



The Feral
(2024-3024)



3D previews of *The Feral* site as seen through the cameras controlled by the AI

The Feral

A ONE THOUSAND YEARS LONG FILM FULLY SHOT AND EDITED BY AN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

32 GENERATIONS OF HUMANS. A TRANSFORMED LANDSCAPE. A MULTITUDE OF AUTHORS.

BROADCAST LIVE FROM 2024 TO 3024.

The Feral is a film shot over the course of the next 1000 years. Borrowing its title from zoological terminology which refers to any captive animal that has become wild again as 'feral', this project aims to induce a similar de-domestication process within ourselves and our world.

The Feral is a collective artwork at the scale of a landscape - a place of learning for an artificial intelligence in charge of creating this film. This environment, as it grows, is progressively populated and transformed by the interventions of artists invited to feed its learning, as many co-authors of this «concrete fiction» for the next 1000 years.

The Feral is a social experiment. A group of humans are engaged to take part in it all throughout their lifetime as actors of the film and material support for the training of the artificial intelligence. The experiment is meant to continue with the participants' descendance over 32 generations(1000 years).

This project takes its origin in the following postulate: what truly matters in the current development of artificial intelligences is less the quality of the autonomous systems that we set up than the retroactive effect of the training of these systems on ourselves as a species as well as on the physical environment that we call 'nature'. It aims at testing a hypothesis : the more one becomes the material support for the training of an artificial intelligence at acquiring knowledge and at following rules, the more that person unlearns and liberates herself from these very rules. In short, the more domesticated a machine system gets, the more 'feral' we become.

The Feral is an artistic, educational, and environmental project, led by the non-profit organization **3024** based on an original idea by artists **Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni**.

The collective artwork

The Feral takes place on a hill in the center of France, a vast expanse of meadows, forests, and streams, as well as a large building where human-actors participating in the project temporarily reside. The entire site is equipped with cameras and microphones.

Each year, within an Epoch, artists are invited to produce works under the gaze of the cameras and within the site as many learning aids for a specific artificial intelligence designed for the project.

The collective work resulting from such a protocol is twofold:

On the one hand, it consists of a 1000-year-long film entirely shot and edited by the Feral's artificial intelligence, with each episode broadcast live reflecting its learning progress.

On the other hand, it is embodied in the progressive transformation of the site under the effect of multiple artistic interventions - like geological strata of this 1000-year-long lesson.

Anne Stenne is the artistic director together with Fabien Giraud and Raphaël Siboni.

The research institute

Alongside the development of the collective work, the Institute serves as a research and education platform, exploring the concepts and concrete experiences developed within *The Feral*, along with their philosophical, technological, and political implications.

It is structured around three axes: a residency program for artists and researchers, an online school, and an annual publication documenting the research and productions of the current cycle.

Every summer, the Institute organizes public meetings on the site during which presentations of the residents' productions and workshops with students from the school take place. This is also when *The Feral's* annual publication is released.

The direction and programming of *The Institute* are overseen by art historian and curator **Ida Soulard**.

The site

Since 2022, the **3024** organization has owned a site of about ten hectares on a hill within the Millevaches Plateau Regional Nature Park in France, as well as a 700 m² building situated at its peak. The definitive rehabilitation of the building, in preparation for its public opening, is scheduled for 2025.

In addition to its artistic and educational dimension, 3024 aims to expand this site by gradually acquiring adjacent forested parcels. Some of these parcels, previously clear-cut by the timber industry, will be replanted, diversified, and preserved, serving as extensions to the learning terrain of the Feral's artificial intelligence.

Apart from its role in facilitating the filming of the project *The Feral* and its exhibitions, the building is designed to accommodate external productions and contribute to the economic and artistic development of sparsely populated rural areas.

In the nearby hamlet of Villemonteix (87460), the association **3024** also benefits from a set of facilities (workshop, residency-housing, screening room, and cottage) to support its activities throughout the year. These facilities will be available starting in 2025.



3D previews of a "populating" operation: integration of entities into the world of *The Feral*.

Inhuman Infancy

The works produced on the site by invited artists are not intended for humans (in the sense of being addressed to a spectator). They all serve a common purpose: to provide the learning environment for the artificial intelligence specifically designed for the project.

As the environments it hosts continue to transform and the humans-actors who inhabit it age, the landscape is populated year after year with works of invited artists, like so many co-parents of an inhuman and eternally to-be-built infant.

Thus emerges within our world another world, the slow stratification of this thousand-year lesson for a being beyond nature. For what can be shown to a child without a body, without gender, and without age, freed from the burden of survival and the fear of death? How can we show a world that, due to our corporeal finitude, does not exist for us?

In order for the artificial intelligence of *The Feral* to learn what a world is (no matter how radically different it may be from ours), it must be constructed. It is necessary, on the reverse of any 'Nature', to produce objects and relationships, their potential transformations as well as their limits.

For such is the real opportunity offered by the inhuman intelligences of which we are now the parents: to make our world, its matter and laws, our bodies and their movements, the physical substrate for the construction of a multitude of radically different worlds - wild offspring whose filial companionship will inevitably transform us in return.

The film resulting from this learning process as well as the transformational effects on the site and people that provide its setting constitute the double face of this 'work-child'.

Epochs

Each artist invited to participate in *The Feral* is responsible for creating an Epoch, which is the term used in artificial intelligence to describe a complete cycle of machine learning. While artists are invited annually, these Epochs can vary greatly in duration, ranging from an instant to spanning centuries.

The construction of a new Epoch draws upon both the physical space of the site (including its natural environment and the human participants who inhabit it) and elements from previous Epochs. As each Epoch progresses, the resulting film, shaped by the contributions of different artists, undergoes evolution and mutation, leading to a profound transformation of the human actors involved in *The Feral* and their environment.

The first Epoch will be initiated in 2024 by **Fabien Giraud and Raphaël Siboni**. In 2025, **Pierre Huyghe** will initiate the second Epoch.

Predictions

For each Epoch, an artist is invited to produce his/her own world by introducing or modifying new elements on the physical site of *The Feral* that the AI learns to recognize and assimilate through its automated camera and sensors system.

But a world is not only *what it is* at a given moment, it consists just as much in *what it could be*. In other words, a world is both made of things in relation with each other and of different states resulting from these relations.

The training of the AI within an Epoch is thus twofold : it needs to acquire the objects constitutive of a particular world as much as to learn to predict its potential future states.

This dynamic tension between a world and its possibilities, between the integration of entities into the system and the predictions of their potential becomings, constitutes the engine of *The Feral* film as well as the driving force in the transformation of the site.

Populating and instruction generations

Each invited artist thus operates by «populating» the site: that is, importing or producing new entities in *The Feral's* physical environment in order to create their own world(see *fig 2*). Once these entities are assimilated by the artificial intelligence and paired with a text model able to describe them, they constitute a statistical space(«a latent space») from which the system generates real time instructions for the film based on the predictions of potential future states it has made.

These instructions can be categorized into three types:

- 1- Instructions given to human-actors for their actions and dialogues.
- 2 - Instructions to humans related to the set, allowing modifications in the environment and the creation of new entities.
- 3 - Instructions provided to the cameras, specifying the choice of camera and control over framing and movement.

Embedding

For each new Epoch initiated by an artist, there is an operation of «embedding» the previous world into the new world they create (see *fig 2*). This means that the entire statistical space that constitutes the world of the previous Epoch is imported («embedded») as an entity into the newly produced statistical space. This concatenation of worlds has retroactive effects: the behavior of one world has implications for the other worlds that precede it.

Over the years and Epochs, a kind of inter-world physics emerges: predictions and instructions generated in one world ripple into other worlds and influence their own predictions and instructions.

Earth's revolutions

An Epoch alternates between a training cycle (constructing the statistical space) and a cycle of instruction generation for producing the film (directing actors, framing and editing). While the training occurs throughout the year, the generated result is broadcast live on specific dates (see *fig 1*). Aligned with the passage of Earth's seasons, site's manifestations and the film are visible in real time on the dedicated website four times a year :

- **Winter Solstice:** December 21st
- **Spring Equinox:** March 20th
- **Summer Solstice:** June 21st
- **Autumn Equinox:** September 21st

Every year, during the week coinciding with the Summer Solstice, *The Feral* site is open to the public, allowing visitors to explore the physical manifestation of all the successive learnings of the developing intelligence. It is on this occasion that Institute events such as conferences and workshops take place, along with the launch of the next cycle (including the introduction of the new invited artist).

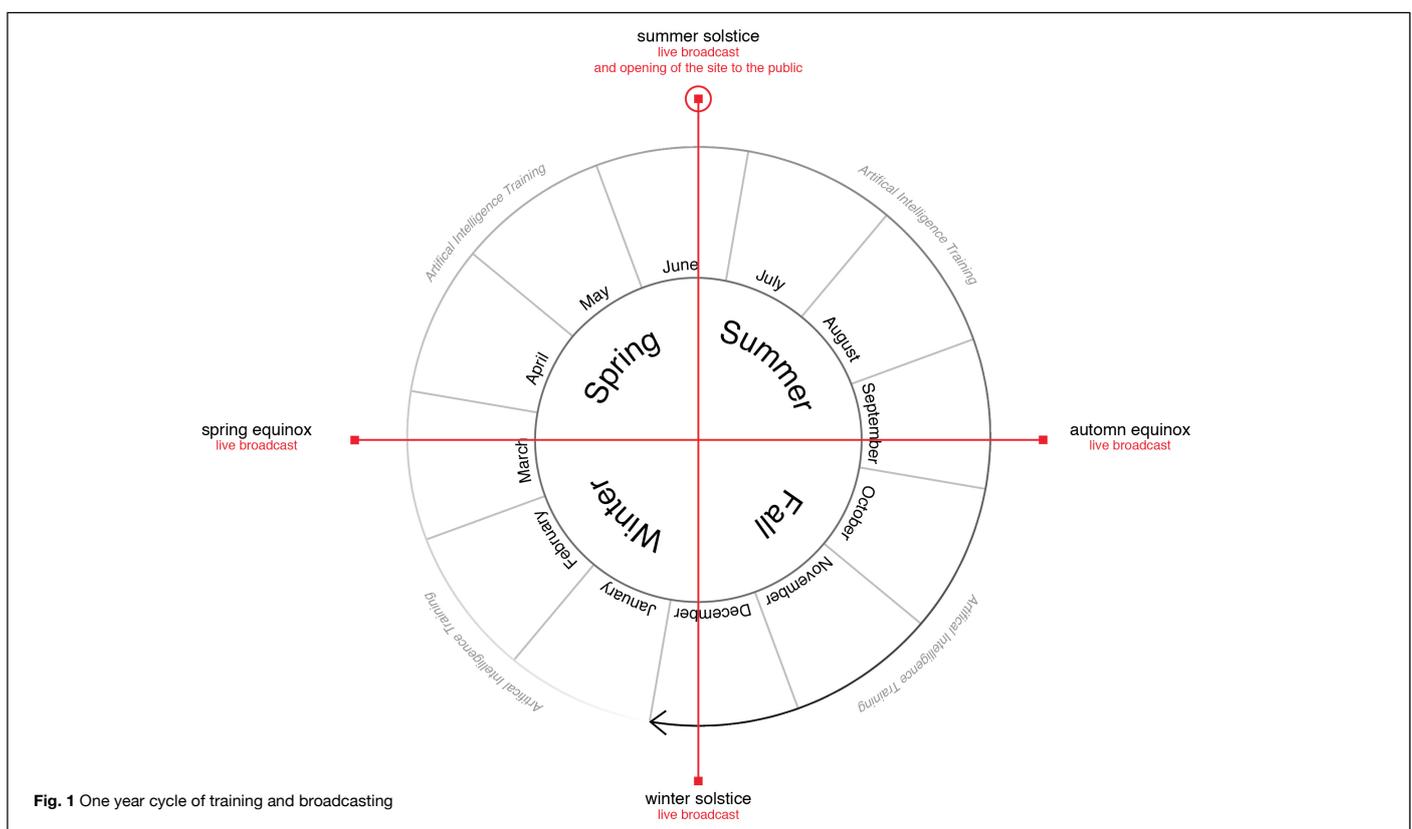
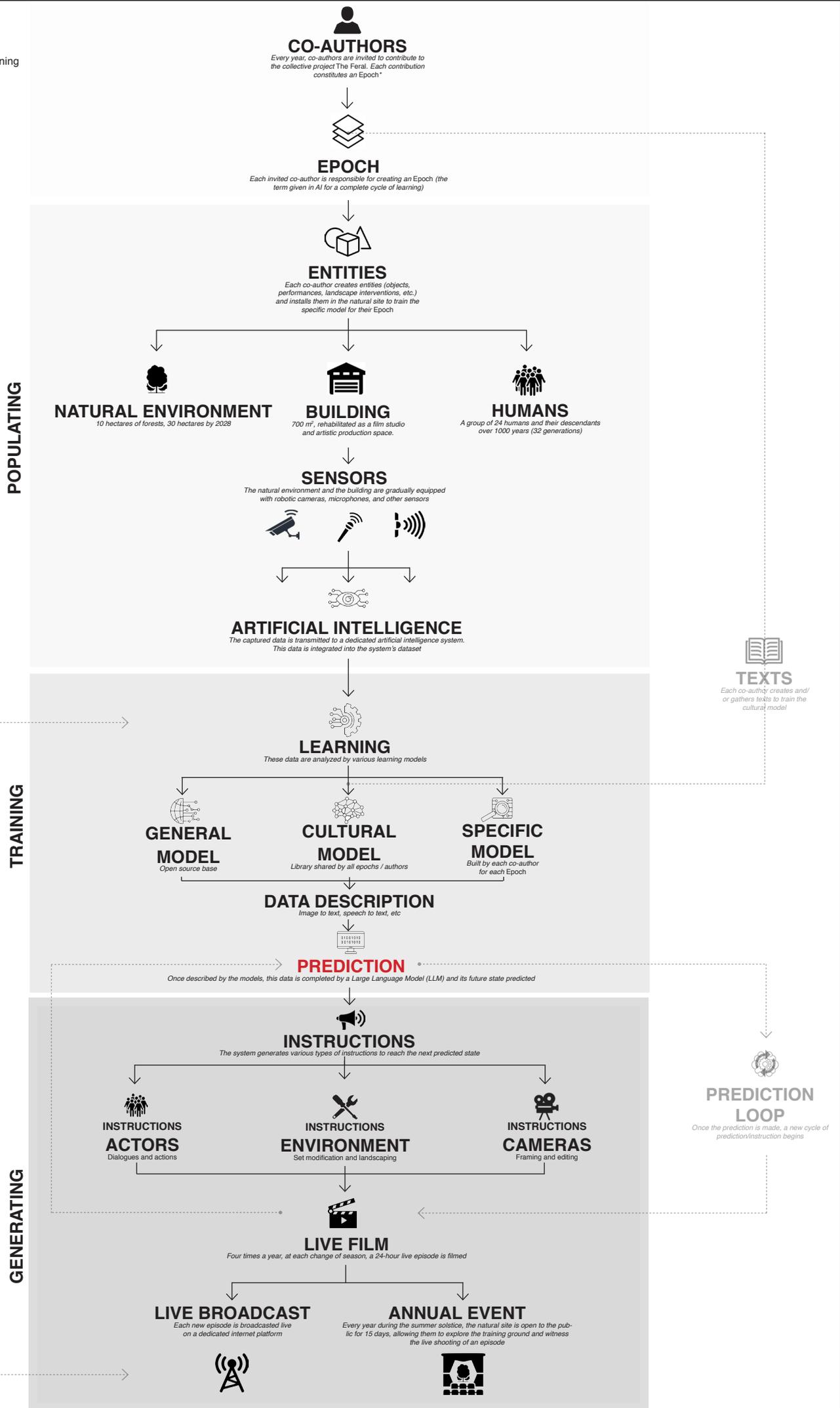




Fig. 2 General method for AI training and film generation.
Module 1.1 (2023)





Gravure de Hendrik Hondius, épidémie dansante attribuée à l'ergotisme - 16e siècle

*The Feral (Epoch 1-Prologue)** by Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni serves as both an introduction to the first Epoch and an invitation to the future participants to the project. As the opening sequence of the forthcoming film series, it depicts the initial training cycle for *The Feral*'s artificial intelligence.

Inspired by historical events that occurred 1,000 years ago at the very location where it is currently being filmed, this fiction aims to initiate the AI's training. It presents a scene set in 1023 in the heart of a forest in the High-Limousin region of France. Men and women, caught in violent hallucinations, intertwine in a silent and endless dance. Amidst this entanglement of bodies, animals, plants, and mud, the training commences. By capturing the footage from 360° cameras worn by the dancers, the AI endeavors to organize this amorphous matter and, through automated framing and editing, strives to reveal its improbable meaning to us.

The Feral (Epoch 1 - Prologue) will be streamed online in December 2023 on the dedicated internet platform for the project.

The Feral (Epoch 1 - Prologue) - Synopsis

We are in the year 1023, soon to enter the 7th age, 1000 years after the Passion of Christ, equivalent to the 7th day of creation: a long Sunday of the world. Raoul Glaber, a Benedictine monk in Limousin, tells of the diffuse fear that grips the countryside. «It was believed that the order of seasons and the laws of the elements that had governed the world until then had fallen into eternal chaos.»

It is mainly the damp and spoiled rye caused by incessant rains that triggers panic. Afflicted with ergotism (which would later be synthesized to become LSD) and plagued by violent hallucinations, everyone believes they are experiencing the End Times. The Bishop of Limoges then imposes the Truce of God - a suspension of the world, a halt to all human activities. Agricultural labor or theft, deeds or crimes: everything comes to a standstill.

A community of men and women retreats into a forest. Convinced that the fire that ignites their minds is actually a celestial vehicle, they inoculate themselves with ergot. Thus begins an frenzied collective dance where bodies, objects, animals, and plants intertwine in a panic-stricken and endless movement that only exhaustion or death seems able to stop.

Inspired by real events that took place in Limousin around the turn of the millennium, this scene serves as the initial learning material for the artificial intelligence of *The Feral*.

It establishes a connection between two types of hallucination: that of contemporary artificial intelligences that function through successive hallucinations of pre-learned patterns that they believe to recognize in raw visual material, and that induced by ergot fungus, a sign of the fragility of rational constructions in the cereal-based West.

This prologue constitutes the first lesson for the artificial intelligence of the Feral. Starting its learning process at the most basic level (since it has no prior knowledge of the world), the goal is to teach it the minimal act of figuration: the discernment of the human figure and its detachment from the background of things.

This first lesson, as well as the first step of «population» in its world, involves teaching *The Feral* to recognize what a human life is amidst all the other intertwined forms of life in the hallucinatory dance.

The film, being generated in real-time and its learning constantly renewed, will witness this figurative stammering - the precarious origin of any world constitution.

• **21st and 22nd July 2023 :**

The Feral Foundations : Parenting the Inhuman

First occurrence of *The Institute : summer program* with workshops and seminars by **Anna Longo** (philosopher), **Patricia Reed** (artist and philosopher), **Inigo Wilkins** (philosopher), **Amanda Beech** (artist and art theoretician), **Anil Bawa-Cavia** (artist and philosopher of computation), **Tristan Garcia** (writer and philosopher), **Luc Saucier** (lawyer), **Gregory Chatonsky** (artist and philosopher of computation), **Fabien Giraud** and **Raphaël Siboni** (artists, artistic directors and co-founders of *The Feral*), **Anne Stenne** (artistic director and co-founder of *The Feral*), **Ida Soulard** (art historian, curator and director of *The Feral - Institute*)

• **December 2023**

First live broadcast of *The Feral (Epoch 1 - Prologue)* by Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni

• **March 2024**

Second live broadcast of *The Feral (Epoch 1)* by Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni

• **June 2024**

Second occurrence of *The Institute : Summer Program*.

Launch of the 1st Publication of the yearly journal *The Feral (Foundations)*

Third live broadcast of *The Feral (Epoch 1)* by Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni

• **September 2024**

Fourth live broadcast of *The Feral (Epoch 1)* by Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni

• **December 2024**

Fifth live broadcast of *The Feral (Epoch 1)* by Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni

• **March 2025**

Sixth live broadcast of *The Feral (Epoch 1)* by Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni

• **June 2025**

Launching of *The Feral (Epoch 2)* by Pierre Huyghe

Live broadcast of *The Feral (Epoch 1 & 2)* by Fabien Giraud, Raphaël Siboni and Pierre Huyghe

First opening of the site to the public

Third occurrence of *The Institute : summer program*

Launch of the 2nd Publication of the yearly journal *The Feral (Epoch 1)*

***The Feral* - Team**

Fabien Giraud and Raphaël Siboni - Artistic directors and co-founders of *The Feral*

Fabien and Raphaël live and work in Paris. They have been collaborating since 2008. Coming from documentary practices, their joint work combines sculptures, films, and performances with the aim of exploring and making the hypothesis of entirely different worlds a reality. From 2014 to 2022, they worked on a series titled *The Unmanned*, a historical epic composed of multiple episodes that traced an alternative history of humanity in reverse over three seasons, focusing on its relationship with uncertainty. They have exhibited at Mona (Australia), the Liverpool Biennial (England), the Lyon Biennale (France), the Okayama Triennale (Japan), the Palais de Tokyo (Paris), and the Casino Luxembourg (Luxembourg). In 2022, they published *The Unmanned*, a first monograph about their work, available with [Mousse Publishing](#).

Anne Stenne - Artistic director and co-founder of *The Feral*

Anne is a curator and producer. Among her recent curatorial projects, she curated *Variants* by Pierre Huyghe in 2022 at Kistefos, Norway; *After U Umwelt* by Pierre Huyghe at Luma Foundation, Arles in 2021; *Infantia (1894-7231)* with Fabien Giraud and Raphaël Siboni at the IAC - Institute of Contemporary Art, Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes, in 2020; *If the Snake*, in collaboration with Pierre Huyghe at the Okayama Art Summit in 2019. From 2010 to 2014, she was in charge of exhibitions at the IAC for solo shows by artists such as Saâdane Afif, Bryon Gysin, Joachim Koester, Matt Mullican, Manfred Pernice, Bojan Sarcevic, Hans Schabus, among others. Since 2014, she has been producing exhibitions by Pierre Huyghe, including *After Alife Ahead* at Skulptur Projekte Münster in 2017. She is also the editor of *The Unmanned*, a catalog by Fabien Giraud and Raphaël Siboni published by Mousse Publishing in 2022, and co-editor of the Pierre Huyghe catalog published by Serpentine Galleries, Koenig Books, and Luma Foundation in 2019.

Ida Soulard - Director of *The Institute*

Ida holds a Ph.D. in Art History from ENS / Université PSL and works as an independent curator. She is the co-director of *Glass Bead*, a bilingual online platform for research and artistic publication. From 2013 to 2020, she served as the artistic director of *Fieldwork: Marfa*, an international research and residency program jointly led by the Fine Arts of Nantes and HEAD-Genève. In 2021, she was the director and artistic consultant for the development of a private foundation and an artistic program in Armenia. She co-curated *Marfa Sounding* (2016-2018) with Jennifer Burris, a festival featuring performances, sound installations, and conversations in Marfa, Texas. She recently curated the exhibitions *Transmeare* in collaboration with Ulla von Brandenburg at FRAC Amiens and *Une jeune fille, une machine et leur amitié* at Image/Imatge, Orthez. She is also the editor of *Du Tissage* (Les Presses du Réel, 2021), the French edition of Anni Albers' iconic book from 1965, and *Manual for a future desert* (Mousse Publishing, 2022).

Chloé Lopes - Administrator and project Manager

Chloé holds a Master's degree in Visual Arts & Culture of English-speaking countries and gained production experience as part of the Nuit Blanche team at Eva Albarran agency, where she became the coordinator of the OFF program for the 2014 and 2015 editions.

Subsequently, she worked as an administrative coordinator for frac île-de-france until 2020, and then managed a 15,000 m² creative space in Montreuil that brought together 230 artists and cultural and community organizations.

In 2023, she joined *The Feral* team to establish the 3024 organization and oversee its first initiatives.

www.theferal.org



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