

**La Biennale di Venezia**  
**19<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition**  
*Intelligens. Natural. Artificial. Collective.*  
curated by Carlo Ratti



**Statement by Pietrangelo Buttafuoco**  
*President La Biennale di Venezia*

Intelligently building the world, listening to the intelligence of the earth. This is Intelli/Gens, and it is what Carlo Ratti is building with his visionary Exhibition, its title already presenting itself as a founding reflection for the near future, a subject of study and debate for the scientific and artistic community and for the public that will visit it.

The Gens, precisely. A vital and indispensable part of a deliberately reticular manifestation. Whether it is neuronal synapses, social networks, the Internet, it is the rhizome-like shape that ensures the centrality of each periphery, the interchange of nodes, of different points of view. And it is the vision but—even better—the pre-vision, which, as the poets put it, allows us to cross the “night of the world”. And this is what pre-vision—or even oracular vision—is for. For gearing up and taking action. For creating the future.

Carlo Ratti’s project and thought is indeed the future. His special vision transcends the contemporary—which is the time of divestment—to make architecture, our shelter from the dawn of time, a capacity to dwell in the world.

Ratti therefore replaces the pyramid hierarchy with the rhizome, as a hermeneutic and operational approach with around 750 participants and almost 300 projects. It is from large numbers and brainstorming that the most innovative and surprising ideas germinate. In assonance with the training practices of neural networks that require a substantial volume of data to provide valuable output, Ratti questions humanity as a number, a thinking organism, a nursery of complexities.

These many voices give rise to research, taking shape in a limpid and distinct manner, and looking to the ancient and wise customs of recovery and conservation of resources prior to turbo-capitalist consumption, bringing them together with scientific studies and the most cutting-edge technological applications in the field of new materials; as well as concrete models and, when possible, 1:1 scale sections to best communicate the precipitate of a thought in its material extension; or even Agora in which to be all together, Gens, in public space, to exercise the highest form of our humanity, i.e. intelligence.

The guests at the Biennale Architettura are groups of thinkers, listed in strict alphabetical order as is proper for a scientific article. They are architects, engineers, biologists, scientists, philosophers who share their knowledge to find solutions both useful and elegant, and elegant because they are useful.

In the dialectical arena of various disciplines, filled with algorithms that resemble prophecies, Ratti deciphers what we are and what we will become—as individuals and as a society—in the digital flow that shapes our future, the time of us, the Gens, endowed with Intelligence. And if intelligence is the foundation of the individual’s evolutionary process, in the noblest sense of being a *civis* (a third-declension noun, therefore both masculine and feminine), architecture is the space in which it can unfold, in a constant negotiation with the

territory. Through functions, symbols and relationships, intelligence generates architectures guided by ethical, aesthetic and ecological principles. It is no coincidence that the Greek word *oikos* means both “house” to inhabit and “environment” to immerse oneself in.

And this is the reason why in his—very intentional—text Ratti himself asks: “Will we ever be able to design a building as smart as a tree?”.

This question is the happy heresy of the architect and researcher leading the Senseable City Lab at MIT in Boston, a sign of a journey in which circuits and silicon are nothing but a means to get back to basics. Perhaps with more awareness.

This Biennale Architettura by Carlo Ratti is also the autobiography of Venice, the Hydropolis that no utopia had dared to imagine, but which the genius and ingenuity of a people have managed to create by bending nature through architecture.

The city of water therefore becomes a local model to be interpreted on a global scale.

A laboratory of complexity *par excellence*, in which to find functional methods for the whole world. A supreme example of Intelli/Gens, where the duality of nature vs. artifice is overcome by the fusion of civilisation and environment.

An organism in the making, then, an admirable balance of human and natural history, in which we appear to glimpse the city of refuge desired by Pope Francis in his historic visit to the Biennale Arte, hailed as a “place of encounters and cultural exchanges”. And from Venice, the voyage reaches out all the way to Space, projecting natural, artificial and collective intelligences beyond the stratosphere.

A score that leads us straight to the Milky Way via the Italian musician Franco Battiato: “We rised before the sun, / to step inside / an artificial satellite / that took us at speed / to Sirius’s gates.”

An itinerary—since “poetically man lives on this earth”—aligned with the foundations of the 19th 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 **19th 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 the **International Councils and Organisations** that have been essential to the realisation of Biennale Architettura 2025.

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