**Project Proposal: Art as an Archive of Memory**

**Working Title:**
*Art as an Archive of Memory: Exploring How Artists Preserve Cultural and Personal Histories*

**Overview:**
This project explores how artistic practice can serve as an archive of memory, particularly in intercultural contexts. Drawing from written research and theoretical frameworks, the paper will examine how artists use visual language to document, process, and transmit personal and collective memories. It will consider how memory, identity, and cultural presence intersect through the act of making, with an emphasis on how these elements are reflected in contemporary visual art.

The project will be primarily theoretical, submitted as a written paper, with the potential addition of a visual or video-based documentary element that complements the research. The focus will remain on analysing existing artistic practices and theoretical texts, with minimal inclusion of the researcher’s own practice.

**Research Question:**
How can artistic practice function as an archive of memory, and what role does this play in preserving cultural identity and expressing lived experience across intercultural contexts?

**Key Themes:**

* Memory as a method of cultural continuity
* Art as a vessel for emotional and historical preservation
* The artist's role in holding, recording, and translating lived experience
* Interculturality as it emerges through memory, identity, and expression
* Oral storytelling and the visualisation of intangible heritage

**Research Context:**
This topic draws on a wide range of literature and existing visual practices that treat art as a form of historical and emotional documentation. The research will focus on case studies of artists who engage with themes of memory, cultural identity, and oral tradition. In parallel, it will examine relevant theoretical contributions in the fields of memory studies, oral history, and intercultural theory.

To support the analysis, the project will reference a Cypriot folk tale that has been passed down orally for generations. A visual interpretation of this tale, created for an external exhibition, will serve as a minor case study that illustrates the transformation of oral storytelling into contemporary visual art. This inclusion will not shift the academic focus but will enhance the conceptual relevance of the research.

**Methodology:**

* Theoretical research: academic papers, books, and online archives concerning memory studies, oral history, cultural preservation, and intercultural theory
* Visual contextual analysis: case studies of artists whose work deals with memory, storytelling, and identity
* Comparative reflection: minimal reference to the researcher’s own project, used to complement the analysis of broader examples
* Documentary option (optional): A short video essay presenting highlights of the research with visual materials

**Outcome Format:**

* A written paper (up to 8000 words) with Harvard references
* Optional supporting visual documentation or a short video essay (up to 30 minutes) reflecting key ideas from the research

**UAL Learning Outcomes & REBEL Capabilities:**

* *Normalcy Competency*: By exploring memory in ordinary and familial contexts, the project emphasises everyday experience as a site of cultural reflection
* *Self-Awareness Competency*: While largely theoretical, the project demonstrates awareness of the researcher’s own cultural background as it relates to the broader themes
* *Communication & Knowledge*: The written paper and optional documentary will clearly communicate complex ideas, supported by visual and theoretical research

**Conclusion:**
This project aims to offer a theoretically grounded analysis of how memory is preserved and translated through artistic practice. By exploring a variety of visual works and oral traditions, it highlights the importance of art in holding and passing on cultural identity. The inclusion of a folk tale interpretation as a supporting case study underscores the enduring relevance of memory-based storytelling in contemporary art.