

SAAR 2018 Summer Academy for Artistic research Inter Arts Center, Malmö, Sweden

Welcome to SAAR 2018, the Nordic Summer Academy for artistic research at the Inter Arts Center, a resource for interdisciplinary artistic research at the Faculty of Fine and Performing arts at Lund University!

SAAR brings artist-researchers (PhD candidates, Doctoral candidates or research fellows in artistic research) in a wide range of art forms together from Norway, Finland and Sweden. The Summer Academy provides a supportive setting where artist-researchers from various art fields present their ongoing artistic work and research and receive feedback from experienced tutors and peers from leading academic institutions. The summer academy aims to reflect the international diversity and scope of artistic research and to provide a stimulating and creative environment. It seeks to clarify, discuss and develop further emerging themes and issues arising out of the individual fellowship projects of the participants within the framework of artistic research.

The aim of SAAR is to create a setting which is practice-oriented and allows for an in depth discussion of the participants' research projects. The form of SAAR 2018 is that of a laboratory for artistic research, and each participant is invited to make a presentation of ongoing work, which ideally can be a work-in-progress, or a finished piece. A source of inspiration for earlier festivals and conferences within which this format has been developed, mainly at the Inter Arts Center, since 2010, was the Knowledge Lab at Haus Der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, which was curated by Sarat Maharaj. In an introductory address he outlined the following aims, which capture much of the intentions with the laboratory at SAAR of this year. The Knowledge Lab brought together artists and researchers from a wide range of disciplines with the aim of unpacking artistic practice, to see how it ticks from the inside, in a format where interactions were guided by the presentation and creation of theatre, choreography, music, and visual art:

The idea is to take this “embodied knowledge”—rather than any readymade body of “abstract theorization”—as our starting point. The issue is to begin by immersing ourselves in the performative experience—looking, listening, acting out, saying, showing—responding to and interacting with the image-sound-movement sequences presented by the various artist-contributors-respondents.

The Lab is about plunging in, getting under the skin of things to see how they tick from the inside. The atmosphere is of intimacy, immediacy and involvement—not clinical aloofness. We are not standing by watching the presentations as ‘spectacle’. Its a ‘thinking and doing’ mode. We join in, participate, eventually begin to watch ourselves watching. A self-reflexive awareness surfaces building up towards attentive understanding. A sense of analytical observation and critical scrutiny is teased out from probing the processes of making. It gets elaborated in the

thick of the performative experience — from within its sticky non-discursive spread —rather than in terms of some 'off-the-shelf' theoretical programme. (Maharaj 2005, n.p.)

From Monday through Wednesday, all participants make presentations within this lab. The presentations and discussions are all in plenary sessions, structured so as to first invite the two presenters to engage in a dialogue around their projects, with the aim of widening this discussion to a discourse around their artistic research practices which involves all participators.

On the Thursday, a special excursion day is organized which will take us to the Wanås Sculpture Park and Skissernas Museum (Museum of Artistic Process and Public Art) in Lund.

The Friday and Saturday will be devoted to group discussions/presentations or interventions related to topics identified over the first three days. The nine supervisors will be responsible for structuring these sessions, but it is essential that all participators make proposals and engage in the content of these two days. It will also be possible to sign up for individual supervision. Sunday morning will allow for summing up and evaluation, until eventually the entire event is closed with lunch. Once again, many thanks for joining the academy, we look forward to taking part in and sharing knowledge through artistic research over the coming week!

Stefan Östersjö