

MIT DEUTSCHEM TEXT

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KONFEKT

The Magazine for Sharp Dressing, Drinking, Dining, Travel & Design.

1.

LOOKING THE PART
Anna wears kaftan by Eres and sunglasses by Cartier



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UK £15
DE €15
CHF 15
USD \$20
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2.

ISLAND ESCAPES
Life among the pines



Taste the SUMMER

Things are hotting up. KONFEKT is an elegant new title by the creators of MONOCLE

— ISSUE THREE —

3.

DRINKING IT IN
Sips, trips and itineraries to refresh



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HOSTING. Sephardic fare in an Izmir garden and a candlelit dinner at a Bavarian manor
LOOKS. Winning summer stripes, chic sandals and swimwear, then boules and boating
WINE. Raising a glass to a family 'quinta' in Portugal's Douro Valley. Plus: why to drink pink
MENUS. Langoustines and lemon with a Greek potter, and recipes for a Sicilian fish supper
DISCUSSIONS. In Venice, chewing over architecture, clean air and our appetite for change

DRINKING & DINING — THE CONVERSATION — Venice



Designing our FUTURE

Great once-in-a-generation opportunities for positive change on an international scale have emerged from the rubble of the pandemic. At this year's Venice Architecture Biennale, *Konfekt* held a round-table discussion – over a hearty seafood lunch, naturally – with luminaries of the profession from all over the globe to put a finger on the pulse of their creativity and discovery. Cross-disciplinary collaboration and serving the common good on the planet we share emerge as the dominant, achievable themes, with ideas to preserve our environment and improve the way we live today for a healthier tomorrow in which we can all breathe a little easier.

Photographer — Andrea Pugiotto

The venue:

Tucked away in the Castello district of Venice, the classic restaurant Corte Scorta serves homemade pasta and the full run of fish reeled in fresh from the Adriatic, including a host of specialties difficult to find at other city restaurants. Fans of the trattoria's rigorously traditional Venetian recipes recline under the century-old grapevines covering the courtyard, sipping wine from its well-stocked cantina. cortescontavenezia.com

The menu:

Starters

Swordfish carpaccio with tarragon.
Marinated tuna with juniper berries.
Marinated anchovies with capers.
Sautéed mussels and clams.
Sardines in saor.

Mains

Baccalà mantecato (creamed cod).
Grilled cicale (mantis shrimp).

To drink

Cave Mont Blanc "XT". Zambon
"Le Cervino Vulcano" Soave DOC.

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THE HOST



The journalist
Laura Rysman

I write for *Konfekt*, *Monocle* and *The New York Times* on art, design, food and travel in Italy.

THE GUESTS



The professor of architecture
Tomohisa Miyauchi

I'm an architect from Japan based in Madrid, and curator for Venice's Singapore pavilion.



The design curator
Valentina Ciuffi

After a journalism career, I founded design agency-consultancy Studio Vedèt in Milan.



The architect
Lina Ghotmeh

I set up my architecture practice in Paris, where I also teach. My redevelopment project for Beirut is on display in Venice.



The architect and researcher
Giulia Foscarl

I founded architecture studio *USA*. Our current project, about Antarctica, is the first about the continent at the Biennale.



The curator
Olga Subirós

My project *Air*, on the issue of air pollution, is representing Catalonia at Venice Biennale.



1. Popping the cork
2. Architect and curator Olga Subirós, from Barcelona
3. Our host, journalist Laura Rysman
4. Swordfish and tuna carpaccio



Laura Rysman

Thank you, everyone, for joining me in the middle of your busy Biennale schedules. It's so wonderful to bring a group of interesting people together over a relaxed meal so we can hear what you have to say about architecture and design, and about this moment.

ON THE VENICE BIENNALE**Tomohisa Miyauchi**

We just finished our opening of the national pavilion of Singapore last night, so I haven't quite calmed down yet. But I'm looking forward to feeling "relaxed".

Valentina Ciuffi

Everyone here has a project at the Biennale. Can we hear about what you're presenting?

Lina Ghotmeh

I am exhibiting in the New Households section of the Arsenale a model of the building that I designed in Beirut, near the site of the port explosion in August 2020. But here I use the model as a tool to present Beirut as a place for creativity. It's a place of crisis, of course, but it's in these moments that creativity can really change things.

Valentina Ciuffi

I love that project and I love Beirut! That project is one of the most moving I've seen here at the Biennale this year.

Tomohisa Miyauchi

I was really taken by it. There's a pedestal you can stand on to look into the model and it feels like you're in the space with all these ghostly people. There's a guy just sitting and contemplating an empty flowerpot. I thought the characters were genius. All the details really stayed with me.

Lina Ghotmeh

And inside you can see art photography on small screens by seven artists who depicted Beirut and video work on small screens narrating the building process. The model gives you an accurate scale of the building and how it was handcrafted and I like this material side but I want you to also discover a narrative inside. So there is a sense of, "Who are we as humans, actually? And how can we inhabit our planet? Why do these kind of crises happen today in the 21st century?"

In Beirut there's a concentration of issues to deal with that we're trying to answer with architecture and I wanted them to be felt. The challenge was, "How do you show that through the sensitive realm instead of an explanation?"

Laura Rysman

At the Biennale there's a lot of text to read and it doesn't always have the right effect.

Tomohisa Miyauchi

Well, there's been some evolution: the text

is a little more concise than last time.

The Biennale has always been very much about the physical but people use more hangings, more projections, there's more sound and digital information now. And many people are making their installations less wastefully; in the past, they used more stuff.

Lina Ghotmeh

Living through this moment of crisis with the climate, you wonder when you do an installation these days. How much material should you use? It's a big question actually, because you want to talk about these issues but you don't want to contradict yourself by doing a huge installation and importing a lot of material.

Laura Rysman

Can we pause for a cheers? You know, to be together with people is truly special these days. *Evviva!*

All

Cheers!

ON THE ENVIRONMENT**Giulia Foscari**

Back to the Biennale, I have an installation on Antarctica in the central pavilion with UNLESS. It's a non-profit agency for change that I founded last year. Antarctica is a global commons that we collectively neglect, even though it holds 70 per cent of the world's fresh water and just one glacier melting can raise sea levels by 3 metres in the next 100 years.

We presented research from 150 leading experts in the form of an exploded book, along with artefacts. One is the set of wooden snow goggles that Captain Scott used when he went to the South Pole. There are very small cross-shaped slits in the wooden "lens", which allowed him a narrow field of vision to protect his cornea from snow blindness. But for us, the slits in those lenses are very important, symbolically; we all have to put down our own goggles and start widening our field of vision.

Laura Rysman

You're making something invisible to us become visible. It's very easy for us, living in cities, to forget about Antarctica and these things that really shape the planet.

Giulia Foscari

It's the first time there's a multidisciplinary presentation on Antarctica at the Biennale, which was very exciting to work on. We also reproduced the sounds of the ice breaking by blasting air against 3 metre-long steel plates, which you can hear through the whole pavilion.

It's shocking but it helps build an image of a continent that has such a pivotal role in the ecosystem and we've neglected it. We've absolutely neglected it.

"We should not be looking at things from a national perspective whether in terms of architecture or science, or any other field. Collaborations give me optimism"

ON WORKING TOGETHER**Laura Rysman**

This suggests to me that the world needs more collaboration. After all that we've experienced this past year, do you think that we have a greater understanding of how borders don't matter when it comes to solving global crises?

Giulia Foscari

We should not be looking at things from a national perspective, whether in terms of architecture or science, or any other field. In Antarctica, I experienced collaborations across a wide variety of fields of research and across all nationalities and borders. That gives me a lot of optimism. And I think it's essential to shift our attention to what we often overlook.

Lina Ghotmeh

The first lockdown – wasn't it magical? In Paris, we just heard the birds. We had fresh air and a sense of nature invading the city.

Olga Subirós

Yes. The air quality was so improved, which is the subject of my exhibition. It was unbelievable – the best rehearsal ever of what we can achieve, collectively. In just one week's time, we noticed the difference. We see now that we can act locally, that we can avoid fossil fuel vehicles and we can change things for the better. And this idea is

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suddenly very present in the public sphere. The Biennale being postponed for one year has been great for addressing this topic, because we've had a whole year of talking about it. Now it's easy to see that our global air-pollution problem is indeed caused by human activity.

Laura Rysman

And we just need to stop depending on cars.

ON TRANSPORT

Olga Subirós

We need more public transport, more widely distributed, and more public space. Barcelona is super-densely populated, and we don't have parks like in other cities. When we were locked down, we realised how much our cities are lacking.

A big issue in Barcelona is reclaiming public space, because 60 per cent is dedicated to vehicles and parking. The debate is happening in Spain and in across the world. Paris is asking for *Paris Respirer* ['Paris Breathes'] zones in the city with no cars on Sundays and holidays. With our project, we're reclaiming that for Barcelona.

If the burden of air pollution on our health was known – it kills seven million people a year – we would change, as we changed for coronavirus. And for me, that's crucial, because my father, a non-smoker, got lung cancer from environmental causes. Everything in my work pays homage to him. I'm an architect and I said to myself, "What can I do?" So I went to health scientists, atmospheric scientists and urban planners. Then, working with big data, I decided to map what's happening. I wanted evidence. My project is a production of evidence.

Laura Rysman

I think it's the right moment to change everyone's perceptions.

Lina Ghotmeh

Absolutely. And it's so necessary now. Probably more than half the people on our planet are living in ways that are completely inhumane – for health issues, in precarity – which is what I wanted to show a glimpse of with my project for the Beirut exhibition.

"Conversations are a much stronger way to get acquainted with an idea. We lost a lot this past year but now it's the revenge of the real."

Olga Subirós

You know, as architects, we see injustice everywhere. In a city, it's not all about the buildings. It's about all the layers that are invisible to other eyes; it's about income inequality, pollution and lack of opportunity. We see another trait of the city and this is what we should bring to the public sphere.

Lina Ghotmeh

Our discipline can get people to open their eyes by making something invisible into something visible to the public, like your exhibition about air, either through the physical or through information.

Olga Subirós

It's not just about making the invisible visible – a quality that we share with artists. The important thing is to make the unacceptable visible.

Laura Rysman

It's hard to know what we can actually do as individuals that will really make a difference.

Maybe the best thing we can do is to change mindsets, to change perceptions. Do you feel like it's working, like you're able to have an effect as architects?

Olga Subirós

Of course. Being here at the Biennale, and in our home cities, we are spreading the word and we are activating the conversation in the public sphere. We cannot just stay in our studios. We need to produce ideas for citizens – a citizen's toolbox.

ON CONVERSATION

Laura Rysman

Oh, we have some food on the table – *Buon appetito!* As a journalist, I feel that so many of my best story ideas happen over a meal, at times when I'm just talking to someone.

Olga Subirós

It's a much stronger way to get acquainted with an idea. We lost a lot this past year but now it's the revenge of the real.



1. Sardines in 'saor' and grilled polenta
2. Toasting the conversation
3. Lebanese architect Lina Ghotmeh



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1. Mantis shrimp

“I’ve felt that very strong urgency of environmental crisis and climate change, and it’s as if architecture is becoming almost a crime. You waste a lot when you build but it doesn’t have to be that way”

Valentina Ciuffi

Yes, but one of the main things I think it’s so important to recognise is that technology wasn’t ready – it wasn’t ready for almost everything we tried to do with it. We tried to go online very fast but we weren’t ready with the tools and we were having conversations with the sound going in and out, with these disembodied heads on screens. I stopped watching all those webinars and whatnot after a while.

Laura Rysman

For a while, that’s all we had and it was interesting to get any kind of stimulation when we were stuck at home. But now that we have some options, I think we treasure the real-life conversations all the more.

Olga Subirós

Meeting people like this, we need it. It’s my first time travelling abroad since lockdown.

ON REFLECTION

Valentina Ciuffi

Lina, your Beirut project with your ghostly figures on their own is really like the backdrop of our conversation today. I think we all felt more distant, more on our own. For months we were questioning ourselves, in our small spaces, thinking our dark thoughts and now we’re all primed for collective action. Maybe I’m being too abstract...

Olga Subirós

No, no, you’re not. You’re asking for radical care and we need that for ourselves and for our environment.

Laura Rysman

We saw this year that we can make radical changes and that our cities can change completely. As you were saying before, Lina, that Paris became this incredible place full of nature. More food is here! Everyone dig in. I know it seems like too much but we’re at a restaurant in Italy and this is the way we do things here. Can I top up anyone’s wine?

Valentina Ciuffi

Who wants some clams and mussels?

Laura Rysman

Do you think we’re more ready to make radical changes after this year?

Tomohisa Miyachi

Radical change – I hope that doesn’t go against our architecture practice, because I’ve felt that urgency of environmental crisis and climate change, and it’s as if architecture is becoming almost a crime. You waste a lot when you build but it doesn’t have to be that way because architecture is about making the world more liveable. But then once we say that something is a waste of materials, it gets harder for architects to envision interesting things and to build. We need to be mindful but it’s getting harder to move forward in a sustainable way.

Laura Rysman

But there’s such a need to present new ideas in ways that people can incorporate at a profound level, not just an intellectual level, right? Which can happen through architectural projects like Lina’s, and Olga’s, and Giulia’s... So that through architecture, we transform the way that people think.

Olga Subirós

In that sense, I very much like the Pritzker prize choice this year. Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal imagine buildings in a very contemporary way and make them less energy-consuming by creating a new façade. Instead of demolishing and building again, they refurbish and renovate. And I love this idea that suddenly the Pritzker, which has always rewarded superstars, decided that this is the right way to go now.

Laura Rysman

Has everyone eaten enough? Does anyone want more *ciale* [mantis shrimp]? Another glass of Soave?

Giulia Foscari

Here in Veneto we call them *canoe* instead of *ciale*. They look really prehistoric, don’t they? Like what we might find if the ice melts away in Antarctica.

Valentina Ciuffi

They’re delicious. Olga, I see so much

optimism in your thinking and the way you want to make us realise that we all breathe this air and it needs to be healthier.

Olga Subirós

I feel that an architect or an urban planner is really a bridge person – a bridge between science and citizens. We have to really embrace this role in the public sphere and as teachers. I’m teaching, you’re teaching. And we have a holistic way of thinking that’s very important now.

ON EDUCATION

Laura Rysman

And do you feel that architects today are embracing that role as bridges between science and citizen?

Olga Subirós

In Barcelona there are many schools of architecture that are teaching this way.

Giulia Foscari

Well, I think it’s important that there are courses in which the students are made very aware of all that we’re discussing here but I think the university also has to be a place of experimentation, of radical thoughts that are unbuildable. They’re utopian, because – and this goes back to your anxiety, Tomo – if it’s not going to be a condemned profession, we have to be able to conceive things that may not be viable but that are important for the discipline to radically push forward.

Laura Rysman

Even concepts can change behaviour. Architecture doesn’t always have to be a real building – it can be a way of conceiving what we want in the world. And that can radically affect the way that people move forward. Do you think the world is ready for more utopian ideas now?

ON UTOPIA

Lina Ghotmeh

We don’t even need to go as far as utopia. There are older ideas to try to revive. Time is cyclical, not linear, after all. If we give

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“Architects have a responsibility to create awareness and use our discipline’s ability to visualise things – sometimes scientists and politicians cannot reach a wider audience”

more voice to minorities, a project will create more equity for a greater diversity of people. And diversity, with more voices and more happening, automatically introduces others ways of doing things. It’s about learning and projecting that into the future.

Tomohisa Miyauchi

My friends in Japan, for example, architects of my generation, are increasingly interested in pre-industrial methods and systems of agriculture and fishing.

Olga Subirós

It seems like that’s part of a wider cultural transformation. It’s as if we’re building up humidity, and it’s going to break on us like rain: positive rain. I’m hopeful.

Laura Rysman

It makes me hopeful to talk to all of you today, to hear all of these ideas and the ways that architects can transform how we think, transform our behaviour.

ON CHANGING MINDS

Olga Subirós

Well, I see changes, like the Pritzker prize not going to a starchitect and governments setting up a ministry of ecology, and I feel that we’re moving in the right direction; as though I’m helping with my work to accelerate the process. We just need more critical mass.

Giulia Foscari

We have a responsibility, as you were saying earlier, to create awareness and to use our discipline’s abilities to visualise things. It was one of the things I learned with the Antarctica project: sometimes scientists and politicians cannot reach a wider audience because they speak in ways that are complex to understand; they haven’t been taught to communicate visually. And they lose the audience that way.

Laura Rysman

So architects and artists can communicate something at a metaphorical level, a visual level that perhaps penetrates more deeply.

Giulia Foscari

The collaboration between my studio and the scientific experts who are researching Antarctica allows their work to be seen and understood by a wide audience of people. I think that is really part of our responsibility as architects.

Olga Subirós

And that’s why, when I conceptualised the Air pavilion, I invited a singer, because I really wanted the power of sound.

Giulia Foscari

I don’t have a singer but I have thunder!

Laura Rysman

It’s interesting that both of you, as architects

of physical spaces, decided to incorporate sound in your projects.

Olga Subirós

If you fill the space with another invisible layer, one that really involves you and puts you in another state of mind, then you’re prepared to receive all this content, as if “In the Mood for Love” was “in the mood for understanding.”

Laura Rysman

In the mood for understanding!

Giulia Foscari

As you can maybe imagine, the landscape of Antarctica is beyond any scale that an architect can describe, so I asked myself, “How can I try to bring this emotion to viewers?” And the best thing I could think of was to use sound, because when I was there, every so often there were these shocking bursts of thunder that come from the glaciers. It’s the sound of the ice breaking – and it gives you goose bumps.

ON THE LIMITS OF DIGITAL

Valentina Ciuffi

Why don’t we learn from this lesson that when we have the physical, we are a little bit more physically involved? And when we are digital, we can explore the digital space in a different way.

Laura Rysman

For me, it felt amazing just to be back in a physical space full of new ideas. It was such a part of our lives before, going to these events, being surrounded by new ideas, interacting with people. Just the premise of the Biennale – that you enter into a space and you’re surrounded by newness – was very stimulating. I’m curious how everyone feels about being back in the physical realm.

Tomohisa Miyauchi

It’s hard to say, because physical is about sharing and about people coming from different parts of the world. It’s an incomplete physical experience this time. But in our pavilion, we have more chairs than any other pavilion – 60 in all – as we wanted to invite people to spend time and enjoy being back in a physical experience.

Lina Ghotmeh

Even if I love the materials and the physical experience, I’m thinking that maybe the future of exhibitions might not actually be physical in a sense, because the digital tools are becoming so powerful – immersive realities or holograms, for example. The fact is that you use less material, you waste less and we have to think this way. And actually with digital, you can make an amazing immersive experiences.

Valentina Ciuffi

The physical and digital spaces need to be



1. Architect Giulia Foscari was raised in Venice and has worked all over the world
2. Valentine Ciuffi, founder of design consultancy Studio Vedùt
3. Japanese architect Tomohisa Miyauchi
4. Sautéed mussels and clams



interpreted as two completely separate things, though. We need to start conceiving of digital space as a thing with its own goals. We can really create something different for the digital space, which could be totally unique, instead of trying to make it parallel to the physical world. Because we miss what's real, miss it brutally – it really is the revenge of the real.

Laura Rysman

And do you feel stimulated being back in the physical world? Or over-stimulated?

Giulia Foscari

It's important to generate ideas. The kind of conversation we've been having today, I have been missing this so much. And parties. I'm very tempted to have a party.

Olga Subirós

We need those parties! — x