

## British artists get set for Venice Biennale

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More British artists than ever before will represent the UK at the art world's version of the Olympics, the Venice Biennale. The "official" British artist, who will compete against the rest of the world for the event's prestigious Golden Lion award, is Tracey Emin.



Floating it ... Tracey Emin is the UK's choice at this year's Venice Biennale. Photographer: David Levene

Art experts were today predicting a Kate Moss-at-Topshop-style scrum to witness the ever-controversial figure's exhibition when the Biennale opens to the public on June 10. However, the contents of her show are being kept a closely guarded secret. The commissioner of the exhibition, the British Council's Andrea Rose, today revealed only that the show would contain a combination of new and past work.

The British contingent will also include a further 11 artists representing Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland, including Charles Avery, Louise Hopkins and Richard Deacon, who will show outside the official competition lineup.

At least 64 nations will be officially represented in the international art world's most highly-anticipated event, which sees thousands of artists, curators, dealers, collectors and art lovers flock to Venice every other year to enjoy a heady diet of high art and serious partying.

British artists will also be seen in some unexpected contexts. Work by Mark Titchner, last year nominated for the Turner prize, and the well-known Britartist Sam Taylor-Wood - neither of whom are particularly well-known for their eastern European connections - will appear in the Ukrainian pavilion, which is being curated by Peter Doroshenko, an American of Ukrainian extraction who runs the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead.

A number of British-based artists will show work on behalf of their nations of birth, including acclaimed sculptor David Altmejd, who will represent Canada; Lala Meredith-Vula, for Albania, and Mustafa Hulusi, for Cyprus.