



Nessun'Isola. Trame di dignità (No Island. Textures of Dignity)

by Tanja Boukal

curated by Tina Teufel

(curator for contemporary art, Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Austria)

The exhibition is part of *HOSPITIUM – The Lampedusa Project*

1-15 October 2025

MARP—Museo archeologico regionale delle Isole Pelagie | **Lampedusa**

Inauguration: 30 September 2025, 9 pm

Tanja Boukal has been working on topics like migration, cultural upheaval, and human dignity for many years. Each of her projects has been closely related to the places where they have been conceived and she has made the people—and in this case also the island—an integral part of her work. Lampedusa, where the artist developed her fifth immersive project, and her third on the situation of people on the move in the Mediterranean, is a place of escape as well as arrival: *HOSPITIUM*, Boukal's year-long project on Lampedusa, now concludes with ***Nessun' Isola. Trame di dignità*** (No Island. Textures of Dignity). The exhibition is an in-depth study of both the history and the contemporary situation of the island, but it has also developed, over the course of almost a year, an intense dialogue between the artist and the people of Lampedusa. The exhibition, one of the projects within ***Agrigento Italian Capital of Culture 2025***, inaugurates on **Tuesday, September 30, at 9 p.m.** and will be **open to visitors until October 15**. *HOSPITIUM – The Lampedusa Project* marks Tanja Boukal's tenth anniversary since *The Melilla Project*, which began in 2014, and *The Aegean Project* of 2016, but also her twentieth year as a politically engaged artist.

Suspended between continents, cultures, and politics, the exhibition redefines the role of the island as more than just a geographical location: Lampedusa is a prism through which Boukal observes the fluid interaction between refuge, control, and the changing landscapes of European identity, a place where notions of belonging are continually forged, contested, and redefined.

Picking up where her previous works—*The Melilla Project* and *The Aegean Project*—left off, which examined the human cost of Europe's fortified borders, Tanja Boukal sees Lampedusa as a microcosm of broader European tensions, completing a triangle of the most important and controversial places for migration in the Mediterranean. The exhibition *Nessun'Isola*, curated by Tina Teufel, curator at the Museum der Moderne Salzburg in Austria, reflects on what it means to belong, welcome, and coexist in a world increasingly defined by divisions and displacement.

Starting from the entrance to the **Museo Archeologico Regionale delle Isole Pelagie**—where an innovative participatory management project is being trialed between the Valley of the Temples Park, to which it belongs, and local civic associations—and with a delicate intervention involving the permanent collection of artifacts on the ground floor, the works of *Nessun'Isola*, created between 2008 and today, trace and comment on the role and different perceptions of migration in 21st-century European history. The curatorial thread places them in dialogue in the different rooms of the museum also with works already installed there, but develops an autonomous path, revisiting the boundaries of the place and questioning the very idea of insularity, affirming that an island does not really exist. “The exhibition encourages a deeper investigation into how identity takes shape at the margins of our worlds, inviting us to reconsider the meaning of home, community, and the bonds that unite us,” says Tina Teufel, the exhibition's curator. In this sense, Tanja Boukal's works tie in with those of Francesco Arena, Emilio Isgrò, William Kentridge, Loredana Longo, and Gian Maria Tossati—part of the exhibition *Rotte Mediterranee: Lampedusa come isola del contemporaneo* (Mediterranean Routes: Lampedusa as an Island of the Contemporary), acquired through PAC—Piano per l'Arte Contemporanea (Plan for Contemporary Art)—and Lampedusan artist Giovanni Fragapane.

In numerous projects, Tanja Boukal has worked at the intersection of journalism, participatory community projects, and art. At the heart of many of the works resulting from these wide-ranging projects are meticulous research and visualization of their context, intensive contact with the people involved on site, and their active involvement through workshops and events held in previous months. Boukal believes it is her duty not to limit herself to an outside perspective, but to personally visit the places and get a feel for the situation, which necessarily involves working with the people on site: She is not interested in those who write history with the power of words and images, but those who, as “civilian victims,” often remain in the shadows and anonymous. The artist uses materials and craft techniques with positive connotations to promote, through her art, a confrontation with the injustices that many people encounter in daily reports, news, and, in part, research. For the people of Lampedusa, all this is linked to their daily experience—or to the denial of what is happening around the corner from their homes, which they do not want or are unable to confront (any longer). With seemingly beautiful craft techniques associated with positive connotations, Boukal undermines the privilege of those who are not involved, who can look away. She takes advantage of the power of knitting, embroidery, and

weaving to attract people and of a surprise effect that strikes some deeply. She contrasts the power of images with the power of knowledge and understanding of facts. In this way, we viewers are confronted with the responsibility of moving from being consumers and indifferent to taking action. Tanja Boukal urges us to take on this responsibility. The new works in the Lampedusa Project are therefore part of an international network that has been created through the artist's work: The exhibition contains 17 works, one of which has been created during the preparatory phase of the project and other three were made in Lampedusa. Every inhabitant of Lampedusa—permanent or temporary—with whom Tanja Boukal has come into contact and who has participated in one of her projects thus becomes an integral and irreplaceable part of this international network which, metaphorically speaking, like fishing nets, raises awareness of the island's greatest asset: hospitality and generosity—*Hospitium*.

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EXHIBITION DETAILS

Nessun'Isola. Trame di dignità

by Tanja Boukal
curated by Tina Teufel

realized within *HOSPITIUM—The Lampedusa Project*

1-15 October 2025
MARP - Museo archeologico
regionale delle Isole Pelagie
Via Roma 8 | Lampedusa
Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday, 7 p.m. to midnight
Free entrance / Pay as you wish

A project as part of Agrigento Capitale Italiana della Cultura 2025
Inauguration: 30 September 2025, 9 pm

MARP – Museo Archeologico Regionale delle Pelagie
gestito da ATS Pelagies (Fondazione Visioni d'Autore Rosangela Mannino Sirio ETS)
e HUB Turistico Lampedusa
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Mare Nostrum, 2024/2025
Hand embroidery on linen, cotton thread, 98 × 44,5 cm



Schuhe für Nirgendwo (Shoes for Nowhere), 2025
petit point embroidery, 2 parts à 12 x 5 x 3 cm



Blaues Schweigen (Blue Silence), 2025
embroidery on Dupioni silk, 132 x 132 cm



Schutzwand (Rampart), 2015
Cotton, terry cotton, 9 parts à 390 x 109 cm



Erinnerungen an Reisen und Träume (Memories of Travels and Dreams), 2016
Print on Alu-Dibond, padded fabric on plywood, rubber bands, postcards, 98 x 140 cm