

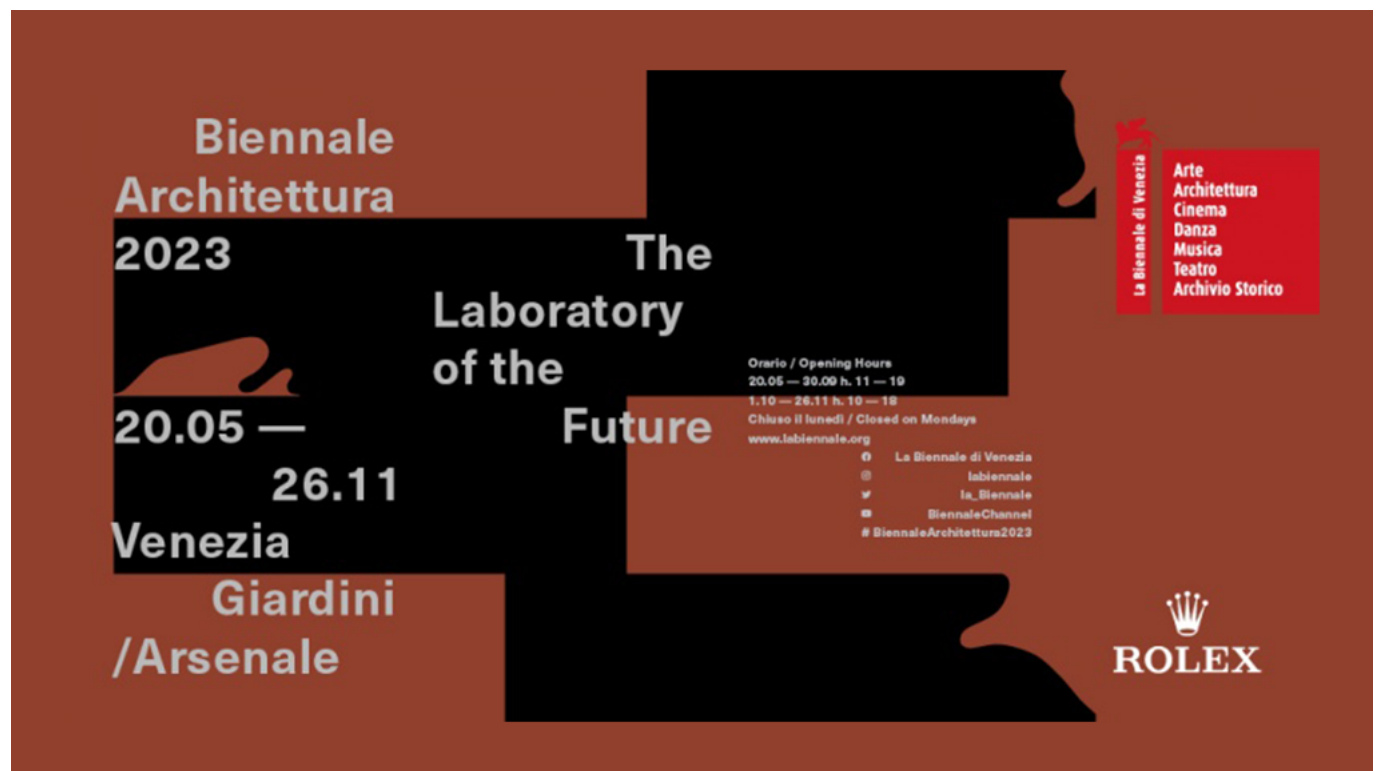
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Biennale Architettura 2023: "The Laboratory of the Future"



The 18th International Architecture Exhibition will open its doors to the public on Saturday 22 May 2023 and will run until Sunday 26 November 2023 at the Giardini, Arsenale, and Forte Marghera of Venice, Italy. The Press Office of the Global Campus of Human Rights is participating in the preview days attending the press conference of the inaugurations.

The International Exhibition “*The Laboratory of the Future*” is an exhibition in six parts. It includes 89 [Participants](#), over half of whom are from Africa or the African Diaspora. The gender balance is 50/50, and the average age of all Participants is 43, dropping to 37 in the [Curator's Special Projects](#), where the youngest is 24. 46% of participants count education as a form of practice, and, for the first time ever, nearly half of the Participants are from sole or individual practices of five people or less.

There are 64 [National Participations](#) that will organise their exhibitions in the historic Pavilions at the Giardini (27), at the Arsenale (22) and in the city centre of Venice (14). Niger participates for the first time at the Biennale Architettura; Panama participates for the first time with its own pavilion and has already participated in previous editions as part of the I.I.L.A. (Italo-Latin American International Organization). The Holy See returns to the Biennale Architettura, participating with its own Pavilion on the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore (it participated in the Biennale Architettura for the first time in 2018). The Italian Pavilion at the Tese delle Vergini in the Arsenale, sponsored and promoted by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Ministry of Culture, is curated by the Fosbury Architecture collective, consisting of Giacomo Ardesio, Alessandro Bonizzoni, Nicola Campri, Veronica Caprino, Claudia Mainardi. The title of the exhibition is *SPAZIALE: Everyone Belongs to Everyone Else*.

A total of 9 [Collateral Events](#) have been approved by the Curator Lesley Lokko, and promoted by non-profit national and international bodies and institutions, offering a wide range of contributions and participations that enrich the diversity of voices that characterizes the Exhibition.

More about the opening on our Social Media.

About the Exhibition:

“What does it mean to be ‘an agent of change’? (...) Over the past nine months, in hundreds of conversations, text messages, Zoom calls and meetings - stated Lesley Lokko - the question of whether exhibitions of this scale — both in terms of carbon and cost — are justified, has surfaced time and again. In May last year, I referred to the exhibition several times as ‘a story’, a narrative unfolding in space. Today, my understanding has changed. An architecture exhibition is both a moment and a process. It borrows its structure and format from art exhibitions, but it differs from art in critical ways which often go unnoticed. Aside from the desire to tell a story, questions of production, resources and representation are central to the way an architecture exhibition comes into the world, yet are rarely acknowledged or discussed. From the outset, it was clear that the essential gesture of *The Laboratory of the Future* would be ‘change’”.

“(...) For the first time ever, the spotlight has fallen on Africa and the African Diaspora, that fluid and enmeshed culture of people of African descent that now straddles the globe. What do we wish to say? How will what we say change anything? And, perhaps most importantly of all, how will what we say interact with and infuse what ‘others’ say, so that the exhibition is not a single story, but multiple stories that reflect the vexing, gorgeous kaleidoscope of ideas, contexts, aspirations, and meanings that is every voice responding to the issues of its time?”

“It is often said that culture is the sum total of the stories we tell ourselves, about ourselves. Whilst it is true, what is missing in the statement is any acknowledgement of who the ‘we’ in question is. In architecture particularly, the dominant voice has historically been a singular, exclusive voice, whose reach and power ignores huge swathes of humanity — financially, creatively, conceptually — as though we have been listening and speaking in one tongue only. The ‘story’ of architecture is therefore incomplete. Not wrong, but incomplete. It is in this context particularly that exhibitions matter”.

“A laboratory of the future must necessarily begin from a specific starting point, from one or more hypotheses seeking confirmation - Roberto Cicutto, President of La Biennale di Venezia, stated. Lokko

starts with her continent of origin, Africa, to talk about its historical, economic, climate and political criticalities and to let us all know «that much of what is happening to the rest of the world has already happened to us. Let's work together to understand where we have gone wrong so far and how we must face the future». This is a starting point that seeks to heed those segments of humanity that have been left out of the debate and opens to a multiplicity of voices that have been silenced for so long by the one that considered itself to be rightfully dominant in a vital and unavoidable contest.”

“I believe that this is La Biennale di Venezia's true task as an institution, and not only for Architecture. We must start here to seize the opportunity that will allow us to raise the bar in the way we approach all the other disciplines as well.” President Roberto Cicutto.

“For the first time ever, the Biennale Architettura will include the [Biennale College Architettura](#), which will run from 25 June to 22 July 2023. Fifteen renowned international tutors - Samia Henni, Marina Otero, Nana Biamah-Ofosu, Threshen Govender, Lorenzo Romito, Jacopo Galli, Philippa Tumubweinee, Ngillan Gbadebo Faal, Rahesh Ram, Guillermo Fernández-Abascal, Urtzi Grau, Samir Pandya, Alice Clancy, Sarah de Villiers and Manijeh Verghese - will work with fifty students, early career practitioners and academics from around the world, selected by Lesley Lokko through an Open Call process over the four weeks of the teaching programme. At the conclusion of the Call on 17 February, 986 applications had been received. A documentary of the educational experience will be filmed by Ángel Borrego Cubero and released in October this year. An international cast of critics will join the College in July.”

The Laboratory of the Future programme is enriched by [Carnival](#), a six-month-long cycle of events, lectures, panel discussions, films, and performances, that explore the themes of the Biennale Architettura 2023. “Conceived as a space of liberation rather than a spectacle or entertainment, *Carnival* offers a space for communication in which words, views, perspectives, and opinions are traded, heard, analysed, and remembered – Lokko said. Politicians, policymakers, poets, filmmakers, documentary makers, writers, activists, community organisers and public intellectuals will share the stage with architects, academics, and students. This public event programme is increasingly a form of architectural practice that attempts to bridge the gulf between architects and the public”.

La Biennale again this year dedicates the [Biennale Sessions](#) project to Universities, Academies of Fine Arts, and other Institutes of Higher Learning. The aim is to facilitate three-day self-organised visits by groups of at least 50 students and teachers, offering assistance in the organisation of travel and accommodations and the possibility of organising seminars in exhibition venues free of charge.

For the past decade, La Biennale di Venezia has been devoting increased attention to learning activities and has developed a growing commitment to educational initiatives addressed to the audience of its Exhibitions, to universities, young people, and children, from schools at all levels. In the past two years, Biennale Architettura 2021 and Biennale Arte 2022 counted 111,164 participants in [Education activities](#), of which 52,392 were young people. A broad Educational programme will be offered in 2023 as well, addressed to individuals and groups of students, children, adults, families, professionals, companies, and universities. All these initiatives aim to actively involve participants. They are conducted by professional operators, carefully trained by La Biennale, and they fall under the following categories: Guided Itineraries and Workshop Activities and Interactive Initiatives.

La Biennale di Venezia and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London present for the seventh consecutive year the Applied Arts Pavilion Special Project (Arsenale, Sale d'Armi A) titled *Tropical Modernism: Architecture and Power in West Africa*, curated by Christopher Turner (V&A) with Nana Biamah-Ofosu and Bushra Mohamed (AA). The presentation is organised in collaboration with the Architectural Association (AA), London and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi.

The exhibition of the Venice Pavilion, located in the Giardini di Sant'Elena, is organised by the Municipality of Venice.

The full calendar of events is available on the website www.labiennale.org