Jane da Mosto

Getting involved with the thinking of Lucius Burckhardt at the Swiss Pavilion gave me the initial idea for the project Venetia è Laguna (Venice is the Lagoon). It is one of many actions from the grass roots citizens’ petition to the international campaign that are aiming to reverse the recent decision of the Government to allow the Port Authority to dredge another maxi-channel in the lagoon. During the day of the Regata Storica, giant flags with the message Venetia è Laguna started flying on the façades of 50 palaces along the Canal Grande. This campaign is a reinterpretation of the tradition of hanging precious tapestries on balconies and from windows for the day of the famous boat race. A smaller version of the flags are now spreading throughout the city, showing the world that Venetian citizens are united, vigilant and ready to be protagonists in all decisions that concern Venice and to do so with the same long-term vision, energy and rigour with which its palaces were originally constructed.

During the workshop of Università IUAV di Venezia the students worked on fictitious and unfeasible projects focusing on the city of Venice. They invented virtual identities for architects, urban planners and all sorts of visionary designers to launch impossible projects, or bring to light old unrealized projects designed by forgotten authors. The students created an archive containing both selected projects from the past dealing with impossible Venices and new projects invented by the students themselves.

After the end of the Summer School, the performers of the Swiss pavilion that originally were supposed to present the drawings by Cedric Price or those by Lucius Burckhardt to the public, instead presented the boxes added by the universities to the archive. Nobody had told them to use these boxes; it was their own curiosity which had lead them to this unexpected way of sharing knowledge.