

# Cultural Mobility Forum 2023

## Tunis, Tunisia and online

TUESDAY 9 AND WEDNESDAY 10 MAY 2023

The second yearly Forum is hosted by On the Move member Culture Funding Watch and live streamed by HowlRound and Basita.Live. It is supported by the Delegation of the European Union to Tunisia.

### Why a Cultural Mobility Forum?

On the Move is the international information network dedicated to artistic and cultural mobility, currently gathering 66 members from 24 countries in Europe and the world. Co-funded by the European Union, On the Move aims to support all mobility stakeholders to build responsiveness to global interdependencies and challenges, including social and societal ones. As part of its multiannual programme, each year On the Move proposes a Cultural Mobility Forum to collectively investigate international artistic and cultural mobility trends. As a unique knowledge platform, the network works together with its members and partners to design thematic panel discussions and contextualise global mobility issues addressed in On the Move's annual Cultural Mobility Yearbook.

### Focus 2023: international cultural mobility and environmental sustainability

In recent years the culture field has been increasingly focused on climate change, trying in various ways to tackle the urgent need to develop more environmentally sustainable practices in our ecosystem. Whether raising awareness through new artistic work, adopting more ecological production practices, measuring and reducing the carbon emissions of cultural venues, or prioritising slower and more meaningful international mobility experiences, the sector has embarked on a long journey with numerous challenges.

All culture stakeholders must navigate different layers of complexity as they gradually learn what solutions they can implement to limit their impact and adapt to new realities. In doing so, they must both acknowledge that they are a

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very small part of the global problem and that every initiative counts. As a laboratory for contemporary societies, the arts and culture field goes beyond its own direct climate action to host experiments, raise awareness, and advocate for a more sustainable world.

Because of the complexity of all these intertwined issues, we have seen a tendency to reduce environmental sustainability to measures that limit international travel or suggest 'one-size-fits-all' solutions. Emergency responses, where they exist, are often binary and tend to decontextualise the much-needed discussions and initiatives, adding more pressure to underfunded local cultural players and putting more responsibility on artists' shoulders.

The 2023 edition of the Cultural Mobility Forum is an attempt to (re)contextualise the conversation on cross-border artistic mobility and environmental sustainability, unfolding the interdependencies between privileged Western Europe and other territories, investigating local practical sustainable solutions (e.g. regarding time management, resources, well-being, local network management, adaptation to climate change), and listening to a variety of voices from Africa and the SWANA region.

With this Forum taking place in the South Mediterranean region, we aim to support a more nuanced approach, informed and context-based, that allows different models to coexist. We would like to put the 'green transition' in perspective by looking at how this notion is approached, envisioned, practiced and discussed in the Global South.

# Schedule

## LIVE STREAMING

[HowlRound](#) | [Basita.Live](#)

Please Note all times indicated are Tunisian times, please check the equivalent in your time zone using a [time-zone converter](#).

## TUESDAY 9 MAY 2023

### 8:30 - 13.00 Cultural Mobility Forum (part I)

**Venue: El Teatro, Chedli Kallela, Avenue Ouled Hafouz, Tunis [\[map\]](#)**

8:30	<i>Opening registration for participants</i>
9:00-9:30	<b>Welcome speeches and introduction</b>
9:30-10:45	<b>Panel discussion: 'Towards more ecological artistic production and distribution'</b> Moderator: <b>Reem Kassem</b> , head of performing arts, Cultural Foundation Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates) Speakers: <b>Selim Ben Safia</b> , dance artist and artistic director, Al Badil (Tunisia), <b>Ukhona Ntsali Mlandu</b> , curator and artistic director, Greatmore Studios (South Africa)
10:45-11:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:15-12:30	<b>Panel discussion: 'Greening policies and support schemes'</b> Moderator: <b>Yohann Floch</b> , director of operations, On the Move (Belgium) Speakers: <b>Karim Sultan</b> , chief curator, Kamel Lazaar Foundation (Tunisia/UK), <b>Areej Abou Harb</b> , programme director, Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy, Culture Resource (Lebanon)

**12:30-12:45**

**Takeaways**

Rapporteur: **Leila Ben-Gacem**, social entrepreneur and founder, Blue Fish (Tunisia)

**13:00-14:30**

**Networking lunch for all Forum participants**

Location: El Mechtel | Golden Tulip, Chedli Kallela, Avenue Ouled Hafouz, Tunis

**WEDNESDAY 10 MAY 2023**

**8:30 - 13.00 Cultural Mobility Forum (part II)**

**Venue: El Hamra, 28 rue Al Jazira, Tunis [map]**

8:30

*Opening registration for participants*

**9:00-9:15**

**Welcome speeches**

**9:30-10:45**

**Panel discussion: 'Sustainable local strategies and cultural impacts'**

Moderator: **Fairooz Tamimi**, director of strategic development, TEH - Trans Europe Halles (Sweden)

Speakers: **Mike van Graan**, playwright and coordinator, Sustaining Theatre and Dance (STAND) Foundation (South Africa), **Sarah Abdu Bushra**, visual arts and performing arts curator, Contemporary Nights (Ethiopia)

10:45-11:15

*Coffee break*

**11:15-12:30**

**Panel discussion: 'Sustainable transcontinental cultural relations and South-South mobility'**

Moderator: **Sana Ouchtati**, founder and manager, SO-Cult (Belgium)

Speakers: **François Bouda**, arts programme officer, Africa No Filter (Burkina Faso), **Ghita Khaldi**, project manager and founder, Afrikayna & Africa Art Lines (Morocco)

**12:30-12:45**

**Takeaways and perspectives**

Rapporteur: **Leila Ben-Gacem**, social entrepreneur and founder, Blue Fish (Tunisia)

**13:00-14:30**

**Networking lunch for all Forum participants**

Location: L'Art Rue | L'Art Rue, rue Kouttab Ouazir, Tunis

# Panel Information

## Rapporteur for the forum



### **Leila Ben-Gacem - Social Entrepreneur and Founder, Blue Fish (Tunisia)**

Leila Ben-Gacem is a social entrepreneur, Ashoka Fellow, and founder of Blue Fish, a consultancy that designs and implements projects that improve the socio-economic dynamics of heritage, culture and local community to improve their resilience. Leila also founded Dar El-Harka, a creative industry hub, and Dar Ben Gacem, a Boutique Hotel and cultural catalyst in the medina of Tunis. Leila is also a founder and president of Mdinti, the Medina's first economic interest group, and a member of the organisation committee of Ultra Mirage El Djerid. Leila was an elected city council member for her native town of Beni Khalled. Before switching careers, Leila held various positions at multinational corporations and has a BS in Biomedical Engineering.

**Panel 1****'Towards more ecological artistic production and distribution'****Tuesday 9 May 2023, 9:30-10:45**

The capacity of the culture field to speak to the challenges of the climate emergency is often evoked as an asset and relevant area of action. 'Artistic languages can contribute to generating new narratives about the relationship with the planet. The responsibility of cultural agents towards the environment [...] can also be channelled through their involvement in environmental education and awareness-raising initiatives' (Baltà Portolés and Bashiron Mendolicchio: 2021).

Beyond shaping new narratives, cultural stakeholders can act more concretely to reform how art is made and how international works circulate. It is often remarked that cultural practices have both direct impacts (use of materials, transportation, waste generation, etc.) and indirect impacts (suppliers, production, distribution and access to cultural content via digital platforms, etc.). The many recent publications on the subject show that the field, mostly from the Global North, feels a sense of responsibility and is encouraged to change patterns and working methods. Despite concrete limitations in terms of knowledge, tools and financial support, the field is trying to find ways to embrace more environmentally friendly practices.

However, the 'possibility of greening production, presentation and mobility practices remains an expensive affair. Besides, it requires knowledge and skills, access to technologies, as well as the readiness to compromise on one's visibility, international fame, diverse artistic offer, and for those based in the most remote areas – on translational physical connections of all sorts. Needless to stress – ecological concerns in action are to be found in places where there are more resources, better geographical and infrastructural connectivity, longer history of structured cultural policies, and the overall social, political and economic preoccupation with the ecological matters' (Janssens and Fraioli: 2022).

In the 2023 edition of On the Move's Cultural Mobility Yearbook, Tunisian choreographer Selim Ben Safia reminds us of the circumstances artists navigate, the global inequalities and harsh realities they face in terms of access to production and distribution opportunities, and the international dependencies at play: 'Many artists are therefore able to create in Tunisia thanks to their

performances abroad [...] we are talking more and more about a decrease in international mobility. For Tunisian artists, the international dimension is vital.' In the same publication, South African curator Ukhona Ntsali Mlandu underlines the risk that the conversation around the climate emergency could reinforce 'the inequities of a neoliberal, capitalistic, patriarchal world order that is built on domination, extractive practices and injustices'. In the Halaqat project, exploring cultural links between Europe and the Arab world, cultural stakeholders stressed the importance of cross-border mobility, underlining that even if they recognise 'the devastating effects of air travels on the environment', they are 'concerned that their carbon footprint will be used as an excuse to put more hindrances on their already challenged international mobility' (Hadj Benchelabi: 2022).

We understand then that the words 'sustainability' and 'mobility' resonate in a particular way in non-Western contexts, echoing vulnerabilities such as limited resources and regional isolation. In discussing more ecological artistic production and distribution practices, the panel will unpack what conditions are necessary to implement such an ecological transition, and highlight the potential division of responsibilities and tasks within the ecosystem.



With



**Moderator**

**Reem Kassem - Head of Performing Arts, Cultural Foundation Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates)**

Reem Kassem is an Egyptian cultural manager, producer and researcher based in Abu Dhabi. In 2021, she was named one of 50 most inspirational women in Egypt. She currently works as Head of Performing Arts at the Cultural Foundation (Department of Culture and Tourism). She has 21 years of experience in the cultural sector, including work in performing arts, community arts, arts for social, community and economic development, cultural policies, and cultural diplomacy.

She is an international fellow of the DeVos Institute of Arts Management, a global fellow of the International Society for Performing Arts, a Chevening Scholar and Clore Cultural Leadership Fellow, a Tandem Shaml participant, and a Robert Bosch Stiftung Alumni. She is a member of several international networks, among them UNESCO’s U40 global network, the Cultural Innovators Network, and the African Youth Advocacy Network.

Her work experience includes Head of Performing Arts at the Library of Alexandria (Egypt), Manager of Programming and Cultural Affairs at the Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation (ADMAF), Founding Director of AGORA for Arts and Culture, and co-founder of Basita.live.



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**Panellist**

**Selim Ben Safia - Dance Artist and Artistic Director, Al Badil (Tunisia)**

Selim Ben Safia is a choreographer, a dancer, and the artistic director of the Tunisian association Al Badil – the Cultural Alternative, which aims to widen access to art and culture, promote emerging artists, and support Tunisian cultural managers. Key concerns in Selim Ben Safia’s work are reaching out to the world and promoting artistic exchange between countries. In 2019, he launched the archipel programme in Tunisia, an initiative which unites and builds sustainable trajectories between structures and territories on principles of mutual aid. In 2022, Selim Ben Safia was appointed director of the international festival Les Journées Chorégraphiques de Carthage.



**Panellist**

**Ukhona Ntsali Mlandu - Curator and Artistic Director, Greatmore Studios (South Africa)**

Ukhona Ntsali Mlandu is the director of Greatmore Studios in Cape Town and founder and head curator of makwande.republic in Goshen Village, Eastern Cape. She is Senior Atlantic Fellow for Racial Equity and Global Cultural Relations (2021) with the Atlantic Institute. Her work is interested in artist mobility and mobility justice for artists and cultural goods. Mlandu also has a special interest in the politics of public space and place-making, spatial and gender justice, heritage and memory. All her work is concerned with decoloniality and a black radical feminist position as central to the transformation and imagining of justice, repair, care and equity.

She has curated a number of festivals, programmes and public art interventions including the public art live installation #100AfricanReads.

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## Panel 2

### 'Greening policies and support schemes'

**Tuesday 9 May 2023, 11:15-12:30**

The effects of human activity on Nature, and especially on climate, has over the years become a political issue as it affects all areas of public action and indeed our ways of life.

At an international level, the United Nations has set up several programmes and entities tasked with supporting the global response to the threat of climate change. Compared to other regions of the world, the European Union was an early adopter of legislation when it signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (the UNFCCC) in the early 1990s. Later, the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 13 called for action to combat climate change and its impact, including improvements to of mitigation, adaptation and impact reduction. Today, the Treaty on European Union (the TEU) makes it possible to include a large range of environmental protection requirements in policies and actions. The European Green Deal sets the target of a climate-neutral European Union by 2050, thereby putting the climate emergency at the centre of all EU programmes and policies.

Most countries develop ecological strategies, have individual greenhouse gas reduction pledges, or commit to reviewing practices that may be harmful to the planet and its ecosystems, in all areas and sectors, including in culture.

To develop a systemic paradigm shift, public and private cultural funders are invited to revisit their priorities and criteria, the way they operate, and the way they support the sustainable development of the field (Moore and Tickell: 2014). At the European level, the Parliament demands that environmental protection, sustainability, and fighting climate change be mainstreamed across the European Union's programmes, including cultural and educational ones (European Parliament: 2020).

We are now seeing many Ministries in charge of cultural affairs, Arts Councils, local governments, and foundations in the Global North slowly adopting and implementing new 'greening' strategies. Among them are examples like Arts Council England, which made ecological transition a funding requirement for all National Portfolio Organisations and Major Museums Partners in 2012. This mandatory framework had an important accompanying feature: an extensive support programme, intended to build skills and capacity in the sector, so that

organisations could feel confident to act on climate change and reduce their environmental impacts. The implementation and results of this policy framework were monitored through annual reports, which recorded impressive achievements across the sector – including a 35% decrease in CO2 emissions and a 25% reduction in direct energy consumption, leading to £16.5 million in financial savings (Julie’s Bicycle: 2018).

However, in collecting information for its recent Cultural Mobility Funding Guides, On the Move observed that few funders include environment-related measures within their support schemes. In the second edition of the GALA – Green Art Lab Alliance Funding and Resources Guide, the researcher noted an increasing number of organisations and cultural funding bodies including sustainability criteria in their terms of support, or otherwise encouraging green behaviour, but also pointed out that few made extra resources available to support these changes in the long term (Gracia: 2020).

In this panel discussion, like the British-Nigerian cultural expert Nike Jonah, we will ask ourselves ‘Who can afford sustainability?’ (Al-Yasiri: 2023), as well as who makes the decisions, who enforces certain conditions, who benefits from a reordered world, and who might be left out. In the process, we will discuss how to continue international cooperation in a sustainable way, and how funders can take responsibility while avoiding inaction, ‘one-size-fits-all’ solutions, or top-down decision-making.

## With



### **Yohann Floch - Director of Operations, On the Move (Belgium)**

Yohann Floch is Director of Operations at On the Move and has coordinated the Cultural Mobility Yearbook 2023 and the Cultural Mobility Funding Guide focusing on the South Mediterranean region, the two publications that nourished the curation of the Forum. He has been an external expert for governmental bodies and private foundations, and led or (co)authored European studies, including recently Cultural Mobility Flows: European Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories (On the Move, 2022), Time to Act (Europe Beyond Access, 2021), i-Portunus Operational Study (Goethe-Institut, 2019). Working for independent arts organisations and cultural institutions, he has designed, coordinated or contributed to many European cooperation projects and pilot international collaborations over the

**Moderator**

years, including recently Learning Trajectories (led by Eunia) or SHIFT (led by the European Music Council).

Yohann also leads FACE, a resource platform that facilitates European capacity building programmes in the contemporary performing arts field. He serves the Danish organisation IMMART - International Migration Meets the Arts as international advisory board member.



**Panellist**

**Karim Sultan - Chief Curator, Kamel Lazaar Foundation (Tunisia/UK)**

Karim Sultan is curator with the Kamel Lazaar Foundation, where he has curated a number of exhibitions for the B7L9 Art Station in Tunis. In addition to his curatorial practice, his areas of interest and work include modernism in art and architecture in the Arab world, music and sound, animation, and games. Karim has also presented performances of his music and audiovisual works internationally. He is currently based between London and Tunis.



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**Panellist**

**Areej Abou Harb - Programme Director, Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy, Culture Resource (Lebanon)**

Areej Abou Harb is a cultural actor and researcher who co-founded the me'zaf musical cultural initiative and works as programmes manager at the pan-Arab cultural organisation Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy (Culture Resource). Abou Harb is a PhD candidate in cultural history of the Levant at the Université Lumière – Lyon 2 and a master's degree holder in design and management of cultural projects from the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3. Her interests cover topics including the Levantine music industry; cultural reach and decentralisation; the mobility of cultural actors and audiences; manifestation of culture in coffee houses; archives of cultural journals and magazines; funding models for cultural projects; and cultural policies. She has participated in the design and management of numerous cultural projects, including the Arabic Language Festival in Beirut, the Ma Yatlubuhu Al-Mustami'ūn (Playlist Requests) Concert Series, the Cultural Programme in a Coffeehouse, the Cultural Scan Project in Lebanon, and the Authentic Music Program, in addition to the production of a number of authentic, traditional Levantine music albums. She has also facilitated discussion sessions and published articles on culture, funding for culture, and music.

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**Panel 3****'Sustainable local strategies and cultural impacts'****Wednesday 10 May 2023, 9:30-10:45**

Is there a global phenomenon of 'de-globalisation' that changes our perception of sustainability? The culture field deploys and offers a vast array of ideas and measures to reflect and act on the challenges posed by the climate emergency. From sourcing locally produced materials for sets and costume design to strengthening alternative transportation for more diverse audiences, from managing water and waste to supporting the socio-economic development of local craft, the field responds to global challenges by valuing small-scale hubs and circuits.

While addressing the climate emergency, many cultural agents work towards responding to local challenges: temperature changes, rising sea levels, and soil erosion are already affecting the conservation of tangible heritage in many places. Human migration, refugee flows, and the extinction of natural species meanwhile result in a loss of the knowledge, traditions and practices that represent intangible cultural heritage. Changes in the environment affect cultural resources and cultural life, the preservation of cultural heritage and diversity, and opportunities to participate in cultural life (Baltà Portolés and Bashiron Mendolicchio: 2021).

Heritage, culture and arts are always dynamic: they are a reflection of our lives, impacted by the socio-economic, environmental and political developments and context of their time. Climate change threatens the development of local creativity, impacting opportunities in the creative industries and forcing creatives out of the sector. It creates a situation of cultural poverty, where young people struggle to find positive cultural inspirations or even a sense of identity, and feel they need to leave their country for better opportunities that will help unleash their creative potential.

'Culture and creativity are largely underinvested to bring about the change in mindsets and behaviours that is urgently needed to address the climate crisis. The cultural and creative sectors themselves need to accelerate their transition towards sustainable cultural production and consumption' (Kamara: 2022). However, literature on art and climate activism is mainly produced by Anglo-Saxon authors and from a Eurocentric perspective. This situation, along with the smaller number of initiatives usually listed in mapping exercises (compared to the number of initiatives from the Global North) 'gives the impression that any

Global South efforts were erased or assumed as non-existing and suggests a narrative that it is European artists pushing the boundaries in climate activism. These assumptions are of course erroneous, especially when projected against the definition of activism as a form of political activism and the practice of dissent to bring excluded views and voices into public debates' (Quiroz, Stravens and Achterberg: 2022).

Using the words of the Roberto Cimetta Fund in its manifesto statement on mobility, the panel will discuss 'the profound connection between cultural rights, cultural survival, climate justice and climate action', and particularly how local strategies and actions can support a broader sustainable development across its four dimensions – cultural, economic, social and environmental. Moreover, the conversation will explore how local initiatives and territories reduce ecological impacts while increasing cultural ones.

## With



**Moderator**

### **Fairooz Tamimi - Director of Strategic Development, TEH - Trans Europe Halles (Sweden)**

Fairooz Tamimi is Director of Strategic Development at Trans Europe Halles. She has 25+ years of experience in the cultural sector, innovation, information and communication technology (ICT), and banking. She has worked as the executive director of the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture and as fund manager of the Royal Film Commission in Jordan. An award-winning author and journalist, she has worked for Swedish television, as well as for several newspapers in Sweden and the Middle East. In 2016, she won the Herbert Felix Institute's Göran Tunhammar Award. She has worked as a consultant for the Cultural Administration of South-Sweden Region (Region Skåne) and as a business advisor for Innovation in the same region. She holds a degree in Engineering.



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**Panellist**

### **Sarah Abdu Bushra - Visual Arts and Performing Arts Curator, Contemporary Nights (Ethiopia)**

Sarah Abdu Bushra is an Ethiopian curator of visual and performing arts exhibitions. Her research interest lies in sensing the lived experiences of artists in East African localities, and documenting their underlying ties towards building alliances that emerge as rooted arts ecosystems. She works to sharpen the East African gaze centring its archives as well as post-contemporary practices of art making, contributing to the plurality of existing narratives



concerning exhibition making and curatorial praxis. She works at a family-run bookstore and publishing house, Ankeboot Publishing, that explores books as repository and mutating site of knowledge production. She's a co-founder of Contemporary Nights, a curatorial collective facilitating research-based and process-driven collaborative praxis.



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## Panellist

### **Mike van Graan - Playwright and Coordinator, Sustaining Theatre and Dance (STAND) Foundation (South Africa)**

Mike van Graan currently serves as the Coordinator of the Sustaining Theatre and Dance (STAND) Foundation, an initiative to support the South African dance and theatre sector through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. After the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, he was appointed as a Special Advisory to the minister responsible for arts and culture where he played an influential role in helping to develop post-apartheid cultural policies.

He has extensive experience in policy formulation and advocacy and in building artists' networks, both in South Africa and across the African continent. Mike was the founding Secretary General of Arterial Network, a pan-African organisation advocating for the cultural dimension of development, human rights and democracy. He served on the expert facility of UNESCO's 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions from 2011-2018. He was the head writer of the team that produced Breathing New Vision into Theatre and Dance: National Theatre and Dance Policy, commissioned by South Africa's Department of Sport, Arts and Culture in 2021.

He helps to develop the programme of the Festival Academies and has facilitated its Ateliers since March 2018. As a playwright with 36 plays under his belt, he is regarded as one of South Africa's foremost contemporary playwrights having garnered numerous awards and nominations for his work. He is the 2018 recipient of the Swedish Hiroshima Prize for Peace and Culture, the same year that he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Pretoria in recognition of his work as a playwright, and as a cultural activist.

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**Panel 4****'Sustainable transcontinental cultural relations and South-South mobility'****Wednesday 10 May 2023, 11:15-12:30**

In a 2018 publication dedicated to fairer international collaboration coordinated by IETM, On the Move, and DutchCulture, Mike van Graan noted that cultural projects between 'resourced and less-resourced' North and South partners are 'not simply arts projects but are microcosms of an inequitable world order, where some have more funding, skills, experience, infrastructure, etc. than others, but where we wish to work together for our common good. To achieve this, we need to negotiate a range of dynamics that have to do with power relations, values, worldviews, aesthetic traditions, differing markets, etc.' This list of dynamics could be extended to encompass issues addressed by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, from equity to human rights, among many others.

Climate change is a matter of equity, for current and future generations but also concerning mobility, inclusion in international cultural relations, and the right to fair work. 'Addressing the ecological crisis within international cultural relations is inseparable from the need to address widespread inequalities in the cultural sector, acknowledge privileges and strive for equity in international cultural relations' (Ouchtati: 2022). Lázaro Gabino Rodríguez put it slightly differently: 'We are all in the same boat, but we travel in different seats.' International cultural projects are essential for many artists and culture professionals and their organisations. However, transcontinental relations seem to clash with pledges to work in more sustainable ways, let alone 'greener' modes of transportation.

International bodies, world regions, and governmental institutions promote international cultural relations and value cultural diversity without always admitting the colonial frameworks they operate within or reinforce, or addressing mobility barriers for cultural actors and cultural goods. North-South cultural relations are often poisoned by bureaucracy and visa rejections, lack of transparency among the instruments and support programmes in place, tax issues, or economic pressures.

Cultural stakeholders from the Global South express the need for more interregional exchanges and projects, for example through the African Union, the Community of West African States, or the Arab League of States (More

Europe: 2020). Cultural agents deplore that 'very little is done for mobility within African countries and the cultural sector in Africa is extremely fragile: the market is weak and there are very few funds to promote and support South-South cultural exchanges' (Hadj Benchelabi: 2022), with exchanges between Arab, African, Caribbean and Pacific countries similarly neglected.

If everybody acknowledges the necessity to reduce the frequency of some in-person activities (i.e. making them digital), they also point out both the digital divide that still exists in many world regions and the fundamental need to maintain in-person interaction and real-life events and encounters.

During this panel discussion, we will exchange on how the UN's Sustainable Development Goals could provide a framework for international cultural relations, especially for non-state actors, and what would be the best circumstances for fruitful international and South-South cultural partnerships.

With



**Moderator**

**Sana Ouchtati - Founder and Manager, SO-Cult (Belgium)**

Sana Ouchtati is the founder and manager of SO-Cult.org. For more than 15 years she has worked as an independent cultural relations expert and adviser. She steers several important initiatives dedicated to international cultural relations, and has worked with over 30 countries, building sustainable relationships and connections across diplomatic, government, cultural and non-state actors. She is involved in a number of programmes and projects aimed at creating European and international exchange partnerships. Since 2020, she has directed the Cultural Relations Platform, and since 2012 has coordinated the external cultural relations initiative More Europe. From 2001-2011, she worked at the European Institutions in Brussels, mainly on multilateral and bilateral partnership agreements with partner countries, as well as the cultural dimension of EU external relations with ACP Countries, MENA Countries, and Emerging Countries before becoming an independent consultant. She has two master's degrees, in European Union policies and in International Relations & Business Administration, as well as a thorough knowledge of the cultural field, international relations, and EU policies and instruments dedicated to external relations, culture and intercultural dialogue. She has thorough knowledge of and experience in the MENA and Gulf region.



**Panellist**

**François Bouda - Arts Programme Officer, Africa No Filter (Burkina Faso)**

François Bouda is the co-founder of Sankhof'Arts Productions, a cultural engineering agency based in Burkina Faso. Today, he is the Arts Programme Officer for Africa No Filter (ANF), a not-for-profit organisation that supports the development of nuanced and contemporary stories that shift stereotypical and harmful narratives within and about Africa.

He has collaborated with international organisations in Europe, Asia and the United States of America, including the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific countries) Group, the Permanent Mission of la Francophonie to the UN in New York, the CKU (Danish Centre for Culture and Development), Art Moves Africa and Africalia. He is the author of several studies, including the Note on the Critical Analysis of Developments in the ACP Group's cultural strategies, and the chapter on dance for AMA's study on Mobility and touring in West Africa. In 2022, he was the main expert for the evaluation of Africalia's five-year cultural programme in Burkina Faso (2017-2021). He made his debut in the dance field in Burkina Faso as the manager for Burkinabe dance company Auguste-Bienvenue and then as the project manager for the Choreography Development Centre in Ouagadougou, CDC La Termitière. He holds a bachelor's degree in Anglophone Studies, a master's degree in Arts Management, and a European Diploma in Arts Projects Management from the Marcel Hicter Foundation.



**Panellist**

**Ghita Khaldi - Project Manager and Founder, Afrikayna & Africa Art Lines (Morocco)**

Ghita Khaldi is a cultural projects manager and founder of the Moroccan association Afrikayna (focused on intercultural exchange, development and cooperation in Africa), where she designs, directs and produces various programmes and projects.

She has worked on programmes and projects such as Africa Art Lines, the first Moroccan fund for artistic mobility in Africa, and The Instrument Library of Africa, promoting traditional musical instruments from the region, as well as various artistic residencies, workshops, and masterclasses.

Ghita is also in charge of the coordination and production of the L'Boulevard de Casablanca festival, and collaborates on the production of various projects and festivals including the street art festival Jidar de Rabat and the Gnaoua Festival Tour 2022.

She works as an expert, consultant and evaluator for projects of various organisations and institutions such as UNESCO-FIDC and the Culture & Development association.

Equally connected to regional and international dynamics, she has been a member of the steering committee of several networks, such as Arterial Network, the African Fund for Culture, Music In Africa Foundation, the International Music Council, and the Moroccan Association of Music Careers.

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