

**RE-
SEARCH**

*THROUGH
FOR
AS
IN*

ART

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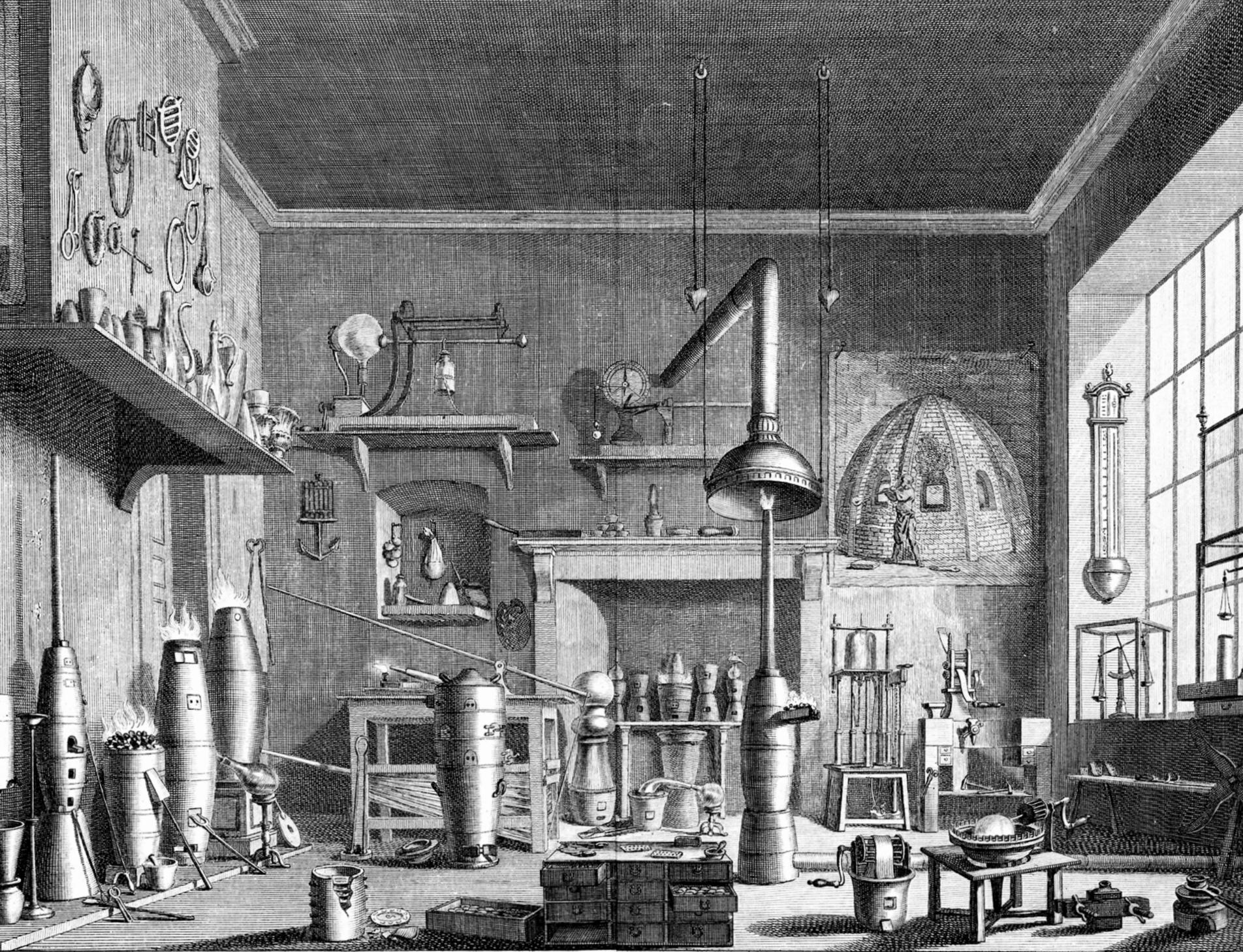
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LABORATORY COOPERATION

What is a 'LAB(oratory)' and what does it have to do with artistic research?



Interior of an Alchemical Laboratory. Engraving, 18th century
Philosophical Commerce of Arts W. Lewis Published: 1762.
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LABIFICATION – METAPHOR OR PRACTICE?

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Even though a universal history of laboratories hasn't been written yet, according to the development of the term and format we can acknowledge that its history is closely tied to the history of modernism. Its first usage in the modern sense dates back to the 15-16th centuries, when it primarily denoted the workshops of alchemists where natural phenomena were explored by means of tools and instruments¹ – depicted extensively in the iconography of the epoch.

Based on historical depictions a new aspect of the laboratory emerged in the 18th century: the organized division of labor, which became a fundamental aspect of modern laboratories. The 'revolution' of the laboratories in the early 19th century was influenced by the reform of existing universities transforming them from places of collecting and ordering knowledge into places where new knowledge was being produced through research. During the last third of the same century two significant changes occurred in the development of laboratories. They began extending into the field of humanities (psychology, linguistics), resulting for instance in the establishment of new fields such as experimental aesthetics with documented

1 based on Henning Schmidgen: Laboratory <https://ethos.lps.library.cmu.edu/article/id/450/#fnref2> "One of the first laboratories for which detailed information exists was housed in Uraniborg, the research centre which was built and equipped in the late-16th century for the Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546-1601)."

impacts on pointillism and on the work concepts of the Bauhaus later on. At the same time 'this special form of knowledge production was increasingly subjected to an economic regime which was guided by the principles of specialization, mechanization and standardization.'² Meanwhile the Romantic concept of an individual scientist striving for knowledge was replaced by a collective space, 'which primarily served to establish new scientific facts' with growing authority in an increasingly industrialized society.

Already in the 18th century, the word 'laboratory' was used to describe not only the studios of painters, sculptors and printmakers, but more generally, any place where people made *things with their hands*. However, the modern generalization of the term with a clear focus on science occurred as late as the beginning of the 20th century, coinciding with a change in status of the scientific practice, which became *work* in the sense of labor. As Henning Schmidgen notes, 'in the laboratory, the activities of the scientist assumed some of the characteristics of work at the conveyor belt.'³ At the same time the laboratories became global institutions establishing a framework of movement for scientists of different nationalities who started to travel and exchange texts, instruments and experimentation procedures, thereby raising the issue of *mobility and translation*.

Based on the above, the architecturally delimited laboratory is a space equipped for the experimental study, testing and analysis of various phenomena,

2 *ibid.*
3 *ibid.*

where new information can be obtained, and their truth can be validated. While this requires a controlled environment and protocols, artistic procedures—especially since the 20th century—seem to be doing just the opposite: they continuously dissolve the external controlling elements and renew their own focuses, protocols and (counter)methodologies, including even their own identity and eventual ideology. Since, within artistic methodologies, the intentional misuse of already established methodologies as a form of testing is a common occurrence, a multidimensional criticality is crucial to their development. This aspect extends to the relationship between art and other fields of research (scientific, social, esthetic, philosophical), including an often radical self-reflectiveness as a legacy of 20th-century art history.



Ildar Sagdejev (Specious)
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In the 1940s an increasing number of artistic and architectural endeavors were proclaiming themselves 'laboratories' on account of the importance of experimentation in their methodologies. This was a tendency rooted in the historical avant-garde, notably the Russian VKhUTEMAS and the Bauhaus, where the term of laboratory wasn't only used as a metaphor; in the case of the former for instance proper laboratory settings were created with apparatuses and standardized testing. It is worth noting that in these cases artistic production was conceived as part of the architecture and design, understood in a broader sense though, as for instance in the pedagogic activity of Josef Albers at Black Mountains College.

Thus we can encounter the term and format of art laboratories throughout history both as metaphors (from Le Corbusier to Passolini) and real, physical and practical implementations.⁴ In the past decades however an impressive boom of various cultural, artistic, technological and social laboratories have taken place.⁵ While in the '90s this expansion was mostly animated by the optimism surrounding the emergence of 'new media',⁶ in the 2000s one of the main driving forces became the European Union's various R+D+I (Research, Development and Innovation) policies, which were explicitly aimed at converting the knowledge-production potential of universities into innovative applications, ultimately serving the competitiveness of the EU economy. Since artistic knowledge has

4 <https://lab.cccb.org/en/artists-in-the-laboratory/>
5 <https://lab.cccb.org/en/dossier/laboratories/>
6 for instance in the UK: <https://www.furtherfield.org/media-lab-culture-in-the-uk/>

less obvious pragmatic value, academic artistic research aims to reach an equal status with established scientific research, as expressed in the Vienna Declaration of 2020.⁷ As a result it positions itself within a wide transdisciplinary range from hard to social sciences, looking for its role within the research landscape from data visualization to social intervention, from material experimentation to cultural cohesion, and ultimately aiming at the implementation of various European social and cultural values.⁸ What is common in all of them is the freedom inherent to art's tradition, which, similarly to the freedom of scientific research, 'is a necessary condition for researchers to produce, share and transfer knowledge as a public good for the well-being of society. Our hopes and our ambitions to achieve a better future also depend on the freedom of scientific research.'⁹

For art, freedom is nonetheless connected to a deeper sense of social responsibility, demanding a critical stance towards any neoliberal or illiberal ideological distortions of democracies and acting as an agent of humanistic values.

In order to achieve this, the laboratory as such should become a practice, rather than a metaphor.

7 <https://cultureactioneurope.org/news/vienna-declaration-on-artistic-research/>
8 For the critical reception of Vienna declaration see: THE CONTROVERSIAL INSTITUTIONALISATION OF ARTISTIC RESEARCH, ISSUE #10 – Journal of art & design HEAD – Genève <https://issue-journal.ch/focus-summaries/issue-10-the-controversial-institutionalisation-of-artistic-research/>
9 Bonn Declaration on Freedom of Scientific Research 2020 https://www.bmbf.de/bmbf/shareddocs/downloads/files/_drp-efr-bonner_erklaerung_en_with-signatures_maerz_2021.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=1

In the following pages you will find the descriptions of four newly established LABORatories, as a result of a collaboration between four universities within the framework of EU4ART European University:

ABARoma	Academy of Fine Arts of Rome
HfBK	Dresden University of Fine Arts
LMA	Art Academy of Latvia
MKE	Hungarian University of Fine Arts

Defined by different local contexts and developing different concepts and methodologies, they articulate what role they envision for the newly established institutional units called LABs.

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Further information on EU4ART_differences project: <https://differences.eu4art.eu/>

PRESENT (01)

- (a) What is the context and institutional structure of your future LAB?
- (b) How would you contextualize the institutional forms and levels of artistic research in a broader theoretical-historical and epistemological framework?

DRESDEN UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS

(a) One of the oldest institutions that provides fine arts in Europe is the Dresden University of Fine Arts (HfBK Dresden). The University currently has 550 students enrolled in five different study programs. Dresden is the city with the highest concentration of research institutions in Germany. It ranks among the top German cities in terms of the number of scientists and research facilities. Thanks to EU4ART_differences, the HfBK is pursuing joint projects, exhibitions, and outreach initiatives with the Dresden State Art Collection and the Technical University of Dresden.

As a result, the HfBK's working environment is ideally suited for cross-disciplinary collaboration and expert-to-expert professional interaction. The University's study programmes are organised between two faculties: one for fine arts and one for applied arts, with the second covering restoration, art therapy, and activities linked to scenography and theatre. In recent years, experimental multidisciplinary artistic practice has grown more rapidly in the applied field than in the fine arts. However, there hasn't been a formal conversation on artistic research led in HfBK up until now. As a result, the HfBK LAB, which debuted in October 2022, explores a new field, and may unite the two faculties. Saxony does not offer a PhD degree in the arts generally due to

federal requirements for HEI in Germany. Nevertheless, the HfBK offers a degree for 'Meisterschüler' that, in terms of scientific output, is inferior to a doctorate. The term 'Meisterschüler' is also employed differently in different German fine arts academies, either as a degree earned after several semesters of study or as an award of excellence. As a result, the Science Council of the Federal Republic of Germany advised the development of new frameworks for a third degree in the arts, with particular emphasis on enhancing its academic value.

(b) Artistic research in general is a relatively new field of artistic practice and discourse. It claims relevance wherever artistic processes get involved in knowledge production, which mostly happens in cross-disciplinary processes. Moreover, artistic research can be understood as an ontological practice directly related to tacit knowledge, specialists' skills and creative processes. In both understandings, it is essential that the respective knowledge production process would not be possible without the artistic approach to the topic. As a fundamental need for the artistic research process, a research question and a methodological framework should be given for each artistic research project, but these frameworks will differ extremely in relation to the topics chosen.

While the artist-researcher is an ideal that can be traced as far back as the Renaissance, an explicit turn of artistic practices towards



a critical dialogue with society can be seen as a development of the second half of the 20th century. Understanding their creative practice as a contribution to societal discourse, artists developed an approach to their practice which led to an increasingly interdisciplinary way of thinking, defining other sectors of activity beyond the art market. Artistic research, as an academic discipline, has been developed towards different methodologies. For the HfBK Dresden with its strong focus on artistic traditions, techniques and skills, there is an opportunity to involve a broad spectrum of possible partners, both from the fine and applied arts, also based on existing projects focusing on art and technology or art and sustainability.

Besides artistic practices which are informed through, and related to, academic contexts and background knowledge, and which intend to approach their topic on a highly conceptual and intellectual research-based level, the Faculty of Applied Arts provides the most relevant connections towards artistic research processes at the moment. Involving applied arts will not only be fruitful for visual artists working on artistic research at the HfBK, but also lead to a varied and dialogical approach, from embodied knowledge to design research, therapeutic aspects and creative, epistemological artistic research activities.

(Cooperation with TU Dresden)

ART ACADEMY OF LATVIA

(a) Established in 1919, the Art Academy of Latvia (LMA) is an internationally renowned platform for higher education, R&D (including artistic research and science), knowledge transfer and creative ideas in the field of art, design, art theory and architecture. The Art Academy of Latvia has flexible organisation skills towards dynamic challenges.

As an artistic practice- and research-based art academy, we believe in a disciplines-related approach that encourages students to develop their own styles and to blend their talent, technical skills, creative aspirations, and professional knowledge. All curricula of the LMA art program require that students consider the arts from a critical, interdisciplinary perspective. Through this approach, the academy ensures that students graduate with a degree representing a deep, holistic understanding of not only the fine arts and design, but also of the creative industries, culture management, artpreneurship, and art theory.

Starting from the spring of 2021, for the first time in Latvia, a study program of the professional doctorate level, jointly implemented by three art universities –the Latvian Academy of Culture, the Art Academy of Latvia, and the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music –was launched in all sub-branches of art.

The concept of a professional doctorate in art encompasses a wide range of art practice-based,

-informed, and -directed research, summarized under the term 'artistic research'. Therefore, artistic output and artistic research-related theoretical reflections are uniform and equally essential components of the dissertation. As part of their studies, doctoral students attend lectures, seminars and workshops in which they not only learn to deepen art practice-based, -informed, -related and -guided research approaches and methods, but also carry out such research practices themselves. Research can therefore be conducted in all artistic and creative areas: audio-visual media, performing arts, visual arts, and design, as well as music, and contemporary musical forms of expression.



(Open Artistic research Lab of Professional Doctoral Study Programme, presentation by Laura Veja. Photo: Antra Priede)

(b) The Art Academy has historically embedded artistic practice and art historical and theoretical research studies in its curricula. Artistic research not only builds a bridge between the two, but also offers artistic practice and academic research new opportunities, as well as innovative research approaches and methods in artistic practice and science-implemented research.



(Open Artistic research Lab of Professional Doctoral Study Programme, Photo: Antra Priede)

The tasks of the part-time doctoral program are:

- (1) Provide in-depth theoretical knowledge of contemporary arts, including music and performing arts, visual arts and design, audio-visual arts, theatre and contemporary dance, development tendencies of their theoretical concepts, interdisciplinary interaction, unity and interaction between artistic and research practice, as well as research-based practice models and methods.

- (2) Acquire the ability to independently assess and select suitable methods of artistic innovation research and to apply the acquired knowledge not only through the implementation of artistic projects of high artistic value and large-scale original projects, but also through a direct contribution to knowledge expansion and through offering a new understanding of existing knowledge.

- (3) Acquire the ability to communicate effectively both within narrower professional circles and with the general public about one's professional artistic and research-based artistic practice.

- (4) Acquire the ability to solve relevant issues of the highest complexity in the area of their own artistic activity and its development through independent, critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

- (5) Acquire the ability to plan, structure and manage large-scale artistic innovation projects, including at an international level. The implementation of artistic research and related activities directly contributes to the achievement of these goals.

Besides the professional doctoral study program, artistic research activities are also conducted at the level of Master of Arts programs at the Art Academy of Latvia. Moreover, artistic research methods, including contextual inquiry and participatory research methods, are finding their way into the fields and practices of academic research.

FINE ARTS ACADEMY OF ROME

(a) The Fine Arts Academy of Rome (ABARoma) started its PhD cycle in August 2022 with two fellowships, in partnership with five other academies (Macerata, Firenze, Catania and Lecce, and the Institute of Artistic Industries of Rome) as well as with the University of Rome II – Tor Vergata, leader of the National Doctorate project (a higher level of PhD cycles) and granter of the final title for PhD students. At the same time, the Fine Arts Academy of Rome started another PhD cycle with one fellowship with the Artistic, Music and Theatre Disciplines (DAMS) of Roma Tre University, in partnership with the University of Teramo and with the National Academy of Dance of Rome (Accademia Nazionale di Danza). Third Cycle studies at ABARoma are developed in two curricula: the former in new media for cultural heritage, the latter in performative arts.

In this important framework, ABARoma is working to provide new stimulating environments for the future development of artistic research through the CARE project, in partnership with the National Institute of Nuclear Physics (INFN) of Roma Tre University, opening new possibilities of methodological exchange between art and science. The students of the Academy, together with the junior scientists of EU4ART_*differences* and with Academy professors, will exchange plans and experiments with the INFN, with the possibility of visiting the scientific INFN

labs of Rome, Frascati, L'Aquila, and possibly the CERN in Geneve. The goal is not only to visualize science through the visual arts, but also to extend to the fine arts the method of scientific research, and to offer scientists the opportunity to solve problems through visual knowledge. At the same time, we aim to disseminate awareness of research in the curricula of Fine Arts Academies.



CARE Lab first meeting
Photo: Monkeys Video Lab

ABARoma, before the PhD programs, also promoted collaboration and research programs with several institutions, such as the Politecnico delle Marche and the University of Florence, to develop a new software for didactic goals, as well as with the MAXXI, Museum of the Arts of the 21st century, the MACRO, Museum of Modern Art of the Municipality of Rome, The Opera Theatre of Rome, the National Institute of the Restoration of Books (Istituto di Patologia del Libro), the Capitoline Museums, the Vatican Museums, the Palazzo delle Esposizioni and the RomaEuropa and Short Theatre Festivals. Finally, ABARoma has an agreement with RAM (Radio Arte Mobile) and has established the Sound Museum with the goal of research and experimentation in this field.

(b) The Fine Arts Academy of Rome considers artistic research a vast and wide-open concept that refers to an epistemological category of exploring and advancing the ontological nature of art. It is devoted to knowledge generation in the field and requires theoretical musings in addition to practical knowledge and challenge.

ABARoma guides students to art research starting from the level of degree courses and practical workshops, encouraging reflection and investigation on formats, materials, and techniques, thereby opening the path to art research possibilities. But the third cycle studies, focused on the performative arts and new media for cultural heritage, along with the projects carried out in the EU4ART_ *differences* framework, are the two main levels of the institution's research sector.

The WP2 of the Fine Arts Academy of Rome considers the laboratory as a research community that is composed of people with different backgrounds and educational levels, with the aim of creating a cooperative environment committed to experimentation and collaboration among people with a varied level of expertise. Besides its productive purposes, the laboratory that ABARoma intends to create will also serve a pedagogical role, in view of future generational change. Indeed, the laboratory is regarded as a space for exchanges and learning process in which mentors and young researchers find mutual inspiration and motivation.

HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS

The HUFA (Hungarian University of Fine Arts) is a 150-year-old institution with a rich history in crafts-based media. As its official description emphasizes: “the whole range of artistic expressions and creative methods can be found in the institution today, from the classical genres of painting, graphics and sculpture to intermedia. (...) Alongside our autonomous courses in fine arts, our long-established applied art courses offer students the highest levels of training in restoration and visual design, while the two courses run by the Department of Art Theory—uniquely in Hungary—train curators and future theorists.”

Depending on the given department, education is structured in undergraduate (BA), postgraduate (MA) and third cycle study programs. The Doctoral School was established in 2002, offering a DLA degree (Doctor of Liberal Arts, equivalent to a PhD) within an eight-semester curriculum.

Throughout the past decades various research programs have been completed, spanning a large spectrum of fields from art history through art restoration to data analysis¹, in the format of conferences, symposia and publications. These were co-organized with a variety of external academic partners (Hungarian and foreign universities), as well as non-academic cultural

1 <https://mke.hu/kutatas/index.php>

institutions, such as cultural foundations, galleries and museums. Individual researchers and small groups of academics have usually initiated these programs, as the institution has been lacking a complex research strategy at the university level. However, from 2019 a Center for Knowledge and Innovation has been established with the task of coordinating R+D activities within the University, and with the objective of both widening the HUFA's international network and generating monetary income. The latter is an increasing expectation of the present policy of Hungarian higher education, conflicting with the general aims of autonomous art education.



Pilot LAB HUFA – Gabriella Kiss
Photo: Julianna Nyíri

The theoretical discourse around artistic research as such oscillates between two genealogies. One emerged in the 1990s following the establishment of doctoral schools within European art universities, the other is an extra academic approach that positions the relationship between art and knowledge in a broader art historical perspective, pointing out early examples of it going back as far as the European Renaissance. These two perspectives sometimes work against each other, especially as the latter occasionally expresses

criticism of the former, highlighting its dependence on EU economic policies in which the R+I of universities is outspokenly regarded as a key element of industrial and economic competitiveness. While the universities of natural and applied science have been contributing extensively to industrial and economic development through their research, the instrumentalization of autonomous art universities—and their research activity—is obviously problematic. This is why all the concepts connected to the possible role of artistic research in knowledge production—including the notion of LAB/oratory—should be subjected to critical scrutiny.

There are various levels of the HUFA's institutional structure where different types of research activity can be identified. On the BA level we can speak of *experimentative* research, mostly addressing media-specific questions focusing on materials, processes and technologies. During their MA studies many students are engaged in *investigative research*, mapping the historical and aesthetic background of their own field and media. Some of them deepen their research towards conclusive formats through various academic programs and scholarships, such as the OTDK (National Scientific Students' Associations Conference) of ÚNKP (New National Excellence Program). Meanwhile both doctoral students and individual faculty members are also engaged in conducting their *conclusive research* projects. The HUFA LAB's intention is to connect all these levels by establishing and securing a discursive space in which research outcomes and methodologies can be shared and small research collectives can be formed. Our LAB supports the methodologies of research through art, and prioritizes the investigation, articulation and application of new artistic formats and strategies.

02 DEVELOPMENT

What kind of preparatory
steps have been taken for the initiation
and development of your LAB?

ART ACADEMY OF LATVIA

Having completed the compulsory courses, which ensure an in-depth examination of the latest achievements in art theory and practice, as well as elective courses of study, doctoral candidates can demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the most relevant scientific theories and concepts, master the research methodology and contemporary research methods in the respective field of art or culture, or in the professional field, as well as at the interface between different spheres.



Open Artistic research Lab of Professional Doctoral Study Programme, presentation by Anna Pommere.
Photo: Antra Priede

By choosing the format of the Open LAB of Art Academy of Latvia, our aim is to highlight different aspects and topics of education. The variety of joint lectures and the exchange of ideas between interdisciplinary practices train students to find their unique methodology. Therefore, the format of open discussions – involving not only students and professors but also the public—is the format that helps students articulate their own research and train them to share scholarly practices with society in an open and mediated way.

During the open lab, students share their practices and introduce visitors to advanced painting formats and challenges; to experiments with epoxy layers to articulate aspects of shared memory; to material experiments with plastic and homemade drinks to bring forgotten places into focus; to animation sequences with participatory interruption; to design methods for transdisciplinary tax policy, and so on. The first ever event for students to share their physically created works and present them to a wider audience provided them with the necessary feedback to realize the fundamental format of artistic research that helps them enrich their further practice and quest for advancement.

After months of preparatory work on educational, we tested our Artistic Research LAB within the framework of a pilot workshop in November 2022, in cooperation with doctoral and undergraduate students of the HUFA (workshop leaders: Mátyás Fusz, Gabriella Kiss, Szabolcs KissPál). However, we did not want to launch joint student research theme clusters or joint student research projects at the event. Instead, we aimed to create a discursive space where student research at different levels or on various topics could be equally represented in a professional dialogue.

We have created four territories in which artistic research can be placed: Art/science (the relationship between art and traditional humanities and natural sciences); Art/pedagogy (the role of art in educational and knowledge transfer); Art/social processes (the potential and capacity of art to shape society); Art/art (the medial, technical aesthetic and formal questions of art).

These clusters were placed on a map of an imaginary world we had created, each belonging to a continent. We used travelling as a metaphor to illustrate the temporality and multi-layered nature of artistic research. Working in teams of two, we asked students to tell each other which continents they had visited in their research and when, with the option of everyone adding specific

geographical elements to the map according to their research journey. Finally, the task was extended to groups of four students, who worked together to find possible common intersections or differences on maps drawn on superimposed pieces of tracing paper. At the end of the workshop, all groups presented these points to each other.

Building on the experience of the pilot workshop, we plan to launch a one-week block seminar for doctoral and undergraduate students in the spring semester of the academic year 2022/23 in the Doctoral School of the HUFA. We also welcome undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral students from EU4ART_ *differences* partner institutions as participants. This block seminar is a kick-off event for creating research micro-communities for doctoral and undergraduate students. The established micro-communities, the technical details of the HUFA LAB pilot event and the block seminar will be presented on an English-language website.

In addition, we aim to extend and consolidate the educational format of the block seminar in the HUFA's educational system, encouraging professional dialogue and interoperability between the student and faculty communities of the different departments.

Participants of the Pilot LAB HUFA:

Dániel Bencs, János Donnák, Dominika Drótos, Apolka Erős, István Felsmann, Emese Fodor, Rita Horváth, Klaudia Janusko, Katalin Kortmann Járay, Ádám Jeneses, Bernadett Jobbágy, Bence Kala, Judit Kis, Alíz Kovács, Viola Dóra Lenkey, Mózes Murányi, Vivi Papp, Zsolt Sőrés, Áron Szabó, Nóra Szabó, Gáspár Szőke, Anna Tóth, Vilmos Vagyoczki, Anna Zsámbéki.



DRESDEN UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS

Since there had been no discussions at the HfBK on artistic research as an autonomous form of practice before the EU4ART_ *differences* project began, there was an urgent need to engage the topic on a broader basis. Therefore, the Dresden project team presented the project aims, the partners and the resulting possibilities to their institution directly after the grant agreement. This included intense one-to-one exchange with professors, teaching staff, postgraduates, externals and students in order to not only analyse existing approaches, ideas and viewpoints, but also identify needs, gaps and deficits connected to the possibilities of artistic research.

In addition to associated project partners of the HfBK Dresden, international specialists experienced in comparable projects (e.g. the joint Norwegian Doctoral School programme) were also involved in the discussion. The doctoral schools within the alliance (Riga, Budapest) were also subjected to analysis in order to understand their approach.

As a next step, a working group for improving the third cycle in fine arts in Dresden was established, which included professors and staff from both faculties, and which intended to clarify the content and tasks of the lab, in accordance with the needs of the HfBK, with a focus on both artistic research and further qualification in general. After a presentation of the results in the Faculty of Fine Arts, a call

for application was launched in connection with a small monthly scholarship for ten postgraduates. Beyond this, the HfBK Dresden hosted a conference on artistic research, together with TU Dresden and the artists' board of Saxony, as a preparational project for the LAB. Furthermore, a cooperation with the Faculty of Architecture at the TU Dresden explored intersections between the sciences, fine arts, architecture and possibilities for societal outreach.

The LAB has been operating in a pilot phase since October 2022, hosting lectures, seminars, workshops and roundtable discussions during week-long block seminars three times per semester.



Workshop at HfBK LAB



CARE Lab first meeting – Raffaele Gavarro
Photo: Monkeys Video Lab



FINE ARTS ACADEMY OF ROME

The Fine Arts Academy of Rome laid the foundations for the development of the CARE Lab by making a joint agreement with the National Institute for Nuclear Physics (INFN), organizing a pilot phase, and investing in human resources. To this end, a new junior scientist was hired to develop a methodological model for the lab as well as relevant initiatives with Alliance partners, and to boost communication with the other research sector of the Academy, i.e. doctoral courses.

The initial activities of the Lab began on 19 January 2023, when the Fine Arts Academy of Rome hosted the launch of CARE (Creative Artistic Research Ecosystem), its laboratory of artistic research developed in partnership with the National Institute for Nuclear Physics of Roma Tre University. On that occasion, a transdisciplinary dialogue was initiated in a preliminary internal meeting to lay the foundations for the research laboratory that would bring art and science under the same methodological umbrella. The laboratory kick-off was intended to facilitate the acquaintance of respective languages and researches. Keynote speeches on the Standard Model of physics and science-related art practices were given to introduce current research relevant for the Lab.

A subsequent meeting is scheduled for 9 February 2023 at INFN to continue the pivotal dialogue started during the first meeting, with a plan to finalize working teams and projects to focus on.

Q3) FUTURE

What is your vision of the organizational
framework and methodological
tools for your LAB?



Pilot LAB HUFA – doctoral and graduate students working together
Photo: Gabriella Kiss

HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS

Through its specialized orientation, a lab always situates itself at the cross-section of various institutional-organizational structures (universities, departments, institutes, formalized and independent research projects, and so on). This multileveled structure is further shaped by the ramifications of interdisciplinarity—an inherent feature of art research. Furthermore, an international network and a functional connection with other labs are also crucial. Since artistic research in one way or another aims at cultural transformation, its ideal positioning would require embeddedness in the system of cultural institutions, galleries and museums.

Nonetheless, the ideal contexts outlined above carry some limitations in Hungary due to various policies and political influences. These can be experienced at the level of the institution itself. As already mentioned, the HUFA's research policy is funded and coordinated through an organizational unit (Center for Knowledge and Innovation) that—in line with government policies—aims at converting research output into a commodifiable innovation with economic value. This expectation, of course, excludes a wide range of research topics that do not carry this particular potential. Another limitation is imposed by the overall ideological control of the entire cultural field and its main institutions, resulting in a significant restriction on the possible variety of research topics. Since this control emphasizes the national character of cultural production, the options for international networking are also being limited.

In light of the above, the HUFA LAB positions itself between the two aforementioned discourses (see: 'PRESENT b'): while we consider the inclusion of various aspects of the extremely productive—though to some extent redundant—academic discourse important, we strongly encourage its critical interpretation, highlighting the threats of the instrumentalization of artistic research. This comes partly as a result of the desire to conform to the norms underlying the EU's political role-concept about the knowledge producing role of universities in an economic sense, and is partly due to some national political policies as well. Therefore this criticality extends to various local ideological influences as well, constantly rearticulating the concept of freedom and the responsibility of art and research. This extension could lead to the identification of possible social partners (from a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds, from museums to advocacy groups) who could benefit from the research outcomes. Collaborating with these partners through particular methodologies and by using *collective radical imagination*, new social alliances can be established as the groundwork for a wider dissemination of research.

Regarding the methodological tools, we articulated two priorities: the discursiveness and narrativity placed in the context of a collective endeavor of knowledge production. Since the research activity within our university spans a wide spectrum in terms of both its objects and subjects, our vision is to connect these layers and actors.

Further information:

<https://www.mke.hu/artisticresearchlab/>



ART ACADEMY OF LATVIA

The Art Academy of Latvia Open LAB focuses on the realization of various formats of public activities organized by both students and invited guest professors. Activities are built to ensure knowledge transfer to society and to teach participants the methods necessary for artistic innovation suitable for independent evaluation and selection, including research based innovation. It has contributed to the expansion of the frontiers of knowledge—or has attributed a new understanding to existing knowledge and its application in practice—through creative artistic work or large-scale original research, part of which is carried out at international level and cited publications. Open LAB aids students not only in sharing their respective artistic fields of activity with wider professional circles and with society as a whole, but also in independently improving their professional qualifications, as well as implementing research-based innovation projects by realizing achievements that meet the international criteria in artistic research-based innovation. They are also aided in coping with development tasks in companies, institutions and organizations where extensive research- and artistic research-based innovative knowledge and skills are required.

(Open Artistic research Lab of Professional Doctoral Study Programme, presentation by Linda Vilka. Photo: Antra Priede)

The LAB at the HfBK Dresden will undergo some conceptual changes after evaluation of the pilot phase ending in Spetember 2023. According to current, vivid discussions in the faculties and the senate of the academy, the focus of the lab will shift from the Faculty of Fine Arts to the Faculty of Applied Arts, where a strong interest in artistic research exists and a wide range of related questions is discussed. This involves aspects of outreach to society, Third Mission, and a strong focus on performative, embodied and tacit knowledge production as relevant for the fields of performative arts, stage design and theatre theory as it is for art therapy. These new focal points may also provide the partner alliance with a broader thematic approach to artistic research in general. Nevertheless, this orientation will not mean the exclusion of fine arts practices.

In order to embrace the different needs of the fields of applied arts research, openness to different methodological frameworks will be a general precondition. The LAB itself shall exist as a real open space for joint discussions and collaborative processes. It will most probably be located not only in the postgraduate phase, but also in the second cycle. In this sense, the project will open up to a larger number of students and facilitate the development of society- and discourse-related fields.

Nevertheless, the LAB is intended to be an important place to develop third cycle options further on. It might bring together young artist-researchers in research groups funded by the German national funding scheme *Europäischer Sozialfonds* (ESF), and become more and more visible through national events, such as the Long Night of Sciences every year in June.

Structurally, the most important next step will be to strengthen the integration of the LAB into the existing structures of the HfBK. Due to the change of the hosting faculty, this is a field yet to be explored. A seamless cooperation with teaching staff, both in practice and in theory, shall be of great importance, especially with a focus on transdisciplinarity. Cooperation beyond the institution, providing connections to societal and academic discourses, will be another logical consequence. An important role can be given to invited external lecturers in order to explore the field. The possibilities opened through international exchange and cooperation within the project will create an enormous impact, too, and can help the LAB become a vivid and inspiring element of the HfBK in the near future.

FINE ARTS ACADEMY OF ROME

In order to lead participating researchers toward a methodological awareness in which art and science meet, the CARE Lab will follow an implementation plan that defines development strategies, workshop tools, and a pedagogical framework. Below is a list that summarizes the main points:

- > John Butler CEO of EQ-Arts, the international agency for quality assurance in higher art education, has been designated to support and guide the CARE Project toward quality assessment and to guarantee a high standard of research in the output.
- > To cross boundaries between art and science the Lab will be structured in mixed, nonhierarchical teams constituted by representatives from the fields of art and nuclear physics.
- > Students and junior scientists who are going to actively participate in the workshop will have recurring meetings.
- > The two partner institutions will be involved in the workflow as a cohesive unit. Thanks to physical and digital spaces that are going to be set up, artists and scientists will be able to steadily work together and share their knowledge.

- > The Research Catalogue will be one of the adopted tools; a group and a relevant exposition will be created to keep track of the rate of progress, as well as ideas and perspectives.
- > The Academy will organize guided tours to places of interest—e.g. the National Laboratories for Nuclear Physics in Frascati (Rome Province)—to familiarize CARE participants with how scientific laboratories function and experimental operations are developed.
- > Periodic reports on progress and halfway goals will be written and shared with EQ-Arts and EU4ART_ *differences* partners to ensure feedback and exchange. Such documentation is meant to also serve as an instrument of self-evaluation.
- > The final output of the project is expected to be published in the Research Catalogue.

OUTPUT (O4)

What kind of output are you
expecting from your LAB?

DRESDEN UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS

According to its institutional location and focus, the LAB can create output on several different levels in the future. To discuss this outcome, we will proceed from the personal results for participating students to the possible results in the field of culture and educational policy. At the student level, the LAB will encourage participants to follow their artistic and research questions, and provide a programme for further qualification. This programme will help them not only to create better artistic and research work, but also to get involved in collaborative processes which strongly support their abilities in practice, research and reflection, e.g. through peer review processes. The work and output of the students can be found on the Research Catalogue portal of the alliance, which is an amazing opportunity to become visible at international peer level. International networking will be extremely helpful not only for the students but also for the institution.

This might lead to a development in some aspects of the institution's profile and reputation. An implementation of artistic research as an alternative artistic practice model can open new professional perspectives for the students and make the academy more open to societal discourses.

Finally, the LAB and its perception within the academic framework will facilitate discussions towards a broader variety of postgradual artistic degrees than what currently exists in the institutions of higher education in Saxony.

THE ART ACADEMY OF LATVIA

In directly focusing on the public and reaching out to society-based activities, the goal is to secure understanding in a wider context about diverse aspects of artistic research. AR LAB will also serve as a testing ground for a broader implementation of the outreach and outreach research activities that bridge artistic inquiry and research. Therefore, AR LAB will contribute directly to the social and community turn of artistic research. The special role of artistic research as a testing ground for interdisciplinary and community-based research approaches and activities will help further persuade stakeholders to recognize the relevance and precise role of artistic research. It will further promote the implementation of research- and artistic research-related activities at all levels of artistic education and also provide background for the recognition of artistic research.



FINE ARTS ACADEMY OF ROME

The CARE Project aims to build a transdisciplinary model for a common methodology of art and science research. This primary ambition will be pursued by approaching the Lab as a case study. The interaction between the fields of art and science points beyond using art merely to make science more attractive to a broader audience. To this purpose, Italian multimedia artist Cristian Rizzuti will supervise students in practical workshops and direct the creation of an art installation produced in an experimental framework, facilitated by nuclear physics.

In addition to this main goal, doctoral students and art researchers from the Academy are invited to experiment in accordance with their own artistic language and expression, considering transdisciplinarity as a model and an end goal.

All the research and the outcomes produced by CARE will be presented during a week-long Festival on Artistic Research, connected to the European Researchers' Night on September 29.

CARE Lab first meeting - Eleonora Scarponi
Photo: Monkeys Video Lab

HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS

As presented in LAB Present section, one of the institutional characteristics of the HUFA is the parallel coexistence of a wide range of media and artistic approaches: from sculpture to programming, from craft-based to performative, or from the conceptual to the applied formats. This structure obviously generates a divergence and variety of research topics and focuses, which is mostly visible among the doctoral research projects. This is due partly to the inherent complexity of art as a field, and partly to the role of individuality within the art field. Therefore the question arises: how can one single LAB structure and coordinate research activity on an institutional level? It is obvious that neither the media nor the topics can establish a correspondence between different individual research projects. Therefore we looked for shared elements that pointed beyond these inherent differences, and identified two of them: communication and format. Through the establishment of a discursive space and applying the metaphor of traveling, we created a special narrative framework in which the different resources and fields of each research in part could be communicated. We initiated this communicational process in order to help young researchers to identify the common

fields and resources shared in their research, and to facilitate the creation of small research collectives, in which future collaboration is possible.

Therefore the intended core output of our pilot LAB was to demonstrate the potential of collaboration as opposed to a purely individual research strategy. Since we are planning to continue our pilot LAB in the form of a seminar, we truly hope that small temporary research collectives will result from this process, which will not only benefit the individual researchers, but also contribute to the creation of a more dynamic, discursive and interconnected research environment.



Pilot LAB HUFA – Szabolcs KissPál, Mátyás Fusz
Photo: Julianna Nyíri

OS) SUSTAIN- ABILITY

How do you imagine the future
sustainability of your LAB?

DRESDEN UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS

The sustainability of the LAB strongly relies on developments to be achieved during the upcoming months. It is very much connected to its intertwinement with the structures that are already in place in the faculties, in order to develop a network of cooperation within the institution which can even survive changes in funding. Thus, the LAB must also be understood as a reaction to urgent needs, both in the field of teaching and for students and their work.



Scientific Drawing workshop

Therefore, in the future, there should be both content and financial support through the EU, to make it possible to create academic visibility for the project beyond the local, regional and national levels. This might lead to co-funding through the Free State of Saxony and the aforementioned research funding schemes. Through excellence funding at the EU level, the HfBK might even be able to think about scholarships and project support for researchers and students.

As a result of all this, artistic research might develop towards a fully accepted method of knowledge production, and therefore, become a candidate for other forms of academic funding as well.

Another process to be followed will be the one of cooperation with other academic partners. There were several cooperations carried out during the last two years, with universities as well as with partners from society. A strong collaboration with such partners will allow for thinking about long-term cooperations, e.g., for third cycle degrees not available for fine arts academies in Saxony alone but only in joint projects. Internationality within the LAB can also lead to structural sustainability. The online 'Peers'n'differences' colloquia may be an important first step here in order to establish long-term exchange.

The strategic objective of WP2 is to provide a methodological framework for the establishment of R+I centers as local labs. European universities have more and more possibilities for contact with companies, non-university agents and society. If they work together in both education and research, the accumulated knowledge and experience will result in a structure that will cross not only language barriers, but disciplinary boundaries as well. Thus, innovative initiatives can emerge. By strengthening research activities and restructuring institutions, open science practices will prevail, and cooperation with other branches—including academic and business cooperation—can be enhanced as well. The purpose of our labs' operation is to support innovative activities at universities, to assist in research collaborations, and to promote the socio-economic, academic and cultural exploitation of research outcomes in university education and research.

The aim of the WP2 working group is:

- > To provide a theoretical framework for Artistic Research and stages in the mapping of the recent literature in AR;
- > To provide practical solutions and common recommendations on how artistic R+I activities can be effective, how AR and development can be implemented in the broadest possible range of partnerships, how to reach out to the rest of society, and how to integrate AR into higher education;
- > To set up labs in all four universities, initially as pilot projects and then, after sharing good practices and experiences, with a long-term perspective;
- > To formulate innovative ideas on how to make academic careers attractive for researchers/ teachers, and what incentives can be used to keep them in universities and on a research career path;
- > To recommend harmonizing the protection of intellectual property at our universities.

FINE ARTS ACADEMY OF ROME

The Work Package 2 of the Fine Arts Academy of Rome has looked at the future of the Lab with the dual objectives of creating sustainability in both the research project and in institutional cooperation. Indeed, to build the CARE Lab, the Fine Arts Academy of Rome made a framework agreement with the National Institute for Nuclear Physics from Roma Tre University. This long-term partnership is meant to last the entire period of the research Lab, until the end of EU4ART_*differences* project. The engagement of Professor Cristian Rizzuti and the involvement of academy students ensure internal efforts and the sustainability of the laboratory.



CARE Lab first meeting – Elena Giulia Rossi
Photo: Monkeys Video Lab

ART ACADEMY OF LATVIA

AR LAB activities are included into the curriculum of the professional doctoral study programme and will become part of joint doctoral school activity. AR LAB will be provided for all schools participating in the EU4ART_*differences* project and the joint professional doctoral programme. Therefore, further activities related to the AR LAB will be financed by funding the doctoral study programs and R&D activities of the Art Academy of Latvia. AR LAB will continue to serve as a key platform for establishing Open Research and Civic Research activities and practices in the field of artistic research at the Art Academy of Latvia. Besides these activities, the AR LAB will also serve as a starting point for artistic research activities of the Third Mission of the Art Academy of Latvia.



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The EU4ART European University is a collaborative effort between four higher education institutions focused on finearts: the Hungarian University of Fine Arts in Budapest, the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, the Academy of Fine Arts of Rome, and the Art Academy of Latvia in Riga.

The aim of the EU4ART *differences* project is to develop the research profiles of the four partners, to create a culture of excellence in arts research, and to enhance academic excellence while further strengthening the cooperation between the four institutions.