

## Press Release

15th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice

# Bacteria as building materials and airfields for drones

Zurich, 26 May 2016

ETH Zurich will present a whole range of projects at this year's International Architecture Exhibition in Venice. At the invitation of curator Alejandro Aravena, several project groups in which ETH is involved will present their contributions in the main exhibition, exhibit at national pavilions and play an active role in the supporting programme.

Confronted with rapid population growth, urban regions face an influx of migrants and the challenges of climate change. For this reason, ETH Zurich is focusing its research on the development of sustainable cities. It is hardly surprising, then, that ETH Zurich is represented so prominently at this year's Architecture Exhibition in Venice, that addresses how architecture can improve people's living situations.

"I am delighted that our researchers will have the opportunity to present some of our flagship projects in Venice," says Lino Guzzella, President of ETH Zurich. "ETH Zurich can look back on a long tradition of architectural teaching and research, and is today taking a leading role in the field of digital fabrication. Digitalisation will, without a doubt, fundamentally change the future of construction." Together with Federal Councillor Alain Berset, Guzzella will be present at the official opening of the Swiss Pavilion, designed by Christian Kerez, Professor of Architecture and Design at ETH Zurich.

### **Architecture for the people**

The 15<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition in Venice officially opens its doors on 28 May. It is one of the world's largest and most important platforms for architecture and will be curated by Alejandro Aravena, the Chilean architect and winner of the Pritzker Architecture Prize 2016. The motto of this year's exhibition is 'Reporting from the Front'.

ETH Zurich related projects include:

### **“Beyond Bending”**

Main exhibition, Corderie dell’Arsenale – Block Research Group (Prof. Philippe Block and Tom Van Mele)

The Block Research Group, John Ochsendorf, Matthew DeJong and the Escobedo Group present their contribution, which includes an expressive 16-metre-long unreinforced limestone vault with a minimum thickness of just 5 cm, created using novel structural design approaches and digital fabrication methods. The installation demonstrates how architecture can learn from the building techniques of the past – and that aesthetics and the efficient use of resources are not mutually exclusive.

See the separate [Factsheet](#) for more information.

### **“Droneport”**

Main exhibition, Arsenale – Block Research Group (Prof. Philippe Block and Tom Van Mele)

The Block Research Group and ODB Engineering join the team of Norman Foster and supported by the Lafarge Holcim Foundation to present an earthen tile shell, which serves as a prototype for a terminal for drones, the “droneport”, in Rwanda. In the future, this is intended to form part of an infrastructural network to supply blood, medication and other important goods to remote regions of Africa.

### **“Mud WORKS!”**

Main exhibition, Giardini – Anna Heringer and Martin Rauch

Some three billion people live in homes made of clay, and for good reason: as a natural product, mud is inexpensive and available almost everywhere in the world. In collaboration with Andres Lepik and the Architecture Museum of the Technical University of Munich, ETH guest lecturers, Anna Heringer and Martin Rauch, pay tribute to the beauty and versatility of mud. Weighing in at 25 tonnes, the installation took them more than three months to mould by hand.

### **“Jardim Colombo: a Selective Chronology”**

Main exhibition – Prof. Christian Kerez and Hugo Mesquita

Christian Kerez uses this exhibition to look at the emergence and architecture of favelas. He examines the technical, morphological and typological characteristics of informal urban architecture in Brazil, analysing the extent to which the favelas differ from the formally constructed city, and how this difference can be reconciled with the objectives of public planning.

### **“Incidental Space”**

Swiss Pavilion – Exhibitor: Prof. Christian Kerez, Curator: Sandra Oehly, together with: Profs. Benjamin Dillenburger, Joseph Schwartz, Karin Sander, Ludger Hovestadt, Olga Sorkine-Hornung, and Alessandro Tellini

The ‘Incidental Space’ project from architect Christian Kerez takes the form of fundamental research and re-examines the possibilities of architecture. Although today’s technology creates more possibili-

ties than ever before, architects' creative scope seems instead to be narrowing. In this project, Kerez demonstrates how the interpretation of architecture can change not only the possibilities of architecture but also the architecture itself.

See the press release from [Pro Helvetia](#) for more information.

### **“Informal Settlements in Cairo”**

Egyptian Pavilion – The MAS Urban Design, Prof. Marc Angéilil

Since 2014, the research group led by Marc Angéilil has been studying the emergence of informal settlements in Cairo. The group is calling on domestic and international architects to play a more active role in these informal city districts. As part of its exhibition in the Egyptian Pavilion, the group is presenting selected research and design results from the past few years.

### **“Daring Growth”**

Supporting programme, 'Time-Space-Existence', Palazzo Mora – Prof. Dirk Hebel

The research group led by Dirk Hebel is calling for a radical paradigm shift towards decentralised, local and renewable production strategies. This is the only way to ensure the efficient use of energy and raw materials. In the 'Daring Growth' exhibition, the group teams up with the company Myco-Works, and engineers and geoscientists from TU Delft to highlight the potential of alternative building materials such as bamboo, mycelium, bacteria, grasses and waste.

See the separate [Factsheet](#) for more information.

### **“Sarajevo Now: The People's Museum”**

Supporting programme, Arsenale Nord, Tesa 99 – Urban Think Tank (Prof. Hubert Klumpner and Prof. Alfredo J. Brillembourg)

To this day, the war-torn city of Sarajevo is still marred by destruction and political deadlock. Like no other building in Sarajevo, the historic Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina symbolises resistance; with no funding whatsoever, locals have begun restoring the museum into a forum for cultural encounters. Inspired by these efforts, architects from the Urban Think Tank and Baier Bischofberger Architekten have designed a series of temporary measures to improve the situation without altering the building's character.

[www.labiennale.org](http://www.labiennale.org) →

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