

AFAD International Doctoral Colloquium 2026
Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava, Slovakia

January 26th 2026
Room No. 135 + Online MS Teams

Participants:

PhD Program Students (2nd year of study)

Invited critics:

Professor Gordon Hush

Head of The Innovation School
The Glasgow School of Art

Roger Paez, PhD

Director & Research Lab Leader
Design for City Making Research Lab,
ELISAVA Research
FACULTAT DE DISSENY
I ENGINYERIA DE BARCELONA

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AFAD critics and moderators:

Associate Prof. Zuzana Husárová, Department of Theory and History, AFAD

Associate Prof. Jozef Eduard Masarik, Department of Theory and History, AFAD

Associate Prof. András Cséfalvay, Digital Arts Platform

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Invited guests:

Lada Tsymbala, PhD, Associate Prof., Department of History and Theory of Art,
Lviv National Academy of Arts (Ukraine)

Yuliya Babunych, PhD, Associate Prof., Head of the Department of Doctoral and
Postdoctoral Studies, Lviv National Academy of Arts (Ukraine)

Olena Kashshay, PhD, Associate Prof., Vice-Rector for Scientific, Creative and
Innovative Activities, National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture (Kyiv,
Ukraine)

9:00am – 9:05am Colloquium Opening: Jozef E. Masarik, moderator

Ing. Barbora Hrmová

Department of Architectural Design

City and Landscape. Overlaps

9:10am – 9:20am Presentation

9:20am – 9:40am Discussion

Annotation: The city as artificially created space outside of nature. The landscape as cultural space embedded in nature or created as nature.

The work is research of city space and projects for the city that are understood as projects of social, cultural, habitat interactions. It can serve as a prerequisite for similar research of processes and spatial decisions in the environment outside the city leading to landscape as cultural project, i.e. a conscious and intentional inhabitation of the natural environment.

We are interested in projects on spaces as overlaps that exist or emerge between the city and the landscape. Interface spaces that already exist as spatial cultural typologies (garden, park, playground, etc.) or spaces that need to be provoked, found or generated and then tested as potential new artificial ecosystems, grown infrastructures, gradient environments or redundant constructions.

By research, we understand the movement between the scales and territories of landscape, city and architecture, searching for and mapping provocative overlaps that have the potential to become a current cultural spatial problem, captured textually and graphically. This becomes the starting point/hypothesis for the author's architectural project, which leads to spatial strategies/scenarios or decisions and forms through arguable design procedures.

During the doctoral studies, consistent individual work on artistic research is expected from the doctoral student, regularly presented and discussed at consultations and seminars. Pedagogical activity is also expected within the seminars at KAT (Projects for the City, Projects for the Landscape, ZVET) or when conducting one's own seminar. It is also assumed that the doctoral student will organize or tutor a theme related workshop or will cooperate on studio assignments with the aim of testing the doctoral project.

Mgr. art. Diego Hernando

Department of Design

Design and engineering relationships through new technologies

9:45am – 9:55am Presentation

9:55am – 10:15am Discussion

Annotation: The intended topic of the doctoral study follows the Transport Design Department's efforts to create a coherent and up-to-date education system. Topics addressed in the past period dealt with the issues of model building and 2D depictions in virtual and analog forms. Due to new trends in design, the dialogue between engineering and design is becoming more and more relevant. The latter is currently very underdeveloped at the school. The ambition of the PhD will be to open up this environment and define new requirements, especially towards the very promising issue of start-ups. The department has published teaching texts previously absent from the offer as part of the doctoral studies. A secondary objective of the PhD will be to create a new subject complemented by relevant literature on the evolving relationship between engineering and design. The doctoral study will be based on the construction of a real prototype under the conditions of an experimental

laboratory. The PhD student will closely participate in existing courses, especially in the field of technology and fundamentals of design.

Mgr. art. Volodymyr Serhachov

Department of Design

Speculative evolution

10:20am – 10:30am Presentation

10:30am – 10:50am Discussion

Annotation: In the context of the challenges we face today, thinking about alternative evolution is a way to understand the seriousness of the situation and turn it into an opportunity to ask questions and open a debate. The topic provides space for the use of the speculative method for proposing unconventional scenarios of future development based on the analysis of the current state of affairs and the search for answers to the question: "What if?"

The subject of the investigation is to check the potential of design to communicate current problems through the visualization of possible alternative futures. The project can work with tangible phenomena that directly concern us, based on the identification of crisis areas, but it can also be based on the absolute scenario of a catastrophe of a global, planetary dimension, which makes the subsequent development assumptions much more radical. It focuses on hypothetical artificial organisms that arise on the border of technogenic and natural environments, the remains of which are used as building material to create a new ecosystem.

Mgr. art. Radovan Labaš

Department of Design

Minimum living space

10:55am – 11:05am Presentation

11:05am – 11:25am Discussion

Annotation: The current economic and ecological situation is favorable to all solutions that at least partially eliminate negative impacts on various ecosystems. One of the successful solutions is primarily minimization. Minimizing manufactured materials, minimizing waste, minimizing human needs. This solution is slowly starting to move into architecture and overall human living. However, the full potential of applying a change in perspective on housing, in the context of minimal housing, has not yet been realized. This creates an opportunity for designers to search for new, minimal forms and ways of living, both year-round and temporary.

Mgr. art. Veronika Pátrovič Kočáriková

Department of Textile Design

Integration of current technologies into textile production

11:30am – 11:40am Presentation

11:40am – 12:00am Discussion

Annotation: This PhD project aims to explore the connection of traditional textile art and design with the latest technologies, with an emphasis on the integration of 3D technologies and generative artificial intelligence in virtual spaces. The project will investigate how these innovations affect the creation, perception and future possibilities of textile art. It aims to explore the transformative potential of 3D and generative technologies in shaping the future in connection with textile artistic expression.

12:00 (noon) – 1:00pm Lunch Break

MgA. Karina Golisová

Department of Photography and New Media

Resilience and resilient society as a response to crises

1:05pm – 1:15pm Presentation

1:15pm – 1:35pm Discussion

Annotation: The dissertation thesis will focus on the fundamental methodological approaches and analysis of the terms - resilience and resilient society in connection with subversive research of the photographic image, contemporary photographic media, and visual studies.

The research will address questions related to the phenomenon of resilience - Political resilience (resilience of communities) - Mental resilience - Cultural resilience and the resulting questions of creating / finding safe space.

Using an interdisciplinary artistic research method with an emphasis on the photographic medium, the work will delve into a new system of knowledge and questions in the context of the latest visual research on politics in relation to communities. It will bring new perspectives, understandings, and perceptions of communities and minorities who find themselves at the intersection of crises. The work is based on theoretical and visual research on the "resilience phenomenon," developed among others, by Professor Anne Masten, who states, "resilience grows out of everyday sources and processes. Resilience represents the ability to adapt and survive the system after its disruption, often involves the process of restoring functional balance, and sometimes denotes the process of successful transformation into a new stable functional state.

MgA. Lucia Sceranková

Department of Photography and New Media

Procedures and mechanisms of embodiment, disembodiment, re-embodiment in the photographic image

1:40pm – 1:50pm Presentation

1:50pm – 2:10pm Discussion

Annotation: This project will deal with artistic research concerning the depiction of disembodiment, re-embodiment or an embodied. These relate not only to the physical or mental body, but also to human ideas about nonhuman bodies: things, objects in diverse environments and their material and non-material nature. The

project will test new ways of depicting embodiments emerging in dialogues of mind and body, in the tensions between corporeality and non-corporeality in the medium of photography in relation to vision and sight, its framing, etc. New experiences, practices and mechanisms of imaging will be tested.

The research should also derive from natural science disciplines such as biology, but also from medicine and social science and cultural fields such as social or cultural anthropology, etc., and develop a creative dialogue with them in the actual artistic research. The future PhD student should establish communication with a specific researcher or research department in the disciplines.

Mgr. art. Ján Šutvay

Department of Painting

Painting medium in interdisciplinary overlaps and intersections

2:15pm – 2:25pm Presentation

2:24pm – 2:45pm Discussion

Annotation: The project will deal with the medium of painting and its spillovers into other artistic fields (performative or other). The overlaps will also concern the relations between 2D (image-surface) and 3D (image-object, installation, environment, etc.), i.e. shifts from surface to spatial solutions and the connection of painting with other media that originate from it. The medium of artistic research will be studio realizations, exhibitions and workshops in domestic and foreign environments. The prerequisite for such research is the doctoral student's ability to involve the medium of painting in trans-media collaborations that will arise from new projects.

Mgr. art. Filip Bielek

Department of Sculpture, Object, Installation

Sculpture in the context of public space and urban planning (socialist past, transformation period and contemporary perspectives)

2:50pm – 3:00pm Presentation

3:00pm – 3:20pm Discussion

Annotation: The topic responds to the current discourse in the field of public space in terms of sculptural, object-based and non-traditional artistic interventions and realizations. It reflects on the context of urban planning and the above mentioned artistic outcomes from the socialist past to contemporary tendencies and projects.

Mgr. art. Paula Malinowska

Digital Arts Platform

Socially Engaged Digital Art

3:25pm – 3:35pm Presentation

3:35pm – 3:55pm Discussion

Annotation: The aim of this PhD thesis is to delve into the transformative power of art practices within society, particularly focusing on marginalized voices. A notable aspect of the research is the examination of how the digital paradigm influences the spotlighting of new valid perspectives. Through digital and post-digital practices, there's a facilitation of engagement with elements beyond traditional viewpoints, fostering the emergence of novel models and mythologies. These evolving modes of discourse give rise to socially engaged forms of body politics, ecological considerations, and inclusive economies. Digital art, in particular, holds a promise for envisioning potential social changes that could steer us toward new, sustainable trajectories. The thesis underscores the significance of socially engaged art, especially in addressing themes such as ecofeminism, posthumanism, and mythopoietic practices within digital and post-digital contexts, which offer novel aesthetic avenues. Through probing these subjects, the thesis aims to contribute pertinent inquiries to ongoing discussions regarding the future of society and the transformative role of art therein.

Ing. arch. Irakli Eristavi

Department of Architectural Design

Author's strategies and procedures of architecture production

4:00pm – 4:10pm Presentation

4:10pm – 4:30pm Discussion

Annotation: The dissertation thesis and project will deal with the author's strategies and procedures for designing and subsequent building of architectural concepts, designs and projects. It will formulate, select, compare but also test and interpret the spheres of conceptual and design work as well as specific tools of architectural work.

4:30pm End of the first day of the colloquium: Jozef E. Masarik, moderator