

TRIENNALE BRUGGE

**Press release
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**BRUGES TRIENNIAL 2027 ANNOUNCES THEME:
AFTER BIRTH — STRUCTURES OF TOGETHERNESS
24.04–05.09.2027**

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The fifth edition of Bruges Triennial, titled *After Birth — Structures of Togetherness*, places life at its centre, focusing on shared moments, practices, processes, and rituals that connect all living beings. Curated by Ulrika Flink and Helen Rix Runting and running between 24 April and 5 September 2027, TRIBRU27 celebrates the phases and infrastructures of a life lived in common, offering a counterbalance to a society that prioritises individualism and accords some a life of mere survival.

For the first time at Bruges Triennial, works will emerge from a dialogue between architects and artists. This fifth edition also aims to develop an extensive participatory programme that will permeate this UNESCO World Heritage city. In this way, the open air exhibition embraces life in all its facets. TRIBRU27 will stimulate togetherness and dialogue.

“What struck us most about Bruges was how strongly a collective approach to life was already embedded in the medieval structures of the city. This immediately became the starting point for TRIBRU27: how can art and architecture together enable collective life? This shared perspective on life feels increasingly urgent and radical in our current time.”

— Ulrika Flink en Helen Rix Runting, curators TRIBRU27

AFTER BIRTH

The theme *After Birth — Structures of Togetherness* forms the basis for a series of “chapters” exploring the broad arc of life — from birth to death. Each chapter focuses on a social structure in Bruges that has brought people together for centuries, at sites such as birth clinics, monasteries, schools and hospitals. After Birth also questions the idea that a “site” must always be a geographically defined location, by presenting a number of works that are dispersed or conceived to exist independently of a single place.

The selected chapters form the conceptual starting point for Belgian and international artists and architects. Works emerge from shared conversations between different artistic practices, without merging completely. In this way, new interpretations and ideas are developed in each thematic chapter, making space for a social infrastructure that houses, commemorates and supports life — human and more-than-human. Although architecture and visual art have traditionally both been present at Bruges Triennial, it is a first for the festival that so many works explicitly originate from such a dialogue.

STRUCTURES OF TOGETHERNESS

In 2027, Bruges Triennial will stand for five months, creating spaces for exchange and encounter.

After Birth — Structures of Togetherness will take shape through collaborations between artists and architects, and interventions that relate to the history and possible future of the selected locations. Throughout the exhibition period, the installations will be regularly activated through performances, music, and lectures, events which allow the chapters to continuously attract new meanings and audiences. In parallel, this edition explores how temporary interventions can contribute to a longer-term vision of use and space. In searching for forms of continuation — through knowledge transfer, the reuse of materials, new functions elsewhere, circular trajectories or other ways of extending life — After Birth also reflects on its own future. The installations will be dismantled afterwards, but the thinking they set in motion, and the material, collaborative, spatial and conceptual traces they leave behind will persist.

This ambition translates into numerous collaborations with local and supra-local partners, each contributing their expertise to the activation and development of the different installations within the overarching theme. Within this broad network, Bruges Triennial continues the tradition, started in 2018, to realise a joint installation with Triennale Beaufort. This installation, the first chapter of the triennial, opens in Zeebrugge in March 2027, even before the official start of TRIBRU. More information about these collaborations and the full programme will be released in autumn, 2026.

“We are particularly proud that this edition of Bruges Triennial pays extensive attention to the exceptional UNESCO World Heritage city of Bruges, actively involves local organisations and at the same time strengthens the international appeal of our city. TRIBRU27 will bring residents and visitors together around art and architecture, demonstrating how Bruges continues to connect and inspire both locally and internationally.”

— Dirk De fauw, Mayor of Bruges



ULRIKA FLINK

Ulrika Flink is curator and artistic director of Konstfrämjandet Stockholm. She has previously realised projects for, among others, Momentum 9–The Nordic Biennial (2017), the Borås Biennial (2021), the Çanakkale Biennial (2024) and the Swedish Pavilion at the Gwangju Biennale (2024). Her practice moves between institutions, biennials and public space, with a focus on the power of art to question existing narratives and create space for collectivity, encounter and transformation.



HELEN RIX RUNTING

Helen Rix Runting is an architectural theorist, critic, editor and urbanist. As co-founder of the architecture practice Secretary Stockholm, she develops multimedia installations and research trajectories that have been presented internationally, from Norway to Georgia. Her work starts from the conviction that different ways of building and thinking also make other forms of living together possible.

BRUGES TRIENNIAL

Bruges Triennial brings contemporary art and architecture to the unique UNESCO World Heritage environment of the City of Bruges. Every three years, an artistic team invites (inter)national artists and architects to develop and present new site-specific installations for the city. This year the team consists of Ulrika Flink and Helen Rix Runting (curators Bruges Triennial), Alan Quireyns (artistic coordinator Brugge Plus), Steven Slos (cultural policy coordinator City of Bruges) and Isabelle Speybrouck (project manager Bruges Triennial).

For five months, they take over the historic inner city with their contemporary creations. They provide an artistic response to a theme connected to the future challenges of Bruges and cities worldwide.

Since 2015, Bruges Triennial has built further on a series of triennials dedicated to visual arts, organised in 1968, 1971 and 1974. Whereas the focus of the early editions was on contemporary Belgian art, the relaunch in 2015 introduced architecture as a second pillar of the programme.

The event takes place in public space, is free to access for everyone, and open (or visible) seven days a week.

In 2027, the fifth edition of Bruges Triennial will take place, marking the first time a fully international curatorial team has been appointed: Ulrika Flink and Helen Rix Runting.

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*Bruges Triennial is an initiative of the City of Bruges
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