

Netherlands Architecture Institute on location  
Netherlands Pavilion  
Giardini di Castello  
La Biennale di Venezia (Venice)

Sunday 14 September - Sunday 23 November 2008  
10:00 - 18:00 hrs



la Biennale di Venezia

11. Mostra  
Internazionale  
di Architettura

Partecipazioni nazionali

Rotterdam, 8 September 2008

## Burning questions, unconventional answers

'ArchiPhoenix – Faculties for architecture', the Dutch submission to the 11th International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia

The fire that destroyed the Architecture Faculty of the Delft University of Technology (TU Delft) last spring seems to herald the end of an era. This faculty has produced architects who have achieved an international reputation as a building generation. However, the professional world in the Netherlands and abroad is asking itself whether thinking in terms of buildings is the solution to the issues and demands that will face us in the near future. If the phoenix rises from the ashes, what form should that resurrection take?

For the Netherlands, this is an opportunity to ask ourselves during the International Architecture Exhibition in Venice what are the burning questions for architecture at the moment, where the commitment of architecture lies, which values are important, which areas are in need of exploration, and which attitude and expertise an architect ought to develop. The Netherlands Architecture Institute is presenting an inquiry into the potential capacities of architecture under the title 'ArchiPhoenix – Faculties for architecture'. In that way hinting on possible answers to the question raised by Aaron Betsky, director of the 11th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, in giving this biennale the theme 'Out There: Architecture beyond Building'.

### Production machine

For a whole week, from Tuesday 9 to Sunday 14 September, the Dutch pavilion on the site of the Architecture Biennale in Venice will be a platform for research on the possible futures of architecture and a debating centre where lectures, round table discussions, interviews, a workshop, informal conversations and speed dates concerning these issues can take place. At the same time the pavilion is a production space where an international team of writers, designers, editors, a film team and columnists will work continuously on the production of a book that proposes an imaginary architecture curriculum. The findings of this week will result in an exhibition produced on location. The exhibition ArchiPhoenix will be open to the public from Monday 15 September to Sunday 23 November.

### Exchange of ideas

The preview days of the international biennials have exerted a strong force of attraction on the international cultural jet-set. Also at this biennial the architecture world finds out about the state of the art in architecture and draws inspiration. It is a good opportunity for architecture professionals not only to pick up ideas, but also to exchange them. Those professionals who will be there on the preview days from 9 to 14 September will be encouraged to join in thinking about the future of their discipline on the basis of five questions: **How we work** – about designing in a network setting, beyond the 'starchitect'; **Why we make** – about sustainable social relations, beyond the economic

motives; **For whom we make** – about new principals, beyond the vested authorities; **What we make** – about processual architecture, beyond the building; and **What it takes to make (and un-make)** – about the flow of sources of energy, material and people, beyond sustainability.

### **Program**

Under pressure from developments in the world such as the rapid population growth, economic instability and the depletion of fossil fuels, architects are forced to review their working methods, resources and products carefully and to develop alternatives.

In the course of round table discussions on Thursday 11 September, speed dates on Friday 12 September and lectures on Saturday 13 September, architectural professionals such as Alejandro Aravena from Elemental, Lorenzo Romito from Stalker/ON, Markus Miessen, Jan Jongert from 2012 Architecten, Irit Rogoff, and John Thackara will present their vision of the way in which the discipline ought to develop.

The detailed program can be found on [www.facultiesforarchitecture.org](http://www.facultiesforarchitecture.org). All the lectures and debates can be followed live via this website, where they also will be archived. It also shows the transformation of the special setting in the pavilion. Using semi-transparent crates as building blocks, the setting of the pavilion will be adapted to the program: from tables with stools for a dinner to a seating arrangement for a well attended lecture. In the end the crates will be used to build the exhibition in which the results of the research will be displayed in photographs, film, audio fragments, written text and drawings.

### **Openings**

The Chief Government Architect Liesbeth van der Pol will officially open the Dutch submission to the 11th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia at 18:00 hrs on Friday 12 September. Ronald Plasterk, Minister of Education, Culture and Science, will launch the international competition for ideas 'BuildingforBouwkunde' in the Dutch pavilion at 13:00 hrs on Saturday 13 September. 'BuildingforBouwkunde' is an initiative that was triggered by the fire that destroyed the Architecture Faculty of the TU Delft.

*The Dutch submission to the 11th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia has been organised at the invitation of and with financial support from the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The exhibition, commissioned by Ole Bouman, director of the NAI, is curated by Saskia van Stein in collaboration with co-curators Ana Dzokic and Marc Neelen (STEALTH.unlimited). The program and the production on location are the product of collaboration with an editorial team consisting of Lillet Breddels, Christian Ersten, Jeanne van Heeswijk, Dennis Kaspori, Peter Lang, Billy Nolan, Arjen Oosterman, Miguel Robles-Duran and Piet Vollaard.*

### **NOTE FOR THE EDITOR**

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