

4.1. Project Title:

ORPHEION (ORPHEUS + EON)

4.2. Participating Artists

Magdalena Kalieva – visual artist, author, and initiator of the project ORPHEION and of the concept of a Thracian–Orphic musical–alphabetic system. She participates with original analogue watercolor paintings on paper depicting kuker bells (*chanove* and *hlopki*). She is currently working on the animated film *The White Kuker*, related to Orpheus and the essence of the kukeri ritual tradition.

Emil Hristov – sound and interactive systems artist with an established practice in sound art and custom musical instruments, essential for transforming the concept into a fully functioning artistic experience. His selection is motivated by his experience in developing systems that use sound as a mediator between audience, space, and visual content, as well as by his ability to create instruments designed for direct interaction within an exhibition environment.

The transparent hologram will be realized by the company Virtu – Transparent Hologram – VIRTU - [ПРОЗРАЧНА ХОЛОГРАМА - ВИРТУ](#)

4.3. Artworks

The original watercolor paintings on paper by Magdalena Kalieva are completed.

Concept of the ORPHEION Project

1. Triadic Physical Structure

At the core of the project lies one of the most ancient Bulgarian energy practices – the *kukeri* ritual, with a focus on bells (*chanove* and *hlopki*) as a model for understanding time, body, and community, articulated through a triadic structure:

1.1. Quark – elementary particle – bell

1.2. Quantum – unit of energy / transition from analogue to digital

1.3. Fractal – infinite self-unfolding structure expressed through three objects:

– analogue watercolor on paper depicting clusters of bells

– “musicalization” of letters – repetition as transformation

– holographic composition of *kuker* bell ornaments (*dizii*)

2. Three Media: Watercolor – Musicalization – Hologram

Each of the three parts (quark / quantum / fractal) manifests in a holistic triadic form and becomes interdisciplinary - each contains elements of the others and is expressed through them:

2.1. Watercolor (Aqua) – Quark:

Analogue material – pigment/traces, brush/stains, water/flows

2.2. Musicalization – Orpheion (Orpheus + Aeon) – Quantum:

Sound, vibration, oscillation

2.2.1. Creation of a new musical mode, conceptually and symbolically connected to the Thracian–Orphic cultural tradition, based on the mythological figure of Orpheus as a bearer of harmony, mystery wisdom, and musical influence over nature and the human spirit. The new mode is linked to the 30-letter Bulgarian Cyrillic alphabet, with a “translation” of the letter–sound system into the Latin alphabet.

The Thracian–Orphic musical–alphabetic system represents an innovative musical project and a cultural–mythological reconstruction of a new artistic language connected to the archaic roots of the Bulgarian lands, digitized and made usable by contemporary audiences.

While Orpheus is known through mythological narratives, his music is inferred through the nuances of these stories. The project develops an intervallic core that combines elements of minor structures and ancient Balkan sonorities, creating a reference “Orphic sound.”

2.2.2. A handmade prototype of a machine with custom-built software that transforms a letter/word/phrase into sound with a corresponding frequency and timbre.

2.3. Hologram – *Lux Orphea* – Fractal: Light, 3D illusion

3. Three Types of Space:

3.1. Intimate Space (Quark)

The Entrance – Analogue Threshold: One analogue watercolor painting on paper, one analogue bell, one analogue bell sound. The visitor encounters a one-to-one situation: one image, one sound, one condensed light - bell.

3.2. Transitional Space (Quantum)

The Corridor – The Passage: A path marking the transition from analogue art to digital art—20 steps, representing 20 basic and extended approaches, from documentary to experimental. The visitor encounters these steps through panels marked with letters from the Italian alphabet and a verb (a gesture toward the host country), beginning with the corresponding letter, accompanied by Bulgarian and English translations, escalating toward digitalization. Each panel contains a QR code, allowing the visitor to hear how the verbs are musicalized in all three languages, as well as to access texts and visualizations of the 20 transition steps. The journey culminates in the main hall with the 21st letter of the Italian alphabet and three verbs. The 21 steps are presented as individual pages of an interactive catalogue / interactive table, positioned at the entrance of the main hall. (Details of the catalogue are described in section 10.1.)

3.3. Communal Spaces (Fractal)

3.3.1. Main Hall – ORPHEION: Fractal Unfolding of Sound and Light

3.3.1.1. Interactive musical–alphabetic system—a rhythmic “landscape” of musicalized letters, words, and phrases

3.3.1.2. Transparent light hologram (4 × 2 meters) featuring an animated collage of bell dizii

3.3.1.3. Interactive catalogue / interactive table

3.3.2. Courtyard – The Power Sign

An interactive “horo” (circle dance) of transparent panels (50 × 70 cm) with prints of watercolor bell imagery arranged in the shape of a power symbol, inviting visitors to take photographs while wearing bell clusters around their waists.

The power sign is a composite symbol of 60 and 61:

– 60 years since the „Surva” masquerade games in Pernik (recognized in 2015 as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage)

– the 61st Venice Biennale of Art in 2026

Power signifies 1 and 0, unlocking and locking—the completion of the digitalization process.

60

61

+

=

60

5. Visual Material

Sample exhibition layout and technical information for its realization and display, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the concept within the context of the already selected space (maximum of 5 A4 pages).

5.1. Analogue Threshold - First visualization (see below).

5.2. Beginning of the Corridor - On the left and right sides at the entrance of the corridor – pavilion poster and legend.

5.3. Corridor – The Transition from Analogue to Digital Art

Second visualization:

20 panels in A3 format, featuring letters from the Italian alphabet, a verb corresponding to each letter, translations into Bulgarian and English, and a QR code.

5.4. Main Hall – Third Visualization

5.4.1. 21st A3 panel with a letter from the Italian alphabet, a corresponding verb, translations into Bulgarian and English, and a QR code.

5.4.2. Interactive table with a touchscreen for browsing the pavilion catalogue.

5.4.3. ORPHEION Installation: A custom-built musical machine positioned in the central area of Tiziano Hall, featuring a clean, monumental form factor. The installation combines a central touchscreen with a minimal number of physical controls designed for direct audience interaction. On the touchscreen, visitors select, drag, drop, and combine predefined words and phrases represented through letter-based and symbolic forms.

Buttons:

- Play – activates the sound process
- Stop – interrupts the current sound configuration
- Randomize – introduces an element of unpredictability by generating a new combination of words and phrases

Rotary Controllers (3 or 4 units) function as gestural controls, allowing visitors to influence the sound process without directly controlling it:

- Rotary I – introduces spatial expansion and reverberation, creating a sense of depth and distance
- Rotary II – transforms the timbral structure of the sound by altering its density and character
- Rotary III – activates more radical sonic interventions affecting sound, light, and the holographic layer simultaneously

Main Parameters:

- Dimensions: approximately $90 \times 40 \times 12$ cm
- Power supply: 220 V
- Autonomous operation; no continuous operator required
- Low ambient noise levels outside the audio content

Internet Connectivity:

- A permanent internet connection is required (LAN or stable Wi-Fi)
- The connection enables:
 - remote system access
 - system status monitoring
 - software updates and maintenance if needed

- No public internet access is required for visitors

Proposed Sound System Configuration:

- 4 active speakers positioned in the four corners of the hall
- 2 active speakers positioned at the midpoint of the long walls
- Audio cables connecting the speakers to the central sound system
- Controlled sound pressure levels, adapted to an exhibition environment

5.4.4. Holographic Composition

In the second half of the hall, an animated holographic composition of *kuker* bell ornaments (*dizii*) with dimensions 4×2 meters is installed.

The hologram is positioned 75 cm below the ceiling and 75 cm above the floor.

Daylight from the courtyard is blocked in the second half of the hall using panels with dark, matte fabric.

The required viewing distance for visitors is 3–4 meters in front of the hologram.

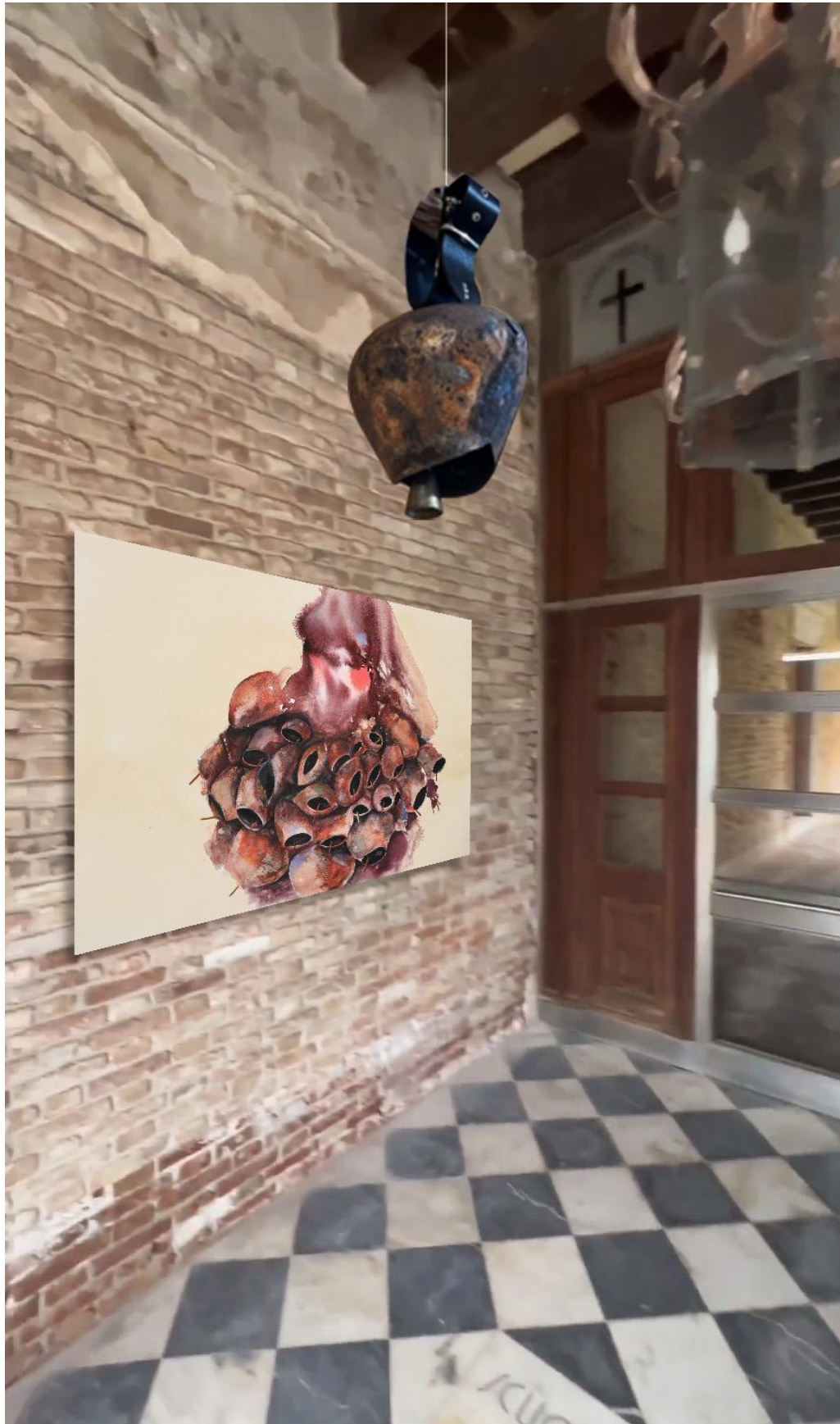
Visitors will not have access behind the hologram, where the projection equipment is installed.
Fourth visualization.

5.5. Courtyard – Fifth Visualization

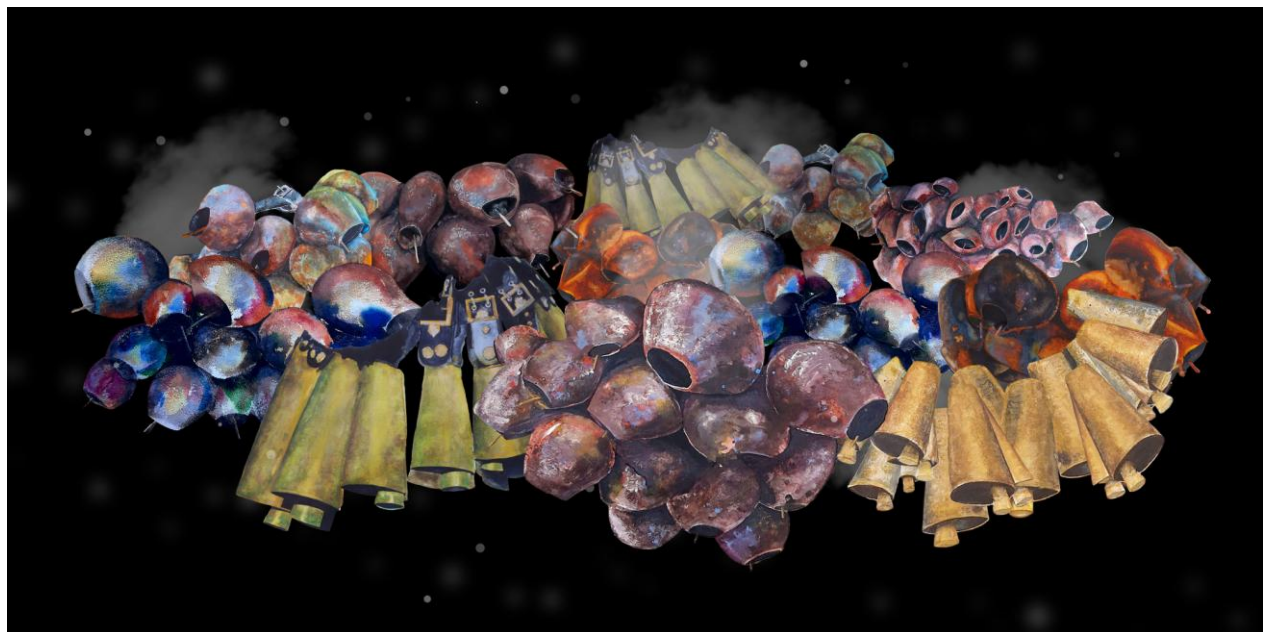
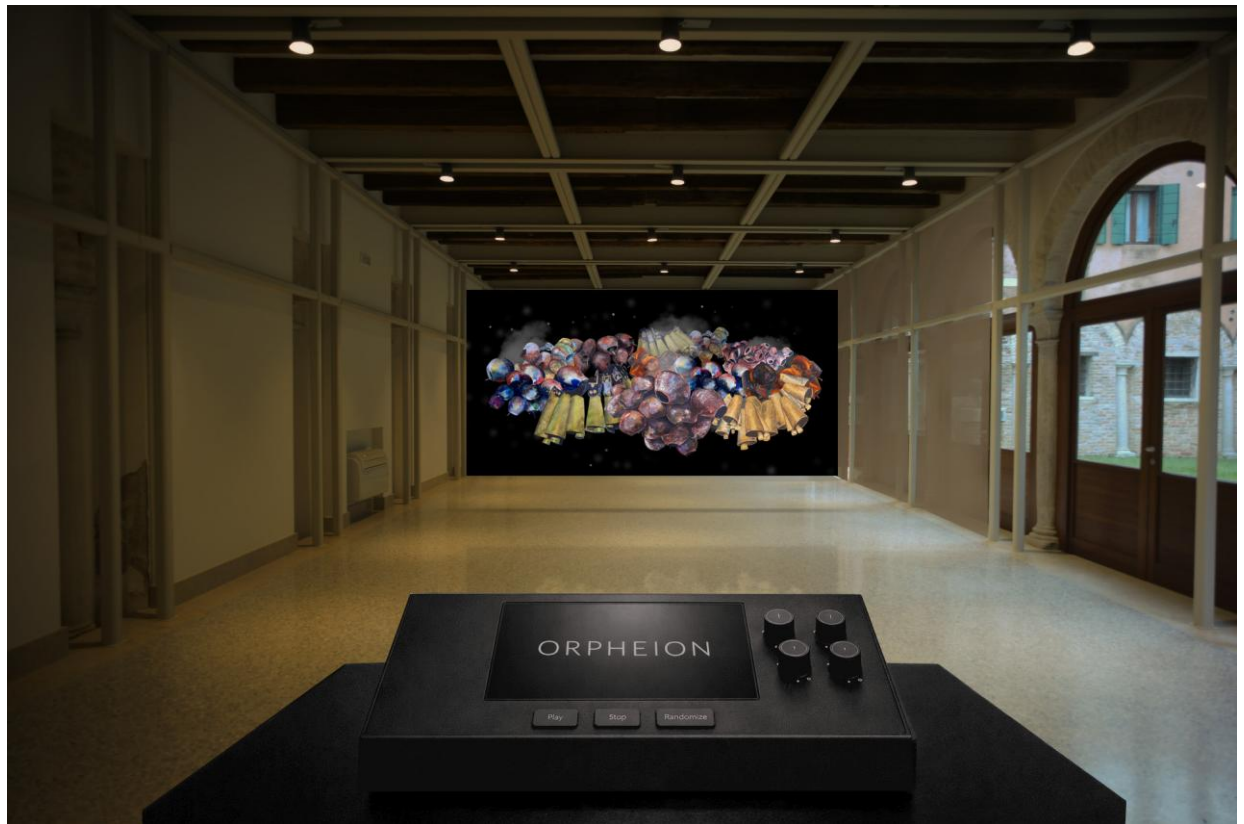
An interactive “*horo*” (circle dance) in the shape of a power symbol, composed of transparent panels mounted on stands, featuring prints of watercolor images of bell ornaments (*chanove* and *hlopki*).

Visitors are invited to take photographs while wearing clusters of bells around their waists.

Sixth Visualization - Overall layout plan of the entire exhibition space.









Български павилион - зала Тициано, Венеция
Bulgarian pavilion - Tiziano hall, Venice

