

# SUN-AIR

M A G A Z I N E

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## Christmas in LONDON

- something magical is in the air



# Life-Boats on Tour

Three sailing sculptures will cross Europe on the old water ways bringing culture and human relations from Aalborg to Venice.



By Hans Sejlund – Photos: Claus Ørntoft

“We are all in the same boat. We have all been inside a woman. We share the same cycle of life. I think we need to dwell on the life-affirming and simple elements that unite us.”

**MARIT BENTHE NORHEIM.**  
ARTIST

**Life-boats on Tour** is an art project consisting of three sailing sculptures in concrete, that both physically and mentally involves the audience on the waterways of Europe. The artist behind the sculptures, Marit Benthe Norheim, has based her work on three crucial stages in the life of women: the young woman entering the world, full of hope and dreams (My ship is loaded with Longing). The pregnant woman, in the middle of life (My ship is loaded with Life) and the aging woman, carrying portraits of 19 old women representing 27 different cultures (My ship is loaded with Memories).

“I had this dream of a sailing exhibition across borders, and I spend eight years reaching the simple conclusion: We are all in the same boat. We have all been inside a woman. We share this cycle of life. My work of art had to focus on these life-affirming and simple elements that unite us. That was obvious at the time, it's even more important today,” says Marit Benthe Norheim.

## BRINGING AND TAKING PARTS OF EUROPE

The project wants to meet the people in their surroundings and hear, see, feel and experience their culture, while bringing and taking a part of Europe with us. The sailing figures are 12m long, rise 3m over the water surface and are propelled forward by sustainable electric motors.

As floating cultural houses, the sculptures will sail through the hearts of the European cities, which are built up around the old waterways. The project is a platform for cultural exchange and the idea is, that the various harbours through their own artistic performances will communicate with the Life-Boats, leaving a trace that will be documented and accumulated to the next cities as a growing capital of dreams, life and common memories. The Life-boats project is about meetings - about exchange - about receiving foreign expressions - about daring to move into unknown territory and enter the dialogue.

## FUNDING FOR THE EUROPEAN TOUR

The overall aim of the Life-boats project is to create new kinds of dissemination of art and culture. The Life-boats on Tour are bringing art to people, where they are, establishing and reinforcing relations between European cities, residents and cultures in order to enhance the cultural diversity of Europe and strengthen our common European bond. The Life-Boats tour will visit some twenty cities sailing from Aalborg to Venice. Project manager Inger Grund Petersen has established cooperation with all the cities and is now working on funding the event – hoping to depart in 2019.

“The educational value of the project is high, as it draws in the population as well as countless other collaborators and artists from the countries that the Life-boats will be visiting. The project focuses on a string of issues like climate, environmentally friendly transport, relations between cultural groups, the role of women in society, peace negotiations, communication and our common development. The project will activate thousands of European children and young people in roles as cultural contributors, cultural creators and cultural consumers,” says Inger Grund Petersen.

The overall theme for the tour is Connecting Cultures across Europe, in which the Life-Boats play the part as floating ambassador. The idea of Life-Boats is to bring and leave traces of European culture on the way.

The three Life-Boats moored alongside the Copenhagen Opera House during a visit in 2017. In 2019 the Life-Boats are bound for Venice.

