

Press Release
8 April 2026

47,000 visitors in twelve days: Art Explora Festival launches its 2026 tour with a major success in Barcelona

From 26 March to 6 April 2026, the Art Explora Festival stopped for the first time in Barcelona, transforming Port Vell into a vibrant cultural destination. Over twelve days, 47,000 visitors experienced the festival, both on board its museum-boat and across the quayside exhibition pavilions and live programme, curated by Rosa Lleó with associate curator Maguette Dieng.

Key figures – Barcelona
47,000 visitors in 12 days
1,145 schoolchildren welcomed during weekdays
1,600 participants in workshops and family activities
50 artists involved, from Spain and across the Mediterranean region

"Barcelona marks an important milestone in our Mediterranean journey. Welcoming 47,000 visitors confirms the strength of our ambition: bringing art to all, making it free and accessible to everyone, and fostering dialogue between cultures. The energy of the local scene and the diversity of audiences fully reflect what the Art Explora Festival stands for and reinforce our commitment to continue this journey"
Frédéric Jousset, Founder and President of Art Explora

With an average of nearly 4,000 visitors per day, the festival quickly established itself as a major cultural event in the city, activating the port from morning to night with a free and accessible programme. From the opening parade led by Ngomez Nokass to the closing performances on the waterfront, the festival created a continuous flow of audiences and encounters, bringing together local communities, families and international visitors.

Each evening, the festival's waterfront stage became a central gathering point, hosting performances, concerts and interdisciplinary works exploring Mediterranean narratives and diasporic identities. Artists such as Poncili Creación, Invernomuto and Tewa Barnosa, as well as collectives like Jokkoo and performers including Nkisi or Nadah El Shazly, shaped a programme that was both ambitious and accessible. The focus on Senegalese and West African scenes, with figures like Dudù Kouate or Agnes Essonti, gave the programme a strong and coherent artistic direction, rooted in the social and cultural fabric of Barcelona.

The Ocean Weekend marked a key moment of the festival, bringing together artists and researchers around environmental issues, marine ecosystems and Mediterranean crossings, while projects by Laura Llaneli or Gabriel Ventura and Rosa Tharrats extended these reflections through sound and performance.

"A community of more than 50 artists and musicians, from Egypt to Andalusia, defined the seas with complexity and beauty, learning from and acknowledging its rich sonic traditions."
Rosa Lleó, curator of the Barcelona programme

Throughout the twelve days, the exhibition pavilions and the museum-boat — the world's largest sailing catamaran — maintained a strong attendance confirming the success of a format combining exhibitions, immersive experiences and live programming.

Following the success of Barcelona, the Art Explora Festival will continue its Mediterranean journey **with its next stopover in Ibiza, from 23 to 29 April 2026, at IGY Ibiza Marina,** where the festival will combine immersive experiences onboard the museum-boat, some live events and a comprehensive programme of workshops.

Discover the best pictures from the festival: link

About Art Explora Festival
The Art Explora Festival is a travelling cultural festival that sails across seas and oceans on board the world's first museum-boat, offering free access to innovative artistic and cultural experiences for all audiences. The festival unfolds on board the museum-boat, quayside in exhibition pavilions and in a range of venues in the heart of host cities, with a programme combining exhibitions, virtual reality, performances, talks, film screenings, concerts and more. Since 2024, the museum-boat has journeyed through a dozen countries, meeting audiences and expanding access to the arts. At every stopover, the festival fosters connections among artists, curators, cultural institutions, associations, and educational organisations to create collaborative projects and promote intercultural dialogue.
artexplora.org/festival
@artexplorafestival

About Art Explora
Art Explora is an international organisation that inspires new encounters between arts and audiences – locally, nationally and internationally. Its imaginative contemporary approach encourages new forms of access, participation and engagement with arts and culture, pushing boundaries with digital technology and mobile programmes. It works in partnership with artists, cultural organisations and communities, exploring all art forms and creating transformative cultural experiences for everyone. Art Explora is a charitable organisation founded in 2019 by philanthropist and entrepreneur Frédéric Jousset, with offices in France and the UK, bringing together many partners and over 2,000 volunteers.
artexplora.org
@art.explora

About Accor
ALL Accor, Accor's loyalty programme and booking platform, connects a global community of travellers to cultural, sports and lifestyle experiences. As main partner of the Art Explora Festival, ALL Accor contributes to its success by helping provide free access to culture for all, while supporting the visibility and reach of artists and territories. Accor, a global leader in hospitality, is committed alongside the Art Explora Foundation by mobilising its employees, its hotels across more than 45 brands, and its ALL Accor member community, to support the festival throughout its journey and foster dialogue between cultures.
group.accor.com
Learn more about the partnership

About the Port of Barcelona
The Port of Barcelona is Catalonia's main transport and services infrastructure and a leading port in the Euro-Mediterranean region. It brings together more than 500 companies and provides employment for over 40,000 people. Its activity is structured around four main areas – the commercial port, the logistics port, the outer port and the port-city - diversification that has consolidated its position as the leading logistics platform in southern Europe and the Mediterranean.
Within this model, Port Vell plays an essential role as a space fully integrated into urban life, conceived to bring the port environment closer to the public and to foster cultural, social and leisure activities. Port Vell provides a privileged setting for initiatives that connect culture, innovation and territory.

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