

# PROJECT STIMULUS

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**Stichting Project Stimulus**  
**Ferdinand Huyckstraat 32, 1061 HW Amsterdam**

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## Introduction

Stichting Project Stimulus was founded on 20.1.2022, in order to consolidate and support project Stimulus, a wide-ranging exploratory project bringing together cultural, scientific and medical institutions. The project aims to investigate if and how the experience of an art exhibition - the synergy of art and its environment - can influence a person's overall health and well-being. In collaboration with the Amsterdam Museum, OLVG Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam, Stichting Project Stimulus investigates the impact of experiencing art exhibitions on mental health, how such impacts can be assessed, and ultimately how museums and hospitals can collaborate to create sustainable working and living environments.

### The objectives of Stichting Project Stimulus include:

- creating a fruitful long-term collaboration between the art world and the healthcare industries for improving the wellbeing of the individual and the community
- establishing an interdisciplinary research framework in the healthcare sector in order to explore the effects of art and the museum experience on the wellbeing of individuals
- creating site-specific environments where research and measurement of the art- and museum experience can take place through different means;
- researching the effects of art and the museum experience on hospital- personnel, patients and visitors
- making sure the project and its outcomes are accessible to the public; involving the public in the process of the research
- implementing the outcomes of the research in different locations
- raising necessary funds to accomplish the goals above.

The second year of the Stichting was extremely fruitful. Most importantly, we secured funding for the project to ensure its feasibility. The University of Amsterdam continues to support the project both in cash and in kind, especially through the Healthy Future collaboration seed grant that finances the research costs of a team of two senior and two junior researchers. The OLVG and the Amsterdam Museum continue to support Stichting Project Stimulus in kind, enabling us to work on location and with a team of experts and volunteers. We further received the financial support of Stichting DOEN/ VriendenLoterij Fonds, Het Cultuurfonds, and Banning de Jong Fonds.

In this year we also made progress regarding our site-specific interventions, where we offered new aesthetic experiences to the staff in the hall next to the OLVG West Emergency department. This helped to further work on creative research methodologies that would align with the project's methods and goals, methodologies that have the potential to offer more general insight to similar forms of creative environments intervention. Through this process, our collaboration with our external partners deepened and developed, strengthening the commitment, and interest, of both our academic and the museal partners in the project's future. We also keep working on the creation of the working council and advisory board, to be completed in 2024

In the near future, we aim to keep on this steady development, through further site-specific interventions with new artists, further development of co-creation schemes with the Amsterdam Museum, and further development of research methodologies with the UvA. We are also investigating possibilities to broaden the project to additional hospitals and art collections in the Amsterdam area, and to collaborations with the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. A recent [white paper](#) from the University of Groningen, echoes our vision of the importance of art and creativity for the well-being of patients and staff, and argues for the need to bring art in health to the national agenda. It underscores the national relevance of our project to current societal issues and concerns. Stichting Project Stimulus remains unique in this landscape of rising initiatives for art in care, in its focus on the effect of an exhibition experience (the synergy of art and its environment) on hospital staff. For 2024 we also have already a few events planned, including the official launch of Project Stimulus at OLVG, two co-creation workshops with staff, three new art experiences and a new round of research experiments with creative methodologies.











## **Organization and members**

**Chairman board and founder: Itamar Gilboa**, multi-disciplinary artist based in Amsterdam, whose work explores the connections between art, technology, science, and environment. He holds a bachelor's degree in visual arts from the Rietveld Academy Amsterdam. Itamar's works have been exhibited in museums and art institutions across Europe, North America, the Middle East and Asia; currently they feature in private and corporate collections and in the permanent collection of the LAM Museum in the Netherlands.

**Secretary : Alessandra Laitempergher**, independent curator and creative producer. Until recently she was Senior Curator of Modern and Contemporary Sculpture and Head of Presentation and Education at Museum Beelden aan Zee. Today, in addition to making and producing exhibitions, Alessandra works as a mentor for emerging artists, lectures on the presentation and interpretation of contemporary art and gives workshops on creative thinking.

**Board member and founder: Dr. Obbe Tiddens**, Emergency Physician (dr. med) at the OLVG, an independent artist and a guest lecturer at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten. Within the art committee of the OLVG hospital he is responsible for the art content and for research and development. He is committed to a more human-oriented, integrated medicine and together with Itamar Gilboa he started Project Stimulus.

**Board member and founder: Dr. Mariska Zwartsenburg**, Emergency Physician at OLVG and principal investigator in the OLVG research team. She has a background in medical journalism and (science) philosophy, and is actively involved in several pieces of research toward a more humane approach to medicine. She co-created the Pediatric Emergency Department, the Project Learning from Excellence that focuses on what goes well in healthcare, and coaches fellows in Emergency Medicine.

**Core Team Member: Dr. Noa Roei**, Assistant Professor in Comparative Literature and Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam and a research fellow at ASCA (Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis). Noa has published material mostly on the representation of national identity in visual arts and popular culture. Her current research focuses on questions of image, space and infrastructure.

**Treasury: Eduardus Johannes Maria Zentveld**



## Collaborations

Within OLVG:

- **Dr. Maro Sandel**, Emergency Physician and head of research at OLVG on setting up a research internship for Stimulus.
- **Herre Reesink**, board director of Art Committee OLVG, to enable site-specific artistic intervention and to ensure financial support for Project Stimulus.

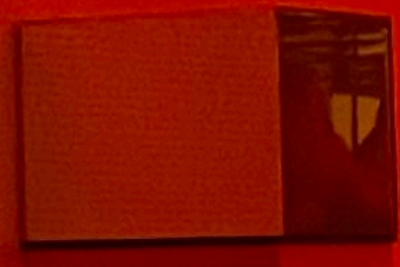
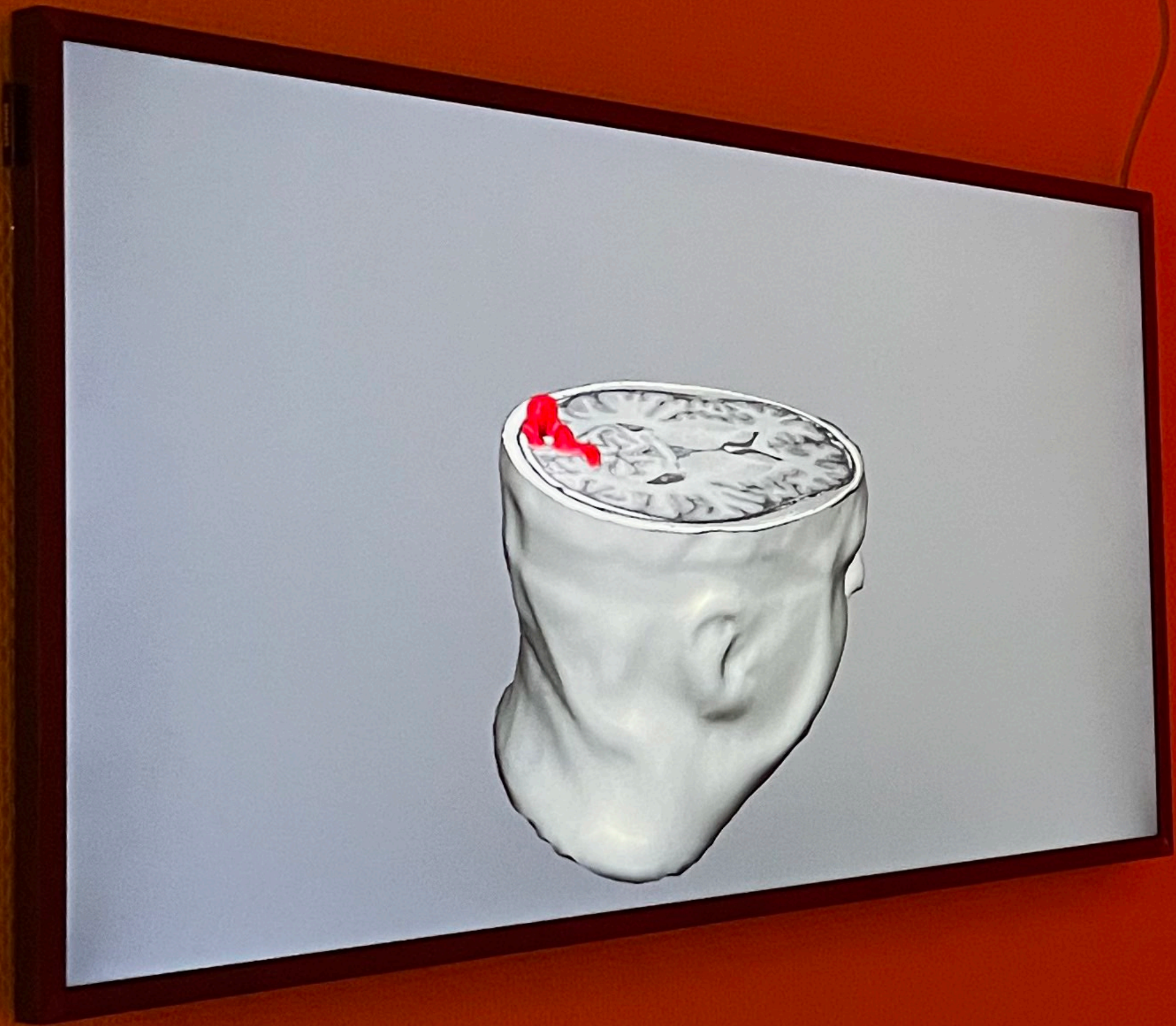
Within the Amsterdam Museum

- **Dr. Margriet Schavemaker**, Director of Amsterdam Museum,
- **Gonca Yalciner**, Manager Education and Participation,
- **Rowan Stol (2022) and Dorine Maat (2023)**, junior curators,
- **Emma Waslander**, curator
- **Tom van der Molen**, curator

Within the UvA

- **Prof. Dr. Manon Parry**, historian of medicine, exhibition curator, and founder of PULSE (research network in medical and health humanities)
- **Margot van der Sande (2023)**, research assistant to Prof. Parry
- **Prof. Dr. Jeannette Pols**, professor of Anthropology of Everyday Ethics in Healthcare
- **Maya Lane**, junior researcher, medical anthropology
- **Simone Stergioula**, junior researcher, cultural theory and affective justice.
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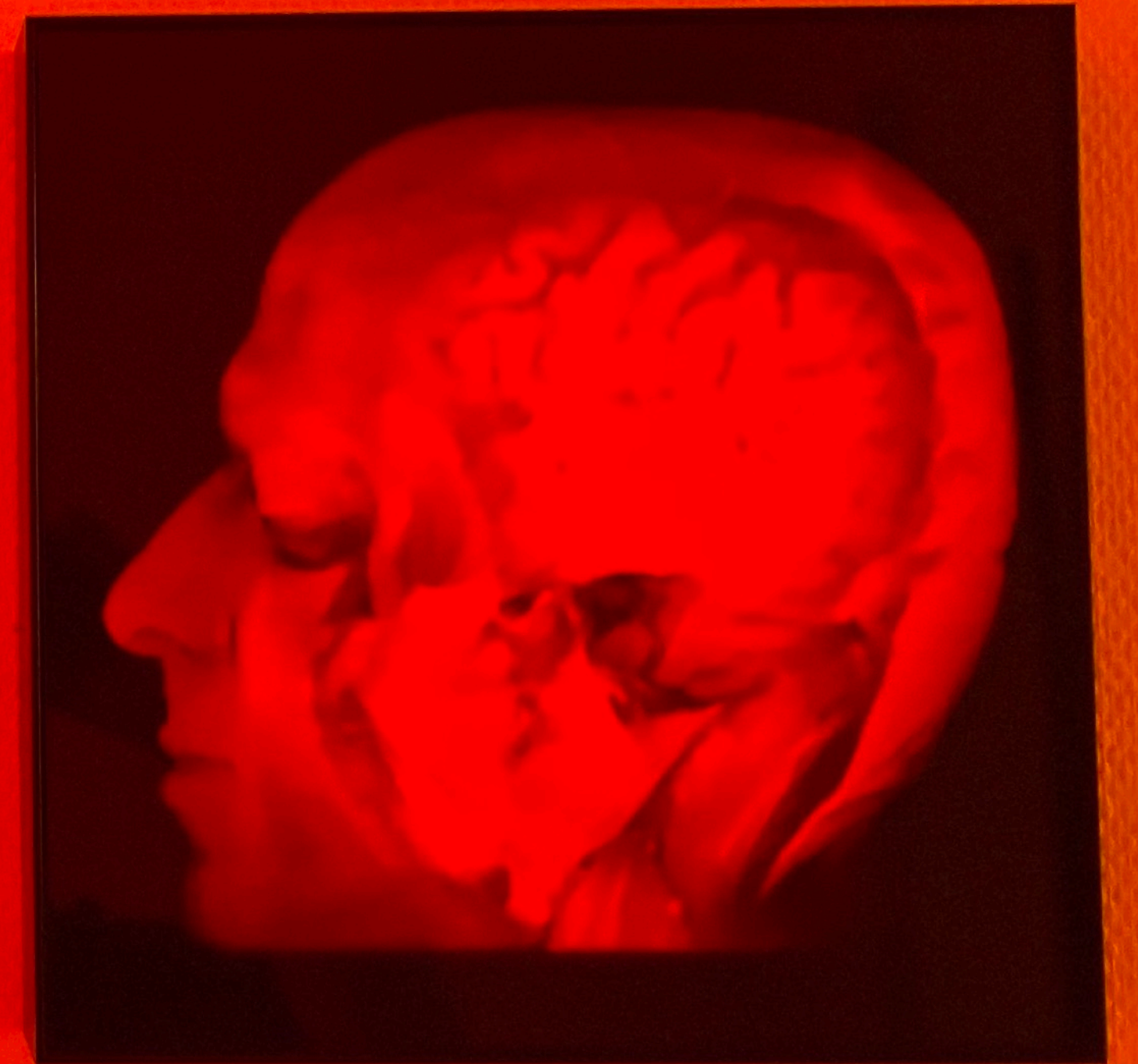
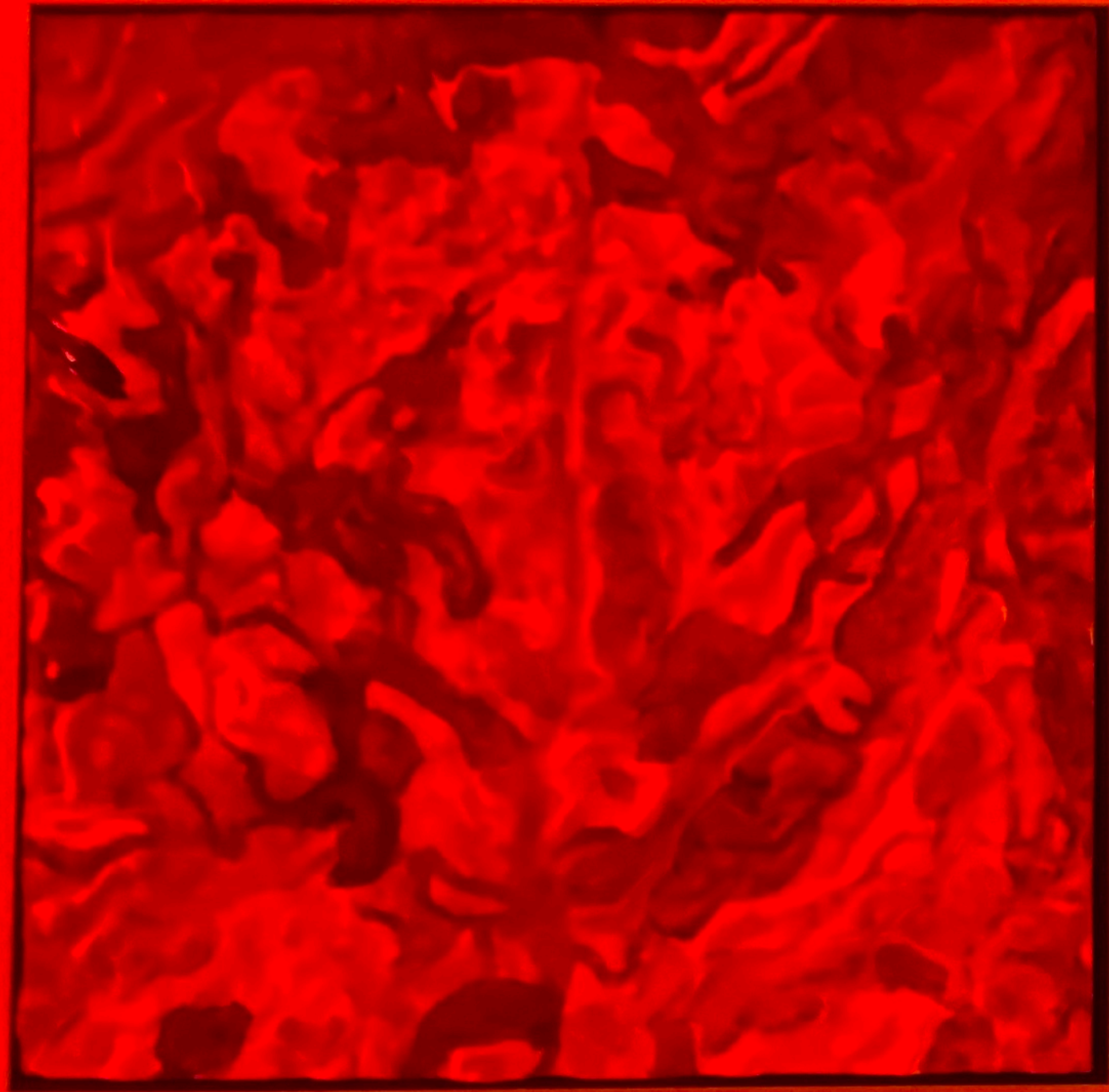
red













## Activities

### 1. Securing budget

This was one of the main goals and challenges for 2023 in order to ensure the feasibility and stability of the project. The Cultuurfonds, Banning de Jong Fonds and Doen/ Vriendenloterij Fonds reacted positively and decided to support us and fund the project. This is a necessary addition to the ongoing support in cash and kind from our partner institutions.

### 2. Site-specific interventions, on the theme: color reception

In 2022, we secured a space for Project Stimulus: a hall that is located very near to the Emergency Department of OLVG West, for artistic interventions. During 2023 we have kept the space “alive” through feasibility tests, and the space was shaped into a mini-exhibition with the work of artist and Stichting Project Stimulus board member Itamar Gilboa. The first intervention, titled WHITE, included 3D reproductions of famous artworks on lightboxes. In this way we introduced artistic highlights from the most recognizable, famous and profitable artworks. The room’s atmosphere was played with by dimming the light, thus bringing staff into a different type of space, that hints at a museum experience. The second intervention, titled RED, was moving further in the direction of an art installation. It comprised a mixed media site specific installation, part of Itamar Gilboa’s series *Cogito Colorum: Color, Wave, Mind*. The series asks, where do colors exist in the human brain? In the intervention, as in the series, artistic visualizations and medical visualizations are put into dialogue, as the recordings of an fMRI measuring of brain activity are represented in video, sculpture, 3D prints, photography, and neon light. The installation invited hospital staff to experience what is commonly part of their daily shifts (fMRI visualization) from a different aesthetic perspective.











### **3. Feasibility test runs on focus group and new research methodologies**

In collaboration with the University of Amsterdam, the OLVG research team, and Project Stimulus members, we continued to run official surveys that have received the approval of the UvA ethics committee. A group of 20 volunteers from within the OLVG emergency staff members responded to the surveys to give preliminary information on their well-being as well as on their use of, and view on, the site-specific space for research. Securing funds for research, an UvA research team started to work on additional, alternative assessment methodologies (see point 5).

### **4. Collaboration with Partners**

2023 was significant in making concrete and consolidated plans of action and collaboration with the Amsterdam Museum, the OLVG, and the University of Amsterdam.

With the Amsterdam Museum, we develop co-creation schemes related to the cross-over of artistic and medical visualization methods. We also secured the museum's commitment for an exhibition that will take place on both sites – the hospital and the museum – to be carried out in 2025.

With the hospital, we continue to work with the staff of the emergency room and with the art committee to ensure continuous renewal of artistic interventions as well as continuous research of its effects.

The University of Amsterdam has taken over the lead in terms of research, headed by a team from the faculties of humanities and social sciences, to develop alternative assessment methodologies that cater to Stichting Project Stimulus' core investigation and to the form of its continuous and multisensory interventions in lived space.

### **5. Dissemination and Public Visibility**

In 2023 invested time and effort in sharing our work and making our project visible to stakeholders, expert groups, and interested public. In January, February, and June, we presented information to the OLVG art committee and to its interior design team, on the role of art in the hospital style and corporate identity. In March we hosted a meeting with the [PULSE](#) network for the Medical and Healthy humanities at OLVG, to collaborate and network with related research projects across the Netherlands. In June we led a creative workshop at the [Unexpected Subjects](#) festival for art, science and philosophy. We also presented our work in June to the [ICEM](#) international congress of emergency medicine and to the [Healthy Futures](#) collaboration programme, and in October to an interdisciplinary expert meeting from the social sciences.



## **Future Plans**

Stichting Project Stimulus has ambitious and exciting plans for 2024 and beyond, including:

- Securing further budget for the project;
- Preparing future site-specific interventions that will involve artists from outside of Stichting Project Stimulus core team;
- Broadening research profile through additional interdisciplinary collaboration (potential new partners are the University of Groningen; Vu Medical Center; the Rijksakademie and the Rietveld Art Academy)
- Strengthening and maintaining current collaborations;
- Searching for additional site-specific possibilities in additional locations in the Netherlands
- Developing PR and communication, hiring social media professional support.
- Consolidating an advisory team

## **Financial overview**

2023: art committee

2022; contributions in kind from museum and hospital; Itamar's expenses



