

**Portugal Pavilion  
at the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia**

**Mónica de Miranda, Sónia Vaz Borges and Vânia Gala  
'Greenhouse'**

**Palazzo Franchetti, San Marco  
20 April – 24 November 2024**



**PRESS RELEASE**

'Greenhouse', the collective project by artist-curators Mónica de Miranda, Sónia Vaz Borges and Vânia Gala, will represent Portugal at the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, 20 April – 24 November 2024.

The artists will create a 'Creole garden' in Palazzo Franchetti, referencing private plots tended by enslaved people as acts of resistance and survival – an antithesis of the monocultural plantation. Densely planted and richly biodiverse, the 'Creole garden' fosters a discursive space of liberation, possibility and multiplicity. Created by artists from different backgrounds – visual art, history, and choreography – the project will enact a philosophy of participation, collaboration and interdisciplinary solidarity.

Connecting ideas of ecology, decolonisation, diaspora and migration, the artist-curators will construct a garden of plants native to African countries, which will grow in the palace's main hall throughout the exhibition period. The project proposes soil as a vector of decolonial and ecological engagement, capable of both sustaining growth, as well as archiving traces of historical violence, connecting past, present and future, the politics of the land, history, body and identity.

The garden will stage a sound installation, sculptures, dance/performance, workshops and participatory events. Together, these components will create a transdisciplinary space of experimentation, encounter and collective possibility. 'Greenhouse' will be grounded in four actions: **Garden** (Installation, Space, Time); **Living Archive** (Sound, Movement, Performance), **School** (Education, History, Revolution); **Assemblies** (Public, Communities and Publication).

'Greenhouse' marks two anniversaries: the centenary of Amílcar Cabral (1924–73), a Bissau-Guinean anticolonial leader and

agronomist crucial to the country's independence in 1973, and the 50th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution which deposed Portugal's dictatorship on 25 April 1974. Emphasising the composite histories and identities that emerged from colonialism and the liberation struggles, 'Greenhouse' proposes actions that enact radical and decolonial solidarities, and challenge monocultural norms of nation, knowledge, and agriculture.

The Pavilion unfixes hierarchical conventions, encouraging fluid modes of artistic production grounded not in binaries of theory and practice, artist and curator, but in their interconnection. The project transforms the exhibition space into a space for action and dialogue. Rather than a static experience, it proposes the creation of a 'living archive'. The garden will be activated across the exhibition period, becoming a place of collective action and care, of multiple possibilities and pedagogy.

Conceived for the first time by three women, the Portugal Pavilion proposes the emergence of various choreographies based on encounters and collaborations between public, communities and artists, in resonance with the theme of the Biennale Arte 2024, *Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere*.

Moreover, 'Greenhouse' develops a public program of assemblies with invited guest curators and artists from Angola, Benin, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Chile, France, Nigeria, United States and Saudi Arabia fostering critical thinking through collective participation and interaction.

The Official Portuguese Representation at the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia 2024 is commissioned by the Directorate-General for the Arts (DGARTES).



## NOTES TO EDITORS

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The Pavilion will be on public display 20 April – 24 November 2024, Tuesday – Sunday from 10am – 6pm. Pre-opening 17 April – 19 April.

Palazzo Franchetti  
San Marco 2847 – 30124 Venezia, Italy

**Curators/Artists:** Mónica de Miranda, Sónia Vaz Borges and Vânia Gala

Organization: Ministry of Culture of Portugal

**Commissioner:** Américo Rodrigues,  
Directorate-General for the Arts (DGARTES)

[www.greenhouse2024.com](http://www.greenhouse2024.com)  
[@greenhouse\\_2024](https://www.instagram.com/greenhouse_2024)

### About Mónica de Miranda

Mónica de Miranda is a Portuguese visual artist, filmmaker and researcher of Angolan ancestry, whose interdisciplinary practice examines the convergence of politics, gender, memory, space and history. Mónica investigates strategies of resistance, geographies of affection, storytelling, and ecologies of care. She is the founder of Hangar, an art and research centre in Lisbon, where artists, curators and researchers, mainly from the global south, can co-create and build networks.

Her work has been presented at major international events such as: Colomscope – Contemporary Art Festival 2024; 6th Lubumbashi Biennale; 12th Berlin Biennale; 12th Dakar Biennale; 5th Biennale Internationale de l'Art Contemporain de Casablanca; Bamako Encounters – 13th African Biennale of Photography; 14th Venice Architecture Biennale; BIENALSUR 2021; Houston FotoFest 2022; 18th Fotografia Europea, 2022; Addis Photo Fest 2016; Bienal São Tomé 2013. Selected solo and group exhibitions include: CAIXA Cultural; Gulbenkian; MUCEM; AfricaMuseum; MAAT; MUAC; Barbican; Autograph; Uppsala Museum; MNAC; Camões Institute (Luanda) among others. She won the Idealista Award for

Contemporary Art in 2023 and she is a recipient of the Soros Arts Fellowship 2023 – Art, Land and Public Memory, as well as the Exposed Photography Grant 2024.

### About Sónia Vaz Borges

Sónia Vaz Borges is a Portuguese militant interdisciplinary historian. She received her PhD in History of Education from the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HU) and is the author of the book, *Militant Education, Liberation Struggle, Consciousness: The PAIGC education in Guinea Bissau 1963–1978* (2019). As a result of her research Vaz Borges co-authored the short films, *Navigating the Pilot School* (2016) and *Mangrove School* (2022). Continuing on this line, Vaz Borges co-edited the 49th issue of the magazine *The Funambulist: Politics of Space and Bodies*, with the title *Schools of the Revolution: Radical Education and Pedagogies Around the World* (2023).

Her academic, militant, and collaborative artistic work has been presented internationally, including at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin); Escola das Artes (Porto); Mbonji 67; Coimbra Biennial; Hangar; The Funambulist; Sharjah Architecture Triennale; Cooper Union; Harvard University, among others.

Vaz Borges is currently Assistant Professor in History and in the Africana Studies Program at Drexel University in Philadelphia (USA).

### About Vânia Gala

Vânia Gala is a Portuguese choreographer and researcher. Her interests lie in experimental practices with an emphasis on notions of refusal, choreo-thinking, fugitivity, improvisation(s), black (non)performances, negotiation, dissensus, hospitality and value.

Collaborations as a dancer have included Belgium company Les Ballets C. de la B, Constanza Macras, DIN A 13 and Company B. Valiente. As a choreographer she has collaborated with contemporary artists Sonia Boyce, Harold Offeh and Teatro GRIOT. Recent performative works include *Give & Take* (Tate Modern) and *Mesa para Práticas de Pernas para o Ar* (Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon). In 2019 she was awarded Best Choreography by Theatre Guide (Portugal). In 2005 she was awarded Best Female Performance at Dublin Fringe and was part of Aerowaves (London) and the Triennial of Luanda. Gala is a co-convenor of the Theatre,

Performance and Philosophy group of the  
Theatre and Performance Research  
Association.