



NICA, Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis
Zelf-evaluatie 2015

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1. Organisation

Academic Director: Prof. dr. Christoph Lindner (UvA)

Programme Director: dr. Murat Aydemir (UvA)

Host: University of Amsterdam, Faculty of Humanities

Executive Board: Prof. dr. Christoph Lindner (UvA), Prof. dr. Ernst van Alphen (UL), Prof. dr. Maaïke Bleeker (UU), dr. Murat Aydemir (UvA)

Coordinator: dr. Eloe Kingma

Advisory Board: Prof. dr. Maaïke Bleeker (UU, chair), Prof. dr. Ernst van Alphen (UL), Prof. dr. Ginette Verstraete (VU), Prof. dr. René Boomkens (UvA), Prof. dr. Patricia Pisters (UvA), Prof. dr. Frans-Willem Korsten (EUR), Prof. dr. Rosemarie Buikema (UU), Prof. dr. Anneke Smelik (RU).

Secretary: Chantal Olijerhoek

Participating universities (8): UvA, VU, UL, UM, UU, RUG, ERU, RUN

Participating research master programmes (10):

- Art and Visual Culture (RU)
- Art Studies (UvA)
- Artistic Research (UvA)
- Arts and Culture (UL)
- Cultural Analysis (UvA)
- Gender and Ethnicity (UU)
- International Performance Research (UvA)
- Literary and Cultural Studies (RUG)
- Media and Performance Studies (UU)
- Religious Studies (UvA)
- Visual Arts, Media and Architecture (VU)

2. Profile

NICA's research agenda and curriculum pertain to Cultural Studies, i.e. the study of contemporary (socio-)cultural phenomena and developments from a hermeneutic, critical, theoretical, and interdisciplinary perspective. NICA fosters a national graduate environment, wherein researchers, PhD students, and research master students all collaborate and interact. The school favours a light and "bottom-up" organisational structure, designed to facilitate emerging interests; our activities are as likely to be initiated by students as by staff members. NICA hosts three active inter-university platforms: Platform for Postcolonial Readings, the Benelux Association for the Study of Art, Culture, and the Environment, and the Design and Fashion Cultures Platform. In 2014, NWO awarded NICA with a Graduate Grant, facilitating four PhD-fellowships. The four NICA PhD-fellows will start their appointment at September 1, 2015.

3. Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the following general objectives:

- a close dialogue with on-going research practices of staff members;
- requested or initiated by PhD and/or research master students;
- international participation or perspective;
- societal participation (museums and other organisations and institutions);
- cooperation with other research schools, e.g. RMeS, OSL, and OSK.

In the calendar year 2014, NICA offered 34 activities, for a grand total of 79 ECTS. The year's curriculum comprised of seminars, masterclasses, workshops, soirées, and a Summer and Winter School. (For a full overview of our 2014 activities, please refer to the Appendix.)

As of 2015, we have started to restructure and consolidate our curriculum. From September 2015 onwards, NICA will offer a yearly core programme consisting of the following three elements:

Theory Seminar (12 ECTS)

The NICA Theory Seminar offers a year-long and highly interactive research environment, in which PhD students study key theoretical texts, present their research in progress, and give feedback to each other's work. In addition, participants organize the International Workshop, hosting keynote lecturers and graduate students from around the world. Directors: prof. dr. Mireille Rosello (UvA) and dr. Sudeep Dasgupta (UvA).

Research in Progress: Methods and Practices (6 ECTS)

Guest lecturers from different universities, disciplines, and research communities demonstrate and debate their current research: what they are working on at the moment, what methodological choices they address, what problems they have encountered or foresee, how they situate themselves vis-à-vis the field of Cultural Studies, and so on. Participants acquire insight into the genealogies, methodologies, and practices of Cultural Studies in a national context. Director: dr. Murat Aydemir (UvA).

Politics and Economies of the Contemporary Arts (6 ECTS)

This course has a double focus: on the one hand, it inquires into how the arts today manage themselves politically and economically; on the other, it tries to analyse how the arts articulate the larger political and economic crisis that surround and impinge on them. What can art be and do today? Director: dr. Johan Hartle (UvA).

4. Enrolment

Tables 1 and 2 (below) show the respective enrolment of PhD students and research master students during the 2010-2014 period. During that period, an average of 10,8 PhD students enrolled each year. Each year, an average number of 42 research master students enrolled.

Table 1: PhD students					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
RUN	1		1	1	
RUG					1
UL	2		5	5	2
UvA	4	13	11	4	3
VU		1			
UU					
TOTAL	7	14	17	10	6

Table 2: Research master students					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
RUN	1	3	1	1	2
RUG					4
UL		7	5	10	5
UvA	20	30	22	36	32
VU					
UU		3	6	11	11
TOTAL	21	43	34	58	54

5. Participation

Table 3 (see page 5) shows the numbers of participants to our activities during the 2014 calendar year. (For a full overview of our activities of that year, please refer to the Appendix.)

Table 3: Participation Activities 2014					
Activity	EC	Participants	RMA	PhD	Other
<i>Seminars:</i>					
Theory Seminar	6	18	5	13	0
Cross Media Seminar	6	6	3	3	
Cities Seminar	6	35	17	14	4
Topics in Cultural Analysis	5	21	16	4	1
Reimagining the Global	5	20	10	7	3
Cuts Wounds, Slits	6	5	3	0	2
<i>Masterclasses</i>					
Martin	1	19	6	4	9
Luisetti	2	18	7	6	5
Mahrenholz	1	18	5	5	8
Activist Art in the Museum	1	20	13	3	4
Protevi	1	12	6	4	2
Boone	1	30	10	5	15
Mueller	1	17	4	13	0
Mediatization of the Artist	1	8	2	3	3
Esposito	1	25	10	4	11
Gordon	1	7	5	2	0
Hansen	1	9	4	1	4
Boltanski	1	14	3	3	8
Nealon	1	9	3	4	2
Chun	1	25	7	13	5
Weizman	1	15	3	9	3
Hitchcock	1	8	6	2	0
Mediating Asian Youth	1	9	5	4	0
<i>Winter & Summer Schools:</i>					
Sound Signatures I	6	23	9	7	7
Sound Signatures II	6	18	2	12	4
<i>Soirees:</i>					
Queer Abilities	6	31	14	8	9
<i>Workshops:</i>					
Legal Bodies	1	13	4	9	0
Deleuze in Praxis	0	12	3	9	0
Debt Drive	0	30	10	12	8
Postcolonial Museum	0	25	9	6	10
Archiving Ephemera	0	9	6	0	3
TOTAL	79	529	210	189	130

6. Quality

The quality of our researchers is corroborated by the Dutch quality assurance agency QANU. Table 4 (below) shows the most recent QANU scores of the three largest research institutes whose staff members participate in NICA.

In 2013, we have held an open (digital) survey among our members. Of the 36 respondents, 74,19% rated the quality of our programme for research master students as 'good', 12,9% as 'excellent'; 51,52% rated the quality of our programme for PhD students as 'good', 39,39 as 'excellent'. In response to the question whether NICA's activities offer a 'valuable addition' to students' local curricula, 60% answered 'yes', 34,29 answered 'very much so'.

A final testament to quality of our programme is offered by the reviews and positive decision by the selection committee of the 2014 NWO Graduate Grant call, funding four NICA PhD fellows starting September 2015.

	Quality	Productivity	Relevance	Vitality
LUCAS, UL	3,5	4	4,5	4
OGC, UU	5	5	5	4
ASCA, UvA	5	5	4	5

7. Host institution

The board advises to extend UvA's hosting of NICA for a second period. After that period, it seems most productive and warranted for NICA to move either to Utrecht or Leiden.

Appendix: Overview of 2014 Activities

Seminars (6 EC)

The Significance of Phenomenology

University of Amsterdam

Julian Kiverstein (UvA) , Christian Skirke (UvA)

Pirates, Privateers and Robber Barons

Leiden University

Frans Willem Korsten (LU), Yasco Horsman (LU)

Amsterdam Theory Seminar

University of Amsterdam

Mireille Rosello (UvA), Sudeep Dasgupta (UvA)

Leiden Theory Seminar

Universiteit Leiden

Ernst van Alphen (LU)

Cities Seminar

University of Amsterdam

Christoph Lindner (UvA)

Film and Philosophy Seminar

University of Amsterdam

Patricia Pisters (UvA), Joseph Früchtl (UvA)

Reimagining the Global

University of Amsterdam, in cooperation with ACGS

Esther Peeren (UvA), Jeroen de Kloet (UvA)

Schools (6 EC)

August 18-22

Sound Signatures, Part Two

New York University Berlin

Carolyn Birdsall (UvA), Myles Jackson (NYU), Mara Mills (NYU), Viktoria Tkaczyk (UvA)

January 13-17

Sound Signatures, Part One

University of Amsterdam

Carolyn Birdsall (UvA), Myles Jackson (NYU), Mara Mills (NYU), Viktoria Tkaczyk (UvA)

Soirées (6 EC)

Queer Abilities and Rudimentary Bodies

University of Amsterdam

Mireille Rosello (UvA), Jules Sturm (UvA), Birkan Tas (UvA)

Masterclasses (1 EC)

Peter Hitchcock: Exchanging Values, Trading Objects

November 10, 11, University of Amsterdam

Esther Peeren (UvA), in cooperation with Amsterdam School for Globalisation Studies

Wendy Chun: Imagined Networks

October 24, University of Amsterdam

Esther Peeren (UvA), in cooperation with ASCA

Jeffrey Nealon: Plant Theory

September 30, October 1, University of Amsterdam

Gaston Fransen (UvA) and Iris van der Tuin (UU)

Luc Boltanski: Mysteries and Conspiracies

September 24, University of Amsterdam

Robin Celikates (UvA)

Mark B.N. Hansen: Feed-Forward: The Future of 21st Century Media

September 2-4, University of Utrecht

Iris van der Tuin (UU)

Joshua Ramey: Spiritual Materialism

June 27, University of Amsterdam

Patricia Pisters (UvA)

Robert Esposito: Biological Life and Political Life

June 20, University of Amsterdam

Joost de Bloois (UvA)

Eric Gordon: Games, Civic Learning, and Power

June 23, Free University Amsterdam

Ginette Verstraete (VU)

Jeffrey Schnapp: Knowledge Design

May 27, University of Utrecht

Kiene Brillenburg Wurth (UU)

Nick Couldry and Eggo Mueller: Participation and Voice in Everyday Culture

May 15, Utrecht University

José van Dijck (UvA)

Time Crane: The Objects of Thoughts

May 14, University of Amsterdam

Julian Kiverstein (UvA), Christian Skirke (UvA)

Joseph Boone: Homoerotics of Orientalism

May 14, University of Amsterdam

Mireille Rosello (UvA)

John Protevi
April 19, University of Amsterdam
Annelies Kleinherenbrink (UvA)

Ray Brassier: Against Flat Ontologies
April 12, University of Amsterdam, in cooperation with Festival Drift

Frederico Luisetti: Primitives, Savages, Barbarians
January 22, University of Amsterdam
Joost de Bloois (UvA)

Simone Mahrenholz: Music as a Knowledge-System
January 23, University of Amsterdam

Heather Love: Queer Affect and Method
January 16-17, University of Amsterdam
Eliza Steinbock (UM), Esther Peeren (UvA)

Adrian Martin: Creative Film Criticism
January 9-10, University of Amsterdam
Patricia Pisters (UvA)

Workshops (1 EC)

November 14
Mediating Asian Yough: How to Hope in Precarious Time
University of Amsterdam, in cooperation with RMeS
Jeroen de Kloet (UvA), Donna Chu (University of Hong Kong)

October 6
Archiving Ephemera
University of Amsterdam
Sara Rosa Espi (UU)

September 25-26
Security/Mobility: Between Imagination and Authority
University of Amsterdam
Marie Beauchamp (UvA)

June 17
The Mediatization of the Artist
University of Amsterdam
Steven Jacobs (UGhent), Sandra Kisters (UU), Rachel Esner (UvA)

June 4-5
The Debt Drive
University of Amsterdam
Robin Celikates (UvA), Joost de Bloois (UvA)

June 6
Decolonizing the Museum
University of Amsterdam
Isabel Hoving (LU), Liesbeth Minnaard (LU)

May 15-17
Legal Bodies: Corpus/Persona/Communitas
University of Leiden
Frans Willem Korsten (LU), Yasco Horsman (LU)

April 17
Michelle Facos: Politics and the Arts
University of Amsterdam, in cooperation with Van Gogh Museum
Camelia Errouane (RUG)

March 6
Annie Fletcher: Humour, Conflict, Art
University of Amsterdam, in cooperation with Van Abbemuseum
Sruti Bala (UvA), Veronika Zangl (UvA)

February 21
Dutch Racism
Tropenmuseum Amsterdam
Elisabeth Bekers (VUB), Sarah de Mul (OU), Isabel Hoving (LU), Liesbeth Minnaard (LU)

Other

September, October
Aesthetics of Crisis
Lecture series and tutorial
University of Amsterdam, in cooperation with Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam
Johan Hartle (UvA)

June 2
Feminist Performance, Activism, Humour?
Interview with Laia Ribera Americana Cananguez
Mikki Stelder (UvA)

May 7
May Joseph: Fluid New York
Public Lecture
University of Amsterdam
Christoph Lindner (UvA)

Winter 2014
Cuts, Wounds, Slits: Mapping a Theory of the Cut
Tutorial
Sophie Berrebi (UvA)