

## NewImages Festival – 3<sup>rd</sup> edition

### Challenges successfully met!



First event ever to be available in double access, both physical and online, **NewImages Festival** transformed its 3<sup>rd</sup> edition into a veritable success, despite uncertainties and constraints linked to the pandemic. Delayed to **September 23 to 27**, the Forum des Images' Festival attested to its ability to evolve "in real life", in terms of the digital creation and virtual worlds it explores, and even more so this year. During 5 days, its rethought program and layout have sparked the enthusiasm of a large audience and of the professionals, on site as much as from a distance, and federated French and international speakers during the Industry Days and its XR Financing Market.

For **Michael Swierczynski, NewImages Festival's director**, "this hybrid edition changes the way festivals will take place tomorrow... the engagement of the public and the professionals, and the jury's feedback confirms the importance of immersive creation today and the legitimacy of the fight to bring it to the forefront tomorrow. Missions we will have to extend for our 4<sup>th</sup> edition from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2021."

Despite reduced capacity and specific health regulations, NewImages Festival gathered more than **6 000 guests** to the Forum des Images and under the Halles' Canopy. A unique occasion to fully and physically get involved with around thirty experiences and immersive installations, including numerous premieres: **ATLAS**, fruit of the Taiwan VR Residency, **Fragments**, an AR story developed with the Magic Leap technology, the VR cinephile series **Missing Pictures** or even **The Line**, a tale by the Brazilian studio ARVORE Immersive Experiences.



The world premiere of **Flame**, a choreographic and musical spectacle that foreshadows the emergence of social reality, the photos exhibition in augmented reality (AR) ) **Potente**, the aquatic experience **Spaced Out** as well as **Alain Damasio's masterclass** on the new narrative forms complete this overview of immersive creation.

Amongst the highlights, international competition – until now dedicated to VR – opened up this year to augmented reality (AR). Presided by **Jean-Michel Jarre, the exceptional jury**, made up of the filmmakers **Julie Bertuccelli, Jérémy Clapin, Alice Diop** and the actress **Vimala Pons**, particularly praised the selection's quality. Of the 15 experiences in competition, **Bodyless** by Taiwanese artist Hsin-Chien Huang obtained the golden mask and **M.O.A – My Own Assistant**, the smartphone app inspired by Alain Damasio's book *The Stealthies* received the Jury's Special Prize for best work in augmented reality. In the VR Section, **Fernej: A Graphic Memoir in VR** and **Gravity** both won the Jury's Special Prize!



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On the professional side, NewImages Festival met the challenge of an attendance at least equal to that of 2019! **623 French and foreign professionals – half of them on site** – got accredited to follow and participate to the Industry Days and to the XR Financing Market, a financing and coproduction market. The attractivity and influence of the festival on the international scale have largely been confirmed. The rich selection of conferences, round tables and workshops on offer at the Forum des Images and by livestream saw the participation of XR figures to the problematics of a domain in full swing but badly hit by the pandemic: **Fox Harrel** (MIT), **Tony Parisi** (Unity Technologies), **Sarah Steele** (Youtube), **Marc Petit** (Epic Games), **Ainslee Robson** (producer) and other artists such as **Blanca Li** or **Karim Ben Khelifa**.



100% online, the **XR Financing Market's** 2<sup>nd</sup> edition confirms its influential role amongst actors in the XR ecosystem, with an undeniably international audience, and equal attendance to the precedent edition.

Under production and looking for funding, the **40 projects selected by the festival** have gathered **132 participants, 50% of which were women**, and coming from 22 countries.

**336 online meetings** have been organized between the 90 producers and 42 Decision Makers, amongst them **Jake Sally**, (Head of Development, **Ryot/Verizon**), **Bethanie Maples** (Product/Research, **Google AI, Stanford HAI**), **Elaine Wong** (Content Partnerships, Viveport, **HTC Vive**), **Joanna Popper**, Global Head of VR, LBE, **HP**, **Jenny Woo**, Design Lead of Immersive Experiences, **IBM Watson**, **Todd Shaiman**, Strategy Lead, AR and Hardware UX, **Google** as well as **Averie Timm** (Producer, **Oculus/Facebook**).

Unique in Europe in terms of openness to immersive creations as a whole (film, contemporary art, game, performing arts...), the XR Financing Market awarded its Best Project Prize to **A City of Foxes**, directed by Nihaarika Negi and produced by Rémi Large and Samuel Lepoil from Tamanoir Immersive Studio. The project will be included in the unique system of **Kaleidoscope Slate Funding 2020**.

Finally **Hayoun Kwon** is the winner of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Taiwan VR Residency – initiated by **NewImages Festival, Kaohsiung Film Festival** and **the French Office in Taipei**. Up to 30 000€ in support will allow her to develop her project **The Guardians of Jade Mountain** during the 3 months of her residency in Kaohsiung.

All conferences will soon be available on [NewImages Festival's](https://www.newimagesfestival.com/) website and on the [Forum des Images' Youtube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).

Information: [forumdesimages.fr](https://www.forumdesimages.fr) - Tel.: +33 (0)1 44 76 63 00

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