



SMAC San Marco Art Centre, a pioneering new arts institution will launch in Piazza San Marco, Venice, on 9 May 2025

SMAC will be permanently located on the second floor of the Procuratie, providing a new exhibition space comprised of 16 galleries in the heart of Venice

SMAC's inaugural programme features two solo exhibitions dedicated to Australian modern architect Harry Seidler and pioneering Korean landscape designer Jung Youngsun



[Procuratie. Photo: Mike Merckenschlager](#)

Venice, 10 April – SMAC, a pioneering new arts centre that will present a dynamic programme spanning visual arts, architecture, fashion, technology, and film, will open to the public on 9 May. SMAC is situated on the second floor of the Procuratie in Piazza San Marco and will provide more than 1,000 sq meters of exhibition space, recently restored by Pritzker prize winning architect David Chipperfield. Through research, dialogue, and experimentation, SMAC will critically examine contemporary visual culture and its relations with history, science, philosophy, and society. The exhibition programme will be realised in collaboration with world class international institutions and curators. To coincide with the 19th International Architecture Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia 2025, SMAC's inaugural exhibitions will focus on the careers of two pioneers in their respective fields, the Australian modern architect Harry Seidler, with *Migrating Modernism: The architecture of Harry Seidler*, and *For all that Breathes on Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators*, which presents the work of the Korean landscape architect Jung Youngsun. Beyond the inaugural exhibitions, SMAC will present two to four major exhibitions per year. In the autumn of 2025, Daniel Birnbaum and Jacqueline Davies will come together to co-curate *The Quantum Effect* at SMAC.



[SMAC San Marco Art Centre galleries. Courtesy Generali Real Estate. Photo: Andrea Artoni](#)

Co-Founders Anna Bursaux, David Gramazio and David Hrankovic: *“SMAC fills a gap in Venice’s rich cultural landscape. We focus on content that sheds light on the unexpected, that challenges conventions and poses rigorous questions. We are a spontaneous and experimental organisation, testing traditional models of arts institutions and exhibition making. We welcome collaboration, providing institutions, artists, and creative practitioners with a platform in Venice. We believe that the arts open new possibilities for human co-existence and allow for cities and communities to thrive.”*



[Procuratie. Courtesy of The Human Safety Net. Photo: Alessandra Chemollo](#)

SMAC occupies the second floor of the Procuratie, which is owned by Generali, who commissioned the restoration of the entire building from David Chipperfield, reimagining it as a hub of social inclusion and culture, open to the public for the first time in 500 years to provide a place to meet, inspire and discuss the challenges of the future.

Simone Bemporad, Generali Group Chief Communications and Public Affairs Officer:

“I would like to thank Anna Bursaux, David Gramazio, and David Hrankovic. The vision of SMAC introduces a new concept to Venice, enriching the city's offerings by integrating them into a unique context like that of the Procuratie in Piazza San Marco. This 500-year-old masterpiece has been reopened to the city and the world, designed to welcome and inspire a vibrant community that is engaged and dedicated to the great challenges of the future through The Human Safety Net foundation. Today, this reality is further enhanced by the stimulating presence of SMAC, with whom we are excited to collaborate, based on shared goals and our desire to be an ever-increasing point of reference, meeting, and inspiration.”

SMAC's state-of-the-art exhibition space is comprised of 16 galleries, arranged along a continuous corridor that stretches in parallel over 80m. There are 58 windows, which overlook the iconic square in Venice with ceiling heights in each of the rooms of 4.5 metres. Visitors will enter the building from Piazza San Marco 105 through Corte Maruzzi, a private courtyard which leads onto a monumental staircase. David Chipperfield's sensitive restoration of the Procuratie, orchestrated by Generali Real Estate, includes reviving exquisite details that reflect the architectural history of the city while instilling the building

with a contemporary vision.

The walls are covered in light grey Venetian marmorino, made from crushed marble, while the floors are white terrazzo. The original doors in the enfilade have been preserved with some galleries containing exposed Renaissance beams. SMAC will be one of only a handful of spaces in Venice with international museum quality conditions that include full climate and humidity control. Two event rooms with Napoleonic-era frescoes will provide the setting for engagement events, which will accompany each exhibition. The events within this strand of SMAC's programme will cultivate the exchange of ideas between exhibition partners, curators and members of the public.

Migrating Modernism. The architecture of Harry Seidler presents the extraordinary personal history and work of the leading modern architect Harry Seidler [1923 (Vienna) – 2006 (Sydney)], with a particular focus on the artists he worked with and commissioned. The exhibition will feature artists who collaborated on projects with Seidler such as Josef Albers, Alexander Calder, Helen Frankenthaler, Frank Stella, Lin Utzon and Sol LeWitt, as well as the famed Italian structural engineer Pier Luigi Nervi. The exhibition is curated by the University of Sydney's Ann Stephen and Paolo Stracchi, with special advisor Nikolaus Hirsch. It is organised in partnership with the Chau Chak Wing Museum of the University of Sydney.

For all that Breathes on Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators is co-organised with Seoul's National Museum of Contemporary Art, MMCA. The exhibition presents the work of Korea's foremost landscape architect Jung Youngsun, tracing the development of her practice from grassroots activism to ambitious state-led projects such as those for the Seoul Olympics and Incheon International Airport. Jung's oeuvre illustrates the profound connection between nature, architecture, and human resilience.

The exhibition is curated by Jihoi Lee and is made possible by the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, commemorating 140 years of cultural ties between Korea and Italy.

Additionally, the opening week will feature a public programme entitled *The World Around On Site: Venice*, hosted by SMAC and The World Around, a non-profit organisation that champions the work of architects and designers who are addressing the global challenges of our time. On 8 May, the future of contemporary architecture and design will be discussed in a forum bringing together leading voices from the worlds of arts, culture, architecture, design and technology. The symposium will take place in the auditorium at The Home of The Human Safety Net on the third floor of the Procuratie.

SMAC's location has been made possible due to a landmark agreement with Generali, the owner of the Procuratie, and thanks to the collaboration of Elia Federici and Fresia Re Spa. The third floor of the Procuratie hosts The Home of The Human Safety Net, with the interactive exhibition 'A World of Potential', an immersive journey in which visitors are led to discover their strengths and can connect to the Foundation's programmes. Interactions between The Home of The Human Safety Net and SMAC enable further synergies at the intersection of art and social impact, in the development of initiatives for the local and global community, and in the creation of new partnerships.

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[Portraits of David Gramazio, David Hrankovic and Anna Bursaux. Courtesy of SMAC San Marco Art Centre. Photo: Pierfrancesco Celada](#)

Migrating Modernism. The architecture of Harry Seidler

SMAC San Marco Art Centre, Procuratie, Venice

9 May – 13 July 2025



[Australia Square, Sydney, Australia. Architect Harry Seidler. Photo Max Dupain, 1968 © Penelope Seidler](#)

Venice, 10 April 2025 - SMAC San Marco Art Centre and the Chau Chak Wing Museum (CCWM) at the University of Sydney present *Migrating Modernism. The architecture of Harry Seidler*. The exhibition is a major retrospective of the life and work of Austrian-born Australian modern architect Harry Seidler (Vienna 1923 - Sydney 2006). As one of the most influential modern architects, Seidler was responsible for designing numerous pioneering

buildings in Australia, and he also designed buildings in Mexico, Paris, Hong Kong and, by the end of his career, back in the city of his birth, Vienna.

Migrating Modernism. The architecture of Harry Seidler is curated by Ann Stephen from CCWM and Paolo Stracchi from the University's School of Architecture Design and Planning, with curatorial advisor Nikolaus Hirsch. The exhibition will consider in depth both individual projects and Seidler's collaborations with architects and artists. These include Josef Albers, Alexander Calder, Helen Frankenthaler, Frank Stella, Lin Utzon and Sol LeWitt. Seidler also collaborated with the famed Italian structural engineer Pier Luigi Nervi.

Migrating Modernism. The architecture of Harry Seidler will present materials, such as letters, drawings, and models together with personal documents and the artworks of those who either influenced him or with whom he collaborated.



[Architect Harry Seidler, Sydney, Australia 1973. Photo Max Dupain © Penelope Seidler](#)

Ann Stephen: *"Living in Sydney, we see how Harry Seidler's modern vision introduced a distinctly cosmopolitan culture to Australian cities—not only through his buildings, but also through the art he brought into public spaces."*

Paolo Stracchi: *"Beyond its refined formal language, Seidler's architecture stands as a reflection of the broader cultural, historical, and architectural conditions of its time."*

Harry Seidler escaped Nazi-ruled Vienna at the age of 15, fleeing to England before being interned as an enemy alien and later deported to further internment camps in Canada, where he, later, upon release completed his first degree in architecture and became registered as an architect.

Seidler later moved to the United States, studying and working under a remarkable lineage of masters – Walter Gropius, Josef Albers, and Marcel Breuer, and worked with Oscar

Niemeyer in Brazil – before moving to Sydney at the age of 24. A decade later, he met Penelope, who became his wife, life companion and professional partner. United by a deep passion for architecture and art, they built a life enriched by collaborations with artists such as Alexander Calder, Josef Albers, Helen Frankenthaler, Frank Stella, Lin Utzon and Sol LeWitt. Seidler also collaborated with the famed Italian structural engineer Pier Luigi Nervi.

After studying in the Americas, Seidler arrived in Sydney in 1948 to design his parents a house – the Rose Seidler House. He started his private practice in 1949. In Australia, he emerged as one of the most prominent figures of the modern movement, with his work spanning radical single houses to monumental towers.



[Harry & Penelope Seidler House, Killara, Sydney, Australia, Photo Max Dupain, 1968 © Penelope Seidler](#)

Partly trained in an engineering school, Seidler's technical expertise, especially of reinforced concrete, was rare amongst his generation of designers, and set him apart from his peers. This also provided the foundation for the fluid forms he produced with Pier Luigi Nervi that characterized his work from the early 1960s. The combination of his engineering competence and sculptural flair meant that he was one of the few designers of his age capable of fulfilling the modernist dream of integrating art and technology.

Celebrated as one of the most influential voices of the modern movement in Australia, Seidler shaped a legacy spanning single-family houses, inventive towers, public buildings and progressive housing schemes. These were realised in cities as varied as Sydney, Acapulco, Paris, Hong Kong, and his native Vienna. Seidler's life and work trace the arc of

modernism as both a personal journey and a global narrative, inviting reflection on architecture as a layered expression of society and a medium through which ideas migrate across continents and time.

As **Jørn Utzon**, architect of the Sydney Opera House once said: *“Harry is the best example of how a newcomer, a migrant, attacks the problem of getting something built. He taught others to achieve this, including myself. He was a marvellously gifted architect... showing a new way of living in the modern times.”*

The exhibition opens with the launch of SMAC San Marco Art Centre, a new centre for the arts in the heart of Venice, located in the Procuratie on Saint Mark’s Square, which was recently renovated by Pritzker-prize winning architect David Chipperfield. *Migrating Modernism. The architecture of Harry Seidler* coincides with the opening of the 19th International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia. As part of its inaugural programme, SMAC will also present *For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators*.

The Procuratie also hosts The Home of The Human Safety Net on the third floor, with the interactive exhibition *A World of Potential*, an immersive journey in which visitors are led to discover their strengths and can connect to the Foundation's programs.

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For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators
SMAC San Marco Art Centre, Procuratie, Venice
9 May – 13 July 2025



[Jung Youngsun, Courtesy of MMCA](#)

***Landscape architecture can be a poem
written on earth and it can resonate deeply.***

Jung Youngsun

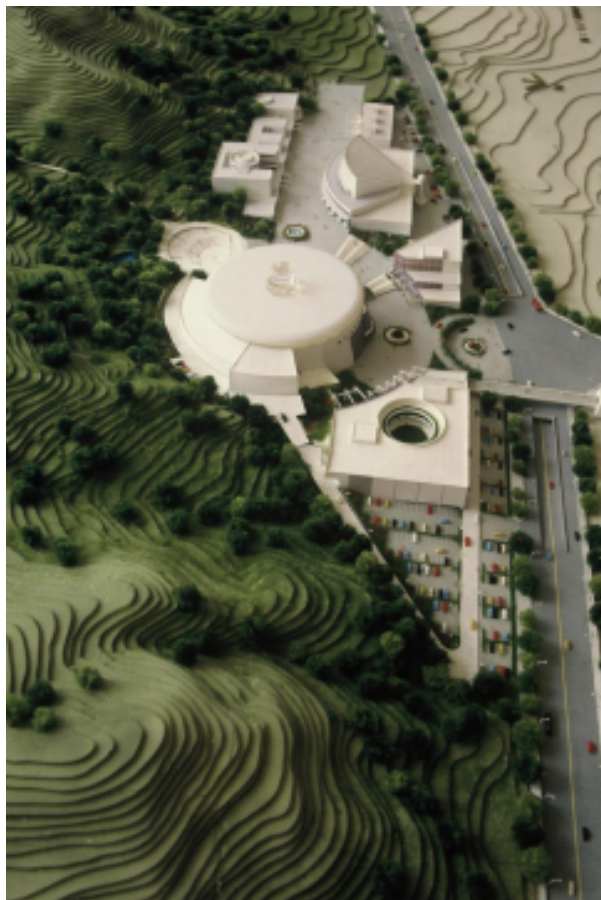
Venice, 10 April 2025 - SMAC San Marco Art Centre and MMCA (National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea) present *For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators*, the first major international exhibition of Korea's foremost landscape architect Jung Youngsun (b. 1941).

Jung Youngsun was the first Korean woman to earn the title of land development engineer. Her work fostered a new sensitivity to rehabilitation and the creation of green spaces, both in urban settings and in various public and private domains, focused on designing not only for nature but also for communities, creating resilient and sustainable havens.

Jung Youngsun: *"Landscape architecture can be a poem written on earth and it can resonate deeply. Just as the sight of a rainbow in the sky makes our hearts skip a beat, I hope that the gardens we tend, stroke, and nurture will be a source of inspiration and a moment of healing and recovery for all."* Youngsun's work incorporates living materials, favouring native species that enhance 'the beauty of the void. The social role of landscape architecture is exemplified in Jung Youngsun's work through the creation of harmonious spaces for socialisation, contemplation, and meditation, which unlock the regenerative powers of nature.

For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators will recount and document the breadth of her practice, which has always aimed to give locations a distinct spatial identity rather than merely linking buildings and their surroundings. The exhibition design at SMAC will incorporate traditional Korean wood-building techniques.

Among her projects, the exhibition highlights those designed and built for major international events, such as the Seoul Olympics, the Asian Games, the Daejeon Expo, and Incheon International Airport. These ambitious state-led projects, which presented opportunities for economic, cultural, and technological advancement, inspired Jung Youngsun to leave teaching and enter the field of landscape architecture in earnest, founding the landscape architecture firm Seo-Ahn Total Landscape (STL) in 1987.



[Seoul Arts Center Model, ca.1985. Courtesy of STL](#)

Since the 1980s, she has been dedicated to reclaiming urban suburbs by creating facilities for leisure, sports, art, and tourism—designing captivating environments that enhance nature’s self-healing properties. During this period, she developed an archetypal resort suited to Korea’s mountainous terrain. She also established arboreturns and botanical gardens where nature and humans coexist and interact harmoniously. These include the Amorepacific Botanic Garden, composed solely of plants used in cosmetics, and the Asan Medical Center, a forested space where families and patients can mourn in peace, comforted by nature, which nourishes both body and spirit.

Jung Youngsun has also worked extensively on the restoration and regeneration of the Han River, creating a sequence of parks aimed at improving the river ecosystem through self healing wetlands. By connecting aquatic spaces, she has revitalized areas that had been cemented over and become degraded. The dialogue between nature and architecture has always been central to Jung Youngsun’s research in landscape architecture, as has the equally fundamental relationship between land, ecosystems, and people.

Jihoi Lee, Curator of For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators at SMAC and Curator, The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea: *“For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators in Venice will further echo our efforts in revealing the profound relationship between the built environment, landscape and ecology. As a landscape architect, Jung has explored the interdependence of life through designed environments, with water as one of her central elements. Her renowned work, Seonyudo Park, a former industrial site transformed into a water-purifying ecological park, exemplifies this vision. Presented at SMAC San Marco Art Centre, Procuratie, in a city shaped by its own aquatic balance, I hope the exhibition fosters a dialogue on resilience and sustainability, inviting audiences to reflect on our shared responsibility for all that lives and breathes.”*

The opening of the exhibition will coincide with the launch of SMAC San Marco Art Centre, a new centre for the arts in the heart of Venice, located in the Procuratie on Saint Mark’s Square, recently renovated by Pritzker-prize winning architect David Chipperfield. The exhibition also coincides with the opening of the 19th International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, and celebrates the year of Cultural Exchanges between Korea and Italy. As part of its inaugural programme, SMAC will also present *Migrating Modernism. The architecture of Harry Seidler*.

The Procuratie also hosts The Home of The Human Safety Net on the third floor, with the interactive exhibition ‘A World of Potential’, an immersive journey in which visitors are led to discover their strengths and can connect to the Foundation’s programs.

‘For All That Breathes On Earth: Jung Youngsun and Collaborators’ is presented by MMCA National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea in partnership with SMAC. The international presentation of the exhibition is made possible by the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, in commemoration of the Year of Korea-Italy Cultural Exchange.

The presentation at SMAC San Marco Art Centre is sponsored by AMOREPACIFIC and Samsung Foundation.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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Procuratie, Piazza San Marco 105
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Open from Wednesday to Monday, 10am - 6pm (closed Tuesdays)

Tickets and more information at www.smac.

About SMAC San Marco Art Centre

SMAC is a new centre for the Arts in the heart of Venice. Every year SMAC presents a dynamic and vibrant programme of exceptional exhibitions across all of visual culture. Situated in one of the most iconic locations in the world, SMAC is located on Piazza San Marco inside the Procuratie, recently restored by Pritzker-prize winning architect David Chipperfield. SMAC presents an ambitious programme across art, architecture, design, fashion and film, offering opportunities for discovery for specialists and the general public alike. SMAC focuses on content that sheds light on the unexpected, that challenges conventions and poses rigorous questions. Through research, dialogue, and experimentation, SMAC critically examines contemporary visual culture and its relations with history, science, philosophy, and society. SMAC believes that the Arts open new possibilities for human co-existence and allow for cities and communities to thrive.

About The Procuratie

The Procuratie opened to the public in 2022 for the first time in 500 years, following a major restoration by David Chipperfield commissioned by Generali and orchestrated by Generali Real Estate. The second floor houses SMAC San Marco Art Centre. The third floor houses The Home of The Human Safety Net, a Foundation working in 26 countries to unlock the potential of those living in vulnerable conditions. The permanent exhibition '*A World of Potential*' is conceived as an experience that leads visitors to discover their unique combination of character strengths, while also enabling them to see the best qualities in the people around them.

About The Home Of The Human Safety Net

The Human Safety Net is a global movement of people helping people, whose mission is to unlock the potential of people living in vulnerable circumstances, so that they can transform the lives of their families and communities. The Human Safety Net's programmes support vulnerable families with young children (0-6 years) and integrate refugees through work and entrepreneurship. The Home of The Human Safety Net has been designed as an amplifier of its programmes through the interactive exhibition '*A World of Potential*', which guides visitors to awareness of their own potential and the right we all have to express and develop it, as well as the co-working hub, the event space, and the library dedicated to themes of social inclusion.

About Chau Chak Wing Museum

Located on Gadigal land, the Chau Chak Wing Museum is a hub for sharing the University of Sydney's extensive collections with the wider community. Officially opened in 2020, the Museum comprises three separate collections within one multidisciplinary institution. From First Nations culture, natural history collections, antiquities, and contemporary art works, the Museum's collection embodies cultural and artistic creativity at its core and welcomes all communities to engage with the collections.

About MMCA

Established in 1969, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA) has emerged as one of Korea's preeminent arts and culture institutions, sharing its history with the course of Korean modern and contemporary art.

The MMCA currently operates four venues; MMCA Gwacheon opened in 1986, MMCA Deoksugung at Seoul's Deoksugung Palace opened in 1998, MMCA Seoul opened in 2013, and MMCA Cheongju opened in 2018.

MMCA Seoul is a multipurpose museum that houses a full range of contemporary art and serves as the face of Korean modern and contemporary art. MMCA Deoksugung specializes in modern art, focusing on Korea from the 1900s to the 1950s. MMCA Gwacheon focuses on research and family-oriented art, broadening the horizons of art history into the areas of architecture, crafts, prints, and design while also providing a full experience with its Children's Museum. MMCA Cheongju is located in a former tobacco factory that has been repurposed as "visible storage," specializing in the curatorial life cycle of its collected works and its stages of research, preservation, and exhibition.

As a leading cultural institution, the MMCA plays a pivotal role in shaping and disseminating critical discourses within the field of contemporary art, positioning itself as a dynamic site for intellectual inquiry, creative education and the cultivation of aesthetic engagement through rigorously curated exhibitions.

BIOGRAPHY Jung Youngsun

Jung Youngsun (b. 1941, Gyeongsan) is a seminal figure in Korean landscape architecture, renowned for redefining the discipline's role in urban and ecological contexts. Since founding Seo-Ahn Total Landscape in 1987, Jung has led transformative projects that bridge design, environmental stewardship, and cultural memory. Her work—spanning Seonyudo Park, Cheonggye Stream Restoration, Gwanghwamun Plaza, and Seoul Botanic Park—has been instrumental in raising public awareness about the social and ecological significance of landscape design.

A consistent advocate for ecological resilience and biodiversity, Jung has integrated native species and site-specific ecologies into her projects long before such practices became standard. Her designs prioritize the long-term vitality of landscapes through strategies rooted in contextual sensitivity, habitat preservation, and the symbiotic relationship between natural systems and urban life.

Jung's contributions have been internationally recognized with honors including the IFLA Award of Excellence, ASLA Award of Merit, and the AIA Architecture Honor Award. In 2023, she became the first Korean laureate of the IFLA Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe Award, the field's highest distinction. Often referred to as the "godmother" of Korean landscape architecture, Jung continues to shape the field with a vision grounded in ecological ethics, cultural continuity, and design for the future generations.

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