

## Fundação Bienal de São Paulo announces the curators of Brazil's official participation in the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

*Find out about the curators **Gabriela de Matos** and **Paulo Tavares**, architects with extensive experience in the field of research and curatorship; the exhibition takes place from 20 May to 26 November 2023*

**São Paulo, 7 December 2022** – The Fundação Bienal de São Paulo announces the curators and the project selected to represent the country in the Brazilian Pavilion during the **18th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale**, opening on 20 May 2023. Entitled **Terra [Earth]**, the Brazilian representation will be coordinated by **Gabriela de Matos** and **Paulo Tavares**, both architects and researchers with a transversal approach that is in dialogue with race, gender, pedagogy and visual culture studies (*see curricula below*).

For José Olympio da Veiga Pereira, president of the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo: “The International Architecture Exhibition of the Biennale di Venezia is a privileged space for debating the most urgent subjects in architecture and urbanism, a field that ultimately reflects on our dynamics of life from the use and sharing of common spaces, as a society. At a time when humanity is facing major challenges, the exhibition proposed by the young architects Gabriela de Matos and Paulo Tavares is a way of giving visibility to researches and practices that can contribute to the collective shaping of our future.”

The curators were selected through a closed call for projects, to which Gabriela de Matos and Paulo Tavares responded with a proposal for an exhibition that focused on “earth” as the founding motif for conceptions, imaginaries and narratives of national formation. In the words of the curators:

“Earth is a founding motif of the conceptions, imaginaries and narratives of national formation and the representation of Brazil. Representations of nationality were structured by idealized and racialized visions of tropical nature... Earth is also a founding motif in the cosmologies, philosophies and narratives of the indigenous and Afro-Brazilian populations that form most of the national cultural matrix. But in this approach, the concept of earth appears in another form, as an ancestry that takes us to cultural geographies further inside and beyond Brazil. It points to another sense of earth and territory – such as belonging, cultivation, rights, reparation and other imaginaries of Brazil... The curatorial proposal sets out from these reflections and their contemporary relevance to think of Brazil as earth. Earth as soil, farm, ground, territory and *terreiro*. But also Earth in its global and cosmic sense, as a planet and a common home of all life, human and non-human. Earth as memory, and also as future, looking at the past and at heritage to rethink the field of architecture facing the most pressing contemporary urban, territorial and

environmental issues."

Traditionally for the event, the Brazilian representation establishes a dialogue with the theme of the main exhibition of the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – *The Laboratory of the Future*. Curated by Lesley Lokko, "La Biennale di Venezia itself is also a kind of laboratory of the future, a time and space in which speculations about the discipline's relevance to this world — and the world to come — take place. (...) We envisage our exhibition as a kind of workshop, a laboratory where architects and practitioners across an expanded field of creative disciplines draw out examples from their contemporary practices that chart a path for the audience — participants and visitors alike — to weave through, imagining for themselves what the future can hold."

### **About the curators**

**Gabriela de Matos** is an Afro-Brazilian architect and urban planner, born in Vale do Rio Doce in Minas Gerais, who creates multidisciplinary projects with the aim of promoting and highlighting Brazilian architectural and urban culture from the lens of race and gender. She graduated from the Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo at PUC Minas in 2010, and in 2016 she specialized in sustainability and management of the built environment at UFMG. Master degree candidate at Diversitas – Center for the Study of Diversities, Intolerances and Conflicts of the Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas (FFLCH) of the Universidade de São Paulo, she currently teaches undergraduate architecture and urbanism at Escola da Cidade. She is the CEO of Estúdio de Arquitetura – Gabriela de Matos, created in 2014. She is vice-president of the São Paulo department of the Instituto de Arquitetos do Brasil, and is the founder of the project *Arquitetas Negras*, which maps the production of black Brazilian architects. De Matos researches architecture produced in Africa and its diaspora with a focus on Brazil. Among other things, she proposes actions that promote the debate on gender and race in architecture as a means of bringing visibility to the issue. She is the editor of the book *Arquitetas negras vol.1*, which is included in major collections such as that of the Library of Washington (United States) and won the IAB SP Award in the Best Architecture Publications category. She was a collaborator with the *Rebel Architette* collective in 2019 (Italy), and participated as a speaker at the 2021 UIA – International Union of Architects. For the 2021 edition of the CASACOR exhibition, she designed the reception environment, entitled *Espaço Agô*. She was awarded Architect of the Year 2020 by IAB RJ, and was a juror for the 2022 Ibero-American Biennale of Architecture.

**Paulo Tavares** explores the interfaces of architecture, visual cultures, curatorship, theory and advocacy. Operating through multiple media and mediums, his work opens up a collaborative arena focused on environmental justice and counter-hegemonic narratives in architecture. His projects and articles have been featured in several national and international exhibitions and publications, including *Harvard Design Magazine*, *The Architectural Review*, Oslo Architecture Triennial, Istanbul Design Biennale, and the 32nd Bienal de São Paulo – *Incerteza viva*. Tavares was co-curator of the Chicago Architecture Biennale 2019 (USA) and is currently a member of the

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curatorial board of the second edition of the Sharjah Architecture Triennale 2023 (UAE). He was the curator of the projects *Acts of Repair* (Preston Thomas Memorial Symposium, Cornell University, USA), and *Climate Emergency > Emergence*, at the Museu de Arte, Arquitetura e Tecnologia (MAAT) in Lisbon, Portugal. Tavares is the author of several texts and books that question the colonial legacies of modernity, including *Forest Law/Floresta Jurídica* (2014), *Des-Habitat* (2019), *Memória da terra* (2019), and *Lúcio Costa era racista?* (2020) and *Derechos No-Humanos* (2022).

### **About Brazil's participation in the 18th International Architecture Exhibition of the Biennale di Venezia**

The prerogative of the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo to officially represent Brazil in the Biennale di Venezia is the result of a decades-long partnership with the Brazilian Federal Government, which has granted the Fundação Bienal the responsibility of appointing the curators and conceiving and producing the exhibitions, as a recognition of the excellence of its work in the artistic and cultural field. Created with the aim of promoting Brazil's artistic production in the most traditional art event in the world, the exhibitions take place in the Brazil Pavilion, designed by Henrique Mindlin and built in 1964.

### **Brazilian Pavilion at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia**

**Commissioner:** José Olympio da Veiga Pereira, President of the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

**Curators:** Gabriela de Matos and Paulo Tavares

**Exhibition:** Terra [Earth]

**Venue:** Brazilian Pavilion

**Address:** Giardini Napoleonici di Castello, Padiglione Brasile, 30122, Venice, Italy

**Date:** 20 May to 26 November 2023

**Preview for the press and professionals in the field:** 17-19 May 2023

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