

Catalogue of Artistic Residencies

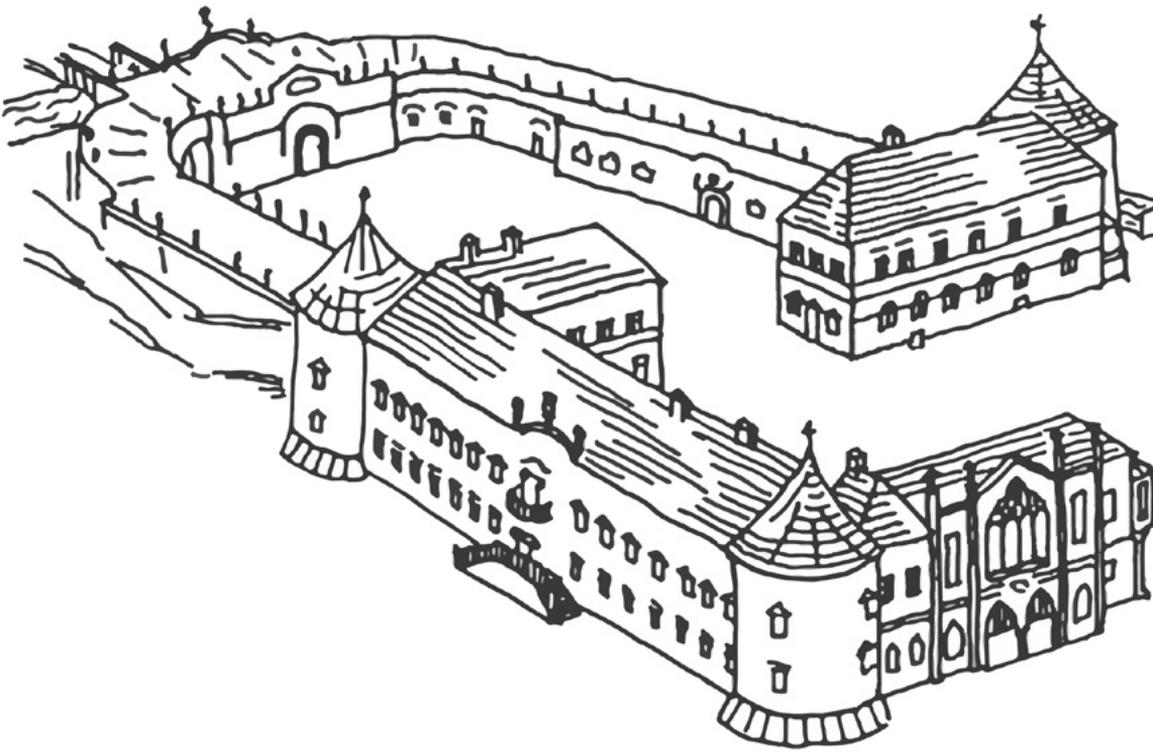
ARTECH

- Arts ·
- Rediscovery ·
- Traditional ·
- Eclectic ·
- Contemporary ·
- Heritage ·



2021-
2022

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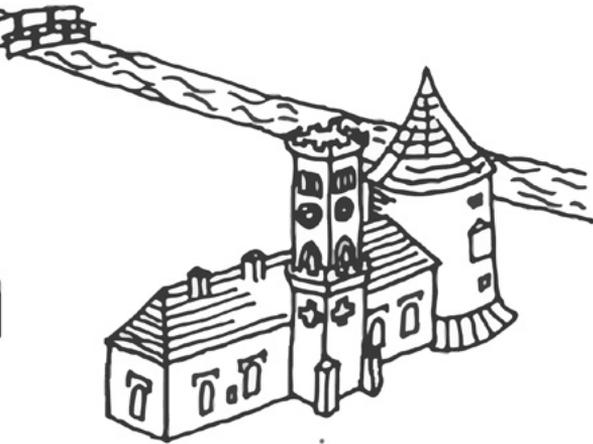
About ARTECH

ARTECH – Arts, Rediscovery, Traditions, Eclectic, Contemporary, Heritage proposed to create bridges between arts and traditional crafts, connecting contemporary modalities of artistic expression with the roots of cultural identities and with European heritage.

The aim of the project was to develop and promote European heritage and cultural diversity in a creative and collaborative way through trans-sectorial and innovative practices. The project embraced the concept that the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works, combined with the mobility of cultural operators, performers and artists has an immeasurable capacity in promoting understanding and diversity within the European Union.

The project focused on combining artistic innovation, crafts skills, traditional and new technologies, while strongly reinforcing the ability and capability of cultural/creative players (artists, creators, tech-savvies, makers with different disciplinary backgrounds) to operate internationally through understanding new skills/artistic techniques.

As part of the project, creative residencies were organised in Albania, Spain and Romania in 2021 and 2022, enhancing historic sites with artistic creations and performances.





Chapter 2

*Artistic Residencies
in 2021*

Artistic Residency in Albania

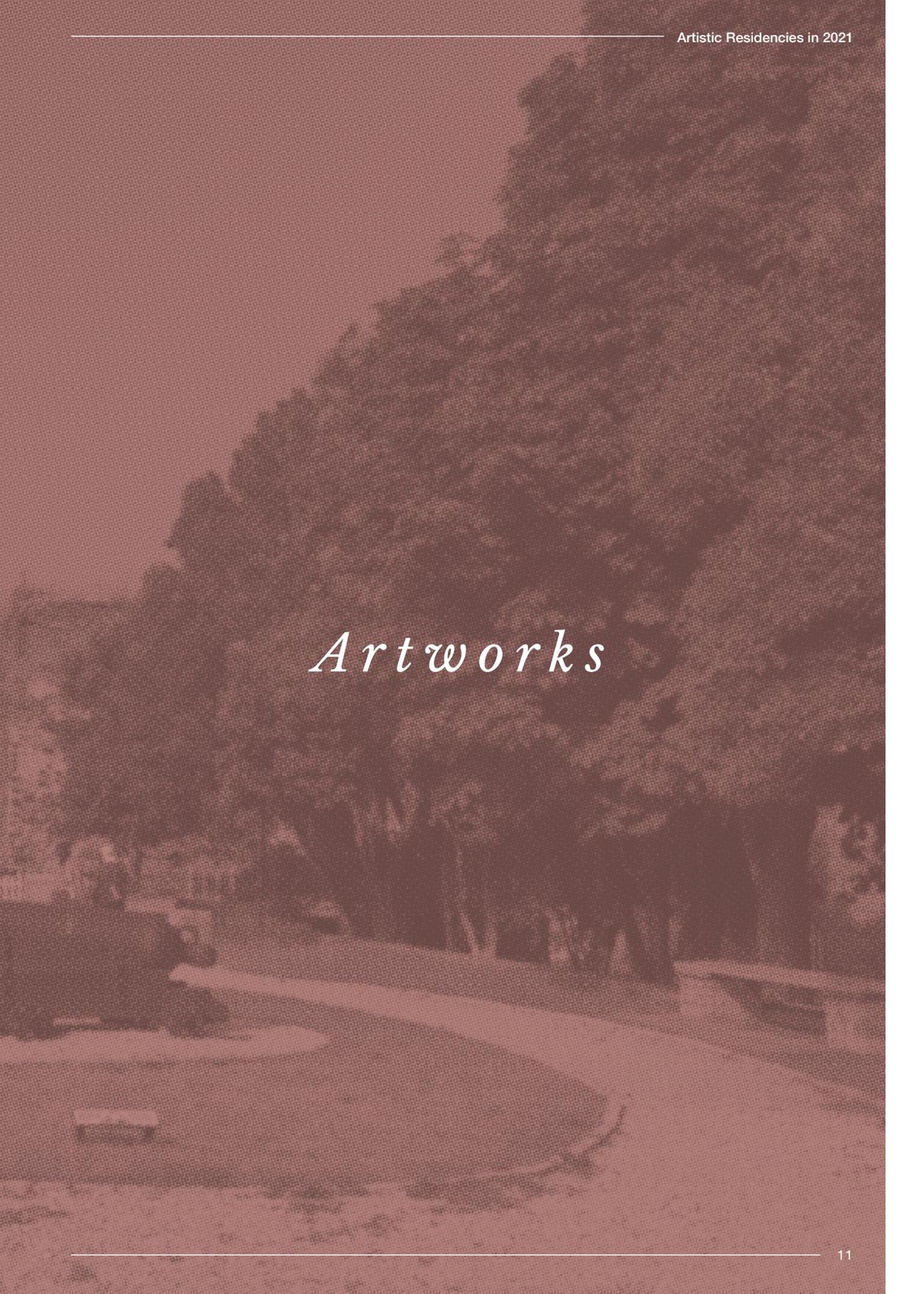
Situated in southern Albania, Gjirokastra is an authentic hidden gem where people can live an immersive experience and breathe history. Known as “the city of stone”, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is a rare example of a well-preserved Ottoman town. Its main features consist of remarkable examples of vernacular architecture, i.e. hundreds of Ottoman-period tower family houses with distinctive stone roofs, wooden balconies and whitewashed stone walls, the Old Bazaar, as well as a splendid castle. From feudal stronghold to Ottoman jewel, the city has known many rulers throughout history and has inspired poets, authors and artists. For the past 20 years, Gjirokastra Foundation has been working with the local community and main stakeholders to keep this unique site alive and to protect its heritage as a good base for social and economic development.

The artistic residency of Gjirokastra was an opportunity for artists and creators from the country and beyond to create and co-create,

as well as to improve their works based on heritage, traditional and modern techniques, to provoke discussion about preserving authenticity and new approaches in historic centres. For seven days, the participants had “access” to spaces and communities in the historic area of Gjirokastra – to the great culture and marvel of this UNESCO site. The participants included artists, makers, architects and designers that either worked closely with the local community in order to co-create an artistic project with selected artisans and craft masters from Gjirokastra, or independently, exploring different themes, devising projects and artworks.

The local artisans who helped in the art camp were Burbuqe Muka, a local artisan woman, Elida Zhulati, a local artisan woman and master of traditional costumes, Lubjana Baoja from GjiroArt and wood carver Viktor Nurce.

The residency was mentored by Gulia Cerrato from Turin with Liridona Ura from Shkoder, Albania.

The background of the page is a halftone-style photograph of a park. A large, leafy tree dominates the right side of the frame. A paved path curves through the lower portion of the image. In the foreground, there is a circular area that appears to be a fountain or a small pond, with a bench visible nearby. The overall color palette is a monochromatic, muted reddish-brown.

Artworks



1.

Fustanella Tent



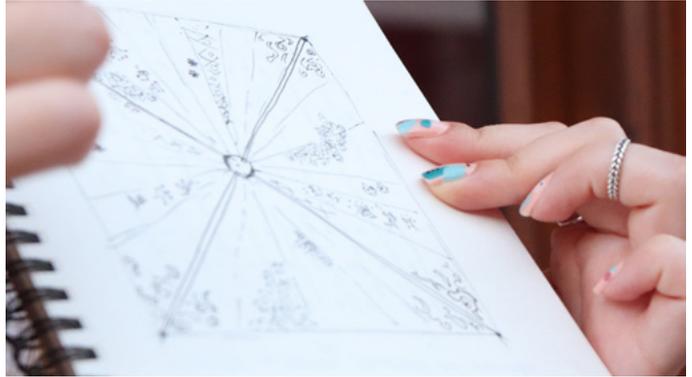
The installation is a prototype of a tent the shape of which is inspired by the fustanella traditional men's skirt of Gjirokastra. The traditional fustanella is a skirt of 500 pieces, while the Fustanella Tent is approximately 50 pieces. It is a collage of traditional floral motifs and typical colours of Gjirokastra found on traditional clothes, decorative embroidery placed on household objects, as well as characteristic herbs and leaves found in Gjirokastra houses as aromatics or in their gardens.

This project aims to translate the traditional into a modern and useful product, which will cast a pleasant shadow in the inner streets of the Bazaar, meanwhile adding an artistic touch and uniqueness to an otherwise simple tent.

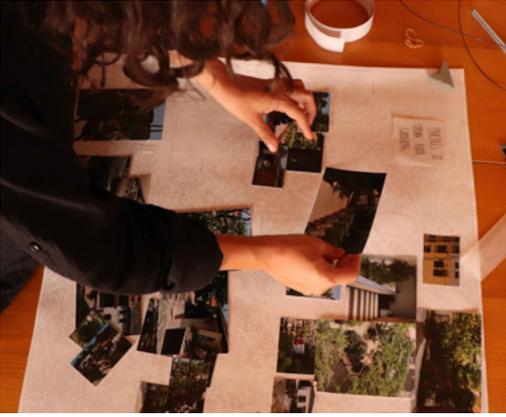
The collage theme of the installation is inspired by GjiroArt, a support organisation of women artisans that hosted the artistic residency and was carried out in close collaboration with the artisans.

Concept: **Valbona Fejza**





Materials and techniques: textile, costume and embroidery motifs, plants, cord, wire, hand and machine sewing, needlework, collage



2. *Urban and Rural Practices of Gardening*



Concept: **Arba Bekteshi and Toska Salihu**

A well-known phenomenon in Albanian cities is to appropriate (make use of or tend to) a specific portion of land, be it a green spot or a small example of Gilles Clément's third landscape, fencing it with rope, wood or metal structures. The artists decided to collaborate on a psychogeography of Gjirokastra and to illustrate the moulding of traditional practices of homemaking through mapping practices of gardening in different neighbourhoods. During the residency they deep-walked through the Old Bazaar area, Cfakë and parts of the new city.

Talking about the changing daily lives, we tap into the temporalities of Dunavat, a place between the chaotic, world-heating beats of development at its doorstep and the harmonious affordances of garden commons. The spatial poetics of Dunavat match our intention to walk, tending to the presence of green spaces, third landscapes and whatever else is built, grows and relies in between. It becomes clear to us that greening in Gjirokastra takes the form of gardening, or making similar uses of green spaces. Between what the future holds in terms of development and what the past and present shows us as urban potentiality lies a bridge uniting the urban fabric through practices of urban rural gardening.



3. “Woving Forward”

With the intent of *finding a bridge between artisans and artists*, the project proposed a collaboration between the two of them, in which the cultural heritage of Gjirokastra can be rediscovered and *moved forward* with the help of artists and technological innovation.

The starting point in the project was the idea of creating a new set of the same products (carpet, bag, wallet) that uses all the traditional original motifs but combined, juxtaposed, overlaid, in order to obtain a contemporary product. The process began with the sketching of the three products (carpet, bag, wallet) and the six motifs. After understanding them through drawing, they were scanned, colour edited in computer graphics and printed in order to make the final design. By this time, the artist decided to arrange the motifs on textile, in the form of the cobblestone geometry, which is very particular and specific to Albania. After that the artisans brought into reality a traditional yet novel product that reflects both the national characteristics and the present times.



Concept: **Daria Langa**



Materials and techniques: paper, colour pencil, print, wool, site visits, sketching, computer graphics, weaving on handloom



4. *Influences* – *Visual* *Cartography of* *Gjirokastra*

This work aims to show the importance of the natural environment that undergoes a metamorphosis to become architectural heritage, and how it transcends the architectural features to the mundane.

The work is described in three panels representing the *environment*, the *streets* and the *housing*. In these moodboards, different distinguished materials are used, but they communicate with each other to give a glimpse of the landscape of Gjirokastra, to show how the primary state of a material can be turned into a final product and to reflect on the importance of using local resources as an ancestral practice that today's society would reward as sustainable.

In this way, we observe the transformation of different elements of the natural environment, moulded for use in the streets and transformed in a much more functional way in homes.



Concept: **Águeda Centelles Moliner** and **Darío Escriche Domínguez**



Materials and techniques: panels, wood, stone, wool, traditional objects, souvenirs, fabrics, traditional costumes, herbs, etc.



5. *Fustanella ime / Our Fustanella*

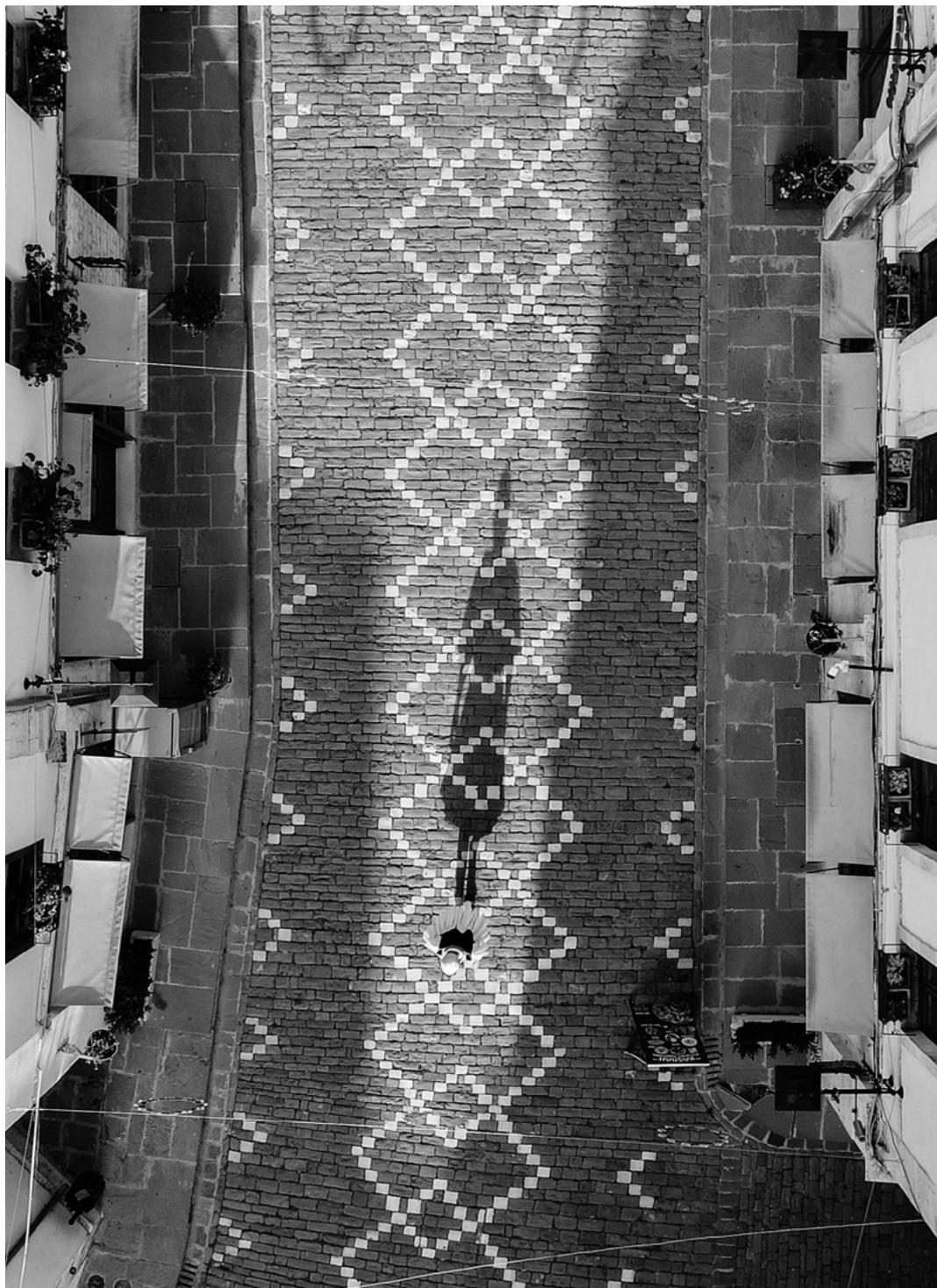


Concept: **Cami Bjant**

This audiovisual project blends and offers a modern take on tangible and intangible heritage, highlighting at the same time several motifs and values that define local and regional identity.

Inspired by the fustanella traditional men's skirt of Gjirokastra, the artist produced a short video which combined showing this traditional costume in the context of the stone city's cobblestone streets, with the sounds of iso-polyphony, inscribed as UNESCO intangible cultural heritage.





Materials and techniques: fustanella costume, video, camera, drone, video and sound editing



6. *Çilimi*



Combining the culture and tradition of Gjirokastra carpets through the technique of “string art” or the “art of knitting”, the artist turned the carpet into a wall decor in the assembly of 1000 nails.

In the artist’s view, this number shows the distant past of the city of Gjirokastra, in order to demonstrate that the values of the past must always be preserved, as well as merged with the modern and reworked, giving a new spirit to traditional culture. The artist analysed various motifs utilised in the local productions and used wool strings to complete his work.

Concept: **Fatbardh Kabashi**





Materials and techniques: nails, wool strings, string art



7. *The Stone Carpet – Decorative Composition*

Concept: **Ertit Bello**

This composition entails courage and provokes debate in the field of placemaking by decorating public spaces in historic centres such as Gjirokastra. Through the envisioned geometric decoration with solid shapes and colours, which reminds of the patience of creating crochet or carpets, the work transforms the public space into an intimate, home-like place.





Materials and techniques: reversible paints and colours, sketching, painting, public art, placemaking



8. *Symbols of Gjirokastra*



During the artistic residency, the artists from Ukraine, showing interest in wood carving, collaborated closely with a local woodcarver to learn and experience this craft. They learnt how to work with wood and create products that can be turned into souvenirs by replicating or using elements and themes of the heritage of Gjirokastra.



Concept: **Lisa Karpushina** and
Lisa Valyavska, with **Viktor Nurce**



Materials and techniques: wood, wood carving



9. *Whirlwind Tunnel – Game*



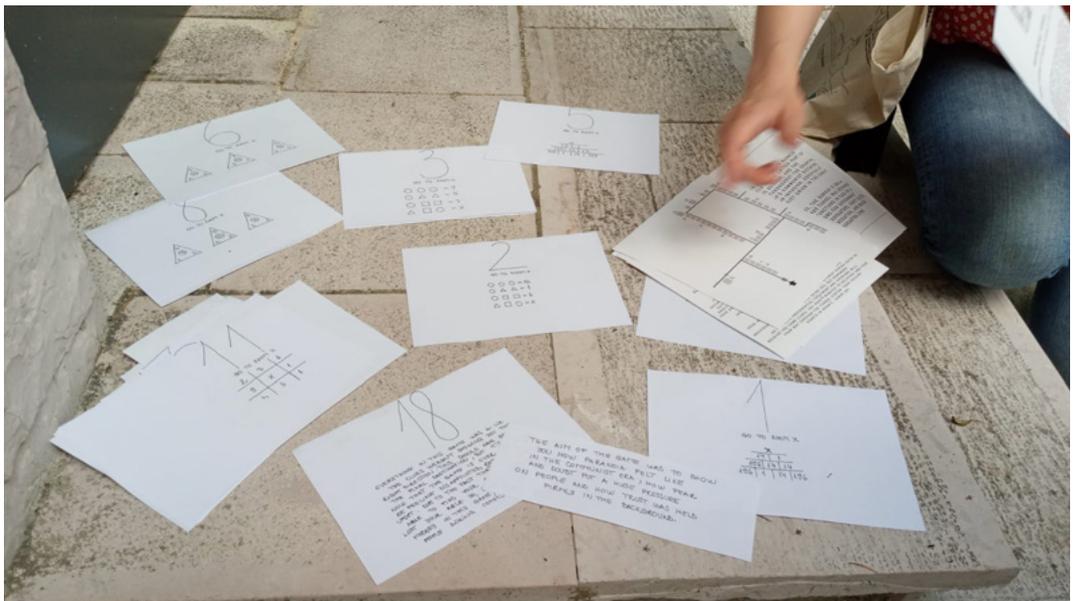
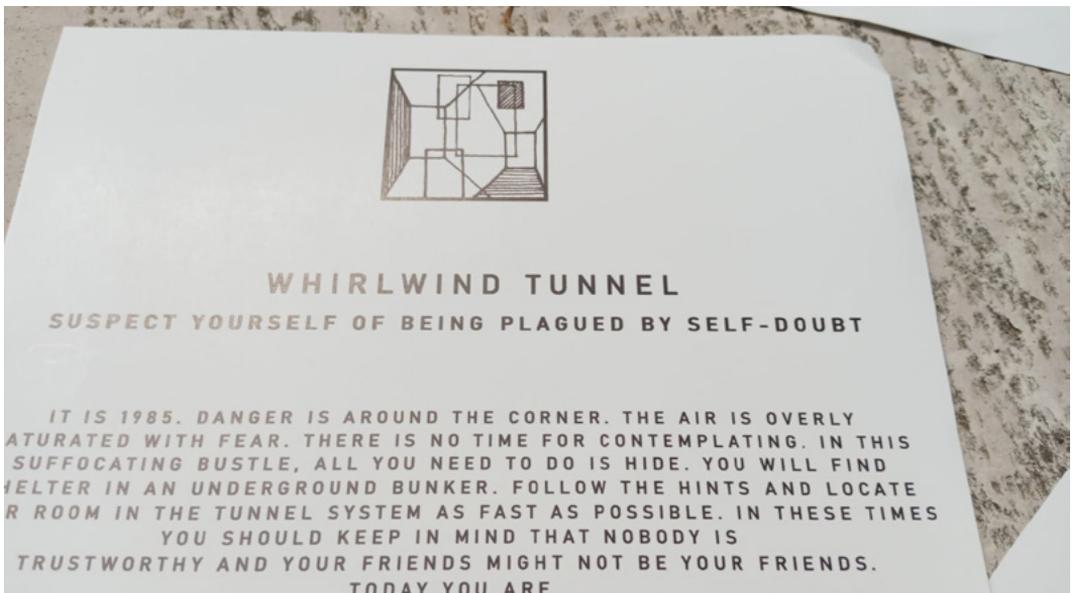
Concept: **Ágota Kovács**

Suspect Yourself of being plagued by self-doubt...The artist proposed a game which can be played at the Cold War Tunnel of Gjirokastra under the castle.

The Cold War Tunnel is an underground bunker that served as an emergency shelter in the latter part of Albania's Communist Era. It reflects the paranoia of the communists and the dictator Enver Hoxha who was born in this city.

The game is set in the year 1985, when danger is around the corner...The air is overly saturated with fear. There is no time for contemplating. In this shelter, in an underground bunker. Follow the hints and locate your room in the tunnel as fast as possible. In these times you should keep in mind that nobody is trustworthy and your friends might not be your friends....

The result: everything in this game is a lie. The clues weren't showing you the right direction. And the message is to show that you were nobody in this game, just as regular people during communism.



Materials and techniques: prints, maps, gamification



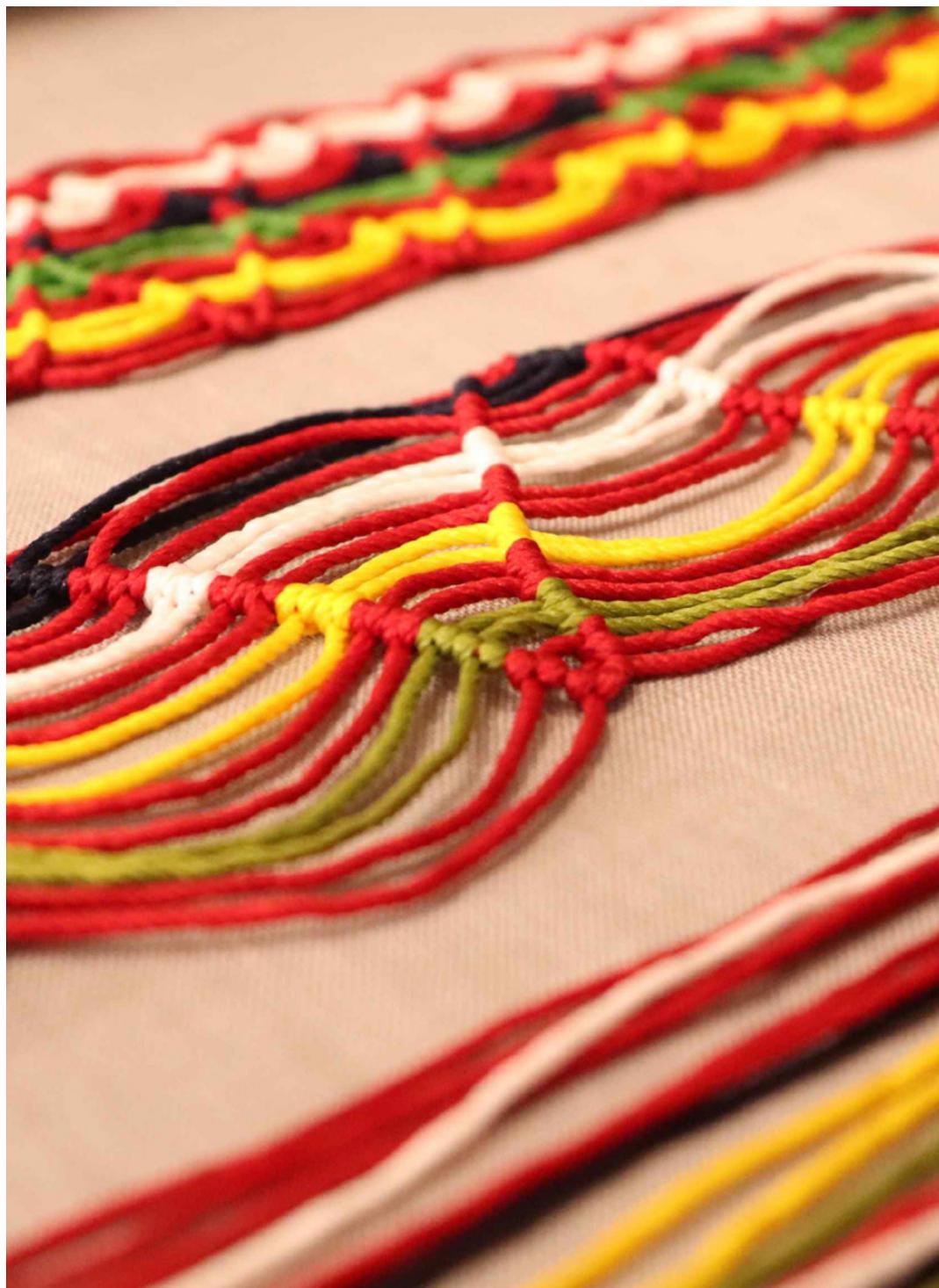
10. *Hejbe*



The name used is an inspiration from the traditional horse saddlebags. During the camp, the local artisan woman shared her knowledge on the macramé technique with the participants. The new insights from the European participants helped her generate new ideas and artworks through artistic thinking.

Concept: **Burbuqe Muka**





Materials and techniques: jute, macramé

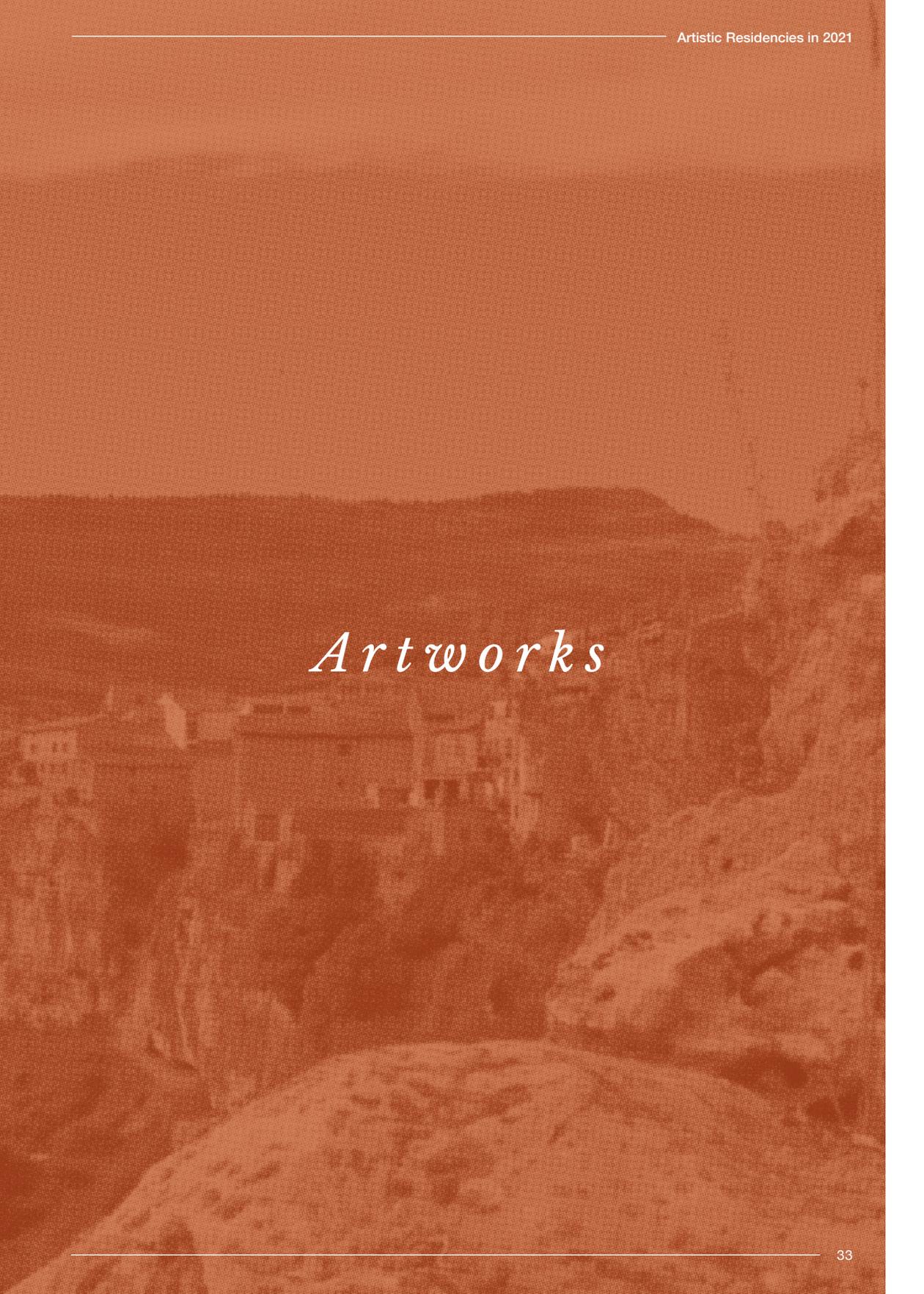
Artistic Residency in Spain

Cantavieja, a small and picturesque municipality of Comarca Maestrazgo, Spain, is located on an impressive mountain cliff at a height of 1300 m, dominating the mountains and preserving an interesting architectural ensemble. In the artistic residency organised here, 17 artists were selected, mainly from the region – Zaragoza, Navarra, Valencia, Teruel – completed by artists from Albania and from Romania. This unique collaborative project was based on the development and enhancement of cultural heritage through innovative and collaborative practices. It also involved the local population through the compilation of their personal experiences, favouring reflection with their active participation. The work was organised based on the knowledge of the cultural heritage of Cantavieja, both tangible and intangible, complemented with guided visits to Tronchón and La Iglesuela del Cid.

Professor and artist Rocío Garriga was in charge of directing the works and coordinating the artists and teams created. The residency

included crafts workshops for basketry and ceramics, led by specialists: Carmen Igual from the Vila Rubei ceramic workshop in Villarroya de los Pinares and Jorge Lanzuela, an expert in basketry and traditional clothing. Both workshops were also attended by the locals and the final pieces were integrated into the artistic project.

In the creative residency, the artistic pieces considered the urban environment and integrated the artistic values of the architectural and cultural heritage. The various spaces in Cantavieja, such as the porticoed Plaza Mayor, the Santo Sepulcro and Calvario chapel, the communal public laundry and many streets hosted the installations of the participants in the creative residency – privileged spaces to reflect on the enhancement of cultural heritage and an itinerary that allows visitors to rediscover the emblematic enclaves of the town. The last day of the programme was dedicated to an urban tour inviting residents and tourists.



Artworks



1.
*Mens et cor homo
est. Man is Mind
and Heart*



Concept: **Sergio Peramato**

The piece is an audio-visual installation located in the public laundromat of Cantavieja, where water is supplied from the village's central fountain by absorbing both the sediments of the environment and the remains of hand washing. The concept of sediment is diluted, as an idea of what remains in a collective identity, of what has been purified, rested and remains despite the flow. The idea of intangible heritage becomes relevant in this case, as a sanctuary-laundry, where both personal and collective conversations take place and the purification of both the physical and the mental is possible. That outer skin that is the clothes we wear and those thoughts that inhabit us can only be purified by meditating on remembering what it means to go back through the heart. The laundry room becomes an intimate place of reflection and listening.

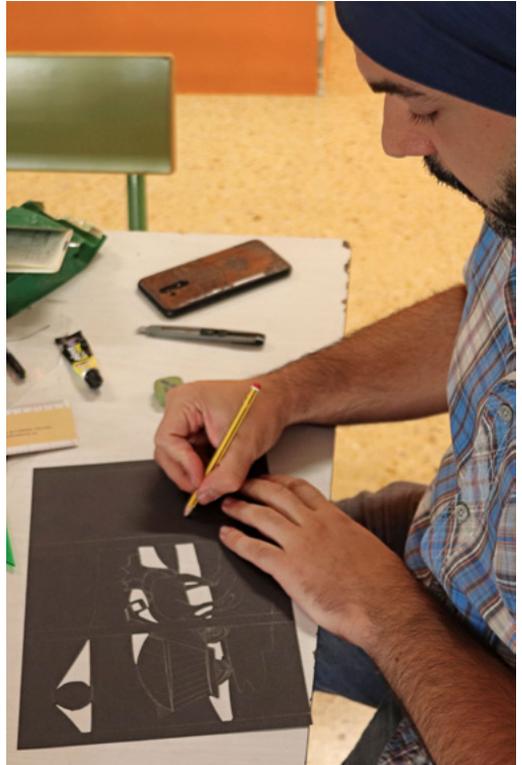
The stagnant water becomes a place for reflection, for grouping the mental images that inhabit us, construct us and give us meaning.



Materials and techniques: water, led band, audio-visual installation



2. *Gyrocastra*



Concept: **Concord Armengod** and **David Feroce**

It is a piece based on the ancient zoetropes and summarises the history of the accumulation and sale of snow, normally the responsibility of the council. It has a carved wooden base inspired by the textures and proportions of the arches of the church's gothic marketplace, made of pine wood by Concordia Armengod. On it, several openwork drawings by David Feroce allow the light from the lantern to pass through and project images onto the stone walls.



Materials and techniques: wood, nails, cardboard, light, carving, drawing, openwork

3. *Influences - Constitutive Synopsis of Cantavieja*



Located in the Santo Sepulcro of Cantavieja, this installation aims to show how the natural environment of Cantavieja influences the constitution of a cultural heritage and how it is impossible to understand a heritage of such value without the weight of the landscape, the materials and resources it offers.

In this space we can find the transformation of natural heritage into cultural heritage. The stone that we see in the dry-stone walls or in the buildings of the old town was part of nature before being transformed by the hand of man. Livestock farming, agriculture, craftsmanship and the result obtained from each human activity reminds us that if something that nature gives us is managed and used correctly, it lasts over time. The installation has made use of the ten wicker baskets hand-woven by the women of the village in the basket-making workshop led by Jorge Lanzuela.



Concept: **Águeda Centelles** and **Darío Escriche**





Materials and techniques: stone, wicker baskets, plants, various objects



4. *The Paper House / La casa del papel*



This intervention consists of documenting different examples of forging techniques in Cantavieja (balconies, door knockers, etc.). The work is completed by covering this selection of elements with white paper, wrapping them completely, to draw attention to them by hiding them. For this reason, this installation was spread out in different parts of the village, in order to draw the attention of the inhabitants to elements that are familiar to them and therefore go unnoticed. The metal craftsmanship is highlighted with this unusual appearance.



Concept: **Oana Hălmăgean**





Materials and techniques: white paper, strings, photography



The work is a 4 m high piece of yellow fabric 12 m in diameter with a wooden stamp in the centre of the installation. It is designed to be seen from the inside in order to appreciate a decorative border that reinterprets the old prints and embroidery of the woollen cloth commonly used in Cantavieja.

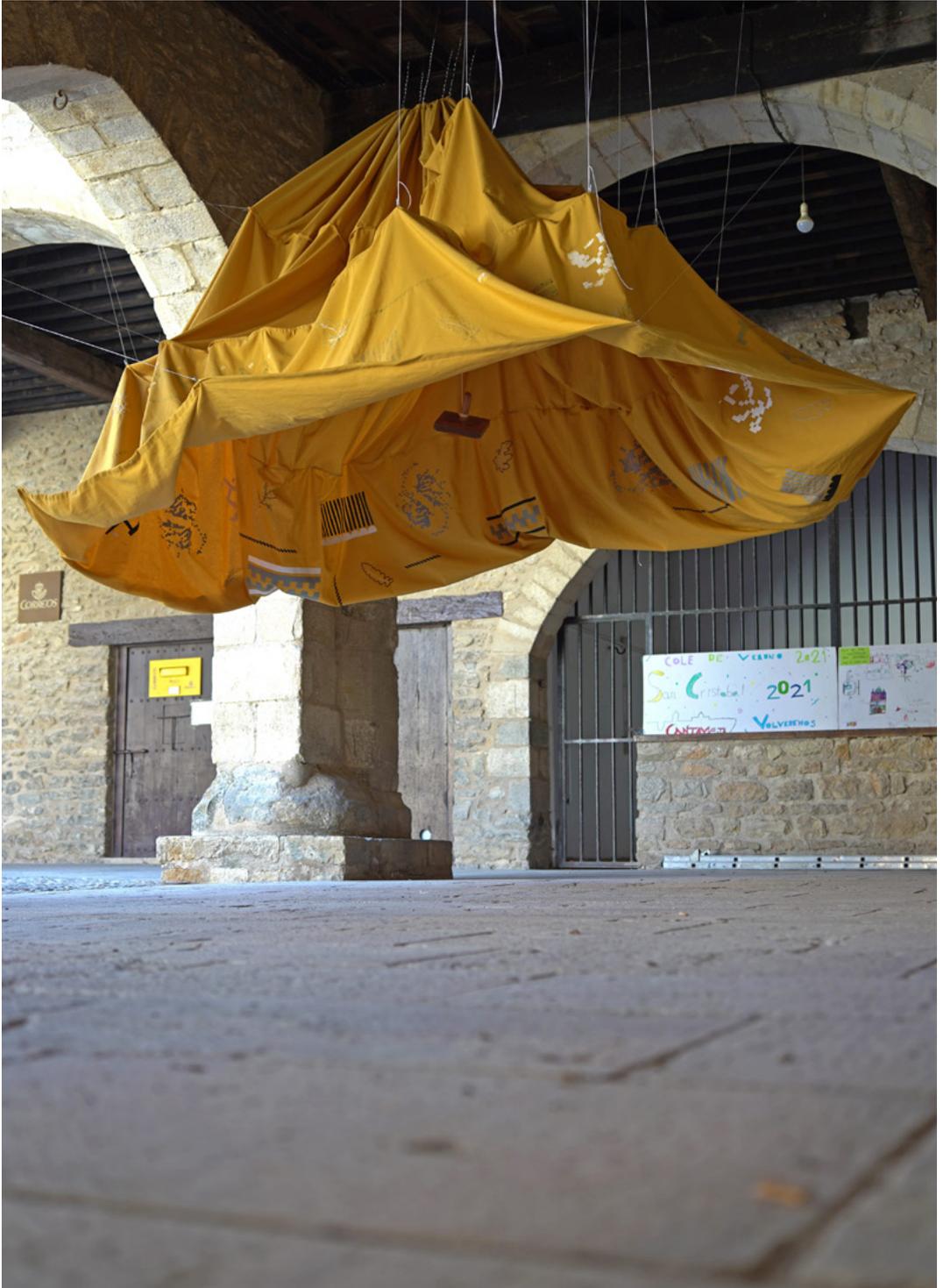
5. *The Sense of Home*



In addition, the typical local plants used for healing have also been hand-embroidered. Inside, in the centre of the installation, hangs a wooden stamp, made by Concord, reminiscent of the technique traditionally used to create skirt ornaments. The idea behind the installation is to invite visitors inside where the treasure and the world of a Cantavieja woman is represented, while giving visitors the feeling of familiarity and warmth.



Concept: **Valbona Fejza, Dora Buñuel and Mónica Machín**



Materials and techniques: textile, thread, strings, wood, cardboard, leaves, motifs, embroidery, carving



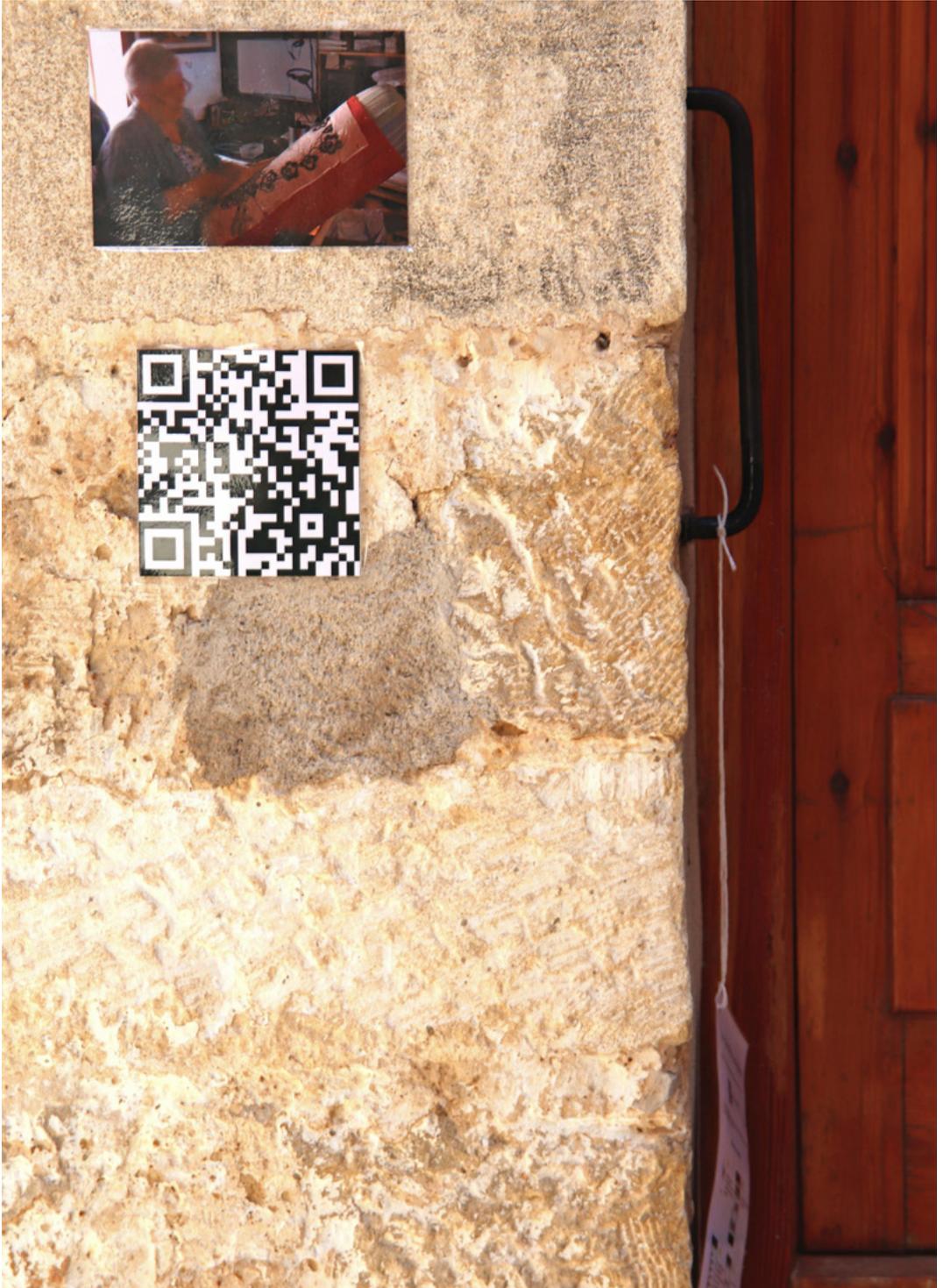
6. *Those Who Are / Los que están*

Concept: **Nora Monge**

This project consists of a compilation of photographs, videos and sounds of some of the inhabitants of Cantavieja with traditional skills or trades that make them unique. The information is accessible through QR codes located in the places where the project has been developed.

The aim of this piece is to give visibility to phenomena such as the depopulation of the villages in the Maestrazgo Region, in particular Cantavieja. This situation leads to a loss of these activities and the sounds that characterise them.





Materials and techniques: video and sound recordings, photographs



The lullaby is one of the most intimate musical practices, which arises with the ultimate purpose of soothing and lulling the baby to sleep through voice, song and the characteristic cooing movement.



7. *Nana*



This experimental sound piece awakens the lyric and melody of a traditional lullaby from Maestrazgo, which is known thanks to the work of Carolina Ibor and Diego Escolano in the book *Maestrazgo Turolense: Música y literatura populares en la primera mitad del siglo XX* (Maestrazgo Turolense: Popular music and literature in the first half of the 20th century). The artists Joel Rico and Carolina Ferrer pull this kind of thread to find the voices of the people of Cantavieja who, remembering their birthplace and those to whom they sang, bring to the present this heritage that used to walk on the edge of oblivion.



Concept: **Carolina Ferrer and Joel Rico**

*Materials and techniques: sound recordings,
sound piece, performance*





8. *Offering to the Old Woman / Ofrenda a la vieja*



Concept: **common concept, with the participation of summer school children**



This project is the result of the collaboration between the ARTECH creative stay and the local summer school. During one morning the children enjoyed a workshop where they worked with their hands on alginate. Alginate is a powder that when mixed with water in the right proportion, and through a chemical reaction, generates a mass that is able to reproduce any model in negative. This particularity of alginate was used to reproduce the children's hands. Then they brought elements selected by themselves to offer to Cantavieja and through drawings or phrases they showed who the hands belonged to, which like wax votive offerings were hung on several walls of the reception area of the Town Hall.





Materials and techniques: alginate, various objects, casting



9. *Embroidered Memories*

This work consisted of compiling the memory of wool and embroidery in the region. To this end, women of different ages from the village have been contacted to show the evolution of the tradition. The aim is for each of the participants to make an embroidered motif including a phrase that evokes how they began their apprenticeship.



Concept: **Ana Gibrés** and **Helena Gómez**



Materials and techniques: frames with panama cloth, wool thread, embroidery



10.

*Tots frares esser
sans et alegres*



The title of this work is a phrase that symbolises the resistance of the Templars besieged in the Castle of Cantavieja. After seven months of being harassed by the troops of James II, the Templars sent a letter to a friend in which they insisted on showing that they could hold out much longer despite the fact that their resources and energy were being consumed. Like that which burns, all fire consumes and goes out. The T of the Templars burned at night surrounded by the phrase written with wooden slats on the walled enclosure of the castle. The aim is to update a symbolic event in order to relate it to the resistance of the people of Cantavieja and of the Maestrazgo Region to depopulation.

Concept: **Darío Escriche**





Materials and techniques: wood, fire, performance



11.

Trasver Cantavieja



This is a mural painting on the walls of the old pelota court built in 1950. It is a trompe l'oeil that seeks to create the illusion of seeing the landscape on the other side of the wall – a grove of oak trees on a hillside accessed from the Mirambel Road. The space was quite degraded and unused, but located in one of the main squares of Cantavieja, an emblematic place for meeting and passing through.

As the hours of the day go by, the sky changes, so that by mid-morning the natural tones coincide with those of the painting, producing the real deception.



Concept: **Daniel Vera**



Materials and techniques: various paints and colours, painting



12. *A Frame in Time*



Concept: **Liridona Ura**

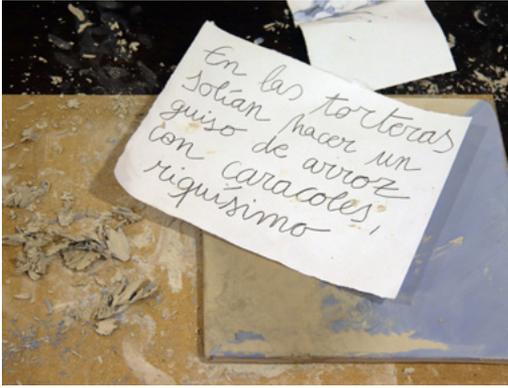
When we visit a place, what stays in our memory are experiences, feelings, impressions and for most of us very little information about history and dates. Yet, these places that we leave behind remain there and constantly face the pressure of time that takes something from them little by little, which is hidden from our naked eye. Pavements, walls, corners, doors, windows, textures of stone, wood, metal and all other elements combine the physical experience of a place that our memory observes subconsciously. They are also the elements upon which the communities through time reflect history and identity. In Cantavieja, time has been cruel and has washed away many of these particles, even though restorations have kept the wholesome character of this town. It is important to preserve the details of the textures that are fundamental to experiencing a space and place, because these are what we mostly fail to pay attention to.



The project consists of capturing fragments of textures such as stone, wood, metal and small details of their combination around Cantavieja that represent the tangible space of this town. This is achieved through the method of casting, by framing in 1:1 scale the fragments of those textures or decorations found in certain buildings that are still visible. The importance of using plaster through this technique is to absorb all the impact time has had on each of the materials. The final product is square frames of different dimensions with scripts of coordinates for the location of the captured textures.



Materials and techniques: plaster, casting



13. *A Look into the Past*



The tiles that make up the exhibition are the result of the workshops that were held during the ARTECH artistic residency by Carmen Igual with her workshop in the neighbouring town of Villarroya de los Pinares.

The participants decorated the pieces based on traditional motifs and colours as well as texts taken from oral history. To make the pieces, the participants were provided with a series of examples taken from Adriana Germán's work for the ceramics exhibition at the Virtual Museum of Maestrazgo.



Concept: **Alba Lagares** and **Adriana Germán**



Materials and techniques: ceramic material, paint, oral history

Artistic Residency in Romania – Crafting Stories

The artistic residency in Romania was held at Bánffy Castle, Bonțida, a historic building encompassing various architectural styles and a past of several hundred years. The creative residency was aimed at artists, craftsmen, artisans, makers, creators and tech-savvies, with participants from Albania, Spain, Ukraine and Romania. The focus of the residency was on “crafting stories”, aiming at the reinterpretation of historical values through new narratives, spaces and shapes, configurations and patterns by combining artistic creation with manual and technical

skills. The reference point was the utopian idea of returning, proposed by Marcel Proust, which starts with the taste of a madeleine. During the two weeks, participants took part in formative morning talks and co-producing activities for the implementation of their concept and creation of artworks and installations, for crafting the new stories of the historic place.

The artistic coordination was ensured by Kalló Angéla, a photographer, graphic artist and lecturer at the University of Arts and Design in Cluj-Napoca.

Architectonics,

Artworks

+ Ludwig

- Love +



1. *Layers of Time*



Cloth is a mediator between the centuries. The layers of the past generations give rise to new achievements in the modern world.

The textile is transparent, but when many layers overlap, we cannot perceive what is on the other side, as we cannot predict the future either. The cloth, easily changing in shape at every breeze, symbolising the variability of time.

Concept: **Kateryna Kuzmuk** and **Daria Shkurupii**





Materials and techniques: wood, textile, fabric painting



2. *unDIMMED*

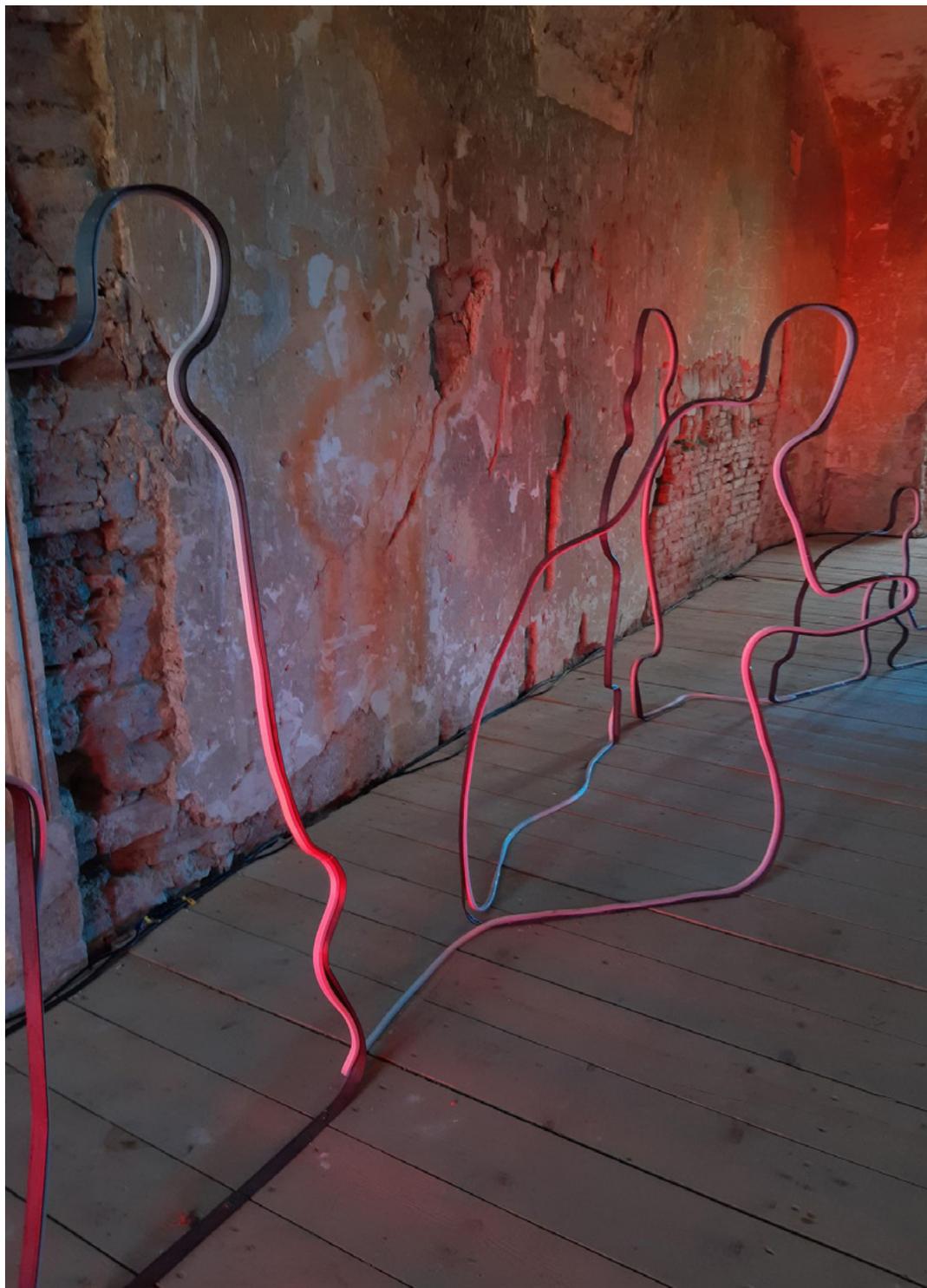


Concept: **Valbona Fejza** and
Liridona Ura

Who was cleaning? Who was lighting the fire?
Who was cooking? Who was serving?...

The pillars that maintained the extravagant
façade of life within the castle have become
visible shadows. The site-specific art
installation consists of five enlightened linear
silhouettes evoking unseen characters that are
shaped with metal bands.





Materials and techniques: metal band, LED strip, metal bending



3.

Take my Lead

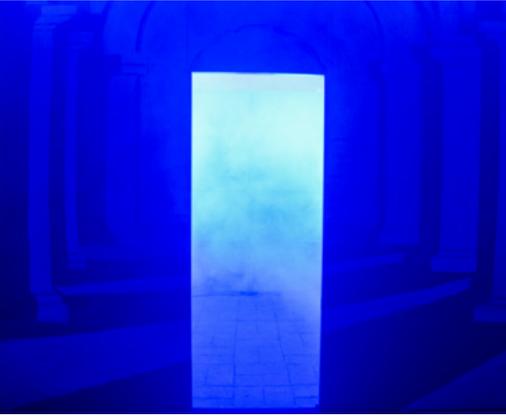
Concept: **Valbona Fejza** and
Liridona Ura

Tracing the steps of elegance and Bánffy's musical spirit on the dance floor of intimacy, affection, warmth, joy and fun. A glimpse of former dazzling and glamorous assembly in the castle, translated into a place of gathering and socialising through music and dance.

The dance floor is an outdoor carpet inviting the viewer to dance through the guidelines of learning waltz to the sounds of one of the compositions of Miklós Bánffy, unlocked by QR code.



Materials and techniques: carpet, spray colours, interactive art installation, dance



4. *Crossover Bánffy Castle*

The things that we perceive as real today are a distortion of what a place was yesterday, and in the same way, some elements remain and others alter with the passage of time. This site-specific installation generates a new sensorial space through colour, light and sound. From the outside we observe the distortion of the space, while inside we contemplate another way of feeling the place. The blue walls inside the room invite us to completely forget the location and the reality in which we find ourselves. The outside coldness is represented through the blue colour, while the warmth of the room is perceived through the warm light that envelops the place.



Concept: **Daniel Vera**



Materials and techniques: wood panel, wall and spray paint, light, artificial smoke, mural



5. *Castle Architecture and Function*



Concept: **Vibhuti Yadav**

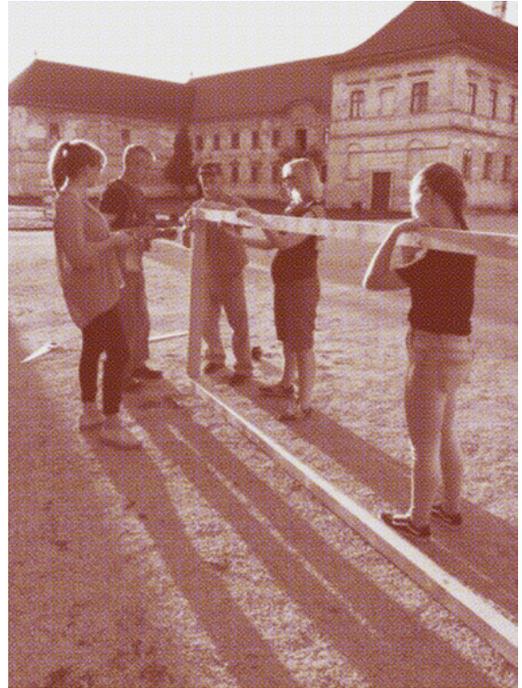
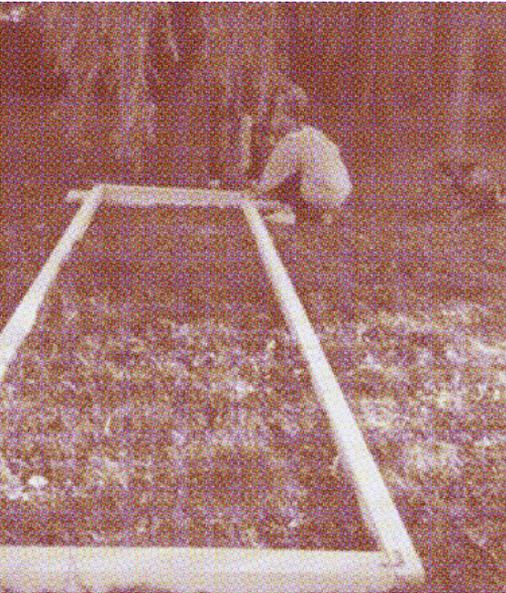
The exhibition is a collage that documents and illustrates how the castle architecture has evolved in multiple layers and textures from the 17th to the 21st century. It does so by following a chronology of periods and architecture styles blended together that are observable even today.



Materials and techniques: A4/A5 panels, wire grid panels (1000 X 2000 mm), collage



6. *Life Sign*



Upon walking around the castle and its luscious green spaces, one can't help but imagine all the people, now long gone, that have enjoyed and cherished the same scenery in the past.

Although the castle has had its share of hard times, for a long time now it's been experiencing a second revival. Thus, the light installation is a tribute to the pulse of the castle that has kept beating all these years, sometimes stronger, sometimes less strong, but always alive.

Eight wooden bars and a metal grid were used for the installation's structure, all spray coated in dark grey as the background and support of the life line drawn on with a light strip.

Concept: **Daria Langa**



Materials and techniques: wood, metal grid, LED strip

7.

Breaking Silence



A composition of sound points that break the silence and make the viewer doubt if what they have heard is something true or only their imagination, making them direct their attention to the corners and secluded areas of the castle. The sounds recorded in the area surrounding the castle are in contrast with reality, thus having a striking effect on people.

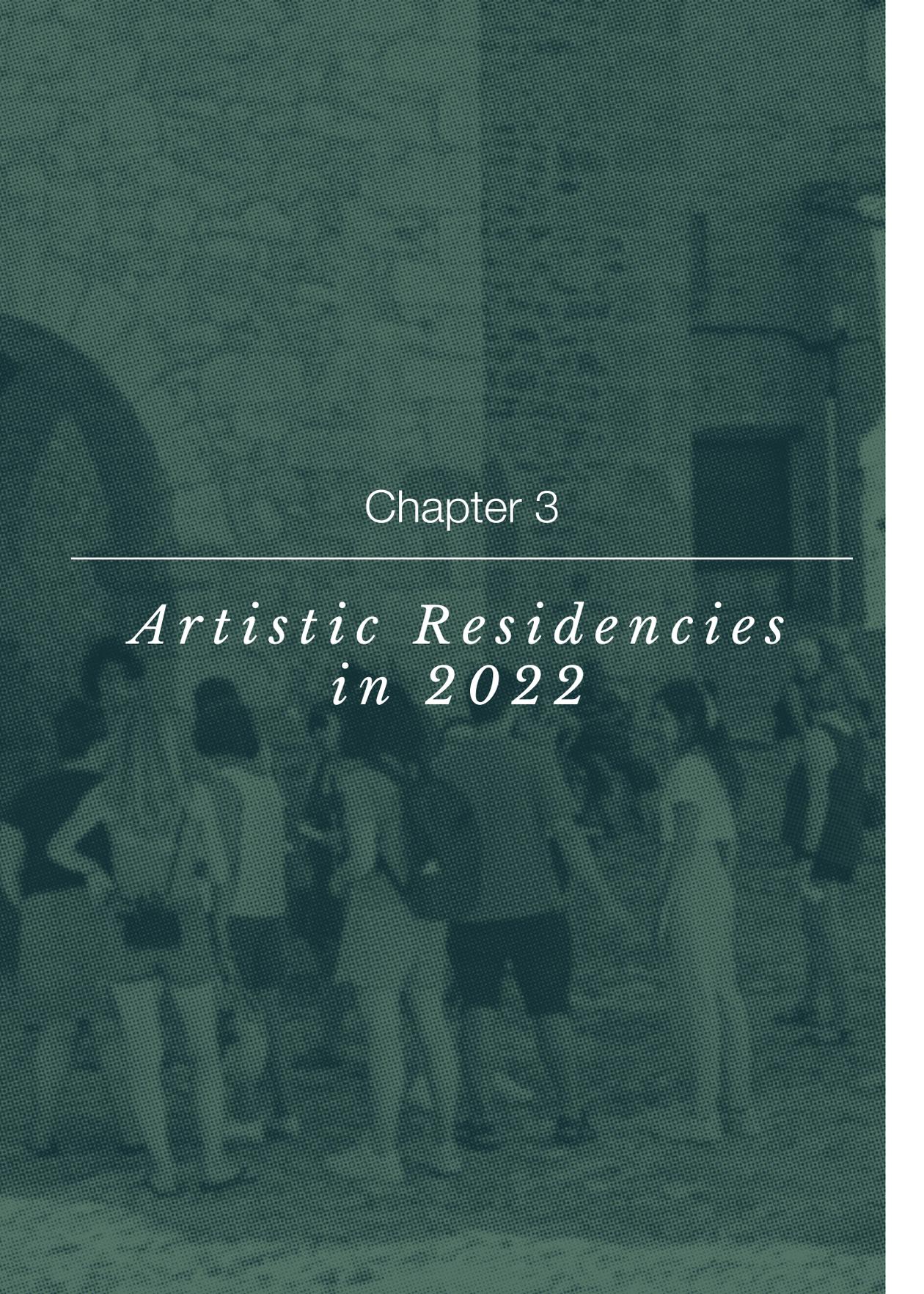


Concept: **Alba Lagares Olague**



Materials and techniques: wood, speakers, sound recordings, sound installation





Chapter 3

*Artistic Residencies
in 2022*

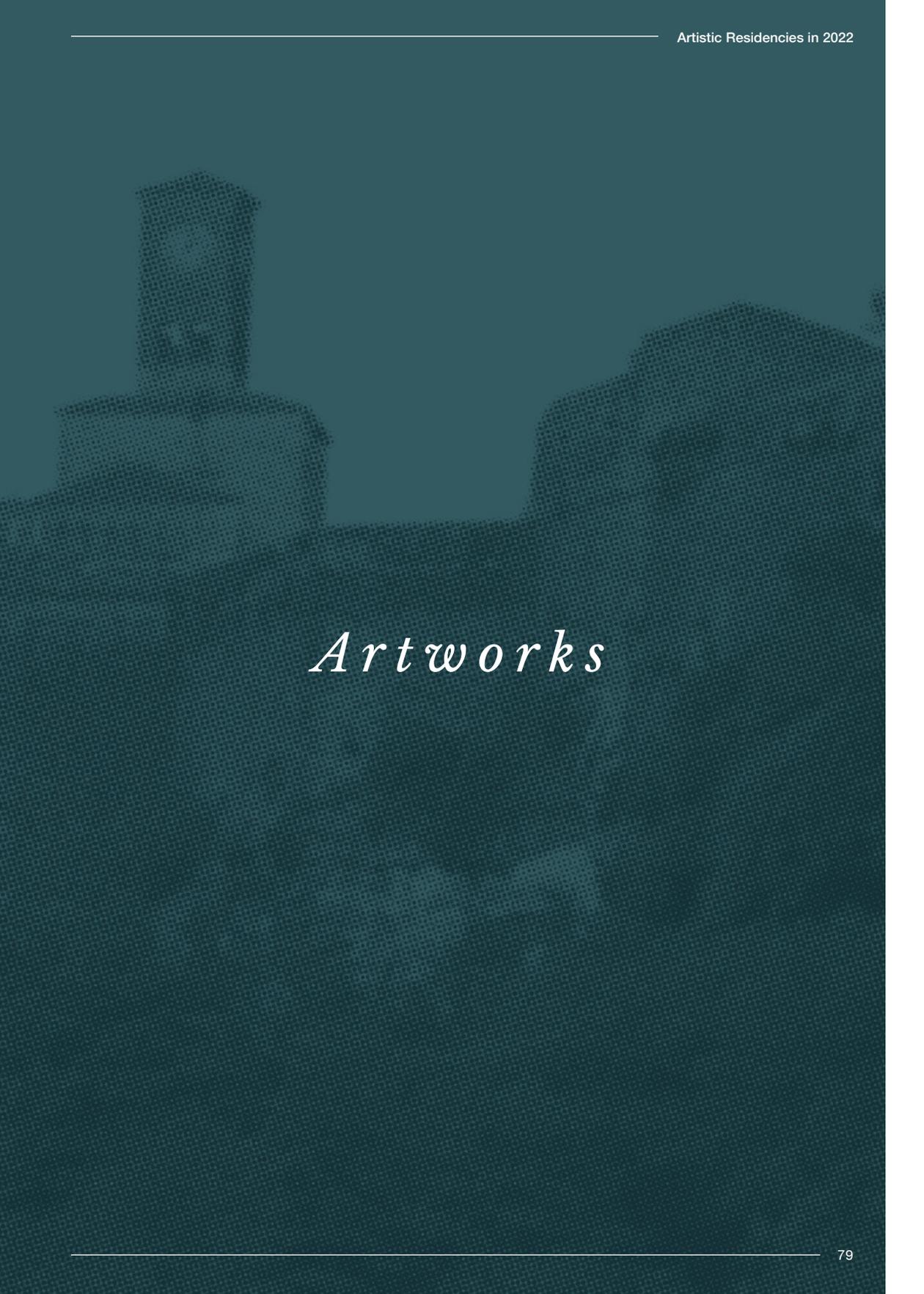
Artistic Residency in Albania

The 2022 artistic residency organised within the ARTECH project in Gjirokastra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was a unique event, as it brought together international artists and makers, giving them access to create and learn, inspired by the heritage of the “stone city”, through direct discovery and living, through direct collaboration with local artisans and artists, in a direct contact with the historic centre area.

The art camp gathered artists, makers, architects and designers, museum curators, heritage officers, photographers, video makers etc, coming from Spain, Albania, Greece, Romania, Israel and Ukraine. They worked closely with the local community or independently, exploring different themes, devising projects and artworks, creating stories and legends, trying out new and innovative techniques. The artistic interventions and creations of the artistic residency were meant

to provoke discussion and perhaps even a debate. The city is a heritage asset that should remain untouched, and thus the artists made certain bold interventions. On the other hand, they brought new innovative approaches and modern techniques that are intertwined with tradition and that can be used by local artists in the future.

The project continued to build the bridge between arts and traditional crafts, connecting on the one hand contemporary approaches of artistic expression with new technologies and techniques and, on the other hand, the roots of cultural identities and heritage. The cooperation between artists, creators, tech-savvies and makers with different disciplinary backgrounds for the common goal of using and readapting cultural places, values and meanings offered a trans-sectorial perception of creation and increased the solidarity and common responsibility among the participants.

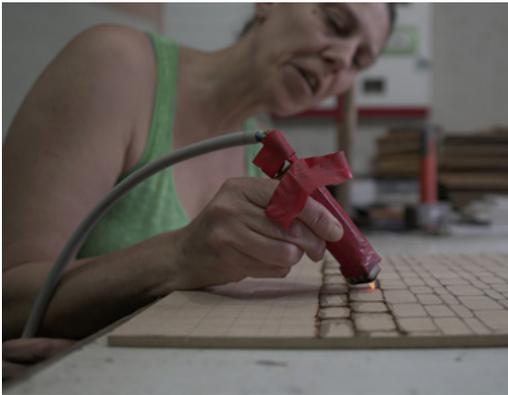


Artworks



1.

Fragments in Union



Concept: **Maria Gouveli**

“Gjirokastra has offered me the opportunity to rethink my art practice in a relational context. During my stay, I engaged with local artisans and worked for the first time with a new technique, pyrography. Magnetised by the patterns of the stone streets and walls of the old city of Gjirokastra, my project was realised with the contribution of two local artisans who create artefacts using pyrography” – Maria says.

The artist created a “visual game” that depicts the cobbled streets, one of the strong visual impressions of the “stone city”. For the artist, these kinds of patterns represent the union of singular pieces or fragments, being interested in what can be achieved by bringing together a lot of singularities. Through both a sense of uniqueness and a sense of affiliation with certain groups, we are in a constant state of “building” (becoming) ourselves. The idea consists in how we coexist and interact with others and our environment in order to “build” ideas and experiences, to construct our identity.

This visual game requires others to rearrange and reassemble the pieces in different combinations. The work created by the artist has the potential of being developed into a series of souvenirs, a little magnet for the fridge, an object that would remind someone of Gjirokastra.



Materials and techniques: wood, wood carving, pyrography, design, gamification



2. *Ju san Rrom ose Gadjo?*



Concept: **Doru Nicolae Cristofor**

Despite constant exposure to many collective influences and pressures, the Romani community managed to retain a distinct identity, in spite of being some of the most disadvantaged and marginalised people in the world, notwithstanding having existed all over the globe. The assiduous conversation about their existence, especially in terms of current domestic social progress but also imposed orders, Gypsies are rarely seen as having their own space in a country, whether culturally, economically, socially or geographically. The categorisation of this community as part of a “past without history” stems from their exclusion from works of history, the most recent studies on the subject being also the most extensive in terms of information.

Wishing to create a reiteration of his own Romani experience and an allegory of the specific symbolism of the community, the artist developed a project in order to present the pragmatic character of the Roma people, by associating symbols with real experiences in different contexts, both personal and historical. And Albania houses a large population of Romani people, Gjirokastra being acknowledged as one of many cities where such communities are found.

Using works of art from Albania’s art history bonded with the country’s motifs, the project rearranged the composition to insert the Roma identity out of the desire that our community identify and appreciate different cultures. But also, to signal the problem of inclusiveness and borderline racism - where are our beautiful Gypsies in all the history of art?

For this project, Albanian professor Vilson Kilica’s work was used as the main point of reference, whose art follows the socialist realism era. The recomposed work depicts a group of women, of different ages, that are grouped together, dressed in Albanian tradition. With his work, the artist is seeking to touch the truth, or even the essence that is buried deep within the viewer’s spirit; awakening the unconscious...



Materials and techniques: oil on canvas, painting, political art



3. “Willmilll”



A windmill is a mysterious object that appears to have a life of its own. It breathes in the rhythm of the wind and swirls like water under the rays of the sun. It can be a simple, beautiful toy or a valuable tool. It is known for its capacity to produce power as it transforms stormy weather into electricity and obstacles into solutions. Over time, people have attributed to it words like potential, perseverance and hope. The installation composed of 110 blue windmills created manually over the course of a couple of days was presented at the castle of the historical city of Gjirokastra as a reminder of the perseverance of the Albanian nation and as inspiration to keep on playing. This work is the first of its kind displayed in the castle of Gjirokastra.

Concept: **Daria Langa**





Materials and techniques: papers, sketches, pencils, tubes, plastic boards, drill, nails



4. *Memories to Smell / Më nuhat*



The project approaches the heritage of Gjirokastra by accessing a different dimension, inviting locals to sense the smells that they remember from their childhood...

The project idea is based on the memory of the inhabitants of Gjirokastra. It is a collection of smells brought in cloth bags. The smells have been selected by the artist after interviewing the locals, asking them what were the smells of their childhood memories. With the smells, the artist collected materials and essences and put them in small cloth bags, letting people guess what they remember.

This sense is a unique memory, those simple reminders that should be revealed. Smell and memory are so closely linked. By smelling, this sensation triggers memory or emotional memory and in a way heritage.

Concept: **Alba Lagares Olague**





Materials and techniques: cloth bags, wires, paper, herbs, food, sensory art, recent history, performance



5. *Argjiro*



When we think of the city of Gjirokastra, we immediately think of the legend of Princess Argjiro. The legend has always affected the locals, as it states that the princess refused to be captured by the Ottomans alive, and she jumped off the castle walls along with her child, when they conquered the city back in the 15th century. In the past, various artists have tried to capture the image of the princess, whether in the form of sculpture or painting.

This time, the artist evoked her figure in the form of a fine line wire installation. This project was handmade and consists of the portrait of the princess and her newborn child, made of metal wires on a white wooden background. The artist created a life-size artwork of this powerful female figure, reminiscent of narratives of identity, mortality, loss and power.

Concept: **Helga Toci**





Materials and techniques: iron wires, nails, wood, prints



6. *Gjiro Women*



Concept: **Fabio Toska**



The installation attempts to highlight the role of the women in the history of Gjirokastra by recalling three influential women who originated in the city in three distinct time periods.

The first is Princess Argjiro, a legendary princess who jumped off from the castle, together with her child, rather than being captured by the Ottomans in the 15th century. The second is Urani Rumbo, a well-known woman activist, teacher and playwright during the 1930s. Thirdly, Musine Kokalari was a prominent writer and politician. Because of her opposing political ideas against the rising communist dictatorship, she was imprisoned for many years. She died in poverty and total loneliness.

The installation aimed to reproduce the figures of the three above-mentioned women by displaying their representative garments and clothes, as well as the original photos of Urani Rumbo and Musine Kokalari. Related to the latter, a microphone placement was built in order to reproduce the very original dramatic photo and momentum of Musine Kokalari when she was before trial. The garments and clothes were mainly collected within the old town of Gjirokastra, after several interviews and site visits, including families, artisan women and historic houses.



Materials and techniques: historic garments, historic photos, collecting stories and artefacts, anthropological research, feminist art



7. *Come on the Roof – A Journey to Discover*



Concept: **Kateryna Kuzmuk**

An attribute of the silver city – Gjirokastra are the distinct roofs of the historic houses hidden from the visitors' eyes. The project is about drawing attention to these unspoiled unique roofs by providing an online map and QR codes. The local community and travellers get into an unexpected roof journey.



Materials and techniques: mapping, site visits, prints, postcards, field research, interviews with locals, geocaching



8. *Embroider the Tradition*

The artwork aimed at the stylization of the traditional embroidery with the motifs of the Gjirokastra area on the blouse of the popular men's costume, bringing it back as a dress in a female version.



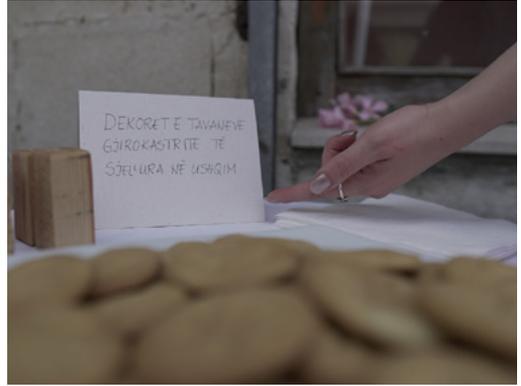
During her stay in Gjirokastra, Enxhelina was fascinated by the shirt of the popular men's local traditional costumes and decided to reveal her idea on embroidery by bringing it to the female version as well, by taking the embroidery motifs from popular costumes over the years and intertwining the elements with each other in modern styling. In the same way, she worked with the colours - the traditional content in a modern twist.

Concept: **Enxhelina Haziri**





Materials and techniques: fabric, various threads, hand and machine sewing, embroidery



9. *Food Ornaments*

The idea of the project was to transfer the traditional wooden ceiling decorations of the houses into local gastronomy. The decorative repertoire of the wooden stamps consists mostly of flower motifs, for example, the pomegranate flower, present in every courtyard of Gjirokastra, used both as décor and ingredient in preparing food. The aim of this project was also to ignite an interdisciplinary collaboration between carpentry and gastronomy.



Concept: **Valbona Fejza**





Materials and techniques: wood, wood carving, gastronomy



10. *“As the old town used to say”*



The artist wrote a series of articles titled “As the old town used to say” based on the stories of the local community, recalling the fact that cultural heritage is transmitted the way the local community perceives it. The articles were published on the website of the Gjirokastra Foundation. For the presentation of this project to the local community, some inspirational quotes narrated by the interviewed residents were selected and written on a 30-metre-long textile sheet that was exhibited in the Bazaar of Gjirokastra, which visitors passing by could read.

Concept: **Oriada Dajko**





Materials and techniques: textile, paint on textile, interviews with local artisans and residents, oral history, performance



11. *Supper in Gjirokastra*



The project consists of a video recording that shows the inhabitants of Gjirokastra as they prepare a daily supper and eat it. Besides the local dishes, the artist documents something else as well: the gestures and interactions between the family members that become micro-traditions.



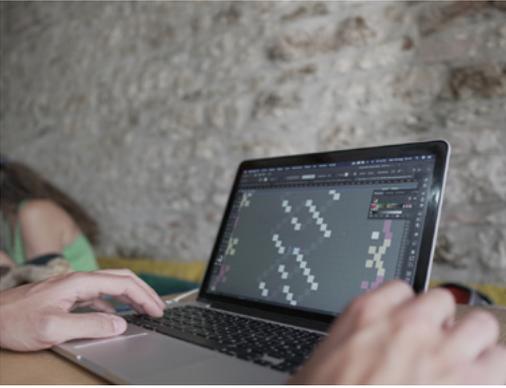
The artist intends to continue the project, creating a new series on suppers in countries that were under the influence of Russia until 1991, as part of their interest in other cultures.

Concept: **Vardit Goldner**





Materials and techniques: site visits, interviews with locals, filming, video recording, video editing



12. *Motifs*



The artist was inspired by the local artisans and handloom works. He explored the motifs of the area and the mosaics of the cobbled streets. The project was developed with the aim of uniting craftsmanship with graphic design, creating new compositions to promote the city of Gjirokastra and support local businesses with innovative products.

For this, different elements were designed, such as posters woven into typical rugs from the town of Gjirokastra, as well as different postcards that honour the name of Gjirokastra and remember people who were important to the city, such as Muhedin Makri, a stone craftsman.



Concept: **Ruben Planas**





Materials and techniques: wool, handloom, weaving, graphic design

Artistic Residency in Spain

After a successful residency in Cantavieja celebrated in 2021, a second edition was developed within ARTECH for creative artists in Tronchón. Therefore, this second edition continued with well-known methods and dynamics, as well as pointing out the value of innovative practices in cultural heritage.

Located in the province of Teruel, Aragon, Tronchón is situated in a mountainous area, which provides beautiful views and picturesque surroundings to this quaint little town full of history and rich in heritage. The town has a long-lived tradition of agricultural activity and is famous for its cheese production, existing to this day. However, Tronchón faces challenges similar to other

settlements in the area, experiencing a continuous depopulation since the end of the 19th century.

The artists from Spain, Albania, Romania and Ukraine were encouraged to reflect on these traditions and to intertwine in their creative endeavours not only built and tangible, but also intangible heritage, such as legends, tales, living traditions and crafts. The second residency organised in Spain had a continuity regarding past artistic stays and it meant an active cooperation between artists and the village in order to consider, reinterpret and enhance the artistic situation in the countryside and the importance of local heritage in a critical way.

Artworks



1. *Coalpits*



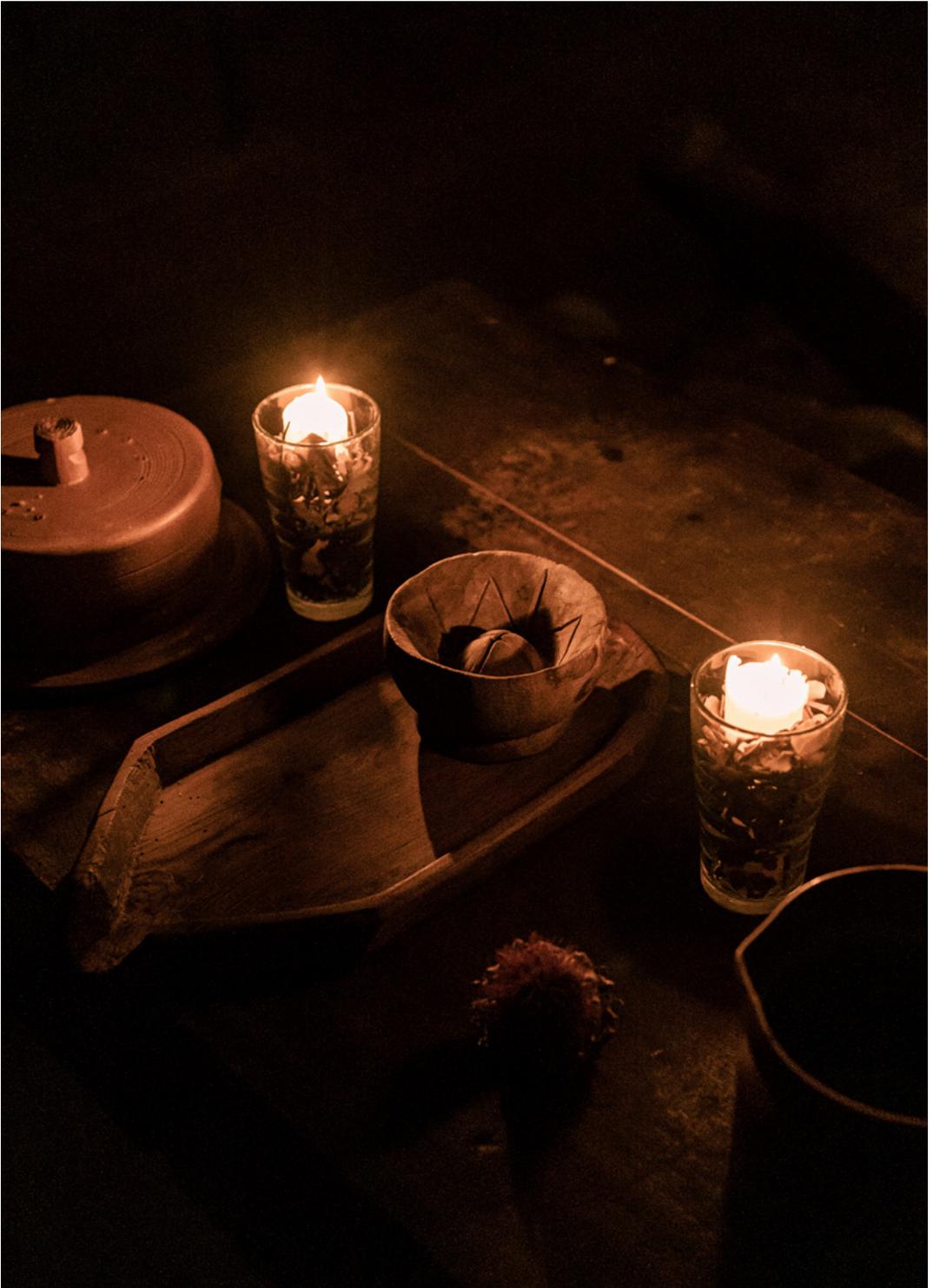
Concept: **Darío Escriche**



This artist based in Teruel seeks to relate and highlight the local historical and cultural heritage from the use of charcoal as an axis of Tronchón's natural environment, which has conditioned the daily life and economic activities of the village.

This project consists of two actions that simulate the process of the charcoal piles. The first action is lighting a fire with various materials in their natural state, such as firewood, flowers, plants or clay, and preparing a small simulation of what a charcoal pile would be like, adding logs to be burnt. In the second part, the charcoal pile is opened and a loaf of bread is removed, symbolising that the work of the charcoal burners transforms a tree into bread for the family.

Therefore, through this performance, the use of natural materials and recreations of ancient professions show the natural and cultural heritage of the village from another point of view.



Materials and techniques: wood, plants, clay, performance



2. *The Brief Memory*



The work of this artist from Tortosa consists in a photographic collage, designed from a set of snapshots made during the 1960s and '70s by the local photographer Antonio Nava in the village of Tronchón.

Royo seeks to foster a dialogue and a symbiosis between contemporary art and rural culture through traditional sewing techniques. Therefore, these photographs show inhabitants, traditions or trades of the 1960s and '70s, which allow us to know their daily life.

This fusion represents a reinterpretation of Tronchón's history through new narratives that recall and recover Nava's legacy, the artistic heritage and the culture of the people. This implies a persistence of the recent memory of the village, sharing and highlighting the value of memory as a hallmark of Tronchón.



Concept: **Sofía Royo**



Materials and techniques: photography, sewing, collage



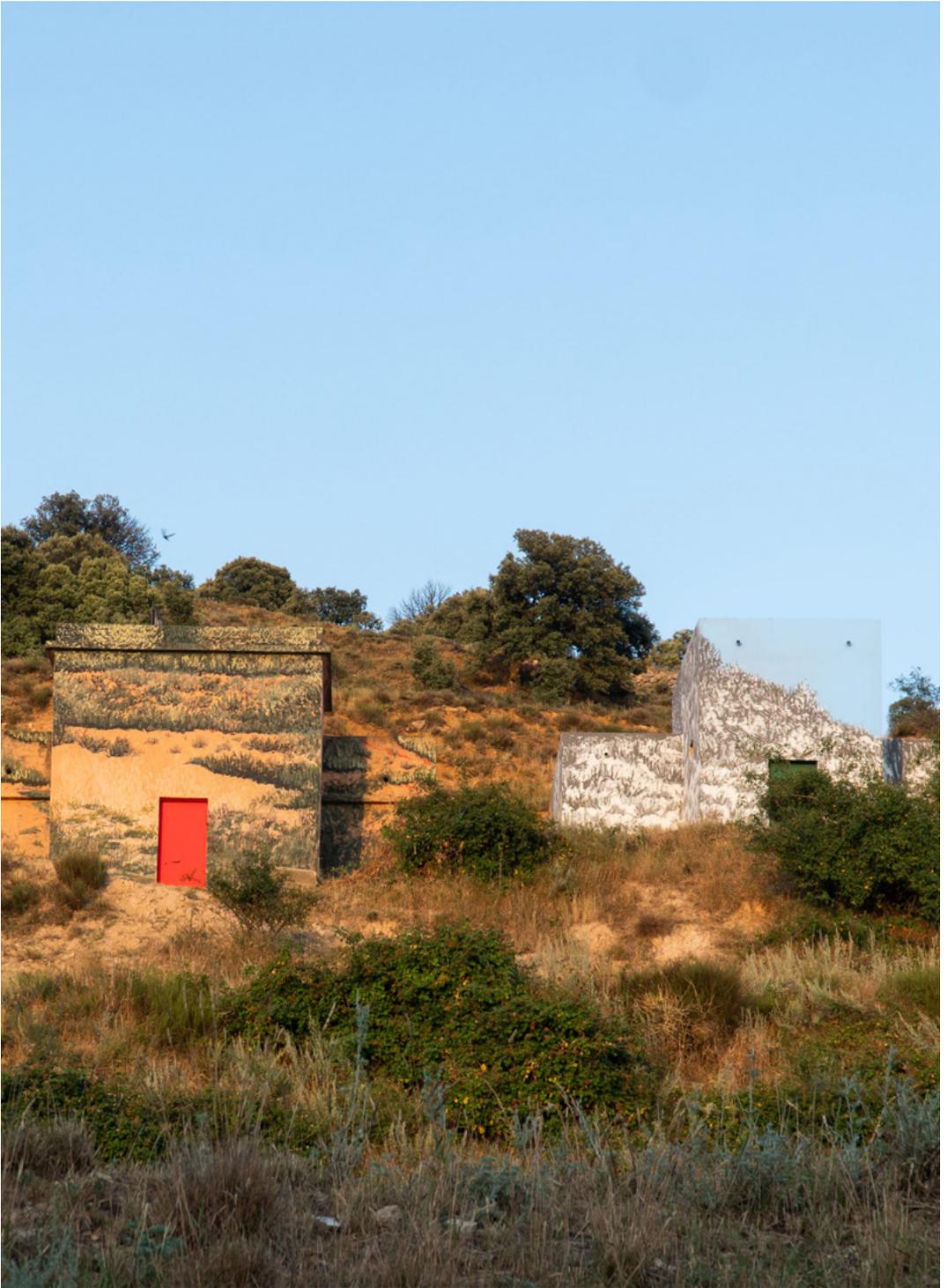
3. *Trasver* *Tronchón*

This artist from Monzón proposes a pictorial technique called “trasver” (which means seeing through) that consists in the creation of trompe l’oeil murals, blending and integrating the paintings into the landscape, thus rendering them invisible. This is a recurrent theme in the art of Daniel Vera, his style being already used at the artistic residency in 2021 in Cantavieja.

This time, he chose to paint two unused buildings located on the hill above the village of Tronchón. They represent alternately summer and winter landscapes, one of which disappears or integrates into the landscape depending on the season. As a detail, Vera has added a complementary colour in the central part of each landscape as a distinctive element.



Concept: **Daniel Vera**



Materials and techniques: mural painting, trompe l'oeil



4. *Tronchón's Memories*



Concept: **Josep Sanmartín**

The oral memory and its transmission are part of the work of this artist from Valencia. Josep has collected the memories of the population, the essence of a village that has managed to survive the passage of time despite the depopulation, so that memory forms the local culture of Tronchón.

The stories collected in this piece are distributed in four sound devices that can be found in different parts of the village, where it is possible to sit and listen to the different narratives, as if it were a historical journey. These allow, on the one hand, the inhabitants of Tronchón to recall a common past and even discover some history that would have gone unnoticed; on the other hand, those who visit the village can better know the life of representative people of the region.

The four locations where it is possible to hear these testimonies are the Town Hall, both inside and outside, the old school and the oven. These pieces are made of aluminium and wood, like boxes, with a walkman that plays a cassette tape loop, with recordings that last between fifteen and thirty minutes, depending on the place. In this way, the installation symbolises the fragility of memory, both in terms of the recorded content and regarding the obsolete and delicate technology with which it is reproduced, as a reminder of the intangible value of culture and history that we must collect and care for.



Materials and techniques: sound, aluminium, wood, audio recordings, oral history



5. *Tronchón's Floor*

This designer from Castellón was inspired by the ceramics of the Chapel of San Antonio and by the particular shape of the cheese of Tronchón (geometric and symmetrical) to create a painted carpet under the arch of the Chapel of Santa Barbara, also located in the same village.

His objective was creating a symbol that merges various cultural features of village life, in order to create an idea of Tronchón as a place surprising both inhabitants and visitors.

The blue and white colours represent the polychrome of traditional artisan ceramics, using specific paints for pavements, which increased the difficulty of carrying out the work.



Concept: **Rubén Planas**



Materials and techniques: paint, decorative art, gastronomic heritage



6. *Mother Land*



The inspiration for this Albanian artist comes from the surrounding landscape of Tronchón, whose characteristic and unique topography is hardly ever seen elsewhere. The patterns of the landscape are presented in a textile which is hung in the village's historical laundromat.

The location of the installation is a metaphor for cleaning as a process of transformation and rebirth – both of the clothes and of the landscape. Besides, it is established as a spot where a visual relation with the topography and the real landscape can be created.

The aim of the project is to raise awareness about the uniqueness and tranquillity of the place in the context of the rapid depopulation trend.



Concept: **Valbona Fejza**



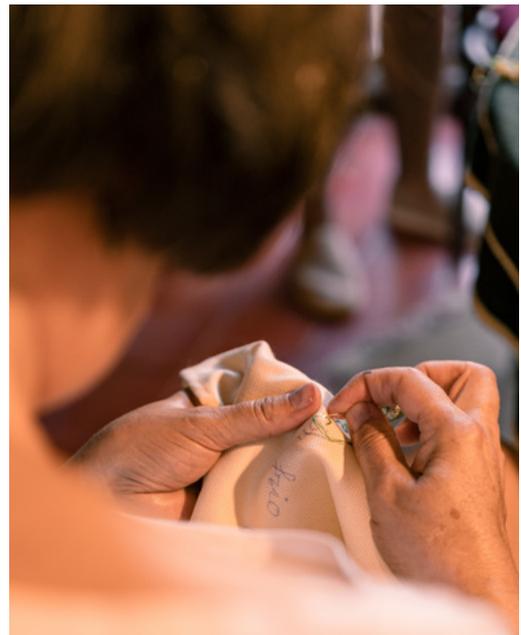
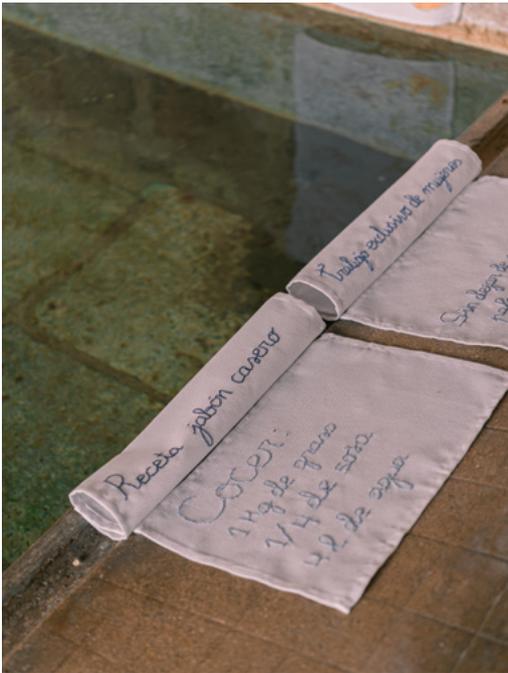
Materials and techniques: textile, threads, sewing, embroidery, topography, installation



7. *Life in Laundromat*

This artist focuses on the value of laundromats as mostly female spaces of labour, seen as a physical process, but also as a space for handling the feelings and emotions shared by women throughout their recent history.

Buñuel embroidered different phrases and anecdotes related to the laundromats and the conversations that women had had there. She used embroidery and the sewing of different coloured threads on the fabric. Furthermore, she collected the testimonies of two ladies from Tronchón who used to go to the local laundromat, painting their hands as proof of the invisible labour that women perform, highlighting a gender-focused narrative.



Concept: **Dora Buñuel**



Materials and techniques: textile, threads, sewing, embroidery, invisible labour, feminist art, oral history



8. *Relicarium*

This audiovisual performance took place in the Church of Santa María Magdalena in Tronchón. Its main elements were sound, light and the elements of the church – such as its most precious relics, the hand of the innocent, which was carried out in procession to avoid storms, and the organ of the church, whose tubes were plundered in the Civil War and which is currently dismantled.

The sound experience is a contemporary take on a centenary place, which seeks to awaken memory and its links in the viewer through the senses. The sound, silence and illuminated parts are constructed as an experiential melody which are revealed in the spectator. It connects with the past, the present and nature, represented with the outside of the church and the light of the stars.

The performance ends with a red flare that symbolises survival, as well as a latent image in the gaze and the end of time.



Concept: **Sergio Peramato**



Materials and techniques: sound, light, site-specific installation, performance, musical composition



9. *Shapes of Humankind*



This Romanian artist works in a contemporary and minimalistic way. In her current work, she highlights the expressiveness of wool, while taking into account the role it played in Tronchón's history, with the aim to address its cultural heritage.

The works take abstract shapes of human silhouettes. In Tronchón's streets, Larisa sought to observe the movement of these shapes as metaphors of the village's inhabitants, so the works convey their history to the spectator. Beside the use of traditional materials, natural colours allows for the works to easily blend with their surroundings, creating a soft visual dialogue.



Concept: **Larisa Petcuț**



Materials and techniques: wool, sewing, felting

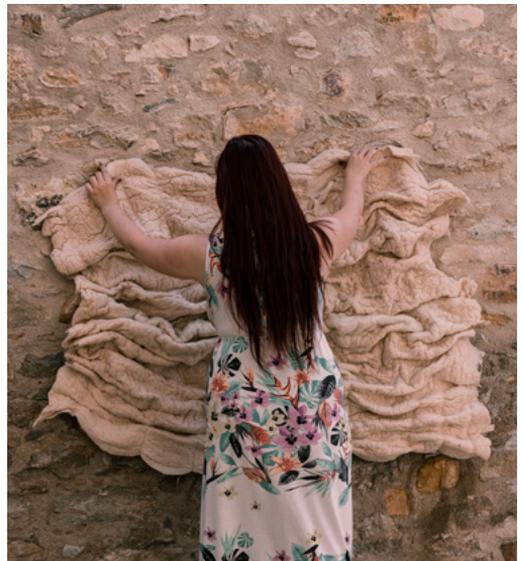


This work aims to juxtapose recognisable elements and places from Tronchón, from its surrounding landscape to local architecture, like a hallmark of this village. These artists look to integrate a piece of Tronchón's architecture while using natural earthy colours.

The main goal is reproducing the richness of the village's stones that have been marked by the passing of time. At the same time, the landscape is reflected in this work through several hues of green used in the foreground.

The shape of this work is intentional, resembling a blanket that can surround the spectator and provide them comfort and protection, stating the fact that in a similar way a geographical place is offering a welcoming and caring home to its people.

10. *Surrounding Me*



Concept: **Larisa Petcuț and Ioana Andrei**

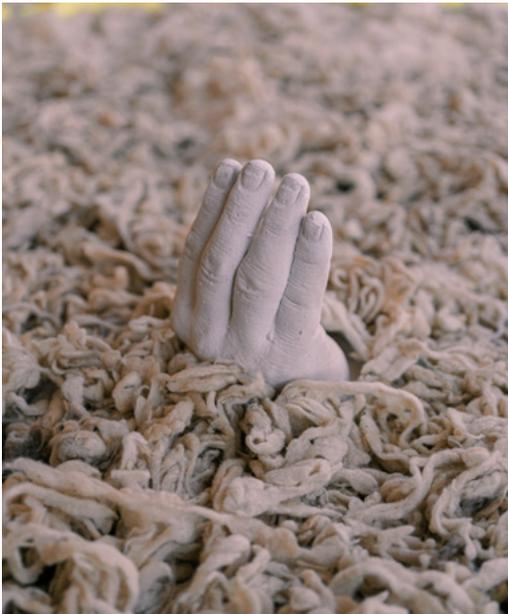


Materials and techniques: wool, sewing, felting, garment, topography



11.

Tremedal's Miracle



The artist from Montoro de Mezquita was inspired by the legend of the miracle of Tremedal's Virgin regarding a shepherd that recovered the use of his hand by intercession of the Virgin, as the central axis of her work.

The work is based on a circular wool carpet on which plaster-cast pieces rest, inspired by the motifs of the Chapel of Tremedal and the shepherd's hand to whom the Virgin has appeared. Its location is found in the portico of the Chapel, which was built as a place of worship in the mid-19th century.

This work seeks to highlight the value, history and art of the Chapel of Tremedal, with ornamental elements and figures that symbolise certain details of the legend.



Concept: **Alba Lagares**



Materials and techniques: wool, plaster, moulding, religious heritage



12. *Lamaleza*



These artists from Teruel composed a song and carried out a performance in the Church of Tronchón. The composition took as inspiration the local oral tradition both in terms of lyrics and melodies. They were also inspired by historic records of the region, different conversations with locals and, above all, the publication *El Maestrazgo turolense. Música y literatura populares en la primera mitad del siglo XX* (Maestrazgo Turolense: Popular music and literature in the first half of the 20th century) by Carolina Ibor and Diego Escolano.

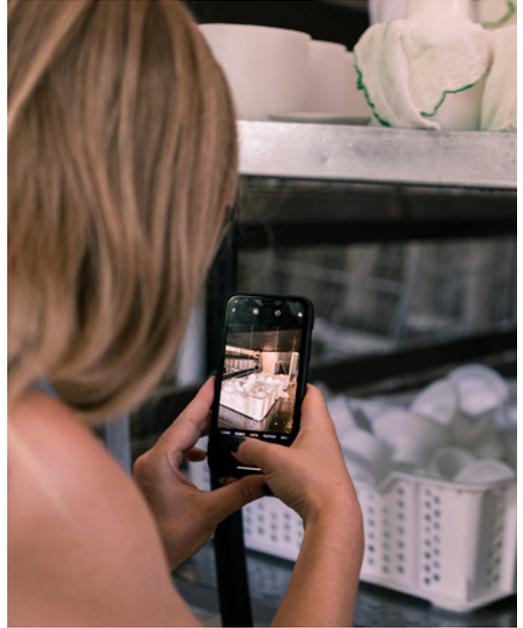
There are several pillars that have inspired this piece, such as *Las relaciones de la Virgen, el Rolde*, themes like the meaning of life, nature and spirituality. The multiple identities which coexist in this region of Aragon have common elements that allow us to explore their rites and customs. This project aims to revive verses that have become blurred over time and that can be inserted into the present as an ephemeral performance.



Concept: **Carolina Ferrer, Jesús Bellosta and Roberto Morote**



Materials and techniques: music composition, performance, ephemeral



13. *Cheese's Essence*



This Ukrainian artist seeks her inspiration in Tronchón's cheese and the families that have worked in the different factories of this village. The work combines tradition and contemporary art, as cheese production has been a well-known and historic activity since the Modern Age, becoming an important element of the village's heritage.

Kateryna was influenced by a visit to a still existing factory and she used wool, light and intertwined wire to represent cheese workers' souls and emotions. Although most of the cheese production is now automated, it is still dependent on the dedication of the people that work there.



Concept: **Kateryna Kuzmuk**



Materials and techniques: wool, metal wire, light, gastronomy



Based on the essay “A Room of One’s Own” written by Virginia Woolf, this artist born in Huesca focuses her work on the creation of works by women. It starts from the premise of a garden as a metaphor for the available space between villages, as a vacuum that should be made the most of.

Starting from a dry stone wall on which rests a vertical garden, Abad highlights as a main element the native plants of Tronchón, which were used traditionally to make bouquets and baskets, so they became a sign of identity and survival of the village. In addition, through her work she raises awareness regarding other current issues, such as environmental sustainability and carbon footprint.

14. *An Own Garden*



Concept: **Teresa Abad**



Materials and techniques: plants, gardening, landscape architecture, foraging, horror vacui, upcycle

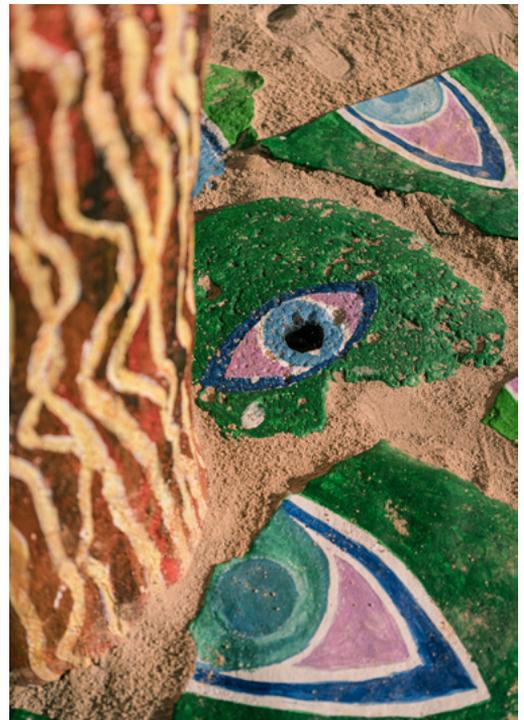


15.

Tronchón's Trees

This artist from Tronchón wanted to commemorate different fires which had devastated the region during the 1990s. The region's most famous tree is kermes oak.

The work consists of a recovered tree trunk, painted in a symbolic way. The 28 coloured circles represent the 28 years that have passed since the fire, moreover, the yellow, red and black colours are associated with fire. In contrast, the green colour on the different branches represents renewal, hope and an ode to natural heritage.

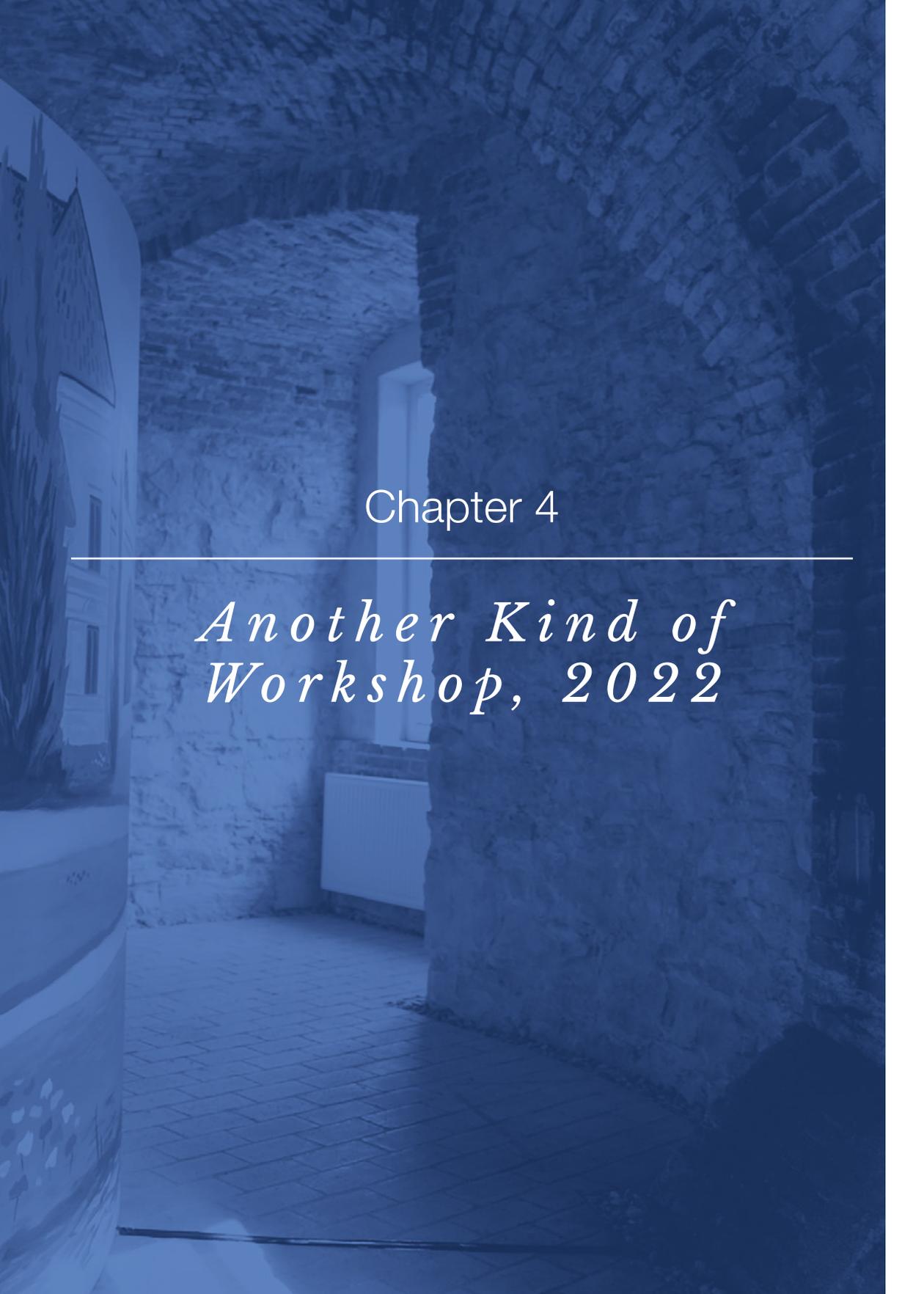


Concept: **Pedro Lucía**



Materials and techniques: wood, paint





Chapter 4

*Another Kind of
Workshop, 2022*

Experience Room in Romania



Concept:

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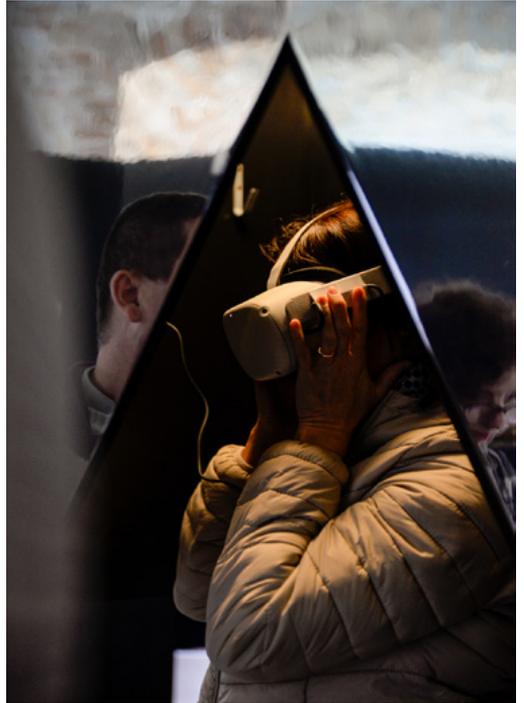
Nyiri Dalma Dorottya

The Experience Room set up at Bánffy Castle, Bonțida, Romania, was the result of an interdisciplinary cooperation, combining history, storytelling, architecture and design, animation, AR and VR technologies, with the aim of engaging audiences in an immersive and innovative way, to encourage them to reflect on history, cultural and built heritage through a new lens.

The concept of the Experience Room developed through several months of meetings, site visits, discussions, explorations, brainstorming sessions with the participation of artists and creators pertaining to different creative sectors. The result was a creative exercise rooted in historical reality: based on period photographs of Bánffy Castle, Bonțida, the interdisciplinary team set out to recreate with the help of AR and VR technology a fictional day in the life of a noble family, focusing on questions such as how did the family members spend their days and how did they socialise, aspects that engage audience's fantasy, involving them in a playful story.



Therefore, nine historical photographs were inserted in an installation that evoke certain moments of a day in the life of a noble family ending in a ball. The goal was not historical accuracy, an almost impossible endeavour, but rather to create a story that delights both children and adults.



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Graphic design: **Nyiri Dalma**

Printed by: **IDEA Design&Print**

Cluj-Napoca

2022

ARTECH

Arts, Rediscovery, Traditional,
Eclectic, Contemporary, Heritage

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With the support of:

Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union



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Nemzeti Kulturális Alap

Cluj-Napoca
2022