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DESIGN STUDIO METHODOLOGY



The Santa Gilla Design Studio was a landscape architecture course organized by the Institute of Landscape Architecture for architecture students of the ETH Zurich, held in collaboration with the Facoltà di Architettura UNICA in Sardinia. Students from both schools could either complete the standard elective course, or they could broaden their studies in landscape architecture in the form of an elective research project. The varying levels of student participation – fluctuating from 7 up to 48 students – as well as the great variety in student expertise regarding the design task at hand, led us to develop a string of intense and interrelated workshops as part of an overall design teaching methodology. Three main working phases were established: the first involved preparation workshops, the second an on-site workshop and the third a design proposal workshop. The first phase had the primary goal of acquainting the 13 ETH students with the island of Sardinia as well as the historical context of the site itself. At the

same time the intention was to raise the students' awareness of the design potential for the Santa Gilla waterscape. These preliminary tutorials prepared the students for the workshop in Cagliari, the second and main phase of the design studio. In Cagliari, the 13 students from the ETH mixed with 35 students from Italy and formed 6 different teams. The introductory seminar day and the site visit were followed by an intense design workshop, which concluded in the presentation of 6 different design proposals for Santa Gilla. Back in Zurich an overview was conducted of the work done on site. This offered a point of closure on the one hand and a starting point for the third phase. In the last workshop, 7 highly dedicated and motivated students were able to develop one common design proposal and a complete documentation of the design argumentation and proposal itself.

Preparation Workshops

The preparation workshops, held in Zurich on two Saturdays, introduced the students to the site through a series of analyses, map reading exercises, and intuitive conceptual designs.

Santa Gilla On-Site Workshop

The on-site workshop consisted of acquiring supplementary knowledge of the site through various lectures and a thorough site visit, serving as an introduction to 6 days of intense group work.

Design Proposal Workshop

With the knowledge acquired on site, 7 students pushed the brief one step further, working on a single design proposal over a 2-week period.

WORKSHOP 1  
History of the Site

WORKSHOP 2  
Water Landscape

WORKSHOP 3  
Santa Gilla

WORKSHOP 4  
Design Proposal

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