

An aerial photograph of a construction site. The ground is dark and rocky, with a path of light-colored stones and a patterned tile area. Numerous wooden beams and slats are scattered across the site, some standing upright and others lying flat. A large, dark, diagonal line runs across the image, possibly a shadow or a structural element.

# NAT JOU KANN


2025

\\ FESTIVAL DES ARCHITECTURES









**On the occasion of the second Matjoukann Architecture Festival, the Maison de l'Architecture de Martinique (MAM), the Regional Council of the Order of Architects of Martinique (CROAM), and the Council of Architecture, Urbanism, and the Environment (CAUE) are launching a call for applications to create six installations. The Festival takes place in the heart of the city of Saint-Pierre, Martinique. It offers a journey through the folds filled with the city's potential: vestiges, vacant lots, and also iconic heritage.**

## \\\ PRESENTATION

Matjoukann is the term for pa(ma)trimoine in Martinican Creole.

The Matjoukann Festival seeks to highlight the pa(ma)trimoine of the island. It evokes the past, the present, but above all, it projects towards the common future.

The Matjoukann Architecture Festival aspires to be reborn every two years through its in-situ temporary installations, serving as witnesses of a specific moment, marked by the evolution of architecture, art, and by extension, culture—a reflection etched by a society in motion, a legacy to be passed on.

The installations are designed for specific locations that they aim to reveal or transform, whether it be a neglected space, a hidden spot, or a place that has been seen too often and is no longer noticed, having become ordinary or even insignificant. They aim to revalorize the locations in which they are placed and for which they are intended.

In addition to raising awareness about architecture, art, and existing heritage, Matjoukann aims to stimulate the imagination of its audience by inviting

them to adopt a new perspective, encouraging questions about their past, present, and future environment.

The installations are designed to inspire and engage the various senses of the public, making each step of the journey a moment of connection (liannaj).

For this second edition, the selected locations align with the festival's theme ("remission") and the desire to contribute to the reconstruction of the city of Saint-Pierre.

The various spaces chosen for this year, whether unused, uninhabited, neglected, or protected, are sometimes rendered invisible by their location or their static preservation, gradually falling into the oblivion caused by routine. The installations should focus on revitalizing and recycling these sites into active spaces for the city's revitalization during the Festival, to show paths and open avenues to help Saint-Pierre emerge from the lethargy that plagues it.

The interruption of the usual functions of these spaces is naturally done with respect for the selected sites.

<sup>1</sup> "Matjoukann [macuka]n 2 (neol.) heritage. Tou sa ka fè pawti di an matjoukann kiltirel. (H. Atine, A.S.D)  
All this is part of a cultural heritage." In DICTIONNAIRE DU CREOLE MARTINICAIS,  
Raphaël Confiant (1951- ). Éditions Orphie, Fort-de-France, 2022.







Martinique, in the form we know today, is made up of several small volcanic islands that formed in a line as the volcanic eruption vents shifted over time. It is the only island in the Lesser Antilles to exhibit three juxtaposed volcanic arcs, with a steady northwestward migration of volcanic activity since 25 million years ago. It was the young Mount Pelée — recently inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, the most recent and still active volcano — that, on May 8, 1902, swept over the city of Saint-Pierre by releasing a ground-hugging pyroclastic flow that killed more than thirty thousand people.

Saint-Pierre, known as the Little Paris and the Pearl of the Antilles, was founded in 1635 by unemployed buccaneers acting independently of the central government and developed in a often rebellious way by a caste of free people of color, maintaining a distance from the metropolitan capital based in Fort-de-France (then known as Fort Royal). It disappeared not only as a physical space but, more importantly, a major part of the dynamic mulatto society committed to the ideals of the Republic and secularism, which had propelled Martinique toward Modernity in the 19th century, was lost.

Following other minor eruptions, the island's cultural and economic capital was transferred to its rival, Fort-de-France, and the devastated structures of Saint-Pierre were left more or less abandoned for more than a century.

Since then, Saint-Pierre has wavered between rebirth and resignation, without ever clearly positioning itself — neither as a tropical Pompeii preserved under glass nor as a new city rebuilt upon its ashes.

Even today, its designation as a “Ville d’Art et d’Histoire” and the regulations concerning preventive archaeology create an ambiguity: highlighting what remnants of the past society must be explored, recorded, and preserved, but with almost no resources dedicated to inventory work.

Time passes, putting what remains under the layers of ash in greater danger and pushing the opportunity for understanding the past into an increasingly uncertain future, while reconstruction efforts are bogged down by costs and delays, as the financial burden for archaeological interventions falls on private individuals wishing to build.

Three years after our first festival, ERUPTION, we want, for this new edition, to focus on what comes after — the positive continuation, the end of mourning, the end of victimization — and finally call for the REMISSION of the city, for the colors and music to return, for life to truly resume.

“*Asé pléré, an nou lité*” (“Enough crying, let’s fight”) once said the activist.

Of course, Saint-Pierre will forever remain in our memories as a martyr city, a witness to a central chapter in the history of our small country. Even though the urban society that built the city was deeply bereaved, its ideas and struggles were not completely extinguished.

Of course, Saint-Pierre will not reclaim its role as Martinique’s cultural and economic capital, because life moves on. A new society has formed since departmentalization, centered inland, supported by a new suburban structure designed to help it thrive.

Yet life does not like emptiness either, and a new configuration of living together could breathe new life into the old skin of Saint-Pierre — if we can find the necessary energy.

This is what our Festival aims to generate: architectural vitamins.

The installation proposals we invite you to imagine must act as dietary supplements, capsules of healing, to help the city out of its convalescence and set it on the path to recovery.

One key strategy to avoid the obstacle of mandatory preventive excavations is to build without anchoring into the ground.

Thus, the Festival calls for the production of architectural prototypes that can serve as recipes, as models, to break the deadlock.


We must imagine architectures that do not need to dig into the soil — architectures simply placed gently upon it — like soothing caresses on the city’s healing wounds.

We must invest these gaping spaces and transform them into places of renewal, delicately laid there.









## /// PARTICIPATION CONDITIONS

The consultation is open to enthusiasts of architecture and urban planning.

It is possible to form a multidisciplinary team of up to 4 people, with the team leader being a graduate architect or a master's level architecture student.

## /// APPLICATION DOSSIER

The application dossier consists of an online registration form to be completed and signed at <https://matjoukann.com/inscription/>.

This form requires the following information:

- \ Team Presentation in both French and English: including members' names, contact details, motivations, and a high-resolution photograph of the team members.

- \ Presentation of the Installation, in both French and English, according to the site chosen by the team and the theme of the Matjoukann Architecture Festival for the year, "**REMISSION**": detailing how the team envisions their installation, its contribution to the city and the public, its integration into the site, its assembly and disassembly, and its overall cost. The presentation must be illustrated with a high-resolution image (mandatory) and sketches deemed useful for understanding the project.

- \ Signed Rights Transfer Authorization.

**All sources for the projects must be cited and referenced. Only original creations should be presented as part of Matjoukann.**

## /// PLANNING

Launch: **Monday, March 31, 2025.**

Application period: From **Monday, April 28 to Thursday, July 31, 2025**, until 11:59 PM Martinique time (GMT-4).

Selection results announcement: **Monday, September 1, 2025.**

Matjoukann Festival schedule: **Saturday, October 18, and Sunday, October 19, 2025**, as part of the 2025 National Architecture Days.







An aerial photograph of a lush green landscape. In the top left, there is a building with a red corrugated metal roof. The rest of the image is filled with dense green trees and vegetation. A path or road is visible on the right side. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

## \\ \\ SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection of teams will be based on the following criteria:

### **Team Composition (10%)**

- \\ The multidisciplinary nature of the team.
- \\ The references and background of the team members.
- \\ Motivation and interest in the Matjoukann Festival.

### **Context (20%)**

- \\ Consideration of the general context at the Caribbean, Martinique, and Saint-Pierre levels.
- \\ Integration of the project into its urban context and spatial environment.

### **Project (50%)**

- \\ Addressing the theme “Remission” in the developed project.
- \\ Research – Process – Innovation aspects of the project (overall concept, innovative ideas, creativity, construction strategies, materiality, volumetrics, etc.).
- \\ Use of local, bio-sourced, biodegradable, and recyclable materials in an environmentally respectful approach.
- \\ Technical methods for anchoring the project to its environment.

### **Feasibility (20%)**

- \\ Project completion and execution timelines.
- \\ Project cost.
- \\ Reversibility of the installation.

## \\ \\ JURY COMPOSITION

The jury will consist of 7 members:

- \\ 1 representative from MAM.
- \\ 1 representative from CROAM.
- \\ 1 representative from CAUE.
- \\ 1 representative from Lycée Polyvalent Victor Anicet.
- \\ 1 representative from Campus Caraibéen des arts
- \\ 1 representative from the City of Saint-Pierre.
- \\ 1 representative from the Directorate of Cultural Affairs of Martinique.



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## /// CONTACT

All questions should be addressed via email to [contact@matjoukann.com](mailto:contact@matjoukann.com).

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