

# WITHOUT BORDERS



## Sound, reading and a fishing line

Words by **Giuliana Barbaro-Sant**

**Q**uintessence is best described as an immersive experience that wraps the audience in an alluring world of sound, created through the use of sampling and live electronic manipulation, a large suspended metal sheet, a fishing line, vocal phrases, and a sculptural array of found objects and acoustic instruments.

This is Maltese experimental electronic artiste and performer Renzo Spiteri's new solo performance *Quintessence* and which recently premiered at The Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester (UK) in partnership with Future Everything Festival 2015.

*Quintessence* is at the forefront of artistic experiments in a digital age storytelling technique that brings audiences together to discover and experience the meeting point between live performer, sound art, story, music, and digital technology. It is a piece that challenges the audience to reconsider what sound can mean and how the boundaries of self and world, performer and spectator, organic and inorganic, sound and instrument are rendered fluid and all-encompassing.

In close collaboration with Spiteri, writer and researcher Giuliana Fenech drew upon studies of sound and auditory culture to complement what the visual can do, in certain instances superseding it, in order to challenge audience perceptions about a straightforward interpretation. In a performative reading that is delivered after the show, she provokes the audience to rethink the piece, revisiting the multiple journeys that are embedded within its story.

*Quintessence* traces its roots to an artistic collaboration with the Royal Conservatoire of Music of The Hague (The Netherlands) in September 2012, when Spiteri co-led workshops. Part of the output of these creative sessions resulted in the vocal phrases, featured in *Quintessence*, by Leah Uijterlinde and Egle Petrošiūtė, former students at the conservatoire. 

*Quintessence* is presented by Open Works Lab and will be performed at Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta, between 29 and 31 January 2016. Tickets are available at: <https://ticketengine.sjcv.org/?eventname=Quintessence>