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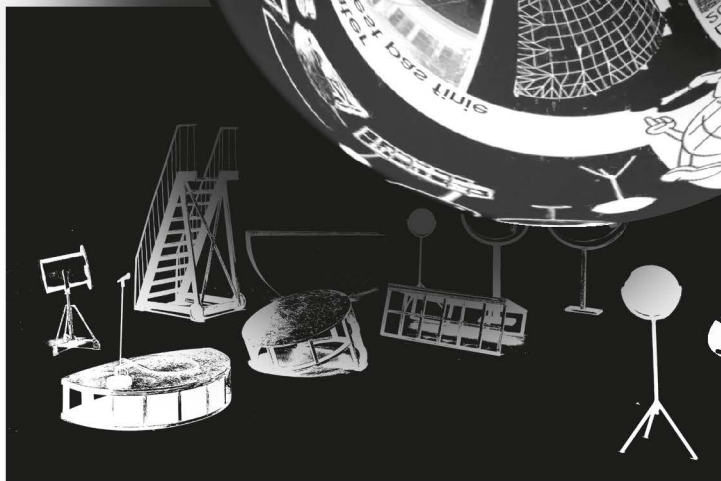
La Biennale di Venezia

18. Mostra
Internazionale
di Architettura
Partecipazioni Nazionali

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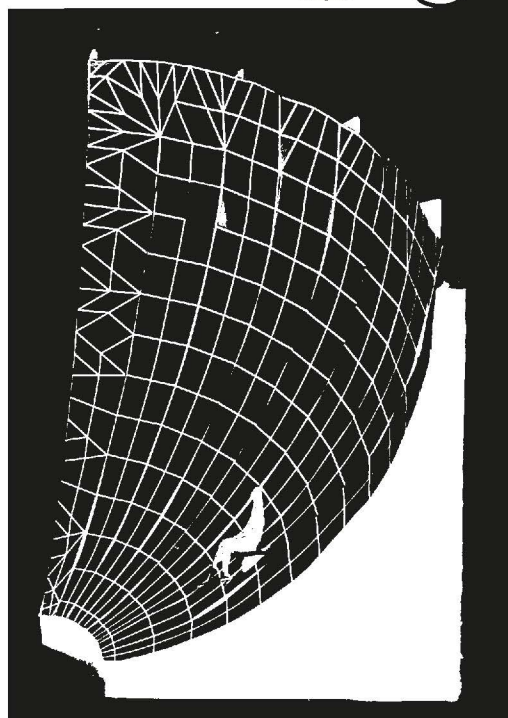
Ball Theater



Press Kit
20 May – 26 Nov. 2023



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1—Zeiss Planetarium under construction, 1932, © Zeiss archives 2—Structure design model 3—Spiral slide, photograph Fred Lyon, circa 1950 4—Design models for sound objects 5—Model of the Ball Theater 6—Pole carousel, circa 1950 7—Design model for sphere 8—Summer Olympic Games, Moscow, 1980

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What desirable future can we imagine for living beings and for our planet? How can we avoid losing hope in a world that seems every day more fragile and conflict-ridden? How can we find our way and act effectively in a world riven with such deep economic, social and environmental fractures, immersed in contradictory narratives and saturated with images?

This is the world of thought and above all of experiment into which Lesley Lokko, curator of this 18th Venice International Biennale of Architecture invites us, to explore the theme of “The Laboratory of the Future”.

Lesley Lokko sees the laboratory as a workshop, a working space, a place of collaboration and cooperation. Thanks to its capacity to influence our vision of the world, to work on different scales, to connect the material and immaterial dimensions, architecture is a discipline and a language that is particularly conducive to experimental approaches.

With the “Ball Theater” project, the architecture firm Muoto, in partnership with Georgi Stanishev and Clémence La Sagna for the scenography, associate curator Jos Auzende, and Anna Tardivel for the programming, bring an original and open response to the questions and challenges raised by this Biennale.

Original, because *Ball Theater* revitalizes our view and understanding of architecture by making it a performance space through the use of both theater and sound. Indeed, this is above all an architecture of sound, a space that visitors can move through and contribute to with their movements and their speech. In this creative exercise, architecture becomes an invitation to travel. As an object, the sphere is striking in its materiality, yet at the same time its polysemic nature transports us to a multiplicity of imaginative possibilities.

Open, because in the plurality and diversity of bodies and voices, the object functions like an echo chamber, a place of listening and perhaps of meditation, as well as a laboratory of identities. Open too because, by drawing on the profoundly ritualistic nature of theater, *Ball Theater* will become a place of celebration

and collective experiment in the different “balls” that the theater will host between June and November.

These are just some of the reasons why we were very enthusiastic in our support of the “Ball Theater” project occupying the French Pavilion at the 2023 edition of the Biennale of architecture, a year of rebirth after the previous event fell victim to the pandemic. Welcoming and promoting cultural diversity, looking to the future with determined optimism despite adversity, conversing with others in the quest to construct shared narratives, these are all major priorities on which the teams at our two ministries work every day.

We will therefore be very happy to meet around the mirrored surface of the Ball Theater, which will make French architecture, and more broadly all of France’s artistic creativity, sparkle with the thousand colors in Venice.

We would like to thank the Institut français, the key ambassador for France’s cultural action beyond its borders, which is in charge of coordinating the French Pavilion.

Catherine Colonna and Rima Abdul Malak,
Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs and Minister of Culture

The French Pavilion at the International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia offers a tremendous showcase for the talent and creativity of our architects. The Institut français is happy and proud to be organizing the Pavilion on behalf of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. An unique space of experimentation and interchange, every other year the prestigious Venice Biennale of Architecture becomes the world's leading stage for a stimulating and ever changing global conversation on the priorities of the discipline.

For the 18th edition of this Biennale, and for the first time, the Institut français decided to run a competition. This culminated in the selection of the bold proposal put forward by the firm Muoto, in partnership with Georgi Stanishev and Clémence la Sagna for the scenography, Jos Auzende as associate curator, and Anna Tardivel for the programming. Ball Theater invites us to enjoy a sensory experience, a theater-architecture, a scenographic and auditory composition that is open to the world and receptive to its concerns, whether ecological or societal.

Ball Theater is above all an immersive and experimental space, a place where multiple practices interact, occupied and inhabited for a week each month by researchers, students, artists, and thinkers, who will turn the Pavilion into an animated arena of celebration, experiment, and discussion.

Faced with an uncertain future, at a time when some societies seem tempted to withdraw into themselves, the Institut français, which exists to contribute to the global cultural dialogue, was excited by this festive, joyous and poetic proposal, which calls on us to work together to construct new worlds of the imagination and to build our future together.

The French Pavilion, which for the last year has been engaged in a transition to low-carbon practices aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement, plays host this year to a project that advocates

frugality: light and modular architecture, reversible assemblages, local production, economic use of materials... these are all markers of an innovative approach permeated with environmental and climatic priorities. A frugality infused with joy, hope, the desire to be and to advance together.

In order to expand the circle of the Ball Theater to the wider world, the Institut français will work through its cultural network to develop “echoes” of the project in a number of other countries. Resonating out from the Pavilion and the community of thought within it, they will create opportunities to give it a life beyond Venice and to transpose its distinctive ideas into “local culture”.

Eva Nguyen Binh, President of the Institut français

1 A theater to awaken the desire for utopia

Daring architecture

The *Ball Theater* is a hemispherical theater built inside the French Pavilion, like a pavilion within the pavilion. It reflects the Biennale Architettura 2023 general theme – “Laboratory of the Future” – set by Lesley Lokko, because the theater is in essence a laboratory of identities, of places and of imaginaries. It is a device that enables people to project themselves into elsewhere and into the future. What the artistic team does here is to create an architecture that offers visitors an experience that is simultaneously spatial, aesthetic and acoustic. For, according to Lesley Lokko, today it is no longer the role of architecture to represent or to be represented as an image. Architecture needs to be real, tangible and concrete, to become the place where life, society and the future are experienced! Architecture is no longer something to be avoided. It needs to be made and experienced. It is time to stop looking backwards, as most exhibitions do, and to look forwards. It is time to write the next chapter.

Awakening our desires for utopia

The installation is designed to reawaken our desires for utopia. With its globe shape, the theater immediately recalls the architectures of revolution or of the Russian constructivists. Its smooth and continuous outline gives it a utopian aura that represents a world in miniature, this terrestrial globe that we are now ever more aware of sharing, with its meridians and its parallels. The shape of the theater is an invitation to look forward again, beyond crises. In a time of emergency, austerity and climate anxiety, this theater delivers a message: let us awaken the utopia within us! Let us allow ourselves moments of discovery and euphoria.

Imagine it's party time

The theater's shape can be interpreted equally as a terrestrial globe or as a mirror ball, a kitsch icon of an era when partying was still possible. This party aura suggests a new approach to today's



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crises, one where the emphasis is no longer on emergency, but on the possibility of imagining somewhere and something different. This is enacted in the life of the theater for the duration of the Biennale Architettura 2023 by the alternation between moments of contemplative immersion in a soundscape echoing with foreign and far-off voices, and periods of intense occupation and activity based on variations on the theme of the “ball”, an interplay of workshop-residencies involving artists, researchers and students.

An intriguing experiment

The installation intrigues visitors by placing them at the center of a stage that prompts risk-taking, speech, gesture and intervention. It is not the typical theater of illusion characterized by the face-to-face between actors and audience, but a theatrical setting designed for experiment. A stage that delivers an experience that challenges. Which does not so much provide answers as raise questions. Where did this half-sphere come from? Who lives in it? What is it for? How did it get there? What are the fragments of voices, the whisperings and radio static that emanate from these loudspeakers saying? Has it just landed or is it about to take off? These are questions we ask ourselves in an uncertain world: should we stay grounded or take off? Should we get close to things, create new communities, erase distances and distinctions, or conversely withdraw and remain aloof? How to choose? How do we reinvent our relationship to this world in quest of a future? And how do we readdress the question of ecology, in a fundamental way, by means of architecture, and not against or despite it?

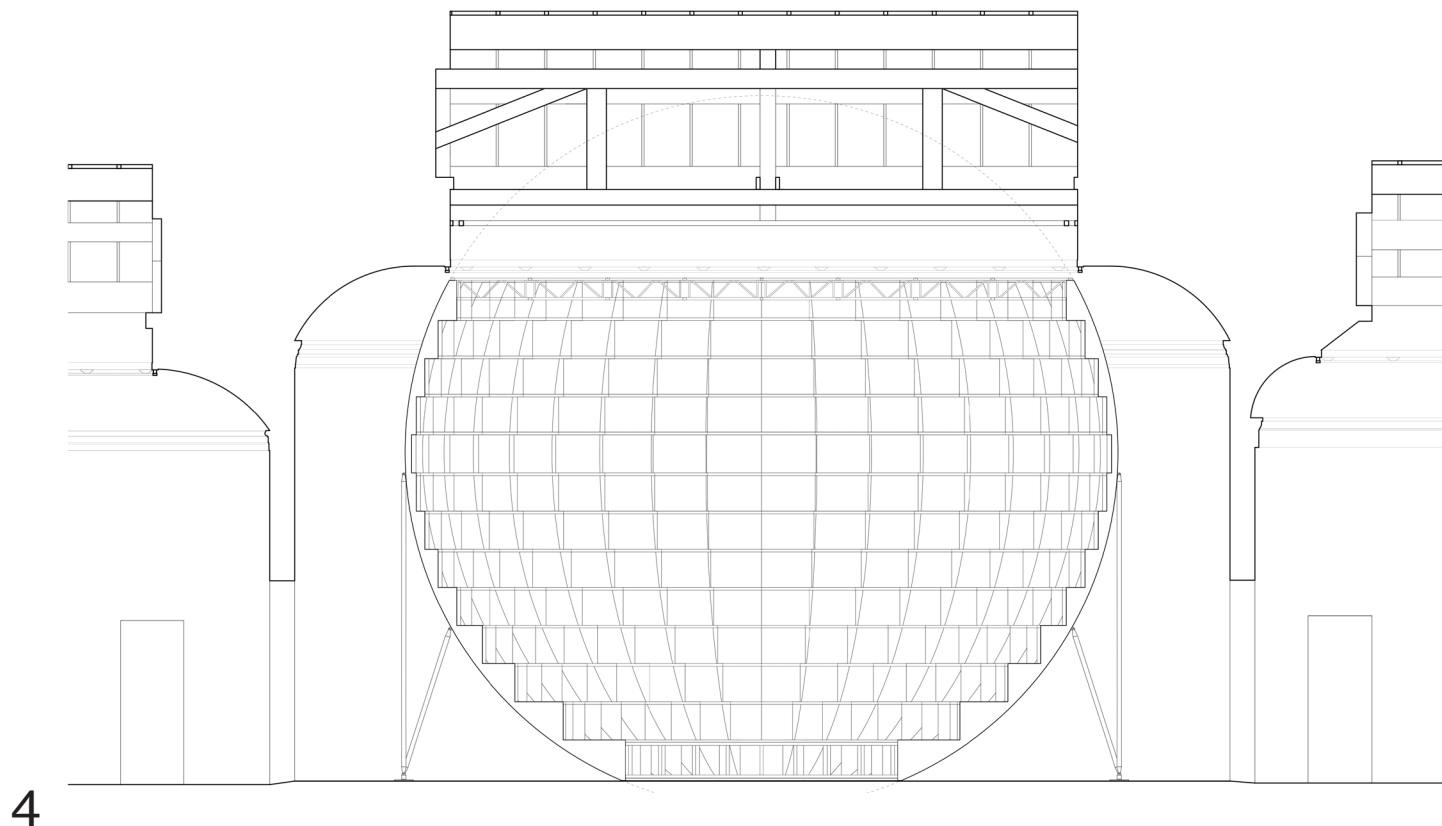
2 Scenography: a sound odyssey

Makeshift Ark

The architecture of the theater stands midway between structure and setting. The purpose of this scenographic dimension is – like in a real theater – to accommodate a stage, performers and an audience. The image it projects is nevertheless ambivalent, juxtaposing objects as contradictory as the futuristic capsule and the primitive hut. The details are meticulous whereas the assemblages, the props and the cables remain visible. The object is simultaneously ramshackle and sophisticated. It conjures up associations with Noah’s Ark, some kind of makeshift craft that has landed here. The beings that built it, it would seem, wanted to escape a world that no longer had a place for them. They chose a flimsy and temporary structure which they equipped, like an echo chamber, with rudimentary devices for capturing and emitting sounds and devising possible new rituals: microphones, loudspeakers, projectors...

A Silver Stage

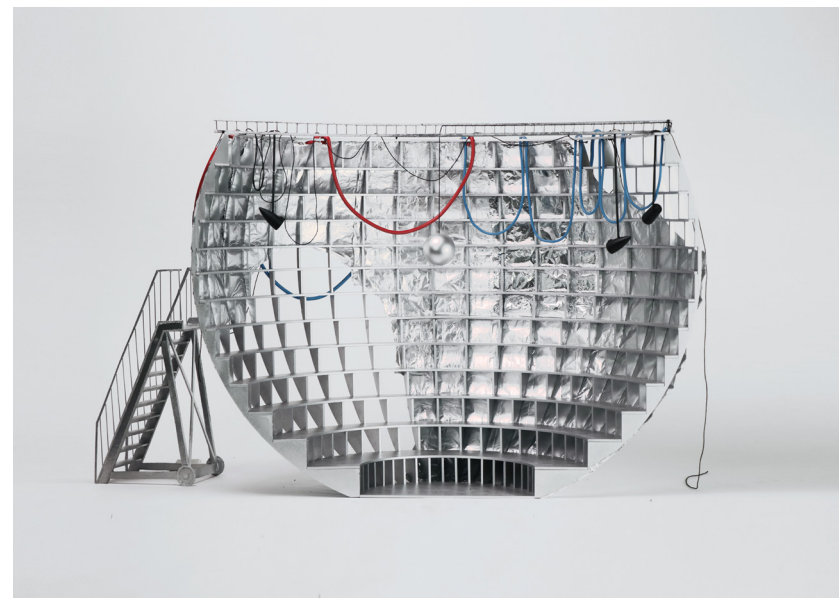
Entering the pavilion, the first thing visitors see is the exterior of the half-sphere, surfaced with a layer of silvered aluminum. The object appears looks immense. One wonders how it managed to get in here. As they move around it, visitors encounter a hollow interior, a steel structure, tiered plywood seating, a silvered fabric curtain and a stage with an active microphone. Above the whole structure hangs a triangular beam supporting a few projectors. The virtual circle of the sphere is interrupted by a stool and two tiered seats. The lower part of the stage can be configured in different ways, with a low, circular, movable podium where the public can sit and have access to the middle of the stage, as well as a higher platform for the guest artists.



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Lost and found

At the same time, visitors see a series of objects in the adjacent rooms, expressing a strange kinship with the half-sphere. They suggest a temporary camp, somewhere between a picnic area and a playground. For example, there is a sort of maypole that makes a repetitive sound, as well as recovered metal objects that could be used to equip the theater – a spinning top, a cable drum, a mirror, a stool, etc. This stage, made up of recovered and recycled objects, reflects our conflicting feelings of hope and nostalgia, our desire to reconstruct a future with what remains of the past.

The space of sound

A nonvisual but perceptible connection links the demi-sphere and all the objects together, a connection that you discover as you move around. It consists of directional acoustic pathways, sounds that bounce from one room to the next, creating a spatial experience of sound. This acoustic environment, made up of voices and whispers, immerses visitors in a form of abstract, non-verbal ur-language that precedes words and stimulates new forms of attention. Noises, songs, voices, murmurs... the sound space evolves over time shaped by an AI system and an original arrangement of 36 speakers, which creates a “slow listening” ambience. In a world saturated with visual signs and images, this soundscape devised by the theater’s sound team, the electronic music composer Pilooski (Cédric Marszewski) and the sound engineers Alain Français and Thomas Fourny, suggests that utopia is only possible if one can briefly drop out of the dominant culture, if one can de-familiarize oneself with language and conventional expression.

3 The balls: performances during the Biennale Architettura 2023

The life of the *Ball Theater* alternates between times of contemplation and times of activity. The first corresponds to the ordinary life of the Biennale Architettura 2023 when visitors move through its ghostly soundscape. The second is ballroom time when the party idea ceases to be metaphorical and becomes literal and real. The programming of these balls raises current questions about the fragility of the planet, about our colonial heritage, and about our representations of identity, norms and gender. In this way, the *Ball Theater* brings together two imaginaries – the utopia and the party – around a shared goal: the quest for collective emancipation.

Ball Culture: a vision of celebration and emancipation

The name *Ball Theater* plays on the dual meaning of the word ball, on the one hand a spherical object like a globe, and on the other an event where people dance. The balls in the *Ball Theater* are inspired by the history of Ball Culture, a movement that grew up in Harlem in New York City in the 1920s and 1930s where the balls were utopian spaces of resistance, dance and celebration for the African-American and Latino LGBT communities, a response to racism and homophobia. In the 1960s and 1970s, ballrooms became places where gay and lesbian people could meet, and where the participants, organized into houses, paraded in events that resembled competitions, to the sound of jerky synthetic music. They were places of emancipation, where people were free to express their identity. This kind of party culture historically develops at times when the great political utopias are collapsing, as if to compensate for the end of this desire for somewhere else.

Performance workshop-residencies

At the Biennale Architettura 2023, the balls take the form of performance workshop-residencies that are open to the public and

scheduled for one week in every month. The balls offer an opportunity for multidisciplinary teams – artists, researchers, students – to inhabit and occupy the theater, transforming it into a catalyst of imagination. Each ball event gives a new set of occupants a chance to take possession of the theater, to work on and try out new relationships with the public. During these residencies, the theater's occupants use voice, body, music, image, and text to engage with visitors, who sometimes as spectators, sometimes as accomplices, are invited to participate in the construction of the performance. The experience is similar to going backstage in a theater, the sensation of arriving in the middle of a private rehearsal. The balls bring together multiple disciplines and are an opportunity for interaction between different domains, such as art, architecture and research. The program of events will cover the six months of the Biennale Architettura 2023.

First announced and confirmed balls

Radio Utopia, le bal des sonorités

By Nicolas Tixier, AAU research unit, Cresson Team, ENSA Grenoble and Carlotta Darò, LIAT research unit, ENSA Paris-Malaquais

During this week, the Ball Theater becomes a radio studio open to the public. Capturing and broadcasting extracts of different types of sound, this radio antenna connects the radiophonic theatre to numerous French and foreign partners, territories, institutions, researchers, artists and acousticians. Its programming evolves during the week with a series of live broadcasts entitled «News from the World», in situ installations and the possibility of wandering around the interior and exterior of the pavilion with mini loudspeakers playing sounds from all over the world, previously collected through a call for contributions. This sound lab acts as an experimental platform to better understand our time, to learn to listen differently and to bring out new voices from here and elsewhere. This program is supported by the Réseau International Ambiances, B_AIR-Art Infinity radio / Creative Europe, École Supérieure d'Art Annecy Alpes, D-ARCH ETH Zurich, Radio France Internationale.

Les bals des écoles
The joy of tilting

By Can Onaner and Mathilde Sari with the students of ENSA Bretagne (master's project workshop on "Architecture of the Crowd"), Johanna Rocard, Damien Marchal and the Synopsis Collective, in partnership with EUR-Caps

Thinking about our crisis-ridden world from a mythic perspective can offer an opportunity for authentic re-creation where the whole social, cultural and natural world can be rethought without guilt, without fear, with joy. In ENSAB's "Architecture of the Crowd" project, Johanna Rocard, Damien Marchal and the Synopsis conspire

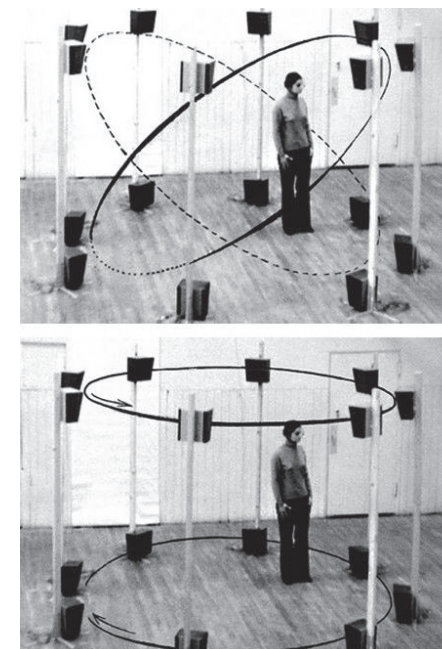


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together to turn the Ball Theater into the laboratory of a mythical universe: a world of ritualized and joyful fluctuation. Shifting from sleep to wakefulness, from heavy to light, from balance to imbalance, from ordered to inchoate, from calm to revolt, from fear to courage. Swinging from one state to another, individual or collective, physical or psychological. Posters, speech, the movement of bodies, sounds, the whole spectrum of physical and symbolic devices devised in situ, which come to constitute rituals specific to the Ball Theater.

After the revolution

By Xavier Wrona, Manuel Bello Marcano in Cédric Libert with students from ENSA Saint-Etienne

After the Revolution was a one-off architectural TV channel created in Chicago in 2015 for a run of ten programs. It analyzed neoliberalism as the culmination of a global conservative revolutionary process, a total architecture imposed by the new world order of the market economy. In the French Pavilion at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, Ball Theater, students on Saint-Étienne Advanced National School of Architecture's one-year Master's program on Architecture as a Political Practice revive this instrument for thinking about the relations between architecture and revolutionary phenomena in the form of a radio station. Inspired by Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Comizi d'amore* (love meetings), sidewalk surveys on questions of sexuality in 1970s Italy, the students will conduct a survey with all the nations present in the Biennale's pavilions to explore and document the ambivalence of revolutionary processes. Because it is indeed difficult to imagine that revolutions will not be among the phenomena needed to stop the ongoing global destruction of our ecosystems.

Other scheduled balls, subject to confirmation

You betta talk to me nice, le bal interlope [subject to confirmation]

By House of Revlon in collaboration with Tata Foxie and La Déliche

The Ball Theater gets the ball rolling with a dual tribute to the history of "interloper balls" and voguing as utopian spaces of emancipation. In reaction to the homophobia and racism of 1930s American society, the African-American and Latino communities created their own ballroom scene. A mix of fashion parade, dance competition and performance, it was a place where people could feel free to express who they truly were. In a similar movement, in early 20th-century Paris, carnivals and so-called interloper balls enlivened the city's "queer" scene. In the 21st century, we call this the drag scene.

In Venice, the "legend" of French voguing, Vinii Revlon, along with his team, the House of Revlon, invites the public to take part in the preparations, to follow the steps of the dancers, or to take the time to talk about this highly stylized culture, synonymous with partying and political expression. During this time, Tata Foxie and La Déliche, two drag scene personalities, citizens of the sophisticated and egalitarian society of the Ball Theater, retell the utopian history of interloper balls, cross-dressing, transformism, the transition from underground protest to upfront and inclusive emancipation.

Snow ball, le bal de neige [subject to confirmation]

By Infecticide

Some people want to move mountains. Others, icebergs. Is it the megalomaniacal utopia of hauling blocks of ice across the sea that caused three of them to run aground in Venice to quench their thirst for fresh water in the depths of summer? Is it the breakup of their habitat that forced them to drift towards these shores, before the city sinks beneath the waves? Or is the

pavilion a zoo, a place that offers a last chance to see icebergs, together as a family?

Sheltered in this ideal, futuristic, perfectly equipped dwelling, they engage in a series of mysterious activities. Are they fashioning this craft in order to quit the earth for a more hospitable planet? What are we going to do with them? Or what are they going to do with us?

Mixing the serious and the comical, the members of Infec-ticide adopt the biography of those amphibious snow creatures, sink into their capsule, recreate an everyday existence, and above all slow down the pace of a life in which every drop of sweat raises the water level.

Earth/Ball/Theater, le bal de la terre [Subject to confirmation]

By Zone critique cie: Frédérique Ait-Touati, Emanuele Coc-cia, Duncan Evennou

Forty-four years after Aldo Rossi's Teatro del Mondo, Earth/Ball/Theater, devised by the Zone critique company, is a creative research residency that imagines the Ball Theater as a theatrum mundi, a model of the world. Inspired by georamas, the immense hollow globes built in the 19th century so that the public could "visit" Earth, Earth/Ball/Theater reveals the manufacture of future spaces by reinventing these lost geographical attractions. Visitors and artists in residence are invited to experience the Festival as the distillation of an era, of a society, of a way of seeing the world, of a cosmology: it is during festivals that worlds are invented, that codes are dissolved or set, that new ways of coming together are tested. It is the grand tradition of the carnival, with Venice, of course, at its mythical heart.

Echotopy, le bal des voix [subject to confirmation]

By Violaine Lochu

The voice in song, murmur, whisper, groan, coo, shriek...

Every vocal register is recruited, calling on us to imagine a



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relationship to the environment that is based not on reciprocal otherness but on continuity. Here, we are asked not to sing about a place or a landscape, but to become part of the coming into being of a landscape, of a mountain, of a river, or indeed of a Ball Theater, as happens in animist rituals, in the Joik songs of the Sami people, or in classical Chinese painting. In the Ball Theater, the performance artist Violaine Lochu will be presenting a series of polyphonies interpreted by 4 singer-performers who will act out and sing out musical scores and research improvised in real time and in situ with the public. A specific protocol will be applied with the aim will of sketching out the outlines of an “echotopia”.

Prospect Station, le bal des Novums utopiques [subject to confirmation]

By Alice Carabédian, Fanny Lopez, Université Gustave Eiffel with the collaboration of Claire-Rose Barbier, Marthe Drucbert, Caroline Gallez

Prospect Station is a toolbox of cyborg objects that cast light on our relations of dependency and necessity with the environment. Starting from science fiction, the history of technologies, architecture and the environment, this contribution is about the design and enactment of a series of radically utopian instruments. During a week-long residential workshop in Venice, students make a series of objects and costumes to combat the coming collapse: data mule Wi-Fi; symphonic solar sabre; intergalactic wind turbine translator, etc. In a joyous playground of high-tech and low-tech IT survivalism, these light-hearted nature-culture objects, possible vectors of energy self-sufficiency, of sound, of augmented spatialities, are used to create political collectives for the realists of a wider reality.

4 Ecology of a touring theater: low-carbon strategy, local manufacture and reuse

Low-carbon strategy

For this 18th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, the Institut français, organizer of the French pavilion, has employed a low-carbon measurement tool to reduce the impact of its projects. According to its study, the production of materials and travel are the two leading sources of emissions. The *Ball Theater* project tackles these challenges through a number of strategies.

A travelling theater

The first is to design an object that is reusable and can travel. The wood and steel composition of the seats is light, modular and collapsible. A low-tech, modular mode of construction is used, requiring a minimum of materials. The structure breaks down into small parts that are easily assembled and disassembled. This design means that the theater can travel and be set up in other places to host future events. The goal is that the theater should ultimately be acquired by one of the institutions that host it on its post-Biennale Architettura 2023 tour. Several touring scenarios are in the pipeline, since the sound system and the objects that make up the installation are light enough to travel.

Local manufacture and minimum structure

The second strategy is to promote local production. The whole installation is produced by craftsmen from the Venice region in order to reduce material mileage. The half-sphere is made of fine steel plates: 21 meridians and 13 parallels, which break down into 300 bolted segments. The structure is reinforced by props mechanically fixed to the outside of some of the meridians to keep the structure light. The half-sphere sits on a circular turntable, with a base of silver-painted plywood boards. A technical gantry fixed to the last parallel is used to hang spotlights, loudspeakers and a sliding curtain.

The power cables are visible, suspended from the last beam in flexible ducting that gives the impression that the theater is still under construction. The external surface of the ball, punctuated by the structural grid, is covered with thin aluminum sheets.

Reuse

The third strategy is reuse. All the objects in the theater and the three adjacent rooms are bric-a-brac found in Italy and restored in situ, so that they experience a second life for the duration of the 18th Internationale Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. Going on tour with the theater will give them the chance of a third life.

5 Photo-novel

Lorem ipsum

Lorem ipsum is an architectural fiction in the form of a photo-novel, the outcome of a meeting between an author, Ugo Bienvenu, and the architects of the French Pavilion at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. In this novel, the illustrator and producer Ugo Bienvenu imagines the story and myth of the Ball Theater. His tale is situated in a world suspended between past and future, where the pain of abandonment combines with the joy of collective celebration. The story takes us on a journey with a small community of strangely similar children and a rusty robot, and their discovery of enigmatic objects that they try to assemble in order to bring them back to life. The title *Lorem ipsum* is a meaningless extract from a Latin treatise, a reference to the common practice in the graphic design and printing world of using this term as temporary filling for future text fields. In the context of the book, the juxtaposition of these two Latin words refers to the idea of an architectural narrative whose meaning emerges in the course of the action, before words and explanations.

Lorem ipsum, Ugo Bienvenu – Remembers Studio.
Editions Caryatide. 72 pages illustrated in color.

6 A multidisciplinary team: biographies

Within the design team, the studio Muoto and Georgi Stanishev are responsible for curating the Pavilion, with Jos Auzende as assistant curator. Clémence La Sagna and Georgi Stanishev are in charge of the scenographic aspect of the installation. The Ball Theater will host a program of artistic, scientific and educational workshop-residencies, which is designed and coordinated by Jos Auzende and Anna Tardivel. The permanent sound installation was developed by the electronic music composer Pilooski (Cédric Marszewski) and set up spatially by the sound engineers Alain Français and Thomas Fourny.

Muoto

Muoto is an architectural practice founded in Paris in 2003 by Gilles Delalex and Yves Moreau. The office advocates for a frugal approach to architecture, based on economical use of resources to foster multiple uses and encourage the evolution of buildings over time. The practice is identified as a representative of a new French architectural scene described as “new realism”.

Georgi Stanishev

Georgi Stanishev is an architect and scenographer, with a PhD in architecture, who teaches at ENSA Paris-Malaquais. He set up his architecture and scenography workshop in 2011 in Paris. The workshop primarily designs temporary architectures and scenographies for events and exhibitions. His approach focuses on the notion of staging.

Clémence La Sagna

Clémence La Sagna is a state licensed architect, project manager and scenographer, who works out of a studio in Pantin. The team, made up of architects, designers, and artists specializes in scenography for exhibitions and live arts events. It develops both ideas and objects. The workshop devises immersive scenarios that plunge visitors into a sensory and cognitive experience.

Jos Auzende

After obtaining a degree in architecture, Jos Auzende specialized in the avant-garde musical and performance scene, notably heading programs for Batofar and then for In famous. She has worked for 13 years at La Gaîté Lyrique, a digital arts and modern music center in Paris, and is now its joint artistic director. As exhibition curator, her job is to ensure that the use of technology in artistic exploration remains original and vital, contributing to the center’s national and international reputation with an ever-growing audience.

Anna Tardivel

Anna Tardivel has been responsible for programming “New Writings” at la Gaîté Lyrique since 2019. The interplay of the different disciplines – music, live performance and visual arts – has always been central to her interests. Initially responsible for the production of major exhibitions dedicated to the visual arts and music at the Philharmonie de Paris, she also took part in the design and organization of the exhibition *Lieux infinis*, headed by Encore Heureux, for the French Pavilion at the Biennale Architettura 2018.

1 The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs

The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs devises and implements France's foreign policy. It promotes global diplomacy in its geography, in its fields of action and in the variety of its instruments.

It works for peace, security and the protection of human rights in its bilateral relations and within international organizations. It contributes to the unfolding of a globalization process that supports sustainable and balanced development of the planet. It supports the promotion of French companies on external markets and of France's attractiveness abroad. It implements cultural diplomacy and influence founded on three primary missions:

- The promotion and spread of the French language and the teaching of French abroad, in particular through the global plan for the French language and multilingualism.
- France's artistic and intellectual outreach, the dissemination and influence of its cultural and creative industries and the promotion of its cultural expertise,
- The development of academic and scientific partnerships as well as the hosting and training of foreign students in France.

In order to carry out its missions, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs draws on its diplomatic and consular network (163 embassies and 16 permanent representations, 90 consulates general and 112 consular sections) and on the variety and crosscutting nature of its cooperation and cultural action network (552 educational institutions present in 138 countries, 830 Alliances Françaises, 386 of them government subsidized, 98 Institut français and 27 French Research Institutes abroad, including 5 research centers attached to French Institutes).

www.diplomatie.gouv.fr

2 The Ministry of Culture

The first clause of the 1977 Architecture Act defines architecture as the “expression of culture” and specifies that architectural creation, the quality of buildings, their harmonious insertion in the surrounding environment, respect for natural or urban landscapes and heritage are of public interest.

The Ministry of Culture's Heritage and Architecture Department decides, coordinates and assesses government policy on architecture, as well as on monumental and archaeological heritage, archives and museums. It oversees the National Order of Architects.

The role of the Ministry of Culture also includes knowledge, protection and enhancement of the nation's built, urban and landscape heritage. It ensures that they are taken into account in the design and implementation of spatial planning measures, and is particularly concerned with the issues of ecological transition.

Within the Ministry of Culture, the Heritage and Architecture Department is responsible for the economic, cultural, scientific and technical development of the conditions under which architecture is practised.

Because it oversees France's 20 national schools of architecture, it makes student training a priority: initial training, whose quality – based on excellent research within the higher education system – is internationally recognized, leads to the emergence of new generations of professionals who are highly effective in their capacity to carry forward the main priorities of architecture today, through the multiple possibilities for the exercise of the profession of architecture.

The Heritage and Architecture Department plays an active part in Europe in discussions on public policies for architecture and the living environment. As a result of its international action, on the one hand, and on the other hand the support that it provides for French architecture at interministerial level, the Heritage and Architecture Department contributes to

the international outreach and influence of French architecture.

www.culture.gouv.fr

3 The Institut français, operator of the French Pavilion

As a key stakeholder in cultural policy outside France, the Institut français operates under the dual supervision of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture. It has three fundamental missions:

- To promote French culture and language around the world. The Institut français works to promote the internationalization of French creators and French cultural and creative industries. It supports stakeholders with a commitment to the French language and multilingualism abroad.
- To strive for cultural diversity around the world the Institut français supports the international mobility of talents and encourages cultural encounters between France and other countries. The Institut français helps to provide hospitality to foreign cultures in France.
- To amplify the action of the French cultural network abroad. The Institut français works with all the establishments of the French cultural network abroad: Instituts français, Alliances Françaises, Cooperation and Cultural Action Services (SCAC) of the French Embassies and binational centers. It provides advice and expertise, supports their projects and creates and provides them with tools and resources.

The Institut français recently developed an action plan for the ecological transition and established a roadmap based around three major objectives: being responsible, working to accelerate the transition and speaking for it. Central to these of its commitments is the calculation of the carbon footprint of the projects presented in the French Pavilion at the Venice Biennales of art and of architecture, so that it can embark on a course of reducing their impact in terms of greenhouse gas emissions.

Aligned with the target of carbon neutrality by 2050 set by the 2015 Paris Agreement with the aim of restricting climate heating to 1.5°C or at most 2°C, the Institut français plans to reduce the carbon impact of the French Pavilion by 5% a year over the next five years, i.e. a total reduction of at least 25% in the Pavilion's overall carbon footprint by the end of 2026.

In order to achieve this change and rethink its way of doing things, the project's carbon balance presented at the Biennale Arte 2022 identified the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions and formed the basis of a strategy founded on precise data. The French Pavilion's low carbon strategy has been developed with the help of sponsorship from ATNA.

www.institutfrancais.com

4 ARTER, production contractor

ARTER is Europe's leading production agency for artistic and cultural events. It supports and assists institutions and artists in the creation and realization of complex projects beyond the traditional framework of production. It produces multifaceted projects for brands wishing to enhance their cultural and creative legacy.

ARTER has supported the design and realization of iconic projects at the Venice biennales, notably Sophie Calle's "Prenez Soin de Vous" (2007), Xavier Veilhan's "Studio Venezia" (2017), Laure Prouvost's "Deep See Blue Surrounding You" (2019) or Zineb Sedira's "Dreams have no titles" (2022).

ARTER has made reducing the environmental impact of the cultural sector central to its corporate development plan. Now a "company with a mission" and in the process of ISO 20121 recertification, the Agency is working to use its position and the cultural influence of its productions to accelerate the ecological and social transitions demanded in today's world, regardless of the scale and artistic ambition of the projects it is commissioned to undertake.

Within the French Pavilion, this takes the form of eco-design in the art and architecture exhibitions, the measurement of their carbon footprint, but also the establishment of a multiannual low carbon strategy with the Institut français with the aim of reducing the Pavilion's carbon impact both as a building and as an event.

With contributions by:



In partnership with:



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