

Press Kit

The 16 Fellows selected for 2024-2025
at the French Academy in Rome



VILLA MEDICI

An artists' residence, a multidisciplinary art centre and a 7-hectare heritage site, the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici welcomes **nearly 70 artists, authors, and researchers every year** for stays of varying lengths, including **16 year-long Fellows**.

The competition to select Fellows for 2024-2025 has just closed. Following the selection procedure for which **713 applications** were submitted, the jury has chosen **16 winners**. This new class of Fellows, representing 6 artistic disciplines and 6 different nationalities, will be welcomed at Villa Medici from September 2, 2024 for a one-year residency of creation, experimentation, and research. The Fellows will receive a residence grant, accommodation, and a workspace.

The following have been selected as Fellows for the year 2024–2025:

Haig AIVAZIAN – Visual arts

Bianca BONDI – Visual arts

Jérôme CLÉMENT-WILZ – Screenwriting

Nicolas DAUBANES – Visual arts

Abdessamad EL MONTASSIR – Visual arts

Alessandro GALLICCHIO – Art history

Amalia LAURENT – Visual arts

Pierre-Yves MACÉ – Musical composition

Clovis MAILLET – Visual arts

Nicolas SARZEAUD – Art history

Claudia Jane SCROCCARO – Musical composition

Seynabou SONKO – Literature

Ana VAZ – Photography/Film

Pierre VON-OW – Art history

Lise WAJEMAN – Literature

Louisa YOUSFI – Literature

The jury

The selection jury was made up of **Sam Stourdzé**, director of the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici and president of the jury; **Delphine Fournier**, visual arts delegate to the Directorate General of Artistic Creation in the Ministry of Culture, ex officio members, and 6 qualified persons of standing: **Tiphaine Samoyault**, writer and director of studies at EHESS; **Marie Cozette**, director of the CRAC Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée; **Sasha Blondeau**, composer; **Joana Hadjithomas**, film director, screenwriter, and artist; **Jérémie Koering**, full professor of modern art history and senior researcher at CNRS; **Vincent Baudriller**, director of the Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne.

To analyze the applications, the jury called upon the expertise of sixteen persons of standing appointed from within the French cultural administration.

The residency

During their one-year stay at Villa Medici, the Fellows will mingle with the Residents, that is, the artists in residence for short periods. In all, nearly 70 artists – Fellows and Residents – are welcomed to Villa Medici each year.

In the course of their year of residency in Rome, the Fellows will be invited to share their work during multidisciplinary artistic events that will be open to the public:

- in the autumn, the *Nuit Blanche* will be the opportunity for a first public presentation of their projects at Villa Medici and in its gardens, which, for an evening, will be the setting for visual installations but also performance works;
- throughout the year, concerts, readings, lectures, performances, and events will be organized on the initiative of the Fellows, regularly involving guest artists;
- an end-of-residency event, a highlight of the summer program, will be the opportunity to present the research projects and works developed by the Fellows during their residency.

Key figures

Applicants for the competition:

- Among the 713 applications representing 765 candidates, there were 384 women, 369 men, 12 non-binary persons, 47 duos, 1 trio, and 1 group with 5 members.

Fellows in the class of 2024-2025:

- The class comprises 7 women, 7 men, and 2 non-binary persons.
- The average age of the Fellows is 38.

The Fellows in the class of 2024-2025

Haig Aivazian

Visual arts



Haig Aivazian (1980, Lebanon) is a visual artist based in Beirut. His work ranges across the moving image, sculpture/installation, drawing, and performance art, and explores how power integrates, affects, and displaces people, objects, animals, landscape, and architecture. From 2020 to 2022, he was artistic director of the Beirut Art Center, where he founded and directed the digital publication thederivative.org.

His residency project explores the dynamic between darkness and artificial light, a powerful beam that shapes and reflects transactions of power and control in modern life. From its origins in policing, street lighting – a coding of the links between darkness and crime – has become a central tool of urban planning and public infrastructure. Haig Aivazian uses the magic lantern as basic material and tells the legal stories of who possesses and who is dispossessed of the right to inhabit the night, and of the emancipatory rituals of those driven to hide or to adopt reduced visibility.

Bianca Bondi

Visual arts



Bianca Bondi (1986, South Africa) is a visual artist based in Paris. Her practice involves activating or elevating everyday objects using chemical reactions. The materials she works with are chosen for their transformative potential or their intrinsic properties; they underline the interconnectedness of things in the world, their transience, and reveal the cycles of life and death. Her works have been exhibited notably at Lafayette Anticipations (2023), Fondation Louis Vuitton (2021), Casino Luxembourg (2020), and in the Lyon 2019, Busan 2020, and Thailand 2021 Biennales.

Her residency project is inspired by the concept of *rewilding*, a branch of conservation biology. Working with local actors, Bondi's main aim is to broaden her language in the visual arts, which already incorporates life at the molecular level, to include other more developed living elements. She hopes to deepen her research on Roman Antiquity, and particularly on sanctuaries, in order to try out new immersive installations that encourage the presence of life among forms inspired by the past. At the same time, she intends to work on her first monograph.

Jérôme Clément-Wilz

Screenwriting



Jérôme Clément-Wilz (France) is a writer-director who works mainly on documentary material. His films have been selected for the Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and Toronto festivals, among others, and are included in the collections of the Cinémathèque Française. He was awarded the Grand Prize at DOXA and the Hong Kong Film Festival and a Star from LaSCAM.

His work also extends from performance to photography and installation. With the La Tendre Émeute, Epectase and Carmel Miracle groups he has appeared, in particular, at the Zénith in Paris and the TRAF0 Museum

and has been exhibited at Circulation(s) and at Mécènes du Sud. He is also a founder member of the Ateliers Wonder.

His residency project is devoted to writing his first feature-length fiction film. What if St Paul were alive today, in contemporary France imbued with queerness? What if we could give a voice to the Christian and pagan communities he visited in the 1st century? Jérôme Clément-Wilz's *St Paul* explores a Christianity of the margins, shaped by fluidity and the desire for emancipation. Between epistles and social media, Paul interrogates the figures of the saint and the prophet, and positions himself as God's new influencer.

Nicolas Daubanes

Visual arts



Nicolas Daubanes (1983, France) is an artist living and working in Perpignan. For over 15 years, his work has revolved around the prison world (drawings, installations, videos), arising from immersive periods spent in detention centers.

He was awarded the Mezzanine Sud les Abattoirs Prize in 2017, the Amis du Palais de Tokyo Prize in 2018, and the Drawing Now prize in 2021. He presented a large installation at the Lyon Biennale in 2022. In 2025, he will present a solo exhibition at the Panthéon in Paris.

His residency project is based on the Ribibbia prison, north of Rome. Borrowing its title directly from Goliarda Sapienza's novel, *L'Université de Rebibbia* refers to a single body of works and activations grouped in three sections: the *Codex*, *Universités des prisons*; *Cosa Mangiare [What to Eat]*; and the *Parloir [Visitors' Room]*. Each of these three projects has a graphic, editorial, and performative dimension at the same time. Each, from a specific angle, seeks to question, to shape, or to develop bridges between the inside and the outside of the prison.

Abdessamad El Montassir

Visual arts



Abdessamad El Montassir (1989, Morocco) is a visual artist. In collaboration with scientists, citizen-witnesses, and militants, he develops an artistic practice at the intersection of research and creation. His works are the fruits of a meticulous process in which the collection of intangible testimonies and collective narratives serves to revive oral memories that are very often buried and silenced by official history.

His projects explore the notion of trauma and the way in which acts of violence experienced, (un)transmitted, or anticipated are incarnated in the bodies of those touched by them. In this process, non-human entities such as

plants play a central part.

His residency project *Âabide l'kadia* focuses on Maddahas, groups of poets in Mauritania. It plunges us into the spaces of resistance borne by those communities, through a rhizomatic narrative that connects testimonies of militants, songs of Maddahas, language as a tool of domination, hairstyles as cartography, all connected by the myth of a shell. On a broader scale, *Âabide l'kadia* offers a reflection on situations of domination, where new models emerge as spaces of emancipation constantly being reinvented.

Alessandro Gallicchio

Art history



Alessandro Gallicchio (1986, Italy) is a lecturer in contemporary art history at Sorbonne Université, a member of the André-Chastel Center and a research associate at CETOBaC. With a doctorate in art history from the Universities of Florence, Paris-Sorbonne, and Bonn (2016), he pursues his research following the methodologies developed by the social and political history of art. He is interested in the influences of nationalism and anti-Semitism in the construction of artistic discourse and in the relationship between art, architecture, and urban space in the Balkans and the Mediterranean.

His residency project is devoted to writing a book about Edi Hila. Adopting a transnational and transdisciplinary perspective, his project analyzes the work of an artist who has always been concerned to capture the ambiguities and complexities of contemporary Albania. Sensitive to spatialities and an acute observer of the socio-political changes that have marked this country, Hila has developed a language that could be described as 'paradoxical realism', and that will be at the center of this historical rereading with a critical dimension.

Amalia Laurent

Visual arts



Amalia Laurent (1992, France) is an artist and researcher who lives and works between Paris and Nîmes. She addresses topographical, geographical, and cartographic themes that are both real and fantasized. Her obsession with alternative realities has given birth to a corpus of works – dyeings, installations, performances, sculptures – that makes the frontiers between real and/or parallel worlds tangible. She is currently conducting research at the EHESS on the links between architectural arrangements and processional practices, and she is also a member of the Javanese music group Genthasari from the Pantcha Indra association.

Her residency project finds its inspiration in the *angklung*, a portable Javanese musical instrument that emits a single note for one person, often used in processions. Drawing on its radical nature, the central point of this artistic exploration, Laurent aims to question collective efficacy in an urban context and to grasp the way in which sound can transform and reveal spatial dynamics in the city. So this comparison seeks to explore the influence of walking and acoustic resonance on the perception and appropriation of space, while establishing parallels between Javanese and Western musical practices in the Middle Ages.

Pierre-Yves Macé

Musical composition



Pierre-Yves Macé (1980, France) is a composer. His work crosses electroacoustic and instrumental music with a method that borrows from *musique concrète*, taking recorded sound, the document or file, as a primary source. He releases discs on the Tzadik, Sub Rosa, and Brocoli labels. He writes scores for the *L'Instant donné*, *Les Cris de Paris*, and *Ictus* ensembles. He collaborates regularly with directors (Sylvain Creuzevault, Joris Lacoste), choreographers (Emmanuelle Hunh, Liz Santoro, and Pierre Godard), and writers (Pierre Senges, Mathieu Larnaudie). His music was the subject of a Portrait for the 2023 Paris Autumn Festival.

His residency project is devoted to writing the score of *Lady F.*, a dramatic musical work for voice (mezzo-soprano) and ensemble, with a libretto by Pierre Senges. The plot develops around the character who gives the piece its title (F. for Fenice), a successful pop singer, whom we see in her dressing room just before a concert, and who, for some mysterious reason, refuses to go on stage, a decision that causes a shock wave in the globalized world of networks. With this piece, the composer will project the recurrent issues present in his work – the interplay between presence and absence, the musicality of the spoken word, the influence of pop and rock music – in fictional form.

Clovis Maillet

Visual arts



Clovis Maillet (1981, France) has published *La parenté hagiographique* [*Hagiographic Kinship*] (2014) and *Les genres fluides* [*Genderfluid*] (2020). He has directed several issues of academic journals while conducting research on the uses of history in contemporary art (*Witch TV*, 2021; *Un Moyen Âge émancipateur* [*An Emancipatory Middle Ages*], with Thomas Golsenne, 2021).

Clovis Maillet practices performance art and installation with Louise Hervé, and has been making films since the early 2000s. They have published *Attraction Étrange* [*Strange Attraction*] (2013), *Spectacles sans objet* [*Pointless Shows*] (2015) and *L'Iguane* [*The Iguana*] 2018. He co-wrote the show *Medieval Crack* with the Foulles group.

His residency project invites us to think about a historical condition (that of women and gender minorities who think violence and live with the dead), starting from a specific bereavement (the death of a mother crushed by antifeminism and dissolved in the water of a river). The project unfolds in three political phases. *Fare l'amore tutte le volte che si vuole* is inspired by the struggle of the Movimento di Lotta Femminile, which fought for sexual and contraceptive freedom in the 1970s. *Il lavoro di riproduzione* evokes the 1980s, antifeminism, conjugal and intra-family violence. *La ricostruzione* is the re-emergence of feminism, illuminated by trans studies and community mourning.

Nicolas Sarzeaud

Art history



Nicolas Sarzeaud (1992, France) is a graduate of the École du Louvre, with a doctorate from the EHESS, and an associate member of the Centre de Recherche Historique. In 2021 he defended a thesis on the cult of the Shrouds of Christ from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, to be published by Cerf in 2024. He has taught at the University Lumière Lyon II and the University of Lorraine and has published numerous articles on the cult of images in the late Middle Ages and the way they were shown, looked at, and disseminated through intensive production of copies, which he resituates in a long history of facsimiles.

His residency project, *Sur les traces du Christ à Rome (XIV^e-XVI^e s.): culte des images et vérité visuelle à la fin du Moyen Âge* [*On the Traces of Christ in Rome (14th–16th Centuries): The Cult of Images and Visual Truth in the Late Middle Ages*], centers around the traces of Christ in Rome. In Rome, Christ can be tracked: as well as the Veronica, an imprint of the face of Christ on a cloth, several other Holy Faces coexist there with traces of his feet, left on the stone when he appeared on the Quo Vadis path, and other relics stained with his blood. Through this investigation of the intense devotion they received from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century and the discourses surrounding their dissemination in the form of representations and reproductions, Nicolas Sarzeaud aims to show the mutations at work in visual culture between the Middle Ages and the Modern Era.

Claudia Jane Scroccaro

Musical composition



Claudia Jane Scroccaro (1984, Italy) is an Italian composer based in Paris, where she teaches electronic music at Ircam. She seeks to achieve a coherent combination of instrumental and electronic writing structured through personal computer-assisted composition tools. Her music fluctuates between two extreme temporalities expressed through an alternation between unbridled, compulsive rhythms and immersive, introspective explorations, interwoven with the expressiveness of the spoken voice.

Her residency project is devoted to the composition of *Faro*, following the unique directions initiated by the poet Amelia Rosselli (Paris 1930–Rome 1996), a cycle for soprano, ensemble and electronics, which seeks to represent her literary and intellectual work in a more comprehensive way. The project therefore focuses on the essential mechanisms that are already at the heart of her work: the links between speech and music. The project envisages an international co-production between the soprano Johanna Vargas, the Musikfabrik ensemble, the Fondation Royaumont, the Fondation Pierre Boulez, and Ircam, and is expected to be premiered in Ircam's ManiFeste Festival in 2025.

Seynabou Sonko

Literature



Seynabou Sonko (1993, France) is an artist from the Senegalese diaspora, based in Paris. A graduate of UQAM in Montreal, ENSAV La Cambre in Brussels, and the University of Paris 8, her first steps in literature were marked by the publication of texts in magazines such as *Sabir*, *Muscle*, and *Sève*.

In 2023 she published her first novel, *Djinns*, in Éditions Grasset, which won the Prix du Cheval Blanc and was shortlisted for the Porte Dorée prize.

She also works as a musician, under the name Naboo. Her musical world, just like her writing, shows boundless creativity and an explicit desire to break down boundaries.

Her residency project uses the image of *tombolos*, those pieces of land that jut out into the sea, sometimes forming islands isolated from the mainland, to explore the dialectics of overflowing, whether in language, through the notion of creolization developed by the Martinican poet, novelist, and philosopher Édouard Glissant, or in the hybridism specific to *Giallo*, those Italian genre novels and films on the boundary between detective fiction, horror, and eroticism.

Ana Vaz

Photography/Film



Ana Vaz (1986, Brazil) is an artist and filmmaker born in the Brazilian Midwest, which is inhabited by the ghosts buried under its modernist capital: Brasília. Her provocative filmography questions cinema as an art of the (in)visible and an instrument capable of dehumanizing the human, broadening connections with non-human or spectral forms of life. Her artistic activities, resulting from or expanding on her filmmaking, are also embodied in writing, critical teaching, installations, or collective marches.

Her residency project is devoted to writing *ANHNANGUERA*, a screenplay under development for a tran(s/ce)historical fiction arising from the history of the colonization of the Brazilian Far West, which is Ana Vaz's birthplace and the central axis of her entire filmography. The film is based on a wild interpretation of the book *História da Terra e do Homem no Planalto Central [History of the Earth and Man in the Central Plateau]* by Paulo Bertran, a historical kaleidoscope that intermingles geological, pre-modern, and modern

time. The archive of the Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, a Catholic congregation based in Rome that was responsible for the evangelization of the country, is one of the guides for the writing of this cosmopolitical Western.

Pierre Von-Ow

Art history



Pierre Von-Ow (1992, France) is a researcher in art history. His work is mainly concerned with the intersections between arts and sciences in the Early Modern era. He is currently completing his dissertation at Yale University on a history of perspective in Great Britain and the British Empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 2021, Pierre Von-Ow curated the virtual exhibition *William Hogarth's Topographies* for the Lewis Walpole Library. Among his publications, he has recently co-edited an anthology of Jean-Claude Lebensztejn's writings on film (*Propos filmiques*, Paris, Macula, 2021) as well as a special issue of the journal *Écrans* on *William Hogarth et le cinéma* (Paris, Garnier, 2024).

His residency project is devoted to writing two studies. The first is concerned with a tangible history of perspective. This project examines the various drawing machines, folding plates and other tactile devices developed for teaching geometry and the laws of perspective between the Quattrocento and the Enlightenment. The second study deals with the circulation of knowledge on anamorphosis between Italy, France, and Britain. His research attempts to determine how these "monstrous perspectives" were perceived in a British context marked by distrust of images.

Lise Wajeman

Literature



Lise Wajeman (1973, France) teaches comparative literature at Paris Cité University. She works on Renaissance literature and art, and has published, in particular, *L'Amour de l'art : Erotisme de l'artiste et du spectateur au XVI^e siècle* [*Love of Art: Eroticism of the Artist and the Viewer in the Sixteenth Century*] (Droz, 2015). Since 2016 she has also been following current developments in contemporary literature as a critic: she has published numerous articles in *Mediapart* and is a regular contributor to the podcast *L'Esprit critique*.

Her residency project, entitled *Seconde zone*, is devoted to writing a praise of commentary, of the reader, the viewer, the word that comes after, in second place: the word that stands in the shadow of the work. The text will be hybrid in form, combining first-person narrative, commentary on artworks, and literary theory. The ultimate aim is to destabilize the authority of the “I” that leads the narrative: pervaded by the otherness of works, it is a permeable person. It will be a question of turning this weakness into a self-assertion, a “pride”, against whoever claims to be the only one that makes sense – which is not without political considerations.

Louisa Yousfi

Literature



Louisa Yousfi (1988, France) is a journalist and literary critic. She is the author of *Rester barbare* [*Remaining Barbarian*] (La Fabrique, 2022), a work in which she appropriates the theme of “barbarism”, borrowed from the Algerian writer Kateb Yacine, to present a political and literary account of Black and Arab people in France (re)becoming barbarian. More recently she has participated in the collective book *Contre la littérature politique* [*Against Political Literature*] (with Pierre Alferi, Nathalie Quintane, Leslie Kaplan, Tanguy Viel, and Volodine, La Fabrique, 2024).

Her residency project is devoted to writing a work of fiction based on a Franco-Algerian family suffering the ordeal of the death of the father, a narrative that she will strive to bring into contact with traditions of writing other than testimonial form or archival documents, and in language driven by a radical syncretism. This will particularly involve lost stories, secret heritage, spiritual biology, and intergenerational telepathy between a people of indigenous ghosts and their descendants engaged in a series of “herculean labors” to be performed in an increasingly hostile world.

About



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The French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici

The French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici, founded by Louis XIV in 1666, is a French institution housed since 1803 in Villa Medici, a sixteenth-century mansion surrounded by a seventeen-acre park, located on the Pincian Hill, in the heart of Rome. A national public institution under the authority of the Ministry of Culture, the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici today fulfils three complementary roles: to accommodate artists and art historians in residence for long stays lasting a year or shorter periods; to implement a cultural and artistic program embracing all artistic and creative fields and aimed at a wide audience; to conserve, restore, study, and publicize both its architectural and landscape heritage and its collections.

The French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici is directed by Sam Stourd  .

The Fellowship competition

Every year, the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici organizes an international competition to select Fellows based on a criterion of excellence. The competition is open to confirmed French-speaking artists, creators, and researchers, regardless of nationality. Candidates may apply in any of the disciplines of creative arts and crafts, as well as history and theory of the arts and restoration of artworks or monuments. Applications are examined by a jury of qualified persons of standing. The competition takes place in two stages: a first phase of examining the applications and a second phase of interviews with the shortlisted candidates. Information on the terms and conditions and the dates of the next competition can be found on the Villa Medici website.

Past Fellows of the French Academy in Rome include numerous winners of the Marcel Duchamp Prize, such as Lili Reynaud-Dewar (class of 2018–2019, winner of the Prize in 2021),   ric Baudelaire (class of 2017–2018, winner in 2019), Cl  ment Cogitore (class of 2012–2013, winner in 2018), Laurent Grasso (class of 2004–2005, winner in 2008), and M  lik Ohanian (class of 2003–2004, winner in 2015), and also the Prix Goncourt, such as Marie Ndiaye (class of 1989–1991, winner in 2009) and Mathias Enard (class of 2005–2006, winner in 2015).

The full list of former Fellows can be consulted [here](#).

The French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici is an institution of the Ministry of Culture



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