

Bent!

Naval construction/
Urban spectacle

Workshop for architects and
architecture students

25th to 28th of November

"Bent" attempts to bring back ship building into the city under the form of an architectural experiment: bending wood into an inhabitable structure, reminiscent of naval craft, that creates a dialogue between the medieval urban fabric of Genoa and its historically innovative attitude towards boat making. An architectural workshop as a historical and cultural experiment unfolded in 3 actions: link, construct and inhabit.

Directed by Edouard Cabay and
Margherita Del Grosso

in collaboration with
Manuel Gausa, DSA
Department of Architectural
Science, Genova University,
polytechnic school

Curated by



Promoted by



With the patronage of



Sponsored by



Technical partner



Media partners



Media supporter



BENT!
NAVAL CONSTRUCTION / URBAN SPECTACLE

“BENT” ATTEMPTS TO BRING BACK SHIP BUILDING INTO THE CITY UNDER THE FORM OF AN ARCHITECTURAL EXPERIMENT: BENDING WOOD INTO AN INHABITABLE STRUCTURE, REMINISCENT OF NAVAL CRAFT, THAT CREATES A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE MEDIEVAL URBAN FABRIC OF GENOA AND ITS HISTORICALLY NOVATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS BOAT MAKING. AN ARCHITECTURAL WORKSHOP AS A HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIMENT UNFOLDED IN 3 ACTIONS: LINK, CONSTRUCT AND INHABIT.

LINK

The city: matter between land and sea

Genoa is a city articulated along the coastline, it has constructed its urbanism and culture throughout its history on a symbiotic relationship to the shore.

Two environments, seemingly adversaries, here interact with one another, the limit between the city and the sea is not the one of the common shoreline one that clearly demarcates a shift, highlighting an edge between two realities. Here the line is blurred, both geographically and culturally, Genoa is both land and sea, urban and marine. In Genoa, the architecture is either static, strong, mineral and rectilinear, as in its historical urban fabric; or light, dynamic, wooden and curved, as in its naval counterpart.

In this context, the vessel itself is an architectural dispositive that enables spatial occupation on the surface of the sea; it has been the object of relentless technological research and innovation and discoveries.

Traditionally both its making and its use have driven the activity of Genoa and, indirectly, shaped the quality of its inner urban space. Aren't the ship and its construction, both as space and event, the cultural aspect that most strongly questions the ambiguous relationship between land and sea?

Once deployed along its coastline, shipyards have been here driving the economy, the knowledge and the culture of the city. Shipbuilding has for centuries been embedded within the city fabric regulating its life; the streets smelled of wood, the hammers of the carpenter's dictated the daily life rhythm, logs would occupy narrow alleys.

Today, after an industrial past in which Genoa has had to turn its back to the sea, the core of Genoa is longer the coast but its inner centre, the morphology of the city has changed and shows signs of ambiguity in how it relates to the shore. Shipbuilding, however, has not disappeared, it is still at the heart of the economy, but its industry has become hidden, the shipyard has become an economic drive and has lost its theatrical quality of urban spectacle, it is now segregated from the urban.

"Bent" as the linking system

The workshop is the occasion to **bring back the sea into the city fabric under the form of a cultural and constructive event**. Rather than bringing the city towards the sea, the construction of an architectural installation reminiscent of naval constructions represents an attempt to bring the sea back into the urban fabric.

CONSTRUCT

The shipbuilding: the historical attitude and “ Il maestro d’ascia”

A ship, because of the complex conditions in which it needs to exist and operate, is a particular or unique construction. It uses materials and techniques, which have been developed and improved over centuries. Today, technologies developed in naval architecture are often used to the construction of buildings on land. The timber of the boat, a thin surface that separates water from air, has two purposes: the hydrostatics (the ability to remain afloat - buoyancy) and hydrodynamics (the flow of water around the ship).

What can we learn from the craft of boat making? What does it mean to bend a wooden profile; are there other ways to work with layering and lamination? How are the techniques and materials used in ship-building useful to construct a physical building within the space of the city?

For this experiment we will work with two distinctive and interwoven systems: primarily a wooden matrix, consisting of an orthogonal assembly of timber studs, it will enable us to construct a volume which will rest or lean on the stones of the city, both streets and buildings. Secondly, on the primary structure a thin curved and porous surface composed of bent timber profiles, assembled as to create a continuous skin reminiscent of the shell of the vessel and the boundary between air and water.

Bending wood implies embedding or storing energy, mastering the force that a material can induce from its own composition, in this case the fibre. We will observe and employ the geometry in which a wooden stripe settles, as in other types of form-finding processes. The fibre of the wood will dictate the shape, and we will take advantage of its bending properties.

INHABIT

Naval architecture towards production of space

What happens when a boat is no longer in the water? What kind of space articulates around its curved surface? What architectural and spatial attributes could such a complex surface induce into a public space? The boat is a device to travel, but essentially, it is being inhabited. It accommodates daily life and most of its necessities, that makes it a spatial dispositive no less complex than the one of a construction on firm land.

techniques of naval craft, to test and explore what architectural qualities it can provide in the public space of Genoa.

The orthogonal timber assembly will mainly help us to strongly and steadily connect to the existing constructed condition of the place, carefully selecting anchor points and designing the accurate details to lean on the century old stones. The curved wooden stripes, individually bent on the structure one next to another will form a surface, continuous or fragmented, opaque or porous to eye and light, enabling a complex game of creating interior and exterior spaces and of which the ergonomic curves will relate directly to the body.

These architectural qualities will let us create a relationship to the public space, and to create an installation which will activate, modify a context, interact and interfere with its users.

The sharing knowledge: A participatory event

Set up as a pedagogical event, the experience will merge students, architects and academicians of both Genoa and abroad into an enterprise of both design and making, transforming the public space into an event space. In the space of 4 days, students will act as designers, builders and artists, and will perform an architectural and naval urban spectacle.

Program

From Wednesday the 25th of November to Saturday the 28th.
The workshop is open to a **maximum of 12 participants**, young architectural graduates and students of architecture.

Organised by: New Generations Festival, Genova

Conducted by architect and educator:
Edouard Cabay and Margherita Del Grosso

With the assistance/participation of:
Sophia Benghebara, Pauline Charles, Dereck Rauback

With collaboration of:
Manuel Gausa, v, DSA, Department of Architectural Science, Genova University, Polytechnic School

Promoted by:
Ordine degli Architetti PPC della Provincia di Genova e la Fondazione Ordine degli Architetti PPC della Provincia di Genova

Location of the workshop:
Historical Center of Genoa, Museo Sant'Agostino e Piazza Negri

Time: from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 14:30 to 18:30

Language: English

Skills: technical and graphic

Fee: 80 euros

Credits: 15 CF for architects

Schedule

Wednesday 25th

Introduction of the workshop and discussion of the given research themes

Thursday 26th and Friday 27th

Development of design installation and construction details; construction of details and prototypes; construction on site

Saturday 28th

Construction on site; opening and final presentation.

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Would you like to participate to “Bent”?

To participate inscribe on iM@teria following the link <https://imateria.awn.it>

The call is open from the 6th to 16th of November.

Participants will be contacted by email from the Monday 16th of November.

Participants: max 12 from architecture and academic field (6 + 6)

MODALITÀ D'ISCRIZIONE e PAGAMENTO: attraverso il portale di iM@teria collegandosi al link <https://imateria.awn.it>

Iscrizioni aperte dal 06 novembre al 16 novembre 2015