

LUXEMBOURG PAVILION

"A COMPARATIVE
DIALOGUE ACT"

ANDREA MANCINI
AND
EVERY ISLAND

CURATED BY
JOEL VALABREGA

20.04-24.11.2024

ARSENALE, VENEZIA

Project presentation

A Comparative Dialogue Act challenges the entrenched notion of individual artistic authorship by presenting a collection of works where artists relinquish ego in favour of a profound exploration of collective creativity through the medium of sound.

A programme of residencies taking place over the duration of the Biennale Arte 2024 will transform the pavilion into a production space where each individual exploration will contribute to a shared body of work.

This exhibition explores the transformative potential of sound as a medium for cultivating connection and understanding. It aims to transcend the limits set by singular perspectives of what sound can lend to the acts of interpreting, distorting and appropriating.

Sound as a Medium

The title, *A Comparative Dialogue Act*, encapsulates the nature of this experimental project – an exploration of diverse sonic languages and a contemplation of dialogue beyond the visual, into the immersive world of sound as a tool for negotiation.

Four artists are invited to explore the elements that define their individual practices and artistic methods. Each of them is asked to create a sound library representing their unique approach by the start of the Biennale Arte 2024. These libraries will be made available in the pavilion space as a shared tool. During the six months of the 60. International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, each artist will appropriate and use this library to create a soundscape. The aim being to stimulate collaboration and community through an understanding and interpreting of what was made available by others, while allowing, in exchange, the use of each other's libraries to create distinct works and performances.

The body of work, both the libraries and the residencies' productions, will constantly be absorbed and integrated anew – challenging notions of authorship and appropriation, each contribution will be shared, contributing to a dialogue between the artist present at a given time and those who came before, or will come to inhabit the space in turn.

ANDREA MANCINI AND EVERY ISLAND "A COMPARATIVE DIALOGUE ACT"

Each artist will engage in a series of performances. The performance is part of the collective artwork and is the moment during which each artist presents their contribution in public. Although the artists never physically cross paths, their explorations intersect in a cyclically unfolding process of synthesis through interference, understanding and trust.

A Comparative Dialogue Act uses sound as a tool to explore different perspectives on identity and artistic exploration. An unprecedented collaboration by four emerging artists from diverse backgrounds, it brings together Spanish musician and performer Bella Báguena, French transdisciplinary artist Célin Jiang, Ankara-born performance artist Selin Davasse and Swedish artist Stina Fors to offer four intersecting approaches to the multiple ways identity, performance and sound can meet. Navigating the realms of gender identity, Báguena weaves sounds inspired by intuition, motivation and a tableau of influences from pop culture to personal experiences. Jiang adopts a decolonial cyberfeminist approach, intertwining arts, technologies and digital humanities to provoke contemplation of identity within the context of transcultural aesthetics. Repurposing literary and performative techniques, Davasse embodies various feminine beasts with distinct syntactical, vocal and gestural characteristics to intimately traverse a speculative ethics of hospitality. And finally, Fors uses choreography, performance, drumming and vocals to explore the depths of a 'sounding body', unleashing a powerful voice that alternates between lethal force and seductive allure, showcasing the complexities of the self. *A Comparative Dialogue Act* offers a rich composition of singular voices brought together in a blurred sound artwork that pushes the boundaries of contemporary art production.

During the performances, artists may manipulate and combine the body of sounds as they wish, while incorporating new and live material. The resulting sequence of pieces will be published as a vinyl record, to be released at the end of the Biennale Arte 2024.

Throughout the thirty-week duration of the Biennale Arte 2024 and its programme of residencies, the space will remain continuously accessible to the public: the installation of the pavilion is designed to foster moments of appropriation and performance, without setting boundaries between artist and audience, who, instead, will coexist.

LUXEMBOURG PAVILION

20.01–24.11.2024, ARSENALE, SALLE D'ARMI 1ST FLOOR

ANDREA MANCINI AND EVERY ISLAND "A COMPARATIVE DIALOGUE ACT"

Physical description of the pavilion

The pavilion is conceived as an infrastructure for the transmission of sound. Technology is used to develop a local experiment investigating the transmission of knowledge and work in progress. The notion of openness is here not bound to the absence of limits, but rather to appropriation of 'the other' and its contribution to collective and open-ended scenarios.

The pavilion's infrastructure is constituted of four elements: four walls, a floor, a ceiling, and a curtain façade.

The four walls, or 'Sounds Walls', are the central piece and sound system itself. They stand on wheels, allowing the artist to interact and work them as they are arranged or rearranged in the space. Each trolley supports a glass panel: the sound is transmitted through one of them via a transducer, a loudspeaker component that by vibrating a rigid surface to create sound.

The artist decides how to use the sound walls during their residency. They serve as tools during the performance, and to play the recorded library of sounds and produced pieces when no artist is present. The four sound walls can be in syntony, looping a previous performance, as well as in interference with each other. Each of these moments of confrontation or interference between the work of several artists is defined as 'dialogue'.

The floor, constructed with standard floating floor panels left bare, functions as a vibrating surface tuned to the walls. The aluminium tiles are fixed to a network of Bass shakers, a type of transducer that transmits bass frequencies to floors. The suspended ceiling hosts a light installation and the electrical nerve of the installation, while a curtain façade acoustically divides the pavilion from the rest of the Sale d'Armi.

In line with the notion of continuous appropriation which will shape the pavilion's content, the infrastructure is also physically altered. The metallic coating of the floor is engraved with symbols and texts that become a temporal record of the pavilion itself, but also the colophon and description of the work. It presents the timeline of appropriations, becoming a palimpsest for the audience to map moments of performance and moments of dialogue.

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20.01-21.11.2021, ARSENALE, SALE D'ARMI 1ST FLOOR

ANDREA MANCINI AND EVERY ISLAND "A COMPARATIVE DIALOGUE ACT"

Visual identity concept

‘The visual identity has originated from a collaborative process, wherein we designed a collective idiosyncratic alphabet based on the writings of everyone involved in the pavilion, including the artists and the curator. The typeface was then optimised to provide instructions to a CNC machine, converting human strokes into numeric instructions for the milling machine. This process facilitated the production of all the necessary graphic materials, from the poster to the floor of the pavilion itself’ Lorenzo Mason.

Publication

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication and a vinyl record. The publication will act as a prequel and include an introduction by Bettina Steinbrügge, Director of Mudam Luxembourg, a commissioned essay by writer and musician Dan Fox as well as a curatorial statement by Joel Valabrega, alongside a rich visual contribution by the commissioned artists. The record will be released at the end of the Biennale and stands as a sequel, comprising the resulting activity taking place at the pavilion over six months. Together they will form a tangible, physical trace of *A Comparative Dialogue Act*. They will be published by Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, and designed by Lorenzo Mason.

LUXEMBOURG PAVILION

20.01–24.11.2024, ARSENALE, SALLE D'ARMES 1ST FLOOR

Biographies

Andrea Mancini (b. 1989) is a Luxembourgish artist and musician based in Brussels. Mancini's practice is interdisciplinary and investigates the relationship between space, form and the realm of sound through composition, installations and video environments activated by performance practices. His recurrent work method consists in confronting the intangible materiality of sound, the tension it creates and the texture it unveils. Mancini's work also uses codes from club-culture, a scene he has been a part of for a number of years under his alias 'Cleveland'. The artist's works have recently been shown in exhibitions, festivals and labels such as Rotondes (2023), Kalahari Oyster Cult (2023), Casino Luxembourg (2023) and Cité internationale des arts in Paris (2022), among others.

Every Island was founded in Brussels in 2021 by Alessandro Cugola, Caterina Malavolti, Damir Draganic, Juliane Seehawer and Martina Genovesi. As a collective their spatial research focuses on the role of performativity in architecture, which translates into volatile building projects and installations. Their projects develop spaces that are open to different uses and consequently abandon inherited binary and conventional models. Space becomes a design tool that defines an alternative common ground. By provoking a confrontation between the spectator and the work, Every Island 'arrives at scenarios in which seeing, acting and imagining become fundamental'. The work of the collective has been shown in several institutions and performative arts festivals, including Mudam Luxembourg (2022), Santarcangelo dei Teatri (2022), VIERNULVIER (2022) and BOZAR (2023).

Joel Valabrega (b. 1991) is Curator of Performance and Moving Image at Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean. She holds a master's degree in Architecture (Milano and Venice). Valabrega has worked within institutional contexts as well as in independent spaces. Valabrega is part of the curatorial team responsible for programming of MEGA, a Milanese project space. In the past she has worked as visiting curator at the V-A-C Foundation in Moscow & Venice (2018-2019). Recent exhibitions, performances and commissions include projects with Tarek Atoui, Alexandra Bachzetsis, Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz, Cecilia Bengolea, Trajal Harrell, Ligia Lewis, Ari Benjamin Meyers and Nora Turato.

Biographies of guest artists

Selin Davaşse (date of residency: 15-21 April)

Selin Davaşse (1992, Ankara) lives and works in Berlin. Her performances repurpose disparate literary and performative techniques to enact and enforce a speculative ethics of hospitality between a bestial feminine stranger and a heterogeneous public. Embodying various narrative selves with distinct syntactical, vocal and gestural characteristics, she transmutes systems of thought into intimate and playful utterances oscillating between speech and song, in a permeable and unpredictable relationship to the viewer. Recent presentation settings include steirischer herbst, Graz (2023); Institute for Contemporary Arts, London (2023); Hangar Bicocca, Milan (2023); Art Encounters Biennial, Timișoara (2023); Kunsthalle Bratislava (2022); Wiener Festwochen, Vienna (2022); BJCEM - Biennale des Jeunes Créateurs de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée, Procida (2022); School of Waters, MEDITERRANEA19 Young Artists Biennale, San Marino (2021); Volksbühne, Berlin (2021); KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, (2021).

Instagram: @radicalized_faghag

Célin Jiang (date of residency : 24-30 June)

Célin Jiang is a French artist-researcher. Her work is transdisciplinary, political, and infiltrated: it aims to explore the relationship between art, technology, and digital humanities. The decolonial approach of her work is rooted in cyberfeminism. By questioning our perception of identities in a globalised context of transcultural aesthetics, Célin Jiang advocates interoperability and considers hybridisation as a sensitive vector of metamorphosis: how does the dissident potential of artistic expressions operate in the phygital era of social networks? Célin's works have recently been shown at Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris (2023); Bourse de commerce | Pinault Collection, Paris (2023); Fondation Pernod Ricard, Paris (2023); Biennale Internazionale Donna, Trieste (2023); Château de Montjuïc, Barcelona (2023); Villa Arson, Nice (2023); VSRL, New York (2023) and Fondation Fiminco, Romainville (2022).

Instagram: @bis0u.magiqu3

ANDREA MANCINI AND EVERY ISLAND
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Stina Fors (date of residency : 18-28 July)

With wit, shocking vocal skills and improvisation Stina Fors (b.1989, Sweden) creates unique, once-in-a-lifetime performances every time she enters a stage. She is known for her one-woman-punk-band; Stina Force. A band that simply must be experienced live. No two performances are the same, everything is created in the moment. The artist has a certain taste for the absurd and the strange. Stina is a self-taught drummer and vocalist. Extended ventriloquism and dissonant screams are used in her recent work, "A Mouthful of Tongues," a performance that makes one wonder, "how can these sounds possibly be coming from her?". Fors's performances are full of tension, humour and raw power. She also teaches how to produce extreme voices like death growls and more without damaging the voice. Stina studied at SNDO school for new dance development in Amsterdam. She currently lives in Vienna Austria. Her recent appearances include CA2M Móstoles (2023), Centrale Fies Dro (2023), MDT Stockholm (2023), Nobody's Indiscipline Milano (2023), Secuencia#2/Fabra i Coats Barcelona (2023), Steinsland & Berliner Stockholm 2023, Wiener Festwochen Vienna (2023), Brut Wien Vienna (2022), Campo Gent (2022), Inkonst Malmö (2021) and Water Mill Center New York (2019).

Instagram: @stinaforce

Bella Báguena (date of residency: 09-15 September)

Bella Báguena (b. 1994, Valencia) is a Spanish trans non-binary woman who works with different disciplines such as music, performance, jewelry and other media. Bella centers her artistic production in a gender self-examination and an intuitive, emotional process, using her voice, body movement and identity, as well as objects, spaces and technologies, to create sound, video, sculptural or performative pieces in which the emotional charge and thought load of the trans woman's identity becomes the key. Some of her recent performance contexts include Trauma Bar, Berlin (2023); Teatro Academico Gil Vicente, Coimbra (2023); A10 Exhibition x Injuve, Valencia (2023); Rokolectiv, Bucharest (2023); Ex Aterriza. Las Cigarreras, Alicante (2023); Construction Festival, Dresden (2023); Systema, Marseille (2023); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2022); Dakota By Night. Nieuw Dakota, Amsterdam (2022); Shape+ Platform. Meet Factory, Prague (2022).

Instagram: @xbellaxbaguenax

LUXEMBOURG PAVILION

20.01-24.11.2024, ARSENALE, SALLE D'ARMI 1ST FLOOR

**ANDREA MANCINI AND EVERY ISLAND
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The Jury

- **Adam Budak**, Director, Kestner Gesellschaft Hannover
- **Michelle Cotton**, Head of Artistic Programming and Content
Department, Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc
Jean
- **Hélène Doub**, Head of the Visual Arts Department, Kultur | lx – Arts
Council Luxembourg
- **Hélène Guénin**, Director, MAMAC | Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art
Contemporain de Nice
- **Stilbé Schroeder**, Curator, Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art
contemporain
- **Bettina Steinbrügge**, Director, Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art
Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, President of the Jury
- **Joel Valabrega**, Curator, Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne
Grand-Duc Jean

For the 60. International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, the
Luxembourg Ministry of Culture has appointed Kultur | lx – Arts Council
Luxembourg as commissioner, and Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art
Moderne Grand-Duc Jean as organiser of the Luxembourg Pavilion.

LUXEMBOURG PAVILION

20.01–24.11.2024, ARSENALE, SALE D'ARMI 1ST FLOOR

La Biennale di Venezia

La Biennale di Venezia was established in 1895 and is today acknowledged as one of the most prestigious cultural institutions. La Biennale di Venezia stands at the forefront of research and promotion of new contemporary art trends and organises events in all its specific Departments: Art (1895), Architecture (1980), Cinema (1932), Dance (1999), Music (1930), and Theatre (1934) – alongside research and training activities.

The history of La Biennale di Venezia is documented in its Historical Archives located at Marghera Venice and in its Library at the Giardini's Central Pavilion. The International Art and Architecture Exhibitions have had a new structure since 1998. In recent years, La Biennale di Venezia promoted new Educational activities, training programmes (Biennale College), conferences and panels in its headquarters at Ca' Giustinian.

Luxembourg at the 60. International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia

Since 1988, Luxembourg has been a regular participant at the art and architecture Exhibitions organised by La Biennale di Venezia. After showcasing projects in various spaces, the Luxembourg pavilion found a new home in 1999, and welcomed visitors on the ground floor of Ca' del Duca, along the Canal Grande. In 2003, Luxembourg won the Golden Lion for the best pavilion with the artist Su-Mei Tse. Since 2018, the Luxembourg Pavilion (architecture and art) has been based in the Sale d'Armi, within the Arsenale, after a contract was signed in 2017 between the Luxembourg State and Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia guaranteeing Luxembourg's presence in the Arsenale for the next 20 years.

**ANDREA MANCINI AND EVERY ISLAND
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**About the Commissioner, Kultur | lx – Arts Council
Luxembourg**

Kultur | lx was established in 2020 as an initiative of the Luxembourg Ministry of Culture. This new tool for supporting, promoting and disseminating the Luxembourg cultural scene was the outcome of an extensive consultation and impetus from the Grand Duchy's creative sector.

Kultur | lx has since become a key partner in the support and promotion of professionals from the following sectors: architecture, design and crafts; multimedia and digital arts; visual arts; literature and publishing; music; and performing arts.

Since 2022, Kultur | lx has been appointed Commissioner of the Luxembourg Pavilion at the Venice Biennale by the Ministry of Culture.

**About the organiser, Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art
Moderne Grand-Duc Jean**

Mudam Luxembourg opened in 2006 in a building designed by architect Ieoh Ming Pei and is located in Park Dräi Eechelen, overlooking the historic city of Luxembourg. Mudam's mission is to collect, conserve and present the most relevant contemporary art of our time and make it accessible to a wide audience. Through its exhibitions, publications, and artistic and educational programmes, Mudam fosters research and dialogue while giving special attention to the changing nature of art and its production across the world. Mudam is committed to a more inclusive, environmentally and socially responsible world in which museums play a leading role in the transmission of our contemporary cultural heritage for future generations.

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20.01–21.11.2021, ARSENALE, SALE D'ARMI 1ST FLOOR

ANDREA MANCINI AND EVERY ISLAND
"A COMPARATIVE DIALOGUE ACT"

60. International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia
Luxembourg Pavilion, Arsenale. Sale d'Armi 1st floor,
Sestiere Castello, Campo Della Tana 2169/F, 30122 Venice
20th April – 24th November 2024

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A Comparative Dialogue Act

Commissioner appointed by the Luxembourg Ministry of Culture
Kultur | lx – Arts Council Luxembourg

Organiser
Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean

Curator
Joel Valabrega, Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean

Assistant curator
Nathalie Lesure

Exhibitors
Andrea Mancini and Every Island

Guest artists
Bella Baguena
Selin Davasse
Stina Fors
Célin Jiang

Visual identity
Lorenzo Mason Studio

Support
Œuvre Nationale de Secours Grande Duchesse Charlotte
The Loo & Lou Foundation

Media partner
100.7

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Practical informations

Official opening of the Luxembourg Pavilion

TBC | April 18, 16:00-17:30

Press preview of the Luxembourg Pavilion

TBC | April 17, 11:00-12:00

Exhibition

20.04–24.11.2024

Opening hours 10:00 – 18:00

Closed on Mondays.

Monday extraordinary openings will be announced soon.

Press contacts

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Instagram: [@venicebiennaleluxembourg](https://www.instagram.com/venicebiennaleluxembourg)

LUXEMBOURG PAVILION

20.04–24.11.2024, ARSENALE, SALLE D'ARMI 1ST FLOOR