



# AGENCY FOR BETTER LIVING

## AGENCY FOR BETTER LIVING

Austrian Contribution to the 19th International Architecture Exhibition –  
La Biennale di Venezia 2025 by Sabine Pollak, Michael Obrist, and  
Lorenzo Romito

## SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

By late November, the 19<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition –  
La Biennale di Venezia came to a close. The Austrian contribution  
*AGENCY FOR BETTER LIVING* addressed the growing housing crisis in  
Europe and worldwide, raising the question of the conditions and  
possibilities for good housing and living for all. In the pavilion, Vienna's  
model of social and affordable housing was juxtaposed with the  
impressive self-organized housing and living forms in Rome.

Throughout the seven months, the courtyard of the pavilion hosted a rich  
array of activities. The curators of *AGENCY FOR BETTER LIVING*,  
Sabine Pollak, Michael Obrist, and Lorenzo Romito, invited guests to a  
total of ten assemblies in the pavilion's courtyard to collectively discuss

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

[info@labiennale2025.at](mailto:info@labiennale2025.at)  
[biennale@artphalanx.at](mailto:biennale@artphalanx.at)  
[www.labiennale2025.at](http://www.labiennale2025.at)

the question of BETTER LIVING in the “Space of Negotiation.” Activists from squatted houses, urban planners, representatives from politics and administration in Vienna and Rome, as well as international architects and theorists, debated topics such as “*New Typologies of Coexistence*,” “*Feminist Urbanism*,” “*Practices of Transformation*,” “*Economies*,” and “*Ecologies of Better Living*.”

In addition to the assemblies, numerous workshops and presentations were organized in cooperation with the University of Art and Design Linz, the Technical University of Vienna, and international universities and institutions such as ZHdK Zurich University of the Arts, University of Arts – UdK Berlin, Politecnico di Milano, Politecnico di Bari, Università degli Studi di Trieste, and more. The connection to the city of Venice was established through discussions and workshops with numerous local groups and activists, such as the *Assemblea Sociale per la Casa*, an organization fighting for the right to housing in a city heavily shaped by tourism.

**The central questions of the AGENCY FOR BETTER LIVING were:**

How can the “Vienna System” be made future-proof? Which issues will become crucial in such a rapidly growing city? What can it learn from the forms of self-organization in urban regeneration in Rome? Could Vienna’s caring system serve as a model for future strategies in Rome to provide affordable housing?

All discussion events are available as video documentation on the website: <https://labiennale2025.at/en/program/>

Accompanying the exhibition at the Austrian Pavilion, the publication of the same name *AGENCY FOR BETTER LIVING* was released in cooperation with the renowned architecture magazine **ARCH+**. The sale of more than 1,000 catalogs in the pavilion demonstrates the enormous interest in the topic, while the additional 10,000 copies of ARCH+, already distributed in the book trade by Spector Books, testify to the wide reach of the mediation.

Talks about a continuation of the exhibition are ongoing. From December to March 2026, the Rome section of the exhibition will be presented at **MACRO – Museo d’Arte Contemporanea Roma**. The exhibition and mediation program of the *AGENCY FOR BETTER LIVING* received impressive international positive resonance, underlining the urgency of the topic. And with nearly 300,000 Biennale tickets sold, the subject was positioned on an international level.

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

[info@labiennale2025.at](mailto:info@labiennale2025.at)  
[biennale@artphalanx.at](mailto:biennale@artphalanx.at)  
[www.labiennale2025.at](http://www.labiennale2025.at)

## ASSEMBLIES: PARTICIPATING GROUPS AND GUESTS

### Assembly 1: Founding Event

Assemblea Sociale della Casa, Microclima, OCIO, Officina Marghera, Pandora, Poveglia per Tutti, ReBiennale, Rivolta, Sale Docks, Veras

### Assembly 2: New Typologies of Coexistence for Better Living

Chiara Cacciotti, Spin Time: Ottavia Cernuschi, Giacomo Ruben Florenzano, Emmanuel Koami Yovogna, Sara Moutawakil, Scomodo: Celilia Pellizzari, Rebecca Venzi  
Guests: Robert Korab, Alessandra Cutolo, Mattia Ferrari, Giulia Fiocca, Cecilia Pellizzari, Paolo Perrini and Rebecca Venzi

### Assembly 3: Feminist Urbanism for Better Living

Florencia Andreola, Azzurra Muzzonigro, Julia Girardi-Hoog, Elena Fusar Poli

### Assembly 4: Commoning Better Living

Quarticcio Ribelle, Elke Rauth, Christoph Laimer, Robert Temel, Zenobia

### Assembly 5: Better Living as Transformation

Constanze Wolfgring, Francesca Serrazanetti, Gennaro Postiglione, Angela Barbanente, Massimo Bricocoli, Elena Marchigiani, Daniele Petrosino

### Assembly 6: Economies of Better Living

Valentina Cocco, Gabu Heindl, Res Keller, Amila Širbegović, Movimento per il Diritto all'Abitare

### Assembly 7: (De)Provincialising Social Housing

Laura Colini, Celine d'Cruz, Kathrin Golda-Pongratz, Juma Hauser, Judith M. Lehner, Christoph Reinprecht, Amila Širbegović and Alumni of the Vienna International Summer School on New Social Housing

### Assembly 8: Desires of Better Living

Andre Krammer, Nicola Ussardi, Ca' Rapace, Katharina Weinberger-Lootsma

### Assembly 9: Ecologies of Better Living

Forum Territoriale Parco delle Energie, Sarah Gainsforth, Maurizio Veloccia  
Michele Colucci, Michele De Sanctis, Forum Territoriale Parco delle energie with Centro di Documentazione Maria Baccante – Archivio Storico della Viscosa, CSOA eXSnia and Lokomotiv, Sergio Scalia, Lina Streeruwitz, Philip Ursprung, Alessandra Valentinelli, Maurizio Veloccia

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

info@labiennale2025.at  
biennale@artphalanx.at  
www.labiennale2025.at

## Final Assembly 10: The Manifesto of Better Living

Kurt Hofstetter, Elke Krasny, Verena von Beckerath und Tim Heide

## Laboratorio Laguna:

Biennale Urbana, U5, Florian Dombois

## School of Better Living

International symposium of architectural and built environment education for young people

## CURATORIAL TEAM

SABINE POLLAK teaches as a professor for space&designstrategies at the University of Art and Design Linz and runs the architecture firm Köb&Pollak Architektur in Vienna together with Roland Köb. 1996 doctorate and 2004 habilitation in residential construction at the TU Vienna. Sabine Pollak was a visiting professor at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and led guest workshops at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, the Politecnico Milan, the University of Salzburg and at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Sabine Pollak works theoretically (books, essays, an ongoing urbanism blog in the Standard), teaches experimental architecture, the history of housing and architectural theory, researches the topics of housing and feminism, community and urbanism and works with her office as an expert for communal housing in Vienna. Residential buildings by Köb&Pollak Architektur, such as the ro\*sa Donaustadt women's housing project, have been exhibited, published, and awarded numerous prizes.

MICHAEL OBRIST, born in Bolzano in 1972, is one of the five founding partners of feld72 Architekten in Vienna and a professor at TU Wien. Since 2018, he has been Professor of Housing and Design and Head of the university's Housing and Design Research Department. He made a central contribution to the creation of the interdisciplinary Centre for New Social Housing, which was jointly initiated by TU Wien and the International Building Exhibition IBA Wien 2022. He has held visiting professorships at Politecnico di Milano and the University of Arts Linz and taught at the Public Art Masterclass of the Salzburg Summer Academy and the Architectural Association Visiting School in Slovenia. He was the Guest Editor (with Christina Lenart and Bernadette Krejs) of ARCH+ "Vienna. The End of Housing (as a Typology)" (Spector Books) and Editor (with Antonietta Putzu) of "The Last Grand Tour" (Park Books). The work of feld72 in the areas of housing, educational and office buildings, and urbanism has received numerous awards (including a number of Austrian State Prizes, the Gold Medal for Italian Architecture, and the Architecture Award of the City of Vienna) and has been presented at several biennales, worldwide (Venice 2016, 2011, 2010, 2008, and 2004, Shenzhen/Hong Kong 2009, São Paulo 2007, and Rotterdam 2003).

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

info@labiennale2025.at  
biennale@artphalanx.at  
www.labiennale2025.at

LORENZO ROMITO is an artist, architect, and curator and a co-founder of Stalker (1995–). He is a professor of space&designstrategies at the University of Arts Linz (since 2022). Together with Giulia Fiocca, he teaches public art at NABA Rome (since 2020) and the Stalker module of the environmental humanities master's program at Roma Tre University (since 2016). As Visiting Professor, he occupied the Francesco De Sanctis Chair for Italian language and culture at ETH Zürich (spring 2024), and he was awarded the Prix de Rome in Architecture at the French Academy, Villa Medici, Rome (2000-2001). With Stalker, he has participated in various art and architecture events across Europe and worldwide, including the Venice Biennale (2000, 2008, 2014), Manifesta, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art in Ljubljana (2000), the Rome Quadriennale (2008), the Riwaq Biennale in Ramallah (2006), and the IABR Rotterdam Biennale (2008). He and Stalker were awarded the Curry Stone Prize for Social Design in 2016.

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

[info@labiennale2025.at](mailto:info@labiennale2025.at)  
[biennale@artphalanx.at](mailto:biennale@artphalanx.at)  
[www.labiennale2025.at](http://www.labiennale2025.at)

## MEDIA CONTACT

ART:PHALANX – AGENTUR FÜR KULTUR & URBANITÄT

Susanne Haider, Catharina Cramer

[biennale@artphalanx.at](mailto:biennale@artphalanx.at)

phone +43 (0) 1 524 9803-11

mobile +43 (0) 699 120 51700

<https://labiennale2025.at/en/press/>

DOWNLOAD MEDIA INFORMATION:

<https://labiennale2025.at/en/press/media-information/>

DOWNLOAD PRESS IMAGES:

<https://labiennale2025.at/en/press/press-images/>

PRESS OFFICE OF THE BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

Architecture Press Office La Biennale di Venezia

Ca' Giustinian, San Marco 1364/A

30124 Venice

phone +39 041 5218849 / 846 / 716

[pressooffice@labiennale.org](mailto:pressooffice@labiennale.org)

[www.labiennale.org/en/press](http://www.labiennale.org/en/press)

VISITOR INFORMATION

Austrian Pavilion

Biennale Architettura 2025

19th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

[www.labiennale2025.at](http://www.labiennale2025.at)

Exhibition Duration: May 10 – November 23, 2025

Giardini della Biennale

Sestiere Castello, 30122 Venice, Italy

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

INSTAGRAM: [www.instagram.com/austrianpavilion](http://www.instagram.com/austrianpavilion)

FACEBOOK: [www.facebook.com/AustriaAtVeniceBiennale](http://www.facebook.com/AustriaAtVeniceBiennale)

#AgencyForBetterLiving #AustrianPavilion #BiennaleArchitettura2025

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

[info@labiennale2025.at](mailto:info@labiennale2025.at)  
[biennale@artphalanx.at](mailto:biennale@artphalanx.at)  
[www.labiennale2025.at](http://www.labiennale2025.at)

## PROJECT TEAM

### COMMISSIONER:

Federal Ministry of Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport, Division IV – Arts and Culture

### CURATORS:

Sabine Pollak, Michael Obrist, Lorenzo Romito

### DESIGN:

Sabine Pollak, Michael Obrist, Lorenzo Romito

### RESEARCH TEAM VIENNA:

Sabine Pollak and Michael Obrist in collaboration with Research Department Housing and Design / Institute for Architecture and Design / Faculty for Architecture and Planning / TU Wien (Adna Babahmetović, Tatjana Bergmeister, Peter Fattering, Sinem Firat, Marie Gnesda, Laura Huber, Michael Klein, Bernadette Krejs, Diego Martinez, Franz Ollertz, Franziska Orso, Lorenzo Vicari, Costanza Zeni) and Anton Krebs, Armin Linke, Carla Lo, Gili Merin, Nikola Miloradovic, Zara Pfeifer, Miriam Pollak, Lotte Schreiber, Paul Sebesta, Veronika Wladyga

### THANKS TO:

Peter Bauer, Katharina Bayer, Carina Bliem, Thomas Bozzetta, Joschka Brangs, Josef Cser, Theo Deutinger, Paulus Dreibholz, Benni Eder, Katharina Egger, David Eisl, Aline Eriksson, Anne Catherine Fleith, Kathrin Gaál, Michael Gehbauer, Julia Girardi-Hoog, Daniel Glaser, Maria Groiss, Dieter Groschopf, Nina Haider, Friedrich Hauer, Gabu Heindl, Kurt Hofstetter, Susanne Kallinger, Winfried Kallinger, Emma Keller, Robert Korab, Roland Köb, Andre Krammer, Theresa Krenn, Christina Lenart, Christoph Limbeck-Lilienau, Max Limbeck-Lilienau, Michael Ludwig, Thomas Madreiter, Materialnomaden, Madlyn Miessgang, Judith Moser, Viktoria Neuber, neunerhaus, Luz Olivares Capelle, Mario Paintner, Markus Pendlmayr, Katrin Pilz, Ulrike Pitro, Planet 10, Gregor Puscher, Bruno Sandbichler, Richard Scheich, Christina Schraml, Milica Simic, Amila Širbegović, Lina Streeruwitz, Katharina Urbanek, Verein Frauenwohnprojekt ro\*sa, Bernd Vlay, Viola Wagner, Michael Wallraff, Natascha Weiß, Wiener Wohnen, Wohnservice Wien, Marie-Noëlle Yazdanpanah, Karin Zauner-Lohmeyer, Markus Zilker, Peter Zoderer

### RESEARCH TEAM ROME:

Stalker/SUN – Scuola di Urbanesimo Nomade in collaboration with Forum Territoriale Parco delle Energie, IURmap, MAd'O@Santa Croce/SpinTime, School of Herat, Scomodo, Vega

Giulia Fiocca and Lorenzo Romito with Tommaso Arnaldi, Jessi Birtwistle, Marco Burrascano, Ottavia Cernuschi, Valeria Cirillo, Mateusz Dalla Torre, Chiara Davoli, Anton Filchakov, Giacomo Ruben Florenzano, Silvio Galeano, Morteza Khaleghi, Armin Linke, Leroy S.P.Q.R'dam, Francesca Pionati, Edoardo Quattrucci, Irene Romito

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

info@labiennale2025.at  
biennale@artphalanx.at  
www.labiennale2025.at

THANKS TO:

Action Diritti in Movimento, BPM Blocchi Precari Metropolitani, Centro socio-culturale Ararat, Coordinamento Cittadino di Lotta per la Casa, Forum Territoriale Parco delle Energie, Metropoliz/MAAM, Porto Fluviale, Quarticciolo Ribelle, 4 Stelle, Santa Croce/Spin Time

Assalti Frontali and Muro del Canto, Edoardo Bucci, Luca Capuano, Ulisse Cavallari, Alejandro Cifuentes, Valentina Cocco, Marco Corirossi, Tano D'Amico, Gianrico Di Fonzo, Giacomo Fabbri, Glenda Furini, Federica Giardini, Alessandro Imbriaco, Pierre Kattar, Lorenzo La Rovere, Rossella Marchini, Stefano Montesi, Valerio Muscella, Daniele Napolitano, Paolo Palermo, Sara Paoletta, Giovanni Parente, Cecilia Pellizzari, Flavia Rizzuto, Andrea Sabbadini, Tommaso Salaroli,

Chiara Sandri, Stefano Sbrulli, Reza Haidari Shahbidak, Flavia Sorichetti, Hamid Sultani, Pietro Vicari, Wuarky

Archivio Rodrigo Pais (Alma Mater Studiorum – Biblioteca Università di Bologna), Centro di Documentazione Maria Baccante, Comune di Montanaro (TO), Fondazione Gramsci, Fondazione Primoli, Fondo Italo Insolera, IRSIFAR Istituto romano per la storia d'Italia dal fascismo alla Resistenza, ISIA Roma Design, Istituto Centrale per la Grafica, Istituto Luce, Laboratorio Circo-Università Roma Tre, Libreria Anomalia-Centro di Documentazione Anarchica, Micro Stamperia Quarticciolo, Museo Cambellotti Latina, Open Impact, Polo Civico Quarticciolo, Sovrintendenza Capitolina (Archivio Storico, Galleria d'Arte Moderna and Museo di Roma)

Roma Capitale - Assessorato alla Cultura, Assessorato e Dipartimento Lavori Pubblici e Infrastrutture, Assessorato al Patrimonio

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT:

Carla Lo Landschaftsarchitektur

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING:

Peter Bauer, Werkraum Ingenieure ZT

PROJECT & PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT:

section.a, Vienna

PRESS & PUBLIC RELATIONS:

art:phalanx, Vienna

VISUAL COMMUNICATION:

Bueronardin, Vienna

PROGRAMMING WEBSITE:

Philipp Daun, Vienna

FISCAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

Georg Geyer, Kanzlei Geyer & Geyer, Vienna

INSURANCE:

Barta M.A.I. (Managing Art Insurance), Vienna

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

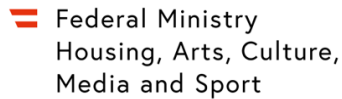
CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

info@labiennale2025.at  
biennale@artphalanx.at  
www.labiennale2025.at

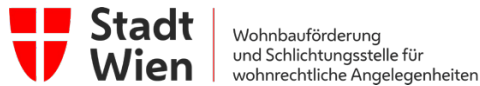


## PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

On behalf of



General Partner



Wohnbauförderung  
und Schlichtungsstelle für  
wohnrechtliche Angelegenheiten

With the support of



HOUSING  
AND DESIGN  
ARCHITECTURE  
AND DESIGN  
TU WIEN



Kunstuniversität Linz  
University of Arts  
Linz



Abt. 3 – Gemeinden  
und Katastrophenschutz

mit Unterstützung von  
Kultur



Main Sponsors



Endlich zuhause.



Sponsors



AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

info@labiennale2025.at  
biennale@artphalanx.at  
www.labiennale2025.at

Friends

LAUFEN

wien  
museum

Sponsors in kind



**ZUMTOBEL**

KOHLMAIER  
Realizing Visions

SCHLOSS  
*Eggenberg*



werkraum  
*ingenieure*

hochgerner  
interior.solutions

**THOMAS  
FEICHTNER**  
STUDIO

 **Hanfstein**  
Hempbrick by Schönthaler

AUSTRIAN PAVILION  
BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA 2025

CURATORS: SABINE POLLAK,  
MICHAEL OBRIST, LORENZO ROMITO

[info@labiennale2025.at](mailto:info@labiennale2025.at)  
[biennale@artphalanx.at](mailto:biennale@artphalanx.at)  
[www.labiennale2025.at](http://www.labiennale2025.at)