

Night of Science 2026: 200 years of Photography

January 22, 2026, 17:00 – 19:00

French Institute in Finland: Tehtaankatu 27-29D, 00150 Helsinki



In 2026, we all take pictures every day without thinking: a swipe, a tap, and a moment is sealed into memory. Two hundred years earlier, in 1826, the French inventor Nicéphore Niépce made the first photograph in history — his famous *View from the Window at Le Gras* — after years of patient experimentation and delicate chemistry.

For Night of Science 2026, we invite you to slow down and rediscover photography as both a science and an art. Throughout the evening, you will hear how this first photograph — a quiet, seemingly unremarkable view — reveals the changing world of Niépce's time, explore the dawn of photographic art in Finland, discover contemporary photography based on historic and camera-less techniques, and even step into the process yourself. Share your own *view from the window* and experience instant, hands-on image-making.

The event will be held in French and in English.

REGISTRATION

Pop-up exhibition *View from my Window*

To honor Nicéphore Niépce and his *View from the windows at le Gras*, be part of our pop-up exhibition. What does the world look like from *your* window? We are seeking photographs that capture our time, be it striking light, urban architecture, or fleeting moments of daily life. The window frame should act as your canvas, echoing Niépce's historic perspective.



Submit your work by 20 January 2026 at science@france.fi (JPG or PNG, high resolution, with full credits). The most striking images will be displayed at the Institute during our special event.

Capture the light. Be part of history. Start shooting!

Programme

Documentary "Objectif Niépce"

Constance Production (director : Christophe Henry)

In French with English subtitles

Historical analysis of "View from the window at Le Gras" photography

Dr. Jan Middelbos, researcher at University Rennes 2

In French with English subtitles

The Quest for Colour: Early Autochromes from the Collection of the Finnish Museum of Photography

Max Fritze, curator at The Finnish Museum of Photography

In English with French subtitles

Contemporary photography based on ancient techniques

Jérémie Barrois, artist photographer

In French with English subtitles

The heliographic garden:

studying photographs, chemigrams and other camera-less light-sensitive techniques

Dr. Tuula Närhinen, artist and researcher at Uniarts Helsinki

In English with French subtitles

Pop-up exhibition *View from my Window*

Participatory exhibition

Stroll around the French Institute

Direct exchange with speakers about photographic artworks or hands-on image-making

