

The ANdÉA

The National Association of French Higher Schools of Art

Established in 1995, The National Association of Directors of Higher Schools of Art (ANDEA) became the National Association of Higher Schools of Art (ANdÉA) in May 2012. Bringing together the totality of the 46 public art schools who deliver national qualifications at the level of BAC +3 and BAC +5 (the latter being a Master's level qualification) and structured to receive the diverse range of participants who bring a wealth of talent and imbue it with life (directors, administrators, teachers, department heads, students), the ANdÉA is a platform for thought, a body of proposition and a force for the affirmation of the specific nature of teaching in the context of higher education in the domain of art.

In a context of the restructuring of the landscape of higher education, the association intends to promote and develop a unique model of teaching and research, which is characterized by the primacy of its reference to the field of art, to its values and its models — irreducible in this sense to the single field of academic higher education but capable, for this very reason, of enjoying a fruitful relationship with the self-same.

The ANdÉA fully and wholeheartedly contribute to the debate of contemporary ideas, by arguing in favor of the unique, emancipatory model of art schools, at a time when both education and creativity have become political, social and economic issues of the utmost importance.

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* *École (nationale) supérieure d'art / École d'enseignement supérieur d'art / Haute école d'art / Institut supérieur des arts:*
 (National) Higher School of Art
École supérieure d'art et de design / de communication:
 Higher School of Art and Design / Communication
École (nationale) supérieure des beaux-arts:
 (National) Higher School of Fine Arts

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The Network of the 46 French Public Higher Art Schools*

École supérieure d'art d'Aix-en-Provence	École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Lyon
École supérieure d'art et de design d'Amiens	École supérieure d'art et de design Marseille-Méditerranée
École européenne supérieure de l'image, Angoulême-Poitiers	Pavillon Bosio - École supérieure d'arts plastiques de la ville de Monaco
École supérieure d'art de l'agglomération d'Annecy	École supérieure des beaux-arts Montpellier Agglomération
École nationale supérieure de la photographie, Arles	Haute école des arts du Rhin, Mulhouse-Strasbourg
École supérieure d'art d'Avignon	École nationale supérieure d'art de Nancy
Institut supérieur des beaux-arts Besançon / Franche-Comté	École supérieure des beaux-arts Nantes Métropole
École supérieure d'art des Rocailles de l'Agglomération Côte Basque-Adour, Biarritz	La Villa Arson - École nationale supérieure d'art de Nice
École d'enseignement supérieur d'art de Bordeaux	École supérieure des beaux-arts de Nîmes
École nationale supérieure d'art de Bourges	École supérieure d'art et de design d'Orléans
École européenne supérieure d'art de Bretagne, Brest-Lorient-Quimper-Rennes	École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, Paris
École supérieure d'art et de communication de Cambrai	École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Paris
École supérieure d'arts & médias de Caen-Cherbourg	Les Ateliers - École nationale supérieure de création industrielle, Paris
École média art Fructidor, Chalon-sur-Saône (Grand Chalon)	École nationale supérieure d'arts de Paris-Cergy
École supérieure d'art de Clermont Métropole	École supérieure d'art des Pyrénées, Pau-Tarbes
École nationale supérieure d'art de Dijon	Haute école d'art de Perpignan
École supérieure d'art du Nord-Pas de Calais, Dunkirk-Tourcoing	École supérieure d'art et de design de Reims
École supérieure d'art de Lorraine, Épinal-Metz	École supérieure d'art et design de Saint-Étienne
Campus caraïbéen des arts, pôle EIA, Fort-de-France, Martinique	École supérieure d'art et design Toulon Provence Méditerranée
École supérieure d'art et design Grenoble-Valence	institut supérieur des arts de Toulouse
École supérieure d'art et design Le Havre-Rouen	Le Fresnoy - Studio national des arts contemporains, Tourcoing
École supérieure d'art de La Réunion, Le Port	École supérieure des beaux-arts Tours-Angers-Le Mans
École nationale supérieure d'art de Limoges	École supérieure d'art et de design de Valenciennes

The Charters for studies and research were the fruit of workshops held during the most recent summer conferences of the ANdÉA. Beginning with the tangible reality of studies and research in an art school, the emphasis is on proposing a fair and shareable description, to announce the main principles and to draw the outlines and possibilities of a policy of higher education in the arts.

The *Charter for studies* was written following the 2013 conference held in the École supérieure d'art d'Aix-en-Provence.

The *Charter for research* was written following the 2012 conference held at the École supérieure d'art du Nord-Pas de Calais – site de Tourcoing, then modified in April 2013 in the context of work being done by the Research committee of the ANdÉA. As with the research itself, it is a *work in progress*.

Charter for Art School Studies

Art schools have a history that has helped them become what they are today. In France, contrary to the system of public instruction, the landscape of art schools was shaped outside of any national, centralized impetus, and formed according to the geographical origin of this or that artist of the Academy or, simply according to the needs of local fabricants. Art schools fall simultaneously under fine arts and professional teaching, which place them alternatively in artists' studios, municipal schools or even in manufacturing schools. It is because they were free, small and little organized in the 70s and 80s that art schools became the laboratory for a profound reform that placed art and the artist at the heart of their pedagogy. This reform, that found its source in the invention of modern art in the 19th century, was made possible a century later by the creation of the Ministry for Cultural affairs in 1959. Taking the measure of the impact made by the avant-gardes, this ministry ended the separation between art studies and the state of international contemporary art. It replaced the tradition of the master in a studio with a method founded on personal research, experimentation and collegiality. It also introduced theoretical teaching which has allowed the decompartmentalization of studies that, until then, had a strong professional orientation, initiating the era of a non-specialized method, a reflection of what art itself had become, art freed from academicism and from technical and market restrictions. From the end of the 19th century to today, art (or free art, fine art, modern art and then contemporary art) has become separate from applied and industrial arts, secondary schools and those of higher education, schools and universities, each one creating its own institutional space.

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The architecture of studies and qualifications

There are in France 46 higher schools of art under the pedagogical supervision of the Ministry for Culture and Communication, located in 59 sites all over the country. In most of these schools, national and territorial, studies are constructed in the following manner:

- ♦ a first cycle leading to a national qualification, a Diplôme National d'Arts Plastiques / National Diploma in Visual Arts (DNAP) or a Diplôme National d'Arts et Techniques / National Diploma in Arts and Technologies (DNAT), of a "Licence" level (semesters 1 to 6) made up of a general first year and two years in one of the following three options: art, design or communication;
- ♦ a second cycle leading to a national qualification, the Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique / National Higher Degree in Visual Expression (DNSEP), in art, design or communication, awarding the grade of Master (semesters 7 to 10).
- ♦ Some schools offer third cycles or postgraduate courses, that may, or may not, lead to establishment qualifications, and university 3rd cycles (PhD in collaboration with partner universities) leading to a Doctoral degree.

Five schools in the network award specific establishment certificates: the three parisian national higher schools (ENSBA, ENSAD and ENSCI), the École nationale de la photographie d'Arles and Le Fresnoy – Studio national des arts contemporains in Tourcoing.

Entry to the first year in a higher school of art is made through an **entry competition**. Students are chosen following an examination open to all secondary level students having successfully passed the Baccalauréat (or an equivalent qualification in the case of foreign students).

Exceptions can be made for students without a Baccalauréat. The admission exam is organized in two phases:

- ♦ a first phase composed of the following three elements: artistic practice, general culture, foreign language skills;
- ♦ a second, decisive phase made up of an interview with an admissions panel based on the candidates artistic portfolio.

The organization of the competition — and the modalities of admission — are decided by each school. Admissions mid curriculum are made through internal panels of equivalence in each establishment.

The Bologna Process (1999) that aimed to harmonize education on a European level has led schools to establish independent structures and to conform to the European architecture of higher education. Teaching is organized in semesters and validated by ECTS credits (European Credits Transfer System) recognized throughout the European Union. The DNSEP awards the grade of Master.

The art school as milieu

The art school is characterized by:

- ♦ a teaching staff, resoundingly diverse, the members of which are actors in industrial, scientific or technical fields (artists, designers, theoreticians, art critics, curators, researchers in art and other scientific or technical fields),
- ♦ a collegial practice of judgment and evaluation,
- ♦ technical centers in manufacturing and media (metal, wood, plastic, sculpture, ceramics, fusion, reprography, screen-printing, photo, video, sound, 3D modeling, web, network, synthesis...),
- ♦ a connection with the professional world which is assured by a diverse, constantly renewed range of participants (artists, designers, researchers, film makers, philosophers, musicians, writers,

The higher school of art and design is a place which provides means for creation and encourages and initiates situations for experimentation, teaching the student to analyze work, to read images and signs in a resolutely critical perspective, with a strong connection to the world of contemporary creation. Beyond that, it has no particular goal, or rather, it constitutes a milieu where students can build their own activities and where there are as many new, original forms as there are professions in the fields of art and design.

choreographers...) and equally through collaborations with museums, FRACs, art centers, associations and structures of dissemination and production on local, national and international levels,

- ♦ differentiated equipment and premises, that participate in the creation of communities and in the service of pedagogy: workshops (painting, sculpture, print...), classrooms, amphitheatres, studios, laboratories (photo, audio, video, computer...), individual workshops, libraries, concert and projection spaces, open spaces, exhibition galleries...,
- ♦ an activity which is as practical as it is theoretical, as individual as it is collective.

Apart from that which constitutes the unity of the network of 46 higher public art schools, there is a diversity in their general organization, their strategies and the definition of the limits and fields of knowledge and experiences, not to mention the architecture of the pedagogical models. This **diversity in the school of art**, in these different schools, constitutes the depth and the wealth of the French system and its history.

Pedagogy

The unique nature of French higher schools of art and design

In art schools, education and research activities are tightly linked to **creation and practice**, and are characterized by processes and modes of legitimization that are those of the **world of art and design**:

- ◆ teaching of art through art,
- ◆ primacy of the sensitive and of experimentation,
- ◆ an overall and collegial perception of student development,
- ◆ legitimization through œuvres and judgment by one's peers,
- ◆ a culture of the project.

The teaching of art modifies the usual situation of education through an approach centered on the uniqueness of each student, so as to avail of their full potential. Developing an alternative pedagogy, art schools have accompanied movements in contemporary art, the avant-gardes and notably the conceptual practices of deconstruction. The arrival of a new generation of artists after 1968 contributed to jolting schools out of their decline, with certain among them adopting radical teaching practices and creating their own unique identity. In certain establishments, the teaching of design was developed in the context of a non-specialized pedagogy of schools of art, this being intimately linked to **contemporary art and the study of present times**.

An education of excellence at the heart of the professional world

The specific nature of art schools in the landscape of higher education, in research as much as in professional modules, is closely related to their history. Their position in the world of art led them to deploy particular

The curriculum is not defined in a recursive manner, by progressive acquisition or by a series of steps, necessary with a view to some finality. A desire to work is the basic requirement as much for artist-students as artist-teachers. It is the path that is privileged rather than the goal, the desire which primes over the sacralization of the production of objects: acceleration and slowdowns, trial and error, exploration and digression, loss and recovery lend their real and lived forms to a curriculum marked by the uniqueness of personal approaches and a sensitive intelligence.

procedures, originating in the artistic field. Art schools clearly separate the education that they provide from legitimacy, the evaluation of which they reserve for actors in the world of art: **though mainly performed by artists, studies, no more than the qualification that validates them, are never enough to make an artist.**

Generalist and non-disciplinary, centered on **the figures of the artist and the author**, pedagogy operates a circulation between thought and manufacture. It is this pedagogy, with its goal of developing a critical mindset and a productive intelligence, that guarantees the excellence of the teaching, the attractive nature of the schools and the high level of professional insertion of graduates in the field of artistic creation and design, and in the wider cultural sector. It is also a specific knowledge which represents the field of visual arts and design, and the *sui generis* value of practices at work in art schools, which create the unity of the network of French higher schools of art. The selective nature of the training and the high teacher-student ratio contribute to placing art schools in a place of excellence in the European panorama.

Art schools have always developed an interest for research. The force, the vitality and the quality of schools rely on the strong and privileged relationships that they have with the professional world of art and design, but also with university research, notably in the social sciences and humanities. Their collaborations owe their depth and their fecundity to the meeting of highly differentiated fields — that is, to the virtues of alterity.

Higher art education, such as it is at work in the unique model of art schools, constitutes one of the major issues of today. It finds itself at the intersection of three strong tendencies that inform our present and future times:

- ♦ the growing importance of **the image** and **the question of the sensitive** in contemporary society,
- ♦ the growing importance accorded by the economic

world, European politics and more widely by society, to the values and processes of **creation** originating in the world of art,

- ♦ the growing importance of notions of **independence, project and professionalization** in the field of higher education.

A non-specialized and contemporary approach

Disciplinary know-how deals with knowledge in terms of a corpus and historical sedimentation. On the contrary, in an art school the generalist approach is privileged, not to revolutionize a given knowledge at any cost, but simply because the contemporary and transversal view is preferable to the historical and compartmentalized view. This way of directing teaching and research relies on the creation of a unique work, requiring **decompartmentalization, transversality and an anachronistic approach to content**. The starting point, the materials, the tools and the finality reside only in creation itself. For example, theoretical teaching is based on an apprenticeship of critical reading, the development of a capacity to analyze an object, an exhibition, a written contribution, a naming of what is at work, while taking the context into account. It is in this sense that History is, in art schools, a subject which is taught beginning with present times, in the manner in which Walter Benjamin speaks of the fact of “wrenching a specific era out of the homogeneous course of history” and of “seizing the constellation that one’s own epoch forms with such an anterior epoch”.¹

¹ Walter Benjamin, *Œuvres III*, «Sur le concept d'histoire», Paris, Gallimard, 2000, p. 441-443.

Finally, artistic creation distinguishes itself from other creative and sensitive activities by its particular approach to **the practice of the form**. Thinking and creating the form presupposes a constant questioning of the process of realization. Contrary to other expressions of creativity, in visual arts the tool and the form produced always result in a re-establishment of the process at work. **The instrument of work is produced at the same time as the art object.**

A strong tradition of openness, generalism and of hospitality characterizes French art schools. Privileging operation in a “project” mode and organization in the form of a network, focusing on imagination, freedom and experimentation, the art school aims to develop critical ability and the capacity for auto-production of the subject. It puts the student in a situation of having a unique artistic production located in the field of contemporary creation.

In other terms, in an art school one does not learn how to apply paint to canvas, one learns to question painting and ask oneself how and why we would place paint there. This notably separates art schools from establishments teaching art trades and applied arts. Art schools train individuals capable of creating new visual forms, of freeing themselves from codes and inventing their own trades. They offer a framework and the resources for students who are put in a position of looking for something, without knowing beforehand what the result will be.

Moreover, they prepare creators and authors who manage cross-media work, sensitive to context and the art world. Different trades and professions have always been associated: applied arts, communication, design... Training is done by artists and creators coming from the professional world, but also by theoreticians, thus, design teaching gains an added value in art schools compared to its teaching in other types of establishments (training dominated by theory or industrial goals). Though designers may highlight the importance of the knowledge of trades and techniques in every approach to industrial creation, they also strongly insist upon the fact that, at a time when the design is freed from being solely concerned with function, the trans-disciplinary and generalist approach found in art schools favors **critical design**. This approach effectively guarantees projects that question both the practical and functional dimensions of the artifacts created, as well as the social, cultural and immaterial issues raised by them. The view of the author and research projects common to different options allow the association of **prospection, innovation, engineering and inherently artistic creation**.

A collegial pedagogy polarized by unique views

French art schools have succeeded in creating art faculties built principally around a collegial group of teachers — visual artists and theoreticians — and have invented in this way pedagogical practices unique in Europe. Centered around the figure of the artist, the pedagogy

is articulated around and from its practice, and the system of transmission associates technical support, orality and display. The art teacher invents **situations of interlocution** and brings about contexts for practice and research, this research being already in play within the curriculum, and this right from the 1st cycle. It is the **irreducible view of the author**, embodied by the teacher, that generates the forms of dialogue between unique personalities, the student being considered as a potential artist or creator.

Nonetheless, **collegiality** is essential to the teacher's approach. It is in moments of collective restitution (hangings, workshops, conferences and assessments) that the confrontation of projects with methodologies becomes truly productive. A common work of reading of œuvres, discussion of methods and references, and a questioning of knowledge acquired from the history of art brings to light irreconcilable postures and contradictory domains. This favors the emergence of original schemas on the part of the students. This collegiality is built up over time at the heart of permanent teaching teams. However, schools, with a direct connection to the art world, perpetually challenge the teams by creating partnerships with external organizations and, in particular, through invitations made to numerous participants and associated professors, actors in art, design and all other creative fields. **Indeed, to teach art is to teach what we do not yet know because we cannot know what art will be.**

Artistic judgment and peer evaluation

The question of evaluation in the sense of an artistic judgment is at heart of the teaching process, to evaluate the evolution of the student within the institution and the quality of her work. **The freedom to create, the right to trial and error and even self-learning** are inherent to pedagogy in art schools, which is structured by an individualized curriculum and also by moments of **judgment** rather than evaluation. What we call “evaluation” is only possible on a level that allows one

to measure the progression, the mastery of acquired knowledge and capacities. It is in the most retrograde forms of art teaching that this type of evaluation occurred — that of technical mastery for example, or that of the conformation of the work to a pre-established history of art or a moment in art history. Contrary to academic teaching, that of creation in no way permits calibration, in the measure that the work being evaluated is fairly graded for its original qualities and its capacity to renew the field of art.

In art schools, it is common to judge the students in the presence of their work. In this way, we can evaluate the work, the critical ability, the coherence of the person's approach, that is to say the quality of the territory at work. **The quality of the judgment is founded on recognition by peers from the professional milieu in the collegial exercise of evaluation.**

Curriculum

– The first cycle –

Year 1

Year 1 is conceived of as an **orientation year common to the different options**. Both practical and theoretical, the studies aim to give the widest possible perspective concerning the creative domain and provide the basis for a solid and independent cultural education.

During this time of discovery and experimentation, where it is a question of both learning and unlearning, students are introduced to various media, practices and methodologies, through a wide choice of workshops and studios, often spread between different sections (image, volume, sound, performance, specific techniques such as ceramics, textiles, illustration and graphic, object or space design...). It is also a time of immersion in the world of art and design, at first on a local level, in connection with the other actors such as the spaces for production and dissemination — notably museums, FRACs and art centers, associations, galleries. The first year is a **probationary year**, in the sense that the student can judge her aptitude or non-aptitude to commit to an art curriculum for a number of years. It questions more so than it transmits a body of knowledge or a defined fundamental basis. It is a decisive year of rupture and orientation.

Years 2 and 3

The second and third years are characterized by the progressive passage from a phase of initiation and experimentation to the construction of the beginnings of a personal proposition. They are structured around the learning of methodologies of work (for the running and management of the project, research on other artist's work providing reference, the development of a critical vision and a historical knowledge). The teaching attributes

a lot of importance to the **relativity of methodologies**, looking to teach the students to make the distinction between a methodology learnt from teachers also found with other artists and a unique methodology relative to their own project. It is the latter which is privileged, graded and evaluated.

The second and third years consist of the acquisition of practical knowledge and technical, conceptual and sensitive tools. They unfold the process and introduce periods dedicated to the observation and invention of forms. This part of the curriculum can also be defined as an **initiation to the fundamentals of the œuvre** (practices, concepts, materials, tools, modes of existence), fashioning knowledge of the history of art, contemporary art and art theory, but also know-how in terms of analysis of the image and critical reading. It is ultimately a moment where the student is confronted with an exterior professional milieu by way of internships.

The second year often divides its time between workshops and studios, allowing students to begin to choose an overarching path. The third year is a year of orientation based on the emergence of this individual orientation. It is also an opening to research. More involved participation in the Ateliers de recherche et de création / Research and Creation Workshops (ARC) and in studios allows for the emergence of a personal proposition and gives direction to the Diplôme National d'Arts / National Arts Diploma (Visual or Technical) in which the work done throughout the three years of the cycle is brought together.

The **diploma** consists of a selection of visual propositions which accompany an oral presentation and a collection of documents. This is to give an account of the three years of study and the emergence of a personal project. The diploma can be considered as an assessment of the three years of study. The students position themselves as potential creators in the field of the contemporary — they must know how to formulate the origin, the issues and the evolution of an approach and contextualize it within a field of reference.

The **DNAP** (Diplôme National d'Arts Plastiques / National Diploma in Visual Arts) marks a step in a process that is continuous and immersed in the school, opening up the development of personal research.

The **DNAT** (Diplôme National d'Arts et Techniques / National Diploma in Art and Techniques) validates the short cycle in the design and communication options at the end of the 3rd year (level 2 of professional certification, equivalent to a bachelor's degree). Its dense architecture, orientated towards the world of work and the importance given to the project and professional internships is explained by an affirmed objective of professionalization in the field of design.

– The second cycle –

The 2nd cycle concludes at the end of the 5th year with the DNSEP, a qualification which confers the grade of Master. Grouping together years 4 and 5, its goal is to structure and reinforce high-level personal research. Conceived of as truly “made to measure”, the pedagogy which is deployed alternates apprenticeship and personal follow up. A plurality of methodologies results in a multiplicity of student projects. If we can affirm that the domains of disciplinary knowledge exist in contemporary art (the history of art, art theory, technical know-how and knowledge, for example), the teaching of art as it exists in the 2nd cycle is never practiced beginning with the disciplines themselves.

It is in the form of conferences, accompaniment in workshops and particularly in one to one meetings that teaching in the 2nd cycle is structured. The contribution of knowledge by the professors is presented in the form of **dialogue**, not based on common knowledge, but beginning precisely from the project, and unique knowledge essential to the execution of the work of creation of each student. At this level, a heavy importance is given to the definition of a territory of research and creation of unique work. The 2nd cycle attributes a crucial

The plurality of methodologies, the dialectic of transmission, the development of a critical view and a generalist and collegial approach are pillars of the teaching of creation through creation. The introduction to research is driven, beginning with, and with a view to, art as the natural continuation of the student's progression.

place to mechanisms of creation, to a critical view and to processes of invention in the domain of the sensitive.

The **DNSEP** (Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique / National Higher Degree in Visual Expression) validates the 2nd cycle in art, design or communication at the end of the 5th year. Registered at level 1 of professional certification, it is accredited by the High council of evaluation of research and higher education, conferring the grade of Master. Some options contain specific orientations which are indicated by mentions. The DNSEP permits one to present Agrégation, Capes and Capet competitions.

The DNSEP consists of the realization of a **visual work** and the presentation of a “**dissertation**”, developed in connection with that visual work. It accompanies, and provides a reading of, the territory of the research at work, through a large spectrum of written forms, from the most conceptual to the most experimental. The dissertation is a way of articulating the form and the content, by reinventing writing tools so as to best adapt them to a specific content. In the same way as with the visual project, it is the object of a collegial accompaniment. The encounter with a DNSEP jury is not a moment of evaluation, but the testing of the work by a college of peers. The jury judges the critical capacity of the student and the efficiency of the œuvre to produce an esthetic attention. It judges the intelligence of the territory that has been deployed, a type of sensitivity and an original production. We are to be reminded that the tradition of art schools does not rely on a state exam that will be an authorization to exercise a profession. The school does not evaluate the professional aptitude of a young creator; it judges solely the original nature of the work that has been done.

– Post-Master –

Higher schools of art accompany young creators, artists, designers and theoreticians in their educational path following a Master's degree, today developing a variety of high level, selective and specialized programmes

that aim to favor insertion in the professional fields of art and design. To the programmes that are traditionally called professional postgraduate or “sixth years”, which have existed in different establishments since the 80s, is to be added 3rd cycles, specific to art schools. These programmes are set up in the context of **research units** (30 or so) and **research programmes** (over 80) that have been developed in art schools over the last ten years.

- ♦ professionalizing postgraduate programmes
- ♦ 3rd cycle research programmes
- ♦ 3rd cycle research programmes done conjointly with universities and validated by a Doctoral degree (PhD)

The landscape of these post-Master's programmes, validated or not by qualifications or establishment certification, is increasingly diverse and constantly evolving. Also, keeping in mind how professionalization and research in art — done by artists and using art as its point of departure — are interwoven, the interaction of different types of post graduate educative processes can form new hybrid programmes.

The postgraduate course

Postgraduate programmes are organized to unfold over a short period (generally one year, but certain can be articulated over a number of years). Either they consist of a 6th year of complementary training of professionalization, or they are part of creative residencies backed by grants, but not teaching in the context of a curriculum. In varying dimensions, postgraduate programmes allow professionals already engaged in their career to specialize, or realize a project while availing of the resources of the school and its artistic and cultural network (production logistics, the possibility of exhibiting in professional conditions...).

The 3rd cycle specific to art schools

Research in art schools is present at every level of teaching. The three cycles of education progressively

intensify the place of research: though the question of research appears in the 1st cycle, it is in the 2nd cycle that the “introduction to research” is truly developed, and it is in the 3rd cycle that students themselves become researchers. The 3rd cycle is **training through research** and articulates individual and creative production in the creative fields.

Third cycles nourish and are nourished by numerous occasional research programmes led by schools, alone, or together in association with other partners, and by research units, permanent structures dedicated to fundamental issues in art and design which aim to create spaces for the capitalization of knowledge and know-how. They radicalize, over long or short periods, for one, two, three or even more than three years, the approach already at work in the DNSEP, built for and with young artists, designers and theoreticians already operating within the professional fields of art and design. Some schools award an establishment certificate, the Higher Diploma in research in art.

The joint 3rd cycle – PhD

Certain schools, in partnership with universities, provide 3rd cycle training validated by a Doctoral degree (PhD), the cycle being co-accredited and attached to a doctoral school. Often, these programmes belong to “practical doctorates”; that place the artistic object and the creative activity at the heart of their thesis, with artists participating in university panels.

Charter for Research in Art Schools

This charter has the goal of supporting the research put in place by higher schools of art since 2006 through the establishment of a framework and criteria which, as with the rest of the organization of studies, guarantee the quality of the activity being done there.

The current document is destined to be a charter of good practice, setting the tone for the involvement of the art schools in national and international research, but it is also a manifesto to build upon that which has produced in recent years which is original, prospective and emancipatory, as a result of wide scale experimenting in the invention of a specific form of research.

It is a structuring document, which intends at the same time to establish a synthesis of the existing; fixing and describing the scope of research taking place today, but equally, following on from the effort of prospection, proposing solutions for the concrete organization of a national plan which is lacking today.

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on a National Level*

Research in art schools is, above all, research, and in this shares the following minimal definition with other fields: “research” is the ensemble of the activities done with a view to producing and developing objects and knowledge which, when shared, enlarges the field in question and, consequently, contributes to the society concerned by the field. This activity in art schools is defined by its prospective character, its tension towards uncertainty, its ambition to conquer original spaces, and by its capacity to disseminate and share its results.

Research in Higher Schools of Art

General definition

Research in art schools also has a number of areas of a specific nature, because its field of reference, art, is of a specific nature.

- ♦ It does not necessarily have technical and technological prerequisites. At the same time, it knows how to show its methods, its protocols, its experiences and knows how to verify their pertinence, how to examine the issues raised and how to rethink them.
- ♦ It recognizes, intuitively, instinctively, an immense prospective capacity in the sensitive and in this, as in all creative activity, never separates the intelligible from the sensitive at any point in the chain of activity (from the moment of production to the moment of sharing what is produced).
- ♦ It draws a large part of its resources from that which is outside its own field — and like art, it is the combination of elements coming from the totality of the activities and information of the world.
- ♦ It assumes a non-linear relationship with history, and despite capitalizing on the forms and ideas of the past, knows the other research that has already been done (at least since the Renaissance and Leonardo da Vinci’s *Treatise on Painting*) and, so as to add originality, it supposes no progress: as with art, it simply helps man to “be in the world”, in every sense of the expression.

The articulation of research and education

Research in an art school is present at every level of education, with varying levels of intensity, as in the rest of higher education where teachers are researchers who transmit, right from the very first cycle, the knowledge and know-how coming directly from the field of their practice.

As in the rest of higher education, the three cycles of training lead to three LMD qualifications gradually intensifying the place of research in education: if the question of research appears in the 1st cycle, it is in the 2nd cycle that the “initiation in research” is truly developed and it is in the 3rd cycle that the students themselves become researchers. Art schools have become accustomed to calling the first cycle “the programme phase”, the 2nd cycle “the project phase” and the 3rd cycle is known as a “research phrase”.

To be more specific, because the research produced concerns art and thus the being in the world, it happens regularly that students, irrespective of their level of studies, appear as those “concerned” by research, and even as experts — as such, they are associated with this research. Art schools have developed liberating forms of pedagogy which allow one to go beyond the master / student dialectic. In research it is a matter of continuing to rely on this effective power: artists, designers and theoretician teacher-researchers, emancipated students — research which knows how to associate all of those affected by the construction of the problem to which it relates.

The temporality of research

As with art, research requires varying time frames. Therefore, in art schools, we can distinguish:

- ♦ “research units” dedicated to a fundamental problem in art and design which intend to create spaces of capitalization of knowledge and know-how on the problem,
- ♦ “research programmes” set in a defined temporality (from two to four years) which occasionally bring specific teams together.

The **research units** structure research on an artistic and scientific level of the life of forms and ideas, but also at a material and technical level. They are carried by one or more schools and are as diverse as the higher art

The formats of research (conferences, workshops, residencies, exhibitions...), as is the case with pedagogy in art schools, are thus extremely diverse and invented according to the needs of the projects: here again, they rely on the specific nature of the field of art to produce forms and to relay an extremely rich history as it pertains to the question of medium and format.

schools themselves, each one being characterized by a project which is unique to them — a project whose artistic, thematic, esthetic, political and, occasionally, stylistic coordinates and characteristics are elaborated and coordinated within the framework of the activity of each school. Concerning their role in the construction of the research content, the units:

- ♦ bring together the researchers, artists, designers and theoreticians concerned by the project which is defined by the higher art school, or schools, concerned;
- ♦ regularly work with the scientific counsel of the school (in accordance with the modalities decided by each school);
- ♦ animate the life of the forms and ideas by being a space where that which is produced in the different “research programmes”, backed by the establishment or establishments, is discussed, cross referenced and thus evaluated;
- ♦ think about different research formats and regimes, as well as definitions and methodologies;
- ♦ organize structured partnerships with regards to the research.

Concerning the material and technical aspect of the activity of the research unit, and as a function of their specific project, they can equip themselves with:

- ♦ specific work spaces, whether they be physical (residences, laboratories, workshops, offices, meeting rooms...) or dematerialized (platform, blog, discussion forum, website...) — these spaces allow for research activity, whatever it may be, to take place and develop *on site*, in the schools;
- ♦ a defined budget (for the organization of events, publications, for missions and its members’ expenses, etc.);
- ♦ an administration and a team responsible for communication and valorization — both to accompany and support the activity (from the constitution of dossiers to answering tenders to the organization of real events) and to archive, disseminate and redistribute that which is produced by the research.

It is important to note that it is no way desirable for a research unit be separate to the rest of the school (or schools) that it is attached to. On the contrary, it is in the constant contact and overlap between the activity of the research unit and that of the school (its artists, its designers along with its students and technicians...) that the forms invent themselves. This particularity, which is linked to the ecosystem of the art schools is a precious asset for the research activity.

As for the **research programmes**, they are produced to contribute to the capital of the units, but also to nourish the pedagogy, the activity of a specific department of the school, an important event in a territory, etc.

Between these two centers (an occasional programme and a perennial research unit) and these two temporalities, the art schools regulate the cursor of their activities, relying on their permanent prospective inventiveness.

Research and its actors

The actors of research function according to a logic which privileges complementarity and the tensioning of their differences. In addition, everyone engaged in a process of work, recognized by their peers as having sufficient skills, can participate in, or carry out, research. No more than in the other aspects of their activity, do the art schools wish the imposition of a set model here. They promote an open model of trials, which permits the creation of *ad-hoc* teams, on a national and international level, as a function of that which is envisaged to be built. Also, the regulatory structuring of peer recognition takes into account this lightness and the fundamental organizational logic which governs the world of art and design.

In this way artists, designers, doctors and researcher-professors in the social sciences and humanities (sociologists, philosophers, historians, ethnologists...) or in the natural sciences (biologists, botanists...), engineers,

and Directors of Art and Design centers and cultural institutions, exhibition curators, museum curators, and professionals, craftsmen, writers or any other personality in France and abroad, are in a position to contribute to research projects.

Partnerships

Research in art schools is defined and done in research structures which are situated within them, but, because art is an activity which is nourished by all human activities, it regularly collaborates with researchers from other disciplines and can generate associations with other laboratories and research centers in France and abroad. Research programmes and units can be thus set up between different structures, and as a result, original spaces for research see the light of day.

However, because research always has the objective of expanding its own field of reference, even in the case of research done in common with other disciplines, *the value of this research for art cannot be determined outside of the field of art*: it is important to accept that, as in other fields, the presence of partnerships in no way guarantees the value of the research done — research in the philosophy of science, for instance, is not necessarily pertinent because a philosopher works with a CNRS research team in physics. This is equally valid when it comes to research done in the field of art and design.

Research can outline new territories, third territories if you will, that of the partnership, which stems both from the territory of the art schools and that of their partners. Similarly, in no way must the absence of external partners be allowed to disqualify a research project.

Third cycle

Some schools provide high level, selective and specialized post-master's training: specific 3rd cycles, sanctioned or not by qualifications, establishment certificates, or doctorates.

Considering that after the “initiation in research” phase of a Masters’ programme it is necessary to be in a position to practice an activity to which one has been initiated and thus really work within a research *regime*, art schools develop third cycles which are specific to each structure. As the DNAP is a specific certificate grade qualification, and the DNSEP is a master’s grade qualification being driven from the field of art, the third cycles invent themselves as close as possible to the frame of reference which the art world represents.

Postgraduate programmes already exist in certain schools and can be starting points for the setting up of 3rd cycles. However, in no way do 3rd cycles aim to replace the postgraduate programmes which are strictly orientated towards professionalization: over a short time (usually one year) postgraduates belong to creative residencies and no longer to education. In varying dimensions, they allow professionals who have already begun their careers to see a project through while relying on the resources of the school and on its cultural and artistic network (production logistics, the possibility of exhibiting in professional conditions...).

On the contrary, the 3rd cycle is actually a cycle of training through research, completing the curriculum for DNSEP and Masters graduates, with specific arrangements for research, over longer periods, which radicalize the approaches already underway in the DNSEP programme. These 3rd cycles and their actors (artists and theoreticians, student-researchers, guided by referent teams) fully participate in research. They nourish the “research units” and the occasional projects of the programmes. They help in the development of research specific to the art schools through the example of their equally specific activity — by situating themselves in the extension of that which the first two cycles have opened.

The 3rd cycles are thus built for and with young artists, designers and theoreticians operating in the field of art, the community of reference for the art schools. They allow

For its publication and its sharing, research led in art schools produces forms which are very diverse, chosen as a function of the projects concerned. These forms (œuvres, exhibitions, films, public events, websites, publications, lectures...) come from the history of art and creation, but also from other fields of human activity — art knows how to use diverse *formats* to give account of a specific *regime*, that of research. If, since the 16th century, creative work has been accompanied by an analytical research activity on art and coming from art, artists have always invented forms that allow for the best dissemination of their research work, offering to society results which appear as true *exceedances*.

for the structural implementation of a space for research regulated by the temporality of specific regimes. Also that which they produce being prospective, emancipating and adventurous is evaluated by competent actors of the art world, so as to guarantee the awarding of a specific school qualification at a doctorate level, following on from the DNAP and DNSEP.

Production and evaluation of research

That which is produced by research can be generally identified (almost systematically in this order) as the following:

- ♦ the identification of a problem,
- ♦ the work done on a problem using diverse practices and tools,
- ♦ the production of a form (of knowledge and experience) allowed for by the work,
- ♦ the sharing of this form which is disseminated and received by those concerned by the problem,
- ♦ the record of a result, of a resolution or the shifting of the problem: ultimately, the presence of something more, an excess, with respect to the initial situation.

Every moment and every dimension of the production of research can be restituted, shared and given value — and this using forms always chosen in an *ad-hoc* manner.

With regards to its evaluation, the quality of the production of research is determined by peers coming from the reference community, in France and abroad, to which are added those concerned by the issue being treated. As in other places of artistic activity, evaluation is done in a situated way, that is to say by evaluating objects beginning with that which they postulate.

These seven points which characterize research in higher schools of art allow one to deduce the line of a national organization, an obvious necessity in the current context.

Structuring of Research on a National Level

To be in a position to effectively support the research activity developed by art schools, the implementation of the following arrangements and statuses is proposed.

The National Council for Higher Art Schools

As research is led from the field of art, this field puts a legitimate and co-built structure in place for the establishment of good practice: the National Council for Higher Art Schools (CNESA) which brings together and represents the concerned actors. This council permits the organization of an approach to research by acting on the following points:

- ♦ the status of the student-researcher and the professor-researcher, for artists, designers, practitioners and theoreticians and the authorization to direct research units, research programmes and 3rd cycles;
- ♦ the creation of, and participation in, the operation of a new approach to the distribution of budgets allocated to research;
- ♦ the evaluation of research units, research programmes and 3rd cycles;
- ♦ the national coordination of research.

The governance and functioning of the CNESA will be determined in a collegial manner from the moment of its creation, especially from propositions made by the “research commission” of the ANdÉA — the National Association of Higher Schools of Art. Already, it is clear from what has been previously stated that, for it to accomplish its missions, the CNESA will meet a number of times per year and is intended to be a particularly active council.

Schools represent an essential element in the world of art and design. The community of peers, which provides

legitimacy and evaluates the activities of schools (education and research) is the milieu itself and the different actors operating within it. These peers are represented by three types of person:

- ♦ those involved: artists, designers and theoreticians involved in research in schools;
- ♦ those concerned in France: critics, curators, institutional members from the world of creation, artists and designers;
- ♦ those concerned internationally: critics, curators, institutional members from the world of creation, artists and designers.

The categories of experts and proportions to be respected by the CNESA and by organs of evaluation in general:

- ♦ male / female: 1/1;
- ♦ design / art: 2/5;
- ♦ theoretician / practitioner: 1/5;
- ♦ involved / concerned in France / concerned internationally: 8/6/1.

The CNESA could bring together:

- ♦ 12 involved (6 men and 6 women): 5 artists, 2 designers, 1 theoretician or 1 critic, 4 directors;
- ♦ 8 concerned in France (4 men and 4 women): 3 artists, 1 designer and 4 curators or critics;
- ♦ 2 concerned internationally (1 man and 1 woman): 1 artist and 1 curator or critic;
- ♦ representatives of the Ministry for Culture and Communication.

The status of the student-researcher

Young artists and also theoreticians, designers, curators and other creators, when they register with a school so as to prepare a third cycle, are given the status of student-researcher.

As student-researchers they benefit from the student status, but also from all of the resources of the establishment with which they have registered. Furthermore, because they are also researchers, they can lead missions, drive projects for establishments and their research units and also disseminate various teachings. For each one of these missions, contracts are established between the student-researcher and the school concerned.

This status is to be created on a national level, from the recommendations made by the CNESA.

The mission of the professor-researcher

The teachers, theoreticians, artists and other creators who wish to practice the activity of research in an art school will make the request to the establishment and its associated scientific council — and on the advice of the scientific council, for the determined length of time of the research project, the theoretician, artist or designer can obtain an occasional arrangement with regards to her position and become a professor-researcher.

The responsibility for research is thus accessible to any teacher whose skills are recognized by their establishment — teachers in art schools are already in effect teachers working in higher education and their activity is evaluated and recognized at the moment that the LMD qualifications, for which they are responsible, are awarded — so they can request the status of professor-researcher in the establishments where they work.

Of note is the fact that the status of professor-researcher occurs within the framework of the general restructuring of the status of art school teachers which appears today to be essential in accomplishing the reform of higher artistic education (the annualization of face to face teaching time and the possibility of release so as to participate in research, validated by the scientific council of the establishment in which they work).

Funds and financing for research

The financing of the research in the art schools comes primarily from the field of art and with their traditional national and international partners. Indeed, because research concerns an existing field, the financing of this research is first made with the arrangements already established in this field. Thus, in France, in the context of their mission of support for creation, in the first place the Ministry for Culture and Communication, followed by the territorial managers of cultural affairs follow and develop the accompanying of research activity. They put specific funds for financing and research into place, all the while communicating clearly on an ambitious research policy, they articulate a reaffirmed support for creation, the other essential aspect of a policy favorable to the visual arts. The means that have been assembled are distributed by relying on the expertise of the CNESA. These means aim to support:

- ♦ research units in addition to the activities of teachers and student-researchers who participate in increasing their influence on a national and international level (notably: mission and travel expenses, the dissemination of results in publications, lectures and exhibitions...) — this will allow the establishment of permanent structures, true pillars of research;
- ♦ occasional research programmes, established for a defined objective and length of time — this will also allow the constitution of original teams, so that a specific and localized problem can be treated, in each case a situated activity is stimulated;
- ♦ 3rd cycles specific to art schools.

In the first and third cases, financing is provided by renewable multi-year contracts (4 years minimum). In the second case, project tenders are proposed regularly, with a defined specification sheet and transparency when it comes to the attribution of this assistance.

Research activity can then find its financing by making inroads into the professional creative fields, of art, of design and of theory, and by moving closer to R&D. In the same way, research can find a number of resources by optimizing its organizational logic, in particular in partnership with other places of research in higher education eligible for their own financing (European and ANR project tenders, various grants...), and the art schools can in this way monetize their partnership. This does not in any way constitute the principal resource of research activity. Because research in an art school, just like research in general, is not necessarily immediately profitable but participates in innovation and the transformation of our society, it is for the public powers to refine their structures for the financing of this specific research.

Evaluation of research

The principal of evaluation of research taking place in ESAs is the same as that in all research activity: an evaluation by peers. To this is added, in the case where the research is particularly situated and contextualized, and when this is an issue in the research itself, an evaluation by those concerned.

The CNESA, the National Council for Higher Art Schools, organizes the structure for evaluation of research:

- ♦ for research units and 3rd cycles, evaluation can be done on site, so as to be in contact with teams and their tools, and to observe the work being done;
- ♦ for research programmes, evaluation can be carried out on presentation of documentation, before and after projects, when financing is solicited.

The CNESA can also be called upon to accompany the attempt to structure research within a school. In any case, evaluation is considered as accompanying the practice of research and is there to stimulate the progression of the development of specific research.

To achieve this goal, evaluation:

- ♦ is carried out by a group of peers,
- ♦ explicit its methods, its expectations and its objectives,
- ♦ systematically renders public its conclusions (and generally renders its functioning transparent, for example concerning the conditions in which the evaluation was done and by whom),
- ♦ is argumentative and constitutes the strength of the proposition,
- ♦ privileges the “evaluation report” rather than numbered grades, and chooses *criticism* above awards.

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