

Liminal Practices in Contemporary Academia: Between Artistic Research and Research in the Arts

**Baltic Drama Forum conference
November 5 -7, Riga, Latvia**

The Baltic Drama Forum Conference 2026 invites researchers, artists, and artists-researchers to explore the evolving relationships between academic research in the arts and artistic research. Taking place in Riga, Latvia, the conference brings together voices from the Baltic region and beyond to examine how contemporary cultural contexts challenge, expand, and transform established ideas of research, knowledge, and authorship.

In recent decades, artistic research has become an increasingly significant field within higher education, opening new possibilities for understanding artistic practice as a mode of inquiry. Across the Baltic states, doctoral programmes in artistic research have developed rapidly, often becoming more prominent than traditional academic pathways in the arts. This shifting landscape raises important questions: What kinds of knowledge emerge through artistic processes? How do artists become researchers, and how do researchers become makers? Where do artistic methodologies meet academic traditions, and where do they resist them? How can artistic and academic research complement one another?

Following debates in artistic research initiated by scholars describing artistic research as a form of knowledge production in which artistic practice itself becomes a central vehicle of investigation, the conference seeks to examine the intersections of researching through art.

The conference also draws inspiration from interart and performance studies approaches, including Erika Fischer-Lichte's understanding of performance as a dynamic, transformative event emerging through encounters between bodies, materials, spaces, and audiences. Such perspectives invite us to reconsider the boundaries between disciplines and to recognize artistic processes as relational, embodied, and often experimental forms of thinking.

Keynotes (titles to be confirmed):

Diāna Zandberga (Latvia), **Jelena Novak** (Portugal), **Piersandra di Matteo** (Italy)

We welcome proposals that address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

Artistic Research and Academic Research: Dialogues and Differences

- How do artistic research methodologies reshape academic approaches to theatre, music, and performance studies?
- What are the productive tensions between scholarly analysis and artistic creation?
- How can artistic and academic researchers develop shared vocabularies?

The Researcher's Profile in Contemporary Art Academia

- Who is the researcher in today's arts academy: critic, theorist, artist, performer, composer, curator, or a hybrid figure?
- How are new researcher identities formed between artistic practice and academic inquiry?
- What competencies and forms of knowledge define the contemporary arts researcher?

Liminal Practices and Hybrid Methodologies

- Artistic practices that operate between disciplines, media, and modes of knowledge production
- Practice-as-research, research-creation, and other hybrid approaches
- The role of experimentation, failure, intuition, embodiment, and tacit knowledge in research

Performance, Music, and Interart Perspectives

- New approaches to theatre and performance research
- Intersections between performing arts, music, visual arts, and digital practices

Doctoral Studies and the Future of Arts Research

- Experiences and challenges of artistic doctoral education
- Institutional frameworks for artistic research in the Baltic region and internationally
- How can universities support artistic inquiry while maintaining critical reflection?

Possible Formats

The conference welcomes:

- Individual papers (20 min)
- Short lecture-recitals, commented performances, accompanied papers, dialogues between artists and scholars (20min)

We especially encourage proposals that emphasize new methodologies that can emerge from shifting the boundaries of a particular kind of research.

Submission Guidelines

Please submit to the e-mail: **Balticdramaforum2026@gmail.com**

- Title of presentation
- Abstract (200–300 words)
- Short biography (150 words)
- Indication of preferred format

Proposals will be evaluated according to their relevance to the conference theme, methodological originality, and contribution to current discussions on artistic and academic research.

Deadline for submissions: September 20

Notification of acceptance: by October 1st

The Baltic Drama Forum Conference 2026 aims to create a meeting place for researchers who inhabit the borderlands of disciplines — where artists become scholars, scholars become makers, and new forms of knowledge emerge through creative practice.

Pogramme committee:

Ramunė Balevičiūtė, Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

Lauma Mellēna-Bartkeviča, Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music

Rūta Muktupāvela, Latvian Academy of Culture

Madli Pesti, Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre

Zane Radzobe, Latvian Academy of Culture

Anneli Saro, University of Tartu

Jurgita Staniškytė, Vytautas Magnus University

Dīana Zandberga, Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music