



**PAVILION OF GREAT BRITAIN AT THE  
16TH INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION  
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA**

**– EMBARGOED UNTIL 15.00 GMT TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2018 –**

*The British Pavilion is commissioned by the British Council; please make sure to credit the British Council in all editorial features.*

The British Council will present *Island* at the British Pavilion at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, which will run from 26 May to 25 November 2018.

The curatorial team, Caruso St John Architects working in collaboration with artist Marcus Taylor, responds to Biennale Architettura 2018 theme of *Freespace* – set by the curators Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara – with the construction of a new public space on the roof of the British Pavilion. This elevated piazza will offer visitors to the Giardini a place to meet and a unique vantage point looking out across the Lagoon. At the centre of this new public space, the peak of the Pavilion's roof protrudes up through the floor, suggesting both an island and a sunken world beneath. Below, the doors of the Pavilion are open to visitors, but the building is empty of exhibits.

Throughout Biennale Architettura 2018 the British Pavilion will programme a unique series of events including poetry, performance, film and architectural talks and debates in response to *Freespace* and ideas raised by *Island*.

In their statement, the curators Adam Caruso, Peter St John and Marcus Taylor said:

*“There will be many ways to interpret the experience of visiting the 2018 British Pavilion. An island can be a place of both refuge and exile. The state of the building, which will be completely covered with scaffolding to support the new platform above, suggests many themes; including abandonment,*

*reconstruction, sanctuary, Brexit, isolation, colonialism and climate change.”*

Sarah Mann, Director of Architecture Design Fashion at the British Council and Commissioner of the British Pavilion 2018 said:

*“Island will offer a thought-provoking experience within the Biennale, continuing the British Pavilion’s role as a platform for debate, for exchanging ideas and for visionary thinking. This is the first time we have a joint commission between art and architecture at the British Pavilion. Rather than presenting an exhibition, we want to offer an unmediated experience through a new piece of architecture, which offers a generous space to reflect and to come together.”*

The British Council has been responsible for the British Pavilion in Venice since 1937, showcasing the best of the UK’s artists, architects, designers and curators to an international audience. This year John Morgan Studio has been commissioned to create the graphic identity for *Island* and its accompanying book, published by The Store X The Spaces. This publication, the events programme and the Venice Fellowship, play a crucial role in making the British Pavilion a platform for discussion about contemporary art and architecture.

The British Council will also support the participation of UK architects and designers in the central exhibition through the British Council’s Biennales and Festivals fund.

#### Notes to Editors

Please find the full press pack, including images here:  
[venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/press](http://venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/press)

#### Dates

The 16th International Architecture Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia opens to the public 26 May to 25 November 2018.  
Vernissage: 24-25 May 2018

#### Updates online

Follow updates on the #BritishPavilion:  
Twitter: [@British\\_Design](https://twitter.com/British_Design)  
Instagram: [@British\\_Design](https://www.instagram.com/British_Design)  
Facebook: [BritishArts](https://www.facebook.com/BritishArts)

Find out more about the British Pavilion in Venice: [venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org](http://venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org)

#### Media Contacts

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#### About the Curators

Caruso St John Architects was founded in 1990 by Adam Caruso and Peter St John. The practice has completed major projects throughout Europe and was awarded the 2016 RIBA Stirling Prize for the Newport Street Gallery, built for Damien Hirst to show-case his collection of contemporary art.

Marcus Taylor has exhibited widely in the UK and overseas. His work has been collected by several major institutions including the Tate and Foundation Cartier. He has collaborated on several architectural projects as part of his artistic practice, most recently with Caruso St John Architects on the competition for the United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial next to the Houses of Parliament.

#### About the Venice Fellowship

The Venice Fellowship enables students, graduates and researchers to spend a month in Venice during one of the world’s most significant art and architecture exhibition organised by La Biennale di Venezia. This year the British Council is working with 29 partner universities and institutions to send 69 Fellows to Venice.  
[venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/fellowship](http://venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/fellowship)

#### About the British Council

The British Council is the UK’s international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We work with over 100 countries in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Last year we reached over 65 million

people directly and 731 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications. We make a positive contribution to the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust. Founded in 1934 we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. We receive 15 per cent core funding grant from the UK government.

[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

#### About Pavilion Patrons

The Pavilion Patrons scheme supports the preservation of the British Pavilion as a historic venue and the ambitions of artists and architects, demonstrating excellence in contemporary arts and architecture on a global stage.

[www.britishcouncil.org/arts/venice-biennale-pavilion-patron](http://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/venice-biennale-pavilion-patron)

#### About The Store X The Spaces

The Store X is a platform for presenting ideas and culture that engages a global community of icons, innovators, creators and the curious in an ever-evolving dialogue. The Spaces is a design, art and property publication exploring new ways to live and work. It calls on leading artists, architects, critics, curators and photographers to re-examine how we use the spaces around us, presenting their ideas on digital magazine TheSpaces.com and in limited-edition books.

[www.thespaces.com](http://www.thespaces.com)

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[www.generationscaffolding.com](http://www.generationscaffolding.com)  
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