General

Texting the Future: Bar CodeX at the macBAR in Lyon's Contemporary Art Museum

A look at Wen New Atelier's "Bar CodeX" exhibition at macBAR, part of macLYON: Lyon's Contemporary Art Museum, in partnership with Art on Tezos

7 minute read March 12, 2026

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Wen New Atelier, *Miniscriber Duo* Agoria Edition, Courtesy of the Artists.

In the ever-evolving landscape that is blockchain-powered art, very few art ecosystems have carved out a niche as artist-centric and universally embraced as that of Tezos. Through its famously reasonable gas fees that make minting and trading affordable, its vibrant global community of creators and collectors, its second-to-none tooling, and its low barriers to entry, the Tezos art ecosystem has proven to be a fertile ground for the exciting blockchain art movement to take root in.

And take root it has.

From objkt to teia and beyond, platforms in the Tezos ecosystem have enabled thousands of artists from every corner of the globe to mint hundreds of thousands of works. These works have pushed the boundaries of this emerging medium in fascinating new directions and established Tezos as a crucial art chain powerhouse.

But the production and marketing of incredible works of art isn't the only art-focused area in which Tezos shines. The Tezos art ecosystem has also emerged as a global leader in forging meaningful partnerships with established art institutions—partnerships incorporating co-curated exhibitions, educational initiatives, and integrations that seamlessly blend Web3 art with the practices of the traditional art world and its historic institutions. The fostering of such partnerships reaches back to the very earliest days of the Tezos art ecosystem, and has continued to this day…

2026 Tezos Art Partnerships

MoMI x TEZOS
[Blockchain as art]

In 2024, the Tezos Foundation launched a major year-long partnership with New York's Museum of the Moving Image (aka MoMI). Titled "Museum Without Walls", this exhibition reached over 243,000 people, and segued into a renewed partnership for 2025–2026. Today, the Tezos x MoMI partnership features artist commissions exploring blockchain as a creative material. It also includes a strong educational element called the "FA2 Fellowship", which offers workshops to teach artists smart contract tools for creating and managing digital assets. FA2 Fellowship participants are eligible for $500-$1000 microgrants to support the ongoing development of their projects.

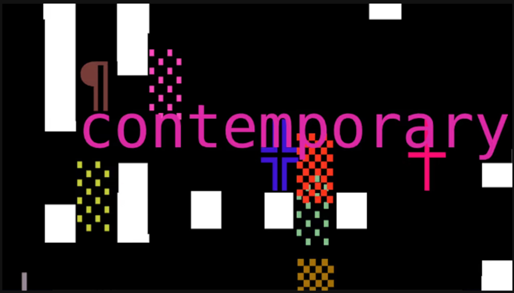
HEK
Tezos
HEK

Earlier this year, the Tezos Foundation also announced an additional year-long partnership with House of Electronic Arts (HEK) in Basel, Switzerland. Building on the historic ties between the Tezos art ecosystem and HEK, this latest iteration focuses on curation, education, and preservation of blockchain-based art. It includes virtual exhibitions on HEK's online platform, an outdoor presentation during Art Basel 2026, artist releases via objkt, and workshops addressing long-term digital preservation.

Now, the latest Tezos art partnership announcement looks to continue building upon both the Tezos art ecosystem's history of partnering with established art institutions and the impressive momentum generated in this area already in 2026. Partnering with one of France's premier contemporary art institutions ,the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Lyon (aka "macLYON"), this partnership seeks to bring Tezos-powered art to a whole new audience. Backed by the Tezos Foundation and Art on Tezos, "Bar CodeX" brings blockchain-infused participatory art into an impressive and storied museum space.

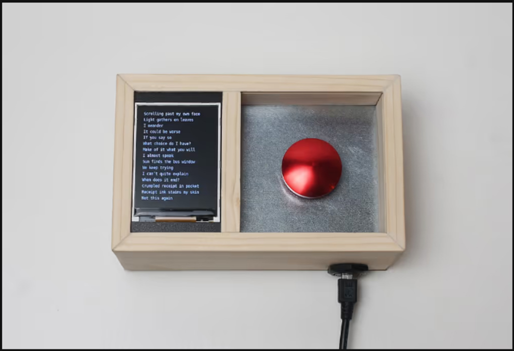
Let's take a look at how…

Bar CodeX



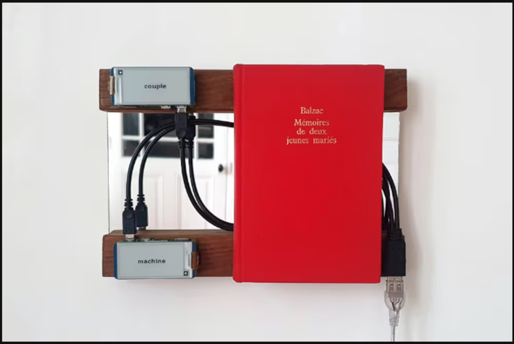
Wen New Atelier, output from the *Miniscriber Duo* Agoria Edition. Courtesy of the artists.

Curated by Marlène Corbun, an independent art consultant and exhibition curator specializing in contemporary and Web3 art, and presented in close collaboration with macBAR (macLYON's lively social hub), Bar CodeX represents the first solo institutional exhibition effort from Wen New Atelier, the art, language and technology practice founded in 2022 by artist duo Kalen Iwamoto and Julien Silvano.


Scrolling past my own face
Light gathers on leaves
I meander
It could be worse
If you say so
What choice do I have?
Make of it what you will
I almost speak
Sun finds the bus window
We keep trying
I can't quite explain
When does it end?
Crumpled receipt in pocket
Receipt ink stains my skin
Not this again

Wen New Atelier, *Panic Poetry*, Courtesy of the artists

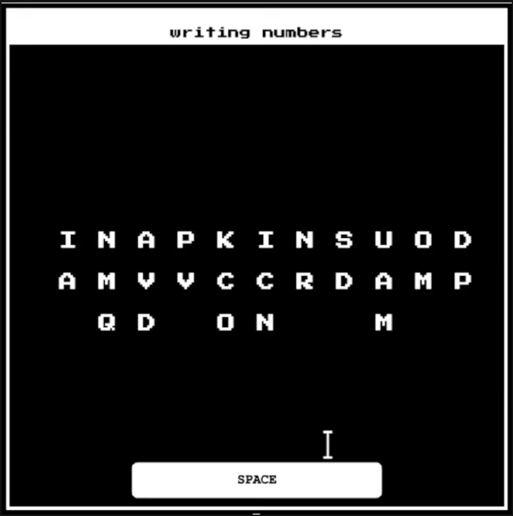
This hybrid "pop-up" exhibition—encompassing visual, plastic, digital, and interactive elements—explores the performative and conceptual dimensions of text. Wen New Atelier treats language as a plastic material and creative device, often positioning viewers as co-authors, generating ideas and sensory experiences as they interact with the exhibition.



Wen New Atelier, *Couple machine*, Courtesy of the artists

macBAR has assembled curated works from the duo's practice, positioned alongside new productions created with this exhibition specifically in mind.

The exhibition features "Space Bar Invaders," a game poem created specifically for Bar CodeX. Played using only the space bar, the game allows players to erase letters to reveal a poem. Visitors who receive one of the 500 secret codes distributed during the exhibition and available via beer mats for purchase in the museum shop will be able to obtain a unique version of the work minted on Tezos.



Wen New Atelier, *Space Bar Invaders*, courtesy of the artists.

Rounding out the Bar CodeX exhibition, Lyon-native multidisciplinary artist and DJ Agoria (aka Sébastien Devaud) is presenting a collaborative piece based on Wen New Atelier's Miniscriber and delivered a special live performance/set at the exhibition's vernissage on Thursday, March 5th.

Partnerships like this one with Lyon's Contemporary Art Museum, the Museum of the Moving Image in New York, and Basel, Switzerland's House of Electronic Arts represent just the most recent efforts from the Tezos Foundation and the Art on Tezos team to share Tezos' thriving art ecosystem with the traditional art world.

The Trilitech Arts Team, which plays a pivotal role in fostering such relationships, believes that partnerships like these are more than just a nice-to-have, but an essential part of the sustainable growth of the Art on Tezos ecosystem…

> “Exhibitions and partnerships at HEK, Museum of the Moving Image and macLYON’s macBAR are a testament to the growing recognition of blockchain art within established cultural spaces around the world. Through our support of the Bar CodeX, we are proud to continue expanding the reach of the Art on Tezos ecosystem and to support artists like Wen New Atelier in bringing their practice to new and diverse audiences.”—Trilitech Arts Team

With every partnership forged, and with every new set of eyes gazing upon the stunning work the artists on Tezos are producing at scale, the boundary between blockchain-powered art and the global contemporary art scene becomes increasingly blurred.

The Bar CodeX exhibition runs from Friday, March 6th, through July 12th, 2026, at macBAR, Musée d’Art Contemporain de Lyon (81 Quai Charles de Gaulle).

Bar CodeX will be an absolute must-see for anyone invested in (or even just curious about) the future of the evolving intersection between art and technology.

Details below!

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Cité internationale
81 quai Charles de Gaulle
69006 Lyon—France