

Kunsthalle Wien

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN

Press release

Nadim Samman to curate new festival

Vienna Digital Cultures

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN and Kunsthalle Wien announce the first Vienna Digital Cultures festival, curated by Nadim Samman. Beginning in May 2025, it succeeds the City of Vienna's Media Arts Festival inaugurating an annual event jointly organised by the two institutions. Samman takes up the role following his previous appointment as Curator for the Digital Sphere at KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2020–2024). Samman brings wide-ranging experience developing successful programs across digital and physical media, and international festivals to the position.

Vienna Digital Cultures consolidates the shared commitment of FOTO ARSENAL WIEN and Kunsthalle Wien to exploring how new technologies impact upon culture. While further developing synergies across the organizations, in programming and digital infrastructure, this annual festival will offer audiences cutting-edge perspectives bridging art and media.

Nadim Samman explains: 'Austria's cultural scene leads international conversations around art and technology. I am excited to contribute to this rich landscape. Digital change affects everyone, in both obvious and subtle ways. Festivals are important platforms for collective reflection. Now, more than ever, we need moments to take stock of where tech is leading us, and what other directions we might pursue. I look forward to working with colleagues at FOTO ARSENAL WIEN and Kunsthalle Wien to make this happen.'

'In Vienna Digital Cultures, FOTO ARSENAL WIEN and Kunsthalle Wien have the possibility to engage artists working with different media. Digital culture is already a key focus for our programmes with our respective emphases on photographic and contemporary art. With Nadim Samman, we have been able to engage one of the most outstanding international curators who brings years of expertise. We are very much looking forward to working together' say Michelle Cotton, Artistic Director Kunsthalle Wien and Felix Hoffmann, Artistic Director FOTO ARSENAL WIEN.

Veronica Kaup-Hasler, City Councillor for Culture and Science, City of Vienna: 'How does society shape technology and, conversely, how does technology, especially AI, shape humanity? Will the rapid developments of our time serve the good of mankind in the sense of digital humanism or lead to dystopian future scenarios? As a seismograph of social development, art is able to discuss these controversial questions on an aesthetic and sensual level. I am therefore delighted that Nadim Samman, an experienced international curator in this field, will now be utilising the reflective potential of art for Vienna Digital Cultures.'

Biography

Nadim Samman studied Philosophy at University College London before receiving his PhD in Art History from the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. He was Co-Director of Import Projects e.V. in Berlin from 2012 to 2019 and, concurrently, Curator at TBA21 in Vienna (2013–2015) – where he curated the exhibition *Rare Earth*, amongst other projects. His curatorial work for festivals includes the 4th Marrakech Biennale (with Carson Chan) in 2012; the 5th Moscow Biennale for Young Art in 2015; Cycle Music and Art Festival, Reykjavik (2015); and Aurora Dallas (2017). He co-founded and curated the 1st Antarctic Biennale (2017) and the Antarctic Pavilion (Venice, 2014–2017). Widely published, he was First Prize recipient of the International Award for Art Criticism (IAAC) in 2019. His most recent project is the book and touring exhibition *Poetics of Encryption* (KW Institute of Contemporary Art, Berlin, 2024), currently on view at Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen.

Press image for download:

kunsthalwien.at/101/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/nadim-samman-foto-frank-sperling.jpg

Photo: © Frank Sperling



Notes to Editors

Vienna Digital Cultures
5–18 May 2025
Kunsthalle Wien Karlsplatz

Press conference: 5 May 2025, 10am
Opening reception: 5 May 2025, 7pm

About FOTO ARSENAL WIEN

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN is the new center for photographic images and lens-based media in Austria. Initiated by the City of Vienna in fall 2022, the institution presents and communicates contemporary photography in all forms of appearance and use. In spring 2025, FOTO ARSENAL WIEN will open its final location in the Arsenal in Vienna's 3rd district. As a platform, FOTO ARSENAL WIEN also organizes FOTO WIEN, Austria's largest festival for photography.

About Kunsthalle Wien

Kunsthalle Wien is the City of Vienna's primary institution for contemporary art. At its locations in the MuseumsQuartier and on Karlsplatz, it presents an annual programme of exhibitions alongside public and educational programming that seeks to engage diverse publics. We provide a platform for artists, commissioning new works and partnering with individuals and institutions, both local and international, to develop exhibitions and publications based on original research. Kunsthalle Wien is committed to providing an inclusive space for exchange and debate and furthering the discourse on contemporary art in all its forms.

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN and Kunsthalle Wien, together with KÖR – Kunst im öffentlichen Raum Wien and Atelierhaus Wien, are part of Stadt Wien Kunst GmbH, financed by Magistratsabteilung Kultur der Stadt Wien (MA7).

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