


 The logo for Creative Edge features the word "CREATIVE" in a black, sans-serif font on the left. To its right is a series of blue dots of varying sizes, followed by the word "EDGE" in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter "G" in "EDGE" is stylized with a blue, curved arrow-like shape that loops around it.

'A view from the edge gives the best perspective'

[www.creative-edge.eu](http://www.creative-edge.eu)

## Creative Talent Development Programme

The June edition of the Creative Edge newsletter profiled the Creative Steps initiative. This initiative is part of the Creative Edge project's work package four, based around the Creative Talent Development Programme. Film i Västerbotten in northern Sweden and Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences in northern Finland take the lead on this work package.

Expected outcomes of the Creative Talent Development Programme include increasing young creative talents employability and connecting young talent to creative industries. To support the achievement of these outcomes, Film i Västerbotten's work on the Creative Edge project involved partnering with a number of events. A regional resource centre for film and video, Film i Västerbotten's mission is to support and broaden film culture in the County of Västerbotten, Sweden. One such event that Film i Västerbotten partnered with through Creative Edge is the Creative Summit, which involves a number of partners in the Creative Summit network. #CRESUM13 was the 6<sup>th</sup> Creative Summit and took place on June 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> at the Nordanå theatre in Skellefteå, Västerbotten. Technology now plays a central part in our lives, and this societal shift is reflected in the broad range of creative work that Creative Summit speakers showcased. The FilmArc Master Class is another event, that through Creative Edge, Film i Västerbotten partnered with. Bringing filmmakers from the north of Sweden, Finland and Norway together over two days, the FilmArc Master Class is a series of lectures and workshops that facilitates cross-border networking.

These events act as a physical meeting places for creative people, assist knowledge transfer and build trans-regional creative networks, all of which are important outputs of Creative Edge's Creative Talent Development Programme. Some emerging creative talents also got the opportunity to attend these events, as well as three filmmakers from the western region of Ireland. The articles in this newsletter focus on the [Creative Summit](#) and the [FilmArc Master Class](#).

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This edition of the Creative Edge newsletter focuses on Creative Edge activities in Sweden and a number of events based in Skellefteå, northern Sweden that Creative Edge partnered with.



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## Inside the Summit - the organiser perspective

*Creative Edge spoke to Creative Summit Producer Peter Mandalh to learn more about what's involved in organising such an event, and also very importantly, maintaining its aims and objectives.*

The Creative Summit is now in its 6<sup>th</sup> year. It began with the summer conference, and last year held its first winter conference. Behind the Creative Summit event is the Creative Summit network, which is a collection of creative companies based in and around Skellefteå, and working in creative industries such as film and communications. The event is embedded in this region, and helps to raise its profile and bring business to the area.

Creative Summit aims to bring people together to share knowledge and ideas to gain inspiration. This aim is as much to do with how we now live, as to do with the nature of the creative sector. Peter explains how we need to take time to meet up: "The need to actually meet people, we need to do more of that, you know because of the way we live. Also when we meet we are always in a rush to do something else. And that is something that maybe doesn't come through, that is why we have the long breaks, and we just have seven speakers, because we want people to have the time to think as well". The ticket price is also determined so that more people can attend, but this also means the event relies on sponsors. According to Peter: "The idea of the conference is to have a price that makes it possible for companies to bring their whole team. So the ticket price is quite low. Also on the back of that we need partners to support the event, so the more partners we get the better an event we can do, because we can't raise the price that much more".

Ideas for Creative Summit speakers are also generated from the event. There often isn't a defined vision to have a specific conference theme, but Peter outlines: "We ask the previous speakers and the audience who would you like to see, and then off the back of that we have kind of a theme that just comes together". The summer Creative Summit's theme saw technology at the back of a lot of the speakers' creativity. Peter outlines: "This is how we live in society today, and actually it is tech, that is the platform of society now, like if you took away everything that is tech, people wouldn't survive". The audience is also surveyed after the event and the plan this year is to conduct a traditional online survey to gather feedback.

For details of upcoming events sign up for the Creative Summit newsletter at: <http://www.creativesummit.org/>

*Coffee break at the Creative Summit*



### The perfect fit

The Creative Summit has experimented with its length, and has held one, two and three day events. For the summer Summit, two days is the planned length for future events. Longer can be too much time away from work for many people. Also with a two day event Peter describes other advantages, which also support the Creative Summit's aims. Peter says: "You can arrange a dinner or a party you know as well which is really important. With a one day thing the people from outside tend to go home". Last year's winter Creative Summit was in response to requests for more events. The winter Creative Summit remains, for now, a day-long conference.

### A conference with a difference

As a conference, the Creative Summit is different in a number of ways. There isn't a detailed schedule circulated before the event, the audience is given the start and end time, and the location. Peter outlines how conference participants may think they need a schedule, but the Creative Summit works very well without one. Not having a schedule also has advantages, enabling a deeper level of engagement of participants with the conference and also participants with each other. For example, Peter explains: "People have in their minds now, "how can I do all of these things?" Some people are maybe booking phone meetings on the breaks, you know they see, we have one hour here, and we can work". Creative Summit plans to keep its organising ethos this way, and is thinking of moving towards less information, and not more.

## A view from the Creative Summit ...

Creative Summit is a network based in the north of Sweden, just south of the Arctic Circle. Creative Summit believe that bringing people together is vital for sharing knowledge, inspiration and ideas. The network also aims to create environments where people from all over the world can meet, regardless of industry or background. Over the past five years, over 1,000 people have taken part in Creative Summit events and workshops. The Creative Summit ethos has a strong affinity with the Creative Edge project and Creative Edge was a partner in the summer Creative Summit 2013. Other partners included the Lodge, Infotech Umeå, Tieto and DinoLab. Here we take you through the speakers at the Creative Summit. We can only touch on aspects of their inspirational speeches, but hope we can highlight some of the best bits. Katrina Dodd, a consultant and writer at Contagious Communications, moderated this year's Creative Summit. Katrina had the perfect background to tease out the intricacies of each presentation. Katrina described the work of Contagious as surveying and connecting the dots between what is happening in the creative nooks and crannies of the world today and then identifying newly surfacing trends.

On day one, Amber Case, cyborg anthropologist, spoke of the interaction between humans and technology. Amber talked of how much information we can store using technology. One example of this highlighted by Amber was her construction of a physical, real Facebook wall, based around her own virtual Facebook wall. What effects does this information overload have on us? Junk sleep and digital dementia were two phenomenon mentioned by Amber. She also profiled Steve Mann's work and the idea of 'augmented reality' using technology to alter what he sees, for example by using heads up displays. Next up was Ellen Sundh, a creative technologist who described her work, including projects such as the sound of football, the depressed shoe shelf and the posture corrector. The Sound of Football project aims to give visually impaired people a better football experience and hopes in future to work on creating new devices that enable people to "see" with sound. After lunch, Denise Wilton, Creative Director at BERG began her talk by raising the much debated question- what is the best interface? This approach was used by Denise to highlight how different interfaces have their advantages. BERG's work is based around symbiotic relationships, developing devices that collect and distribute data. For example the Little Printer prints news, puzzles and gossip from friends on miniature newspaper at your demand. Last up on day one was Bitsy Knox, a Berlin based visual artist and writer, and Communications Director at EyeQuant, a company that predicts the attention of users of websites. Bitsy spoke of the link between design, attention and observation, testing audience observation. After the first day of talks, Creative Summit delegates made their way to Stiftsgården to party amongst its idyllic and historic surroundings.



First to take the floor on day two was Susan Stone, founder of the creative music agency Tonic. Susan spoke of projects her business has worked on, such as the choral version of Air's Sexy Boy sung by an all female choir. Susan also discussed the wider issue of how music can be used as a layer of communication, and how it can work in tandem, or independent to, other mediums of communication. Next, Sofia Svanteson, entrepreneur and design strategist, began with an animated personal tale of her genetic vascular disorder, and her work on the human dashboard. We know so little about what happens inside our bodies from minute to minute, whereas we have information on our car's state of health on its dashboard. The human dashboard, the human equivalent of a car's dashboard, can tell us about key aspects of our internal state of health, such as dehydration. The Creative Summit closed with artist, composer and social practitioner Christine Sun Kim who explored her work on the medium of sound and communication, displaying examples of her art in various mediums, from performances to drawings. For example Christine explained face opera, a performance, where the face is used to depict different words, and showed a video of a face opera performance. Christine is profoundly deaf and tells of how when the deaf sign to communicate the face is also an important medium of communication. Plans are already underway for #CRESUM14.

## Creative Edge talks to Creative Summit speaker Bitsy Knox

*#CRESUM13 speakers have diverse backgrounds and are an impressive, inspirational bunch. Others working in creative industries can learn from their paths and experiences. At the Creative Summit, Creative Edge caught up with [Bitsy Knox](#), visual artist and also now Communications Director at [EyeQuant](#).*

Bitsy's educational background is in fine art. She received her Bachelor of Fine Art from Queens University, Ontario, Canada and Masters in Fine Art at the Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam, Holland. Now working for EyeQuant, based in Berlin, the company uses its patented attention prediction technology to help improve website design to better hold user's attention. Creative Edge was interested to understand more about how a visual artist ends up working for a company that's work is based around cognitive science. What Bitsy's story demonstrates is that the skills of an artist are applicable in the wider business world. Bitsy points out that there is more being written these days about how business should hire people who have Masters in Fine Art. What may be different about art graduates is that they learn "a sense of critical thinking", according to Bitsy.

Bitsy's outlook is also distinctive and describes how she wanted to step slightly outside of the art world, but still remain part of it: "I am one of these people who really likes to touch on different worlds, and get away a little bit from the extremely insular art world and move outside of that". This perspective is one factor in Bitsy ending up working at EyeQuant. There was also the more practical consideration that few artists make a full living from their art. Bitsy points especially to the difficulty for conceptual artists. While her artwork has taken different forms including painting, poetry, performances, sculpture and film, she also does a lot of non-object based work. Bitsy says: "It is not an easy field to make money in, and you find yourself having to look into different paths, be that funding, grants, other work in cafes or bars". Bitsy describes this choice as going down two different avenues. Some artists may choose to take on a job that is less challenging so their mental and physical energy is reserved for their art practice, or a job that is more challenging mentally, and demanding on time. From Bitsy's perspective, what is centrally important is that: "The key with this is also a way of opening yourself up to new facets of things; I mean I have learned a huge amount from working for EyeQuant, not just from the business, but also for my art practice". Bitsy is multi skilled, and her art still remains central to her professional occupation (s): "Aside from my work with EyeQuant, I am also a practicing visual artist and a writer. I also work with an editor, sometimes as a translator, sometimes as a speaker as well". Bitsy's career path was not planned, however she has successfully adapted her art background to make her skills applicable to a commercial company.

EyeQuant itself is a young company, established in 2009. Its work until recently was centered on the German market but has recently begun to expand to the UK, United States and the rest of Europe. It plans to double its workforce from six to twelve by the end of the year. Other EyeQuant employees also have diverse backgrounds, from science to music and languages.

While other companies do similar work, EyeQuant's technology is patented, which protects its unique approach to web optimisation. Its clients have a broad range, such as e-commerce companies, small boutique companies and agencies. EyeQuant's work also has potential to be applied in other fields. Its current work is around web optimisation, and how to draw user attention in, but this can apply to other fields.

EyeQuant is likely to develop its potential, also because of the networks, facilities and team that supports the business: "We are not at all held back by our limitations, we are really active in what we do" according to Bitsy. It also faces its challenges head on. For example one challenge for EyeQuant is to maintain its scientific credibility. It has a scientific board of advisors and is also actively engaged in scientific research. Because the company's work is deeply engrained in science, the company has to be careful not to overstate claims, which Bitsy highlights is also "part of being a responsible company".

Developing networks and connections is also very important to EyeQuant. This works to the advantage of EyeQuant and those who are part of the networks it is connected with. EyeQuant organises regular meet-ups or 'salon', for people who are involved in neuroscience, artists, designers and the start-up scene in Berlin, where big ideas are discussed such as singularity, artificial intelligence, neuroscience and design. Bitsy explains: "This is a really cool way to exchange ideas and figure out what other people are up to. We really try and do this as well, to build a community and to know what is going on and people that are doing really cool things". Finally what is very interesting about EyeQuant's, and Bitsy's story, is that both are hard to categorise as either niche or mainstream. There are aspects of both in EyeQuant's work: "It is extremely universal in a way, it is to do with how people see things and human attention, but in another way it is a little bit niche, a lot of it is to explain to people what we do and the potential in what we do".

We might finally raise the question, is there a transition happening, where the mainstream now needs the innovation and creativity in what was more traditionally pigeonholed as niche? From this story at least, it certainly seems so.

## The FilmArc Master Class

Held in Oulu, Finland and Tromsø, Norway in previous years, this year's FilmArc Master Class III was held in Skellefteå, over 3 days from June 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. This year's Master Class made the most of its Skellefteå location. Participants enjoyed the seaside setting in Maskinhuset on day 2 and a local brewery tour at Kallholmen's microbrewery.

The Master Class kicked off on day 1, opened by Salmonfox Director, Ted Kjelsson, who has been referred to as the Swedish Peter Jackson. Day 2 began with a series of lectures from some of the most successful and talented people in the Scandinavian and European film and TV business. Eric Kafoe, Director of Acquisitions at Sony Pictures Television, International Production spoke about the TV market, giving tips on how to be a successful part of it, including tools for getting your ideas from mind to screen. Lars Blomgren, CEO of Filmlance spoke about the crime series the Bridge, which is now an international success story being remade in the US and the UK. Karin af Klintberg, Producer, Thelma/Louise TV talked about how she has combined public service and entertainment television into a success story in TV production. Martin Persson, CEO Anagram Production, spoke about the making of the film TPB AFK (The Pirate Bay Away from the Keyboard), which took four years to make and mixed traditional financing with crowdfunding.

Two workshops were held on day 3 of the Master Class; the first 'How to create your TV format', and the second, 'From the mind to the screen'. Magnus Abrahamsson, Head of Development at Meter TV guided participants through the process of creating their own TV format.

*Lars Blomgren, CEO of Filmlance presenting at the FilmArc Master Class*



Eric Kafoe then led the second workshop which followed on from the first, taking participants through the experience of success stories in TV formats that have been successful in getting their format on screen. Applying the tools presented by Magnus Abrahamsson in the lecture on day 2, participants created the basics of a television format, based around a central idea.

*Eric Kafoe and Lee Gooch at the FilmArc Master Class*



Creative Edge brought 20 emerging creative talents from the Västerbotten region to the event, which provided valuable opportunities for networking with both filmmakers and decision makers. Creative Edge also supported three filmmakers from Ireland to attend. One of these was Lee Gooch, of [Lee Gooch Promotions](#) who told us the real highlight for his business was its link with a current work project having recently pitched a TV format to a TV company. "It was great getting inside knowledge from Eric Kafoe on what the TV entertainment market looks like today and what you need to make it there" says Lee. Also according to Lee, the only lowlight was that the Master Class wasn't longer: "It was only 2 days. Not complaining, it was an amazing trip!" Another filmmaker from Ireland who attended was Frank Delaney of [Spirit Films](#), who described the experience as invaluable and enriching. Frank told Creative Edge that the experience highlighted how we now need to think globally and that "the week in Sweden reconnected me with this, and invigorated my own career vision. We are now in the midst of a digital revolution, television is changing at a very fast rate, traditional markets and practices are shrinking so in order to stay in business we all need to be looking for where the new and emerging markets and practices are...this trip showed me that I need to do a few of these type of trips annually from now on and get off the Island and see what the rest of the world is doing". Frank also points out that some of what he learned was "bittersweet", observing the rise of the TV format shows over documentaries. "The week confirmed that as a documentary maker and factual storyteller I now need to be looking towards internet and online platforms. I need to embrace new forms of filmmaking, new filmmaking practices and new forms of storytelling that will be suitable for these platforms".

## Update on Creative Edge Activities

The Creative Edge project received €1.1 million in funding through the European Union's Interreg 4B initiative under the Northern Periphery Programme (NPP) and brings together universities, development agencies and industry bodies from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Finland and Sweden. The main objective of the project is to promote the active participation of local creative organisations and businesses in global markets while also aiding them in their ability to attract and utilise local emerging creative talent in these markets. Some recent and planned activities of the project are as follows:

- A growing number of creative businesses and talents have set up profiles on mycreativeedge.eu. If you are a creative business, freelancer or recent graduate looking for work and haven't signed up for this free service, go to mycreativeedge.eu to find out more.
- The Creative Edge Policy Toolkit is well underway. We are keen to extensively review policy reports and research. Any suggestions of best practice creative industry initiatives, policy reports or research can be sent to: [aisling.murtagh@nuigalway.ie](mailto:aisling.murtagh@nuigalway.ie)
- Work is also ongoing on the Creative Edge Social Media Toolkit that will feature on MyCreativeEdge in coming months.

Our forthcoming newsletters will focus on the innovative activities mentioned above, and others, taking place as part of Creative Edge, such as the Lurgan Creative Hub and the Craigavon Borough Council Creative Edge Seminar Series.

*Maskinhuset, Skellefteå, Sweden – one of the venues for the FilmArc Master Class*



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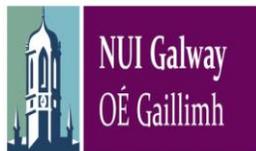
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Photographs by: Pauline White, Western Development Commission



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