

Beyond What Drifts Us Apart

Organizer: **Diyalog** in cooperation with **Unfinished Art Space Malta**



Beyond What Drifts Us Apart (BWDUA) is the title of an art event curated by **Elyse Tonna** in the frame of the **Mahalla Festival 2023** taking place in November 2023 in **Malta**.

BWDUA is an interdisciplinary site-specific project which attempts to uncover the less dominant narratives associated with the environments surrounding historic coastal towers and the consequent relationships between the impacted landscapes and non-human communities in Malta.

BWDUA is a collaborative event of the Istanbul-based Mahalla Festival organized by the cultural organization **Diyalog** and Malta-based **Unfinished Art Space**, including site-specific artistic interventions, artists residencies and community-oriented activities.

The project will bring together four artists, one Maltese artist, and three international artists-in-residence. They will initiate a dialogue and facilitate an exchange of ideas regarding the post-Anthropocene era, speculative futures, ecological thinking, endangered landscapes, and non-human communities.

BWDUA in Malta 2023 is part of the **MagiC Carpets platform**, co-funded by the European Union's **Creative Europe** program. The **MagiC Carpets platform** brings together 21 European cultural organizations, coordinated by Kaunas Biennial in Lithuania, offering opportunities for emerging artists to explore little-known areas and to create, together with local communities, new works that bring to light regional particularities and traditions. The aim is to raise awareness of undervalued cultural aspects in modern society, thus facilitating intercultural access, engagement, and dialogue. The **Mahalla Festival** (Association **Diyalog**)

and **Unfinished Art Space** are two of the 21 members from twenty-one countries in Europe. **Sabine Küper-Büsch**, Artistic Director of the Mahalla Festival and Deputy General Secretary of the Association **Diyalog** is the advisor to Curator **Elyse Tonna** in the framework of the **MagiC Carpets** Network.

The context of the forthcoming project in Malta diverges from the usual sites for artistic interventions. It perceives potential in utilizing sites of historical significance with the aim of transmitting non-linear narratives corresponding with the main themes.

A post-colonial, post-Anthropocene, ecological approach is reflected through the utilization of innovative artistic practices in order to reinforce the notion of enhancing the connections between contemporary art and cultural heritage. **Unfinished Art Space** and **Diyalog** will be collaborating with Malta's National Heritage Trust, **Din l-Art Helwa**, to contextualize interventions in sites under their care. The intervention will be situated 2023 within and around the **Qalet Marku** tower in **Baħar ic-Cagħaq**.

Thematically, **BWDUA** seeks to uncover the less visible narratives associated with the environments surrounding historic (300+ year old) coastal towers and other coastal structures, and the consequent relationships that have developed and continue to develop between the impacted landscapes and non-human communities. It seeks to reconsider the dichotomies between the visible and the invisible, raising issues related to identity, extractive capitalism, and contestation of landscapes. It is approached from decolonial and post-anthropocentric perspectives and aims to investigate the intersections among climate justice, territorial defense and bio-cultural diversity preservation.

The project invites local communities in Malta to participate in contemporary arts practice. The primary artistic concept of the project is site-specific and multi-disciplinary, utilizing typical Maltese watchtowers and other Maltese locations that have not been utilized previously in an artistic manner. This approach opens up avenues for community inclusion on certain levels, including but not limited to workshops, community involvement in the process of creating art works, panels, and dialogues with the audience.

Participating artist:

- Samuel Ciantar (MT)
- Fernando P Ferreira (PT)
- Alfred Graf (AT)
- Marija Rasa Kudabaite (LT)

Istanbul/Malta, September 14th, 2023

