



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Culture

CASINO LUXEMBOURG
Forum d'art contemporain



La Biennale di Venezia

58. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

58th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia
Luxembourg Pavilion, 11 May – 24 November 2019

Marco Godinho

Written by Water

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Press release

Marco Godinho was selected to represent Luxembourg at the 58th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia with his project *Written by Water*.

In line with the main themes that guide his artistic approach, Marco Godinho's work for the Luxembourg Pavilion looks at the relationships that mankind entertains with the sea. Always in search of new horizons, the Portuguese-born artist is a nomadic explorer of the geographical, political and philosophical margins and boundaries of the world in which he lives.

Throughout the centuries, the sea has fascinated humans and given birth to countless legends and projections, prompting men and women to embark on daring exploratory journeys that have durably changed and defined our perception of the world. Yet beneath the romantic veneer of an epic space that kindles the imagination lurks a more complex geopolitical dimension.

The beginning of the twenty-first century will forever be marked by the waves of migration from South to North. *Written by Water* is an odyssey that takes the reverse path of today's migratory routes across the Mediterranean, the cradle of modern society and birthplace of founding narratives that underpin our common heritage. In his installation for the Luxembourg Pavilion, Godinho creates an organic landscape imbued with its own temporality. Here, the sea appears as a world in perpetual motion in which the thoughts and memories associated with it become unspecified nomadic variables, a space onto which spectators can project their own stories cued by the elements assembled by the artist.

In the eponymous subproject, composed of notebooks that the artist has temporarily submerged in the water of the Mediterranean sea, the traditional

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form of the written travel account makes way for a flowing narrative charged with evocative potential. Its author is the sea itself, whose recollections are left to naturally 'inscribe' themselves onto the pages of the artist's notebooks. Only the sea knows what each of these soaked, undulating pages suffused with a distinctive individuality contains.

Another integral part of Godinho's installation, *A Permanent Sea inside Us* examines personal stories in connection with the mindscape of the sea. For many people, the sea is merely a distant reality or fiction, with which they have never entertained an actual relationship, and probably never will. For them, it remains a myth or something impossible. Others, in turn, know it all too well for having placed their hopes and fate in it. What kind of portrait emerges from all these personal stories? How can we (re)think the sea based on these multiple individual abstractions?

Written by Water invites viewers into a kind of analogue deep-learning experience. It is through their introspection and immersion in these volatile 'living memories' assembled by the artist himself that these seemingly lost stories will be perpetually rewritten.

Luxembourg's presence at the *Arsenale*

For the Biennale Arte 2019, the Luxembourg Pavilion joins the *Arsenale*. Leaving the Ca' del Duca, the private home that had been hosting its exhibitions since 1999, it has moved to the first floor of the *Sala d'Armi*. Thanks to this new location, the Luxembourg Pavilion sits right in the throbbing heart of the Biennale.

Jury

In the spring of 2018, a jury composed of Emma Lavigne (Director, Centre Pompidou-Metz), Danielle Igniti (Director, CCR opderschmelz, art galleries of the City of Dudelange), Suzanne Cotter (Director, Mudam Luxembourg), Frank-Thorsten Moll (Director, IKOB Eupen) and Kevin Muhlen (Director, Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain) unanimously selected Marco Godinho to represent Luxembourg at the Biennale Arte 2019. With their choice, the jury wished to "honour the prolific work of Marco Godinho and his remarkable presence on the national and international artistic stage for the last decade. The invitation to conceive the Luxembourg Pavilion at the Biennale Arte 2019 will allow him to realise a new and ambitious artistic project and expand his field of action in the years to come. His participation in this internationally recognised event – as well as the increased visibility of the Luxembourg Pavilion in the *Arsenale* – will give him an opportunity to further expand his professional network".

Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain

Luxembourg's participation in the Biennale Arte 2019 is organised and coordinated by the Ministry of Culture of Luxembourg in a revolving partnership with Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain and Mudam Luxembourg. The 2013 and 2015 editions were organised by Mudam, while Casino Luxembourg is in charge of the 2017 and 2019 contributions. A flagship institution for contemporary art in Luxembourg and abroad, Casino Luxembourg is exclusively dedicated to art in the making. Focusing on production rather than collecting and conservation, it supports and nurtures experimentation and risk-taking as inherent characteristics of creativity.