

# Performance-Based Façade Design 2025

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Conference, Off-site Activities, Cultural Immersion & Intimate Networking

Curated by Angela Mejorin

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**10-13 Sept. 2025**

**Venice, Italy**



# PBFD 2025 CORE PROGRAM – Conference

@ Auditorium Santa Margherita

**Sept. 11-12, 2025**

A former 13th-century church has been transformed into a cultural hub, renowned for hosting international conferences and workshop events. The auditorium's unique blend of Gothic and Venetian architecture, coupled with its elegant vaulted ceilings and preserved fresco fragments, creates an **inspiring atmosphere**.

The choice of Auditorium Santa Margherita underscores the PBFD initiative's commitment to connecting cutting-edge façade design with Venice's rich architectural legacy, for **advancing creative and technical exchange**.





# Keynote Speakers

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Michele Pasca di Magliano  
Director, Zaha Hadid Architects



Agnes Koltay  
Founder and CEO, Koltay Façades



Thomas A. Winterstetter  
Partner, Werner Sobek



# Speakers

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Joan Tarrús  
Consultant, Sedak



Ingo Stelzer  
Senior Technical Program Manager,  
Kuraray Europe



Laura Craft  
Head of Sustainability, Staticus



Massimo Colombari  
Technical Director, Simeon



Stephen Katz  
Technical Director, Gensler



Caroline Kruit  
International Business Developer,  
Metadecor



Peter Dushenski  
Managing Director, GlasCurtain



Lars Anders  
CEO, Priedemann



# Moderator and Panelists

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**Mikkel K. Kragh**  
Head of Department of Civil and  
Architectural Engineering,  
Aarhus University



**Mitsu Edwards**  
Director, EOC Paris



**Damian Rogan**  
Director of Façade Engineering, EOC  
London



**Lisa Rammig**  
Director, EOC Los Angeles



**Alessandro Baldini**  
Director, EOC Milan



## **Sept.11** - Seminar - *Technology Meets Nature*

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The third edition of the Performance-Based Façade Design (PBFD) conference arrives in Venice this September, promising three days of insight, innovation, and international collaboration at the intersection of technology and nature. Hosted at the historic Auditorium Santa Margherita and featuring off-site activities across the Veneto region, PBFD 2025 will unite leading architects, engineers, developers, researchers, and industry pioneers to explore how advanced technologies and natural elements are shaping the future of building envelopes.

PBFD 2025 is set to be a landmark event, bringing together the brightest minds in façade design to explore how technology and nature can unite for a more sustainable built environment. With a diverse programme spanning technical innovation, sustainability, circularity, and cultural heritage, this year's conference promises inspiration, practical insights, and invaluable networking opportunities for all who attend.

PBFD 2025 will open with a seminar dedicated to the theme "Technology Meets Nature," setting the stage for a rich exploration of how digital innovation and natural systems can work together to create high-performance, sustainable façades. **Angela Mejorin**, the event curator, will introduce the PBFD Advisory Group, outlining the initiative's evolving vision and the key themes that will guide this year's gathering.



# **Sept.11** - Seminar - *Technology Meets Nature*

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## **Keynote: Zaha Hadid Architects-Design Driven Innovation**

**Michele Pasca di Magliano** of Zaha Hadid Architects will deliver the opening keynote, drawing on his experience with globally recognized projects. He will demonstrate how advanced technologies can merge with natural systems, creating sustainable and iconic urban architecture that bridges the gap between innovation and craftsmanship.

## **Revolutionizing Architectural Design with 3D-Bent Tempered Glass**

**Joan Tarrús** from Sedak will present breakthroughs in 3D-bent tempered glass, highlighting how doubly-curved, heat-strengthened glass and energy-efficient coatings are enabling bold, dynamic façades. Sedak's proprietary technology is pushing the boundaries of glass design, offering architects new creative possibilities.

## **Sustainable Solutions for Laminated Safety Glass**

**Ingo Stelzer** of Kuraray will introduce a new classification system for assessing the carbon footprint of laminated glass, including innovative materials such as recycled PVB and bio-based components. He will also unveil Kuraray's AI-based software for optimizing sustainable glass configurations, demonstrating how structural interlayers can reduce glass thickness and embodied carbon.



## **Sept.11** - Seminar - *Technology Meets Nature*

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### **Smart Technology and Biobased Innovation in Next-generation Timber Façades**

**Laura Craft** from Staticus will showcase the Hybrid Unitised Façade (HUF) system, which replaces traditional aluminium profiles with engineered timber, reducing embodied carbon by up to 65%. She will discuss the integration of real-time sensor networks for predictive maintenance and the exploration of Danish willow as a fast-growing, sustainable material for façade systems.

### **Bringing Terracotta Craftsmanship to a City Skyline**

**Massimo Colombari** of Simeon will delve into the revival of terracotta as sustainable façade material. He will present a high-rise project in New York by City by Selldorf Architects and Frank Seta, that combines high-performance façades with terracotta, demonstrating how traditional materials can meet modern performance standards. Attendees will have the rare opportunity to view a mock-up of this system during the off-site tour.

### **Stainless Steel Façade Panels in Silicon Valley**

**Stephen Katz** from Gensler will discuss the use of stainless steel panels in the 200 Park project in San Jose. He will address the challenges of solar heat gain, glare control, and structural integrity in high-rise façades, while highlighting the material's durability, low maintenance, and reduced embodied carbon.



## **Sept.11** - Seminar - *Technology Meets Nature*

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### **An Experiment in Non-Electric Dynamic Shading**

**Caroline Kruit** from Metadecor will introduce SOMBRA, a dynamic shading system powered by air-driven soft robotics. This adaptive aluminium skin responds to sunlight without electricity, optimizing energy efficiency and comfort. SOMBRA's debut at the Venice Architecture Biennale marks a world-first in soft robotics for façades.

### **The Cold, Hard Facts: Achieving Beauty, Durability, and Daylight North of 60**

**Peter Dushenski** of GlasCurtain will explore façade design for Arctic and subarctic climates, balancing thermal efficiency with daylight access and human well-being. He will share innovations in glazing and framing that enable beautiful, resilient buildings even in extreme environments.

### **A Borosilicate Cast Glass Museum Façade - Design and Development Journey**

**Agnes Koltay** of Koltay Facades will present the Misk Art Institute Museum in Riyadh, focusing on the challenges and triumphs of developing a complex borosilicate glass façade in a harsh desert climate. Her keynote will inspire with lessons on merging technology, artistry, and cultural identity in façade engineering.



# Sept.11 - *Grand Finale Event*

@ Palazzo Nani Bernardo

**September 11, 2025**

Located in the heart of Venice on the Grand Canal, between Ca' Rezzonico and Ca' Foscari, Palazzo Nani Bernardo is a 16th-century palace. The building features a **typically Renaissance façade** with remarkable compactness and regularity. The façade, clad in white marble, is also distinguished by two 18th-century coats of arms positioned at the level of the second floor between the windows. Inside, the Palazzo boasts a truly unique **Italian-style garden**, one of the largest private gardens in Venice.





## **Sept. 12** - Debates - *Façades as Drivers for Sustainable Developments*

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The second day shifts focus to the broader role of façades in sustainable development, featuring interactive debates and panel discussions. **Professor Mikkel K. Kragh** of Aarhus University will open the day, emphasizing the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration and setting the agenda for a day of forward-thinking discussion.

### **Climate Change Working Group Address**

**Marino Mazzon** of the Order of the Engineers of Venice will highlight the urgent need for sustainable engineering practices in the face of climate change, underscoring the critical role of engineers in driving environmental progress.

### **The Future of Performance-Based Façade Design**

**Angela Mejorin** will provide a strategic overview of PBFD's growth and future direction, emphasizing global engagement and multidisciplinary collaboration as keys to advancing façade innovation.



## **Sept. 12** - Debates - *Façades as Drivers for Sustainable Developments*

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### **Think R-IOT: Saving Natural Resources Through Predictive Maintenance**

**Lars Anders** from Priedemann will introduce the R-IOT concept, which leverages IoT and predictive maintenance to extend façade lifespans and promote circular economy principles. This award-winning approach demonstrates how continuous monitoring and modular design can deliver sustainability and longevity.

### **Panel: Façade Circularity in Practice - Strategies for Adaptive-Reuse Across Global Markets**

A panel led by Eckersley O'Callaghan will feature directors from France, the USA, the UK, and Italy (respectively **Mitsu Edwards**, **Damian Rogan**, **Lisa Ramming**, and **Alessandro Baldini**). They will share best practices and real-world examples of circular design, adaptive reuse, and material reclamation in façade systems, highlighting both challenges and solutions across diverse markets.

### **Keynote: High-tech and Growing - Innovative and Sustainable Modern Façade Technology**

**Thomas Winterstetter** of Werner Sobek will close the conference with a keynote on the latest advances in façade technology, focusing on dynamic, adaptable systems that meet the rising demands for energy efficiency and sustainability.



**Sept. 13** - Limited to 50 experts

@ Simeon & @De Stefani

*Simeon Factory & De Stefani  
Winery Tours: A Journey  
Beyond Ideas and Into Taste*

Private transportation departs from Venice for a visit to **Simeon's production facility**. The experience continues with a visit to the De Stefani winery, situated in the heart of the Veneto wine region.

At the winery, the guests will enjoy a curated tasting of five estate wines, paired with a guided tour of the historic wine cellars. This will be followed by a traditional lunch featuring Venetian finger food *cicchetti*.

**September 13, 2025**

