



PONTIFICAL COUNCIL
FOR
CULTURE

THE HOLY SEE PARTICIPATES FOR THE FIRST TIME AT THE *BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA* 2018

After the experiences of 2013 and 2015 at the Biennale Arte, the Holy See will participate for the first time at the Biennale Architettura with a Pavilion on the Island of San Giorgio, open to the public from 26 May.

Rome, 2018, January 22 - The Holy See will take part in the 16th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale, from May 26 to November 25, 2018, with a pavilion spread through the picturesque wood on the Island of *San Giorgio Maggiore*, in Venice.

Promoted by Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, coordinated by the Pontifical Council for Culture and curated by Prof. Francesco Dal Co, the project is modelled on **Gunnar Asplund's 1920 "woodland chapel" in the cemetery of Stockholm**. Ten architects with proven experience and different backgrounds were invited to propose and create ten chapels, investigating the possibilities offered by different materials. In designing and constructing the chapels, particular attention will be given to the possibility of **reusing the chapels after the exhibition**, as well as to protecting and respecting the surrounding natural space.

Architects from Italy, Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, USA, Australia, Brazil, Japan, Chile / Serbia and Paraguay have been called to approach a building type that has no previous models. In our culture, in fact, chapels are usually identified as part of a larger religious space and worship environment, such as a church or cathedral; in the Pavilion of the Holy See at the *Biennale Architettura* 2018, however, the chapels will be isolated and placed in a natural, abstract environment – a wood – that is a metaphor for the meandering of life.

Among the initiatives promoted by the Pontifical Council for Culture connected to the Holy See's participation at the *Biennale Architettura* 2018, there is also an event organized by the "*Cortile dei Gentili*," due to take place September 21: four internationally renowned architects will meet and discuss with the general public in order to show how fruitful dialogue can be between architecture and spirituality and also to investigate how to interpret the message contained in Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

More detailed information about the project and the participating architects will be given in April, during an official presentation in the Holy See's Press Hall.