

Press Release
April 2026

**Argentine Pavilion – 61st International Art Exhibition
– Venice Biennale**

Matías Duville. Monitor Yin Yang

Curator: Josefina Barcia

From May 9 to November 22, 2026. Arsenale.

Organized by:

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship –
Directorate of Cultural Affairs, Secretariat of Culture of the Nation,
and PromArgentina*

In collaboration with Estudio Duville and BARRO Gallery

On the occasion of the 61st International Art Exhibition – Venice Biennale, the Argentine Pavilion presents *Monitor Yin Yang*, a site-specific installation by artist Matías Duville (Buenos Aires, 1974) that transforms the space into a traversable territory built with salt and charcoal. Conceived as an interdisciplinary project, the work expands drawing—one of the central languages in Duville's practice—into a spatial, sonic, and performative experience.

Curated by Josefina Barcia, *Monitor Yin Yang* proposes an open cartography that does not fix coordinates or represent a specific place, but is activated by the movement of visitors and the interaction between materials, sound, and time.

The project draws on the worldview of yin and yang to imagine a territory where opposing forces coexist: light and shadow, waste and energy, ruin and promise, without a horizon of resolution. Drawing thus appears as a shared space to traverse, where beauty, improvisation, and tension persist.

On a blanket of white salt, lines traced with ground charcoal form an unstable landscape. Shapes and scenes emerge—mountains, paths, objects, horizons—and fade without ever fully settling. Drawing ceases

to be an image and becomes an environment: a surface to be walked on and activated by the body.

The materials take on a central role. Salt, the product of evaporated oceans and geological processes spanning millions of years, evokes permanence and accumulation. Charcoal, the result of plant combustion, condenses time linked to energy, transformation, and consumption. In their interaction, these materials make visible a friction between temporal scales—the enduring and the altered.

The project is situated in a context where landscapes are no longer solely physical spaces but also systems mediated by observation and recording technologies. The notion of “monitor,” present in the title, introduces this dimension: a device that measures, translates, or controls the environment. At this intersection, the landscape becomes an active field of relationships among matter, perception, and technology.

For curator Josefina Barcia:

"Monitor Yin Yang proposes a key shift: to stop thinking of drawing as representation and instead understand it as a territory in friction, where bodily experience, sound, and time activate an unstable cartography. In that space, fragility does not appear as a flaw but as a condition of potential. At the same time, the work prompts reflection on contemporary mediation: how we perceive the world through systems of recording, monitoring, and translation."

In the words of Matías Duville:

"This project stems from the idea of thinking of drawing as a territory that can be walked. Instead of an image on a wall, I wanted to build a landscape. I replaced paper with salt and charcoal because they are materials that already contain time: salt as the residue of ancient oceans, and charcoal as organic matter transformed into energy."

"I come from the southern part of the world, from a territory defined by vastness and distance, and that experience of displacement is fundamental in my work. My earliest memories are linked to travels through Patagonia, landscapes that exceed human scale. That relationship with territory continues to operate as a starting point in my work."

"The work functions as an open cartography. It does not represent a specific place but a space activated through movement. When you walk, you are not seeing the drawing from the outside; you are inside it. Each

path modifies the surface, and the landscape is never the same. I am interested in that tension between control and drift, between something that seems organized and something that constantly transforms."

Sound Composition

The installation incorporates an original sound composition developed by Centolla Society—a project by Matías Duville with his brother Pablo Duville—in collaboration with Alvis Vidolin and the team from the Center for Computational Sonology (CSC) at the University of Padua, which he directs. Designed specifically for the pavilion, the sound work unfolds through a multichannel system that creates acoustic paths in dialogue with the architecture and the movement of the audience.

The system integrates real-time environmental data from the city of Venice—such as variations in air quality, suspended particles, and atmospheric conditions—which are translated into sound transformations: density, intensity, texture, and movement. In this way, the installation adds a third component to the elements already present—water (salt) and earth (charcoal): air, introduced as an invisible yet active dimension that becomes part of the work's sensitive system.

The soundscape does not function as background but as a dynamic layer that modifies the perception of space and constantly evolves. Together with the crunch of footsteps on the salt, it creates a holistic experience where drawing, sound, environmental data, and human presence intertwine in a composition in perpetual transformation.

In Minor Keys

The project engages with the curatorial proposal of the 61st International Art Exhibition – Venice Biennale, *In Minor Keys*, conceived by Koyo Kouoh, based on a logic of subtle intensity. Through elemental materials and minimal gestures, *Monitor Yin Yang* unfolds a complex landscape where small variations—of light, sound, and movement—produce significant changes in perception.

Drawing functions as an open score: visitors' paths introduce modulations, repetitions, and displacements. In this sense, the work is constructed as a composition in a minor key, where the seemingly discreet acquires a great capacity for resonance.

Selection Process

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship – Directorate of Cultural Affairs, the Secretariat of Culture of the Nation,

and PromArgentina, in their role as the Organizing Committee, convened a prestigious jury in August 2025, which selected the winning project from 69 proposals to represent Argentina at the 61st International Art Exhibition – Venice Biennale.

The jury consisted of Amalia Amoedo, President of the Ama Amoedo Foundation; Sergio Baur, President of the National Academy of Fine Arts; Andrés Duprat, Director of the National Museum of Fine Arts; Tulio Andreussi Guzmán, President of the National Arts Fund; Rodrigo Moura, Artistic Director of the Latin American Art Museum of Buenos Aires (Malba); Adriana Rosenberg, President of Fundación PROA; and Eugenia Usellini, President of the Castagnino Museum Foundation.

Bios

Matías Duville (Buenos Aires, 1974) works with objects, videos and installations, although his production has mainly grown out of drawing. His works evoke scenes of desolation with rarified, timeless atmospheres like those that precede a natural disaster: hurricanes, tsunamis or scenes of abandonment in a forest that represent a dreamlike vision of a wandering explorer, like a mental landscape. Duville's work is characterized by experimentation with different mediums and materials. With his expressive strokes and procedures which reveal certain brutality, he modifies the surface by leaving traces in the representation, marks which blend the nature of matter with the landscape. The tension between opposites, mutation and time are some of the subjects that feature in his most recent works. He lives and works between Buenos Aires and Mar del Plata.

Highlights of his solo shows include *Vertices of time* (BARRO, New York, 2024), *Cenizas de mañana* (Casa Triângulo, São Paulo, 2024), *El fondo inestable* (BARRO, Buenos Aires, 2023), *Arena Parking* (Fundação Getulio Vargas, Rio de Janeiro, 2021), *Hotel Palmera* (Colección Fortabat, Buenos Aires, 2020), *Desert Means Ocean* (MOLAA, Los Angeles, 2019), *Projection Soul* (Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo, 2019), *Romance atómico* (BARRO, Buenos Aires, 2017), *The Valise Project* (MoMA, New York, 2017), *Arena Parking* (Art Basel, Miami Beach, 2016; Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, 2015), *Mutações* (MAM, Rio de Janeiro, 2015), *Precipitar una especie* (BARRO, Buenos Aires, 2014), *Discard Geography* (Ecole de Beaux Arts, Paris, 2013), *Safari* (Malba, Buenos Aires, 2013) and *Alaska* (Drawing Center, New York, 2013).

Josefina Barcia (Buenos Aires 1985) is an Argentine curator based in New York whose practice bridges contemporary art, performance, sound, and archival research. She holds an MA in Curatorial Studies from Bard College and specializes in interdisciplinary and time-based practices within Latin American and Global South contexts. From 2011 to 2021, she worked in the Curatorial Department at MALBA (Buenos Aires), where she developed her archival approach through private collections in Argentina and later with the personal archives of Marieluisse Hessel in New York.

As a Hartwig Foundation Curatorial Fellow at Performa, she co-curated the film program Occasionally Humane and produced new commissions in collaboration with Americas Society and Asia Society. Her projects have been presented at the Hessel Museum, Anthology Film Archives, Festival de Nueva Ópera, and Giorno Poetry Systems, while her writing has been published by MALBA and ISLAA (New York).

She approaches curating as an act of collective mediation—between histories, geographies, and bodies—foregrounding sound and performance as critical tools for rethinking global contemporary art.

Press

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