



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 has invited 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 sixth edition of the festival will take place on **March 22, 23 and 24, 2024**.

Part of the cultural project of the city of Arras since 2016, this artistic and cultural event intends to invest the downtown area: its streets, squares, courtyards, gardens ...

This event aims to increase the visibility of contemporary creation and to raise awareness among residents: it is aimed at contemporary art lovers, families, schoolchildren and students, to the inhabitants of Arras and of the neighboring towns as well as to the visitors passing by. Arras is an attractive city for tourists thanks to its rich architectural heritage, which also makes it a fertile playground for 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... are welcome. The call for artists is addressed to professional artists as well as to young creations: art school students are welcome. Participation is open to local artists as well as those from the European region, in particular from neighboring countries, as an invitation to cross the border, which makes sense with the precise theme of this sixth edition. It is planned to retain 10 artistic projects (individual or collective).





A theme : Movement

The sixth edition of Appel d'Air invites to think about the notion of movement in its variety: intellectual, physical, geographical, individual or collective movements. Bicycle, rollerblades, skateboard, train, flying machine, or on foot, the artists will be able to think about the different ways of moving, existing or imaginary. Flying, crawling, hopping, human beings are not the only ones to move around and the circulation of other species can also be questioned in urban environments.

Moving encourages a deeper knowledge and understanding of the territory we live in. André Leroi-Gourhan, ethnologist and historian, explains that it is by walking that territories were born, and vice versa. The path is the first form of habitation of the territory. The civilization was made by the walk, then thanks to other means of transport, which allowed and still allows to create routes and borders. The line is the trace of this movement. The artists can therefore also be interested in the question of geography and cartography.

This idea implies a strong political dimension, since reappropriating the places we inhabit is an important issue, in order to feel like actors of the areas we live in. We have less need to go out : everything that is consumed can arrive at our door without having to set foot outside. We need to rethink our relationship to inhabiting and living together. The outside is a dilated, open space that we wish to invite to rediscover.


Moving allows us to reappropriate the territory through the body. To move is extremely sensory, involve a tactile, kinesthetic or proprioceptive aspects; odors, sounds, volumes or even variations of light. (see DAVILA Thierry, *Marcher, créer - Déplacements, flâneries, dérives dans l'art de la fin du XXe siècle*, Paris, Du Regard, 2007.)

To move also influences the spirit. Walking changes the way we think, the body in tune with our thoughts. Walking activates a spatial memory while opening to an elsewhere.

In order to nourish ideas, testimonies of inhabitants about their experience of moving and transportation in Arras are collected and available on the website of the biennial.

Other resources (bibliography, maps, testimonies) gathered during the previous editions are already available on the website: <https://www.biennaleappeldair.fr/ressources-1>.

The artists are also encouraged to give attention to the specific context of Arras. Inspired by the singular history of the city and its urban landscape, the artists will renew the daily life of the inhabitants by day and by night. A resources tab including a research and archive file on the city, an artistic watch, a bibliography and maps is available on our website to help artists to better understand Arras and give them sources of inspiration. The artistic movement brought by the artists is meant to be common and will embark the inhabitants of Arras in a stroll through the streets and gardens of Arras.





A dynamic of co-construction

Appel d'Air promotes artistic productions that are rooted in the territory of Arras and creating links with the actors who constitute it. Collectives and associations, students, apprentices in construction and historical architecture (Lycée Jacques Le Caron), social centers and cultural institutions are as many partnerships set up for a co-construction of the works. Each co-construction will take the form of a partnership between an artist, a patronage of skills and a group of inhabitants of Arras.

A residency is planned in October in order to allow an immersion on the territory, to see the possible places of implantation for the works of the biennial and to meet these partners who will be able to accompany them on their project.

An urban journey

The implantation of the biennial in the urban space was born from a double will: on the one hand, to be accessible to the greatest number of people by exhibiting in the public and daily space and, on the other hand, to question the territory on which the works are deployed and to propose singular conditions of exhibition.


The interaction of the work with its exhibition area creates space for reflection and experimentation. This choice to invest the urban space imposes however technical constraints: a resistance of the work to bad weather or the taking into account of the inevitable wear in the creation of the work. It is nevertheless possible to exhibit a limited number of more fragile works or works with high multimedia technical maintenance indoors, in the rooms of the Hôtel de Guînes for example.

Financial conditions

The remuneration per artistic proposal is fixed at 500 euros, including production costs. In addition, meals, lodging, and transportation will be taken care of, both for the residencies and for the duration of the biennial. The artists are nevertheless free to engage, in parallel, their own search for patrons likely to support them in their creative process.

Ethical approach

Appel d'Air has written a guideline establishing the ethical line that the biennial wishes to respect (<https://www.biennaleappeldair.fr/copie-de-charte-%C3%A9thique>). Thus, proposals adopting an eco-conscious approach in the creation process and the choice of materials will be favored. The Appel d'Air biennial is also conceived as an inclusive project thanks to mediation supports adapted and accessible to the greatest number of people.





Residencies

In order to get a feel for the territory of Arras, to meet the city's resourceful inhabitants as well as production partners and patrons of skills, a first residency period is planned for **October 12, 13 and 14, 2023**. A second creation time, to be determined according to the needs of each artist, is possible in January 2024.

To respond to the call for artists, please send a **note of intent** (with a photo, sketch or visuals to clarify your project), your **CV** and your **portfolio** in a single **PDF** document to **appeldair6@gmail.com**. The selection criteria are based on the relevance of the work in relation to the project and its feasibility.

The *Appel d'Air* biennial website: www.biennaleappeldair.fr

Calendar

- Deadline to respond to the call: **April 20, 2023**
- Decision of the selection committee: **May 20, 2023**
- Residencies: **October 12, 13 and 14, 2023 and January 2024**
- Finalization of the works and installation: **March 19, 20 and 21, 2024**
- Vernissage: **March 21, 2024**
- Biennial: **March 22, 23, 24, 2024**
- Dismantling: from Sunday, **March 24 (from 5 p.m.) to Monday, March 25, 2024 (noon)**

Team *Appel d'Air*

