ON ESSAYISM

THE ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS IN BRATISLAVA

CALL FOR WORKS

On Essayism x Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava

24 June 2026
Academy of Performing Arts
Bratislava, Slovakia

ON ESSAYISM // Conference welcomes **PhD** candidates to participate in a one-day in-person doctoral conference dedicated to exploring essayism as a method, a mode of thinking and a practice within academic and artistic research.

Over the past decades, the essay has expanded beyond text, manifesting in diverse formats such as the essay film, the visual or photo essay, the performance essay, the essay exhibition, and more. This expansion testifies an increasing interest in opening and presenting the arts as a way of doing research, or a mode of inquiry.

Due to its reflective, open-ended, and subjective nature, the essay offers a unique model for thinking-through-making. Its process-based approach makes it particularly apt for being integrated in artistic research, offering researchers of all disciplines method for investigating the questions that are relevant to their practices as well as a common ground to communicate thought processes underlying their experiments.

Essayistic strategies can be used as a method for researchers to reflect on their subject matter, practices, motivations, meaning making, and navigating their PhD journey.

The conference is organised under the FilmEU Dynamic Cluster ON ESSAYISM – Pedagogical Innovation through Essayism and seeks to investigate how doctoral research engages with essayism whether in film, performance, visual art, sound, installation, writing, or hybrid practices.

It aims to explore, test, and articulate essayism as a transdisciplinary methodology for both artistic and theoretical research.

This gathering of researchers aims to provide the opportunity for sharing knowledge, experiences, and feedback. We welcome contributions that engage with, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- How does essayism challenge traditional academic epistemologies?
- How can the essay become a tool for critical thinking in times of crisis?
- How to bridge theory and practice? Can an essayistic framework help with this?
- How could essayism function differently for different disciplines?
- How to develop various strategies building on the characteristics of the essay?
- How can the essay be a way to document, activate and make research visible?
- How to expand your sources and references through an essayistic approach?
- How to consider essayism as a non-linear methodology?
- How to use essay as a negotiation between object and concept?

Who can apply:
We welcome submissions from all PhD candidates, both from FilmEU Alliance member institutions and other higher education and research institutions. We encourage proposals that are ACADEMIC, ARTISTIC or HYBRID in nature, with the possibility to showcase excerpts of the work, as well as research projects in progress. Sessions will be organized based on thematic kinship, regardless of practices – all works will be considered equally valid scholarly outputs.

Presentation format:
All presentations are limited to 20 minutes. ARTISTIC or HYBRID presentations should be time-based, including audiovisual or sound-based works, or performance-based actions.

How to apply:
Submit an abstract (300-500 words), bibliographic references (max. 200 words), keywords, biography of the speaker (max. 150 words) and technical requirements (if applicable). Artistic or hybrid presentation proposals must be accompanied by a short 2–3 min. sample and/or an illustrated description. To apply, please complete this SUBMISSION FORM.

Deadline for submissions: 30.4.2026
Applications will be reviewed by 15.5.2026

Programme committee: Katarína Mišíková (VŠMU, SK), Katja Dreyer (LUCA School of Arts, BE), Konstanza Kapsali (LUCA School of Arts, BE), Sara Santos (ICNOVA, PT), Soraya Vasconcelos (CICANT/Lusófona, PT), Žofia Ščuroková (VŠMU, SK)

Conference will be held in English and is free of charge. Please note that participants are responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses.

For more information contact Žofia Ščuroková at
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