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The Malta

artpaper. No.1

+

LISA GWEN BALDACCHINO

V-(B)-18

Eighteen: that's how many years it is since Malta was last represented at the largest art fair in the world: nine editions in Biennale years.

What most articles fail to mention, however, is that despite the long hiatus Malta has only ever participated on this platform on two previous occasions - once in the 1960s and then the last time was in 1999.

It's true that, over the past few years, Malta hasn't been completely absent from the scene, mainly through the participation in the Architecture Biennale, thanks to Architecture Project's presence for two years running and preceding that, in 2013, Raphael Vella - half of the duo curating this year's Homo Melitensis project - also participated in one of the collateral events in the Art Biennale. Pg. 29 >>

Rise in the City 35

What do 76 artists from around the world, who are conscientious about the world, have in common? They are all participating in the first Rise in The City event - an international art event to inspire change! Pg. 35 >>

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Vitra

The art scene in Malta is starting to take shape – or at least is more receptive and free. We are delighted to have a pavilion at The Venice Biennale this year – after 18 years trying to make it happen again, and Malta will be an EU Capital of Culture in 2018, along with Leeuwarden (Netherlands) – something we trust Malta will live up to.

However, being the tiny island that it is, in the middle of the Mediterranean, means that Malta will always have its limitations. So, it is only natural that I had the idea of creating a publication to honour Maltese talent in Malta and abroad, and to document the efforts being made by its residents. Artpaper will

also present international artists, art-related news, reviews of exhibitions and other relevant art market information.

Artpaper has been created with everyone in mind – to essentially change the scary, three-letter word that 'art' is to some and bring it down to earth, where it belongs, and high up above the clouds on a golden pedestal for the art addicts! It can be anything and anywhere and mean something different to each one of us. This publication reflects the Artpaper team's creative journey, and it will grow.

Written by artists, architects, students, art professionals and ambassadors, Artpaper is for those who appreciate – and others like us who thrive on – creativity and innovation. We are ambitious, but within reason. We believe in the power of art and design – that

it comes from the soul and that it can change everything – and whether you believe this or not, are an art aficionado or not, we welcome you to Artpaper.

This first issue of Artpaper is dedicated to the late museum curator and university lecturer Dennis Vella, who dedicated his life to promoting modern and contemporary art, especially Maltese, and gave me the inspiration and confidence to take up a career in the arts in Malta; and also, Daphne Caruana Galizia who was a great supporter of the arts.

Lily Agius

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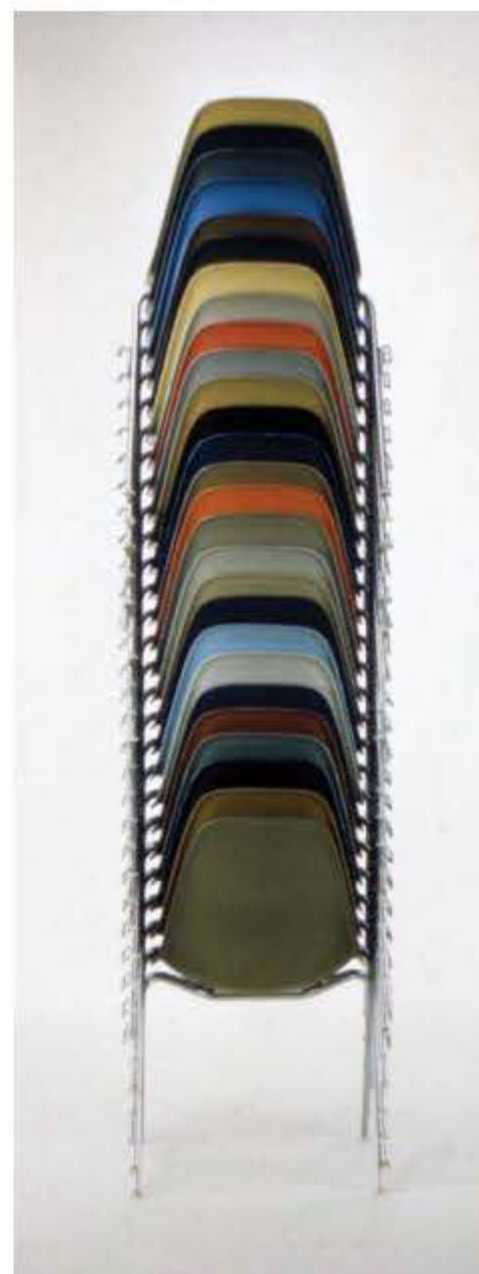
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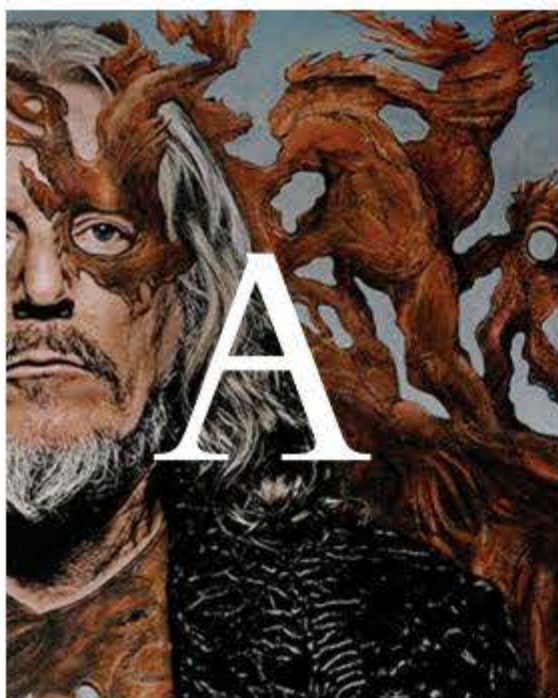
The Eames Eames Chairs in the glass hallway in the Vitra office on campus



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01

The Malta
artpaper.



+ ON *the* SCENE.

Art is everywhere you look for it, hail the twinkling stars for they are God's careless splatters – *El Greco*



01

Rendez-vous à Paris

Paris Photo is back. The world's leading photography fair at the Grand Palais, where dealers, collectors, book publishers and several of the world's pre-eminent photographers gather for four days, never fails to please.

Paris Photo, 9 - 12 November, The Grand Palais, Paris.



02

Rolex Middle Sea Race

"My work is about understanding the dynamics of creating a special moment. With the experience of having done this with passion for so many years, it becomes instinctive to communicate a strong artistic message of what the event is all about." – Kurt Arrigo, official Rolex Middle Sea Race photographer.

The Rolex Middle Sea Race starts and finishes in Malta every October. This year it began on 21 October from The Grand Harbour. www.kurtarrigo.com



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03

DaVinci – estimated at \$100,000,000

There are only 15 works by Leonardo da Vinci known to exist, and the last one in private hands, *Salvator Mundi* (Saviour of the World), is up for grabs, with an estimated sale price of \$100 million. Dating from around the year 1500, the oil on panel depicts a figure of Christ as Saviour of the World in flowing robes, holding a crystal orb in his left hand and with his right hand raised in benediction.



Christie's will show the painting in Hong Kong, San Francisco and London before it arrives in New York, where it will be exhibited before the sale on 15 November.

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ART EXHIBITION

KANE CALI AT BLITZ

Human Construct

Blitz is pleased to announce the first major solo exhibition by Maltese artist Kane Cali. *Human Construct* is both a research project and an exhibition, delving into notions of identity. The works invite the viewer to take a step back and reflect on our identity as a social species, both in tangible human form and as a construction of ephemeral data.

We live in an era that is data-hungry; where interactions between individuals are monitored and numerically quantified. These interactions are ultimately reduced to a transfer of code between machines, with relationships built on data and customisable beyond the realm of reality. In *Human Construct* Cali (re)creates an experience where our current existence faces questionable truths, within a space littered with data aggregated through our parallel, virtual existence(s).

By adopting a techno-utopian premise – one that suggests advances in science and technology might be a means to the understanding of social differences – the work returns our gaze with futuristic perspectives. This vision presents the body as no longer being a vessel for the soul, but rather a structure of tightly compiled systems. This is the introduction of the body as an engine; a sum of parts each discernible and dissectible.

Human Construct is the culmination of two years' research, combining these ideas with new and old technologies, beautiful raw and tactile materials, and holographic protection.

18 Nov – 8 Dec, Blitz, 68 Santa Lucia Street, Valletta



ARCHITECTURE



EASA WORKSHOP

Maltese architecture graduates host workshop in Denmark

EASA (European Architecture Student Assembly) is a network of architecture students from all over the continent. Every summer the assembly takes place in a different European country with 500 design students, graduates and tutors living together in a self-sustaining, community-like setting. The assembly lasts two weeks and includes lectures, building and theoretical workshops, as well as other cultural and architectural endeavours. The event was held in Valletta, Malta in 2015.

This year, two Maltese architecture graduates, Lucia Calleja and Katrina Gauci tutored the concrete workshop *Current* in the beautiful town of Fredericia, Denmark. Twenty

participants from all over the world worked hand in hand with the tutors and sponsors to create a permanent structure in the town's vibrant harbour.

Current is a pavilion composed of gradient spaces that serve as protection from and celebration of Fredericia's continuous rainfall. The integration of porous and non-porous concrete modules results in highly contrasting volumes that flow seamlessly into one another, controlling the passage of water.

The dynamic structure provides grounds for recreation, encourages users to strip away formalities, and ultimately provide a hospitable social

environment. This is in line with this year's theme, "Hospitality. Finding the framework," which resonates with the history of Fredericia and the challenges the city now faces. This also links to the current political situation in Europe and the world.

The *Current* pavilion provides a new space for the community and visitors to interact and socialise, while also offering a unique way of experiencing the rainy season.

The workshop was sponsored by multinational building materials company CEMEX, and supported by local fabrication company Dfab studio.

6 Opinion / Richard England

Oct - Dec '17

Richard England is an architect, writer, artist and academic. England is also a poet, and the author of several books on art and architecture.



ART + DESIGN

W

hen considering the exiguous size of the island, with a population of less than half a million, Malta boasts of an excellent number of well-prepared, professional and talented artists. On the other hand, it is sad that these, on many an occasion, are not chosen by government entities to design public artworks. The result being that many of these works are, on the whole, disappointing and poor. By the way, please no more puerile statues of politicians, especially not in our Capital City! Perhaps it is also high time for the authorities to understand the distinction between high art and craft. A papier-mâché Christmas crib dispatched to St Peter's Square in Rome is not high art!

The situation is also not helped by the too many dilettantes who audaciously jump on the bandwagon and egoistically term themselves artists. Their work remains fake, facile, simplistic and derivative due to their lack of didactic preparation. Picture postcard paintings are not art and pretty pictures do not art make, nor are simplistic abstract splashes by technically unprepared and untutored individuals. Selectivity on the part of Art Galleries in their choice of artists is therefore essential as is also more discerning



“ Art is the expression of the soul against the limitations of the mind ”

- Ben Okri

criticism. The dictionary definition of an artist is “a person who requires artistic expertise” implying the necessity of skill and knowledge in the technique of design, drawing, painting and understanding of materials. It was Michelangelo who advised artists in their training period to “spend a year on drawing alone, and six years for colours”. It is only after one has assimilated the disciplines and the rules that one can break them. Picasso himself emphasised this when he wrote “one must first learn the rules in order to be able to flaunt them”. Good advice

for individuals aspiring to an art career is to frequent the Design Foundation Studies Diploma Course at the Faculty of Built Environment at the University of Malta or one of the many MCAST Design Courses. Both offer excellent preparation and tutorage.

Now for some advice to young artists: Do not be carried away or influenced by what is currently fashionable; ‘isms’ too quickly become ‘wasims’.

Despite extraordinary advances in technology which provide highly so-

phisticated tools, always remember that the bridge between mind and paper remains best crossed by the hand. Please continue to ensure that the mouse will not eat the pencil. Remember also that it is only through learning that one can erase ignorance.

“If people knew how hard I worked to get my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all.” Michelangelo

Art remains more of a vocation than a profession. Therefore, one must follow passion not indifference, ardour not apathy, zeal and not lethargy; and always practice humility and not vanity. Success remains a journey and not a destination. Work from the heart and remain true to your personal creed and belief. You will learn by trial and error, so allow and give yourself time... not an easy task in today's instantaneous, frenetic lifestyle. Do not lose hope; remember there is no hint in the caterpillar that one day it will become a butterfly. As an innovator, you will follow an arduous and difficult path, for as Nietzsche reminds us “those who dance are always thought insane by those who do not hear the music”. Use the giraffe as a model, head up high in the air, feet firmly on the ground.

Art is about skill, emotion, passion, dedication and resilience and also perhaps that magical touch of the inherited gene of creativity. True art remains the magic amulet to amplify humanity and raise one to ecstasy. Finally, bear in mind that when you will eventually fly, you will appear smaller to those who do not fly... so go ahead, fly, but remember to always remain an eternal student and never stop learning.

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Local photographer wins 2017 International Photography Award

Alex Attard, a Maltese photographer specialising in art and architecture, was awarded second place for his entry in the Interior Architecture category at the 2017 International Photography Awards (IPA) with his in-camera multiple exposure interpretation of Beijing's Bird's Nest

national stadium by Swiss architects Herzog & De Meuron. His other series – of a staircase at Villa Castro, a project by Architecture Project and Jens Bruenslow, currently shortlisted for the World Architecture Awards – received an honourable mention in the same category.

The 2017 IPA attracted nearly 15,000 submissions from 103 countries across the globe. The IPA is a sister-effort of the Lucie Foundation, the top three winners of which are announced at the annual Lucie Awards gala ceremony. The Foundation's mission is to honour master photographers, to discover new and emerging talent and to promote the appreciation of photography.

Since 2003, the IPA has had the privilege and opportunity to acknowledge and recognise the accomplishments of contemporary photographers in this specialised and highly visible competition.



ART MARKET

Robert De Niro acquires Maltese art



Maltese painter Christian Palmer studied at Central St Martin's before travelling the world and discovering the appeal of an alternative lifestyle. He settled in Byron Shire, Australia, in 1999 and remains there today, surrounded by like-minded artists and musicians and the animals that influence his work. His commitment to conservation is empowering and he has collaborated with Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors on fund-raising projects, as well as the vital 'Let Elephants be Elephants' (LEBE) campaign to stop the illegal trade in ivory. Animals are the key focus of his work, creating a dialogue through a skilful mixture of words and images that reflect his personal message to the world. Although he admits that he doesn't much like leaving his chosen home, his work is

exhibited internationally – from high-end galleries in Asia and 7-star hotels in Europe to local pop-up galleries he organises in Byron Bay. His latest venture is a Pop-up exhibition in New York City, following the acquisition of one of his pieces by Robert De Niro that now hangs above the actor's desk at The Duane Street Hotel in Lower Manhattan – which is also owned by De Niro.

DESIGN

Malta's oldest brewery undergoes a makeover by DEX workspaces



Malta's oldest brewery and main importer of many food and beverage brands, Simonds Farsons Cisk, has recently undergone a serious makeover. The need for a healthier space for employees and more efficient environment for production led the group to seek the professional help of DEX Workspaces – after consulting with the clients' architects (TBA Periti) and designer Robert Farrugia (DStudios) – they have delivered the excellent furnishing job that the company was after.

ILLUSTRATION

FIMBank commission artists to present an educational video of the Maltese language



FIMBank plc gave two artists the job of illustrating a number of Maltese sayings and proverbs in as many different styles and techniques as possible and the result was presented in a 30-second video on the Fimbank website and YouTube.

The artists, Kelsey May Connor and Frank O'Neill, used various materials, and are pleased to have been part of such an initiative. The video has been used in schools, making the learning experience more inspiring and powerful: "The arts can really help explain the most complicated of things", Frank tells us.

This is the third consecutive year in which FIMBank has produced a campaign concerned with Malta's heritage. As a Malta-based bank with a global mission, FIMBank recognises the importance of corporate social responsibility and regularly supports local artists and designers.

The video clips will appear seven times a day on TVM and TVM 2, until the end of the year and can be viewed on the bank's social media channels. Visit www.facebook.com/easisave/



DESIGN

STINE LIV BURR

Is it vulgar or is it Art? A Vitra anecdote

The Eames Plastic Chairs were launched in 1950 as the first-ever industrially produced plastic chairs. The curved organic shells, which rested on a minimalist metal base, represented a carefree, free-floating type of seating never seen before – in striking contrast to the heavy upholstered furniture found in most homes of that era. In many ways, husband and wife Charles and Ray Eames were ahead of their time, surrounding themselves with friends who shared their visionary perspective. One of this group was the American cartoonist Saul Steinberg, who was especially known for crossing borders into uncharted visual territories.

Shortly after the Eames had developed the Plastic Chairs, Saul Steinberg came to visit their office in Los Angeles at 901 Washington Boulevard. During the visit, Steinberg picked up a brush and drew a number of lively cartoons around the office interior. He extended the series of cartoons from one object or surface to another, continuing a sketch that began on a piece of furniture up along the walls or down onto the floor. One of the cartoons turned

into an undressed woman lounging on a La Chaise mould; another depicted a cat sleeping on a newly produced Eames Plastic Armchair. Steinberg also drew a sitting female nude, whose upper body occupied the seat shell while

chair a prominent place among other art objects and the furore began when members of the Municipal Art Committee spotted the nude and turned her towards the wall, prompting the directors to turn the chair back around

were different. Shortly afterwards, an article in the Los Angeles Herald-Express reported on the controversy with a photo of the chair and the questioning caption: 'Is it vulgar or is it Art?'

Charles and Ray Eames did not consider the cartoon as vulgar. In the same way that Steinberg admired the seminal work of the Eameses, they admired Steinberg's practice of crossing the borders between media. Charles and Ray Eames later 'invited the nude woman to dinner', placing the chair in one of their collage settings for a photo shoot. The photo was taken by Charles Eames.

Today, the chair with the cat belongs to the Eames Office and family, and the chair with the nude woman is on permanent loan from the Eames Office and family to the Vitra Design Museum. They are often lent out for exhibitions around the world, but occasionally the chair with the nude woman can also be seen at the Vitra Schaudapot on the Vitra Campus.

www.vitra.com

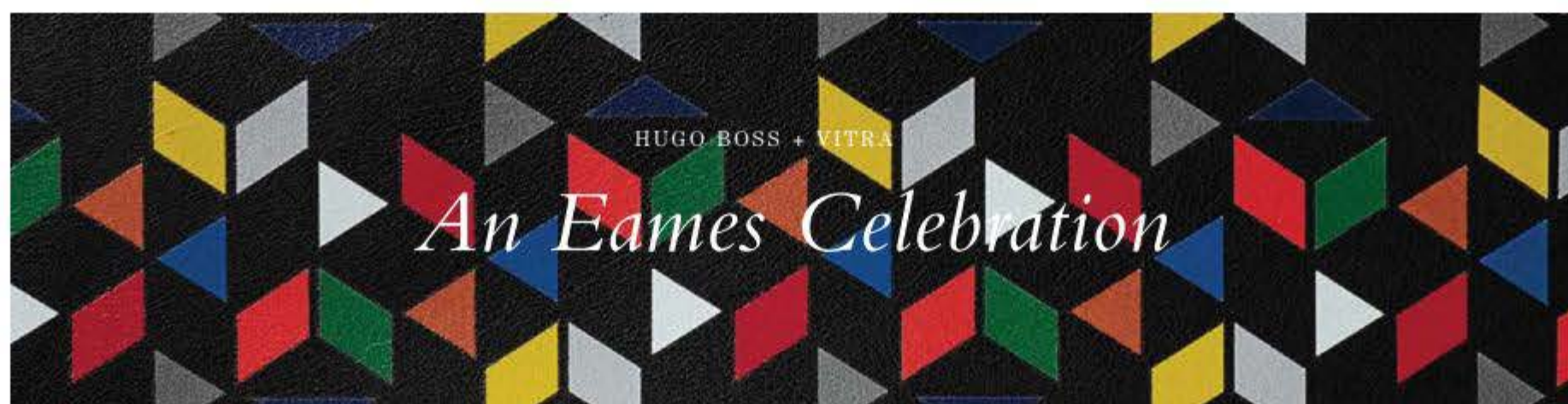


the outlines of her legs extended across the floor.

The 'nude woman' later had Long Beach art critics in an uproar when she made her first appearance at the opening of the Municipal Art Center in 1951. The directors of the show had given the

again. The head of the Committee then demanded that the chair be removed, based on the opinion that it was 'vulgar' and 'not art' – but the directors refused. Today it is hard to imagine that a simple drawing of a nude woman on a plastic chair shell could cause such uproar but, then, the year was 1951 and times

DESIGN NEWS / FASHION



Until 27 February 2018, Hugo Boss will be supporting the comprehensive retrospective "An Eames Celebration" at the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany. The project comprises of four separate exhibits dedicated to the various facets of the legendary designers' oeuvre, along with a broad array of companion events staged across the extensive Vitra campus. Strad-

ding numerous disciplines, Charles and Ray Eames blazed new trails with their conceptual approach, ideas and iconic designs. As such they rank among the most versatile and influential designers of the past century. The exhibition "An Eames Celebration" draws together a large selection of original works – including films, photographs, drawings, sculptures, paintings,

textiles, models, stage props and graphic design. It contains previously unpublished material and provides the most all-encompassing overview of the designer duo's creativity to date.

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\$ Art Market / Piero Guccione
Oct - Dec '17

FOR SALE

on the market...

In a category all of his own, we find an artist who has been a beacon of light for many of the contemporary painters in Sicily. Piero Guccione is considered as the father of the Gruppo di Scicli, being the first of this group of artists to gain national and international acclaim. By exhibiting together with the other members, and with his intellectual nature, Guccione was largely responsible for stimulating the recognition of the Gruppo di Scicli as a whole.

Born in 1935, in the town of Scicli itself, Guccione attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Catania. After graduating, he moved to Rome where he met Renato Guttuso who by then was one of Italy's leading painters. From 1966 to 1969, Guccione participated in the Paris Biennale, while working as an assistant to Guttuso at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome. Later, he would continue his work at the Academy in his own right.

The year 1966 served as a launch pad for Guccione, who also participated in the Venice Biennale for the first time. He would be reinvested to this biennial Mecca of contemporary art in 1978 and 1982, while he was granted a personal showroom in the Italian Pavilion for the 1988 edition of the Venice Biennale. Personal exhibitions in his honour were organised from the 1970s onwards in Italy as well as abroad; most notably at the FIAC (International Fair of Contemporary Art) in Paris and at the Metropolitan Museum of New York with a retrospective of his graphic work in 1985.

A first monograph appeared in 1989 as part of the series Grandi Monografie, published by Fabbri Editori and written by Enzo Siciliano and Susan Sontag. A second monograph was published in 1997 by Edizioni Electa, and a third one was made for the prestigious anthological exhibition in 2008 curated by Vittorio Sgarbi for the Palazzo Reale in Milan and travelling under the curatorship of Maurizio Calvesi to the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna of Rome.

From monumental seascapes to small-scale pastel sketches of land, sea and sky, abstraction and figuration go hand-in-hand and seem to become one. Drawing vigour from the undeniable detail, the viewer receives an account

of reality so real that it is in danger of being passed off as surreal. Guccione navigates successfully the thin line that divides reality and the dream, as the apparition of a ship on the horizon. A quote from Haruki Murakami's book *Kafka on the Shore* comes to mind: "Beyond the edge of the world there's a space where emptiness and substance neatly overlap, where past and future form a continuous, endless loop. And, hovering about, there are signs no one has ever read, chords no one has ever heard."

A collection of Guccione's paintings are currently on display in Catania, Sicily. For more information and sales enquiries, contact info@artpaper.press

'The year 1966 served as a launch pad for Guccione, who also participated in the Venice Biennale for the first time.'



Paesaggio per il Gattopardo, 1987, tecnica mista su carta, 38x49cm



Studio per Luca Signorelli, 1962, olio su tela, 93x76cm



Paesaggio, 1994, tecnica mista su tela, 94x74cm



Giardino sul muro giallo, 1965, olio su tela, 108x95cm



Attesa di partire #9, 1970, olio su tela, 52x100cm



PERSPECTIVE



As a virgin art reviewer reviewing a 'new entry', I joined the ranks of the team responsible for catapulting Malta into one of the greatest art shows on the planet. Organisers and curators included both seasoned Biennale aficionados as well as those for whom this was their first attendance at the Venice Art Biennale. The same applies to some of the artists whose work was exhibited in the Maltese pavilion. So, if anything, naivety and innocence certainly played a big role here. Like a double-blind

Pretty much every exhibit in every other Pavilion and by every other artist requires a process of untangling. Some have gone for the ultra-simple and therefore probably require a process of abstract construction. Some are sharing a plain observation. A lot are trying to alert the masses to a cause which they believe is not receiving enough attention and some are giving a peek into a cultural element of which the artist believes not much is known beyond a particular community or territory. Perhaps all of them are partly or wholly concerned with identity.

Homo Melitensis, the Maltese installation, is like a literature review that

float on her canvas. References to the absurdly high levels of Maltese piety and religion are everywhere. Every attempt seems to have been made to twist and explore perversion. Following the removal of the ban on religious vilification, the chapters almost all refer to the veil that has finally been lifted and, as a local, I saw that there was nothing so shocking underneath – it was all always there: the 19 chapters seem to be a lesson in moving on. 'Let's move on' they say to me.

During the launch I am surrounded by the artists, some of them looking giddy, perhaps trying to play it cool and hide

was certainly magnetic and attracted an almost constant audience.

'Small' and 'intense' are the focus words here. Small, intense and overlapping – nonsensical. The pavilion of the islanders who speak 'Arabic' but are Catholic, and who also speak English but eat spaghetti, al dente; the people who, through several cultural revolutions enforced by a series of diverse colonisers, remain both unfazed and deeply affected. Paradox rules.

This is no place for standing, in silent appreciation, in front of an inconceivable installation. It's a place where you

A Personal Perspective

A REVIEW FOR THE PEOPLE
JOANNA DELIA

study – both the performers and the audience are introduced to each other with little or no knowledge of each other: as is the case with all art, I might add.

For those who have never visited the Biennale, may I say that the experience is a surreal, immersive one that sets your heart racing and causes your senses to go into overload. This is done with the use of an infinite variety of media: every scrap of imagination is stretched – not to the limits, but beyond every limit, beyond the realms of logic and reality.

Everywhere, you see curators and artists – with one arm crossed across their upper body and the other with an index finger swinging abstractly in the air in front of the artefacts, conjuring analysis and perspectives from both their and the artists' journey and understanding of the pieces.

one does before starting to think about concept – long before the conclusion is reached. It's like the first lie-in with your new psychotherapist who is trying hard to get to know you.

The pavilion houses a monty (market) of artefacts and works of contemporary art exposing a country obsessed with virginity, hugs and domestic conflicts, testosterone and strict adherence to stereotypical roles; traditions that become schedules; iconography that attempts to make time stand still; a constant discussion of if development, evolution and progress – whether architectural or psychological – is permissible; of a people with so many chips on their shoulders that they become unsure of their ability to bear anything new until they realise that the chips are all made up and purely decorative.

Teresa Sciberras's oils conjure up perhaps a hint of inspiration from construction sites that she then loads with surreal boundaries which, together,

the fact that they have been craving to show their rebellious work to the public. The opportunity to show at the Venice Art Biennale can be a life-changer for the talented ones.

You cannot but notice that the Maltese Pavilion tries hard to veer away from site-specific, painfully minimalist very together installations that everyone walks through and takes artsy photos of, from different angles, aiming to get a good photographic composition to create an artwork out of an artwork.

In the Maltese pavilion the elbows and forearms holding up the camera or iPhone are lowered. The eyes are a little confused. The pupils contract and the lens – the one in the human eye – is forced to focus. This is no place to see the 'bigger picture', and yet the bigger picture is what it's all about.

The sculpture of John Paul Azzopardi, painstakingly constructed from bone and depicting mythological creatures,

zigzag around the wares on display and twist your lips and eyes into every form of expression. At the launch of the exhibit, the presence of Maria Grazia Cucinotta – although somewhat controversial in terms of her attracting kitsch attention – was crucial. Part of our identity as Maltese is certainly a worrying fascination with Italian female celebrities. She is also a connection to James Bond – who is not only the epitome of British charm (to whose antics all Maltese privately educated poser boys aspire) but snippets of some James Bond scenes were also supposed to have been shot in Malta – something which a lot of tourist luzzu (fishing boat) owners never tire of telling their passengers, in broken Maltese/English.

The sight of The Malta Arts Council team carrying brass flag poles and a Maltese and EU flag around Venice and setting them up outside the pavilion and then outside the wonderful apartment where the cocktail reception was held was remarkable. It reminded me



Teresa Sciberras's oils conjure up perhaps a hint of inspiration from construction sites that she then loads with surreal boundaries which, together, float on her canvas.

+ Review / Venice Biennale
Oct – Dec '17



“I wonder how the masses who are completely unfamiliar with my country will see it.”



Austin Camilleri – rosary beads with screaming new-born heads



A man with a Maltese hooded cloak (ghonella) that was traditionally worn by women in Malta. The photographer is unknown.



Joe Sacco – From the unwanted

of the logistics man in charge of carrying the flags around for the banda (band), for the festa (feast), or for the Purcissjoni tad-Duhuri (procession of Our Lady of Sorrows) or tal-Gimgha l-Kbira (Good Friday).

I wonder how the masses who are completely unfamiliar with my country will see it. Will we now lose our bland, non-stereotype exoticism or will this show deepen the jaw-dropping type of curiosity associated with Malta? The reviews so far have been incredibly

encouraging. The Guardian newspaper placed the Maltese Cabinet of curiosities in the top five, and theculturetrip.com in the top 10 pavilions to watch. Forbes listed the Pavilion as the fifth of 13 reasons to visit the Venice Biennale. As for me, I think we certainly score the maximum points for introspection. At the same time, we had a national pavilion which spilled out its guts. And everyone saw it was good.

The exhibit in the Maltese pavilion at the 2017 Biennale di Venezia Homo

Melitensis, an incomplete inventory in 19 chapters, was produced and commissioned by the Malta Arts Council. Bettina Hutschek and Raphael Vella were the artist curators and the exhibit portrayed works by 13 contemporary Maltese diaspora artists: Aaron Bezzina, Adrian Abela, Austin Camilleri, Darren Tanti, David Pisani, Gilbert Calleja, Joe Sacco, John Paul Azzopardi, Karine Rougier, Maurice Tanti Burlo, Pia Borg, Roxman Gatt and Teresa Sciberras, as well as up to 200 artefacts from Malta.

The 57th International Art Exhibition, entitled Viva Arte Viva, is open to the public until Sunday, 26 November, at the Arsenale and Giardini venues, and in several locations in Venice.

The show features the works of 120 invited artists, 103 of which are participating for the first time, 86 national participations, special projects and 23 collateral events.



John Paul Azzopardi – Mylius Opus Medico-Chymicum



Gilbert Calleja – A photo of the Maltese transvestite community



The Maltese Pavilion at the Arsenale

Lily Agius
LILY AGIUS GALLERY



VICTOR PASMORE
Oil and spray on wood
72.5 x 72.5 cm
P.O.R.

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6 Spotlight / Victor Pasmore

Oct - Dec '17

BY GIULIA PRIVITELLI

Where Saudade

meets

Abstract Art

Saudade is one of those elusive, potent words that, try as you might, cannot be translated or accurately understood in any other language if not the original, that is, in Portuguese or Galician. Tentatively, it refers to melancholic nostalgia - an engagement with the past, while paradoxically acknowledging that it is a past which can no longer be engaged with. It refers, more precisely, to the emotive depth of this inescapable sense of loss, which traps one between a dichotomy of sorts: "a pleasure you suffer, an ailment you enjoy," as aptly expressed by the seventeenth-century Portuguese writer, Francisco Manuel de Mello. Saudade can only exist in the present, but cannot do without the past; it is insubstantial, but departs from the material; it is subjectively experienced but originally derived from the objective; it is a term ambiguous and universal enough to speak about practically anything: from the natural environment to man-made creations, such as music. Here the journey through saudade takes us to abstract art, more specifically, to the late abstract work and artistic philosophy of Victor Pasmore (1908-1998) who lived and worked on the island of Malta for the last thirty years or so of his life.

In an article conveniently titled, 'What is Abstract Art?' published in the British Sunday Times back in 1961, Victor Pasmore crystallised a mission statement which calls every abstract artist "to build from a simple but objective

centre until he [or she] finds a subjective circumference." Pasmore's idea of abstract art, here, is one of construction and transformation - of a built landscape, metaphorically speaking. In this case, abstract art entails a process which goes against the grain of what is usually thought. It is a process of construction, not of dismantling, not of merely peeling away the layers of what is seen until one presumably arrives at the purest forms in nature. If it could be at all a destructive process, it is only so at the start in order to make it possible for new forms, images and symbols to emerge. In other terms, the value of a word, or perhaps of a letter even, must be known for it to be used in conjunction with another, and then another, until an entire sentence is formed. A language is first born this way, and only later refined.

To a certain extent, this philosophy could be found at the core of Pasmore's interest in opposites, their juxtaposition and harmonisation. It is what enabled him to be detached from, say, the line, the dot, the material or the colour, but not from the final effect they produced when brought together. Pasmore understood that nature too, works in this seemingly conflicting way, and therefore, sought to emulate its *modus operandi* in his art. This further enabled Pasmore to draw references from the ancient past, rendering them relevant and modern while simultaneously respecting their original essence. Thus, what is timeless and therefore, objective, remains unchanged, but the experience of the object, which is subjective, is entirely different, unique and without precedent in the past.

One instance which sums this up rather nicely takes us all the way to ancient Mesoamerican culture, to the so-called symbol of the *atl-tlachinolli*, literally meaning 'burning water.' In 1988, Pasmore published a book composed of a poem and prints entitled 'Burning Waters' wherein he paid homage to this ancient symbol that "signified the unity of opposites and the cosmological paradox." Indeed, the ancient Mexican symbol was a visual stand in for sacred war, where water intertwines with fire - the union of two contrasting elements. This was a long-held metaphorical understanding of the cosmos, of creation, as the interminable struggle between two opposing forces. The binomial expression of fire and water, of destruction and life, was often depicted in front of the mouths of figures, or rather sacred soldiers, as if it were some form of blessing, battle cry or song. What Pasmore does instead, is juxtapose text and image in a sort of visual poem as a representation of "the tragedy of human spirit." Here, the nature of opposites is still applicable, but the war cry now addresses contemporary man and the existential crisis of the age.

And what of the sacred soldier? It would seem that the artist has assumed this position - a median delivering two opposing, interlocking realities; the artist who is at once detached, yet whose identity paradoxically hangs in the balance between the two. Towards the end of his artistic career, Pasmore eloquently presents this world view in the *Two Faces of the Turning World* (1990), located at the Victor Pasmore Gallery, in Valletta. In this work, at the tip of a network of olive branches

and suspended between a connected world of violence and destruction on the one hand, and of tranquillity and stewardship on the other, hangs the artist's identity, abridged in a simple and resolute 'VP.'

The interpretation of an image, of an artistic career or world-view is, essentially, a coming together of a number of views which are, at times, conflicting. New possibilities are born this way, whereas old ones are elaborated or, almost certainly, challenged. The Tuesday Talks series of monthly public talks held at the Victor Pasmore Gallery, and which will commence once again in November 2017, seek to adopt this multi-faceted approach in understanding not only the life, art and philosophy of Victor Pasmore and of the local and international twentieth-century cultural context, but to also outline deep-seated concepts and realities which are still pertinent to our times. Thus, our engagement with the past is indeed inexhaustible, but every attempt to do so is also tinged with a sense of something that is inevitably and irreplaceably lost.

The Victor Pasmore Gallery is open daily between 11.00am-3.00pm except on week-ends and public holidays, and is located next to the annexe of the Central Bank of Malta, Valletta. The gallery was first opened in November 2014 as a collaborative initiative between the Victor Pasmore Foundation and the Central Bank of Malta, and is currently being managed by Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti. For more information follow the Victor Pasmore Gallery on Facebook and Instagram or on www.victorpasmoregallery.com.



FILM



2

RAPHAEL - THE LORD OF THE ARTS
EXCLUSIVE AT
EDEN CINEMAS

From 1 November

As part of its arts on screen series, Eden Cinemas presents Raphael – the Lord of the Arts, starting from the 1st November and showing for a very limited period. The first ever film adaptation of Raphael Sanzio and his art (1483-1520).

Enlightening commentary from the experts takes us on a journey starting from Urbino (where Raphael was born), stopping off in Florence and

continuing on to Rome and the Vatican, which represent both the peak of Raphael's brilliant artistic career and its epilogue. The story is told through a total of 20 locations and 70 artworks - more than 30 by Raphael - as well as with numerous exclusive interviews and original opinions.

The historical reconstructions are inspired by 18th Century paintings (a period during which the artist was considered very much a cult-figure) and representing a kind of 'figurative testament'. They are depicting fragments of Raphael's life, like snapshot moments. They give a sensitive, subtle impression of the artist's life and evoke an emotional response from the audience,

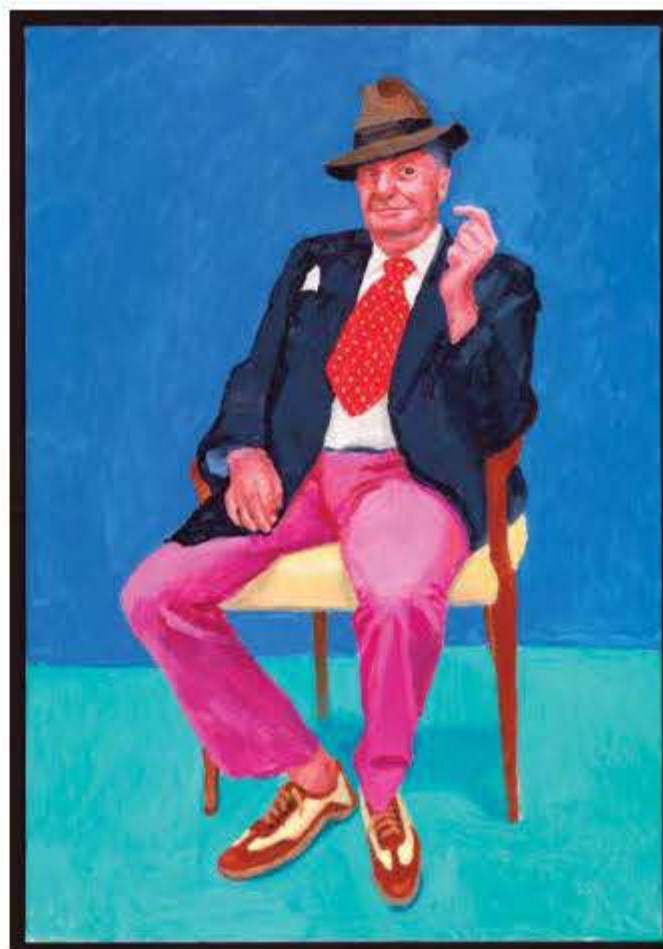
increasing their involvement through each chapter

Lending his face to Raphael Sanzio for these historical reconstructions is actor and director Flavio Parenti (To Rome With Love, Io sono l'amore, Un Matrimonio). La Fornarina, the woman the artist loved, is played by Angela Curri (La mafia uccide solo d'estate), with Enrico Lo Verso as Giovanni Santi and Marco Cacci as Pietro Bembo. Set design and costumes are by two of the finest talents in Italian cinema, Francesco Frigeri and Maurizio Millenotti respectively.

For a cinematic experience into the life and works of Raphael Sanzio, visit www.edencinemas.com.mt.

DAVID HOCKNEY

THE ON-SCREEN EXHIBITION



4. DAVID HOCKNEY AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ART

© David Hockney - Photo Credit Richard Schmidt



HOW TO MAKE A PROFIT FROM YOUR ART:

INÉZ KRSTINA

1. HAVE A FEELING



2. CHANNEL FEELING ONTO SOMETHING CHEAP BECAUSE YOU NEED TO PAY YOUR RENT THIS MONTH



3. REALIZE NOBODY WANTS IT, THEN GIFT IT TO SOMEONE TO GET RID OF IT



4. ASK RELATIVES FOR MONEY





Film News / Showing

Oct - Dec '17

FILM

FILM / ART BASEL / MIAMI

Organised in association with David Gryn, Director of Daa-ta Editions and London's Artprojx, the Film sector presents a dynamic program of films. Outdoor screenings take place at SoundScape Park, where works are shown on the 7,000-square-foot projection wall of the Frank Gehry-designed New World Center; and inside the Miami Beach Convention Center. In addition, New York-based film curator Marian Masone selects a feature-length film for a special screening at the Colony Theatre.



FILM

3 'INTIMISSIMI ON ICE' WITH ANDREA BOCELLI SHOWING FOR THE FIRST TIME AT EDEN CINEMAS 23 / 26 November



Intimissimi on Ice has been charming the Arena di Verona for seven consecutive years and now can finally be seen in Malta at Eden Cinemas. Andrea Bocelli will star in this feature-length special event ice show in which opera, pop music, figure-skating and fashion combine for a breath-taking performance produced and filmed at the iconic Arena di

Verona in Italy. Intimissimi on Ice combines the greatest international ice-skating champions, and opera and pop stars, for a night of pure Italian fashion and style. For the first time in the history of the show in the Arena, the main protagonists will be Olympic medalists from all over the world, such as Shizuka Arakawa, Stéphane Lambiel, Evgeni Plushenko, Meagan Duhamel/Eric Radford and Meryl Davis/Charlie White. Andrea Bocelli will perform live during their performances with his impeccable voice acting as a backdrop to their ice-skating.

Shows at Eden Cinemas will be on Thursday, 23 November at 7.30pm and Sunday 26 November at 3pm. Tickets are available from www.edencinemas.com.mt or the Eden Cinemas Box Office in St Julian's.

FILM AT EDEN

4 DAVID HOCKNEY AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS AT EDEN CINEMAS

21 / 26 November

As part of its Arts on Screen series, Eden Cinemas will be showing David Hockney at the Royal Academy of Arts: A Bigger Picture 2012 & 82 Portraits

and One Still Life 2016. The on-screen exhibition will be shown in Eden Cinemas on Tuesday 21 November at 8.15pm and Sunday 26 January at 3pm.

Widely considered Britain's most popular artist, David Hockney is a global sensation with exhibitions in London, New York, Paris and beyond, attracting millions of visitors worldwide. Now entering his 9th decade, Hockney shows

absolutely no evidence of slowing down or losing his trademark boldness. Featuring intimate and in-depth interviews with Hockney, this revealing film focuses on two blockbuster exhibitions held in 2012 and 2016 at the Royal Academy of Art in London. Director Phil Grabsky secured privileged access to craft this cinematic celebration of a 21st century master of creativity. Watching David Hockney at the Royal Academy of Arts on Eden

Cinemas multipurpose theatre will be a truly immersive experience, offering a unique opportunity to witness never-before-seen interviews with one of the world's favourite living artists and behind the scene footage to Hockney's wildly popular exhibitions.

Tickets are available at €12 for adults. For more information and for ticket purchasing visit www.edencinemas.com.mt or call on (+356) 23710400.

CINEMA



Like moths drawn to a lighted candle, the tormented genius of Dutch artist Vincent Van Gogh has always attracted the creatives in the entertainment industry to interpret the intense tragedy in his chequered life.

Culminating in suicide, his life never ceased to be painful, largely due to his fervently idealistic belief in the inseparability of his social, philosophical and aesthetic ideas from his day-to-day behaviour.

Almost a decade ago, Oscar-winning British animator Hugh Welchman started working on a film about Van Gogh's life that is unlike any other that has been seen before. Loving Vincent is the world's first fully oil-painted feature film. With the help of 125 specially trained painters, this uniquely animated film is composed of 65,000 painted frames, drawn from meticulous research and inspired by Van Gogh's masterpieces, subjects and 800

TONY CASSAR
DARIEN

A Film Unlike ANY other.

personal letters. It certainly manages to capture the world of the artist and his inspired artwork in a cinematic experience like no other.

Speaking to Google's Florence Waters in his studios outside the Polish city of Gdansk, Welchman described the technique involved as being "From life to oil: footage of the actors is filmed in a studio against a green-screen background. The footage is then projected, frame-by-frame, on to an

artist's board, painted over in the style of Van Gogh and then photographed before the board is scraped clean for the next frame."

For example: the opening scene involves Starry Night, one of the most immediately recognisable paintings from the 130 Van Goghs that feature in the film. Welchman explains how the camera swoops down from the heavens, past the moon and stars, through the swirling blue and violet clouds of Starry Night, before it eventually hones in on a house in Arles, where a fight is taking place. (Arles is where Van Gogh lived and, for a time, in the company of Gauguin before the two fell out. He loved the place for 'its limpid atmosphere and gay colours'. His famous Arles Landscapes in three series are concerned with aspects of seasonal change.) The animation of this single scene has taken three artists a year-and-a-half to create. ➔

► Film News / Showing
Oct - Dec '17



FILM



'It's my Life, as I would have drawn it'

Vincent Van Gogh

Owing to the complex pattern of brushstrokes that make up Van Gogh's sky, in order to retain the clarity of the lines and for them to move in a believ-

able way, each frame had to be created from scratch. Overall, the film used more than 3,000 litres of oil paint. It was Welchman's wife – the Polish anima-

tor Dorota Kobiela – who first came up with the idea for the film. Kobiela, who is the film's director, had been interested in Van Gogh since her college days studying painting in Warsaw, and she was particularly curious about the many conflicting accounts of his last days. On 29 July 1890, two days after shooting himself in the abdomen in the fields of Auvers-sur-Oise, a suburb of Paris, Van Gogh died from his injuries.

"Why did this ambitious young artist kill himself just as he was creating some of his finest work?" asks Kobiela. As far as the records show, nobody knows exactly why. He did not leave a suicide note, he did not write a letter and no first-hand evidence was given by his physician, Dr Gachet. Vincent and his brother Theo spent several

hours together before he died, and Vincent was totally lucid. But Theo never recorded in writing anything about the conversations they had had. It was in 2008 that Kobiela first told Welchman of her ambition to paint a short animation about Van Gogh's last days. Together, they began to read every biography they could find of the artist whom Welchman describes as 'a rock star, the Kurt Cobain of the 19th century'. "We had to have a good story," he confided to his interviewer, Florence Waters. "If the story is no good, no matter how beautiful it is, people are going to resent sitting there for 90 minutes." They came up with a noir-ish detective story set a year after the artist's death. The film takes in the various conflicting accounts given by residents who personally knew Van

Gogh. The scenes of his painting and interviews with the characters in them are manipulated to give a reconstruction of the story nearing his end. It also explores the theory, prevalent at the time, that Van Gogh was murdered by René Secrétan, a local 16-year-old who enjoyed ridiculing the quiet, anti-social artist, and went so far as admitting to having given him the gun.

Welchman admitted that finding artists with the necessary skills to pull off this feat of story-telling was not easy. The members of the current, 91-strong team come from all over the world and include Julian Mallia (better known as 'Julinu'), the only Maltese artist selected to join the international team of artists working on the film.

SPOTLIGHT

Valletta International Baroque Festival '18

Built by the Knights of St John after the Great Siege of 1565 and consequently adorned by its eight languages, Valletta not only had to serve as a powerful fort, but was also to become a strongpoint of culture, economy and politics in the world. Embellished at the height of the baroque period, Valletta rose to become a city built by gentlemen for gentlemen.

The Valletta International Baroque Festival has been conceived purposely as a celebration of this baroque identity of Valletta. The first Festival was held in January 2013. During the Festival Valletta resounds with music from the period when it was built.

More importantly, an international festival like this forthcoming edition will continue to, not only confirm and en-

hance Valletta's prestige but, also show Europe that this small historical outpost in the Mediterranean has over the centuries played a vital role in European history.

Centering around the Teatru Manoel, one of the oldest working theatres in Europe which also happens to be the only one in Europe that fulfils the role of a National Theatre, the Festival extends to the magnificence of St John's Co-Cathedral, the atmospheric Valletta churches, the splendid Grandmasters' Palace, the auberges and other baroque edifices.

With two very important events on the horizon namely the EU Presidency in 2017 and the European Capital of Culture the following year, plans for the Valletta International

The 6th edition of the Valletta International Baroque Festival will take place between 13th and 27th January 2018. This is a festival designed to enhance the baroque beauty of Malta's capital city which in 2018 will also be the European Capital of Culture.



Baroque Festival are not only long-term but also ambitious. No stone has been left unturned in securing some of the best contemporary Baroque

exponents of the moment, both from the international sphere as well as locally. Finally, the high calibre programme that has been put

together should not only give this Festival the international status that it deserves but also extend the Baroque map of Europe to Malta.

To book tickets go to: www.vallettabaroquefestival.com.mt

F Feature / Wolfgang Beltracchi
Oct – Dec '17



TONY CASSAR DARIEN

The Bonnie & Clyde of Fake + Fakery

Fakery is a fascinating business. Frauds make excellent tales: it is always such a pleasure learning about the ingenuity and diligence of their perpetrators and the detection work which finally exposes them.

In the art world, fakes and forgeries are the stuff of legend – the subject of many books, films and television series. I suspect that people have a sneaking admiration for the rogues and scamps who perpetrate scams and hoaxes. People like to see the hoaxer being found out (unless they were the ones who were duped, in which case they prefer to keep quiet), but they also like to see the hoaxer get away with it, especially when the hoax pricks the pomposity of learned institutions and the self-appointed arbiters of behaviour and taste.

For nearly 40 years, Wolfgang Beltracchi fooled the international art world, being responsible for the biggest art forgery scandal of the post-war era. An expert in art history, theory and painting techniques, he tracked down the gaps in the oeuvres of great artists – Max Ernst, Fernand Léger, Heinrich Campendonk, André Derain and Max Pechstein, above all – and filled them with his own works.

He and his wife Helene would then introduce them to the art world as originals. What made these forgeries truly one-of-a-kind is that they were never mere copies of once-existing paintings, but products of Beltracchi's imagination: works 'in the style of' famous early 20th-century artists. With his forgeries, Beltracchi fooled most of the renowned experts, curators and art dealers.

This free-spirited German couple made big headlines in 2010, after being arrested for pulling off one of the big-



gest art hoaxes of modern times. They made millions of dollars from the sale of an estimated 300 bogus paintings that they passed off as 'discovered' works by great European artists – the majority expressionists and surrealists – from the early 20th century.

In the documentary *Beltracchi: The Art of Forgery*, the German forger – who in 2011 was sentenced to six years in prison but was released in August 2015 – professes to be able to paint anything. Art historian Henry Keazor gives him names. "Leonardo? Of course: he's not difficult," Beltracchi replies. When Mr Keazor notes that the forger has the potential to deceive even scholars such as him, Beltracchi replies: "If you

write a catalogue of works, bring it to me first," ostensibly to ensure that undiscovered fakes were not accidentally included.

The film, directed by Arne Birkenstock, the son of one of the lawyers for Mr Beltracchi and his wife, (Helene was sentenced to four years in prison as an accomplice), is hardly impartial about its subject, positioning the bohemian con artist as a man of enormous talent and ingenuity. The film suggests that his deception was made possible by the skewed economic incentives of the art world, where the authentication of a painting has the potential to reap financial rewards.

In the film, the director watches Beltracchi undertake a painting in the style of the Russian artist Marie Vasiliyev. The swindler approaches the task with an artist's attention to detail. He adds dust to the back of a frame to create the appearance of age and notes that a real painting would smell of the room in which it was hung. It is hard not to draw the conclusion that Beltracchi's ability to paint in a chameleon-like array of styles is indeed a form of flair worth appreciating.

This subtitled documentary (primarily in German, but also French and English), captures the prankster and his wife as they are about to start serving their jail time. Theirs was a strangely lenient sentence: they were even allowed to work together in a photo studio during the day – in order to pay back those they had hoodwinked – and were then imprisoned for the night.

Often referred to as the 'Bonnie and Clyde of the Art World', and regularly promoted by the likes of 60 Minutes, (America's most famous news programme, produced by CBS), and the magazine *Vanity Fair*, the naughty duo made a hugely lucrative living out of creating original fakes that were so well done that Max Ernst's widow declared Beltracchi's *The Forest*, (a counterfeit bought by French media mogul Daniel Filipacchi for \$7 million in 2006), as the most beautiful Ernst piece she had ever seen! Another false Ernst hung for months as part of a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. ➔



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* Spotlight / Events / Malta

Oct – Dec '17

ART + CULTURE

A curated selection of local events



11+12.17

Events until December



08.11.17

Until 18 Nov

CIRCULUM BY GEORGE MUSCAT

The title of this exhibition, Circulum, can be considered as representative of George's continuous journey on a road of perpetual experimentation. Like the Circulum, George's artistic journey transcends end points. It is not just the philosophy that is linked to the artistic works that is admirable, but also the fact that, throughout his career, George has – perhaps at times even subconsciously – used the Circulum as his point of reference. Iniala5 Mosta, 9th April Street, Mosta



08.11.17

Until 12 Nov

THE MALTA BOOK FESTIVAL

Visitors will find numerous stands representing both local and foreign publishers, bookshops, distributors and NGOs. Most of these participants have also been preparing events with literary themes, including presentations of new publications and their authors, dramatic performances and discussions. The Mediterranean Conference Centre (MCC).



21.10.17

Until 18 Nov

ANDREW BIRK – I AM THE BODY OF A HUMAN

Andrew Birk presents a series of Life Shrouds, an exercise of dirt-on-denim pieces made with the imprint of his own body, at Malta Contemporary Art, 12, Felix Street, Valletta.



17.11.17

Until 16 Dec

AN ACCIDENTAL FIND BY PAUL SCERRI

A sequel to Running with Scissors, these are figures that are both aesthetic and chorological to emotional anecdotes. The works express cultural, social and personal issues, a therapeutic way to portray what lies within. The facial expressions, together with the objects and symbols embedded in the figures, convey a subtle and spiritual meaning. Iniala5 Valletta, 45 Republic Street, Valletta, Malta



22.11.17

Until 24 Nov

LIVING CITIES, LIVEABLE SPACES

The fourth in the Valletta 2018 Foundation's series of annual international conferences on cultural relations in Europe and the Mediterranean, this conference explores the interplay between cultural diplomacy, place branding and livability, particularly in light of large public events such as the European Capital of Culture. These issues will be debated within the context of citizen engagement and sustainable city development.



18.11.17

Until 8 Dec

HUMAN CONSTRUCT

Blitz is hosting the first major solo exhibition by Maltese artist Kane Cali. Human Construct is both a research project and exhibition, which delves into notions of identity. The works invite the viewer to take a step back and reflect on our identity as a social species, both in tangible human form and as a construction of ephemeral data. Blitz: 68 St Lucia Street, Valletta.

“The poem acquires time as it becomes film. Past and present come together and the poet himself will walk the viewers back and forth along this symbolic distance.”



TREVOR BORG – POETRY ON FILM

Recently, artist and academic, Trevor Borg was chosen to produce a short film for the Poetry on Film initiative organised by Valletta 2018 and Inizjamed and which forms part of the Malta Mediterranean Literature Festival. The film was shown for the first time during the Festival which was held at Fort St Elmo in August. The selection was made by Inizjamed and Valletta 2018 following an open call for proposals. The chosen poem, translated into a film, was titled Fuq Gholjiet Dingli and it was penned by celebrated local poet Victor Fenech. Borg, whose work often responds to specific environmental aspects, was tasked with making a film based on this poem, which in the artist's trademark way is open ended and anything but linear. The film can be viewed at Spazju Kreattiv until 5 November. Keep an eye out for it at Maltese and international festivals.

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Continued from previous page...

The actor and (my favourite) comedian Steve Martin was tricked into purchasing a supposed 1915 painting by Dutch-German artist Heinrich Campendonk with the title Landscape with Horses for \$850,000 from a Parisian gallery (even having it authenticated by a Campendonk specialist) and later sold it through Christie's at a hefty loss. Like most collectors and experts who

fell for Beltracchi's chicanery, Martin understandably declined to participate in the documentary.

In one scene, a silver-haired French couple of means invite the camera into their sophisticated mansion. They show off their Warhol, Renoir and Matisse before coming upon a Magritte seascape. The lady of the house notes

that it is “not as nice” as the phony Campendonk done by Beltracchi that once occupied the space and which they eventually returned after learning of its illegitimate origins.

When pressed about the fake painting, the couple confess that it still remains beautiful, no matter how it came to be or how much it is worth.

And they clearly miss it. Which begs the question: should the fact that it is not a Campendonk matter? If it gives one pleasure, isn't that more important than whose signature is on it? I think that when the documentary considers such thought-provoking matters is when it feels at its very best.



PERSPECTIVE



KENNETH ZAMMIT TABONA

Art Appreciation: I thought I would share

The antagonism between Saul and David has long been the subject of artistic interpretation. One of the most amazing operatic productions I have seen at Glyndebourne in the last couple of years was Handel's wonderful oratorio, Saul, transformed into an opera by the brilliant Australian director Barry Kosky. It is the descent into madness of a king who has been, fairly or unfairly, abandoned by God in favour of a stripling shepherd boy who eventually manages, with Divine help to kill Goliath with a slingshot. From then on Saul descends even further into madness, exacerbated by the admonishments of the prophet Samuel. His own son Jonathan forms a deep and lasting friendship with David and David marries Michal, Saul's daughter, who not once saved him from her father's deadly wrath.

I always found the Old Testament fascinating. Even the children's version which people of my vintage all had in their library was full of battles and sieges, deaths and assassinations, intrigue

and yes even divine magic, pillars of fire, parting seas, crashing walls and other supernatural phenomena that today have been supplanted by Harry Potter and The Lord of the Rings. If you read Simon Sebag Montefiore's Jerusalem, a bestseller a few years ago, you will discover that the history of the Israelites is one steeped in blood and violence, putting both Rowling and Tolkien into third division.

So why all this?

I recently visited the delightful Mauritshuis museum in The Hague and was transfixed by Rembrandt's interpretation of Saul and David. Just look at Saul wearing all the trappings of his authority and power, covering one eye with his cloak (he may be weeping with emotion at David's playing but to me he looks as if he has a blinding migraine) and looks out directly and balefully at us with his other eye. The tension is palpable. He looks as if he is on the verge of insanity. David plays the harp in the far-right corner of the painting. While his music was the only thing to calm Saul down he is keeping a safe distance just in case that in a mad fit of jealousy Saul would let fly a javelin; something he in fact did twice. Rembrandt emphasizes the youthfulness of David here. This is still the callow youth anointed by Samuel and not yet the slayer of Goliath, nor of the ten thousand nor the procurer of 600 philistine foreskins as a bride price for Michal's hand in marriage.

The positioning of the two figures is immensely bold and takes balance to the edge reminding me of Caravaggio's Beheading of St John and Reni's magnificent Atalanta and Ippomene. Then of course there are the inimitable Rembrandt brushstrokes that only Velasquez could rival. Just look at those amazing swathes of red in Saul's cloak.

Most amazingly, this great masterpiece painted between 1646 and 1652 was, at one point actually split in half. It was so over-painted that it was considered to be a bad imitation of the great master. The Mauritshuis in 2007 undertook a bold line of restoration revealing a glorious psychological drama that immediately arrests the viewer with its powerful imagery. It was really no surprise that this particular painting fascinated me immediately. A masterpiece which has now a firm place on my personal Hall of Fame that I thought I'd share.

New art-space at Tigné

Iniala5 Gallery is extending its footprint by taking on new gallery space in a new office building at Tigné in Sliema

Iniala5 Galleries hosted a low-key exhibition on the 20th of October, organised by the gallery owner Maria Galea, presenting a small but nevertheless interesting collection by established Maltese artists of different styles and various achievements. These include Austin Camilleri and Darren Tanti who are both represented in the Maltese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale this year, academic and visual art lecturer Anton Grech, Adrian Scicluna, Paul Scerri – a founding father of modern Maltese art, Gabriel Caruana and the late Isabel Borg... We will see the extended gallery space soon, when it will also be open to the public.

Iniala5 Galleries are in Mosta and Valletta, and soon at Tigné and Thailand.



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ART + DESIGN

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Events until December



08.11.17

Until 11 Nov

ABU DHABI ART

WHERE: Situated in the cultural hub of the Middle East, this fair provides a destination for contemporary art enthusiasts in the United Arab Emirates.

WHAT: The ninth edition of the fair will feature a wide range of contemporary art mediums, including installations and sculptures, alongside an exhibit of local and international street art.

WHO: Art Fair aims to promote the history and culture of Abu Dhabi to both local and international visitors.



09.11.17

Until 13 Nov

THE SALON ART + DESIGN NYC

WHERE: New York City

WHAT: A place to inspire you to create impeccable spaces. From 1890 to the present, the exhibition has presented historical, modern and contemporary furniture, design and 21st-century artwork. You can find 20th-century masters alongside new emerging artists – a mix of fine art and contemporary design.

WHO: 56 galleries from across the globe showcasing high-end decor, blurring the lines between art and design.



10.11.17

Until 12 Nov

ART021 SHANGHAI

WHERE: The third edition of this globally-recognised ART21 fair, based in Shanghai.

WHAT: 21st century, mostly Chinese, contemporary art.

WHO: 75 galleries, the majority being local but also some internationally-renowned contributors such as the New York based Gagosian Gallery.



17.11.17

Until 19 Nov

THE AFFORDABLE ART FAIR

WHERE: Taking place in the bustling city centre, this will be the fourth fair to be held in Singapore.

WHAT: Making art accessible to everyone, this fair gives visitors the opportunity to not only fall in love with contemporary art but also to begin a collection of their own. A wide range of what Singapore and the surrounding Asian countries have to offer will be exhibited, from traditional ink painting and abstract canvases to prints, photography and sculptures. This particular fair focuses on new media works such as video and digital installations.

WHO: The work of over 500 artists will be showcased by 65 exhibitors.



7.12.17

Until 10 Dec

ART BASEL MIAMI

WHERE: One of the prestigious collection of Art Basel fairs, which have been held since 1970, the Miami Beach version – launched in 2002 – has now become North America's premier contemporary art fair, attracting over 70,000 visitors each year.

WHAT: A contemporary art wonderland, with art from every medium on display from both established and emerging artists.

WHO: Featuring more than 4,000 artists and 250 of the world's leading galleries, there is so much for visitors to see.



16.12.17

Until 10 Dec

DESIGN MIAMI BEACH

WHERE: Design Miami happens at the same time as Art Basel Miami, turning Miami Beach into a hotspot destination for art lovers at the beginning of December.

WHAT: The fair, which was first held in 2005, was an instant success as a global forum for many mediums of design, including 20th and 21st-century furniture, lighting and objects d'art. Two awards are given during the fair one for 'Designer of the Year' and the other for 'Designer of the Future'. The fair is followed by numerous auctions to sell the art-design pieces that have been exhibited.

WHO: The fair attracts high-profile private and public collectors, but also people who have a keen interest in historical and contemporary design.



05.12.17

Till Dec 10

SCOPE – MIAMI BEACH

WHERE: One of the SCOPE collection of fairs including New York and Basel, this 17th edition is situated in the art hub of Miami Beach, Florida.

WHAT: Founded by artists and galleries Alexis Hubshman, the fair focuses on fresh, emerging talent.

WHO: an estimated 55,000 visitors are expected to enjoy art from 140 international exhibitors from 25 different countries.

EUROPE / NOV-17

The Pick
European art fairs
in November
2017



COLOGNE FINE ART, 23-26 NOVEMBER

WHERE: Cologne, Germany.

WHAT: The fair highlights a variety of art mediums throughout history including antiques, Asian art, design, furniture, Old Masters, sculptures, watches and jewellery. The Cologne Fine Art Award is presented at the fair with a prize of €10,000 for the winner.

WHO: over 160 exhibitors showcased at the 2016 fair to 16,000 visitors during the course of four days.

THE AFFORDABLE ART FAIR HAMBURG, 16-19 NOVEMBER

WHERE: First launched in London in 1999, the fair gained popularity due to its innovative approach, and eventually 13 major cities from across the globe created their own version. The sixth edition held in Hamburg, Germany.

WHAT: Contemporary art, including a curated exhibition by six local Hamburg galleries.

WHO: 80 local, national and international galleries exhibiting

ART THESSALONIKI, 23-26 NOVEMBER

WHERE: The location of the fair has great significance to the cultural reference of the show. The Greek city of Thessaloniki was an important Roman-period metropolis with a recorded history spanning more than 2,300 years.

WHAT: Artwork based on the historical importance of Thessaloniki and the surrounding area.

WHO: The fair's debut last year attracted more than 10,000 visitors.

ART DUSSELDORF, 17-19 NOVEMBER

WHERE: Situated in the Ruhr Valley, the centre of an art hub that has over 10 million inhabitants.

WHAT: Modern and contemporary artwork dating from 1945 to the present day. Visitors can also view individual masterpieces from before 1945 in a different section, exhibited as 'references'.

WHO: Around 80 galleries, both established and new, from over 21 different countries.

PARIS PHOTO 9-12 NOVEMBER

WHERE: Situated in the Ruhr Valley, the centre of an art hub that has over 10 million inhabitants.

WHAT: Modern and contemporary artwork dating from 1945 to the present day. Visitors can also view individual masterpieces from before 1945 in a different section, exhibited as 'references'.

WHO: Around 80 galleries, both established and new, from over 21 different countries.

*Style is a simple way of
saying complicated things.*

JEAN COCTEAU

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ART FAIR

Art Basel Miami;

Art Basel takes place at the Miami Beach Convention Center (MBCC), Miami Beach, Florida, USA with over 500,000 square feet of exhibition space.

More than 200 of the world's leading modern and contemporary art galleries – from North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia – present paintings, drawings, sculptures, installations, prints, photography, film, video, and digital art by over 4,000 artists. Visitors can find works ranging from inexpen

sive editioned pieces by young artists to multi-million-dollar museum-calibre masterpieces.

The fair consists of different sections. Designed for galleries to present one, two or three artists showing work created within the last three years, the Nova sector features strong juxtapositions and never-before-seen pieces fresh from the artist's studio while Positions allows curators, critics and collectors to discover ambitious new talents from across the globe by providing a platform for a single artist to present one major project.

Edition presents leading publishers of editioned works, prints and multiples, exhibiting the results of their collaboration with renowned artists and giving visitors the opportunity to see significant and rare publications.

With Kabinett, in a separately delineated space within their booths, galleries present a curated exhibition by an artist of their choice. The diverse curatorial concepts for Kabinett include thematic group

exhibitions, art-historical showcases and solo shows for rising stars.

Survey presents precise art historical projects. These may include solo presentations by an individual artist, juxtapositions and thematic exhibits from artists representing a range of cultures, generations and artistic approaches.

As part of Art Basel's show in Miami Beach, large-scale sculptures and installations by leading and emerging international artists are set up in Collins Park. Public is curated by independent curator and critic Philipp Kaiser.

Miami Beach's history as one of the world's premier resort destinations makes it easy to find a wide range of accommodation, from the small art deco boutique hotels to luxurious beachfront resorts. Those going to Miami and looking for somewhere to stay should have a look at the Art Basel Miami website for some good recommendations and discounts on both hotels and apartments.



Henrique Oliveira EXLP 12, 2017



Kwame Brathwaite Untitled (Sikolo with Carolee Prince Designs), 1968, printed 2016



William Turnbull Duet, 1966 stainless steel



Sérvulo Esmeraldo Untitled, 1960



Tercerunquinto Restoration of a Mural Painting, 2000-2010.

Jean-Michel Basquiat. Untitled (Pollen Angel), 1981. Acrylics and oilstick on canvas. © The Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artista, New York.




JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT.

- for -

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OPTICIANS

* Spotlight / Event / London
Oct – Dec – '17



VISUAL ART AWARDS

Turner Prize London;

The 2017 Turner Prize is taking place in Hull. Although launched in 1984, since 2011, the Prize has taken place outside of London every other year. For this edition, it is being presented at Ferens Art Gallery in Hull as part of the UK City of Culture 2017 programme.

Since the prize was first established in the 1980s, it has become one of the most prestigious international visual arts awards and has both reflected and contributed to a growing public awareness and interest in contemporary art.

Originally, the prize could be awarded to anyone working in the arts (including curators, critics or gallery directors) for the 'greatest contribution' to art. But in 1988 this changed and the prize was awarded to artists only. Since 1991, when an age limit of 50 was introduced, the Turner Prize has been committed to showing new developments in contemporary British art and has played an important role in introducing

the work of emerging artists to the public. This year, it was announced that artists of any age will be eligible to be shortlisted for the Prize, acknowledging the fact that artists can experience a breakthrough in their work at any age.

The prize is awarded on an annual basis, to an artist who is born, living or working in Britain, for an outstanding exhibition or public presentation of their work anywhere in the world, during the previous year. The four shortlisted artists for 2017 are: Hurvin Anderson, Andrea Büttner, Lubaina Himid and Rosalind Nashashibi.

Winners of past editions of The Turner Prize include Damien Hirst, Rachel Whiteread, Grayson Perry, Chris Ofili, Wolfgang Tillmans and Antony Gormley, among others. The winner of the 2016 Turner Prize was Helen Marten.



Andrea Büttner, various works



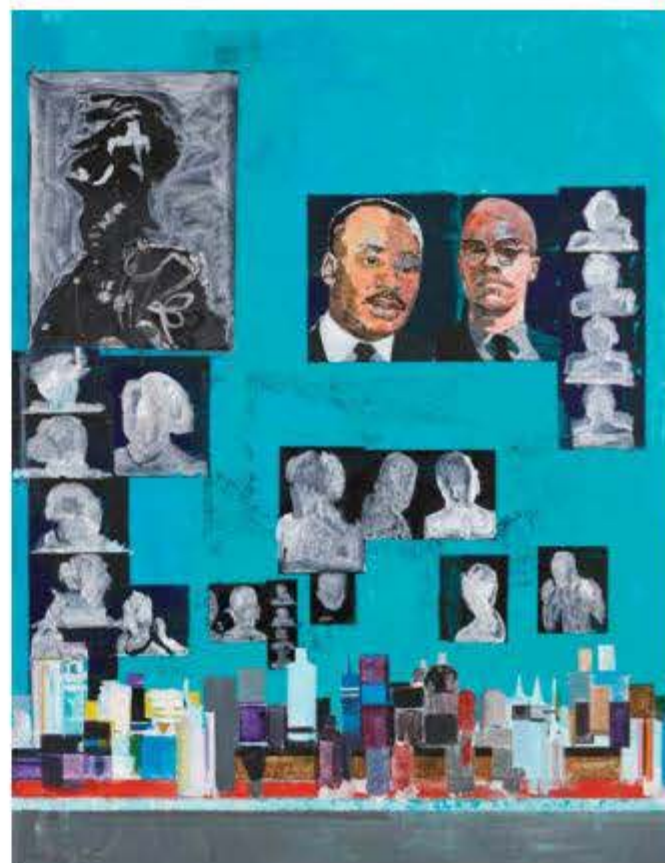
Lubaina Himid, Naming the Money (2004) at "Navigation Charts", Spike



2017 Turner Prize Nominees



Rosalind Nashashibi, A still from Electrical Gaza 2015



Hurvin Anderson, Is It Ok To Be Black (2016)



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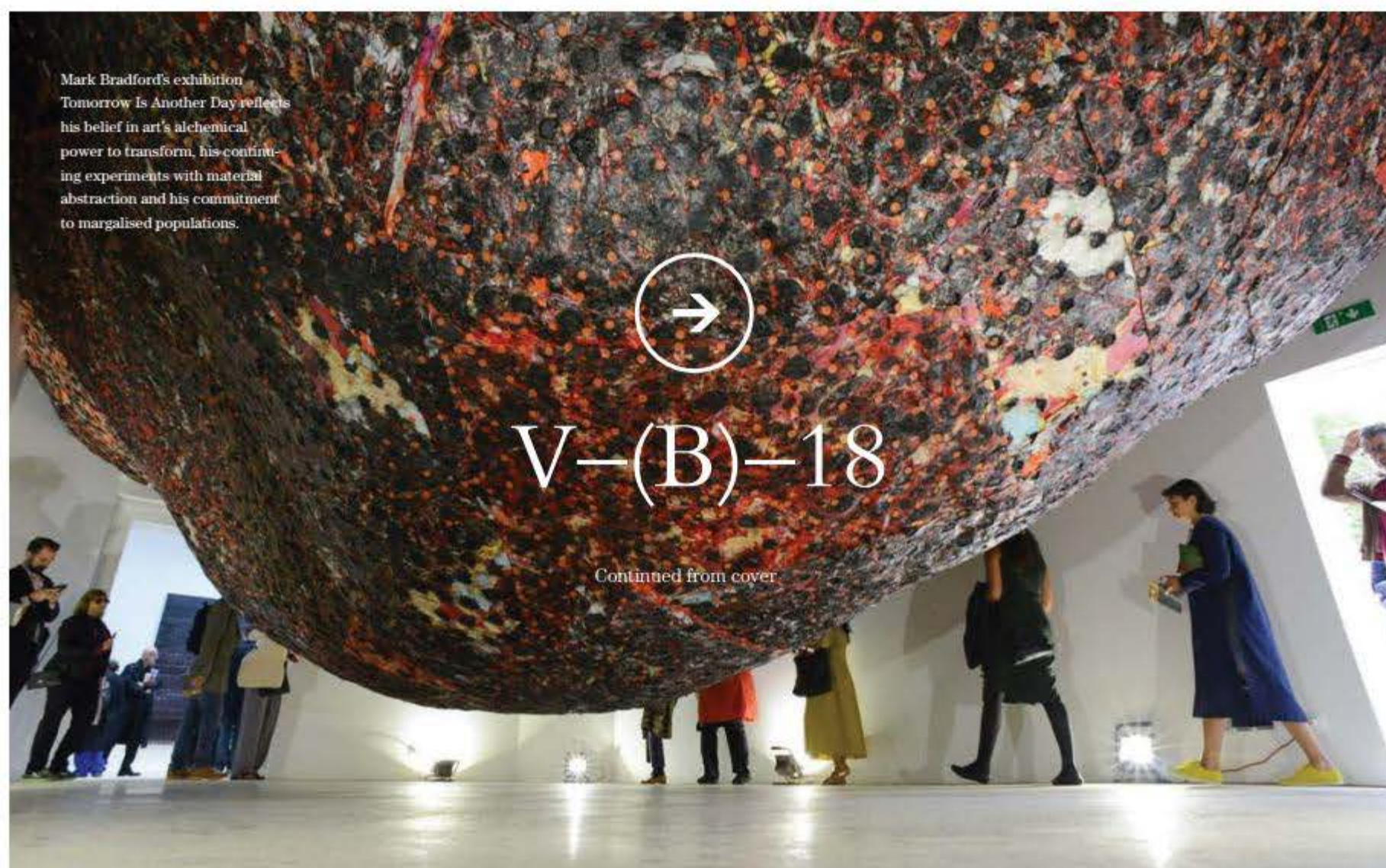
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* Spotlight / Event / Venice
Oct – Dec '17



VISUAL ARTS



Mark Bradford's exhibition *Tomorrow Is Another Day* reflects his belief in art's alchemical power to transform, his continuing experiments with material abstraction and his commitment to marginalised populations.

V-(B)-18

Continued from cover



Just to put you in the picture, the Biennale has been running since the late 1800s, and has not only showcased tens of thousands of artists from all corners of the earth, but has also featured the most prominent, cutting-edge and/or controversial modern and contemporary visual artists – the likes of Marc Chagall, Rene Magritte, Paul Klee, Lucio Fontana, Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud, Olafur Eliasson, Berlinde de Bruyckere, Joseph Beuys, Tracey Emin, Rachel Whiteread, Sarah Lucas, Damien Hirst, Anish Kapoor, Frank Auerbach, Maurizio Catellan and Yayoi Kusama – and that's barely scratching the surface.

The Venice Biennale is a gargantuan event, which takes place across two

venues – the Arsenale and the Giardini, as they are popularly known. And it literally takes (at least) two days to cover this event: a day each dedicated to both venues. A map and comfy shoes are a must, as are regular breaks for nibbles and caffeine intake, as the Biennale will leave you a little breathless, if not downright hung-over. And it doesn't even stop there. Doing the main event might give you a false sense of security but, in actual fact, the Biennale extends throughout Venice and even the Veneto region, with independent pavilions, pop-up events, collateral projects and museums/galleries, all setting-up ancillary and complementary exhibitions. Overwhelming? It is, but it's also the perfectly picturesque city in which to soak it all up.



Julian Charrière *Future Fossil Spaces*, 2017 Salt from Salar de Uyuni, lithium-brine in acrylic containers, dimensions variable



Rasheed Araeen *Zero to Infinity in Venice*, 2016-17 Painted wood, dimensions variable



GEORGE EYNAUD

Basquiat BOOM FOR EX- HIBITION

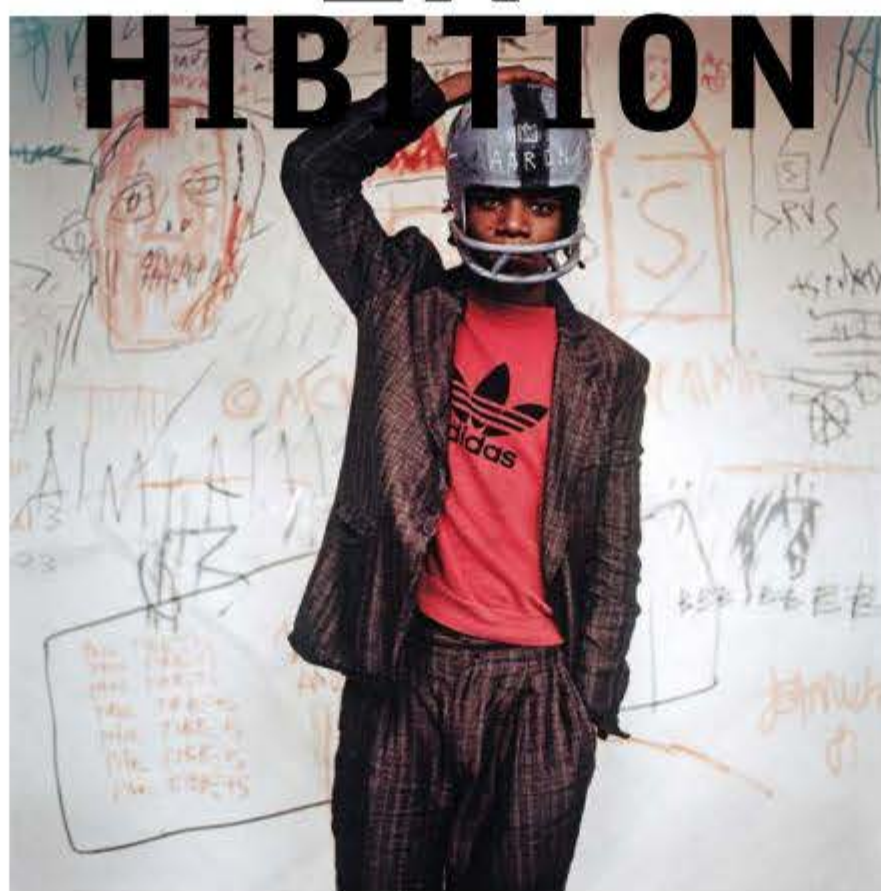
Drawing up to the Barbican's singularly unwelcoming Brutalist edifice after a harrowing journey across rain-sodden London, I was perhaps better prepared than ever to process this eclectic exhibition of one Jean-Michel Basquiat. You know Basquiat – everybody does: doomed junkie genius and morbid muse, ingénue of the street, lover of Madonna, whose spirit hovers far above the twin constellations of Hollywood and Hip-Hop, patron saint to the moneyed and the disillusioned alike.

All day I had been harassed by blaring electronic recordings, browbeaten by swivelling, automated machinery and eyed-up warily by armed police cradling their submachine guns with paranoid fervour (earlier that morning, a minicab had veered off the road and run over a bunch of tourists outside the Natural History Museum).

But nothing really prepares you for a head-on collision with a Basquiat, let alone an entire gallery crammed (in the best possible sense) with paintings from across the artist's short-lived, yet manically productive, career. They hit you like a sucker-punch to the gut. The immediacy of Basquiat's imagery, charged with the dark magic of the street, demands that you look beyond the well-worn threads of this familiar underdog tale.

Arriving seemingly out of nowhere, the graffiti legend known as SAMO (Same Old Shit) enjoyed a meteoric rise to prominence, living in a state of bohemian glamour, mingling with intellectuals and vagrants alike and becoming a source of intoxicating fascination for the otherwise jaded god of candy-coloured disaffection, Andy Warhol who, by that point, lorded it over the New York society scene like Kurtz in the jungle.

I look at his paintings and end up dreaming of the simple days that might have been, when a down-and-out kid in Brooklyn, wandering the streets with a spray-can in his hand and a poem of revolution in his heart, could become



king of the world, enthroned with his own trademark squiggle of a crown.

Then I catch myself, as Basquiat's paintings are wont to make you do. The life that actually once was is immeasurably different from the fantasy we fondly remember today, perhaps to assuage the still all too present ills of an otherwise distant time.

The artist Keith Haring remembers that, even at the height of his fame, Basquiat would still have trouble hailing down a cab on any given day. As a black man, he was both patronised and vilified, placed within the gilded cage of the commercial gallery circuit (almost literally locked away in the gallery basement in the run-up to his first solo exhibition, as the gallerist didn't trust him to produce on his own accord) and side-lined as a hotshot upstart, all gimmickry and empty tricks, a one-hit-wonder.

Unsurprisingly, Basquiat both resented and embraced his notoriety and felt

justifiable anger at being treated as an exotic novelty and unwilling savant, barely able to control or understand the meaning of his own output (which, as this show illustrates, couldn't be further from the truth – Basquiat's work is as erudite and driven by knowledge as the driest conceptual art of his time).

He also felt a fierce sense of pride as a person of colour breaking through the monolithic, rigid structures of the mostly white art-world hierarchy, blazing his own path with undeniable force. Assuming to understand the motivations of the dead seems unbecoming, yet this contradictory mind-set must have been of some consequence to the artist's self-destructive behaviour, which ultimately led to his early death at the tender age of 27.

Basquiat's contemporary, George Condo, recalls walking into an upscale New York restaurant with the artist, resplendent in his stylish garb of paint-covered Giorgio Armani suits matched with converse sneakers, effortlessly chic as

always. The maitre d' barked: "We don't allow his kind in here."

"You bastard!" Condo barked in reply, "Don't you know who this is? He is the greatest painter in this country!"

The Barbican show makes a strong case for Condo's assessment, and goes some way to showing how far the world has come in hailing Basquiat's almost eerily preternatural genius. There seems much more ground to be covered, however. Remarkably for such a popular icon (any teenager will instantly recognise the Basquiat style, and it is reproduced no end on trinkets and other merchandise), his work remains under-represented and rarely seen in public institutions. Indeed, this is the first large-scale exhibition of the artist's work in this country and his work is part of no major public collections here. This exemplifies the no small scale of institutionalised snobbery which exhibitions like the Barbican's aim to address, with good cause.

An exhibition such as this career-wide retrospective also serves to place the work in context, and therefore challenge previously established assumptions and clichés and bring the artist's voice to the fore – an angry, punchy, caustic, informed, intelligent and reverential voice, endowed with myth and history and as funny as hell. On a sprawling pictorial plane like an acid-trip cartoon western saloon in the middle of a shoot-out, Basquiat does something truly remarkable. He finds the space, amidst body parts being blasted to oblivion and swathes of hastily applied colour, to make erudite asides about language, Egyptian mysticism, anatomy, religion, science, art history and slavery: like the proverbial child wise beyond his years – an old head upon a young body.

Much of this comes from a childhood unexpectedly (to most) steeped in a rich education abounding with words, culled from both western text books and local Haitian folk tales. Many of these texts and their accompanying



+ Review / Exhibition / London

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illustrations took hold of the magpie-like artist's imagination during long periods of recuperation following a devastating childhood car accident that necessitated the removal of his spleen. Basquiat's mother, who struggled with substance dependency herself, gave him a copy of Gray's Anatomy to help while away the hours and a reproduction of Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp* in a favourite art book further cemented an obsession with the human body and its machinations. What sort of work might Basquiat have continued to pro-

duce were he alive today – he would have been 57 this year? It is impossible to say, and perhaps inappropriate to even speculate. He would have just done what he wanted to do. His life was so much wrapped around his art that it has become impossible to separate the two. For now, we can only enjoy what has been left behind – and what a great joy that is.

REVIEW SPONSORED BY



AFRICA

CHRISTINE XUEREB

The Ghanaian art scene breaks through

"Outside Africa, people think African masks are contemporary art, but in Africa they are not. They're just masks" said Tutu Agyare, co-founder of Accra's Nubuke Foundation, at a panel discussion at Gallery 1957 in August 2016.

'Non-Orientable Nkansa' from the exhibition *Fragments* at the White Cube Gallery in London, which was on display up to April this year. Image from www.okayafrica.com

Strong connections between a group of Ghanaian artists, galleries and international art fairs have been pushing for exciting themes of African art without jumping in with generalisations like the one that is stated above.

In fact, Ghana has seen a revolution in its post-colonial art scene since 1996, when students at the College of Art at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science &

Technology (KNUST) tested their boundaries whilst confronting the department's ideas on what art is, at a time when the college was already being criticized for being unprepared for the critical issues raised in contemporary art communities.

The students came up with guerrilla-style performances and different art forms that created controversy. This was followed with some silence on the subject of radical ideas, until the appointment of one of the 1996 students, K r i'k chā Seid'ou, as the Head of Faculty in 2003.

He established what he termed 'Emancipatory Art Teaching', in which he made each of his students curate his or her own show in a guerrilla-type, end-of-year project. Exhibitions were held in outlandish places such as mini vans, fast food bars, unfinished buildings, physical and virtual social

networks and so on. The more recent innovations resulting from this can be seen as a comeback of the revolutionary pioneer MFA class of 1996.

In the mid-2000s, K r i'k chā Seid'ou found engaging collaborators among the younger faculty, namely, Kwaku Boafo Kissiedu and George Ampratwum. With this team, he set up a network of artists and art professionals practicing outside Africa. To transform the radical experimentation into a long-term practice and collective movement, the contemporary Ghanaian art scene needed a stronger infrastructure and that was when blaxTARLINES KUMASI, a new project space for contemporary art, was established. The aim of this space was to open avenues for artistic and critical exploration while probing and deepening modes and bases of knowledge. Students from KNUST are encouraged to



Installation made from shoe-cleaning equipment called Non-Orientable Nkansa, 2017, by Ibrahim Mahama at White Cube Gallery

experiment with photography and video, digital art and new media, etc. Experiments tested in the city of Kumasi push students to make critical decisions on aspects of material, space, display, and exhibition-making. Accra's art scene has been getting a great deal of attention in recent years, thanks to these multimedia artists, including those of

international fame such as Ibrahim Mahama, Serge Attukwei Clotte, Yaw Owusu and Bernard Akoi-Jackson. Since 2011, the historic area of Jamestown, Accra, has also been home to the annual Chale Wote Street Art Festival (in August) which attracts over 10,000 visitors each year.



EXHIBITION

Magnelli: PAINTING REINVENTED



The Galerie Boulakia is delighted to host an outstanding new exhibition: 'Magnelli: painting reinvented', running from October 18th to December 7th 2017. The exhibition will bring together 25 paintings by Alberto Mag-

nelli – many of which have never been displayed in public before – in the first such showing of the artist's work in Paris since that held in the Galerie Maeght-Lelong in 1986. The exhibition will focus on paintings dating from the

1920s to 1930, completed in a style which the artist described as 'painting reinvented'.

This period from the 1920s to 1930 represented a key phase in Magnelli's career. During the course of the previous five years, he discovered the Parisian avant-garde art scene, which was the inspiration behind his first abstract works. He moved to Paris in 1932 to escape from the fascist regime in Italy and made the definitive move to abstraction with 'Pietre' (Stones).

In France, his paintings were often grouped with the 1920s 'Return to order' movement, whilst in Italy they were associated with De Chirico's and Carrà's rejection of Modernism. However, the artist emphasized that whilst his works from this period were figurative in style, they were no throwback to the past, but examples of 'painting reinvented'. Retrospectives of this period of Magnelli's career were held at the musée de Troyes in 2002, Geneva's Galerie Sonia Zannettacci in 2004 and the musée Magnelli, Vallauris in 2008.

The Galerie Boulakia, Avenue Matignon, Paris

LONDON



Jean-Michel Basquiat
Red Skull, 1982
Sold for \$16,546,250
(Estimate Upon Request)
Christie's London



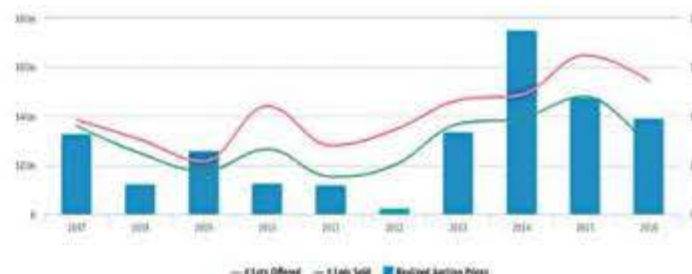
Francis Bacon
Head with a Raised Arm, 1955
Sold for \$11,483,750
(Est. \$7,000,000-10,000,000)
Christie's London



Lucio Fontana
Concetto Spaziale, in piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita, 1961
Sold for \$10,021,250
(Estimate Upon Request)
Christie's London



Peter Doig
Camp Forestia, 1996
Sold for \$15,421,250
(Est. \$14,000,000-18,000,000)
Christie's London



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VISUAL +
PERFORMANCE ART

FABRIZIO MIFSUD SOLER

[OFF-TOPIC:]

Budapest's independent art biennial returns for its second edition.



Budapest's OFF-Biennale is the largest independent arts initiative in Hungary. Launched in 2014 to help re-establish the foundations of an art scene outside official state institutions, the first Biennale hosted a solid programme featuring more than 350 artists from 22 countries in over 100 venues.

OFF-Biennale was the outcome of a struggle for a sustainable and critical-minded approach to art in a social environment that was witnessing increasing anti-democratic, segregationist and xenophobic tendencies. It continues to strive towards taking an active role in social discourse on public issues and to enhance a culture of democracy through art. Moving away from unchanging – seemingly set-in-stone – routines, unchallengeable protocols and the general mainstream, OFF continues its efforts to find its own path.

Establishing its own way of operating, the biennale is based on self-organisation and a voluntary collaboration of artists, curators, gallery owners, and collectors. OFF supports the work of Hungarian artists and brings the international art scene closer to the Hungarian public. It commissions new artwork, exhibitions, publications, events and education programmes hosted in private apartments, vacant shop premises, industrial buildings, alternative theatres and public places.

On 29 September, the OFF-Biennale returned for its second edition. Although this year's biennial revolves around the theme of Gaudiopolis/The City of Joy, its 'outsider' ethos remains the same, as does its distancing itself from Hungarian public funds and art institutions run by the state. Over the course of five weeks, this year more than 50 events are being held in venues in Budapest

and other Hungarian cities such as Pécs and Eger. Highlights from this year's edition include:

1. Society of Rascals (Towarzystwo Szubrawców) – Slavs and Tartars, Viltin Gallery, Budapest.

True to its body of work demonstrating social processes, historical links and often employing absurdity and humour, the Polish-Iranian/American artist collective Slavs and Tartars presented an installation in the form of a pickle-juice bar. The title, Society of Rascals (Towarzystwo Szubrawców) was drawn from the name of a now-forgotten literary society of 19th-century Vilnius. The society was famous for its heavily ironic satire that stood counter to the Romantics and their exalted engagement in nationalist discourse.

Slavs and Tartars references the group's 'pavement prose', or low-brow language, coupled with a cosmopolitan approach towards national identity. It brings in the centuries-old kitchen tradition of pickling – referred to as a cornerstone of national identity and pride in Eastern European countries – to turn sour the romantic conception of fatherland and power. This 'pickle politics' introduces paternalistic, nationalist visions from these countries with a sour, austere sense of humour.

Pickle juice, a well-known folk remedy, is advertised by Slavs and Tartars as the sour, sobering cure for the delirium of power. Such pickled juices, touted as an antidote for the pathos of Eastern European patriotism, were served on the day of the exhibition opening.

2. Somewhere in Europe there is an Animal Audience! – Marvin Gaye Chetwynd Headquarters of the Union of Steel and Metalworkers of Hungary

Marvin Gaye Chetwynd's *Somewhere in Europe there is an Animal Audience!* was produced specifically for OFF-Biennale and was realised with the participation of children and young adults from Budapest who took the roles of both actors and interlocutors with whom the audience could actively engage. The collaborative performance project, which includes mime, colourful animal costumes and projections, reworked Géza Radványi's 1948 film *Somewhere in Europe*. Based in the aftermath of World War II, the film's plot follows the life of a gang of orphaned children who emerge from a brutal situation to find a sense of freedom, empowerment and belonging. The film itself is based on the true and exceptional story of Gaudiopolis, an orphanage that existed in Budapest between 1945 and 1950. The narrative of Chetwynd's performance was formed through the participating children's own interpretation of the film. The animal costumes used were hand-made by Chetwynd, with some of them being produced by workshops with youngsters from a foster home in Budapest.

3. Breeze – Róza El-Hassan Muegyetem Rakpart, Budapest

Róza El-Hassan's project emerged from sketches she drew from memories of her Syrian grandmother's old domed house constructed from adobe, a clay-like material. She recalls how she discovered the same structure to be central to the research of a Californian architect who presented it as a case-study in natural air-conditioning, owing to its round shape and moderate fluctuation of temperature and moisture inside.

Conscious of the practical applications of the adobe dome structure, El-Hassan began to spread her drawings among architects and international relief organisations. She hoped they would build economical shelters for refugees from local materials rather than house them in tents and metal containers.

However, the response she received was negligible. El-Hassan remains hopeful that one day the harrowing images of displacement will be replaced by simple forms and materials in the same way that the breeze brings physical and spiritual relief in the desert.

4. For Me, Trianon – Anca Benera and Arnold Estefan, Anetta Mona Chisa and Lucia Tkáčová, Dávid Demeter, Nikita Kadan, Csilla Nagy, Olja Triška Stefanovic and Lana Stojicevic Chimera-Project Gallery, Budapest

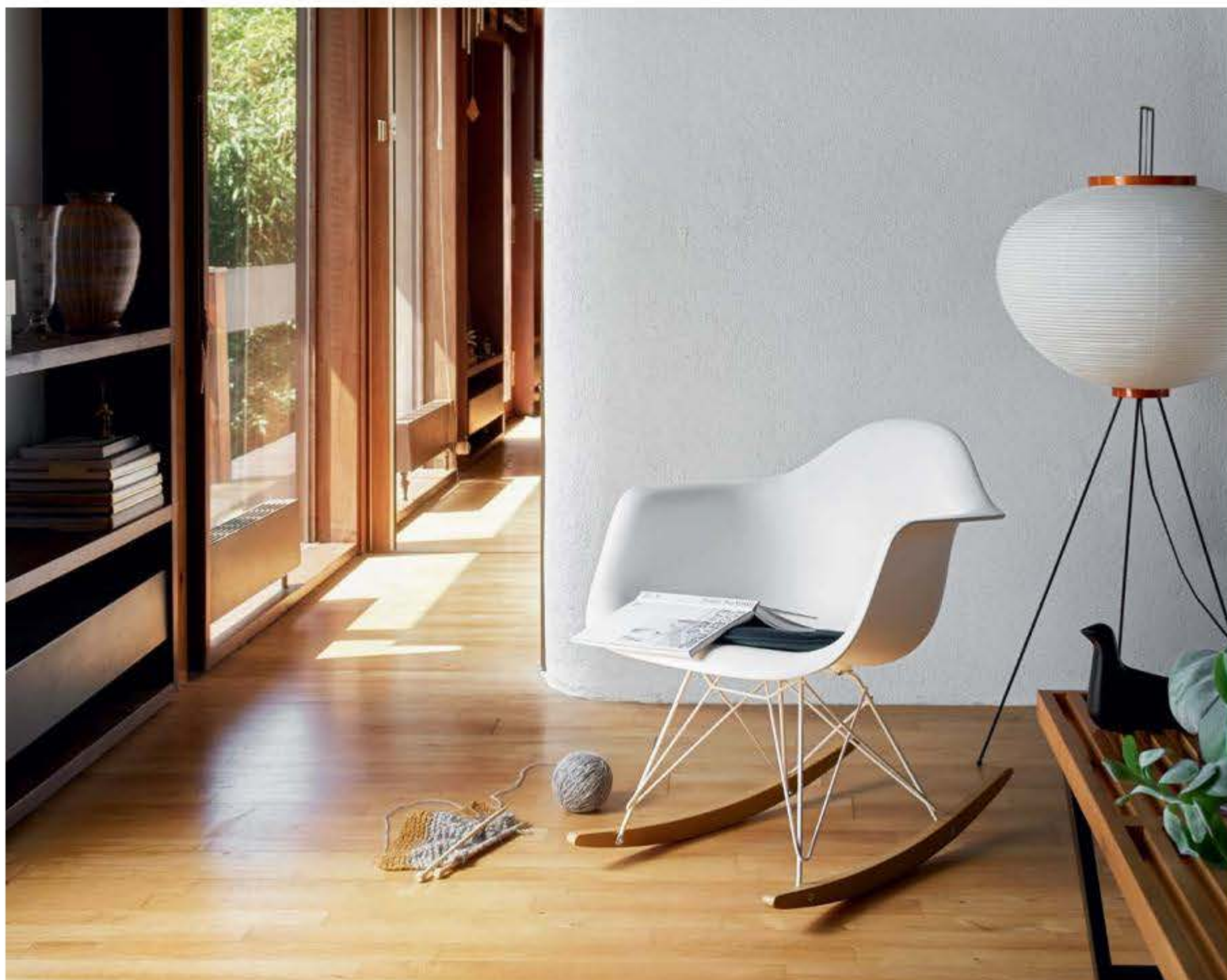
The curatorial collective Teleport Gallery chose to investigate the impact of the Treaty of Trianon from the perspective of young and middle-aged artists in the region. The project questions the relevance of the disappearance and reappearance of borders, the questions of emigration and immigration and dual citizenship within the confines of contemporary art practices.

Participating artists were asked for personal artefacts or images embodying the idea and importance of Trianon in their everyday lives and artistic attitudes. Presenting a personal and highly incidental collection in the format of an exhibition, the display aims to draw a mental map, influenced by the perspective of artists belonging to either a minority or majority group.

Although the Trianon today has been mostly regarded as a fetish by conservative and radical right-wing groups, the project provides an opportunity to explore new perspectives on the topic in the wider context of contemporary art.

OFF Biennale Budapest runs until 5 November www.offbiennale.hu

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* Spotlight / Auction / New York

Oct – Dec '17



IZ COLLINS

RISE *in the* CITY

What do 76 artists from around the world, who are conscientious about the world, have in common? They are all participating in the first rise in the city event – an international art event to inspire change!



Gustavo Duque - Souls in Hiding

I had a vividly interesting conversation about the event with Daniela Gusman, the founder of Rise (Relationship Inspiring Social Enterprise) at a rooftop café in Sliema. The idea is creative and inspired: Manhattan's skyline was mapped out in 100 virtual blocks and principal architecture firms, designers and artists have been invited or, as Daniela puts it 'challenged', to create artwork relevant to a NYC block of their choice. The works of art created should represent that block infused with some elements of Lesotho culture.

All the works had to have found some inspiration from Lesotho in Southern Africa, such as making reference to the white, blue and green colours of its national flag, the traditional blankets or the famous Basotho hat – or even re-interpreting the traditional Litema patterns that adorn Lesotho's vernacular buildings. The artworks could be anything from a sculpture, sketch, painting or photograph to jewellery or clothing.

Lesotho was chosen for this Rise pilot project for a number of reasons, one of which is Daniela Gusman's experience and network of contacts built up through living and working for years in this region of Africa, where she has initiated community-led development, trying to reduce dependency on aid and leveraging existing resources.

The 'in loco' (<https://riseint.org/programs/loco-lesotho-2017-18/>) project was conceived through the first-hand knowledge and awareness that, in Lesotho, especially in the rural and semi-rural areas, there is a fundamental lack of certain skills in the fields of construction and architecture that inhibits proper development in built environments.

To address this, Daniela and two other architects, Pedro Clarke and Luca Astori, devised a model to bring together local expertise as technical advisors to work on community projects. The purpose of Rise in The City (a non-profit organisation) is to fund this project 'in loco' in an effort to connect those with skills already in Lesotho with each other and if any gaps are identified, then connecting the right international people to compliment the teams as well. This type of approach is 'sustainable, dignified and makes sense for long-term change to be initiated'.

'In Loco' is a programme for 20 local graduates who have studied the Built Environment to attend a six-month design and build fellowship and entrepreneurial training programme. At the conclusion of this programme they will be equipped with the skills required to initiate other

community projects.

The benefactor of the programme is God's Love Centre, a home for orphaned or abandoned children, many of whom are HIV positive, in Sekamaneng, 15kms outside the Lesotho capital of Maseru. The house was designed to accommodate 20 children in two dormitories; however, it currently has 54 children with two to three sharing a mattress and is in great need of additional accommodation and study areas. All the proceeds from the Rise in the City event and online art auction will go towards the construction of an extra accommodation block combined with entrepreneurship training and mentoring for the staff and older children at

the orphanage so they can establish income-generating activities and reduce their dependency on aid.

Daniela, a Maltese by birth who considers herself a citizen of the world, has spent her life working on projects that make a difference in the community. This is rise's first event and the plan is that it will become an annual event on the New York arts calendar and become known as a creative and collaborative event, the proceeds of which will go 100 per cent to a selected social project in Africa.

The event is a combination of competition, online auction and live auction and New York was chosen for the venue due

to its vibrant art scene and high network individuals as well as the fact that it has a considerable number of top architectural firms.

Rise's co-founder is BOND events, who organise B2B events mainly for the architectural and design community and have strong networks in New York.

Initially, artists wishing to create an art piece chose one of the 100 Manhattan virtual blocks, and choices were made through a personal affinity or some other connection. Certain blocks were very sought after by the artists applying. All the blocks were also open for sponsorship packages. Some sponsors, such as architecture firms, opened the art piece competition internally and then chose the best piece to submit, whilst other firms sponsored their own physical block.

This provided the opportunity for artist and sponsor company interaction but was entirely up to the artist to decide the degree of the sponsor's involvement in the creative development of the work.

Some sponsors ended up very involved – resulting in a number of co-created works, whereas others are just having name placement as per the sponsor package.

The artists come from 15 different US states and 11 different countries and many will be travelling to New York for the live auction. New York – apart from the value of helping towards a good cause – is the ideal platform to increase their profile.

The venue chosen is New York's oldest synagogue, Angel Orensanz Foundation, a beautiful gothic building and an Art Foundation, so the monetary rental costs are fed straight back into the art world.

The job of exhibiting 76 artworks for a four-hour auction is not for the faint-hearted! A friend of Daniela from the New York art scene told her: "You're organising a four-hour art festival, not an exhibition!"

The top 10 artworks chosen by the judging panel will be auctioned live during the event night on 25 October, and the judges will announce the winner and present the prize: a trip to Lesotho from anywhere in the world.

Rise encourages all those who love art but cannot be physically at the event to take part and bid in the online auction.

The online auction needs to raise \$75,000. Any remaining funds needed will be raised from local donors in Lesotho. For more information and bids log on to www.32auctions.com/ritc2017

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House of Character Ref P000200727

A charming house of character with traditional features situated in the historical village of Rabat. The property consists of a welcoming hallway, a spacious living room, an adjacent modern kitchen and a separate dining area. A glass door leads to the courtyard, pool and deck area and the upstairs layout consists of three double bedrooms (two with ensuite facilities), a walk in wardrobe, family bathroom and a gym with a large spa bath overlooking the pool area.



Ta' Xbiex €1,230,000

Apartment Ref P000200415

A beautifully finished and designer furnished seafront apartment situated in Ta' Xbiex, forming part of a unique development. The layout consists of an open plan kitchen/living/dining area leading to a spacious terrace, with a barbeque area, from where stunning sea views can be enjoyed, three large bedrooms (main with a walk in wardrobe and ensuite facility), a guest bathroom as well as a spare restroom. Complementing this property are two car spaces included in the price.



Swieqi €485,000

Penthouse Ref P000183159

Designer finished penthouse enjoying lots of light with most apertures overlooking its own private terrace. The layout consists of an entrance hall leading into a large living room and a fully fitted kitchen/dining area all overlooking a massive terrace enjoying lovely valley views. Further in are two double bedrooms, two bathrooms, a box room and laundry room. This property is also complemented with its own airspace and a two car garage.



St. Julian's €595,000

Semi-Det 1st Flr Maisonette Ref P000201061

A semi-detached maisonette having three bedrooms (main with ensuite), a lovely sitting/kitchen/dining area, a study, main bathroom and a fourth bedroom at roof level with a separate cloakroom as well as a washroom/kitchenette. Furthermore this property has two roof terraces - one that could be converted into a large roof garden and a back terrace that could be used as a drying area. This bright and spacious maisonette also has an optional garage available.



Sliema €580,000

Apartment Ref P000197984

A highly finished, recently built, spacious apartment situated in a central part of Sliema, close to all amenities and overlooking two roads. Accommodation consists of a fully fitted kitchen, a large living/dining area leading onto a sizeable front balcony, a utility room, a guest bathroom, three double bedrooms (two with ensuite facilities) and two back balconies. Further complementing this property is an underlying basement one car garage.



Floriana €720,000

Apartment Ref P000196095

Double fronted seafront apartment overlooking a public garden and enjoying fantastic views of the harbour and the three cities. The property consists of an entrance into a grand circular hall, lounge/dining area, a separate kitchen/breakfast, three double bedrooms (main with ensuite facility), a main bathroom and a box room. Further complementing this apartment are two back balconies and a front terrace, making the property bright and airy throughout, as well as a car space.

For more information or an appointment contact **Neville Sciberras** on +356 9949 4851

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A Architecture / Museums

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KONRAD BUHAGIAR is a founding partner of Architecture Project and has been responsible for numerous restoration and rehabilitation works in historic buildings and urban sites. He has lectured in Malta and several countries abroad, published numerous historical articles and has been the Chairman of both the Heritage Advisory Committee and the Valletta Rehabilitation Committee. Konrad is also the chief editor behind our A Printed Thing and Founding Myths of Architecture publications.

Museum Piece...

What would the world be like, if there were no museums and no art galleries, I wonder. They have planted themselves within the urban fabric of our cities and onto the grey matter of our minds. Even the least assiduous of museum-goers would be at a loss were these institutions to disappear from our cities and our lives. They inform us about where we come from, they inform us about who we are and they give us clues about where we go to next. They are like silent beacons, anchors transcending chronological time and providing stability against the shifting tides of life. Not unlike the multifarious religions that accompany us as we grow, they provide answers to the eternal questions of existence.



Punta della Dogana, Venice



So it comes as no surprise that the first museums were churches and temples, structures erected to celebrate life and the after-life. All manner of builders, craftsmen, sculptors and artists were commissioned to decorate these buildings in order to impress upon the faithful the message of the divinity in whose hands their destiny lay. The stories told, and the myths created, by the painters and sculptors who contributed to the sumptuous interiors of our places of worship, provide a narrative that contains our imagined origins and the desired meaning of our individual lives.

Our individual lives also have their separate story that is written by the artists of the time. Throughout the centuries, great palazzos and residences were home to the works of major and minor painters whose images depicted great historical events, ancient myths, religious symbols and scenes from everyday life. All this, together with libraries and cabinets-of-curiosities, repositories for knowledge and ideas in the case of the former and of the known physical world in the case of the latter, were museums in the making.

It was the Enlightenment, and the great social upheavals that took place at the end of the 18th century, that provided the seed for the modern-day museum. The French Revolution irrevocably destroyed the feudal patronage structures that had, up that

point, fed the art market. The Declaration of the Rights of Man created the concept of heritage and the common good, and the first collections of fragments retrieved from the destruction of monuments – the erstwhile symbols of the ancient regime – were catalogued, displayed and thrown open to the public at the Monastery des Petits Augustins in Paris.

The rise of the middle class went a long way towards eliminating the concept of Divine Right, propagating advancement through personal achievement and consolidating the concept of material wealth and collective property. The old-world, institutional museum or art gallery, the domain of the educated bourgeois, was born.

The 1960s and 1970s changed all that. The hippie revolution, Vietnam and the war against the establishment took Art out of its revered niche, brought it down to the ground and installed it on the tarmac. Malraux wrote Museum without Walls and the Centre Pompidou dematerialised the bricks and stones of the traditional, neo-classical façade. It turned the building inside out, brightly coloured ducts, pipes and all, and pulled the public square into the building together with its inhabitants, the Parisians, the tourists and the flâneurs (strollers). Art aligned itself with the manufacturing industries as an economic force, its container became a factory and

the masses were targeted as unwary consumers. The Tate Modern, the museum that installed itself inside a power station, is a curious symbol of this new vision: art as a commodity and a luxury. Contemporary art is capitalist art.

Undeniably, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the advent of the post-modernist world played its own tricks on art as well – on its production, its consumption and its container. The new museum, like the art that it serves, follows no rules or, let us say – as Jean-Francois Lyotard, one of the foremost philosophers of the Post Modern condition – wrote: 'Contemporary Art works without rules in order to formulate later the rules that emerge from what was done.' And so does the contemporary museum or gallery. It could be narcissistic, and rival the works of art themselves, like Gehry's Guggenheim in Bilbao. Or it could be humble and neutral, a simple contemporary implant inside an old structure. Such is Tadao Ando's scenography for the Pinault collection at the Punta della Dogana in Venice, which plays second fiddle to the Grand Canal that seeps into the spaces and surrounds the works of art themselves.

To my mind, this is the ultimate museum. Like Calvino's 'Invisible Cities', it speaks of 'La Serenissima' in all her vague and seductive forms. So although you could

sometimes feel you are walking through the product of a surreptitious marketing machine, driven by the economic engine of the art world, this elegant fusion of the sublime location and the artworks themselves reveals, as in an epiphany, the magic and ineffable nature of Art. Canaletto, carnival and Catellan's marble corpses are all there – symbols not only of the dream-like splendour of Venice but also of the power of Art, a spectacular show made of both luxury and of lies.





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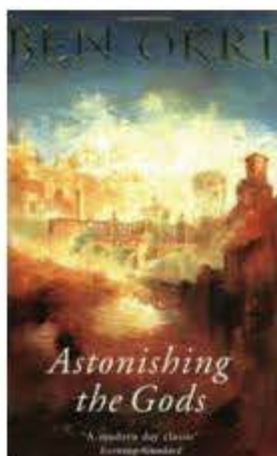
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B Books / Richard England

Oct – Dec '17



Astonishing the Gods
Ben Okri

A contemporary fairytale enriched by Okri's sensuous, magical prose. This surreal narrative is a real treasure: a journey through a dream-like world recounted in a melodious language, a modern-day myth equal to those of ancient Greece.

Okri sculpts and paints with words, with an extraordinary poetic ability. Each time I have read this book – and I have read it over and over again – its musical literary magic and its mysterious loci have repeatedly enchanted me. It is a book I have time and time again recommended to many of my friends.

Astonishing the Gods, like many of Okri's books, stems from the ancestral oral traditions of his native Africa, recounted in a contemporary alchemy of reality and reverie mantled over with a deep philosophical overlay. My favourite quote from the book, a perfect example of how prose can be alchemised into poetry, is: "the houses, buildings and offices were all majestic and all of stone, but it was of a stone that seemed in a permanent state of dreaming. As he passed them, then he felt that one day he would understand their dreams." Okri refers to his writing as being "structured round an idea of a suite" with a leading melody running through it. There is no doubt that his writing is indeed musical, both melodic and mellifluous and also sonorous.

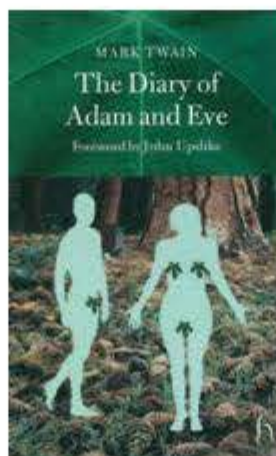


The Little Prince
Antoine de Saint Exupéry

An infectious book if ever there was one, this is basically the story of an airman who is lost in the desert and an intergalactic little prince who is searching. Rich in poetics with underlying philosophical themes, and illustrated with Saint Exupéry's own water colours, the publication remains to this day the paradigm fairy tale. It extracts the child inside the adult, regaling grown-ups with a story to curb the demise of their childhood. Above all, it remains a heart-warming parable with lasting power but also an allegory of human behaviour focusing on the importance of feeling in lieu of seeing.

The book constantly emphasises the difference between the viewpoints of children and those of adults. It is also a pedagogical lesson on the important values of life: after accentuating the futility of power, the narrative turns poignant and intense to emphasise the importance of friendship and love, reminding us that relationship ultimately means responsibility.

As the little prince, in his touching farewell, tells the aviator that he will forever hear his laughter in the stars, so also will I forever recall this didactic fairy tale reverie on the wisdom of childhood and the healing power of caring.



The Diary of Adam & Eve
Mark Twain

Mark Twain – in a humorous, witty narrative – allegorically recounts the initial experiences, encounters and adventures of our primal ancestors in the Edenic garden compound. This humorous account is also about the gender divide, with Adam yearning for solitude and quietude and to be left on his own and Eve, talkative and intrusive. However, after a long and frictional co-existence they learn not only to live in harmony but also to love one another. Adam is always portrayed as the male prototype, passive and cautious, while Eve, as the feminine archetype, is involved and experimental. The book may, however, be read on many levels, also as a study of the male and female psyche and the polarity between men and women. Adam is perturbed by the new arrival: "this new creature is a good deal in the way... I wish it would stay with the other animals," as is also Eve on viewing Adam for the first time: "I followed the other experiment around yesterday afternoon, at a distance, to see what it might be for. But I was not able to make out. I think it is a man. I have never seen a man... and I feel sure that this is what it is. I realise that I feel more curiosity about it than any of the other reptiles. If it is a reptile and I suppose it is, for it looks like a reptile. It has no hips; it tapers like a carrot and when it stands it spreads itself like a derrick, so I think it is a reptile, though it may be ARCHITECTURE". Regretfully, it is Eve who listens to the Satanic snake and takes its advice to eat the forbidden fruit, which is why we are where we are today and not frolicking and rollicking in paradisiacal arcadia. To my mind, Twain's genius story-telling of this Edenic tale is one of the most amusing narratives that I have ever read.

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