

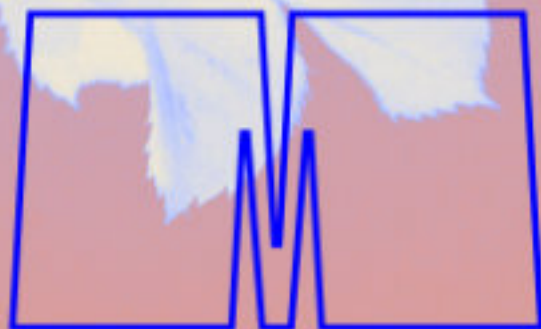
Brussels

19 – 24.09.22

1st edition



festival
where arts meet
empowerment



theater · dance · workshop · conference
projection · concert · exhibition

Summary

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FAME is a multi-disciplinary, mixed media performing arts festival which aims to encourage the discovery of new narratives which are both fairer and more inclusive. This is done through the exhibition of works and reflections produced by women and gender minorities.

4 The festival

FAME is a week-long festival that takes place in the second half of September. It is supported in spirit and location by many cultural centres in the city of Brussels.

The line-up comprises a mix of performances from international and Belgium-based artists, works in French and Dutch, young artists and those established, or emerging.

Aside from the works and performances that are exhibited, there are also conferences, workshops, exhibitions, film screenings, etc, which have been in partnership with FAME's network of Brussels-based associations, researchers, collectives, and activists.

For the first edition of the festival which took place on the 19-24 September 2022, FAME partnered with

- Bellone*
- Cinématek*
- C12*
- Fashion and Lace Museum*
- KVS*
- Maison du Roi Museum*
- Montagne Magique theatre*
- Riches-Claire theatre*
- Tour à Plomb cultural center.*



Sing Out Brussels © Samy Soussi



Killjoy Quiz, Luanda Casella - NTGent © Michiel Devijver



8 Objectives



Deep Time, Virpi Pahkinen Dance Company © José Figueroa

- 1 .
To contribute to the visibility, dissemination and valorisation of the work and productions of women and people from gender minorities.
- 2 .
To facilitate the creation and exhibition of new, fairer, and more inclusive narratives.
- 3 .
To support the production and dissemination of knowledge on the dialogue between the arts and feminisms.
- 4 .
To offer emancipatory tools for women and minorities in the cultural sector.
- 5 .
To create a place for knowledge exchange and learning for the general public.
- 6 .
To change welcoming and accommodation practices towards artists and audiences and to rethink inclusiveness and safety in the organisation of and during the festival.

10 The ethical agenda

We have imposed some practices related to the ethics of the festival organisation to help level the playing field for those in performing arts and to imagine a more equal and inclusive sector:



Soledad Kalza et Sima Kienou © Sammy Soussi

1. The majority of the programme will comprise works created by individuals or collectives made up of women and gender minorities.
2. Special attention will be paid to ensuring a diversity of artists in regard to their gender identities, sexual orientations, ethno-cultural identities, social classes, mobility, etc.
3. The line-up will include both local and international artists and will feature art creations by young artists as well as those both established and emerging.
4. Regarding the local line-up, special care will be taken to ensuring a balance between French and Dutch-speaking artists.
5. Every year there will be a special show which has been co-produced by the festival. This show will alternate yearly between theatre, dance and circus.



Artistic direction and the festival line-up

The cultural sector is a one where debate around representation, gender and income inequality is commonplace. Despite discourse on such topics, there is a deficit of works and events that question what 'feminist art' or a 'feminist programme' can be. It is thus important to us that all is called into question:

Should a feminist programme only be made up of female speakers?

What about the meanings and representations of the work and what image can these things convey?

Should feminist art seek activism? Is it political, and how so?

This festival intends to operate around the following question:

How can art forms that connect aesthetics and politics

(i.e., art that interrogates the discursive potential held in art)

be fairer and more inclusive, without supplanting the feminist discourse itself?

In other words, how can art as language allow the invention of new imaginal worlds which are both fairer, more inclusive, and more emancipatory? Thus, it is not only a question of what feminist knowledge and reflections can bring to the art world, but also a question of what art (a form of expression that mirrors, critiques and models reality) can contribute to feminisms.



Le cas Nele Marien, Écarlatte la Cie © Milva Ghenda

Programme committee

The artistic direction will present a collection of works that unite the 'aesthetic' and the 'political'. It will contribute to the renewal of our imaginations about gender and the world in which we live.

The artistic line-up will not only feature works about gender, women, and feminisms, but will also tackle other less dominant/normative themes and imaginations.

The themes tackled throughout the performances and works will therefore be determined each year by a wider festival theme.

In order to respect our values and the wish to defend varying points of view and subjectivities, the programme will be elaborated annually by a programming committee from the year 2023 edition onwards. This committee will be changed either entirely or in part for each edition. It will be composed of three-five individuals, including the festival artistic director. The members of this committee will be chosen each year based on their know-how, knowledge, expertise, experience in their field, aesthetic vision, skills (relative to the theme of the forthcoming edition) and their ethical positioning or commitment to the fight against sexism and racism in the cultural sector. These committee members will be separate from the artistic directors of the partner venues (in order to render the programming independent from the artists associated with each venue).

For the 2023 edition of the festival, the programming committee is composed of :

Camille Khoury
Artistic director of FAME ;

Aru Lee
Poet, dramaturge, workshop facilitator on inclusion ;

Milady Renoir
Poet, activist, performer ;

Miriam Youssef
Director, actress, teacher.

By moving away from having gender as a theme, a greater artistic liberty is given to women and minorities to artistically explore the other parts of their identities.



Relational ethics

FAME has given itself a series of verbs as a guide to orient our relationships with artists, audiences and between the members of the FAME team:



Nimuel Gamboa © Samy Soussi

To consider is to take others into account. It is to be considerate of others regardless of their identities or views. It is to consider the artists and the partners.

To allow others to be visible, audible, to give a voice to those who may not often be heard.

It is to give people a place that remains untouched by stereotypes and norms, a place for others to speak, aloud or not, in their own words, with their own voice.

It is to recognise art as a form of work, to recognise the time and effort that has been put into the creation process and to recognise the cost and value.

It is also to accommodate the spectators and audience, to welcome them over an extended period, and accept them in proposals, activities, as participants as well as individuals with their own subjectivities.

It is to avoid measures that only prioritise efficiency and measurable results.

It is to accept that others have boundaries and to make a concerted effort to respect them.

Finally, to consider and accommodate also involves pricing. We operate a flexible pricing system where each person can decide how much they can contribute.



Vulcana © Samy Soussi



Eclipse © Samy Soussi

Empower, as in giving the adequate space to those who need it, to give them a platform, a stage.

Empowerment is more like the redistribution and renegotiation of power instead of the centralisation and concentration of power.

It is about instilling and gaining confidence, letting go of doubts and assuming one's own voice.

Verbs n°1 & 2 Consider Accommodate

Verb n°3 Empower

So Sucks - QRE.w © Samy Soussi



*To take care of yourself.
To take care of the works that surrounds you.
Taking care of your time and the efforts
you put in. Valuing quality over speed.
Taking care of others, one's work partners
but also of the artists and the audience.
Taking care of others by identifying risks
and putting safety mechanisms.
It is to take care of our environment, our
ecosystem, and to make our practices and
organisations more ecological.*

Comité des Femmes sans Papier © Samy Soussi



*Disrupt as in remove the borders between
institutions and the margins, between dis-
ciplines, genres and categories. Disruption
is about taking off the mask and recogni-
sing that we are people. It is to shake up
ideas about spaces, functions and routines.*

Vulcana © Samy Soussi



*Take the time to think, to contemplate, to
do the background work, the deep stuff.
To think is also to make choices, to reflect
on your stance, your position.
Thinking is also understanding our limi-
tations. To recognise where we might fail,
to make mistakes, to acknowledge that we
did and to improve.*

Verb n°4
Take care

Verb n°5
Disrupt

Verb n°6
Think



Public Relations and hospitality: the Where

The *#where* thus represents all the spaces where the audience, spectators, artists, researchers, activists, associations, etc., are brought together. They are spaces where partnerships can be forged.

The *#where* is both a physical location, but also a process which is embodied in a variety of spaces where encounters take place

It is the festival art outreach with its own programme and line-up where the audience is invited to reflect on

what it means to participate. It is an attempt to create a collective discourse that brings together self-reflection and observation. The *#where* gives place and voice to the audience, by opening spaces for criticism and expression, something very much in line with the ethos of the festival.

The *#where* is ultimately the beating heart of the festival. It has an artistic programme that is free, a bar for relaxation between shows and a chance to meet and engage with the other participants. It can be considered the FAME garden in which you can take part in activities, drink, eat, socialise, rest, and bask in the sun.

'where',
is the word
that is
missing from
the FAME
acronym

•
Festival
where
Arts
Meet
Empowerment.





2023 edition

Legacy and Transmission

Every year, the festival programme revolves around a specific theme. Usually, festivals present themselves as showcases where various acts and shows can have no apparent connection to each other. This suggests which acts and shows are to be considered “good” or “bad” in the field. This, however, is not our intention. Revolving the programme around a central theme means that each of the shows/acts approaches the theme from a different angle, and as such, contributes something politically, aesthetically, or conceptually unique.

The theme of the first edition was Overture(s) or Opening(s). This edition was centered around the idea of opening the FAME concept to the public eye, but also opening the FAME programming both spatially and temporally to the diversity of bodies, ages, and subjectivities. Essentially, the first meta-theme intended to lay the ethical foundations for the FAME festival.

The 2023 edition, with an even richer and more varied line-up explores the notions of Héritage-s (Legacies) et Transmission-s.

On one hand, it requires us to question the nature of what is inherited, something material or immaterial, cultural or symbolic, familial or historical, traumatic or remedial. Inheritance can be both (un)desired and (un)conscious simultaneously.

The verb transmit comes from the latin parts “mittere” – to send, and “trans” – across. Our intention is thus to explore what we transmit and what we want to transmit, but consciously this time. After all, we can choose what we pass on and who we pass it to. It is about questioning the act of non-vertical transmission and investigating modes of transmission that are horizontal.

Legacy

That which is passed down/ onwards or endured as a result of succession.

Transmission

That which is transmitted or transferred, the action of moving something from one party to another and the result of doing so.

Since finding oneself at the crossroads of some sort of inheritance or transmission process is a universal experience, our question is:

in light (or in spite) of what we have inherited, what do we want to transmit to future generations?

Because this theme is so vast, we have selected 5 pathways to aid exploring it.



Comité des Femmes Sans Papier © Samy Soussi

1. The history of conflict, of resistance, of the place of women and minorities (gender, racial, and class) in social conflict and emancipation.
2. Mythology contemporary and feminist rewritings of myths, which myths do we want to keep? Non-western mythology, hero and heroines, superheroes, including the hidden ones and the communities
3. Rereading/rewriting/reworking the classics: What role do these works play in modern times? What kind of works would we want to see? What of our misogynistic, patriarchal, colonialist, ableist, sexist, racist inheritance can be kept? How can we transcend, disqualify, or move on from and not get caught up in this?
4. The inheritance of systems of domination (colonial, patriarchal, bourgeois...) and contradictory determinism.
5. The history of minority (sub)cultures: archives of queer, gay, lesbian, sex-workers, punks, drag artists, etc.

Je veux être régularisée
Oui, je veux travailler légalement
Je ne suis pas un ange
Mais je fais du bien
Je ne suis pas folle
Mais je n'oublie rien
Je ne suis pas forte
Mais je suis là
Je ne suis pas bête
Mais je dis la vérité
Je ne suis pas un enfant
Mais je fais des erreurs
Je suis fière d'être comme je suis
C'est rare qu'on trouve quelqu'un de
bien juste pour le bien
Qui ne craint rien, quand on donne le
souffle, quand on offre le soutien,
quand on profite d'un moment plein de
joie
Exprimez que bientôt tout ira bien



The 2022 edition, a recap

Institutional partners :

Bruxelles City
FWB Culture,
FWB égalité des chances
COCOF
visit.brussels.



Partner venues :

Bellone
Bronks
Cinematek
C12
Fashion and Lace Museum
KVS
Maison du Roi Museum
Montagne Magique theater
Riches-Clares theater
Tour à Plomb cultural center.

One week
 43 activities
 8 different venues

9 shows

1 creation, composed of 5 performances by emerging female directors on Belgian female heritage.
 2 works organised by the Fédération Wallonie-Brussels
 2 works organised by Dutch speaking companies
 3 works organised by international companies (France, Sweden)

1 drag king/
 drag queer
 cabaret

with Belgian and international performers

70% attendance
 on average



In the press

Paper press

[La Libre](#) (*Belgium*)

[RTL](#) (*Belgium*)

[Les Grenades](#) (*Belgium*)

[Jeanne Magazine](#) (*France*)

[Critical Stages](#) (*Europe*)

[TEB Oyun](#) (*Turkey*)

[Podhoubi](#) (*Czech Republic*)

TV

[BRUZZ](#) (*Belgium*)

Radios

[Tendances Premières](#) (*Belgium*)

[Radio Campus](#) (*Belgium*)



festival of arts
meet empowerment