

Press Release

ITALIAN PAVILION
at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES
Curator: Alessandro Melis

Like the human brain and genome, the pavilion will be a jungle inhabited by strange and fascinating creatures, on a journey that cannot leave indifferent those seeking novel responses to urgent epochal challenges

Rome, April 23, 2021 - **Resilient Communities**. This name chosen for the **Italian Pavilion at the upcoming Biennale Architettura 2021** turns the focus of the exhibition, in all its vividly dramatic nature, onto the issue of **climate change and the demanding challenges for architecture**. In particular, it aims to underscore how climate change is seriously straining the sustainability of the urban, productive, and agricultural system, and to emphasize the critical areas and opportunities in our own present time.

Promoted by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Ministry of Culture, the project is founded upon the strong conviction that architecture must make a tangible contribution towards improving quality of life by providing adequate responses to the epochal environmental and social changes taking place.

The main objective of the Italian Pavilion will be to cause visitors to reflect in a new way upon the resilience mechanisms of communities, a key priority for interpretation in recovering a new form of interaction between urban space and productive territory, in pursuit of interdisciplinary skills and non-deterministic evolutionary logic, central elements in moments of transition.

*We are aware - says **Minister of Culture Dario Franceschini** - of how much architecture is called upon to provide an increasingly qualified and interconnected contribution to our shared life under the stresses of multiple social and environmental criticalities. The objective of the Italian Pavilion 2021 is to promote the capacity of Italian communities to reflect upon transformation and adaptation, now necessary in order to respond locally to global challenges. We cannot shirk this essential task, but rather we must share the forward steps taken by Italian research on these vitally important issues in many fields. With this, we hope to make a meaningful contribution that can bear fruit even after the prestigious Venetian exhibition has ended.*

*Resilient Communities - emphasizes **Onofrio Cutaita, Director-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Ministry and Commissioner of the Italian Pavilion** - proposes concrete solutions for our country. Within twenty years, our peripheries will be called upon to transform into resilient communities, which is to say communities which are capable of positively combating the current social and environmental pressures. The Italian city is a concentration of applied knowledge to draw from in order to remodel urban peripheries - the country's priority and complex areas - in order to reflect upon the contemporary challenges raised for the future of architecture. Capitalizing on this heritage of knowledge starting from the model of the compact and ecological Italian city, and disseminating the results of applied research especially outside disciplinary settings and academia, are the challenges that the curator Melis has given us all.*

The Italian Pavilion – comments the **curator Alessandro Melis** – ***will itself be a resilient community, consisting of 14 “sub-communities” understood as operating workshops, research centres or case studies in accordance with two essential lines: a reflection on the state of the art in the matter of urban resilience in Italy and the world through the showing of works by eminent Italian architects, and a focus on methodologies, innovation, and research with interdisciplinary experiments straddling the ground between architecture, botany, agronomy, biology, art, and medicine.*** Stephen Jay Gould and Elizabeth Vrba revolutionized taxonomy in biology by introducing the term “exaptation”: the non-deterministic mechanism of natural selection. Heuristically, ***the Italian Pavilion will promote architectural exaptation as a manifestation of diversity, variability, and redundancy, challenging deterministic aesthetic homogeneity in favour of the diversity of creative structures. Like the human brain and genome, the pavilion will be a jungle inhabited by strange creatures, in which to listen to the background noise that is already deafening and requires an adequate response, by resorting to new knowledge paradigms.*** In the vision provided by the curator of Biennale Architettura 2021 Hashim Sarkis, the Pavilion ***will emphasize the aspects of experience and immersiveness, privileging forms of expression linked to graphic novels and gaming in tones and modes inspired by cyberpunk culture, while relying on the contribution of undisputed masters in the sector, in order to be able to approach and hopefully increase the awareness of a young, broad public.***

And in an wholly new feature, the Italian Pavilion at the Biennale Architettura 2021 will be virtually carbon neutral. To achieve this goal, **removal + integration of the materials of the 2019 Italian Pavilion for the 58th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia has been arranged, in addition to the permanent relocation of everything that will be produced.** This will present a unique opportunity not only to exhibit works consistent with the proposal’s objectives, but also an occasion to study the **life cycle of a development in a setting of resilience.**

In order to broaden the resonance, more deeply analyze, and disseminate the curatorial project, a rich calendar of in-person and online panel events has been planned for the entire duration of the exhibition, which may also be consulted on the **Italian Pavilion’s website: www.comunitaresilienti.com**

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Official web site of the Italian Pavilion 2021: www.comunitaresilienti.com

Official web site La Biennale: www.labiennale.org

The press kit can be downloaded at the link: <https://www.comunitaresilienti.com/press.zip>

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