

The background of the poster is a photograph of a woman in the foreground, wearing a black top and a necklace, with her mouth open in a shout or song. Behind her, another person is visible with their arms raised, and a blurred audience is seated in the background. The lighting is dramatic, with strong blue and purple hues.

FemArt Festival

Narrative Report

12th edition
25-30 September, 2024
Prishtina, Kosovo

FEMART FESTIVAL

Narrative Report

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SUMMARY

This year, we celebrated 12 years of feminist artistic activism at the FemArt Festival. Over 200 artists and activists from 20 countries participated in 30 diverse activities, each contributing to our mission for equality, justice, and peace through the power of sisterhood—especially crucial in times when human values are threatened by conflict, tension, and oppression.

"Sisterhood: In Time of War and Peace" was this year's theme of the Festival that connected participants across various venues, from theaters to galleries, libraries, and cinemas. The festival showcased a vibrant array of events, including film screenings, feminist discussions, music concerts, exhibitions, theater performances, workshops, conferences, and publications, all fostering a spirit of collaboration and resilience.

From September 25-30, 2024, a vibrant array of cultural activities unfolded across various venues—Klan Arena, Oda Theater, Dodona Theater, Termokissi, Kino Armata, "Hivzi Sulejmani" Library, Faculty of Arts Gallery, Hotel Grandi, Faculty of Arts, Shota Ensemble Spaces, Finnish School, the Embassy of Luxembourg, the

French Institute, and Heroinat Park. These spaces served as gathering points for reflection, discussion, entertainment, and cultural exchange.

The festival opened with the captivating performance of "Carmen" by the Barcelona Flamenco Ballet. This piece echoed themes of freedom and women's empowerment. As Gili Hoxha writes in her blog, "Carmen, in her duets, gives her all to love, yet when alone, her movements reveal a deep quest for freedom and autonomy. This is a Carmen who defends her liberty and cherishes it." Through these performances and interactions, we celebrated the strength of sisterhood and the journey towards empowerment. Rebel. Drenched in her world. Rhythmic music infused with elements of traditional Spanish melodies effortlessly transforms into an anthem of freedom, capturing the essence of rebellion.

Social norms and patriarchal oppression were boldly challenged through a series of powerful performances and theatrical shows. Among these was "The Big Giggle" by Xixi Xiao, which graced the Heroines' Park on the festival's

second day. Other notable works included the theatrical piece "World Without Women" by Serbian artists Olga Dimitrijevic and Maja Pelevic, the premiere of the dance theater performance "O Lord, O Lord, O Lady of the House" by Robert Nuha, the play "Sonny" by Slovenian artist Natasha Zhivkovič, and "Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again," directed by Zana Hoxha. The French artists Caroline Sahuquet, Delphine Biard, and Flora Grimaud also presented "Speculum." Each of these performances conveyed a unified message—calls for freedom, equality, and justice in a world where peace and solidarity reign among and for women.

This year's FemArt program also delved into themes of migration with "I Want a Country," directed by Ema Andrea from Albania, and explored existence through the performance "In Memoriam" by Sylvia Camarda. In this moving piece, every movement, step, and gesture transcended the boundaries of life and death, leading us on an engaging journey through the stages of human metamorphosis. In this performance, death transformed into a celestial dance,

where each motion told a story of hope, resilience, and renewal.

This year, FemArt provided audiences with opportunities to reflect on war, peace, and LGBTQI+ rights. Over two days, Kino Armata showcased a variety of films, including the documentary "Trained to See: Three Women and War" by Luzia Schmid, the animated short "Self Story" by Géraldine Charpentier, "A Sister" by Delphine Girard, "The Ephemeral" by Jorge Muriel, "Afterwar" by Birgitte Stærmose, "The Leading Actor" by Paula Markovitch, and "The Art of Encounter" by Marinka Limat. The festival also focused on the growth of emerging artists through workshops led by Sylvia Camarda, Shpëtim Selmani, Attila Antal, Xixi Xiao, and Georgina Kakoudaki, fostering inspiration for future generations of feminist activism.

Discussion panels and the Peace Conference highlighted the voices of women activists, emphasizing calls for peace, justice, and equality. The event celebrated women's vital roles in promoting peace during times of conflict, bringing together feminist activists from Kosovo, Serbia, Ukraine, and Palestine.

The discussion panels titled "Femicide," "The Voice of Women Poets: Solidarity and Empowerment through Poetry," and "Beyond Barriers: Inclusivity in Culture and Art," along with the publication of a Manual for the Visually Impaired, brought together

activists and key figures from important institutions to address these critical issues with sensitivity and significance. These discussions served as a source of reflection and inspiration, urging us to engage daily in making our society better for everyone. Additionally, through the publication of a Monograph, an exhibition, and a discussion panel, FemArt honored and recognized the contributions and dedication of many women artists and activists who infused pieces of their souls into the pages of this book. Edited by Ivana Bilić, the Monograph not only preserves memories but also creates a lasting testament to feminist strength and courage that resonates across time. Curated by Berat Bajrami, this exhibition celebrated a decade of feminist artistic activism in Kosovo through the FemArt Festival.

The FemArt Festival was illuminated by the enchanting performances of Lucia de Carvalho and Vjollca Robelli – Mripa (AJO), who magically brought their concerts "Pwanga" and "Braids" to our audience. This musical journey celebrated the past while offering hope for the future.

FemArt serves as a platform for artists and activists to build bridges of collaboration, and this edition was no different. Participants had the opportunity to connect, exchange ideas, and inspire partnerships during the "Networking Event," hosted by the Luxembourg Embassy in Prishtina, accompanied by the

music of DJ Matale.

Expressing deep gratitude to all donors, sponsors, and institutional partners, Zana Hoxha, founder and director of the FemArt Festival, shared her enthusiasm for yet another successful edition of the festival.

"I'm incredibly proud of our team. While we're understandably exhausted by the end, we feel deeply satisfied with the artistic values and themes that we explored together. This year's theme struck a chord with the audience, and I'm thrilled that everything unfolded as we hoped—sometimes even better. It's a joy to wrap up the festival tonight after six nights filled with 30 diverse activities," said Zana Hoxha.

The festival attracted guests from various countries across Europe and beyond, highlighting how sisterhood transcends both familial bonds and national borders.

We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to the FemArt audience. Over 2,000 attendees immersed themselves in a captivating array of musical sounds, feminist narratives, and the stories of FemArt captured in our book. The discussions ignited reflection and shared experiences, uniting us in sisterhood.

Femart 12

Activities

DAY 1

25 September, 2024

OPENING CEREMONY OF THE FESTIVAL: PERFORMANCE "CARMEN" BY BARCELONA FLAMENCO BALLET / SPAIN

The performance of "Carmen" by the Barcelona Flamenco Ballet marked the opening of the 12th edition of the FemArt Festival, filling the Klan Arena with nearly 500 attendees.

This performance revisited the ever-present myth of Carmen, reinterpreting Bizet's work with new elements from flamenco, previously unknown to the audience, and which were warmly received. Going beyond the traditional conceptualization that the work has historically been categorized under, it was presented in a way that seamlessly connected with the realities of today's contemporary society.

The values of Carmen, as a woman of our time, and the integration of flamenco music and ballet, infused with the distinctive style of David Gutierrez, placed the work within a new paradigm of universal myth and 21st-century flamenco.

Despite the passage of time, Carmen continues to carry its message of freedom and courage in the face of an unequal world where women still fight for their rights. Carmen is the prototype of a woman who faces a hostile and violent patriarchal world—one she does not survive, but leaves behind a legacy for future generations.

The performance of Carmen conveyed pain, passion, and a call for freedom—emotions that flamenco represents with masterful intensity in its most raw and primal form. *"Each scene, vibrant with its own color, was like a new day on the horizon of history, surviving the test of time through the stage—a theatrical production that, from its inception, was not initially welcomed due to the boldness of depicting a seductive woman who answers to no one but love. Not even when threatened. The performance*

is not just about love; it is a constant struggle where peace is fragile. And with the tragic end, everything comes to rest," writes Gili Hoxhaj in her blog about the first day of the festival.

The applause and ovations from the audience were the clearest indicator that this call for freedom was understood, conveyed, and embraced as such.











COCTAIL AND PARTY

After the passionate performance of Carmen, the audience moved into the lobby of Klan Arena, where they had the chance to mingle, chat, and enjoy themselves to the sounds of music. Between raised glasses, lively dancing, and animated conversations, unforgettable moments were made—and many of them were captured in photographs. This vibrant atmosphere brought a perfect end to the first day of the festival, leaving behind a beautiful feeling of energy and connection.





DAY 2

26 September, 2024

WORKSHOP “ART, ACTIVISM AND EQUALITY: THE INTERSECTION OF GENDER AND PEACEBUILDING”

The second day of the festival began with the workshop "Art, Activism: The Intersection Between Gender and Peacebuilding." The workshop aimed to challenge gender stereotypes, address human rights issues, and promote peacebuilding. This was achieved through a methodology that included gathering qualitative data in the form of "counter-narratives" and personal stories, led by trainers Shpëtim Selmani, a writer and actor, and Attila Antal, a director and writer. Based on the stories collected and the collaborative work during the workshop, the creation of a theater performance was also initiated.

During the workshop, participants developed their skills in writing short texts, which were later shared on Instagram as part of the "Instagram Challenge." What made this workshop particularly special was its ability to bring together 23 young people from Kosovo and

who actively engaged in exploring the theme of peace. This two-day workshop took place at the Dodona Theater, creating a space for meaningful dialogue and creative expression around the topic of peace.



FEMINIST TALKS “FEMICIDE: HOW DO WE FIGHT IT?”

Femicide – one of the most painful wounds in society, affecting every community without exception – was the first topic addressed in the Feminist Talks series at the 12th edition of the FemArt Festival.

The issue of femicide and violence against women remains a serious problem in Kosovo, with 29 women killed in the last five years and thousands of reported cases each year. Many of the perpetrators are repeat offenders, and judicial sentences are often minimal. These facts, among others, were highlighted during the panel discussion “Femicide – How Do We Fight It?” held at the French Institute in Pristina.

Activists criticized the courts and prosecutors for inadequate sentencing and stressed the need for better protection and support for victims of domestic violence.

The panelists included: Albulena Haxhiu, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Kosovo; Adelina Berisha, Program Manager for Gender-Based Violence at the Kosovo Women’s Network; Afërdita Mikullovi, Colonel and Director of the Regional Police in Mitrovica; Nerimane Ferizi, Director of 4thwave; Zana Hamiti Asllani, Director of the Women’s Shelter “Center for the Protection of Women and Children” in Pristina; and the discussion was moderated by Kaltrina Rexhepi-Dragusha, Journalist. The panel drew the attention of local media and relevant institutions.

“Minister of Justice, Albulena Haxhiu, stated that addressing domestic violence is one of the Government’s priorities. She said that 87% of the recommendations in the Strategy for Preventing Domestic Violence have either been implemented or are in the process of being implement-

Kallxo.com. A total of 30 people attended the panel discussion.

This discussion was a crucial step in pushing for the necessary change in the fight against femicide in Kosovo, urging relevant institutions to treat the issue with the seriousness it deserves.



PERFORMANCE "THE BIG GIGGLE" BY XIXI XIAO / CHINA, UNITED KINGDOM

The unique performance "The Big Giggle" was a physical, interactive experience that engaged the audience in a special way.

Held in the "Heroinat" Park in Pristina, the performance brought the space to life, transforming the park into a stage where multidisciplinary artist Xixi Xiao took command and shared her art with the audience. It was a journey of reconnection to one's roots. The music and movements of the artist's body didn't go unnoticed by passersby, many of whom stopped out of curiosity to watch up close. Activists and artists participating in the festival joined in to interact with Xixi and share their favorite personal objects with her.

Xixi Xiao, a Chinese artist based in London, explained that this moment was about pausing and living in the present. "Since this is an open, public space, the whole conc-

ept was about involving everyone in the performance, bringing people together to experience the moment. We're always rushing to work and not living in the present. I wanted everyone to enjoy the experience without doing anything," she said in an interview with Koha.net.

Shqipe Malushi shared her experience of the performance, saying, "I felt my heart pounding intensely from the impact of this performance. Yes, it touched me deeply on many levels. At first, I thought I had been fighting fear my entire life, while XiXi embraced fear, riding it like a wild horse. During our conversation, I reflected on this and realized I may have been struggling between my art and my humanitarian calling, never fully able to serve my first art, but always serving people first. At that moment, I wished I could dance like XiXi and silently express my own free-

dom."

In total, 50 people experienced the transformative energy of this performance, leaving with a sense of connection and reflection.







THEATRE PERFORMANCE "WORLD WITHOUT WOMEN" / SERBIA

The theme of "Women and Work" was at the heart of the project "A World Without Women", with text, concept, and performance by Olga Dimitrijević and Maja Pelević.

The performance began by exploring structural inequalities within Serbian theater: gender inequality, unequal pay, normalized violence, and the reproduction of capitalist patriarchal models. It delved into the boundaries of engaged art today and examined how love (for art) can represent a covert source of social repression.

The position of women in theater was unveiled through both factual information and the satirical performance of the two actresses. While theater may seem detached from "normal" life, it actually serves as a valuable lens for understanding broader social processes and the role of women within them.

The performance went beyond counting statistics, quoting feminist slogans, and framing itself within liberal feminism. Instead, it sought to create space for visualizing political actions and the influences that challenge the existing system and its structures of inequality. Throughout the show, the barriers between the audience and the actors were broken down, initiating direct communication with the crowd through questions like: "Do you do your work with pleasure? With laughter? Who needs more free time?"

As Koha.net wrote, "The epilogue of A World Without Women on the second day of FemArt is 'surrender'—the actresses step away from the stage, return to their housework, but essentially, the show is a call to do the opposite."

The performance ended with the audience invited onto the stage to share in a meal of

crepes prepared by the actresses themselves—a biting irony about the unpaid labor women do as caretakers. The stage to share in a meal of crepes prepared by the actresses themselves—a biting irony about the unpaid labor women do as caretakers.

The show was held at the Dodona Theater in front of an audience of 60 people.







PREMIERE OF THE DANCE THEATRE PERFORMANCE "O LORD, O LORD, O LADY OF THE HOUSE"/ KOSOVO

The performance "O Lord, O Lord, O Lady of the House" directed, conceptualized, and choreographed by Robert Nuha, in collaboration with the Artpolis Artistic Ensemble and Noa Dance Theatre Co, packed the Oda Theater in Pristina with nearly 200 people in the audience.

With text and dramaturgy by Zana Hoxha, this performance delivered a powerful blow to toxic masculinity, which continues to dominate our society. The themes of masculinity and the impact of patriarchy were explored in a comedic and provocative way. Using a mix of body language and dialogue, the show examined aspects of masculinity and old Albanian traditions, combining humor, contemporary dance, and technology to create a unique format.

Through video projections and on-stage performances, the clash between the past and

the present was highlighted, underscoring the ongoing influence of old practices on today's society—depicted through the interactions between two brothers and their sister (the characters in the play).

As Gili Hoxhaj wrote for Kult-Plus: "Besa was unshaken. She only fought in direct confrontation. No more words. By the end of the performance, she sank into her passions and dreams. A character set apart from norms that do more harm than good, she shows that sometimes battles can be won by not following them at all. Girls like Besa hold the power; they leave the fighting to others. This happens because they believe in victory and in what rightfully belongs to them. FemArt taught us this on the second night."

This innovative and comedic approach helps reflect on and critically examine the role of

masculinity and traditions in our lives. Based on the audience's reaction, it's safe to say that the performance was a success.







DAY 3

26 September, 2024

WORKSHOP “ART, ACTIVISM AND EQUALITY: THE INTERSECTION OF GENDER AND PEACEBUILDING”

The "Art, Activism: The Intersection of Gender and Peacebuilding" workshop continued on the third day of the festival. The workshop aimed to challenge gender stereotypes, address human rights issues, and promote peacebuilding. This was achieved through a methodology that involved gathering qualitative data in the form of "counter-narratives" and personal stories, led by trainers Shpëtim Selmani, a writer and actor, and Attila Antal, a director and writer. Based on the stories collected and the collaboration throughout the workshop, a theater performance was also initiated.

During the workshop, participants were trained and developed the art of writing short texts, which were later shared on Instagram as part of the "Instagram Challenge." A particularly special aspect of this workshop was that it brought together 23 young people from Kosovo and Serb-

ia, who actively engaged in exploring the theme of peace. The two-day workshop was held at the Dodona Theater, fostering a space for creative collaboration and reflection on peace.



PLAY WITH ME: CLOWNING WORKSHOP

The focus of this workshop was on play. The goal was to relearn "how to play, fail, and play again," just as we did when we were children.

Facilitated by Xixi Xiao, a dynamic artist known for her innovative approach to interactive experiences, the workshop included several games designed to encourage creativity and spontaneity. From engaging with participants through group activities to playing with objects, attendees were challenged to stay present in the moment, fostering a sense of community and joy throughout the experience.

The workshop offered a unique opportunity for everyone to reconnect with their playful spirit and embrace the art of play. It was held at the Finnish School in Pristina, where 20 students from the school took part.





FEMINIST TALKS: “BEYOND BARRIERS: INCLUSION IN CULTURE AND ART”

The panel “Beyond Barriers: Inclusion in Culture and the Arts” was inspired by the “Manual for Access Cultural Events for Blind and Visually Impaired People” developed by Artpolis. During this session, the discussion focused on the importance of including all individuals—regardless of their background, abilities, or experiences—in the cultural and artistic world, with a particular emphasis on people who are blind or have visual impairments. Representatives from organizations for the blind and visually impaired also attended and expressed strong support for this initiative.

The main focus of the discussion was how to create more inclusive artistic and cultural spaces, overcoming barriers that often prevent full participation. Panelists included: Jehona Shyti, Director of the Department of Culture at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and

Sports; Kushtrim Sheremeti, Director of the National Theater of Kosovo; Mimosë Musliu, Professor of Special Education and Activist; and Elvana Shala, Goodwill Ambassador. The panel was moderated by Ardianë Pajaziti, Director of Kult-Plus.

A highlight of the discussion was the commitment of both Ms. Shyti and Mr. Sheremeti to implement the Handbook wherever possible, depending on available infrastructure. The panel was attended by 25 people at the French Institute in Pristina, where the Handbook was also distributed to the participants.

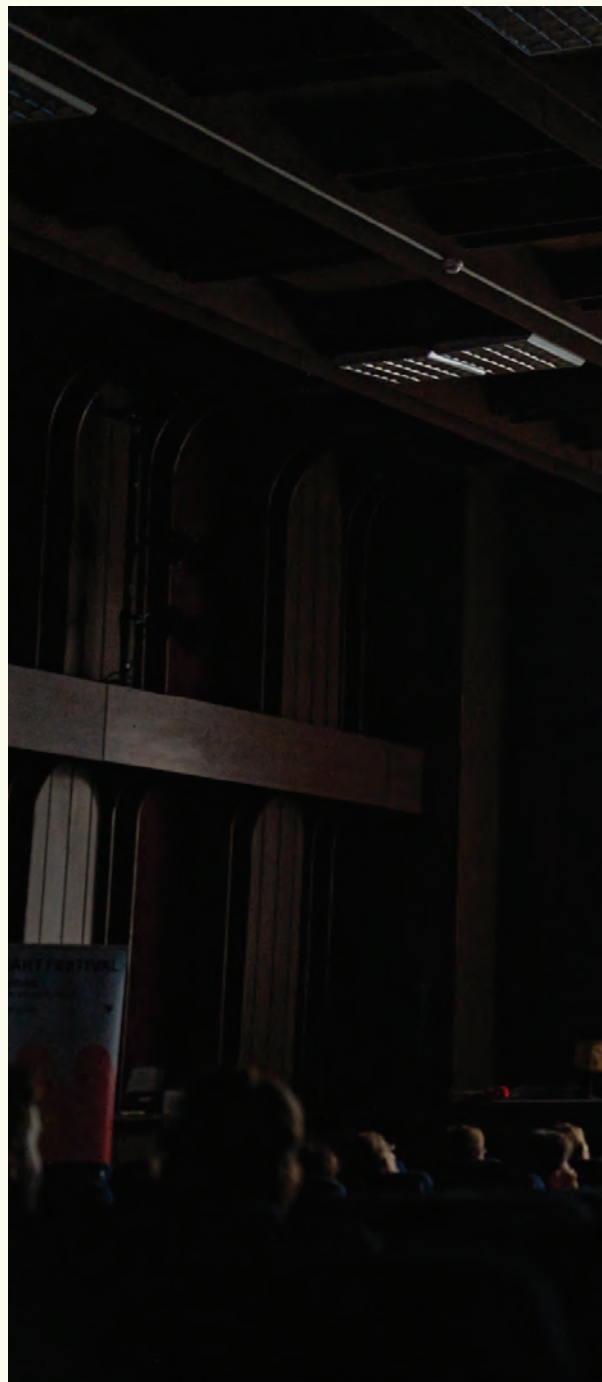
The session concluded with the sharing of best practices and strategies to promote an open and equal approach for everyone, highlighting the crucial role that art and culture play in building a fairer and more equal society.



DOCUMENTARY “TRAINED TO SEE: THREE WOMEN AND THE WAR” / GERMANY

The European Film Day kicked off with the powerful documentary "Trained to See: Three Women and War" by director Luzia Schmid, a German production that sheds light on the courage and work of women during times of turmoil.

The film paid tribute to three legendary figures—Margaret Bourke-White, Martha Gellhorn, and Lee Miller—pioneering journalists who broke barriers to become the first women to report from the front lines of World War II. This inspiring documentary, which honors their strength and resilience, perfectly embodied the theme of FemArt 12, reminding us of the critical role women's voices have played in shaping world history.

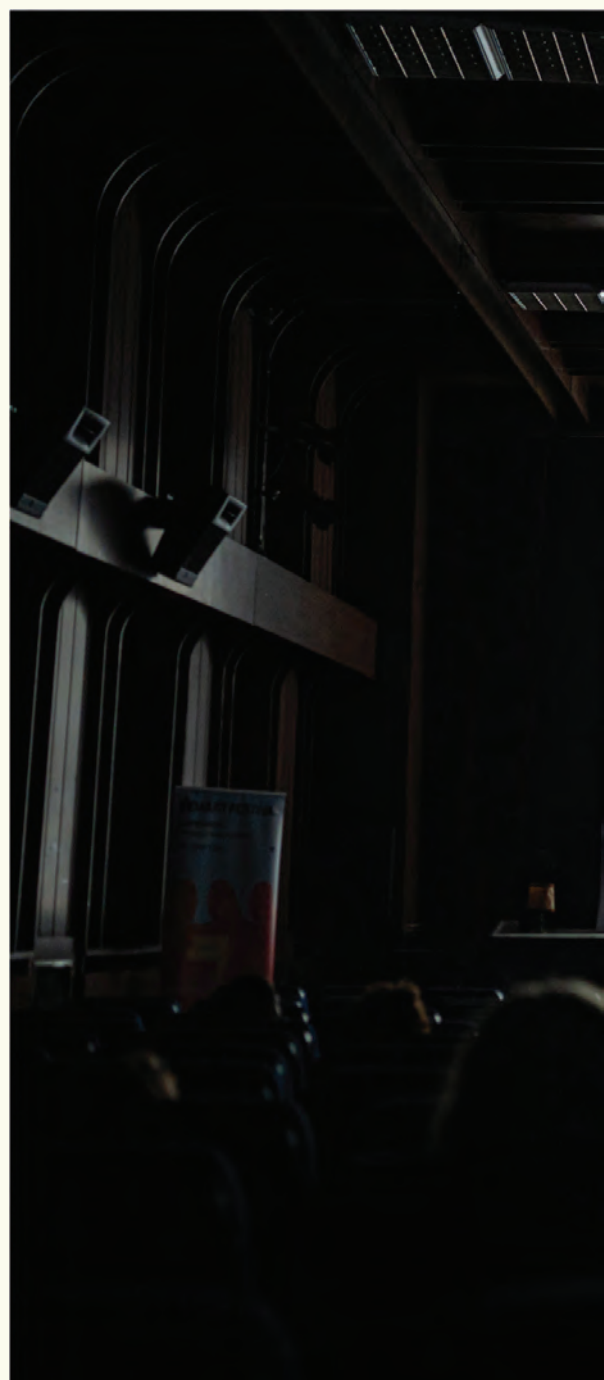




SHORT ANIMATED MOVIE “SELF STORY” / BELGIUM

The short movie "Self Story" offered a rare and powerful representation of non-binary people, a perspective we don't often see in events or on screen. The story of Lou explored their relationship with gender, clothing, and the journey of self-discovery.

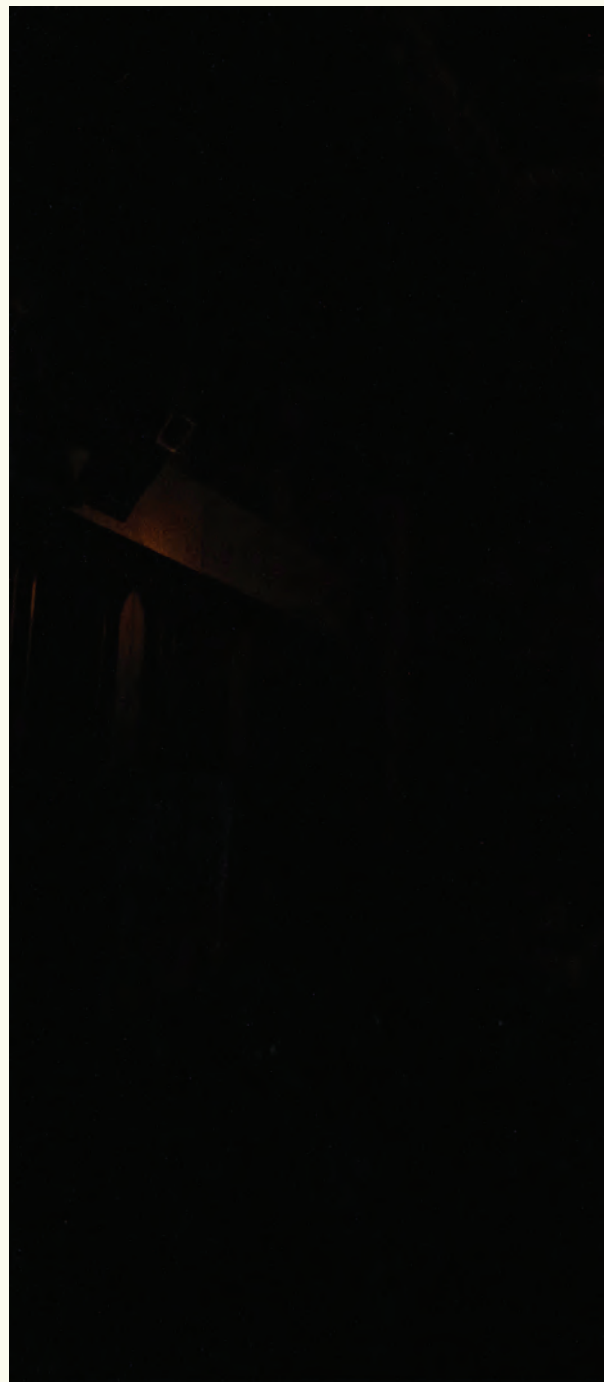
In a way, the film invited us to join non-binary individuals on their journey, offering insight into what they experience and who they are. Created masterfully by Géraldine Charpentier, "My Story" depicted Lou's childhood and adolescence, their process of discovering their gender identity, the challenges with clothing, their menstrual cycle, and the labels imposed by others.





SHORT MOVIE "A SISTER" / BELGIUM

Directed by Delphine Girard, the short movie "A Sister" tells the gripping story of a woman in danger during a single night. One night. One car. To escape, she must make the most important phone call of her life. The woman on the other end of the line helps her navigate the immediate threat she faces. This powerful film was nominated for an Oscar for Best Live Action Short Film in 2020.





SHORT MOVIE "THE EPHEMERAL" / SPAIN

The short movie "The Ephemeral" by Spanish director Jorge Muriel invited viewers to reflect deeply on the journey of life. A chance encounter between two strangers on a subway train brought with it their shared pasts. Both of them, looking at the present, determined their future in that brief, fleeting, and temporary journey that connected them for just a moment. The film masterfully explores human connections, love, and the interplay between past and present. The captivating performances by Miguel Ramiro, José Cameán, and José Luis de Madariaga added a special depth to the story, making it even more moving.

The short movies were screened at Kino Armata, which transformed into a gathering place for film lovers, artists, and activists on this beautiful artistic journey! Over 30 people attended the screening of these movies.





RECEPTION BY THE GERMAN EMBASSY IN PRISHTINA

After the screening of the short films, the German Embassy hosted a special reception with a cocktail. During the event, artists had the opportunity to connect with activists and film enthusiasts. The lobby of Kino Armata was filled with positive energy as guests exchanged impressions about the films, engaging in lively discussions and enjoying each other's company. It was a moment of shared reflection, creativity, and celebration of the arts.

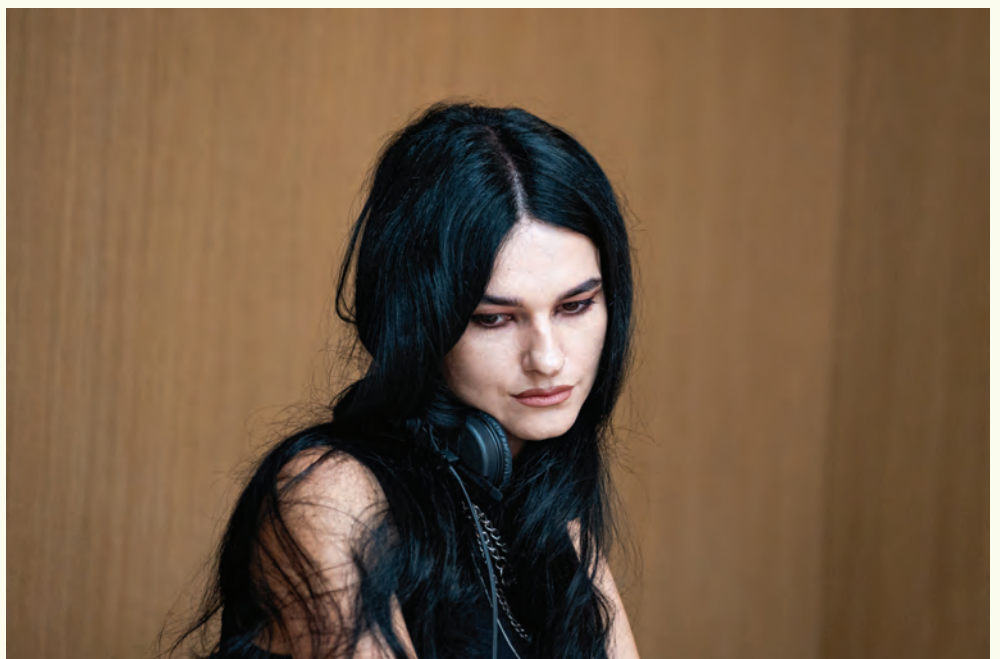




NETWORKING EVENT BETWEEN ARTISTS AND ACTIVISTS AT THE EMBASSY OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG IN PRISHTINA

Under the patronage of the Embassy of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in Pristina, a Networking Event for artists and activists was organized. The event was hosted by Eric Dietz, Head of Mission at the Luxembourg Embassy, who warmly welcomed and greeted all the guests. With a cocktail reception accompanied by music by DJ Matala, this networking evening provided a unique opportunity for attendees to connect, exchange ideas, and foster collaborations.

Held at the Embassy's premises, the event brought together 60 artists, activists, public figures from Kosovo's cultural scene, as well as prominent representatives from the political arena. It was a memorable night of meaningful conversations and new connections, strengthening the ties within the creative and activist communities.



THEATRE PERFORMANCE "I WANT A COUNTRY" / ALBANIA

Directed by Ema Andrea, the play "I Want a Country" offered a deep and thought-provoking reflection on the everyday struggles and emotions of individuals grappling with the personal battle for survival. It explored the internal conflict many face when questioning: "Should I stay in this place, amid uncertainties, or should I leave and move to another country?"

Throughout the performance, the characters raised important questions, such as: Can a new place truly be built while carrying the imperfect memories of an old one? The characters, uncertain about what to do, found comfort in the memory of being cradled by their grandmother, with her lullabies, which pushed them to sleep once more and reflect on their next steps.

This theme, deeply relevant to our social context, was brought to life by actors

Adriana Tolka, Matia Llupa, Paolo Kadillari, Artemis Beluli, Eva Gjika, Eraldo Mala, and Lindar Kaja. The performance took place at Termokiss in Prishtina, and was attended by 50 people, who were moved by the timely and heartfelt portrayal of personal choices in the face of uncertainty.



CONCERT "PWANGA TOUR" BY LUCIA DE CARVALHO / ANGOLA, FRANCE

The space at Teatri Oda was brought to life with vibrant colors and energy during the "Pwanga" concert. The voice of Lúcia de Carvalho resonated with healing and transformative vibrations, while her drumming echoed the voices of ancestors, inviting the audience to reconnect with their inner depths.

The technical and artistic precision of the band, made up of Lúcia de Carvalho, James Muller, Edouard Heilbronn, and Simon Lannoy, created a magical atmosphere, making everyone in the room want to dance and lose themselves in the rhythms of Afro-Brazilian music. The energy and voice of Lúcia de Carvalho captured the soul of every person in the audience, drawing them into a collective experience of singing, dancing, and interacting in perfect harmony.

"Around two hours of Lucia de Carvalho made me feel like I

was in a more beautiful world, full of life and colors – a world where, above all, love triumphs. Her voice, the poetry in her songs, her stage movements, the way she effortlessly switched between and played different instruments, touched my mind, my heart, and most importantly, my soul," said actress Aurita Agushi.

Gili Hoxhaj wrote on her blog, "Unity can always be created through music, not just by singing and dancing on stage, but by singing and dancing together. Unity is created with musicians like Lucia and evenings like this at FemArt. Lucia aims to plant light with her music. And she did so in Pristina, but her light was full of colors – planted straight into our hearts."

This concert was part of Lúcia de Carvalho's world tour for her album "Pwanga", her third album that reflects her search

for essence and connection.

The concert was attended by 150 people, all of whom shared in the powerful and joyous experience.











DAY 4

28 September, 2024

WORKSHOP “TASTE OF CULTURAL AESTHETICS IN CALLIGRAPHY: EXPERIENCING THE HARMONY AND FLOW WITHIN US”

The workshop “Taste of Cultural Aesthetics in Calligraphy-Experiencing the Harmony and Flow Within Us” was attended by 20 participants under the mentorship of Chinese artist Xixi Xiao.

Held at Teatri Dodona, the workshop aimed to raise awareness about the psychological connection between the body and the sensitive movements in calligraphy. It demonstrated how practical work in calligraphy requires precise control over the writing instrument, ensuring a steady balance of lines, angles, and space. The continuous nature of calligraphy, with its purposeful and fluid movements, created a rhythmic sensation and a deep connection with the subconscious.





WORKSHOP ON MOVEMENT AND CHOREOGRAPHY

At the Shota Ensemble venue, a positive and energetic atmosphere was created, inspired by the power of movement, guiding participants through a deeply emotional journey during a one-day workshop led by artist Sylvia Camarda, designed specifically for actors and dancers.

This workshop gave participants the opportunity to free themselves, delve into their inner worlds, and experience the present moment without the weight of the outside world. In this space, every gesture became a language of its own, with words transforming into physical expression. The act of exploration, simple yet profound, revealed itself as a deep and meaningful experience—because no movement is random, empty, or useless. Each movement carries its own significance, reflecting the emotions hidden deep within the human soul.

The workshop sparked great enthusiasm among the 20 participants, turning it into a lively and unforgettable experience for all.





EXHIBITION AND PUBLICATION OF MONOGRAPHY “FEMART FESTIVAL: 10 YEARS AND GROWING 2013-2022...”

The FemArt Festival has reached a significant historic milestone, celebrating a decade of feminist artistic activism. Through an exhibition curated by Berat Bajrami and the launch of a Monograph, edited by Ivana Bilić, a rich reflection on the festival's 10-year journey was shared. The Monograph, built through texts, photographs, interviews, and archival materials, provided an important retrospective on the festival's work and impact on the artistic and cultural scene in Kosovo and the broader region.

The celebration of FemArt's decade was accompanied by deep emotions, with tears and moments of reflection on collective engagement. Those who were lost along the way were remembered, their presence felt deeply, as spirits that continue to accompany us in this moment. In this atmosphere, the celebration was not only of the past but also of

the shared cultural legacy being built for future generations—creating a bridge between the past and the future, a heritage that will be passed on, generation after generation.

This monograph, launched at the Faculty of Arts Gallery, is a powerful work that represents the dedication and contributions of many women artists and activists, each of whom has infused pieces of their spirit into its pages. Through it, we not only preserve memories but also build an enduring testament to the strength and courage of feminism, one that resonates beyond time.

At this special event, people of different ages and backgrounds from various places came together, united by a profound sense of nostalgia. Participants embraced one another, unveiling their artistic souls. The attendees had the opportunity to listen to and

engage in a discussion panel with Zana Hoxha, Igballe Rogova, Ivana Bilić, and Berat Bajrami. In this warm and emotionally charged space, they shared their experiences and reflected on their collective journey through this long and inspiring path.

"I was deeply moved when I entered here today. I had to step outside and come back in to gather myself," said activist Igballe Rugova, describing her emotions during the Monograph launch, according to Gili Hoxhaj's report. Hoxhaj adds, "FemArt was described as a celebration, because, in addition to protesting stagnation, it also celebrates successes. Successes like this one, with the monograph. But what began with nostalgia ended in deep emotion, in tribute to the photographer Meddy Huduti. He was remembered through words, memories, photographs, and a song that premiered, created by Ceylan

Taci, titled 'Mr. Photographer, Mr. Prizren.' FemArt celebrated everyone who is here, as well as those who are no longer with us, but who have left an everlasting mark on the history of activism through art."











THEATRE PERFORMANCE “SONNY” / SLOVENIA

In the dim light of the Dodona Theatre stage, Nataša Živković brilliantly brought to life the stories and images of the *Burneshat*—the Sworn Virgins—from the northern regions of Albania, Montenegro, and the broader Balkans. Through this performance, the phenomenon of the *Burneshat* raises the question: what kind of world are we living in? It sheds light on the harsh reality of women's survival in a male-dominated society. Nataša's movements, voice, and silence conveyed the painful sacrifice of these women—women who became men, not out of choice, but out of necessity, in order to protect the honor of their families, giving up their own personal lives in the process.

"The portrayal of the Sworn Virgins by Nataša was breathtaking. She seamlessly shifted between various masculine roles she embodied—armed, with a cigarette in hand,

restrained by marriage and family, standing among men as an equal, perhaps even superior to them. But beneath this tough exterior, the woman burned with fire. Her suppressed and hidden desires could not be silenced entirely. In a mesmerizing dance, Nataša's body swayed and twisted, her movements reflecting the suffering of a woman deprived. Peeling away the layers of her masculine mask, almost naked, she unleashed a primal, liberating dance—a dance of freedom, where her femininity, long repressed, fought to break free. It was a dance of necessity, of forbidden desires, and of dreams silenced by the chains of tradition," writes Shqipja Malushi on her blog.

This theater performance, before an audience of 50 people, sparked a provocative challenge to tradition, leaving those present with a deep reflection on the power of

identity and resistance.



THEATRE PERFORMANCE “REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN.” / ENGLAND

"Rebellion is not just about thought—at least not for the women of the 21st century." This is how Gili Hoxhaj captures the essence of the performance "Revolt. She said. Revolt again." in her critique.

Written by Alice Birch and directed by Zana Hoxha, the production, created in the UK, featured a cast of actresses who brought a unique and powerful energy to the stage. As it made its way to Prishtina, the performance held the audience captivated and interactive, right in the heart of the city, at the "ODA" Theatre, as part of the 12th edition of the FemArt Festival. A crown placed at the entrance, arranged by the director, symbolized the essence of the place from which the show originated, giving a sense of connection to its roots and the cultural context in which it was created.

Zana Hoxha returned to Koso-

vo with a performance unlike anything she had created in her long career as an activist and director. She taught us to revolt and to engage with our revolt in a new way, through a modern creation.

The actresses, with their shifting roles, played with sensuality, reflecting the need for a better economic life and freedom in the workplace, the desire for inclusion and power in politics, and the longing to be accepted and convinced that they were made for something better.

The language of the playwright Alice Birch is placed by director Zana Hoxha in a context that speaks to everyone. Especially, it speaks to the present time—with courage. When she first took the script in her hands, director Hoxha emphasizes that she was shocked.

"I was impressed by the way it

deconstructed language, behaviors, and other socio-cultural factors in the construction of femininity," she said. "The performance seemed to resonate with my own artistic and activist methods. Birch challenged patriarchal oppression and asked the central question: 'What is stopping us from doing something truly radical to change these things?' (Birch, 2016). This again reflected my commitment to fostering critical thinking and opening pathways for action through theater," emphasized Zana Hoxha.

The main idea of this performance was this great protest. A protest against systems and values that lead to the collapse of societies and ecologies. The stage portrayed a destroyed world, a remnant of patriarchal structures; it was based on ecofeminist theories, which connect the exploitation of nature with the

oppression of women. Zana, along with her team, penetrated deeply with a creative vision—a vision of those who raised their voices for their choices. Choices made with great courage!

This performance was attended by an audience of 150 people.











DAY 5

29 September, 2024

WORKSHOP “ORAL HISTORY: WAYS TO FIND WHO WE ARE”

The workshop "Oral History: Ways to Find Out Who We Are," led by Georgina Kakoudaki, challenged participants to explore themselves through change and discover that by understanding themselves, they can better understand others. With an open and inclusive approach, the activity emphasized the importance of free thinking and communication as key elements of personal and collective growth.

Through documentary theater methods and other improvisational techniques, participants were encouraged to look within themselves, as if in front of a mirror, to embrace reality, reflect on the past, and build a more conscious future. In this open, unrestricted atmosphere, space was created for sharing personal stories, daily struggles, and deep family and social memories, which brought the 18 participants closer together.

One participant expressed: *"During the conversations, I realized that everyone has a story that, if not shared, could fade away. It's essential to listen to others and discover what they have to say, because each of us carries a story within."*



FEMINIST TALKS “THE VOICE OF WOMEN POETS: SOLIDARITY AND EMPOWERMENT THROUGH POETRY”

In the Hivzi Sulejmani Library in Prishtina, a group of poets gathered for a feminist discussion to share their experiences as creators, alongside their poetry.

a direction of elevation and the revelation of beauty, love, and kindness."

Around 15 people attended the panel discussion.

Poets Shqipe Malushi, Brikenë Ceraja-Beka, Ilire Zajmi, Xhejlane Tërbunja, and Gili Hoxhaj, moderated by Naime Beqiraj, presented poems and stories from their personal journeys. The discussion highlighted the importance of solidarity among women creators and the challenges they face in a world where poetry is often ignored or marginalized from a gendered perspective. The conversation also explored how poetry can serve as a form of empowerment and resistance for women, a tool to break silence and build a supportive community.

Among other things, Shqipe Malushi shared: "I write for myself, seeking the discovery of the soul and spiritual life in



MOVIE NIGHT AT FEMART FESTIVAL

The afternoon of September 29th at Kino Armata was a true celebration for film enthusiasts. The cinema became a meeting point for those passionate about film, who chose to spend their Sunday afternoon immersed in feature-length movies. The program featured three films: one international-local co-production and two foreign productions, presenting a diverse array of perspectives and artistic approaches. By combining international productions with local elements and films from around the world, the event offered the audience a vibrant and inclusive cinematic experience.

The program featured the international-local co-production "Afterwar" written and directed by Birgitte Stærmose. In addition, the audience enjoyed two foreign productions: the film and documentary "The Leading Actor," written

and directed by Paula Markovitch, and "The Art of Encounter," directed by Marinka Limat. After the screenings, a lively discussion took place, with the directors of all three films, the actress from "The Leading Actor," Vjollca Bajraj, and the director of the Kosovo Cinematographic Center, Blerta Zeqiri, all taking part. The conversation was moderated by Zana Hoxha, the director of Artpolis. This panel gave the 100-strong audience a chance to dive deeper into the themes and creative processes behind these works, making for a truly engaging and insightful afternoon.



FILM “AFTERWAR” / DENMARK, KOSOVO

“Afterwar” directed by Birgitte Stærmose, was showcased at the 12th edition of the FemArt Festival, presenting a powerful and emotional narrative about the effects of war on both individuals and society. The film opens with striking images of buildings burning in a thick fog, a dead horse lying in a dusty road, and people fleeing through rugged mountain landscapes. These scenes powerfully recalled Kosovo in 1999, a time when a painful chapter in modern European history was drawing to a close.

“Afterwar” portrays children selling peanuts and cigarettes on the streets of Prishtina just to survive, speaking directly to us: “There’s only one reason we’re talking to you. It’s my hunger! I’m so hungry, I’d even eat your money!” In this cinematic testament, created over 15 years, these children transform before our eyes into adults. Yet, the child still looks back at us through the eyes of

the grown-up, as their struggle for survival becomes a fight for a better future. They confront us with their deepest secrets and desires, trapped in neglect and haunted by their painful past.

Through a close artistic collaboration with the main cast – Xhevahire, Gëzim, Shpresim, and Besnik – “Afterwar” moves between raw realism, staged performance, and an existential meditation on the long-term consequences of war. It tells a universal story about any war, anywhere it takes place, reflecting on the deep wounds that remain long after the guns fall silent. The film invites us to reflect on the lasting scars left by conflict, both on individuals and society as a whole.



FILM “THE LEADING ACTOR” BY PAULA MARKOVITCH / MEXICO

“The Leading Actor” by Paula Markovitch unveils the power of empathy while avoiding the objectification of its themes. The story intertwines the fates of two lost souls: Luis (Marcelo Ceron), a 24-year-old from Iztapalapa, Mexico, who survives by stealing and ends up as the lead in a film at the 2017 Berlinale, and Azra (Vjollca Bajraj), a cleaner at a laundry in Berlin, carrying the scars of the Kosovo war.

In a foreign city, and through their native languages—Spanish and Albanian—they communicate beyond words, united by the universal pain that binds them.

In the laundry, Luis finds a chaotic world that mirrors their own sense of abandonment. He comes to understand that fame doesn't heal wounds, but it's empathy that shares the pain, revealing the deepest truth of all. The film is a poignant exploration of human

connection, showing that sometimes, the most meaningful conversations happen in silence, through shared suffering.



DOCUMENTARY “ART OF THE ENCOUNTER” BY MARINKA LIMAT / SWITZERLAND

The film-documentary by Marinka Limat, an artist who travels long distances in the name of her art, creating various media works from her research along the way, is an experimental documentary about her journey from Kassel to Athens in 2017.

After seven years, she shares with the public her experiences from the road, recounting the full journey. Along the way, she meets people she's never known before. Some encounters didn't work out, some she lost, and sometimes avoiding a meeting turned out to be the best choice.

Through these experiences, Marinka Limat reveals her practice of meeting others, unfolding it to a broader audience and offering an example of learning from the moments in between these encounters.





PERFORMANCE “IN MEMORIAM” BY SYLVIA CAMARDA / LUXEMBOURG

Sylvia Camarda's performance “In Memoriam” was a standout moment at this year's FemArt festival, bringing a profound emotional and artistic dimension to the stage through a unique interpretation.

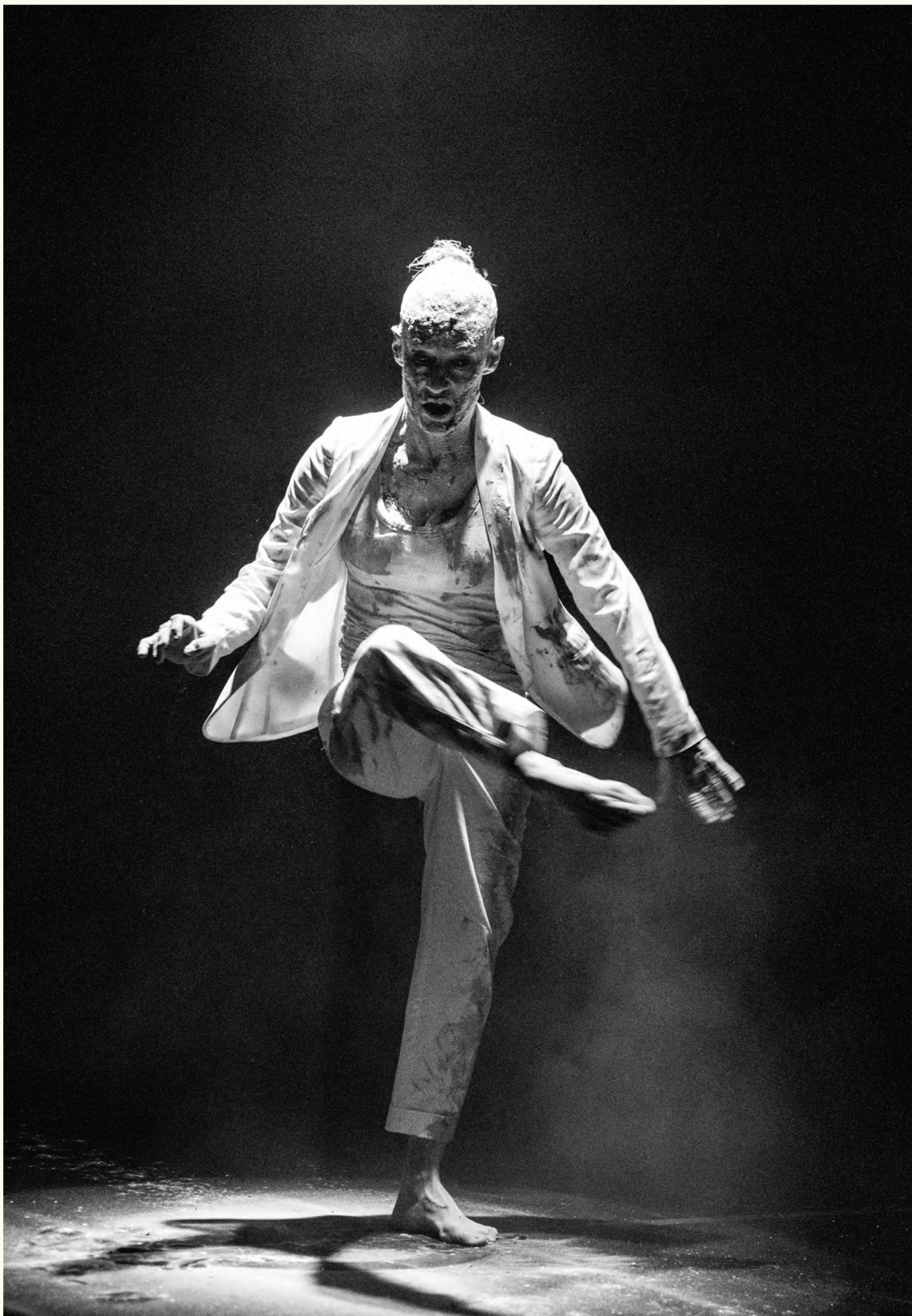
Presented at the Dodona Theater, “In Memoriam” offered a deep, philosophical experience, taking the audience on a journey through the different stages of life and death. Camarda approached these themes not as endings, but as natural and beautiful transformations. With a stage filled with heartfelt movements and subtle gestures, she captivated an audience of 150, guiding them through an emotional journey that transcended the ordinary.

The performance explored the complex transition that death represents, breaking it down into an essential act of metamorphosis. This perspective revealed the power of art to

uncover the beauty of life, even in its most delicate phases, touching the audience's deepest emotions. Through her moving performance, Camarda showcased how death can be seen not as an end, but as a transformation, emphasizing the continuous flow of existence in all its forms.

“In Memoriam” was an immersive experience that defied the expectations of a typical dance performance. Sylvia Camarda presented death as a “celestial dance,” giving it new meaning and a sense of hope. Every movement she made spoke to themes of resilience, renewal, and the enduring power of life. The performance invited the audience into a deep reflection on the nature of existence, seeing impermanence not as an end, but as part of an eternal cycle. More than just a show, this experience created a space for contemplating what lies

beyond life, how we feel transformation, and how art can turn death into a poetic, powerful act. beyond life, how we feel transformation, and how art can turn death into a poetic, powerful act.







DAY 6

30 September, 2024

PEACE CONFERENCE “SISTERHOOD: IN TIMES OF WAR AND PEACE”

The Peace Conference "Sisterhood: In Times of War and Peace," brought together activists, artists, and key stakeholders to discuss the role of activism in promoting peace in the region. Held at the Grand Hotel in Prishtina, the conference gathered around 50 people in the audience. The conference was opened by Zana Hoxha, who emphasized the importance of this event and highlighted the significance of sisterhood in the times we are living in. The event was divided into three discussion panels:

Panel 1: Feminist Activism in the 1990s in the Region: Sisterhood in Times of War

Panel 2: Young Women Activists of the Region: Sisterhood in Times of Peace

Panel 3: Women Activists in Ukraine: Resilience and Sisterhood in Times of Conflict

Before the discussions in each panel began, the research titled "Tranquility amid diversity: Exploring Peaceful Periods in Kosovo's History - After the 1974 Constitution" was presented by the author, Valdete Idrizi. She explained that the main goal of this research is to make a meaningful contribution to the ongoing discourse on achieving peace and fostering sustainable development in post-conflict regions. She further emphasized that by deepening the study of the peaceful period in Kosovo's history within Yugoslavia, society can draw valuable lessons for transformative processes that occur when a society emerges from destruction and conflict and begins the path of change and reconciliation. The findings of this research will enrich existing knowledge and could help shape strategies for peacebuilding and sustainable development in other regions

trying to recover from conflict. During her presentation, the author also highlighted the role of women during the period the research focuses on. *"The role of women was evolving both in public and private life," said Valdete Idrizi. "For many women, the challenges of this era—patriarchal limitations, lack of access to education, and political repression—were deeply intertwined with the broader struggles of the Albanian community. Women were discriminated against not only as women, but also as Albanians."* She emphasized that despite these obstacles, women managed to create their own paths toward progress, fighting for education, taking on leadership roles in both families and society, and making significant contributions to preserving cultural identity.

The author also raised the issue of the lack of recognition

for women's contributions in historical narratives, highlighting the importance of acknowledging these efforts. She pointed out that the names of women who contributed significantly, such as Exhlale Dobruna Salihu and Kaqusha Jashari, are included in this research, serving as an inspiration for future generations. Finally, the author presented the recommendations of young people and activists who were interviewed during the research. Further empowerment of peace education, integration of peace courses in schools, training for teachers, inclusion of women in mediation processes, the use of art, support for artistic projects

related to intercultural dialogue, interethnic dialogue, creation of safe spaces, addressing historical narratives, countering structural violence, strengthening a culture of peace, support for transitional justice, engagement of young people, expansion of educational programs, creation of opportunities for young boys and girls in political processes, and the sharing of positive stories, were some of the recommendations arising from this research.

Regarding the development of critical thinking among young people, Valdete Idrizi mentioned that during interviews, many participants referenced

exchange programs organized by Artpolis as a starting point in fostering activism and critical thinking among these young people.

The discussion panels were then conducted, moderated by Jeta Xharra, a journalist, publicist, and producer. The topics focused on the Balkan wars of the 1990s, the fragile peace in the Balkans, and the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Palestine. The conference aimed to foster dialogue, share experiences, and strengthen the sisterhood between women activists who have played and continue to play crucial roles in building peace.







PANEL 1

FEMINIST ACTIVISM IN THE 90S IN THE REGION: SISTERHOOD IN TIMES OF WAR

The first panel of the conference was titled "Feminist Activism of the 90s in the Region: Sisterhood in Times of War," featuring prominent women from Kosovo and the region who have contributed to women's rights and beyond: Igo Rogova (Kosovo), Vjosa Dobruna (Kosovo), Jadranka Miličević (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Danijela Stanojević (Croatia), and Vjollca Krasniqi (Kosovo).

Jeta Xharra opened the panel by sharing her personal experience, explaining how she herself is a product of the sisterhood movement during the 90s in Kosovo. She emphasized that many other women, who were students at the time, learned a great deal from the feminist activists of the 90s, and thanks to them, these women are now in key positions in the public sphere in Kosovo.

Panelist Igo Rogova shared

her experience from the 1990s and her journey of empowering feminism through sisterhood between Albanian and Serbian women. She emphasized that despite the efforts of the regime at the time to prevent communication between Albanians and Serbs living in Kosovo, she and her colleagues did not stop. Furthermore, as she called herself "Igo the storyteller," she shared the story of her trip to Belgrade with Julie Mertus.

"We went to Belgrade and I saw the 'Women in Black,' Serbian women who held weekly protests, standing still for an hour, without speaking or moving, holding banners that read 'Albanian women are our sisters.' This was sisterhood; we were united, and we continued our contact with those women in our feminist movement," said Igo Rogova. "Sisterhood continued, as we participated alongside the 'Women in Black' from Serbia

in many conferences with women from the region, all united in the mission of sisterhood and empowering one another. This very union led to the formation of the Women's Coalition from Kosovo with women from Serbia during the negotiations, raising their voices together on issues that were not being discussed in the talks: and those were the women's voices!"

The discussion continued with panelist Vjosa Dobruna, who shared how and why she began her sisterhood with Croatian, Slovenian, and Serbian women at that time. She explained that the turning point that pushed her into feminist activism and sisterhood with women from Belgrade was the 1990 Resolution, which was later adopted as law by the Serbian Parliament. This resolution outlined two demographic policies for Yugoslavia: one was the encouragement of Serbian

women's fertility, while the other aimed to prevent or discourage the reproduction of Albanian, Muslim, and Romani women. Vjosa Dobruna expressed: "No one from the region reacted against this law, except for the "Women in Black" in Belgrade, who went out with banners that read 'Achtung! Achtung!'" She went on to say that she joined the protest with those women, showing solidarity and forming a sisterhood with them.

Jadranka Miličević from Bosnia, who joined the "Women in Black" during the 1990s, shared that it was not at all easy for a woman from Bosnia to go to Belgrade and protest with her body against the policies of Serbia at that time. Solidarity with sisters from the region was the main reason she joined other women in demanding fair treatment and equal rights. To highlight the impact of sisterhood at that time, she recalled the 1993-1994 "Women in Black" conference: "There weren't only women from Yugoslavia, but believe me, there were women from Spain, Germany, Israel, Palestine... From 1993 to 2005, we organized conferences, built our bridges, and created our net-

work, which still exists and remains active today." Jadranka Miličević emphasized that women must continue to collaborate and deepen their sisterhood because they share the same struggles.

Vjollca Krasniqi expressed that feminist solidarity has been and continues to be a consistent force, both ethically and politically, highlighting that women's activism and solidarity persists even in times of war. She described what defines feminism and how it has emerged in our region, linking it to various historical moments. "Feminism and all the discussions here are an archive, a memory that requires us to take great responsibility in how we deconstruct, speak about, and analyze it. The key word in all of this is that feminism and solidarity are about sensitivity to injustice," said Vjollca Krasniqi regarding the conference and the stories shared by the other panelists before her.

Danijela Stanojević shared her experience as a young anarchist in Zagreb during that time, fighting for women's rights. In a brief speech, she told the attendees that they remain united in the name of peace and equality, and that

their fight continues and is as important as ever. She added that organizations like the Women's Network of Kosovo and the Women in Black Movement have paved the way, fighting injustice and violence, but she emphasized that we still need such organizations and brave women because, even today, we face ongoing wars, inequality, and discrimination against women.

"In times of peace, we must focus on networking among women, which will lead to solidarity, where one sister will offer her hand of support to another," she concluded.



JETA XHARRA



Igo Rogova



Vjosa Dobruna



FEMART FESTIVAL

SISTERHOOD:
IN TIMES OF WAR AND PEACE
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Jadranka Milicevic



Vjollca Krasniqi



Danijela Stanojevic



PANEL 2

YOUNG WOMEN ACTIVISTS OF THE REGION: SISTERHOOD IN TIMES OF PEACE

The second panel, which included Jelena Memet (Serbia), Mirishahe Sylja (Kosovo), Ferdane Asllani (Kosovo), Tamara Milanović (Serbia), and Liridona Osmanaj (Kosovo), brought a different perspective on feminist engagement in the region.

It was Jelena Memet who started her speech by highlighting the contributions of feminist activists during the 1990s and expressing that she belongs to a slightly younger group of activists. She said their mission is to transform the experiences of older activists and learn from their activism, passing those values onto new generations. According to her, her activism and the work of the organization she is part of are inspired by the activism of the Women in Black Movement, citing as an example their campaign "Not in My Name," which was a response to the war in Kosovo by the Serbian regime. This campaign

told the state and the world that the crimes were not committed in their name, and they were not responsible for those crimes.

Jelena Memet also mentioned that her organization and Artpolis have been collaborating for the past 10 years to implement the "Feminist Spring School," which brings together young women from Kosovo and Serbia to contribute to reconciliation and peacebuilding, serving as an example of sisterhood in times of peace.

Mirishahe Sylja also expressed her deep appreciation for the contributions of feminist activists from that time, stating that without their efforts, feminist activism today would not have been possible.

"Perhaps there were fewer women activists back then, but they achieved much more than we are doing today," said

Mirishahe Sylja. She also emphasized that in the 1990s, it was much more difficult to operate on feminist issues than it is now. However, she pointed out that even in the present, there is still a great need for women and young female activists, because the problems and challenges that women face are ever-present.

The next speaker on the panel, Ferdane Asllani, focused on the role of education for girls and women from minority communities in Kosovo. She shared examples from her activism, explaining how, through various programs, she has encouraged young girls from minority communities to pursue education, thus raising their awareness about their position and role in society. Ferdane Asllani also discussed violence against women within minority communities. She mentioned that, as a young activist, she had organized awareness-raising lectures

against this issue. “Unfortunately, we still have cases of violence that are not reported, education is not at the necessary level, and workplace discrimination still exists against minority communities in Kosovo,” she said. These facts indicate that feminist activism is crucial to overcoming the barriers faced by non-majority communities in Kosovo.

Tamara Milanović, an activist from Serbia, said that the current problem we are facing is re-nationalization and re-traditionalization, constantly reverting to an even worse state than we were in before. “We are facing a much stronger patriarchy now, and we need to work on empowering the feminist movement,” she expressed. She also mentioned that as the coordinator of the Feminist Spring School, she has managed to break down taboo topics regarding cooperation between Serbian and Albanian girls, dismantling the stereotypes and prejudices that have existed for many years.

Liridona Osmanaj, the final speaker of the panel, thanked her mentors for shaping her experience as a feminist

activist. Understanding her personal challenges was the reason Liridona Osmanaj became involved in feminist activism. Her participation in the Feminist Spring School, organized by Artpolis, was a significant turning point that encouraged her to engage in feminist activism. She shared with the audience the family losses she experienced during the last war in Kosovo and how she has used her personal story for a positive impact, emphasizing that through sisterhood, we can overcome even the most significant emotional traumas. Liridona Osmanaj further stated, “Whether in times of war or peace, women face their own battles and struggles, which are shared, regardless of where they come from.” She mentioned that as young activists, women and girls can now use various social networks to raise important issues, in contrast to the activists of the 90s who did not have this opportunity.

In closing the panel, moderator Jeta Xharra expressed her deep admiration for the feminist activism of these young women, noting that they have identified and raised important issues such as sexual harassment in universities, the

workplace, and other public spheres—topics that were rarely discussed in the past but are of great significance. She stated that she considers this to be a revolution of our time, made possible through the feminist activism of these women and young girls of today.

FEMART F

SISTERHOOD:
IN TIMES OF WAR AND

25-30 SEP 2024



ILTA KHABRA



Jelena Memet



Mirshad



Ferdane Asllani



Tamara Milanović



Liri

PANEL 3

WOMEN ACTIVISTS IN UKRAINE: RESILIENCE AND SISTERHOOD IN TIMES OF CONFLICT

"Sisterhood is a bridge to the future," was the opening statement by Oksana Chykanchy, a journalist from Ukraine who works in Kosovo. She added that during the ongoing war in Ukraine, thousands of women are on the frontlines, and many others are volunteering in various organizations, all of which showcase the crucial role of women in times of war. These women, she emphasized, communicate regularly, are united, and are dedicated to contributing everything they have. "They equip soldiers not just with material and food supplies, but with strength—the strength that comes from solidarity, love, and energy for life," said Oksana Chykanchy.

Nibal Thawabteh, from Palestine, was the next panellist, joining the conference via a live online connection. She shared the challenges faced by Palestinian women during this extremely difficult time.

"This is not the first war for Palestinian women; it is the second, third, and fourth," said Nibal Thawabteh. She spoke about the severe physical conditions of women in the Gaza camps, pointing out the shortage of basic necessities like cleaning supplies and food. "More than 100,000 women have lost their husbands, and their children are now orphans," she said, underlining the immense emotional and psychological impact this has on Palestinian women. She continued by saying that Palestinian women are now dreaming of the simple life they once had before the war, longing for the small, modest homes they enjoyed before the conflict.

In closing the conference, Zana Hoxha expressed solidarity with Palestinian women, telling Nibal Thawabteh that women from Kosovo are here for them, and they are ready to help

help in any way possible.

This conference served as a bridge for women living in war, conflict, and peace, a call for the empowerment of solidarity and support for one another.



THEATRE PERFORMANCE “SPECULUM” / FRANCE

The theater performance “Speculum,” directed, written, and performed by Caroline Sahuquet, Delphine Biard, and Flora Grimaud, was presented on the sixth day at the Dodona Theater in Pristina.

Through their performance, Caroline, Delphine, and Flora explored the history and narratives of gynaecology. They interviewed their peers, medical professionals, journalists, and many others. Soon, they felt overwhelmed by the vastness of the topic, the numerous taboos, and the cases of mistreatment they uncovered. Drawing from the writings of Benoîte Groult, they delved deeper, experiencing a true feminist awakening while reflecting on their personal experiences.

Current events helped them better understand what was happening around them, enriching their discoveries and bringing a rich and emotional

narrative to the stage. The result was a kaleidoscopic tale that wavered between documentary and autofiction. The audience of 60 people journeyed with the actresses through three thousand years of deception and turmoil, experiencing an intense event that revealed another form of vulnerability, with modesty, humour, and courage. This experience invited everyone to reflect on history and the ongoing challenges women face.



CONCERT "GËRSHETAT" BY VJOLLCA ROBELLI - MRIPA (AJO) / ENGLAND

The concert "Gërshetat" by Vjollca Robelli Mripa marked the closing of the 12th edition of the Festival. This performance was a fusion of traditional and modern sounds, highlighting the thematic depth and cultural significance of ancient Albanian music.

At the heart of the concert was the preservation and honoring of the rich traditions of Albanian and Kosovar folk music, giving them new life through the modern influences of jazz. The band, consisting of artists from various countries around the world, created an intriguing blend of styles and artistry. With Oliver Dover on clarinet, Nikos Ziarkas on guitar, Gizem Altinordu on percussion, and Jamie Benzie on bass guitar and double bass, Vjollca Robelli Mripa took the audience on a delightful musical journey through beautiful Albanian songs, tastefully arranged with jazz elements. Additionally, through the presentation of

her own original songs, she shared stories of love, honor, motherhood, and political resistance—touching on both the past and the present.

Beyond cultural preservation, the concert "Gërshetat" was a deeply personal narrative of the artist. Through each song, she told the story of her homeland. It was an undeniable social commentary braided into her music, especially as she explored the roles of women and children in the face of political repression, as seen in the song "90-ta," which reflects on the tragedy of a child killed during the conflict in Kosovo. It was a musical reflection that testified to history and the ongoing struggles.

"Each song performed represented a pearl of our cultural heritage or a creation born from the artist's own soul. With this 'braided' performance at Kino Armata, they gave voice

to both the past and the future, blending beautifully themes of love, motherhood, and resistance," writes Kultu-plus.

Her voice and musical compositions came together on stage not only to celebrate her roots but also to address today's challenges, offering a message of hope and resistance. The concert brought together over 200 people at the Kino Armata venue.

For all who attended and enjoyed the event, "Gërshetat" was a testament to the power of music as a force to honor the past and shape the future.







ARTIST IMPRESSIONS ON FEMART 12

"It's our second time at FemArt." The audience in Kosovo is amazing, it's been a great experience."

David Gutierrez
"Carmen"
Spain

"I had a wonderful time at a wonderful festival! Thank you, FemArt, for inviting me to your festival. You are doing a great job!"

Silvya Camarda
"In Memoriam"
Luxembourg

"FemArt, with the theme 'Sisterhood in Times of War and Peace,' focuses on the importance of women's solidarity and the role they play in social transformation and the improvement of human rights. FemArt, led by director Zana Hoxha and her team, is inspiring freedom!"

Sibel Halimi
Director of Culture
Municipality of Prishtina

MEDIA COVERAGE OF FEMART 12

"The opening of the 12th edition of the International Festival of Women Artists and Activists, FemArt, with the motto "Sisterhood in Times of War and Peace," featured a performance by the Barcelona Flamenco Ballet, who presented the show "Carmen". The festival's mission is to empower women through art and activism, offering a diverse program filled with cultural and social events."

Ardita Zeqiri
Kallxo.com

"Kosovo has long proven to be a place that fosters cultural events, rather than obstructing them. Thursday evening was the latest example, marking the second day of the International Festival of Women Artists and Activists 'FemArt'"

Besartë Elshani
KOHA

"At the 'FemArt' festival, discussions are held on femicide, the state's lost battle with family violence recidivists."

Isa Vatoci
Kallxo.com

MEDIA COVERAGE OF FEMART 12

"Besa was not easily impressed. She fought only in direct confrontations. No more conversations; towards the end of the play, she would sink into her passions and dreams.

A character who is detached from norms, which often do more harm than good, demonstrates that sometimes battles can be won by ignoring them altogether. Girls like Besa hold the power, leaving the fight to others. This happens

because they believe in victory and in what is rightfully theirs. This is what 'FemArt' taught us on the second evening."

Gili Hoxhaj
KultPlus

"FemArt, which is now in its 12th year, has gradually become a highlight of the city's cultural calendar, hosting radical performances, exhibitions and panel discussions."

Weronika Strzyżyńska
Hyphen.

FEMART 12 BLOGS

The activities of the 12th edition of the FemArt Festival have been reflected by Shqipe Malushi and Gili Hoxhaj through their blogs.

From Shqipe Malushi

A NIGHT OF PASSION: OPENING OF FEMART FESTIVAL WITH
"CARMEN" BY BARCELONA FLAMENCO BALLET

DAY 2 OF FEMART FESTIVAL: A WORLD WITHOUT WOMEN - A
BOLD THEATRICAL CHALLENGE FROM SERBIA

REVOLT SHE SAID. REVOLT. AGAIN.

FREEDOM PARADOX: "BURRNESHAT" – SWORN VIRGIN EMERGE

PERFORMANCE "THE BIG GIGGLE" BY XIXI XIAO, CHINA-UK

A MASTERPIECE UNVEILED: "O LORD, O LORD, O LADY OF THE
HOUSE"- BREAKING THE CHAINS OF PATRIARCHY THROUGH ART

DAY 3 OF THE ENCHANTING FEMART FESTIVAL '12

From Gili Hoxhaj

CARMEN WHO DEFENDS FREEDOM- A CELEBRATION AT
FEMART

THE RING THAT HOLDS A FAMILY CAPTIVE

"I WANT A COUNTRY" OF EMA ANDREA IN PURSUIT OF AN IDEAL
PLACE AT "FEMART"

LUCIA WHO TAKES THE STAGE AS SHE IS AND CAPTIVATES YOU

FEMART HONORS ALL THOSE WHO MADE THE JOURNEY

"REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN." AS A PATH FOR ACTION
THROUGH THEATRE

A VOICE THAT ECHOES IN ALBANIAN- MAGICALLY

KEY RESULTS OF FEMART 12

30 activities

214 artists/activists/technical staff
(114 women, 100 men)

25 volunteers
(14 women, 11 men)

2033 physical attendees at FemArt 12

68 media articles published

14 blogs published

20 participating countries
Kosovo, Albania, Spain, France, Angola, China, United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Greece, Denmark, Mexico, Switzerland, Ukraine, Croatia, Palestine dhe Turkey.

Social Media Reach

Facebook	Instagram	Twitter
511.9K people reached	113.2K people reached	1,859 views
4.7k content interactions	5.2K link clicks	
2.3K clicks	1.8K profile visits	
14.2K facebook visits	9.4K new followers	
198 new followers		
1,691,218 reactions/impressions		

COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

All the activities carried out during this period have been published on our social media platforms. The social media channels of the FemArt Festival include the following:



www.femart-ks.com



FemartKosova



FemartKosovo



FemartKosovo



FemartFestival

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The organization of the FemArt Festival in Prishtina has brought about a series of challenges and valuable lessons. Below is a summary of the main challenges faced and the lessons learned:

Lack of Suitable Spaces and Limited Cultural Infrastructure:

A major challenge was the lack of suitable venues and the limited cultural infrastructure in Prishtina. This made it difficult to find appropriate spaces, as there was a shortage of the necessary equipment for performances, exhibitions, or workshops. The lesson learned is the urgent need for Artpolis to advocate strongly with the Municipality of Prishtina. The organization must seek a public space that can be renovated and transformed into a center for art and community. This center would not only benefit the festival but also serve the community as a place for various activities throughout the year. By collaborating with the municipality and securing this dedicated space, Artpolis can create a sustainable cultural center that supports the organization, the festival, and the community. Until this is achieved, Artpo-

lis should prioritize proactive planning and explore alternative venues or collaborate with existing cultural institutions to overcome these limitations.

Delays in Responses and Fund Transfers:

Another challenge was the delays in receiving responses to funding applications and the transfer of funds from donors. These delays negatively impacted the festival's budget and financial management. The lesson learned is to anticipate possible delays and allocate enough time for fundraising efforts. It is also essential to maintain transparent communication with donors and work towards simplifying the fund transfer procedures.

Economic Crisis and Rising Costs:

The festival coincided with an economic crisis, where the costs of services increased due to global inflation. This added challenges in managing

expenses, attracting sponsors, and providing comfort for participants. The lesson learned is to adapt to potential economic fluctuations, research ways to reduce costs, seek partnerships with local businesses, and implement flexible pricing options to ensure financial sustainability.

Festival Organization:

FemArt in Prishtina requires addressing challenges related to space availability, cultural infrastructure, delays in funding, economic crises, planning conflicts, and resistance to ticket payments. The lessons learned emphasize the importance of proactive planning, effective communication, alignment, and collaboration for different funding strategies.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS

The daily and weekly meetings of the Artpolis/FemArt staff during the organizational period of the FemArt Festival served as a platform to discuss the progress and completion of activities, the challenges faced, lessons learned, and the necessary steps to ensure the successful completion of remaining activities in the future.

After each activity organized as part of the FemArt Festival, the monitoring and evaluation of the situation were carried out by the FemArt staff in regular meetings. These meetings provided an opportunity

to reflect on the festival, write reports outlining the pros and cons of the activities' progress, which would serve as a reference point for the successful realization of future editions of the FemArt Festival and other activities of Artpolis.

Documents Produced for Monitoring Activities:

- Registration forms for participants in workshops during the FemArt Festival

- Photographs, audio, and video from the Festival

- Social media monitoring – Each activity organized by Artpolis is published on our social media platforms

- Media coverage (attached as an annex)

- FemArt 12 Catalogue

- FemArt 12 Program

ARTPOLIS AND FEMART STAFF

Zana Hoxha
*Founder and Executive
Director*

Donarta Limanaj
*Finance and Administration
Manager*

Venera Ismaili
Project Manager

Berat Bajrami
*Project Coordinator and PR
Officer*

Rudina Xhokli
Project Coordinator

Valëza Sijarina
Project Coordinator

Elira Lluka
PR Officer

Arbnora Kajtazi
*Finance and Administration
Assistant*

Mimozë Musliu
Project Assistant

Rukiye Gashi
Office Maintenance

Esad Duraki
Photographer

Arbër Matoshi
Designer

Teuta Gashi
Media Manager

Blerza Krasniqi
*Project Assistant and Volunteer
Coordinator*





FEMART

GOOD:

Partner

FESTIVAL



ARTPOLIS ENSEMBLE

Director
Zana Hoxha

Choreographer
Robert Nuha

Dramatourg/actor
Shpëtim Selmani

Actresses/actors
*Blerta Gubetini, Donikë Ahmeti,
Edlir Gashi, Labinot Rraci,
Qëndresa Kajtazi, Zhaneta
Xhemajli*

Production assistant
Elira Lluka



VOLUNTEERS OF FEMART 12

Jon Podrimaj
Blend Selmani
Medina Rudari
Lorea Dauti
Leart Ademi
Enkel Tmava
Besart Krasniqi,
Irela Retkoceri
Sidarta Krasniqi
Ardea Gojnovci
Jor Hoxha
Era Bujupaj
Viona Kutllovci
Elda Shala
Sara Çeshko

Drilon Kaçiu
Magita Delija
Jona Olloni
Ismajl Pireva
Gerta Mrasori
Albulena Krasniqi
Erblina Luma
And Haziri
Aleksandra Pepkolaj
Fjolla Ademi



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FEMART FESTIVAL

SISTERHOOD: IN TIMES OF WAR
AND PEACE

25-30 SEPTEMBER, 2024



