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Attraverso: The simple expression of complex thoughts. School-workshop of naval architecture in Isolotto della Celestia.

Venice is a unique place in the world and to know it we must be able to interweave the senses. When we go through to a complex space involving it with the gaze, there is an overlap of perspectives that develop as a film before our eyes: the smells, sounds and materials that compose these spaces incite us to generate basic experiences that are etched in our mind.

That is why the act of touring Venice has been one of the fundamental engines of the proposal. However, walking can be a much more complex activity than the simple act of walking around the city: reading a novel set in the Venice of the seventeenth century, analyzing pictures of Canaletto, etc. Gradually, through various sources, we have been able to generate a "global" image of Venice.

History has confirmed to us what we can read in a bird's-eye view of the lagoon: what we consider today as Venice is actually the overlapping of two cities. On the one hand the urban Venice, and on the other the Arsenal of Venice. They always functioned autonomously and as proof of this separation (which goes beyond the physical) we identify the wall of the Arsenal. This imposing architectural element has generated a psychological barrier that makes us doubt the limits of the city, and therefore, where the spaces of community relations of the Venetians are located.

We could call the area where this construction is erected as an indeterminate strip, a place of intersection of two realities that never came to be understood at all, and that has not been until the conversion of the Arsenal into a universal exhibition center of art and Architecture when it has begun to blur its boundaries. Despite this, the feeling of physical separation continues to persist due to the temporality of the activities that activate the relationship processes.

That is why our project at the intersection has the main objective of erasing in a definitive way the limits imposed by the past and that respond to a functioning and an organization of work that nowadays is far from the reality of the place. The ideal site for the implantation of an architecture that is capable of generating this effect could not be other than the Isolotto della Celestia.

The construction of the Isolotto della Celestia was the greatest architectonic exponent of the plan of renovation initiated by Barbari in the year 1500. Of that initial construction the three front naves and two rear naves were maintained that would appear years later completing the plot. Nowadays these ships have lost their function, and in spite of their good state of conservation we could catalog them of ruins to be in a state of palpable indefiniteness: they do not belong to the realm of the life of Venice, neither they are part of the exhibition set of the Biennial Of Venice.

Attraverso tries to introduce a more complex operating system of the preexisting, showing how through order and form a very specific type of architecture is reinterpreted to give answers to a diverse society. To do this, they take advantage of constructed elements and give a new logic to existing empty spaces.

With this objective, a type of complementary architecture is projected where the spaces that are defined have a wide margin for the user to colonize and interpret them. Initially it has been linked with the use and function of school naval architecture workshop taking advantage of the roots of the place, but always linked to an expository function, which can participate in the life that is generated around the Biennial. With this it is possible to introduce the temporal variable that this space had lost, causing the architecture to stop being an object to become a behavior.

From the compositional point of view, the project interprets the plant as the result more than as the starting point. Through a process of research and spatial experimentation based on the model of the place obtains tangible data of the same, being much more interesting and basic the concepts of the sections of the project since they are documents that are more linked with the experience of the space.

Clarifying the perception of the server spaces and served spaces of the project, is released to the form previously imposed. In a way, the architecture of the project is already given, the proposal is based on improving the relationships between internal and external spaces. For this, much of the formal decisions taken refer to spatial sequences of the reading of the city, reinterpreting Venice in this space of intersection.

From a first moment it has been very clear what is the image of the project: it must be a strong image, with powerful tactile and muscular qualities, where through visual perception we are able to perceive a corporal experience of weight, gravity and balance. Truly this project begins to make sense when, as visitors, we are able to move through the proposed spaces. In this situation we could observe how the confluence of two times occurs: the fluid time, related to the life that is produced in its interior, and the fixed time, (of movement more paused) related to the tectonic one.

Investigating about the traditional Venetian construction method, the proposal incorporates the interior walls as an active part of the structural operation. To do this, these walls are conceived as the elements that will have to send the loads that gravitate on the structure to the terrain, incorporating to the project as a structural part and as a fundamental spatial element. Reflection in such encounters always tends to establish a debate between the heavy and the light, the eternal and the temporal, expressing itself through materials such as brick and copper, letting time cover them with their particular patinas.

Each material and surface has its own language. Attraverso departs from a purely visual architectural project where geometry tries to stop time, and is closer to a type of haptic and multisensory architecture of matter that allows the experience of time to be comforting. To all this we must add a constant variable in Venice: water. As a result of incorporating water as one more element that gives shape to the project, images are obtained where the flow and the persistence of time are captured.

Finally, light takes on special importance in each of the projected spaces, trying to produce an emotional impact. The perception of the visitor is greatly intensified by crossing the various spaces of the project, manifesting the temporary processes that inevitably occur. We could say that the project consists largely of drawing a path to the observer, where the linear path elements are fundamental elements that form the project.