Pavilion of Croatia at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia
Dubravka Lošić: Compelled by Fright and Beauty
Curated by Branko Franceschi
Palazzo Zorzi, Castello 4930

Compelled by Fright and Beauty, a site-specific installation by Dubravka Lošić at Palazzo Zorzi, presents updated cycles developed throughout the artist's four-decade career, now conceptually and spatially adapted to the exhibition site. Lošić conceives, exhibits, and produces her cycles as systems open to development, formal expansion, and experimentation. Her exhibition methodology is grounded in the interaction between the formal and conceptual properties of individual cycles and the semantic and spatial connotations of the exhibition space, resulting in installations that evolve from one context to another.

The setup at Palazzo Zorzi begins in the courtyard as a dynamic interaction of the cycles *Libertas Bells* (2014 - 2026), *Rosary* (2026) and *Tondo* (2020 – 2025), juxtaposing sculptural forms in corroded iron and bronze with object-paintings made of coloured wood and textile. In Codussi Hall on the palazzo's *piano nobile*, the cycles *Alba Albula* (2019), *Rain Paris* (2018), *Imago Anima* (2012 – 2013), *Rosary* (1987 – 2026) and *Sharks* (1986 – 2026), complement Venetian splendour with the raw expressiveness of gesture, paint, fabric, and form, articulating an altogether unique creative vision. The installation thus becomes an orchestration of the artist's oeuvre, carefully adapted to the spatial and conceptual specifics of the exhibition site, with a pronounced sense of theatrical aestheticization characteristic of both Venice and the artist's native Dubrovnik.

Lošić traces bold forms in which modernist, postmodern, neo-avant-garde, local, and traditional creative paradigms converge and reinforce one another. Her artistic language is simultaneously universal, subjective, and local, opening a space for improvisation at the formal boundaries through which the emotional, visual, sensory, and affective role of art becomes accessible to all.
During her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in the 1980s, Lošić's exposure to postmodern aesthetics directed her imagination towards self-invented hybrid procedures, forms, and formats grounded in modernist formal principles. Her cycles encompass a broad technical range,

from oil painting and expressive figuration to gestural abstraction, monochrome painting, Art Informel, collage, metal casting, and constructed objects, as well as the use of industrial materials in her signature object-paintings.

Lošić's visual language, universal in its expression of a dramatic sense of existence, draws on subliminal references to personal, familial, local, and global realities, evoking tectonic shifts occurring beneath the visible surface. These processes appear as tensions in surfaces, flows of material and colour, and corrosive transformations in which matter itself becomes the subject. Her oeuvre is rooted in personal experience and local understanding of freedom and independence as a form of beauty worthy of sacrifice, whose contemporary resonance is intensified by current global conflicts.

Dubrovnik, where the artist lives and works, provides a distinctive cultural backdrop that has shaped her aesthetic sensibility. Formed through dynamic historical processes, the city embodies a culture of freedom intertwined with refined aesthetic discernment, historically regarded as a hallmark of urban identity. This sensibility resonates with the verses of Dubrovnik's Baroque poet Ivan Gundulić (1589–1638), who celebrated the city's freedom as the source of all blessings granted by God. Drawing on both the exaltation of local heritage and family tradition of textile manufacturing, the cycles presented here transform trauma into form and aesthetic content without recourse to didactic narration, affirming autochthonous culture as a counterpoint to dominant cultural production.

Dubravka Lošić was born in Dubrovnik, Croatia in 1964. She completed the School of Applied Arts in Zagreb and studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in the class of painter Ferdinand Kulmer. Since 1983, she has exhibited extensively in Croatia and internationally.

Branko Franceschi, art historian, is director of the National Museum of Modern Art in Zagreb.

CROATIA

Compelled by Fright and Beauty

Commissioner: Ministry of Culture and Media; *Curator*: Branko Franceschi; *Exhibitor*: Dubravka Lošić;

Venue: Palazzo Zorzi, Salizada Zorzi, 4930

Press contact: info@nmmu.hr

www.losic.nmmu.hr; www.dubravkalosic.com;
https://www.instagram.com/croatianpavilion2026?igsh=eGNzbTF4bzJ4NW1z
https://www.facebook.com/nacionalnimuzejmoderneumjetnosti?locale=hr_HR
https://www.instagram.com/dubravka_losic/