

Report on Artistic Research for AVU (2020)

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0° Introduction

The Report on Artistic Research at AVU arises from several motivations. Foremost among these is the Academy's need—as an educational institution in the arts—to revisit, after 26 years, the issue of artistic research and the artistic doctorate. The discourse surrounding the artistic Ph.D. is evolving dynamically, both in the global context of art education and within AVU itself. The aim of this report is thus to reflect upon the current state of affairs while also outlining potential avenues for the future development of both the doctoral module and artistic research as a distinct discipline cultivated (though not exclusively) within art schools.

The document assumes a conceptual, analytical, and documentary character—it traces the development of artistic doctorates at AVU, examines their current form, and offers concrete proposals for changes in the operation of doctoral study. For the internal climate at AVU—that is, for its leadership, academic staff, and student body—the report endeavours to provide a shared referential vocabulary, along with frameworks through which discussions regarding artistic doctorates may be meaningfully conducted.

As the report is being developed within the framework of the Centralised Development Project “Analysis and Definition of the Specificities and Developmental Potential of Higher Arts Education Institutions in Research Activities”, it also aims to serve as an inspirational resource for partner institutions preparing similar materials. It likewise seeks to encourage dialogue among individual schools and, by extension, across artistic disciplines.

The Report on Artistic Research for AVU focuses primarily on doctorates in the field of visual arts. We are aware that the artistic doctorate represents only one of four doctoral study pathways at AVU. Unlike doctoral programmes in the theory and history of contemporary art, as well as in architecture and conservation—each of which adheres to the standards of its respective field—artistic doctorates lack clearly standardised formats. This is due not only to the heterogeneous and often interdisciplinary nature of the dissertation projects themselves but also to the relatively recent emergence of this model, which has gained momentum since the 1990s. Compared to other doctoral programmes, the formal parameters of artistic doctorates remain less clearly defined.

of academic fields standardised according to the conventions of scientific disciplines across institutions, but rather by two principal factors: the requirements for an artistic doctorate as determined by the respective domestic art institution, and the fact that such doctorates are conferred under the unified degree framework of the Ph.D. title.

0.1 Why This Report Combines the Artistic Doctorate and Artistic Research

Within the institutional framework of the Academy, artistic doctorates constitute a notional niche in which artistic research may be carried out. We combine the domains of artistic doctorates and artistic research in this report because doctoral projects are expected to engage in systematic research conducted through artistic means—or in systematic reflection upon the object of study more broadly.

For artistic research, the artistic institution and the academic sphere together represent a unique biotope. The outputs of such research offer the Academy an opportunity to innovate artistic thinking and the practical theory of art cultivated within the school—through its senior-most students. Moreover, this environment supports a living dialogue with other disciplines, facilitates inter-institutional collaboration both within and beyond the Czech Republic, and helps maintain an active international network in the field of artistic research. In doing so, it extends the operational radius of the art academy: generating new knowledge which, by its very nature, also transcends the boundaries of the academic sphere.

1° Artistic Research

1.1 Artistic Thinking in Research

Graduates of art schools have spent their studies honing imagination, cultivating aesthetic sensitivity, seeking out and articulating original themes, testing diverse forms and nuances of expression across media, working with ambiguity, risk, and unpredictability, stepping outside established systems, and unlearning ingrained stereotypes. Isabela Grosse refers to this type of experience as artistic competence¹, while Luis Camnitzer describes it as artistic thinking². Doctoral study in the field of fine arts provides a platform for applying artistic thinking (or artistic competence) to the systematic, multi-year development of a complex project. The questions addressed within doctoral projects may or may not relate directly to art. Artistic thinking can manifest in any—or all—aspects of the dissertation: in the identification and formulation of the research problem, in the chosen methodology, or in the means by which knowledge is communicated, irrespective of the research subject³.

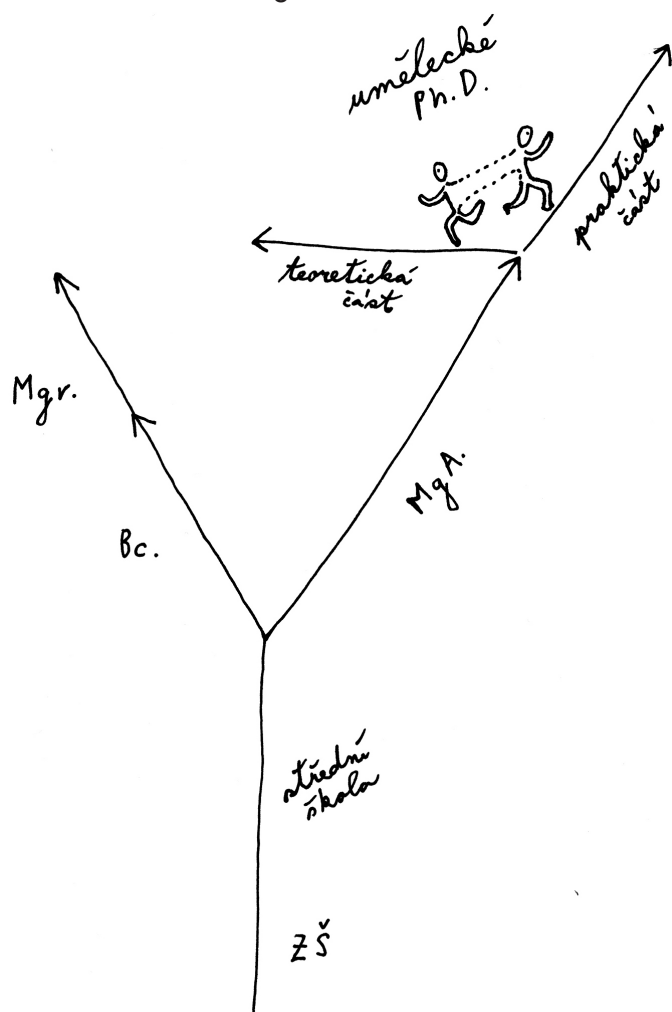
An artistic doctorate is not a supplementary theoretical programme (as, for instance, in the case of additional pedagogical training). However, the current state of affairs does not fully realise this vision. One underlying reason is the traditionally divided roles within art education, whereby artistic practice is taught by artists, and theory—

1 “By competence, I refer to the complex set of qualities acquired through this type of education, which are essential for the pursuit of an artistic profession, though they are by no means confined solely to the artistic sphere” (Grosseová 2020: 13).

2 “Art thinking is much more than art: it is a meta-discipline that exists to help expand the limits of other forms of thinking. Though it is something as autonomous as logic might be, and though it can be studied as a self-contained entity, its importance lies in what it contributes to the broader acquisition of knowledge. With a touch of pomposity, I like to say that science is merely a subcategory of art. Science is generally bound by logic, sequencing, and experimentation with repeatable and provable results. It usually presupposes that there is something out there that is knowable, which can be instrumentalised and represented. It does not matter whether it follows what science calls Mode 1, propositional, or Mode 2, interventionist. Art is all of that—plus its opposite.” (Camnitzer 2015: online).

3 “Artistic competence is something universal—something that can be applied independently of the production of artworks. A part of it is present in a specific mode of thinking and perception.” (Grosseová 2020: 34).

are taught by art historians and theorists. This dichotomy is reflected in the structure of doctoral dissertations, which are typically divided into a practical and a theoretical part. The practical component is usually supervised by an artist acting as the doctoral advisor, while the theoretical part is most often consulted with a member of the Department of Theory and History of Art. The practical component tends to be a continuation of the candidate's prior mode of working and is thus regarded as self-evident and largely unproblematic. By contrast, the theoretical component often poses an entirely new challenge, where the doctoral candidate appears to start from scratch and is expected to rapidly catch up with material that graduates of philosophy faculties would have encountered during their undergraduate and Master's studies.



However, the discipline of art history and theory should not occupy such a dominant position in relation to dissertations in the field of fine arts. Visual art, for instance, encompasses a wide array of tools and methods that traditional humanities disciplines

including art history—hardly engage with: thinking through drawing, working with colour, material, space, sound, chemistry, and time. In these respects, artistic research is in fact more closely aligned with the natural and technical sciences.

- mathematics (topology, geometry) – thinking in images, spatial reasoning, thinking through drawing
- engineering disciplines – working with materials, engaging with matter
- experimental fields within the natural sciences – laboratory/studio-based work, the need for workshops and other forms of technological infrastructure
- biology – communicating knowledge through drawing
- cartography – working with colour

In the AVU research report from 1994, Hugo Schreiber writes: “[D]octoral study programmes at institutions of an artistic nature neither wish to, nor under any circumstances will, substitute for the classical disciplines, which have been clearly defined for many decades.” (Report 1994: 15). The artistic doctorate and artistic research should be understood as an opportunity for developing a new approach to research, and as a space for testing novel combinations of artistic and scientific methodologies.

1.2 When Is Research Artistic?

The basic definition of research is:

„Research and experimental development comprise creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge.“

This definition is intentionally broad in order to encompass all types of research: basic, applied, and experimental (see subsection 1.5 for further detail). Nevertheless, it clearly implies the most general parameters of scholarly research: it is a systematic endeavour grounded in

4 This is a general definition adopted from the Frascati Manual (2015), Chapter 2.5, published by the OECD. It is also employed by the Research and Development Council of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic as the definition of experimental research. Moreover, it is enshrined in Czech legislation. For the purposes of this report, we adopt this definition as the fundamental and overarching framework, superseding the Czech legal implementation. The definition is also used by UNESCO and other national frameworks in a manner similar to that of the Czech Republic. For literature relating to artistic research, see for example Klein: online.

invention and creativity, through which we come to know more about the world than we did before. Systematicity refers to knowledge that is non-random, critically verified (not merely intuitive), and supported by a describable method. Work refers to a methodical process carried out over a certain period of time and focused on a particular problem or object. Finally, creative invention is fundamental to research activity insofar as it ensures that the knowledge produced is original—only such knowledge extends the existing landscape of human understanding. Research is grounded in the dynamics of knowledge, which leads from not-knowing to knowing, from limited current knowledge or hypotheses to renewed, updated knowledge (albeit with new limitations and hypotheses).

The Frascati Manual, published regularly by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and arguably the most frequently cited document for defining what constitutes research and development, outlines additional criteria for research activity. In order to qualify as research, an activity must “contain an element of novelty, be creative, involve uncertainty, be systematic, and be transferable and/or reproducible” (Frascati Manual 2015: 46).

If we accept the premise that art and scientific research are not separate realms but rather two—historically related—dimensions which, alongside others, converge in a shared cultural space and actively shape it (Klein: online), then artistic research constitutes a zone in which scientific and artistic modes of thinking intersect.

“It is no secret that science and art differ not only in their modes of expression, but also in the degree to which they involve intuition, emotional experience, and communication. Yet without an exacting form of expression, an artwork would be incommunicable. Conversely, abstract science inevitably requires intuition for creative work. Despite the apparent distinction between these two worlds—the scientific and the artistic—they are, in reality, merely different manifestations of a single culture, a single universal intelligence, a unified epistemological system of perception.”

(Report 1994: 16)

Artistic thinking and artistic competence, as outlined in the preceding chapter, are regarded as key concepts for artistic research. They constitute a significant part of the epistemology and methodology of artistic inquiry, even though this mode of research lacks the “hard core”⁵ typical of established scientific disciplines (Lakatos, as cited in Fajkus 2005: 143). For this reason, it is likewise impossible to provide a definitive answer to the essentialist question “What is artistic research?”—just as it is not possible to satisfactorily answer the question

⁵ “The ‘hard core’ [of a scientific] programme represents the set of assumptions that determine the direction of research. It comprises a body of statements that, by methodological decision, are not subject to criticism.” (Fajkus 2005: 143)

“what is art?”). If, however, we adopt a more accessible formulation in the spirit of Goodman and ask instead, “When is research artistic?”, the answer is:

Research that employs artistic thinking is artistic research.

Even under such a definition, it remains the case that the work of students at art schools—or of artists themselves—whose core activity centres on artistic research (rather than, for example, background research on a theme), should meet the fundamental criteria of rigorous scholarly inquiry as outlined above.

1.3 Specific Features of Artistic Research

The aim of this chapter is not to compile an exhaustive list of all the specific features of artistic research, nor to present the characteristics listed below as prescriptive or binding for artistic research projects. The field of artistic research is highly dynamic, and its defining features are subject to continual change. Rather than a definitive inventory, the following list should be seen as a prompt for reflection on selected specificities, and as an impetus for the ongoing identification and inclusion of additional, as yet unarticulated, features.

I. Interdisciplinarity

The idea that artistic research—whether in the form of a doctoral project or pursued outside academia—is inherently an interdisciplinary activity can be regarded as a broadly accepted consensus. The very term artistic research suggests the convergence of two domains and situates the practice at the intersection of two modes of thinking and knowing. Art history itself reveals the figure of the artist-scholar, and many contemporary artists also operate at the interface of science and art—examples include Olafur Eliasson, James Turrell, and Lynn Herschman Leeson. Although science and art are often perceived today as distinct and separate spheres, this dualism is not historically self-evident⁶.

The identity of artistic research may appear paradoxical precisely because it is interdisciplinary. However, parallels with other interdisciplinary fields—such as molecular biology, the sociology of literature, or the digital humanities—easily dispel this apparent paradox: when interdisciplinarity is successful, it often becomes a new discipline in its own right (Matheus-Berr 2013: 153). This applies

6 „For only two centuries, knowledge has assumed a disciplinary form; for less than one, it has been produced in academic institutions by professionally trained knowers. Yet we have come to see these circumstances as so natural that we tend to forget their historical novelty and fail to imagine how else we might produce and organize knowledge“ (Wilson 2013: 203).

u to artistic research both in general terms and within the framework of specific projects. By engaging with themes from other scientific disciplines—such as anthropology, sociology, history, art history, chemistry, or information technology—and by adopting their tools, methods, and findings, artists create their own research “islands” and interdisciplinary bridges.

u The proliferation of these islands—the biodiversity of the archipelago of artistic research—precludes the establishment of a fixed disciplinary core. Nevertheless, artistic research can be understood as a term that brings together alternative modes of inquiry grounded in artistic thinking.

The conception of artistic doctorates as interdisciplinary projects has been present at AVU since their inception in the 1990s (at that time referred to as “unspecified fields of study”). The inherent tension between research conducted by artists—defined by its own subject of scholarly interest (Report 1994: 14)—and its interdisciplinary identity, which creates “a new space for the interpretation of phenomena and knowledge” (ibid.), that is, the tension between delineation and intermediation, was undoubtedly an attractive one. Milan Knížák, the first doctoral candidate during his tenure as head of the Academy, explored this in his dissertation entitled *The Gap Between Media as a New Medium*. His hydrogeographic metaphor remains inspiring to this day:

“If I understand the gap as the space between these domains, then the gaps transform for me into a kind of sea, in which the domains float like (for instance) ice floes. [...] These floes can further break apart, melt away entirely, or, conversely, freeze, expand, merge, and solidify into land. (The sea, the ocean) Water—the fundamental substance from which the floes arise—thus represents something essential. From such a reflection it follows that the gap is the basic material from which domains can potentially condense.

The very notion of the relative existence of domains is also immensely thought-provoking. From this perspective, the entire world of art (and surely not only art) transforms and becomes relativised. It also (and quite naturally) follows that things and phenomena occurring within the gaps are more fundamental and more closely connected to their original sources. The oceanic element (for our reflection has transformed the gap into an ocean) is of vital importance to the Earth, and it is rightly assumed that life itself originated there. With this metaphorical speculation, I have attributed essential importance to interdisciplinary fields—and I am willing to believe in the results of this speculation (practically believe in them).”

(Knížák 1997: 5)

The nature of artistic research enables a free movement between disciplines and the exploration of fissures that may remain invisible within the established perspectives, methods, and languages of academic disciplines. Artistic research is capable of generating forms of knowledge that may be inaccessible to science, and for this reason, in its specificity, it cannot be substituted by any other form of research.

II. Art Theory from the Perspective of Practising Artists

Within the field of art history and theory, the focus lies on evaluating and categorising what has already been created. However, definitions of art or the classification of artworks into various movements generally offer little assistance in the process of creating new art. This issue was already noted by Hugo Schreiber in the AVU research report of 1994: “Most teachers indicated that for a number of theoretical problems arising in teaching, they do not find satisfactory answers in the classical theories of art, which are often overly absorbed in their own ‘academic’ questions.” (Report 1994: 15). The artistic doctorate provides a space for developing a theory of art grounded in the experience of the creative process. This is a theory of art from the perspective of those who create it—as opposed to theoretical reflection on works that already exist. It informs not only the theoretical background for studio consultations and creative practice itself, but also contributes to a broader understanding of art as a whole. Comparable examples in literature include texts written by authors based on insights drawn from their creative practice—such as Kundera’s “Author’s Note” in *Immortality*, Eco’s postscript in *The Name of the Rose*, Poe’s essay *The Philosophy of Composition*, or Vonnegut’s article “How to Write with Style.” In architecture, a parallel can be found in *A Pattern Language* by Christopher Alexander and colleagues. In the visual arts, similar contributions include the pedagogical writings of the Bauhaus faculty, David Hockney’s book and film *Secret Knowledge*, and the television series *Ways of Seeing* by trained painter John Berger

III. Thinking Through Images, Thinking Through Drawing

Just as writing or other forms of verbalisation can sometimes aid in thinking through a particular problem, at other times, drawing, working with images, or engaging with materials may prove to be more effective tools. For certain types of problems, pure verbalisation is inadequate—for example, the spatial structure of proteins—while in other cases, different approaches can reveal various aspects of the same issue, such as the algebraic versus geometric proofs of the Pythagorean theorem⁷.

Michal Cáb, who in his doctoral dissertation at AVU explored visual⁸

⁷ The algebraic formulation consists of equations and does not necessarily require visualisation, whereas geometric proofs rely entirely on imagery.

⁸ A programming language in which code is not written but drawn: “Algorithmic functions are represented in Pd by visual boxes called objects placed within a patching window called a canvas. Data flow between objects are achieved through visual connections called patch cords.”

Online: <http://puredata.info/>, accessed 8 December 2020.

programming language Pure Data, which he describes as a “tool for creating new tools” (Cáb 2014: 5), opens his dissertation with the motto: “If the only tool you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail” (ibid.: 1). When we rely solely on language to think through a problem—or when we know in advance that our research must be presented in written form—we are compelled into a particular mode of thinking shaped by that form. Verbalisation forces us to arrange thoughts linearly, whereas the tools of art allow us to move freely across multiple (not only spatial) dimensions.

Non-verbal thinking is by no means confined to the artistic domain. Mathematician Tadashi Tokieda describes the core of his course on topology and geometry as “thinking in images,” and advocates training in this mode of cognition: “draw pictures, use pictures, work with pictures.”⁹ Likewise, Benoit Mandelbrot, the founder of fractal geometry, discovered that “a number of problems that were too complex for others in the realm of pure mathematics were solved instantly [by him] by viewing them as images in his mind.”¹⁰ Although few within the field of artistic research are likely to work on mathematical problems, the act of thinking in images and through drawing is a practice shared by both artists and mathematicians.

Relevant in this context is also the research of Valeria Giardino, who investigates diagrammatic thinking. According to her hypothesis, this type of thinking distributes cognitive processes across several systems—conceptual, visual-spatial, and motor—which alleviates the burden on the part of the brain responsible for verbal processing, thereby enabling a more efficient thought process. Her work also explores the role of gestures, which, like diagrams, support the act of thinking (Giardino: online).¹¹ At the same time, she emphasises that verbal and visual thinking cannot be simply separated, and that the recent resurgence of interest in non-verbal thought reflects a reaction against the logocentric tendencies that dominated science throughout the 20th century.

⁹ Tadashi Tokieda. *Topology & Geometry*. Lecture series at the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences, 2014. Quotation from Lecture 1, Part 2. Online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wj5foqm5MfM>, accessed 1 August 2020.

¹⁰ “I discovered that many problems which for others were difficult purely mathematical issues, for me, were solved instantly by looking in my head by looking at pictures.” 42:25, from the documentary *The Man Who Saved Geometry*, directed by David New. Foundry Films, 2009. Online: <https://vimeo.com/120725835>, accessed 2 August 2020.

¹¹ Isabela Grosseová employed a strategy in her doctoral research to evoke memory through means other than verbal interview: “[T]o merely talk about something, as compared to doing something to evoke memory through movement and bodily memory, are two different approaches” (Grosseová 2020: 31). Lenka Vítková similarly notes in her doctoral dissertation at AVU: “I think best about artworks when I am installing them” (Vítková 2013: 7).

IV. Studio-Based Work

Just as a significant portion of research in the natural sciences takes place in the laboratory, artistic research often requires a studio.¹²

V. The Research Exhibition

One of the tools of artistic research is the research exhibition, which is not intended to merely present the outcomes of research, but rather to create an environment or framework within which research takes place during the course of the exhibition, in the presence of an audience. If the research exhibition is accompanied by workshops or other public programming, the aim is not passive entertainment but active engagement—participation that actively shapes the ongoing research. By the end of the exhibition, the research will have advanced beyond the point at which it began.

In the context of tools used in other scientific disciplines, the research exhibition may be compared to so-called citizen science, in which members of the public—without requiring formal scientific training—are involved in research projects. One possible medium for such research could be a research-based computer game.¹³

VI. Is the Academic Style the Only Suitable Format for Sharing Knowledge?

For the sharing of knowledge, the scientific community has established the format of the academic text,¹⁴ which possesses certain features common across disciplines (such as an abstract and traceable references to ideas borrowed from other authors), as well as additional characteristics specific to individual fields. With few exceptions, the style of writing within each discipline tends to be as uniform as possible, reflecting

¹² “In the national science funding council in Spain, we are in the same category with humanities. That creates a lot of troubles. I don’t see any reason for that. I always wanted to move to engineering, because they also need labs and facilities.”

Quoted from the Mind Mapping Supervision workshop, part of the international meeting Challenges of Doctoral Supervision, held within the project Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates at the University of Music and Performing Arts Stuttgart, 25 September 2019.

¹³ In the computer game Foldit, developed at the University of Washington, players interact with models of protein chemical structures. The number of possible configurations is too vast for a small group of scientists to explore alone. The developers created a game that is entertaining, yet simultaneously serves the search for solutions to pressing scientific problems. The more people contribute to the search, the greater the chances of success. Currently, players are challenged to design a protein capable of blocking the coronavirus. Each week, the most promising solutions submitted by players are selected and tested in laboratories using real proteins.

¹⁴ A conference paper is typically considered to be a presentation—or even a formal delivery—of a scholarly text, which is subsequently published in the conference proceedings. In certain disciplines, particularly the more exact sciences, an alternative format known as the poster is also used. During a poster session, the author stands beside a poster containing a concise explanation of the research (via short texts, diagrams, tables, and other visual material), which serves as a stimulus for discussion.

an understanding of science as a collective endeavour to expand human knowledge, in which everyone is, in effect, writing subchapters of a single, overarching text.

Proposal 1: The poster session format could serve as inspiration for developing a parallel format to the doctoral colloquium.

Some stylistic features of academic writing are useful, while others—though commonly employed—may be unjustified.¹⁵ (The course Writing in the Sciences from Stanford University focuses on unlearning such conventions that tend to obscure rather than clarify the content, and includes numerous exercises aimed at shortening and simplifying texts.) The essence of an academic text is not to include as many foreign terms and as complex sentence structures as possible, but rather to describe research and present its results with maximum precision and clarity—without exaggeration and with an awareness of its own limitations.

In the exact sciences, where minimising conceptual vagueness is key, storytelling and metaphorical thinking are frequently employed in the form of thought experiments—Schrödinger's cat in quantum mechanics, the Chinese room argument in the philosophy of mind/artificial intelligence, or Hilbert's infinite hotel in set theory, for example. These thought experiments do not diminish the scientific integrity of the fields they belong to; in fact, they are often the clearest way to conceptualise a problem and communicate it to others.

What other forms of text might communicate and expand knowledge? An interesting example is Kurt Vonnegut, who described anthropology—which he studied at the University of Chicago—as “a science that was largely poetry” (Vonnegut 1982: 105).¹⁶ His thesis, *Fluctuations between Good and Evil in Simple Tales*, was in fact rejected¹⁷; more than twenty years later, he was retroactively awarded a Master's degree in recognition of the “anthropological foundation”¹⁹ of his novels, specifically for the novel *Cat's Cradle*. This was not an honorary degree, but a formal academic qualification that had not been

15 „[A] lot of visual artists have troubles to write a thesis. And I think it's partly because writing is a difficult practice [...] but partly also because this non-poetic way of writing in academia that is bullying me as an artist. I feel visibly bullied by some form of text when I'm totally de-leveled by everything.“ Citováno ze záznamu workshopu Mind Mapping Supervision, který byl součástí mezinárodního setkání Challenges of Doctoral Supervision uskutečněného v rámci projektu Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates na University of Music and Performance Arts Stuttgart, 25. 9. 2019.

16 From the English original “a science that was mostly poetry,” translated by the authors (this formulation is omitted in the Czech translation of the book).

17 „Part of Vonnegut's legacy, *Cat's Cradle*, also earned him master's“. In: The University of Chicago Chronicle. May 10, 2007, Vol. 26, No. 16. on-line: <http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/070510/vonnegut.shtml>, 2. 8. 2020.

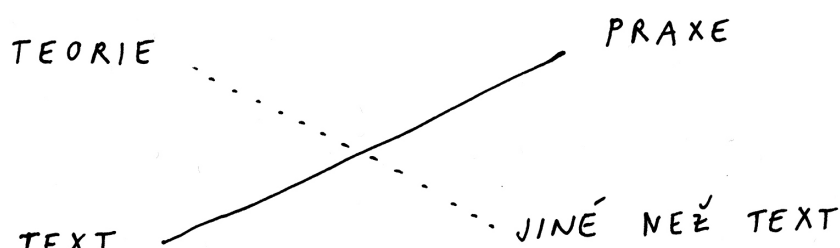
18 “My thesis was rejected because it was too simple and looked too much like fun. One is not allowed to be that playful at a university.” (Vonnegut 2004: 247)

19 From Vonnegut's letter to Playboy magazine, 1973. „Kurt Vonnegut to visit campus as Kovler Fellow“. In: The University of Chicago Chronicle. Feb. 3, 1994, Vol. 13, No. 11. on-line: <http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/940203/vonnegut.shtml>, 2. 8. 2020. Translated from the original “anthropological basis of my novels” by the authors.

awarded not for a scholarly treatise, but for a work of fiction.²⁰

VII. Is Verbalisation the Only Possible Means of Communicating Knowledge?

The conventional division of artistic doctorates into a theoretical and a practical component assumes that the theoretical part is a text, while the practical part is something other than text. Yet just as a text can itself be a form of creative practice (such as prose or poetry), theory, too, can take forms other than written language.



"Theory is the relating of observations, experiences, and encounters to the level of knowledge within a given intellectual, social, or artistic context—something that offers insight into that context and may help us to understand it."²¹

This act of relating can be communicated outside the form of written text. In many disciplines, natural languages (such as Czech, English, etc.) are either insufficiently precise or otherwise inadequate, and thus various formal languages have been developed to improve clarity and functionality—mathematical notation, chemical formulas, cartographic representations, musical scores. Even within individual disciplines, competing systems of representation may exist, some of which can advance the field, while others may hinder it. A notable example is the use of Arabic numerals: they allow for straightforward algorithms for multiplication and division—operations that are impractical or impossible using Roman numerals, which also lack a symbol for zero.

Alternative modes of communication may be inspired by reflections on how knowledge might be conveyed to different types of intelligence.²² One example is the illustration placed on the plaques sent by NASA beyond the solar system in 1972 and 1973. An incomparably older means of transmitting knowledge

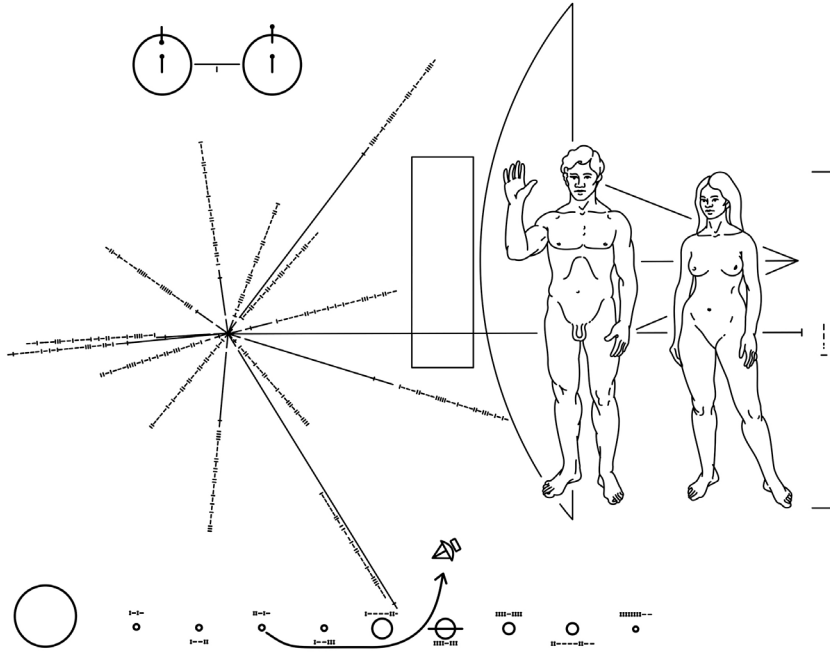
²⁰ The doctoral dissertation *Children from Absurdland* by M. Kwiatkowská took a similar fictional form.

²¹ Alice Koubová, handout for the workshop "Possibilities of Teaching Theatre Theory", held at the Department of Alternative and Puppet Theatre, DAMU, 4 September 2018.

²² This issue is elaborated by Douglas Hofstadter in his book *Gödel, Escher, Bach* (1979), in the chapter "Locating Meaning" (pp. 179–198).

than text is DNA, in which knowledge is encoded chemically. It has four different “letters” (nucleotide bases); its “words” (codes for amino acid synthesis) are composed of three-letter sequences. It can be read, corrected, manipulated, and translated. This is a form of knowledge refined through the process of evolution.

23



In comparison with the previously mentioned examples, the use of images and other visual art media as means of communicating knowledge is self-evident. Visual materials that are not merely illustrative but are at least equal in status to text are common even in the natural sciences. In recent years, several scientific journals have introduced graphical or visual abstracts and/or video abstracts as part of scholarly articles (e.g. *Cell*, *Neuron*, *Journal of Number Theory*), or even video reports (such as the *Journal of Visualized Experiments*—a peer-reviewed journal focusing on laboratory methods).

In mathematics, there are conferences that regularly include exhibitions (e.g. the European Society for Mathematics and the Arts, Bridges), where the exhibited works represent solutions to mathematical problems.²⁴ In technical fields, object-based prototypes (such as engine models) have always played a crucial role. In the humanities—where author-created visual materials have traditionally been rare—visual thinking is beginning to find its way in.

²³ Image from The Pioneer Plaque. Vectors by Oona Räisänen (Mysid); designed by Carl Sagan & Frank Drake; artwork by Linda Salzman Sagan – vectorised from NASA image GPN-2000-001623. Online source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pioneer_plaque, accessed 16 August 2020.

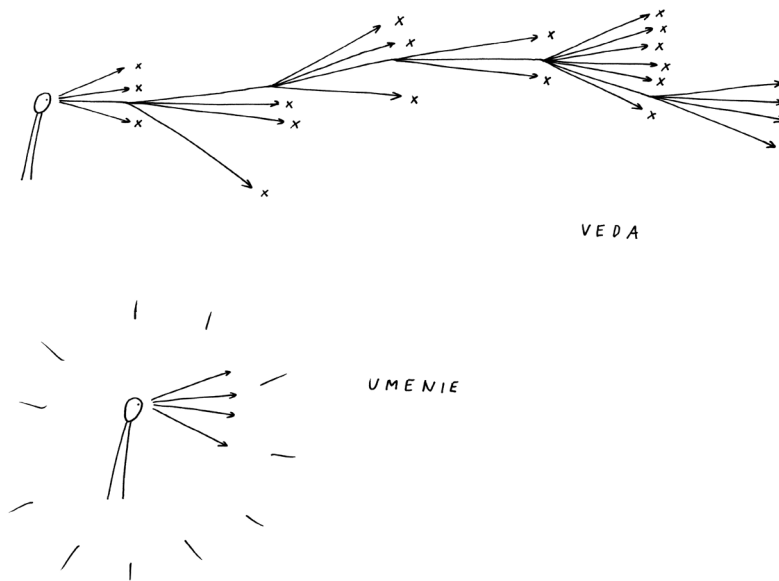
²⁴ For example, solutions to problems from four-dimensional spaces visualised as three-dimensional sculptures.

thinking has only recently begun to emerge more substantially in the humanities—primarily through the field of digital humanities.

Proposal 2: Introduce the option of a visual abstract for doctoral colloquia and within dissertations.

Unlike formal languages, graphs, or technical drawings, the means employed in art are not formalised—that is, individual elements do not possess fixed, unambiguous meanings. Ambiguity is deliberately employed in art.²⁵

(Stanová: 2015)



When knowledge is communicated through art, it occurs in a manner similar to the Hejný method of teaching mathematics: students are not presented with knowledge in an explicit form, but rather through clues which, when combined with their prior knowledge and cognitive abilities, lead to an understanding of the concept. An artwork or an exhibition acts as a trigger. As Isabela Grosseová writes about an exhibition she prepared as part of her doctoral research: “The exhibition is not meant to illustrate, substantiate, or document; it is rather an environment in which the theme is in the air, and the viewer experiences it personally” (Grosseová 2020: 33).

One of the challenges facing artistic doctorates is the search for alternative forms—or entirely new genres—for sharing knowledge. To express theory through means other than

²⁵ “Neuroscientist Semir Zeki, in the article *The Neurology of Ambiguity*, puts forward the hypothesis that this ambivalence is a key characteristic of many outstanding works of art. But note, ambivalence is not the same as vagueness. Ambivalence, as defined by Zeki, is the fluctuation between multiple equally valid meanings. In the case of vagueness, the brain is not sufficiently stimulated to search for interpretations.” (Stanová 2015: unpaginated, chapter “The Moment When Everything Was Possible”)

purely text; to discover such combinations of text and images (or other materials) in which the images are not illustrations, but stand on equal footing with the text; to draw a dissertation in which the images express the theory and the texts serve as their illustrations.²⁶ These listed forms are merely examples, limited by the imagination of the authors of this report. Truly new forms and genres will emerge only through the work of individual doctoral research projects.

VIII. Methods of Artistic Research?

The question “What are the methods of artistic research?” cannot be answered satisfactorily. As already mentioned above, this field lacks the “hard core” of an established academic discipline. Such a discipline typically stabilises over time around a core set of themes and problems, develops (and continues to develop) methods and tools, and supports scholarly inquiry grounded in a shared body of knowledge and a common reference framework—comprising language, terminology, platforms for dissemination, and genres for the successful presentation of research outcomes.

At present, the field of artistic research is not yet consolidated in this way. However, considering its development over the past thirty years, it cannot be ruled out that it is in the process of becoming so. Artistic research is a term that encompasses a wide variety of investigative practices, whose common denominator is the presence of artistic thinking and the systematic procedures typical of scientific practice, in which domain-specific—i.e., artistic—competences are applied at various stages of the project. (Julian Klein even argues that conducting research through artistic means is itself a specific type of method and a research strategy.²⁷)

Artistic thinking, as a meta-level of both artistic and artistic-research practice, possesses not only an epistemological foundation but also a methodological dimension—it serves both as a conceptual vanishing point and as a point of departure for knowledge-making through art and artistic methods.²⁸ Because it lacks a fixed range of themes or problems, every successful doctoral project contributes to the expansion of the field of artistic research and enriches the portfolio of methods through which artistic inquiry can be conducted.

From this, it also follows that each specific artistic research or doctoral project must either rely on a chosen method or actively develop a new one, and the doctoral candidate must be aware of the methodological

26 „I think JAR [Journal of Artistic Research], at the moment, is still verbal, and then you have images ...as illustrations. Now, you can have sound as an illustration, but it's still on the level of illustrations instead of, for example, having a film that is illustrated by text. I'm always dreaming of that.”

Quoted from the recording of the Mind Mapping Supervision workshop organised by AVU representatives, part of the international meeting Challenges of Doctoral Supervision, held within the project Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates at the University of Music and Performing Arts Stuttgart, 25 September 2019.

27 “There is no method within artistic research, because to research artistically is in itself a method or, better, a strategy of undertaking research.” (Klein, 2017: 80)

28 See Camnitzer in footnote 2.

foundation of their work. The presence of methodology and its associated criteria is one of the fundamental distinctions between purely artistic practice and artistic research.

Given the heterogeneity of research approaches and the interdisciplinary nature of most artistic research projects, we maintain that there is no single set of specific methods exclusive to artistic research (despite the ongoing demand for such from educators and doctoral supervisors at art schools). It is more appropriate to speak of the methods employed within individual artistic research projects.

The methods are chosen by the doctoral candidate in collaboration with supervisors and consultants, based on the area of research interest, the research perspective, and the project's interdisciplinary orientation. For this reason, it would be inappropriate for this report to establish any kind of canon of artistic research methods.²⁹ The choice of methods—whether explanatory or interpretative, empirical or theoretical, qualitative or quantitative—depends on the nature of the project and the type of research. Specific procedures for data collection (observation, inquiry, measurement, analysis, deduction, induction, comparison, etc.) are selected accordingly. It is therefore the responsibility of the institution conducting artistic research to offer students a course that provides foundational orientation in methodological questions and research methods across a broader range of disciplines.³⁰

Proposal 3: Establish an appropriate lecture series presenting methodological examples from various fields.

1.4 Artistic Practice, Artistic Research and the Doctorate

As in doctoral projects across other disciplines, an artistic dissertation must assume that new understanding or knowledge can be critically built upon through further research.

Exploring a given topic and its contexts—those related to a specific artistic intention or project—is a standard part of artistic practice. However, such inquiry should not be mistaken for an academic contribution or artistic research in itself: it is more akin to material gathering, generating stimuli or inspiration, or expanding a mental map, all of which play a supportive but

²⁹ This should rather be the subject of a separate, comprehensive study or report.

³⁰ A potentially inspiring example is the structure of the three-year doctoral programme at the Utrecht Graduate School of Visual Art and Design. During the first year, students complete courses in "Methodology" and "Transmedia Research." Henk Slegers notes: "By the end of the first year, the doctoral candidate must be able to present a concrete plan for their research trajectory. Over the following two years, the candidate maintains close contact with their supervisor; at the end of the residency period, they are offered an assistantship. Throughout the residency, at least six peer review seminars are held each academic year." (Slegers 2009: 50)

simultaneously non-binding in its significance. This important form of inquiry typically serves to expand the horizons and insight of the individual artist, rather than to contribute to the broader body of knowledge. In a doctoral project, however, it is assumed that the research and creative effort is directed toward articulating new understanding and knowledge for the benefit of a wider community, not merely the individual. This reflects the inherent altruism and scholarly nature of (artistic) research. On the part of the researcher, this requires a thorough familiarity with the current state of knowledge concerning the subject of investigation, as well as the ability to revise one's original theses and assumptions when the research findings demand it—or if the project shifts toward a more significant creative or intellectual horizon than initially anticipated.

1.5 Artistic Research as Basic, Applied, and Experimental Research?

The general categorisation of research into three types (full definitions can be found in Appendix F), which is recognised in our region and adopted in Czech legislation via the Frascati Manual (see Appendix E2), serves primarily as a guiding framework—the relationships between these categories are dynamic, and the areas may partially overlap. The principal distinction between these categories lies in whether the research is directed toward a specific use (primarily market-based, industrial, etc.), or whether it avoids questions of application and focuses instead on the pursuit of new knowledge or understanding of a given phenomenon. The former includes applied and experimental research; the latter refers to basic (fundamental) research. While basic research tends to dominate (though not exclusively) in the humanities and social sciences, and experimental and applied research features more prominently in the natural sciences and technical disciplines, research conducted within art schools can fall into any of these categories—depending, once again, on the specific project.

The Vienna Declaration 2020

During the preparation of this report, the so-called Vienna Declaration was published (in June 2020), in which key organisations representing artistic research within the EU called for this form of research practice to be included in the next edition of the Frascati Manual 31.

It can therefore be stated that, following nearly thirty years of development in artistic research and artistic doctorates, a clear European trend has emerged: an effort to more precisely define artistic research practice as a new chapter of the Frascati Manual, and, through it, to recognise and integrate this practice into similar strategic documents at both the national and affiliated member-state levels.

³¹ Among the signatories of the declaration are: AEC, CILECT/GEECT, Culture Action Europe, Cumulus, EAAE, ELIA, EPARM, EQ-Arts, MusiQuE, and SAR.

The full text of the declaration is available online:

<https://www.elia-artschools.org/news/elia-presents-the-vienna-declaration-on-artistic-research>

Accessed 24 July 2020.

2° Possible Typologies of the Artistic Doctorate

Artistic doctorates cannot be categorised into fixed types—even at the level of basic typology. This is due to the high degree of heteronomy in the issues addressed, and the methodological variability of these projects when compared to the more firmly established disciplines in the humanities, natural sciences, or technical fields. Any attempt at categorising artistic doctorates must therefore be approached critically, with the understanding that proposed models represent conceptual poles to which current doctoral projects may approximate to varying degrees. There are several typologies of artistic doctorates. Among the most frequently cited are those distinguishing between the practice-based doctorate—rooted in practical artistic research—and the practice-led doctorate, which employs research to support artistic practice.³² Another commonly referenced framework is Frayling's triad: research into art and design, research through art and design, and research for art and design.³³ All of these models attempt to articulate the relationship between artistic practice, research, and its theoretical grounding. However, upon closer inspection, it becomes evident that although the names suggest clearly delineated categories, the actual characteristics are often ambiguous and the categories tend to overlap.

2.1 An Alternative to Dualism? The Dichotomic and Integrative Models

The typology we propose below is constructed with regard to both the historical and current formal structuring of artistic doctorates within the context of AVU, as well as the alternatives these structures offer.

³² The original formulation comes from the publication by Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

³³ Podle Frayling 1993.

The original 1994 concept of the artistic doctorate presupposed a strict separation between the so-called practical and theoretical components. The practical part referred to a body of artistic outputs, while the theoretical part was understood as a conventional academic text. This dichotomy still strongly informs the prevailing idea of the prototypical dissertation structure, and the majority of doctoral projects continue to be developed along these lines.³⁴

However, as the field of artistic research and doctoral study in the arts is characterised by “heteronomy, heterotypy, interstitiality, or the polyphony of sources, processes, and outcomes” (Koubová 2017: 8), the rigid form that the theory–practice dichotomy tends toward may be suitable for some types of doctoral projects, but inappropriate for others. Even among previously successful defended doctorates, there are examples that transcend this dichotomy.³⁵

The fact that artistic research is not yet a firmly codified academic discipline may be perceived as a limitation, and its thematic and methodological diversity as confusing. At the same time, however, this can be seen as an opportunity: in this space—akin, perhaps, to a “Temporary Autonomous Zone” as coined by H. Bey—there is greater room than in many other disciplines to experiment with the conventions of research practice, or with the ways theory is conceived, developed, and communicated. This is not at odds with the definition of research as systematic creative work aimed at advancing knowledge.

Since artistic doctorates are not constrained by the standards of philosophy faculties or disciplinary frameworks, they have the potential to develop alternative forms of systematic inquiry across media—distinct from those pursued in, for example, art history or aesthetics.

2.2 Models of the Artistic Doctorate

The following proposals for two models of the artistic doctorate are based on two key considerations. First, they respond to the currently preferred conception of the doctorate at AVU,

34 This is supported by formulations found in authoritative documents such as the Doctoral Study Guide, which is issued at the start of the academic year: “[Doctoral study] consists of a creative, practical component and of theoretical-historical research, presented in the form of a dissertation.” This formulation appears in the editions for the academic years 2017–2018, 2018–2019, and 2019–2020.

35 Examples include the dissertations *Children from Absurdland* by Magdalena Kwiatkowská (2016), *Algorithms in Art* by Magda Stanová (2016), *The Gravity of Artistic Competence* by Isabela Grosseová (2020), and *Litany of the Precariat* by Jirka Skála (2018).

as described above.³⁶ Second, they draw inspiration from a model proposed by James Elkins (Elkins 2009), which, in contrast to the previously mentioned typologies, we find to be more instrumental and concrete. Intentionally excluded here is a conceivable model in which the primary focus of the doctorate would be the creation of an artwork. Even if a dissertation were composed exclusively of an artistic project, it would still be expected to meet the rigorous demands of the highest level of academic study and conform to a three-year full-time format. However, within AVU's tradition of the artistic doctorate—which defines the doctoral project primarily as research-based and/or theoretically grounded—such dissertations do not currently exist.

I. Dichotomic Model

Research informs and complements artistic practice—or vice versa

In this model, research is conducted along two parallel pathways: on one side, through methods drawn from other academic disciplines; on the other, through artistic means. Academic and artistic work mutually support, inspire, and modify one another. The output of such a project comprises separate theoretical and creative components, which together form the doctoral thesis, with research running in parallel to the artistic practice. The relationship between the two parts is correlational rather than integrative—more of a juxtaposition than an organic fusion. If the written component (the “theoretical part”) is dominant in the project and takes the form of a conventional scholarly treatise, the artistic outputs may function as mediating elements—articulating new insights through visual, performative, or other non-verbal means of expression. Conversely, if the creative component (the “practical part”) takes precedence, the written component may serve a supplementary and navigational role, providing a description of aims, methodology, and outcomes. According to Elkins (2009), doctoral works defended within this model most often take the following forms:

- a) (Written component): the dissertation as a contribution to art history
- b) (Written component): the dissertation as a contribution to art theory or philosophy of art
- c) (Written component): the dissertation as a contribution to art criticism or a form of self-critique
- d) (Written component): the dissertation as a contribution to another field within the humanities

³⁶ The announcement for the admissions process to the doctoral study programme in Fine Arts for the academic year 2019/2020 states:

“The applicant in the field of Fine Arts may propose a project focused either on the creation of artistic artefacts or on the investigation of cultural, social, or societal phenomena through artistic means. It is assumed that the outcome of the doctoral study will offer an original insight or solution to the issue in question, thereby contributing to the expansion of current knowledge. [...] A doctoral project grounded in artistic research must be based not only on a well-formulated research question but also on appropriately selected and clearly defined tools of artistic research.” (online).

and natural or technical sciences
e) (Written component): the dissertation as project documentation

Challenges: Formalism and Doctoral Candidate Preparedness

This model of the dissertation brings with it at least two key challenges (or risks). The first is that such structurally defined doctorates are prone to formalisation (e.g. by prescribing a required number of pages) and therefore standardisation, which can threaten the diversity of projects pursued. The degree of formalism is shaped by the internal climate of the institution overseeing the doctorates. The second, and more significant, challenge is the preparedness of graduates of art schools for this type of doctoral project. Unlike graduates of the humanities and natural sciences, who typically gain training in academic research and acquire basic methodological and scholarly competencies over the course of their bachelor's and master's studies, candidates for an artistic doctorate enter their programme with a foundation in artistic competence. At the beginning of the doctoral journey, they face a dual challenge: not only must they conduct appropriate research and produce relevant outputs, but they must also, within the accelerated timeframe of a three-year full-time programme, acquire familiarity with the academic standards of the discipline their research engages with, and meet field-specific publication requirements. However, this can also present an advantage—offering a fresh, unencumbered perspective on the research topic, uninhibited by disciplinary tradition.

II. Integrative Model

Research and creation are organically interwoven

In this model, artistic thinking is integrated into all activities contributing to the dissertation project. Artistic work or practice (e.g. a research exhibition) may serve as one of the primary tools for acquiring new knowledge about the subject under investigation. The reflection on this work then feeds back into the research process, shaping both the understanding and the articulation of the phenomenon through other media and practices. Research thus unfolds organically and circularly, and it becomes meaningless to distinguish between “art” (practice) and “theory” (text) within the project. „[T]he scholarly portion of the thesis [is] inextricably fused with the creative portion, so that artwork is scholarly and the scholarship is creative“ (Elkins 2009: 159).

In this model, every component of the dissertation project functions as a research tool, and together they form a kind of synthetic argument. There is no conventional hierarchy or fixed sequence among the parts; these are defined by the doctoral candidate in methodological consultation with supervisors and tailored to the inquiry at hand. The research outcomes may be presented through various media and practices: for example, visual codes may communicate theoretical ideas, while the written portion of the dissertation may take the form of an artistic text.

o Dissertation projects in this model are highly individual and difficult to standardise, the same general requirements for research activity still apply: the dissertation must meet the criteria of an original research contribution to new knowledge, and it must be capable of effectively communicating that knowledge beyond the confines of academia.

Challenges: Lack of Structure and Unclear Evaluation Criteria

Doctoral projects framed as autonomous research domains—that is, as “unspecified fields of study”—naturally come with a number of challenges. The first major requirement is the systematic balancing of the various components of a project that is not predefined or formalised. Both the doctoral candidate and the supervisor face at least two core issues: how to establish parameters and criteria for artistic research that do not conform to standard academic norms, and how to determine a meaningful way to communicate about the project and its partial outcomes—both within the doctoral programme and to the broader academic and artistic community. The second challenge concerns the evaluation criteria for such projects. While in the case of the first model (the dichotomic model), the quality of the written dissertation is readily assessed using established standards of the relevant discourse (e.g., art-historical, theoretical, technical), in this model, evaluation criteria may only emerge through the process of the project itself. This places increased demands on doctoral candidates, supervisors, and independent evaluators (such as colloquium committees, examination boards, and thesis defence panels)..

2.3 A Note on the (Non-)Definition of a Minimum Word Count for the Dissertation

In the subsection “Is Verbalisation the Only Possible Means of Communicating Knowledge?”, we pointed out that knowledge can be conveyed through means other than text. It is no coincidence that fields which rely on such alternative forms of communication—such as mathematics, physics, or chemistry—typically do not define a minimum page count for dissertations. This requirement tends to exist only in the humanities, where research is presented almost exclusively through text.³⁷

Yet even within the humanities, this requirement is curious. Why should the length of a dissertation say anything about the quality of the research? It would be as absurd as setting a minimum number of sculptures in art, a minimum surface area for paintings, a minimum duration for video works—or in mathematics, a required number of

37 “Miloš Vojtěchovský [...], serving as a lecturer at FAMU, criticises the fact that art schools often adopt formal requirements from the humanities or other disciplines, and as a result, the work becomes ‘ballast that disqualifies or damages the creative and genuinely authorial part of the artistic doctorate.’” (Dolanová 2009: online)

equations, or in chemistry, a required number of chemical formulas. A dissertation may be excellent or weak regardless of whether it is short or long. A well-known example of an outstanding short dissertation is *Non-Cooperative Games*, defended by John Nash at Princeton University in 1950. The dissertation is only 28 pages long (32 with title pages, abstract, and table of contents), yet its concepts continue to be foundational in game theory today—and Nash was later awarded the Nobel Prize for it.

Once a page count is defined, there is a tendency to prioritise quantity over quality: longer words and verbose formulations are favoured, resulting in a text that is often harder to follow. Writing a good dissertation not only requires the ability to write well, but also the discipline to edit rigorously.

If any formal requirement is to be set at all, it should be a guideline rather than a binding norm. It is the responsibility of the evaluation committee to judge whether a deviation from traditionally accepted formats is justified by the nature of the project, or whether it reflects a lack of rigour on the part of the doctoral candidate.

Proposal 4: Abolish the requirement for a minimum length of the dissertation. Instead, provide a general recommendation for dissertation length.

3° Knowledge and the Institution

Research can be carried out outside the university system and beyond the context of a doctoral programme. However, conducting research under the auspices of a university offers significant advantages. The institution provides an inspiring environment with platforms for consultation—both with supervisors and with other faculty members and students; access to material resources such as studios, libraries, workshops, and technical equipment; financial support in the form of stipends and grants; access to lectures and courses; a community; the motivating rhythm of a structured study schedule; and other benefits associated with student status. Institutional affiliation also facilitates collaboration with other institutions, departments, and organisations. Thanks to this supportive infrastructure, research conducted within a higher education institution can reasonably be expected to attain a higher standard of quality than the same research carried out independently.

3.1 General Development of the Artistic Ph.D. in Europe and the Czech Republic

The doctorate as we understand it today—the Ph.D. (philosophiæ doctor) as the highest academic degree obtainable through study—emerged in the mid-19th century, first in Germany and subsequently in the United States. The successful educational reform in Germany at the time established the requirement that the doctoral degree be earned through an original research contribution—an expectation that remains a defining characteristic of doctoral study to this day.

The title Ph.D. became the standard for the third cycle of higher education in Europe in connection with the Bologna Process, which began in 1999. In addition to improving access to higher education and enhancing the permeability of higher education systems among participating countries, the process also sought to establish comparability of academic degrees.

The Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (AVU), which had already been actively pursuing doctoral programme accreditation prior to the start of the Bologna Process, initially proposed—in a research report for the Ministry of Education—the title Dr. A. (doctor artis). The only person ever awarded this title was then-rector Milan Knížák, who defended his doctoral project at AVU in 1997.

Subsequent graduates (beginning in 2002) have received the Ph.D. title.

The framework for doctoral study within the Bologna Process was elaborated in a 2005 document titled the Salzburg Recommendations. This identified ten qualitative principles for the third cycle of education—some of which have since become standard practice, while others remain aspirational ideals.³⁸ In the field of higher arts education, the Salzburg Recommendations were followed in 2017 by a set of proposals titled the Florence Principles, initiated by the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), in which AVU has long been represented (see also section 3.6).

At the heart of the Florence Principles are seven brief, advisory articles (the full text is included in Appendix G), which address: the selection and qualifications of doctoral candidates in the arts; career prospects for graduates; general criteria for the quality of an artistic doctorate; the research environment; the importance of supervision and basic guidelines for mentoring; the visibility of doctoral work; and the dissemination and preservation of doctoral research outputs (Florence Principles, pp. 10–11).

3.2 Legal Definitions of Doctoral Study in the Czech Republic and the Artistic Doctorate

The legal definition of doctoral study in the Czech Republic (the full text of the relevant legislation is provided in Appendix E1) is well formulated from the perspective of art schools, as it explicitly includes artistic doctorates. These are defined as “independent theoretical and creative work in the field of art” (paragraph 1), or alternatively as “independent theoretical and creative artistic activity” (paragraph 4).

3.3 Development of Doctoral Studies at AVU: Programmes Without Predefined Study Fields

In October 1994, AVU submitted a proposal to the Accreditation Commission of the Czech Ministry of Education to establish a doctoral programme titled Doctoral

³⁸ The Salzburg Recommendations address the following principles:

- Doctoral training as the advancement of knowledge through original research
- Integration of doctoral training into institutional strategies and policies
- Recognition of the diversity of doctoral research
- The identity of doctoral candidates as early-stage researchers
- The crucial role of supervision and assessment
- A critical mass of research activity within doctoral programmes
- A standard full-time study period of three to four years
- Support for innovative structures
- The importance of researcher mobility at the doctoral level
- Adequate funding for doctoral candidates as a necessary condition for quality.

Studies with Unspecified Fields of Study.³⁹ This proposal was preceded by a background research report in which Milan Knížák justified the title by referencing developments in art over the past hundred years, arguing that “many artists (through their attitudes and work) define entirely new areas that had previously not been considered within the framework of art. And it is precisely the definition of these new areas that is of immense value to a living art school. [...] This is why we emphasise ‘unspecified fields’—that is, domains (positions) that will only emerge through a given doctoral project.” (Report 1994: 2–3). With this programme, the developers of doctoral study at AVU intentionally created space for projects that do not fit into pre-established categories.

In February 1995, the Ministry responded by authorising AVU to implement a doctoral programme in the field of “Theory of Fine Art Creation.” In 1998, AVU submitted a request to change the programme’s title from “Theory of Fine Art Creation in Unspecified Fields” to “Theory and Creative Practice of Fine Art Creation in Unspecified Fields”, citing amendments to the Higher Education Act, which newly recognised artistic creative activity as a “fully valid equivalent of scientific, research, and development activity.” By the time of the June 2006 application to extend the programme’s accreditation, the phrase “unspecified fields” had disappeared (the study programme was now titled Fine Arts, with fields of study including Fine Art Creation, Architectural Creation, and Conservation of Fine Art Works). However, the application explicitly noted that “despite formal changes to the programme title in recent years, the concept of the doctoral programme has remained unchanged.” A significant shift in doctoral study at AVU came with the transition from distance learning formats—which were the only option in the 1990s—to full-time (in-person) study. This transition took place in the early 2000s (beginning with the 2002–2003 academic year) and was likely motivated in part by financial considerations. Before this shift, distance-learning doctoral candidates tended to be solitary figures, with relatively little engagement in the day-to-day academic life of AVU (their physical presence at the Academy was not expected). The move from exclusively distance-based study to in-person doctoral study presented AVU leadership with a host of new practical questions: How should the doctoral programme be structured when candidates are physically present at the Academy and in individual studios? What kind of curriculum should be offered to address the specific needs of this advanced level of study? How can doctoral candidates be integrated into the rhythms of studio-based instruction and into the life of the Academy? How can the development of their projects be supported beyond one-on-one supervision, and how should this development be communicated? What form of research and grant-based incentives should be developed for doctoral candidates? And more broadly—and perhaps most importantly

39 In a letter from the Rector of AVU to the Ministry dated 5 June 2006, it is stated that the doctoral study programme at AVU was accredited in 1990. This is likely an error, as no documents have been found to confirm this claim.

—what role should doctoral candidates play at AVU, and for AVU? It is fair to say that these questions remain open and are still being addressed today. Indeed, this Report on Artistic Research at AVU has been produced in response to them. In the first 15 years following the accreditation of the doctoral programme, only four dissertations were successfully defended. In the past decade, however, that number has increased significantly. As of July 2020, a total of 43 doctoral dissertations have been defended at AVU—26 in the field of Fine Arts, 13 in Conservation of Fine Art Works, and 4 in Architectural Creation. The field of Theory and History of Contemporary Art, into which the first students were admitted in 2017, had not yet had any graduates at the time of this report. A complete list of defended dissertations is included in the appendix to this report (see Appendix A).

3.4 Artistic Doctorates at AVU in 2019-2020 – Programme Structure

Doctoral candidates are admitted to the programme following a two-round admissions procedure based on an individual project proposal. Project topics or research themes assigned by specific supervisors are not published in advance. The supervisor is customarily the head of the studio; however, the school's internal regulations do not preclude assistants from serving in this role.

Students enrolled in the full-time mode of study (three years) receive a full scholarship (AVU adheres to the philosophy of providing maximum financial support from the outset, without incremental increases or strategic withholding). In the part-time mode, students do not receive a scholarship, but may apply for one-year project and research grants through the school's internal funding scheme (Research Grant Competition).

If a student fails to complete their studies within the three-year period allocated for full-time study, they are transferred to the part-time mode. The maximum duration of study is six years in total.

The study programme follows an individual study plan. Each year of full-time study includes a selective seminar or lecture, pedagogical involvement in the studio (the nature of which is determined in agreement with the supervisor), and participation in the doctoral colloquium (a public presentation of the project's development in the presence of a committee). In the final year of full-time study, students are expected to pass a foreign language examination, sit the state examination, and defend their dissertation. However, the defence typically takes place in a subsequent year, when the student is already enrolled in the part-time mode.

The structure of the programme is described in detail in the annually updated Doctoral Study Guide, which is published in print and available for download on the school's website.

I. Vertical and Horizontal Communication in Doctoral Studies

As indicated in the introductory section of this chapter, the academic environment provides a framework for multi-year doctoral projects and structures various formats for professional and collegial communication throughout the course of study. A well-functioning institution ensures a balanced approach to both so-called vertical and horizontal communication. Vertical communication refers to formats that maintain the relationship between the doctoral candidate and the institution; horizontal communication, on the other hand, refers to platforms and formats that strengthen dialogue within the doctoral community itself. The core document establishing vertical communication between the institution and the doctoral student is the Individual Study Plan, a legally mandated component of doctoral study. Complementing this is the institution's official Guidelines for State Final Examinations, available on the school's website, which set out the formal requirements for the completion of the programme.

Horizontal communication is not formally prescribed or regulated in the same way, but is reflected in the activities and support the school provides to its doctoral community. A notable example of such activity is the regular off-site retreat for doctoral candidates and supervisors (discussed below). However, what remains lacking in the school's infrastructure is a shared study or project room—a communal space or doctoral hub—in which students might organise and run programming for their peers, and for students and staff at the Academy. It should be noted that in 2020, a year of operational constraints due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a pilot programme called the PhD Lab was initiated, which partially addresses this shortcoming in horizontal communication.

II. Collective Formats

The most significant collective formats recurring each academic year are the Doctoral Colloquium, the Doctoral Symposium, and the Off-site Retreat.

Doctoral Colloquium

The Doctoral Colloquium resembles a multi-day doctoral conference and is held annually in the summer semester (April). It is a public event during which doctoral students present a "concise report on the progress of their work for the given academic year" (Doctoral Study Guide). Each student gives a 15–20-minute lecture, typically introduced or concluded by their supervisor.

Following each presentation, a discussion takes place with a designated committee comprising members of the home institution (including members of the Subject Area Board, supervisors, and other academic or research staff), as well as invited external guests.

Until 2019, the structure and content of the Colloquium were set by the Vice-Rector for Studies in consultation with the Subject Area Board, and the event served as a review of the current status of doctoral projects. In 2020, due to the pandemic, the Colloquium was postponed to October and restructured to more closely resemble an academic conference. First-year students focused on their research question; upper-year students presented a specific topic from their project in a cohesive lecture; and third-year students were given the opportunity to use the colloquium as a trial run for their state examination presentation. The structure of individual sessions was developed based on proposals from the doctoral community. The programme for the 2020 Doctoral Colloquium is included as Appendix H.

Doctoral Symposium

The Doctoral Symposium emerged from the earlier Doctoral Lecture Week (2018) and has taken place each November since 2019. Its thematic focus lies in methodological issues and questions related to artistic research. The programme includes 3–4 invited lectures, seminars, or workshops aimed at doctoral students and supervisors, and occasionally other AVU affiliates. A keynote address, typically delivered by an international expert, opens the symposium with a contribution focused on artistic research (2019: Mika Hannula; 2020: Florian Dombois). In subsequent days, guests from various academic disciplines and artistic practices address different topics, with a particular emphasis on methodology (2019: Michal Pullman, Radan Haluzík, Ondřej Buddeus; 2020: Barbora Klímová, Zbyněk Baladrán). In 2019, the symposium was informally extended by the conference *Between Visual Performance and Theatre*, part of the doctoral project by Jana Orlová. In 2020, it included the inter-institutional colloquium *Artistic Research – Where Next?* featuring contributions from AMU, AVU, JAMU, and UMPRUM, along with a supervisory workshop led by Henk Slegers.

Off-site Retreat

The Off-site Retreat takes place regularly in the autumn semester and spans two or three days. It brings together the doctoral community, including supervisors, and is centred on both formal and informal discussion. The programme typically includes several thematic moderated debates and joint activities that engage with the cultural context of the retreat location.

PhD Lab

In the winter semester of 2020, a pilot version of a shared hub for doctoral candidates was launched. The aim of the PhD Lab is to provide a structured environment for cross-disciplinary engagement among doctoral students, facilitating peer-to-peer education, guest lectures, seminars, and workshops initiated by the doctoral community or supervisors, as well as collaborative projects (e.g. research-based or exhibition-oriented initiatives).

3.5 Continuity of Knowledge Arising from Artistic Research

Analysis of the Current Situation at AVU and Recommendations for Improvement

One notable weakness within the system of artistic higher education appears to be the lack of continuity in artistic research. This may be attributed, in part, to the prevailing perception of doctoral candidates in the local context—namely, that they are primarily students at the highest level of education, rather than, in line with recommendations such as the Salzburg Principles, being recognised as early-stage researchers. To date, no institutional structures exist under the auspices of traditional academic institutions to systematically support artistic research. There are no dedicated centres or academic departments in which such research might be continuously conducted in a postgraduate context. As a result, artistic research lacks both the continuity and the infrastructure typically found in other academic disciplines. Moreover, artistic research does not comfortably fit into the formal and economic frameworks of institutional support and thus remains a marginalised area. This situation is likely symptomatic of the current societal climate and its corresponding decision-making culture, in which the humanities and social sciences are often not perceived as possessing strong innovative or trend-setting potential—an attitude reflected, for example, in the Czech Republic's current Innovation Strategy 2019–2030. In this context, the field of artistic doctoral studies and research is not afforded the structural conditions necessary for institutions to fully cultivate the continuity of doctoral research. As a result, there is a significant risk of losing the know-how that such research brings to art schools. Consequently, institutions forfeit strategic opportunities—such as international and inter-institutional collaborations, access to funding schemes (e.g. those of the Czech Science Foundation [GA ČR], the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic [TA ČR], or the NAKI programme)—as well as the chance to assert themselves not only as centres of artistic production, but also of research excellence.

40 Cf. "Doctoral candidates as early stage researchers: should be recognised as professionals – with commensurate rights – who make a key contribution to the creation of new knowledge." In Salzburg II Recommendations [online].

41 A potential opportunity for the further development of artistic doctorates, including the enhancement of their continuity, is signalled by the new Strategic Plan for the Higher Education Sector from 2021 onwards, which identifies improving the quality of doctoral study as one of its priorities.

Artistic doctorates have been conducted at the Academy of Fine Arts (AVU) for over 25 years, which allows for a partial evaluation of their impact and raises questions such as: how are the findings obtained through research further utilised and built upon? How are successful graduates employed? In the current situation, where a successful doctoral candidate is unable to continue their work within the home institution in the capacity of a postdoctoral researcher or in a similar framework, the competencies gained through doctoral studies can, at best, be integrated into individual artistic practice. Alternatively, the Ph.D. title may offer an advantage in a teaching or other career path outside the home institution. It remains questionable, however, whether such a loosely connected continuation is sufficient or even desirable.

I. Academic Staff

One of the motivations for establishing doctoral studies at AVU in the 1990s was to educate teachers “with a solid theoretical foundation and the ability for precise analysis” (Report 1994: 2). The following statistics show how many current AVU teaching staff hold an artistic doctorate and how many possess a Ph.D. from other fields.⁴²

Pedagogues in Fine Art Studios

Total: 38 (16 supervisors + 22 assistants)
Artistic Doctorate: 8 (4 supervisors and 4 assistants), i.e.
21%. Other doctorate: 0

Pedagogues in restoration studios

Total: 12 (2 supervisors + 10
assistants) Ph.D. in restoration: 3

Internal pedagogues of the Department of Theory and History of Art

Total: 11
Artistic Doctorate: 0
Other doctorate: 10

Total pedagogues (in all studios, workshops, internal and external teachers of KTDU)

Total: 84
With artistic doctorate: 10 (i.e. 12%)

⁴² The source for these statistics is the information available on the official website of AVU. In one case (Jiří Skála), where an assistant in a studio holds a Ph.D. that was not listed on the website, the information has been corrected. The statistics do not differentiate between artistic doctorates obtained at AVU and those awarded by other institutions.

With a different doctorate: 16 (i.e. 19%)

How many doctoral candidates in the field of Fine Arts have a supervisor with an artistic or other PhD?⁴³

Total: 27 doctoral candidates

Supervisors with an artistic doctorate: 11 (i.e. 41%)

Supervisors with a different doctorate: 0

Supervisors without a doctorate: 16

How many doctoral candidates in the field of Fine Art have a consultant holding a Ph.D.⁴⁴

Total: 20

Consultants with an artistic doctorate: 1

Consultants with a different doctorate: 13

Consultants without a doctorate: 6

II. Subjects

At the Academy of Fine Arts (AVU), there is currently a lack of modules derived from the ongoing research of doctoral candidates or from the artistic research practices of successful graduates. As a result, the knowledge produced through such research does not “permeate” the academic community at AVU. Yet it would be possible to integrate modules into the curricula that are based on this research, with topics rotating on a semesterly or yearly basis. A similar rotating model to that of the visiting artist studio could be employed to incorporate graduates, with teaching staff selected via open call, and selection need not be limited to holders of an artistic doctorate from AVU alone.

The Ph.D. Lab could then serve as a platform for instructional formats –lectures, workshops, seminars–led by current doctoral candidates. This doctoral teaching would be aimed at Master's level students and conducted in the form of teaching blocks spanning several weeks at minimum. The guiding assumption is that the teaching delivered by a doctoral candidate beyond the scope of their home studio would be open to interested students from across the school, and would closely align with the subject matter of the candidate's dissertation. This act of “teaching through research,” through dialogue with participants, would enable the doctoral candidate to further develop and substantiate their argument.

43 The statistics include current doctoral candidates (as of July 2020), including those whose studies are currently suspended, as well as those who have been admitted and are due to commence their studies in the autumn.

44 The statistics include current doctoral candidates (as of July 2020), including those whose studies are currently suspended. Newly admitted candidates are not included, as they have not yet selected a consultant. One doctoral candidate has two consultants, and one candidate with suspended studies has no consultant.

III. Courses for Doctoral Candidates

At present, the Academy of Fine Arts (AVU) offers only one course specifically designed for doctoral candidates, namely the Doctoral Seminar. This course combines an introduction to scholarly work and the issues surrounding artistic research with a consultation format. It consists of lectures, collective consultations, and writing exercises, and typically takes place four to five times per semester. As the first course of its kind at AVU, its significance is considerable. However, as noted in section 1.3–VII, this structure would be more appropriately delivered through two distinct courses, with the group consultation formats conducted separately to ensure participation from all doctoral candidates across year groups.

IV. Doctoral Programme Council

The Field Council for Doctoral Studies is a body mandated by law. As of 2020, AVU's Field Council consists of ten members, of whom only one holds a doctoral degree in Fine Arts and one in Restoration. Yet the majority of AVU's doctoral candidates are enrolled in these two fields. Architecture is not represented in the Subject Council at all.

V. Research Units

Most universities offer graduates of doctoral studies the opportunity to continue their research in a postdoctoral capacity. The situation regarding institutions dedicated to artistic research has already been partially outlined in the introductory paragraph of this chapter. When comparing opportunities for continuing research after completing an artistic doctorate at AVU with those available to graduates of Art History at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, the latter benefit from the possibility of continuing research at university departments of art history, the Academy of Sciences, or, for example, AVU's own Research Centre. No such options exist for graduates of artistic doctorates at AVU. Within the school, graduates may only be employed as teaching staff; however, teaching responsibilities differ from research activities. At AVU, research takes place only within the framework of doctoral studies or in the form of individual artistic research projects pursued by faculty members beyond their teaching duties.

Currently, AVU does not employ any research staff holding a doctorate in Fine Arts.

Platforms such as research institutes are of fundamental importance for the continuity of artistic research. Within doctoral studies themselves, such platforms can provide both theoretical and production-related infrastructure (e.g., developing appropriate courses) and foster an environment that

replaces the pressures of the gallery context with academic freedom—and thus a different kind of pressure.⁴⁵

Proposal 5: Introduce a new seminar for doctoral candidates irrespective of year group, aimed at fully harnessing the potential of shared consultations among doctoral candidates.

VI. Publications

The existence of research institutions is also inherently linked to the potential for publication. An institution that conducts research typically publishes its results. The absence of infrastructure for artistic research after the completion of doctoral studies is thus associated with a lack of opportunity to publish subsequent research. As a result, publications based on domestic research are often issued elsewhere (a list of publications produced during doctoral study is included in Appendix B). As is standard at other universities, it should be natural for AVU to have the capacity to publish dissertations and potentially other outputs of artistic research—particularly those created by graduates beyond their time at AVU—through its own publishing house. Although galleries do publish artists' work, these are usually catalogues accompanied by curatorial texts; independent artistic research is rarely attractive to galleries or the art market. Currently, a dissertation may be published by AVU's publishing house if the doctoral candidate applies for publication support while still formally enrolled as a student. (Thanks to this policy, *Děti Absurdlandu* by M. N. Kwiatkowská and *Algoritmy v umení* by M. Stanová were published by NAVU. In contrast, *Litanie prekariátu* by J. Skála was published under a different arrangement, as the author was already a faculty member at AVU.) Once the graduate is no longer a student or employee, they cannot apply for this type of support. Publishing strong doctoral outputs presents AVU with an opportunity to position itself as a research institution—beyond the domain of art history—and to retain high-quality research publications within the institution.

Proposal 6: The NAVU Grant Competition could expand its eligibility criteria to include graduates of AVU's doctoral programmes and open its publishing plan to successful dissertations even after the loss of student status. Additionally, the grant could be extended to support other publication projects by successful alumni and encourage them to continue

45 An inspiration for the establishment of research institutes combining artistic and scientific research may be found in the institutes of the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste. For further information, see: <https://www.zhdk.ch/forschung>.

46 The conditions for AVU Publishing House's grant competition contain a contradiction: "Applicants may include one or more academic staff members and students of doctoral or master's programmes at AVU. [...] Dissertations may be submitted only after their successful defence and with the recommendation of the doctoral committee." It is not clear, however, which body is meant by the term "doctoral committee."

with postdoctoral research and dissemination of outputs that are research-based (excluding exhibition catalogues or retrospective monographs).

Proposal 7: One of the core conditions of research is its dissemination, which allows others to build upon the results. In making research outputs accessible on the AVU website (as is the case for doctoral theses at other Czech universities), it is desirable to archive and document not only the textual part, but also the complete output: text, image, video, audio, interactive projects, etc. The AVU website should also provide an overview of current research (a research catalogue).

3.6 International Integration of AVU in Doctoral Education

„Appropriate research environments consist of a critical mass of faculty and doctoral researchers, an active artistic research profile and an effective infrastructure which includes an international dimension (co-operations, partnerships, networks).“
(Florence Principles, viz příloha G, kap. Research Environment)

The international dimension of doctoral studies at AVU is manifested on several levels: at the level of inter-institutional cooperation, in relation to individual doctoral student mobility, and also through programmes provided directly for the doctoral community – for example, the involvement of international guests in teaching, thematic workshops, lectures, and similar activities.

An international lecture programme specifically aimed at doctoral candidates has only begun to develop in recent years. In 2019 and 2020, the Study Department facilitated the participation of international guests using grant funding from the Central Development Project (2019, 2020), primarily within the format of the Doctoral Symposium. In 2020, along with the pilot launch of the PhD Lab, the first guest lectures by international experts invited directly by the doctoral community at AVU (Merete Røstad, Asli Çicek, Jana Striová) were organised and funded through the Research Grant Competition (VGS). However, this form of financing remains ad hoc, and it would be appropriate for a programme of such guest lectures to be secured through stable funding.

Short-term international mobility of doctoral candidates is currently supported through funding from the Research Grant Competition (VGS), provided that the doctoral student applies for support as part of a one-year project. Long-term mobility, such as study and work placements, is administered by the International Office via Erasmus+ programmes.

CEEPUS, among others, is currently expanding the range of study placements available to doctoral students within the framework of existing partner institutions. It is desirable that both academic staff and doctoral candidates contribute to the expansion of existing partnership agreements through their own activities, research, and networking with third-cycle institutions at foreign universities. As opportunities for study placements increase, it is also necessary for AVU to establish conditions for the reciprocal acceptance of foreign doctoral students. In the context of international cooperation, AVU's most significant engagement over the past decade—and currently—has been within the ELIA network (The European League of Institutes of the Arts), which brings together 260 institutional members from 48 countries. Active participation in ELIA is strategically important for AVU, as it is reflected in concrete projects and represents a major potential for partnerships with other member institutions. AVU was most prominently represented in ELIA by Anna Daučíková, who served on the ELIA Representative Board from 2007 to 2010 and also represented the Academy in her role as Vice-Rector for Research and International Relations (from 2011). Through her efforts, AVU was involved in the extensive “SHARE” project (2010–2013), the outcome of which—the SHARE Handbook for Artistic Research—remains a fundamental reference on topics and institutional contexts associated with artistic research.

In 2017, thanks to Anna Daučíková and Dušan Zahoranský, AVU also directly contributed to the formulation of the Florence Principles (see Appendix G). In 2019/2020, AVU was represented on the ELIA Representative Board by Maria Topolčanská, who was succeeded in November 2020 by the Vice-Rector for International Relations, Vít Havránek.

At present, AVU is engaged in the ELIA thematic project “Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates,” which focuses on the supervision of artistic doctorates. AVU representatives participated in the inaugural conference Challenges of Doctoral Supervision in 2019. Following this, a workshop for supervisors was held at AVU in December 2020 with Henk Slegers, and another supervisor-focused event is planned at the Academy for autumn 2021.

Proposal 8: Ensure stable funding for visiting lectures, workshops, and similar activities aimed at doctoral students, and establish partnerships with higher education institutions abroad to facilitate study placements at the doctoral level.

⁴⁷ Available for download at: https://www.academia.edu/19400374/SHARE_Handbook_for_Artistic_Research_Education

⁴⁸ Challenges of Doctoral Supervision conference, held 24–25 September 2019 at the University of Music and Performing Arts Stuttgart.

4° Conclusion

Summary of Proposals for Doctoral Study at AVU

Proposal 1

Adopt the poster session format as a potential inspiration for developing a parallel format to the existing doctoral colloquium.

Proposal 2

Introduce the option of a visual abstract for both doctoral colloquia and doctoral dissertations.

Proposal 3

Establish a dedicated lecture series showcasing examples of research methods drawn from various academic and artistic disciplines.

Proposal 4

Abolish the formal requirement for a minimum page count in doctoral dissertations. Instead, provide a non-binding recommended length as a general guideline.

Proposal 5

Create a new seminar open to doctoral students across all years, which would make full use of the potential for shared peer consultation and collaborative dialogue.

Proposal 6

Expand the eligibility criteria of the NAVU Grant Competition to include graduates of AVU's doctoral programme. Extend the editorial plan to include successful dissertations even after the student status has lapsed. The grant scheme should also support other publication projects of successful alumni and encourage postdoctoral continuation of research and dissemination of research-based outcomes (excluding exhibition catalogues or non-research monographs).

Proposal 7

One of the essential conditions of research is its dissemination, which enables others to build upon its outcomes. When making research results accessible on the institution's website (in a manner comparable to the publication of dissertations by other universities in the Czech Republic), it is desirable to ensure the archiving and documentation not only of the textual component, but also of the full range of research outputs – including text, images, video, audio, interactive projects, and more. Furthermore, the AVU website should feature a comprehensive and regularly updated overview of ongoing research activities (a research catalogue).

5° Appendices

- A. List of Defended Doctoral Dissertations at AVU 1994–2020
- B. Overview of AVU Doctoral Theses Published in Book Form
- C. Maria Topolčanská: Working Theses on the Academic Practice of Artistic Research at AVU
- D. Definitions: Practice-Based Doctorate, Practice-Led Doctorate
- E. Legal Excerpts:
 - E1. Legal Definition of Doctoral Studies
 - E2. Legal Definition of Research and Development
- F. Basic, Applied, and Experimental Research
- G. The Florence Principles (2017)
- H. Documentation: Abstracts of Presentations from the Conference “To See with a Compound Eye: Doctoral Colloquium 2020”

List of Defended Doctoral Dissertations at AVU 1994–2020

Year	Candidate	Title	Supervisor	Field
1997	Milan Knížák	Mezera mezi médii jako nové médium	prof. PhDr. Václav Bělohradský, prof. akad.mal. Zdeněk Beran	U
2002	Biliana Topalova-Casadio	František Kupka (Některé aspekty malířské techniky F. Kupky), Edvard Munch (Studium techniky vybraných obrazů)	prof. Karel Stretti, akad.mal.	R
2003	Martin Velíšek	Dějiny citronu aneb receptura na zátiší (několik poznámek k užití malířství v recepturách na život Holanďana 17. století a pro život umělce dneška)	prof. akad.mal. Zdeněk Beran, doc. PhDr. Miroslav Petříček	U
2007	Věra Kuttelvašerová Stuchelová	Identita, intimita, autoportrét a sebe prezentace	prof. Milan Knížák, PhDr. Milena Slavická	U
2010	Jakub Gajda	Sochařský materiál Krupnik– Netradiční materiál horské oblasti Jeseníků	prof. Petr Siegl	R
2010	Alena Kupčíková	Slabikář (multimediální interaktivní) pro tzv. děti s rizikem dyslexie ve věku od 4–6 let, pochopení a nalezení jejich specifického vnímání, jeho využití k možnosti správně číst, Testy/Hra (multimediální interaktivní) pro tzv. děti s rizikem dyslexie ve věku od 4–6 let, k možnému odhalení a prevenci počátečních problémů ve čtení a psaní	prof. Milan Knížák Dr.A.	U
2010	Kamila B. Richter	IN-FORMATION. Život in-formování a in-formační život: Proces Materializace a dematerializace informací	prof. Marcus Huemer	U
2011	Peter Janáček	Vášeň a prázdno v kontextu fotografie devadesátých let 20. století	prof. Miloš Šejn	U
2011	Tereza Janečková	Současný grafický design jako galerijní artefakt versus strategie guerilla marketingu v současném umění (produkce – intervence – recepce – interpretace)	Mgr. Jiří Příhoda	U
2011	Radka Müllerová	Dosah a vliv POPu na teenagery	prof. Milan Knížák Dr.A.	U
2011	Pavla Sceranková	Mysl bez obrazu	doc. Vladimír Skrepl	U
2011	Matěj Smetana	Působení nezáměrných náhodných vlivů na umělecké dílo	Mgr. Jiří Příhoda	U
2011	Velíková Tereza	Dialog mezi obrazem a zvukem. Problém audiovizuality v umění a médiích	doc. Vladimír Skrepl	U
2012	Quan Do Manh	Historické technologie přírodních laků používaných v umělecké tvorbě jihovýchodní Asie	prof. Petr Siegel, akad.soch. a rest.	R
2012	Vít Mudruška	Význam plastických doplňků na historických sochařských dílech	prof. Petr Siegel, akad.soch. a rest.	R
2012	Markéta Pavlíková	Polychromovaná sochařská díla z českých sbírek od středověku k vrcholnému baroku (úvod, restaurování, ukázky restaurovaných děl)	prof. Karel Stretti, akad. mal.	R
2012	Adam Pokorný	Technika malby českých deskových obrazů 1400 – 1420	prof. Karel Stretti, akad. mal.	R

Year	Candidate	Title	Supervisor	Field
2012	Andrej Šumbera	Problematika restaurování drobné plastiky z obecných a drahých kovů. Dokumentace, rekonstrukce a terminologie zlatnických historických technologií a technik	prof. Petr Siegel, akad.soch. a rest.	R
2012	Štefan Tóth	Význam kontextu v současném umění. Reinterpretace jako umělecký styl	prof. Milan Knížák Dr.A.	U
2013	Hana Mislerová	Malířská výstavba obrazů v tvorbě Friedricha von Amerlinga	prof. Karel Stretti, akad. mal.	R
2013	Radek Petříček	Plastická anatomie – Teoretická část. Výtvarná část. Mimika	prof. Jiří Lindovský akad. mal.	U
2013	Lenka Vítková	Texty ve vizuálním umění	doc. Vladimír Skrepl	U
2014	Michal Cáb	Pure Data. Rukověť postdigitálního umělce ver. 0.1a	MgA. Tomáš Vaněk	U
2014	Denisa Cirmaciová	Studium technicko-technologických aspektů holandské a vlámské malby 17. století v rámci sbírky Národní galerie v Praze	prof. Karel Stretti, akad.mal.	R
2014	Tereza Severová	Nový hybridní jazyk pohyblivých obrazů v českém umění	Marcus Huemer	U
2015	Kristina Maršíková Málková	Technologie malby Lucase Cranacha st. a jeho okruhu (Průzkumy děl z českých sbírek a jejich interpretace)	prof. Karel Stretti, akad.mal.	R
2015	Martin Rusina	Vany, voda, vzduch. Fenomén architektury klasických městských lázní v českých městech	prof. Ing. akad. arch. Emil Přikryl	A
2015	Dunja Stevanović	Etické, estetické a technologické dilema odstraňování nebo zachování tmelů a rekonstrukcí ve dřevě na polychromovaných plastikách z gotického období	prof. Karel Stretti, akad.mal.	R
2016	David Blahout	Problematika restaurování. Comesso in Pietre Dure e Tenere	prof. Petr Siegl, akad. soch.	R
2016	Pavel Humhal	Excesivní hodnoty současného umění	doc. Anna Daučíková, akad. soch.	U
2016	Vladan Kolář	Percepční komory v umění	prof. Milan Knížák Dr.A.	U
2016	Magdalena Natalia Kwiatkowska	Děti Absurdlandu	MgA. Tomáš Vaněk	U
2016	Magda Stanová	Algoritmy v umění	MgA. Tomáš Vaněk	U
2016	Christl Mudrak	Psychologische Räume Auflösung des Raums im Medium Malerei. Psychologické prostory. Ztvárnění prostoru malířskými prostředky	MgA. Tomáš Svoboda Ph.D.	U
2016	Marcela Steinbachová	Kulisa, kulisárna. Asociace slova kulisa v souvislosti s architekturou a domy pro kulisy vybraných evropských měst	prof. Ing. akad. arch. Emil Přikryl	A
2017	Tomáš Hlavina	Před uměním a po umění. Vlivy a paralely mezi uměním do období renesance a konceptuálním uměním	prof. Milan Knížák, doc. Milena Dopitová	U

Year	Candidate	Title	Supervisor	Field
2017	Magdalena Kracík Štorkánová	Opus musivum – mozaika v českém výtvarném umění 19. a 20. století– Historické techniky, materiály, degradace a koroze mozaikových materiálů, návrh metodiky restaurování děl v mozaice techniky	prof. Karel Stretti, akad.mal.	R
2017	Petr Tej	Socha a sokl	prof. Ing. akad. arch. Emil Přikryl	A
2018	Jan Vlček	Válečné konflikty, militantní estetika a válečná nostalgie: Historický reenactment jako svébytná výtvarní disciplína	prof. Milan Knížák Dr.A.	U
	Jirka Skála	Litanie prekariátu		U
2019	Michal Krejčík	Překlady symbolických forem a jejich aktualizace nadčasovým modelem sakrálního prostoru	prof. Ing. arch. Miroslav Šik, dr.h.c., prof. Ing. akad. arch. Emil Přikryl	A
2020	Marek Škubal	Ars vermibus	akad. mal. Jiří Petrbok	U
2020	Isabela Grosseová	Gravitace umělecké kompetence	prof. Vladimír Kokolia	U

Overview of AVU Doctoral Theses Published in Book Form

Doctoral Theses Published by AVU:

- Jirka Skála. *Litanie prekariátu*. 2019, (Litany of the Precariat)
Magdalena N. Kwiatkowska. *Děti Absurdlandu*. 2016, (Children of Absurdland)
Magda Stanová. *Algorithms in Art*. 2016
Magda Stanová. *Algoritmy v umení*. 2015
(Algorithms in Art)

Other Publications by Doctoral Candidates Published by AVU:

- Tomáš Moravec. *Poznámky o vzducholodích*. 2018
(Notes on Airships, 2018 – catalogue)
Marek Škubal. *Bůh odporných věcí*, Praha: Spolek Trafačka, 2018
(The God of Repulsive Things, Prague: Spolek Trafačka, 2018 – practical component of the dissertation *Ars vermibus*, defended in 2020)
Pavel Humhal. *Záznamy manipulované reality*. 2017
(Records of Manipulated Reality, 2017 – part of the dissertation, structured as a catalogue or portfolio including an introductory text by the author)

Doctoral Theses Published Outside AVU:

- Pavla Sceranková. *Mysl bez obrazu*. Brno: Dexon Art, 2012
(Mind Without Image, Brno: Dexon Art, 2012 – with financial support from the Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové)
Martin Velíšek. *Dějiny citronu, aneb receptura na zátiší*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova, 2017
(The History of the Lemon, or the Recipe for a Still Life, Prague: Charles University, 2017)
Radek Petříček. *Výtvarná anatomie*. Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice, 2017 (2. vyd. 2020)
(Artistic Anatomy, Pardubice: University of Pardubice, 2017; 2nd ed. 2020)
Alena Kupčíková. *Dyslektický slabikář*, 2010, on-line: http://www.dys.cz/slabikar_cz.html
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- Michal Cáb. *Pure Data. Rukověť postdigitálního umělce ver. 0.1a*. 2014
(Pure Data: A Manual for the Post-Digital Artist, ver. 0.1a, 2014)
– prepared as lecture notes, published on the author's
website, online:
[/2/29/Cab_Michal_Pure_Data_rukovet_postdigitalniho_umelce_2014.pdf](#)

C. Maria Topolčanská: Working Theses on the Academic Practice of Artistic Research at AVU

Artistic research is intrinsically linked to the broader policies of arts education. It is a concept that may operate as both emancipatory and conservative, radically inclusive or exclusive.

An important function of art schools lies in questioning socially accepted norms—not only of artistic research, but also of ethical codes, political strategies, and more.

What forms of regulation, economic control, and self-legitimation does artistic research at AVU currently undergo (e.g. evaluation, accreditation, etc.)? In which of the Academy's strategic or assessment-related documents are these manifested?

Artistic research represents one of the arenas in which contemporary debates over the relevance of both art and education are taking place. These discussions are often framed in terms such as the "knowledge economy," "knowledge production," or "knowledge practice." Since the 1990s, artistic research has been embedded within the broader context of Europe's political economy and art education.

What alternatives are currently available at AVU and other European institutions?

Is artistic research more than just another technique for managing and financing higher arts education?

Paradoxically, artistic research serves to affirm the "usefulness" and productivity of academic artistic practice. At the same time, it can be part of a subversive artistic practice that critically addresses what is often perceived as superficial "knowledge production/practice," particularly since the neoliberal shift of the 1970s and more acutely the 1990s.

Artistic research has been institutionalised since the 1990s in various contexts (e.g. the Netherlands, Scandinavia, the United Kingdom), primarily through postgraduate and Master's-level programmes. In German-speaking countries, its adoption occurred later.

How has the institutionalisation of artistic research developed at AVU since the 1990s and the launch of the doctoral programme? How has this process evolved into the present day?

What impact has the Academy's active involvement in the European discourse on artistic research over the past decade had on AVU's academic practice?

Artistic research is also a significant economic factor for art schools. How does AVU engage with this dimension?

How is this economic factor continually negotiated externally (e.g. state funding) in relation to AVU? How is it negotiated internally—i.e. with internal actors: the engagement of artists and theorists as educators participating in artistic research, the development of alternative internal strategies and approaches? Artistic research is a shared vision. What vision does AVU cultivate? Is artistic research reflected in AVU's strategic documents? What is AVU's current concept of artistic research?

Does this represent a forced rapprochement between art and research? How has AVU addressed concerns regarding the instrumentalisation of such a connection? How can it avoid imposing discursivity or normative assumptions (e.g. equating theory and research with textual production)? How can it ensure that the pressure to produce artistic research does not suppress something essential in teaching—something that escapes current conceptions of artistic research at AVU?

Under which traditions has the debate on artistic research developed since the 1990s, and what tradition is AVU currently establishing? How is student learning in theoretical subjects taught by KTDU AVU (e.g. aesthetic theory, positivist philosophies of science, artistic methodologies either close to or distant from scientific paradigms—from the 1960s and '70s, through the 1990s, up to the present) connected to internal debates at AVU about the relationship between art and research—among doctoral candidates, artist-educators, and theorists? Who leads this internal debate and how—is it between institutional platforms such as the Research and Education Centre (VVP AVU), the Department of Art Theory and History (KTDU AVU), the Vice-Rector for Studies, and the coordinators of the doctoral programme? Artistic research has its protagonists in both artistic and academic practice.

Who are the actors in artistic research at AVU? How are they organised?

The institutionalisation of artistic research at AVU is not solely a matter of the doctoral programme and its coordination (e.g. the subject-area board, the coordination of the PhD in art). What is our (personal) position within artistic research—when we act as supervisors, assessors, or consultants? Must the subject—i.e. an AVU teacher-artist—necessarily also be an artistic researcher? Does this create forced identities? Is it an exclusive identity? Or is every subject at AVU potentially an artistic researcher? (Scepticism often arises from such imposed identities.) Artistic research cannot be promoted without initiating internal debate and formulating an institutional strategy—that is, without a degree of collective reflection and destabilisation of the concept itself.

Under what institutional circumstances (both external and internal) does AVU wish to engage actors in artistic research beyond the framework of the doctoral programme? How can normative methodologies be avoided while collectively articulating what constitutes the form of artistic research that AVU engages with—and why? What concept does AVU (including KTDU AVU, the Research and Education Centre VVP, and the school's leadership) have for maintaining and moderating such internal debate continuously across studios, pedagogical settings, and research platforms?

Artistic research relates to knowledge generated and acquired at the Academy through various forms of pedagogical practice and academic artistic activity. How does AVU (in terms of organisational structure and conceptual reach) perceive and define the concept of “research” across its research centres, the Department of Theory, the studios, and the coordination of both Master's and Doctoral programmes? In what situations, and how regularly, do such interdisciplinary overlaps and confrontations occur at AVU? How does AVU work with the long-standing tradition of the relationship between research and art (e.g. research-based art, conceptual art, didactic approaches), beyond the context of art history courses? What projects and seminars dedicated to artistic research does AVU currently offer? How does AVU evaluate artistic research beyond the framework of doctoral studies? What kind of community for self-assessment does AVU cultivate? While AVU's creative grants may be the closest institutional support available—are they actually formulated as such?

The alignment of artistic doctoral programmes with traditional theoretical academic PhDs is shifting the model of the art academy closer to that of a university. Is this alignment occurring consciously at AVU? Is the primary medium of artistic research at AVU the written dissertation? If so, does this confirm a shift towards the model of traditional academic PhD dissertations in theory? Artistic research has, in Europe and beyond, developed its own specific media and projects across art schools, and has been organised through institutionally networked initiatives emerging from the grassroots since the 1990s. The discourse around artistic research has strong advocates—authors. What media does AVU use? How does it build upon the personal presentation of the Journal of Artistic Research (JAR, www.jar-online.net) at the AVU PhD Colloquium 2019? In which projects and debates concerning artistic research has AVU been directly involved over the past decade? What journals and publications (e.g. anthologies) does AVU recognise as essential to its internal conception of artistic research? Who are the key authors contributing to this discourse?

Does rhetoric influence the discourse on artistic research at AVU?
(Some speakers at the 2019 doctoral colloquium.)

In which networks and organisations has AVU been active over the past decade, and why is it not involved in others? ELIA is only one of them. How is the communication and conceptualisation of artistic research structured within AVU's leadership (foreign relations, academic affairs, research)? How is this linked to the academic practice of AVU?

In the field of architecture, artistic research has equivalents more commonly referred to as practice-based or design-based research (in doctoral programmes as design-driven doctorates).

What is the existing practice of artistic research in architecture at AVU, and how is it currently conceptualised?

Does the written dissertation remain the principal medium of such research?

Attention devoted to artistic research may catalyse structural change in the arts, not only in arts education.

In what ways does artistic research strengthen AVU as an institution? What kind of institutional imagination might artistic research at AVU inspire?

Is artistic research merely another term for the precarisation of artistic and pedagogical practice, conducted without comparable working conditions to traditional academic research—particularly when realised exclusively as PhD “study” rather than as work within a “research” position?

How might AVU, through critical and emancipatory conceptions of artistic research, better resist academic reorganisations that reinforce the further economisation of higher education, increasing pressures on applied research, and the subsuming of culture within the cultural industry and its metrics of productivity?

Artistic research at AVU could offer the fields of art and architecture a more protected living and working environment, with clear parameters, conditions, and tools for artists and architects.

Such a research environment must remain sufficiently ambivalent and open to ensure broad acceptability by the community that creates it.

Only from within this community of protagonists can such an environment be shaped and reshaped—and be meaningfully reported on from the inside.

July 2020

Definitions: Practice-Based Doctorate, Practice-Led Doctorate

Taken from Candy 2006: on-line.

Research in which practice is a central focus can be divided into two main types: practice-based and practice-led.

- If the research includes a creative artefact as the basis of the contribution to knowledge, the research is practice-based.
- If the research leads primarily to new understandings about the nature of practice, it is practice-led.

In some cases both types of research appear together but there is usually one that is more dominant.

Practice-based research is an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice. In a doctoral thesis, claims of originality and contribution to knowledge may be demonstrated through creative outcomes in the form of designs, music, digital media, performances and exhibitions. Whilst the significance and context of the claims are described in words, a full understanding can only be obtained with direct reference to the outcomes.

Practice-led research is concerned with the nature of practice and is directed towards generating new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice. In a doctoral thesis, the results of practice-led research may be fully described in text form without the inclusion of a creative work. The primary focus of the research is to advance knowledge about practice, or to advance knowledge within practice. Such research includes practice as an integral part of its method and often falls within the general area of action research.

Although practice-based research has become widespread, it has yet to be characterised in a way that has become agreed across the various fields of research where it is in use. To complicate matters further, the terms, 'practice-based' and, 'practice-led' are often used interchangeably.

E. Legal Excerpts

E1: Legal Definition of Doctoral Studies

Doctoral studies are defined by Act No. 111/1998 Coll. – The Higher Education Act and on Amendments and Supplements to Other Acts (The Higher Education Act).

§ 47

Doctoral studies

(1) A doctoral study programme is oriented towards scholarly research and independent creative activity in the field of research or development, or towards independent theoretical and creative activity in the field of the arts.

(2) The standard duration of study is a minimum of three and a maximum of four years.

(3) Study within a doctoral programme is conducted according to an individual study plan under the supervision of a supervisor.

(4) The programme is formally completed by a state doctoral examination and a public defence of the dissertation, which demonstrate the candidate's ability and preparedness for independent activity in research or development, or for independent theoretical and creative artistic work. The dissertation must include original and published results or results accepted for publication.

(5) Graduates of doctoral study programmes are awarded the academic degree of "Doctor" (abbreviated as "Ph.D.", placed after the name).

(6) The course of study in a doctoral programme is overseen and evaluated by a subject-area board established according to the internal regulations of the higher education institution or its constituent unit, which holds accreditation for the relevant study programme. For programmes in the same field of study, higher education institutions or their constituent units may, by agreement, form a joint subject-area board. The chair of the subject-area board is the guarantor of the doctoral study programme.

E2: Legal Definition of Research and Development

110/2009 Sb. – Act on the Support of Research and Development

§ 2

(1) For the purposes of this Act, the following definitions apply:

a) Basic research refers to theoretical or experimental work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge about the fundamental principles of phenomena or observable facts, which is not primarily directed towards practical application or use.

b) Applied research refers to theoretical and experimental work aimed at acquiring new knowledge and skills for the development of new or substantially improved products, processes, or services.

c) Experimental development refers to the acquisition, combination, shaping, and use of existing scientific, technological, business, and other relevant knowledge and skills for the design of new or substantially improved products, processes, or services (hereinafter referred to as "development").

d) Innovation refers to the introduction of new or substantially improved products, processes, or services into practice, distinguished as follows:

1. Process innovation, meaning the implementation of a new or substantially improved method of production or delivery of services, including significant changes in techniques, equipment, or software;
2. Organisational innovation, meaning the implementation of a new method of organising business practices, workplace organisation, or external relations.

F. Basic, Applied, and Experimental Research

The definitions of the following terms are presented according to the terminology employed by the Council for Research, Development and Innovation. These are excerpts from the chapter “Terms Used in R&D Statistics”:

a) The most accurate and objective definitions of these terms are provided for statistical purposes. The most recognised source of R&D statistics is the OECD, which evaluates R&D activity in its member states using more than 100 defined indicators. A very detailed methodology is set out in the so-called Frascati Manual, which is revised at regular intervals (every 3 to 4 years).

b) The basic terms – research and development – are defined in the OECD methodology as follows and have been adopted, with minimal changes, in the amended Act on the Support of Research and Development, as well as in the new methodology of the Czech Statistical Office for the assessment of R&D:

Basic (fundamental) research – Experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying principles of phenomena or observable facts, without aiming at specific practical application or use of the acquired knowledge.

Applied (targeted) research – Experimental and theoretical work directed towards acquiring new knowledge, but explicitly aimed at a specific, predetermined practical objective.

Experimental research and development (development) –

Systematic creative work aimed at expanding the existing stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and its use to devise new applications of this knowledge.

c) In actual statistical data and indicators (e.g. funding, human resources), however, OECD statistics do not distinguish between these individual types (categories) of R&D.

d) The 1995 revision of the Frascati Manual introduced further distinctions. Articles (227) and (232) of the OECD document DSTI/EAS/STP/NESTI(93)6 state:

(227) – Basic research may be divided into:

Pure basic research (also called fundamental research), which is carried out to advance knowledge for its own sake, without any particular application or use in view, nor with the intention to yield economic or social benefits (even in the long term), and without seeking to communicate results to those who might be responsible for applying scientific knowledge in practice;

Oriented basic research, which is carried out with the expectation that it will generate a broad base of knowledge that will likely serve as a foundation for solving recognised or anticipated (current or future) practical problems.

49 On-line: <https://www.vyzkum.cz/FrontClanek.aspx?idsekce=932>, 15. 5. 2020.

2) (232) – Applied research may be divided into:

General applied research, which consists of systematic investigation aimed at acquiring new knowledge, where the research has not yet reached the stage at which specific application objectives are clearly defined;

Specific applied research, which is also a systematic investigation aimed at acquiring new knowledge, but is directed towards a well-defined practical objective, with a clearly intended application of the results.

G. The Florence Principles (2017)

The Florence Principles – Seven Points of Attention

Preamble

Doctoral studies (doctorates and PhDs) in the arts enable candidates to make an original contribution to their discipline. Doctoral study programmes in the arts aim to develop artistic competence, generate new knowledge and advance artistic research. They enable candidates to progress as both artists and researchers, extending artistic competence and the ability to create and share new insights by applying innovative artistic methods. The general principles for doctoral education elaborated in the Salzburg Recommendations II and in the Principles on Innovative Doctoral Training are largely held to be valid in the arts. The following points isolate criteria which are essential, and perhaps also particular, to doctoral studies in the arts.

Qualifications

Doctorates in the arts provide a research qualification that builds upon diploma/masters studies and requires the in-depth development of an artistic research project. Candidates are selected who meet formal requirements defined by institutions and as a result of their artistic qualifications and competences. Potential supervisors may be part of the selection process, to ensure the academic quality of the dissertation process.

Career Perspectives

Holders of doctoral degrees in the arts may enter (or continue) an academic career at a higher education institution and/or enter (or continue) their career as artists. As a doctorate in the arts is usually undertaken when the candidate has completed graduate studies and produced a significant body of work, cohorts of doctoral programmes comprise established, internationally mobile artists. In bringing their academic and professional experience together, cohorts build valuable networks and accumulate key transferable skills that shape future perspectives for doctoral candidates in the arts. Upon completion, holders of doctoral degrees have the potential to combine their career as artists with a career in higher education.

Doctoral Work

The doctoral work (the dissertation project) undertaken during doctoral studies in the arts includes the development of an original and concrete artistic research project. This project uses artistic methods and techniques, resulting in an original contribution to new insights and knowledge within the artistic field. The project consists of original work(s) of art and contains a discursive component that critically reflects upon the project and documents the research process. Internationalism, interdisciplinarity and interculturality are implicit in many artistic practices and can benefit from doctoral programmes in the arts.

Research Environment

Artistic doctoral studies embedded within an appropriate research environment ensure the best possible (inter)disciplinary advancement of work. Appropriate research environments consist of a critical mass of faculty and doctoral researchers, an active artistic research profile and an effective infrastructure which includes an international dimension (co-operations, partnerships, networks). Doctoral research projects in the arts can advance discipline(s) and interdisciplinary work, by extending borders and establishing new cross-disciplinary relations. Artistic doctoral projects require adequate resources and infrastructure, in particular studio space and exhibition/performance environments. Funding for doctoral researchers in the arts is crucial.

Supervision

Supervision is a core issue for good practice in doctoral education, and at least two supervisors are recommended. A doctoral agreement, outlining the supervision roles (candidate – supervisor – institution), triangulates this process and setting out the rights and duties of all parties.

Institutions establish a good supervision culture by precisely defining responsibilities in their guidelines which provide a basis for avoiding and resolving conflict. Supervision is to be separated (at least partially) from final evaluation (assessment, reviewers), and supervisors should focus on maintaining the quality of the dissertation project in relation to national and international standards. Doctoral programmes in the arts follow the standard quality assurance and evaluation procedures applicable in the relevant national and institutional context (accreditation, reviews, etc.).

Dissemination

The results of doctoral work in the arts are disseminated through appropriate channels. For artistic work, exhibitions, performances, media installations and content, websites, and so on provide appropriate

dissemination frames. A particular effort needs to be made to create adequate archives for the results of doctoral work. Wherever possible and under the provision of proper copyright regulations, open access is the guiding principle for dissemination of artistic research work and the documentation of artistic work (e.g. digital portfolios in institutional repositories). Peer-reviewed and/or externally validated contexts are to be prioritized (e.g. via exhibition programmes in museums or curatorial selection processes). The specificity of dissemination contexts should be clarified at the beginning of the doctoral studies (e.g. in the doctoral agreement).

H. Documentation: Abstracts of Presentations from the Conference “To See with a Compound Eye: Doctoral Colloquium 2020”

“To See with a Compound Eye: Doctoral Colloquium 2020”
DOCTORAL COLLOQUIUM AVU 2020
TO SEE WITH A COMPOUND EYE
20–21 October 2020

TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER // BLOCK 1 Possibilities of Deviation

9:00–9:40 – M. Arch. L. Zein: Dromology of the Developer City
9:40–10:20 – MgA. T. Moravec: Crisis of Vision / The Architecture of Imaginations and the Topography of Their Realisations
10:20–11:00 – Epos 257: The Unconscious of the City – Other Sites of Architecture for Socially Beneficial Housing
11:00–11:40 – Ing. Arch. M. Havlová: Half-Life of Transformation – Re(vision)

“The environments of contemporary cities are increasingly subject to intensifying pressures and efforts aimed at their maximal extraction and politico-economic exploitation. The result of these processes is a pre-emptively colonised space, within whose embrace we are meant to feel comfortable only insofar as our desires and intended goals find appropriate fulfilment within the machinery of systemic mechanisms.”

The doctoral contributions in this session examine current paradigms of life within urban agglomerations and explore possibilities of deviation from them. They encompass themes that co-construct the perception of space in contemporary architecture and urbanism, thus defining the ways in which we move through these environments, the places we inhabit, how we influence space, and how, in turn, it exerts influence upon us.

An Attempt at Reappraisal

13:00–13:40 L. Gažiová: Romani Art and Segregation
13:40–14:20 M. Smutná: The Language of Inequality
14:20–15:00 J. Havlíček: Steps. The Moving Image of the Institution

This session is loosely connected by the theme of re-examining the realms of history, language, and culture. Ladislava Gažiová presents the initial phase of her research into the domain of Romani art and culture, attempting to liberate it from entrenched interpretative frameworks. Jiří Havlíček introduces a lesser-known image of public culture in 1970s socialist Czechoslovakia, revealing the fissures in the ideology of the “normalisation” era through the lens of several television programmes. Martina Smutná addresses the language of inequality. She analyses the language used in examiner reports on diploma theses from painting studios in the years 1994–1999. Her presentation outlines potential responses to structural inequalities within artistic and curatorial practice.

Panel/Committee:

External members: Mgr. Sláva Sobotovičová, Ph.D., MgA. Zbyněk Baladrán

Representing AVU: PhDr. Pavlína Morganová, Ph.D.; Mgr. Věra Borožan, Ph.D.; Vít Havránek, Ph.D. (morning session); MgA. Jirka Skála, Ph.D. (afternoon session)

ABSTRACTS OF PRESENTATIONS (in chronological order)

M. Arch. Lynda Zein, Year 1

Dromology of the Developer City

Supervisor: Ing. arch. Maria Topolčanská, Ph.D.

This presentation will address dromology, the study of speed, through the example of Prague's Karlín district, which has undergone a process of gentrification over the past 18 years. The leitmotif of commercial districts—whether geared towards office functions or short-term/investment housing—is the deterritorialisation enacted by transnational corporations, operating on the principle of creative destruction. I examine the impact of financialised urban development on the perception of time. My analysis draws on the theory of Paul Virilio, specifically his conception of speed as the driving force in *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology* (1977, 1986) and *The Futurism of the Instant: Stop-Eject* (2010). Additionally, I refer to Pierre Nora's *Mémoire collective* (1978) and his notion of *histoire des mentalités*, which explains how our collective, often subconscious perception influences the trajectory of political, economic, and sociological decision-making.

MgA. Tomáš Moravec, Year 3

Crisis of Vision / Architecture of Projections and the Topography of Their Realisations

Supervisor: doc. Mgr. art. Dušan Zahoranský

Consultant: doc. Mgr. Václav Magid

Public space is undergoing transformative processes. These begin with the emergence of needs that necessitate change. This generates pressure—concentrated at a specific time and place. The original structure erodes and becomes disrupted, leading to transformation. At the end of this process lies the anticipated realisation of a new vision. Within the boundaries of this interval, a confrontation unfolds between the envisioned plan and its execution. The interplay between intention and outcome influences the trajectory of development. Frequently, this results in a crisis—a turning point in the evolution of space. Such crises may produce environments that deviate from initial expectations. These altered conditions may, from one perspective, be viewed as failures or even catastrophes. Yet, their new and current state warrants investigation. From another vantage point, these spaces may represent new open quality.

The presentation by Tomáš Moravec offers a specific segment of his doctoral project. In field studies, he focuses on several locations in Prague's Holešovice district. He works with these sites long-term, engaging with them through artistic interventions. His research explores their spatial qualities in relation to human movement within the urban environment, paying particular attention to both the destructive and imaginative potential of the transformative processes affecting these areas. In the installation *Manuport*, prepared for the *Unplugged* exhibition at Galerie Rudolfinum, he responds to the transformation of these locations in the context of real estate development. He captures a moment in which the slow metamorphosis of the site—previously observable like Brownian motion—gives way to a violent jolt to the Petri dish via the blow of a demolition hammer. His contribution discusses strategies for engaging with and coping with the constant transformation of our surroundings. He concludes that the critical perspective offered by art must proceed more swiftly than the changes occurring in the object of interest.

Epos 257, Year 2

The Unconscious of the City – Other Places

Supervisor: doc. Mgr. art. Dušan Zahoranský

Consultant: doc. Mgr. Tomáš Pospiszyl, Ph.D.

This presentation builds organically on my previous artistic practice: it investigates the city through specific sites and situations, and through the reverse construction of an image of the whole. It focuses on the interstitials—blind spots and cracks in the urban fabric, emptied or vague spaces (which paradoxically can also be highly frequented), that have become impersonal non-places of our disinterest, neglect, and repression, lying outside the field of “public” and “conscious” perception. These are peripheries in the broadest sense—not only geographical but also socio-cultural. I examine the relationship between periphery and centre in a manner analogous to the relationship between the unconscious and the conscious. Drawing on psychoanalytical experience, I explore the environment as a reflection of our inner worlds, and of the repressed dimensions of our unconscious that manifest spatially around us. As society and its structures evolve, so too do the spaces within the postmodern urban landscape—the organism we call the city. My presentation aims to highlight how much can be perceived around us through such a narrowed lens.

Ing. arch. Magdalena Havlová, Year 1

Half-Life of Transformation – Re(visions) of Architecture for Publicly Beneficial Housing

Supervisor: prof. Ing. arch. Miroslav Šik, dr. h. c.

Consultant: Ing. arch. Maria Topolčanská, Ph.D.

5° Appendices

Ing. arch. Magdalena Havlová, Year 1
Half-Life of Transformation – Re(visions) of Architecture for Publicly Beneficial Housing
Supervisor: prof. Ing. arch. Miroslav ŠIK, dr. h. c.
Consultant: Ing. arch. Maria Topolčanská, Ph.D. This presentation at the 2020 AVU Doctoral Colloquium introduces the topic of housing crisis solutions and their typologies within the context of Czech architecture. The introductory part will focus on the reasons for selecting the topic and its scope—defining the research frame was a key task in the first year of doctoral studies. In response to the current public discourse around the urgent need for quality and affordable housing, I have formulated a core research question: What was, is, and could be the architecture of socially beneficial housing, and what is its position in our society across various historical periods? The talk will outline the chosen methodology and approaches I am employing to answer this question (archival research, textual analysis, diagramming, photography), as well as possible formats for both graphic and written research outputs. The final dissertation is envisioned in the form of a published book, potentially accompanied by a travelling exhibition.

MgA. Ladislava Gažiová, Year 1
Romani Art and Segregation
Supervisor: doc. MgA. Tomáš Vaněk
Consultant: Mgr. Věra Borozan, Ph.D.
The notion of “Romani culture” is widely understood within liberal discourse as an unambiguously positive force necessary for the emancipation of an oppressed ethnic group. Yet, this notion becomes problematic when considered through the lenses of multiculturalism, identity politics, or monoethnic framing in the context of the state, nation, or culture. Cultural diversity—once a truly emancipatory concept historically linked with the ideals of internationalism—today often works in reverse, creating conditions in which fragmented identities are left to fight for their own survival. This cultural demarcation increasingly spills over into other domains, including the socio-economic sphere. For several decades now, most Roma in the former Czechoslovakia have once again lived as outcasts. While a solution remains elusive, this presentation will attempt to analyse and highlight the challenges of the current conceptualisation of “Romani culture” using selected examples: Frantz Fanon and the outcasts of the former Eastern Bloc, The Aver Collective and their re-examination of history and life in the Chanov housing estate, George Soros, his funding, and the role he played in shaping Romani cultural narratives.

MgA. Martina Smutná, Year 1
The Language of Inequality
Supervisor: MgA. Josef Bolf
Consultant: Mgr. Věra Borozan, Ph.D.
What kind of language was used to evaluate diploma projects in painting studios at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague during the 1990s? What was the prevailing idea of “excellent” painting and artistic expression? Who was acknowledged by their supervisors as an artist—and who was excluded from that framework? And who were the actual individuals involved in shaping the painterly canon of that recent decade?

These are the questions I seek to address in my presentation, titled *The Language of Inequality*. It is based primarily on an analysis of school archival materials which I examined during the past academic year, focusing on the period 1995–2005. The title refers to the methodological approach I adopted in the initial phase of my research, aimed at better understanding and articulating the occurrence and impact of the term “female painting.” Analysing the language used in evaluations of final works from the painting studios has enabled me to expose the power relations embedded in the rhetoric—ranging from uncritical adulation and paternalistic moralising to outright primitive sexism. In this talk, I will present initial findings from my archival investigation. I will show how painterly expression often reproduced an image of women as a “natural element” in need of control and regulation, and how this framing encompassed any expression of “otherness” that deviated from Eurocentric artistic traditions. To conclude, I will outline potential directions for further research, drawing from my recent experience conducting interviews with former female students at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Brno.

MgA. Jiří Havlíček, Year 3

Steps. The Moving Image of the Institution

Supervisor: doc. MgA. Tomáš Vaněk

Consultant: doc. Mgr. Tomáš Pospiszyl, Ph.D.

The unlikely circumstances surrounding the creation of the Czechoslovak television series *Kroky* (Steps, 1976–1980) and the censorship of one particular episode reveal several intriguing insights. The episode in question, titled *On Kitsch* (1979), although relatively bold for its time and completed through standard production processes, was never broadcast. This omission did not stem from open conflict with the institution or the ruling regime, as evidenced by the continued professional involvement of its creators. The screenwriter and cinematographer remained active on subsequent episodes of the show—albeit under different directors. The presenters went on to enjoy acting careers in both television and film. The original director, for his part, later debuted as a filmmaker at the Barrandov Studios. While these authors managed to subvert norms from within Czechoslovak Television, they simultaneously created works aligned with the dominant political ideology. Within a regime of compatibility, oppositional and conformist elements can exist concurrently. To paraphrase Beate Müller: the multitude of factors relevant to censorship—author, work, code, medium, audience, and context—justify our view of censorship as an unstable process of actions and reactions, rather than a straightforward repressive mechanism with predictable outcomes.

TUESDAY 20 October // BLOCK 2

Conservation Colloquium

9:00–9:40

L. Kouřilová: Possibilities of Forgery Identification Using Contemporary Examination Methods

9.40–10.20 Z. Žilková: The Painting Technique of Jan Kupecký (1666–1740)

10.20–11.00 K. Velišková: Challenges in the Conservation of Asian Wall Paintings – Application of Identified Techniques in the Czech Context

11.00–11.40 J. Kyncl: The Conservation of Lovers by Vítězslav Jungbauer, Made from PVC – Modurit, 1958

Conservation Colloquium Overview

This series of presentations introduces a variety of topics from the field of art conservation, ranging from material surveys and painting techniques, to the identification of forgeries, the consolidation of wall and secco paintings, and approaches to conserving contemporary artworks.

Panel/Committee Members:

External members: Ak. mal. Zora Grohmannová, Ak. mal. Jiří Třeštík

AVU representatives: Assoc. Prof. MgA. Adam Pokorný, Ph.D.; PhDr.

Štěpán Vácha, Ph.D.; MgA. Jan Kracík

ABSTRACTS OF PRESENTATIONS (Chronologically according to programme)

MgA. Lucie Kouřilová, Year 1

Possibilities of Forgery Identification Using Contemporary Survey Methods

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. MgA. Adam Pokorný, Ph.D.

Consultant: Ing. Lenka Zamrazilová

This presentation at the 2020 doctoral colloquium introduces the topic of Possibilities of Forgery Identification Using Contemporary Survey Methods. The dissertation project focuses on both invasive and non-invasive technological examination methods that can assist in identifying forged paintings executed on canvas and wooden supports. Forgery identification is currently a highly topical issue in the Czech Republic and requires critical reassessment and in-depth processing. As a methodological example, the speaker will present partial findings from extensive technological surveys of paintings by Emil Filla—an artist frequently subjected to forgery. The focus will be placed on his painting techniques. These surveys were conducted in 2020 on selected works from the collection of the National Gallery in Prague. The presentation will also touch on the broader issues and history of art forgery, with a particular emphasis on modern artists. Additionally, it will include the creation of reference samples—so-called period palettes of modern artists.

MgA. Zuzana Žilková, Year 1

The Painting Technique of Jan Kupecký (1666–1740)

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. MgA. Adam Pokorný, Ph.D.; PhDr. Štěpán Vácha, Ph.D.

The dissertation project focuses on the detailed technological survey and description of Jan Kupecký's painting technique using available investigative methods employed in the conservation of artworks. The presentation will offer partial findings from the ongoing examination of paintings housed in the National Gallery in Prague. It seeks to answer questions such as: How did the artist work in his studio when creating his paintings? Did he prepare his canvases himself or purchase pre-primed canvas by the roll? How were the canvases prepared for painting, and what kind of lighting did he use? What role do Kupecký's frequent compositional revisions—pentimenti—play in his oeuvre, what can be inferred from them, and are they in any way interconnected? Can authorship and the extent of workshop collaboration be clearly determined through analysis of painting technique and stylistic comparison?

MgA. Klára Velíšková, Year 4

The Challenges of Restoring Asian Mural Paintings – Applying Acquired Methods in the Czech Context

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. MgA. Adam Pokorný, Ph.D.; Prof. Karel Stretti, akad. mal.

Consultant: PhDr. Štěpán Vácha, Ph.D.

This presentation at the 2020 colloquium focuses particularly on the practical part of the dissertation titled The Challenges of Restoring Asian Mural Paintings (Application of Acquired Methods for the Restoration of Mural and Secco Paintings in the Czech Context). It reports on the independent conservation project involving the wall paintings of the Stupa at the Eastern Gate of Leh, completed in 2019. The methodology of conservation treatments applied to Asian paintings will be described, along with the potential to adapt these procedures for the restoration of mural and secco paintings in the Czech Republic. Additionally, the results of academic research and material testing carried out during the project will be presented, with a focus on the consolidation of colour layers in mural and secco paintings.

Mgr. et Mgr. art. Jan Kyncl, Year 5

Conservation of the Sculpture Lovers by Vítězslav Jungbauer, Made from PVC–Modurit (1958)

Supervisor: Prof. Petr Siegl

Consultant: PhDr. Štěpán Vácha, Ph.D.

The sculpture Lovers, created by sculptor V. Jungbauer in 1958, was made from a polymer material using a technique unknown to us—possibly by pressing the material into a mould and curing it using thermal infrared heaters. The artwork entered the Studio for the Conservation of Sculptural Artworks at AVU in Prague in December 2018. Its surface shell was cracked and previously repaired by the artist; the interior was reinforced and unevenly filled with a plaster shell. The work involved a material survey of the sculpture, identification of damage extent using scientific methods, a search for suitable conservation materials, and consideration of appropriate restoration techniques.

Following the survey of the original material and subsequent laboratory, physical, and mechanical testing of materials intended for future use in restoration—carried out at AVU and in the laboratories of the University of Chemistry and Technology (VŠCHT) in Prague—the actual conservation process could begin. One of the project’s goals was to verify the feasibility and accuracy of the proposed restoration procedures for modern artworks created from alternative, non-traditional materials used in artistic practice. Throughout all phases of the work, the authenticity of the material, the artist’s original intent, and the conservator’s ethical code were respected, while also considering the cost-effectiveness of the intervention. Copyright law was also taken into account. The presentation highlights the complexities involved in conserving works made from modern materials, illustrating the essential research methods and the specific workflow required in dealing with the unique characteristics of such materials. The project could only be completed thanks to the support of the AVU Research Grant Competition for 2019 (specific research program).

WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER // BLOCK 3

Ephemeral Images

9:00–9:40 V. Takáč: Remediation as a Path to the Absence of the Image

9:40–10:20 A. Zapletal: Image Schemas

10:20–11:00 D. Böhm: Places Where Ideas Are Born

11:00–11:40 J. J. Alvaer: Seeing Through Shortcomings

This panel of presentations is loosely connected by the theme of ephemeral images—those that are emerging, disappearing, not yet present, or already lost. This impermanence is explored through four distinct (media-based) situations. Aleš Zapletal addresses the relationship between illustrations of philosophical texts and mental imagery. Viktor Takáč reflects on the transformation of cinematic language and the search for “active emptiness” within the spectacular saturation of immersive images. David Böhm focuses on the sketch—a fundamental visual articulation of the initial idea. Jesper James Alvaer, in the final presentation, explores images that arise gradually through collective play, lacking a clear origin and characterised by a blurred concept of authorship.

Exploring Potentials

13:00–13:40 Š. Zahálková: PRINCIPLES OF DIALOGUE: Public Space as Social Matter and Art as a Tool for its Malleability

13:40–14:20 J. Berberich Sokolová: Forms of Life and the Contours of the Courtyard

14:20–15:00 M. Hájek: Limits of Imagination, Gateway to Experience

The research of Juliana Berberich Sokolová, Matěj Hájek, and Šárka Zahálková is united by a shared interest in examining the modes and models of inhabiting and organising space, matter, and spheres. Their presentations, rooted in doctoral research, investigate various configurations of spatial experience and relational dynamics in the context of artistic and social inquiry.

Their projects explore the possibilities of building relationships and connections between spaces, materials, and buildings; between the artwork and architecture; as well as across private, public, and social spheres.

In the Committee/Panel

External members: MgA. Lenka Vítková, Ph.D.; MgA. Matěj Smetana, Ph.D. (morning); Mgr. Edith Jeřábková (afternoon)

From AVU: Prof. Vladimír Kokolia; Assoc. Prof. Mgr. art. Dušan Zahoranský; Mgr. et Mgr. Václav Janoščík, Ph.D.

Presentation Abstracts (in chronological order)

MgA. Viktor Takáč, 2nd Year

Remediation as a Pathway to the Absence of the Image

Supervisor: MgA. Tomáš Svoboda, Ph.D.

Consultant: Assoc. Prof. Mgr. Tomáš Pospiszyl, Ph.D.

In his presentation, Viktor Takáč draws loosely on Rudolf Arnheim's *Film as Art*, where the author compares the specificity of the cinematic image with the real-world image. Takáč extends this comparative strategy through the theoretical lens of remediation (J.D. Bolter and D. Grusin). He focuses on the domains of cognitive perception, mimesis, and the "disappearance" of the medium, with the aim of analysing our perception of body, space, time, and motion. Using practical examples and his own experiences, he outlines possible directions for utilising these technologies within artistically driven research and creative practice.

MgA. Aleš Zapletal, 3rd Year

Image Schemas

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Vladimír Skrepl

Consultant: Mgr. et Mgr. Václav Janoščík, Ph.D.

Aleš Zapletal's doctoral project investigates philosophical imagery—visual representations that emerge directly from philosophical texts. He focuses on the ways in which abstract concepts are transformed into visual forms and how such images subsequently enrich the original meanings of the texts. He raises the question of why philosophical imagery has been marginalised in both modern philosophy and modern art. Zapletal employs the theories of image schemas and conceptual metaphors to dissect these representations. Image schemas—fundamental physical and experiential units that enable meaning-making—have been widely documented in cognitive science through linguistic examples. In this presentation, Zapletal introduces the application of this theory to visual material, offering a novel perspective on image-based representation. His talk is supplemented by a selection of previously unpublished illustrations developed specifically for his dissertation, through which he tests the potential of philosophical imagery as a genre in the context of contemporary art, philosophy, and artistic research.

MgA. David Böhm, 4th Year
Places Where Ideas Arise
Supervisor: Prof. Vladimír Kokolia
Consultant: Mgr. art. Magdaléna Stanová, Ph.D.

How do we lure ideas? How can we hunt for them, or lie in wait? When do they arrive? Is it possible to artificially create the right environment for them? Can we deliberately invite such situations? I am interested in the transition from nothing to something—the trajectory from the spark of an idea to the first sketch. As part of my doctoral project, I aim to establish a sketching cabinet at AVU during the winter semester—a mobile structure for one person, similar in design to a hunting hide. My contribution to the doctoral colloquium will explore why this idea captivates me, what I hope it might yield, and will simultaneously serve as an invitation to students across the academy to make use of it.

MgA. Jesper James Alvaer, Year 2.
Seeing Through Shortcomings
Supervisor: Prof. Vladimír Kokolia
Consultant: Assoc. Prof. Mgr. Václav Magid

„To be the image of God does not signify to be the icon of God, but to be found in His trace.“ (Levinas 1963: 623).

A research project on intrinsic material, formal, social, conceptual and historical characteristics of the medium of traditional printmaking. The research design is configured as a long term art based workshop with 20 anonymous participants working together apart, not knowing or meeting each other in person. Each person leave their (professional, personal) traces in the material generated in the workshop. Unlike for example an interview situation, making is prioritized (before documenting), designed as repeated operative modules that includes both doing and interpretation, ultimately pointing towards ontologies or constituents of its image. The image here is not an object or thing but is an utter transparency, the, presence of the thing in its absence' to quote Prof. John Lechte. Working modules typically consists here of an individual modeling of (abstract) form. After this individual composition, the same material is exposed for collaborative interpretation process. The use of „low skill – high sensitivity“ approach enable effective temporalities to challenge co-authors (participants) to think, articulate, and deconstruct images and configurations within a variety of epistemological frameworks. The working units/modules, thus encourage the intermodal treatment of forms, surfaces, texts, concepts etc. with mutation, repetition and mutual translation. At this point the main method applied is Paolo Knill's intermodal decentering. The project touches upon an inherent dialectic in most image making methods that are investigative. The research project is currently evolving into the end of its second year. First sub-chapter of the project Seeing Through.

Shortcomings...was titled Graphic Unconscious. The second sub-project Mutual Imprint is looking for possibilities of relevant interpretation, placing shared authorship, historical and techno-political narratives in the foreground for the continuation of the current research. The overall project inscribe itself through artistic production (as well as research exhibitions) and unfold with traceability to traditional printmaking, including notions of the master printer and the historical printshop.

MgA. Šárka Zahálková, 1st Year

PRINCIPLES OF DIALOGUE

Public Space as Social Matter and Art as a Tool for Its Malleability

Supervisors: MgA. Marek Meduna, Ph.D., MgA. Petr Dub, Ph.D.

Consultant: M. Arch. Ing. Arch. Maria Topolčanská, Ph.D.

In both my artistic and curatorial practice, I have long engaged with the themes of public space and art, and with the possibilities of how to grasp and interpret the urban organism. I articulate these concerns through a variety of expressive means and media. I perceive art as a valuable tool for social reflection and as a potential catalyst for positive change within public space. My overall practice may be categorised within the framework of socially and communally engaged artistic projects. In my dissertation project, I examine the role of art as an active agent of transformation and as a facilitator of communication in public space, which I primarily understand as a shared social substance. I explore the levels, methods, and rationale for conducting artistic dialogue with public space, and investigate what may be considered essential in this process. My objective is not to produce another compendium of best practices, but rather to concentrate on the very process that initiates change in public space. I am particularly interested in how dialogue enters the formation of both the artwork and the public space, and what barriers hinder this interaction or influence it either positively or negatively. A key aspect of my inquiry is the understanding and articulation of temporality and the broader narrative of place, situation, and relationships—elements shaped by multiple, shifting variables.

As part of the doctoral colloquium, I will present not only the general conceptual foundation of my research but also a practical research sub-project. In this work, I meet people and places through the act of walking, collecting personal reflections through open-ended, semi-structured conversations centred on topics closely or broadly related to my focus. I observe and acoustically record the rhythm and interrelation of space, time, and thought. The gathered material serves both as a reference base for further inquiry and as raw content for formal and conceptual experimentation. My methodology draws inspiration from numerous predecessors, notably the figure of Baudelaire's flâneur and, in particular, Henri Lefebvre's concept of rhythmanalysis.

Research Questions (Šárka Zahálková): On what levels, in what ways, and for what reasons should a respectful artistic dialogue with public space be conducted? Can key principles and methods connected to the creation of "space-forming" artistic projects be identified and described?

Juliana Berberich Sokolová, M.A., 1st Year
Forms of Life and the Contours of the Courtyard
Supervisor: Ing. Arch. Maria Topolčanská, Ph.D.

This presentation is based on archival and in situ research into the developmental phases of spatial disposition and use of the inner courtyard of a tenement house with access balconies located on Mäsiarska Street in Košice. Drawing on memoir literature, family archives, and records from housing authorities and heritage institutions, the research examines the relationship between the organisation of physical space through residential architecture and the ways of life that such spatial arrangements make possible—or, conversely, inhibit—for its inhabitants. The contribution interweaves a study of a specific courtyard with a theoretical framework that situates the fate of inner courtyards of residential buildings across various European cities within the context of the evolving relationship between private and shared spheres. The methodology combines literary and academic approaches, blending narrative and analytical modes.

MgA. Matěj Hájek, 1st Year

Limits of Imagination, the Threshold of Experience
Supervisor: Ak. mal. Tomáš Hlavina, Ph.D.
Consultant: Mgr. et Mgr. Václav Janoščík, Ph.D.

This presentation explores the notion of play as an abstract discipline situated within the physical world. Beginning with a historical overview of sculptural works that incorporated playful or game-like functions, the project proceeds to deconstruct the intersection between physical and mental activity. It oscillates between experiential-reflective learning and the visceral moment of losing balance—such as falling from a bar stool. The presentation introduces the conceptual framing and delimitation of the research scope. It formulates the central research question and outlines the envisioned methods of artistic inquiry, including the presentation of spatial models designed to investigate the principles under examination.

WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER // BLOCK 4: Frames and Frameworks
9:10–9:50 I. Gravlejs: Hitler's Moustache
9:50–10:30 M. Mazúr: Absence as a Strategic Motif in the Visual Video Essay
10:30–11:10 P. Šprinc: Documentary Narratives in Experimental Film Break
11:50–12:30 F. Jakš: How Do Experimental Poets Shift the Frameworks of Authorship?

12.30–13. 10 A. Bartlová: The Czechoslovak Section of AICA as an Institution: Communication and Coordination

What, in fact, constitutes a frame, and what is framed? What role do established institutions play in this distinction, and what is the place of tradition? And how far can one go with experimentation? This panel partially addresses contributions revolving around the establishment of frameworks for understanding art, with particular attention to the 1960s and the present day. Filip Jakš explores the disruption of entrenched frameworks of poetic language as investigated by experimental poets and literary figures. Anežka Bartlová examines the institutional role within the art criticism of the 1960s. Milan Mazúr analyses the potential of non-narrative film, both historically and today. Petr Šprincel poses the question: “In what ways can reality and fiction intersect without forfeiting their documentary dimension?” Meanwhile, Ivars Gravlejs focuses in his contribution on aspects of manipulation and speculation.

Panel Members:

External Members: MgA. Hana Janečková, MgA. Pavel Sterec, Ph.D.
Representing AVU: ak. mal. Tomáš Hlavina, Ph.D., doc. Mgr. Václav Magid, Ing. arch. Maria Topolčanská, Ph.D.

PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS (in chronological order):

MgA. Ivars Gravlejs, Year 4

Hitler's Moustache

Supervisor: doc. Vladimír Skrepl; Consultant: doc. Mgr. Václav Magid
Hitler's Moustache is the focus of the final chapter of my dissertation *The Clown's Story*, in which I aim to highlight the mechanisms of manipulation and speculation. This lecture presents a brief overview of figures historically associated with the small moustache worn under the nose—figures who often embody a tragicomic character of the artist. The key method employed in such work is provocation, intended to breach and transgress established ontological, aesthetic, or political boundaries.

MgA. Milan Mazúr, Year 2

Absence as a Strategic Motif in the Visual Video Essay

Supervisor: MgA. Tomáš Svoboda, Ph.D.; Consultant: doc. Mgr. Václav Magid

The chapter *Absence of the Image* stems from a broader interest in the film medium, the visual essay, and cross-genre approaches within the context of experimental cinema. The absence of the image—or of the seen image—refers to the phenomenon of emptied narration, a cinematic concept emerging prominently from the 2000s to the present, especially within independent film genres. Of course, this is not the only domain in which such an approach can be found

The principle is indirectly employed, primarily within the realm of experimental film and certain forms of video art. Emptied narration represents a mode of filming in which the exposition is defined, but the viewer is not permitted access to a final catharsis or to a dramaturgical arc concluding with a clearly delineated ending. The chosen chapter on absence functions as a test case within the context of other cross-disciplinary overlaps. Absence may be interpreted from various perspectives as a motif. In this chapter, I will introduce some leading figures associated with experimental film. In the second part, I will present selected principles employed in my own creative practice, including those underpinning particular formal decisions. The motif originated from a family myth concerning a historical figure—an ancestral relative whom certain family members recalled as having left their place of origin during a particular period, only to subsequently disappear without trace. This state of being missing likewise belongs to the domain of absence—absence of a specific reality or temporality. The figure thus becomes a motif: how might one construct a situation that enables disappearance to occur? Disappearance may represent the non-visibility of a visual perception, or a situation not captured within the framework of visible reality or sound. Absence itself may embody a form—a form that has been analysed by numerous authors since the early 20th century, particularly in the context of work with moving images, time, and montage.

The text will oscillate between theoretical principles derived from other artists and theorists, and the conceptual strategies I have chosen for the practical dimension of my doctoral research.

MgA. Petr Šprincl, 4th Year

Documentary Narration in Experimental Film

Supervisor: MgA. Tomáš Svoboda, Ph.D.; Consultant: Mgr. et Mgr.

Václav Janoščík, Ph.D.

The presentation introduces selected aspects of the film *Blue Box*, focusing on the methodology of working with documentary material within the fictional framework of a genre film. The editing and dramaturgical concept of the film engages with real interviews and actual environments, which are, however, embedded within a fictional narrative. The central question explored is: How can reality and fiction be intertwined without losing the documentary dimension? The presentation will outline dramaturgical and structural strategies applied in the creation of a narrative experimental film.

Visual references / visual abstract available here: <https://vimeo.com/373556581>

Mgr. Filip Jakš, 3rd Year

How Do Experimental Poets Redefine the Frameworks of Authorship?

Supervisor: doc. Mgr. Tomáš Pospiszyl, Ph.D.

This presentation explores the model-based construction of works in experimental poetry.

u Drawing on Max Bense's theory, a work may "acquire its own consciousness," becoming a programme that positions the viewer and the author in differing roles, allowing the concept of the work to fulfil its potential. This strategy closely aligns with the tactics of conceptual art. The affinity becomes particularly evident in a comparison of the works of Timm Ulrichs and Gerhard Rühm, who attempt to direct the viewer's approach in such a way that the aesthetic of the work is foregrounded.

u In the texts of Helmut Heissenbüttel, the model approach manifests in constructive strategies rooted in autobiographical perspectives. The text places the viewer in the role of a researcher in an archive, while the author becomes the subject of investigation. This archival method of working with personal experience is also evident in the writings of Konrad Bayer and the objects created by Dieter Roth. The transformation of temporal perception through language—and the subsequent disintegration of a cohesive sense of self as author—is a recurring theme in theoretical essays by experimental poets such as Siegfried J. Schmidt, Franz Mon, and Helmut Heissenbüttel.

u According to contemporary theorist Hal Foster, this archival orientation creates a schizophrenic reality. Can this deliberate disintegration of authorial perspective be interpreted as the logical endpoint of deconstruction? The archival artistic approach is also present in the work of Dan Graham and Ferdinand Kriwet, who begin to guide the viewer through the investigated phenomenon in a directorial manner. The autobiographical viewpoint is replaced by a phenomenological one. Does this mark the moment in which the viewer begins to perceive their own presence as an artistic possibility? And in these works, can we trace the moment when, in Peter Osborne's words, the artist becomes a "phenomenologist of dislocation and displacement"?

Mgr. et Mgr. Anežka Bartlová, 2nd Year

The Czechoslovak Section of AICA as an Institution: Communication and Coordination

Supervisor: doc. Mgr. Tomáš Pospiszyl, Ph.D.

The International Association of Art Critics (AICA), of which the Czechoslovak section was among the founding members, offers an exemplary case for examining my broader research into art criticism during the 1960s. In this paper, I will briefly present findings from my study of the history of the Czechoslovak section of AICA, which simultaneously serve to outline my methodological approach to investigating institutional frameworks.

As an institution with an international scope—yet one in which Czechoslovak critics played an active role—AICA represents a partially flexible structure through which one can observe modes of communication, international relations, and organisational practice. Drawing on the recently defended thesis by Lujza Kotočová, which traces the history of the Czechoslovak section of AICA, along with other sources, I aim to explore the question: what role did AICA play in the function and shaping of art criticism in Czechoslovakia during the 1960s?

A central figure in this period was Jiří Kotalík (1920–1996), who was not only significantly involved in the Czechoslovak section of AICA but was also closely tied to the history of the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague. This year marks the centenary of his birth, offering a timely moment to reflect on his legacy. Part of my presentation will therefore focus on Kotalík's role as a mediator and representative of Czechoslovak art criticism in both the international arena and the domestic context.

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