

Press Release
27 April 2021

Taiwan Collateral Event at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia embarks on a journey for another year

Under the auspice of the Ministry of Culture of Taiwan, the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (NTMoFA) and curatorial teams Divooe Zein Architects and Double-Grass International Co., are jointly organizing the Taiwan Collateral Event for the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia (Biennale Architettura 2021). Titled *Primitive Migration from/to Taiwan*, the exhibition tackles a question posed by the biennale’s curator Hashim Sarkis, “How will we live together?”, which has taken new relevance since the postponement of the biennale last year due to the pandemic. *Primitive Migration from/to Taiwan* will take place at the Palazzo delle Prigioni from 22 May to 21 November 2021.

A pre-event press conference for the Taiwan Collateral Event at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia will take place on 27 April. Attending the pre-event press conference are the Minister of Culture of Taiwan; Director of NTMoFA Liang Yung Fei; curators Divooe Zein of Divooe Zein Architects and Frank Huang; the evaluation committee and sponsors. Thanks to the cooperation and support of various inter-ministerial agencies, the Command Center for Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens of Taiwan Centers for Disease Control has specially arranged vaccines to ensure the health and safety of personnel travelling to Venice. Following a year of delay, travelling for the exhibition set-up was also made possible thanks to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ sponsorship of the exhibition. The teams travelling to Venice include: Zein Group Co., Ltd./Divooe Zein Architects, TransGlobal Logistics and the NTMoFA administrative team. Adhering to La Biennale’s pandemic regulations, the Taiwan Collateral Event at Biennale Architettura 2021 is expected to overcome overseas travel challenges for the exhibition set-up and launch successfully.

With a focus on the overarching theme “How will we live together?”, the biennale illuminates the current global need for architecture, especially projects that can serve as a bridge between environment and people, integrating life, work and ideologies, whilst also lending itself as a site that weaves the divine, life, and travel altogether. In a press conference held on 12 April, Roberto Cicutto, President of La Biennale di Venezia, expressed that physical events will take place as scheduled after a year-long preparation. Biennale Architettura 2021 is expected to welcome architectural teams from 63 countries and regions in May with a limited number of visitors able to attend at any one time. Ticket purchase information and COVID-19 prevention guidelines are available on La Biennale’s official website.

Primitive Migration from/to Taiwan draws from existing case studies and interdisciplinary collaborations that elicit in-depth discussions around constructing pioneering, environmentally friendly buildings to present an exemplary model for future experimental architecture. The three sub-themes of the Taiwanese

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presentation – Ask, Work Together, and Influence Each Other – foregrounds the unique relationship between humans and nature. These sub-themes will be unveiled through five architectural projects: *Siu siu – Lab of Primitive Sense*, *Nature Monastery in Bali*, *Semi-ecosphere glass house for isolation and meditation*, *Lab of Primitive Sense* and *The Forest BIG*. Additionally, the exhibition will unite audiovisual and olfaction designs by collaborating with Peruvian director Mauricio Freyre to produce conceptual images and *Äi Äi Illum Lab* to design interactive elements, inviting viewers to experience a unique curatorial concept that stimulates our five senses.

Primitive Migration from/to Taiwan will be staged in the ancient prison of Palazzo delle Prigioni, an emblematic landmark situated in the heart of Venice. The architectural design provides viewers with a tranquil environment that echoes the history of Venice. Facing the adversity of COVID-19, the exhibition also provides viewers an opportunity to examine these nature-inspired projects to find a tranquil state of mind. The Palazzo is an ideal venue for the presentation as it offers vast empty areas for creativity and the display of new work, whilst retaining many original elements of the Palazzo itself.

The exhibits were transported in early March 2021 and are expected to arrive in Venice in early May. In conjunction with the official opening of Biennale Architettura on May 22, the Taiwan Collateral Event has scheduled a virtual opening to provide remote viewing access. For further details about the exhibition and opening activities, please refer to the Biennale Architettura page of [NTMoFA](#) and the official website of [La Biennale di Venezia](#). The public is invited to follow Taiwan's living traditions, largely influenced by its mountains and surrounding ocean, through its distinctive architectural presentation in an international context.

Click [here](#) to download the full press kit

Taiwan Collateral Event at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia

- Dates : 22 May to 21 November 2021 (closed on Monday's)
- Location: Palazzo delle Prigioni, Venice, Italy
- Exhibition organizers: Chao Hsin-Yi, Ho Thung-Yu (04) 23723552 #303、#308
- Media contacts:
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National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts

- Opening hours:
Tuesday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00
Saturday to Sunday 09:00 – 18:00
Closed on Mondays
- Address: Wu Chuan West Road, West District, Taichung, Taiwan, 40359
- Website: <http://www.ntmofa.gov.tw>

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Appendix

1. Exhibition concept

People who pine to live closer to nature, tend to travel between urban and rural areas. This kind of informal, ever-changing nomadic lifestyle is well represented by travelers, spiritual practitioners, and those who pursue their sanctuary in nature.

Situated in East Asia, Taiwan is located at the convergent point of the Eurasian Plate and the Philippine Sea Plate. As one of the homelands of the Austronesian people, Taiwan is surrounded by the sea and approximately 70% of the landscape is covered in verdant Alpine forests and rolling hills. Being the 38th largest island in the world, it has an overall marine tropical climate, where the northern and central regions of Taiwan are subtropical, the southern region is tropical, and the mountainous regions are temperate. Taiwan is also home to over 4,077 species of native vascular plants, 800 species of vertebrates, and 20,000 recorded species of insects.

There is a fine line between the balance of developing and conserving nature that is worth the effort.

Based in Taiwan, the interdisciplinary design team Divooe Zein Architects studio has been dedicated to studying and planning for nature and rural fields for many years. In 2014, the studio established “siu siu – Lab of Primitive Senses”, with the core value of generating a “nature-based learning field”. The success of interdisciplinary collaboration among botanists, traditional medicine practitioners, aboriginal artists, climatologists, spiritualists, yoga instructors and many others is shared with the public through this experimental base. In 2017, the team collaborated with CMP Village on the project “The Forest BIG” which integrated multiple industries and the concept of “Learning from nature”. By observing the everchanging landscape and environment of each unique architectural work and carrying out in-depth fieldworks, the team discovered that for nature to not be overexploited yet develop continuously, it required to co-exist with the essential component of “tranquility of mind”.

The Taiwan Exhibition presents not only the independent experimental works such as “siu siu - Lab of Primitive Senses” in Taipei and “Nature Monastery” in Bali, but also other planning and conceptual design projects which cooperated with enterprises such as “The Forest BIG” with CMP

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Village, “Semi-Ecosphere Glass House” with Spring Pool Glass and JUT foundation, and “Lab of Primitive Perception” with developers in China. These selected projects reflect different cultural backgrounds, geographical landscapes, commercial industries, and space usage among others. While each project shows their own unique perspective, they all play a significant role of bridging the gap between different local contexts and demonstrating and expanding the values of cross-disciplinary collaborations.

2. About the curators

Divooe Zein, Director of Divooe Zein Architects

Divooe Zein (Tseng Chih-Wei, b. 1973, Taiwan), Director of his namesake architecture firm, was raised in Palau and studied at international school SDA. In 2003, he established Divooe Zein Architects and then embarked on regular long-term research trips to Bali. Zein founded Siu siu – Lab of Primitive Senses in Taipei in 2014 and started teaching at Taiwan’s Shih Chien University Department of Architecture a year later.

Wei-Lun (Frank) Huang

Frank Huang (b.1981, Taiwan), Founder of Double-Grass International Co, started an art news website in 2012 that gave rise a series of creative activities and curated exhibitions.

3. About the curatorial teams

Divooe Zein Architects

Established in 2003, Divooe Zein Architects is located in Taipei, Taiwan. The team’s design takes on a holistic approach that considers the building itself, its surrounding environment, perceptions and other factors. The team has worked on historical building renovations, innovative designs for research institutes, experimental housing and hotels, amongst many other projects. Since 2014, the firm has been exploring the development of lightweight and composite materials and their potential applications in architecture.

Conceptual image: Mauricio Freyre

Olfaction design: Äi Äi Illum Lab

Main visual design: Hung Chang Lien

Technical consultants: Lin Kai-Feng, Huang Yen-Hsun