

**Pavilion of the Republic of Bulgaria  
58th International Art Exhibition  
La Biennale di Venezia**



La Biennale di Venezia

**58. Esposizione  
Internazionale  
d'Arte**

Partecipazioni Nazionali

**Rada Boukova and Lazar Lyutakov  
HOW WE LIVE  
May 11 - November 24, 2019**

**Official opening:  
Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at 6 - 8 pm**

Bulgarian Pavilion  
Fondazione Ugo e Olga Levi Onlus,  
Palazzo Giustinian Lolin  
San Marco 2893  
30124 Venezia

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria and the National Gallery, Sofia, have the pleasure of announcing the participation of Bulgaria at the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. **Rada Boukova** and **Lazar Lyutakov** present the project entitled “**How We Live**”, curated by **Vera Mlechevska**.

“How We Live” is a visual dialogue of two individual works by Rada Boukova and by Lazar Lyutakov, which reflect on the concept of centuries-old craft traditions juxtaposed with large-scale industrial production of standard and accessible commodities that intrude into the contemporary living environment. The works were developed specially for the space in the Palazzo Giustinian Lolin, the history of which dates back to the 17th century and relies on semantic and visual opposition to the architectural and historical context of both the building and the city of Venice.

In fact both artists transform serial modular sequencing, which is the basis of their compositions, into a generic world of forms where both logic and functionality collapse into the abyss of the imagination. According to Rada Boukova: “After the ultimate industrialization in our life, there came a kind of repetitiveness where it appears that everything is a subject to the principle of modular construction, often referred to as normalization. You buy one item, then add another one, then another and they are all made so as to fit in with one another. For its part, the work that makes it possible for you to acquire things is of a standardized and segmented nature and devoid of any overall viewpoint.”

Rada Boukova investigates the remnants of ideological, economic and social changes. In this installation she introduces the building blocks of synthetic, industrial construction

materials that are loaded with potential for realization as decorative motifs, functional elements or abstract painting. “The sheets I work with are found objects, in a way; I don’t interfere with them. They come as finished products and I put them together in a meaningful way. After the exhibition is over and the panels are taken down, they can be returned for use as building materials. Everything I do can be returned into the consumption cycle.”

Lazar Lyutakov investigates the overall manufacturing and consumption processes; he creates a cycle of sculptures made of acrylate glass; these are structures which match mass-produced items and yet are fully individualized objects from everyday life. In the process of making his structures, the artist includes the randomness of fractures. In this process, failure is intentional but controlled and therefore craftsmanlike. A uniform product, limited due to its individual rectangular elements, is released from symmetry through unique cracks and curves. The artist supplements acrylic glass, the industrial substitute for glass, with handmade glass that introduces a totally different production and distribution principle, rearranging the relationship between the precision of the craft and its value. “The glass comes in the form of roughly made glasses full of small imperfections, revealing not only the manual labour behind the objects, but also the use of recycled material. The market for which these glasses are made requires them to be accessible, which affects the amount of time needed to produce them. This leads to a certain level of chance and to imperfection, which for me makes the products feel like sculptures, because it actually makes them unique.”

The experience of diverse cultural realities in both of the artists has given them an awareness of the social implications of materials. Working with synthetic industrial materials such as acrylate and polystyrene in the installation challenges the viewers’ perception to oscillate between the nondescriptly copious and the uniquely artistic, between sustainability and quick, cheap, but futureless solutions. “How We Live” engages with constant renegotiation of the hierarchy of values such as productivity, quality and utility in today’s world.

The Pavilion of the Republic of Bulgaria at the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia is organized by the Ministry of Culture of Bulgaria. It is produced by the National Gallery, Sofia with Commissioner Iara Boubnova and Pavilion Director Katia Anguelova, with the additional kind support of Gaudenz B. Ruf, and the contribution of The Arts and Culture Division of the Federal Chancellery of Austria. The inauguration of the Pavilion is assisted by Alexandra Estate and Better Half Garage Wine, Bulgaria.

\*All quotations in this text are from the artists of “How We Live.”

**Rada Boukova** (1973) born in Sofia, Bulgaria. She lives and works in Paris. She studied at the National Art Academy in Sofia and graduated at The École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris. Among her solo exhibitions are What energy do we put into transforming things, with undisguised pleasure, Sariev Contemporary, Plovdiv (2018); Alice Georges, One night stand gallery, Sofia (2017); Start a New Victory, FUTURA, Prague (2013); Me and a German Girl, Patricia Dorfmann Gallery, Paris (2011). Her work was presented in numerous group exhibitions at KVOST, Berlin; MOCA, Taipei; Salonul de proiecte, MNAC Bucarest; MUDAC Lausanne; ICSP,

New York; Domaine de Pommery, Reims; Palais de Tokyo, Paris. Rada Boukova is the winner of the BAZA Award for young contemporary artist in 2008 and of the M-Tel award for contemporary Bulgarian Art in 2009. The artist is represented by Galerie Patricia Dorfmann, Paris since 2011 and Sariev Contemporary since 2012.

**Lazar Lyutakov** (1977) born in Shabla, Bulgaria. He lives and works in Vienna. He studied at the National Art Academy in Sofia and graduated at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in 2005. His works were included in the 6th Moscow Biennale (special project, 2015); the 1st Vienna Biennale in MAK, Vienna (2015); the Take Festival of Independent Fashion and Arts (2016); and the 1st Triennial in Linz, Austria (2010). He has held solo exhibitions at Georg Kargl Permanent (2015); the MAK Austrian Museum of Applied & Contemporary Arts (2011); the One night stand gallery in Sofia (2017); wellwellwell Vienna (with Max Schaffer, 2017); Song Song Vienna (2012); Gallery Winiarzyk, Vienna (2008); Werkbank Lana, Italy (2011); Ryllega Gallery, Hanoi (with Karine Kauchard, 2006) and Vesch Vienna (with Karine Fauchard, 2015). Lyutakov's works are held in permanent collections at the Artothek Collection of the Austrian Culture Office; the Collection of the City of Vienna; Freie Sammlung Vienna and the Sofia City Art Gallery.

#### ABOUT BULGARIA AT LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA:

Bulgaria's participation in Biennale Arte 2019 is the result of a nation wide open call for curatorial projects, which was organized by the Ministry of Culture and attracted interest from the artistic community in the country. Before 2019, Bulgaria participated in the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia in 1912, 1942, 1964, 1993, 1999, 2007 and 2011.

CATALOGUE of "How We Live" will be published by the National Gallery with specially written essays by Vera Mlechevska, Jonathan Chauveau, Stephen Zepke, Iara Boubnova and Katia Anguelova. It will be designed by POSTSTUDIO.

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