

# air



La Biennale di Venezia

17. Mostra  
Internazionale  
di Architettura  
Eventi Collaterali

**air/aria/aire**

**Catalonia  
in Venice**

## **Collateral Event of the 17th International Architecture Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia**

The Institut Ramon Llull presents **Catalonia in Venice - air/aria/aire**, a Collateral Event of the Biennale Architettura 2021 and an exhibition curated by architect Olga Subirós. The project reflects upon the central theme of the Biennale, 'How will we live together?', with an investigation into air as a common asset upon which our survival depends. Under the name Aire, the exhibition highlights the role of architecture and urbanism within the context of two interconnected global crises: the climate emergency and the public health crisis. This curatorial project aims to seek solutions to these interconnected crises through an investigation into air pollution and how it directly affects people. The exhibition offers an immersion into the radical experience of air contamination through a large, multi-sensory installation.

**Catalonia in Venice - air/aria/aire** is based on the study of the city through the application of digital technologies to analyse big data, viewed as an invaluable tool for empowering citizens and for enabling architects to design more sustainable, healthier, fairer cities. The exhibition focuses on the analysis of big data to benefit the public and identifies actions needed to rethink urban design and the need for access to open data. Cities, as prolific producers of data, must be able to protect the sovereignty of this public and private data, so that it works for the common good. The project proposes a revision of the concept of 'smart cities' in which the use of technology is not the solution, but rather a tool to constantly renovate the social pact.

It is particularly relevant within the context of the COVID-19 health crisis. Numerous studies have pointed to air pollution as a contributing factor towards the higher rate of COVID-19 cases in urban areas. This makes the right to breathe clean air, on which this proposal is based, all the more important. Epidemics have always been an opportunity to accelerate the introduction of urban planning measures aimed at improving health in cities. This new public health crisis, along with critical levels of air pollution and the climate emergency, emphasises the need to adopt sustainable, healthy urban planning measures supported by an interdisciplinary, collaborative, participative model that incorporates data.

300.000 km/s, an architects' studio specialising in the analysis of urban data for new urban challenges, will present the results of a project to create new cartographies of the city of Barcelona and of Catalonia, based on an examination of architectural, urbanistic, atmospheric and health data. A fundamental aspect of 300.000 km/s's investigation is the active participation of experts from Catalonia's scientific community and public sector. The cartographies were created by 300.000 km/s using a vast range of information, from European Space Agency (ESA) data to numerical models established by various public and private research groups in Catalonia. Examples of the latter include CALIOPE-Urban, an air quality forecasting operational system project carried out by the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre (BSC); the company Labelia Earth's predictive model; data from the Government of Catalonia's network monitoring stations and pollution prevention; and studies on health impact from the ISGlobal institute and from Barcelona City Council's Public Health Agency.

Olga Subirós, who also designed the architecture of the exhibition space, offers a large-format, immersive experience that brings visitors closer to three aspects of air pollution: its materiality, its apparent invisibility, and its impact on our cities. A large audiovisual installation presents the vulnerabilities, impacts and opportunities revealed by 300.000 km/s's investigation that set the guidelines for sustainable, healthy urban planning. The installation takes on another, particularly sensory dimension thanks to the participation of singer and composer Maria Arnal, who fills the exhibition space with her own, never-before-heard aria.

**Catalonia in Venice - air/aria/aire** is an investigation into new work methodologies, which allow for a radically different analysis of the cities we live in and help us visualise future opportunities for these environments. The investigation will be explained in a monographic edition of the Quaderns d'Arquitectura i Urbanisme ('Architecture and Urbanism Workbooks') journal, published by the Architects' Association of Catalonia (COAC). The Institut Ramon Llull and the COAC have signed an agreement for the journal, with a national and international circulation of around 8000 copies, to be the new outlet for the scientific dissemination of the content produced by **Catalonia in Venice** for each edition of the Biennale Architettura.

### **Olga Subirós**

Olga Subirós is an architect and curator of exhibition projects that provide an integrative approach to twenty-first century culture and the far-reaching transformations of the digital era. Alongside José Luis de Vicente, she was the curator of Big Bang Data, an exhibition on the datafication of the world presented in venues including the Singapore ArtScience Museum and the MIT Museum, the contents of which were adapted and extended for each centre. In 2016, Olga Subirós won the international competition for the Data Square exhibition at the EPFL-ArtLab in Lausanne. She also designed the exhibition on chef Ferran Adrià's creative process and the El Bulli restaurant held at Somerset House in London, Boston Science Museum, and Fundación Telefónica in Madrid. She is also behind the staging of the exhibition Esteu a punt per a la televisió? ('Are you ready for television?'), curated by Chus Martínez at the MACBA, and of over a dozen exhibition projects at the CCCB. Olga Subirós is a lecturer on the Data and Design master's course at Escola Elisava-Universitat Pompeu Fabra.

### **300.000 Km/s**

300.000 km/s is a pioneering urbanism studio in macrodata-based strategic planning. Its installations combine the analysis and the visualisation of data on cities to improve their inhabitants' quality of life. This studio has put exhibitions on at the Chicago Architecture Biennial (2019), Madrid's Casa Encendida (2017), the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago (2014) and the CCCB (2014). Founded by Mar Santamaría and Pablo Martínez, 300.000 km/s has been awarded the Manuel Solà-Morales Catalonia Urbanism Prize 2020, the CSCAE National Urbanism Prize in 2019 and the S + T + ARTS Prize from the European Commission in 2019, with the urban planning project Pla d'Usos de Ciutat Vella de Barcelona ('Usage Plan for Barcelona's Old Town').

### **Institut Ramon Llull**

The Institut Ramon Llull has been promoting, producing and organising Catalonia's participation in the Collateral Events at the Biennale di Venezia since 2009. It is a public institution dedicated to the international promotion of the Catalan language and culture. The project to be presented by the Llull Institute in Venice is chosen by an expert committee that changes every year. For the Biennale Architettura 2021, the project was chosen by Assumpció Puig, the dean of the Architects' Association of Catalonia (COAC), alongside committee members Pau de Solà-Morales, president of ARQUIN FAD; Pep Quílez, vice president of the Young Architects' Association of Catalonia (AJAC); Pati Núñez and Estel Ortega, curators of the Collateral Event from Catalunya at the Biennale Architettura 2018 (one vote between them) and Francesc Serés, head of the Creation Department at the Institut Ramon Llull. Institut Ramon Llull.

### **Catalonia in Venice**

Calle Quintavalle, Castello 40, Venice. 22 May - 21 November 2021  
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### **Prensa y RRPP**

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