

NATIONAL PAVILION OF THE
GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
AT THE 15TH INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE
EXHIBITION - LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA



la Biennale di Venezia

15. Mostra
Internazionale
di Architettura

Partecipazioni Nazionali

TRACING TRANSITIONS

PRESS PREVIEW DAYS

25.05.2016, (PRE-PREVIEW DAY)
26 + 27.05.2016, 10:00-19:00

EXHIBITION

28.05 – 27.11.2016
11:00-19:00, CLOSED ON TUESDAYS



LUCA
LUXEMBOURG CENTER
FOR ARCHITECTURE



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Culture

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OVERVIEW

National Pavilion of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
at the 15th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

"TRACING TRANSITIONS"

Exhibition 28 May to 27 November 2016

Curators – exhibitors

Claude BALLINI, Serge ECKER, Daniel GRÜNKRANZ, Panajota PANOTOPOULOU

Commissioner

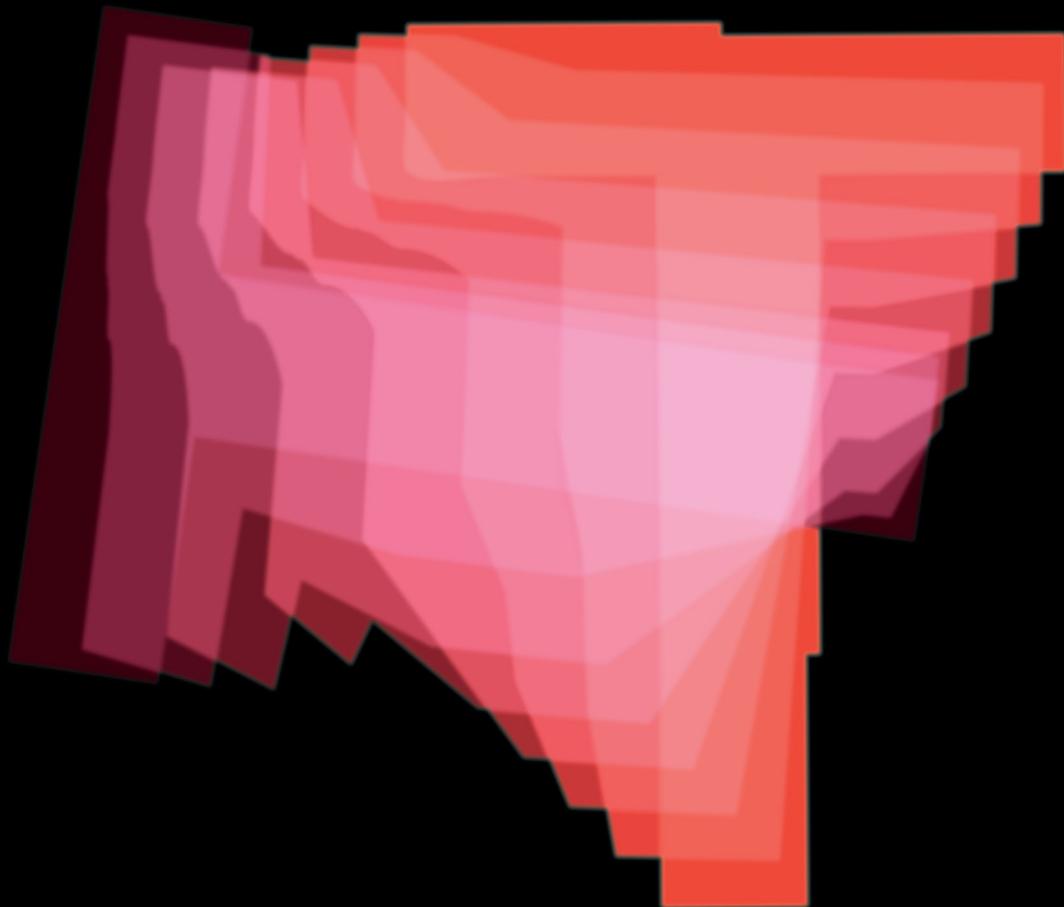
LUCA Luxembourg Center for Architecture

With the financial support of the

Ministry of Culture, Luxembourg

With the additional support of

Cœuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte



PRESS RELEASE

THE LUXEMBOURG PAVILION AT THE 15TH ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE IN VENICE

Open to the public from 28 May to 27 November 2016, the 15th International Architecture Exhibition, entitled "Reporting from the Front", is curated by the Chilean architect, Alejandro Aravena and organized by La Biennale di Venezia chaired by Paolo Baratta.

This Saturday 28 May 2016, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg will open the doors of its national pavilion at the 15th edition of the Venice Architecture Biennale to the public. Set up since 2004 at the Ca' del Duca in the neighborhood of San Marco, the Luxembourg Pavilion will host until 27 November an exhibition entitled "Tracing Transitions".

The conception and production of this exhibition was trusted to a multidisciplinary collective, made up of the architect and town planner Claude Ballini, the artist and creative director Serge Ecker, the architects and theoreticians Daniel Grünkranz and Panajota Panotopoulou in July 2015. Their designation as curators of the exhibition is the result of an international call for projects launched by the Luxembourg Center for Architecture, charged as in the previous years by the Ministry of Culture to act as commissioner for this seventh national participation in the Venice Architecture Biennale.

THE EXHIBITION: "TRACING TRANSITIONS"

Habitation, the shortage of living space, and the creation of socially sustainable housing are the critical issues of our times – the fronts where a battle is worthwhile. The exhibition "Tracing Transitions" documents the current situation in Luxembourg through a spatial installation. It serves as a kind of screen in order to present subjects concerning the creation of housing, the geographical ramifications of problems, and possible approaches to solutions. We will show new concepts, upcoming ideas, and projects which promote a change in this important debate. Layers of information are used to illustrate the current reality and to discuss the possibilities of influencing this reality in a favourable manner.

Its geographical location and economic development, the competitive housing and high-priced property market, population growth and demographic change make Luxembourg a complex and adversarial area of tension. The situation is characterized through unsustainable building developments, unused property resources, and dormitory suburbs located in the countries bordering Luxembourg, such as France, Belgium and Germany, that generate a massive volume of traffic by commuting residents. "Tracing Transitions" tracks these phenomena in the sense of a modern urban "archaeology" in order to generate a spatial assemblage. This way, the visitors of the exhibition are able to get in touch with the problem areas while the presentation of progressive approaches to the housing debate offers the possibility of a better future.

The inauguration of the Luxembourg Pavilion at the Ca' del Duca will be held on Saturday 28 May by the Luxembourg Center for Architecture in the presence of the Minister of Culture, Xavier Bettel, the Luxembourg Ambassador in Rome, Janine Finck and the Honorary Consul in Venice, Gian Angelo Bellati. The Ca' del Duca will be open to the public from 28 May through 27 November 2016 from Wednesdays to Mondays, 11:00 to 19:00.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Press days

Pre-preview day: 25 May, 10:00-19:00 (restricted access)
Preview days: 26 and 27 May, 10:00-19:00

Official opening

Saturday, 28 May, 19:00

Exhibition

From 28 May to 27 November 2016

Opening hours

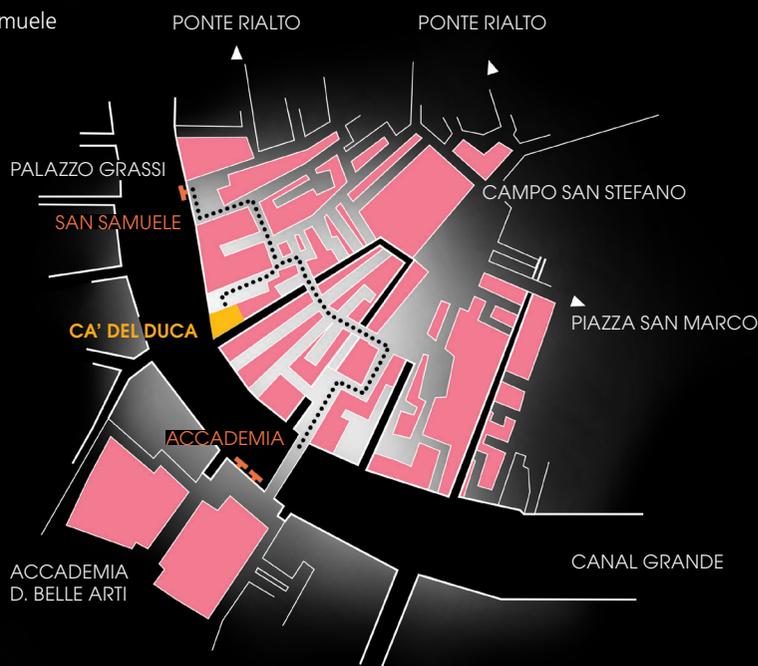
11:00 to 19:00, closed on Tuesdays

Luxembourg Pavilion in Venice

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Corte del Duca Sforza
San Marco 3052
I-30124 Venezia
Tel. Fax: +39 041 520 75 34

Vaporetto

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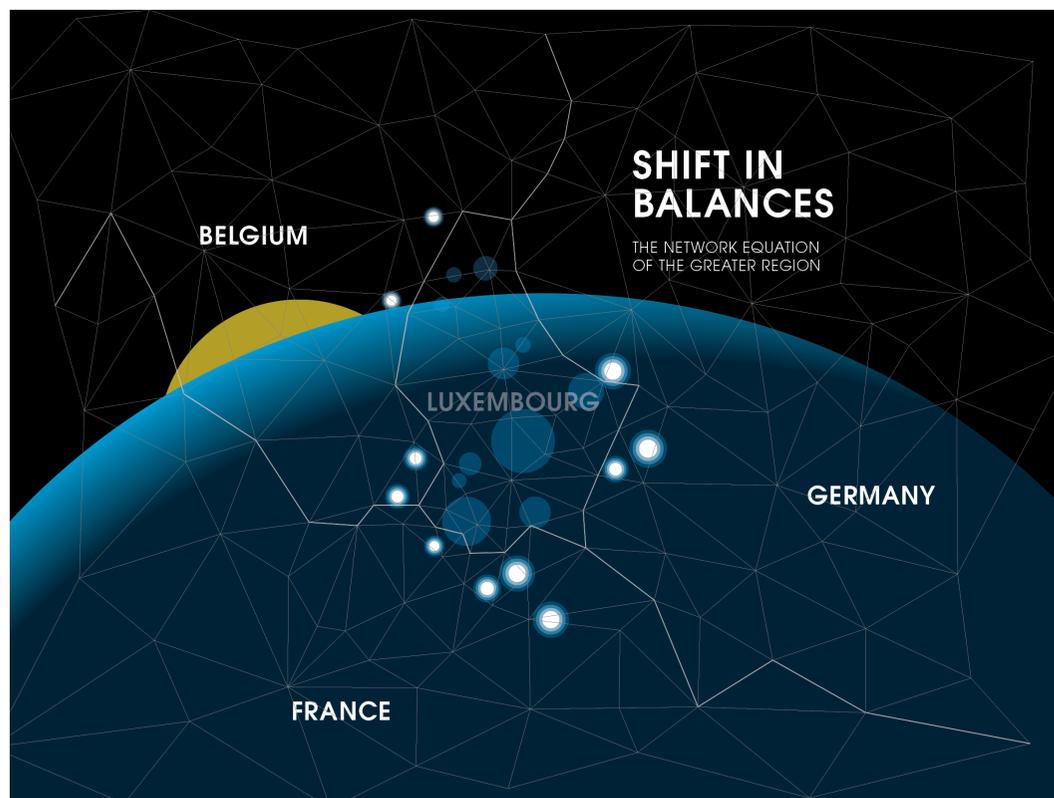
Contact

Andrea Rumpf, director
lyoshi Kreutz, administrative assistant
Thomas Miller, programme assistant + press contact

THE PROJECT

Tracing Transitions addresses current housing problems in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg as well as aspects for a possible transformation of the situation in the future. Habitation, provision of residential property, and socially sustainable housing are essential issues of our time. Shelter is a fundamental human need and an internationally confirmed human right. In Luxembourg, the preconditions for satisfying this need have become more and more unstable.

As a small nation in the heart of Western Europe, Luxembourg is truly a land of specifics. Being a sovereign state, Luxembourg's location and policies have simultaneously generated a continuous yet porous border region with its neighbours Belgium, France and Germany. Luxembourg's niche strategies have enabled the country to achieve international significance in a globalised world and considerable economic success bearing no relation to its size. But Luxembourg's wealth, attractive job opportunities, and socio-economic policies also put pressure on the housing market. The mechanisms for the provision of housing are dominated by ownership and free market economy. These models are increasingly unable to satisfy the need of significant parts of the population for affordable and adequate housing. Many people turn in reaction to neighbouring regions in search of housing, constituting the phenomenon of the Grenzgänger – frontier commuters and highly mobile labourers. This situation entails a range of problems like the danger of real estate bubbles in these regions, unbalanced programming in urban areas, and excessive environmental pollution through traffic.



TRACING TRANSITIONS

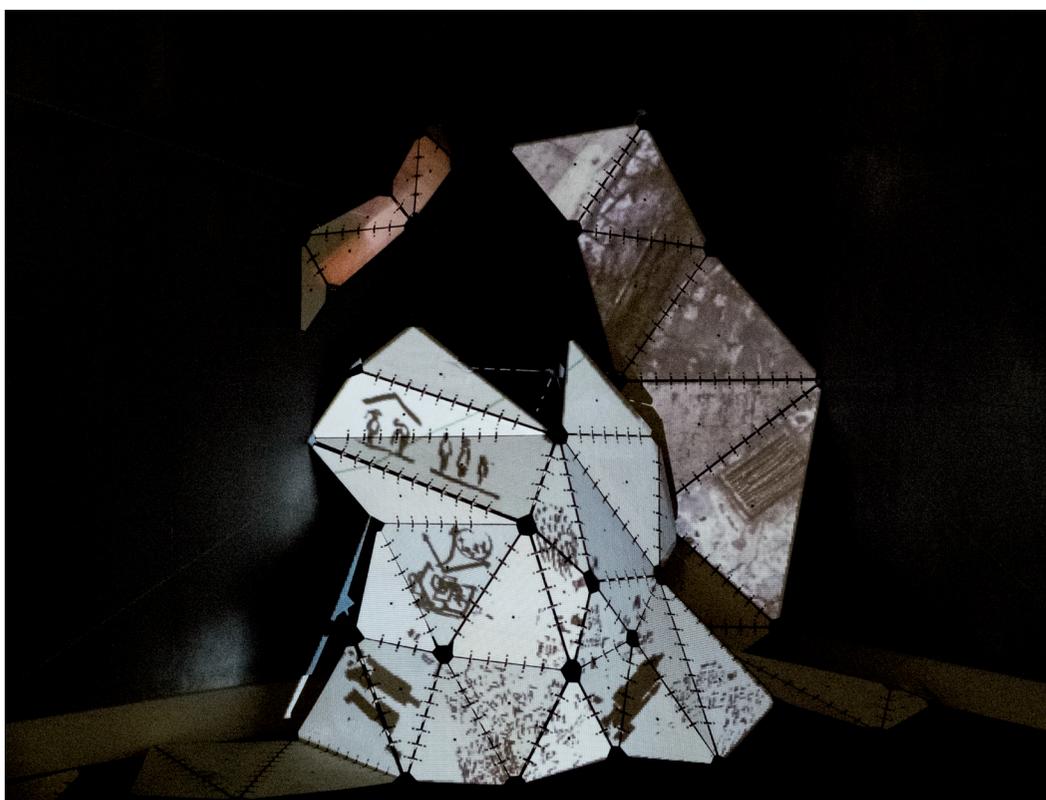
NATIONAL PAVILION OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
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LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

Its geography and economic development, the competitive and high-priced property market, population growth and demographic change have turned Luxembourg into a complex and adversarial area of tension. Tracing Transitions looks at interventions that aim to gradually diffuse the current situation. These interventions present alternatives: they are options for the realisation of housing solutions that stand in contrast to ownership or built-to-rent models; they offer different living configurations as answers to demographic changes; they question traditional and known housing types; and they make use of Luxembourg's biggest resource for the implementation of housing – vast former industrial areas, remnants of Luxembourg's past as an iron and coal nation.

Tracing Transitions seeks indicators that signify a possible change in the production and social sustainability of housing. It is primarily a story about processes, events, and the consolidation of networks and not about full blown design solutions and neat buildings. Architecture becomes instead part of activism. And Tracing Transitions is part of architectural communication – to communicate the challenges in the production of conditions for realising the 'good project'.

An assemblage composed of 3D scans of particular situations in Luxembourg and the Greater Region constitutes the "canvas" or the projection screen. The assemblage is a continuous installation that connects the different spaces of the Ca' del Duca.

Beamer and diapositive projections of the "traces" that signify the possibility of change regarding the production and the social sustainability of housing in Luxembourg. This is a story about processes, events, and the consolidation of structures which are able to drive a modification of the actual system.



FIVE THEMATICS

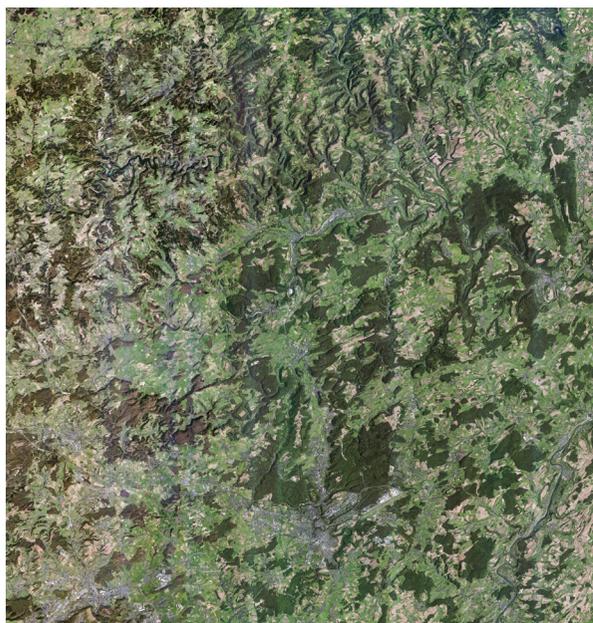
WELCOME TO LUXEMBOURG

The shortage of affordable and adequate housing causes a large part of Luxembourg's working population to live across the border. The phenomenon of the Grenzgänger – cross-border commuters and mobile labourers – adds to the specifics of Luxembourg and the Greater Region, as a large part of the working population travels.



THE NETWORK EQUATION

The necessity for extensive commuting generates unbalanced programmed urban areas. Networks of dormitory suburbs emerge on one side of the border and office districts, deserted at night and on the weekends, on the other.



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FRONT YARD PARADISE

A large part of housing in Luxembourg consists of mono-typological structures like single-family homes and small-scale terraced houses. For many people, such housing may represent something similar to the ideal solution.

“Auf Mont’ in Wincheringen is a new housing estate [in Germany] next to the border [to Luxembourg]. Most people here build ecological and sustainable houses. There are far fewer building restrictions than in Luxembourg, and we had the freedom to realise our eco-friendly, self-design in keeping with our own ideas.”

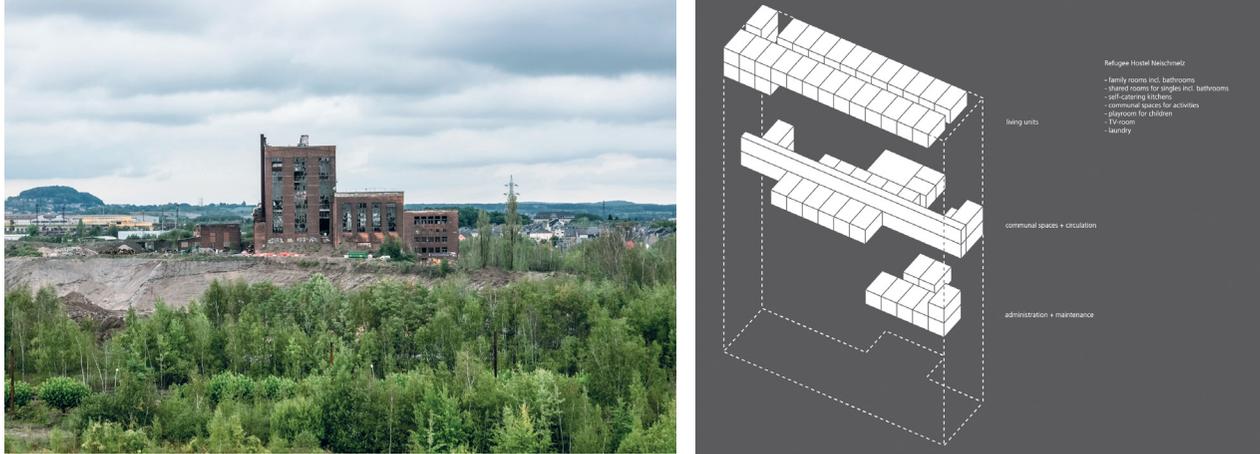
“Our dream was to live in a suburban idyll as we knew it from films or TV soaps but we never thought this ideal conception would ever come true...” (Danny + Nathalie, residents of ‘Auf Mont’)



TRACING TRANSITIONS

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POST-INDUSTRIAL WASTELANDS



Luxembourg's transition into a post-industrial society led to the creation of fabulous wastelands of former industrial areas. Today, they represent the biggest property resource for the construction of new housing. For about 100 years, the steel industry occupied a large site in the town of Dudelange separating some of its urban quarters. The planning of a new neighbourhood at this place – the 'Neischmelz' – is already underway in order to backfill the town's fabric. In the meantime, a number of initiatives and artistic projects drive the revitalisation of the industrial brownfield prior to the implementation of big planning. The recent construction of accommodations for refugees reflects the ability to mobilise resources and to create conditions for the realisation of projects through civic engagement and the will of political actors.

"With the first wave of refugees in 2012 emerged the idea of preparing a dignified welcome for migrants in our commune. The brownfield of Dudelange presented enough space and the required scope for a temporary housing structure for 93 persons seeking international protection..." (Dan Biancalana, mayor of Dudelange)

STEP-BY-STEP UTOPIA

A tale of processes, events and consolidated structures, which are able to drive modification of the current system. Defined utopias are gradually formed by potential solutions.



THE CURATORS AND EXHIBITORS



Serge Ecker, Panajota Panotopoulou, Daniel Grünkranz, Claude Ballini

Multidisciplinary approach is the key word to characterize the team constituted by Claude Ballini, Serge Ecker, Daniel Grünkranz and Panajota Panotopoulou: architecture, urban planning, art, theory, practice. Disciplines and approaches are multiple, as are professional and geographical journeys.

CLAUDE BALLINI

Date of birth 08.12.1981, Luxembourg City (Luxembourg)
Architect and town planner
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THE COMMISSIONER AND ITS PARTNERS

LUCA LUXEMBOURG CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE

As a platform for exchange and action, breathing new life into the heart of the old Hollerich steelworks site since its friendly takeover of the district's great landmark building in 2006, the Foundation for Architecture and Engineering now operates under the name "LUCA", consolidating its role as a vital player in the sphere of quality architecture in Luxembourg.

Since its inception in 1992, the non-governmental, non-profit making organisation has been able to promote the notion of quality of the urban environment as a crucial value of today's society. As a platform for exchange and meeting place for the general public, ranging from the interested enthusiast or the committed citizen to the political decision maker or professional player, LUCA organises a broad cultural programme that reflects the diversity of its public: series of conferences and debates, temporary exhibitions, guided tours, educational workshops, the Luxembourg Architectural Award, the pavilion for the Venice Architecture Biennale... Its publications, its library of architecture containing nearly 6000 early and recent titles and its archives, give the public tools for additional research and material.

LUCA's professional team works with many experts and partners, in this way LUCA is consolidating its place at the heart of the debate, of the current position and of the questions about new architecture in Luxembourg and in the world.

Professional team

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Iyoshi KREUTZ, administrative assistant
Thomas MILLER, programme assistant

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REPORTING FROM THE FRONT

Extracts from the official press kit, available on www.labiennale.org

Open to the public from Saturday May 28 to Sunday November 27 2016, at the Giardini and the Arsenale, the 15th International Architecture Exhibition, entitled "Reporting from the Front", will be directed by Alejandro Aravena and organized by La Biennale di Venezia chaired by Paolo Baratta.

The Exhibition will also include the 64 National Participations in the historic Pavilions at the Giardini, at the Arsenale and in the historic city centre of Venice. Five countries will be participating for the first time: Philippines, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Seychelles and Yemen.

... Alejandro Aravena expressed his hope that the Biennale Architettura 2016 might "offer a new point of view. Given the complexity and variety of challenges that architecture has to respond to, REPORTING FROM THE FRONT will be about listening to those that were able to gain some perspective and consequently are in the position to share some knowledge and experiences with those of us standing on the ground."

"We believe – explained Aravena – that the advancement of architecture is not a goal in itself but a way to improve people's quality of life. Given that life ranges from very basic physical needs to the most intangible dimensions of the human condition, consequently, improving the quality of the built environment is an endeavour that has to tackle many fronts: from guaranteeing very concrete, down-to-earth living standards to interpreting and fulfilling human desires, from respecting the single individual to taking care of the common good, from efficiently hosting daily activities to expanding the frontiers of civilization."

The curator's proposal is therefore twofold: "On the one hand we would like to widen the range of issues to which architecture is expected to respond, adding explicitly to the cultural and artistic dimensions that already belong to our scope, those that are on the social, political, economic and environmental end of the spectrum. On the other hand, we would like to highlight the fact that architecture is called to respond to more than one dimension at a time, integrating a variety of fields instead of choosing one or another."

"'Reporting from the Front' will be about sharing with a broader audience, the work of people who are scrutinizing the horizon looking for new fields of action, facing issues like segregation, inequalities, peripheries, access to sanitation, natural disasters, housing shortage, migration, informality, crime, traffic, waste, pollution and the participation of communities. And simultaneously it will be about presenting examples where different dimensions are synthesized, integrating the pragmatic with the existential, pertinence and boldness, creativity and common sense."

"It is not easy – concluded Aravena – to achieve such a level of expansion and synthesis; they are battles that need to be fought. The always menacing scarcity of means, the ruthless constraints, the lack of time and urgencies of all kinds are a constant threat that explain why we so often fall short in delivering quality. The forces that shape the built environment are not necessarily amicable either: the greed and impatience of capital or the single mindedness and conservatism of the bureaucracy tend to produce banal, mediocre and dull built environments. These are the frontlines from which we would like different practitioners to report, sharing success stories and exemplary cases where architecture did, is and will make a difference."

See the complete text by Alejandro Aravena on www.labiennale.org.

COLOPHON

Curators and exhibitors

Claude Ballini, architect
Serge Ecker, artist, creative director
Daniel Grünkranz, architect, theoretician
Panajota Panotopoulou, architect, theoretician

Commissioner

LUCA Luxembourg Center for Architecture

With the financial support of

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With the additional support of

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LUCA Luxembourg Center for Architecture:

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Thomas Miller, program assistant
Iyoshi Kreuzt, administrative assistant

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Caterina De Cesero
Elena Durigon
Sara Bonaventura

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Université du Luxembourg: Prof. Markus Hesse, Prof. Christian Schulz, Nathalie Christmann – Politecnico di Milano: Prof. Massimo Bricocoli – Christian Bauer & Associés (CBA) – A+T Architecture – Atelier D – Adhoc

Interviews

Dan Biancalana (Ville de Dudelange) – Marco Hoffmann (Caritas) – Eric Weirich (Adhoc) – Julien Licheron
Observatoire de l'Habitat – Vincent Delwiche + Robert Kocian (Agora) – Marianne Brausch (Fonds d'urbanisation et d'aménagement du Plateau de Kirchberg) – Nathalie Flander & Danny Koppers

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Vidale-Gloesener

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Marlène Kreins

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