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# Vatican Releases Its First Entry For Venice Biennale 2018 With Holy See Pavilion

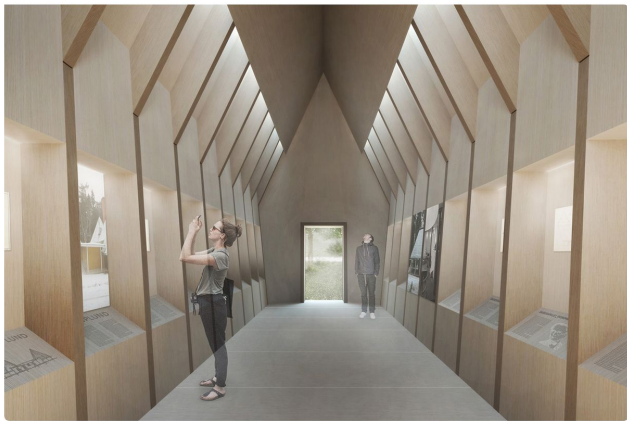
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The Vatican has released more details about the Holy See Pavilion that will take place at this year's [Venice Architecture Biennale](#), curated [Yvonne Farrell](#) and [Shelley McNamara](#) of [Grafton Architects](#) - which was themed as "FiveSpace". The Vatican will be participating in the Venice Architecture Biennale for the first time this year.

As announced in a [press release](#) last week, the project, officially titled as "Vatican Chapels", will comprise ten chapels commissioned by ten architects from different countries. Each structure will be situated on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, located opposite of St. Mark's Square. After the six-month run of the Biennale, each structure will be dismantled and shipped to Catholic communities in need.

The Holy See pavilion, which represents the Catholic Church in its entirety will be penetrating a woodland oasis not with graphic representations or models but with a veritable sequence of chapels, entitled "Vatican Chapels." With the Vatican Chapels, the pavilion will also present the Asplund Pavilion, which is being designed by architects Francesco Magnani and Traudny Pelzel of [MAP Studio](#) and built by [Alpi](#).



The Asplund Pavilion will aim to exhibit the drawings by architect Gunnar Asplund (1885-1940) for the chapel in the Skogskyrkogården cemetery in Stockholm, conceived as a prelude to the exhibition itinerary and embodying the essence of the entire project of the Holy See Pavilion.

Focusing on the composite wood construction, the pavilion, all made of wood by [Alpi](#), will be the only non-religious artifact to exhibit Asplund's drawings. The Asplund Pavilion will be made of "an experimental material" 9,000 shingles developed by [Alpi](#).

"The element in its absolutism is intended to refer both to the stereometry of the supporting buildings designed by Asplund and Lewerentz for the Skogskyrkogården cemetery and to the theme and spatiality of the hut-shelter in nature," said [MAP Studio](#).

"A sort of domesticated absolute which borrows from traditional Nordic woodwork and in particular to the Stavkirke, a reinterpreted vernacular lexicon," added the company.

The exhibition is integrated into the structure of the pavilion itself: a unicorn defines the entire interior space and hosts, in the articulation of the thickness of the walls, the reproductions of the design drawings by Gunnar Asplund for the Skogskapellet, the texts and the models.

"The project for the Pavilion of the Holy See at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale is based on a precise model, the "woodland chapel" built in 1920 by the famous architect Gunnar Asplund in the Cemetery of Stockholm. To help visitors understand the reasoning behind this choice, an exhibit space will be set up as the first episode encountered at the entrance of the Pavilion of the Holy See, displaying the drawings and model of Asplund's chapel," said Professor Francesco Dal Co, curator of Vatican Chapels.

"With this small masterpiece Asplund defined the chapel as a place of orientation, encounter and meditation, seemingly formed by chance or natural forces inside a vast forest, seen as the physical suggestion of the labyrinthine progress of life, the wandering of humankind as a prelude to the encounter"

"This theme has been proposed to the ten architects invited to build ten chapels, gathered in the densely wooded area at the end of the island of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice, to form the Pavilion of the Holy See, together with the space set aside for Asplund's drawings," he added.

"This metaphor, in the case of the Pavilion of the Holy See, is even more radical than the one configured by Asplund, who built his chapel amidst the trees, but inside a cemetery. For these reasons, the architects of the Pavilion of the Holy See have worked without any reference to generally recognized canons, and without being able to rely on any model from a typological viewpoint, as is demonstrated by the only apparently surprising variety of the projects they have developed," as Dal Co explained.

The **ten contributing architects** are: Sean Godsell (Australia), Carla Juacaba (Brazil), Smiljan Radic (Chile), Francesco Cellini (Italy), Teronobu Fujimori (Japan), Javier Corvalán (Paraguay), Eduardo Souto de Moura (Portugal), Eva Prats & Ricardo Flores (Spain), Norman Foster (United Kingdom), Andrew Berman (USA).

In 2013 and then in 2015, the Holy See entered two editions of the Venice Art Biennale with its own pavilions, offering a primordial message on the theme "In the Beginning" from the Judeo-Christian Holy Scriptures.

[Venice Architecture Biennale 2018](#), curated by Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, will open to the public from May 26th to November 25th, 2018 in the Giardini and the Arsenale, and around other venues in Venice.

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