

BRILANT MILAZIMI



La Biennale di Venezia

61. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

HARD TEETH

Pavilion of the Republic of Kosovo
61st International Art Exhibition
La Biennale di Venezia

Curated by José Esparza Chong Cuy
May 9 – November 22, 2026
Chiesa di Santa Maria del Pianto, Venice

Press Preview: Wednesday May 6, 3 pm
Opening: Wednesday May 6, 4–6 pm

Brilant Milazimi has been selected to represent the Republic of Kosovo at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. Known for painting psychological landscapes that oscillate between menace and dream, Milazimi's work registers an interior climate populated by characters that dwell between harm and survival, collapse and persistence.

In Venice, he will present *Hard Teeth (Dhëmbë të Fortë)*, an immersive painting installation at the newly reopened Chiesa di Santa Maria del Pianto, curated by José Esparza Chong Cuy.

Featuring a 17-meter-wide landscape painting, Milazimi depicts a line of people standing closely across mountains reminiscent of Kosovo's rural terrain. Echoing historical and contemporary scenes of displacement, the panoramic composition features frail bodies lingering in the landscape. Presented along a self-standing structure designed by LANZA Atelier, the figures stretch across its full length and do not advance, but persevere—with their teeth tightly clenched.

Waiting is not abstract in Kosovo. For decades, mobility has been shaped by borders, documents, and the uncertain pace of recognition. The political has often been experienced administratively: through stamps, delays, and provisional

acknowledgments. In this context, waiting becomes a mechanism that structures expectations and shapes tempo. What lies ahead is never named. This suspension of time and destination reflects decades of lived indeterminacy shaped by political transition, contested recognition, and unfinished bureaucracies of sovereignty in Kosovo.

Across the globe, the image of the line has returned. People fleeing war. Standing at checkpoints. Waiting for asylum. Waiting to learn whether they will be allowed to stay, whether they will be sent back, whether return is possible. Waiting in spite of the likelihood of harsher conditions ahead.

Artist

Brilant Milazimi (b. 1994, Gjilan) translates his perception of the world into images that are at once bitter, tender, darkly humorous, and unsettling. Drawing on the logic of the unconscious and fictional imaginaries, his paintings articulate a sinister yet poetic vision of contemporary life, marked by exaggerated physiognomies, animal presences, and the recurring motif of clenched teeth—symbols through which social tension and unresolved conflict surface. Milazimi studied visual arts at the University of Prishtina. Recent solo exhibitions include Brownie Project Gallery,

Shanghai (two-person exhibition, 2025); Storefront Viewing Room, kurimanzutto, New York (2025); Stacion – Center for Contemporary Art, Prishtina (2024; 2020); LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina (2023; 2019); Paul Soto, Los Angeles (2023); LA MAISON DE RENDEZ-VOUS, Brussels (2022); and ERMES ERMES, Rome (2021). He has participated in major group exhibitions including the 5th Autostrada Biennale, Prizren (2025); Galleria Continua, Paris (2025); Manifesta 14, Prishtina (2022); and the Ludwig Museum, Budapest (2020). He received the 2020 Artist of Tomorrow Award in Kosovo, and was a resident at the Art Explora Foundation in collaboration with the Cité internationale des arts, Paris in 2024.

Curator

José Esparza Chong Cuy is a curator, writer, and architect from Mexico. Since 2018, he works as Executive Director and Chief Curator at Storefront for Art and Architecture in New York City. Between 2019–2025 he was part of the curatorial council of the Museo Tamayo in Mexico City. Prior to his current role, he was Associate Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and the Museo Jumex in Mexico City. In 2013 he was co-curator of the Lisbon Architecture Triennale. Between 2007–2012 he also lived in New York and held positions as Intern and Curatorial Associate at Storefront, Research Fellow at the New Museum, and contributing editor at *Domus* magazine. He holds an MS in Critical, Curatorial, and Conceptual Practices in Architecture from Columbia University.

Venue

The Chiesa di Santa Maria del Pianto is an octagonal church and former monastery facing Venice's northern lagoon, designed by architect Francesco Contin and completed in 1658. It was commissioned by the Senate of the Republic in connection with the plague of 1630 and the War of Candia. In the early nineteenth century, the complex was repurposed as a school, hospital, barracks, and even a storage facility, undergoing significant alterations before its reconsecration in 1851. From the early 1970s onwards, the church was closed to the public and has remained inaccessible for decades; it has been recently entrusted to the Fondazione Museo della Scuola Grande di San Marco e della Sanità for progressive restoration and renewed religious and cultural accessibility. *Hard Teeth* is the first cultural initiative hosted by this historical place of great importance to Venice.

Publication

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication edited by José Esparza Chong Cuy and Sarah Demeuse, with contributions by Magali Arriola, Justin Beal, José Esparza Chong Cuy, Valeria Luiselli, Hana Halilaj, Ana Janevski, Migjeni, Brilant Milazimi, Vjosa Musliu, Hans Ulrich Obrist, and Damir Pilić. Designed by Bardhi Haliti and published by Sternberg Press.

Kosovo Pavilion

The Kosovo Pavilion at the Biennale Arte 2026 is commissioned by the National Gallery of Kosovo, represented by Hana Halilaj, and supported by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Kosovo.

The Republic of Kosovo has participated in the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia with a national pavilion since 2013. Previous presentations have featured Petrit Halilaj (2013), Flaka Haliti (2015), Sislej Xhafa (2017), Alban Muja (2019), Jakup Ferri (2022), and Doruntina Kastrati (2024).

Brilant Milazimi: *Hard Teeth (Dhëmbë të Fortë)*
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Commissioner: National Gallery of Kosovo, Hana Halilaj
Curator: José Esparza Chong Cuy
Exhibitor: Brilant Milazimi
Exhibition Design: LANZA Atelier
Composer and Sound Designer: Liburn Jupolli
Graphic Design: Bardhi Haliti
Editor: Sarah Demeuse
Exhibition Production: DH Office
Translator: Blerta Haziraj

Dates: May 9 – November 22, 2026

Venue: Chiesa di Santa Maria del Pianto, Venice

Download the press kit, including the press release and images, [here](#).

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