

biennále:9

ΜΠΙΕΝΑΛΕ ΣΥΓΧΡΟΝΗΣ ΤΕΧΝΗΣ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ
THESSALONIKI BIENNALE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

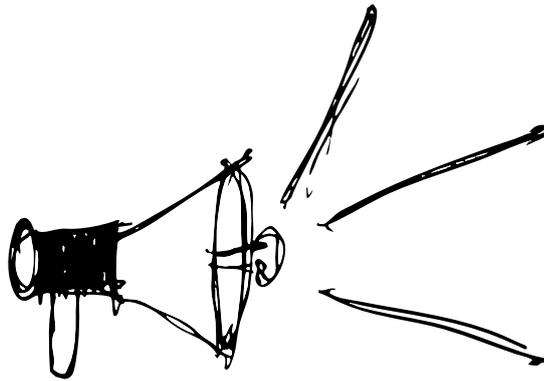
everything
must
change

RIS9

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ - ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ

MOMus

ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΟΣ ΟΡΓΑΝΙΣΜΟΣ ΜΟΥΣΕΙΩΝ ΕΙΚΑΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΤΕΧΝΩΝ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ



TEXT & IMAGES

VIDEO

Click on the hyperlinks to download/watch.

ANNOUNCEMENT

exhibition title
everything must change
Radical Intelligence. Saloniki 9

curator
Nadja Argyropoulou

director
Thouli Misirloglou

organizer
MOMus – Metropolitan Organisation
of Museums of Visual Arts of Thessaloniki

implementation
MOMus-Museum of Contemporary Art-
Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art and
State Museum of Contemporary Art Collections

The Thessaloniki Biennale
of Contemporary Art is co-financed
by the European Union (NSRF – “Central
Macedonia” Operational Programme).

co-organizer
TIF-Helexpo

partners
Municipality of Thessaloniki
Thessaloniki Film Festival

ANNOUNCEMENT

exhibition duration

31 October 2025 – 4 January 2026

opening

31 October 2025

preview and opening events

30, 31 October & 1 November 2025

venues

Pavilions 2 & 3 (TIF-Helexpo),
MOMus–Museum of Contemporary Art,
MOMus–Experimental Center for the Arts,
Kalochoiri Delta

visual identity

studio precarity

architectural design

Y2K Architects

The full list of participants and
exhibition programme of the 9th Thessaloniki
Biennale of Contemporary Art will
be announced in September, 2025.

9th Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art
 everything must change ^{RI.S9}

The Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art, with its ninth edition, is embarking on a new approach to the institution, reconfiguring itself both spatially and conceptually. It explores the pervasive demand for an "otherwise" that appears to define life and art both locally and globally, while also delving into the perception, content, necessity, and significance of "change" in general—both in the present moment, but also in connection with key relevant moments of the past.

With its intriguingly ambiguous title, "everything must change. RIS9", curated by independent curator and art historian Nadja Argyropoulou, the 9th Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art aims to connect life and art in unexpected ways—through humour, ingenuity, and a spirit of joyful militancy that remains non-didactic yet alternatively pedagogical. The Biennale seeks to highlight works that critically engage with the present and help shape the future, all while actively envisioning a *world of many worlds*.

"everything must change. RIS9"

In exploring the proposition of "everything must change", the exhibition confronts the excitement, awe, and even the fear caused by the urgent Now shaped by Artificial Intelligence. It attempts, however, a deeper and less banal approach to intelligence by looking into the revolutionary, multi-layered thinking that resides beyond the

6 trite evocation of technological thauma - trauma binary. The “Radical Intelligence” referenced in the “RI” of the title is paired with “S9,” a shorthand evoking a popular, older alternative name of Thessaloniki (*Saloniki*), thereby inserting in the Biennale’s title a direction and an invocation. This dynamic movement, *towards* the city and broadcast *from* it, reflects an ambition to foster a sense of *togetherness*—however temporarily— with Thessaloniki’s spaces and symbols.

Biennale 9 features works by international artists, with a significant proportion of the exhibits comprising new digital and non-digital works commissioned specifically for this edition by MOMus in keeping with the curator’s rationale and overall plan. Diverse social, artistic, and scientific groups and individuals are participating, while the Biennale’s identity, venues, actions, communications, and collaborations are all designed to reflect and engage with the questions raised by its title and content.

Under this curatorial vision, and in collaboration with the Biennale’s management, two **primary venues** have been selected to host the exhibition. Emphasis was placed on their contrasts and dialogue, which co-create a crucial symbolic liminal space:

- Venues within the Thessaloniki International Fair-Helexpo, specifically Pavilions 2 & 3, and MOMus-Museum of Contemporary Art. These sites highlight the Fair’s historical significance and multifaceted function, particularly its ties to Greece’s economic model and broader socio-economic imaginaries and rituals. Moreover, the complex’s ongoing transition makes it currently a focal point for debates and competing visions

- 7 for the city's public space, touching on the very future of urban life in Thessaloniki.
- The unique Kalochori Lagoon on Thessaloniki's western outskirts. This is a landscape that has been shaped by refugee communities, industrial growth, and the gradual emergence of a wetland since the mid-1960s – a result of land subsidence, groundwater depletion, and the mixing of river and sea waters. Now part of the Axios Delta National Park, the lagoon is rich in rare biodiversity, hosting both old and new species, human and non-human activity, generating narratives that powerfully demonstrate the value of symbiotic living.
 - Additional venues include the MOMus-Experimental Center for the Arts (Warehouse B1, Pier A', Port of Thessaloniki) that will host an exhibition featuring works from this year's Biennale that engage in dialogue with the central theme of the 66th edition of the Thessaloniki Film Festival – highlighting a curatorial collaboration between Biennale 9 and the Festival (this exhibition will run from 30 October to 16 November 2025).

Nadja Argyropoulou, curator of the 9th Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art, notes:

“What are the things that “must change”? How, when, *by whom*, and *with whom*? Might the “sustainable dismantling” of institutions, practices, and rituals that confine and alienate us be just as vital as the sustainable growth of everything that heals and unites us? Why is it easier to envision the end of the world rather than imagine the emergence of a world of many worlds, the possibility of differentiation without separation, as invoked by poets and quantum physicists alike? What is the rebellious ground of response-ability,

8 engagement, and witnessing that might give rise to genuine change? How does art participate in this change if not by powerfully drawing us towards the animating force of communal life?

Biennale 9 echoes a common(place) yet recurrent, urgent, and fragile, plural and widely co-opted demand / slogan. It simultaneously subjects this slogan to the rigours of critique or better stated, to the practice of attending to what is emerging, to the care of witnessing, interpretation, accountability to the precision required in order for a change fair for all to be imagined and realized.

Through its works and overall character the exhibition points at the ways that the same phrase can be wielded by social revolutionaries and techno-fascists alike, by persecuted activists and authoritarian demagogues, by rival social classes and diametrically opposed collective forms of expression. In other words, it asks: amidst a world that often feels suffocatingly predetermined, compliant, entrenched, un-free, possessed, how can we reclaim the right to wander into complexity, the right to refuse, the joy of resistance, the choice of life over mere survival? What is the radical intelligence that ever, persistently creates everyday routes of escape to the insurgent ground of love?

A central inspiration is the rather untranslatable concept of “waywardness”, articulated by theorist and writer Saidiya Hartman in *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval*, where Hartman reconstructs the “terrible beauty” of oppressed and marginalised black lives in early 20th-century New York. As she writes, “A revolution

9 in a minor key unfolded in the city and young black women were the vehicle”, while forms of solidarity and love emerged outside conventions and the law¹.

As writer and academic Fred Moten remarks today, ‘We have to recognise that our struggle for liberation is given in the language of liberalism.’ How can a language, so brutally co-opted by genocidal, colonial capitalism, by an economy built on distraction and spectacle, remain vital and vibrant, active and transformative, accurate in its references and origins, yet not authoritarian and exclusionary? How can it still articulate the *para*-the alongside and beyond-that we inhabit and connect us with the alternative politics of pleasure, the mourning of loss, earlier and current struggles for social equality and justice, degrowth and environmentally engaged cosmopolitics, queer practices of care, Indigenous traditions and anti-colonial movements, eco-social alliances, and their solidarity-based agendas? How might it empower the proverbial canary in the coal mine? How can it inspire (without manipulating) desire to not settle for the proper and the proposed of thanatopolitics?

Through the visual frequency of the works displayed, the dialogues, the contradictions and entanglements, the exhibition is above all committed to explore kinships within the practice of thinking and highlight the possibility of radical change and emancipatory pluralism.

1 In Hartman’s own words: “The acts of the wayward – the wild thoughts, reckless dreams, interminable protests, spontaneous strikes, riotous behavior, nonparticipation, willfulness and bold-faced refusal – redistributed the balance of need and want and sought a line of escape from debt and duty in the attempt to create a path elsewhere”, Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019), p. 237

10 It champions forms of collective action, vigilance and radical symposiums that avoid the homogenizing silencing of contradictions and paradoxes, while emphasizing the realisation of free thought, the importance of small-scale stories of everyday disobedience, resistance, love, escape, and poetry that change the world from below and within.

Embracing “the aesthetics of bewilderment”, which fuses pleasure and questioning, frictions and fictions, clarity and blur, sensory participation and distancing – Saidiya Hartman’s notion of “critical fabulation”-, the 9th Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art breathes an air alive with the possibility of undeterred assembly, unruly gathering, aesthetic sociality.”

Under the direction of Thouli Misirloglou, the Artistic Director of MOMus-Museum of Contemporary Art, which is the implementing institution of the event, the Biennale is co-organised with TIF-Helexpo, in partnership with the Municipality of Thessaloniki and the Thessaloniki Film Festival.

Details about more creative collaborations, partnerships, and venues will be announced in September 2025, along with the full list of participating artists and the full exhibition programme.

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11 ORGANIZATION DETAILS

Curator: Nadja Argyropoulou

Director: Thoui Misirloglou

Organizer: MOMus – Metropolitan Organisation
of Museums of Visual Arts of Thessaloniki

Implementation: MOMus-Museum of Contemporary Art-
Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art and State
Museum of Contemporary Art Collections

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of Contemporary Art, MOMus-Experimental Center for
the Arts, Kalochoi Delta

Visual Identity: studio precarity

Architectural Design: Y2K Architects

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ORGANIZER

HELLENIC REPUBLIC - MINISTRY OF CULTURE

MOMus
METROPOLITAN ORGANISATION OF MUSEUMS OF VISUAL ARTS OF THESSALONIKI

IMPLEMENTATION

HELLENIC REPUBLIC - MINISTRY OF CULTURE

MOMus
METROPOLITAN ORGANISATION OF MUSEUMS OF VISUAL ARTS OF THESSALONIKI

**MUSEUM
OF CONTEMPORARY ART-**
MACEDONIAN MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART
AND STATE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART
COLLECTIONS

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CITY OF **THESSALONIKI**



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FILM
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everything
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RIS9