

Soil Rhythms and the Pulse of the City Workshop

Iuav university of Venice

City of Amsterdam

With the support of Venice Architecture Biennale 2025

4-5-6 November 2025



Abstract: The cities of Amsterdam and Venice share a unique relationship with water: both are built on and surrounded by it. The interaction between urban development and the geo-environmental context of the lagoon raises urgent issues of sustainability, conservation, and future safety. This project aims to organize an interdisciplinary workshop, drawing on Amsterdam's experience in soil and water quality—through exemplary projects such as *BiodiverCITY* and the *Academic Workshop Soil*—to explore, visualize, and contribute to potential measures for the geo-environmental context of the Venice Lagoon.

Study programmes: Architettura ciclo unico, Architettura triennale, Architettura magistrale, Design del prodotto, della comunicazione visiva e degli interni - Product e Visual Design, Design della moda e arti multimediali - Comunicazione e nuovi media della moda, Urbanistica e pianificazione del territorio triennale e MS in Urban Planning for Transition, Urbanistica e Pianificazione per la Transizione Master degree programme in Architecture, Design del prodotto, della comunicazione e degli interni, Arti visive e cinema espanso.

Credits: 2 elective CFU (university credits) will be awarded.

Details: free access to the Arsenale for registered participants on November 6.

Tutors: Maria Chiara Tosi, Alessandra Marcon, Marta De Marchi, Alessia Franzese, Francesca Guarnotta, Francesca Strano

Programme

DAY 1 – 4 November - Soil Rhythms and the Pulse of the City at Palazzo Badoer

9:00 - Palazzo Badoer, Aula C2

9:15 - 9:30 - Workshop introduction

9:30 - 10:45 - Presentation round table (background and reasons for participating in the workshop)

11:00 – 14:30 - Online connection with the Speakers' corner at Arsenale.

11:00 – 11:10 Welcome & Framing, Joyce van den Berg Studio Berg

11:10 – 11:25 Beneath the Surface: Joyce van den Berg The Soil as a Mirror

11:25 – 11:40 Tuning to Rhythms of Soil Alexander Cullen, University of Cambridge

11:40 – 11:55 From Rhythm to Trust to Knowledge Caroline Nevejan, University of Amsterdam

11:55 – 12:05 Mini break

12:05 – 12:20 Rhythms of Energy: Mimi Eelman, The Soil as a Source City of Amsterdam

12:20 – 12:50 Soil Time & Carriers: The Ground Beneath Memory, Maria Chiara Tosi,, Iuav University of Venice; Echoes in Sediment: The Soil as Timekeeper, Alessandra Marcon, Iuav University of Venice

12:50 – 13:00 Mini-panel reflection with speakers 1–6

13:00 – 13:45 Lunch Break & Informal Exchange

13:45 – 14:00 Collective Reflection – Soil Rhythms in the City

14:00 – 14:15 Assignment Briefing – The Soil of the Venetian Lagoon, Maria Chiara Tosi, Alessandra Marcon

14:30 - 15:30 - Lunch

15:30 - 18:00 - Afternoon: Operation session of the workshop

15:30 - 16:00 - Francesca Guarnotta, Introduction to the context of the island of Lazzaretto Nuovo.

16:00 - 18:00 Operational session: Students will be invited to organize themselves into four working groups: 1. Section, 2. Emergent soils, 3. Marshlands, 4. Submerged sediments.

Start of collective work on the section and exploration of cartographic and bibliographical materials.

DAY 2 - 5 November - Approaching, representing and mapping Venice Lagoon soils

MORNING: Site visit to Lazzaretto Nuovo (9:15 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.)

Purpose: direct exploration of lagoon soils and sediments

9:15 a.m. - Meet at the F. te Nove Line 13, D stop; vaporetto departure at 9:25 a.m.

9:50 a.m. - Welcome at the Lazzaretto Nuovo

10:00 - 11:15 Soil Seminar at Teson grande

Geoenvironmental overview of the Venice Lagoon

Sebastiano Trevisani, Associate Professor of Applied Geology, Iuav University of Venice

From sedimentary processes to deposits: practical sedimentology and sampling

Marta Cosma, Fixed-term Researcher in Sedimentology and Coastal Hydrogeology, CNR-IGG

LIFE VIMINE - an integrated project for the sustainable management of the Venice lagoon saltmarshes

Dario Smania, Technical Specialist Life Vimine project

The archaeosphere: archaeological soils and anthropogenic traces in the lagoon

Francesca Guarnotta, Lazzaretti Veneziani, Iuav University of Venice

Future perspectives: edible landscapes and adaptation to climate change

Lorenzo Barbasetti di Prun, The Tidal Garden, Orizzonte Sale

11:15 – 12:45 - Fieldwork (practical session)

Distribution of materials (observation sheets, maps, instruments)

Division into three work areas:

- Emergent soils (archaeological soils)
- Salt marshes (water–land transition)
- Submerged sediments (velma / lagoon channel)

Planned activities:

- Execution of core samplings (up to 1 m)
- Observation and direct description of the sedimentary profile (visual analysis: grain size, color, sedimentary structures, presence of shells, plastic, organic material; tactile analysis; olfactory analysis; gustatory analysis)
- Vegetation sampling and zoning (visual, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory analysis)
- Observation and direct description of the “archeological excavations”
- Photographic documentation and sensory notes in the observation/recording sheet [At this link.](#)

AFTERNOON

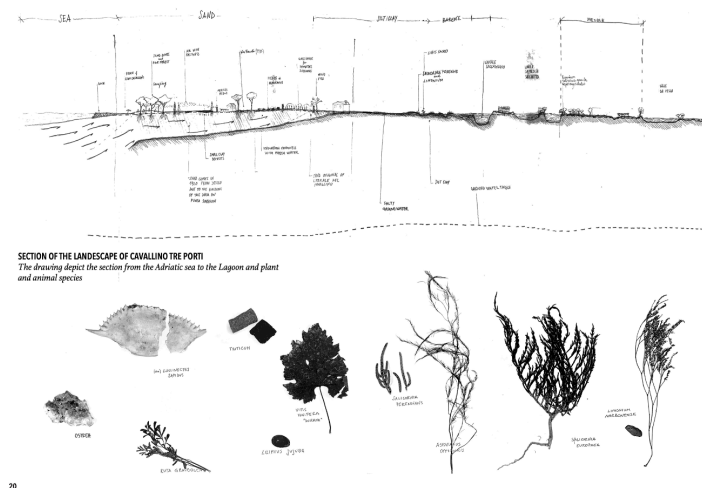
12:45 – 14:00 Return to Palazzo Badoer:

12:59 – 13:25 – Vaporetto *Lazzaretto Nuovo* → *Fondamente Nove* (Line 13) (*packed lunch recommended*)

13:25 – 14:00 – Walk from *Fondamente Nove* to *Palazzo Badoer*

14:00 – 18:00 – Workshop operational session- Soil&Rhythm – Location: Palazzo Badoer, Room D (28 seats)

- Processing of collected data and samples;
- Creation of a large collective section (*inhabited transect*) (e. g. see the work of Maria Teresa Alvez)
- Focusing on Soil& Rhythm : Graphical and visual synthesis of the fieldwork; Integration of historical maps, photos, and collected materials. Reflections about the rhythm of the city (season, human activities, life cycles, climatic challenges...)



Top: Example of a transect section on Cavallino-Treporti, *Towards a Food Atlas* Summerschool 2023;

Bottom: Maria Theresa Alvez, *Wake: The Flight of Birds and People*, 2015.

DAY 3 - Soil Rythm workshop at Palazzo Badoer and Speakers' Corner

MORNING: 9:00 – 12:30 – Workshop operational session - Location: Palazzo Badoer, Aule T1 (20 posti) e T2 (20 posti)

9:00 - 10:00 Completion of the section

10:00 - 12:00 Creation of PowerPoint presentations (one per group; the group "presentations will then be merged into one)

AFTERNOON: 14:00 – 18:00 - Presentation of the works – Location: Speakers' Corner, Arsenale, Venice Architecture Biennale

Feedback session in English at the Speakers' Corner at the Arsenale, with presentation of the .ppt prepared by the students

14:00 – 14:08 Welcome and Introduction to the Afternoon Joyce van den Berg, Studio Berg

14:08 - 15:30 - Soil&Rhythm Group presentations (4 groups x 20 min)

15:30 - 15:55 - Shared Reflection: What Emerged Between Soil and Rhythm?

15:55– 16.00 Short break

16:00 – 17:00 Closing concert, Sirishkumar Manji, Alice Mazzilli, Sha Xin Wei

Required materials

For classroom work: stationery supplies (markers, pencils, tape, etc.) and all the elements essential for inhabiting the section.

For the field visit: boots, gloves, folding ruler, magnifying glass (if possible), freezer bags, “*quattro stagioni*” jars (one per person), spoons or small trowels, smartphone/camera, notebook, spare socks.

Main bibliographic and cartographic references

Barbieri, A., & D’Alpaos, L. (2005). *La carta geomorfologica della Laguna di Venezia*. Provincia di Venezia – Magistrato alle Acque.

D’Alpaos, L. (2010). *L’evoluzione morfologica della Laguna di Venezia attraverso la lettura di alcune mappe storiche e delle sue carte idrografiche*. Comune di Venezia. online:

https://www.comune.venezia.it/sites/default/files/publicCPSM2/pubblicazioni/D_Alpaos_ICPSM_L_evoluzione_morfologica_della_laguna_di_Venezia_2010.pdf

Gandy, M. (2022). *Queering the Transect*. In M. Mostafavi & G. Doherty (Eds.), *The Botanical City: A Handbook for the Contemporary Garden* (pp. 115–122). Lars Müller Publishers.

Omodeo, P. D., Trevisani, S., & Babu, S. (2020). Benedetto Castelli’s considerations on the lagoon of Venice: Mathematical expertise and hydro-geomorphological transformations in seventeenth-century Venice. *Earth Sciences History*, 39(2), 420–446. <https://doi.org/10.17704/1944-6187-39.2.420>

Provincia di Venezia. (2005). *Carta Geomorfologica della Provincia di Venezia*. Venezia: Servizio Difesa del Suolo e Idraulica. Foglio 2.

<https://politicheambientali.cittametropolitana.ve.it/pubblicazioni/carta-geomorfologica-della-provincia-di-venez>

Servizio Geologico d’Italia (2007), Carta Geologica d’Italia alla scala 1:50.000, F. 128 Venezia, ISPRA, Roma. DOI: 10.15161/[oar.it/211694](https://www.isprambiente.gov.it/it/temi/geologia/carta-geologica-ditalia). Online:

<https://progetto-carg.isprambiente.it/cartografiaCARG/index.php?source=cartageologica®ione=Veneto&foglio=128>

Geologia del sottosuolo, Carta Geologica, F. 128 Venezia, disponibile online

https://www.isprambiente.gov.it/Media/carg/128_VENEZIA_SOTTO/Foglio.html

Pileri, P. (2022). *L’intelligenza del suolo: Piccolo manuale per salvare il suolo e rigenerare l’Italia*. Altreconomia.

Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2017). Soil times. In *Matters of care: Speculative ethics in more than human worlds*. University of Minnesota Press.

Toland, A. R., & Wolter, D. (2023). *Soil art: Sensory and symbolic engagement with soils*. In M. J. Goss & M. A. Oliver (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Soils in the Environment* (2nd ed., Vol. 3, pp. 509-520). Elsevier.

Watkins, M. (2008). Engaging with soil: Past and present. *Environmental Archaeology*, 13(1), 63-76.

Wells, E. C. (2006). *Cultural soils*. Geological Society, London – Special Publications, 266(1), 125-132. doi:10.1144/GSL.SP.2006.266.01.10