

# School of kindness

23 June —  
7 July 2021

Sofia (Bulgaria)  
and surrounding



# OPEN CALL

In a time when we are living on the edge, both in the so-called West and East, in real, virtual and psychological wars, it is radical to be kind. High levels of anxiety and psycho-somatic post-states call for the need to embrace coexistence. As humans, today we are connected by the wrong ideas and the proposition of kindness is one way to deal with this contemporary default. To arrive to kindness is to embrace friendship and kinship.

**School  
of kindness**



**Aether Art Space** and **Migrating Voices** invite you to apply to the **School of kindness**—a cross-disciplinary, school-workshop-seminar, open for participants from different artistic as well as non-artistic backgrounds.

**School of kindness** will take place from 23 June until 7 July 2021 in the city of Sofia and its surrounding mountains, in Bulgaria. Over the course of two weeks, participants will engage in a program of workshops, excursions, exercises, lectures and seminars provided by artists, theorists, performers and activists. A public program of films and a symposium will be presented in parallel.

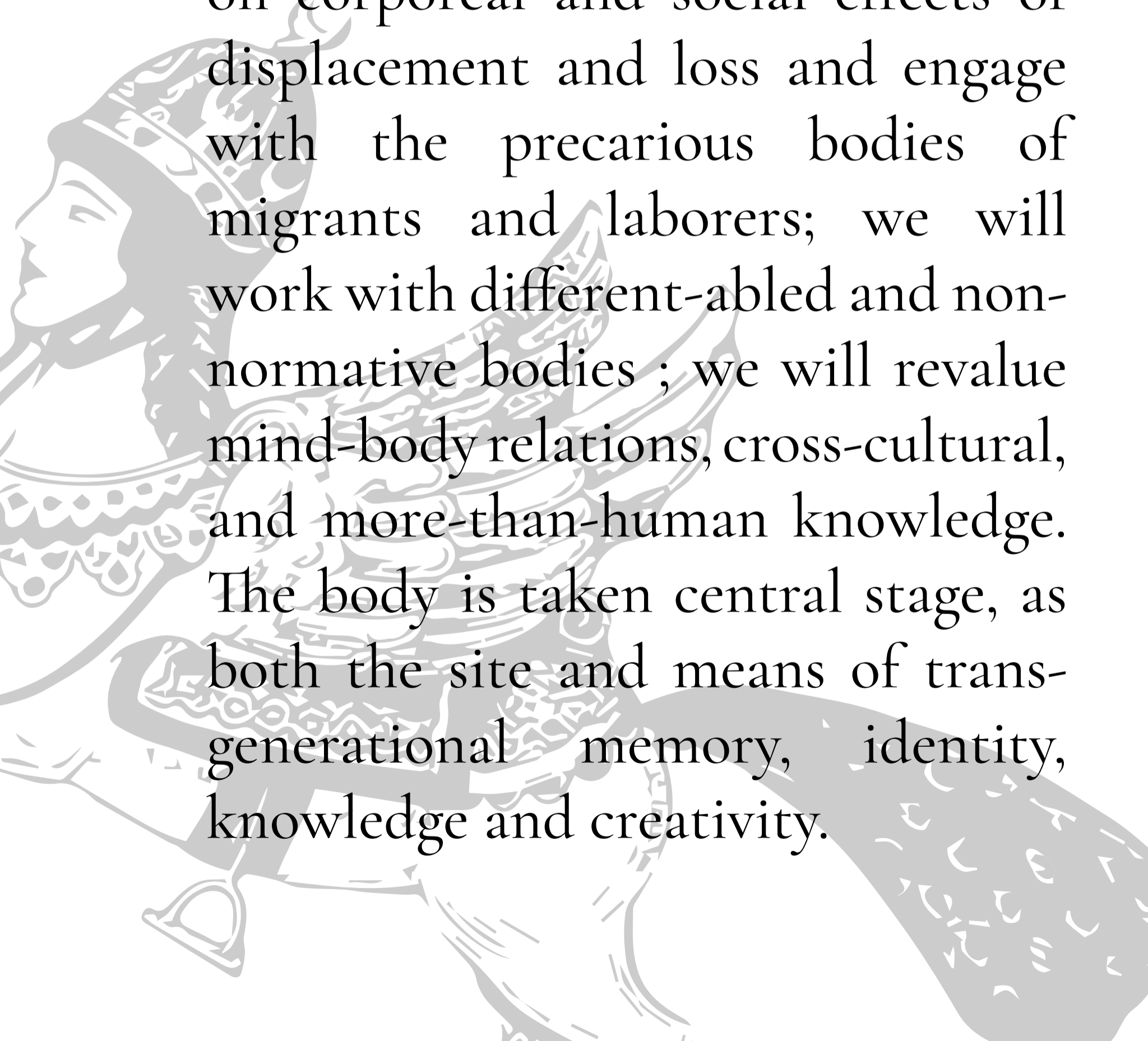


## **School of Kindness**

is the first edition of a series of experimental, educational and discursive programs realized at different places in, and on the border with, Europe. Together these programs form a fugitive school of sorts. The fugitive school aims to connect practitioners and thinkers from East and West, to share ideas and knowledge, to work together, in order to arrive to a new cognitive state of political imagination.

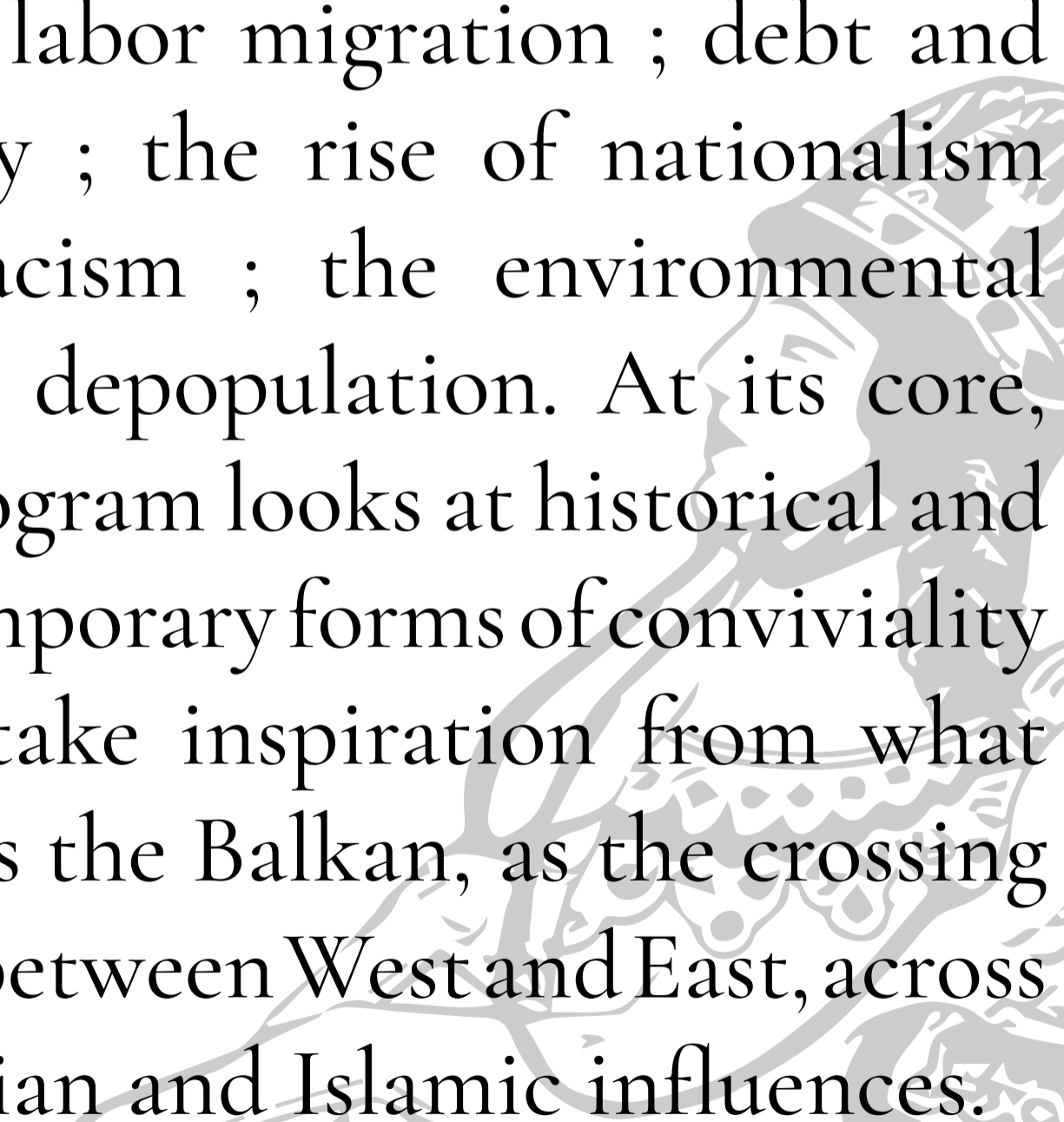
# School of Kindness

explores cultural, economic and political migration through real, virtual, mythological, juridical and political bodies. We will focus on corporeal and social effects of displacement and loss and engage with the precarious bodies of migrants and laborers; we will work with different-abled and non-normative bodies ; we will revalue mind-body relations, cross-cultural, and more-than-human knowledge. The body is taken central stage, as both the site and means of trans-generational memory, identity, knowledge and creativity.



## **School of Kindness**

will take place in the context of a set of interrelated issues that overwhelmingly permeate daily life in Bulgaria: political transformation and living in the post-socialist state ; labor migration ; debt and poverty ; the rise of nationalism and racism ; the environmental crisis ; depopulation. At its core, the program looks at historical and contemporary forms of conviviality — to take inspiration from what typifies the Balkan, as the crossing point between West and East, across Christian and Islamic influences.

A faint, stylized illustration of a woman in traditional Balkan attire, including a headscarf and a patterned dress, is visible in the background on the right side of the page.

## Program

### **School of Kindness**

offers a two-week program of practical and theoretical experiments for approximately 25 participants who are willing to work collectively and to share their own concerns and practices in regard to different forms of migrations. We offer a tuition-free program, but participants are expected to be present for the full two-weeks and to deliver a presentation at the end of the program. They also need to finance their own travel to Bulgaria and stay in Sofia for two weeks. Two excursions to respectively Vitosha mountain and the village of Brestnitsa/ Prohodna cave are included in the program, as well as a free daily lunch.

*Tutors include:*

**Ismail Fayed** (Egypt), writer, scholar ;

**Raia Apostolova** (Bulgaria), sociologist and political theorist in the field of migration ;

**Tania Reytan** (Bulgaria), scholar, researcher and activist ;

**Farah Barqawi**, Palestinian writer, performer, translator, and editor ;

**Sarah Mardini** (Syria), activist ;

**Dolores Hulan** (Austria/ Belgium), dancer, choreographer ;

**Sorour Darabi** (Iran/ France), performer, artist, singer ;

**Mladen Alexiev** (Bulgaria), dramaturg, performer, writer, artist;

**Angelo Custódio** (Portugal/ Netherlands), artist, performer ;

**Akim** (Germany/ Bulgaria), artist ;

**Marlie Mul** (Netherlands/ Belgium), artist and educator ;

*and others to be confirmed.*

**School  
of Kindness**



## How to apply

We invite you to send your application to  
[fugitiveschoolaether@gmail.com](mailto:fugitiveschoolaether@gmail.com)  
not later than 15 April 2021.

The application should include:

- ✿ A letter of motivation: why do you want to be part of the program, what do you expect to learn, and what could others possibly learn from you? (pdf, 1 page)

- ✿ A biography: where are you from and what do you do? Do you have a practice as an artist? What are your interests?

What are you engaged with at the moment?  
(pdf, 1 page)

- ✿ A selection of works: images or other visual material ; a text or publication  
(pdf, 1 file, max size xxx)

## About

**Æther Art Space** is a self-organized platform for exhibitions, discussions, community gathering, experimentation, workshops and publishing in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Æther partners with LGBT+, anti-fascist and human rights organizations in Bulgaria to oppose anti-democratic developments, specifically issues regarding violence against women, hate speech, same-sex marriage, and discrimination of minority groups. Æther is founded by artist and performer Voin de Voin.

**Migrating Voices** is a cross-disciplinary research project founded in 2019, as a continuation from the MA program Master of Voice (Amsterdam, Netherlands) with the aim to further investigate the agency of voice in, and outside of, artistic practices. The project is dedicated to the articulation of lost, silenced, dissident and marginalized voices in different forms of migration and aims to bring these voices the fore as inspiration and as material to examine positions of radicality as (artistic) practice. Migrating Voices is founded by curator, researcher and educator Lisette Smits.

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*Buraq on a reproduction of 17th century Indian (Mughal) miniature (public domain). The Burāq (Arabic: al-Burāq / “lightning” or more generally “bright”) is a mythical creature in Islamic tradition that was said to be a transport for certain prophets, “The Buraq carried the Islamic prophet Muhammed from Mecca to Jerusalem and up in the heavens and back by night.”*



## Contact and more information:

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Migrating Voices  
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