

Press Release

IRISH PAVILION OPENS AT VENICE BIENNALE

**Ambassador of Ireland to Italy opens
'Shifting Ground' exhibition
by Dublin-based architects heneghan peng at the
Irish Pavilion**

**Four more Irish firms featured in world's
most prestigious architecture event**

(Venice, Italy: Monday August 27th, 2012) The Ambassador to Italy **Mr. Patrick HENNESSY** is to officially inaugurate an exhibition by the Irish architects **heneghan peng** at the Irish Pavilion at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition as part of la Biennale di Venezia on Monday August 27th at 17h30.

The exhibition, titled 'Shifting Ground' is one of 56 national pavilions and represents Ireland to hundreds of thousands at one of the most important architectural showcases in the world. At the heart of the exhibit, which was coordinated for Ireland by Commissioner, Elizabeth FRANCIS, and Curator, John McLAUGHLIN, is the idea that contemporary Irish architecture has a global identity bound up in transnational collaborations of world-class work.

The Dublin-based architects heneghan peng are currently working in three continents and are the architects responsible for the new Giant's Causeway Visitors' Centre in Antrim, a bridge at the London Olympics and the new Museum at the Pyramids in Egypt.

With Ireland one of the most globalised countries in the world, 'Shifting Ground' looks at architecture's relation to networked flows of products, data, and knowledge. It asks how could a global architecture be grounded culturally, philosophically and spatially and how can it situate itself outside of shared national reference points. The Pavilion of Ireland is composed of a series of wall drawings and a 12-meter long bench constructed of 6 interconnected sections for resting.

While heneghan peng are the official Ireland at Venice delegation, four more Irish architects are featured at Venice. Two firms - Grafton Architects and O'Donnell + Tuomey - were chosen by the Director of the Biennale to feature in the exhibition's notable international curator's programme. A fourth firm - Clancy Moore Architects - is to be included in the Backstage Architecture exhibition and book, a show presenting work by 56 architects under the age of 40, selected from around the globe. Finally,

Dublin practice Boyd Cody Architects are among the Greek and international practices invited to contribute to the Greek Pavilion.

Expected to attend the official inauguration are: the Ambassador of Ireland of Italy Mr. Patrick HENNESSY; CEO of Culture Ireland Ms. Christine SISK; Chair of the Arts Council Ms. Pat MOYLAN; Arts Council Director Ms. Orlaith McBRIDE; Director and CEO of The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland Mr. John GRABY; Ireland at Venice Commissioner Ms. Elizabeth FRANCIS; 'Shifting Ground' Curator Mr. John McLAUGHLIN and many others. (For a full list of attendees please contact press contact below.)

Mr. Hennessy in opening the exhibition said "Ireland's presentation at this major international event represents a key opportunity to highlight the creative talent and high reputation of Irish architects. While Heneghan Peng and the other Irish architects presenting work at Venice already have a considerable international reach, their work showcases the rich pool of architectural talent available in Ireland and will lead to further opportunities for Irish architects globally."

Commissioner Elizabeth FRANCIS said: "The Venice Architecture Biennale is the most significant event on the international architectural calendar. What is shown in the main curated exhibition and in the national participations brings together all that is current, innovative and emerging in architectural design."

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Jimmy DEENIHAN T.D. said that he was pleased that his Department was able to support this important international showcase. "Ireland's presentation at the Biennale reflects the strength of Irish architectural talent on the world stage," he said.

The 13th International Architecture Exhibition - la Biennale di Venezia opens to the public on 29 August 2012 and continues until 25 November 2012. For more details please visit www.shiftingground.ie.

Ireland at Venice is an initiative of Culture Ireland in partnership with The Arts Council of Ireland. Supported by Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and RIAI, The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland and Arup.

CREDITS

IRELAND AT VENICE 2012

'Shifting Ground'

Commissioner ELIZABETH FRANCIS

Curator: JOHN McLAUGHLIN

Participants: HENEGHAN PENG ARCHITECTS

Venue: Artiglierie building of the ARSENALE

Dates: Inauguration Monday August 27th 2012 at 5.30pm

Press Preview: 27th – 28th August 2012

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NOTES

- The Architecture Biennale attracts over 170,000 visitors over 3 months
- This year fifty six countries are participating
- There are two main venues - the Giardini and the Arsenale. Many countries have their own pavilion building in the Giardini. A few countries that don't are invited to exhibit in the Arsenale, which is where Ireland is this year
- This is the seventh time that Ireland has participated in the Architecture Biennale
- It opens to the public the same day as the Venice Film Festival

BIOGRAPHY DETAILS

HENEGHAN PENG - PARTICIPANTS

heneghan peng architects is a design partnership practising architecture, landscape and urban design. The practise was founded by Shih-Fu Peng and Róisín Heneghan in New York in 1999 and in 2001 was relocated to Dublin. We take a multi-disciplinary approach to design and have collaborated with many leading designers and engineers on a range of projects which include larger scale urban masterplans, bridges, landscapes and buildings. Current projects include the Grand Egyptian Museum, at the Pyramids, the Giant's Causeway Visitors' Centre, Central Park Bridges at the 2012 London Olympic Park, a Library and School of Architecture at the University of Greenwich in Greenwich, London and the Palestinian Museum.

ELIZABETH FRANCIS – COMMISSIONER

Elizabeth Francis was born in Co. Donegal, Ireland. She studied architecture at University College Dublin and graduated with honours in 1993. Based in Bologna in Italy, she has studied and worked in Italy, France, Ireland and the UK. In 2010 she founded atelier Francis to pursue her interests in architecture, art and research. atelier Francis cultivates cultural links internationally, curating architectural events and exhibitions. Prior to this from 1994 she was partner in Mario Cucinella Architects (MCA) in Paris and Bologna. MCA is award-winning practice at the forefront of contemporary design whose work has been internationally recognised for its architectural, environmental and technological quality. She developed research and design in the field of renewable energies participating in European Commission funded interdisciplinary projects. She brought this work to an international audience with exhibitions, publications and seminars in Europe, Asia and the USA.

JOHN MCLAUGHLIN - CURATOR

John McLaughlin is a practicing architect who also lectures in architecture in UCC and UCD. His work covers a range of projects integrating architecture with urbanism, landscape and art. He is interested in developing an expanded field for architecture through interdisciplinary work and has collaborated in this with other architects, engineers, landscape designers and visual artists. Before founding his design practice in 2010, John was director of architecture with Dublin Docklands Authority where he directed many groundbreaking projects including the Grand Canal Square development. A graduate of UCD, John has served on many design juries including European 10 and the RIAI Silver Medal 2011. He was a member of the advisory panel on the Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015.

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PRESS CONTACT DETAILS

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