

SILENT THREADS, RESOUNDING KOSOVA

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SISLEJ XHAFA INVITES

LUAN BAJRAKTARI / ARIANIT BEQIRI / BURIM BERISHA

AGRON BLAKÇORI / JETON GUSIA / ARTAN HAJRULLAHU

BLERTA HASHANI / HATIXHE IBRAHIMI / LUMTURIE KRASNIQI

MIMOZA LIZA / PETRIT MALIQI / BRILANT MILAZIMI

VALDRIN THAQI / DARDAN ZHEGROVA / ERMIR ZHINIPOTOKU

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GALLERIA CONTINUA is pleased to present, in its exhibition space in Paris, in the heart of the Marais, the group show *Silent Threads, Resounding Kosova*.

Curated by Kosovar artist Sislej Xhafa, the exhibition brings together fifteen artists who are shaping Kosova's contemporary art scene. GALLERIA CONTINUA, a longstanding supporter of Sislej Xhafa's projects worldwide, is proud to partner with him in this curatorial endeavor, shedding light on his country's artistic output, which has gained heightened significance following the success of Manifesta 14 in Prishtina in 2022.

The exhibition reflects Sislej Xhafa's ongoing dedication to promoting the art of his homeland, a commitment he has actively pursued through the ARKIV Institute of Contemporary Art. Founded by Xhafa in 2018 as an artist-run space, ARKIV seeks to foster community building by uniting people through art and ideas, thereby encouraging collective engagement and international dialogue.

The artists featured in the exhibition provide a compelling reflection of Kosova's broader population, connecting the pioneering generation of Sislej Xhafa, with the younger generations. While their voices and socio-historical contexts are distinct, they successfully converge on shared ground for dialogue, particularly at the intersection of international and local trajectories – an enduringly significant theme for Kosovar artists.

With the youngest demographic in Europe and a median age of just 32 – shaped by the legacies of war and emigration – Kosova's youthful energy is vividly expressed through its emerging generation of artists. Their work resonates with the experiences of youth in Kosova today, reflecting both the challenges and the dynamic drive to shape the nation's future, both artistically and politically. The title *Silent Threads* thus evokes the subtle yet potent bond that links these artists together, while also alluding to the unspoken theme of Kosova's

isolation within the European context. As Sislej Xhafa stated in his conceptualization of the exhibition:

"Silent Threads where expression transforms into form, shaping timeless stories that transcend boundaries.

Silent Threads, Resounding Kosova is a celebration of creativity, a vivid testament to the power of art to illuminate history and inspire possibility.

This exhibition gathers the voices of artists, voices rich with transformation, connection, and boundless imagination. The threads that weave through this show speak quietly but powerfully. They carry stories of depth and meaning, resonating with the essence of a vibrant culture and a shared humanity. These threads transcend borders and barriers, extending an invitation to witness, feel, and connect with the experience as it transforms into memory.

Through the expressive depth of painting, the sculptural elegance of form, and the immersive reach of installation, these artists present a mosaic of beauty, tradition, and vision.

Each piece is part of a larger tapestry, a singular voice contributing to a collective chorus. This is art that inspires, that calls for reflection and dialogue, creating pathways toward shared understanding and endless possibilities.

As Silent Threads arrives in Paris, it brings with it the rich stories and vibrant energy of a culture. Here, the unseen becomes visible, and the intangible takes shape, forging connections through the unifying power of imagination."

The artists featured in the exhibition either continue to live in Kosova, actively enriching and contributing to the growth of the local art scene, or support their homeland's artistic environment from abroad, helping to promote Kosovar culture on a global scale. For most of

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them, this marks their first exhibition in Paris. GALLERIA CONTINUA is proud to enhance their visibility by providing a platform that highlights Kosovar art in Paris, one of the world's foremost art hubs, while amplifying the powerful and universal messages embedded in their work.

About the artists:

Sislej Xhafa (b. 1970, in Pejë, Kosova) lives and works in New York. He is known for his artistic investigation into the social, economic and political realities associated with the various complexities of modern society. Xhafa has over the years highlighted his artistic work on economic and social themes, political realities, as they interact with the protean variety of modern society. His investigations, for example, into phenomena of tourism or forced illegality use a minimal language and they are at the same time ironic and subversive, practicing indifferently a wide range of media, from sculpture to drawing, from performance to photography.

In March 2022, Sislej Xhafa was appointed Honor Academician of Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze.

In 2022, Xhafa founded ARKIV, the Institute of Contemporary Art, in Pejë, Kosova. A public, non-profit NGO located at the current public school 'Vaso Pash Shkodrani', ARKIV was inaugurated in July 2022 with a personal exhibition of artist Artan Hajrullahu.

"Reality is stronger than art. As an artist I do not want to reflect a reality, but I do want to question it. My social upbringing does not embrace, rational linear actions. I approach the world and life with primal instinctive behaviour. Interview of G. Tawadros with Sislej Xhafa, catalogue of the exhibition *Transmission Interrupted*, Modern Art Oxford, 2009."

Luan Bajraktari (b. 1979) is an artist expressing himself through drawings, social actions, ceramics, sculptures, and installations. He lives and works between Vienna, Austria and Prishtina, Kosova. Among his recent exhibitions: *Balkanization, Human Wanted*, Friday Exit, Vienna, Austria (2016).

Arianit Beqiri (b. 1996) is a conceptual artist. He lives and works in Rome, Italy. Among his recent exhibitions: *Announcement*, ATELIER SO & Hamburger Kunstgalerie, Hamburg, Germany (2022).

Burim Berisha (b. 1980) is an artist specializing in sculpture and installation, lecturer and curator. He lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. Among his recent public art projects: *Unknown Soldier*, realized with the support of the Municipality of Prishtina.

Agron Blakçori (b. 1981) is a contemporary artist known for his sculptures and installations. He lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. Among his recent exhibitions: *A munda imagjinosh këtë si diçka të bukur?*, National Gallery of Kosova, Prishtina, Kosova (2018).

Jeton Gusia (b. 1980) is a painter. He lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. Among his

recent exhibitions: *Ordinary Idylls of Modern Life*, National Gallery of Kosova, Prishtina, Kosova (2022).

Artan Hajrullahu (b. 1979) is a painter and educator at the Visual Arts High School of Gjilan. He lives and works in Gjilan, Kosova. His work was featured in Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022). Among his recent exhibitions: *Silence Took a Hold of the Rooms*, ARKIV Institute of Contemporary Art, Pejë, Kosova (2022).

Blertha Hashani (b. 1997) is a painter. She lives and works in Ferizaj, Kosova. Her work was featured in Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022). Among her recent exhibitions: *Memorizonim*, LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina, Kosova (2024).

Hatixhe Ibrahim (b. 2000) is a visual artist. She lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. Among her recent exhibitions: *Subversive Parallels*, NOfade Biennale, Prishtina, Kosova (2023).

Lumturie Krasniqi (b. 1997) is a visual artist. She lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. Her work was featured in Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022). Among her recent exhibitions: *Awakening*, Museum of Contemporary Art Skopje, Skopje, Macedonia (2023).

Mimoza Liza (b. 1995) is a visual artist. She lives and works between Vienna, Austria, and Prishtina, Kosova. Among her recent exhibitions: *Artists of Tomorrow Awards 2022*, Stacion - Center for Contemporary Art Prishtina, Prishtina, Kosova (2022).

Petrit Maliqi (b. 1994) is a painter. He lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. Among his recent exhibitions: *Ens Potentia*, Galeria e Arteve, Gjilan, Kosova (2023).

Brilant Milazimi (b. 1994) is a painter. He lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. His work was featured in Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022). Among his recent exhibitions: *One Ball for All*, LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina, Kosova (2023).

Valdrin Thaqi (b. 1994) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Prishtina, Kosova, and Berlin, Germany. His work was featured in Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022). Among his recent exhibitions: *There is a place, where the sidewalk ends*, East Contemporary, Milan, Italy (2023).

Dardan Zhegrova (b. 1991) is an object- and performance-oriented artist. He lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. His work was featured in Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022). Among his recent exhibitions: *A Model*, MUDAM, Musée d'Art Contemporain du Luxembourg, Luxembourg (2024).

Ermir Zhinipotoku (b. 1997) is a visual artist. He lives and works in Prishtina, Kosova. Among his recent exhibitions: *Ephemeral Echos*, LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina, Kosova (2024).

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