

CHRISTINA SKARPARI

Artist–Designer | Creative Leader | Researcher | Educator | Curator (She/her)

Interdisciplinary artist–designer, creative leader, researcher, educator, and curator working across socially engaged art, design, and cultural and learning ecosystems. AHRC technē-funded PhD candidate at Central Saint Martins, developing sympraxis as a methodology for collaborative peer-to-peer learning and ethical creative leadership. Experienced in MA/BA teaching and curriculum design across formal, non-formal, and community-based contexts, with a focus on interdisciplinary and practice-led learning environments. Proven track record in designing cultural programmes and partnerships across governmental, municipal, and civil society organisations in national and international contexts, bridging connections with higher education institutions. Practice integrates research, pedagogy, and cultural production, contributing to international dialogues across art, design, education, and policy.

EDUCATION

PhD Candidate, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London, AHRC technē funded (Forthcoming 2026)

Developing *sympraxis* as a transferable methodology for collaborative, practice-based learning, ethical authorship and leadership, bridging community and institutional contexts.

Training includes: Advanced research methods; working with marginalised communities; curating practice-based research; photographic storytelling through curatorial selection and narrative sequencing of images; participatory video methods; academic and creative writing.

Supervisors: Dr Matt Malpass (Central Saint Martins), Dr Peter Hall (Camberwell College of Arts), Dr Beth Cullens (University of Westminster)

christinaskarpari.org

password: enter_sympraxis

MA Communication Design (Distinction), Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London (2012-2014)

Thesis: Festival experiences as tools for community empowerment: the case of Xarkis Festival

Developed and launched Xarkis as a design-led assembly and creative response to a socio-economic crisis.

TEACHING & CURRICULUM DESIGN EXPERIENCE

Associate Lecturer, Central Saint Martins – Creative Unions, University of the Arts London, (2017-2025)

- Taught interdisciplinary cohorts (Fine Art, Fashion, Graphic Communication, Product design, Ceramics, Architecture, Performance design).
- Contributed to the development of BA unit briefs and supported undergraduate teaching through tutorials, feedback and assessment of group project submissions.
- Designed and delivered sessions on collaborative practice, socio-environmental design, and creative leadership through lectures, workshops, and facilitated group learning.
- Supported students in developing group film-based projects addressing social and environmental challenges through an intersectional lens, while assessing and grading individual reflective essays.
- Emphasised collaborative, real-world practice and supported clear storytelling that communicated both process and outcome.

Associate Lecturer, MA Design for Social Innovation & Sustainable Futures, London College of Communication, University of the Arts London, (2020-2023)

- Contributed to the design, delivery and development of MA-level co-design unit for transdisciplinary cohort
- Designed and delivered original teaching content including lectures, facilitated workshops and tutorials on co-design, social design and related practice-based and theoretical research methods.
- Provided feedback and academic support to postgraduate students.
- Supported postgraduate students in developing socially and ecologically engaged, practice-led projects through feedback and assessment.
- Assessed work-in-progress and provided feedback on student work, including final exhibition projects.

Visiting Lecturer, Graphic Communication Design, University of Westminster, London (2020)

- Taught authorship, critical and social design in undergraduate programmes.
- Introduced speculative and participatory methodologies to support critical and reflective practice.

Scientific Collaborator, Graphic Design, European University Cyprus, Nicosia (2015)

- Designed and delivered lectures for undergraduate students on social design and participatory practices.

CREATIVE LEADERSHIP & PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT xarkis.org

Founder & Director, Xarkis NGO, Cyprus (2013)

- Established Xarkis as a design-led initiative evolving into a nomadic cultural platform spanning festivals, multi-site residencies, and educational programmes across Cyprus, operating at the intersection of cultural practice, pedagogy, and socially engaged research.
- Developed and led integrated learning environments combining public pedagogical formats, foregrounding experimental and practice-based approaches to collaborative learning.
- Art directed 11 *Xarkis Festivals* and 9 *Xarkis Multi-residency* programmes across 8 rural and urban communities in Cyprus, leading large-scale interdisciplinary and site-responsive cultural and learning programmes.
- Led 30+ interdisciplinary and practice-based research projects exploring community engagement through participatory and co-design methodologies, addressing themes including sustainability, natural and intangible cultural heritage, DIY/DIT cultures, and decolonisation.
- Developed *sympraxis* as a methodology for collaborative learning and creative leadership across artistic, pedagogical, and organisational contexts.
- Designed and delivered non-formal education programmes, workshops, and experimental learning formats including oral history projects, online platforms, and site-specific initiatives such as *Voicing Stories*, *KaFEMio Women's Coffee Shop*, *PIKNIK* and *The SPA of the Century*.
- Designed and facilitated participatory and co-design frameworks connecting artists, students, communities, and institutions across local and international contexts.
- Curated and commissioned interdisciplinary programmes including workshops, screenings, performances, and pedagogical interventions with a strong emphasis on collaborative learning processes.
- Recruited and mentored artists, curators, and practitioners through open calls and targeted invitations, facilitating cross-disciplinary collaboration and learning exchange.
- Built and led multidisciplinary teams and international partnerships across cultural, academic, and institutional contexts.
- Secured and managed £400,000+ in EU and international funding (including Creative Europe and Youthopia, see p.4), alongside public, semi-public, and private cultural bodies.
- Work has been presented internationally across platforms including *TEDx*, *UNESCO*-related publications, *Revista Mesa*, *Elefsina Capital of Culture*, *The Walking Society by Camper*, and engaged with frameworks such as *Maison de l'UNESCO*, *Culture Action Europe*, and the *Anna Lindh Foundation*.

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & SECTOR LEADERSHIP

Vice-President, Phyltorio Visual Artists Association (2024–2026) phyltorio.org

- Represented visual artists and theorists at governmental and parliamentary level
- Contributed to cultural policy development, labour rights & sectoral advocacy in national frameworks
- Co-drafted and develop a national open call for public art commissions
- Serve on selection committee for national art commissioning processes and open calls
- Engaged in strategic advocacy and institutional dialogue across cultural governance structures

Member, Visual Arts NGO Lobbying Group, Cyprus (2021-)

Representing 51 organisations advocating for cultural worker rights and policy reform.

RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS & PROJECTS

Social Design Institute, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London (2020)

Commissioned to produce a social design literature review, including an annotated bibliography on the history of social design, focusing on Victor J. Papanek.

DREAM[of]LAND, SPAJZU KREATTIV, Malta (2024)

Published reflective poem on craft knowledge, focusing on identity, belonging and materiality.

PIKNIK, Xarkis, Cyprus (forthcoming 2026)

Lead editor of publication on a nomadic cultural platform, residency and unconference, rethinking knowledge exchange via informal, outdoor assemblies bridging artistic, ecological and community knowledge systems.

Homeland of Our Thoughts, Xarkis, Cyprus, (forthcoming 2026)

Co-writing and editing publication exploring 'third spaces' in contemporary art across Athens and Nicosia.

CONFERENCES, TALKS & ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Co-design Workshop Facilitator, H401 & Kunstfort Vijfhuizen, Amsterdam (2026)

Facilitated a co-design workshop linking 'Contested Desires' research, leading to Xarkis Festival 2026 as an evolving curatorial and pedagogical framework.

[Re-]Thinking Curating Design and Craft: With rurals, Linnaeus University, Växjö (2025)

Invited speaker on practice-based research case studies on rurality, curatorial methodologies, and design pedagogy in expanded learning contexts.

Chair, Learning with Mountains: Recalibrating how we understand art and planet, Nicosia (2024)

Chaired interdisciplinary session on 'Learning from Nature', facilitating critical dialogue on eco-pedagogy, artistic research, and planetary thinking.

Museum Lab (CYENS), AHRC Techne Placement, Nicosia (2024)

- Conducted research placement on identity construction in museums through intangible cultural heritage
- Contributed to institutional discussions on authorship, representation and curatorial practice.

Assembling Performative Knowledges, PSi Conference, London (2024)

Panel speaker contributing to debates on performance, social design, and eco-social learning practices within artistic research and higher education contexts.

The SPA of the Century, Beyond the Obvious (Culture Action Europe), Malmö (2024)

Selected speaker presenting a practice-based project exploring cultural leadership, wellbeing, humour, and care within interdisciplinary creative practice.

Death and Sympraxis: A Story of Reincarnation, IAPT Conference, Nicosia (2024)

Presented photographic research exploring sympraxis as a methodology for narrative, collaboration, and situated visual practice.

sympraxis and cultural practice, EMPACT EU Programme, TEPAK, Limassol (2023)

Led workshop and presentation on empathic methodologies, circular economy thinking, and socially engaged pedagogies in cultural practice.

Tangible Changes in ICH, DADH Conference, University of Nicosia (2023)

Presented paper on co-design methodologies and sympraxis as a framework for cultural heritage, pedagogy, and design research.

Invited Speaker, AANFA, Halifax, Canada (2023)

Delivered lecture on socially engaged art, cultural leadership, and practice-based research methodologies.

Feature Interview, Walking Society (CAMPER), Europe (2021)

On interdisciplinary design practice, socially engaged methodologies, and research-led creative leadership.

Social Design Conference, Cyprus University of Technology (2019)

Presented paper and led workshop on participatory design, heritage, and community-led cultural practice.

UNESCO Futures Literacy Forum, Paris (2019)

Participant in global forum on futures thinking, design and cultural systems.

Participatory Design as Community Empowerment, World Design Day, TEPAK, Limassol (2018)

Invited lecture on participatory methodologies and their application in design education and civic practice.

TEDx Speaker, Rialto Theatre, Limassol (2014)

Delivered public talk on Xarkis Festival as a model for socially engaged, practice-led cultural leadership.

SELECTED ARTISTIC & CURATORIAL WORK

Invited Resident, Arvier Innovation, Fondazione Santagata and Netural Coop, Arvier (2026)

Outcome: Light in Waiting (solo exhibition), supported by the EU and the Italian Ministry of Culture.

Invited Guest Curator, IASPIS, Stockholm (2025)

sympraxis Exhibition & Platform, SIC. Contemporary Culture, Nicosia (2025) siccontemporary.com/sympraxis

Film screenings and festival selections in Cyprus International Festivals, (2025)

- Lemesos International Documentary Festival (Limassol)
- International Short Film Festival of Cyprus (Limassol)

Invited Artist, Limassol Art Walks, Phytorio / Apothikes Papadaki, Limassol (2023)

Resident Designer, TEPAK, Limassol (2021)

Residency exploring observational and ethnographic approaches to community engagement, craft heritage, and co-design experimentation.

Resident Artist, Exotic Birds, Phytorio Visual Artists and Theorists Association, Nicosia (2020)

One-month residency culminating in exhibition presenting video stills and haikus.

Artist, Berengaria, Apothikes Papadaki, Limassol (2019)

Featuring photography, banner work, and poetry exploring narratives of Queen Berengaria through material traces at the Berengaria Hotel.

Resident Designer, Prozymin, Youth Makerspace Larnaca (2019)

Residency focused on reimagining craft heritage through upcycled materials and experimental design processes.

Curator, Point Centre for Contemporary Art, Nicosia (2014–2019)

Curated four group exhibitions presenting Xarkis Festival practice.

Co-curator, The Cyprus Circle, Point Centre for Contemporary Art, Nicosia (2015)

Co-curated exhibition and coordinated public programme.

Participant, Spotlight Group Exhibition, The Doctoral Platform, London (2018)**Designer, Also, Lethaby Gallery, London (2014)**

Contribution as designer.

Contributor, Integrating Knowledge, Somerset House, London (2014)

Collaborative illustrated work developed with students from Central Saint Martins and Kings College London.

FUNDING & AWARDS / LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS**Creative Europe – Feed Your Future (2024–2027)**

- Lead Curator, *Edible Commons: Performing the Future of Food (Creative Europe)*
- Developed across multiple European cities including Milan, Almere, Braşov, Thessaloniki and Cyprus
- Shaped curatorial direction and co-developing participatory formats across sites.

Creative Europe – Contested Desires (2019-2022, 2024–2026) contesteddesires.eu

- Co-Lead (Communications & Festival) in International project across Europe, Africa, Chile and the UK
- Led art direction and visual identity for external facing communication
- Leading Festival partner; art directing programming, dissemination and public engagement strategies.

ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY PRACTICE**Art as Infrastructure for Social Action, Goethe Institut, Nicosia (2024)**

- Panel speaker on the role of the arts in articulating collective desires and constructing community visions?

Facilitator, United Nations Development Programme, Technical Committee on Culture, Nicosia (2023)

- Led island-wide community engagement between Greek and Turkish Cypriot cultural workers
- Mapped sector needs for cultural workers in performance (theatre, performance art, acting, directing, dance).

Community Engagement Expert, Interreg “Phygital” Project, Nicosia (2020)

- Developed non-formal education programme for the Cyprus Handicraft Service (University of Nicosia),
- Translated participatory methodologies into institutional learning frameworks
- Developed co-design initiatives with craft educators and makerspaces.

Peace Ambassadors (Association of Historical Dialogue, Home for Cooperation), Nicosia (2023)

Mentor for peace ambassadors, on mapping events relating to cultural heritage across the island, bridging connections between young Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots.

AFFILIATIONS

- Culture Action Europe (Member)
- Anna Lindh Foundation (Member, Steering Committee)
- The Festival Academy (Alumni)
- UNESCO Heritage Network (Ambassador & Cyprus Representative, 2019)