



***Who Is This For* art installation premieres at Venice architecture exhibition**

- Canadian interdisciplinary design studio [hcma](#) challenges designers to take responsibility for creating inclusive and accessible spaces
- Time Space Existence architecture exhibition is curated by the European Cultural Centre
- The biennial exhibition runs from 20 May - 26 November, 2023 at Palazzo Bembo, Venice

(Venice, Italy. 20 May 2023) Millions of people experience cities as spaces of alienation because of poor choices made by designers. Premiering at the [Time Space Existence](#) architecture exhibition (20 May - 26 November) in Venice, *Who Is This For* acts as a provocation to the design industry.

Created by Canadian interdisciplinary design studio [hcma](#), the art installation and online experience aims to create a sense of the discomfort, alienation and frustration felt by millions when they cannot access or fully participate in public spaces. It challenges designers to take responsibility for their work and be part of an inclusive solution to this global problem.

Time Space Existence is a biennial group exhibition presented by The European Cultural Centre (ECC). It features projects, innovative proposals and dreams of architectural expressions. The 2023 edition will draw attention to the emerging expressions of sustainability in its numerous forms, ranging from a focus on the environment and urban landscape to the unfolding conversations on innovation, reuse and community.

Installation

Visitors to *Who Is This For* will encounter a fictional city close-up and side-on: a scaled composite of 11 global city grids, including New York City, São Paulo, Lagos, London, Mumbai and Montréal. The grids are stitched together to form one urban space. It is at once both nowhere and everywhere. Each grid has been chosen for its specific manifestation of design inequalities in urban spaces. In a handful of cases, like Singapore's Enabling Village and Toronto's Regent Park, they show examples of inclusivity and therefore hope.

Move closer, and the vibrant colour splashed across the work reveals stories of lived experiences. These perspectives offer snapshots of life in a city that is not welcoming, such as: "I love New York, but many days, I feel like New York doesn't love me back". Step away from the work and the colour comes together into a superimposed and challenging prompt: *Who Is This For*. A secondary plaque describes the installation in braille and an audio description is also provided.

Microsite

The microsite [whoisthisfor.city](#) extends the impact of the installation and creates a global conversation about the need to design the world around us differently. Built in accordance with WCAG internet accessibility guidelines, the site's interactive elements, including soundscapes and redacted images, highlight spaces of exclusionary design.



Darryl Condon, managing principal at hcma, says: “‘Who is this for?’ is a question that all designers ask in their work—but often they answer far too narrowly or without much thought. It’s a question we need to ask better, to seek more and different perspectives, to consider and embrace more people, to become more inclusive, by design. From our own privileged position at hcma, we are mindful that we too have been part of the problem in the past. However, we want to be an active agent of change within the industry. We can’t change everything, but we can change something.”

Marni Robinson, senior director for social impact at hcma, says: “Expanding our perspective of how different people experience the same city is just the beginning. With this exhibit, we want to start a conversation with the global design community, to encourage greater inclusivity in design thinking and practice.”

hcma became B Corp certified in 2022 and is the firm behind the design of [Clayton Community Centre](#), North America's largest non-residential building to attain Passive House certification. The firm developed and [published strategies](#) for gender-neutral washrooms and change rooms as part of that project.

Time Space Existence is organized by The [European Cultural Centre Italy](#).

Who Is This For @ Time Space Existence

Venue: L2 Room 15, Palazzo Bembo, Riva del Carbon, 30124 Venezia VE, Italy

Location: Venice, Italy

Press preview and private view: 18 & 19 May

Dates: May 20 - November 26, 2023

Entry: Free of charge

Access the microsite (going live in May): [whoisthisfor.city](#)

Read more about *Who Is This For* at Time Space Exhibition here: [timespaceexistence.com](#)

Credits: Designed by hcma.

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About hcma

hcma designs buildings, brands, and shared experiences that connect people. Because with collective strength, communities can work together to make a difference to the issues that matter.

Collective strength empowers our practice too. Driven by relentless curiosity, we work as one to solve complex problems from every angle. Advocating for inclusive, accessible design that embraces everyone, promotes biodiversity, and minimizes environmental impact.

We’re multi-skilled but driven by a shared purpose: to maximize positive impact. We achieve it by learning from others. By challenging ourselves. And by applying relentless curiosity to create the lasting change we all want to see in the world. [hcma.ca](#)

About ECC



The European Cultural Centre (ECC) is a non profit organisation headquartered in the Netherlands. We are cultural entrepreneurs committed to promoting culture through international exchanges. We work with associations and partners from around the world, ranging from educational, cultural and governmental institutions to non-governmental organisations as well as museums, foundations and several private initiatives.

Based in Venice, ECC Italy is the main branch of its larger parent organisation the European Cultural Centre. Focusing on diverse topics within art, architecture and design, we aim to create dynamic exhibition spaces that show the interchanging of ideas from different cultures. Our architecture exhibition Time Space Existence, alternates each year with the art exhibition Personal Structures. Our exhibitions draw a range of visitors, from professional architects and artists to locals and tourists. ecc-italy.eu