

# La Biennale di Venezia

## 19<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition

Statement by **Pietrangelo Buttafuoco**

*President La Biennale di Venezia*



Intelli/Gens. To build the world with intelligence, listening to the intelligence of the world. This is what Carlo Ratti wishes to say in his visionary Exhibition, the very title of which announces its intention to be a foundational reflection for the near futures, the subject of study and debate for the scientific and artistic community and for the public of visitors. Yes, Gens. A vital and indispensable part of a deliberately reticular event. Be they neuronal synapses, social networks or the Internet, it is the rhizomatic structure that ensures the centrality of every periphery, the interchange between nodes, the different points of view. It is the vision, or better yet – the pre-vision – that, in the words of the poets, allow us to advance through “the darkening of the world”. That is what pre-vision is for. To gear up and intervene. To create the future. Future time is indeed Carlo Ratti’s project and thinking. His unique vision transcends the contemporary – which is the time of divestment – to make architecture, man’s shelter since the dawn of time, the ability to dwell in the world.

Ratti thus replaces the hierarchy of the pyramid with the rhizome, as a hermeneutic and operative approach.

The participants invited to the Exhibition are communities of thinkers, listed rigorously in alphabetical order as in a scientific paper. Architects, engineers, biologists, scientists, philosophers who share their knowledge to find solutions that are useful and elegant, and elegant because they are useful. In the dialectical arena of the various disciplines, constellated with algorithms that he consults as newly-minted oracles, Ratti deciphers what we are and what will be – as individuals and as society – in the the digital stream that leads into our tomorrow, the time of all of us Gens bestowed with Intelligence. And while intelligence is the foundation of the individual’s evolutionary process, in the most noble sense of their being *civis* (a third declension noun thus both masculine and feminine), architecture is the space in which it may be wielded, in a constant negotiation with the territory. Through functions, symbols and relationships, intelligence generates architecture guided by ethical, aesthetic and ecological principles. It is no coincidence that the Greek word *oikos* means both a “home” to live in and an “environment” that surrounds us.

This is why in his own statement – which shows very precise intents – Ratti himself asks: “Will we ever be able to design a building as smart as a tree?” This question is the felicitous heresy of the architect and researcher who heads the Senseable City Lab at MIT in Boston, indicative of a pursuit in which which circuits and silicon are nothing but a means to return to the origin. Perhaps with greater awareness.

This Biennale by Carlo Ratti is also the autobiography of Venice, the *Hydropolis* that no utopia has ever dared to imagine but that the genius and ingenuity of a people were able to create, forcing nature by virtue of architecture. The city of waters thus becomes a local model to read at the global scale. The ultimate laboratory of complexity, in which to find solutions useful to the entire world. The highest example of Intelli/Gens, where the duality nature vs. artifice is superseded by the fusion between civilization and environment. An organism in the making, therefore, an admirable balance between human and natural history, in which one might perceive the city of refuge envisioned by the reigning Pontiff, Pope Francesco, in his historic visit to La Biennale di Venezia, welcomed as a “place of encounter and cultural exchange”. And from Venice the voyage leads all the way out to Space, by means of natural, artificial and collective intelligence.

A composition of intelligence that leads us to *Via Lattea* by Franco Battiato:

“We rose even before the morning had broken/ready to transfer/into an artificial satellite/that quickly brought us/to the gates of Sirius”.

This is a voyage – because “man dwells poetically” – that coincides with the foundations for the 19<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition.

We would like to thank all the participating Countries and the new National Participations.

We also thank the **Ministry of Culture**, the **Institutions of the territory** that each in their own way support La Biennale, the **City of Venice**, **Regione del Veneto**, the **Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape Heritage for the City of Venice and the Lagoon**, the **Italian Navy** and the **Museo Storico Navale di Venezia**.

Our thanks go to **Rolex**, our **Partner** and **Official Timepiece** of the event and to the Sponsors

**Bloomberg Philanthropies**, **Vela - Venezia Unica**, **Hydro** and **Gruppo Saviola**.

We would also like to thank **Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP**.

**Rai** is the Media Partner of the 19<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition and will report on the event with dedicated programming on television, radio and the web.

We wish to thank the **Donors** and to the **International Councils and Organizations** that have been essential to the realisation of Biennale Architettura 2025.

And finally, we extend our thanks to all the **great professionals at La Biennale** who worked with great dedication to organise and manage the Exhibition.