



**PAVILION OF AUSTRALIA  
AT THE 58TH INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION – LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA  
AUSTRALIAN PAVILION TO PRESENT ANGELICA MESITI'S SOLO EXHIBITON  
*ASSEMBLY***

**PRE-OPENING:**

8, 9, and 10 May 2019, 10.00am – 6.00pm  
The Pavilion of Australia, Giardini della Biennale

**ON VIEW:**

The Pavilion of Australia, Giardini della Biennale  
11 May to 24 November 2019, 10.00am – 6.00pm  
The Giardini is closed Mondays

**OFFICIAL OPENING:**

Wednesday 8 May 2019, 11.00am – 1.00pm  
The Pavilion of Australia, Giardini della Biennale

**VENICE, Italy, May 8, 2019**—The Australian Pavilion at the Biennale Arte 2019 is proud to present ***ASSEMBLY***, a solo exhibition by Angelica Mesiti.

A new, three-channel video installed within a constructed amphitheatre, ***ASSEMBLY*** invites the audience into a symbolic circular gathering to encounter a multiple filmic scenario. Each screen draws the audiences' attention to differing points of view in Mesiti's imagined new world, in which a 'contingent' gathering of 'the people' is allowed to disintegrate and resolve by perpetually reforming and revolutionizing itself.

***ASSEMBLY*** opens with the 'Michela' machine, a 19<sup>th</sup> century stenographic machine modeled on a piano keyboard, which is used in the Italian Senate for official parliamentary reporting to ensure transparency within the democratic process. The inventor of the Michela was originally inspired by musical notation as a universal language. Mesiti uses this device to recode a poem by esteemed Australian writer David Malouf, which is then arranged into a musical score by Australian composer Max Lyandvert, and played by an ensemble of musicians.

Filmed in the Senate chambers of Italy and Australia, the three screens of Mesiti's ***ASSEMBLY*** travel through the corridors, meeting rooms and parliaments of government whilst performers, representing the multitude of ancestries that constitute cosmopolitan Australia, gather, disassemble, and re-unite, to demonstrate the strength and creativity of community in evolution.

In ***ASSEMBLY***, a communal gathering is a precarious business, a necessary corrective and a means for making those with authority recognize the collective power of "the people".

"Through both the metaphor of translation and the act itself, I am exploring the very human and increasingly urgent need we have to assemble in a physical way, in a physical space, in these complex times," Angelica Mesiti said.

“Translation has been a particular enquiry and methodology for me for a number of years. In **ASSEMBLY**, I explore the space where communication moves from verbal and written forms to non-verbal, gestural and musical forms. The latter creates a sort of code upon which meaning, longing and memory can be overlaid.”

Juliana Engberg, curator for the 2019 Australian Pavilion said, “From text to code, music to movement, actions to occupations, **ASSEMBLY** represents the way a society gathers and builds upon itself.

“Mesiti’s musical transpositions are generative, inclusive and perform a future that is multiple and fluid. Through poetry and metaphor Mesiti shows the joy of making a hospitable place for the ‘other’ in the community. **ASSEMBLY** uses and personifies the exilic energies of those who seek belonging in the community – the young, the female, the Indigenous, the arrived, the exiled, the hopeful, the refugee and the artist.

“Their performances add layers to the landscape of Lyandvert’s score and metaphorically represent the diversity necessary in a complex and functional democracy,” Engberg said.

**ASSEMBLY**, drawing on the musical styles of polyphony, dissonance and cacophony, and traveling towards a harmonic destination, is built upon a desire for finding a position of understanding for the individual within the ensemble, in an effort to make the group stronger. Angelica Mesiti illustrates the gradual gathering of actions and ideas that make up a democracy that moves away from a tyrannical hierarchy to become both more horizontal and inclusively circular.

Adrian Collette AM, Chief Executive Officer of the Australia Council for the Arts, added, “As Commissioner for Australia, the Australia Council is proud to present Angelica Mesiti’s deftly nuanced, deeply moving new work, **ASSEMBLY** at the Biennale Arte 2019. The work uses metaphor, performance and a multitude of diverse voices to suggest a new world where a growing and evolving society is open to new ideas, desires and beliefs.”

“Angelica has worked with close to forty Australian artists including dancers, musicians, and film and sound practitioners to produce this monumental new work, which demonstrates how Australia’s presence at Venice can generate myriad flow on benefits across the broader visual arts sector.”

Angelica Mesiti is one of Australia’s foremost contemporary artists, with an internationally renowned practice that combines video with performance and installation to create immersive environments that require absorption and contemplation. Her practice is focused on diaspora cultures, gestural communication and multi-cultural dimensions through musicality and movement. She lives and works in Paris and Sydney.

*The Australia Council for the Arts is the Australian Government’s principal arts funding and advisory body. Australia’s participation at the International Art and Architecture Exhibitions of La Biennale di Venezia began in 1954 and has been managed by the Australia Council since 1978.*

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

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