

Amant

We are pleased to announce the artists, writers and curators who will participate in the first edition of Amant Siena 2020. Lockdown restrictions have been lifted in Italy and traveling, albeit difficult, is possible. In Chiusure, the independent apartments and studios allow for social distancing and a safe coexistence between the residents and the local community. Amant's goal is to foster dialogue and experimentation and we are delighted to be able to start our program as planned.

The projects selected range across a broad spectrum and a variety of disciplines. From folktales to accounts of uncomfortable truths; sonic manifestations of migrant communities to the representation of violence in arts; writing about forgotten modernist figures and thinking about oppressive systems in the arts, to making sculptures in collaboration with local artisans.

Amant Siena 2020 Residents

Andrius Arutiunian (b. 1991, Vilnius, Lithuania)

Martina Caruso (b. 1978, Brussels, BL)

Gianluca Concialdi (b. 1981, Palermo, Italy)

Janice Kerbel (b. 1969, Toronto, Canada)

Nina Kurtela (b. 1981, Zagreb)

Vanessa Onwuemezi (b. 1988, London, UK)

Oliver Rohe (b. 1972, Beirut)

Reem Shadid (b. 1984, occupied Jerusalem)

Amy Sherlock (b. 1987, Manchester, UK)

Vasco Forconi (b. 1991, Rome) has been appointed residency coordinator of Amant Siena. Vasco is an independent curator and writer based in Rome and Stockholm. He is currently curatorial assistant at CuratorLab, Konstfack University, Stockholm, and visiting curator at V-A-C Foundation in Moscow.

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Biographies

Andrius Arutiunian (born in 1991 in Vilnius) is an Armenian-Lithuanian artist based in the Hague in The Netherlands. He works with sound and hybrid forms of media, with a particular interest in the politics of sound and technologies, sonic artifacts and shifting identities. Recent shows and performances include ZKM | Hertz Lab, Karlsruhe (2020), Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2019), documenta 14, Parliament of Bodies, Kassel (2017), Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius (2017), deSingel, Antwerp (2017), Rewire Festival, The Hague (2016), and MAZE Festival, Amsterdam (2016). He has recently been selected as an EMARE/EMAP artist-in-residence at FACT Liverpool for their 2021 program.

During his residency, Andrius will research and develop a new body of work connected to the sonic manifestations of different migrating communities. The focus of his research will be displaced sounds and music, fluctuating aural landscapes and sonic artifacts of migration.

Martina Caruso (born in 1978 in Brussels) is an art historian and writer, former Assistant Director for Art, Architecture and the Creative Industries at the British School at Rome. She has lectured in Art History and the History and Theory of Photography at the Courtauld Institute of Art, Camberwell College of Arts and London College of Communication. Martina has curated exhibitions in Rome, London and New York. Her research interests focus on lens-based media, fascism, antifascism, gender and decolonialism. She co-directed the Giulio Turcato archives in Rome and worked on the artist's *catalogue raisonné*. As well as publishing articles, catalogue essays and book reviews on photography and Italian modern art, her book *Italian Humanist Photography from Fascism to the Cold War* was published by Bloomsbury in 2016. Currently Martina is working on colonial and postcolonial representations of landscape in the Mediterranean as well as a project on private memoirs and public memory under Fascism. She is interested in approaching history through a combination of the subjective and the objective, the creative and the factual, with a strong visual culture perspective.

During her residency Martina proposes to begin writing an experimental book that investigates the gaps that exist between family memoirs, photographs and letters in relation to scholarship and archival resources. The research focuses on the fascist crimes her paternal grandfather, Pietro Caruso, committed of which he was accused, and for he was executed on 22 September 1944. By splicing her grandmother Zita Stefani's memoirs with her own primary and secondary source findings, Martina's book will place divergent historical accounts from the personal and public spheres, questioning their co-existence in order to reveal aspects of the history that may have been stifled due to the way in which Fascism has been historicized in Italy.

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Gianluca Concialdi (born in 1981 in Palermo) worked in Germany and United Kingdom researching and developing his studies in abstract painting, testing all the elements within it: line, point, surface, materials. His personal way of expressing his concepts is to spread a non-contemplative effect into his canvases. Each painting is double-sided, with one side forced against the wall, creating the constant possibility of a choice. Language plays an important role in his practice, as the paintings and the exhibitions often have suggestive, ironic and poetic titles. Recent exhibitions include 'Piatti Caldi' (Hot Dishes), Almanac London (2019); 'Vagabondi Eccellenti' (Excellent Rovers), Casa Piena Microcentro, Petralia Soprana, Palermo (2019); 'Il Mistico Palestrato' (Mystically Ripped), Polo Santa Marta in Verona (2018); 'Curva di Gallo' (Cockrel Bend), Clima, Milan (2018).

During the residency, Gianluca will collaborate with local artisans in order to create functional sculptures that combine the idea of *bas-relief* with a communal moment. Concialdi will work towards a collective experience –a barbeque– using the sculptures to both cook and create drawings.

Janice Kerbel (born in 1969 in Toronto) is a Canadian artist living in London UK. She works with print and performance, exploring subjects ranging from plant life to violence to synchronized swimming. While her work takes multiple forms, a recurring interest in performative language underpins her practice. Recent exhibitions include: 'Sink', The Common Guild Glasgow; 'Beautiful World, Where are you?', Liverpool Biennial; 'Alphabet', Hamburger Kunsthalle; 'Space Force Construction', V-A-C Foundation, Venice; Arts Club of Chicago; and Chisenhale, London, amongst others. Kerbel was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2015 for the performance work, 'Doug'.

During her residency, Janice will develop a new performance-based work that will explore languages of power expressed through physical gesture and spoken word. Interested in the practice of *commedia dell'arte*, renowned for performances that fuse scripted and improvised forms, she hopes to experiment with techniques of unarmed combat and symbolic oratory to examine how meaning can be at once created and withheld.

Nina Kurtela (born in 1981 in Zagreb) is a visual artist and a dance maker who works with choreographic and site-specific practices. She studied Dance, Context, Choreography at the HZT, UdK Berlin and holds a diploma (MFA) in visual arts and art education from The Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. Her work has been presented in a variety of contexts: museums and galleries, theatre and dance festivals as well as public spaces: KW Berlin; MUMOK Vienna; Transmediale, Berlin; Survival Kit, Riga; Tanz Im August, Berlin; X-border Art Biennial, Sweden; MSU Zagreb; HKW Berlin; Tokyo Opera City Gallery; 104 Paris; MMOMA Moscow; Ars Aevi Sarajevo. She received the Japanese Media Arts New Face Award in Tokyo 2017, and was shortlisted for Berlin Art Prize in 2018. Through her performance and time-based art practice she works with methodologies of endurance, perseverance and daily practice while questioning notions of labor, identity, place and belonging and the position of women in art and society.

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During her time at Amant, Nina will explore the relationship between the body and the landscape, taking into consideration the current processes of commodification affecting nature. Nina will question the extent to which it becomes possible to see nature as a virginal sphere where the economic categories established by society cease to be valid, engaging in understanding how space, territory and identity are bound to existence and creation.

Vanessa Onwuemezi (born in 1988 in London) is a writer and poet based in London, UK. She completed an MA in Creative Writing at the University of Birkbeck, 2018. Her story *At the Heart of Things* won the The White Review Short Story Prize 2019. She was a Showcase writer featured by the Literary Consultancy, UK, 2018, and has received a commendation for her flash fiction, *The Crossing*, from Bare Fiction magazine, 2017. She is interested in expanding the reach of the prose form through collaboration. She has produced the accompanying exhibition texts for artists Kira Freije, *Mouthing the living, undetected, on breeze or breath*, Soft Opening, London 2019; Alex Stone, *INTERVENTION I*, London 2018; Lauren Keeley, *Lanes and Lanes*, Frutta Gallery, London 2018.

During the residency Vanessa will prepare a book-length manuscript, a collection of experimental short stories currently titled *Dark Neighbourhood*. The stories in the collection are grounded in her wide-ranging interests: the rich history of Yoruba and Afro-Cuban religions, mythology and art; the visual arts; avant-garde and postmodern literature and poetry, as well as the reality bending narrative traditions of folk-tales.

Oliver Rohe (born in 1972 in Beirut) is the author of three novels, *Défaut d'origine* (Allia, 2003, translated into English by Jane Kuntz, *Origin Unknown*, Dalkey Archive Press, 2013); *Terrain vague* (Allia, 2005, translated into English by Laird Hunt, *Vacant Lot*, Counterpath Press, 2011); *Un peuple en petit* (Gallimard, 2009). One biographical fiction on Mikhaïl Kalachnikov, *Ma dernière création est un piège à taupes* (Inculte, 2012); and two essays, *Une année en France*, with François Bégaudeau and Arno Bertina (Gallimard, 2005) and *A fendre le cœur le plus dur*, with Jérôme Ferrari (Inculte/ Dernière marge, 2015). He is one of the founding members of 'Inculte' collective and publishing house. His books are translated into English, German and Italian.

During his residency, Oliver will be working on a long-term project dealing with the civil war in Lebanon (1975-1990) and its resurgences in present time, notably a lynching incident occurred in 2010 in a village south of the country. The book is an investigation on that tragic incident as well as a personal and fragmented recount of the author's experience of the civil war. Through both these themes, explored in various forms and genres, Oliver's project is a reflection on the ways language and image represent violence in arts, especially in literature.

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Reem Shadid (born in 1984 in occupied Jerusalem) is an independent curator who works on the emancipatory possibilities within artistic practice, exploring the ways it intersects with socio-economic forms. Previously, she was the Deputy Director of Sharjah Art Foundation, where she served in various capacities between 2006 – 2020. She was instrumental in developing and managing the foundations' team, operations, public and curatorial programs which includes Sharjah Biennial, March Meeting, exhibitions, publications, film, music, education and community outreach programs. Among her recent curatorial projects are 'New Affinities', B7L9-art station, Tunis (2019); 'Debt', Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre, Ramallah (2018); 'Active Forms', Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah (2018) and 'March Project', Sharjah Art Foundation (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019). She has also served on various advisory and selection committees of commissions and participated in several symposiums such as 'In 20/20', the Architecture Association, London; 'Understanding Asia: Understanding Art and Culture', Asia Pacific Triennial, Brisbane; 'Africa Art Book Fair', La Colonie, Paris; and 'Collecting Territories', Studio-X Amman – Columbia GSAAP, Amman among others.

Reem's research explores various forms of protest that aim to disrupt the entangled dynamic between art and the neoliberal capitalist system, and hold accountable those in the art world who are complicit with state violence, injustice and oppressive systems of control. Reem will study new introductions to forms of protest; such as the use of the image, sound, social media, as well as hacking and augmented reality technologies. This will consider the efficacy of actions that have been in practice for decades, such as targeted petitions, boycotts, civil disobedience, demonstrations and strikes. Understanding these practices will pose questions around issues of responsibility, complicity and accountability. Furthermore, it will allow for an exploration of the broader role of art in society and developing ways of working that dismantle and re-configure existing structures. In parallel to this research, Reem will start conversations with fellow residents and beyond, through weekly public group meetings around this topic.

Amy Sherlock (born in 1987 in Manchester) is a writer and editor based in London, UK. She is the deputy editor of the international arts and culture journal *frieze*, where she has worked since 2011. In addition to her editorial work, she is the curator of the annual Frieze Academy Art & Architecture Conference, which takes place every October in London. She was one of the directors of Open Source, a non-profit, free contemporary arts festival that took place in Dalston, east London, in 2015–16 and worked with more than 60 emerging and established artists, also producing more than 15 new commissions. Her writing has been widely published in arts and culture publications and she has contributed to numerous monographs, including recent pieces on Nick Goss and Lois Dodd, as well as academic journals.

Amy will use the residency in Chiusure to work on her first substantial piece of fiction: a narrative that takes as its starting point the life of the French artist, poet and filmmaker Jean Cocteau.