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La Biennale di Venezia

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“The vision of a modern, diverse, and inclusive society is seductive and persuasive, but as long as it remains an image, it is a mirage. Something more than representation is needed, and architects historically are key players in translating images into reality.”

Lesley Lokko

THE LABORATORY OF THE FUTURE

The **18th International Architecture Exhibition**, in Venice from May 20th to November 26th, 2023, is entitled **The Laboratory of the Future**. Conceived as “a kind of workshop, a laboratory where architects and practitioners across an expanded field of creative disciplines draw out examples from their contemporary practices that chart a path for the audience — participants and visitors alike — to weave through, imagining for themselves what the future can hold” (Lesley Lokko).

The Catalogue of the **Biennale Architettura 2023** is divided into two volumes and follows the organisation of the Exhibition, accompanying visitors and architecture enthusiasts through the exhibition spaces of the Arsenale and the Giardini, and towards the other projects showing in various locations in the city of Venice and in Forte Marghera, in Mestre.

Volume I of the Catalogue, divided into different sections, opens with statements from the President of La Biennale di Venezia, Roberto Cicutto, and the Artistic Director of the Architecture Department, Lesley Lokko. One section is dedicated to the events of **Carnival**, a cycle of lectures, debates, panel discussions and performances that explore the themes of the 18th International Architecture Exhibition, followed by a section dedicated to **Special Projects**. The Volume then dedicates two sections to the **International Exhibition**, curated by Lesley Lokko, respectively titled **Force Majeure** and **Dangerous Liaisons**. Each project on display in the Exhibition is accompanied by a critical text and a rich iconography that completes the Participants’ work. A further section is dedicated to the first edition of the **Biennale College Architettura**, which will hold its workshop from June 25th to July 22nd, 2023, in Venice.

Threaded throughout are a series of essays developing the themes of the Exhibition and a detailed record of the works on display. **Volume II** of the Catalogue presents the **National Participations** and the **Collateral Events** of the 18th International Architecture Exhibition. The volume includes a series of illustrated texts that delve deeper into the projects on exhibit in the Pavilions and the Collateral Events at the Giardini, at the Arsenale and in various locations across Venice from May 20th through November 26th, 2023.

The graphic identity of the Biennale Architettura 2023 and the design of the publications are the work of **Die Ateljee_Fred Swart**.

Lesley Lokko (Ghana/Scotland) is an architectural academic, educator and best-selling novelist. She is the founder and director of the *African Futures Institute*, established in Accra, Ghana, in 2020 as a postgraduate school of architecture, research centre and public events platform. In 2015 she founded the Graduate School of Architecture at the University of Johannesburg. She has taught in the UK, in the US, Europe, Australia and Africa. She is the recipient of a number of awards for contributions to architectural education, among them: the RIBA Annie Spink Award for Excellence in Education 2020; the AR Ada Louise Huxtable Prize for Contributions to Architecture 2021. In 2019, she took up an appointment as Dean of Architecture at The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture, CCNY, from which she subsequently resigned in 2020 to start the *African Futures Institute* in her home country, Accra, Ghana. For the past thirty years, her work in both architecture and fiction has looked at the relationship between ‘race’, culture, and space. In 2004, she made the transition from architecture to fiction with the publication of her first novel, *Sundowners* (Orion), following up with further novels. Her thirteenth novel, *The Lonely Hour*, is forthcoming in 2024, from Pan Macmillan. She is the founder and editor-in-chief of *FOLIO: Journal of Contemporary African Architecture* and the editor of *White Papers*, *Black Marks: Race, Space and Architecture* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press 2000). She holds a PhD in Architecture from the University of London and a BSc (Arch) and MArch from the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. She is currently a founding member of the Council on Urban Initiatives, co-founded by LES Cities, UN Habitat and UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose; a UCL Press Series Guest Editor; a Visiting Professor at the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL; Visiting Professor at University College Dublin and in 2022, was made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS). Lokko was a member of the International Jury of the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia in 2021.

