**Seven Young Female Artists Selected as Finalists for Mentorship Program in Partnership with Vienna's MuseumsQuartier**

In the world of contemporary art, the journey to success can be complex, but it also offers inspiring opportunities for growth and recognition—especially for women, whose courage, persistence, and talent continue to break down barriers and reshape the artistic landscape.  Supporting young, talented female artists contributes to creating an environment in which female artists can realise their full potential. That’s why the mentorship program for visual artists, initiated by Nomad – the Croatian Office for Contemporary Art from Zagreb, Nomarts – Kunstverein zur Schaffung von Kunstsammlungen from Vienna, and the UNIQA SEE FUTURE Foundation, implemented in partnership with Vienna’s MuseumsQuartier, is of great importance today.

The program is designed to support and promote young visual artists from Southeast Europe, offering them a unique platform for artistic development and international visibility.

The selection process for the first edition of the mentorship program was entrusted to a jury of experts from the industry: visual artist and project mentor Šejla Kamerić; curator at Vienna’s MuseumsQuartier Verena Kaspar-Eisert; independent curator Tevž Logar; independent curator Natalija Paunić; head of the UNIQA SEE FUTURE Foundation Petra Šolman; curator Lea Vene; and curator and art manager Vanja Žanko. The jury selected seven promising young artists.

Bulgarian artist based in London, **Krasimira Butseva**, explores the tensions between memory and forgetting, histories beyond archives and official narratives, and spaces of silence and absence. **Marija Iva Gocić**, an artist from Belgrade, interweaves performance, installation, site-specific interventions, and collective practices to engage with themes of intimacy and trust. The artistic practice of **Bruna Jakupović** from Zagreb focuses on themes of the body, identity, and the position of women in society, utilising media such as sculpture, film, text, installation, poetry, performance and sound. Montenegrin artist **Milica Mijajlović Živković** investigates personal and collective histories and the contradictions of female identity within the complex and changing landscape of the post-war Balkans. **Mila Panić**, a Bosnian-Herzegovinian artist, works at the intersection of stand-up comedy and contemporary visual art, aiming to disrupt conventional norms of art institutions and comedy venues, using humour to question power structures and societal norms. The practice of **Sofija Pavković**, an artist from Belgrade, deals with themes of memory, identity, and heritage in relation to personal and collective remembrance. Croatian artist **Paula Tončić** uses nonlinear narration, documents and archives the forgotten traces of our society, with a particular focus on the presence of the female body in abandoned public spaces.

The winning selected artist will then receive mentorship from **Šejla Kamerić**, a renowned visual artist whose work spans film, photography, and installation, and often deals with themes of memory, trauma, and identity. Her works have been showcased in numerous international exhibitions, including at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, TATE Modern in London, MACBA in Barcelona, MUMOK in Vienna, and the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

*“I’m happy to be part of this project. Being a mentor means much more than transferring knowledge – it is an opportunity for mutual exchange of experiences, inspiration, and creating space for new artistic exploration. Supporting young female artists is particularly important to me because I’m aware of how challenging it is to build an artistic career, especially for women coming from our region. This initiative opens up a rare, yet much-needed space in which art can grow freely, honestly, and courageously,*” said Šejla Kamerić.

The selected finalist will also hold a **solo exhibition** at the art space **MQ Freiraum within Vienna’s MuseumsQuartier** in **February 2026**, receiving **financial support for the production and presentation of a new work**. MuseumsQuartier, located in the heart of Vienna, is a vibrant hub for contemporary art. MQ Freiraum, situated in the baroque Fischer-von-Erlach wing of the MQ complex, is dedicated to showcasing contemporary art exhibitions with a focus on video works, installations, and art that critically reflects on socio-political themes. This space provides an ideal platform for artists to present their work to an international audience, encouraging critical discourse and cultural exchange.

**Nomarts** is an art organisation focused on the strategic development of art collections and advising philanthropic foundations, while **Nomad** connects artists, public institutions, and private and corporate collections with the aim of jointly promoting contemporary artists from Croatia and the region on the international stage. Key artistic collaborations include Lovro Artuković, Jasmina Cibic, Šejla Kamerić, and Zlatan Vehabović, as well as partnerships with both domestic and international institutions such as the National Museum of Modern Art in Zagreb, Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb, Art Gallery Dubrovnik, Museum der Moderne Salzburg, and MuseumsQuartier in Vienna.

*“This program is extremely important because it systematically recognises and supports outstanding artistic talents from the region who often operate outside institutional and production frameworks. Through an open call, mentorship, and an exhibition in a prestigious international context such as the MuseumsQuartier in Vienna, the program not only builds professional paths for artists but also simultaneously creates a new platform for visibility and exchange in Southeast Europe. Working with the finalists showed just how necessary this kind of support is — each of these artists could be the winner. This is the best proof that the region has potential, but it needs infrastructure, space, and continuity,”* stated **Vanja Žanko**.

**UNIQA SEE FUTURE** is a non-profit foundation founded by the UNIQA insurance company, established to promote philanthropy and support young people and organisations that stand out in the fields of sports, culture, and sustainable development through their skills and talent, operating throughout Southeast Europe.

Manager of the Foundation, **Petra Šolman**, stated: *"Just as it is in the art world, we also promote and advocate for diversity and equality in the business environment, and by supporting this project, we aim to give talented visual artists an opportunity to realise their potential and positively influence the community. We look forward to the continuation of this project so that we can witness positive changes in the lives of these promising visual artists, as we believe that being among the finalists of such a project is a great achievement and a wonderful stepping stone for the further development of their careers, as well as an encouragement for all others who are at the beginning of their artistic journey.”*