

**Summer school  
Biennale Sessions - Venice Biennale 2018**

**Typologies of forgotten landscapes**

**Prof. Dr. Christoph Grafe, Kornelia Dimitrova, Daniel Spruth**

**Prof. Dr. Gennaro Postiglione, Dr. Francesco Lenzini**

**University of Wuppertal / Politecnico di Milano / University of Hasselt**

Before it became a pleasure island, Venice had an intensive economic and cultural link to its lagoon, much more so than with the mainland. The city is an archipelago of 118 islands, and it is its 400 bridges that trick us to think of it as a single island.

The relationship to the sea defined the development of each of these islands bringing their edges to prominence both for representations, economic and practical reasons. It's urban pattern therefore unfolds from the canal edge inwards. Take a look at its map - could you find a public space there of any regular shape? Perhaps, with great difficulty, as these spaces usually resulted as a negotiated left-over space. Some of these left-over spaces rose in importance, and invited the development of a secondary front. Some, less fortunate left-over spaces never experience this process. They remain even today as the true back-sides of Venice.

**Spaces of freedom**

The places that define Venice's postcard identity receive the care, are cleaned and governed of many who have an economic cultural interest in their maintenance. Bringing about less freedom for the visitors, a code of conduct as it were. Polished by the footprints of a touristic tidal waves. Documented continuously by their biological and digital eyes.

As desolate islands amid the sea of people, the true backsides are bound by different socio-economic rules, and seem to offer their visitors an array of freedoms, inconceivable in postcard Venice. These spaces could be free of visitors, advertisement, formal record, ownership and surveillance. Could that suggest that they are also free of rules? In an otherwise very public setting, such freedom can be consumed for contemplation, camping, even cruising.

**Scouting for spaces of freedom**

Some of these places emerge as \*corte\*, some emerge on the edge of the city. Such a place would be awkwardly-shaped, overgrown with urban weeds. You will recognise it by its rough, unpolished surfaces. You will find it trapped between buildings or at an unexpected dead end. Such places can manifest both inside the city and at its periphery. These places are forgotten, ignored, perhaps even useless to present-day Venetians.

**What freedoms does Venice offer? Where and how do they manifest? What architectonic and urban form would characterise them?**