

ROMAMOMA INTERVIEWEES – BIOGRAPHIES

Selma Selman (b. 1991) is from Bosnia and Herzegovina and is of Romani origin. She earned her BFA in 2014 from Banja Luka University's Department of Painting. In 2018, she graduated from Syracuse University with an MFA in Transmedia, Visual and Performing Arts. In her artwork, the ultimate aim is to protect and enable female bodies and enact a cross-scalar approach to the collective self-emancipation of oppressed women. Selman's search for functional, contemporary political resistance stems from her personal experience of oppression from multiple directions and scale. Selman founded the organisation "Get the Heck to School", which aims to empower Roma girls worldwide who have faced poverty and ostracization from society. Selman currently lives and works in Bihac (BIH) and New York. Selman participated in Tania Bruguera's International Summer Academy in Salzburg, "Arte Util" in 2013. In 2014, Selman was the recipient of the Zvono Award, given to young artists in Bosnia, and in 2017 Selman was awarded the Trieste Contemporanea Award. In 2018, she was nominated for Forbes 30 under 30, Art and Style, and in 2019 she was the winner of the White Aphroid Award, Maribor (SLO), as well as winning the Power of Excellence Award from the Association of Business Women in BiH and Magazine Grazia, Sarajevo. Selman's works have been shown, among others, at Kunsthalle Wien (2020); L'Onde Center for Art, Paris (2020); 58th Venice Biennale (2019); Queens Museum (2019); Villa Romana, Florence (2019); The Creative Time Summit, Miami (2018); 3. Berlin Herbstsalon, Maxim Gorki Theatre (2017); acb Gallery, Budapest (2017); agnès b. Galerie Boutique, New York (2017); Good Children Gallery, New Orleans (2016); Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin (2016); Museum of Contemporary Art, Banja Luka (BIH, 2014).

Dan Turner is an artist and educator from London, a Romani born in Kent. Turner trained at Saint Martin's School of Art, where he completed a BA Honours Degree in Fine Art (Sculpture). He works across media, including sculpture, video and painting. Turner's practice explores the interaction between Romani and mainstream culture through themes of commercial interchange in Romani life. He is interested in how human life can be defined and archived through made objects, and how these objects communicate across timelines through a shared material culture, articulating that culture to a wider audience. Using transactional objects which have significance across both cultures, Turner examines how Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultures meet and interact with the dominant culture. Working with migration maps of Roma diasporas, and using traditional crafts and occupations, such as herbalism, wooden peg and flower making, and fortune-telling, Turner re-imagines the Roma past, present and future to challenge mainstream culture's view of Roma identities. His work, *Seeds of Healing*, was shown in FUTUROMA at the Venice Biennale 2019. His work is currently on view in Wales, in the Gypsy Maker Project, supported by the Romani Cultural and Arts Company, and in Berlin at the Kaidikhas Gallery.

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas was born 1978 in Zakopane (PL). She graduated from the Sculpture Department at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow in 2004. She participated in the International Sculpture Symposium in Brno (CZ, 2012), and was co-creator of the exhibition *Zalikierdo Drom* in Warsaw (2014). She was awarded a scholarship of the US Government International Visitor Leadership Program in the USA on the subject of Promoting Social Good Through the Arts (2015). Mirga-Tas received awards at the 42nd and 44th Biennale of Painting Bielska Jesień (2015, 2019), and participated in the International Art Symposium at the Moravian Gallery in Brno (2011, 2017). She also participated in the 3rd Art Biennale in Timisoara (RO, 2019), the 11th Berlin Biennale (2020), and the Warsaw Gallery Weekend (2020). Mirga-Tas was awarded a scholarship of Poland's Minister of Culture (2018). Mirga-

Tas is engaged in many social art projects aimed at counteracting exclusion and racial discrimination and xenophobia.

Mihaela Drăgan is an actress and playwright who lives in Bucharest (RO) and works in several European countries. In 2014, she founded Giuvlipen Theatre Company, for which she is both actress and playwright, together with other Roma actresses. Over the past few years, she has been working in Berlin as an actress for Maxim Gorki Theatre, Heimathafen Neukölln, and Theatre Aufbau Kreuzberg. She was one of six finalists for the 2017 Gilder/Coigney International Theatre Award in New York, and a 2020 nominee, an award which acknowledges the exceptional work of 20 theatre women around the world. In 2018, Drăgan was a resident artist in Hong Kong at Para Site Contemporary Art Centre, where she developed *Roma Futurism*, which lies at the intersection of Roma culture with technology and witchcraft. She was acknowledged by PEN World Voices: International Play Festival 2018 in New York as one of the ten most respected dramatists of the world. In 2019, she was one of the playwrights selected for the acclaimed Royal Court Theatre International Summer Residency in London, where she wrote a science-fiction play about a future utopian society of Roma witches who control technology and fight neo-fascist politics in Europe.

Nihad Nino Pušija (D/BIH) born 1965 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, is a fine art photographer. His work (since 1992), focused primarily on documentary and portrait photography, aims to capture Roma identity in Berlin, where he has been based for the past 27 years, and elsewhere in Europe. Important themes in his work include: the politics of recognition, minority positions in contemporary artistic and curatorial practice, south-east Europe, refugees, conflict resolution, integration and the Roma in Europe. His work has received support from nGbK Berlin (New Society for Visual Arts), Museum of European Cultures, and Allianz Cultural Foundation. He was included in both the 1st and 2nd Roma Pavilions at the Venice Biennale 2007 and 2011. Pušija lives and works in Berlin.