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Spirito d'Acqua

La Biennale di Venezia 2019

Sponsorship opportunity

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, which is very useful, and humble and precious and pure.

St. Francis of Assisi, from 'Canticle of the Creatures' 1224

An Initiative of the Global Network of Water Museums

Row of 4 logos

Spirito d'Acqua

Project concept

Over the last decades, the increasing utilisation of water as a resource has afforded the developed world unprecedented but unsustainable economic growth. At the same time it has become increasingly invisible, removed from everyday awareness. Things we can't see we forget about, and things we forget about become increasingly vulnerable and fragile.

Despite (or perhaps because of) unprecedented technological progress water today is increasingly threatened by waste, pollution, degradation and indifference.

Through scarcity (exhausted and over-used water sources, desertification, increasing salinity and pollution) or through over-abundance (melting glaciers, recurrent floods due to climate change, violent weather events), this precious element is causing a dramatic reduction of biological diversity and the exodus of entire populations, seem unresolvable through purely technocratic approaches. Even its beauty causes problems as coastal areas become oversaturated with populations through housing developments and tourism.

Can we reinstate a close relationship between humanity and water? Can we find ways to encourage new societal behaviours which help reconnect people with water, in all its social, cultural, artistic and spiritual dimensions?

The art exhibition Spirito d'Acqua proposes and explores a new message on global sustainable uses of this precious resource. Realising that the environmental crisis is only part of a deeper social, cultural and intellectual malaise, during recent decades a new form of art has emerged. Ecological and socially engaged art, design and architecture have begun to explore, expose and find strategies to remedy the exploitation, waste and pollution of the water environment through direct action and sustainable design.

Art touches people in ways that speak to human emotions and human passion rather than the cold reason demanded by scientific knowledge and data. This exhibition features important work by internationally-renowned artists that reflect on water as an essential part of a natural world that we all love.

Venice: City of water and the arts

Venice is, by definition, 'the city of water'. Its heritage has been built over many centuries in relation to both salt and fresh water. Comprising 118 islands, the city is famous for its art and architecture, and today it hosts the

world's oldest and most prestigious biennale of contemporary art: *La Biennale di Venezia*.

Water has always been the great gift and the enemy of Venice, which faces an increasingly complex battle with rising water levels and crumbling ancient buildings. Its exceptional beauty and unique ecology (the city has no fewer than three UNESCO world designations - World Heritage, Man & Biosphere, and Ramsar) draws millions of tourists and so many massive cruise ships that the city has recently banned all ships over 55,000 tonnes from the city's waterways entirely. The fragile ecosystem and infrastructure of this beautiful city is in crisis – one that mirrors the crisis in sustainable use of water across the planet.

In the context of the global water crisis, the proposed project Spirito d'Acqua will provide an opportunity to fuse the City's international reputation as a host to cutting-edge contemporary art with its unique natural and cultural history. Venice is the perfect place to launch new messages of global corporate sustainable responsibility. The exhibition Spirito d'Acqua will have a worldwide impact and guarantee high visibility at an international level to a limited number of sponsors.

A major new event at the Venice Biennale

Each Biennale Arte alternates with a Biennale focused on architecture and takes place every two years, attracting around 500,000 paying visitors over seven months (from May to November). The areas of the Giardini and Arsenale, and dozens of other locations across Venice hosts major art events and happenings. While the Giardini ('gardens') hosts the official artists of the national pavilions, the Arsenale is the most prestigious place where every artist would like to exhibit at least once in lifetime.

The inaugural exhibition Spirito d'Acqua will launch a new pavilion where we envisage around eight artists will show their artworks, reflecting on both our material, spiritual and metaphysical connection with water and current environmental issues such as ocean pollution, lack of clean drinking water and rising sea levels. The artists will be selected from around the world, with a focus on gender equality and a balance between established and emerging artists. Artists working in countries most affected by water issues - such as the Maldives or Tuvalu, the new Atlantis islands of our era - will be involved.

The exhibition Spirito d'Acqua will be accompanied by a programme of educational activities, workshops, performances, and artist residencies, and also include large scale video projections and sound works. The selection will be made by a curatorial panel with international experience, in order to guarantee a global resonance in the art world and media.

The sponsor will benefit in terms of branding and image from the most important exhibition on water and environmental sustainability ever organised at a Venice Biennale.

A spectacular new exhibition venue in the Arsenale

The main exhibition programme will be on the north side of the Arsenale in one of the monumental shipbuilding warehouses of the Venetian Republic. These historic shipyards and armories of Venice date back to the Middle Ages and Renaissance periods and constitute the largest proto-industrial complex in Europe before the Industrial Revolution.

The Venice Arsenal is made up of many historic warehouses (or 'Tese' in the Venetian dialect), where ships were built to guarantee trade and secure navigation across the Mediterranean. Until 2013 they were used only by the Italian Navy, but today an agreement with the Venice Municipality has made a number of spaces available. The Tese and the Arsenal Tower today make the most prestigious settings for the Biennales.

Symposia at the magnificent Palazzo Zorzi

An international symposium will be held in May 2019 at UNESCO's office in the palace of Zorzi's family (the former residence of the Dukes of Venice) at the launch of the 2019 Biennale exhibition. The symposia will document the work achieved to date by the Global Network of Water Museums, an ongoing project endorsed in 2017 by UNESCO-IHP, of which Spirito d'Acqua is a part.

Artist residencies across Venice's islands

The planned residency opportunities will focus on revitalising the water heritage of Venice's abandoned hydraulic artefacts and waterscapes. An additional number of artists will be invited for art residencies on Certosa (a former abandoned island which has been reclaimed recently and today hosts the most sustainable marina in Venice), and the Giudecca (in cooperation with the Venice Municipality and Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation).

Opportunities for Sponsors

The Venice Biennale provides many opportunities for businesses of many scales from global to local to ally their brand with the world's finest and most innovative contemporary art and one of the world's greatest cities. Spirito d'Acqua provides a very particular opportunity to ally your company or organisation with contemporary art with a powerful social and environmental ethic.

Every year, the Venice Biennale attracts many thousands of visitors from around the world and receives huge visibility in the media worldwide. We are offering a number of sponsorship packages that will help support Spirito d'Acqua and bring environmental concerns expressed through excellent art to this worldwide audience.

Corporate sustainable responsibility

At the 58th Venice Art Biennale (2019), the sponsor of the exhibition Spirito d'Acqua will be promoted as the official Ambassador to save water, Venice, and its environment. The exhibition Spirito d'Acqua will be a unique opportunity to promote the sponsor's brand and business together with art and R&D projects for more sustainable water uses and alleviate environmental impacts globally.

Brand visibility

Your brand will be associated with Spirito d'Acqua in the following contexts:

- **Official Sponsor of the major exhibition Spirito d'Acqua**
- **Use of the following logos: the Venice Biennale, the Global Network of Water Museums**
- **Press conference with sponsor's representatives**
- **Inauguration ceremony with sponsor**
- **Dedicated communication campaign**
- **Video and social media campaigns**
- **International symposia with UNESCO at Palazzo Zorzi**
- **Special, on site events in the most prestigious Venetian palaces**
- **Dedicated app for Smartphones and Tablets on sustainable ecotourism itineraries in the Venice Lagoon**

Sponsorship packages

Primary sponsor: €

Secondary sponsor: €

Event sponsor: €

Who we are

Spirito d'Acqua is a collaboration between two not-for-profit organisations, Civiltà dell'Acqua ('Water Civilisation International Centre', Italy), the Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World (UK), and one international organisation, the UNESCO Regional Office for Science and Culture in Europe (Venice). During the last decades these institutions have been active in differ-

ent international projects and activities, promoting new perceptions and behaviours towards water: the most precious source of life.

UNESCO-IHP

The International Hydrological Programme (IHP) is the only intergovernmental programme of the UN system devoted to water research, water resources management, education and capacity building. Since its inception in 1975, IHP has evolved from an internationally coordinated hydrological research programme into an encompassing, holistic programme to facilitate education and capacity building, and enhance water resources management and governance. IHP facilitates an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to watershed and aquifer management, which incorporates the social and cultural dimensions of water resources.

UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe

The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, with its office in Venice, fosters cooperation and capacity building and provides specialized expertise in science and culture. It contributes to peace, stability and sustainable development in Europe, especially in South East Europe and the Mediterranean area, through activities in the field of Science and Culture, considering the political, social and environmental changes, by providing policy advice, communication and supporting territorial management as well as risk and conflict prevention.

Civiltà dell'Acqua ('Water Civilisation') - International Centre

Civiltà dell'Acqua International Centre is a non-profit NGO, based in Venice. It is aimed at promoting trans-disciplinary research and holistic approaches to change unsustainable behaviours and practices in water perception, use and management. The Centre is active in the recovery of local water knowledge, and the material and non-material heritage of different water civilizations or 'water worlds'. In 2016, the Centre launched a new project, the Global Network of Water Museums, which today is officially endorsed by UNESCO-IHP.

Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World

CCANW is an educational charity founded in 2001 which uses the arts to explore deeper understandings of our place within nature. 'Soil Culture', its recent programme of touring exhibitions and artist residencies, was the UK's most substantial contribution to the UN International Year of Soils 2015. Increasingly working internationally and across disciplines, it is part of the 'art.earth' family of art and ecology organizations based at Dartington Hall in Devon, England.

The Global Network of Water Museums (WAMU.NET)

The Global Network of Water Museums was launched in Venice in May 2017 at the 1st International Symposium organized by UNESCO-IHP. This network of water museums, universities and cultural institutions was formally recognised in June 2017 at the 55th Session of UNESCO-IHP Bureau in Paris. UNESCO's formal recognition of this project enables the creation of a new IHP programme with global reach and visibility, and consolidate the WAMU.NET partnership through a number of projects - the major exhibition at the Venice Biennale being one. The exhibition Spirito d'Acqua is intended to promote the UN's vision of more sustainable water uses in order to encourage new actions for global corporate responsibility.

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