

Greenberger, Alex. "Venice Biennale Names 111 Artists for Koyo Kouoh's Posthumous Exhibition," *Artnews*, 25 February 2026.

ARTnews Est. 1902

Venice Biennale Names 111 Artists for Koyo Kouoh's Posthumous Exhibition



BY ALEX GREENBERGER February 25, 2026 7:18am



The Venice Biennale, the world's most important art exhibition, has officially named the 111 artists participating in its 2026 edition.

Opening to the public on May 9 and running through November 22, this year's Biennale, the 61st edition to date, is an unusual one: its curator, [Koyo Kouoh](#), died suddenly last year during the making of the exhibition, a first in the 131-year history of this storied exhibition. To see through her vision, she appointed a set of advisers that includes curators Gabe Beckhurst Feijoo, Marie Helene Pereira, and Rasha Salti; Siddartha Mitter, a critic who will serve as the editor of written materials; and Rory Tsapayi, who will act as an assistant to the team.

Kouoh's Biennale is titled "In Minor Keys" and appears to focus on art with a decidedly understated vibe—a sensibility all the more notable in a world riven by violence and tension.

"The minor keys refuse orchestral bombast and goose-step military marches and come alive in the quiet tones, the lower frequencies, the hums, the consolations of poetry, all portals of improvisation to the elsewhere and the otherwise," Kouoh wrote in a text that quotes from thinkers such as Édouard Glissant, Toni Morrison, and Patrick Chamoiseau. "The minor keys ask for listening that calls on the emotions and sustains them in return."

The Biennale tends to be treated as a weather vane for art-making, with the show often viewed as a means of divining which way the artistic headwinds are blowing. It comprises a main exhibition organized by a selected curator and a set of national pavilions that stand independently of that show.

There is typically little to no crossover between the main exhibition and the pavilions, though this year, there is one artist exhibiting in both sectors. That person is Khaled Sabsabi, who is representing Australia following a tumultuous process that saw his pavilion canceled over controversy over his past work, then reinstated months later.

While most Biennales award Golden Lions for Lifetime Achievement, this one will not because Kouoh did not select the winners herself prior to her passing, the Biennale said.

Pietrangelo Buttafuoco, president of the Biennale, said in a statement that Kouoh's show stood as "an exhibition permeated with spirit, with a sacredness that puts the person, the human being, back at the heart of things, rediscovering the sense of being in the world by reacquiring a sense of proportion with respect to all earthly elements, and by looking to the sky once more. Koyo Kouoh's journey is one that reappraises human relationships, starting from people's own backyards. The little things, which are also great ones."

Founded in 1895, the Biennale has historically functioned as a picture of the international art scene as it stands currently. But the past two editions, curated by Cecilia Alemani and Adriano Pedrosa in 2022 and 2024, respectively, also turned a focus on the past by featuring a heaping of dead artists who made significant, if often under-recognized, contributions to art history.

Aleman and Pedrosa's editions both numbered more than 200 artists each, but Kouoh's edition is comparatively much smaller, with just 111 artists. And unlike Pedrosa's Biennale, where 55 percent of the participants were dead, this time the focus is predominantly on living artists.

Still, two dead artists act as guiding lights for the show. In what Salti called a "shrine" in the Central Pavilion, Issa Samb and Beverly Buchanan, of Senegal and the US, respectively, will receive large-scale presentations. Samb, as Salti noted, was a "lifelong mentor" to Kouoh, whose work she credited with inspiring her to form with Raw Material Company, an art space in Dakar that she intended as a response to the state-run institutions in Senegal.

In Tuesday's press conference, the advisers to Kouoh's show recalled meeting at Raw Material Company in April 2025, not long before her passing in May of that year. Pereira said that each curator was assigned daily "missions" by Kouoh, and that they met in the space's courtyard to discuss artists for the show. Fruit fell around them as artist's names were spoken, Pereira said, and the curators developed a ritual of eating the mangoes that had dropped, following Kouoh's lead.

"She was our conductor, and while each of us arrived with a finely tuned instrumented, it took a few days for us to attune to one another," Pereira said on Tuesday. "She composed while we improvised."

Beckhurst Feijoo noted that the resultant show "is not organized according to sections but according to priorities." Novels by Toni Morrison and Gabriel García Márquez—*Beloved* and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, respectively—were "touchstones," they said. "In both novels, magical realism deepens rather than distracts from an emotional register." Such an impulse will be also evinced by the exhibition itself, which the curators promised would contain as few dividing partitions as possible.

The programming includes live events such as a procession of poets, something that Mitter said was an allusion to a "Poetry Caravan" event once led by Kouoh herself between Dakar and Timbuktu.

The Biennale can be an overwhelming endeavor, with a show so big that it can often require multiple days to take it all in. Tsapayi said that there will be "rest spaces" throughout the main exhibition, to allow for the opportunity for "contemplative pause" in keeping with the show's ethos.

Tsapayi said that that pause "prompts to tune into granular changes in and around us and, as Pauline Oliveros puts it, become engrained to listening."

The [2026 Venice Biennale](#) artist list follows in full below.

Pio Abad (Born 1983, Manila, Philippines. Lives in London, UK)

Philip Aguirre y Otegui (Born 1961, Schoten, Belgium. Lives in Antwerp, Belgium)

Akinbode Akinbiyi (Born 1946, Oxford, UK. Lives in Berlin, Germany)

Laurie Anderson (Born 1947, Chicago, IL, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA)

Fabrice Aragno (Born 1970, Neuchâtel, Switzerland. Lives in Lausanne, Switzerland)

arms ache avid aeon: Nancy Brooks Brody (Born 1962, New York City, NY, USA, D. 2023); **Joy**

Episalla (Born 1957, Bronxville, NY, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA); **Zoe Leonard** (Born 1961 Liberty, NY, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA); **Carrie Yamaoka** (Born 1957, Glen Cove, NY, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA); **fierce pussy** (Founded 1991, New York City, NY, USA); **Jo-ey Tang** (Born 1978, Hong Kong, China. Lives in New York City, NY, USA)
Kader Attia (Born, 1970, Dugny, France. Lives in Berlin, Germany and Paris, France)
Sammy Baloji (Born 1978, Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Lives in Brussels, Belgium and Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo)
Ranti Bam (Born 1985, Lagos, Nigeria. Lives in Paris, France and Lagos, Nigeria)
Alvaro Barrington (Born 1983, Caracas, Venezuela. Lives in London, UK)
Éric Baudelaire (Born 1973, Salt Lake City, UT, USA. Lives in Paris, France)
Sabian Baumann (Born 1962, Zug, Switzerland. Lives in Zurich, Switzerland)
blaxTARLINES KUMASI (Founded 2015, Kumasi, Ghana)
Beverly Buchanan (Born 1940, Fuquay, NC, USA. D. 2015)
Seyni Awa Camara (Born 1945, Oussouy, Senegal. D. 2026)
Nick Cave (Born 1959, Chicago, IL, USA. Lives in Chicago, IL, USA)
Carolina Caycedo (Colombian, born 1978, London, UK. Lives in Los Angeles, CA, USA and Caguas, Puerto Rico)
Annalee Davis (Born 1963, St. Michael, Barbados. Lives in St. George, Barbados)
BuBu de la Madeleine (Born 1961, Osaka, Japan. Lives in Nara, Japan)
Dawn DeDeaux (Born 1952, New Orleans, LA, USA. Lives in New Orleans, LA, USA)
Nolan Oswald Dennis (Born 1988, Lusaka, Zambia. Lives in Johannesburg, South Africa)
Denniston Hill (Founded 2008, Glen Wild, NY, USA)
Bonnie Devine (Born 1952, Toronto, Canada. Lives in Toronto, Canada)
Godfried Donkor (Born 1964, Accra, Ghana. Lives in London, UK and Accra, Ghana)
Marcel Duchamp (Born 1887, Blainville-Crevon, France. D. 1968)
Edouard Duval-Carrié (Born 1954, Port-au-Prince, Haïti. Lives in Miami, FL, USA)
Torkwase Dyson (Born 1973, Chicago, IL, USA. Lives in Beacon, NY, USA)
rana elnemr (Born 1974, Hannover, Germany. Lives in Cairo, Egypt)
Theo Eshetu (Born 1958, London, UK. Lives in Berlin, Germany and Rome, Italy)
Rachel Fallon (with Alice Maher) (Born 1971, Dublin, Ireland. Lives in Dublin, Ireland)
G.A.S. Foundation (Founded 2023, Lagos and Ijebu Ode, Nigeria)
Sofía Gallisá Muriente (Born 1986, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Lives in Puerto Rico)
Adebunmi Gbadebo (Born 1992, Livingston, NJ, USA. Lives in Philadelphia, PA and Newark, NJ, USA)
Leonilda González (Born 1923, Minuano, Uruguay. D. 2017)
Linda Goode Bryant (Born 1949, Columbus, OH, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA)
Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige (Born 1969, Beirut, Lebanon. Lives in Beirut, Lebanon and Paris, France; Born 1969, Moussaitbeh, Lebanon. Lives in Beirut, Lebanon and Paris, France)
Alexa Kumiko Hatanaka (Born 1988, Toronto, Canada. Lives in Toronto, Canada; New York City, NY, USA; and Japan)
Ayrson Heráclito (Born 1968, Macaúbas, Bahia, Brazil. Lives in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil)
Clarissa Herbst & Dominique Rust (Born 1959, Crailsheim, Germany. Lives in Zurich, Switzerland; Born 1960, Basel, Switzerland. Lives in Zurich, Switzerland)
Nicholas Hlobo (Born 1975, Cape Town, South Africa. Lives in Johannesburg, South Africa)
Carsten Höller (Born 1961, Brussels, Belgium. Lives in Stockholm, Sweden; Biriwa, Ghana; and Tuscany, Italy)
Sohrab Hura (Born 1981, Chinsurah, India. Lives in New Delhi, India)
Alfredo Jaar (Born 1965, Santiago, Chile. Lives in Lisbon, Portugal)
Mohammed Joha (Born 1978, Gaza, Palestine. Lives in Marseille, France)
Michael Joo (Born 1966, Ithaca, NY, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA)
Nina Katchadourian (Born 1968, Stanford, CA, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA and Berlin, Germany)
Bodys Isek Kingelez (Born 1948, Kimbembele Ihunga, former Belgian Congo, now Democratic

Republic of the Congo. D. 2015)

Sandra Knecht (Born 1968, Buus, Switzerland. Lives in Buus, Switzerland)

Marcia Kure (Born 1970, Kano State, Nigeria. Lives in Princeton, NJ, USA; Abuja, and Kaduna, Nigeria)

Natalia Lassalle-Morillo (in collaboration with Gloria Morillo) (Born 1991, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Lives in San Juan, Puerto Rico)

Florence Lazar (Born 1966, Paris, France. Lives in Paris, France)

Dan Lie (Born 1988. Lives in Berlin, Germany)

Werewere Liking (Born 1950, Mgombas, Cameroon. Lives in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire)

lugar a dudas (Founded 2004, Cali, Colombia)

Daniel Lind-Ramos (Born 1953, Loiza, Puerto Rico. Lives in Loiza, Puerto Rico)

Alice Maher (Born 1956, Tipperary, Ireland. Lives in County Mayo, Ireland)

Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons & Kamaal Malak (Born 1959, Matanzas, Cuba Lives in Nashville, TN, USA; Born 1962, Philadelphia, PA, USA. Lives in Nashville, TN, USA)

Senzeni Marasela (Born 1977, Thokoza, South Africa. Lives in Johannesburg, South Africa)

Guadalupe Maravilla (Born 1976, San Salvador, El Salvador. Lives in New York City, NY, USA)

Manuel Mathieu (Born 1986, Port-au-Prince, Haïiti. Lives in Montreal, Canada and Paris, France)

Georgina Maxim (Born 1980, Harare, Zimbabwe. Lives in Harare and Mutare, Zimbabwe)

Tiona Nekkia McClodden (Born 1981, Blytheville, AR, USA. Lives in Philadelphia, PA, USA)

Big Chief Demond Melancon (Born 1978, New Orleans, LA, USA. Lives in New Orleans, LA, USA)

Avi Mograbi (Born 1956, Tel Aviv. Lives in Lisbon, Portugal)

Wangechi Mutu (Born 1972, Nairobi, Kenya. Lives in New York City, NY, USA and Nairobi, Kenya)

Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute (NCAI) (Founded 2020, Nairobi, Kenya)

Eustaquio Neves (Born 1955, Juatuba, Brazil. Lives in Diamantina, Brazil)

Tuấn Andrew Nguyễn (Born 1976, Sài Gòn, Việt Nam. Lives in Hội An, works in Hồ Chí Minh City, Việt Nam)

Tammy Nguyen (Born 1984, San Francisco, CA, USA. Lives in Easton, CT, USA)

Otobong Nkanga (Born 1974, Kano, Nigeria. Lives in Antwerp, Belgium, and Uyo, Nigeria)

Kaloki Nyamai (Born 1985, Nairobi, Kenya. Lives in Nairobi, Kenya)

Temitayo Ogunbiyi (Born 1984, Rochester, NY, USA. Lives in Lagos, Nigeria)

Pauline Oliveros (Born 1932, Houston, TX, USA. D. 2016)

Kambui Olujimi (Born 1976, Brooklyn, New York City, NY, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA)

Hagar Ophir (Born 1983, Jerusalem. Lives in Berlin, Germany)

Uriel Orlow (Born 1973, Zurich, Switzerland. Lives in Lisbon, Portugal; London, UK; and Basel, Switzerland)

Ebony G. Patterson (Born 1981, Kingston, Jamaica. Lives in Kingston, Jamaica and Chicago, IL, USA)

Rajni Perera & Marigold Santos (Born 1985, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Lives in Toronto, Canada; Born 1981, Manila, Phillipines. Lives in Calgary, Canada)

Thania Petersen (Born 1980, Cape Town, South Africa. Lives in Cape Town, South Africa)

Alan Phelan (Born 1968, Dublin, Ireland. Lives in Dublin, Ireland)

Johannes Phokela (Born 1966, Johannesburg, South Africa. Lives in Johannesburg, South Africa)

Léonard Pongo (Born 1988, Liège, Belgium. Lives in Brussels, Belgium and Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo)

Walid Raad (Born 1967, Chbanieh, Lebanon. Lives in Medusa, NY, USA)

Mohammed Z. Rahman (Born 1997, London, UK. Lives in London, UK)

RAW Material Company (Founded 2008, Dakar, Senegal)

Tabita Rezaire (Born 1989, Paris, France, 1989. Lives in Cayenne, French Guiana)

Guadalupe Rosales (Born 1980, Redwood City, CA, USA. Lives in Los Angeles, CA, USA)

Yo-E Ryou (Born 1987, Seoul, South Korea. Lives in Seoul and Jeju Island, South Korea)
Khaled Sabsabi (Born 1965, Tripoli, Lebanon. Lives in Sydney, Australia)
Rose Salane (Born 1992, New York City, NY, USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA)
Issa Samb (Born 1945, Dakar, Senegal. D. 2017)
Amina Saoudi Aït Khay (Born 1955, Casablanca, Morocco. Lives in Sousse, Tunisia)
Carrie Schneider (Born 1979, Chicago, IL USA. Lives in New York City, NY, USA)
Hala Schoukair (Born 1957, Beirut, Lebanon. Lives in Beirut, Lebanon)
Berni Searle (Born 1964, Cape Town, South Africa. Lives in Cape Town, South Africa)
Mmakgabo Mmapula Helen Sebidi (Born 1943, Marapyane, South Africa. Lives in Johannesburg, South Africa)
Wardha Shabbir (Born 1987, Lahore, Pakistan. Lives in Lahore, Pakistan)
Yoshiko Shimada (Born 1959, Tokyo, Japan. Lives in Chiba, Japan)
Himali Singh Soin & David Soin Tappeser (Born 1987, New Delhi, India. Lives in London, UK and New Delhi, India; Born 1985, Bonn, Germany. Lives in London, UK and New Delhi, India)
Buhlebezwe Siwani (Born 1987, Johannesburg, South Africa. Lives in Amsterdam, Netherlands and Cape Town, South Africa)
Cauleen Smith (Born 1967, Riverside, CA, USA. Lives in Los Angeles, CA, USA)
Vera Tamari (Born 1944, Jerusalem, Palestine. 1944. Lives in Ramallah, Palestine)
Tsai Ming-liang (Born 1957, Kuching, Malaysia. Lives in New Taipei City and Taipei, Taiwan)
Victoria-Idongesit Udondian (Born 1982, Uyo, Nigeria. Lives in Lagos, Nigeria and New York City, NY, USA)
Celia Vásquez Yui (Born 1960, Pucallpa, Peru. Lives in the Peruvian Amazon, Pucallpa, Peru)
Kemang Wa Lehulere (Born 1984, Cape Town, South Africa. Lives in Cape Town, South Africa)
Kennedy Yanko (Born 1988, St. Louis, MO, USA. Lives in Miami, FL, USA)
Raed Yassin (Born 1979, Beirut, Lebanon. Lives in Beirut, Lebanon and Berlin, Germany)
Sawangwongse Yawnghwe (Born 1971, Shan State Burma. Lives in Zutphen, Netherlands and Chiang Mai, Thailand)
Billie Zangewa (Born 1973, Blantyre, Malawi. Lives in Johannesburg, South Africa)