

U.S. Pavilion at Biennale Architettura 2018 Announces Details of Architects' Projects for *Dimensions of Citizenship*

Amanda Williams + Andres L. Hernandez, in collaboration with Shani Crowe;
Design Earth; Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Laura Kurgan, Robert Gerard
Pietrusko with Columbia Center for Spatial Research; Estudio Teddy Cruz +
Fonna Forman; Keller Easterling with MANY; SCAPE; and Studio Gang
Explore the Relationship Between Citizenship and the Built Environment

Chicago, IL, March 13, 2018— The U.S. Pavilion at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, commissioned by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) and The University of Chicago (UChicago), today announced new details about the exhibition *Dimensions of Citizenship*. The exhibition's curators have commissioned seven architecture practices to explore how citizenship may be defined, constructed, enacted, contested, or expressed in the built environment at seven different spatial scales. Expanding from the body and city to the network and the heavens, the seven installations raise questions about issues including belonging, sovereignty, and ecology.

Curators Niall Atkinson, Associate Professor of Architectural History at UChicago; Ann Lui, Assistant Professor at SAIC; Mimi Zeiger, an independent critic, editor, curator, and educator; and associate curator Iker Gil, Lecturer at SAIC, said: "Whether we think about it or not, we all occupy different, overlapping categories of space at the same time, from the level of the neighborhood, to the nation, to the planet as a whole. The deeply thoughtful and remarkably inventive teams that have created the projects in *Dimensions of Citizenship* have made lasting contributions toward understanding the potential meanings of citizenship at these different scales, each of which can involve varying legal, political, economic and social issues. In mapping out these territories, the installations make it clear that the stakes of citizenship will be exceedingly high in the years to come."

The spatial scales encompassed by *Dimensions of Citizenship* and the participants commissioned to consider them are:

Scale: Citizen / Amanda Williams + Andres L. Hernandez, in collaboration with Shani Crowe
Dimensions of Citizenship begins at the scale of the citizen with the project *Thrive Geographics (In My Mind I See a Line)*, which will consider how race shapes notions of identity, shelter, and public space in historically African-American communities. For their installation in the courtyard of the U.S. Pavilion, Williams (a recently named 2018 USA Ford Fellow) and Hernandez, who is an associate professor of art education at SAIC, will partner with Chicago-based artist Shani Crowe, whose intricate braided hair sculptures have been worn by celebrities such as Solange. While the specter of slavery and continued racial injustice will be at the core of the installation, the piece will ultimately strive for a possible architecture of freedom that might allow all citizens to thrive and participate in the democratic ideal.

Scale: Civitas / Studio Gang

Led by 2011 MacArthur Fellow Jeanne Gang, Studio Gang uses design as a medium to help strengthen communities. *Stone Stories* builds on the Studio's ongoing work in Memphis, Tennessee, to investigate how redesigning cities' public space can be an exercise of citizenship and empowerment. Inspired by Memphis's recent removal of two Confederate statues, *Stone Stories* offers an inclusive urban vision for Cobblestone Landing, an overlooked yet historically important site along the Mississippi River. Hundreds of Memphis cobblestones will be shipped to Venice and used as a platform to share the stories of Memphians past and present, offering visitors a visceral and material interaction with a distant public space and the citizens who are actively building its shared urban future.

Scale: Region / SCAPE

SCAPE, under the leadership of 2017 MacArthur Fellow Kate Orff, will demonstrate that landscape architecture can be a critical tool for re-envisioning the response of citizens to climate change. SCAPE's project, *Ecological Citizens*, understands the region as an area defined by the shifting relationships of ecology, infrastructure, and climate. It takes the Venetian Lagoon as a globally significant case study of a tidal region under ecological threat. Partnering with Università di Bologna and the Italian Institute of Marine Sciences, SCAPE will present possible solutions or interventions to aid the environmentally sensitive La Certosa island in the lagoon.

Scale: Nation / Estudio Teddy Cruz + FONNA FORMAN

Estudio Teddy Cruz + FONNA FORMAN challenges the way we think about national boundaries. Their project, *MEXUS: A Geography of Interdependence*, reveals a transnational zone comprised of eight watershed systems shared by Mexico and the United States. *MEXUS* provokes us to rethink citizenship beyond the limits of the nation, mobilizing a more inclusive, interdependent idea based on co-existence, shared assets, and cooperative opportunities between divided communities. Cruz is the winner of the 2018

Vilcek Prize in Architecture, which is presented to immigrants who are champions of the arts and sciences.

Scale: Globe / Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Laura Kurgan, Robert Gerard Pietrusko with Columbia Center for Spatial Research

When we zoom out to the scale of the globe, the primacy of the individual, the city, and even the nation drops away and is replaced by data: electricity, trade routes, migratory shifts, and the flow of capital, goods, and people. *In Plain Sight*—a collaboration among Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Laura Kurgan, and Robert Gerard Pietrusko with Columbia Center for Spatial Research—uses data drawn from images created by the Soumi National Polar-orbiting Partnership satellite to visualize where people live on earth. Two contrasting NASA images of the Earth taken at 1:30 pm and 1:30 am show us the gaps in the network: the places with many people and no lights, and those with bright lights and no people. This information maps out a political geography of belonging and exclusion.

Scale: Network / Keller Easterling with MANY

Keller Easterling's writings and projects regularly investigate the emergent territory where the state meets the digital network. With *MANY*, an online platform designed to facilitate migration through an exchange of needs, Easterling and team propose that we use the network to rethink possibly outdated notions of citizenship. With a nod to the pervasive and familiar share economies that define online life, *MANY* envisions a global form of matchmaking between the sidelined talents of migrating populations and the multitude of opportunities around the world. Favoring cosmopolitan mobility over national identity, *MANY* looks to short-term visas as a tool to foster an exchange of needs.

Scale: Cosmos / Design Earth

The space above Earth, as a site of existing human occupation and potential belonging, has become a territory that both captures the imagination and serves as a theater for existing conflicts or conditions. In looking to the cosmos, Design Earth's speculative designs suggest possible off-world architectural responses. Design Earth's El Hadi Jazairy and Rania Ghosn (recipient of the 2017 Boghossian Foundation Prize) present three "geo-stories," which speculate on the legal geography of citizenship when extended to "the province of all mankind." Together the stories in *Cosmorama—Mining the Sky, Planetary Ark, and Pacific Cemetery*—ask how we should reckon with the epic and frontier narratives that have fueled space exploration, at a time when prospects of instability and extinction have become normal on Earth.

ABOUT THE COMMISSIONERS

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

For more than 150 years, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) has been a leader in educating the world's most influential artists, designers and scholars. Located in

downtown Chicago with a fine arts graduate program consistently ranking among the top programs in the nation by U.S. News and World Report, SAIC provides an interdisciplinary approach to art and design as well as world-class resources, including the Art Institute of Chicago museum, on-campus galleries and state-of-the-art facilities. SAIC's undergraduate, graduate and post-baccalaureate students have the freedom to take risks and create the bold ideas that transform Chicago and the world—as seen through notable alumni and faculty such as Michelle Grabner, David Sedaris, Elizabeth Murray, Richard Hunt, Georgia O'Keeffe, Cynthia Rowley, Nick Cave, Jeff Koons, and LeRoy Neiman.

The University of Chicago

The University of Chicago (UChicago) is a leading academic and research institution that has driven new ways of thinking since its founding in 1890. As an intellectual destination, the University draws scholars and students from around the world to its home in Hyde Park and campuses around the globe. The University provides a distinctive educational experience, empowering individuals to challenge conventional thinking and pursue research that produces new understanding and breakthroughs with global impact. At the University, UChicago Arts, which includes nearly 100 arts organizations, initiatives, and academic programs, brings together the efforts of students, faculty, artists, and community partners to infuse creativity throughout the intellectual life on campus while solidifying the University's role as a cultural destination and resource on Chicago's South Side.

ABOUT THE U.S. PAVILION

The U.S. Pavilion at the Venice Biennale Architettura 2018 was built in 1930 and designed by architects William Adams Delano and Chester Holmes Aldrich. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation acquired the U.S. Pavilion in 1986 and now manages it through the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, with the support of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs for the U.S. Department of State.

ABOUT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND THE U.S. EMBASSY IN ROME

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) builds relations between people of the United States and the people of other countries through academic, cultural, sports, and professional exchange programs, as well as public-private partnerships and mentoring programs. These exchange programs improve foreign relations and strengthen the national security of the United States, support U.S. international leadership, and provide a broad range of domestic benefits by helping break down barriers that often divide us. ECA programs build connections that engage and empower people and motivate them to become leaders and thinkers; to develop new skills; and to find connections that will create positive change in their communities. Alumni of ECA

exchange programs comprise more than one million people around the world, including more than 80 Nobel Laureates and more than 500 current or former heads of state and government around the world. For more information: eca.state.gov

ECA also closely collaborates with the U.S. Embassy in Rome, which has long supported the International Art and Architecture Exhibitions promoted by La Biennale di Venezia and has maintained a strong interest in this important opportunity to showcase innovative American architects and artists. For more information: it.usembassy.gov.

DESIGN, EDITORIAL, MEDIA

The U.S. Pavilion exhibition and graphic designer is IN-FO.CO. The editorial partner is *e-flux* and the media sponsor is *Architectural Record*.

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