

A joint project of Fondazione Giorgio Cini and Pentagram Stiftung

LE STANZE DEL VETRO
Venice, Island of San Giorgio Maggiore
12 May 2017 - 30 November 2018

Qwalala by Pae White

A new outdoor sculpture by American artist Pae White, commissioned by LE STANZE DEL VETRO on the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice to coincide with the 57th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Qwalala, a monumental new sculpture by American artist Pae White, will open to the public on the **Island of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice, on the 12th of May 2017** coinciding with the **57th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia**. It is the second outdoor installation (following Hiroshi Sugimoto's *Glass Tea House Mondrian*) to be commissioned by **LE STANZE DEL VETRO**.

Qwalala consists of a curving wall made only of solid glass-bricks, which occupies the entire area opposite **LE STANZE DEL VETRO**. At 75 metres long and 2.4 metres high, the thousands of glass bricks for **Qwalala** were hand-cast by **Poesia Glass Studio** in the Veneto region. Each of these hand-cast bricks is unique, owing much to chance and variation inherent in the artisanal manufacturing process.

Approximately half of the bricks are made of clear glass. The other half span a palette of 26 colours, and are made using a technique where each brick contains a “storm”-like effect of swirling colour, while remaining transparent. For this project, the individual bricks present the idea of modules of contained chaos. The artist combines these bricks to form an abstract, painterly pattern when viewed from afar, which, upon closer inspection, reveals unexpected worlds of detail. The muted blues, greens, pinks, greys and browns of the palette are drawn from colours used in first century Roman glassmaking created by the presence of sulphur, copper, manganese, and other metals and minerals.

Pae White studied the flow of the site and the multiple points of view it offers, not only from ground level, but also from the tower of San Giorgio Maggiore as well as how it might appear on Google Maps, nestled between the marina and the Borges Labyrinth. She selected the path of the wall from thousands of computer-generated designs processed through randomisation software created specifically for this project. The two openings in the wall were inspired by the engineering simplicity observed during a recent visit to Mayan ruins in Mexico, suggesting that, even in today's political climate, walls can be both transparent and permeable, connecting people rather than keeping them apart.

The title of the piece, **Qwalala**, is a Native American Pomo word meaning “coming down water place.” It references the meandering flow of the Gualala river in Northern California, which the work echoes in both its structure and layout. The wall's ever-shifting play of light, recalls the way in which the colour and temperature of the river water changes minute to minute as it meets the Pacific Ocean. Additionally, the name “Qwalala” itself, rolling off the tongue, also mimics the visceral experience of the body as it journeys around and through the curves of the wall.

Pae White has a long standing interest in glass and its potential as a building material merging the idea of chaos and the elusive with practicality. The bricks and construction methods used for **Qwalala** are the result of long and exhaustive research into the material





and its functionality for construction. Seemingly simple in its form, the wall is a complex feat of engineering that has been made possible due to the structural analysis and design of leading engineering firm **schlaich bergemann partner**. It is supported by a steel base and a special structural sealant provided by **Dow Corning**. **Qwalala** bears witness to Pae White's interest in combining common materials with cutting-edge technology, traditional craftsmanship with advanced engineering, and employing industrial manufacturing to challenge the limits of each of these. The result can be understood as both a sculpture that is evocative of architecture and architecture that is evocative of sculpture.

The project will be accompanied by a book published by Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther Koenig. Pae White will also produce new artist editions in Murano glass for **LE STANZE DEL VETRO**.

Background Information

Pae White's **Qwalala** is the second in a series of outdoor commissions by the **LE STANZE DEL VETRO** on San Giorgio Island in Venice. The concept of these temporary installations is to allow an internationally acclaimed artist to work on a large scale, and to engage with the space between sculpture, and architecture. Each project will be presented over two years, during Venice's Art and Architecture Biennales, aiming to address both of their respective audiences as well as the public at large.

LE STANZE DEL VETRO is a long-term joint initiative between Fondazione Giorgio Cini and Pentagram Stiftung. **Qwalala** was made possible thanks to the support of **Pentagram Stiftung, schlaich bergemann partner** and **Dow Corning** in collaboration with **Poesia Glass Studio**. Special thanks to Costruzioni e Restauri G. Salmistrari and Cattaruzza Millosevich Associated Architects for having overseen each phase of the design and construction of the pavilion.

LE STANZE DEL VETRO offers **educational activities and guided tours** for **Qwalala**, organized by **Artsystem**. All **educational activities are free** and can be booked by calling the toll-free number **800 662 477** (Monday to Friday from 10 am to 5 pm) or by e-mail: artsystem@artsystem.it.

Short biography – Pae White

Pae White (b. 1963) is an American artist based in Los Angeles, California. Working across media, she pursues an expansive practice that embraces sculpture, installation and painting as well as architecture, furniture and graphics. Pae White's large-scale architectural installations are often carefully integrated into their site. Her practice is characterized by an unconventional use of materials such as glass, fabric, paper, wire and vinyl and her desire to create work beyond her personal skill set by inviting artisans and industrial fabricators to help realise her ideas. Exploiting the perceived gaps between art, craft and design, Pae White has created an extraordinarily diverse body of work.

Recent solo exhibition and public commissions include *Command-Shift-4*, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle (2015), *O R L L E G R O*, MAK, Vienna (2013), *Too much night, again*, South London Gallery, London (2013), *Magic Carpet Ride*, Berlin Brandenburg Airport (2012), *Woven Walk*, LAX Airport (2012), *Restless Rainbow*, The Art Institute of Chicago (2011), *Dying Oak/Elephant*, St Louis Art Museum, St Louis (2010), *Material Mutters*, The Power Plant, Toronto (2010), *MetaFoil*, the curtain for the New Opera House, Oslo (2008), *Lisa Bright and Dark*, Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Scottsdale (2008) and *In no particular order*, Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester (2006).

Group exhibitions include *Le Souffleur*, Ludwig Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen (2015), *Artists and their time*, Istanbul Modern, Istanbul (2015), *Magnificent Obsessions; The*

Artist as Collector, Barbican Art Gallery, London (2015), *Selections from the Grunwald Center and the Hammer Contemporary Art Collection*, The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2013), *Contemplating The Void*, Guggenheim Museum, New York (2010), the 75th Whitney Biennial (2010), the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009) and *run run*, Collins Gallery during The Glasgow International (2008). Pae White is represented by greengrassi in London, kaufmann repetto in Milan and neugerriemschneider in Berlin.

LE STANZE DEL VETRO



Useful information:

Production:	LE STANZE DEL VETRO – Fondazione Giorgio Cini and Pentagram Stiftung
Title:	Qwalala
Date:	Opening on May 11, 2017
Times:	10 am – 7 pm, closed on Wednesday
Location:	Gardens in front of LE STANZE DEL VETRO
Address:	Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore, Venezia
Tickets:	Free admission
Info:	info@lestanzedelvetro.org, info@cini.it
Web:	www.lestanzedelvetro.org, www.cini.it
Artist:	Pae White
Project manager:	David Hrankovic
Project coordinator:	Francesca Nisii
Graphic & Book Design:	John Morgan Studio
Book publisher:	Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther Koenig
Engineers:	schlaich bergemann partner Project Team: Christoph Paech, Knut Göppert, Katharina Kunz
Associate Architect:	Cattaruzza & Millosevich Associated Architects
Building partners:	Costruzioni e Restauri G. Salmistrari S.r.l.
Acknowledgements:	greengrassi, London kaufmann repetto, Milan neugerriemschneider, Berlin
Structural Sealant:	Dow Corning DC 993
Glass Bricks:	Poesia Glass Studio

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