

# EFSN International Workshop

## Research in Film Schools

La Fémis, Paris, April 16-17, 2015

I.	Introduction – Marc Nicolas .....	3
II.	Session 1: Mapping Research in Film Schools .....	3
1.	Presentation of Film Schools .....	3
2.	Presentation of Questionnaire Results .....	3
2.	Discussion .....	8
III.	Combining Research with Professional and Artistic Training .....	9
1.	Case Study 1 – Dana Whitco: The Tisch Initiative for Creative Research at New York University .....	9
2.	Case Study 2 – Kirsi Rinne: Research as a Pedagogical Tool at Aalto University.....	11
IV.	Screening of a Selection of Research Projects.....	14
1.	Treefellers Revisited – Screen Academy Scotland .....	14
2.	Transatlantic Hauntings, African Modernities – WITS School of Arts South Africa .....	15
3.	Boxer – Zurich University of the Arts Switzerland .....	15
4.	Filmographie Pierre Lhomme – La Fémis France .....	16
V.	Session 3: Artistic Research in MA and PhD Degrees – A European Model? .....	17
1.	Case Study 1 – Mieke Bernink: The Master of Film Program at the Netherlands Film Academy .....	17
2.	Case Study 2 – Fredrik Graver: PhD Level Degrees at the Norwegian Film School .....	20
3.	Case Study 3 – Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen: “SACRe” Doctoral Program, PSL University .....	23
VI.	Session 4: The Uses of Research .....	25
1.	Case Study 1 – Manuel José Damásio: Disseminating Research in Film and Media Arts.....	25
2.	Case Study 2 – Michael Wedel: Immersive media and film heritage research at the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf .....	27
3.	Case Study 3 – Lewis Paul: Overview of research at the Northern Film School and CINAGE case study.....	29
VII.	Concluding Remarks .....	30

## List of Participants

- **Michèle Bergot**  
ENS Louis Lumière, France
- **Mieke Bernink**  
Netherlands Film Academy,  
Netherlands
- **Bert Beyens**  
RITS School of Arts, Belgium
- **Klara Björk**  
Valand Academy, Sweden
- **José Bogalheiro**  
Escola Superior de Teatro et  
Cinema, Portugal
- **Arne Bro**  
National Film School,  
Denmark
- **Kujtim Çashku**  
Academy of Film and  
Multimedia Marubi, Albania
- **Manuel José Damásio**  
Humanities and Technologies  
University, Portugal
- **Caterina d'Amico**  
National Film School, Italy
- **Hilde d'Haeyere**  
KASK School of Arts, Belgium
- **Fredrik Graver**  
The Norwegian Film School,  
Norway
- **Barbara Harumová-Hessová**  
VŠMU, Slovakia
- **Coral Houtman**  
Newport Film School, UK
- **Rolf Hughes**  
Stockholm University of the  
Arts, Sweden
- **Christian Iseli**  
Zurich University of the Arts,  
Switzerland
- **Pavel Jech**  
FAMU, Czech Republic
- **Tinna Joné**  
Stockholm Academy of  
Dramatic Arts, Sweden
- **Ghassan Koteit**  
ALBA, Lebanon
- **Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen**  
Ecole Normale  
Supérieure, France
- **Robin MacPherson**  
Screen Academy,  
Scotland
- **Jyoti Mistry**  
WITS School of Arts,  
South Africa
- **David Munns**  
Arts University  
Bournemouth, UK
- **Jan Nâls**  
ARCADA, Finland
- **Ramiro Noriega**  
University of Arts,  
Ecuador
- **Javier Olarte**  
National University Film  
School, Colombia
- **Kerstin Parth**  
Filmakademie, Austria
- **Lewis Paul**  
Northern Film School, UK
- **Roberto Perpignani**  
National Film School,  
Italy
- **Giusy Pisano**  
ENS Louis Lumière,  
France
- **Kirsi Rinne**  
ELO Film School, Finland
- **Gisli Snaer**  
Puttnam School of Film,  
Singapore
- **Linda Sternö**  
Valand Academy,  
Sweden
- **Simone Stewens**  
IFS International Film  
School, Germany
- **Donald Taylor Black**  
National Film School,  
Ireland
- **Hermann Van Eyken**  
Griffith Film School,  
Australia
- **Claudia Walkensteiner-  
Preschl**  
Vienna Film Academy,  
Austria
- **Michael Wedel**  
Film University  
Babelsberg "Konrad  
Wolf", Germany
- **Dana Whitco**  
Tisch School of the Arts,  
US
- **Vinca Wiedemann**  
National Film School,  
Denmark
- La Fémis, France  
**Pascale Borenstein**  
**Marc Nicolas**  
**Frédéric Papon**  
**Olivier Rignault**  
**Barbara Turquier**
- CILECT  
**Maria Dora Mourao**  
USP, Brazil  
**Stanislav Semerdjiev**  
NATFA, Bulgaria

## I. Introduction – Marc Nicolas

Marc Nicolas welcomes participants to the EFSN International Workshop, which deals with issues that are common to all film schools. For the first time this year, with the generous support of CILECT, participants from non-MEDIA countries are also present.

A meeting on research in film schools was organized by La Fémis 4 years ago, highlighting the different conceptions and traditions of research in the countries and schools represented. Today, this topic has gained even more importance due to developments in higher education policies at the national and European levels, making today's meeting extremely timely. It will focus on 2 main questions:

- What does research mean in structural terms for film schools given that they have traditionally been involved in production-based learning or training?
- What kinds of subjects could be covered by such research activities?

The aim of this meeting is to act as an *exchange* between participants – an exchange of practices and ideas, with the additional potential of encouraging cooperation among schools.

## II. Session 1: Mapping Research in Film Schools

### 1. Presentation of Film Schools

Participants present their respective institutions.

- **Lewis Paul, Northern Film School, UK.** The school has 400 students in BA and MA programs, with several PhD students. It is currently exploring the concept of research *in filmmaking* as part of the university's wider research program.
- **Dana Whitco, Tisch School of the Arts, US.** The school has 1,400 film school students (out of a total of 4,000 students at the school). There are 283 full-time faculty members (tenure and arts professors), and over 300 adjunct faculty members. The school offers BFA, MFA, MA and PhD programs.
- **Kujtim Çashku, Academy of Film and Multimedia Marubi, Albania.** The school has 20 BA students in 4 departments, and operates on the basis of Public-Private Partnerships. There are no permanent full-time teachers but representatives from industry present thematic courses.
- **Tinna Joné, Academy of Dramatic Arts, Sweden.** The school has BA and MA programs, and 4 PhD students. Faculty is primarily part-time, and are able to undertake research as part of their responsibilities.
- **Rolf Hughes, University of the Arts, Sweden.** The school has BA and MA programs, and 20 PhD students. Research can be either discipline-based or trans-disciplinary.
- **Hilde d'Haeyere, KASK School of Arts, Belgium.** There are 80 students in the BA and MA programs, and 80 in the animation BA and MA programs. 18 PhDs have already been awarded.

- **Gisli Snaer, Puttnam School of Film, Singapore.** There are 50 students in the BA program, and 80 in the BA Hons program. A research-based MA in Asian film studies has just been launched. The school has 7 full-time staff and 30 part-time staff, with 1 day per week allocated to practice-based research.
- **Pavel Jech, FAMU, Czech Republic.** The school has BFA, MFA, and PhD programs. There are 200 staff, mainly practitioners, 1/3 of whom are full-time. PhDs are based on practical research, and the development of art-based research has been a challenge for the school.
- **Bert Beyens, RITS School of Arts, Belgium** (and President of GEECT). The school has 650 students in BA, MA and PhD programs (11 students). Faculty is made up of 200 teachers (including 60 tenured teachers). The school's audio-visual departments are increasingly interested in the idea of research.
- **Christian Iseli, Zurich University of the Arts, Switzerland.** The school has 3,000 students overall, including 90 students in the film department. It is currently exploring the introduction of a PhD program, and more and more artistic research is being carried out at the school.
- **Kirsi Rinne, ELO Film School, Finland.** The school has a long history of doctoral programs, with 30 doctors of art already graduated. Teachers are primarily professionals and are required to undertake artistic research.
- **Fredrik Graver, Norway Film School, Norway.** The school has 6 students in each of its 6 departments. It has a BA program and is about to launch an MA program. The school has been involved in artistic research since 2003.
- **Vinca Wiedemann, National Film School, Denmark.** The school has 100 students, and operates under the Culture Ministry; it is not part of the Bologna system. It offers a 4-year program, with teachers drawn mainly from industry.
- **Arne Bro, National Film School, Denmark.** The school believes that artistic research should be conducted on *film* and not on paper. It should also be conducted *with* students.
- **Claudia Walkensteiner-Preschl and Kerstin Parth, Filmakademie, Austria.** This is a production-based film school, with 180 students. It offers an academic research-based PhD, and is beginning to explore the idea of artistic research.
- **Simone Stewens, IFS International Film School, Germany.** The school has recently launched a new MA program, which is research oriented. Artistic research is also part of the BA program. The school has 110 students.
- **Roberto Perpignani and Catherina D'Amico, National Film School, Italy.** The school has a 3-year program, which is outside of the Bologna process. It has an intake of 120-130 students per year. All teachers are drawn from industry. Research is carried out within the programs but is not "named" as such.
- **Giusy Pisano and Michèle Bergot, ENS Louis Lumière, Paris.** The school has an MA course, with 16 students per department per year. Teachers are varied, with a mix of academics and practitioners. It is increasingly participating in a number of national and international research projects.
- **Jan Nâls, ARCADA, Finland.** The school has 200 students in its BA and MA programs. Research projects are related to subjects such as diversity, inter-cultural

communication and media management. The school is currently exploring the idea of artistic research.

- **José Bogalheiro, Escola Superior de Teatro et Cinema, Portugal.** The school has a research centre, and MA students are required to undertake research.
- **Stanislav Semerdjiev (CILECT), NATFA, Bulgaria.** The school has 600 students including 200 in the film department. It has 35 full-time professors and 45 professionals. It has BA, MA and PhD programs, and does not consider that there is a distinction to be made between academic and artistic research.
- **Maria Dora Mourao (CILECT), USP, Brazil.** The Film School within the University of Sao Paulo offers BA, MA and PhD programs. It is planning to launch a professional MA degree, in contrast to the more theoretical degrees offered in the past.
- **Ramiro Noriega, University of Arts, Ecuador.** He is interested in learning more about what it means to be a film school in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- **Donald Taylor Black, National Film School, Ireland.** The school has a 4-year program that is 70-75% practical-based, and 25-30% theoretical-based. The school has recently launched a research-based MA.
- **Robin MacPherson, Screen Academy, Scotland.** The school has BA, MA, and MFA programs. Its PhD program is 20 years old, with 3-5 PhD students per year. It has an MA by research program. The school has 10 full-time staff, and also offers a PhD by published works.
- **David Munns, Arts University Bournemouth, UK.** The school has 3,000 students, including 250 students in film. It has BA and MA programs, and has introduced a PhD program this year.
- **Coral Houtman, Newport Film School, UK.** The school has 2,000 students, with 500 students in film and documentary. It has 7 teachers with a number of visiting professionals. There has been a shift from pure artistic research to applied research.
- **Klara Björk and Linda Sternö, Valand Academy, Sweden.** The school has 300 students, including 50 in film. It offers BA, MA and PhD programs.
- **Jyoti Mistry, WITS School of Arts, South Africa.** The school has 1,000 students, and offers BA, MA and PhD programs. The PhD program is dissertation and research driven, but the school has now introduced a practice-based PhD.
- **Ghassan Koteit, ALBA, Lebanon.** The school has 100 students in BA and MA programs. The MA degree is practice/creation oriented. Approximately 30% of staff members are academic teachers.
- **Michael Wedel, Film University Babelsberg "Konrad Wolf", Germany.** The school has 500 students in BA and MA programs. It offers an academic PhD and is currently developing an artistic, practice-based PhD. It has 40 senior professors, 30 professional filmmakers, 6 academic colleagues, and 3 professorships that span the academic and the artistic.
- **Barbara Harumová-Hessová, VŠMU, Slovakia.** The school has BA, MA and PhD programs (both artistic and theoretical). It has 350 students per year, and 50 full-time professors plus professionals.
- **Mieke Bernink, Film Academy, Netherlands.** The school offers a combined BA and MA program. An artistic research program was set up 5 years ago. The school has

400 students and 60 members of staff plus 200 professionals. The school is exploring the creation of a research laboratory in which all students can participate.

- **Marc Nicolas, La Fémis, France.** The school has 10 departments offering a 4-year MA program. 5 Paris art schools (including La Fémis) set up a PhD program 2 years ago. In addition, the school is developing research-driven modules as part of its MA program. It is also exploring the development of post-graduate activities using professional researchers. A principal issue it faces is the difference between artistic research and film production itself.

**Stanislav Semerdjiev** asks participants to provide the above information – which is valuable for all participants – for inclusion on the CILECT website.

## 2. Presentation of Questionnaire Results – Barbara Turquier

Barbara Turquier highlights the 4 principal observations and 4 principal challenges to emerge from the questionnaire that was sent to all participants. She also provides an overview of the research topics underway in participating schools.

### *a. Principal Observations*

First, research activities have intensified and are better structured in the schools today. This is partly due to a new institutional environment, with many schools obtaining university status, becoming part of a larger school or university, or developing close ties with other institutions. There are very few entirely standalone film schools today and this has implications for the way they conduct research. Having a strong connection with art schools can be an advantage when it comes to advocating artistic research. However, it can also raise issues as to the specificity of film research.

Second, the notion of artistic research is now more widely recognized and asserted in the film school context. Almost all of the schools in the questionnaire conducted artistic research. Norway and Sweden, in particular, have national policies that favor artistic research. However, generally speaking, advocacy for artistic research has increased throughout all schools.

Third, for schools that have a PhD program, the creative PhD has played a crucial role in the development of research in the school. The issue of PhD formats – is there a mandatory written component? – is a subject of negotiation and a pivot for the development and acceptance of the notion of artistic research within the school. More schools offer art PhDs today than in 2011, and 6 schools among the participants to this workshop have launched new PhD programs in the past 5 years. While the number of doctoral students remains relatively low, they play a crucial role in their school's research activities. The PhD was also a valuable option for faculty already teaching in the schools.

Fourth, there is a greater link between research and learning than in the past. Research tends to cascade down into the general curriculum of the school, notably through the creation of

research labs, innovation workshops, and so on. There appears to be a shift from individually based research to collective research, which can be driven by the schools themselves. Again, this could have implications for the teaching programs.

#### *b. Principal Challenges*

First, the financial model for research in film schools. Should these projects be financed as film projects or as research projects? Many of the schools funded research out of the school's overall budget or through funding provided by research bodies. Very few schools turned to traditional channels of film funding for these projects, and only one school mentioned a European call for projects. Do art PhDs favor more individual-based PhD projects rather than traditional collective filmmaking, the latter being more costly?

Second, schools pointed to a general lack of staff and lack of time, which act as obstacles to artistic research. There was significant disparity in the scales of the schools, and it may be more difficult to build a research environment with critical mass in the smaller schools. There is also a question as to the status of the staff involved. At La Fémis, for example, teachers are not paid to conduct research, as is the case for university professors.

Third, evaluation and conformity to academic standards. Schools can find themselves in a double bind between doing more research, on the one hand, and the requirement to have more impact in terms of the employment of their students, on the other.

Fourth, the outlet of research production. Platforms in which to showcase the research productions of film schools were lacking. They ranged from traditional research outlets (publications, books) to new outlets (new publication platforms, websites). This raises issues as to publishing policies and whether or not they need to differentiate themselves from film and media publications in general. There were few mentions of transfers to industry, or of technological outputs such as patents.

#### *c. Research Topics*

The following research topics emerged from the questionnaires:

- Narrative and storytelling, especially in a digital context.
- Technology (new and digital media, games, audio landscapes, interactive media, etc.)
- Aesthetics and the formal artistic qualities of film
- Emotional or cognitive reception of film (audience sensations, sensory perceptions)
- Political issues such as cultural studies, gender, race, social outreach, representations of troubled history and identity
- Preservation of film history
- Teaching film
- There were relatively few mentions of applied research projects
- There were few mentions of research on the economics of the film and media industries.

### 3. Discussion

**Robin MacPherson** refers to the status of staff. At the Screen Academy Scotland, all full-time staff members are expected to do research, and 10% of the budget is allocated to such research. Staff members are expected to deliver more and better research, and this is now part of their appraisal process. In particular, staff members are required to produce 4 quality research outputs of some kind (a film, an exhibition, a paper, a book), and this can be a struggle for those who do not have a history of academic research.

**Coral Houtman** notes that, given the length of time it takes to make a film, it can be quite a challenge. It is necessary to redefine the film research process so that it can be articulated in the output form that is required.

**Fredrik Graver** refers to the case of Norway, where a 1995 government decision determined that artistic research was separate and parallel to academic research. This paved the way for significant room for maneuvers by the film schools, and it came about as the result of much lobbying by film schools and art schools. The actual definition of artistic research was provided in 2007: “artistic practice combined with critical reflection by the practitioner”. The emphasis is therefore very much on practice. The actual Norwegian term is “artistic development work”, which highlights the fact that this work is aimed (a) at the development as individual artists, and (b) at the development of the field in which they are working. In the Norwegian system, candidates are *not* required to produce any written work in parallel to their artistic project.

**Kirsi Rinne** adds that even the “critical reflection” part of the process need not be written up.

**Robin MacPherson** explains that, in the UK, only a 300-word explanation is required when a practical work is submitted. However, when applying for funding, it is necessary to explain how the practical work is also contributing to the development of knowledge.

**Rolf Hughes** distinguishes between artistic development and artistic research proper. There is a risk that if one eliminates the “research” part of the process, artistic research could become ghettoized. There is also a risk that artistic *practice* becomes separated from the more formal written *research* component. The Society for Artistic Research has developed the notion of “exposition”, an attempt to integrate the account-giving into the actual artefact or performance. The Society publishes the Journal for Artistic Research, an online, peer reviewed publishing tool that has been adapted to artistic researchers. It includes a Research Catalogue, which acts as an online workspace. Finally, the Society is working to facilitate international research initiatives between individuals and institutions.

**Arne Bro** notes that film has only a 100-year history, and researchers and practitioners are still exploring what it all means. It is important to distinguish between the “ordinary” research that artists do all the time, and research in general – the latter is something that can benefit everyone. It is also important to remember that much work is done that is equivalent to research but is not necessarily named as such.

**Jan Nâls** was interested in the list of research topics presented by Barbara Turquier. It would be helpful to have a detailed list of the topics being undertaken at the schools, as this could help foster joint initiatives among the schools. **Barbara Turquier** explains that the questionnaires were completed confidentially, but participants could agree to share this



information.

For **David Munns**, the question of collective research is very important and it would be of interest to hear the experience of those who have engaged in collective research. **Barbara Turquier** notes that all final year students at La Fémis undertake a collective film project.

For **Bert Beyens**, the quality and volume of research undertaken can depend on the existence of inspirational individuals at the school. For example, a theatre teacher at the RITS School of Arts Belgium was responsible over 5 years for an enormous multidisciplinary project on the Earl of Rochester (*the Monkey*). This culminated in the award of a PhD for the teacher in question.

**Pavel Jech** questions the rationale behind the research topics chosen: have they been selected due to an intrinsic interest, or because this is where funding is available, or as an attempt to preserve something from the past in an ever-changing world?

**Mieke Bernink** explains that the Netherlands Film Academy has taken a bottom-up approach to research. This is much more empowering than having something imposed from above.

### III. Combining Research with Professional and Artistic Training

*The discussion focuses on research activities in the schools' general curricula, apart from PhD and Masters Programs specialized in research: What are the research formats that can be implemented? How do they contribute to the other missions of the school? How are the different "cultures" of teaching combining? How can we meaningfully involve students and teaching staff in research activities? What is the place of theoretical courses and written theses in the curriculum?*

#### 1. Case Study 1 – Dana Whitco: The Tisch Initiative for Creative Research at New York University

**Dana Whitco** begins by stating that the Tisch School of the Arts is in a period of transition and re-formulation. The school has 4,000 undergraduates, of which 1,400 are in the Film and Television department. The school has 283 full-time faculty, including tenured academic positions and limited-term positions. In addition, there are over 300 adjunct part-time teachers. The school offers BFA, MFA, MA and PhD programs. The new dean, Allyson Green, is the first artist to hold that position.

One year ago, the school launched the Initiative for Creative Research. There is some reluctance to refer to this as "creative" research, which seems to lessen its importance vis-à-vis scientific, traditional or pure research – creative work should not be seen as a decorative afterthought to the work of the university. The initiative is a 2-3 year pilot that is currently extra-curricula. A Working Group of 30 faculty members meets regularly to explore the ideas underpinning the initiative. 4 research strategies have been initiated:

- Residencies: 3 artists have been invited to take up residencies at Tisch.

- Collaborations: Tisch has not had a system of school wide support system for faculty or student research. To address this situation, a substantial number of grants will be awarded in September to support collaborations between students and faculty across departments. Successful teams will have 1 year in which to complete their work.
- Partnerships: to date, Tisch has not been active in the local arts scene. The idea is to get students and faculty into the local venues to develop programs that have a pedagogical component and that are research oriented.
- Events/publications: Tisch has hosted 26 events this year, including academic symposia, conferences, seminars, and so on.

NYU does not have a robust capacity to translate creative work into traditional scholarship. However, many other US colleges and universities have already achieved that, notably UCLA, Berkeley, Arizona State University and the University of Illinois.

### Discussion

**Robin MacPherson** asks whether Tisch has responded to *external* pressure to have a more active research profile. If that is the case, its own faculty may be reluctant to follow this direction. For **Dana Whitco**, the aim is to bring Tisch into a leadership position on this issue, showing that what artists do is an essential part of the academic space. Regarding faculty attitudes, some reluctance was expected but, in fact, faculty members proved to be enthusiastic about the opportunity to explore all of these issues.

In response to another question from **Robin MacPherson**, **Dana Whitco** explains that the practice-based PhD is under threat. NYU, for example, has decided not to pursue a practice-based PhD.

In response to a question from **Coral Houtman**, **Dana Whitco** explains that the residencies are aimed at contributing to knowledge; they are more than simply an opportunity to create and develop a new work. For Vinca Wiedemann, this raises questions quite a dilemma of what exactly is art. Is it a product? Should researchers be told that they are not supposed to be producing “art” but they should be producing research? Herman Van Eyken explains that the Griffith Film School Australia also expects its artists in residence to work with undergraduate and post-graduate students. In contrast, students in the PhD research programs are only expected to do practice-based research.

**Robin MacPherson** asks whether the research adds real value to professional practice. It would seem that the pressure to turn out PhD graduates is not being driven by industry.

**Bert Beyens** refers to the shifts that are occurring in the schools. Teachers in art schools are now expected to be good artists, good teachers *and* good researchers. There has been an inflation of the MA, and we are now witnessing the emergence of a new generation of PhDs.

**Marc Nicolas** asks for further details of the collaboration grants. **Dana Whitco** explains that the faculty Working Group will make a call for the collaboration grants, with a funding of \$35,000. These must involve 2 or more principal collaborators from at least 2 different departments; the work must be experiential and laboratory-based; and applicants must be thoughtful about the process.

**Barbara Turquier** asks how these projects fit in with the schedules of students and faculty. **Dana Whitco** explains that this has not yet been determined. The idea of course buy-outs has been explored. Involving and supporting students is always considered a priority but it is also important to take care of faculty.

**Marc Nicolas** asks whether any other schools present undertake such calls for proposals.

**Mieke Bernink** advises that the Netherlands Film Academy puts out calls for small research projects that would allow participants to try out new ideas within the education space. It has a limited budget, which is allocated to selected projects by an editorial team that has been set up for this process. A range of very different projects has been submitted, from very technology driven projects to projects on collaborative filmmaking or projects on new forms of collaboration among students. The calls have received a very enthusiastic response to date.

**Robin MacPherson** advises that the Screen Academy Scotland held a call for proposals (€10,000) between 2 or more researchers from different departments or from within the school and externally. The call was in fact under-subscribed.

**Fredrik Graver** explains that while the Film School Norway does not have funding for this type of project, the Norway Program for Artistic Research has such funding. 3 projects have been funded to date: (a) a feature film project (with Juliette Binoche), which has raised the level of discourse about the school's research; (b) a project by an editor that explores the subjectivity of the filmmaker in the editing room; (c) a project by an editor working with neuroscientists to monitor audience perceptions. The greatest challenge for these projects has been to obtain the buy-in of commercial production companies.

**Pavel Jech** advises that a new €20,000-25,000 grant has been established with Prague's 5 art academies, and it has received a very enthusiastic response. 20-25 projects were selected on the basis that the cooperation to be undertaken brought real added value to the project. The word "research" was not used in setting up or administering the grant, but that is probably what was involved.

**Donald Taylor Black** asks whether the term "research" should be defined. Should cooperative projects also be called research?

In response to a question from **Barbara Turquier** regarding the role of a "scholar in residence", **Dana Whitco** explains that the Cinema Studies department is interested in having a scholar who is a curator, engaging with students as a mentor with respect to his or her own project.

## 2. Case Study 2 – Kirsi Rinne: Research as a Pedagogical Tool at Aalto University

**Kirsi Rinne** presents the aims of her department when undertaking research – the objective is to take both a theoretical approach and contribute to practical knowledge. That is, the ultimate aim is to make better films. The most relevant research questions for film schools come from the practical work of filmmakers. The main challenge for those who apply for PhDs is that they do not necessarily know how to set out their projects or ask their questions in an

academic manner. The school has therefore introduced the idea of “research thinking” into the MA program, and several workshops have been set up to facilitate that move into research thinking.

- First, a 4-month workshop on rhythm led by 3 filmmakers that explored questions such as the role of practical knowledge in studying dramaturgical and cinematic rhythm. 4x2-day workshops/lectures were held, with independent work undertaken between sessions. Various theories of rhythm were explored and an experimental approach was taken – the process is in fact considered more important than the actual output.
- Second, the school also set up a Laboratory of Poetic Dramaturgy based on a PhD thesis by Marja-Ritta Koivumäki on dramaturgy. The workshop tested her ideas and approach in practice, exploring deviations from classic dramaturgy. This was a 4-week workshop involving 8 students who shot a selected scene.
- Other workshops explored topics such as cinematography (aspect ratios), sound design (felt sense), and counter-hegemonic cinema, etc.

This is a two-way process: research ideas come into the school from the outside, and vice versa. The school believes that all disciplines must be involved in research. The relevant outputs include refereed articles, art works, publications, and societal impact.

### Discussion

**Robin MacPherson** asks whether validation of the practice-based work as research is only possible if it is accompanied by recognized outputs such as publications. **Kirsi Rinne** explains that the workshops themselves are not outputs.

**Bert Beyens** notes that the number of students involved is relatively limited. How much dialogue is possible in that context? **Kirsi Rinne** explains that, while few people are involved, they generate a lot of noise!

**Herman Van Eyken** asks whether people from different sub-disciplines work together. If so, how are course credits calculated? **Kirsi Rinne** advises that students have to demonstrate, in writing, their contribution to the whole project.

**Jan Nâls** raises a question on method. How are these research proposals evaluated? Do the students use classic research language to describe their methodologies or do they invent their own terminology? **Kirsi Rinne** explains that, in general, the language used is quite traditional. However, there have been some highly imaginative proposals, which are greatly valued. The main criterion for evaluation is whether or not it is possible to address the research topic without producing an art work. For example, a documentary proposal on the future of the Finnish welfare state obtained funding because it was so much more interesting than the “classic” submissions made by sociologists.

For **Javier Olarte**, this raises the issue of how the knowledge gained in the project can be “captured” for use by others. For **Kirsi Rinne**, this is part of the wider question of how research results can be communicated to others, which is after all the aim of research. Knowledge has to be made public if it is to be conveyed to others.

**Coral Houtman** notes that some research questions pursued by artists are more concerned with description than the production of objects. In that way, their research is similar to humanities research. **Kirsi Rinne** agrees. In many cases, the actual research question only becomes clear at the end of the research project.

For **Rolf Hughes**, a key difference with the humanities is the relationship with empiricism. In the humanities, researchers are trained to work empirically in a scientific manner. Artistic research work is not necessarily concerned with validation or positioning within the humanities universe; it can be about the creation of impossible objects or paradoxes. This raises the issue of its evaluation by committees that are trained in the logics of the humanities. Each artistic project has to be viewed as a unique case study in itself, creating a new set of representational and discursive possibilities. At the same time, those engaged in artistic research have to develop multiple literacies, *viz.* Henk Borgdorff's "boundaryobjects".

**Barbara Turquier** refers to the dialogue between artistic research and more academic forms of research. In an academic sense, research requires both the state of the art and the idea of progression. Should artistic research be defined within that context or should that context simply be ignored? **Kirsi Rinne** refers to the OECD's *Frascati Manual*, which sets out a definition of research: an original contribution to knowledge.

**Rolf Hughes** refers to his work with the Swedish Research Council, which showed that many of the issues and challenges associated with artistic research also apply to other research areas – the world has problems but universities have departments! Artistic research in fact spearheads the re-formulation of other research areas and the creation of hybrid forms of research. Arne Bro agrees, drawing on the example of physics.

**Bert Beyens** notes that "art" is never defined and everyone knows that communication is problematic for art. For **Rolf Hughes**, art is able to communicate well but on its own terms. This raises the question of whether art is carried out in the pursuit of precision or in the pursuit of uncertainty. Funding committees expect precision. **Bert Beyens** agrees. The fact that this has now been institutionalized is a dangerous development.

**Simone Stewens** refers to Kirsi Rinne's comments that "the aim is to make better films". Does that mean that the school expects specific results? For **Kirsi Rinne**, the research carried out in film schools should have an impact on pedagogy, and it should have an impact on film production. This is similar to the way in which medicine – which is practice-based research – aims to improve the practice of medicine.

**Hilde d'Haeyere** explains that research is an integral part of the Belgian education system. It is part of the undergraduate film course and it is taught by art PhD students. That is extremely valuable for students, who work on films using a process-driven approach – that process is more important than the final film itself. Surprisingly, the films they make end up being quite traditional; they are not necessarily highly experimental even though they are produced in a highly experimental manner.

**Vinca Wiedemann** relates the case of a project that was submitted for funding to the Culture Ministry. It explored the collaboration between scriptwriters and directors and was rejected as being a pedagogical research project rather than an artistic research project.

**Kirsi Rinne** advises that she and a number of other participants have applied for a grant that explores the question of pedagogy in film schools. The aim is to develop a specific course for those professionals who come to teach at the film schools. This could be of relevance to both GEECT and to CILECT.

For **Laetitia Masson** (co-director of the filmmaking department, La Fémis), art is research. However, it is necessary to work within a system that is defined in academic and commercial terms. In that context, it is valuable to have a space where people can keep on practising “art” regardless of whether or not it is called research.

**Marc Nicolas** refers to his discussions with the French Ministry of Higher Education on the difference between creation and research. In the French system, students spend their BA to MA years learning things that have been developed in the past by someone else. That is called “training”. In their last year, they are told to invent something, to create knowledge – and that is called “research”. In contrast, students in art schools are told to create something new from their very first day; they are not there to *learn* but to *do*. However, this distinction between learning and doing is quite misleading. **Bert Beyens** agrees that learning by doing is not a panacea – it is possible for someone to make the same mistakes year after year if they are only doing and not learning!

#### IV. Screening of a Selection of Research Projects

##### 1. *Treefellers Revisited* – Screen Academy Scotland

**Robin MacPherson** presents this practice-led work in progress based on a 2004 documentary on Belizean emigrants in Scotland during WWII. He took the film to Belize to see what contribution it had made to Belize’s sense of its own heritage, shooting a new documentary on its reception today by a range of audiences from school children to war veterans. The project explores the relationship of the documentary filmmaker with the subject.

- ***What was the impact of the film when screened?*** Robin MacPherson does not know of the impact when first screened. At the time, more people saw the documentary in the UK than in Belize. This raises many questions about who has control of this kind of archival material shot during colonial times.
- ***How do you go about determining how the audience perceives the film?*** Robin MacPherson has taken a less structured approach to this, using observational filmmaking methodology rather than social scientific methodology. It is not rooted in an empiricist tradition of sociology. Instead, the method itself is being developed and identified as part of the process.

- **What will the output format be: a film or a written publication?** Both. Robin MacPherson will also experiment the use of social media in order to create a more interactive documentary form.

## 2. *Transatlantic Hauntings, African Modernities* – WITS School of Arts South Africa

Jyoti Mistry presents the work in progress of 2 candidates registered in her school's PhD through creative research program: Nduka Mntambo (*African Modernities*) and Kitso Lelliot (*Transatlantic Hauntings*). That program is based on a theory/practice approach, which requires both a scholarly written submission and a creative project outcome. Students are asked to think about art practice as multifaceted *inquiry*. PhD candidates must have an academic and creative portfolio that provides a convincing case for practice-based research. At the same time, their research must be grounded in a conceptual inquiry that is informed by a clear theoretical framework.

The works presented explore aspects of cinematic language in the context of the African continent and its colonial past: identities, nationalities, gender. There has to be another way to tell stories than the one prescribed by the North.

- **Will both works be submitted for the students' doctorates?** The 2 films are works in progress, which were shot after 8 months of research.
- **Are the installations that feature in the films those of other artists or the students' own work?** Kitso Lelliot studied Fine Arts, and has moved to the school's film department for the purposes of her PhD. The installation filmed represents various iterations of her own work. Nduka Mntambo's piece draws on various films that were made about Johannesburg, using them as inter-textual references.
- **The 2 pieces were quite different but both were a type of audiovisual essay.** Nduka Mntambo's will probably end up as a film. Kitso Lelliot's work is more about fragmentary iterations of her images.
- **How do you envision "publishing" these works? Will the written component of the PhD be taken into account with the audiovisual component?** Nduka Mntambo's MA film stands as a film on its own right, and that will also be the case with the PhD work. The written components will also be published in their own right. The artists consider their careers as belonging to the 2 different spaces.
- **It requires great courage for a teacher to allow these 2 poets to work in such a manner. Jyoti Mistry and the WITS School should be congratulated on the fact that these 2 students will leave the school as artists.**

## 3. *Boxer* – Zurich University of the Arts, Switzerland

Christian Iseli presents several recent research projects carried out at the school:

- Analogue versus digital: the emotional impact of film recording formats on the audience.
- Digitized reality 4K and HFR: creative strategies for ultra-high resolution images and high frame rates.
- Digitized reality: new ways of telling stories with Auro-3D or Dolby Atmos.

High frame rate (HFR) is a technical parameter that helps improve film quality. At the same time, however, having a very sharp picture can mean that audiences are less involved in the story being told. The so-called uncanny valley effect occurs when using +60 frames/second. Test sequences were therefore shot at 24, 48 and 96 frames per second, and questionnaires and eye tracking techniques were used to measure audience reaction. The pilot film, *Boxer*, is currently in post-production and will be shown at 24, 48 and 96 frames per second speeds. An HFR conference will be held in June 2015, and will become part of the IMMERSION research project to be launched next year.

- ***Both short films were edited in the same way but it may in fact be necessary to edit 96 frame films in a different manner.*** Christian Iseli explains that the issue of editing will be explored in a second stage of the project.
- ***The 96 frame film presumably requires a different approach to depth of field.*** Christian Iseli agrees that operators will probably need to use a different lens when filming in 96 frames per second. Audiences could indeed be distracted by the fact that the background is so much clearer.
- ***Presumably the 24 frame images were multiplied. Does that not exaggerate the problem?*** Theoretically, it is exactly the same but this will have to be verified.
- ***What was the reaction of the audience? The speaker preferred the 24 frame version and felt that the 96 frame version was more like HD TV. In his opinion, accuracy is not an aesthetic!*** Christian Iseli advises that many viewers – in particular older viewers – prefer the 24 frame as it is what they are used to. However, not all the results have been analyzed yet. People tend to prefer the 96 when looking at one shot only; for the whole film, they prefer the 24.

#### 4. ***Filmographies : Pierre Lhomme – La Fémis, France***

Barbara Turquier presents an oral history archive-based project based on about 10-hour long interviews with leading figures from the French film industry.

- ***Will this work become a film or a database?*** Marc Nicolas explains that this project has been 10 years in the making. Its pedagogical aim is to contribute to the students' knowledge of their craft and industry, and provide an opportunity for dialogue with an experienced peer – the meeting between the students and the interviewee has been very powerful as a training sequence. It also fills gaps in France's cinema archives. The underlying concept is not to make a documentary but an archive. The films will be held by libraries for those doing historical research.



- ***Is the camera always positioned in the same place for the whole 10 hours?*** Yes. However, the material is not at all boring because the interviewee's story is so fascinating.
- ***Will the material be available on the Internet for public use?*** The material will be provided to the French Cinémathèque for free public use. La Fémis will retain 100% of the rights.
- ***Which students are involved in the project?*** 6 second-year students are involved in the project. They were assisted by a historian who drives the preparation phase, which includes film screenings and research.
- ***What type of editing is used?*** The material undergoes a minimum of editing: it is simply separated into chapters.
- ***Would you like to see this idea copied by other schools?*** La Fémis would be extremely pleased to see that. The beauty of the concept is that 10 hours allows an in-depth exploration of the interviewee's work.
- ***Will the material be indexed and/or sub-titled? The sub-titles could in fact be used for indexing purposes.*** La Fémis will provide the material in chapters with a list of the themes addressed. It will be up to the Cinémathèque to tag or index the material. The version presented today was sub-titled but that will not necessarily be the case for all the works.

## V. Session 3: Artistic Research in MA and PhD Degrees – A European Model?

*This panel deals with degrees specifically designed around research, notably artistic or practice-based PhDs. How are the programs built? What conceptions of artistic research are promoted? How to best train students, fund artistic projects, have their expertise recognised? What are the professional goals of these degrees? How has their recognition evolved?*

### 1. Case Study 1 – Mieke Bernink: The Master of Film Program at the Netherlands Film Academy

The Netherlands Film Academy is part of a School of the Arts but not of a university. The MA program has been developed over the past 5 years, and is not necessarily a follow-on to a completed BA degree. It is a 2-year course, with an intake of 10-12 students per year. It is international – conducted in English – and multidisciplinary. It is neither skills-driven nor production-driven, but provides candidates with a valuable time for reflection. The mission of the course is to contribute to the development of cinema by providing a context in which young filmmakers can develop their own craft through artistic research. Research is in fact the essence or centerpiece of the course.

While it is multidisciplinary, the course has primarily attracted directors, editors, and camera operators. The course has extended both the concept of traditional film research and the concept of academic research. No specific methodology has been established, and it is up to the students to develop their own hypotheses and methodology.

Artistic research is an essentially creative process in which practice and reflection – doing and thinking – are intrinsically related. It is process-driven based on an endless series of detours. As such, the work is assessed in terms of the *process* rather than the *outcome*. It is the filmmaker's own development that is central to the process. Creating a framework for the students to develop their own identity is therefore more important than the actual project outcome.

The course is structured in 4 semesters over 2 years, based on the following themes.

- Subjective identity and positioning
- Process and methodology
- Exploration and experimentation
- Conceptualization and communication.

In terms of the underlying educational principles, students are responsible for their own development. The course involves workshops, seminars, artists in residence, lecture series, and so on, in particular in the first year. In the second year, the students work on their research/projects; they can seek skills training at other institutions or they can invite guest teachers to their own workshops. Peer learning is their most decisive development tool.

There are no restrictions whatsoever on the outcomes: films (fiction, documentary, long, short), installations, web based projects, live performances, books, etc. One project, for example, involved a virtual museum for sent and unsent emails. Many students end with a proposal for a film or a project, and the school attempts to link them to a producer. All projects have to be presented at the National Film Museum, together with the research (in some form or other). More and more students are making essay films, which appear to be the most suitable format for integrating their research into the project. This is preferable to having the project and the reflection on the project as separate and distinct stages.

Two examples of work by MA students are provided. First, a relatively well-established Indonesian filmmaker who worked on the relationship between colonialism and eroticism. He shot a porn film, which led him to explore the use of analogue film, and created a "dinner" performance/installation. He ended with a proposal for a feature length film that is now in the process of being made. Second, an Italian theatre maker who worked (a) on formal research regarding the connections between theatre and film, and (b) on the gestural aspect of work. Her work in progress has already been taken up in festivals and even received prizes.

The MA involves very individual based research, with filmmakers making more complex and interesting works than they would otherwise have done.

### Discussion

**Robin MacPherson** notes that it is the *process* that is assessed. Does that mean that the student could in fact make nothing at all? **Mieke Bernink** explains that 1 formal assessment is made in each semester: the students explain where they are in the process, what they have you done, and the questions they are exploring. They do this through a presentation, a paper or an essay film, for example. At the end of the second semester, the outcome assessed is their plan for Year 2. At the end of the final semester, the project itself is assessed

by a committee that includes external assessors.

**Rolf Hughes** asks whether the students also work on each other's projects. **Mieke Bernink** explains that students are able to do as they like. They can also choose to work with people from outside the school.

In response to a question from Bert Beyens, **Mieke Bernink** explains that it is the students' responsibility to widen their networks and find their own mentors.

**Bert Beyens** explains that he was present when the course was launched 5 year ago. He is amazed by the progress that has been made in that time.

**Marc Nicolas** asks for further details of the workshops that take place. **Mieke Bernink** explains that, in Semester 1, the students map out their past work and their future work. Semester 2 begins with an in-depth seminar on the workshops, which are up to 1 week long and include writing workshops, academic workshops on research, etc. No actual workshops are held in Semesters 3 and 4. Most of the teachers do not come from film – they are visual artists, dramaturgists, or writers. Similarly, most do not have an academic research background.

**Coral Houtman** is impressed by the candidates who are willing to take the risk of giving up 2 years of their lives for the MA degree. **Mieke Bernink** advises that the school receives about 80 applications from all over the world. Successful candidates are selected on the basis of their earlier work (CVs), and their research and project proposal (although it is assumed that the project will change over the 2 year period). Candidates are either genuinely interested in undertaking artistic research, or they have come to the end of a current cycle of work and feel they need to take the time to re-position themselves. They are looking for a "life-changing event".

**Pavel Jech** asks what it would take to fail the program. **Mieke Bernink** explains that students have indeed been failed if they do not make sufficient progress or if they are unable to conceptualize or talk about their work.

In response to a question from **Marc Nicolas**, **Mieke Bernink** explains that about 30 students have graduated to date. Approximately half of the projects were films, with slightly more documentary (60%) than fiction (40%). It is too early to say whether graduates will primarily end up as filmmakers or as visual artists. Generally speaking, those who come from a visual arts background go back to the visual arts, and those who come from film tend to return to film.

**Tinna Joné** asks how peer learning is encouraged. **Mieke Bernink** advises that this occurs naturally. The program begins with a 3-day boat trip, which is an excellent way of bringing the students together. They also have to participate in an acting/directing workshop. Finally, the students have to make many presentations, which are the subject of collective feedback.

**Michèle Bergot** asks whether the school keeps a trace of their work. **Mieke Bernink** explains that the students have to provide the school with a copy of the end result of their work. They do, however, retain the rights to any work produced – essentially because the school did not want the additional burden of administrating the film rights.

**Pavel Jech** notes that the program is quite different from the usual film school programs. **Mieke Bernink** agrees. The school had to choose between its mission as a cultural institution and its mission as an educational institution; it chose the former.

In response to a question from **Dana Whitco**, **Mieke Bernink** explains that the fundamental ideas were present at the start of the process but it took at least 3 years to get the program into its current form. The students actually helped develop the program and make it what it is today.

**Jan Nåls** asks whether it would be possible for 2 students to work on and be evaluated on the same project. **Mieke Bernink** advises that this has not yet occurred but the school would be very open to such a concept. To date, students have helped on each other's projects but they are evaluated on their own project only.

## 2. Case Study 2 – Fredrik Graver: PhD Level Degrees at the Norwegian Film School

**Fredrik Graver** focuses on PhD level research at the Norwegian Film School. The school is part of the national program for artistic research in Norway, which provides a central funding source for all such research. The school has a 3-year BFA program, a PhD program, and also provides funding for a senior research program (3 such projects are currently underway). It is about to launch a production-based MFA program.

Artistic research emerged in Norway in the mid-1990s, with its own status within the overall research framework. When launched, funding was provided for 6 fellows from all the different arts institutions. The Film School has now had 3 fellows complete their projects: 2 screenwriters and 1 director. The program does not confer formal PhD status: the school has been pushing for a status of Doctor of Fine Arts, but the majority of schools are pushing for PhD status.

7-8 new candidates enter the 3-year program each year, some funded under the national program and others by the schools themselves. Candidates are also free to seek additional funding from outside the program. 2 mandatory courses per year bring all fellows from the different disciplines together for several days at a time. Once a year, the fellows, their institutions, and their supervisors are also brought together.

The National Advisory Board is currently exploring the definition of artistic research, which is today defined as “artistic production combined with critical reflection”. The key to artistic research is “critical reflection”. However, the candidates do also have to produce art – the most important part of their application is the work of art they intend to produce, which has to be publicly viewed at some point. The fellows can teach for up to 40 days in the course of the 3 years, but there is no obligation to do so. An additional fourth year can be added to the course, in which the fellows dedicate 25% of their time to teaching.

Most applicants tend to be screenwriters who see this as an excellent opportunity to be paid for 3 years while they write their screenplays! Last year, a cinematographer was selected, and it is hoped that candidates will be received from production design and sound. This is an

international program that is conducted in English. Half of the candidates come from outside Scandinavia.

Two examples are provided of work undertaken. First, a Norwegian director, Trygve Allister Diesen. His project, *Swimming with Sharks*, explored the way in which a creative director can maintain his or her vision in a commercial environment – in this case, while working on a TV series and a film. He made a video diary of the process, based on a daily log, and he interviewed other directors facing similar challenges, as well as producers and cinematographers. His work took the form of a 45-minute film. The main criticism he faced was that the reflection on his work occurred in the editing of his video journal, but this did not come across in the final work. He therefore wrote a short essay after the fact to set out and explain his reflection process. His project took 5.5 years instead of 3, and this extension of the allotted time has occurred in other cases as well.

Second, a cinematographer, Cecilie Semec, who has worked extensively in feature film with innovative Norwegian directors. She has also worked with visual artists and fashion houses. Her project, *The Modern Film Image*, prompted extensive discussion on the meaning of the term “modern”. Her artistic project is based on (a) her work with a controversial Norwegian director, and (b) her work with a visual artist. In parallel, she is working on the dialogue on aesthetics that occurs between cinematographers and directors. She also presents master classes.

With respect to critical reflection, the school has developed the concept of the “statement of intent” throughout all its programs. Students start working on this from Day 1, with extensive discussion and feedback on their statements.

## **Discussion**

**Robin MacPherson** asks whether the school is open to any form of reflection. Is there a mandatory written component? **Fredrik Graver** explains that the school is open to whatever makes sense for the fellow. If they are comfortable with writing, they can present their reflection in the form of writing. **Pavel Jech** adds that he was on the Committee that assessed Trygve Allister Diesen’s work. The project was of interest and it posed a legitimate question. However, the Committee had an issue with his film essay, which was very entertaining but did not demonstrate his reflective work. He was therefore asked to write a piece about that reflective process.

**Coral Houtman** raises the question of the research *context*. The professional artistic practice of being a filmmaker is quite different from a discipline such as film studies. It is only in the latter that a well-established form of reflection exists. **Mieke Bernink** agrees. That is why students at the Norwegian Film Academy are required to chart their own territory, looking around what may already been written or done in the area. The ultimate test is what comes out at the end. The prerogative of the artist is to *abuse* theory – they are not philosophers and they cannot be expected to present their work in the way that philosophers do. Of course, there are some exceptions – individuals who are both great philosophers and great artists. **Fredrik Graver** adds that, for the Norway Film School, the key is for the artist to do this from his or her own perspective.

**Robin MacPherson** does not agree that practitioners have an obligation to try and synthesize an existing body of knowledge in the theoretical space. That body of theory is not necessarily required to form the development of a critical self-reflective practice. Bridges can be built between the two, but a student cannot be penalized for not taking that theory into account when developing a practice-based, reflective project.

**Rolf Hughes** agrees that theory can be “played” with as any other material. However, this raises the question of the difference between reflection and *critical* reflection. There is a danger that the work itself will be domesticated: it will be considered as enigmatic and mysterious in itself, and requiring a second stage of critical reflection if it is to be understood. Critical reflection always seems to be geared to the past; it looks backwards rather than forwards into speculative utopias, for example. How are the Norwegian programs evaluated by the funders? **Fredrik Graver** explains that the government is interested in numbers rather than content. For example, it wants to know how many candidates complete within their 3-year allotted time. The program has been reasonably successful in recruiting national and international supervisors, peer reviewers and final adjudication committees. Its level of internationalization is in fact much greater than for other doctoral programs in Norway. As result, the program for artistic research is very well considered by the government and is conducted with relative freedom.

**Hilde d’Haeyere** is interested in the concept of *integrating* the reflection into the works themselves. She was struck by the amount of text that was included in the works from the WITS School of Arts that were presented yesterday. **Jyoti Mistry** highlights an exercise undertaken by the students. If indeed cinema has its own grammar or syntax, are students able to critique a film using only that grammar of the images? In the exercise, students prepared a 3-minute film to critique a Tarantino film using the film itself. They were able to show that this was possible, but it requires considerable imagination.

**Robin MacPherson** notes that such issues were already extensively explored in the 1970s by people such as Peter Wollen or Noel Burch. For **Jyoti Mistry**, this is not a case of reinventing the wheel. Wollen’s work, for example, is greatly concerned with language: if cinema is a language, can it be divorced from the Saussurean understanding of language? **Bert Beyens** adds that both Peter Wollen and Noel Burch have distanced themselves from their work in the 1970s. Since then, it would seem that this sensitivity to explore has disappeared from the film world today, and has been relegated to the museum. Similarly, film schools have become “industry formatted” and that has narrowed down the perspectives that are taken.

For **Mieke Bernink**, it is crucial for young filmmakers to do this research themselves, even if they could be considered as reinventing the 1970s. **Robin MacPherson** is also in favor of practitioners exploring such issues for their own development. However, this cannot be considered as extending a field of knowledge, which is the very definition of a PhD.

**Arne Bro** asks whether film is a commodity or a language. If it is a language, then artists need to explore and discuss that language. **Jyoti Mistry** refers to William Kentridge, who describes his work as “stone-age filmmaking”. The notion of an advance implies that evolution is about a hierarchy of development. What is of interest is the way that students are reinterpreting knowledge systems that were expressed and articulated in a way that was specific to the

historical and political context of the 1970s. They may be asking the same questions today but they are doing so in a way that is inflected by a different set of circumstances.

### 3. Case Study 3 – Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen: “SACRe” Doctoral Program, PSL University

**Marc Nicolas** introduces this topic by explaining that the French higher education system has been undergoing a *Big Bang* for the past 8 years. All universities and higher education institutions have been divided up into groups. La Fémis is therefore now part of one such group – the PSL Research University – together with 4 other Paris arts schools and the Ecole Normale Supérieure (an academic institution spanning the sciences and the humanities). The group has established an experimental artistic research PhD that is called SACRe (Sciences, Arts, Creation and Research).

**Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen**, an art historian and professor at Ecole Normale Supérieure, presents the SACRe practice-based doctorate that aims to bring together PhD students practicing different visual arts (drama, acting, design, music composing, and filmmaking). The program was established 3 years ago and is an experiment in proximity between the disciplines. It aims to obtain recognition as a genuine research-based PhD and not as a professional or specialized degree. All of the schools involved already had a prestigious MA program and were reluctant to merge. However, they also understood the importance of participating in an internationally recognized PhD program.

Today, the program comprises 31 students – 25 practicing artists and 6 theoreticians whose more academic dissertation deals with the arts. Students receive a monthly salary over the 3-year course. They are selected on the basis of (a) their artistic or academic excellence, (b) their desire to embark on a long-term project with a coherent subject, and (c) their ability to dialogue with students from other disciplines.

The SACRe students from La Fémis have explored subjects such as stereoscoping or the art of memory. This is not an artist’s residency, although the students do spend a significant amount of time on their artwork. They also attend seminars and workshops, and reflect on and react to topics presented. Students and theoreticians work together, and also organize their own workshops. In the future, a system of *doctorials* will be set up – 2 day meetings between SACRe students and other PhD students. Students are also encouraged to travel abroad as part of their research projects.

The body of the PhD consists of the artistic work, which is shown publicly (an exhibition, a screening, a performance, etc.), and the “portfolio” – a mandatory written text that addresses question such as artistic and philosophical references, methodologies and tools used, and the results obtained. How did the 3-year period change the candidate’s practice and approach? The SACRe PhD must be defended before a jury that includes 3 artists and 3 academics. The written thesis is but one component of the jury’s evaluation process that is based on the following criteria: the overall quality of the artistic work, the significance of the work from the perspective of the research theme, the coherency and quality of the written portfolio, and the coherency and quality of the overall defence.

## Discussion

**Linda Sternö** refers to a joint PhD program established at the Valand Academy, which has attracted more applicants from the visual arts than from filmmaking. This may be the result of the fact that photo and fine arts practitioners tend to be much more theoretically based in contrast to filmmakers who tend to be practitioners. Is that also the experience of the SACRe program? **Barbara Turquier** explains that 1 or 2 grants are made *per school* so that the numbers remain quite balanced between the different disciplines. However, La Fémis tends to receive many applications from visual arts candidates, and it may be that these applicants should be going through the applied arts or fine arts schools.

**Kirsi Rinne** asks whether both artistic and theoretical supervisors are involved in the evaluation. If so, how is consistency achieved? **Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen** explains that every student has both an academic supervisor (a *HDR*) and an artistic supervisor, and it can indeed be challenging to reconcile the two. **Marc Nicolas** adds that, as La Fémis does not have academic teachers, Giusy Pisano from the ENS Louis Lumière film school was appointed as a SACRe supervisor. **Giusy Pisano** explains that coordinating the 2 supervisors is a complex process. Ideally, the academic supervisor should have a certain artistic sensibility and should have some experience of working with artists.

For **Kirsi Rinne**, it is very important for the academic supervisor to have an interest in and understanding of what is involved in artistic research. **Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen** agrees. It is hoped that the current SACRe PhD students will become professors themselves and will be ideally placed to act as academic supervisors in the future. **Barbara Turquier** adds that students are required to articulate their practice in a way that can be clearly understood and communicated. They may not always be used to working in that way.

**Pavel Jech** asks whether there has been much cooperation between the different disciplines. **Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen** explains that students were strongly encouraged to cooperate in the first year. However, they ended up working so much together that they neglected their individual theses. It is therefore necessary to find the right balance.

In response to a question from a participant, **Barbara Turquier** explains that students are required to present their work each year. At this stage, funding is not being withdrawn if those presentations are not satisfactory. **Marc Nicolas** adds that French PhDs *on art* generally take 5- 7 years, during which time the candidates do not receive a monthly salary. In contrast, scientific PhDs take 3 years, and candidates receive a monthly salary. The SACRe system therefore created something entirely new: not only is a piece of art produced as part of the PhD, but the candidates are paid a monthly salary for the 3-year period. All of this is therefore still quite experimental.

**Rolf Hughes** quotes from the PSL website: the ambition is “to transform French scientific excellence into a force for technological innovation”, and “to foster innovation, stimulate business creation, and support SMEs”. How do artists fit into those ambitions? **Marc Nicolas** explains that PSL is made up of hard sciences (70%) and humanities (30%), and the website was clearly written with a view to obtain funding. Nevertheless, the artists involved are not considered as a second-rate minority in the overall scheme. On the contrary, the participating scientists are genuinely interested in working with artists. **Rolf Hughes** refers to the example of the Stockholm School of Entrepreneurship, which brings together many different disciplines.



This has led to extremely innovative ways of thinking and to the creation of pools of post-disciplinary research.

**Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen** notes that, paradoxically, the main opposition comes from certain artists. The Fine Arts School, for example, is not convinced that it needs to enter the academic realm. **Marc Nicolas** adds that this issue results from the historical separation between artists and academics in France; it may not be relevant to other countries, even within Europe. In parallel, it is necessary to note the political separation that exists between the French Ministry of Culture and the French Ministry of Higher Education. All of this leads to a situation where educators consider their role as making people know and understand, while the role of the artist is to make people love art. For **Rolf Hughes**, the two can be reconciled by remembering that the principles of fascination and curiosity apply to both.

## VI. Session 4: The Uses of Research

In a context where research increasingly needs to justify its relevance, both economically and socially, and to be evaluated in multiple ways, how can we meaningfully approach some of the “uses” of research in film schools? This panel explores how research involving the arts can yield results that have scientific, artistic, social or economic relevance outside of traditional outlets.

### 1. Case Study 1 – Manuel José Damásio: Disseminating Research in Film and Media Arts

**Manuel José Damásio** presents a proposal for an international online journal of film and media arts. The idea emerged from a benchmarking exercise of all the journals that exist in the area of research and film. In addition, there is an increasingly strong pressure for researchers to produce research outcomes that have an impact on society and that can be disseminated, notably through publishing. In many countries in fact, accreditation of degrees is completely dependent on publication indexes. That is an issue for arts education as there are very few journals available, and there is no real tradition of teachers publishing or of their participation in collective work. Collaboration is at the heart of what GEECT represents, and publishing is a key venue for collaboration.

When considering publication in scientific terms, a number of issues have to be addressed: IF (impact factor), H, or the identity of the top journals. In that context, it is worth noting that there are *no* film-related journals in the Top 10 journals in the communications area. The first journal that appears with any relevance is an animation journal. A number of journals cross the field of the arts, notably *New Media & Society* (which is highly regarded and has a strong impact factor) and *Convergence*.

It therefore became apparent that there was room for the launch of new research publications that would focus not on critical reflection on film but on film as a media art. In that way, it would open up a space for the international publication of both written results and audiovisual pieces, in the form of an *online* journal.

The idea of the International Journal of Film and Media Arts therefore emerged, the first issue of which is currently in preparation. It will be an online journal, and will focus on projects that have been developed within research efforts. It will be strictly academic-focused, and will therefore be indexed in SCOPUS and the Latin Index. It will be an open access journal. Articles

will be selected according to a high standard peer review process. The aim is to have a fast turnaround, with a large board of reviewers available. There will be 2 issues per year (a minimum requirement for international indexation), and the first issue – dedicated to documentary animation – will be published on 1 October 2015. It will also include a special section on Portuguese produced animation.

## **Discussion**

**Mieke Bernink** refers to an online Journal on Artistic Research (JAR), which also publishes visual work. Manuel José Damásio notes that there are a number of such journals on artistic research, in particular in the US, but none are specifically focused on film. **Rolf Hughes** explains that JAR was set up by artists for artists. It has created an online publishing platform that is peer reviewed. The peer reviews are published as well as the works themselves. It explores more flexible strategies for the distribution by artists of moving image, still image, text, and sound. It can also be a useful teaching device.

**Kirsi Rinne** advises that the Journal of Screenwriting publishes both academic and practice-based research results. It is published by Intellect Inc., which also produces journals on many other topics such as animation, adaptations, etc.

**Barbara Turquier** notes that the peer review system is based on the academic research model. How will that be adapted to artistic research? Who are the relevant peers? Manuel José Damásio advises that the peer review model has been imported into the evaluation of the pieces, and both the piece and the peer review will be published. Rolf Hughes adds that the peer review is a dialogue that takes place over time. The reviewer's role is closer to that of a critical friend or supervisor.

In response to a question from **Barbara Turquier**, **Manuel José Damásio** advises that the Journal will target a scholarly audience.

**Javier Olarte** asks for details of the Journal's ranking. **Manuel José Damásio** explains that journals are indexed according to their ratings on SCOPUS, for example. It is not necessary to be owned by a publishing house or to be present on any particular database. It is, however, necessary to work in a very professional manner. There is no system for the ranking of journals in Portugal or Spain, as is the case in Brazil. Europe will probably move towards the same metrics that are used in the US. It should also be remembered that there is potential even when publishing in languages other than English. Manuel José Damásio has a good age index, for example, because he has published in Mandarin.

In response to a question from **Barbara Turquier**, **Manuel José Damásio** advises that the Journal is currently inviting individuals to become members of its Editorial Board. The fact that this is an online publication significantly reduces the costs involved, as does the use of an open source platform.

**Arne Bro** refers to his experience as a journal editor. His aim was to get artists to write about their art themselves, which can be quite a challenge. He therefore believes that an important role of a film school is to facilitate the articulation of the artist's knowledge in a form that can be understood and disseminated. For **Coral Houtman**, the use of the interview is perfectly adapted to that. **Manuel José Damásio** points to the potential to experiment different ways of

doing this, especially when using an online format. For the past 10 years, he has been working with an online platform that combines interviews with more in-depth articles on the concepts under discussion.

In response to a question from **Lewis Paul**, **Manuel José Damásio** explains that there is a need to explore the uses of metadata related to film production. There are only 2 European projects dealing with that issue, but neither has any relation to research or training.

**Lewis Paul** asks whether the Journal's future topics have already been chosen. **Manuel José Damásio** advises that the list of topics for the next 2 years have already been selected: documentary animation, visual effects, sound, and film and architecture.

## 2. Case Study 2 – Michael Wedel: Immersive media and film heritage research at the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf

**Michael Wedel** begins by explaining that the Film University of Babelsberg was founded in 1954, and is the oldest film school in Germany. Its underlying philosophy is that theory and practice work hand in hand. As a result, all students have to produce written work in order to obtain their BA and MA degrees. Students are also required to attend a certain number of trans-disciplinary, theoretical courses. It is also important to note that the school is now located in a studio compound, an area that also includes television stations, visual effects companies, film production houses, and a theme park.

Babelsberg carries out 3 strands of research: academic research, applied research, and (since 2008) artistic research. Two examples are provided of immersive media projects that cut across the 3 strands.

First, PRIME, a project related to 3D cinema. The school produced a 3D film, and documented the implications of 3D technology on the entire filmmaking process. 2 monographs were also produced on audience acceptance of 3D technologies, on the one hand, and on the impact of 3D on modes of narration, on the other. The 3D technology was then cascaded down throughout the school, with notably a short film made by an MA student, which combined a 180° panorama film with 360° spatial audio.

Second, preservation and heritage projects in conjunction with the research institutions that exist within the school (the Erich Pommer Institute, the Film Museum Potsdam, and the Centre for Media Studies). A very successful exhibition was organized at the Film Museum, with students staging a number of famous paintings. Another exhibition related to the director, Herrmann Zschoche, and it involved an exhibition, an essay film, a retrospective, and a publication. Finally, the school produces DVD and BluRay editions of classic films, carrying out the relevant research, re-editing/restoring works, composing new music, etc. These have proved to be more popular than the school's printed monographs.

There is a growing frustration among academic scholars that fewer and fewer people read their work. This points to the need to find new ways of presenting research – in DVDs, in essay films, etc. The written word may not be the most appropriate way of presenting visual work.

The school will be introducing 2 new MA courses in 2015/2016: audiovisual application design (software development), and film culture heritage.

## Discussion

**Robin MacPherson** asks whether students have explored publishing their work in the liner notes to the boxed sets, for example, rather than in an academic journal. **Michael Wedel** explains that the booklets for the DVD sets were indeed written by students. While these texts are not considered as serious academic genres, they do provide good training in how to render an argument or an idea understandable. The humanities deal with aesthetic objects, and film studies have emerged from a mode of essayistic writing, with filmmakers writing about film. This began with a more empirical phase, which is now behind us. Going forward, the focus will be on finding new modes of writing that capture some of the specificity of the research work. This can take the form of video essays, audiovisual journals, or even mash ups. It is not possible to avoid the conceptual work within this process, and writing still has its place, but there is huge value to be gained by using these new formats.

**Marc Nicolas** asks how many schools around the table have implemented a multi-targeted research strategy. **Kirsi Rinne** states that the ELO Film School in Finland has such a strategy. **Klara Björk** notes that the Valand Academy carries out collaborations across the entire university. **Michael Wedel** explains that Babelsberg's research strategy is both the result of its history and location, and of pragmatism. It is quite difficult to obtain funding for artistic PhDs in Germany, and the school has therefore combined many different targets. This has had a very liberating effect for artistic research. The main challenge is that the PhD reviewers tend to be academics with a conservative idea of what research is. It may take another generation before those mind sets are changed.

**Barbara Turquier** asks for details of the model used for any research outcomes that have industrial relevance (patents, for example). **Michael Wedel** explains that if a technology is developed in-house, the school retains the rights. If a technology is developed in collaboration with a private company, the rights tend to be shared or go to the company that has provided the funding. **Barbara Turquier** notes that some schools face a challenge in defending the artist's contribution to technological development, and in having that contribution valued in monetary terms.

**Kujtim Çashku** provides examples from the Albanian Academy of Film and Multimedia that show how research can be not only academic and theoretical but can also have a real impact. In one project, 6 students each from Albania and Italy carried out research on the period of fascist occupation and on Italy's "invasion" by Albanian boat people. That research was carried out from the perspective of either side. Another project involved the organization of an International Human Rights Film Festival.

### 3. Case Study 3 – Lewis Paul: Overview of research at the Northern Film School and CINAGE case study

**Lewis Paul** presents the CINAGE project, a research project at the Northern Film School, which is run within Leeds Beckett University. A range of research activity at the school is aimed at exploring the personal narrative as a driving force in story telling within film. That research activity is presented in traditional research papers, journal articles, books, etc. However, the school has the ambition of placing the activity of research firmly within the practice of filmmaking, within the context of practice-based doctoral research.

The school also encourages the concept of creative messiness, and the overlap between filmmaking and contemporary art. One of the strategies employed with research at the school has been to consider the personal narrative in the widest framework possible within both research and film research.

The CINAGE project has received funding from the European lifelong learning program, Grundvig. It explores the question of whether the needs and concerns of older people are reflected in contemporary cinema. A focus group of over-60s watched a range of European movies to discuss their portrayal of age and ageing. A team of 12 volunteers from the group went on to attend practical filmmaking workshops, and produce a series of 3 short films. The films will be showed in a Festival and Summit to be held in July 2015.

The project aims to offer exciting later life learning opportunities to senior learners from diverse communities. It also aims to engage them in critical analysis of European cinema and filmmaking. It has been an exciting process for the school: it has combined the putting of the life experiences of older students onto the screen with the process-led teaching methods that are generally employed for young students.

#### Discussion

**Klara Björk** and **Linda Sternö** described a project being carried out by the Valand Academy that involves giving a camera to very young children (1-5 years old) and to older persons (over 70). This process is called “life filming” (and is equivalent to the concept of “life writing”). In another project, artistic methods have been used to open up the perspective of medical faculties and scientific departments. **Lewis Paul** adds that such projects raise extremely timely questions on the implications of increases in longevity.

For **Arne Bro**, the fact that the CINAGE participants were not interested in making films but were interested in telling stories is a study in itself. It also seems that as soon as teachers stop *teaching* students how to make films the students begin to make interesting films! This raises a broader question about the role of film schools: is the aim to teach students how to make films or to travel with students on a journey? **Lewis Paul** notes that, in the CINAGE case, the storytellers were not burdened by technique, as they were assisted by directors and cinematographers. That was also an important benefit for the film schools students involved.

For **Rolf Hughes**, the real interest of the project is not the filmmaking in itself but the invitation to engage and collaborate. Going forward, there could be room to develop this concept further in horizontal terms by extending it to other art forms (for example, dance). It

could also be developed vertically by extending it to the very aged (for example, a project in palliative care).

## VII. Concluding Remarks

**Barbara Turquier** draws out a number of key words and phrases that emerged in the past 2 days:

- What is a 21<sup>st</sup> century university of the arts?
- Research can be a fun thing to do, a playground for film education.
- Artistic research as a discovery and process-driven concept.
- Artistic research as an endless set of detours.
- Creative messiness, a language of imprecision.
- Creating boundary objects.
- Research workshops were possible on rhythm, being a *flanneur*, staging paintings, research ethics, or active ageing...
- Distinctions were made between “statements of intent”, “critical reflection”, “speculative utopias”.
- It was the prerogative of the artist to use *and* abuse theory.
- At times, students may need to reinvent the 1970s in their own terms.
- The existence of laboratories and collaborations.
- Empathy can be an interdisciplinary research project.
- Curiosity and fascination are common drivers for both artists and scholars.

**Barbara Turquier** thanks all participants for their patience, engagement, and involvement over a very intense and enriching 2 days.

**Marc Nicolas** notes that the participants in this seminar are quite different from those that were present in 2011, reflecting the changes that are occurring in the research field: more and more schools are conducting research activities, and those activities are more and more diverse in terms of the topics addressed and the methodologies used. Many schools have now established specific research-based MA and PhD programs. They have also introduced research-based activities to their BA and MA training programs. It would in fact be of interest to organize a type of festival of research projects that have been developed in the PhD or MA programs.

**Marc Nicolas** thanks participants for sharing their ideas and experiences, and even allowing others to “steal” those ideas where opportune. He also thanks Barbara Turquier, Pascale Borenstein and Olivier Rignault for their work in organizing this meeting.

Finally, Marc Nicolas notes that this is the first time participants from other continents have also been present, thanks to the support of CILECT.

**Caterina d’Amico** adds that she is pleased to see that, for the first time, there are more women around the table than men! **Bert Beyens** advises that GEECT is planning 2 research related events in 2016 and 2017, probably in Prague and Amsterdam. **Stanislav Semerdjiev**

refers to a CILECT project for the compilation of a database of those available for the evaluation of PhD research and the assessment of PhD dissertations. The database would be available to all schools. He will be writing to all participants, inviting them to be part of the project and/or to recommend other potential participants. **Rolf Hughes** adds that the Society for Artistic Research has been approached by Polyphonia – an international network of music researchers – to create such an international catalogue of individuals available to review sound projects. Going forward, the aim is to extend that into other disciplines.

[Participants depart for a visit of the exhibition, *Mark Lewis: Above and Below* at Le Bal.]