Press Kit, Nov. 2026, XXV edition, 1 Oct. 2026 to 30 Sep. 2028

An institution that challenges the founda-tions of art.

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Biennale de Paris

Remain silent and act

Preamble, p.6

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Since its founding in 1959, the Paris Biennale has accompanied several major transformations in art. Today, it no longer seeks merely to identify tomorrow's artistic forms. It questions the very need to continue conceiving art through the production of artworks.
The contemporary world faces ecological, economic, social, political and technological transformations of immense scope. In the face of these challenges, multiplying art objects is not necessarily an appropriate response.
The Paris Biennale advocates the possibility of art capable of intervening directly in the conditions of existence of the world: art that does more than represent problems and can help transform them; art that no longer depends exclusively on exhibitions, the market or institutional recognition; art that invents its own methods, economies, institutions and possibilities. Invisual art opens up this prospect.

Previous page: the motto of the Biennale de Paris.

The chal-lenge is no longer merely to change art, but to change what art can do.

What if the future of art began where the artwork ends?

An art institution that changes the rules, p.9

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Founded in 1959, the Paris Biennale has undergone several major transformations in art history.
Having accompanied the avant-gardes of the second half of the twentieth century, it embarked, from 2000 onwards, on a radical transformation of its identity, objectives and operation.
The Biennale no longer seeks merely to present new artistic forms. It questions the very conditions of art's existence. At a time when art institutions multiply exhibitions, events and productions, it defends a radically different position: the world does not need one more artwork. It needs art capable of acting on what determines our lives.
This orientation rests on invisual art, a kind of art that exists otherwise than in the form of an artwork, whether material or immaterial. Art is no longer confined to representing, interpreting or commenting on the world. It can intervene directly in the fields that constitute it: economics, ecology, law, education, human relationships, institutions and every other known or unknown dimension of reality.

An art institution that changes the rules, p.10

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The Biennale thus becomes a space for research, experimentation and transformation. It does not ask artists to produce artworks, but to invent new possibilities for art to exist.
Its operation reflects this ambition: no exhibitions, an evolving programme, international decentrings, collective intelligence, the search for alternative economic models and the development of an ecosystem of institutions and initiatives.
The Paris Biennale does not merely criticise the art system. It experiments with ways of moving beyond it.

The Paris Biennale at a glance, p.11

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Founded in 1959 in the context of French cultural policy championed by Andre Malraux, the Paris Biennale was initially dedicated to young international artists. Across its historical editions, it welcomed artists and practices that contributed to the major transformations of art in the second half of the twentieth century. After its activities ceased in 1985, the artist Alexandre Gurita revived it in 2000 and transformed its institutional model. The Biennale abandoned the conventions usually defining an international art event: exhibitions, curatorship, aesthetic selection, artwork production and the concentration of activities in a single venue. It developed a model based on artistic research, autonomy of practices, collective intelligence, transversal economy and international cooperation.

The Paris Biennale at a glance, p.12

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Key facts:

- Founded by Andre Malraux: 1959.
- First edition: October 1959, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris.
- End of the first historical cycle: 1985.
- Revival: 2000.
- Formulation of the concept of invisual art: 2004.
- Director: Alexandre Gurita.
- Frequency: every two years.
- XXV edition: 1 Oct. 2026 – 30 Sep. 2028.
- Official website: biennaledeparis.fr.

A biennial without exhibitions, p.13

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International biennials generally follow a relatively stable model: selected artists, works produced or assembled, curators, exhibition venues and an audience invited to discover a programme.
The Biennale de Paris challenges every element of this model. It considers that an exhibition is not a necessary condition for art to exist. It may be one means among others, but cannot be its compulsory horizon.
Producing artworks is no longer an end in itself. Institutional recognition is no longer an objective in its own right. Visibility is not necessarily proof of artistic relevance.
This position transforms the institution’s role. Rather than asking artists to adapt to its spaces, formats and schedules, the Biennale seeks to adapt its resources to the needs of the practices it supports. It can therefore take the form of research, cooperation, an intervention, a new institution, an experimental economy or a dynamic continuing beyond its public presentation.

The birth of an international biennial, p.14

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The Paris Biennale emerged amid profound changes in the international art landscape. After the Second World War, Paris gradually saw its influence challenged by New York, which had become a major centre of contemporary art. Creating an international biennial devoted to young artists was part of an effort at cultural renewal and international influence.
The first edition took place from 2 to 25 October 1959 at the Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Andre Malraux inaugurated it on 3 October. Dedicated to artists aged 20 to 35, it sought to give space to new generations and research foreshadowing future transformations.
Jean Tinguely presented Meta-Matic No. 17, a drawing machine that challenged the traditional positions of author and spectator. From the outset, the Biennale was associated with experimentation, questioning conventions and inventing new artistic forms.

The Paris Biennale promotes an art that no longer needs to be shown in order to exist.

The 1969s: art moves beyond its categories, p.16

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During the 1960s, the Paris Biennale accompanied the expansion of artistic practices. Painting and sculpture gradually ceased to be the only points of reference. Artists experimented with movement, light, industrial materials, participatory devices, collective actions and new technologies.
The event welcomed practices associated with Christo, Niki de Saint Phalle, the ZERO group and other protagonists of the international avant-gardes. These experiments testify to shifting boundaries in art.
The artwork sometimes became an event, a process, a device or a situation. Relationships between artist, object and audience changed. Yet despite these innovations, the artwork remained a central reference within the art system. The transformation undertaken by the Biennale from 2000 onwards would go a step further: questioning the very necessity of the artwork.

1967–1969: Critiquing the institution, p.17

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Editions in the late 1960s reflected a radicalisation of artistic questioning. In 1967, the practices of Daniel Buren, Olivier Mosset, Michel Parmentier and Niele Toroni challenged conventions of painting and its conditions of presentation. Collective experiments of the period also questioned relationships between creation, authorship, institutions and society. Criticism no longer concerned only artistic forms: it began to address the mechanisms governing their recognition. Who decides what counts as art? By what criteria? Through which institutions? And in whose interest? These questions provide an important historical precedent for the Biennale's subsequent transformation.

1970-1985: The end of a first cycle, p.18

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Between 1970 and 1985, the Biennale continued to explore international artistic transformations. Conceptual, performative, photographic and experimental practices became increasingly prominent. In 1980, Sophie Calle presented The Sleepers (Les Dormeurs), a practice based on experience, relationships and documentation. Long regarded as mere techniques, photography and video gained recognition as artistic practices in their own right, marking a major turning point in art history.
The thirteenth edition, held in 1985 at the Grande Halle de la Villette, closed the first historical cycle. The Biennale then ceased operating on its original schedule. This interruption marked the end of one institutional model while opening the possibility of a deeper transformation.

2000: Institutional capture, p.19

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In 2000, artist Alexandre Gurita undertook the revival of the Paris Biennale. The initiative did not aim to reproduce its historical operation. It rested on institutional capture: taking over an existing institution to change its purposes, methods, values and operating conditions. The institution itself became an artistic material. Instead of creating an artwork to be hosted by an institution, the artist intervenes directly in the institution and transforms what it can do. The Biennale thus becomes both a cultural structure and an artistic experiment.
This shift profoundly changes the relationship between art and institutions. The institution is no longer merely a venue for dissemination or legitimation: it becomes a force shaping art. Institutional capture also challenges the idea that artists must necessarily submit to institutions.

The emergence of a new kind of art, p.20

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In 2004, Alexandre Gurita invented the concept of invisual art. The term designates art that exists otherwise than in the form of an artwork, material or immaterial.
Invisual art must not be confused with invisible art. An invisible artwork is an artwork that does not exist. Invisual art, by contrast, questions the necessity of the artwork itself.
It is not a new style, aesthetic or additional category within contemporary art history. It is an ontological mutation: art can exist otherwise than through the forms by which it has historically been identified.
This formulation follows practices emerging from the 1980s onwards, notably those of Gary Bigot, François Deck, Sylvain Soussan, Bernard Brunon and Elisa Bollazzi. Invisual art is not a homogeneous school. It brings together singular practices sharing the possibility of creating without necessarily producing artworks.

The challenge is no longer merely to change the forms of art. It is to change what art can do.

Invisual art: an ontological break, p.22

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Art history has largely been structured around the production of artworks. These may be material, immaterial, ephemeral, conceptual, performative or digital, but they generally remain identifiable as artistic productions.
Invisual art shifts this logic. It considers that reality itself can become art's medium of creation. A human relationship, an organisation, a method, an institution, an economy, a rule or a social transformation can constitute the site of an artistic practice.
Creation no longer necessarily consists of adding an object to the world. It may consist of changing the conditions under which the world operates.
This perspective raises a fundamental question: Why should art have to take the form of an artwork in order to be recognised as art?
Invisual art does not seek to produce a new category of artistic objects. It opens the possibility of art whose forms of existence remain to be invented.

A radical critique of visual art, p.23

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For several decades, visual art has faced a phenomenon of redundancy. The same forms, devices and presentation strategies recur, often under the appearance of novelty. The multiplication of artworks and exhibitions guarantees neither art's renewal nor its effectiveness in the world. The Biennale de Paris offers a radical critique of this situation. It considers that visual art has been reduced to entertainment, decoration, speculation or social distinction. Its dependence on exhibitions, the market and institutional recognition limits its capacity to act. This critique targets the dominant model that makes artwork production the principal condition of artistic activity. The Biennale therefore asks an uncomfortable question: If art claims to transform our relationship with the world, why does it continue mainly to produce objects intended to be looked at?

Art and the world’s major transformations, p.24

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Science, education, law, economics and politics have means of directly changing the conditions in which societies exist. Art, by contrast, is frequently confined to a symbolic role. It can denounce crises, represent injustices or comment on transformations without necessarily intervening in the mechanisms producing them.
The Paris Biennale challenges this secondary position. It believes art must be able to develop capacities for action comparable to those of other fields of knowledge and intervention.
The point is not to turn artists into scientists, lawyers or economists, but to recognise that these fields can become fully fledged sites of artistic creation.
The challenge is no longer merely to change the forms of art. It is to change what art can do.

The precursors of invisual art, p.25

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Invisual art belongs to a genealogy of practices that, since the 1980s, have questioned the centrality of the artwork.
In 1983, Gary Bigot formulated four resolutions radically transforming the artist's condition: do not produce, do not promote oneself, do not seek personal profit, and do not own personal property.
From the 1980s, François Deck developed practices based on cooperation, discussion and decision-making. Sylvain Soussan explored creation linked to economic systems, services, organisations and relations between art and society.
Bernard Brunon questioned the boundaries between professional activity and artistic practice, notably through interventions indistinguishable from ordinary work. From 1990, Elisa Bollazzi developed the MicroCollection, shifting notions of collecting, value, ownership and conservation.
These practices are not alike. Their significance lies precisely in their singularity and their capacity to shift the customary conditions by which art is identified.

Collective intelligence, p.26

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Collective intelligence occupies a central place in the methods developed by the Biennale de Paris and its ecosystem. It rests on the idea that research can become more relevant when it brings together multiple experiences, skills and perspectives.
The artist is no longer necessarily a solitary author who conceives a work before presenting it to the public. They may initiate a research dynamic, design a method or participate in a collective process.
Collective intelligence does not erase individual singularities. On the contrary, it seeks to create conditions in which they can meet, complement one another and generate unprecedented possibilities.
Practices may involve artists, researchers, professionals, institutions, residents or actors from other fields. Creation then becomes a process depending not exclusively on an author, but on the organisation of intelligences.

Horizontality: transforming power relations, p.27

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The Paris Biennale challenges institutional models based on rigid hierarchies between those who decide, those who produce and those who receive. Horizontality is a fundamental orientation of its operation.
It seeks to foster the autonomy of initiatives, the circulation of responsibilities and participants' ability to influence organisational rules.
This does not deny the need for identifiable responsibilities or structured decisions. Rather, it prevents institutional organisation from becoming an end in itself or imposing constraints contrary to artistic singularity. In this perspective, an institution must be able to learn from what it hosts and transform itself through the practices it supports.

Transversal economy, p.28

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Economics is one of the major issues in contemporary artistic research. The dominant model often depends on subsidies, markets, collectors, commissions or institutional mechanisms. The Paris Biennale explores alternatives through the concept of transversal economy. This approach regards economics not as external to art, but as a site of creation. Artists can invent their own ways of operating, systems of exchange, resources and conditions of autonomy. Economics is no longer limited to financing an artwork or event: it can become a constitutive dimension of artistic practice. The aim is to enable practices to develop conditions of existence consistent with their own purposes rather than depending exclusively on pre-existing economic models.

Terminology, ecology and strategy, p.29

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For the Paris Biennale, artistic invention is not limited to conceiving a form. It also entails creating the conditions required for that form to exist. Terminology makes it possible to name unprecedented practices and to identify, discuss and transmit them. Ecology invites consideration of their material, social, economic and environmental consequences. Strategy helps devise the means by which a practice can develop, reach its interlocutors and achieve its objectives. These are not ancillary skills. They are integral to artistic research. A singular practice must be able to invent its vocabulary, economy, ecology, strategy and modes of existence.

Art is no longer limited to representing, interpreting or commenting on the world.

Decentring: another geography of art, p.31

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For several years, the Paris Biennale has pursued an international policy based on decentrings. Decentring does not mean transporting an exhibition designed in Paris to another country. It means enabling the Biennale to exist from within another geographical, cultural, social and institutional context.
Each decentring is developed through its own participants, resources, issues and possibilities.
This approach challenges the traditional model in which a central institution designs a programme and then distributes it across different territories.
The Biennale does not seek to export a Western model. It seeks to multiply situations in which its principles can be tested, transformed and confronted with other realities. Decentring is therefore both a method of institutional research and a form of international cooperation.

An international geography in transformation, p.32

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Since its revival, the Paris Biennale has developed events, cooperation and projects in several countries. Major decentrings include:

- Nicosia, Cyprus, 2010.
- New York, United States, 2011.
- Bujumbura, Burundi, 2012.
- Réunion Island, 2013.
- Beirut, Lebanon, 2016–2017.
- Guatemala City, Guatemala, 2017.
- Luxembourg, 2018–2020.
- Bangkok, Thailand, 2025.
- Torun, Poland, 2025.
- Tunis, Sousse, Hammamet and Beni Khalled, Tunisia, 2026.

Other projects and partnerships have been initiated or announced, notably in Brussels, Berlin, Tokyo and Yerevan. This geography is not a network of branches reproducing a single programme. It is a set of autonomous experiences connected by shared orientations and a desire to renew the conditions of creation.

Bangkok 2025: clearing the ground to rethink art, p.33

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From 21 to 28 February 2025, the Paris Biennale decentered to Bangkok under the proposition “Clearing the ground to rethink art” (Faire le vide pour repenser l’art).
The programme examined habits of thought, institutional models and conventions determining what is ordinarily regarded as art. Activities took place notably at River City Bangkok and Silpakorn University, in meetings with research and education communities.
The Bangkok decentring did not seek to add another event to the international exhibition calendar. It proposed suspending the assumptions underpinning contemporary art to envisage other possibilities. Clearing the ground means creating the conditions for practices that do not reproduce existing models to emerge.

Torun 2025: thinking the post-artistic era, p.34

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From 20 to 23 May 2025, the Paris Biennale developed a programme in Torun, Poland, in cooperation with the Znaki Czasu Centre of Contemporary Art and Nicolaus Copernicus University. Discussions addressed the post-artistic era, collecting and possible transformations of artistic activity.
A post-artistic era does not necessarily imply the disappearance of art. It calls into question the categories, professions, institutions and systems of recognition inherited from its history.
What becomes of the artist when producing artworks is no longer compulsory? What becomes of a collection when what it seeks to preserve is not necessarily an object? What becomes of an institution when it ceases to regard exhibitions as its primary function? These questions run through the research developed in Torun.

Tunisia 2026: invisual art in practice, p.35

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From 10 to 16 October 2026, the Paris Biennale decentered to Tunisia, with activities in Tunis, Sousse, Hammamet and Beni Khalled.
This edition brought together artists, researchers, authors and institutions around practices shifting creation towards action, research and cooperation. Proposals addressed hospitality, human relations, economic systems, sciences, ecology, institutions and methods of intervention.
Research presented included Yosr Mahmoud's aesthetics of hospitality, Mariem Memni's creative science and migrology, Ralf Porzel's generosity-wisdom (générosagesse), and other forms of invisual art.
The Tunisian edition illustrated the diversity of fields in which art no longer defined by artwork production can intervene. It also demonstrated the possibility of building an international event through cooperation between artists, institutions, researchers and local participants.

Berlin 2027: rethinking the economic conditions of art, p.36

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The Paris Biennale decentring in Berlin, in preparation for 2027, places art's economic models at the centre of its research.
The programme aims to question artists' and cultural organisations' dependence on traditional systems of funding, dissemination and recognition. It explores mutual support, cooperation, autonomy and the invention of new economies.
The Berlin project is directed by Jeremie Pujau in collaboration with the Paris Biennale leadership.
This orientation extends research into transversal economy. It holds that art's economic conditions should not merely be endured or administered: they can become a site of artistic invention.

ENDA: a school that does not train people to produce artworks, p.37

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Paris National School of Art (ENDA) is one of the principal educational, research and transmission structures within the Biennale's ecosystem.
ENDA presents itself as the first school of research in art whose pedagogy is based on inventing unprecedented artistic practices, freed from existing conventions and models. Unlike art schools primarily organised within the limited field of visual art, around disciplines, techniques or media, ENDA places artistic research at the centre of its operation.
It does not ask participants to reproduce existing models. It invites them to invent a practice, define its principles and build the conditions for its existence. Each project is considered in its entirety: conception, terminology, economy, ecology, strategy, methods and implementation. ENDA thus develops a pedagogy that does not separate creation from its material, institutional and intellectual conditions.

A pedagogy of invention, p.38

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ENDA's pedagogy is based on collective intelligence and support for artistic research projects. Participants are invited to identify what makes their practice singular and to develop the means required for it to exist. The programme notably draws on the ontology of art, transversal economy, ecology, strategy, terminology and collective intelligence methods. The objective is not to train artists to meet the expectations of the market or institutions. It is to enable the emergence of practices capable of changing the very conditions of art. ENDA's 26th session runs from 19 November 2026 to 25 June 2027 in Paris. It leads to the Diplome national de recherche et d'experimentation en art (DNREA), awarded by the school.

Rigour and generosity

ARCAI: invisual art enters university research, p.40

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The Invisual Art Research and Creation Workshop (ARCAI) is developed within the Academie libanaise des beaux-arts (ALBA), University of Balamand, in Beirut. It was initiated by artist Ricardo Mbarkho in collaboration with Alexandre Gurita.
ARCAI is a space for research and experimentation devoted to invisual art. It brings together artists, researchers, teachers, students and theorists around a fundamental question: What can art become when it frees itself from the obligation to produce an artwork? This initiative brings invisual art into a university research setting while preserving its capacity to question established categories. It also contributes to developing methods of documentation, transmission and analysis suited to practices that do not necessarily take the form of artworks.

Previous page: the motto of ENDA (Paris National School of Art).

Collecting art that does not take the form of artworks, p.41

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The establishment of an invisual art collection within ALBA's research environment in Beirut opens an unprecedented field of reflection. Traditionally, a collection relies on acquiring, conserving and presenting artworks. But how can one collect art that exists otherwise than as artworks? How can one preserve a method, an institutional transformation, a relationship or a collective dynamic? How can one document a practice without reducing it to its material traces? These questions invite a reconsideration of the functions of collections, archives and conservation. Documentation does not necessarily replace the practice; it can help us understand its principles, conditions of existence and effects. The challenge is to invent forms of transmission that respect invisual art's singularity without artificially turning it back into an art object.

An ecosystem of insitutions and initiatives, p.42

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The Paris Biennale operates within an ecosystem of institutions, programmes, research and initiatives that broaden the possibilities of art. This ecosystem is not based on uniformity. Instead, it brings together singular practices that can cooperate, exchange methods or build joint projects.
ENDA, AASF, ARCAI, MicroCollection, EEIMA, CDRAO, CoSAA, FomeA, CNHA, Institut de Donbat, and initiatives relating to creative science, migrology, the aesthetics of hospitality, education, collecting and art economies all testify to this diversity.
These structures are not merely dissemination partners. They help produce new conditions for art's research and existence. The ecosystem functions as an evolving set of relationships, skills and possibilities.

Art forms that invent their own conditions, p.43

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One of invisual art's major specificities is its ability to invent its own conditions of existence. A practice may require the creation of an institute, a method, an economic system, a terminology or a particular organisation. These elements are not external to creation; they may constitute its very substance. Donbat, developed by Jeremie Pujau, involves identifying social, economic, ecological, relational or institutional imbalances and undertaking proportionate actions to change their conditions. Migrology, created by Mariem Memni, proposes considering migration and related realities as an autonomous field of research. Elisa Bollazzi's MicroCollection shifts conventions of collecting and artistic value.
These practices show that invisual art is not a single aesthetic. It is a field of possibilities as diverse as the realities in which its practices intervene.

The XXV edition: 2026-2028, p.44

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The XXV edition of the Paris Biennale runs
from 1 October 2026 to 30 September 2028.
It continues the transformation begun in 2000
and deepens research devoted to invisual art.
Unlike biennials built around a central exhibition
and a fixed programme, this edition develops over
time through research, international cooperation,
institutional initiatives, meetings and projects
that may evolve throughout the period.
Its main orientations are:
- Develop artistic practices that exist
otherwise than as artworks.
- Invent new economic and
ecological conditions for art.
- Deepen research into collective
intelligence and institutions.
- Multiply international decentrings.
- Strengthen research and transmission structures.
- Develop new ways of documenting
and collecting invisual art.
The XXV edition does not seek to impose
a single theme on different practices.

Another conception of the art institution, p.45

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The Paris Biennale does not regard institutions as immutable structures. It sees them as sets of rules, relationships, resources and methods that can be transformed.
This position challenges the traditional role of art institutions, often organised around conserving, exhibiting, disseminating and legitimising artworks and artists. The Biennale seeks to develop an institution capable of acting on its own conditions of existence. It does not merely welcome experimental practices; it accepts that they may challenge its operation.
This is one of its fundamental differences from major international contemporary art events. The Paris Biennale is not merely an institution devoted to artistic experimentation. It is itself an artistic experiment.

Frequently asked questions from journalists, p.46

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Why is the Paris Biennale no longer based on exhibitions?
Because it considers that exhibitions are not a necessary condition for art to exist. Practices can develop in reality, in forms that do not correspond to the conventions of exhibited artworks.

What is invisual art?
Invisual art is art that exists otherwise than in the form of an artwork, material or immaterial. It does not mean invisible art, but another possibility for art to exist.

What is the difference between contemporary art and invisual art?
Contemporary art may renew forms, media and modes of presentation while retaining the artwork as a central reference. Invisual art questions this requirement and opens creation to other conditions of existence.

Why use the term “decentring”?
Because the Biennale does not seek to export a Western model. Each decentring is built from a particular context, with its own participants, methods and issues.

Frequently asked questions from journalists, p.47

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What is ENDA's role?
ENDA develops a pedagogy of artistic research based on inventing practices that free themselves from established frameworks of art and create their own conditions of existence.
Is the Paris Biennale opposed to artworks?
Its critique does not consist in banning artworks, but in challenging their status as a compulsory condition of art. It seeks to open possibilities that no longer necessarily depend on their production.

Chronological landmarks, p.48

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1959: Paris Biennale founded by Andre Malraux; first edition at the Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris.
1961–1969: Development of avant-gardes and collective experiments.
1967: Participation of Buren, Mosset, Parmentier and Toroni.
1980: Sophie Calle presents Les Dormeurs.
1985: Thirteenth edition at the Grande Halle de la Villette; end of the first historical cycle.
2000: Revival by Alexandre Gurita and transformation of the institutional model.
2004: Formulation of the concept of invisual art.
2010: Decentring in Nicosia.
2011: Decentring in New York.
2012: Decentring in Burundi.
2013: Decentring in Réunion Island.
2015: Decentring in Beirut.
2017: Decentring in Guatemala.
2018–2020: Decentring in Luxembourg.
2024: Development of ARCAI in Beirut.
2025: Decentrings in Bangkok and Torun.
2026: Decentring in Tunisia; opening of the Biennale's XXV edition.
2028: XXV edition closes on 30 September.

Press information and documentation, p.49

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Biennale de Paris
Press relations: Sophie Le Malet
XXV edition: 1 October 2026 – 30 September 2028
Official website: https://biennaledeparis.fr/en
Contact: info@biennaledeparis.fr
Documentation resources:
Journalists can consult the principal
sections of the official website:

- History of the Paris Biennale.
- Singular identity and institutional positioning.
- International decentrings.
- Ecosystem.
- Publications and editions.
- Calendar and event archives.

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Biennale de Paris

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