

The 2023 Venice Architecture Biennale Opens to the Public on May 20th



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The 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, titled *The Laboratory of the Future*, will hold its official inauguration on Saturday, May 20th, and will remain open to the public until November 26th, 2023. The pre-opening events happening on May 18th and 19th include the awards ceremony, during which an international jury led by Ippolito Pestellini Laparelli as president will award the official prizes: Golden Lion for best National Participation, Golden Lion for best participant, and Silver Lion for a promising young participant in the biennale. The Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement will be awarded to Demas Nwoko, Nigerian-born artist, designer, and architect, during the inauguration ceremony on May 20th.



For this edition of the Biennale, 64 national participants have been invited to organize exhibitions in the pavilions at the Giardini, Arsenale, and in the city center of Venice. Niger participates for the first

time at the Biennale Architettura, and Panama participates for the first time with its own pavilion. While following the direction set out by curator [Lesley Lokko](#), several sub-themes are present in the exhibitions presented in the national pavilions.



Countries such as [Canada](#), the [Czech Republic](#), [Ukraine](#), and [Estonia](#) are focusing on pressing social issues present in their areas, from the housing crisis to armed conflict or deficient working conditions. Others, such as the [United States](#), [Belgium](#), [Germany](#) or [Bahrain](#), are questioning the use of resources and are finding hidden potential in the unique character of their countries. While some pavilions adopted a playful tone, like the case of [Latvia](#), others are opening debates on larger overarching themes such as [decolonization](#), in the case of the [Australian Pavilion](#), or [decarbonization](#) and [sustainability](#), addressed by countries such as [Spain](#), [Türkiye](#), [Chile](#) or the [Netherlands](#).

In addition to the national pavilion, [9 collateral events](#) have been announced to further develop the diverse perspectives and themes explored at the Biennale Architettura. The events, which are admitted by curator [Lesley Lokko](#) and promoted by non-profit national and international bodies and institutions, take place in several locations scattered around the city. They include exhibitions focused on the migrant experience, the relationship between language and landscape, or the wisdom of traditional practices, such as [those practiced throughout Taiwanese history](#). As part of the official collateral events, the [Fundació Mies van der Rohe](#) will award the [Young Talent 2023](#) as part of the [EUMies Awards](#), while the [New European Bauhaus](#) is organizing conferences as a practical form for a laboratory of the future.



“ 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? – curator Lesley Lokko ”



This edition also includes a collaboration with the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, in the form of the Applied Arts Pavilion Special Project, an exhibition titled *Tropical Modernism: Architecture and Power in West Africa*, curated by Christopher Turner (V&A) with Nana Biamah-Oforu and Bushra Mohamed (AA). Additionally, *The Laboratory of the Future* program 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, analyzed, and remembered. Politicians, policymakers, poets, filmmakers, documentary makers, writers, activists, community organizers and public intellectuals will share the stage with architects, academics, and students. This public event program is increasingly a form of architectural practice that attempts to bridge the gulf between architects and the public. - curator Lesley Lokko ”



Furthermore, during the Biennale Sessions, Universities, Academies of Fine Arts, and other Institutes of Higher Learning will facilitate three-day self-organized visits by groups of at least 50 students and teachers. This emphasizes the educational role assumed by the Biennale for the past decade, devoting increased attention to learning activities and educational initiatives addressed to the audience of its Exhibitions, to universities, young people, and children, from schools at all levels.

We invite you to follow ArchDaily's comprehensive coverage of the Venice Biennale 2023: The Laboratory of the Future.

Image gallery

