

News

2022 Venice Biennale Breaks Attendance Records

The exhibition sold the highest number of tickets in its 127-year history.



Rhea Nayyar November 28, 2022



Visitors congregating outside of the central pavilion at the 2022 Venice Biennale (all images courtesy La Biennale di Venezia)

The 59th Venice Biennale closed yesterday, November 27, with record attendance figures. Over 800,000 people bought tickets for the exhibition, titled *The Milk of Dreams*, and 22,498 attended the preview. It's a 35% increase from the last edition in 2019 and the highest number of visitors in the exhibition's 127-year history.

It must, however, be noted that the 2022 exhibition ran longer than usual, stretching over 197 days instead of 173 days in 2019. According to the Biennale, 41% of this year's visitors were from Italy while 59% came from other countries.

The Milk of Dreams, curated by Cecilia Alemani, featured work by 213 artists from 58 countries, of whom 90% are women. For comparison, 2019's *May You Live In Interesting Times* only included 83 artists, half of whom were women. Also, of the 213 artists from this year, 180 of them were first-time participants in the prestigious international exhibition.



Installation view of Golden Lion award winner Cecilia Vicuña's work in the central pavilion

The Biennale was postponed from 2021 to 2022 due to COVID-19, leaving Alemani with two years' worth of Zoom studio visits to get through in order to put together the exhibition.

“It's been a very long journey that took us through a pandemic, a cruel war, and a collective sense of uncertainty,” Alemani said in a [statement](#). “To organize this exhibition under such circumstances has been a great adventure, but not one without hurdles and complications.”



Biennale visitors taking in the work of British painter Jadé Fadojutimi in the central pavilion

The biennale's organizers also reported that 30% of attendees were young viewers and students, making up over 200,000 ticket holders. Over 79,000 visitors participated in educational activities and guided tours this year, more than double the number in 2019. That includes hundreds of preschoolers who had the privilege to witness some of the world's best contemporary art.

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