

OBJECTIVE 04

To support the exchange of good practice, allowing the creation and expansion of citizen networks, initiatives and platforms, including support for voluntarism



YUKA BLEND STREET FESTIVAL - TRANSFORMING THE CITY

DERVIŞ ZEYBEK AND STUDIO 21

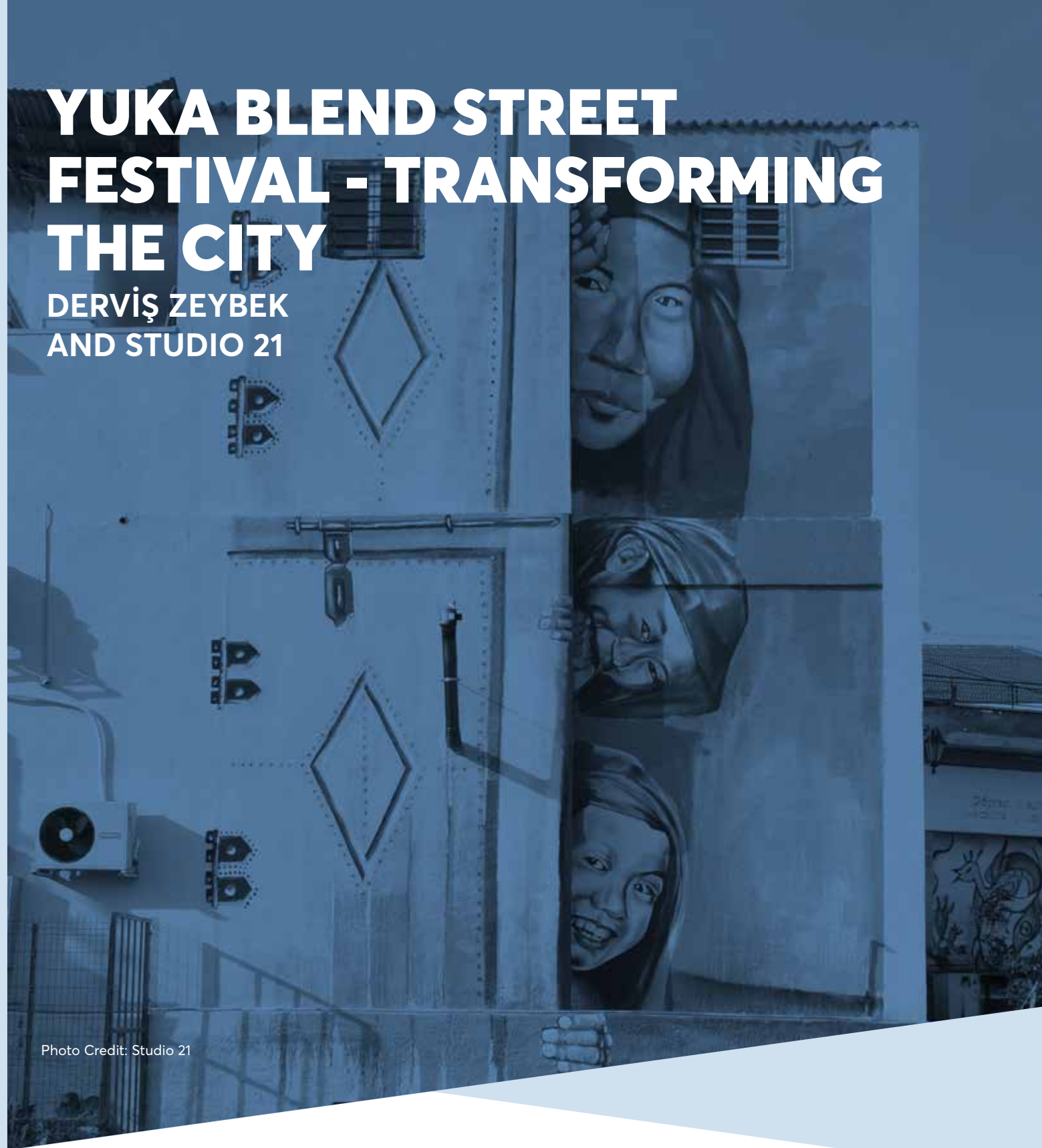


Photo Credit: Studio 21

THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Promotion of the Yuka Blend Street Festival (6-7 October 2017).

A "Transforming the city" activity that decorated various spots around Arabahmet neighbourhood with street art.

ABOUT DERVIŞ ZEYBEK AND STUDIO 21

Studio 21 was founded by Derviş Zeybek in 2011. The purpose of the organization is to use various forms of art, sport and culture as an instrument in order to provide a platform for people with disadvantages such as people with disabilities, the poor and immigrants to equally take part in social life and form a universal language.

STORY OF THE ACTION

The Yuka Blend Street Festival, held on 6-7 October 2017, brought people together to participate in art activities, encourage youth to get involved in the community and celebrate the colourful life of Nicosia. The festival included various street activities such as workshops, film/documentary screenings and discussions, and was open to everyone.



"The festival was attended by approximately 20,000-25,000 people from diverse backgrounds, including both Turkish and Greek Cypriots, young people, families with children, tourists, local and international artists. It attracted large groups of people to go to the walled city of Nicosia, which had fallen into neglect, and to re-energize the historical city by enhancing a stronger sense of public participation and community spirit."

Derviş Zeybek



Photo Credit: Studio 21



Photo Credit: Studio 21



At the Yuka Blend Festival, the Grow Civic Programme supported a specific activity called "Transforming the City" which was implemented in the Arabahmet area, known for its rich cultural heritage. "Transforming the City" re-claimed the walled city as a public space through painting on buildings in key locations to inspire a collaborative action with five international and twenty local artists. The specific locations for the murals were strategically selected to attract attention and celebrate the diversity of the shared Cypriot cultural heritage.

The festival organized by Studio 21, provided a diverse group of emerging artists with a place to foster freedom of expression through live street art and music events. During the festival, participants attended a public bike ride, a photo exhibition, seven workshops and nine public performances, including dance and interactive theatre.

Photo Credit: Studio 21



RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The action successfully supported dialogue, reconciliation and built closer relationships between the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot communities. It also allowed the exchange of good practices and volunteerism between various stakeholders. Ultimately, it acted as a bridge between stakeholders and supported a multicultural environment.

Photo Credit: Studio 21



"We targeted participants that are socially excluded within the walled city of Nicosia and young, emerging artists. We also involved stakeholders such as the Nicosia local community, "the police", and "Directorate of Foundations in Cyprus (EVKAF)". The action successfully created a space for open communication between these groups to ensure that the voices, needs and ideas of all community members were incorporated into the festival. This sets a precedent for other local communities and organizers to replicate the methodology for citizen's involvement in other local communities in the northern part of Cyprus."

Derviş Zeybek



The action reached out to people with words, concepts and ideas that had local resonance. It empowered the neglected heart of the city and directly supported the neighbourhood by attracting people to work together with duty bearers. The positive effects of the Yuka Blend Street Festival can still be seen today in the walled city of Nicosia where the heart of the city has become livelier, attracting people with its uniqueness. The festival has become a significant yearly event in the walled city of Nicosia, taking place in the late summer.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Previous Yuka Blend festivals were organized by a dedicated team of volunteers of Studio 21, with limited funding. With the support of Grow Civic, the 2017 festival reached a larger group of people, which allowed the capacity of Studio 21 to increase and become the primary choice for organizing street festivals and working with socially excluded young people. The fact that a well-known company has approached the organization team to become a sponsor of Yuka Blend Festival 2018 shows the growth and impact of the event in the community.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION



This Project is funded by the European Union.



The content of this article is the sole responsibility of B&S Europe Consortium and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.