

# ARTISTIC RESIDENCIES → INDIVIDUAL AND → COLLECTIVE A NON-FORMAL



## NEWSLETTER #3

The Erasmus+ project “Artistic Residencies - individual and collective non-formal learning” 2022023-1-PT01-KA210-ADU-000156035-03 aims to establish a European Network of Artistic Residencies (RA) to facilitate the development, dissemination, and promotion of artistic work across different countries.

### Artistic Residencies Meeting in Preveza: A Hub of Creativity and Collaboration 12-15 September 2024

The central theme of the meeting, organized by Artifactory with its partners VedoGiovane from Italy and CRL - Central Elétrica and Casa de Vilar Associação Cultural e Artística from Portugal, held from 12-15 September 2024 in Preveza, focused on the added value of artistic residencies for both artists and the institutions promoting them.

The ARICNFL meeting in Preveza centered on the theme of “What for?” as participants delved into the added value that artistic residencies bring for both artists and supporting organizations.



Key questions addressed included: Why implement artistic residencies, and what unique benefits do they provide for artists? Participants examined the tangible and intangible returns for artists who join an AR, discussing how residencies differ from other avenues like exhibitions or festivals. The group also explored motivations for residency hosts and the impact they anticipate.

**lead partner Casa de Vilar - Portugal partners**  
**Circolando, CRL - Portugal ARTIFACTORY - Greece**  
**Vedogiovane Società Cooperativa Sociale impresa sociale - Italy**

# ACTION #03 Artistic Residencies

## What for?

Preveza, Greece, became a vibrant hub of artistic exchange during the ARICNFL Artistic Residencies, held from 12th to 14th September 2024 at the Municipal Gallery "Giannis Moralis". Artists, curators, and cultural managers from across the globe gathered online and offline to share insights, foster collaboration, and celebrate the transformative power of the arts.



### 13 September Highlights

From 10:30 to 14:30, the morning session featured key presentations and remote contributions:

- **Spyros Paloukis**, artist and photographer, shared insights into his visual practice and his experience with residencies.
- **Nina Kassianou**, curator and co-founder of the Return2Ithaca Residency, presented their curatorial approach and shared reflections on the residency's impact on artists and the island of Ithaca. More info: <https://www.return2ithaca.gr>
- **Akshay Mahajan**, an internationally acclaimed photographer, joined the meeting in person. He spoke about his diverse residency experiences across continents, reflecting on the intersection of travel, research, and artistic production. More on his work: <https://akshaymahajan.in/about>



Akshay Mahajan sharing his experience



Residency Spotlight – Return2Ithaca with Nina Kassianou

The afternoon session resumed at 18:00 with more presentations and remote connections:

- **Aggeliki Sigourou**, president of the AKROPODITI association and coordinator of the Akropoditi Dance Centre Residency in Syros, discussed the residency's commitment to contemporary dance and the support it offers to movement artists from around the world.

### 14 September Highlights

The evening session at the Municipal Gallery (18:00–21:00) welcomed two powerful photographic voices:

- **Ana Núñez Rodríguez**, a research-based photographer working between Spain and Colombia, shared her exploration of identity politics and colonial memory through the lens of international residencies.
- **Mouna Saboni**, a French-Moroccan photographer based in Rennes, presented her deeply personal and territory-rooted projects. Her work touches on memory, belonging, and the layers of identity shaped through displacement.

The evening concluded with a focused discussion on the next steps of the project, including final outputs, upcoming collaborations, and strategic plans for broader dissemination.

These two days highlighted the transformative power of residencies and artistic exchange, offering valuable perspectives on how artistic practices intersect with geography, history, and identity.



The team visited the archaeological museum of Nicopolis

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# Artist Talk – Ana Núñez Rodríguez

During our residency gathering in Preveza, photographer Ana Núñez Rodríguez (Galicia/Colombia) shared insights from her experiences in international residencies across Japan, Europe, and Latin America.

Ana sees residencies as vital spaces for experimentation, interdisciplinary exploration, and connection with new cultural and natural contexts. Importantly, she emphasized that choosing the right residency involves finding geographical and conceptual alignment with one's artistic practice. In her case, the link between identity and nature is central—so she looks for environments that feed and expand this exploration. In Ithaca, for example, she developed work around the olive tree as a symbol deeply rooted in Mediterranean identity and memory.

She stressed the importance of choosing residencies that align with one's practice, and called for clearer funding structures or guidance for artists navigating financial barriers. Ana also emphasized the power of community engagement and peer exchange, favoring group residencies that foster dialogue and collaboration. As she put it:

"If you don't want to engage with the local context or other artists, why go anywhere at all? You could just stay home. Residencies are about exchange."

Ana's presentation offered a compelling reminder of the transformative potential of residencies—not only for artistic production but for building international solidarity, shared knowledge, and deeply rooted connections with place and people.



## Aggeliki Sigourou So We Are: On Artistic Residencies

Highlighting the experience shared by Angeliki Sigourou, founder and organizer of the Residency Program at Akropoditi Dance and Performing Arts Centre in Syros, Greece, we reflect on what it truly means to host – and be hosted – within a creative sanctuary.

Since 2013, Akropoditi has welcomed artists from 25 countries into two beautifully restored 19th-century spaces: one a dance studio with wooden floors, the other a multipurpose performance and living space. Artists work across disciplines – from visual and performing arts to literature and media – living and creating in an environment that fosters deep focus, collaboration, and community involvement.

The residency is offered at no cost, with the organization covering accommodation and facilities, and artists contributing through public presentations, workshops, or masterclasses. While no direct funding is provided, selected artists often secure support from their home countries using the official invitation.

For Angeliki and her team, the residency program is not just infrastructure; it's a vision. A meeting point. A place where artistic practices intertwine, perspectives expand, and cultural bridges are built. It's a platform designed not only to support artists in their creative development, but also to foster intercultural dialogue and embed artistic practice into the fabric of everyday life in Syros.

As Europe grows increasingly closed in terms of borders and movement, these residencies become even more critical – offering moments of stillness, reflection, and mutual exchange amidst an increasingly fragmented world.

# Artist Talk with Mouna Saboni: ---

## On Artistic Residencies, Collaboration & Creative Freedom

French-Moroccan artist Mouna Saboni, known for her photographic work interwoven with other visual media, shared how international residencies have been vital in shaping her creative journey. Based in France but active across borders, Mouna describes how a residency in Morocco five years ago transformed her approach—shifting from a rigid, intellectual framework to a more instinctive, cross-disciplinary process.

She emphasizes how residencies foster artistic risk-taking, peer learning, and meaningful exchange with local communities. Her experiences highlight that the most impactful residencies offer time, space, and connection—not just financial support. However, she also underlines the importance of fair remuneration as a form of recognition, especially when artists must pause their daily lives to commit fully to a project.

Reflecting on systems in France—where public funding often supports residencies—Mouna also warns of increasing pressures toward privatization. Despite these shifts, she continues to seek out residencies that allow deep immersion, like her upcoming one in Cameroon.

Residencies, she reminds us, are more than a break from routine—they are a catalyst for transformation, collaboration, and discovery.

## Residency Spotlight

## Return2Ithaca with Nina Kassianou

Nina Kassianou, co-founder of the Return2Ithaca residency, shared the vision and structure of this unique photography program rooted in the myth of Odysseus and the symbolic power of Ithaca as a place of return. Each year, ten photographers from around the world are selected through an international open call to explore contemporary themes—identity, migration, environmental and social challenges—through the lens of Homeric myth.

The residency fosters critical reflection, peer exchange, and community engagement, with participants living and working together, joining curator-led review sessions, and presenting their work publicly. While artists begin their projects on the island, they often continue developing them in their home countries, culminating in international exhibitions in places like Athens and Vienna.

Now in its fifth year, Return2Ithaca operates with support from local institutions and aims to further expand its impact—building networks, involving local communities, and bridging cultures through photography.

As Nina noted, residencies like this not only offer artists space and time to create but also weave lasting connections across geographies and generations.



The team visited the archaeological museum of Nicopolis