



ARRAS BIENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART

CALL FOR ARTISTS

***Appel d'air* : contemporary art in Arras**

Appel d'Air (which translates both as “in-draught” and “breath of fresh air”) is the title of the Arras Biennial of Contemporary Art. Since 2014, *Appel d'air* invites artists to invest in urban space. It is organized by the young curators from the Curating and Museography Master’s degree course of Arras University. The fifth edition of the festival will take place on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of April 2022.

Part of the cultural project of the city of Arras since 2016, this ephemeral event takes place in the heart of the urban space. This new edition intends to invest more particularly the "green spaces" of the city in the broadest sense, that is squares, parks, public and private gardens as well as wastelands.

This event aims to increase the visibility of contemporary creation and to raise awareness among residents: it is aimed at amateurs and specialists in contemporary art as well as at curious passers-by, and both at locals and tourists visiting the city. Arras is indeed a city whose rich built heritage makes it both attractive to visitors and a fertile playground for visual artists.

Appel d'air is an interdisciplinary biennial: as such, its selection is open to all types of media and practices. Thus, all proposals from visual artists, painters, graffiti artists, sculptors, photographers, video artists, actors, composers, musicians, dancers, writers, etc. are accepted. The call for artists is addressed to professional artists as well as to young creators: art school students are thus welcome to submit proposals as well. Participation is open to local artists as well as artists from the euro-region. It is planned to select 10 artistic projects in total.

A theme : attention to the living

Previous editions have chosen the theme of imprint, breath, intimacy and upheaval, with guest artists such as David Mesguich, Claude Cattelain or Lada Neoberdina.

This edition intends to address the issues of ecology, through the theme of 'attention to the living'. How can we renew our attention to the living in all its forms, by finding back a true intensity of listening? In what way are the "green spaces" that punctuate the city the place where species meet and interact? The program of this edition will be structured by these questions and will be built around the definition of ecology as being the science of interactions between organisms in an environment. If the urban environment is in essence the place where humans meet and live together, nowadays the city can no longer be thought of solely from a human perspective. On the contrary, it is a hybrid space, a place of cohabitation with non-human organisms - animals and plants - that constitute it, in a more discreet but equally essential way.

A dynamic of co-construction

Appel d'air promotes artistic productions that establish a dialogue with the Arras territory and create a link with the actors that make it up. Ecological groups and associations, students in geography and territory planning (DTAE master's degree), apprentices in building and heritage trades (Jacques Le Caron Institute), students in agro-environmental schools, social centers and shared gardens are all partnerships set up with a view to co-constructing the works. Each co-construction may take the form of a triad between an artist, an actor in the ecological and social field and a production partnership.

In order to provide paths for reflection and creation, testimonials from local inhabitants about their relationship to nature spaces in an urban context were collected during street interviews. These testimonials, as well as other resources (maps, bibliography), can be consulted on the biennial's website.

A residency is planned in order to allow an immersion in the territory, to choose the locations of the artworks and to meet the project partners.

An urban itinerary

The implantation of the biennial in the urban space aims to be accessible to the widest possible public and also to establish a dialogue with the territory on which the works are to be exhibited. The interaction of the work with its exhibition space is subject to reflection and experimentation. However, the very fact of exhibiting the artworks outside, in the public space, imposes technical constraints and will demand either a necessary resistance of the work to diverse weather conditions or, on the contrary, an integration of the work's deterioration within the creation process. For this edition, the biennial will take the form of a route focusing on squares, parks, public and private gardens, but also wastelands and other urban neglected areas.

It is nevertheless possible to exhibit, as an echo or addendum to an *in situ* installation, a limited number of more fragile works or works with high multimedia technical maintenance indoors, in the rooms of the Hôtel de Guînes.

Financial conditions

Each artist will receive a remuneration of 500 euros for their creation, including production costs. In addition, meals, lodging, transport will be taken care of, both for the residences and during the biennial itself. Artists are nevertheless free to engage, in parallel, their own search for sponsors likely to support them in their creative process.

A sustainable design process

Appel d'air, in conformity with the ecological theme of this edition, has written a charter establishing the ethical line that the biennial wishes to respect. Thus, proposals adopting an eco-responsible approach in the creation process and the choice of materials will be favoured.

Residencies

In order to immerse oneself in the territory of Arras and to meet the inhabitants and the production partners, a first residency is planned for October 14, 15 and 16 of 2021.

A second creative phase, to be determined according to the needs of each artist, is considered in January or February 2022.

To respond to the call for artists, please send a note of intent (with photos, sketches or visuals to specify your project), your CV and your portfolio to appeldair5.mem@gmail.com. The selection criteria will be based on the relevance of the work to the project and on its feasibility.

Appel d'air biennial's website: www.biennaleappeldair.fr

Calendar

- Deadline to answer the call: **May 15, 2021**
- Decision of the selection committee: **June 15, 2021**
- Residencies: **October 14, 15 and 16, 2021 and January/February 2022** (flexible depending on the case)
- Artworks set-up: **March 30 and 31, 2022**
- Opening: **March 31, 2022**
- Biennial: **1, 2, 3 April 2022**
- Dismantling: **from Sunday, April 3 (from 6 pm) to Monday, April 4, 2022**