

# PERSONAL STRUCTURES

## European Cultural Centre Italy announces theme and highlights of the biennial contemporary art exhibition *Personal Structures 2026*

<b>Title</b>	<i>Personal Structures – Confluences</i>
<b>Venues</b>	Palazzo Bembo, Palazzo Mora & Marinaressa Gardens
<b>Location</b>	Venice, Italy
<b>Organiser</b>	European Cultural Centre Italy
<b>Co-organiser</b>	Open Space Venice
<b>Curators</b>	Elisa Dallanoce, Sara Danieli, Rachele De Stefano, Lucia Pedrana, Claudia Piovan, Sara Serpilli, Micaela Skerl, Lucia Trevisan, Elena Volpato
<b>Period</b>	9 May – 22 November 2026
<b>Previews</b>	7 – 8 May 2026
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://personalstructures.com">personalstructures.com</a>

**Confluences** is the theme of *Personal Structures 2026*. The international contemporary art exhibition, organised biennially by the European Cultural Centre Italy, returns to Venice for its eighth edition, from **9 May to 22 November 2026**, featuring a **new visual identity** aligned with the curatorial concept, and the **debut of a new section** dedicated to the design world titled **PS Design**.

**Admission is free** and open daily from **10.00 am to 6.00 pm**, closed on Tuesdays. **Press previews: 7 & 8 May**.

Over **150 artists from more than 30 countries** will gather in the historic venues of **Palazzo Bembo, Palazzo Mora, and the Marinaressa Gardens**, transforming Venice into a dynamic laboratory of visions, practices, and languages.

In a society marked by fractures, displacement, and accelerated transformation, *Personal Structures – Confluences* emerges as a **space for encounter**. It is

a place where artistic practices, cultures, and disciplines intersect, contaminate one another, and generate new possibilities for coexistence.

Visual artists, photographers, sculptors, performers, universities, and artist collectives, both established and emerging, bring a multitude of perspectives to the lagoon. As **Sara Danieli** (Head of Art for ECC Italy) explains, “In an era characterised by profound global transformations, **Personal Structures – Confluences** explores how personal narratives build ties with collective ones, shaping an ever-evolving cultural landscape”. Artistic practices thus converge into a single flow, transforming and resonating with one another in a conscious dialogue with time and memory. “An invitation to rediscover the value of sharing and to imagine more open, sensitive, and sustainable forms of coexistence”. Inspired by the natural world, **Personal Structures 2026** presents itself with a **new graphic and visual identity** that becomes an integral part of the exhibition project. Graphic and conceptual elements trace the **encounter between different paths, artistic practices, and cultural backgrounds**, giving shape to the biological, cultural, and experiential micro-confluences the exhibition aims to explore.

**Artworks and languages intersect** in a continuously transforming collective fabric, making the curatorial process visible and opening a space for reflection on the present and future possibilities where society, nature, and technology engage in an ever-evolving dialogue.

Among the highlights of this edition is the presence at **Palazzo Bembo** of the Japanese curatorial platform and gallery **B-OWND**. Interpreting the theme **Confluences** through the works of seven artists, the project spans art, craftsmanship, and hybrid practices, including a space hosting public tea ceremonies. Also at **Palazzo Bembo**, Brazilian photographer **Sandra Cattaneo Adorno**, who has already won an **ECC Award**, presents a new immersive installation. Within the same exhibition venue, is presented the Special Project *Unison* by the Vienna-based artist **Rita Sabo**. Curated by Dr. **Tayfun Belgin**, the exhibition

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weaves together fifteen cultures into a polyphonic field where past, present, and future coexist. *Unison* transforms painting, sculpture, installation, scent, and sound into a layered, multisensory environment, creating a transcultural space where art, consciousness, and global responsibility converge.

At **Palazzo Mora**, identity emerges as the result of cultural and experiential micro-confluences. The **Stephens Tapestry Studio** from Eswatini, South Africa, presents two tapestries designed by the esteemed **South African artist William Kentridge**. The Stephens Tapestry Studio uses hand-spun and hand-dyed mohair to create monumental tapestries designed by artists across the globe. Moreover, a project curated by the Japanese gallery **BALC**, presents a solo exhibition by South Korean artist **G Sim Seyeon**. The same venue welcomes the **El Salvador Pavilion**, making its first appearance at the 61st International Art Exhibition of **La Biennale di Venezia**, with the project *Cartographies of the Displaced* by the artist **J. Oscar Molina**, curated by **Alejandra Cabezas**. Also at Palazzo Mora, **Adrian Elisheva Parr Zaretsky**, known as **A.Z.**, and **Liu Shiming** present *Intimate Unthinkables*. The project reflects on the ordinary dimension of women's lives, made up of fragile and powerful moments. Working in distinct styles, Liu Shiming and A.Z. foreground the material realities of everyday life and the intimate forms of endurance embedded within it, bringing east and west, tradition and the contemporary world into dialogue. It is produced in collaboration with the **Liu Shiming Art Foundation** in New York.

**Confluences** frames this edition of **Personal Structures** and extends seamlessly into **PS Design**. Like converging streams that generate new currents, this new section explores how design intersects with art, architecture, and research to engage with and reinterpret contemporary societal, political, ecological, and material contexts. It brings together projects that act as bridges across disciplines and cultures, shaping new relationships between humans, nature, and technology, while responding to the architectural and cultural identity of Venice.

All exhibited projects will compete for the **ECC Award**, the prize established by the European Cultural Centre Italy. The ECC Italy team, together with an international jury, will award projects in the new categories introduced for the 2026 edition: **Artistic Interpretation of the Theme: Confluences, Research & Curatorial Project, Space & Context Project, Cross-Disciplinary Project, Emerging Practice** and the **Artist as Activist Special Award Recognition**, selected by the ECC Italy team.

The new categories of the **ECC Awards** embrace the complexity of contemporary artistic practices and the curatorial focus of **Personal Structures – Confluences**. The Awards aim to support and highlight practices that **transform diversity into opportunities for encounter, exchange, and growth, placing research, social impact, site sensitivity, and interdisciplinarity at the centre**, aligned with ECC Italy's mission and the unique context of Venice. Through these recognitions, the ECC Awards highlight new visions, amplify artists' voices as reflections of society, and support practices that interpret the present and imagine the future. The winners will be announced at the end of the exhibition.

**Personal Structures – Confluences** will be enriched by a public programme of events featuring artists and creative professionals from around the world, invited to reflect on contemporary topics shaping and questioning our time.

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