



La Biennale di Venezia

Arte
Architettura
Cinema
Danza
Musica
Teatro
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Biennale Arte 2019

Meetings, talks, performances to happen on the closing week

Sunday, November 24th

Paolo Baratta and Ralph Rugoff
to close the “Meetings on Art” programme

followed by

the reference-book launch of
“**Esposizione Internazionale d’Arte, La Biennale di Venezia, 1895-2019**”

Venice, November 14th, 2019 – The last days of the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia is to be enlivened by a wide range of meetings, talks and performances.

Following the great success of last May’s pre-opening-week performances, **the closing week of Biennale Arte 2019** will host a series of new performances taking place every day in the Arsenale at Teatro alle Tese and Teatro Piccolo within the context of the Meetings on Art.

The programme extends the theme of the 58th International Art Exhibition, titled *May You Live In Interesting Times*, and features a line-up of artists who are defining this generation of performance. **Tarek Atoui**, a participant in the 58th International Art Exhibition, bridges music and contemporary art to expand notions of listening through participatory and collaborative sound performances. In a series of performative lectures and listening sessions, **Vivian Caccuri**, **Bo Zheng**, **Cooking Sections**, **Vivien Sansour**, and **Invernomuto** interrogate bio-politics and wider ecological concerns, from the land to the sea to the human body. In a new collaboration, **Paul Maheke**, **Nkisi & Ariel Efraim Ashbel** bring to the fore diasporic geographies, ancestral knowledge, and questions of visibility and invisibility of marginalized voices in Western-dominated history. Taken together, the performance programme opens up new and complex readings of the past, present and potential future. (*artistic organizer Aaron Cezar; with the additional support of Arts Council England and Delfina Foundation*)

“This year’s Exhibition, titled *May You Live In Interesting Times*, highlights art that exists in between accepted categories and genres – **Ralph Rugoff** said – and which questions the rationales behind our categorical thinking. The performance programme exemplifies this kind of approach, testing aesthetic, behavioural and social conventions in a wide range of events”.

On Sunday, November 24th, President of La Biennale di Venezia **Paolo Baratta** and curator **Ralph Rugoff** will meet visitors in a public conversation to discuss the legacy of Biennale Arte 2019.

Following the talk, Baratta will launch a new **reference book** titled *Esposizione Internazionale d’Arte, La Biennale di Venezia, 1895-2019*, collecting detailed information on all the editions of the International Art Exhibition since its foundation in 1895 to this day. The volume is published by La Biennale di Venezia and edited by La Biennale Historical Archives.

PROGRAMME

Sunday, November 17th

Teatro alle Tese 2

3 pm

Tarek Atoui, *Mirror Reverse* (2019) (50 to 60 min.)

The practice of **Tarek Atoui** (a participant artist in the 58th International Art Exhibition) bridges music and contemporary art to expand notions of listening through participatory and collaborative sound performances. Through his complex environment, the artist breaks down the notions of performance, collaboration and installation.

On *Mirror Reverse*, Tarek Atoui conceives a 20-minute piece that repeats twice and on which two performers/ improvisers switch roles and instruments every cycle. The starting point of this piece is *Quote from the Reverse Collection*, Atoui's project currently part of the Biennale Arte 2019. Prune Bécheau and Adrian Smith will improvise along audio recordings from the *Reverse Collection*, and will alternately play the Hybrid Violin, an instrument by Leo Maurel part of Atoui's project.

Friday, November 22nd, and Saturday, November 23rd

Teatro alle Tese 3

Performative lectures

A three-part series of performative lectures and listening sessions that interrogate bio-politics and wider ecological concerns. (Detailed information in the following section)

11.30 am – 12.30 pm

Part I

Bo Zheng, *Plant Sex Workshop* (2019) (25 min.)

Intermission of 10 min.

Vivian Caccuri, *Mosquitoes Also Cry* (2018) | *The Fever Hand* (2019) (25 min.)

Intermission of 30 min.

1 pm – 2 pm

Part II

Cooking Sections, *CLIMAVORE: On Tidal Zones* (2018) (25 min.)

Intermission of 10 min.

Vivien Sansour, *Autonomia* (2019) (25 min.)

Intermission of 30 min.

2.30 pm – 3.30 pm

Part III

Invernomuto, *Black Med: Chapter IV* (listening session) (2019) (50 min.)

Teatro Piccolo Arsenale

6.15 pm

Paul Maheke, Nkisi and Ariel Efraim Ashbel, *Sènsa* (2019) (30 min.)

Through sound, light, and movement, *Sènsa* brings to the fore diasporic geographies, displacement of knowledge, and questions of visibility and invisibility of the black body in public space.

Sunday, November 24th

Teatro alle Tese

11.30 am

Meetings on Art | A Conversation with Paolo Baratta and Ralph Rugoff

followed by

Book launch of *Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte, La Biennale di Venezia, 1895-2019*

Paolo Baratta launches the reference book titled *Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte, La Biennale di Venezia, 1895-2019*, published by La Biennale di Venezia and edited by La Biennale Historical Archives (ASAC)

In order to attend the meetings it is necessary to purchase an admission ticket to the 58th International Art Exhibition.

The detailed programme can be found at <https://www.labiennale.org/it/agenda>

For further information and accreditation please contact:

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THE ARTISTS participating in the *Closing Weekend* performance programme

VIVIAN CACCURI (BRAZIL)

Brazilian artist Vivian Caccuri investigates the physical, sociopolitical, and spiritual impact of sound, especially the unwanted or subaltern sounds.

About the performance

Caccuri's illustrated lecture *Mosquitos Also Cry* (2018) is inspired by the mosquito and its relationship with humanity. Mosquitos buzz to each other as a love call, but their buzz in the ears of humans, once understood, is now hated. Caccuri proposes delirious ways to re-bond with these insects.

A very unexpected connection between mosquitos and sugar plantations makes the 18th century a very unique moment for the Latin American psyche, health and music. *The Fever Hand* (2019) highlights historical moments of madness, disease, and psychedelia during the first yellow fever epidemics in Brazil to create a semi-fictional bond between mankind and mosquitos, which has been protected and empowered by sugar and yet to be transformed with new GMO mosquitos in the environment.

BO ZHENG (CHINA)

Bo Zheng is committed to socially and ecologically engaged art. He investigates the past and imagines the future from the perspectives of marginalised communities and marginalised plants. He is learning to cultivate ecological wisdom for a Good Anthropocene.

About the performance

No, we won't be talking about how plants have sex (you can read Darwin). Yes, we will be talking about how plants can have sex with us. Don't tell me this is ridiculous. I'll prove to you why it's better to have sex with plants than to kill them and eat them! In this hands-on workshop (all puns intended), we will be reviewing: 1. Which other species on planet Earth are having sex with plants 2. Why Japanese artists in the 19th century only thought about sex between animals and humans 3. How you can practice what sages of our Massive Anthro Extinction Event – Donna J. Haraway and Anna L. Tsing – preach by a simple act of pleasure?

COOKING SECTIONS (UK)

Cooking Sections (Daniel Fernández Pascual and Alon Schwabe) is a duo of spatial practitioners based out of London. Cooking Sections was born to explore the systems that organise the world through food, using installation, performance, mapping and video. Their research-based practice explores the overlapping boundaries between visual arts, architecture and geopolitics.

About the performance

Cooking Sections presents a new version of their lecture-performance, *CLIMAVORE: On Tidal Zones* (2018) which focuses on sea pollution by fish farms and the cultural construction of "Scottish Salmon", looking specifically into the case of the Isle of Skye. Commissioned by Atlas Arts, the project investigates the detrimental effects of salmon farming and explores alternative ecological imaginaries. The resulting installation consisted of an "oyster table" – home for 1,000 common oysters on the tidal zone filtering thousands of liters of water daily at high tide. As the structure emerged out of the water at low tide, it served as a dining table for humans, where performative lectures, public workshops and tastings allowed participants to discuss alternative aqua-cultures. The project is evolving into an installation on the island titled the *CLIMAVORE Station* (scheduled to open 2020).

VIVIEN SANSOUR (PALESTINE)

Vivien Sansour is an artist and conservationist who uses image, sketch, film, soil, seeds, and plants to enliven old cultural tales in contemporary presentations and to advocate for the protection of biodiversity as a cultural and political act. As the founder of Palestine Heirloom Seed Library and the Traveling Kitchen project, she works with farmers to promote seed conservation and crop diversity.

About the performance

As a seed storyteller, Vivien Sansour takes us through a global journey of looking for and excavating bio-cultural heritage through stories of seed keepers, farmers, and natural elements across the world. A pollinator, Vivien weaves her own story with her work as someone who delivers old tales and gives them a contemporary twist. From the grasses of the American Prairies, the Milpas of Central America, and the hills of her home in Palestine, *Autonomia* (2019) is a tapestry of stories, both personal and universal that takes the

audience on an audio-visual journey that ignites the senses to imagine the smells, textures, and tastes of an ever changing and dynamic world. This performance will include large images, sound, narration by the artist, and audience interaction.

INVERNOMUTO (ITALY)

Simone Bertuzzi and Simone Trabucchi have been collaborating as Invernomuto since 2003. Although their work focuses primarily on the moving image and sound, they also integrate sculpture, performance and publishing into their practice. Invernomuto explores what remains of subcultures by moving through different media. Observed through unashamedly affected eyes, oral cultures and minor histories are laid open, their vernacular forms examined.

About the performance

The Mediterranean Sea, once understood as a fluid entity aiding the formation of networks and exchange, is now the site of a humanitarian crisis and heated geopolitical dispute. Following scholar Alessandra Di Maio's adaptation of Paul Gilroy's concept of the Black Atlantic to the Mediterranean, *Black Med* (2019) aims at intercepting the trajectories that sounds trace when passing through this protean area. Divided into different chapters, the *Black Med* listening sessions are based on a DJ set supported by a series of projected slides containing theoretical texts and backstories referring to the musical pieces, grouped by elegiac themes. The sessions explore different journeys of sound movement, touching topics such as alternate uses of technology, migrations, peripheries and interspecies. For the occasion of *Meetings on Art* at Biennale Arte 2019, Invernomuto premieres the fourth chapter of *Black Med*, which expands their research around sound crossing the Mediterranean towards eastern routes, to include a detour in the Gulf area. In this session they will explore different ideas of futurism and undertake unexpected trajectories between Europe and the Middle East, trying to deconstruct older tropes of the Orientalist gaze.

PAUL MAHEKE (FRANCE/UK), NKISI (BELGIUM/UK), AND ARIEL EFRAIM ASHBEL (ISRAEL/GERMANY)

With a focus on dance and through a varied and often collaborative body of work comprising performance, installation, sound and video, Paul Maheke considers the potential of the body as an archive in order to examine how memory and identity is formed and constituted. Nkisi is the pseudonym of Melika Ngombe Kolongo, whose activities as a producer, live musician, DJ and curator are channels for an ongoing inquiry into sound as a tool of communication beyond the purely lingual. Ariel Efraim Ashbel frequently collaborates as a performer, dramaturg and light designer with many artists, choreographers and composers, in addition to his own transdisciplinary performance practice that weaves together historical, political, theoretical, and pop culture references.

About the performance

Combining sound, light, and movement, *Sènsa* (2019) traverses diasporic geographies and ancestral knowledge. Playing with motifs of presence and withdrawal, the performance insists on the sensorial. A blurring of the field of vision is at the heart of *Sènsa*, a Bantu word that translates as "coming to visibility," "to appear from far away," or "to reveal itself." Informed by Dr. Kimbwandènde Kia Bunseki Fu-Kiau's 1991 book *African Cosmology of the Bantu-Kongo: Principles of Life and Living*, *Sènsa* positions the cosmology of the Bantu-Kongo as a point of entry which grounds the performance in a diasporic imaginary; one that is "in-between." *Sènsa* brings to the fore voices often marginalized in Western-dominated history. The performance oscillates between visibility and erasure with a lighting system conceived by Ariel Efraim Ashbel while Nkisi's music alternates between atmospheric waves and forceful musical spasms to create a disorienting sonic environment generated and treated live by sound captors installed on the theater's walls and floor. Ghostly shadows appear and disappear, mumbled words akin to spells are being cast, and echoes of the building's vibrations serve as strategies to build an intoxicating performance. Costume: Firpal Jawanda | Stylist: Curtly Thomas