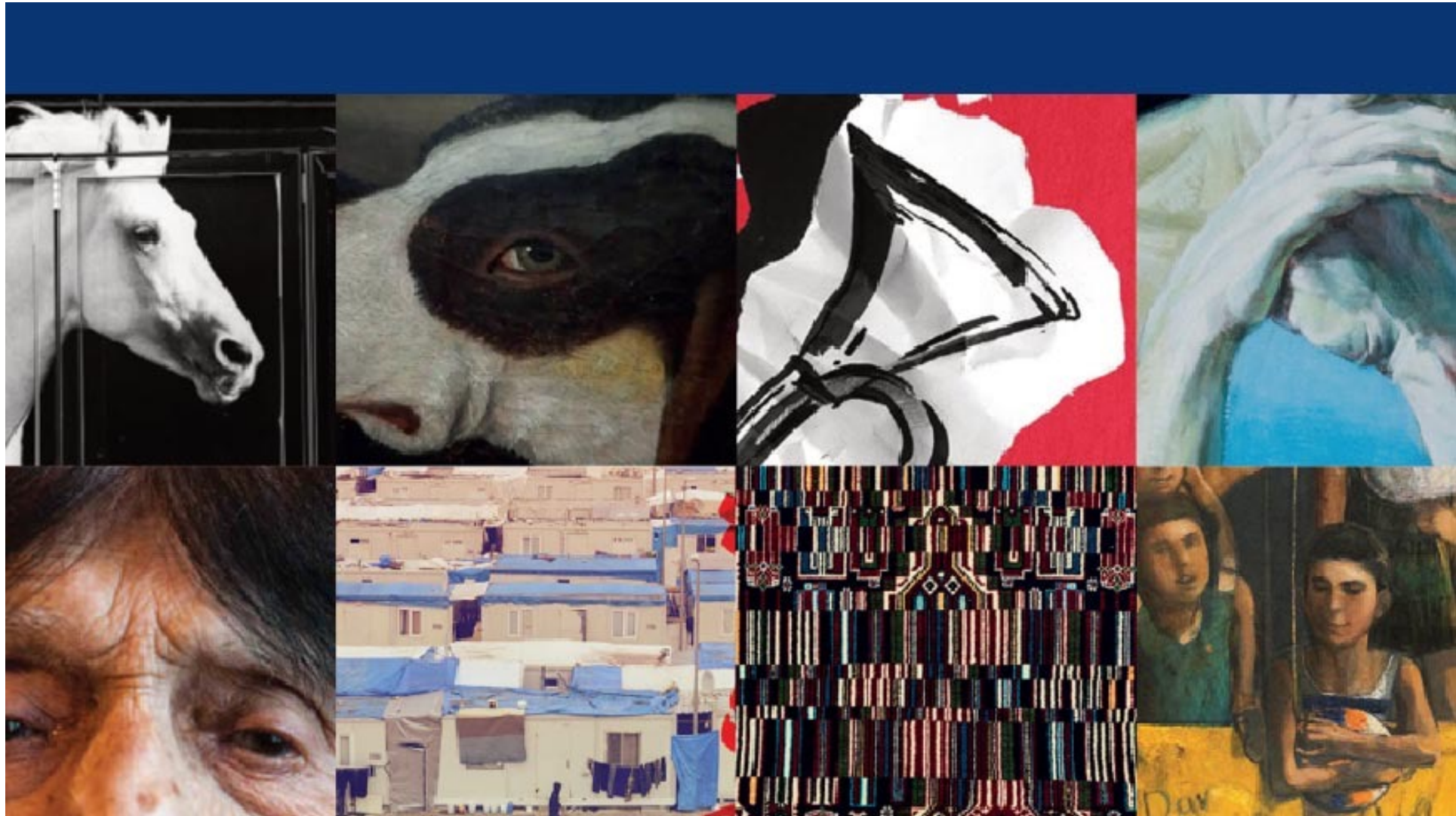


# Free to Create: Artistic Freedom in Europe

Author: Sara Whyatt



# Council of Europe in defence of Artistic Freedom

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- European Convention on Human Rights – Article 10
  - European Court on Human Rights
- 2020 Manifesto on Freedom of Expression of the Arts and Culture in the Digital Age
  - ‘Free to Create | Create to be Free’ program
- 30<sup>th</sup> Council of Europe Art Exhibition “Desire for Freedom: Art in Europe since 1945” (2012-2015)



# Definitions of artistic freedom

## UNESCO 2005 Convention

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- The right to create without **ensorship** or intimidation;
- The right to have artistic work **supported, distributed, and remunerated**;
  - The right to freedom of **movement**;
  - The right to freedom of **association**;
- The right to the protection of **social and economic rights**;
  - The right to participate in **cultural life**



# State of artistic freedom in Europe

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- **402** Reported Attacks
  - **28** Countries
- **32%** of all reported attacks globally

*Freemuse report on artistic freedom in Europe*

*January to December 2021*



# Range of threats to artistic freedom

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- **Anti terror** legislation
  - ‘Mocking’ the power mongers – **insult laws**
  - Laws on blasphemy and insult to **religion**
- **Violence** and intimidation by non-government groups
  - **Vulnerable groups** – women, LGBT, minorities
    - **On-line** dangers



Anti-Terror Laws  
Kurdish Theatre plays  
banned

Photos: bianet.org



# Insulting states, presidents & Kings



***Pablo Hasél***  
***Spain - Mural by***  
***Cinta Vidal in***  
***Barcelona***



***Jan Böhmermann***  
***Germany***

## • **Where else in Europe?**

- Andorra – Belgium – Denmark - France – Germany - Greece – Iceland - Italy – Malta – Monaco - Netherlands – Poland – Portugal – San Marino – Slovenia – Spain – Sweden - Vatican

Blasphemy and  
religious insult  
- the banning and  
unbanning of  
'Stitching' - Malta





# 'Under the radar' impacts

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- **Undue government interventions** – museums, cultural institutions, public broadcasters
  - Institutional **self-censorship**
  - **Under represented** groups
- **Status of the artist - precarity**, lack of status → self censorship
  - **Funders** as inadvertent censors



"I do theatre to push the envelope. I aim to challenge the status quo"

What we want is to be in a society where artistic freedom is not only okay but is wanted

*"Public money' is used as an excuse for not funding something or someone. This instrumentalises the public".*

"We are fighting for visibility while censorship is against it."

"The idea of art not having any value, like it's just for fun - it's so f\*\*\*ing absurd."

"The work of constantly being vigilant, fighting for one's rights and values and so on is exhausting, draining, and even boring."

# What we can do ...

- **States** to stand by their obligations to protect artistic freedom
- **International & regional organisations** to include artists when promoting freedom of expression
- **Civil society & human rights organisations** to include artists' rights in their work
- **Artists & cultural institutions** to monitor attacks on artistic freedom in their own countries, take collective action & provide moral support.
- **Artists** to create networks to exchange and share experiences, and to support others
- **We all** work to create public understanding of the importance of artistic freedom

