

Echoes of a Land | Pavilion of Mexico

16th International Architecture Exhibition | La Biennale di Venezia

I. Press Release

Mexico's territory contains inherent collective imaginaries that guide a daily practice for architects to allow emergence from the virtues of place. The sum of overlapping layers grants a symbolic meaning to architectural work beyond what is built, and intertwines complex interpretations of landscape, history, geography, politics, art, and spirituality. In this way, the weight of the Mexican territory is greater than its composition: it is the weight of a climate, of its flora, of its way of doing and making, of years of history and social transformations, representations, desires and affections.

From an open call competition (213 projects submitted), 21 projects assemblage the curatorial proposal regarding our geographic and cultural charge of its architecture. Throughout the research process, *Freespace* has been understood as a proper noun that implies a concept in itself. For this reason, it was not translated nor it was conceived as two different terms, but a single motto that exemplifies a compilation of meanings that guideline the exhibition.

However, dismantling the concept as a curatorial request, the translation combines both the Manifesto by the Artistic Curators and the national proposal for the Pavilion of Mexico, as *Espacio Generoso*. Describing the generosity of a territory, this idea emphasizes nature's quotidian and almost imperceptible gifts, which is transferred into architecture and inhabited spaces. *Espacio Generoso* highlights architecture's ability to engage with the territory over time. After all, its generosity entails both difficulties and virtues that enhance and enrich architecture as an inhabited discourse based on reality.

The pavilion assumes the freedom of imagination, the interaction with the intangible and the incorporation of a cultural heritage in the architecture. The collective Mexican palimpsest is assembled in a portrayal of murals with textures, and volumes that retrieves the plastic integration of our modernity and the transversal readings of our architecture. Alexander von Humboldt geographical visualizations 'where the represented territory is transformed into the imagined landscape', is a reference to the curatorial proposal; relating the Mexican architecture as if it were a node where the landscape, history, geography, politics, art, literature and religion are intertwined and legible at the same time.

The exhibitor's work is presented through abstractions. Each one, take form of the exhibitor discourse, that grants a symbolic meaning in the realm of architecture beyond what is built. *Echoes of a Land* indicates a fertile, high-dense and contrasting territory anchored to its architecture; shows the echoes between the territory and the projects equalizing the voice of those whose trajectories have explored and captured the comprehension and vulnerability that today represents the morphology of a changing ground for architectural practice.

“The proposal presents the creative process in which architecture bases its work on geographical diversity and sensitivity. Taking an approach that is proactive complexity is presented as wealth, contrasts as opportunities, and vulnerabilities as spatial qualities whereby everything that is outside, all that constructs the territory, ends up in the form that architecture takes discursive and symbolic configurations. The exhibition's layout attempts to make the territory visible by revealing all of its layers, and explaining its numerous manifestations and disguises. The murals on display are the echoes of the territory that open sequences that reveal a dialogue between parties in which natural phenomena; geographic formations and infrastructure are all turned into an ongoing discussion. Based on the language of muralist art in order to rescue a discourse of identity, this time based on dialogue established between the land and the synthesis in murals that express the diversity of discourses and oppositions which Mexican architecture still faces to this day”, Gabriela Etchegaray, curator.

II. Press Images

1.0 *Echoes of a Land*, Map, 2018, Ambrosi | Etchegaray

2. 0 *Echoes of a Land*, Section (Tribute to Alexander Von Humboldt), 2018, Ambrosi | Etchegaray

3.0 *Echoes of a Land*, Mosaic, 2018, Exhibitors assemblage

4.0 *Mexican Territory*, Photograph, 2018, Santiago Arau



III. Abstract

The Pavilion of Mexico shows the geographical and imaginary space where contemporary Mexican architecture takes place as a contrasting territory. *Echoes of a Land* implies a fertile, high-dense space that enhances and enriches architectural practices, one that takes the form of both sublime landscapes and threatening scenarios. Emphasizing nature's quotidian and almost imperceptible offers, *Echoes of a Land* describes the generosity of a territory that bears the consequences of its diversity and its inconsistencies. Those vulnerabilities that allow for an inhabited space to take the form of immersive forests, volcanoes, lakes, earthquakes, floods, or changing climates; all could be currently read beyond the landscape into Mexican society.

Thus, a double dialogue is subtly established between vulnerabilities as natural and physical conditions and as human interventions echoed into a creative process. The pavilion conceives both of them in their richness, not as obstacles but as free treats seeking for new ways of thinking and presuming a renewed sense of humanity in architectural practices. Through a portrayal of murals, *Echoes of a Land* exhibits the contrasting territory and the sum of the overlapping vulnerabilities displayed as opportunities and conditions, in an attempt to engage and inhabitate consciously a land.

IV. Exhibitors

Commissioner | Gabriela Gil

Curator | Gabriela Etchegaray

Exhibition Venue | Arsenal

Exhibitors List | Alejandro Guerrero-Andrea Soto-ATELIER ARS; Alonso de Garay -Taller ADG; Carlos González Lobo+María Eugenia Hurtado; Comunal: Taller de Arquitectura + Onnis Luque; Enrique Lastra de Wit; Enrique Norten-TEN Arquitectos; Escobedo-Soliz; Estudio ALA; Estudio Macías Peredo; Estudio MMX; GDU: Grupo de Diseño Urbano; Isaac Broid + PRODUCTORA; Javier Muñoz; Mario Peniche; Augusto Quijano; Alejandro Vales, Jorge Carlos Zoreda; JSa Javier Sánchez + Aisha Ballesteros; Juan Carral Arquitectura; Manuel Cervantes Céspedes; Oscar Hagerman + CANO VERA; S-AR; Taller 6A Alejandro Sánchez+ Mariza Flores; Taller Héctor Barroso; Taller: Mauricio Rocha+Gabriela Carrillo



Exhibition Design | Jorge Ambrosi

Production | We Exhibit

Research Assistant | Marina Povedano

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Photographs | Lake Vereá. Carla Vereá, Francisca Rivero-Lake

Video & Dronography | Santiago Arau

Light Art Installation | Maurici Ginés

Sound Compositions | Manuel Rocha

Advisory Board | Lidia Camacho, Xavier Guzmán, Dolores Martínez, Ernesto Alva, Francisco Serrano, Bernardo Gómez-Pimienta, Juan José Kochen

Supporters | Mármoles Arca, Gerardo Cortina | Payanini SRL, The Stone Brand, Vladimir Payano | LMI Producciones

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