

PHD SEMINAR IN ARTISTIC RESEARCH AND HORIZON MISSION PILOT PRESENTATIONS

15 APRIL
2026

13:00 – 18:30
FERNANDO LOPES
MOVIE THEATRE

Join us for an inspiring presentation of doctoral research projects, where emerging scholars share their current work and open it up to feedback, dialogue, and lively discussion.

Designed to foster an open and supportive academic environment, the PhD Seminar in Artistic Research offers a dynamic and collaborative platform for doctoral researchers within the FilmEU Alliance to present their ongoing research, engage in critical dialogue, and receive constructive feedback from peers, external experts, and the wider academic and artistic research community.

Nine participants at various stages of their studies, from early-phase projects to those approaching completion, will deliver presentations focusing on a specific research question, challenge, or issue – whether theoretical, methodological, or practice-based, that they wish to explore in greater depth and discuss with others. Each presentation will be followed by senior researcher and audience feedback, creating a focused space for critical engagement.

As part of the programme, the event will also feature presentations of three WIRE Horizon Mission Pilot projects – ARWUM, Immersive Shipwrecks, and Water as Time – offering additional insight into current WIRE research initiatives.

PHD SEMINAR IN ARTISTIC RESEARCH AND HORIZON MISSION PILOT PRESENTATIONS PROGRAMME

13:00 – 13:25

**Anne Susan Zachariah*

THE SPACE BETWEEN: EMBODIED EXPERIENCE
IN INTERACTIVE VR FICTION

13:25 – 13:50

**Michelle Kranot*

ENTERING THE GARDEN: FROM ATTENTION
ECONOMY TO ECOLOGY OF ATTENDING EXPANDED
WORLDBUILDING AS RELATIONAL PRACTICE

13:50 – 14:10

WATER AS TIME

(Horizon Mission Pilot Presentation)

14:10 – 14:35

María Casas Castillo

IMAGINARY ANIMALS: LOOKING FOR IMAGES
OF A FADING WORLD

14:35 – 15:00

Beth Walker

WILDLIGHT: THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL
OF PROJECTION ART IN NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

15:00 – 15:30

COFFEE BREAK

15:30 – 15:50

IMMERSIVE SHIPWRECKS

(Horizon Mission Pilot Presentation)

15:50 – 16:15

**Xinwei Wan*

FROM SPECTACLE TO CONNECTION: DESIGNING CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCES OF OPENING CEREMONIES IN VR

16:15 – 16:40

Daina Smolskutė Urbanavičienė

BETWEEN CONTROL AND CREATIVITY: JAZZ, NETWORKS, AND IDENTITY IN LITHUANIA

16:40 – 17:05

Margaryta Kulichova

EFFICACY OF COLLABORATIVE MUSIC PROJECTS AMONG DIASPORA ARTISTS IN PORTUGAL IN FOSTERING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY & LOCAL INITIATIVES

17:05 – 17:25

ARWUM

(Horizon Mission Pilot Presentation)

17:25 – 17:50

Bahar Kiamoghaddam

UNVEILING THE UNSEEN: IRANIAN POETIC RESISTANCE & AR

17:50 – 18:15

Janne Kummer

TITEL: _WATCHING THE STREAM SITTING ON THE RAILING OF A BRIDGE (TALKING TO MY LOVER VIA NOTES ON MY PHONE, ABOUT TO THROW A STONE INTO THE WATER)

** Projects of Anne Susan Zachariah, Michelle Kranot and Xinwei Wan can be experienced in VR at the Fernando Lopes Movie Theatre between 12:00 – 13:00 (Lunch Break) and 15:00 – 15:30 (Coffee Break).*

PRESENTER NAME:

Anne Susan Zachariah

INSTITUTION:

Lusófona University /
PhD in Media Arts & Communication

THE SPACE BETWEEN:
EMBODIED EXPERIENCE
IN INTERACTIVE VR FICTION

The Space Between is an original Interactive Fiction Film in Virtual Reality (IFFVR) created as practice-led research, informed by theoretical investigations into embodied experience in forms of Interactive Digital Narratives.

7 Set in southern India, the IFFVR experience explores human-animal conflict through dual perspectives of the same existential struggle. The user occupies both the literal space between a village and a forest, and the metaphorical space between conflicting yet parallel narratives, through a hybrid approach combining live-action video with a 360-degree storyworld, spatial audio and designed opportunities for object interaction.

The Space Between contributes to a field that, despite an established body of practice that remains theoretically underexamined, despite an established body of practice.

This research addresses these gaps through a multi-part inquiry into the participatory experience of IFF and IFFVR within the larger category of Interactive Digital Narratives (IDN). Flat-screen IFFs are analysed through the frequency, range and significance

of ludic interactivity. When applied to IFFVR, however, these criteria prove insufficient—spatial presence and the pre-reflective nature of sensorimotor engagement cannot be captured through metrics of designed interaction alone. The investigation of IFFVR therefore turns to embodiment as its analytical lens, examining how spatial exploration and object interaction affordances create conditions for embodied narrative engagement. Finally, the research draws on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of embodied perception to develop an analytical framework grounded in motor intentionality, body schema, sensorimotor engagement and spatio-temporal horizons.

Together, the theoretical framework and artistic component contribute to IDN scholarship by offering an analytical toolbox for embodied narrative engagement and its application in IFFVR design practice.

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BIOGRAPHY

Anne Susan Zachariah is a PhD student in Media Arts and Communication at Lusófona University, Lisbon. Her research examines embodied experience across flat-screen and Virtual Reality forms of Interactive Digital Narrative (IDN). She holds a Master degree in Mass Communication from Drake University, USA, a Master degree in Indian Philosophy and a Bachelors' degree in Physics from the University of Madras, India. Her professional experience spans documentary production, documentary editing, digital cinema technology and media education. Her background in filmmaking combined with a deep interest in entertainment technologies informs her practice-led research into Interactive Fiction Films in Virtual Reality.

PRESENTER NAME: Michelle Kranot
INSTITUTION: IT University of Copenhagen /
Play, Culture and AI / PhD Fellow
VIA University College / Centre for Creative Industries,
Technologies and Business / Associate Professor

ENTERING THE GARDEN:
FROM ATTENTION ECONOMY TO ECOLOGY
OF ATTENDING EXPANDED WORLDBUILDING
AS RELATIONAL PRACTICE

My artistic practice-based PhD investigates how audiences make meaning from immersive environmental storytelling through “Expanded Worldbuilding”. My research bridges contemporary animation and documentary practice through three interconnected areas: phenomenological approaches to immersive experiences, curatorial and pedagogical work in animated documentary through the ANIDOX programme at VIA University College.

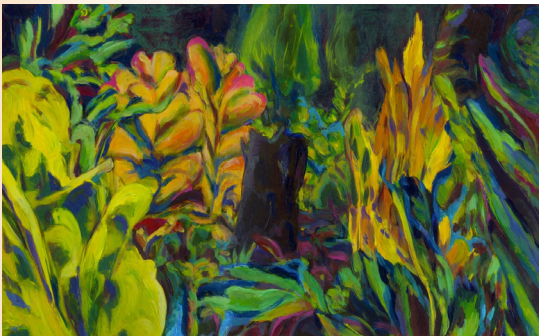
My presentation introduces “Expanded Worldbuilding” as a responsive, conceptual framework. Drawing on Tim Ingold’s anthropology of entanglement, mindfulness studies, and Bombaerts et al.’s manifesto *Beyond the Attention Economy* (2025), I propose that immersive environmental storytelling can cultivate “attending” as a relational, caring practice rather than extracting “attention” as a commodity.

I address my central research question: *How can we gauge experiential impact?* Through *The Garden Says...* exhibited at Museum Jorn, I demonstrate method-

ological approaches combining phenomenological analysis with contemplative sciences. The case study is an interactive multi-user experience using mixed reality headsets, exploring human encounters as ecological acts through immersive experiences of the sublime. My methodology integrates prototyping processes, audience research, and contemplative approaches to explore how shared meaning-making emerges in immersive environments.

This research demonstrates how audiences engage as ecological beings in relation with each other and the environment, offering frameworks for practice-based researchers investigating experiential impact.

<https://www.gardensays.org/>



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BIOGRAPHY

I am a filmmaker, educator, and multi-media artist based in Viborg, Denmark. I am currently a PhD fellow at IT University of Copenhagen, researching immersive environmental storytelling and audience meaning-making processes. Together with Uri Kranot, I co-founded TinDrum, a research and development studio. Our work has received top industry honours including the Grand Jury Prize at Venice Biennale, Best Immersive Work at Cannes, and the Eurimages Innovation Award. As an Associate Professor at The Animation Workshop / VIA University College, I lead ANIDOX, educational and professional programmes focused on animated documentary and non-fiction XR.

PRESENTER NAME:

María Casas Castillo

INSTITUTION:

LUCA School of Arts /
Art, Technology & Medium
Exploration research group /
PhD in the Arts

IMAGINARY ANIMALS:
LOOKING FOR IMAGES
OF A FADING WORLD

This PhD project investigates how artistic research, specifically documentary filmmaking, can weave scientific and traditional knowledge in the process of imagining and reimagining an ecosystem in recovery, and how more-than-human life is represented through human imaginaries and practices of care in the Anthropocene. Lake Pátzcuaro in Mexico has faced severe socio-ecological transformations since the Spanish conquest and is gradually drying up, putting endemic species at risk. Scientists and local communities have worked to restore the lake's socio-ecological system, drawing on different ways of knowing the past and imagining possible futures.

The research follows ecological restoration across the watershed through documentary fieldwork, filming in spaces where restoration is enacted: scientific monitoring and captivity centres for threatened species. At this stage of the PhD, I am developing the concept of *imaginary animals*: beings that exist not only as biological entities, but also as mediated presences shaped by scientific data, personal narratives, and the desire to sustain what is disappearing.

This research currently focuses on the achoque (*Ambystoma dumerilii*), a critically endangered amphibian endemic to Lake Pátzcuaro. A symbol of regional biodiversity and cultural memory, the achoque survives largely in captivity centres around the lakeshore, where artificial tanks are designed to reproduce conditions from the past. Like these tanks, documentary film constructs a framed space where disappearance can be observed, sustained, and temporarily held.

The research asks: What images can we look for while documenting an animal whose habitat is vanishing? How do documentary images negotiate extinction, endemism, and ecological loss? And how might restoration and filmmaking attempt to produce a future through the reconstruction of a past?

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BIOGRAPHY

María is a filmmaker from Mexico and a PhD candidate in the arts at LUCA School of Arts (KU Leuven, Belgium). She holds a Joint Master's degree in Documentary Filmmaking from DocNomads and an MA in Visual Anthropology from the University of Manchester. Her films explore the relationships between humans, animals, and landscapes, including Dust Is a Whale, Is Sunlight (Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival, 2023), and How to See the Night (Sheffield DocFest, 2022). She is currently based in Brussels, where she continues to make films as a way of searching for hidden worlds.

PRESENTER NAME:

Beth Walker

INSTITUTION:

*Lusófona University /
PhD in Media Arts & Communication*

WILDLIGHT:
THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL
OF PROJECTION ART IN NATURAL
ENVIRONMENTS

Media arts have a critical role to play in fostering more attentive and relational modes of engagement with environments and ecosystems. Projection can radically transform environments without invasive or permanent physical intervention, and holds unique potential for establishing direct, intimate encounters between artistic media and organic surfaces. Projection in natural environments represents a convergence of immersive media art, environmental engagement, site-specificity, and communal outdoor experience—offering layered possibilities as a timely and resonant practice.

This presentation introduces Wildlight, a practice-led research project that explores and advances this emerging field. While many artists are exploring the recontextualisation of projection into wild and semi-wild environments, academic discourse on projection remains largely focused on galleries and urban contexts. In response, this research investigates projection as a form of ecological attunement and multispecies encounter, considering its artistic, technical, and ethical dimensions.

Drawing from the fields of environmental media studies, posthumanism, and site-based art, the project adopts

an ethics-of-care framework centred on attentiveness, reciprocity, and ecological sensitivity. The methodology combines literature review, practice-based enquiry, and the development of a Parametric Visualisation Model (PVM)—a supportive tool that translates qualitative aspects of projection works into a visual framework, supporting both analysis and creative decision-making. The PVM will be tested and refined through the development of a site-responsive installation, planned for Greenham Common Nature Reserve in October 2026.

In this presentation, particular focus will be given to two key concerns: the possibility of co-creation with non-human beings within site-responsive practice, and the challenge of analysing such work without reducing its situated, affective, and relational complexity.

BIOGRAPHY

Beth Walker (she/her) is a filmmaker, visual artist and researcher from the UK. Her work spans short films, live visual performance and immersive installations, with her recent practice focused on ecological themes. Beth's works have been shown in venues including The Barbican Centre, New York State Museum, Annecy International Animation Festival and the Walker Art Center. She holds an MA in Animation from the Royal College of Art and was recently part of the judging panel for London Animation Festival. Beth is currently completing a PhD in Media Arts and Communication at Lusófona University.

PRESENTER NAME:

Xinwei Wan

INSTITUTION:

LUCA School of Arts – KU Leuven
/ Mediated Environments / PhD in the Arts

FROM SPECTACLE TO CONNECTION: DESIGNING CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCES OF OPENING CEREMONIES IN VR

With the ability to reach a global audience, opening ceremonies of mega-events such as the Olympic Games are a relevant stage for cross-cultural storytelling and shared experiences. The narratives of these opening ceremonies are often composed of the host country's rich history and cultural heritage. While organising committees adopt novel platforms such as Virtual Reality to support engagement, new narrative challenges emerge—particularly for designers, who are increasingly expected to cater to global audiences and help them interpret the cross-cultural narratives embedded in these spectacles.

In this research, we adopted the Research through Design (RtD) methodology and answered two research questions: RQ1: *How can we design the VR space to augment the traditional mega-event broadcasting viewing experience?* RQ2: *How does the VR space support audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds in understanding and engaging with the cultural narrative?* To answer these questions, we analyzed the visual and narrative design of an existing Olympic opening ceremony. Based on these insights, we designed a low-interactivity VR viewing experience that leverages the affordances of VR and employs spatial

narrative strategies, aiming to enrich the traditional broadcasting format. This experience was evaluated in a controlled study involving 30 participants from several backgrounds, then a thematic analysis was conducted to generate insights, support reflection, and derive design suggestions.

Our findings are synthesized along two directions—Designing for Cross-Cultural Narrative Comprehension and Designing for Cross-Cultural Narrative Engagement—through which we also offer design recommendations for similar events in the future. The contributions of this study include the design process and empirical results, as well as design recommendations for designers of cross-cultural experiences.

BIOGRAPHY

Xinwei Wan is a PhD student at the Mediated Environments department, LUCA School of Arts. She now focuses her research on exploring interactive methods for opening ceremonies of mega-events in virtual environments (VR/AR/XR). Situated at the intersection of immersive technology and cross-cultural storytelling, her research investigates novel spatial storytelling and engagement approaches within the context of virtual event experiences.

PRESENTER NAME: *Daina Smolskutė Urbanavičienė*
INSTITUTION: *The Lithuanian Academy
of Music and Theatre /
Faculty of Music / Department of Music History,
PhD in Art Studies (Musicology)*

BETWEEN CONTROL & CREATIVITY: JAZZ, NETWORKS, AND IDENTITY IN LITHUANIA

This paper explores the formation of Lithuanian jazz identity within the broader context of Cold War cultural exchange, Soviet ideological constraints, and post-socialist transformation. Combining musicological analysis with sociological theory, it draws on Georgina Born's ethnographic approach and
17 Bruno Latour's Actor-Network Theory (ANT), alongside concepts of imagined communities, discourse, and cultural memory.

Lithuanian jazz is examined as a field shaped by tensions between creative autonomy and institutional control. While jazz in the West functioned as a symbol of freedom, in the Soviet Union it occupied an ambiguous position restricted yet partially tolerated. Musicians navigated censorship and limited access to global cultural flows while developing local practices of expression and identity.

The Lithuanian jazz scene is conceptualised as an "imagined community" formed through formal and informal networks, including cafés, clubs, and the circulation of recordings. These practices enabled connections with global jazz culture despite political isolation. Particular attention is given to generational dynamics

and musicians' narratives, which reveal tensions between different artistic values, aesthetic orientations, and modes of self-understanding – shaping how jazz identity is articulated and negotiated.

Jazz festivals are analysed as key sites of cultural mediation within an ideologically constrained environment. Events such as Jaunystė '68 and the Birštonas Jazz Festival functioned as hybrid spaces, formally embedded within Soviet cultural structures yet enabling relatively autonomous musical expression. They facilitated the formation of artistic networks, the circulation of ideas, and the gradual legitimisation of jazz as a cultural practice. From an Actor-Network Theory (ANT) perspective, festivals can be understood as socio-cultural assemblages that connect actors, sustain networks, and contribute to the ongoing articulation of cultural identity.

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The study demonstrates that Lithuanian jazz identity is not a fixed stylistic category but a dynamic, historically contingent, and discursively constructed process shaped through networks, generational shifts, and cultural practices.

BIOGRAPHY

Daina Smolskutė Urbanavičienė is a cultural policy expert, arts manager, and PhD researcher in Musicology at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. Her doctoral research focuses on the Lithuanian jazz scene and the transformation of cultural identity in the late Soviet period. She has held key leadership positions in the Lithuanian cultural sector, including Vice-Minister of Culture (2021–2024) and Chair of the Lithuanian Council for Culture (2013–2021). She currently heads the Arts Management Department at LMTA and teaches arts management, creative industries, and cultural funding. Her research and professional interests lie at the intersection of artistic ecosystems, cultural policy, and international collaboration.

PRESENTER NAME:

Margaryta Kulichova

INSTITUTION:

Lusófona University /
Cinema Arts and Media / CICANT

EFFICACY OF COLLABORATIVE MUSIC PROJECTS AMONG DIASPORA ARTISTS IN PORTUGAL IN FOSTERING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY & LOCAL INITIATIVES

My research examines the efficacy of collaborative music projects among diaspora artists in Portugal as mechanisms for cultural expression, identity construction, and grassroots cultural diplomacy. Centred on the case study of *Home Ensemble 2025*, a music residency hosted by *Largo Residências* in Lisbon, the research investigates how music-making among diasporic communities operates beyond institutional frameworks and contributes to informal diplomatic processes.

The study combines semi-structured interviews with participants and curators, alongside an autoethnographic approach informed by my dual role as participant and observer. This embedded perspective enables a nuanced understanding of the interpersonal and affective dimensions of collaboration, reflecting the introduction of “sub-personal diplomacy”, a concept describing micro-level, often unconscious artistic practices that shape cross-cultural relations.

This project is situated within broader discussions of cultural diplomacy, diaspora studies, and deterritorialised music-making. Drawing on theories of soft power, everyday diplomacy, and identity as produc-

tion, the thesis argues that diasporic collaboration occupies an “in-between space” where cultural practices are deterritorialised yet not fully reterritorialised, creating fertile ground for intercultural dialogue and co-creation. This liminal zone allows cultural practices to escape fixed identities and explore new directions through collaborative music-making.

BIOGRAPHY

Margaryta Kulichova is an award-winning composer, sound designer, producer, and PhD candidate. She is a member of the Ukrainian Film Academy and the co-founder of Sound Force Studio, a Lisbon-based post-production facility and creative space for sound artists. Since 2014, she has released music under the moniker Grisly Faye, performing across Europe and the United States. She has participated in several international music exchange programs, including OneBeat, which sparked her interest in contemporary approaches to cultural diplomacy through collaborative music-making.

PRESENTER NAME: Bahar Kiamoghaddam
INSTITUTION: LUCA School of Arts – KU Leuven
/ Inter-Actions Research Unit / PhD in the Arts

UNVEILING THE UNSEEN: IRANIAN POETIC RESISTANCE & AR

My research starts from a personal and cultural problem. As an Iranian artist living in Europe, I am often labeled as “too dreamy” or “excessive” compared to Western ways of thinking. In the same way, Western media usually shows Iranian women through the stereotype of the “shy” or “submissive” victim. However, in Iranian culture, poetic expression and “dreaminess” are not about
21 escaping reality; they are intelligent survival strategies. The *Women, Life, Freedom* movement in 2022 proved this by using creative strategies, like illegal displays of joy or the symbolic act of cutting hair, to directly challenge these submissive stereotypes.

This research explores how Augmented Reality (AR) animation can be a tool to bring a more nuanced view to the representation of Middle Eastern women. I am looking at technology through the lens of Bernard Stiegler’s *pharmakon*, which means a tool that can be both a poison and a remedy. For example, my 2023 experiments with AI showed a “digital colonialism” where the systems could not imagine an Iranian woman without a hijab. This reinforces “femonationalism,” where the West views Eastern femininity as something passive that needs to be “rescued.”

To provide a “remedy,” my method uses workshops where simple tasks reveal hidden traumas. These are then translated into collective myths through a specifically Iranian way of thinking. By working with immigrants to animate indirect subjects—like using stop-motion cooking to find the memories behind a recipe, or turning emotions like fear into clay characters—I aim to extract the “mythmaking mindset” of Iranians. These AR narratives use exaggeration and “decadence” as resistance to interrupt controlled media representations and reclaim the body as a site of defiant imagination.

BIOGRAPHY

Bahar Kiamoghaddam is an Iranian artist-researcher and PhD candidate at LUCA School of Arts / KU Leuven. As a Persian artist, she blends contemporary practice with Middle Eastern philosophy, drawing deeply from folklore to uncover concealed truths. She believes that by offering fresh, nuanced viewpoints, artists can reveal what remains hidden in dominant narratives. a graduate of the Re:-Anima Master’s program, Bahar uses animation and Augmented Reality to translate everyday displaced experiences into collective myths. Her work focuses on reclaiming narrative agency for women through the powerful intersection of “dreaminess” and resistance.

PRESENTER NAME:

Janne Kummer

INSTITUTION:

*LUCA School of Arts /
Interaction Design, Meaningful Play*

TITEL:

_WATCHING THE STREAM SITTING
ON THE RAILING OF A BRIDGE
(TALKING TO MY LOVER VIA NOTES
ON MY PHONE, ABOUT TO THROW
A STONE INTO THE WATER)

Artificial intimacy refers to technologies engineered to engage our most fundamental human needs for connection, recognition, and desire.

23 Drawing on evolutionary biologist and AI researcher Rob Brooks' formulation—that artificial intimacies are machines built to feed back whatever it is they need us to see, hear, or feel—this practice-based PhD examines how AI companion platforms, algorithmic agents, and personalised digital systems commodify longing itself, converting the human need for belonging into a mechanism of consumer loyalty, data extraction, and ideological reproduction.

The research argues that intimacy has become the next major resource under surveillance capitalism, operating within conditions of structural loneliness where technological simulations of care increasingly displace collective forms of solidarity, meaning-making, and political agency. The isolated, individualised subject—rendered vulnerable by the scarcity of genuine connection—becomes acutely susceptible to manipulation when companionship

and desire are transformed into tradeable commodities. These systems do not merely reflect existing inequalities of gender, race, and class; they actively reproduce them, embedding misogynistic fantasy, racialised exotification, and heteronormative dominance into the bodies and behaviours of algorithmically generated companions.

This crisis of manufactured intimacy does not unfold in isolation. It is inseparable from a broader political hardening: the expansion of authoritarian surveillance, normalised state violence, and a new fascist body aesthetic that circulates through the same digital infrastructures. Against this convergence, the PhD develops an original somatic counter-protocol: a community-based body practice toolkit designed to reclaim erotic vitality, nervous system autonomy, and the conditions for genuine human togetherness.

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BIOGRAPHY

Janne Kummer (they/them, no pronouns) is a transdisciplinary artist and educator working across performance, digital art, game design, and critical theory. Their practice integrates technological research with a somatic understanding of body politics and power, critically engaging with AI, representations of bodies, and the ways digital technologies shape social and political hierarchies. JK is a PhD candidate at LUCA School of Arts (Brussels) and the Berlin Open Lab, examining the emotional economies of AI companionship and how algorithmic intimacy operates as a tool of socio-political manipulation, reinforcing inequalities related to gender, race, and class. As a martial artist, active fighter, and trainer informed by trauma-sensitive somatic practice, JK leads community self-defense training and workshops on martial arts, trauma, and collective empowerment—recognising the body as a primary site of knowledge, resistance, and healing.

WATER AS TIME

Water as Time is an artistic research project developed within the FilmEU WIRE Horizon Mission Pilots that engages water as a medium through which temporal perception, environmental consciousness, and embodied experience can be investigated. The project responds to the ecological urgency of oceans and waters by treating water not only as a thematic concern, but as an epistemic partner: a material agent through which the interdependence of body, environment, and time can be sensed and thought. Structured as an immersive projection ecology, the installation combines moving image, multichannel sound, haze, reflective foils, and translucent membranes to create a spatial field of temporal modulation. The work is not conceived as a collection of discrete screens, but as a temporal volume in which images, sound, bodies, and materials continuously interfere with one another. Water as Time thus operates as a flowing vertical field rather than a projection-based installation. Water appears at multiple scales and in different states from sweat, tears, breath, and blood circulation to ice, ocean currents, and planetary vortices, linking bodily rhythms with geological and cosmic processes. Through this hydrological montage, water emerges as a connective medium that carries multiple, intersecting temporalities. Instead of following a linear narrative, the installation is structured through flow, suspension, rupture, and return. Long, slow sequences are interrupted by moments of instability—a trembling droplet, a crack in ice, a pulse in a blood vessel, a storm-like vortex—making time perceptible as pressure, release, delay, and transformation. In this way, the work foregrounds water as a carrier of environmental memory and ecological change, inviting visitors to inhabit temporal change as an embodied and spatial

condition rather than a sequence to be followed. The project draws on embodied metaphor theory and predictive processing. If time is commonly understood through metaphors of flow, movement, and continuity, then water becomes a privileged experiential domain for sensing duration, instability, and transformation. At the same time, water's turbulence and unpredictability generate micro-surprises in perception, disrupting expectation and heightening attention. By staging temporal disjunctions and perceptual delays, the installation modulates the visitor's felt sense of time and ecological entanglement. In this sense, Water as Time becomes a sensorially driven metaphorical space where embodied cognition and predictive perception converge. Visitors do not simply see or hear time; they feel it, move through it, and continuously construct it through the unstable material and sensory dynamics of water.

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TEAM MEMBERS:

Prof. Dr. ELENA TRENCHVA (Project leader), visual artist, production and costume designer, researcher and educator, NATFA / Prof. Dr. DAVID NOVACK, sound designer, documentary filmmaker and educator, Lusófona University / Dr. MAARTEN COËGNARTS, film studies scholar and artistic researcher, LUCA School of Arts / Prof. Dr. RADOSTINA NEYKOVA, visual artist, animation director, illustrator, researcher and educator, NATFA / Prof. Dr. MARTIN DIMITROV, Director of Photography, visual artist, researcher and educator, NATFA / Dr. LEA VIDAKOVICH, multimedia artist, animation film director, researcher and educator, Lusófona University / ANDREA-NIKOL KOSTOVA, visual artist, film editor, researcher and educator, NATFA / TARUN MADUPU, sound designer, filmmaker, and film researcher, Lusófona University

IMMERSIVE SHIPWRECKS

The pilot project Immersive Shipwrecks aimed to increase ocean literacy by telling the stories of shipwrecks along Europe's coastline. The project used multiple platforms and points of contact to reach its audience, including virtual reality (VR), an immersive installation, and a responsive website. In connection with the EU Mission "Restore our Oceans and Waters," this proposal used a creative and artistic approach to address two key issues:

- *The past impacts of shipwrecks on specific European coastal areas.*
- *The future impacts of climate change on those same coastlines.*

27 The project's main research question was: *How can VR increase ocean literacy among specific audiences, particularly young people?*

At the core of the project was the production of two 3D worlds. The first represents the underwater resting grounds of a European shipwreck. The second simulates a future underwater world based on scientific scenarios of rising sea levels along the European coast.

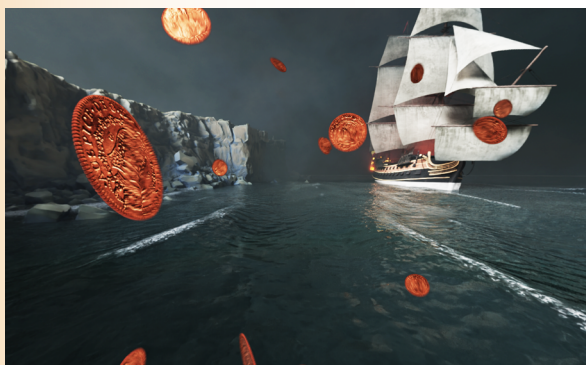
For more information, visit the project website: <https://shipwrecks.filmeu.eu/>

TEAM MEMBERS:

CÉLIA QUICO (*Project leader*), *interactive media, immersive media, digital heritage*, Lusófona University / ANABELA CRUCES, *environmental sciences*, Lusófona University /

DULMAA PUREV-OCHIR, *scriptwriting, Lusófona University / FERNANDO ANGELINO, marketing, entrepreneurship, VR, Lusófona University / JOÃO ALVES, music composition, sound design, Lusófona University / JOSÉ GOMES PINTO, aesthetics, media theory, philosophy of communication, Lusófona University / PEDRO SOUSA, VR, 3D modelling, visual effects, Lusófona University / NUNO CINTRA TORRES, branding, audiovisual, project development, Lusófona University / RUTO MUCHACHO, project logotype/graphic identity, Lusófona University / VALTER ARRAIS, webdesign, Lusófona University / JOACHIM PIETSCH, web programming, digital fabrication, maker culture, IADT / ROBERT GRIFFIN, user experience design, online learning, immersive technologies, IADT / ELENA TRENCHÉV, concept design, costume design, historical reenactment, NATFA / RADOSTINA NEYKOVA, animation, non-traditional animation techniques, NATFA/YOANKADIEV, AI, Artistic research, NATFA / THOMAS BOGEVALD BJORNSTEN, digital and strategic communication, affective computing, data visualization, VIA/CAROLINE SOARES, 2D animation, Lusófona University / FELIPE KENJI, 2D animation, Lusófona University*

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ARWUM:
ARTISTIC RESEARCH ON WOMEN'S URBAN
MOBILITIES

By bringing together urban scholars, media and communication experts, artists, and filmmakers, ARWUM seeks to foreground the often-invisible realities of women's urban travel. These include navigating care responsibilities, managing menstrual health, and balancing personal commitments with professional aspirations—factors that deeply shape how and why women move through cities. Despite women globally demonstrating more sustainable mobility patterns—such as greater reliance on walking and public transportation over car use—their specific needs and challenges remain largely ignored in urban planning. This invisibility contributes to ill-fitting timetables, insufficient care-related infrastructure, and diminished perceptions of well-being.

Adopting an interdisciplinary and gendered lens, this project offers an intimate view of what the shift toward climate-neutral and smart cities entails in everyday life. It centers on the lived realities of women who prioritize collective sustainability, even at personal cost, within urban environments increasingly impacted by extreme weather, energy instability, and geopolitical tension. Through this focus, the project will help found an international and interdisciplinary collaboration that fosters the creation of narratives and representations that illuminate the gendered dimensions of everyday commuting, as well as the challenges posed by the transition to carbon-neutral cities. The project's centerpiece is an inaugural exhibition in Tallinn that will feature different artworks that translate these stories into accessible and evoc-

ative forms. Through intimate narratives—such as women’s experiences of cycling, female tram drivers’ perspectives in Tallinn and Porto, and corresponding stories from Dublin—the exhibition invites audiences to reimagine urban futures that are not only smart and sustainable, but also contribute to gender equality.

TEAM MEMBERS:

MARIA LINDMÄE (*Project leader*), *Urban Studies researcher, TLU* / ALEKSANDRA IANCHENKO, *artist and researcher, TLU* / VANESSA RIBEIRO-RODRIGUES, *filmmaker and media scholar, Lusófona University* / SARAH HOOVER, *dramaturg and lecturer in devised and interactive performance, IADT* / CARLOS LESMES, *film director, BFM*

