

Black Biennial

The Five Skin

Open Call
Submissions

Recife
PERNAMBUCO
2026

www.bienalblack.com.br

THE FIVE SKINS

Body, territory, and world from a decolonial reading

The theory of the Five Skins, formulated by Friedensreich Hundertwasser, proposes an expanded understanding of the human being as a body composed of successive layers of relationship with the world: epidermis, clothing, house, social identity, and global environment. At Bienal Black, this theory is displaced from its Eurocentric origin and reinterpreted from decolonial, Afro-diasporic, and Indigenous perspectives, in dialogue with the thought of Nêgo Bispo, for whom the world is not organized through rigid separations, but through continuity, coexistence, and circularity.

The first skin — Texture (Epidermis) — is understood as a living boundary between body and world, but also as a historical archive where colonialism inscribed violences, classifications, and racial hierarchies. Black and Indigenous skin was transformed into a political marker, a target of control, erasure, and exploitation. At the same time, it is within the epidermis that ancestral knowledge, embodied memories, and technologies of resistance reside. Texture, porosity, scar, mark, color, and touch become fields of artistic investigation, revealing the skin as a sensitive, spiritual, and political surface — that which protects, reveals, and creates.

The second skin — Body (Clothing) — shifts dressing from the field of fashion to that of identity performance and ancestral technology. Beyond its utilitarian function, garments, adornments, fabrics, and bodily markings constitute languages of affirmation, belonging, and insurgency. In dialogue with Nêgo Bispo, clothing is understood as a practice of cultural continuity: the body wears territory, memory, and ancestry. From Afro-Brazilian attire to peripheral streetwear, from Indigenous braidings to ritual and performative costumes, this skin investigates how the body becomes a living manifesto against colonial regimes of normalization.

The third skin — Space (House) — addresses dwelling as a political gesture. House is not merely physical shelter, but symbolic, cosmological, and affective territory. In Afro-diasporic and Indigenous contexts, the house expands to the terreiro, the quilombo, the favela, the riverbank, the mangrove, the street.

While it is a place of care and belonging, the house also bears marks of forced displacement, migration, evictions, and structural violence. Here, the Bienal understands space as an expanded body, aligning with Nêgo Bispo's notion that territory is not owned: territory is lived, cared for, and shared.

The fourth skin — Network (Social Identity) — breaks with the idea of identity as something fixed or individual. Identity, from a decolonial perspective, is a relational process, woven through networks of affection, solidarity, orality, and struggle. Extended families, traditional communities, diasporas, cultural collectives, social movements, and digital networks constitute relational ecologies that sustain existence. This skin investigates how artists materialize these networks through gestures, images, sounds, technologies, and rituals, understanding collectivity as a form of resistance and future-making.

Finally, the fifth skin — Community (Global Environment) — expands the gaze toward the planet as a living and interdependent body. In resonance with Nêgo Bispo's thought, which rejects the separation between humanity and nature, this skin proposes a pluriversal vision in which humans, waters, plants, animals, spirits, cities, and ancestries coexist. In the context of Recife — a city of waters, mangroves, and Atlantic crossings — the Bienal articulates Black ecologies, Afro-Atlantic cosmologies, and Indigenous knowledge with contemporary debates on climate justice, sustainability, and the rights of the Earth.

Thus, by decolonizing the theory of the Five Skins, Bienal Black proposes a curatorial approach that does not separate body, territory, and world, but understands them as continuous layers of existence, memory, and collective invention.

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The Organizing Committee of the 4th Edition of the Black Biennial, through its legal representative, Instituto Black Brazil Art, hereby announces the opening of applications for the selection of works for the collective exhibition 4th BLACK BIENNIAL, to be held from October to December 2026, in the city of Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.

The theme of this edition dialogues with THE FIVE SKINS and is open to national and international artists, aged 18 or over, regardless of color, race, or gender, whose works present an approach focused on decoloniality in art.

2. APPLICATION DEADLINE

The application period runs from March 10 to April 30, 2026, until 11:59 PM (GMT). The application form and document specifications are available at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSchx2VYHrD1AjgxQGcPoYL7CqWCjceAVT_H8HW4fgf2slpw_2g/viewform?usp=header

3. APPLICATION

This call for entries is free of charge and is open to individual or collective artists and creators, both national and international, aged 18 or over. Applicants may submit entries in up to two categories.

Bienal Black strongly encourages the participation of educational institutions interested in working with their students on the themes proposed for this edition, which may be presented in the form of a pedagogical project, an artistic-pedagogical process, or an exchange activity among artists, educators, and students.

For collectives or groups, the application must be submitted in the name of a single representative.

Only national artists will be eligible for cash awards.

Applications must be submitted exclusively through the online form available on the Bienal Black website.

Registration and participation in the exhibition are open to national and international artists.

However, eligibility for cash awards and participation in the commercialization of artworks is subject to specific legal criteria, as detailed in items 8 and 11 of this call for entries.

3.1 GENERAL CONDITIONS

- Each participant may submit up to two (02) works, with one (01) work or series per category;
- Submissions sent by post or courier will not be accepted;
- Incomplete forms or submissions sent after the deadline will not be reviewed;
- All attachments must be uploaded directly within the application form;
- Applicants are responsible for the technical quality of the submitted materials.

3.2 REQUIRED MATERIALS (Attachments)

- Audio (up to 1 minute): poetic or thematic contextualization of the work;
- Video (up to 2 minutes): conceptual presentation of the proposal and technical requirements, if any;
- PDF (up to 10 pages): containing the submitted works, duly identified (artist's name, title, technique, dimensions, year of execution, and value of the work, even if symbolic);
- Image: one (01) high-resolution photograph per work, for catalog purposes;
- For video, performance, or video art: submission of a link (YouTube or Vimeo), with a maximum duration of 4 minutes.

3.3 SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

- Password-protected links will not be accepted;
- All content must be accessible within the scope of this open call;
- Live performances must include an explanatory video or audio detailing technical requirements;
- Installations must include a detailed mounting proposal and technical requirements;
- Members of the organization and production team of the Black Biennial are not eligible to apply;
- Submission implies full acceptance of the terms of this open call.

4. CATEGORIES

Proposals in all forms of artistic expression will be accepted, including but not limited to:

- Visual Arts (painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, photography);
- Design Art (decorative, textile);
- Digital Art (image, animation, digital photography);
- Urban Art (posters, graffiti, site-specific works);

- Video, video installation, and sound art;
- Performance (video or live);
- Installation;
- Other forms.

All works must be original, previously unshown at the Black Biennial, and aligned with the theme of the 4th edition.

5. SELECTION OF WORKS

- Selection will be conducted online by a specialized jury, whose names will be announced later;
- The jury will act with autonomy and full authority;
- Artists may be contacted for additional clarification;
- Selected works will be included in the exhibition, catalog, and the Online Auction on the Biennial website;
- No substitutions or changes will be allowed after selection;
- Any omissions will be resolved by the Organizing Committee.

6. ABOUT THE WORKS

Artists will have the following spatial limits for physical exhibition:

- Two-dimensional works: maximum size of 2.00 x 2.00 m and minimum of 30 x 40 cm, including frames, if any. Unframed works must have proper finishing;
- Three-dimensional works: must not exceed 4.00 meters in any dimension;
- Diptychs, triptychs, and polyptychs follow the same rules as two-dimensional works, up to a maximum of 3.00 x 3.00 m;
- For video art and video performance:
 - Minimum duration: 2 minutes
 - Maximum duration: 15 minutes

Works exceeding this duration will be classified as medium-length films and will be presented exclusively within the parallel program as a COMMENTED SESSION.

7. PARALLEL PROGRAM

Projects selected for the Parallel Program of the Black Biennial will integrate a pool of actions to be developed throughout the Biennial period, potentially held in person and/or virtually, according to curatorial planning and institutional feasibility.

Parallel activities—such as workshops, lectures, roundtables, educational and community actions—must be offered free of charge to the public.

Some activities, especially those conducted in schools and partner institutions, may

receive a cost allowance, subject to organizational criteria, budget availability, and specific institutional agreements.

8. AWARDS

Five (5) awards will be granted to works selected by the jury:

- Three (3) cash awards of R\$ 4,000.00 each;
- One (1) cash award of R\$ 2,000.00;
- One (1) incentive award of R\$ 1,000.00 plus artistic mentorship for an individual artist who has never participated in a collective exhibition;
- Three (3) virtual artistic residency grants for 2027;
- One (1) cultural internationalization grant, consisting of an online and/or in-person experience at an international institution (museum or cultural center).

All selected artists will receive a certificate and the digital catalog of the Biennial.

Prize payments will be made to a Brazilian bank account held by the awarded artist. Accounts belonging to relatives will not be accepted.

Awarded works will become part of the Black Brazil Art collection or will receive a destination defined by the Biennial organization.

For legal, fiscal, and operational reasons, cash awards will be granted exclusively to artists residing and domiciled in Brazil, who hold a Brazilian tax identification number (CPF) and a bank account in Brazilian territory.

9. EXHIBITION SETUP

The Biennial exhibition will take place from October 6 to December 31, 2026. Under no circumstances may works be removed before the end of the exhibition.

The curatorial concept and exhibition layout will be defined by the Organizing Committee of Black Brazil Art, including the placement and spatial distribution of works.

The exhibition will be installed exclusively by the Organizing Committee, except in specific cases where installation and dismantling will be the responsibility of the artist or their representative, including equipment and related expenses.

The list of selected projects and artists will be published on the Biennial website, social media, and local press.

Awarded works will not be returned.

- Artists selected in the Live Performance category will receive financial support exclusively for materials required for the presentation. No performance fee, travel, accommodation, meals, or personal expenses will be covered.

- Performances must take place on dates, times, and locations defined by the Biennial organization.
- Artists selected in the Installation category must submit a detailed installation dossier, including descriptive memorial, full list of materials, dimensions, technical requirements, and installation instructions.

The Biennial will evaluate feasibility according to budgetary, technical, and spatial limits and may request adjustments.

10. TRANSPORTATION

All costs related to shipping and returning artworks are the responsibility of the artist.

Works sent via courier or postal service will be returned using the same method, with shipping costs payable by the artist, as specified in the consent form.

The pickup schedule must be respected by the artist or their representative.

The organizers' responsibility ends once the works are handed over to the courier or postal service.

Damaged works will only be exhibited if the artist has sufficient time to restore them.

Artworks will be received at a location and address to be disclosed later and individually to each artist.

11. ARTWORK SALES – BIENAL BLACK

During the period of the physical exhibition of the 4th Bienal Black, the artworks of selected artists may be made available for acquisition directly through the official Bienal Black (BBA) website.

- Participation in the sales process shall be optional;
- Only artworks by artists officially selected for the 4th Bienal Black may be made available for acquisition;
- The artworks shall remain available for sale for the duration of the physical exhibition;
- Any artwork acquired may only be removed from the exhibition after the official closing of the physical show;
- The specific terms of sale, pricing, and operational procedures shall be formalized subsequently with the participating artists.

The initiative to make the artworks available for acquisition aims to foster the formation and expansion of institutional and/or private collections, promoting

financial circulation among participating artists and encouraging cultural institutions — such as museums and public and private galleries — to reformulate and balance their collections.

Participation in the sales process shall be restricted to Brazilian artists residing and domiciled in Brazil, for legal, fiscal, and operational reasons.

12. IMAGE RIGHTS

By submitting, artists declare they hold the copyright to the submitted works.

Artists guarantee that any individuals depicted in photographs, videos, or audio recordings have given proper consent for participation and publication.

The organizers are not responsible for third-party claims, including copyright or image rights violations.

Artists guarantee that the granted image rights do not infringe third-party rights or contain discriminatory content.

13. DATA PROTECTION LAW

In this public call for the 4th Black Biennial, we emphasize the importance of Brazil's General Data Protection Law (LGPD) to ensure privacy and data security.

The Black Biennial commits to complying with all legal requirements regarding personal data processing, collecting only necessary information and using it transparently and responsibly.

Participants' data will be protected and stored in accordance with LGPD guidelines, ensuring confidentiality throughout the selection and execution process.

14. SUPPORT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

14.1 The Black Biennial commits to providing:

- a) Institutional visibility through curatorship and physical and digital exhibition;
- b) Inclusion in the catalog and communication materials;
- c) Possibility of participation in educational actions under a specific contract;
- d) Issuance of institutional invitation letters to support artists in securing financial, logistical, or institutional support.

14.2 The Black Biennial does not cover:

- National or international transportation of artworks;
- Airfare or ground transportation;
- Accommodation, meals, and personal expenses;
- Production, adaptation, or restoration of works;

- Expenses not expressly provided for in this open call.

15. FINAL PROVISIONS

Exhibited works will be insured only by the exhibition venues. However, Black Brazil Art will provide full insurance coverage at a value to be determined.

Works not collected within the stipulated period may be donated or incorporated into a museum institution.

Submission implies full acceptance of the rules of this open call.

The organization reserves the right to reject applications that do not meet the conditions or present excessive exhibition complexity.

Any omissions will be resolved by Black Brazil Art.

SCHEDULE

1. Applications: March 10 – April 30, 2026
2. Review and Selection: May 02 – May 15, 2026
3. Announcement of Selected Artists: May 30, 2026
4. Receipt of Works: September 30, 2026
5. Exhibition Opening, opening Ceremony and Awards, exhibition Period and Parallel Program: **See schedule on the website**

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