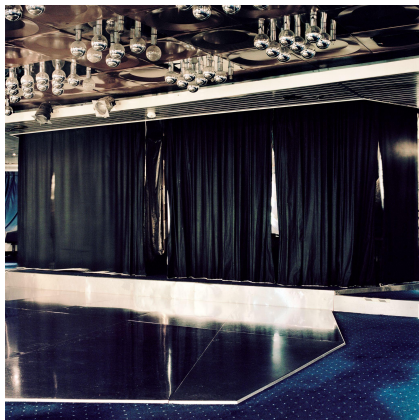


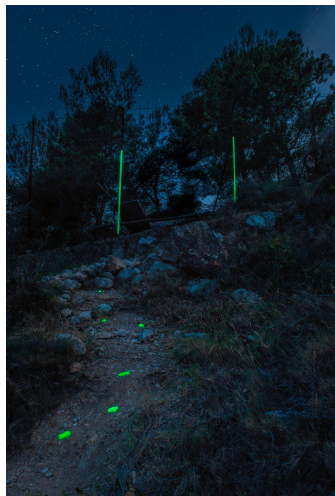
Overview of Research and Curatorial Project

# *Crossing Slowly / Attraversando Lentamente*

Exploration of Cultural Connotations of Migration

An initiative by **Yohsuke Ishizuka** | With support of **Viafarini** | July 2026





# Background

What motivated the project?

## 1. The Worsening Discourse on Immigrants in Europe

Due to the rise of conservative governments and the growing popularity of far-right political groups, immigrants have become scapegoats blamed for various problems. In this context, immigrants are easily associated with social problems.

## 2. Immigrants Becoming Anonymous

Issues concerning immigrants tend to be discussed from a macro perspective: How many immigrants are documented, what social impact have they brought, etc. However, each immigrant has their own story, and their diversity is neglected.

## 3. A Lack of Deeper Understanding of Migration in the Contemporary Art World

In the contemporary art scene, migration is often mentioned casually, such as in a biography or curatorial text that states, "The artist moved from A to B." However, migration must greatly impact one's life and art practices, and we should understand it further.

# Development

How did the project come about, and how has it evolved?

From May to June of 2026, during his residency at Viafarini, Ishizuka interviewed ten Italian artists working with the theme of migration, both directly and indirectly. An online exhibition titled “Crossing Slowly / Attraversando Lentamente” was curated and launched in July 2026 based on this research.

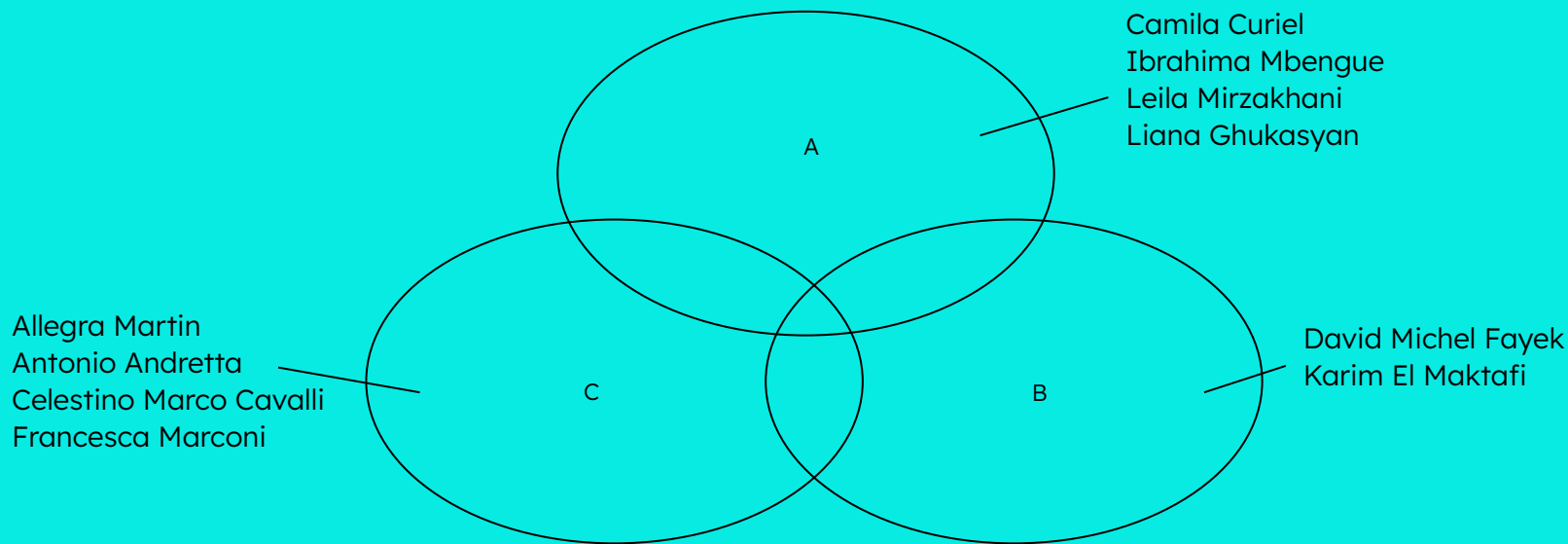
<https://www.islandsproject.org/crossing-slowly>

The exhibition aims to explore questions about the cultural significance of migration. Considering that the movement of people creates new landscapes by blending different cultures, how exactly does this happen?

Crossing a border is a brief action. After all, a border is just a line. However, reflecting on the Italian equivalent, “attraversare,” offers a different perspective. In addition to the basic meaning of “crossing,” the word also means “to go through,” for example, “to go through a difficult time” (attraversare un momento difficile), which suggests a longer duration of time needed for an action. In other words, “attraversare” blurs the distinction between crossing and going through. Inspired by this idea, this exhibition views migration as a process rather than a short action.

# Artists on focus

The participating artists showcase diversity in three areas: 1) cultural background, 2) artistic medium, and 3) gender. Notably, the artists can be categorized into three groups based on their migration experiences: A. Artists who have experienced migration firsthand, B. Second-generation immigrants born in Italy to immigrant families, C. Artists with Italian cultural heritage. The exhibition presents the intersections of their works.



# Themes that emerged

What core issues were revealed through the exhibition? What topics warrant further discussion?

## 1. Maintaining a Changing Relationship with the Country of Origin

Some artists travel back and forth between their country of origin and their current place of residence. Even frequent visits reveal changes. A familiar place can become unfamiliar. The relationship with one's country of origin is usually taken for granted, but sometimes it becomes a matter of much thought.

## 2. How to Create Resilient Discourses about Immigrants in Italy

Despite the "problematic" images of immigrants or their invisibility in Italian society, it has become clear that some artists continuously create humanistic discourses through their art practice. How do they manage to do this without losing resilience?

## 3. Articulating Emotions Arising from the Experience of Migration

Some of the works in this exhibition made it clear that addressing the emotional aspect of migration is important. After all, migration is a humanistic process that evokes strong emotions. How can artists continue to address this issue?

# More relevant themes...

