

Minister of State Ó Ríordáin announces the selection of Niall McLaughlin Architects to represent Ireland at the 15th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice in 2016

Aodhán Ó Ríordáin, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, today (16 November, 2015) announced the selection of Niall McLaughlin Architects to represent Ireland at the 15th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice in 2016.

The Minister, reaffirming the Government's commitment to supporting Ireland's participation at the Venice Biennale, noted, 'international interest in and appreciation of contemporary Irish architecture continues to grow and Ireland's presence at the Biennale provides an outstanding opportunity for Irish architects to platform new thinking and exhibit Irish architectural approaches.'

The theme of the 15th International Architecture Exhibition, which will be held from 28 May to 27 November 2016, is entitled '**Reporting from the Front**'. Announcing the theme, Alejandro Aravena, the Biennale artistic director, stated, 'there are several battles that need to be won and several frontiers that need to be expanded in order to improve the quality of the built environment and consequently people's quality of life...at this Biennale, we want to see stories worth telling and exemplary cases worth sharing where architecture has, is and will make a difference in winning those battles and expanding those frontiers'.¹

Responding to the overall theme of the Biennale, the proposal presented by Niall McLaughlin Architects and curated by Yeoryia Manolopoulou, reflects their interest in working as architects to understand and improve the quality of life for those suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

The selected team will examine the spatial experiences of people with Alzheimer's disease whilst recognising that the experiences of the sufferer are unlikely to resemble any conventional architectural representation. The installation at Venice will record and represent the human experience from this frontline condition and show it as a space with its own characteristics. This central concept will be accompanied by a contextual piece and also a social media campaign to extend the impact of this exhibition beyond the Biennale.

Christine Sisk, Director of Culture Ireland said: 'The Venice Architecture Biennale is the greatest world showcase for the presentation of contemporary architectural talent. The selection of Niall McLaughlin Architects to represent Ireland in 2016 will serve to build on Ireland's successes over the

¹ <http://www.labiennale.org/en/architecture/exhibition/15iae.html>

years at the Biennale and serve to further highlight the ingenuity and responsiveness of Irish architects to difficult challenges.'

Orlaith McBride, Director of the Arts Council, said: 'The Arts Council is proud to support Niall McLaughlin Architects to represent Ireland at the Venice Biennale in 2016. Niall's work demonstrates the international importance of Irish architectural practice today and we are looking forward to what promises to be a wonderful representation in Venice.'

Ireland at Venice is an initiative of the Culture Ireland Division of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in partnership with the Arts Council.

Biographies

Niall McLaughlin

Niall McLaughlin was born in Geneva in 1962, was educated in Dublin and received his architectural qualifications from University College Dublin in 1984. He worked for Scott Tallon Walker in Dublin and London between 1984 and 1989 before establishing his own practice, Niall McLaughlin Architects, in London in 1990, with a view to designing high quality modern buildings with a special emphasis on materials and detail. Niall won Young British Architect of the Year in 1998, was one of the BBC Rising Stars in 2001, and his work represented Britain in a US exhibition Gritty Brits at the Carnegie Mellon Museum.

His designs have won many awards in the UK, Ireland and the US; including an RIAI award for Best Building in the Landscape and the RIBA Stephen Lawrence Award, and have featured on the RIBA Stirling Shortlist 2013 and 2015.

Niall is Professor of Architectural Practice at University College London, was a visiting professor at the University of California Los Angeles from 2012-2013 and was appointed Lord Norman Foster Visiting Professor of Architecture, Yale University for 2014-2015. He acted as chair of the RIBA Awards Group from 2007 to 2009.

His practice has considerable experience of developing and delivering exhibition proposals; such as the Bloom exhibition at the RIBA, the De La Warr Pavilion Bandstand in Bexhill, the Vidal Sassoon Salon in Boston and the Drawing Floor in Dublin.

Yeoryia Manolopoulou

Yeoryia Manolopoulou is an architect, educator and researcher. She is Senior Lecturer and Director of Research at The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. Yeoryia received her Diploma in Architecture at the National Technical University in Athens, and completed a MArch and one of the first PhDs by Architectural Design at The Bartlett.

In 2006, she established AY Architects with Anthony Boulanger. The practice is particularly concerned with the social purpose of architecture, often self-instigating projects. One of these projects, Montpelier Community Nursery, won a RIBA National Award and the 2013 Stephen Lawrence Prize. AY Architects received international attention with their installation House of Flags erected on London's Parliament Square to celebrate the Olympic Games in 2012. In 2014, the practice was BD's Small Project Architect of the Year Award Finalist while Yeoryia was shortlisted for the AJ's Emerging Woman Architect of the Year Award.

Yeoryia has exhibited and lectured internationally. She has acted as external examiner for several architecture schools, including TU Delft and the Architectural Association. She has served on the RIBA Awards Panel and the peer review college of the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Yeoryia is author of the book Architectures of Chance and founding editor of the online series Bartlett Design Research Folios.