

YILLIK

Annual of Istanbul Studies

2025

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Biennale Architettura
2025: Intelligens. Natural.
Artificial. Collective.
Curated by Carlo Ratti,
10 May–23 November 2025.
Venice: La Biennale di
Venezia

**Reimagining the Built Environment
and Community amid Climate
Urgency**

Biennale Architettura 2025 – “Intelligens. Natural. Artificial. Collective.”, curated by Carlo Ratti, runs from 10 May to 23 November 2025 at the Giardini, Arsenale, and across Venice. The exhibition explores the evolving relationship between nature, technology, and human intelligence, inviting architects to reimagine the built environment in an age shaped by both ecological urgency and artificial intelligence.¹

This short text above offers an AI-generated summary of the Nineteenth Venice Architecture Biennale, 2025. One might even call it a form of collective intelligence, with the AI feeding off my prompts as well as online sources as it generates this summary. The Biennale itself has adopted a similar practice, including AI-generated summaries alongside the captions of the exhibited works. These provide visitors with a quick overview, helping them decide whether to explore further. The format often resembles a newsfeed or story on Instagram, where one can follow a thread or swipe to the next. This addition could be thought of as a useful move by the curatorial team, given the density of the main exhibition. It presents roughly three hundred projects by more than 750 participants, spanning the wide spectrum between poetic and pragmatic takes on architecture. As some reviewers describe it, this results in a “dizzying and claustrophobic mess of bio- and techno-theatrics” and data-driven aesthetics, producing a confounding density that mirrors today’s attention economy.²

The exhibition may feel overwhelming both spatially and conceptually. Yet it derives from a genuine attempt at a bottom-up approach, prioritizing

collective research and authorship, as envisioned by curator Carlo Ratti. A professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and founder of the Senseable City Lab, Ratti issued an open call that drew nearly one thousand submissions from an exceptionally wide range of disciplines—architects, engineers, mathematicians, and climate scientists alongside philosophers, artists, chefs, woodcarvers, and farmers. His dialogical process, in resonance with his earlier work *Open Source Architecture*, culminated in an overwhelming number of projects (exhibited primarily in the Arsenale, because of the temporary closure of the Central Pavilion in the Giardini) fractally organized around the central themes of natural, artificial, and collective intelligences.³ As Ratti elaborates,

The title [i.e., Intelligens], 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.⁴

It is tempting to celebrate this curatorial call to embrace multiple intelligences, which seeks to underscore the coupling of nature and culture while exploring how emerging digital methods and more traditional, localized forms of knowledge can mutually shape the future of planetary design. Notably, feminist technoscience pioneer Donna Haraway received a lifetime achievement award. Her work, particularly *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, explores possibilities for life amid capitalist ruins and examines collaborative survival through multispecies kin-making.⁵ Haraway elaborates the concept of “response-ability,” emphasizing not only adaptability but also relational care, ultimately decentering the universalist gaze of “Man” as the measure of all things. She demonstrates how collaborative and speculative practices across art, design, and other knowledge systems can take an active role in cultivating these capacities.

The curatorial team presents the Biennale as a living lab, promoting grounded yet innovative experimentation across varied mediums and disciplines. Adaptation, resilience, and regeneration are foregrounded, framing climate change as a multi-scalar crisis and recasting architecture’s “response-ability.” Yet the exhibition largely shies away from self-reflexivity and accountability: It overlooks how architecture has contributed to major crises like climate change as much as it has addressed them, while glossing over the entrenched wealth and power asymmetries that determine who benefits, who suffers, and whose futures are considered worth protecting. Adapting for what? Resilience for whom?

As Orit Halpern underscores with the notion of “hopeful resilience,” discourses of resilience have been repeatedly entangled with capitalist logics that claim to imagine more just and sustainable futures, while primarily focusing on designing smart infrastructures capable of absorbing shocks, sustaining speculative growth, and extending circuits of capital.⁶ This tendency did not emerge with the climate crisis alone; it has deeper genealogies in cybernetics, ecology, and financialization, yet it became starkly visible in the wake of the 2008–9 global financial crisis, when a wave of eco-smart city projects proliferated, privileging modeling, deming, and speculative design as ends in themselves. In such projects, the lived realities of catastrophe are displaced by the preemptive anticipation of risk and the engineered promise of high-tech futures, obscuring the historical conditions from which these crises emerged.

Walking through the exhibition hall, one encounters *Ancient Future: Bridging Bhutan’s Tradition and Innovation* by Bjarke Ingels Group, featuring an intricately hand-carved wooden beam crafted by Bhutanese artisans Sangay Thsering and Yeshi Gyeltshen with the assistance of AI-driven robotics.⁷ The piece is striking both visually and as a live performance, also accompanied by a documentary, and will be integrated into the architecture

298 of Gelephu International Airport as part of Bhutan's Mindfulness City masterplan. Yet it leaves little room to interrogate Bjarke Ingels Group's role in spectacle-driven development projects (e.g., the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan) that often overlook or exacerbate environmental harm and social inequality.

Interestingly, the summer of the Biennale also saw protests against Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos's extravagant wedding, drawing attention both to environmental concerns and to the role of tech moguls in the rise of right-wing populist regimes. It is also worth noting that this is the first Biennale commissioned under Pietrangelo Buttafuoco, the new President of the Venice Biennale and a prominent right-wing figure in Italy, raising concerns about a potential shift in the Biennale's orientation in coming years.⁸ Taken together, these overlaps call for deeper reflection on the broader political and aesthetic regimes we are part of as curators, visitors, and reviewers. In other words, in the high-stakes urgency of our times, the Biennale, like many other European cultural institutions, invites us to question its relevance in today's world.

In the rest of this review, I organize my observations around four thematic focuses: Heat, Map, Earth, and Lagoon. I will briefly discuss multiple works, mostly from the national pavilions, that capture both the on-site experience of the Biennale and the broader discussions it may provoke.

Heat

The first work visitors encounter at the Arsenale, which houses the main exhibition curated by Carlo Ratti, is *Terms and Conditions*.⁹ The title recalls the terms and conditions we often take for granted without a thorough reading, while also suggesting the need to rethink them for more sustainable design and consumption. This immersive, site-specific installation transforms the historic industrial Corderie dell'Arsenale into a dark, humid sensory exploration of climate urgency. Set in the high-ceilinged former rope factory, *Terms and Conditions* exposes the usually invisible me-



Figure 1: Transsolar, Bilge Kobas, Daniel A. Barber, and Sonia Seneviratne, *Terms and Conditions*, La Biennale di Venezia, 2025. Photograph: Marco Zorzanello. Courtesy of La Biennale di Venezia.

chanics of air conditioning—metallic fans, ducts, and AC units, suspended from the ceiling at varying heights. Produced collaboratively by Transsolar (Thomas Auer and Jochen Lam), Bilge Kobas, Daniel A. Barber, and Sonia Seneviratne, the installation confronts visitors with the waste heat generated from cooling the main exhibition hall, making the hidden environmental costs of climate-controlled interiors vividly tangible (fig. 1).

Visitors traverse platformed water pools rising to seventy centimeters, representing Venice's projected sea level rise by 2100.¹⁰ The humidity, alongside the continuous mechanical hum, creates an unsettling atmosphere, while narrow corridors guide visitors through the sculptural space. As temperatures rise toward the center of the room, visitors may feel momentarily breathless, compelled to step outside. A lit pathway, the only source of light, stands ahead, shaped like the Third Paradise, a symbol reconfigured from the mathematical infinity sign and introduced by Michelangelo Pistoletto in 2003.¹¹ Highlighting the harmony between nature and humanity, Pistoletto presents the Third Paradise as a model of thought that prompts a "passage to a new level of planetary civilization, essential to ensure the survival of the human race," by "re-form[ing] the principles and ethical behaviours guiding our

common life."¹² This ritualistic optimism, serving as both a literal and a metaphorical entry into the rest of the exhibition and accompanied by an allegorical representation of passing to the other side, may appear unmoored to certain visitors.

Regardless of the discrepancy between where visitors are and where the heat comes from, the attempt to make them feel it as a prompt for planetary awareness falls short of *Terms and Conditions*' broader aim: creating a spatial allegory for global thermal inequities. Yet it simultaneously reveals an ideological dissonance, as practitioners make the costs of everyday comfort tangible by literally heating a room in Venice, while the real consequences of climate change remain unavoidable for those who bear them disproportionately every day. The well-managed, temporary discomfort may provide a misleading, if not privileged, sense of control and order.

This raises urgent questions for curators and practitioners: How can they afford to fail to account for the direct impact of their work on the material and symbolic inequities they claim to confront? How can they justify forcing visitors through unbearable heat before enjoying a cool spritz? Walking through the heated room, I was acutely aware of the tension between individual comfort and global climate

impacts. As someone currently living in Europe, I wonder how societies that, prioritizing their own comfort, remain silent and complicit in the ongoing eco-genocides are meant to be enlightened by this experience. What would be required to spur them to act?

In this sense, the installation becomes a microcosm of Europe's fantasy of controlling uncertainty—an enduring logic that has underpinned colonial and capitalist modernity as a project of mastery and domination. Rising heat and water levels act as both physical and psychoanalytic symptoms, demanding a reckoning with often-repressed realities, including Europe's complicity in past and present violences, as well as its dissociative logic that enables the evasion of accountability. It gestures toward the necessity of confronting what lies beyond the fortresses of European democracies, increasingly marked by authoritarian tendencies. *Terms and Conditions* and *Third Paradise* set the tone for the Biennale, leaving visitors with lingering questions of accountability, equity, and the limits of architectural spectacle in addressing planetary crises.

This brings us to the Germany Pavilion: *Stresstest*.¹³ Commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development, and Building and curated by Nicola Borgmann, Elisabeth Endres, Gabriele G. Kiefer, and Daniele Santucci, the pavilion immerses visitors in the realities of the coming urban climate through two contrasting thematic zones: Stress and De-Stress. In the Stress zone, visitors are confronted with the immediate threats of urban climate change, such as heat waves and floods. A three-wall display presents infrared heat maps of city centers alongside alarming news footage, while a smaller heated room visualizes visitors' own body heat in real time, transforming abstract climate data into an immediate, visceral experience. The De-Stress zone offers a contrasting experience, presenting interventions that cities could adopt to mitigate extreme climate impacts, from urban planning measures to energy-efficient designs. The pavilion adheres to the Biennale's principles of cyclical design by relying on solar energy.

Overall, one may question what these artificially heated rooms, whose impacts are both material and embodied, truly signify in the present moment, at the heart of Europe. The imaginaries of green design and sustainable economy, as suggested by the name *Stresstest*, a term used to assess economic pressures and vulnerabilities, hint at the ways in which such spaces may, often unconsciously, replicate the social and material divides that sustain global inequalities. The pavilion's physical separation of problems and solutions echoes a linear vision of progress rooted in the instrumental rationality of the supposedly self-contained Western, post-Enlightenment subject, whose legitimacy is increasingly being challenged today.

As seen in the Stress and De-Stress zones, this dichotomy generates a fundamental gap: The possibility of a genuine encounter with what has been historically rendered as the Other, whether non-human, dehumanized, or even one's own embodiment, remains absent. Despite the overwhelming heat and larger-than-life displays, the Other continues to be framed as a threat or a problem to be managed, rather than as a presence that demands reflexivity and accountability within the systems producing climate and humanitarian crises. In an age that livestreams genocide, the limits of representation were sur-

passed long ago. The Biennale's reliance on immersive aesthetics and its attempts to make visitors feel or act ultimately expose the limitations of experiential design as a tool for cultivating radical planetary consciousness.

Map

Several works are worth highlighting for their effort to map the historical situatedness of contemporary technologies, tracing their development alongside social, economic, and political transformations. A particularly striking and popular example from the Biennale is *Calculating Empires: A Genealogy of Technology and Power Since 1500*, a large-scale visual mapping display more than twenty-four meters in length and three meters in height, illustrating how technical and social structures have coevolved over five centuries (fig. 2).¹⁴ In it, researchers and practitioners Kate Crawford and Vladan Joler sublimely visualize their intensive research in *The Anatomy of an AI* (available online) on a large map that “charts a global history of control—from colonial expansion and militarization to automation and artificial intelligence—revealing how the legacies of empire continue to shape today's digital infrastructures.”¹⁵

The physical scale and content density of this exhibit demand time to

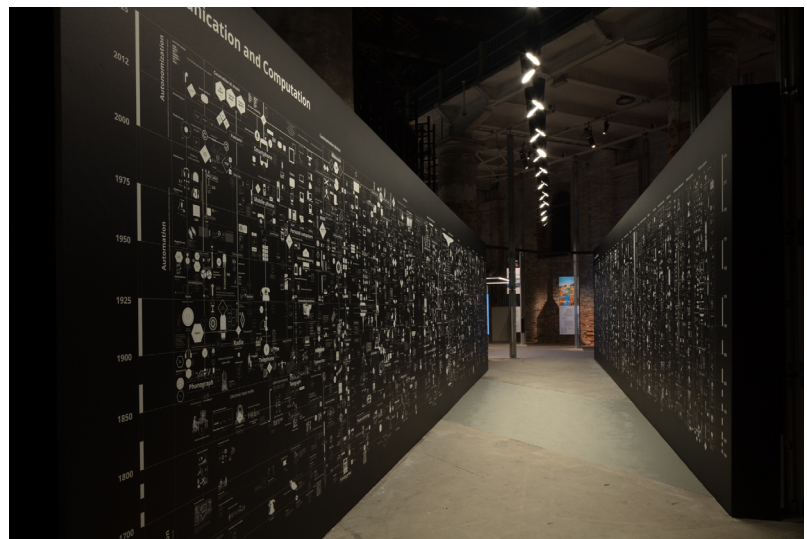


Figure 2: Kate Crawford and Vladan Joler, *Calculating Empires: A Genealogy of Technology and Power Since 1500*, La Biennale di Venezia, 2025. Photograph: Luca Capuano. Courtesy of La Biennale di Venezia.

300 navigate. Visitors move slowly down a corridor past numerous thematic headings, each of which charts the course of a particular theme across five centuries—"Algorithms," for instance, begins with fifteenth-century Islamic mathematics and seventeenth-century Cartesian geometry, then moves to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century developments in probability and statistics, and ends with today's predictive algorithms. This gives the work the feel of a Foucauldian genealogy, tracing continuities and ruptures along each thread, underscoring that technologies' pasts cannot be taken for granted and that their futures are not inevitable but could be constructed differently, thereby opening space for change.

Crawford and Joler won the Silver Lion award at the Biennale for this work. In his award speech, Joler dedicated it "to all students and activists who are currently in prison in Serbia or in forced exile; to all students, professors, and citizens who are victims of police brutality, physical and psychological abuse, targeted surveillance, intimidation, and smear campaigns organized by the regime; and to the people who lost their lives under the canopy of the renovated railway station in Novi Sad, an event that sparked massive anti-government protests."¹⁶ At the time of Joler's speech, student protests were also taking place in Türkiye following the detention of Ekrem İmamoğlu, the mayor of Istanbul and the leading opposition candidate for the presidency. This overlap serves as a reminder that the issues the Biennale raises cannot be considered in isolation from ongoing social struggles that resonate across different locales.

Still, one might wonder whether this urge to map, carrying as it does the risk of flattening the context, ends up resembling the imperial method itself: an overarching, and thus abstracted, perspective. Does the current form of data visualization, now the dominant aesthetic of our time, perpetuate this effect? There is also the concern that the visual immensity of *Calculating Empires*, literally larger than human scale, with a corridor flanked by high walls, renders

individuals too small or lost within this seemingly never-ending map. Alternatively, each visitor may direct their attention differently, engaging with particular corners of this historical map and contextualizing it in their own way. Having encountered this work multiple times over the past few years, I noticed a different detailed connection each time, leading me down a different thread on each occasion.

Overall, Crawford and Joler's *Calculating Empires* has been well received by art institutions, with exhibitions in cities such as Prague, Paris, Milan, and Berlin. In preparation for an exhibition on AI, it is clear why their work would be invited, as it combines aesthetic sublimity with critical insight. This aligns with the groundbreaking nature of Crawford's scholarship in critical AI studies, which consistently exposes the limits of the dominant imaginaries surrounding these technologies by emphasizing their material and social impacts. Her well-known assertion that "AI is neither artificial nor intelligent" shifts attention from high-tech spectacles to the ways in which these systems rely on enduring histories of extraction and exploitation.¹⁷

This traveling exhibit, often positioned alongside high-tech spectacles, tends to embody what might be called an "outsourced" or "reified" critique, which appears to be a frequent tactic in contemporary (European) cultural institutions. At the Biennale, for instance, beyond the high walls of Crawford and Joler's installation, visitors encounter Refik Anadol's immersively poetic data sculptures, which, though sensually striking, amplify the spectacle of data rather than engaging with data politics. Crawford counters this tendency by insisting that the popular terminology of "AI ethics" should be replaced with a focus on politics, shifting the debate from the establishment of abstract ethical principles, often reproducing liberal values such as privacy, to the more pressing task of grappling with automation, surveillance, and the ongoing struggles for more just and egalitarian systems.

Earth

In a continuation of the thread of mapping, this time inscribed in the earth itself, multiple works propose counter-mappings to imperial gazes, aiming both to historicize and to reinvent the relationship between architecture and the Earth. *GBR: Geology of Britannic Repair* explores "geological empires" in an attempt to repair landscapes shaped by violence, loss, and trauma, reimagining their pasts, presents, and possible futures. Commissioned by Sevrá Davis (director of architecture, design, and fashion at the British Council), it is curated by the British-Kenyan team of Owen Hopkins, Kathryn Yusoff, Kabage Karanja, and Stella Mutegi, with contributions from Cave_bureau, the Palestine Regeneration Team (PART), Mae Ling Lokko & Gustavo Crembil, and Thandi Loewenso.¹⁸ The pavilion was recognized with a Special Mention Award.

Visitors are first confronted by an intervention on the pavilion's neoclassical façade: *Double Vision*, a veil of carbon-black and earthy brown beads honoring the Kenyan Maasai people's dwelling traditions, characterized by their single entrance and curved profile (fig. 3). The beads, made from agricultural waste and interspersed with red glass beads from India, are assembled through practices of repair and reuse. Draped from roof to ground, the veil reinterprets a building long emblematic of Britain's imperial cultural legacy, strikingly visible along the Giardini's central axis. Yet it inverts the gaze, highlighting "other earths" displaced by empire and reversing the colonial gaze that forced colonized peoples to see themselves through another's eyes.¹⁹

Upon entry, *Earth Compass* charts the cartography of carbon emissions shaped by geological empires on the hall's walls, situating the British Pavilion along a parabolic axis from London to Nairobi via the Great Rift Valley, exposing the continuity of colonial extraction across time and space. The *Rift Room* extends this cartographic approach: Its walls trace mining, extraction, and present-day conflicts along the Rift Valley,



Figure 3: *Double Vision* at the Great Britain Pavilion: *GBR: Geology of Britannic Repair*, curated by Owen Hopkins, Kathryn Yusoff, Kabage Karanja, and Stella Mutegi, La Biennale di Venezia, 2025. Photograph: Chris Lane. Courtesy of the British Council. <https://venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/geology-britannic-repair/double-vision>.

stretching from southeastern Africa to southern Türkiye. At its center lies an architectural fragment resembling a fissure—an index of deep time, refuge, and resistance. *Objects of Repair*, by PART (Yara Sharif, Nasser Golzari, and Murray Fraser), brings the urgency of the present into focus. Using salvaged materials and vernacular techniques, their installation demonstrates how architecture in Gaza and the West Bank becomes an act of resilience and resistance to settler colonial occupation, violence, and erasure.

Another room features Cave_bureau's documentation of their journey from Nairobi to Shimoni on Kenya's Indian Ocean coast, where enslaved people were once imprisoned in coral caves and, in some cases, escaped through hidden passages. Working with local custodians and 3D scans of the silted cave networks, Cave_bureau reimagines these sites of trauma through rattan-woven architectural forms that fill the space, transforming the caves into places of repair and healing, where material, memory, and sea life are intertwined. As the pavilion states, "amid the rubble of broken earths, architecture offers possibilities for repair, reparation, and renewal from which new worlds might emerge."²⁰

Other national pavilions, such as Lebanon's *The Land Remembers* and

Türkiye's *Grounded*, turn to land and soil as hosts and carriers of information, exploring ways to restore our relationship with them. In the case of *The Land Remembers*, visitors encounter "a fictional ministry" dedicated to healing land poisoned by ecocide.²¹ The project begins with witnessing, archiving, and counter-mapping this violence, continuing with the preservation of endemic species and the development of strategic methods for ecological restoration. The exhibition hall itself becomes a form of living architecture, sprouting from compacted-soil bricks embedded with wheat seeds.

This performative approach continues in the Türkiye Pavilion. *Grounded (Yerebasan)*, curated by Ceren Erdem and Bilge Kalfa, showcases works by both invited and open-call participants.²² Upon entry, visitors are enveloped by the physical presence, scents, visual textures, and vibrations of soil, offering a multisensory mapping with the earth that lies often unnoticed beneath our feet. The pavilion's central work, *In*, by the curators, is a light earthen passage in a circular form, consisting of a wooden framework covered with textile, clay, and soil, and amplified by a sound installation by Michael Akstaller based on his field recordings. Drawing inspiration from Türkiye's rich archaeological heritage,

including Göbekli Tepe, Latmos, and Çatalhöyük, as well as the layered material and cultural histories inscribed in the soil, the works at the pavilion invite visitors to reflect on the deep interplay between environmental and cultural legacies as active, living participants in shaping our understanding of past, present, and future. The Earth haunts, heals, and persists, serving as both a source and model of geo-political sustainability. The curators reframe the role and potential of architecture through traditional practices of dwelling and agriculture, as well as the emerging affordances of digital tools and methods. In doing so, they offer a historically situated and nuanced exploration of the possibilities of interplay between craft, materiality, and digital technologies, as expressed across multiple works at the Biennale.

Lagoon

Following the curator Carlo Ratti's notion of the city, or the Biennale, as a living laboratory, the Lagoon forms the final section of this review, where I reflect on Venice-inspired projects. The city faces urgent ecological challenges, including flooding and contamination, due to a combination of natural tectonic movements, groundwater extraction, the accelerating rate of sea-level rise caused by climate change, and mass tourism. This environmental vulnerability has drawn growing attention to strategies for preserving the lagoon's biocultural diversity. Within this context, the Golden Lion was awarded to the Canal Café, a hybrid espresso bar and laboratory by Diller Scofidio + Renfro: Water is drawn from the lagoon and channeled through an "eco-machine," a biofiltration system, which purifies the canal water to make it potable, and it is then used to make espresso (fig. 4).²³ While the reasoning behind the fancy labeling remains unclear, the project claims to present a moment of reflection on Venice's water issues. Yet its primary appeal seems to be that it offers "the comforting scent and taste of espresso—the irreducible Italian pleasure." It may be a tasty experience on this occasion; however, it ultimately reflects how many works and pavilions engage in the appropri-



Figure 4: Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Natural Systems Utilities, SODAI, Aaron Betsky, and Davide Oldani, *Canal Café*, La Biennale di Venezia, 2025. Photograph: Marco Zorzanello. Courtesy of La Biennale di Venezia.

ation of cultural heritage to rebrand cities, with architecture often the usual suspect.

A number of projects employ data-driven tools and audiovisual storytelling to engage with the symbiotic fluctuations of Venice's lagoon ecosystem. One is *0.5* by Caterina Miralles, which bridges the analytical work of climatological research centers with the intergenerational knowledge of northern fishing communities.²⁴ Presented across two large, angled screens, the installation symbolically brings into dialogue perspectives that are often held in opposition, highlighting the complex ecological interdependencies of the lagoon.

Fundamental, by ecoLogicStudio and developed in collaboration with the Synthetic Landscape Lab at Innsbruck University and the Urban Morphogenesis Lab at the Bartlett School of Architecture at University College London, draws on real-time inputs from the lagoon, such as water acidity and microbial activity, and human interactions.²⁵ These data streams animate audiovisual projections mapped onto reinterpreted *bricole*: Venice's traditional wooden foundation poles, here reimagined as biofabricated and biodegradable 3D-printed columns embedded with responsive technology, merging traditional forms with experimental, data-driven approaches. Similarly, *The Living Orders of Ven-*

ice encourages curiosity and care for non-human city dwellers by hosting a crowdsourced ecological field study of the Biennale grounds using iNaturalist, a citizen-science app.²⁶ The project playfully creates architectural prototypes of shelters designed not for an idealized human body, but for Venice's animal inhabitants, expanding the conversation about architecture's role in multispecies urban ecologies.

Finally, *AquaPraça*, the submersible floating platform unveiled at the Nineteenth International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia in September 2025, was designed by CRA-Carlo Ratti Associati and Höweler + Yoon.²⁷ It departed Venice in early September and arrived in Belém, Brazil, in time for the Italian Pavilion at COP30 in November 2025.²⁸ After the summit, *AquaPraça* is set to become a permanent public space on Guajará Bay within the Amazon River system, intended to serve as a living example of adaptive architecture responding to climate urgency. As I completed the final edits of this article in mid-November 2025, there were reports of Indigenous mobilizations and widespread protests at COP30 in Brazil.²⁹ Thousands had taken to the streets of Belém, urging governments to act decisively on matters of land and climate justice.³⁰ These scenes underscore moments when direct po-

litical action and concrete demands become particularly salient.

One of the principal insights from the Biennale is the extent to which the rhetoric of care and solidarity becomes reified within the contemporary cultural landscape, projecting an unacceptably naïve, even cruelly optimistic, vision of society seemingly unburdened by structural tensions. This demonstrates how "response-ability" becomes insufficient without the scaffolding of accountability.³¹ This thread weaves into my concluding remarks, where I adopt the lagoon as an interpretive lens for assessing the Biennale's resonance with what lies beyond its curated spaces—a relational environment poised at the edge, tethered to the sea, simultaneously closed and open, bridging local and planetary concerns. Throughout the exhibition period, there has been a deliberate effort to multiply public programs and off-site installations, extending the Biennale's reach beyond the Giardini and Arsenale. Many of the projects described above exemplify how architecture and design can blend data-driven research, socio-material histories, and ecological urgencies into multisensory experiences. In this sense, the Biennale aspires to function as a living laboratory; yet it does not operate in a vacuum. It is not contained within black boxes and white cubes but is continually negotiated on the ground, interacting with everyday life, environmental conditions, and broader social and cultural contexts—as it ought to be.

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<https://doi.org/10.53979/yillik.1844368>

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- 2 Phineas Harper, "Venice Architecture Biennale 2025 Review: A Tech Bro Fever Dream," *ArtReview*, 12 May 2025, <https://artreview.com/venice-architecture-biennale-2025-review-a-tech-bro-fever-dream-phineas-harper>.
- 3 Open Source Architecture advocates for a shift from ego-driven "starchitect" projects toward a collaborative, inclusive, and networked approach to design, leveraging crowdsourcing, open access, and mass customization.
- See Carlo Ratti and Matthew Claudel, *Open Source Architecture* (Thames & Hudson, 2015).
- 4 The quote is taken from the curator statement on the official website of La Biennale di Venezia: <https://www.labiennale.org/en/news/biennale-architettura-2025-intelligens-natural-artificial-collective>.
- 5 Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Duke University Press, 2016). See also Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton University Press, 2015).
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- 11 Fondazione Pistoletto Cittadellarte, *The Third Paradise Perspective*, La Biennale di Venezia, 2025, <https://www.labiennale.org/en/architecture/2025/intro/third-paradise-perspective>. The exhibited work is the result of Cittadellarte's workshop and in particular a multidisciplinary collaboration between Michelangelo Pistoletto, Paolo Naldini, Michele Cerruti But, Tiziano Guardini, Luigi Ciuffreda, and Giulia Giavatto. See also <https://cittadellarte.it/en/events/third-paradise-perspective-cittadellarte-at-biennale-2025>.
- 12 *The Third Paradise* is a manifesto and artistic project conceived by Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto in 2003 (https://www.pistoletto.it/eng/testi/the_third_paradise.pdf). It envisions a harmonious fusion between the natural world and human-made systems, symbolized by a reconfiguration of the mathematical infinity sign—three interconnected circles representing nature, artifice, and their synthesis. This concept aims to address global challenges by promoting ethical behavior, collective responsibility, and a new level of planetary civilization. See also <https://terzo-paradiso.org/en/>.
- 13 Nicola Borgmann, Elisabeth Endres, Gabriele G. Kiefer, and Daniele Santucci, *Stresstest*, La Biennale di Venezia, 2025. See also the Germany Pavilion's official website: <https://stresstest.world/en>.
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