

Promoted and developed by
BJCEM - Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean

Republic of San Marino
Ministry of Education and Culture, Department of Tourism and Culture, Cultural Institutes - San Marino National Gallery,
San Marino University

United Kingdom
UK Young Artists

Republic of Cyprus
Ministry of Education and Culture, Cultural Service

Republic of Greece
Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs, General Secretariat for Life Long Learning & Youth Directorate for Youth
Culture and Social Participation Department

Open call *A Natural Oasis?* *A Transnational Research Program* curated by Alessandro Castiglioni and Simone Frangi

A long-term training and research program open to curators, art writers and cultural researchers, under 34 from
Cyprus, Greece, San Marino and UK

Deadline *May 21st 2018, at 1 pm Italian time*

1 – PROPOSAL AND PROGRAM

A Natural Oasis? is a two years nomadic free school dedicated to the development of new curatorial research paths in the field of contemporary visual and performing arts starting from the geopolitical peculiarities of the artistic scenes of those European **territories which are commonly considered remote, marginal, small, insular or liminal**.

The purpose of this project is to build a transnational cultural platform able to critically question the ideas of **territorial remoteness/marginality/smallness/insularity** through the lenses of artistic research, triggering a reflection on the fictional procedures that empowered the idea of Europe in its geopolitical and cultural immunity via the exclusion or the vampirization of its “provinces”. The project aims to develop radical curatorial and artistic discourses assuming geo-cultural areas as polemical fields in which a precise ecology of fluxes describe their cultural, economical and political morphology. Moreover, this project focuses on the controversial shortage of cultural professionals in “peripheral” cultural and artistic systems in relationship with on-going processes of educational centralization and with the concentration of artistic legitimation processes in big European “centres”.

A Natural Oasis? is a transnational research training based on the tools that social sciences provide to contemporary cultural practices and develops specific context-aware professional figures in the frame of a global contemporary artistic scene. The aim of the project is the development of what we can call situated practices in the context of a specific locality but with a transnational perspective. *A Natural Oasis?* bases its working methodology on the tactics of conversational and dialogical research and on the main strategies of oral history. In this view, work sessions, visiting professors’ lectures and seminars will be characterized by a discursive approach based on study and in-depth analysis but also on storytelling and **more fluid transmission of diverse knowledges**. The project privileges an idea of knowledge production through direct rough experience and travelling experiences in the territories accompanied and tutored by local partners.

The final result of *A Natural Oasis?* will be composed **by a performative lecture series, an educational program to be organized after the training program** and an editorial object, which will include critical essays and visual researches developed by curators, visiting professors and participants during the program.

2 – APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Young curators aged up to 34 (born from January 1st 1984) from: **Republic of Cyprus, Republic of Greece, Republic of San Marino and United Kingdom**, shall send the following:

A) a dossier documenting their studies and research and/or new projects as well as the methodology characterizing their specific field (compressed Pdf, Quick Time or MP3 formats of max. 6MB).

B) a motivational letter proving their specific interest in the program and for the theoretical matters detailed in point 1 (max. 1 page).

C) application form, downloadable here: <http://www.bjcem.org/a-natural-oasis-2018/>

All the dossiers, motivational letters and application forms shall be sent to application@bjcem.org not later **May 21st 2018**, at **1 pm Italian time**. Any application not complying with the requirements will be automatically rejected.

3 – SELECTION MODALITIES

The dossiers will be evaluated at their incontestable discretion by curators Alessandro Castiglioni and Simone Frangi and up to 6 practitioners will be selected from these countries: **Republic of Cyprus, Republic of Greece, Republic of San Marino and UK.**

4 – TERMS

The participation to this call is free of charge.

Please notice that no fee will be provided to the selected curators.

The participants will be selected during the weeks following the deadline for application detailed in the announcement and selection results will be communicated immediately on BJCEM website (www.bjcem.org). The selected participants will be contacted by email.

Travel and accommodation expenses for the selected curators for the first step in Palermo will be covered by the partners of the project.

Meals expenses must be covered by the selected curators.

For the steps foreseen in 2019, fundraising activities are undergoing, and all the efforts will be done by the project partners to secure the funds and/or help the selected curators to apply for mobility grants.

5 – THE PROGRAM

The project is based on a structure of 5 theoretical paths, developed during the two years of work. The five paths questions differently the identity of contemporary Europe, its crisis and identity, helping curators in the research and the productions of new works, ideas, and connections. All these paths share the desire to internationalize, develop, and give shape to art practice within a dialogue with cultural and political context, advancing themselves in a strong link but also in an independent and critical way with institutions but also, collaborating with them as well. From this standpoint, the art practices, cultural strategies, and cultural identity of a territory, challenging the very nature of the notion of nation, the strategies of survival, resistance, and presence. Taking the floor in the context of globalization and polarization of contemporary cultural policies becomes important the moment when this presence bears a discourse that expresses itself through works and ideas, but also through structures and projects of production. On the other hand, art has always been an atypical language: together with its contents it has always invented the language to express them, and today, in order to survive, it also becomes responsible for the strategies to ensure and spread its own presence.

Starting from these premises, these are the 5 Paths: HOSPITALITY | MARGINALITY | EDUCATION | MEMORY | WORK

Step 1 Manifesta 12 collateral event, Palermo, July 24-25-26 (date to be confirmed)

Step 2 Nottingham, in the framework of WEYA 2019 (dates to be announced)

Step 3 San Marino (dates to be announced)

Step 4 Cyprus (dates to be announced)

Step 5 Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean (dates to be announced)

The first step of the project has been selected as **collateral event of Manifesta 12 Palermo** among over 630 project applications received. Manifesta is the **European Nomadic Biennial**, held in a different host city every two years. It is a major international art event, attracting visitors from all over the world. Manifesta is the go-to place for discovering emerging artists, thought-provoking ideas, new artworks especially commissioned for the event, and creative experiences in dialogue with spectacular locations of each host city.

6 – NOTES

This call and the participation in the project *A Natural Oasis?* do not preclude the possibility to apply for future BJCEM national and/or international calls with different personal projects. All the curators and artists who have already participated in the previous editions of the Biennale can apply to this call. Priority will be given to curators that have never attended previous events.

7 – FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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