

TRAINING CREATIVE ACTS AND ACTION

Training Creative Acts and Action is an international, interdisciplinary project that is both an investigation of and powered by artistic research. Integrating innovative approaches from the fields of art history and media theory, the project will explore the concepts of ‘training,’ ‘exercise,’ ‘praxis,’ ‘action,’ and ‘mediation,’ as well as the physical factors linking them. To pursue our aim of an interdisciplinary examination of the possibilities of artistic research in both the spaces between and the nexus of art and politics, research focused on “what we do when we are thinking” (Hannah Arendt) will be combined with body-centered practices used as means for gaining knowledge.

Throughout our workshop, we will critically examine the assumption that artistic research is a methodological and stylistic approach to art, thus shifting the focus from the interplay of art and science to that of art and art theory. This means taking up one of the most pressing discursive issues of our time, namely, how the transitional forms of artistic action interact within the political field of action. The workshop is thus dedicated to, on the one hand, a central theme in art and, on the other, questions this as the possible methodological core of a new field.

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

September 17, 2025

6–8 pm

SOFT OPENING

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

Arrival of participants, Snacks and Drinks

9 am–5 pm

Nina Nielebock, "Goldbridge", action

Bridge at Wittenburger Strasse/Reiferbahn, 19053 Schwerin

September 18, 2025

10 am–1 pm

INTRODUCTION, Björn Egging, Nina Nielebock, and Katharina Neuburger

Four Exercises in Old Schwerin: A Walking Tour

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

- "First Exercise: Invisible structures," Market Square
- "Second Exercise: Günther Uecker's 'Lichtbögen'," Cathedral
- "Third Exercise: The Curatorial Act. The New Presentation of the Collection," Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Björn Egging (11 am)
- "Forth Exercise: Goldbridge," Nina Nielebock, Wittenburger Strasse

1–2 pm

LUNCH BREAK (optional)

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

2–5 pm

PRAXIS, Knut Ebeling

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

Introduction of an epistemological approach to the theoretical framework of artistic research and the praxes that can emerge from it. Participants will evaluate corresponding exercises derived from these frameworks (such as meditation, body awareness, thought experiments, etc.)

- Anna Helfer, "Survival Kit by Ken Aicha Sy"
- Johanne Mohs, "Werk/statt/Werk: Autorschafts- und Kreativitätsbegriff der 'Schreibwerkstatt' am LCB und im OuLiPo" [Concepts of Authorship and Creativity in the 'Writing Workshop' at the LCB and in OuLiPo]
- Peter Seeland, "Facing Gaia: Justin Brice Guariglias Landschaftsfotografie in ökokritischer Perspektive" [Facing Gaia: Justin Brice Guariglia's Landscape Photography from an Ecocritical Perspective]

From 7 pm

DINNER (optional)

Meeting point: Señor Zorro, Address: Domhof 6, 19055 Schwerin

September 19, 2025

10 am–1 pm:

EXERCISE, Georg Winter, Aliz Farkas, and Marie Götze

Meeting point: Tram Marienplatz at 10 am

Exploring the exercise aspect of an art practice. Participants will analyze how repetition and reflection can become acts both creative and critical.

Other sites: Lenin Monument, Internationales Feuerwehrmuseum, and Berliner Platz

1–2 pm

LUNCH BREAK

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

2–5 pm:

ACTION, T.J. Demos

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

Discussion and practical examination of the concept of action within political art practice. Addressing the role of art as political action as well as art's limits, which can also be generative through a questioning of the immediacy of connection between motivations and effects. Participants will analyze how art can initiate social and political change.

- Stephanie Dvareckas, "The Space Between: Kazakh, Uzbek, and Kyrgyz Art from Late Soviet Period to Independence"
- Irène Unholz, "Reproducing, Simulating, Acting? On Artists and (the) System(s)"

From 7 pm

DINNER (optional)

Meeting point: Grill party, Kerstin Döring. Address: Hospitalstrasse 5, 19055 Schwerin

September 20, 2025

10 am–1 pm:

TRAINING, Göze Saner, Isa Fontbona, and Alex Gross

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

An exploration of the concept of training in the context of artistic practice.

Participants will discuss how technical skills can be connected to interdisciplinary research and critical engagement.

Other sites: tba

Material: <https://kai.nl.tab.digital/s/n7xZJ6T79iPoyTq>

1–2 pm

LUNCH BREAK

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

2–5 pm:

MEDIATION, Nora Sternfeld

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

Reflection on the concept of mediation as a response to social and political events. Special attention will be paid to art mediation as an emancipatory tool that can open up discourses on power relations and social norms.

- Cyrill Lim & Daria Nedelcu: "Build Yourself a Small Situation Without Future: Atelier 35 Bucharest"
- Verena Straub: "Creative Acts for Decolonial Futures: Introducing the Affect and Colonialism Web Lab"

Material: <https://kai.nl.tab.digital/s/iRTam2z5Yo9wRJL>

From 7 pm

DINNER (optional)

Meeting point: Kunstverein für Mecklenburg und Vorpommern in Schwerin, Address: Spieltordamm 5, 19055 Schwerin

Including a book release of: Daniel Wolter, *Environment & Archive: Oppositional Surroundings in the GDR*, Institut für Umwelt und Gestaltung, 2025.

September 21, 2025

10 am–noon

TRAINING CREATIVE ACTS AND ACTION

Closing Discussion and Farewells

Meeting point: Säulengebäude

Moderation: Christina Irrgang

with a contribution by Grégoire Rousseau

Open to the public

GOOD TO KNOW

The Säulengebäude, our main meeting point, opens every morning at 9 am. It is centrally located on Schwerin's market square. Address: Am Markt 1, 19055 Schwerin.

Coffee, snacks and working spaces (Wifi) as well as a safe place to store your belongings are available there.

Links to reading material:

1. A non-curated collection of texts: <https://kai.nl.tab.digital/s/gGrTryPZ5k6P8Ni>
2. Program: <https://kai.nl.tab.digital/s/YoaNgbXZ3kxnmQ8>
3. Module Göze Saner: <https://kai.nl.tab.digital/s/n7xZJ6T79iPoyTq>
4. Module Nora Sternfeld: <https://kai.nl.tab.digital/s/iRTam2z5Yo9wRJL>

How to reach us:

Antonia Gradnitzer: +49 152 2814 0401, ag@guenther-uecker-institut.de

Katharina Neuburger: +49 151 5722 4691, kn@guenther-uecker-institut.de

PARTICIPANTS

T.J. Demos holds the Patricia and Rowland Rebele Endowed Chair in Art History in the Department of the History of Art and Visual Culture at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is the founding director of the Center for Creative Ecologies at UCSC. Demos is the author of numerous books, including *Radical Futurisms: Ecologies of Collapse, Chronopolitics*, and *Justice-to-Come* (Sternberg Press, 2023) and *Against the Anthropocene: Visual Culture and Environment Today* (Sternberg Press, 2017).

Stephanie R. Dvareckas is a Ph.D. Candidate in Art History at Rutgers University. She is a Dodge Avenir Fellow at the Zimmerli Art Museum where she works with the Norton and Nancy Dodge Collection of Nonconformist Art from the Soviet Union. Her work is supported by a fellowship from the Fulbright Scholars Program (Kazakhstan, 2022-23), a Foreign Languages and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship from Harvard University's Davis Center (2019), and a Graduate Dean Professional Development Award (2018). Stephanie holds an MA in Art History, Theory, and Criticism from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a BFA from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

Knut Ebeling is a media theorist whose work focuses on a material epistemology of the arts and knowledge. His research interests include modern and contemporary philosophy, cultural aesthetics and aesthetic theory, media of cultural memory, media archaeology, and the archaeology of contemporary art and knowledge. In 2009, Ebeling was appointed professor at the Weißensee Academy of Art Berlin. His publications include *Der Krieg im Kopf. Meditieren mit Bataille* (Matthes & Seitz, 2024), *Sorge. Autotheorie der Trauer* (textem Verlag, 2021), and *Wilde Archäologien I and II* (Kadmos, 2012 and 2016).

Aliz Farkas is a visual artist and art historian. Her interdisciplinary practice—spanning painting, photo, and experimental textile work—investigates the intersection of myth and everyday life, and the dynamics between individual and community practices. She earned her degree in Painting from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts in 2022 and is currently pursuing a PhD in Art History at Eötvös Loránd University. In 2024 and 2025, she was an artist-in-residence at the Cité internationale des arts in Paris. She has contributed to exhibitions at the Hopp Ferenc Museum of Asiatic Arts and the Kiscelli Museum, and her writing appears in journals such as *Új Művészet* and *Balkon*. In 2025, she was a guest lecturer on textile practices at the Hochschule der Bildenden Künste Saar in Germany. She is a member of the Studio of Young Artists Association and regularly participates in interdisciplinary collaborations at the intersection of art and social work.

Isa Fontbona is a performance artist, academic researcher, and bodybuilder. Her career focuses on using the body as a creative material to stimulate critical thought on issues that affect us as individuals in post/hypermodern society. Her works challenge the limits of her body, employing physical effort to penetrate the audience.

Marie Götze works with industrial traces accumulating in more-than-human bodies as touching, contaminating & transforming guises. Her installative, performative, conceptual & textile art practice connects within underground networks, merging nourishing, extractive & resisting tendencies.

Alex Gross, visual artist and PhD in art theory, has been working at the Chair of Visual Arts, Institute of Architecture at TU Berlin since 2010. His artistic practice focuses on destabilizing material processes as key agents in sculptural and performative interventions. At the Institute of Architecture, he develops and implements experimental teaching formats that focus on material-based artistic research and performative inquiry.

Anna Helfer is a Ph.D. candidate in Social and Cultural Anthropology at Freie Universität Berlin and the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO). Her research focuses on art, memory, and postcolonial critique, and she has been conducting fieldwork in Dakar since 2018. From March 2024 to February 2025, she was a research associate at the Department of African Art at the Art History Institute of Freie Universität Berlin. Since 2023, she has been a member of the project Re-connecting “Objects” (TU Berlin), which was presented at Dak’Art 2024. From 2015 to 2017, she worked on the Café Deutschland oral history project at the Städel Museum, conducting interviews with key figures of the postwar German art scene. She currently teaches at the Institute of African Art at Freie Universität Berlin and holds a doctoral fellowship from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Christina Irrgang holds a doctorate in art and media studies and works as a freelance author, publishing texts on contemporary art as well as on photography and modern art. In independent projects in the fields of publishing and teaching, she engages with techniques of democratic communication and dialogue, from which conceptual conversations emerge.

Cyrill Lim, a multimedia artist and researcher, and **Daria Nedelcu**, an emerging curator and art historian, began collaborating in 2022. Their joint practice intersects art, research and social engagement.

Johanne Mohs studied Romance languages and literatures, art history and journalism at the University of Hamburg and the University of Barcelona. From 2007 to 2010 she held seminars on French and Spanish literature at the University of Hamburg and since 2010 she works first as a doctoral candidate and then as a postdoctoral researcher at the Bern University of the Arts. Since 2020 she works as an independent researcher with institutions like the Hamburger Kunsthalle, the Kunstmuseum Olten or the Literaturhaus Berlin and as a lecturer at the Technische Universität Berlin. Her research interests include intermediality between literature and photography, poetics of European Avant-gardes (especially Tel Quel and OuLiPo), material aesthetics, collaborative writing cultures, and the interplay of art/literature, technology and science.

Nina Nielebock is an artist specializing in sculpture and performance in public space. In her art, she deals with contemporary politics and explores their impact on society in participatory performances. She studies under Sam Durant at the Stuttgart State Academy of Art and Design. Nina Nielebock also works as an art educator, organizes discussions at the interface of art and politics and organizes group exhibitions.

Grégoire Rousseau is an artist and educator based in Helsinki. He holds a degree in electrical engineering and a Master of Fine Arts and is currently a doctoral candidate at Aalto University. His research explores digital commoning practices with a focus on radio. In 2020, he co-founded Station of Commons and initiated lumbung radio for documenta fifteen. Station of Commons participated in radio curatorial work for Manifesta13, documenta fifteen, Miss Read 2023/24/25, the African Art Book Fair at the Dakar biennial OFF 2024, and Maison Européenne de la Photographie Paris 2025. In 2024, he co-edited and contributed to the publications Waves: Radio as Collective Imagination published by Missread Berlin and Radio as Radical Education published by Station of Commons in collaboration with HfBK Hamburg Art University. He holds an artistic working grant from TAIKE, the Arts Council of Finland.

Göze Saner received her PhD in 2009 through a practice-based research project on archetypes while simultaneously developing a solo theater practice centered on social engagement. Her research and body-based work explore how training tools for solo performers can be conceived as an independent form of critical pedagogy. Until the summer of 2024, she served as Senior Lecturer and Co-Director of Research for artistic PhD candidates at Goldsmiths, University of London.

Peter Seeland is a Master's student in Art History at LMU Munich. His research focuses on ecological and ecocritical perspectives in the history of art and contemporary art, with an emphasis on visual culture, landscape, and historical resource relations.

Nora Sternfeld is Professor of Art Education at the University of Fine Arts Hamburg (HFBK). Previously, she served as documenta Professor in Kassel (2018–2020) and Professor of Curating and Mediating Art at Aalto University in Helsinki (2012–2018). She also co-directs the /ecm – Master's Program in Exhibition Theory and Practice at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. She is a member of schnittpunkt. exhibition theory & practice, a co-founder of trafo.K (Office for Education, Art, and Critical Knowledge Production, Vienna), and freethought (a platform for research, education, and production, London). Sternfeld has published extensively on contemporary art, educational theory, exhibitions, politics of history, and anti-racism.

Verena Straub is an art and image historian at TU Dresden. Her research focuses on contemporary art, images in the context of political agitation and online visual culture. She is co-leader of the research project Image Protests on Social Media and a cofounder of the Affect and Colonialism Web Lab.

Irène Unholz is a PhD student at the University of Fribourg (CH), investigating strategies of simulating and reproducing systems in contemporary art. She studied Art History, Media Research, and Psychology at the University of Fribourg and FU Berlin. Alongside, she contributes as a cultural journalist.

Georg Winter lives in Völklingen, Stuttgart, and Budapest. In temporary laboratories, urban situations, self-organizing performances, and training sets, the sculptor develops research projects that define a cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary field of work. Starting from his concept of the University in a Suitcase. Winter has taught since 1994 at institutions including the University of Stuttgart, Merz Academy Stuttgart, Zurich University of the Arts, Academy of Fine Arts Nuremberg, and since 2007 at HBKsaar. Winter has co-founded numerous cooperatives, including forschungsgruppe_f (Zurich), Arbeitsgemeinschaft Retrograde Strategien (Berlin), Urban Research Institute (Nuremberg), S_A_R Project Office (Völklingen), AG AST – Working Group on Anastrophal Cities, Volume V (Mannheim), and TanzPflanzPlan.