



La Biennale di Venezia

18. Mostra
Internazionale
di Architettura

Partecipazioni Nazionali

PRESS RELEASE

Portuguese Pavilion at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Fertile Futures

20 May – 26 November 2023

Palazzo Franchetti

S. Marco 2847, Venice

Press Preview: 18 May 2023 – 10am - 12am

Opening: 19 May 2023 - 4pm

Curator: Andreia Garcia

Deputy Curators: Ana Neiva and Diogo Aguiar

Organization: Ministry of Culture of Portugal

Commissioner: Directorate-General for the Arts

The Official Portuguese Representation at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia 2023 presents **Fertile Futures**, a project curated by **Andreia Garcia** and deputy curators **Ana Neiva and Diogo Aguiar**, which focuses on the **problems of water resources in seven Portuguese hydrogeographies**, to stimulate thought about a fertile, sustainable and equitable future. Commissioned by the Directorate-General for the Arts, the exhibition Fertile Futures will be presented between May 20 and November 26 2023, at Palazzo Franchetti, in Venice.

As a vital element for human and non-human species, but also metaphorical and emotional, **freshwater is simultaneously political and economic**, which is why public debate on the protection, management and future of this natural resource is urgent. These are global issues with dramatic manifestations in specific distinct areas within Portuguese territory. Focusing on seven hydrogeographies, Fertile Futures commissions **young architects**, in collaboration with **experts** from other areas of knowledge, to present models for a more sustainable future, in a non-hierarchical cooperation between disciplines, generations and species.

The seven cases under study exemplify the **anthropocentric action on water**, natural and finite resources with implications for the Tâmega Basin; the International Douro; the Middle Tejo; the Alqueva Reservoir; the Mira River; the Lagoa das Sete Cidades; and the Madeira Streams. The production of unpublished content, based on the strategic complementarity between practice, theory and teaching in architecture, defines the tripartite approach to experimentation and reflection that focuses on the reality of the Portuguese territory.

Fertile Futures involves new generations in the development of solutions for future reservoirs and defends, between Portugal and Venice, the relevance of the contribution of architecture in the redesigning of a **decarbonized, decolonized and collaborative future**, thus contributing to a discussion that is common and global, in direct response to the call of Lesley Lokko, curator of 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia 2023, whose title and theme is “The Laboratory of the Future”.

The title of the proposal underlines the **speculative character** of the Representation of Portuguese Architecture, aiming to contribute to the design of fairer, more inclusive, more equitable and more diverse Futures, but also more Fertile ones, heralding a greener, more imaginative, generous, abundant, positive, productive, responsible, feminine, and plural future. **As the Curators point out:** “*The programme proposed by Fertile Futures defends the laboratory dimension of architectural design in dialogue with other disciplinary areas, and the ability to move forward, seeking to imagine the future, requiring the contribution of multidisciplinary discourse in the design of solutions to emerging issues that tend to go beyond the singular domain of the work of architects*”.

Investing in the strategic complementarity between practice, theory and teaching in architecture, a tripartite approach to experimentation and common reflection is defined: **seven Design Teams**, whose work is the body of the propositional exhibition in Venice and occupies the seven exhibition halls in the Palazzo Franchetti, where in the central hall, a water line organises the space and its flow emanating from a gesture that evokes symbolic and metaphorical dimensions, in a sensory and emotional experience; **five Assemblies of Thought**, moments of reciprocal (re)learning based on the coexistence of knowledge (28-29 January in Porto, 20 May in Venice, 3 June in Braga, 2 September in Faro and 7 October in Porto Santo). The official calendar and information are available at: <https://fertilefutures.pt/en/>; finally, an **International Summer Seminar in Fundão**, from 10 to 22 July 2023. This municipality is a territory that is deeply affected by water scarcity and highly intensive agriculture, fires and desertification. With tutoring from the teams of the Hydrogeography Workshops and the participation of national and international students, selected by **open call** and reinforced by institutional partnerships, the intervention materialises in the self-construction of installations scattered throughout the territory, developing strategies for the capture, fixation, use and/or redistribution of water in the municipality of Fundão.

Addressing common and intersecting issues, Fertile Futures defends that a laboratory cannot present known results at the outset and, therefore, collaborating with other disciplinary areas, it promotes the production of speculative investigations, presented in word and drawing form, for an exhibition that thinks about a fertile, sustainable and equitable future, to be presented at the 18th International Exhibition of Architecture – La Biennale di Venezia 2023. In summary, Fertile Futures reiterates the transformative capacity of an architectural exhibition, as a **knowledge production platform**.

The Pavilion of Portugal has as institutional partners the Camões, Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, IP and Aicep Portugal Global.

Portuguese Pavilion at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Address: Palazzo Franchetti S. Marco 2847, Venice (near Accademia Bridge)

Vaporetto Accademia - Lines: 1, 2

Opening hours: 10am to 6pm - 20 May – 26 November

Closed on Mondays, except: 22.05, 14.08, 4.09, 16.10, 30.10, 20.11

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