



# Circostrada Network

## Street Arts Winter Academy #2 Artistic Practice as Research

EUROPEAN

The University of Winchester, in partnership with Circostrada Network, Gledališče Ane Monro and the Advanced Itinerant Learning Programme for Street Arts (FAI AR), organised the second edition of the Street Arts Winter Academy. This closed seminar, held from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2012 in Winchester (UK), gathered European professionals and academics to tackle the issue of artistic practice as research.

Circostrada Network proposes in this publication a synthesis of the discussions on the structuring of the transmission of skills within this artistic sector, as well as existing schemes and good practices.

This publication was coordinated by Yohann Floch and Victoria Seidl

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### HorsLesMurs

HorsLesMurs is the French national information centre for street arts and circus arts. Created in 1993 by the Ministry of Culture and Communication, since 2003, it has been the general secretariat of Circostrada Network, European platform for the street arts and circus dedicated to information, observation and professional exchanges. Representing 76 members from 22 countries, the network is working to develop the structuring and recognition of these sectors in Europe.

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## Partners

**Ana Monro Theatre** is one of the oldest independent theatre groups in Slovenia. It was established in 1982 as a small artistically very articulated group. From that time it created more than 50 original theatre pieces, indoor and outdoor. With time the field of action has broadened and diversified. There are four main fields of activity: the creation of theatre pieces; the Annual Cycle of the Ana Monro Theatre Festivals, including the Ana Desetnica festival, taking place in the beginning of July every year, in Ljubljana, since 1998; SUGLA, a street theatre school for young artists and the international cooperation through the participation in two European networks, Circostrada and Meridians.

[www.anamonro.org](http://www.anamonro.org)

The **FAI AR**, the first advanced itinerant learning programme in France and Europe dedicated to artistic creation in public areas, was launched in April 2005, after several years of reflection and experience in the field of public area training. For a period of 18 months, the FAI AR aims to consider the main resources favourable to artistic creation in public areas. At the heart of the 'Cit  des Arts de la Rue' project in Marseille, it moves between different places devoted to urban arts in France and throughout Europe. The training revolves around three main axes: collective fundamentals that look at basic questions (sound, verticality, natural and artificial lighting...); individual adventures and a 'volunteer collaboration', involving two months of total immersion as an assistant in a company creating a project. Personal artistic project is the main theme of the adventure of each participant.

[www.faiar.org](http://www.faiar.org)

**Street Arts at Winchester University** is an exciting new performance-based degree for students who want to create imaginative contemporary productions in the new arenas of street arts and outdoor spaces. The programme provides students with the skills to create and produce spectacular performances for festivals and large-scale events; make and perform large-scale puppets; engage in the vibrant world of street dance, music and comedy; or develop a show that students could perform in many different countries around the world. The programme is taught by academics that have expertise in the defined core areas of street arts at both the theoretical and practical level, and many of them are practitioners themselves. This is coupled with visiting practitioners who are invited to present lectures, academies, seminars or workshops and provide feedback on student performances.

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**Circostrada Network** gathers 76 members from 22 European countries and contributes to the circulation of information and resources within the street arts and the circus arts sectors, putting emphasis on exchange and cooperation between International professionals and carrying out joint actions to encourage greater recognition of these art forms. The French information centre HorsLesMurs acts as the Secretary General of the platform which receives support for organisations active at European level in the field of Culture (Culture program, strand 2) of the European Commission, in the framework of a 3-year partnership agreement (2011-2013).

[www.circostrada.org](http://www.circostrada.org)

# Weekend in Winchester

## Jordi Duran i Roldós

Artistic Director [FiraTàrrega, Spain]

I am writing these words having just arrived back from England, after a few intense days in Winchester at the Street Arts Winter Academy. Many things happened last weekend. So many that I decided to dedicate a couple of articles to these three really inspiring days. What I am presenting today is more of a digest, and what follows is very much my own opinion. I hope it is nonetheless helpful.

SAWA was organised by the University of Winchester (which has recently launched the first degree in street arts in Europe), the street theatre school of the Slovenian company Ana Monro, the French street arts course FAI AR (an academy offering advanced training in street arts), Circostrada Network, and HorsLesMurs. The issue, you may already have caught: training in street arts. But it was to focus on the theme of practice as research.

However, other topics were worked on, including a mapping of the activities related to training in street arts in Europe, an ever-richer space that is active and varied. In the following, I talk about the programmes that I found the most interesting.

On the one hand, looking to the academic world, progress can be seen in the establishment of a Masters degree at FAI AR.

In addition, the summer school at Mintfest Festival (an international festival of street arts in Kendal, in the UK) is strengthened. Also Aurillac Festival in France and the Oerol Festival in the Netherlands have been developing activities related to reflection and training. In Spain, in Tàrrega (excuse me, because here I will toot my own horn), in a few days the second edition of FiraTàrrega will be presented to support creation, and will contain, among other things, various activities related to street arts training in the summer of 2012.

As an initiative linked to companies or artists, the work of the Slovenian company Ana Monro stands out. Although their understanding of creation in public space is quite classic, it can be said that they are the great champions of their field in Eastern Europe – not only for the work of their school in Ljubljana, but for their travelling courses. As a result of the workshops which they held last year in Turkey in collaboration with the University of Anatolia, three festivals in that country are becoming interested in programming street performers. As a new activity for 2012, this group is preparing a special programme for the Ukraine. In a similar vein, the company Oposito was also spoken of in respect of their acting training course focusing on public spaces; and the Compagnie Internationale Alligator for the activities carried out in 'Atelline', a venue hosting residencies for creations in the public space that is also used for training.

Finally, the workshops and urban interventions of the Viennese company Willi Dorner were spoken of in respect of the project *Bodies in Urban Space*, where a selection of dancers interact with the urban environment – its landscape, its architecture – rediscovering the transient public and the city's inhabitants. A fascinating work. Feel free to check the dates on the company's website. Not to be missed.

In one of the seminar's breaks, sitting eating a cucumber sandwich under very rare sunshine for this time of year in England, Goro Osojnik, director of the Slovenian company Ana Monro and head of the Ana Desetnica Festival, delivered the following gem: 'Put a toilet in a museum and you have art, put it on the street and you'll have trash.'

## Jordi Duran i Roldós

is the artistic director of FiraTàrrega International Performing Arts Market. Jordi has been active as part of the technical programming staff of FiraTàrrega since 2003. This experience is playing an important role in programming as an artistic director and in creating partnership with organizations. In addition, to create the FiraTàrrega into a more rich festival experience, Jordi has been solidifying the network with European festivals and organizations of Spain, Catalonia, and even Europe. FiraTàrrega, founded in 1981, is being held annually on the second weekend of September at Tàrrega, Catalonia, which is nearby Barcelona.

This is a sentence, a sentiment, that cannot miss. It was really funny. I almost choked on the sandwich. I told Goro that I was going to use it and take it with me, like a souvenir from the conference.

The respect I have for street arts is enormous. From my humble point of view, the street artist is the gunner of performing arts, the one that manages the most sensitive and unstable material. I have been fortunate to collaborate with many artists in different fields, and without a doubt the language of street arts is the most impressive and I admire it due to its complexity, fragility and openness. At the same time, I cannot imagine a more fertile landscape; the possibilities of artistic discourse in public spaces are endless.

Yet in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the institution continues to justify the content. The framework or context legitimises the artistic product, and the art remains in prison in museums, galleries, theatres and other buildings. 'Put it on the street and you will have trash' is what many people still think.

That is why the fact that European universities are interested in this sector is great news to me. It is very good publicity – even if you think there are other ways of recognising culture beyond imprisoning it in college or other buildings and institutions.

And speaking of prisons, the contemporary architecture of the art world is not connected to current society either. What madness; legislature always results in large buildings and not in cultural policies. Theatres and museums are frightened of being classist, but who are these mausoleums even directed towards? I have the feeling that culture seems more and more like a luxury sports car. It continues to be for just a few. Why do popular things have to be at odds with art? Why neglect the democratic possibilities of public space being a canvas?

The citizen has the right to culture, and we as cultural operators and administrators have to watch over this access. For years we have been talking about building a knowledgeable public – an educated audience – and conducting numerous experiments, more or less successful, for connecting citizens with art. It's a shame that we don't use street arts more as a bridge, but it's not due to a lack of examples. One of the most famous is found in England, where the National Theatre in London spends most of the summer programming outdoor activities under the banner of 'Watch This Space!'. Seems like a miracle, doesn't it?

For now, between one sandwich and the next, under the English sun or the Mediterranean storm, we continue to defend the qualities of street arts, fighting for their visibility and recognition. This one's dedicated to Goro and his bombs, a Slovenian striker with a lamb's heart.

## Participants

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# The Street is a Weapon: Claim it!

## *Researching and Reflecting on Political and Cultural Spaces Through Street Theatre*

**Goro Osojnik**

*Artistic Director [Ana Monro Theatre, Slovenia]*

*Theatre is an adaptable, compatible art.  
When reflecting, it describes social  
contexts and reacts to them [...] Its principle  
lies in reflection and distance.*

*(Lukan, 1998)*

The Afghan director and actor Hashmat Ulla Fanaji has been using theatre as a tool – or a weapon – for social change for the last fifty years, with recent performances fighting against gender segregation, discrimination and the drug trade. He has persisted all these years, in spite of the discouraging circumstances in a culturally and politically troubled country, because he found, somehow, that he could not follow the mainstream – that he could not simply replicate the image of the ruling class or repeat the well-established patterns of convention. Instead, Hashmat Ulla Fanaji gives us an alternative narrative of contemporary Afghanistan, one that opposes the hegemonic culture and that challenges people's perceptions concerning the state's infallibility and decency. During his last performance different theatre techniques were used to infiltrate society with non-hegemonic social and political ideas.

Similar styles of theatre 'activism' can be found – and are in fact very established – in many parts of the world outside of Europe, where, in order to avoid producing works derivative of European styles, theatre directors, actors and theatre activists have started digging into their own cultural heritage – and, even more often, into their own society's political and social issues. This kind of theatre in many cases uses a force – a weapon – that has been neglected in Europe since the Middle Ages: people themselves. In Europe, more and more performers are leaving institutionalised theatre determined to return back to the people and to seek their active engagement, their stories, their narratives.

According to the old European theatre legacy, invented and developed in Ancient Greece, the audience were of great importance, seen more as active shapers of the work than mere observers. The Forum Theater, for instance, was a public space where lively debates were held. In the Middle Ages the acting space became sacred, a definite line was drawn between actors and spectators, and the

**Nena Močnik**

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roles of both were precisely determined. What was left for the audience was inactive observation, conducted from somewhere in the darkness of the theatre hall, and a passive acceptance of whatever ideas appeared on stage. Performances taking place within this dichotomy mostly support prevailing ideologies and devalue people's proactive cooperation in the re-creation of the work and its ideas. This is why it is so important to demolish walls, visible and invisible ones, and to bring performance to open space – to the streets, squares, pavements, parks; to life and to people. And to bring theatre to places of people, not places for people.

Making the street the site of theatre and political engagement brings both artists and passers-by many advantages and opportunities for participation. In direct contact they may both, in a sense, research each other. The artist is able to listen to people's stories, to think and reflect on them, before recreating them in

### **Goro Osojnik**

Goro Osojnik is the director and programmer of Annual Cycle of Ana Monro Theatre Festivals, a year round international street theatre festivals in Slovenia; artistic leader of Ana Monro Theater; headmaster of ŠUGLA, street theatre school for young artists in Ljubljana; actor in shows Golden Ass and The Cage (Ana Monro Theatre ); actor in TV Slovenia show for children "Pod klobukom"; hospital clown for children with Red Noses in Slovenia.

an aestheticised, dramatised form. This process frees people and their stories from the mechanised, unthinking perspective of life's routine. The very thing that lead them in the first place to a feeling of passive hopelessness is questioned and confronted, and they are given a voice. Issues and subjects from everyday life therefore have an emancipatory potential – they can transform and be transformed.

Contrary to the conventional theatre, imprisoned within a building, simulating and artificially recreating the real world, street theatre makes its home in public spaces and public life. The performance space offers to the artist's sensibility a rich backdrop in its architecture and existing social functions – stimuli that can be used in as many ways as the artist can imagine. Since it is not spatially dislocated in the way of conventional theatre – is not confined to a constructed, artificial space – it may refer to its surroundings and to the socio-political issues that manifest through the public's movements and interactions (Pavis 1997, 45). However, making socially engaged theatre on the street also presents many obstacles that an artist must overcome in order to reach the audience and to send his/her message. One could criticise street theatre for lacking the characteristics of an art space, especially when it freely invites, includes and improvises with spectators (Ahacic 1998, 342), but conventional theatre, imprisoned within four walls, offers spectators only definite messages, without the possibility of alternative interpretations or new understanding. Theatre on the street, made and performed together with the people, constantly researches, reflects and adapts to everyday life's society and socio-political issues. If it is boring and irrelevant, people will leave – since there is no wall to stop them, and no investment in a ticket. On the street the performer may question himself and his spectators about issues that are not questioned in the regular theatre as there they are presupposed by the work (Milohnić 2005, 10). If a performance loads its audience with information beyond their ability or readiness to constructively deal with it, they will become lost, and the artist must therefore research the space before entering it – must gauge its ability to accept the interrogation of social injustice and other issues. With this in mind, street theatre may 'push back against dominant discourses' (Fajt and Velikonja 2006, 23).

Provoking people was the primary function of art in Ancient Greece. But in the Middle Ages people lost the opportunity to personally contribute to the issues spoken of in theatre. And it is still the same today: when the play is over, it can be discussed among a small circle of acquaintances, or in critiques, written by sacred writers who hold the sole privilege to judge the art. Institutional theatre, once again, works to preserve existing narratives, causes audiences to accept them without question, and, last but not least, restricts the formation of new, alternative narratives. Public space does not isolate its spectators from the real world, does not allow them to vegetate and to switch off their conscious minds; in street theatre, the identification with the hero or heroes, which wraps the spectator in a comfortable illusion, is not permitted (Melchinger 2000, 18-19). On the street an artist may use their theatrical and performative skills and knowledge to catch a passer-by headed for his Saturday shopping, take his bag, and make a story of it! The artist can make the passer-by think about the boring content of his Saturday shopping bag, and may, at his best, shock the passer-by in such a way as to bring him to a realisation of his moral responsibility; therefore 'the intention of the street artist should be nothing but to change a society' (Sierz 2004, 14).

But you can only change a system if you get to know it first. From that point of view, the artist on the street, working to change society, working to make people think, must firstly come to get to know the street, to research it. The line Handke draws between institutional and street theatre (in Cohen-Cruz 2003, 9) lies in the way street theatre encourages people's engagement: '[institutional] theatre is the instrument of the social institution and as such is not appropriate for changing society. It creates every single moment, movement, every unimportant detail, every word and every silence. But as soon as we want to solve problems, this mode is not suitable any more. For the solution, we need acting that can be rejected.' Rejection comes from people, and the people are on the streets. In theatre we have spectators: a defined group of people. But on the street, an artist may reach people in general. A passer-by that has never been in a theatre before. A passer-by that hates theatre. Spectators who attend theatre performances weekly. Theatre on the street happens in real spaces; of course there is a shift from everyday life into the language of the performance, but at the same time street theatre represents a very important step back toward real life (Lukan 1998, 48). 'What connects theatre in

### Nena Močnik

(1986) holds a degree from the Faculty of Social Sciences (University of Ljubljana), and since 2011 a Master of Arts degree. Since 2010 she is a co-leader of the project Global SOFA, which introduces theatre techniques of Theatre of the oppressed idea into Slovenia environment. In 2011 she worked for Mostar Friedensprojekt Association (Berlin/Germany) in youth projects and currently she is a PhD student of Balkan Studies at the University of Ljubljana

the street with real life is the laundry which must be put on the line because of the dramatic act and not because it must be dried by the sun.' (ibid)

The role of the artist is not to lead the audience, but preferably to provoke it – to awake in it an impulse to keep thinking, and to open questions rather than close them. With a mission of provocation, the street artist can discover their material on the field of the performance: what actions are needed, what complacent perspectives should be provoked, what the people's issues are, what people are talking about. In the time when theatre was first established as a form of art, it belonged to the people. Actors and participating non-actors played the roles of social activists. They did not just accept or assume prescribed roles; they created them. Theatre happened in open spaces, spaces that belonged to people. In this way various narratives and ideas could be brought to the theatre by the people themselves, and debated, with peaceful

coexistence as the expected result. Since in institutional theatre there is no place for the people's voice, artists should instead occupy public spaces, streets and squares, buses and trains, restaurants and hospitals, and bring performative reflection back to the people. Artists are those who aim to discover and create alternative narratives and, in doing so, to uncover alternative ideologies. They should challenge people to speak openly and to talk of their own reality, their own past, present and future. Artists should listen to people's personal narratives, and, with all their knowledge and skills as an artist, use them to bring social justice and reveal the potential for change within public space. If Hashmat Ulla Fanaji could do it under the unbearable politics of Afghanistan, then we Europeans, with dominant narratives supporting democracy and human rights, could do it as well.

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# Practice as Research in Street Arts Training and Education

Olu Taiwo

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## Introduction

As we know, the street arts profession has rightly put a critical spotlight on the Street Arts course at Winchester, which has now completed its first cycle with the graduation of its first third-year students. Questions like, how can performers making content which in practice seeks a direct experience with an outdoor public be taught in mainstream universities? Or how can you learn about our profession, which is inherently practice-based and exposed outdoors to a diverse intergenerational public, within a university? In this academic conference we explored new ideas of how 'practice as research' in Street Arts can be utilised, so that by placing 'practice' at the centre of academic teaching, we can help to establish a new performance paradigm for research. In this Academy we unpacked patterns of inquiry where effective interventions 'of' and 'on' the self, the group, the public and different social environments, can be explored and not defined; where we can raise questions, without answering them, on issues surrounding current debates, cultural perceptions and social practices. In this sense, our subject is truly Socratic. What we do consciously is playfully simulate contemporary discussions. Just like the clown, we enjoy starting with 'the assumption that' or in some cases 'project the illusion that' we know nothing whilst, through performance, provokingly questioning those who assume they do. In this Winter Academy we discussed how different methods of teaching and learning can inform as well as bridge the gap between educating general techniques through embodied training and the sort of formal education that foregrounds abstract disembodied critical thinking. There was an attempt to redefine what we perceive formal training to be, which is based on embodied cognition through practice. The focus was on exploring how we develop appropriate criteria concerning higher and postgraduate programmes for both intensive training courses and the modular degree courses that underpin formal undergraduate education.

## What is practice as research?

There isn't a definitive answer to this question and nor should there be; however, practice as research can be seen as a methodological strategy – a paradigm shift with regards to new perspectives and approaches concerning academic study and the generation of new knowledge concerning the nature of the Arts. It relates to reflections drawn during the act of creation from the artist's perspective. Practice as research in the Performing Arts is still an emerging subject area with many models and labels: Practice-

as-research, practice-based, practice-led, mixed-mode research practice, and practice through research to name but a few. Practice, as part of research, is nothing new. Science and engineering, from the beginning of antiquity right through to the present day, have used practice as a way of securing proof and as a strategy for constructing processes. Models and experiments are constructed to prove a theoretical proposition. Practice research is a type of academic enquiry which integrates an element of 'practice' in both the methodology to find something out and/or in the outcome of research – the Large Hadron Collider being a case in point in that it is the method and tool used in a practice methodology aiming to uncover the secrets of our universe, and at the same time the Collider itself is an outcome of detailed practical research. Practice as research in performance, then, can be seen as a process which is marked by a paradigm shift in observing real-time action to explicate tacit experiences in the artistic process. It can be seen as a way of making explicit what the professional performer/artist implicitly and subconsciously uses as their principal methods when

## Dr Olu Taiwo

Senior lecturer Street Arts, Visual Development and Contemporary Performance, University of Winchester. Publications include *The Orishas: The Influence of the Yoruba Cultural Diaspora* in Harvey and Thompson (Ed.) *Indigenous Diasporas and Dislocations* Ashgate (2005) *The Physical Journal: The living body that writes and rewrites itself* in Susan Broadhurst and Josephine Machon (Ed) *Sensualities/Textualities and Technologies Writings of the Body in 21st Century Performance* Palgrave Macmillan (2009). His main interests are to propagate twenty first century issues concerning the interaction between body, identity, audience and technology.

making work. When using creative practice as a rational lens, it gives creative practitioners a strategy not only to interrogate but to disseminate tacit knowledge drawn from performed experience in new ways. Practice as research in performance starts with a practitioner's subjective perceptions and experience with regard to their particular embodied practice. This performance paradigm differs from participant observation in that when we are initially engaged in practice, we are totally immersed in the activity; we go native. Critically, we can employ contemporary hermeneutics

– the reflective oscillation between a personal interpretation of a specific action and a reflection of the whole cultural event – as a way to excavate personal information. This facilitates a method of explicating our experience of 'being in the act' and not 'observing the act internally, from a critical distance'. If we are observing ourselves acting during practice, we cannot be totally immersed in the act of doing; therefore we cannot collect all the reflective data from our subjective experience as a result of being totally immersed. 'Practice as Research' highlights this emerging strategic environment, which is a deliberately uncertain terrain for performing academics. It places embodied cognition, embodied know-how, and performed outcomes concerning sustained practice at the centre of any researched product. Emphasis is on the importance of reflecting and articulating the embodied tacit knowledge associated with a practitioner and their incremental development: practice as research, recognises this central fact and makes clear, as Trimmingham suggests concerning reflective practice, that its:

*Built-in dynamism of the spiral is the only paradigm model that can account for such change in theory in relation to the ongoing practice, whilst also successfully defining the area of research, and preventing it spiralling out of control. (Trimingham: 2002, 56)*

Professor Robin Nelson's definition of 'Practice as Research' highlights this emerging process for performers, who place practice at the centre of any research product; however he emphasises, as does Trimmingham, the importance of reflecting and articulating the embodied knowledge of a practitioner:

*Practitioner knowledge is both a necessary and sufficient condition for arts practices but it is only a necessary condition for PaR since research sufficiency may lie in sustained and structured reflection to make the "tacit knowledge" explicit. (Nelson: 2006, 14)*

## New ways to disseminate practice

Evidence of practice can be disseminated as a result of the emerging practices of web 2.0 structures on the internet. There are an increasing number of channels made available for the distribution of videos within social networks that have a research focus. These domains can, 'make [...] "tacit knowledge" explicit'. The use of social media to disseminate technical strategies and creative practice can straddle cultural, intercultural and transcultural movement boundaries. This makes the aspiration to acquire skills, which generates particular movements, in terms of practice, culturally blind in terms of their ethnic associations. Of course, one could argue that this is not new; however, there appears to be an acceleration of the fact. Desire to practice occurs when inspiration motivates us to engage with rigorous effort in the pursuit of acquiring or developing techniques for performance; consequently, being tutored by a master in a particular form can be augmented by watching examples of practice online. In my practice as research, I use the critical description of a Physical Journal and discuss writing and rewriting effort sequences underpinned by embodied cognition to create strategies for improvisation. This is primarily based on different cultural techniques. The definition of a Physical Journal is: a person's embodied knowledge and memory, which requires an organisational intelligence to project their presence through

a lived body. Physical journals are the result of lived corporeal projections that are realised through embodied cognition. With our efforts (Laban: 1966), we can write and rewrite new performative information into our living bodily systems, via neuro-plasticity; in other words, our efforts rearrange our synaptic pathways. Physically, we can critically reflect on our neuromuscular skills in the process of articulating and sequencing movement by practicing it. This kind of grammar for proficient movement and development, includes physical practices like Alexander technique, Tai chi chuan, Butoh-Maison de Artard technique, as well as vocational practices like Engineering, Agriculture and Nursing where the cognitive procedural connection between knowledge and practice is vital. To expand this input, embodied cognition is underpinned by a concept of an embodied mind. Here it is assumed that the material form of a living body is in a symbiotic relationship with the mind pertaining to the individual. As a consequence, the cognitive aspect that relates to the higher levels of thinking like 'conceptualising', 'categorising', 'movement' and 'perception' occurs through the embodied mind contextualised by performed tasks in lived situations or vocational activities. These ideas provided some provocative thoughts that simulated debate within our Winter Academy.

## Street Arts Triumvirate for Training and Education: Artists, Universities, Festivals

- Definitions of PaR: Issues to do with what definitions are appropriate concerning the relevance of PaR to the development of street arts training and education in Europe.
- Utility of PaR: How can PaR be effectively utilised to disseminate new ideas and practice as well as to enhance pedagogical processes in Street Arts training and teaching.

There emerged a spectrum between the two poles of having, on the one hand, an output, an outcome of creative research like a final performance production; and, on the other, an output that is the experiment concerning the creativity process itself.

The key concepts here are the various natures inherent in the 'devising function' where differences exist in our approach to how we devise and how we focus PaR. Each approach will determine the kind of information we wish to obtain, whether it is in relation to a product or in relation to a process. This is of particular importance particularly when we are considering what it is and how we want to teach. The nature of the 'process' and 'product' in our discussions underpinned our concepts of formal and informal procedures with regards to learning, considering how a matrix can be formed with the structural responsibilities of: the artist, universities and festivals. To unpack this further, when defining PaR for a street artist or an outdoor performer, it is useful to think of the reflective practitioner as a starting point. The street artist has a public responsibility to be creative, artistic and to produce an effective interactive product for public consumption. So PaR serves as a way to facilitate innovation in pursuit of professionalism. The formal process here for the artist revolves around learning what is required to make an innovative professional product. In higher education, the street artist needs to develop a critical soul; critical language, curiosity and creativity (being in the world). This may and often does take informal routes. The city for

the street artist is perceived as a performance space with multiple artistic possibilities.

When considering PaR at universities, the formal aspect of accreditation influences definitions of responsibility in this context. University institutions are in the process of generating, disseminating and teaching knowledge. Knowledge is not to be confused with data information, even though different data points serve an important function in generating knowledge. The formal processes for university institutions are to do with how to regulate PaR in a street arts provision to meet national standards of higher education, which are naturally set by individual governments and universities. At the level of the module within a street arts programme, there may be workshops lead by artists who have learnt their skills informally – such as a parkour and breakdancing specialist who may introduce formal techniques to students in a formal or semi-formal setting. The questions asked here are to do with the structure of the format for residences, the polyvocal nature concerning the reflections that are used and the use of polyvocal documents, e.g. YouTube, diagrams, social media, and other ways processes are shared with undergraduates. An example in our current Street Arts provision is the Group Project module's link to professional festivals. After developing criteria used in accreditation, we are presented with the difficult task of training the trainers through various forms of residences. Examples here were the possible uses of conferences and online forums whether real or virtual.

To complete the triumvirate of powerful players in street arts training and education, we have the festivals. Their main responsibility is to deliver quality and financial value – to monetise the process and make it accessible as well as viable for an intergenerational audience. The formal educational processes for festivals revolve around increasing participation through workshops as well as a strategy to generate new audiences. Apart from ethical, health and safety concerns, there are no real statutory regulations needed for formal training. In terms of higher education, this would be seen as informal. The main concerns for festivals are to deliver quality experiences to inspire and to encourage participation. Participants are usually from different disciplines and levels of expertise; however, for aspiring professionals, what festivals can offer are interchange networks as they will have an up-to-date network themselves. Here there is potential for different collaborative initiatives, pedagogically, between festivals and universities to determine themes in a bid to keep current training and education contemporary.

Having unpacked the individual players in the triumvirate, the discussion moved towards framing links and alliances – some examples being sports, architecture, sociology, dance and the visual arts – which seek to disseminate and enhance the training and education provision in street arts in Europe as well as to develop new audiences.

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# Intertwining practice and research

Anne Gonon

Researcher [HorsLesMurs]

The University of Winchester served as host of the second edition of the Street Arts Winter Academy. After experiencing the snow-covered landscape of the Pokljuka region in Slovenia – where the Ana Monro Theatre had organised the first edition in February 2011 – the participants got a taste of life on an English university campus.

Street Arts Winter Academy #1 (SAWA) had offered a chance to acknowledge a clear shift in the varied field of European street arts. The need for training was no longer a topic of debate, which represents an important step forward for a sector marked by a culture of contact on the ground and informal transmission within artistic teams. Training is now clearly recognized as encompassing a number of important issues, such as greater structure within the sector, the development and promotion of sustainability within the practice, increased production quality, more widespread information and greater recognition for the street arts.

With this consensus established, the participants of SAWA #1 attempted to answer the multitude of questions posed and imposed, such as who, what, where, how and why? The publication released in June 2011 by Circostrada Network puts to paper exchanges that laid the groundwork for an evolving discussion. One of the standout observations is how much the practice of street arts and, more generally, performance in public spaces, is founded more on an ethic, a "way of being" and mode of doing – in relation to space and to the audience in particular – than on any single artistic discipline. This constitutes both the strength and weakness of the sector. The modes of doing are unique and innovative, but the matter of the field's artistic identity continues to act as a thorn in the side of players on the ground, who are continually asked to define themselves in relation to certain labels and categories – generally to comply with the demands of cultural or funding policies.

With the release of SAWA#1, three strategic directives came to light:

- the need for specific, degree-granting training programmes, which must work as a driving force and a pivot both within their countries and on the European scale – notably through inter-programme cooperation,
- the integration of short, targeted modules to existing training programmes at all educational and academic levels and especially in art schools (for theatre, dance and visual arts) as a form of introductory training,
- an increase in the number of seminars, workshops and master classes accessible to artists and technicians, but also as a form of accompaniment, so as to encourage life-long training.

Only by conjoining these three levels may we come up with a response to satisfy all needs, from artistic and cultural education in the classroom to the training of specialized artists, to increased awareness among supervisors and programmers.

While major questions regarding content were raised at Pokljuka, it turned out to be impossible to get into them too deeply, mostly for lack of time. Pedagogy was an important standout among the issues identified as requiring the most development in the future. The question of pedagogy was all the more central when participants insisted on the importance of having practitioners be a part of training and the need to seek out a balance between training by transmission, on-site learning and a formalized and clearly accredited education closer to the university model. Bringing together formal, informal and non-formal training methods seems to be like trying to square the circle. Which teaching methods would be best to adopt in accordance with a target audience and instructors' backgrounds?

## Anne Gonon

Anne Gonon's doctoral thesis (2007) talked about the question of the audience of street arts. She co-wrote together with Bertrand Dicale, *Oposito, l'art de la tribulation urbaine* (L'Entretemps, 2009). *IN VIVO, les figures des spectateurs des arts de la rue* (L'Entretemps, 2011) was written based on her research work. She actively observes creation in public space and regularly publishes in the specialised press (*Stradda, Mouvement/Lieux Publics*). Since December 2009, she works at HorsLesMurs, French information and documentation centre for street arts and circus, as the Research and Studies Manager.

It is with these questions in mind that the participants of the second edition of SAWA met in Winchester in 2012. A brief overview provided the chance to highlight the increased number of training programmes in the form of seminars and workshops, as well as the increased links with the University – as evidenced by the creation of the ZEPA network, which brings together partner universities of members of the Franco-British network ZEPA, and the launching in January 2013 of the first Masters degree in Street Art Creation, co-piloted by the FiraTàrrega festival and the University of Lleida

(UdL) in Catalonia . However, this engaging momentum must not hide the fact that programme offerings are fragmented and irregular, especially when it comes to seminars and workshops. Also, the lack of structure on the national and European levels continues to eat into the benefits of this development.

## Exploring the coming together of practice and research

For the participants, the beautiful building dedicated specifically to the arts college at the University of Winchester appeared emblematic of the idyllic situation of the Street Arts Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree directed by John Lee. Who would have imagined, 20 years ago, that there would be a seminar on training in the street arts held on a university campus? The existence in Europe of a BA dedicated to the street arts is an important first. Of course, pessimists will point out that there is only one of these and that it is, therefore, truly an exception. While this may be so, the partners of this second edition of SAWA and the actors on the ground who are committed to training seem intent on maintaining this exception, hopefully converting more and more people to their side, until they themselves attain the rank of "old timers".

It's no coincidence, of course, that an arts training programme in the centre of a University should take on as its theme the connections between practice and research and, more specifically, the notion of "artistic practice as research" since, as John Lee has mentioned many times and as Olu Taiwo showed in his intervention, these connections and the questions and issues they encompass are at the heart of the training offered by the BA programme. These connections are, in fact, a matter of continual experimentation and reflection. One cannot help but notice that the European scope of SAWA has turned out to be, as is often the case, both pertinent and complex in terms of its exchanges. The common ground of practice and research is always a topic for debate – at times bitter debate – and the Bologna accords amplified the potential for both growth and controversy. From the point of view of training dedicated to the street arts, the question of conjoining practice and research is a particularly interesting one. However, for participants, the very notion of "practice as research" poses a problem on several levels. First of all, the notion remains to this day more developed and, above all, more applied in the Anglo-Saxon world. It therefore needs to be clarified. However, this clarification is not so simple because, in truth, there are many approaches with subtly different implications. Finally, as we have now understood, such a clarification would also include major methodological issues that have been hotly debated.

How and why does artistic practice constitute research? What distinction can be made between research carried out by the artist as part of a creative process and foundational artistic research? What methods of supervision, of documentation and of dissemination can there be for research based on practice? How can the artist be considered a researcher? How does one evaluate the results of such research? These arduous questions shed light on the complex relationships that remain between artistic practice and scientific research, between artists and scholars.

## Learning from the experience of other sectors

These questions are not new and other artistic fields are currently addressing them as well. In order to shed some light on the street arts sector and so that its actors may take advantage of existing intellectual material and experiments carried out, it is useful to look into what is already out there. The intervention of Efva Lilja went along these lines. She is a choreographer, professor and Vice-Chancellor at the University of Dance and Circus in Stockholm (DOCH) and was invited to present at SAWA#2 the approach implemented at DOCH and, in particular, the doctoral programme in art. Detailing the philosophy and concrete actions implemented in favour of artistic research within the University, Efva Lilja pointed out that, on the one hand, the system of higher learning, especially in the arts, needed artist-scholars to renew its approaches and to question its methods, and on the other hand the research carried out by artists on their own process enables the development of both artistic knowledge and artistic production. "Many recognized artists have developed a new form of knowledge which they convey through their productions", she writes in a published article. "When the path they take to reach their goal is documented and the questions that emerge are made accessible to all so they can follow the process, examine it critically and learn lessons from it, more people are able to acquire more knowledge, to be inspired and motivated in their own work. This is how knowledge in the arts develops."

If the University of Dance and Circus in Stockholm (DOCH) still stands out as an exception in the European landscape for its strong commitment in favour of artistic research, the question of arts research has arisen in recent years in France in the plastic arts. As the Bologna accords have set in motion the reform of the Fine Arts schools, which are now accredited to award a Masters degree, the question of arts research in France has developed in a particularly vivacious and fascinating way. This is evidenced by, among other things, the release in 2010 of the publication *La recherche en art(s)* under the direction of Jehanne Dautrey as a follow-up to the multi-disciplinary seminar on the same theme held from December 2007 to September 2008, as well as the conference "Art and Research: Research in Art and in Artistic Higher Education", which took place 9-10 February 2012. Among the main issues evoked during these debates is the need to allow for an emergence of research on art that is specifically focused on artistic practice. As Emmanuel Tiblioux, Director of the National School of Fine Arts in Lyon has pointed out, "it is here that we find a unique opportunity to create and develop the field of a properly artistic form of research, one that would comply with the heterodox principles of art." The fear of a universalization of artistic teaching is clearly articulated, with the research and evaluative methods characteristic of the University seen as rigidifying and leaning toward standardisation. "Research on art can in no way be dissociated from the production of plastic works", argues Bernard Rüdiger, artist and professor at the National School of Fine Arts in Lyon. The form is the true place of this research, even when other approaches – theoretical, historical and philosophical – are indispensable to arrive at this form. When one makes the decision, in France, to

formalise this research by focusing on university practices, one runs the risk of excluding all of the rigorous research necessarily linked to questions and temporalities involved in an artistic praxis." It is therefore the close and complex relationship that emerges between practice and research that is at stake here and in all artistic fields and disciplines. In this same line of questioning, one could also address research in dance, which attached itself to the methodological question of the "inside/outside" in a particularly invigorating way.

It is with this global context in mind that we must focus today on training in the street arts sector and on the development and structuring of training offerings on the European scale. Like Sisyphus facing the mountain, actors on the ground certainly feel overwhelmed at times by all that is at stake and by the ground to be covered. They may also feel isolated and/or in a position of weakness, especially in their interactions with Universities, whose administrative mechanisms seem – rightly or wrongly – like steamrollers that flatten everything as they pass by. But the training landscape has evolved in the sector of artistic education and in the University. Opportunities must be created and seized in order to develop training offerings, especially introductory offerings, while we also conserve atypical methods and formats in close connection and resonance with the moving and voluble milieu of the street arts. Most importantly, there is much to learn from other artistic fields that have already addressed and, for some, confronted head on the potential setbacks briefly described here. Finally, collaboration among actors on the ground, the mobility of students and artists in the framework of introductory training as well as seminars and workshops and the conducting of a general discussion on methods of transmission, formation and pedagogy specific to the street arts constitute, more than ever, major issues to be addressed on the European scale.

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- 1 Download at [www.circostrada.org](http://www.circostrada.org)
- 2 [www.zepa9.eu](http://www.zepa9.eu)
- 3 See the contribution of Jordi Duran i Roldós, Artistic Director of FiraTàrrrega, present at SAWA#2.
- 4 The Bologna Process is committed to the construction of a European space of higher learning. The idea is to structure a common framework for national systems, based notably on two key points: the uniform implementation of the BMD structure (Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate, also called 3-5-8 in reference to the number of years of study) and the implementation of a single credit-granting system – the European system of credit transfer and accumulation – aimed at facilitating mobility for students.
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# Practice as Research from an Artist's Perspective

## Bev Adams

*Board Member [ISAN Independent Street Arts Network]*

*Committee Member [NASA National Association of Street Artists UK]*

*Artistic Director/CEO [Faceless Company]*

## Notes from conference break out group:

- The act of creating the work is research in progress/practice
- There is a need for practical research into space, ritual, content, scenography for street artists/arts
- Ability to rehearse is constrained by the need for an audience in situ
- Musicians and dancers train themselves every day. Street artists attend occasional workshops, but these are rarely documented. The cost implications in Pounds/Euros for daily training is prohibitive to the street arts practitioner
- There is a need for supported networks where artists can share skills and ideas
- What would we do if we had daily street arts training?
  - Observe the street and how people inhabit it prior to creating any work (Bev)
  - Train the body (Sally)
  - Explore the dramaturgy of public space (Goro)
  - Understand the trinity of Audience / Artist / Space in Time (Goro)

ches in thinking, creation, writing, cross fertilisation, and teaching/dissemination

- As well as learning and skills development, the university provides opportunities in terms of observation, critical thinking, reflection and documentation

## Documentation

- It is important for artists to talk about what they do (the process) and publish it – our form is, for the most part, ephemeral
- It is important to document the environment in which the work is created
- How do you effectively document a theatrical event?
- How do you document a performance's impact in changing something subtle in the street... momentarily
- The best documentation is communication
- Document in order to connect with other professions

## Other models

- Week-long or longer placements with practicing companies to explore the specific skill sets and techniques of that company (Bev)
- How do we preserve longer term practice (support networks, creation of work and its impact on wider sectors)? (Sally)
- NASA supports a model of annual residential weekends for street artists...
- Sugla – a two-year programme providing entry level training in street arts for young people in Ljubljana (Goro)

## The role of the university

- Formal and informal documentation (there has been predominantly oral transmission of work to date)
- Maintain archives
- Present opportunities to discover, question and experiment
- Multi-faculty universities are a rich ground for cross-fertilisation (with geography, social science, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, etcetera)
- The university provides time and space for fresh approa-

## Bev Adams

Since founding Faceless in 1990 Bev has continued to perform, adapt and direct a range of professional and community outdoor performance productions with the company. Bev takes a humanist, philosophical approach to socially engaged work and through the "Empty Square" projects is currently researching the relationships between outdoor & community arts practice and (re)definition of civic space & civil society. Bev's practice is based in in visual, mainly non-verbal, ensemble outdoor performance, using Mask, Puppetry and Clown alongside the techniques of Peter Brook & Vsevolod Meyerhold.

Bev has taught street arts, puppetry, biomechanics and ensemble to community participants of all ages and abilities as well as at undergraduate level at Winchester University & Leeds University, England and Anadolu University in Turkey.

## The role of documenter

- Documenters can be critics, professors, artists or audiences; all these perspectives need to be documented
- Importance of external documentation in addition to that produced by the practicing artist, providing further analysis and alternative perceptions, expanding the work
- Critical exchange between observer and practitioner enabling objective explanations of the work

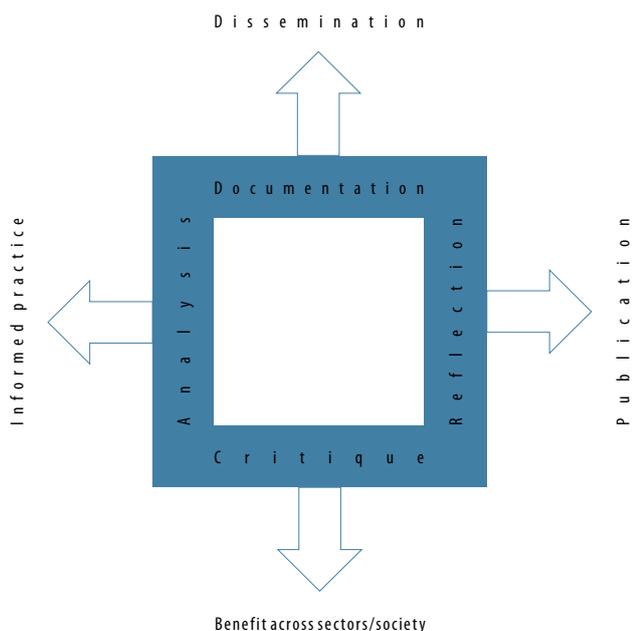
## However

- The artist may be the best person to talk about the work
- It depends on the relationship between documenter and artist. It can be a co-constructive process with the documenter avoiding the position of the critic
- We need to see research and practice combined as a whole
- We can all plug into social media more readily to disseminate our practice and research
- Q: When creating a show, when does homework become research?
- A: When it informs future practice or society.

## Search → Research

You need a frame in which to present a perspective or to analyse/document the practice – research is the frame.

## Research Frame



# A Conference Response

## The Problems and Promise of Emerging Conversations on Street Arts Histories

Grant Tyler Peterson

*Researcher, performer and teacher*

The historical documentation of street arts – or the lack of it – appears to be a recurring topic for the Street Arts Winter Academy (SAWA). Although I was not in attendance at the first SAWA conference in Slovenia, I gather from the writings that emerged, and from the discussions at this year's SAWA in Winchester, that street arts history is a sometimes difficult but ongoing conversation within SAWA. After all, it seems impossible to discuss street arts within the context of educational programmes without relying on, at least in some sense, history and knowledge derived from the previous grammars of street practice. Historical narratives of street arts shape current practice, and accordingly, the use of street arts history and documentation as pedagogical tools and the study of disciplinary practices are natural areas of interest and merit our attention.

Whereas the SAWA 2011 conference focused on defining an educational field for the practice and study of street arts, SAWA 2012 investigated how institutional Practice as Research (PaR) models might serve and contribute to this emerging field. The PaR theme invited many questions and inspired several ideas about the role of history and documentation within street arts. Of course, street arts, as a set of artistic practices and cultural forms, have evaded or have been excluded from traditional modes of documentation – particularly academic literary forms. In this manner, much of street arts history has been overlooked or disregarded, and its practices, traditions and paraphernalia brushed to the gutters of the past. Literature recording and critically considering histories of street arts practice is, of course, upsettingly thin. With the troublesome state of street arts' documented histories, one must ask: if an educational field of street arts is to emerge and maintain itself, what role can history and historical methods play?

At this year's PaR themed SAWA, issues concerning artistic research and its relationship to methods of history, performance documentation, and critical reflection featured frequently in the keynote addresses, in seminar discussions, as well as in remarks on the closing day. First, Dr Olu Taiwo opened the conference with a keynote performance that featured a series of drum rhythms from various regions in Africa, followed by Taiwo's explication of the differences in each variation. Taiwo's performative fusion of rhythmic vocabularies was put forth as an example of PaR, and crucial to his demonstration was a methodology that included an articulation of the pre-existing musical patterns of drumming from which his performance borrowed and re-appropriated. In this respect, Taiwo's keynote served as an example of how PaR as

an academic practice for street arts can be productively supported by historical dialogues with past and present practices.

Professor Efva Lilja's keynote address complemented Taiwo's presentation not only by emphasising the role of memory and history within an artist's research, but by extending the importance of kinaesthetic repertoires to the impact they can have on a public's consciousness. An applicable example of Lilja's point entered discussion later in the conference when Ebru Gokdag explained how certain forms of street theatre that might be considered cliché in Britain (such as living statues or stilt walking) retain a novelty in Turkey where such forms of street practice are relatively new. In this sense, a public's taste for creative forms of civic

### Grant Tyler Peterson

Grant received a MA from UCLA and a PhD from Royal Holloway, University of London. He has published work in the field of performance studies focusing on areas including British alternative theatre history, street theatre, gender, sexuality, and digital technologies. His recent research, funded by the HEFCE, presents a historiographical study of street theatre practices and focuses on one of Britain's longest operating street theatre troupes, the Natural Theatre Company.

engagement can reflect a public consciousness shaped, in part, by street artists. A public's predilections are, of course, the result of a host of many other forces and arise from a specific time and place, but by recognising relationships between street artists and public audiences, we can examine more closely the ways street arts are employed and how performative interventions or cross-cultural exchanges function.

Understanding how certain publics engage (or not) with street arts practices, and how artists might compose work in relation to this, relies on past and current knowledge of working on the street. Traditionally, street arts, as a set of cultural forms, has relied significantly on modes of informal social exchanges to

maintain, revise, reinvent, and develop. This is a cultural process Joseph Roach has described as surrogation, or the successive developments of practitioners' kinaesthetic imagination, shaping how artists move, interact, and embody modes of expression, knowledge and engagement. Diana Taylor has also written extensively on performance practices that may lack preserved material archives but represent dynamic cultural reserves of knowledge in the form of social exchanges and culturally composed repertoires of movement embodying important histories.

In this respect, street arts represent a large body of diverse cultural practices and embodied repertoires. Archives of street arts practices – whether in the form of embodied repertoires, traditional collections, academic texts, digital data, or otherwise – represent potential areas of development for street arts educators, practitioners, and researchers. As Anthony Dean noted early in the 2012 conference, street arts educational programmes generally lack archives that support contextual studies and historical research interests. It was also noted in the conference how other disciplinary fields rely on, at least in part, established bodies of documented work and other resources that may productively intersect with street arts; these included: dance studies, theatre studies, visual arts, music, architecture, digital media, and sport studies. Interdisciplinary opportunities and educational alliances with such departments may be, it was said, in the interests of street arts programmes to foster. For example, joint departmental relationships may lead to developing or sharing resources, archival collections, libraries, and performance training facilities.

Accompanying ideas of disciplinary collaboration and developing archives, this year's conversations about street arts history were sometimes characterised by a degree of anxiety. 'As one of the most transient of occupations in the arts,' John Lee commented in his final remarks, 'it is interesting that we have a concern, not only about [providing] information and details to other genera-

tions, but also that sense of prosperity has anxiety to it as well, in the sense that the idea that we leave something that is evident'. The anxiety about street arts' history noted by Lee may also help explain why, up to this point, SAWA has not more directly approached questions of history and documentation. As Lee observed, history and documentation became a 'very strong theme', even if unintended. He continued,

*Both in terms of documenting what we did, and also the role of documentation as archive and other forms. And I think this is something that comes up very strongly and we should address it perhaps at SAWA in the future. Sometimes you set a theme here, and actually other things come out of that and those are the things people really want to talk about. These things reflect what the unconscious actually wants to talk about even though we put up something else. We should listen to this. That's a suggestion.*

I agree with Lee and think his suggestion represents both an important intervention and a promising point of departure. We must, of course, remain mindful that adopting academic practices in recording street arts' history may invite the challenges that often accompany forms of documentation and institutionalisation, as well as the political riddles therein – issues and relationships long resisted by many street artists. But questions and debates about who tells, shares, documents, collaborates, and 'controls' histories of street arts can be a healthy, polyvocal, and productive process – one that can remain active and unfinished. Historical projects aimed at expanding street arts' archival bodies of knowledge could potentially offer significant benefits for artists, educators, and researchers alike. As an emerging field, it becomes increasingly pertinent for street arts to address issues of history and documentation. These types of conversations and projects could create promising opportunities and hold potential for enhancing dialogue with each other and the public about street arts' valuable cultural contributions and important historical legacies.

# Case Study “FAI AR”

## Advanced Itinerant Learning Programme for Street Arts (FAI AR)

Aurélie Labouesse  
*Head of studies [FAI AR]*

For ten years, FAI AR, the Advanced Itinerant Learning Programme for Street Arts, has accompanied artists who have chosen the public space and other out-of-the-ordinary spaces to communicate their artistic message. This training programme bases its pedagogical approach on a fruitful coming together of different forms of artistic writing. Participating students come to the programme having already established a certain background, a skill in an artistic discipline and their own artistic universe. Throughout the 18 months, they reinforce their knowledge, skills and desires in terms of expression in the public space. They examine their practices and their own place and strengths within the public sphere through encounters with working professionals, through experimentation and through multiple practical exercises.

### The importance of Research in FAI AR's approach

Pedagogically, beyond the teaching of technique and skill, the fundamental principal is that of learning by doing. This project-oriented pedagogy is at the heart of the 3 training directives. The Fundamentals make for a collective experience and are carried out in ten 3-week modules, which are interspersed throughout the curriculum. Each module carries the mark of the artist designated to direct it and to choose its theme and territory for experimentation. They each result in a creation managed in situ. The pedagogical goal is then to allow for a practical implementation of research. The goal, for the artists running the modules, is not to offer a certain formula or technique to be understood and learnt. To the contrary, they are asked to share a manner of questioning, and through contact with different artistic worlds, to explore possible responses as a group.

### The Individual adventures are personal journeys through four orientations:

- The Gardens to cultivate: an independently-managed option to pursue one's initial practice or to learn new skills,
- The Extraordinary moments: knowledge sharing based around the major events of the world of Art in the public space,
- The Volunteer collaboration: an internship as artistic assistant in a professional organisation,
- The Imagined journey: a 2-week educational journey in a country as far-removed as possible from the artist's own universe, meant to encourage insight to the relationship between Art and the public space.

The decisions made allow each participant to find his or her own way and to nourish new ways of thinking while also creating a space for sharing and exchange.

The Personal artistic project is a project of artistic research. Each student is encouraged to write and direct his or her own project. While the project's completion is not the final goal, its composition and construction are key to appreciating the different stakes and perspectives involved.

This work is complemented by documentary research, experimentation and regular encounters with professionals. It is supported by a writing grant and overlooked by a remunerated Tutor. The project is eventually presented in 4 different forms (a project file, an oral presentation, an installation and an in situ experimentation) during the Overview of worksites, which takes place at the end of the training programme's final semester.

Since FAI AR's goal is to facilitate reinsertion into the professional world, its students are encouraged to engage in concrete research via its 3 pedagogical axes. Although the project's completion is not part of the required curriculum, it is to this end that each student embarks on his or her research.

This pedagogical approach places great emphasis on learning through experimentation and through personally guided research, rather than through the teaching of techniques (although this is not at all absent from the curriculum).

### Academically oriented research

In the case of FAI AR, the word Research must be considered from an artistic point of view. FAI AR, like the major artistic schools in France (the School of Fine Arts, the School of Architecture, the different schools for the performing arts) is compelled to operate in line with the Bologna process (LMD). In light of this, it has decided to create a partnership with a university in order to accredit its curriculum with a Masters level university degree. This partnership comes with a number of obligations, such as the integration of academic research into the curriculum. The agreement now in process with the University of Aix-Marseille will complement the practical, professional training of FAI AR with theoretical research to be expanded upon in the writing and defence of a Masters thesis. FAI AR's 18-month curriculum will be complemented by 3 months of academic work, and the 2-year programme will be accredited with a professional Masters degree in "Scenic Dramaturgy and Composition".

The nature of the academic research to be carried out is yet to be determined. Will it be in conjunction with the artistic project? Will there be a theoretical analysis of the concept, or a consideration of other, less artistic aspects, and if so, in what form? Will it be a written paper, a digital project, and how will such a project be accompanied in terms of theory and methodology? How will the Tutor (who accompanies the artistic project) and the thesis advisor interact? More generally, how does one implement academic research, and its demands in terms of methodology, analysis and results, within an artistic framework?

These questions are not unique to FAI AR, but are relevant to all artistic training programmes. In France, two conferences on the theme of "Art and Research" in 2009 and February 2012 brought together the Art Schools. The goals of these encounters was to rethink research from the point of view of art, while also establishing points of comparison and dialogue with scientific research, to question the position of art and the artist in his or her relationship with research, to approach or to provoke research lab or research programme conditions within the artistic field.

## Research: a generator of growth and exchange

One point accentuating the usefulness of thinking about research in art is the search for and understanding of new artistic forms. Research is considered a possible space for the exploration and creation of new perspectives. The current tendency toward hybrid artistic forms requires fields from which these may emerge and crossover with other forms. Lastly, the artist, as an instigator of social, societal and technological change is a producer of generative innovations and economic development, and attracts interest well beyond the boundaries of artistic fields.

Schools are the privileged terrain of such "discoveries", since they participate in the training of the artists of tomorrow. They are spaces for exploration, experimentation and open laboratories.

The specificities of Art in the public space open these art forms up to even broader interests. Their multidisciplinary nature enable them to bring together theatre, dance, the plastic arts and music. But more than this, they also discuss issues of the city and of living together while also affecting the sectors of architecture, urban planning, sociology, political science, geography and economy. What's more, the artists or students of artistic training programmes produce resources that can be of interest to various professional fields.

The street arts have demonstrated a deficit in terms of the production of resources and knowledge. The recent creation of specialized training and the integration of this training in the academic field point toward a growth in traces and documentation, as well as certain forms of artistic, theoretical formalization and dissemination. This must be combined with contributions made to creation in the public space in a more intermittent or peripheral fashion by other training programmes.

The research question in the domain of the street arts allows us to consider transnational and trans-disciplinary partnerships and

exchanges. It can serve as the crossover of different types of structures or actors (universities and centres of artistic training, research laboratories and creation centres, artists and scholars...).

### Aurélie Labouesse

Has been working with FAI AR since 2002 and participates in the defining and implementation of the programme of studies, pedagogical supports, structural development (partnerships and international relations). Masters in Economics and Arts administration. Currently researching the field of Education for creation in public space. University thesis: "Invent or I'll devour you. The creation of artistic training mechanisms as a new developmental priority for the street arts", 2002 / Rapport Fondation HICTER "A European diploma for creation in public space" 2011

How might we accompany this exploratory aspect? The boundaries defining arts in the public space are in constant movement. These arts include very diverse expressions, intentions and visions, and make for complex collaborations. The common interests are at times to be found within other fields. Openness is therefore perhaps the key word to bring together the different actors, forms and experiences. The departure point could be to find one or several common denominators (for example, the performance space, the relationship with the audience, or unconventional artistic forms...) that could become an important reference point and encourage cohesion despite the differences between the actors, along with a broader interest beyond the artistic field. These considerations enable one to consider issues at the heart of the contemporary debate, especially that of "creative Europe" (the city, living together, the creation and maintenance of common values, development through innovation and creativity...).

The other concern for a training programme is professionalization. How does one accompany the artists of tomorrow? What is at stake in artistic training? Can one be trained into the artistic profession? What relationship should be sought out among professionals, training and research and what are the stakes of the artistic sector? FAI AR will offer a further exploration of these questions in March 2013 in Marseille at the 3<sup>rd</sup> SAWA edition, leading up to the Overview of worksites of its 4<sup>th</sup> graduating class.

# Case Study “BA Street Arts”

## The University of Winchester BA Street Arts Degree in the Context of Formal and Informal Education

John Lee

Program leader of the Street Arts degree [University of Winchester]

The Second Street Arts Winter Academy at the University of Winchester was a platform that brought together voices from across street arts' many disciplines. Members of the conference came from Turkey, Slovenia, France, the UK, Germany, Sweden, and Spain, and ranged from practitioners, to community artists, to facilitators and academics.

A central intention was to creatively explore pedagogies in the teaching/learning of street arts education and training in order to establish detailed documentation of the various ways that these formal and informal systems might be organised.

The Academy was specifically interested in the debates that relate to the principles, aims and pedagogical frameworks of street arts education; the relationship of the various disciplines to the subject

revealed a wide range of professional, educational and community practices. Therefore I will leave others to talk for themselves and attempt to offer the experience of Winchester's BA Street Arts Degree as it relates to the aims of the Academy.

Within the formality of the Academy's stated aims, I wish to express the distance between the event and the writing of the event, between the experience of being there and the reflection on being there. My sense of what was attempted and what was achieved have become clearer. I am also informed by my experience as an educator and artist and by the final achievements of the students on the BA Street Arts degree – the first students ever to graduate from the course – and I wish to draw in my experience of developing and running this degree programme in order to reflect on the intentions and achievements of the Academy.

### John Lee

Program leader of the Street Arts degree. M.Sc in Social and Political Theory, MBA and MA in Performance Writing. 26 years professional practice as a performer/ director in 35 countries British Council.

In summary, the intentions of the Academy were to explore different ways in which a Street Arts education/training might be defined from initial philosophy and aims, through learning objectives and models of practice, all the way to the outcomes and their summative and formative assessments. Were there ways that we could include all the needs of such an education and training within generic statements that might act as principles that lead to good practice(s)? Were there golden threads that connected the academic study of street arts with the specificity of intensive practitioner-led training?

area of street arts and to notions of interdisciplinary practice; the definition of learning objectives and outcomes and curricular content; and the sharing of examples of good practice and models in teaching methods, methods of assessment and accreditation.

The Academy was interested in defining the relationships between formal/institutional pedagogies and informal/practitioner-led intensive training programmes. Additionally there was interest in the possibility of the existence of both within one new generic type.

*'Street arts are a very exciting and rich ground in which we continue to develop new aesthetics, collaborating with people of different cultures and discovering our differences as well as our common ground.'* (Mullins: 2003)

Given the diversity of the members of the Academy, this document represents the Academy's desire to develop a polyvocal approach to achieving its desired outcomes, especially as the Academy has

As a practitioner, I have benefited from the advantages of intensive, practitioner-led training. Workshop leaders guide a workshop member through a set of practices that are often organised into warm-up, group skills / skill based learning, tasks, and leader/peer evaluation. These vary in approach and in the skills that are exchanged according to the trainer's own skill set and performance style. These workshops are usually very focused and useful in that, at their least, they offer insights into an area of practice and develop skills, and, at their best, they inspire participants to work through the workshop leader's practice in order to find their own voice. The usefulness of the workshop to the workshop participant also depends on their ability to reflect and continue to practice beyond the period of the workshop and to integrate its teaching into their own practices. Participants are often drawn to a workshop by the professional work of its leader, and may enter with questions about how the leader's practice has been developed and how it might relate to their own practice. This is an example of practice as research.

How does street arts operate within formal education? In the BA Street Arts course at Winchester the central pedagogy has become one in which the students concentrate on the dramaturgical question of how to generate material in relation to the use of space as a resource, and then how this can be developed as collaborative practice between artists and creative producers.

The programme assesses how the students access and develop resources, how they devise performance material, and how they then place that material in space in relation to negotiated restraints.

One of the programme's important learning objectives was the facilitation of lateral thinking around practice, encouraging students to find new and innovative ways of defining their practice and their subject matter. They are encouraged to challenge traditional categorisations of street arts performance by exploring the possibilities for cross-fertilisation between different art disciplines, between different transcultural approaches, and between street arts performance and other fields of study.

The students are also encouraged to see themselves as creative producers, or to at least have some relationship to that function – i.e. to become makers and promoters of their own work, and to form their own companies and/or see themselves as cultural entrepreneurs who can facilitate and promote innovative events and projects.

So at the core of this degree is the desire to produce contemporary interdisciplinary street arts practice through the exploration of company and solo practice, and to create new work through critical reflection on performance and performance making processes.

Translating these pedagogical objectives into specific learning objectives, a contextual learning objective might, for example, read:

**To explore theoretical and practical ways in which street arts practices emerge from and interact with personal, dramaturgical, cultural and socio-political contexts.**

That objective might open a module on Dramaturgy of Public Space in which students are asked to study different ways that public space is constructed by examining a range of theoretical texts on the production of space, and by looking at interesting companies that work in unusual and found spaces to create primarily but not exclusively outdoor performances. Assessments in this case would be through a written and digitalised document that allows the student to demonstrate interesting practice online, and through a debate in which students are asked to defend one side of a contested point of view.

Another practical learning objective for the programme might read:

**To create emerging independent and skilled street arts performance makers, who have knowledge of the professional street arts sector and are creative and critically reflective practitioners.**

This would lead to a module in Devising which, at the core of the degree, would represent the main tool for creating material for

performance. Students would approach the process of devising from different directions that could include design/making, circus skills, dance, movement, or puppetry, and they would be taught how to use and develop their existing skills. Assessment would be through performances which, as the students progressed through the programme, would become increasingly open to the public. This would be accompanied by the writing of journals and other documents to allow the student to critically reflect on their work and to demonstrate wider reading and thinking through a range of media that would at least partly include their preferred form of expression. This would allow them the opportunity to excel within rather than exclude their range of abilities. As a first year module, this would also help the students to start to develop their own unique voice.

Within each module the assessment would be judged on criteria that test the student's level in achieving the learning outcomes.

For example in devising a criteria would be:

**Depth of exploration of process and of growth as a performer and learner.**

This would look at how, in their journal and performance work, the student had referred to / drawn from other practitioners; at how they had demonstrated / discussed what they had created in their performance and their reasons for creating it; at the level of sophistication in their work; and at how they had used what they had learnt in the studio.

In terms of progression through the levels of the degree programme the students would generally be expected to receive more difficult assignments in terms of written word counts and the complexity of questions, and to create gradually longer and more ambitious productions.

More importantly they would be expected to explore and research more widely in their preparation and analysis, and to adopt more and more independent approaches in their group and solo work with fewer inputs from their tutors. Also their range of skills would widen out from those of creative performers to encompass a range of skills including performance, making, production design, digital practices, and the ability to creatively produce their work in a way that would maintain its artistic integrity and find an appropriate audience.

In this sense the degree aims to make each student a complete artist who can imagine, design and deliver a performance or event and then creatively produce it and market it to its audience.

So what happened? Did it succeed with the first cycle of students? The current third-years have trail-blazed their way through the degree programme. They will be performing at the Olympic Games 2012 in London in front of 80,000 people each day. Student company groups have toured successfully in France at student and cultural festivals. They have collectively created their own emergent festival, Platform. They have set up their own not-for-profit company from which they create and produce events, have funded overseas exchange visits to the Tàrrega Creation Centre

in Catalonia, and with ZEPA and University funding have worked and created performances with French and UK companies both here and abroad at the Le Fourneau Creation Centre. They have appeared in major TV award ceremonies and films, worked within local communities with young people, started and run their own burlesque club. The degree has been nominated as the most innovative degree in the UK.

However, behind these examples of the students' outward-facing activities lie more interesting observations. A formal education at a university has given them time to explore and question their creative practice. The key in this type of education is to examine the process, not necessarily the outcome. It has allowed them to develop their own artistic voice. They have built a portfolio of performances and events within an evolving and emerging practice. They have learnt to devise from dramaturgical starting points as well as to play and invent from visual and performative starting points. They have learnt to think and reflect and to critique their work and the work of others. They have learnt very practical skills and how to strategise within these for their own artistic objectives. They have become fearless in front of, and with, the public, creating work on the streets as well as in the studio. They have learnt how to speak about their work and publicise it through the use of digital media and how to run their own business. At their best, they are emerging as independent artists able to speak about street arts and about their work within the sector.

They have in the true sense of the word been allowed to become professionals ready to tackle the difficult world of street arts.

These are the true benefits of a formal education that has been realised, as far as is possible, as an Academy and creation centre led by practice as research.

The journey to this point has also taken us through difficult times and involved immense learning. The students have completed the narrative that began when the degree was first conceived, and the staff have just now arrived at the point of really understanding what this type of education can be and what now needs to happen to develop the degree programme to its full potential.

To return, then, to SAWA and its intentions. To some extent, the Academy explored some of the themes described above. In retrospect, the Academy needed focus on the actual details of the creation of learning and teaching programmes, within both formal and informal education, and to take some of the general discussions to this level. An expression used in the UK says that 'the devil is in the detail'. This is often where the real crafting of an educational process can take place, and where an effect will be felt within the teaching space. What was valuable at SAWA was the exchange of information on practices across Europe and the valued inputs of all the Academy's members. How we are to detail and document our work together still needs to be decided, and I look forward to further discussion on how this might be achieved.

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# Case Study “Street Jam”

## Street Jam: Education, Professional Practice and Training

Sally Mann

*Lecturer/research practitioner [University of Winchester]*

The second Street Arts Winter Academy was held at the University of Winchester, and was a platform that brought together collective voices from across the street arts disciplines and from across Europe. The conference bridged the space between the subject areas of education, training, dramaturgy and artistic practice, and emphasised the importance of dialogue between different approaches.

The conference discussed training and education both within and outside institutions, covering professional practice, research, working with professional companies to map training, pedagogical approaches, and opportunities that exist across Europe. This was by no means a definitive study but a starting point and contribution to the street arts sector. The conference members mapped their own knowledge and expertise of training in street arts.

As co-director of Fuse Performance, a street arts company based in South West England, my contribution will discuss the link between education, professional practice and training, as well as how Fuse creates and makes work with professional artists across artforms; the creation of new work in public spaces; peer-led practice; and the work of supporting emerging artists.

Fuse delivers formal training in further and higher education institutions. As a nomadic mobile academy Fuse delivers nationally accredited training in the UK as well as informal training. The training is focused on developing skills and dramaturgy, and creating new work and performances in public spaces by using a combination of artforms that encompasses visual and digital arts, circus, street theatre, music, and dance.

The Fuse project Streetjam is a peer-led model of practice that works with professionals and emerging practitioners, offering training for young people to deliver workshops in youth and community settings. Fuse is also part of a multi-agency partnership working with the local government, the National Health Service, architects, planners, local agencies, theatres, and people who are from disadvantaged backgrounds or hard to reach areas including rural and urban environments. Fuse widens perceptions of how street arts are used to fulfil social and cultural strategies and produces performances, interventions, festivals and events.

The long-term, sustainable youth and community projects Fuse delivers are part of its collaboration with multi-agency partnerships which work towards supporting social, cultural and economic stra-

tegies. The funding cuts for the arts in Somerset have been harsh, with 100% cuts. In a political climate that does not necessarily support the arts it is important now more than ever to produce, make and create work, and to embed the arts into the social fabric of everyday practice by nurturing established artists, supporting emerging artists, creating events, performances and platforms for the future, and working together in collaborations.

As part of this changing landscape Fuse is undertaking research with Creative Somerset, the carousel collective that shares knowledge and expertise, and that enhances opportunities for companies and emerging artists in a variety of disciplines and skills that may include film, street theatre, lighting, performance, directing, festivals, outdoor performance, street arts, production and administration. Adopting transferable skills and teaching methods, and training and learning from other disciplines and from different perspectives, may widen opportunities within sectors.

Sally Mann

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With SAWA and ZEPA, Fuse will continue its exploration, working for a depth of knowledge that could bring not only new artistic collaborations but also new ways of working and thinking, making a richer textual landscape of cross-disciplinary practice.