



La Biennale di Venezia

18. Mostra
Internazionale
di Architettura

Partecipazioni Nazionali

Press Release 18th May 2023

2pm CEST

Ireland at Venice: In Search of Hy-Brasil

Ireland's Representation at the 2023 Venice Architecture Biennale

Minister of State at the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Patrick O'Donovan T.D. will tomorrow, Friday 19 May, open Ireland's Representation at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia.



Caption: In Search of Hy-Brasil, Ireland at Venice

Credit: Ste Murray

The exhibition, *In Search of Hy-Brasil*, is curated by a team of five architects, Peter Carroll, Peter Cody, Elizabeth Hatz, Mary Laheen and Joseph Mackey. Ireland at Venice is an initiative of Culture Ireland in partnership with the Arts Council.

In Search of Hy-Brasil presents fieldwork from Ireland's remote islands, investigating their diverse cultures, communities, and experiences. The exhibition has a focus on renewable energy, ethical food production and biodiversity, capturing the islands' sustainable methods of livelihood through drawing, models, film, sound, writing and language, to raise awareness of the islanders' management of resources and their balancing of the delicate equilibrium between culture and nature. The pavilion responds to the theme, *The Laboratory of the Future* - selected by curator of the Biennale Architettura 2023, Lesley Lokko.

The exhibition offers an immersive experience using local materials that highlight the traditional heritage of each island; for example sea sacks woven from discarded fishers' rope, a linen tapestry mapping Ireland's maritime zone and an abstraction of *Sceilg Mhichíl* made from Galway sheep's wool. The installation includes large slabs of local limestone from the offshore islands of Inis Meáin (Inishmaan), UNESCO World Heritage site *Sceilg Mhichíl* (Skellig Michael) and *Cliara* (Clare Island). In doing this, *In Search of Hy-Brasil* shifts between the global and the local, the territorial and the intimate and gives international audiences the chance to experience connections between the social fabric, cultural landscape and ecology of these islands. The exhibition is also steeped in the Irish language through voice, writing and song.

Ireland at Venice 2023 builds on Ireland's strong presence at the International Architecture Exhibition of La biennale di Venezia. In recent years the Biennale Architettura 2018 was curated by Shelley McNamara and Yvonne Farrell of Grafton Architects. This year sees the involvement of Irish architects Emmett Scanlon, Alice Clancy and Laurence Lord on the Biennale's Curator Lesley Lokko's curatorial team. Culture Ireland is also supporting the project of BothAnd Group, which is participating in Curator's Special Projects at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition curated



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by Lesley Lokko. Also supported by Culture Ireland, a project by architect Miriam Dunne will be featured in Time Space Existence, running in Venice at the same time as the Biennale this year.

The exhibition will continue in Venice from May until November and will then undertake a national tour of Ireland in 2024, supported by The Arts Council. The tour will recreate elements of the installation on the islands, with the curatorial team seeking to create an enriched narrative, bringing voices from peripheral locations into mainstream conversations around our global future. The curators of the installation will publish a book of essays and contribute to a film documentary.

Catherine Martin T.D., Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, said:

“I am very pleased that *Ireland in Venice 2023* will open tomorrow with the exhibition *In Search of Hy-Brasil* representing Ireland at the 18th Venice Architecture Biennale. *In Search of Hy-Brasil* in responding to the joint themes of the Biennale - decarbonisation and decolonisation - examines the relationship between the islands of Ireland and their natural environment. Irish architecture has had a strong presence at the Biennale in recent years, in particular since Grafton Architects Shelly McNamara and Yvonne Farrell were selected as the Biennale curators in 2018. I have no doubt that the Hy-Brasil team will continue the robust representation of Irish architecture in Venice.”

Patrick O'Donovan T.D., Minister of State with Responsibility for the Gaeltacht and Gaeltacht Affairs said:

“I am honoured to launch *Ireland in Venice 2023*. As Minister with responsibility for the Gaeltacht I am particularly pleased that the exhibition provides a unique showcase for the Irish language where people from countries around the globe will get to hear and see the Irish language spoken as part of an immersive experience.”

More information on the Pavilion and curators can be found at: www.hy-brasil.ie/.



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Press kit available [here](#).

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Editor's notes:

The Venice Architecture Biennale, which will run from 20 May to 26 November 2023, remains the most important global platform for the exhibition of architecture involving the public, members of civil society, individuals and institutions. It offers a unique opportunity for Irish architects to engage with international audiences. Ireland at Venice 2023 will build on Ireland's strong presence at the Venice Architecture Biennale in recent years with Annex's 'Entanglement' and 'Free Market' gaining global acclaim in 2021 and 2018 respectively. The



16th Venice Architecture Biennale in 2018 was curated by Shelley McNamara and Yvonne Farrell of Grafton Architects.

In Search of Hy-Brasil - Ireland's Maritime Zone

The five curators have studied the island landscapes of Inis Meáin (Inishmaan), UNESCO World Heritage site Sceilg Mhichíl (Skellig Michael) and Cliara (Clare Island) through drawing, survey, film, sound, model, mapping, and story. The installation will offer an immersive experience that draws connections between the social fabric, cultural landscape and ecology of these islands, shifting between the global and the local, the territorial and the intimate.

Large limestone slabs of three of the islands - Inis Meáin, Sceilg Mhichíl and Cliara and their related ocean floor - will be on display, alongside a range of hands-on tactile displays, which celebrate the use of local materials in innovative and unorthodox ways.

These include:

- A hung linen tapestry mapping the extraordinary complexity and rich topography of Ireland's maritime zone and beyond;
- An abstraction of Sceilg Mhichíl made from Galway sheep's wool, a traditionally mill-woven yarn, re-proposed within the pavilion in an entirely different light;
- Clare Island Survey, including a biological scientific study of microorganisms endangered by the climate crisis;
- A sea of interpretive drawings revealing aspects of unique living conditions on the islands;
- A film and soundscape of Inis Meáin, combining language, landscape, ocean, time and light;
- Sea sacks woven from discarded fishers' rope and filled with the by-product from the production of yarn;
- A graphite rendering of the Pangaea, a reminder of our shared landmass in geological time"

Curatorial team:

Peter Carroll BArch MRIAI. Graduated from University College Dublin in 1995. He worked in the



studios of O'Donnell + Tuomey in Dublin and Rafael Moneo in Madrid before establishing A2 Architects in 2005. He is Director of A2 Architects and Senior Lecturer, School of Architecture University of Limerick since 2007. Peter is currently running the third year studio in SAUL focussing on Clare Island and its ongoing relationship to the Praeger and Feehan surveys.

Peter Cody PhD MScAAD DipArch BScArch MRIAI. Graduated from the Dublin Institute of Technology in 1990, completed a master's degree in architecture at Columbia University, New York in 1996 and a PhD at RMIT University, Melbourne in 2018. He worked in the studio of and Alvaro Siza in Porto before establishing Boyd Cody Architects in 2000. He is currently a Director of Boyd Cody Architects and assistant professor at University College Dublin. He exhibited an interpretation of the work of Eileen Gray at the Venice Biennale 2018 and previously exhibited at the Biennale in 2012 and 2006 with a focus on the depleted bog-lands of the Irish Midlands. He was Co-Curator of 'Line to Surface' at the Inaugural Lisbon Architecture Triennale 2007 with Peter Carroll.

Elizabeth Hatz AA Diploma / SAR / MSA, is a practicing architect, professor and art curator, sharing her time between practice, research and teaching positions at UL and KTH Stockholm. Built work includes Kodak Head Quarters Gothenburg, Stockholm Globe Arena and buildings for AKSO-Nobel, Stockholm. Hatz curated EVA 2010, Ireland's pre-eminent art event. The head of SAR (Swedish RIAI) she cofounded Fargfabriken, renowned scene for Art and Architecture in Stockholm, where she is a board member.

Mary Laheen BArch, MUBC, FRIAI graduated from University College Dublin in 1981. She worked with de Blacam and Meagher Architects before establishing a practice in Dublin in 1995. She is the author of various publications related to cultural landscape, and represents Ireland on the International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes, ICOMOS. With Aoibheann Ní Mhearáin, Architect, she exhibited 'Landscape and Lens' interpreting the work of Jean Rénaudie at the Venice Biennale 2018. Mary has had a lifelong engagement with the islands of Ireland, in particular the drystone-wall field-boundary landscape of the Aran Islands. The nature-culture dynamic of the islands has informed and inspired her work in the practice and teaching of

architecture.

Joseph Mackey BArch, MRIAI graduated from University College Dublin in 2010. He worked with the Renzo Piano Building Workshop in Paris, Tom de Paor in Dublin, Eric Parry Architects and Niall McLaughlin Architects in London, before establishing Joseph Mackey Architects in 2015. He is a director at Joseph Mackey Architects and a senior lecturer at Cork Centre for Architectural Education. Joseph's work has been exhibited at RIBA gallery in London 2010 and the Tallinn Architecture Biennale 2022.

[instagram.com/hy_brasil_irl/](https://www.instagram.com/hy_brasil_irl/)

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Hy-Brasil is Commissioned by Culture Ireland, and supported by:

- Culture Ireland
- The Arts Council of Ireland
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Cardinal Capital
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick
- Cork Centre for Architectural Education
- The Office of Public Works
- The Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland
- Kavanagh Lighting
- TG4
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Infomar
- Techrete
- Galway County Council
- Kerry County Council
- Mayo County Council