

ART EXPLORA FESTIVAL



ODYSSÉE
CULTURELLE
EN MÉDITERRANÉE

Central pavilion **UNDER THE AZURE**

Curation: Rebecca Lamarche-Vadel
and Blanche de Lestrangé

The exhibition *Under the Azure* takes as its starting point a Hittite myth (the Hittites were a people of Asia Minor who lived in the 2nd millennium B.C.) according to which, every evening, the sun would fall into the sea at the moment of its setting. *Under the Azure* brings together works by some twenty international artists, both historic and emerging, whose artistic practice has been shaped by a fascination for the Mediterranean Sea. The exhibition reflects the dreams and fears that the Mediterranean evokes, from the beings that inhabit it to the tragedies it witnesses.

Conception/realization: ma-tisse / layout and design: Flore Beaudelin



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Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, Remember The Light, 2016
Jean Painlevé, Acéra ou le bal des sorcières, 1972

MOVEMENT

MYTH

Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, *Remember the Light*, 2016

Presented in two parts, this work is set against the backdrop of the **Mediterranean Sea**. The artists filmed these scenes near Beirut, Lebanon, a transit country for migrants crossing to Europe. On one of the screens, a **scarf** is seen flowing in the sea, while the other video shows several objects and five snorkelers. As these different bodies sink into the **depths**, the colors darken.

? What can you imagine from the submerged objects? These images of falling bodies remind us that people perish in the Mediterranean while attempting to reach Europe.

DREAMS

Lydia Ourahmane, *Calypso*, 2023

Lydia Ourahmane's work is a large-scale magnet, immersed in the harbor at each stopover of the exhibition, attracting various objects, materials, or waste buried there. Together, these objects compose a still life, and a true **landscape of treasures submerged in the sea**, whatever their value.

? Observe the current magnetized objects. Do any of them surprise you?

CREATURE

SEA

Marguerite Humeau, *The Dead (a drifting, dying marine mammal)*, 2019

Marguerite Humeau creates mysterious works that evoke the world of dreams. This sea creature, resembling a mammal, appears to be using its gigantic fins to **escape a threat**. It propels itself toward the sky, hoping to be saved. Through this work, the artist addresses issues of the **climate crisis** and the **disappearance of marine species**. She questions whether marine animals are aware that their lives are at risk.

? Observe the shape and color of the animal. The artist represents it as a body floating on the surface of the ocean. What animal species does this creature remind you of?

Luigi Zuccheri, *Untitled*, 1965-1970

The painter Luigi Zuccheri frequently depicted the landscapes and animals of his region, located in the northeast of Italy, near Venice. The animals and fish that the artist portrays appear **monumental**, while the scale of the human figures is **reduced**. The power dynamic is thus reversed. Humans are no longer the predators, and **nature reclaims its rights**.

? Now observe the painted material. Is it fluid, dense, or pasty? Zuccheri uses the very ancient technique of tempera, which involves adding water to colored pigments. This technique, used by the Old Masters, offers both ease, transparency, and fluidity in applying paint to the surface.

Dominique White, *The Obliteration of Nothing*, 2023

This sculpture is an **assemblage** of various objects and materials evoking the sea, **navigation**, and conquest. For this work, Dominique White draws inspiration from the myth of the Hydra, a multi-headed water monster from Greek mythology. Here, the numerous harpoons represent the heads of the Hydra, symbolizing the **dangers** of the Mediterranean Sea for those who cross it to reach Europe in the context of exile and forced migration.

? Observe the shape of the harpoons. What do you notice? They are twisted! It would be difficult to catch prey this way... It's as if the harpoons are turning against the hunter, seeking revenge on the man who attempts to dominate other beings.

HORIZON

Jean-Marie Appriou, *Black Smoker (Muraena)*, 2023

The base of the work Black Smoker (Muraena) is a «**black chimney**,» an element of deep-sea fauna that manages to survive without light, thanks to its symbiosis with bacteria. Here, moray eels capable of producing their own **fluorescent light** are depicted, extending the chimney while inhabiting it. They evoke the ability of certain living beings to create light in the darkest contexts.

? Which plant, animal or human creature(s) does this sculpture remind you of?

Jean Painlevé, *Acra ou le bal des sorcières*, 1972

These animals filmed in the deep sea belong to the mollusk family. Jean Painlevé filmed these aceras for **scientific purposes**, revealing images that are usually inaccessible and invisible. Set to jazz music, the movement of the aceras seems to follow a dynamic and swirling **choreography**. Between attraction and repulsion, the artist showcases little-known living beings that enrich marine life and contribute to the balance of our **ecosystem**.

? Observe the movements of the aceras. What do they remind you of? Some movements evoke a dance! One might think of the serpentine dance of Loïe Fuller (1862-1928), the famous American dancer considered one of the pioneers of modern dance.

IMAGINARY

CROSSING

Adrián Villar Rojas, *Untitled XI (série Rinascimento)*, 2023

The refrigerator, a symbol of modernity, becomes, under the hands of Adrián Villar Rojas, the frame for a strange painting: a **still life** of frozen food and objects. The contents of this freezer change at each stop of the museum ship, acting as a sort of **identity card** for the country where it is displayed. The freezing chamber casts a cold light on its contents, as if everything were perfectly **frozen in time**, yet capable of being reborn at any moment, as its title suggests.

? Look closely at the contents of the freezer. Identify all the items from the country you're in and imagine what those from other stops might be.

LIVING