Xing
presents
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[festa¬18 September 2026]
lying-in-state for the Internet
RICCARDO BENASSI
Le ultime fabbriche rimaste in lontananza intonano gospel ripetitivi...
Torino
Fondazione Merz
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Friday 18 September 2026 from 6 pm to 9.30 pm, at the **Fondazione Merz** in **Turin**, **Xing** presents, in collaboration with **GAM** Torino, **'Le ultime fabbriche rimaste in lontananza intonano gospel ripetitivi...'**, a new production commissioned to **Riccardo Benassi**, an artist and theorist active in the new media scene who has been involved with Xing several times since the 2000s.
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'Le ultime fabbriche rimaste in lontananza intonano gospel ripetitivi...' (camera ardente per Internet) / **The last remaining factories in the distance sing repetitive gospel songs...'** (lying-in-state for the Internet) is the second event of the **FESTA** project, which will take place in 2026 and 2027 in **Bologna, Turin, Cesena, Riola, Florence** and **Milan**.
FESTA is based on commissions to artistic personalities, each invited to conceive and create a typology of 'festive event', a **prototype** for an artwork intended as a moment of suspension of the ordinary, in terms of time and manner.
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'Le ultime fabbriche rimaste in lontananza intonano gospel ripetitivi...' attempts to trace the internet's lifespan, from its landing in the 1990s as an upgrade to home telephone lines, to its supposed demise, which began on tiptoe on the pandemic precipice, as if it were necessary to return to the moment it inhabited our neighborhoods to focus on how it inhabits our bodies. Setting up **a lying-in-state for the Internet** is a festa intended as cultivating the necessary conditions for there to be something worth celebrating.
The basement of the Fondazione Merz will be populated by the **Tecnosistemix**, new vibrant high reliefs that abstract and invent the form of the technological infrastructure of the global telecommunications system, imbuing the space with both industrial melancholy and interface-free exuberance. Through a dilated action of perpetual maintenance, the Tecnosistemix are played by Benassi, sounding like a distant digital choir that musically coagulates in the air a form of spirituality achieved through technology, a malfunction of our sensorial system induced by a surrogate and synthetic truth that flirts with hypnosis. And since human beings seek out life even where it isn't, from the melodic buzz the voice sprouts: it becomes a phenomenological essay and an impersonal diary, only to then fade back into a hint of tinnitus.
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Riccardo Benassi
Le ultime fabbriche rimaste in lontananza intonano gospel ripetitivi… (2026)
concept, text, sound, performance Riccardo Benassi
design and production Tecnosistemix Riccardo Benassi
production assistant Martina Pumpel
a commission by Xing
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The event will be preceded by a **conversation** on **Wednesday 16 September** at 7 pm at **Combo Torino** (Corso Regina Margherita 128, Turin) with **Riccardo Benassi** and **Vincenzo Estremo**, media theorist, **Chiara Bertola**, Director of GAM - Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Torino, **Giulia Turconi**, curator at the Merz Foundation Turin, and **Silvia Fanti** and **Daniele Gasparinetti**, artistic directors of Xing Bologna.
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Riccardo Benassi, artist born in Cremona, lives and works in Berlin, Bergamo and online. He makes use of text and sound to question the limits of technology from an existentialist perspective, implementing poetic language in time-based environmental installations, video essays, performances and spatial interventions created for public and private commissions. His work has distinguished itself for a multidisciplinary approach on the impact of technology in our daily relation to space and people, mostly reflecting on how technological devices have radically altered the structures for living and organizing the real, from architecture to politics, to cultural production and consumption. Benassi traversed the subcultures of the 1990s and was a key figure in the underground music scene. Equally active in the visual field, he

employes new media focusing on the expressive growth of the millennial generation, becoming a point of reference for them both in theory and artistic practice. In recent years text has taken an increasingly large place in his productions. His work has been presented at MAXXI, Rome (2025, 2026); Museion, Bolzano (2024); Museo della Permanente, Milan (2024), Palazzo Grassi / Punta della Dogana, Venice (2023); Fondazione ICA, Milan (solo show, 2023); MAXXI, L'Aquila (2022); GAM, Turin (2022); ar/ge kunst, Bolzano (2022); Macro, Rome (2022); Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement, Genève (2021); MoCA Taipei, Taiwan (2021); ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe (solo show, 2020); Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève (solo show, 2019); Galleria ZERO..., Milan (2019); Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (solo show, 2016). Among his special projects: *Morestalgia* (2020), curated and produced by Xing and supported by the Italian Council. Benassi was a finalist for the MAXXI Bvlgari Prize 2024. Riccardo Benassi is professor in Sound Design at Politecnico delle Arti in Bergamo since 2013 and Visual Art lecturer at NABA in Milan since 2019. He published the books: *Letters from the Passenger Seat with No One at the Wheel* (Mousse Publishing 2010), *Briefly, Ballare* (Danilo Montanari 2012), *Attimi Fondamentali* (Mousse Publishing 2012), *Sicilia Bambaataa* (NERO Publishing 2015), *Techno Casa* (Errant Bodies 2015), *Morestalgia* (NERO Publishing 2020), *Daily Dense Dance Desiderio* (Distanz Publishing, 2023).
www.riccardobenassi.info

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The **FESTA project** draws inspiration from an exhibition of events imagined (but never realized) by art critic Alberto Boatto in 1976 for the GAM Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Bologna. Boatto proposed that art could inhabit a territory removed from any immediate social utility, where it could cultivate an irreducible and poetically fertile individual testimony.
Does a use, or at least an idea, of 'FESTA' exist within our contemporary world? The answer can only initiate a process of exploration.

Tackling a topic as vast and multifaceted as it is misunderstood, overused, and neglected, is perhaps a hazard. From the feria as a break from work to the most banal interpretation of the party; from the picnic to the more ambitious dimension adopted by regimes to celebrate themselves or their founding myths; from the parade to protest marches in their spontaneous codification; from popular and devotional festivals to raves (now illegal, at least in Italy); from the festival to the potlatch; from winter Epiphany fires to the most intimate dimension of private or family celebrations (baptisms, birthdays, weddings, and funerals), what we would like to borrow is only the call for **a (new) propitiatory** and **non-celebratory appointment,** including its aspect of 'waste'. The horizon of possible is still open while the invited artists for FESTA are preparing unusual appointments: from a Farewell to Flesh, to a conference of people who no longer need Art; from a lying-in-state for the Internet to a Wandering Jangle feast...

FESTA are not mere occasions for entertainment but **live events** that accompany a state of suspension, in parentheses and outside the operational and functional cycles of the ordinary. A (temporary) change of regime, and a series of **situations** that recall one another, punctuated along the arc of a yet-to-be imagined **calendar.**

So, what and how can a festivity be today? The artists invited to address this issue are: **Simon Vincenzi, Riccardo Benassi, Claudia Castellucci, Michele Rizzo, Mårten Spångberg, Ashes Withyman, Cristina Kristal Rizzo.**

The FESTA 2026-2027 program is part of Xing's research into **Live Arts** for over two decades, showing the amplitude of contemporary practices and languages that manifest in **extended temporality** (duration) marked by **presence**. At the heart of this project is the desire to investigate and reshape the relationship between art and its audience.

The overall structure of the FESTA project is inspired by the French Republican Calendar of 1793, a bold historical experiment with which the newly formed republic sought to reshape and rebrand its temporal structure and priorities in relation to the values of its new citizens.

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FESTA is a project conceived and produced by Xing.
Each event is accompanied by a publication, to be collected in a final edition in collaboration with NERO Editions.
Graphic design: Marco Casella.
Partners FESTA Torino: Regione Emilia-Romagna, Comune di Bologna, Fondazione Merz Torino, GAM - Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea Torino, SUTURA, IFT. Hospitality partner: Combo Torino. Media Partners: NERO, Edizioni Zero, ATPdiary.

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Xing is a cultural organization based in Bologna, Italy, that conceives, develops and curates projects, events and editorial productions characterized by an interdisciplinary approach toward the issues of contemporary culture, with particular attention to generational tendencies and new languages. Since 2000 Xing has presented, produced, supported in Italy and abroad over 1000 artists inventing anomalous formats and platforms connected to time based arts, as well as

involving public and private partners. Among the projects that constituted specific survey cycles: Netmage International Live Media Festival (2000>2011), F.I.S.Co. Festival Internazionale sullo Spettacolo Contemporaneo (2000>2011), Live Arts Week (2012>2021). From 2003 Xing has been sustaining a program of research at their own space, Raum. In 2020 Xing launched a new project: Xong collection - artist records, a vinyl-only record label dedicated to personalities linked to the worlds of performativity. The year 2021 opened a reflection by Xing on the post-pandemic perspectives of live arts, launching an interstitial and communal format: Holes. In 2026-27 the FESTA project punctuates a calendar of propitiatory and not celebratory live events.
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Combo Torino
Corso Regina Margherita 128 - Torino
https://thisiscombo.com/it/agenda

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No booking needed

Press Kit Riccardo Benassi – 'Le ultime fabbriche rimaste in lontananza intonano gospel ripetitivi...'
https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/u6kfksmmveemyyxom44sd/AFCiFw1ShohjT9Y4FfwkjDE?rlkey=3e5sbsshs6ocyfr70a9kp3ezh&dl=0

Press kit FESTA
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