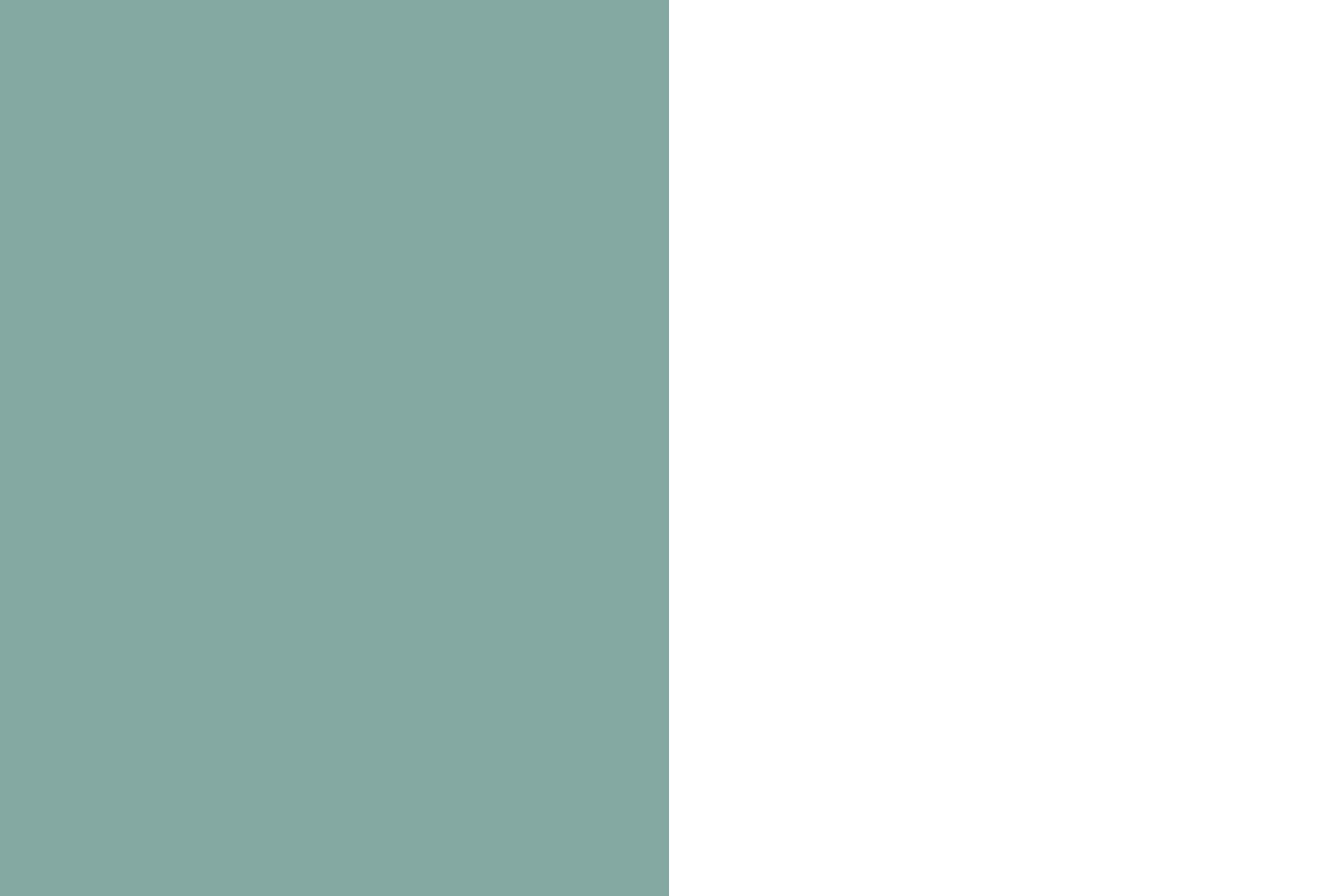


# STUDY AT THE AIX-EN-PROVENCE SCHOOL OF ART



ÉCOLE SUPÉRIEURE D'ART D'AIX EN PROVENCE FÉLIX CICCOLINI



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## THE SCHOOL OF ART: AN INSTITUTION IN THE PUBLIC'S SERVICE

The Félix Ciccolini Aix-en-Provence School of Art is a public institution for cultural cooperation dedicated to higher education in the arts and art research. It prepares students for the National Diploma in Art (DNA, equivalent to a bachelor's degree) and the Higher National Diploma in Visual Expression (DNSEP, equivalent to a master's degree). The school also offers a joint PhD in research in artistic creation with Aix-Marseille University, in the context of the PRISM joint research unit under the supervision of the CNRS. In addition, the school endeavours to disseminate and promote contemporary artistic creation and art expertise by organising exhibitions, conference cycles and seminars. As an institution committed to its community, it also offers practical art classes for some 400 amateurs (children, adolescents and adults) in the form of 20 workshops in modelling, painting, life drawing, history and current state of experimental music, comics, visual expression, serigraphy, photography, and more. Students and graduates are helped to enhance the value of their work through residency programmes and meetings with art professionals. The school also promotes art to ensure equal access to culture for all by participating in events throughout the city and region.

## THE ART EXPERIENCE

For the undergraduate and graduate programmes, the school's educational approach sees the art experience as a combination of both vertical (teacher to student) and horizontal (peer to peer) learning. It considers each student's affirmation of their identity is inseparable from the construction of their artistic project. This combined learning approach, which stimulates students to share their knowledge dynamically, develops new pathways from techniques acquired to projects completed, and from collective work to individual practice. Undergraduate students participate in different semester projects and take a set of theory classes. Projects are jointly supervised by the instructors of both practical and theory classes. Built around themes, these projects allow students to discover different work methodologies and approaches to art and to practice with different mediums. Courses common to both the undergraduate and graduate programmes allow students in years 1 through 5 to tackle current issues in artistic creation. This constantly evolving educational approach is further enriched by the back-to-school project, the numerous workshops, the weekly conferences, the "Journées thématiques" series of events and the "Les Mondes de l'art" programme. Graduate students must choose at least one workshop in topics such as spatial drawing, edition, digital, mechatronics, painting, performance, photography, sound, video and volume. In these workshops, students can design and produce their work with a focus on a specific medium or an artistic creation process.

Theory courses, thesis work and workshop attendance all help students develop an artistic body of work while confirming their personal approach.

Foreign language courses in English and French round out the education offered in both the undergraduate and graduate programmes. A broad range of elective courses offering theory, practical and technical classes are also available to all students from years 1 to 5. Elective courses enable students to consolidate basic knowledge in certain areas and delve deeper into specific concepts.

## ADMISSIONS

The Aix-en-Provence School of Art admits applications for first-year admission or transfer. First-year applicants must take an entrance examination, while an admissions committee approves any transfer applications. International students may apply for admission online through the CampusArt/Campus France platform, which promotes art and architectural studies in France abroad. This programme allows, under certain conditions and pre-requisites, to apply for certain art degree courses without competition and without appearing in person before a transfer placement committee.

## ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

The school, which has registered with the Parcoursup admissions platform starting on 2021, organises an entrance examination for first-year applicants twice a year. This is a three-part exam consisting of a theory test that includes an English section, a visual arts test and an interview with a board of examiners. The interview is essential to assess the applicant's motivation.

## TRANSFER ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Two different committees offer admission to transfer applicants.

- The pedagogical committee handles applications from students enrolled in another French art school having at least one year's credit.
- The local transfer placement committee handles applications from students enrolled in art studies in France or abroad outside an art school, or with a professional background.

For each commission, applicants are summoned to appear before a board composed of faculty members and students.



Azad Eurdekian and Laura Jacob, students, *Les Mondes de l'art #2*, march 2019.

## UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME DNA

The undergraduate programme consists of six semesters of instruction. It begins with a series of projects proposed by teachers and centred around common issues. Every semester, students are assigned a new project that develops multidisciplinary practices. Students go through five projects of their choice during the first five semesters of their studies. The sixth semester is devoted to the preparation for the National Diploma in Art. During the undergraduate course, students are trained through specific projects where theory, practice, and technique are combined in the same artistic creation experience. This a horizontal learning approach that allows the peer-to-peer transfer of the students' level of knowledge, artistic sensibility and maturity. Theoretical instruction and personal research fuel experimentation with artistic practices, and structure the conceptual, artistic, and technical knowledge acquired. Students may move up to the graduate programme if they obtain their DNA and are approved by a graduate admissions committee.

## GRADUATE PROGRAMME DNSEP

Entry into the graduate programme is subject to the decision of the admissions committee, which approves a project presented by the student. During this four-semester course of study, students complete a personal artistic project that they will present to receive their Higher National Diploma in Visual Expression (DNSEP). These two years allow them to deepen their mastery of a set of artistic practices and personal research and to prepare for the professional world. During this time, students must develop their practice with a view to the future by attending workshops, thematic workshops, theory lectures, weekly conferences and, finally, by diligently working on writing their thesis. Such thesis work allows each student to present a piece of critical writing that deeply questions one area of their research. It takes artistic practice onto the field of the writing by covering an artistic, theoretical, political or social matter encountered in the student's personal approach. The school also offers a concentration in Real-time art. Interested students must follow a course of study in techno-digital practices where the mind questions and implements the flow of information. The second year of the graduate programme is devoted to preparing for the diploma which grants access to postgraduate studies, the agrégation qualification for teaching in the visual arts and postgraduate art studies.

## **WORKSHOPS**

### **SPATIAL DRAWING**

Drawing is considered from an interdisciplinary perspective in connection with the other artistic disciplines. The workshop tackles issues relating to public space and movement and begins with a time of observation followed by artistic creation.

### **DIGITAL**

The digital workshop gives access to the computer-powered tools of artistic creation. It is organised around four learning areas: games, programming, 3D, and the web.

### **PAINTING**

As a laboratory of ideas and forms that interacts with other disciplines and other ways of perceiving reality, this workshop adopts a technical and conceptual approach to painting.

### **EDITION**

The edition workshop presents an opportunity to reflect on the artist's multiple and techniques for its production. As a space for such production, the workshop teaches students the graphical formatting of iconographic and textual context and to allows them to experiment with techniques, methods and different media.

## **MECHATRONICS**

Mechatronics has been one of the school's core workshops since 1992. It enables students to understand the design of mechanical and electronic objects from a perspective that is unconstrained by a technological view of the work.

## **PERFORMANCE**

Performance is one of the main practices where art meets the real world, essentially through the common denominator of the individual. Whether individual or collective, performance plays with time, requires thinking outside the box to set the duration of an exhibition, and challenges the notions of public and private space.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

This workshop examines the means whereby the image questions the world. Can art be a tool for the critique of contemporary realities?

## **SOUND**

The practices addressed in this workshop involve the design and realisation of mechanisms, processes, installations or performances in which sound is considered in its relation to space, both as a medium and a flow.

## **VIDEO**

The video workshop traces the history of the medium from its beginnings to today through several presentations of historical and contemporary international works. It has been conceived as a space for discovery, exchange and critical and theoretical experimentation.

## **VOLUME**

Sculpture is considered as a means of expression that resonates through its use of space. Practices addressed in this workshop range from DIY to digital techniques, passing through ceramics, moulding and modelling, with constant interaction with the other workshops of the school.

## **WOOD AND METAL WORKSHOPS**

As the school's resource centres, these two workshops allow students to access specific tools and receive assistance with projects in the production phase. This results in the students achieving technical mastery and autonomy in terms of tools and shared techniques.

## INSTRUCTION COMMON TO THE UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

### THEMATIC WORKSHOPS

Every school year, two weeks are set aside for thematic workshops during which students gain experience and create works at a fast pace, under the supervision of teachers or outside contributors. No other classes are scheduled during this time.

### CONFERENCES

Included in the course of study for all students, the weekly lectures programme covers many horizons in the fields of art, philosophy, social sciences, history, poetry, film or dance. Here, students are exposed to research work and works of art in a manner that also allows for a privileged interaction with the actors of contemporary artistic creation.

### “JOURNÉES THÉMATIQUES” AND “LES MONDES DE L’ART”

Included in the course structure of all students, the “Journées thématiques” and “Les Mondes de l’art” programmes highlight the different theoretical and professional environments in the field of artistic creation. They allow students to discover the aesthetic, social, political, economic and technical issues of the field.

### MULTIMEDIA LIBRARY

The multimedia library keeps and makes available to the public a collection of more than 8,000 items (magazines, general and reference works, exhibition catalogues and artists’ books as well as essays, DVDs, CDs, etc.). The collection provides a broad overview of the art of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As a member of the BEAR (Bibliothèques d’Écoles d’Art en Réseau) art school libraries network, the multimedia library gives access to articles published in more than 200 of specialised journals that document not only the current affairs of the arts, but also aesthetics and cultural news. It highlights a selection of books and documents related to the instruction imparted in the school and high points in its history. The multimedia library assists students throughout their course of studies through a programme of working sessions (research methodology...) and meetings (“Choses imprimées”). For this purpose, it shares in the school’s educational proposals.



Louise Lett, student, *Lichttraum* project carried out with the partner International Festival of Lyric Art, april 2019  
Photograph : Carlos Casteleira

## RESEARCH

Today, research is an integral part of artistic practice in art schools. At the Aix-en-Provence School of Art, research can lead to a joint PhD in research in artistic creation offered with Aix-Marseille University, with work conducted in conjunction with the PRISM joint research unit under the supervision of the CNRS. In this postgraduate programme, doctoral students work on a research project based on the link between practice and theory. Even before this, research activities are fully integrated into the educational approach of the undergraduate and graduate degree courses and find applications through several programmes led by faculty members, in conjunction with academic partners in France and abroad: antiAtlas of borders, Walking the Data, Locus Sonus and Décors, dispositifs, déplacements.

## LOCUS SONUS RESEARCH GROUP

The Aix-en-Provence School of Art is one of the first to have structured art research by creating in 2005 a research group under the name of “Locus Sonus”. This group conducts research based on the practice of sound arts. It considers how space is transformed as sound transmission, distribution and generation have evolved, and studies the artistic possibilities that stem from such change. Locus Sonus welcomes postgraduate students in the context of a doctorate in research in artistic creation. It is part of the PRISM (Perception, Representations, Image, Sound, Music) joint research unit,

an interdisciplinary laboratory under the supervision of the CNRS and Aix-Marseille University. The school offers a joint PhD in the field of “Practice and theory of artistic creation” with the latter’s Language, Literature and Arts Doctoral School in the context of the PRISM arrangement, with the support of the French Ministry of Culture. The school now hosts several doctoral researchers, as well as pre-doctoral artists in the context of residency programs several months long, who regularly speak at the school.

## DÉCORS, DISPOSITIFS, DÉPLACEMENTS RESEARCH PROGRAMME

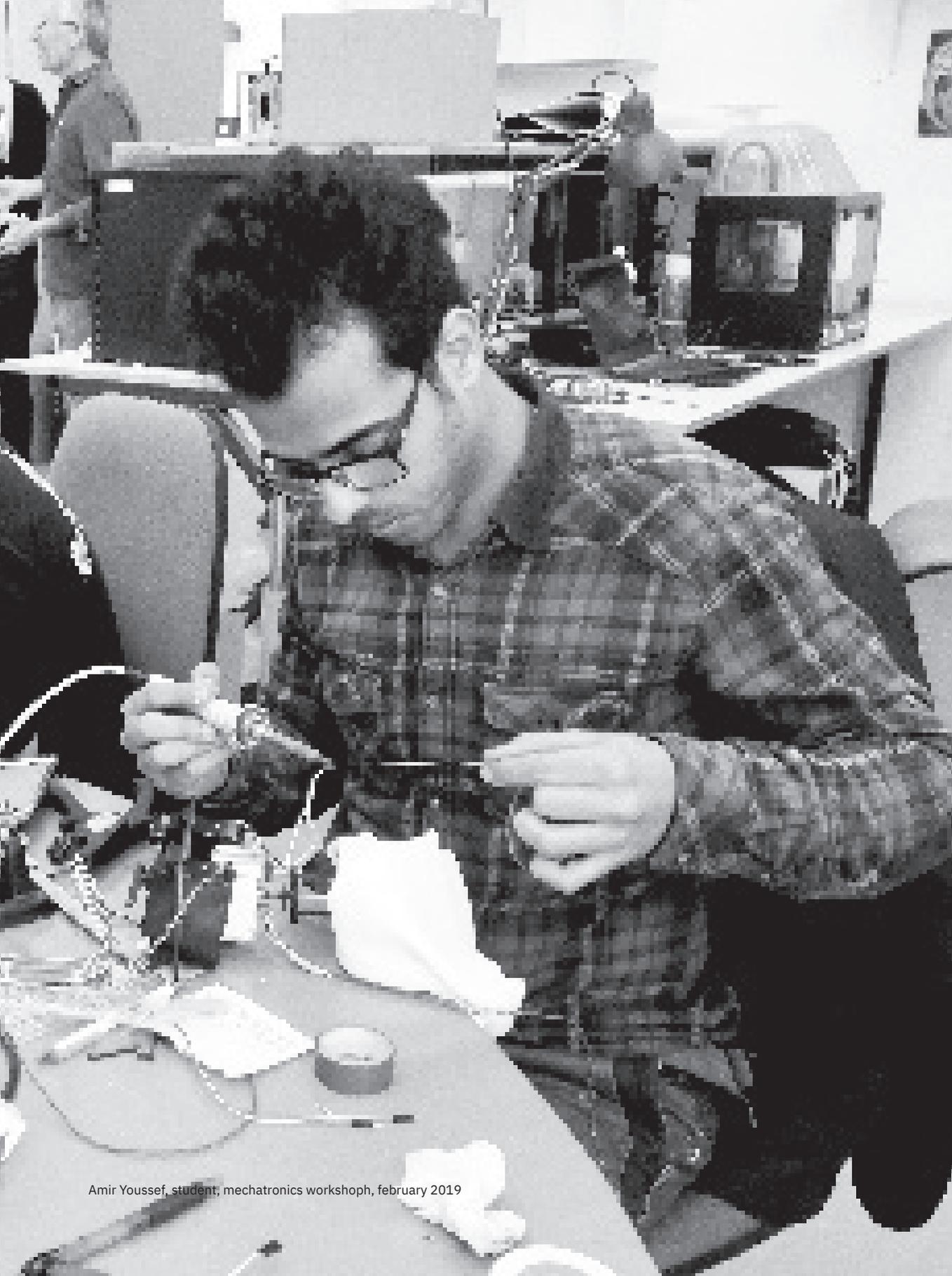
This research programme aims to question the interventions that renew, within the scenic and visual domain, the manner in which works of art or shows are staged. It makes it possible to study the logic behind decompartmentalisation, behind leaving the stage or exhibition stage. It allows students to consider the porosity between genres and practices, which necessarily opens the door to new collaborative arrangements. For the participants in this programme, the focus is on laying hold of conceptual spaces in scenography and working scenery, like so many theoretical reformulations conducive to the widening of the artistic fields and the nomadism of contemporary practices. This programme is carried out from an historical, cultural, sociological and artistic perspective.

## INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMME

As experiences are shared and cultures exchanged, students create an ideal framework for research, creativity and innovation. One of the main goals of international mobility is the discovery of other reference systems in the field of art. At the Aix-en-Provence School of Art, this mobility represents an essential component of the students’ path and fits fully into their educational course of study. Students plan their mobility project in their third year and complete a semester of studies or work placement abroad during their fourth year. The school participates in the ERASMUS+ programme, which finances part of the mobility projects in Europe. The school also promotes and supports extra-European mobility projects. Mobility enriches students’ career paths and international networking. In addition, the same student benefits from an educational follow-up to ensure the full recognition of their acquired knowledge.

## WORK PLACEMENT

Work placements form part of students’ training and contribute to prepare them for professional life as they allow them to come into contact with artistic practices and creative trades and develop a network of contacts. Work placements, whether short or long, mandatory or at the student’s personal initiative, are formalised in an agreement. At the end of this professional immersion period, all students must submit a work placement report – a template is sent to them with the agreement – to the person responsible for assisting students with their life off campus.



Amir Youssef, student, mechatronics workshop, february 2019

## CONTEMPORARY LISTED BUILDING

### THE SCHOOL BUILDING

The school has occupied its 7,026-square-metre building designed by architect Claude Pradel-Lebar since 1977. The land, which belongs to the city, consists of a parcel adjoining the Pavillon Vendôme, a baroque jewel that is part of the heritage of Aix-en-Provence. Designed in line with the 1973 reform of art education, the art school's building represents a contemporary break with the canons of the Académie. This architectural work is unique in how its use of space captures this change in theoretical approach. Arising in the wake of post-1968 thinking, this architectural project is a direct interpretation of the opening up of artistic practice, in favour of a model of teaching art through art where all users, teachers (artists) and students (artists in training) become actors in new creative dynamics. Claude Pradel-Lebar's work reflects the political choices made in relation to cultural facilities in France in the early 1970s, mainly for the accessibility of art to the greatest number. The art school was built at the same time as the Vasarely Foundation, inaugurated in 1976 in Aix-en-Provence. Claude Pradel-Lebar, a government-certified architect, was the adviser to Victor Vasarely for the creation of 42 monumental works done by the Foundation, of which it was the first director from 1975 to 1982. In July 2019, the Aix-en-Provence School of Art was awarded the "Architecture contemporaine remarquable" label by the French Ministry of Culture.

## CAMPUS LIFE

As a place for experiences, learning and reflection, the school is also a place where students, faculty members, administrative and technical staff, art lovers and outside guests rub shoulders daily. The architecture of the building, designed to promote an exchange between disciplines, contributes to the free flow of people within it. Workshops, offices, a multimedia library and shared workspaces are connected by a network of footbridges which, as they go around an inner courtyard, lead to the amphitheatre – a meeting place at the heart of campus life. The school promotes the emergence of artistic projects and citizen initiatives, both individual and collective, by means of which the topical and societal issues influence how each person is involved: the creation of a salvaged materials storehouse, storage space management, radio projects or festive events proposed throughout the year are just a few examples. The school is a signatory of the National Association of Higher Schools of Art (ANdÉA) charter against discrimination. Art schools are spaces where everyone can build and affirm their identity.

## ÉCOLE(S) DU SUD

The École(s) du Sud network is made up of the region's six schools of art and public design (Aix-en-Provence, Arles, Avignon, Marseille, Toulon, Nice) and the school of Monaco. École(s) du Sud thus consists of seven educational institutions whose actors collaborate and pool their resources and their know-how at different levels. The network also promotes the flow of students within its schools during their studies, the complementarity of technical skills and the pooling of resources and tools in the areas of education, research, support for artistic creation and the professional integration of graduates.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

A B2 level in French is required to enter a degree programme. Before coming to France, EU students must apply for a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) from their country of origin.

## CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

Ten representatives (two per year) represent the student body before school authorities, who decide, along with the faculty, how these representatives are appointed. They play a crucial role as they liaise between the students, the faculty and the administrative personnel throughout the year.

## STUDENT ASSOCIATION

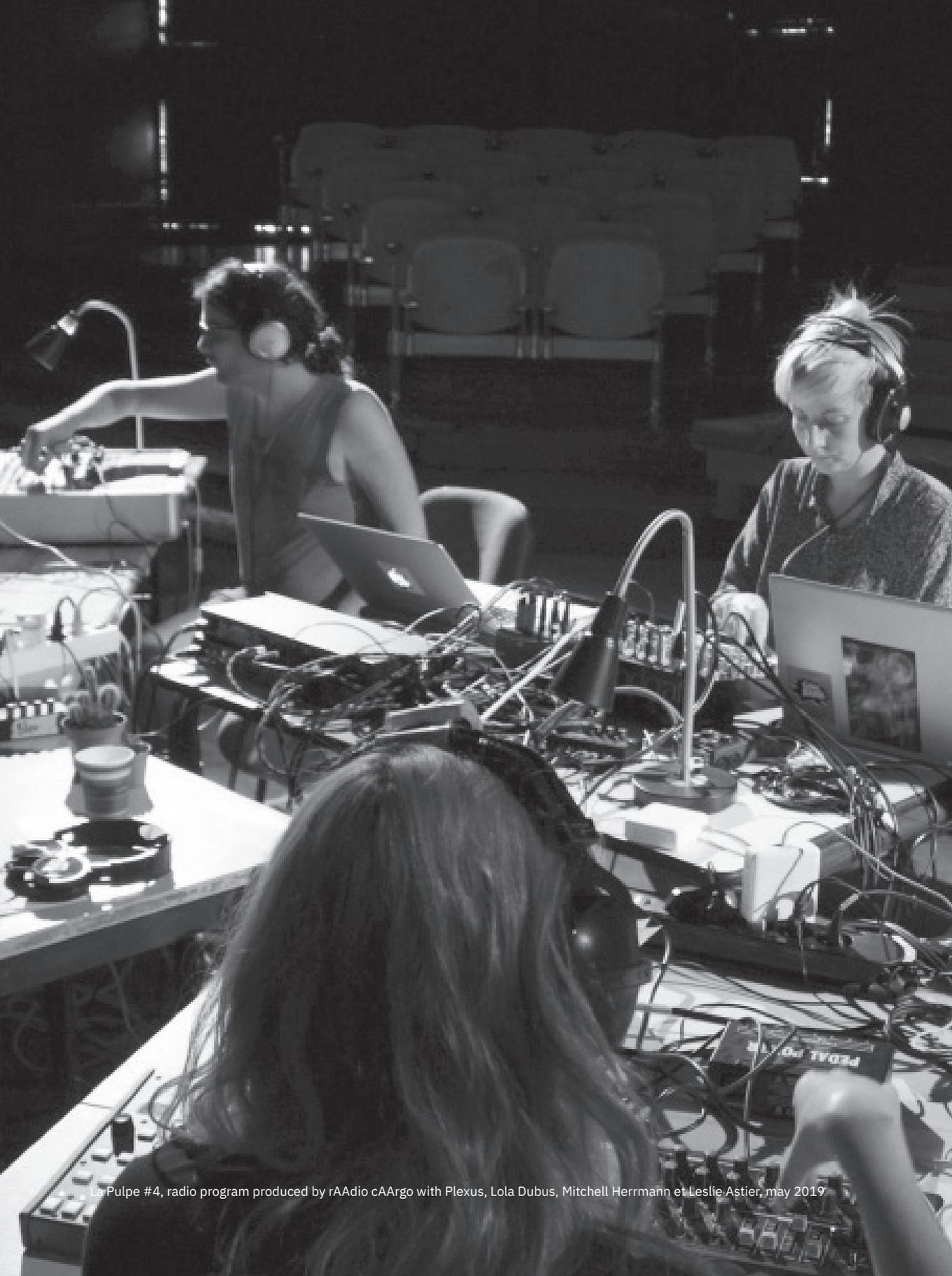
The students' association, which is involved in campus life, aims to promote and support student initiatives, to obtain financing for or the recovery of equipment and to organise artistic and cultural events.

## PLENARY SESSIONS

Twice a year, plenary sessions bring together the entire student body and all faculty and administrative personnel to give everyone the opportunity to share ideas and opinions on life at the school in a collegial atmosphere.

## BURSARIES AND INSURANCE

Higher education bursaries are awarded to art school students, exclusively by the CROUS, based on social criteria. The admissibility of the application depends on the resources and expenses of a student's parents or legal guardian. A third-party liability and individual accident insurance certificate is mandatory. It must be submitted when registering for the school.



La Pulpe #4, radio program produced by rAAdio cAArgo with Plexus, Lola Dubus, Mitchell Herrmann et Leslie Astier, may 2019



École supérieure d'art d'Aix-en-Provence  
Félix Ciccolini  
rue Émile Tavan  
13100 Aix-en-Provence  
+ 33 4 65 40 05 00  
[www.esaix.fr](http://www.esaix.fr)

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