

# European Film School Network

## What is research in a film school?

La fémis, Paris, 6-7 April 2011

I.	Introduction – Marc Nicolas .....	3
II.	Presentation of participants .....	3
III.	Who's afraid of artistic research? – Dieter Lesage .....	7
IV.	Case study 1: VSMU (Slovakia) – Zuzana Gindl-Tatárová, Maria Ridzonova Ferencuova.....	9
V.	Case study 2: University of Westminster (UK) – Joram Ten Brink.....	10
VI.	Two French points of view .....	11
	1. Musical Research at IRCAM – Andrew Gerzso.....	11
	2. Ecole Normale Supérieure – Michel Gribenski.....	12
VII.	Case study 3: HFF Potsdam (Germany) – Kerstin Stutterheim .....	13
VIII.	Case study 4: Stockholm Academy Of Dramatic Arts (Sweden) – Marianne Persson, Maria Hedman-Hvitfeldt .....	14
IX.	Case study 5: Aalto University (Finland) – Kirsi Rinne .....	15
	1. Crystallized to Diamonds – Saara Cantell.....	16
X.	European Film School Network Website – Suzy Gillett .....	16
XI.	Conclusions – Pascale Borenstein.....	16

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## I. Introduction – Marc Nicolas

Marc Nicolas begins by welcoming participants to the annual meeting of the European Film School Network, which has been organised with the support of the MEDIA programme. This year's meeting will be devoted to the question of research in film schools, and will include presentations and case studies. It will also include two examples of research in higher education institutions concerned with the arts in France.

Marc Nicolas explains that the research function has traditionally been associated with universities and with *scientific* research. In contrast, schools such as La fémis have been concerned with the training, creation and production of films, and do not carry out research activities as such. In recent years, however, there has been a movement to compare the process of artistic creation with the process of scientific research. In addition, for administrative reasons, higher education institutions are increasingly considered on the same footing regardless of the subject matter taught. As a result, the distinction between art schools and universities has been diluted.

This has led La fémis to identify two potential directions for research: • experimental activities between the film school and private companies such as camera or film manufacturers • courses/workshops on the history, aesthetics or economics of the film industry such as a recent seminar on the impact of the internet on cinema.

## II. Presentation of participants

Participants were asked to present their institutions and their approaches to research. What does research mean within their system? Can any activities currently carried out in their institutions be qualified as research?

- Michal Bregant: FAMU is part of an arts university that comprises film, drama and music schools. A PhD programme was introduced in the late 1990s, with the first graduates dating from 2001. As well as pursuing their creative work, the aim is for PhD students to develop standard academic skills. They are therefore involved in teaching and in the school's overall curriculum. A new initiative is currently being developed in the Czech Republic to enable artistic outcomes from all the art schools to be registered. This will lead to a new financing system for art schools and universities.
- Suzy Gillett: the London Film School offers three MA programmes (film making, screenwriting, film theory). It does not have a PhD programme.
- Joram Ten Brink: the University of Westminster is one of over 50 different establishments in England that offer a solid education in film at the BA level. Funding is provided for both teaching and research, under a well-established mechanism that has recognised research in art for over 20 years. The first practice-based doctorate in film was awarded in 1999. Each university runs its PhD programme on the basis of peer review according to its own rules. There are no national regulations governing this area. See also case study 2 below.

- Guido Lukoshek: the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg has about 400 students and is not part of the Bologna process. It is not required to undertake research, although research is carried out by the animation institute which is part of the school. It is notably involved in virtual reality software and applications that go beyond merely technical development.
- Zuzana Gindl-Tatárová: VSMU is part of the university level academy of performing arts. It has nine departments that cover all the skills required for filmmaking, including research. It is part of the Bologna process, offering BA, MA and PhD degrees (both a doctorate in art and a traditional science PhD). The first doctorate in art was awarded in 1997, and the first PhD student in 2003 was Maria Ridzonova Ferencuova, who moved to cinema studies after obtaining an MA in screenwriting. See also case study 1 below.
- Maria Ridzonova Ferencuova, VSMU: the PhD has been replaced by the art doctorate, even for film studies students. There are three different types of research project: human sciences research, applied science research, and combined human sciences and artistic research. The research outcomes of the latter type of research include both the production of an academic paper and of a film.
- Bartolomeo Corsini: the Fondazione Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia is made up of the national film academy and the national film archives. It is not part of the Bologna process and is not involved in research, except for student work on experimental films. It also carries out some research with the media industry, with other universities, and with the national research centre.
- Benoît Rossel: the Ecole Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne contains a film department with about 40 students. Most teaching is carried out by professionals from the industry, and the permanent faculty numbers only three. The Swiss government has invited the country's many different film and arts schools to work together on joint programmes in a very open and flexible framework. Recent work explored the filming of dance works. The possible creation of a PhD programme is still under discussion.
- Manuela Cernat, UNATC Romania: Romania's new legislation on education considers the creative process as equivalent to scientific research. The school has a PhD programme and a specific research department that is a source of significant funding. It has its own publishing house, a monthly film review, and a monthly theatre review. PhDs are awarded on the basis of a written dissertation and not on the basis of the film made.
- Dieter Lesage: RITS Brussels began doing research 10 years ago. Discussions are currently underway in the country as to what constitutes artistic research. Further details are provided in section III below.
- Bert Beyens: for RITS Brussels, as for other arts schools, the question of research has become a question of funding and of the very survival of the school. The PhD discussion is taking up much time and energy but actually only

concerns a limited number of students. He believes that research should be about creating an open-minded climate and attitude at film schools.

- Hilary Thomas: the NFTS has had an MA programme for the past 10 years, which is validated by the Royal College of Art. Recent research topics include 3D film, installation art, and digital games. The NFTS is not a university, and its funding does not depend on the development of research projects. Its Bridges to Industry project can, however, lead to research links with industry, for example in a 3D project for LG phones. The link between research and funding is clearly important in an environment of shrinking resources.
- Florence Michèle Bergot: the Ecole Nationale Louis Lumière is devoted to film, photography and sound engineering, with courses run at the masters level. It does not have a PhD programme. The school is mainly involved in applied research. Examples of research carried out include HD 3D projects and sound mapping. Due to its small size, most of its work is carried out in cooperation with other institutions.
- Carole Alexandre, French Ministry of Culture, refers to the gradual convergence of higher education institutions in France. As of March 2011, all of France's fine arts schools have had their masters programmes recognised. The question of research in the arts is a hot topic in France, for both cultural and funding reasons.
- Mieke Bernink: the Nederlandse Film en Televisie Academie has a masters programme but not a PhD programme. MA students are not required to write a thesis. She is very interested in the definition and re-definition of research, which she believes is about attitude (openness, curiosity) rather than methodology.
- Ana Vinuela: INA has recently begun providing courses independently and in conjunction with other institutions. It does not have a PhD programme, and its approach is based on associating practice and research. INA's main research activity is in applied research for the preservation, management and use of audiovisual content. It also offers a masters in sound arts.
- Noemie Mendelle: the Screen Academy is the national film school of Scotland, made up of Napier University and the Edinburgh College of Art which set up a film department 10 years ago. It offers a PhD programme by practice, and is strongly in favour of combining research and practice. Research is defined as something that adds to existing knowledge and does not necessarily take the form of a dissertation.
- Simone Stewens: the IFS was set up 10 years ago, and its degrees are validated by Köln University. Its first masters programmes will be available in 2011. The IFS is not required to conduct research but firmly believes in the transfer of knowledge between theory and practice.

- Gundolf Freyermuth, IFS: there are three different kinds of knowledge – scientific knowledge, academic knowledge and artistic knowledge. The IFS has conducted a research project on the feasibility of combining learning and “serious” games, and is currently working with Köln University on a game development and research project. These projects are financed by regional and state funds.
- Ines Gil: Universidade Lusofona offers a masters programme in film. Its PhD programme is scheduled to start in 2012, and will have both a strong practical focus and a dissertation component. Its research centre is currently carrying out projects on film audiences and on interactive digital technologies.
- Marianne Persson and Maria Hedman-Hvitfeldt: the Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts offers bachelor and masters programmes. Further details are provided in case study 4 below.
- Kerstin Stutterheim: the HFF is Germany’s oldest film school, and will soon obtain university status. The HFF offers BA and masters degrees, and has a number of PhD students. It has three fields of research: media studies, artistic and technical research, and artistic research. She believes it is important for students to learn how to explain and debate their ideas and projects. See also case study 3 below.
- Kirsi Rinne: Aalto University has offered PhD programmes since 1983 (pre-Bologna). She refers to the Norwegian system which also qualifies its PhD film students for associate professor positions. See also case study 5 below.
- Svend Abrahamsen: the Danish Film School is not part of the Bologna process. It works with 10 universities in interactive digital animation (DADIO), and it plans to conduct research in the near future as part of a government strategy to develop scientific art research. The aim is to provide students with a language with which they can communicate internally and externally.
- Nathalie Degimbe: the IAD has been integrated into the Bologna process, offering BA and masters degrees. The IAD has taken the decision *not* to introduce research into its programmes: it wants to retain its specific artistic status that is independent from the universities, teaching its students to think by doing and creating. It has, however, introduced a research component into its masters programmes.

Marc Nicolas notes that all the possible variations within the research game are represented at the meeting. All institutions are required to reflect on the question of research today, and it is clearly of interest to see how the different institutions approach this question.

### III. Who's afraid of artistic research? – Dieter Lesage

Dieter Lesage refers to the question of the place of research in film schools today, a question that was addressed during a European Artistic Research Network conference held in June 2010: *The Empire Strikes Back*. In the early years of the Bologna process, which was launched in 1999, the primary interest lay in the introduction of the BA and MA cycles to arts schools, and the development of a common structure for higher education courses in Europe. The aim was to facilitate multiculturalism and trans-national mobility, replacing Europe's former academic feudalism with a new academic capitalism. As such, the Bologna process has created an academic *empire*.

In 2003, the concept of an arts PhD emerged as the next phase in the Bologna process, and various institutions decided to establish a doctorate in the arts. This raised many existential questions and was also met with fierce opposition in certain circles. Dieter Lesage defends the idea of a doctorate in the arts, seeing the artist as a researcher in his or her field – this is the way artists themselves have been describing their work in recent decades. Portraying the artist as a researcher is a way of providing support to the unproductive time that is needed as part of the creative process – time to think, time to see, time to waste.

The question of the form that the arts doctorate should take has also been explored. In most cases, this requires a combination of both an artistic portfolio and a written, explanatory supplement although there are some exceptions to this rule. The composition of juries must be addressed: artists as peers see and hear in a different way from non-artists. There is also the danger that the textual supplement will be given greater weight than the artistic portfolio itself. There is therefore a need to extend the understanding of what constitutes a textual supplement (*cf.* Derrida – “everything is text”). The artistic portfolio itself can therefore be seen as a text, and the textual supplement is not an explanation of the work but part of the work itself. In this context, the continued demand for a textual academic supplement means that the art work itself is not being taken seriously.

The next issue to be addressed is the use of investment in artistic research. When an academy receives funding for its artistic research, it is also required to prove that there is a return on that investment. However, artistic research should be seen as a way of recognising artistic labour time. The notion of artistic research is not an attempt to conform the arts to the sciences; it is about recognising the artist as a worker and recognising art as a form of cognitive labour.

**Discussion.** Kerstin Stutterheim's experience with her own doctorate and her doctoral students is that the written part of the doctorate was in no way a *supplement* to the film but an integral part of the artistic process. Calling the text a “supplement” gives it a negative connotation. Kirsi Rinne agrees that the art work and the written text are part of the same process; they should not be seen as opposing tracks. She refers to the doctoral project of a Norwegian screenwriter, which includes both a screenplay and a documentary essay on the process of writing the screenplay. All types of variations are possible but they both support each other rather than being on separate tracks. Dieter Lesage is not against the use of a film work alone for the art doctorate, and does not

believe it is necessary to also submit a text. However, it is necessary to have a jury with the competence to evaluate the film.

Zuzana Gindl-Tatárová agrees that the text is a self-reflection on the work and should not be considered as a supplement. The use of the term “supplement” is pejorative. Bert Beyens makes the distinction between a doctorate in art and a classic PhD; between a doctorate *in* the arts and a doctorate *about* the arts. The PhD is considered the logical next step after a BA and an MA, but a PhD in art only makes sense if it is accepted that the art “speaks”. For Mieke Bernink, society still places enormous emphasis on writing, resulting in a visually illiterate world. She believes that the forms of expression for a PhD in the arts should be artistic, rather than using an old medium to talk about something new. For Dieter Lesage, rather than being defensive, artists should go on the offensive and argue that scientists should also be able to replace their written dissertations with a film.

Kerstin Stutterheim notes that artists also want the opportunity to obtain PhDs as this enables them to teach in higher education institutions. Michal Bregant defends the existence of PhDs in film schools but has doubts about the PhD being equal to a PhD in the traditional sciences. He suggests that art schools should perhaps resist the bureaucratic requirement that restricts teaching positions to those with a degree. Nathalie Degimbe is also strongly against making a PhD or doctorate in the arts a prerequisite to teaching in a film school.

Manuela Cernat explains that the PhD became an industry in certain countries as professors were required to leave their positions if they did not obtain a PhD, or else were paid less than their PhD counterparts. She believes that the PhD is an opportunity to discover oneself and it should be of very high quality. The new Romanian law provides for two kinds of artistic PhDs: scientific PhDs and professional PhDs. The latter allow esteemed artists to obtain a PhD on the basis of their body of work, thus enabling them to take up teaching positions.

Ana Vinuela asks whether artistic works can only be assessed by peers or if other criteria are required. Dieter Lesage advises that the works can be assessed artistically.

Saara Cantell notes that most research on film is done by non-filmmakers. She considers her films as her work and her art; she does not consider them research. If, however, she decides to do research on a particular issue or concept, that research work is distinct from her filmmaking.

For Gundolf Freyermuth, a PhD – a philosophical doctorate – is a specific, well established form of text. A film is a very different kind of text. Today, there is a shift from representing knowledge in text to representing knowledge in multimedia forms. This should result in a transition in the PhD form or in the creation of a new type of doctorate for artists (an AD, for example). Dieter Lesage also distinguishes between a doctorate in the arts and a PhD in the arts; he is in favour of a doctorate in the arts rather than a PhD.

Michal Bregant refers to a recent controversy in the arts field, when a student in metal and glass submitted an installation video as her MA art work rather than an actual



metal and glass creation. This led to an enormous debate that was ultimately resolved in the student's favour.

Marc Nicolas explains that, in the masters programme at La fémis, students are asked to explore a technical question with which they have grappled or to produce a diary of their experience. The question is not to eliminate the writing component, which is a valuable exercise for students, obliging them to think about their work. At the doctorate level, however, the same reasoning does not apply. At the same time, it is difficult to argue that the film alone is sufficient for the award of a doctorate. Ultimately, this will depend on what the doctorate is for – is it to enable the candidate to qualify as a teacher or to recognise their artistic achievement?

Andrew Gerzso distinguishes between granting doctorates to filmmakers in recognition of their work as an artist or in recognition of their contribution to collective knowledge. In the first case, submitting a written text makes no sense; in the latter, it makes perfect sense.

In Kirsi Rinne's experience, filmmakers who commence a doctorate do not do so for the sake of the qualification itself. Instead, they want to use their time at the university to think more deeply about questions they otherwise do not have time to explore. She adds that Aalto University does not require its professors to have PhDs.

#### **IV. Case study 1: VSMU (Slovakia) – Zuzana Gindl-Tatárová, Maria Ridzonova Ferencuova**

Zuzana Gindl-Tatárová explains that VSMU is a publicly-funded, university level art school that has offered cinema studies since the 1980s. It currently has about 38 art doctorate students. Research is at the top of the list of priorities of the Ministry of Education, and VSMU has been trying to combine research and creativity in order to create a PhD programme based on a film and a written component in which students reflect on their own work and on a wider context. In terms of obtaining funds in Slovakia, it is necessary to be a university level school with all that entails in bureaucratic and process terms. At the same time, the Ministry has now specified that degrees must be based on practical rather than theoretical work.

Maria Ridzonova Ferencuova firmly believes that artists are engaged in research. However, the result of that artistic research is rarely seen on the same footing as scientific research. VSMU has therefore tried to exempt itself from a scientific evaluation of research, but this has proved to be a difficult task. An example of the work undertaken under the MA programme is an oral history project of the Slovak film industry. Students were required to interview active and retired filmmakers – interviews that were filmed by documentary film students. The outcome was an exhaustive set of interviews with Slovakia's filmmakers, which will then be analysed at many different levels and conceptualised in many different ways by documentary filmmakers. This highlights the difference between the artistic and the scientific approaches to the same experience.

**Discussion.** Bert Beyens notes that the methodology itself was not the subject of the oral history project; what is of interest is the sociological level. The research

programme should therefore be congratulated as this type of work will not be carried out by any other institution. Maria Ridzonova Ferencuova explains that the interviews were designed to ask questions about the way of working from the point of view not only of directors but also of technicians and engineers, who are only rarely seen or heard.

## V. Case study 2: University of Westminster (UK) – Joram Ten Brink

Joram Ten Brink provides an overview of the practice-based PhD that has been recognised and funded in the UK for the past 15 years. In order to have a good PhD programme, it is necessary to have a thriving research environment that attracts funding and is able to take on different projects.

PhD candidates can be filmmakers who wish to reflect on their experience; practitioners who seek employment on university faculties; students who want to go to the next stage after their BA and MA; or practitioners who wish to develop a specific large-scale research project. All candidates need to be accomplished filmmakers as no training is provided at the PhD stage.

A practice-based PhD is a doctorate where the primary research is done through the production of artefacts. The core of the research is in the practice – producing knowledge through doing. At the same time, it is in dialogue with the history, theory and other contemporary work in the field. Practice does not illustrate theory, but the theory comes out of the practice. The thesis therefore contains two equal parts: the artefact and the written thesis. One of the main functions of the PhD is to train candidates in doing academic research. As such the PhD should be seen as the start of one's career rather than its culmination. Other PhDs include visual anthropology (where films are only rarely accepted as part of the doctorate), doctorate in music, professional doctorate, creative writing, or PhD by portfolio of work.

**Discussion.** Joram Ten Brink explains that responsibility for higher education in the UK gravitates between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Industry. Increasingly research is expected to have a positive impact on industry and society. Michal Bregant asks how that impact can be measured, and Joram Ten Brink explains that this is a new requirement that is currently being developed.

In response to a question by Marc Nicolas, Joram Ten Brink explains that the practice-based PhD grew from the bottom-up. It was developed by individual universities rather than being imposed from above by the national government. In a second step, funding became available through the National Research Council. Marc Nicolas points out that such decisions in France can only be taken at the national level, which obviously slows down the process.

Kirsi Rinne agrees that supervision of the PhD should not be split between art and theory but between thinking artists and sympathetic theoreticians.

*[Day 1 closes with a screening of "Where the train goes", a 3D film by Jeanne Guillot and a tour of La fémis.]*

## VI. Two French points of view

### 1. Musical Research at IRCAM – Andrew Gerzso

IRCAM was established in 1977 by Pierre Boulez to allow scientists, technicians, composers and performers to work together to enlarge the vocabulary of music through the possibilities offered by new technologies. It was to be both a research centre and a place where music was produced and performed. Today, IRCAM is organised around (a) R&D, (b) production, (c) teaching, and (d) the coordination of musical and scientific research. IRCAM is not able to award degrees but does so in conjunction with other universities.

In terms of musical and scientific research, IRCAM manages a database of online works, a European project (CO-ME-DI-A) on musical network performance and installations, research/production seminars and prospective seminars. Musical research is made up of personal research, collective research (among artists only), or collective research (among artists *and* scientists). Scientists are attracted to IRCAM as they believe that music poses interesting technological problems. In some cases, scientists propose technical possibilities the potential of which can only be seen by artists.

IRCAM imposes the following conditions on musical research: focused research themes, a critical mass of composers, and “mediators” who act as an interface between scientists and composers. Research themes that are currently being explored include rhythm, orchestration, writing sound synthesis, improvisation, gesture recognition, and score tracking.

IRCAM has an annual budget of €12 million, 30% of which is self-funded.

**Discussion.** Marc Nicolas asks for further details of the relationship between production and research at IRCAM. Second, is it possible to have musical research without reference to technology? Andrew Gerzso explains that the relationship between production and research was “invented” out of necessity, and eventually led to the development of the “mediator” position. Second, it is possible to explore musical concepts such as harmony without any specific reference to technology.

In response to a question from Pascale Borenstein, Andrew Gerzso advises that the IRCAM model remains unique. This may be due to the fact that IRCAM was established by a musician. Other technologically sophisticated institutions such as Stanford University or MIT do not engage in musical production.

Noemie Mendelle asks for further details of the documentary work undertaken by IRCAM. Andrew Gerzso refers to various databases of electronic music works, IRCAM works, interviews with composers, text and sound excerpts, concerts, etc. It has been involved in about 25 film projects, generally putting music to existing films. Going forward, the aim is to have projects where both the film and the music are developed at the same time.

Simone Stewens asks whether IRCAM’s sound design department works for the film industry. Andrew Gerzso explains that this is done in an indirect way. He notes that

IRCAM produced the castrato voice for the film "Farinelli". Marc Nicolas adds that La fémis uses software developed by IRCAM.

Hilary Thomas asks if the IRCAM Forum is open to all. Andrew Gerzso confirms that it is (see [ircam.fr](http://ircam.fr); <http://forumnet.ircam.fr/>).

## 2. Ecole Normale Supérieure – Michel Gribenski

Michel Gribenski presents the Science, Art, Creation Research (SACRe) project, a work in progress between Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) and four of France's principal art, dance and performing arts schools. The project resulted from the Excellence Initiative (IDEX), a call for tenders by the French Research Agency which is investing heavily in such joint projects among academic poles of excellence.

SACRe is a key project within the overall excellence initiative, the *Paris Sciences et Lettres* project (PSL\*). France has only recently become involved in the international movement towards practice-based PhDs. The SACRe project is a project for a doctorate in art, exploring the interfaces between the arts, and between art and science. It will create a practice-based PhD or doctorate in art. The impetus to develop a new curriculum and diploma was driven by a desire • to increase the attractivity and mobility of art schools • to develop synergies between art schools and the academic world • to recognise artistic research alongside scientific research. The aim is to create a bridge between art and science through the research process, and to explore the multiple interfaces that exist between the two.

Ten candidates will be selected each year (two per institution), and obtain funding for three years. The jury will be made up of representatives of each of the institutions involved and external personalities. There will be two types of candidates: classical PhDs for scientists with an orientation towards creative practice, and the new doctorate in art (a revolutionary concept in France).

The aim is to reach a balance between theory and practice, with both common courses/seminars and a practice-based or classic thesis. The practice-based thesis will be a set of works or performances accompanied by a document that can be a text, audiovisual and multimedia material, exhibition catalogues, interviews etc. Candidates will not be required to write a text similar to the traditional PhD thesis. As such, the ENS has taken the risk of creating a new form of research and of accepting a variety of research forms. This approach could meet with opposition from the French Higher Education Ministry, which might impose certain criteria on the process. It will also be necessary to create a new category of official supervisors for doctoral candidates.

*[PSL\* short film screened.]*

**Discussion.** Hilary Thomas asks whether consideration was given to including a film school in the SACRe project. Marc Nicolas explains that La fémis will probably join the initiative in the future should it be confirmed. Michel Gribenski adds that he is clearly interested in involving La fémis in the project.

Hilary Thomas asks whether the initiative has been driven by the government or by the institutions themselves. Michel Gribenski advises that this was very much a bottom-up process.

For Noemie Mendelle, the project is not radical enough. It could be premised on the argument that creativity and practice can lead to theory rather than the other way around. Michel Gribenski explains that the aim of the programme is not theory but practice. However, this does not mean that theory does not have a role to play in feeding creation and vice versa.

Kirsi Rinne congratulates Michel Gribenski on the healthy and open-minded approach that has been taken to the process.

Joram Ten Brink does not believe that the centralised training network will be able to take off with only 10 candidates. The UK Research Council, for example, funds 300 candidates per year. Michel Gribenski explains that the funding of 10 doctoral contracts represents a significant step. In addition, it is hoped that the dynamic created by SACRe will lead to other sources of funding – both public and private.

In response to a question from Manuela Cernat, Michel Gribenski explains that the doctorate is awarded after three years of studies.

Bert Beyens suggests that the French government could be convinced to agree to the project by showing how far France is lagging behind the rest of Europe in this area.

## VII. Case study 3: HFF Potsdam (Germany) – Kerstin Stutterheim

HFF has over 500 students and is in the process of obtaining university status. Three fields of research are conducted at the school: media studies, artistic and technical research, and art research. Multi-disciplinary colloquiums are held regularly, allowing artists and scientists to present their work to a wider public.

Art research projects underway at HFF include *MishMashMe*, a cross-media project on how people are connected in today's world; *Anything is a Storytelling Device*, a cross-media project involving three film schools and three different media platforms; and *Museum Play*, a sound installation for the Potsdam Film Museum. The school also has doctorate candidates who are artists writing about their own fields. Two other doctoral students (a sound engineer and a screenwriter) are working on the topic of immersive narration in radio plays. Their doctoral work will include the development and production of their own radio play. Another director/screenwriter is exploring whether dramaturgical knowledge can support the process of writing and directing. A cinematographer/medical doctor is working on the representation of time in documentaries as opposed to the rhythm of time in real life.

Kerstin Stutterheim's own research is concerned with dramaturgy and narration in documentaries, with cross-media storytelling and dramaturgy, and with narration in postmodern cinema

**Discussion.** Hilary Thomas asks whether PhD students are able to use the school's resources for their filmmaking. How does this fit in with the use of equipment by

undergraduate students? Kerstin Stutterheim explains that, as students of the school, they are able to use the school's (ample) stock of technical equipment.

Joram Ten Brink asks for further details of the joint PhD project. He is reluctant to allow joint PhDs unless each candidate also presents his or her own thesis. Kerstin Stutterheim explains that the two students involved were required to clearly specify who was doing what, and they individually signed the chapters they wrote. The process worked well in this particular case. She notes that even in medicine, for example, it is possible to rely on test results that were produced by third parties.

Zuzana Gindl-Tatárová refers to *The Art of Film*, which is based on collective works – dramaturgy into screenwriting, screenwriting into directing, etc.

## **VIII. Case study 4: Stockholm Academy Of Dramatic Arts (Sweden) – Marianne Persson, Maria Hedman-Hvitfeldt**

Marianne Persson begins by explaining that the Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts (SADA) is now Sweden's largest higher education institution for the arts (film, radio, television and theatre), offering BA and MA courses. It has about 200 students and 38 staff members. Permanent staff members are required to undergo a special national training programme for art school teachers. SADA has a specific section for artistic research and development work, which focuses on issues within the performing arts. Currently, the school has two PhD candidates, both exploring the work of the actor.

Maria Hedman-Hvitfeldt notes that artistic R&D work is undergoing a transformation in Sweden, partly due to the introduction of an artistic PhD degree and the setting up of a national artistic research institute. The boundary between science and the arts is increasingly seen as a fruitful area for further study. She refers to the Konstnärliga forskarskolan, a national research school in the field of the arts that was established in 2010. Nine Swedish art schools are involved in a five-year programme to develop a nation-wide structure for post-graduate studies. A training course is available for researchers to help them define their projects. The Ministry of Education provides €1.5 million in annual funding to each school for the project, and there are currently about 60 PhD students working in the art schools involved. The artistic project can be oral or written, and it is not necessary to present a written thesis in order to obtain the PhD. (See [konstnarligaforskarskolan.se](http://konstnarligaforskarskolan.se) for further information.)

**Discussion.** In response to a question from Manuela Cernat, Marianne Persson advises that film studies and theatre studies are undertaken within the universities.

Marc Nicolas asks whether there is a leader among the different schools involved in the project. Maria Hedman-Hvitfeldt advises that the traditional fine art schools probably take on this role *de facto*.

In response to a question from Edith Sepp Dallas, Maria Hedman-Hvitfeldt advises that students obtain a scholarship of about €2,500 per month. Joram Ten Brink adds that PhD students on a scholarship at the University of Westminster are required to teach about 6 hours per week.

Edith Sepp Dallas asks what motivates candidates to apply for the PhD. Maria Hedman-Hvitfeldt explains that some candidates may not be able to find work in their field and wish to pursue an academic career; other are genuinely interested in research. Candidates are selected on the basis of their artistic merits.

Zuzana Gindl-Tatárová asks whether foreign students can be accepted for the PhD programme. Maria Hedman-Hvitfeldt advises that foreign students are accepted. However, they require Swedish language skills as seminars are conducted in that language.

Marc Nicolas notes that the structure of the programme is similar to that outlined by Michel Gribenski this morning: both involve a cluster of different art schools. This is also a question of ranking: art schools are often too small to rank on their own, and can only be ranked by pooling their forces. A mapping system of art schools is being developed at the European level, and this will be followed by the development of a ranking system. Arts schools can be expected to be ranked in the future, much as business schools are ranked today. In 15 years' time, it is likely that there will be a wave of mergers among art schools in the face of international competition. Edith Sepp Dallas adds that 2014-2020 will be a crucial period for all of these issues.

## **IX. Case study 5: Aalto University (Finland) – Kirsi Rinne**

Finnish law on doctoral studies underwent a major transformation in the 1980s. The impetus for the development of a doctorate came from a need to improve status and esteem, develop a solid knowledge base, and to explore changes in the art scene. As argued by Wollen, the theorising of film and the practical activity of making films have long been closely connected.

In 1998 a doctoral school of audiovisual media was established (Elomedia), and nine dissertations have been completed since that time. Examples of ongoing doctoral projects include the challenge to cinematography of digitalisation or the changing field of Finnish animation.

The concept of practice-based research remains controversial. Does it refer to arts practice or education practice? Does it lead to research outcomes or professional outcomes? For Kirsi Rinne, creative practice is a vehicle for inquiry which adds to knowledge or understanding. The starting point for the research project should be the experience gained from practising one's craft. The aim is to critically examine artistic practices, conventions and working methods. As to the role of the film project in research, this raises the question of whether it is possible to answer the research question with or without the art work.

The research projects currently underway include *Aristotle in Change* (variations in screenwriting), *BrainWave* (a multidisciplinary project using neuro-imaging techniques), *S3* (on the dynamics between the large screen, shared spaces and social activity), and *Figures of Touch* (on the relationship between the arts, the body and society).

Kirsi Rinne concludes by referring to the book, *The Art of Research*, which provides a valuable introduction to the relevant issues.

## **1. Crystallized to Diamonds – Saara Cantell**

Saara Cantell introduces her art doctorate thesis on storytelling strategies in short fiction films. The mystery of the short film is revealed in the existence of short masterpieces that have a very powerful impact, at times lingering over the years. Saara Cantell believes that it is particularly challenging to make a good short film, and even more difficult than making a good feature film. However, many people see the short film as only a “gateway” to the making of feature films. Saara Cantell has explored classical dramaturgical theories and various theories on the short film genre. Most short films use a joke structure, a poem structure, or a metaphoric structure. Her doctoral thesis includes five short films, and she also made a feature film as a reference work.

Saara Cantell concludes by paraphrasing Estelle Barrett: what new knowledge or understanding can result from practice-based research that could not have been revealed through other research approaches?

*[“Potretti” by Saara Cantell screened.]*

## **X. European Film School Network Website – Suzy Gillett**

Suzy Gillett provides an update on the proposal to create a website to provide information on European film schools and their activities. Rather than creating a new website, a link to the European Film School Network has been included on the Cineuropa website ([cineuropa.org](http://cineuropa.org)) funded by MEDIA. The idea is to create a one-stop shop for European film schools that links back into their own websites. This is work in progress, and it is up to the film schools to provide the information they wish to include on the site. Some schools have also included extracts of films. Participants can add material to the site through Suzy Gillett ([s.gillett@ifs.org.uk](mailto:s.gillett@ifs.org.uk)).

Manuela Cernat asks about the copyright issues relating to film extracts. Suzy Gillett advises that some schools have the rights to their students’ films, and others do not. It is up to the schools to decide what they will and will not put on the site, and schools are not obliged to include films. Joram Ten Brink notes that this reflects 20<sup>th</sup> century thinking. The aim today is to make such material free and available.

## **XI. Conclusions – Pascale Borenstein**

Pascale Borenstein begins by asking participants to complete their MEDIA evaluation forms as soon as possible to ensure the continued funding of this seminar. Copies of Jeanne Guillot’s thesis on 3D film will be sent to candidates. She thanks Sophie Duverges for her work in organising the seminar, and Kirsi Rinne for providing valuable information on the issues and stakes involved in the concept of research in art schools.

The 2011 European Film School Network seminar brought together 22 schools from 18 different countries, highlighting the differences and similarities that exist in the approach taken to research in the different film schools. The same issues are dealt with in many different ways according to each institution’s culture, educational approach, teaching staff, funding etc. The case studies led to many valuable insights



into the schools and their research programmes, and provided food for thought for all the other schools present. The very unique IRCAM model, combining music and research, was also of interest.

The aim of the seminar was to define, describe and map artistic research around Europe. How should a PhD or doctorate in art be defined, and by whom? What are the virtues of artistic research, and why should schools undertake such research? In pursuit of the Bologna process, the PhD would appear to be the next logical step after the BA and MA programmes but this is not the case in all countries. Northern Europe has a well-established tradition in this area and has recognised and practised the doctorate in art for a number of years. Other countries and institutions are still struggling with the concept. This led to an exploring of the general question of what is artistic research and how different is it from scientific research or research in the humanities. It is then necessary to determine how a doctorate in art should be evaluated. Is it necessary to include a written text or should the work itself be sufficient? The relationship between the work and its assessment varied from school to school.

Pascale Borenstein concludes by stating that it is highly likely that all film schools will be expected to conduct PhD programmes in the coming years. This is therefore a discussion that cannot be avoided.

For Marc Nicolas, education is increasingly a priority for national governments and the European Commission, and schools have more and more pressure to expand their activities in other directions, including research. Similarly, schools are expected to cooperate with each other in joint projects and initiatives, in marked contrast to the situation that existed only five years ago. That cooperation extends to their relationships with national governments and the European Commission, and film schools now approach these institutions in a more concerted manner.

**Meetings calendar.** Marc Nicolas advises that the following meetings could be of interest to participants:

- SELECT meeting, late November 2011 in Prague, hosted by FAMU. Michal Bregant adds that the meeting will be devoted to the theme of Thresholds. The format of the meeting will be slightly different with a greater use of smaller working groups, academic panels on international benchmarking, inspirational lectures, and speed meeting sessions.
- JECT conference, late February 2012 in Edinburgh on Creative Producing.
- SELECT congress, early May 2012 in Cape Town.
- European Film School Network, second half of 2012. Marc Nicolas invites participants to submit their ideas for the theme of the 2012 meeting.

Kirsi Rinne thanks La fémis for organising what has been a valuable meeting on research in art. Michal Bregant adds that it was very exciting to hear about research in film schools, a concept that was considered a bad word only a few years ago. He is also pleased to see that film schools around Europe are much more concerned with cooperation and sharing ideas than was the case in the past.