

Art Beats Festival 2026

International Festival of Art, Film, Music, and Theatre

Date: 3 September – 6 September

Location: Lancaster, United Kingdom and [Online](#)

Established in 2023, Art Beats is an international festival jointly organised by Lancaster University (United Kingdom) and Sunway University (Malaysia). Since its launch, the festival has alternated annually between Sunway University and Lancaster University, creating a dynamic platform for international artistic exchange, collaboration, and dialogue across cultures and disciplines.

Art Beats celebrates interdisciplinary artistic practice across visual art, film, music, theatre, sound, and immersive media, bringing together emerging, mid-career, and established artists from around the world. Through exhibitions, screenings, talks, the festival promotes creative encounters between artists, researchers, students, and communities.

As part of the 20th anniversary celebrations of the Lancaster University–Sunway University partnership, the 2026 edition reflects on global collaboration, movement, memory, and future imaginaries through contemporary artistic practice. We are looking for multi-disciplinary works in form or content, from visual arts, painting, and photography to multimedia, film and video art, immersive and interactive media, experimental sound, and music.

This year's festival focuses on the themes of **The Power of Two**, **Crossings**, and **Future Memories**.

The Power of Two: Partnerships, encounters, and exchanges shape the way we understand ourselves and the world around us. Inspired by the 20th anniversary of the Lancaster University–Sunway University partnership, this theme invites artists to explore the creative and transformative potential that emerges when two forces meet. Whether through collaboration or conflict, intimacy or distance, dialogue or tension, “The Power of Two” celebrates the spaces created between people, cultures, disciplines, technologies, and ideas. From human relationships and intercultural exchange to AI-human collaboration and immersive participation, we welcome works that reflect on coexistence, connection, duality, and shared futures.

Crossings: To cross is to move between worlds. This theme invites artists to reflect on journeys across borders — physical, emotional, political, digital, and imagined. “Crossings” explores movement as an act of survival, transformation, discovery, resistance, or encounter. We welcome works that engage with migration, displacement, mobility, hybridity, coastlines, transitions, and shifting identities, as well as crossings between media, realities, and modes of perception.

Future Memories: Memory is never fixed; it is continuously reshaped through technology, storytelling, archives, and imagination. “Future Memories” invites artists to explore the relationship between remembrance and speculation, asking how we preserve the past while imagining possible futures. From postmemory and intergenerational narratives to artificial intelligence, immersive worlds, ecological futures, and intangible heritage, this theme embraces

works that blur the boundaries between history and projection, testimony and invention, documentation and dream.

Call for Entry & Submissions

Key Information

- Submission Deadline: **July 13, 2026**
- Eligibility: Artists, filmmakers, musicians, sound artists from around the world.
- Time-based works such as film and video art should not **exceed 20 minutes**.
- For review, all submissions should be in a digital format *

Submissions **MUST** include:

- Your name and country of residency
- A short bio of the main creator of 100-150 words maximum
- Title of the work
- Which of the festival themes you wish to address
- Work's specification (dimensions for physical works, length/running time, aspect ratio, colour/BW, etc.)
- A short interpretative text suitable for use as an exhibition label (up to 100 words)
- An artist's statement of maximum 100-300 words, including an explanation of how the work relates to the chosen theme.
- 3-4 images from your work
- 1-2 photograph/s for the creator (or the team behind the work)

For more information, please email us at art.beats@lancaster.ac.uk with any questions you might have.

*If the work is selected for physical exhibition at Lancaster University, the transport of the work and insurance will be the artist's responsibility. Performance work will have production support.

How to enter:

1. Complete the [online submission form](#) then
2. Upload your digital work [here](#)

You must complete both step 1 and step 2 for work to be considered.