

**GENOA**

Studio Sergison  
Autumn Semester 2022

Genoa



## Contents

5	Introduction
6	Theme: case a torre
10	Genoa and its harbour: the context
18	Project site
24	First exercise: survey
34	Second exercise: strategy plan
36	Third exercise: building concept
38	Fourth exercise: facade concept, image
44	Material for final review
46	Programme: Autumn semester 2022
48	Reading list
49	References
50	Contacts

Aerial view of Genoa



## Introduction

This semester we will be working in the Italian city of Genoa to develop comprehensive design proposals for a site near the historical centre on an area that was formerly part of the harbour infrastructure.

Projects should create a coherent urban strategy to be tested and refined at a larger scale. Students are invited to produce a survey of an exemplary existing building that serves a collective housing programme. They will need to survey, photograph and draw it very precisely at a scale of 1:100.

A study trip to Genoa is planned at the start of the semester, to explore the city and the project site.

We are particularly interested in exploring low-rise towers as a building type and how they can increase density and create a sense of proximity.

Porto Antico, Genoa

Over the course of this academic year, we will be working in two port cities, Genoa and Antwerp. In the autumn semester we will work on a site near the city centre of Genoa.

While this is an academic exercise, it is intended to generate realistic design proposals as a form of propositional planning. Our work will address issues relating to contemporary affordable housing and the evolving image of the city. We will consider strategies that might be adopted in the future to increase urban density.

As in previous semesters, we will survey existing buildings carefully. We hope that by accurately recording existing historical buildings, it will be possible to offer contemporary solutions rooted in place and in the local building culture.

The theme of our exercise is 'low-rise towers' and we will consider ways of generating solutions for contemporary housing. In the first instance, working in pairs, students will develop an urban strategy plan. This will then be studied in more detail.

To assist in our work, we will rely on a panel of experts – architects, planners and people with experience of building and assessing architecture critically.

Surveys will be one of the key tools for developing projects, and we will refer to precedents as a means to develop a conceptual base for proposals: our working method emphasises learning from existing examples, built or unbuilt, and interpreting and adjusting to the context to produce a convincing project.

Throughout the semester lectures will be offered to support students in exploring topics and themes that are relevant to the course



Camogli, Liguria. 1900



Genoa's strategic position makes it Italy's foremost port and, together with of Marseilles, the most important in the Mediterranean. As far back as the sixth century BCE, the bay of Genoa has played a crucial role in the trade between merchants from the Mediterranean and the inland populations.

The initial settlement emerged in Sestiere del Molo before expanding towards Collina di Castello during the following century. In 147 BCE, the Roman consul initiated the construction of the Via Postumia, which connected Genoa with Aquileia and during the reign of Gaius Julius Caesar, Genoa became the most important port of Cisalpine Gaul.

After the destruction of the Roman walls during the tenth century, the expansion of the city beyond its original perimeter and the need to defend itself from enemy assaults led to the construction of several new city walls. The first dates back to the ninth century, when Berengar II of Italy gave full legal freedom to the city, which led to economic growth and a significant population increase. The first wall, which enclosed the hill of Sarzano, had three gates: the Serravalle gate on the north side of the church of San Lorenzo, the Soprana gate the on the hill of Sant'Andrea, and a third gate at the end of Via Canneto il Curto, near the church of San Pietro. The settlement between the walls and the coastline extended to approximately twenty-two hectares and expanded to fifty-five hectares in 1155 with the construction of the Barbarossa walls.

The history of Genoa has always been entwined with the development of its port, which over the centuries enabled the city to grow into a trading hub. Already by the twelfth century, luxury goods from the Orient and Belgium were being processed in its port, which allowed Genoese bankers to become major players in Europe.

The urban expansion of the city during the fourteenth century and increased trading activities led to a further expansion of the city walls to accommodate the new neighbourhoods to the west and east of the original city centre.

In the sixteenth century, as the city's position in the Mediterranean became established, its prestige was marked by two important events: the construction of the Strada Nuova in the centre, and the reinforcement of the city wall towards the sea. Built between 1558 and 1591, the Strada Nuova is a major example of Italian Renaissance architecture and urban planning, designed to mark Genoa's regained international status. The port was threatened by the expansionist moves of the two major powers of the time, Spain and France, and the in 1551 the republic decided to erect a defensive wall on the coast. By 1611, the walls had reached the present-day Ponte Calvi, but were not completed until 1638, when they merged with those of the Darsena.

This latest extension of the walls took place after the failed attempt by Carlo Emanuele of Savoy's to conquer the city in 1625. The heavy attacks led the government to recognise the need for new and improved defensive walls. The city walls were extended to 19,560 metres, walls of Genoa reached 19,560 metres, enclosing an area of 903 hectares — almost five times the 197 hectares contained within the old walls.

During the second half of the nineteenth century the city's inhabitants started abandoning the historic centre, and Genoa's population decreased from 80,000 at the end of the nineteenth century to 20,000 today.

It was during this period that the port area started undergoing major changes: the first dry dock in the Darsena was built, and the railway connecting Genoa with Turin, Milan and Ventimiglia was completed. This resulted in an increase in the port's commercial activity: at the end of the nineteenth century about 90% of raw cotton for, 33% of all iron and steel and 35% of all coal trade for Italy passed through Genoa, and in the years immediately preceding the First World War the port handled about 7.5 million tonnes of goods.

At the beginning of the Second World War, port activity intensified further due to an increase in goods coming in from the North Sea, but the city then suffered heavy bombing which caused extensive destruction and major disruption to port operations. After the war, construction began on a new terminal that would handle coal and oil, and on a container facility.

It wasn't until 1992 that a major project for the regeneration of the old port started. The concept underpinning the masterplan was to transform the harbour into a public space for the city, capitalising on the close relationship between the city centre and its port. Today, the port of Genoa extends to more than 500 hectares on land and as many in the water and handles approximately 51.3 million tonnes of goods per year with 13 terminals and numerous operating piers.



1



2

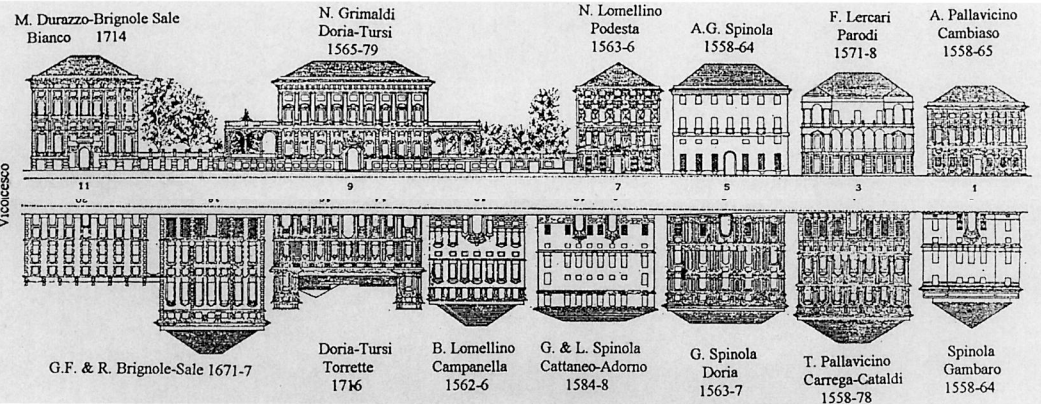
1  
Ignazio Danti,  
Panoramic plan of  
Genoa, late XVI  
century.  
Map Gallery, Vatican  
Museum.

2  
Drawing by Giovanni  
Battista Cevasco.  
XIX century

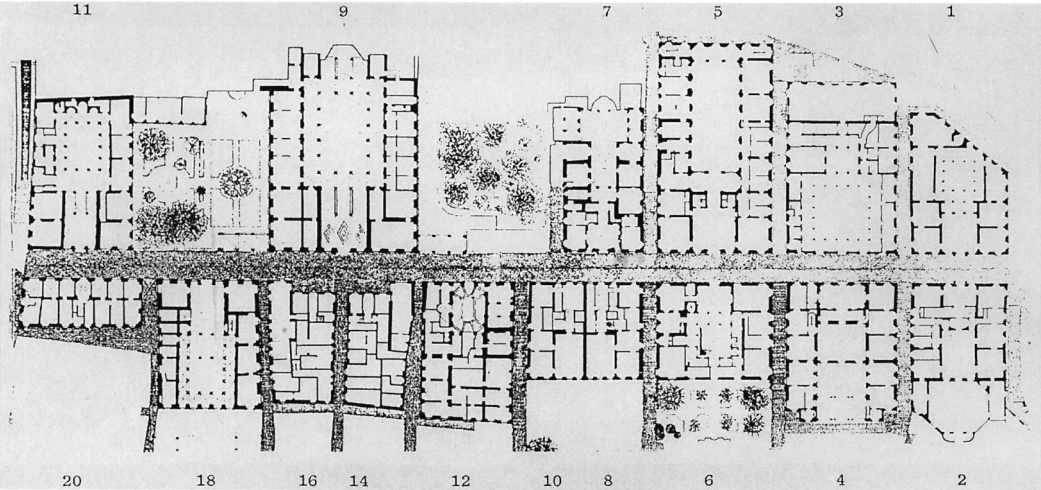
3  
Painting by Domenico  
Fiasella, 1640



3



1



2

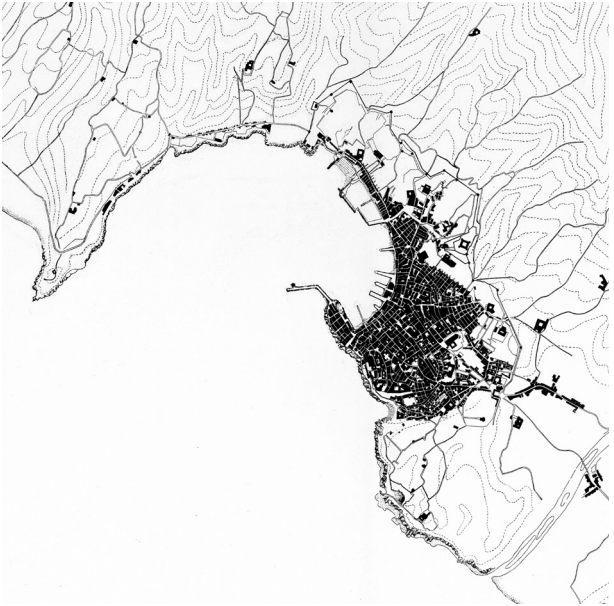
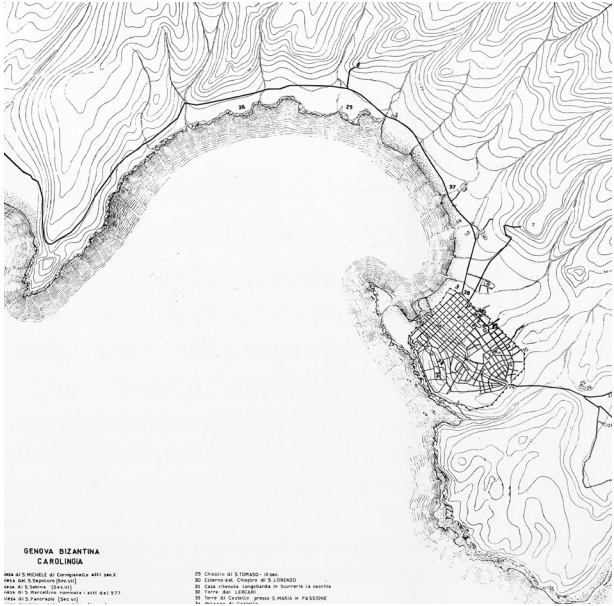


3

1  
Palazzi dei Rolli on the Strada  
Nuova  
Archivio fotografico del  
Comune di Genova.

2  
Ground floor plan of Strada  
Nuova palazzi. Archivio  
fotografico del Comune di  
Genova.

3  
Antonio Gioffi, Perspective  
of the Strada Nuova from the  
east, 1769

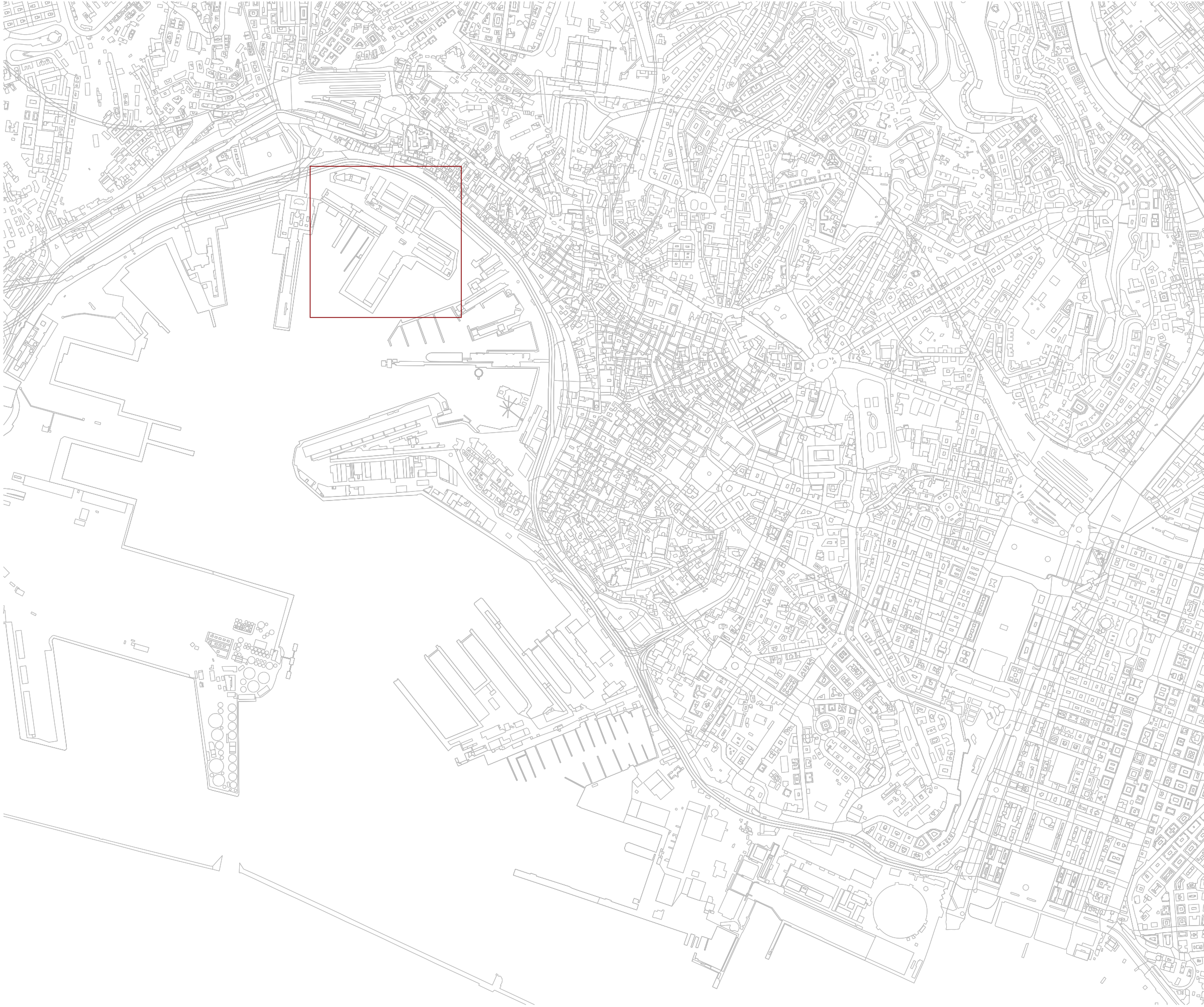


1 2



3 4

- 1  
1000  
c. 1000-4000 inhabitants
- 2  
1400  
c. 35.0000 inhabitants
- 3  
1890  
c. 270.000 inhabitants
- 4  
1937  
c. 640.000 inhabitants





1



2



3 4

- 1  
Access to the site form the harbour
- 2  
View from the Univeristy of Genoa
- 3  
Via Francesco Vivaldi
- 4  
View from the Istituto Nautico San Giorgio



1



2



3



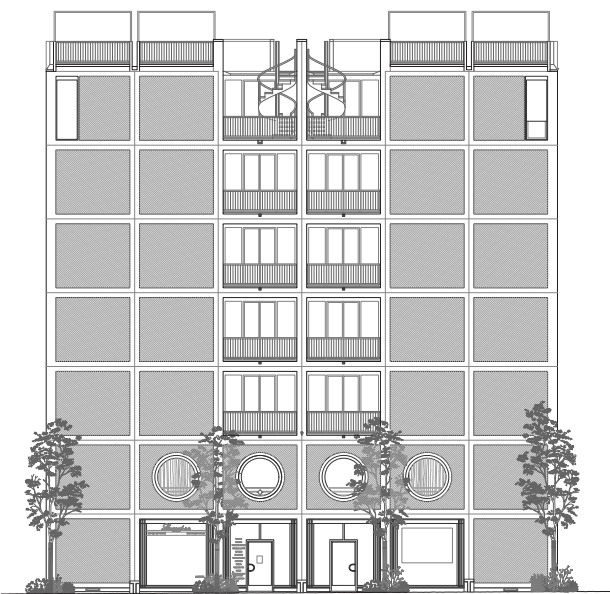
4

- 1  
View towards the north
- 2  
View towards the east
- 3  
View towards the south
- 4  
View towards the west

We hold the position that invention is a necessary ambition in architecture, but it rarely emerges by spontaneous intuition. An architect can only hope to make a truly unique proposal after many years of study and reflection. Indeed, it is debatable whether true originality is achievable. To help you understand the task you are attending to this semester, we would like you to undertake a survey of one seminal residential building in North Italy. We believe that surveying existing buildings helps develop a deeper understanding of their qualities, a useful corrective to the belief that it is possible to come up with entirely original solutions.

The information recorded in your survey will be drawn upon and referred to throughout the semester and will inform your subsequent work. You should draw the facade and understand the way it is organised. You will be expected to describe it clearly and analytically, employing diagrams where necessary. You should concentrate on understanding the quality and arrangement of the facade by drawing a measured survey of the building. This will require you to look very carefully at it, make sketches and take photographs as a way of recording their condition.

We also ask you to make a precise photographic portrait that conveys the atmosphere of the building, its urban context and the qualities you find in the main interior space. An introduction will be offered to assist you in understanding this exercise.





1  
Torre Rasini tower  
Emilio Lancia and Gio Ponti, 1935  
Porta Venezia 1, Milan

2  
Quartiere Sperimentale dell'VIII  
Triennale - QT8  
Piero Bottoni, 1949  
Via Diomede, Milan



12



3  
Apartment building  
Ignazio Gardella, 1952  
Corso Teresio Borsalino 17, Alessandria

4  
Case INCIS, Quartiere Vialba  
Franco Albini, 1953  
Via Felice Orsini 68, Milan

5  
Residential building  
Ezio Sgrelli, 1952  
Via Moscova 40, Milan

6  
Residential building  
Ignazio Gardella, Anna Ferrieri Castelli,  
Roberto Menghi  
Via Marchiondi 7, Milan



34



56



7  
Casa Torre  
Rino Tamí, 1957  
Via delle Scuole 1, Lugano



7 8

8  
Residential building  
Mario Asnago and Claudio Vender, 1957  
Via Tommaso Grossi 53, Como



9  
Residential building  
Mario Asnago and Claudio Vender, 1957  
Via Eugenio Corbetta 3, Cantù

10  
Casa FEAL  
Marco Zanuso, 1961  
Via Laveno 6, Milan

11  
Residential building  
Luigi Caccia Dominioni, 1962  
Piazza Carbonari 2, Milan



10



9 11

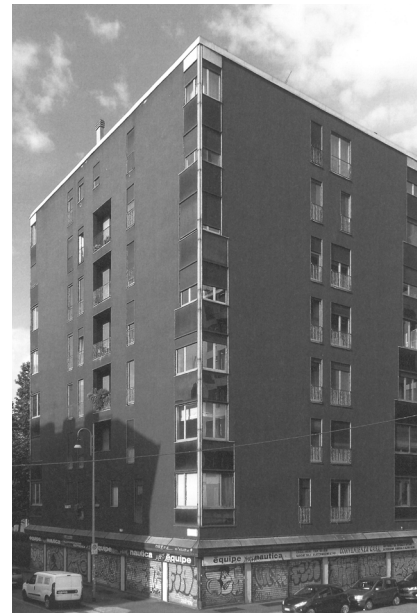


**12**  
Palazzina Smeraldo  
Asnago and Vender, 1963  
Via Angelo Longoni 8, Cantù

**13**  
Mixed- use building  
Luigi Caccia Dominioni, 1964  
Corso Italia 22-24, Milan



12 13



14 15



16 17

**14**  
Residential building  
Luigi Caccia Dominioni, 1964  
Via Santa Croce 3, Milan

**15**  
Mixed-used building  
Asnago and Vender, 1964  
Via Caterina da Forlì 40, Milan

**16**  
Residential building 'I Faggi'  
-BBPR, 1965  
Via Zezio 32, Como

**17**  
Residential building  
Vittore Ceretti, 1966  
Viale Monte Rosa 11, Milan



**18**  
Torre Pitagora  
Sergio Jaretti, Elio Luzi 1968  
Corso Siracusa 158, Turin

**19**  
Residential building  
BBPR, 1970  
Via Cavalieri del Santo Sepolcro 10, Milan

**20**  
Apartment building 'La Balossa'  
Angelo Mangiarotti, 1972  
Via Degli Artigianelli 4, Monza



18



19 20



**21**  
Residential building  
Franco Albini and Franca Helg, 1972  
Via Argelati 28-30, Milan

**22**  
Quartiere Milano San Felice,  
Luigi Caccia Dominioni, Vico Magistretti, Giorgio Pedroni 1975  
Nona Strada 13, Segrate

**23**  
Residential building  
Angelo Mangiarotti, 1977  
Via Guglielmo Marconi 17, Arosio

**24**  
Casa A1  
Diener & Diener Architekten,  
2006 Olympic Village, Turin



21 22

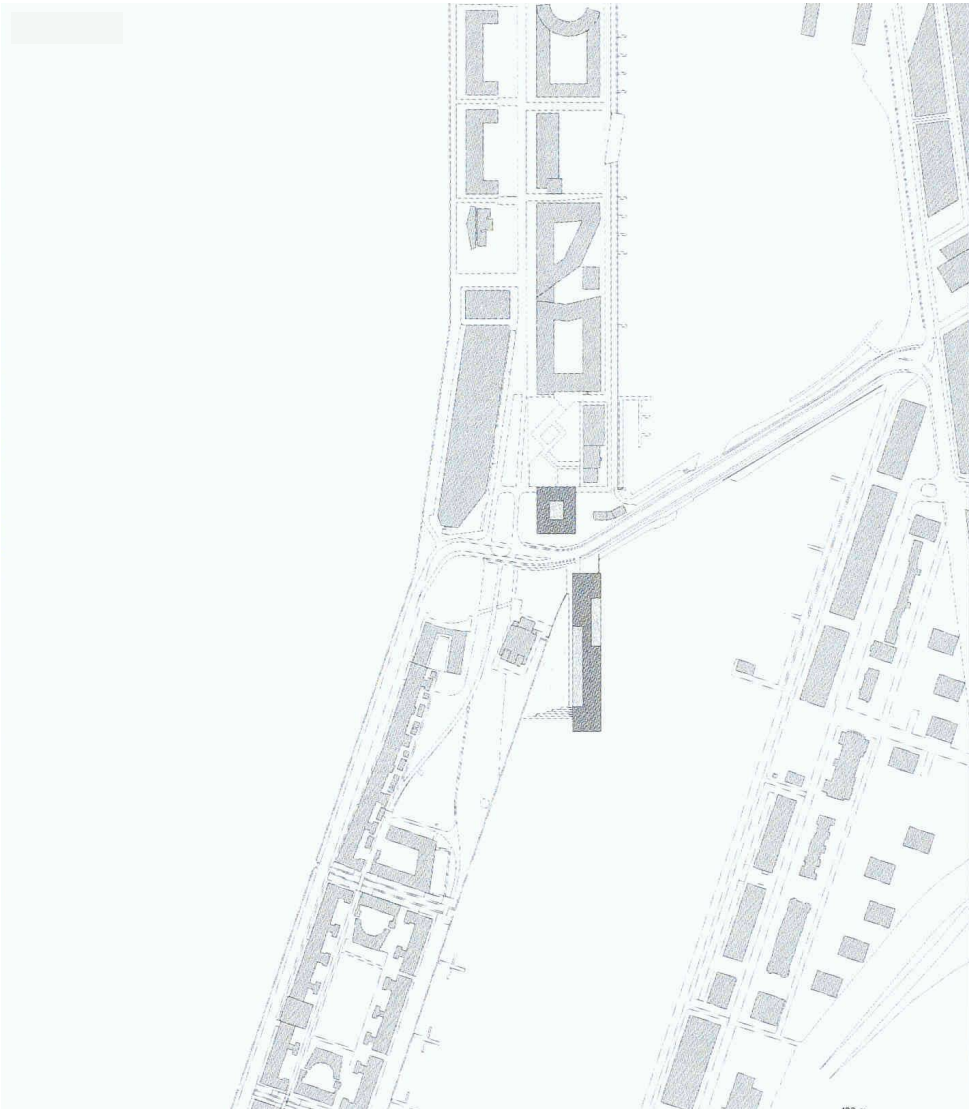


23 24

The second component of the work to be undertaken this semester is the development of a strategy plan. This can be understood as a typological and massing study. The principal tool to assist you in this exercise will be a 1:500 model. This should include the area surrounding the site on which you are working. The base model will be made collectively by all members of the studio.

We ask you to begin by exploring a number of solutions that would allow the site you are studying to be developed to a reasonably high density through the introduction of building blocks. The scale of these blocks and the distance between them should be carefully considered. Each option you propose should be recorded photographically and then critically appraised and tested to determine the density it yields and refined or discarded as appropriate.

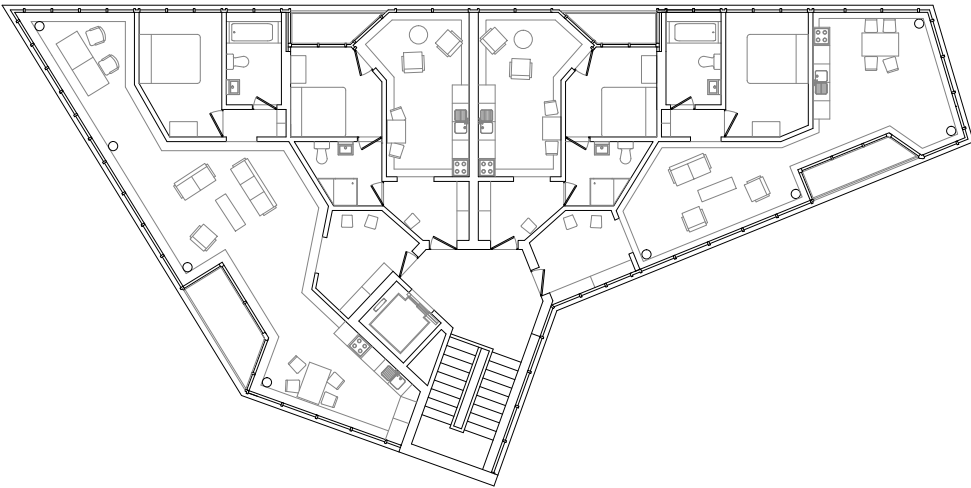
This work should be understood as an iterative process that will begin to develop the idea you will be working on throughout the semester. You should use the study trip to Genoa as an opportunity to begin to understand the scale and urban structure of the city.



Housing KNSM, Java Island,  
Amsterdam, 1995–2001  
Diener & Diener Architects

The results of these previous studies should now be re-appraised and drawn upon for the next phase of this semester's work. We now ask you to develop a more precise concept for a block, focusing on the relationship it might have to other blocks and to the wider context. The principal tool we ask you to use is a 1:100 study or sketch model which should include an appropriate amount of detail and context. This is really the beginning of the key piece of work you will produce this semester. We are interested in the qualities contained in the buildings you design and the way they are expressed through the organisation of their facades.

The emphasis of your work should be on critically appraising and further refining earlier studies. While a model will be the main product of your work, we expect you to develop your project through study plans, elevations, sections and sketches. It is also important that you measure the density of the project.



The next exercise requires you to produce two images. The graphic technique is not prescribed, although you should be able to explain why you feel that the technique you have chosen is appropriate.

These images should represent the atmosphere and the presence of the building you propose. One of the images should represent the exterior of one or more buildings and their relationship to its immediate context, the general urban fabric. The other image should represent the interior of an apartment in a block and its qualities as a semi-public, semi-private space. A lecture will be offered to introduce this exercise.



Spring semester 2015  
Andrea Scognamiglio  
David Evan Eagleton





As a convincing set of ideas for the projects emerge, you will need to produce a set of drawings at a suitable scale, in plan, section and elevation. You should also produce a landscape plan which explains the relation between your work and the wider setting. Hard and soft landscaping elements should be drawn precisely.

It is important that you update the strategy plan produced earlier in the semester taking into account the evolution of a more detailed understanding.

The main piece of work will be the creation of a series of images of the location with and without your project, as a way of illustrating the qualities and the positive impact of the intervention on the wider surroundings.

Finally, you will need to produce a pdf or powerpoint presentation to describe your project. This is an important tool in illustrating your proposal at the final review and tracing its evolution through various stages of development.



Date	Event	Details	Assignments
22 September	Studio briefing	Jonathan Sergison (JS) presents studio introduction Lecture by JS: 'Strategy plan' Lecture by Cristina Roiz de la Parra Solano (CRP): 'Making a survey'	Survey Tower houses in Northern Italy
29 - 30 September	Study trip to Genoa	Study trip to project site	1:500 site model Initial ideas of strategy plan
6-7 October	Review	Survey studies. Initial ideas for the strategy plan. Lecture by JS: 'Case a torre'	1:500 study models Initial ideas of strategy plan
13-14 October	Tutorials	Initial ideas for the strategy plan	1.500 study models 1:200 drawings, plans, sections and elevations
20-21 October	Tutorials	Initial ideas for the strategy plan	1:200 drawings, plans, sections and elevations 1:200 model studies
27-28 October	Tutorials	Building concept, model, plans, sections, and elevations Lecture by CRP: 'Notions of inhabitation'	1:200 drawings, plans, sections and elevations 1:200 model studies
3 November	Intermediate review	Project reviews with guest critics	Pdf presentation Survey 1:500 models and 1.200 models 1:200 plans, sections, elevations Images
10-11 November	Tutorials	Plans, sections and elevations Lecture by Flavia Saggese: 'Atmosphere'	1:200 models 1:100 plans, sections, elevations
17-18 November	Tutorials	Plans, sections and elevations	1:100 plans, sections, elevations

Date	Event	Details	Assignments
24-25 November	Review	Facade, plans, sections	1:100 drawings
1-2 December	Tutorials	Facade, plans, sections	1:100 drawings
8-9 December	Tutorials	Submission of final drawings	1:100 plans, sections and facades 1:200 situation plan
15-16 December	Tutorials	Final models and images	Interior perspectives, Exterior perspectives, 1:200 site model Draft Pdf presentation
20 December	Final review	Project reviews with guest critics	Pdf presentation 1:200 site model Interior and exterior perspectives 1:200 situation plan 1:100 plans, sections and facades Interior and exterior perspectives

Aldo Rossi  
L'architettura della città  
Padova: Marsilio, 1966

Joseph Rykwert  
The seduction of place: the city in the twenty-first century  
New York: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2000

Jonathan Sergison and Stephen Bates  
Papers 3  
London, 2016

Martin Steinmann  
Forme forte. Schriften / Écrits 1972-2002  
Birkhäuser, 2003

Roger Diener, Martin Steinmann  
Das Haus und die Stadt / The House and the City Diener & Diener, Städtebauliche Arbeiten/Urban Studies  
Birkhäuser, 1995

Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani  
Die Stadt im 20. Jahrhundert. Visionen, Entwürfe, Gebautes  
Berlin: Wagenbach Verlag, 2010

Dichte / Density Archithese  
Zürich:Niggli Verlag, 2011

Federico Bucci  
Franco Albini  
Milano: Electa, 2009

Fulvio Irace  
Franco Albini  
Roma: Gruppo Editoriale l'Espresso, 2013

Giovanna Franco, Stefano Francesco Musso (eds.)  
Architetture in Liguria dopo il 1945  
Genova: De Ferrari Editore, 2016

Franca Balletti, Bruno Giontoni  
Una città tra le due guerre: culture e trasformazioni urbanistiche  
Genova: De Ferrari Editore, 1990

Martin und Werner Feiersinger  
Italomodern 1, Architektur in Oberitalien 1946-1976  
Wien: Springer 2012

Martin und Werner Feiersinger  
Italomodern 2, Architektur in Oberitalien 1946-1976  
Wien: Springer 2012

Massimo Razzi  
L'ulivo sul tetto 1892-1992 Cent'anni di edilizia genovese tra storia e ricordo  
Genova: Cassa Edile Genovese, 1992

Paolo Cevini  
Genova Anni '30 da Labò a Daneri  
Genova: Sagep, 1989

Piero Boccardo, Clario Di Fabio, M. Listri  
I Musei di Strada Nuova a Genova: Palazzo Rosso, Palazzo Bianco e Palazzo Tursi, U.  
Torino: Allemandi, 2004

Pietro D. Patrone  
Daneri  
Genova: Sagep, 1982

Silvia Barisione, Valter Scelsi  
Luigi Vietti. Architetture liguri  
Genova: Erga edizioni, 1999

## Contacts

### Professor

Jonathan Sergison  
jonathan.sergison@usi.ch

### Assistants

Cristina Roiz de la Parra Solano  
cristina.roiz.de.la.parra.solano@usi.ch

Flavia Saggese  
flavia.saggese@usi.ch

### Studio

3rd floor  
Palazzo Canavée

### Office

Dependence  
Ufficio D1.03  
Largo Bernasconi 2  
CH 6850 Mendrisio