

Study Guide  
2023–2024

# Master of Film

# Artistic Research in and Through Cinema



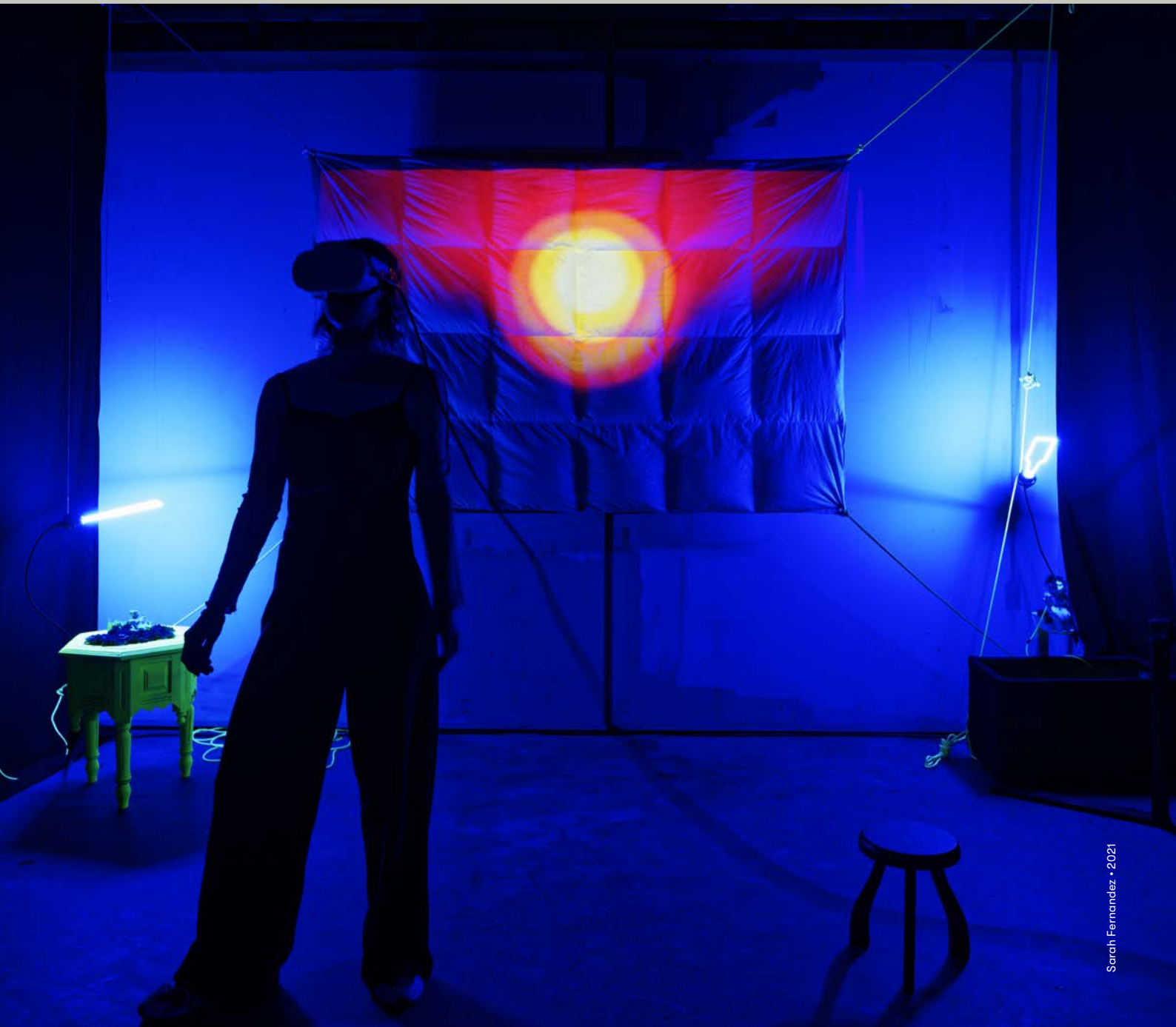
Netherlands Film Academy  
Amsterdam University of the Arts

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This Study Guide describes the educational vision of the Master of Film-programme and outlines its translation into the content of the programme. The study guide is complementary to the 'Teaching and Examination Regulations (2023-2024)'. No rights can be derived from the text in this Study Guide.

# Our Vision



### The value of artistic research

We believe in the intrinsic value of art and its critical contribution to society. Research is an integral part of art. Grounded as it is in the practice of art, or, in our case, the practice of filmmaking, artistic research produces knowledge. Knowledge relevant to the worlds of art – all major movements in cinema were the result of artistic research – but also knowledge that extends beyond the arts or cinema. Thus, our Master's programme 'Artistic Research in and through Cinema' can be said to operate at the crossroads where art practice meets production of knowledge.

### Our view on education

We believe that education is about creating 'conditions of possibility'. It is about creating a framework in which students (or 'researchers' as we prefer to call them) are given the space to shape their own development. This framework requires a focus on process rather than product, a non-hierarchical relation between teachers and researchers, an understanding of subjectivity as driving force, and an emphasis on the group as a context of support rather than competition.

We focus on process rather than product because we believe that researchers who learn how to steer their own processes are more flexible and therefore more capable of adapting to continuously changing circumstances and professional demands.

The emphasis on a democratic or non-hierarchical relation between teachers and researchers is born from our understanding that education is a space of learning, not just for the researchers but also for the teachers, mentors and all the others that are part of our 'learning community'.

Creating 'conditions of possibility' means taking seriously individual differences and individual needs and desires. Understanding them, 'owning' them and using them to carve out one's trajectory, makes subjectivity a driving force of the learning and research process. Emphasising the group as a necessary support structure for development, doesn't stand in contradiction to the focus on subjectivity as a driving force. On the contrary: successful groups need individuals who recognize their responsibility towards their work and learning processes. This recognition will create respect for other voices and thus prevent a sense of competition.

### Artistic Research in and through Cinema

Our practice driven MA-programme has a clear focus: artistic research in and through cinema. This focus sets it apart from other film programmes, both in film or art schools and in universities. We define 'artistic research' as an open-ended trajectory in which thinking and making are one, and which privileges questions over answers, process over product, experimentation over mere execution and long-term effects over short term gain. 'Artistic research' is neither a discipline nor a methodology. Instead, it's a state of mind, a 'mentality' or an attitude.

'Artistic research in and through cinema' means thinking through images and sounds. It means starting from the practice, knowledge, and perspectives of filmmaking, and using its accompanying concepts and language.

Thus, researching 'in and through' cinema refers to research through the frame, notions and paradigm of the filmmaking practice. The research 'in' revolves around questions of the cinema practice itself – spectatorship, perception, storytelling, modes of production, ethics et cetera – while, in addition, research 'through' relates to the use of cinematic conditions and concepts to explore topics and fields beyond cinema – topics such as memory, trauma, archival practices, human relations or identity for example.

### Programme structure

The 2-year full-time, English spoken MA-programme (120 EC) is divided into 4 semesters that each have their own focus. Together they create an ongoing research cycle of which the exams are an integral part. The programme uses three pedagogical 'tools' and provides a research budget. It is also closely linked to the Film Academy's Research Group.

#### The four terms and their focus

##### Semester 1. Subjectivity and positioning

To understand 'from where you speak' and to take responsibility for that 'point of view' is perhaps the most important precondition for artistic research and for any artistic practice. This is why our programme starts from this notion of 'subjectivity'. It determines what you do, how and why; it's a position towards yourself, your work and the world. This is not to say though that it's a given, on the contrary: subjectivity itself is a process and a space of research and exploration. Although it is related to questions of identity and psychology, 'subjectivity' cannot be reduced to autobiography. It is instead about authorship, about developing your singular vision and defending it. This notion of subjectivity underlies all other semesters.

##### Semester 2. Method and methodology

Finding your own (working) method and (research) methodology is the focus of semester 2. We do not believe that there is, or should be, a predetermined or fixed methodology for artistic research in and through cinema. In line with our focus on subjectivity we believe that the methods of artistic research are individual, subjective, and singular. In fact, we believe that what makes your 'artistic signature' is your singular research and production methodology.

##### Semester 3. Exploration and experimentation

Semester 3 is devoted to further exploring your research theme or project in an experimental manner. Experimentation in art and artistic research has less to do with testing assumptions or checking working methods, technologies, or production strategies.

Instead, artistic exploration and experimentation is about being open to surprises, detours, and unexpected encounters – with knowledge, materials, references, technologies, and people. Tracing, documenting, and communicating that subjective process of exploration is part and parcel of the experimental attitude.

#### Semester 4. Conceptualisation and communication

The practice of art and artistic research organically leads to a desire or need of conceptualisation, of zooming out from the particularities to see a bigger picture, a wider context in which the research figures or can be meaningful. Like methodology and experimentation, conceptualisation starts from the researcher's subjective understanding of concepts and notions used. Conceptualisation is at the core of artistic research as it enables insights, produces knowledge, and gives rise to new questions. Part of the conceptualisation process is also, finally, how to share or communicate these insights and new questions with others.

#### **Exams**

Understanding the 4-semester programme as a dynamic process, the 'exams' that conclude every semester are considered milestones in that process: moments to take stock of what you have done, how you evaluate that and how you wish to go on. Even the last exam, at the end of the second year, and the subsequent public presentation of your research project during the Artistic Research Week is considered a moment in an ongoing process, albeit an important one. Each exam is dedicated to the theme of the semester and all exams, except for the first one, involve external examiners from the professional field.

#### **Three pedagogical 'tools'**

There are three integrated pedagogical 'tools' that are in place to enable your artistic research journey: the curriculum, core 'teaching' system and the group.

#### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is made up of workshops that take your research interests as its material to work with. All workshops combine practice and reflection and are taught or moderated by filmmakers and artists whose own practice can itself be described as invested with an artistic research ethos. Aside from these workshops, there are regular inspiring public lectures by filmmakers, artists, philosophers, or scientists, related to the theme of the semester.

Although it's a full-time programme, there's a distinction in the density of workshops between the first and second year.

Whereas year 1 is primarily organised around workshops, year 2 focuses more on your individual research project and therefore has fewer workshops.

#### **The Core Teachers Team**

You will be supported throughout your research process by a team of four core teachers, including the Head of the Program, who will engage with your research, both individually and collectively in small research groups. We conceive of a research environment that is premised on peer learning and self-directed research anchored in continuous professional dialogue, for which you also need to take responsibility. Group and individual consultation sessions with the core teachers are aimed at strengthening your research abilities through systematic reflection on your practice.

As the designers of the curriculum, the core teachers will be able to help you in understanding what is expected of you in the particular stage of the semester, understanding the key notions and concepts (subjectivity, methodology, experimentation, conceptualization), exam requirements etc. All core and guest teachers and most, if not all external advisors are artist-researchers themselves.

#### **The peer group**

Every year we select no more than ten researchers based on their CV, portfolio, and research interests, aiming to create a group that is inclusive in terms of gender, race, nationality, origin and professional or artistic background. Because of its creative level and its diversity, the group will provide a stimulating and supportive environment for all.

Generally, we believe that the group is a very important, if not the most important learning tool. This is also why, particularly in the first year, there are many collective workshops, collaborative group research activities and why we place a great importance on peer feedback. For this we use a specific technique that understands feedback not as a tool to judge but as a tool to think.

#### **Budget**

You will have a research budget to your disposal of around €10.000, which you can use to pay for fees for people you work with – including your external advisors –, rental of equipment (if the equipment is not available at the school), travel and festival visits, et cetera. Part of the budget is kept aside to pay for the concluding public presentation of your research during the Artistic Research Week at the end of the second year. As a researcher you're of course also entitled to use the Film Academy's equipment and facilities.

# Our Programme



# Semester I: Subjectivity and Positioning

September – December 2023; programme is subject to change



Peter Hammer • 2019

## Focus, structure, goals, final qualifications

The focus of the first semester is on ‘subjectivity’ and ‘positioning’, described as understanding from where you speak and taking responsibility for that point of view. Subjectivity determines what you do, how and why; it’s the position or point of view you take, or rather: develop, towards yourself, your work, and the world.

Positioning relates to an understanding of the fields or references that are of importance to you, your (previous and present) work and your research, and why.

The specific goals of the semester are described as follows.

The student/researcher can:

- articulate his/her understanding of subjectivity in relation to his/her own present artistic research interests
- review his/her earlier practice and trajectory in relation to his/her present artistic research interests
- envision or project ways to further explore his artistic research interests
- articulate an understanding of the need to position oneself and one’s practice in relation to one’s earlier practice and interests, and within relevant fields

- develop a way to trace, document and archive his/her artistic research process
- creatively express him- or herself

The final qualifications (or most important intended learning outcomes) for this semester are:

- 1A. The graduate understands the importance of subjectivity for artistic research and can relate it to his/her own artistic research process and practice
- 1B. The graduate is aware of the need to contextualise and position his/her artistic research and practice

## Input moments/weeks

- The first input week of semester 1- as of all semesters in the program, is the general introduction of the theme of the semester.
- Every input moment ends with an assignment (or set of assignments) to be worked on in the weeks until the next input moment.
- Every input moment lands in the beginning of the next one.
- Although every input moment takes a week, it doesn’t need to be a single workshop, nor does it necessarily imply 5 straight days of teaching.

#### Group moments/weeks

- Group moments can be of different length, depending on the purpose of the group moment (the assignment following on from the input moment) & on the initiative of the group itself.
- Group moments can also be used for one-day workshops, proposed by the group (for example at the end of the introductory input at the beginning of a semester).

#### Individual working weeks-

- The researchers will have an opportunity to work on their research and professional development/obligations

#### Public lectures

Every three weeks the Master organizes public lectures, for which she invites filmmakers, visual artists, philosophers or scientists to share their work, perspectives and research. Where possible these lectures are connected to the theme(s) of the semester.

#### Research consultations

- One-on-one's with two core teachers responsible for the semester are primarily focused on the theme and requirements of the semester programme.

#### Festivals

- Festivals (IDFA, IFFR) are a good way for you to connect to the (inter)national film world.

#### Exams

- Exams are important milestones in the research trajectory
  - looking backwards and forwards, supported by evidence
  - but they are not where the semester lands; it lands after the exam, where you look back at the entire semester including the exam.

### Workshops

Workshops are the key input format in which each researcher's teaching and learning trajectory is supported within the semester structure. The workshops are delivered by the core teachers and guest teachers. The content of the workshops is thematically related to the semester goals. The workshops consist of presentations and practice-based assignments or outputs for the student researchers.

#### Semester 1

##### Workshops

#### Unpacking Subjectivity and Positioning

##### Katarina Zdjelar

Conducted by the core teacher, Katarina Zdjelar, this workshop introduces the intricacies of Semester 1, with a primary emphasis on the themes of subjectivity and positioning. The method of exploration involves the analysis of a curated selection of films and moving image artworks, with the objective of dissecting the multifaceted concepts.

These artistic works, crafted by renowned artists, will function as instruments to enhance understanding and enable student researchers to articulate their interpretations of these notions, particularly in the context of their individual research inquiries. The case studies encompass moving image examples by Anri Sala, Rori Pilgrim, Marwa Arsanios, Pierre Huyghe, Sejla Kamerić, and Philbert Aimé Mbabazi Sharangabo. These art pieces will not only serve as sources of inspiration but will also contribute to the enrichment of artistic research discourse, enhancing the comprehension of fundamental ideas related to subjectivity and positioning among student researchers.

#### The Locations of the Voice

##### Federica Buetti

In this workshop, we explore and experiment with the concept of "voice." This exploration encompasses both the act of "speaking with" and "listening to" one another. Within the realm of writing, the concept of voice serves as a reflection of one's thinking and speaking, their poetic intentions that guide their work, and the general attitude underlying their words. It encompasses the choices made regarding tone, words, and approach. For thinkers like Carla Lonzi, Audre Lorde, and Hortense Spillers, the feminist voice is one that continually challenges itself, striving to eliminate traces of oppression within. A voice also serves as a unique way of seeing the world, shaping one's viewpoint, and influencing how they listen, which in turn impacts their relationships with the world. Throughout the workshop, student researchers will engage in exercises, close readings, and open conversations, fostering a collective practice of listening to each other's voices. The methodology of "listening to images," as described by Tina Campt, will be employed to tune into the inaudible frequencies of images, allowing for a deeper understanding of how they convey and open

up interpretative possibilities and concealed meanings. The workshop will delve into questions such as how images and words communicate, taking into account the diversity of participants' perspectives from their unique locations and how to access deeper resonances within these forms of expression.

#### Encounters with Alumni of NFA Master of Film

These half-day encounters are conceived as space in which the Master of Film Alumni shares their research trajectories and creative work with the current cohort of student-researchers. The encounters are designed to be a creative site of exchange between researchers in ways that are inspiring and generative. Eliane Esther Bots will present her film *In the Flow of Words*, the documentary follows the narratives of three interpreters of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. They interpreted shocking testimonies from witnesses, victims and perpetrators, without ever allowing their own emotions, feelings and personal histories to be present. Contrary to their position at the tribunal, this film places their voices and experiences center stage.



### Artistic Research: A journey into practice

Lucy Cotter

This workshop, led by Lucy Cotter, will draw upon the ideas presented in her introductory essay found in “Reclaiming Artistic Research.” Its primary objective is to shed light on how the world of art serves as a catalyst for the redefinition of knowledge. It does so by placing a significant emphasis on open-ended research processes that prioritize the generation of new inquiries, rather than the provision of definitive answers or supplementary information. Furthermore, the workshop will explore notions of embodiment and material knowledge. Contemporary art emerges as a distinctive arena, housing a myriad of sensory, corporeal, and intuitive forms of knowledge. It stands out as a unique space in which individuals can engage with knowledge that transcends conventional linguistic constructs, circumvents human consciousness, or resides outside established historical narratives. Within this context, Lucy Cotter will explore the various registers of knowledge, dissecting their relevance in a world. The workshop will encompass an examination of recent video works by artist Sky Hopinka, coupled with a thorough analysis of selected portions of his dialogues. These discussions will revolve around the intricate relationship between embodied and material knowledge, the role of abstraction, and the significance of language in artistic expression. Drawing from Hopinka’s essay, “The Centers of Somewhere,” the workshop will also delve into the artist’s positioning within this creative domain.

### Positions

Melvin Moti

The intricate process of mediating personal experiences is an ongoing and evolving journey. This workshop, led by filmmaker Melvin Moti, is dedicated to exploring the various approaches to formalizing and mediating one’s own experiences. Drawing from Moti’s body of work, the workshop will delineate a spectrum of potential methods for mediating thoughts and experiences, techniques he has applied over the years. Student researchers will have the opportunity to locate their own position within this spectrum and become better acquainted with an approach that aligns with their needs. Each day of the workshop will commence with a series of collective discussions centered around pertinent questions concerning articulation, mediation, and the discovery of one’s unique standpoint. Furthermore, Melvin Moti will present his own work, contextualizing it within the framework of questions raised during the workshop. This interactive approach ensures that students’ work, thoughts, and writing remain in constant dialogue with Moti’s research and creative process. Through collaborative work and discussions, the student researchers will collectively learn from one another, fostering a dynamic and enriching learning environment.

### In search of non-logocentric

Janis Rafa

In this workshop, Janis Rafa, a visual artist working in both the fields of art and film, will delve into the intricate connections within her body of work. She will explore the concealed failures, accidents, and inevitable choices inherent in the filmmaking process, which have emerged as pivotal components of her artistic practice. The workshop will examine the subversion of hierarchies, the exploration of marginal territories, and the liberation of the animalistic and uncontrollable aspects of storytelling. These elements serve as the organic building blocks that shape each film, with the potential to not only influence the filmmaking process but also to redefine the narrative itself. Student researchers will gain insights into Rafa’s creative approach, revealing the hidden narratives and transformative potential within the filmmaking

### Exam 1

The purpose or goal of the exam is to discuss and assess your process during the first semester considering the theme of the semester (subjectivity and positioning) and your research interests. The exam consists of material to be handed in before, an audio-visual presentation and a Q&A with the committee of examiners. The committee consists of one external examiners from the professional field, one internal examiner (core teacher) and the head of the department (chairperson of the exam committee). One of the core teachers and a critical friend (peer student-researcher) are present as well. The different criteria of assessment, for each of the exam parts, relate to the two final qualifications mentioned before:

- 1A. The graduate has the capacity to understand, develop and creatively express his/her subjective identity
- 1B. The graduate has developed an awareness of context and position

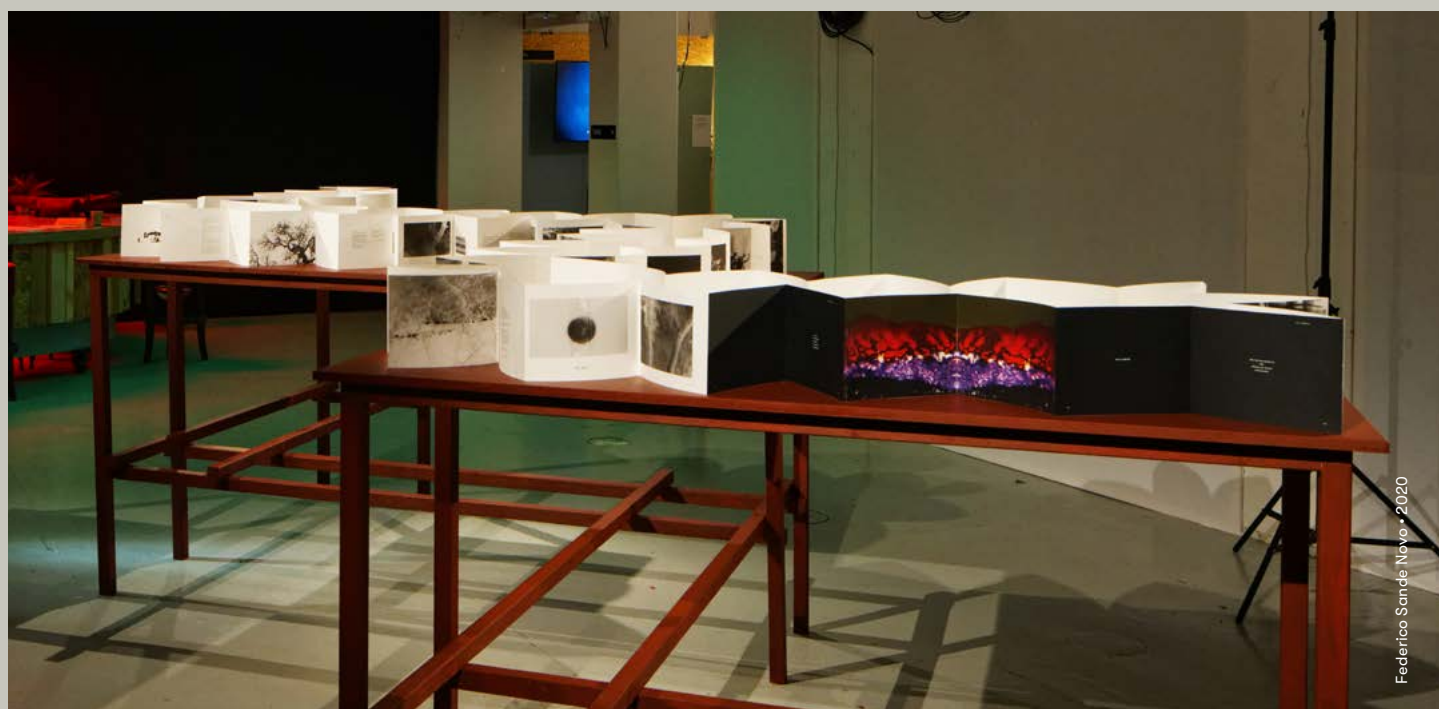
### General framework

The exam procedure consists of two elements:

1. Material that you hand in beforehand: a critical review + ‘evidence’
2. an oral exam consisting of two parts a 10-minute visual presentation for the committee of examiners and your colleague students a 30-minute individual examination by the committee.

# Semester 2: Method and Methodology

January – June 2024; programme is subject to change



Federico Sande Novo • 2020

## Focus, structure, goals, final qualifications.

The focus of the second semester is on you finding your own (working) method and (research) methodology. There's no such thing as a given methodology for artistic research. Like in your work, it's your own voice that needs to resound in the methods you choose.

The structure of the semester is such that it allows you to experience and play with different approaches you can use to sharpen your research interest with, or against. These are of course but a selection of possible methods and you're invited to find or develop your own. After an introductory workshop on the theme of the semester, the second block or period consists of different workshops, together forming a range of possible ways to approach your research. Like in semester 1 workshops – combining practice and reflection – are interspersed with core teachers' consultations, feedback sessions and public lectures. The semester formally concludes with an exam, as a milestone, in which you look back at semester 2 in terms of methodology and look forward to year 2 and specifically to semester 3, exploration and experimentation.

The specific goals of the semester are described as follows.

The student/researcher can:

- frame his/her field of research
- find and express his /her method (in view of other possible methods)
- undertake preliminary research & provide 'evidence' for it
- articulate a proposal for a research project
- defend the relevance of his /her research and research project
- critically review his/her ongoing process
- creatively express him- or herself

The final qualifications (or 'most important intended learning outcomes') for this semester are:

- 2A. The graduate has mastered his/her own method(s) after reviewing existing methods.
  - 2B. The graduate can initiate and steer a process of research
- Recurring programme elements

### Workshops

Workshops are the key input format in which each researcher's teaching and learning trajectory is supported within the semester structure. The workshops are delivered by the core teachers and guest teachers, the content of the workshops is thematically related to the semester goals. The workshops consist of seminar type presentations and practice-based assignments or outputs for the student researchers.

## Semester 2

### Workshops

The MA CORE Teachers team Diana Toucendo, Katarina Zdjelar and Nduka Mntambo will introduce the Semester 2 Method and Methodology through a series of seminars, workshops, screenings, and an assignment in which the researchers will be invited to reflect on their individual methods of making work as entry points of exploring the themes of the semester.

### Methodological Elasticity

Nduka Mntambo and Katarina Zdjelar

This workshop marks the beginning of the second semester of the MA program in Artistic Research in and through Cinema. The focus for this term is on 'Method(s) and Methodology,' to reveal individual subjective and unique working methods and research methodologies. As artistic research in cinema is interdisciplinary, there is no single methodological framework. We recognize and value the diverse approaches each student researcher may bring to their distinct modes of working. The workshop does not prescribe predetermined methods; instead, we encourage student researchers to discover these methods from their creative practices. By drawing from your personal tools, skills, inspirations, references, and experimentation, student researchers are encouraged to reinforce, adapt, and apply these methods aligned with their chosen subjects of study. This approach resonates with the concept of 'artistic subjectivity,' where an individual's unique method becomes their identifiable 'artistic signature.' It is essential to understand the rationale behind selecting a specific approach as it forms the fundamental groundwork for methodology.

### Thinking through filming

Albert Elings and Eugenie Jansen

With a strong emphasis on methodology for the semester, this workshop offers a practical exploration of how the filmmaking process, encompassing shooting, preparation, and editing, can serve as a valuable tool for gaining deeper insights into one's unique creative approach and their perception of the world. Through hands-on practice, student researchers will discover potential personalized methods for addressing their research questions. The workshop commences by delving into the research questions currently captivating the student researchers. It seeks innovative approaches to investigate these questions by harnessing the diverse elements intrinsic to the medium of film. These elements include the use of images, sounds, music, texts, graphics, and edits.

Student researchers will acquire practical experience in employing filmmaking to reflect upon the art of filmmaking itself. Key questions to be explored during the workshop encompass: Can sketching within the medium of film, as opposed to traditional writing, be considered a valid method? Alternatively, should we seek our methodologies within the process of creating film sketches? Moreover, how does the act of presenting these sketches to colleagues contribute to our comprehension of the medium, and what insights can be derived to propel us towards the next stages of our research practice?

### Refusal as Method

Federica Bueti

How do artists and filmmakers develop a language that is both aesthetically and politically subversive? This language is a rejection of the reproduction of images and narratives that feature pain, suffering, violence, and dispossession, which create a victimhood narrative. Can fiction be used to pull contemporary audiences out of their echo chambers of biased truth-telling? This workshop will explore how images can be used to contest and counter conservative forces and oppressive narratives. During the workshop, we will examine examples from art and cinema, including Elia Souleiman's films and Shuruq Harb, Bani Abidi, and Bassem Saad's videos. We will look at how filmmakers and image-makers have traced "subversive" routes for the circulation of images in post- and neo-colonial contexts, such as the Middle East. We will study how they have dealt with the construction of images and imaginaries, and the role that art can play in recording, addressing, and attending to certain histories. We will also explore how people use their imagination to improvise ways out of conditions of oppression and alienation, and imagine what lies "beyond the beyond," where certain colonial politics and practices stop making sense. The workshop will analyze examples of filmmakers and artists who have used the possibilities of twisting, tweaking, and tricking a given language or well-defined path of thinking, visualizing, and vocalizing to put pressure on and trouble given narratives. Here, "refusal" is an affective response to the carefully orchestrated propaganda machines of colonial and settlercolonial regimes.

### Towards decolonial film praxis

Ram Krisha Ranjan

This week-long workshop will introduce student researchers to interlinkages between film as a medium and method and the logic of coloniality. This workshop aims at giving students an in-depth understanding of the present condition and critical potential of film praxis and education with a particular focus on the question of decolonial thinking and doing. The workshop will draw upon multiple filmic traditions and the concrete project of decoloniality operative for decades throughout Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The workshop will critically engage with methodological and aesthetic strategies and imaginaries involved in decolonial film practices through examples of individual and collective film practices.

During the intensive, students will be encouraged to cinematically test and speculate on the propositions discussed in the class.

### Expanded sonic practices

Carlos Casas

This interdisciplinary workshop explores how sound intersects with art practices, challenging traditional film and audiovisual methodologies. The workshop uses sound as an alternative process to shift the focus from the visual to the sonic world. It explores themes related to perception and how sound can evoke different perceptual states compared to the visual world. The workshop introduces sound studies theory to guide different approaches to art practice and encourages research on sound's impact on contemporary music composition methodologies and technical developments.

The workshop draws examples from music and sound art, field recordings, film, photography, writing, and emerging multimedia practices. It focuses on the “cross-breeding” of documentary media and methodologies that enrich each other. Researchers will conduct an empirical exploration of the interrelationship of sound and perception and redirect their research to the sonic realm. Throughout the different exercises, students will be challenged to develop their critical, creative, and sensorial understanding within their research while bringing a new perspective to the field.

### Rituals, amulets and filmmaking

Saodat Ismailova

Saodat Ismailova is an artist who believes that filmmaking can be a ritual or an amulet. By bringing together fragments of memory, emotions, sensations, and knowledge, she creates narratives that reflect her personal experiences. Her body of work includes videos, performances, musical forms, installations, and documentaries that draw inspiration from childhood memories and traditional technologies from Turkestan. Saodat aims to create a dialogue between autochthonous traditions and forgotten pasts. Through her five films, including *Chillpiq*, *Plea*, *Chillakhona*, *Bibi Seshanbe*, and *18,000 Worlds*, Saodat shares her artistic research, methods, and methodologies through film as a ritual. Sometimes, a specific ritual is captured in the film, while other times, the entire film is inspired by a ritual. Saodat's creative methods are explicitly rooted in decolonial thoughts, exploring the possibility of re-establishing communication with cultural heritage that has been silenced, erased, or forgotten. Saodat invites students to create a moving image exercise as an amulet or a ritual, reflecting on the complexities, possibilities, and other inquiries that a ritual may convey. They will use their footage from their research to make a film that is not intended for public viewing but rather as a self-introspection ritual.

## Researchers Curated Encounters

Considering our program's emphasis on a peer-driven and non-hierarchical approach to curriculum design, we provide student researchers with the chance to extend invitations to guests for the program.

### Group Assignments

Group assignments are planned in a way that will allow for each contributor to incorporate elements of his/her/their own research in the process. It does not have to necessarily become a part of any researcher's project, but it should always be relevant to his/her/their research. Each group assignment has its “landing moment” where the results are going to be reflected upon, so the experience can be salvaged and reapplied as a learning moment in the development of an individual research trajectory.

#### Research Consultations

In between the different workshops there will be sessions with the core teachers to recap and reflect on what you've taken from the workshops and subsequently what steps you will take in your own research.

### Feedback sessions

An important part of the group as a learning tool consists of the use of a specific feedback method. This method sees giving and getting feedback not as a moment of judgement but as a moment of collective thinking and learning. Feedback sessions are a regular feature of the programme.

### Public Lecture Series

Every three weeks the Master organizes public lectures, for which she invites filmmakers, visual artists, philosophers, or scientists to share their work, perspectives, and research. Where possible These lectures are connected to the theme(s) of the semester.

## Exam 2

The purpose of this exam is to discuss and assess the progress you've made in the second semester of the master's course regarding your research project. The exam consists of material to be handed in before, a (public) audio-visual presentation and a Q&A with the committee of examiners. The committee consists of two external examiners from the professional field and the head of the department. One of the core teachers and a critical friend – one of your peers – are present as well. Like the semester as a whole, the focus of the exam is on ‘methodology’ and relates specifically to two of the four sets of final qualifications.

- 2A. the graduate has mastered his/her own artistic research method(s) after reviewing existing methods
- 2B. the graduate can initiate and steer a process of artistic research in and through cinema

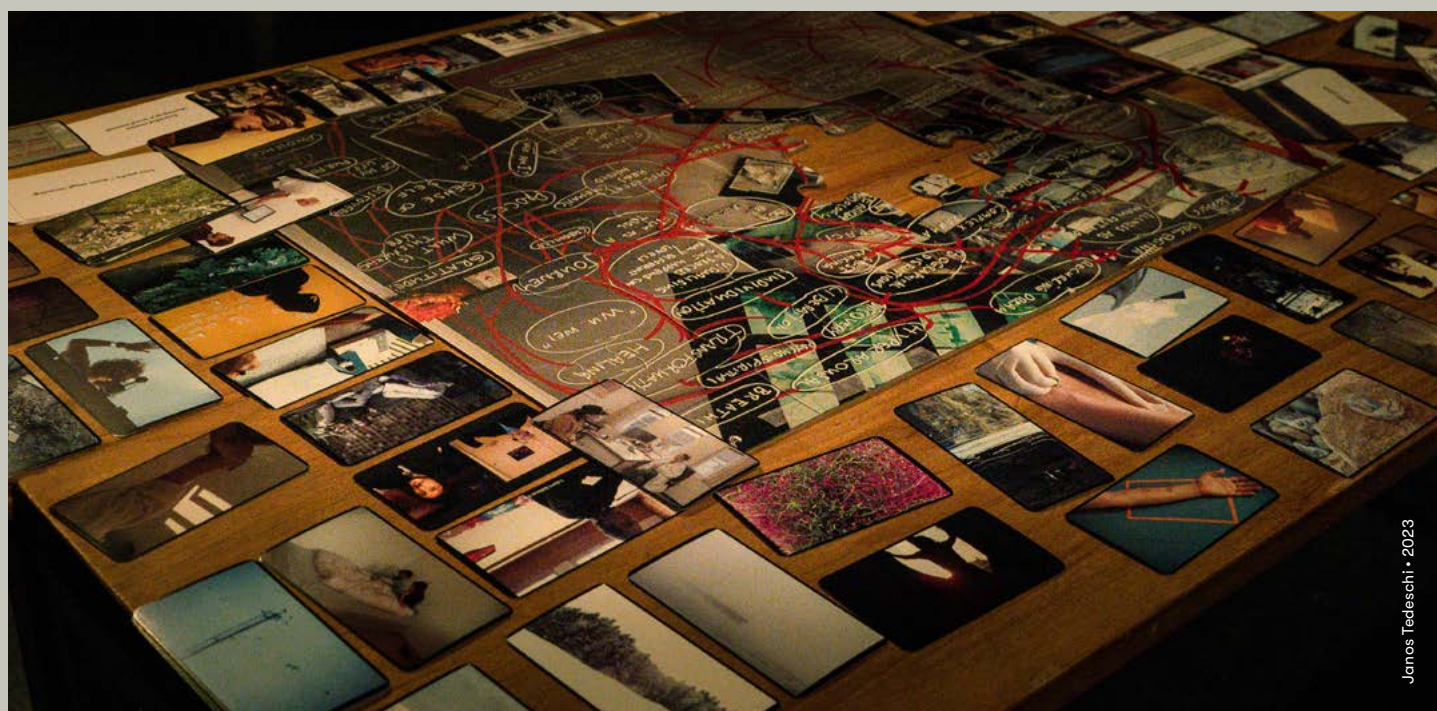
**General framework**

The exam procedure consists of two elements:

1. material that you hand in beforehand:
  - a critical review including evidence (looking back)
  - a research project-dossier including evidence (looking forward)
2. an oral exam consisting of two parts
  - a 10-minute visual presentation for the committee of examiners and your colleague students
  - a 30-minute individual examination by the committee

# Semester 3: Exploration and Experimentation

September 2023– DEC 2023; programme is subject to change



Janos Tedeschi • 2023

## Focus, structure, goals, final qualifications.

The focus of the third semester is on further exploring your research theme or project in an experimental manner, open to surprises, detours, and unexpected encounters. Tracing, documenting, and communicating that subjective process of exploration is part and parcel of the experimental attitude.

The structure of the semester is such that the focus is on your individual research project. The introduction to the semester took place before the summer – see under semester 2 – as we assume that you'll be working on your research project through (part of) the summer and the first month of the new term. The semester itself only has a few workshops, reflecting on the 'outcomes' of your research thus far and thinking about the relation between form, content, and presentation of your research project. These workshops, as usual, combine practice and reflection. Although you will work on your research with external advisors (of your choosing), there will also be mentor meetings, feedback sessions and public lectures.

The specific goals of the semester are described as follows.

The student/researcher can:

- set up and organize a process of creative experimental research.
- produce and execute research plans.
- implement acquired knowledge and gained experimental practice into subsequent production process.
- evaluate, communicate, and discuss the process and the results of the production/ experiments conducted.
- creatively express him- or herself

The final qualifications (or 'most important intended learning outcomes') for this semester are:

- 3A. The graduate is able to explore by creative experimentation.
- 3B. The graduate can open up possibilities of innovation through experimentation.

## Semester 3

### Workshops

#### A constellation of the milestones of your research

##### Core Teachers

Inspired by the Aby Warburg's photographic collection *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1925–1929), we would like to invite you to present for the opening of the 3rd semester your own constellation. The governing principles of montage (editing), such as juxtaposition, counterpoints, the assemblage of heterogeneous parts, parallelisms, deviations, echoes, resonances, subordination, impact, distancing to emphasize the different, tonal, rhythmic, sensorial, among others and emphasis on the spectator's participation are well known. Perhaps, however, we can speak about editing in another way, when it is employed as a mode of knowledge. And as a starting point, we invite you to create your own edited constellation of the different knowledges that you have found along the summer work. A panel or series of panels based on still photographs or images, where you can make your own constellation, as well as other objects, elements or relevant things for this body of work (as sound, etc). A moving image work could be done and presented (inserted inside the panel) for a maximum length of 15min followed by an extensive feedback session.

#### Experiment, challenge, Knowledge and Care

##### Mårten Spångberg

What is an experiment, really? How can we today justify experimentation considering its relations to power, violence, privilege, and ecology? How can the arts relate to experimental practices when both practice and experimental has been financialised? Simultaneously, can we not insist on experimentation? Because perhaps experimentation is important not just regarding what it produces, the result, but as a mentality, for how experimentation keeps our minds and bodies open and ready to move. But if so regarding what forms of outcome, relations to progress, understandings of value and what might be left behind? This workshop aims at tracing relations between experimental practices and its relations to challenge, knowledge and care, relations that are not as evident as it might seem and that differ strongly in respect of context. Related dynamics such as artistic research, methodology, representation, and style will further be addressed in regard to situate experimentation in respect of contemporary aesthetic and artistic practices. Intertwined with dialogue and conversation a series of body practices will be introduced, as a mean to complexify relations between experimentation and rationality, cognition and embodiment, Western knowledge, intellectual property, and spiritual practices.

#### Architecture of Vision

##### Riccardo Arena

Student researchers will delve into the conceptual and aesthetic characteristics of diagrams and mental maps, I investigate their practical applications. The choreography of the diagram creates, alters, and reconstructs a mental space architecture through the interplay of structured procedures and the abandonment of method, as well as the balance between logical connections and intuitive analogies. This approach serves as a tool for visualizing one's associative thought processes, assisting individuals in navigating the intricate maze of their imaginations and poetic expressions, ultimately guiding them through the fragmented nature of their work.

#### The Performative in Film Research

##### Kumjana Novakova and Diana Toucedo

This workshop aims to engage in a multidimensional exploration of "cinema" without being restricted by the materiality of traditional film. Instead, it encourages participants to draw upon their chosen body of work to foster performative acts. These acts will serve as a gateway for collective exploration of the concept of "cinema by other means" or "expanded cinema." We will employ techniques and methods typically unrelated to traditional film apparatus, providing essential tools for your research at this specific juncture.

Student researchers are introduced to the potential of experimentation through performative actions and their implications for artistic research. The objective is not to generate a new series of artworks (performances) but to uncover and outline a distinct layer of meaning within your existing research. This layer may already exist, yet it is not always consciously or intentionally shaped or addressed, representing its reality-producing dimension. In this context, the performative serves as a unique methodological approach to experimentation, offering an alternative perspective on what generates or has the potential to generate meaning within an artwork. By translating one's artistic research process and mental/aesthetic/visual maps or diagrams into performative actions, guided by fellow researchers and external inputs, we initiate a process of "making sense." This process leads to an understanding of artistic research and art itself as an impactful force, prompting reflection on the contribution of our art practice to the world. Iterative performativity introduces movement and transformation to concepts, understandings, common knowledge, and methodologies, resulting in fresh and evocative sensations. Furthermore, performativity as an iterative and repetitive practice challenges the conventional idea of artistic research as a singular act, paving the way for ruptures that enable experimentation and a reevaluation of the existing body of work.

This workshop provides a unique opportunity to explore the boundaries of cinematic artistry and expand the horizons of artistic research.

### Against the Blank PAGE

#### Matías Piñeiro

As a professor and filmmaker, Matías Piñeiro believes that the blank page can be paralyzing when it comes to creating films. Cinema relies on the camera and microphone to capture the world that surrounds us. Therefore, it's crucial to find an attitude that will help us overcome the blank page and explore alternative ways to approach our creative process.

Intgis workshop Piñeiro aims to guide filmmakers and help them discover their unique creative process. He will begin by sharing his most recent experiments in developing his own creative process. This will encourage students to expand their understanding of the moving image and its research.

In addition to writing materials, Piñeiro suggests that students reflect on our process by creating a one-channel audiovisual sketch or a B-side to our main project. The purpose of this project is to help us reflect on the film we want to create. By making another film, we can think about the film we want to produce and challenge the hierarchy of what is considered the A-side of cinema.

The aim of this exploration is to allow filmmakers and visual artists to shed light on new aspects of their research projects-in-progress. By understanding that thinking about the formal aspects of research and creating work is part of the same gesture, we'll find new possibilities to overcome the blank page and explore our creativity.

#### Recurring programme elements

### Research Consultations

In between the different workshops there will be sessions with the core teachers to recap and reflect on what you've taken from the workshops and subsequently what steps you will take in your own research.

### External advisors

In your second year you are encouraged to find external advisors who can support your research in a more specific or in-depth way. Depending on the nature of your research and your needs, it could be a single advisor or different ones at different moments of your process. You have a budget to pay them.

### Feedback sessions

An important part of the group as a learning tool consists of giving and receiving feedback, understanding feedback not a moment of judgement but as a moment of collective thinking and learning. The group will do this internally, with each other, on a (bi)weekly basis, and once or twice per semester – for example during the exam preparation period - with mentors and sometimes externals.

### Public Lecture Series

Every three weeks the Master organizes public lectures, for which she invites filmmakers, visual artists, philosophers or scientists to share their work, perspectives and research. Where possible these lectures are connected to the theme(s) of the semester. These lectures could be extended the next day into a kind of 'master class' moment with the lecturer for specific researchers whose research relates to the theme of the lecture.

### Exam 3

The purpose of this exam is to decide whether your research project has developed enough for you to start preparing for the final exam and the public presentation during the Artistic Research Week in June 2021. Discussing and assessing (the update of) your research process during the semester considering the theme of the semester (exploration and experimentation), the exam also looks forward to how you intend to continue with your research project and what ideas you have for presenting both process and project at the end of the next semester. Like in earlier semesters, the exam consists of material to be handed in before, a (public) audio-visual presentation and a Q&A with the committee of examiners. The committee consists of the head of the department and two external examiners from the professional field and one of the mentors. The different criteria of assessment, for each of the exam parts, relate to the two final qualifications mentioned before

- 3A. The graduate is able to explore by creative experimentation
- 3B. The graduate can open up possibilities of innovation through experimentation



# Semester 4: Conceptualisation and Communication

February – June 2024; programme is subject to change



## Focus, structure, goals, final qualifications

The focus of the fourth semester is on zooming out from the particularities of your research project to see a bigger picture or a wider context in which the research figures or can be meaningful. Conceptualisation is at the core of artistic research as it enables insights, produces knowledge and gives rise to new questions. How to communicate these insights and new questions to others is an integral part of conceptualisation.

The structure of the semester continues the focus on your individual research project. Like in semester 3 there will only be a few workshops – focusing on the conceptualization of your process and project and on how to choose appropriate forms to communicate both to a diversity of audiences. Aside from working with your external advisors, there will be mentor meetings, feedback sessions and public lectures. You will publicly present your research project during the Artistic Research Week at the end of June in the EYE Film Museum.

The final exam takes place some 3 weeks before, to give you time to incorporate the examiners' observations in your public presentation. During this last period leading up to the Artistic Research Week, you will be supported by your external advisors and the core teachers.

The specific goals of the semester are described as follows. The student/researcher can:

- accomplish his/her research and creative project
- conceptualise and creatively present his/her project or project proposal
- conceptualise and contextualise the research (outcome)
- present the research outcome in an appropriate and original form
- demonstrate a subjective understanding of the relation between research and project
- communicate the research process
- creatively express him- or herself

The final qualifications (or ‘most important intended learning outcomes’) for this semester are:

- 4A. The graduate can reflect on and present his/her process and outcome(s)
- 4B. The graduate has the ability to conceptualise his/her point of view

## Semester 4

### Workshops

#### The Form is the Statement

Riccardo Arena

The workshop will focus on the conceptualisation and design of the first draft or mock-up for Artistic Research Week. The challenge is to create a draft of the exhibition by imagining, designing, and planning the presentation of your research, processes, and experiments in an installative manner within a designated space. The aim is to simulate the final show using your existing materials and experimentations. The show’s framework serves as a platform to explore the aesthetic possibilities of research, transforming it into an artwork that interacts with the audience. The workshop emphasises the pivotal role of aesthetics in conveying the essence of your project’s investigations. A robust work of art communicates its message through its spatial presence, even before the audience directly engages with it. Hence, the form is a statement. The formalisation of your research encapsulates and conveys concepts and their poetic tensions.

The workshop invites participants to envisage their final presentation at the ARW as a mental laboratory, a privileged space to share creative processes, research materials, working experiments, and formalised investigations.

In line with the Master’s programme, the workshop will highlight the delicate interplay between artistic practice and theoretical discourse. Fundamentally, we seek to underscore that the research process is an artwork in itself. The curated installation emphasises that research processes are, fundamentally, art.

#### Publishing Research

Kris Dittel

Through a series of collective workshops and individual meetings we will explore various ways of conceptualising your work and research process in writing, and discuss possibilities of an end-year publication.

We will begin with a series of workshops delving into various approaches, such as autotheoretical and autofictional writing, and consider the importance of citations and referencing both in artistic work and writing.

As literary genre, autofiction, or autobiographical fiction is a form of fictionalised autobiography. Similarly, the term autotheory began to circulate in literary spheres, where it was used to describe books in which memoir and autobiography fused with theory and philosophy. It is a mode of writing that integrates the personal and conceptual, the creative and the

critical. Both autotheory and autofiction gained popularity in the past two decades or so, yet its traces go back to feminist and hybrid genre writing by women of colour. During these sessions we will explore genres of autofiction and autotheory through collective and individual writing exercises. We will also read and discuss selected text excerpts. Along the way, we will question what constitutes theory and philosophy, whose voice and knowledge is considered legitimately critical and vigorous. The goal of these sessions is to integrate experiences and “gut research” into writing and help finding your voice as an author.

We will also delve into the importance and meaning of academic and artistic practices of footnoting, citing and referencing. By citing, we reinforce the intellectual influence of other makers and thinkers, we show our intertextual affinity, and may also insert our own critical voice into a paradigm. Importantly, by citing we also diversify various voices and draft a constellation of intellectual ancestors on whose shoulder our thinking stands on. In Sara Ahmed’s words: “citation is how we acknowledge our debt to those who came before; those who helped us find our way when the way was obscured because we deviated from the paths we were told to follow.”<sup>1</sup> This workshop will draw on the writing and thinking of Sara Ahmed, Katherine McKittrick and Lauren Fournier, among others.

#### Communication

Rada Sesic

The focus of this workshop is helping you explore and define how you will present your project and your research outcome in the final stage of your MA trajectory. You will get to know the film industry standard communication models and terminology; explore if and how do they apply or could be transformed and customized to your own project and research presentation; explore and try out alternative methods and ways of communication and presentation.

#### Presentation of your research project

Regular meetings with the core team to talk about possible ways to present your research during the Artistic Research Week (the moment of public presentation).

Recurring programme elements**Research Consultations**

In between the different workshops there will be sessions with the core teachers to recap and reflect on what you've taken from the workshops and subsequently what steps you will take in your own research.

**External advisors**

In your second year you are encouraged to find external advisors who can support your research in a more specific or in-depth way. Depending on the nature of your research and your needs, it could be a single advisor or different ones at different moments of your process. You have a budget to pay them.

**Feedback sessions**

An important part of the group as a learning tool consists of giving and receiving feedback, understanding feedback not a moment of judgement but as a moment of collective thinking and learning. The group will do this internally, with each other, on a (bi)weekly basis, and once or twice per semester – for example during the exam preparation period - with mentors and sometimes externals.

**Public Lectures**

Every three weeks the Master organizes public lectures, for which she invites filmmakers, visual artists, philosophers or scientists to share their work, perspectives and research. Where possible these lectures are connected to the theme(s) of the semester

**Exam 4**

The purpose of this exam is to decide whether you have sufficiently acquired the qualifications of the Master's programme in order to graduate. The exam is meant to discuss and assess the overall process and outcomes of the two years of your research and your concrete plans for the public presentation of it during the Artistic Research Week in June. As the exam takes place some 3 weeks before the Artistic Research Week, you can take on board the comments and suggestions of the examiners while preparing for that public presentation.

Like in earlier semesters, the exam consists of material to be handed in before, a (public) audio-visual presentation and a Q&A with the committee of examiners. The committee consists of the head of the department and three external examiners from the international professional field. And one of the mentors will also be present. The different criteria of assessment, for each of the exam parts, relate to the two final qualifications mentioned before:

- 4A. The graduate can reflect on and present his/her process and outcome(s)
- 4B. The graduate has the ability to conceptualize his/her point of view



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