

# Bahamian Pavilion la Biennale di Venezia 2026

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### The Bahamas announces its participation in the 61st International Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

**Nassau, The Bahamas – Thursday, October 23, 2025**, Under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture and the Honourable Mario Bowleg, Minister, Youth, Sports, and Culture, **The Bahamas in Venice Committee** proudly announces **The Bahamas' participation in the 61st Venice Biennale**, having appointed as the Pavilion Curator the distinguished Bahamian art historian, **Dr Krista Thompson**, the Mary Jane Crowe Professor of Art History at **Northwestern University** and the author of seminal Caribbean art texts including *An Eye for the Tropics* (2006) and *Shine: The Visual Economy of Light in African Diasporic Aesthetic Practice* (2015).

This historic achievement marks only the **second time** The Bahamas will participate in the biennale — a significant milestone in the nation's cultural history.

Under Dr Thompson's curatorial vision, the **Bahamian Pavilion** will present the work of the revered Bahamian artist **John Beadle (1964–2024)** and critically acclaimed contemporary visual artist **Lavar Munroe (b 1982)**, with a posthumous collaboration between the late and the living artist. Both Beadle's and Munroe's work is deeply rooted in Bahamian artistic and social practices, like **Junkanoo**, the national processional festival that continues to inspire generations of Bahamian creativity. Their dialogue—grounded in the culture of The Bahamas and addressing pressing issues faced in many parts of the world—forms the conceptual and visual foundation of the Pavilion.

Resonating with the Biennale's overarching theme, *In Minor Keys*, envisioned by the late **Koyo Kouoh**, which celebrates "artists who work at the boundaries of form and whose practices can be thought of as intricate melodies to be heard both collectively and on their own terms," Dr Thompson's curatorial approach offers a distinctly Bahamian interpretation of this sentiment. The Pavilion will highlight Beadle's and Munroe's use of discarded materials and processes of artistic collaboration to call attention to the hidden, the undervalued, "the minor notes," in society and in the art world.

**John Beadle**, a painter, sculptor, and lifelong Junkanooer born in Nassau to Jamaican-Bahamian parents, combined traditional techniques with the found materials of Junkanoo —cardboard, wood, and salvaged objects—to create relief monuments and striking sculptural works. He addressed social issues, from migration to states of insecurity, in his work. He played a formative role across different artistic communities, having a central role in several artistic collectives, and paved the way for Munroe's generation.

**Lavar Munroe**, an interdisciplinary artist from Grants Town, Nassau, works across mixed-media painting, cardboard sculpture, and drawing. Represented by **Monique Meloche Gallery** (Chicago) and **Larkin Durey** (London), Munroe's work blends spirituality, mythology, and history to create a visual language steeped in African diasporic symbolism and cultural imagination. His mixed-media practice combines paint, airbrush, collage, ceramic, glass, feathers, cardboard, and other sacred objects to explore mythology, spirituality, and identity.

*"I am elated to have been chosen, along with the late John Beadle, to represent The Bahamas at the 61st Venice Biennale, one of the world's most prestigious platforms for contemporary art," said Lavar Munroe. "This extraordinary opportunity offers a space to present work that critically, intellectually and artistically engages with the global audience, while celebrating the depth and creativity of Bahamian contemporary art."*

Office of the Commissioner of the Bahamas Pavilion  
FAB Foundation (Bahamas)  
c/o Mortimer & Co., Dockendale House, 4th Floor, Nassau, Bahamas



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**The Bahamas in Venice Committee** comprises cultural leaders dedicated to advancing the nation's artistic legacy: **John Cox**, Chairman, National Art Gallery of The Bahamas, Artistic Director, Baha Mar and **Commissioner of The Bahamas Pavilion**; **Maelynn Ford**, Executive Director, National Art Gallery of The Bahamas; **Amanda Coulson**, Former Executive Director, National Art Gallery of The Bahamas (2011–2021), and **Executor of the Bahamas Pavilion**; **Jodi Minnis**, Curator and Cultural Worker; and representatives of the **Friends of The Arts in The Bahamas (FAB) Foundation**.

*"Building on the powerful legacy of John Beadle and guided by the vision and intellect of Dr Krista Thompson, The Bahamas' Pavilion will challenge expectations, spark dialogue, and showcase material mastery at its finest," stated The Bahamas in Venice Committee. "Our goal is to create a Biennale blueprint for future Bahamian artists — ensuring The Bahamas maintains a strong and enduring presence on this global stage for years to come."*

The Pavilion's realisation is made possible through the efforts of the **FAB Foundation**, established to expand opportunities for Bahamian artists and institutions. Lead sponsors include **Baha Mar**, **The Nassau and Paradise Island Promotion Board**, **FUZE Caribbean Art Fair**, and the **Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD)**. Support has also been forthcoming from the **NAGB** and the **Port Authority**, Freeport Grand Bahama. Additional support provided by **Monique Meloche Gallery (Chicago)** and **Larkin Durey (London)**.

Together, **Beadle's and Munroe's** transformation of everyday and discarded materials into visionary works, celebrates the enduring power of Bahamian creativity within the global art world.

The **61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia** will run from **May 6 to November 22, 2026**.

For more information, please contact Jodi Minnis, Executor Assistant at [office@bahamasvenicebiennale.com](mailto:office@bahamasvenicebiennale.com)

