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Cipru

## Elena Baturina and BE OPEN Art awarded the first Artist of the Region at a celebratory ceremony in Nicosia, Cyprus

De către Nicosia, Cipru

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On June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 [BE OPEN Art](#), an online art gallery set up by BE OPEN think tank, a humanitarian initiative founded by international businessperson and philanthropist Elena Baturina, held an opening ceremony for the BE OPEN Regional Art: the Eastern Mediterranean art competition.

The exhibition will be open to public until June 21<sup>st</sup> at the Centre of Visual Arts and Research in Nicosia. It is dedicated to celebrating the emerging artists of the Eastern Mediterranean and displays the artworks selected by the public and BE OPEN experts in the course of a region-based competition that lasted from January to March 2023.

Every month, works by 20 emerging artists from Cyprus, Turkey, the Greek Dodecanese islands, and the countries of Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Egypt were posted at the online gallery, for the public to select the Regional Artist of the Month.



Based on the general amount of votes, [Jovanna Theodosiou](#) was selected as the Artist of the Region for the Eastern Mediterranean. Jovanna studied Fine Art in Kingston University, UK, and currently lives and works in Nicosia, Cyprus. As a regional winner, she received a money prize of EUR500 and a major representation at the exhibition.

The exhibition featured works by other regional artists: Chrystalla Tsiamparta, Cyprus; Aya Abou Hawash, Palestine and Lebanon; Christina Kyriakou, Cyprus; Abdelrahman Mahmoud, Egypt; Jamilee Doueihy, Lebanon; Dimitrios Ikonomou, Nicolaou Pantelis and Elena Adamou from Cyprus.

The exhibition enjoyed cordial support from the Ministry of Education of Cyprus: *"We are glad to see creative Cyprus youth benefit from BE OPEN's international initiative that offers much needed support to young artists. This exhibition will become a celebration of our artistic and cultural tradition. We hope that such philanthropic projects will help more of our creative young people become acknowledged and appreciated in Cyprus and internationally. Furthermore, it will contribute to the achievement of the Government's objectives of providing opportunities for all our children and young people to develop their talents and abilities to the fullest extent possible,"* said **Minister of Education Dr Athena Michaelidou**.

**Eleni Loukalidou, Municipal Councilor Nicosia and President of European Affairs Committee**, greeted the artists and guests on behalf of the city of Nicosia: *"I am greeting you all at this celebration of arts, youth, creativity and talent of Cyprus and other Eastern Mediterranean countries, conceived and organised by BE OPEN Foundation. Being a very important part of our rich and*



*ancient culture, visual arts have always played an immense role in the expression of who we are as a person, as a people, as part of the bigger world. We are very glad that thanks to BE OPEN Regional Art programme and this exhibition, more people around the world will learn the names of Cyprus's young and talented. Hope this becomes the beginning of your great future."*



When awarding the winner, **the Founder of BE OPEN Elena Baturina** said: *"We set up BE OPEN Art with the sole purpose to showcase and support emerging talents. So many young artists all over the world deserve to be seen, and BE OPEN is happy to contribute to their artistic aspirations, to help them get deserved attention and an opportunity to have their say in the art. Our congratulations, this certificate and a money prize go to Jovanna Theodosiou. We wish Jovanna to keep following her heart, and the best of luck in her artistic future."*

BE OPEN Regional Art is a series of competitions for emerging artists, aimed to support those whose art best represents their regional, cultural and ethnic identities. Each regional stage lasts three months, therefore four stages will be run a year, with a winner named for each of them. The regional winners get the money prize of EUR500, while a selection of artwork best representing the region form an exhibition, in order to share the art with the wide public and celebrate the artists involved. The ongoing stage of the regional programme is held in the Caribbean, and then BE OPEN Regional Art will travel to Southeast Asia and Central Africa at the end of the year.