(Re)search & Find!

Art & Research at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp

Academic year 2026-2027

Research class ‘Art & Ecology’ by Sina Hensel, Ligia Poplawska and Delphine Wibaux, 2025, photo by Wannes Cré

Artistic research flows through every facet of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp

Each year, around 30 research projects run at the Academy. Over a period of one, two, or four years, artists investigate and deepen a particular dimension of their practice. In doing so, they address material, cultural, ecological, technological, and social challenges shaping today and the future.

The research at our school is structured around four interdisciplinary research themes: ArchiVolt (activating archives), Art & Ecology (ecology, art, and activism), Intermatter (digital technologies, art and society), and Thinking Tools (the technological apparatus as black box).

The Academy’s educational programme is powered by research. Through research classes, workshops, lectures, performances, and studio visits, artist-researchers actively share knowledge, expertise, and enriching perspectives.

Public events invite students and external audiences to engage with this research in action.

In this brochure, we present the vibrant heart of the research at the Academy: the wide-ranging projects that will unfold during the 2026–2027 academic year.

ART & RESEARCH

Various thematic strands run through the research at the Academy, taking shape in different ways across projects and practices.

The projects at the Academy are organised around four interdisciplinary research groups. Each research group provides a thematic framework that encourages collaboration, supports the continuous development of expertise, and drives innovation.

ArchiVolt

ArchiVolt is a think tank and a research platform centred on the notion of the archive and on the practice of archiving. Its central objective is to ‘activate the archive’. Archives not only encourage discourse and reflection, but also action and creation.

Art & Ecology

The Art & Ecology research group hosts a broad cluster of artistic research at the intersection of ecology, art and activism. This highly interdisciplinary field offers multiple perspectives, including social and political engagement, (eco)feminism, scientific insights and artistic activism.

Intermatter

Intermatter explores the dynamics between humans and digital technology. The research group focuses on the aesthetics, politics and poetics of interaction, placing the entanglement of humans, technology and matter at its centre, and examines how technology mediates, shapes and sometimes obscures human experience.

Thinking Tools

Thinking Tools supports practices shaped by the friction between control and surrender, the digital and the analogue, old and new media, human and non-human, exploring the (relative) autonomy of technical apparatuses and the unruliness of materials.

Research class ‘Tasting Tendrils – Digital Delicacies & Edible Encounters’ by Mathias Mu, 2025, photo by Wannes Cré

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Get to know our researchers and discover the projects taking place at the Academy during the 2026–2027 academic year.

Jenny Åkerlund
‘Visual Artefacts (Carte du Ciel)’
2026-2028
Thinking Tools

This project examines drawing as a medium of translation between materials and disciplines. Through studio practice and archival research, the project reflects on concepts such as mechanical image reproduction, original and copy.

jenny.akerlund@ap.be

Karl Joonas Alamaa
‘Home, carried’
2025-2027
ArchiVolt

‘Home, carried’ explores the essence of belonging, hope and home, with a focus on marginalized histories that have often been forgotten or excluded from mainstream narratives.

karljoonas.alamaa@ap.be

Andrea Cammarosano
Vivi Touloumidi
‘Crafting Futures’
2023-2027
Art & Ecology

This collaborative, inter-disciplinary project seeks ways to revalue the knowledge and skills embedded in crafts and tap into their potential to address current challenges in sustainability, innovation, inclusion, lifelong learning, and urban transformation.

andrea.cammarosano@ap.be
vivi.touloumidi@ap.be

Jeroen Cluckers
‘ECLIPS’
2026-2030
Intermatter

What happens when human and machine perception begin to merge? This PhD project explores how generative AI reshapes perception, memory, and reality through immersive installations, performances, and real-time human-machine interaction.

jeroen.cluckers@ap.be

Eline De Clercq
‘Who and what makes the academy garden?’
2025-2029
ArchiVolt

In response to the climate emergency we are called to action, to gather our efforts in transdisciplinary collective practices. How can we evolve towards a more inclusive art practice? The PhD project includes weekly open gardening sessions where students garden together.

eline.declercq@ap.be

Niel de Vries
‘Brackish Practices: Social Organisation in the Scheldt Estuary’
2026-2027
Art & Ecology

This project explores the Scheldt estuary: a tidal landscape between land and water. It brings residents, artists and experts together to collectively reimagine our life with this body of water.

niel.devries@ap.be

Dušica Dražić
‘Constructed Landscape. Contemporary Forms of Social Realism?’
2025-2027
Art & Ecology

‘Constructed Landscape’ explores a (hu)man-made forest in Yugoslavia, created over ten years through collective volunteer labour. How can the ecological and ideological processes behind this forest help us understand the contemporary world?

dusica.drazic@ap.be

Nedda El-Asmar
‘999,9’
2022-2026
Research project in collaboration with PXL-MAD (2022–2025) and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp (2026)

Within this project, the search for a combination of traditional techniques and contemporary technologies to use pure gold in contemporary objects and jewellery is central. Elements from the monetary, physical and metaphysical realms are combined to dematerialise the material, to return gold to a base substance devoid of any monetary connotation.

nedda.el-asmar@ap.be

Liza Goncharenko
‘Landscapes of Recovery: The Role of Art in Ecological Restoration in War-Torn Ukraine’
2025-2027
Art & Ecology

This research explores how contemporary art — through drawing, filmmaking, and mixed media — can document and aid the ecological recovery of wardamaged landscapes in Ukraine, fostering collaboration between artists, ecologists, and local communities for real-world impact.

liza.goncharenko@ap.be

Sina Hensel
‘Fields Without Soil (Animal Letters from Liquid Agriculture)’
2026-2028
Art & Ecology

This research project explores the entangled ecologies of microalgae and cyanobacteria farms, tracing how these microbial constellations invite us to reimagine agriculture beyond extraction and toward forms of multispecies cohabitation.

sina.hensel@ap.be

Vedran Kopljar
‘Practice: A Metaphor – Metaphorizing practices and practicing metaphors’
2023-2027
ArchiVolt

PhD project on metaphorizing artistic practices, on breaking down the artist’s practice into sub-practices to see their potential as metaphors, on questioning the role of metaphor on the level of artistic practices, instead of on the level of the artwork itself.

vedran.kopljar@ap.be

Mathias Mu
‘NEO SEER: A Syncretic Animacy’
2025-2027
Intermatter

‘NEO SEER’ explores a series of interactive and responsive objects that allows you to explore what they are thinking through an artificial stream of consciousness as they observe their surroundings.

mathias.verhoeven@ap.be

Johan Pas
‘CRAP! The Memory of the Avant-Garde’
2021-2029
ArchiVolt

CRAP (Collection for Research on Artists’ Publications) is a

collection of artists' printed matter from ca. 1888 to today. The project explores how publications connect artistic creation, research and communication, and investigates ways to make the collection accessible.

johan.pas@ap.be

Will Peck
'Drawing Out: Marks, Machines, Material Worlds'
2026-2027
Thinking Tools

The project explores how familiar technologies can be used to record the world beyond human sight. Through playful misuse, familiar devices are repositioned as sensing tools, opening new ways to understand image-making between humans, machines and environments.

will.peck@ap.be

Anne Penders
'rewind / remind / rewrite'
2026-2028
ArchiVolt

'rewind/remind/rewrite' is a polymorphic art-based research project rooted in a PhD on Land Art, written in Pender's early twenties and now used as "scores" for new works (film, music, poetry). What happens when we use the same documents for different purposes?

anne.penders@ap.be

Laurence Petrone
'On the Perpetual Becoming of Sculpture and History and Their Moments of Convergence'
2023-2027
ArchiVolt

PhD project on the testimonial character of art with regard to political events, the sensory qualities of sculpture, non-discursive and embodied thinking.

laurence.petrone@ap.be

Bas Rogiers
'Empty Pages'
2019-2027
ArchiVolt
Thinking Tools

The PhD project 'Empty Pages' contrasts the conventional art book – which is functional, represents and discloses art – with the so-called artists' book – which questions its function as a book, presents art and is autonomous as art object.

bas.rogiers@ap.be

Cecilia Belén Sandoval
'If a Forest Could Take Its Own Portrait: Regenerative Image-Making in the Paraná Rainforest'
2026-2028
Art & Ecology

This project explores how a rainforest can participate in creating its own portrait through syntropic agriculture, plant-based photography, and regenerative image-making. In Argentina, Sandoval will collaborate with local communities and in Antwerp she will create a Pigment Garden.

ceciliabelen.sandoval@ap.be

Sabrina Seifried
'Weekly Paintings'
2026-2028
ArchiVolt

'Weekly Paintings' explores shop windows as fleeting performative spaces shaping urban life and collective desire. Through oral history and private archives, the project traces the overlooked practice of window display asking how ephemeral culture is archived.

sabrina.seifried@ap.be

Oleksandr Sirous
'LIMEN: Signal Ecologies and Hybrid Actors in Dead-Zone Territories'

© Cecilia Belén Sandoval

© Karl Joonas Alamaa

© Laure Winants

© Dušica Dražić

2026-2027
Intermatter

‘LIMEN’ investigates the Ukrainian kill zone as a signal ecology, where drones, jamming, terrain, animals and humans become hybrid actors within a fragile system of visibility, interference and survival.

oleksandr.sirous@ap.be

Edu Tarín
‘Metacognitive Assemblies. Crafting intra-relations with Technology in Posthuman Making’
2025-2029
Intermatter

This PhD project explores the dichotomy between crafts and technology by delving into the interplay of hand and machine - aiming to demystify the imaginary fracture separating these two realms and to interrogate the linearity among maker, object, and tool.

edu.tarin@ap.be

Kristof Timmerman
‘Sense of Wonder. Artistic portals between the real and the virtual’
2022-2026
Intermatter

This PhD project explores how to construct the transition between the real and the virtual in such a way, that those involved (artists, performers, spectators) feel part of the virtual environment.

kristof.timmerman@ap.be

Dennis Tyfus
‘The Airwaves as an Experimental Space: (From) the Archives of Radio Centraal (1980–Present)’
2026-2027
ArchiVolt

This project traces and unlocks the archive of Radio Centraal, an independent Antwerp radio station and experimental cultural platform. It has been a huge source of inspiration for many people and can also inspire future generations.

dennis.tyfus@ap.be

Emmanuel Van der Auwera
‘The Technological Republic’
2026-2028
Thinking Tools
Intermatter

The project investigates the hidden infrastructures sustaining AI systems, tracing the labour and extraction pipelines behind automated technologies through field research, post-documentary methods, and installative practices.

emmanuel.vanderauwera@ap.be

Joppe Venema
‘Electric Bodies: The infrastructures of medicine and technology’
2026-2028
Intermatter
Thinking Tools

In this research project, Joppe Venema investigates electricity, electrotherapy, and the ideological relationship between technology, healing, and the body.

joppe.venema@ap.be

Angelo Vermeulen
‘Quantum Crossing’
2026-2028
Intermatter

This project explores artificial consciousness through interactive simulations where AI systems and human participants respond to and reflect on each other.

angelo.vermeulen@ap.be

Cian-Ti Wang
‘When entering a foreign place, can eating and digestion become a way of belonging?’
2026-2027
ArchiVolt

How do cooking and eating shape belonging? Using short films and shared meals, this project explores how food creates community, memory, and visibility in migrant restaurants in Europe.

cianti.wang@ap.be

Delphine Wibaux
‘Otolitalgia: a visual exploration in the furrows of time’
2025-2027
Art & Ecology

Linking sky and sea, from sun to fish, Wibaux questions the temporal recording of living things through the figure of the otolith (a calcareous concretion located in the inner ear) and Solargraphs (solar imprints).

delphine.wibaux@ap.be

Laure Winants
‘Time Capsule. Fossils of Future’
2025-2027
Thinking Tools

This project explores the relationship between time, memory, and climate change. It highlights the fragility of ecological systems and invites reflection on the planet’s past, present, and future using the concept of a time capsule as both metaphor and object.

laure.winants@ap.be

Raf Wollaert
‘“Prix de l’image:” A Speculative Reenactment of the (Para)cinematic Imaginary’
2026-2027
ArchiVolt

What could a documentary about unfilmable material look like? Delving into the archive of the ‘Prix de l’image’ scenario contest (1937-39), this project endeavors to produce a virtual documentary on this little-known chapter in Belgian film history.

raf.wollaert@ap.be

‘Conceptual, Performative, Pedagogical: Teaching Artist Conference’, organised by PhD researcher Yuki Okumura, 2025, photo by Wannes Cré

Research class ‘Tasting Tendrils – Digital Delicacies & Edible Encounters’ by Mathias Mu, 2025, photo by Wannes Cré

ACTIVITIES

RESEARCH PITCH
25 September 2026
Researchers whose projects are running during the 2026–2027 academic year present their research to master students and teachers.

ARTICULATE
14-30 October 2026
During this annual research festival, the Academy and the Conservatoire open up their artistic research to students and an external audience.

RESEARCH WEEK
19-23 October 2026
Experimental, reflective, and thematic research classes for master students by artist-researchers.

EXTRA ACADEMY
An open programme of lectures, performances, workshops and screenings around artistic practice, reflection, and research.

SOUP SESSIONS
Get to know our artist-researchers over a bowl of soup at the Research Room, about twelve times per academic year.

VISITS AND ENCOUNTERS
For research to thrive, the exchange of good practices is essential, so we invite (international) artists, designers, theorists, curators, and researchers to the Academy for lectures, studio visits, and residencies.

COMMUNITY GARDEN
In the historical garden of the Academy, students, staff, researchers, and alumni work together toward restoring ecology from a non-human-centred perspective.

STUDIO STADSWAAG
A co-creative process in which artists and students explore how to make public domain together.

METHOD/ART
An annual two-day seminar where artistic researchers from different disciplines discuss their research methods.

ANTWERP ART WEEKEND
6-9 May 2027
Our research exhibitions during this event are an ideal opportunity to discover the artistic output of the research projects at the Academy.

TRACK REPORT
Our publishing house documents artistic practices and research in and around the Academy.

FORUM+
The peer reviewed journal for research and arts, published in collaboration with the Academy.

Follow us on Instagram for more details
@research_royalacademyantwerp

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Instagram
@research_royalacademyantwerp

Website
royalacademyantwerp.be > Research

Email
art&research@ap.be

Research Room
Find us on the ground floor of Campus Mutsaard - enter the white gate, pass the Academy Library, turn right, and go to the end of the corridor.

Research Team
All researchers of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp
the research group coordinators: Nico Dockx, Inge Henneman, Steven Humblet, Kristof Timmerman
the research office at the Academy: Els De bruyn, policy and coordination; Lotte De Voeght, presentation and communication; Ann Daemen, data management and administration

You can find the credits for the researchers' portraits on their profiles on our website.

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Research class ‘Tasting Tendrils – Digital Delicacies & Edible Encounters’ by Mathias Mu, 2025, photo by Wannes Cré

Research class 'Visions for Crossing & Vivid Tales' by Anaïs Chabeur and Khristine Gillard, 2025, photo by Wannes Cré