



PRESS RELEASE
VENICE PAVILION – BIENNALE ARTE 2026
PERSISTENT NOTES

The Venice Pavilion presents on the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, **Persistent Notes**, a project curated by **Giovanna Zabotti** with the participation of **Denis Isaia** and **Cesare Biasini Selvaggi**. The exhibition unfolds as a sequence of environments guiding visitors through four symbolic dimensions of the city: **submerged, domestic, mythological, and collective**.

In dialogue with the Biennale Arte 2026's curatorial concept **In Minor Keys**, the exhibition invites visitors to listen to the city's deepest frequencies: those emerging from its foundations, from the stories of its inhabitants, from the transformations of the material that sustains it, and from the corrosive processes that shape it. Like a composition in a minor key, **Persistent Notes** constructs a sensory and narrative experience that traverses different dimensions of Venetian reality, transforming the Pavilion into a field of resonance between past, present, and future.

"I imagined the Venice Pavilion as a return to its deepest notes, to what endures. A relational pavilion, where the works are not merely observed but activate connections between people, stories, and perceptions," says curator Giovanna Zabotti. "My Venice reveals itself through minimal and poetic signs—the light reflected from the water onto the walls, transforming surfaces; its submerged parts; the intimate memories of those who live it every day—almost imperceptible details that, precisely in their fragility, preserve the city's most authentic essence. Alongside these are other persistent notes: the stratification of cultures, signs, and historical periods, and the spirit of its inhabitants, capable of recognizing and loving even its smallest and most silent traces. The Pavilion thus takes shape as a collective score, in which artists become channels through which to tune into the city. A generous and hospitable gesture toward life, inviting listening and sharing."

"The Venice Pavilion is a source of great pride for the municipal administration: over the past eleven years it has regained prominence and become an authoritative voice in the international cultural and artistic landscape, and beyond. It demonstrates and represents what Venice has always been: open, diplomatic, and free. This is the city where people choose to be free," comments Mayor Luigi Brugnaro. "And so today more than ever, the Venice Pavilion stands as a stronghold of freedom. This year, it is also a place where people—Venetians—freely tell their stories: a narrative of many individuals that together form a collective identity. Because Venice, which exists and endures with all its fragility, has always also been a non-place, an idea: a cultural reference, an ideal. The Pavilion also confirms itself as a space for new generations, thanks to the 'Artefici del Nostro Tempo' competition."

"In this exhibition, there is a city that speaks in a low voice, like someone who knows they will be heard nonetheless. The installations move through the exhibition space without declaring themselves, gradually allowing the city to emerge," explains Commissioner Maurizio Carlin. "It is not style, but tone: a vibration that lingers. Something seeps into the materials, rhythms, and silences, yet reality does not change—it shifts just enough to demand the visitor's attention. From the entrance, visitors will encounter traces, presences, notes emerging, accompanying them throughout the exhibition. And within the Artefici space, a promise quietly persists."



According to Denis Isaia, “the project reflects on the unique nature of Venice, a myth-city in which container and content merge, generating universal imaginaries. Three ‘persistent notes’ emerge—fragility, resistance, and efflorescence—with a gaze directed toward what continues to generate possibilities from below.”

The exhibition begins with the collective dimension of Venice in the space dedicated to **Artefici del Nostro Tempo**, a competition aimed at new generations of artists and emerging practices, now in its seventh edition. The space is also conceived as a place for meeting and social interaction, with an area dedicated to rest and conversation, transforming the visit into a moment of sharing and dialogue.

The first voice is the Pavilion’s **mythological** dimension, taking shape in the work of pianist **Dardust**, who creates an original composition dedicated to Venice. The project unfolds as an immersive installation, conceived by scenographer **Paolo Fantin** in collaboration with an international team of engineers from **Cisco** and **H-Farm**, integrating a generative sound system based on artificial intelligence. The work responds to sounds, movements, and environmental data from the city, as well as to words written by visitors, generating a unique and ever-changing musical landscape each time: Venice thus becomes a living composer, and the audience becomes an active participant in the sonic experience. “Music becomes immersion into what remains invisible: Venice also lives beneath the surface, like a memory that continues to vibrate,” says Dardust. “The space becomes a suspended place, where what is real and what belongs to the dimension of dreams begin to blur. In this perceptual fracture, the viewer is invited to enter, to lose themselves for a moment, and to reconnect with a deeper emotional dimension,” adds Paolo Fantin.

The second voice is the city’s **submerged** dimension, evoked by the work of **Alberto Scodro**, who explores what supports Venice yet remains invisible except under particular tidal conditions. His sculptures, like material stratifications forming beneath the water’s surface, arise from the fusion and agglomeration of sands, glass, pigments, and material residues, generating forms reminiscent of geological concretions and natural sedimentation. The works present matter as a living process, where time, energy, and transformation become visible, evoking the deep dynamics that sustain and shape the city. “The work speaks of what might exist beneath the surface: a hidden world of possibilities, between reality and imagination,” says the artist.

The third voice is the **domestic** dimension, entrusted to **Venetian Diary** by **Ilya and Emilia Kabakov** with the participation of Venetian residents. Created in collaboration with residents of the metropolitan area, the work takes shape through a large participatory project collecting everyday objects lent by Venetians that express their bond with the city. “In an era dominated by spectacle, *Venetian Diary* restores centrality to everyday life, inviting Venetians to reclaim their own narrative: not an exhibition about Venice, but an exhibition of Venice. The result is an emotional map of the city, where art becomes a shared experience and a collective story,” says Cesare Biasini Selvaggi.

Special thanks to **BPER Banca La Galleria Corporate Collection**, main partner, and to all private and institutional partners for believing in the project. “The partnership with the Venice Pavilion and a project such as *Persistent Notes* reflects the desire to embrace a cultural vision that engages with time and memory,” emphasizes Sabrina Bianchi, Head of Cultural Heritage at BPER Banca. “We strongly believe in the ability of art to build connections and to speak to new generations, contributing to social growth based on responsibility, inclusion, and attention to sustainability.”

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