

PONKS

CV
2025





BIOGRAPHY

PONKS is an art collective created by Julien Vinet (visual art, installation, b. France) and Sam Alekksandra (poetry, visual art, b. Malta). This collective lies at a morphing intersection of poetry, visual arts, installation, performance, video and sound, that is born and based in Malta. The duo aims to engage in public spaces to inspire critical discourse and self constructive practices, while using conceptually-driven initiatives that subvert a sense of order.

Following their debut international show in Shanghai, 边 EDGE /// 上 OVER /// 看 LOOKING (July 2024) the collective embarked on the trans-Mediterranean project RITUAL, with the first edition held at JAOU, Tunis Biennale in November 2024.

PONKS MANIFESTO

PONKS is an art collective at a morphing intersection of poetry, visual arts, performance, video and sound. The collective aims to engage in public spaces to inspire critical discourse and self constructive practices, while using conceptually-driven initiatives that subvert a sense of order.

PONKS aims to bring unsubmissive art and poetry into public spaces.

PONKS aims to remain as anonymous as possible to create without the anchors of the artists' personal spheres in the collective.

PONKS seeks to develop the poster culture in Malta and contribute to the international scene through collaborations, residencies and other contributions.

PONKS engages in pressing contemporary social issues.

PONKS wants to give a voice to the voiceless in its different manifestations of human and nonhuman forms.

PONKS centers collaborations with different artists from different horizons in order to create diversity in a non-normative way.

PONKS looks to inspire critical discourse and self constructive practices while using conceptually-driven initiatives.

PONKS uses guerrilla tactics when needed.

PONKS enjoys experimental approaches.

PONKS affirms the respect of all lifeforms and its diversity.

EXHIBITIONS

- SEE DJERBA, Djerba, Aug 2025 (TUN) - International Contemporary Art Festival

- FLÂNEUR, Hamrun, Refugee week, June 2025 (MAL) - Solo show

- RITUAL, Mouhit Space, JAOU Tunis Biennial, November 2024 (TUN) - Solo show

- Fejn Kontu?!, Società Dante Alighieri, Valletta. October 2024 (MLT) - Group show

- 边 EDGE /// 上 OVER /// 看 LOOKING, ACENTRIC, Shanghai, July 2024 (CHN) - Solo show

- RIMES OF DIFFERENCE, Valletta (various places), May 2024 (MLT) - Intervention

- INTERVENTIONS OF OUTERPOETRY, Valletta (various places), April 2024 (MLT) - Intervention

- UNSEEN BODIES, Victoria Gate Valletta, March 2024 (MLT) - Intervention

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FLÂNEUR

1400X280X120CM
INDUSTRIAL PAPER ROLLS,
METAL RODS, BOOK, VIDEO,
POETRY
2025

FLÂNEUR is a framework developed by PONKS, rooted in the art of spontaneous encounters with people and place. Rejecting the scripted demands of mass tourism, this work celebrates the joy of discovery through human connection. In its first iteration, FLÂNEUR reimagines Ħamrun—Malta's vibrant capital suburb—through poetry and poster art.

Ten independent business owners, hailing from Togo to Mauritius, Syria to Santa Venera, shared their stories: their lives, ties to Ħamrun, and their hopes, dreams, and desires. PONKS transformed these intimate conversations into ten stream-of-consciousness poems, each accompanied by a poster featuring a striking line of verse.

The posters were displayed in the shop fronts of each participating business, inviting passersby to engage as flâneurs themselves. Scanning QR codes on the posters revealed the poems, and those who collected all ten unlocked a free digital edition of the FLÂNEUR book.

The project culminated in a limited-edition book (PONKS' first publication, released by Kotba Calleja) and an exhibition at Ħamrun's historic train station. At its heart stood a 14-meter steel installation, evoking the carriages of Malta's long-vanished railway. Rolls of book paper unfurled like tracks, displaying the posters, poems, and portraits of each business owner—a tribute to Ħamrun's unstoppable motion and its overlooked diversity.

The ghost train, forever in transit, became a metaphor for the suburb itself: a place of perpetual becoming, carried forward by its people.

NEW YEAR ANTISONNET

POEM ON A3 COPY PAPER X 27
2025

This intervention of 27 verses is a manifesto musing for the new year, a break from the adverts in a city of urban noise.

Cross section of Christopher Street and Strait Street, Valletta

*things are getting pretty pretty
and pretty ugly
the mirror is pretty clearly
crackling cackling in all the news that flows
an ulcer to pop the weasel in, junk field
i want to be sexy, light, violent, good
in the new year i should have written this before
but now the jet stream of focus
pulls the brain back and drips out typing, flowing
it flows.
things are getting pretty prettily ugly and ugly is the new pretty
and old friends are petty in their ugliness
and i will read all the most sophisticated words and hands will make noises
for me.
at any given moment this thought will implode and i won't remember it.
i am thinking about my friend who is dead, and the others who will die.
i pretend i am writing this for someone with a deadline to keep up
appearances.
your things are fugly and mine
are pretty greatly probably not proper
and i won't think about strategy,
i put my teeth in a heart and get away with it.
yesterday i was a new person
and today i was the past one
passing pretty tenderly on your tenderloins.
pretty in waist in the morning,
music obscure, the kind that repeats and chews itself away in a kitchen full
of empty cups and we like it.
it's a new year of pretty petty preaching
plundering ugly things for a sucked air of new beginnings.
i want to be a poet. i want to put my hand inside and eat it.*



RITUAL

500X200X240CM
MARITIME CHART, INK, PENCIL,
PVA GLUE, METAL RODS,
METAL THREADS, THREADED
POETRY, ROPE.
2024

“RITUAL” is a multi-disciplinary art project that aims to re-enchant the Mediterranean through rituals of transformation. The project, which centres around a five-metre tunnel-like, suspended installation began in Tunis, Tunisia, as part of JAOU Biennale, and will be gradually built, adding five metres in each new context and displayed all around the Mediterranean sea (23 countries, final size of the artwork to be 115m).

The project involves artist duo PONKS - French visual artist Julien Vinet and Maltese poet Sam Alekksandra working within the local context, with members of coastal Mediterranean communities, poets, sailors, residents, artists, craftsman and scholars to engage and reflect on rituals and challenge constructs of time, to understand the metamorphoses needed as a region in confronting 21st-century societal, environmental, and humanistic challenges.

Constructed entirely of old maritime charts, threaded poetry on painted translucent sheets of cured glue folded and holding on 35 hollow iron rods, the artwork is suspended delicately in the air, seeming to defy gravity, creating a sense of weightlessness and intrigue.





WAYS OF BEING

700X80X24
STAINLESS STEEL
2024

WAYS OF BEING was the final artwork of RITUAL exhibition as part of JAOU Biennale. A streetlight with a changed archetype due to a simulated car accident that physically changed its axis, it morphed the object from an illuminating structure into a multi-purpose object: a playground for children, shade for Tunis' cats, a place to sunbathe for the venue's chickens, and a place to sit, discuss and be together. WAYS OF BEING allows us to see things differently through individual and collective transformation.





LE TIERS INSTRUIT

135X184

MIRROR, TEXTURED GLASS

2024

Le Tiers Instruit is an outdoor installation. A free standing mirror with a layer of mosaicked orange skin glass presents a reflection that is fragmented, unclear, the antithesis of what mirrors should show. Here the viewer is presented with a choice: to take the blurred reflection as a trigger of frustration, or take the unclarity as a chance for multiple possibilities and futurities to emerge. Inspired by Le Tiers Instruit by Michel Serrs, the work sends us our image changed, without clear limits, a mosaic of a human, an harlequin made of divers experiences, origins and influences. We can choose to fear this metamorphosis or we can embrace it, viewing things from a new perspective and working together for a shared vision.

THE LAND IS A SERIES OF RETURNING

5'

VIDEO, POEM

2024

THE LAND IS A SERIES OF RETURNING is a video ode to Tunis. Produced in collaboration with Selima Attalah, a Tunisian poet, the work is a poem of sixteen stanzas in Tunisian and English, each an abstract set of instructions, like a ritual, to embrace the cyclical ways of Tunisia's capital through food, space, people and life. A version was also made in Maltese, with poet Antonio Tufingo and Jake Buttigieg, to emphasise the similarities between the two languages.



FREEDOM RITUAL (YOU ARE HERE NOW)

49X20
TUNISIAN DRIVING LICENSE, GLUE, INK
2024

FREEDOM RITUAL (YOU ARE HERE NOW) centers on a Tunisian driver's license, a common rite of passage symbolizing a first step toward capitalist freedom, particularly in the Southern Mediterranean. This piece is part of RITUAL, an exhibition exploring the transformative power of rites of passage—ceremonies or actions that mark significant life changes, such as getting a driver's license, menstruating, marrying, or joining a community. These rituals help individuals understand and prepare for their roles in society. Through this lens, artists Julien Vinet and Sam Alekksandra invite viewers to experience symbolic transformation, encouraging reflection, imagination, and critical thinking about our roles in reconnecting the Mediterranean's shared cultural and historical threads.





DIMENSIONAL FRUITS

VIDEO

9:15

2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSmiNT2lppE>

"dimensional fruits" is an experimental video work made in residency in Shanghai in June-July 2024.

The work is an abstract ode of filmic poetry dedicated to the ancient water town of Zhujiajiao, where the collective resided for a month. It was eventually exhibited in the duo's solo exhibition 边 EDGE /// 上 OVER /// 看 LOOKING at Acentric gallery in Shanghai in July 2024.

边 EDGE /// 上 OVER /// 看 LOOKING was an exhibition by Malta-based art collective

PONKS. It celebrated the certainty of the uncertain, looking over and between edges of places and emotions between what was and what can come next. Through posters, video, poetry, and installation, PONKS explored inevitable conditions of transition and contradiction: just as the 3 rivers of Zhujiajiao carve through and present life in reflections, morphing, in motion, and upside down. 边 EDGE /// 上 OVER /// 看 LOOKING is a reversal of the phrase, "looking over the edge", the act of peering over the limits of something, whether tangible, cultural or assumed to open up to the floating possibility of the ambiguous. It is a playful space to tune into the dual idea of the "dao": when the upside-down (dao 倒), just as in reflectional surfaces, arrives (dao 到) as a right way up.



JIGSAW POEM

18 A1 POSTERS.
400X252
2024

Jigsaw Poem is an installation of contemporary posters with abstract poems on inner and outer reflections, taken from PONK's film "dimensional fruits". These posters were displayed in the gallery space but are also found throughout the streets of Zhujiajiao, in which the viewers will create their unique version of the work according to the path they take to see the different posters.

Every spectator can record their own version of the poem with the help of a QR code next to the posters.



**MISTAKING THE SOUND OF RUSTLING LEAVES FOR
THE SOUND OF FLOWING WATER**

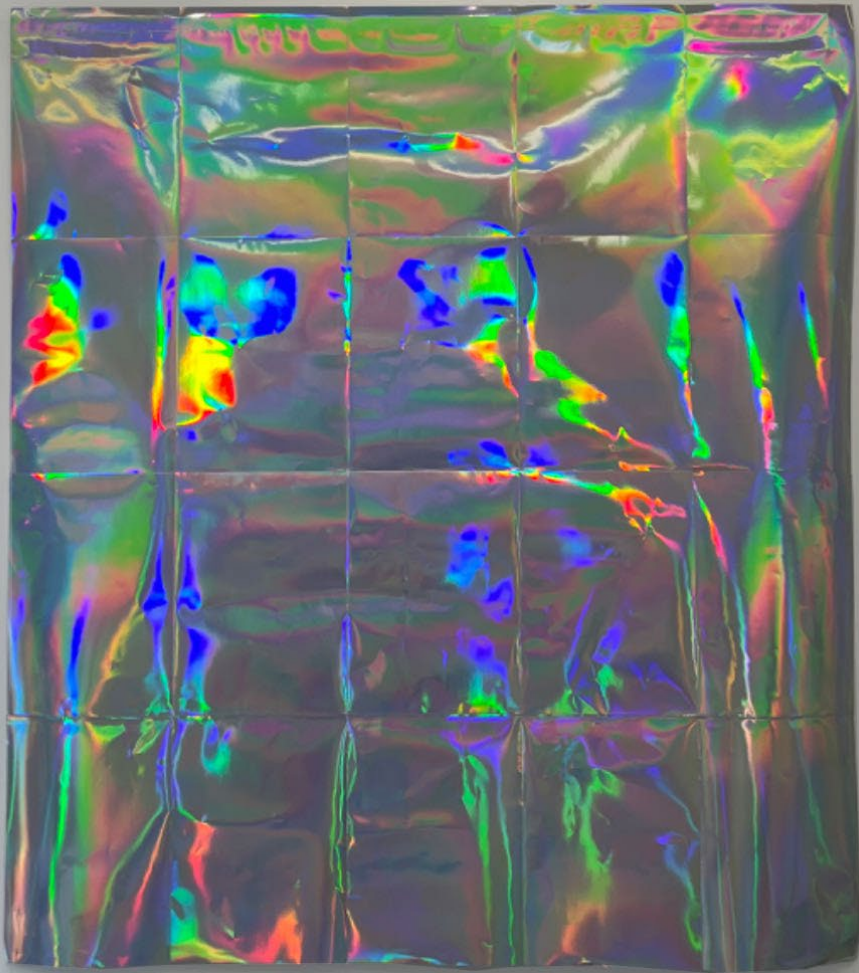
VIDEO
16:05
2024

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_E6oaw0rYQI

“Mistaking the sound of rustling leaves for the sound of flowing water” is a filmic mediation of stillness, with the aim to inject a new alien beauty to a common bridge in the Shanghainese town of Zhujiajiao, to offer a new appreciation for residents who may not look twice at the scene in the mundanity of the everyday.

This work is a nature-based intervention within the ancient water town of Zhujiajiao.

The concept is anchored in the idea of offering portrait of the day-to-day scenes of locals with a new light, a chance to reflect and revisit an image long imprinting and possibly forgotten in the mind of those who witness it everyday. It is a moving portrait of stillness.



WINDMADE RGB

210X297
PAPER, GLUE, TAPE, WOOD, WIND
2024

Windmade RGB is a square object comprised of iridescent paper. It featured in the video work "mistaking the rustling of leaves for the sound of water", which, through dramatic reflections through the shifting rays of the sun, sought to introduce a new appreciation of a scene seen everyday by locals and offer a moment of meditation on natural beauty of the ancient town of Zhujiajiao.



LOOK OVER EDGE

INSTALLATION.
CHARCOAL ASHES, GLUE, METAL,
PERSPEX, LED LIGHTS, VIDEO
240X300X200
2024

LOOK OVER EDGE is an installation that embodied the title of the solo exhibition of the duo. It offered a layered experience of meaning upon witnessing the work from different angles and closeness. The first section comprised three towering plinths, blackened out with charcoal and cured glue. Upon closer inspection, the words LOOK OVER EDGE appear to emerge from the plinths, illuminated by the bright yellow rays from the cuboid light-box. The phrase LOOK OVER EDGE, which holds different meaning if read the other way elaborated the certainty of the uncertain, looking over and between edges of places and emotions between what was and what can come next.



PONKS QR

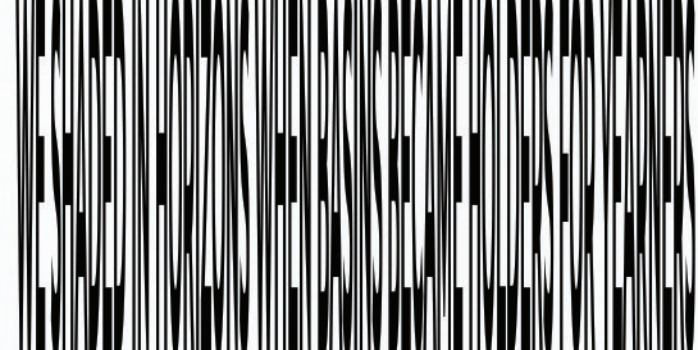
farsi vento (pop) (IT)
 • Fig. rimanere inattivo, restare in coin
 avendo come unica occupazione quella
 di infatuarsi con un ventaglio.

se dimesse de l'air (FR)
 • (Sans figure) Fuir une contrainte, une difficulté.
 S'y en aller
 se dimesse

blow off (informal) (EN)
 • If you blow something off, you ignore
 it or choose not to deal with it.

hacer la vista gorda (ES)
 • simular una persona no darse cuenta de
 algo que debe denunciar

WE SHADED IN HORIZONS WHEN BASINS BECAME HOLDERS FOR YEARNERS



PONKS QR

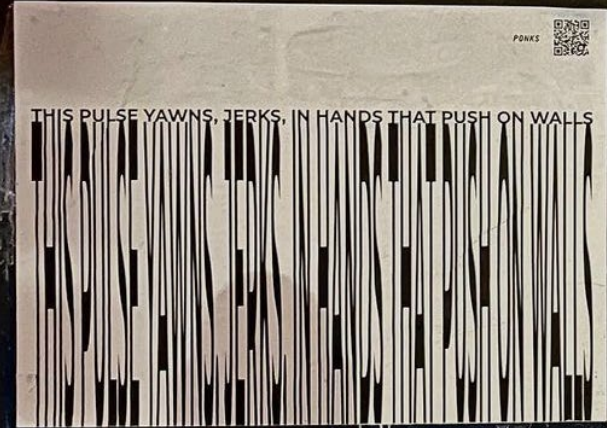
RIMES OF INDIFFERENCE

12 A0 POSTERS
 DYSTOPIAN FANS, POETRY
 2024

RIMES OF INDIFFERENCE is a poetic poster series of abstract verses combined with pictures of fans - a tourist and elderly's staple during the hellish Maltese summer season - imprinted with scenes of contemporary doom-filled realities.

With fan-related expressions on looking the other way in face of atrocities - in the lingua franca and three other European languages - RIMES OF INDIFFERENCE forces us to confront archaic consequences of a globalized and polarized world when we all are told to do is to "blow it off" (farsi vento).

RIMES OF INDIFFERENCE is a PONK collaboration with visual artist Alberto Favaro



PONKS QR

THIS PULSE YAWNS, JERKS, IN HANDS THAT PUSH ON WALLS



PONKS QR

farsi vento (pop) (IT)
 • Fig. rimanere inattivo, restare in coin
 avendo come unica occupazione quella
 di infatuarsi con un ventaglio.

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**IZ-ZEJĠ DEJEM JITLA
F'WICC L-ILMA**

Tow Zone
2024 - 31/12/2024
07:00 - 17:00

INTERVENTIONS OF OUTER POETRY

10 A2 POETRY-BASED POSTERS
2024

Interventions of outer poetry is an installation of ten text-based posters installed around the capital city of valletta, with critically-charged phrases reflecting the often state of affairs as well as phrases of hope to “stay soft in the face of a hardening world”.



UNSEEN BODIES

---PJANCI II
230X210.
20 YEARS USED PASTIZZI COOKING
TRAYS, VARNISH.
2021

---UNSEEN BODIES
A 5:51 MIN POEM
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=TIBVQIFTJNA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIBVQIFTJNA)
2024

On world poetry day 2024 PONKS produced a transdisciplinary artwork - an ode to the most essential cooking trays on the Maltese Archipelago. One of the PONKS reads her poem inspired by Pjanci II, an installation by artist Julien Vinet.

*It is a city that simmers in its best and worst when the rotting bell strikes
four. A yolk haze perfumes its walls and children in shirts and skirts stuck
with sweat unstrap their shoes in door frames. It is when the cafe dwellers
sip lukewarm cups in the gentle rays and stare into thinning crowds. It is
when unseen bodies behind store counters roll their sleeves to clean and
curate for the next day.*

UNSEEN BODIES A 6 lines poem excerpt of PJANCI

PONKS



PJANCI 300x180 cm — Varnished pastizzi cooking trays — 2021

PONKS



POETRY FROM THE FUTURE

20 EVENTS FROM OCT 2023

As part of PONKS practice of heralding the importance of poetry in public spaces the duo created POETRY FROM THE FUTURE as a monthly platform for contemporary poetry sharing, curated by Sam Alekksandra. Born in October 2023 and hosted at Malta's firstly dedicated poetry bar in the capital Valletta, PFTF is a curated evening for a casual sharing of fresh voices from seasonal poets to newcomers. Each month has a dedicated theme which poets write to and share. Through its year and a half it has cemented itself as a cultural flagship of Valletta, with hundreds of attendees and dozens of international and local poets taking the stairs to share their words. POETRY FROM THE FUTURE was invited to collaborate with celebrated contemporary artist Paul Scerri in 2024 for the exhibition "The Sound of You Dreaming" (Valletta Contemporary) and had its first international export during the 2024 Tunis' Biennale, JAOU. The event has welcomed poetry of at least 14 languages and poets of all ages.





BLACK VELVET 002

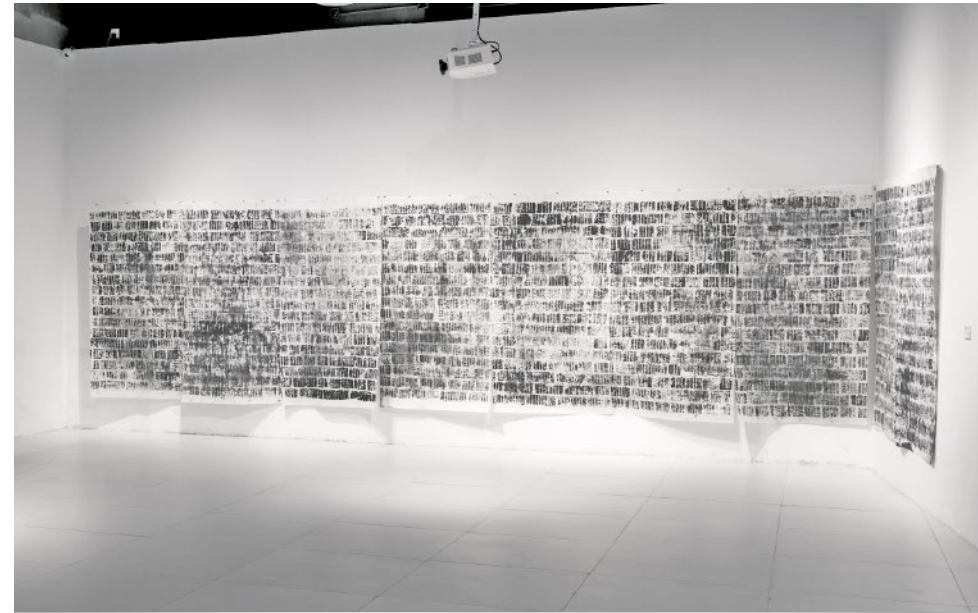
OFFSET INK ON CANVAS
210X220
2024

Black Velvet --- The Black Velvet series is a series of large format works (from 210x90 to 500x400) entirely black, worked with printing ink that is slowly left to dry to form textures transforming the works into bas-reliefs. The cured ink retains the depth of its color and plasticizes its own substance transforming the artwork, catching any light to give life to the almost topographical reliefs that cover the canvas. Doubled with a changing light, the works evolve with its movements to create a different visual at each moment, the textures constantly reflecting the light differently depending on the angle from which the light comes.

IMPRESSION OF A MULTIPLE

986X175
CHINESE INK, RICE PAPER
2024

Impression of a multiple is the result of a sum of first impressions of China, of its numerous residential towers all of similar height, of its neighborhoods razed to make way for renewal and also that of my Chinese studio with its vitrified brick walls. Capturing the essence of the bricks with ink, this work is of multiple readings, a repetitive mantra which exposes the surprising and ephemeral temporality in China of materials as solid as brick and paradoxically the durability of elements as fragile as rice paper or Chinese ink. The result conjures the singularity of an ecological and diverse vision in a world where excess imposes itself on each monad.



FLATTEN HOUSE. SOUTH, WEST, NORTH, EAST

VIDEO INSTALLATION
4X 5'
2024

Four videos of the sheets of Impression of a Multiple II are placed in a building in Shanghai that appears abandoned but is, in fact, inhabited. The fabric, painted with impressions of Chinese bricks, flutters with the air currents, much like the ebb and flow of economic trends, within a seemingly lifeless space that still harbors life. Life in its human form but also in its natural and vegetal form, to represent this ecological need that the artist confronts with economic variables.



SAM ALEKKSANDRA

SELECTED WORKS
2025

FOR MORE ARTWORKS AND COMPLETE BIO CHECK AT: SAMALEKKSANDRASTUDIO.XYZ



UNFINISHED BARRICADE: A SPACE FOR BORDERLINE HESITATIONS

Poetic performance on loop + flag Collaboration with Post Disaster Rooftops (IT) Commissioned by Malta Biennale.art
St. Elmo, Valletta, Malta
April, 2024 https://www.instagram.com/p/C42e7XII6w/?img_index=1

HESITATIONS #1 was commissioned for Malta's inaugural biennial in 2024. It comprised a performance of poetry shouted in cycles, upon a site-specific installation of a flag and concrete blocks, with Post-Disaster Collective. The work reflected on the question: does occupation ever end?

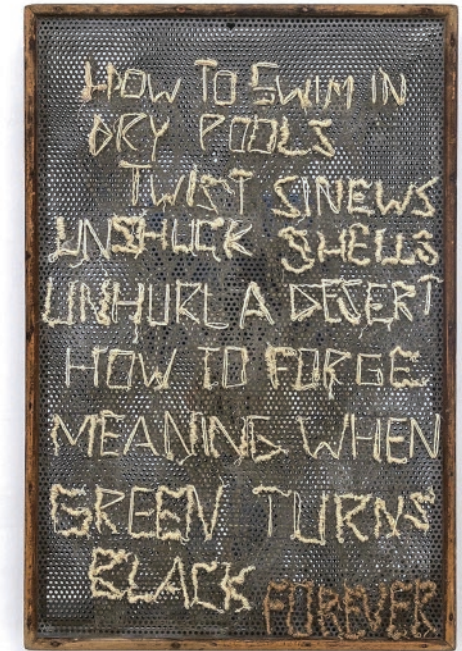


26 HOURS

DURATIONAL PERFORMANCE,
26 HOURS
30M RICE PAPER, INK, CCTV

This performance consists of living 26 hours inside the gallery and write verse of poetry every hour the artist has been alive, resulting in a colossal map of black and white poetry.

Images of 26 hour performance:
Dimensions Art Centre
2024



BEEHIVE

POETIC OBJECT
METAL, WOOD, THREAD (150M) 61.5X98.6CM
2023
SHOWN AT R GALLERY, MALTA APRIL 2023

BEEHIVE forms part of a series of what the artist calls "poetic objects". Appropriating found objects with materials like metal and mirror, and threaded them to hold tangible poems, this work forms part of a larger body of work exhibited through Malta, China and Tunisia. Poetic objects are a meditation on poetry as material intervention, expending the boundaries of the written tradition to take physical space.