



Jenna Sutela *Aeolian Suite*

Pavilion of Finland at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

- To mark the 70th anniversary of the Pavilion of Finland, designed by **Alvar** and **Elissa Aalto**, commissioner Frame Contemporary Art Finland presents *Aeolian Suite* by **Jenna Sutela**, premiering at the pavilion as part of the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. The exhibition is curated by **Stefanie Hessler**, Director of Swiss Institute in New York.
- *Aeolian Suite* presents a windscape inside the Pavilion of Finland, where fuzzy kinetic sculptures and an immersive soundscape animate the elemental forces of Venetian winds to explore their environmental, cultural, and emotional dimensions. It is on view from 9 May to 22 November 2026.
- From Venice, the work will travel to the Oulu Art Museum in 2027 as part of the Oulu2026 European Capital of Culture 2026 programme, with Oulu2026 serving as the main partner of the Pavilion of Finland exhibition.

Aeolian Suite by **Jenna Sutela**, curated by **Stefanie Hessler**, transforms the Pavilion of Finland into an immersive soundscape that animates the elemental forces of Venetian winds to explore their environmental, cultural, and emotional dimensions. The exhibition features five sonic-kinetic sculptures installed in a circle, like a medieval wind rose diagram. The sculptures are covered in soft, fuzzy wigs that reference the wind muffs used on microphones. Here, instead of blocking out wind sounds, they become vessels for it, channeling the whispers and songs of wind while inviting us to reflect on what we consider noise and how we relate to our natural and cultural environment.

The sculptures personify five Venetian winds: Tramontana, Scirocco, Garbin, and two different Boras. Blowing through the pavilion, they become the protagonists of an elemental drama unfolding on a stage, each with their own energetic, tempestuous personality. The characters evoke classic tropes from the travelling theatre tradition of *commedia dell'arte*. Scirocco the Melancholic seeks meaning, Tramontana the Trickster seeks disruption, Garbin the Magician seeks transformation, and Bora Scura and Bora Chiara, the Lovers, seek union. By personifying the atmospheric forces that shape Venice and the ways the global climate is becoming increasingly volatile – ecologically, socially and politically – the work addresses environmental questions from the mundane to the existential.

The newly composed musical score, running about 16 minutes, brings together sounds from wind machines, alto, basset, and contrabass recorders, and a children's woodwind orchestra. It also includes recordings of wind moving through a bridge, sailboat masts, poplar trees, and clotheslines in Venice and Helsinki. The composition's structure follows weather data collected for one year at The Acqua Alta Oceanographic Tower (AAOT), a permanent research platform in the Gulf of Venice. The vocal characterisations in the score are inspired by *grammelot*, the art of speaking without words, that allows communication beyond verbal language, with rhythm, tone, and gesturing.

The scenography reflects the spirit of **Alvar** and **Elissa Aalto's** original 1956 pavilion design, which was conceived as a mobile structure. It also draws inspiration from the makeshift stage sets of the

commedia. The curtain backdrop bears stains that evoke submersion in the 'acqua alta' high tide, and billows in the wind that enters through the open doors at each end of the building.

Aeolian Suite looks at wind as a source of randomness that resists full capture or control. While it can be analysed, it remains ultimately unknowable. It carries particles, microbes, seeds, and signals that often evade detection or are overlooked. The work engages with sounds typically dismissed as noise while reflecting on the environmental cost of technological systems, such as algorithmic forecasting, that attempt to measure and predict weather while contributing to its destabilisation.

"*Aeolian Suite* embraces the wind's unpredictability and its fully relational being," said **Jenna Sutela**. "We can only hear wind as it blows into, out of, or against things like trees, alleys, flutes and wings. To listen to it and let it take over the microphone and the recording, is a way of staying porous to the world, of recognizing registers beyond us that we nonetheless shape."

Curator **Stefanie Hessler** added, "The pavilion whisks us into an expanded conversation with the atmosphere – one that moves between scientific measurement and poetic intuition, between control and surrender. Sutela sensitizes us to forces that exceed human scale while simultaneously summoning us to sound the whispers and roars of the winds with our full sensorium, wit, and languages beyond those known to us as of yet."

The presentation coincides with the Pavilion of Finland's 70th anniversary in 2026. It will be accompanied by a publication edited by Stefanie Hessler, with newly commissioned texts by Hessler, Jenna Sutela, **Elvia Wilk**, and **Gary Zhexi Zhang**, and a vinyl record, co-published by Mousse Publishing, PAN, and Frame.

The exhibition at Finland's Aalto Pavilion is commissioned and produced by Frame Contemporary Art Finland.

Oulu2026 European Capital of Culture is the main partner of the exhibition. *Aeolian Suite* by Jenna Sutela will travel to Oulu Art Museum in Spring 2027.

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture is the main supporter of the exhibition. Other supporters and partners are Jane and Aatos Erkko Foundation, Genelec, Kvadrat, Schering Stiftung, Saastamoinen Foundation, EMMA – Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Finnish Embassy in Rome, FUTUARTS, and Pavilion of Finland Patrons. Event partners are Finnland-Institut in Berlin, TBA21–Academy's Ocean Space, and Swiss Institute (SI) New York.

For a full list of credits and collaborators, please see the digital brochure via QR code below.

Events

Pavilion of Finland's opening reception will take place at 1 pm on Wednesday, 6 May.

Notes to Editors

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Press Kit

For more information, please see the press kit here:
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