



# ARTISTS' DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015



Artists' Development  
Programme



Dear Art Lovers,

The Arts Team of the EIB Institute is delighted to share with you the outcome of the **2015 edition of the Artists' Development Programme (ADP)**. Focusing on the development of budding talent in the visual arts field, the programme aims to **help emerging artists to produce artworks during a month-long residency in Luxembourg, boosted by mentorship from a high profile, established artist.**

It is already the **third edition** of the ADP. The Programme has its appeal among emerging artists, building on the growing profile achieved since the launch in 2013. In response to **increased demand**, it has **grown from one to three residencies**. **This year, the mentor is the acclaimed British visual artist Darren Almond.** This brochure profiles artists and, for context, mentors.

The ADP aims to pay tribute to the extraordinary pool of young creative talent in Europe, and to acknowledge the value of experience and knowledge-sharing via a mentoring programme. The main objective is to **help bring about an innovative artistic project, boosted by synergies between established and emerging talent.**

The programme has **two angles, geographic and thematic**. Each year the geographic programme shifts its focus within the EU, but consistently emphasises artists from countries under-represented in internationally recognised European art spheres. The second - thematic - focus is, for the second consecutive year, ***"The Imprint of Man - Representing the Anthropocene"***, addressing one of the current strategic priorities of the EIB – **environmental and climate action.**

The EIB Institute hopes that you will continue to enjoy this and future events organised by the Arts & Culture Programme – details on **upcoming events** are at the end of this brochure. We always welcome your feedback and suggestions. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

**The Arts Team**

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# ARTISTS' DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

## 🌀 Approach and calibre

The Artists' Development Programme is a month-long residency & mentorship programme in Luxembourg. It offers emerging European visual artists the opportunity to develop their practice in a **high quality professional context**. It involves creating a new (body of) work(s) under the mentorship of an internationally renowned artist. The project enables budding artists to develop their artistic skills without any material constraints and to be introduced to appropriate public fora. The **mentors provide an exceptional tutoring and networking opportunity** for young artists, while the **exhibition of works from the project at the EIB premises adds the credibility of an established setting**. Renowned Polish conceptual artist Mirosław Bałka was the mentor during the first two editions. Darren Almond, selected as mentor for the 2015-2016 editions, is well known for his innovative photography and videos.

## 🌀 Development of the project

The programme aims to catalyse artistic innovation and promote artists in Europe by associating an established European artist with an emerging artist working in the same field, or pairing two established practitioners from different fields. In order to apply, candidates must be emerging artists under the age of 35 holding EU citizenship or a residency permit.



While the first edition of the Artists' Development Programme targeted specifically emerging artists from EU member countries under-represented in the EIB's art collection (Baltic States, Malta and Cyprus), the second edition extended the range of the programme with the establishment of two calls for applications: one with a thematic focus, opened to all European citizens and residents; and one with a geographic focus targeting in particular artists from the newest EU member states. This year's edition of the Artist Development Programme offered three residencies, two with a geographical focus and one with a thematic focus.

## Objectives

The Programme can have **wider socio-economic benefits**, well beyond the support for “production” of an art project.

There is a strong economic aspect to the programme: by fostering emerging talent, in a **highly challenging economic environment for artists**, characterised by reduced funding for Europe’s cultural sector, the EIB Institute seeks to add value and **compensate for current gaps in the market mechanism**. This programme also serves the EIB Group’s mandate to contribute to social cohesion, which benefits from the promotion of cross-border cultural synergies. In particular, the strong geographic focus of the Programme reflects the catalytic approach of EIB investments.

### Thematic Focus - The Anthropocene

*The current geological age, viewed as the period during which human activity has been the dominant influence on climate and the environment (Oxford Dictionary).*

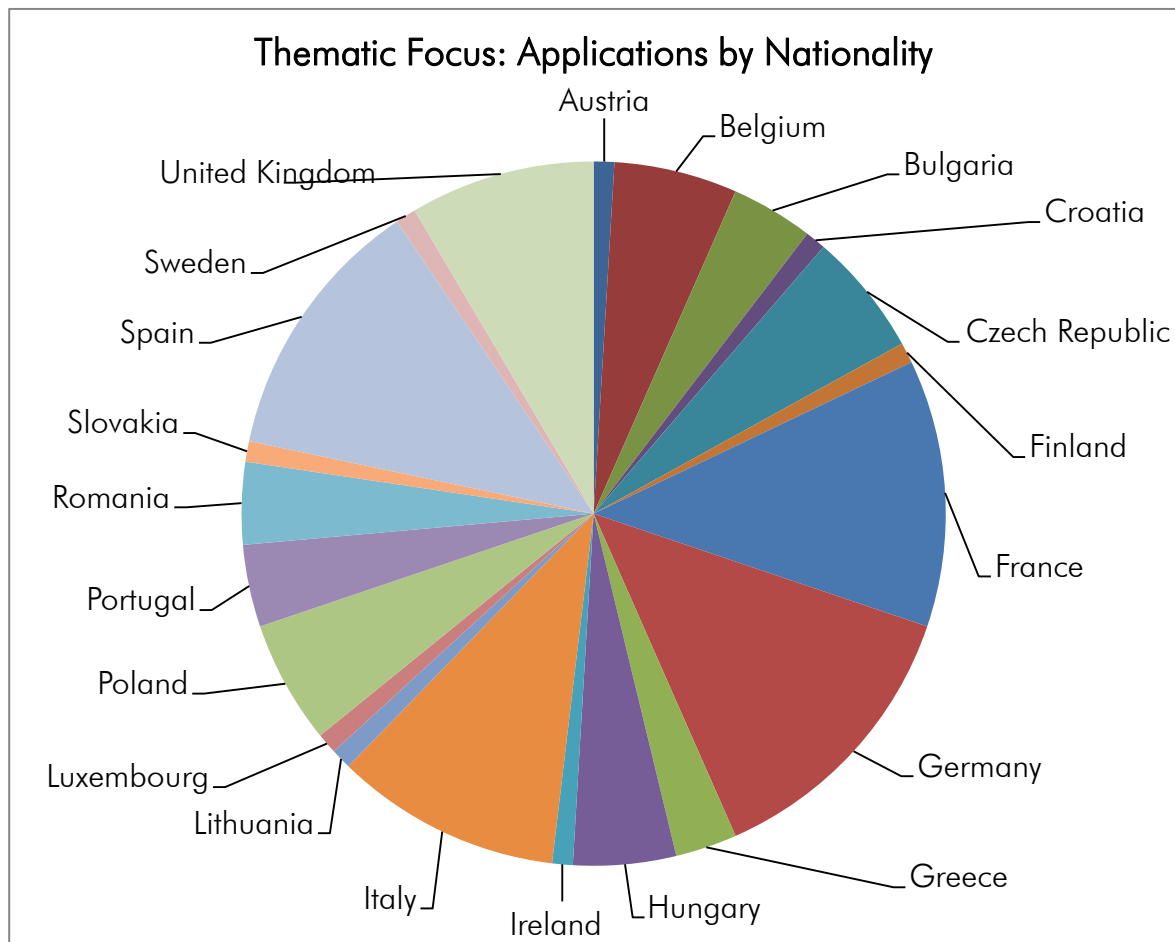
*The time from the 18th century until now, in which it is possible to see the effect that people have had on the environment and climate (= weather conditions) (Cambridge Dictionary).*



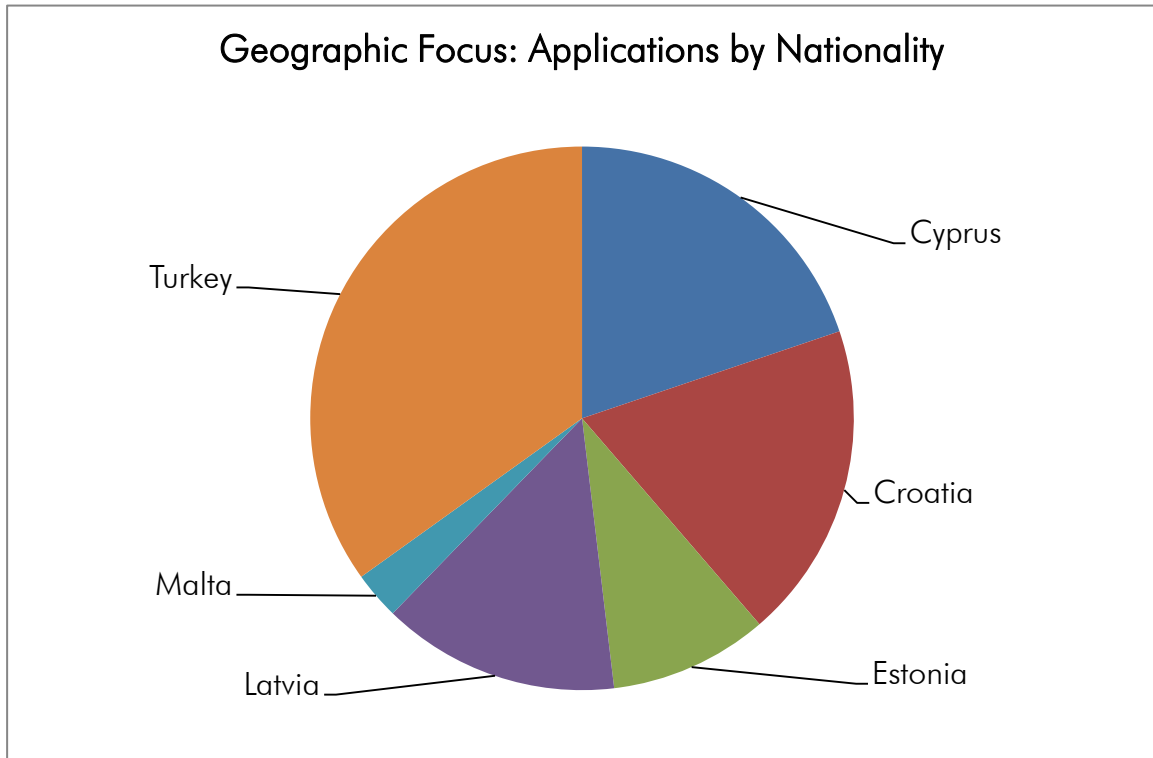
Unveiling of the artworks produced during the second edition of the ADP

## Third edition of the ADP (2015)

This year the Jury of the ADP selected three winners from a record 220 applicants. **Aaron Bezzina from Malta and Fatma Çiftçi from Turkey won the geographic focus residency**, targeting artists from Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Malta and Turkey. **Markus Hoffman from Germany won the thematic focus residency on “The Imprint of Man – Representing the Anthropocene”**. Turkey was also included in the countries targeted by the geographic call for applications, supporting for the first time also artists’ coming from a country considering EU membership. The three chosen artists had the **opportunity to visit the mentor’s studio** in London.



The 2015 call for applications was remarkable for the **number and diversity of applicants**. More than 50% of the applicants were women and there was a very strong participation from Turkey, Croatia and Cyprus.





## Mentor: Darren Almond



United Kingdom, 1971



Darren Almond is a leading British visual artist who works and lives in London. He has had numerous group exhibitions and solo shows in renowned public galleries such as Tate Britain (London), and Kunsthalle (Zürich). His most recent solo show was at the Bloomberg art space in London (Winter 2014). Finalist of the Turner Prize in 2005, he participated in the Venice Biennale in 2003. Mainly working with new media, sculpture and works on paper, he achieved worldwide recognition with his photographs and videos.

Almond's artistic practice deals mainly with meditations on time, place, duration and, particularly, their connections with personal history and collective memory. At the base of his production is the artistic documentation and representation of real life experiences, especially travels, which characterise the artist's biography. He has travelled extensively to remote and almost inaccessible locations, such as the Arctic Circle, Siberia, the source of the Nile and the sacred mountains in China. His art develops through very diverse means and explores notions of geographical limits as well as cultural legacies. Among his best known artworks are the series of photographs *Fullmoons* and *Norilsk*.



### Fullmoons

Fullmoons includes landscape photos taken in remote locations and exclusively under a full moon light. Using an exposure time of about 15 minutes, the resulting images are permeated by an unexpectedly bright light, often giving the impression of being taken during daylight.

*Fullmoon@Eifel, 2007, © Darren Almond*





*Fullmoon@Benbane*, 2007, © Darren Almond



*Fullmoon@Arondine*, 2001, © Darren Almond

## **Norilsk**

The series *Norilsk* has been developed in the nickel-mining town of Norilsk (Russia), one of the largest gulags existing in the Soviet Union under Stalin's regime. After a trip to Antarctica, Almond decided to visit the Arctic, passing through Siberia. Norilsk is a city known for two very negative things, record-high levels of pollution due to the nickel mines, and the presence of an abandoned Stalinist gulag. Almond chose to document the silent historical legacy of this place, linking it to the current ecological crisis faced by the city and its surroundings.



*Norilsk (20) & Norilsk (16)*, 2007, @ Darren Almond



## Artist: Aaron Bezzina



Malta, 1991



Aaron Bezzina is a Maltese sculptor and Fine Arts student. He lives and studies in Malta. From 2012 he has exhibited in several cities across Malta. He mainly produces sculptures and installations, using materials ranging from wood to concrete, textiles and metals. The concerns influencing his practice are mainly existential, and he seeks to reproduce, through his objects, feelings such as anxiety, frustration, alienation, sarcasm and irony.

Below are a series of his sculptures produced before the residency, and the two artworks *Apparatus for no apparent reason* & *Hard head held high*, which together form an installation that he created during the residency in Luxembourg.



*The Homage series (heads on stands), 2014*



*The Myth of Sisyphus (Kinetic sculpture & mask), 2014*

### *Apparatus for no apparent reason & Hard head held high, 2015*

The objects are outcome of an exploratory task and are testaments to the absurd circumstances allowing them to exist. It is very unlikely for these contraptions to be materialised under any other paradigm or situation.

*Hard head held high* is a self-referential title indicating the qualities of the piece. It links to a past series which treats the representation of the human head as physical busts in various materials. The structural wooden component attempts to explore new metaphors and connotations which could be established through the physical and visual properties. The concrete bust is positioned on a shelf which is narrower than its carved and curved wooden base, relying on **equilibrium as its only chance of survival**.

*Apparatus for no apparent reason* takes the notion of absence as a motivation, by creating the illusion of utility. Both extremities of the work are occupied with means hinting at being containers, one holding physical volume, the other auditory experiences. The seemingly missing parts aim at being replaced by conceptual frameworks, although the whole contraption is built around the sole purpose of acting as an alarm which is ultimately hindered and rendered purposeless.

These two works are intended to interact with each other and draw on their proximity to establish links which otherwise cannot be possible.





## Artist: Fatma Çiftçi



Turkey, 1981



Fatma Çiftçi works and lives in Istanbul. She graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Bilkent University in Ankara. Since 2003, she has participated in several group and solo exhibitions in Turkey, China, the United Kingdom, South Korea, France and Germany. She also took part in various residencies in Europe and Asia.

Her work is inspired by her own experience and explores social and cultural facts, such as the representation of the female figure in religious iconography. She is concerned with political and social issues and investigates the subject through different media, always taking as a starting point traditional Turkish craft techniques. Working on a relationship between photography and embroidery, she reproduces old family photographs with cross-stitch embroidery and traditional lacework.

She often works with installations, combining different types of media. Below are *Family Bonds*, a series of artworks produced from 2008 onwards, and *In and Out*, produced during her residency in Luxembourg.

### Family Bonds, 2010

This series of artworks reinterprets and subverts old family photographs via cross-stitch embroidery. Below is a picture of the artist's grandmother, which is one of the latest works of the series.



## 🌀 In and Out, 2015

Utilising a range of materials and media, the work is marked by biographical elements, ranging from personal everyday anecdotes to family photographs. These elements, reflecting on the common bonds and borders of family and society, are transformed into political and social images that question the position of the artist as a female based in Turkey. It builds upon her practice over the last two years, concerned with traditional Turkish handicraft techniques, focusing on religious iconography and gender representations.

Based on an old photographic image, the project *In and Out* focuses on the family as a microcosm of Turkish society. The image of a young couple embracing is transformed into a sculptural installation formed by two curtains, one featuring the image of the woman and the other of the man, both parts rendered through patchwork and embroidery. In the work, the stereotypical image of romantic love is literally broken up in the middle by the two curtains, a cut that creates a sense of ambiguity and disturbs nostalgic feelings. The decision to work with a personal image places the artist in the very structures of family and society that she is seeking to explore, while the reimagining of the image as a sculptural installation reflects the attempt to break out of such institutions. This inside and outside dance around the nostalgic image of a couple in love becomes the starting point and the playground for shaping and reshaping a self-portrait.





## Artist: Markus Hoffmann



Germany, 1982



Markus Hoffmann is a German artist based in Berlin. Before being admitted to the Institut für Raumexperimente (Berlin) and studying at the Universität der Künste in Berlin, he was a student of medicine. He has exhibited extensively in Germany and has participated in exhibitions in China, Japan, Russia and Ethiopia. He also exhibited in prominent museums, such as the ZKM - Zentrum für Medienkunst (Karlsruhe), the

Museum of Contemporary Arts Tokyo, the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin and the CCK-4, Hessel Museum in New York.

Using radioactivity as a guiding theme, he explores, through his artistic practice, the way humankind has permanently changed the planet. Mainly working with site-specific installations, his work stands between art and science. In the process of artistic production he very often makes use of radioactive materials and stones and re-produces the trace they leave on the world that surrounds us. His art focuses on finding and representing the relationship that man has developed with the planet in the Anthropocene.

Below are the two artworks produced during the residency in Luxembourg.

### Invisible Imprint, 2015

The work *Invisible Imprint* captures the radioactive potential of uranium minerals. Radioactivity leaves visible traces on paper previously treated with a photosensitive emulsion – a process and technique that historically refers to the accidental discovery of radioactivity by Henri Becquerel.

Radioactive minerals from all continents of the world have been repeatedly arranged and re-positioned over a period of 30 days with different exposure times, thus resulting in blurry shadow traces that overlap forming a sun-like disk. *Invisible Imprint* thus takes the iconographic symbol of the sun and

relates it to the ambivalent but simultaneously intentional pursuit of excessive use of radioactive material in the age of the Anthropocene.

Since the moment of the detonation of the first nuclear bomb, radioactivity has been fixed in the human eye as an explosion akin in strength and heat to that of the sun – as bright and as strong as a thousand suns. This association with the sun, the Earth's primary source of energy, mirrors the source of energy that emanates from Earth's fissionable material assets, generated millennia ago by the cataclysmic death of other stars and trapped in the Earth's crust. *Invisible Imprint* reminds us that the human eye is no longer an icon of proof and a trustworthy source that can perceive what is actually surrounding us.



Thus the work deals with the narrative potential created by the void relating to something that we cannot perceive and that has a destructive potential that we can barely comprehend – the void induced by the relocation of uranium minerals on our planet, resulting in an oscillation between fear, fascination and denial. A manifest issue of the Anthropocene.

### **Zirkon Compass, 2015**

Filled with different zircon sands from all the continents of the world, the work *Zirkon Compass* consists of sixteen hourglasses that are suspended from the ceiling. Positioned at eye level, the hourglasses are arranged in a circle, each located at one of the points of a 16-point compass rose. A thin steel rope is mounted at the narrowest point of each hourglass, balancing them in horizontal equilibrium.

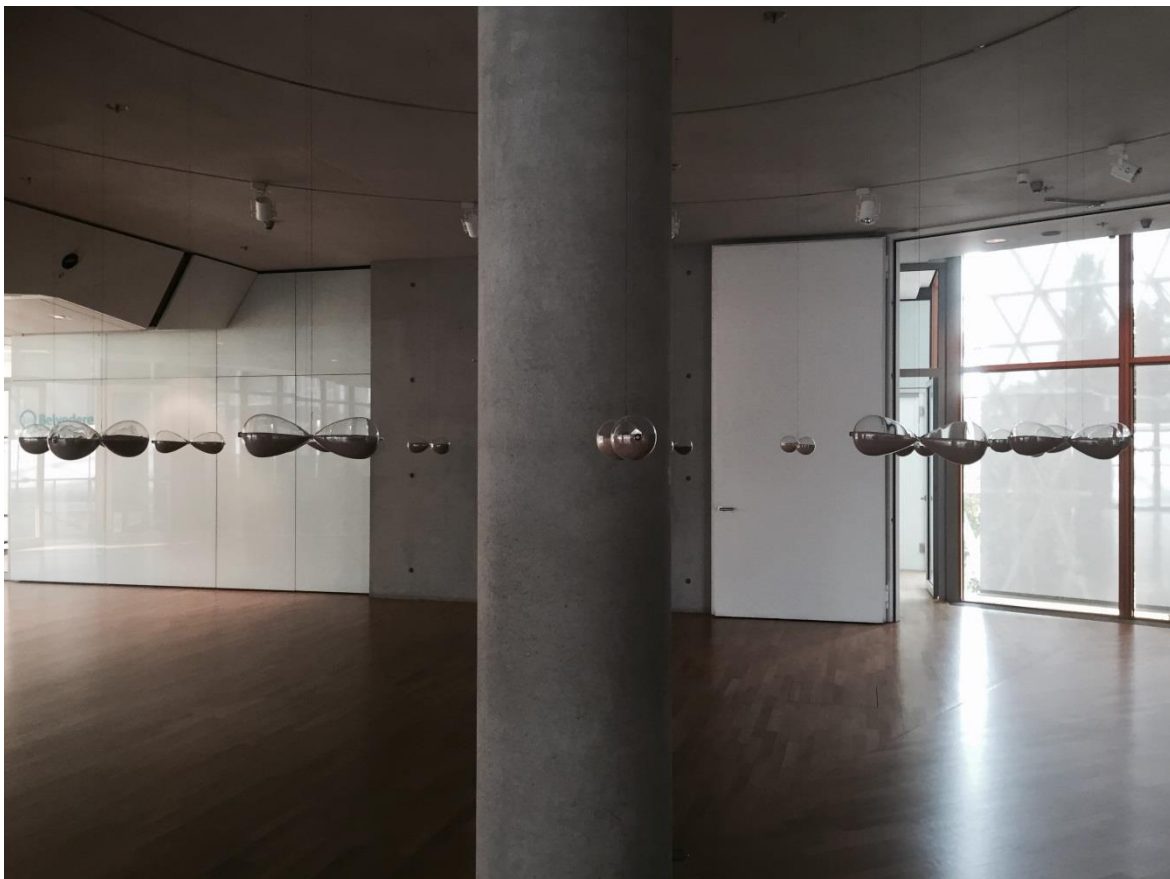
Zircon minerals are the oldest known materials on Earth. Resistant to chemical changes, they offer a window onto time as far back as 4.4 billion years ago. Zircon is omnipresent in all stones and contains the radioactive

elements uranium and thorium in minute amounts – the clock within the zircon. With the passing of time, it converts to the element lead.

In the work, both the semiotics of the hourglass as a metaphor for *vanitas* and the use of the hourglass as a scientific instrument are transformed. In contrast, the sand forms a seemingly stable horizon: a layer, the oldest layer we could hypothetically stand on. While the hourglass thus loses its function, the zircon clock invisibly continues to transform – subconsciously reminding the viewers of their precious, yet transient, time on earth.

Metaphorically, zircon resembles the element of time: being the oldest material on the planet, it establishes an abstract meaning of time that is limited by our current possibilities of scientific research. It thus inherently addresses the relative stability of scientific knowledge, which depends on technological progress and the creation of measurement methods, enabling us to expand our limited horizon.

Paradoxically zircon is used to create storage vessels that might be durable enough to contain the radioactive waste products of our species – the future fossils of the Anthropocene. But even zircon is not eternally durable. Everything eventually decays, and even permanence becomes relative.

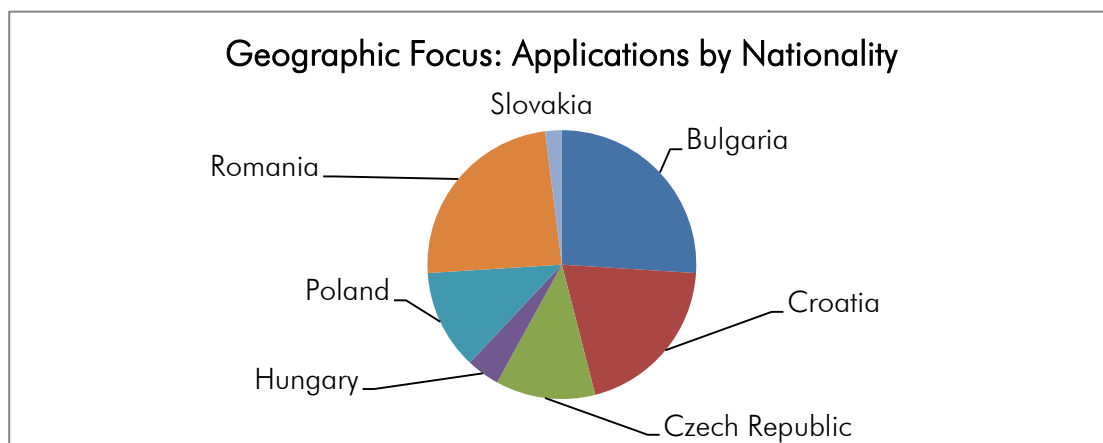
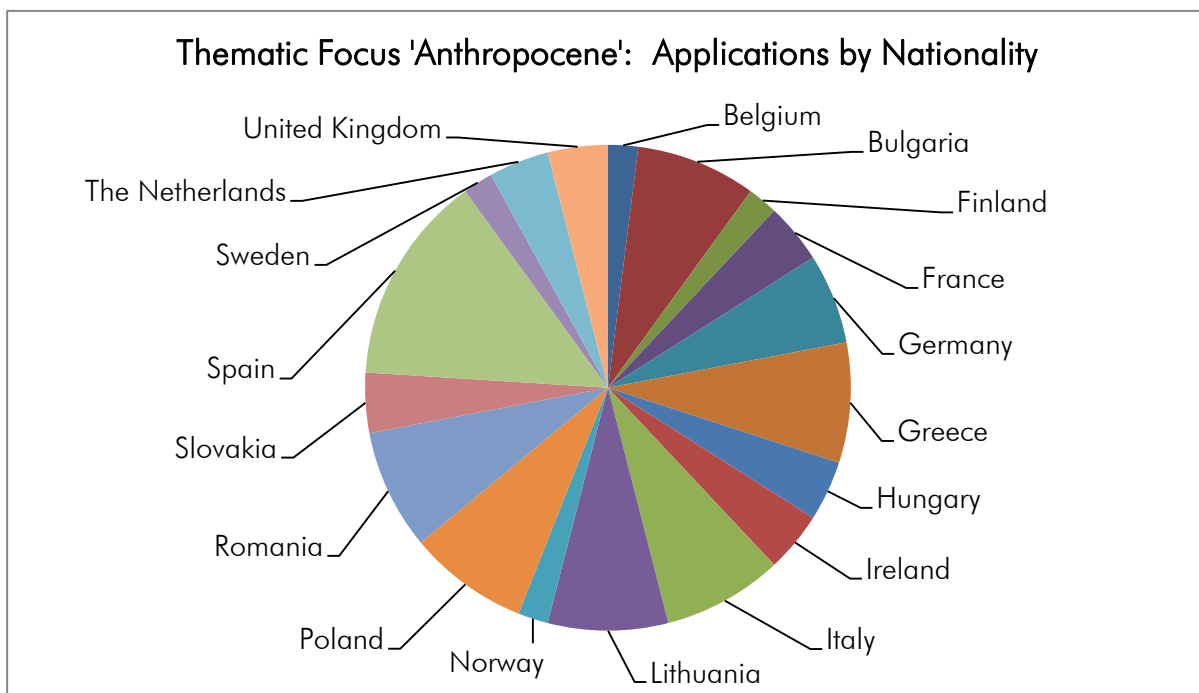




## Second edition of the ADP (2014)

Two young artists were selected for the second edition of the Artists' Development Programme under the mentorship of Mirosław Bałka. The scope of the call for applications was broadened and two different categories were created: one residency with a geographic focus, targeting artists coming from the newest EU members, i.e. Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia; and one residency with a thematic focus, open to artists wanting to develop their skills on the theme of "The Imprint of Man – Representing the Anthropocene".

Dominik Gajarský from Czech Republic won the geographic residency, while Sjoerd van Leeuwen from the Netherlands was selected for the thematic residency.





## Mentor: Mirosław Bałka



Poland, 1958



Mirosław Bałka is an internationally acclaimed, leading Polish conceptual artist. Mainly working with sculptures and installations, Bałka is also renowned for his videos and works on paper. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, where he holds a studio at the Department of Media since 2011. He has participated in several prestigious international shows, such as Documenta (1992), the Venice Biennale (1990, 1993, 2003, 2005 and 2013) and the Sao Paulo Biennale (1998). Bałka's artworks are included in the collections of MoMA (New York), Tate Modern (London), Museo Serralves (Porto) and the MOCA (Los Angeles).

His artistic practice is characterised by bare and elegiac spaces and a minimalist style. He often takes self-referential objects and himself as a starting point and media for his artworks, such as ash, hair, salt and soap. His art explores both the concepts of personal and collective memories, in particular traumas and crisis situations. His identity as primarily a Polish and also European artist consistently permeates his artistic practice, which investigates the links connecting domestic memories to the fractured history of Poland and Eastern Europe in general. While reflecting on his own personal experience, ranging from subjects such as Catholic education to subjective traumas, he also represents collective traumas of his nation, such as the legacies of Nazi and Soviet occupation.

### Winterreise, 2003

Winterreise is a work consisting of three videos, shot during a winter trip Bałka made to the former site of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The three videos, *Pond*, *Bambi 1* and *Bambi 2*, are filmed around a pond inside the camp, where the ashes of cremated prisoners were deposited. Around the pond there are several roe deers. The deers are filmed from behind a barbed-wire fence. The opening of the video is accompanied by Schubert's songs from the *Winterreise* cycle, alluding to human loneliness. The

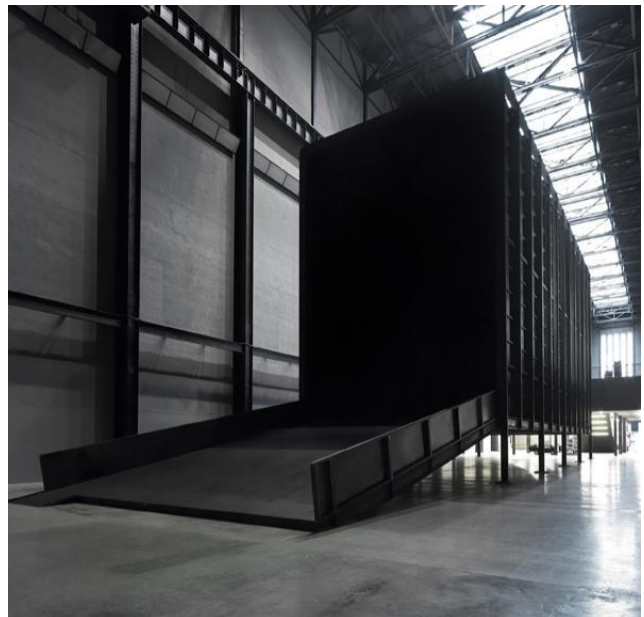
contrast between past and present, i.e. between the tragic legacy carried by the location where the video is shot and the innocent groups of deer bounding about in the camp in the present, shocks the spectator and provokes a painful feeling. Although *Bambi* appears a banal name for the artwork, it actually refers to the date when the Disney movie was filmed, 1942.



Two scenes from the series *Winterreise*, 2003, @ Mirosław Bałka

### How it is

*How it is* is a sculpture/installation part of the *Unilever* series. It is a giant steel structure installed in Tate Modern containing a dark chamber, which reflects the surrounding architecture of the building, particularly the ceiling of the exhibition room. Lifted up from the floor with 2m stilts, it stands 13m high and 30m long. The whole structure seeks to disorient the spectator, both when visited from within and without. Although being a conceptual artwork, it very expressively communicates a sense of unease to its spectators, connected to the ideas underlying the work's production, such as references to recent episodes of Poland's traumatic history and the holocaust. The ramp entrance of the structure represents the entrance to the Warsaw Ghetto, while the dark chamber strongly reminds of the train trucks that were used to transport Jews to concentration camps.



*How it is*, 2009, @ Mirosław Bałka



## Artist: Dominik Gajarski



Czech Republic, 1986

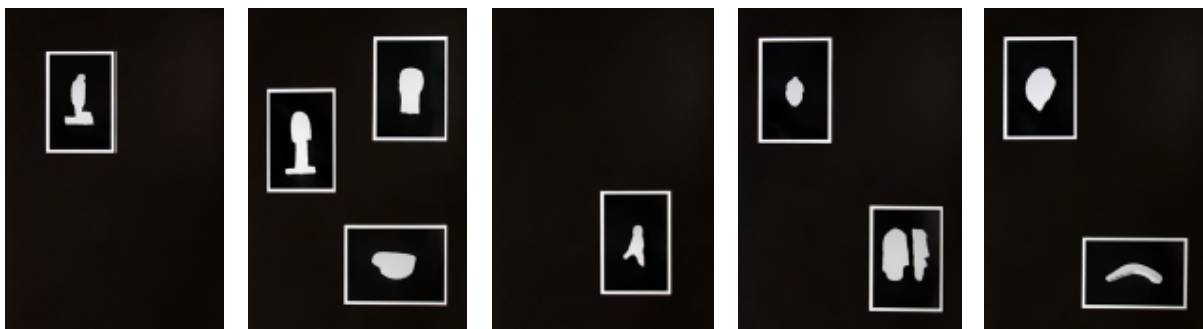


Dominik Gajarski lives and works in Prague. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (2009-2014) and worked in several studios in Prague and Berlin. He started participating in group exhibitions in 2007 and had his first solo exhibition in 2009. Since then he has exhibited several times in the Czech Republic and Germany.

Through his artistic activity, he seeks to re-read and re-tell from different angles renowned stories and novels, often part of our collective memory. During his residency in Luxembourg he used as a starting point for his practice *Treasure Island* from Robert Louis Stevenson. The purpose of his research is combining the cultural and historical legacies of the stories he uses with the cultural and historical perspectives of the reader/spectator.

His preferred media are photography and videos, with which he creates different types of installations. He tends to install his artworks according to geometrical codes and in a minimalistic way. Below are *The White Man's Album*, an artwork produced before the residency, and *Message in the Bottle*, produced during the residency.

### *The White Man's Album*, 2013



A collection of black and white photographs of white gypsum objects made according to the dimensions of African and transoceanic statuettes, masks and idols from the collections of Czech interwar artists, such as Adolf

Hoffmeister or Emil Filla. Inspired by the book *Lovesick Exoticism* by Tomas Winter, the artwork is composed of photographs adjusted on a black fibreboard.

### 🌸 *Message in a Bottle, 2014*



It is the 28th of September, St. Wenceslas Day. While visiting the National Library in Luxembourg, the artist typed the sentence “What if money was no object?”, which was taken from an essay by Alan Watts, into the computer, expecting his book to appear. However, the system found quite a different one: *Treasure Island*. This classic book, written by Robert Louis Stevenson, became a conceptual point of departure for the artist and gave him a clear idea of what to do next. “I want to bury a treasure here” he said to himself.

He went to the mall and bought a swing top bottle. He underlined particular letters in Stevenson’s book to make the sentence: “What if money was no object?”, scanned this page and put that scanned page with a new sentence in the bottle. Then he found a perfect place close to the Abbaye de Neumünster and buried it in the ground. The artist made a cross on a little map of Luxembourg, indicating the treasure’s location. Afterwards, he put this map in the book on page 248 (the chapter where the main characters find the treasure). He erased the lines under each word and returned it to the library, so that future readers may find the instructions that lead them to the buried treasure.



## Artist: Sjoerd van Leeuwen



Netherlands, 1985

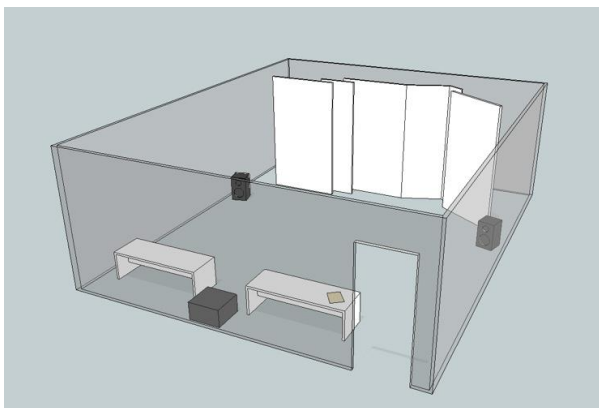


Sjoerd van Leeuwen lives and works in Amsterdam. He studied at the Amsterdamse Hogeschool voor Kunsten (2004-2008) and completed a Masters in Fine Arts at the Willem de Kooning Hogeschool in Rotterdam. He started to participate in group exhibitions in 2006 and since then exhibited all over the BeNeLux region in numerous museums and galleries.

He mainly works with videos and photographs and often includes them in installations. His artistic practice focuses on the relationship and links between mankind and nature as they developed in last couple of centuries. He explores through different media and projects the activity of mankind on earth, taking as a starting point historical facts and political issues. In this regard, his artistic practice is characterised by journeys and long-term travel projects, through which he tries to find a connection between past and present. His artworks are the result of the process of re-construction and re-interpretation of crucial historical events from a contemporary perspective. A peculiar form of contemporary romanticism permeates all of his works.

Below is [*LE CHOEUR*] *Conduis ta barque avec prudence, Le roi des mers ne t'échappera pas!* (2012), an installation produced before the residency and *Landfall Greifswald (after Caspar David Friedrich)*, (2014), produced during the residency in Luxembourg.

⚙️ [*LE CHOEUR*] *Conduis ta barque avec prudence, Le roi des mers ne t'échappera pas!*



On the right is the plan of the installations, which consists of a dark space with a fragmented screen and, on the benches, a text written by the artist explaining the political motives underlying the artwork. On the screen are projected google street-view images from the Hertogin Hedwigepolder in Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, and five audio-clips from the opera 'The Dumb Girl of Portici' (1828) are played. Thanks to a flashlight the spectator can read the booklet on the bench. The installation connects an ongoing political crisis between the Dutch and Belgium government over ecological compensation with the 19<sup>th</sup> century opera that is said to have caused the Belgium independence from the Netherlands.

### 🌀 Landfall Greifswald (after Caspar David Friedrich)



The work that lies before you brings together two apparently unrelated historical events: the artistic emergence of the Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich and the installation of the Nord Stream Gas Pipeline that runs along the Baltic seabed between Russia and Europe. Both have had a huge impact on the manner in which we perceive and subsequently give form to our natural surroundings in landscapes. Their stories begin in the same unremarkable town in rural Germany.

On the 5th of September 1774, Caspar David Friedrich is born in the small town of Greifswald on the Baltic coast. He studies art and learns to draw by

observing and sketching the Greifswald countryside. In a few years he will develop an exceptional talent for landscape painting. After his death his work will function as a carrier of a unified German sense of shared natural beauty.

237 years later a 1222 kilometre-long pipeline that connects the town of Vyborg with Greifswald is completed. The first Russian gas flows through the town of Greifswald on the 6th of September 2011. From this landfall facility the gas pours into a network of smaller pipes that strategically connects Northwest Europe. From here on the European Union's dependence on gas from the Yuzhno-Russkoye field is a fait accompli.

Friedrich's paintings reveal a type of landscape that can influence our state of mind and thereby shape our actions. Friedrich tried to capture the German landscape, but in doing so showed us just how fierce nature can be. It turned out to be this paradoxical portrayal of nature - as a source of beauty and as an uncontrollable force – which attracts so many of us. Friedrich was convinced he could find this type of experience only outside the human realm.

Today, now that we have arrived in the age of the Anthropocene, this romantic ethos is incorporated in civil life. There is no clear boundary any more between where nature stops and economics begin. Hidden within the logic of calculations, running through underground pipelines, are economic interests that extend beyond borders. This capitalist force seeps through the European landscape and provides us with great abundance. Simultaneously its network has grown beyond us; it transcends us and at unexpected moments, like the unannounced arrival of a storm, confronts us with its capriciousness. In his work the artist restates this apparent opposition between romantic views and capitalist reasoning by creating new landscapes in which their imprints resurface.



## First edition of ADP (2013)

The call for applications for the first ADP targeted emerging visual artists from five countries: Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta and Cyprus. The Programme attracted a lot of interest, with 89 applicants from the five eligible countries. Considering the under-represented European nationalities in the EIB Art collection, the Arts Committee had chosen to offer the residency only to this restricted number of countries. Jokūbas Čižikas from Lithuania was selected as first beneficiary of the ADP. In the framework of the residency he had the chance to visit Mirosław Bałka in his studio in Warsaw.



# Artist: Jokūbas Čižikas



Lithuania, 1988



Jokūbas Čižikas is a Lithuanian sculptor living and working in Amsterdam. He studied at the Vilnius Academy of fine Arts and the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. He participated in several group exhibitions in Lithuania, Germany, France, Austria and the Czech Republic since 2008. He was also commissioned for the production of two site-based artworks and one performance.

His artistic practice explores the process transforming language and concepts into objects and the mental manifestations affecting this process. He focuses on the translation of ideas and perceptions into material. Although a sculptor, sound installations are a very important element in his art, since they express invisible narrative properties. Below is *Palette*, a series of works he produced during his residency in Luxembourg.

## Palette Series – Palette 1



A sense of something ancient, hidden, dusted away and fossilised is shaping the perception. It is not just a matter of aesthetics, behind the exterior there are layers of elements: pigment, dust, colophonium and grains of sand. A sort of alchemistic palette stands in front of you. Forms and abstract textures, planetary-like terrains are guided by the dark lines, their structure can lead you to the next platform or they can become letters, shapes or dissolve into the background. Your eyes start travelling around the surface, picking colours, peeling layers and recognising shapes, you are brought into a creative act.

## Palette Series – Palette 2

A system of intuitive selection and planned, structured processes has been combined in order to produce this experimental object. It is juxtaposed in a way to be in a pure state of potential.



It can be a continuous process of building, using and combining different materials and getting various results. Imagine an object which changes its state whenever you look at it again. At one point you can focus to recognise an easel seen yesterday on TV, a furniture design you have at home; a conversation about the object can make it into garden fence, next time it dissolves into Mondrian-like compositions or a computer microchip.

The raw materials suggest concrete implications, but the artwork seems incomplete and as such a paradigm of speculative realism. Its micro-details create a poetic language, which in combination can result in surprising results.

### Palette Series – Palette 3



The structural composition is twofold. It is heavy with its colour, shape and material which act as sculptural properties. But it is light at the same time, it is dynamic and white parts of the surfaces suggest levitation, a space to fill in with words, shapes or matter. A dialectical process of constructing and erasing, ageing and renewing, remembering and forgetting.

The artwork is also suggested to be used in a concrete way - what could be made from the given materials and shapes? Perhaps a boat, shelter, or a support structure to pour concrete to make another sculpture. The artwork is not yet an artwork. I claim to be an art engineer and create tools for art, for people to use both practically, mentally and spiritually.

## The EIB's Art Collection



The EIB's art collection comprises some 700 works, encompassing paintings, photographs, works on paper, sculptures and installations. It contains mainly representative works of **European contemporary art** but also some old masters, 19<sup>th</sup> century and modern works.

The current collecting policy has been designed to very gradually create a unique long-term perspective on contemporary EU art. The acquisitions are subject to a rigorous process of selection under the guidance of the Arts Committee, which is assisted by established experts. The works of art must have been produced **after 1958** by an **artist** from one of the **EU member or candidate** countries who was still **alive** at the time they were acquired. The Bank has tended to acquire art at an early stage of an artist's career. Some of the artists have since become widely recognised, or even iconic and internationally acclaimed, such as Janis Kounellis, Anish Kapoor, Tony Cragg, Sean Scully and Olivier Debré. In recent years the emphasis has been on acquiring work from emerging or newly established artists.

For its 50th anniversary, the EIB unveiled three works of art commissioned from two leading EU artists, Michael Craig-Martin (Ireland) and Tobias Rehberger (Germany). The new installations form the cultural centrepiece of the new building in Luxembourg (restaurant, cafeteria and main atrium).

The artistic focus of the art collection reflects the EIB's role at the forefront of promoting economic and social development in Europe and naturally interacts with the evolving scope of the Bank's character and activities, particularly its geographical expansion in line with that of the EU. The EIB Institute believes that culture can be a significant generator of social value, notably by fostering new ideas, innovation and socially



responsible, sustainable economic development. Overall, the aim of the collection is to encourage reflection in a manner consistent with the corporate vision; to offer creative energy, inspiration and even spiritual nourishment on a day-to-day basis; and to act as a catalyst for relational and intellectual development, which underpins economic progress both within and beyond borders.



A corporate art collection is a live communication tool. To ensure maximum visibility and exposure of the works, **thematic exhibitions** are organised – a way for staff and visitors alike to encounter the EIB’s art collection in a new light. Recently four exhibitions – *Elles@eib* (2011), *Portraiture* (2012), *Landscape(s)* (2013), *La terre est bleue comme une orange* (2014) – were designed to strengthen the dialogue between the collection and both external and **internal audiences**.

**External exhibitions of the collection** take place to commemorate momentous events in EU Member States. *Within / Beyond Borders* was presented in a different format at the Byzantine & Christian Museum, Athens (2011) and in the former Church of St Julian, Lisbon (2014). The curatorial approach consisted in exploring the theme of frontiers – real or imagined, physical or in the mind. A frontier lends itself to contrasting thoughts about discipline or confinement on the one hand, and innovative exploration or breakthroughs on the other. The selection of art aimed to explore both angles. It gave examples of the transcending of frontiers or crossing of borders – territorial, intellectual or artistic. It also investigated notions of special and visual limitations and confinement. In doing so, it tested ideas of the already explored versus the as yet largely unexplored. Comprising respectively 40 works and 28 works, the show featured both what are now mainstream historical examples, and what are still considered to be more experimental works. To indicate the diversity of European artistic output, the show presented a wide variety of European Union artists working in various media – painting, sculpture, photography, light box/installation and work on paper. Extensive mediation / outreach programmes were on offer: they included thematic guided tours, family workshops, drawing classes, and programmes targeting students from deprived neighbourhoods.

## Forthcoming Projects of the Arts Team

- ✿ An **exhibition of representative artworks** stemming from the EIB art collection will take place at Cercle Cité in Luxembourg from mid November 2015 to end January 2016. This exhibition is organised at the request of the city of Luxembourg, and is placed **under the patronage of the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU**. Through this initiative, the EIB wishes to pay homage to the **cultural vitality of its host country**, but also the **Bank's pan-EU role**. The exhibition offers both community engagement - dialogue with civil society and a contribution to the local cultural offering, while also emphasising **the asset that is the EU's artistic heritage**.
- ✿ **Behind the Lens 2015 (BTL)** is an EIB staff photographic competition, which takes place every year and has the highest staff participation rate of all EIB initiatives, and involves the external offices. BTL recognises internal talent, contributes to staff motivation and breaks down communications silos.
- ✿ The Bank will **donate 3 tapestries** stemming from its art collection, currently on long-term loan to the Château de Vianden in Luxembourg. The donation will **commemorate the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU**, and the handover ceremony will take place in November 2015.



