

Stories

2021–2025

**Shaped
by**

**Villa
Albertine**

Foreword

Created in 2021, Villa Albertine offers one-of-a-kind exploratory residencies across the United States. Through this program, we support artists, thinkers and creators from France and the Francophone world as they draw inspiration from transformative immersive experiences in the US.

Every year, we select 60 talented creators to embark on these exploratory journeys throughout the United States. Chosen from among approximately 900 annual applicants across 15 disciplines (visual arts, performing arts, new media, and more) by an international jury, our residents reflect the excellence, diversity, and dynamism of contemporary French culture.

By Villa Albertine's 5th anniversary season in 2026, we will have hosted more than 300 residents across 60 US locations, from New York to Alaska, South Dakota to Los Angeles, building an international network of creative and intellectual exchange.

Villa Albertine's offices in 10 US cities provide residents with both the structure and flexibility needed to deeply engage with the actors and institutions in the territories in which they pursue specific creative projects that bring fresh perspectives to today's most pressing global issues. Rooted in a longstanding tradition of French American cultural dialogue, Villa Albertine reinvents the residency as a platform for contemporary creation, transatlantic collaborations, and people-to-people dialogue.

This booklet offers a glimpse into Villa Albertine residencies' tangible results and success stories, showcasing the deep impact and lasting outcomes of our program.

Mohamed Bouabdallah,
Cultural Counselor of
France in the United States
Director of Villa Albertine

Contemporary Creation

From architects to musicians, podcasters, designers, filmmakers, and curators, our residents pursue specific creative projects that bring fresh perspectives to today's most pressing global issues. They transform residency encounters and discoveries into original works (books, films, performances, exhibitions) that reflect both the multifaceted nature of the American experience and the richness of their own perspectives.

Transatlantic Collaborations

Residencies resonate far beyond the one-to-three-month immersion period itself. With support from Villa Albertine, residents build meaningful connections with local American artists and institutions. These encounters spark dialogue and mutual inspiration: French and American artists come together to create collaborative works that bridge disciplines, territories, and generations.

Sustained Cultural Presence

These residencies forge a strong transatlantic community. Providing singular access to new markets and professional ecosystems, Villa Albertine expands the reach of contemporary French creation, amplifying voices that might otherwise remain unknown to American audiences. Our residencies open up new business opportunities for creators and facilitate US market penetration. Our model ensures that residents move from creation to visibility to integration, building lasting cultural impact in the United States.

300
residents

since 2021

60 US
locations

60%
women

15
disciplines

Architecture, Cinema, Craft, Design, Comics, Fiction, Nonfiction, Museums, Music, New Media, Artificial Intelligence, Performing Arts, Urban Arts, Culinary Arts, Visual Arts.

900
applications
annually

65
post-residency
grants
since 2023

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Acknowledgements

The Villa Albertine Team

Alain Gomis' Unique Take on Jazzman Thelonious Monk

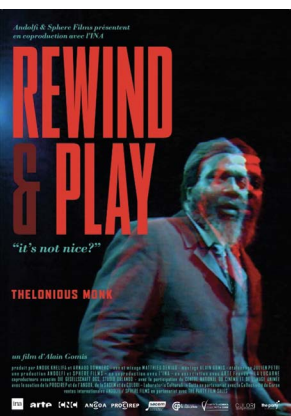
Inspiring Creation

During his residency, Alain Gomis conducted archival research on renowned pianist and American jazz legend Thelonious Monk, which led to the documentary film *Rewind & Play* (2022). Based on newly discovered footage from a 1969 interview recording of Monk, Alain Gomis' film tackles the music industry's casual racism, exploitation, and the complexity of Monk's genius.

Praised by the American press (*The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*), *Rewind & Play* was featured at prestigious North American festivals, among which Toronto's Hot Docs, Vancouver's DOXA Documentary Film Festival, and the New York Film Festival.

Following his residency, Alain Gomis was appointed lecturer in the Department of Art, Film, and Visual Studies at Harvard University for the 2023-2024 academic year.

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Alain Gomis
Filmmaker, in residence
November-December
2021 in Boston,
Los Angeles, New York,
and Washington, DC

Julia Ducournau Draws Inspiration from New York's Landscape of Memory and Resilience in Alpha

Inspiring Creation

In residence in New York City, Julia Ducournau delved into the history of the 1980s-1990s HIV/AIDS epidemic. With help from Villa Albertine, she met with one of the founding members of Act Up—an encounter that proved instrumental to the realism of her project.

Julia Ducournau's fieldwork and research during her residency inspired her new feature film, *Alpha*, deeply rooted in the people and history Ducournau engaged with during her stay.

Alpha was selected for the Official Competition at the 2025 Cannes Film Festival, paving the way to international acclaim.

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Julia Ducournau
Filmmaker,
in residence
April-July 2023
in New York

Discover books by our residents, inspired by their immersive stays in the United States.

These works are shaped by unique encounters and in-depth research throughout the country.

Albertine Collection: A Collaboration with Éditions du Seuil

Albertine residents have been afforded the unique opportunity to publish work inspired by their diverse experiences during Villa Albertine residencies with Éditions du Seuil, as part of our Albertine Collection imprint.

Alain Damasio's Vallée du Silicium: Humanity Meets Technology

Alain Damasio conducted his residency in Silicon Valley, delving into the world of emerging technologies to explore their impact on humanity.

His technopoetic essay, *Vallée du Silicium*, published in spring 2024, was born from this Villa Albertine residency and was met with great acclaim.

As the inaugural tome in Villa Albertine's new series with Éditions du Seuil, Damasio's *Vallée du Silicium* offers a bold and incisive critique of Big Tech's influence and growing impact on our lives.

An Italian translation is forthcoming.

Alain Damasio
Author and Science
Fiction Writer,
in residence April-May
2022 in San Francisco



Léa Hirschfeld's Zeno: Rethinking Inclusion

Inspiring Creation

Léa Hirschfeld explored inclusion initiatives across the United States, with a particular focus on Zeno Mountain Farm, a unique community where people with and without disabilities live, work, and create together in a spirit of mutual acceptance and collaboration.

Her Villa Albertine journey built upon the work of her podcast, *Décalés*, which gives voice to the siblings of persons with disabilities.

Léa Hirschfeld's residency gave way to her debut book, *Zeno*, published in February 2025 as part of the Villa Albertine collection at Éditions du Seuil.

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Léa Hirschfeld
Writer and podcaster,
in residence
January-April 2023
in Atlanta, Boston,
Los Angeles, New York,
and San Francisco

Alaska, l'usure du monde, by Claire Houmard and Charlotte Fauve

Inspiring Creation

Claire Houmard's residency took place at the Nunalleq archaeological site in Arctic Alaska. Through archaeological digs in close collaboration with the local Yupi'k community, she studied the resilience of Indigenous populations whose cultural heritage is under threat from accelerating coastal erosion.

Her work has led to the recovery and preservation of over 100,000 artifacts, powerful traces of daily life and ancestral traditions. This residency project showcases the archaeological and cultural richness of the Yupi'k and plays an active role in preserving their heritage.

Claire Houmard's research led to the writing and publishing of *Alaska, l'usure du monde*, a travelogue-style book co-written with journalist and fellow 2023 resident Charlotte Fauve. In this novel, the pair recount their experiences on a rescue excavation in the Yup'ik village of Quinhagak, in Alaska. Tracing the devastating effects of ecological and social crises, it is an urgent call to protect cultural heritage before it is carried off for good.

Alaska, l'usure du monde was published on May 16, 2025 by Éditions du Seuil, as part of the Albertine Collection.

Claire Houmard
Archaeologist,
multi-year residency
(summers 2022-2026)
in Quinhagak, Alaska

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More Publications Inspired by Our Residencies

Inspiring Creation

Inspiring Creation

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Grizzly Jam: Alice Chemama Draws the Wild

Based on dozens of interviews in Bear Country, Alice Chemama's graphic novel captures the delicate bear-human coexistence, where awe meets caution and adaptation. Dargaud, 2025.

Un désir démesuré d'amitié: Hélène Giannecchini in Queer California

Having delved into California's queer history through rarely seen photographic archives in San Francisco, Hélène Giannecchini's novel reimagines friendship not just as an emotional bond, but as a political and ethical force, one capable of challenging social structures and amplifying marginalized stories. Éditions du Seuil, 2024.

Mémoires sauvées de l'eau: Nina Léger on the Gold Rush

Blending fiction and historical narrative, Nina Léger's *Mémoires sauvées de l'eau* focuses on Oroville, California, a city shaped by the gold rush, environmental devastation, and the erasure of Indigenous cultures. Gallimard, 2024. Winner of the 2024 Historical Novel Prize.

Alice Chemama

Artist and author, in residence during Fall 2023 at Yellowstone National Park (California)

Hélène Giannecchini

Writer, in residence December 2021-February 2022 in San Francisco

Nina Léger

Writer, in residence April-June 2023 in San Francisco

Pierre-Emmanuel Lyet

Illustrator and animation filmmaker, in residence during Summer 2024 in New York

Jamal Ouazzani

Author, podcaster, and filmmaker, in residence during Fall 2024 in Los Angeles

Pierre-Emmanuel Lyet's US recognition: New Yorker Cover Illustration

New York *Rain Tales* is Lyet's children's comic book slated for release in October 2025, with an animated film adaptation in the works. His residency led to his work's US recognition, with one of his illustrations being featured on the cover of *The New Yorker* magazine.

Amour by Jamal Ouazzani

Following his residency, Jamal Ouazzani released his debut essay *Amour* and produced Season 3 of *JINS*, exploring the sexualities, gender identities, and spiritualities of Arab and Muslim communities through a feminist, intersectional, and inclusive lens. In partnership with Villa Albertine, the Institut du monde Arabe in Paris hosted a launch event and presented an audio exhibition of *JINS*.

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Jazz Meets South Indian Music in Sivan Eldar's Opera in Collaboration with Peter Sellars

Exploring music, rituals, and storytelling, Sivan Eldar made pivotal residency encounters that shaped her œuvre. Following her US immersion, she created *The Nine Jewelled Deer*, a bilingual opera in English and Tamil, in collaboration with renowned artists, including Ganavya Doraiswamy (Tamil-American Singer), Lauren Groff (American novelist), Julie Mehretu (Ethiopian-American visual artist), and Peter Sellars (American theater director). The opera will premiere at the 2025 Aix-en-Provence Festival. It will then travel across the United States on tour. Inspired by Jātaka tales, the life of Indian musician Seetha Doraiswamy, and Buddhist literature, *The Nine Jewelled Deer* tells a universal story of freedom and resilience in the face of violence. The score blends classical music with jazz, South Indian traditions, and electronic elements.

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SIVAN ELДАР — GANAVYA DORAISWAMY — PETER SELLARS

> AIX-EN-PROVENCE ET ARLES

Sivan Eldar
Composer, in residence
June-September 2023
in Los Angeles
and New York

Fostering Transatlantic Collaborations

A Franco-American Jazz Ensemble Is Born, Led by Sélène Saint-Aimé

Martinican and Franco-Ivorian artist Sélène Saint-Aimé researched New Orleans' African, Afro-Indian, and Caribbean heritage.

While experiencing local culture first-hand, she built connections with US-based musicians, including trumpeter Steve Lands, saxophonist Gladney, and pianist Shea Pierre. Together, they formed a new ensemble dedicated to creating new Creole arrangements, bringing *New Orleans Creole Songs* to life.

The group now regularly tours on jazz stages across Europe and the United States.

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Fostering Transatlantic Collaborations



Sélène Saint-Aimé
Double bass player,
singer, and composer,
in residence April-June
2022 in New Orleans

The Body as Site of Liberation in Wanjiru Kamuyu's *Fragmented Shadows*

As part of *Albertine Dance Season 2023*, Wanjiru Kamuyu studied the body as a means for liberation. She collected recordings of stories, interviews, sounds, and environments which served as source material for her work, with a particular focus on African American mothers' memories.

This exploration led to *Fragmented Shadows*, a performance piece examining the ties between memory, movement, and emancipation. *Fragmented Shadows* will tour the US in Fall 2025.

16 Supported by Villa Albertine's FUSED (French-US Exchange in Dance) program, the piece will be staged at the Wexner Center for the Arts, known for its innovative programming and commitment to intercultural dialogue. This residency also deepened Wanjiru Kamuyu's ties to the American artistic and academic world, leading to a residency at NY Live Arts and a teaching fellowship in choreography at Bard College.



Wanjiru Kamuyu
Choreographer
and dancer,
in residence
March–September 2023
in Boston, New York
& Washington, DC

Fostering Transatlantic Collaborations

A New York Collaboration Between Noé Soulier and the Trisha Brown Dance Company

During his Villa Albertine residency, Noé Soulier worked with the Trisha Brown Dance Company to create *In the Fall*, a performance staged in New York (Joyce Theater), London, Berlin, Paris, and Abu Dhabi (NYU Abu Dhabi) in 2023 and 2024.

In the Fall explores choreographic processes and the embodied relationships between dancers and choreographers.

Villa Albertine's support further led to a new collaboration with costume designer Kaye Voyce, whom Soulier met in residency and later invited to design the costumes for his next piece, *Close Up*, performed at the 2024 Avignon Festival and on tour in Europe in 2025.

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Fostering Transatlantic Collaborations



Noé Soulier
Choreographer
and director
of CNDC-Angers,
in residence in April
and October 2023,
New York



(LA)HORDE Jumpstyle and the Future of Dance in Los Angeles

Artist trio (LA)HORDE (Marine Brutti, Jonathan Debrouwer, and Arthur Harel) has been pushing the boundaries of contemporary dance through performance, film, and installation since 2013. They are currently at the head of the Ballet National de Marseille.

During their 2021 residency in Los Angeles, (LA)HORDE explored jumpstyle, a high-energy street dance, using it to inform both choreographic and cinematic work.

As a pioneer of a new generation of dance, (LA)HORDE champions radical creativity, inclusivity, and youth-driven innovation.

Further supported by Villa Albertine's FUSED program, they returned to the US in 2025 with a collective of dancers to present *Age of Content*. This new performance draws inspiration from digital aesthetics to question our physical and emotional responses to the abundance of online content today.

(LA)HORDE

Co-directors of Ballet National de Marseille, choreographers, and Filmmakers, in residence November-December 2021 in New York and Los Angeles

Florient Jousse's Journey Through Creole Memory

Florient Jousse studied Puerto Rican *bomba*, a musical genre which bears a striking resemblance to the Réunionnais *maloya*, as they share African roots. He researched Puerto Rico's Taíno language and its role in conveying a particular cosmogony and worldview, drew inspiration from narratives surrounding endemic plants, and delved into *bomba* preservation and its relationship to contemporary society.

His Villa Albertine Puerto Rican immersion will feed *Flamboyants!*, a hybrid documentary, theater, and musical project connecting Réunion Island, Puerto Rico, and Louisiana. *Flamboyants!* explores Creole identities, shared colonial legacies, and the invisible threads linking island and port cities shaped by histories of slavery, resistance, and cultural reinvention. Rooted in maloyan and bomban musical traditions and inspired by symbolic figures like the flamboyant tree, the play will bring Puerto Rican and Réunionnais artists together on stage.

Florient Jousse
Actor, playwright,
and director,
in residence
in April 2025
in Puerto Rico



Nicolas Floc'h on the Mississippi, From Arles to the New Orleans Museum of Art

Photographer Nicolas Floc'h traveled the span of the Mississippi River during his Louisiana residency. He developed *Fleuves Océan*, a photographic project that stands as a poetic and critical reflection of the impact of humankind on water ecosystems.

These photographs have been exhibited at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC (March-April 2023), at the Rencontres d'Arles (2024), and at Paris Photo at the Grand Palais (2024).

In 2025, the New Orleans Museum of Art is showcasing *Fleuves Océan* in a solo exhibition entitled *Mississippi Watershed*. This exhibition marks the culmination of Floc'h's Villa Albertine residency, illustrating the importance of a shared water network that links people across the entire continent. *Mississippi Watershed* showcases monochrome images and large-format black-and-white landscapes photographed along the banks of the Mississippi River and in Louisiana.

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Nicolas Floc'h
Photographer,
in residence
Spring-Summer 2022
in Louisiana

Reaching European and American Audiences

Rethinking Chicagoan Architecture with Frédéric Chartier and Pascale Dalix

Frédéric Chartier and Pascale Dalix conducted comparative research on the rehabilitation of business districts in Chicago and Paris.

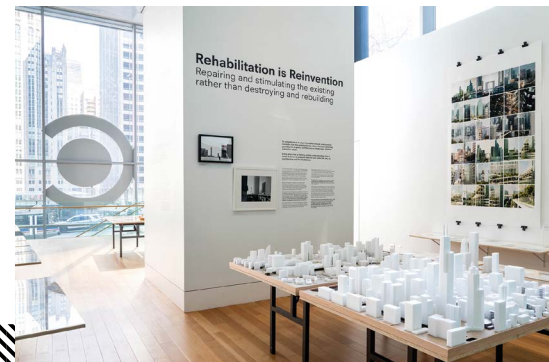
Their residency work led to Systems, an exhibition offering new ways to integrate biodiversity into urban design. Systems ran for five months at the Chicago Architecture Center, as part of Chicago's 5th Architecture Biennial.

The duo continues to cultivate the transatlantic network they have built in residence, in preparation for future French-American projects.

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Reaching European and American Audiences

Frédéric Chartier
and Pascale Dalix
Architects
(ChartierDalix),
in residence during
Fall 2023 in Chicago



Reexamining Chicago's Environmental History with Jennifer Buyck and Pierre-Alexandre Savriacouty

Following their joint residency focusing on the environmental history of Chicago, Jennifer Buyck and Pierre-Alexandre Savriacouty's work was presented during Chicago's 5th Architecture Biennial and at Art Design Chicago. The resulting exhibition, entitled *Myth of the Organic City Water*, explored the city's historical and contemporary relationship with Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River, from Indigenous land use to twentieth-century infrastructure.

Through maps, installations, and sculptures, Buyck and Savriacouty examined the consequences of waterway exploitation, commodification, and control.

In addition, Pierre-Alexandre Savriacouty held his first solo exhibition, *Iceberg Process 5*, at Tala Gallery (June 28 - July 21, 2024).

Reaching European and American Audiences

Reality and Virtuality Collide with Mathieu Pradat at the Boston Museum of Science

Mathieu Pradat uses immersive storytelling to explore the intersections of reality and virtuality.

During his residency, he developed *The Response*, which explores the murky space between reality and virtuality, using artificial intelligence and humanoid robots. As visitors progress through the installation, sensors track them through space and measure their emotional states, allowing virtual beings to respond in an increasingly disturbing way.

The Response was presented as a virtual reality experience at the Boston Museum of Science.

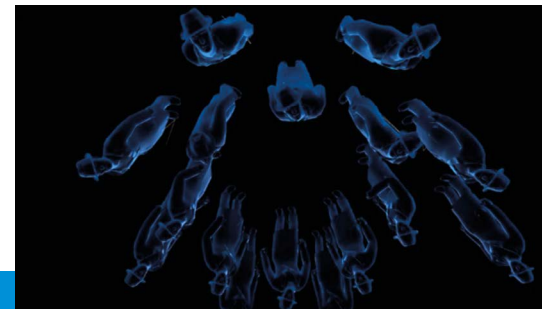
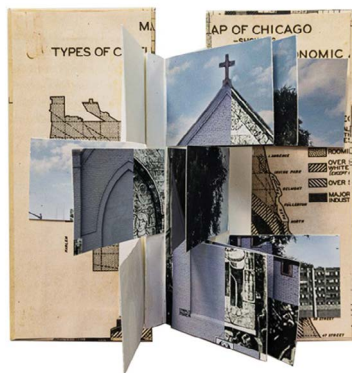
Reaching European and American Audiences

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23

Jennifer Buyck
and Pierre-Alexandre
Savriacouty
Architect (Buyck)
and Artist (Savriacouty),
in residence in April
and September-
October 2022 in Chicago

Mathieu Pradat
Author and director,
in residence during
Winter 2022 in Boston



Steven Leprizé Brings French Cabinetmaking Excellence to US Audiences

Steven Leprizé studied recycled materials, solid surfaces, and 3D modeling during his residency, drawing inspiration from high-end US custom motorcycle design. His New York immersion directly inspired several new creations such as a marquetry mural, a folding screen, two mirrors, and more. These objects were exhibited at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair during New York Design Week 2024. During his stay, he connected with *The Invisible Collection*, leading to the inclusion of five of his pieces in their catalog and the sale of his signature Arcane stool. His introduction to the US market led him to co-found his own US-based company, *+33 Collectif*, with fellow French craftsmen Emmanuel Barroix (glassmaker) and Steven Richard (metalworker). They recently sold a custom-designed pool table in the US that blends their three crafts into a single object, epitomizing French excellence and redefining luxury through collaborative design.

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Steven Leprizé
Cabinetmaker,
in residence
June–August 2022
in New York

Elevating French Savoir Faire

Robin Bourgeois Maps Neighborhood Identity Through Design in Brooklyn

Robin Bourgeois researched Sunset Park, a Brooklyn neighborhood known for its cultural diversity and industrial waterfront, reexamining relations between the site's inhabitants, history, and culture. From Native American heritage to modern urban dynamics, Robin Bourgeois sought to give shape to Sunset Park's legacy through a series of objects. His creations reinterpret forgotten elements of local life, combining design, memory, and community heritage. Robin Bourgeois' series was showcased at the 2024 New York Design Week.

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Elevating French Savoir Faire

Robin Bourgeois
Product designer
and animation
filmmaker,
in residence during
Summer 2024
in New York



Eve George's New York City-Inspired Glass Object Collection

Eve George drew inspiration from the relationship between water and the urban environment in New York City. Her fieldwork inspired *Brume*, a collection of glass objects evoking the three states of water, solid, liquid, and gas. The collection was featured at Villa Albertine in May 2024, with the support of the Bettencourt Schueller Foundation and Galerie Philia. In December 2023, it received the *Best Special Project Award* at Design Miami's collectible design fair.

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Eve George
Designer, in residence
February–April 2023
in New York

Elevating French Savoir Faire

Claire Houmard Works Alongside the Yupi'k Community in Alaska

Claire Houmard's residency, which began in 2022 and will continue through 2026, has taken her to the Nunalleq archaeological site in Arctic Alaska. Through archaeological digs in close collaboration with the local Yupi'k community, she has studied the resilience of Indigenous populations whose cultural heritage is under threat from accelerating coastal erosion.

Her work thus far has led to the recovery and preservation of over 100,000 artifacts, powerful traces of daily life and ancestral traditions. This residency project showcases the archaeological and cultural richness of the Yupi'k and plays an active role in preserving their heritage.

Claire Houmard's research led to the writing and publishing of *Alaska, l'usure du monde*, a travelogue-style book co-written with journalist and fellow 2023 resident Charlotte Fauve. In this novel, the pair recount their experiences on a rescue excavation in the Yup'ik village of Quinhagak, in Alaska. Tracing the devastating effects of ecological and social crises, it is an urgent call to protect cultural heritage before it is carried off for good.

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Claire Houmard
Archaeologist,
multi-year residency
(summers 2022–2026)
in Quinhagak, Alaska

Nurturing Intellectual Dialogue

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Alicia Knock Traces African American Artistic Legacies Between the US and France

Nurturing Intellectual Dialogue

Alicia Knock explored the transatlantic ties of African American, African, and Caribbean artists with France. From Washington, DC to Atlanta, Denver, and Baltimore, she conducted extensive archival research in institutions including Howard University, the Smithsonian, and the Library of Congress.

During her residency, Alicia Knock gave public talks in Washington, DC and across four US states, from Louisiana and Georgia to New York and Ohio.

Her residency will culminate in the major *Paris Noir* 2025 exhibition, which she is curating at the Centre Pompidou.

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Alicia Knock
Heritage curator, 2024,
traveling residency

Visuals captions

16—Festival d'Aix-en-Provence premiere poster, summer 2025
17—Sélène de Saint-Aimé © Nicolas Derné, Shea Pierre © Elliot Kamenitz, Miles Lyons © The California Honeydrops, Steve Lands © Margaux Rodrigues, Alfred Jordan Jr, Gladney © Noé Pierre
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29—The Nunalleq Archaeological Site in Alaska
30—Alicia Knock with Kim Vaz-Deville and Darryl Montana



Acknowledgements

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Our heartfelt thanks goes out to our individual supporters as well, whose trust and generosity continue to shape Villa Albertine's mission: Daphne Recanati-Kaplan and Thomas S. Kaplan, Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis, Béatrice Stern, Fidji Simo, Sana Sabbagh, Elizabeth and Jean-Marie Eveillard, Stephan Haimo and Veronica Bulgari, Michel David-Weill, remembered with deep gratitude, and Hélène David-Weill, Claude Wasserstein and Mamadou Abou and Catherine Sarr.

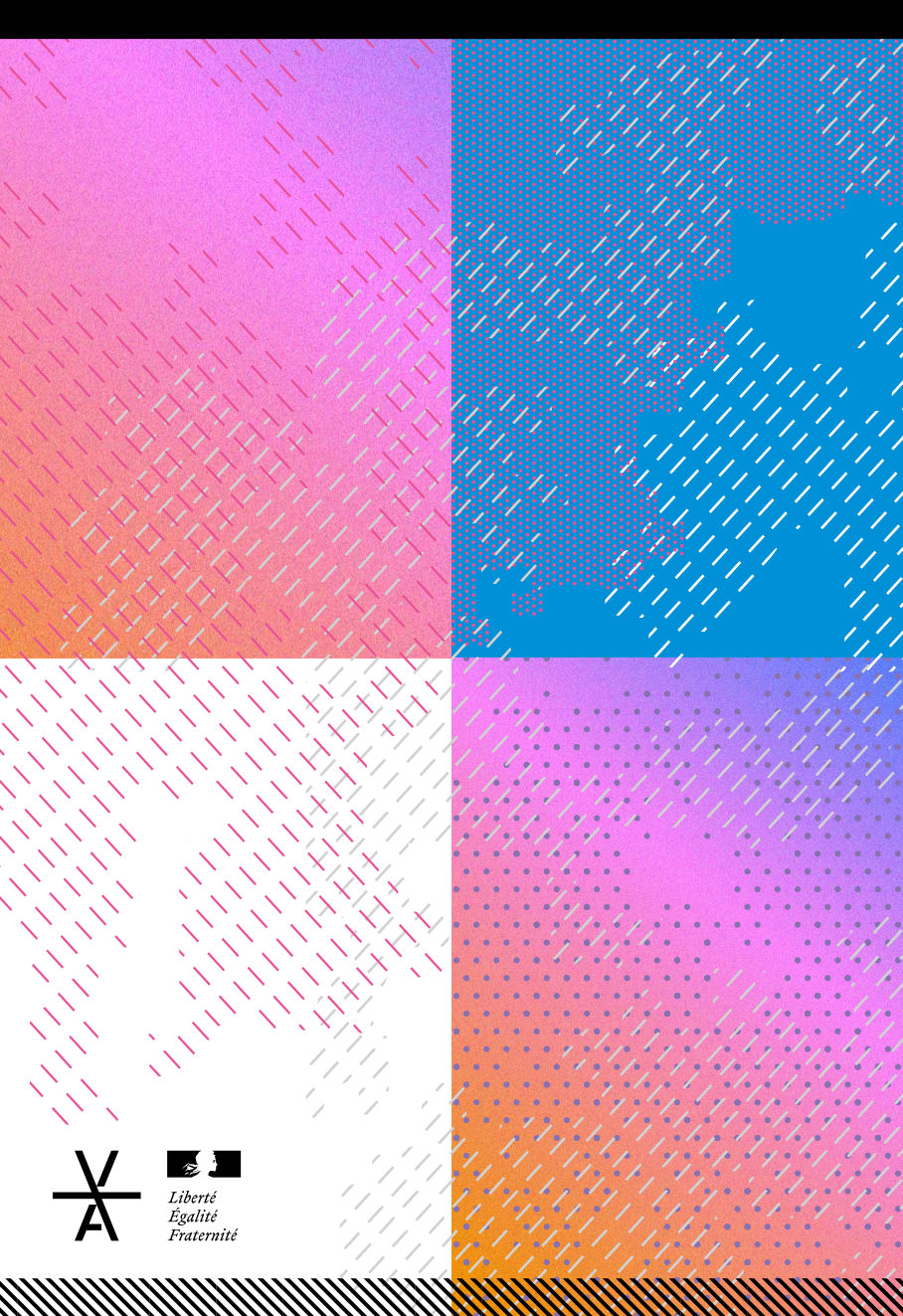
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*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*