



## Helsinki Conference Discussion Paper 05

### The Summer School Model and 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Students and Researchers

SHARE Network 30<sup>th</sup> October 2011

#### 1. What this paper does?

This is a short discussion paper (one of several prepared for the [www.sharenetwork.eu](http://www.sharenetwork.eu) conference in Helsinki 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November 2011) introducing some different models of “summer school” (or “winter school”) developed with particular focus on 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle level students and researchers in the creative arts. The purpose of the paper is to share ideas and information on different models. It is descriptive rather than evaluative.

#### 2. What is a “summer school”?

For the purposes of this paper the idea of a “summer school” is taken to mean a form of educational event that is:

- (i) short duration (1 to 3 weeks typically)
- (ii) immersive (i.e., a lot of activity in a short period of time, with people being in contact and dialogue with each other for long periods of time during the summer school)
- (iii) structured (i.e., there is a clear programme, agenda, schedule of activity)
- (iv) discursive (i.e., there is an emphasis on dialogue and not just presentations and lectures)
- (v) participative (i.e., participants are required to be active in engagement rather than passive recipients of information and ideas)

There are many forms and models available in this area – including Schools that are set up in Winter, Spring and Autumn. The original idea of a “summer” school was that it took place in the period of the year when educators were typically freer to do inventive and non-standard activities because their teaching-load was less during the summer months.

Summer Schools can be directed at the general public or they can be directed at world leaders in a field. Typically summer schools might bring together international mixes of advanced students, already well-established players within a given field of knowledge, and world-renowned figures.

#### 3. Why is the summer school model so important in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle?

Summer schools have proved important for higher level studies because of the way they facilitate advanced students who may otherwise have professional and life commitments that make it difficult for them to attend programmes scheduled on a weekly basis.

Summer schools also allow the bringing together of expertise and experience from several institutions and many countries at once. This means that an international spread of inputs can be achieved as is required if one wishes to develop work at the cutting edge of a field – especially when that field has practitioners distributed around the globe.

Summer schools have an experimental nature as they are usually organised as single self-contained events allowing experimentation, risk-taking and invention in terms of modes of presentation and mixes of people, disciplines and educational models. This experimental aspect is of course suited to developing new work in a research frame.

Summer schools provide stimulation, enrichment and opportunity for all people involved in 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle education – for research students, for supervisors, for examiners, for people involved in managing and leading 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle programmes. Everyone who attends whether as a “teacher” or a “student” has an opportunity to hear, see and learn new ideas and practices because of the inter-disciplinary, inter-institutional and/or international aspects of the school.

Summer schools can be organised so as to bring the work of 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students into closer relationship and interaction with the actual field of practice they are pursuing. Summer schools are mobile, and can follow the centres or margins of the art-world in ways that open up the academy to insight from outside the academy.

Summer schools are key to networking researchers from across disciplines and across countries as they allow new social and professional bonds to be created. This kind of networking is clearly important for the development of research and for peer communities of knowledge and practice.

#### **4. What are examples of the summer school in the creative arts?**

##### **4.1 “As the Academy Turns” Murcia, (2010)**

*EARN- Manifesta 8* Winter School “As the Academy Turns” Murcia, co-organised by Henk Slager, EARN and *Manifesta 8* (December 2010).<sup>1</sup>

‘As the Academy Turns’ – the EARN Winter School during Manifesta 8 Murcia December 2010 – was a unique experiment at the intersection of artistic research, contemporary art, and the new art academy practices that have emerged across Europe in the last decade. ‘As the Academy Turns’ is a multilayered project exploring the potentials and the tensions in the growth of artistic research and the current ‘academicisation’ of art education. This ‘academicisation’ of art is increasingly marked by the strong expectation of research trajectories and how these will be shaped within the changing institutional framework of art education. In that context, the present possibilities of PhD research within visual art are particularly at the center of attention and debate.

What do those challenges mean for the art academy as such? Will novel forms of academic elitism pop up or will research induce a novel form of intellectual conscience in the art academy? How will research and artistic practice be intertwined? Will they produce redefinitions in both domains or is research rather doomed to be a fringe phenomenon at the art academy? And the ultimate question, how will research be conducted within art academies? These themes will be tackled in three different dissemination platforms: a three day international symposium, an infolab presentation and an artwork in the form of a soap opera set in an art academy.

During the three-day symposium a series of exemplary research projects from prominent European art academies was to be presented and discussed. The researchers involved included practitioners based in MaHKU, KUVA, Malmo, Gothenburg, CePRA, GradCAM and other academies across Europe (full list posted shortly). Their presentations will be critically addressed by a number of invited respondents including Sarat Maharaj, Tom Holert, Hito Steyerl, Marquard Smith, and Jan Kaila. In addition, a special infolab presentation in Cendeac including research statements provided by the twelve researchers gave further information on their research trajectories and practices.

The presentation of the soap ‘As the Academy Turns’, a commissioned project developed and realized by artist Tiong Ang, will also take place in CENDEAC. The setting of the soap is the contemporary art academy where the characters – the art academy population of teaching staff and students – act within a situation of transformation where the current master-pupil oriented educational system moves towards a seminar-based form of education with artists as scholars and researchers in an academic community.

##### **4.2 “First International Finnish Summer Academy for Artistic Researchers” (2011)**

“First International Finnish Summer School for Artistic Researchers” Helsinki/Seili co-organised by (August 2011)<sup>2</sup>  
Participating institutions: Aalto University School of Art and Design, Finland; Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Regina, Canada; Faculty of the Arts, Tel Aviv University, Israel; Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, Finland; Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media, Ireland; Theatre Academy Helsinki, Finland; University of Dance and Circus, Sweden; Utrecht Graduate School of Visual Art and Design, the Netherlands.

Graduate students in academic institutions who are pursuing practice-based research are invited to submit applications and proposals to the first International Summer Academy for Artist-researchers that will take place in Finland, August

22nd-31<sup>st</sup>, 2011. The aim of the Summer Academy was to clarify, discuss and develop emerging themes and issues arising out of the individual projects of the participants within the developing discourses of art practice and research. The Summer Academy provided a supportive setting where artist-researchers from all fields collaborate, present their ongoing artistic work and research and receive feedback from experienced tutors and peers from leading academic institutions. The academy aimed to reflect the international diversity and scope of artistic research and to provide a stimulating intellectual environment. The Summer Academy consisted of a broad range of activities including individual presentations by all the participants, discussions on material sent beforehand, individual tutoring and collective work.

The academy began with a two-day stay in Helsinki where participants visited art universities and cultural institutions and heard guest lectures. The remaining seven days were spent in a study center in the Finnish island of Seili, a remarkable island in the South Western archipelago. The tutors for the academy included: Prof. Annette Arlander, Theatre Academy Helsinki, Finland; Prof. Kathleen Irwin, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Regina, Canada; Prof. Dorita Hannah, College of Creative Arts, Massey University, Wellington, NZ; and Dr. Mick Wilson, GradCAM Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media, Ireland. There were 16 participants coming from a range of countries (including Mexico, Germany/Turkey, Belgium/Tunisia, Netherlands, Finland, Israel, Canada, Ireland), and from a range of disciplines (including theatre, dance, architecture, fine art, audio-design, scenography and photography). The working language was English. European applicants were required to be enrolled as doctoral students, while MA/MFA students from other continents were eligible to apply.

This summer academy built upon an earlier summer school process that was developed by the Theatre Academy in Helsinki and this new model was based on a lot of earlier experience and experiment. It also brought a new disciplinary mixture and a new degree of internationalisation into the model.

#### 4.3 “The Question of Culture” I and II <sup>3</sup> summer schools on creative practice and research (2009 / 2010).

This was a one week intensive summer school introducing participants to the principles, methods and purposes of creative research across many different art forms. It was delivered as a collaboration between GradCAM, UCD Architecture and Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin. This week long series of lectures, workshops and seminars focused on how cultural practitioners – artists, musicians, designers, and architects – are currently pursuing research through their different art forms and practices. The Summer School is open to anyone interested in developing a better understanding of creative cultural practice as a means of enquiry. The following table gives an outline idea of the structure

day	mon	tues	weds	thurs	fri
theme	<i>on first principles</i>	<i>on not knowing</i>	<i>on motives</i>	<i>on methods</i>	<i>on public-ness</i>
question	what is the question of culture?	what do you want to find out?	why is it worth knowing?	how do you go about finding out?	who is this work for?
special guest	<b>Pauline Byrne</b> <b>Simon Sheikh</b>	<b>Luke Clancy</b> <b>Barbara Holub</b>	<b>Sarah Tuck</b>	<b>Siun Hanrahan</b> <b>Dominic Campbell</b>	<b>Brian Hand</b>

Each day entailed lectures, seminars and workshops around the key theme, enabling participants to begin to formulate an answer to the key question adapted for each day. At the end of the week participants present their ideas to each other in small working groups. Participants included doctoral researchers, independent practitioners and masters students and brought urbanists, musicians, artists, designers and cultural historians together in one structure

#### 4.5 SHARE/NIDA Summer School 15-24 July 2012.

In the summer of '12, SHARE will organize a ten days Summer School in partnership with NIDA Art Colony, the Curonian Spit, a peninsular dividing the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea. There will be discussion of this and other proposed summer schools during the conference in Helsinki.

## 5. What other Summer Schools are planned for 2012-2013?

We are asking delegates to the SHARE conference to provide information through the network about any summer schools planned for the 2012-2013 period. We would like to help promote awareness of opportunities for 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle researchers to participate in any programmes that are open to application from outside.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.artresearch.eu/index.php/2010/08/22/earn-manifesta-8-as-the-academy-turns-2-51210/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.konstnarligaforskarskolan.se/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/summeracademy2011call.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.gradcam.ie/summer\\_school.php](http://www.gradcam.ie/summer_school.php) and [http://www.gradcam.ie/autumn\\_schools.php#question](http://www.gradcam.ie/autumn_schools.php#question)



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