

PRESS RELEASE | Turin, 5 November 2022

**ARTISSIMA 29  
Edition 2022**

**As part of the A Sud project**

**Announces the winners  
of “ad occhi chiusi...” and ISOLA SICILIA 2022**

*Turin, 5 November 2022* – **Artissima**, the International Fair of Contemporary Art in Turin, launches at the Oval the new **A Sud** project aimed at enhancing the activity of galleries, foundations and artistic institutions from the southern and island areas of Italy and based on the intention of reinforcing the focus on the Mediterranean as a place of artistic growth and an incubator of new creative perspectives. *A Sud* is thus an invitation extended by Artissima to its audience to re-examine the specificities of places through art institutions, reconsidering geographical mapping to grasp new connections, proximities and resources.

The protagonists of the 2022 edition of *A Sud* are: **Fondazione Merz/ZACentrale** in Palermo, **Fondazione Oelle** in Catania and **Fondazione Thorel** in Naples.

Today Artissima announces the winners of the two awards “**ad occhi chiusi...**” promoted by Fondazione Merz/ZACentrale and **ISOLA SICILIA 2022** promoted by Fondazione Oelle.

**“ad occhi chiusi...” by Fondazione Merz/ZACentrale**

**Alex Ayed and Nona Inescu are the winners of the second edition**

**Alex Ayed** and **Nona Inescu** are the winners of the second edition of “**ad occhi chiusi...**”, the grant created in 2021 in collaboration with the fair, which selects international artists who correspond best to the foundation’s research on young artists of the Mediterranean.

The ex aequo winners are **Alex Ayed** presented by **ZERO...** gallery, Milan and **Nona Inescu** presented by **SpazioA** gallery, Pistoia.

The grant has been awarded by an international jury composed of **Owen Martin**, director and chief curator of the Norval Foundation in Cape Town, **Beatrice Merz**, president of the Fondazione Merz in Turin and ZACentrale in Palermo, **Agata Polizzi**, cultural coordinator of ZACentrale in Palermo, and **Bart van der Heide**, director of the Museion in Bolzano, with this motivation:

*The jury has awarded two winners, Alex Ayed and Nona Inescu for this year’s edition. Both artists recover and imagine histories that challenge linear narratives through practices that are embedded in lived experience. The repurposing of existing, often commonplace materials—on a continuum between natural and artificial—are constricted by devices such as the format of a painting, for Ayed,*

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*and carefully fabricated metal armatures, for Inescu. This implicit tension, productively never resolved, allows for new associations and meanings to emerge. The jury believes that the city of Palermo, with its densely layered histories and position at the intersection of two continents, as well as the support of the team at ZACentrale, is an ideal context for these artists to undertake a residency and produce new work or an intervention.*

The title of the prize takes its cue from a phrase by Marisa Merz, “When the eyes are closed they are extraordinarily open”, which prompts us to rethink how the artists – in the opacity of the general media riot, packed with images that are too fast and too superficial to be able to describe reality – offer a truly personal perspective.

Palermo and Sicily represent multifaceted places containing multiple points of observation and perception due to their geographical location, in which contradictions and resolutions coexist, starting from cultural, linguistic and narrative stratification. Territories in which sensory as well as physical boundaries are repositioned and altered by the actions of those in transit. The selected artist will have the possibility of taking part in a residency in Sicily.

The results of the work conducted during the course of the residency will be presented in the programming of **ZACentrale** at the Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa in Palermo.

In 2021 the artist selected for the project was Heba Y. Amin, presented by Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul, Berlin.

**Fondazione Merz**, named after Mario Merz, was founded as a centre of contemporary art in 2005 in Turin, with the aim of hosting exhibitions, events and educational activities, moving forward with research and exploration on art. After years of prolific activity in the territory, in 2021 the foundation opened **ZACentrale**, a permanent space in Palermo inside ZAC–Zisa Arti Contemporanee, a cultural district provided by the municipality of Palermo.

### **ISOLA SICILIA 2022 by Fondazione Oelle** **Dala Nasser is the winner of the first edition**

**Dala Nasser** is the winner of the first edition of **ISOLA SICILIA 2022**, born from the collaboration between Artissima and **Fondazione Oelle** from Aci Castello, in the province of Catania, chosen among the artists represented by the galleries at the fair. ISOLA SICILIA is an experiential format for the “artist-navigators” of the third millennium, to promote contemporary artistic research in the fields of visual arts, photography, video, sound art and more: actions seen as cultural crossings in Sicily.

The artist is presented by **Deborah Schamoni** gallery, Munich.

The grant has been awarded by an international jury composed of **Etienne Bernard**, director of FRAC Bretagne in Rennes, **Stefano Collicelli Cagol**, director of the Centro Pecci in Prato, and **Francesca Guerisoli**, director of the MAC Contemporary Art Museum in Lissone, with this motivation:

*The award goes to Dala Nasser for the scope of her research in the idea of confronting abstraction as a political territory. The jury acknowledges her ambition to develop a work that is as tangible as*

*poetical. The Jury considers that the residency in Sicily will provide her the opportunity to further expand a work that is a deeply personal and relational archipelago.*

The winning artist will have the opportunity to take part in a residency at Aci Castello, Catania, during which she will conduct research on the concept of Sicily, *an island among islands*. Upon completion of the residency, an exhibition will be organized in one of the locations in which the Foundation operates.

**Fondazione Oelle**—Mediterraneo Antico was founded in 2017 at Aci Castello Catania by Ornella Laneri, entrepreneur, and Carmelo Nicosia, photographer, with the aim of assigning value to the Sicilian cultural panorama, “Isola Sicilia”. Over the years the initiative has created cultural synergies with foundations, museums, academies and universities, with the aim of moving along shared pathways oriented towards a new definition of cultural engagement as an action of enhancement of the territory, to nurture the value of the Mediterranean, “a sea between lands”, the cradle of important civilizations and a crossroads of powerful cultural flows, through which different traditions, religions and cultures can interact in a situation of mutual benefit, navigating the many routes of contemporary thinking.



ARTISSIMA

**ARTISSIMA – International Fair of Contemporary Art**

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**OVAL Lingotto Fiere** | via Giacomo Mattè Trucco, 70 – Torino

**Preview**

Thursday 3 November 2022 3–8pm (by invitation)

**Opening to the public:**

4-5 November 2022 12–8pm

6 November 2022 11am–7pm

The organization of Artissima is overseen by Artissima srl, a company affiliated with **Fondazione Torino Musei**, and formed in 2008 to manage the fair's artistic and commercial relations. The Artissima trademark belongs to **Città di Torino**, **Regione Piemonte** and **Città Metropolitana di Torino**. The 29th edition of Artissima, for the first time under the patronage of **Ministero della cultura**, takes place with the support of the three brand-owning authorities, jointly with **Fondazione CRT**, **Fondazione per l'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea CRT**, **Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo** and **Camera di Commercio di Torino**.

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Press release and high-resolution images at the following link:

[https://bit.ly/Artissima2022\\_PressKit](https://bit.ly/Artissima2022_PressKit)

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