three cities where it is located: Basel, Miami, and Hong Kong. By focusing on European galleries located in Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Switzerland and their represented artists, we consider various measures of diversity. Results show a high diversity in terms of the number of artists showcased and their nationalities, with regional artists relatively preferred. On the other hand, we also find a dominance of artists from the United States, followed by German ones, and a concentration of a considerable number of artists shared by few galleries, with few mainstream artists shared by highly internationalised galleries.

## CONTEMPORARY ART FAIRS AND THE CITY

Current evidence accounts for a healthy international market for contemporary art, with an estimated annual turnover of \$63.2 billion. This is contributed by the increasing phenomenon of art fairs. Art fairs are emblematic, recurrent city events marked by a double connotation. First, they can be considered as a showcase for artistic innovation, in terms of the latest production of living artists, including both emerging and consolidated artists.

Furthermore, art fairs are a concentration in space and time of national and international business players (artists, dealers, private and institutional collectors, other art professionals, etc., besides the general public) that catalyse the presence of other collateral, simultaneous events, which altogether economically and socially boost the city where the fair takes place (Richards & Palmer, 2012; Du Cros, 2018). Nowadays, each major city hosts at least one contemporary art fair, accompanied by official and more spontaneous collateral events.<sup>9</sup> This is not only the prerogative of Western countries, since other cities in emerging and developing countries are also interested by this growing phenomenon.<sup>10</sup> Such a socio-economic impact of art fairs is apparent during the fair, but also lasts beyond it.

## THE EVOLUTION OF ART FAIRS

The physical value chain in the primary art market has been traditionally characterised by art supplied by (living) artists to satisfy the demand of collectors, both private (individual and corporate) and institutional (museums), where art galleries have been essentially the sole commercial intermediaries linking supply and demand. However, with the internationalisation of the art market in recent decades, art fairs have been playing an increasingly active role (Quemin, 2013; Velthuis, 2013), adding to the complexity of the value chain. At first was the German fair Art Cologne, established in 1967 and shortly after followed by the Swiss Art Basel, (1970), the French FIAC (Paris, 1974), the American Art

<sup>9</sup> See, for instance, Pan Amsterdam and Amsterdam Art Weekend, taking place in the Dutch capital each year in November. The concentration of parallel events, including other (less important) fairs, is particularly high during Art Basel.

<sup>10</sup> See, for instance, the more recent Art X Lagos and Art X Week, taking place in the Nigerian city each November. See also Vermeylen (2015).

Chicago (1980, closed in 2011), and the Spanish ARCO (Madrid, 1980). Trends in new fairs opening have increased since the 1990s, and nowadays there are more than 250 fairs worldwide.

Contemporary art fairs have evolved numerically, and also geographically. In 2008 Art Basel (occurring in June) opened its first branch in Hong Kong (occurring in March), and in 2015 a second one in Miami Beach (occurring in December), at the same time filling the span of one year. Most remarkably, fairs have evolved also for their role in the art market. Initially they were mere commercial platforms, acting as neutral intermediaries for the logistical support of a concentration of art galleries in time and space. Today, fairs compete in playing an active role in the diffusion of artistic information and innovation, framing the artistic value and hence the art world. Among contemporary art fairs, Art Basel, together with its two younger sisters, Hong Kong and Miami Beach, is acclaimed by a wide audience (also by other fairs) as the foremost concentration and panorama of the finest contemporary artistic creation (Wolf, 2014; Lazzaro & Moureau, 2018).

## RESEARCH APPROACH

In such a context it becomes then crucial to question to which extent this growing, city-based, successful business of artistic events contributes innovation in terms of artistic diversity (Peterson & Berger, 1996), or, conversely, whether we can observe a certain artistic “hegemony.” In order to address this question, we take a close look at the most acclaimed Art Basel fairs (Basel, Miami, and Hong Kong) and the diversity of a number of characteristics of the artists showcased there. Our main hypothesis is that the triple location in three major cities in three different (although wealthiest) continents ought to offer a great diversity in terms of showcased artists and galleries, and hence of artistic representativeness.

Our research approach is empirical and based on data on participating galleries and artists at the three Art Basel fairs in 2017.<sup>11</sup> In this study we focus on galleries located in the three numerically most represented European countries, namely Germany, the United Kingdom, and France, plus Switzerland, where Art Basel originates.

<sup>11</sup> Source: [www.artbasel.com](http://www.artbasel.com)

## AN APPARENT DIVERSITY

Overall, results show a great diversity of artists who are showcased at the three Art Basel fairs: about 750 in Basel (the largest fair), more than 450 in Miami, and about 350 in Hong Kong (the smallest fair), with the great majority of artists (about 75%) represented by one artwork only. We explain this by an objective of profit maximisation—rather than artistic-diversity maximisation—by galleries. Noticeably, participation costs are quite high and the selection process is quite stringent for galleries at Art Basel, which can also influence the choice of artists and artworks by galleries (Vallois, 2018).

Artistic diversity scores rather low, also in terms of the same artists shared by different galleries at the three Art Basel fairs: about 100 artists are shared by two to four different galleries, while between five and ten artists are shared by highly internationalised galleries, that is, with branches in multiple countries. In 2017 the most shared artists at the three Art Basel fairs were the Swiss-American Not Vital (b. 1948), the Germans Sigmar Polke (1941–2010) and Thomas Schütte (b. 1954), and the American Sol LeWitt (1928–2007). Notice also that only two artists are still alive, besides the particular geographical representativeness of Germany and the United States.

On average, artists are quite aged, since almost 40% are 70 years old, while young artists (younger than 40) are a minority (12%). This might translate into a relatively limited degree of artistic experimentation and risk, in favour of more established, though trendy, art.

While the three fairs show in general a significant variety of artists' nationalities (Basel, 69; Miami, 58; Hong Kong, 53), the US represents the dominant nationality, followed by (at increasing distances) Germany, France, the UK, Switzerland, Japan, and China. We also observe some regional or local effects: European artists relatively dominate in Basel, Asians in Hong Kong, and Latin Americans in Miami.

The geographical diversity of artists varies according to the nationality of their representing galleries. In fact, while German galleries seem especially keen to support artists from their own country, British and Swiss galleries are dominated by American artists, and French galleries showcase French and American artists equally. Notice that, in our sample, German galleries are the most numerous, especially in Basel, followed by British, French, and Swiss galleries. We can also observe a core group of highly internationalised galleries with branches abroad and with high rates (more than 66%) of participation at the three fairs. If, in theory, less internationalised galleries would have an advantage in participating in an international fair like Art Basel and reach new collectors, in practice, as we mentioned above, the modes of selection and the costs of participation do not necessarily favour them.

## CONCLUSIONS

In a healthy international market for contemporary art, fairs are increasingly playing a key role at the crossroads between the business of city events and the diffusion of artistic innovation. The three Art Basel fairs are acclaimed by a wide audience as the foremost concentration and panorama of the finest contemporary artistic creation. The triple location in three major cities in three different continents ought to offer an artistic diversity in terms of showcased artists. In this paper we questioned whether and to which extent this is the case.

By focusing on European galleries located in Germany, the UK, France, and Switzerland and their represented artists, we have considered various measures of artistic diversity. Results point to various degrees of diversity. In particular, diversity is high in terms of number of different artists showcased, with the great majority of them being represented by one artwork only; number of artists' different nationalities; presence of local effects at the three fairs. On the other hand, diversity is limited in terms of dominance of artists from the US, followed by German ones; the concentration of a considerable number of artists shared by a few galleries; and a few mainstream artists shared by highly internationalised galleries.

Our results also suggest that, in order to fully capture the artistic diversity and hence innovation directly, as well as indirectly contribute to hosting cities by the major contemporary fair, further research should take into consideration the catalysing effect played by Art Basel on and through collateral events.



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# RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE IN ARTISTIC EDUCATION

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**Keywords:**

resistance  
resilience  
art education  
island studies

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores the emergence of “resilient subjectivity” through neo-liberal discourses that promote self-investment, flexibility, and adaptability. In the late 20th century, education became the primary training ground for neo-liberal subjectivity, which was mobilised by the theory of human capital. Tracing the history of human capital development, we arrive at today’s “resilient subjects” in which the economic rationality of human capital merges with the ecological rationality of sustainable development (Reid, 2013). Against the image of “survivability” and “self-protection” in resilient discourses, this paper explores a theory of world-centred education, developed by Gert Biesta (2018), as a model for art education. These explorations are developed through a unique visual arts degree programme on an island off the West Coast of Cork, Ireland.

Today's pedagogical subject has its foundational event in the theories of human capital, developed in the late 1950s. Privileging investment and return on human attributes, human capital is intimately linked to education as the training ground for survival in the market economy. More recently, this economic rationality has merged with ecological rationality to form the "resilient subject." The dominant image of the resilient subject is of a subject defined by survivability, by its ability to "bounce back," to "adapt." Whilst resilience might be an important factor in the survivability of subjects within the context of the neo-liberal market economies and climate change, this does not necessarily imply a resistant subjectivity. Given that artistic practice is traditionally about *flourishing* rather than *surviving*, this paper argues that art education is a potential site of disruption and resistance within these modes of educational subjectivity.

## FROM HUMAN CAPITAL TO RESILIENT SUBJECTIVITY

Human capital theory as we understand it today is the product of economic developments which reached a crisis point at the end of the 1950s, due to dwindling resources and the stagnation of economic growth in North America (Bouchard, 2006: 1). Economists responded to these underlying anxieties through a complex set of theories which eventually came to define the "knowledge economy" (Bouchard, 2006: 1). At the core of these theories was a return to Adam Smith's theory of human capital investment, defined as the shift from fixed capital to fluid capital in his seminal work *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). For Smith, there were four types of fixed capital: 1) useful machines, instruments of the trade; 2) buildings as the means of procuring revenue; 3) improvements of land; and 4) the acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants or members of the society (Smith, 1776: vol. 2). Importantly, these "useful abilities" are acquired through education and training:

*The acquisition of such talents, by the maintenance of the acquirer during his education, study, or apprenticeship, always costs a real expense, which is a capital fixed and realized, as it were, in his person. Those talents, as they make a part of his fortune, so do they likewise that of the society to which he belongs (Smith, 1776).*

With the fourth mode of capital, Smith argued that the possibility of dwindling material resources brought about by the advances of industrialisation would provide a valid rationale for considering the "human being" as a form of capital. This rationale would focus on extracting the value of human capacities such as knowledge, skills, and other unlimited resources (Smith, 1776). Too extreme for its time, human capital theory lay

dormant until the mid-1950s, when it became articulated as synonymous with the drive toward modernisation in most developing countries.

The first wave of human capital theorists took shape in the seminars and lectures developed by the Chicago School of economics, such as Milton Friedman's 1952 text "The Role of Government in Education," where he writes that "although it is obvious that people acquire useful skills and knowledge, it is not so obvious that these skills and knowledge are a form of capital, or that this capital is in substantial part a product of deliberative investment" (Schultz, 1989: 219). Claiming that every individual could become a capitalist of their own commodity, Friedman proposed that education was a system of measurement that needed to be opened up to the possibility of financial speculation (Schultz, 1989: 219). For Noble Prize winner Gary Becker, students should be encouraged to consider all *educational* activities as "rational choices" in the formation of their own stock:

*Human capital analysis starts with the assumption that individuals decide on their education, training, medical care, and other additions to knowledge and health by weighing the benefits and costs. (Becker, 1992: 42).*

In Ireland, human capital theory was motivated significantly by the investment in education act of 1971, which made the case for education to be considered an investment by the state, rather than a cost to the state (O'Sullivan, 2005). In his study of human capital development in Ireland, Denis O'Sullivan emphasises the gradual shift in education policy from a "theocentric paradigm" in the mid-1970s and '80s, to the "mercantile paradigm" in the mid-1990s. These ideological shifts in the value and purpose of education supplanted the themes and principles of "equality, civil society, social morality, citizenship, and democracy" with more modern themes "pertaining to autonomy, competition, and economic transaction" (O'Sullivan, 2005: 225). Noting the influence of this shift on educational subjectivity, O'Sullivan identifies a significant development in which "individualism, rationalism, and calculation" began to replace traditional modes of "exchange relations" in educational practice (O'Sullivan, 2005: 224). Similarly, for adult educator Ian Baptiste, such themes have been replaced by a Hobbesian "state of nature" where the educational subject becomes increasingly defined by survival in the marketplace. Using the North American myth of the "lone wolf" to define the human capital subject, Baptiste highlights three key attributes that define a pedagogical programme suited to a pedagogy to the lone wolf (Baptiste, 2001: 197). First, it must be apolitical, because according to the rules of the market, "consensus would be assumed a priori, not sought through political struggle"; secondly, it must be "adaptive and promote adaptive learning" if the student is to stay one step ahead of market fluctuations; and finally, it must be fundamentally individualistic, where "each learner would simply stock up enough ammunition and face the world as an educational Rambo" (Baptiste, 2001). Over the past two decades the educational subject has morphed from an "educational Rambo" into a "resilient subject."

As suggested by Julian Reid, the economic pillars of adaptability, utility maximisation, and market flexibility were instrumental in defining political subjectivity in the late 20th century (Reid, 2012). However, emphasising neo-liberalism's capacity to appropriate its external antagonisms, Reid also argues that the concept of resilience did not only develop as an extension of classical neo-liberal forms of subjectivity but also through an appropriation of the "doctrine of sustainable development," precisely because "resilience" is a "specifically neo-liberal institution" (Reid, 2012: 3). It is within this context that resilient subjectivities have begun to replace "politically resistant" communities.

The resilient subject is a subject which must permanently struggle to accommodate itself in the world. Not a subject which can conceive of changing the world, its structures, its conditions of possibility. But a subject which accepts the disastrousness of the world it lives in. Building resilient subjects involves the deliberate disabling of the political habits, tendencies and capacities of peoples and replacing them with adaptive ones (Reid, 2012: 3).

Drawing attention to the political function of the resilience discourse, Reid argues that resilient subjectivity is motivated by a "highly circumscribed imaginary" that is predominantly defined "by survivability" (Reid, 2018: 1). A concrete response to these destabilising discourses can be found in the 2005 poster campaign that followed Hurricane Katrina. Developed by the Louisiana Justice Institute in one of the poorest neighbourhoods in New Orleans, the Ninth Ward, it read in stark blue and white type: "STOP CALLING ME RESILIENT: Because every time you say 'Oh they are resilient' that means you can do something else to me. I AM NOT RESILIENT."

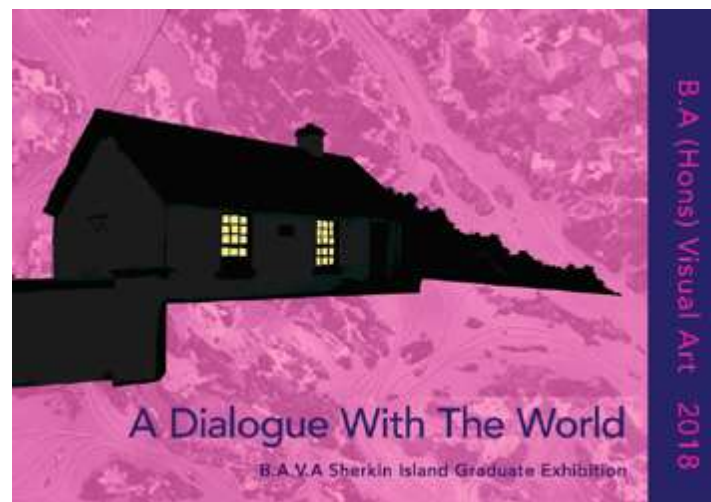


Figure 1. BA Visual Art, Graduate Exhibition Catalogue (2017). Source: Glenn Loughran

The significance of this image lies not only in its expression of a politically resistant community but also as a different representation of political "imagination" within the discourse of resilience.

These experiences have become more intensified within the context of the Anthropocene,<sup>12</sup> and whilst "resilience" is vital to face the growing difficulties of the Anthropocene, there is a concern that the coupling of economic subjectivity with an ecological subjectivity will replace the political tools of collective bargaining and resistance with those of individual survival and adaptation. Reflecting on the impact of this dilemma on academic discourse, Delphi Carsten asks, "How are we as academics coping with the capitalist system of unquestioned consumerism that is hastening extinction or engaging with the phenomenon of the Anthropocene (if in fact we are engaging with these issues at all?)" (Carsten, 2016: 257). It is within this context that Gert Biesta's articulation of a "world-centred" education is an important supplement to consumer-led models of education and a direct engagement with art education as space for "imaginative action" and "flourishing" beyond "resilient subjectivity."

## TOWARDS A WORLD-CENTRED EDUCATION

Biesta's critique of neo-liberal subjectivity has focused on connecting the consumer model of education with the new language of learning, which he terms "learnification" (Biesta, 2005). In this new language of learning the pedagogical relationship is replaced by economic transaction and the *citizen-student* is recast as a *student-consumer*, to be serviced by the *teacher-service-provider*. He writes,

The main problem with the new language of learning is that it has facilitated a re-description of the process of education in terms of an economic transaction, that is, a transaction in which (1) the learner is the (potential) consumer, the one who has certain "needs," in which (2) the teacher, the educator, or the educational institution is seen as the provider, that is, the one who is there to meet the needs of the learner, and where (3) education itself becomes a commodity—a "thing"—to be provided or delivered by the teacher or educational institution and to be consumed by the learner (Biesta, 2005: 19).

<sup>12</sup> The Anthropocene derives from the work of the Nobel prize-winning chemist Paul Crutzen ("The Geology of Mankind," *Nature* 415, 3 January 2002), who argued that we have left the Holocene (the official present epoch, which began at the end of the last Ice Age 11,700 years ago) and have entered a new geological epoch.

Key to the consumer model of education is an emphasis on student-centred learning and its potential to produce student/consumer “satisfaction,” however, as Biesta suggests, education should never be motivated by the needs of a consumer, but rather by pointing students “beyond the present and the particular” (Biesta, 2010). In a recent text titled “Letting Art Teach: Art Education ‘After’ Joseph Beuys” (2017), this proposition is explored through a critical reflection on art education as world-centred. Against the instrumentalization of art education through economic and developmental logics, Biesta argues that art education enables students to have a unique dialogue with the world by providing them with the imaginative capacity, skills, and knowledge to think with and against the world in a non-instrumental way (Biesta, 2017). By fostering a relationship between student and world, educators can take responsibility for student subjectivity and cultivate spaces of plurality where the “curriculum is not simply seen as a set of knowledge and skills that need to be transmitted to the students, but where different curricular areas are explored and used for the particular opportunities they provide for students to bring their own unique beginnings into the world” (Biesta, 2006: 138).

To begin to think how a world-centred education might be instituted into curricular models of organisation is a challenging task, however, it is one that academic institutions have already begun to take on through various explorations of the expanded academy, the engaged campus, the city campus, and the digital campus. In Ireland a prescient glimpse of this shift can be seen in the BA in Visual Art (BAVA) programme on Sherkin Island.

The BAVA has been developed by the Dublin School of Creative Arts (TU Dublin) on Sherkin Island, in partnership with the Sherkin Island Development Society (SIDS) and Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre, over the past 15 years. Initiated as a pilot project to address rural exclusion to the arts, it has emerged from a traditional arts and crafts course into a contemporary art programme that supports critical engagements with conceptual, digital, and environmental art. Embedded within the island community, the BAVA supported three key educational principles: qualification, socialisation, and agency.<sup>13</sup>

Through *qualification*, students gain the skills and knowledge to develop an economically sustainable life. Within the curriculum, qualification is gained through an interdisciplinary framework that enables students to acquire traditional skills, conceptual skills, and relational skills. The island is also sustained and enriched by the social and cultural activities of the students enrolled on the course, which can often produce disconcerting results that the community has to negotiate. As a result of this dynamic there is a reciprocal demand within the course, which informs its ethos of social engagement. These socially engaged practices have contributed to the social life of the community by

<sup>13</sup> This framework is influenced by the educational philosophy developed by Gert Biesta. See Biesta, G. (2010). Good education in the age of measurement: Ethics, politics, democracy. In *Interventions: Education, philosophy, and culture*. London: Routledge.

developing new relations and intersections between the arts, their institutions, and their localities. Whilst this is an important aspect of student engagement with the community, it is equally important that students are supported in their autonomy and agency through the artistic practices they develop in their studies on the island.

Testament to this framework was this year’s graduate show, which exhibited a political edge and depth of knowledge that was deeply rooted in the environment in which it was situated. Studying on an island intensifies the experience of rural isolation and climate vulnerability, and this year’s students responded to these experiences through a collective gesture of solidarity with the island in their graduate show catalogue. Traditionally, BAVA student work is incorporated into the city college catalogue in Dublin, alongside the main city exhibition. This year the BAVA students decided to fund their own catalogue in order to make a broader political point about the closure of the school on the island, after 100 years. For the islanders, the closure of the school posed a serious threat to the future of the island, to its sustainability and regeneration. This threat was often expressed through the vernacular phrase “lights out.” In support of the community, the students designed the catalogue to include an image of the school on the front cover with the “lights on,” and on the back cover of the catalogue the students inscribed “NO MOTHBALLING” on the school wall. “Mothballing” is a term used in the social sciences to describe the “strategic deterioration” of infrastructures often experienced by marginal communities.<sup>14</sup> This concept became a rallying point for the students, who used the graduate show as a public platform to address the “politics of resilience” being imposed upon the island.



Figure 2. BAVA Graduate Catalogue (2018).

<sup>14</sup> See <http://www.mayonews.ie/news/28453-island-primary-schools-a-litmus-test-for-future-sustainability>

## CONCLUSION

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The BAVA is an important example of how an urban institution might act in a responsible way towards a situation that is beyond its immediate self-interest, beyond the consumer model of education. Providing resources, access, security, and knowledge for a small island is quite exceptional, however, as suggested by the ethos of the programme, economic sustainability is only one part of the equation. The island is also sustained and enriched by social and cultural activities which look beyond the politics of “survival” and “resilience,” towards a new politics of “imagination” of “human flourishing.” Where *socialisation* balances the economic aims of the programme gained through *qualification*, individual *agency* balances the socialising aspect of the programme by affirming the students’ individual capacity to develop a critically reflective dialogue with the community and the world. This unique dialogue positions the student as someone who is conditioned by the world, someone who will take responsibility for the world, and importantly, someone who is a *producer* in the world (Biesta, 2017).

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# HIGHER GROUND: LEVERAGING BALTIMORE'S TOPOGRAPHY TO INCREASE SOCIAL AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

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**Keywords:**

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climate change  
social justice  
urban flooding  
Baltimore

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Higher Ground* is a data-driven design project that addresses flooding, increased resiliency to climate change, and economic redevelopment to provide social and racial integration in Baltimore, Maryland, a highly segregated American city. Our group has been studying the potential flooding risks that Baltimore City faces from storm surge and increased rain events. These findings allow us to envision a strategic plan that accommodates anticipated increased water volume through landscape intervention with a method for re-centring work hubs and communities on higher ground that is the current site of swaths of decaying, nearly abandoned factories, industrial spaces, apartment buildings, and homes (fig. 8). By building resiliency to climate change, our plan will simultaneously revitalise these decaying areas with mixed use, mixed income, accessible, desirable, resilient neighbourhoods, rediscovering the city whose work centres and neighbourhoods have been shifting away from the commercial centre and accessible public transportation for decades.



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Maryland Institute College of Art*

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Boston, MA*

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Civil and Environmental Engineering  
University of Michigan*

## INTRODUCTION

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Our group has been studying the potential flooding risks that Baltimore City faces from storm surge and increased rain events. Among the most populated, most flood-prone of all counties on the east coast, Baltimore City presents a complex array of environmental and social challenges. Through our longstanding, multidisciplinary collaboration, our team brings a new approach to address these challenges simultaneously. Based on our findings, we have envisioned a strategic plan that accommodates increased water volume through landscape intervention, with a method for re-centring work hubs and communities to higher ground. By building resiliency to climate change, our plan also addresses the deterioration of a city whose work centres and neighbourhoods have been shifting to the suburbs and its high-end waterfront for decades.

Today in Baltimore's inner city, large swathes of underutilised and abandoned factories and homes continue to decay, further isolating these struggling communities from thriving social and commercial centres. Our methods combine the physical modelling of riparian and coastal flooding by Celso Ferreira and his team at George Mason University (Bigalbal et al., 2018) and a spatial analysis of businesses at risk with detailed demographic studies of isolation, income, unemployment and travel times to work. This work ensures that planning for the future tackles resiliency to climate change while simultaneously addressing the city's social stressors—social disparity, lack of access, and inequity.

## BACKGROUND

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Baltimore's identity has always been defined by its water systems. Built as a fall line city where the edge of the Piedmont Plateau meets the Coastal Plain (fig. 1), the city's economy and urban form were constructed around its coastal and riverine water systems (O'Meara, 2011). Like many cities built at this time, Baltimore's siting on the Patapsco River took advantage of this hydrological condition: the fall line is the furthest inland a sea-faring ship can navigate upriver before the steepness of the terrain makes it impassable. This steep terrain, or falls, is where water energy, falling from significant heights, has been used as hydro-power from grist mills to electric turbines. (Carr, 1950). For both of these attributes, the waterways are integral to Baltimore's origins, and the city is inextricably woven into its terrain.

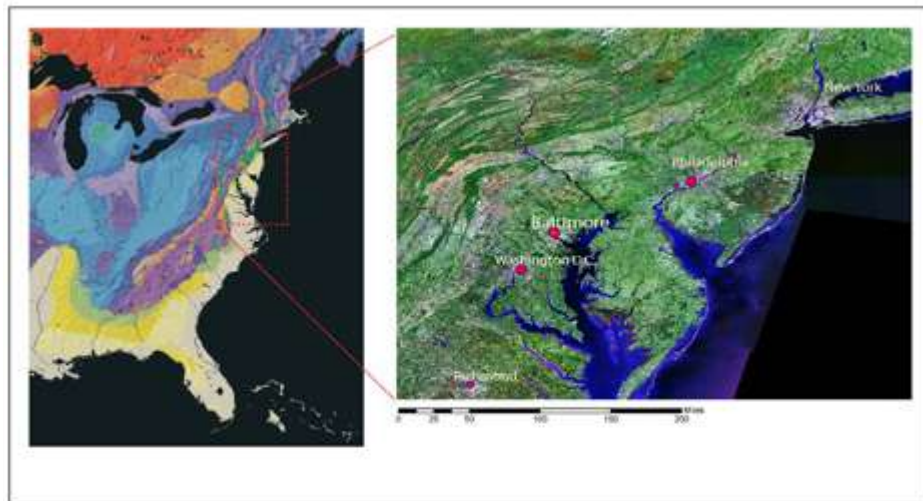
Over time, the city's industrial sites shifted to the suburbs for ease of highway access, and new residential development gradually transformed the post-industrial waterfronts. Years of high-end commercial and residential projects along the waterfronts have contributed



to an increasingly polarised city; Baltimore has always been highly segregated by race and income (Pietela, 2010; O'Meara, 2011) (fig. 2, 3), and the dimension of the disparity continues to grow as high-paying wage work disappears and elite, new high-tech jobs drive demand for high-end, insular waterfront real estate.

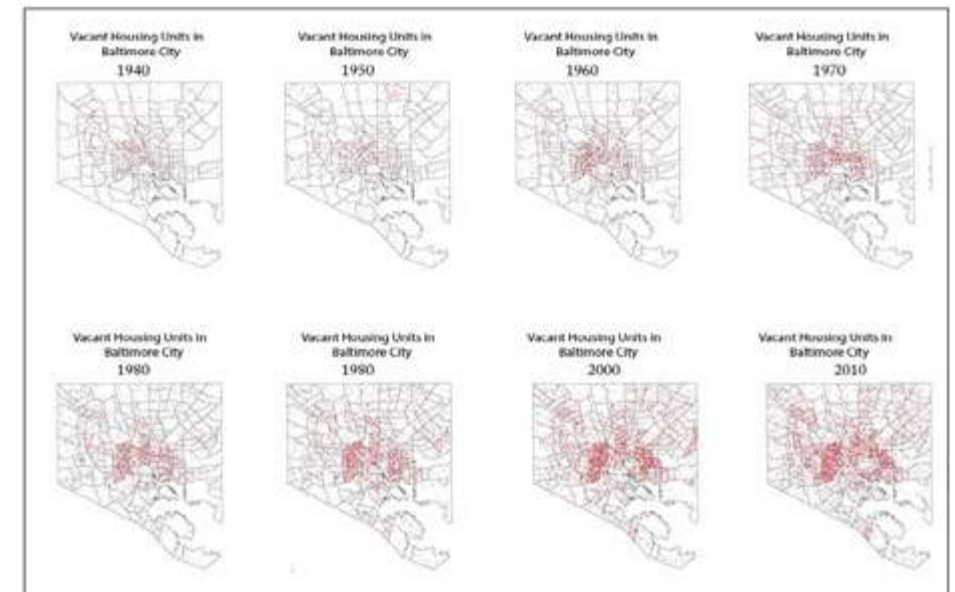
The lowest income areas now have longest travel times to work centres and are severely underserved by public transportation. Built as housing developments to serve nearby rail yard and canning factories, these neighbourhoods are now isolated and inaccessible and marked by high rates of abandonment and vacancy. But these working-class communities of the late 19th and 20th centuries were built upon the city's high ground, where the rail depots and railroad infrastructure were deliberately sited above potential flood zones (fig. 8). Current flood modelling shows that these areas remain above flood risk zones—even in the more extreme climate change scenarios. Through strategic economic development and landscape-urban planning, we propose that these almost abandoned neighbourhoods represent the future of an equitable, economically successful city.

Figure 1. Coastal plain meets the Piedmont Plateau on the fall line, American cities on the fall line.



Source: O'Meara, K., *Intertidal Urbanism* (2011), USGS North America Tapestry of Time and Terrain, [https://pubs.usgs.gov/imap/i2781/i2781\\_c\\_med.pdf](https://pubs.usgs.gov/imap/i2781/i2781_c_med.pdf)

Figure 2. Time series of Baltimore City vacant housing units 1940–2010. Source: O'Meara, K., & Kim,



E. (2016). *HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore's Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape*.

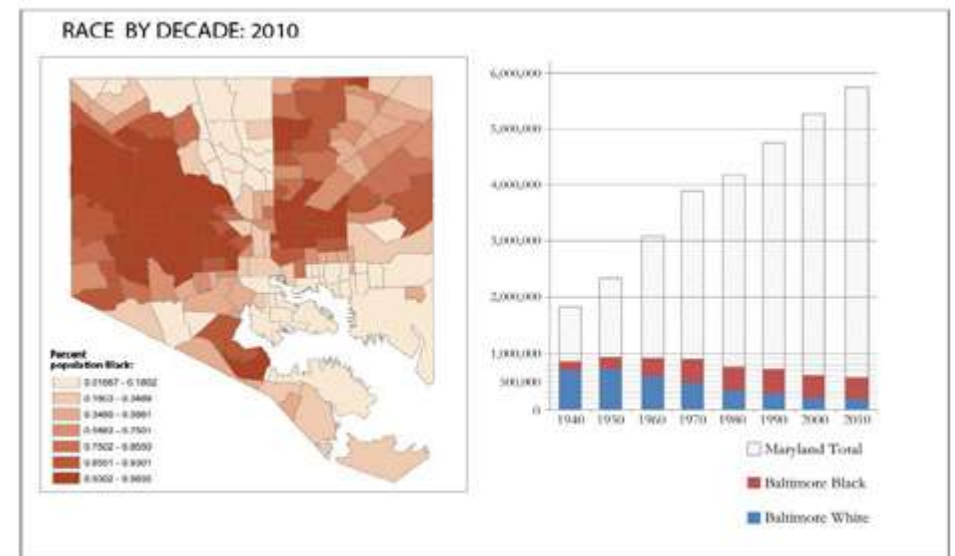


Figure 3. Race by decade, Baltimore City, 2010. Concentrations of black population and city population of black and white by decade, and state of Maryland total population by decade. Source: O'Meara, K., & Bessho, A. (2016). *HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore's Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape*. Data: Steven Manson, Jonathan Schroeder, David Van Riper, Steven Ruggles (2018). IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 13.0 [database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V13.0>

# METHODS

## Study of aggregated weather events and population concentrations for the Eastern United States

Collaborator on the NSF-funded Hazard SEES “In Hot Water and Harm’s Way,” Brooke Anderson (Colorado State University) has identified hazard-specific storm effects by location and type. Working with MICA intern Cheng Qin, we have mapped these storm effects individually and in aggregate, and mapped the aggregated effects in combination with highest population centres of the Eastern United States. Based on our analysis, flooding was found to be the most frequently occurring and most destructive storm-related risk (Anderson, 2018), and has affected the largest populations by county in the Eastern United States. Baltimore City is within the contiguous geography of high-population counties at high risk for flooding (fig. 4, 5).

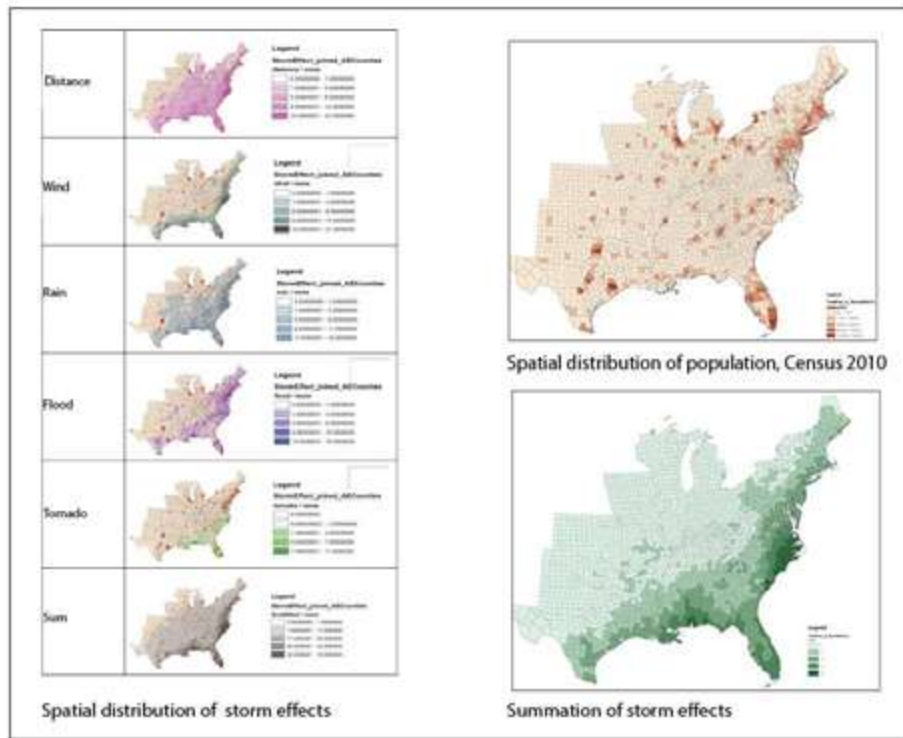


Figure 4. Hurricane and tropical storm effects by type, with population, Eastern United States. Source: O’Meara, K., & Qin, C. (2018). HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore’s Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape.

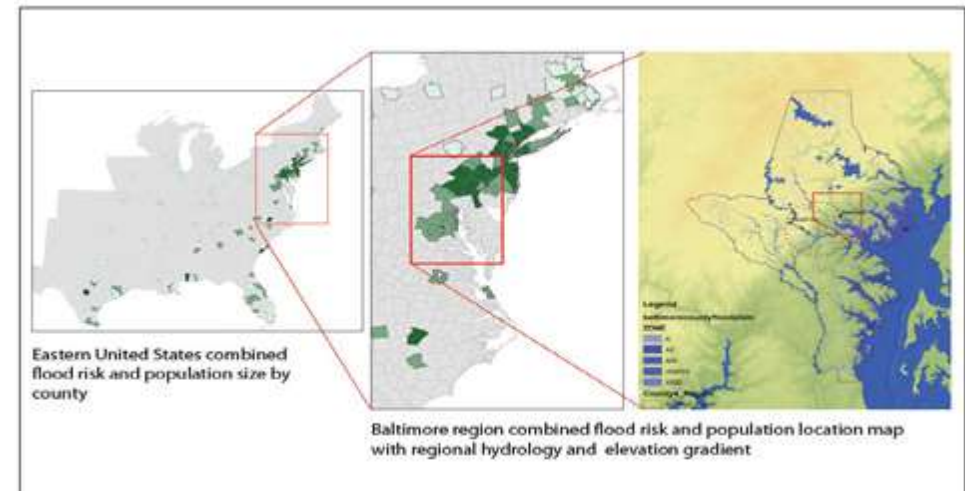


Figure 5. Worst-case storm effects in highest population counties, Eastern United States, Baltimore, Maryland. Source: O’Meara, K., & Qin, C. (2018). HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore’s Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape.

**Study of riverine and coastal flooding adjacent to high vacancy areas in Baltimore City**

Despite associated risks flooding, Baltimore City continues to promote the harbour waterfront for high-end residential development (fig. 6). In fact, 13 of 15 active development projects in 2016 were along this vulnerable edge (BDC report, 2010). We are proposing the city support development in a more meaningful way. Working with Celso Ferreira and his team at George Mason University, who are advancing state-of-the-art hydrodynamic models specifically implemented to the Chesapeake Bay, we have explored the potential for coastal flooding in several areas of Baltimore’s waterfront by simulating the storm surge generated by the same historical and future events driven by climate change (Bigalbal et al., 2018). We have also studied the potential for riverine flooding in West Baltimore by simulating flood patterns for historic storm events and projecting potential increases in storm intensity under future climate scenarios. Esther Kim, MICA, with guidance by Ferreira and Ben Zaitchik (Johns Hopkins University), used Army Corps of Engineers HEC-RAS software to develop a series of flood inundation scenarios for West Baltimore (fig. 7). The capacity to integrate the riverine and coastal models is still in development. As proof of concept for addressing flooding and blight simultaneously, we selected a section of West Baltimore in the Gwynns Falls watershed as the geography for our site (fig. 8).

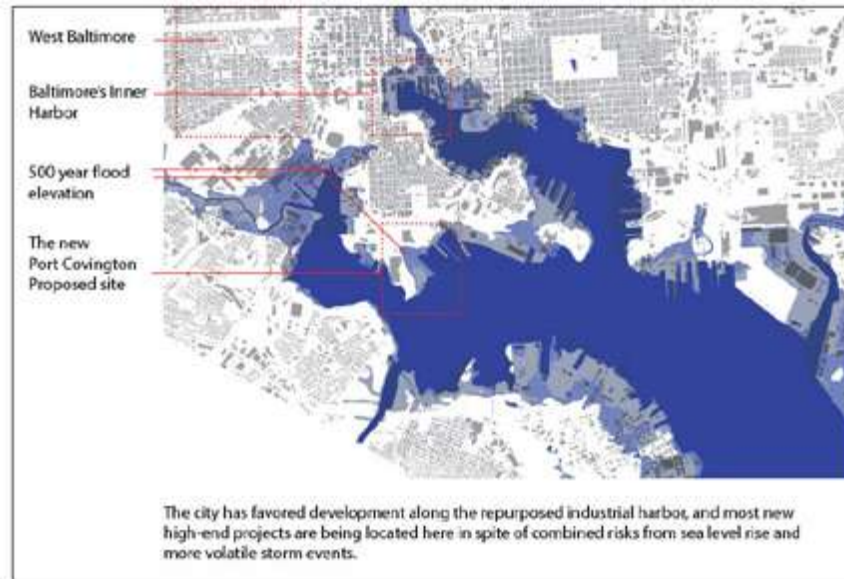


Figure 6. Baltimore’s harbour, key sites and 100 and 500 year flood zones. Source: O’Meara, K. (2018). HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore’s Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape.



Figure 7. Flood risk stages for West Baltimore, 500 year flood base with 10% incremental increases to Hurricane Agnes level, the worst flood in Baltimore’s history. Source: O’Meara, K., & Kim, E. (2016). HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore’s Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape.

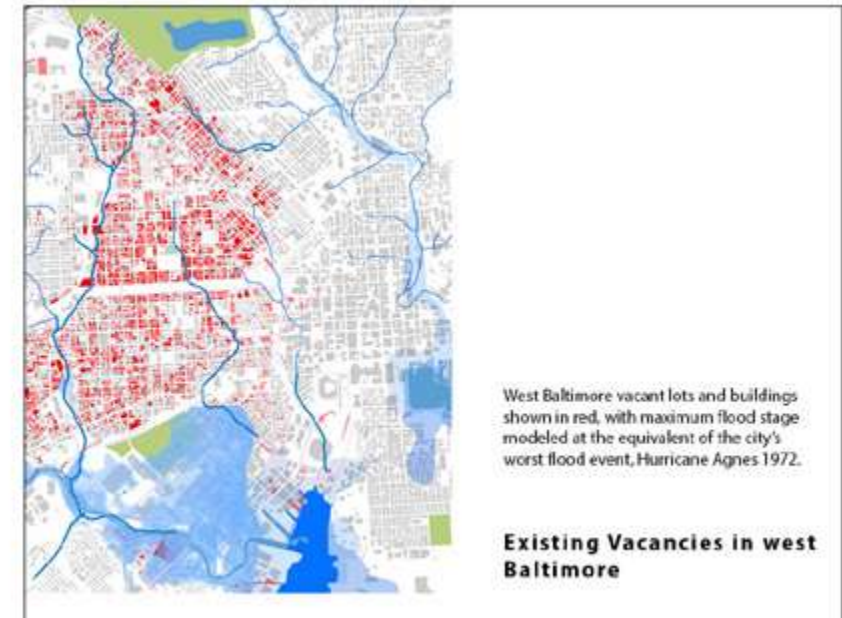


Figure 8. West Baltimore flood risk at maximum level, with vacant land and buildings on high ground. Source: O’Meara, K., & Kim, E. (2016). HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore’s Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape.

# PLAN DEVELOPMENT

## Phased plan for Baltimore City that addresses flooding, blight, and jobs creation

This project demonstrates the potential for addressing social and climate stressors simultaneously. We are proposing landscape-urban interventions on higher ground that provide absorptive terrains in a wide variety of uses that promote integrated economic redevelopment.

Working with the spatial proximity of major routes and amenities to the highest concentrations of vacant property and buildings, we developed a five-phase sequence of redevelopment. Each phase incorporates landscape projects and redevelopment opportunities. The goal is to completely eliminate vacancies sequentially within each geographic extent by concentrating city resources thoroughly, rather than in a less effective, diffusing manner.

### Phase 1

The first proposed landscape interventions are in the floodplain where the Gwynns Falls meets the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River, where the worst flooding has occurred and is predicted to occur again. This area is industrial because of its position in the floodplain. We propose using a series of wetlands and retention projects to absorb, slow, and filter rainwater and buffer the area from coastal impacts. These works should be integrated with existing structures and businesses. The economic development component of phase 1 supports the existing Route 1 light industrial corridor with new business opportunities and better services.

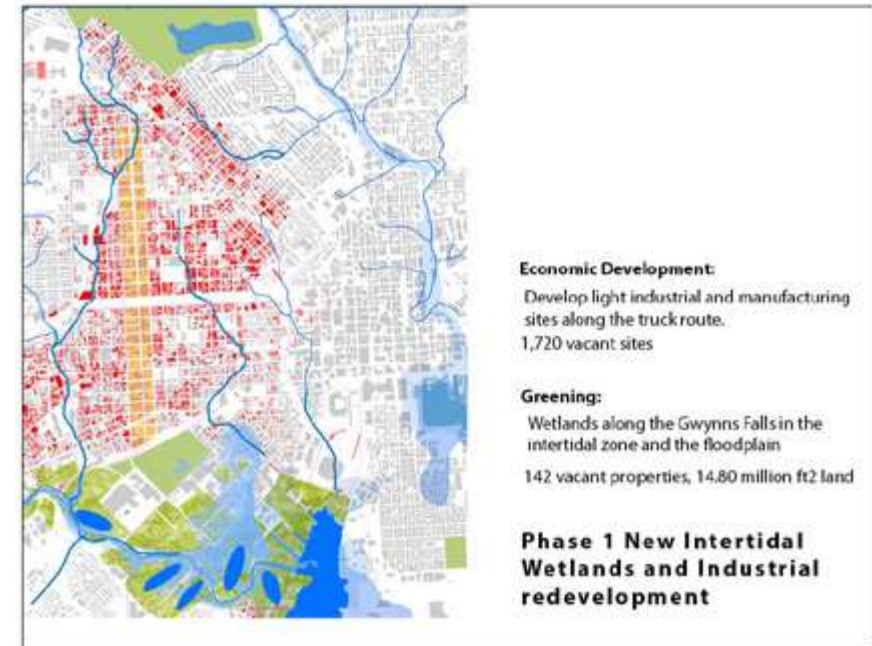


Figure 9. Higher Ground proposal for West Baltimore, Phase 1. Source: O'Meara, K., & Kim, E. (2016). HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore's Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape.



## Phase 2

Phase 2 of the design proposes two greening strategies: first, a continuous green belt flanking the western edge of the project area, following a natural boundary and a buried stream. This greening site is programmed with forest and meadow landscapes. The second greening project, a series of community parks and gardens, connects the social space with the environmental attributes of the project.

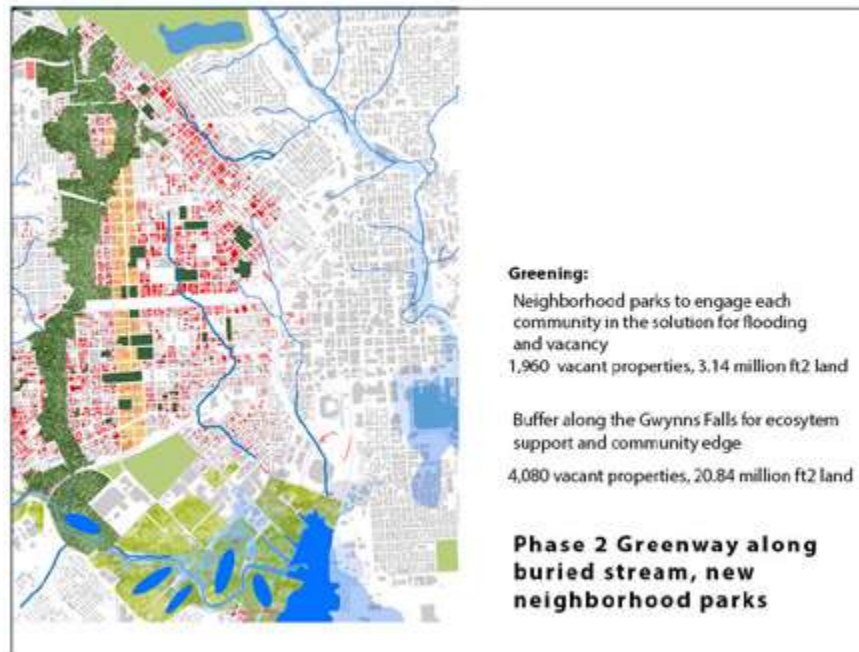


Figure 10. Higher Ground proposal for West Baltimore, Phase 2. Source: O'Meara, K., & Kim, E. (2016). *HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore's Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape*.

## Phase 3

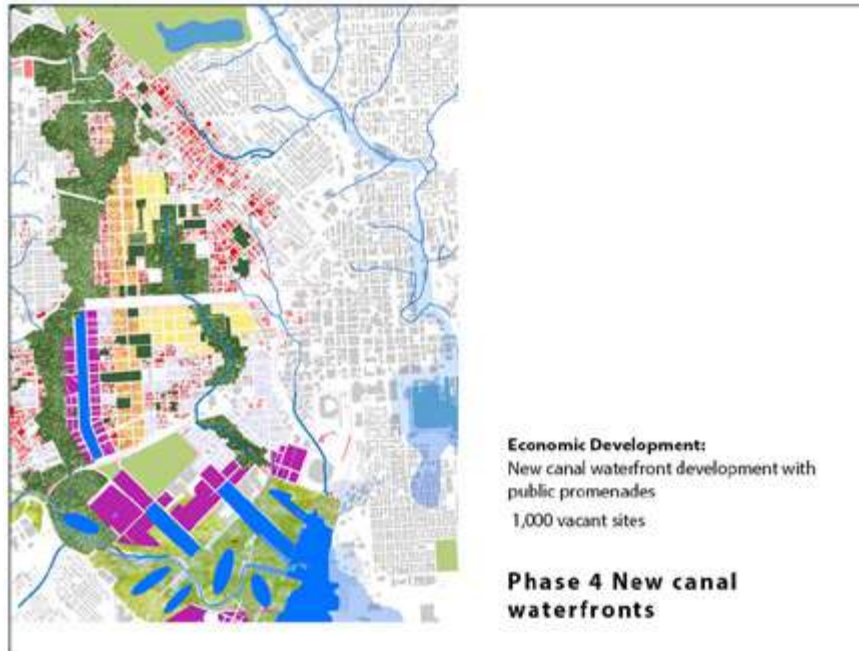
The third phase of the proposal is to create a second, continuous green belt along a buried stream and integrating bike paths and walking routes within the district. This will complement the development of a dense mid-rise area comprised of mixed-use projects near downtown and just a few minutes' walk to the University of Maryland Medical and Professional Campus.



Figure 11. Higher Ground proposal for West Baltimore, Phase 3. Source: O'Meara, K., & Kim, E. (2016). *HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore's Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape*.

#### Phase 4

Phase 4 provides a new public waterfront for storm water and surge control, and a very social venue for strolling and commercial development, retail and restaurants, and mid- and upper-tier housing possibilities.



#### Phase 5

The fifth phase is to complete the transformation by taking up remaining vacant lands and buildings where necessary, responding to private sector developments that will likely piggyback on the larger projects, and continuing to work to ensure a long-term success.

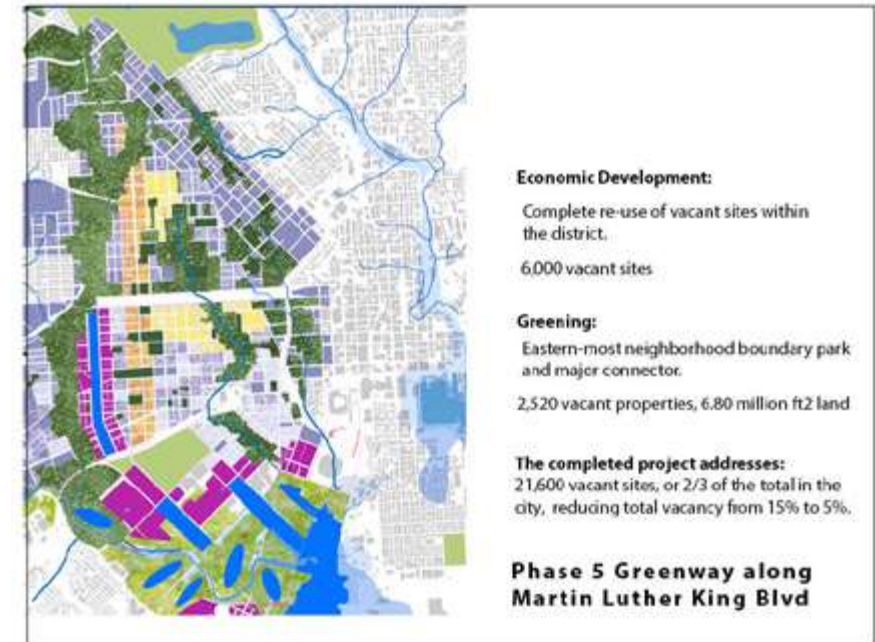


Figure 12. Higher Ground proposal for West Baltimore, Phase 4. Source: O'Meara, K., & Kim, E. (2016). *HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore's Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape*.

Figure 13. Higher Ground proposal for West Baltimore, Phase 5. Source: O'Meara, K., & Kim, E. (2016). *HIGHER GROUND: Leveraging Baltimore's Topography to Increase Social and Climate Resiliency through Landscape*.

## DISCUSSION

The phasing of this proposal provides a direction and a foundation for in-depth conversations among stakeholders, demonstrating a realistic sequence of events. Community input and commitments from businesses and institutions are essential to shape and drive the details. Engineering information on hydrology must be developed, and should be made available by cities to designers for work like ours. Modelling for this kind of proposal is also challenging with current tools. Gerda Roeleveld of Deltares in the Netherlands has been developing designer friendly modelling software which, in conjunction with detailed hydrology data, would facilitate more undertakings such as ours, in the building of resiliency for our communities (Roeleveld, 2016).

*Higher Ground* demonstrates the potential for transforming a large area of the city from a major detractor to a major attractor. By accommodating lower- and middle-income populations with a focus on nearby jobs, this scheme provides an evidence-based vision for a flourishing city with opportunity for all.

## CONCLUSION

Even under moderate climate change models, new terrains are at risk of flooding for the first time, while previously flooded areas can expect more dire events in the future. There is an urgent need to reduce risks from these events by implementing realistic and radical new plans. Design schemes like *Higher Ground* can be a model for other communities to illuminate their risks and possibilities, and to explore pathways to solve multiple problems through design planning.

Like Baltimore, many cities on the east coast from Alabama to Maine were developed as fall-line cities and are therefore facing the same challenges: Raleigh, NC, Richmond, VA, Washington DC, Wilmington, DE, Trenton, NJ, Philadelphia, PA, and Augusta, ME, are just a few of hundreds of cities and towns built in similar proximity to river and shore that will need to evaluate their changing relationship to water-based risks. Beyond planning, cities and localities that are at new and increased risk of flooding need to start incorporating plans like *Higher Ground* into practice. Every urban project for streets, highways, parks, and housing could be a participating project, incrementally reducing risk and increasing resilience and the potential for prosperity and security for all. We urge elected leaders, planners, housing agencies, and public works decision-makers to work with designers to create and implement robust, multifaceted, solution-based planning for all upcoming projects.

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## CHAPTER 3

# APPROACHING INNOVATION

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# TESTELAB & GUESTS: EXPANDED ANIMATION WORLDS (WORK IN PROGRESS)

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## Keywords:

pre- and future cinema  
experimental hybrid arts  
expanded animation worlds  
synthesis of the arts  
*Gesamtkunstwerk*

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## ABSTRACT

TESTeLAB & Guests: Expanded Animation Worlds is a cross-media interface project aimed at “experimenting with connecting the disconnected.” In this autobiographically driven examination of high and low culture, against a sweeping backdrop of image and media history, traditional media are brought into the digital realm, subjecting them to a productive, artistic kind of hybridisation. In doing so, the panorama—one of the most popular phenomena of the pre-cinema age—is revived, while supposedly obsolete media are also cultivated anew as part of a hybrid “future cinema.” This experimental exploration of the potential of movement, time, and sound also serves to enhance the cinematographic experience and questions the basic building blocks of film under new premises.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*For Leonardo da Vinci and Alberto  
Giacometti*



Figure 1. Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, Leonardo da Vinci (1519/1919), L.H.O.O.Q., originally published in 391, no. 12 (March 1920), first conceived in 1919.

# VOYAGEUR DE L'IMAGE / WEGE ZUM BILD / TOWARDS THE IMAGE (WORK IN PROGRESS)

## 1. Satz\_TESTE SANS FIN: ALIAS YEDERBECK

## 2. Satz\_DSDKBM: UNTITLED Shot & Poetry

## 3. Satz\_FUSSNOTEN: YEDERBECK'S Biopic

## 4. Satz\_INTERFACE: TESTeLAB & Guests

The VOYAGEUR DE L'IMAGE / WEGE ZUM BILD / TOWARDS THE IMAGE project, which can be likened to a symphony, forms the basis for the entire media transformation, arranged in four movements or seasons.

Extending the concept of animation, the project centres on an animated cross-media studio archive and the mental image of movement in sculpture, painting, drawing, and photography, so that it comes into play at the point at which language takes its leave. After all, the specific filmic (the filmic of the future) lies not in movement, but in an "inarticulable third meaning," as Roland Barthes wrote of illustrated broadsheets, comics, and *fotonovelas*.<sup>1</sup>

Photographic reproduction of the kind found in "coffee table books," not to mention the internet, makes the huge pool of art from the ages accessible. This museum is imaginary because it is not tied to a real place: photographic reproduction brings us face-to-face with all of the different possibilities for expression that the world has to offer. To echo André Malraux, we could say that the history of art emerges as an "art of fiction" and turns into a "state of motion."<sup>2</sup>

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1 Barthes, R. (1985). *The responsibility of forms: Critical essays on music, art, and representation*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

2 See, for reference, André Malraux's giant essay as a kind of "planetary art history," which makes thought connections multidimensional and multi-perspectival through dissolutions, surprising associations, and jumps in time and place. Malraux, A. (1978). *Propyläen Geist der Kunst: Metamorphose der Götter, Erster Band / Das Übernatürliche, Zweiter Band / Das Irreale, Dritter Band / Das Zeitlose*. Frankfurt / Berlin / Vienna: Propyläen-Verlag.

The history of art has become a history of what can be photographed; in the wake of painting, photography, and film it became, to all intents and purposes, a "super-medium"—a universal "time machine" that can transcend time and space. Camera-based images provide the essential interface for working in time-based media. Photography is film's blood relation, while the synthetically generated image has a greater kinship with animation.<sup>3</sup>

The hybrid audiovisual media transformation of the first movement (1. Satz\_TESTE SANS FIN: ALIAS YEDERBECK, Expanded Animation Cinema), produced under the metafictional heteronym Paul Yederbeck, which has been stylised as an artistic legacy, refers loosely to the fictional character "Monsieur Teste" of Paul Valéry ("Teste" = neologism: Fr. tête "head," Lat. testis "witness" or "test"), with twelve panoramic sequences (Entertainer, Flaneur, Spectator, Actor, Dissolution, Projection, Anima Techne, Transcendental Animation, Happy Ending, Doppelgänger, Reminder, The End), together with the artist's video QU'EST-CE QUE MONSIEUR TESTE?, represented an initial milestone along the path towards an artistic fusion of theory and practice. The project was completely restaged at the German Institute for Animated Film (DIAF) at the Technische Sammlungen Dresden, using different modes of media presentation (installation, DVD, app, VR, mobile model) in a paracontextual exhibition that would serve as a model.<sup>4</sup>

ALIAS YEDERBECK was also presented in public and conceptually delineated even during the pre-production phase (Frank Geßner, Alias Yederbeck: Arbeit am Künstlermythos, pp. 80–83. In *Licht Spiel Haus, Moderne in Brandenburg, Film, Kunst und Baukultur*, Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 2011), and at numerous international symposia and festivals, as well as receiving coverage in two publications with a wide readership (Frank Geßner / Paul Yederbeck, *Alias Yederbeck: Expanded Animation Cinema*, texts by Suzanne Buchan, Ursula Frohne, Christian Katti, Yvonne Spielmann, Karin Wehn. Paris: Re:Voir, 2014; and Frank Geßner, *Panoramavision: Earth seen from the studio*, texts by Fee Altmann, Franziska Bruckner, Suzanne Buchan, Frank Geßner, Kerstin Geßner, Stefan Winter. Berlin: Revolver Publishing, 2018). See also further material and credits on the project website: [www.testefoundation.org](http://www.testefoundation.org).

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3 See, for reference, Geßner, F., & Gusztáv H. (2010). Foto – Malerei – Film, Ein Gespräch zwischen Frank Geßner und Gusztáv Hámos. In Hámos, G., Pratschke, K., & Tode, T. (Eds.), *Viva Fotofilm - Bewegt/Unbewegt* (pp. 217–228). Marburg: Schüren.

4 Retrieved 9 January 2019 from <https://www.diaf.de/sonderausstellungen/vergangene-sonderausstellungen/panorama-vision-film-projekt-installation/>

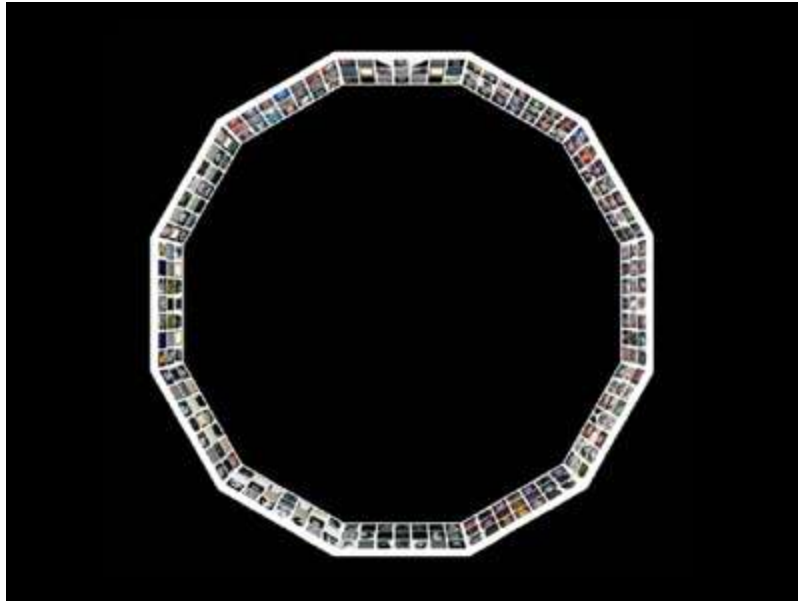


Figure 2. ALIAS YEDERBECK, *TESTE SANS FIN*, cutscene (2011).

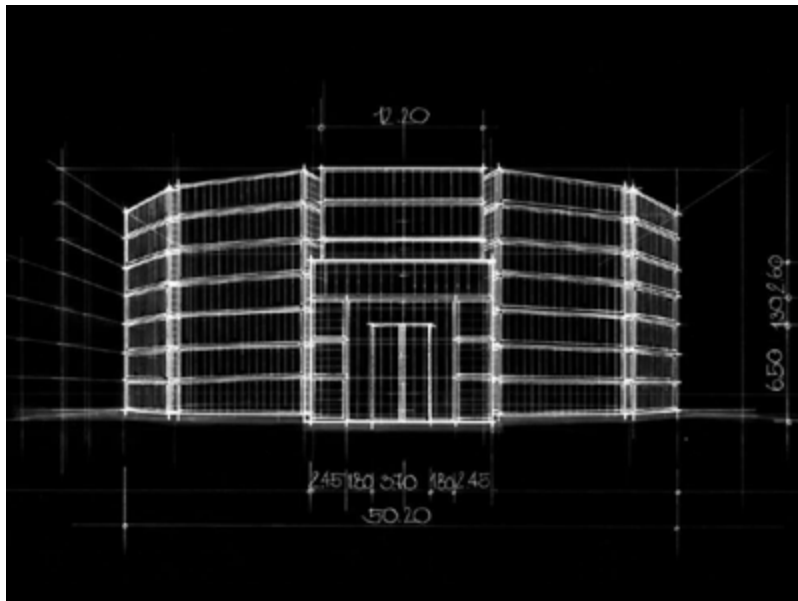


Figure 3. *CIRCUS CONTAINER COLOSSEUM*, draft (2010).

## TESTELAB MISSION: CIRCUS CONTAINER COLOSSEUM

The fourth movement (4. Satz\_INTERFACE: TESTeLAB & Guests), which forms the subject of this piece, is aimed at filmmakers, performers, musicians, dancers, poets, artists, designers, technicians, academics, students, companies, and other individuals who are interested in the interface between art, design, science, nature, technology, and creativity. Together they fashion the CIRCUS CONTAINER COLOSSEUM into a (post-)modern equivalent of a cathedral or a cross-media riff on the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

TESTeLAB & Guests sees itself as a university-based “research satellite” and is attempting, in its extended form, to embrace an open laboratory principle in order to explore an experimental approach to material and media development for the very latest “Expanded Animation Worlds.”

This fascinating field of play between theory and practice opens the way for other areas, apart from language or science, that might be ripe for reflection; after all, artistic imagination, self-reflective art, and artistic research may be seen as discrete forms of thought.

This aesthetic practice form deals with the transfer of theory—the Greek etymology of which implies looking and contemplating—to the medium of the image, which can only be realised in the dialectic between theory and practice, in the sense of a self-reflexive image that can serve as a model, or, as Jean-Luc Godard expressed it almost panegyrically in his *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, by seeing cinema or art as forms that feel, see, and think, telescoping out from the particular to the general in a kind of improvisation.<sup>5</sup>

Art, nature, and theory are seen as an inexhaustible pool of models for interaction, not through the contrast between their different modes of representation, but rather in the historical dialogue surrounding them. This form of dialogue requires a “technique,” in the primordial sense of the word. In Ancient Greek, *téchne*, meaning “ability, art, and craftsmanship,” was understood as the practical application of science in terms of the production of goods. The original term *téchne* did not distinguish between what today we split into the two categories of art and technology. Instead, art and technology were seen as a unified whole, as an “educated” or rather “gebildete” practice—the German term would be more meaningful here—that signalled both the process of “sich bilden”

5 Godard, J. (1998). *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. Paris: Gallimard, Collection Blanche.

(educating oneself) and state of “gebildet sein” (being educated). Moreover, this was the only sense in which “Bildung” (education) was deemed to inform “identity.” Today, *Bildkunst*, or visual arts, constitutes the theory and practice of reinventing technology for the study of art and nature, using all of the tools at one’s disposal. It is more than just “technical practice,” as, like Richard Sennett, it sees “craftsmanship” as “a basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake.” What is more, one has to understand one’s craft, now that it is no longer self-evident.<sup>6</sup>

Nonetheless, Western history, especially the history of ideas, has imposed a strict boundary between practice and theory, technique and expression, maker and user. Visual arts, which is grounded in research-based practice and practice-based research, can help to reopen the debate on these demarcations, which are sometimes far too rigid. This is a multifaceted synthesis in which reflection and improvisation extend to the individual frame itself.

The result is a whole series of questions that have aesthetic, social, and political implications. How does our understanding of evidence and the status of images change overall if we are no longer able to distinguish between real and synthetically generated images? Where can we draw the line between fiction and reality if fictitious images, for instance in virtual reality, become part of our physically lived experience? What the future of the moving image holds and how it might feel is determined neither by the development of ever more cutting-edge production and receiving technology nor by theory. The aesthetic experiences that are made possible by new types of image and sound must be explored through methods of artistic research.

As such, the success of the experimental TESTeLAB is incumbent on inviting guests from Germany and further afield to take part and to create “extraterrestrial” spaces that will enrich the institutional framework. A new, twelve-course panorama and full-dome menu, featuring an array of experiments, will be developed in the cross-media rehearsal theatre, in conjunction with guests and groups. The multi-perspective nature of the TESTeLAB presupposes that the participants will be drawing upon their various experiences, skills, artistic languages, and nationalities in an interdisciplinary manner, as Peter Brook wrote in his lecture-based classic work, *The Empty Space: A Book About the Theatre* in the 1960s, describing this as the “immediate theatre,” and which has recently found its way into a number of museum experiments and art scenarios.<sup>7</sup>

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6 Sennett, R. (2008). *The craftsman*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

7 See, for reference, Brook, P. (1968). *The empty space: A book about the theatre*. Deadly, Holy, Rough, Immediate. Museum spaces such as the ZKM, Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, are made available as “open fields of action” for the duration of the exhibition; Frohne, U. (2006). Der Künstler als Kulturaktivist: Détournement als ‘verwirklichte Poesie’ (pp. 961–968). In *Peter Weibel. das offene werk, 1964–1979*, Exhibition Cat., Neue Galerie Graz; Katzmair, H., Steiner, J., & Wegner, A. (Eds.). (2015). *Prinzip Labor: Museumsexperimente im Humboldt Lab Dahlem*. Berlin: Nicolai, German.

## EXPANDED CINEMA WORLDS AS A PLASTIC THEORY OF PRACTICE

At the same time, the “Expanded Cinema Worlds” are also intended to form a springboard for an ongoing grappling with the relationship between classic and digital media and theoretical discourse. Under the new, expanded concept of film as plastic theory, there is also a need to pinpoint where art, entertainment, and science intersect. To this end, W. J. T. Mitchell’s concept of the “metapicture” is helpful for exploring the relationships between text, image, sound and space.<sup>8</sup> The metapicture is intended to be a “self-conscious image” that is granted both autonomy and power of a corresponding magnitude. The theoretical is not something that needs to be added to the image from the outside; instead, it is embedded in its references, ambiguities, and cracks; within its very surface. This principle has been applied to various works based on film and media theory, such as *Histoire(s) du cinéma* and ALIAS YEDERBECK. This creation of a “self-conscious image universe” triggers the reactivation of the viewer within the cinematographic, 360-degree installation, in which the active observer perceives and completes the “open work of art” as a self-thinking medium. This fascination with interfaces sees the cracks between media as an opportunity to create abstractions, fashioning concrete images and the way in which they collide into statements about hybrid media and options for perceiving them. The clash between disparate visible elements allows the invisible to be grasped and made visible, thus presenting a comprehensive illustration of highly topical knowledge and the transfer of ideas aesthetically and conceptually within the context of artistic research.<sup>9</sup>

The disparate media and their relationships, not to mention the aesthetic couplings and breaks between the analogue and digital media used, are the precise subject of this cross-media transformation: in this case, intermediality could be described as a conceptual fusion “whereby elements of different media are brought together and build a new form that is not the sum of its parts but the convergence into a third form.”<sup>10</sup>

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8 Mitchell, W. J. T. (1994). *Picture theory: Essays on verbal and visual representation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

9 See, for reference, Partenburg, V. (2006). *Film als Theorie: Bildforschung bei Harun Farocki und Jean-Luc Godard*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

10 Spielmann, Y. (2011). Conceptual synchronicity: Intermedial encounters between film, video and computer. In D. Curtis, A. Rees, D. White, & S. Ball, (Eds.), *Expanded cinema: Art performance film* (pp. 194–201). London: Tate Publishing; Spielmann, Y. (1998). *Intermedialität: Das System Peter Greenaway*. Munich: Fink.

Artistic research is therefore not just a means of unlocking new worlds, but is itself a tool for quelling the upheavals that are currently being caused as technology transgresses its traditional borders. Art and design are ways of interpreting the world, and must be interpreted in turn if they are to be developed: "the future will primarily be a matter for design [and art]."<sup>11</sup>

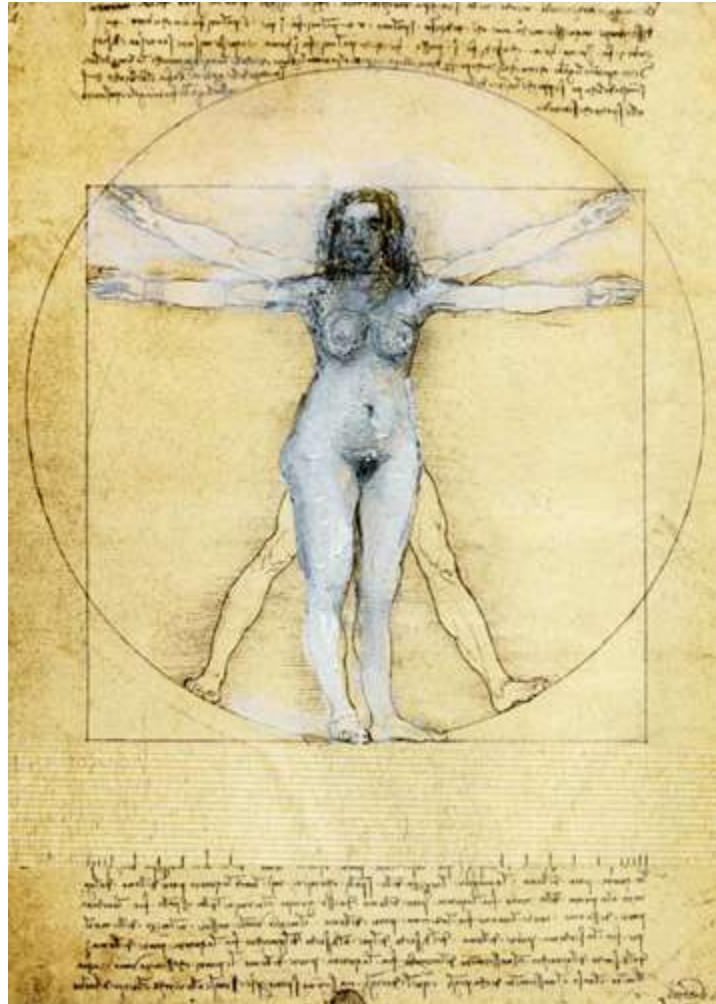


Figure 4. Leonardo da Vinci, L'Uomo Vitruviano, postcard, first overpainted in 1999.

11 Flusser, V. (1996). *Ins Universum der technischen Bilder*. Göttingen: European Photography; Flusser, V. (2011). *Into the universe of technical images* (N. A. Roth, Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

## EXPANDED CINEMA WORLDS AS A PLASTIC MACHINE FOR DISCOURSE

*"Leonardo da Vinci's symbolic and constructively methodical spirit becomes the model for the transgression and mutual permeation of art and science in an ultimate spirit of interdisciplinarity."*

*Paul Valéry, Introduction to the Method of Leonardo da Vinci*

The paradigm shift of the digital in new media aesthetics that is arising from the interplay between art, science, and technology, old and new, leads to the emergence of a new kind of media culture: "The hybridisation of media has done away with the strict compartmentalisation between media subsystems that has been long maintained by science, and merged them into complex artistic forms. This finds expression in new approaches to research."<sup>12</sup>

International symposia and associated events will be held in the CIRCUS CONTAINER COLOSSEUM in collaboration with other institutions, in order to promote and contextualise its artistic and scientific interpretation and reception (HYBRID FUTURE CINEMA: talks, lectures, essays, performances, exhibitions, etc.) Both aesthetic matters and the effects of digitisation in visual arts and the audiovisual moving image of the future are examined in this open format.

The transdisciplinary events aim to enhance artistic research practice and put it on an equal footing with other fields of knowledge in academic discourse, as well as promote exchange between artists and theoreticians in order to pave the way for new developments that are based on freedom, creativity, teaching, research, and experimentation.

12 Missomelius, P. (2006). *Digitale Medienkultur: Wahrnehmung, Konfiguration, Transformation*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.



Figure 5. Quadtriangle, Motion Capture Test Set, Free After Samuel Beckett (2017/18).

## CONCLUSION

*"We have to try to understand the overall functioning of man. [...] A person sees, hears and affects himself alone. Physics is purely anthropomorphic."*

*Paul Valéry, Cahiers*

As a place of production and reception, the TESTeLAB constitutes a practical space for acquiring the free and unpredictable experiences and insights that are required on a foray into the future of the technological image. New visual worlds are opened up through the development of an interactive prototype for a 360-degree panorama and dome installation. The future of the moving image can be walked into and experienced in the "sphere installation" of the CIRCUS CONTAINER COLOSSEUM in a way that stimulates the audience to actively reflect on the aesthetic and technological transformation of our environment. Wholly in keeping with the spirit of the original union between research and

teaching in a university setting, the "Expanded Cinema Worlds" have taken on the mission of transporting audiovisual media into the future, in a quest to represent and describe how the digital transformation of 21st-century society is being shaped and moderated, in all of its aspects.

On this basis, the artistic project VOYAGEUR DE L'IMAGE / WEGE ZUM BILD / TOWARDS THE IMAGE will once again be "set up" in the mothership of the university, so that it can continue to sow its seeds and forge connections, because we cannot dispense with either art or science: "This having-to-be-based (*Sich-einrichtenmüssen*) on its own results as the ways and means of a progressing methodology, is the essence of the character of [artistic] research as constant activity."<sup>13</sup>

The audiovisual essay FROM ASSISI AFTER PADUA, a vivid demonstration of aesthetic, formal, structural, and image theoretical premises, together with their combined approaches, both opens up new pathways and closes off others. Bursting through conventional forms of representation and questioning established patterns of perception opens up new spaces of experience, which can amalgamate the personal, current, and virtual into time-based "meta-documentation." The essay films made in this age of the intermingling and manipulation of analogue and digital will only become truly topical in the future, as it is ready to accommodate complex themes and the full range of genres.

The essay introduces a conceptual and practice-based way of working as a form of discussion. This approach puts forward the premise, in form and content, for a common starting point in theory and practice, as well as providing the foundation for interacting with new partners.

<sup>13</sup> See, for reference, Germán Toro-Pérez, On the difference between artistic research and artistic practice (p. 33). Quotation from Martin Heidegger (1938), The time of the world picture. In J. Young & K. Haynes (Eds. and Trans.), *Off the Beaten Track* (pp. 57–73, 59), 2002, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. In C. Caduff, F. Siegenthaler, & T. Wälchli (Eds.), *Kunst und Künstlerische Forschung, Art and Artistic Research, Zürcher Jahrbuch der Künste, Band 6*, 2009, Zürich: Scheidegger & Spiess, German, English.

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# WALKING IN THE CITY: BETWEEN SILENCES AND EMPTINESS

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## Keywords:

walking  
intimacy  
silence  
body  
wanderlust

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to give a glimpse of the festival Urban Emptiness Nicosia, which explored the interconnection between walking and new media in digital and physical spaces in Nicosia, Cyprus, and elsewhere. Artists from all over the world investigated silence, intimacy, and emptiness in the contemporary urban fabric of the city through collective experiences and documentation of diverse artistic practices with parallel and simultaneous actions in other cities.

As Nicosia is a divided capital, the idea of crossing, borders and limits was almost inevitably an integral part of many projects. Investigations of “parallel cities within a city” were also carried out as guided walks, referencing the urban reality of marginalised communities and groups, in contrast to the high street experience. Walks/performances also strove to connect the experience of navigating virtual and actual spaces simultaneously.

Ultimately, this presentation asks the question: can a playful encounter in public spaces carry political implications or make us experience a certain place anew?



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## URBAN EMPTINESS NICOSIA IN CONTEXT

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### **A festival about intimacy, silence, and the city**

Walking as an artistic practice is a form developed as early as the 1960s, with the pioneering work of Richard Long. Other major artists, such as Hamish Fulton, Francis Alÿs, Janet Cardiff, and Gabriel Orozco, as well as collectives such as Stalker (Italy) with ON/Osservatorio Nomade, which made a bridge from the late 1960s to the 21st century and influenced the contemporary art scene intensely with walking as a form of art practice.

Walking as an aesthetic practice goes as far back as the end of the 18th century. Its basis was laid by thinkers and writers as Wordsworth and Jean Jacques Rousseau, whose daily walks resulted in the *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*. Since this beginning, walking has been a creative tool and inspiration for artistic practice and its importance was understood as a contemplative practice—grounded on the tradition of the peripatetic philosophers of ancient Greece. Rebecca Solnit, in her book *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*, is probably the first to attempt a systemisation of the history of walking for pleasure and for political, aesthetic, and social purposes, examining how the world around the walker interacts with the experience of their body and imagination (Solnit, 2000).

This paper uses the methodology of the case study examining the festival Urban Emptiness Nicosia (1-16 December 2018), which explored the interconnection between walking and new media (Careri, 2001, and Solnit, 2000) in digital and physical spaces in Nicosia and elsewhere. Artists from the United States, Puerto Rico, Japan, Mexico, Belgium, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Catalonia/Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Greece, and Cyprus investigated silence, intimacy, and emptiness (Marc & Howe, 2009) in the contemporary urban fabric through collective experiences and documentation of diverse artistic practices within the urban landscapes, with parallel and simultaneous actions in New York, Brussels, and Athens.

Focusing on emptiness/silences and sounds/spaces/movements, the festival acted as a laboratory in which interdisciplinary artistic and research-based practices were used to explore our experiencing and imagining of the urban environment.

The festival also included walking workshops, a round table, and a complementary exhibition of performances, video, and sound pieces, mapping and walking related installations, with parallel and simultaneous actions in other cities.

Below are outlined some of the approaches taken by the artists, and highlights of the festival's performances are presented. Some are playful, like children's games, some are more contemplative, and some are plainly political.

## SOME APPROACHES

### **Stefaan Van Biesen and Annemie Mestdagh (BE): Meander and the interconnectedness of everybody**

The festival employed interdisciplinary approaches regarding the relationships between body and movements, sounds and silences, and digital and physical spaces. Such was the work of Stefaan Van Biesen and Annemie Mestdagh from Belgium, who invited participants to walk collectively in various directions, tied together by a shared attribute, a meandering elastic belt, that both constrained and facilitated their collective movements. This work enabled participants to physically experience the interconnection and interdependence between humans, stirring us away from the customary egocentric state of mind in which we dwell.



### **Frans Van Lent (NL): A Performative Walk 2 - where anyone takes charge**

Collaborative creation and decision-making, just as documentation of the process, were a crucial part of the laboratory, prompting critical thinking about aesthetic experiences in relation to our everyday life. An example of this was the performative walk of Frans Van Lent, where, according to the artist, *walk* was used as the *base*, the *method* and the *outcome* of a process of *leading* and *following*.<sup>14</sup> Van Lent, who has done a series

of performative walks in the past years, decided here to relinquish control over his walk and instead give the participants the option to co-create the course. Even though it started with a prescribed route, initiated by Frans, every second repetition of the walk could be altered by the person walking in front, thus creating five alternative routes. The walk was silent, and all decisions were made by any participant that would choose to speed up and lead the group. That created interesting surprises as sometimes the participants had no clue where they were going. The walk ended when the group returned at the starting point.

### **Ieke Trinks (NL): Meetings - a playful interaction between strangers**

By generating transversal dialogical encounters with participants, the aesthetic practice was rooted on relationships with one another and with the space we transit and inhabit as an ever changing dynamic. Ieke Trinks organised a set of meetings, with prescribed scenarios, where participants inhabited and navigated space in unexpected ways. Trinks performs work that often includes the contributions of others in the creation of it. "Meetings" is a series of instructions conducted during a period when the artists Ieke Trinks and Bernard Roddy were unable to meet one another. The meetings take place in the city's public environment. Each conducted meeting can be read as an aesthetic set of instructions, but by performing them, they turn into an experience piece. Different participants who don't know one another are invited to perform a meeting.



Handing out a set of rules like in a game, participants are called to act out the artwork themselves. In "Line," two participants were asked to "walk backwards, from opposite ends of a street beginning several blocks away. If they bump, each returns to the direction they are facing. If they pass, they maintain eye contact and continue walking backwards in the direction they have been going until they reach the start point of the other person's walk."<sup>15</sup> This resulted in the participants walking towards one another, and then continuing their path, never really meeting, while passers-by were trying to decipher this unexpected behaviour in public space.

In "Chance," two participants that have never met before start looking for one another in a delineated area of a neighbourhood. They wander around looking for one another until two hours have passed.

In "Traces," two participants are walking for two hours in opposite directions around the same block. Each time they meet, they mark the spot on the pavement, to indicate time and place.

<sup>14</sup> As per the project description offered by the artist.

<sup>15</sup> From the guidelines handed out by Ieke Trinks. Concept by Ieke Trinks and Bernard Roddy.

**Milka Panayotova (IT): Hide and Seek. Touch and Feel - games are not just for children**

An alternative experience of the city but also of our relating to our fellow city dwellers was offered by Milka Panayotova. "Hide and Seek. Touch and Feel" is about playing games, just as children do, says the artist.<sup>16</sup> It takes the audience on the street, a natural playground, that reserves surprise and unexpected encounters.

Panayotova is a performance maker and artist whose research focuses on the possibilities of communication between performer and audience, with particular attention to sensory deprivation and body memory. For Urban Emptiness Nicosia, she created a childlike play performance of hide and seek, and then led us to experience the city through our senses of touch and feel, rather than the usual lazy, mindless looking. Participants had to choose a pair. They would then alternately walk the city streets with eyes closed and the help and guidance of their pair. This meant give up control and trust a person you might have just met, and also rely on senses other than the dominant sense of vision, all qualities of children's behaviour, to which we become oblivious as we grow old.



**Fereshteh Toosi (US): Driftwood - where senses just wake up**

Another walk that enhanced our mindful perceptions of our surroundings and offered an alternative way to experience them was Fereshteh Toosi's work, "Driftwalk." Toosi an artist-researcher at the Department of Arts, Florida International University, Miami, designs participatory experiences and hybrid objects such as oyster mushroom sculptures, audio portraits, and films processed in mint tea, and leads the Nature Connection Arts Lab. During her walk, participants explored the ecology of the city while walking and engaging in a series of sensory experiences focusing on reflection and deep listening. Toosi combines in her practice forest therapy, mindfulness, and other contemplative practices helping people to reconnect to nature.

<sup>16</sup> From the performance description given by the artist.

**Sophia Hadjipapa-Gee (CY): Parallel Nicosias - mapping the joy**

One of the authors' contributions to the festival was a guided tour of "Nicosia Highlights" according to the children of the multicultural nursery of Eleneio. For this project, Sophia Hadjipapa-Gee worked together with the children and their teacher to find out which spots of their environment are important to them, as they had to identify the "points of joy." Hadjipapa-Gee has often used the devices of mapping (O'Rourke, 2013) and wandering in her work. For this project she suggested that the children of the nursery map and walk about their most important spots in the urban environment. Mapping was also used in her earlier project "Metromentality," where via an online platform, participants were asked to add their own points of reference in the city, whether those were of political, historical, sentimental, or even anecdotal importance (Macauley, 2000: 3-43), and then navigate the city through the use of an interactive map of a virtual, utopian metro. In that project, people from different communities were called to participate and, for example, different historical points were chosen by one community or another. In the project "Parallel Nicosias," though, contrary to adults' expectations, those cardinal points were not related to the children's identity and local community, but were places of play and family sharing time.



**Elli Vassalou and Maya Dalinsky (BE/US/GR): Parallel Perceptions of Divided Cities**

With the festival taking place in Nicosia, "the last divided capital city of Europe," according to the grim slogan of the Nicosia Municipality,<sup>17</sup> the notions of crossing and of border became inevitably an integral part of many projects. Artists explored through walking experiences and performances, their fascination relating to the two parallel cities of the Northern and Southern parts of Nicosia. Visual artists/performers Elli Vassalou and Maya Dalinsky divided the participants in two groups and invited them to come to parallel perceptions of the urban setting through the practice

<sup>17</sup> Retrieved 26 January 2019 from <http://www.nicosia.org.cy/en-GB/home/>



of video-walking: the perception offered through a previously prepared digital recording, and the audience's lived perception as they encountered each other on the other side of the divide. "Video walks are pre-recorded trajectories through space that spectators embody by trying to make video match reality. "Parallel Perceptions" was an invitation to explore visual and tactile perception as a relationship to the urban environment, encountering space first through the body and then through the lens of a camera. This practice is brought into the public sphere, where participants build their own video walks *in situ*.<sup>18</sup>

In particular, the artist duo focused on the parallel perceptions of the borders/divisions through the city and explored them beyond preconceived identities and narratives. Body and compositional practices were shared in order to create an original video-walk for the festival.

**Unfinished Business (CH): Creating Truth in Conflicting Experiences**

The "Unfinished Business" group also divided their audience in two groups, and each participant was invited to create a route, describing to a voice recording device their experience while walking. Then the participants exchanged devices and had to trace the other person's experience through following the recording, but also layering their own experience on top of that. This work could be characterised as challenging, as the two perceptions often conflicted. For example, for the first participant, walking through the buffer zone and the surrounding degraded area of the occupied part could be intriguing, but for the second, who had to retrace the route, it could be terrifying.



**Bionica (ES): Quiet Riot Tour - where the walk becomes a protest**

Bionica's was one of the first tours of the festival. The curators were a bit anxious to have them, since the group from Catalonia did not travel to Cyprus, but rather directed their audience through the use of technology and 4G towards a guided tour of both parts of Nicosia. In an engaging and interactive way, Bionica managed to draw parallels between the Catalanian political situation and the Cyprus problem. Participants were asked to make choices, take sides, but also listen to songs that found their parallels in both countries.

18 As per the performance description offered by the artists.

**Veronica Cordova de la Rosa (MX): Silent Witness - where the marginalised meet the high street**

Veronica Cordova de la Rosa, a Mexican artist and academic who runs the Laper (Life art and Performance) group at Oxford Brooks University, also performed a quiet riot in Nicosia, as her performative walk entailed sweeping the streets of Nicosia with brooms of red roses, dressed as maintenance staff. Cordova de la Rosa says about this work: "In this performance, a long walk around the streets delimited the space in which the performer moves around. The street is swept with a broom that had roses instead of bristles. It is swept until the roses are completely destroyed. During the action the broom transforms into other things; it slowly transforms into a tool to clean and a tool to destroy itself."<sup>19</sup> In a silent way, indeed, Cordova de la Rosa comments about the dynamics between the suppressors and the suppressed, drawing parallels between the Latino community that services the wealthy white Americans, and the (mainly Asian) immigrants in Cyprus, servicing the local population as helpers as she sweeps the high street where on Sunday both these groups may meet.



**Geert Vermeire (BE): Reading the Moment - silent collective walk**

Geert Vermeire develops an ongoing series of collective silent walks and performative actions in collaboration with artists as Marielys Burgos Melendez and Stefaan van Biesen, together with the public, often defined by collective way-losing and way-finding, in a relation between walking, moving towards/with/from each other, and meditative practices, placing attention on spatial awareness, kinetic memory of space, local context-history, and conscious intervention. The outcome of these collective walks are audio recordings and the re-enacted memory of places through walking scores. His walk in Nicosia invited the participants to move in silence, each in a different direction from the square where the action started, walking for 30 minutes with no other intention than to get lost, eventually turn around after 30 minutes, reach out mentally for the others, and start walking back, without using the same route as the one that lead them there, and (if the participant manages to arrive back at the point of origin) wait for the others. A performance creating a state of being-leaving (home) without knowing where you will arrive on your journey, and not knowing if you will be able to come back, nor knowing on arrival if someone will be waiting for you, or if the ones that you are waiting for will ever come.

19 As per the project description offered by the artist.



## ENDING REMARKS: FROM HERE WHERE?

For economy of space, not all walks and performances of the festival were accounted here. However, they all, even the ones not mentioned, created an immersive experience for the participants and viewers, who became part of the experiential artwork and saw the urban landscape, but also our relation to it and between us, in a completely different light, touched either by the playfulness or the contemplative qualities of the performances, or even their political agitation.

The Urban Emptiness Festival Nicosia is embedded in a network, taking shape as an international project with an interdisciplinary exploration of emptiness and silence in various contemporary cities, called the Urban Emptiness Network.<sup>20</sup> Through a series of further ongoing actions—workshops, performative projects, open discussions, exhibitions—the project intends to contribute to the discourse about the social, educational, ecological, and cultural value of silence in urban life. Acknowledging the significance of the contribution of diverse groups of people in its results, the project invites students and local citizens in its actions between 2016 and 2019 in Athens, Brussels, Edinburgh, Limassol, Nicosia, and New York. The international project and the Urban Emptiness Festival Nicosia explore the conditions of emptiness in the contemporary city through the examination of silence in its embodied understanding, using walking as the key instrument. Combining methodologies from different disciplines (i.e., architecture, arts, dance/performative arts, walking, and new media), it traces the silence of empty, abandoned, or even hidden parts of contemporary cities, seeking to reveal their particular qualities, examine and comment on their role in the life of the local communities, and also suggest innovative ways of mapping them (Kakalis & Mygdali, 2016). The walking exploration of the city draws our attention to people's actions and doings; as an immersive practice it reveals the potentiality of space by using participants as active producers of content and meaning.

Openness and improvisation are deployed to trigger the emergence of qualities that allow for a more democratic understanding of the individual's engagement with the city. Acting in silence and seeking intimacy entails a negotiation with the boundaries of ourselves and, therefore, becomes a process of appearance in a world of encounters (Kakalis & Mygdali, 2018).

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<sup>20</sup> See <https://urbanemptiness.org/>

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# SHIFTING CONTEXTS



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## Keywords

re-think  
re-discover  
encourage  
resilience

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Fontys Arts is encouraging and facilitating art practices in public space. Our programmes and initiatives are at the forefront of building resilience by educating a new generation of artists; artists that have recognised the importance and responsibilities of creating art that is developed and rooted in public space. Our mission as an institute is to guide artists that wish to leave behind conventional spaces, that want to re-think and re-discover our shared spaces.

# TRANSFORMING THE ARTS IN PUBLIC SPACE

*What kind of responsibilities do next generation artists have in our future urbanised communities? How can educational structures adapt to fast-paced changes in society?*

These questions have concerned Fontys Arts and have been used as a starting point to evaluate the status quo and to investigate alternative educational approaches.

Based on the history of the different academies within Fontys Arts, on the existing tradition of education in public space, and on the fact that we are situated in the heart of Tilburg, the theme of the ELIA Biennale Conference 2018, *Resilience and the City*, resonated strongly with the institutional, educational, and artistic identity of Fontys Arts.

Fontys Arts in Tilburg, the Netherlands, provides higher professional education on Bachelor and Master degree level in the field performing arts and art education. It offers an inspiring learning environment in which students acquire knowledge and develop the skills they need to be successful in a rapidly changing art world. Fontys Arts houses 15 different art programmes under one roof, of which eight are international. With its iconic architectural venue, Fontys Arts provides a safe and state-of-the-art environment to shape its students' artistic skills.

## **Creative Hub Tilburg**

Tilburg, a city in the province of Noord-Brabant, has a long cultural tradition that goes back to the 19th century. Today, Tilburg is a cultural city buzzing with art initiatives and festivals. More than 30,000 students transform Tilburg into a hub for creativity and innovation every single day. Fontys Arts collaborates closely with art and culture organisations in and around Tilburg.

Fontys Arts focuses on the following key components:

- *Co-creation* - Offering an investigative learning environment for those who wish to turn the world upside-down.  
At Fontys Arts, artists encourage each other to investigate and co-create tomorrow's art world. Projects that are part of the programmes are created based on equal partnerships with the work field. These partnerships can be with arts or cultural institutes, but also organisations from other fields. This makes the connection to the work field immediate, and brings a sense of urgency to the artistic practice of the students.

- *Interdisciplinary Collaboration* - Challenging students to explore cross-disciplinary practices in the arts to inspire others and to encourage collaboration.  
In our institute collaboration between programmes is encouraged, but also with disciplines from outside of the arts. A research community has recently started concerning the subject of interdisciplinary practice.
- *International Learning Environment* - Meeting international standards and by being well connected, both nationally and internationally, Fontys Arts can provide high-quality international education.  
Our university attracts students from all around the world who together with our international network of educators build a sustainable international community.

Fontys Arts is part of Fontys University, the largest University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands, with over 44,000 students in various cities. With 50 nationalities from all over the world, we have the second-largest number of international students in the Netherlands. Despite the large number of students, education at Fontys is organised on a small scale. The university is known for project-based education with a tight connection to the work field. Fontys has been ranked as one of the five best Dutch Universities of Applied Sciences and offers more than 35 international Bachelor, Master, and Minor programmes in English, covering a wide range of fields, such as Arts, Communication, Economics & Marketing, Engineering, Health Care, ICT, and Logistics.

Fontys Arts, as an arts university, has been encouraging and facilitating art practices in public space, specifically in urban space, for many years. We believe our programmes and initiatives are at the forefront of building resilience by educating a new generation of artists; artists that have recognised the importance and responsibilities of creating art that is not merely presented in public space but developed and rooted in public space. Interconnectedness and cross-pollination between art disciplines contribute to a more sustainable cultural landscape.

Recognising changing cultural landscapes and career perspectives in contemporary and future societies has led our university's investigation to focus on supporting:

- the facilitation of interdisciplinary education
- the co-creation within a hybrid work field
- the engagement of an international learning communities

In order to manifest these focus areas, the following three innovative trajectories were established:

1. The initiatives by Fontys Arts *Dance Academy* to educate resilient dancers for a constantly transforming work field.
2. The newly created international master programme, *Performing Public Space*; a programme for artists of all disciplines who choose public space as their artistic environment.
3. The interdisciplinary community project *The Darling Collection*, initiated in 2016 in collaboration with the city of Darling, South Africa. This project series was concluded in December 2018.

## 1. THE RESILIENT DANCER

The contemporary dance art practice is defined as diverse. Not only in terms of the different contexts wherein dance art is created and presented, but also in a diversity of style, technique, culture, body, and artistic strategy. As artists, we constantly move in and out of social, public, political, private, and virtual spaces.

For this reason, Fontys Dance Academy believes that dance art and dance artists are more than ever capable of empowering and transforming both personal and social domains of life, and have a positive impact on our physical and ecological surroundings. The skills of a dance artist are valuable within a rich variety of domains.

Because the shifts in the arts field are radical, we need to rethink our educational culture radically as well. We need to rethink what a contemporary dance artist is and what it needs to flourish in today's working field and in the future. The constantly moving frameworks we find ourselves in call for other strategies with which we can embrace them. As new generations hardly see boundaries between style or culture, but instead see interconnected fields of interests, we might adapt to this kind of model and provide a grounded and safe base for both students and staff in which to learn and develop together and explore new and unknown territories.

*What makes a resilient dancer?*

A resilient dancer has a strong sense of self, and knows that they represent more than a defined professional role. They have a broad and inclusive view of the work field. They know how to appreciate certain skills beyond dance related skills. They are empathic, and can contribute to develop new structures and ways of building a fulfilling career in collaboration with others.

*Why we find it important to educate resilient dancers?*

The contemporary dance field has changed radically in recent years. The cuts in subsidy, the lack of long-term contracts or stable positions have put a lot of pressure on the art field. Young generations are questioning the present structures on which the field is built upon, and are calling for new ways of operating and working outside the fixed structures. We recognise the increased developments in experimenting with alternative approaches and tools.

### **Erasmus+ project Inclusive**

A project that influenced our change of perspective is the Erasmus+ project *Inclusive; The Transferable Skills of the Dance Artist*. This platform was created in collaboration with the *Duncan Conservatory* in Prague and *The Royal Conservatory* in Antwerp. The focus was on the *transferable skills* of the dancer, and how these skills could offer creative answers to particular needs in other sectors, such as healthcare, urban development, and somatic practices. The goal was to widen the perspective on the dancer's career, since the narrow scope of educating a dancer exclusively for the stage did not reflect the current situation of dancers who usually undergo various transitions throughout their careers.

The project ran from 2014-2017, and included several teacher and student events in Antwerp, Prague, and Tilburg. The final output was an online community, a platform where best practices could be shared and where people could connect in relation to this specific topic.

Including outside views and researching unknown territories were part of an inclusive work setting that enlarged artistic, social, and intellectual growth. By encouraging cross-fertilisation, society could learn from dance and movement practices and from embodied perspectives.

The platform was designed for dance performers, choreographers, teachers, movers, and anyone who wanted to challenge the boundaries of their own movement practice. It offers a playground of exploration to rethink the potential of movement and dance practice in a wider, interdisciplinary, and inclusive manner. This platform was the result of a three-year Erasmus+ project.

As one of the partner organisations in this international collaboration, Fontys Arts aimed for an explication of the theme through practice-based research around dance in public



spaces and the effects on the art, the artist, and the public space by changing contexts. As dance and public space has a long tradition our education, this project was a chance to develop the theme and make it more explicit.

The Erasmus+ project led us to start a process of redesigning our education. Our aim is to embed what we learned into every current and future initiative within our faculty, in order to transform the dance education sector from within.

#### **FOR ELIA 2018**

Ulrika Kinn Svensson, Artistic Advisor of the Fontys Arts Dance Academy, presented a paper presentation featuring the variety of above mentioned initiatives.

## **2. INNOVATIVE NEW MASTER PROGRAMME**

In August 2017, Fontys Arts launched the international master programme *Performing Public Space*, a one-year, blended-learning programme designed for international creatives from a variety of art disciplines who currently focus on public space as their artistic environment. The master programme promotes artistic research to study public space, socio-political matters, and various performing theories, in order to mobilise artists to study, develop, and execute their individual projects.

Economic shifts make space in cities a rare luxury. In the age of populism, we feel strongly about encouraging artists in diversifying information, experiences, and encounters to hold against possible future developments in our society.

*"If we look outside of the traditional infrastructure, we see so many possibilities for art."*  
Karen Neervoort, Dean of Fontys Arts

Combining an interdisciplinary range of approaches, including critical theory and other modes of analysis, with an equally diverse range of research methods, the programme offers creatives the opportunity to explore the impact of producing work in public space.

The course's approach to flexibility and forward-thinking is designed for creatives from a variety of art disciplines (such as, but not limited to, theatre, dance, circus, music, fine arts, architecture, digital arts, graphic design, etc.). The programme welcomes artists with an existing artistic practice and the ambition to work in public space.

The full-time programme combines online and on-site learning. This means that while the Master lasts one year, the majority of the course will occur online, via an online learning platform.

While students continue working on their individual projects in their home countries, they will also have access to the 24/7 online platform for intensive research and creative dialogue with their peers and mentors.

In addition, students will be invited to join on-site intensive "bootcamps" in the Netherlands, on three occasions per year (two weeks each, for a total of six weeks).

*"The combination of individual distant work and intensive group work is functional for this kind of programme and offers a big agency to the artists."*  
Danae Theodoridou, Programme Coach

Bootcamps include the following modules:

- *Theory Lab*: A collection of lectures given by guest lecturers, like artists specialised in working in public space and theorists that can contribute to the conceptual, intellectual, and practical context of making art in public space.
- *Co-Creative Lab*: Group activities in public space. Different assignments will be practiced and researched in the field.
- *Urban Safaris*: The students will experience guided sessions in public space.
- *Case Studies*: Students learn from each other's practices by introducing, sharing, and solving their individual challenges.
- *Best Practice Dialogues*: Talks with invited artists about their artistic practices, paired with a relevant literature study.
- *Student-led activities*: Peer-to-peer exchange sessions, group readings, and coaching sessions.

This Master focuses strongly on building an international learning community based on a like-minded and ambitious group of creatives seeking to strengthen their international arts network and to analyse the versatile facets of public space.

#### **FOR ELIA 2018**

After a short introduction on the organisational objectives, aspirations, and challenges intrinsic to this new endeavour, a short documentary film was shown, sharing exclusive insights into the development of this innovative education programme and the students' individual experiences during the master programme (presented by Heleen de Hoon, Head of Studies, Performing Public Space).

### 3. INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*The Darling Collection* is an interdisciplinary art project series that took place in South Africa to interact with unknown communities in unknown environments. The two main objectives were to develop skills on how to engage with communities and to make art inspired by existing stories. Through local interaction with people, global topics were addressed. The project was inspired by the African vision on art as a reflection of human connections. Art conveying a message which could encourage a community to grow resilience.

#### FOR ELIA 2018

Transplanting *The Darling Collection* to Rotterdam

Rotterdam, like many other cities, is a melting pot of cultures. However, in recent years, opposition against diversity has increased dramatically. Due to the negative image of “the unknown,” an atmosphere of alienation and segregation has emerged. The fact that every single resident of the city, local or foreign, is someone with ideas, stories, and experiences, is rarely recognised. Often the unique qualities which define an individual and strengthen a diverse community stay hidden in the dark.

A group of students worked on the production of *The Rotterdam Collection*. In one of the streets in the city centre, ten inhabitants of different origins were asked to provide an object together with a story. Students were given the assignment to translate these collected pieces into an art production (presented and organised by Jan Grolleman). This project series was concluded in December 2018.

### HOW DOES FONTYS ARTS TRANSLATE LEARNING INTO EDUCATION?

In collaboration. It was clear from the beginning that processes of change needed to be developed and shared within our learning community in close relation with the professional work field. The described initiatives by Fontys Arts have been designed to develop resilient artists—artists who are prepared for diverse and alternative art careers defined by their own ideas, craft, and visions. Developments in society and the professional field have fuelled the need for crafting change within our university and beyond.

Our mission as an institute is to guide artists who wish to leave behind conventional spaces, who want to rethink and rediscover our shared spaces. We want to shape artists that face change in its momentum, outside our doorsteps, every day. Fontys Arts is proud of its strong lineup of individual forward-thinkers, and hopes to unite in debates about the future of the arts field and the responsibilities in arts education in the Netherlands and beyond.

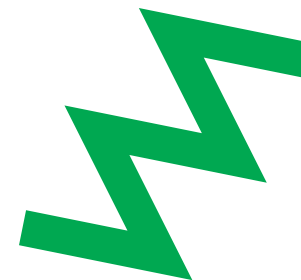


Image: *Making Space*,  
Photo: *William van der Voort*

# AN EXTENDED NOTION OF THEATRE – DEMOCRATIC ENCOUNTERS AND ITS POETICS

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## Keywords:

theatre  
democracy  
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site-specific  
relevance



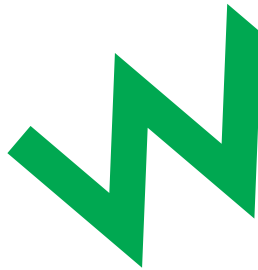
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## ABSTRACT

Presentation of artistic practices that enable encounters between citizens on eye level: “Evening School Import,” “Sports & Politics,” “All Languages – a crash course,” and “Tårnby gets a visit” (inspired by Steven Spielberg’s *E.T.*). These artworks address social and political discourses, don’t narrow down participants to target groups, and take all equally in playful and serious social framings.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## AN EXTENDED NOTION OF THEATRE – DEMOCRATIC ENCOUNTERS AND ITS POETICS

The following lines present four examples of what I call the “extended notion of theatre.” These works have theatre as a background but ended up with formal setups and work strategies that differ very much from what one would define as “theatre.” The reason for this development in my work lies in concrete artistic and societal problems and ideas that I describe below. The notion refers to Joseph Beuys and his “extended notion of art.” Beuys sees society as a social sculpture and everyone in it as an artist forming this sculpture. To call the following examples as having an extended notion of theatre helps me in framing, understanding, and communicating the works.

The idea that theatre plays a crucial part in a democratic society, as a kind of an antique forum where people meet relevant issues, distraction, fun, and social engagement, is an important motivation to engage in theatre. But how can this function be maintained when most people do not at all share the habit and interest in theatre?

How to enforce the connection of theatre work with “real life” and its protagonists—the citizens around the corner—and still claim that art does not need to prove its usefulness by solving the problems irresponsible politics have created?

How to get the voice of people around the corner heard without instrumentalising them as a function of your artistic expression? Who is the artist that is dealing with the social? Only a *réparateur* of failed politics? Is there anything more to offer? Can an artwork be used to find unseen treasures in the middle of the normal currents of our daily lives?

I describe here four examples of performative setups that enable encounters on eye level between citizens and artists as citizens: “Evening School Import,” “Sports & Politics,” and “All Languages – a crash course,” and “Tårnby gets a visit” (a site-specific remake of Steven Spielberg’s *E.T.*). These artworks address social and political discourses, and don’t narrow down participants to target groups.

These participatory performances balance on the fine line between social encounters, friendship performance, political discourse, invitation to strangers, and poetics. They have been developed to regain a sense of the local community and enforce the political voicing of individuals. They gather people with various backgrounds in the same physical space and create meetings on eye level with a light spirit. They create openness, social

fantasy, and surprising connections between strangers, or even opponents. They go beyond representative artwork, value daily randomness, and question too simple political remedies by their twist of perspectives and humour.



Figure 1. Tårnby Torv Festival 2017. Photo: Onur Agbaba



Figure 2. Tårnby Torv Festival 2017. Photo: Onur Agbaba

Figure 3. Tårnby Torv Festival 2017.  
Photo: Manon Div Duquesnay

### Sports and Politics

“Sports & Politics” is a format where a local audience and politicians are invited to a common sports training followed by discussions on politics. It starts with a physical training for everyone, led by a local sportsman. The training already creates a funny way of being together. Have you ever done physical exercises together with one of your politicians? Have you ever tried balance exercises with a right-wing politician? Have you ever counted the push-ups of your mayor? In sports and politics this is what you can experience. The training has an equalising effect on people; it creates spontaneous humour and openness. The discussions that follow become direct, fearless, and serious. Not only do people address their politicians in a unusual way but also the politicians suddenly listen differently, feel taken seriously and lose their well-trained habitus of self-protection by standard rhetoric. The potential of sports and politics is far beyond artwork. But it started by a conceptual twist of a theatre maker who did nothing else than listen to the ideas of regular citizens. One of my talking partners, whom I met in the frame of a street performance I did, said to me that he feels part of the public space when he is in the fitness centre together with his friends where they work out.

There they talk—after the workout—about politics. The second inspiration for “Sports & Politics” came through a practice done by Nomad Dance Academy, from some dance institutions in Serbia, Macedonia, and Bosnia (e.g., Station for Dance Belgrade, Kino Kultura Skopje). Regularly they do an “Advocacy day for dance,” where they invite politicians into an experience of dancing. A day with debates, but also with a shared physical training. Sports and politics has been developed for the Tårnby Torv Festival 2017 ([www.taarnbytorvfestival.dk](http://www.taarnbytorvfestival.dk)).



Figure 4. Tårnby Torv Festival 2017.  
Photo: Manon Div Duquesnay

### Evening School Import

“Evening School Import” is a school programme based on the fact that refugees always bring knowledge and skills along with them, but often don’t have the opportunity to use or share them with others. This school allows refugees to make these skills visible—and local people to become aware of them. As opposed to a normal education, each class happens only once. So in a way it functions like a performance; it is a live act. In 90 minutes you can get basic new knowledge in Arabic language, for example, but also a vibrant memory of a unique encounter with the potential of rethinking concepts of identity. The artistic strategy is a hybrid between activism and participatory performance. To underline the artistic function, which consists in the creation of certain “images” that oppose regular clichés on refugees, we only present “Evening School Import” in the context of theatre or art institutions. “Evening School Import” was developed in Zurich and is currently running in Basel, Zurich, and Fribourg. In 2015, when the performance started, the topic of refugees was on everyone’s mind. Now the political focus has started to shift. “Evening School Import” tries to react to this shift by reworking the frame; for example, we now focus less on the notion of the “refugees,” and instead now call them “migrants.” In order to stay in a place where utopian perspectives can be trained, the “Evening School Import” aims to get rid of the problematic determination of people coming to Europe as refugees. This terminology itself can be seen as a problem that already prevents these people from becoming regular citizens ([www.abendschule-import.ch](http://www.abendschule-import.ch)).

Figure 5. Tårnby Torv Festival 2017.  
Photo: Manon Siv Duquesnay

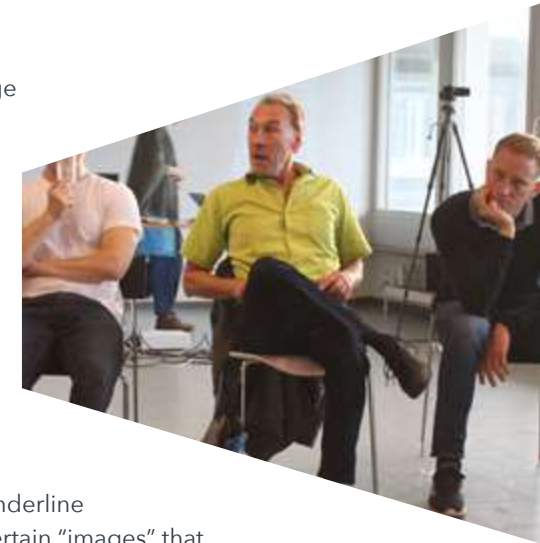


Figure 7. Evening School Import.  
Photo: Olaf Brachem





Figure 8. Evening School Import.  
Photo: Olaf Brachem



Figure 9. Evening School Import.  
Photo: Andreas Liebmann



Figure 10. Evening School Import.  
Photo: Andreas Liebmann

Figure 11. Evening School Import.  
Photo: Andreas Liebmann



### All Languages - a crash course

"All Languages - a crash course" works comparably, and was actually a main source for "Evening School import." Foreigners who work in various jobs around a specific urban site are invited to teach one class of their mother tongue within a several-week programme that offers "all languages" which are spoken at that place. Each day there is another language to learn. For the audience it is not only the single course that is interesting but also the visit of several of them within the given period. This experience creates an inner landscape of all the rich origins that are condensed at a place with many foreigners. In this project, I learned a lot about the structure of languages. But my main lesson was to experience the beauty of knowledge incorporated in people and their life history. People always have knowledge—and the mother tongue is one of the deepest. The project was done in 2011 at Brunnenpassage Wien, which is situated in an urban area with a high percentage of foreigners.

### Tårnby gets a visit

Tårnby gets a visit is a film about and with citizens from the Danish suburb of Tårnby. They are portrayed in their usual surroundings—be it their garden, workplace, favourite restaurant, or elsewhere. They choose the place. At these places they show and talk about their life with a mute puppet that looks like the creature E.T. from Steven Spielberg's movie. They talk to the puppet, explain what they like, and show it around in their chosen areas. This scenery refers to the original movie, in which the boy Elliot explains to E.T. the American way of life in two minutes. In Tårnby, "Elliot" could be of any age, gender, and migratory or not migratory background. The whole gesture of the film is documentary, but is given a fictional, playful, and seemingly

naive turn by the simple fact that people talk to this puppet. The filming process lasted one month and included regular citizens, politicians, a priest, refugees, children, and both Danish and foreign people. The filming process is seen as a performance in itself, which ends at the premiere where all of the people in the movie and other spectators can show up. There they see what has been filmed, but first they participate in the last scene: E.T. is sent home by the audience of the premiere. This scene is cut at the premiere itself and added to the movie on the same evening. So the premiere is combined together with the last shooting day. The project works on the social sculpture of this community, creates a film out of it, and brings people together that might be neighbours but often are strangers to each other. The film itself is an entertaining, calm, and poetic view of unspectacular lives with hidden treasures, and it creates a fine gap in the everyday of the people. The artistic agenda that drives this performance film is to move away from the idea that only the crisis produces (spectacular) food for artists and social debate. My interest is to find artistic material and audiences where there is the most normality, maybe seemingly boring. It is there where most people live. It is this that a majority of a society is made of. Here, crucial political decisions are made. And it is here where I want to find proof for the meaning of artistic work. If the artistic work stays in the elitist circles or—like statistics in Denmark indicate—is reserved for white women over 50, the time is not far away where art plays no role any more in the echo chamber of democracy.



Figure 12. Film still, *Tårnby gets a visit*. Camera: Dorthea Boyi



Figure 13. Film still, *Tårnby gets a visit*. Camera: Dorthea Boyi



Figure 14. *Tårnby gets a visit*. Photo. Mikisoq Lynge

# SOLAR ENERGY AS SOCIAL SCULPTURE: THE ECO-EFFICIENT ART AS CREATIVE TECHNO-POETIC ECOSYSTEM

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## Keywords:

art  
energy  
social sculpture  
techno-science  
creative ecosystem

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## ABSTRACT

The human being starts to leave an irreversible imprint on the planet from an outside perspective to a totality awareness of being one more part of the ecosystem which we destroy. Sun provides us our main energy; consequently, it is our main world heritage. Artists must protect it. Scientists, engineers, and artists are working together in AST (Art, Science, Technology) laboratories to research solar energy, to create “eco-efficiency urban site-specifics,” and to develop a new code to connect political-ecological will and social education. This essay takes the concept of “social sculpture,” defined by Joseph Beuys in 1982, to discuss those artistic projects which redefine the objects of our social environment, using an eco-efficient solar technology for a civic education. This “Eco-efficient Art” builds a proper creative ecosystem according to the ecological concepts defended by Hans Haacke, and for the idea of “gathering” from Bruno Latour.

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## INTRODUCTION

According to Bruno Latour, “The time we live is the Anthropocene” (Latour & Mora, 2013).<sup>21</sup> The term “Anthropocene” was popularised in 2000 by Paul Crutzen, Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995, to name the time when human beings are unaware of the irreversible imprint we are making on the planet; we have forgotten the holistic conscience of being part of the ecosystem which we are destroying (Crutzen & Stoermer, 2000: 17-18). These affirmations invite us to ponder the current era in which we live; we cannot separate man from nature, as we are the same dependent ecosystem on a constant flow of energy that gives us our cosmos: the sun. As the scientist C. Sagan reminds us, “We are stars stuff harvesting starlight. Our lives, our past, in our future are tied to the sun, moon and the stars” (1980). The whole society must understand that the sun provides us with our main source of energy—it is our main world heritage.

Nowadays all fields of knowledge are currently working on being able to face the research of new eco-efficient ways of extraction and use of solar energy, in order to deal with the eco-energetic needs of our society. From the scientific field, the science of ecology established the foundations of sustainable development: “The key is in the energy flows” (Lindemann, 1942). So, the key is in the study and use of the energy flows of our ecosystem. This is the task of technoscience in relation to energetic efficiency; we think the solution to the problem of energy is currently in the search for renewable and sustainable energy. But maybe the current ecological solutions are too aggressive for our ecosystem, as we see in this example, thanks to the photographs by the artist Jamey Stillings, dedicated to the documentation of the development and implantation of the renewable energies in the world. One of the largest solar thermal plants in the world, the Ivanpah Solar Power Facility in the Mojave Desert in California, shows us how these installations sometimes could not only alter the landscape but also are highly aggressive with the ecosystem, mainly because to the purpose is not eco-efficiency production; it's macro production instead.

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21 Original quotation in Spanish. The translation is by the authors.

## THE CURRENT ROLE OF THE ECO-EFFICIENT ARTIST IN ENERGETIC-ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

From our educational field, we question what is the artist's role regarding the issue of energetic-environmental problems. The need to search for energy sustainability is not a concern of the 21st-century artist, much less a concern far from art. The artworks which interacted with nature during the 1960s and '70s (Land Art, Earthworks, and Environmental or Ecological Art) connected the structural bases of ecological awareness with society. Starting in 1970, many artists considered that it was not only necessary to raise awareness of environmental deterioration, but also why it was happening and what we can do about it.

Hans Haacke, along with his contemporary, Joseph Beuys, were pioneering artists in addressing ecological and cultural issues through art. First of all, Haacke's true contribution is the vision of the possibility of an art within the concept of ecology, that is, as part of an ecosystem that reacts and relates to its environment (Ruiz, 2014). In the words of Haacke, “A ‘sculpture’ that physically reacts to its environment is no longer considered as an object... in a relationship that is better understood as a ‘system’ of interdependent processes. [...] A system is not imagined, it is real” (Sutton & Blind, 2007: 82). That is why his work is involved in the more specific concept of Ecological Art, understanding it as “the one that intervenes in the systems constituted by organisms, in the environments they live in, and in the energy transformations that they provoke” (Guasch, 2005: 77).<sup>22</sup>

Secondly, we bring back the concept of “social sculpture” from Beuys, in which art should mean a representation of the society that acted for it and its environment, highlighting the importance of bringing together different contextual sectors such as art, society, ecology, and technoscience for the common good (Contreras, 2014). In the artist's words, “The generation of energy means the production of warmth and hence the link with the idea with social sculpture” (Tisdall, 1979: 134). Under this perspective we find his work *Capri-Batterie* (1982), since “in this work there is a direct reference to energy as a flowing natural substance, as the temporary basis of a belief system, as a growing understanding based on the exchange and the transfer” of energy (Morgan, 2003: 115).<sup>23</sup> *Capri-Batterie* is an emblem of the artist's aspiration to radically transform society through the discourse of art as social sculpture. It makes an ecological statement by coupling a lemon (nature)

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22 Original quotation in Spanish. The translation is by the authors.

23 Idem.

with a light bulb (technology). The perfect balance of the elements of this work illustrates how all forms of energy are derived from nature, and since the resources of nature are limited, they must be used with the social conscience that implies. This work functions as a metaphor for the artist's conviction that natural energy laws of the universe were the most successful model on which to base human thinking. Because "the form of energy he saw as a catalyst for change and creativity," for seeking balance between nature and technology through art (Amelio, 2014).

Figure 1. Joseph Beuys, *Capri-Batterie* (1982).  
Source: Extracted from the *Pinakothek der Moderne public Beuys multiples* (<http://pinakothek-beuys-multiples.de/en/product/capri-battery/>)



Lastly, "the difference between 'nature' and 'technology' is only that the latter is man-made. The functioning of either one can be described by the same conceptual models, and they both obviously follow the same rules of operation. It also seems that the way social organisations behave is not much different. The world does not break up into neat university departments. It is one supersystem with a myriad of subsystems, each one more or less affected by all the others" (Haacke & Siegel, 1971).

So the art is the connector, the artist fulfils a social communicator role when interacting with other areas of knowledge. Through the fusion of art, science, and poetical technology, art has evolved into an eco-efficient art. The contemporary artist is working with scientists and engineers in AST laboratories to research solar energy, to create eco-efficient urban site-specifics for the development of a new language with new codes to connect ecological policies with social education.

## THE SOLAR ENERGY ECO-EFFICIENT ART PROJECTS AS CREATIVE TECHNO-POETIC ECOSYSTEM FOR AN ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

This eco-efficient art builds a proper creative ecosystem according to the idea of "gathering" from Bruno Latour, in which art is a meeting place in-between people and technologies for disputes about environmental problems. Art as a bridge between techno-scientific research and society. Due to this we will analyse some examples of eco-efficient artistic projects that use solar energy developed within AST laboratories and scientific and public institutions until we reach the new concept of "Social Design Lab" of Studio Roosegaarde.

As a first example, we found the Land Art Generator Initiative (LAGI). LAGI is a biennial competition design, an international public call for artists, architects, scientists, and engineers to achieve aesthetics efficiency and pragmatic solutions for the energy crisis of the 21st century. The project winner of the edition LAGI Dubai 2010, titled *Lunar Cubic*,<sup>24</sup> was inspired by astronomy, quantum physics, and ancient civilisations. It is capable of supplying energy consumption in an environmentally sustainable way to 250 homes, thanks to the development of new technologies for the exploitation of solar energy (LAGI, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> All the information about the project and LAGI calls can be found on its official website.

# LUNAR CUBIT

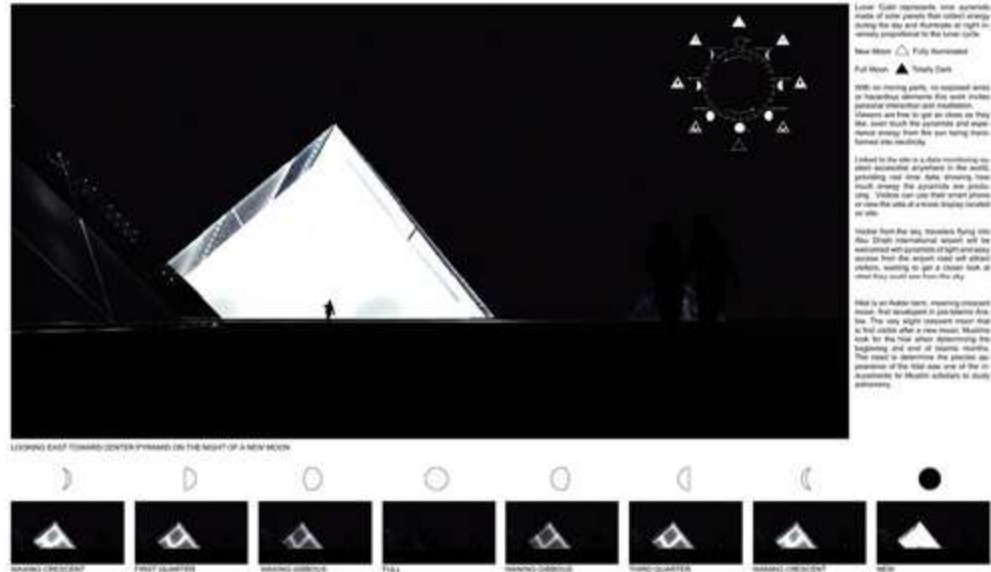


Figure 2. Lunar Cubic (2010). Source: Extracted from the official LAGI website

# LUNAR CUBIT



(<https://landartgenerator.org/LAGI2010/705507/>)

From the university field we also have the Solar Artworks Projects of Nacho Zamora, Spanish art researcher and collaborator with international photovoltaic solar technology companies. These projects put together the works of urban installations which use the current technological solar tools to express an appropriate language of ecological, energetic, and efficient awareness. All the installation works of this project explore this wealth of new technological resources and point where aesthetic appeal is projected, once they make use of their capacity to obtain solar energy in a sustainable manner. In the words of Zamora, "Art and architecture do not remain in the historical context and are manifested through works that illustrate this path to the future" (Zamora, 2011: 66). Inside these solar installation projects, we found *The Verdant Walk* (2008), an original photovoltaic solar artistic installation in Cleveland (US) developed by North Design Office. *The Silicon Forest* (2003), by the artist Brian Borrello, located in an area degraded by industrial activity in Portland (US) and developed for the Interstate/ Rose Quarter Station, is designed as a tribute to the original vegetation that occupied the place. It serves as an illustrative example of another objective of its creators, which is highlighting the new directions of some of the leaders towards more ecological policies, in contrast to the historical industrial heritage of the city. Finally, we have the *Night Garden* by O\*EG Group Architects, which was exhibited during the Festival Light in Jerusalem in 2009. What makes this work special is the fact that it includes an interaction with the public through sustainable lighting, whose presence produces changes of colour, movement, and intensity. "Our aim for this installation was to demonstrate that, by using alternative energy and technology, not only are we safeguarding our environment but we are also creating a poetic, magical experience."<sup>25</sup>



Figure 3. Night Garden installation by O\*EG Group (2009). Source: Extracted from the official O\*EG Group website (<https://www.oge-group.com/solar-nightgarden>)

As an illustration of functional urban public art, we find some projects by the artist Dan Corson (US). For instance, the solar-artistic installation of photovoltaic sculptures *Sonic*

<sup>25</sup> Quote from TreeHugger, a leading media outlet dedicated to driving mainstream sustainability. Retrieved from <https://www.treehugger.com/slideshows/solar-technology/solar-powered-artwork-around-the-world/page/6/>

*Bloom* (2013), commissioned by the Pacific Science Center Green Up Program of Seattle City Light. It produces eco-efficient lighting and interacts with the audience with music, sounds, and colour changes. "I was thinking about how some flowers move in order to capture the sun," says the artist (Gambino, 2013). A set of 5.16-metre-high photovoltaic sculptures, *Nepenthes* (2013), was inspired by the genus of carnivorous plants of the same name, known as tropical pitcher plants. It has the ability to generate sustainable energy for four hours. Financed by public companies and institutions, it's installed in Davis Street in the Old Town Chinatown neighbourhood of Portland, Oregon (US).<sup>26</sup> It's a magisterial fusion between art, nature, the functionality of urban furniture, and energy ecology.

In the category of AST laboratories, we highlight the artist Roman Keller (CH), who developed the world's first solar thermal rocket, titled *The rocket for the rest of us*, inside the multidisciplinary lab programme Art-In-Labs at PSI in 2007. The objective of the programme is artistic production and techno-scientific innovation through the incorporation of artists in laboratories specialised in scientific and technological research. "The idea of building a solar rocket evolved from a childhood dream of the artist, and it's an attempt to remind us of the pioneering spirit of science and the emotional impact of discoveries." In his handbook, Keller documented his research on the history of solar-powered vehicles, the pioneering spirit of science, historical facts about steam engines and solar energy, and the history of space travel (Perelló, 2010: 22).

These artists and laboratories offer a reflection about the use of natural, ecological resources and their possibilities, and offer innovative and aesthetic solutions in an eco-efficient way. We conclude with Studio Roosegaarde: The Social Design Lab as a key element in this research. For its founder, Daan Roosegaarde, nature is source of knowledge and alerts us to the necessity to extrapolate this knowledge to our public and social space, to establish new links between people, environment, and technoscience in response to current social and environmental challenges (EFeverde, 2015). In Roosegaarde's words, "Studying arts helped me to understand different points of view better, and to understand how these different ways of seeing become new forms of expression. I believe attitude is really important to approach reality and to do what is required by the world where we live" (Vega, 2017). This philosophy and its formation in art has led him and his team of designers and engineers to develop "interactive techno-poetry landscapes," projects with the collaboration of public and private entities to achieve a better future.

The studio has developed several internationally renowned urban projects under its humanistic philosophy, which connects people, technology, and space to improve daily life in urban environments and to awaken the imagination. Here we highlight a few

<sup>26</sup> Information about the project can be found on the artist's website, see <http://dancorson.com/nepenthes>

projects based on eco-efficient solar energy.

The project *Smart Highway* (2012–2015) developed the interactive and sustainable roads of tomorrow in collaboration with Heijmans Infrastructure. "Its goal is to make smart roads by using light, energy and information that interact with the traffic situation" (Studio Roosegaarde, 2012–2015). He creates a new concept of roads for which he has developed his own luminescent paint in gel format that absorbs sunlight during the day and releases it during the night with zero cost and without any environmental impact. It also provides information about the state of the road or climate through changes in colour. Sharing the same vision, we found *Van Gogh Path* (2012), which is made of thousands of blinking stones inspired by *The Starry Night*. The path combines innovation with cultural heritage in the town of Nuenen (NL), where Van Gogh lived in 1883. The collaboration between Roosegaarde and Heijmans is a true example of innovative industry. The design and interactivity between the studio and Heijmans's handicraft are fused into one common goal: innovation of the Dutch landscape (Studio Roosegaarde, 2012–2015).

Studio Roosegaarde recodes the concept of sculpture and consequently conceives of the city as a "social design laboratory" at scale 1:1. *Rainbow Station* (2015), in collaboration with the University of Leiden, has unravelled light in a spectrum of colours. The artwork marks both the celebration of the 125th anniversary of the railway station and the start of the UNESCO International Year of Light 2015 (LUZ, 2015). Through a newly developed crystal technology for the investigation of exoplanets, *Rainbow Station* makes the exact shape of the roof of the historic 125-year-old station. The installation can be seen every day for a brief moment within an hour after sunset. The light and colour show a magical moment at night to 50 million travellers per year.

One of the studio's most recent instalments is *Glowing Nature* (2017–2018), an interactive installation of 20 x 50 metres of living algae emitting light, encased in a custom polymer as a colony. Made by multiple collaboration between Roosegaarde and his studio, the project transforms a 32-kilometre-long dike built in 1932 (the Afsluitdijk), which protects



Figure 4. Studio Roosegaarde, *Van Gogh Path* (2012). Source: Extracted from the official Studio Roosegaarde website (<https://www.studio Roosegaarde.net/project/van-gogh-path>)

the Netherlands against flooding, with a bioluminescent device. *Glowing Nature* is a great example of the artist's ability to reinterpret scientific advances under a cosmogonic vision of reality. The installation attracted thousands of visitors, and was first exhibited as part of "Icoon Afsluitdijk" at the Friesland bunker on the dike. The project is now travelling to exhibitions around the world.<sup>27</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In summary, as a new educational tool the "Social Design Laboratory" achieves the perfect balance between art, science, technology, ecology, and functionality. The studio shows there is no need to go against social or political environmental systems; we need to study their structure and performance in order to take advantage and transform them into a common good through art, technology, and design. All projects in the category of eco-efficient art use solar energy as an artistic material, and as a basis for our environmental future. They show us new possibilities for making use of solar energy in an eco-efficient and sustainable way, thanks to the current technological tools. At the same time, they act as a "gathering" that invites us to reflect on the use of resources and their possibilities, and offer innovative and aesthetic solutions in an eco-efficient way. "In an hour, the sun gives the earth the energy that all humanity consumes in a year. As long as the earth exists, the sun's energy will be inexhaustible. It is enough to stop delving into the earth, and look up to the sky. It is enough to learn to domesticate and to cultivate the sun" (Arthus-Bertrand, 2009, 1:50:32). There is still time to look for a solution. We could propose different global eco-efficient and creative innovations to awaken our awareness of being one with nature. Culture, innovation, and creativity are as much inexhaustible resources as is the sun.

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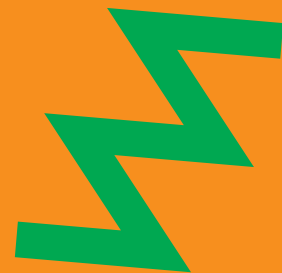
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<sup>27</sup> Information about the project can be found on the Studio Roosegaarde website, see <https://www.studioroosegaarde.net>

# WORKSHOP OF OTHER KNOWLEDGE

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**Keywords:**

workshop  
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## ABSTRACT

Are we providing art and design students the tools, the skills, and the technology they need? Are we offering the right learning environment for them to be able to investigate and experiment with crucial phenomena of this time and age? Don't we need to introduce students with new modes of making and seeing, and let them break away from the standard artistic toolset?

In this paper the role of the workshop within art and design education is being criticised. It looks at how Bauhaus has had a great influence on the role of the workshop of today. It concludes that we need to reformulate skill education regarding technology with critical making as an integral part. We do this by proposing new pedagogical and educational spaces, the "Workshop of Other Knowledge," in which new modes of making and designing by cross-, inter-, and transdisciplinary tools and instruments are used.



As an art educator, I ask myself daily whether we are offering students the right tools, skills, and technology. Within this writing I would like to share my questions and struggle regarding the learning environment in which we address these tools, technology, and skills; namely, the workshop.

First, I would like to address the role of the workshop in relation to Bauhaus. Bauhaus will celebrate its centenary in 2019, and has had a great influence on the role of the workshop of today. Secondly, I would like to look at how current times resonate with the desires and attitude that shaped Bauhaus, and how it can inspire us to rethink the role of the workshop of tomorrow.

The Bauhaus responded to the effects of the “First Machine Age,” in which the machine took over handcraftsmanship, and artists and designers sought a new role within the junction of craft and industrial production. Bauhaus was responding to a world which had many insecurities. World War I had just finished, Germany was bankrupt, and there was great inflation.

In the context of all of this it was clear a new narrative was needed. In all this misery Bauhaus had a rather remarkable, positive approach; they developed a utopian vision to make a better world for all, through better designed objects and environments; they wanted to change the world by design.

Today we are experiencing the emergence of the “Second Machine Age,” wherein technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and biotech are fundamentally changing the way we live. An age in which the boundaries between the physical, digital, and biological blur.

Maybe, in parallel to Bauhaus you could say, we also live in a time of big societal change and transformations. Along with the impact of technology there is ecological and political crisis, and we have migration issues. These are not just themes to be reflected upon, but they redefine the fundamentals of how artists and designers work.<sup>28</sup>

At the Willem de Kooning Academy (WdKA), as at many other art schools, we are putting a lot of effort in looking for ways to connect these urgent topics to the practice of art and design education in the 21st century. In response to these developments we applied fundamental changes in our curricula, in order to make our education more relevant. Besides the major (disciplinary courses), WdKA adds elective projects. These projects introduce students to our three graduation profiles. We call them the Autonomous,

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28 Schutten, I., Adu, N., Sei-Poku, Teeuwen, R., & Troxler, P. (2018).

Social, and Commercial Practices.<sup>29</sup> In all three practices, students work on real-life, practical assignments which transcend the boundaries of their discipline. Within these educational programmes much effort is put into rethinking systems, notions of authorship, collaboration, and transdisciplinarity.<sup>30</sup>

Another major change in the innovation of our education was our reinvention of the workshop.

We saw a great divide between new art and design practices and our craft-oriented education within the workshop. We believed that “a changing society” also calls for new ways of making. New technologies not only alter the way we make things, they also influence the way we think about production.

So we upgraded the workshops and implemented the Stations.<sup>31</sup> Within the Stations we are questioning the technology we teach by making room for new technologies and by reinventing old technologies. We are changing the workshop from a place for production and execution to a place where research can take place. Also we created an environment which allows more and intensive collaboration between teachers and technical staff.

But despite successes, I feel we are still held back by the past. The division between the art professor and the technical staff working in the workshop seems to be more hard-coded in the DNA of the art school than we realised beforehand. Also the hierarchical (read: financial) divide between educational and technical staff holds us back when trying to fully integrate and innovate the education within the workshop.

To gain more insight into where we stand now and to be able to go further, it is good to look at history.

I came across the work of Meredith Davis. She states:

*For most of the 20th century, the primary role of design was to make things look and work better, to support the functional and emotional experiences of the consumers, through well-designed artefacts and places.<sup>32</sup>*

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29 See <http://wdka.nl/practices>

30 Schutten, I., Adu, N., Sei-Poku, Teeuwen, R., & Troxler, P. (2018).

31 See <https://www.wdka.nl/stations>

32 Davis, M. (2017) *Teaching Design, a guide to curriculum and pedagogy for college design faculty and teachers who use design in their classrooms* (p. 84). New York: Allworth Press.

As Meredith Davis describes, this 20th-century, Bauhaus-based notion of an artefact-oriented view of design is very much applicable within today's vision on the role of technology, and particularly the workshop within art education. In practice this means that there is the professor/tutor teaching in the classroom or studio and, in the workshops, technical staff instructs students in technologies to help them realise their "products." Of course, the subjects and classes of professors have changed over time. Due to mass industrialisation and the outsourcing of production, a greater removal from the manufacturing process arose. Postmodern ideas were introduced, which related to this mass industry and consumerism. Art education developed a more "conceptual," "critical," and "theoretical" approach relating to design practices.

This led to the shared opinion that the designer/artist is responsible for the concept but not for the execution of the work, and that the technology or media that was used was inferior to the overall concept/message. Technology or material knowledge was considered less important and did not have a central role in the creative process; moreover, it was sometimes even seen as limiting the imagination. Due to this, the role of technology within art education in general has been neglected for decades. The ever-expanding digital networked technologies have not led to major changes, but to more fragmentation and specialisation within the field of higher art and design education.

In my opinion you see this very much reflected in the lack of awareness regarding the development of the workshop and the pedagogy around learning technology, materials, and skills. In most (Northern European) art schools you will find similar workshops, mostly related to old media and crafts and equipped to make "artefacts": the wood, metal, ceramics, and plastic workshop; graphic and print studios; time-based media; photography and film. At the turn of the 21st century, digital technologies were slowly introduced; think of computers, editing studios, and fabrication technologies like laser cutters, 3D printers, and the like.

In practice, however, the art and design professors were increasingly distanced from "teaching" in the workshops. Art and design educators have limited knowledge in this ever-expanding field of complex technologies. The technical staff and instructors in the workshop have, as in Bauhaus period, little or no influence on a student's artistic development. They also have a hard time keeping up with these new technologies, and often lack the artistic background and qualities to formulate appropriate pedagogy that critically examines the use of media and material.

I think today it is time to rethink this pedagogy in technologies and materials and, in doing so, to rethink the role of aesthetic production and making.

And to come back to Bauhaus, there are things we can learn from the holistic and open attitude of the Bauhauslers and their engagement with experiment. We should reconsider object lessons and material expeditions within the digital and the analogue realm.<sup>33</sup>

We can learn from Josef Albers and Lázló Moholy Nagy. They taught their students to experiment with different materials through their senses.

Pushing students to question and research the materials of that day and age.

In a world where we are getting out of touch with the physical and tangible, and have lost control over the virtual, it is crucial for designers and artists to again engage with the substantial, real world.

Not only through tools and media, which have been "supposedly" artistic, like the pencil, the camera, or wood, but through tools and media that relate to our world and time.

So thinking about this holistic and experimental approach of the Bauhaus led me to embark on the question of what the workshop of today should be like.

As Jan Boelen has said:

*How can we learn a certain attitude to deal with reality of today? Design has the enormous potential to create products that deal with our reality. This productive mode is necessary—to construct and make your own reality rather than becoming a consumer and a slave of reality. But if we are still dreaming of a reality that we can construct ourselves, then what are the skills that we need to know and to be in control of...?*<sup>34</sup>

Are we providing the students the tools, the skills, and the technology they need? Are we offering the right learning environment for them to be able to investigate and experiment with crucial phenomena of this time and age? Don't we need to introduce students with new modes of making and seeing, and let them break away from the standard artistic toolset?

There is a great urgency regarding the changes and transformations taking place in our society. Hereby, two forces which illustrate these changes:

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33 Lehmann (2017).

34 Jan Boelen was curating the 4th Istanbul Design Biennial, *A school of schools*. See references for Ragajopal in *Metropolitan Magazine*.



## Accelerating technological developments

Making is becoming complex because we have more and more (digital) technologies at our disposal and, next to that, technologies become increasingly non-transparent, which makes it very difficult to make it your own. Students need knowledge and guidance in researching and exploring these (digital) technologies.

Like the critical engineers are saying, "The greater the dependence on a technology, the greater the need to study and expose its inner workings."<sup>35</sup>

Technology can be a tool, a medium, or both. Making has meaning and is not a neutral activity. How do we, for example, overcome cultural biases and differences?

Technology is not a means to an end. Critical making should be a basic learning objective within art education.



Figure 1. Intern Lieke van der Maas working with Kombucha, BlueCity Lab (<http://www.bluecitylab.nl/>)

What tools and materials do we have to offer in the workshop in a time and age where we run out of resources? What role can the workshop play in helping students to make more ecological decisions? What is the "matter" or "material" we create with?

At its core the Bauhaus project revolved around the "New Human Being." It was not about learning a profession, but about the universal education/formation of the personality.

Making practice ever since has been very much human-centred, but can we continue thinking like this in the Anthropocene?

What can we learn from the discourse centred on the notion of the post-human? Can we also make for other entities? Can we use technology—such as VR—to empathise with the other? And can we use other entities to help us create? How do we, for example, work together with digital entities like "Artificial Intelligence"? What happens when new technologies such as AI enter the workshop?

35 See <https://criticalengineering.org/en>



Figure 2. Arthur Boer & Boris Smeenk, Phony - Make Believe

In conclusion, I want to suggest developing a new vision around the pedagogy relating to technology, skill education, and specifically experiential learning which takes place in the art school. Most importantly this vision should not be developed separately but overarching all curricula, embedding "critical making" as an integral part within. By formulating better (skill) education regarding technology and making, it will enable students to deal with reality and connect to the world. In order to do this, it is necessary to cooperate, learn from each other, and let go of former hierarchical divides.

This pedagogy needs to redefine the learning environment we used to call the workshop.

This is my further topic of research which I gave the working title the "Workshop of Other Knowledge"<sup>36</sup>. This research will result in several temporary, experimental, physical learning environments where tools, things, instruments, software, hardware, methods, and equipment are collected. These experiments will stimulate cross-, inter-, and transdisciplinary collaborations. Within this new learning environment, new modes of making and designing will be developed by breaking away from standardised ways of seeing and making.

Hopefully this research will lead to different learning environments within our art school and will inspire tutors, students and others to reimagine and see the world differently, and have the tools to respond more accurately to crucial phenomena of this time and age.

Being able to make invisible visible!

Figure 3. Arthur Boer & Boris Smeenk



36 See <http://workshop-ok.wdka.nl/>

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# NANTES – THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ISLAND

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## **Keywords:**

Island of Nantes  
France  
higher art education  
cluster  
city

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## **ABSTRACT**

At the very heart of a proactive cultural policy pursued for 25 years and an urban project for the Île de Nantes, the new Island of Nantes, together with the Quartier de la Création, aims to produce a European model and pole of excellence in the fields of architecture, art in public places, and higher art education.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*Le Voyage à Nantes, SAMOA*

*“Nantes: perhaps, with the exception of Paris, the only city in France where I feel that something worthwhile might happen to me, where certain eyes burn all too brightly for their own sake... where for me the pace of life is not the same as elsewhere, where certain people still nourish a spirit of supreme adventure, Nantes, a city from which friends can still come to me, Nantes...”*

*André Breton, Nadja, 1948*

## RETHINKING THE ISLAND AS A NEW VISION OF THE URBAN TERRITORY

Like other European cities at the turn of the 21st century, Nantes has opted for a proactive cultural policy. By revolutionising the post-industrial urban planning of the Île de Nantes ([www.iledenantes.com](http://www.iledenantes.com)) through the lens of art, culture, and architecture, the city's policy has stimulated the creation of an arts and culture pole of excellence. The project for a huge higher art education campus is being formalised in a territory that is being reappraised by the yardstick of architectural creation and the production of contemporary artworks in the urban space.

With large areas in an unusual environmental setting, the Île de Nantes project, and more specifically the project involving the Quartier de la Création on more than 15 hectares, will seek to be in tune with all uses and requirements—housing, economic development, education, functional infrastructures, places dedicated to culture and leisure—while emphasising sustainable development and innovation, with, as their goal, the creation of a new “urban centrality” within the Nantes Saint-Nazaire metropolis.

## A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

The Quartier de la Création cluster is not solely the outcome of a geographical concentration or a spatial agglomeration of places and people in the artistic territory of Nantes. By stimulating a territorial dynamic based on the importance of culture, knowledge, and apprenticeship in its development process, the metropolis has taken the risk of imposing the culture/economy *binôme* to try and get beyond the economic crisis that followed the closure of the spearheads of the port industry of Nantes from the 1980s onward.

Devised on the basis of Anglo-Saxon studies of cultural and creative industries (Nesta reports, Porter, Florida, etc.), the Quartier de la Création has set its sights on three pillars of its development: the concentration of spaces (pure agglomeration model), relations between businesses, institutions and powers-that-be (industrial complex model), and an increased number of inter-individual relations (social network model).

Representing the key issue for territorial policies in Europe, we find the strategy adopted by territories facing the challenges of conversion leading to a fundamental change in the ways people are thinking, producing, and organising.

This process of construction, based on these new “geographies of organisation” and on the notions of collective learning and resource sharing, develops this knowledge economy where ideas are the raw materials. From now on, a system is being developed in which material and immaterial resources (know-how, skills, qualifications, behaviours), and the participative and the collective, are being highlighted.

This “ecosystem” has gradually been given material form over more than ten years, in particular through the programme of a mixed-development company—the SAMOA—in collaboration with the directors of companies and art education institutions in one and the same territory. Alongside those institutions, which we call establishments of higher art education, and cultural facilities, the emergence of third places and informal venues is being encouraged on the Île de Nantes: cafés, library, galleries, co-working spaces, innovative businesses and shops (organic grocery, artists’ shops, etc.), and these places are becoming “sticky places,” or places which attract (Markusen, 2009).

The Quartier de la Création is economically driven by the Creative Factory by SAMOA ([www.creativefactory.info](http://www.creativefactory.info)). As an informative and project-supporting platform, it acts as a go-between permitting the networking of people and programmes, and participating in an old strategy involving the construction of partnerships, tailor-made consultancy, and representation at local, national, and international levels.

## ART COMMUNITY

As the key to a new form of urban creativity, the role of these gatekeepers is pivotal (Rycken & Zimmermann, 2006). These purveyors of knowledge and coordinators of (real) networks have become the interfaces necessary for creating dense human relations, encouraging meetings, synergies, and new projects designed to strengthen a specialised labour market (architecture, design, art, teaching), successfully creating a dynamic economy, revamping the region’s attractiveness, and inventing “communities of activities” (groups with an informal structure where the behaviour of members is hallmarked by voluntary involvement in construction), knowledge sharing (Cohendet, 2010), and idea networks.



Starting from the ironical postulate that “All regeneration starts with poetry and ends with real estate” (Kluntzmann, 2004), the construction of this cluster has come about during an historical process and a concept of urban amenities (Machado et al., 2012), conceived and re-examined with each renewal of the urban design teams for the Île de Nantes: Paul Chemetov, from 2000 to 2010; then Marcel Smets and Anne Mie Depuydt (uapS), from 2010 to 2015; and currently Jacqueline Osty (landscape artist) and Claire Schorter (architect and town planner), from 2016 to 2024.



At the beginning of the great urban regeneration projects based on culture and the creative industries (Florida, 2002), the development of the attractiveness of the Île de Nantes territory lay in its capacity to design, produce, and ensure the continued existence of different cultural products. In close collaboration with the former prime minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, mayor of Nantes from 1989 to 2012, Jean Blaise, a cultural programmer since the 1980s, has stimulated art in the city's public places by combining live spectacles and the visual arts.

To reinvent the new conditions of a territory based on its urban redevelopment, the creation of an artistic and cultural heritage is essential. In Nantes, everything started in 2007, with the “Estuaire” contemporary art fair created by Jean Blaise, and the revelation of the landscape along the river Loire between Nantes and Saint-Nazaire through the production of monumental artworks devised by artists of international stature: Roman Signer, Tadashi Kawamata, Felice Varini, and Erwin Wurm, etc.

The proposal to develop and improve the western end of the Île de Nantes first of all envisaged rehabilitating the Quai des Antilles with the opening of a series of sidewalk cafés and a “shared” 1,600 m<sup>2</sup> contemporary art space (the HAB gallery) opposite the installation of Daniel Buren and Patrick Bouchain’s 18 light rings along the quay, which redefines the Loire and the island’s landscape.

At three biennials, 2007, 2009, and 2012, contemporary artists produced 30 permanent public artworks, sustainable installations in a territory of 60 km<sup>2</sup>, which began to become a geo-poetic landscape.

On the Île de Nantes, in the Parc des Chantiers and the Prairie-au-Duc neighbourhood (listed as an eco-neighbourhood in 2009), there are no fewer than 20 permanent monumental artistic works scattered through the cityscape ([www.levoyageanantes.fr](http://www.levoyageanantes.fr)).

E Artist	(Public Art Work (title))	A Location
Daniel Buren & Patrick Bouchain	Les Anneaux (2007)	1. Quai des Antilles
Vincent Mauger	Résolution Des Forces En Présence	Parc des Chantiers
Bruno Peinado & Detroit Architectures	On va marcher sur la lune	Parc des Chantiers
Jean Prouvé	Station Prouvé	Parc des Chantiers
François Delarozière & Pierre Orefice	Carrousel des mondes marins	Parc des Chantiers
a/LTA	L'Arbre à basket	Parc des Chantiers
Cie La Machine	Machines de l'île and the Grand Eléphant	Parc des Chantiers
Aurélien Boury	Traverses	Boulevard Léon-Bureau
François Morellet	De temps en temps	Bâtiment Harmonie Atlantique, Quai François-Mitterrand
Studio Katra	La Pointe Noire	Quai François-Mitterrand
Lilian Bourgeat	Mètre à ruban	Bât. Aethica, Rue La-Noue-Bras-De-Fer
Rolf Julius	Air	Bâtiment Manny Rue La-Noue-Bras-de-Fer
Angela Bulloch	1. The Zebra Crossing, 2. Regulations and General Directions	Bâtiment Manny, Rue La-Noue-Bras-de-Fer
Atelier Van Lieshout	L'Absence	École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Nantes
Jenny Holzer	Sans titre	École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Nantes
Atelier Van Lieshout	L'Absence	Palais de Justice (arch. Jean Nouvel), Quai François-Mitterrand
Fichtre	Canadienne	Quai François-Mitterrand
Fichtre	Table ronde	Parvis des beaux-arts, 2 allée Frida-Kahlo
Laurent Perbos	Ping-Pong Park	Square Mabon, Quai François-Mitterrand, Rue Lanoue-Bras-De-Fer
Jocelyn Cottencin	Echoes	Front building ensa, Quai François-Mitterrand

Table 1. Art in public spaces, Quartier de la Création, Île de Nantes, 2019. Source: *Le Voyage à Nantes*

Back to the Île de Nantes and its resilience: by the year 2020, the 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> of the old Alstom market will have been definitively refurbished within the Quartier de la Création. By seeking to encourage the social proximity of its players and inhabitants, over and above the economic conversion of industry to knowledge, the Île de Nantes project is attempting to recreate a community around a new “urban centrality and re-description.”

In the same territory, focusing on the porous factor existing between the art education establishments, the schools in the Quartier de la Création will play the part of catalysts for synergies, collaborations, and shared projects, which may extend to joint degrees and overlapping art projects by way of the pooling of spaces, in order to organise training and guidance links, shared research projects and, beyond that, encourage the international attractiveness of this new multidisciplinary campus alongside the future Quartier de la Santé, with the new university hospital centre of Nantes (opening planned for 2026).

## A FUTURE NETWORK FOR A COMMUNITY OF STUDENTS, ARTISTS, AND ART AND CULTURE PROFESSIONALS

By 2022, the Île de Nantes will play host to 5,000 art students, more than 100 tutor-researchers, and 2,000 jobs in the artistic field at large: fine arts, architecture, cinema, communication, design, music, and dance. Standing on nearly 15 hectares, these international centres of expertise, occupying more than 25,000 m<sup>2</sup>, aim to create a dynamic concentration of dedicated public and student facilities:

- Higher art education and research
- Art in public places
- Cultural facilities
- Companies for the development of the knowledge economy and art



HAE Higher art education	Year of construction, number of students, curriculum	Architect & Location
Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture <a href="http://www.nantes.archi.fr/">http://www.nantes.archi.fr/</a>	2009, 850 students. Diplôme d'Etat d'Architecte, DPEA, Masters, Doctorat	Arch. Lacaton & Vassal, 2009 Quai François-Mitterrand
Pôle des Arts Graphiques <a href="http://www.la-joliverie.com/pole-arts-graphiques/">http://www.la-joliverie.com/pole-arts-graphiques/</a>	2010 300 students Bac Professionnel Bac Technologique, BTS	Arch. Agence Lepinay, Chabenès et Scott Architectes Associés, 2010 Place Albert-Camus
ESMA – Ecole Supérieure des Métiers Artistiques/ Cinécréatis <a href="http://www.esma-artistique.com/">http://www.esma-artistique.com/</a>	2015 MANAA, BTS, Cycles professionnels	Arch. BNR Paris, 2014 Parc des chantiers
Beaux-Arts de Nantes Saint-Nazaire <a href="https://beauxartsnantes.fr/">https://beauxartsnantes.fr/</a>	Halles 4 & 5, 2017 Diplôme National d'Art, Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique.	Arch. Franklin Azzi, 2017 Allée Frida-Kahlo
Ecole de Design Nantes Atlantique <a href="http://www.lecolededesign.com/">http://www.lecolededesign.com/</a>	2022 1200 students Bachelor, Master, MANAA, BTS, Continuous training	Arch. Marc Mimram, Gaëlle Péneau (GPAA), Jouin Manku, 2022 Boulevard Prairie-au-Duc
Mediacampus <a href="http://sciencescom.audencia.com/mediacampus/">http://sciencescom.audencia.com/mediacampus/</a>	2017 Bachelor, Master	Arch. Moatti – Rivière, 2017 Boulevard Prairie-au-Duc
Pont supérieur <i>Pôle d'enseignement supérieur spectacle vivant Bretagne - Pays de la Loire</i>  live spectacle courses for performers and teachers in dance, music and theatre  <a href="https://www.lepontsuperieur.eu/">https://www.lepontsuperieur.eu/</a>	2017 DNSPM/License Diplôme d'État de Professeur de musique	Arch. Atelier Raum - architectes Rue Gaëtan Rondeau
Pôle	Sept. 2019 Research Federation ATLANSTIC, Research Federation Art, Cultures et Territoire Masters, Licences PRO, Formations tout au long de la vie)	Arch. LIN architects / F.au Rue Arthur-III

Table 2. Advanced art schools, Quartier de la Création, Île de Nantes, 2019. Source: Beaux-Arts Nantes Saint-Nazaire

Cultural facility	Artistic field	Architect & Location
Stéréolux (La Fabrique) <a href="https://www.stereolux.org/">https://www.stereolux.org/</a>	(Digital art, art installations, music, concerts)	Arch. Tétrarc, 2011 Boulevard Léon Bureau
Tremolino (La Fabrique) <a href="https://tremolo.com/">https://tremolo.com/</a>	1. Music studios, professional training	Arch. Tétrarc, 2011 Boulevard Léon Bureau
HAB Galerie <a href="https://www.levoyageanantes.fr/etapes/hab-galerie/">https://www.levoyageanantes.fr/etapes/hab-galerie/</a>	1. Contemporary art centre	Arch. Roulleau, in partnership with AlexandreChemetoff Quai des Antilles
Mélanie Rio Fluency <a href="http://www.rio-fluency.com">http://www.rio-fluency.com</a>	1. Contemporary art gallery (private)	Arch. Souto de Moura & agence Unité, 2017 Zero Newton Boulevard Léon Bureau
HAUS <a href="http://www.haus-block.fr/">http://www.haus-block.fr/</a>	1. Contemporary art association	Blockhaus DY10, 1943-44 Boulevard Léon Bureau
Ateliers Millefeuilles <a href="http://www.millefeuillesdecp.com/">http://www.millefeuillesdecp.com/</a>	1. Artists' studios	Former manufacturing of sails, Port autonome, Nantes Quai des Antilles
Mire - Jardin C <a href="http://www.mire-exp.org/jardinc/">http://www.mire-exp.org/jardinc/</a>	1. Contemporary art urban place	Boulevard Léon Bureau
Ateliers Bonus <a href="https://collectifassobonus.wixsite.com/bonus-les-ateliers">https://collectifassobonus.wixsite.com/bonus-les-ateliers</a>	1. Artists' studios	Arch. Garo & Boixel L'Îlot des Îles, 2017 Parc des Chantiers
Galerie Open School (Beaux-Arts School) <a href="https://beauxartsnantes.fr/">https://beauxartsnantes.fr/</a>	1. Contemporary art gallery (Beaux-Arts Nantes)	Arch. Franklin Azzi, 2017 Allée Frida-Kahlo
Galerie Loire (Architecture School) <a href="http://www.nantes.archi.fr">http://www.nantes.archi.fr</a>	1. Contemporary art and architecture gallery 2. (Architecture school)	Arch. Lacaton & Vassal, 2009 Quai François-Mitterrand

Table 3. Cultural facilities, Quartier de la Création, Île de Nantes, 2019. Source: Beaux-Arts Nantes Saint-Nazaire

## THE OUTLOOK: AN ISLAND AS AN INTERNATIONAL HUB

With a view to heightening the attractiveness of this territory for students enjoying mobility (enrolling and leaving), each school draws up an international strategy compatible with its development policy, based around 50 international partners (including Erasmus agreements).

But partnerships can also turn out to be more inventive by developing special and long-term relations with original places:

- Shanghai, Pune, São Paulo, Montréal for the Nantes Atlantique School of Design
- Mauritius for the School of Architecture
- Santander (Spain) for Médiacampus
- Marfa / Houston (Texas, United States), Seoul / Suncheon (South Korea), and Dakar for the Nantes Saint-Nazaire School of Fine Arts

As platforms for students and young artists with international mobility, these cross-disciplinary, experimental campuses on different continents make it possible to envisage speculative immersion in radically opposed geopolitical contexts, sites, environments, and highly unusual landscapes. This new territorial future in the field of artistic education anticipates changes in art practices, exploring notions of experience and immersion, as keys to artistic production and thinking, and focusing on intelligence and collective imagination, and an agile way of thinking, working, and relating.

This overall strategy based on a process of artistic and cultural development, and on the construction of collective apprenticeship, demonstrates a fundamental change in ways of thinking, producing, and organising. The raw material becomes art, thought, ideas, and the knowledge economy.

The next challenge of this urban cultural revolution will be gauged by the yardstick of environmental policy. Programmes promoting ecology and sustainable development, at the heart of the urban project of the Prairie-au-Duc eco-neighbourhood on the Île de Nantes, will find an echo in measures against global warming supported by future generations of students.

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# TRANSITION DESIGN

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**Keywords:**

design  
transition  
eesab  
sustainability  
biomimetism

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## ABSTRACT

Since 2013, the EESAB in Brest has been conducting educational work and cross-disciplinary research for resilient design as part of its Master's programme Transition Design.

This programme had resulted in a specific educational project, developed in partnership with a university FabLab, which seeks to respond to these challenges through an innovative programme combining a project-based approach and working methodologies in multidisciplinary teams. Its aim is to teach students an active learning methodology and introduce them to the scientific fields that border the subjects they cover alongside their artistic education.

The Transition Design programme attempts to go beyond the incorporation of ecological parameters in the creation process. It seeks to offer a holistic view of the project by expanding its tools, working methodologies and economy. It acts as an interface between cultural, social, environmental and technological values.

## CONTEXT



Copyright by EESAB

At a time when environmental issues are at the centre of our concerns, and when production issues can no longer be considered without also looking at the required resources and the resulting waste, the Transition Design concept seeks to rethink design practices to incorporate these concerns, with particular emphasis on local and regional dynamics.

The educational project within the Design option at the EESAB in Brest places the priority on context and emphasises the need for design to draw on local research.

The geographic location of the city makes Brest a peninsular territory rich in social and environmental biodiversity, but also one with a certain fragility, where the human impact is measured on a short time scale. It is against this backdrop that the programme Transition Design has been established in order to understand this territory through the kaleidoscope of transition and to lay the groundwork for discussion on the implementation of resilient design.

The region's geographic location on the coast combines a social biodiversity with a rich and fertile natural environment. The region is based on a balance of different environments - urban, rural and maritime -, the outlying location of which requires a certain amount of consideration in terms of self-sufficiency and resilience.

In addition to the region's various preservation efforts, including the Armorique Regional Natural Park, which spans 44 towns, and the Iroise Marine Park, which spans over 3,500km of coastline, there is also a large community network that is working to achieve greater resilience and self-sufficiency, lots of third places that promote multidisciplinary and collaborative projects and centres of excellence in maritime and coastal scientific research.

Whilst it may have a rich artistic, technical and scientific culture behind it, the concept of design is all too often understood in France as being an artistic discipline rather than a necessary approach to economic and industrial development.

Supported by a regional network of design schools, design practices have been redefined at regional level through a localised approach that highlights the importance of taking the designer's location into account.

## GLOBAL VISION

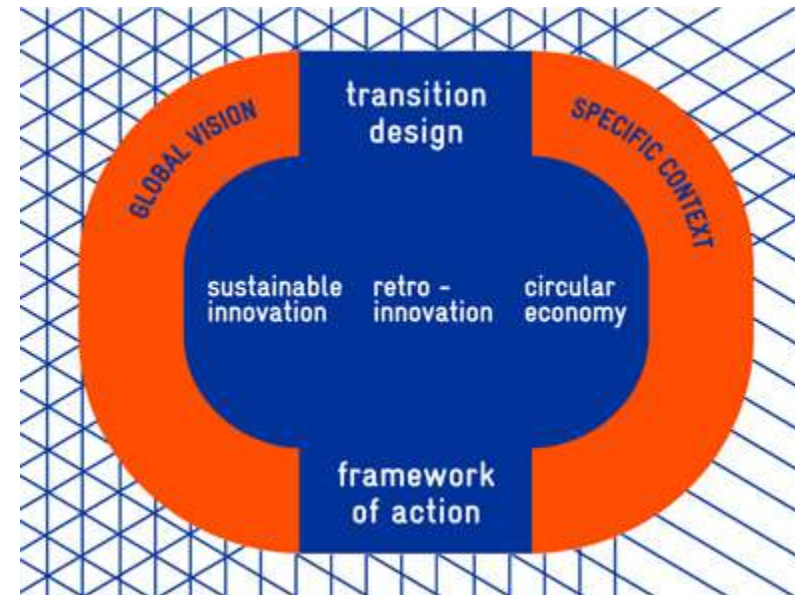


Copyright by EESAB

In a transitional context, the designer will then seek to adopt an approach that takes both global issues and contextual factors into account as part of a dynamic working process. These global issues might, for example, take the form of politically identified indicators for initiatives designed to promote sustainable development. These are some of the indicators that feature on the intercommunal barometer for our region.

The global vision therefore outlines the perfect direction to take and a series of initial evaluative components, but it is out of touch with the complex and unique reality of real-life contexts. Projects implemented in real-life contexts generate the most concrete data but mostly at a later date. A real-time feedback relationship between the global and local components is therefore vital.

## FRAMEWORK OF ACTION



Copyright by EESAB

This being the case, in a real-life context, projects developed using a Transition Design approach are developed using different resources and to different ends. Some adopt a sustainable development approach, whereas others adopt a retro-innovation or even circular economy approach. Depending on the context, these frameworks of action can be implemented simultaneously and do use certain methodologies.

Such projects require cooperation between players and a certain transdisciplinarity and are developed with the Fablab at the University of Brest's Faculty of Science and Brest-based schools of engineering, which are working with us to set up this educational programme. From design, biology and sociology to electronics and IT, the accumulation and hybridisation of skills and expertise are vital to the emergence of these new design practices.

We also use biomimicry as both a language, allowing us to communicate with other disciplines, and of course as a research process to draw inspiration from the living world when it comes to designing and innovating. Our biomimetics training module is certified by the Senlis European Centre of Excellence in Biomimetics. These are a few examples of projects we have worked on in the Finistère region.

## PROJECT: KRAK'EN



Copyright by Corentin Vitre

Corentin Vitre dealt with waste from the fishing, auction and canning industries, which discard large quantities of fish skin. Working alongside Sophie Menguy, a student biologist at the University of Western Brittany, they developed a plant-based tanning technique and succeeded in obtaining a technical and aesthetically-pleasing material that required no chemical treatment, resulting in the production of a leather referred to in tanning terms as 'exotic'.

This project won the support of the Armorique Regional Natural Park, which works to promote circular economic flows, with a local auction house providing the raw material. The university's Fablab helped with adapting traditional tanning techniques, whilst local dressmakers expressed an interest in this sort of fish leather.

## PROJECT: ELEC GREEN CITY



Copyright by Alizée Gerard

The Elec Green City project was the brainchild of Alizée Gérard, who describes herself as a bio-inspired designer. She took on the challenge of a city at the end of the network, namely Brest, which is not very resilient in energy terms, the idea being to create living walls on the facades of social buildings using a modular system and using the bacteria from the plant substrate to create a current to harness and amplify.

Current amplification is a technical innovation developed jointly by 2 electronic engineers from the university's Fablab, Christophe Bars and Julien Raoul. The electricity generated is proportionate to the planted surface and could locally and renewably power special temporary urban lighting that is better distributed than it currently is. This research is awaiting funding for a prototype.

## PROJECT: A-VEN



Copyright by Atelier Z

A-Ven is a collaborative project run by Cédric Le Breton and involving research into efficient usage in micro-contexts and a more resilient approach to coastal sailing. The mini-catamaran is lightweight, easy to dismantle and transport and designed for sailing in estuaries and rias. Plans are under shareable Creative Commons license and the vessel is made of bio-sourced composite sheets.

This is primarily a sustainable innovation project. The material used is a cork, flax fibre and PLA composite and the catamaran is 95% biodegradable by industrial composting. The plans are designed for easy digital cutting at the Fablab, for example, and assembly involves a so-called conventional 'stitch & glue' technique.

## PROJECT: WASTE FACTORY



Copyright by Sarah Laubie

This final project, run by Sarah Laubie, is called Waste Factory. On the one hand, it involves using low-tech tools to categorise, grind and recycle used plastics recovered from the sea, and on the other hand, a designer who comes up with relevant uses and designs for the material produced. Waste Factory has produced this collection of bio-inspired surf fins.

Waste Factory has been supported by and granted access to equipment at various academic research centres to develop the project. Sarah can gather her raw materials locally and has also identified a regional target for the goods she produces. She is now seeking to complete her own production facilities to ensure the project is based on a circular and sustainable economic model.

## MASTERS IN TRANSITION DESIGN



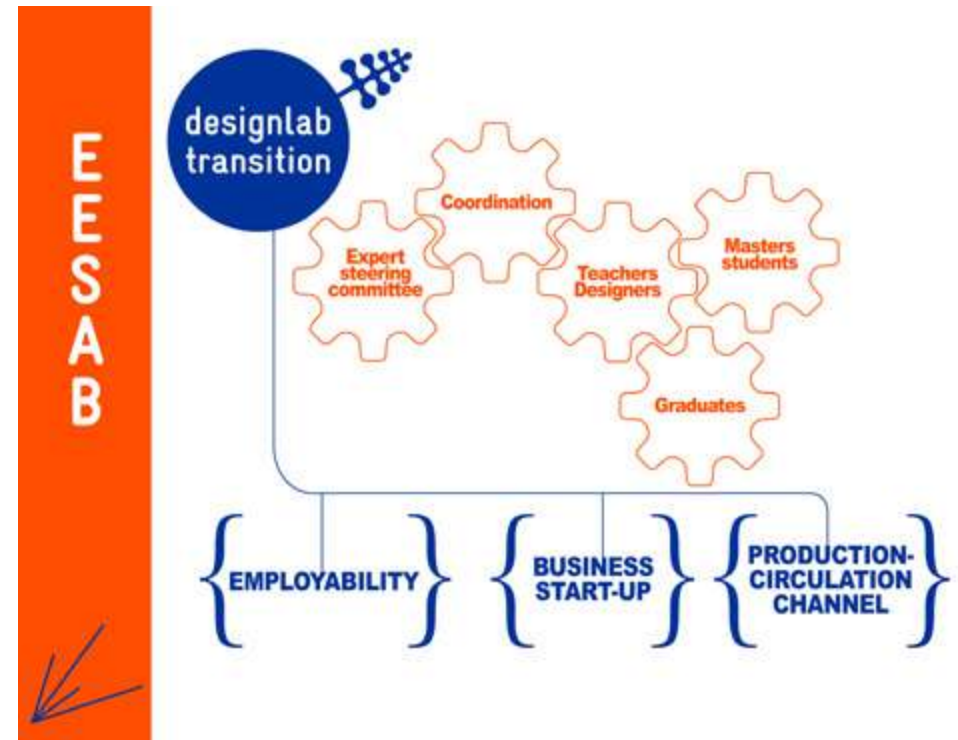
Copyright by Erle Marec

These young designers are from the EESAB's - the European Academy of Art in Brittany, Brest - design department.

The EESAB is a higher education establishment for art and design that operates right across Brittany with 4 sites in 4 cities spread across three French departments. Each site has its own environment and syllabus, Brest being responsible for the Masters in Transition Design.

It consists of a teaching syllabus and a special working environment designed to promote the development of transitional projects across the Finistère region. Its aim is to help students adopt an active learning methodology and multidisciplinary project management skills and to introduce them to the scientific fields relating to the issues they are dealing with alongside their artistic training.

## DESIGNLAB TRANSITION



Copyright by EESAB

They receive support from the very start of their working lives from Designlab Transition - an action research laboratory with a strong vocational emphasis that supports Masters students and young graduates by assisting with research contracts in real-world situations, with an incubation programme to support business start-ups and by heralding a support channel for the production and circulation of student projects .

## CHAPTER 4

# SHIFTING CENTRES, SHIFTING MARGINS

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# ART AS AN AGENT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH RESEARCH PROJECTS

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## **Keywords:**

heritage  
communication  
artistic research  
projects  
data  
exhibition  
decentralization

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## **ABSTRACT**

How can Art act as an agent for social change and development? What strategies can be used through research projects to approach these changes and help build awareness in society concerning issues such as climate change, social integration, entrepreneurship, or gentrification? Projects such as WARMEST and ARTApp are examples introduced to address these topics.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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# INTRODUCTION

A total work of Art is only possible in the context of the whole of society. (Beuys, 1992: 891)

We cannot talk about social change without being aware of our role within a network. Art, as an agent of change, should not carry out simple artistic actions without connecting with the rhizomatic structure of today's society.

The paper by the authors Katja Fleischmann and Clive Hutchison (2012), entitled *Creative Exchange: An Evolving Model of Multidisciplinary Collaboration*, defines a series of principles related to creative exchange:

Creative Exchange supports discipline-specific expertise. However, Creative Exchange also recognises the potential interrelationship between all concepts, and will invite participation from other disciplines, cultures, the community, and industry.

Creative Exchange offers support to fledgling concepts, ignites and inspires both individual and team-driven directions and aspirations, and encourages students to speak out and build confidence in the articulation and expression of their ideas.

Creative Exchange examines current debates and revels in contentious issues. (2012: 24)

This is how we understand Art in our research group, approaching it holistically in all its complexity and totality; our starting position understands Art as a dynamic element of diverse and different social assets, rather than an isolated reflection of a society with which it does not dialogue.

We are currently in an expanded Art scenario where a multitude of disciplines converge, which are interconnected and progressively interrelate for the production of higher holistic projects. Our research group has been building proposals and actions through research projects in this line of transdisciplinary work, thought, and positioning. Not only do we approach Art as a form of expression or an aesthetic experience, but we do so with a completely collaborative perspective, both at the team level (where different orientations converge) and with external agents outside of the artistic context. Projects where the parties dialogue, generating a continuous feedback, without forgetting that:

*The fundamental problems facing humanity make it essential to study them as a whole, demanding the combination of all the potentialities of human knowledge, and to focus them as complex, inseparable and part of a feedback loop; such that the need arises to address an integral and interdisciplinary perspective to solve them, which poses changes in education and research with new inter- and transdisciplinary approaches. (Carvajal, 2010: 165)*

As a result of this holistic perspective, the research group has developed a series of projects, which can be divided into two major research fields and structured into subprojects with different nuances. These areas of research are grouped in a first focus on Art, Market, and Entrepreneurship with links to the economic sector, corporate identity, and innovation, and with a strong orientation towards the emerging Art sector. A second line is focused on Cultural Heritage, both material and immaterial, and keeping in mind the various stakeholders involved in this heritage, such as its dissemination, construction, conservation, and interaction.

Within the actions in the first group, previously carried out research such as GLOCALFINEART<sup>1</sup> are highlighted. More recently, we have developed ARTApp project and we present it in this paper as case study.

With regard to actions focused on the second focus, that is cultural heritage, we have developed research linking Art, Crafts, and Design in comparative studies between Southern Spain (Andalusia region) and Northern Morocco, two different scenarios brought together by a single sea. These are projects that also links to the maker movement with particular emphasis on the value of craftsmanship and its preservation as a vehicle for cultural identity and heritage awareness, establishing links with craftsmen, artists, and designers.

Currently, in line with the aforementioned priority research lines of the group, we are immersed in the WARMEST project, which helps to strengthen the research line undertaken by the group.

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<sup>1</sup> CORDIS. European Commission. Retrieved 14 December 2018 from <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/111159/reporting/en>

# FOR A SUSTAINABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH HERITAGE AND ITS DISSEMINATION: WARMEST PROJECT

WARMEST, as the acronym for *LoW Altitude Remote sensing for the Monitoring for the state of cultural hEritage Sites: building an inTegrated model for maintenance*, is a project funded by the European Union, within the programme Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research and Innovation Staff Exchange Actions-MSCA-RISE.

Funded with 1.4 million euros, and coordinated by the University of Granada, its main goal is the development of a tool for the prediction of various risks affecting heritage, using strategies based on machine learning, AI and dissemination processes it is collecting and analysing data obtained from the associated heritage sites in Spain and Italy. Both the tool and the whole research process seek a comprehensive approach to heritage; understanding heritage in a comprehensive way leads us to view its various aspects (Smith, 2006):

- Heritage is a multi-layered performance—whether a performance of visiting, managing, interpretation, or conservation.
- The idea of heritage as an act of meaningful communication—indeed as an experience—.
- It may, for instance, involve revising meanings of the past, as well as the cultural, social, and political needs of the present change and development, or challenging the ways in which groups and communities are perceived and classified by others.
- Heritage is also a discourse. The idea of discourse used in this work does not simply refer to the use of words or language, but rather to a form of social practice.

A breakdown of the objectives<sup>2</sup> is provided in order to give the reader a clear vision of what and how we will attempt to achieve:

- OBJ1. Collect updated, detailed, and integrated data on the state of conservation of cultural heritage.

<sup>2</sup> WARMEST website. Retrieved 14 December 2018 from <http://warmest.eu/>

The availability of the data required on the condition of heritage is essential in order to safely pass it on to future generations, needing time and suitable decisions on preservation. Low Altitude Remote Sensing (LARS) and Ecomapper underwater technology are effective to establish the moisture content of structures, the evolution of cracks, to monitor foundation movements, and for the analysis of thermal gradients.

- OBJ2. Define safe and effective visitor routes for monuments/sites.
- OBJ3. Produce accurate and cost-effective predictive maintenance plans on foreseen scenarios for cultural and natural heritage sites.
- OBJ4. Make decisions on excavation campaigns in relation to expected maintenance plans. New technologies can highlight the presence and composition of buried structures, helping to create integrated excavation/maintenance plans, and greatly supporting knowledge on past cultures.

For this purpose, the transdisciplinary dimension of the project was paramount from the beginning, considering not only the material aspect, but also the cultural and economic aspects, since the tool will enable decisions of heritage management, conservation, etc., and of course the aspects involved in the very achievement of the tool, such as climate studies, microbiology applied to heritage, etc.

The development of the tool will be achieved by retrieving data from the following heritage sites:

## **The Alhambra, Granada (Spain)**

The Alhambra is a palace, a fortress, and a citadel. It was originally the residence of the Nasrid Sultans and high government officials, servants, and the royal guard. Its construction started in the 11th century; today, more than 2.5 million visitors visit the citadel every year.

We are focusing in the study of the Court of the Lions and its 148 marble columns, which is now receiving more than 2.5 million visitors walking inside the citadel every year.

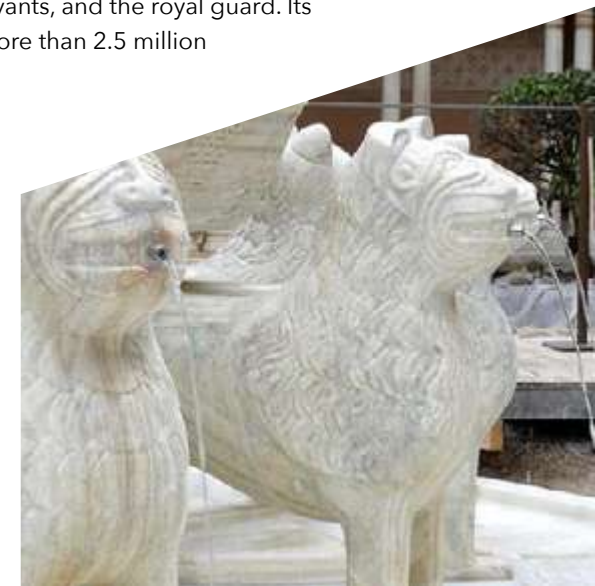


Figure 1. Patio de los Leones (Court of the Lions), Alhambra, Granada.

### Marzamemi "Church Wreck," Sicily (Italy)

Some of the first works in this underwater area (including a series of pieces such as stone columns, capitals, etc., from a Byzantine merchant ship, which lay hidden in the seabed until discovered in 1959) are concentrated in the Marzamemi area known as the "Church Wreck," since prefabricated architectural elements for the construction of an ancient Byzantine church sank with the merchant ship in this area, along with other northern cargoes of the Aegean during the 6th century.

In addition, in line with the group's research and in order to foster awareness and promotion of the Marzamemi heritage, WARMEST supports artistic projects that interconnect contemporary art, technology, science, and nature, such as the organisation of the 1st Art Residency on contemporary art, based on the underwater heritage, which will be organised together with the Soprintendenza del Mare (Superintendence of the Sea, dependant on the Culture Ministry). Artists will be asked to reflect and focus on the preservation of the oceans and the heritage under them by using data that will be provided by the project.



Figure 2. Underwater heritage site in Marzamemi, Sicily.

### Santa Croce Basilica, Florence (Italy)

The monumental complex of Santa Croce in Florence, property of the Fondo Edifici di Culto of the Italian Ministry of the Interior and of the Municipality of Florence, is managed by Opera di Santa Croce, a non-profit organisation.

The monumental complex includes the Basilica, the convent areas, the museum, the Pazzi Chapel, and the cloisters, with a surface of about 15,000 m<sup>2</sup>, of which more than 11,000 m<sup>2</sup> are roofed. The WARMEST project will be focused in the second cloister, which will permit the use of the methodology based in the Alhambra research for the Court of the Lions.

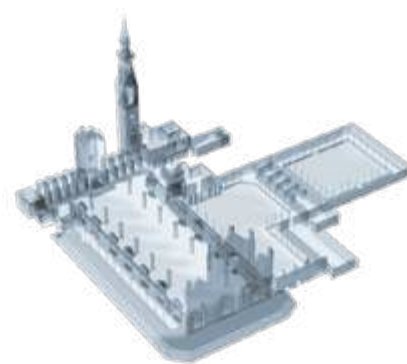


Figure 3. Santa Croce Basilica, Florence.

It is important to highlight that the diversity of every exploitation site and its conditions and particular aspects is a challenge for the project group of researchers. Different technology devices will be chosen to collect data from each site, allowing us to end up with a reliable portrait of the condition of each of these heritage sites.

Reconstructive methods are not confined to science: on the contrary, as cognitive agents, scientists have always drawn on representational practices derived from culture. In particular, science owes a great deal to art practices (as *Ars* or makers of knowledge), as argued by historians of medieval science and technology (Crombie, 1953; De Santillana, 1962; Perez-Ramos, 1988).

*The result of the condition of the sites selected for the study will be the basis for developing the mathematical algorithm that provides our risk prediction and prevention tool in different contexts, in order to preserve them and generate more sustainable relationships with them. (Malco, 2004: 7)<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>3</sup> WARMEST website. Retrieved 16 December 2018 from <http://warmest.eu/>

# DECENTRALISATION OF EXHIBITION ACTIVITY IN THE CITY OF GRANADA: ARTAPP PROJECT

The ARTApp research project—an acronym for Visual Arts, Talent Management, and Cultural Marketing, building branding and development of a network for advertising and dissemination of young artists<sup>4</sup>—is funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness and has developed actions for the transfer of knowledge generated through artistic production from two fields of action: the offline and the online world.

In the *offline* context, the project has collaborated with the University of Granada, co-funding some exhibitions of graduates in the city of Granada, such as Cristina Ramírez with the exhibition *La muerte y el ciego* (fig. 4), Álvaro Albadalejo with *Vueltas y penumbras* (fig. 5), and the collective exhibition *Nuevos Nómadas* (fig. 6), amongst others.



Figure 5. Exhibition *Vueltas y penumbras*, Álvaro Albadalejo, PTS.



Figure 6. Exhibition *Nuevos Nómadas*, PTS Exhibition Hall.



Figure 4. Exhibition *La muerte y el ciego*, Cristina Ramírez, PTS.

<sup>4</sup> ARTAPP website. Retrieved 16 December 2018 from <http://artapp.asociacionartes.com/>

All these exhibitions were held in a new exhibition venue at the University of Granada that opened on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 with the exhibition *El peso del alma*,<sup>5</sup> located in the PTS-Health Technological Park—a complex that brings together university training spaces for the students and staff of the Faculties of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Health Sciences, as well as companies, research centres, and healthcare in a hospital<sup>6</sup> in one of the fastest-growing areas of the city of Granada.

The collaboration between the ARTApp project and the University of Granada in the co-funding of the exhibition activity at this new venue dedicated to emerging art responds, on the one hand, to the project goal of promoting and giving visibility to young artists and, on the other, promotes the outreach of knowledge generated through artistic creation in this area of the city, which barely had access to this type of activity.

If we analyse the distribution of the exhibition spaces dedicated to the dissemination of Contemporary Art in the city of Granada, it is noted that all the exhibition spaces are strongly centralised in one area, being coincident with the main tourist area (fig. 7)

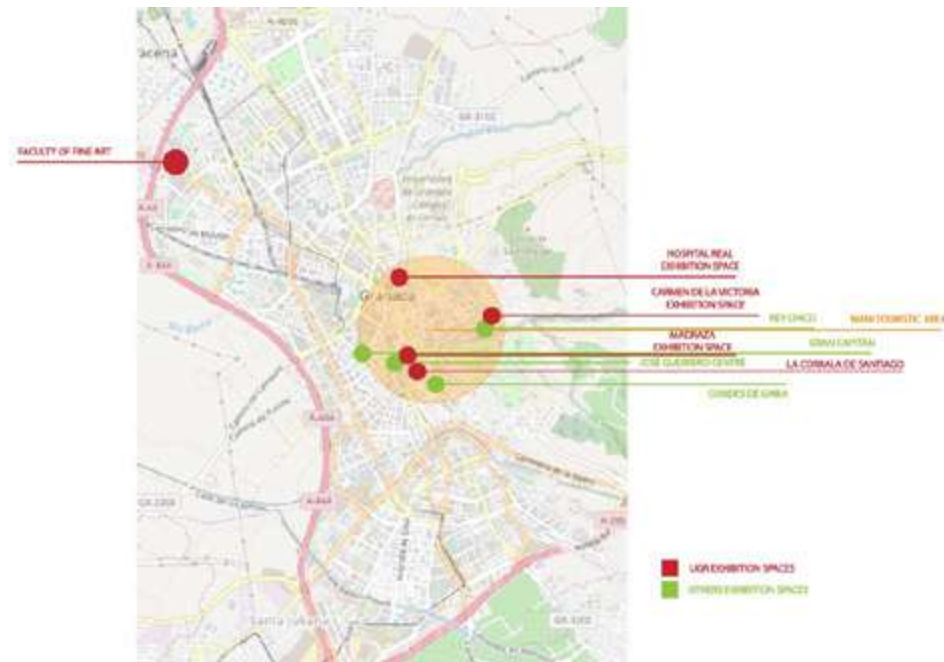


Figure 7. Distribution of exhibition spaces in the city of Granada.

5 Review of the exhibition *El peso del alma*. (The soul's weight) Retrieved 14 December 2018 from <https://canal.ugr.es/evento/exposicion-peso-del-alma-fisiologia-la-vida-la-muerte/>

6 PTS website. Retrieved 14 December 2018 from <http://www.ptsgranada.com/>

This area includes the Joven Rey Chico Municipal Art Centre and the Gran Capitán Cultural Centre, both of municipal ownership, and also the Palacio Condes De Gabia and José Guerrero Contemporary Art Museum, both managed by the Provincial Council of Granada.<sup>7</sup>

The University of Granada also owns exhibition venues in this central area, such as the Carmen de la Victoria, the Corrala de Santiago, the Hospital Real (headquarters of the principality), and La Madraza Centre for Contemporary Culture.<sup>8</sup>

These university buildings that host exhibition activity are also heritage buildings,<sup>9</sup> and are therefore included in tourist itineraries as points of interest. This translates into important results in number of visitors; for instance, the Exhibition Hall of the Madraza Centre received a total of 33,192 visitors in the four exhibitions held in the academic year 2017/2018, becoming the exhibition space with the greatest potential for artistic outreach of the University of Granada (fig. 8).

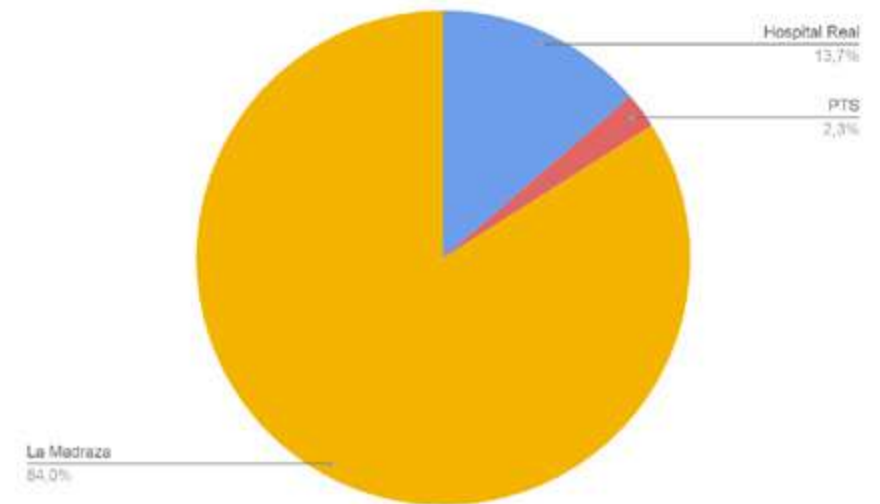


Figure 8. Number of visitors to the exhibitions at venues of the University of Granada.

7 Provincial Council of Granada. Retrieved 10 December 2018 from <http://www.dipgra.es/contenidos/palacio-condes-gabia/>

8 La Madraza Centre for Contemporary Culture. Retrieved 10 December 2018 from <https://lamadraza.ugr.es/>

9 UGR Heritage. Retrieved 10 December 2018 from <https://patrimonio.ugr.es/multimedia-cat/edificios-patrimoniales/>

These results in number of visitors translate into important benefits in terms of the transfer of artistic knowledge and the dissemination of human capital and its production generated in this educational institution.

But this centralisation of the exhibition activity catalyses attention to the demand, enabling access to knowledge in areas where it is most difficult because they are peripheral neighbourhoods of the city.

Thus, the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Granada attempts to remedy this deficiency by covering the north-west area of the city with the activity generated in its exhibition hall.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, with the creation of the PTS and the construction of an exhibition hall in its facilities, the transfer of artistic activities to communities at the other side of the city is covered (fig. 9).

The management of these spaces is carried out by the area of visual arts at the Vice-Rectorate of University Extension (University of Granada), maintaining a continuous activity and opening a call for grants for the artistic production within the framework of the Research Plan of the UGR, mainly aiming to promote research, creation, and artistic production and to use these spaces for its dissemination.

The University of Granada, thus, becomes a stimulating agent for the generation of knowledge through financial aid for emerging and mid-career artists; on the other hand, with the creation of new, decentralised spaces for the promotion and dissemination of artistic activity, generated by the aforementioned calls and by exhibitions of renowned guest artists, the boundaries between centre and periphery are removed, sharing the material and immaterial benefits that this activity generates.



Figure 9. Radius of action of the exhibition halls of the Fine Arts Faculty and the PTS.

The ARTApp project also expands the promotion and dissemination of artistic production and knowledge towards the digital area, through an online platform developed to eliminate physical barriers and to democratise artistic activity and its global visibility.

One of the main differences between this platform and similar ones is the high level of relationship of the information, which will make it possible, for example, to know the actors participating in the same exhibition or those with the same award or prize.

Moreover, as a result of a comparative analysis between similar platforms (fig. 10), fields that have not been contemplated in other cases have been expanded and added, such as the awards, which are usually included in the curricula of the artists, associated with the author. In the case of the ARTApp platform, the prizes will be related to the artist's work and acknowledgements. This differentiation will make it possible to identify the curriculum of a work of art, which will show the trajectory of that piece, obtaining quantitative and qualitative information—with the reputation of the award—in order to make more objective assessments of a work of art.

<sup>10</sup> Faculty of Fine Arts. Universidad de Granada. Retrieved 10 December 2018 from <http://bellasartes.ugr.es/>

## CONCLUSIONS

In this way, EU funded WARMEST project provides not only a tool to prevent future risks in heritage sites associated with climate and other facts, such as the impact of the visitors' itineraries, but also aims to establish a series of more sustainable relationships between them. Its results will allow institutions to redesign public circuits in heritage sites likely to deteriorate, as well as to disseminate the intrinsic values of the site to the surrounding population and to tourism through contemporary art tools.

On the other hand, the ARTApp project has contributed to a double purpose: the decentralisation of the exhibition activity in the city of Granada in order to bring other areas closer, such as those in the outskirts, far from the tourist circuit where the majority of contemporary art exhibition spaces are condensed, in collaboration with the Cultural Extension Vice Rectorate of the University of Granada, and to generate a new channel for outreach and promotion through the development of an online platform.

Thus, these two research projects, from two different spheres of action within art, address social change and its development by reinterpreting and restructuring the context and the artistic community, since "in general, social change (or development) could be described as a significant change of structured social action or of the culture in a given society, community, or context" (Sarvaes, 2011).

INFORMACIÓN SOBRE OBRA										
	Subtítulo	Descripción	Artista	Exposición	Colección	Fecha	RECONOCIMIENTOS			
ArtApp	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ArtDiscover	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Artnet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ARTAPP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

INFORMACIÓN SOBRE ARTISTA													
	Nombre	Local	Residencia	Comunidad	Superficie	Exposición	Estadía	obra	exposiciones	Estudios	Publicaciones	Teoría	RECONOCIMIENTOS
ArtApp	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ArtDiscover	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Artnet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ARTAPP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EXPOSICIÓN										
	Fecha	Organización	Local	Organización	Artista	obra	Descripción	Tipo	Comentarios	OBRA
ArtApp	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ArtDiscover	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Artnet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ARTAPP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

INFORMACIÓN SOBRE COLECCIÓN							
	Nombre	Local	Artista	Descripción	Fecha	OBRA	TIPO
ArtApp	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ArtDiscover	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Artnet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ARTAPP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

INFORMACIÓN SOBRE INSTITUCIÓN										
	Nombre	Local	Artista	Exposiciones	Comentarios	obra	Tipo	Emergencia	Org. Info	UBICACIÓN
ArtApp	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ArtDiscover	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Artnet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ARTAPP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

INFORMACIÓN SOBRE RECONOCIMIENTOS				
	Premios A	Premios B	Premios C	Premios D
ArtApp	x	x	x	x
ArtDiscover	x	x	x	x
Artnet	x	x	x	x
ARTAPP	x	x	x	x

Figure 10. Comparative analysis between digital platforms for the promotion of art.

Thus, the degree of innovation of the online platform ARTApp lies in positioning the work of art as a source of information to approach the knowledge of other data related to the art system. For this reason, an App will be included with visual search and recognition technology,<sup>11</sup> which will allow, by taking a picture of a work of art with a mobile device, to obtain information about the artist, the collection and the exhibitions in which the piece and its creator participated, creating a new form of knowledge transfer to society via new technologies.

<sup>11</sup> For more information, see <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/visual-search-brands/260897/>

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# CITIES IN THE CITY: WALKING IN THE URBAN UNCANNY

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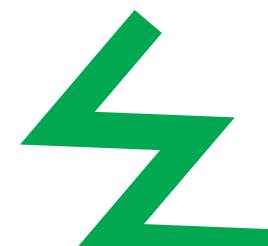
**Keywords:**

mnemonic city  
pattern recognition  
psychogeography  
biological data  
ambulatory artwork

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## ABSTRACT

*Mirages de Ville* is an art project that studies the idea of multiple cities occupying one physical space. It does this by exploiting deficiencies in computer software and then mapping the electronically generated data onto concrete environments. This mixing of realities suggests that sometimes this information doesn't just intersect, but that it produces its own reality.



## THE CITY IN THE CITY

*The City & the City*, is a novel by China Miéville (2010) about overlapping worlds. The book is an account of two different cities occupying the very same physical space with two sets of completely different inhabitants. What separates these populations is not a conventional border or fencing, but the barriers set up by language, laws, and customs. The inhabitants have learnt the art of “unseeing,” allowing them to completely ignore things that don’t directly affect them, and of never quite being conscious of the other. It’s a book about neighbours that will never meet, talk, or even glance at one another; never bump into each other on the street, and each seeing a completely different set of landmarks, passers-by and shops. What Miéville calls “unseeing” comprises the full range of unsensing: unseeing, unsmelling, unhearing, untasting, and untouching.

The ambulatory artwork *Cities in the City*, by Alan Dunning, uses various computational stratagems in concert with tactical walking to explore the psychoacoustics of the natural and artificial systems that contain and define the modern city. In doing so, it seeks to reveal a new mnemonic city—memories and events embedded in material structures that reveal hidden cities. It does this by deploying pattern recognition software to analyse the bioelectrical output of a moving body, and its visual and sonic environment, to look and listen, filtering collected data through the lens of false positives generated by the electronic equipment; mistakes that suggest the existence of unexpected alternative realities, the other dimensions predicted by theoretical physicists—phantoms within and between sounds, spaces, and memories.

The work sets out to find anomalies in the steady rhythms of the city, unexpected sounds, images, or patterns in the everyday urban material, processes, and systems. As such, the project is one of discovery and exploration—one that is informed by a search for moments when meaning is discovered in a place where none is expected. The intention is to build psychologically-based understandings of the urban space which will form the basis for new views of the city as an ever-growing and changing accretion of multidimensional layers, formed by the passage of past lives and events.

The piece is structured as rambling, aimless walks, during which observations, records, and data are gathered by endoscopes—tiny, illuminated cameras, normally used to look deep into the body—digital cameras, microphones, and journals. Small cracks, unseen or inaccessible spaces, and undistinguished ambient and unheard acoustic spaces, are probed, digitally analysed for pattern and form, and documented as moments and events along an exploratory trail. At times the walks are imagined as explorations, as the participants make their way through a foreign terrain looking for a new world and are simply struck by one or another promising aspect. Other times they are planned by

chance—the throwing of dice, an arbitrarily chosen first word on a random page in a book, a first colour seen and pursued, a line scribbled, or liquid spilt across a map—to decide a route, only to be abandoned by some later arbitrary decision. In all cases they echo the irrational drifting strategies developed by the Situationist projects, constantly resituating the participant within a city as it changes moment to moment by how it is felt and seen (Wollen, 1989).

Such walking becomes not only the means to explore a city, but also ensures the fluid nature of the work, as the very act of mapping and observation instantaneously redefines what Adèle Cassigneul calls “the interface of a concrete topography and an individual cartography” (2017: 2).

*Cities in the City* is part of a larger project examining the digital uncanny, and it is the continuation of many of the themes of the artist’s earlier collaborations with the late Paul Woodrow in the Einstein’s Brain Project (EBP). Sigmund Freud’s (2003) original description of the uncanny was the feeling of something appearing to have a bizarre basis beyond the ordinary or normal; it is something that is uncomfortably strange, the experience of unfamiliarity. This experience of strangeness includes those physical spaces that have been transformed through historically significant events that produced unsettling emotional and psychological states of anxiety, trepidation, and psychosomatic trauma.

By analysing ambient audio environments, unheard voices and sounds are revealed which disturb our sense of our surroundings. It associates the uncanny with the mirage of contemporary urban life, looking for the presence of an unsettling unknown. The work takes as its starting point ideas about the illusory nature of reality, through an exploration of the unseen and unheard, and the uncanny, as it conflates public and private imagination. It uses the disorientation experienced when something hidden is revealed, to draw attention to ever present disturbances in the relationship between self and surroundings.

There is a public image of any city, which is the overlap of many individual experiences. *Cities in the City* explores the idea of a number of psychological dimensions occupying the same physical space. The work builds on the legacies of Walter Benjamin’s (1978) expression of profane illumination, Anthony Vidler’s (1994) architectural uncanny, and the Surrealist and Situationist (Cohen, 1993) projects that open the city to change through disorientation and drift by recasting the most ordinary objects as poetically exciting and even supernatural, to unlock a whole new sense of the dimensions of the city.

As *Cities in the City* sets out to reconfigure the city into psychological and psycho-geographic zones, it recalls what Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer explains as the schizophrenic nature of discovered sounds, texts, and data. That is, dislocated from their original sources, sounds, text, and data generate new contexts for the environment

that produces them. Like Plato's, *Realm of Becoming*, the polis is in a constant state of becoming something else in a series of moments of pivotal, and lived experiences, and of active spatio-temporal events that suggests both time and space are fluid.

The city amplifies the clatter of the street to the point where, as John Cage (1939) argued, the streets themselves are an acoustic medium—a cacophony of bouncing and reflecting sounds that inform modern urban life and produce the frenetic soundscapes of sensorial confusion that early modernism promised to manage. Public sounds have always created a sense of community, whether in church, the market, or on the street. The artist's intention here is to discover the acoustic consciousness of the city contained within the concrete and asphalt patterns of the metropolis by using speech and pattern recognition software.

*Cities* monitors ambient and environmental audio by using microphones placed in specific locations or worn by participants in the artwork, and bespoke speech recognition software to tease out, isolate, and generate words, phrases, and sounds from the noisy environment.

As participants travel the tentacles of the city, biometrics and texts and sounds recorded and analysed by the recognition software produces strings of words that distort and change the perception of the terrain. As the paths of the participants overlay and intersect, the layering process produces more and more complicated features: hotspots and areas of dense or sparse word clusters that can be translated into topography as peaks, valleys, and plains. In re-characterising the city this way, the project produces emotional maps of more or less psychologically charged zones, capable of generating elevation, topographical, and psycho-barometric diagrams as features within the city. Instead of colonising space, as maps have done in the past, the work augments reality by introducing layers of stratification; enhancing the outside world with additional layers of digital information.

*Cities in the City* studies the idea of multiple cities occupying the same physical space but consisting of assorted psychological dimensions conjured up through various emotional valences—the intrinsic attractiveness or averseness of a place, event, object, or situation. It focuses on the discovery of meaning in chaotic and random flows, where there is usually an expectation of none. The idea is to look at how we might perceive space differently, how we might “unsee” through the lenses of the misheard, the half-heard, and the imagined, to perceive alternative realities. This digitally produced material is used to create new landmarks, street names, maps, and other visual and audio ephemera that can be used to re-characterise the urban setting through the evocation of emotional responses.

In this instance the application of new media technologies provides the opportunity to expand on traditional urban environments with unique information and communication

spatial experiences. The convergence of telecommunication networks, geographical positioning systems, and interactive graphic interfaces introduces novel contexts and forms of interactive creative practices.

*Cities* is one of several projects that looks at plotting virtual space onto the physical spaces of the concrete environments inhabited by material bodies. This mixing of realities might mean that the virtual and physical are simply layered or intersecting, however, the work suggests that something else is being produced in the folds or creases between the virtual and physical, between data space and geographical space. Sometimes these folds don't just mix realities, but they produce their own reality. They can, in this sense, produce other spaces—like Michel Foucault's heterotopias—spaces that have more layers of meaning or relationships to other places than immediately meets the eye (Miller, 2015). These other places place all other sites into question, metaphorically as much as literally. The resulting hybrid spatial context becomes the arena for a distinctive electronically generated aesthetic.

The objective is to deliberately exploit the random occurrence of false positives in the collection of data to create new meaning(s) in the urban landscape, developing new algorithms to permit sounds other than speech to be recognised as words. The aim is to build psychologically based topographic and mental maps from psycho-geographical space (Debord, 1955), to form the basis for a new understanding of the urban as a continual accretion of spatio-temporal zones.

The work aligns itself with important moments in the history of 20th-century Western philosophy and art, where artists turned walking into a critical and creative gesture, taking to the streets, looking for other ways to see and be seen, other ways to be. In a lineage that stretches back to wandering nomads and spiritual pilgrimages, to writers and philosophers, the walking body turns into a means of both creating and resisting meaning: resisting prescribed itineraries, thwarting predictable outcomes, opening up fresh points of engagement, and discovering surprising vistas (Gros, 2014). Still others, such as Run Dem Crew, a community of runners founded by poet Charlie Dark, or Peter Costello's urban explorations, provide both inspiration and context.

What emerges from these bipedal exercises, author Francesco Careri (2017) explains, are a range of alternative ways of evoking and inhabiting space, giving the experience of place a phantasmagoric character; where the global and local, the familiar and the strange, the real and the virtual become intertwined. By deploying the digital recording technologies, the work explores inaccessible or unimagined physical and virtual urban space. Technologically mediated public space, in this instance, proposes a different dimension to the city, and it encourages additional modes of social interaction.

As the creative application of communication technologies becomes more and more integrated into our everyday activities, they help us to reshape and redefine meaningful human interaction. This process of cybernetic deployment produces a system of practices through which artistic artefacts acquire new symbolic, individual, and emotional value. At the same time this work highlights the antinomy between established social art practices and the growing influence of post-internet art production—one of many paradoxes in an increasingly fragmented field where established humanist approaches are contrasted with technologies' post-human visions.

Drawing on earlier bioelectrical work, *Cities in the City* sets out to map urban spaces in terms of psychologically charged sites, showing degrees of emotional responsiveness as salient features and landmarks within the city. These responses are revealed by biological sensors and used to build a psychologically based topography of the landscape, producing maps that show where states of high arousal and activity occurred. This information is coupled with data from monitoring the position, direction, and speed of a body's passage through the city; elevation contours and areas of density and openness emerge and are rendered as topographical maps.

The work does not set out to map patterns to specific emotions. The intention is only to distinguish areas in terms of instances and intensities of primary arousal. Over time the accumulation and sedimentation of these electrical indices crisscrossing and overlaying the city created a topology with areas of high and low activity that establish a different urban geography. In remapping the city this way, the project opened additional articulations of the dimensions of the city by acknowledging its immaterial, psychic, and spiritual shape.

The way we engage with technologies involves not only material, but also psychological dimensions. They are a link between our existence in the world and our search for meaning and purpose in our lives. The myths that are produced do not speak to us in factual terms, but rather in a Jungian, archetypal, metaphorical language.

In the book *Invisible Cities*, author Italo Calvino (1974) describes the index-ridden city this way:

*The city... does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls. (1974: 11)*

Physical structures are historical records that contain the accretion of social sediment. Stains, marks on stone, polished edges, worn stairs, and discoloured surfaces all index the passage of bodies in time, that leads to the reconstruction of space beyond its immediate architectural limits. These places contain cultural memories, retain a sense of

time or place, a sense of the stories and events that were once told or took place there, and are now embedded into their walls. The senses provide an interesting entry point into these memories, a site for recovering forgotten or erased experiences that reintegrate the sensorial with the material, countering the notion of fragmentation proposed by modernity. Imagine if we could resurrect these memories, the lost narratives, the stories and sounds that once echoed around or in a particular space.

*Cities in the City* is interested in mapping these phenomena precisely because they reshape familiar local spaces by changing the psychological view of the space. These spaces suddenly become disorienting and unsettling, unknown or unknowable, and surround us with an anxiety of uncertainty. In the most extreme responses to the recordings and data, they become evidence of conspiracy, indications of alien activity, or even hauntings.

In 1972, BBC television broadcasted a Nigel Kneale play called *The Stone Tape*. In it a team of scientists examine a ghostly event in an old building. They discover the possibility of the building's stones being a kind of recording medium for images and events that can be played back if given a powerful enough stimulus. This imaginary plot heralds a coming reality according to futurologist Ray Kurzweil (2005), who in his book, *The Singularity Is Near*, predicts that through nanotechnology the molecules of stone can be restructured into "computronium" (a programmable matter), and stones can then be turned into recording devices.

*Cities* references *The Stone Tape* as a fictional device to engage with theory about the materiality of the city and its capacity to store evidence of past lives and events. While *The Stone Tape* theory has been adopted by paranormal investigators to explore hauntings and other phenomena, these artworks use it as a purely fictive, but hopefully persuasive, device to engage with the idea that space is marked, indexical, and deictic.

The visualisation and sonification of patterns in noise sets out to develop works that suggest different ways to experience the world. That is, by analysing our environments to reveal concealed, hidden, or unbidden information that disturbs our given or received sense of ourselves and our surroundings, the work is interested in exploring the visible world to reveal the invisible forces that influence the lives of the living. Using the praxis of walking invisibility has become a theory of sight, with many invisibilities at play: artistic, social, technological, and political.

Capturing these moments, *Cities in the City* constructs an archaeology of loss, pathos, and missed connections, assembling a forgotten past in our digital present. It investigates the hidden resonances and meanings within the subtle traces that people and their actions leave behind—walking through a continuously remade city guided by the remnants of past lives and their ever-present ghosts.

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# YOU ARE VARIATIONS

## AN ECOLOGY OF

### SCIENTIFIC AND ARTISTIC

#### TRANSLATIONS

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**Keywords:**

ecology  
water  
data  
sound  
interdisciplinarity

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## ABSTRACT

*you are variations* studies the water cycle of living organisms. It processes scientific climate data from long-term environmental monitoring research differently. It composes this data as a musical score and enacts this score collaboratively through performative light and sound environments.

The nine versions of *you are variations* teach a startlingly clear sapience. They appear distressingly sorrowful, like somewhat dissonant largos grieving a loss. Mourning structural exclusion from our environment and each other, *you are variations* acknowledges this loss, allowing for a tangible relationality to emerge.

To harbour a relationship with water, it does not suffice to produce new, ever more precise technologies. One has to disclose the central void—the distance between words, the pause between the breaths you take to read them, the gap between us. *You are variations* researches how, with the help of water, this interval starts to resonate, becoming an aperture for a new kind of we.

## INTRODUCTION

Can we learn to listen to a tree?  
And if so, how do we learn listening?

*you are variations* does so by experimenting with aesthetic settings that enable and allow perceiving oneself *separated from, in the vicinity of, related to, or together with water*. This puts practice on a specific plane: *you are variations* calls for an artistic research practice that is contiguous with water; whatever that might mean or come to mean.

One of the challenges the research sets out to understand is how all elements are involved in the cycling as constituent members; that is, to treat *the human body, the living city, the measured tree, the participating humans, the conceptual score, the performative event, etc.*, as *organisms on different scales*.

*you are variations* is an ongoing cluster of events that reads long-term monitoring data of water cycling through trees, humans, cities, etc., as a score, and that enacts the score through acoustic and visual performances.

The work consists of transferring and arranging scientific measurements of water activity into compositions that recall the water flow as *generative* to the organism.

In the trajectory from micro to macro—which any interpretation of sensing data inherently requires—there are eminent and effective scale changes. The resulting enactment performing the score is conceived as re-creation of the water cycle as measured by science in the form of a collaborative live event.

Or, put differently, the project researches if *you are variations* has to operate as “organism” too, if it wants to meet a tree.

To understand oneself simultaneously as a part and as a whole entails discussing the research reciprocally in scientific, artistic, technological, and eco-political contexts.

## CONTEXTS

The research is positioned *conceptually* in the ecosophical tradition and *historically* in the contexts of various aesthetic choices for non-tempered tuning systems.

Mathematician Alfred North Whitehead’s process philosophy is revisited in the age of the Anthropocene, and three chapters on the histories of order in Western music and physics produce diachronic, discursive, and artistic constellations that delve into sound in its material, conceptual, and phonological cluster: acoustics, music, and language as sonic energies.

The nine versions of *you are variations* so far experiment with approaches from different frames of references, relating to topoi that recur across disciplines, that is, to a cluster of contexts in the disciplines of political ecology, philosophy of science, programming and mathematics, and media in the visual and time-based arts, as well as diverse fields in the range of sound art, art music, and experimental music.

Each of the numerous disciplines is deeply engaged in creating a committed relation between the environment and us, while none of these disciplines taken by itself is leading the research. Rather, the working process is guided by an inclusive navigation through all of them: at times surfing, swaying, staggering, at times drifting tangentially, even transgressively, seeking continuously to keep being propelled by each of the disciplines’ capacities *to move*.

It is in this processual sense of *creating motion* that I understand and evaluate the work.

The distinction between maps and diagrams emphasises a fundamental difference as well, not only in the dynamics of movement but also in the integration and effects of knowledge. It is in looking at data as *diagrams* that I suggest to turn measurements into sonorous organisms; as points of contact for the passages between human *and* non-human cosmologies, in which indeed “the viewpoints are not outside any event, as a master viewpoint, but are at the vanishing point within the event.”<sup>12</sup>

The challenge of setting up a working process that dispenses with any superior hand of authority, in the sense of resisting an overall disciplinary control, is vital to the research. Rather, the aspiration is to summon the union of number, music, and word; of chaos, order, and organism.

It does so for the sake of rendering responsibility to the multiplicity of perspectives on *water*, and to the way in which the nature of matter—be it a cultural artefact like this text,

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<sup>12</sup> Retrieved 21 April 2016 from <http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/woc/2014/04/12/negative-space-in-the-diagrammatic-imaginary-of-science-and-art-by-david-burrows-slade-school-of-fine-art/>

be it a so-called natural resource like a tree, be it an actual reader like you are right now—is neither reducible to an *objective* account of a historically outlined context, nor to a *subjective*, personal or private exemplary experience. If ever, then, it might rest there only temporarily, in the sincerity of abundant descriptions and its hybrid multitude of contexts. Maybe Evernden (1996) meant something similar when pointing out in *Beyond Ecology*: “The really subversive element in ecology rests upon its basic premise: inter-relatedness... Ecology denies the subject-object relationship upon which science rests.”<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the contexts *you are variations* finds itself in are numerous, ancient, and deeply coiled in the relations between music (sound) and cosmos (system), respective to the entire associative field these notions open up and play with: notions of *order* (*ratio in the sense of proportion*), *time* (*rhythmic cycles*), and *void* (*no-thing, emptiness*) are called upon.

I cannot but keep on working with the entire spectrum, including the intervals *between* these notions, that perhaps cannot be articulated, but speak silently.

To me, so far *you are variations* suggests experimenting with approaches to the water within organisms by moving from and into different Western and Eastern perspectives on tree-like structures. It does so in view of the actual associated complexities it wishes to encounter and address.

If we are to imagine operative re-articulations of our scientific *and* cultural relationship to our environment and ourselves, I propose to embrace and cultivate rigorous, creative forms of experimentation. It might mean having to modify the nature of the scientific experiment.

## METHOD

Roots and soil do not touch each other; they create interfaces, root hair, in order to touch. At the interface, root and soil communicate through translation, with root hair as their instrument. The abstraction inherent in these processes of translation, I would like to argue, is not a uniquely human faculty, phenomenon, or practice, but the very manner of how connection is fabricated. The method of *you are variations* resides in such an ecology of translation, apprehended not as exclusively human practice, but as the fabric of relation.

Microscopy, dendrochronological methods, and data collecting are part of the project's working methods, which lead to the artistic concept, the musical scores and the live

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<sup>13</sup> Evernden, N. (1997). *Beyond ecology*. In C. Glotfelty & H. Fromm (Eds.), *The ecocriticism reader: Landmarks in literary ecology* (p. 93). Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

performances. The assembly of different systems, aggregating various organisational, compositional, and instrumental cultures, is in itself understood as a work of translation, employed in the following way:

- scientific long-term monitoring data is read as artistic material (translation into *diagrams*)
- energy circulation is read as index of the overall timing (translation into *tempi*)
- the periodic table is read as music scale (translation into *sound frequencies*)
- the molecular formula is read as metric structure of repeated patterns of movement (translation into *rhythm*)
- meteorological data is read as instructions for instrument-specific articulations (translation into *gestures*)
- the tree as organism is read as composition, that is, a statement of organisation (translation into *score*)

Furthermore, all (empiric) data are read (diagrammatically) by the electronics, while particular scientific data are (re-)read by a varying choice of specific acoustic instruments. All versions consist of a collaboration between the scientists and musicians involved (professionals as well as amateur instrumentalists, solo voices and choirs, children, students, nuns, etc.), working together with and at the participating site.

This transdisciplinary methodology might be best described as *composing* by means of an *ecology of translation*. To realise this, I am working with a cross-disciplinary group of scholars, a hybrid set of materials, and an open box of tools to connect different ways of listening to trees *and* ourselves.

It is only possible collaboratively to turn scientific data on tree activity into diagrams that are themselves active and generative, twisting all subsequent embodiments.

It takes *more than one* to become one. It is only possible *together* to become an organism.

I wish to assert the utmost attention to a plurality of apprehensions and to consider the diversity of details involved in the composite materiality of any natural, cultural, and social environment such as a tree, including the actual and potential interrelations it harbours. My attempt is to explore the entire ecological, artistic and political contexts that are at work in *you are variations* accordingly; that is, inclusively.



## CONCLUSION

The reason I do not conceive of myself as a composer in the classical sense—or, if ever, rather in a literal sense—is because I deeply wish to listen and learn from the sounds my work creates.

The working process is not set up to lead, direct, or conduct the sounds, but to be guided and conducted by them in such a way that they can touch (me and others), go through us, and take us along.

I sense that neither me nor the tree nor the city is the composer. Instead, it is the collaborative working process itself that incites a composition that does not narrate the water's course through the tree, but resonates with it for a while.

To foster a new relationship between myself and the water also means to disclose the central emptiness, the hyphen—within myself—that separates me from the it. I risk myself in this void, the hiatus is within us.<sup>14</sup>

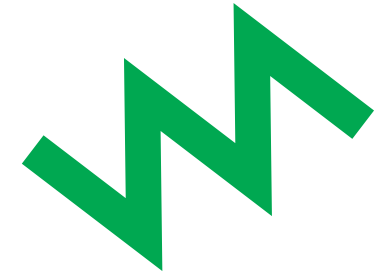
*You are variations* researches how this interval can become an aperture for a new kind of we. Opening our thinking in this way might allow us to realise a greater we—a we that, in the process, might be “*thriving*”<sup>15</sup>—not just in our lives, but in the lives of all of us, including those who lived before us and those who will live beyond us. It is the only gift we have and can give to the living future.

It comes like a flash: water is inconspicuous, sober, inexhaustible.

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14 As in Agamben's later work on paradigms, the way to reconcile the caesura or fracture at the heart of the human being is to do away with the dichotomous logics that representational schemas have brought us. Instead of relying upon a duality of the universal versus the particular, we can learn to respect the absolute singularity of each tree that presents itself before us: “The world—insofar as it is absolutely, irreparably profane—is God.” Agamben, G. (1993). *The Coming Community* (M. Hardt, Trans.) (p. 90). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

15 To connect to Donna Haraway's term “what constitutes an ethic of flourishing.” Haraway, D. (2008). *When species meet* (p. 134).



# IMAGINED ALTERNATIVES: TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES BETWEEN RURAL AND URBAN

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**Keywords:**

rurality  
pedagogy  
ecosystem  
network  
precarity

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## ABSTRACT

Can the relationship between the urban and rural offer shared sites of learning? This paper examines resiliency in art education and community engagement in rural contexts, and addresses ways in which the fluid boundaries between rural and urban can provide models for alternative modes of pedagogical and artistic engagement. It examines the discourse between the rural and the urban in art practice and education and discusses common challenges. Foregrounding initiatives that aim to engage and build community, examples include rural artist's collectives in the West of Ireland and the pedagogical approach of Burren College of Art as an art school located in the heart of a rural community. In conclusion, the paper offers an analysis of the rural and urban as active sites of potential shared learning and discusses the importance of developing alternative modes of engagement with each in the current climate of economic and environmental precarity.

# INTRODUCTION

*"There is nothing neutral about this space, it demands you interact with it."*  
Angus Farquar, NVA<sup>16</sup>

In the current climate of economic and environmental crisis the relationship between rural and urban is complex. Voting patterns in the United States and Brexit-era Britain have fostered a sense of political polarisation between rural and urban communities. Yet, despite very real divisions, similar concerns frame the rural/urban relationship. For example, economic precarity and sustainability remain common threads. In the context of a post-productivist west of Ireland, agricultural food production has partially given way to a new paradigm encompassing the tourist economy and artisanal initiatives, which in effect constitutes a complicated and multifaceted social reality. Community cohesion and survival, and the environmental crisis, inform a socio-political landscape that is as precarious, dynamic, and fluid as that of the urban. How does an art school relate to this social environment, and in turn, encourage students to be socially conscious arts practitioners? Burren College of Art is located in an area where the social is no longer defined by agriculture, but embodies this plurality. Additionally, social practitioners and artists' collectives operate alongside community-based organisations. As such, curricula and academic and community partnerships provide platforms for students to examine a range of social and environmental issues and learn from and contribute to discourses shaping the rural.

## 1. RURALITY AND THE POLITICS OF PLACE

We are fast approaching a situation where the majority of populations exist in urban concentrations. In Europe and the United States this is already the case, with rural areas relatively underpopulated. A recent Eurostat survey highlighted that an average of 27% of the population of the European Union live in rural areas (McMahon, 2016). Ireland has one of the highest percentages of rural populace at 42%. There can be little doubt that the trend is towards increasing urbanisation. According to a recent United Nations projection, 68% of the global population will be urban-based by 2050 (United Nations, 2018). While this dynamic continues to impact Ireland, the relationship between urban centres and rural hinterlands remains complex. There is stratification on one hand, yet a certain level of fluidity between them on the other.

In discussing the rural in this context, it could be argued that it has no homogeneous definition. The rural is often defined by what it is not, as the non-urban. As a term, rurality encompasses a non-homogeneous definition of the rural as a site of fluidity, plurality, and multiple identities. It is not simply a definition of place characterised by low population density, food production, and the countryside, but is a complex social, cultural, and representational formation. As place it represents a multi-layered constellation. As such, it cannot be subject to a fixed, essentialist reading, and is as much a social construct as nature, culture, or gender. As with any spatial formation it is defined by politics and power relations. In Ireland, this dynamic involves outward and inward migration, lack of services and infrastructure, and an enduring sense of precarity. These challenges are compounded by social and cultural marginalisation, in representation as much as in realpolitik. Additionally, issues arising from the environmental crisis that directly impacts rural communities is increasingly prescient in the context of the urban.

In eschewing essentialist readings of the rural, as a socio-political environment it remains as complex and multi-layered as the urban. Struggles for economic sustainability have in turn generated activism focused on natural resources and infrastructure, such as the Shell to Sea protests that took place in Co. Mayo from the mid-2000s onwards. Rather than the centre/periphery binary that often characterises the urban/rural dynamic, there exists a more fluid system of exchange, influence, and impact, and more interpenetration between rural and urban as spatial constructions. Power and politics define the relationship between them, and in the context of the rural art school, the politics of place constitutes a key site of enquiry and artistic research.

## 2. PEDAGOGY, PRAXIS, AND LEARNING FROM PLACE

So what does it mean to be an artist in this context? Moving away from the rural as a place of retreat for artists, contemporary Irish rurality presents a multifaceted platform for artistic practice and the discourse that surrounds it. For example, the Burren is home to a number of artists and artists' collectives. Ground Up Artists Collective has been a forum and resource for rural practice for over ten years. Artist and former collective member Fiona Woods describes its existence as "both recognition and assertion of the principle of mutuality. Many of the artists who are currently involved in the collective refer to the importance of non-competitive sharing and support, to the value of dialogue and critical conversation, to the exchange of information and ideas" (Woods, 2013). As an alternative focus for the production of and engagement with a rural aesthetic, former member Maria Kerin describes Ground Up as being "not about the rural, but from the rural" (Kerin, 2013).

16 Profile Angus Farquhar, The Oxford Student, 5 March 2017.

Deirdre O'Mahony is an artist who collaborates with rural communities. In the Burren, she revived a former post office in collaboration with the local community, turning it into a hub for exhibitions, screenings, and a mapping initiative. Expanding the social and relational as forms of civic engagement, Deirdre collaborated with Chicago-based artist Francis Whitehead on *Potato/Batata*, a project at Burren College of Art that merged local and global understanding of food production. Seamus McGuinness also works with social practice. *Lived Lives* is an ongoing social practice project carried out in collaboration with Professor Kevin Malone from University College Dublin and families who have lost members to suicide. Focusing on the problem of youth suicide in Ireland, *Lived Lives* seeks to rehumanise and restore identity to the deceased, in opposition to their reduction to a statistic.

Collaboration, and the building and sustaining of networks, unifies these examples of rural-based art practice. All focus on critical engagement, the generation and sharing of new knowledge, and a reframing of representation. Their rural context relies on creating spaces for access, participation, and visibility. Their reliance on an active maintenance of networks mirrors the inherent dynamic necessary for the existence and sustenance of rural communities.

So what are we educating artists for in this context? The model of the rural art school has drawn upon the trajectory of the Bauhaus and the Black Mountain College. Both were centres of the avant-garde, and their pedagogical approach has provided a model for the structure of successive art schools. The complexity of the fields of practice defining contemporary art calls for a comprehensive and contextual pedagogical approach. In a rural context, students have the ability to not only learn from, but contribute to an understanding of place. Criticality and place-based learning inform technical and material exploration, and in conjunction with Burren College of Art's praxis-based model, students develop competencies in collaboration. A sense of community is at the core of this approach, between peers, students and faculty, and between the college and its immediate locale. As such, Burren College of Art is intersectoral, collaborating with community-based organisations and local initiatives to provide students with a complex, heterogeneous approach to practice that can be applicable in multiple contexts.

Understanding place is central to the college curriculum, and is reflected in the research of core teaching staff. Ruby Wallis engages with rural representation through the experiential and haptic. Likewise, Miriam DeBurca questions rurality in Ireland as colonial construct, examining the politics of exclusion. Eileen Hutton examines precarious ecologies through collaboration with bird and insect species. Áine Phillips has been instrumental in the Artist's Campaign to Repeal the 8th Amendment, generating regional collaborative actions aimed at changing Irish legislation on reproductive rights. In the context of research, the college functions as site of critical discourse engaged with the politics of representation and social change.

### 3. ECOSYSTEMS, NETWORKS, AND PARTNERSHIPS

If the college is a hub, it manifests the idea of the rural as a matrix that is activated by networks, both visible and invisible. In generating and participating in networks, dichotomies between centre and periphery become porous. That said, in realpolitik the rural tends to remain peripheral or marginal. While the centre may be everywhere in terms of communication networks, capital and labour, as discussed, tend to flow towards the urban. Despite decentralisation in terms of communication, the distribution of power remains uneven. At the same time, this unfixed status outside the centre constitutes a field of potentiality in terms of art, research, and pedagogy. As Michelle Horrigan, Curator of Askeaton Contemporary Arts, states, "The opportunities and possibilities are, if anything, less limited away from urban centres: we always imagine anything is possible, unrestricted by the urban framework" (Tipton, 2011). The utopian dimension of the rural is not new, of course, and it continues to offer alternative models of community. As such, the rural art school also occupies a utopian zone, on the periphery, where the experimental, experiential, and communitarian can find new modes of articulation.

In building and sustaining networks, Burren College of Art has fostered a number of community-based partnerships. Representatives from Burren Beo (a local conservation trust) lecture on the Art and Ecology programmes, and students participate in their annual *Leaning Landscapes* symposium. Likewise, staff from Burren Geopark (responsible for the stewardship of the Burren as a protected landscape) contribute across the curriculum. Further engagement with place is facilitated through courses such as *Walking as Art Practice*, *Performing Self and Landscape*, and *Global Ecologies Studio*. Run in partnership with AICAD (Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design) in the United States, *Global Ecologies Studio* constitutes an intensive, month-long summer school merging ecosystem science with studio practice.

Through ongoing relationships with international art schools, artists, and researchers these partnerships are extended beyond the local to the global, constituting a transnational ecosystem. The articulation of this pedagogical space is shaped by a dynamic of local culture, history, politics, and international interaction. While defined by a perpetual state of flux, the merging of the local and global in effect creates a new, alternate space; a shared space of learning that constitutes a field of potential. Such a network is not a panacea for the problem of the social, cultural, and geographical enclosure, but can contribute to questioning the increasingly fixed ideological boundaries currently defining mainstream politics.

Building networks raises the question of ethics and social responsibility. At the moment there is a distinct lack of confidence in governments and public institutions. Previous notions of stability and trust in the state have fallen apart, and politics has become, to paraphrase filmmaker Adam Curtis, a form of crisis management. Combined with unsustainable urban living situations, the desire for alternatives remains prescient. As such, alternative value systems and communities continue to emerge in rural and urban contexts, such as urban farming projects and eco-villages. Such initiatives rely on collaboration and a balance between the autonomous and the social. This dynamic is important, as collaboration as survival strategy post-college is increasingly the norm.

## 4. CONCLUSION: SHARED SITES OF LEARNING

In conclusion, what are the sites of shared learning between rural and urban? How to they inform a contextual approach to pedagogy? Despite the apparent discrepancy, which is more complex than centre/periphery binary as discussed, a set of core issues could remain central to each sphere as a teaching and learning environment, particularly in the current transnational climate of division and polarisation. These are:

- Understanding place
- Engaging the local
- Building community
- Developing and activating local/global networks
- Solidarity

While not a comprehensive list, the understanding of and engagement with place provides vital pedagogical opportunities. Students can examine and question specific contextual issues, many of which impact multiple socio-political spheres. In particular, the issue of sustainability and the ecological impact of the Anthropocene makes no distinction between rural and urban. Likewise with civic engagement. How we define, build, and contribute to community is a matter of context, shaped by the social specificities of rural and urban terrain. The importance of social and professional networks defines student survival post-college. The building and sustenance of such networks requires tenacity, and through necessity must move beyond fixed boundaries and question narrow ideological enclosures.

Yet what value system does the building of such networks embrace? A network is not necessarily neutral or beneficial. Colonialism, empire, and the worst excesses of neo-liberalism rely upon networks. In our current climate of precarity and crisis, with the rise of right-wing politics and openly reactionary attempts to roll back social progress, the question of the ethical and of solidarity in relation to inequality and injustice remains central. This applies across the terrain of the local and the international. As such, an engagement with the ethical, which is contextual, must provide a discursive and practical framework for teaching and learning in the current political climate. At best, cultural production and arts practice raises questions, generates visibility, and creates space for dialogue. In this sense, rural knowledge offers a platform for critical discourse and engagement with place in any context, and the generation of local, national, and international dialogue remains central to the role and function of Burren College of Art as a rural art school.

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# THE RESILIENT CITY, RECIPROCITY WITHIN THE CREATIVE ECOLOGIES

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## Keywords:

Glasgow School of Art  
resilience  
fine art education  
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## ABSTRACT

This paper focuses upon the City of Glasgow and the Glasgow School of Art, resilience and creative pedagogies, and future strategies and creative ecologies. It opens discussion around the central tenets of resilience aligned to art practice and the creative ecologies of the city and beyond.

Our conception of studio is a place of practice and practice of place: a site of insight. The production of new knowledges takes place in the studio as a hub for innovative exploration. Our approach to teaching mobilises multiple modalities of studio as a porous pedagogic space, which operate within and beyond the walls of the academy. The social textures of this space and critical dialogue generate new knowledge(s) within and across the field.

Distribution is a heterogeneous field of enablement: Shaping and re-shaping. The practitioner imbricated in differential fields of practice engages in iterative adaptation, a complex interdependence: ways of being and becoming resilient. The creative ecologies of Glasgow are a dynamic and multifaceted emergent network through which there is a symbiotic engagement and co-learning through the professional advancement of multiple practices.

# THE RESILIENT CITY, RECIPROCITY WITHIN THE CREATIVE ECOLOGIES

This paper presents The Glasgow School of Art in the context of the City of Glasgow and explores the reciprocal relationships which have contributed to our resilience. In the paper these points are aligned to creative pedagogies within Fine Art practice and both existing and future strategies for the School of Fine Art focused around intradisciplinary learning, collaborations, and community-facing practice which generate creative ecologies within and beyond the art school.

The turbulence experienced by The Glasgow School of Art since the first fire in the Mackintosh Building in May 2014 has been well documented. However, from our perspective it is important to consider resilience in this context as emerging from a fairly embattled position, albeit one that has focused upon maintaining a productive and inspirational learning environment for Fine Art practice. Alongside this, our focus has been on maintaining the potential of existing external relationships and the development new curricula. Indeed, in spite of these circumstances, the period after the 2014 fire has been a time of unprecedented growth in our teaching portfolio.

The fire, which took place on the final day of the undergraduate degree show install in 2014, was devastating to the building, the graduating students' work, and the work of the staff housed in the studios. Clearly this was a deeply difficult, stressful, and traumatic position to be in. It is also important to note that the logistical impact of this event was substantial to the School of Fine Art, as the building also accommodated half of the Fine Art student cohort, in effect the entire Department of Painting and Printmaking and half of our taught postgraduate students. It was therefore incredibly important that the recovery plan had three clear phases: a short-term strategy for immediate recovery; and medium and longer-term plans to re-establish the stability of the School of Fine Art.

The short-term aims were to enable the students to graduate; therefore, rethinking the assessment processes was crucial, alongside enabling a degree show of some description to take place. Alongside this, it was necessary to locate new premises to accommodate and teach over 300 students within a five-week timescale. The mid-term plans were focused upon enabling the effected students to make new bodies of work beyond graduation, in order to support their future ambitions. And finally, the long-term strategy aimed to stabilise the School of Fine Art estate and rationalise five different sites across the city to one primary building for all undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral provision, all planned over a four- to five-year period.

It is important to draw out two clear points relating to the conditions which supported the school's resilience and strategic planning: the first relates to the enormous support from the Glasgow City Council, which made it possible to find and develop a building within Glasgow very quickly. This allowed us to return to a normal mode of academic delivery by September that year. The relationship that we have with the city council is crucial and reciprocal, and the School of Fine Art has worked very closely with community groups and cultural agencies, supporting the development of new creative ecologies within the city for many years. This has engendered a unique relationship between the School of Fine Art, the Glasgow City Council, and different communities within Glasgow. The second point is crucial to our local and international relationships, and relates to the coordination and support which was given to us by the Scottish Government, allowing us to develop the Phoenix Bursaries. These bursaries enabled the 102 students whose work had been destroyed in the fire to engage in the development of new bodies of artistic practice after graduation. The amazing and truly uplifting aspect of the bursary programme was reflected in the incredible support from our institutional partners across the world, many of whom allowed our graduates to study with them during the following year.

A significant contextual factor in recent times is the second fire which took place in the Mackintosh Building in June of 2018. This event has created significant logistical problems across the Glasgow School of Art and has resulted in another tumultuous period in the school. Therefore, we are currently working through a period of re-stabilisation within the Glasgow School of Art, a key milestone for the institution being the acquisition and refurbishment of a building which is in the process of becoming the new home for the School of Fine Art, scheduled to open for the degree show in 2019. The recalibrated layout of the building is focused around providing the very best studio accommodation aligned with excellent technical facilities. The aim is to enable students to radically challenge existing modes of disciplinary artistic practice and research.



Figure 1.  
Mackintosh Building fire,  
15 June 2018.

The creative ecologies of Glasgow are a dynamic and multifaceted network through which there is a symbiotic engagement and co-learning through the professional advancement of multiple practices. Emergent networks are a transformative affective spaces through which interdependence becomes a mode of sharing knowledge, within which artistic research is core to the process. In the future, learning from the creative ecologies of the city could facilitate new adaptive knowledges and patterns of global engagement and reciprocal distribution. The School of Fine Art has a long-standing commitment to socially engaged practice, working within urban, local, and global contexts. Over time, staff and students have fostered initiatives not only in the city but also in artistic centres across the world, from Glasgow to Berlin, from New York and Los Angeles to Shanghai. Our enhanced staff profile and internationally diverse alumni have enabled Glasgow's rich arts infrastructure and international networks to flourish. Connectedness and the sharing of knowledge has had a generative impact on the creativity experienced in a raft of cultural and social situations and forms of engagement.

The school is committed to enabling meaningful conversations to take place with all of the city's constituents whenever the opportunity arises. The school's programme of events (e.g., the *Friday Event*, a free event open to the public that the school has run for over 30 years) provides a platform for speakers of international repute to visit the city. This initiative is complimented by more recent initiatives, for example, the *Race, Rights and Sovereignty* series of events co-led by the GSA Students' Association and the People of Colour Society and supported by the Glasgow School of Art, designed to explore the complexity of postcolonial histories and structural inequality in art, culture, and education. The Glasgow School of Art's Reid Gallery is also a responsive space open to the public with an international exhibition profile that in turn makes an important major contribution to the city's cultural profile. This in-out traction is central to our ethos, and is one of the many attractors for those wishing to study with us.

The School of Fine Art is a welcoming environment, with a dedicated staff team that does its utmost to facilitate the many different needs of the many different students who join us. We are of course located in Glasgow, a city that has built up a well-established arts infrastructure, an infrastructure that includes museums, galleries, festivals, artist led spaces, bookable spaces, community led spaces, pubs, clubs, and homes—places and spaces in which the arts can thrive. Glasgow is a city which, especially for students, is still a financially viable place to live and, as a result, Glasgow is a space for diversity and of diversification.

Glasgow's artistic environment has grown and continues to grow from an overwhelming commitment to low-cost grassroots initiatives. How else can students who have been burdened by increasing amounts of debt not only survive, but make things happen? The School of Fine Art produces artists who are resilient, and who are committed to that resilience, understanding that central to this is reciprocity and mutual support. This is an

environment in which the artist's labour is acknowledged and valued, which should come as no surprise, for this is a city with its heritage in shipbuilding, a city psychologically shaped by the fight for the rights of workers, for the rights of people. After all, as the city's slogan says, "People Make Glasgow."

In keeping with its outward-facing ethos, the School of Fine Art has developed a diverse range of projects in association with different communities across the city. These include the Glasgow/Havana Film Festival; Platform Projects in Easterhouse; Accidental Mix (with Queens Cross Housing Association); Garnethill Community Projects; Project Ability; the Woodlands Trust Project; Prison Projects; and Helensburgh Arts Festival. Some of these initiatives are outlined in more detail below.

The Glasgow/Havana Film Festival was initiated in 2015 with the local council and the cross-party group on Cuba. Havana and Glasgow became twin cities in 2002, and therefore this initiative built on that developing relationship. It involves screening films from Cuba supported by talks by screenwriters, film directors, and actors.

Platform Projects in Easterhouse is a community-based theatre, dance, and performance initiative—here students work with user groups of facilities. It is part of a building called "The Bridge" that provides an array of facilities for the local community. Students are invited to propose projects that respond to the environment in terms of its architecture and/or its historical/social context.

The Woodlands Trust Projects initiative enables students to develop projects in the natural landscape, as well as work with community groups from the Dumbartonshire area. This fits into GSA's wider Sustainability Agenda.

Project Ability Glasgow offers opportunities for people with disabilities and mental health issues. Students in 4th year Sculpture and Environmental Arts are invited to work in collaborative partnership with clients from Project Ability to produce outcomes. Students are selected by proposal to propose work in response to the studio environment of the project and/or work collaboratively with the artists towards a public exhibition.

From GI to GY gives another side to the resilience of students when faced by the officially sanctioned biennale, Glasgow International (GI). In 2016 it became clear to two of our students, Jack McCombe and David Stinton, that if they wished to propose a show/event as part of the Glasgow International Festival they would not be able to access financial support because they were still students. Their response to this unfortunate state of affairs was to organise an alternative event titled GYFest, or in Scot's parlance, "Glasgow Aye" as in "yes." In 2018 this event mobilised over 40 venues, thus demonstrating the resilience of artists to take control in order to make things happen. The organisers describe the event as follows: "Positioned as a grassroots alternative to Glasgow's 'world-renowned festival of contemporary art,' GY aims to showcase the spontaneity and fun that exists within the development of emerging local artists' practices" (GY, 2018).



The grassroots activity of artists in Glasgow has also led to the international success of many of our graduates. The School of Fine Art has produced no fewer than six Turner Prize winners since 1996, the most recent being Charlotte Prodger in 2018, and there have been a further nine nominees.

Development in the School of Fine Art never stops, and there are a number of exciting initiatives currently being pursued, including the recent development of the Master's programme in Art Writing and the forthcoming Master's in Art, Society and Culture, both of which prepare students for employment in the creative industries. Two new initiatives will enhance the long-standing and highly successful MFA programme by developing an artistic research route-way, in a 2 + 2 model of practice, leading to the award of the Creator Doctus (DFA), a practice-driven qualification focused on what we might identify here as "close making." Further to this, we are currently developing an internationalised version of our MFA programme in collaboration with partner institutions in Europe and the United States in which students will move between institutions during their periods of study.

Both of these initiatives are being enhanced by the school's contribution to two Erasmus Partnership Projects:

- *The Creator Doctus Project* with partner institutions:
- Gerrit Rietveld Academie (lead partner);
- Athens School of Arts;
- L'Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Arts de Paris-Cergy;
- Vilnius Academy of Arts + Nida Art Colony;
- The Royal Danish Art Academy of Fine Arts;
- Schools of Visual Arts;
- Merz Akademie;
- EQ-ARTS.

Also, the *Advancing Supervision in Artistic Research Project* with partner institutions:

- The Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna (lead partner);
- Zurich University of the Arts;
- The University of Art and Design, Linz;
- Norwegian Artistic Research Programme;
- Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen;
- the Academy of Fine Arts, Prague;
- Orpheus Institute, Gent;
- Aarhus School of Architecture, Aarhus;
- ELIA



Figure 2. The Stow Building, the new School of Fine Art.

Maintaining our focus on life outside of the art school to support the professional skills acquisition of our graduates is essential as we plan for the next phase in our development. The former Stow College building was acquired by Glasgow School of Art in August 2016 as a home for the School of Fine Art (fig. 2). The school is currently dispersed across five buildings, and has never in its history been housed under one roof. The opportunity to be in a single building will be, we believe, transformational. Stow has a history of education and craft; it was built in 1934 as a college for the trades, the first ever purpose-built Further Education College. Butchery, Engineering, and latterly Creative Industries and Gaelic Immersion courses were taught here. The Music Business Administration students also ran a number of world-class record labels, including Electric Honey, which released (amongst many others) Belle and Sebastian's first album, *Tigermilk*. There could be no better fit for the School of Fine Art as we move towards the future in a building whose robust fabric is permeated by the history and patina of making. Stow, like the Mackintosh Building, was designed to be built in two phases. With only the first part ever constructed, it is a building in many respects, *yet to be completed*. The building speaks its past while at the same time it will inform our future trajectory, our *yet to become*.





Figure 3. The new technical facilities (under construction).

In Stow the workshops are co-located with studios, and the layout aims to make the space between workshop and studio as permeable as possible. Although health and safety considerations are paramount, there is a planned porosity between studio and workshop, which aims to allow the maker to move *between* without friction. Although the workshops will continue to be centrally managed and administrated, Stow will bring studio and workshop back into alignment, their co-location will build co-dependency, and the workshops will be naturally devolved to allow disciplinary practice to continue to thrive in the school.

At the core of the School of Fine Art's mission is the provision of studio education for the 21st century. This includes the traditional studio space/workspace as pictured, but increasingly through the diversification of our programmes, for example the Master's in Art Writing and Master's in Art, Society and Culture mentioned earlier, we begin to think the studio differently, beyond mere space, to ways of thinking, modes of operation that will require us to sharpen our future pedagogies. Our conception of studio is a place of practice and practice of place: a site of insight. The production of new knowledges takes place in the studio, which is a hub for innovation and exploration. Our approach to teaching mobilises multiple modalities of studio as a porous pedagogic space, which operate within and beyond the walls of the academy. The social textures of this space and critical dialogue generate new knowledge(s) within and across the field. We are currently asking ourselves how might we think about making new spaces for learning in studio; spaces which open out and flow through one another; spaces which enable a pedagogy of sociability. Our current students will be the space shapers; we are working with them in Stow as we transition into the building, and through this process they will begin to enact their collective futures.

In our undergraduate programme, although the named award is Fine Art, we are resolutely committed to disciplines through the departmental structure: Sculpture & Environmental Art; Painting & Printmaking; and Fine Art Photography. This will not change

with the advent of our move to Stow; indeed, our focus on discipline will sharpen and become clarified by new curricular developments in skill-based learning which we are currently working on. This resonates deeply with the history of vocational education in our new home. The interior of the Stow building is punctured by two large void spaces. Lined with glazed wally tiles (so very Glasgow) and large windows, these voids create an interior exterior; the building looks outwardly/inwardly onto itself, and it will be fascinating to see how these spaces will be owned and used by the School of Fine Art Community. These voids are a powerful illustration of the potential that this building has for us; no longer "siloes" in a collection of departmental/programme buildings, the school will be open and visible to itself. Being together will make it easier to work together, and the future challenge for us will be to carve out the curricular voids which will enable intradisciplinary learning to take place, making the space in the curriculum for us to see one another. The words of Jean-Luc Nancy are pertinent here: "Being cannot *be* anything but being-with-one-another, circulating in the *with* and as the *with* of this singularly plural coexistence" (Nancy, 2000: 3).

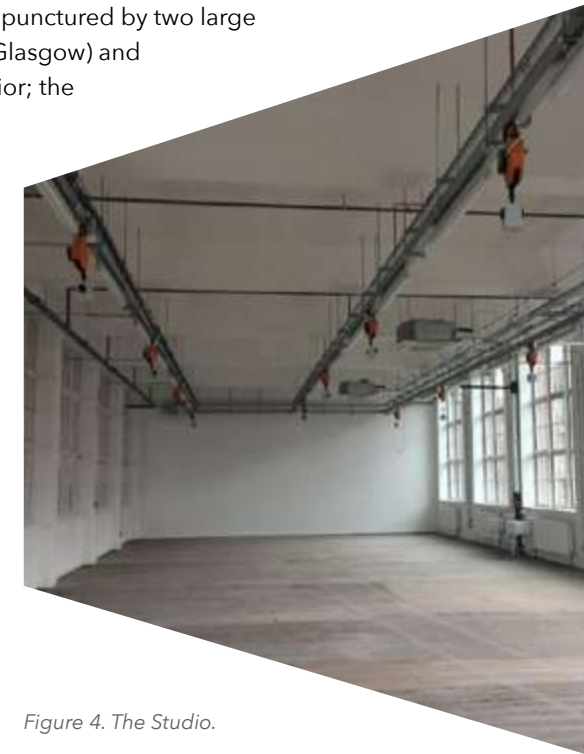


Figure 4. The Studio.

"With-ness," being together, and co-existence enables reciprocity; it will strengthen the intradisciplinary creative ecology of the School of Fine Art and this will, we believe, make us still more resilient than we have already demonstrated ourselves to be. Together, we—staff and students—are future shapers, place-makers; our graduates are the art stars of tomorrow, the teachers, and the community practitioners. Together we are the School of Fine Art, and our people make Glasgow.

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# SMART, RESILIENT APPROACH FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION: WHICH ROLE FOR DESIGN?

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**Keywords:**

resilience strategy  
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## ABSTRACT

Well known as Italy's financial, commercial, and industrial centre, Milan is one of the world capitals for fashion and design culture. It is now member of *100 Resilient Cities*, a project pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation with a Resilient Office at City of Milan Municipality, aimed at propelling the city through the process of building resilience, especially by means of actions of urban regeneration to eliminate tangible and intangible barriers, while ensuring equitable access to public services and the introduction of technological innovations for urban connectivity and social inclusion. For this reason, the paper aims at investigating the role of design in the relationship between resilience strategy, considering also the issue of new technologies that can therefore suggest new forms of personal belongings and services designed to affect citizens' resilience and adaptation towards climate, physical, social, and economic changes and crisis at the urban scale.



# 1. THE IMPORTANCE OF DESIGN FOR URBAN RESILIENCE

## 1.1 Introducing 100 Resilient Cities

The City of Milan is the capital of Lombardy and the second-largest municipality in terms of population size after Rome, with an area of approximately 182 km<sup>2</sup> that is tackling the most urbanisation in Italy; consequently, Milan experienced a +2°C average temperature increase between 1901 and 2017 and 62.2 mg/m<sup>3</sup> annual concentration of PM<sub>10</sub>. Also, urban heating has been incrementing air pollution. In order to tackle the environmental, economic, and social challenges of today, Milan's City Council has set up a department within the local authority, member of *100 Resilient Cities* pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation, one of the programme's donors. "We help cities around the world to become more resilient to the physical, social, and economic challenges that are a growing part of the 21st century."

## 1.2 The shocks and stresses identified for Milan

Urban resilience is defined as the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, companies, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow up, excluding chronic stresses and acute shocks that it experiences. The first are unexpected and abrupt, the latter chronic and slow, all summarised here:



Figure 1. Identification of shocks and stresses in Milan. Source: Comune di Milano

## 1.3 The six discovery areas for Resilient Milan

The department for Urban Resilience at Milan's City Council first came out with the Preliminary Resilience Assessment that includes an analysis of the environmental, social, and governance challenges faced by Milan. Based on this the team involved in the research defined six discovery areas encompassing the main shocks and stresses identified for Milan.



Figure 2. The six discovery areas for Resilient Milan. Source: Comune di Milano

## 2. THE NEED FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN DESIGN, POLICY-MAKING, AND URBAN PLANNING ON THE RESILIENT MILAN APPROACH

When city projects, plans, and policies are designed through a resilience lens, the output is a product that is resilient: resilient to climate change, to economic state, and to political and social conditions. With the aim to scale down this assumption to objects, clothes, and visual items, we want to demonstrate how designing for resilience means to create better opportunities to innovate and to improve the quality of life for citizens. Consequently, we've selected the topics of *Living Milan*, *Cool Milan*, and *Circular Milan* as the meeting points between resilient Milan, design culture, and innovation, and we've linked each discovery area to some of the projects developed by IED Milan students in the last few years.

### 2.1 IED Milan

For more than 50 years, IED (Istituto Europeo di Design) has been operating in the fields of education and research in the disciplines of design, fashion, visual communication, and management. Today, IED is a constantly expanding international network that issues undergraduate and master programmes as well as diploma courses, a study abroad catalogue, and short specialising courses. Partnerships with leading enterprises are a key factor in the educational strategy, featuring either every stage of the didactic process or special events taking place throughout the academic year. As a result of IED's constant, active relationship with the business world, more than 200 firms contribute in several ways every year to the training programmes. Moreover, the faculty includes experts and professionals carrying the ability to teach applied skills and a constant stream of innovation. Each course is run in contact with and supported by companies operating in the relevant field. As an educational institution involving companies from private sector, IED can play a relevant role in exploring synergies with art, fashion, culture, design, and resilience, in order to define the importance of design for urban resilience.

For this purpose, definition and guidelines for resilience can definitely be implemented: firstly, by mapping the action areas set by the department for urban resilience at Milan's City Council and linking them to past projects developed by the students at IED Milan in collaboration with companies; secondly, by planning actions and future collaboration based on this approach.

"Planning changes to a system also involves the review and reinterpretation of the relationships between stakeholders within society, so as to ensure that they understand the need to turn problems into opportunities through participatory processes. This doesn't merely mean creating consensus; it also means attributing key roles in the management and planning of processes, creating public-private partnerships..." (Daglio et al., 2018).

### 2.2 Towards a resilient design: exploring synergies with art, fashion, design, and culture through past actions and projects developed by students at IED Milan

*Cool Milan* is the first area among those set by the department for urban resilience at Milan's City Council that joins projects developed at IED by students in collaboration with companies. *Cool Milan* tackles the challenge of industrial productivity, human activities, and habits that have collectively contributed to a critically warmer global scenario that threatens our safety and health. By adapting to climate change, reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> footprint, and creating more green spaces, we can reduce the quantity of harmful GHGs that contributes to the heat island effect and air pollution, thereby creating an atmosphere for citizens that is healthier and improving liveability and quality of life.

As far as IED's projects selected for this area are concerned, the main ones are as follows:



Figure 3. Reopening of Navigli. Source: IED - Istituto Europeo di Design

*Reopening of Navigli* (canals) is a thesis project developed by students of the Visual Art department, Graphic Design programme at IED Milan in 2017, aimed at promoting the plan of reopening a section of the canals, that, on one hand, may help increase the cool parts of the city and offer a new way of living to residents and, on the other, can contribute to increase tourism, new ideas, and business.



Figure 4. Branding per il Parco Nord Milano. Source: IED - Istituto Europeo di Design

*Branding per il Parco Nord Milano* is a thesis project developed by the students of the Communication department, Comunicazione Pubblicitaria programme at IED Milan in 2018 to promote among citizens the benefit of having green areas and parks in the city as means of interaction with nature, while increasing biodiversity and providing help in cooling.

*Living Milan* is the second area for possible synergies between urban policies and design as it is facing social innovation, including housing solutions, training, and work. The City Council of Milan has recently developed a project aimed at tackling the increase in the share of unsold and vacant houses, combined with high costs and economic crisis that have left many families without an income and therefore unable to sustain their rent. Co-housing and accommodation at an agreed fee that is less than 20-30% than the market price are seen as two of the possible solutions.

The suggestions and projects of IED's students in this case have been as follows:



Figure 5. Ostello Bello: The ultimate hospitality experience. Source: IED - Istituto Europeo di Design

*Ostello Bello: The ultimate hospitality experience* is a thesis project developed in 2017 by a group of students of Product Design and Interior Design, department of Design, aimed at creating a hostel that can accommodate youth, budget travellers, and tourists while providing high-quality service that makes it a place not only to sleep, but to live.



Figure 6. Adidas Sport City: Milano Home of Sports. Source: IED - Istituto Europeo di Design

*Adidas Sport City: Milano Home of Sports*, realised in 2018 by students of Interior Design, department of Design, is meant to design places and services to meet the aim of Adidas to create extraordinary experiences in Milan while promoting healthier lifestyle among the citizens of Milan.



Figure 7. Cyclocracy. Source: IED - Istituto Europeo di Design

*Cyclocracy* is one of the research projects promoted within the framework *IED for Future*, developed in partnership with the Municipality of Milan. It leads to a wide-ranging reflection about cycling in the city, analysing the ways of fruition and perspectives and considering a radical change in the way of living through everyday mobility. *Cyclocracy*

is a design and cultural communication project which aims at redesigning the city and promoting cycling culture. It is a creative story meant to make citizens think about sustainable mobility from an environmental and social point of view.

Lastly, *Circular Milan* is the area of action for Milan Resilient City where most of the projects developed in the past years can be taken more into consideration, as it considers resources, waste, food policy, innovation, and productivity.

*Milan Food Policy* and *Open Agri* by the City Council of Milan are multidimensional approaches engaging several local actors, such as research centres, food businesses, food banks, non-profit organisations, and foundations, that promote development projects involving SMEs and start-ups to accelerate new food enterprises in the city. Moreover, they want to promote green transport for food companies and to foster skills and competences in order to lower the environmental impacts of farming. On the social dimension, community-led initiatives for inclusion, urban regeneration, and social and territorial cohesion projects will be implemented.

Also, *FabLab Milano*, a fully equipped digital manufacturing laboratory located in former industrial areas, enables the transformation of abandoned areas into innovative spaces that encourage young entrepreneurs and start-ups. This regeneration of neighbourhoods and areas that had been either degraded or abandoned was a strategic decision to reclaim valuable land in Milan and use it in ways that could implement social innovation and inclusion, increase new skills and training, transform the economy to become more circular, and propel Milan to its future vision.

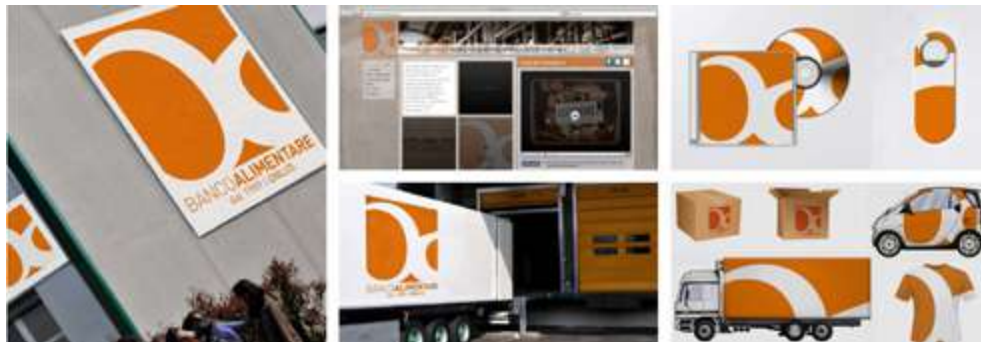


Figure 8. Banco Alimentare 2.0. Source: IED - Istituto Europeo di Design

Closely related to these initiatives is the IED's *Banco Alimentare 2.0* project, developed by the students of different programmes of the Communication department in 2010, in collaboration with the food bank, Banco Alimentare Foundation. This non-profit foundation is involved in the collection of excess food from agricultural production, food industry, large food distributors, and restaurants, redirecting it to charity organisations.

The project highlighted the need to change food habits, increase awareness, decrease environmental impact, and promote recovery and redistribution of food losses by creating tight relations among the local players.



Figure 9. Fashion Remake. Source: IED - Istituto Europeo di Design

*Fashion Remake* by IED Fashion Design students uses a resilience lens to innovate the fashion design process and to come up with new ways to produce sustainable fabrics, such as through the *EKOCYCLE* process. This project, showcased at Expo Gate in 2015 to promote sustainable fashion, was a fashion laboratory open not only to other designers but also to citizens.



Figure 10. Perpetual-Artwork: Speedo Racing Upcycling. Source: IED - Istituto Europeo di Design

*Perpetual-Artwork: Speedo Racing Upcycling* by Fashion Design students enables circular economy in the fashion system. This project, developed in 2018, is a collection of women's clothes made with swim caps and Speedo racing costumes that could not be reintroduced in the market and were therefore destined for waste. The manipulation of fabrics and materials has the aim of giving them a second life through six tailoring collections: six female outfits, three made entirely with Speedo costumes and swim caps, and the other three using only some parts of the products supplied by the brand.

## 3. DESIGN, INNOVATION, AND URBAN RESILIENCE

Passing through the projects developed by design students at IED Milan in the past few years, we realised that design is driving innovation towards a definition of environmental sustainability, revealing a new role for design in achieving resilience in a way that can be seen and felt in daily lives of citizens.

“Innovation represents a set of strategies and tools to support new businesses able to meet social needs and to create social and economic value for the city” (Galliano, 2018).

Design innovation originates from the bottom, thanks to companies and design studios which develop new products and services that might become new value.

The dream of design to abolish all scale has been clearly stated in 1965 by the Milanese architect Ernesto Rogers in the motto *Dal cucchiaino alla città* (“From the spoon to the town”). In any case, “Design changes scale when it becomes mixed with social planning” (Vermaas et al., 2018). The resilience framework should be stretched in order to scale and reach the design of objects, clothes, and personal belongings, passing through the review of the relationships between stakeholders and then creating public-private partnerships and top-down/bottom-up articulations. This also means attributing key roles and new guidelines in the management and planning of the processes that implement resilience in design, with the goal, for a city like Milan, to make a noticeable mark on resilient design.

### 3.1 Implementing resilience in design

Resilience in design should be implemented throughout its supply chain, to mainly address overproduction and pollution for cities and citizens, such as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, seasonal and low-quality products, excess of textile and clothing waste, excess of food waste, hazardous waste, ocean plastic, air pollution, urban heat island, contaminated water sources, increase in biodiversity, low quality of life and housing conditions, and social inequalities.

### 3.2 Defining guidelines for resilience in design

By analysing the projects developed by design students at IED Milan and comparing them to the discovery areas mapped by the Resilient Milan team, we found some characteristics common to all of these projects. We summarised these as guidelines that should lead the design process meant at implementing resilience in design:

**REFLECTIVE:** design in Milan must be known as a symbol of Made in Italy. How can we use past experiences, history, and tradition in guiding and shaping our actions? Aesthetics must be calibrated to be long-lasting to avoid obsolescence and resist any future changes to lifestyle (Klemp et al., 2011).

**RESOURCEFUL:** engineering of materials and qualitative standards to minimise inefficient manufacturing and wasted human labour. How can we innovate and leverage technology to rethink about how we use materials? How can we prevent the use of materials at the source and rely on existing materials to be reused and refurbished? How can the decision of the materials we use affect the quality of a product and its impact on its useful life, or attitude towards purchasing and then throwing away affordance? (Norman, 1999).

**INCLUSIVE:** be universally applied. Can we make better decisions that collectively benefit society and citizens? How can we create a sense of shared ownership? Developing and gaining a greater awareness in order to propose compromises that will satisfy both private interests and the collective good.

**INTEGRATED:** transform design culture towards one that will withstand environmental, economic, and social changes. Incorporate resilience in design throughout its supply chain, from long-lasting aesthetic to production planned for disassembly, remanufacturing and obsolescence mitigation, and after sale service and repair; from minimising the impact of distribution and logistics, to developing and gaining a greater awareness towards citizens and consumers through communication. Which skills and competencies can we bring together to maximise the impact? What kind of collaboration and mix of organisations do we need?

**ROBUST:** alter consumer habits to rethink product lifecycles and their end-of-use. Being long-lasting, expanding beyond the function of objects through aesthetic and usefulness. Are our plans and products made to last? Can we extend their lifespan and transform attitudes, habits, and mentality to value things that are well-conceived and constructed?

**REDUNDANT:** bring a change in economic activities, to innovate socially and environmentally, and to reduce overproduction. How can we better plan to avoid overproduction and excess of waste? Can we identify which specific areas need spare capacity to accommodate disruption and which areas do not?

**FLEXIBLE:** make cities and their inhabitants more resilient. Are our strategies, plans and products designed to be flexible to changing circumstances?



### 3.3 Open-ended questions and call for projects

The guidelines for resilience in design are set as a first hypothesis, based on the extension of a methodology conceived to be applied to city planning and policy-making and then scaled down to be addressed to the design of objects and of personal belongings. This hypothesis needs to be tested on the basis of the experimental findings and to be refined, and then validated, in order to foster design as a challenge for urban resilience.

To meet these requirements, we cannot afford to rely entirely on our own projects, but we must foster collaboration and dissemination through the design education network and be open to other design cultures (Chesbrough et al., 2014). The aim is that of innovating through a better integration between design, policy-making, and urban planning within the Resilient City approach. From 100 Resilient Cities to 100 Resilient Designs!

Considering this, the next step is to invite other universities and design schools to carry out projects and research based on these guidelines in order to meaningfully test them.

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# DISREGARDED EVERYDAY DESIGN – THE ABILITY TO CHALLENGE CONVENTIONS

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**Keywords:**

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active participation  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The paper shows that the task of design lies in empowering each of us. Consequently, the role of design—as one of the key builders of our environment—lies not only in redesigning the environment, but also in establishing the conditions for creating and encouraging new ways of thinking. In other words, the goal is to make a case, through a discussion of active citizenship during the era of globalised capitalism, for the necessity of the existence of grassroots initiatives and unregulated islands of design activity. The paper shows why focusing on everyday design—design for life—should be of much greater importance than it is now.

# THE SEEMINGLY ORDINARY

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## NATURE OF EVERYDAY DESIGN

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In his short essay *Approaches to what?* novelist Georges Perec poses the following question: “What speaks to us?” Judging by the media, the answer is always something with a tinge of the catastrophic, the spectacular, something that carries a trace of danger and scandal. Something out of the ordinary. Perec continues, “The daily papers talk of everything except the daily.” They leave out the part that represents the majority of our lives. A question, therefore, remains open: “How should we take account of, question, describe what happens every day and recurs every day: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual” (Perec, 2002: 177). Again and again, these things are overlooked, precisely because of their regularity and apparent mundanity. They remain unrecognised, even though this ordinary world, the environment we’ve built for ourselves, conceals our forgotten origin. And not only that; as we redesign—spontaneously or deliberately—this everyday, mundane environment, it also constantly redesigns us in return.

Similarly, design theorist Tony Fry calls this world we live in the “world-within-the-world”; one which is entirely designed by us—by people—yet remains largely invisible (Fry, 2015: 4). Architectural historian Sigfried Giedion describes this as the world of anonymous life, as the “particles [which] accumulate into an explosive force” (Giedion, 1948: 3). It is this invisible, anonymous, and slow-changing everyday world that “is continually shaping and reshaping the patterns of life” (Giedion: vi).

Philosopher Giorgio Agamben develops this concept into what he calls *form-of-life*. He explains, “a life—human life—in which the single ways, acts, and processes of living are never simply facts but always and above all possibilities of life, always and above all power” (Agamben, 2000: 4). It is precisely the possibilities of life—the ability to imagine or recognise the possibilities and have the power to choose between them—that also offers the shortest description of what design can do in society.

Synthesising the thoughts above, we arrive at a conclusion that while the mundane is indeed overlooked, it is this very day to day existence that carries the possibility for revolt, the possibility to redesign the situation we are witnessing. The latter is seen by the historian and activist Howard Zinn as the *true* revolutionary change, but one that can only occur “as something immediate, something we must do now, where we are, where we live, where we work” (Zinn, 2013). Zinn moreover asserts that such a revolutionary change is underway at this very moment. For “it takes place in everyday life, in the tiny crannies where the powerful but clumsy hands of state power cannot easily reach. [...] It takes

place in a hundred thousand places at once, in families, on streets, in neighbourhoods, in places of work. It is a revolution of the whole culture. Squelched in one place, it springs up in another, until it is everywhere. Such a revolution is an art. That is, it requires the courage not only of resistance, but of imagination” (Zinn, 2013).

In other words, the benefit of action is in the possibility of and capability to (re)design our everyday environment. However, this possibility must involve active participation by every member of society.

## AN ACTIVE PARTICIPATION:

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### WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

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Ezio Manzini, an Italian design theorist and one of the foremost thinkers and practitioners in the field of social design, is among the authors pointing out the importance of perceiving and understanding the otherwise neglected changes constantly taking place around us. In his book *Design, When Everybody Designs*, he hypothesises that a key role in the process of changing our environment is played by people he calls protagonists, meaning everyone who actively participates, either knowingly or unknowingly. Hence, that is where we need to direct our attention. Mazzini continues, “This means looking at the people who take part and the social forms they generate, and especially at the social forms in which people collaborate in order to achieve a result they would not be able to achieve alone, and that produces or could produce wider social value as a side effect” (Manzini, 2015: 77).

It is essential for designers to observe and identify these protagonists, but moreover it is not for the designers to assume the role of decision-makers dictating the direction the transformation of environment should take. Their role is instead in being able to recognise and possibly empower the protagonists—the protagonists who already create collaborative organisations (or have the potential to, in favourable circumstances) and who already generate (or could generate) possibilities of life. The designers’ task is therefore to establish spaces for continued action and in opening up better opportunities for development. Based on the above, the following description of design with the aim of social innovation emerges: “a design action that seeks to make these ways of being and doing things (that is, the existence of these collaborative organisations) both possible and likely” (Manzini, 2015).

If we combine the aforementioned views on disregarded everyday design and provide the ability to challenge conventions, putting both in the framework, we can conclude that in order to build the world in which we can imagine or recognise the possibilities of life

and have the power to choose between them, we have to come up with two fundamental notions: first, it is imperative that our actions are based on comprehensive thinking and observing; second, we need to understand that we are all involved in the process of changing our behaviour, our attitudes in the ways we operate, and therefore participatory action is crucial.

Both notions provide the foundation for four key “ingredients” in order to start to tackle so-called alternative projects. Or better yet, other *possibilities of life*. These are grassroots initiative, collaboration, design action, and, as a result, social innovation.

In the following we will show that design is an integral part of participation; at the same time, we will indicate the areas in which designers can collaborate with protagonists to bring about the aforementioned changes. Building on the theoretical foundations of community economy that are being established (Gibson-Graham et al., 2013; Manzini, 2015), we will focus on the ability to challenge conventions and the capabilities for establishing spaces for a different kind of action in the future. Perhaps even more importantly, we will point out the possibilities for professional design practice in the future.

## IT'S UP TO US TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO

### Crops-2-Swap

What, then, are the nascent design projects that could, in practice, lead towards alternative spaces for collaboration—alternative spaces for solidarity communities? Among the most numerous examples of such design projects are those that establish opportunities for community gatherings, since it is the gatherings of individuals and communities that are of key importance in building the foundations of quality coexistence. One of the crucial factors necessary for quality coexistence, as the authors of the book *Take Back the Economy* emphasise, is “community well-being”; this is fostered by our active participation in the community (Gibson-Graham et al., 2013). It's not enough to just socialise; these are gatherings that create new opportunities, new values.

Among the excellent examples of such activities is the grassroots initiative called *Crops-2-Swap*. It is a civil initiative organising crop swaps in many towns across Slovenia. All events are organised on a volunteer basis, and many participants help out with equipment, skills, and ideas. At these events, participants exchange seeds, seedlings, seasonal crops, dried and preserved herbs, veggies and fruit, home-made jams and cakes, gardening books, etc., all on a purely voluntary and cost-free basis.

The whole movement started as an exchange of seeds between a handful of friends.

The first exchange took place in the living room of Darja Fišer, the leading force behind the movement. Soon enough, Darja's living room was too small to accommodate all those who wanted to exchange crops. One of the people who crucially contributed to the transition from Darja's living room to Park Tabor in Ljubljana is Zala Velkavrh of the ProstoRož team, a designer and architect. “Even though at first it seemed that our gatherings wouldn't go beyond exchanging garden surplus, they soon became far broader in scope; we realised that the pleasant and informal gatherings strengthen the connections between the townspeople, that we were building a community and exchanging knowledge and experiences” (Fišer, 2014). According to Fišer, the community is still growing. This clearly demonstrates the need for further development of urban gardening, as well as of community events in public spaces. It also proves solidarity is far from dead—despite how egotistical and consumer-oriented our society has become.

### Revealed Hands

For quite a while now, in the context of coexistence and the co-creation of community economies, design has been exploring the so-called capability approach. In the field of design, this refers to the recognition of individuals and groups who possess certain capabilities but lack the possibility to manifest them. In this process, designers no longer see the potential participants solely as users or customers. Instead they start trying to redesign the situations and conditions with the aim of empowering individuals. In other words, the designers cease designing consumer-focused products and focus instead on eliminating the obstacles that had been impeding the individuals from realising their existing capabilities, as well as on enhancing their further development. Among such endeavours is the multi-annual project *Revealed Hands* by the Oloop design collective and the Humanitarian Charity Society UP. The project concentrates on vulnerable groups of people—mostly migrant women and the disabled—who live in Jesenice and in asylum centres.

It's interesting to trace the evolution of the project. From the initial collaboration (back in 2012), which largely arose from the appreciation of the significance of textile craft and the effect it has on individuals' well-being, the designers changed their focus—along with the participants—with every annual iteration. In the most recent edition (2016/17) they decided to focus their effort on redesigning the working conditions and establishing the skills that could provide the chosen group of individuals with an opportunity to live independently, with the emphasis on economic independence. Whereas the previous editions mostly built on knitting and design skills, this last project saw the participants open the online store *Revealed Hands* ([www.razkriteroke.si](http://www.razkriteroke.si), 2017) and acquire skills such as web management, video production, basic promotion, marketing, and web marketing communications. The online store went live in August 2017 and has been managed in its entirety (from product design to sales) by the women from Jesenice. In their own words,

“We are women who love knitting and hanging out. Our creations revolve around textile materials and Balkan delicacies. The stories of our lives that brought us to Slovenia are diverse, but today our common meeting point is the *Hiša sreče* [The House of Happiness] in Jesenice” (www.razkriteroke.si, 2017). On the part of design, the key was to establish different conditions, ones conducive to independence and collaboration in the design of the products to sell; it remains up to each individual to decide what she wants to do, in which areas to improve her knowledge, and how to establish her own place of operation.

### **Hacking Households**

The following projects represent illustrative examples of practical experimentation with decentralised structures of design potential: *Hacking Households* and *Cloning Objects*. These projects could be described as practical exploration of the theory from the manifest *Generation M*, in which Dimitris Papadopoulos, director of the Institute for Science and Society, predicts that the first generation of the 21st century will be defined by “craft, matter and the fusion of the digital and the material.” He anticipates that, on a micro-level, generation M will independently produce and more extensively modify existing objects (Papadopoulos, 2014). What are the selected projects about? In the *Hacking Households* project, the authors’ starting point is identifying poorly adaptable and largely unsustainably manufactured household appliances. The key problem with traditional household appliances is their closed system of operation. “When something goes wrong, the most cost-effective solution is to throw out the appliance and replace it with something new” (Hacking Households, 2014). For the user, this implies a predefined role in the process, allowing no active involvement or upgrades. The user is denied the ability to independently repair, modify, redesign, or repurpose the devices. The authors of the *Cloning Objects* project call into question the need for information ownership, patents protecting the intellectual property of the designers or producers.

Accordingly, the authors question the current market-based system of product creation and manufacturing. This doubt spurs them to reflect and seek different ways of answering the questions relating to the product design development process. In the *Hacking Households* project, they approach product development and manufacturing in a way that is similar to how open-source software is developed and modified. As a result, they developed a system of programmable objects whose operation and purpose can be adapted on the fly. They facilitate the user’s independence in terms of co-creation, co-design, and co-development of product manufacturing. What the users receive are at first glance only pieces, blocks of material, but a collection of such blocks already becomes the desired object. An object we create by ourselves, based on our own need. The decision as to what the object will be and how it will look is therefore ours—the object that emerges will reflect our own requirements. “Objects can now be designed, developed and produced democratically, rather than through a top-down approach

from corporation to consumer” (*Hacking Households*, 2014). Meanwhile, in *Cloning Objects*, the product contains embedded information needed for its reproduction. Although products can still be distributed through the existing network and could even be manufactured within this network, individuals may also freely produce, modify, and redistribute the pieces as they see fit (Hacking Households, 2015).

What makes the selected projects interesting is not just how the designers have departed from the paradigm of providing a final and finished solution to the potential user, but also that they enable (and thereby empower) the user community to respond to their own questions and needs in an independent, autonomous, and adaptable way. The designers’ success is in not just providing the users with access to knowledge, but in giving them the tools that empower them to take independent action. This way, the project designers manage to develop the currently often limited tendencies towards co-creation in the field of design.

### **Recognising Existing Potential**

The project selection is deliberately diverse, in order to show that we can all tackle different fields around us, and that the degree of activity can differ from project to project. The selected projects share the aim of empowering communities and establishing conditions for continued independent operation. The designers-protagonists are making room (or helping to make room) where existing potential can manifest. At the same time, they enable and allow every individual to actively intervene and participate according to that individual’s needs and wishes. The projects show that the essence of design does not lie in the creation of products, but rather in the creation of a new use, in the encouragement of potential new thinking.

The choice of projects also demonstrates that alternatives are possible—and that they’re already taking place. As has been pointed out before, the ability to challenge convention is hidden in the possibility of (re)designing our everyday environment. The process of redesigning our everyday environment introduces the aforementioned potentiality and thus alters, step by step, the existing and the ordinary.

The selected examples not only satisfy the initially established criteria for generating *possibilities of life*; they also pose, again and again, the question: in what world do we wish to live, or better yet, are we able to live? When we start thinking about this question, we are inherently thinking about the necessity of establishing an alternative—building, as a form of revolt, an alternative to the current situation. Through co-creation we facilitate the exploration of different social relationships and thereby establish conditions for the development of a multitude of options. By creating potential options, we also open the doors for a new level of culture, a new level of openness, and for a different kind of creativity in the exploratory field of possibilities.

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# RESILIENCE AND THE PRACTICE OF ART, FORM AS DIALECTICAL APPROACH TO THE SUBJECTIVE AND THE COLLECTIVE

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**Keywords:**

form  
perception  
resilience  
art-based research

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## **ABSTRACT**

The notion of form is at the heart of artists' considerations and has constantly evolved over the last few centuries. If one puts the history of art to one side, along with the classification of appearances that form has taken in the work of artists, instead paying close attention to the functioning itself of that which creates form and its evolution, one can quickly see that certain of its essential characteristics—instability, potentiality, relativity—are at the heart of the preoccupations of contemporary society. The recent notion of resilience can be seen to have a close kinship with the reasoning and procedures that are at the heart of the work of artists. Artists have always developed the inheritance of culture by working on the perception of shaping in present time. This dialectic relation gives rise to a set of theoretical paradigms around the relationship between individual subjectivity and the collective and the contemporary exercise of the exhibition.

# FORM AS DIALECTICAL APPROACH TO THE SUBJECTIVE AND THE COLLECTIVE

I will try to explain, from the point of view of a visual artist, why resilience is not a subject of art, nor a private attitude of the artist, but the contemporary condition of art itself. I would like to suggest the necessity to shift the margins of our teaching in order to redefine our political and social role, and therefore try to find out how to centre and ground this large domain we call art research.

As a sculptor, I work with shapes, and this is the only way I know to handle such a complex matter. In this given space I will pass very quickly over several issues that I will not really explain. You will find some more information in the references of the footnotes.

As an artist, I know that the notion of form is constantly evolving, but some of the main characteristics of what in visual art we name form are still at work: instability, relativity, and potentiality.

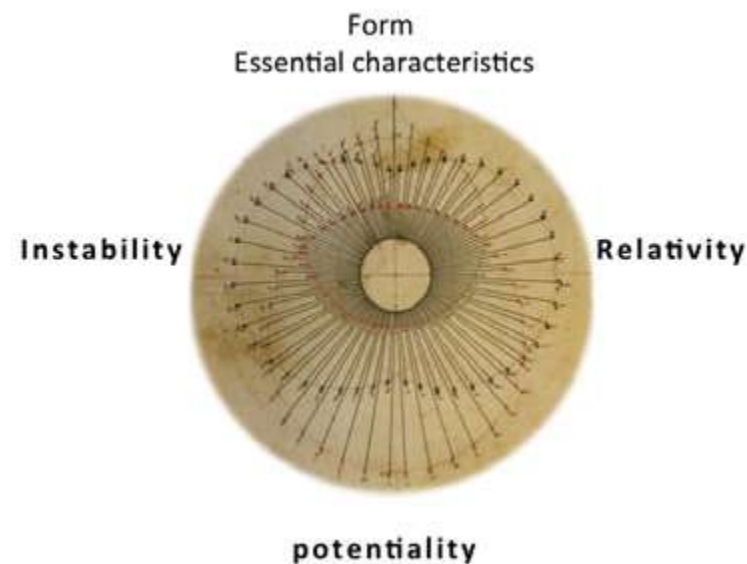


Figure 1. Form: Essential characteristics, with a detail from a drawing by Oskar Schlemmer in the centre. Source: Bernhard Rüdiger

In German, the word *die Gestalt* expresses all these concepts together by putting in first place the action of perceiving. The name *die Gestalt* (the thing that becomes body or the object which stays in front of me) and its verbal declination *gestalten* (literally the action of embodying) expresses the idea of an active gaze.

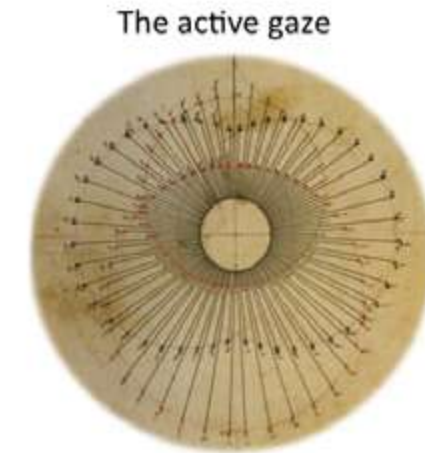


Figure 2. The active gaze, with a detail from a drawing by Oskar Schlemmer in the centre. Source: Bernhard Rüdiger

I'm looking at the object, and by the very action of my gaze, the object shows itself to be what it is. This notion is particularly efficient if we are interested in both the form of an object and its relationship to the watcher's perception.

Paul Klee's teaching in Weimar at the Bauhaus academy during the twenties was "grounded," if I may use a typical Klee term, on this approach of an active form. In his notebook of the Weimar courses you see some studies of dynamic forms he develops in his work.



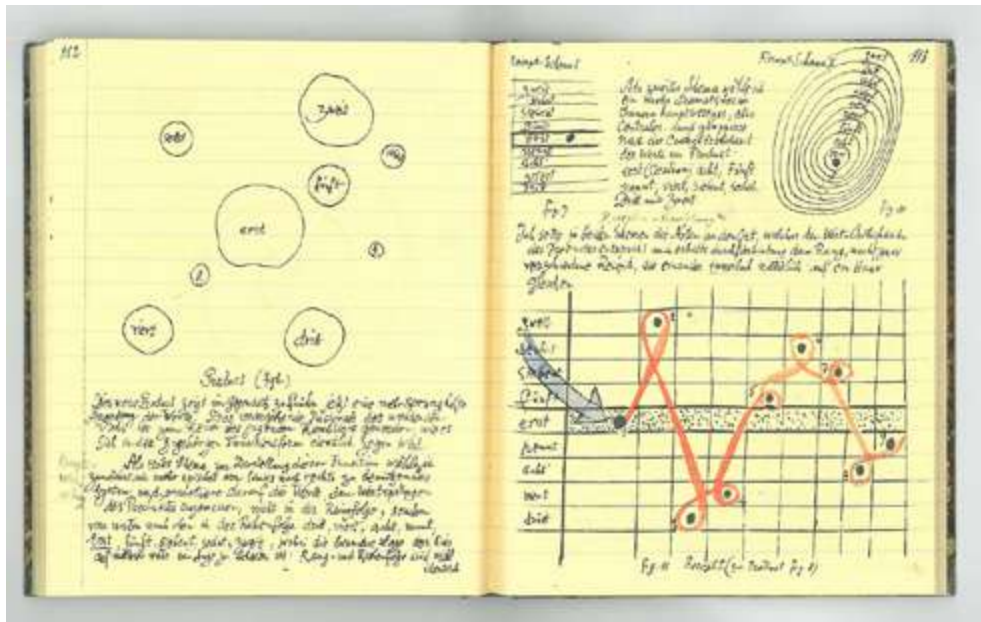


Figure 3. Paul Klee, notebook of the Weimar courses.

In this notebook he introduces the problem of form this way: "The apprenticeship of *Gestaltung* (of the form as embodiment) concerns the reasons that leads to the Gestalt (the form)." In German, Klee does not use the term *reason* but *die Wege*, literally the paths, the ways we get to something or somewhere. It is this concern in the way the perception gets to catch something that interested him in first place. So, he underlines that the theory of Gestalt "is certainly the apprenticeship of the form, but with stress of the there leading ways." What is interesting in regard to contemporary art and to our topic is this idea he adds to the notion of Gestalt: "In its other sense, *Gestaltung* goes on clearly to the notion of the presuppositions lying to reason." By using the German term *Grund*, which means *reason* and *ground*, Klee introduces the idea of an active perception grounded on pre-existing images, ideas, and experiences. We do not see only the object we perceive, we also project on it what we knew before our gaze is activated by this new, unknown thing. In his approach the presuppositions are the grounding, or grounded reasons.

I do not have the space to describe in detail how the form, to be understood as *Gestalt*, passes through a singular reception and is therefore deeply connected to an environment, to a culture, to a community. Let's say that something appears as new, interesting and different, because I belong to a culture where an amount of forms, ideas, and objects are usual to me.

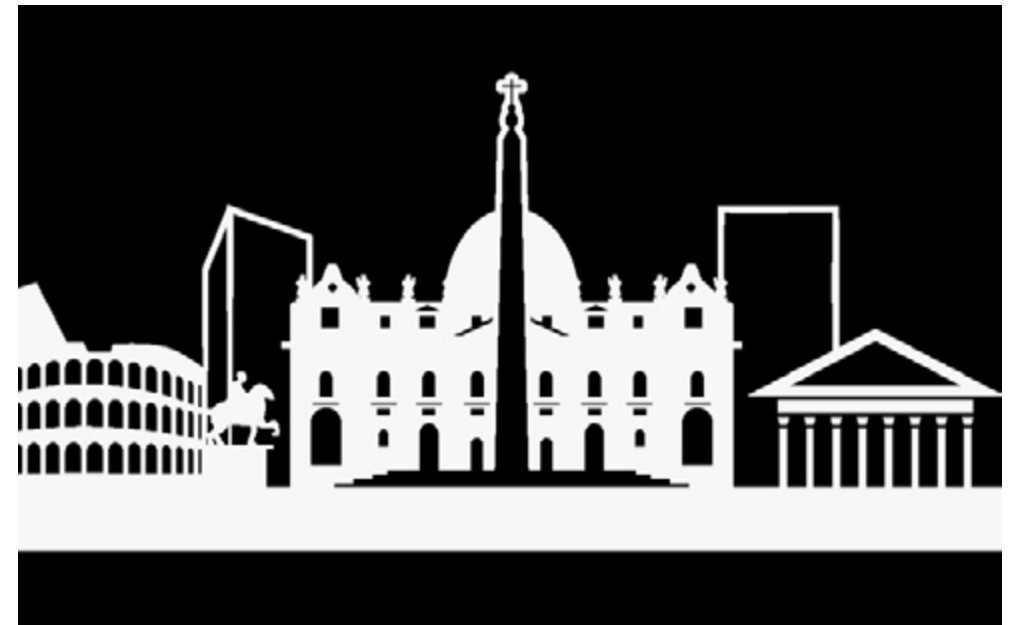


Figure 4. Skyline of Rome

Here you see a grabbed image of the presupposed skyline of my native city of Rome. The horizon and the culture, from which we see things and I see things, are essential to perceive an object as singular or new. Without this collective horizon full of things I know myself, but full of other ideas I simply presuppose I know, I cannot even think about an object. To be brief, let's agree on this: the experience of an active gaze (what Klee names "form") takes place when someone can recognise something as singular and different.

As a contemporary artist, I know that our use of the form has changed and is no longer the same as in Klee's time. From my singular point of view, I would suggest that what has really changed in the last century is what the two World Wars left behind them.<sup>17</sup> I've been working a lot on the problem of form in regard to destruction, and again to make it short, let's say simply that our relation to the horizon of known shapes and objects has certainly changed with the experience of what Marguerite Duras calls, in the film *Hiroshima mon amour*, "A new desert without reference to the other deserts of the world."<sup>18</sup>

17 Mengoni, A., & Rüdiger, B. (2016). Histoire et réalisme traumatique. In G. Careri & B. Rüdiger (Eds.), *Le temps suspendu* (pp. 20–31). Lyon: PUL Presses Universitaires de Lyon.

18 Rüdiger, B. (2016). Le marqueur, Histoire et réalisme traumatique. In G. Careri & B. Rüdiger (Eds.), *Le temps suspendu* (pp. 48–73). Lyon: PUL Presses Universitaires de Lyon.

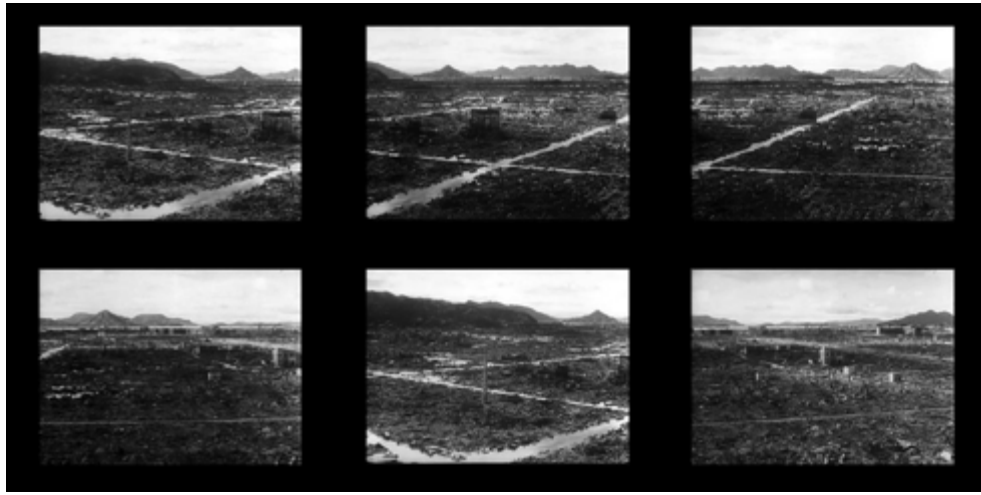


Figure 5. Images of footage used by Alain Resnais in *Hiroshima mon amour* (1948).

What does that mean for a contemporary artist, for someone born after total destruction, to look at nothing? What is art, if there is no more narration, if experience lacks and any form can be recognised? Is there still an experience of the difference? Is there still a horizon of known objects?

In one of my personal exhibitions I did long time ago at the beginning of the nineties, two stairs obstructed the two doors leading to a huge, empty exhibition space in Florence.

The spectator could climb on the stairs up to a kind of bluff overlooking the empty space at a height of three metres from the ground. But there was nothing to look at.



Figure 6. Bernhard Rüdiger, *Räumen* (1991). Installation in the Ridotto del Teatro Verdi, Florence. Source: Bernhard Rüdiger, Paris. Photo: Roberto Marossi, Milan

In this exhibition there is no longer an object standing between the viewer and a given horizon, as was usual in modern art. And I was interested at this very moment in where the perception gets loose, where the viewer has to decide to remain, all senses fixed to the physical condition of the body or to look up and perceive space as radically empty. In this moment of indecision, the viewer, even if there is no object to look at, becomes active; they literally occupy the space by projecting something coming out of an internal horizon on this radical emptiness.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Rüdiger, B. (2016). *Transcodage et forme: l'art du concret*. In G. Careri & B. Rüdiger (Eds.), *Le temps suspendu* (pp. 202–223). Lyon: PUL Presses Universitaires de Lyon.





Figure 7. Gerhard Richter, *Räumen* (2013), installation view, Marian Goodman Gallery.

We could resume very quickly, that in contemporary art, as in a show by Gerhard Richter, here in 2013, perception is no more grounded on the relation of an outstanding object in front of a horizon. But there is still a political, historical, social horizon working in the viewer's eye. Translated in the terms of psychoanalysis (please follow me in this sudden shift), we can say that contemporary art is grounded on the radical experience of the absence of any *object*. This doesn't mean that there is nothing in front of me or that we are insensible. This means that we perceive differently. This condition is very near to the critical condition psychoanalysis recognises as an experience of shock. *Shockerlebnis* is the term Walter Benjamin uses in his texts on Baudelaire and the experience in the modern city.<sup>20</sup> In this writing he distinguishes two kinds of experiences in order to describe the split modern man in industrialised society. His experience is spread and dislocated in a radical opposition between a fragmented and isolated form of *Erlebnis* and another and different diachronic mode of *Erfahrung*. The German word *Erlebnis* underlines the experience of an event, in opposition to *Erfahrung* as the experience caught in its evolution to expertise, something that we can call back to memory. I cannot develop here this fundamental approach I've been working on over the years

20 Rüdiger, B. (2015). Le Chockerlebnis selon Walter Benjamin; la nouvelle configuration de l'acte créateur. In G. Careri & G. Didi-Huberman (Eds.), *L'histoire de l'art depuis Walter Benjamin* (pp. 185–206) Milan: Mimesis.

with my group of artist-researchers.<sup>21</sup> What is essential in this short presentation is the fact that perception is still working, even in condition of *Shockerlebnis*. To say it in the terms of Lacan, through what he names "touché,"<sup>22</sup> the individual being in a condition of *Shockerlebnis* is not excluded from reality, he is excluded only from experience as *Erfahrung*. He is still in touch with reality, but in a different way.

In the condition of *Shockerlebnis* the viewer's question is no longer, "What do I see?" This is the question we have when one looks at a Klee painting. In the condition of *Shockerlebnis* the question is, "Is there something I should see?" Said in other terms, the viewer's question is no longer posed to the object looked at, but to its absence. *Should I see something now and there?*<sup>23</sup>

What I'm trying to explain is that the question we address to contemporary art is based on the very same mechanism of resilience process in psychoanalysis. The split modern man has an approach of the experience, which is separated in *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*. Resilience is the work someone does to get out of an unresolved tension, to come to a new form, which can be experimented, narrated, and finally memorised; a situation in which the event of the *Erlebnis* can fully become an experience, *eine Erfahrung*.

21 Research Unit *Contemporary Art and Historical Temporalities*. See "Art Contemporain et Temps de l'Histoire." ENSBA Lyon. Retrieved 14 January 2019 from [http://www.ensba-lyon.fr/page\\_art-contemporain-et-temps-de-l-histoire](http://www.ensba-lyon.fr/page_art-contemporain-et-temps-de-l-histoire)

22 In his second book of physics, Aristotle distinguishes two types of chance events. Those which happen automatically, *by themselves* (automaton), and chance events where no intentional intervention is possible, in the case of an object (or with animals). The second category of chance is that of things which happen by luck (*tuché*), where it could be possible to assume that the being connected to the event might have had some kind of choice or interference in the event.

In his 11th seminar, Lacan used these two concepts to speak about one aspect of repetition in psychoanalysis as an *automaton*, a network of signifiers, which is held together by itself. Something is built with no participation from the subject (for example, the signifiers linked to heritage and to what pre-exists of the subject and which are kept in a principle of stability, repressed to maintain a state of well-being). On the other hand, the *tuché* is the encounter with the real. It is chance, the unexpected, the extracurricular, the accident which can reactivate that which was absent or interrupted, repressed. The subject is touched by the Real in a different manner and can be re-elaborated in other, unexpected ways. What is suspended—traumatic experience, for example—find with the *tuché* the opportunity to return: a reformulation which could perhaps be anti-traumatic. "The function of the *tuché*, of the real, as encounter—the encounter in so far as it may be missed, in so far as it is essentially the missed encounter—first presented itself in the history of psychoanalysis in a form that was in itself already enough to arouse our attention, that of the trauma." Lacan, J. (1998). *Tuché and automaton in the four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis*. *Book IX* (A. Sheridan, Trans.) (p. 55). New York: W.W. Norton and Co.

23 Rüdiger, B. (2016). Le temps suspendu. In C. Viart (Ed.), *L'art contemporain et le temps; visions de l'histoire et formes de l'expérience* (pp. 117–136). Rennes: PUR Presses Universitaires de Rennes.

What I'm trying to show is that the process of resilience and the process of contemporary perception of an aesthetic *Erlebnis* are based on the very same mechanism. That means that artists are not only that kind of curious citizen you can use to work on problems society doesn't want to handle, as is often the case today when we speak about resilience. The real question for me is that the contemporary viewer and the artist behave with contemporary art in a confrontational relationship based on the very same process of resilience. This means that our teaching and our research are based on such knowledge, and we should put the process of resilience and its theoretical potentiality at the very beginning of our basic education. It is an apprenticeship that is not only necessary to the aesthetic education of man (to quote the famous writing of Friedrich Schiller), it is essential to the education of man *tout court*.<sup>24</sup>

Art research is absolutely necessary to define a new approach of pedagogy. But our actual higher education plans are not based on an apprenticeship of perception and what Klee names *die Gestalt*. They are based on the very old categories coming out of trade tradition. The old craftsman's categories of an industrialised society of the 19th century are still influencing higher education and our relation to research. That is why art-based research is often under the influence of other traditions of higher education.

And this is the last point, to get to a quick conclusion.

Historically, research in higher education is the result of two main traditions. An experimental approach in science and, on the other hand, a research with a critical dialectic approach inherited from humanistic culture. We hardly tried in our art schools to produce a singular approach in research, but very often we don't really succeed to open up a new and specific place where art research is grounded on its own know-how.

24 Schiller, F. (2016). *On the aesthetic education of man*. London, Penguin Classics.

## Essential characteristics of research

Experimental  
research

Humanities  
research

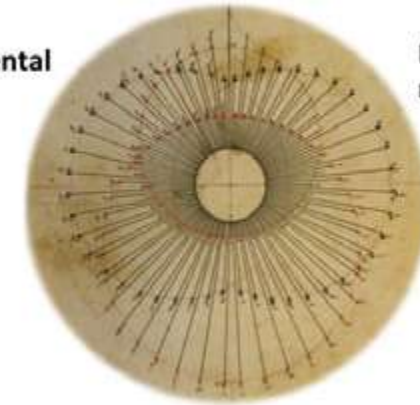


Figure 8. Essential characteristics of research, with a detail from a drawing by Oskar Schlemmer in the centre. Source: Bernhard Rüdiger

Practice-based research and research on art belong in the end to one of the traditional approaches of research practice.

If we go back to our first definition of the form as something that is instable, relative, and potential, trying to understand how this can work in our contemporary viewer condition,

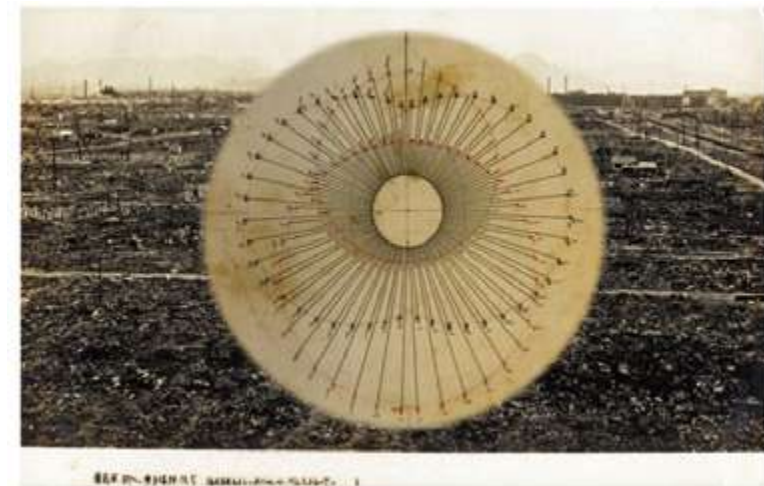


Figure 9. The contemporary viewer condition, with a detail from a drawing by Oskar Schlemmer in the centre, and a postcard from Hiroshima (1947) in the background. Source: Bernhard Rüdiger

we can now presume that instability in regard to form is directly linked to the experience and the understanding of an event in an experimental approach of research, *ein Erlebnis*.

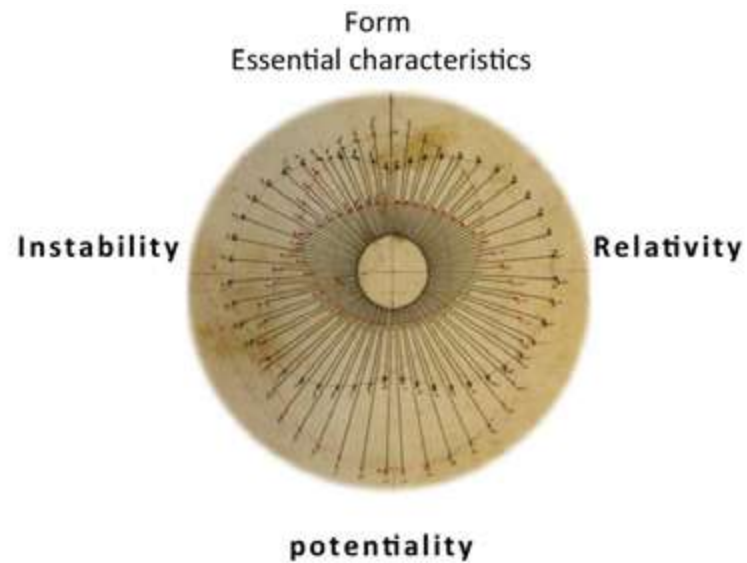


Figure 10. Form, essential characteristics, with a detail from a drawing by Oskar Schlemmer in the centre. Source: Bernhard Rüdiger

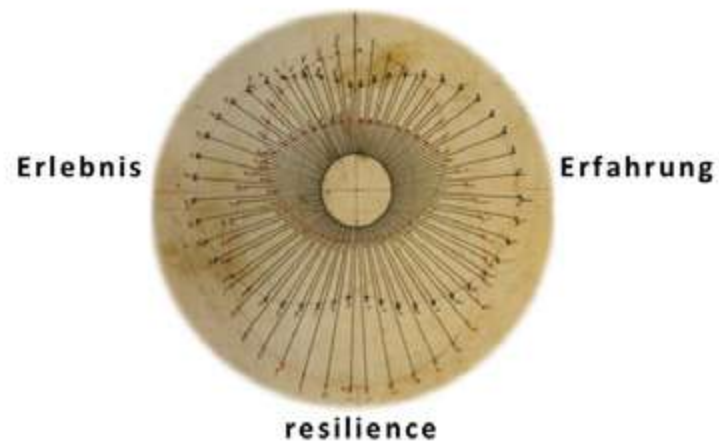


Figure 11. Erlebnis, Erfahrung, Resilience, with a detail from a drawing by Oskar Schlemmer in the centre. Source: Bernhard Rüdiger

We can also say that relativity is grounded on a humanistic approach of dialectics and the narrative of experience as *Erfahrung*. But *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* are in tension in contemporary art, and deeply involved in the process of perception as resilience. And this is now the real point: there is no tradition that really fits with the notion of potentiality that could sustain actual art-based research programmes.

The process of resilience and its paradigmatic potential form, capable to keep together what can exist only in a condition of unresolved tension, currently seem to be a minor approach in research, even if it is essential to daily life. Let's be honest, the skill of art research is not innovation, but potentiality. It is based on the possibility to think in terms of persisting tension. Why should we not produce a research grounded on this essential approach of contemporary knowledge?

Art schools should produce singular, art-based research.

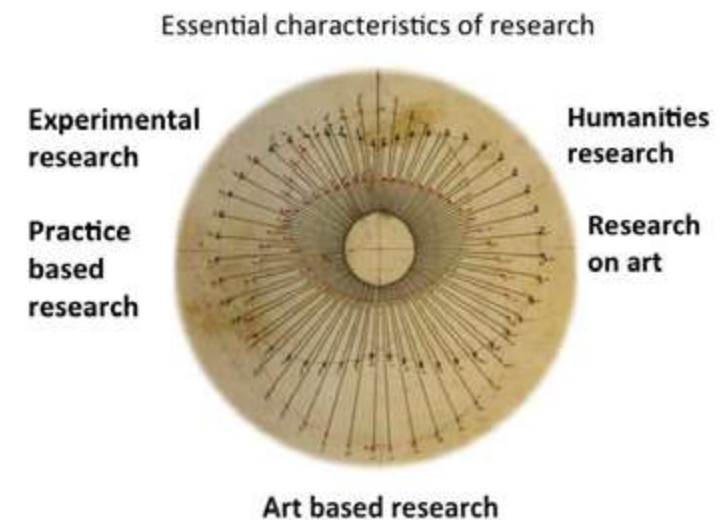


Figure 12. Essential characteristics of art research, with a detail from a drawing by Oskar Schlemmer in the centre. Source: Bernhard Rüdiger

A research based on contemporary perception as potentiality.

In France, I work in a research programme based on such an approach. Of the 44 French art schools, 10 have developed an Upper Diploma of Search in Art, which is not a PhD, but an art-based higher degree research diploma certified by the Ministry of Culture. Higher art education in France is managed by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education.

The defence is the result of an art-based research of a minimum of three years, on subjects specific to the domain of artistic creation in art and design. The forms and the conditions of defence of the diploma are specific to every project.

As I said in the beginning, it becomes urgent to shift our research programmes from the margins to the centre of contemporary art, where the form works as *Gestalt* on potentiality.

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# T-LAB: FROM THE THEORETICAL TO THE THEOROTICAL: THEORY AS PRACTICE IN THE ARTS

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**Keywords:**

theory in the arts  
T-Lab  
theoros  
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## ABSTRACT

What is the role of theory in the arts and how can it contribute to the resilience of the arts? To answer this question the text follows the shifting role of theory and its relation to the arts. Theory started as a practice-oriented, actively enquiring agent in Ancient Greece (resulting in the *theoria* of the *theoros*); transformed subsequently into a detached, observing agent when philosophers like Plato took over (resulting in a *theory of or on*), and finally touched base with practice when two modern philosophers, Hemsterhuis and Novalis, compiled theory and practice in art. Making became a thinking and vice versa. Contemporary art education, however, did not follow, but kept theory and practice separate until mid-20th century (conceptual art). When research was introduced into the art-curricula a few decennia later, they started their productive re-encounter, a meeting that contributes to a robust resilience, when stimulated by a T-Lab.

When preparing my paper, I reread my proposal to regain my initial thoughts on the topic. The blurb appeared explicit and straightforward:

*We propose to address the renewed interest in theory as a forceful practice in the arts, especially in connection to the question how the arts could or should enforce their own (presumed) resilience. Since the arts are increasingly viewed as helping forces for societal—mostly urban—problems, they seem to serve as an alternative Salvation Army, which leads to an increasing instrumentalisation that is not without consequences; art can lose its proper elasticity, or will be transformed into a whole other matter.*

I would like to concentrate on a related issue to this problematic, that is, the role of theory within art education and the arts. How can theory in the arts contribute to analyse, counterattack, or develop whatever action in our fascinating but also confusing period of times? To answer this, I'll sketch the historical place and role of theory in the arts, and how we can cope with the changed role of theory in present-day art schools. After that, I'll briefly introduce the T-Lab, a lab for theory, history, and critical art studies, that could expand art's resilience.

## THEORY AND ARTISTIC PRACTICES

In *Theory in the Arts*, a research group of ArtEZ University of the Arts, we enquire in various ways what the role of theory in the different arts can and should be.<sup>25</sup> How does theory work in artistic practices? It seems a simple question; finding an adequate or satisfying answer, however, is quite another matter. For posing this question implies that we should describe what we mean by theory and by artistic practice. What is more, the latter expression is composed of another two elements, art and practice. So we have already three variables that are in some way connected.

What does theory *do*? Instead of asking what theory *means* or *is*, this question refers to the practice of the term, that is, how the arts relate to theory, and vice versa. The question therefore refers more to doing than to being; to existence instead of essence. Doing implies a practice, but should we call theory a practice too? In art education of the last two centuries, theory was generally regarded as the *counter*-part of practice; as something that could sustain but also even hinder or obstruct art-making. Theory referred to an age-old system of art laws, which gave it (academic) steadiness but also stubbornness. In 20th-century art education, theory started to change. It referred mostly to the (teaching of the) history of art, theatre theory, music theory, philosophy, and various other domains

<sup>25</sup> See <https://www.artez.nl/en/research/theory-in-the-arts-professorship>; for the ongoing discussion on research in the arts, see [www.lets-talk.artez.nl](http://www.lets-talk.artez.nl)

that are generally connected to the humanities.

Our research group uses theory, however, as a term to describe the working of all possible discursive ideas that connect to or take part in artistic practices. Although theory is also an autonomous field, we focus especially on its workings and appearances in the making, in the various art practices. In *Denken in Kunst (Thinking in Art)*, I made the following observation with regard to making in the arts:

*Making is the more or less consciously composing or joining of elements in order to construct an object, a form, a happening or a sentence that generates meaning, and to present it in and to the world. The theory of making represents the discursive dimension of the process, in which is included the reflection on the actions and on the concepts with which the process of making has been thought, steered and reflected. This theory is, within the arts, part of the whole of ideas that are unbreakably connected to the artistic process, and which plays its part, consciously or unconsciously, in the realisation of works of art. (Sondereren, 2012)*

Theory and making are intimately connected, but also the idea of being or becoming art. The theory of making does not withdraw from artistic practice but moves along it with it, continuously. It is systematically linked to creating works of art. Theory, making, practicing, and being art are therefore structurally intertwined; they are entangled (Sondereren, 2019). Theory in the arts is the collective noun of all possible concepts, ideas, and perhaps also all possible affects and things that actively co-create the artistic work. To our surprise the idea of theory as a practice finds support in the etymology of the word.

## THEORY, THEORIA, THEOROS, AND THE THEOROTICAL

This appeared when reading one of Heidegger's texts in which he referred to the Greek root of the word: *thea* and *horein*. The latter word means viewing, looking, observing, and inspecting. Theory therefore implies looking at things and developing a certain relationship. Theory is an activity that connects to the apparent or the perceptible, and, subsequently, speculates about it. Speculating is related to the visual and its double. The word *theatre*, which is akin to theory and *theorein* (its verb), still contains this double meaning of watching the being watched. *Thea* stands for the outer aspect of things, but also refers to deity. The concept of *theoria*, which is the result of *theorein*, can also be connected to *thea* and *ora*, which refers to respect and honour. Following this logic, we can describe theory accordingly as the venerating, concentrated attention for the



disclosure of that which presents itself. Theory describes what becomes visible or perceptible in things that appear to us. It is, however, not only the outer appearance but also their hidden creating force (i.e., that which makes them appear). The concept of *thea* turns this into something *divine*.

Heidegger omits, as far as I am aware, the one who makes the *theoria* and who theorises. This is the *theoros*, a figure who appeared around the 6th and 5th centuries BC. The *theoros* visited happenings like religious festivals and other gatherings that took place outside his polis, his own "comfort zone." The *theoros* went to supranational happenings that took place at shared fields that were no one's property, where he met his peers, the other *theoroi*, who also had left their poleis behind. The *theoros* was thus not some theoretician who invented new thought systems at home but was somebody who wrote down his activities, his encounters, and his observations of the outside world. This became his *theoria* in which he reported his findings, his thoughts, and his experiences in his search for new knowledge.

The *theoros* enquired the world by actively searching and viewing, and by finding and creating new horizons. Theorising was a double action and not, as we often hold, only a reflective activity that takes place in a "distanced" and bodiless head, resulting in a theory of or on something. Theory was a *doing*, an active acting and viewing during the practice of observing. It was an engaged way of making theory, and implied *autopsy* (i.e., seeing things with one's own eyes). The *theoros* became an eyewitness.

Although the manifestation of the *theoros* in Ancient Greece looks like a nice and special story, we should realise, however, that the *theoroi* have had quite an influence on the Western philosophy that was evolving in those days. The *theoria* of the *theoros* became the model of the philosophical *theoria* that developed gradually during the 4th century. Moreover, the philosophers connected their *theoria* to this *theoretical theoria*, which focused on visiting and witnessing religious festivals and divinities that were supposed to be present there. This *theoretical* attention to the divine was essential for the development of philosophical *theoria*; the philosophers were looking for an adequate form with which they could study divine essences, or that which came to be known as *truth*.

The subsequent development of philosophy changed, however. Philosophers gradually withdrew from the quotidian social, religious, and political matters. At least some of them also departed the city borders, but this time not to enter the unknown outside real world but the immaterial sphere "above" the city, and finally above mankind itself, thereby striving for an unspoiled state of being. They gradually preferred to become impersonal, disinterested, and objective with regard to the real world. This distancing activity made them gods alike. In addition, some of them also started to work and talk in small, intimate groups (the academy), or completely alone.

Next to the idea of the divine, the philosophers had also learned something from the *theoroi* that was again quite important, that is, the idea of *universality*. In their meetings on common ground the *theoroi* realised that sharing certain issues referred to a bigger entity than their individual being. The idea of universal truth, of something that presides over everything else, showed up in what we would call now Panhellenism, the idea of a bigger unity that organised all of them. The experience of transcendence was something that affected everyone. The philosopher could, subsequently, transcend the world to arrive at the eternal and the divine as universally valid principles. This made the development of what we now call philosophy or metaphysics possible.

Theory started thus as an exploring and inquisitive activity; an enterprise, a travel, a pilgrimage, a research. It directed itself both at worldly and divine matters. By this engagement with the world and the universal it became a model for philosophy, which, in turn, withdrew itself from worldly matters and started to concentrate instead on the essence or the model of philosophy per se.

This remarkable history of the concept of theory, which was enquired in detail by, among others, Andrea Nightingale (2004), and which I came across in another research project (*Unpacking Performativity*, 2016) with our dance department, is an important incentive and even a support to view theory not only as a theory of something else, as a description of the world, but rather as an activity that makes new insights and ideas possible. Theory is an active practice.

## THEORY AS PRACTICE: ART

Theory started as a practice in the classical past but turned itself gradually into theoretical systems. But how can we make theory a practice again, or to be more precise, to see it as practice, as a non-fixed form of transformation? To answer this, we should first deal with the third term that we established at the start: art or artistic. The term art, as we use it nowadays, is a modern concept that was invented by the end of the 18th century. It could therefore not have played any role in the history of theory that we have sketched up until now. In my contribution to *Theory Arts Practices* (2017), a book that concerned the question *Why, What, and How Theory?* in current art education, I have enquired the relationship between art, theory and practices in the arts. Important founders of our modern idea of art around 1800 were the philosophers Frans Hemsterhuis and Novalis. In their writings—and also in their artistic practices—we see how theory and practice are going to move, to oscillate and incite each other. Theory and practice evoke one another and keep each other moving. An important element in this development is that the principle of imitation, which had kept all the arts together up until then, did not remain

in force. The arts were from that moment on connected by the singular concept of *Art*. Be(-com-)ing Art became the new leading metaphysical concept that would keep all the arts together for more than 200 years. To become or being art was spurred on by something that was coined *desire*. The desire to put things together became the very incentive of *poiein*, of making and gathering things; a poetic principle that was both active in science and art, and which was agitated by the desire for unification and the poetical imagination. This finally led to Novalis's apt expression that "the real thinking appears as a making" (Sonderen, 2017). Practice/making and theory/thinking were entangled once the modern concept of art was invented.

## ART EDUCATION

The return of theory as a practice around 1800 is thus connected to the invention of the modern concept of art, in which theory and practice are taken as equal and co-working forces. This relationship was not very fruitful, however, in art education. Theory and practice were rather seen as opposites and not as co-workers. Academic theory frequently considered itself as the conceptual mould that should be imposed onto artistic practice. There was a clear hierarchy. Later on, with the arrival of 20th-century conceptual art, for instance, this would change radically. Then theory no longer functioned as a template, but became an intrinsic part of art practice. Theory could even become visible as a textual form (see, for instance, Lawrence Weiner). The turn to conceptual art would also change the role of theory within art education. From the 1960s on, we see more art historians, theoreticians, and philosophers entering the art schools as teachers. Due to the introduction of the Bologna Process in Europe in the nineties, the role of theory even became more important, because of the importance of research. In *Theory Arts Practices* we have enquired how master programmes in fine art and performing arts view the current role of theory. Most of the essays that were written by theoreticians and by artists show that most of them oppose the dualism of theory and practice. They took up the line that was set out by Hemsterhuis and Novalis. Although the split between theory and practice was not an issue any more, the heads of the fine art department of Goldsmith, for instance, were explicit about what kind of theory they preferred for their master students: "Recent courses include 'Art and Labour in Advanced Capitalism' (looking at post-Marxist theories of labour), 'Speculating Futures' (speculative realism and fiction), 'Bodies in Space' (phenomenology and spatiality) and 'Perversion Now' (psychoanalysis and object-relations theory)." And also:

*A more general introduction to Marxism, starting with Marx, followed by sessions on the Frankfurt School, the New Left, and Hardt and Negri, but also theories of Globalisation, Feminism and Identity. These ideas can be taught both as knowledge that the student*

*ought to be aware of and as a stimulation and provocation to challenge students' preconceptions and give them a basis and context for the second relationship to theory..."*

*(Mabb & Malik, 2017: 74-75)*

Others were not that specific, but we do see a general predilection for French thinkers like Deleuze, Rancière, Foucault, and others. In the Finnish contribution we come across François Laruelle, who is connected to the notion of *theorein*. Theory does not impress itself on practice but is part of its movements. In the contribution from Central St Martins the interesting observation is made that theory and practice are inseparable in the artwork but not in education. There they can be taught separately, although in practice they are frequently connected. The ArtEZ master "Theatre Practices" uses the notion "discursive practices" instead of theory to emphasise the complexity of meaning-making in art. In sum, theory in current (master) art education is seen as a theory that moves with practice and gives form to it. In addition, theory in art should also reflect on itself, and enquire how and why it moves within art practice and how it is touched by practice. This "reflective practice mode" of theory has, however, only started recently.

## THEORY LAB: T-LAB

To encourage the entanglement of theory and practice in art education we are studying the idea of installing a place in which the new role of theory in art education can be explored: a T-Lab, a lab for theory as a practice. A lab that explores from within and with the arts, and that acts as an active "Fundgrube" of possibilities that pollinate both artistic practices and theory. It will become a dynamic web of practices in which theory has its own right place. Not only theory teachers but also art practitioners are taking part in this practice place, in Dutch a *theorie-werkplaats*: a theory workshop that focuses on the interactions between all practices, including theory. The T-Lab should develop theories together and practice them in education.

This new ecology of theory and practice is, according to us, (also) the true starting point of a real university of the arts in which theories of the making will preside. The contents of these new theory practices act and develop differently from the ones that are made within, for instance, research universities. The T-Lab is a possibility to lay bare the practice-theory fields that remain generally too much hidden and too implicit in the arts and in art education. We should explore and exploit these fields of the "theoretical" that are growing continually due to artistic research and other art research approaches.

# RESILIENCE

What does this imply in connection to the theme (“resilience”) of the conference? With the active use of theory, with theory as an explorative practice, the outside world will come in closer, and will become, perhaps, in this approach, less of a–permanent–threat. Resilience as a word means literally “jumping back.” This implies that something will remain the same, otherwise there could not be a “re” of a return. ELIA’s website mentions the following definition of resilience: “Resilience is the capacity of a system, be it an individual, a forest, a city or an economy, to deal with change and continue to develop. It is about how humans and nature can use shocks and disturbances (like a financial crisis or climate change) to spur renewal and innovative thinking.” This is another important argument to reinforce theory in the arts. It makes them stronger in all possible relationships with the future environment. With theory in the arts it is possible to jump back on a firm but malleable and flexible foundation. A both resisting and persisting resilience. In theory.

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# SCHOOLCAMP@CALAIS

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école mondiale

sensuous

laboratory

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schoolcamp

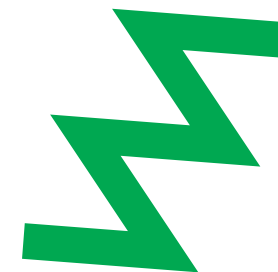
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<sup>26</sup> This article is part of the Labo-project of the teacher training programme in audiovisual and fine arts that took place in October 2018. The lecturers involved in the project were: Filip De Roeck, Maarten Van Luchene, Nancy Vansieleghe and Liesbet Verschueren. All the pictures and figures presented in this article are made in function of this project

## ABSTRACT

Inspired by the project Ecole Mondiale, we want to rethink the idea of school in times of globalisation. Ecole Mondiale is a design for a school initiated by King Leopold II. The aim was to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to civilise an undisciplined world. In our project we do not want to think about the school in terms of civilisation. Starting from the idea that, over the last centuries, humankind has put processes in motion leading to developments for which we have no longer any standards to judge them, another approach to the world is required. Therefore, the question at stake in our project is how to rethink *école mondiale* not in terms of colonising, but in terms of seeing and experiencing the world. In order to do so, we take Calais as research base. As a border area, Calais hybridises economic aims and human needs, which reflects our neo-liberal society. From that point of view, we set up schoolcamp@calais. Particular aesthetic instructions and conditions were set up. By doing so, we tried to affect the senses rather than the intellect.



Inspired by the project Ecole Mondiale by the visual artists Filip Van Dingenen and Ive Van Bostraeten, we want to rethink the idea of *école mondiale* in times of globalisation and migration. Through the design of ten field stations at different locations, the aim of the visual artists was to redefine and investigate the feasibility of Ecole Mondiale as an educational project today (Van Dingenen & Van Bostraeten, 2018)

Ecole Mondiale is a design for a postgraduate school initiated by King Leopold II in 1902. Although never built, the aim of the project was to develop and prepare young men for a career in the overseas areas of Europe, acquiring competences and skills necessary to civilise and colonise an undisciplined world. The preparation and competences include: Agronomy, Ethnography, History, Languages, Law, Mathematics, Medicine, and Natural History. Accompanied by a document archive, the aim was to build an international knowledge centre.

This unique knowledge centre, however, not only focused on the intellect but was also very much concentrated on discipline. A strong military discipline and physical training needs to make the vitality of Western man “principle proof,” so to say.

*The Ecole Mondial is not destined to take a place among the existing educational establishments and even less to compete with them. Its objective is beyond the framework of present study programmes in the way the Ecole will have the mission of completing the general instruction from the global point of view, and to train, by means of special preparation, competent and capable elements, in the various branches of intellectual and professional activity, to provide for the functions, professions, or trades in our overseas possession. (Ranieri, as cited in Delheye et al., 2014: 1160)*

As such, next to knowledge acquisition, collection, and distribution, Ecole Mondiale also focuses on Swedish gymnastics, sports, manual labour, and military training.

The idea was that a trained body with a firm will and perseverance was necessary for not being discouraged by the rigour of the tropical climate and the seductions of a wild and exotic world. A discipline of the body and the mind was thus of crucial importance in order to “become a good expansionist” (2014: 1162).

Today, conditions are changed. We no longer have to explore the overseas world; in the meantime, we have explored, civilised, and capitalised the world in such a way that there is nothing left to explore, civilise, and appropriate. Or as Bernd Scherer, the director of Haus der Kulturen der Welt, has put it:

*We have reached a Tipping Point.... Over the last centuries humankind has put processes in motion leading to developments for which we no longer have any standards by which to judge them.... With the traditional methods of knowledge acquisition—the natural sciences on the one side and the humanities on the other—humankind has reached a limit. (Scherer, 2017)*

Hence, another approach to the world is required.

*The tipping point consists in the challenge of finding new standards for judging an activity that has crystallized over the last 300 years in the form of a geo-historically effective dominance. A new sense of amazement at the wonder of the Earth is required: what can we do and how can we know—and to what extent are these two questions connected? With what means, methods, and senses can we encounter the world of our own creation? (Scherer, 2017)*

*The challenge for us today, as such, is no longer to think of Ecole Mondiale in terms of colonisation, appropriation, and capitalisation, but in terms of seeing, experiencing, and of being exposed to the world. Or, in the words of Jacques Rancière, how to form école mondiale as a practice and a way to create another time in the heart of the normal order of time, a way to inhabit in a different way the common sensible world? It has always been a way of living in the present of another world rather than preparing for a world to come. (Rancière, 2017: 31–32)*

Hence, challenges we have to deal with are as follows:

- How can we reconsider Ecole Mondiale in times of migration and globalisation?
- How to think about conditions and instructions not in terms of acquiring predefined standards, but in terms of affecting the senses and of disclosing a world?
- How to expose Ecole Mondiale not as an idea, but as a form that calls for attention and regard?

In trying to come to terms with this request, together with the students of the teacher training in audiovisual and fine arts of LUCA School of Arts we set up schoolcamp@calais. The main questions of schoolcamp are what is this world for, which forms of existence does it make possible, and what are the limits? We took the city of Calais in the Northern Province of France as the starting point for our research. We chose Calais because of being a city at the border and of being a city that does not function as a final destination. Although it is situated at the coast, Calais is not a touristic location. Calais attracts people only for its being a transit zone to the United Kingdom. A place, in other words, where no one remains: a non-place, to paraphrase Marc Augé (1995). Our assumption is that precisely because of its condition of not being occupied by a particular destination and, as such, by a predefined gaze that is full of expectations—say, it being a touristic attraction, a university city, etc.—it allows us better to see and experience (aspects of) the world. As far as cities offer a lot of amusement, attraction, and spectacle, we do not so much see and experience the world, but become subject of consumption and of consuming the world. Of course, in some way, we can say that Calais is very much defined. Since the refugee and migration encampment, the Calais Jungle, has been expanded, Calais has

received a lot of media attention, and in a sense, it is impossible not to look at Calais through the eyes of the refugee. Perhaps this was precisely the point, and the main issue of our schoolcamp. However, not to look from a point of view of being in a weak and problematic position, but from a point of view of temporality, and of being exposed to the world. I will come back to this later.

Hence, instead of focusing ourselves on possible competences that need to be achieved in order to prepare us for another world, the idea was to suspend that idea in order first to look and to think about what there is to see here and now. As such, we set up what we will call a "sensuous," "temporal," and "collective" laboratory that enabled students and lecturers to "see" and "experience" our "common" world, so as to disclose it in terms of a milieu we are a part of and need to live together with.

In order to make this happen, and to make Calais what Bruno Latour (2004) has called a matter of concern, and not just a matter of facts (where it is located, amount of inhabitants, rate of income, etc.), technological and disciplinary arrangements were set up in which Calais was turned into an issue, or something that addresses us. Meaning that particular exercises and instructions were involved in order to suspend our expectations in favour of the senses. Hence, to speak and think about what we see instead of what we know or hope to see.

What did we do?

We started with a map of Calais. We divided the map in 31 gussets, as many as the number of students.

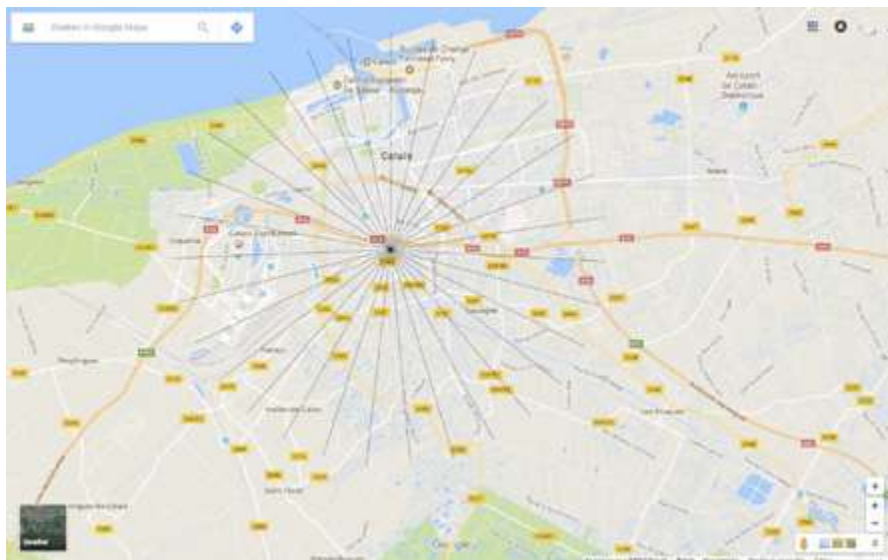


Figure.1 Map of Calais divided in 31 gussets.

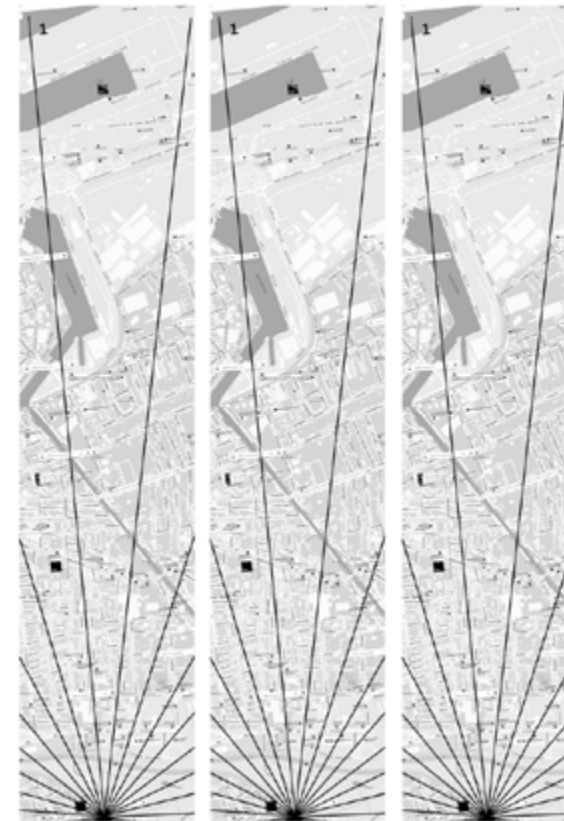


Figure 2. Walk a line.

Each student was asked to walk a line, individually, during four whole days. The act of walking, so Jan Masschelein (2010) writes, "Has to do with opening the eyes and becoming attentive for what there is to see, so that we are 'there' and the 'there' can present itself to us in its evidence and command us" (2010: 45). It helps to "see what is visible" and it liberates the gaze. Walking, as such, is not so much a method than a discipline. A discipline that addresses us to become attentive to the road as it unfolds; to cut into expectations and to concentrate upon what the road commands. To see what is visible, instead of what we want or think to see. This, however, as Rancière writes, is something children do, and you could say artists as well, but we adults have unlearned.

*The child is surrounded by objects that speak to him, all at once, in different languages; he must study them separately and together; they have no relationship and often contradict each other. He can make nothing of all the idioms in which nature speaks to him—through his eyes, his touch, through all his senses—simultaneously. He must repeat often to remember so many absolutely arbitrary signs... What great attention is necessary for all that! (Rancière, 1991: 51)*

As the child grows older, “this need becomes less imperious, and the attention less constant. And the child gets used to learning to use the eyes of others” (1991: 51).

We learn to see what is known, hence, too often we are only focused on our destination, and thus on what we expect to see, and are no longer paying attention to the road.

Exhaustion, therefore, was an additional condition that makes it possible to become attentive and to see what is there to see beyond intentions and expectations.<sup>27</sup>

Besides the request to walk the line, there was also the question to map the line according to particular parameters. The parameters were arbitrary and remained object of discussion, but referred in a sense to indications of how people live together. This way the parameters were playground, public benches, waste, control, transport, homeless people or refugees, commercial centres, etc.

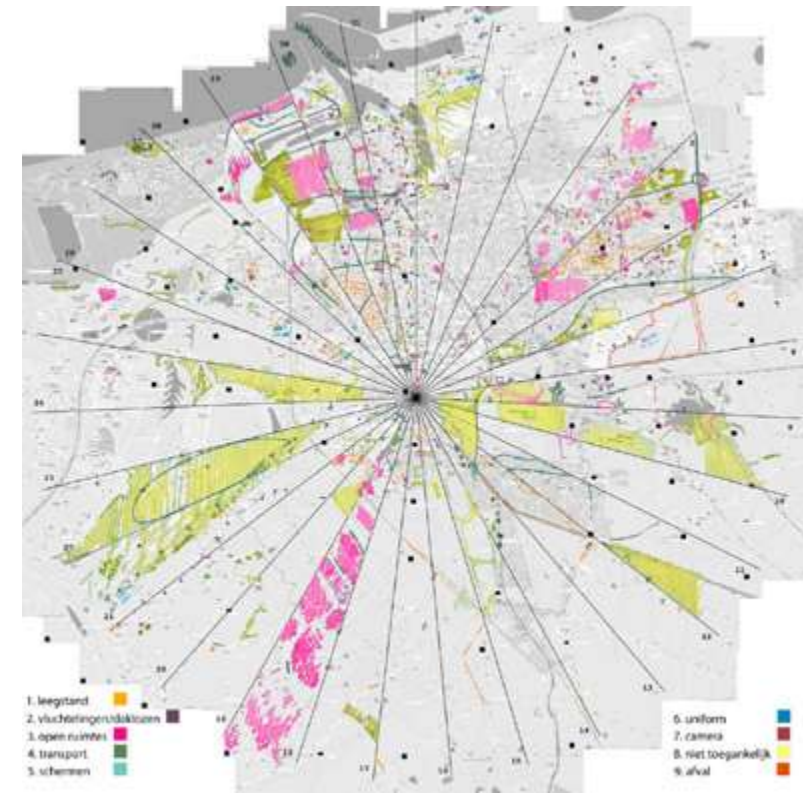


Figure 3. Mapping of Calais using particular parameters.

The only thing the students needed to do was indicate where they found these parameters along their way. We had different maps for each parameter, and every evening the students had to indicate their findings on the particular map. I have to admit that it was the first time we did this exercise, and we did not calculate enough time in order to finish this request. So a complete work is not realised. But the idea was to visualise particular relations between parameters and their location.

Together with the mapping we also asked the students to make pictures and to record sound or conversations as well. At the end we asked the students to assemble their material in order to pronounce a statement in the form of an exhibition.

<sup>27</sup> See also Vansieleghem, N. (2011). Philosophy with children as an exercise in parrhesia: An account of a philosophical experiment with children in Cambodia. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 45(2), 321–337.

Hence, what the mapping discloses is not a piece of art, and neither did it reveal some scientific insights, but rather visualises what you could call “power relations” in terms of modes of existence that emerge. I can only show a glimpse of the pictures, but what we got to see was:

- Many traffic, transport, and commercial centres located at particular places that are guarded well
- Nature and playgrounds at particular places and in relation to larger colourful buildings
- Traces of refugees in Calais (toothbrushes, clothes, pillows, etc.)
- Lots of graffiti (“no border, we are humans”)
- An enormous presence of empty and abandoned spaces (for sale, inactive industry, etc.), and so-called grey zones of small houses with curtains
- Everywhere, control; in terms of police but also cameras, large fences, “watch out for the dogs,” especially seen at very small and poor houses
- But also, among these items, sculptures and inscriptions that point at these issues



Figure 4. Abandoned spaces.



Figure 5. Large fences.

What schoolcamp did was bringing us onto the street, accompanied with instructions to become attentive, and not captivated by an intention. Attention implies a kind of waiting, so Masschelein (2010) writes, in the sense that Foucault wrote of critique as the art of waiting (in French, too, is the idea of attention relating to the verb *attendre*, “to wait”). This way one could also say that what schoolcamp did was a kind of slowing down, a kind of slow research. It opened up questions concerning our world. It seems as if Calais shows us our common world, as that conglomeration that is so focused on mobilisation, control, and capitalisation. Yet a large part of the world, the grey zone, remains living in poverty and fear—fear for those who are not mobile, not in control, having no capital. At the same time, there are things that do not coincide with all this. Some little “childish” things, so to say, that attract the gaze as well. Think of the little lion, or the old woman who invites one of our students to have a cup of coffee with her, the abandoned farm full with beautiful light...





Figure 6. Little childish things.

Ecole Mondiale cannot be understood this way as an idea, but needs to be understood as a particular arrangement between people and world. Requiring practices to keep the things of the world out of the circles of consumption and the business of use and exchange value. In order to make them “common” things, so as to have the faculty of arresting our attention and moving us. Something that allows for study, exercise, and thus renewal.

Hence, practices that try to open the eyes do not acquire a rich methodology or technologies, but ask for poor practices and art which helps us to become attentive, which offers us the exercises of an attitude: the art of waiting, mobilising, presenting. An art that invites one to go outside, into the world, to expose oneself, to put oneself in an uncomfortable, weak position, and that offers the means and support to do so. An art education, thus, that entails offers of experience and of the time and space of thought.

This request is not making *école mondiale* impossible. In contradistinction. It makes it possible by bringing it into a shape and by providing it with meaning—suspended from a political, ethical, or cultural perspective.

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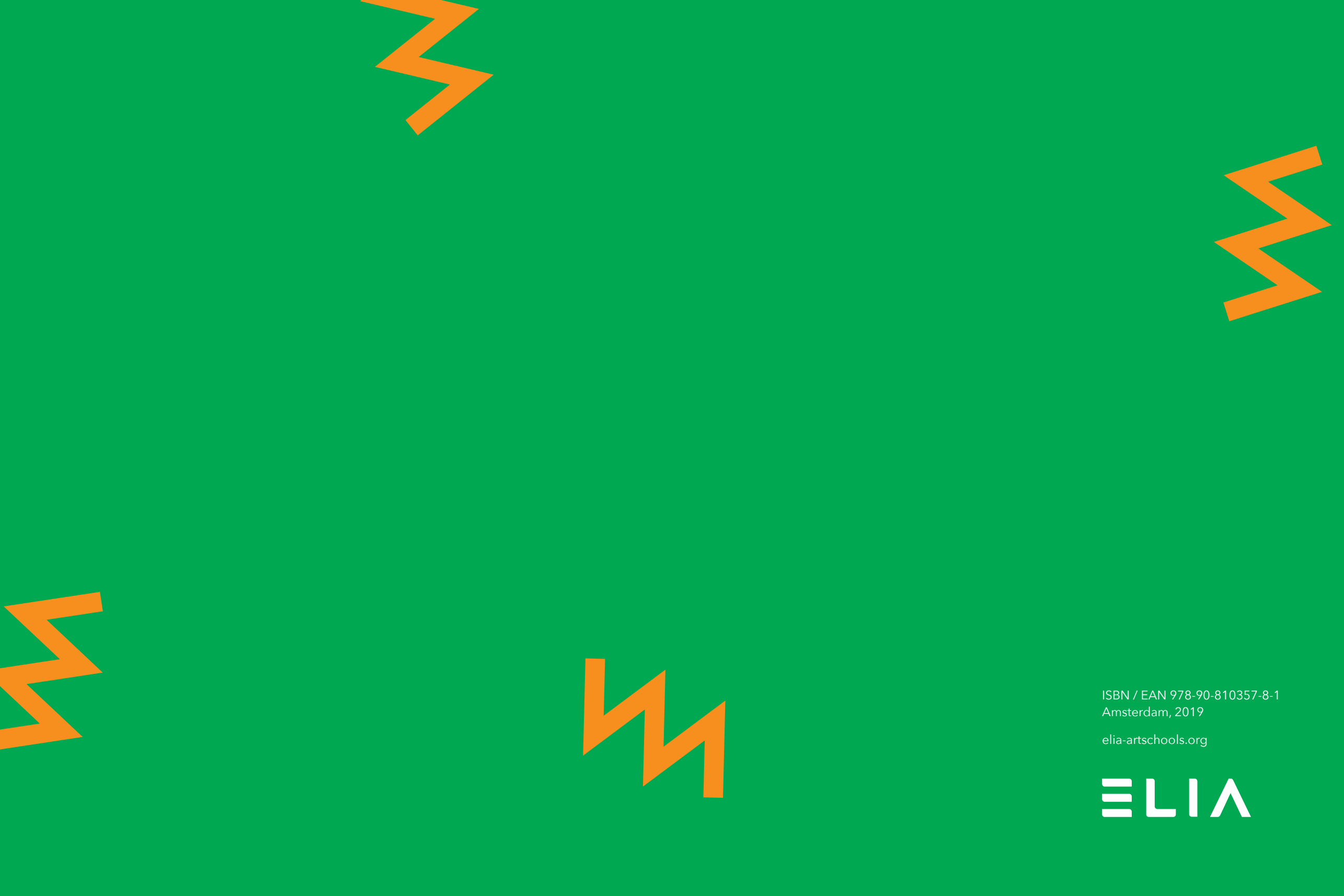
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