

BIENNIAL NOVA XX

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Biennial dedicated to the intersection of
Arts / Sciences / New Technologies in a feminine
and non-binary mode in the era of 5.0

2026/7 Edition

Epokhé & Instauration



Centre
Wallonie-Bruxelles
/ Paris

EPOKHÉ & INSTAURATION

The NOVA_XX biennial was founded in 2017 in Brussels by Stéphanie Pécourt. Since its second edition it has been presented by the Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles/Paris and coordinated by Sara Anedda. For this fifth edition, the Biennial will be structured around 4 programming territories, opening **a new one dedicated to art video games and:**

Anarkhè-exhibition¹
performances
artist's motion pictures films
artist's video games

For these territories, four juries are to be assembled.

The morphology of NOVA_XX is resolutely hybrid and celebrates interweavings, the heterosis effect: it infuses an extensive program of meetings, conferences, sound evenings, screening events... all with the aim of exploring the issues that distinguish it over the course of three months.

NOVA_XX will open in December 2026 at the Centre with an inaugural conference and Off-Site with fugitive performative and sound Hours - the other territories of the Biennial will unfold from January to March 2027 In Situ.

ISSUES AT STAKE IN NOVA_XX

We are the hackers of abstraction. We produce new concepts, new perceptions, new sensations, hacked out of raw data. Whatever code we hack, be it programming language, poetic language, math or music, curves or colorings, we are the abstracters of new worlds. Whether we come to represent ourselves as researchers or authors, artists or biologists, chemists or musicians, philosophers or programmers, each of these subjectivities is but a fragment of a class still becoming, bit by bit, aware of itself as such

McKenzie Wark²

The Biennial is dedicated to those who, in a spirit of coalescing and heterogeneous gender, were confined to the nave of margins in the shadow of certainties³.

NOVA_XX - liminal space - aims to highlight works and approaches that seize upon, critique as much as they attest to and incorporate data, scientific and technological protocols. Artworks displaying strength in their capacity for non-coincidence, for creating tensions, and that enable the potentialization of worlds not yet considered and sinusoidal cartographies. The Biennial desequences and inscribes itself in an aspiration to *epistemic disobedience*⁴ in a critical reflection on the ethics of separation and dualisms, in an ode to the Pluriverse - a plurality of heterogeneous worlds that reconciles nature and culture as much as human and non-human. It is an ode to alien performativities, to the living in its incommensurability, and to research in its fundamental nature.

1 - *Anarkhè-exhibition* - a neologism inspired by the concept of anarchitecture and the work of Gordon Matta-Clark, coined to describe a singular exhibition morphology that does not claim to be its antithesis but distinguishes itself through its unpredictable, unfixed, and unreproducible dimension. An *anarkhè-exhibition* is defined by its nomadic ontology - it is shaped by works created in situ, some of which are ephemeral and will have existed only through the memory they leave with those who have seen them; they will become mythologies, memories. An *anarkhè-exhibition* is a liminal territory where material and immaterial works coexist, such as sound artworks, and where traces of agencies persist within its space: archives, artifacts of performative gestures developed during its enactment. An *anarkhè-exhibition* invites one to imagine what was experienced there and to project future states. It acts as the receptacle of human and non-human performativities - where the genius loci of artists is celebrated as much as vegetal, liquid, mineral, synthetic elements... By principle, it escapes total control and any aspiration to preservation. An *anarkhè-exhibition* chants fragility and is animated by the living; it is intrinsically chaotic, deleterious, and a corruptor of meaning (Baudrillard). The *anarkhè-exhibition* contributes to making its hosting space an experiential, non-prescriptive space. Stéphanie Pécourt

2 - *A Hacker Manifesto*, Harvard University Press, September 2004.

3 - This term was used as the title of the first *anarkhè-exhibition* designed by Stéphanie Pécourt in June 2022.

4 - *La désobéissance épistémique - Rhétorique de la modernité, logique de la colonialité et grammaire de la décolonialité* - by Walter D. Mignolo - Peter Lang - 1997.

According to an archipelagic topography - which validates the experiential vocation of the Centre - the Biennial aims to approach new epistemes, to fracture certainties, regenerate regimes of experience and language, and approach nomadic, hybrid, and de-essentialized ontologies.

It brings together over forty Belgian and international artists and researchers, veering towards a climax of situated practices.

NOVA_XX does not intend to conform to a mythologizing of heroines and iconic, prescriptive figures __ *Haro sur les Héros* [Down with the Heroes]⁵ __. It deliberately aims to produce a kind of saturation of meaning, a foregrounding of intersubjectivities, demonstrations, orientations; it multiplies viewpoints with the prospect of corrupting the aspiration to a conquering discourse steeped in certainty. It is a magma of germinations, gestures, critical and speculative thoughts that takes form through numerous alliances sealed in its favor.

The Biennial commits to the interpenetration of knowledge and the valorization of heterogeneous epistemic communities. NOVA is dedicated to those who have engaged in so called digital arts without yielding to techno-feudalism, to an imperative of spectacularity and ostentation of technological mastery.

The Biennial intends to privilege approaches that advance the dismantling of black boxes and valorizes sophisticated research protocols. NOVA_XX investigates niches that until recently remained invisibilized and subalternized, such as bio art, neuroaesthetics, bioengineering, algorithmic art, cyberfeminism, critical AI, primitive technology... The programming also favors the approaches of those who, through their artistic research, have contributed to celebrating performativities and genius loci other than human. To the seditious Pythias who formulate new languages profiling alternative futures that escape eschatological prophecies and collapsology tinged with *retrotopia*⁶.

One does not build a new world without a new language
Ingeborg Bachmann

The question of «who speaks,» of enunciative and therefore performative devices is raised. Who speaks and about what, what speech can emerge?

In these times of collapse, new phenomenological approaches are taking shape and an era of de-instrumentalization is observed. It traces in its wake a call to consider technoscience as a valid hermeneutics that nevertheless does not exhaust others and whose use is non-deterministic.

The time has come for barbarous words and the rediscovery of non-human agencies and performativities. The time has come for consideration of sensitive, critical, marginalized and peripheralized artistic practices in the antechambers of spectacular practices founded on mastery and a demiurgic vision.

Never forget that this world compels us to struggle, that nothing in it is normal
Isabelle Stengers⁷

⁵ - *Haros sur les Héros* – Title of the first installment of Biennial NOVA_XX.

⁶ - *Retrotopia* – Zygmunt Bauman – Cambridge, Polity, 2017

⁷ - *Les faiseuses d'histoires - Que font les femmes à la pensée ?* Vinciane Despret, Isabelle Stengers – Les empêcheurs de tourner en rond – 2011 -

NOVA_XX is resolutely a Hacking project. Hacking, as defined by Pekka Himanen, is the act of realizing that what is represented has only the quality of being a representation of the real, it is to potentialize the virtual in the actual and perpetually requalify reality.

*The beings*⁸ proliferating at the heart of NOVA_XX thwart the expectation of completeness. Within the Biennial, resemblance, commensurability, translation are not forced, but rather instauration and singularities are celebrated.

NOVA_XX is resolutely marked by the seal of dismembering tutelary regimes and rhetorics and questions discourses that would be inviolable and justify decisive political, civilizational orientations. NOVA_XX is the licentious banner of «What if.»

*We are the eyes and ears of those who have been ousted*⁹
Silvia Federici

Stéphanie Pécourt
Founder of Biennial NOVA_XX
Director of Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles / Paris

8 - The ethnography of indigenous America is populated with these references to a cosmopolitical theory that describes a universe inhabited by various types of actants or subjective agents, human and non-human – gods, animals, the dead, plants, meteorological phenomena, very often objects and artifacts as well – all endowed with the same general set of perceptual, appetitive and cognitive dispositions, in other words a similar «soul.» Eduardo Viveiros de Castro

9 -On October 28, 2020, at Vooruit in Ghent, Silvia Federici included this phrase in her lecture entitled «Rethinking and restructuring social reproduction in times of racist violence and global epidemics».

ALUMNI

CLASS OF 2017

Alexandra Dementieva, Annemarie Maes, Artefakt & Deframe, Claire Williams, Katia Lecomte Mirsky, Kika & Ivo, Léa Pogliano, Lynn Pook, Maria Castellanos, Martine-Icole Rojina, Milène Guermont, Myriam Bleau, Soumaya Phéline, Verena Friedrich.

CLASS OF 2019-2020

Agnès De Cayeux, Anne Laforet, Anne-Marie Schleiner, Annemarie Maes, Cécile Babiolo, Cinzia Campolese, Clara !, Danielle Gutman Hopenblum, Hélène Barrier, Katerina Undo, Kristin Sue Lucas, Laura Colmenares Guerra, Laura Mannelli, Laurie Simmons, Marie-Eve Levasseur, Mika Oki, Myriam Bleau, Naziha Mestaoui, Olivia Hernaiz, Omma, Pepa Ivanova, Sarah Charlesworth

CLASS OF 2021-2022

Alix Desaubliaux, Anna Raimondo, Anouk Kruithof, Caroline Le Méhauté, Cindy Coutant, Cucina Povera, Daisy Darkpark, Daria Galabriel, Decha, Deeat Palace, DJ Under Arrest, Eduardo Andres Crespo, Elizabeth Saint-Jalmes, Eva L'Hoest, Félicie d'Estienne d'Orves, Geneviève Favre Petroff, Helena Dietrich & Thomas Proksch, Hélène Barrier, Ichraf Nasri & Xeno, Jean Biche, Jeanna Criscitiello, Jenny Abouav, Julia Maura, Julie Rousse, Julie Vacher, Katherine Melançon, Kika Nicolela, Laura Conant, Léa Rogliano, Leoluna Robert-Tourneur, Les Inappropriée's, Lisa Boostani, Magall Desbazelle, Marie Lisel, Marion Balac, Marion Devaud, Marion Lissarrague, Marjolijn Dijkman, Mathilde Lavenne, Mélina Ghorafi, Méryll Ampe, Molly Soda, Morgane Baffier, MYAKO, Bluepanther, Naomi Cook, Nariné Karslyan, Nina Berclaz, Ninar Esber, Noriko Yamaguchi, Ov, Pascale Barret, Perrine Lacroix, Rocio Berenguer, Sabrina Ratté, Sigolène Valax, Sophie Audoubert, Stéphan Goldrajch, Summer Satana, Sylvie Lehmers, Terrine, Under Arrest, Véronique Béland, Véronique Hubert, Vica Pacheco, Victoire Thierrée

CLASS OF 2024

Amélie Bouvier, Aurélie Noudelmann, Esther Denis, Eva Medin, Ève Gabriel Chabanon, Élodie Huet, Faye Formisano, Félicie d'Estienne d'Orves, Gala Hernández Lopéz, Isadora Neves Marques, Lisa Boostani, Lou Fauroux, Louise Charlier, Marylou, Sara Dufour & Claire Malrieux, Sarah Sandler, Yue Cheng, Laura Cinti, Bobby Brim, Cassandra Muñoz, Célin Jiang alias Bisou Magique, collectif Not Your Techno, Jenny Abouav, (L.FRX Aka Lou Fauroux), Michel Jocaille & Paul Levrez, Pom Bouvier & Marjolijn Dijkman, Yamila, Vica Pacheco, Mona Servo, Loto Retina - Alisa Berger, Marielle Chabal, Mélanie Courtinat, Sophie Sénécaut, Côme Ferrasse, Mélodie Blaison, Wendy Cornu & Lucien Gaudion, Pauline Mik, Shivay La Multiple, Eric Androa Mindre Kolo, Michel Jocaille & Charlotte Sarian, Jean-François Krebs, Vera Moro, Naominitel, Stella K, Xaxalxe, Fallon Mayanja, sEllis Laurens & Eythan Sallet, Raphaële Bidault-Waddington

JURYS

Patron: Estelle Francès

Collector, exhibition curator and cultural entrepreneur.¹

Anarkhè-exposition Jury:

- Anne-Laure Belloc - Director of Digital Arts and Culture Programming at Stereolux
- Clément Postec - Artistic Director Le Nouveau printemps
- Evelyne Deret - Collector and co-founder of Art [] Collector
- Ikbal Benkhalfallah - Director of Safra'Numérique
- Joseph Cui - Director of L'espace temps
- Maria Giovanna Gilotta - co-founder and co-director of Rencontres Carré sur Seine Paris
- Marie du Chastel - Artistic Director Kikk Festival, le Pavillon, Trakk, ikii

Performances Jury:

- Anne Dreyfus - Founder and Director, Le Générateur
- Cédric Fauq - Chief Curator at Capc - musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux
- Clément Thibault - Art critic & Director of visual and digital arts at Cube-Garges
- Elise Bergonzi - Independent curator and artist
- Etienne Blanchot - Founder of Ideal Trouble festival, Music Curator at Lafayette Anticipations
- Myriama Idir - Curator, Co-founder of Prix Utopi-e
- Vincent Cragon - Co-founder and curator at Elektron.Luxembourg

Artist's Films Jury:

- Alberta Pane - Founder of Galerie Pane
- Gabriel Soucheyre - Artistic Director Vidéoformes
- Jean-François Rettig and Nathalie Hénon - Founder and director of Rencontres internationales Paris / Berlin
- Inès Geoffroy - Head of Exhibitions, la Villette
- Valeria Cetraro - Founder of Galerie Valeria Cetraro

Video Games Jury:

- Alexandra Boucherifi-Kornmann - artist, researcher and founder of PROXIMA - the European Biennial of AI and Augmentism
- Frédéric Lorin - collector and founder of CulturFoundry
- Isabelle Arvers - Artist - Curator & art critic
- Lucia Garcia - General Director iMal, centre for new media and digital arts
- Mylène Marx - Associate Director Ubisoft
- Natacha Duviquet - Curator, co-president of SIANA, artistic laboratory in Essonne and General Delegate of the TRAS network
- Paula Zeng - Independent curator
- Vincent Moncho - General Director of Festival Octobre numérique

¹ - In 2006, she founded "ARROI, du sens à l'œuvre", a cultural engineering company specializing in cultural events, exhibition curating as well as exhibition and collection management. In 2009, she opened the Fondation Francès in Senlis then in Clichy, dedicated to presenting an international collection assembled with her husband around a central thematic axis: the excesses of the human being. This ensemble today comprises over 1,000 works. As an exhibition curator (member of C-E-A since 2009), Estelle published numerous texts on the works in the collection and the exhibitions she develops in situ and off-site. In 2015, she established the association Française pour l'œuvre contemporaine en société, whose mission is to support artistic creation through a dissemination platform and an international artist residency program, deployed at the Cité internationale des arts de Paris since 2017. Since January 2026, this program has inaugurated the Art and Psychiatry residency, dedicated to dialogue between artistic practices and the field of psychiatry. Artists Céline Cuvelier and Sarah Feuillas are developing their work there with the close support of the association and Albertine de Galbert, exhibition curator and clinical psychologist. Estelle Francès participates in numerous committees and juries, notably at CNAP, the Salon de Montrouge and the Prix Marcel Duchamp. Her commitment was recognized by her appointment to the rank of Knight of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2013.

APPLICATIONS

Applications are submitted by Belgian and international artists/researchers engaged in a creative practice incorporating and/or questioning new media - digital tools, sciences - and fostering hybridization between fields.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Artwork created by a woman or non-binary creator(s)
- The installation, where applicable, must have been produced and presented publicly at least once
- Technical feasibility given the exhibition space

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Originality and singularity of the creation, of the approach
- Adequacy between the subject matter and the tools and technologies employed
- Critical, prospective dimension of the proposal
- For installations, technical feasibility given the exhibition space (see floor plan in appendix)
- - the work must require installation time not exceeding 3 days

New programming territory: VIDEO GAMES

For video games: art games will be selected - scripts, game protocols as much as playable games that defy and transcend gamification and technological mastery. Games that subvert the mechanisms of mass-market video games celebrating upward performance and conquest. Preference will be given to games that lead to penetrating alternative worlds, universes, unprecedented languages and idioms, that lead to thinking about regenerated cosmopolitanisms - games with critical, prospective and geopoetic intent. The immersive dimension of the game will constitute a significant selection element. The mode of communication and apprehension of these games or protocols must be specified in the application.

TO APPLY:

- Specify at the beginning of the file for which «territory» the application is submitted Biographical note
- Document, video, presenting the project(s) submitted
- If the project includes collaborations, a note regarding these is required
- Detailed project description including technical requirements + mention of equipment provided and requested
- Portfolio presenting current and past work (max. 10 images and/or 3 audio/video excerpts, 20 MB max)
- Internet links
- The application file may be sent in French or English

FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

- Exhibition fee for the work during the exhibition: €800 including tax
- Daily per diem during installation and de-installation time
- Expenses covered for: accommodation and travel expenses for the artwork and the artist

APPLICATION

Sara Anedda – General Coordinator for NOVA_XX: s.anedda@cwbf.fr

SCHEDULE

- Application deadline: until May 18 at midnight
- Selection: during June 2026
- Selection confirmation: July 2027

ANNOUNCEMENT

- The juries will meet in June & July 2026. They will deliberate based on the aforementioned eligibility and selection criteria
- Publication and notification of selections will take place in early September 2026.

COPYRIGHT

- The artist retains all property rights to their work
- The organizer of NOVA_XX and its partners may use images of the installations/performances/films and projects presented before and during the Biennial
- The organizer has the obligation to associate the name of the creator(s) with images of the projects that will be used for its communication

CWB Paris

Direction Stéphanie Pécourt

Far from a mausoleum contributing to the canonization of the pa-ma-trimomial heritage of Francophone Belgian culture, the Centre – also known as the vessel – is a non-prescriptive space with an experiential vocation, a reference catalyst of so-called Belgian contemporary creation and of the artistic ecosystem in its transversality.

Through resolutely deconsecrating and a-transdisciplinary programming, the Centre is mandated to disseminate and showcase the work of artists based in the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles. It thus ensures the promotion of emerging and established talents, from the peripheral to the consecrated. It helps stimulate co-productions and international partnerships and crystallizes attention in favor of the so-called Belgian scene.

Each season, the Centre unveils artistic approaches showcasing irreducibility to a common denominator of the porous territories of contemporary creation. Located in the 4th arrondissement of Paris, its programming unfolds over more than 1000 sqm.

As a decentralized Belgian vessel it also carries out Off-Site programming and invests Cyberspace as a territory of creation and dissemination with specialized content beyond the programming it deploys In-Situ.

The Centre is a decentralized service of Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI): an instrument of the international policy conducted by Wallonia, the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, and the Commission communautaire française de la Région de Bruxelles Capitale.

The Centre works in close collaboration with the Wallonie-Bruxelles General Delegation in Paris. The Wallonie-Bruxelles General Delegation in Paris is responsible for the diplomatic and institutional representation of the governments of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles and Wallonia to the French authorities, both national and regional, as well as to international organizations: in particular Francophonie (OIF) as well as UNESCO and OECD. As spokesperson and relay for the values carried by Francophones of Belgium, the General Delegation carries out its activities in collaboration with the Wallonia Economic and Commercial Attaché, its tourism representatives, and with the Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles.

Press contact

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Access

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Théâtre - Cinéma - Bunker	46, rue Quincampoix, 75004 Paris
Métro Châtelet-Les-Halles, Rambuteau, Hôtel de Ville	