

Nairy Baghramian

nameless

25.10.2025 - 01.03.2026

WIELS, Brussels



From October 2025 to March 2026, WIELS presents a new exhibition by internationally acclaimed artist Nairy Baghramian. An expansive presentation across multiple floors of the WIELS Blomme building, the exhibition features several unseen bodies of work in dialogue with WIELS' brutalist, post-industrial architecture.

Nairy Baghramian is considered one of today's most influential sculptors. Through complex forms with sensitively treated surfaces, she reflects on the relationships between the human body, objects and architectural environments, as well as on the social conditions of making and production today.

She has a rare capacity to imagine and integrate unfamiliar dimensions of texture, surface, territory and disciplines – combining a broad range of forms and materials that affirm both the independence of aesthetic experience and the autonomy of art. Baghramian's work draws on techniques and forms from diverse fields – design, architecture, fashion, boating, dentistry, prosthetics or Japanese packaging. The unpredictable, the subconscious and the somatic coincide with the forces that define specific forms, which she often bends, fluidifies or leaves deliberately unbalanced.

The title of the exhibition, *nameless* – spelled out in the monumental neon sculpture in the historical silo of WIELS – points to a realm that escapes being named: a space beyond rational definition, linguistic overdetermination and categorisation.

Baghramian creates an open spatial environment for aimless wandering among leaning, unstable display walls. It is a space where one can only observe, sense, dance or taste – the realm of that which has no name, or where the name has been revoked, refused or stripped.

Baghramian draws inspiration from decades of observation and encounters with works produced by avant-garde artists – including, among many others, Katarzyna Kobro, Kurt Schwitters, Jean/Hans Arp, Isamu Noguchi, Max Ernst, Wols, Toyen and Mira Schendel – who, because of their uncompromising attitude, were exiled from autocratic regimes in 1930s Europe. While displaced, disoriented and deprived of ateliers, tools, familiar languages or stable living conditions, they persisted, working under immense constraints. Their provisional and precarious creations – often made for basic survival – resonate with the instability, precarity, impermanence, fragmentation, reduction and displacement that lie at the centre of Baghramian's artistic practice.

The exhibition marks Baghramian's return to WIELS, after her participation in the pre-opening group exhibition *Expats and Clandestines* (2007), and reactivates the dialogue with the architecture of WIELS and its artistic and intellectual environment.

Curator: Dirk Snauwaert

Biography

Nairy Baghramian's sculptural and installation work explores the intersections of architecture, the human body and social space. With what she calls site responsiveness, she reflects on the site and the context whilst she engages themes of displacement, temporality, language, living conditions and realities.

Baghramian is a German artist, born in Isfahan, Iran, to an Armenian family in 1971.

Her notable recent projects include the solo exhibition Nairy Baghramian: *Jumbled Alphabet*, South London Gallery, London (2024) her façade commission *Scratching the Back* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2023), *YOU ARE HERE* Contemporary Art in the Garden*, MoMA, New York and *Modèle vivant* at the Sculpture Center, Dallas (2022). Her work has also been on view at the Aspen Art Museum (2023); Carré d'art Musée d'art contemporain, Nîmes (2022); Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan (2021); Secession, Wien (2021); Palacio de Cristal, Madrid (2018); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2017); and S.M.A.K., Ghent (2016); Documenta 14, Athens and Kassel (2017); Skulptur Projekte Münster (2017, 2007); the Venice Biennale (2019, 2011) among many others.

Among other award she was the recipient of the Aspen Award of Art (2023), Nasher Sculpture Prize (2021) and the Arnold-Bode-Award of the documenta (2014).

Public programme

Lecture by Kate Nesin (EN)

Sun. 23.11.2025, 15:00

Conversation with Nairy Baghramian & Dirk Snauwaert (EN)

Wed. 26.11.2025, 19:00

Look Who's Talking with Shervin/e Sheikh

Sat. 29.11.2025, 14:00

Conversation with Nairy Baghramian & Elena Filipovic (EN)

Thu. 15.01.2025, 19:00

Look Who's Talking with Dirk Snauwaert

Wed. 04.02.2025, 19:00

Lecture by André Rottmann

Thu. 26.02. 2026, 19:00

Choreography by Marie Goudot

07 & 08.02.2025

Lecture by Adam Szymczyk

Date to be confirmed

Stay updated on the public programme via wiels.org.

With the generous support of

Exhibition Circle: Dhr. en Mevr. Antoine & Isabelle Bosteels, M. et Mme Peter & Nathalie Hrechdakian, Ms Elisa Nuyten, Mme Lucy Pereira, Dhr. en Mevr. Guido & Griet Van Middeltem – Dupont

Hauser & Wirth, Kurimanzutto, Marian Goodman Gallery

Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian – Délégation en France, Goethe Institut

Practical information

WIELS is open from Tuesday to Sunday from 11:00 to 18:00 and every first Wednesday of the month until 21:00

Press contact for interview and image requests:

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Images and credits:

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WIELS

As one of the leading institutions for contemporary art in Europe WIELS presents temporary exhibitions by national and international artists, both emerging and more established. WIELS is a site of creation and dialogue, in which art and architecture form the basis for a discussion about current events and issues, not only through its exhibitions, but also through an international artist-in-residency, an education and community-oriented programme and complementary activities.

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