On June 30 and July 1, 2023, an interdisciplinary seminar will be held at the Gaîté Lyrique (Paris). It is the initiative of four institutions based in France and in the Western Balkans: the École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts de Paris-Cergy (ENSAPC), Art Explora—Paris, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Skopje (MoCA) and Oral History Initiative (OHI)—Pristina. This seminar is the first chapter of the European program Culture. EUBalkans (2022–2024) whose aim is to encourage the circulation of artists, researchers and cultural actors between the Western Balkans and the European Union and to promote the dissemination of their practices and their researches. It receives

The École nationale supérieure d'arts de Paris-Cergy (ENSAPC) is a public institution of higher artistic education under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture which trains artists and creators who are active on the international scene. ENSAPC's resolutely cross-disciplinary offerings span a wide range of disciplines, linking the visual arts, writing, live performance, sound, film, and theory. It is a locus of lively contention and fruitful exchange, a space in which ideas, knowledge, and experience collide and coalesce in complementary ways.

Founded by Frédéric Jousset in 2019, Art Explora is an international foundation that renews the dialogue between the arts and audiences at all scales. The aim is to contribute to democratizing access to culture, and to reaffirming the central place of artists in the face of the great challenges and changes of our time. This aspect is illustrated more particularly through the residency programs for artists and scholars, and in particular "Art Explora - Cité internationale des arts" program launched in Paris in 2021 at the Cité internationale des arts de

Founded in 1964 after the Skopje earthquake and as a result of numerous donations of artworks to the City of Skopje from artists and institutions around the world, the **Museum** of Contemporary Art (MoCA)'s mission is to nurture and disseminate the values of modern and contemporary art that define the living culture and society of our time. Its building is an example of late modernism architecture with a total surface of 5000 square meters.

Oral History Initiative (OHI) is a non-profit organization based in Kosovo, composed of a collective of researchers from different generations, ethnicities and backgrounds. A pioneer in new media formats, OHI's practice is in the field of digital humanities, cultural heritage and memory studies. The Initiative engages with Kosovo's history in a non-formulaic way, trying to recover the interplay of individual and collective memories, beyond constructed group narratives – whether ethnic or national.

La Gaîté Lyrique – Factory of our times is a City of Paris cultural center that seeks to address pressing cultural, social democratic and climate issues. Its Factory of our times project combines creation and social engagement to put ideas into practice and bring stories to life, to foster artistic creation and the spread of ideas, empower people, break down barriers, move in new directions and build fresh impetus. La Gaîté Lyrique is designed as a toolbox for artists and changemakers to improve their ability to create and take collective action, to join together



ART EXPLORA

ART E

Wake up on Mars

Interdisciplinary seminar dedicated to the cultural scene of the Western Balkans

Gaîté Lyrique, Paris 30.6-1.7.2023

Free admission. Online booking required **here**



PROGRAMME

DAY 1, JUNE 30, 2023

9:40 am Opening remarks by Corinne Diserens, Juliette Donadieu, Camille Kingué and Blanche de Lestrange

> MORNING SESSION: 10 AM-1 PM Moderators: Camille Kingué, Vincent Enjalbert and Jovanka Popova

Lecture by Arnisa Zeqo, art historian-curator, 10 am director of Kunsthuis SYB in Beetserzwaag A Flute, a bell, waters: Fragments of a fictional genealogy and futurity

The title of the presentation refers to a series of artistic feminist trips in Albania that Zeqo took together with artist Bora Baboçi and editor Leah Whitman Salkin in 2020 -2021. How can friendship and fiction help construct a feminist genealogy and how can that be embodied in future actions? Thought of as a sharing of resources and references, the presentation aims to give a glimpse into different elements that have been present in the ongoing curatorial research of Zeqo into the feminist traces in the Balkans and particularly Albania: from the poems of June Jordan on the Kosovo War, a re-reading of Monique Wittig, two sister painters in the 30s, to the importance of water, music and poetry.

Lecture by Mira Gakjina, director of MoCA, Skopje Solidarity, virtue of the 21st Century

While most museums are founded to support an identity and result from the state's action or a private initiative, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Skopje was initiated and created spontaneously by the artists themselves as a key cultural element of the reconstruction after the massive earthquake that hit Skopje (then Yugoslavia) in 1963. The initial motivation and expression of solidarity as well as exterior factors increased the enthusiasm for this extraordinary project which became authentically international. The geographical and stylistic diversity of the unusual museum's collection of thousands of donated artworks attests to the heterogeneity of the world's art scene. Today, MoCA is aiming once again to reexamine its social role and the importance of its collection, successfully soliciting and engaging with renowned artists for a new wave of solidarity action. Solidarity as a motive is reaffirmed as a necessity in the global society of the 21st century.

Lecture-performance by Hristina Ivanoska, artist, Skopje/Berlin Document Missing: Lecture no. 2 (When Remembering Becomes Forgotten)

My artistic practice is entangled around the issues of suppression, control, and construction of collective memory regarding women's resistance strategies and politics. During my presentation, I will focus on my ongoing research project *Document Missing* (2014–) which is a compilation of works produced in different mediums: performances, photography, objects, textile, and typography. This project emphasizes the lack of recognition of women's history in Macedonian society and its links to current forms of political activism and theory. In my performances based on found or lost documents and oral interpretations of events, I "inhabit" the character of Rosa Plaveva (1878–1970), a Macedonian fighter for women's and workers' rights, whose narrative was forgotten, or simply erased, from the official history and the national state archives.

1 PM-2 PM: LUNCH BREAK

AFTERNOON SESSION: 2:15 PM-5:30 PM Moderators: Camille Kingué and Vincent Enjalbert

2:15 pm Lecture by Dr. Olsi Lelaj, IASKA, Tirana The argonauts and the eagle: The making of modern anthropology in Albania

I first read The Argonauts of Western Pacific (1922) by Bronisław Malinowski as a freshman at the University of Malta. Then, I had no idea what anthropology was, nor would I have imagined how it would change my life. Returning back to my country with a degree in Anthropology and Sociology, I met a group of young researchers working at the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Art Studies. After joining the IASKA, I discovered the rich history of ethnographic researches and publications carried out mostly by Albanian scholars from 1947 onwards. However, the way we approached research topics and their relationship to theory contrasted sharply with the very romantic and patriotic view that scholars of older generations had of their objects of study. This lecture will outline the foundation of modern anthropology in Albania drawing attention to the questions, research issues, publications and activities upon which a group of scholars who are not so young today - shifted this discipline's objects of study from tradition to modernity. It will then focus on two major research projects that will shape Albanian anthropology for the next decade.

3:15 pm Lecture by Diana Malaj, activist, co-founder of ATA (Them), Kamza

Can the subaltern do theatre? Theatre in Kamza as an aesthetic and political act

The activist group ATA founded in 2014 in Kamza (Albania), uses theatre as a language to bond with its community. Through theatre, ATA tries to elaborate, understand and criticize social relations on stage. For more than 9 years now, ATA has regularly organized theatre performances as artistic and political practices that establish collectives and raise awareness on the importance of civic engagement to face the lack of local and central cultural policies, corruption scandals in urban planning and infrastructure, damage and mismanagement of public property, and ecocide state interventions in national parks. Through the work of Augusto Boal (Theatre of the Oppressed) and Jacques Ranciere (The Emancipated Spectator), my presentation will attempt to explore how theatre can be staged outside conventional spaces, from marginal communities coming from different neighborhoods

4:15 pm Film screening Wake Up on Mars (2020, 75 min, VOSTENG) by Dea Gjinovci

In Sweden, a family from Kosovo is confronted with the rejection of its asylum application. The two daughters are traumatized and victims of the "resignation syndrome" which plunges them into a long coma. In the face of this atrocity, Furkan, 10 years old and the youngest of the family, shows incredible resilience and embarks on the construction of a spaceship as a horizon towards all possibilities.

and its social and political implications in Kamza and beyond.

EVENING SESSION: 6:00 PM-7:30 PM Lecture by Alush Gashi, director of Kino ARMATA, Pristina Kosovo Cinema: Nouvelle Vague

Kosovo cinema has experienced a remarkable evolution and growth in recent years, reflecting the cultural and social changes in this small but vibrant Balkan nation. Emerging from the aftermath of the Kosovo War, the country's film industry has become a powerful medium for storytelling and self-expression, often revolving around the war's consequences, identity, social issues, and offering a window into the country's history and contemporary challenges. It has produced a diverse range of works, including documentaries, feature films, and short films, garnering international recognition and acclaim. Filmmakers from Kosovo have brought their unique perspectives to global audiences, shedding light on the resilience, struggles, and aspirations of the Kosovar people. Despite facing financial constraints and limited resources, it continues to flourish, thanks to the determination and creativity of its filmmakers and to festivals such as DokuFest Short and Documentary Film Festival and the Prishtina International Film Festival (PriFest). Drawing attention on Kosovo cinema's potential to shape narratives, challenge stereotypes and contribute to the cultural landscape of the region and beyond, the lecture will focus on its recent evolution and future perspectives.

Performance by HAVEIT, art collective, Pristina Shaving Patriarchy

Men with bigger beards are viewed as more respectable, loyal, and strong. This perception is rooted in traditional beliefs that associate beard with masculinity, wisdom, and power. It can influence how men are evaluated in various contexts, including work, romance and social interactions. For instance, men with larger beards may be seen as more authoritative, trustworthy and competent, which can enhance their leadership potential and social status. Overall, this social phenomenon illustrates how physical attributes can affect people's perceptions of individuals and their behavior. The performance will thus consist of four women shaving their "beards" by shaving patriarchy.

DAY 2, JULY 1, 2023

9:40 am Opening remarks by Corinne Diserens, Charlotte Fouchet Ishii and Bruno Julliard

MORNING SESSION: 10 AM-1 PM

Moderators: Camille Kingué, Vincent Enjalbert and Jovanka Popova

Discussion between Erëmirë Krasniqi, director of Oral History Initiative, Pristina, and Arbnora Dushi, research advisor at the Institute of Albanology, Pristina On folklore, oral history and the digital sphere

The conversation between Erëmirë Krasniqi and Arbnora Dushi will focus on the close relationship between folklore and oral history. The paradigm shift in folklore studies in the second half of the 20th century has created new challenges for the discipline. By opening up to other scholarly disciplines and practices, such as memory studies and oral history, folklore redefined its frontiers. In the same period, oral history practice gained ground in scholarly circles by empowering less visible subjects in becoming narrators, allowing them to shape and intervene in historical discourse. This conversation will also consider the role of technology, which, resisted at first, opened up new spaces to study and reimagine folklore and provided important tools for oral history by sustaining and activating cultural memory through digital archives.

Lecture by Gjorgje Jovanovik, artist and program director of SCS Centar-Jadro, Skopje I'm just trying

In his lecture, Gjorgje Jovanovik will focus on a selection of his solo and group performances in which he makes a specific use of humor to touch upon serious topics relating to social context, interpersonal relationships, personal stories and tragedies, public space and freedom of expression, as well as the extremes of human behavior in situations of adversity. All these performances aim to go beyond the art object to reach interactivity and collaboration.

Lecture by Dr. Branislav Dimitrijevic, professor of History and Theory of Art at the College of Art and Design, Belgrade A case for an alternative art education in peripheral conditions

The world we inhabit is threatened by injustice, deprivation, economic segregation, lack of solidarity (or any affirmative social ideal), the poisonous role of media and a global feeling of distrust and disillusionment. This is particularly obvious in peripheral regions like the Western Balkans. In such context, art education has fell in a gap formed between the remnants of a closed system of conservative academic inertia and the demands for the artistic work's self-sustainability on the market within the neo-liberal mantra of "creative industries". Art academia is now driven by its servitude to an imaginary art market (which, in the region, is almost inexistent, or exists in a perverted sense). It is unable to pull itself out of the vicious circle of an inherited immobility that results in mental isolation and creative mediocracy. It seems that art education does not provide any grounding in which artists may respond and intervene in the conditions of contemporaneity, whilst the contemporaneity itself is continually growing elusive, precarious and beyond reach.

X 1 PM-2 PM: LUNCH BREAK

> AFTERNOON SESSION: 2:15 PM-5:15 PM Moderators: Camille Kingué, Vincent Enjalbert and Jovanka

2:15 pm Presentation by Veton Nurkollari, co-founder and artistic director of DokuFest, Prizren Screening of Sans le Kosovo (2017, 22 min, VOSTENG) by **Dea Gjinovci** followed by a conversation between Veton Nurkollari and Dea Gjinovci

Veton Nurkollari will present the history of the renowned Kosovar festival DokuFest, screen a short video from one of its editions and discuss its impact and today perspectives. Together with filmmaker Dea Gjinovci, they will then introduce her very personal film Sans le Kosovo which tells the story of her father and his escape from Kosovo as a political refugee. It is a road movie in which the father returns to Kosovo for the first time, more than 30 years after his exile. A discussion between Veton Nurkollari and Dea Gjinovci and a Q&A will follow the screening. They will also evoke the filmmaker's current project.

3:15 pm Lecture performance by Natasha Nedelkova, artist and researcher, Skopje An "optical lead" and the platforms for monetized toxicity

There are links between the fake-news industry in the city of Veles, North Macedonia, the Slavic divinity of Veles (Volos) and its visual resemblance with the self-proclaimed shaman Jason, one of the most visible figures in the attack on the Washington Capitol on the 6th of January 2021. The ex-Yugoslav city of Titov Veles first became famous after it was classified by WHO as the world's most polluted city, due to its toxic zinc and lead factory located in the city center. The toxic environment, with a cheap and stable internet connection and a high unemployment rate, drove a group of young people to create hundreds of fake news sites, contributed to the creation of radicalized far-right groups like QAnon and eventually influenced the US elections in 2016 in support of Donald Trump. This occurrence granted Veles a new identity as the World Capital of Fake News. The intervention dwells on the dark and suffocating atmosphere of this city and draws parallel lines between the environmental and media pollution.

4:15 pm Lecture by Valentina Bonizzi, artist and researcher, co-founder and director of Bulevard Art and Media Institute, Tirana Bulevard Diaries—A way to tell an institution in Tirana

On September 23, 2021, Bulevard Art and Media Institute opened to the public. Housed in the underground spaces of a building that was once home to Gazeta Bashkimi, a prominent newspaper during Communist times, Bulevard uses contemporary art and discourse to contextualize archival narratives through historical processes. The program is conceived through storytelling structures, starting from intimate, personal experiences to critically unpack and learn from the past. This presentation will focus on Diaries, an open archival project that looks at Lindart and the Albanian Association of Women Artists to explore the 90's in Albania through a feminist

EVENING SESSION: 6 PM-8 PM

Reading by Ornela Vorpsi, visual artist and novelist, Paris 6 pm

"I want to talk about a novel in progress and its intertwining with painting. The finality will be twofold: a novel to be published by Gallimard and an exhibition. This is the first time I will bring together in a common form my two artistic practices. This association, which I have always dreamed of, has not been possible until now, despite various attempts. The narrative (as I envision it) and the paintings concurrently will unfold the experiences of the narrator, a young Albanian woman who has just recently disembarked from her homeland, in the weeks and months following her arrival in Paris, caught between the enthusiasm, joy, amazement and the threat of engulfment. Être ou ne pas être une Parisienne is a literary and pictorial project about the power of an unknown world to drive you mad as well as to lead you back to yourself. What is madness today? What new names have we given it? What ancient figures haunt them, as a city is haunted by all its pasts?"

Performance by HAVEIT, art collective, Pristina 7 pm Examination

Examination is a performance that addresses the pervasive issue of sexist language in the parliament of Kosovo while amplifying the voices and experiences of the more than 20,000 rape victims during the war. It utilizes unconventional elements to shed light on the role of women in contemporary society. Four women, each embodying different aspects of womanhood, stand before the audience, their attire signifying the traditional roles often assigned to women in the domestic sphere. Through synchronized movements, powerful symbolism, and immersive storytelling, the performance aims to inspire dialogue and celebrate the strength and resilience of

WORKSHOP

Reservation is required for this workshop

"Five lost kilometers of the Bièvre"

JULY 1, 2023, 2 PM-4 PM

Workshop by Bora Baboçi, artist in residency, Art Explora - Cité internationale des Arts program Visions of a Buried River? Workshop related to her residency project

Workshop

From June to August 2023, the focus of my residency as part of the Art Explora - Cité internationale des Arts program will be the changing perception of the river Bièvre in the collective memory of Paris and how it informs our understanding of the relationship between nature and the city. A stinking open sewer, highly polluted by the industries that made use of it, half of this Parisian river was completely concealed by 1912. "Tomorrow, this once beautiful river will be walled up and bewitched like a sorceress during the middle ages" mourned *Le Figaro* as the 20th century approached. The Bièvre thus represents the tragic degradation of natural resources as a result of industry. In her article "A Lost Paradise on the Left Bank: An Ecocritical Analysis of J.-K. Huysmans", Claire Nettleton argues that the river's disappearance coincides with the birth of the decadent movement in literature, which had an ecological underpinning. Alfred Seegert describes it as "cloistered, indoor, disembodied artificiality" comparing the virtual ecologies of these writings with modern day virtual reality and hypermediated spaces of artifice. Today, through a process called "daylighting rivers", several rivers around the world have been brought back to the surface. Sections of the Bièvre have also re-opened. When speaking about the necessary adaptations for the future of Paris, Dan Lert, the city's deputy mayor for climate, water and energy said "La Bièvre is one of the great tools that we have". However, on the 33km of the Bièvre, eleven are canalized under slabs and five have disappeared under rubble and urbanization in Paris. I am specifically interested in these 5 kilometers that have been lost, as a subject, space of contemplation, critique and artistic expression. For the workshop these topics will be explored in relation to the river Bièvre as well as other water flows that have been the subject of my work in the past, such as the Shannon River in Limerick, Ireland and the Lumbardhi river in Prizren, Kosovo

VID EO PROGRAM Curated by Oral History Kosovo

JUNE 30-JULY 1, CHAMBRE SONORE

Thematically diverse and politically dense, the program presents video works produced in Kosovo in a span of over two decades. The selection brings together visual artists of different generations, who have incorporated video into their practice as a means to engage with ideas of trauma, identity, mobility, women's experiences within the patriarchy and national imaginaries prior to Independence. Through a reflexive and self-aware praxis, the video works move their register from private to public, and at times stand as historical footnotes. The program positions these works as prisms to navigate cultural production and as lenses to read political transitions of a country-in-the-making.

Sokol Beqiri

Video, color, sound, 5'58"

In the screen incorporated into the tummy of Laa-laa from the Teletubbies, Sokol Beqiri inserts his own video story. His testimonial about confinement in his studio during the 1999 war makes him vulnerable as he recounts the struggle to maintain composure for his family's sake and assure them that they would be safe. While revisiting his time in the studio, he taps into a traumatic experience. He is torn between his own fear, which infantilizes him, and the duty of embodying a Superman-figure for others.

Lulzim Zeqiri Heroes, 2003

Video, color, sound, 3'40" The work addresses the position of Kosovo artists within their own context and Europe wide. To solve the first question, Zeqiri stages three musicians in an oriental-style setting to play a traditional melody. Rhapsodic in form, the lyrics draw references from the contemporary art world. Staged as such, he elevates the status of the artists and brings it closer to that of a hero, which is the only currency by which Kosovo society communicated value in the aftermath of war

In the work *Three Virgins*, the artist listens to a performance by Yoko Ono and John Lennon calling each other by their names, before starting to call his own name "Jakup! Jakup!" inviting himself in the

Three Virgins, 2003

Jakup Ferri

Video, color, sound, 6'30"

conversation and carving out a place for himself among these stars. Driton Hajredini Sin, 2004 Video, color, sound, 7'27" In the video Sin, Driton Hajredini, a Muslim, enters a Catholic confessional

addressing a question to the priest: what "sin" must Kosovo

Albanians have committed to be so consistently "punished"? Could

being born in Kosovo be sin enough to deserve exclusion from the European Union and the restriction of movement?

Nurhan Qehaja The Flag, 2005

Video, color, sound, loop (extract) A naked woman and the Albanian flag are in dialogue; their secret meeting in the middle of the night to sing the "forbidden" national anthem represents the uncanny that raises awareness on the human body's relationship to time and space, as well as the struggle of one's selfexpression in the search for one's own identity.

Fitore Isufi-Koja

Japan, 2006

Video, loop, 2' The flag with its iconography resembling the Japanese one: a white background with a red circle, questions persisting traditional social aspects of today's contemporary society. Therefore, the flag of the cult of compulsory virginity that judges someone's value based on their sexual behavior within the current context becomes a flag of obscurantism, male power, social arrogance and manipulation.

Kaltrinë Rrustemi

Nxehtësia e djepit [The cradle's warmth], 2015 Video, color, sound, 3'18"

As a child of émigrés, the artist's world is split (at least) in two, between here and there. As she weaves her narrative, moving from left to right in a close-up shot, she recreates the double-sided swing reminiscent of the traditional Albanian cradle. These pushes from both sides, be they political or cultural, creates a position for her to inspect closely what is that warmth of the cradle made of.

Dardan Zhegrova & Samuel Weniger

I kissed your kiss on your girlfriend's cheek, it was still wet, 2016 Video, color, sound, 8'07"

Through beautiful footage of different local architectural sites and poetic language, the work deals with queer visibility and asks a question which is suggested in the title itself: What's it like for a man to be into another man who isn't into men while they still are together?

SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES

Bora Baboçi lives in Tirana, Albania. She studied architectural design and theory at the University of Toronto, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella in Buenos Aires, and holds a Master's degree from the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya. In 2017, after working for several years in different fields of architecture, she iniated an independent practice, diffusing her spatial research with visual and performative arts. Residences include: Salzburger Kunstverein, Austria (2022), Il Lazaretto, Italy (2021) Eva International, Ireland (2019), ZK/U Berlin, Germany (2017). Exhibitions include: Manifesta Biennale, It matters what words world worlds: how to tell stories otherwise, Kosovo, (2022), Autostrada Biennale, What if a journey, Kosovo (2021), Mediterranea Biennale, School of Waters, San Marino, (2021), National Gallery of Albania, Ambitions (2021).

Valentina Bonizzi is an artist and researcher based in Tirana. Her work incorporates storytelling through film, writing and radical pedagogical practices to question the politics of representation and narration. She holds a Master of Research from Glasgow School of Art and a PhD from the Visual Research Center (DJCAD), Dundee. Valentina is a co-founder and director of Bulevard Art and Media Institute and her studio is Academy of Others.

Branislav Dimitrijević is a Professor of History and Theory of Art at the College of Art and Design in Belgrade. He teaches and writes on art and culture of socialist Yugoslavia; avant-garde art, contemporary art and exhibition histories. His books include: Consumed Socialism - Culture, Consumerism and Social Imagination in Yugoslavia, 1950–1974 (Fabrika knjiga, Belgrade 2016), Dušan Makavejev's Sweet Movie (MOCA, Belgrade, 2017) and most recently Yugoslavia: How and Why? (Museum of Yugoslavia, Belgrade, 2019, w. I. Erdei T. Toroman). Since the mid-1990s he has been active as a contemporary art curator primarily interested in exploring sitespecificity and context-specificity. Among others, his curatorial projects include *Good Life* (Geozavod, Belgrade, 2012, w. M. Hannula) and No Network (2011), the first edition of the Time Machine Biennial in the nuclear bunker in Konjic, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Arbnora Dushi is research advisor at the Folklore Department, Institute of Albanology in Pristina. She holds a PhD. from the University of Prishtina, and completed her postdoctoral studies at the University of Turku (Finland). Her research focus on the application of modern folkloristic theories and methods on researching and studying Albanian folklore, more specifically on the connection between oral history methods, disciplines of memory and border studies. She has published many articles in national and international scientific journals and conference proceedings.

Mira Gajkina is an art historian, art critic and curator. She was teaching at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje and received her PhD in Art Management. She served as President of AICA North Macedonia Since 2017, Mira Gakjina is the Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art Skopje (MoCA). She has organized and curated numerous exhibitions and curatorial projects in the country and abroad and published her writings in art books and magazines.

Alush Gashi is the director of Kino ARMATA, a public space in Pristina, Kosovo, promoting alternative culture and social dialogue. He is the founder of No Recess, a music-driven art platform, and INIT communications agency and film production company. With academic experience in economics, journalism and computer science, as well as years of involvement in managing media-related projects, he is the director and producer of four documentary films and a frequent contributor to local and international media on social and cultural topics.

Dea Gjinovci is a Swiss-Albanian director and producer. Her films have premiered in prestigious international film festivals including Tribeca Film Festival, Visions du Réel, IDFA, CPH:DOX, Hot Docs, DocNYC, Winterthur KurzFilmTage and many others... Her cinematographic style blends poetic narration, magical realism and cinéma vérité. She won several awards including "Best National Film" at 2017 Dokufest, "Best new Talent" mentions at both ZagrebDox 2021 and Biografilm 2020. She is a member of the Swiss Film Academy since her "Best Documentary" nomination for Wake Up on Mars in 2022. Gjinovci is also a member of the European Film Academy.

HAVEIT is an art collective formed by four women, Alketa and Lola Sylaj and Hana and Vesa Qena, who use performance, photography and video to explore social issues in Kosovo. Haveit is known for its public performances, which, in most cases, protest against gender stereotypes, women and LGBT+'s discrimination. The collective was founded in 2011 after the murder of Diana Kastrati who was killed by her ex-husband.

Hristina Ivanoska works with objects, text, drawing, video, performance and installation, often interdisciplinary, and critically investigates the experience of present-day social and political systems and their relationship to theory and history. She validates handcraft such as embroidery, weaving, pottery, and quilting as mediums of political and social value and as a representation of individual struggle and limitations. Ivanoska has exhibited at the Budapest Gallery, Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova +MSUM, Ljubljana; Manifesta 14 Prishtina; 2nd Autostrada Biennial, Prizren; Kunsthalle Darmstadt; WUK-Werkstätten und Kulturhaus, Vienna; Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb; Museum of Contemporary Art Skopje; MUMOK, Vienna. Since 2000 she is collaborating with Yane Calovski and their installations were exhibited at the Kunsthalle Wien, Art Encounters Foundation, 56th Venice Biennial—Pavilion of the Republic of Macedonia.

Gjorgje Jovanovik is a visual artist and program director of SCS Centar-Jadro in Skopje. In his recent work, he re-examines interpersonal communication in the context of the general situation of redefining universal values, man-society relations, and consumerism as a key factor of modern life style, politics and the disintegration of cities, states, and families... He has conducted numerous solo exhibitions in North Macedonia and abroad and has taken part in various international group exhibitions, and residency programs.

Erëmirë Krasniqi is an art writer, curator and researcher based in Pristina, Kosovo. She received her M.A. from Dartmouth and B.A. from Bard College, as well as attended a year-long postgraduate program in curation and museology at the Friedrich Schiller Jena University. Her writing has been published among others in Kosovo 2.0, Frieze and Artforum. As an independent curator, she has curated projects for the National Gallery of Kosovo, the National Gallery of Arts in Albania, the 39th EVA International, Ireland. Her curatorial and research practice engages with oral histories and critical fabulation to counter silences in historical research. Since 2017, Krasniqi is the executive director of Oral History Kosovo, an open-access digital resource which engages with new forms of cultural production, supporting and advocating the essential work of media archives.

Olsi Lelaj is a scholar of the anthropology of modernity and head of the Department of Ethnology at the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Art Studies (IAKSA), Tirana, Albania. His research focus on topics such as class formation and the role of the modern state, ethnographic knowledge in dictatorship, modern ideologies and intellectuals, and post-communist urban spaces. He is the author of Nën Shenjën e Modernitetit: Antropologji e Proçeseve Proletarizuese gjatë Socializmit Shtetëror në Shqipëri [Under the Sign of Modernity: Anthropology of Proletarianization during State Socialism in Albania] (2015) and co-author (with Nebi Bardhoshi) of Etnografi në Diktaturë: Dija, Pushteti, dhe Holokausti Ynë (2018) He is also the co-editor of the special issue of *Urbanities* titled "The Dreams and Nightmares of City Development: Urban Planning, Ideologies, and Social Movements in Contemporary Cities" (2017).

Diana Malaj is from the city of Kamza, in Albania. She has completed a master degree in Law at the University of Tirana and is currently a PhD. student in Law & Politics at the University of Graz. She is one of the founders of the collective ATA (Them) in her city and the editor of the local newspaper founded by the collective, Nyje.al. Together with other activists, she engages with various disciplines and practices, from law to ethnography, activism to journalism, and essay writing to artistic performances.

Natasha Nedelkova is a visual artist and researcher. Her art projects contrast the digital allure of realism, resemblance, immateriality, totality and converge with the pleasures and complexities of computational, algorithmic and ludic digital culture. By using narration as a tool to reframe and fragment ideas, she aims to grasp and reconfigure social and political transitions. She obtained a bachelor's degree at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje and a Master's degree in Film Studies at École Normale Supérieure de Lyon.

Veton Nurkollari is the artistic director of DokuFest, Kosovo's largest cultural event and one of the most important documentary and short films festival in South East Europe, which he co-founded in 2002 with a group of friends. He is also one of the curators of DokuPhoto, an annual showcase of documentary photography that runs alongside the film festival. Veton is a member of the selection committee of Cinema Eye Honors, a New York City based organization honoring innovative nonfiction filmmaking. He is also one of the founding board members of The Albanian Cinema Project, an initiative to bring awareness and assistance to the plight of the Albanian National Film Archive. He is currently involved in a coaching and mentorship program for young filmmakers from Kosovo within the

"Future is Here" training program.

Ornela Vorpsi was born in Tirana, Albania. She lives and works in Paris and is currently a resident at the Cité Internationale des Arts. After studying at the Akademia e arteve te bukura in Tirana, she continued her training at the Academia di Belle Arti di Brera. She went on to study philosophy at the University of Paris VIII. For decades, she has found refuge in writing and photography, while continuing to paint. An unconscious choice (at first) to write about the sad magma of her past, using another language, a language stripped of the style through which her childhood was filtered. She first turned to Italian, her second language, and then to French. She participated in the Venice Biennale 2016 and collaborated with curator Harald Szeemann. She has written several books published at Actes Sud: Le Pays où l'on ne meurt jamais (2004) for which she received numerous Italian awards, including the prestigious Grinzane Cavour and Viareggio, *Tessons roses* (2007), *Vert venin* (2007) and *Ci-gît l'amour fou* (2012).

Arnisa Zeqo is an art historian, curator and educator, currently working with Art Explora as a curator of a performance series in Durres. Albania. She co-founded Rongwrong, a space for art and theory in Amsterdam and is now director of Kunsthuis SYB in Beetserzwaag. In 2021/22 she was researcher in residence at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam where she worked on the intersection of (auto)fiction, performance and printed matter. In 2015-2017 she worked for documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel, responsible for the education programs (aneducation) in Athens and initiator of the Society of Friends of Ulises Carrion within the Parliament of Bodies. The writings of Jane Bowels and June Jordan give a liberating feeling to her methodologies.











