

BLACK SEAS

Scores
for the
Sonic Eye



La Biennale di Venezia

61. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

Anca Benera & Arnold Estefán present **Black Seas – Scores for the Sonic Eye: the Romanian Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition** – La Biennale di Venezia 2026

Exhibitors

**Anca Benera &
Arnold Estefán**

Curators

**Corina Oprea
Diana Marincu**

Commissioner

Ioana Ciocan

The exhibition opens to the public on 9 May 2026, with professional preview days from 6–8 May, featuring a sonic performance and two official opening ceremonies.

Artists Anca Benera & Arnold Estefán will present their exhibition *Black Seas – Scores for the Sonic Eye* for the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, a large-scale, multi-layered audiovisual and sculptural installation at the Romanian Pavilion and the New Gallery of Culture and Humanistic Research in Venice. Curated by Corina Oprea and Diana Marincu, the exhibition will be on view from 9 May to 22 November 2026 at both the Romanian Pavilion in the Giardini della Biennale and at the New Gallery of the Romanian Institute of Culture and Humanistic Research (Palazzo Correr) in Cannaregio.

The program during the professional preview days (6–8 May 2026) will include:
Sonic Performance by Attila Faravelli – 6 May 2026, 14:00, Romanian Pavilion, Giardini della Biennale
Official Opening – Romanian Pavilion – 7 May 2026, 15:30, Giardini della Biennale
Official Opening – New Gallery of the Romanian Institute of Culture and Humanistic Research – 8 May 2026, 18:00, Palazzo Correr, Cannaregio

About the project

Developed for the Romanian Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, *Black Seas – Scores for the Sonic Eye* unfolds as a multi-layered installation in which sound, moving image, sculpture, and scientific material form a shared field of inquiry. By activating acoustic and geological strands, the artists offer a reading of the Black Sea that is mediated through oceanographic processes, infrastructures of extraction, and overlapping histories of empires and trade routes connecting it with the Mediterranean and beyond.

The Black Sea as motif, metaphor, and system of relations

The Pavilion is grounded in sustained research on the Black Sea as an ecological basin and geopolitical frontier where histories remain literally submerged. The Black Sea is often described as a marginal, semi-enclosed sea defined by borders, yet it remains deeply connected to broader ecological, geopolitical, and economic systems. It functions as a stratified body in which surface waters remain separate from anoxic depths below—among the largest of their kind in the world—where decomposition slows down, and the sea becomes an archive.

The artists present an installation in which video, sound and sculptural elements attune to the Sea, as the Danube, the Don, and the Dnieper flow into it – vast river systems that transport sediment and memory from across the continent, carrying Europe's intertwined colonial and political histories. These currents extend toward the Mediterranean and the Adriatic, situating the Sea within broader systems of circulation, migration, and exchange that historically connected it to Venice, as well as to routes between Asia and Europe. In its anoxic depths, traces of empire, extraction, displacement and ecological change persist, pressing on the material and political present.

Pre-opening

6 – 8 May 2026

Exhibition

9 May – 22 November 2026

Venues

Romanian Pavilion,
Giardini della Biennale,
Sestiere Castello, 30122
Venice

**New Gallery of the Romanian
Institute for Culture and
Humanistic Research**
Palazzo Correr, Cannaregio
2214, 30121 Venice

“Shaped by this layered separation and persistent surface turbulence, the sea reflects a broader condition: not a single geography, but a shared state in which ecological, geopolitical, and economic forces collide without reaching equilibrium. In this sense, the Black Sea becomes a metaphor—a lens through which to read a fractured world, where separation, instability, and entanglement define the conditions of the present.” – **Anca Benera & Arnold Estefán**

“*Black Seas – Scores for the Sonic Eye* transforms marine science, hydropolitical histories, and ecological observation into spatial and acoustic form, inviting an encounter with geological depth and suspended temporality, where the seabed emerges as an archive and latent force.”

– **Curators Corina Oprea & Diana Marincu**

The ‘sonic eye’

The notion of the “sonic eye” in the title derives from sonar—a technology originally developed for military use that employs sound waves to navigate and detect objects underwater. The concept of the “sonic eye” frames listening as a way of seeing, allowing space to be perceived and navigated through sound.

Benera and Estefán assemble and repurpose oceanographic instruments from the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, the Baltic, the Adriatic and the Atlantic Ocean. Sourced from bodies of water connected by shared ecological conditions and the increasing militarization of maritime space, these objects are transformed into sculptural instruments that carry the sounds of waves, storms, and drifting currents. Marked by wave impact, turbulence, and prolonged exposure, their surfaces register otherwise imperceptible tensions, which are released as sound in the exhibition, and reposition the Black Sea as an active force within global systems of circulation and power.

Notes to Editors

Romanian Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia 2026

Black Seas – Scores for the Sonic Eye

Artists: Anca Benera & Arnold Estefán

Curators: Corina Oprea, Diana Marincu

Commissioner: Ioana Ciocan

Preview days: 6 – 8 May 2026

Exhibition: 9 May – 22 Nov. 2026

www.blackseas.ro

About Anca Benera and Arnold Estefán

Anca Benera and Arnold Estefán have worked together as an artist duo since 2012 and are currently based in Vienna. Their practice spans multimedia installation, sculpture, and drawing, exploring the intersections of history, environment, and resource politics. Recent works investigate how military imaginaries shape landscapes, climates, and communities, examining the ways past conflicts continue to influence the environments we inhabit and the futures we imagine.

Their work has been exhibited in museums and biennials including Manifesta 15, Barcelona (2024); Kyiv Biennial (2025, 2023, 2015); Kunsthalle Mainz (2025); Matsudo International Science Art Festival, Tokyo (2025); Creative Time Summit, New York (2024); 1st Klima Biennale, Vienna (2024); Art Encounters, Timișoara, Romania (2024 – solo); Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin (2023 – solo); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2022); Museum Tinguely, Basel (2022); Migros Museum, Zürich (2021); Ludwig Museum, Budapest (2021); Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh (2021); 39th EVA International – Ireland’s Biennial (2020); MUCEM, Marseille (2019); Art Encounters Biennial, Timișoara (2019, 2017); Frac des Pays de la Loire, Nantes (2018); MUMOK, Vienna (2017); ZKM, Karlsruhe (2016); Vienna Biennale, MAK, Vienna (2015); Off-Biennale, Budapest (2017, 2015); Kunsthalle Wien (2014); 13th Istanbul Biennial (2013) and La Triennale, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012). They are the recipients of the Birgit Jürgenssen Prize 2022, and were the first Creative Fellows at UCL’s Postsocialist Art Centre in London in 2023.

Press Contact

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www.blackseas.ro

Social Media

[@blackseas.ro](https://www.instagram.com/blackseas.ro)

Credits

Anca Benera & Arnold Estefán

Black Seas – Scores for the Sonic Eye

Romanian Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition

– La Biennale di Venezia 2026

Curators Corina Oprea, Diana Marincu

Commissioner Ioana Ciocan

Team

SOUND PRODUCTION

Sound Composition & Spatial Audio Design Simina Oprea

Vocal Performer & Composer Diana Miron

Composer & Field Recordist Laurențiu Coțac

Guest Sound Artist Attila Faravelli

COORDINATION

Strategic Coordinator Corina Bucea

Executive Producer Ioana Gonțea (Uzinele Creative)

Communication Coordinator Raluca Selejan

EXHIBITION & ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

Exhibition Design George Marinescu & Maria Daria Oancea

(Atelier Ad Hoc)

Head of Installation Justin O'Shaughnessy

Installation Jude O'Shaughnessy, Vlad Cîndea, Alexandru Leric

Production Assistants Georgiana Țidorescu & Martha Ciurea

(Uzinele Creative)

DOP & Video Editing Tudor Cioroiu (Format Film)

Colour grading Simona Cristea

3D Modeling Sergiu Negulici (Reniform)

Technical Planning, Multimedia Equipment & Installation

EIDOTECH Polska

Light Design Mikołaj Szulczewski

Metal Works Jozef Vančo (Gutenart Studio)

Textile Embroidery Veronika Persché

COMMUNICATION & MEDIATION

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