



Flashback
presents

Opera Viva Barriera di Milano, il Manifesto
12th edition – IN TIME

An urban art project by **Alessandro Bulgini**
Turin, Barriera di Milano district

First manifesto:
***Follow the Ship(s) – Drawing Detail #2* by Matthew Attard**
Courtesy Galleria Michela Rizzo

Monday 20 July, 7.00 pm
Piazza Bottesini, Barriera di Milano, Turin

Turin, 13 July 2026

In the lively district of Barriera di Milano, amid the intense flow of vehicles and passers-by, ***Opera Viva Barriera di Milano, il Manifesto*** returns to Turin - the urban art project conceived by **Alessandro Bulgini**. Now in its twelfth edition and produced by Flashback, the project transforms a municipal space reserved for public bill-posting in Piazza Bottesini into a work of art. The initiative develops around a precise idea of the relationship between the artwork and public space, in the conviction that art must leave institutional spaces, venture into reality and become fully integrated into the dimension of everyday existence.

The 2026 edition, titled **IN TIME**, continues Flashback's research into time, not as a linear succession of eras, but as an open dimension in which past, present and future coexist and contaminate one another. For Flashback, indeed, every work of art always speaks in the present in its encounter with the viewer. To be *in time* therefore means to be within one's own time, but also to move across all times, building unexpected connections between images, stories and experiences.

From this perspective, the journey becomes the metaphor that guides the entire edition. Not a route with a predetermined destination, but a crossing in which finding one's direction means reading the present, welcoming the unexpected and continually altering one's course. The sailing boat embodies this condition perfectly: it advances thanks to the wind, the currents and the ability to interpret what happens, turning uncertainty into possibility. Navigation has always accompanied the human experience. It is the symbol of crossing, of knowledge, of the desire for freedom and of the search for new landfalls.

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From the ancient vessels that accompanied the passage between different worlds, to the voyages of Odysseus, from the great marine representations to modern painting and on to contemporary artistic practices, **the simple act of sailing continues to tell about the human condition: the relationship with the unknown, with risk, with hope.** Today this long iconographic tradition takes on new meanings, entering into dialogue with the urgencies of the present. Images of sails evoke not only the journey, but also the themes of migration, of borders, of solidarity and of collective responsibility. In this sense they resonate with initiatives such as the **Global Sumud Flotilla**, which in 2025 brought together dozens of vessels from more than forty countries to carry humanitarian aid to Gaza, once again transforming navigation into a gesture that is at once political, civic and profoundly human.

The billboards of this edition are therefore **a compendium of works dedicated to the theme of sailing**, created by Italian and international artists in collaboration with institutions and museums, giving rise to a set of images that traverses history without following a chronology, but allowing correspondences, analogies and new readings to emerge.

All the images will then be brought together in a single exhibition at Flashback Habitat (corso Giovanni Lanza 75, Turin) on the occasion of the fourteenth edition of Flashback Art Fair.

The first billboard

The first billboard is the work ***Follow the Ship(s) – Drawing Detail #2*** by **Matthew Attard**, part of the project *I Will Follow the Ship* presented by the artist at the Malta Pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale. Attard draws inspiration from the ship graffiti carved by sailors and pilgrims in the churches of Malta: ex-votos, marks left by those who entrusted their hopes and requests for protection to the sea. The title holds, implicitly, an invitation that is also a hint at the work's method of creation: *follow the ships*. The drawing, in fact, does not arise from the movement of the hand, but from an eye-tracking system that records the movement of the artist's eyes as he follows the contours of the engravings. Into these traces are woven digital images of the sea and the routes of ships. Thus the ancient graffito and the digital mark, past and present, merge into a new image. The technique changes, but not the function: today as then, that drawing entrusts a hope of salvation to the sea.

IN TIME is this: to be present and to take part in one's own time, to recognise that time does not separate, but places in relation. A time conceived as living matter from which to draw in order to speak of today, to stand within its tensions, its urgencies, its transformations.

MATTHEW ATTARD (Malta, 1987) is a visual artist and lecturer at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Malta.

He represented the Malta Pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale with the project *I WILL FOLLOW THE SHIP*, commissioned by the Malta Arts Council and co-curated by Elyse Tonna and Sara Dolfi Agostini. His artistic practice investigates images as social and cultural constructs. His work sits within the field of contemporary drawing through a multimedia approach that highlights its versatile, performative and temporal nature. Central to his research is the idea of the gaze as a form of drawing, in its perceptual, physiological and cultural dimensions - a theme also developed during his practice-based doctorate at Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, funded by the Malta Arts Scholarship programme.

His first exhibition was a two-person show organised in 2014 at Galleria Michela Rizzo in Venice. Since then he has presented his work in Venice, Rome, Valletta, Genoa, London, Beijing and Los Angeles, among other cities. In 2018 he received the Under 30 Euromobil Prize at Arte Fiera in Bologna. He was also selected for three editions of Ten Artists to Watch at the Los Angeles Centre for Digital Arts (LACDA) and, in 2019, invited to take part in Artissima Telephone in the spaces of the OGR in Turin. In 2021 he was shortlisted for the Lumen Prize and presented one of his main solo exhibitions, *Rajt ma rajtx... naf li rajt*, curated by Elyse Tonna at Valletta Contemporary. In 2022 he was commissioned to create the work *Here's How I Did Not See What You Wanted Me To See* as part of the OPEN digital residency at Blitz in Valletta, curated by Sara Dolfi Agostini. In 2023 he held the solo exhibition *Ship of Fools* at Galleria Michela Rizzo in Venice. In 2024 he represented the Malta Pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale. In 2025 he presented *Segni di rotta* at the same gallery and won the Best

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International Achievement Award from the Malta Arts Council for I WILL FOLLOW THE SHIP; in October of the same year he inaugurated The Ship (Unseen), curated by Elyse Tonna, at the Inquisitor's Palace in Birgu, Malta.

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A project by Alessandro Bulgini

12th ed. 2026 – IN TIME

1st manifesto – Monday 20 July, 7.00 pm

Matthew Attard, *Follow the Ship(s) – Drawing Detail #2*, 2024, ballpoint pen on paper, pen plotted and hand-drawn

Courtesy Galleria Michela Rizzo, Venice (IT)

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Press Office

Margherita Dionisio / +39 339 6114425 megdionisio76@gmail.com

Flashback

Ecosystem for Contemporary Cultures

Corso Giovanni Lanza 75, Turin

flashback.to.it

info@flashback.to.it

t. +39 393 64 55 301