

# make a·pass

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**a·pass** { advanced performance  
and scenography studies

# getting started...

**duration:** 12 months, full time

**3 entries/year:** January, May, September

**applications:** candidates should be holder of a master's diploma (artistic or academic) and deliver a copy of this upon registration (or should be considered equivalent through practice-based experience by the co-ordinators and the artistic board).

**selections:** the selection procedure starts with a call for projects. Candidates start the selection procedure by submitting a research proposal and biography before the deadline. Then they are invited for an interview (oral or by mail).

**deadlines for applications & timing:**

SEPTEMBER: to start in January of any year

JANUARY: to start in May of any year

MAY: to start in September of any year

**tuition fee:** 1000 EURO (tuition fee is subject to yearly indexation)

**{ a.p.t }** advanced  
performance training

**{ a.s }** advanced  
scenography

# a.what?

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A . P A S S = A . P T + A . S

**a.pass** (advanced performance and scenography studies) is an artistic research environment at post-master level, containing two study programmes: a.pt and a.s.

**a.pt** (advanced performance training) is mainly aimed at artists and theoreticians with a proven experience in developing work in or on the performance field (apart from the usual suspects, also musicians, visual artists, architects, political and social scientists, critical theorists, actionists, etc. with a trajectory in the performance field). a.pt addresses participants who want to question their own work, re-evaluate their trajectory or explore a fascination that doesn't fit institutional standards.

**a.s** (advanced scenography) welcomes artists and theoreticians who want to investigate the notion of scenography on and off the stage. The programme offers a practice-based artistic and theoretical programme and addresses professionals trained in architecture, (interior) design, visual arts, graphics, etc. a.s also addresses directors, choreographers, costume designers and performers who want to expand their thinking about and experience within scenography.

a.pass welcomes participants with a master's degree in either a practical or theoretical study programme, and invites them to develop a personal practice-based research project. a.pass can make an exception on the master's degree criterion if the applicant can offer proof of at least three years of qualitative experience working in or reflecting on the artistic sector. We encourage research proposals that question the place performance and scenography occupy today in contemporary society and in the transdisciplinary field of the arts, but also of politics, history, the humanities, technology, etc. Based on the principles of self-organization and collaboration, the a.pass model provides an open and flexible structure. We invite participants to generate for a large part their own curriculum through the needs they encounter during their research. Participants are encouraged to share their projects with one another and actively look for alliances and shared experiences.

The a.pass training programme, both a.pt and a.s, takes 12 months and is organized in a rotating system of three blocks of three months each. At the start of each block new participants are admitted based on their research proposal. The months in between the subsequent blocks serve as reflection periods, during which the participants can amend or rethink their original proposals. At the end of the programme the participants present the results of their research to a larger public. Since a.pt and a.s share the a.pass model and training toolkit, combinations and collaborations between the two programmes are possible. Both training courses open up varied perspectives on artistic exchange among all players involved in the performing arts.

Based on the same principles of transdisciplinarity, a.pass operates an autonomous research platform that can be used in the development of a PhD in the Arts.

# application selection organization

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## APPLICATION

### Call for projects & applications

The artistic-pedagogical process of a.pass always starts with an international call for projects aimed at artists and theoreticians. Respondents to this call for projects have to outline an artistic research project that ties in with their own artistic or theoretical background. The proposal should also clarify the relevance of the research towards the applicant's artistic and/or theoretical development.

### Required qualities of the research proposal

To apply for either a.pt or a.s, you are required to send us a proposal for a research project. Your application is meant to give us a clear insight in what you aim to achieve in your 12-month working period, the relevance of your project, and your willingness to open up your personal research to the critical platform of the a.pass participants.

## Your proposal should consist of:

- 1 a clear text describing your project, including a quite clear planning of the first 3-month working period (central question, proposed research trajectory, initial proposed methodology, what media would you like to work on, etc.).
- 2 the relevance of this project to the development of your practice or knowledge production of the performance scene or scenography in particular.
- 3 a proposal on how to develop and communicate your research to your fellow participants, and a wider audience (what formats you would like to explore, how you would like to archive your trajectory and make it available to your professional colleagues and the public).
- 4 some material illustrating your past achievements and/or your artistic/design talents: DVD's, photos, texts, reviews, etc. and for a.s also a portfolio, drawings, paintings, scale models, etc.
- 5 a recent curriculum vitae including information on your master diploma (master in what, where obtained, date of issue) or on the highest diploma you obtained.
- 6 your contact information (full name, date & place of birth, nationality, address, phone numbers).

## SELECTION PROCEDURE

### Selection criteria

Once the deadline for the call for projects is over, a selection will be made based on the following criteria:

- 1 the added research value of the project for the participant's trajectory
- 2 the originality of the project/research questions
- 3 the potential of the project to develop performance practice and/or scenography or theatre practice
- 4 the probability that the research will bring about a creative dynamics in the group
- 5 the potential impact on a wider scale (directors, performers, other artists, audience, academic researchers, etc.)

Applicants will receive confirmation of their application upon receipt of their proposals. Candidates may be asked to give more information or to specify certain elements of their research proposals. To this purpose they may be invited for an interview.

### Selection

The selection is a collective decision of the artistic co-ordinator and (part of) the artistic board of the a.pt and of the a.s programme. The artistic board is a group of artists and theoreticians committed to following closely the running of a.pt and a.s and to function as a critical sounding board. The a.pass programme has a maximum capacity of 20 participants altogether.

## ORGANIZATION

### Timing & organization

At the start of each 3-month block (in January, May and September) new participants can join the training. This brings about a constant flow of new views and ideas. It also allows the participants to exchange insights gained during different moments of the research process. The intermediary buffer month can be filled in collectively or individually. The training will not stand in the way of artistic creation: participants can work on their own creations during the training in so far as these creations are part of the participant's research project.

### Duration

The a.pass programme takes up 12 months in total, which means participants follow three blocks consecutively. Exceptionally - when participants want to interrupt their studies for a short-term professional activity - we allow for an extension of the working period to a maximum duration of 16 months. Such a decision can only be made by the a.pass staff on explicit request beforehand and needs official approval. A 3-month block can never be attended partially.

### Tuition fee

The registration fee is 1000 euro. Note that the tuition fee is subject to yearly indexation. The fee can be paid in instalments. Participants proving their full unemployment upon registration may formally request a reduction.

# program

## **Make a.pass!**

Working with the principles of self-organization and collaboration entails that everybody involved in the programme, both the a.pass staff members and participants, is responsible for setting up the programme and for the organization of the platform and its activities. Working within a.pass implies negotiation and experimentation. Participants are asked to develop a discourse stimulating discussion, challenging certainties and allowing a redefinition and repositioning of artistic points of view.

The staff members of a.pass develop working formats that encourage the creation of a 'common space' - both in a literal and figurative sense. The work methods (lectures, workshops, public activities, etc.) have to fit the communality of the projects and have to carry the potential of collaboration and discussion. This common space forms the artistic and discursive backbone of the learning plan.

# U M M M M M M E

## Artistic and pedagogical toolkit

### CONTENT OF THE CURRICULUM

The whole programme is based on the theoretical, practical and artistic work developed in the personal research of each of the participants (50 percent). Besides this the programme provides both a theoretical (30 percent) and a practical (20 percent) shared curriculum. The concrete working timetable is drawn up according to the needs of the selected participants.

The shared curriculum is set up by the artistic co-ordinators and guest curators. They help to define the communal basis of the individual projects. They actively build up this basis too, by inviting mentors and speakers, by organizing workshops and preparing public output - publications and/or other media. They bring with them and contribute their own (artistic and/or theoretic) practice so as to really be part of the group. The only relevant difference would be that their projects already have a clearer 'meta-context' which facilitates the interaction and theoretical discussion.

## TOOLKIT

The artistic tools developed in the a.pass programme are aimed at acquiring and sharing knowledge according to the needs of each project, preferably in such a way that the ensuing results can also be relevant to other participants and to a wider audience with an interest in the activities of the platform.

During every working block of three months, a.pass creates the opportunity to invite personal or shared mentors. The participants thus have the chance to work with mentors of their choice.

### **Finality of the a.pass research environment**

There are four types of encounters which emerge at a.pass:

#### 1 ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN ARTISTIC DISCIPLINES

The practices of performance and scenography have always fed on and been strongly influenced by other artistic disciplines - from literature and music to visual arts in the broadest sense - but also by theoretical discourse - philosophy, politics, sociology, science, etc.

a.pass intends to open up theatre practice to the influence of other practices going beyond the boundaries of disciplines.

Performances and scenographies do not exist as self-contained artworks but only come to life through a relation to its performers and/or spectators. a.pass projects will always have a 'performative' aspect, no matter how widely we define this concept: it can include the 'performative' in architecture just as it can include political rhetoric or the theatricality of corporate strategies

or again the ‘mobility’ of visual arts. As a result the workshops, lectures and debates organized by a.pass are very diverse, the task of the artistic team being to place these diverse approaches in a coherent framework.

## 2 ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN CULTURES

a.pass explicitly positions itself as an internationally oriented platform that is always seeking a communal basis for all participants. In practice, this means that theatre practices will be tested against one another and against other artistic challenges. a.pass also includes the organizational and productional structure of these practices in the encounter so that a platform can emerge which will be more than just a space for artistic-pedagogical exchange. A reflection becomes possible on the position of the artist/theoretician within a community and on his/her responsibility in the organizing of his/her work in non/hierarchical models, organizational structures and within the division of production means.

In this way, the participant is able to position his artistic and creative growth in the broader context of his relation to a community and of the economic system. Also, it is essential to bring together Western and non-Western approaches and standpoints. We therefore intend to open up our network and to draw participants who do not belong to the standard circuit of European festivals and meeting places: a non-Western input, both at the level of artistic theory and practice, will be an important contribution to the research environment which a.pass is developing. An experiment in artistic and intellectual hospitality.

### 3 ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Participants choose for the a.pass approach because they want to develop their practice in a space - in a literal and figurative sense - where theoretical reflections play an important role both within the work process itself and beyond it. This means that they are willing to question and reflect on their habitual artistic practices and to confront them with divergent practices and theoretical frameworks. Without losing sight of the specificity of their own work, they wish to engage with other opinions and adopt a critical attitude towards their own practice and that of other participants. A theoretical framework is being constructed in which lectures, texts, discourse analyses, etc. occupy a relevant place. From a discussion on a philosophical concept such as the 'affect' or 'perspective', for instance, a workshop could develop which would give this concept its concrete, practical dimensions and turn it into a concept that can be used 'in practice'. The aim is to enable theory to be translated into practice and vice versa: neither theory as the expensive ornament of an artistic practice, nor the naive belief in the 'gut feeling'.

### 4 ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN TRAINING AND WORK FIELD

Because a.pass is largely organized as a 'link' in a network, it is possible and even necessary to interact directly with the professional work field. Research and creation are always involved with one another and the curriculum needs to include flexibility, for instance by interrupting a course to make way for a period of

creativity in a relevant theatre, workplace or art centre. a.pass wishes to play a visible role in the field: by functioning as a think tank for the performing arts sector in Flanders/Brussels and in the international scene – setting up work groups, performances and debates – and by organizing shows, talks, installations etc. with other institutions. This heightens the recognition and visibility of a.pass to a significant extent.

### **Learning potential of the a.pass research environment**

The pedagogical-educational potential of a.pass is situated on three levels:

First comes the learning-by-exchange process: participants should develop their own research (for instance, mass choreography as a tool for social choreography, digital surveillance as a performative strategy, the use of performative stereotyping of identities in Western and non-Western theatre, etc.) and are helped in this by the curators, the mentors, the artistic board and the a.pass team. At regular intervals they will present the progress of their research to the other participants who will then function as critical sparring partners.

Secondly, the participants' research will be strengthened by the contribution of specialists in the field. For instance: a political scientist or a sociologist can come in handy to sketch out the context of cultural stereotyping; workshops can be organized around new media or light design or around post-dramatic theatre; a coaching project can be set up around the development of scenography in public spaces, etc.

At a meta-level, a.pass participates in the inquiry into the communication of the research: how can a broader public be involved in the participants' research? How can the results be publicized in a manageable way? Throughout the process, a.pass supports the search for suitable means of communication and a responsive audience to share the research with. Possible ways are the organization of performances and debates in art centres and workplaces, the development of an interactive website, the creation of publications, etc.

### **Infrastructural toolkit**

As a.pass wants to concentrate on its core pedagogical tasks, the programme is calling on motivated partners to house the training and to offer all opportunities for it to develop itself into a versatile research space. In this respect the link with the international art campus deSingel is important since this art centre not only offers housing but also guarantees technical support. Apart from this, a.pass also has a working studio in Borgerhout (Antwerp).

a.pass facilitates the relocation of students into the sector by developing a network of interested partners who are willing to:

- offer a workspace for participants wishing to test their research in practice.
- communicate the research to a wider audience, by means of performances, talks and debates co-organized with a.pass.

Partners we have worked with in the past are Les Bains Connective (Brussels), TQW (TanzQuartier Wien), Kunstenfestivaldesarts (Brussels), IN TRANSIT (Berlin), Tanzfabrik (Berlin), PAF Performing Arts Forum (Reims), Kaaithheater (Brussels), Beursschouwburg (Brussels), Workspace Brussels, Buda Kunstencentrum (Kortrijk), the international network APAP, etc.

### **International collaborations**

If participants decide to move from their research to a production phase, a.pass can offer them a network of partners for the progress of their artistic work. a.pass has a broad Belgian network and is internationally connected. In this respect, a.pass is in contact with related art and research training centres abroad about the possibility of joining parts of research projects, which could be honoured by the different partners.

## Study Programme

CURRICULUM	CREDITS	%
<b>Theory</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Reading and viewing sessions</i>	6	
<i>Research strategy &amp; methodology</i>	4	
<b>Practice</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>34</b>
<i>Workshops</i>	10	
<i>(International) knowledge exchange &amp; networking</i>	8	
<i>Performances, exhibitions</i>	2	
<b>Research</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>
<i>Theoretical research</i>	6	
<i>Artistic research</i>	12	
<i>Research exchange</i>	8	
<i>Communication, presentation, archiving</i>	4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**a.s** The basis for the programme comprises the theoretical, artistic, and technical workshops and the self-organizing weeks.

**THEORY**

On a theoretical level reading sessions are organized, discussing a specific aspect of scenography on the basis of theoretical texts, films, exhibitions, etc. on the subject (diving into scenographic dramaturgy and theatre history, but also researching the possibilities of new media art, scenography for public space, virtual scenography, etc.).

**PRACTICE**

On an practical level, a.s organizes technical and artistic workshops, revolving around light, sound, new media, material choices, construction, etc. In the 'concept and design' workshops, the participants work on personal interpretations of tasks, developing their own ideas and designs, concepts and models for a contemporary scenography. The formats for thinking and developing the personal research in set design theory and practice are quite open, ranging from maquettes, over 'mood boards', to conceptual sketches and discussions. Apart from the initial and final week of every block, we ask the participants also to take part in at least two projects developed in the intervening weeks.

**RESEARCH**

The rest of the time, we expect the participants to develop their own research and self-organize their mentoring and workshops or meetings with the other participants. In these cases a.s offers the organizational, intellectual, practical and other support needed.

**a.pt** The basis for the programme comprises the theoretical, practical, artistic workshops in which the participants choose to take part. These workshops/working weeks are partly organized by the a.pass co-ordinators, and partly by the participants themselves.

**THEORY** On a regular basis we work around theoretical texts from performance theory, philosophy, science, etc. Most of these theory sessions are related to an artistic project in the making or an upcoming workshop, so as to link the theoretical to the artistic practice as much as possible.

**PRACTICE** Apart from this, a.pt regularly invites artists to work with the participants on an individual or group level. Very important in the a.pt working are the 'location workshops', in which the participants of the workshop move to work within the larger artistic context of e.g. a festival or a colloquium. This way, a.pt opens up the closed sphere of the research lab to other people and influences, and develops the 'networking' factor of the artistic sector into a confrontational tool for debate and encounter. Apart from the initial and final week of every block, we ask the participants to take part in at least two projects developed in the intervening weeks.

**RESEARCH** The rest of the time, we expect the participants to develop their own research and self-organize their mentoring and workshops or meetings with the other participants. In these cases a.pt offers the organizational, intellectual, practical and other support needed.

# RE- search center

Based on the same principles of transdisciplinarity, a.pass operates as an autonomous research platform, developing independent artistic and transdisciplinary projects with experienced international artists and theoreticians. The results of the research developed answer to questions relating to the key issues of the a.pass programme: education & communication in the arts, transdisciplinary practices, collaborative creation, the notions of space and

presence, the concept of the ‘contemporary’ artist, etc. Even more than in the regular working of a.pass, the Research Centre aims at developing knowledge and tools which are accessible to a wider audience and the artistic sector, and function as thought-provoking starting point for discussions, workshops and publications.

### **Tailor-made guidance for PhD in the Arts**

PhD-students with an affinity to the a.pass research platform can join the programme for (part of) their research period. The communication and public sharing of the PhD-research are vital to be accepted into the a.pass environment. The PhD-students are invited to develop and conduct their own research formats, taking up the role of curator, mentor and/or participant, using the a.pass research lab as a test case for presentations for an active public, or as an experimental tool for collective research.

# how to reach us

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- visit us** a.pass  
c/o Posthogeschool voor Podiumkunsten vzw  
Jan Van Rijswijcklaan 155  
2018 Antwerp  
Belgium
- mail us** info@apass.be  
apt@apass.be  
as@apass.be
- talk to us** *general:* +32 3 242 89 60  
*personal:*  
general co-ordinator a.pass:  
Leen Hammenecker  
+32 486 510 472  
artistic co-ordinator a.pt:  
Elke Van Campenhout  
+32 477 807 382  
artistic co-ordinator a.s:  
Bart Van den Eynde  
+32 476 595 866