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See Some Of The Brightest, Boldest Art At The Venice Biennale 2024

By [Rebecca Ann Hughes](#), Contributor. © Rebecca Ann Hughes covers travel,...

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The Nordic Countries Pavilion presents a special live performance of The Altersea Opera created by Swedish artist Lap-See Lam in collaboration with Norwegian composer Tze Yeung Ho and Finnish textile artist Kholod Hawash.

SIMONE PADOVANI/GETTY IMAGES

The **Venice Biennale** is renowned for tackling weighty and complex themes, from nationalism to climate change. But that doesn't mean all the works on show are somber or obscurely conceptualized. This year, dozens of contributions to what is known as the “Art Olympics” are joyous, celebratory and spectacular to look at.

Venice is famously photogenic, but these works will add a whole new flavor to your vacation snaps. With curator Adriano Pedrosa's spotlight on the Global South, the 60th edition of the Venice Biennale explodes with eye-popping murals, bold tapestries and vivid performances.

Here are some of the brightest and boldest artworks you can find in and around the Biennale this year.



Visitors enter into the main pavilion at the Giardini during the 60th Biennale Art 2024 on April 18, 2024 in Venice, Italy.
SIMONE PADOVANI/GETTY IMAGES

In the Giardini, the Central Pavilion's normally white façade has become an explosion of color. The exterior is the work of **MAHKU**, a group of indigenous Huni Kuin artists from Brazil. The fantastical mural depicts the passage between the Asian and American continents through the Bering Strait. In order to cross it, legend says people found an alligator who offered to carry them on its back in exchange for food.

However, as animals became increasingly scarce, humans resorted to hunting the small alligators. Trust betrayed, the alligator that transported the people submerged itself beneath the sea. The myth symbolizes the beginning of the separation between people and places.

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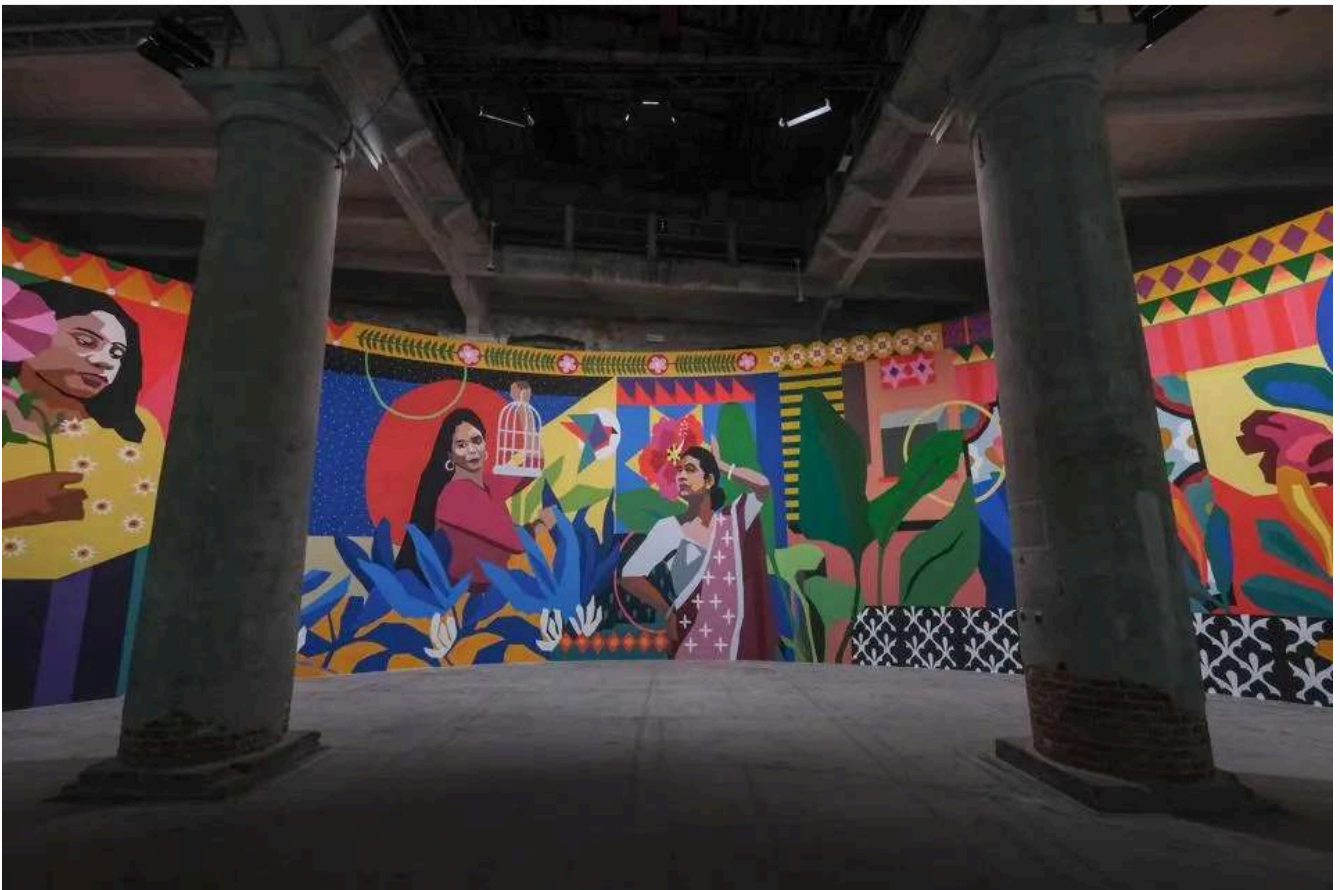
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The Corderie at the Biennale at the Arsenale during the 60th Biennale Art 2024.
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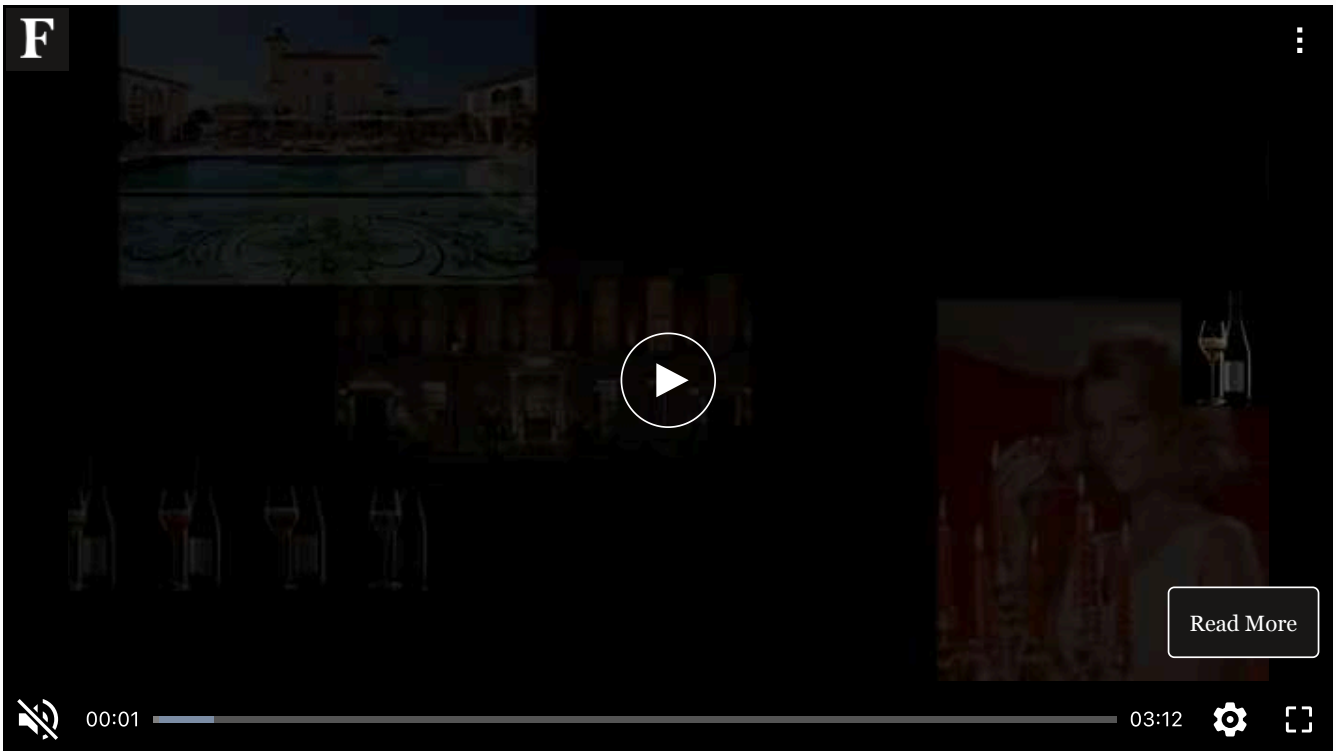
The Bangalore-based Aravani Art Project is a collective of cis and transgender women who aim to spread positivity and hope to their communities through their art. Their colossal mural, located in the Arsenale, features representations of trans bodies and natural elements, with a nod to the experiences of transition, dysphoria and acceptance of trans people acknowledging their identities.

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Color is a crucial element of the group's work, recalling their Indian background—where bright color appears in clothing, spices, and architecture—as well as amplifying of the colors of the LGBTQI+ flag. It is an upbeat, optimistic work that forms a triumphant conclusion to the Arsenale's main exhibition.





VENICE, ITALY - APRIL 19: A view of the US Pavilion at Giardini during the 60th Biennale Art 2024 on April 19, 2024 in Venice, Italy. (Photo by Luc Castel/Getty Images)

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The U.S. pavilion is transformed outside and inside by Jeffrey Gibson, the first Indigenous artist to represent the United States at the Venice Biennale in a solo presentation. He is known for his interdisciplinary practice and hybrid lexicon that draws on American, Indigenous and queer histories. A member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and of Cherokee descent, Gibson's work features intertribal motifs, beadwork, textiles, and found objects from the past two centuries reimagined with modern twists—beaded ducks, busts with skull-like faces and the songs of Nina Simone.

the space in which to place me is a defiant work that represents Gibson's futuristic vision of inclusivity—a space in which Indigenous art and multiple identities become central to the American experience.



Visitors attend the official open of the Nordic pavilion at the Giardini during the 60th Biennale Art 2024.
SIMONE PADOVANI/GETTY IMAGES

At the Nordic Countries pavilion, *The Altersea Opera* is an audio-visual installation depicting an epic quest. The project by artist Lap-See Lam, experimental composer Tze Yeung Ho and textile artist Kholod Hawash centers on the Cantonese mythological figure Lo Ting—half fish, half man—and his longing to return to his former life in Fragrant Harbour. The opera is staged on a Chinese dragon ship whose giant prow beckons from out front.

Inspired by the Red Boat Troupes—the traveling company that popularized Cantonese Opera in the 19th century—*The Altersea Opera* veers between the real and the imaginary while telling a story of generational loss and diasporic displacement.

Correction 4/29/2024: This article was updated to reflect that Jeffrey Gibson is the first Indigenous artist to represent the United States at the Venice Biennale in a solo presentation.

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