

*A mapping of the*  
**Architecture Biennale**  
*Laboratory for future*

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*Shared washing lines between households*

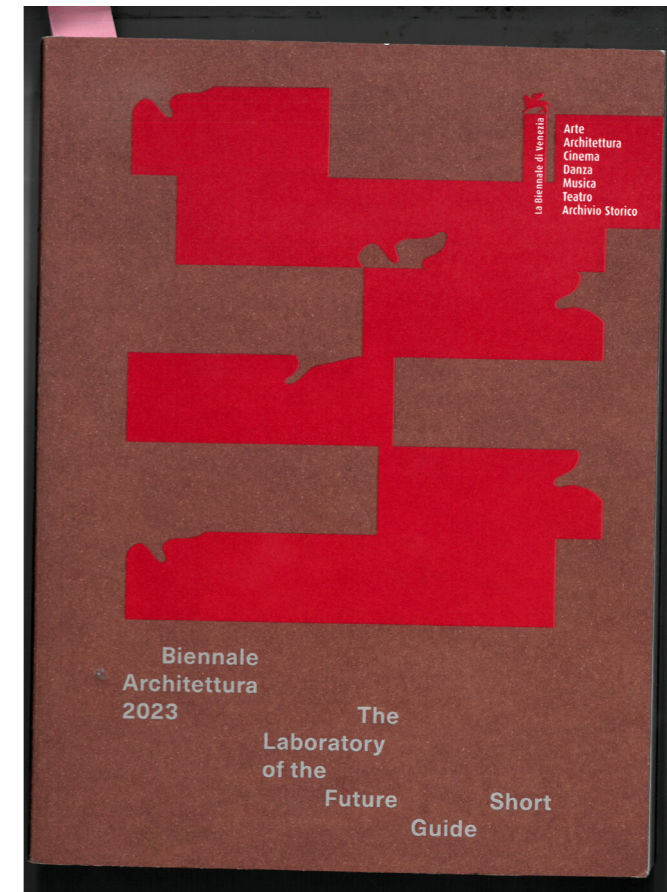


### What

A one-week study trip to Venice, Italy, visiting Architecture Biennale 2023 titled *Laboratory for the Future*.

### Why

To gain a critical understanding and engage in discussions about architectural discourse. To further develop our thesis project *Entangled Architecture: Imagining the possible*, which poses the question: How can we imagine architecture and its' process, what it contains and how it is represented?



Scan of The Laboratory of the Future Short Guide



## Mapping the Architecture Biennale

We were interested in gathering our experiences, thoughts and insights from the architecture biennale, and try to find how they related and connected to each other as well as to our thesis. The purpose was to set a starting point for our project and to find what excited us.

Inspired by one of the quotes by James Bradley printed onto the red walls of the central pavilion we decided we would make a mapping of our findings from the trip. "Maps, like any other representation of events, or things, are just that: representations. Not reality, merely facsimilies, stitched together with gathered evidence and made whole by our trust in them."

We have gathered, stitched and trusted, and it is through this mapping we will tell our story of our visit to the Architecture Biennale, what we found and what stayed with us and how we intend to use these findings in our work going forward.

"Maps, like any other representation of events, or things, are just that: representations. Not reality, merely facsimilies, stitched together with gathered evidence and made whole by our trust in them."  
— James Bradley



Exercise: Findings from the Biennale from our Thesis "Entangled Architecture"



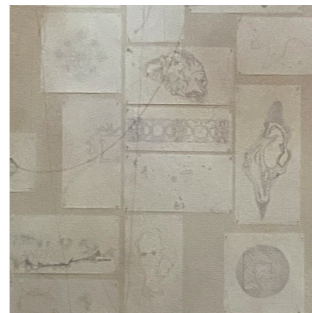
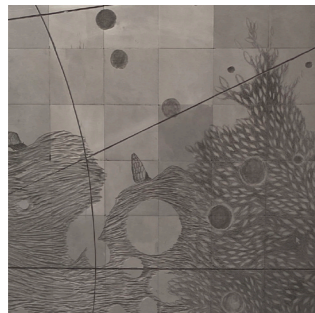
What does it mean to be 'an agent of change'? The question has shadowed the gestation period of The Laboratory of the Future, acting as both counterfoil and life force to the exhibition as it has unfolded in the mind's eye, where it now hovers, almost at the moment of its birth. Over the past nine months, in hundreds of conversations, text messages, Zoom calls and meetings, the question of whether exhibitions of this scale - both in terms of carbon and cost - are justified, has surfaced time and again. In May last year, I referred to the exhibition several times as 'a story', a narrative unfolding in space. Today, my understanding has changed. **An architecture exhibition is both a moment and a process.** It borrows its structure and format from art exhibitions, but it differs from art in critical ways which often go unnoticed. Aside from the desire to tell a story, questions of production, resources and representation are central to the way an architecture exhibition comes into the world, yet are rarely acknowledged or discussed. From the outset, it was clear that the essential gesture of The Laboratory of the Future would be 'change'. In those same discussions that sought to justify the exhibition's existence were difficult and often emotional conversations to do with resources, rights, and risk. For the first time ever, the spotlight has fallen on Africa and the African Diaspora, that fluid and enmeshed culture of people of African descent that now straddles the globe. What do we wish to say? How will what we say change anything? And, perhaps most importantly of all, **how will what we say interact with and infuse what 'others' say, so that the exhibition is not a single story, but multiple stories** that reflect the vexing, gorgeous kaleidoscope of ideas, contexts, aspirations, and meanings that is every voice responding to the issues of its time?

*Excerpt from Introduction by Lesley Lokko: Agents of Change*



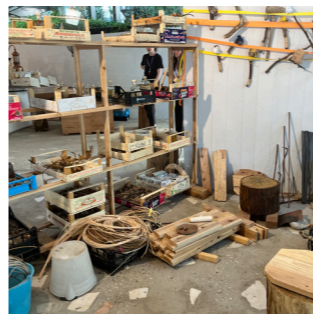
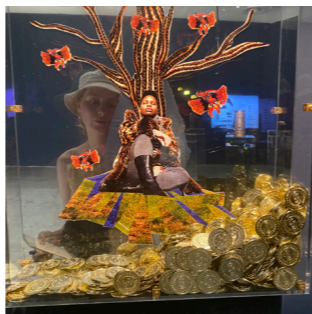
*Enmeshed map of the participants in the Central Pavilion*



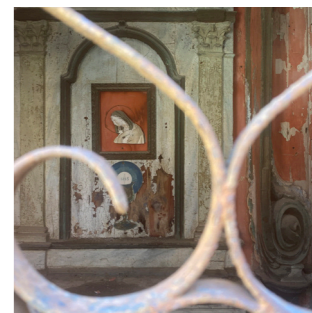
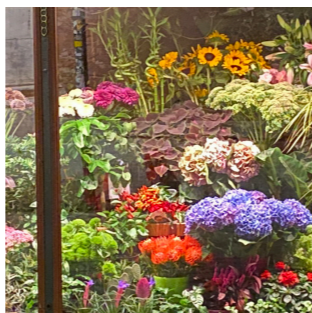
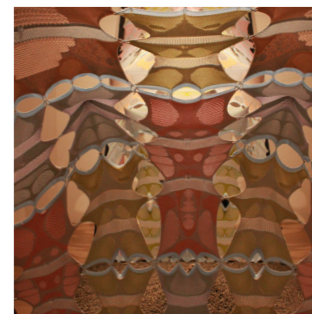


Designing with the unpredictable - be it the unknown availability of materials or the open-ended participatory processes - generates creative possibilities that spell an optimistic outlook for architecture..

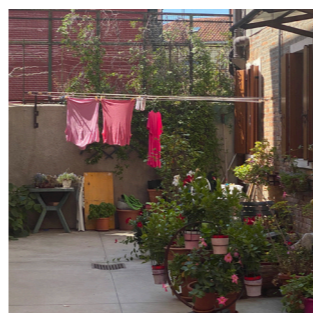
- Introduction German Pavilion



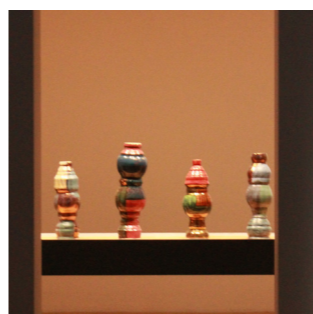
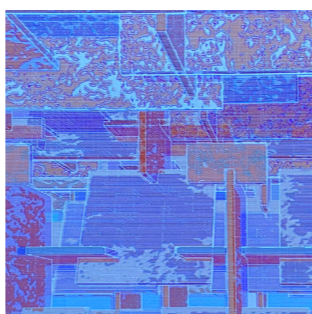
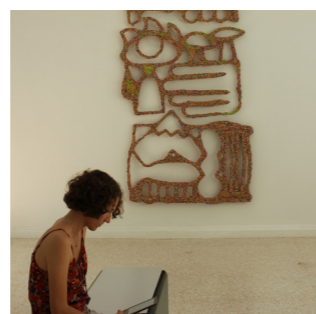
**THERE IS A REASON, AFTER ALL, THAT SOME PEOPLE WISH TO COLONISE THE MOON, AND OTHERS DANCE BEFORE IT AS AN ANCIENT FRIEND.** - James Baldwin



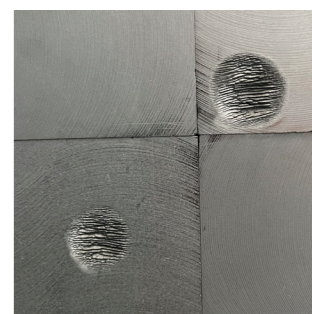
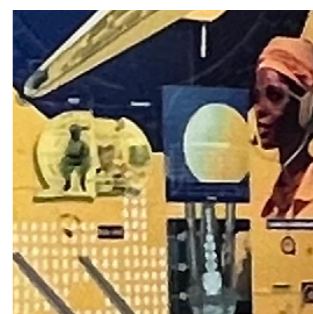
**Architects will indulge in the rebuilding but not in repair.**



**Architecture, a place to be loved**  
— when architecture is seen as a living creature



**A RAPIDLY HYBRIDISING WORLD CALL FOR A DIFFERENT AND BROADER UNDERSTANDING OF THE TERM 'ARCHITECT'**  
- Lesley Lokko



Photos & Quotes from the Architecture Biennale



## A week at the Biennale

We arrived in Venice on a Saturday morning, stepping onto the ferry to take us to the island, the sun beat down, and the shimmering blue waters surrounding Venice provided little relief, as swimming here was forbidden. After checking in at the hotel, we made our way towards the Giardini, one of the main venues of the biennale. It was our first time attending the Architecture Biennale, and we were filled with excitement and hope, much like two kids entering an amusement park. Our first stop was the British Pavilion, followed by the German.

On the second day, we entered the Central Pavilion, and it took us two full days to explore all the marvels inside. We were pleasantly surprised to find that most of the exhibited works straddled the boundaries between art and architecture, touching upon several other fields as well. Curatorial texts on the walls reminded us that this was a deliberate choice, questioning the future role of the architect. Lesley Lokko, the curator, wrote that *"a rapidly hybridizing world calls for a different and broader understanding of the term 'architect'."*

As the days passed, we managed to visit several national pavilions. The ones that left the strongest impression were the Dutch, German, British, Turkish, and Japanese pavilions, and perhaps these were the ones that influenced our own project the most. We also made our way through the Arsenale Exhibition space. The use of sound as a spatial and narrative tool was evident in many of the works, as well as the use of specific language, something we were inspired by to incorporate in our project as well.

Exploring Venice became a surprisingly rich source of inspiration. Site and context are always important and shape an experience, and Venice is a uniquely special place. Perhaps not in the way most would expect. Our thesis project is titled 'Entangled Architecture,' and we were amazed by the intricate systems of entangled life that we observed in everyday city life. From the washing lines crisscrossing buildings and alleyways, to kids feeding the birds, to trees, to people of all ages, to the sounds and scents, to turtles bathing in fountains, to the plants growing from the cracks in century-old buildings, to the spiderwebs interwoven with electrical cords. We didn't have to venture far beyond the biennale to find inspiring discoveries, and these two experiences, woven together, provided us with a most interesting starting point for our thesis project.

### Daily Schedule

Day 1 - 2

Giardini

Day 3

Exploring Venice

Tuesday Day 4

Giardini

Day 5 - 7

Arsenale



Supported structure for tree, Giardini, Venice

## Documentation of Reflection

For just under a week, we visited the Biennial daily, which was both inspiring and at times overwhelming. The exhibition sparked many thoughts, and we documented our reflections in photos, text, sketches, and discussions. The documentation became crucial for the ongoing work as we started to map out our impressions and ideas for the thesis project.


Bardo  
 advocates circular thinking  
 wisdom, buddhis

Bardos - transitional states

"Humans are merely elements within an expansive interconnected system"

"interactively"

Renollet



You are close not to improve system design or building that is built.

Carljin / difficult to grasp that want to understand

→ Study other the opportunity to rethink.

Venice water common food.  
 → neglected last 100 years.

- pollution
- drinking
- cooling
- energy

intech  
 devised  
 lost

Dutch Pavilion Film Maricon de Minder  
 Jan Jongert conv. Carljin Kingma


Use your skills to illustrate what our world/society works now

III possible future in different directions. <sup>examine scenarios</sup>

III possible water retention systems

WHAT you force we TAKE the economy can be overruled changed. and that man are tools to do it right away.

Land Narratives Fantastic Futures



what is landman?



3D printed sand object

Memor Model, Manifesto

Moffie D'Arbante

Japan 25/8

"Architecture, a place to be loved."

- when architecture is seen as a living creature "

"creating something involves giving it life"

"would it be possible to make architecture like a plant?"

Theater Gates Studio

Niga sit at "make practical" knowledge sharing


Carljin Kingma  
 The power of imagination.

A healing is coming

- shawanda corbett

cyborg theory  
 idea of world-building

reject boundaries & create space for alternative futures.

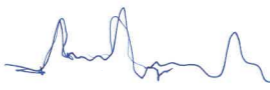


rigid?

inspired jazz flourish.

NOTES -  
 use of sound!

Very dominant



blue last to be described

→ therefore possess a kind of freedom

Theater Gates Studio 22/8  
 Black Artist Retreat

Sound  
 trying to explain complicated nuance of other people's practices

complicated relationship to material  
 Material expressivity

The African Post office  
 - Sumayya Vally & Mandi Nasirali

Blue Hour Fesake Okoribi  
 memories of the sister wife.  
 Yonson "architecture of atmosphere"  
 "oscillating presence"

Scans from our notebooks



What parts of the Biennale stayed with us and how does it connect to critical posthumanist/feminist theory?

After our trip to Venice we designed an exercise to start of our thesis project. The exercise gathers our experiences from the Biennale through a mapping process. We try to see what connections each memory has and how they connect to each other and the theory we have read (Donna Haraway, Staying with the trouble & Karin Reisinger, Abandoned Architectures). The purpose was to find what interested and excited us, and to set a starting point for our project.

### What did we learn? - Stories

Using string and connecting images and text to each other we notice that everything is connected to something and that this becomes an effective way to communicate with each other, a virtual and collective mindmap of our thoughts and impressions. In the core of it we find an emphasis on stories and how they are connected to architecture. This is something we want to take with us and build upon.



Exercise: Findings from the Biennale from our Thesis "Entangled Architecture"



## What did we learn?: It matters what stories tell stories

Words matter, they carry different meanings and they impact how we perceive something. When strung together they form sentences and weave narratives and construct stories. During our visit we took notice and interest in what words had been chosen to describe the different projects, to mention a few: imaginaries, stories, science fiction, futurism, narrative, living world, non-human, architecture as a living creature, sound, sensory, bodily, bodies, cyborg, ghost, boundaries, borders, playfulness, action, healing, unknown, unpredictable, temporality, circular, connected and entanglement. While some of these words share similarities, each bears its own distinctive nuance.

By gathering a selection of these words, they create a small glossary for us to continue using through out our thesis.



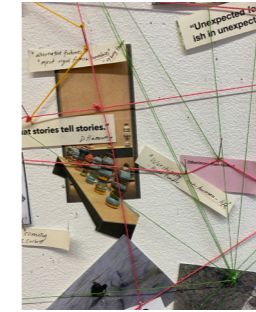
Link to film of our mapping process

Images from our mapping process



### Imaginaries

Represent visions or constructs of possible worlds, often used to explore creative and speculative ideas in design and architecture.



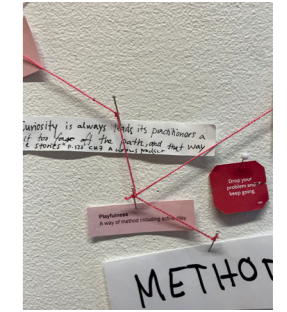
### Other - then - Human

Entities, beings, or elements in the natural world that are distinct from humans, encompassing animals, plants, ecosystems, and other non-human elements.



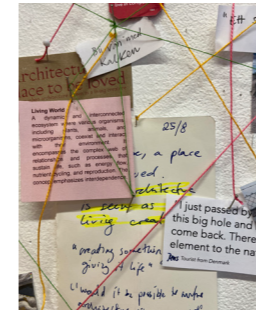
### Science Fiction

Speculative fiction that explores imaginative, futuristic concepts and alternative realities, and can serve as a source of inspiration for architectural design.



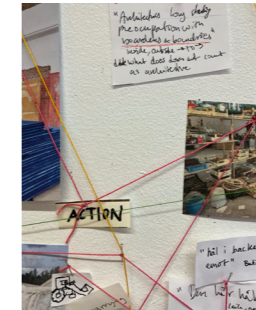
### Playfulness

Encourages experimentation, creativity, and a sense of joy in design, aiming to challenge conventions and engage users in interactive and dynamic ways.



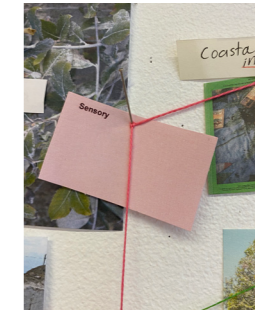
### Living World

The interconnected ecosystem of all living organisms, including humans, highlighting the importance of sustainable and holistic thinking.



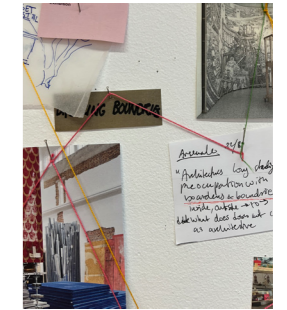
### Action

The active role of architecture in effecting meaningful change and addressing societal, cultural and ecological challenges.



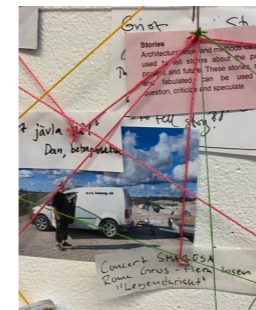
### Sensory

Engages the senses, such as sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell, in the design process to create immersive and experiential environments.



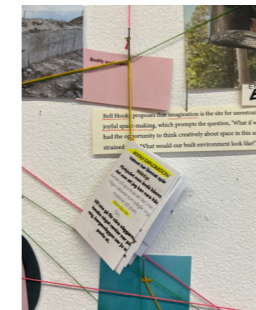
### Boarders & Boundaries

What boarders and boundaries can architecture help us to question today?



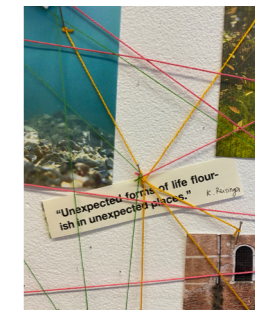
### Stories

Narratives that convey meaning, culture, and history, which can be integrated into architectural design to communicate a sense of place and identity.



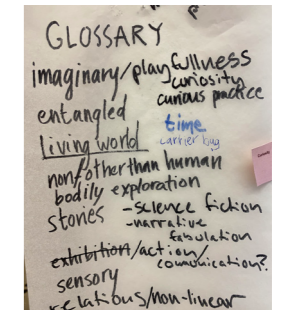
### Bodily Exploration

Refers to the act of investigating and becoming intimately familiar with ones surroundings, through one's own body.



### Unpredictability

We need to adapt to a changing future, a future with a lot of unknowns. Architecture too needs to be able to handle unpredictabilities.



### Glossary

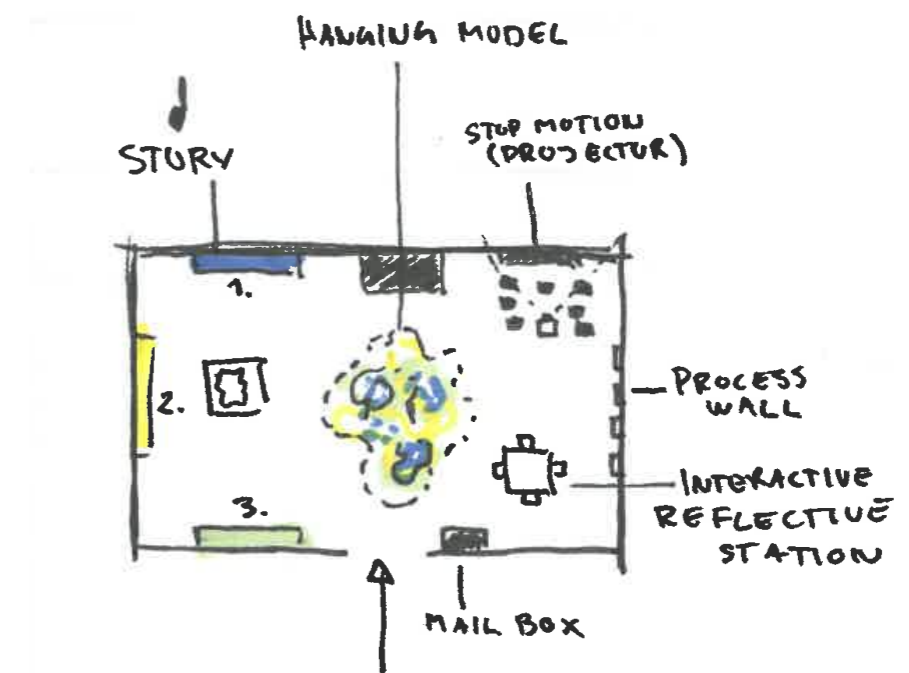
Serves as a reference guide for understanding and communicating specific knowledge and terminology.



## What did we learn?: Exhibition

The Architecture Biennale uses exhibitions as a format to communicate important issues about our world through the architectural lens. However, occasionally we found it difficult to grasp certain parts and works. We believe that the format can be adapted to reach a wider audience, making it more inclusive, where more people can be part of the conversation about the role and impact of architecture.

As part of our thesis project, we will work towards exhibition materials that will be displayed outside the school and the academy's premises. In this regard, the trip to Venice and the Biennale has played a crucial role, influencing both the thematic approach and the physical spatial layout of our project.



Early sketch of thesis exhibition

*This trip was made possible thanks to:*

*Hawermans Resestipendium*

*We want to thank the foundation for making  
this invaluable experience possible.*