

Open call for the 2nd KOMMAGENE BIENNALE

2024 – Kahta, Türkiye

Dear Artist,

The Kommagene Biennale, an international event of site-specific contemporary art, has announced its 2nd edition. For this occasion, the biennial's organizers have chosen the theme „*Rising*“, referring to the cyclical nature of historical eras and cultures, as well as the need for spiritual and economic rebirth following traumatic events in the recent past. We wish to share our excitement with all Turkish and foreign artists worldwide, and we are looking forward to hosting new ideas and artistic interpretations regarding the 2024 Biennale theme.

About the site and the context

The region of the Euphrates is considered to be the cradle of human civilization. Throughout the millennia, a variety of cultures have left their mark on this particular part of Türkiye, where monuments of the Assyrian, Persian, Commagene, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman and many other kingdoms and empires stand side by side (UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1987). The area around the city of Kahta includes the burial sites of *Mount Nemrut* and *Karakush*, the *Severan Bridge* – the world's second-largest surviving Roman bridge –, the *Kahta Castle*, or the formidable engineering feat of the 20th century: the *Atatürk Dam* on the Euphrates.

In February 2023, this vibrant cultural and historical region was hit by a massive earthquake, claiming many lives and causing enormous damage to the built environment.

Goals and criteria

The works should be created for the following sites: the city of **Kahta**, the **Kahta Castle**, the burial sites of **Mount Nemrut** and **Karakush**, the **Severan Bridge**, and the **Atatürk Dam**, with special emphasis on the cultural-historical and natural contexts. Artists may reflect on topics such as the historical dimension of the site, the cyclical changes in the natural environment, or the city's architectural, social, economic, and ecological problems. Urban areas are mainly marked by the scars of last year's earthquake. These reveal a traumatic experience that the local community is forced to deal with to take on a new beginning, and to start the path of *rising*.

The Biennale's organizers are looking forward to receiving the application of artists – or groups of artists – who are interested in site-specificity, who are concerned with the meaning of historical symbols, the reflective possibilities of creating in natural environments, the problematics of different sculptural solutions and the use of organic materials, and who see the process of making as a critical, cohesive act. These aspects allow the applicants unravel visual art problems, such as the perception of space, human scale and proportion, the scale of historical motifs, and how natural materials and quality are related.

We encourage proposals wishing to collaborate with the local artisans of Kahta. The industrial area of the city is home to many workshops, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, glaziers, tailors, and other types of handicrafts, thus offering yet another inspiring context. The artworks made in such collaborations can also be installed on the sites mentioned above.

Feasibility, sustainability, sizing, and durability

We are expecting proposals for new, large-scale works of site-specific art.

- The artists should consider **environmental sustainability** by e.g. choice of **locally available natural materials**, building on-site (also with the collaboration of local firms, workshops) to avoid transport; devise anchoring solutions that guarantee stability **without digging foundations, use of concrete bases** etc.
- The artists should design the work about the location: the proposal must be **appropriate to the 'scale of the landscape'**.
- The artist must ensure that the artwork will be durable in the outdoor environment (considering the rain and possible ground conditions etc.) for the duration of the Biennale and must have in mind high safety standards in terms of stability, possible misuse, possible harmful elements (sharp edges, climbing holds etc.).

Residence and Installation

Attendance at the set-up, assembly, and placement of the artworks, as well as on the day of the exhibition opening is compulsory and is to be scheduled between 10-24th August 2024. Please consider that arrival is on the 9th, while departure is on the 25th. A maximum of 15 days is available for creating the work of art.

Open call guidelines

Apply by sending your documents to: kommagenebienal@gmail.com

» Selection process:

- Deadline of submission: **30th April, 2024;**
- An international jury of 5 members will select **30 proposals;**
- Announcement of the results: **12th May, 2024;**
- Exhibition of proposals: *if the submitted proposals match the theme of this Biennale, the drawings/visual plans will be exhibited in a public exhibition before the event.*

» Documents required (maximum 25MB):

1. Application form (A4, pdf);
2. Proposal (A3, pdf);
3. Portfolio (A4, pdf).

» Schedule:

- Arrival: **9th August**, departure: **25th August, 2024;**
- Working period: **10th - 24th August, 2024;**
- Exhibition opening at Kahta Castle: **24th August, 2024.**

» Conditions

- The selected artists will receive a honorarium of **500 EUR/artist or group;**
- The Biennale-organization covers a **roundtrip ticket** between the artist's home and Kahta;
- Meals, accommodation (9-25th August), and transportation to the sites where artists are working will be covered by the organizers throughout the program;
- **All production costs will be covered.** Details will be discussed between the artist and the organizer after the proposal is accepted;
- A group of volunteer art students will help construct the works.

Note

Please name the documents in the following way:

- o YOUR_NAME_ApplicationForm_KommageneBiennale2024.pdf
- o YOUR_NAME_Proposal_KommageneBiennale2024.pdf
- o YOUR_NAME_Portfolio_KommageneBiennale2024.pdf
- o The Proposal should contain **the suggested location, drawings, sketches, illustrations of the idea, a brief description, and materials needed**. Please make sure to design your proposal in **A3 size**. The best proposals will be printed out for the jury and exhibited before the event;
- o **Please make sure that your application documents do not exceed 25MB!**

You can find further information on the Kommagene Biennale at:

www.kommagenebienal.com

Organization and coordination

The call and the Kommagene Biennale were conceived and organized by the **Kahta City Administration** and other public and private partners.

Art Director: **Nihat Özdal** (Türkiye);

Curator of the Kommagene Biennale, 2024: **István Eróss** (Hungary).

Contact:

Kund Kopacz, assistant

kommagenebienal@gmail.com



Kahta Castle



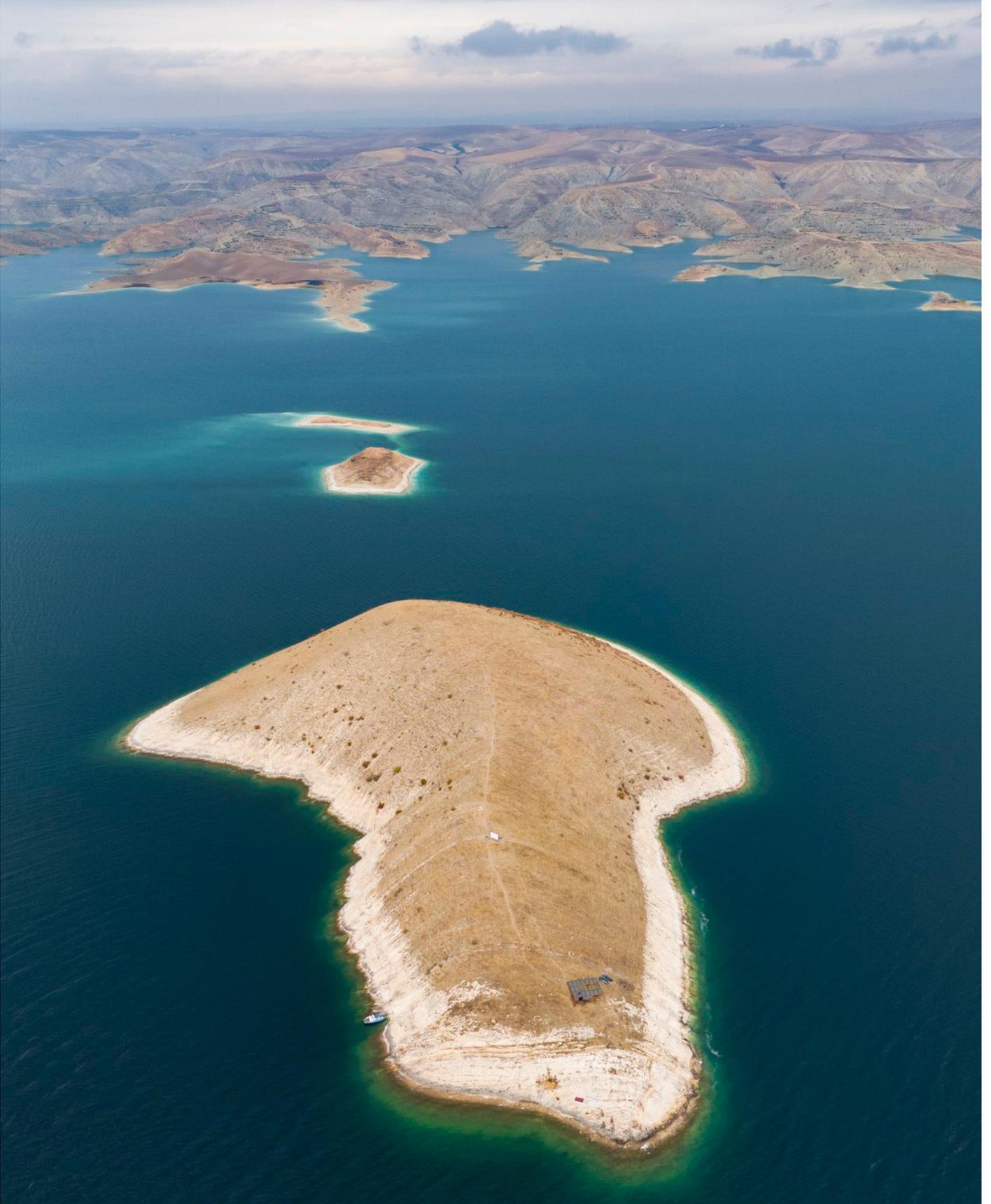
Mount Nemrut



Karakush Tumulus



Severan Bridge



Island in the Atatürk Dam Lake



View after the earthquake