

## Canadian government offers funding to digital festivals in Montreal

Article by Lucia Ruggiero



The Canadian government has offered financial backing to two major digital arts events in Montreal. The two organisations that received funding are the Biennale internationale d'art numérique (BIAN), now in its second year, and the Elektra Festival, which is now in its 15th year. It has been reported that the funding will go towards concerts, exhibitions and other events related to the two festivals, with the special aim of attracting and enhancing collaboration with young people.

BIAN is a festival dedicated to digital arts, and this year's edition, entitled 'Physical/ité' will focus on how digital media and machinery have become 'extensions of our senses', as indicated by the Artistic Director, Alain Thibault. He explains that, 'PHYSICALITÉ allows us to see and hear algorithms, to render material the immaterial and to visualize the invisible. This emphasis on the return of the physical, on materiality and objecthood is reflected more broadly in, for example, the internet of things and the rise of hacker, DIY and Maker / Fab Lab cultures'. BIAN festival will be held between 1st May and 19th June.

The latter of the two festivals, Elektra, has an audiovisual focus and will host light shows and installations that demonstrate use of electronic music and new digital technology to create visual pieces. The festival's mission statement explains that here, 'artists from all disciplines - composition, performance, dance, visual arts, etc. - all with a common interest in artistic applications of new technologies, uniting visual and sound'. Elektra will take place from 27th May till 1st June, this time having combined with MUTEK, which is an organisation that promotes advancements in sound, music and audiovisual arts through digital media. Above all, the Canadian government's contribution to these festivals highlights a recognition of the growing importance of digital culture and artistic experiences, which attract viewers and audiences from across the world.

More information: <http://www.sys-con.com/node/3050559>

BIAN festival website: <http://bianmontreal.ca/en>

Elektra festival website: <http://www.elektrafestival.ca>

(Photos: Elektra logo and Physical/ité from artseenvt.com)