

Art & Research



at the Royal
Academy of
Fine Arts
Antwerp

annual report 2024



Research Class 'Cooking' by Charlotte Koopman; photo by Wannes Cré

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Exhibition 'Moving the Photogram'; work in the back by Berit Schneidereit, front by Dries Segers; photo by Wannes Oré



Research Class 'Photosynthetic Cookbook' by Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky; photo by Wannas Cré

Purpose and Means

Since artistic research became one of our core tasks, it has had a somewhat complex relationship with that other core task, art education. Whereas the latter enjoyed a certain naturalness, this has been less the case for artistic research. Over time, we have clarified this relationship, but a certain ambiguity between research and education remains. Far from being a problem, this dynamic fosters movement, sharpens focus and keeps us alert. One of the possible pitfalls is the risk of corporatising artistic research into an end in itself. One of the possible remedies is to keep the essence in mind.

Artistic research does not serve the research, but the artistic. Artistic research serves the arts. And therefore, also art education. Without the context of artistic practice and art education, artistic research loses its purpose and function. Seen this way, relevant artistic practice inherently includes research, and relevant art education cannot do without artistic research. They deepen, broaden, and enrich one another, forming an essential interconnectedness. At the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, we are strongly committed to this synergy. The interaction and interplay between education and research, with artistic practice at the centre, remains a constant.

Artistic researchers bring creative and critical input to the educational process, while the art students and teachers provide researchers with an engaged audience, a critical sounding board and an experimental space. The Bachelor Classes, Research Weeks, Extra Academy and Studio Visits connect researchers and students in meaningful ways. Initiatives such as the Soup Sessions, the ARTICULATE research festival and the publication series Track Report, further facilitate dialogue with the broader art field and public. In doing so, we activate and animate the unexplored territory between research and education, without concreting it.

I would therefore like to thank the research team and the Academy's researchers for their insights and their commitment.

JOHAN PAS
Dean of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp

From Artificial Intelligence to Social Creativity

In 2024, the topic of generative artificial intelligence was ever-present in our research programme. The possibilities offered by new technologies and AI were explored by researchers, students, and teachers. By means of lectures and debates, insights into its impact on the art world and the artistic practice were shared. This led to new opportunities for experimentation but also sparked robust discussions on the ethical issues and potential pitfalls involved. During events like *ARTICULATE 2024 – Art Without Artists* – the dialogue on these matters was further deepened.

As a first concrete result of these strong focus on GenAI within the research programme, a code of conduct for the use of generative technologies in artistic research was discussed and approved by the Research Council of the Academy and the Conservatoire. This code will likely be regularly updated as technology and our understanding evolve.

Being surprised and amazed by the speed of developments within this field, and as a first encounter with ChatGPT, I asked if it could identify the major trends of 2024. As key trends in 2024, ChatGPT identified issues around sustainability and climate change first, the breakthrough of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and automation second, and health and well-being third. It is striking, and perhaps not coincidental, that the three research domains defined by our researchers within ARIA during the past year coincide exactly (!) with these three major trends. Artistic researchers will continue to contribute to these three clusters, adding new artistic perspectives from their artistic practice.

After a year in which generative technology may have been excessively present, it seems prudent to focus more on social engagement, participation, and the importance of interpersonal relationships in 2025. Our focus will maybe shift to the physical and visceral, the intuitive, the imaginative, and the instinctive – addressing themes such as solidarity, care for one another, social connection, human creativity, and passion.

Ranked seventh among the trends of the year – following hybrid working, the emergence of the metaverse and virtual reality, and advancements in fintech and digital currencies – ChatGPT highlighted the undeniable importance of social and political movements. Activism and awareness of social inequality, diversity, and inclusion are expected to play an increasingly significant role in the public sphere.

Artistic research at the Academy in 2025 will continue to play a pioneering role in exploring and deepening these developments. Together with you, we look forward to this with great interest!

ELS DE BRUYN

Head of Research of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp

Research groups



Research Class 'Photosynthetic Cookbook' by Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky; photo by Wannes Cré



Exhibition 'Subversive Pages: 100 Surrealist Publications'; photo by Mannes Oré

ArchiVolt

ArchiVolt is a think tank and a research platform centred on the notion of the 'archive' and on the practice of archiving. The central objective of the research group is to 'activate the archive'. Archives not only encourage discourse and reflection, but also action and creation. They are crucial to both academic and artistic practice.

We deliberately understand the word 'archive' in a broad sense. ArchiVolt is not only concerned with physical archives of artists. The platform is also focused on the practice of archiving and collecting; on the significance of an archive in the context of alternative organisations, such as artist-run spaces; and on the meaning of the word 'archive' in the digital age.

ArchiVolt ambitions to be a forum for colloquia, projects, presentations and publications about the archive and the act of archiving. How an artist looks at his or her own archive (or at that of a colleague) differs greatly from that of an art historian. But both lead to activation: in the form of new work, an archival exhibition, or new publications.

How we use the past today re-determines the place and the face of that past. An archive is usually synonymous with institutionalization and canonization. What is preserved, does have the potential to become history – and what is not preserved does not. Ethical and aesthetic aspects touch each other in the archive.

The platform offers the opportunity to reinvent the archive as a place that invites researchers to reflect on their own practice and to (re)position themselves. Examples of such strategies are wide-ranging, from the classical art catalogue or artist book, over the photobook and the digital archive, up to and including the self-publishing of archival material by artists, and personal ways of activating the archive (performance art). Archives can also establish new collaborations between artists and other researchers: What happens when both engage with the same archive?

Coordinated by NICO DOCKX

Art & Ecology

The Art & Ecology research group hosts a broad cluster of artistic research at the intersection of ecology, art and activism. This highly interdisciplinary field offers a multitude of perspectives, including social and political engagement, (eco)feminism, scientific perspectives and artistic activism. Insights from Posthumanism and New Materialism play an important reference point here.

From a commitment to art and ecology, the research group wishes to play a meaningful role in the recognition of contemporary art as a vital, connecting, investigative and regenerative force within society and within local natural and (cultural) historical givens. With exemplary policies, it aims to help the development of equitable and sustainable alternatives for a positive future.

Ecological art constitutes a highly pluralistic artistic discipline that has been around for decades, but for a long time remained relatively invisible and on the margins of more dominant art movements. At the beginning of the new millennium, the movement seems to have rapidly gained renewed momentum, visibility and a (young) following. Among the numerous topics addressed within eco-art are the representation of 'nature', sustainability, the Anthropocene, climate change, species extinction, the finite nature of fossil fuels, colonialism, waste, species contact, taxonomy and classification, food, indicator species, water management, genetic engineering, and ecosystem restoration.

The Art & Ecology research group stems from the research group Body and Material Reinvented (2015-2022). Partly because of stormy debates and pioneering research in the field of body and matter, and from the need to give ecology a permanent place within the Academy, in recent years the group has felt the need to define its field of research more specifically.

Coordinated by ROEL ARKESTEIJN



Research Class 'Photosynthetic Cookbook' by Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky at the Eco Lab; photo by Wannes Cré



Research Class 'Exquisite corpses in digital landscapes' by Kristi Fekete, in the exhibition 'The Grid'; photo by Mannes Oré

Maxlab

The research platform Maxlab focusses on the interaction between digital technologies, art, and society with a twofold objective.

On the one hand, we deal with the artist's expanding digital toolkit through our research projects, workshops, and educational programs. With an emphasis on experimentation, we envision the digital through artistic methodologies, thereby catalyzing innovation in art practices.

On the other hand, we acknowledge the rapidly evolving landscape of digital technologies. Through our research projects, lectures, performances, publications and exhibitions, we commit to a nuanced discourse on technology's omnipresence and its societal impact.

Maxlab aims to cultivate a comprehensive artistic ecosystem by creating environments where digital technologies are manipulated and their profound implications for both the arts and society can be critically examined. We provide space for both individual artists and collectives, nurturing the emergence of inter- and transdisciplinary collaborations within a broad (inter) national network. Furthermore, we advocate for the essential integration of digital literacy within the artistic curriculum of the Royal Academy, as well as within broader art education initiatives. *

*This text was written by artists with the assistance of a Large Language Model, a shared online word processor, a spell checker and several other technologies.

Coordinated by KRISTOF TIMMERMAN, JANNA BECK and THOMAS CROMBEZ



Exhibition 'Moving the Photogram'; work in the back by Jeff Weber, front by Wries Segers; photo by Wannes Cré

Thinking Tools

Thinking Tools focusses on artistic practices in which a technical apparatus plays a crucial role. For the definition of what constitutes a technical device, the research group leans heavily on the insights of the media philosopher Vilèm Flusser. Following his definition of the apparatus as a 'black box', we do not consider it as a simple transmission device that faithfully translates the maker's intentions into a concrete artistic object, but as an autonomously operating partner that intervenes decisively in the production process. Another characteristic of the technical apparatus is that it works according to strict rules and procedures. Therefore, within the broad field of art, the influence of the technical apparatus manifests itself both in conceptual practices where artists are willingly submitting themselves to self-designed rules and in artistic practices that employ a mix of analogue and digital apparatuses. In summary, the experimental, artistic practices that the research group wishes to support are determined by the friction (or collision) between control and surrender, between the digital and the analogue, between old and new media.

In other words, the researchers within Thinking Tools operate in the field of tension between the (relative) autonomy of a technical apparatus, the unruliness of the material they work with, and the idiosyncrasy of an independent artistic position. The result of this multifaceted interaction, of this multiple authorship, is a polyphonic artistic object where different actors meet on an equal footing. The works these artist-researchers create are hybrid objects, determined by the friction between human and non-human (technical, algorithmic, chemical, operational) actors. By encouraging researchers to allow these non-human forces to actively and poetically intervene in the production process, we invite them to produce work in which new relationships to (and imaginings of) the world can take form.

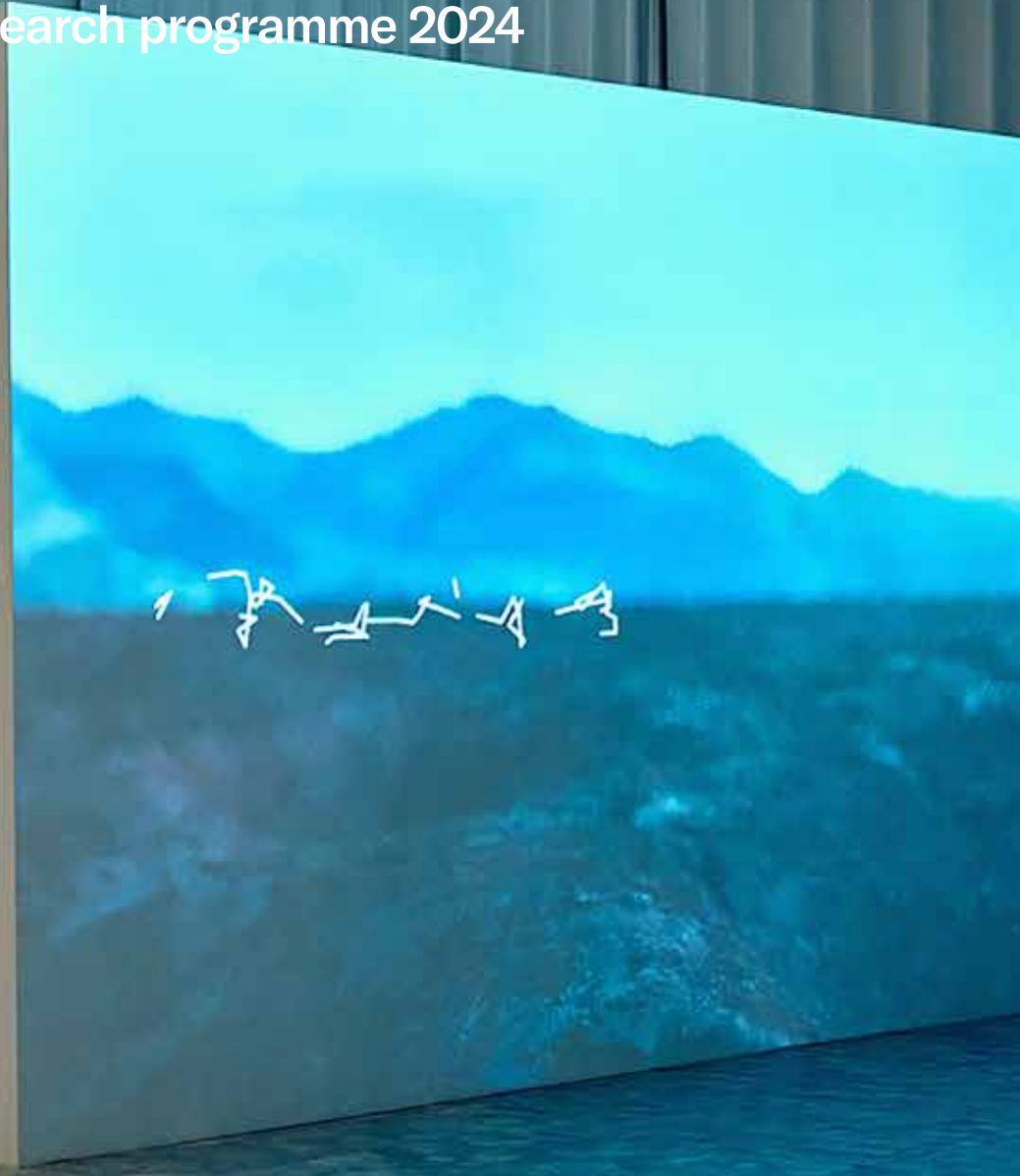
Coordinated by STEVEN HUMBLET



Research festival ARTICULATE 2024; photo by Wannes Cré



Exhibition 'Reproducibility'; work in the back by Kelley Walker, front left by Spiros Hadjidjanos and front right by Jenna Sutela; photo by Mannes Cré





Extra Academy: book launch 'Visible: Art As Policies for Care, Socially Engaged Art (2010-ongoing)' with Martina Angelotti, Matteo Lucchetti and Judith Wielander, at the Academy; photo by Art & Research

Extra Academy

Open programme on artistic practice, reflection and research

Extra Academy is an alliance between the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, Sint Lucas School of Arts and Het Bos. It is curated by Nico Dockx (Academy), Joery Schepers (Het Bos), Teun Verbruggen (Conservatoire) and Helen Mauli Dowling (Sint Lucas). From September 2024, Jan Denoo (Stadsform) and Clara van den Broek (Conservatoire) joined the curatorial team.

The platform that they offer, is one where participants become acquainted with practices and visions that are hardly or not at all addressed in the media or art education. In this way they aspire to create a much broader picture of the stratification and rich complexity of what contemporary artistic practice can mean in dialogue with, among other things, art-historical, socio-political, philosophical and economic implications.

- **Extra Academy by OMAR CHOWDHURY**
18 January 2024, Het Bos
- **Extra Academy by NADIA DE VRIES**
22 February 2024, Het Bos
- **Extra Academy by SOTA (State of the Arts)**
Book launch 'Fair Kin Arts Almanac'
28 March 2024, Het Bos
- **Extra Academy by SELOUA LUSTE BOULBINA and SAMMY BALOJI**
25 April 2024, Het Bos
- **Extra Academy by LOTTE BOONSTRA, JUSTINE GRILLET, AYRTON EBLÉ, JOKE VAN DEN HOF and NICO DOCKX**
For the occasion of 10 years
Het Bos
23 May 2024, Het Bos
- **Extra Academy by JUDITH WIELANDER, MARTINA ANGELOTTI and MATTEO LUCCHETTI**
Book launch 'Visible: Art As Policies for Care. Socially Engaged Art (2010-ongoing)'
9 October 2024, Academy
- **Extra Academy by MAJA BEKAN**
16 October 2024, Stadsform
- **Extra Academy by AMRIT KARKI (in collaboration with MARIE-SOPHIE BEINKE)**
20 November 2024, Stadsform
- **Extra Academy by IAN WAELDER**
11 December 2024, Stadsform

Soup Sessions

Get to know our researchers over a bowl of soup

At the Academy

During the Soup Sessions, researchers, students, and teachers come together to discuss artistic research. Researchers explain their research, methods, or processes, (provisional) conclusions or results. Through images, they document their practice or talk about obstacles, doubts, and progress.

The Soup Sessions are organised by the research groups of the Academy. They are open to everyone connected to the Academy, and people from outside are welcome by invitation.

- **Soup Session by GIULIA VISMARA**
invited by research group Maxlab
20 February 2024
- **Soup Session by THOMAS CROMBEZ**
invited by research group ArchiVolt
27 February 2024
- **Soup Session by NICOLAS BAEYENS**
invited by research group ArchiVolt
5 March 2024
- **Soup Session by PETER LEMMENS**
invited by research group Maxlab
12 March 2024
- **Soup Session by MARIANNE VIERØ**
invited by research group Thinking Tools
19 March 2024
- **Soup Session by EVI OLDE RIKKERT**
invited by research group ArchiVolt
26 March 2024
- **Soup Session by KELVIN HAIZEL**
invited by research group Thinking Tools
5 November 2024
- **Soup Session by GINA POORTMAN and ANNE LISE CERCHÉDEAN**
invited by research group Maxlab
26 November 2024
- **Soup Session by EDU TARÍN**
invited by research group Body and Material Reinvented / Art & Ecology
3 December 2024
- **Soup Session by ODE DE KORT**
invited by research group ArchiVolt
10 December 2024
- **Soup Session by BART VAN DIJCK**
invited by research group Body and Material Reinvented / Art & Ecology
17 December 2024



Soup Session by Gina Poortman and Annelise Cerchedean; photo by Art & Research



Community Garden at the Academy; photo by Eline De Clercq

Community Garden

Research project by Eline De Clercq
At the Academy

In the historical garden of the Academy, students work together with researcher Eline De Clercq towards restoring ecology from a non-human-centred perspective.

'The Sympoiesis Garden' ('sympoiesis' means 'making together') functions as a non-formal learning environment about climate change, gender norms, decolonisation and intersectionalism. The community garden is an investigation into the creation of a garden as an artistic work field. Gardening is at the very essence of world-making where ideas and the real soil make sense together.

The garden group meets weekly. All students, staff, researchers and alumni are welcome to join this community.

PhD defence by Mirjam Van Tilburg

Studies in Art Teachers-Savants
20 February 2024,
at Buitenplaats Brienoord,
Rotterdam

The PhD research 'Studies in Art Teachers-Savants', conducted by Mirjam Van Tilburg between 2017 and 2023 at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp (AP Hogeschool) – within the Educational Master of Visual Arts – and the University of Antwerp (ARIA), was successfully defended on 20 February 2024.

Promotors: PASCAL GIELEN (UAntwerp) and INDRA WOLFAERT (Academy)

In her research, Mirjam Van Tilburg explored the possibilities for the life-long development of art teachers working with students aged 12 to 18. One significant aspect of this exploration was the 'Studio' experiment, conducted with ten arts teachers in 2020 and 2021, which examined the shifting dynamics of their profession during the lockdowns. She investigated questions such as: What makes art teaching an artistically connected practice? What was required for the life-long development of art teachers? What dominant images prevailed in this field? What alternative possibilities existed? And could life-long development be approached as a practice of commoning?

BALOJI in conversation with SANDRINE COLARD and BRANDON WEN

AUGURISM, Blurring the lines between reality and imagination

12 March 2024,
at MoMu

Expanding Academy, in collaboration with the MoMu – Fashion Museum Antwerp, was hosting a public talk on 12 March 2024 at MoMu. The programme was linked to the exhibition project 'Baloji Augurism', launched on 21 October 2023 at MoMu, and drew inspiration from Baloji's debut film 'Augure (Omen)'. The film was shot in both Lubumbashi and Kinshasa and was selected for the Cannes Film Festival in 2023, where it received the New Voice Award and nominated to represent Belgium at the Oscar 2024.

The conversation featured the transdisciplinary, all-embracing artist Baloji, along with Sandrine Colard, a writer, curator, and assistant professor of art history at Rutgers University, Newark, and Brandon Wen, artist, designer, and creative director of the Fashion Department at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp. They explored Baloji's expansive and captivating imaginary at the intersection of visual arts, music, poetry, cinematography, and fashion. Baloji's body of work, infused with surrealism and magical realism, has been deeply affected by this symbolic play on sorcery, serving as both a weighty burden and a catalyst for an imaginative and empirical approach.



Baloji in conversation with Sandrine Colard and Brandon Wen; photo by Anzai Zhang

BRANDON BALLENGÉE

Visiting researching artist

Lecture, studio visits and field trips
25-29 March 2024,
at the Academy

American eco-artist, biologist, and environmental activist Brandon Ballengée was invited to the Academy as visiting researching artist. His visit was initiated by the Art & Ecology research group, which wishes to encourage pioneering eco-art inside and outside the walls of the academy, as part of a pilot project on art and science.

Brandon Ballengée (Sandusky, Ohio, US, 1974) holds a Ph.D. in Transdisciplinary Art and Biology from Plymouth University (UK) in association with the Hochschule für Gestaltung Zürich (Switzerland). He creates transdisciplinary artworks inspired from his ecological field and laboratory research. Central in his artistic and scientific research is the global decline of animal populations, the extinction of species and how animals adapt and evolve in particular ecological systems in order to survive. A recent example is his study of the impact on fish species from the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

Ballengée is internationally acclaimed for his continuing research project Malamp (Malformed Amphibian Project): a scientific and artistic study of anatomical deformities in frogs and other amphibians.

Over the years, Ballengée has developed multiple, more collaborative and (inter) active ways to engage audiences and to create a more thorough commitment to ecological and environmental issues. His artistic practice also includes doing fieldwork and other forms of scientific research, involving children and community groups.

- **Public lecture**
25 March 2024
Brandon Ballengée shared his artistic practice in a public lecture.
- **Studio visits**
26 and 28 March 2024
Ballengée visited the studios of the Academy's master students.
- **Field trips**
27 and 29 March 2024
Ballengée took selected students on field trips, collaborating with prof. dr. Ronny Blust, Vice-rector Research and Full Professor at the Department of Biology at the University of Antwerp. They created an art-science-ecosystem monitoring programme where the students participated through the collection of flora samples. On Friday, Ballengée and Blust hosted different groups of bachelor students in the harbour and visited the reed banks near Stormkop.



Field trip with Brandon Ballengée: photo by Roel Arksteijn

METHOD/ART #6: Unpredictability

Research seminar initiated by ADILIA
ON-YING YIP, VIVI TOULOUMIDI and
UMUT ELDEM

25-26 March 2024,
at the Conservatoire &
the Academy

The sixth edition of METHOD/ART focused on unpredictability in artistic research methodology. It explored the pursuit of control over the research process and output at every level and stage of a project. This pursuit of control, along with the fear of obstacles, was tied to the recognition and success of the research, as well as the fulfillment of the requirements of existing academic rules and structures. The seminar also addressed how chaotic processes, obstacles, and dead ends could become integral to the methodology of artistic research. Within cultural and social structures, uncertainties and failures were considered for their potential to inform methodology, influence the gathering and treatment of data, and even generate unanticipated outcomes as research results. The ability to embrace unwanted uncertainty offered new perspectives on the artistic research process.

The seminar featured contributions from NADIA SELS, JESSE MAGEE, JOANNA AMBROZ, FRANCESCA AJOSSA, INGE HENNEMAN, YORGOS MARAZIOTIS, JOHAN DE WALSCHE, MARIA KONSCHAKE, JANNA BECK, WOUTER STEEL, ANNE LISE CERCHÉDEAN, PHILIP MEERSMAN, BOB SELDERSLAGHS, KURT BERTELS, EDITH CASSIERS, LUK VAES, EWELINA HAJDA, XIAOYUN CHEN, and CAESO.



Intervention by the Bachelor Class 'Art & Research' at the METHOD/ART #6 seminar; photo by Nigel Dubois

BIANCA BALDI 'The Parable of the Sunfish'

Performance Course Visiting Artist
Lecture #2

26 March 2024,
at the Academy

Inaugurated in 2022, the Performance Course is an elective course for the 3rd year bachelor students of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, tutored by the PhD researcher Yuki Okumura. Aiming at opening up one's working process to chance through instructed actions after conceptual art, it focuses on the artist's doing rather than showing, exploring performance as a way of self-reflection rather than that of self-expression.

In March 2024, Yuki Okumura invited Bianca Baldi as a visiting artist to enrich the course's ongoing exploration of performance. Baldi's work, which critically examines identity, Western European imperial history, and the symbolic and material roles of the skin and other entities within these contexts, aligned with the course's ethos of conceptual experimentation. Okumura's longstanding curiosity about Baldi's creative process and her unique approach to research and performance made her an ideal guest. Baldi responded to the invitation with an unexpected contribution: as part of her presentation she enacted a pilot version of the work she has been developing, which actually took the form of a lecture performance.

'Framed' at AfrikaBurn 2024

An Exploration of Experiential Creativity

29 April-5 May 2024,
at Tankwa Karoo, South-Africa

The project 'Framed' received an artistic grant from the AfrikaBurn organization to present the outcomes of the VLIR-SI project 'Drawing Resilient Futures' —ba collaboration between the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa, and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, Belgium. This presentation marked the culmination of two years of collaborative work, emphasizing in-situ and spontaneous partnerships. AfrikaBurn provided a dynamic and immersive setting for unveiling the project's results, fostering open dialogue, interaction, and creative exchange among participants and audiences.

Team 'Drawing Resilient futures': JANNA BECK, WOUTER STEEL, ANELISE CERCHEDEAN, GINA POORTMAN, TOM DIETVORST, BHAVNA PATHER, LELO BUTHLEZI, PHILIP MEERSMAN, ISIS ECKARDT, STEVEN STEEL AND TOBIAS DE KEYSER.

Preparation support from MICHELE STEWART and KRIS MEEUSEN.

ARIA Spring School

Enhancing and Sharing Artistic Research

24-25 April 2024,
at ARIA, UAntwerp

This spring school was exclusively for ARIA researchers in the arts, focusing on enhancing research skills, exchanging research findings with peers, and learning from colleagues' work. The programme of this first light edition introduced some key aspects in artistic research and included interactive training sessions on writing (as a method and for communicating process and results) and research ethics. PhD researchers in their second and last year had the opportunity to present their work and receive feedback.

Surrounding Jef Geys

4 conversations, an installation & an exhibition

26 April 2024,
at the Academy

Jef Geys (1934-2018) probably was one of the most radical artists of his generation. For sure he was one of the first to explore the relationships between art and life in depth, and to investigate transdisciplinary strategies to do so. Trained in advertising at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp in the 1950s, Geys successfully integrated communication and publication tools in his artistic practice. As a teacher, he considered avant-garde art a liberating and emancipating force.

At the occasion of the exhibition 'You don't see what you think you see' at WIELS, the Antwerp Academy and research group ArchiVolt paid tribute to Geys by reflecting on his practice and his legacy through four thematic conversations, an installation and an exhibition:

- **'Jef Geys, the Archive & the Legacy':**
Nico Dockx in conversation with Iris Paschalides & Frederik Swennen
- **'Jef Geys as Source & Inspiration':**
Johan Pas in conversation with Guillaume Bijl, Renée Somers & Liselore Vandeput
- **'Jef Geys, the Collaborator and the Teacher':**
Sofie Dederen in conversation with Piet Coessens & Nicholas Tammens

- **'Jef Geys, the Publisher and the Communicator':**
Andrea di Serego Alighieri in conversation with Gloria Hasnay & Moritz Nebenführ
- **During the whole day:**
'To Marie / Aan Marie': an installation by Liselore Vandeput
- **'85 x Jef Geys':**
an exhibition by Collection for Research on Artists' Publications.



'Surrounding Jef Geys': photo by Art & Research



Still from 'Partisans of the Real' by Els Dietvorst (2024), screened at her PhD defence at the Academy

PhD defence by ELS DIETVORST

Partisans of the Real. How art can strengthen the individual and play a role in the transition to a socially just, sustainable society

2 May 2024,
at the Academy

The PhD research 'Partisans of the Real', conducted by Els Dietvorst between 2019 and 2023 at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp (AP Hogeschool) – within the research group ArchiVolt – and the University of Antwerp (ARIA), was successfully defended on 2 May 2024.

Promotors: PASCAL GIELEN (UAntwerp) and JOHAN PAS (Academy)

“My work is driven by an ongoing exploration—a quest for beauty, a connection to the collective subconscious, and what I see as the ‘missing link’ between art and society. I truly believe in the link between art and society. This goes beyond the narrow institutional focus on issues like poverty, exclusion, and marginality, encompassing broader social and human concerns. These include life stories, interpersonal dialogues, migration, cultural diversity, human aspirations, and the broader spectrum of the human condition in the society of today. (...)

Experiment and serendipity, primal intuition and dialogue are the foundations of my work. I firmly believe in the role of art as a catalyst serving to bridge social divides and enhance social cohesion. My work has the power to work across diverse communities, artists and non-artists transcending boundaries and barriers. In this sense I perceive art as a collaborative effort—an amalgamation of

shared experiences, warmth, and vitality arising from people coming together. It is within this collective engagement that art takes form, evolves, and becomes a dynamic force.

My approach to creation is holistic and inclusive, permeating the world, embracing both the living and the deceased, as well as overlooked objects and people. Working collaboratively allows me to connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds, bridging boundaries of culture and societal norms. All these experiences contribute to my growth as both a human and an artist. (...)

—Els Dietvorst, April 2024

MARIANNE VIERØ 'Flesh, Or The Colour Of Any Other Object'

Solo exhibition

10 May–7 June 2024,
at MORPHO

Marianne Vierø presented a solo exhibition composed of three groups of works, each exploring sculpture in relation to temporality. Using wax, aluminium and photograms, the works considered the transformative potential of materials and methods against a backdrop of subjective gestures and stylized forms. Here, repetitions of visual markers create an underlying rhythm – a kind of riff, while the interconnections between the works brought into play a negotiation between continuity and changeability.

Marianne Vierø was a research resident at MORPHO from February to April 2024. Her residency was initiated and supported by the Thinking Tools research group at the Academy.

SINE VAN MENXEL 'A table under a tree'

Exhibition and book launch

17–19 May 2024,
at C A S S T L

In the artists' publication 'A table under a tree' by Sine van Menxel, an imaginary table moment is photographically captured using photograms. Glass plates in the shape of spoons and plates were placed blindly on the photo paper in the dark room and then exposed. These images were taken without the use of a camera, and yet they exhibit photographic characteristics such as depth, movement, foreground and background, zooming in and out. In this work, analog photography shows itself as an anachronistic medium that is extremely suitable for the search for alternative possibilities to depict life.

This Track Report publication is the result of Sine Van Menxel's research project 'Dancing in the Dark', conducted at the Academy.



MARK RIETVELD

'A long loving look'

Book launch and exhibition
17-19 May 2024,
at the Academy

Stadscowboy vzw and HOPPER&FUCHS launched a book of photographs from the archive of Mark Rietveld (1969-2022), a renowned Antwerp photographer known for his portrayal of the underground music and art scenes.

Rietveld captured more than just concert stages; he focused on the periphery, including the audience, artists, and staff, expressing his deep connection to the fringes of these worlds. He was often found at venues like Onder Stroom, Scheld'apen, Stadslimiet, Factor 44, the Tenace Boot, De Nor, AudioPlant, Minigolf Beatrijs, Forbidden City, Bar Paniek or Het Bos, blending into the environment he loved to photograph. His work also explored a broader range, including serene landscapes, still lifes, and domestic scenes.

Nico Dockx, artist and researcher attached to research group ArchiVolt at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, curated the book, selecting images from Rietveld's extensive archive.

The book was presented at De Tempel of the Academy during the Antwerp Art Weekend, alongside an exhibition of selected works.

Paper bag

Exhibition by 3BA students Academy
16-19 May,
at the Academy's garden

Since 2022, Eline De Clercq has led a participatory garden initiative at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp as part of her research. The project engages students from various art disciplines in ecological restoration while fostering discussions on the climate crisis and resilience in the visual arts.

For this exhibition, De Clercq collaborated with a select group of her In Situ department students to create works inspired by and intended for the multispecies gardeners of the Academy Garden. The exhibition took place in the Academy's old garden, accessible via the Mutsaardstraat entrance.

Visitors of the Antwerp Art Weekend were invited to stroll through the ecological garden, designed in the style of an English Landscape. Acknowledging the garden as the home of others, the intention was to create the exhibition in symbiosis with the garden.

With contributions by ANDREA HERNANDEZ, ENYA DUCHATEAU, EMILIA SCHUPP, JONNA WITTE, KASPARAS BRAZOVSKIS, NELLY LIGHT, PAMELA GARCIA VALERO, SOPHIA KURI



Work by Emilia Schupp in the exhibition 'Paper bag' at the Community Garden of the Academy; photo by Eline De Clercq

VEDRAN KOPLJAR 'MEAN'

Solo exhibition

17 May–8 September 2024,
at M HKA Antwerp

This solo exhibition by Vedran Kopljar at M HKA was part of his PhD research 'Practice: A Metaphor – Metaphorizing practices and practicing metaphors', which he is conducting at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp.

Creating and cultivating meaning stand at the heart of Vedran Kopljar's work. In his practice, he continuously searches for and experiments with different systems used to create meaning.

For this exhibition, Vedran Kopljar apprehended the space as a closed circuit. A constellation of painted works played with the idea of forming a cohesive system. The works on display included didactic paintings boldly enunciating words and designs, poems as paintings, painted game scores, and psychedelic paintings resembling mental images outside any classification. Educational language and ideological terms were intersected with laid-back expressions and uncontrolled phrasings, all of which contributed to his experiment with the mechanisms of learning and unlearning, identification and standardization, consciousness and abstraction.

LAURENCE PETRONE '4D'

Solo exhibition

15 June–6 July 2024,
at Fred & Ferry Antwerp

This solo exhibition by Laurence Petrone at Fred & Ferry was part of her PhD research 'On the Perpetual Becoming of Sculpture and History and Their Moments of Convergence', which she is conducting at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp.

"Often, I find myself re-reading a 1997 interview with the late Belgian artist Jan Vercruyse who opposes compelling tendencies regarding communication and sensation. Without sharing his temperament (in this interview I notice a certain degree of anger) I do share his awareness of what art can be. The sculpture studio was for me a new beginning. Until relatively late in life I did not know that there was such a thing as what I recognise now to be 'embodied thinking'. A thinking from form. A thinking beyond or in addition to a verbal, cerebral thinking. One that brings me nearer to everything that is, and lets me cherish every aspect, literally. Every object, every material is to be cherished. Somewhat tongue-in-cheek, I have named this exhibition 4D. I do not bring a sensational fourth dimension through movement or special effects. For me it is an internalized dimension evoked from what is always given: our capacity to feel, to sense rhythm, to observe, to breathe."
—Laurence Petrone in 'The starting point was to make tangible a falling drop of water'

Playing in VR

International conference and workshops

May 2024,
at the City Campus,
University of Antwerp

A collaboration between the Centre for Philosophical Psychology (University of Antwerp) and research group Maxlab. Sponsored by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) and grant to support young researchers ('subsidie Omkadering Jonge Onderzoekers' – OJO)

- **Conference: Playing in VR – Imagination, Affordances, and Aesthetic Experience**

21-22 May 2024

The main objective of the conference was the critical assessment of the concept of play in VR contexts. The conference aimed to extend the scope of philosophical interest in virtual reality, from questions about metaphysics, to the domain of aesthetics and ludic experiences.

With contributions by AMY KIND, SHAUN GALLAGHER, NELE VAN DE MOSSELAER, PAWEŁ GRABARCZYK, TOM MCCLELLAND, KRISTOF TIMMERMAN, among others.

- **Workshops: Playing in VR – Digital Art Practices and Theoretical Assessment**

23-24 May 2024

The workshops offered a mixture of theoretical, empirical and practical insights in how to use virtual reality in digital artistic

practices and in creation of play spaces, provided by philosophers and artists from an interdisciplinary perspective.

In his workshop 'Portals between the real and the virtual', PhD researcher and VR artist Kristof Timmerman endeavoured to unravel the intricacies and vast potential of live performances within virtual environments.



ODE DE KORT '()'

Site-specific installation

22 June–29 September 2024,
at Una Boccata d'Arte,
Otricoli, Italy

This installation was part of the research project 'Exe-xe-xercising feedback loops' Ode de Kort was conducting at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp.

Ode de Kort was invited by Fondazione Elpis to create a site-specific project in the village of Otricoli in Umbria, in the context of the 5th edition of Una Boccata d'Arte. The project was curated by Giovanni Rendina.

De Kort realized the kinetic sculpture titled '()', mainly composed of two metal brackets that, moved by the wind, frame the surrounding landscape and sky in a circular motion. The sculpture invited to reflect on the meaning of alphabetical signs and how it can vary among an infinite number of possible interpretations. De Kort showed us how these grammatical objects can come to life and escape from pre-established meanings, proliferating elsewhere, always the same, but potentially always different. The viewer was the one who could ultimately decide whether to play with their meaning or not. In this escape of signs – brackets and commas, precisely because of their suspensive character, seemed to be the most predisposed to evade the grammatical regime that restrains them, showing their alphabet companions that they too can rebel against their semiotic chains.

DENYS SHANTAR 'God save the Queers'

Solo exhibition

12–22 September 2024,
at Cas-co Leuven

This exhibition was the culmination of Denys Shantar's one-year research project 'God Save The Queers – The (not so) secret life of Saints' at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp. The presentation took its final shape during his residency at Off the Grid Leuven.

Shantar's practice often uses his memories and family history, deploying different materials and techniques to create narratives laying between reality and fiction. In his research about childhood, religion, migration, and queerness, he links the personal to current global but also historical events, weaving in symbols from mythology, art history, folklore and Christianity. He uses predominantly recycled, gifted, or found fabric and materials, often including religious iconography.



Research Class 'See What I Mean', by Phil Baber; photo by Wannee Ore

Welcome days new researchers

Tour, lunch and pitch

19–20 September 2024,
at the Academy

In September, the research department of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp hosted its annual Welcome Days to mark the start of the new Art & Research year.

The programme began on 19 September with an introduction session and campus tour for new researchers starting their projects in September 2024, followed by a shared picnic lunch for all researchers, including those concluding their projects.

On 20 September, new and current researchers presented their projects in short pitches to master’s students and teachers. This session served as an opportunity to introduce the research projects to students, fostering connections and collaboration within the Academy’s research and educational community.

ANNA GODZINA ‘Earthscapes’

Solo exhibition

29 September–1 December 2024,
at Z33 Hasselt

The works in this exhibition were part of the ongoing ‘Sonifying Landscapes’ research project, which Anna Godzina is conducting at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp.

Godzina’s method of research is one of the wanderer. Whilst hiking, she locates her materials and inspiration for her sculptures. Certain qualities of these found objects are activated or “charged” through simple devices such as motors or magnets. For this solo exhibition, she is developing a new body of work that attempts to create a unique representation of landscape through visual and sonic means.

ELINE DE CLERCQ and YUKI OKUMURA ‘Postcards from Japan’

Conversation

2 October 2024,
at the Academy

During the summer holidays, researcher Eline De Clercq stayed at ARCUS Project in Ibaraki, Japan. The artist residency’s studio is located in an old school building, with a table covered with flyers, postcards, residency open calls, and many more papers. They are written in Japanese, and the venues are a mystery.

Moderated by researcher Yuki Okumura, De Clercq shared her stories about Japan, the arts, nature, traveling, etc. A selection of these and other flyers were presented at the Academy.

With ‘Postcards from Japan’, Eline De Clercq and Yuki Okumura invited students to join an open conversation. They set up a table in the Winter Garden not only with papers from Japan but also with a light twig tea and a photo presentation of De Clercq’s visit to Japan.

Visible: Art As Policies for Care. Socially Engaged Art (2010-ongoing)

Book launch and talk by MARTINA ANGELOTTI, MATTEO LUCCHETTI, and JUDITH WIELANDER

9 October 2024,
at the Academy

This new publication explores the transformative potential of socially engaged art practices. It is the culmination of over a decade of curatorial research by Martina Angelotti, Matteo Lucchetti, and Judith Wielander, focusing on the relationship between art and the public sphere. It presents a new scene of artistic practices that interpret the dematerialization of art into transformative cultural and care policies, addressing the climatic, social, and political urgencies of our times.

Several of the projects included in the book were guests at the Academy during the past years in the frame of the ARTICULATE research festival and the Expanding Academy project.

Reading Group Art & Ecology

Reading and discussing together relevant articles on Art & Ecology

Monthly gatherings, at the Academy

Each meeting, the group reads and discusses relevant and urgent selected articles within the field of enquiry of the Art & Ecology research group.

The group welcomes everyone – researchers, staff, students, alumni or otherwise – who wishes to participate.

- **‘Symbiotic Planet: a New View of Evolution’ by LYNN MARGULIS**

23 October 2024

During the first meeting, the reading group discussed the first (‘Symbiosis Everywhere’) and third chapter (‘Individuality by Incorporation’) of Lynn Margulis’s groundbreaking publication ‘Symbiotic Planet: a New View of Evolution’, which was first published by Basic Books in 1998.

- **‘Feminism & Ecology’ by MARY MELLOR**

4 December 2024

During the second meeting, the research group discussed the third chapter (‘Ecofeminist Thought’) of Mary Mellor’s publication ‘Feminism & Ecology’, which was first published by Polity Press in Cambridge in 1997.

ARTICULATE 2024 | ANONYMOUS CREATIVITY – ART WITHOUT ARTISTS

Research festival

17-27 October 2024, at the Academy

Alongside a rich programme of exhibitions, research classes and public lectures and discussions, a publication was realised.

ARTICULATE 2024 was the 9th edition of the annual research festival of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp. It presented a diverse programme of performances, exhibitions, research classes, lectures, and workshops, a series of fragile and wonderful encounters with the ability of artists to repeatedly rethink their own practice and its position in the world.

At the Academy, the festival looked back on 100 years of Surrealism and forward to a future shaped by artificial intelligence, exploring the fascinating possibilities of anonymous creativity and the concept of art without artists.

In the First Surrealist Manifesto, André Breton declared: “We are modest recording instruments (...). We do not have any talent.” This proposition is echoed in contemporary generative technologies such as GPT. The question lingers: who is the invisible creator of these creations? The answer is as simple as it is complex: no one.

The new generative tools are undeniably creative, or at least productive, but at the same time, there is no one behind them. This poses a challenging dilemma for aesthetics. Just like in Surrealism, we find ourselves faced with a hypothetical ‘collective unconscious’, inviting us to reconsider the traditional role of the artist.



Work by Elisa Giardina Papa in the exhibition 'Reproducibility'; photo by Wannes Oré

Techno/seen: on the technological apparatus and its images

Symposium by research group

Thinking Tools

17 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

With talks by FRANZISKA KUNZE,
MICHAEL REISCH, SPIROS
HADJIDJANOS, EMMANUEL VAN DER
AUWERA, SUSAN MORRIS, JEFF WEBER,
MONA HEDAYATI

Organised by STEVEN HUMBLET

Ever since the invention of photography, technologically produced images have dazzled us. Often, it has fallen to visual artists to critically assess the social and cultural impact of these images. One of the main issues that piqued their interest was the way this constant stream of ever new technologies redefined the relationship between the apparatus and its human operator. What does it mean to be relegated to the somewhat passive position of someone merely activating a process that for the most part runs its own course? Their attempts to explore the programmatic nature of these apparatuses has become even more necessary today as we are being confronted with powerful systems that seemingly conjure up images out of thin air.

Considering that these apparatuses are supposed to function as technological enhancements (or should we say: replacements?) of our human faculties of thinking and imagining, we're left with the urgent question how to deal with this alien intelligence. Are we supposed to

play with or against these apparatuses? What remains of the human experience in the datasets they produce and what is left out? Is it possible to equate the flexibility of AI models that dynamically adjust their internal rules based on input data to our own human capacity of invention? Are they really able to free us from our all-too-human expectations and, in doing so, open up new avenues for our imagination? If so, what would be required to unleash their potential to surprise us? Does it emerge in the glitches that appear when they are pushed beyond their limits? Or does it only appear when their virtual data are translated in a material form and run up against the friction of the material world? These are only some of the questions that the invited speakers were addressing in their talks during the conference.

AI Musicking

Performance by Umut Eldem, Chiara Percivati and Adilia Yip

17 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

Is musical AI a tool, a performer or a mirror? The widespread use of AI is changing our relationship with how we interact with technology in artistic expression. Most popular generative AI tools are based on models trained with an enormous amount of data, reflecting large-scale biases and tendencies. Smaller AI models trained with a specific source of data, however, can generate specialised outputs, minimising the impact of irrelevant biases and better aligning with niche requirements or specific tasks.

Over the last year, researchers from the research group CREATIE of the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp have been training generative AI models based on their musical practices. The resulting algorithms generate sounds and musical phrases in real time that shadow the sound world of the research group.

In this performance at the opening of ARTICULATE 2024 at the Academy, musicians from the research group CREATIE explored the implications of placing musical AI on the stage by co-creating with AI as a creative agent.

Reproducibility

Exhibition

18–27 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

With work by MINNE ATAIRU, EMMANUEL VAN DER AUWERA, ALICE CHANNER, ELISA GIARDINA PAPA, WADE GUYTON, SPIROS HADJIDJANOS, MASHINKA FIRUNTS HAKOPIAN, HOLLY HERNDON & MAT DRYHURST, BENJAMIN LALLIER, SARAH MEYOHAS, MIMI ÖNÜÖHA, SETH PRICE, MICHAEL REISCH, THOMAS RUFF, PHILIPPE STARCK, JENNA SUTELA, KELLEY WALKER, NUSHIN YAZDANI

Curated by SPIROS HADJIDJANOS

‘We are in this AI moment.’ ‘Reproducibility’ explored the transition from digital tools to artificial intelligence (AI) models in technologically mediated artistic production.

Emphasising the shift from deterministic input-output digital-material workflows to dynamic, AI-driven processes, the exhibition critically examined the role of technology in contemporary art. Unlike traditional algorithms that follow fixed rules, AI systems continuously adapt to the data they are fed. This evolution raises important questions: Can AI truly foster creative breakthroughs? And how might this technology shape the future of artistic production?

The works in the exhibition revealed how artists use AI models to generate unpredictable and unique results, often rooted in chance and archival material. Grouped with works from the past two decades, they highlighted the vast

creative possibilities this technology offers for experimentation and innovation.



Exhibition 'Reproducibility'; work in the back by Holly Herndon & Mat Dryhurst, front by Spiros Hadjidjanos; photo by Mannes Cré



Exhibition 'Reproducibility'; works by (from left to right) Spiros Hacııđıjanos, Thomas Ruff, Alice Channer, Holly Herndon & Mat Dryhurst, and Jenna Sutela; photo by Wannes Cré



Exhibition 'Moving the Photogram'; work in the back by Sophie Thun, front by Marta Djourina; photo by Mannes Cré



Moving the Photogram

Exhibition

18–27 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

With works by FRANCESCO DEL CONTE, MARTA DJOURINA, SASCHA HERRMANN, BERIT SCHNEIDERREIT, DRIES SEGERS, SOPHIE THUN, SINE VAN MENXEL, MARIANNE VIERØ and JEFF WEBER

Curated by STEVEN HUMBLET

Whenever photography is forced to reinvent itself, it often harks back to the photogram. This happened in the twenties of the previous century when photography became a true mass-medium and it is happening again right now when the digital revolution is radically reshaping the production, dissemination and reception of photographic images. So, where does this allure of the photogram come from? One simple answer would be to point out that the photogram is the closest we could get to the core of the photographic system. In the photogram light is simultaneously theme and medium, form and content: it is photography reduced to its bare essence as ‘writing (playfully) with light’.

However, this ‘retour aux sources’ should by no means be understood as a reactionary or nostalgic throwback. As it did in the past, the current photogram functions as a playground to critically engage with (or against) the transformations that define our current cultural and visual environment. Defined by the ever-increasing ease and autonomy by which self-sufficient

operating systems create images, the nine artists presented in this exhibition were eagerly looking for some kind of (material) resistance, a way of being challenged by a hands-on procedure that leaves room for the disruptive intervention of forces outside of their control. In each instance, a kind of movement was involved in the creation of their works. It could be caused by placing an unstable object on the light sensitive paper, or by either blindly or very deliberately shuffling objects around, it could involve initiating a chemical reaction between the chemical layer and liquids or contaminated soil, etc. In all these experiments, the artists triggered the unruly automatism of the analog photogram to create an unstable environment where anything and everything can happen.

Subversive Pages: 100 Surrealist Publications

Exhibition

18–27 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

Curated by JOHAN PAS

With a selection of one hundred Surrealist documents from the Collection for Research on Artists’ Publications, ‘Subversive Pages’ commemorated a centenary of Surrealism. Since October 1924, when André Breton fired his first Manifesto of Surrealism, Surrealist ideas were launched through books, pamphlets, and magazines.

Surrealism was conceived as ‘a revolution of the mind,’ aiming at overthrowing Western rationalism and liberating mankind. The movement not only tapped into dreams but also produced poetic and polemical discourse, resulting in printed documentation. Breton and his fellow poets considered straightforward publications most adequate to disseminate disturbing content. As a result, the publication strategies of the Surrealists reveal a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

Focusing on the first three decades and on the hotspots France, Belgium, and England, ‘Subversive Pages’ unravelled the expanding international network of Surrealist poets, painters, and publishers. The exhibition aimed at representativity, showing a wide variety of printed output. These subversive pages, usually slumbering in the silent

shadows of archives, occasionally pop up to inform, inspire, and– why not – irritate us.



Exhibition 'Subversive Pages: 100 Surrealist Publications'; photo by Mames Cré

The Grid

Interactive collective installation
18–27 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

A collaboration between JANNA BECK, KRIS MEEUSEN, KRISTÍ FEKETE, ANH LE PHUONG, SHAYLI HARRISON, PETER LEMMENS, KAREL TUYTSCHAEVER, BORIS VAN DEN EYNDEN, ANNE LISE CERCHEDEAN, GINA POORTMAN, BAS ROGIERS, PHILIP MEERSMAN, TOM DIETVORST, and MATHIAS MU, among others

Curated by JANNA BECK

'The Grid' was an interactive installation that utilised a projection mapping on the ceiling of the Venushal, transforming its grid pattern into a dynamic canvas for collective expression. This installation engaged participants in real time, exploring the evolving role of the creator in the post-digital era.

Inspired by James Turrell's Skyspace installations and Rafaël Rozendaal's 'Bring Your Own Beamer' concept, which advocates for inclusive, collaborative art, 'The Grid' consisted of 63 interlocking squares, each nested within the next, creating a mesmerising effect that evolves as participants engage with it. This structure created a visually engaging and evolving environment as audiences interact with the installation.

'The Grid' was part of the celebration of Maxlab's tenth anniversary. Established in 2015 as a research group within the Academy, Maxlab has grown into one of four prominent research groups at the school. To commemorate this

milestone, 'The Grid' was featured during ARTICULATE 2024, inviting all artists and researchers who have contributed to Maxlab's evolution to participate in this collective installation.



Installation 'The Grid'; photo by Wannes Cré



'Yes Second Chance'

Exhibition

18-27 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

WITH WORK BY MARÍA ALBORÉS
LOJO, MARIANNE BIERBOOMS, YUKI
OKUMURA, VANESSA STEFANETTI,
ELISA VERKOELEN, MIA WANG, KEIGO
WEZEL, JONNA WITTE, HELENA ZARYS,
HOYT ZHANG

Curated by YUKI OKUMURA

Inaugurated in 2022, the Performance Course is an elective course for the third-year bachelor students of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, tutored by artist and PhD researcher Yuki Okumura. Aiming at opening up one's working process to chance through instructed actions, after conceptual art, it focuses on the artist's doing rather than showing, exploring performance as a means of self-reflection rather than self-expression.

The Performance Course presented the exhibition 'Yes Second Chance' in the context of ARTICULATE 2024. Various outcomes of chance-oriented actions, conceived and performed by last year's course participants, along with related documents, were displayed in the built-in vitrine and other areas of the entrance hall.

Reading Table 'Art without Artists – Anonymous Creativity'

18-27 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

The Academy's Library showcased a Reading Table featuring a selection of inspiring, thought-provoking books on this year's theme of anonymous creativity, curated by our researchers.



Research Class 'Cooking' by Charlotte Koopman during ARTICULATE 2024; photo by Wannes Cré



Research Class 'The Rainbow and the Photogram', by Francesco del Conte, photo by Marnes Oré

Research Week

21-25 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

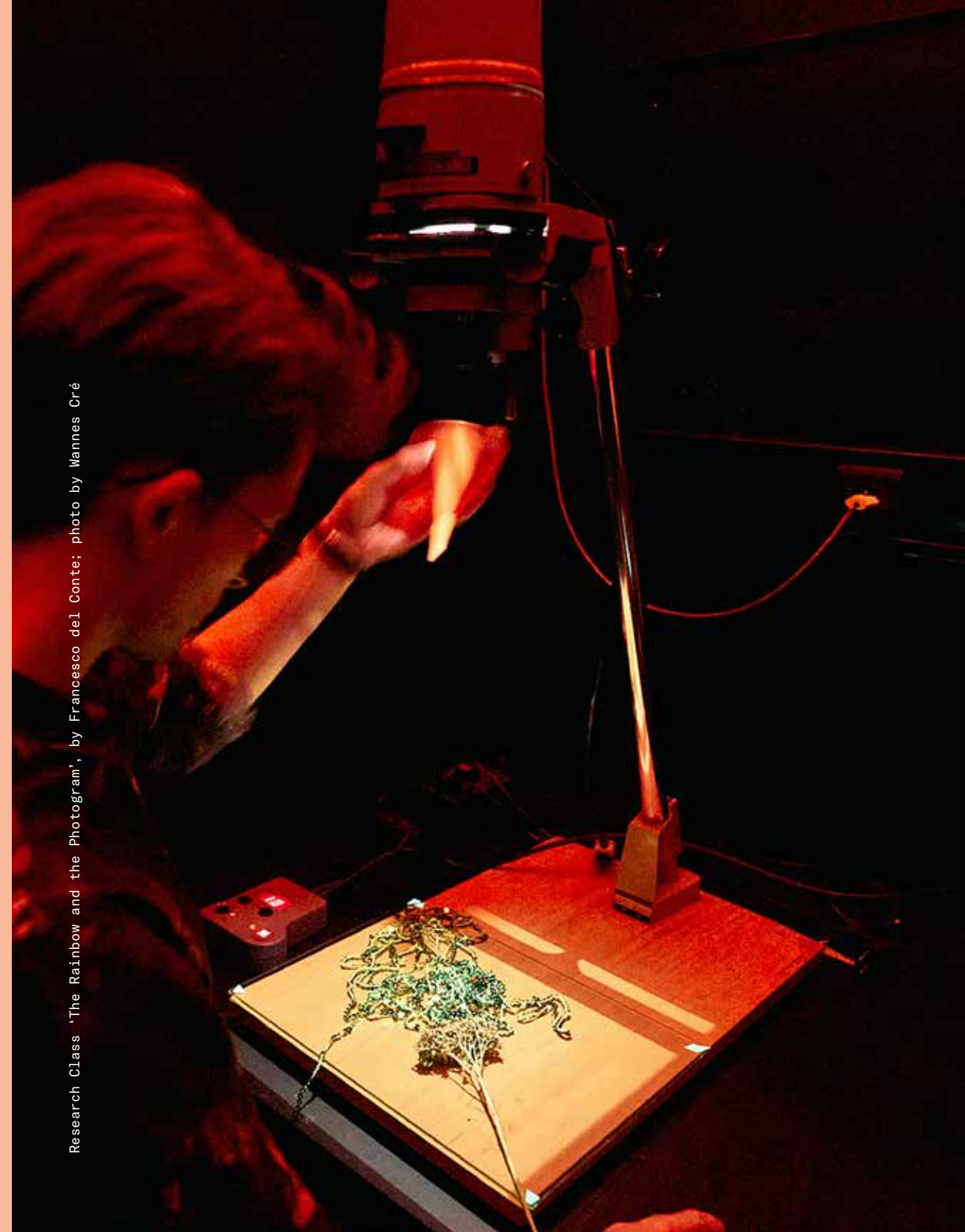
The five-day experimental, in-depth, and interdisciplinary research classes for master students of the Academy were this year led by artist-researchers Mirja Bush, Kristí Fekete, Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky, Spiros Hadjidjanos, Francesco Del Conte, Ilaria Lupo, Charlotte Koopman and Phil Baber.

- **Research Class 'The Rainbow and the Photogram', by FRANCESCO DEL CONTE**

This research class unfolded the creative possibilities of an analog world on the edge of disappearing. After a dive into the fascinating field of color theory, the participants explored the realm of colors within the photographic medium through a series of darkroom experiments. They discovered the photogram and its chromatic potential, and exposed B/W films to the colors of a rainbow. What's the creative potential of chemical photography today? And what's the hidden impact technology has on reality representation?

- **Research Class 'Cooking', by CHARLOTTE KOOPMAN**

The vantage point of the research was the kitchen. There was no time for rehearsal, the participants were winging it. "Winging it" should not be mistaken for a lack of effort. It is, ideally, a state of mind in which one is fully present and engaged, with a sense of respect for the natural rhythms and flow of life. Instead of aiming at control, the situation was handled with intuition and improvisation, with a foundation of previous practise and experience.



Research Class 'The Rainbow and the Photogram', by Francesco del Conte; photo by Wannes Cré

- **Research Class 'Just Another Monument', by ILARIA LUPO**

This research class was a workshop on Expanded Public Space Practices. It aimed to reflect on the identity/ies of the monument and on the range of social and political implications it gets to embody over time in its own context. The students elaborated proposals on possible projects - realistic, fictional or even absurd ones - addressing existing, hidden, dissolved, accidental or future monuments. They were encouraged to explore multiple interpretations and perspectives - even diverging ones - which cohabit the collective perceptions of a monument.

- **Research Class 'Mind Mapping', by SPIROS HADJIDJANOS**

The synergy of research and imaginative capabilities forms a very powerful tool for any artist. Students were encouraged to merge their imagination with mind-mapping techniques in order to enhance their problem-solving capabilities. They used mind mapping in creative, unconventional and irrational ways. Through visual language, students strived to discover and establish connections between seemingly unrelated research domains, fostering a deeper, interdisciplinary understanding that will drive their work to an enriched and previously unanticipated territory.

- **Research Class 'Photosynthetic Cookbook', by EVA-FIORE KOVACOVSKY**

What can we learn from photosynthesis? How can we make photosynthesis tangible and learn how it tastes? How is sugar/ energy being passed on within the ecosystem? This research class involved exploring the tastes of various plants and understanding the interconnectedness of organisms. It followed the indigenous principle of the "honorable harvest". Students looked at the impact of human activities, like burning fossilized plants, on the planet's ecosystem. The central theme was entanglement and fusion, emphasizing collaboration and interaction.

- **Research Class 'Exquisite corpses in digital landscapes', by KRISTÍ FEKETE**

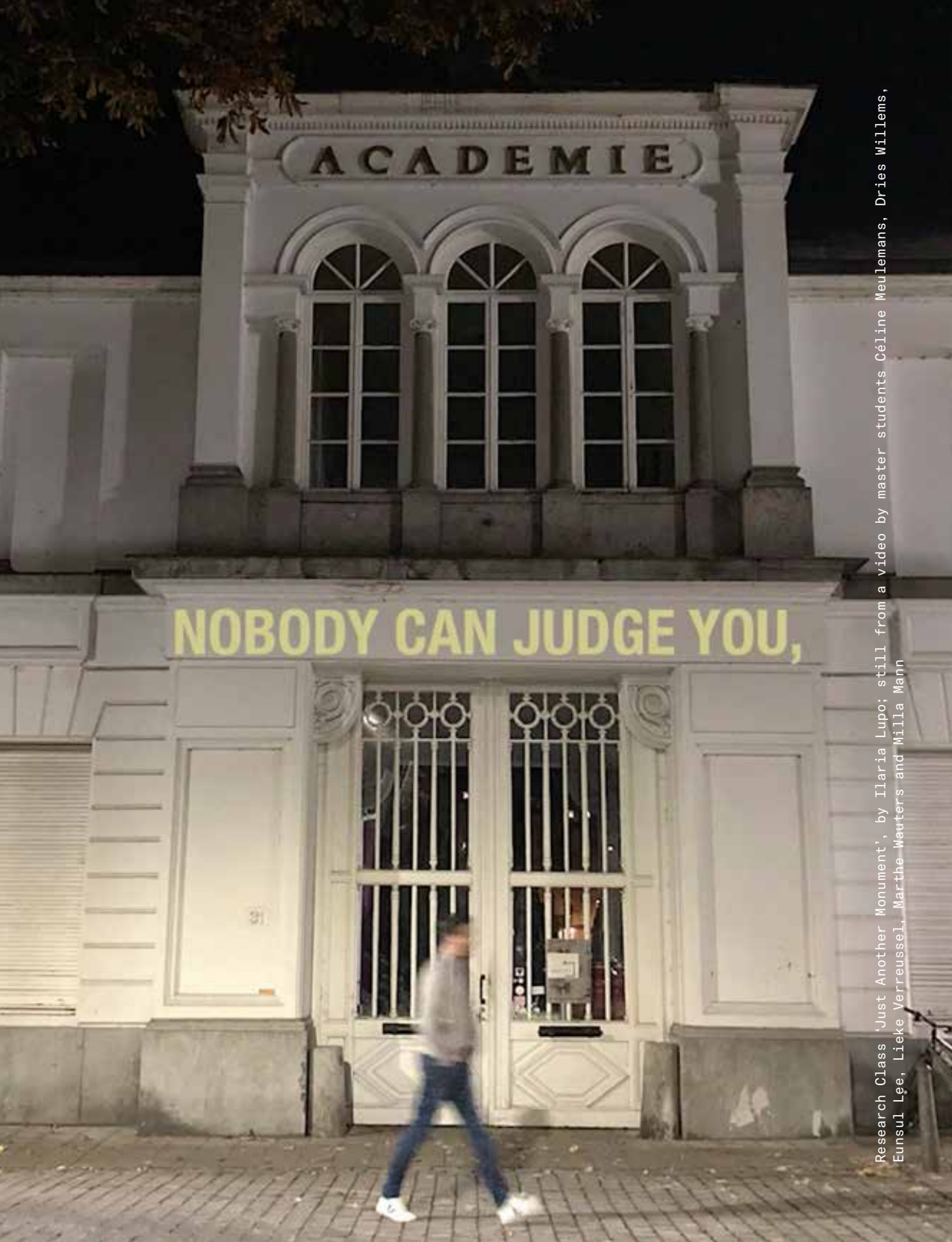
This research class animated an exquisite corpse (a game during which a collection of words or images is collectively assembled) with digital technologies. Instead of a sheet of paper, participants used the ceiling of the Venushal, with its grid as the paper folds. Each 'fold' was worked on by the group in turns. This collective process was systematically documented, creating a moving image. The focus was on experimenting collectively. The practical approach was accompanied by a critical, theoretical framework.



Research Class 'Mind Mapping', by Spiros Hadjidjanos; photo by Wannes Gré



Research Class 'Puddle Forensics' by Mirja Busch; photo by Mannes Cré



Research Class 'Just Another Monument', by Ilaria Lupo; still from a video by master students Céline Meulemans, Dries Willems, Eunsul Lee, Lieke Verreussel, Marthe Wauters and Milla Mann

- **Research Class 'See What I Mean', by PHIL BABER**

Students did a series of individual and collective writing exercises and experimented with the (typo) graphic presentation of their texts. They also read, looked at, and discussed writing by experimental poets of the last fifty years and the printed ephemera of countercultural publishers. To what extent are social and economic relations legible in the material and visual forms of poems? How has the (often collective) labour of editing, typesetting, and printing served—overtly or tacitly—to build solidarity within radical poetic and political movements?

- **Research Class 'Puddle Forensics', by MIRJA BUSH**

This research class explored contaminated puddles as nature-culture assemblages, speculating on how they might offer new perspectives on the world and the planetary crisis. Framed as a speculative forensic investigation, students from the Academy conducted research in the field, in dialog with scientists from the UAntwerp. Using artistic strategies, they engaged with scientific traces of contamination and explored the site-specific entanglements of different actors, paying attention to the clues and mysteries they might leave behind.



Research Class 'See What I Mean', by Phil Baber; photo by Wannes Cré



'Tablecloth' at the research festival ARTICULATE 2024; photo by Mannes Cré

'Tablecloth'

collective reflection on art education
21-25 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

By students and researchers of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp and PXL-MAD School of Arts Hasselt

The tablecloth on the tables in the entrance hall during ARTICULATE, was conceived as a canvas. It was made by master students from PXL-MAD School of Arts Hasselt and adorned with embroidered statements, reflecting on the role of art schools today. It was later on passed onto the master students of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp as part of the research festival.

Over the course of five lunch breaks where food and conversations were shared, the tablecloth served as a prompt for discussions and reflections. Visitors, students and researchers were invited to contribute their thoughts by writing them directly onto the tablecloth.

In November 2024, the tablecloth travelled to the ELIA Biennial 2024 in Milan, where it once again acted as a catalyst for meaningful exchanges. At this conference on art education, the research teams from both the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp and PXL-MAD School of Arts Hasselt joined forces to host a workshop. Participants cooked together and, both literally and figuratively, embroidered on the thoughts already shared.

DRIES SEGERS 'An exploration of generative photographic strategies'

Artist talk

22 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

In this lecture, researcher Dries Segers focussed on the generative possibilities of image-making as part of his research project 'Ask your hands to know the things they hold'. Central in this lecture was the activation and use of natural and earthly matters, self-developed technologies, the position of individual authorship, key historical figures, and Segers' personal research.

'Ask your hands to know the things they hold' dives into the challenges of ecological thinking while being engaged in artistic production. How can you co-create with non-human actors and share (or even give away) authorship?

Segers shared a curated selection of contemporary and historical artworks that were generated through earthly co-existence. He focussed on his self-made photographic technique, the 'Mudgram', and other work that was part of the exhibition 'Moving the Photogram' in the Lange Zaal.

+ Guided tour by curator Steven Humblet at the exhibition 'Moving the Photogram'

Ask your hands to know the things they hold



Artist talk 'An exploration of generative photographic strategies' by Dries Segers; photo by Wannes Cré

ARTICULATE 2024 Anonymous Creativity - Art without Artists

27-31.10.2024

In his first Manifesto of Surrealism (1924), André Breton declared: 'We are modest recording instruments (L). We do not have any talent.' This proposition is echoed in contemporary generative technologies such as GPT. The question lingers: who is the invisible creator of these creations? The answer is as simple as it is complex: no one.

The new generative tools are undeniably creative, or at least productive, but at the same time, there is no one behind them. This poses a challenging dilemma for aesthetics. Just like in Surrealism, we find ourselves faced with a hypothetical 'collective unconscious', inviting us to reconsider the traditional role of the artist.

In this 9th edition of the annual research festival, ARTICULATE, at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, we look back on 100 years of Surrealism and forward to a future shaped by artificial intelligence. We explore the fascinating possibilities of anonymous creativity through various exhibitions and a public programme.

Programme on royalacademyantwerp.be
and [IG @research_royalacademyantwerp](https://www.instagram.com/research_royalacademyantwerp)

JOHN C. WELCHMAN

‘Object, Dream, Thought: Marcel Broodthaers, Pense-Bête and Surrealism’

Lecture

23 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

This lecture by John C. Welchman, Distinguished Professor of Art History at the University of California, San Diego, examined the connection between Marcel Broodthaers’ early work, ‘Pense-Bête’, and the Surrealist genre of Poem-Objects.

Welchman delved into Broodthaers’ broader relationship with Surrealism by referencing Raoul Vaneigem’s critical reassessment of the movement in his book ‘Histoire désinvolte du surréalisme’ (1977), published under the pseudonym Jules-François Dupuis. Vaneigem, a member of the Situationist International, critiques Surrealism for turning the image-as-object into a commodity that conceals alienating relationships, reproducing itself as a purely ideological appearance. The lecture suggested that Broodthaers’ career-launching work, ‘Pense-Bête’, can be interpreted as a reaction against Surrealist ideals, particularly their tendency to elevate art to a counter-truth that ignores economic realities. Broodthaers’ notorious admission of ‘insincerity’ and his embrace of commercialism are seen as rejections of these Surrealist fantasies.

The lecture addressed the visualization of thought in Broodthaers’ work. The title ‘Pense-Bête’, which translates to ‘memory aid’ or ‘reminder,’ hints at a

deeper engagement with the relationship between visual and literary art, a topic central to Surrealism and later, Conceptual Art. By naming both his book of poems and an early sculpture ‘Pense-Bête’, Broodthaers critiques and redirects Surrealist ideas about thought, moving away from their mystification and self-referential tendencies.

In collaboration with S.M.A.K. To celebrate 100 years Marcel Broodthaers (1924-1976) and the 60th anniversary of his keywork ‘Pense-Bête’ (1964), S.M.A.K. commissioned art historian John C. Welchman to write a close reading on this seminal work. Welchman present edhis findings in a series of rolling lectures, seminars and discussions at S.M.A.K. and various partner institutes.

Subversive Surrealism?

Panel discussion by research group ArchiVolt

23 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

With KURT DE BOODT, LIESBETH DECAN, VINCENT VAN MEENEN, QUINTEN INGELAERE, and JOHN C. WELCHMAN, moderated by JOHAN PAS.

This panel discussion focussed on the contemporary relevance of Surrealism, 100 years after the First Surrealist Manifesto (1924). Artists and theorists explored and discussed the topicality of Surrealist concepts and methods. Do they still make sense, and if so, how to deal with them?

Our times are as troubled as those of the interbellum, when Surrealism emerged from the rubble of earlier avant-garde movements and the traumas of the First World War. It was a movement that witnessed the rise of Fascism and Communism, and the crisis of modernism.

Notwithstanding its entanglement with its cultural and historical contexts, Surrealism managed to survive these and became the most lasting avant-garde movement. Only at the end of the 1960s, with its spokesman André Breton passing away and postmodern art movements gaining prominence, did Surrealism really become a phenomenon to look back on in history.

Today, its imagery and vocabulary are still being appropriated and quoted. Names like Salvador Dalí and René Magritte attract public attention, while

some of their images have become part of our collective memory. Surrealism has been reduced to its most canonical artists and motifs and seems to have lost its sense of danger and provocation.

Commemorating a centenary of Surrealism, Mark Polizzotti, biographer of André Breton, recently released ‘Why Surrealism Matters’. Exploring Surrealist themes, such as transformation, appropriation, subversion, transgression, disruption and revolution, the author concludes that Surrealist topics and strategies still make sense and deserve to be reinterpreted, even after a hundred years.

The Surrealists believed in a revolution of the mind and the liberation of humankind. Is this purely utopian or are there things to be learned from their radical position? In an informal conversation with theorists, artists and the audience, this panel tried to explore if, how and why Surrealism still makes sense today.



Workshop 'Some More Chances: Re-Playing Surrealist Games and Beyond' by Iris Henneman and Yuki Okumura; photo by Wannas Cré

INGE HENNEMAN & YUKI OKUMURA

‘Some More Chances: Re-Playing Surrealist Games and Beyond’

Workshop

24 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

Automatic writing, drawing, and other methods devised by the Surrealists in the 1920s were intended to free the imagination from rational order, and to exploit the unpredictable outcomes of chance and accident. Those solitary and collective games, procedures, and techniques were designed to unlock the unconscious, ‘igniting flares of unexpected wonder’. The invitation was to forget your talent.

Looking back from the contemporary perspective, however, their methods might still seem to stick to the tradition of artist as genius. What are the dormant potentials latent in their methods, and how could we activate them today?

Focusing on collective games of the Surrealists as well as those associated with Fluxus, postmodern dance, etc., this workshop was for young artists who would like to tap into the creative potential of chance. Through three sessions, the participants played ‘updated’ versions of selected techniques revolving around words, images, and actions, each followed by a historical and theoretical input, an artistic footnote, and a conversation.

Does the indeterminacy provide fresh ways of making art? Does it help you discover unknown aspects of

yourself? How do you balance between coincidence and control? Where do subjectivity and authorship reside when anonymous rules and parameters govern the process?

Art without Artists – Anonymous Creativity

Panel discussion

24 October 2024,
at the Academy,
during ARTICULATE

With MATHIAS MU, MATHIJS TRATSAERT, MONA HEDAYATI, SHAYLI HARRISON, MARNIX VAN SOOM, moderated by THOMAS CROMBEZ and KRISTÍ FEKETE

The relationship between creatives and digital technology is becoming increasingly complex. Digital structures and their workings are hard to trace, creating both an exciting challenge and a pressing issue for artists working with(in) them.

For this debate, we invited four young artists — Mathias MU, Mathijs Tratsaert, Mona Hedayati, and Shayli Harrison. All four of their practices are interwoven with digital technologies. Coming from seemingly disparate disciplines and backgrounds, they offer different perspectives on the topic. Mathias MU is exploring a gamified interaction between technology and humans in an exhibition setting; Mathijs Tratsaert is a poet co-writing with ChatGPT; Mona Hedayati draws on computational arts, post-humanism, memory, trauma, and affect studies; Shayli Harrison does speculative fashion design, investigating the influence of digital identities on real-world behaviour.

The panel members explored a creator’s role in the context of emerging digital technology. A basis for their conversation was both Breton’s Surrealist Manifesto and the concept of ‘art without artists,’ along with

demonstrations of the artists’ own work. They examined digital’s impact on authorship and the possibilities and challenges of anonymous creativity. The discussion was a space to show, teach, and learn.

The demonstrations brought by the artists were also points of discussion. Each of the works provided context for questions regarding authorship in the digital age. How can a critical responsibility be practised as an artist? How does digital intimacy and emotional connections function within the work, the artist, and the public?

30 Million Years: Art, Ecology and Sustainability

Seminar by the Nieuwe Opdrachtgevers

7 November 2024,
at M HKA

How can art help communities and citizens get a better understanding of ecology and sustainability? How do art production sites change their material and conceptual patterns and habits to meet the challenges of sustainability? How can a contemporary artwork, invited by people to be part of their community, remain meaningful and increase its durability?

During the seminar '30 Million Years: Art, Ecology and Sustainability', these questions were not only addressed discursively but also practically. Art professionals, artists, academics, students, government agencies and people from all walks of life were invited to participate in this discussion.

The seminar featured keynote lectures by NATHALIE BLANC, PASCAL GIELEN, ROEL ARKESTEIJN and NICOLA SETARI.

NIK NAUDTS 'Between Old Habits and New Habits'

A series of 'tacts'

Why do we oscillate between old habits and new habitats, settling for yesterday's ideas while envisioning distant futures? Why does real estate continue to dictate the uniform organisation of our cities, leaving little room for versatility or vulnerability? Why are our Western cities still carved from the same stone?

Through conversations with the users of space rather than spatial professionals, researcher Nik Naudts aims to break down the walls we have built. Not by starting from scratch, but by experimenting with the traditional spatial and societal boundaries of the city of Antwerp. How can we approach them differently so that they can connect and enable, instead of divide and prevent?

Can the city be a collective home wherein we reconsider societal norms, real estate trends, cultural habits, family dynamics, public-private divisions, and the work-life balance?

To test this hypothesis, Naudts is organising a series of 'tacts' – invitations to engage with, work around, or rebel against what you know and don't know about inhabitability.

- **What if the houses I've lived in could talk? (Tact #3)**
2024-2025
As part of his research project 'Between Old Habits and New Habitats', Nik Naudts is giving his current home a voice. On behalf of his present-day residence, he sends letters to every house he once lived in. He invited you to do the same.
- **Room()service (Tact #4)**
2024-2025
During the winter months, Nik Naudts offers a free, warm, single-person room. As part of his project, he aims to explore what warmth and comfort mean to each of us.

ESTELLE ZHONG MENGUAL

‘Learning to see the living world through art’

Lecture

21 November 2024,
at the Academy

French art historian Estelle Zhong Mengual proposes to investigate our eye, as it relates to a very specific part of the world: the living world. What eye have we inherited when it comes to seeing living things? What mental and sensitive equipment comes into play when we look at a forest, a cornflower or a fox? What are its powers and limits? What do our eyes perceive of the living world, and what lies outside of our common ways of paying attention to it? And above all: how can this equipment be enriched? Estelle Zhong Mengual suggests that art could be an unexpected, but highly relevant path.

The lecture was followed by a Q&A between Roel Arkesteijn and Estelle Zhong Mengual. The publication ‘Leren kijken: De optiek van het levende’ (the Dutch translation of ‘Apprendre à voir. Le point de vue du vivant’) by Estelle Zhong Mengual, recently published by Octavo, was for sale this evening.

TINC Fest 2024

Festival on technology, innovation and creativity

21 November 2024,
at AP Hogeschool, Campus Noord

Organised by research groups Maxlab, Immersive Lab and Media, Design & IT, in collaboration with ANTWERP. POWERED BY CREATIVES.

Creative professionals could participate in workshops, attend talks and debates by industry speakers and expand their network in an accessible way. With Jorn Craeghs (keynote), Remco van de Craats/Edhv, Architects of Identity, Wendy Plomp/Dutch Invertuals, Paulien Verheyen/Illustrator, beeldend kunstenaar en cultuurwerker, Jeroen Cluckers/Immersive Lab en Maxlab and Laure Weckx/Statik.

With the slogan, ‘Let’s TINC Twice’, this edition encouraged creative entrepreneurs, artists and students to think about how to combine today’s challenges and tomorrow’s deadlines with a long-term vision. Themes such as harnessing creativity and technology to address societal problems and ethical issues surrounding recent technological developments took centre stage.

- Workshop ‘Reading Reading’, by our researchers ANNELOISE CERCHEDEAN and GINA POORTMAN
What if we start thinking of the act of reading as a physical choreography? In this interactive session, we playfully revisited the physical act of reading, which is often wrongly labelled as a purely mental, disembodied

activity. By no longer viewing the reader as a passive recipient, we explored how modern technologies such as augmented reality (AR) can break the boundaries of the traditional reading experience.

- Showcase ‘DISSOLUTION’ – by PhD researcher KRISTOF TIMMERMAN, WITH LOWIE SPRIET, CHARO CALVO, ARAFA YONÇALIK, BAVO DEBRAEKELEER and ROB MERTENS
‘DISSOLUTION’ is a VR experience that merges live theater and gaming. Up to eight participants enter a portal, transitioning from the visible front end to the hidden back end of our digital world. Every decision consumes data, influencing the environment and shaping the performance’s duration, emphasizing the tangible impact of digital waste.

To cook, to consume, to connect: Recipes for developing knowledges

Breakout session hosted by Art & Research of the Academy and PXL MAD Hasselt

22 November 2024,
at the ELIA Biennial
Conference 2024, NABA Milan

At the ELIA Biennial Conference 2024, at NABA Milan, the research teams of the Academy and PXL-MAD Hasselt, hosted a hands-on workshop, bringing participants together to cook and, both literally and figuratively, build upon shared thoughts. The tablecloth was a collaborative work, crafted by master’s students from PXL MAD, featuring screen-printed reflections on the evolving role of art schools today. It later journeyed to the Academy during ARTICULATE 2024, where students and researchers continued to add their voices.

Also researchers Andrea Cammarosano and Mahmoud Saleh Mohammadi presented the results of their research at this international conference.



Workshop 'To cook, to consume, to connect: Recipes for developing knowledges' by Art & Research, at the ELIA Biennial Conference 2024, WBA Milan; photo by Art & Research

HYDROMEDIA – Seeing with Water

Exhibition, lectures, workshops

23 November 2024–16 March 2025,
at the Technische Sammlungen,
Dresden

This exhibition marks the end of ‘Hydromedia. Seeing with Water’ (2023-2024), an EU-funded cooperation research project between the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, the Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht and the Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung Karlsruhe. As hosts, the three institutions have not only organized artist residencies, but also symposia, excursions, workshops, local exhibitions and initiated an intensive exchange between the art world, science and the public.

All participating artists have focused on water and used photographic and acoustic processes to create new perspectives and a new proximity to questions of ecology and climate change. Their collective efforts culminated in this exhibition at the Technische Sammlungen in Dresden.

Workshops and lectures by artists and scientists gave insights in the methods of artistic investigation and in recent scientific research on water in the era of climate change. As a bonus, the artists have written short instructions for their water experiments, which the public can try out for themselves at home.

A catalogue with texts and numerous illustrations was published to accompany the exhibition.

The residency at Antwerp, consisted of the artists Tim Theo Deceuninck,

Mirja Busch, Jarek Lustych and Sascha Herrmann, took place during the month of April 2023 at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp. They took the aquatic ecosystem of the Scheldt Estuary as a starting point to create new, easy-to-use visual procedures to re-imagine our relationship with nature.

Urban Travel Machine (UTM)

European Planetariums and Immersive Poetry Performances

The Creative Europe project ‘Urban Travel Machine (UTM)’ (2022-2024) contributed to the renewal of the literary and poetry sector in Europe through the adoption of Immersive Technology. Coordinated by Philip Meersman, it was a collaboration between four planetaria across Europe (Tartu, Estonia; Volkshochschule Vienna, Austria; CasaCiencias A Coruña, Spain; and Koninklijke Belgische Sterrenwacht, Brussels), the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, the School of Arts, Design and Architecture of AALTO University in Finland, and the Polish-Japanese Academy of Information Technology in Poland.

• Field trip and presentation
Urban Travel Machines 360° Poetry
Festival + Framed live drawing

March 2024,
at the Planetarium Casa
de las Ciencias,
A Coruña, Spain

The UTM project offered Academy students a unique opportunity to collaborate with international poets, culminating in a presentation at the A Coruña planetarium in Spain. Students worked closely with poets to visually interpret their work. The trip combined creativity and cultural immersion, featuring live poetry performances, workshops, and visits to exhibitions and local landmarks.

• Urban Travel Machines: Cosmos met Poetry

28-30 November 2024,
at the Brussels Planetarium
In November 2024, the Brussels Planetarium hosted the UTM project for its final presentation at the 10th Brussels Planetarium Poetry Fest. The show combined live performance, storytelling, typography, and immersive technology, bringing together poets and visual artists from across Europe.

Digital Mythologies – Mythical Digitalities

Exploring digital tools for art-tutors and artists

‘Digital Mythologies’ (2021-2024) was a three-year European research project about exploring and designing digital tools for art-tutors and artists.

Coordinated by Janna Beck and Gina Poortman, it was a collaboration between the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, the School of Arts, Design and Architecture / Aalto University, Finland, the Academy, the Art Academy in Katowice, Poland, IADT Institute of Art, Design + Technology, Dublin, Ireland, the VDA Academy of Arts, Vilnius, Lithuania.

This international project provided opportunities for student participation and international exchange.

In 2024, the following activities took place:

- Workshop ‘Mythology: Body’, 25 February–1 March 2024, at the Academy
- Seminar ‘Digital Literacy in Art Education’, 29 February 2024, at the Academy
- Exhibition ‘Shapeshifters’, 1–25 March 2024, at the Plantin Moretus Museum Antwerp
- Digital Toolkit in collaboration with DIDAE.EU

Bachelor classes and optional courses based on Art & Research

Courses touching upon artistic research
At the Academy

Bachelor classes provide a playground between theory and practice, a meeting place between education and research, away from the familiar disciplines in the Academy, with several led by our researchers. Optional courses for third bachelor and master students, are theoretically oriented courses that explore themes intersecting across the programme, with several closely connected to our research groups.

Bachelor classes:

- Art & Research, by INGE HENNEMAN
- Sharing Space. Exercises in Togetherness, by INGE HENNEMAN
- Nature Studies, by ELINE DE CLERCQ
- Immersive Storytelling, KRISTOF TIMMERMAN and JEROEN CLUCKERS
- Physical Awareness, by KAREL TUYTSCHAEVER

Optional courses:

- Extra Academy, by NICO DOCKX
- Performance Course, by YUKI OKUMURA
- Studio Moving Image, by GEERT GOIRIS and WIM CATRYSSSE
- Art & Ecology. Making Change, by ROEL ARKESTEIJN

BERNADETTE ZDRAZIL and LOCU Cultivating Together: Presence, Connection and Balance

Meditation and Yoga classes
At the Academy

As part of Expanding Academy, the project ‘Cultivating Together: Presence, Connection and Balance’ undertaken during 2023-2024 promotes the importance of a conscious environment at the Academy by enhancing student well-being through yoga and meditation practices.

The project began with a needs assessment, using a questionnaire that gathered responses from 122 BA and MA students. Bernadette Zdrzil and Locu introduced the project’s objectives at an awareness-raising event, rapping it up with a closing event featuring guest speakers like Chiara Ravano, Hadas Cnaani and Prana Estu.

Based on the assessment feedback, Zdrzil and Locu developed a weekly programme offering yoga and meditation sessions. They incorporated techniques from yoga, breathwork, movement-focused meditations, and time management theories to promote relaxation and overall well-being. A result of the project was the concept of Meta Sculpting, a term coined by students to describe the mental sculpting effects of meditation.

The project underscored the need for more time, ongoing communication, and collaboration with both students and staff to fully establish a conscious environment within the Academy.

Residencies@ThinkingTools

Residency programme
At MORPHO Antwerp

Each academic year (from 2020 on), the research group Thinking Tools invites two artist-researchers for an intense, short-term residency of three months at Morpho. With this project, Thinking Tools wants to support and give visibility to those practices that critically question and experimentally apply the underlying principles of the photographic image process. In other words: projects that focus on 'the photographic'. With this term we refer to a method of image production that may have originated in the invention of photography, but which by now has also seeped through into other artistic practices. In this sense, the research group mainly wishes to invite residents who follow a photographic production method in their practice, without their work invariably having to culminate in photographic images, even though the latter, of course, remains possible.

In 2024, **MARIANNE VIERØ** (February- April 2024) and **KELVIN HAIZEL** (October-December 2024) took up residency at Thinking Tools / Morpho.



Exhibition 'Flesh, Or The Colour Of Any Other Object' by Marianne Vierø at MORPHO, photo by Art & Research



Eco Lab at the Academy; photo by Wannes Oré

Eco Lab

Laboratory for Art & Ecology
At the Academy

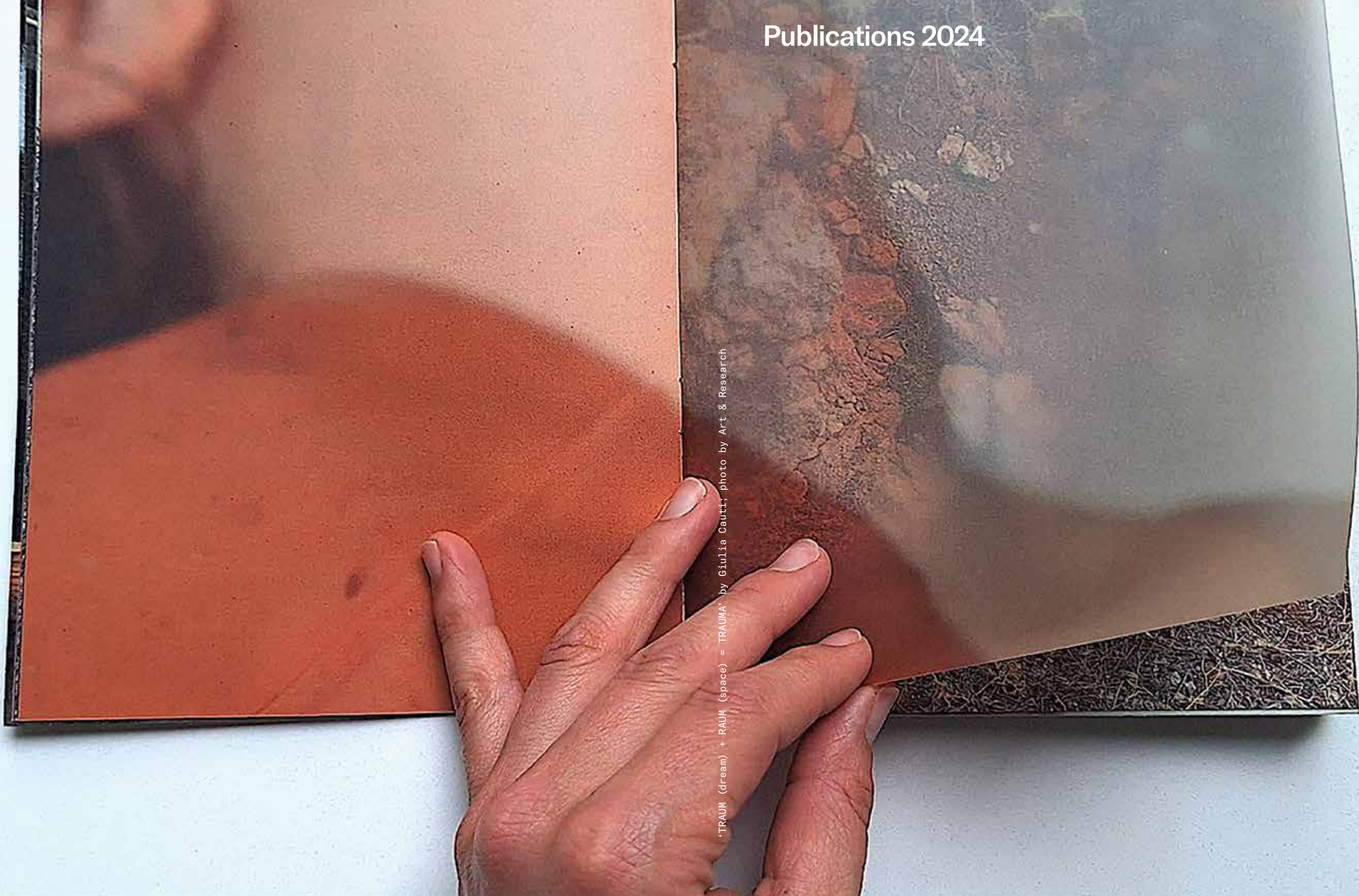
The Eco Lab was established in October 2024 by the Art & Ecology research group at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp. It serves as both a literal and symbolic space where art and science merge synergistically. With a focus on observation and field research, the lab offers essential equipment such as a stereoscope, microscopes, binoculars, a plant press, collection tools, field guides, and instruments for basic experiments.

Beyond its scientific resources, the Eco Lab functions as a versatile space for a wide range of activities aligned with the Art & Ecology research group's interests. It hosts monthly meetings of the reading group, where participants—including researchers, students, alumni, and other interested individuals—discuss pressing and relevant articles. Additionally, the lab alternates as a workshop for researchers, a cinema, an auditorium for lectures and discussions, an exhibition space, and the starting point for field trips.

The creation of the Eco Lab was made possible in part by Ronny Blust, biologist and full professor at the University of Antwerp. Together with research group coordinator Roel Arkesteijn, Blust plays a key role in bridging the Academy and the University. The lab serves as an experimental space to further explore and expand the intersection of art and science.

The Eco Lab is committed to being an open and welcoming space for the Academy's community.

'TRAUM (dream) + RAUM (space) = TRAUMA' by Giulia Cauti; photo by Art & Research



'Mythical Truths'
YORGOS MARAZIOTIS

The site-specific artistic research that Yorgos Maraziotis executed at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, spans between archiving, social sculpture and institutional critique. Drawing on the understanding of space through embodied memories and over a methodology that includes story-telling, human relations and visual arts, Maraziotis provokes the canon of academic knowledge and envisions an alternative school model where decision making occurs on the authority of its community. 'Mythical Truths' gathers two theoretical essays (by Yorgos Maraziotis and Sotirios Bahtsetzis), documentation from the social sculptures that were exhibited around the campus of the Academy in 2023 and the archive of the oral stories of the Academy's workforce.

Published by Track Report
(Royal Academy of Fine Arts
Antwerp), 2023-2024



'FRAMED'
JANNA BECK & ANNE LISE
CERCHEDEAN

FRAMED is a platform that creates a common ground for immersive experiences. It encourages public participation and interaction. The low-threshold approach encourages all to get the most out of their creativity and intuition. It is a stage for performance, one which is based on a shared improvisation in a fluid, post-digital world. The charcoal figure is animated into conscious action by a creative community.

This flipbook is an analogue counterpart to an online publication. The two emerged as one of the outcomes within the research projects 'GrowingGifs', 'Framed', and '&Co', striving to be a culmination but acknowledging the inherent challenge of fully encapsulating the entire research.

Research initiated and conducted between 2015 and 2023 at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp (AP University of Applied Sciences and Arts).

Published by Track Report (Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp), 2023-2024



'Mark Rietveld. A long loving look'
ed. NICO DOCKX

Mark Rietveld (1969-2022) was best known in Antwerp for his photography in which he photographed the underground music scene and art world. At concerts, he always paid equal attention to what was happening on the periphery of the stage – so he also portrayed the audience and its surroundings.

If you visited places like Onder Stroom, Scheld'apen, Stadslimiet, Factor 44, the Tenace Boot, De Nor, AudioPlant, Minigolf Beatrijs, Forbidden City, Bar Paniek or Het Bos over the past two decades, there was a good chance you saw Rietveld wandering in front, beside and behind the stage.

But his work also explored a broader range: the archive is full of hushed moorland scenes, torn hoarfrost floors, still lifes, cats, parks in the snow, timeless figures in Prague or Paris and domestic scenes.

Nico Dockx, artist and researcher attached to research group ArchiVolt at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, curated the book, selecting images from Rietveld's extensive archive.

Published by HOPPER&FUCHS, 2024

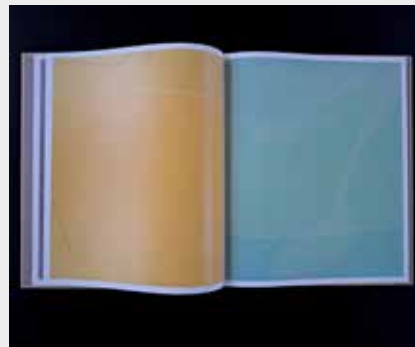
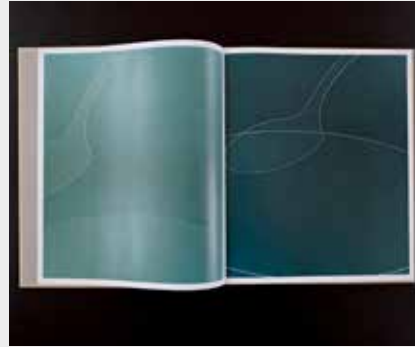


**'A table under a tree'
SINE VAN MENXEL**

In the artists' publication 'A table under a tree' by Sine van Menxel, an imaginary table moment is photographically captured using photograms. Glass plates in the shape of spoons and plates were placed blindly on the photo paper in the dark room and then exposed. These images were taken without the use of a camera, and yet they exhibit photographic characteristics such as depth, movement, foreground and background, zooming in and out. In this work, analog photography shows itself as an anachronistic medium that is extremely suitable for the search for alternative possibilities to depict life.

This publication is the result of Sine Van Menxel's research project 'Dancing in the Dark', conducted at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp.

Published by Track Report (Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp) and HOPPER&FUCHS, 2024



**'TRAUM (dream) + RAUM (space) =
TRAUMA'
GIULIA CAUTI**

This artist's book aims to give a sense of the fragmented truth, involuntary associations and flashbacks typical of the post-traumatic experience. It is conceived as a visual diary, attempting to frame a year of research into the relationship between our physical and mental realities. The content is an intersection of research pictures, material experimentations in regard to body and movement, and visual whispers from the diverse contexts that accompanied the investigation: as if a certain synchronization has happened between an inner flow of thoughts and the reality of mundane situations. This book aims to make a visual contribution to awareness of trauma as part of the 'normality', of how it nestles in the fibres of our bodies and how it determines our relationship to itself, others and the outside world.

This publication is the result of Giulia Cauti's research project 'TRAUM (dream) + RAUM (space) = TRAUMA' conducted at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp.

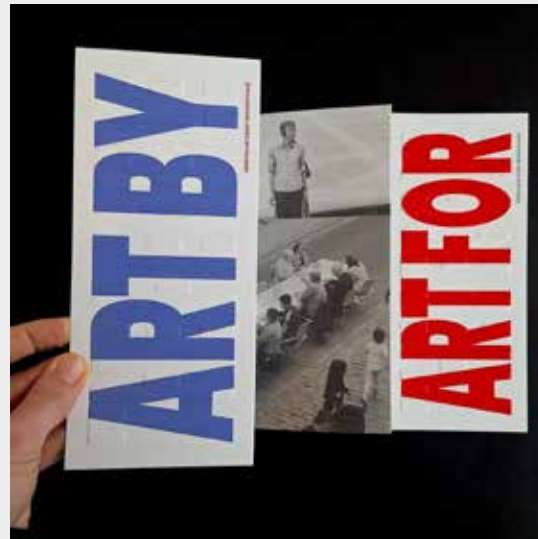
Published by Track Report (Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp), 2024

'Art for the People, Art by the People'
MAHMOUD SALEH MOHAMMADI

This leporello is part of Mahmoud Saleh Mohammadi's research project at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, summarizing over a decade of artistic research in Italy, Finland, and Belgium.

The research centres around the role of participatory art in urban regeneration, specifically how collaborative participatory artistic practices can activate communities, foster empowerment, and build resilience by integrating local resources, traditions, and histories.

Published by Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp and HOPPER&FUCHS, 2024



'HYDROMEDIA: Seeing with Water'
ed. STEVEN HUMBLET, INGE HENNEMAN, TACO HIDDE BAKKER, and VANESSA BOSCH

This publication collects the results of the collaborative artistic program 'Hydromedia: Seeing with Water', organized in 2023 and 2024 by the Royal Academy of Arts Antwerp, the University of Arts and Design, Karlsruhe, and the Utrecht University of Arts, and co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe programme.

It contains traces of the various activities that were organized in this project's three stages: the residencies in and around the cities of Antwerp (April 2023), Utrecht (October 2023) and Karlsruhe (April 2024), some conversations between scientists and artists, presentations by philosophers or activists, and the local exhibitions and workshops that followed each working period. Finally, it also contains manuals written by the artists explaining (parts of) their research process, so the public could experience firsthand how to engage with the medium of water in a variety of artistic approaches, some which will make you wet, others which invite to relate to water in a poetic key.

Published by the HYDROMEDIA project under the Creative Commons license CC BY-NC ND





Welcome days new researchers at the Academy; photo by Art & Research

1. Research projects

'Residencies@ThinkingTools'

STEVEN HUMBLET

from 2020

Thinking Tools

In collaboration with MORPHO
Antwerp

Each year the Thinking Tools research group invites two artists for a three-month residency. The selected artists all have a practice that involves the use of a technological apparatus and is built around a series of consecutive translations and mediations between technological operations and artistic choices. The selection process starts from a list assembled by all researchers currently active within the research group while the final selection is made after a thorough discussion with our two 'critical friends'. During their period in Antwerp the artists stay at our partner Morpho who provides them with lodging and a working space. The aim of these residencies is twofold: to strengthen and broaden the focus of the research group and to create a free space for the residents to embark on new projects or to deepen their current practice. Being present in Antwerp for three months allows the resident artists to enlarge their network, to get acquainted with the art scene in Antwerp and to engage fully with the students at the Academy. For the research group, their

prolonged presence gives us ample opportunity to learn more about their artistic practice which in turn allows us to broaden our field of research. The residents also bring in their existing network of artist friends, curators and other experts, which amplifies the visibility of the research group to a larger audience of artistic professionals.

'Meeting Louwrien'

JAN BEDDEGENOODTS, SOFIE

COREYNEN, MAARTEN DESMET,

NICO DOCKX

2022-2024

ArchiVolt

In collaboration with Louwrien
Wijers and Egon Hanfstingl

"You come in and she calculates your numbers. Now she knows you're a 7. Around you the transcripts of many conversations with people who are no longer there, but still sitting next to her. When you engage in conversation with her the frequency changes. "What a kind man that Dalai Lama. A real artist". She also eats only grains, vegetables and beans and lives in a farmhouse in Hallum, Friesland, which is on the verge of collapse. She lives in an almost provocative austerity. And, Ben d'Armagnac sits beside her staring ahead in silence while her partner Egon Hanfstingl prepares a delicious meal of some

rice and a green vegetable whose name I forgot. She tears through the curves of life with fun in her eyes and a heart valve that no longer works. The pills the doctor prescribes are not made for people who eat only grains, vegetables and beans. There is still a lot of work, there is still so very much to do. Among other things, that and more". (Jan Beddegenoodts just after his first meeting with Louwrien Wijers)

Through a documentary film 'Meeting Louwrien', this research team aims to demonstrate the topicality of conversations organized by Wijers in 1990 at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam within the framework of her work Art meets Science and Spirituality in a changing Economy (AmSSE). This research builds on Nico Dockx's previous doctoral research and analyzes conversations with, for example, artists Marina Abramovic, Lawrence Weiner, John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg, scientists such as Ilya Prigogine, Francisco Varela, David Bohm, Rupert Scheldrake, economists such as Stanislav Menschikov, Pienhero Neto and spiritual leaders such as Dalai Lama, Raimon Panikkar, Sogyal Rinpoche, Huston Smith, Tessa Bielecki, as well as the preparatory talks she organized from the mid-1970s onward with art lovers such as Robert Filliou, Joseph Beuys, Andy Warhol, Ben d'Armagnac, and many other artists of the Fluxus and Conceptual Art movements.

'Cognitive Making. The recreation of procedures in the field of jewellery and gemstone cutting'

EDU TARIN

2022-2024

Body and Material Reinvented /
Art & Ecology

This research intends to deal, from an artistic perspective, with the imaginary fracture that exists between crafts and technology, focusing on the bridging point between hand and machine in jewellery making and more particularly in gemstone carving.

Although the etymological definition of craft shows a direct link with the domain of technology, and despite the fact of humans being immersed in a self-made world, craft is often associated with the way things were done in the past but not with how they will be done in the future. We build our understanding through technological systems that will, in turn, shape how we act and think. Through a phenomenological engagement towards making, Edu Tarin intends to plasm his personal entanglements with new technological processes and to find new sustainable equilibriums between the notion of human and technology.

The research methodology is based largely on an interdisciplinary approach, physically exploring how cognitive structures evolve within both traditional and modern manufacturing processes, and in search for ways to enable

a deeper interaction between different branches of knowledge involved within the process of making.

By intertwining human, machine and artifact through reciprocal modification, Edu Tarín intends to question anthropocentric ideals in search for a more intimate and intrusive way of dealing with matter that encompasses post-humanist and new materialistic cultural identities.

'&CO'
JANNA BECK, MARTINO MORANDI,
ANNELISE CERCHEDEAN and WOUTER
STEEL
2022-2024
Maxlab

Nowadays the term co-creation is applied to everything, what we used to call collaboration, participation, co- production, now falls under this term.

With the FRAMED project as a case study, we want to define co-creation within the context of digital art. During FRAMED, a toolbox for new expression possibilities and alternative forms of collaboration was created. An own open source software was developed that allows artists to draw simultaneously (digitally with Wacom tablets) on 1 canvas that consists of different frames.

We plan experiments and research by giving artists different roles: the team player, the

conductor, the dictator and the performer. The output of each experiment/session/live event is a co-created digital artwork, a drawn animation created simultaneously.

As a theoretical output of the research, we provide a framework and some reflection sessions with the artists and researchers in which we map out the collaboration, the course of the co-creation, the individuality of the artist and the shared authorship.

A second output of the research will be the "DIGITAL DRAWING COOKBOOK", a visual analysis of the research, experiments and best practices. The Cookbook thus becomes a manual/guide/lexicon/vade-mecum for co- creations within the context of digital animation drawing.

'What I'm talking about when I'm talking about Narrativity'
PETER LEMMENS
2022-2024
Maxlab

In a current Western information capitalism and distribution, infrastructure has become more and more synonymous with technology. In this research project, Peter Lemmens wants to look at how technology operates with an obfuscated backend narrativity. Although technology's ubiquity is beyond obvious, it simultaneously retreats into a background: it has become a covert database operation in

darkness. Infrastructure is not about content that flows as information. Content is simply replaced over and over again. The real information piggybacks on the inconsequential frontend content and operates in backend darkness.

Darkness is a setting for narratives. Everybody loves a good story. However, more and more, stories are overhauled as unilateral constructs for leverage that require neither dialogue nor reflection. This is where the underlying infrastructure and technology become key. Infrastructure is no longer a neutral operational database. Technology actually shapes whatever it stores and distributes. In doing so, infrastructure applies two types of narrativity. The frontend scenario and the backend script. As more and more the frontend scenario is of no consequence, we are presented with a double ghost story: the frontend scenario insists on its characters' belief in them and the backend script not only plays out in the dark, but also keeps you in the dark.

Narrativity doesn't mean coinciding with words then. It expands into the intangible constructions of production and distribution when we ask what something does. It expands the "what to produce" with the "how to produce".

Here, the artwork is questioned as a site of interference for dominant narratives instead of

the search for an alternative dominant narrative. If infrastructure has become a party-in-the-front- business-in-the-back model, then let's ask what frontend narratives are, what backend narratives are and how art can expand its content providing role and create meaningful relationships between these two?

'Ask your hands to know the things they hold'
DRIES SEGERS
2022-2024
Thinking Tools

The research 'Ask your hands to know the things they hold' focuses on generative materialization of photographic images through organic materials. In this way, a potentially dominant gaze of a maker is exchanged by reacting to, and radically collaborating with, the mechanism and raw material itself. This creates an artistically open process driven by the vibrant matter itself. This research will focus on the local, the attachment to the soil, the connection to traditions, photographic history, seasons, and the attention to the earth. By working with materials of botanical origin, researcher Dries Segers wants the experiments to lead to new devices and techniques that (re)activate historical and innovative knowledge.

'Temporary sonic architecture'

GIULIA VISMARA

2022-2024

Maxlab / Creatie (Conservatoire)

Giulia Vismara will build on her theoretical-practical research on the relationship between space and sound as she investigates the creative potential of cutting-edge technology in architectural design, virtual environments, and 3D sound in search of unexplored possibilities. Her work intends to contribute to the discussion on the concept of material and materiality by focusing on the transition from matter as an expressive possibility to matter as an agent that enables experience. In fact, it appears that the relationship between sound and space is being undervalued in the current discussion, both in terms of morphological-formal organization and spatial morphogenesis. Instead, having access to virtual space creates a realm where one might encounter the different potential entanglements in all of their unique and varied manifestations. From a compositional perspective, it involves directly integrating sound into the space-time dimension in order to create beyond the articulation of spatial information in the projection space.

'Play(s) of Féminitude. The role of female artists in Belgian theatre history 1830-1948'

1830-1948'

EDITH CASSIERS

2022-2024

UP (Conservatoire) / ArchiVolt

This research project offers the first in-depth study of the pioneering role of female Belgian artists in theatre during the period of modernism: from Belgium's independence (1830) until an important feminist victory shortly after WW II (1948).

The study analyzes these staging and performance practices as a 'play with féminitude', a concept within second wave feminism that characterizes a woman's gender identity (De Beauvoir 1949). Rather than being a purely theoretical endeavor, this project proposes theatrical strategies to perform feminist historiography. It sheds light on the staging practices of female artists, on the basis of a carefully selected corpus of Belgian womxn playwrights, actors, dancers, performers, directors and choreographers.

The objectives are threefold: (a) to collect and disclose historical information on the role of female artists in early Belgian theatre history, (b) to understand the sociopolitical relationship between the Belgian performing arts and feminism during the period 1830-1948, and (c) to develop performative strategies to re(dis)cover and (re)imagine women's history.

'WE GROW MUSIC! Ecologies of attention, discrepancy and multiplicity – real and imaginary – in embodied music performance'

PAUL ABBOTT

2022-2024

CORPoREAL (Conservatoire) / ArchiVolt

This research looks at the aspects of discrepancy and multiplicity as specific generative features of embodied music making, primarily in the context of live experimental improvised music. This follows the idea of music making as an ecology, in which simultaneously real (material, sonic) and imaginary (subjective, embodied) music is grown. The project engages the challenge: how to access, explore, and articulate features of the complex embodied music making process. The body is an "intricately coordinated crowd" and "multiple" but not "fragmented." Through practice led research the project focuses in particular on the aspect of attention as a practical guide through this 'crowd'. Practical exercises – for live improvised music – will be developed. These will be based on listening as a mode of attention and used to investigate how performing bodies grow music and language – dcharacterised by discrepancy and multiplicity. What this sounds and looks like, and what is at stake, will be demonstrated through performed and recorded music, written documentation, and presentations. This musical growth will be approached as the

production of a 'living archive' of scores, in an expanded sense.

'God Save the Queers – The (not so) secret life of Saints'

DENYS SHANTAR

2023-2024

ArchiVolt

"I often wonder about the discrepancy between the teachings of the church and what is written in the Bible and other holy texts. Growing up in a Russian Orthodox community in Zurich, I was taught a very conservative, heteronormative way of living and loving. Being always fascinated by saints, I used to read a lot about them in different books and Akathist Hymns (a hymn praising a saint's life). At one point though, the ambivalence between the Russian Orthodox church and my sexuality became so intense that I decided to leave the church. I was 18 years old then. The need for an alternative view on religion and iconography made me re-analyze my religious knowledge in the following years. I realized that the church and the community are often preaching a dogma, which is based on tradition rather than on what the Bible or other writings were telling. When looking for the queer-coded life of saints and biblical figures, I noticed that the heteronormative interpretations given by the church makes the difference. An alternative way of living and loving is possible, and even accepted and through sainthood even supported by the church,

but at the same time not for the normal church goers.

Although this research is based on religious topics, it shouldn't be become a religious work, it's more a personal journey asking myself where do I come from and who am I? This got me questioning how can I use this experience and knowledge for my personal artistic practice. But also, how can this be used for art institutions and museum collections to create a more diverse experience?" (Denys Shantar)

'The Chromatic Illusion within the Photographic Universe'
FRANCESCO DEL CONTE
2023-2024
Thinking Tools

'The Chromatic Illusion within the Photographic Universe' is a practice-based research project that aims to examine the impact technology has on color rendering within the photographic.

To carry out this work, Francesco Del Conte will refer to Vilém Flusser's notions of 'black box' and 'program', and he will re-enact the scientific experiments carried out in the 1660s by Isaac Newton with sunlight and prisms. By stripping photography down to its very essence, Del Conte will seek to disclose how light-sensitive supports and output devices record and render the colors of the visible spectrum. The research will deepen the notion of ready-made colors and

will explore the elementary properties of photographic matter.

The experiments will address the following questions: Given that color in photography is always manufactured and never merely registered, what influence does the chosen technology have on the produced color charts? Would it be possible to link different worldviews to these different color charts? What is the influence of a given culture on the development of color technology? Do the cultural stratifications of a geographic area determine how visual technologies decode colors? What remains of the chromatic heritage left by past technologies? For instance: when a certain photographic film is discontinued, is it possible to talk about extinct colors?

'Exe-xe-xercising feedback loops'
ODE DE KORT
2023-2024
ArchiVolt

'Exe-xe-xercising feedback loops' is an artistic research that focuses on the exercise as an artistic working form to (learn to) know. In the exercise, a specific form of attention emerges that challenges unknowns both individually and collectively. In it, the exerciser tests individual intentions, desires and impulses. In this sense, a vibrational field is created in the exercise, in which an embodied, sensory experience

comes into direct relationship with an abstract knowing.

By going through a process in the exercise, namely, the individual sensorial handling of objects and environments, an experience has been given shape, and thus meaning is co-created. Thus experiencing is in this research understood in two ways: it is both experiencing and shaping an experience. The research looks for vibrational fields where there is resistance, faltering, unknowns, frustration and distortion. How can these resistances begin to mark, imprint, and thus begin to express themselves?

Repetition and repetition are central here. It is precisely through the systematic repeated deployment of the same abstractions that one can arrive at various articulations of "the same thing". Consequently, we can arrive at a vibrational understanding of knowledge, namely an embodied language that teaches us to be open to change and alterity.

'The Color of Language – The Language of Color (Abbreviated as CoLLoC)'
PHILIP MEERSMAN
2023-2024
Maxlab

Artists create work that is interpreted by the public within a (different) context. In visual poetry this happens with white space, typography, color; in performance poetry

through analog and/or digitally distorted voice (timbre, pitch, volume...), while hybrid or XR art introduces the user to predefined "experience contexts" with attention to user experience (UX) and user environment (UI : user interface). This 'human-machine-interaction' (HMI) and/or 'human-technology-interaction' (HTI) ensures that the user can enter into an engagement (interaction) with the technology used.

Various machine learning tools have already been developed that convert speech to text. In this research project Philip Meersman wants to find ways in which speech-to-text contributes to an immersive live visual poetry performance experience, how this can contribute to interaction between performer, audience and environment and how speech-to-text AI can interact in performance locations created for this purpose. For this he wants to visit expos, performances and events that already use these technologies. He will be mapping and testing these technologies with the aim of using different parameters, or performance variables that at the end are presented as Proof of Concept (POC) in poetry performances during, among others, the final event of the 'Urban Travel Machine' project at the Heysel planetarium, but also in the Lange Zaal during ARTICULATE 2024.

'Patricia Johanson: The World as a Work of Art. Selected Writings and Interviews'
ROEL ARKESTEIJN
2023-2024
Art & Ecology

As early as 1969, Patricia Johanson (New York City, 1940) developed a visionary, coherent ecological program in which she devised sculptural solutions to environmental problems, planning issues, urban development and the loss of natural habitats of plants and animals. Her work is always conceived on a landscape scale and focused on practical implementation. She designs complete landscapes or habitats, restoring local plant and animal communities and creating meeting places between humans and nature. Despite its undiminished topicality, Johanson's work has so far remained relatively unknown to a wider audience.

This research project sets as its goals:

- To reconstruct and provide insight into the genesis context and development of Patricia Johanson's work using mostly previously unpublished artist's texts
- To highlight Johanson's central place within eco-art with her methodology as its main "ideologue"
- To explore the significance of her work and tools for current, younger generations of artists.

By publishing a voluminous book of the writings of pioneering American eco-artist Patricia

Johanson, it aims to help set the tone for the continued history of the research group.

'Archival research Livinus van de Bundt'
NICO DOCKX, OXIEA VILLAMONTE AND RAF WOLLAERT
2023-2024
ArchiVolt

In collaboration with MIT Museum/ MIT University (CASV), Boston

This research focuses on a particularly rich partial archive of visual artist Livinus van de Bundt (1909-1979). The archive concerns the intense correspondence between Livinus van de Bundt and Marcel Broodthaers between 1958-1962. An archive of letters, photographs, audiotapes, and an unrealized script of a film Broodthaers had planned to make about van de Bundt's work and in particular his lighting experiments in the late 1950s.

Via ArchiVolt, this sub-archive ended up in a private collection in Antwerp, making it easily accessible for further research. The project should result in a first monograph on the work of van den Bundt so that it can offer an inspiration to future, younger generations.

'Archival research Jef Geys'
SOFIE DEDEREN, ANDREA DI SEREGO ALIGHIERI, NICO DOCKX, JOHAN PAS
2023-2024
ArchiVolt

In collaboration with Wiels, Brussel

In the spring of 2024, Wiels, Brussels, will host a retrospective exhibition of Jef Geys' work. In preparation for this retrospective exhibition, the curators (Dirk Snauwaert and Charlotte Friling) are working on an accompanying catalogue raisonné of Jef Geys' oeuvre. In the context of this research and in consultation with them, ArchiVolt is organizing a parallel event (symposium) with several lectures and talks on the work of Geys, and in particular his archival work and the various artists' books, editions and other printed works he produced. ArchiVolt researchers will collaborate on this with the Graphic Design Studio of the Royal Academy, as well as with lecturer and researcher Sofie Dederen, who has published several Xerox books with partial archives from the archive of Jef Geys and who is currently working on a research project concerning the oral history of Geys' work on the basis of interviews with friends who do not necessarily have anything to do with the art world.

'Max (xe/xem)'
KRISTÍ FEKETE
2023-2025
Maxlab

In 2025, Maxlab will be celebrating its 10th anniversary, entering the age of teenhood. Seeking identity is often related to adolescence. The teenage Maxlab will look for ways to identify itself in the digital. In this context, virtual identity is meant as a performative embodiment utilizing digital technology. The research group is an entity composed of multiple selves; a decentralized 'I' pulled together by the overall research goals. To define its own dynamic identity and its potential, Maxlab's position in the digital will be made use of. Identity seeking will be put into a virtual context. In the virtual, identity is consciously performed: in what we upload and share. This presence is often spread across multiple online platforms. This digital, fragmented presence perfectly reflects Maxlab's structure as a decentralised 'I' with a digital context. The project is strongly self-referential. The project's goal is Maxlab's own definition of "digital" and its own definition of 'identity'. By doing this, the research group's dynamic identity will be defined: the project aims to create a virtual presence for Maxlab. The output of this project will help Maxlab in exploring its own present and future potential in artistic research.

'Towards Transdisciplinarity'

LOWIE SPRIET

2023-2024

Maxlab

Transdisciplinary research is defined as research efforts conducted by investigators from different disciplines working jointly to create new conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and translational innovations that integrate and move beyond discipline-specific approaches to address a common problem. This transdisciplinarity will be developed in 2023-2024 during internal residencies, where researchers of the Maxlab research group get the opportunity to spend a certain period of time in the Immersive Lab of the AP University of Applied Sciences and Arts, in order to explore if in the longer run a permanent structure for external residencies could be set up from September 2024 on.

'EXPANDING CREATIVITY: Cultivating Presence, Connection and Balance'

BERNADETTE ZDRAZIL AND

LOCURATOLO

2023-2024

ArchiVolt

In collaboration with
Expanding Academy

In this course and research - developed by alumni Bernadette Zdrzil and Locuratolo - Expanding Academy co-explores how to install a conscious environment despite existing structures and dynamics which

are not always benefiting our health. This open platform discusses how to deepen our connection to our bodies, minds, creative potentials and the environment we live in. We will apply to techniques of ayurveda, time management, meditation, yoga and temporary concepts of sustainable living, healing and transformation. In December 2023 the project was presented to the students of each department at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and the Royal Conservatoire in order to investigate their needs, beliefs and constraints with questionnaires and interviews. With this collaborative and inclusive approach the project initiators enhance a project outline benefiting the individuals directly. After this investigation, in spring 2024, results will be evaluated and implemented in a project outline with the prospect to grow over time. During the first months of 2024 a pilot project with weekly activities & discussions will be realized testing formats of healing and transformation according to the evaluated needs of the students. Enhancing the student's capabilities and empowering them to find their own language to transform into more wellbeing and to expand their creativity detached from pressure and time constraints.

'See What I Mean'

PHIL BABER

2023-2025

ArchiVolt

"See What I Mean"[1]

This project will focus on the ways in which radical anglophone poets of the post-1945 period reimagined the space of the page and its relations to prosody, the voice, and the body. It will analyze how these poets exploited what Nathaniel Mackey has called "graphicity"—"line breaks, multiple margins, orthography, typography and so on"[2]—to reveal antagonisms and contradictions within language itself.

It will also reflect on the links between underground textual production and the social, political, and technological transformations of the period. To what extent are social and economic relations legible in the material and visual forms of poems? How did nonconformist poets and publishers of the later twentieth century appropriate or resist capitalist literary technologies? How has the (often collective) labour of editing, typesetting, and printing served—overtly or tacitly—to build solidarity within and between radical poetic and political movements?

The research will concentrate on documentary material related to the design and production of poetry: manuscripts, drafts, page proofs, correspondence, etc. In

the process, it will ask how we can work with archival material in ways that are attentive to the physical and temporal processes of literary production.

1. Amiri Baraka, "In Memory of Radio," c. 1962.
2. Nathaniel Mackey, "That Words Can Be on the Page," in 'Discrepant Engagement: Dissonance, Cross-Culturality, and Experimental Writing' (Cambridge, 1993), 122, 123.

'Between Old Habits and New Habitats'

NIK NAUDTS

2023-2025

ArchiVolt

We are frequently confronted with vastly different changes in our society today. Yet we still often cling to old habits. Even our Western cities remain largely carved from the same stone. Despite the ongoing search for new urban habitats and the many ambitious plans that accompany them, the most successful way we have inhabited the world for centuries is coming under pressure. But what do we exactly mean by inhabitability? We know it primarily as a set of technical regulations that our home must comply with. Moreover, inhabitability seems to apply only to our private domain; no such criteria exist for public space. However, it can be argued that as city dwellers we inhabit the entire city and not just our own home.

It is time to stretch the concept of inhabitability. Not by starting from scratch, but by experimenting with the existing physical boundaries of the city

of Antwerp. The dividing wall, the facade, the row house, the building block, the street profile, the ring road, ... they are all spatial elements that separate and limit us. How can we approach them differently so that they connect and enable us in the future? Possible answers to this question are modelled from clay as the research progresses. The sculptures will be presented to the city's increasingly diverse group of residents, users, and professionals. From developers to activists, the sculpting sessions provide a casual playground in which ideas, needs and doubts can be shared.

'Virtual Matter: Metamaterialisations of computational processes'

SPIROS HADJIDJANOS
2023-2025
Thinking Tools

The Anthropocene is an era of multiple nested crises in which all species are facing a series of existential challenges. An important and yet underexposed cause of the current predicament we find ourselves in, is the development and expansion of a robust system of information technologies. A constant theme in the work of Spiros Hadjidjanos has been the exploration of the mineral origins of information technology objects and materials. Geo-scientifically, these materials comprise the Technosphere, a crucial component of the Anthropocene. The Technosphere, which covers by now the entire planet and penetrates

the depths of nature, can be understood as the result of the spread of the technical object.

Informed by technological processes underlying the Technosphere, this research project starts with the investigation of newly emerging AI algorithms capable of extracting 3D models from single photographs and their potential to disrupt recognizable art-historical categories (more specific those focusing on human representation). For the final step, this project will set up an experimental studio to explore the hitherto little-studied dialectics between light-sensitive chemicals and digital fabrication.

'Pas de deux'
GINA POORTMAN and ANNE LISE CERCHEDEAN
2023-2025
Maxlab

For years, literary studies have mistakenly portrayed reading as a purely mental, disembodied activity. Consequently, research on reading has primarily focused on its visual and cognitive aspects, ignoring the physicality involved in handling and reading a body text. However, with advancements in technology, it becomes possible to make the body - which is often overlooked and neglected in our current society - an explicit part of reading.

As technology progresses to become more tangible, portable,

and collaborative, it's possible to constantly collect bodily data through sensors. In a virtual world where everything is flexible and adaptable, the body text can immediately respond to the human body, making it as changeable and mobile as the body reading it. The body text exists in a flow of time - changing through different body forms, postures, movements, and interactions - and becomes performative in nature.

The reading body and the body text engage in a dance for two, with the body text no longer positioned as an opponent but as a willing dance partner, supported by modern technologies. In addition to a graphic and spatial design (scenography), reading involves a sequence of steps, gestures, and movements (choreography). What can the reading body learn from the dancing body?

'Making Sense'
ELINE DE CLERCQ
2023-2025
Art & Ecology

The research project 'Making Sense' is a continuation of the one-year project 'The Sympoiesis Garden, ecology and art in a participative garden', in which Eline De Clercq, together with students, laid out a 'community garden' in the historic Academy garden, with a responsible botanical selection that corresponds to the local ecology and the typical characteristics

of the Academy and its students. Developments are posted online via a logbook designed for this purpose and on Instagram. In this way, a new ecofeminist artistic vision can be developed from the sympoiesis garden, the co-creation of a botanical workplace for visual art and ecology.

'Sonifying Landscapes'
ANNA GODZINA
2023-2025
Art & Ecology

It has been frequently stated that our inability to engage with, and effectively intervene in the processes and transformations happening in our environment, are being directly related to the gradual time scale of those changes. In this artistic research, as a visual and sound artist, Anna Godzina wants to address the possibilities of making seemingly gradual, hardly perceivable changes in our environment and landscapes sensorially tangible on a time scale that becomes perceptible to humans. By positioning recording devices such as contact microphones inside landscapes, she will team up with the transformative forces that shape our surroundings in order to create sonic and sensory experiences. She will document microscopic events and the transformation of the properties and qualities of materials in time. Changes that are ephemeral and inaudible, will become permanent and audible. From remote peripheral areas to

city environments, the sounds of a specific location inside a time span will be documented with the use of sound maps and sound scores.

By collaborating with composers and musicians, these sounds will be published on vinyl. Godzina aims to address the following questions: How to convey contemporary landscapes with their ephemeral, transitory stages in musical compositions and soundscapes? What can sound tell us about the micro-changes happening in our surroundings? How to activate the entangled network of the found object, matter, and the contemporary landscape?

'This Small House Is All We Need'
MARC BERTEL
2023-2025
ArchiVolt

'This Small House Is All We Need' is an ever-expanding net of artistic projects produced in close collaboration with family and friends in Watts, California. These projects, varying in size and scale, include but are not limited to film installations, publications, objects and interventions into public space. Ongoing conversations, the understanding of the various talents and desires of those involved as well as the consideration of the tools and resources available allow us to conceptualize the projects as small pieces fitting into a larger, open-ended body of

work. Incorporating accidents, failures, chance, incompleteness and improvisation into the very DNA of the projects enables us to grow the work into many directions without having to adhere to the notion of a preconceived final destination. This *Small House Is All We Need* expresses our need to foster community, to embrace and build upon our differences and to never stop chipping away at my own Whiteness and the potential threats it poses to those around me in Watts and beyond.

'Living-Room'
MICHAL LUFT
2024-2025
ArchiVolt

At the heart of the 'Living-Room' artistic research lies an ever-evolving exploration, based on the environments in which we submerge ourselves. This project wishes to unfold the multilayered nature of 'Home' and our profound connections to the objects within it. Those objects carry personal histories, memories, and narratives that offer glimpses into collective pasts and present realities. Focusing on photography and site-specific approaches, the research actively engages with various everyday life elements, potentially gathering fragments of contemporary culture. These fragments emerge amidst the changing landscapes shaped by war, migration, intergenerational trauma, environmental shifts, and other socio-cultural influences.

'A Resilient Archive'
OXIEA VILLAMONTE
2024-2025
ArchiVolt

"I am a second-generation image-maker, my mother studied photography at Columbia College in Chicago in the 1990's. After her studies she met my father, fell in love, I was conceived, and they travelled through Europe together. Both of my parents saw the freedom that Amsterdam had to offer and thought it was a better place to raise a child than in Chicago. My parents packed up their most precious belongings and immigrated to The Netherlands with me.

My mother tried to pursue her photographic career after separating with my father however it was hard to make a living from her photography while being a single parent and a foreigner. She made the decision to devote all her energy towards my upbringing.

At the age of nineteen, with the encouragement of my mother I chose to study photography at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, I decided to immigrate to Belgium.

The research project 'A Resilient Archive' questions the desire and urgency to archive. My mother's archive has resisted the wear and tear of the seasons, time and movement from one country to another. It is a resilient archive which I through printing,

publishing and distributing want to activate. A second chapter of my MFA graduation project 'Next of Kin' but now with a different methodology and output. I want to digest the past so that I can look forward."
-Oxiea Villamonte

'The Balkan Frontier'
IVAN TOMAŠEVIĆ and JAKA TERŠEK
2024-2025
ArchiVolt

The Balkan countries stand at a critical turning point as they approach potential integration into the European Union. The region's complex cultural influences and geopolitical dynamics have had a significant impact on its identity, both historically and in recent times. The project aims to explore the contemporary understanding of Balkan identity, seeking to uncover what symbolically unites the region while distinguishing it from the rest of Europe. Additionally, the purpose of the research is to explore the legacy of the region and to archive its cultural, social, economic, and political landscapes with the tools of visual communication. The objective is to capture a snapshot of life in the area before it is transformed by possible integration with Europe, examining how the perception of the Balkans impacts notions of borders and nationhood in today's interconnected world.

Through their collaboration as an artistic duo, Ivan Tomašević and Jaka Teršek aim to draw on each other's strengths and approaches to their research focus, with the goal of producing more dynamic and diverse findings. Since photographic research often is an exclusively individualistic practice, they are interested to see how their ideas will develop and expand through this partnership. By sharing their perspectives, they hope to gain new insights into their research topic, ultimately producing more compelling and refined results.

'Purple as Resilience'
SINA HENSEL
2024-2025
Art & Ecology

Anthocyanin is the pigment responsible for spectacular vermilion-purple in terrestrial plants. Yet, the plant cares for the pigment for different reasons than us humans; it functions as a protective mechanism against environmental stress. As climate-related residues amplify, colours exercise resistance.

Furthermore, the same Anthocyanin is a 'natural' organic dye which was employed in historical dyeing practices. Working and thinking with this colouring agent can support our understanding of local entanglements and the notion of repair towards the non-human. How can we understand the protective role of Anthocyanin across species and scales? And

through its material qualities as an organic dye, how can it shape an empathetic gaze onto the non-human and their different time-making projects?

Hence, colour becomes a lens to look onto local environments and to understand their intrinsic adaptations. As these colours form visual identities of a place, the appearances of this pigment raise the question of how to practice resilience in accelerating climatic conditions.

A three-part methodology (with our hands in the soil: Anthocyanin-laden plants; with our feet on the ground: Colour Walks; with our eyes on the purple: Anthocyanin as an organic dye) will lead to the conceived outcome of a publication and an exhibition.

'Collective Gestures'
INÊS NETO DOS SANTOS
2024-2025
Art & Ecology

The project 'Collective Gestures' explores fermentation as a vehicle for collaboration, community and interspecies relations. Central to the research are stories of migrants and travelers who, faced with the inevitability of resettling, have travelled with preserved portions of their family's fermented foods applied to fabric, safely kept in their pockets or luggage. The traveler's fermented cloths become portals into modes of collaboration and entanglements

between humans and non-humans and are a gateway across space and time.

In investigating these stories further, alongside experimenting with textiles and fermented foods, Inês Neto dos Santos seeks to challenge the long-standing, capital-centric notion of nature as a backdrop to culture, proposing an understanding of the two as one.

'Collective Gestures' revolves around questions about the meaning of belonging, of making home and the significance of carrying one's culture (social, artistic, bacterial) across borders.

Through this work, Inês Neto dos Santos investigates fermentation as a creative practice, one which does not fit capitalist modes of being – rather, it creates a world in which we live as collaborators, rather than competitors or products. 'Collective Gestures' will unfold in a purposefully slow manner, following the rhythms of microbes, plants and other non-humans.

'The Phygital Continuum'
MATHIAS MU
2024-2025
Maxlab

In his research titled 'The Phygital Continuum', Mathias MU investigates the influence of digital cultures on the autonomous artistic practice.

Focusing on our viewing experience of contemporary art, he explores through a practice-led research project, focused on 3D modelling and digital fabrication, for ways to better understand our relationship to technological developments and graphics in games among others. The focus of this project is on the concept of 'The phygital', an amalgamation of 'physical' and 'digital', where the magic wand serves as an object of research, as a mythical symbol that also shows many similarities with digital tools. The 'magic wand' introduces discussions around interaction, perception, and the role of objects as artifacts and active participants. Through the experimentation and combination of several digital fabrication and virtual presentation methods MU aims to define the concept of phygitality.

On a wider scope, MU rethinks the dichotomous notion of digital and physical, by confronting visitors/participants with their relationship to a physical object after interacting with it digitally. With a focus on exploring the concept of the gamification of the art exhibition, he researches the ways technological developments follow or shape our perceptions. Over the course of this one-year research, he explores these concepts through reading, conversation, and active experimentation in 3D software, 3D printing, Virtual Reality, digital environments and video game development.

'Towards Transdisciplinarity. Art & Technology Residencies'
All Maxlab Researchers
2024-2025
Maxlab

Maxlab strives to create a research environment where artistic researchers have the opportunity to work with state-of-the-art technology and collaborate with technological experts. This is done as much as possible on a transdisciplinary level, where artistic and technological researchers do not function as separate entities but work together towards a common goal, combining their knowledge, methods, and practices to generate new forms of knowledge, methods, and practices.

Researchers from Maxlab and the Immersive Lab of AP University College actively seek common ground as a basis for this transdisciplinary collaboration. In addition to facilitating such a research environment, Maxlab is, for the first time this year, inviting an artist-researcher for a short residency within the Maxlab/Immersive Lab ecosystem. This residency aims to inject new ideas regarding methods and practices into the further development of a transdisciplinary framework. The residency will focus on the human and social dimensions of technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence, media architecture, interactive technologies, new aesthetic forms of expression, and their impact on the future of society.

'Fluid Touch'
MARTA DJOURINA
2024-2025
Thinking Tools

'Fluid Touch' explores the notion of touch within the photographic image. The project is studio-based and shows a new focus of Marta Djourina's artistic practice: from movement in the image to touch in the image. It builds upon existing works she has been developing since 2019, connecting natural light phenomena such as bioluminescence or the influence of water and sunlight on photo materials with historical photographic techniques and direct light exposures on analogue photo paper as unique pieces.

The starting point is the study of the image in an experimental way, through the analogue photographic technique in the darkroom, where the light serves as both the subject and the medium. This research is then extended by looking into fluid photography from the early days of photography, exploring scientific phenomena, to the modern day, focusing on the touch screen as the surface where both bodily and technological fluids meet within the moment of touch. The sense of touch, the sensory abilities inherent in our fingertips, serve as orientation in the analogue and digital world. Long rooted in everyday life and firmly established as the key to the mobile phone, our fingertips also wander over smooth screens.

Djourina plans to examine both human touch and different materials and the way their touch can be visualised within the method of Kirlian photography, drawing parallels between touchscreen technology and the Kirlian device. The gesture of touch thus gains importance and attention beyond the purely functional context in our everyday use of smartphones, tablets or other devices with touch screens.

'Visions For Crossing'
ANAÏS CHABEUR
2024-2026
ArchiVolt

'Visions for Crossing' proposes to creatively and sensorially engage with our mortal condition. By looking closely at the gestures of care we offer our dead and developing alternative imaginaries around the threshold process of "becoming imperceptible". How can we regain a comforting relationship with death? The project aims to share and produce embodied knowledge that resists the dramatic effects of the commercialisation of deathcare, and the general disappearance of the dying from modern society. Anaïs Chabeur will focus on the "laying out" of the corpse, an ancestral practice that consists in the cleaning of the body, and the way it is taught today, to develop a multichannel audio and video installation. The prism of this specific act will allow her to explore important

aspects of our cultural and intimate relationships to death. Questioning what we have lost in its institutionalization and what still persists. She will do so by using a methodology developed through her experience as a palliative care volunteer that emphasizes a deep quality of presence.

'Silence is also a Sound'
RONJA ANDERSEN
2024-2026
ArchiVolt

The earliest film editors were almost exclusively women. Today they represent roughly one-third of the field. Their historical prevalence has often been linked to the similarities between the cutting and splicing of film and the menial labour of sewing. Later, it was often reasoned that their proficiency in the role was due to the inherent patience and diplomacy traditionally associated with their gender. Despite their prominent place in film editing from its very beginning, their contributions have historically been under-researched and under-published.

This research will begin development on an experimental archival publication studying the intersection of book design and film editing with Dutch film editor Helen van Dongen as a central figure. Because of the shared sequential nature of books and films, this project posits that book design could be approached with principles

from film editing. Borrowing techniques from compilation films and editing theory the project will explore how to organise, interpret, edit and design archival material as a way of writing feminist (film) history while examining the book format from a new perspective.

‘Photosynthetic Cookbook’
EVA-FIORE KOVACOVSKY
2024-2026
Art & Ecology

“When I enter the forest in spring, while all trees are at the brink of unfurling their leaves to become active again in the process of photosynthesis, I have to think of the energy that is being transformed and how all the sugar (glucose) on this planet and all the sugar that I have ever eaten ‘was first made within a leaf’ (Hope Jahren, 2017).

This all started more than a billion years ago when an anaerobic bacterium (prokaryote) attempted to eat a free-living photosynthetic bacterial cell, but was unable to digest it completely. The bacteria, integrated into the plant’s metabolism, transformed into chloroplasts housing chlorophyll. This is how plants evolved. In her ‘Endosymbiosis Theory’, the microbiologist Lynn Margulis explains that photosynthetic chloroplasts are the product of a symbiosis. To her not only competition and the survival of the fittest, but also

entanglement and fusing are important processes in evolution. In her words ‘the tree of life is growing back on in itself’ (Lynn Margulis, 1998).

What can we learn from photosynthesis? I would like to find out how we can make photosynthesis tangible and learn how it tastes. How is sugar / energy being passed on within the ecosystem? How is everything that heterotrophs eat interconnected? What is a leaf and how does it work? This involves exploring the tastes of various plants and understanding the interconnectedness of organisms.

I approach this project with respect for natural resources, following the indigenous principle of the ‘honorable harvest’. I want to look at the impact of human activities, like burning fossilized plants, on the planet’s ecosystem. The central theme of my project is entanglement and fusion, emphasizing collaboration and interaction among participants.”
–Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky

‘Whispers of the Primeval Forest’
LIGIA POPLAWSKA
2024-2026
Art & Ecology

‘Whispers of the Primeval Forest’ is a research project that will investigate the history, present and speculative futures of the Białowieża Primeval Forest (Puszcza Białowieska), a natural

treasure and Europe’s last ancient forest, aged between 8.000 to 12.000 years. Situated on the Polish-Belarusian border, it is a protected UNESCO World Heritage site of extraordinary biodiversity, untouched by humans until recently.

In what way can we narrate stories concerning emerging environmental issues that empower the more-than-human species? How to cultivate practices of deep listening to nature that can be applied in contemporary visual practices? What does the Białowieża Primeval Forest whisper, how does it sense and adapt to human-induced changes? What stories, tales and secrets about the Białowieża Primeval Forest resonate within the local inhabitants and “whisperers” (witches)?

By drawing a speculative visual narration the artist intends to highlight the importance of more-than-human ethics, interpreting forest as a network of senses, in the spirit of posthumanist philosophies. By collaborating with local scientists, gathering archival material, referencing the writings of biologist Simona Kossak, and incorporating the stories of local inhabitants and Slavic mythical references into the narrative, Ligia Popławska intends to discover, explore and reflect on Białowieża Primeval Forest’s secrets. This research project will result in a series of photographs, a video work and a publication.

‘Between Ego and Alter-Ego: Avatars, Cosplay and Constructing Identity’
SHAYLI HARRISON
2024-2026
Maxlab

This research delves into the phenomenon known as the Proteus Effect: where the embodiment of digital avatars influences real-world behavior. Through conducting qualitative and quantitative studies with cosplayers and active gamers, investigating the aspirational qualities of game characters and their impact on identity formation. Knowledge gained through this experience will then be integrated into collaborative AI/XR workshops and tests to create an aspirational 3D character that triggers embodiment in the user. Inspiring a contemporary fashion silhouette from this design, both versions are durationally worn by the researcher across digital and physical social spaces, documenting and extending the Proteus Effect through personal experience. With findings shared via a live-streamed track report and digi-physical zine, the resulting research contributes to the discourse on identity construction in the digital-age – truly blurring the lines between the virtual and reality.

'The Mega Playback Show'
BORIS VAN DEN EYNDEN
2024-2026
Maxlab

Just about the most fundamental experience in human existence is the irreversibility of time. Technology allows us to resist this irreversibility. This resistance is understood in The Mega Playback Show as time-management. The artistic process central to the study is 'mirroring' which is a concrete manifestation of such time-management. By 'mirroring' can be meant 'repeating' or 'reversing'. In addition, the characteristics of mirroring depend on the medium within which the mirroring is performed. For example, a mirrored audio sample of a melody is something completely different from its mirrored score.

Through "mirroring," memories of toekomstmuziek is evoked. These apparitions are called "ghosts". In short, 'mirroring' 'ghosts'. Mirroring as a form of time-management is explored using the computer. An interface is being developed that allows one to act as The Time-Management, a character who can 'mirror' and 'be mirrored' in space and time, during a live performance - the Mega Playback Show. How vast is the range of toekomstmuziek the audience can be reminded of in this way? Memories of atonal toekomstmuziek, memories of arrobotic toekomstmuziek, memories of

toekomstmuziek for the deaf, memories of toekomstmuziek from Balkanatolia, ...?

'Dialogue with the Sources'
LÉONARD PONGO
2024-2026
Thinking Tools

'Dialogue with the Source's is a mixed-media research project inspired by Souleymane Bachir Diagne's vision from 'African Arts as Philosophy' and connected with Clémentine Faik-Nzuji's research on Congolese symbolism and traditions. It relies on "conversations" with the Congolese landscape as guiding principle to conduct visual research. The project uses visual arts to question the notion that culture arises from the land, manifesting in symbols expressed throughout the landscape. Through conversations, physical engagement, image/object creation and mixed-media installations, the project questions the limitations of human perception and the representation of the Congolese land and traditions.

The experimental 'image/object' creation process encompasses physical practice and formal research. It relies on modified "Full Spectrum" cameras that produce ambiguous, erroneous imagery capturing invisible light. These 'images' constitute the base material to be transformed and crafted into final 'objects' that play with perception, and connect with traditional shapes, stories

and ideas, allowing a space of dialogue between land, image, object and audience.

This research relies on collaboration with various stakeholders including researchers, experts, and guides, both in Belgium and in the Democratic Republic of Congo. During the project we'll unpack and communicate the process to a wider audience during a symposium and workshops, exposing the current research status and facilitating a dialogue with experts and the public.

'Untitled (Neural Networks)'
JEFF WEBER
2024-2026
Thinking Tools

Jeff Weber's work explores the structural conditions of what constitutes a technical image and how its use in a contemporary context is determined by the digital. Weber firmly believes that the intersection of the fields of artificial intelligence and neuroscience are profoundly pertinent to the understanding of how images operate today. The structural and functional similarities between technologies used in AI (i.e. convolutional neural networks) and aspects of the human cognitive apparatus (i.e. nervous system) not only reinforce the idea of the "exteriorization of a cognitive instance" that occurs through the emergence of AI, but also open up the possibility to question whether and how the latter (AI

& artificial neural networks) resonates and interferes with the very system that initially has constituted the model for its own structure: the Nervous System.

To that end, and in order to explore the recursive principles at stake, Weber intends to combine abstract 35mm films that he has previously made (with a score generated by an artificial neural network) with electroencephalography: the recording of the electrical activity of the brain that occurs in the observer through the experience of these rhythmic films.

As such, this research project constitutes a proposition about the present conditions for viewing photographs within today's networked image regime—at a moment when computer technologies, themselves predicated upon neuroscience findings on human perception and cognition, have precipitated a mass transformation of psycho-social behavior.

2. PhD projects

'Empty Pages'
BAS ROGIERS
2019-2024

Thinking Tools / ArchiVolt

Today, graphic designers continually diversify their practices by commissioning themselves and taking on other roles. These hybrid designers navigate between functionality (as designers) and autonomy (as commissioners of their own work). Yet hybrid designers do not create hybrid designs. Their practices are autonomous. Their designs are not. Not by definition.

The project 'Empty Pages' contrasts the conventional art book, which is functional, represents and discloses art, with the so-called artists' book, which questions its function as a book, presents art and is autonomous as art object. Both the representation as the presentation are realized through design strategies. Can that distinction then also tilt through design? Can the conventional art book stand as a thing between its users, as a shared design tool, as an interface? What is the role of reproductions in this? What are the stylistic and aesthetic possibilities and limitations of reproductions? Can the mechanical reproductions of Walter Benjamin be designed as the digital reproductions of Boris Groys: as original

performances of invisible originals?

With regard to these questions, the doctoral project proposes a productive and hybrid design practice as research method: the genesis of a publishing house as artistic research into (and an update of) the design of conventional art books. The practice comprises four sections: Papers (catalogue, raisonné), Sheets (catalogue, imaginé), Folds (catalogue, pratiqué) and Pages (catalogue, publié).

'Relational Creativity. The workshop as a space to build technical, social and creative relations'

ANDREA CAMMAROSANO

2020-2024

Body and Material Reinvented / Art & Ecology

The future of fashion will depend on the industry's ability to redefine not just how we produce and consume, but also of how – and why – we create. Creativity is not just a productive ability: it is originally a ritual act, through which the maker can establish a direct and personal relation to technology, the territory, and / or the human community. It is from these relations that arises the social imaginary: the series of shared symbols and concepts fundamental to cultural and social cohesiveness. A healthy fashion industry will therefore

focus not just on productivity, but on creative relations; generating not just objects, but multiple relations, networks and languages.

Our research aims at defining how the school can foster these dynamics, structuring a system of exchanges between the players (student; producer; community), the places (school; laboratory; territory) and the resources (creative; technical; human) involved in the creative act. We will call this practice relational creativity. Our methodology will be based on workshops and seminars involving the students of the Antwerp Academy Fashion Department, local craftsmen and manufacturers, the public community, and the international fashion ecosystem. This kind of structure will generate hybrid and elastic networks among the creatives, the public community and the industry, of which the school will be the centre and the promoter.

'The medium is the memory, the support the souvenir'

NICOLAS BAEYENS

2020-2024

ArchiVolt

At the beginning of 2018 Nicolas Baeyens started the research project 'Sculpture as a flexible ephemerality'. His question concerned the meaning of sculpture as a static medium in a rapidly changing world. As a methodology he used the

changing conditions between creation and destruction. In the course of the research the term destruction changed into transformation, because the new form still carries the old one, but in a paradoxical way. This transformation of the images took place on the basis of happenings or events.

In a later step, the work of art was literally fragmented to be distributed as a souvenir among the visitors of the exhibition. This led to the following question: Can a work of art be stripped of its static character by inscribing it in a cyclical system of recovery and recycling? Each work of art has a metamorphosis in the viewer's memory, does it still exist in its original physical form?

In this PhD, Bayens wants to go deeper into the memory that functions as a medium and the physical work of art that is reduced to the technical carrier of the concept. Is the artwork the packaging of an idea, just as our economic system stimulates the consumer with evocative packaging? The content is processed and the packaging is temporary and seductive. In this way he questions the material character of a work of art by viewing it as a changeable carrier of an immaterial message that is shaped and reformed by the viewer's memory.

He wants to connect this system in art to our daily world of consumption, recycling and our

related economic system. His artistic practice functions as a case study.

‘INTERZONE (architecture of the ritual space)’

BART VAN DIJCK

2021-2025

Body and Material Reinvented / Art & Ecology

The artistic practice of Bart Van Dijck addresses the unknown in the psyche and the collective consciousness. He sees celebrations and rituals as moments when a community expresses its identity; when the individual and the group merge. His interest in shamanism and rites of passage has a strong impact on his current way of working, in which collaborations and interaction with the public have become important.

The goal of this PhD research is to sculpt the participatory artwork *Interzone*, which aims to function as a transition ritual. During *Interzone* residencies and actions, taking place in the periphery of the city, the school and the art world, a liminal space is made where shared experiences are created through protocols and creative processes. In a next phase, Van Dijck will develop methods to visualize these experiences and, in consultation with the participants, link them back to an artistic context. What do we expose and how?

Furthermore, Van Dijck is going to organize a number of

seasonal, cyclical actions in cooperation with other makers, where art is explored as a catalyst for transformation. Through this research, he is using his artistic practice as an experimental platform to implement rituals in the here and now, in education and in society, while exploring his position as an artist.

‘Sense of Wonder. Artistic portals between the real and the virtual’

KRISTOF TIMMERMAN

2022-2026

Max lab

‘SENSE OF WONDER: a feeling of awakening or awe triggered by an expansion of one’s awareness of what is possible or by confrontation with the vastness of space and time, as brought on by reading science fiction.’

Our lives are increasingly shifting towards the digital. Artists, too, have made attempts – successful or not – to attract spectators in virtual worlds. This evolution is irreversible, not to replace physical experiences, but to create new art forms and to tap into new audiences.

Concepts as storytelling, interaction, presence, and immersion are vital in defining this transition. During this PhD trajectory several experiments combining these concepts will be set up, in order to construct various portals in the

form of performances and/or installations.

‘Conceptual, Performative, Pedagogical: How to Guide Individuals through Courses of Instructed Simple Action Here and Now as Sites for Framed Chance Interaction between Self and World towards a Truly Personal Body of Work of Art and Life’

YUKI OKUMURA

2022-2026

ArchiVolt

From the late 1950s to the early 1970s, practitioners in different fields such as experimental music, postmodern dance, and conceptual art developed a similar method in which an idea is conceived intuitively, a set of simple instructions or rules is derived from it directly, and the procedure is carried out by following them blindly. Here, the idea refers to a possible course of action that usually requires no skill or talent, the score does not determine the result but only governs the process, giving it a rigid structure yet with room for improvisation, and the action is performed not for others but for oneself primarily, driven by one’s own curiosity about its unpredictable consequence.

While rooted in the shared interest in freeing the working process from ego and opening it up to chance, each of such ‘conceptual/performative’ actions has an amazing yet rarely acknowledged effect: by ruling out arbitrary manipulation of occurrences and thus

setting a frame for immediate interaction between self and world, it reveals and renews the performer’s innate nature as a lived human body in the here and now, always beyond their own control and knowledge. If a great work of art celebrates every person’s uniqueness, rather than special people’s genius, to play out such a procedure and be surprised by its outcome as a record of the entire event may be the most fun and instantaneous way to realize one, even emancipative for those who struggle in art-making.

How can we incorporate this method and activate its full potential in today’s higher art education, where conception is still linked to intention and performance is often misconstrued as a quasi-theatrical showcase? Tested through actual teaching practice while informed by first-hand accounts of relevant historical figures and assisted by the philosophical terminology of Kitaro Nishida, this research aims to develop a whole new interdisciplinary curriculum as a guideline for any individual to build up a lifelong body of work that constantly updates their personality as truly different from those of not only others but also their own past and future selves.

'When the artist swallows his image'

KAREL TUYTSCHAEVER

2022-2026

**Body and Material Reinvented /
CORPoREAL (Conservatoire)**

What does the way of depicting someone else say, or not say, about the creator, the maker? 'When the artist swallows his image' digs deeper into the seldom explored domain of embodied knowledge within the relationship between the maker and their image of someone else. Karel Tuytschaever explores the role that the maker's physicality plays in creating a visual presentation of somebody else. This is actualized by mutually purifying his hybrid, artistic craftsmanship and making his teaching method, as an artist at the Antwerp Schools of Arts, explicitly discipline-wide. As a theater and film maker, he looks for new ways to sincerely capture bodies in a 2D image, using lens-based media and his body, as a maker, as equal instruments. In his teaching method, he links different artistic disciplines to physical awareness and emphasize how the unique physicality of makers in training can be an engine for their vision and skills development. This symbiotic and self-reflective research creates an interesting intermediate field in which a relevant awareness for contemporary artistry arises, whereby the body forms the mediator between the world and an image. His methodology is based on the core values of his practice, and aims to identify

crucial elements in an evolution towards a more integral and reciprocal embodied, artistic practice. A practice consisting of the different layers of sensory, embodied knowledge. This is necessary because our urge for identity in a digitized network society threatens to prevent us from productive involvement and empathy with one another. In this way, Karel Tuytschaever hopes to contribute to (the awareness of) a more physical, tactile imagery in the visual and performing arts, and thereby a more layered, multi-sensory viewing experience.

'The Mottolese Archive'

ILARIA LUPO

2022-2026

ArchiVolt

'The Mottolese Archive' is a research project focusing on a video archive never made public: the fifteen-years-long documentation of the local environmental struggles created by Piero Mottolese, a 70-years old former worker of Taranto's ILVA. The largest steel-plant in Europe, ILVA was held liable for environmental and health disaster. Involved in a history of ecocide historically rooted in the systemic harm of communities and ecosystems in Southern Italy, since 2005 Taranto has been home to a civil society's engagement of great complexity. The actual archive's footage includes demonstrations, civil disobediences, meetings of activists, confrontations with politicians, labor strikes,

personal stories, seizures of contaminated flocks and mussels and much more, in a flow of experiences embracing the history of a city. The project aims to collectively constitute the archive as a common good while exploring the intertwined layers of locality and globality in environmental justice through the lens of political ecology.

'On the Perpetual Becoming of Sculpture and History and Their Moments of Convergence'

LAURENCE PETRONE

2023-2027

ArchiVolt

Can a work of art have a testimonial character with regard to political events?

When does one acquire a legitimate authority to reflect upon lifechanging events? How autonomous can an artist or his, her, their work be?

Petrone wishes to address these questions as a sculptor (from within her artistic practice) and as a historian who wants to revisit the oeuvres of other artists.

As to her, the registration and layered processing of an event from within an artistic practice can be meaningful as a commitment that transgresses verbal statements.

Keywords are: the sensory qualities of sculpture, witnessing from the arts, non-

discursive thinking, embodied thinking.

'Practice: A Metaphor – Metaphorizing practices and practicing metaphors'

VEDRAN KOPLJAR

2023-2027

ArchiVolt

This project is a metaphor.

What happens when you say something is a metaphor? You designate that 'something' as that what it is but also as 'something else'. You create a space for anyone who engages with this 'something' to co-create what 'something else' might be. By naming his personal artistic practice a metaphor, Vedran Kopljar wilfully creates this space and the opportunity for anyone who engages with it to co-create what else it might be.

What is the potential of metaphorizing artistic practices? Can the artistic archive be an embodiment of an artistic practice? How does painting relate to metaphor? Is a book a theoretical model? How can an academy function as a metaphor? These are just some of the questions summoned by Kopljar's designation of his practice as a metaphor and reflection on it. The designation is rooted in the division of his practice into sub-practices and the subsequent discovery of their functioning. The sub-practices evolved from works or long-term projects into distinct forms and became semi-autonomous practices with

their own distinct methodology, archiving and documentation. By reflecting on this breakdown of his artistic practice into these sub-practices he has come to see their potential as metaphors, and they have evolved to function as such. In this process he has come to question the role of metaphor on the level of artistic practices, instead of on the level of the artwork itself.

3. Collaborative projects

'Digital Mythologies – Mythical Digitalities'
Erasmus + project
2021-2024
Maxlab

This project is about exploring and designing digital tools for art-tutors and artists starting from the topic of Mythology. Mythology has been used and abused in the current cultural, social, and political discussion and its interpretations have been shallow, divisive, and often nationalistically motivated. However, mythologies reflect our shared experiences and ideas on a less complicated level and can also be used to build understanding and sense of wider communality.

To achieve the goals of the project there will be a series of workshops organized by the different partners: Ireland, Belgium, Poland, Finland and Lithuania. The student workshops have an intensive phase of five days. Themes of the student workshops are related to different aspects of local mythology.

Coordinated by Janna Beck, with Maxlab researchers.

A collaboration between the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, the School of Arts, Design and Architecture / Aalto University, Finland, the Art Academy in Katowice, Poland, the

IADT Institute of Art, Design + Technology, Dublin, Ireland, and the VDA Academy of Arts, Vilnius, Lithuania.

'Studio Stadswaag'
Supported by the City of Antwerp (District Antwerp) and the Flemish Community
2022-2024
ArchiVolt

Studio Stadswaag is a co-creative process in which artists and (former) students of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, together and in dialogue with the neighborhood of the Stadswaag (a square located on the North of the Academy Campus) and its residents, examine what the stratification of the Stadswaag consists of today, what is in the balance, and how we can create harmonious connections and new realities through art in the public space.

How we can make public domain together, create the city together, ... and this in the long term.

We hope that this project can be a starting point for developing a sustainable dynamic on and around the Stadswaag square.

Within this project, an artistic integration will be realized commissioned by the City of Antwerp (District Antwerp) and

the Flemish Community.
Coordinated by JOHAN PAS, NICO DOCKX and MAARTEN DESMET, in collaboration with WOUTER BOLANGIER and others.

A collaboration between the District of Antwerp, the Flemish Community, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, Stadsform vzw, and the University of Antwerp – Faculty of Design Sciences.

‘Upcycling with Waste Reclaimers: Improving Urban Recycling Practices through Industrial Design and the Creative Arts’
VLIR-UOS project
2022-2024

In this project, we improve urban recycling practices in Johannesburg through participatory action research. We re-contextualize waste reclaimers’, residents’ and administrator’s field knowledge within industrial design research and the creative arts. We set up an Upcycling Lab for Metal, Plastics and Paper, we develop three upcycling prototypes, we develop more effective, visual based sorting schemes for local government, and we increase citizen engagement with an upcycling community parade. In that manner, we aim to respond to the low level of effective waste recycling in the province of Gauteng, as in South Africa as a whole, where only 40 % of waste production is effectively being recycled.

Coordinated by KRIS VAN ‘T HOF (Academy) and GORDON FROUD (University of Johannesburg), with LEON VRANKEN and HEIDE HINRICHS (Academy).

A collaboration between the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp and the FADA (Faculty Art, Design and Architecture, University of Johannesburg).

‘Urban Travel Machines: European Planetariums and Immersive Poetry Performances’
Creative Europe Project
2022-2024
Maxlab

UTM contributes to the renewal of the literary sector in Europe through the adoption of Immersive Technology. UTM enhances transnational mobility, new technology and audience engagement with regards to poetry performance.

In order to do that, UTM builds upon (1) the networks and practices of slam poetry. They have proved themselves a vibrant vector of audience expansion and artistic renewal, in particular when it comes to urban and cultural diversification in the literary sector. (2) immersive technology that has gained massive traction in the CCI’s at large, yet remains strongly underused in the context of literary creation, in spite of significant expertise within European art schools (visual arts). (3) tech infrastructure in 4 scientific planetariums, re-

defining 3D projection technology as a compelling means of digital storytelling in the context of 4 creative cities (Tartu, Vienna, La Coruna and Brussels) .

Coordinated by PHILIP MEERSMAN and INE VANOEVEREN, WITH JANNA BECK and KRISTOF TIMMERMAN.

A collaboration between: the Academy Design and Architecture – AALTO University, Helsinki, Polish Japanese Academy of Information Technology, Warschau, Science Centre AAHHA, Tartu, Volkshochschule, Vienna, CasaSciencias, A Coruña, Koninklijke Belgische Sterrenwacht, Brussels.

‘Drawing Resilient futures: Imagining Sustainable Coping Strategies with regards to climate change in low-income urban areas through the digital arts’
VLIR-UOS project
2022-2024
Maxlab

In this project, we develop “collaborative drawing technology” in HEI (creative arts) and local community centres. With open source software and low tech digital devices, we bridge the gap between the “digital survival skills” of disadvantaged youth and the regional frontrunner position of the creative industries in Durban, improving the inclusivity of education, the quality of needs oriented research, the uptake of digital applications for grassroots education and awareness

campaigns. In this manner, we support the digital arts as a powerful means to re-imagine and re-tell futures and gender equity and economic inclusion in the creative arts and in local communities. We help HEI’s in Kwazulu-Natal to guarantee higher quality and more inclusive education for larger and more diverse cohorts of talented candidates in these fields, in order to make the greatest number benefit from digital breakthroughs exemplified in the creative industries.

Coordinated by JANNA BECK, with PHILIP MEERSMAN, EVERT PEETERS, WOUTER STEEL.

A collaboration between the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp and the University of Kwazulu Natal (School of Arts) (UKZN).

‘Hydromedia: Seeing with Water’
Creative Europe Project
2023-2024
Thinking Tools

The climate crisis is announced in images, but leaves the imagination orphaned. Most images we’re confronted with reduce us to passive onlookers. What is missing in our current media environment are images which can propose a healthier relation to the biosphere on which life depends: one in which mankind is not portrayed as the supreme lord of nature, but as an integral part of it. Images that could express this new kind of relationship require a different

production method, one in which the human actor who initiates the process is no longer the sole author of the image, but create a post-humanist vision in which other species, minerals and chemicals are invited to impress their co-presence. To create these new, experimental production methods, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp together with the HKU Utrecht and the Hfg Karlsruhe established the Creative Europe-project

Coordinated by STEVEN HUMBLET and INGE HENNEMAN.

A collaboration between Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, Natuurpunt, Instituut voor Natuureducatie, HKU Utrecht, HFG Karlsruhe, Naturschutzbund, and Technische Sammlun Dresden.

**‘Crafting Futures’
FWO / SBO Project
2023-2027
Art & Ecology**

‘Crafting Futures’ seeks ways to revalue the knowledge and skills of crafts and tap into their potential for addressing current challenges in sustainability, innovation, inclusion, lifelong learning, and urban transformation. The project examines the assessment & validation mechanisms by which crafts knowledge and know-how (CKK) is evaluated in order to enhance its added value for the economy and society in Belgium.

‘Crafting Futures’ is developed by an interdisciplinary team from UAntwerpen and KU Leuven, in collaboration with the Schools of Art, KASK in Gent, Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp and Sint Lucas Antwerpen. The project is realized in close collaboration with field partners and three stakeholder working groups specialized on crafts education, maker spaces, and finally, policy and entrepreneurship. By combining critical analysis with an action-based approach, the project will prototype and develop new models for validating crafts in educational, policy-making, and economic contexts.

From the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, ‘Crafting Futures’ is coordinated by Vivi Touloumidi, and Andrea Cammarosano is involved as artistic action-researcher.

This publication offers an insight into the research-related activities at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp in 2024. However, this is not a comprehensive overview. The researchers and research groups organise a wide range of other informal activities, inspiring encounters, and artistic outputs as part of their research projects, addressing students, specialized peers, or a wider audience.

Many thanks to all the involved artists, researchers, students, collaborators, participants, coordinators, and staff members.

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Texts: the artists, researchers, coordinators

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Art & Research



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Cover image: Research Class 'Puddle Forensics' by Mirja Busch; photo by Wannes Cré



Guided tour by Spiros Hadjidjanos, researcher and curator of the exhibition 'Reproducibility'; work in the front by Spiros Hadjidjanos; photo by Wannes Cré



Research Class 'Cooking' by Charlotte Koopman; photo by Marnie Oré

DLE
RENSICS

A wall covered in forensic evidence. At the top left, the words "DLE" and "RENSICS" are spelled out in black letter tiles. Below this, a sign reads "PUDDLE WATER QUALITY". The wall is covered with various items: a large blue map, several photographs of outdoor scenes and close-ups, a line graph with two data series, and a red-outlined diagram. A large, irregular blue shape is drawn on the wall, possibly representing a site layout or a specific area of interest. There are also several small blue dots scattered across the upper right portion of the wall.

