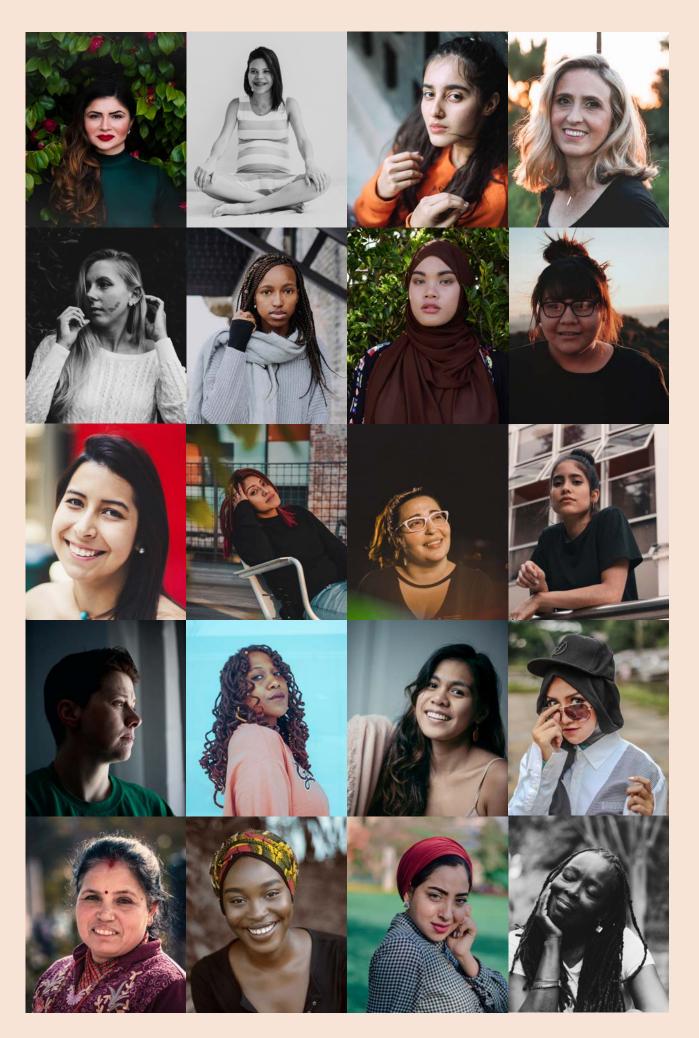
# PROJECT PROPOSAL

CHORUS OF VOICES





## Contents

PROJECT OVERVIEW	4
THE EVENTS	6
EVENT DOCUMENTS	
Derrière les chiffres 8	
Photobooth de l'expression 10	
The Self-Portrait Experience 11	
Soft Voices 14	
Breathing Underwater 22	

## PROJECT OVERVIEW





CHORUS OF VOICES is a cross organization collaborative effort led by Foundation Maison de la Porte Ouverte - Maison Sichem to educate, bring empathy, raise awareness and drive debate on the topic of Domestic Violence before and throughout Orange Week 2024.

Utilizing the film "Breathing Underwater" as an accessible platform for engagement, curated tie-in events such as ciné-debates, talks, professional + educational screenings and art exhibitions by stong female artists are planned.

We aim to highlight the strength of those affected by domestic violence, to valorize rather than victimize, to cultivate openness and respect.

## THE EVENTS



### DERRIÈRE LES CHIFFRES

**Comic Frame Exhibition** 

The "Derrière les chiffres" exhibition was held at the Maison du Savoir in Belval at the end of 2022. This year, we will continue our prevention and information project, with sets of art prints set up at locations around Luxembourg, combined with the distribution of perpetual calendars with 12 images from the collection.



#### **PHOTOBOOTH DE L'EXPRESSION**

Photo Slogan Exhibition

This interactive initiative invited the residents of Maison Sichem and the general public to express their views on the issue of violence against women. Participants were given the opportunity to capture their messages of support, hope, awareness or demand via a Photobooth available within our structure for 1 month. A selection of 30 images will be printed and exhibited.

#### THE SELF-PORTRAIT EXPERIENCE Artist - Cristina Nuñez

The Self-Portrait Experience (SPEX) workshop is a powerful tool to transform our lives into artworks which allow the expression of our authentic selves created by Cristina Nuñez. In collaboration with FMPO, the workshop will be held for the first time with women who have experienced domestic violence, culmulating in a photography exhibition.





04



#### **SOFT VOICES** Artist - Nadine Rocco

Nadine Rocco is a Luxembourgish visual artist. Soft Voices is an exploration of the delicate balance between societal perceptions and the inherent strength of women. Through a series of vibrant and curvilinear illustrations, the exhibition delves into the nuanced and often contradictory ways in which women are viewed and treated in society.



#### **BREATHING UNDERWATER** Film Screenings

"Breathing Underwater" is an emotionally raw, empathetic and intensely honest film set in the in the world of a women's shelter. Targeted educational screenings of this film to politions, law enforcement, legislators, social/ healthcare professionals and students will be accompanied by cine-debates, round-tables and testimonials from women who have faced domestic violence.



In collaboration with the "Nous Toutes Lyon" collective, Fanny Vella has produced black-andwhite portraits of women who are victims of feminicide. The series is called "Behind the Numbers". Her portraits remind us that behind the numbers, there are women, daughters, friends. And that they had lives. This exhibition is a tribute to all these women.

In 2021, the Maison Sichem of the Fondation Maison de la Porte Ouverte (FMPO), with the support and collaboration of the Commission and Service de l'Egalité des Chances of the Commune of Steinfort, has produced a collection of these portraits for exhibition. The exhibition contains 23 50x50cm canvases, 17 20x20cm canvases, 1 general presentation frame and 2 explanatory frames.

For Orange Week 2024, we will add 5 100x100cm canvases to the collection and the exhibition will be exhibited across Luxembourg. We are producing perpetual calendars consisting of 12 images from the collection for distribution.



### PHOTOBOOTH DE L'EXPRESSION

### If you could say something, what would it be? Make a lasting image of it and share it with the world.

This interactive initiative invited the residents of Maison Sichem and the general public to express their views on the issue of violence against women. Participants were given the opportunity to capture their messages of support, hope, awareness or demand via a Photobooth available within our structure for 1 month. It was an empowering event. Later these multillingual images and statements were shared on social media with great success.

For Orange Week 2024, a selection of 30 images will be printed and exhibited in public spaces (communes, parks, schools) to bring inner statements to the external world.



THE SELF-PORTRAIT EXPERIENCE



Cristina Nuñez is a contemporary artist-photographer and facilitator of transformative autobiographical photography with the SPEX device that she created in 2004 on the basis of her personal experience of over 35 years with photo self-portraiture as a self- therapeutic tool. Nuñez has worked with over 4,000 people around the world: in prisons, mental health facilities, universities, high schools, museums and galleries. In Luxembourg, Nuñez ran the project "My Echo, My Shadow and Me" for Esch 2022 with three groups of young people (migrants, people with substance misuse and a high school class). The project was exhibited at the Maison du Savoir in Belval and an online exhibition. Nuñez has run several projects and the Luxembourg Penitentiary Centre, Red Cross, Jugend An Drogenhëllef and is currently working on a comprehensive project with the Ministry of Education and seven high schools around the country.

In 2020 Nuñez completed her PhD research on SPEX. On the link below you can find her doctoral thesis and the appendix on the analysis of feedback from SPEX workshop participants.

The main objective (and expected result) of SPEX is to broaden the perception of oneself, others and the world, to discover the potential in oneself, others and the world. Any process of transformation of one's own life (desistance from crime, recovery from addiction, etc.) must necessarily involve the discovery of other (pro-social) aspects of one's own identity.

## http://selfportrait-experience.com

So looking at yourself from other points of view helps you to explore yourself beyond labels, stigmatisation and judgement. SPEX also serves to stimulate the creative process, transforming difficult emotions into photographic works of art. The autobiographical project is a tribute to oneself and to one's own experience, whatever that may be.

Structure of the workshop:

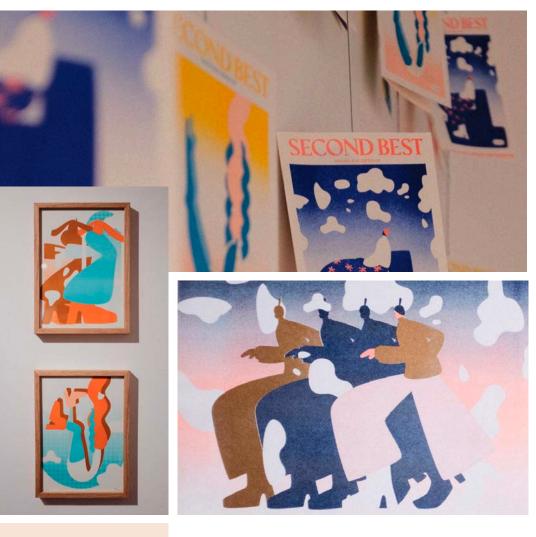
- Presentation and discussion : Cristina Nuñez narrates her life story while projecting her archive photographs and self-portraits. 2h
- Two days of individual self-portrait sessions in the portable photo-studio to be set up at the foyer. Each session lasts 45 minutes (8-10 people per day).
- Two half days of group work on the multiple and everchanging perceptions of the images. The group is divided in two smaller groups.

A selection of 12 images resulting from this and/or other SPEX workshops (depending on how many of the women participants accept to be part of the exhibition) will be printed and mounted (format 100x70cm) for an exhibition in Luxembourg. Two videos can be shown as part of the exhibition : Nuñez's life story « Someone to Love » and the video « Higher Self » about the SPEX dispositive.

### SOFT VOICES

In conjunction with the exhibition of Nadine's art at the VDL Bierger centre, a silent auction will be held for 3 framed, large format, pre-existing pieces with a starting price of 1000€ a piece as a donation from Nadine. 100% of those proceeds will go to improving the lives of the women and children resident in FMPO's structures.

Additionally, there will be an affordable art sale of the limited edition prints of the artwork and a special Orange Week Edition of the Second Best Zine. This will give people an opportunity to own a piece of art, take the visual messages home with them and remind others and themselves of the ongoing fight for equality and safety for women and girls around the world.



Through personal experiences in my private and professional life, the topic of feminism has slowly found it's way into my creative work, without it ever being a conscious decision.

At the same time, I strongly believe that art serves as a powerful tool for raising awareness. Through humor and provocation, it can engage those who initially couldn't see the issues clearly, potentially giving new pespectives and prompting meaningful change.

# EXPOSITION BIERGER-CENTER **LUXEMBOURG**

# NADINE ROCCO

52, rue Demy Schlechter L-2521 Luxembourg

nadine.rocco@gmail.com secondbestzine@gmail.com

+352 621 75 30 14

@secondbestzine

\*

# EXPOSITION Soft Voices

#### EN Dear Ville de Luxmebourg,

In this dossier, I would like to share with you the results of a productive meeting held on May 25, 2024, with Mandy Koppers, Françoise Lentz and Eric Lamhène. During our discussion, we expressed a strong interest in organizing an exhibition focused on domestic violence to be showcased during Orange Week in November 2024.

We would be honoured to contribute to this important cause and to collaborate with you on this meaningful event.

The exhibition will be called *Soft Voices* and will be concieved and created by Nadine Rocco.

#### About the Exhibition

*Soft Voices* is an exploration of the delicate balance between societal perceptions and the inherent strength of women. Through a series of vibrant and curvilinear illustrations, the exhibition delves into the nuanced and often contradictory ways in which women are viewed and treated in society.

#### Artist's Statement

In my work, I employ a palette of rich, bold colors and flowing, curvy forms to create an initial impression of softness and beauty. However, beneath this visually appealing surface lies a deeper narrative about the complexities of womanhood. Each piece is a testament to the multifaceted experiences of women, capturing both their vulnerability and their resilience.

#### The Dual Layers

At first glance, the artwork radiates joy and vivacity, inviting viewers to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of color and form. Yet, as one looks closer, the hidden layers reveal themselves: the subtle messages about societal expectations, the silent struggles, and the unspoken strength that define the female experience.

#### Context of the Exhibition

*Soft Voices* is planned to be part of Orange Week, a global initiative dedicated to ending violence against women and girls. This week serves as a reminder of the ongoing fight for equality and safety, and my exhibition aims to contribute to this vital conversation. The artworks are not only a reflection of beauty but also a call to listen to the often unheard voices of women, to recognize their stories, and to advocate for change.

#### Invitation to the Audience

I invite you to immerse yourself in this visual journey. Allow the colors and curves to draw you in, but also take the time to uncover the deeper messages within each piece.

LOCATION	Bierger-Center Luxembourg
DATE	End of November –
	End of December 2024
EVENT	Orange Week - Raising Awareness
	on Domestic Violence

#### **ARTIST BIO**

Nadine Rocco is a Luxembourgish visual artist. She studied visual communication in Cologne, where she discovered her passion for risograph printing. This unique technique, known for its tactile quality and inherent imperfections, inspired Nadine Rocco to create artwork that merges bold graphic design with expressive illustration. Her distinctive style features dreamy, geometrical landscapes populated by disproportionate characters, often standing alone with only their shadows for company.

Through a series of **vibrant** and **curvilinear illustrations**, the exhibition delves into the nuanced and often **contradictory ways** in which **women are viewed** and treated in society.

# EXAMPLES | EXEMPLES Mock ups | Maquettes



#### HOW LONG IS NOW?

Socially structured body shapes.

Steinbach 250g/m2 - Serigraphie 100x70 Designed by Nadine Rocco & made by Studio Bikini

# EXAMPLES | EXEMPLES Mock ups | Maquettes



#### MANIA I & II

The title comes from the movie called Mania (1918). The silent drama unveils a captivating cigarette factory worker caught in a twisted game of love. Two men, a talented composer and a wealthy patron, vie for her affections, leading to a morally complex narrative. The wealthy patron manipulates the situation, pressuring the worker to become his possession, while the composer, instead of resisting, blames her. The film unveils the societal intricacies and moral ambiguities of love and desire during its time.

> 2x Rugs - Fabric 120 x 140 Designed by Nadine Rocco & made by Gur

# EXAMPLES | EXEMPLES Mock ups | Maquettes

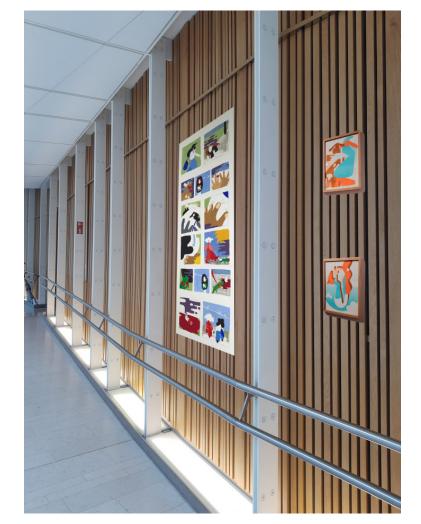
### SILENT COMIC

Just another day in the concrete jungle. So there I was, minding my own business, when suddenly a wild dude appeared out of nowhere, ready to ruin my day. But lo and behold, my unexpected hero swoops in with a crocodile on a leash. Who knew that was the ultimate weapon against street harassers?

Moral of the story: expect the unexpected, folks. Oh, and maybe consider getting a pet croc for self-defense? Just a thought.

NO WORDS

A4 290g – Gouache, 150 x 150 Made by Nadine Rocco



#### AT THE RIGHT TIME (TOP) THE FALL (BOTTOM)

Constantly running after something feels like falling when it works out and when it fails.

Munken Polar 240g - Riso, A5 Designed by Nadine Rocco made by Studio Fidele

# Second Best Zine for Orange Week 2024



<text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text></text></text></text></text></text></text></text></text></text></text></text></text>
--





#### **SECOND BEST ZINE**

An exclusive version of Second Best Zine with testimonies about domestic violence. Une edition spéciale du Second Best Zine avec des témoignages sur la violence domestique.

> A5 - Collaborative Zine Risographie Print - Studio Fidele

### BREATHING UNDERWATER

This film has a 7 year history that began with the essential support of Oeuvre's Fonds stART-up and close collaboration with the women's shelters of Luxembourg, especially Maison Sichem. Without them, it would never have been made.

While it is a work of fiction, the stories of the characters come from true testimonials of women who have experienced domestic violence. In fact, right alongside the professional actors, are women and children who have been or are still in a shelter today. Notably, Esperanza Martin, a non-professional actress who has a starring role.

This film reaches audiences with its accessible and engaging nature, showing the nuanced interior world of a woman struggling with the physical and psychological trauma of an abusive relationship. Importantly, it also shows the strength and the sisterhood of the women in the shelter.

Coupled with the Luxembourgish theatrical release of the film in the run up to Orange Week 2024, a series of educational screenings for people who need to be particularly sensitive and aware of the nuances of the topic of domestic violence (politicians, law enforcement, social and health professionals, lawyers, judges, legislators, teachers and educators) will be set up with our partners. The screenings are spread out across the period of Orange Week with additional outreach to students (secondary and up), members of the international community and of course, the Luxembourgish general public.

The screenings are coupled with events, celebrating the strength and joy of women, and moderated ciné-debates, talks, filmmaker Q&As, round-tables and discussions.



# BREATHING UNDERWATER

CARLA JURI ESPERANZA MARTIN GONZÁLEZ-QUEVEDO VÉRONIQUE TSHANDA BEYA ALESSIA RASCHELLA

LUC SCHILTZ SASCHA LEY DAS BRONCHONS SAMSA FILM DS CORREGUENCES AND ARTÉMIS PRODUCTIONS DEMP DAS RAFE LYN LEE DE REIC LAMHÈNE DESCRICTE DE LA BRONCHUE DE LA BRONCHUE RAFE LYN LEE DER MANNEL JEAN-LUC SIMON SON ALAIN CONIVA, LISE BOUCHEZ, JEAN-STEPHANE GARBE DEBRE-BRONCHUE JULIETA FERNANDEZ DEBRE DE CORMES DE ADADOMS MAGDALENA LABUZ DEBRE DES JANINE SCHMITT DIEBRE BRONCHUE DEBRE BRIGHTE KERGER-SANTOS DEBRETE DE BROCKEUE JULIES WARINGO BROCCHUE SASCHS JANTHUEGES BERNARD MICHAUX CORRECTION PATRICK QUINET BELIGUE SECTION FILM FUND LIXEMBOURG BROCKEUE DESTING BRIGHTE KERGER-SANTOS DEBRETE DE BROCKEUE JULIES WARINGO BROCCHUE SASCHS JANTHUEGES BERNARD MICHAUX CORRECTION PATRICK QUINET BELIGUE SASCHS JANTHUE DE STENDES DE TAS SHELTE DE TA SCHINE THE IN COMPACIENTE SASCHS JANTHUEGES BERNARD MICHAUX CORRECTION PATRICK QUINET BELIGUE AND BELIEVE DE LIXEBBURG DE CORRECTION DE STELLE PROD AND IL SASTED DE TAS BELIEVE DE TAS BELIEVE DE TAS BELIEVE DE TAS BELIEVE DE LIXEBBURG DE CORRECTION DE SCIENCES GRANDE-DUCHESSE CHARLOTTE VERIE VIERDINGE BELIGUE BELIGUE BELIGUE BELIGUE AND IL SOMBORI BELIEVE DE LIXEBBURG

S taxshelter.be

Sshelter prod ING

🗢 samsa

THINK FLAT

O ARTEMS PRODUCTIONS TAX

02 0000

PLUTO

THEFT MAGENCY

SOURCES 2

### DIRECTOR'S NOTE OF INTENT

I remember my initial visit to a women's shelter vividly. It was a modern but unassuming building that sat quietly amongst other family homes on a busy main street in Luxembourg city. There was no name on the doorbell and no indication of what lay behind its doors. I didn't know what exactly to expect and inevitably the impressions of misérabilisme from existing films and media around the subject of domestic abuse began to flood my mind.

It was, however, nothing like I imagined. I had arrived at a house full of life and laughter, of joy even. It was house that was populated by a kaleidoscope of women and children of varying ages and of different nationalities. They lived, loved and pushed on, despite the complex and terrible reasons behind why they were there.

Co-author/cinematographer Rae Lyn Lee was with me that day and we both came away, deeply moved, captured and intrigued by the intellectual and emotional dichotomies of the women in the shelter.

This was absolutely a story we wanted to tell and we knew that we had to tell it right.

We immersed ourselves in the subject, working with all the women's shelters in Luxembourg, speaking at length to psychologists, social workers, lawyers and organizations dealing with domestic abuse. Crucially, we spent time with women who were living in the shelters as well as women who had left, getting to know them and immersing ourselves in their daily lives. The screenplay was shaped by an amalgamation of the women's stories, which became the backstories of the characters in the film. Our mission was to be emotionally true.

We knew early on that we absolutely wanted "Breathing Underwater" to be rooted as much as possible in true experiences and emotions, so the cast would ultimately be a mix of professional and nonprofessional actors. I was no stranger to this constellation, regularly directing actors and non-actors in my previous films.

The first to join the cast was Esperanza Martin Gonzalez-Quevedo, who we met during our research phase. She had little acting experience, but there was something special in her. We invited her to audition and we were absolutely blown away. Having experienced abuse and lived in a shelter, she had an authentic depth of emotion to draw upon, but also the ability to channel it.

We had a long casting process for the role of Sascha, when we found a young and talented newcomer and (at the time) theatre student, Alessia Raschellà. She set herself apart from everyone else with her fiery spirit, dedication and quick, keen intelligence.

We felt Véro Tshanda Beya's powerful presence in Félicité (Alain Gomis) but we were amazed when she brought the wounded soul of Khadij that we had written on the page, to life. Her nuanced performance brought gravity and light to the scenes.

Finally, Emma is played by the magnificent Carla Juri. I was honored and incredibly lucky to have been able to collaborate with her. Her immense talent and deep empathy brought a rare, delicate sensitivity and spontaneity to this complex role, while blending seamlessly with the rest of the cast.

Aside from the four main characters, shelter director Tania and Emma's husband Marc were played by seasoned Luxembourgish actors Sascha Ley and Luc Schiltz respectively. They understood the weight of the subject and delivered outstanding performances in their supporting roles.

Rae Lyn Lee and I collaborated closely throughout with the entire film team to create a visual aesthetic that we candidly describe as "the light in absolute spite of the darkness".

Breathing Underwater is a film of dualities. There is suffering, pain and violence, but there is also strength, joy and hope. It is above all, a hopeful film. The journey of Emma, Khadij, Sascha and Esperanza represents merely the first few hundred meters of the marathon women in situations of domestic abuse have to run towards rebuilding their lives.

We hope that this film will touch hearts, change lives and engage audiences in an open dialogue and debate.

Eric Lamhène



To view the trailer, film stills and more, please visit:

http://breathingunderwater-film.com

#### PASSWORD: HDH2024oeuvre

(expires 15th July 2024)



"You can recognize survivors of abuse by their courage. When silence is so very inviting, they step forward and share their truth so others know they aren't alone." - Jeanne McElvaney

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND CONSIDERATION

CHORUS OF VOICES 2024