

WHAT IF? VENICE BIENNALE 2025



We provide exclusive insights during Venice Art Biennale - all rights are reserved to www.ccollective.cc

“let me tell you”

2025

Architecture has always been a response to a hostile climate. From the earliest “primitive hut,” human design has not only been led by the need for shelter and survival, but also driven by optimism. Our creations have always strived to bridge the gaps between a harsh environment, the safe, liveable spaces we require, and the lives we want to live. Today, as the climate becomes less forgiving, that dynamic is being taken to a new level. Over the past two years, climate change has accelerated in ways that defy even the best scientific models. 2024 marked a grim milestone, as Earth registered its hottest temperatures on record, pushing global averages beyond the Paris Agreement’s 1.5°C target.

And in the fires of Los Angeles, in the floods of Valencia and Sherpur, in the droughts of Sicily, we have witnessed the elements attacking us with unprecedented ferocity. When the knowledge and systems that have long guided our understanding begin to fail, new forms of thinking are needed. For decades, ever since we started counting carbon, architecture’s response to the climate crisis has been centred on mitigation—on reducing our impact on the climate. That approach is no longer enough. Architecture must pivot away from mitigation, reconnect with its longer history of adaptation, and rethink how we design for an altered world.

Adaptation demands a fundamental shift in architectural practice. This year’s Exhibition, *Intelligens. Natural. Artificial. Collective.*, invites different types of intelligence to work together to rethink the built environment. The title, a neologism whose final syllable, “gens,” is Latin for “people,” is an invitation to experiment with intelligence beyond today’s limited focus on AI and digital technologies and demonstrate how we can adapt to the world of tomorrow with confidence and optimism. *Intelligens* serves as a dynamic laboratory, uniting experts across various forms of intelligence. For the first time, the Exhibition features over 300 contributions from more than 750 participants: architects and engineers, mathematicians and climate scientists, philosophers and artists, chefs and coders, writers and woodcarvers, farmers, and fashion designers, and many more.

In times of adaptation, architecture is at the centre. In times of adaptation, architecture needs to draw on multiple forms of intelligence: natural, artificial, and collective. In times of adaptation, architecture needs to reach out across generations and across disciplines, from the hard sciences to the arts. In times of adaptation, architecture must rethink authorship and become more inclusive. Architecture must become as flexible and dynamic as the world we are now designing for.

We set out with a mission: to open up the curatorial process. Wherever travel took us, we invited the local community to join us—friends, colleagues, and a vast network spanning architecture and beyond— to gather around the table.

The central curatorial exercise for Biennale Architettura 2025 was the Space for Ideas, an open call for proposals from people all around the world that evolved into the platform for feedback and iteration between the Curator and participants in the Exhibition. The massive response to this open forum presented a challenge in terms of sheer information processing.

Official introduction by the biennale di Venezia pannel 2035, GVM, fondazione G. and CommonConnection



PHOTOGRAPHY BY EVARAFFAELLA M.

VENICE ARSENALE

The biennale; focuses on contemporary art, and includes events for art, contemporary dance, architecture, cinema, and theatre. It is represented annual but the main exhibition alternates every second year between art and architecture.

The 19th International Architecture Exhibition; intelligens, natural, artificial and collective, curated by Carlo Ratti.

Open to the public from Saturday 10 May to Sunday 23 November. The awards ceremony and inauguration was held on Saturday May 10, 2025.

For the Architecture biennale 2025 two new digital companions are now being added to the Exhibition: Spatial Intelligens is developed by sub, the transdisciplinary architecture and design studio led by Niklas Bildstein Zaar.

The design process of creating architecture for collective proposes is a personal journey for all humans. It is a long journey of searching the essential and making a choice in presenting its subject to the public.



The Gens public program is an exhibition that is greater than the sum of its parts, and greater than it could have been through individual outreach alone. The Space for Ideas was an experiment, and an effort towards replicating the spontaneity that might be considered one of the signatures of intelligence across its many forms. The resulting participant pool spans generations—from seasoned professionals still innovating at ninety to recent graduates just beginning their careers. Pritzker Prize winners, former La Biennale di Venezia Curators, Nobel laureates, and Royal Professors appear alongside emerging architects and researchers. This richness of contributions calls for a new approach to authorship. *Intelligens* challenges the tradition of the architect as the sole creator, with other professionals relegated to supporting roles. The Exhibition demonstrates a more inclusive authorship model that is inspired by academic research. There, authorship is attributed to those who contribute significantly to the design, execution, and analysis of a project, regardless of their primary role.

DESIGN ANALYSIS WITH STRATEGIC INTENT by CC

Our approach is intentionally collective—built on the principle that every contributor’s intellectual capital matters. In moments of adaptation, the design process must amplify all voices shaping its trajectory.

The Biennale Architettura 2025 Circular Economy Manifesto, developed in collaboration with Arup and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, establishes ambitious targets for eliminating waste and championing material reuse. These principles are embedded in the exhibition’s very fabric: most installations are built with recycled wood panels, destined to be shredded post-exhibition and transformed into new resources.

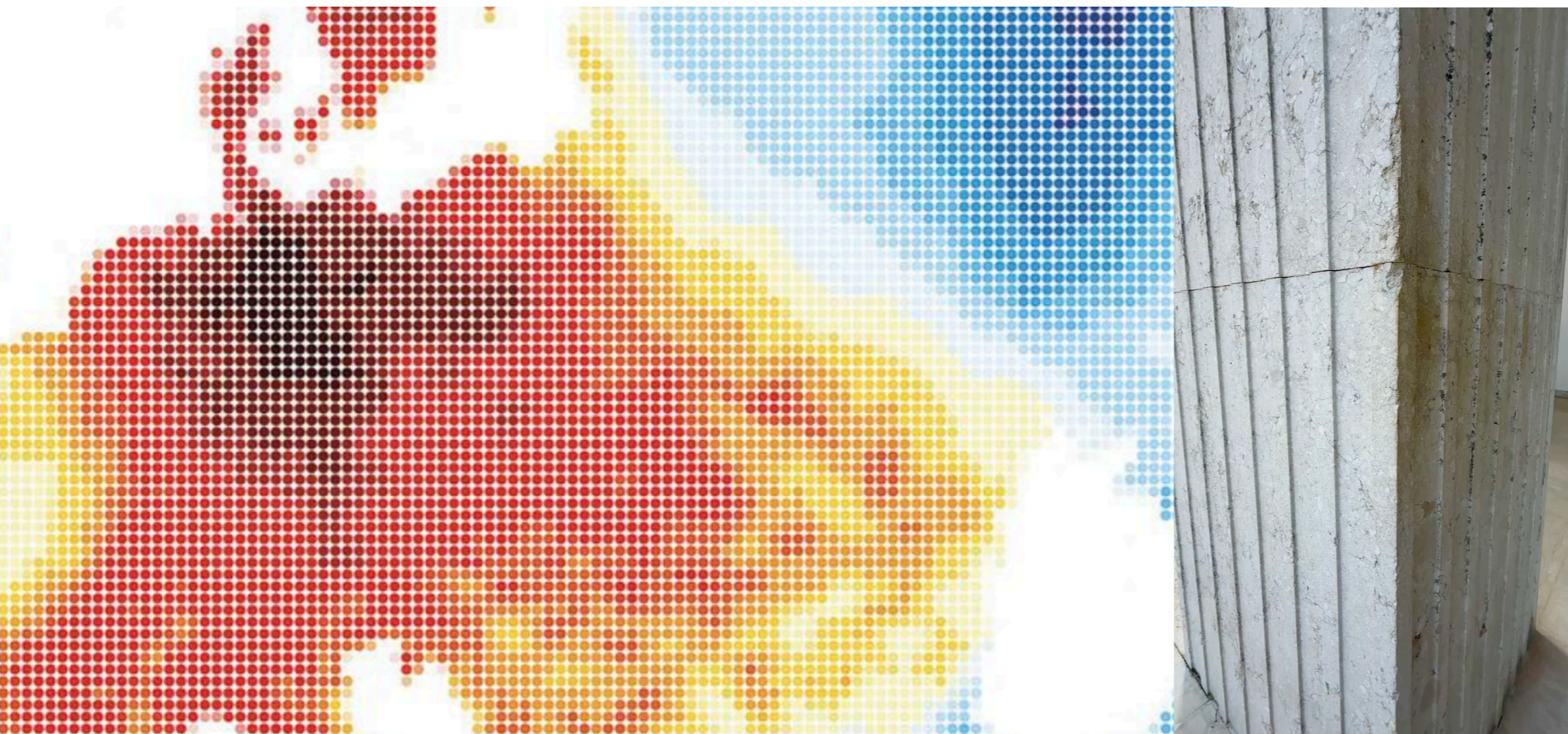
This is not simply an exhibition—it is a living prototype of circular design in action. By integrating multiple perspectives and diverse forms of intelligence, we create a chain reaction of ideas. Some will stand out; others will quietly inform the whole. Together, this choral effort aims to generate fresh strategies for one of the defining challenges of our era: designing for resilience in an altered world.

“let me tell you”

2025

THE GERMAN PAVILION

At the 2025 Venice Biennale, the German Pavilion confronts visitors to the reality of the coming urban climate, both physically and psychologically. Split into Stress and De-Stress, the exhibit allows people to directly experience extreme heat, highlighting the need for action, while simultaneously offering impetus and solutions for resilient urban planning.



BY EVARAFFAELLA MENGA

The exhibition was structured around three interconnected scenarios :

The delicate, wind-stirred installation of a cluster of windsocks on the pavilion's roof by artist Christoph Brech poetically illustrates the complex interplay of climatic phenomena.

The pavilion's operational energy is generated by solar panels.

All its materials have been assigned subsequent uses.

Conceptually the research goes deep, the visitors are shown a 360 degrees width projection of climate change disaster worldwide. After that a heat room exposes the visitors to their own visualization of heat detectors.

PRODUCTION

STRESSTEST

Commissioner: Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development and Building
Curators: Nicola Borgmann, Elisabeth Endres, Gabriele G. Kiefer, Daniele Santucci
Exhibitors: A24 Landschaft, ADEPT, Agence Ter, Atelier Descombes Rampini, atelier le balto, Atelier Loidl, Barkow Leibinger, bgmr Landschaftsarchitekten, Christoph Brech, capattistaubach urbane landschaften, Christoph Hesse Architects, David Chipperfield Architects, EMF landscape architects, Foster + Partners, GemüseheldInnen Frankfurt, Glück Landschaftsarchitektur, GROSS.MAX. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, Grüntuch Ernst Architects, gruppe F | Freiraum für alle, Henning Larsen, IN SITU - Paysages et urbanisme, Hanns Joosten, Karres en Brands, Landschaftsarchitektur+, LOLA Landscape Architects, MAN MADE LAND, MTD Landschaftsarchitekten, MVRDV, POLA Landscape Architects, raderschallpartner, rajek barosch landschaftsarchitektur, relais Landschaftsarchitekten, RMP Stephan Lenzen Landschaftsarchitekten, Julian Rosefeldt, Sauerbruch Hutton, Schönherr, Site Practice, SLA, Stefan Tischer | Landscape Architect, Studio Vulkan Landschaftsarchitektur, TOPOTEK 1, Uniola, Valentien + Valentien, Vogt Landscape Architects, Wagon Landscaping, WES LandschaftsArchitektur, ZUS [Zones Urbaines Sensibles]

“let me tell you”

2025

THE ITALIAN PAVILION

The exhibition *TERRÆ AQUÆ. L'Italia e l'intelligenza del mare* places the SEA once again at the heart of cultural reflection—expanding the Mediterranean to embrace adjacent oceans—and highlights Italy as the EARTH shaped and embraced by the sea. In the delicate environmental balance, seas are among the primary victims of climate change. The view of Italy from the sea suggests a new perspective, a need to rethink the design of the border between land and water as an integrated system of architecture, infrastructure and landscape, inspired by a “maritime” culture whose relationship with the land evokes ritual and discovery.

The exhibition will host the works of individuals and groups, both established and emerging, triggering an intergenerational, intercultural and gender-neutral comparison, in which past and present will be brought together, involving designers, scholars and cultural operators - but also young people, poets, artists, research institutions and the third sector - in rethinking the relationship between land and sea, with the exhibition of both completed redevelopment projects and contributions produced.

PRODUCTION

TERRÆ AQUÆ. L'Italia e l'intelligenza del mare

Commissioner: Angelo Piero Cappello
Curator: Guendalina Salimei



Often denied, brutalized and abused, our coasts are in reality a meeting place between different ecosystems, cultures, activities and religions, in which human action knows and must also express itself with poetry and respect. A relationship so visceral that it found its highest symbolism in Venice with the rite of the marriage of the sea, celebrated every year by the Doge aboard the Bucintoro at the mouth of the port of San Niccolò al Lido where, after pouring a vase of holy water, he threw the ring blessed by the Patriarch into the waves while pronouncing the words ;
“Desponsamus te, mare nostrum, in signum veri perpetuique domini”
“We marry you, our sea, as a sign of true and perpetual dominion”.

THE DENMARK PAVILION

Build of Site simultaneously restores the Danish pavilion and explores unconventional ways of repurposing surplus construction materials hyperlocally. Rather than allocating funds and time to a temporary exhibition, the project redirects these resources into lasting improvements. The elements presented within the pavilion originate from its own restoration. What would typically be discarded as construction waste is reimagined in collaboration with experts across disciplines, integrating bio-based, high-tech, and recycled features, prioritizing structural potential over preconceptions of value.

PRODUCTION

BUILD OF SITE

*Commissioner: Kent Martinussen, Danish Architecture Centre
Curator/Exhibitor: Søren Pihlmann (pihlmann architects)*



[< CLICK FOR MORE THE DANISH PAVILION INSIGHT](#)

Where it seems like a construction site, the curators approach focusses on the re-use of architecture as building blocks, to take climate change seriously while show case that renovation is possible with the material present. The exhibition displays a series of materials that are cut out of the pavilion, nothing new was added to display this relevant view on architecture today.

THE BELGIUM PAVILION

The climate crisis questions the relationship between architecture and nature. In the exhibition Building Biospheres, landscape architect Bas Smets and neurobiologist Stefano Mancuso investigate how the natural intelligence of plants can be used to produce an indoor climate.



PRODUCTION

BUILDING BIOSPHERES

*Commissioner: Flanders Architecture Institute
Curators: Bas Smets, Stefano Mancuso
Exhibitors: Bureau Bas Smets (Bas Smets, Eva De Meersman, Luka Cockx), University of Ghent (Kathy Steppe), Plant AnalytiX (Dirk De Pauw), Erik De Waele, Elmēs, Maud Gerard Goossens, Henri Uijtterhaegen Panta, Lisa Mandelartz and Steven Schenk, Lisa De Visscher and Petrus Kemme*

[< CLICK FOR MORE BELGIAN PAVILION INSIGHT](#)

For six months, the Belgium Pavilion will serve as a prototype for this innovative research. The exhibition seeks a symbiosis between what the plants need, what the building can handle, and what people desire. Historically, architecture has protected us from external weather conditions. Through the creation of indoor climates, we have isolated ourselves from the natural world. Building Biospheres explores how plant intelligence can help produce microclimates within buildings. The plants cool the place, regulate humidity, produce oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide, transforming the building into its own biosphere.

The strategy was produces out of nature, nurture perspective. During these 6 months the change of atmosphere will influence the wellbeing of the plants and the measured results proof the direct benefits on the pavilion’s architecture.

“let me tell you”

2025

THE AUSTRALIAN PAVILION

At the 2025 Venice Biennale, the Australian pavilion presents home as a Country—living landscapes, waterscapes, skyscapes and communities, both human and non-human. The Australian pavilion centred on a circular rammed-earth structure.



PRODUCTION

HOME

*Commissioner: Australian Institute of Architects
Exhibitors: Michael Mossman, Emily McDaniel, Jack Gillmer-Lilley, Kaylie Salvatori, Clarence Slockee, Bradley Kerr, Elle Davidson*

[< CLICK FOR MORE AUSTRALIAN PAVILION INSIGHT](#)

The Australian Institute of Architects presents Home, an ambitious project embodying the relational strength of Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural practices and design. The project provokes audiences to reflect on their connection to homes, homelands, and the care for all places we inhabit. A home is more than a place; it is a site of belonging, memory, and relationships—a way of showing respect, fostering connection and creating safety. For First Nations peoples, home is Country—living landscapes, waterscapes, skyscapes and communities, both human and non-human, intertwined with lore, language, memory, and ancestral beliefs. Country is a living being, deserving of care and responsibility.

- target of added value

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THE SWITZERLAND PAVILION

The Swiss pavilion aims to bring attention to Lisbeth Sachs, one of the first women to be registered as an architect in Switzerland, by exploring what its pavilion building might look like if she had designed it.



Originally designed by Bruno Giacometti, Sachs' contemporary, the pavilion was reimagined with white curtains and grey timber walls designed to look like concrete. Final form will be defined by the architect on site”) is the guiding principle of the curators, inviting visitors to take part in building an exhibition. The group of four architects — Elena Chiavi, Kathrin Füglistner, Amy Perkins and Myriam Uzor — behind the project, works with embedded artist Axelle Stiefel to explore the legacy of Lisbeth Sachs (1914–2002), one of the first women architects in Switzerland. Sachs, a contemporary of Bruno Giacometti, designed the Kunsthalle for the 1958 Swiss Exhibition for Women's Work (SAFFA) in Zurich. The architecture is transformed into a living, evolving space. The intervention breaks boundaries between inside and outside, transforming the space into a multi-sensory experience. A sound installation further enhances the exhibition to an act of building.

PRODUCTION

‘Endgültige Form wird von der Architektin am Bau bestimmt.’

*Commissioner: Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia:
Sandi Paucic, Rachele Giudici Legittimo
Curators/Exhibitors: Elena Chiavi, Kathrin Füglistner,
Amy Perkins, Axelle Stiefel, Myriam Uzor*

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MUST SEE

<https://www.querinistampalia.org/it/> with John Baldessari on show until 23.11.2025

With the exhibition "No Stone Unturned – Conceptual Photography by John Baldessari," the Querini Stampalia Foundation opens a new chapter under the direction of Cristiana Collu. This vital and exemplary exhibition marks the beginning of a new era for the institution.
The architecture is partly done by Carlo Scarpa.

<https://fondoambiente.it/negozio-olivetti-eng> with FORMAFANTASMA on show until 23.11.2025

The Shape of Things to Come" al Negozio Olivetti - On the occasion of the 19th International Architecture Biennale, "Formafantasma. The Shape of Things to Come" is on display: through a series of objects, videos, and 3D animations, the exhibition addresses the environmental impact of the technology sector from various perspectives, highlighting the role of design as a tool for transformation and awareness. It explains how production processes shape society and culture, how they are distorted by economic logic, and how the consumption-based way of producing and living, which characterized the twentieth century, is no longer sustainable today.
The architecture is done by Carlo Scarpa.

<https://metamorfosi-urbana-venezia-nella-fotografia-di-toni-nicolini>

Toni Nicolini (1935 – 2012) was an Italian photographer best known for his black-and-white work documenting Italian landscapes, architecture, and everyday life.

He started his career in the 1950s and became recognized for his sensitive, almost poetic approach to photography. His images often emphasized the interplay of light and form, with a particular focus on the Lombardy region and rural Italy. Nicolini also worked extensively on architectural photography, collaborating with major Italian architects and contributing to important publications. Over the years, he exhibited widely in Italy and abroad, and his works are preserved in museums, foundations, and archives dedicated to Italian photography.

<https://www.misericordiadivenezia.it/en/>

<https://www.fondazioneprada.org/project/diagrams/?lang=en>

Diagrams is an exhibition project by AMO/OMA, the studio founded by Rem Koolhaas, presented at the Fondazione Prada's Venice venue, Ca' Corner della Regina. The exhibition explores the use of visual data communication as a powerful means of shaping meaning, enabling comprehension or manipulation, and serving as a pervasive tool for analyzing, interpreting, and transforming the world around us. Its aim is to encourage dialogue and speculative reflection on the connections between human intelligence, scientific and cultural phenomena, and the ways knowledge is created and shared.



Toni Nicolini, Passaggio del vaporetto sul canale di Mazzorbo, 1973-1978

What should you do to prepare for an exhibition? Is a press kit important? Can you apply for a grant? How should you network? Are you taking your collection to a major architecture biennale like the Venice Biennale?

Define your application concept to have a chance of being selected. The strategy of your application submission is the main goal. Read our guide here to get the most out of your exhibition participation.

PRE-FAIR

1 Research the topic and determine your approach. Set clear objectives beforehand; without a focus on your most important objectives, you'll miss out on a lot.

2 Check whether there are any subsidies or support measures that could help you with research, production and materials.

DURING THE FAIR

3 Don't miss the networking events. Often, there are opportunities to further go agreements (deals) for other fairs and expositions. In a relaxed atmosphere, your core message is sometimes listened to more, and this forms the foundation for a successful deal is often laid.

AFTER THE FAIR

4 Share insights and photogenic moments through a social media post, this can have impact and facilitate access to the show on view online - for everyone to see.

Architecture fairs

*Wat moet je doen ter voorbereiding van een tentoonstelling
deelname? Is een persdossier belangrijk? Kan je een subsidie
aanvragen? Hoe moet je netwerken?*

Ga je met je collectie naar een grote architectuur biënnale zoals
Venice Biennale ? Bepaal je concept insteek ter kandidatuur om kans
te maken op de pre-selectie. De strategie van de dossier inzending is
het hoofddoel. Lees hier onze go - to om zoveel mogelijk uit een
beursdeelname te halen.

PRE-FAIR

1 Informeer je over het thema en bepaal je concept insteek. Zorg op
voorhand voor heldere doelstellingen, zonder focus op jouw
belangrijkste doelstellingen, loop je veel mis.

2 Controleer of je er geen subsidies of steunmaatregelen bestaan die
je kunnen helpen voor het onderzoek, de productie en -materiaal.

DURING THE FAIR

3 Mis de netwerkevenementen niet. Vaak zijn er mogelijkheden om
verdere afspraken (deals) te sluiten voor andere beurzen en
exposities. In een ontspannen sfeer wordt er soms beter naar uw
kernboodschap geluisterd en wordt vaak de basis gelegd voor een
succesvolle deal.

AFTER THE FAIR

4 Deel inzichten en fotogenieke momenten via een bericht op sociale
media. Dit kan impact hebben en ervoor zorgen dat iedereen de show
online kan bekijken.

Architecture fairs

**WHAT IF? is antithetical
to “let me tell you”**

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