

Turmoil, Agitation, and Systems

Verticale – Centre d'artistes (VCA) invites artists, collectives and curators to submit project proposals under the theme of “Turmoil, Agitation, and Systems” for its 2020—21 season (regular programming, research-creation mentorship, Villa curatorial program).

In today's contemporary art context, artists are increasingly pressured to become entrepreneurs, maintain an active art practice, and to engage in a dominant value system. At the same time, artists are often expected to provide social criticism and even imagine alternative economic and value systems. The stereotypical figure of the artist as a disruptor, trouble-maker, or emotionally disturbed creative—often confined to some conventional margin of society—are themes that all speak of an assumed relationship between art, creativity and turmoil. But what about the relationship between art and turmoil when it is used to bring clarity to the world? Don't these rules, systems and prescribed methods (for instance, that art must contest, disturb, upset, or disrupt) also blur reality?

These questions lead us to consider artistic practice as a range of methods that each, in turn, produce their own systems of knowledge. Art as a way of understanding the world, of generating meaning from the otherwise disordered elements of reality or through a reordering of its current categories. One of the values of turmoil, one could argue, lies in the agitation it provokes—in other words, it makes us vulnerable but also open to new perspectives. Agitation isn't just something that is caused, it is also felt. More reactionary than contentious, it stems from a feeling of anxiety that leads to a form of introspection and self-criticism, a moment of suspension.

Through its singular relationship with artistic practice, VCA is uniquely positioned to foster creative processes that involve a negotiation between art and its presentation context, as well as the transformation of artistic intention through the emotional (turbulent) impact of its implementation. Often, art absorbs this turbulent force during its production, but sometimes the turmoil resurfaces once the work is publicly presented, like a barely audible dissonance or a wrong note, gone too soon to be clearly identified. Where does turmoil come from and what position(s) should we adopt in the face of it? Is it related to the notion of systems (values), rules (functioning), or conventions (aesthetics)? What are its effects, its values, and how do we react in its absence? Must we navigate the troubled waters that lie beyond our accepted frames of reference? Does the desire to establish rules stem from an imperative need for landmarks? How does turmoil insinuate itself in artistic practice or artworks? What measures do artists use to either exacerbate or decrease it?

This call for submissions invites artists to address the notion of turmoil, in all its potential forms.

What VCA offers as part of its programs:

- Project coordination, dissemination and promotional support
- Photo documentation
- Exhibition fee or professional honorariums (CARFAC scale)
- Contribution toward installation and production costs
- Contribution toward installation technician costs
- Contribution toward transportation and travel costs

— Regular programming

This annual program provides support for the presentation of projects by up to four artists or collectives at any stage in their career (emerging, mid-career, or established).

VCA embraces the heterogeneity of practices that characterizes contemporary art, and encourages cross-disciplinarity. VCA offers arts professionals in Laval and throughout Quebec an unparalleled framework to develop their creative process through a critical or poetic approach, and by engaging with a particular site.

VCA is in the process of transitioning to a permanent gallery space. Until then, it will focus on presenting off-site projects that, whether strictly in situ or not, consider the site of their presentation as part of their concept, or that propose alternative contexts for disseminating art. VCA will assist artists in their search for a suitable venue to ensure that the selected site meets the needs of each project and individual practice.

Presentation period: between June 2020 and May 2021

To ensure a fair selection process in keeping with its overall programming, proposals should, if possible, include the following elements:

- Name of program to which you are applying
- A brief outline of your project
- An artist statement
- An updated CV
- Images with descriptive list
- Photographic images: maximum 10 in jpg format
- Audio and video: maximum 7 minutes, accessible via Internet links
- Other relevant documentation, as needed (publications, press reviews, potential work schedule, budget, equipment requirements, etc.)

— Research and Creation Mentorship Program

This annual program is aimed at assisting an emerging artist in the exploration and development of their practice through peer support, namely with a professional artist who will take on a mentorship role.

The artist-mentee must submit a research and creation project that will address one or more aspects they have identified as an obstacle to the advancement of their practice and/or career. The program does not necessarily involve the public presentation of an artwork. The artist will carry out their project within a professional context, with the support of their mentor with whom they will meet on a regular basis for the equivalent of fifteen work days. The project will conclude with a public presentation by the artist and their mentor, where they will discuss their work process.

This program is intended primarily for emerging artists (no age limit) currently living in Laval, who are originally from the region, or who are members of the organisation.

Program period: between April and June 2020

To ensure a fair selection in keeping with its overall programming, proposals should, if possible, include the following elements:

- Name of program to which you are applying
- A letter of intent outlining the reasons you wish to take part in this program and your research goals*
- An artist statement
- An updated CV
- Images with descriptive list
- Photographic images: maximum 10 in jpg format
- Audio and video: maximum 7 minutes, accessible via Internet links
- Other relevant documentation, as needed (publications, press reviews, potential work schedule, budget, equipment requirements, etc.)

* You may also include the names of potential mentors or artists whose practices or career paths you find inspiring

— The Villa Curatorial Program

This ad hoc program supports the work of a curator by inviting them to critically enhance VCA's regular programming through the development of a complementary component. The selected curator will participate in VCA's regular programming selection committee, and will contribute by inviting two artists or artist-collectives of their choosing to complete a residency at the Villa.

Selected projects must be in the media arts and/or make use of digital technologies in the creation and presentation of the work.

During these residencies, the curator will provide relevant support for a residency held within the public space by, for example, facilitating encounters with the public through workshops, and overseeing the design of presentation-related elements that are suitable for use in the Villa.

Program period: intermittent engagement beginning in December 2019 until September 2020.
Residency periods (duration of three weeks each): between June and August 2020.

To ensure a fair selection in keeping with its overall programming, proposals should, if possible, include the following elements:

- Name of program to which you are applying
- A curatorial statement and a text outlining why you wish to develop a program for the Villa – contemporary and digital art vehicle.
- A brief biography and list of research interests
- An updated CV
- A list of potential artists or art practices with accompanying visuals and image list
- Photographic images: maximum 10 in jpg format
- Audio and video: maximum 7 minutes, accessible via Internet links
- Other relevant documentation, as needed (bibliography, publications, press reviews, work schedule, budget, equipment requirements, etc.)

— The Writing Mentorship Program

This ad hoc program is aimed at assisting an emerging writer in the exploration and development of their contemporary art writing practice through peer support, namely with a professional writer (art historian, curator, art critic) who will take on a mentorship role.

The potential writer-mentee must submit a writing and research project that will address one or more aspects they have identified as an obstacle to the advancement of their practice and/or career. The program does not necessarily involve the publication of a text. The writer will carry out their project within a professional context, with the support of their mentor with whom they will meet on a regular basis for the equivalent of fifteen work days. The project will conclude with a public presentation by the writer and their mentor, where they will discuss their work process.

This program is intended primarily for emerging writers (no age limit) currently living in Laval, who are originally from the region, or who are members of the organisation.

Please note that this program will take place during the current programming year 2019—20 ([Clan, Destiny & Clandestinity](#)). VCA encourages writers to develop proposals that reflect the Centre's presentation modes, or its past or current programming.

Program period: between January and February 2020

To ensure a fair selection in keeping with its overall programming, proposals should, if possible, include the following elements:

- Name of program to which you are applying
- A letter of intent outlining the reasons you wish to take part in this program and your research goals*
- A brief biography and list of research interests
- Up-to-date CV
- At least one published text on contemporary art: exhibition review, essay, texts published in exhibition brochures, catalogues or other art publications (maximum 10 pages in PDF format)

* You may also include the names of potential mentors or writers whose practices or career paths you find inspiring.

To submit a proposal

In the interest of greater inclusivity and representation, VCA strongly encourages proposals from under-represented artists.

Please note that the number of proposals VCA can support each year is limited and that the selection of projects cannot fully reflect the overall quality of proposals it receives.

Applicants will receive a response no later than February 2021.

Please submit the above in a compressed .zip file (maximum 10 MB) and attach to the online form available at : verticale.ca/appel-de-dossiers/

Files should be submitted online.

Submissions by post will not be considered.

Please note that VCA is able to support each year a limited number of projects and that the selection can not reflect the real value of the proposals received.

In addition, through its community-based activities, VCA offers its members and the art community spaces for professional exchange and cooperation that constitute other visibility platforms for artistic practice. If you're interested in leading a group discussion as part of our [Club de lecture](#) or [Déblocages](#) series, please write to us at info@verticale.ca

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