



# SOMMERWERFT

## 2026 BLUE LAB



From 29 of July until 02 of August

## THE OCEAN STARTS...IN FRANKFURT!

The Sommerwerft International Theatre Festival by the River 2026 presents the Blue Lab, an initiative dedicated to raising awareness of river and ocean sustainability through the arts. Over five days, artists, cultural professionals, scientists and local communities will combine their talents and skills to offer unique experiences about rivers and oceans. This will be a great opportunity to engage and inspire over 120,000 visitors and celebrate the festival's 25th anniversary with us!



2021 United Nations Decade  
of Ocean Science  
2030 for Sustainable Development

Organisation  
**protagon**  
international performing arts



Partnership  
**ACTeon**  
ecological mindsets



# SOMMERWERFT'S 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

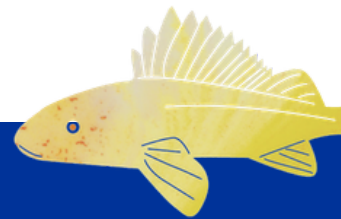
In 2026, Sommerwerft will celebrate 25 years of transforming Frankfurt's Main riverbank into an open and democratic cultural space. Founded on a historically peripheral site of the city, it now takes place in the shadow of the European Central Bank. The festival has grown into a major regional event, offering free access to theatre, dance, music, film, workshops and community dialogue.

In recent years, the festival organisers have placed a strong emphasis on environmental awareness and sustainability, creating space for dialogue between performing arts and ecological reflection through its artistic and educational program, while giving visibility to eco-conscious productions and community recycling initiatives. The festival continues to attract a growing number of visitors and has impressively demonstrated over its 25-year journey how art in public spaces can foster openness, participation, and a socially and ecologically conscious culture that is - and communicates- with everyone.

For more information: [www.sommerwerft.de](http://www.sommerwerft.de)



**Festival duration: July 24 - August 9, 2026**



## BLUE LAB AMBITION

- **Art as a driving force for dialogue in public space:** Artistic works, performances and interventions in public space make water, rivers and oceans tangible and experiential, opening up new perspectives on ecological issues.
- **An artistic journey from a source-to-sea perspective:** Through artistic practices in the urban space, the path of water - from its source to the ocean - is conveyed into a poetic, symbolic and experiential way.
- **Connecting art, people and nature:** Art creates open spaces of encounter where the complex relationship between humans, the environment and water bodies can be reflected on, questioned and reimagined.
- **Inclusive artistic practice:** Artistic processes in public space are developed together with diverse communities, actively involving marginalized groups as co-creators.
- **Raising awareness through artistic work:** Art in public space promotes awareness of river and ocean sustainability and strengthens people and local initiatives in line with local, national, and European goals, including the European Ocean Pact and the Water Resilience Strategy.



## THE PROGRAM

ALL ACTIVITIES ARE FREE!

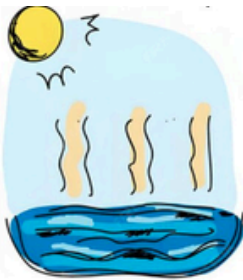
The Sommerwerft 2026 Blue Lab offers an artistic and educational program with workshops, performances, talks and participatory formats following the water cycle:

- discovering the source (July 29),
- rivers and wetlands (July 30),
- the coast and estuaries (July 31),
- and the ocean (August 1).
- culminating with a celebration (August 2) dedicated to the key principles of river and ocean sustainability (respect, responsibility, collective, equity, inclusivity).

Wednesday 29  
**SOURCE**

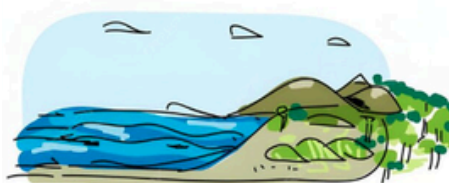


Thursday 30  
**RIVERS**



Saturday 01  
**OCEAN**

Sunday 02  
**CELEBRATION**



Friday 31  
**COAST**



## SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

Visitors – children, youth and adults – will:

- **Discover** many facets of river and ocean sustainability through documentaries, posters, scientific cafés, games or the visit of a scientific research vessel;
- **Feel** River's and ocean's emotions from artwork exhibits to concerts and theatre plays;
- **Experience** rivers and the ocean by participating in hands-on workshops with professionals, creative workshops with artists, the co-building of an art piece, through meditations or by paddling along the Main River.

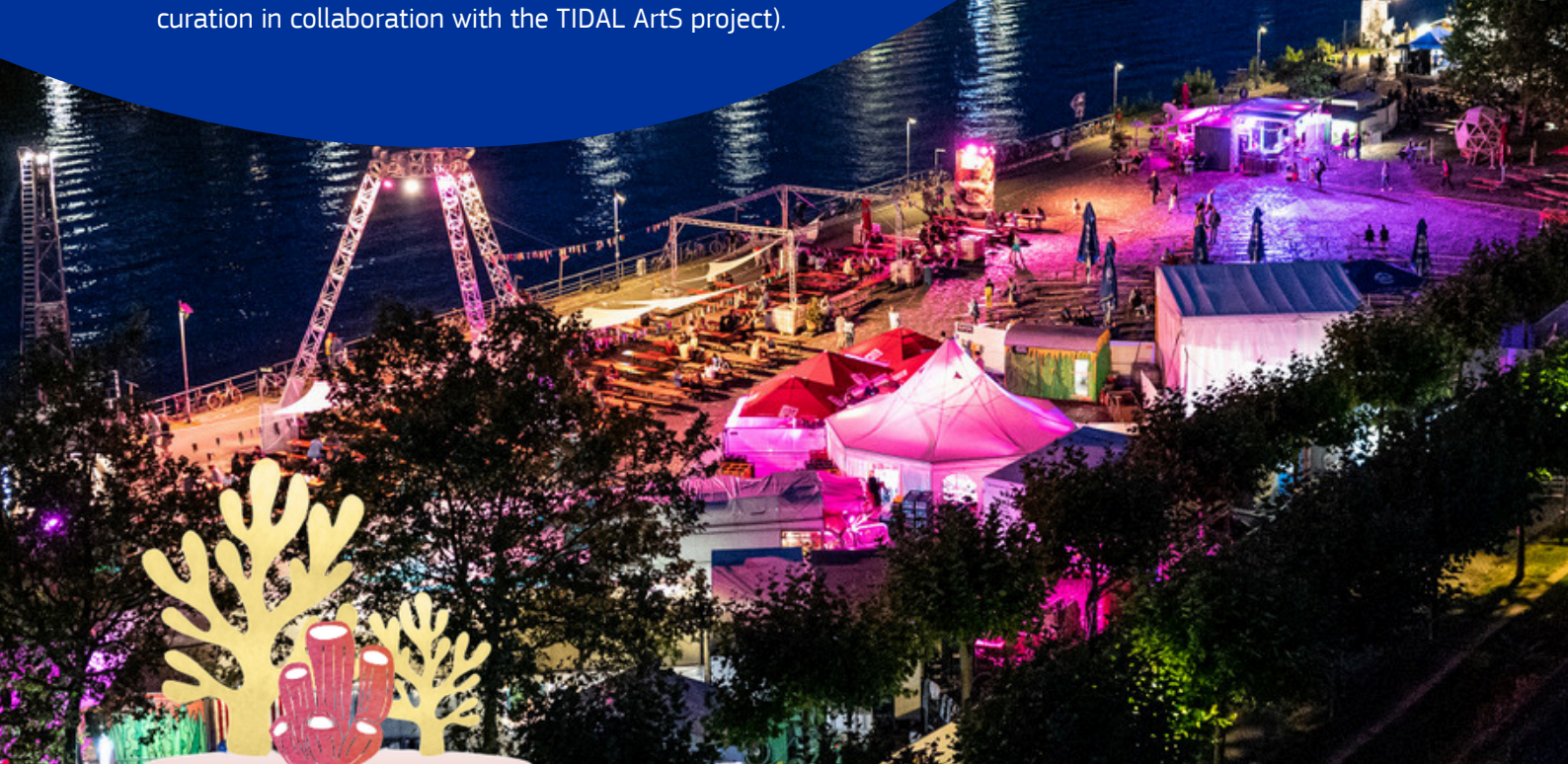
## THE BLUE LAB'S ORGANIZERS

For the Sommerwerft 2026 Blue Lab, protagon international performing arts e.V. and Escuna Criativa e.V. will be supported by a collective of local, national, and European organisations, projects, and individuals committed to river and ocean sustainability [1]. Together, this collective will co-develop an inspiring Blue Lab program of activities and events, facilitate the participation of artists and scientists - including contributors from other EU countries - and extend the project's visibility beyond the banks of the river Main.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Bárbara Luci Carvalho at [carvalho@protagon.net](mailto:carvalho@protagon.net)

[1] Including: Bernhard Bub, Protagon e.V. (Artistic Director of the Sommerwerft Festival); Bárbara Luci Carvalho, Protagon/Escuna Criativa e.V. (Blue Lab Coordination); Olga Mashkina & Pierre Strosser, ACTeon (Ocean Literacy and Policy Engagement); David Whyte, University College Cork / Mission Ocean (Artistic Co-curation in collaboration with the TIDAL ArtS project).



Sommerwerft 2026's Blue Lab is the logical and consistent follow-up to last year's first visit of the **EU4Ocean MakeEUBlue – Cities in Action** campaign to Sommerwerft. (<https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/makeeublue-cities-action-0-en>). This visit has already given Frankfurt clear visibility on the campaign's European map, with more than 2,200 signatures for the city (out of a total of over 15,000)! Building on this first success, the 2026 Blue Lab will reinforce and amplify it by turning citizen engagement into tangible action for healthier rivers and oceans.

The project "Blue Lab – Arts & Culture for Ocean Literacy" has been endorsed by IOC-UNESCO as an official activity of the UN Ocean Decade.



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