

**Biennale Architettura 2021**  
**Special Event**  
**by Vuslat Foundation**  
**Giuseppe Penone**

The **Special Event of Biennale Architettura 2021** commissioned and presented by **Vuslat Foundation** is a new installation by **Giuseppe Penone** - *The Listener* – in close collaboration with **Chus Martinez**. This planting of the tree in the waters of Venice represents the coming into life of this new philanthropic organization. The work, named “*Idee di Pietra – Olmo (Ideas of Stone- Elm)*”, is an elm tree installed **at the Gaggiandre in the Arsenale**.

In relation to the theme of the La Biennale Architettura 2021, *How will we live together?*, the project opens a global conversation about how we can create spaces for listening in 21st century society. The trees as the sign of *regeneration* and the embodiment of generous listening. Listening is creating a new epistemic culture, that is, allowing us to know the world around us under completely new premises. Listening stands for the active sensing of the world. *Receiving* is another key notion that is revived through the presence of the tree and the space for generous listening in the 17<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition.

In parallel with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Vuslat Doğan Sabancı established the new foundation as a platform to place ‘generous listening’ at the very core of human connections by 2030. This will be the first of Vuslat Foundation's many planned global programmes reaching diverse constituencies in partnership with artists, storytellers, change makers and thought leaders.

“Why then a tree? Because a tree reveals to us the fundamental aspects of nature and its consciousness..... since a tree is *all attention* - **Chus Martinez** said. Its life depends on listening to all the elements, to taking them in. It is a dynamic of mutuality. Our Foundation needed the touch of that tree to convey our vision. We would like to deepen feelings of care and mutuality through forms of listening that will nourish society and the values of respect and freedom. We would like to work with artists, storytellers, but also educators and designers to strengthen the many different bonds that will be the foundation of a transformative process towards equality and a non-binary world.”

“In the work “*Idee di Pietra - Olmo*” the stone supported by the branches is made up of countless crystals, like the individual thoughts that constitute our memory – **Giuseppe Penone** explained. When unexpected feelings disrupt and create ripples through the slow flow of sensations that envelop and impregnate our brain like a fluid, ideas— both similar and opposite— gather around them in order to weigh up their value. It is the germ around which a thought takes shape, which, like a crystal, develops in a coherent manner, following a defined pattern that grows

in the space occupied by our senses, which we then set aside along with the other thoughts contained in our memory. They form the bulk of our memories, accumulating over the course of our lives like the continuous germination of crystals that incessantly form the earth's crust. The thoughts contained within a human brain are like the countless crystals within a stone, suspended between the branches of a tree."

### **About Vuslat Foundation**

Vuslat Foundation is a global initiative that fosters a deeper appreciation of listening, the fundamental component to connecting with each other. The foundation creates awareness about and spreads the skill of generous listening- hearing beyond words- to oneself, to others and to nature as the essential element of all our connections. Established in Switzerland in 2020, with offices in Istanbul and London, Vuslat Foundation works with artists, storytellers, changemakers and thought leaders. Through partnerships with academia, the Foundation develops knowledge, research, methodologies and tools on generous listening; cultivates generous listening in the ecosystems of youth and children; partners with civil society to offer the practices of generous listening in their work; and engages with artists.

### **About La Biennale di Venezia**

La Biennale di Venezia was founded in 1895 and is now one of the most famous and prestigious cultural organizations in the world. Chaired by Roberto Cicutto, La Biennale stands at the forefront of research and promotion of new contemporary art trends, organizing exhibitions and research in all its specific departments: Arts (1895), Architecture (1980), Cinema (1932), Dance (1999), Music (1930), and Theatre (1934). Its history is documented at the Historical Archives of Contemporary Arts (ASAC) that has been completely renovated in recent years. The International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia has been recognized as the world leader in contemporary art exhibitions and has also been recognised as the best in the world.

**For interview requests, further information and press images,**  
please contact Scott & Co.

Selina Jones - [selina@scott-andco.com](mailto:selina@scott-andco.com)

Carlotta Dennis-Lovaglio - [carlotta@scott-andco.com](mailto:carlotta@scott-andco.com)