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The Nordic Countries Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia

## **Nordic Countries Pavilion announces artists for the 61<sup>st</sup> International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia**

**The Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma has selected Klara Kristalova, Benjamin Orlow and Tori Wrånes to represent the Nordic Countries Pavilion at the 61<sup>st</sup> International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia. The exhibition will be curated by Kiasma's Chief Curator, Anna Mustonen, and commissioned by Kiasma in collaboration with Moderna Museet, Sweden, and OCA – Office for Contemporary Art Norway.**

Representing a dynamic and diverse approach to contemporary Nordic artistic practice, the exhibition brings together artists from different backgrounds and creative disciplines. Known for their distinctive approaches to sculpture, installation and performance, the artists share a common exploration of transformation, resilience and vulnerability, often blurring the boundaries between the real and the imagined. Their work will weave together Nordic mythologies with broader global contexts such as identity, cultural survival and gender equality to bring a compelling and transformative perspective to the Pavilion.

**Anna Mustonen** quote: "The Nordic Countries Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia brings together three distinct artistic voices of Klara Kristalova, Benjamin Orlow, and Tori Wrånes. The exhibition invites visitors to journey through a dynamic interplay of imagination and reality that bridges Nordic cultural heritage with broader global contexts. Sverre Fehn's iconic architecture itself serves as a timeless backdrop, that fosters a dialogue between art, culture, and the built environment."

**Klara Kristalova** (b. 1967, Prague, Czech Republic; lives and works in Norrtälje, Sweden) creates expressive sculptures that blend fairytale-like imagery with themes of isolation, transformation, and psychological depth. Her works, often made from glazed ceramics, embody a tactile sense of vulnerability and evoke memories of childhood emotions. Her work has been exhibited internationally, with solo shows at Perrotin, Paris (2024) and Lehmann Maupin, London (2023), and featured in *Strange Clay* at Hayward Gallery, London (2022).

**Benjamin Orlow** (b. 1984, Turku, Finland; lives and works in London, UK) works across sculpture, video and installation, to investigate the ways in which cultural narratives shape public and private spaces. His practice examines historical transitions, material culture and human interactions with built environments. His sculptures are often monumental, embodying solitude or the metamorphosis inherent in life's cyclical nature. His artworks have recently exhibited at Kunsthalle Seinäjoki (2025, Finland), *Des Bains* (2024, London, UK), Kohta Kunsthalle (2023, Helsinki, Finland) and Horst-KANAL Centre Pompidou (2022, Brussels, Belgium).

**Tori Wrånes** (b. 1978, Kristiansand, Norway; lives and works in Oslo, Norway) is a transdisciplinary artist and vocalist who fuses music, performance and sculpture to construct alternate realities. Her immersive, often otherworldly environments challenge perception and redefine traditional performance spaces, creating new rituals and dreamlike constellations. Her recent exhibitions include Helsinki Art Museum (2024) and Gothenberg Museum of Art (2019). In 2025 Wrånes will be the artist for Bergen Kunsthall's Festival Exhibition.

**Anna Mustonen** (b. 1979, Joensuu, Finland), Chief Curator at Kiasma, holds an MA in History of Art from University College London. She has worked at leading international institutions and private galleries, including Tate, Kumu Art Museum, Haunch of Venison and Victoria Miro. She has curated exhibitions for Fotografiska, Helsinki Kunsthalle and Kai Art Center, Tallinn, among others.

"In addition to geographical proximity, the Nordic countries have long shared a common cultural heritage. This lays a strong foundation for close collaboration in the arts. The Nordic countries also share many societal values, such as equality and community support. The shared artistic cooperation reinforces our values and the role of art in society", says **Kiira Miesmaa**, Director of Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma and commissioner of the Nordic Countries Pavilion 2026.

The Nordic Countries Pavilion was designed by Norwegian architect **Sverre Fehn** and completed in 1962. It has since been a space for collaboration between three Nordic countries – Finland, Norway and Sweden – who alternate as principal commissioners and managers of the Pavilion.

The Nordic Countries Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia is commissioned by Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma and co-commissioned by Moderna Museet (Sweden) and OCA – Office for Contemporary Art Norway, April – November 2026.

The exhibition is supported by Saastamoinen Foundation.

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#### **About the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma**

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The Finnish National Gallery is the national museum of fine arts. It operates three of Finland's best-known museums: the Ateneum Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma and the Sinebrychoff Art Museum. It also manages the national art collection and its archives, develops Finnish cultural heritage and promotes art to the wider public.

### **About Klara Kristalova**

Klara Kristalova (b. 1967, Prague, Czech Republic) lives and works in Norrtälje, Sweden. Her work has been exhibited internationally, with solo shows at Perrotin, Paris (2024) and Lehmann Maupin, London (2023), and featured in *Strange Clay* at Hayward Gallery, London (2022). Other notable exhibitions include *Norrtälje Konsthall*, Sweden (2022), *Human After All* at Princessehof Museum, Netherlands (2020), Norton Museum of Art, USA (2014), *Bonniers Konsthall*, Sweden (2012), and SFMOMA, USA (2011).

### **About Benjamin Orlow**

Benjamin Orlow (b. 1984, Turku, Finland) lives and works in London. His artworks have recently exhibited at Kunsthalle Seinäjoki (2025, Finland), *Des Bains* (2024, London, UK), Kohta Kunsthalle (2023, Helsinki, Finland), Horst-KANAL Centre Pompidou (2022, Brussels, Belgium) and *Vasa Konsthall* (2021, Vaasa, Finland). His video work has shown among others at the ICA London, *Tetley* in Leeds, *Tramway* in Glasgow, *Fahrenheit* in Los Angeles and *Hordaland Kunstsenter* in Norway. Orlow has been commissioned to create permanent public sculptures in Finland, Belgium and the United Kingdom. Aside from his own practice he curates the project space *St. Chads* in London.

### **About Tori Wrånes**

Tori Wrånes (b. 1978, Kristiansand, Norway) lives and works in Oslo. Her recent solo exhibitions include Helsinki Art Museum HAM (2024, Finland), *Accelerator* (2022, Stockholm, Sweden), Shulamit Nazarian Gallery (2022, Los Angeles, US), Göteborgs Konstmuseum (2019, Gothenburg, Sweden) and Museum of Contemporary Art Oslo (2017, Norway). She has shown at Colombo Art Biennale, Sri Lanka; Dhaka Art Seminars, Bangladesh; CCA Lagos, Nigeria; and Sculpture Center, New York. Her commissioned performances include 19th Biennale of Sydney, *Performa 13* in New York, *Lilith Performance Studio Malmø*, Lagos Biennale in Nigeria, and Thailand Biennale. In 2019 she wrote a score for 40 accordion players as part of the show *The Coming World* at Garage Moscow. In the winter of the same year Wrånes developed an underwater performance in the Arctic called *Sub Adventure*, a commission for the ILIOS festival.