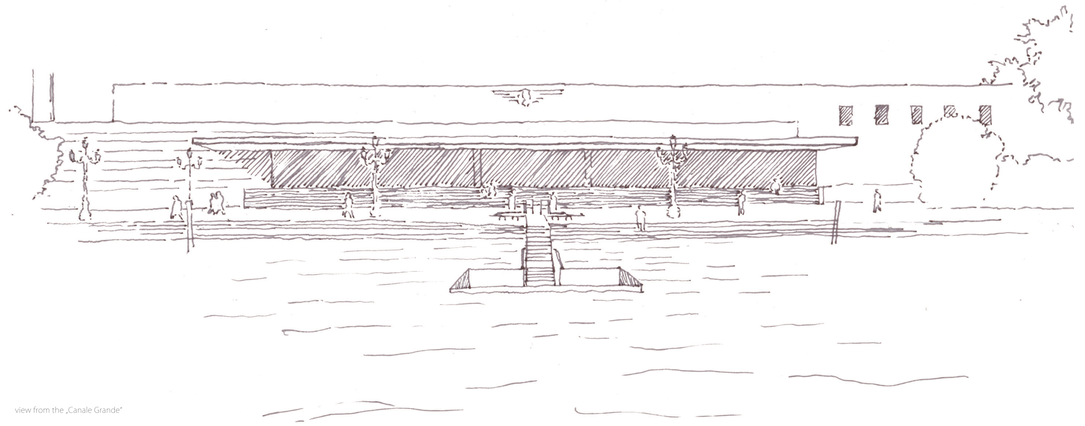
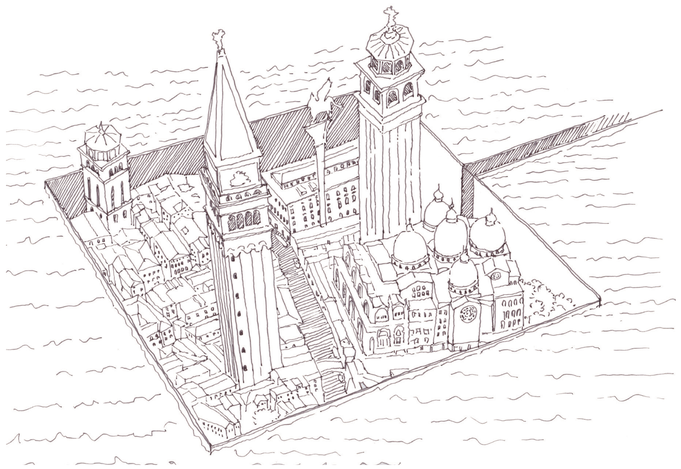
view from the trainstation



view from the „Canale Grande"

iter temporis



Venice – City in the water

‚La Serenissima' it is lovingly called, the city, whose historic center consists of over 120 islands and whose townscape is full of channels and bridges. That is how this lagoon city keeps its romantic image, which attracts thousands of tourists every year. But if you take a closer look, a lot of buildings and especially the lower levels, are despite visible efforts in a very bad condition. "Aqua Alta" became a frequent incident for the residents of Venice during the last decades. Due to climate change and the alternating currents of low and high tide in consequence of frequent changes of the port entrance, the sea level rises bit by bit. In distant future, Venice will not be anymore the city in the water, but the city under water – unless people interfere. To antagonize this development, project MO.S.E (modulo sperimentale elettromeccanico) was created. By building 79 water gates on the sea bottom, which are risen by compressed air, Venice will be kept from too much water.

Idea: A journey to tomorrows Venice

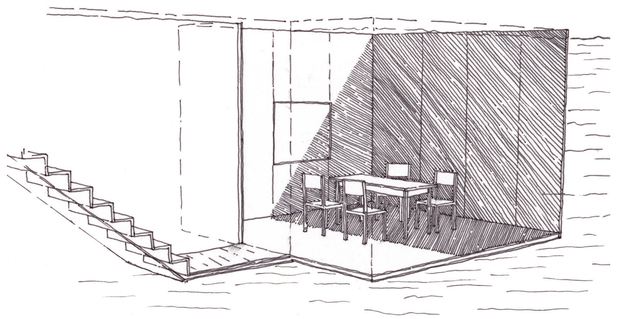
Venice and its future are inseparably connected to the element of water and that is what inspired my conceptual design. Not only should the romantic-kitschy image of Venice be expecting the tourists, when they take a look at the Canale Grande, but also the realistic image behind this very historical setting. The room on the fore court of Santa Lucia, symbolized by a table and chairs on an elevated platform, represents the current state of the city. If the spectator engages in the installation, he is going on a journey through time to a possible future, in which the same room lies surrounded by water in the middle of the Canale Grande. Like the water gates of the MO.S.E project, the room is shielded from the Aqua Alta by steel boards. Water swashing over the top edge and dripping through leaks creates an impression of wetness and humidity caused decay within the room.

Objective and effect

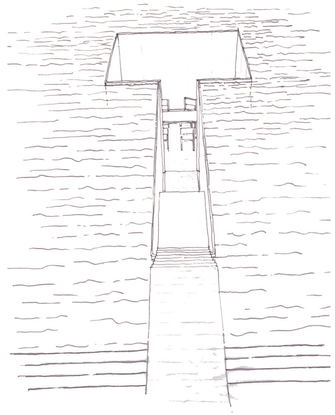
The journey through time to tomorrows Venice is to confront the observer with the problem of the rising sea level. The spectator is to be sensitized to the situation in Venice by experiencing the rising water on his or her walk from the room above sea level to the room beneath the water. By illustrating the consequences of human intrusion of nature, the observer is to be inspired to rethink. The governmental efforts to hinder the rising water in Venice with water gates, just like Moses in the bible impounded the waters of the Red Sea to walls, is critically reflected and put into question.

Construction and material

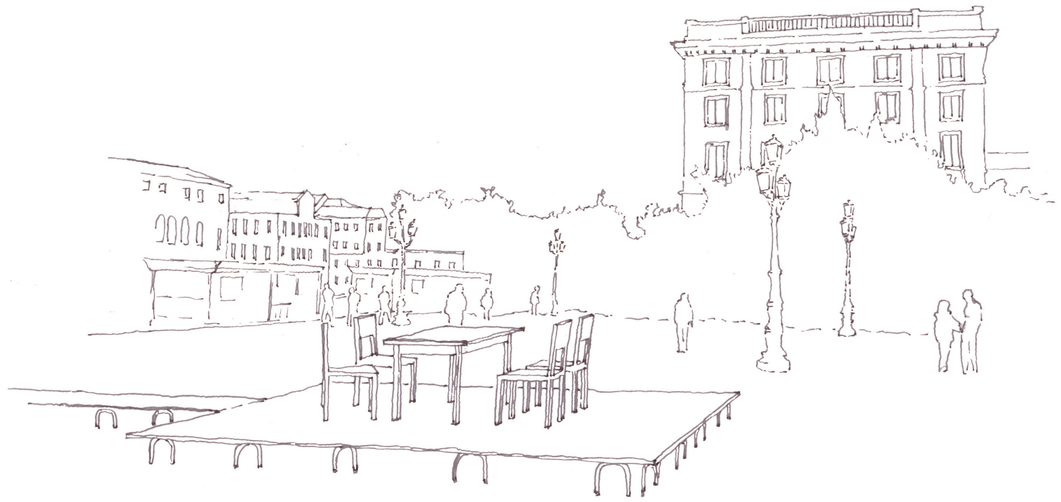
The platform and the way to the room under water are built of Venice typical high tide fillets. All furniture is built of simple solid wood, bolt down on the ground. The walls of the room consist of corten steel boards, bolt or welded on an outward steel frame. The separate boards are fused with each other. Tiny leaks between the boards are to cause a permanent seeping of water. The room itself swims within the water and has a clear height of 3 meters. Its top edge rises about 15 cm over the sea level. The room is fixed by air bags and cable winches to the ground. Floaters are used to detect alterations of the sea level and adjust, how deep the room is allowed to sink in. Swashed in water and water from the mentioned leaks is cumulated between the floor and the under-floor and is permanently pumped out. The fillet is horizontal permanently fixed to the room and vertical flexible by two joints, to absorb movement e.g by swell through shipping traffic or the tides.



perspektive of the room

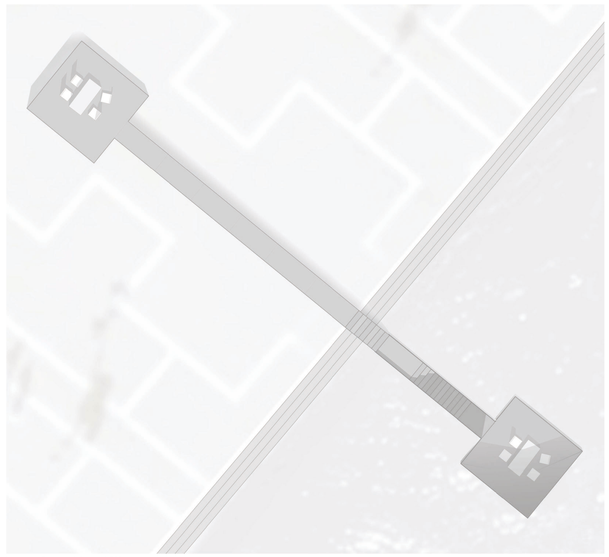


view from the trainstation

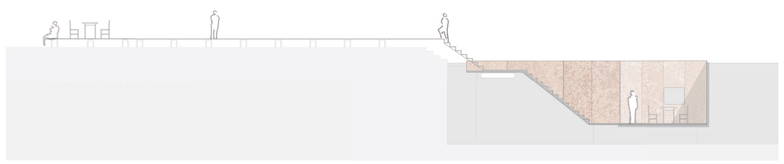


view from the east

view from the west



floorplan „Santa lucia" scale 1:200



section scale 1:100

section scale 1:200

siteplan scale 1:500