

# This Week

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## Tunnelling into the submerged past

Artists in residence at  
Gharb, Gozo forage  
for the disappearing  
past

*See inside*



# How not to disappear

Having presented their work-in-progress last Friday, the artists who formed part of Spazju Kreattiv's residency in Għarb, Gozo earlier this month speak to TEODOR RELJIC about 'The Procession of Disappearance', and how the island of Gozo inspired the dynamics inherent in the project's title

**Could you tell us a little bit about the group, and how your respective backgrounds and artistic inclinations have helped focus your intentions on this particular project?**

We are Pearlie Frisch from Switzerland, Maria de la O Garrido from Spain, Célia Hay from France, Lena Heubusch from Germany, Candice Japiassu from Brazil and Stephanie Sant from Malta. We met at Central Saint Martins during our two-year MA in Photography in

London. We have collectively been organising, coordinating and curating exhibitions, film screenings and multiple events as a way of creating dialogue and immersive experience addressing the contemporary concerns that draw through all of our practices and meet in conversation.

Our practices explore the body through image, traces as awareness of existence, filmmaking as mysterious rituals enabling new relationships, desire and

alchemy, and transformation of the everyday. All these elements came together in the project 'The Procession of Disappearance', within the Gozitan landscape.

**Why was 'Disappearance' chosen as a motif for this Gozo-based project?**

We are addressing elements that are disappearing and have disappeared from the island of Gozo. The idea of this procession is not to mourn their



Pearlie Frisch (Switzerland), Maria de la O Garrido (Spain), Célia Hay (France), Lena Heubusch (Germany), Candice Japiassu (Brazil) and Stephanie Sant (Malta) formed part of Spazju Kreattiv's Għarb, Gozo residency programme earlier this month

fragility, but to celebrate the ephemeral nature of them in the context of Gozo. We see disappearance as a part of the continuation of the island itself, for better or for worse.

There are strong examples of where Gozo was at before – the thousands of fossils lacing the floors, the rocks and some benches are evident of Gozo's submerged past. These, met with the overwhelming presence of plastic show how differing timelines overlap. The collective anxiety of such suffocating forces that are threatening our environment motivated the work we created these past two weeks.

**Procession and ritual also appear to be integral parts of the process. Why is this so?**

These landscapes gave us a strong potential for creating our own mythology and narrative. It's a mythology that we envisage as a more personal and poetic gesture towards this environment rather than by creating a dogma.

We look at rituals as ways of connecting with the island. We thought about the processions, as they are very present rituals in the Maltese calendar. Through this performative act of walking, while enduring the strong gale we carried out an offering to nature.

**Do you hope to further build on the work of the residency in any future work you're planning?**

By filming the procession alongside the various rituals, we enable our project to branch out

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beyond the two-week residency. The film itself will also be an art object on its own and will carry the things accomplished during this period beyond Għarb.

The Artists' Residency Programme is produced by Spazju Kreattiv in collaboration with Valletta 2018, and is informed by Spazju Kreattiv's Strategic Vision and the Arts Council Malta's Strategy 2020. For more information on the Residency and its progress, log on to: <http://imaginegozo.com/>