



pavilions are scattered around the island and compose a cartography of art contexts that include numerous types of institutions, museums, churches and oratories: each location will present a site-specific religious home for art projects and installations that respond to different belief systems. Artists are invited to examine religious thought and representation worldwide, as well as to reflect on the challenge involved in today's perception of religious diversity and faith.

Each year both WISH and BIAS support a humanitarian cause, entitled the **Portability Project Art and Medical Missions**. This year funds will be raised to promote a children's dental hospital in Nuweiba in the Sinai Desert, Egypt. The intention is also to provide aid for a complex system of professional medical internships of Egyptian dentists and ophthalmologists in Italy, and to help fund dentist's internships with renowned professionals in Sicily and Europe.

**WISH - World International Sicilian Heritage** together with the **Biennial of Transnational Contemporary Sacred Art (BIAS)** are proud to present their upcoming projects and programme for 2018.

The theme of this year's **BIAS** is the **Porta: porta itineris longissima dicitur esse**, or the gate, the door, meaning the passage and threshold.

The **Biennial of Transnational Contemporary Sacred Art BIAS** brings together the spiritual and religious essence of contemporary culture from an international perspective. The first biennial of its kind, BIAS aims to embrace different cultural belief systems that stem from religious theory and practice. BIAS strongly maintains that interdisciplinary artistic creativity must not be limited by notions of territoriality, nationality, or any stereotypical prejudice, and that both contemporary and ancient art practice is profoundly connected to ideas of faith that transcend traditional artistic and religious boundaries and visions. The re-evaluation of the spiritual vis-à-vis the religious experience through artistic investigation is one way of allowing us to experience something that would otherwise be intangible.

The individual locations that make up this exposition are organized into religious pavilions, much like spiritual "roots" such as the **Philosophical Pavilion**, the **Scientific Pavilion**, the **Esoteric Pavilion**, and the **Abramic Pavilion** (Jews, Christians, Muslims), the **Buddhist Pavilion**, the **African Religions Pavilion**, the **Lost Religions Pavilion** etc. In the past BIAS has presented its pavilions in a multitude of characteristic architectural locations, this year on the occasion of the nomination of the **city of Palermo as the Italian capital of culture for 2018** and the opening of Manifesta 12, the European Nomadic Biennale hosted by the Sicilian capital, BIAS's exhibitions will spread over various regions throughout Sicily. The sites that house these

BIAS, together with its humanitarian Portability Project, will be celebrating cultural heritage and contemporary interdisciplinary practice in the historic setting of the Palazzo Donà dalle Rose in Venice with a special launch event entitled **Forward Returns**. This evening celebration is intended to help identify, preserve, and protect both local and national heritage and give value to both tangible and intangible history. The evening will include a fundraiser auction: **Pop Art to Archaeology - from Pop Art, Music, Andy Warhol and the Ancient Greek Dancing Satyr from Mazara del Vallo**, a gala dinner and **Studio 54 Party, Basquiat Live Concert** and **Chris Jones Dj-Set**.

This important cultural incentive is supported and sponsored by the Region of Sicily, the Department of Cultural Heritage, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Palermo Museo Riso and Terrasini Cappella dell'Incoronata, the City of Palermo, the Arcidiocesi of Palermo, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Fondazione Orestyadi, together with numerous other public and private institutions.

