

Salone Contract Takes Shape: Presentation of the Masterplan for the 2027 Edition by Rem Koolhaas and David Gianotten (OMA)

Not a simple exhibition mechanism, but a “trading post” or hub of interaction, negotiation, and alignment among actors, expertise, and projects. With the Curatorial Masterplan by Rem Koolhaas and David Gianotten (OMA), the Salone is already looking ahead to 2027, embracing a new challenge.

The public presentation of the Masterplan by Rem Koolhaas and David Gianotten / OMA, marks the beginning of the path towards Salone Contract 2027 - a new Salone del Mobile.Milano project dedicated to one of the most dynamic fields in the industry. In Contract, design, production, supply, and management unfold across the entire lifecycle of large-scale developments, through agreements that bring products and services together within a fluid configuration, continuously reshaped by economic, geopolitical, and cultural conditions. It is from this premise that the Salone del Mobile.Milano and OMA have shaped an idea of Contract as a collaborative ecosystem, in which clients, designers, manufacturers, and operators act across all the different phases of a project. A model that moves beyond the linear structure of the traditional supply chain and recognises projects - rather than individual products - as the true drivers of value creation.

From Product to Project: the Hub as a Space for Interaction

At the core of the Masterplan lies the question of how the Salone del Mobile.Milano, a long-standing global point of reference for the sector, can evolve to represent not only products, but also the actors, processes, and collaborative workflows that define the Contract sector. Rem Koolhaas and David Gianotten / OMA have responded with a platform capable of accommodating, supporting, and generating new opportunities for the sector, fostering the convergence of diverse interests and rethinking the trade fair as an active environment of interchange. In this vision, the space takes the form of a hub of exchange: not a series of autonomous stands, but a device that directs participants toward encounters, negotiations, and business opportunities. The exhibition is thus laid out in the manner of a city to be explored, structured by generous exhibition routes and shared spaces for dialogue.

The Masterplan in Four Elements

The hub is structured around four primary elements: the Forum, exhibition platforms (podiums), design plazas, and B2B arenas. Located at the convergence point of the primary axes of the grid, the Forum constitutes both its spatial and conceptual centre. Defined by a suspended and transformable dome that functions as a projection surface, it hosts a variety of activities - from large-scale presentations to more intimate conversations, as well as work meetings and moments of interaction.

The exhibition platforms form the building blocks of the hub and are distributed across four thematic zones reflecting the main Contract segments: workspace, hospitality and residential, public spaces, and nautical. Their modular structure shapes a coherent visual language capable of underscoring openness and continuity within the space. Each zone is complemented by projected multimedia devices designed to orient visitors and give visibility to the actors and offerings within each cluster.

Surrounding these blocks are the design plazas, conceived as monuments within the hub. Mounted on mobile structures, project displays can be repositioned throughout the exhibition, periodically reconfiguring spatial hierarchies and shifting attention across different sectors. At the intersections between clusters, the B2B arenas host one-to-one meetings, informal moments, and small-scale

appointments. Open to all participants, they allow for the continuous transformation of both the programme and their own identity - even within the space of a single day.

At the entrance, a dedicated corridor introduces the fundamentals of Contract and offers an overview of the hub. This informational device frames the exhibition as a dynamic environment, built through exchange and dialogue.

The event opened with the lecture *Current Preoccupations* by Rem Koolhaas, a reflection connecting the studio's most recent projects with a practice spanning architecture, design, and cultural research. This was followed by David Gianotten, who presented the structure, logic, and objectives of the Masterplan, outlining an initiative designed to evolve in tandem with the sector it represents.

Rem Koolhaas, founder of OMA, had this to say: *"Designers operate within a constellation of stakeholders and infrastructures. Production is not a consequence of design; it is integral to the project itself. This enables greater control over quality and outcomes, moving design away from pure aesthetics toward the orchestration of complex systems. In many areas of contemporary practice, these systems have become so intricate that they are increasingly inaccessible to designers and architects. Our collaboration with the Salone aims to create the conditions in which these domains can be visible, connecting industries, investors, designers, and operators, and forming an ecosystem rather than a sequence of isolated transactions."*

Maria Porro, President of the Salone del Mobile.Milano, commented: *"With Salone Contract, the Salone del Mobile.Milano is expanding its field of action and strengthening its ability to accompany the evolution of the supply chain. It is a project that allows us to work across new geographies, new interlocutors, and new forms of relationship between demand and supply, while maintaining the quality of the project and the international dimension of the Exhibition as its core. In this process, the collaboration with Rem Koolhaas and David Gianotten / OMA represents a key step, as it enables us to shape a solid, open, and long-term oriented infrastructure. For the Salone, it means taking on an even more active role: not only offering visibility, but also contributing to the construction of context, connections, and orientation tools in a market undergoing profound transformation. The work carried out with OMA in recent months clearly reflects this ambition."*

David Gianotten, Architect and Managing Partner of OMA, added: *"Salone Contract is an initiative in progress, destined to evolve alongside economic, geopolitical, and cultural transformations. The Masterplan defines a framework capable of accommodating and supporting the dynamics between different actors within the sector, fostering the convergence of multiple interests. We hope that this project will contribute to strengthening the positioning of the Salone del Mobile.Milano as an international benchmark and as a platform capable of supporting professionals in interpreting an ever-evolving Contract landscape - generating not only business opportunities, but also the conditions for the solid, sustainable, and long-term development of the sector. The project remains open to dialogue: we invite contributions and interchange as we continue the journey toward the first edition in 2027."*

An Evolving Platform

Looking ahead to 2027, the first day of the **Salone Contract Forum 2026** also included two dedicated round tables: one focused on the opportunities within a changing industry, and the other on the pillars of the Contract ecosystem. This marks a further step in the construction of a platform that, even in 2026, will feature within the pavilions of Rho Fiera Milano, a thematic pathway among exhibitors, along with a matchmaking platform developed with the ITA/ICE Agency, aimed at connecting qualified demand, supply, and new modes of market interaction.



As of September 2026, Salone Contract will also be at the centre of an international road tour across key giga-project geographies, geared to exploring global scenarios, emerging dynamics, and ongoing and future investments - supporting the ongoing construction of an international audience ahead of the first edition of the new exhibition in 2027.