

**30 YEARS  
OF BIENNALE**



**THROUGH THE  
BARRICADES**

# THROUGH THE BARRICADES

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FABBRICA DEL VAPORE, MILAN

Promoted by

BJCEM, Biennale des jeunes créateurs  
de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée



Municipality of Milan



Milano

LA FABBRICA  
DEL VAPORE



With the support of the  
Creative Europe Programme  
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# FILIPPO DEL CORNO

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After *Mediterranea 17 Young Artists Biennale* “No Food’s Land”, where 300 artists were invited to reflect upon the Expo 2015 theme, *Fabbrica del Vapore*, a place eager to welcome the expression of youth creativity, pays homage to BJCEM and its thirty-year history.

“Through the Barricades” is an extraordinary retrospective going through and celebrating the history of sixteen Biennials as well as keeping track of thirty years of evolution in artistic production by younger artists.

The exhibition displays the talents that have come to light throughout this journey and highlights the important role played by BJCEM in promoting and making visible breakthrough artists.

Milan is the perfect city to host such an exhibition project, since it has always been a breeding ground for new talents, by welcoming and enhancing creativity and offering new opportunities for artistic development at the same time.

# DORA BEI

## BJCEM President

On behalf of BJCEM, gratitude is owed to the City of Milan for hosting this important exhibition, but also the European Commission, for supporting this activity through the Creative Europe Program.

The occasion for celebrating 30 years of youth creative art productions in Europe and the Mediterranean by organizing “Through the Barricades”, is not to be solely focused on the history of the Biennale per se, but it is an excellent opportunity for the continuing discussions amongst us, on the future of our BJCEM Association, the themes of urban requalification, the exchange of national dimensions, views and ideas on cultural policies related to the several cities involved, the collaborations within the Euro-Mediterranean

area being strengthened and, most importantly, a further enlargement and networking.

BJCEM has been and remains a sole pioneer in Europe in supporting and enhancing young artists, by providing a showcase for their artistic productions, but it is also a pioneer in promoting the interartistic/intercultural dialogue among young creative talents and stakeholders, a dialogue among different cultures, different national dimensions.

Our activities are carried out in a very rich geo-political, historical and cultural environment, but quite diverse at the same time. We seek to support young artists who struggle to be creative in areas of conflict, even of dan-

ger sometimes, of severe financial crisis, and this makes our responsibility even heavier. For many years now, we BJCEM members, cultural stakeholders and institutions, have been engaged in a constant dialogue, with the aim to lift barriers to the participation of the South Shore. There are complications and difficulties, not only financial ones. But, if we really seek to be fruitful in this endeavour, we must turn our focus on the enlargement and broadening of the network by including a larger number of organizations coming from the South Shore, but also organizations from the European continent.

Of course, for what concerns the aim to give artists more chances to move around, we must seek for more financial sources, via a stronger collabo-

ration with international institutions and organizations. We also need to achieve a better “equilibrium” of our national committees with other European networks. All of us, with the honour of being part of BJCEM, appreciate the fact that we are part of a highly prestigious network that, nevertheless, needs to be more visible around Europe and the Mediterranean.

The discussion is open and now it is the right time to seek for new routes, partnerships and ideas. And I strongly believe that it is the dialogue with young artists that can mainly offer the best results.

# FEDERICA CANDELARES

**BJCEM General Secretary**

2015 is an important year for the history of the Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean. Thirty years have passed since the first event, organized in Barcelona in 1985, thanks to Arci Kids, a group of young associations' leaders coming from different parts of Italy.

The idea at the base of the project was to invest in youth creativity, considering it as a real resource, a way that would allow them to express themselves and their vision of reality. Many things have changed since the 1980's, even radically, both in Europe and in the Mediterranean, but the Biennale has always been able to absorb the changes and overcome conflicts and tensions, thanks to the dedicated commitment of the people who are part of it. Consolidating the organi-

zational structure has been essential, as well as strengthening the ability to design more sustainable activities and attract resources. All of this led to the establishment of BJCEM network, an international association born in Sarajevo in July 2001, made of civil society organizations, local, regional and national authorities from the areas of Europe and the Mediterranean, based in Brussels, and with its executive office in Turin, currently located in a space provided by the City of Turin, one the founding members of BJCEM.

With the passing of time, the activities of BJCEM have considerably increased, and besides the Biennale, many artistic residencies, exhibitions (among which we can remember Gattinara Arte, Disorder, Alternative Nomadi, La Sovversione del Sensibile) and con-

ferences (Biennale 3.0, International Forum in Turin) have been sustained. BJCEM has also taken part in international contemporary art events (among which Swab, Contemporary Art Fair in Barcelona and WEYA, World Event Young Artists in Nottingham). Furthermore, it is also very important to underline its opening towards other networks: the Anna Lindh Foundation and Culture Action Europe.

In 2014, BJCEM has obtained an important multi-year support for its own activities from the Creative Europe programme of the European Union: a tangible recognition of the work carried out by the BJCEM network in the European cultural panorama. The peculiarity of the Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean is the fact that it is an important

multidisciplinary international event; a great occasion of mobility, cultural artistic comparisons and exchanges for the young creators engaged, that has often given them the opportunity to create new synergies and ideas for future inter-disciplinary collaborations.

Among all of the artists that have animated the Biennale host-cities over the years with their energy, innovation and ambition, some of them, thanks to their talents, have achieved a great and recognised success in their artistic careers. Among them, the curator Andrea Bruciati has chosen some extraordinary examples coming from the visual art sector, selecting the sixteen artists that compose this exhibition. On the other hand, the traditional multidisciplinary peculiarity of the Biennale is represented by the presentation

of the BJCEM archive, an interesting collection of documents, images, videos and music tracks telling about this thirty-year story. The works to set up the archive, with the aim to remember the history of the Biennale, the disciplines, the artists and the dedicated commitment of the network, began in 2014 with the support of the Creative Europe programme of the European Union, which also supports the exhibition being presented in this catalogue and the activities of our network.

Barcelona (1985), Thessaloniki (1986), Barcelona (1987), Bologna (1988), Marseille (1990), Valencia (1992), Lisbon (1994), Torino (1997), Roma (1999), Sarajevo (2001), Athens (2003), Napoli (2005), Puglia (2008), Skopje (2009), Thessaloniki-Roma (2011), Ancona (2013) and Milano (2015); these are the extraordinary stages of a pathway that has involved over 10,000 artists and

attracted more than 700,000 visitors. Each of these cities experienced the joyful impetus brought up by young artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, an explosion of creativity that made urban spaces, which had been abandoned in most cases, come to life again as well as injected new energy into the social fabric, leaving both tangible and intangible marks.

The Biennale is a collective effort, which involved dozens of operators from the BJCEM network, coming both from the private and the public sector, who did an incredible job in promoting, supporting and selecting young artists for the several disciplines throughout the whole Biennale. An effort that we consider as extremely necessary, especially in this complex period, in order to change the perception according to which the Mediterranean is often considered as a tragic sea, where the

hopes of those who try to escape from wars and suffering are doomed to sink. Whereas, we should remember that it is also a sea made of cultural exchanges and encounters through the peaceful language of art.

The commitment of the association for the years to come, is to work with great engagement and professionalism, increasing the opportunities for young creators to be involved in residencies, summer schools and projects, in order to promote their professional growth, so that the Biennale will be the moment where they will be able to showcase the results of these creative paths. Also, BJCEM is working to guarantee that the member countries are more and more represented inside the network, especially the countries from the Southern Side of the Mediterranean, an area that we have always considered fundamental, since the be-

ginning of our journey. A place where youth creativity has been sometimes the only shattering force in a context of conflicts. The Mediterranean area is a precious cradle and a crossroad of civilizations, in which the populations' contributions have been vital, not only for the mutual enrichment of cultures, but also at the global level.

In a globally interconnected and culturally diverse world with a constantly evolving technology, young artists are the voices of a variable and uncertain scenario in terms of identity, values and beliefs at social, political, economic and cultural level. BJCEM association truly believes in the importance of a constant dialogue with the artists, in order to detect and bring out new trends and promote new reflections, connecting art to reality, so as to become an element of transformation.

# ANDREA BRUCIATI

## Curator

“Tendencias” in 1984 in Barcelona was the first embryonic event of what would have become BJCEM during the following year. Thanks to creativity, borders started to open and a decade that was characterized by a recklessness, anarchic impulse and optimism, managed to find one of its original and structural strengths.

“Tendencias” was a horizontal glaze towards all media that were going to set up for the first time a cross-cutting platform. The need was to express the utopian desire for a new start, based on the construction of a new society through its positive and impulsive dynamics that pushed those generations to knock down any barrier.

Yet the vision, the perception of one’s self and the world as superstructural and superficial elements, immediately grabs the attention - no use to make reference to something that is

more real and genuine, deeper. The memory goes back to Kundera, who turned the ideological emptying of the world into a distressed liberation of its own freedom, as well as to Calvino according to whom, levity, speed or multiplicity were paradigms of a kind of literature that was the human condition itself. Thirty years later, once again the 1980’s exercise the influence on culture, way of thinking and arts, and it feels natural to build an ideal bridge between past and future, where the social and political issues, that shaped that cultural turmoil, have not changed but, on the contrary, have been heightened.

Today as ever, individuals float in a shapeless space, apparently comfortable, but that is actually rife with a sense of emptiness, of drifting away. We were once obscurely aware of it and nowadays has become even more disturbing, especially in consideration

of the social issues of this area. If we take a look at that time from 2015, it seems like floating on a bustle of voices, hanging in the balance between free of guilt levity and omens of drifting away. We were unaware of simultaneous clues of a radical transformation that technology was already preparing and, in a few years, the 80s would embody an existence that was doomed to cope with 21<sup>st</sup> Century virtuality on a daily basis.

In this period of time, BJCEM contributed to describe these ongoing changes and, regarding visual arts, introduced hundreds and hundreds of young authors. Some of them have become the protagonists of the current international art scene, surely not by chance.

“Through the Barricades” takes its name from a famous 1986 song by Spandau Ballet’s. The aim of the exhibition is to highlight the talents that

have stood out from visual art participations in these 16 biennials. Plus, it reaffirms the active and binding role of germinal generations, showing once again the research and experimentation-oriented spirit that the Biennale has supported in the last 30 years. IRWIN (Barcelona, 1985), Grazia Toderi, Miltos Manetas (Thessaloniki, 1986), Vanessa Beecroft, Eulalia Valldosera, Adel Abdessemed (Lisbon, 1994), Vasco Araújo, Tobias Putrih (Roma, 1999), Erzen Shkololli (Sarajevo, 2001), Mathieu K. Abonnene, Ayreen Anastas, Giorgio Andreotta Calò, Haris Epaminonda (Napoli, 2005), Damir Očko (Puglia, 2008), Didem Erk (Thessaloniki-Roma, 2011), Ayman Ramadan (Ancona, 2013) were invited to join the exhibition project as witnesses of this thirty-year adventure, since they are the very artists who have marked the changes of a recent past and critically anticipated those to come.

# 30 YEARS OF BIENNALE 1985 > 2015

**1985**

**I BIENNALE  
BARCELONA**  
La Biennal

Pascuall Maragall  
Enric Trunò

**1986**

**II BIENNALE  
THESSALONIKI**  
B'Biennale

Demetrius Salpistis

**1987**

**III BIENNALE  
BARCELONA**  
Biennal '87

Andreu Solsona

**1988**

**IV BIENNALE  
BOLOGNA**  
Biennale '88

Mauro Felicori

**1990**

**V BIENNALE  
MARSEILLE**  
Biennale '90

Patrick Ciercoles

**1992**

**VI BIENNALE  
VALENCIA**  
València 1992

José Garneria

**1994**

**VII BIENNALE  
LISBON**  
Bienal 1994

Xavier Jorge Barreto

**1997**

**VIII BIENNALE  
TORINO**  
Torino 1997

Luigi Ratalif

**1999**

**IX BIENNALE  
ROMA**  
Visioni  
di Futuro

Luca Bergamo

**2001**

**X BIENNALE  
SARAJEVO**  
Chaos and  
Communication

Ibrahim Spahić

**2003**

**XI BIENNALE  
ATHENS**  
Cosmos:  
a Sea of Art

Vivi Andreou

**2005**

**XII BIENNALE  
NAPOLI**  
Passion

Achille Bonito Oliva  
President of the  
Scientific Committee

**2008**

**XIII BIENNALE  
PUGLIA 2008**  
Kairos:  
our creative  
diversity

Antonio Princigalli

**2009**

**XIV BIENNALE  
SKOPJE**  
Seven  
Gates

Emil Mitewski

**2011**

**XV BIENNALE  
DE LA  
MEDITERRANÉE**  
THESSALONIKI -  
ROMA  
Symbiosis?

Christos Savvidis

**2013**

**XVI BIENNALE  
MEDITERRANEA**  
16  
ANCONA  
Errors  
Allowed

**2015**

**XVII BIENNALE  
MEDITERRANEA**  
17  
MILANO  
No food's  
land

Andrea Bruciati

# ADEL ABDESSEMED PRESSOIR, FAIS-LE

**Adel Abdessemed** (1971, Constantine) is an artist who lives and works in Paris and London. Since the end of the Nineties, Abdessemed has tackled the “problem areas” of our multicultural and globalised world with great intelligence.

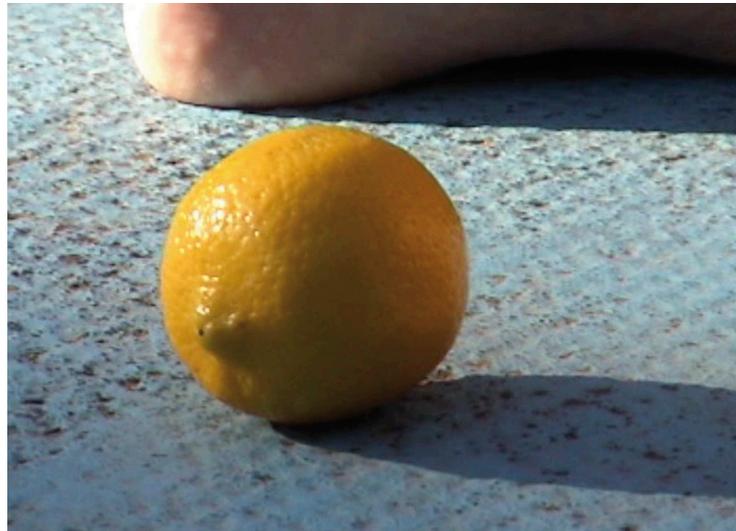
He confronts politics in a very personal way to highlight questions of morality and identity, both in the West and in the Muslim world. His work, which includes installations, videos, photography, sculpture, drawings and book-work, is always visually effective without being literal at all.

He participated in the VII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Lisbon 1994.

Adel Abdessemed declares: “We don’t need hope. What we need is truth”. And truth is what he has sententiously resolved to show us, a brutal, dire truth that places cruelty, suffering and every sort of -ism, from racism to chauvinism, at the heart of human existence.

To that end, he envisions his performances as acts, which do not merely evoke or represent violence, but enact it. The video ***Pressoir, fais-le*** (2002), surgically illustrates an image in loop that lasts only three seconds, where a bare foot in the foreground hits a lemon with its heel and makes it blow up.

The sequence shows the will to destroy a symbol of his mediterranean memory. Also the recording of the noise due to the compression evokes the litany of a broken record, imprisoned by an uncontrollable process.



*Pressoir, fais-le* 2002 Video loop Duration 4" Courtesy AGI Verona collection

# MATHIEU K. ABONNENC AN ITALIAN FILM (AFRICA ADDIO)

**Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc** (1977, Paris) is an artist who lives and works in France. He devotes his focus to the cultural hegemonies upon which the evolution of contemporary societies is based.

Through videos, photography, installations, drawings or exhibition projects, he explores the principles behind the dominant presence of pre-existing elements and events - notably those linked to imperial history and the colonies of the so-called 'developed' countries.

He participated in the XII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Napoli 2005.

*An Italian Film (Africa Addio)* is named after the famous Jacopetti and Prosperi's 1960 film, and it is the first step of a major revision project regarding past and present notions of colonialism and imperialist nostalgia, whose aim is to analyse how they were transposed and still pervade the current globalised contexts.

The artist wants to deconstruct Jacopetti & Prosperi's movie by localizing and defining where it belongs, a margin of the film industry considered as unrecoverable, and what it is, a perverse film lying in an ideological murk, to bring it back to us, eventually.

Or rather to find a point through an association thread that would connect it to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century explorers' narratives, the ethnographic films of the thirties, surrealism, and that temporarily ends with the terrible photographs of Abu Ghraib.



*An Italian Film (Africa Addio) / Première partie* cuivre 2012 HD Film colour, sound Duration 26' Production Pavillon Leeds and École des Beaux-Arts de Nantes Courtesy the Artist, Marcelle Alix, Paris

# AYREEN ANASTAS EDEN RESONATING

**Ayreen Anastas** (1968, Bethlehem) is an artist who lives and works in Brooklyn. Ayreen Anastas uses texts, films, videos, audio tracks and the Internet to create works that focus on legal and discursive shifts around differing notions of security and their subsequent effects on everyday life.

As art activists, Anastas and her long-time collaborator René Gabri, have explored issues of space, politics, language and often, Palestine.

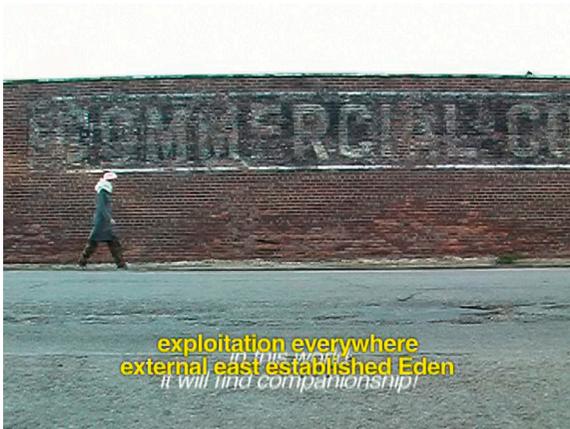
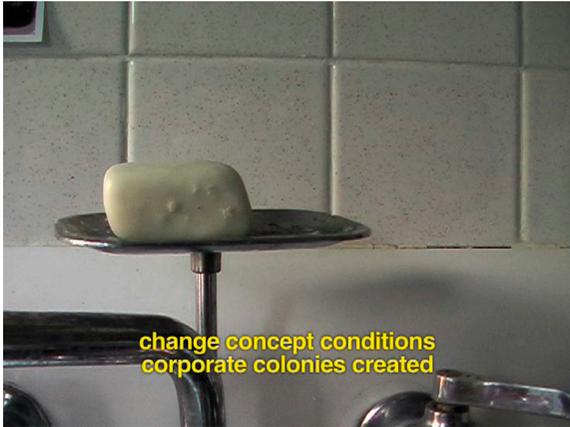
She participated in the XII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Napoli 2005.

This work emerged out of a happy accident: a chance encounter with an old tape, a song about Vienna during a time in which we had an exhibition there, and an early morning walk which called us to live up to it: we decided to shoot and edit a music video for Asmahan's song Layali al-Onns Fi Vienna, in one day in Brooklyn's Williamsburg.

It is about the relation between everyday life and the many struggles that one is confronted with, one involves oneself in. From what we eat and consume to the stories we carry with us, our displacements, movements, memories, our work and our exploitation, uneven development, gentrification, and the ominous political and ecological circumstances we find ourselves in today. One could read such a description and assume that they will be confronted with a bitter salad. But the work is far from that; its pace is gentle and its tone affirmative, attempting to defeat our cynicism to find a political force in the assumption of poetic capacity within the everyday instead.

The only dissonant strain and note of sobriety is offered by a group of Marxist hackers, who have superimposed a kind of secret subtext upon this music video, making the political stakes in our daily comings and goings explicit or manifest.

*Ayreen Anastas*



# GIORGIO ANDREOTTA CALÒ IT

**Giorgio Andreotta Calò** (1979, Venice) is an artist who lives and works in Venice and Amsterdam. Using architectural relics as his primary material - abandoned buildings, cell housing, reconstructed scenographies - the artist's productions hang in balance between participatory operations and direct architectural interventions.

His works, often set in peculiar locations, are being developed through a process that takes fragments of reality, landscape and its history, turning them into aesthetic events which endorse the spectator's sensorial involvement.

He participated in the XII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Napoli 2005.

Passion means suffering or at least this is the etymological meaning of the term. Young artists tried to represent it through suppositions and attempts. I have tried to overcome the term and its immediate meaning. Extreme sufferance is bliss. Abstraction. Light.

A friend of mine pointed out that passion in painting, as he knows it, is the passion of Christ, of Saints, of Martyrs. Painting represents all of these figures as static and this lack of motion results in an inhuman form of endurance.

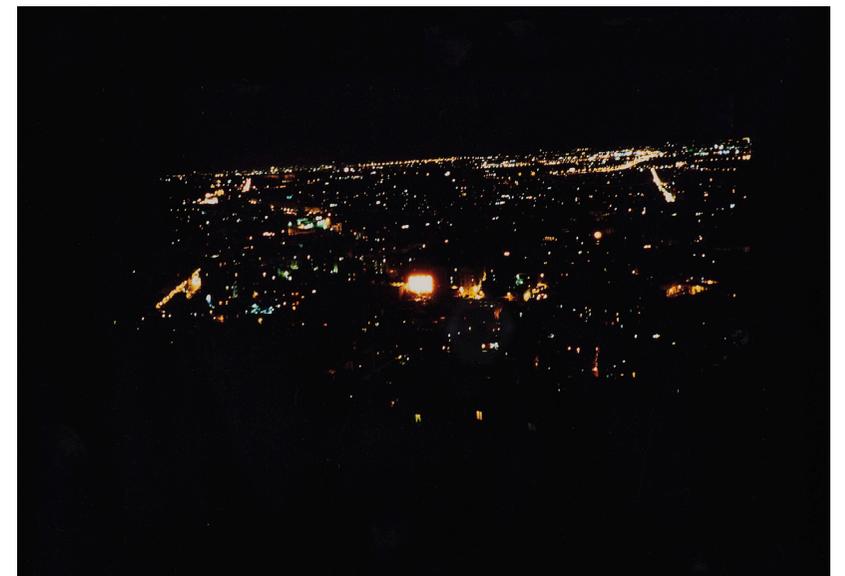
Therefore, now that I'm writing a passage to describe my work, all of a sudden I have a visual epiphany about what I want to say: an abandoned and neglected building which sheds light from the inside, vibrating with new life. Inexplicably, uncannily, miraculously.

*Giorgio Andreotta Calò*



*Dal Tramonto all'Alba* 2006 C-print on aluminium 16x26,5 cm  
*IT* 2005 C-print on aluminium 28,5x39,5 cm

Courtesy the Artist, Galleria Zero, Milano, Private collection, Modena



# VASCO ARAÚJO VULCANO

**Vasco Araújo** (1975, Lisbon) lives and works in Lisbon. He works with a variety of media, including videos, installations and photographs, to explore ideas based on the concepts of community and marginality. Gestures of seduction, cultural stereotypes, political characteristics as well as sexual identities have all been the focus of his work.

It has been described as Baroque in its literary, historical and art historical references and he draws the viewer into looking at society, providing both honest and artificial reflections.

He participated in the IX Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Roma 1999.

*Vulcano* is the observation of the human being in its psychological aspect. In this sense, I am interested in seeing how people become afraid of change and how they deal with this transformation.

We have always realised that we cannot change anything within ourselves. We can move from our house and the more we change everything around us the less we own. The volcano provided me with a metaphor of the issue of change in humans. At first, a change or transformation seems a terrible thing - it destroys a lot - but then it is always for the better.

In this specific video, the volcano that appears in several paintings, that are reproductions of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Italian paintings, is the Vesuvius.

*Vasco Araújo*



**Vulcano** 2012 **Video** 16/9 **Duration** 17'04" **Voice** Francesco Troisi **Paintings** João Fitas **Text** Vasco Araújo  
**Courtesy** the Artist **Music** Symphony N°2 "Copernican, Op. 31"; Already it is dusk (String Quartet N° 1) Op. 62;  
Quasi una fantasia (String Quartet N°2) Op. 64; ... Sing are sung (String Quartet N°3) Op. 67 de/by Henryk Mikolaj  
Górecki **Variable dimensions**

# VANESSA BEECROFT GREEN LEGS

**Vanessa Beecroft** (1969, Genoa) is an Italian contemporary artist living in Los Angeles. She uses a unique, personal, artistic language. Her work is a complex fusion of conceptual issues and aesthetic concerns, focusing on large-scale art performances, usually involving live female models, often nude.

The videos being recorded as well as the photos being taken during her performances are then exhibited as a documentation of the very performances, but also as separate works of art. Beecroft's work is deceptively simple in its execution, raising questions around identity, politics and voyeurism within the complex relationship existing between viewer, model and context.

She participated in the VII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Lisbon 1994.

In 1993, during her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera (Milan), Vanessa Beecroft was invited to take part in a collective exhibition at the Inga Pin Gallery in Milan.

In the middle of the room she presented *The book of Food*, a typewritten document where the artist listed all the food items she ingested, specifying their quantity and colours, and hanged up drawings and watercolours on the wall, coloured stylised illustrations of girls with eating issues. Her first performance, *BVI*, took place during the exhibition, and young girls and students from the Academy of Brera starred in it.

*Green Legs* (1994) is an interesting example of Vanessa Beecroft's painting and figurative production, which is at the base of her artistic research. The artist stated: "I thought that if I eat green, I will become green. So, for a long time, I ate only green food. And then orange food. And I was looking to my skin to become more green if I ate spinach, or orange if I ate carrots. I was trying to colour myself like in my drawings. I wanted my skin to be transparent, and the colours underneath orange and green and red."



*Green Legs* 1994 Acrylic on canvas 150x100x2 cm Courtesy Giovanni Milesi collection

# HARIS EPAMINONDA COLLAGE #13

**Haris Epaminonda** (1980, Nicosia), often uses existing materials such as photographs sourced from books and found objects, sculpture, text and collage, assembled and combined with structures and supports she has designed herself.

Her installations conjure up visual puzzles that suggest a multitude of meanings. Her language often tends to abstraction, evoking mysterious atmospheres that defy precise classification. Many of her shows surprise the viewer with the fragmentary way that scattered, rhythmic units are reassembled into something only at the end of the exhibition. Everything is on the borders, at the edges, hidden in the corners, suspended... until, as one proceeds, the space redefines and reshapes itself, like the syllables of a phrase being gradually revealed.

She participated in the XII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Napoli 2005.

Through this artistic installation Haris Epaminonda introduces and summarizes the *topoi* of her artistic language: the fluidity of materials, the monument, the relation between architecture/structure and the theatrical *mise-en-scène*, landscape, animals.

The artist works with found images from the past: sometimes faded travel photographs, or pages of old nature magazines, ethnographic artifacts or footage from forgotten television programmes. A vocabulary of objects and images allowing to represent the notions of space and time, as an archaeologist of the imaginary, as a researcher of possible meanings which surround things and situations.

Men, women, animals and objects move around and interact in the movie, in an atmosphere dense of mysticism. Their actions and ritual gestures are full of a multiplicity of possible interpretations, emphasized by their slowness or the fluid movements of the camera.



**Collage #12** 2014 Paper collage 33x24 cm Framed

**Collage #13** 2014 Paper collage 33x24 cm Framed

**Untitled #05** t e 2013 Iron plate 27x18x20 cm Plinth 120x34,5x25 cm

**Untitled #11** t f 2014 Metal structure 60,3x23 cm

Courtesy the Artist, Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia **Ph Credit** Bloomlab.it

# DIDEM ERK NEITHER INSIDE NOR OUTSIDE

**Didem Erk** (1986, Istanbul) is an artist who lives and works in Istanbul. She works with texts, videos, found objects, performances, site-specific and performative installations to explore how the notions of border, memory, forgetfulness, knowledge and the writing and poetic aspects of language and literature relate to the multiple meanings of a place.

Her research investigates the contingency and fictional quality of memories related to the performance and the knowledge and the performative quality of all remembering.

She participated in the XV Biennale de la Méditerranée, Thessaloniki-Roma 2011.

*Neither inside nor outside* is installed on the floor with a red flag in the background and a class compass that was once used on black boards. The white chalk of the drawing compass attempts to draw an incomplete circle, thus leaving a white temporary trace on the red floor.

The work is a site-specific installation, which refers to the impossibility of representation by drawing a border around unseen violence. The work is closely connected to its humble ephemerality and it is located as not to be looked at.

*Neither inside nor outside* invites visitors to leave their footmarks on it, as to say, the marks of the white chalk. Its performativity leads to the destruction of the piece at the end of the exhibition.



*Neither inside nor outside* 2015 Installation 150x225 cm Courtesy the Artist

# IRWIN FIRST DECADE

The **IRWIN** group was founded in Ljubljana (Slovenia). Its members are Dusan Mandic, Miran Mohar, Andrej Savski, Roman Uranjek and Borut Vogelnik. IRWIN is committed to the so-called “retro-principle” which is “not a style or an art trend but a principle of thought, a way of behaving and acting”.

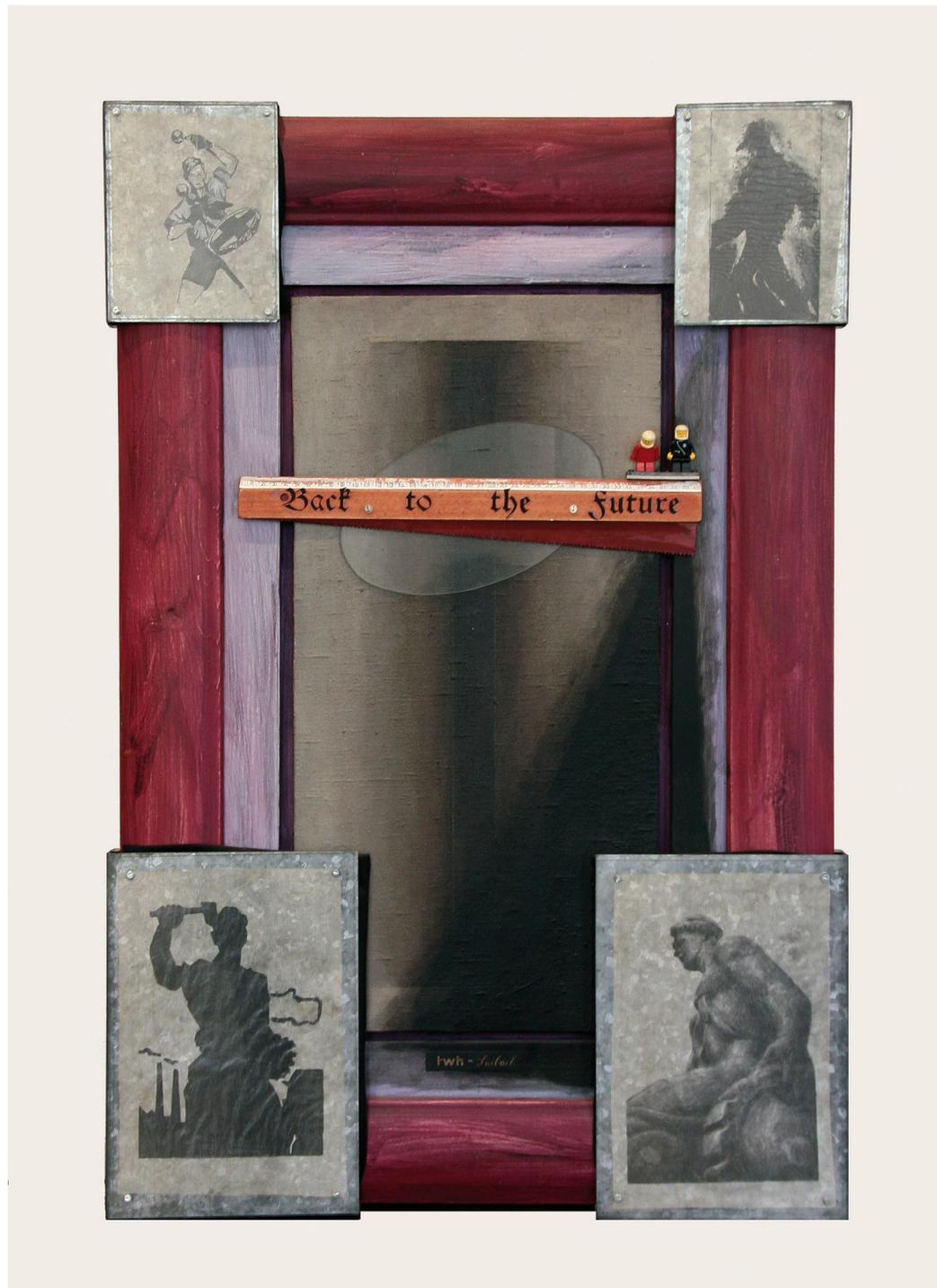
Following the creation of a specific visual language in their predominantly painterly projects of the 1980s, the group has been concentrating since the 1990s on a critical examination of the art history of “Western Modernism”, countering it with the “retro-avant-garde” of a fictive “Eastern Modernism” which, in its own obvious artificiality, points to the artificiality of the historical structure of Western art that continues to exclude contemporary Eastern European art to this day.

They participated in the I Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Barcelona 1985.

IRWIN works by means of a complex and subtle process with connections between art and ideology. Their work brings together art historical references, such as Romanticism, Modernism or Malevich's Suprematism, with symbols taken either from religion or totalitarian political systems, for example the Nazi era or Soviet social realism.

IRWIN has built a complex system of cross-references over time, linking their works to those by other artists. The starting point for IRWIN is that different symbols have different meanings depending on place and time. In order to examine and discover the meaning and function of a symbol, IRWIN starts working with a method or process they have developed themselves, the retro principle.

According to this method, one needs to investigate the origin of a symbol to understand its meaning and function. A reconstruction of the meaning of the symbol implies a retrospective change of that very symbol, through the fact that IRWIN juxtaposes and conveys symbols into new contexts.



**First decade** 1993 Oil acrylic, wood, silk screen, glass, Lego figurine 98x65x10 cm Courtesy the Artist, Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin

# MILTOS MANETAS UNTITLED (CABLES)

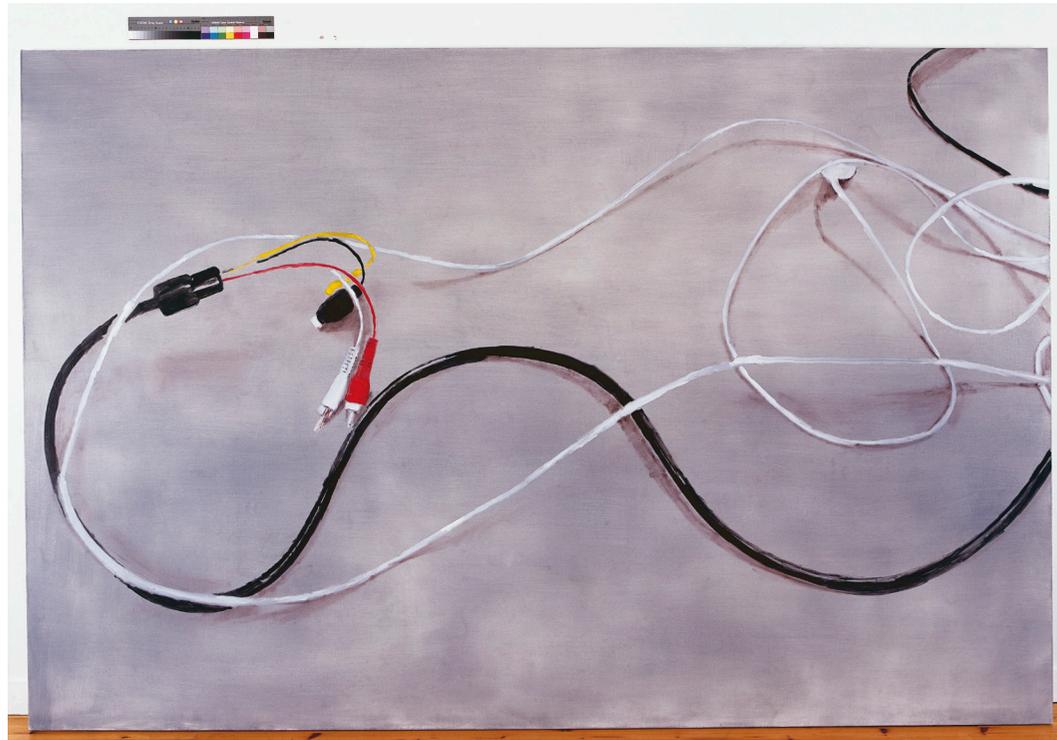
**Miltos Manetas** (1964, Athens) is a Greek-born painter, a conceptual artist and a theorist whose work explores the representation and the aesthetics of the information society. His works include paintings of cables, computers, video games and Internet websites.

He is the founder of the Internet-based art movement NEEN, and in 2009, together with the curator Jan Aman, he has created the Internet Pavilion for the Venice Biennale. According to Lev Manovich, Manetas' work can be placed within a well-established tradition in modern painting (representing modern people in their particular modern settings).

He participated in the II Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Thessaloniki 1986.

*Untitled (Cables) XI* and *Untitled (Cables) XIII*, (2008) belong to the painting series that the artist started in 1996 with the *Selected Objects* exhibition at the Consortium Centre d'Art Contemporain of Dijon, concerning the representation of specific connection cables, peripherals, computers, digital cameras and video game consoles.

Miltos Manetas depicts items typical of the hi-tech society and electronic devices, decontextualizing these objects from their everyday-life setting to include them into an abstract painting universe.



**Untitled (Cables) XI; Untitled (Cables) XIII** 2008 Oil on linen 288x190 cm each Courtesy the Artist

# DAMIR OČKO TK (PAUSE SCORES)

**Damir Očko** (1977, Zagreb) is an artist who lives and works in Zagreb. The space in which Damir Očko's artistic practice unfolds is a space of junction between the poetical and political spheres. The questions raised by the human body and the exploration of the physical dimension of the very body as a social or political subject, have been the core of his recent production.

His works intertwine elements that rightly and poetically translate the social constraints imposed to our bodies, evoking moments of passage and transition zones.

He participated in the XIII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Puglia 2008.

***TK (Pause scores)*** is a work of art inspired by an eight-part poem wrote in 2014 and it is structured on several semantic levels with a movie as its fulcrum, in which the interest for the body language is connected to the socio-political context, seen as a "physical presence". The artwork is a polyptych in which the poetic text, which practically replaces the storyboard of the movie, is transcribed and associated to specific graphic signs that emphasise its meaning.

With a clear reference to the popular 1960s practice substituting the conventional musical language with signs and colours, which visually emulated the harmonic structure, Damir Očko, gathered together a corpus of visual elements to represent the meanings of the words.

Očko hides the boundaries between words, sound and sign, by carrying out a multilayer research where visual references to a number of artists from the past flow into a strongly coherent experience in terms of formality and contents, placing the interest for the body and the way it interacts with the socio-political context, seen as "physical presence", at the core of the artist's practice. The title of the artwork, *TK*, is an onomatopoeic description of the sound produced by a stone hitting the ground, but also by teeth biting.

TK1

In morning  
we praise  
the Sun  
In the name of  
the rotation and the return  
In the name of  
*"honey, did you put the sweetener in my coffee"*  
*"I never drink my coffee black and bitter"*  
*"honey, it is bitter"*  
The world is black and bitter,  
but about to be stirred with a spoon  
In the name of the returnable Sun  
And the metal spoon that clings  
until the evening returns  
Withdrawn  
as the glow of two red rubies  
blinking in the deep



**TK (Pause scores)** 2014 Print on archival paper, 8 elements 48x33 cm each Courtesy Galleria Tiziana Di Caro, Napoli

# TOBIAS PUTRIH SPOGLIANDO UN VICINO (VARIAZIONE 2)

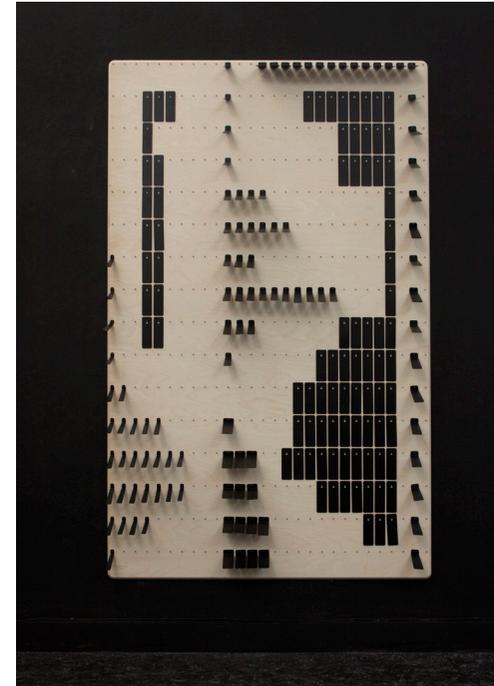
**Tobias Putrih** (1972, Kranj) is an artist who lives and works in Cambridge and Ljubljana. He engages particularly utopian and visionary concepts of architecture and design in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century avant-gardes, through a range of conceptual and materially ephemeral projects.

He designs makeshift architectural modifications of public spaces - cinemas, a library, galleries, and a university common - by constructing temporary environments out of paper, cardboard, plywood, monofilament and light.

He participated in the IX Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Roma 1999.

The art installation *Spogliando un vicino (variazione 2)* was conceived in parallel with the artist's transfer to Cambridge, Massachusetts. Looking out from a living room window in his new house, Putrih was fascinated by the naïf playfulness of the wooden upholstery of the nearby house and by the way this diaphragm, beyond the obvious function of protecting privacy inside the building, captured his attention and delighted his eyes with a curious alternation of corners and curved surfaces.

Through a sculpture and a wall panel, the artwork displays a game of suppositions organized according to a combinatory model, which makes the relationship between volume and surface more fluid through the act of undressing (despoiling).



*Spogliando un vicino (variazione 2)* 2011 Glazed aluminium, nails, lambda print, plywood Variable dimensions Courtesy Pinksummer, Genova

# AYMAN RAMADAN HIJAB

**Ayman Ramadan** (1980, Sharkia) is an Egyptian artist who lives and works in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and Cairo, Egypt. He grew up in a small village in the district of Sharqiya, 50 kilometres outside of Cairo and his artworks are inspired by the popular, urban, street culture, the practices of everyday life and Islamic traditions.

He combines different media, such as video, photos and objects to create installations that attempt to make visible what so often becomes an overlooked or taken-for-granted element of the urban fabric.

He participated in the XVI Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, *Mediterranea 16*, Ancona 2013.

In 1996 the artist left his home village to move to Cairo to find a job. In order to protect him, his mother sewed a hijab for him, a small bag containing protective verses to be carried on the body.

Every time the artist visited his mother she gave him a new hijab, so far 850, thus creating an important link between the artist and his family and roots.



*Hijab* 2012 Video Sound Duration 2'47" Courtesy the Artist

# ERZEN SHKOLOLLI BEAUTIFUL WAY

**Erzen Shkolli** (1976, Pejë) is an artist who lives and works in Prishtina and Berlin. He has been one of the eminent members of Kosovo's new art scene.

Internationally acclaimed, he has also been an active mediator and organizer of the inter-cultural and intra-cultural dialogue between Kosovo and the world, as well as within the Kosovo art scene. Shkolli is experienced in managing art and cultural projects, since his first-hand experience was supplemented by professional seminars and residencies in the field of cultural management.

He participated in the X Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Sarajevo 2001.

Shkolli's art practice utilizes local rituals and folklore to draw the viewer's attention to socio-political issues, as in *Beautiful Way*.

At first glance, his work might remind of simple ready-mades taken from these traditions: the choice of the object doesn't result from an emotive indifference, but from the exact opposite. It is originated by a deep involvement with the story of a population that mourns their deads, like anyone else, but that has even been forced to bury a good number of martyrs, in the last few years.

Through his work, Shkolli acts as a sort of instinctive and biased anthropologist, re-enacting traditional ceremonies, while insinuating contemporary symbols and disillusion. This interplay between past and present typifies a certain generation of art practices throughout the Balkans, placing Shkolli within this broad cultural context.



**Beautiful Way** 2001 Installation, embroidery, fabric, concrete 120x18x200 cm Courtesy Claudio Poleschi  
Arte Contemporanea, Lucca

# GRAZIA TODERI ROSSO BABELE

**Grazia Toderi** (1963, Padua) is an artist who lives and works between Milan and Turin. The artist first gained critical attention in part as a result of her participation in *Aperto '93* at the 45<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, where she exhibited, in addition to photographs, the video *Nontiscordardime*.

Toderi tends to make detached recordings of actions that often unfold in an everyday environment, and her deliberately elementary use of video as an expressive means emphasizes her desire to concentrate on the subject and the action taking place, distancing herself from pure and simple creative will.

She participated in the II Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Thessaloniki 1986.

In *Rosso Babele*, the allegory of the great city, the metropolis, is confronted with the biblical inter-text of the Tower of Babel. (...) Ancient cities now condensate in the globalized metropolis where languages and peoples mix.

Red, in the artist's words, is 'the indefinite and artificial red of contemporary cities illuminated by sodium vapour lamps'. There is, however, a measure of irony in this red that is semantically affiliated with other inter-texts of utopian revolutions, which in their invisibility have also become the globalized city.

There is a measure of monstrosity in this image of Babel, where the fantastical is unabashedly present in the effect of erupting light from whence emerges the allegorized tower. (...) This Red Babel accentuates such paradigm by the phantasmagoria in which it forms out of the formless that constitutes the metropolis' fabric of light. The tower is configured as a volcano of iridescent lava, at once primitive and future in its grandiosity. (...)

*Joao Fernandes in Grazia Toderi Edizioni Serralves, Porto 2010*



*Rosso Babele* 2006 Photographic print 250x180 cm Courtesy the Artist, Galleria Giò Marconi, Milano

# EULALIA VALLDOSERA MATERNIDAD

**Eulalia Valldosera** (1963, Vilafranca del Penedès) is an artist who lives and works in Barcelona. Eulalia Valldosera's works range freely from photography to performance, installation and video. Aiming to bridge the gap between art and everyday life, in her works conceived as scenographies to be completed by the presence of the audience, the duality expressed by light in opposition to darkness has subtly extended to the moral field using the metaphor of cleaning as a way to explore the notions of identity, love and illness.

Her investigation on the relationship we establish with our objects and belongings focuses on interpersonal relations and the roles that women play within the family and society, and allows her to create situations where spectators abandon their normally passive roles to play an active part in her installations.

She participated in the VII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Lisbon 1994.

In *Maternidad* (2010), the duality, expressed by the light in comparison with the darkness, is extended thinly to a moral field, using the maternity metaphor as a method of exploration of the notions of identity, love, sex and illness.

Her research is focused on the interpersonal relations and on the role of woman in family and society.

The artist investigates the historical, social, cultural and anthropological roots that, during the centuries, have influenced both the definition of social roles and their collective perception.



*Maternidad* 2010 B/W, giclée prints on cotton paper 22.5x40 cm each Courtesy the Artist, Laura Bulian Gallery, Milano

**BJCEM  
WOULD  
LIKE TO  
THANK**

**ALL THE ARTISTS**

**ALL THE MEMBERS  
AND PARTNERS**

**THE PRESIDENTS AND  
GENERAL SECRETARIES**

**ALL THE CURATORS**

**ALL THE ARTISTIC  
DIRECTORS**

**ALL THE DONORS  
AND SUPPORTERS**

**ALL THE GALLERIES  
AND COLLECTORS**

**THAT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED  
IN THESE 30 YEARS**

**AND ALL THE PEOPLE THAT  
WORKED HARD MAKING  
POSSIBLE TO CONTINUE  
THIS AMAZING ADVENTURE  
UNTIL TODAY**

**“BJCEM  
CHALLENGE:**

**YOUNG ARTISTS’  
RESPONSE TO  
THE CHAOS AND  
COMMUNICATION  
OF THE MEDITERRANEAN”**

**Ibrahim Spahić**

BJCEM President 2001-2007

**“THE BIENNALE HAS BEEN A POINT OF REFERENCE, A SPRINGBOARD, BUT ABOVE ALL AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE LIFE OF THOUSANDS OF EMERGING ARTISTS THAT HAVE ACQUIRED AWARENESS ON THE ROLE OF THE ARTISTIC CREATION IN THEIR LIFE.**

**THE MEDITERRANEAN AS A PLACE OF MEETINGS AND DIALOGUE, THE ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AS A TOOL OF THIS ENCOUNTER, HAS MARKED AND STRENGTHENED A MESSAGE OF HOPE AND PEACE FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL OF US”**

**Alessandro Stillo**

BJCEM General Secretary 2001-2010

**“IDEAS AND PROJECTS OF YOUNG ARTISTS HAVE BUILT BRIDGES AND RELATIONSHIP DURING THE THIRTY YEARS OF BIENNALE.**

**THEY HAVE PROVED THAT THERE COULD BE A MEDITERRANEAN OF BEAUTY AND PEACE.**

**WE DEEPLY BELIEVED IN IT AND WE STILL BELIEVE IT”**

**Luigi Ratclif**

BJCEM President 2007-2012

**“THAT IDEA OF ENCOUNTER  
AND EXCHANGE IN IT.**

**OUR HISTORY TRANSMITTED  
ORALLY THROUGH LOOKS.**

**OUR LANDS THAT KEEP ON  
LOOKING FOR EACH OTHER.**

**THE MEDITERRANEAN  
INSIDE THE BIENNALE  
AND FLOWING OUT OF IT.**

**AN IDEA THAT LOOKS  
FOR RENEWAL BEYOND  
THE BORDERS THAT WE  
HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED  
TO OVERCOME”**

**Emiliano Paoletti**

BJCEM General Secretary 2010-2014

**“ACTION!**

**BJCEM:  
MEETINGS  
OPPORTUNITIES  
PROJECTS  
FRIENDSHIP  
COMMITMENT  
CONTINUITY**

**THAT WILL  
BE FOREVER.**

**I LOVE BJCEM!”**

**Krista Mikkola**

BJCEM President 2012-2014

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The texts in the catalogue that go along with the authors, unless otherwise specified, come from samples taken from interviews and documents published on the web. Once again we thank all of those (Atp diary; Collezione da Tiffany; Artnet; The Guardian) who have contributed to a better understanding and to the promotion of the artists involved.

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