

Media Release

Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia

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Latifa Echakhch selected for Swiss Pavilion at Art Biennale 2021

On jury recommendation, the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia has chosen to entrust the Swiss Pavilion at the 59th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia to the artist Latifa Echakhch. Living in Fully (Switzerland) with a French-Moroccan background, she has gained considerable international renown over many years in the contemporary art world.

The Biennale jury set up by Pro Helvetia and presided by Laurence Bonvin invited six artists to present a project for the exhibition at the Swiss Pavilion in 2021. The outcome was a unanimous recommendation by the jury members in favour of Latifa Echakhch, a recommendation that Pro Helvetia duly accepted. The artist herself has asked curator Francesco Stocchi and percussionist Alexandre Babel to join her for the realisation of the exhibition. Together they intend to offer visitors of the Biennale a rhythm-based experience with visual, acoustic and spatial effects.

The artist and her team:

Born in Morocco in 1974, **Latifa Echakhch** has been living and working in Fully (canton of Valais, Switzerland) since 2012. She graduated from the École nationale supérieure d'arts in Cergy-Pontoise and the École nationale des beaux-arts in Lyon. Galleries representing her include kamel mennour (Paris and London), kaufmann repetto (Milan and New York), Dvir Gallery (Tel Aviv/Brussels) and Metro Pictures (New York). She took part in the main exhibition of the Venice Biennale Arte in 2011 and was awarded the prix Marcel-Duchamp in 2013 and the Zurich Art Prize in 2015. Latifa Echakhch has made a name for herself thanks to the fine balance between forcefulness and fragility in her interdisciplinary installations, her visual language including surrealist and conceptual elements, and her use of symbols that – in her own words – are both political and poetic.

Alexandre Babel (born 1980 in Geneva) is a Swiss artist, composer and musician living in Berlin. He is the lead percussionist in the KNM ensemble in Berlin, artistic director of Eklekto and co-founder of the group Radial. **Francesco Stocchi** (born 1975 in Rome) is an Italian curator and art critic. He worked in Rome and Vienna for many years before joining the curatorial team of Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam in 2011.

Swiss Pavilion Jury for the Venice Biennale Arte 2021:

- Laurence Bonvin, *artist, Geneva and Berlin*
- Riccardo Lisi, *art critic and curator at Rada, Locarno*
- Federica Martini, *art historian, curator and teacher at édhéa, Sierre*
- Yvette Mutumba, *art historian, curator and editor at Contemporary And, Berlin*
- Rein Wolfs, *director at Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam*

For further information on Switzerland's presence at the Venice Biennale Arte, please go to www.biennials.ch

Visuals: <https://www.biennials.ch/home/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsId=1133>

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