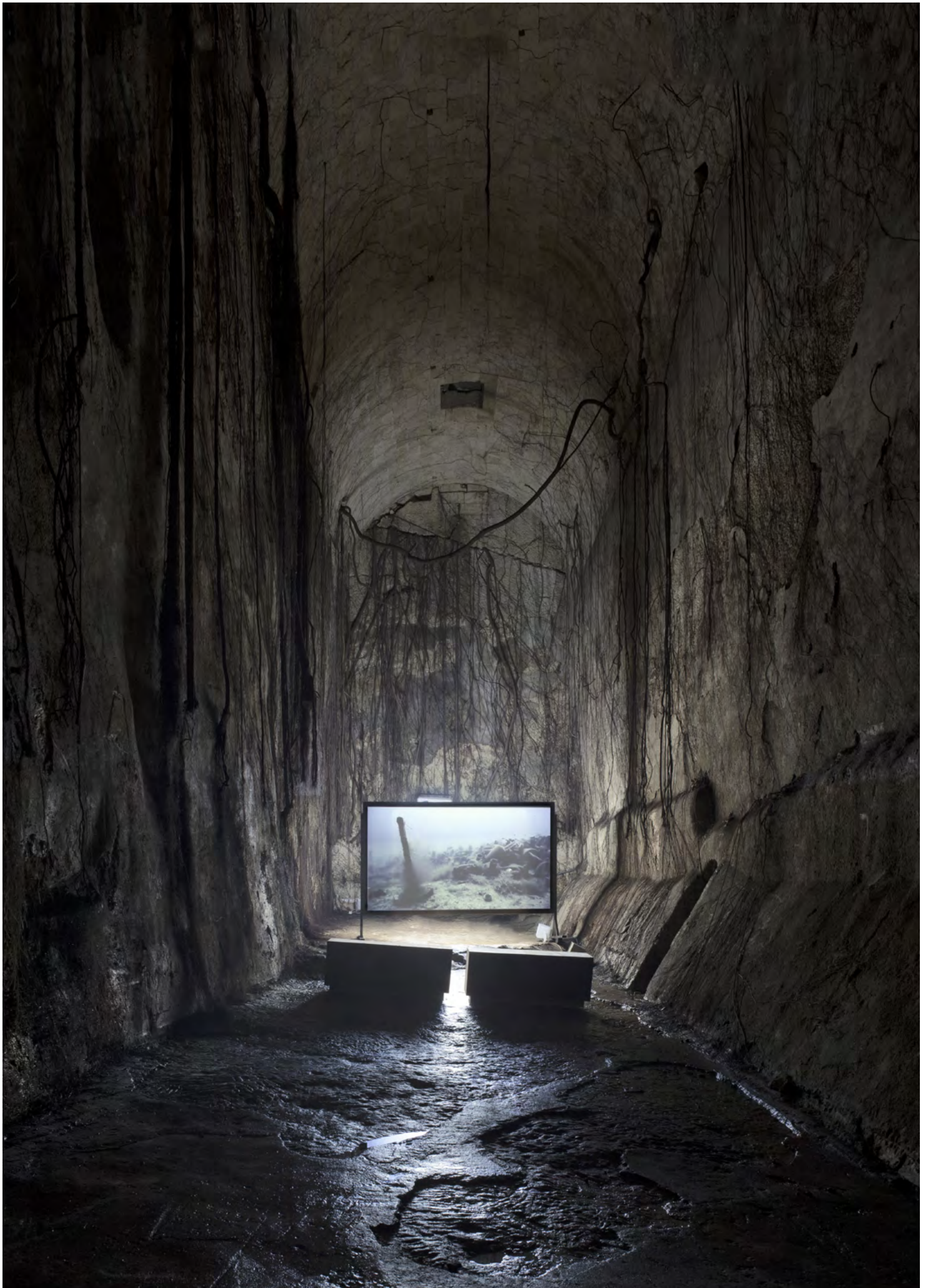


# MALTA BIENNALE 2024

Insulaphilia set out to examine the Mediterranean from an insular perspective; being surrounded by sea drastically alters one's vantage point and response. Through insular thinking, it becomes evident that the Mediterranean basin has two shores — it is both Southern Europe and Northern Africa, a meeting of Orient and Occident, a confluence of East and West.





Far from being something pure, the island is always a principle of composition and invention. An island is the ideal location for the forging of relationships: one departs, one arrives. It beckons one to traverse the surrounding sea, to touch other lands. Exhibition—the act of being outside of oneself—constitutes the truth of the island (Jean-Luc Nancy, *Thinking the Present*, Cuec, 2010).

Here, the island presents itself as the origin of a new political conception; the island must be conceived not as a buffer between the interloper and its inhabitants, but intimately woven with the presence of so-called outsiders. If utopia can still be spoken of today, this is the desire – to centralise the position of the islands, in order to transform the political discourse.

Location is the immediate identifier of any isolated land mass; Malta's maritime lore dates back centuries, and its crucial role throughout history has been as a strategic crossroads in the Mediterranean. Malta is adept at transformation, as a crossing of arrival and departure; as a nation-state, the Maltese identity emerges from centuries of colonisation. Indelibly linked to the various seafaring cultures that have dominated and declined through the region, Malta's natural harbours have provided shelter, refuge and trading outposts to all who sought to settle, conquer, and reign - the Phoenicians, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Arabs, the Normans, the Order of St. John, the French, and the British.



Camilla Alberti  
Anna Anderegg  
Teresa Antignani  
Jean-Marie Appriou  
Rosa Barba  
Simon Benjamin  
Laura Besançon  
Aaron Bezzina  
Rebecca Bonaci  
Josian Bonello  
Isabelle Borg  
Claude Borg, Maria Borg,  
Sumaya Ben Saad, Rebecca Mifsud  
Amy Bravo  
Tania Bruguera  
Siwani Buhlebezwe  
Teresa Busuttil  
Anna Calleja  
Austin Camilleri  
Edson Chagas  
Mel Chin  
Leo Chircop  
Joseph Cochran II  
Andrea Conte (Andreco)  
Gaia De Megni  
Mònica de Miranda  
Adama Delphine Fawundu  
Zehra Doğan  
Dolphin Club  
Madeleine Fenwick  
Andrea Ferrero  
Martina Georgina, Romeo Roxman Gatt  
Nina Gerada  
Goldschmied & Chiari  
Bettina Hutschek

Anne Immelé  
Daniel Jablonski  
Barbara Kapusta  
Dew Kim  
Konstantina Krikzoni  
Wioletta Kulewska Akyel  
Sara Leghissa  
Luz Lizarazo  
Edson Luli  
Basim Magdy  
Guadalupe Maravilla  
Jermay Michael Gabriel  
Karyn Olivier  
Zazzaro Otto  
Adrian Paci  
Post Disaster  
Dijana Protić  
Laure Prouvost  
Keit Bonnici, Neils Plotard  
Agnes Questionmark  
Anna Raimondo  
Pedro Reyes - Artist Against Bomb  
Republic of the Suez Canal  
Paul Sammut  
Zineb Sedira  
Giuditta Vendrame, Ana Shametaj  
Anthony Spagnol  
Franziska Von Stenglin  
Tom Van Malderen  
Fabrizio Vatiéri  
Raphael Vella  
Matteo Vettorello  
Cecilia Vicuna  
Sandra Zaffarese

















Malta boasts seven-thousand-two-hundred-and-twenty-three years of civilisation. To envision the first edition of the biennale in such an ancient land necessitated working in tandem with its history. Thanks to Heritage Malta and the partnership with UNESCO - World International Heritage palaces, neolithic sites, underground passageways, forts and buildings of geopolitical importance, some of which had never been visited by the general public, as well as public spaces, were identified, upgraded and transformed into dynamic sites of convergence.

The Main Exhibition and the National/ Thematic Pavilions took shape primarily within the island's most illustrious and evocative sites. The capital Valletta, the majestic palaces in the harbour town of Birgu, the megalithic temples of Ħaġar Qim and the citadel in Gozo, mapped out a biennale disseminated within the urban fabric.

These sites are not mere locations for intervention; no urban environment, let alone cultural treasure steeped in history, is ever neutral and silent. Psychogeographic thought teaches us about the continual influence that landscape has on our psyche; 72 contemporary artists were called to exhibit in these venues, inviting them to rebuild an intimate relationship with these locations. Common assets, including cultural treasures, exist only if there is a community of inhabitants exercising their fundamental rights through them.

The public good is always the product of these relations. To envision new possible futures for the Mediterranean region, we must rekindle our affection for the places that constitute our history and diverse cultural identity. The insular thinking underlying the biennale hoped to defuse the postcard-like imagery of the Mediterranean, standing against extractive tourism that desires only what belongs to the other—their sea, their beaches and their palm trees (with a round-trip ticket in their pocket).

This narrative is only possible alongside the vision of artists who, tireless in their efforts, were able to chronicle a sea that unites in the face of historical fractures—those forces that extract-exploit-instrumentalise Mare Nostrum. Public space was investigated in the conflicting nature of the planning of underlying memories in the political contingencies that have traversed the Euro-Mediterranean geographic and social territory, marking and marching militarised borders and territories.

Recognising hybridity is crucial. Malta is not one but many—multicultural, multiracial, multilingual. People sing in different languages, just as they think and dream in different languages. This is what positions Malta and its archipelago as an ideal observatory for examining prevalent aspects of Mediterranean culture.

The Biennale established a participatory configuration of invisible networks across the Mediterranean connecting the East to the West and the North to the South, stimulating exchange, vision and unwavering trust in individual and collective transformation, proposing a regional expedition into the possibility of harmonious coexistence.











The Public Program aimed to connect with various non-sector groups within the local communities, always seeking to broaden ties and connect the artists and their work to their audiences in a direct, impactful manner, working with local educators. To this end, we designed 106 events in the Public Program, emphasizing the educational and pedagogical nature of the event. These events were targeted at different audience types, working with local educators, early childhood schools, elderly communities, local university students (MCAST), and European and international students. We organized ad hoc activities for children on weekends and created bilateral educational exchange projects, such as “Rethinking Lampedusa, Rethinking Malta,” involving various higher education institutions, two European countries, and a traveling project. We collaborated with Maltese and international institutions, such as ACCLA, Alien Montesein, Art Explora, Art Workers Italia, Biennale de Photographie Mulhouse, Biennale Sur, Mirjana Batinić, Marie Briguglio, Andrew Borg Wirth, Valentina Buzzi, Rafram Chaddad, Vanessa Ciantar, Cinema Spazju Kreattiv, Centru T'bexbix, Epicure, Timmy Gambin, Liam Gauci, Marcia Grima, Image Threads, Karmagenn, Franco La Cecla, Larnaca Biennale, MADE Program, MCAST, Parasite, Rethinking Lampedusa, Rivoluzione delle Seppie, Ritmu Roots Music Festival, Virgilio Sieni, Žugraga, Michael Taussig, Tarzna, Tetuhi, The School of Winds and Waves, UNESCO - WHIPIC, Sam Vassallo, Orientale University.







Download the Press Coverage of Malta Biennale [HERE](#)

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