

Theory as a Collaborative Impulse

The Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana (UL ALUO) and its Department of Theory aim to create an open space for interdisciplinary, pluralistic discussion and reflection with the first academic monograph linking theoreticians and historians from the fields of fine and visual art, design, conservation and restoration, and the performing arts, at the points where creative practice and theory intermingle. To demonstrate the need for connections and the benefits of collaboration between related sciences, the Department has joined forces with another academic member of the University of Ljubljana, the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (UL AGRFT) and its Department of Dramaturgy and Performing Arts. The environment of the two academies is ideal for exploring transart connections, because this is where the creative process begins, from the initial conceptual stimulation or initiation of an idea to the realisation of the artwork, which must be accompanied throughout by reflection based on theoretical and historical starting points. By combining the theoretical strengths of both academies, we aim to demonstrate the collaborative potential of disciplines and fields that work together in the actual arena of contemporary active, engaged art but too rarely cross the boundaries of their disciplines in academic circles.

With the successful launch of the PhD programme in Theory of Fine Arts as part of the interdisciplinary PhD programme in Humanities and Social Sciences led by UL FF and UL FDV in 2020, the Department of Theory UL ALUO began to focus its energies more on unifying research activities. In the same year, a new student prize for outstanding theoretical achievements, teoREM, was also launched at UL ALUO and the first

ARRS research project was acquired. The initial result of the new commitment to research was the organisation of the first scientific conference Transformations in Theory. The current research was organised in 2020 at the Faculty of Education of the University of Primorska in Koper, with the aim of inter-university cooperation between higher education institutions offering study programmes in the arts. The project will now conclude with the publication of a book of scholarly discussions presenting the latest theoretical findings conducted by the entire pedagogical and research staff of the Department of Theory (UL ALUO) and the Department of Dramaturgy and Performing Arts (UL AGRFT).

The book contains scholarly reflections on the phenomena, processes and transformations that characterise and determine the current situation in the fields of fine arts, design, conservation-restoration and theatre studies. The content focuses in part on the current expansion of the field and concept of art, its flirtation with itself, as well as on considerations of the so-called "intermedial" fields of art, such as the border area that connects the two academies, between contemporary performance and fine arts, with the performative practices that have established themselves as the dominant medium in the art of the last decade.

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