

Ex Caserma Pepe

Lido of Venezia, Italy

A dialoguing Addition

The Caserma Pepe at Lido of Venice

Marta Andrei

The Caserma Pepe, at Lido of Venice, has an ancient history rich in temporal stratifications, which is identified, in part, with the more general one of the defense of Venice. Built at the end of the 16th century in a shape substantially similar to the one it still has today, it was known for centuries with the names of *Quartier Grande* or *Palazzo dei Soldati*. Its construction was, in a certain sense, the last act of a process of transformation and consolidation of the stronghold placed to control and to defend the northern access of the lagoon. It is in fact in the larger project of the lagoon defenses that explained the dynamics of formation of the defensive system, which includes also the Castel Vecchio (located precisely in S. Nicolò del Lido) and the Castello Nuovo, the fort of S. Andrea (located on the other side of the port gate). The Palazzo dei Soldati was built between 1591 and 1595 on a place called “*Serraglio*” near the monastery of S. Nicolò, inside which since 1300 the troops engaged in the defense of the port of Lido have been hosted¹.

The barracks, the first probably built entirely in masonry, had to house about two thousand soldiers and seem to be inspired by the model of Bonaiuto Lorini, an expert in building art and author of the treatise *Delle fortificazioni*, published in 1597 in Venice. Initially, the barracks housed the “*Fanti da Mar*”, troops organized to carry out combined military actions on land and at sea and later hosted the recruits of the “*Serenissima Regiment*”, classified in the specialties of the Army Infantry as “*Lagunari*”. Since the last century it has been called “*Caserma Guglielmo Pepe*”, an eminent figure during the Austrian siege of 1848-49.

The Caserma Pepe

The structure is organized according to a quadrangular plan with a large central courtyard (88 m x 48 m) paved with herringbone bricks; in the centre stands the monumental Istrian stone well. The courtyard is surrounded on all four sides by an arched portico on the ground floor and a loggia on the upper floor filled with walls on which windows have been opened (excluding the side above the entrance where the loggia is completely glazed).

1 Claudio Presta, “*Castra et ars, palazzi e quartieri di valore architettonico dell'Esercito Italiano*”, Laterza, Roma, 1987.

1. Aerial view of the convent of San Nicola and the former Caserma Pepe.

2. Historical photo of the project site. Venezia, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Fototeca dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Arte.



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The internal structure is simple and functional: the loggia that overlooks the internal courtyard acts as a distribution system for the dormitories that instead overlook the outside of the building. The building was partly restored in 1743 and partly in 1782. The façade is adorned with a three-arched portal in Istrian stone that features elements inspired by the Sanmichelian lesson. In 1761 the current pillar barrier was placed before it. Even the most recent works, limited in any case to maintenance or functional adaptations, was moved in line with the history of the building, which remains to testify the maturity reached by technical and engineering culture in the military structures sector in the late sixteenth century.

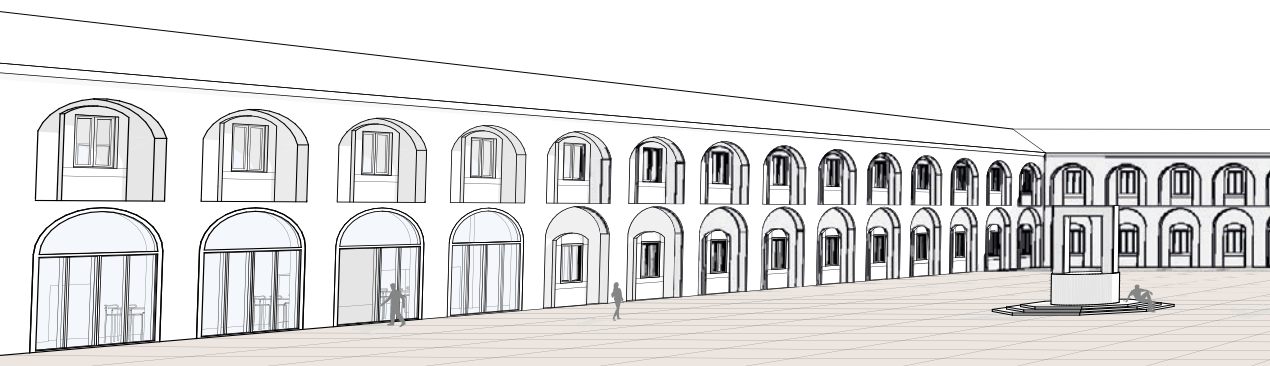
Nowadays, the barracks are in a state of partial abandonment and has been the subject of temporary reuse trials by the “Biennale Urbana” association during the 2018 Venice Biennale, which saw the participation of numerous national and international organizations. On this occasion the spaces of the Caserma Pepe were animated by various residency and artistic experiments, as well as by conferences and meetings on the themes of reuse and urban regeneration.

Projects strategies

Since the area has a recognizable and consolidated urban layout, the various implemented intervention strategies have operated through principles of addition and enhancement of the building through calibrated and proportionate grafting operations. The projects developed have in fact aimed at highlighting the peculiarities of the starting plant through the addition of volumes that on the one hand create a geometric tension with the historical structure, on the other improve the functional aspects of the starting point of the complex, allowing to develop new residential and cultural activities (temporary accommodation, conference rooms, projection rooms, etc.). Each addition operation involved an assessment of the existing structure: the new volumes were inserted maintaining a critical distance from the existing in order not to operate through hiding actions, but rather through reasoned and calibrated insertion. The students worked by proposing different solutions, which found different



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declinations depending on the location inside or outside the historic barracks complex. The strategies operated inside the barracks were configured as enhancement actions of the starting system, in order to improve the provision of services and, at the same time, to allow the development of new functions, such as housing, through the addition of technical volumes. On the outside, however, the strategy implemented changes and operates in the interstices of the building, exploiting the voids present in the various parts of the complex as an opportunity to enhance the functional spaces. To do this, different construction solutions were used to realize an intervention in compliance with the original structure of the complex.

Thanks to the study of flexible and modular compositional solutions, it was possible to guarantee the maximum versatility of spatial conformations. The students in fact worked in order to integrate the compositional solutions with the constructive ones from the beginning, studying integrated systems that would enter in harmony with the historical complex while maintaining a recognizable and expressive character of modernity.

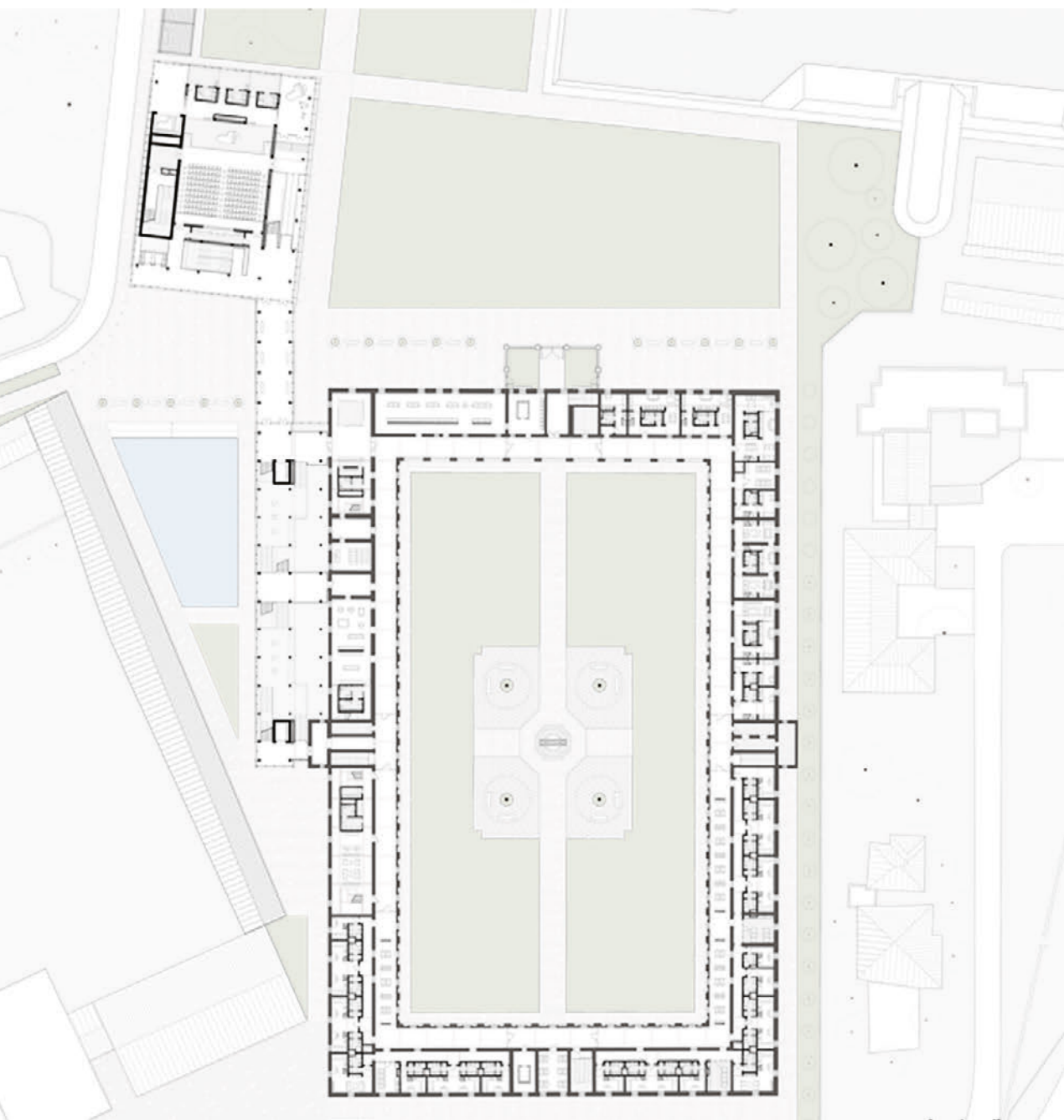
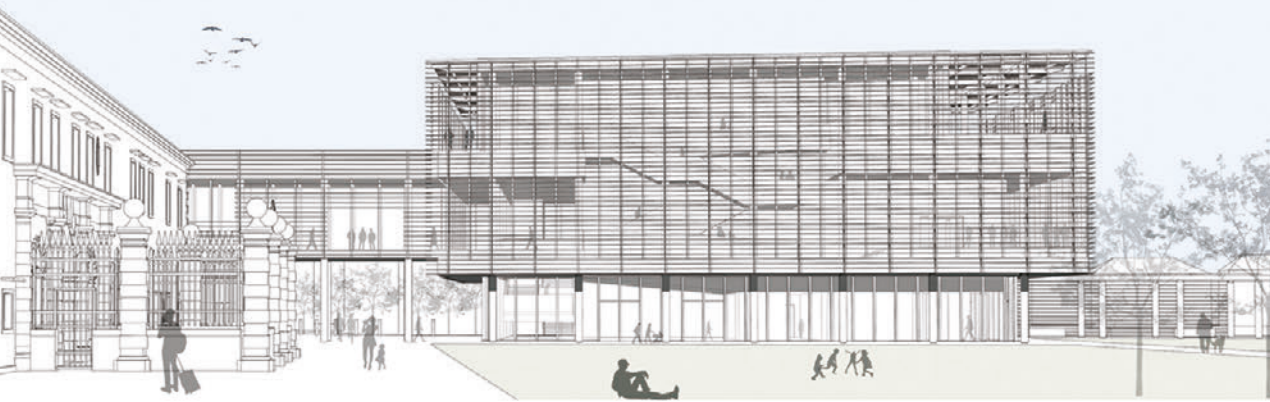
3-4. Perspective section of the barracks and examples of interventions inside the historic building. Without changing the shape of the building, light mezzanines are provided to expand the living spaces by making the most of the internal heights of the rooms. Students: Giulia Curto, Michela Memo.



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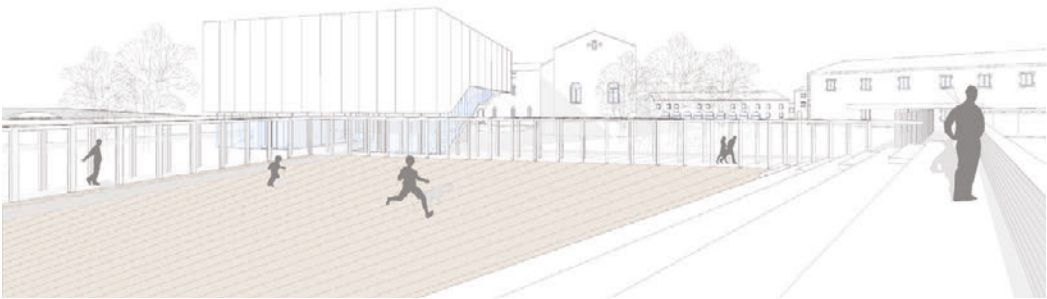
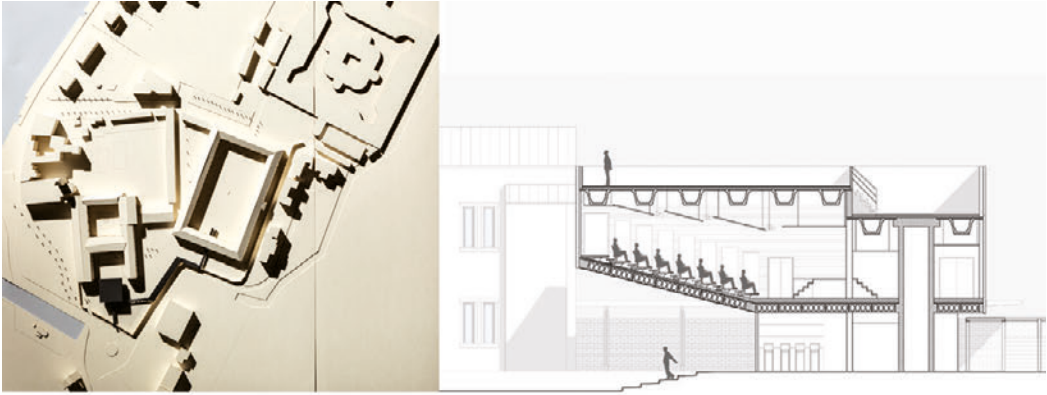
Project Sheets

a.a. 2017-2018

École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris Val de Seine
prof. Hervé Dubois

Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Universidad de Sevilla
prof. Sara De Giles Dubois, José Morales Sánchez

Università Iuav di Venezia
prof. PierAntonio Val

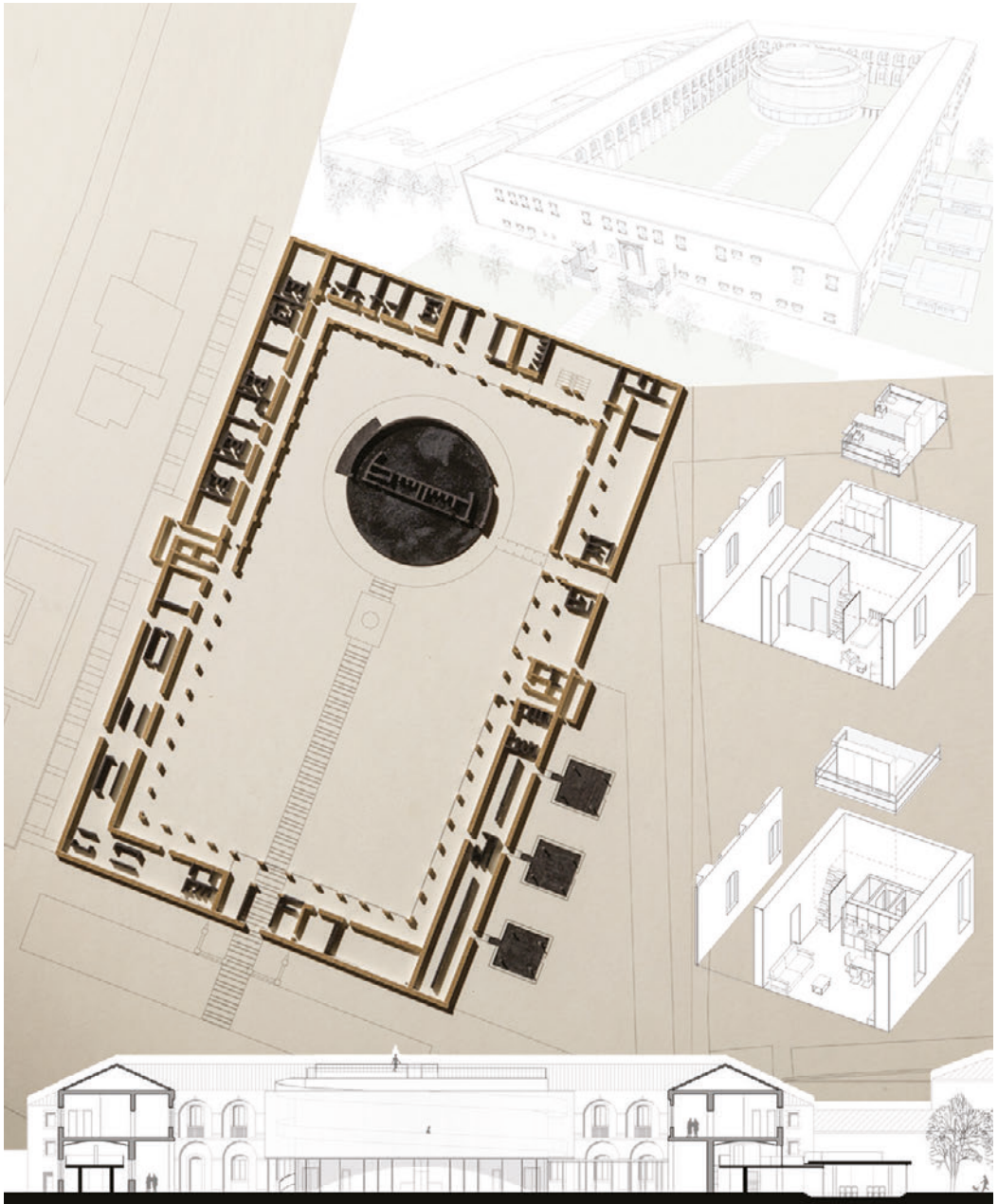


Giulia Curto
Michela Memo

a.a. 2017-2018
Università Iuav di Venezia

The project develops the idea of a distance relationship with the existing because we believe that to give new life to the past it is not necessary to build near it, but rather, the fact of establishing visual relationships, paths and conceptual and functional relationships is more expressive for a careful design to the existing. We have therefore articulated the new building into a more complex system, a square-plan auditorium, proportional to the existing convent court; a flood which is op-

posed to a void and which in turn establishes its own architecture in a relationship between heavy and light elements. To establish strong relationship between past and present, an exhibition deck has been created. It determines a path starting from the trace of the historical wall. This element connects the new auditorium with the existing barracks where the last exhibition halls are located and where the well is exalted as a symbol of the past and the sky as a symbol of freedom.



Debora Bedeschi
Luca Stefani
Sarah Urbani

a.a. 2017-2018
Università Iuav di Venezia

The project consisted in the realization of living accommodations for students and services as an auditorium and study rooms. All the new interventions are defined by the use of pure geometrical shapes, more specifically the auditorium was conceived as a cylindrical volume in contrast with the rectangular courtyard in which it was inserted. Its position is also determined by the intersection of the access to the military base. Twisted around the auditorium there is an helicoid

dal ramp that leads to the panoramic roof on which have been created some bleachers to allow view over the Venetian lagoon. Inside the former military base are located living spaces, common rooms, a library and an exhibition room. From the library there's a direct access to three study rooms located in the interstitial area between the university and the military base. The terrace is accessible by overground passages connected to the mezzanine inside the library.

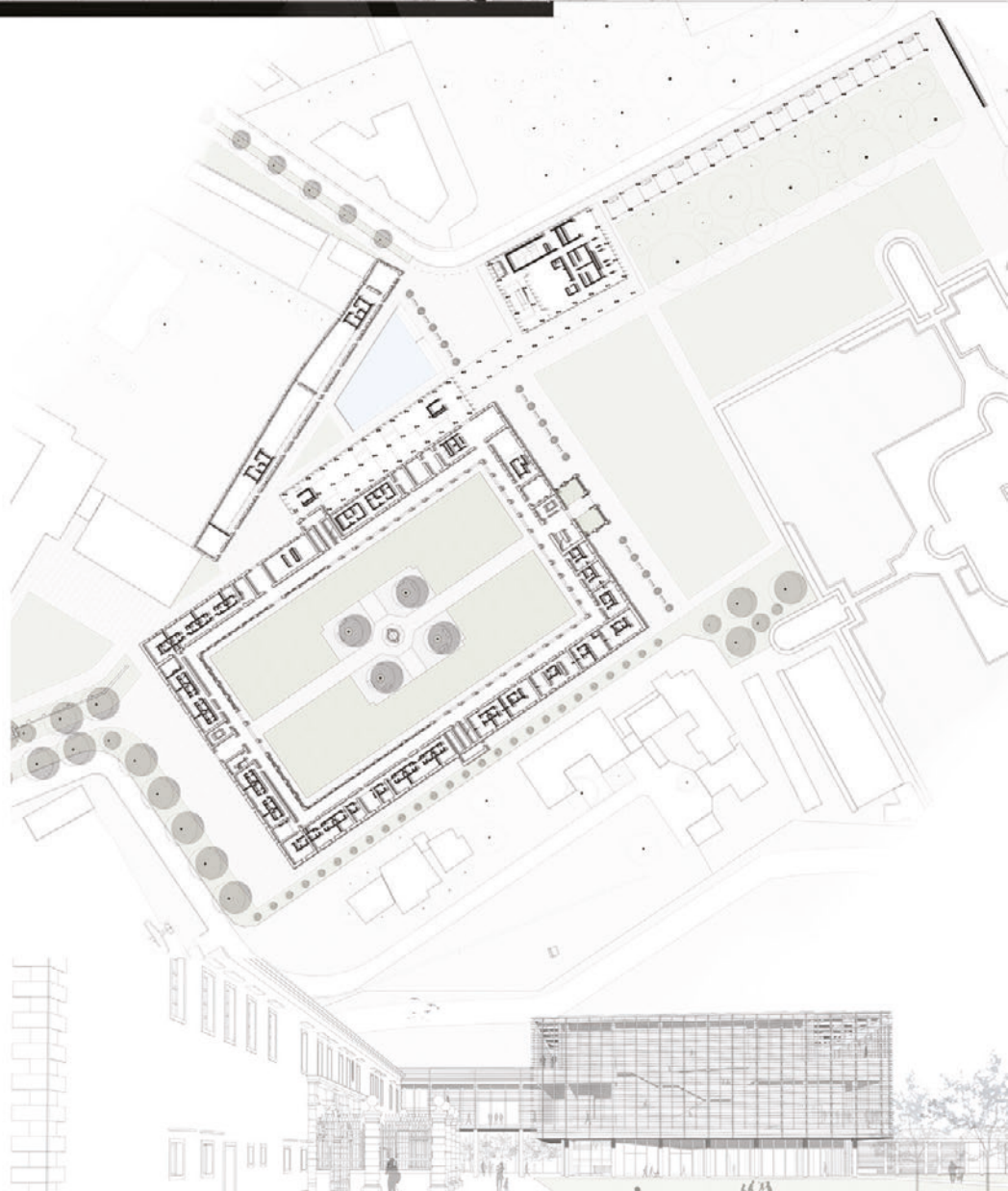
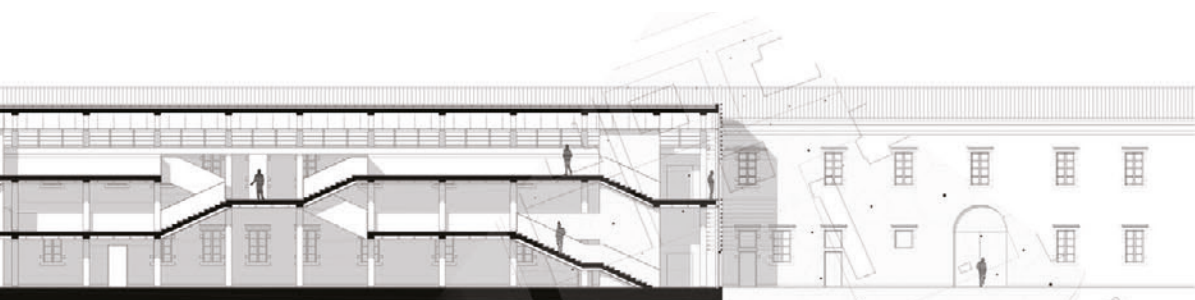


Edoardo Daidone
 Nicola Salvador
 Dinozhan Erineki
 Antonello Zanotti

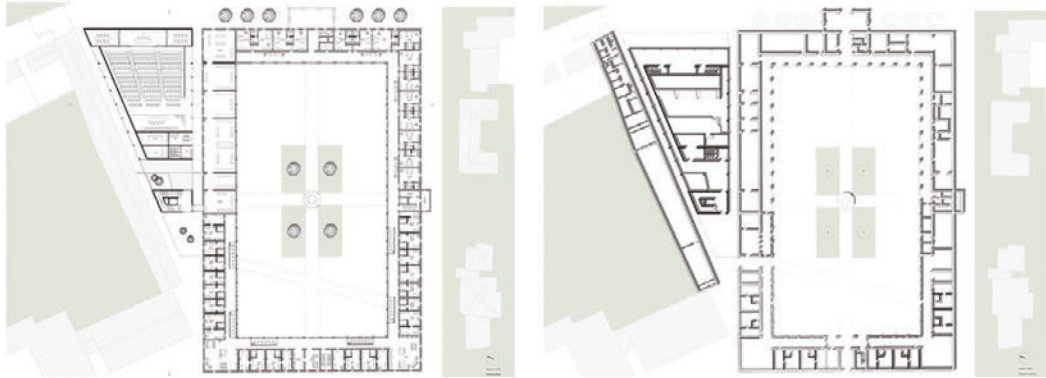
a.a. 2017-2018
 Università Iuav di Venezia

The renovation of the historic building of the Guglielmo Pepe Barracks was designed with the desire to not irremediably modify the image and the typological and constructive principles. The project for the new pavilion represents the symbolic heart of the project, generating an interplay with the context of the Barracks through three different strategies. The new intervention reflects about the complex condition that characterizes the military sites and trying to link the preexistence.

The pavilion bases its formal matrix on the same geometric logic that structures the Barracks, a choice that allows the new intervention – otherwise different in formal language and materialization – to become a part of the evolutionary logic of the existing building. Finally, the new intervention is consistent with the spatial structure of the Barracks and characterized by an alternation of masses and voids: by leaving a space between the new building and the Sixteenth century Barracks.



BELVEDERE TOWER ON THE LAGOON



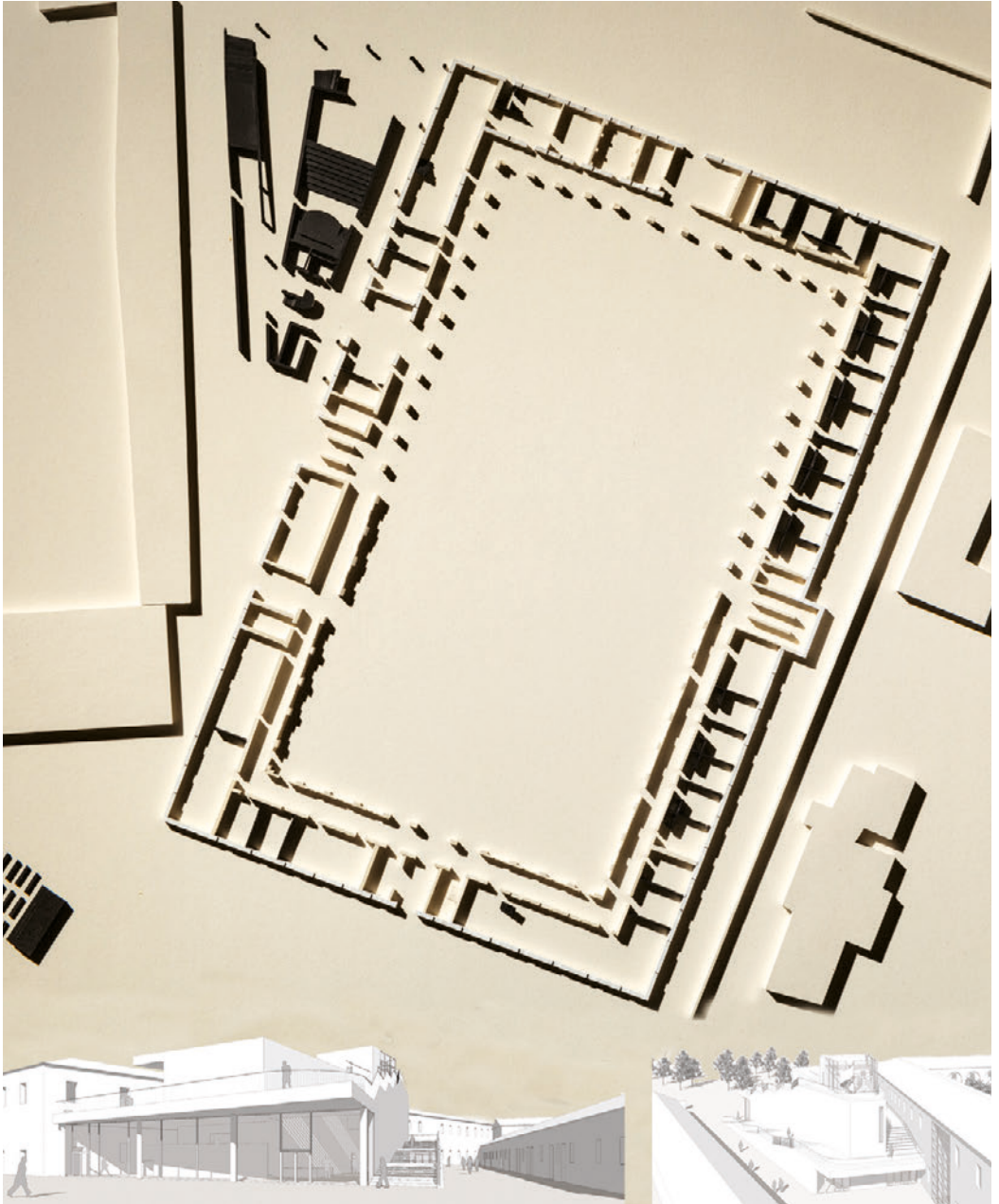
Julia Brall
Katerina Matijevic

The project takes advantage of the recovery of the Caserma Pepe to locate all the spaces used for student services in it: on the ground floor there are study rooms, laboratories and common areas while on the first floor there are apartments for teachers, rooms for students.

The auditorium is instead located in the interstitial space that divides the barracks from the adjacent monastery. Taking advantage of the triangular shape of the

space, the auditorium is inserted between the barracks and the north wing of the monastery - where some service spaces are located - culminating in a tower that serves as a belvedere over the lagoon.

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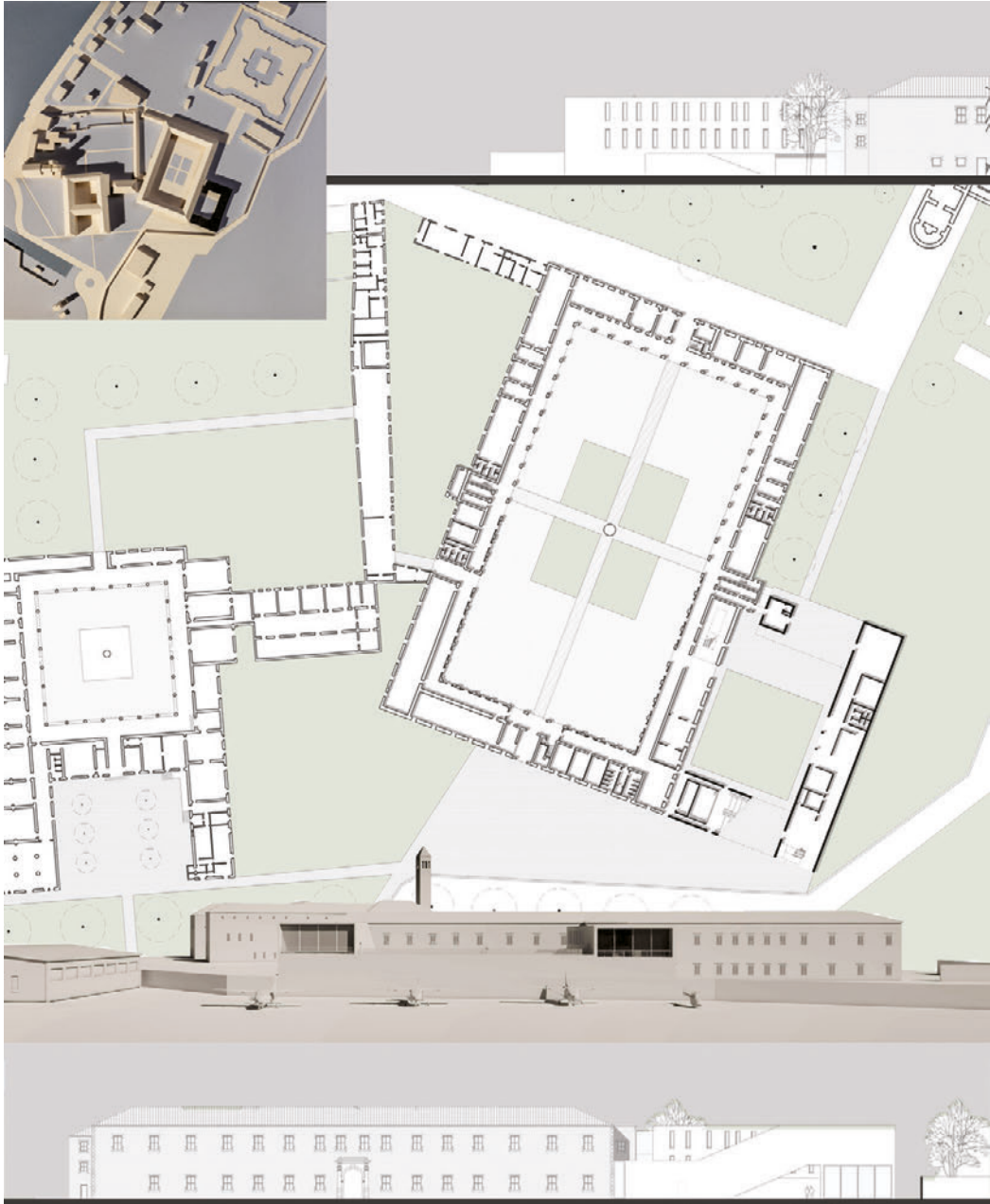


Caterina Carpenè
Raphaëlle Mora
Allegra Zen

a.a. 2017-2018
Università Iuav di Venezia

The project organises the spaces into two specific parts. The barracks contain spaces for students and teachers such as rooms and common areas. The public part of the project - auditorium and exhibition space - is instead conceived as an addition that completes the void that divides the barracks from the adjacent monastery. The triangular shape of the new buildings, however, is clearly distinguishable from the old one thanks to a glazed corridor that al-

lows you to walk around the perimeter of the building while maintaining a critical distance between the old and the new.



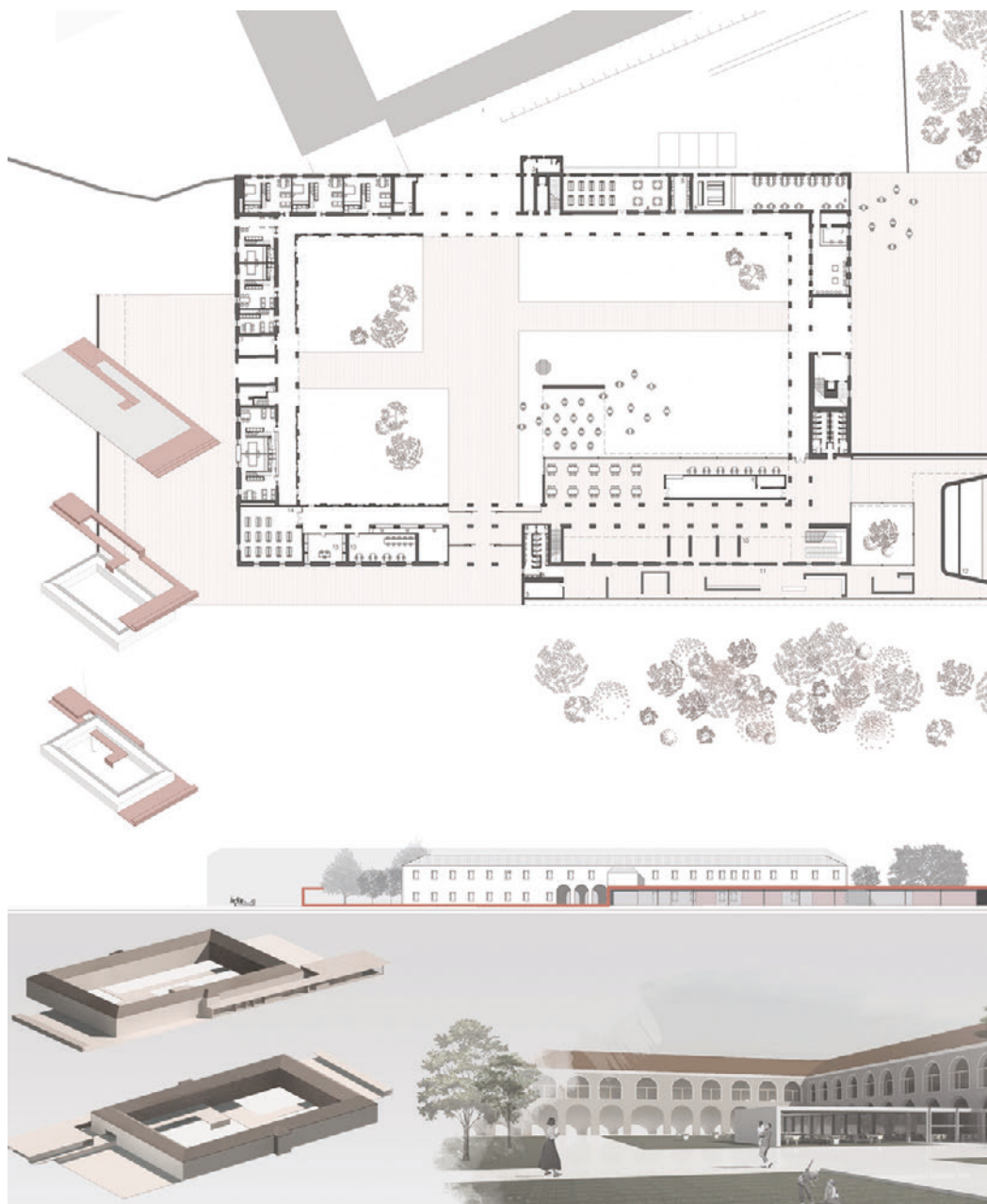
Daniele Carraro
Anna Fasolato
Pietro Girello

a.a. 2017-2018
Università Iuav di Venezia

The project reorganizes the interior spaces of the Caserma Pepe inserting in it residential spaces as apartments and rooms for students and teachers. Study and teaching rooms are also placed on the ground floor of the barracks.

On the south side, instead, a courtyard volume is added, adjacent to the barracks but separated from it by some glazed elements. The volume contains the auditorium, the bar and the exhibition space at

the service of the new campus. The new volume is characterized by a white and uniform façade, which stands out from the historical façade of the barracks, however identifying a dialectical relationship thanks to the continuity in the heights of the volumes.



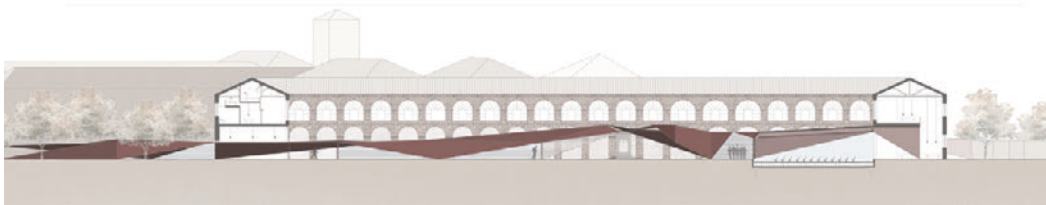
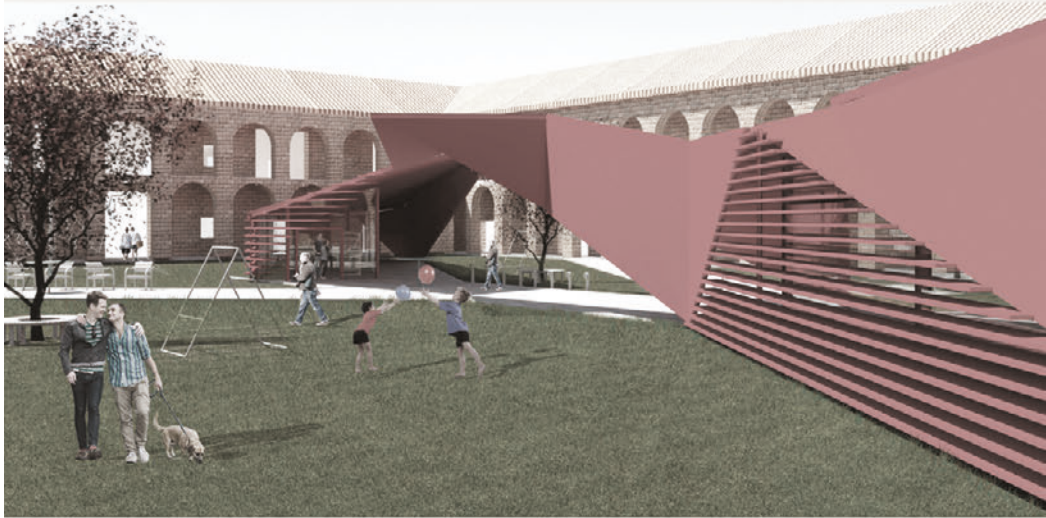
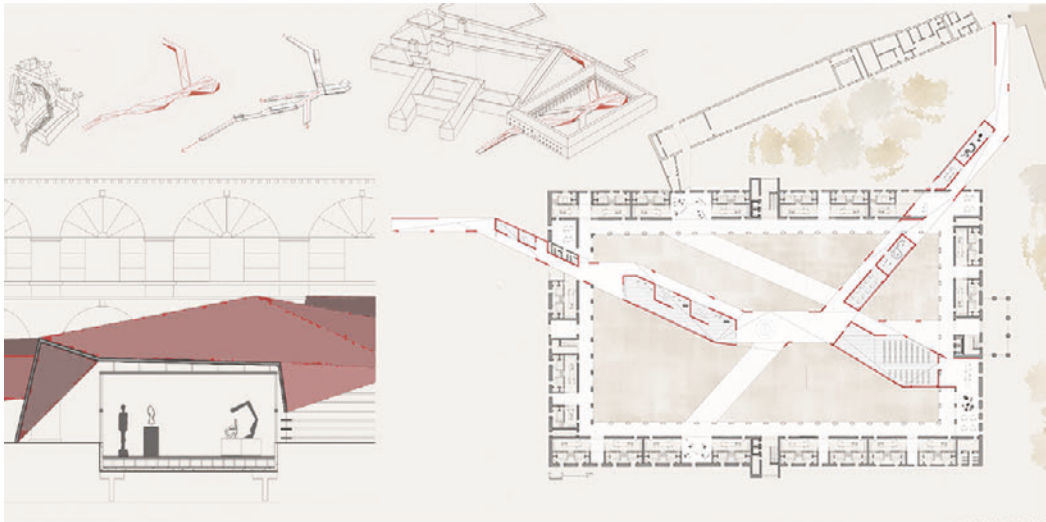
Blanca Pinto Pérez

a.a. 2017-2018
Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura
Universidad de Sevilla

The project is located in a historic building, the Caserma Pepe, a former military barracks. Its context is characteristic, a small airport, a university centre and a ruin of an ancient fort called "Palazzo dei Soldati" identify the area. The project tries to link all these spaces together, relating to each one a specific form.

The project starts from the action of folding a sheet of paper as a basis to develop a project that connects all the necessary spaces

(a test room, a museum, etc.) along a single path. On this path some small shops open towards the central courtyard. This is overlooked by a museum and public spaces serving the student residence. The path, like a ribbon that crosses the barracks, then crosses the stoic building to open visually towards the rear lawn.

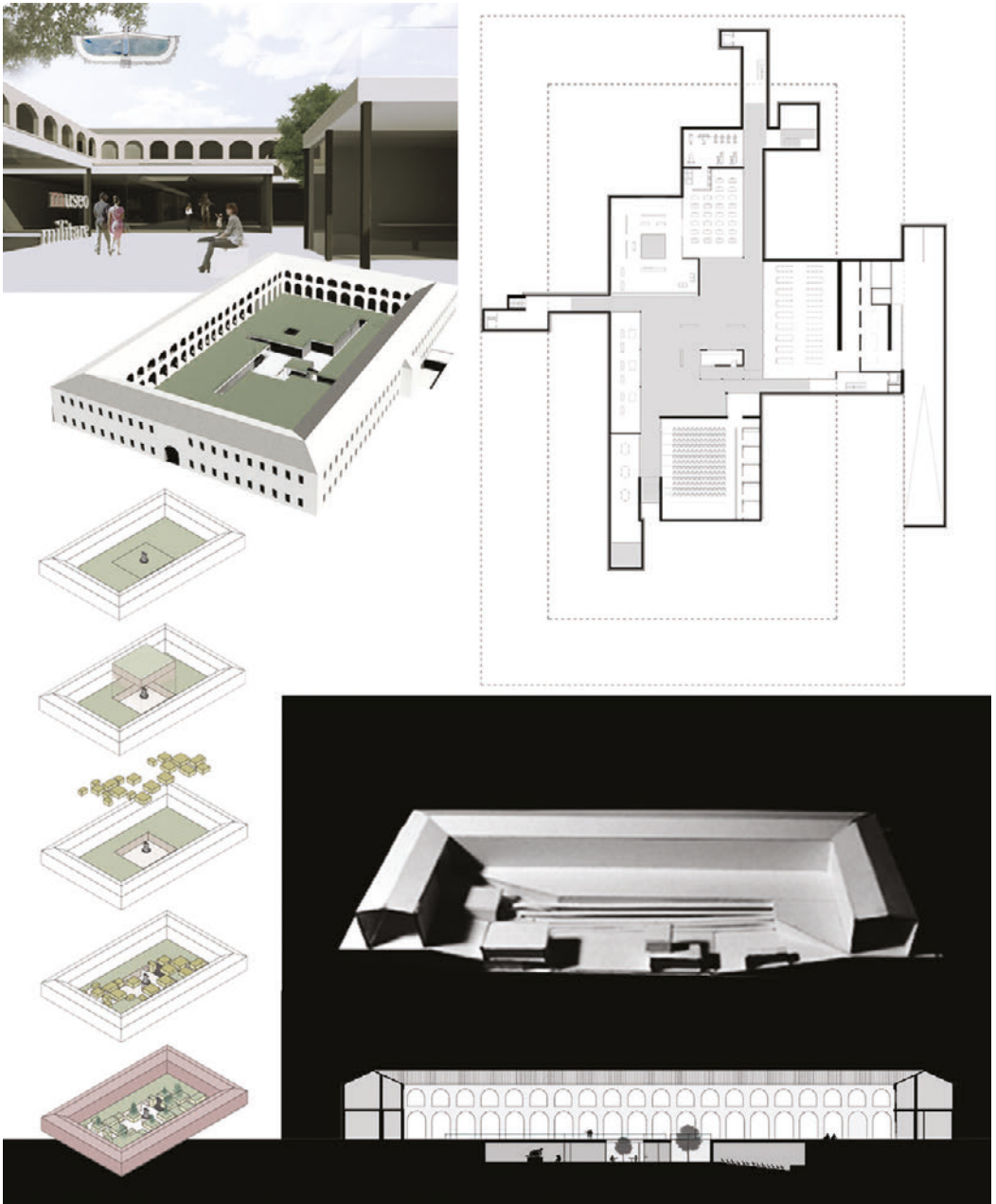


Fran Sánchez Salazar

Lightness, positive sensations and sculpture are the three foundations of this project for the Caserma Pepe, in Venice. Well-conditioned outdoor and indoor spaces in a flying architecture is the concept for the project. Several uses have been placed under a red steel skin (military museum, exhibition hall and smaller multipurpose rooms) with the aim of reactivating the now abandoned building, without forgetting the cultural importance of the building.

New paths connect the new building with the barracks, creating dynamic and meeting spaces. The ground floor is free, with double-height volumes and while the residences are located on the upper floor.

a.a. 2017-2018
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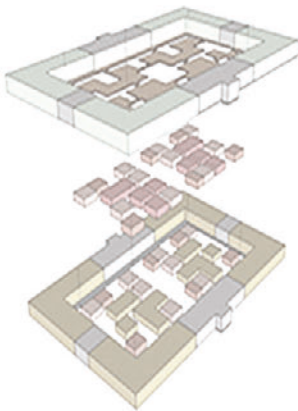
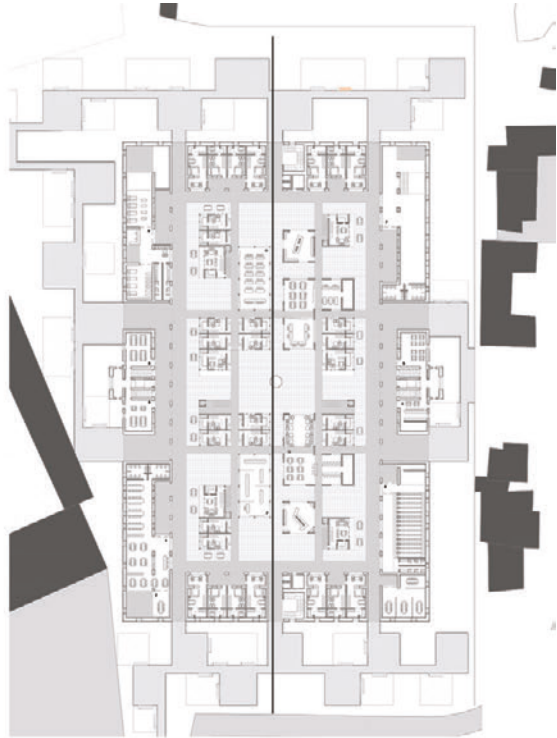


Jesús García Picardo

a.a. 2017-2018
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Inspiration for this project was found in the traditional water wells called "pozzi" that embellish the squares of Venice. In order to build them, the Venetians had to dig huge amounts of soil, so as to create a deposit for the rainwater. This project seeks to repeat the excavation that once was done in the middle of the caserma, embracing the utopian idea of digging in a flooded city like Venice, offering the architecture of the Lido a new perspective.

Common areas were deliberately distributed in the entrenched space, to be the centre of the social life of this new residential and cultural complex. Subsequently, residential spaces were located inside the caserma, constituting a border to contain the public spaces. Thanks to this arrangement, the inner space is minimally invaded as the rooftops for the common facilities provide intact green areas for the people to enjoy.

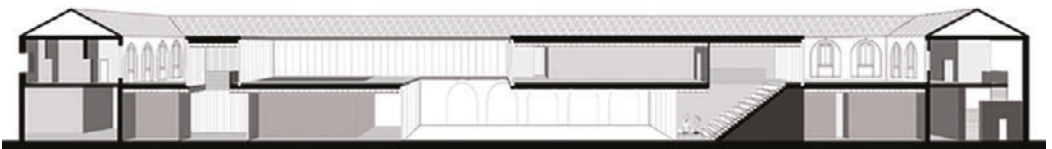
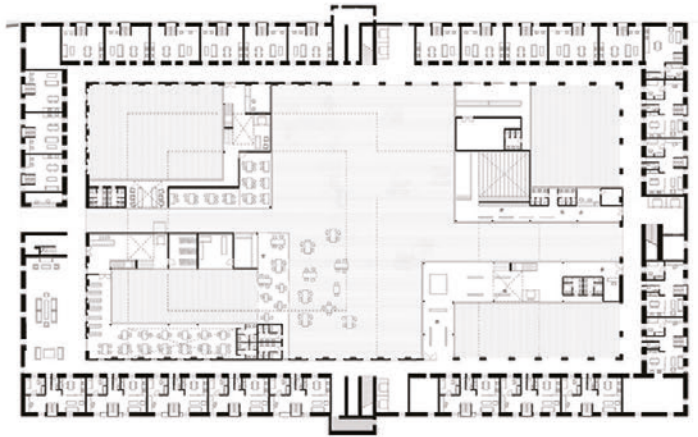
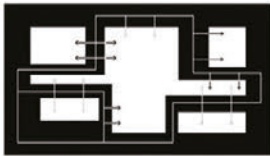
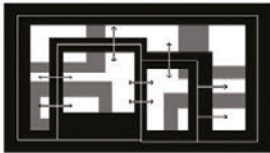
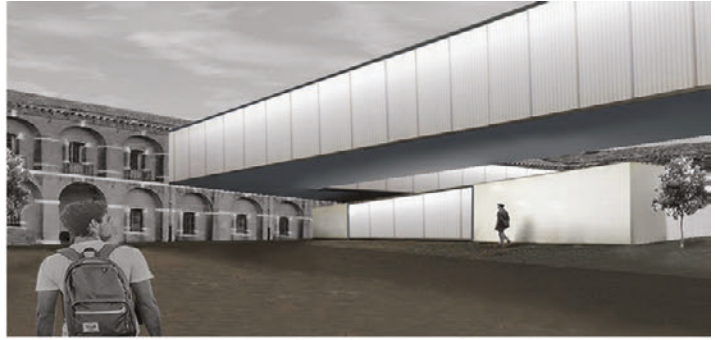


M^oDolores Plaja Benítez

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The main idea of the project is the search for permeability. In first place, after analysing the main focus of interest, (the university, the port and the airport), we tried to get people inside the barracks, facilitating the transit of citizens and residents. We want to create introverted houses inside the historic building, playing with the geometry and the use of patios for the ventilation of these. On the ground floor of the building, as it is a university area, we will

place the equipment of teaching and recreation. In its upper floor, to avoid a greater transit of citizens on ground floor and to give a greater privacy to the residents, we have located equipment and business services, which give to a public area, located in the roofs of the new construction, creating a relationship space for people.



Marta Camacho Gonzáles

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In the program, we can find out two clearly differentiated spaces: some of them are designed for a public use, such as a library or a museum; and the others are more private and rigid, such as housing and tourists' accommodation. Private spaces are located in the old military barracks which suggests a closed and heavy ring. The public equipment is placed in the patio, in light and transparent rings, placed at different heights, in contrast to the heavy band which suggests

the Caserma. These rings intersect, creating different situations and visual connected spaces. Each ring contains a different type of equipment and feeds a section of the Caserma. For example, the ring containing the workshops and classrooms is located next to the part of the Caserma where the student's residence is placed. As a result, each ring has a different width. All spaces are connected, generating a path that makes the whole piece works like a hybrid.

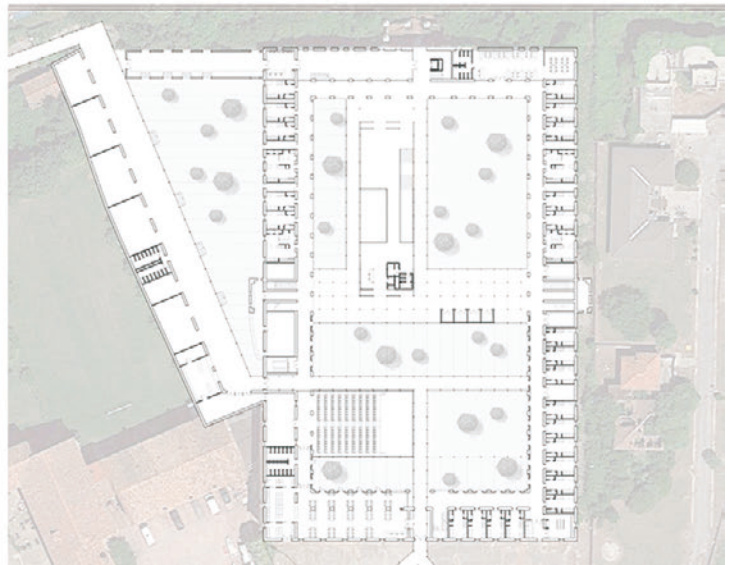
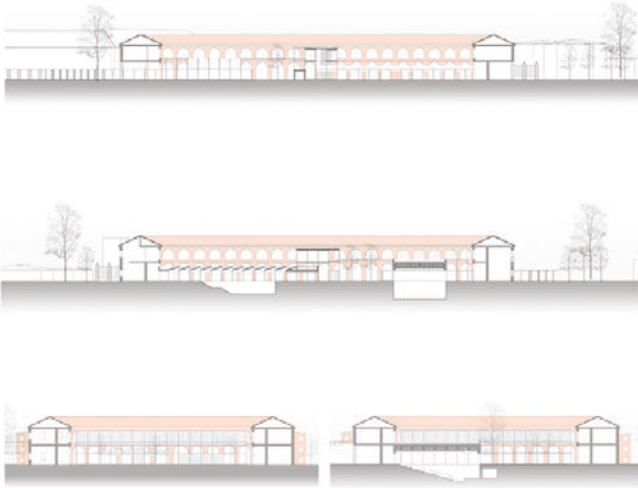


Paula Fernández Ruiz

a.a. 2017-2018
Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura
Universidad de Sevilla

This project is located at the Lido, a sandbar close to Venice. Venice is a city with such a magnetic allure thanks to its winding and surprising streets, where the lack of cars is regarded as a blessing. The caserma can be interpreted as a frame, a safe and well defined environment. Why not taking a scrap of the city and purposefully filling this scenario with it? This is how the idea of a city-in-a-city emerges. The tourist accommodations as well as the

students ones will be located inside the caserma, while the facilities will be set in the central space. The external space has a vital importance within the project. Is the place where relations take place, not only between people but with the different interior spaces and their activities. Its intention is to dilute towards the castle, the university and the airfield.

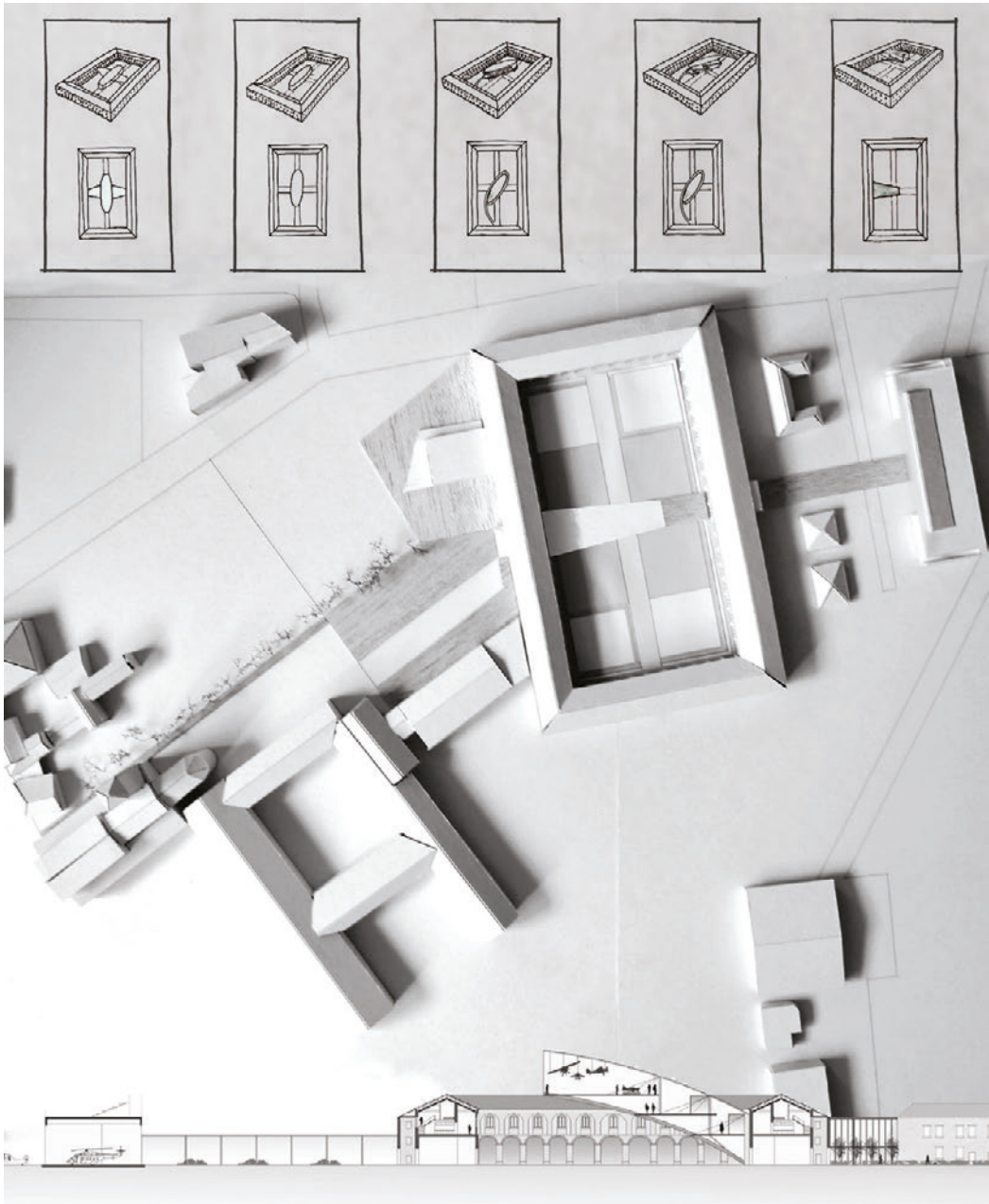


Jose Heras Liñán

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Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura
Universidad de Sevilla

This project is located in Venice, it claims to join some interesting areas near the Caserma Pepe, making a "promenade" that finishes in its central square. In this yard, we place the main public program: a theatre, a library and some empty spaces full of vegetation. All the buildings are built with a light structure which contains different boxes with varying dimensions and utilities, for that reason the project has been called "infra-

architecture". On the other side, inside the patrimonial building, we can find the students residence keeping the main idea of the project, it holds different modular containers with a specific functionality (toilets, stairs, kitchens, beds, etc). This feature allow users to transform every room into a different space.



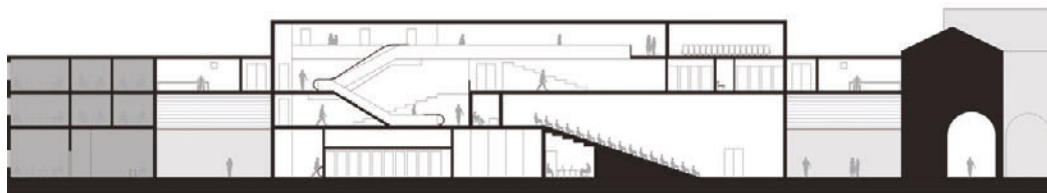
Lucie Poittevin

a.a. 2017-2018
Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture
Paris Val de Seine

The project seeks to demonstrate the tension that is established between the landscape of the venetian lagoon where the man is confined in a thin and very wide horizontal fringe and the aerodrome which allows the passengers of the planes to leave it to grasp the geographical scale. It organizes itself around the creation of a public pedestrian path that connects the vaporetto jetty connecting the Lido to Venice and the aerodrome by serving the existing

buildings and the Caserma Pepe. This one is reconverted in aeronautical school associating educational spaces and accommodation.

In the heart of the courtyard of the barracks, a new large space of exposure, as a stop-motion picture, presents historical and modern aircraft and permits to rise above the roof level of neighboring buildings and to perceive the far landscape.



Maëlle Palumbo

a.a. 2017-2018
 Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture
 Paris Val de Seine

This proposal is based on the strong link between Venice Lido and cinema. All the existing buildings are restructured in order to regenerate the voids by defining two major public spaces: the courtyard of the former barracks and the adjoining triangular space are dedicated to a film school associating in the rehabilitated buildings premises of accommodation, classrooms and projection rooms and services. The heart of the island to the west is deeply redefined by the con-

struction of an L-shaped building combining housing and large multi-hall complex. This one defines a new public place conceived like urban relay between the arrival from Venice by the vaporetto station and the potential future urban extension to the north. The cinema building defines the new square by the uprising of its attic and frees public passages on the ground floor which is extended in the upper floors by a declension of spaces of access to the projection's rooms.