



Press release

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For immediate release

## Visions du Réel presents a special focus on the artist Meriem Bennani



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Visions du Réel is delighted to present a special focus on the Moroccan artist Meriem Bennani to mark the Swiss premiere of her film *Bouchra*, co-directed by Orian Barki. On 24 April, the artist will discuss her approach during a public conversation with artist and filmmaker Valentin Noujaïm, alongside a presentation of her films and video works. Visual artist and videographer Meriem Bennani is known for her art installations and hybrid projects, which feature a light-hearted combination of globalised pop culture references and representations of Maghreb history and culture. A key figure of her generation, the Moroccan artist has held numerous exhibitions at prestigious venues including MoMA PS1, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Louis Vuitton Foundation and, more recently, the Fondazione Prada. As original as they are unique, her films disrupt linear narrative patterns and place protagonists in new, imaginary worlds. The full programme for the 57th edition of Visions du Réel (17–26 April) will be released on 25 March.

After making her name with sculptures and immersive installations, Meriem Bennani turned to video as a medium to create several works addressing issues of exile, migration and the meaning of community. Her cinematic approach offers a perspective on modern society and its complex identities, issues related to gender and the omnipresence of digital technologies. Drawing on duplication and even the concept of remix, Bennani weaves together humour and critique to explore the political force of collective life, while highlighting the power dynamics that shape our hyper-connected societies. Imbued with pop culture, Bennani's films shift easily from music videos to animation, via found footage or documentary material, subverting dominant narratives and opening them up to new, often idiosyncratic and absurdist forms of storytelling.

“We are delighted to welcome artist Meriem Bennani, whose reputation in contemporary art is well established, and to present her remarkable first feature film, as well as seven short films. The conversation around her hybrid, pop and political practice will joyfully expand the spectrum of possibilities for this 2026 edition.” comments Emilie Bujès, Artistic Director of Visions du Réel.

During the lockdown in 2020, Meriem Bennani teamed up with filmmaker Orian Barki to create *2 Lizards*, an eight-episode mini-series in which two anthropomorphised lizards wander through a locked-down New York. Broadcast on Instagram, this fable adopts a multifaceted form that interweaves 3D animation and non-fiction sequences to effectively capture the atmosphere of lockdown, from general apathy to diffuse anxiety and solidarity protest. Initiated in 2018 and completed in 2022, *Life on the Caps: Trilogy in Single Channel* unfolds as a three-part work centred on Fiona, a CGI crocodile and resident of CAPS, a fictional island in the middle of the Atlantic, where teleportation has replaced air travel. Using animation techniques and live-action footage, Meriem Bennani constructs a dystopian universe where the State incarcerates migrants who teleport illegally in an attempt to flee the world of CAPS, offering an alternative representation of immigration that runs counter to the hegemonic and regularly miserabilist media discourses.

In 2025, Meriem Bennani co-created her first feature film, *Bouchra*, with Orian Barki, the original soundtrack for which was also composed by the artist Flavien Berger. True to the universe of the two filmmakers, the film blends 3D animation, anthropomorphism and documentary material to create a surreal and colourful world reminiscent of video games. The film follows Bouchra, a Moroccan coyote-filmmaker living in New York, who examines the impact of her homosexuality on her mother Aicha, a cardiologist in Casablanca. Through this hybrid work, between autobiography and fiction, the filmmakers offer a tender exploration of queer cultures and the complexity of mother-daughter relationships.

Alongside her film work, Meriem Bennani has also created several art installations which have quickly garnered attention from the public and critics alike, such as the recent *Sole Crushing*. Presented at the Fondazione Prada as part of the *For my Best Family* exhibition between 2024 and 2025, this installation brings together nearly two hundred pairs of flip-flops and tap shoes that perform a musical piece somewhere between a symphony and a popular uprising, exploring questions of living together and the place of the individual in the community.

## Biography

Meriem Bennani was born in 1988 in Rabat, Morocco. She now lives and works in New York. She holds a BFA from Cooper Union in New York and a master's degree from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

Her work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions and has notably been presented at the Whitney Museum, MoMA PS1, the Guggenheim Museum, Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris, Nottingham Contemporary, Renaissance Society in Chicago and Kamel Lazaar Foundation in Tunis.

Meriem Bennani's works can be found in the collections of Lafayette Anticipations; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; KADIST, Paris; Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris.

## Save the date

25 March 2026: Programme announced  
17–26 April: 57th edition of Visions du Réel  
VdR–Industry: 19 –22 April 2026

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## Contacts

Carl Ahnebrink  
Press Office Manager  
cahnebrink@visionsdureel.ch  
+41 22 365 44 59

Gloria Zerbinati  
International Press Officer  
gloria.zerbinati@gmail.com  
+33 7 86 80 02 82

Further information: [visionsdureel.ch](http://visionsdureel.ch)  
57th edition of Visions du Réel: 17 – 26 April 2026

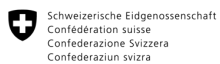
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