

INDUSTRY MUSCLE:

Five Scores For Architecture

Teo Ala-Ruona & the working group



Photo: Venla Helenius

Industry Muscle: Five Scores For Architecture examines architecture using the trans body as a lens, establishing a dialogue with modernist concrete architecture. Working with a team of collaborators, artist Teo Ala-Ruona presents five speculative scores that serve as critical prompts for future architectural practice.

The work was initially commissioned for the **Nordic Countries Pavilion** at **The 19th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia**. Curated by **Kaisa Karvinen**, for **Architecture & Design Museum Helsinki**, *Industry Muscle: Five Scores for Architecture* continues Teo Ala-Ruona's work on trans embodiment and petroculture, expanding his focus into architecture.

Industry Muscle was first conceived for the Nordic Countries Pavilion, designed by **Sverre Fehn** in 1962, where it engaged directly with the celebrated architecture of the pavilion. Now reimagined as a touring version, the exhibition is adaptable to diverse spaces and venues that resonate with modernist architecture. By placing the modernist concrete architecture in dialogue with an alternative model for architectural practice that takes the trans body as its starting point, *Industry Muscle* explores the relationships between architecture, the body, and ecological collapse.



Photo: Ugo Carmeni

In *Industry Muscle* the audience is invited to observe modernist architecture as a stage for sociopolitical norms that are embedded in fossil-based culture. The staging of the exhibition places the visitor at the centre of an architectural experience where all participants are on display, enacting everyday performances. In Ala-Ruona's interventions, the trans body crowbars its way into this structure and reveals the blueprint within.

Industry Muscle unfolds through five speculative scores that serve as critical prompts for future architecture. Scores are used in performance art as tasks, notations, and exercises that provide instructions for a performer. The exhibition brings the is concept to the field of architecture, using the following themes:

Impurity: questioning the role of the ideal of purity in modern architecture and the modern way of life.

Decategorisation: challenging the categorisation and segregation inherent in our built environment.

Performance: investigating how architectural spaces shape everyday performances related to gender and identity.

Techno-body: empowering bodies to autonomically reshape themselves through architecture.

Reuse: considering transbody as an example of re-use and a prompt for practicing ecological thinking.



Photo: Venla Helenius

Teo Ala-Ruona works at the intersection between performance art, theatre and choreography. His practice explores the potential of somatic fiction to shift our perceptions of the human body, navigating the intersections of linguistic, somatic and social existence. He explores how trans experience can broaden our understanding of what the body can be, approaching the examination of trans embodiment as an autopsy of society's conception of the body.

For *Industry Muscle*, he assembled a multidisciplinary team of collaborators including architect **A.L. Hu**, set designer and artist **Teo Paaer**, sound designer **Tuukka Haapakorpi**, dramaturge **Even Minn**, visual artist **Venla Helenius**, fashion designer **Ervin Latimer**, graphic designer **Kiia Beilinson** and performers **Kid Kokko**, **Caroline Suinner**, and **Romeo Roxman Gatt**. Collaboration plays a central role in Ala-Ruona's work.

DOCUMENTATION:

20-Minute cut:

<https://vimeo.com/zodiakhelsinki/industrymuscle1>
password: IndustryMuscle_V1

5'40" cut:

<https://vimeo.com/zodiakhelsinki/industrymuscleshort>
password: IndustryMuscle_V2

REVIEWS:

The Nordic Countries Pavilion at Biennale Architettura 2025 queers modernist ideals.

By Mrinmayee Bhoot.

>> [LINK](#)

Industry Muscle: Five Scores for Architecture. Nordic Countries Pavilion.

By José Juan Barba.

>> [LINK](#)

Performanssitaitelija Teo Ala-Ruona edustaa Pohjoismaita Venetsian arkkitehtuuribiennaalissa Pohjoismaisessa paviljongissa.

By Sara Harju.

>> [LINK](#)

Teo Ala-Ruona katsoo maailmaa "transkehon linssin läpi" Venetsian Biennaalissa.

By Marko Ylitalo.

>> [LINK](#)

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

As part of the exhibition, the performance is a two-hour piece for four performers. Through it, they attune to the psychophysical effects of modernist architecture on their own bodies while imagining and proposing speculative corporealities for the future.

The performance will consist of five different scores, in the same way as the theoretical and installation of the piece. The materials of the performance are divided into both physically intense sections and parts that slow down the space and build suspense. The performance plays with the modernist, objectifying, and alienating gaze, as well as the collective support between performers. The central thematic starting point of the performance is to bring the experience of transcorporeality in the modernist architecture into a choreographic and abstracted form. The performance communicates, among other things, the experience of being the object of a stare, the feeling of dissociation in spaces based on gender segregation, and the experience of a body that is defined as abnormal. The performers are all transgender or gender non-conforming individuals.

PRELIMINARY SPATIAL INFO

- adaptable to different sized spaces
- audience can move freely in the space, both during the exhibition and performance
- audience capacity can be anything between 0-500 depending on the venue
- the space has to somehow fit the themes of the work — modernist or concrete

BIO

Teo Ala-Ruona is an interdisciplinary artist based in Helsinki, working within the expanded field of performance. In using the performing body as a site for speculative narratives, he investigates how alternative stage politics can transform the perceptual frameworks of both performer and

audience. Grounded in theory and embodied scores, his work treats the performing body as both a reflective surface and an active agent in negotiating inherited categories.

Ala-Ruona's work has been shown in the **19th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia** (Venice, 2025), **Performa Biennial** (New York), **Fundació Joan Miró Museum** (Barcelona), **The Vilnius Biennial of Performance Art** (Vilnius), **The Finnish National Gallery Kiasma** (Helsinki), **The Institute of Contemporary Arts in London** (London), **Sequences Festival** (Reykjavik), **Centrale Fies** (Dro) and **Toaster/Husets Teater** (Copenhagen).

MORE INFO OF THE ARTIST

Website: <https://teoalaruona.net>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/teoalaruona/>

Email: teo.alaruona@gmail.com

Email of Teo Ala-Ruona's producer: sanna.ritvanen@gmail.com

PHOTOS

Photos 1-3 by Ugo Carmeni

Photos 4-9 by Venla Helenius







