

Institute for Critical Education Studies
Faculty of Education
University of British Columbia

Public Lecture

‘Reclaiming the School as Pedagogic Form’

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May 12, 2015
12:00 – 2:00pm

Scarfe 1214

In my contribution I will use the word ‘school’ to refer to a specific *pedagogic form* i.e. a concrete way (including architecture, practices, technologies, pedagogical figures) to gather people and things (arranging their company and presence) so that, on the one hand, it allows for people to experience themselves as being able to take care of things, and, at the same time and on the other hand, to be exposed to something outside of themselves (the common world). It is a very specific combination of taking distance and (allowing for) re-attachment. As a consequence, the term ‘school’ is not used (as is very often the case) for so-called normalizing institutions or machineries of reproduction in the hands of the cultural or economic elites. There is reproduction and normalizing, of course, but then the school does not (or does no longer) function as a pedagogic form.

To reclaim the school, then, is not simply about restoring classic or old techniques and practices, but about actually trying to develop or experiment with old and new techniques and practices in view of designing *pedagogic forms* that work under current conditions, that is, that actually slow down, and put society at a distance from itself.



[Jan Masschelein](#) is head of the Laboratory for Education and Society, and of the research group Education, Culture and Society at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium). His research concerns the public and societal role of education and schooling, the role of the university, the changing experiences of time and space in the age of the network, the educational meaning of cinema and camera, the architecture of schools and architecture of the learning environment, a pedagogy of attention, the notion of 'pedagogy', the pedagogical role of teachers and social workers. His book, *In Defense of School* (with Maarten Simons) is available at <http://goo.gl/NN4XeD>.

This event is possible thanks to the material support of the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia