

OPEN
UP

NICOSIA FESTIVAL



Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union



The Open Up Nicosia Festival was organised in the framework of the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.
19 - 22 October 2023 at NiMAC

Leader:

Pierides Foundation

Co-organisers:

PUBLICS – Helsinki, Finland

Valand Academy – Gothenburg, Sweden

New Hand Lab – Covilhã, Portugal

University of Thessaly – Volos, Greece

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona – Spain

Université de Picardie Jules Verne – Amiens, France

CATALOGUE

Compiled and Edited:

Sophia Antoniadou

Graphic Design:

Constantinos Kokkinopoulos

Editing:

Stavros G. Lazarides

Photographs:

Louca Studio

Loizos Papacharalambous

EXHIBITION

Curator:

Xenios Symeonides

Exhibition and Graphic Design:

Xenios Symeonides

Programme Coordinator:

Sophia Antoniadou

Organising Team:

Maria Efstathiou, Constantinos Filiotis,

Marika Ioannou, Vasia Zisimou

Editing and Translation:

Stavros G. Lazarides

Technical Team:

Filios Filokyprou (Supervisor), Charalambos Charalambous,

Christakis Christodoulou, Eraklis Constantinou, Michalis Nicolaou

Volunteers:

Aysel Amir, Kristia Andronikou, Sofia Christou, Marianna Efstathiou,

Panagiota Georgiou, Ilaf Haidar, Cigde Kahvecioglu, Hasan Kayiplar,

Georgia Kyprianou, Georgia Papasozomenou, Rafaella Piyioti,

Phillipos Stavrinos, Eleni Voila

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Pierides Foundation Nicosia, Cyprus

Xenios Symeonides

Curator

This is Abdul from Ivory Coast. He is 19 years old...

Abdul is an asylum seeker. He lives in the Pournara Camp in Cyprus. Alone in a country at the far end of the European Union. He has dreams and has started to make them come true. He finds waste plastics, materials offered to someone who has no access to anything. He creates compositions alluding to memory, to hope, to the new place that hosts him. He decorates with these the small prefabricated camp houses. Abdul asserts his presence, his right to dream...

Eleni K. mourns the incident that governs her existence; she is looking for redemption. The key is there. In front of her, but as elusive as its reflection in the mirror.

Eleni M. exposes femininity, lasciviousness, vanity, the primordial impulse of coquettishness but also of emptiness. The desire of a lifeless doll to become real.

Memo celebrates his diversity. Provocation is his weapon; he instrumentalises audacity in his movements, his apparent willingness to liquidate the solidity of the stereotype. The wig, the beauty of its movement in the fluid dream environment of the clear purified sea, transforms it into a beautiful living being that redeems its freedom.

Despo seeks the moist warmth of the Womb –the ancient Salamis– exorcising displacement, the loss of space and origin; casting the veil of the shadow of the orphanhood of identity; creating the dramatic background that accompanies the violent event leading to the exodus, whether it signifies displacement or birth. The expected pattern... crying and weeping. Life goes on with uncertainty but also with hope.

Ilina creates a cold surgical environment and develops –with an equally surgical precision– delicate compositions that are deposited on the organic forms. She composes within the framework of the perpetual game of existence, capturing the suspicion of death, but at the same time embroidering the anticipation of life.

Artists from seven countries, many of them for the first time, open up and testify, sketch, and explore, feeling situations and meanings. They recall from memory images, performances, sounds, traditions and sometimes myths. Deep inside every person nests a myth, innermost thoughts and words that are not allowed to come out. It is one's secret; something one keeps deep inside. So, a person removes the wings of the mythical bird rendering it incapable of either flying or coming out of her/his mouth. This is the ultimate myth.

A mishmash of myths and stories –sometimes personal and other times collective– in a suspended and overturned world, but inevitably a redefined one. Each society with its own changing energy field, which forces adaptation. With its own socio-political issues and concerns, it sets its own variable parameters. Action–reaction or reaction–action in a perpetual game that begets creation. Hence, myths that acquired wings, position, identity, voice.

A celebration was set up in Nicosia. We celebrated the “Opening”, the “Flying”. The Womb (ancient Salamis), the nest in Covilhã, Portugal. The bright thread or the silver string that even extends beyond, transcending the boundaries of time and space.

We addressed the issues of loss of space, of identity, of vulnerability. Memory –individual or collective– becomes the primary material woven by the “Loom of Light”. It weaves Aladdin’s dress, while without any definite prearrangement –as if in synchronicity– another dress is buried by Nilüfer in a ritual – a tribute to female existence and brutality in one of her encounters with death.

The seeds from the fields of Mazandaran in an ode to earth are planted by female hands, carried, fertilised; nurturing people in a dystopian neo-colonial context.

Life-giving earth, life-giving liquid state, like the water of Pelion with its dual role; sometimes it irrigates, other times it sweeps away things, it creates currents. Migratory currents, material and immaterial flows. With people and possessions, with pain but also with hope. It runs into stereotyped mental barriers but overcomes them through creation and life-giving Word. It was all here; the words and the myths, but now they are winged. The epics of humans and their aftermath...

This is Abdul. He is now 23 years old.

Abdul was expelled.

His legend is here; his epic adorns the “temporary” in the Pournara Camp in Cyprus.

Pierides Foundation Nicosia, Cyprus

The Open Up Project – A four-year project for human creativity

Sophia Antoniadou

Programme coordinator

The Open Up, a project co-funded by Creative Europe, aimed to bring to the forefront artists, performers, designers and crafts people –with a special focus on young people– from neglected, underprivileged and racially segregated communities in urban environments in seven European countries: Cyprus, Finland, Sweden, Portugal, Greece, Spain and France. Since 2019, just before the Covid-19 pandemic, and until 2023, the Pierides Foundation –as the Project Leader– together with PUBLICS in Helsinki, Valand Academy, an institution within the University of Gothenburg, New Hand Lab in Covilhã, University of Thessaly in Volos, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and Université de Picardie Jules Verne in Amiens, had co-organised activities aiming at providing a strong, active and sustainable platform for creative synergies. The project aspired to build sustainable art practices amongst underprivileged communities in each participant city and consisted of a transnational network in the fields of art, culture, performing arts, and urban and social issues. The Open Up Project explored how –in this era of division and partition, of segregation and exclusion– culture could play an active role in allowing new forms of community relations to emerge.

The Open Up Nicosia Festival was the culmination and the last activity of the Open Up Project. The festival presented the results of all the workshops –local and transnational– that were organised during the four-year programme (2019–2023), in all seven countries by the seven co-organisers. The Open Up workshops aimed to enhance existing knowledge and develop new skills on a multi-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary level to a large number of participants, while at the same time securing mobility. Despite the difficulties and constraints in mobility due to the Covid-19 pandemic during the first three years of the project, all partner-countries managed to organise and implement forty workshops through which creators were empowered to develop their skills, present their works and create a new business model framework, which would enable them to sustain their work after the end of the Open Up Project.

The Open Up workshops employed the Learn-Make-Present model, an iterative process, which led to the presentation of new works. Following this model, 140 participants in all seven countries exchanged and disseminated their skills and experience, realised their creative concepts in practice by using their acquired knowledge, and promoted their artistic results and products to the public and the creative industry through the local festivals, the Cope-In Platform and finally the Open Up Nicosia Festival.

The Open Up Nicosia Festival hosted 45 events and 70 artists from Cyprus, Finland, Sweden, Portugal, Greece, Spain and France. These events included an art and a documentary projection exhibition, open discussion, performances, installations, workshops, theatre, dance, audiovisual and vocal performances, video projections, and culinary events. Artists, performers, designers and crafts people mainly from disadvantaged and underrepresented communities, including migrants and refugees, met in Nicosia –a divided city since 1974– to “bridge the gap” and encourage creative people to cooperate with each other beyond constraints and dividing lines.

The Pierides Foundation undertook the organisation and implementation of the festival, the curation of the Open Up exhibition, the coordination of the Panel Discussion, the organisation of all performances to be held at the Teatro Polis OPAP and Gardens of the Future venues. Fifty-two artists in total, who participated in the Nicosia workshops, presented their works in the festival. Specifically, artists of the Performance Lab presented their works in the forms of performances, installations, participatory actions and site-specific pieces, at Teatro Polis OPAP, at Gardens of the Future and in the streets of Nicosia, under the direction of choreographer Lia Haraki. Artists from the Design Lab presented their works in the forms of visuals, video documentaries, installations, and participatory events. The projects presented were related with the field of product and service design. The participants developed online platforms and mobile apps that aimed at facilitating and accelerating the social integration process of underrepresented communities under the direction of architect Constantinos Economides.

Artists from the Visual Arts Lab addressed –through their works– issues of war and dichotomy, abandonment and justice, isolation and memory, under the direction of artist–printmaker Efklides Papadopoulos. Artists from the Fashion Lab presented their designed accessories, under the direction of set designer Mikaella Kassinou. Finally, the Stories of Shifts was presented – a video installation curated by Danai Anagnostou and Lia Haraki, narrating the personal journey of seven artists, one from each partner–country, through the Open Up Project.

The Open Up Nicosia Festival reflected the diversity, the inclusivity, and our strong belief in human creativity with no boundaries and restrictions. The priority was to help emerging artists, performers, designers and crafts people from disadvantaged and underprivileged urban areas around Europe, with a special focus on young talents, immigrants and refugees. The Open Up Project, and specifically the Open Up Nicosia Festival as the final event, demonstrated how collective action by engaged cultural, academic and non-governmental institutions and organisations can have an impact and contribute significantly to addressing major European challenges. Being a Creative Europe programme, the Open Up partnership was devoted to an open and inclusive Europe.



Theodora Andreou
Sex CARing
20min, Performance, +18

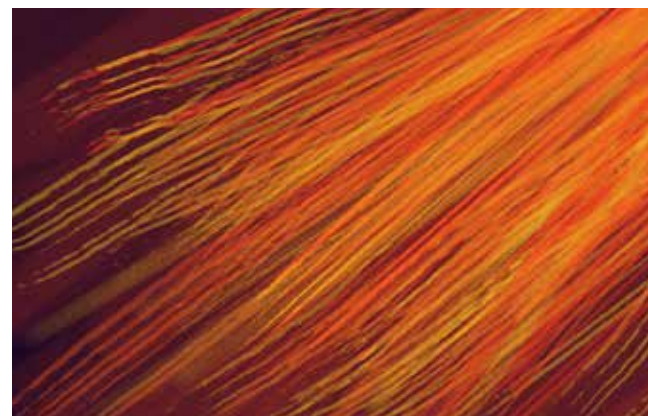
My performance will be a monologue that explores my sexual experiences, more specifically, those in cars. A rollercoaster ride that explores society's 'musts' and 'have to's' clashing with my own sexual desires and experiences with men. I bring forth these experiences that shaped me and share with the audience in order to push you to think, reflect, as well as create discomfort. It is time for women to stop feeling ashamed about...everything. Let's be free to feel, to express our needs! Our need to orgasm, our need to pleasure, our need to enjoy sex and our need to experiment. Included in the performance: fantasy, humor, authenticity and partial nudity.



Maria Charalambous
μ[ε]r r o r
6min, Video

From a young age, self image and perfection is taught to us through dolls, social media, tv and the women around us. A short film explores the messaging young girls receive and its effects in the adult psyche through parallel imaging.

Text/film: Simone Khenkin
Sound: Alkis Nicolaides
Concept/Performance: Maria Charalambous
Edit: Giorgos Alexi Photography



Ifigenia Avraam
sun rays
Installation

An installation that shows a modified journey of the Sun rays. Also, inspired by the calmness and freedom I felt during my visit to the Gardens of the Future.



Argyro Christodoulou
Battlehood
15min, Performance

A mother. The roles. The battles.
The social norms. The expectations.
The predefined standards.
The desires. The decisions. Her voice.



Giorgos Bizios
BRIEF
15min, Performance

A brief take on my approach to music; a brief on behalf of potential.



Emily Cutler
Somewhere, Somehow...
12min, Performance

Somewhere, Somehow, someway.
Anywhere, anyhow, anyway.
I don't know where, I'm not sure how, I wish I knew the way.
Where was that? How should I know? I thought you knew the way.
Where do we go? Do we have to know? Let's go find the way.



Elena Charalambous
Checkmate
20min, Performance

Checkmate is a process, an externalized internal battle of emotions. An interactive game between the performer and the audience where every choice leads towards a different path. A journey full of double meanings and joyfull sadness, combining dance with theatre. Rock, paper scissors. Truth or dare? Backgammon or back out?



Demetra Demetriadou
My nightmare
20min, Performance

There are moments when everyone sinks into the thoughts of the mind, those that echo the voices of critical dance teachers, those who intensified our phobias, and awakened the "nightmares" that everyone hates to encounter on his/her life.



Hayal Gezer
Undysregulated
15min, Performance

Undysregulated is an interactive performance where the participants/audience are invited to wear a set of headphones and respond physically according to the audio they hear.



Natalie Hadjiadamou
Washing Machine
8min, Performance

This piece was conceived as just an idea many years ago. I revisited and further developed it again in 2021, when I attended the year-long Open Up Performance Lab, under the direction and guidance of Lia Haraki. It is a short performance, still in progress, of the task of doing the laundry, resulting in an almost daily repetition, of the same movements. The futility of the act of washing your clothes, wearing them, and washing them again.



Charis Iacovou
retrieve_entity
20min, Performance

Trapped in periodic coded situations and verbal rhythms, this is an ode to an endless reset in the process of becoming.



Nayia T. Karacosta
Un | packed
45min, Participatory workshop

Women of all identities form a circle. The score is: "take out of your bag whatever you want to reveal." How often do we have the opportunity to safely reveal our personal lives? How do these objects define our origin or even our privilege? How do we converse with them? How do we care for ourselves?



Maria Kasapi
Hybrid, 15min, Installation-performance

A performance installation of 1+1=1
An installation performance that proves 1+1=1. Not 2?
It will try to show you a quick demonstration of what can go wrong when you violate the rules.
A Choreography installation of one connection or two.
One to One,
One to one, one to one, one to two, to one to, to two and one, two x2
Me and her, her and me. Us.
One to One,
One to one, one to one, one to two, to one to, two and one, two x2
Can we connect in 10 to 15 minutes?
From the eyes to the hands and then to the pelvis.
One to one, one to one, one to two, to one to, two and one, two.
One.



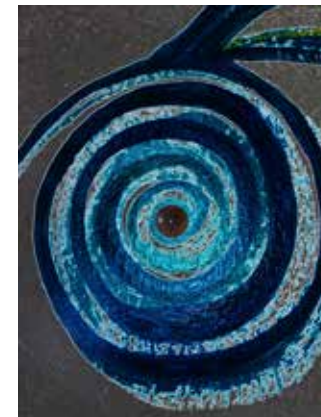
Simone Khenkin
Conversations with my therapist
20min, Performance

Inspired by her own diaries and personal history with physical and mental health, the performer explores the road of healing and bettering oneself.



Eleni Mylona
RUNWAY
20min, Performance

A multimedia solo performance, incorporating live singing, soundscape, visual art, acting and dance. "RUNWAY" is the third part of a trilogy of solo choreographic works by Eleni Mylona with themes of the correlation between past and present and how much of each we choose to carry forward, through the eyes of a solitary character.



Panayiota Nikolaou
Je t'aime
20min, Performance

"Now I am walking. Now I am walking. Now I can't walk more. Now I am leaving. Now I am living." The 'Je t'aime' performance is based on what comes and goes through my life. The phase of the inner me and my body's construction through it. To heal me, I decide what to take or leave behind.



Alexandra Pambouka
Ritewright
20min, Performance

A discovery process of creating ritualistic practices about the need for affection and pleasure. The performer interacts with objects she recreated from unwanted items in order to readjust them in a peaceful and dynamic setting.



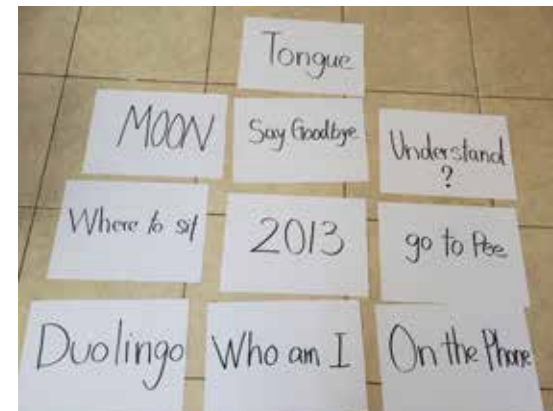
Noutsia Poulouzasvili performing with Jay Stamataris and Viky Kalla
Confetti
20min, Performance

The work draws from Guy Debord's 'society of the spectacle,' illustrating modern society's loss of real human connection. Amid a shift to consumer-driven societies, people grew isolated. While shared experiences seemingly unite, they merely isolate individuals further within their own solitary consumption, echoing Debord's paradoxical sentiment.



Natalia Panagiotou
La Patronne
20min, Interactive performance

La Patronne (the female boss in French) invites the audience to taste a new immersive theatre experience about love. If you are ready to play the game, then come.



Celia Wong
The Real People 2023
20min, Performance

"The Real People 2023" is a stand-up show that features an immigrant from Hong Kong to Cyprus, who has been confronting a massive culture gap in her new home.



Elisavet Panagiotou
childhood leftovers
17min, Performance

...with the innocence of water, the caress of a parent and my faith in a dog.
Childhood leftovers is a movement-based solo performance occupied with diving inside, tracing something forgotten and connecting to idealized absences. Inspiration is drawn from personal experience, possibly twisted introspection, and imagination.
The creative process of the piece has been supported by Open Up Performance Lab 2021 and Moving the New Residency (Dancehouse Lemesos, 2022).



Eleni Phyla
Forest and Love
15 min, Video

A video of how the idea of the experiential workshop 'Forest and Love' started and how it is growing.



Markos Alexandrou, *The Broken*, Prints on paper

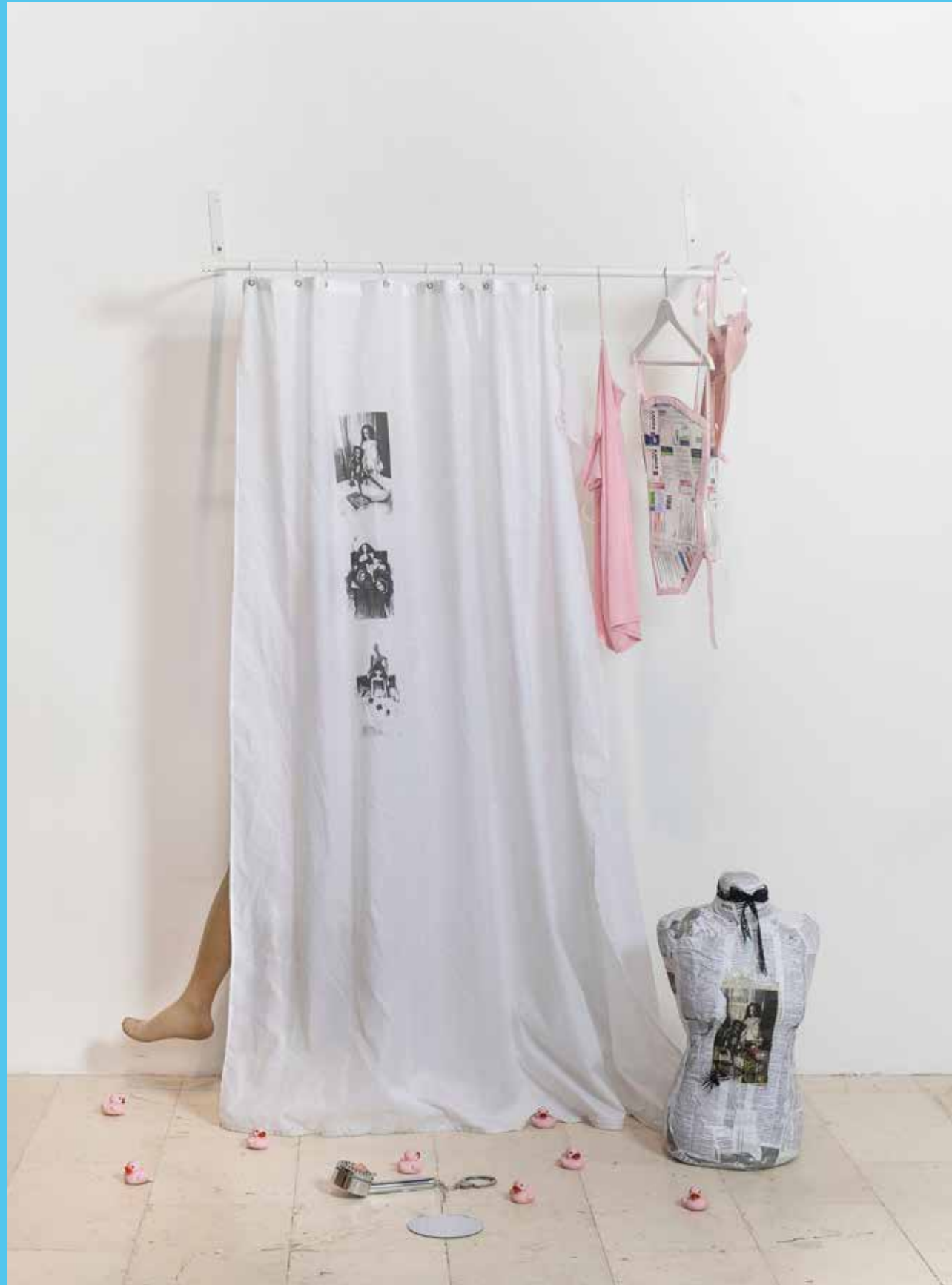


Sakis Doritis, *I am not Japanese*, Silkscreen prints / triptych



Pierides Foundation, Nicosia, Cyprus

Eleni Kepola, *Per_fail_ction*, Mixed materials, found objects, prints



Despo Pringi, *Shadow – The Memory of the Root*, Mixed techniques



Pierides Foundation, Nicosia, Cyprus

Thalia Vassiliou, *Missed Connections*, Mixed materials, wall composition



Abdul Gandy Bande, *Untitled I-IV*, Recycled materials



Kyriakos Theocharous, *Chine Collé Vol.2*, Metal stencils / Diptych (2 pieces 100x70cm)

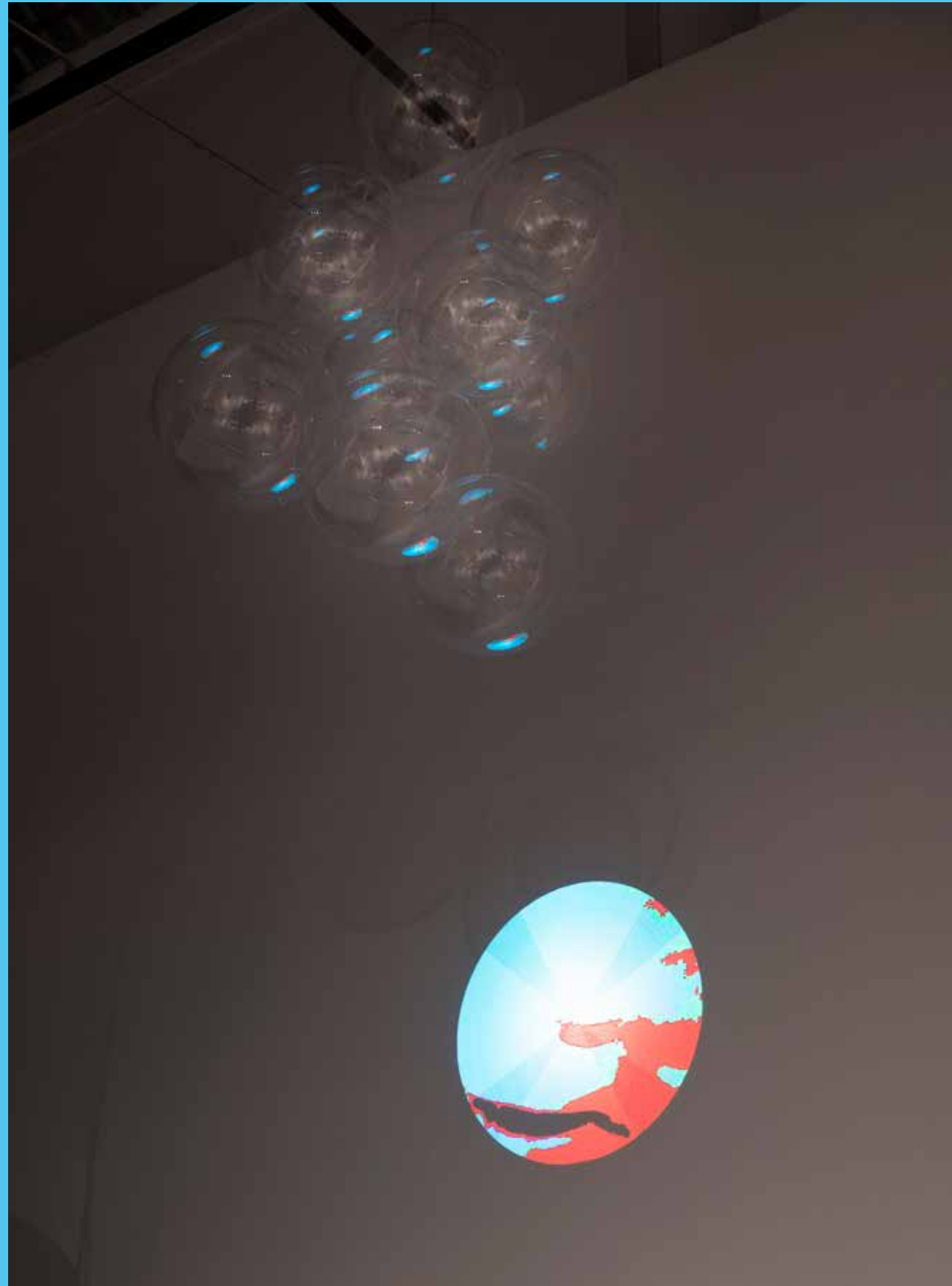


Irina Chervonnaya, *Stuffed by Care*, Installation / mixed media prints



Pierides Foundation, Nicosia, Cyprus

Rebecca Efstathiou, *Bright Words*, Digital image / holographic 3D digital projection



Eleni Mylona, *La Vie D'Un Mannequin*, Silkscreen prints, photographs, collage, fabrics, video art



Pierides Foundation, Nicosia, Cyprus

Katerina Neofitidou, *Inaccessible*, MDF, polystyrene, acrylic, silkscreen print



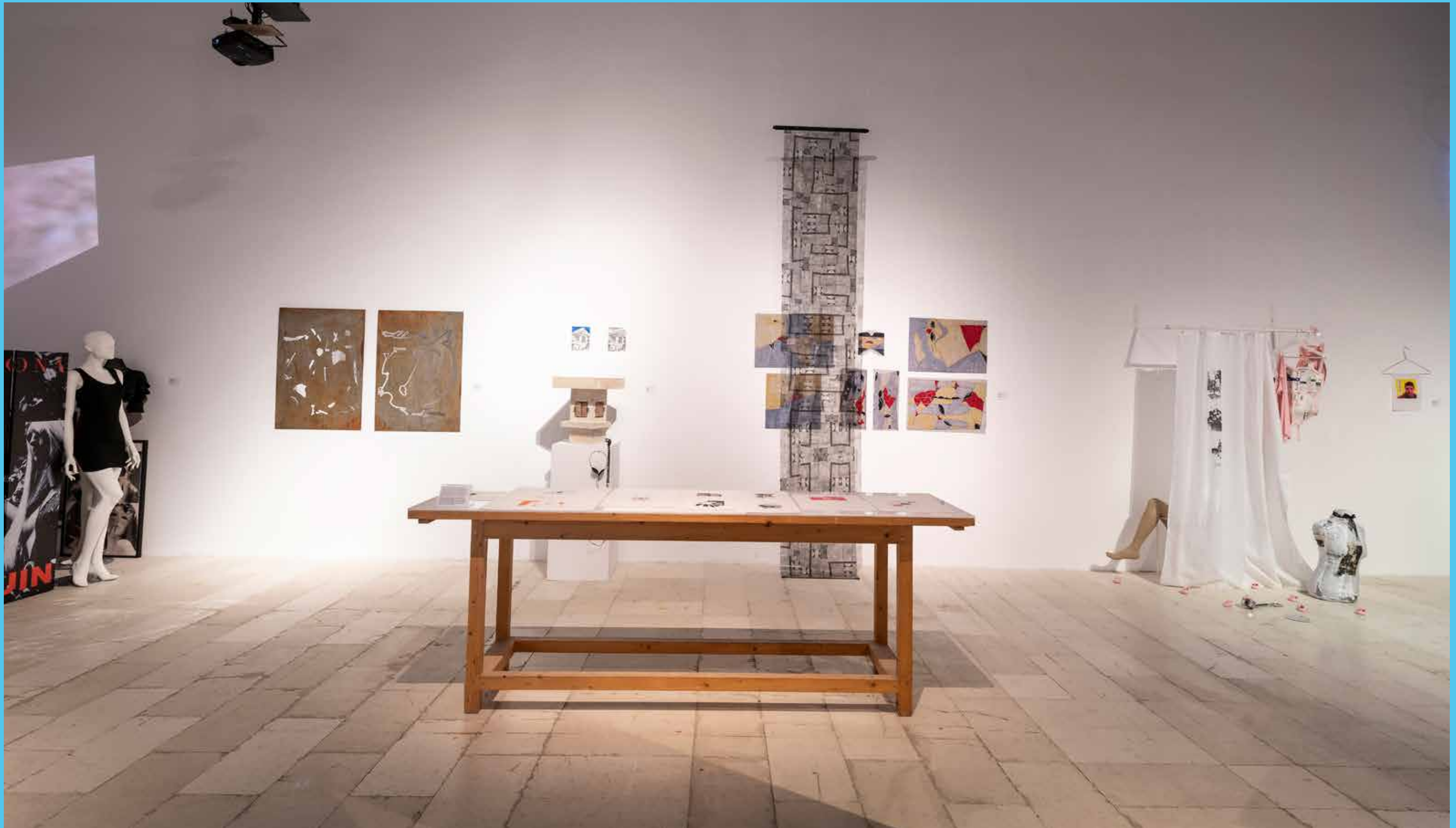
Celia Wong, *Mini Periptero*, Wood, silkscreen prints, sound



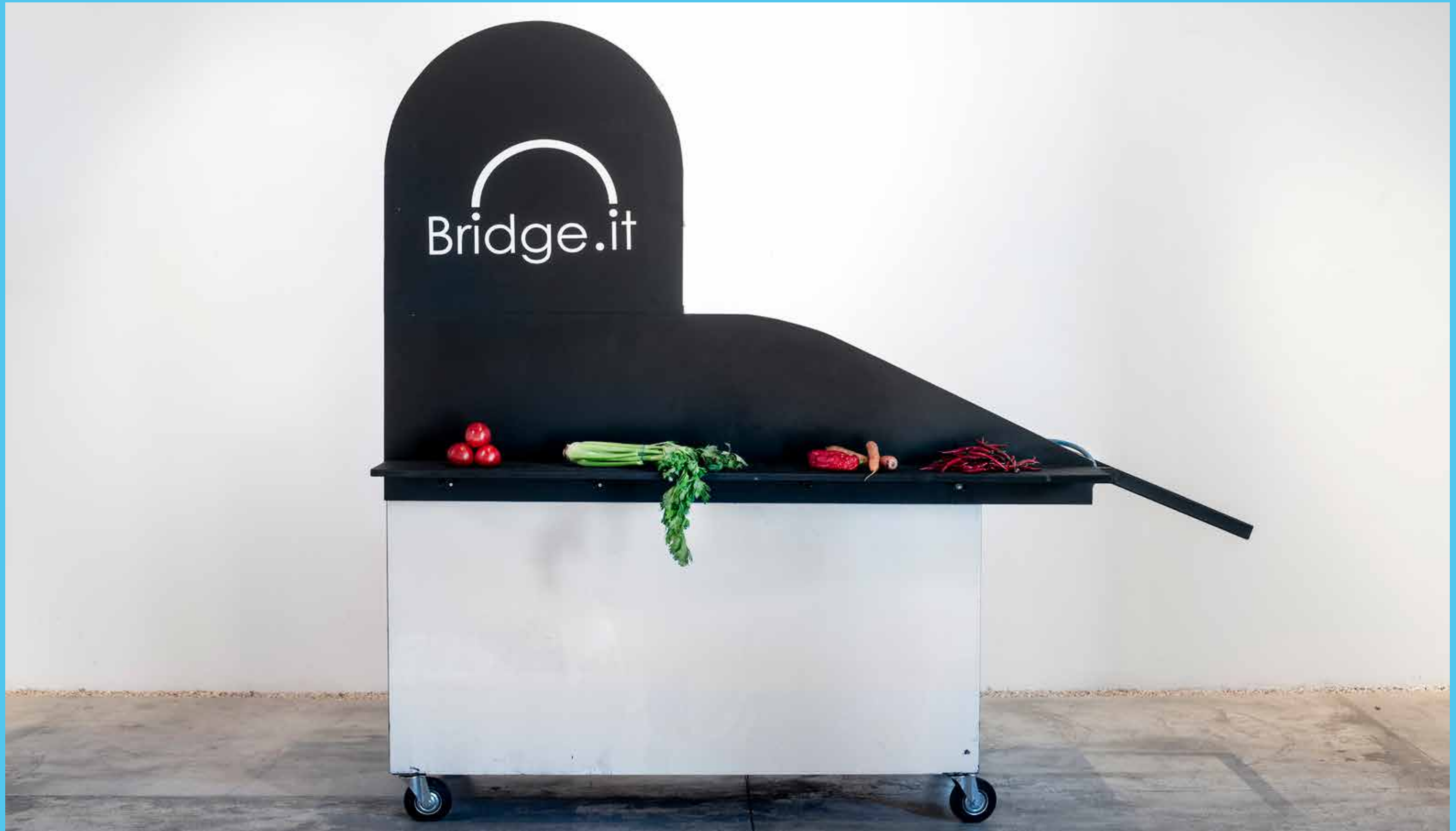














Pierides Foundation Nicosia, Cyprus

Stories of Shifts

"Stories of Shifts" is a project of the European Union Open Up Programme organised by project creatives Danai Anagnostou and Lia Haraki. The project hosted seven artists, from the corresponding seven participating countries of the programme, who created their own short video artworks presented at the closing festival of the programme at NiMAC in Nicosia, Cyprus.

The participants were: Hayal Gezer (Cyprus), Vishnu Vardhani Rajan (Finland), Aladdin Mofakheri (Sweden), Bruno Silva Marques (Portugal), Vangelis Xenodochidis (Greece), Ainhoa Concustell López (Spain), Ilaf Haidar (France).

The process towards the making of the videos included a week of workshops and master classes, especially for the seven participants, including a five-day workshop on performing biography through the body and sound with Lia Haraki and other experts from around the globe: Alexandra Matheou (Cyprus), Chrysanthi Badeka (Greece), Alkis Papastathopoulos (Greece), Payal Kapadia (India), Maryan Abdulkarim (Somalia/Finland), Julian Ross (United Kingdom/Netherlands) and Seemab Gul (United Kingdom/Pakistan).

The final video works show the distinct style and aesthetic of each of the artists. They portray issues of social inequalities and underprivileged identities, the ecological crisis, and modern-day struggles in an attempt to reveal several realities through a unique artistic filter.



Ainhoa Concustell López
Spaniard
Born and works: Sant Joan
de Vilatorrada, Barcelona, Spain

Who leaves a mark on whom?
2023
Video
1920x1080, Full HD

“Who leaves a mark on whom?” is a personal reflection about my becoming a teacher. It is a compilation of the memories and convictions that guided me to be an agent of change through education, but it is also a letter of gratitude to my students for their lessons.



Bruno Miguel Marques Afonso Da Silva
Portuguese
Born and works: Coimbra, Portugal

One story of shift
2023
Video
1920x1080, Full HD

This video is the result of a live performance, where the artist directed, edited and produced live a video feed, mixing his matrix of memories from the project. Three HD robotic live cameras placed at strategic points facing the stage and six VJ video channels were mixed real-time with the live gig synth sound input for the electronic music soundscape into a video recording workstation. A one-man-show...



Alladin Mofakheri
Kurd from Iran
Born and works:
Sanandaj, Iran

Tomorrow is to late
2023
Recycled material such
as metal, paper, plastic
1920x1080, Full HD video

The video work is for the environment and highlights the planet's past beauty and today's deteriorating situation about it.



Hayal Gezer
Cypriot
Born and works: Ottawa, Canada
based in Cyprus

Performers:
Hayal Gezer, Memo Yıldızçoban,
Nuné Tunjikian

Rüyada pembe ba butsa görmek
Να ονειρευτείς ένα ροζ φραγκόσυκο
2023
Video, performance
1920x1080, Full HD



Inspired from a dream, this video art explores the urban and rural landscape of Cyprus where the lines between absurdity and reality become blurry and difficult to define.



Ilaf Haidar
French and Syrian
Born and works: France

Lineae
2023
1920x1080, Full HD video

“Lineae” portrays my Open Up Project journey, taking inspiration from Gibran Khalil Gibran’s poem.

I chose to sing a part of it:
“Have you bathed in fragrances,
and dried yourself with light?
Then you drank the dawn like wine
from chalices of ether?”
“Give me the flute and sing.”



Vagelis Xenodochidis
Greek
Born and works: Athens, Cyprus

(Danae Athanasei: Assistant director
Panagiotis Kravaritis: Assistant sound designer)

Agistri
2023
Video
1920x1080, Full HD

“Agistri” (fishhook) is a small piece of metal, designed to penetrate flesh and cause death. The film intends to be a performative narration of the blurred feeling following a human relation. A collection of passages through landscapes and short investigational focuses on objects and spaces on a Greek island.



Vishnu Vardhani Rajan
Indian
Born and works: Hyderabad, India / Helsinki, Finland

FoodOnWheels
2023
Video
1920x1080, Full HD

“FoodOnWheels” is an essay on the growth of “non-places”, where histories, identities, and human connections remain elusive.

Once relegated to urban fringes, these non-places, initially confined to shopping malls, airports, and supermarkets, have expanded. Now, every urban space is a non-place. The uniform iconography of food delivery companies blurs distinctions, leaving anywhere feeling like nowhere. Everywhere, capitalistic and hypocritical gestures flash in bright colours.





PUBLICS Helsinki, Finland

PUBLICS is a curatorial and commissioning agency with a dedicated research library and event space in Helsinki, Finland. Under the artistic direction of curator Paul O'Neill and team members Annabelle Antas, Micol Curatolo, Valentina Černiauskaitė and PUBLICS Youth Advisory Board, the agency explores a “work together” institutional model with multiple overlapping objectives, thematic strands and collaborations. PUBLICS has developed out of Checkpoint Helsinki, a contemporary art initiative established in 2013. In its spirit, PUBLICS continues the organisation's commitment to critical social thinking, contemporary art and publicness.

Through Open Up Helsinki, PUBLICS maps out, invites, and nurtures new audiences for its activities through a durational public programme and commissioned artworks.

'Parahosting' is an ongoing and expanding strand where PUBLICS hosts and supports local small-scale independent and non-profit initiatives and freelance cultural workers. In addition, 'Parahosting' is a programme of residencies, performances, talks, listening sessions, events, and productions, whereby PUBLICS shares its resources and space, offering its full capacities for others' activities.

Within the framework of Open Up, PUBLICS parahosted eight Listening Sessions held between 2020 and 2022. Each Listening Session was led by an invited small-scale Helsinki-based organisation, collective or local group, which in turn invited a number of international guests from their global networks to be in dialogue and to discuss their common issues, concerns and current challenges.

PUBLICS initiated and launched SHAPE Helsinki Art Map, a website resource for Helsinki's contemporary art landscape, a mapping of 110+ art spaces and public events across the city. SHAPE is a useful tool and an online publication for local residents and visitors that use to navigating the diversity of Helsinki art scenes.

In 2022, PUBLICS hosted The Open Up and Shape Helsinki Symposium discussing how equity, labour, money and structures of power are configured globally, while reflecting these questions back onto Helsinki's cultural scene, inviting three position papers and three Helsinki-based respondents. Over 100 Helsinki-based art organisations and institutions were invited to join in Rants & Raves of four minutes and thirty-three seconds each, inspired by John Cage's composition 4'33". "Ranting" and "Raving" are immediate and liberating forms of public expression. They tell about the present, while pointing at long-coming conditions of pressure, uncertainty and search for alternatives.

Future Futures is a long-term project with PUBLICS Youth Advisory Board, a collective of young people working within the organisation. The Youth Board is a new employment and education opportunity for 18-21-year-olds based in Helsinki, who engage in forms of collective learning through knowledge exchange and co-curation between young people and local and international professionals. PUBLICS and the Youth Board work together on creating a generous space of learning, where they build the tools to carry their voices, needs and wishes as they navigate contemporary culture.

Today is Our Tomorrow (TIOT) is an annual series of collaborations and co-commissions responding to our future present and its social conditions – a coming together of affinities, alliances and differences in the ways we imagine and create our today and tomorrow. The transdisciplinary programme is annually produced in partnership with other local and international organisations, initiatives and institutions.

In 2021, the TIOT Festival connected with three Baltic organisations to co-commission three new artists' works. Furthermore, in 2022 the festival hosted at PUBLICS a day-long public gathering giving special attention to the voices of young people and the politics of listening.

In 2023, PUBLICS concluded Open Up with the *Festival of Books and Voices* and launched the publication *The Voice that Remains*, which compiles traces of works, leftover moments, art projects at PUBLICS over the last four years, alongside five new essays on Voice.

PUBLICS concluded Open Up Helsinki in Nicosia, Cyprus, with *Today is Our Tomorrow: The Voice That Remains*. Nine unique artist commissions were presented, each focusing on the current futurity and presentness of the voice in its many sonic forms, vocal modes and acoustic modalities. The artists explored acts of world listening, life recording and the voice as a body of cohabitation, modes of living and being together, each giving form to the political present and to our future futures.

PUBLICS, Helsinki, Finland



KMRU
performing in PUBLICS
at *Today Is Our Tomorrow*
Festival 2022.
Photo by Aman Askarizad

Artist KMRU performed *Stupor: A Soundtrack for a Future Festival*. *Stupor* was initially commissioned as a musical score for PUBLICS annual festival *Today is Our Tomorrow*, culminating with its premiere at the Open Up Nicosia Festival. The resulting work by KMRU was also released on vinyl with new Helsinki-based label *Other Power* and co-produced with Performa NYC available also in Nicosia. Realised in-between Nairobi and Berlin, field recordings, bodily affects and place-bound identities are navigated through interstitial spaces to form a veil of profound stillness.



Harold Offeh
Lounging, 2017,
performance.
Wysing Arts Centre

Artist and educator Harold Offeh hosted *Lounging Symposium*, a short performance lecture held in a reclining or lounging pose. The lecture explored the history, cultural context, power dynamics and politics of adopting this pose.



Atheer Soot (Moe Mustafa)
performing in PUBLICS
at Xosphere 2021.
Photo by Noora Lehtovuori

Sound artist Moe Mustafa AKA Atheer Soot presented *The Topography Soundscape of My Queer Body*, a sonic research on the artists' existence within a hybrid masculine system and the hierarchy of desire in homosexual contexts.

PUBLICS, Helsinki, Finland



Noor Abed and Mark Lofty
Yours Truly, 2021,
lecture performance.
Photo by Christian Schuller

Artist Noor Abed and film-maker Mark Lofty led *Yours Truly*, a multimedia lecture performance and first public reflection on their three-year research on the private U.S. military engagement in the Middle East.



Shubhangi Singh
Birth of a Grenade, 2022,
film still.
Force Meets Vacuum
at Open Up Nicosia Festival

Artist Shubhangi Singh presented *Force Meets Vacuum*, a performative reflection on the connections between extractivism, colonial botany and the conquest of Australia by the European powers.



Sepideh Rahaa
Songs to Earth, Songs to Seeds, 2022.
Liverpool Biennial 2023
at Cotton Exchange

Sepideh Rahaa featured the video installation *Songs to Earth, Songs to Seeds* / *آه نیمی از آوازه، آه نیمی از آوازه*, which portrays the long and ritual process of rice cultivation in the paddy lands in Mazandaran, Northern Iran, where the artist has family roots. The film connects the local cultivation of the second staple food in the world to stories of water, land, grains, women's labour and songs, and neo-colonial food politics.

PUBLICS, Helsinki, Finland



Eugenia Lim
Metabolism, 2023,
film still

Eugenia Lim presents the film essay *Metabolism*, the portrait of a living, working ecology and the multi-species it sustains, considering the body-as-land and the land-as-body.



Anu Pennanen
5, 10, 100 YEARS FROM NOW, 2023
film still

Anu Pennanen shows the short video *5, 10, 100 YEARS FROM NOW*, a video essay about the future in an era of resource-based conflict and global environmental crisis.



PUBLICS Youth Advisory Board,
Index Teen Advisory Board and
PRAKSIS Teen Advisory Board
presenting in PUBLICS at
Today Is Our Tomorrow, 2022.
Photo by Aman Askarizad

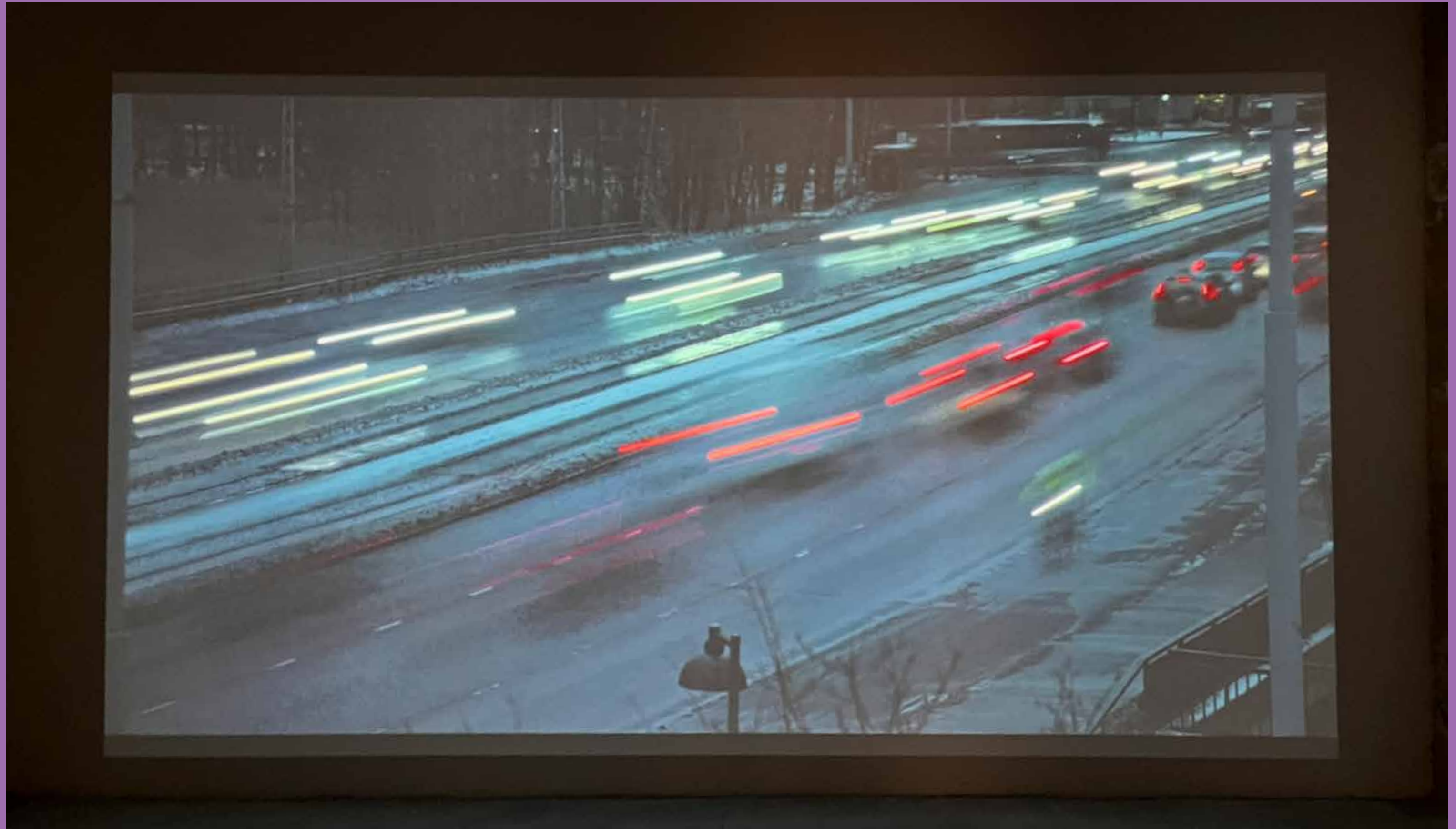
Alongside the eight commissions, the first two episodes of the podcast produced by PUBLICS Youth Advisory Board was presented during the Open Up Nicosia Festival:

- **Episode 1** features members Anastasiia Lapteva, Manda Loipponen, Valeriia Masliukova-Malova, Erika Ryppieva, Róza Turunen, and Vanessa Uhlbäck discussing play-fulness and togetherness as strategies to navigate the passage from teenagehood to adulthood, and to reclaim self-definition in the shift from education to professionalisation.

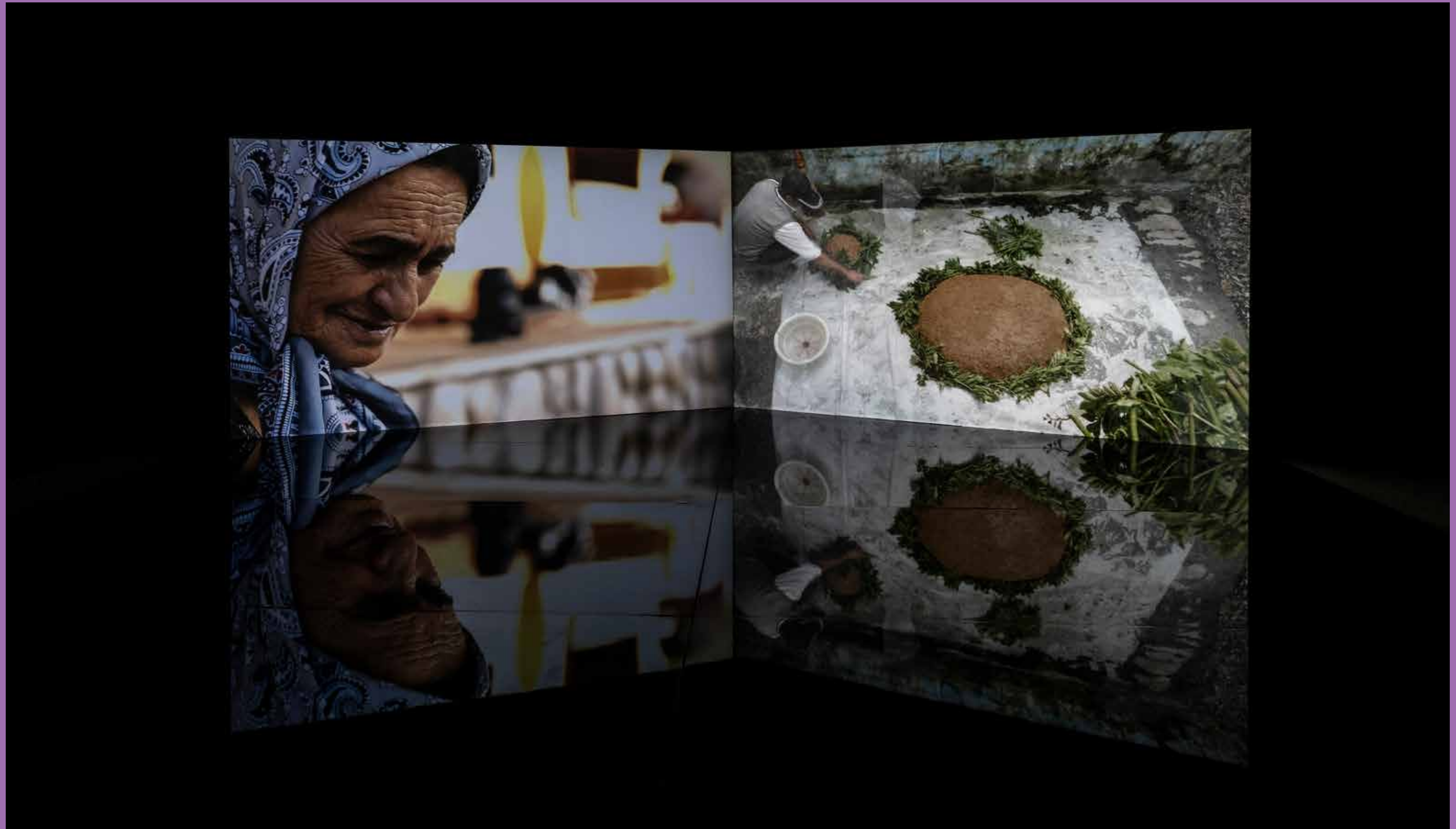
- **Episode 2** features artist and educator Harold Offeh and project coordinator Micol Curatolo reflecting on the position of PUBLICS Youth within the larger infrastructures and practices of contemporary art education.



Exhibition view













Valand Academy Gothenburg, Sweden

Open Up Gothenburg was initiated by Sarah Tuck in December 2019 together with a group of colleagues, graduate students and alumni of HDK-Valand. Over time, this group expanded to include: Andreas Engman, Behjat Omer Abdulla, Anna Liljedal, Esme Valencia Lindström, David Spratt, Azadeh Esmaili Zaghi, Eldin Smajlović, Arash Deghani, Anna Dasovic, Sanskriti Chattopadhyay, Shauheen Daneshfar and Mick Wilson. In the first two years of the project, activities were severely restricted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The key challenge presented was the difficulty of building new relationships with artists in a period when face-to-face meetings were curtailed, and when new social and professional encounters were simply not welcome by most.

An initial impetus for the Open Up work was earlier activity on the theme of desegregating the academy. Students and staff at HDK-Valand had engaged for a number of years (since 2015) in a civil society initiative called "River of Light", which emerged from graduate student Behjat Omer Abdulla's artistic practice, developed together with a guest teacher at the Academy, Denise Langridge Mellion, who led a professional development course at graduate level. "River of Light" began as an annual procession of people –comprising refugee children who had arrived in Sweden as unaccompanied minors fleeing atrocities in various parts of the world, and a range of different communities, activists, artists and advocates– walking with handmade lanterns through the city as a way of announcing the presence and welcoming these especially vulnerable new arrivals in Sweden. This initiative was a powerful cultural force promoting interaction and solidarity across multiple constituencies within the city. It also had the effect of illuminating the challenges of segregation based on class, colour and migration background that was evident in our academy and in the broader city. The Open Up Project was seen as a way to extend what we were learning from "River of Light" by creating opportunities for greater interaction across traditional exclusions.

Over time, as the pandemic receded, the project started to develop a momentum, especially through the active support and engagement of such key figures, as artists Aladdin Mofakheri, Annika Wennberg and filmmaker and actor Masoud Yousefi. Eventually, we grew from a small group of participating artists and makers to become a group of more than forty artists and creative producers working in a wide range of practices, such as fashion design, multimedia, sculpture, painting, digital imaging, filmmaking, literature, graphic narrative, music and performance.

Key to this building of a project constituency was the development of the series of Open Up workshops in Gothenburg that included locally targeted workshops on aspects of funding, exhibition development, producing artists' statements, mediating practices, and most importantly on building peer networks of mutual support, as well as international workshops that included work on aspects of art publishing, working with audio and voice, and professional video editing with industry-standard open access software. The most successful series of workshops were a series of monthly meetings throughout 2022 and 2023 –taking place on Saturdays to facilitate participants who had other professional and educational commitments– that addressed the production processes regarding the realisation of the

Open Up Festival in June–July 2023. These workshops generated a new mixed community of artists coming from multiple disciplines, different generations and multiple backgrounds – a group defined not by a singular identity trait, but by a common experience and desire: the wish to overcome the obstacles and challenges faced by any person wishing to pursue a creative practice of artistic production within the context of Western Sweden.

The Open Up Festival featured film screenings, an exhibition across five venues in the HDK–Valand campus, and an evening concert of music performance and dance. The participants in the festival ranged from recently arrived artists from the Syrian, Iranian, and Kurdish diasporas to Swedish born artists who had been working for decades in Western Sweden but who were now seeking new audiences for their work, and also seeking opportunities to work with new technologies and new genres. Within the festival, we also developed a strand of youth activity oriented to a new generation of artists and media creatives as a response to a request from two teenage girls who wanted a chance to communicate their experience of contemporary Sweden from their multiple perspectives.

The list of artist names for the Open Up Gothenburg Festival, and the makers of a new community of practice, included: Aladdin Mofakhari, Annika Wennberg, Azad Larki, Azadeh E Zaghi, Behjat Omer Abdulla, Bereen Darvis, Catalina Fuentes Araya , Chro Seyedi, David Spraggs, Eldin Smajlović, Elin Wennberg, Fatemeh Salehi, Gunilla Gränsbo, Hamidreza Jahantigh, Heba Alakkad, Helaleh Ghaderi, Ingrid Lindberg, Kamran Seydiyan, Kamyran Seydiyan, Marie Bergqvist, Masuod Yousefi, Negar Latifan, Nora Ordenes Soderberg, Olof Nilsson, Rezgar Alipanah , Ronak Rabiee, Faezeh Daemi, Roya Charehtalab, Saga Biarnason, Sara Khayat, Shenyan Yousefi, Tara Talebsafa, Tayebbeh (Roz) Madadi, Ward Zaraa and the music duo Per & Nada (Per Ohlson and Nada Alichiah), and the Kurdish dance group Jin, Jiyan, Azadî (Eyoub Marabi, Heresh Askari, Kevin Homayoun Nejad, Nina Eftekhar, Roza Hosainpanahi, and Shakila Eftekhar.



Aladdin Mofakhari
Swede, b. Iran / Kurdistan
"Upside Down" (2023)
Installation comprising masks,
video, sculpture and mixed media.
Dimensions: (Variable)

This work responds to the gas attacks on Iranian school children and the protests both in Iran and across the diaspora. The video shows protestors using Mofakhari's masks in a protest at the Iranian embassy in Stockholm.



Aladdin Mofakhari
Swede, b. Iran / Kurdistan
"Untitled" (2023)
Two garments from
recycled textiles
Dimensions: (Variable)

Recycling as a response to ecological crisis is a central concern of this artist.





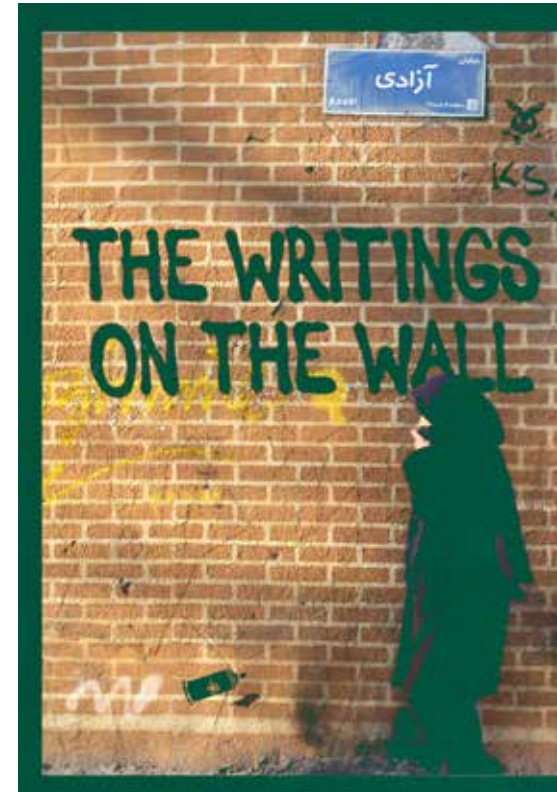
Annika Wennberg
Swede, b. Sweden

"Normal Times" (2023)
Sculpture in wood
Dimensions: (64x36x24cm)



"Weak Connections" (2023)
Sculpture in wood
Dimensions: (20x40x20cm)

"From blue to red" (2023)
Sculpture in wood
Dimensions: (60x70x25cm)



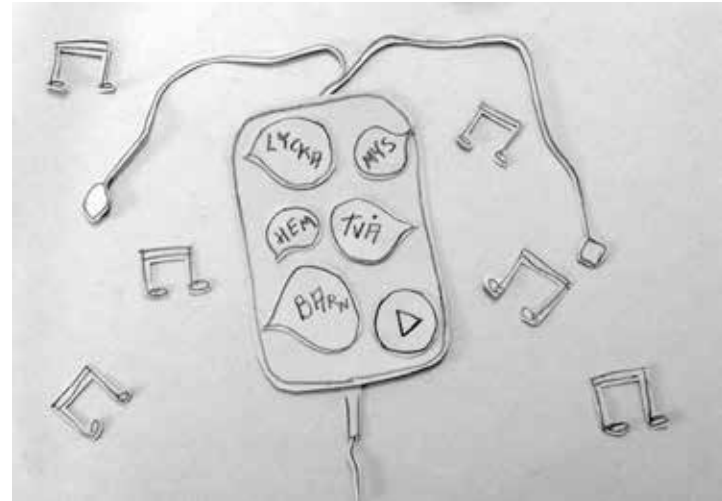
Aladdin Mofakhari
Swede, b. Iran / Kurdistan
"Untitled" (2023)
Two garments from recycled textiles
Dimensions: (Variable)

Recycling as a response to ecological crisis is a central concern of this artist.



Fatemeh Salehi
"Toranj" (2023)
One garment hand fabricated with bead work and embroidery
Dimensions: (Variable)

Toranj is the central and main pattern at the heart of many Iranian carpet designs. It is full of bends and folds that can be used thousands of times in designing clothes.



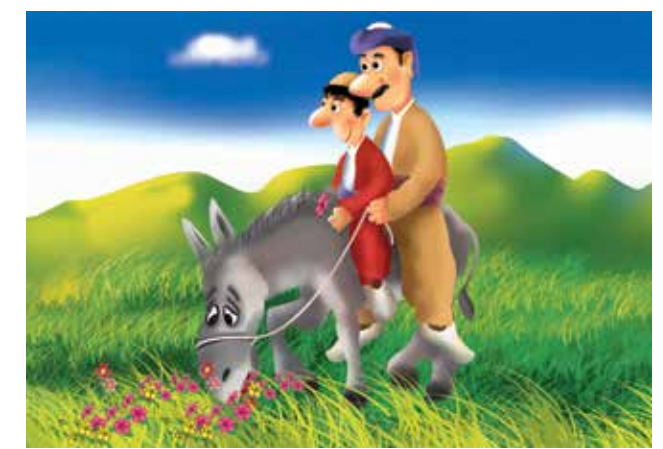
Hamidreza Jahantigh
Experimental Painting
Installation (2023)
Acrylic on canvas
Dimensions: (Variable)

Comprises a set of multiple canvases, painted in different idioms and styles drawn from different traditions of picture-making and abstraction.

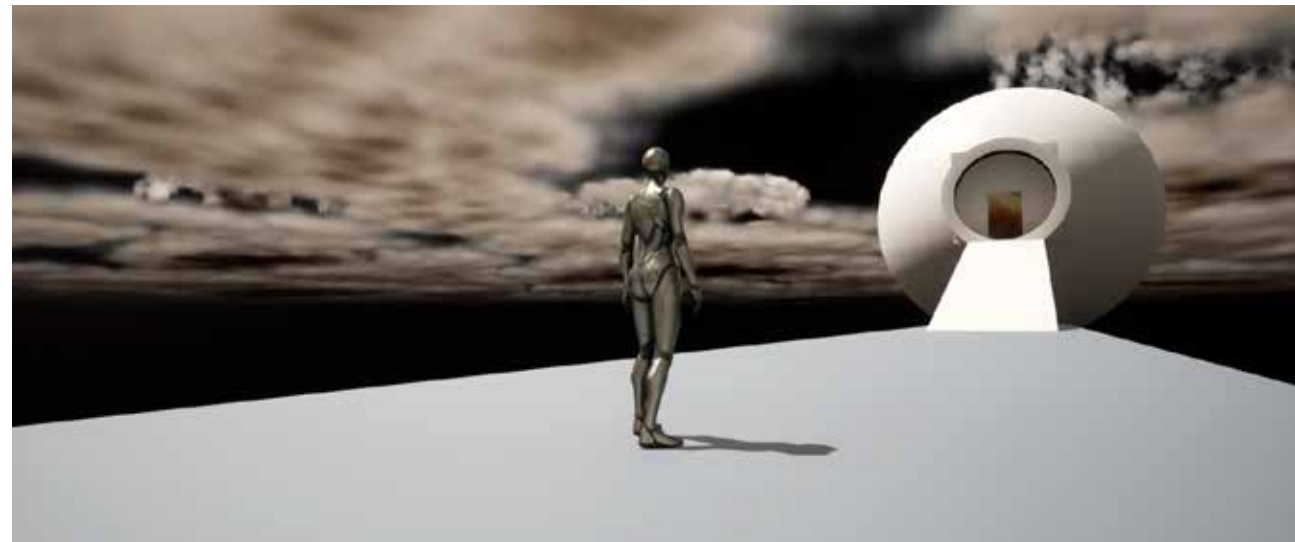


Aladdin Mofakhari
Swede, b. Iran / Kurdistan
"Untitled" (2023)
Two garments from recycled textiles
Dimensions: (Variable)

Recycling as a response to ecological crisis is a central concern of this artist.

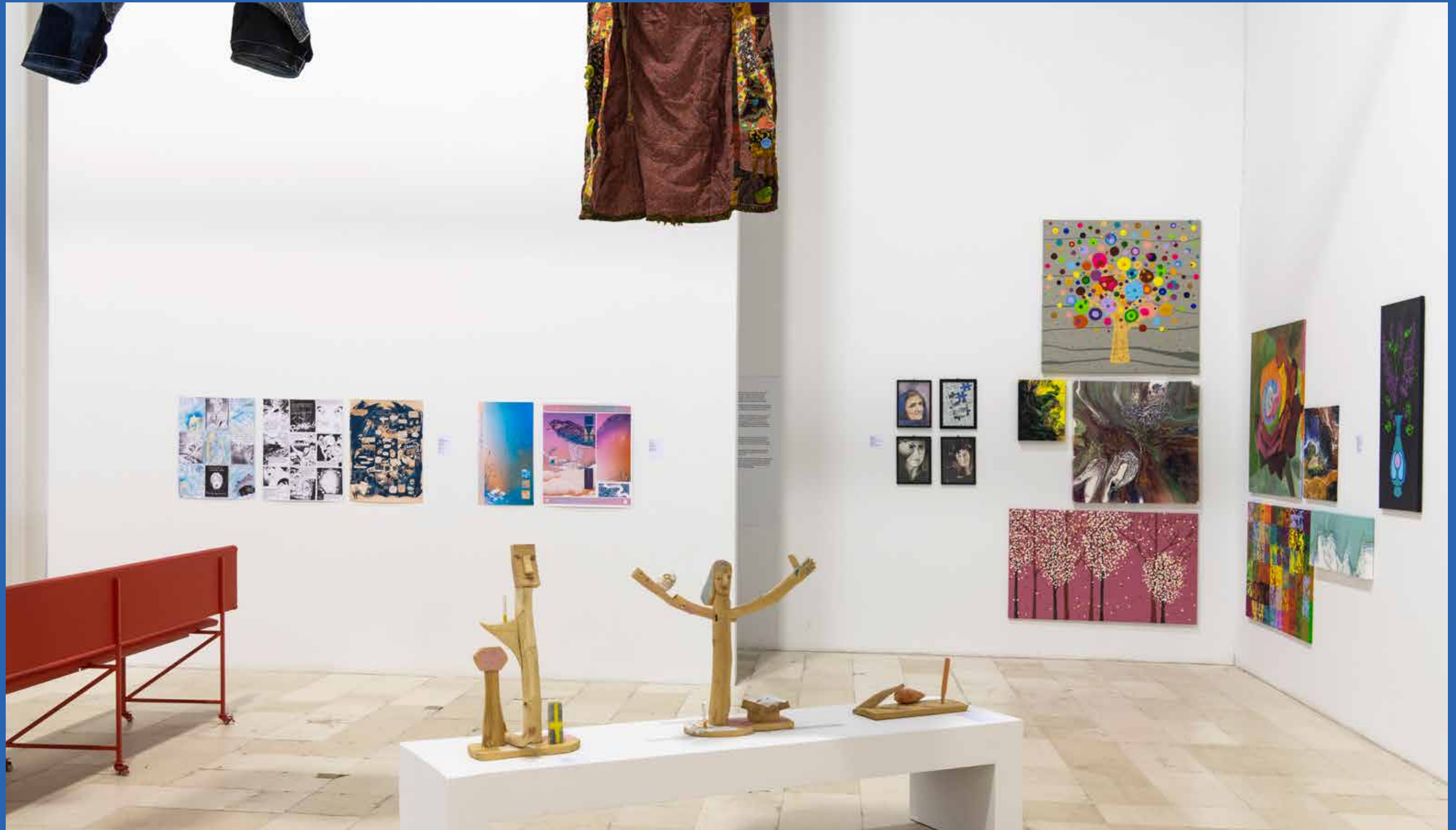


Aladdin Mofakhari
Swede, b. Iran / Kurdistan
"Untitled" (2023)
Two garments from recycled textiles
Dimensions: (Variable)

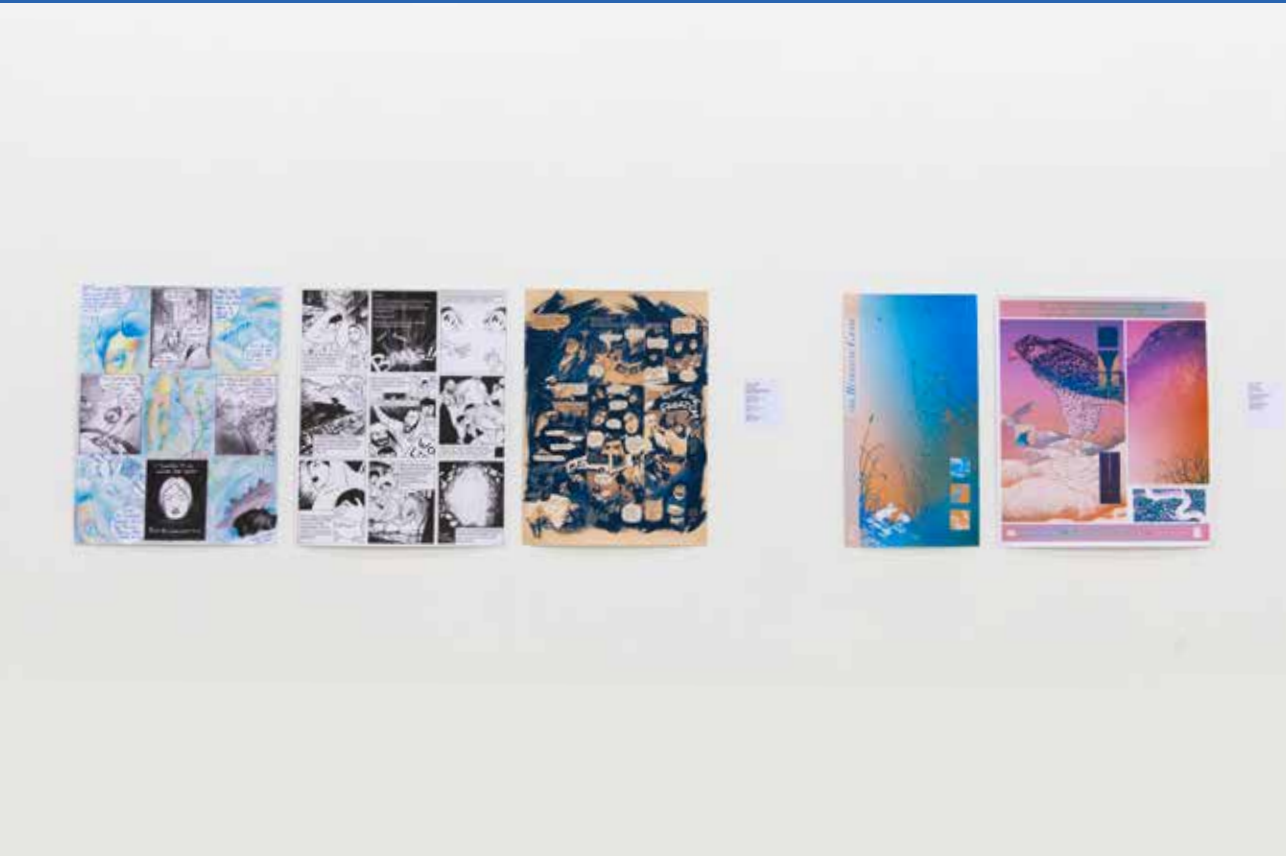














New Hand Lab Covilhã, Portugal

New Hand Lab was created in 2013 and is a space that promotes creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship through the realisation of ideas, products and initiatives. It is home to authors and artists from various fields, such as fashion and textile design, multimedia arts, painting and sculpture, among others. It aims to be a space for promoting, boosting and disseminating the most creative endogenous resources, and to boost Covilhã and Beira Interior in the country and in the world.

Tear de Luz

E. H. Gombrich

"There is no real dividing line, only an intellectual one, separating the object from its context. They are completely intertwined: nothing can exist in the world independently of all other things of the world."

Robert W. Irwin

The installation *Tear de Luz* (Loom of Light) is the outcome of the meeting of its creators, each of whom brings her/his specific references and their own artistic language to contribute to the expressive whole. It is therefore a single piece, in which video art meets physical art work. Its aim is to take the spectator/visitor on a journey to the heart of the creative space in which everything began: the New Hand Lab. We see this piece of work as a "nest", a welcoming, comfortable space that serves to bring together all of its visitors, leading them through a sensorial set of emotions and sensations, guided by the physical characteristics of the space, of its surroundings and references to the city of Covilhã. It is this path, this journey, this route that we invite everyone to take, guided by the light and the yarn of wool – the essence and matrix of so much of this art.

"Mesa dos Sentidos" (The Table of Senses) invites the visitor to take a seat, creating a focus point, which allows her/him to both observe and immerse herself/himself in the experience. There is no given way to live this observational experience. Its luminosity would lose intensity if we were to guide the visitor down a specific path.

Three narratives are distributed in a triptych of films. The initial contact with the piece focusses on that which is concrete. It captures the sensations and the emotions of the space surrounding us. We invoke some of the physical elements, characteristics of the identity of the space we are representing, playing with the notion of observation, of both inside and outside. It is central so that –depending on the size, the orientation of the light and the changing sound– each visitor discovers different stories that we want to tell.

Through the sound that accompanies this videographic narrative, we also aim to rescue the memory of the factory and its machines. By aspiring to represent this sound, in its mechanical and repetitive form, we are able to generate “difference” and, thereby, distinguish ourselves from others in terms of identity. Thus, this piece is also a sound installation.

One of the lateral projections narrates the dynamics, the ways of working, the inspiration and influence of space and time on the work of each of the participants. Like an open and simultaneously graphic conversation, it “translates” the “words” that shape the personality of each one.

The other lateral projection searches for the detail, the specific, the results of what has been achieved thus far. With meticulousness and dedication, we seek to identify the point on the line, the moment in the plot. It is nothing more than reaching the end of the “thread of light” that brought us here.

Having been immersed in the separate parts of this exhibition–environment, divided into three parts by the layout of the space we were invited to occupy, and having followed this trail, this path, we return to the light of the table, where this experience began for the visitor. We become aware of the materials that surround us, the different forms of artistic expression; and, feeling the tufted surface with our bare feet, we depart.

This artwork serves to map the entire creative process, bringing together different results in this final piece, in order to show the essence of the space that welcomed the artists, its particular warmth. It therefore reflects on the creative process itself, and on the exercise of self-representation.

We see it as a loom of light because it crosses the matrix of the origins of the factory, with those who inhabit it today and transform it into a space for the future. This installation is about the future!

“In reality, art does not exist. What exists are artists.”







University of Thessaly Volos, Greece

The Open Up Uth team consisted of architects, artists, creative professionals, academics and researchers, who represented the University of Thessaly in the European Open Up Project. Despite the many difficulties it faced as a result of the Covid-19 global pandemic, the University of Thessaly team successfully organised the following workshops during the four-year programme:

YEAR 2 -2021

Traditional Techniques and Digital Laboratories

A1. "Domestic Assemblage" Object and Furniture Prototyping;

DOMESTIC ASSEMBLAGE I – (ONLINE Workshop) 2021

"Domestic Assemblage" was a webinar/workshop about designing and constructing objects and furniture for everyday living. The aim was to create low-cost domestic forms and structures by reconfiguring and reconstructing different elements found in the participants' houses and their surroundings. Following the methodology of collecting and assembling fragments from the material world around them, participants were called to transform and reuse them for new domestic uses.

At first, the world could be conceived as a patchwork of materials available for the human constructed world. Afterwards, this eternal process of construction and metabolism of the natural world provided one already used, material world, full of things that have been destroyed or haven't yet. In the Anthropocene period the material world was transformed into a world of things.

The workshop explored how everyday life is shaped by the use of functional objects, supporting the idea that objects affect the ritual (efficiency) of daily routine. The projects aimed at analysis, conception and introduction of both the objects and the performance of everyday life. The participants were invited to design and make objects for everyday (their) life, activating a list of materials from our common culture, using simple mechanical tools, low-tech processes and specific methods of design.

The main objective of the workshop was to develop research on various possibilities regarding the design and the production of objects, schedules and actions for everyday life and the activation of home space for both accommodation and work (from home). Recent technologies, as well as software development and efficient manufacturing techniques allow designers, architects and artists to conceive and construct works and products without the need for long and expensive industrial production lines.



In addition, the workshop focused on transformation with reuse, with practices DIY (Do It Yourself), as well as with the use of the assemblage method. Participants were invited to modify or reconstruct a useful object found in their residence, expecting that the resulting object produced in the workshop would be useful for their home. Through the workshop, the participants developed their ingenuity and ability of designing and constructing small-scale objects that could be utilised in their houses, as well as strengthening proper communication and interaction among them.



**Regional Gardening and Local Food Culture
B1. Campus Urban Garden – Home Gardening
HOME GARDENING – (ONLINE Workshop) 2021**

For more than a year, people were obliged to live at home and the majority of them were required to adapt to remote work from home, turning in essence their houses into an office, a workshop, a gym, a restaurant, a garden. The condition of turning the house into a workplace had come to stay; it was, in fact, a universally new condition, which had changed the house into a host of the sum of peoples' activities; their whole life. The house-factory created new practices and habits, and home culture drastically changed. This brought about the opportunity to trace and invent new living practices with self-isolation, solidarity and sharing knowledge and materials among those in the same household. The "Home Gardening" workshop opened a discussion forum on the subject of our relationship with the plant world, home cultivation, gardening and plant parenting practices for each participant of the workshop. In relation to the botanical paradigm in artistic practices, ideas were presented from the field of art and environmental activism. Participants in the workshop undertook the opportunity to discuss and produce new micro-environment plants in every participant's home. The workshop succeeded in forming a critical approach-by-practice to the stereotypical household standards. The house could now be expected to host new practices of domestic production instead of consuming readymade products. As new domestic skills and practices emerged, the metabolism of household life relied in the hands of the inhabitants.



YEAR 3 -2022

Traditional Techniques and Digital Laboratories

A1. "Domestic Assemblage" Object and Furniture Prototyping;

DOMESTIC ASSEMBLAGE II – (Local Workshop) 2022

In the context of a current reflection on daily practices and their environmental footprint, the 2022 Open Up Uth workshop entitled "Domestic Assemblage II – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" posed the basic question of the design of produced objects in relation to their function and materiality and examined reuse as a methodological and design tool. In contrast to the certain life cycle of buy–use–discard objects, reuse is a resistance and a "second life" for objects that have completed a "previous life" but their performativity or functionality remains active. What about the "next life" of our material world and what design process makes it active? The concept of construction is understood in all its synthetic, intended meanings (construction, preparation, repair), as a continuation of actions that maintain and reproduce everyday life. In a logic of sustainability, the construction of objects is not perceived as a process of production, consumption and destruction of the construction. On the contrary, the construction process is of interest as an intervention in the life of materials and objects that creates or renews situations.

The proposed methodology followed the technique of assemblage, in other words the gathering and co-articulation of different elements and materials, following a strategy of collecting and recording fragments of the modern domestic world; the household both inside and outside. The design methodology followed the logic of cooking recipes: Selecting and specifying the materials to be used, determining the required quantities and, by combining them, the new structure emerges. Each articulated part can be deconstructed into the units of the materials that make it up and return to their original state ready to be used in a new "recipe" – in a new form of a useful object. The sustainable design methodology was open to interpretations and to the creation of new "recipes" for the production of new objects. In summary, the workshop was successful in defining and achieving its main objective: to create an archive of methodological approaches to reuse and to compile these assembly methods as an open system for redesigning the material world.





Regional Gardening and Local Food Culture
B1. Campus Urban Garden – Home Gardening
URBAN GARDENING – (Transnational Workshop) 2022

Having experienced long periods of living at home, which gradually turned it into a host for all of our activities, the home–factory created new practices and habits; our home culture changed. This gave us the opportunity to trace but also to invent living practices with self–action, solidarity and sharing of knowledge and materials among the inhabitants. The “agro-urban” environment of Volos has always provided suitable ground to combine urban life with agricultural practices. The “Urban Gardening” workshop, opened a discussion field on the subject of our relationship with the plant world, cultivation and feeding and, at the same time, enabled new cultivation and gardening practices to emerge. Participants in the workshop were given the opportunity to discuss and produce new plant microenvironments in the open space area of the Department of Architecture of the University of Thessaly and even in participants’ house yards. The initial ambition to form an ethos of production and not just consumption, for the formation of the house and the metabolism of home/urban life, was certainly achieved at the end of the workshop.



B2. “Seed & Feed” Canteen
SEED & FEED CANTEEN (Transnational Workshop) 2022

Open Up Uth continued its activities with the “Seed & Feed Canteen” workshop, which negotiated the concepts of common practices, care and synergy. The workshop aimed at multicultural dialogue through the practice of food. A process that brought participants together through the exchange of intangible and material goods. At the centre of the workshop discussions was the concept of recipe, which is a collection of practices that leads to a dish for everyone. The local ingredients, the quantities, the numbered instructions and, the method of preparation composed this cultural good, the recipe, which is transferred through time and keeps the memory alive through taste. A dialogue was opened through this process that extended the concept of the recipe beyond cooking, looking again at the compositions of the things around us. The “dish for everyone” was the common place for dialogue, exchange of materials, recipes, as well as multicultural experiences. The workshop began with the construction of this common place, the work station, cutting, testing and delight, a common table for depositing and managing materials and strategies. Afterwards, the workshop invited participants to perform cooking recipes with the ingredients available to them and to contribute to a series of discussions with guests on key issues of contemporary concern regarding food, such as material management, eating habits and energy footprint. The objectives of these actions was to gain knowledge and experience on matters concerning the world map and of urgent importance. The Open Up Uth Canteen, carrying as luggage the furniture designed and manufactured in the Domestic “Assemblage II” workshop and the garden products of the “Urban Gardening” workshop, became a meeting point for ideas of assembly, manual and collaborative work, cultural exchange and attentiveness through the process of eating.



YEAR 4 – 2023

“Feed Canteen” (Participatory performance)

The participatory performance, led by Soumela Makanika, was presented during the Open Up Nicosia Festival. Concentrating on terms such as memory, place, origin, using a map and storytelling, the performance focused on the issue of instructions: how do we give and show instructions to properly follow a recipe and understand a practice? The importance of the circular economy and zero waste was at the centre of the discussion. We learned ways to store, preserve and conserve food. We followed our motto “Let’s act”, and learned how to knead and bake. A practice with Pontian origins.

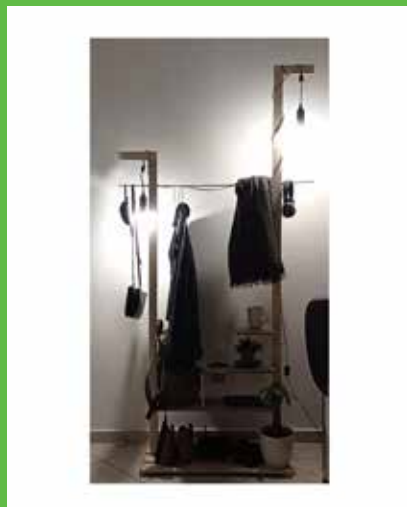
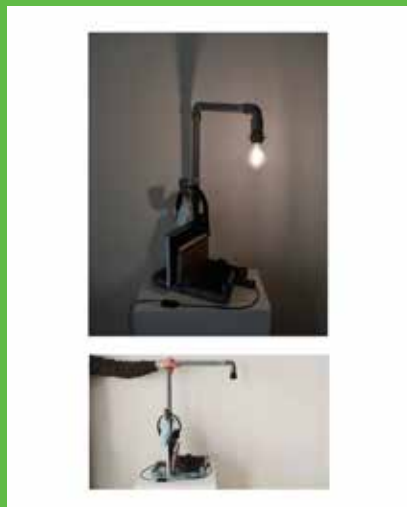
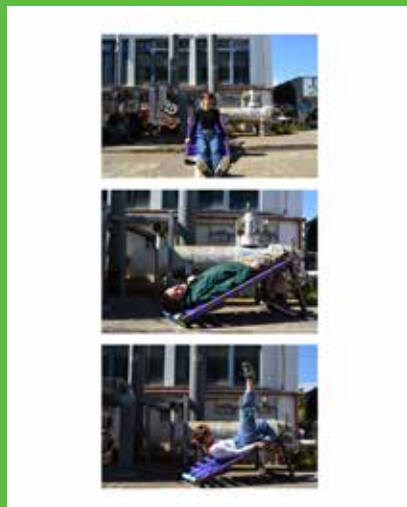
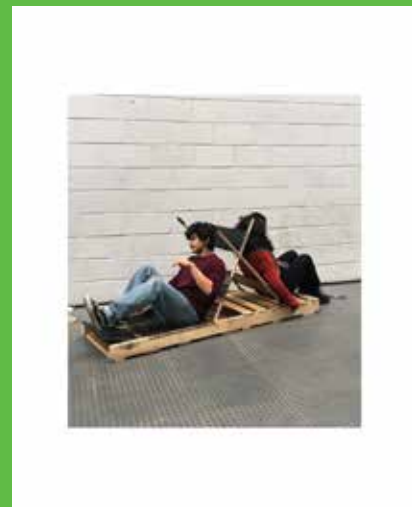
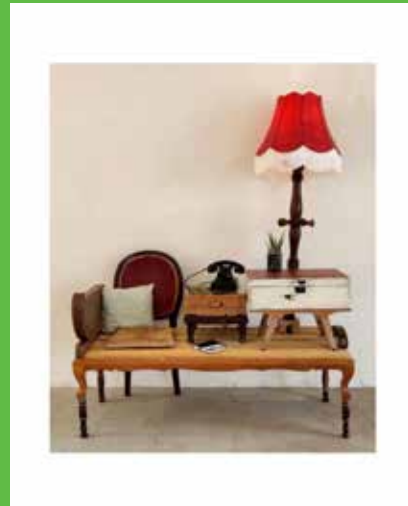
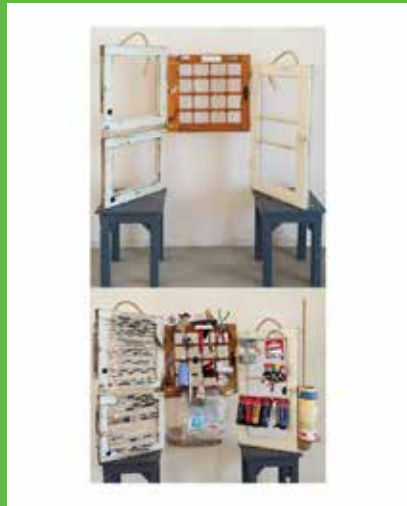




Exhibition view









Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona Spain

The main goal of the Autonomous University of Barcelona Open Up partner was to invite underrepresented people to become aware of the potential of their creativity and, in addition, to invite Barcelona established creators and creative underrepresented students to an analogous awareness-raising of how to innovate regarding the hybridation of their ways of working, agency and results. The contributions of people who left their home countries –usually for survival reasons– or for people who were born in Catalunya in a migrant family, have enriched the artistic ecosystem in the public sphere with different cultural practices and experiences.

With this main goal in mind, the following specific objectives were set:

- To make known to the communities of some creators established in Barcelona and to their institutions the potential of migrants and underrepresented creativity in order to stimulate their strategies of agency.
- To elaborate strategies of “partage” between migrant creators and those established in Barcelona, as well as emphasise the professional, economic and aesthetics benefits of this “partage”.
- To invite creative underrepresented students to enter the creative professional world.
- To generate a network of students from other country–partners of the Open Up Project, encouraging them to mobilise themselves and to share their work.
- To make the creative Barcelona institutions and universities emphasise the innovative power of migrant and underrepresented creativity.

Throughout the duration of the project, the following workshops were developed, all of which became a place of encounter, relationship and movement of diverse bodies and practices (dance, theatre, design, fashion, and gastronomic creation) that we shared with our community:

- “Nomadic Dance”: Laura Vilar invited participants to discover –through movement and creative processes generated by the body– the territories we inhabit. The workshop proposed a collective diary from a personal perspective on global issues, practices around the presence, improvisation-creation-interpretation processes. These practices led to the creation of a video–dance proposal and the encounter with different bodies online in one of the most difficult moments of our times: the Covid–19 pandemic.

- “Open-ing up Space for Culture–Led Transitions”: Tania Costa, Rafael de Balanzó and Pablo Calderón Salazar encouraged the participants to generate creative research of how they position themselves –as cultural agents– in relation to the new contexts in which they are active. Through the elaboration of creative maps of cultural and collaboration networks, the workshop integrated new contexts of personal and professional development as cultural agents.

- “Fusion Cooking”: David Casacuberta and Marco Bellonzi explored the fusion in gastronomy as a perspective to understand creativity and going through the limits between crossing cultural traditions,

appropriationism and distortion. The activity proposed tools to facilitate creative processes of fusion, generating spaces to play and develop other scenarios from different creative fields to several possible futures.

- “Theatre of the Oppressed”: Workshop by Meritxell de Soto and Clara Laguillo, based on the theatrical trend following the methodologies created by Augusto Boal. The workshop provided some expressive and corporal work tools, using the body and the words as possible discursive tools; the proposals of the participants/assistants became communal, providing safe spaces by using their vulnerabilities as collective empowerment.

- “Artistic Research for Transcommunities”: Andrea Soto Calderón, Valentina Alvarado and Erick Beltrán conceived a space to conduct research through artistic practices and collective creation, proposing a set of theoretical and practical tools through research and the creation of materials, in order to propose other possible scenarios that emerged in times of crisis.

- “Transitional Dress”: Fiona Capdevila and Jéssica Espinoza proposed a reflective exercise on migration from memory built-in file that takes different formats, and which was developed around Barcelona. Taking a sensitive journey of migration through the clothed body, the workshop constructed ways of letting go and dispossession as a production process of migrants.

The first event of the Open Up Project was held the year in which we incorporated such words as Covid-19 pandemic, viral load or telework into our vocabulary and in our daily lives. Three years later, we gathered at the festival to make it our home and ritual for a few days. Home because it was created to be a space of care and collective encounter. Ritual because we came back and rebuilt gestures, connections through shared pieces, popular agapes and performative activations.

The pieces that made up the exhibition were at the same time triggers for new creative processes and a living catalogue. With the curatorial work of Bárbara Bayarri and Daniela Callejas, in collaboration with students of the academic and collective practice Curs0 (EINA), the pieces of Katerina Kruglik, Roger Torelló, Luis Torres and Jéssica Espinoza, created proposals that worked as a diaspora – they were fragmented into multiple parts to become dozens of catalogues. The exhibition was aspiring to be presented in as many places as would be willing to host it.

For the performative activities, we looked for ways to relate with Tania Adams, Bárbara Bayarri, Mad Beats Co., Daniela Callejas, Fiona Capdevila, Andrea Soto Calderón and Shulliana –enjoying-weaving-dancing-eating-playing-connecting-moving– responding to our principal question of “How to get to know each other with pleasure and without sharing a language?”. This same question was then transferred to Nicosia, Cyprus, where Open Up partners met to develop other common languages through dress, sewing, body, dance and movement.



Meritxell de Soto

Barcelona, Spain

Meritxell de Soto is a performer and DJ based in Barcelona. She usually works with organic sounds and danceable rhythms, in relation to her body practice.

Performance 432 Hz

Performer and DJ Meritxell de Soto, who usually works with organic sounds and danceable rhythms in relation to her body practice, presented "Espai Segur": A solo piece between a performance and a DJ set that focuses around the concept of safe spaces in the clubbing culture. The 30-minute participatory performance was made possible thanks to the help of Sala d'Art Jove, Beques Bcn Crea and El Pumarejo.

Bárbara Bayarri V

23/05/1991 Barcelona

Barcelona, Spain

PhD Researcher in Philosophy at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Her research focuses on the generation and transfer of knowledge from contemporary curatorial practices. She has worked with different cultural institutions (CCCB, Picasso Museum, Fundació Josep Guinovart, Fundació Joan Brossa, Museo Reina Sofía) and academic (UAB, EINA, UdL).



Daniela Callejas A.

12/10/1991 Manizales, Colombia

Barcelona, Spain

Designer, artist and researcher. Currently Artistic Research PhD student at UAB and Museo Picasso Barcelona. She expresses a contemporary and contestatory voice on the conventional ways of doing a and reading poetry established by heteronormative and colonial discourses, developing visual poetry through light, experimental art, performance and sound.

Fabrics to weave care: the piece that started in Barcelona OU Festival come to Nicosia, to propose a collaborative piece through weaving other possible forms of care and connect. Without knowing how to sew or share a common language, opens a space to create nomadic networks through weaving, blurring, splitting and recomposing other possible geographies.



Laura Vilar D.
1/1/1980 Barcelona
Vienna and Barcelona

Dancer, creator, teacher and researcher. PhD in philosophy from the UAB. Teacher of the Master's Degree in Artistic and Design Research, EINA-UAB. Co-directs nunArt, artistic research center in Barcelona. She is part of the Department of Dance Pedagogy at the Institut del Teatre de Barcelona and the research groups "Dramaturgies of silence" and "Landen" in Vienna.

Nomadic Parcours

Laura Vilar's three-day workshop "Nomadic parcours" was oriented towards exploring the body movement through moving practices; exploring the shared space of some streets of Nicosia; attempting to compose a choreographic proposal in relation with others, and questioning how to weave links between environments, spaces, and people from a nomadic dance practice.



Fiona Capdevila
London, UK 08/10/1968
Barcelona and Girona, Spain

Creative and PhD art researcher in UAB interested in the power of design for social transformation and the agency of art to provoke alterations in sight and experience, focusing on ecological regeneration, climate justice and on the reinterpretation of technical skills.

"THROW" (installation 1)

Action based on the invisible individual gesture of throwing things. Scaling it to become a collective gesture, synchronized in time and space. In Catalan, "Throwing clothes out of the window" denotes to spend more than can afford without care. The work acquires connections with a disintegrating world with almost grotesque connotations.

"TRANSITIONAL DRESS" (installation 2)

Designed as a sensitive route across Barcelona, it's been inspired by the transmutations that migration produce in individual and collective levels, using the clothed body as a work in process, in connection with reflections on global-local dimensions of it. It was an experimentation on extended selves through clothing.

CALICOE MEADOWS AS INTERFACES

The "calicoe meadows" were peripheries with abundance of nature resources, in which, the industrial manufactures of calicoe cottons worked on their clothes in Europe, during the 18th century. It represents the beginning of the fast fashion of today, showing tension between wildlife and a gesture of spreading out long pieces of printed fabrics on it.





Exhibition view

Université de Picardie Jules Verne Amiens, France

Towards migratory and radical hospitality

Androula Michael

Open up Amiens

The Université de Picardie Jules Verne, and more specifically the UFR des arts and the Centre de recherches en arts et esthétique (CRAE), closely links theory and practice and brings together artists and theorists in art history, visual arts, performing arts (theatre and cinema) and animation. The UPJV, which is strongly committed to social issues, works with numerous cultural organisations, both in the Hauts-de-France region and internationally (Africa, Europe and Latin America).

Those involved in the Open Up Project gave a great deal of thought to the ethical implications of the programme. The fact that researchers and artists were working with people who are migrants, who have lost their jobs, or who find themselves in precarious situations –in other words, people whose very survival is often (if not always) in danger– meant that we had to take into consideration certain crucial ethical questions. The people involved in the project did not intend to “instrumentalise” people in vulnerable situations for the purposes of the project. On the contrary, the aim was to encourage them to collaborate in inclusive actions, to make better use of their existing skills, and even to acquire new ones. The idealistic dimension of the Open Up Project had to be put to the test of reality. The question of the feasibility of this type of project, and its very limits, all the more so at a time of universal health crisis, which had a huge impact on the initial scheduled meetings and travel plans. Furthermore, the historical dimension of migration in the Hauts-de-France region, and indeed more widely in France, as well as a knowledge of the socio-economic realities of the region, were also necessary presuppositions to be taken into account for the successful and fruitful outcome of the project.

In order to reach a broader audience, the workshops took place in a wide variety of locations: the Université de Picardie Jules Verne, where there is a kiln for firing the ceramics; the Paul Eluard Museum of Art and History in Saint-Denis, one of France’s most disadvantaged suburbs; the Ikamberé Association (Aubervilliers and Ivry), which accommodates isolated women in circumstances of exile and precariousness (the workshop was led by Lise Lerichomme et Barthélémy Togo), and the art centre Frac Picardie, where Barthélémy Togo’s workshop with people from the Cadran Association –a cultural and social centre that fights against illiteracy– was held. The transnational workshops, under the direction of Theodoulos Gregoriou were held at the Fablab in Amiens, a dynamic and open space, where participants experimented with 3D creation and printing, and laser cutting.

The main themes that formed the theoretical basis of the project were the erasure of memories linked to history, the migration of people, languages and artistic productions, as well as the links between art and craft. The publication “Retours à l’Afrique” was a kind of preamble to these issues, which were subsequently discussed at length during the project’s final action on the notion of “Migratory aesthetics, art and craft”.

Ornamentation was an underlying theme in all the workshops organised by Open Up Amiens. We started by considering the places where we had our first lived experiences, as a precursor to the making of a jewel (artists Nilüfer Ovioglu and Fabien Lerat). The ornament made of our personal memories merges into the cultural, the subconscious and the impulsive. This jewel takes the original plan of our home, the one that we carry in our memory, in all our displacements and migrations, the home that we miss! It is the one where our language and imaginary were formed, the one that often reappears in our dreams. This house, whenever we find it again in reality, will always be stronger in our minds and ornaments are always at the crossroads of our imaginaries, our routes, where our lives are precious. Taking into account the individual stories of each person in relation to the notions of displacement and uprooting, but also of putting down roots in a new place and living a new experience, we attempted to reassess the place of craft in contemporary art. Through the use of ornamentation, we were able to draw silent and striking portraits of people who do not often tell us about their lives, and, in addition, we managed to experience the power of sharing experiences. By combining traditional practices (such as traditional ceramics production) and materials (such as the work with mother-of-pearl) with the most up-to-date techniques involving technology, artists Elisabeth Piot, Jessica Lajard, Caroline Sobczak and Lise Lerichomme –who worked with inhabitants of the town of Méru– helped to bring together people from different territories and cultures, and to encourage the circulation of ideas between the academic world and society.

The historical perspectives and contemporary approaches enabled us to gain a better understanding of artists' renewed interest in material culture, popular traditions and crafts. The aim was also to reflect on aesthetic practices in the light of the migration of people, languages and artistic practices. People who migrate to foreign lands bring with them their aesthetic traditions and in return the host countries react by accepting, rejecting, or even completely ignoring them. Does migration in the broadest sense of the term have an impact on artists' production and aesthetic categories? How does migration upset traditions? Aren't art and aesthetics essentially "migratory" in the way they reject the conservatism of identity-based boundaries? The theoretical workshop was organised by Androula Michael, Joaquin Barriendos and Ricardo Arcos Palma.

The most visionary artists have negotiated their art at the intersection of several artistic and cultural traditions – and have placed the local and the global, dominant Western modernity and so-called peripheral modernities in tension. Without aestheticizing migrant art or denying migrants the agency to play a role in the dominant culture, our aim was rather to understand the interactions between so-called local art and art from outside, from other cultural fields. "[...] In Homi Bhabha's text *DissemiNation*, the figures of migrants act as the return of a repressed colonial history, a return that de-seminates or unmeans the nation and magically transforms it into a site of postcolonial hybridity."¹ Movements, displacements and hybridities enable an unprecedented "mixing" of cultures. In transit and transition, in movement and displacement, migratory aesthetics open up the field towards a radical hospitality that was at the heart of our entire project.

¹ Graham Huggan, "Unsettled Settlers: Postcolonialism, Travelling Theory and the New Migrant Aesthetics", *Essays in Migratory Aesthetics, Cultural Practices between migration and art making*, Sam Durnat, Catherine M. Lord (eds), Rodopi, Amsterdam, 2007, p. 14 and pp.129-145.



Portrait Barthélémy Togo
©Zacharie Ngnogue, 2019



No Borders, 2023
Performance by Barthélémy Togo

Barthélémy Togo's work *Urban Requiem* was shown on a large scale at the 2015 Venice Biennale, curated by Okwui Enwezor. It is made up of a large quantity of cut-out tampons with messages that speak of the artist's commitment against racism and discrimination, xenophobia and injustices in the world. For his performance in Cyprus as part of the Open Up Nicosia Festival, the artist unrolled a 30-metre-long and 2.50-metre-wide piece of drawing paper on which he printed the engraved "No borders" stamp. The location chosen for the performance was a street near NiMAC and the Green Line that divides the island in two: the southern part and the northern part of Cyprus occupied by the Turkish army since the 1974 war. The artist peacefully asserted his opposition to any border that divides people and creates enmity.



Performance and reading device
leather, printed polyester crepe, brass, hard stone, various materials (15 scarves, 30 rings, 1 leather belt with 15 hooks, a mourning dress in old crepe).

Performance, 15',
reading device: 70x120x4cm
(each scarf: 65x65cm). Here the motif is taken from a plate in memory of the strikes by Ford's female workers to obtain equal pay to male workers in 1968.

La Poterie est Politique, 2022
Performance by Lise Lerichomme

"La Poterie est Politique" is an exploration of tableware and its uses, through stories, films and cartoons, depicting the conditions, stories, films and caricatures present in society. The performance is a conversation-conference, where, with the support of successive scarves, the imaginary worlds associated with emancipated female bodies. It evokes *Cunégonde reçoit sa famille*, a silent motion picture produced in 1912, as well as *L'Hôtel des commissaires-priseurs*, Champfleury's 1897 novel.



The Earth as Skin
16–19 January & 20–21 February 2023
Ponchon-style ceramic tiles, in collaboration with Caroline Sobczak from Faïence Ponchon. Glazed red earthenware 8x9cm each

Artists:
Estena Achirafi, Lucas Lefebvre, Meriem Krikab, Oriane Limousin, Apolline Grivelet, Marion Richomme, Dylan Paumier, Périne Christiaen, Evelyne Heroguele, Christine Mansard, Stephanie Tossou, Savannah Salingue, Caroline Sobczak, Jessica Lajard, Elisabeth Piot.



'OPENWORK 'AJOURS 'ΟΠΕΣ, 2023

Performance by Madeleine Aktypi

The performance draws a zigzagging path, starting from Cypriot lefkaritika embroideries and a net of associations of ideas that jump from one language to another, blurring lines and meanings so that a person born in Greece, living in France and coming for the first time to Cyprus can perhaps manage to (come to) realise the proximities, frictions and presents that one same language and a common history produce over time. [In English, the word "openwork" indicates the empty spaces of an embroidery].



"Burying the Dress" (Elbiseyi Gömmek), 2023

Nilüfer Gros, projection of a video performance and soundscape

In Turkish, Kurdish and Armenian with French subtitles

Written as part of an online cross-border collaboration, "Burying the Dress" is a video performance and soundscape. The latter was created by Zeynep Sarıkartal in collaboration with Nejbir Erkol (text/voice), Nilüfer Gros (text/voice/performance), Virginia Kerovpyan (music advisor) and Aşkın Kırım (trumpet), among other sound and music collaborators. This electroacoustic composition reveals the timeless landscape of women's condition in the region.

"Burying the Dress" revolves around the Black Snake Road that connects Nejbir Erkol's hometown of Nusaybin, located on the northern border of Syria in Turkey, to the local university where Nilüfer Gros worked from 2013 to 2017. As Nilüfer Gros and Nejbir Erkol recount their stories regarding the death of a student in a road accident on the Black Snake Road, their shared experience of the region that has been hit by multiple wars reveals the female ghosts of the Armenian genocide and the massacres inflicted on Kurdish populations for over a century.

The audiovisual work brings together Nilüfer Gros's investigation based on the testimonies of quite a few communities from the region. The artist delves into various archives of multilingual testimonies about the region, tales, lamentations and lullabies, as well as the regional memory found in books, literature, historical works and academic articles. It is a work based on sounds, which confronts the difficulty of recounting the unspeakable and the orientalist representation of the Middle East in the past and the present.





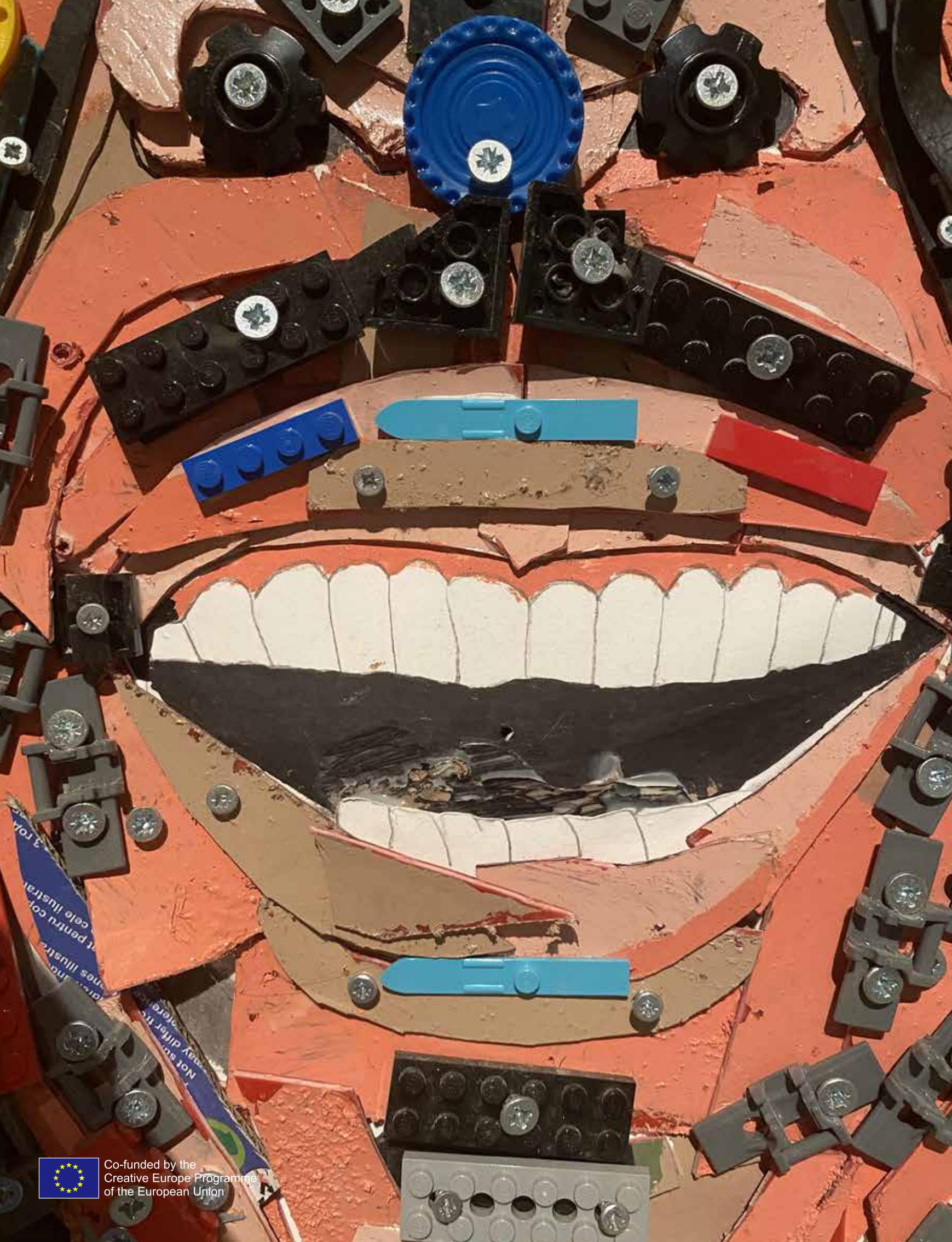


Neither when I lived there; nor 40 years ago when villages were burned, nor 10 years ago when bombs were dropped on children crossing the border, nor 100 years ago during the genocide, have I heard the screams.









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