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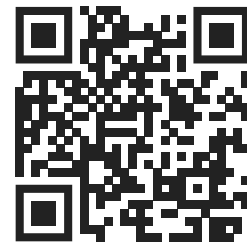
INTERVIEW

DIVINE / PROFANE

In conversation with Dew Kim:
Ahead of Seoul, Bangkok & Berlin

The Malta

artpaper.

BERLIN
2026

Looks Up in Horror, Kane Cali

SEE/SAW

Berlin Art Week once again welcomes a Maltese institutional presence this year. Following the success of R Gallery and AOA:87's joint exhibition FAR REACH in 2023, the two galleries reunite for *SEE/SAW*, presenting the work of Kane Cali and Madeleine Fenwick. Andrew Borg Wirth speaks with both artists about the project, its intentions, and the ideas at play.

>> Read full interview on page 18



Stefanie Moshhammer, Mother, Task I-IV, 2022, video still.
Courtesy of the artist.

Art, Not Angst at Berlin Art Week 2026

Every September, Berlin drops the pretence of being anything other than one of the great art cities on earth. From 9 to 13 September, the fifteenth Berlin Art Week turns the whole ungovernable sprawl into a single exhibition - more than a hundred museums, collections and project spaces in the official programme, and behind them the small matter of the city's five-hundred-odd galleries, all throwing their doors open at once. You cannot see it all. Nobody sees it all. That, I've come to think, is rather the point - and most of the pleasure. Five days of glorious, un-policeable chaos.

>> Read full feature by
Joanna Delia on page 14



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c Contents / Word from the Editor



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It feels particularly special to bring *ARTPAPER* to Berlin Art Week - a city and an art scene that have long represented experimentation, openness and the possibility of new cultural conversations.

This issue would not have been possible without the generosity and belief of so many people. A very special thank you to AOA;87 Gallery for supporting the distribution of this issue in Berlin, and to the local companies and partners who have helped make its presence here possible. We are equally grateful to every artist, writer,

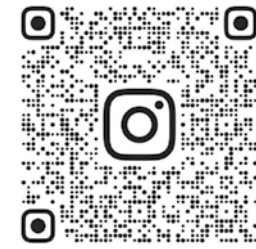
curator, gallery and collaborator who has contributed their ideas, work and voice to these pages.

Most importantly, I hope this is the beginning of something lasting: a beautiful new relationship between *ARTPAPER* and Berlin, and only the beginning of a deeper cultural exchange between Malta and Berlin.

Lily Agius

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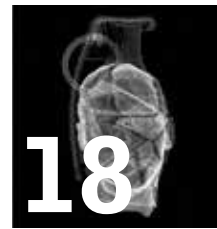
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HIGHLIGHTS | BERLIN



BERLIN ART WEEK [Berlin, Unfiltered](#)

Joanna Delia heads into Berlin Art Week 2026, where galleries, museums, project spaces and unexpected venues collide across the city. From major exhibitions and provocative new work to the Malta–Berlin connection at *SEE/SAW*, this is her personal guide to the artists, openings and places worth crossing Berlin for.



EXHIBITION | BERLIN [Playground Warfare](#) *SEE/SAW*

SEE/SAW brings artists Kane Cali and Madeleine Fenwick to Berlin Art Week in a collaboration between R Gallery and AOA;87. In conversation with Andrew Borg Wirth, the artists unpack play, war, precariousness and the uneasy space between truth and fiction, as their works confront the imagery and realities of conflict.

+



EXHIBITION | ROME [Mediterranean Souls](#)

Ray Pitre's work go to Rome in a posthumous exhibition exploring identity, memory, solitude and the Mediterranean. *Mediterranean Souls* reveals the intimate and emotionally charged side of one of Malta's distinctive avant-garde artists.



CULTURE | PHILANTHROPY [Art That Changes Reality](#)

TOP CHARITY brings together art, business and philanthropy, turning cultural engagement into meaningful social impact. With more than €55 million raised across five editions, the initiative continues to build connections between artists, communities and causes across Europe and Africa.



CULINARY SPONSOR [Noni Restaurant](#)

Chef Jonathan Brincat transforms family recipes and Maltese culinary traditions into a contemporary dining experience. Set within Valletta's historic streets, the Michelin-starred restaurant brings together memory, place and a deep connection to Malta's gastronomic heritage.



EXHIBITION | PHOTOGRAPHY [Confluences](#)

Two distinct Sicilian artists - Giovanna Brogna Sonnino and Fabio Sgroi - come together through photography in an exhibition exploring memory, identity, fragility and change. Their contrasting perspectives meet in a shared space between what is visible and what remains concealed.



BIENNALE | MALTA BIENNALE 2028 [The Mediterranean as a Stage for Contemporary Art](#)

Following its 2024 and 2026 editions, the Malta Biennale returns in 2028 for its third edition, once again bringing contemporary art into dialogue with Malta's historic architecture, museums, palaces and archaeological sites.



PORTRAITURE | SCULPTURE [Portrait of Tansy](#)

For artist Skye Ferrante, a portrait is never simply an image – it is a story shaped by friendship, performance and years of creative exchange. From New York's Hotel Chelsea and the world of burlesque, *Portrait of Tansy* traces the remarkable relationship behind one of Ferrante's most personal wire portraits.



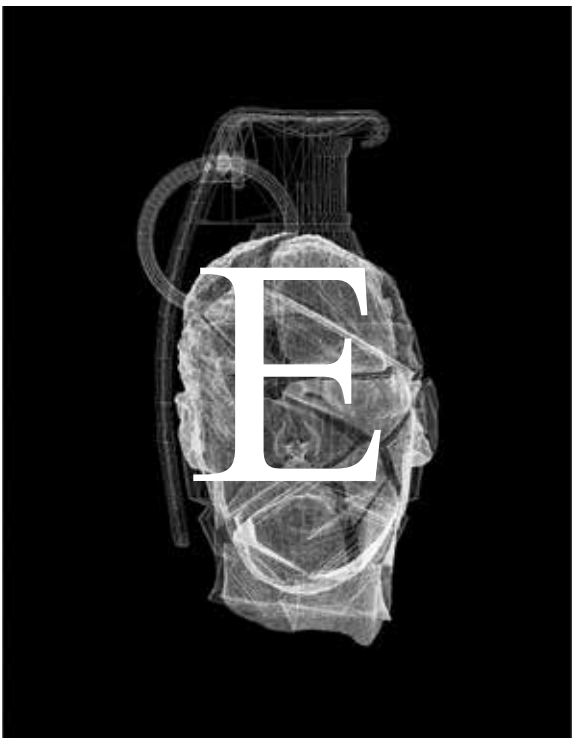
EXHIBITION | COMMUNITY | MALTA [Inside Voices](#)

Inside Voices brings the thoughts, memories and emotions of young people at Malta's juvenile detention centre into the gallery through a collaborative project led by artists Duška Malešević and Pep Walls. Culminating in an exhibition that creates space for voices too often unheard.



INTERVIEW | CULTURE [Divine / Profane](#)

In conversation with Dew Kim, the artist reflects on the space between religion, sexuality, devotion and power. From his Christian upbringing to his work across BDSM, fandom and queer identity, Kim explores the forces that shape belief – and his plans to immerse himself in Berlin's culture during his upcoming residency.



BERLIN

The Malta
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Malta Biennale '28

March - May 2028



maltabiennale.art



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MALTA

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PONKS

MICHAEL QUINTON

BEJN / IN BETWEEN

ASSOCIATE CURATOR MOON HYUN JEOUNG
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MALTA PAVILION 16TH GWANGJU BIENNALE

5.9 —
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COMMISSIONED BY ARTS COUNCIL MALTA
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GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
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AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

전남광주통합특별시



bejn / in-between
Malta Pavilion
Gwangju Biennale 2026

GWANGJU
BIENNALE
PAVILION

Malta Society of Arts

The Malta Society of Arts (MSA) was established in 1852 and is Malta's oldest institution for the promotion of the arts and crafts. The MSA is considered by many to be an educational and cultural centre on the Island. Behind the elegant façade of the Palazzo de La Salle are more than 500sqm of fully equipped exhibition, performance and music spaces, available for hire for events and exhibitions. The building has served as a focal point for art exhibitions of all kinds, hosting societies, solo shows, collective exhibitions, art fairs and more. Visitors are welcome to come in and view the building and exhibitions during opening hours, and to contact us about exhibiting their work or organising events. ¹

The Malta Society of Arts is based at Palazzo de La Salle, 219 Republic Street, Valletta. For more information, see our website: <https://artsmalta.org/>



Sala dei Cavalieri. Photo by Alex Attard

COUTURE AUTUMN/WINTER 2026-2027

For its Fall/Winter 2026-2027 Artisanal Collection, Luke Azzopardi presents *Salomé*, an off-calendar collection examining one of history's most enduring female figures as she moves between scripture, mythology, and seduction. Neither confined to history nor fantasy, *Salomé* exists as a cultural construct that has been continually rewritten across literature, painting, opera, film, and fashion. She becomes a lens through which to explore couture, craft, cultural memory and cross-border dialogue.

Luke Azzopardi approaches *Salomé* as an act of research. Garments function as vessels of memory, constructed through extensive artisanal handwork and textile manipulation. Central to the collection is the language of veiling. Reimagined as fragmented, dismantled and reconstructed forms, veils are transformed into sculptural garments which blur boundaries of concealment.

Drawing together the mythology of *Salomé's* Seven Veils and the Maltese *ghonnella*, the collection establishes an unexpected dialogue between two distinct cultural narratives, examining how dress mediates identity, ritual and female representation across geographies.

Luke Azzopardi continues his exploration of couture and handcraft as multidisciplinary practices situated at the intersection of cultural research and theatrical production. The collection reconsiders historical archetypes through contemporary mindsets, demonstrating how artisanal fashion can become a medium for storytelling, memory, diplomacy and cultural exchange. ²

With special thanks to the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs: Cultural Diplomacy Fund, the Embassy of Malta in France, the Permanent Delegation of Malta to UNESCO, Arts Council Malta, Virgata Group, Alliance Malta, KM Malta Airlines, and Manolo Blahnik.



VALLETTA BAROQUE FESTIVAL RETURNS FOR ITS 15TH EDITION

From 7 to 24 January 2027, Malta will once again become a stage for some of the finest Baroque music with the return of the Valletta Baroque Festival. Now in its 15th edition, the festival brings together leading international artists and ensembles in some of Malta's most beautiful historic venues, including St John's Co-Cathedral, Teatru Manoel, Verdala Palace, San Anton Palace, and historic churches and palaces across the island.

The 2027 programme offers an extensive celebration of Baroque music, featuring performances ranging from Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* by Le Poème Harmonique under the direction of Vincent Dumestre, to Vivaldi's *Quattro Stagioni* performed by the Signum Saxophone Ensemble with violinist Charlie Siem, and J.S. Bach's *Six Brandenburg Concertos* by [oh!] Orkiestra. The festival also continues its commitment to introducing younger audiences to Baroque music through family and school concerts.

A major highlight of this year's festival is Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, presented as a fully staged opera at Teatru Manoel on 22 and 24 January. The production features Cappella Neapolitana under the musical direction of Antonio Florio, with stage direction by Denise Mullholland, and a cast including Raffaele Pe, Claire Debono, Candida Guida and Giuseppina Fina.

The programme also explores the breadth and continuing relevance of Baroque music, from intimate chamber performances and sacred works to contemporary interpretations. Among these is *Inspired by Baroque*, performed by the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as Oxymoron 1079, featuring a new composition by Bosgraaf, Armitage and Houtkamp based on Bach's *Musical Offering BWV 1079*. ³

The Valletta Baroque Festival is produced by Festivals Malta in collaboration with Teatru Manoel, and supported by the Ministry for Arts, Culture and National Heritage and VisitMalta.

**FESTIVALS
Malta**



Photo by Karina Movesyan - iStock

VICTORIA 2031: Gozo's European Cultural Ambition

Victoria, Gozo was officially pre-selected as Malta's sole candidate for European Capital of Culture 2031, following the first phase of the national selection process in November 2025. As the capital of Gozo, Victoria sits at the heart of an island with a distinct cultural identity, rich heritage, and unique landscape. Its candidacy offers an opportunity to bring the cultural life of Victoria and Gozo to the European stage, while building on the legacy of Valletta 2018.

Victoria's European and international connections are already expanding, with the Victoria 2031 Foundation joining the Culture Next network alongside cities from across Europe. The city is now developing its cultural programme, supported by Victoria's first Cultural Strategy, launched in July 2026, as it prepares for the final selection in September 2026. The ambition extends beyond securing the title: it is for the Victoria 2031 journey to act as a catalyst for lasting cultural development in Victoria and across Gozo, rooted in communities, participation, and long-term legacy. ⁴

Less Dominant Narratives Emerge Around Centuries – Old Coastal Watchtowers

Elyse Tonna’s long-term curatorial project *Beyond What Drifts Us Apart* continues during October 2026, leaning ever-more into the project’s ephemeral nature with a focus on the area around two coastal defense towers which have collapsed over centuries.

This year’s chosen site invites an intense examination of Tal-Qortin, Marsalforn on the island of Gozo – a littoral site that is also multi-faceted, encompassing agricultural plots used for grazing, private fields, a nearby scrapyard and a recreational zone on a rehabilitated landfill site.

At Tal-Qortin, the absence of a standing tower structure becomes the curatorial point of departure; the collapsed towers and their uncertain footprints foreground questions of territorial marking, land

reprogramming and the afterlives of defence, communication and waste. Post-anthropocentric perspectives frame the project’s approach, prioritising climate justice, bio-cultural diversity and the dismantling of human-centred perspectives in favour of coexistence.

Guided by ecological thinking and a decolonial mindset, *Beyond What Drifts Us Apart* continually reconsiders inherited legacies of these landscapes, focusing on the interplay between the visible and invisible, the natural and de-/constructed. It addresses concepts related to extractive capitalism, contested land use, identity, and environmental degradation, asking how past infrastructures underpin today’s ecological instability.

In 2026, the project residency invites artists Julian Micallef (MT), Martina Georgina (MT), Bettina Hutschek



Fernando P. Ferreira, *Threading an (un)Safe Plot* (detail) created during *Beyond What Drifts Us Apart* in 2023. Photo by Elisa von Brockdorff

(DE), and Sébastien Schnyder (CH) to investigate how the site’s transformations affect both material conditions and collective memory and how non-human systems respond to engineered ground and reconfigured terrain. ¹

Beyond What Drifts Us Apart is a residency curated by Elyse Tonna, featuring artists Julian Micallef, Martina Georgina, Bettina Hutschek, and Sébastien Schnyder, taking

place from 5 October to 1 November 2026 in Marsalforn, Gozo. Produced by Unfinished Art Space as part of the Magic Carpets Platform and co-financed by the European Union, the residency brings together artistic practices that explore what connects us beyond the forces that drift us apart. Learn more at www.unfinishedartspace.org

RAY PITRÉ: MEDITERRANEAN SOULS GOES TO ROME

Ray Pitré: *Mediterranean Souls* | *Anime Mediterranee* brings the work of one of Malta’s most distinctive avant-garde artists to Rome in his first posthumous international exhibition. Presented by the Embassy of Malta in Italy at Casa Museo Hendrik Christian Andersen, the exhibition explores Pitré’s deeply personal relationship with identity, memory, solitude and the Mediterranean. His work, while unmistakably rooted in Malta, transcends geography, reflecting the shared histories and cultural connections that link Malta and Italy.

Curated by Sandro Debono, the exhibition moves beyond the official portraits for which Pitré was widely known, revealing a more intimate and emotionally charged side of his practice. Spanning works from the 1960s through the 2000s, the selection traces the evolution of an artist whose imagery became increasingly raw, intense and psychologically charged, transforming experiences of fear, vulnerability and isolation into powerful visual language.



An unsigned and undated work on paper by Ray Pitré. The central piece is a collage. Photo by Lionel Cassola

Pitré’s connection to Italy was both personal and artistic. His participation in the 1999 Venice Biennale marked an important moment in Malta’s engagement with the international art world, while Italy itself provided a significant source of inspiration through his wife and muse, Franca, and the



An untitled work on plywood by Ray Pitré signed and dated on the back - Pitre/94. Photo by Lionel Cassola

artists with whom he engaged. The Rome exhibition therefore becomes more than a presentation of Maltese art abroad: it acts as a form of cultural dialogue between two Mediterranean countries whose histories, identities and artistic traditions have long intersected.

Supported by the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs of Malta and Arts Council Malta, through the Cultural Diplomacy Fund, the exhibition highlights the role of culture in strengthening international relationships and bringing Maltese artistic excellence to new audiences. The project was made possible through the collaboration of Pitré’s heirs, Cinzia Grech and Daniele Pitré, and the support of the Italian Ministry of Culture and the Direzione Musei Nazionali della Città di Roma. The exhibition catalogue includes essays by exhibition curator Sandro Debono and Pitré’s long-time friend Kenneth Wain.

Ray Pitré: Mediterranean Souls | *Anime Mediterranee* is on view at Casa Museo Hendrik Christian Andersen in Rome until 22 September 2026, offering audiences an opportunity to encounter the artist’s work not simply as a record of Maltese identity, but as part of a wider Mediterranean conversation about belonging, transformation and the human condition. ²

Art That Changes Reality: How *TOP CHARITY* Is Redefining Philanthropy Through Culture

Can a work of art change the world beyond a museum or a private collection? *TOP CHARITY* has proved that it can. Founded by Omenaa Mensah and Rafał Brzoska, the initiative has evolved into one of Europe's most distinctive platforms connecting art, business and philanthropy, demonstrating how culture can become a catalyst for lasting social impact.

The idea grew out of Omenaa Mensah's personal story. Raised in Poland, she transformed her African heritage into a lifelong commitment to education, intercultural dialogue and equal opportunities. Through Omenaa Foundation, she first focused on supporting children and educational initiatives in Ghana before expanding her vision into a model that brings together entrepreneurs, collectors, artists and cultural institutions capable of creating meaningful change.

In just five editions, *TOP CHARITY* has raised more than €55 million for philanthropic causes. The 2026 gala alone generated over €20 million in only 90 minutes, making it one of Europe's most successful charity fundraising events.

Art lies at the heart of this success. The annual auction, organised by OmenaArt Foundation, has featured works by internationally renowned artists

including Ibrahim Mahama, Amoako Boafo, Ewa Juszkiewicz, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Philip Colbert, Charlotte Colbert and Modupeola Fadugba, alongside emerging talents from Africa and Europe. The initiative has also welcomed Maltese artists such as Antoine Farrugia (2024) and Matthew Attard (2025), reflecting its increasingly international character.

What makes *TOP CHARITY* unique is its long-term impact. 30% of the auction proceeds support the Philanthropic Consortium, an international grant programme funding social projects, educational initiatives and cultural institutions. The Consortium has already supported 167 projects, benefiting around 1,200,000 people in Poland and abroad.

Among its partners are institutions including MICAS – Malta International Contemporary Art Space, the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, Gallery 1957 in Accra, and the Obama Presidential Center in

Chicago. Rather than treating art as an isolated cultural activity, *TOP CHARITY* creates connections between museums, foundations, universities and communities across continents.

Africa remains central to this vision. Every edition brings together Polish, African and international artists within one shared contemporary dialogue, strengthening cultural exchange rather than presenting African art as a separate narrative.

This commitment will reach a new milestone in October 2026 with the opening of the Omenaa Sport & Art Campus in Ghana. Built beside the Omenaa Sport & Art Campus, established by Omenaa Foundation for children rescued from modern slavery, the center will become the country's first complex combining sports facilities with artist, music, and poetry residencies. It represents a unique model in which education, creativity and community development reinforce one another.

The ecosystem continues throughout the year through Phenomenaa Gallery in Warsaw, a permanent platform dedicated to contemporary African and international art, allowing relationships initiated during *TOP CHARITY* to develop far beyond the annual gala.

The initiative's growing international significance has also been recognised globally. In 2026, *TOP CHARITY* received four Eventex Awards, including three Gold Awards, while Poland ranked second worldwide in the Eventex country rankings, ahead of the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates. The same year also saw the historic first official visit of the Asante King of Ghana to Poland, underlining the project's expanding role in cultural diplomacy.

The next international chapter of *TOP CHARITY* will unfold on 10 September 2026 in Venice, with *TOP CHARITY Venice Experience* taking place during



Omenaa Mensah. Photo by Alex Dolny

the Venice Film Festival and Homo Faber Biennial.

Hosted during the Venice Film Festival, it marks another step in transforming a national philanthropic initiative into an international platform where art does far more than inspire, it creates opportunities, builds partnerships and changes lives. 

www.topcharity.eu



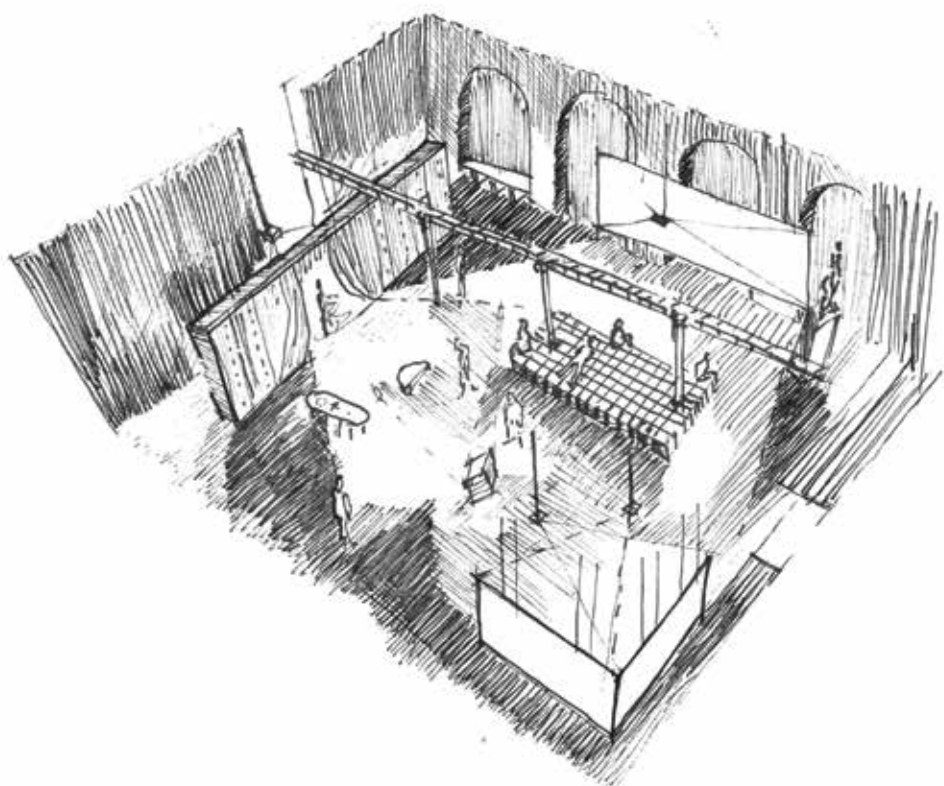
Photo by Alex Dolny

Research processes in the context of *No Need to Sparkle*

This research-driven exhibition focuses on the artistic research and development within the pavilion - the source materials, historical readings, ethnographic notes, and trial fabrications through which preliminary ideas are materialised into polished works.

[illegible]

Adrian MM Abela, notes and drawings, relating to Declaration of Dependence. Photo by Julian Vassallo



Architect's impression of the Pavilion space. Courtesy of Mark Sullivan, SON Architecture Studio

Crucially, *Diamonds in the Rough* also acknowledges the Venice pavilion as a temporal, living organism. Over its seven-month lifespan in the Venetian lagoon, the pavilion will dynamically interact with its immediate environment - yielding to shifting tides, fluctuating thermal conditions, and the unpredictable ebb and flow of daily visitors. ④

The Malta Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia 2026 is commissioned by Arts Council Malta. Adrian MM Abela, Charlie Cauchi and Raphael Vella represent Malta at the 61st International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia 2026 taking place from the 9th of May until the 22nd of November 2026. The Malta Pavilion, titled No Need to Sparkle is curated by Margerita Pulè, with architects SON architecture, and project-managed by Tamara Burr, with Outreach by Kathrine Maj with visual identity by Alexandra Pace. It is produced by Unfinished Art Space with R Gallery.

The Outreach Programme is supported in particular by Arts Council Malta and the Bank of Valletta Foundation.

* Spotlight / Restaurant / Malta

A Taste of Malta, Reimagined

In the heart of Valletta, where centuries of history meet a rapidly evolving cultural and culinary scene, Noni offers a deeply personal interpretation of Malta through food. Founded by award-winning chef Jonathan Brincat, the Michelin-starred restaurant takes its name from the chef's childhood nickname, creating a dining experience that is as personal as it is refined.

Located on Republic Street, Noni occupies a historic building whose character has become an integral part of the experience. The centuries-old space, with its stone vaults and original architectural details, provides a striking backdrop to Brincat's contemporary

approach to Maltese cuisine. The restaurant brings together the character of its historic setting with a modern dining experience rooted in seasonality, local produce and Mediterranean influences.

At the centre of Noni's philosophy is a connection to memory. Brincat's cooking draws on the food he grew up eating at home, particularly the dishes prepared by his mother and grandmother. Rather than simply reproducing these traditions, he transforms them through modern technique and years of experience gained across international kitchens.

The result is cuisine that feels distinctly Maltese without being confined



Photos by Brian Grech

by tradition. Familiar flavours are reconsidered through contemporary techniques and presentation, allowing dishes to tell stories of childhood, family and place. Noni's tasting menus continue to evolve with the seasons, highlighting local and artisanal ingredients while giving traditional Maltese flavours a contemporary voice.

That voice recently travelled far beyond Malta. In March 2026, Jonathan Brincat took Noni to Melbourne as part of the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival's Global Dining Series, becoming the first Maltese chef to participate in the prestigious programme. Collaborating with Maltese-Australian chef Shane Delia at Maha, Brincat created a menu inspired by Noni but adapted entirely to Australian produce.

Today, Noni remains a defining presence in Valletta's dining scene and continues to hold its Michelin Star. More than a restaurant, it is an expression of place: a meeting point between heritage and innovation, memory and reinvention.

Through Jonathan Brincat's cooking, Malta's culinary story is not simply preserved – it is continuously rewritten, one dish at a time. 🍴

211, Republic Street, Valletta.
+356 2122 1441; info@noni.com.mt;
www.noni.com.mt



“What I do and what I’ve always done at Noni, is my interpretation of what I grew up eating from my mother and grandmother. That’s when my real love for food began! When I was at home, I was always intrigued by cooking and for my family, going to a restaurant was very rare. For us it was all about homecooked meals. A good lunch and dinner every day.”

JONATHAN BRINCAT

CONFLUENCES

Giovanna Brogna Sonnino & Fabio Sgroi

Two distinct artistic journeys find common ground through photography. Galleria Susanna Occhipinti, in collaboration with the Malta Society of Arts and thanks to Vivaio Ottone, presents *Confluences*, an exhibition bringing together the works of Giovanna Brogna Sonnino and Fabio Sgroi in the Basement Vaults of the Malta Society of Arts at Palazzo de La Salle, Valletta, from Thursday 17 September to Thursday 1 October 2026.

At the heart of the exhibition lies a dialogue between two Sicilian artists whose deeply personal practices have evolved through distinct experiences, languages, and modes of expression. On one side is the multifaceted work of Giovanna Brogna Sonnino, shaped through photography, writing, collage, assemblage, and the layering of memory. On the other is Fabio Sgroi, whose gaze is directed outward, towards the transformations of reality and the points of tension where fragility, marginality, and unexpected vitality emerge.

The exhibition's title, *Confluences*, stems from the very nature of the gallery as both a place of passage and a space of encounter: a setting where artworks, artists, trajectories, and perspectives converge. Beyond its exhibition function, the gallery also retains its original architectural role as a transitional environment connecting adjoining spaces.

As Salvo Incardona, author of the exhibition's critical essay, observes; "On closer inspection, it is precisely a point of confluence, a crossroads where different movements, perspectives and intentions intersect: the visitor's physical and mental journey, the historical trajectory of the artworks, and the curatorial path that situates them within the space. The gallery thus becomes a place where the transience of movement and the stillness of contemplation coexist, echo and define one another; or, borrowing a compelling insight from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a space that is not merely the milieu in which things are arranged, but the medium through which their arrangement becomes possible."



Giovanna Brogna Sonnino, *Landscapes* 1983/87, analog print

Beyond its exhibition function, the gallery also retains its original architectural role as a transitional environment connecting adjoining spaces.

Born in Catania in 1955, Giovanna Brogna Sonnino is a filmmaker and photographer whose practice extends across a much broader range of artistic forms. After graduating in Florence and moving to Rome, she worked for Italy's public broadcaster RAI, directing films, documentaries and docu-films, several of which received awards both in Italy and abroad. Her official photographic debut came in 1986 with two exhibitions entitled *Portraits*, presented in Rome and Catania.

Malta already occupies a significant place within Brogna Sonnino's personal and artistic history. One of the letters collected in her volume *Letters to Dr. B. 1979–1987*, dated 27 May 1982, was written in Malta, during the same

stay in which she produced one of the photographs now included in the exhibition.

In the works presented in *Confluences*, images, texts and fragments drawn from different times and contexts enter into dialogue, giving shape to a compositional practice based on assemblage and on the possibility of generating new associations and alternative narrative paths.

Fabio Sgroi, born in Palermo in 1965, began working as a photographer in the second half of the 1980s. His collaboration with the daily newspaper *L'Ora*—his first and only experience in journalism—led him to document student movements, demonstrations, anti-war and anti-nuclear protests, as well as the most

violent years of the Mafia war in Palermo.

His engagement with Sicily later expanded to include the documentation of popular and religious festivals, while his research gradually broadened to encompass southern Tunisia, the Americas, and Europe, particularly the countries of Central and Eastern Europe emerging from the collapse of totalitarian regimes. Moving progressively beyond the conventions of photojournalism, Sgroi has developed a coherent and distinctive visual language, attentive to identities in transformation and to the traces of fragility, hope, and change that shape both places and people.

The coexistence of the works of Giovanna Brogna Sonnino and Fabio Sgroi is therefore not intended to highlight formal similarities, but rather to reveal a shared ground upon which their distinct artistic trajectories unfold. Both artists operate on the threshold between what is visible and what remains concealed, between what reveals itself and what must be reconstructed.

As Salvo Incardona concludes;

"One traverses the world in search of its possible truths, while the other journeys inward to return an image of the world. It is precisely within these tensions and short circuits that the gallery finds its most authentic meaning, becoming the place where two divergent trajectories may indeed converge—not in order to resemble one another, but to reveal, each in its own way, the wavering intermittence of their respective ways of seeing."

Salvo Incardona was born in Vittoria (Ragusa, Sicily) and studied at the Universities of Pisa and Augsburg (Germany). He is a philologist, essayist, translator, and curator. 

Confluences opens on the 17th of September from 5 to 10pm and runs until the 1st of October; open Monday to Friday 10am to 12pm and 5pm to 8pm; Saturday 10am to 1pm and Sunday 5pm to 8pm, at the Basement Vaults of Society of Arts, Palazzo de La Salle, 219 Republic Street, Valletta, Malta. For more information email info@galleriasusannaocchipinti.it.

MALTA BIENNALE 2028

The Mediterranean as a Stage for Contemporary Art

Following editions in 2024 and 2026, the Malta Biennale returns in 2028 for its third edition, continuing to position Malta as an international destination for contemporary art. The Biennale brings contemporary practices into dialogue with the islands' historic architecture, museums, palaces and archaeological sites.

The inaugural 2024 edition was led by Sofia Baldi Pighi, Artistic Director and Head Curator, alongside Elisa Carollo and Emma Mattei. The 2026 edition was directed by internationally recognised curator Rosa Martínez, supported by Antoine Borg Micallef and Alexia Medici.

The 2026 programme featured more than 130 artists across 11 sites, including internationally recognised names such as Maurizio Cattelan, Guerrilla Girls, Emily Jacir and Halil Altindere, alongside Maltese artists including Austin Camilleri, Bettina Hutschek and Concetta Modica.

The Malta Biennale's growing international profile has continued to develop with each edition, bringing together artists and audiences from across the world.



Rosa Martínez at Ġgantija. Image by Revo Studio for Heritage Malta

With the 2028 theme, curator and participating artists yet to be announced, anticipation is already building. Artists, curators and cultural practitioners should follow the official Malta Biennale channels closely for upcoming open calls, application details and deadlines as opportunities to participate are announced.

In 2028, Malta will once again become a stage for contemporary art, bringing local and international voices together within its unique Mediterranean landscape. 📍

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ROOTZ BRINGS ITALIAN WINE, STREET FOOD, LIVE MUSIC AND ECLECTIC SOUNDS TOGETHER IN THE HEART OF VALLETTA.

Since 2017, Rootz is the original Italian osteria and vineria where conviviality, live music and exceptional Italian street food meet. Known for its warm atmosphere and eclectic jazz nights and eclectic sounds, it has become a beloved gathering place for people looking for authentic flavour, good wine and memorable evenings in Valletta.

11, Strait Street, Valletta, Malta

RUMI BRINGS POETRY, SOUNDS, CRAFT BEER AND RUM TOGETHER IN THE HEART OF VALLETTA.

Since 2023, it has been home to Poetry from the Future, a monthly platform curated by Ponks Collective, giving contemporary poets a space to perform, connect and build community - making Rumi a meeting point for both nightlife and the spoken word.

7, Strait Street, Valletta, Malta

ONE STREET, TWO SOULS, CONNECTED.

JOANNA DELIA

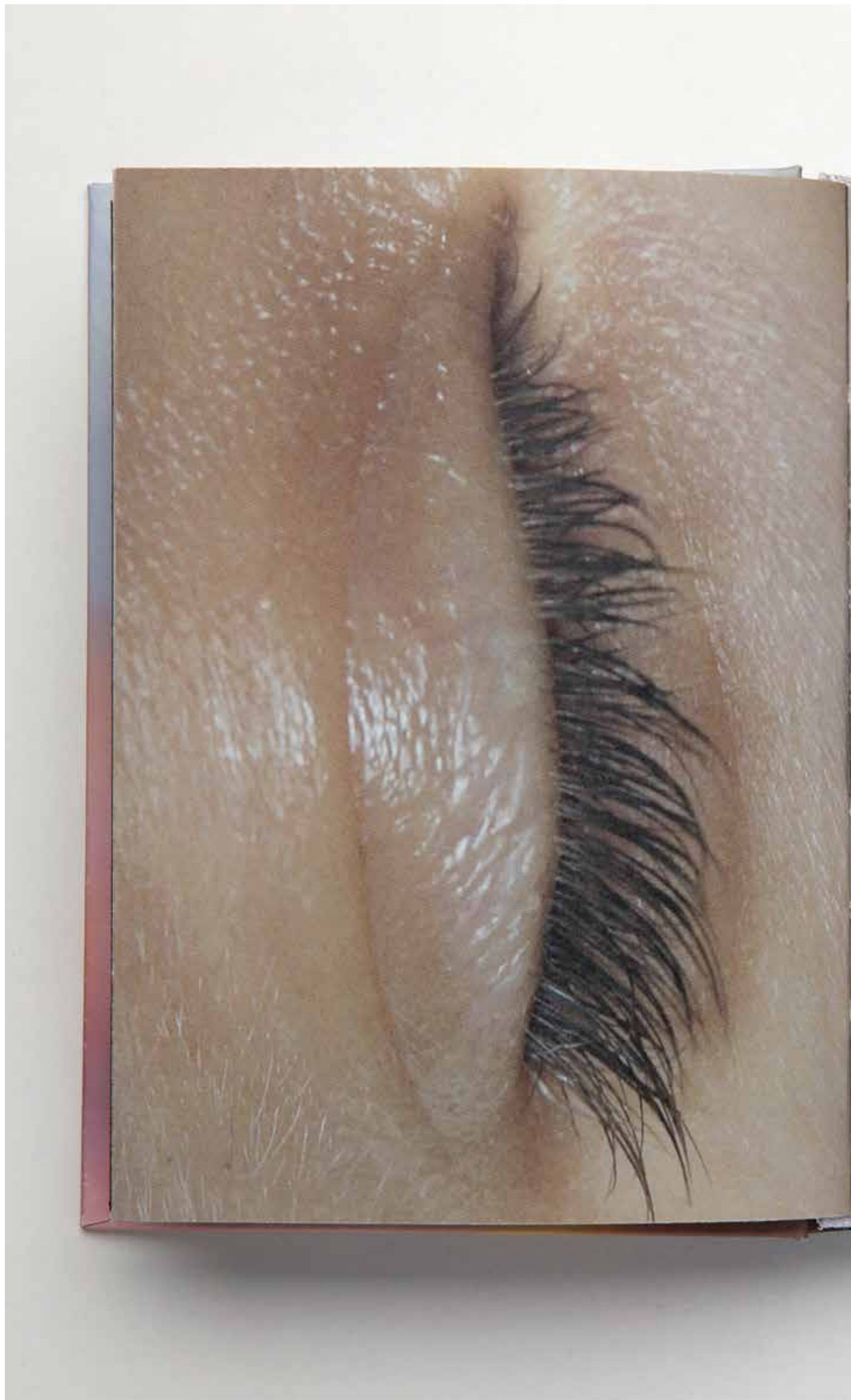
Art, Not Angst *at Berlin Art Week 2026*

Every September, Berlin drops the pretence of being anything other than one of the great art cities on earth. From 9 to 13 September, the fifteenth Berlin Art Week turns the whole ungovernable sprawl into a single exhibition – more than a hundred museums, collections and project spaces in the official programme, and behind them the small matter of the city's five-hundred-odd galleries, all throwing their doors open at once. You cannot see it all. Nobody sees it all. That, I've come to think, is rather the point – and most of the pleasure. Five days of glorious, un-policeable chaos.

I come to this year's edition still buzzing from Venice. The 2026 Biennale was, to my mind, the best in years – the edition where artists finally stopped circling the world's crises and reacted to them head-on, the politics of the moment translated straight into the work. That same current ran through the strongest shows of Berlin's Gallery Weekend earlier in the year - the presentation at KOW chief among them. So I arrive in September genuinely impatient to see how this city answers. Because if anywhere reacts to the state of the world hardest, strongest, most viscerally and most subversively, it is Berlin – and I cannot wait to see what its artists make of this particular moment.

I write this as someone whose love for the gallery gets quietly recharged every time I go to Berlin, and never more than during Art Week. As I write, the full programme isn't online yet – which is itself very Berlin, half-improvised until the last minute, the city trusting that everyone worth knowing already knows where to be. So consider this less a map than a list of the things I'll be forcing my way across town to see, because the other truth about Berlin is that it is enormous: an hour between two openings is normal, and the best evening is the one where you make it to three.

It helps to understand why Berlin became a mecca in the first place. Two institutions did much of the quiet work: the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Programme, which brings established and late-career artists to the city for a year, and Künstlerhaus Bethanien, with its year-long international studios. Artists come, and then they tell their friends, and the friends stay – a melting pot that



Stefanie Moshhammer, Book spread, *Each Poison, A Pillow*. Courtesy of the artist

JOANNA DELIA is a medical doctor who specialises in cosmetic medicine. She is also a cultural consumer and art collector who tirelessly supports Maltese contemporary art and culture.



keeps refilling itself. Add the production workshops you rarely find outside an art school, where you can cast a sculpture or pull a print, and you have a city built not just to show art but to make it.

Here, then, is what I can't wait to see.

Maurizio Cattelan, *NIGHT* – Neue Nationalgalerie, Potsdamer Straße 50 (Tiergarten), 10 September to 7 March 2027. The blockbuster, and deservedly so. Cattelan – the great Italian provocateur of the taped banana and the meteorite-struck Pope – takes the 2026 Preis der Nationalgalerie with his first major solo show in Germany, staging historic works and new site-specific commissions inside Mies van der Rohe's glass hall. There's a lovely circularity to it: Cattelan last worked in Berlin twenty years ago, co-curating the fourth Berlin Biennale. Expect sharp humour and bitter seriousness in equal measure, in a building that will hold both.

Walter Dahn, *Let's Get Married, Let's Get Lost* – Sprüth Magers, Oranienburger Straße 18 (Mitte), 11 September to 24 October. I'll be going to this one with a lump in my throat. It's a survey of Dahn – the punk-inflected co-founder of the Mülheimer Freiheit, pioneer of "Bad Painting," student of Beuys – and the gallery's first show of his work since his death in 2024. A chance to sit with a whole restless career at once.

Grace Weaver – Galerie Max Hetzler, Bleibtreustraße 45 (Charlottenburg), 4 September to 24 October. Weaver's large, tender, slightly awkward figures – bodies caught mid-gesture, full of feeling – are exactly the kind of painting I want to stand in front of for a while. Hetzler runs several spaces across the city, so check which address you're heading to; this one's in the west.

Stef Heidhues, *hook, line and sinker* – Galerie Eigen + Art, Auguststraße 26 (Mitte), opening 10 September (6–10pm), until 31 October. Full disclosure: Stef is a good friend, and she makes wonderful sculpture – objects borrowed from the everyday and the industrial, held in a state of suspension, always questioning the monumental rather than serving it. I'd flag this one even if I didn't love her. >>

⚙ Feature / *Berlin Art Week 2026*

>> Continued

Pick your openings, walk between them, and let the city do the rest.



Maurizio Cattelan, *Novecento*, detail, 1997, Castello di Rivoli, Torino Photo by Paolo Pellion di Persano



Grace Weaver, *Nightgown*, 2024, acrylic on canvas. Photo by def image

Eric Meier & Stefanie Moshhammer, *Bittersweet Symphony* – Galerie im Saalbau, Karl-Marx-Straße 141 (Neukölln), 12 September to 22 November. Two photographers circling the same subject – alcohol addiction – from opposite directions. Moshhammer, the superb Austrian photographer, approaches it through her own mother, in a poetic, encrypted language of images, objects and video; Meier photographs alcoholic men in a residential home in Eisenhüttenstadt, many of them cast adrift by the upheavals that followed reunification, with a closeness that restores dignity to people society has made invisible. That last phrase will sound familiar to anyone who read my last piece – the impulse to make the unseen seen runs straight through this show.

Thu-Van Tran, *Write As Beasts Scream at Night* – KINDL, Am Sudhaus 3 (Neukölln), 13 September to 14 February 2027 (opening 12 September). KINDL is reason enough to visit on its own: a former brewery with a twenty-metre boiler house, one of the most extraordinary industrial conversions in Europe. Tran's work – colour, language, the residue of colonial history – should find room to breathe in it.

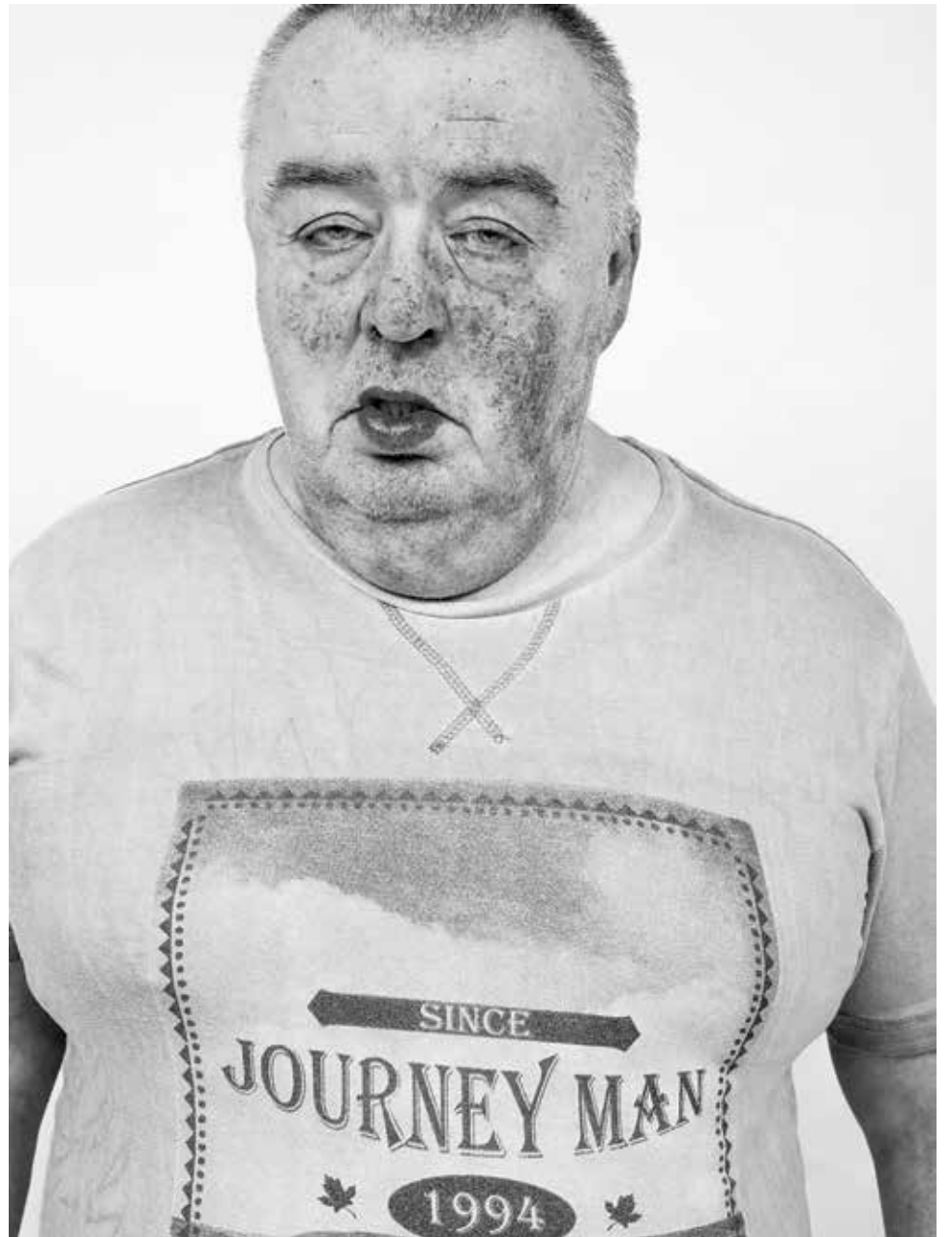
And if you want architecture with your art, König Galerie shows inside St. Agnes, Alexandrinenstraße 118–121 (Kreuzberg) – Werner Düttmann's Brutalist 1960s church, converted by Arno Brandhuber in 2015 – with three exhibitions opening on 9 September (Christian Achenbach, Monira Al Qadiri and Rebecca Brodskis). Worth the trip for the building alone.

And then there's the one closest to home. My friends Madeleine Fenwick and Kane Cali open *SEE/SAW* at AOA;87 (Sophienstraße 5, Mitte), a collaboration between AOA;87 and R Gallery in Malta, with a private opening on Wednesday 9 September, at 7pm – the very first night of the week. Fenwick, British-born and Valletta-based, is a painter turned sculptor whose meditative, copper-led works trace rhythm, balance and movement, a practice she has developed between Malta and Mexico City, where she showed her largest installation to date at Salón ACME during Mexico City Art Week in 2025. Cali, born in Malta in 1983 and a Royal College of Art graduate, is an experimentalist who treats data like pigment – casting it into glass, ceramics, stone and 3D-printed forms from his studio in Valletta. Two artists, two galleries, two geographies: the show takes balance itself as its subject. Not instability, which it treats as a given, but the harder, quieter business of staying upright inside structures we did not choose and cannot leave. It is arranged, as the galleries put it, like a structure under load – each element holding because the others hold. A genuine Malta–Berlin co-production, and a neat illustration of how far the island's galleries now reach. It's the kind of two-hander I always find myself thinking about long after the crush of the openings has faded.

This is my way into the wider Malta–Berlin traffic, as it runs in both directions. Andreas Blank, based between Aurach and Berlin, carves everyday objects – a jam jar, a pair of boots, a crumpled sheet of paper – by hand from marble, alabaster and sandstone, giving throwaway items monumental permanence and using the kind of stone once reserved for religious and political statuary. His practice is exactly what those rare Berlin production workshops make possible, and his work returns to Valletta Contemporary next year. For Berlin Art Week, he will show with Anne Jungjohann, Andreas Blank, Wolfgang Ganter and Ria Wank. The exhibition takes place within the Uferhallen Open Studios on the 12th and 13th of September, 2–8pm, Uferstraße 8–11, 13357. I'll also be keeping an eye out for Nina E. Schönefeld, the Berlin artist whose charged, dystopian video installations – including *RIDE OR DIE*, which premiered at KINDL – turn post-apocalyptic cinema aesthetics onto the politics of the present.

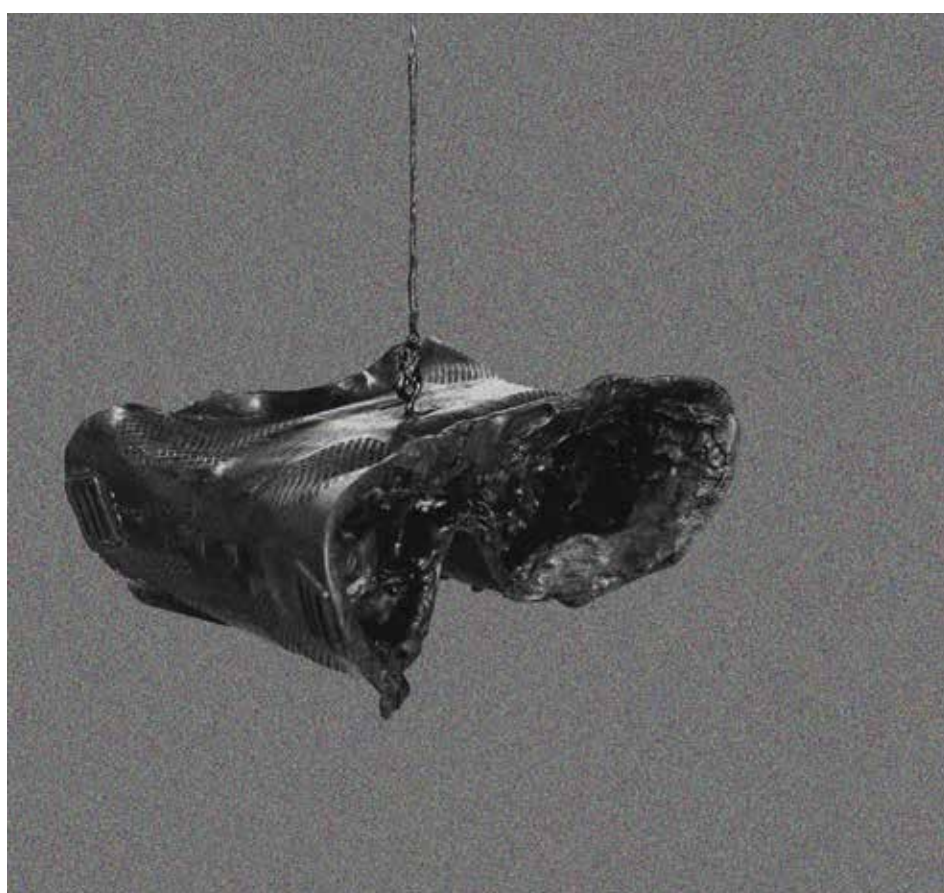


Andreas Blank, *Still Life with Bottles*, 2025, Marble Alabaster, Limestone, Onyx. Photo by Cami Lakonic



Eric Meier, *Journey Man 1994*, 2025. Courtesy of the artist

The official list is only ever half the story, and, honestly, not the wild half. The city genuinely comes alive: the galleries that aren't on the programme, the project spaces and off-spaces, the openings that spill into club nights in the old industrial halls of the former East – spaces like MaHalla, the vast ex-AEG turbine factory out in Oberschöneweide, which shows art by day and dissolves into DJ sets and dancing by night, the way only Berlin seems to manage. The week's centre of gravity is Featured Night on Friday 11 September, 6–10pm, when everything opens simultaneously and the whole art world is out on the street at once. There are collections that only open on Saturdays, special projects tucked into astonishing buildings on the city's edges, and – a personal favourite of the “only in Berlin” genre – the art programme rising inside Spreepark, the abandoned GDR amusement park in Plänterwald that the city has spent well over a decade bringing back to life, and which



Stef Heidhues, *hook, line and sinker*

is finally reopening its gates. This year the Kulturforum serves as the festival's central hub, with the Hamburger Bahnhof (Invalidenstraße 50–51, Moabit) – the former railway station that opened as Berlin's museum of the present in 1996, and turns thirty this year – anchoring the museum end of things.

Five days, five hundred galleries, and no chance of seeing even a fraction. If you're only there for the week, make your peace with that early – pick your openings, walk between them, and let the city do the rest. The full programme will be available on the Berlin Art Week website berlinartweek.de closer to the event time. I'll see you somewhere in the crush. ☎

Q Interview / *Exhibition* / *Berlin*

ANDREW BORG WIRTH

PLAYGROUND WARFARE

Berlin Art Week will once more have a Maltese institutional representation at this year’s edition. In a collaboration between R Gallery and AOA:87, *SEE/SAW* builds on the success of the joint exhibition by both galleries, *FAR REACH* in 2023, and features the work of Kane Calì and Madeleine Fenwick. ANDREW BORG WIRTH sits with both artists to speculate further on the aims of the project.

There is little doubt, upon seeing these works, that *SEE/SAW* comes at a time of war. We live inundated with images, messages and proclamations of alliances, betrayals, progression and regression, as promises of peace repeatedly collapse into violence. In the works of Calì and Fenwick, these are displayed front and

centre. As war escalates before our eyes, the line between truth and fiction is tense. We know that the agenda of who is telling the story is embedded within how it arrives at us. What we can’t decipher is what to make of it all.

This helplessness is ironic when considering that war has, for decades, been fed to us as an act of



No Looking Back, Madeleine Fenwick

ANDREW BORG WIRTH (Malta, b.1993) is a curator and architect with an interdisciplinary practice interrogating disciplines of architecture, contemporary art, theatre and design. He creates collaborative situations between artists and collectives; architecture, fashion and design studios; and public and academic institutions across a variety of projects.



Human Grenade, Kane Cali

play. Children immediately recognise a soldier. They seek out camouflaged outfits and helmets as if the military were welcome guests at a costume party. They play with toy weapons seemingly as harmless as buckets and spades in a sandpit. They are, like us,

unable to decipher the gravity of what all this does to us. Their fictional play mirrors a much uglier global reality.

Human Grenade by Kane Cali, presented in different scales, plays on this irony. The series of works embed

the artist's own image into the form of a hand grenade; a powerful object which explodes as its pin is pulled. The sculptural irony of the grenade is magnified and diminished at different scales. Presented as 3D-printed objects or flat in a series of wall-mounted prints,

they recall the mass-produced toys which children are often presented with. The fabricators Kane Cali, worked with, wary of the intentions of the artist, only produced a part of the required components. Everything had to be verified to ensure that this was >>

Q Interview / *Exhibition* / *Berlin*

>> *Continued*

an artwork with no ability to be triggered and explode. Again, we are at the tense line between truth and fiction: a grenade with no power presented as a powerful artwork.

This sits within the same space as *Seesaw / Equilibrium of Consideration*, the monumental sculpture by Fenwick, from which the exhibition borrows its title. Here, audiences are invited to play. The sculpture is monumental and brutally made of ready-mades and specifically designed pieces. The two seats imply a binary condition, but a seesaw is rarely in equilibrium. The artist speaks of a war we are at with the other; a playful chance for both to rise or fall. The strongest trope here is one of precariousness, which follows through all which is shown in this exhibition.

There is an abundance of metal within the group of works. Embedded with memory from wherever it was extracted, manipulated, engineered, used, collected and recycled, it was ultimately poured back into the artworks flown from Malta for this exhibition in Berlin. The works perform almost like shrapnel on the wall. In different ways they convey the inert substance of war, violence and crises. There is calamity in *No Looking Back* and *Huitzilopochtli* by Madeleine Fenwick. There is altered perception in the *Looks Up in Horror* series by Kane Cali: if seen from one angle, the figures in these works are perceivable, but moving just a short horizontal distance completely rids the artwork of representation. The limits of the material are tested in each artist's work; battered and punctured in the paintings by Fenwick; fluid but tactile in the works by Cali.

The inevitability of crisis is best conveyed in the text works that both artists are producing. There is a flatness in Fenwick's brass plates which almost ridicules the statements they convey: 'PEACE' or 'HE SAID/SHE SAID'. The show gains momentum in the glitched tablets by Cali. A pastiche of media network logos, breaking news imagery and texts across languages, they are caught between different truths and agendas. Again there is something child-like and playful in their manifestation, if only they weren't built of such a visceral, dangerous, raw metal, which, when touched, could tear at your skin. *Hiroshima De Ja Vu* borrows from both the real imagery of the 1945 disaster, and the subtitles lifted from the 1959 film directed by Alain Resnais, *Hiroshima mon Amour*.



Looks Up in Horror, Kane Cali



Huitzilopochtli, Madeleine Fenwick

SEE/SAW feels urgent, but peculiar. It is uncomfortable to think of the ugliness of the onset of war and the inevitability of the apocalypse, from within a playground. It's as if the artists are commanding us to see the world in the same way playing children are made to. At either seat of the seesaw are two children: a weightless plastic toy soldier and a blank-faced desperate orphan child in a warzone. The toy soldier is

frozen high in the air; his playmate grounded adamantly to the floor.

Silent audiences will face a series of loud statements from the two artists from Malta, this September in Berlin. 📍

SEE/SAW runs between 11 September – 31 October 2026 at AOA;87; Sophienstraße 5; 10178 Berlin.

The exhibition is produced and presented by Angela Kohlrush and Jonah Kittlemann of AOA;87 and Mark Sullivan and Kathrine Maj of R Gallery.

Opening: 10 September, 6-9 PM. Press by appointment from 9 September 2026

Portrait of Tansy



For SKYE FERRANTE, portraiture is as much about the stories surrounding a person as the portrait itself. Working in his distinctive continuous-wire technique, Ferrante has spent years documenting performers and artists, from New York’s burlesque and cabaret worlds to the legendary Hotel Chelsea. *Portrait of Tansy* is one such story, originally performed at London’s National Portrait Gallery in 2024 and culminating in the reveal of Tansy’s portrait. What follows is Ferrante’s own account of the story behind the work.

What follows is Skye Ferrante’s own account of the story behind the portrait, originally written for and performed at the National Portrait Gallery in London.

New York, New York. Hotel Chelsea “Any allergy restriction?” I asked her. I myself have a fatal allegory to nuts. Half a nut could kill me. “No gluten, no meat,” she said. “How about fish?” “I love fish,” she said. “Perfect, then I’ll cook a puttanesca. It has an anchovy base, and I’ve found the only gluten-free

pasta in the world that isn’t terrible. “A puttanesca?!” she said. “Who you calling a whore?” I said, “Tansy, the whore is ME, I’m the whore! The art whore, of course, and *I’m* cooking.” I suppose it was a fitting dish, considering where we were - not merely in the Chelsea Hotel but in room 629, one of the last, real

apartments in the newly upscaled, 5-star hotel; where you can get a martini for thirty dollars (that’s without the tip!) or my favorite, a single scoop of truffle ice cream for twenty-two dollars! Who the fuck wants truffles in their ice cream! It’s the Chelsea Hotel – It’s supposed to be a dive – but, you know, ‘classy.’ Not



Skye Ferrante being interviewed by New York Times reporter during sculpting break with models Tansy and Boo Bess

like the Carlyle, or the Connaught! You can't make art in room you have to worry about, with pristine white sheets and a 16-million thread count. You have to be able to leave a mark, literally, a stain or two, a scratch on the table, blood on the floor... I say 'blood,' for as it happened, on a previous Chelsea night I witnessed a blood letting act performed in this very room, room 629, which may have followed a wax-dripping strip tease or was it a bed of nails number? I can't recall... perhaps, because I fainted, and I wasn't the only one, I heard a series of crashes as I slid slowly down the wall and out of consciousness. Apparently, I missed the finale, which involved 'a fountain' I was told, of some sorts, and a magic wand?

Well... it was in this storied apartment that our last portrait sitting took place. My last portrait with Tansy. This one, right here (pointing to the covered artwork). A portrait sitting witnessed by a ancient white cat named Coco... who has seen it all.

La France

Tansy visited me in Normandy, in the quaint medieval port of Honfleur, where I was stuck working for a shitty French gallery that demanded all my steel-wire portraits be plated in gold. They wanted everything in gallery to be shiny! And if that wasn't bad enough, they put my portraits into TASTELESS glitter-lined frames! They wanted me to sculpt French bulldogs – J'ai dit 'Non!' – I refused. They wanted me to be more 'Pop!' More... 'American!' I fucking told them I was from New York. I was miserable – and to make it worse, I couldn't find any willing art models to undress for me in Normandy. So I

called Tansy, who just happened to be in France – on a burlesque tour.

We did two portraits in Honfleur. In the first, she was wearing her favorite vintage kimono, which I had sculpted on her before – I loved sculpting Tansy in kimonos. She draped so well, so easy; the fabric added to her natural movement. In the second, Tansy picked up my pliers and spool and did a portrait...of me! Her request caught me by surprise, which came after a few too many pastis. She said, "I've watched you sculpt me long enough." And it was true, she'd seen my my tricks, my little twists, the way I made my secret little structural ties – she was probably better equipped than anyone to do a wire portrait of me, and so she did, over three hours. I have the photos of her wearing my signature blue French mechanic's jumpsuit... and me – well, there are no photos of me in my birthday suit.

...Tansy's sculpture of me was surprisingly good – for a first try – so good, in fact, that the shiny-shit French gallery stole it. They did, along with five other gold-plated, glitter-framed portraits they actually forged certificates of authenticity for. I haven't seen it since, and to this day, Tansy is the only person in the world to have sculpted my portrait... including me.

Broadway. 13th Street. 2011

Our first portrait together was a double portrait, of Tansy posing with Peekaboo Pointe. Burlesque names are special. I met Peekaboo through the legendary Jo Boobs, and this was while I was dating Gal Friday – Jo Boobs introduced me to everybody – Boobs was seeing Jonny Porkpie, who had just left a marriage to

Nasty Canasta on account of an affair with Clams Casino, who was married to some poor guy named Brett... ANYway – In burlesque, the audience will typically hoot and holler and whistle throughout the act – as they're encouraged to – but not with Peekaboo, or with Tansy for that matter. Their signature numbers build with a slow, quiet, teasing intensity, until the finish, when a thousand pins drop at once, and the audience doesn't applaud. They roar.

The Tansy-Pekaboo portrait took place in a giant loft that was given to me – rent free – by a big-shot Broadway producer who wanted me to write a 'burlesque musical.' However, instead of musical numbers, the characters would break into strip tease acts. It was doomed – from the start – but I was too hungry and too green to know it, or to see that the Producer only wanted to cheat on his wife. Such a pity – my script had legs, and a beautiful pair for Tansy. Come to think of it, until this very moment, no one – apart from that jerk producer – has heard the pitch. Consider it a world premiere! Here goes...

The play was called... VAJAZZLED, and it was the story of two sweethearts... who happened to share...a very rare... and fatal-allergy...to NUDITY... Yes – to nudity, not nuts – until six stripper ghosts showed up to save them. I cast Tansy as one-half of the allergic couple, who could go into anaphylaxis at the mere sight of too much skin. Her sweetheart, sadly, didn't make it. He died of 'acute naked shock.' But boy, did *her* character have an arc...

I envisioned Tansy's final number before a packed Broadway house, emboldening the crowd to uncharacteristic low-brow hoots and hollers, as my PAID ACCOMPLICES in every row of the Broadway theatre would start to undress... Not only would Tansy overcome her own fatal fear of nudity, but she would win over the audience, one by one, in a giant stripping ovation. Surely nothing like this had ever happened on Broadway!!!

...And then Tansy turns to the audience, as the house lights go up, pointing at the family in the fourth row visiting from Tennessee, and then to the retirees from Scarsdale and the Broadway Club of Bensonhurst, to the Mayor of New York City, all of them, standing, in a pile of their own clothes... and Tansy squeals, "It's YOUR birthday too!" And that's when the big band – A big NAKED band – is raised from the orchestra pit as

Tansy, backed by the six stripper ghosts, all play electric ukuleles, in a heavy metal rendition of HAPPY BIRTHDAY... at which point – I haven't worked this out – a SWARM of fireflies form the letters of an enormous, BLINKING SIGN that reads: NUDITY... IS... CONTAGIOUS.

Well, it could've been a great show – eight shows a week – and what could go wrong!? But I suppose some stories are meant for the page.

SF ④

The original performance was featured as part of an evening at The Portrait by Richard Corrigan in collaboration with American Express Experiences

Ferrante's wider body of work includes his signature single-wire nudes, landscapes, tapestries and installations, held in private and public collections internationally.

To view Portrait of Tansy or enquire about available works, including his nude portraiture and other wire sculptures, contact Lily Agius Gallery for further information and viewing appointments.

Lily Agius Gallery
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Photo by Tony Notarberardino

Q Interview / *Exhibition* / *Valletta Contemporary*

JOANNA DELIA

INSIDE VOICES



It sounds easy - and it has become fashionable - to dream up projects, or start foundations, or apply for funds to cook up an event, or series of events which create impact on the community, on the future of society, and embellish it with 'art'. Show something for it... get your legacy sorted. Feel good about the outcome. Change people's lives. Empower some children or women or a marginalised group. Make them feel like we care. Perhaps spark some healing. Display it in public. Remind people that this or the other group is there. They matter. They have feelings.

And after all, it was one of the heroes of contemporary art, Joseph Beuys, who

stated, "Every human being is an artist, a freedom being, called to participate in transforming and reshaping the conditions, thinking and structures that shape and inform our lives."

And it had become so fashionable that we forgot that actually, in the right hands - it works. Art and the transformation of society are intrinsic to one another.

If you know me, you might have to dig through your perceived bias - because although I consider Duška Malešević and Pep Herrera two of my closest friends - and have followed their careers closely and infinitely, I had not been aware of this collaboration until the funding was granted - and when it was - I knew

immediately that it was a phenomenal idea and a brilliant recipe. Pep has the right skills to engage a community in collaborative artworks, and Duška had been itching to manifest her deep understanding of translating emotion into expression.

I know that this project came after thousands of hours of dreaming and planning. Of believing - that artists can sit down with a group of people and facilitate communication, dialogue, expression and change.

As Olaf Eliasson said when visiting Malta - artists should be at every table where decisions are made. I believe that artists should be at every table. Period.

I caught up with the two artists to understand better how one does this. Properly.

Duška is an interdisciplinary visual artist. She holds an MA in Psychology of Art from Sapienza University of Rome, Italy.

Her practice explores the tension between beauty and decay, attraction and discomfort, the quiet moments where something fragile exists inside something damaged or constrained.

Through photography, objects, light and text, she is interested in what remains when the subject is absent: light on a surface, a trace, a fragment, or a space that holds memory without describing it.



Rather than documenting events or people, her work focuses on atmosphere, the emotional charge carried by ordinary materials and overlooked spaces.

Working in restricted environments deepens this approach. Limitation becomes a language in itself. When the body cannot be shown, the space begins to speak. When narrative is reduced, attention sharpens. The image becomes less about explanation and more about presence.

This workshop extends her ongoing exploration of restraint as a creative method using artistic expression not to reveal, but to hold.

Pep Herrera is a freelance mural artist (pseudonym Pep Walls) based between Catalonia and Malta. He holds a Bachelor degree in Fine Arts from the University of Barcelona and completed one year of studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague.

His murals are characterised by a synthetic and illustrative style, often infused with irony and sarcasm; "Urban art has an ability to activate connections with local communities who seem to understand the contexts in which I work, which in turn leads me to create murals with social responsibility while striving to achieve artistic excellence."

In certain socially engaged projects the design and execution unfold as a collaborative experience, particularly with vulnerable groups at risk of social exclusion. The main objective of these projects is to give visibility and empower these communities through participatory artistic experiences. Public spaces become a platform to amplify their voices and create opportunities for inclusion.



"Throughout my career, I have worked in refugee camps, shelters for minors under social protection, highly complex educational centres, homeless shelters, and prisons."

JD: Duška, your background in art psychology certainly gave you a good foundation in preparing for this project.

Were the outcomes as good as you hoped? Does acknowledging that everyone has a right to culture live up to its desired transformation in people?

DM: My background in psychology of art gave me tools to listen, observe and create spaces where people could express themselves without feeling judged. But I quickly realised that no amount of preparation could replace simply being present and genuinely engaging with each individual. The most valuable part of the process was not trying to achieve a predetermined outcome, but allowing trust to develop at its own pace.

The project exceeded my expectations, although not in the way I initially imagined. The transformation wasn't dramatic or immediate, it revealed itself through small moments: a participant finding the confidence to share a thought, someone discovering a new way of seeing themselves, or recognising that their experiences deserved to be heard. Those moments are easy to overlook, yet they are deeply significant.

I believe that culture is not a privilege but a fundamental human right. When people are invited to participate in creative processes rather than simply consume culture, they begin to recognise themselves as contributors rather than spectators. Art cannot erase social inequalities or personal struggles, but it can restore a sense of agency, dignity and belonging. Sometimes that shift is quiet, but it can have lasting effects.

JD: Pep, you have become a fixture in Malta when it comes to rallying communities and working with them

on large scale murals often with a strong social message - has this become a constant in your process? Delivering an artwork born out of dialogue and collaboration?

PW: Not only in Malta but everywhere I work, my practice is very linked to social commitment, and through my murals and projects I very often work together with under-represented communities and groups. Of course, when you are working with groups at risk of social exclusion, giving them a place to express themselves in the public space, the results cannot be other than social and political messages.

Doing these collaborations the participant community really engages with every step of the creative process but at the same time I strive to maintain artistic excellence - which is more often than not very challenging.

For this reason, my projects often become an exploration of the idea of co-creation, prioritising participation and strategies on how to archive success while involving communities in every part of the artistic process.

JD: It is not often that artists transcribe well into art educators or facilitators. How did you, Duška, as an artist, communicate to persons who have been perhaps deprived of a guided creative outlet in order to help them express themselves in way they have seldom been encouraged to?

How has your experience in artistic practice translated into guiding others?

DM: I never approached the participants as someone who had the answers. My role was not to teach them how to make art, >>



Q Interview / Exhibition / Valletta Contemporary

>> Continued

but to create an environment where they felt safe enough to discover that they already had something worth expressing.

As an artist, I spend much of my time working with uncertainty. I have learnt that meaningful work often begins with questions rather than conclusions, and I tried to bring that same openness into the workshops. Instead of focusing on artistic skill, we focused on observation, conversation, memory and emotion.

Once participants realised there was no “correct” response, they became increasingly willing to experiment and speak honestly.

This experience reminded me that creativity is deeply human. Technical ability is only one aspect of artistic practice; curiosity, empathy and imagination are equally important. Facilitating this project reinforced my belief that everyone possesses creative potential - it simply needs the right conditions to emerge.

JD: We are eager to see the visual materialisation of this project at the upcoming show at Valletta Contemporary.

Do you feel that you, as an artist took a step further back this time? How does the artist, used to collaborative work, restrain themselves in order to allow the creative outpouring from the members of the community you worked with this time?

PW: I would like to say that we became art directors and curators for this project; our role for this specific project was to guide the participants with very specific exercises and workshops through an introspective journey which saw its results reflected in a number of visual artworks.

This project was different and more interesting than some of the public murals I have made, because here we did not have an actual client expecting a result where you could see for instance Pep Walls’ characteristic visual style.

In this project we could be honest with the results and use the amount of time given to really explore each of the participants’ artistic language and engage with their inner thoughts, memories and fears, helping them reflect these feelings in the exhibition.

In terms of planning there were also a lot of changes and updates from our

original plans. Our original plan became very flexible, as we were getting to know the group better: doing our best to understand their needs, abilities and talents and we adapted our project to fulfil their artistic interests. This project was very much about listening; understanding what the group needed and working to satisfy their needs which then affected the artistic outcomes.

JD: You have worked to facilitate the right to culture with other such communities before. Can you elaborate and share some thoughts about how you deal with every such project you select as an artist and creative facilitator?

PW: I don’t believe I have truly chosen most of the projects I have worked on with such communities. In fact, it’s quite the opposite. I started getting commissions and projects of this kind, without me searching for them - so it is more like some curators and institutions who run these kind of projects started contacting me - it all happened in a very organic way.

Working with communities of this kind, led to more work of this kind, and my portfolio became focused on these sort of projects.

I also think that muralism works well with community projects - working in large

format matches the participative aspect of the projects, and the fact it results in a public exhibition - a street artwork for instance, maximises the scope of a say human rights lobby’s aim.

When I can choose my projects, or when I can look for funding to work on my own project proposal, I always try to be as innovative as possible. I try to develop new formulas and reach new communities - ones I have never reached before.

In the past I think I was very focused on trying to get as much exposure as possible - to paint bigger murals, in very public venues.



Now I think I have realised this is not my priority, and as per this project I am more interested on coming up with innovative ways of connecting with communities and produce contemporary work that can occupy spaces where community and participative art is not necessarily the main focus.

JD: The work with the community happened through discussion and exploration but ultimately resulted in a visual manifestation. Which media were used to display the results of many hours of introspection and why these media?

DM: The final works combined text and photography, two mediums that

have become central to my own artistic practice. Throughout the workshops, conversations gradually evolved into fragments of language, short reflections, memories and thoughts that carried emotional weight without needing lengthy explanation.

Photography complemented these texts by offering visual spaces that suggested atmosphere rather than illustrating specific narratives.

This combination allowed the works to remain open-ended. Rather than presenting fixed stories, they invite viewers to pause, reflect and complete the meaning through their own experiences. That openness felt particularly important because the project was rooted in listening rather than speaking on behalf of others.

The visual outcomes became traces of a much larger process. They were not intended as documentation of the workshops, but as independent works that carried the emotional resonance of the encounters from which they emerged.

JD: What lessons learnt would you work on and how would you propose the administrators of such communities incorporate such projects as a regularly available activity?

PW: I think art and creative workshops can be very therapeutic for everyone but specially groups of people in confinement, in prison.

For some of them they can become an exercise to realise their talents and abilities and explore techniques they never had the possibility of developing. This helps them improve their own self-esteem and also aids group cohesion.

With this special group, letting out certain feelings can be difficult even through complex but mainstream psychology therapy.

Art becomes a very interesting medium that can help channel emotions they don't even realise they have been holding.

This is something we have dealt with on this project. Being in prison very often forces young people to be tough, to not show their weaknesses and to hide their mental state, which very often is fragile.

It is like wearing armour, that hides your more emotional world and shows



a different person - perhaps one that is tough and careless - an act which protects them in an environment that is often potentially hostile.

Through this project we saw a level of transformation in the youth we were working with.

We saw how with every workshop their armour was dismantled slowly until they showed their true selves - emotional, angry, sad or hopeless sometimes.

JD: How do you hope the public will interact with the work, and what lessons have you learnt which you hope will increase understanding between persons deprived from cultural expression and the community at large?

DM: I hope audiences approach the work with curiosity rather than assumption.

Too often we define people by the circumstances that separate them from society instead of recognising the complexity of their identities. The project invites viewers to encounter individual voices rather than stereotypes.

One of the most important lessons I learnt is that meaningful participation begins with listening.

We often speak about giving people a voice, but the voice is already there. What is frequently missing is an audience willing to listen without judgement or expectation.

If the exhibition encourages even a

small shift in perspective, if visitors leave recognising shared emotions where they expected difference, then it has achieved something meaningful. Art has the capacity to create moments of recognition between people who may never otherwise meet. In a world that often emphasises division, those moments of connection are quietly transformative. ⁹

Inside Voices - What the Room Holds, runs from 18 September to 17 October 2026 at Valletta Contemporary, 15, 16, 17 East Street, Valletta, Malta, Wednesday to Saturday, 2-7pm (closed public holidays).

Inside Voices brings together artworks created by youth at CoRRS, Malta's juvenile detention centre, as part of a participatory project led by artists Duška Malešević and Pep Walls. Developed through a series of creative workshops, the exhibition presents works in photography, text, drawing and mixed media that offer insights into the participants' thoughts, emotions, memories and aspirations. By placing these works within a contemporary art context, Inside Voices highlights the transformative potential of creativity and affirms the importance of cultural participation as a fundamental right for all members of society.

Inside Voices was funded through the Right to Culture call by Arts Council Malta, co-funded by Correctional Services Malta and supported by Valletta Contemporary.



Q Interview / *Dew Kim*

JOANNA DELIA

Divine / Profane

In conversation with Dew Kim

There is a kind of childhood you never quite rinse out of yourself – the one lived inside the church rather than merely near it. Mine was spent almost drowning in Christian imagery - visual and auditory - in the constant company of a practising pastor and the whole apparatus of insider religious life, while somewhere underneath all of it a self was trying to form, and to surface.

I have seldom met anyone raised the way I was – with a priest at the centre of the household – who came out the other side true to themselves, despite the struggle. Rarer still to find that person in a land and a culture as far from mine as could be. And yet, sitting down with Dew Kim to talk about growing up on the fine line between the divine and the profane, everything he described sounded uncannily like home.

His work *The Enchanting Offering*, shown at the inaugural Malta Biennale

in 2024, sat flawlessly inside the Valletta chapel that held it. The pieces I was later lucky enough to see for myself in Seoul – at CR Collective, and an installation at the Seoul Museum of Art – do the same thing: they gather up the mental world of the devout and press it against idol culture and sadomasochism until you can no longer tell which is which. The adoration and the sacrifice, the flagellation, the celebrity, the elevated and the sublime, alongside debased props turned into instruments of profanity – all of it sat far too close to the machinery of my own childhood for comfort.

I caught up with Dew Kim to understand how a person grows up inside all of that – and then makes art from it, honestly.

[Dew Kim (b. 1985, Seoul) works across video, sculpture, installation and performance, dividing his time between Seoul and London. He holds an MA in Sculpture from the Royal College of Art, London, and a BFA in Metalsmithing

and Jewellery from Konkuk University, South Korea. Raised in a devout Christian family, his practice draws conceptual parallels between religious ritual and Christian iconography and those of BDSM, fandom and shamanism, moving through questions of sexuality, queerness, the body and power. He has spoken of saints and K-pop idols as the same kind of creature: “beings that exist on a stage.”

His work has been shown at the Malta Biennale (2024); documenta 15, Kassel; the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul; the Barbican, Camden Arts Centre and the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; the Museum of Contemporary Art Busan and Daegu Art Museum; and Para Site, Hong Kong. Recent solo exhibitions include *I Surrender* (Various Small Fires, Seoul), *The Last Scene* (Alternative Space Loop, Seoul) and *Sacrificium* (CR Collective, Seoul).]

JD: The sacred/profane dichotomy is well over a hundred years old, and yet contemporary artists keep returning to it – perhaps most of all those from countries where religion still holds the community tightly. Why do you feel you have to keep exploring it?

DK: It's an old subject – but for me it was never theory. It's something I actually lived. Grow up in a religious society and that line decides what you wear, who you love, how you move. So it isn't really a topic I picked; it's a question already lodged in my body, and I can't stop asking it: who draws that line, who gets left out, and how do you flip it?

JD: Having exhibited in and visited Malta, do you recognise similarities between our two societies – in their recent moves towards secularisation – through the lifting of censorship and the removal of restrictions that have prevented

same-sex couples from enjoying the same rights as heterosexual couples?

DK: Malta and Korea look completely different, but in one way they're alike – religion ran deep through everything in both. Catholicism in Malta; Confucianism and Christianity in Korea. Both shaped bodies, desire, even what a family was allowed to look like.

What interests me is how fast that power is coming apart now, especially among the young. In Korea, religious affiliation is dropping sharply, and young people are finding belief and belonging in ways that have nothing to do with the old



Dew Kim. Photo by Jiji Kim



When All Flesh Turns to Light, 2026, Stainless steel, latex, vacuum cleaner, sensor timer, CNC-machined styrofoam, sex toy, mixed media, dimensions variable

religion. But the laws, the institutions, the religious groups that still hold power – they haven't caught up.

That push and pull is what I find most compelling: a power that ruled for so long is collapsing quickly, and yet its leftovers are still lodged in the law and in people's bodies, refusing to let go. I felt the same tension in Malta – secularisation moving forward on the surface, a strong religious inertia still holding on underneath.

JD: I believe society and its institutions are far more permissive now, both about the sacred/profane

*Growing up on the fine line
between the divine and the profane,
everything he described sounded
uncannily like home.*

dichotomy and about representing everything that went under-represented in the past. Do you feel you have the power, as an artist, to keep expanding our understanding of how the human condition has been shaped by the split between the mundane and the spiritual? Put simply – does it still excite you to push boundaries, visually and materially? And do you feel a responsibility to do so?

DK: Yes, it still excites me. My work doesn't treat sacred and profane as a single axis. I mix shamanism, the queer body, religion, fandom, BDSM – they look unrelated, but they run on the same structure: devotion, repeated ritual, ecstasy, the exchange of submission and power. A shaman's ritual, an idol fan chant, a BDSM session, a church mass – each is the body reaching for something beyond itself. The only difference is that some get called sacred and others get called perverse or childish.

What I'm curious about is who gets to decide that – who calls one ecstasy holy and another devotion a sickness. Society has grown more tolerant, sure, but tolerance is often just another word for taming something down. So I still need to smash these worlds together on one stage. It's less a responsibility than a necessity – without this, my work simply doesn't work. The moment those lines blur, you see how invented the sacred/profane split always was, and how much of it was only ever about power.

JD: How strongly do you believe artists should work alongside human rights movements – the LGBTIQ+ rights organisations, for instance – to keep giving visibility and representation to groups who remain marginalised, and who still do not enjoy full legal equality?

DK: Honestly, I'm not an artist who works directly with those groups or lobbies. I deeply respect the people who >>

Q Interview / *Dew Kim*

>> Continued



I Surrender, Installation Image, VSF Seoul, 2023. Photo by Siwoo Lee / OnArt Studio

do, but I don't think every artist has to contribute in the same way.

Every artist has their own place. Some fight in the streets and inside institutions; others speak through the work itself. I'm closer to the second kind. Showing which bodies get to stand on stage, and what power those bodies can hold – that's the most honest politics I know how to make. Art changes how people imagine things before the law ever catches up. Organised movements and individual work move at different speeds, in different languages, but they can head in the same direction.

JD: Do you feel well supported – by the lobby, by your community, by the international art world – to go on working with subject matter that exposes hypocrisy, not least within Christian organisations, some of which still stubbornly protect the traumatic marginalisation of people?

DK: Far more supported than when I started. The community and the international art world have clearly gathered around artists working on this material.

But let me add something. The more solidarity grows, the greater the risk that each artist's story gets flattened into a single label – “queer artist,” for example. We're fighting the same oppression, but everyone's wounds, desires and beliefs are different. I hope solidarity doesn't erase what is specific to each story. Work that exposes hypocrisy has power precisely because it isn't an abstract accusation – it's what one actual body went through.

JD: You are about to spend a year in Berlin. Why Berlin? What are your plans for your practice while you're there – what do you want to explore, and are there institutions you're excited to get to know, perhaps to work with?

DK: Because Berlin is a mecca for BDSM. I want to research that culture, and I'm genuinely excited about it – not just the clubs and dungeons, but the personal encounters and relationships that happen inside the community.

In Korea I've always been focused on producing – shows, finished work. In Berlin, I want to live a little differently – focusing on the process itself rather than chasing outcomes, and actually

experiencing and researching this culture. I'd rather spend the time learning through my own body than finishing something. Collaborations, concrete plans – I'll figure those out naturally, once I'm inside it. 🍷

As this issue goes to print, Dew Kim is entering one of his busiest stretches yet. In September he takes part in a group exhibition at the MMCA Changdong Residency in Seoul, co-curated with Latvian and

Lithuanian artists; in November his work travels to Adult Material, a fascinating new gallery in Bangkok. And in 2027 he takes up a year-long place on the Künstlerhaus Bethanien residency programme in Berlin – the very move he describes at the close of our conversation, trading the pursuit of finished shows for a year of living inside the culture he wants to understand. Wherever he lands, the divine and the profane will not be far behind.



Kiss of Chaos, 2020, Single channel video (04'18). Commissioned by MMCA, Korea

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