

# **e-flux** architecture

Nick Axel, Deputy Editor  
Future Architecture Matchmaking Conference  
Museum of architecture and design (MAO), Ljubljana  
16 February, 2017

**e-flux**

1999

Projects

2001

**art  
agenda**

2004/2010

art&education

2006

Program

2007

*e-flux journal*

2008

Books

2009

e-flux conversations

2015

**e-flux** architecture

2016

**BİZİN?**

**TÜRÜMÜZÜN TASARIMI:**  
2 saniye  
2 gün

**MİYİ? SANI?**

22 EKİM • 4 ARALIK 2016

**IZ?**

2 yıl  
200 yıl  
200.000 yıl

# e-flux

e-flux Architecture

e-flux Architecture is a dissemination platform for architecture and design. The content is comprised of commissioned and syndicated essays, as well as press releases for key events and projects in the field.

Superhumanity is the first project by e-flux Architecture.

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February 2017



January 2017

Fundació Mies van der Rohe  
Five finalists for the EU Mies Award 2017  
unveiled



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February 15, 2017

# Fundació Mies van der Rohe



**Presentation of the five finalists:** February 16, 1pm

Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO), Ljubljana, Slovenia

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The **European Commission** and the **Fundació Mies van der Rohe** have announced today the **five finalists** which will compete for the 2017 European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture—Mies van der Rohe Award. The press conference ran by Stephen Bates, Chairman of the 2017 Jury and Ivan Blasi, coordinator of the Prize, has taken place at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion, which generated the organization of the Prize in 1988.

**The five finalists are:** **deFlat Kleiburg** in Amsterdam by NL Architects and XVW architectuur; **Ely Court** in London by Alison Brooks Architects; **Kannikegården** in Ribe by Lundgaard&Tranberg Architects; **Katyn Museum** in Warsaw by BBGK Architekci and **Rivesaltes Memorial Museum** by Rudy Ricciotti.

**Stephen Bates**, architect and Chairman of the Jury declared: “Our instincts could be summed up by the words of Peter Smithson: ‘things need to be ordinary and heroic at the same time.’ We were looking for an ordinariness whose understated lyricism is full of potential.”

**Malgorzata Omilanowska**, art historian, former Minister of Culture in Poland and member of the Jury, highlighted: “social housing, memory and the problem of context and new constructions in the old city centres have proven to be important to us as a Jury. The finalist works show the problematic of our time; what has happened in the last year reveals the really deep problem of populism and the lack of memory. These 5 projects show the problem that we face as citizens, not only as architecture specialists, but as members of today’s society.”

**Anna Ramos**, Director of the Fundació Mies van der Rohe, underlined: “The Jury’s selection consolidates the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture—Mies van der Rohe Award as a strategic element by which to promote research into, debate on and dissemination of contemporary architecture in Europe. Issues such as collective housing, the complexity of the European city—both contemporary and

**e-flux Architecture**

Five finalists for the 2017 European Union Prize For Contemporary Architecture Mies Van Der Rohe Award

To: Nick Axel

Reply-To: architecture.mailer@e-flux.com

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February 15, 2017

# Fundació Mies van der Rohe



## Five finalists for the EU Mies Award 2017 unveiled

**Presentation of the five finalists:** February 16, 1pm

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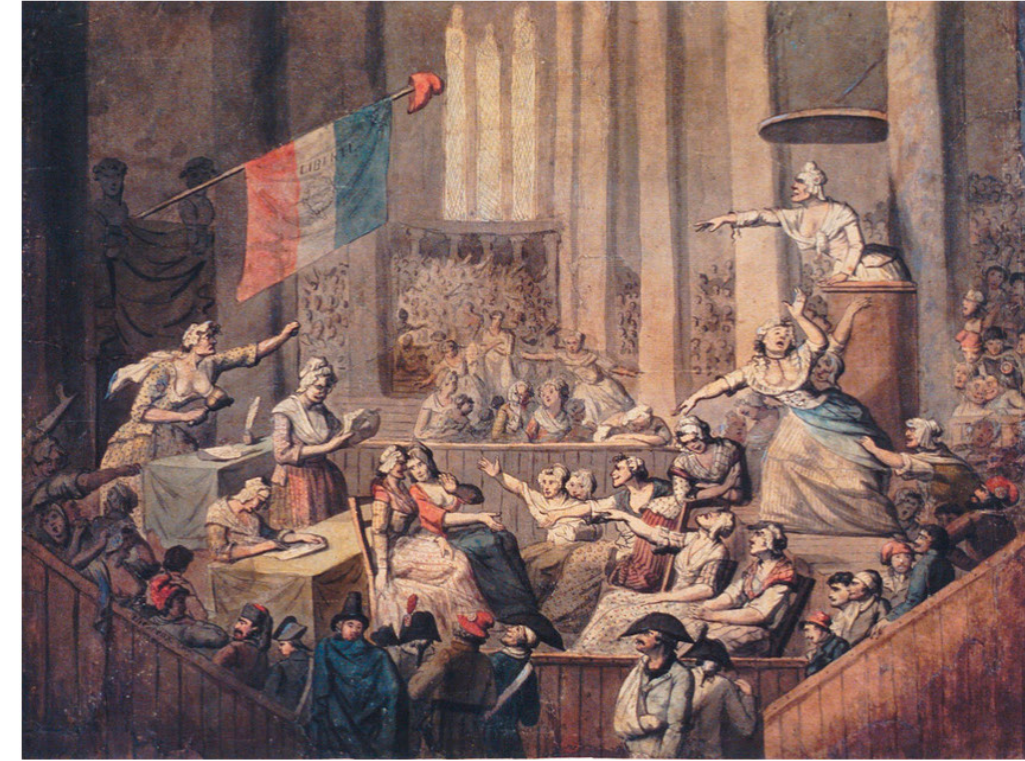
Superhumanity

The field of design has radically expanded. As a practice, design is no longer limited to the world of material objects, but rather extends from carefully crafted individual looks and online identities, to the surrounding galaxies of personal devices, new materials, interfaces, networks, systems, infrastructures, data, chemicals, organisms, and genetic codes, as Beatriz Colomina and Mark Wigley, curators of the 3rd Istanbul Design Biennial, put it in their manifesto (→). Our response to the Biennial's theme—*Are We Human?*—draws from "The Obligation to Self-Design" (*e-flux Journal 0*, →), a text by Boris Groys in which a genealogy of design is traced from the design of the soul and the design of the self to "the design of life as a whole." *Superhumanity* seeks to explore and challenge our understanding of "design" by engaging with and departing from the concept of the "self." *Superhumanity* aims to probe the idea that we are and always have been continuously reshaped by the artifacts we shape, to which we ask: who designed the lives we live today? What are the forms of life we inhabit, and what new forms are currently being designed? Where are the sites, and what are the techniques, to design others? Over fifty writers, scientists, artists, architects, designers, philosophers, historians, archeologists and anthropologists will bring new insight to these and related questions over the coming four months. Contributions will be published both on the e-flux website and dispatched as emails. To join the *Superhumanity* mailing list, please subscribe to e-flux Architecture [here](#).

In addition to online publication, a *Superhumanity* reading room was exhibited from October 22 to November 20 at DEPO (Tütün Deposu Lüleci Hendek Caddesi No.12, Tophane 34425 İstanbul) as a part of the 3rd Istanbul Design Biennial.

Editors

41-50



Thomas Keenan  
Or are we human beings?



31-40



Thomas Keenan

# Or are we human beings?



Perhaps you have been struck by the frequency and regularity with which people find it necessary to state what one might think was the most obvious thing in the world: that they are human beings, or that they would like to live like them.

Here's an example from the front lines of the so-called "refugee crisis" in Europe last March: "May God take his revenge on them—everyone who did this to us—from whatever country they come from," said Raife al-Baltajy, a Syrian from near Aleppo, as she waited for a bus with her family. "May god take his vengeance out on them. Isn't it sinful? Are we animals? Or are we human beings?" She said she had been living in Syria for four years under the shelling, but traveled to Turkey, then to the Greek island of Lesbos, where she took a ferry to the mainland and on to Idomeni.<sup>1</sup>

Or this claim from another Syrian refugee who spoke out from his new home in the United States: "I was born as a human and raised as a human. I have been in some situations that made me feel not like a human," [Refaai Hamo, a civil engineer] said. "I would like to grab any opportunity I can to prove I am a human being and if I don't have that opportunity, I refuse to live anywhere I don't feel like a human."<sup>2</sup>

How do we understand this repeated need of people in situations of displacement, conflict, and injustice, to ask others whether they, the speakers, are in fact human, which is to say, their need "to prove I am a human being"? What is going on when people say this? It seems obvious, but in fact it's one of the most complicated, enigmatic, unstable things that can possibly be said. We should not take its possibility for granted.

That said, people have been saying it, more or less, for a while. Versions of the claim have a long history—think back to Josiah Wedgwood's famous anti-slavery medallion of 1787, featuring a shackled African figure knelt in a plea and bearing the inscription "Am I not a man and a brother?," or to the even more economical signs borne by the Memphis, Tennessee sanitation workers on strike in the spring of 1968, "I am a Man." This rich provenance makes the utterance somehow even more perplexing: haven't we learned this yet? Why do people still need to say this? What accounts for the persistence of this claim?

To begin to understand and appreciate these words, "I am a human being," we need to back up and ask just what sort of speech act is being performed here. I will call it a *claim*, whether it's formulated as a question ("Am I not ..."), a desire ("we want to live like ..."), a simple declaration or an apparent tautology ("I am a

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SUPERHUMANITY—Thomas Keenan, "Or are we human beings?"

To: Nick Axel

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e-flux Yesterday at 5:17 PM



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Thomas Keenan  
**Or are we human beings?**

Superhumanity

February 14, 2017



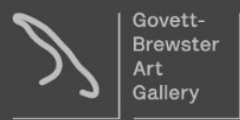
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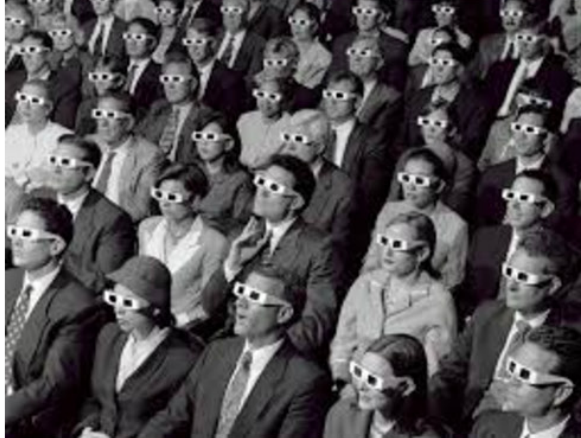
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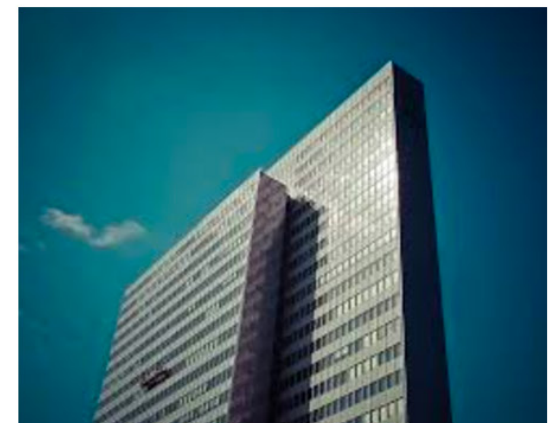
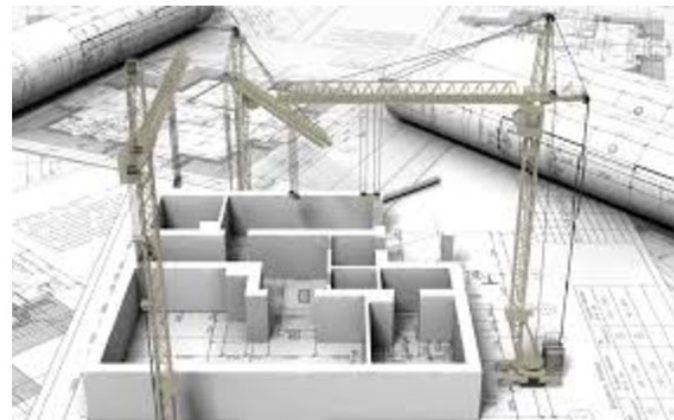
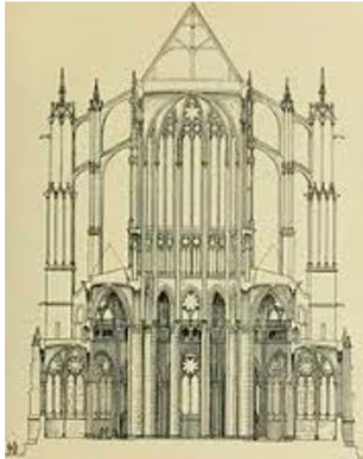
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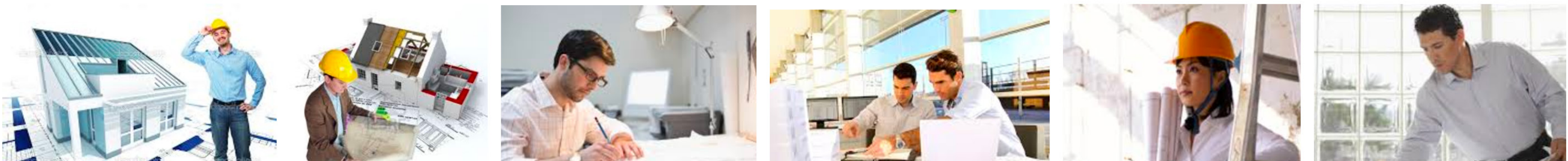
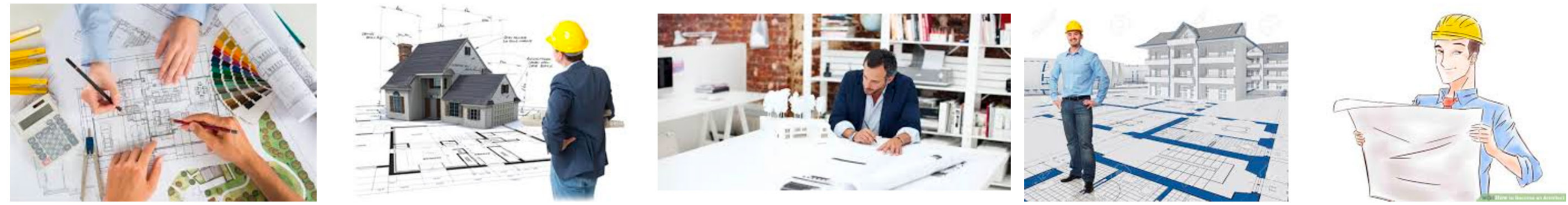
- conference
- concert
- business conference
- seminar
- show
- fashion show
- public speaking
- listening
- presentation
- business presentation
- theatre
- church
- broadway



- traditional
- modern
- renaissance
- victorian
- contemporary
- spanish colonial
- house
- office building
- skyscraper
- school
- tower
- temple
- minimalist
- modernist



- home
- construction site
- museum
- school
- sketch
- cartoon
- meme
- home design
- landscape
- interior
- concept
- house design
- network
- indian
- japanese

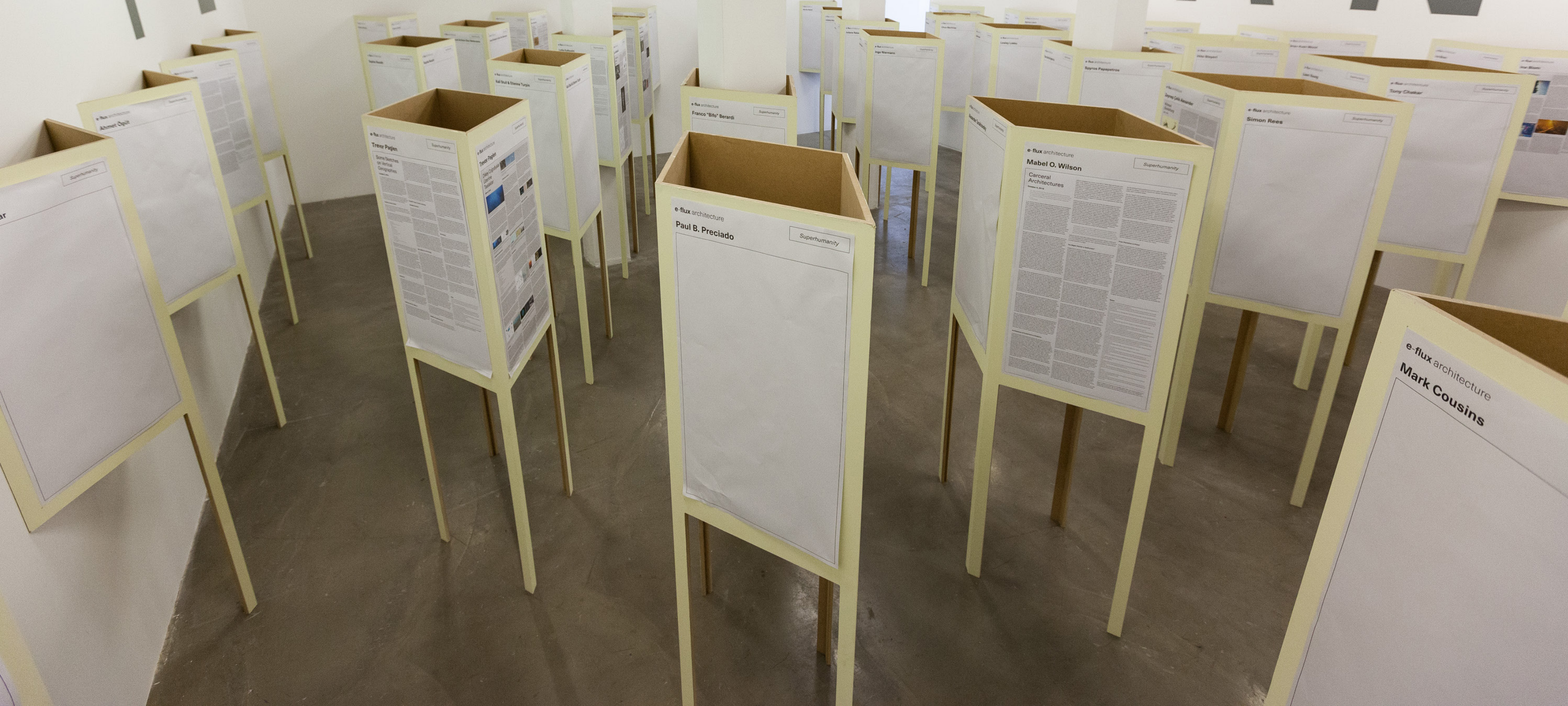








# PERHUMAN



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Geographies

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Superhumanity

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# BİZ İN-SAN MI-YIZ ?

İSTANBUL TASARIM BİENALİ

22 EKİM-20 KASIM

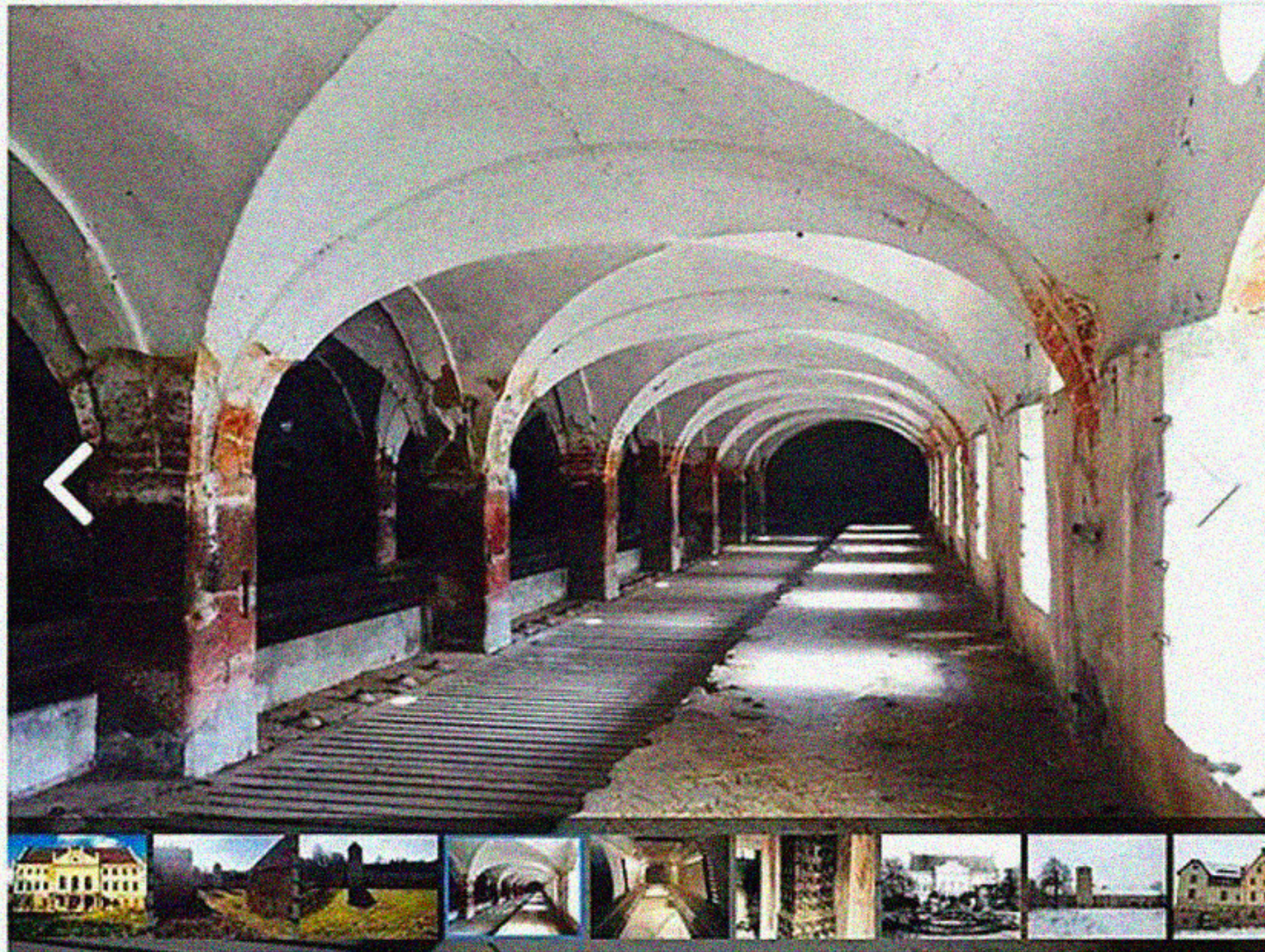
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## Winning

Benedict Singleton and Marta Ferreira de Sá



Film still from Sidney Lumet's *Network* (1976).

We read “No You’re Not” <sup>55</sup> less as an essay than as a pitch. A pitch proposes a course of action to an audience, specifically one which requires their involvement if it is to take place. This immediately makes the pitch very different than the kind of argument that Easterling describes. When an argument is addressed to an audience, it demands they acknowledge it as correct. A pitch, in contrast, offers something to them, in the knowledge they might say no. One does not need to pitch if one is in a position to can issue a command: if you are in a position to say “let it be so,” and then have it be so, you are on the receiving end of pitches—you are the audience—notated in front of it. Pitches, then, trade off persuasion, not



يا ليت ذكرك  
أهد فصلح

معه  
عليان

WARD

كلها أو المقاومة بغير  
فتح فتح

عبدالله  
عورتنا