LA BECQUE
RÉSIDENCE
D'ARTISTES

Call for applications

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1. 2024 Principal Residency Program

A. Practical information

Our call for applications for the 2024 Principal Residency Program **opens on March 1, 2023, and closes on March 22, 2023** (23:59 CEST). Applications sent after these dates will not be considered.

We invite applicants to read the conditions of participation, guidelines, and FAQs before applying. If you have any further questions, please contact us at: applications@labecque.ch.

Applicants may apply for a **three-month** or **six-month residency** (organized in two three-month periods), which must take place between January and November 2024 (see timetable below). The desired length of stay must be specified in the application.

B. Introduction to the residency

Located on the shores of Lake Geneva between Vevey and Montreux, close to all of Switzerland's cultural and natural attractions, La Becque | Artists Residency welcomes artists from all walks of life. Residents are invited to develop their project in an exceptional living and working environment.

La Becque's residency program offers its residents time for reflection, rather than focusing on artistic production. Deeply convinced of the importance of such moments in the artistic process, **La Becque is primarily interested in facilitating the phases of research, reflection, and other modes of transition, rather than capitalizing on creation.** Our aim is not to build up a collection, but rather to support artists in their long-term development.

However, we cannot but underline the undeniable value of meetings and collaborations between artists and/or actors of contemporary creation and we are happy to monitor the transitory stages of the materialization of projects, whether on site through our own infrastructure or with the help of partner institutions. We are also always happy to see, and possibly support, the emergence and subsequent realization of projects from residency periods spent with us.

Public events such as discussions and open studios are organized at La Becque, but they are not the only outcome of the residency periods – they represent an opportunity for intermediate formalization, visibility, and public meetings for the residents. In addition to its Principal Residency Program, La Becque has launched several residency programs in partnership with art schools in French-speaking Switzerland and with Pro Helvetia – Swiss Arts Council, to name but a few.

C. Vision

Our Principal Residency Program pays particular attention to projects that explore the interplay between **nature**, **the environment**, and **technology**, notions that are more intertwined than ever and that lie at the heart of contemporary concerns. We explore these notions in a particularly rich environment of both obvious and ambivalent beauty. The site of La Becque, with its lush garden on the shores of Lake Geneva, offers a particularly autonomous landscape from which to draw ideas. The garden, partly inspired by British artist and activist Derek Jarman, offers a unique entry point into the way we like to think about the above themes. It is a kind of metaphor that anchors the issues we are interested in and their ambiguities.

Nature, where it is artificially shaped in an environment, is never static and often claims its right to be out of control and overflowing. Its multisensory outpouring, its abundance, and its unprecedented alliances often clash with scientific methods of evaluation and cataloguing. Nature, which, in its strongest ambivalence, is "irreparably damaged and yet alive" (Ensore, 2016) speaks, questions, and challenges its own reality and thus ours. From the urgency of this reflection, we must therefore learn to have a critical and attentive approach to the issues that concern it and thus handle with care the tools we have in order to connect these different realities.

To do this, a move beyond human-centered exceptionalism must take place; "decolonizing nature" (T.J. Demos, 2016) means fostering a change in the way science is approached, while considering the multiple possible entanglements. In this regard, there is a wealth of research offering post-anthropocentric, social, political, scientific, technological, and economic methods of analysis. According to Demos, art plays a potentially central role in defining a "non-unified cosmopolitan problematic": it can provide a platform for speculative practices, philosophical questioning, and conceptual experimentation relating to our relationship with nature. So, much like what Alfred Whitehead called the "lure of feeling," we invite artists who also seek to foster possibilities.

The fact that these concerns have risen at a time when global computer development has seen the emergence of what amounts to a second digital skin for the Earth, increases the complexity of nature-technology interactions. With his notion of a *sensing layer*, Benjamin Bratton evokes a system that allows us to model our physical reality as well as to act on it, thus requiring reflection on the way in which nature and culture collide and the multiple possibilities of linking these two notions. The Digital Earth Fellowship class of 2020-2021 and philosopher Lukáš Likavčan have coined this state of affairs a "digital sensorium," the following description of which is highly relevant to the interactions and interdependencies we are interested in at La Becque:

"A 'sensorium' describes the combined system of perception that an organism has to sense its surroundings. Has a planetary sensorium emerged in which a worldwide technological megastructure of cameras, sensors, laser lights, and ultrasonic waves gestures towards new organic and synthetic entanglements? To imagine a *Planetary Sensorium* is to both acknowledge and re-imagine our conception of Planet Earth. As increasingly sophisticated technologies are created to sense the world, the *Planetary Sensorium* is drastically shifting people's worldview in return. Infrastructural networks and logistics of pipelines, high speed rails, and fiber optic cables have informed the worldview of earth as an interconnected and globalized whole in service of a specific monoculture of technology. This in turn produces its own geopolitical realities, impacting how people's lives are governed across the world. The current planetary sensorial apparatus – sonic, tactile, visual, affective, and embodied – can help us to imagine alternate possibilities for the digital planet and new ways of living together. As the planet flows through human, technical agents, and other beings, a

question then emerges: for which Earth do we create our intellectual, cultural, and artistic interventions?"
(Digital Earth Fellowship 2020-2021, https://www.digitalearth.art/fellowship)

D. Themes of the program

We encourage applicants to outline their research methodologies through the medium of art.

A non-exhaustive list of fields to be explored in our residency might include those listed below. We emphasize that these are just a few examples of thematic avenues that an application might explore rather than a *sine qua non* list. It is important for us to be intentionally broad in scope and to support a diverse range of projects that develop new ecologies of thought and artistic practice.

- Address the notion of the Anthropocene and analyze the actors, institutions and technological infrastructures that underpin it.
- Examine the vectors of natural exploration and extraction, and the boundaries between benign and intrusive exploration of nature.
- Explore related processes of decolonization at work in acts of "decolonizing nature."
- Examine the ways in which artists transpose natural data into artworks (images, sounds, texts or otherwise) that contribute to the understanding of our natural environment, and perhaps even to expand the notion of what "interspecies communication" could be.
- Examine whether, and to what extent, technological infrastructure is now part of, or even helps to shape, what is defined as our natural environment.
- Question the beautifully ambivalent "natural landscapes" that surround the residency.
- Explore how and why, in our technological and digital age, older notions of science and para-science, religion and para-religion, technology and para-technology are gaining importance.
- Explore artistic practices that challenge established ways of measuring what surrounds us and that decentralize human presence within it (notions such as time and duration, for example, which can be explored through various artistic approaches), etc.

2. Staying at La Becque

A. Infrastructure

Apartments
Artists-in-residence are provided with a **live/work apartment** for the duration of their stay.
Each apartment is 80sqm in size, with a fully equipped kitchen, a washer and dryer, a
separate bedroom and bathroom, and a modular main living/workspace of approx. 40sqm,
plus a terrace facing Lake Geneva.

Studio space
Depending on the needs outlined in their residency project, residents will be granted
exclusive or shared use of additional studio space. Our studios are 30sqm in size with
3.70m ceiling height and offer ample natural daylight.

Sound studio
La Becque includes a professional music and recording studio equipped with a computer
with Live and Pro Tools software, a piano, mixers, amplifiers, microphones, etc. The
complete list of equipment is available upon request.

Wood and ceramic workshops
Residents have access to the wood workshop at La Becque, which has several machines
for cutting and assembling wood pieces. A workshop for ceramic production is also
available, equipped with a 45cm x 60cm kiln. One of the workshops has a 3D printer
(Ultimaker 2+).

B. Monthly stipend

Residents will receive a monthly stipend of **CHF 1,500** to cover living expenses and the
cost of materials. The grant is adapted for artists' collectives according to the number of
members in the group.

C. Travel costs

La Becque contributes to the travel costs of residents from their place of residence to
Switzerland.

D. Visa & travel documents

La Becque will help when and where possible. However, residents are responsible for
obtaining their own visas or other necessary travel and residency documents.

E. Insurance

Residents must also ensure that they have **valid insurance coverage for medical assistance and accidents** during their stay in Switzerland. Once in Switzerland, residents will be provided with administrative assistance by La Becque staff, as well as the necessary support in case of problems.

F. Family

La Becque tries to be as **flexible** as possible to facilitate the reception of partners and/or children in our different residency programs, but we remind you that the resources available to residents are the same whether they come alone or accompanied (an apartment, individual or shared access to a workshop, and a monthly grant).

La Becque offers additional monthly financial support of **CHF 1,000** to help with childcare costs. La Becque does not offer specific assistance or activities for children, but we are happy to refer artists parents to the various childcare and school institutions.

3. Application criteria

A. Applicants' profiles

Disciplines supported
Our Principal Residency Program welcomes applications from Swiss and international professional artists working in a wide range of disciplines, including:

- Architecture
- Critical writing
- Design (product design, graphic design, design research)
- Film
- Media arts
- Music & sound art
- Performing arts
- Photography
- Visual arts

Curators, critics, and theorists working in research fields connected to cultural practices are also welcome to apply.

Age & profile
Applicants must be at least 23 years of age at the start of the residency.

La Becque's residency program is open to both emerging artists and established practitioners. However, applicants must be professionals in their field and have ambitions to further their practice.

Applicants should not be enrolled in undergraduate or graduate degree programs at the time of application. PhD students who have finished all coursework may apply.

Artists' collectives
Applicants may apply as a duo or a collective. The members of the collective are required to share the infrastructure and resources at their disposal. The grant is adapted for artists' collectives according to the number of members in the group.

Frequency of application
Whether or not their application is successful, applicants may not apply for the Principal Residency Program two years in a row.

Languages
The languages generally spoken at La Becque are English and French. A good command of English is desirable to communicate with other residents during the stay.

B. Your project and La Becque

In the outline of their residency project, applicants should show explicit and structured interest in the guiding themes developed in the Principal Residency Program, e.g., notions of nature and technology, and their interplay.

Applicants should also clearly state in what way their project would specifically benefit from being developed at La Becque, what they expect to draw from our location and our networks, and what specific part of the project would particularly benefit from the residency.

In short, in what way does the applicant's project necessitate or justify a stay at La Becque?

In addition, applicants should specify their workspace needs – especially if they are applying as a duo or a collective.

C. Calendar

- Opening of the call for applications: March 1, 2023
- Closing of the call for applications: March 22, 2023 (23:59, CEST)
- Meeting of the Jury: June 2023
- Announcement of the laureates: July 2023

Applicants are required to submit their applications in a timely manner, once a year, during a three-week call for applications.

D. Residency periods

- January - March 2024
- May - July 2024
- September - November 2024

Applicants for a **three-month residency** should indicate their preference for a specific three-month period and provide a second choice for another three-month period.

We also offer the possibility of completing a **six-month residency** by combining two three-month blocks, January - March 2024 and September - November 2024. A six-month consecutive residency is generally not possible.

La Becque cannot guarantee that successful applicants will be able to complete their residency on the dates requested and reserves the right to offer alternative residency dates on one or more occasions until satisfactory dates have been found for all selected applicants.

E. Application materials

Documentation requested
Applicants will be asked to complete and upload the following documentation for the online application (form available at: https://labecque.ch/en/application-form).

Please attach to the online form a pdf document including the following elements in this order (max. 30MB, the file can be written in French or English):

- **Pitch of your project** (max. 700 characters).
- **Short biography** including a brief description of the applicant's practice (max 1,000 characters).
- **Project** (max 2 pages) highlighting:
  - The specifics of the work the applicant intends to carry out at La Becque.
  - Reasons why the project would benefit from being developed at La Becque specifically.
  - The networks and environments the applicant intends to leverage with/for the project.
  - How the project fits into the applicant's practice.
- **Full CV** (max. 4 pages).
- **One reference letter** from a professional in the applicant's field. The letter should outline why the applicant should be selected and how they might benefit from a residency at La Becque, as well as the referent's address and contact information.
- **A digital portfolio**:
  - All submitted work samples should have been completed within the past five years, unless otherwise noted.
  - Any work done with a collaborator must be noted as such, and roles with respect to the work must be clearly specified.

Specific work sample requirements

Performing arts (dance, performance, theater)
The digital portfolio should include at least two videos or video clips of at least two distinct projects within the applicant's body of work, or links to these materials (include password if password-protected), and written documentation about the work.

Design & Architecture
The digital portfolio should include documentation of three different projects completed within the past five years, with an explanation of significant features, and a writing sample where appropriate.

Film
The digital portfolio should include links to two 5-minute excerpts of the work (include password if password-protected) for feature-length work, and up to three 5-minute excerpts of the work (include password if password-protected) for short films.

Critical writing
The digital portfolio should include a 15-page minimum and 25-page maximum writing sample, as well as links to published work by the applicant.

Music, music composition, and sound art
The digital portfolio should include audio samples of three representative works, or links to these works (include password if password-protected). Scores and live performance documentation may also be provided where appropriate.

Visual arts, photography, and interdisciplinary arts (including media arts)
Digital portfolio should include documentation of three different projects. Projects can be documented via images; scripts, work plans, or storyboards; audio files; videos; video documentation of time-based elements in the work; and for medium-specific digital art, documentation should include work samples that allow jury members to get a sufficient grasp of the work without specific (viewing, other) hardware.

Please submit your application by filling the form available at https://labecque.ch/en/application-form