**PRESS RELEASE**

# EGYPT'S SILENCE PAVILION BY ARMEN AGOP OPENS AT THE BIENNALE ARTE 2026

**Armen Agop | National Pavilion of Egypt**

**61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia**

**Commissioner: Egyptian Ministry of Culture – Accademia d'Egitto a Roma**

**Artist / Exhibitor: Armen Agop**

**Venue: Giardini, Egyptian Pavilion**

**Dates: 9 May – 22 November 2026**

**Venice, May 11, 2026**

The National Pavilion of Egypt opens at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia with Silence Pavilion: Between the Tangible and the Intangible, an exhibition by Egyptian artist Armen Agop. At a moment defined by speed and spectacle, the exhibition proposes a different rhythm: from the fleeting event to the enduring trace, from bombastic rhetoric to quiet precision, affirming that what appears minor in tone or form can carry immense meaning.

Agop's artistic practice distills form to its most meditative essence, stripping it down to what is essential and allowing material, gesture, and time to carry meaning.

The pavilion begins with an invitation for visitors to enter in silence and refrain from taking photographs. Conceived as a passage through three sequential spaces, the exhibition moves from the intangible to the physical to the contemplative. The first space is designed to establish a mode of reception rather than consumption, while the second places the visitor in direct contact with matter, which visitors are invited to touch, allowing the material to respond through movement. The third represents an unhurried zone for sitting and observing, where the experience of the pavilion can settle. Throughout, sound and the scent of lotus move through

the rooms alongside the sculptures and paintings, evoking what the artist describes as the tangible and intangible at once.

The exhibition presents three granite sculptures and two large paintings. The sculptures vary in scale and orientation, each exploring a different relationship between form, weight, and space. The two paintings approach light differently: the first, an oil on canvas made in a single session; the second, from Agop's Mantra series, built from thousands of small marks applied to a black canvas, from which light gradually emerges.

Armen Agop said, "The work you will see at the pavilion is the result of decades of questioning what is essential; stripping back until only what truly endures remains. I am honored with the invitation from the Ministry of Culture  to share the outcome of this ongoing research on such an international and prestigious platform."

Commissioned by the Egyptian Ministry of Culture – Accademia d'Egitto a Roma, the exhibition is on view at the Giardini from 9 May to 22 November 2026.

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**ABOUT ARMEN AGOP**

Born in Cairo in 1969, Armen Agop creates sculptures and paintings that explore the relationship between the physical and spiritual. Rooted in his Egyptian-Armenian heritage, his work connects ancient traditions with contemporary practice, blurring the line between art-making and meditation.

Inspired by the desert's silence, Agop distills his work into essential forms free of narrative or representation. His pieces become meditations on simplicity—recordings of time and consciousness that transform the space around them.

Agop graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Helwan University, Cairo in 1992. Major awards include the Prix de Rome (2000), the Umberto Mastroianni Award (2010), and the Premio Sulmona, Presidential Medal of the Italian Republic (2013). His works are held in

collections including the Saudi Arabia Museum of Contemporary Art, Mathaf (Doha), Barjeel Art Foundation (Sharjah), and the Egyptian Modern Art Museum (Cairo). He lives and works in Pietrasanta, Italy.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL PAVILION OF EGYPT

Commissioned by the Egyptian ministry of culture – Accademia d'Egitto a Roma, the National Pavilion of Egypt has participated in the International Art Exhibitions of La Biennale di Venezia since 1938, making it one of the longest-standing participants. Located in the Giardini, the pavilion was designed by architect Brenno Del Giudice in 1932 and has served as Egypt's permanent home since 1952. In 1995, Egypt was awarded the Golden Lion for Best National Participation. The pavilion serves as a platform for Egypt's most innovative artistic voices, providing a space for dialogue, cultural exchange, and creative collaboration. It represents Egypt's rich artistic heritage while showcasing contemporary innovation on the international stage.

## ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

Founded in 1958, the Ministry of Culture of the Arab Republic of Egypt leads the preservation, promotion, and development of Egypt’s cultural identity and heritage. The Ministry oversees a wide network of national cultural institutions and creative bodies across the country and supports artists, writers, and creative talents through training, production, and representation at national and international platforms. Focusing on institutional development, digital transformation, and regional and international partnerships, the Ministry reinforces Egypt’s cultural leadership in the Arab world and beyond.