

MUTEK Forum 2026: Symbiotic Frequencies

Talks by Caroline Monnet, Claire L. Evans, Fait Poms, Margaret McGuffin, Mindy Seu, New Models, Tati au Miel, Tracy Rector, and Zach Blas plus an expanded MUTEK Market.



Tiohtià:ke / Mooniyang / Montréal, Tuesday, April 28, 2026 — MUTEK Forum, a gathering for bold ideas in digital creativity, returns August 26-28 with a three-day programme of radical imagination and curated exchange, showcasing and critically exploring creative practices across research, creation, and interdisciplinary collaboration. MUTEK Forum brings together artists, studios, institutions, researchers, technology professionals, digital experts, and curators, nurturing interconnection between music, artificial intelligence (AI), extended reality (XR), ecology, media art, gaming, and design.

Running alongside the Forum, the 2026 edition also marks a significant expansion of **MUTEK Market**, MUTEK's marketplace for digital creativity, with a dedicated trajectory and space for curated 1:1 matchmaking and ecosystem-building between creatives and delegates from around the world.

This year's edition moves to an exciting new home: **Atrium et Studio-Théâtre des Grands Ballets** and **Édifice Wilder - Espace danse**, two adjoining flagship performing arts venues in the heart of the city's cultural ecosystem.

SYMBIOTIC FREQUENCIES

MUTEK Forum 2026 unfolds under the theme *Symbiotic Frequencies*, an acknowledgment that something is shifting in the web of relations between bodies, technologies, and ecosystems, and that we are all entangled in it, whether we chose it or not. Existing boundaries between disciplines, cultures, and intelligences are dissolving, giving way to multiple, overlapping networks that cut across technology, climate, geopolitics, and art. From spatial audio to Indigenous epistemologies, from AI to living systems, frequencies are becoming the sites where matter, meaning, and intelligence converge. MUTEK Forum brings together the practitioners, thinkers, and builders who are not waiting for the future to arrive, but growing it from the ground up.

To spark interdisciplinary exchange, the Forum will break down the silos in digital creativity by organizing each day into themed chapters. Day 1: **Storytelling: Expanding Realities**, presented by the **Canada Media Fund (CMF)**, will explore new narrative forms and immersive experiences. Day 2: **Technology: Future Interfaces** will examine transformative technologies shaping creative expression. Day 3: **Sound: Collective Resonance** expands sonic practice as a collective and corporeal experience, examining spatial audio, sound systems, and best practices for the music industry. Each day will feature dedicated networking opportunities, including industry meetups and evening cocktails.

AN ENRICHING AND ECLECTIC TALKS PROGRAMME

This year's MUTEK Forum presents a bold and forward-looking programme spotlighting influential voices at the forefront of creation, technology, and cultural transformation across different formats, including performance lectures, keynotes, panels, workshops, and masterclasses.

(Artificial) Intelligence, Myth and the Non-Human

What counts as intelligence, and who gets to decide? From the sexual origins of the Internet to the religious unconscious of Silicon Valley, a series of performance lectures and keynotes brings together artists and thinkers who refuse and challenge the dominant myths we've built around technology, and reach instead toward more embodied forms of knowing that computation has yet to account for.

MUTEK is delighted to present the Canadian premiere of the acclaimed *A Sexual History of the Internet*. LA and NYC-based artist and technologist **Mindy Seu** (*Cyberfeminism Index*) will offer an interactive lecture-performance based on her eponymous book, released on Metalabel, examining the reciprocal relationships between technological development and sexuality to reveal the ubiquitous and unexpected origins of our digital tools. Berlin-founded media platform and podcast network **New Models**, focusing on the intersection of art, technology, politics, and internet culture, will present *Vibocracy in the Psyber Age*. In a joint-keynote, the co-founders **Caroline Busta and Lil Internet** will contemplate frameworks for navigating a new media environment in the age of *vibocracy*, tracing how algorithmic media, propaganda, and cybernetic feedback loops have replaced information with execution — and where vibes are mathematically measured.

Currently featured in the Whitney Biennial 2026, artist, writer, filmmaker, and University of Toronto Assistant Professor **Zach Blas**, whose practice contends with computational technologies, their industries, and the powers that constitute and animate them, will present the lecture-performance *Does an AI God Have an Ass?* From the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel to Silicon Valley's techno-religiosity, Blas traces historical connections to reveal the erasure of embodiment in AI fantasies and the religious unconscious lurking beneath. Award-winning writer and musician **Claire L. Evans**, will explore alternative AI ecologies with her talk *Brainless: How The World Thinks*. Evans invites us to question traditional conceptions of intelligence by looking beyond the neural networks of the human brain to ask what nature's "brainless" minds, from slime molds to cells to ant colonies, can teach us about the future of AI and the many shapes intelligence can take.

Story, Memory and Indigenous Futures

Talks, project presentations, and case studies will centre artists, studios, and practitioners rewriting the narratives embedded in our cultural institutions, technologies, and histories, and imagine what becomes possible when those stories change.

Tio'tia:ke / Mooniyang / Montréal based multidisciplinary artist **Caroline Monnet**, of Anishinaabe and French ancestry, works at the intersection of cinema and visual art to confront colonialism's legacy through Anishinaabeg methodologies. At MUTEK Forum, she will be in conversation about her film projects, exploring what is transformed, lost, and preserved in the passage between analog and digital. Filmmaker, activist, and curator **Tracy Renée Rector** will present the award winning *Encoded: Change the Story, Change the Future*, an Indigenous augmented reality (AR) unsanctioned intervention at the Metropolitan Museum of Art that brought together seventeen Indigenous artists to reframe the narratives of North American art and history, asking which stories are told, which are missing, and how they might be reimagined. **Elsewhere in India**, the transmedia collaboration of Murthovic and Thiruda, making its Canadian debut at MUTEK Forum, will present a talk that links their speculative reimagining of Indian cultural narratives to climate futures, AI, location-based entertainment, and live electronic performance.

For the first time, MUTEK Forum welcomes **The Lumen Prize**, the world's leading award for art created with technology, celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, as a partner. A 2026 finalist will be featured in this year's programme, offering a rare preview of the prize's most exciting work before the winners are announced in November. This new partnership also opens the door to broader community connections between the two organizations' networks, with more to be announced.

Sound Systems and Embodied Listening

From the sound system as philosophy to the loudspeaker as political instrument, MUTEK Forum brings together builders, engineers, researchers, and artists for whom sonic culture is inseparable from power, access, and community. This year's Forum places a special focus on sound systems

and embodied listening, celebrating the tactile, physical, and deeply human relationships we hold with sound.

In collaboration with **Honeydrip** and **MORPH**, a queer and femme-led collective reclaiming sound system culture and technical spaces, MUTEK Forum is presenting a dedicated track of programming exploring *sound systems culture and embodied sonic experience*, alongside the **Sound System Lab**, a dedicated showcase highlighting the city's vibrant community of builders and operators featuring systems by **Myco Audio**, **Pomelo**, **Hi Five**, and more.

Oakland-based sound engineer, manufacturer, and DJ/producer **Fait Poms** will give a talk to share insight from designing and building custom loudspeakers, bringing a socially engaged perspective to sound that centres the amplification of countercultures and marginalized voices, developed through her work with Eris Drew and Octo Octa's **T4T LUV NRG Soundsystem** and **Envelope Sound System**. Also on the program, multi-sensory artist **Salima Punjani** shares her experience as a social practice artist building relational, multisensory environments using vibrotactile technology. Rooted in disability arts practice, her work explores vibration as an invitation into more attentive and embodied modes of engagement — into the body, into shared presence, and into the joy and pleasure of listening together. **The Afrosonic Innovation Lab** presents its creative research on sound systems in partnership with **Sonic Street Technologies (SST)**, a practice-based research initiative examining the Global South and subaltern dimensions of recorded music technologies, investigating how Jamaican sound systems tools have been shaped by specific social, economic, and cultural conditions, and how they continue to function as instruments of empowerment, identity-building, and resistance across communities worldwide. Also in the the **Sound System Lab**, multidisciplinary artist **Tati au Miel** will offer an interactive workshop centered on active listening and performative prompts, inviting participants to respond to a sonic mise-en-scène, exploring intentional pacing, deep listening, and electromagnetic frequencies in an intimate, immersive setting.

A session on spatial sound and immersive audio will bring together leading voices in the field, including **William Russell**, co-founder and artistic director of spatial sound studio **MONOM** (Berlin), and **Dr. Lea Luka Sikau**, Head Curator for Sound and Music at the **ZKM Center for Art and Media** (Karlsruhe), among others.

Practice, Process and Making

A series of sessions at MUTEK Forum pulls back the curtain on the creative practices shaping digital culture today. Music curator and project coordinator **Chloé Gagnol** will present **Courts Circuits** (Paris), an initiative led by Technopol with DJs for Climate Action France and Music Declares Emergency France, will challenge us to rethink how electronic music artists travel, locally and internationally, towards more sustainable touring practices. **Margaret McGuffin**, CEO of **Music Publishers Canada**, will join a conversation on AI, music, and the industry changes, with a focus on the licensing frameworks, transparency tools, and creative solutions being built right now. **Milieux Institute for Arts, Culture and Technology** (Concordia University) are once again contributing to MUTEK Forum, bringing in student-led research-creation works that explore the thresholds of our encounters with machines in a collective interactive performance.

This year's programme also offers a closer look into the creative worlds of artists performing and exhibiting at MUTEK through a series of workshops and masterclasses revealing their processes, methods, and evolving practices, alongside Q&As hosted by **Nyshka Chandran**, Senior Editor at Resident Advisor. For the second year in a row, MUTEK is teaming up with multidisciplinary production house **DASA**, to host daily artist-led masterclasses with performers from the festival lineup. Among them, sound artist and instrument maker **Evicshen** leads a hands-on workshop on building contact microphones, introducing participants to vibration-based listening through object surfaces and guiding them in the construction of their own devices.

World Creation Studio, an artist-run nonprofit based in Tio'tia:ke / Mooniyang / Montréal supporting experimental and interdisciplinary work in digital, sound, and immersive art, presents a special edition of final-bounce, an event series bringing together music producers, composers, and sound artists through a shared platform for listening and exchange. Hosted by multidisciplinary artist **Malte Leander** and featuring international MUTEK artists, the session invites artists to share unreleased material, opens the floor to participant demos and works-in-progress, and closes with a curated selection spotlighting what is currently emerging in Montréal's electronic music scene.

Canadian Mexican artist and award winning video game director **Paloma Dawkins** offers an exploration of digital world-building through interspecies communication, presence practices and auto-ethnographic approaches based on her projects *Geopresence* and *Glitch Garden*, raising questions about kinship within future technologies and accessibility across different sensory worlds.

The full talks programme will be published in mid-June.

MUTEK MARKET

MUTEK Market, a curated networking and professional development programme connecting artists and creative studios with international presenters, curators, and industry leaders, returns in 2026 in a significantly expanded form, responding to a pivotal moment of transition in the digital creativity ecosystem.

Curated networking is at the heart of MUTEK Market's expanded offering. A dedicated Market space at **Édifice Wilder - Espace danse** will serve as the hub for daily editions of **MUTEK Match**, a customized 1:1 matchmaking initiative offering exclusive access to some of the most influential international minds in digital creativity. This is MUTEK's most ambitious professional offering to date, and a concrete expression of its long-standing commitment to the growth and development of the interactive digital media sector.

Dozens of international industry representatives from digital creativity are set to participate in MUTEK Market. Past attendees include **The Barbican, Victoria & Albert Museum, Cryptic / Sonica, New Museum, LAS Arts Foundation, The Music Centre, Light Art Museum, Brussels Major Events, KIKK, The Tate, HELLERAU - European Centre for the Arts**, and many more.

The MUTEK Market is coming soon. [Submit your interest through our form](#) and be among the first to receive updates as we announce more details about this year's expanded programme.

TICKET INFORMATION

MUTEK Forum offers several ticketing options, including the **Forum Passport** and the **Festival + Forum Passport**, along with the **Student Forum Passport** at a fixed price of \$90 (+ service fees and taxes). Day passes will be available for purchase in June.

Learn More: <https://forum.mutek.org/en/tickets>

PARTNERS

MUTEK would like to thank its partners, who play a key role in the maintenance and development of its activities and have provided particular support towards the production of the Forum.

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MUTEK

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