



REINVENTING VENICE

REINVENTING VENICE:
A CONTEST TO REDESIGN
THE CAMPI IN CASTELLO

CONTEST DETAILS

Venice is unique.

Venice has a certain glory, partially given by its history, but mostly due to its magnificent architecture. People from all over the world want to be there—all except the Venetians.

The latest demographic maps and diagrams clearly demonstrate this tendency. The lack of work opportunities and services for citizens as well as the increase in tourism have created drastic population decline.

Its status as a UNESCO-protected site means that Venice is still there, physically—but the essence is off. Venice exists only in appearance. Its campi used to burst with life, with kids playing around and neighbors conversing with each other. Now these campi are empty.

And this is the starting point of the project. We are focusing on an area in the southeast of Castello, Venice's largest sestiere. The area is close to a popular park with many empty

surrounding streets and abandoned campi. We want to call architects and urban planners to reinvent the campi in a way that will better serve the community and improve the vitality of life in Venice.

By reimagining the campi in a contemporary way, with a particular attention devoted to new technologies and sustainable approach, these current empty spaces will have the ability to encourage interactions between the inhabitants. Appealed by an area that transposes their needs, their expectations, and their values, Venetians will finally feel that this place belongs to them. This is not for tourists, nor for the celebration of the glorified past century, but for the people.

It should recreate the main purpose of why campi first existed.

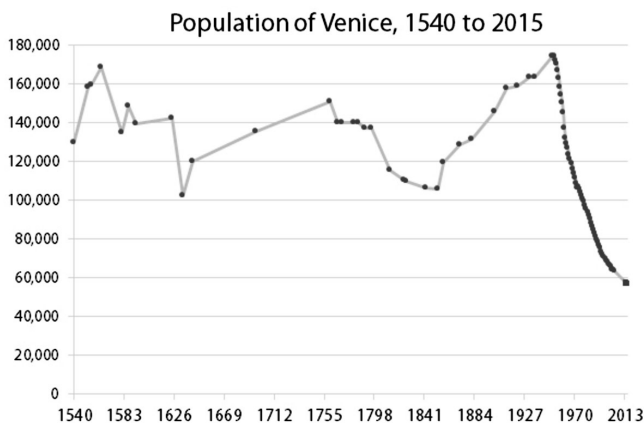
To bring back a sense of community.

To bring back people.

To bring back Venice.

VENICE ON THE DECLINE

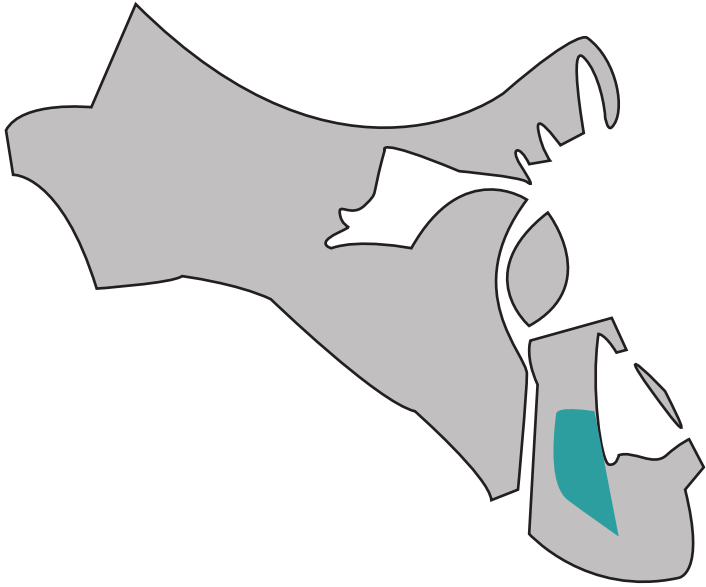
Elbowing your way through a mass of people on the Strada Nova, it is hard to believe that Venice is declining. However, the city's population had fallen from 110,000 in 1970 to 55,000 today, with no sign of slowing. The calli are artificially packed with 25 million tourists a year, giving the city an appearance of life while the abandoned apartments and empty campi tell another story. Graduates are moving to the mainland to find jobs and affordable housing. People are finding the maze of bridges and dependence on the vaporetti inaccessible instead of charming, and the high cost of living leaves little incentive to stick around. The sense of community that used to be a source of pride of the Venetians is eroding.



HOW CAN WE HELP?

Historically, a campo was a gathering place designed to meet the needs of the surrounding community. This multi-faceted space was where people of all ages shopped, talked, played, ate, and danced. There were gardens and fountains, as well as small shops and restaurants, that combined to make the campo a living, self-sustained space. In comparison, the UNESCO-protected campi of today are maintained to meet the visual requirements of a historical city while the surrounding community is abandoned. The purpose of this contest is to design a modern campo, one that serves the needs of the current population without forgetting its historic roots. Redesigning a campo for this century does not have to mean starting over. It means reforming the core ideas of the campo to meet current needs, and reviving the surrounding communities that have become little more than museums. This is not a space for tourists or summer homes. It is a space for Castello and the residents within.

WHY SOUTHEAST CASTELLO?



Castello is home to historical churches, famous cultural parks, and Europe's largest naval base in the 1200s. However, what makes Castello stand out most from other sestieri is its wide open spaces, which are not yet mobbed by tourists, but also without enough markets and goods to sustain a community. Castello is the last sestieri "For Venetians," and the goal is to improve and refresh the Venetian style of life for these residents.

By redeveloping the less prominent areas between La Biennale and Isola Sant'Elena, we would not greatly alter the city's existing culture. Furthermore, the location is ideal because of its surrounding cultural richness. A booming residential area with easy transportation, a lively park, and cultural artistic celebrations right next door—a project for the people—what could be better!



CONTEST FOCUS

COMMUNITY : Physically, the campo must be accessible to community members of all ages. Visually, it must integrate into the surrounding city and celebrate its history, while simultaneously distinguishing itself as a 21st-century space.

SUSTAINABILITY : The historical campi of Venice were self-sustaining, in the way that you could find food, water, company, and other necessities within its boundaries. The new design should embrace this idea, while also adding the more modern definition of sustainable as it applies to energy. Ideas for lighting, wastewater, and facilities such as public fountains should be incorporated with this in mind.

ADAPTATION : The campo was never meant to be a fully-defined space. The current campi are constructed around specific purposes, such as tourism or restaurants, but this is not its intention. Keeping the historical values of open space and the accommodation of community events in mind is a critical part of the design.



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