



kvadrat

# Kvadrat part of three art collaborations for the 57th International Art Exhibition la Biennale di Venezia 13 May – 26 November 2017

This year Kvadrat is proud to support artists Kirstine Roepstorff, Olafur Eliasson and Søren Engsted for their works presented at the 57th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia.

Visual artist Kirstine Roepstorff has been appointed to represent Denmark for la Biennale di Venezia with *Influenza. Theatre of glowing darkness*. The work consists of an immersive spatial theatre experience and a structural intervention in The Danish Pavilion and surrounding gardens. Using darkness, light projections, glass, sound and a recorded dialogue for her large-scale installation, Kirstine Roepstorff challenges us to embrace the mystical darkness as a positive force of healing, transformation and empowerment.

As part of the work and with the support of Kvadrat, Kirstine Roepstorff created the tapestry *Renaissance of the Night*, spanning 7.5 × 2.5 metres, and meticulously hand-crafted over seven months by three of Europe's most skilled traditional weavers. One of the oldest forms of storytelling, tapestries traditionally served both political as recording of important events and domestic purpose as home furnishing and insulation for warmth. Created from a digital drawing made by Roepstorff, the tapestry makes use of technological and scientific aesthetics, producing an iconography that provides a key to the exhibition's symbolism: the mountains in the landscape represent dark matter, and the humanistic forms growing from seeds designate the various stages of social development: potential, action, and future. The very fabric of the tapestry itself symbolically interweaves the cycles of humanity and events, interconnecting life and the cosmos.

## **Darkness**

*When everything was just floating energy in complete darkness...*

*Maybe you remember, which choices you made here?*

*And what you chose to rehearse and to learn in this life?*

*How much did you dare to risk in order to grow?*

*How much darkness did you absorb?*

*Do you remember?*

## **The Danish Pavilion**

Giardini di Castello

30122 Venice

Press conference 10 May, 12 – 1 pm

Duration of *Theatre of glowing darkness*: 30 minutes

13 May – 26 November 2017

Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am – 6 pm

Closed on Mondays

Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson is bringing *Green light – An artistic workshop* created in collaboration with Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary to the 57th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia.

*Green light – An artistic workshop* is a project by Olafur Eliasson, initiated in collaboration with Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna (TBA21). Conceived in response to the present challenges arising from mass displacement and migration, the project shines a green light for refugees and migrants and encourages civic engagement.

Eighty participants have been invited from a range of countries – including Nigeria, Gambia, Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, and China. Located in the Central Pavilion, *Green light* is a space of individual and collective “world-making” that emerges from practical workshop activities and spreads out into society at large. By presenting a multilayered concept of hospitality that encompasses a wide variety of people – an artist, his studio, the participants, partnering NGOs, the visitors, etc. – *Green light* tests alternative models of community.

The artistic workshop invites refugees and asylum seekers to participate in the communal construction of *Green light* lamps, and hosts a multifaceted learning programme titled *Shared learning* that includes language courses, job training, seminars, and artist’s interventions – and explores new models of community and a variety of perspectives on migration, citizenship, statelessness, arrival, memory, and belonging, eliciting exchanges of knowledge, experiences, and values.

Kvadrat has supported the exhibition with textiles and produced seven handwoven hexagonal Kinnasand rugs for use in the space that *Green light – An artistic workshop* will appear in.

The crystalline *Green light* lamp, designed by Olafur Eliasson, is a polyhedral unit fitted with a small green-tinted LED. Made predominantly from recycled and sustainable materials and designed to be stackable, the modules can function either alone as single objects or be assembled into a variety of architectural and sculptural configurations that attest to the collective nature of their production.

The pilot project at TBA21 – Augarten, Vienna, was developed in spring / summer 2016 to devise a replicable and sustainable structure that could be further developed in collaboration with other institutions and contexts worldwide. As of today, *Green light* has taken place at the Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University in Houston, Art Basel, the International Peace Institute’s Annual Conference in Salzburg, and at the National Gallery in Prague.

**The Central Pavilion**

Giardini della Biennale  
30122 Venice

13 May – 26 November 2017

Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am – 6 pm

Closed on Mondays

[greenlightworkshop.org](http://greenlightworkshop.org)

[olafureliasson.net/greenlight](http://olafureliasson.net/greenlight)

The artistic practice of Danish performance and visual artist Søren Engsted makes use of insightful humour to investigate the theme of sculpture in its art historical sense. Film, in particular, allows him to detach everyday objects from their usual physical context and expand the narrative by means of texts and sounds.

Engsted's contribution for la Biennale di Venezia this year is supported by Kvadrat and titled *Levitation*. In a video of the performance, the artist sits cross-legged on an Indian levitation chair, and tells the public a number of anecdotes about the theme of flight and gravity. Engsted ironically lists a number of examples associated with the myth of Daedalus and Icarus, the discovery of the hot-air balloon and its influence on eighteenth-century fashion and society, the physical characteristics of chicken and why it is unable to fly.

Projected in a room covered with wallpaper, the video interrogates the relationship between subject, object, sculpture and viewer. During the performance, Engsted does not hesitate to ask questions and to engage his audience. During the inaugural days of the event, the performance will be held inside the Central Pavilion by actors or by the artist himself, thereby exerting different influences on the viewer's perception and expectations of the work.

**The Central Pavilion**

Giardini della Biennale  
30122 Venice

Press preview performances at the Auditorium

9–12 May, 11 am

Duration of *Levitation*: 13 minutes

13 May – 26 November 2017

Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am–6 pm

Closed on Mondays

### **About Kirstine Roepstorff**

Born in 1972, Kirstine Roepstorff lives and works in Fredericia. She graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. Roepstorff's artistic practice consists primarily of collages that incorporate different media and images, pointing out existing power relations, and critically investigating the history and failures of political ideas. By editing and decomposing the original material, her work generates new contexts that open up spaces for negotiation and new narratives. Roepstorff's practice is situated in those "in-between" spaces of negotiation.

Selection of exhibitions: Andersen's Contemporary in Copenhagen (2016); Den Frie in Copenhagen (2015); Kunstverein Göttingen, Germany (2014); Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Kunstmuseum Basel in Switzerland (2010); The National Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Oslo (2010). In recent years, the artist has created several large-scale public art projects, including "The Gong" for Dokk1 in Aarhus (2015) and "Klangfrø" for the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics at the University of Copenhagen (2014). Her work is included in the permanent collection of Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; The Saatchi Gallery, London, UK; National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo, NO; The Royal Museum of Fine Art, Copenhagen, DK among others.

[danishpavilion.org](http://danishpavilion.org)

### **About Olafur Eliasson**

Artist Olafur Eliasson (IS/DK), born 1967, works in a wide range of media, including installation, painting, sculpture, photography, and film. Since 1997, his solo shows have appeared in major museums around the world. Eliasson's projects in public space include The New York City Waterfalls in 2008, and Ice Watch for which Eliasson, with geologist Minik Rosing, brought melting ice blocks from Greenland to Copenhagen in 2014 and to Paris on the occasion of the COP21 Climate Conference in 2015. Established in 1995, his studio today numbers about ninety craftsmen, architects, archivists, administrators, and cooks. In 2014, Eliasson and architect Sebastian Behmann founded Studio Other Spaces, an office for art and architecture focusing on interdisciplinary and experimental building projects and works in public space. Together with engineer Frederik Ottesen, Eliasson founded the social business Little Sun in 2012. This global project produces and distributes the Little Sun solar lamp for use in off-grid communities and spreads awareness about the need to expand access to sustainable energy to all.

[olafureliasson.net](http://olafureliasson.net)

### **About Søren Engsted**

Søren Engsted lives and works in Copenhagen. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, and has had solo exhibitions at Kunstverein New Jörg, Vienna (2015); YEARS, Copenhagen (2013); Vesch, Verein für Raum und Form in der bildenden Kunst, Vienna (2011); Kunsthaus Graz (2010) and Galerie Mezzanin, Vienna (2008). His work has been included in several group exhibitions, including *Viva Arte Viva*, the Central Pavilion at the 57th Biennale di Venezia (2017), curated by Christine Marcel; *Borderline*, at Universal Museum Joanneum, Maribor (2012): European Capital of Culture; *VILLE EN ABÎME - Hotel Charleroi*, at Palais des Expositions, Charleroi (2012); *Kunsthalle Wien* (2012); and *Open House* at IASPIS, Stockholm (2011).

### **About Kvadrat**

Kvadrat was established in Denmark in 1968 and has deep roots in Scandinavia's design tradition. Kvadrat continuously works to expand the aesthetic, technological and artistic boundaries of the use of textiles through a long series of collaborations with some of the world's best designers, architects and artists, among others Miriam Bäckström, Raf Simons, Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, Thomas Demand, Olafur Eliasson, Alfredo Häberli, Akira Minagawa and Peter Saville.

Art projects include; Pipilotti Rist at New Museum, New York (2016), Philippe Parreno at Tate Modern, London (2016), Joana Vasconcelos at AroS, Aarhus (2016), Goshka Macuga at Fondazione Prada, Milan (2016), Philippe Parreno at HangarBicocca, Milan (2016), Shilpa Gupta at la Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2015), Günther Vogt and Olafur Eliasson at *Your Glacial Expectations*, Kvadrat Headquarters, Ebeltoft (2012), Thomas Demand at Städel Museum, Frankfurt (2011).

For further information, please contact [press@kvadrat.dk](mailto:press@kvadrat.dk)

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