ACADEMY of IMMERSIVE Arts & Sciences

Field of View

The weekly briefing on AI + XR from the Academy of Immersive Arts & Sciences

ISSUE 8
WEEK OF NOV 16–22, 2026

Upcoming Academy Events



NEXT UP

NOV 22 — MISSION RESPONSIBLE
Mission Responsible 4

DEC 9 — ACADEMY PANEL, BRUSSELS, 10 AM
UnitedXR Europe: How the Public Gets a Seat at the Immersive Table

DEC 30 — METATR@VERSAL
MetaTr@versal: Portal Crawl VIII

APR 18 — THE POLYS
The Polys 7th Annual Immersive Awards

Details and registration at academyimmersive.org/events





ACADEMY RECAP · IMMERSIVE X 2026

The Academy rolls out the red carpet as IMMERSIVE X sets out to reclaim the future

The sixth IMMERSIVE X, the global XR festival held entirely in VR, ran November 10 to 12 across VRChat, ENGAGE, Second Life, Foretell Reality and the revived AltspaceVR. The Academy opened day one with the Red Carpet Grand Opening at the Polys Theater, hosted by Ashley Coffey, and Academy President Ben Erwin returned that night to argue why the Metaverse needs a global public commons. Other highlights: Caitlin Krause's participatory keynote in ENGAGE, Philip Rosedale speaking in Second Life, Ferryman Collective on the future of live theatre in virtual worlds, and the Avatar Superstar fashion show. Organizer Thomas Zorbach's takeaway came from SideQuest's Shane Harris at the AltspaceVR campfire: "Social is carrying the entire industry. And it has been from day one."

100+	~70	6TH
PRESENTERS	SESSIONS	EDITION

IMMERSIVE X · Nov 10–12

This Week in Focus

TOP LINE

The Dutch privacy watchdog told consumers not to buy AI camera glasses after testing six pairs, one of which claimed an ambulance was coming when none had been called. A Manitoba school division and Sydney councils added their own bans. Meta opened more than 150 rentable 3D films on Quest, with a license that lasts only as long as Meta holds the rights. Gentle Monster's Gemini glasses sold out weeks before launch, Safari on Vision Pro previewed spatial CSS, and IDFA DocLab gave its immersive award to a duet with a late musician.

Lead Stories

The two to know



POLICY, PRIVACY & SAFETY

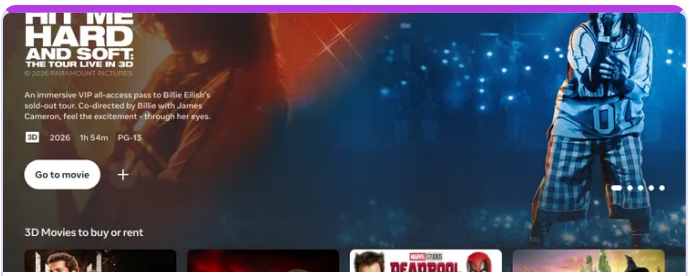
Dutch regulator advises consumers not to buy AI camera glasses

The Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens studied six AI camera glasses and advised consumers against buying them for general use. In a simulated resuscitation, one pair wrongly said an ambulance was on its way. The glasses also did not take enough account of minors' safety, and the AP found security issues in the software. It stopped short of calling for a ban.

INSIGHT

The concern now spans safety and accuracy, not just recording. Schools, museums and broadcasters putting glasses in visitors' hands should test assistants on emergencies and minors first.

Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens · Nov 19, 2026



PLATFORMS & DEVELOPER TOOLS

Meta opens 150-plus 3D movies to rent or buy on Quest

Meta launched more than 150 3D movies to rent or buy in the TV app for Quest 3 and 3S, US only at first. Titles include Avatar and Billie Eilish's tour film, co-directed with James Cameron. Variety says thousands more are coming in 2027. VR.org reads the terms as a stream-only license that lasts while Meta holds the rights.

INSIGHT

Headsets are becoming a cinema channel with platform-controlled ownership. Filmmakers and public media should weigh 3D reach against licenses that can disappear with the store.

Variety · Nov 19, 2026

Also This Week

POLICY, PRIVACY & SAFETY

Alabama woman admits filming trial witnesses with Meta glasses

A Mobile woman pleaded guilty November 19 to witness retaliation after admitting she used Meta glasses to secretly film three witnesses inside a federal courthouse, where recording is banned.

Insight: Venues that screen phones need a camera-glasses policy.

AL.com · Nov 20, 2026

AI & XR HARDWARE

Meta Ray-Ban Display gets turn-by-turn cycling directions from Mapbox

Mapbox is bringing hands-free cycling navigation to Meta Ray-Ban Display, with directions on the lens, spoken prompts, and instant rerouting when a rider changes streets.

Insight: A ready template for heads-up tours and wayfinding.

Mapbox · Nov 16, 2026

> “Glasses that film you without your knowledge are already a cause for concern. Glasses that also give you the wrong advice when someone’s life is at stake go a step too far.
>
> Monique Verdier, Deputy Chair, Dutch Data Protection Authority (AP), Nov 19

AI & XR by Category

POLICY, PRIVACY & SAFETY

Manitoba school division bans student smart glasses

Hanover School Division in southeastern Manitoba banned students from using smart glasses, effective November 10. A letter to parents said glasses carry added privacy implications compared with cellphones because they can record audio and video without others readily knowing. The division calls the policy proactive.

Insight: School bans are spreading from one-off rules to standard policy. Educators can pair a ban with a named exception process for accessibility and approved classroom use.

CBC News · Nov 19

Sydney councils move to ban smart glasses at pools and beaches

Inner West Council became the latest to ban smart glasses at council-run swimming and recreation facilities. Waverley Council, which manages Bondi, Bronte and Tamarama, approved a ban in principle and is consulting on enforcement. Most Sydney pool bans include exceptions for people with disabilities.

Insight: Local governments are acting faster than national law. Venue operators should expect place-by-place rules and plan disability exemptions into their own signage.

ABC News · Nov 18

CULTURE & CREATORS

IDFA DocLab Award goes to Being in You, a duet with a late musician

The IDFA DocLab Award for Immersive Non-Fiction went to Michal Stankiewicz's Being in You (Poland), a 25-minute mixed reality piece made with the late singer-songwriter Cat Janice. The jury said it shows how VR can memorialize while bringing embodied presence. A special mention went to Shifting Connections by Tungyen Chou (Taiwan).

Insight: Festival juries are rewarding intimate, human-scale XR over spectacle. Museums and public media can look to memory and mourning as durable subjects for immersive work.

IDFA · Nov 19

Cairo XR’s second edition drops the guided museum path

The Cairo Film Festival's XR sidebar returned for a second year at the El Hanager Arts Center. A Cairo Industry Days panel asked what tools and resources an XR pipeline in the Arab world needs, and Abderrahmane Sissako said he turned to immersive storytelling partly to bring that ecosystem to African cinema.

Insight: Regional festivals are building local XR pipelines, not just importing Venice titles. Funders and educators can partner early with these programs.

The Film Verdict · Nov 18

South Australian Museum opens a VR expedition to Antarctica

The South Australian Museum announced The Antarctica Experience: A Virtual Reality Expedition, a ticketed 360-degree VR experience seen through a research scientist's eyes. It was created by filmmaker Briege Whitehead with BAFTA-winning director Phil Harper and is narrated by actor David Wenham.

Insight: Natural history museums keep turning to VR for places visitors cannot reach. Ticketed XR shows can also fund the institutions that host them.

South Australian Museum · Nov 18

AI & XR HARDWARE

Gentle Monster’s Gemini glasses sell out before launch

Every Intelligent Eyewear style from Gentle Monster showed as sold out within days of preorders opening, according to 9to5Google. Warby Parker still had most styles in stock, with some, such as the wide-fit Reid, delayed as far as December 28. Nobody has said how many units existed. Sales start December 10.

Insight: A sell-out label tells you little without unit counts. Institutions planning loaner programs should reserve early and not read it as proof of mass demand.

9to5Google · Nov 16

In China, display glasses surge while camera-first AI glasses fall

CINNO data cited by Metaverse Watcher put mainland China's consumer AI and AR glasses sales at 240,000 units in Q3 2026, up 10% year over year. Standalone AR glasses with displays rose 116%, while display-less AI glasses fell 40% to 53,000 units.

Insight: Display glasses may carry the next wave of captions and guides for visitors. Creators can start designing for a screen in the lens, not just a voice in the ear.

Metaverse Watcher · Nov 20

PLATFORMS & DEVELOPER TOOLS

Safari on Vision Pro previews spatial CSS

WebKit said Safari on visionOS 27.3 includes a limited preview of a proposed spatial CSS API, focused on 3D objects in the model element. It adds a spatial portal, independent model transforms, position-anchor snapping, environment maps and orbit control. It sits behind a CSS Portals feature flag.

Insight: Spatial layout is coming to ordinary web pages. Web publishers and museums can prototype 3D objects as web content without building a native app.

WebKit · Nov 16

Android XR adds OpenXR spatial containers, in Full Space only

Android XR now supports the OpenXR Spatial Container extensions on devices with Spatial API Level 4 or higher. Apps can show volumetric 3D content in system-managed containers. UploadVR notes support is limited to Full Space, so containers cannot appear alongside other apps' content.

Insight: A Khronos standard is landing on a shipping platform within weeks. Developers can target one windowing model across engines, though the Full Space limit still narrows multitasking.

UploadVR · Nov 16

AI MODELS & AGENTS

Meta's Muse agent launches in Australia with real-time voice

Meta said Muse became available in Australia on November 17. Real-time voice conversations work on mobile, web and Mac, and Spaces, custom experiences built from a description, are included. Local connectors across creativity, shopping, property, fitness and entertainment are rolling out progressively.

Insight: Agents are going country by country with local services attached. Cultural groups should check whether their ticketing and listings are reachable by these connectors.

Meta · Nov 17

"Hey Gemini" wake word debuts on Google and Samsung glasses

Google's new Intelligent Eyewear debuts a "Hey Gemini" wake word, exclusive to the glasses for now. Wearers can also tap the frames, and "Hey Google" still works, so users can pick either phrase to ask about a sign, a landmark or a translation.

Insight: Hands-free assistants will answer visitor questions in galleries and classrooms. Interpretive content that is well labeled and written to be spoken will serve both people and glasses.

Chrome Unboxed · Nov 17

NEW DEVICES

RayNeo GT Max Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 4 Limited Edition on sale at $449

RayNeo's tethered display glasses carry a Call of Duty skin and co-branded interface. Specs match the GT Max: 59 degree field of view, 120Hz micro-OLED panels at 1,200 nits, 3DoF tracking and a virtual screen up to 307 inches. It sells for $449 on RayNeo.com and Amazon US from November 19; the standard GT Max is $335 through November 30. Source is a RayNeo-sponsored Polygon feature.

Insight: A display-only accessory, with no camera or assistant. Licensed editions show display glasses are marketed as gaming screens first, which affects what audiences expect from XR art shown on them.

Polygon · Nov 19

Commons Watch Open standards & interoperability

Khronos introduces glTF 2.1 to the community

At a November 17 town hall, the Khronos 3D Formats Working Group introduced glTF 2.1, a backwards-compatible revision that lets a glTF asset reference and bundle other assets in its scene graph. It also adds per-node bounding volumes, a 64-bit binary container beyond the GLB size limit and embedded thumbnails. Presentations are posted.

Insight: An open 3D format that can compose whole scenes helps archives and museums keep large collections portable across tools and viewers.

Khronos Group · Nov 17

Hugin Studios open-sources usdchunks for OpenUSD

Hugin Studios released usdchunks under Apache 2.0, a node-based procedural layer stored inside OpenUSD files. Networks run in usdview, Houdini, Blender and on the command line, so the steps that built a scene stay editable instead of being lost on save.

Insight: Free tools that keep an asset's history make shared USD scenes easier for small studios and schools to reuse, adapt and teach.

Hugin Studios · Nov 17

ON THE INDUSTRY CALENDAR

Nov 12–22, 2026	**IDFA 2026 and DocLab** Amsterdam, Netherlands DocLab's 20th edition: VR, games and live immersive nonfiction, plus restored XR classics in an Archive Arcade. **250+ films and new media projects from 80 countries; 2,500+ industry professionals (2026)** festival.idfa.nl/en
Nov 30–Dec 2, 2026	**XR Kaigi 2026** Tokyo, Japan Japan's largest XR conference, with smart glasses, Gaussian splatting and physical AI front and center. **Expected about 4,000 attendees, about 100 booths, about 70 sessions** xrkaigi.com
Nov 30–Dec 3, 2026	**I/ITSEC 2026** Orlando, Florida The world's largest simulation and training show, a major buyer of military and medical XR training. **502 exhibitors, 8,367 exhibit visitors, 4,298 conference attendees, 55 countries (2025)** iitsec.org
Dec 1–4, 2026	**SIGGRAPH Asia 2026** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 19th edition and first in Malaysia: graphics research, XR program and Emerging Technologies demos. **Expected 6,000+ attendees, 300+ speakers, 70+ exhibitors** asia.siggraph.org/2026
Dec 7–9, 2026	**UnitedXR Europe 2026** Brussels, Belgium Europe's main XR conference and expo from AWE and Stereopsia, with European XR Awards and EU policy track. **Expected 2,500+ attendees, 200+ exhibitors, 200+ speakers; 167 exhibitors (2025)** unitedxr.eu
Dec 18–19, 2026	**Qld XR Festival 2026** Brisbane, Australia Queensland's VR, AR, creative AI and digital art festival, returning at a new location; submissions are open on FilmFreeway. **No 2026 attendance figures published on the festival site** qldxrfestival.com
Dec 19–20, 2026	**VketReal 2026 Winter** Tokyo, Japan Real-world twin of VRChat's Virtual Market: avatar culture, mixed-reality play and XR booths in Shinjuku. **50,000+ visitors over two days at the previous edition** vket.com/en/lp/2026Winter_real
Jan 6–9, 2027	**CES 2027** Las Vegas, Nevada Where smart glasses, headsets and spatial computing hardware launch for the year. **148,392 attendees, 4,100+ exhibitors, 141 countries (2026)** ces.tech

Keep Your Eye On

1. Meta's deadline to answer Senators Wyden and Markey on its camera glasses is Wednesday, November 25.
2. Reported, not confirmed: Bloomberg says Apple's first glasses will run third-party features through Siri and iPhone apps, with a reveal at WWDC in June 2027.
3. Reported, not confirmed: The Information says Meta plans a $300 price for its pocket-sized Muse Charm; Meta has not confirmed.
4. Datamine, not an announcement: UploadVR found strings suggesting Meta's Horizon phone app may be renamed the "Meta VR" app.
5. The Game Awards shortlisted five Best VR/AR Game nominees, with voting open until December 9 and the show on December 10.

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About the Academy. The Academy of Immersive Arts & Sciences works to educate, inspire, and recognize, building a global Immersive Public Commons. Programs include The Polys Immersive Awards, the WebXR Summit Series, MetaTr@versal, Mission Responsible, and Ready Player Golf.

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