

**For immediate release**

**WE ARE OCEAN Wadden Sea @ 14th Trilateral Wadden Sea Conference  
Wilhelmshaven**

**CONTACT**

ARTPORT\_making waves e. V., Frankfurt am Main  
Anne-Marie Melster  
Email: [anne-marie.melster@artport-project.org](mailto:anne-marie.melster@artport-project.org)  
Mobile: +49-177-540 3881

**Where:** UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage Visitor Centre, Wilhelmshaven  
**When:** 29<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, 10am – 18pm  
**Artists:** Insa Winkler, Sophia Bulgakova

**Detailed Description**

WE ARE OCEAN WADDEN SEA is an interactive journey created by ARTPORT\_making waves, curated by Anne-Marie Melster in partnership with the BUND Niedersachsen and instrument inventors The Hague, delivered by a group of artists in Germany, Denmark and The Netherlands where in a first part local students reflected on the effects of climate change on the Wadden Sea and how this is affecting the ecosystems and the culture of the land.

This summer interactive and interdisciplinary workshops and excursions to the Wadden Sea were organized in Friesland (The Netherlands) and Lower Saxony (Germany) to bring together the young students with the artists, curators and marine biologists to discuss the local environmental issues, their causes and possible solutions and how traditional knowledge can be of support in a more sustainable, respectful and indigenous perspective driven way.

During workshops at the Oberschule Dorum (Germany), the artist Insa Winkler and the curator Anne-Marie Melster together with the students created 'Kunstreusen' made of willow sticks, which form a giant North Sea shrimp and were suspended in the Wadden Sea in early July. This commemorates the uniqueness of Erhard Djuren, the last remaining willow trap fisher in the region. Particular attention was paid to the feasibility of alternative ecological techniques in the future.

In Schiermonnikoog and Uithuizen (The Netherlands), the artist Sophia Bulgakova supported by the curator Anastasia Loginova created 'The Beauty of Proximity: Sensing the Wadden Sea'. It also consisted of two series of workshops where she, together with the marine biologist Renate Prins, and the students explored the Wadden Sea in the provinces of Friesland and Groningen, both on an island and the mainland, with all their senses. They reflected on the effects of climate change on the Wadden Sea. They did so incorporating video, dance, and games.

In Wilhelmshaven we are coming together to reflect on, and discuss these past events. We will screen for a first time the two films that were created during the workshops this summer, next to participatory activities and an exhibition of the artistic outcomes. There will also be time to directly interact with all of the participants and ask questions during a fishbowl discussion, including artists, curators, students and scientists.

ARTPORT\_making waves has been working for 17 years with young people, who are the citizens of the future and its largest interest group, who more than ever are demanding politicians and systems of power to take them seriously. WE ARE OCEAN brings these young people together with politicians, academics and other decision-makers to think about feasible solutions.

WE ARE OCEAN continues to promote the regular implementation of such external scholarly-artistic workshops into the curriculum of schools to provide first-hand knowledge in a creative way and to involve young people in an international process. It gives young people an active voice. As an official part of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and the Ocean Literacy Program of IOC-UNESCO ([oceandecade.org](http://oceandecade.org)), these voices are carried around the world.



Batuhan Keskiner for WE ARE OCEAN Wadden Sea The Beauty of Proximity: Sensing the Wadden Sea, 2022



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**Anne-Marie Melster** (Artistic Director) an art curator, writer and educator focusing on social and environmental issues. She holds an MA Degree in Philology, Political Sciences and Art History from the University of Hamburg. As the co-founder and executive director of ARTPORT\_making waves she creates interdisciplinary projects which search for environmental and social solutions. She is the pioneering curator focusing on informal education through arts and sciences. She has curated numerous international art exhibitions and projects including film and video in collaboration with renowned institutions, organizations and governments worldwide, also for several UN Climate Change Conferences, always responding to the need to develop them in a sustainable way. Her current WE ARE OCEAN Global Program, which she created in 2019, which is endorsed by UNESCO for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, aims at creating youth empowerment and public engagement through contemporary art, sciences and informal education.

**Anastasia Loginova** (curator) is a cultural producer and part-time artist. Her strengths lie in curating and facilitating exhibitions and events as well as bringing people (and beings) together. Anastasia holds degrees in Art History from University College London (UCL), ArtScience from the ArtScience Interfaculty, The Royal Academy of Art, The Hague and Art Business MA from the Sotheby's Institute of Art (NYC).

She runs the agency at iii instrument inventors initiative, an artist-run community platform supporting new interdisciplinary practices linking performance, technology and the human senses based in The Netherlands, The Hague and is coordinator at the ArtScience Interfaculty, an interdisciplinary bachelor's and master's programme that fosters curiosity driven research as an approach for the making of art and is embedded between the Royal Conservatoire and The Royal Academy for Fine Arts in The Hague, The Netherlands.

**Insa Winkler** (artist) is working in the field of environmental art with focus on humans and nature, landscape and ecology, and philosophy of the flora. The artist obtained her diploma in Fine Arts at Muthesius University of Fine Arts and Design in Kiel (1989) and a post graduate M. Sc. in Architecture and Environment at the University of Applied Sciences in Wismar (2009). She received her PhD at Leuphana University Lüneburg in Culture and Sustainability Science (2020).

She received the Prize of the Federal Minister for Science and Culture, Bonn (1987) and the Art and Culture Award of the State of Oldenburg (2003). Since the early 90s and often together with co-founded artistic collaborations, she deepened her own transdisciplinary methods of "Social Landart" at the interface of art and sustainability. This includes the artistic examination of the Wadden Sea, Water Issues, the North German moors, the nuclear accident in Chernobyl, agriculture within an Acorn Pig Project, several conversion areas in Germany, with a focus on biodiversity and vegetation

**Matthias Merten** (marine biologist) is head of the National Park Center at the Wurster North Sea Coast. His background is in marine biology, with a specific focus on cartilage and bone structure in fish. During his studies, he designed and conducted guided tours and events in the field of shipping history, environmental education (Ozeaneum Stralsund) and natural history tours in Stanley Park Vancouver (Canada).

He received a bachelor's degree in biology (Kiel), a master's degree in marine biology (Hamburg), and did his dissertation at the Maritime Museum in Stralsund via the University of Jena. Through his work as manager of the Wurster North Sea Coast National Park House, he was able to deepen his skills and knowledge of the Wadden Sea habitat. He has been working in environmental education and nature conservation for over 15 years in various institutions, among them the NABU Vogelschutzzentrum Mössingen, the International Maritime Museum Hamburg, and many others.

**Sander van Dijk** (marine biologist) is the head of programming and content of the Sealcentre Pieterburen and the Wadden Sea World Heritage Centre in Lauwersoog. Sander has always been fascinated by the natural world around him and particularly life under water. After completing a bachelor in marine biology, he focused his master on fish and shark behaviour.

After working 2,5 years fulltime in the diving industries and 1,5 year abroad in several shark research related volunteering projects, Sander returned to the Netherlands in 2013. Here, he had the opportunity to work at the Sealcentre Pieterburen as research assistant and science communicator. Quickly it became clear the centre was going through a big change in its mission and vision. As part of the management team since 2015, Sander has been very involved in making this change happen.

**Sophia Bulgakova** (artist) is an interdisciplinary artist and activist currently based in The Hague, the Netherlands. Sophia is working on the intersection between art, technology, and society, focusing on the relationship between light, perception, and imagination. Through various sensorial inputs in her installations and performances, she engages viewers, impacting their ways of perceiving reality and exploring new possibilities beyond it.

Sophia studied sculpture in Kyiv and then got a foundation diploma in Photography and Time-Based Media at the University of the Arts London in the UK. After that, she graduated from the ArtScience Interfaculty at the Royal Academy of the Art and Royal Conservatory in The Hague, the Netherlands.

Her works were exhibited at CTM Festival (DE), Sonic Acts Festival (NL), Baltan Laboratories (NL), Mediamatic (NL), and Ningbo City Exhibition Hall (CN), among other places.

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