

Intermediate 15

Unit Master
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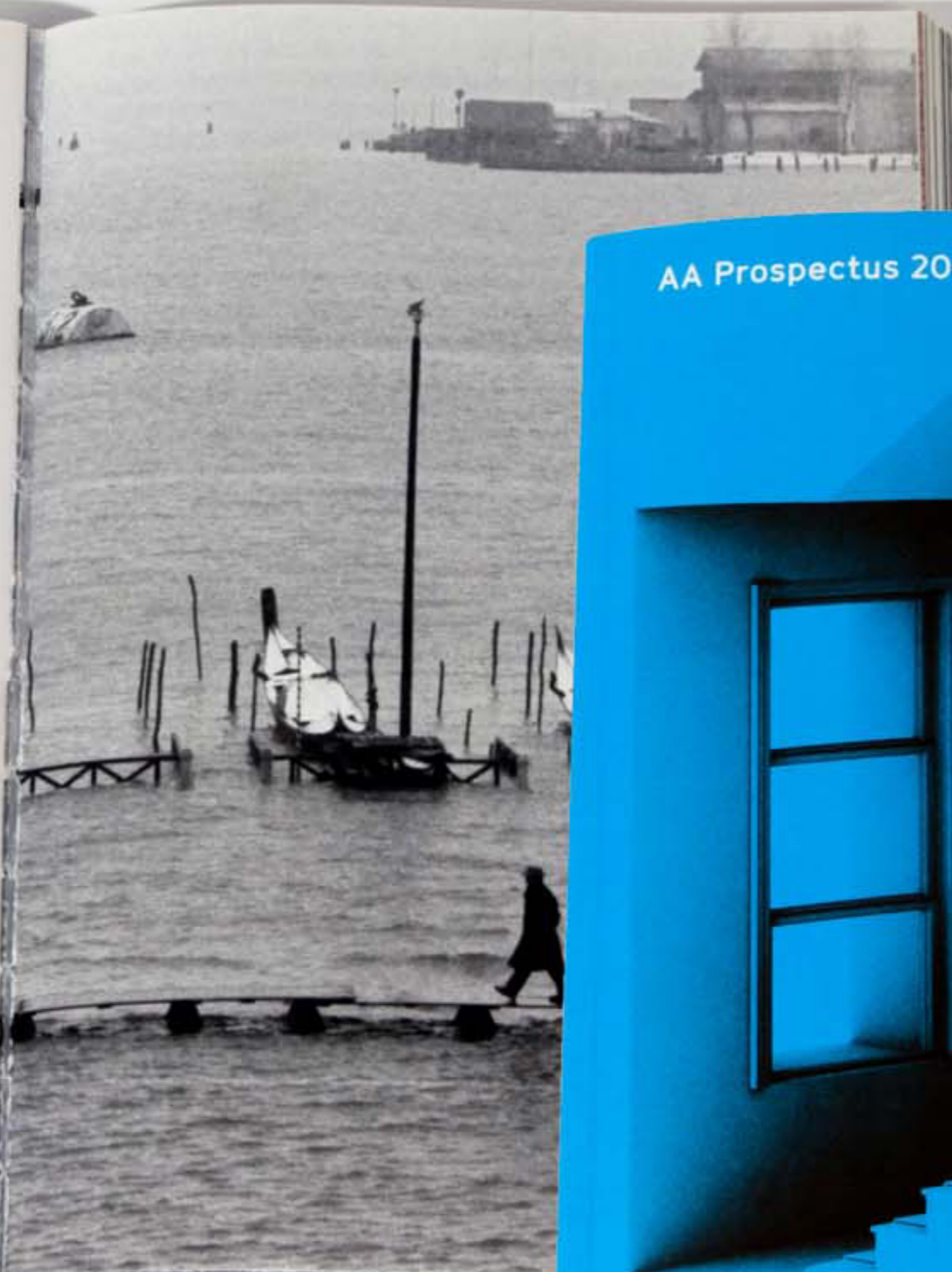
Giulia Foscarini is an architect, author and curator. Since her graduation from Rome University (MArch honours) and her DRG MArch degree at the AA she has lived and worked in Asia and Latin America. After collaborating with Zaha Hadid Architects and Foster + Partners, in 2009 she joined OMA, at first working in Hong Kong then running an OMA/AMO platform based in Buenos Aires. In parallel, she taught for four years at Hong Kong University, wrote and guest-edited articles, worked on curatorial projects for various editions of the Venice Biennale of Architecture, and, as member of Koolhaas' curatorial team for Fundamentals, she authored *Elements of Venice*. Having returned to Europe, she is now opening her own architecture office.

Elena Longhin is a practising architect and researcher. She received her MArch in 2011 from the IUAV of Venice and is currently completing her graduate studies in Landscape Urbanism at the AA. She has worked throughout Europe and South America with several practices such as Studio012 Secchi-Viganò and OMA. Her recent work includes a collaboration with Rem Koolhaas and Giulia Foscarini on the publication of *Elements of Venice* and participation in the Fundamentals 14th Venice Biennale.

Venice conceals a fundamental paradox that might undermine its very existence if it is not urgently unveiled: while the city's much admired architectures and island archipelago are condemned to a stringent preservation policy, its lagoon (no longer governed by the city council) is undergoing a tremendous transformation that could lead to the physical and moral destruction of the city itself.

With a surface area of over 550km², the Venetian lagoon has been modelled by man for centuries to respond to varying political and economic agendas, and to empirically regulate the delicate ecology of such an amphibious environment. However, while originally the state's interest coincided with the development of the city, after the fall of the Republic, Venice and its lagoon were gradually regarded and governed as distinct entities. Recently, the consequences of this paradigm shift have become evident as the perilous future of Venice is regularly reported in the international media.

The challenge offered to the students of Intermediate 15 is to produce much needed and uncensored research on the Venice lagoon. Critical analyses, mapping, models and visualisations of the problems that constitute the status quo will lead to a 'project on the city' of Venice. In analysing the metamorphosis of the lagoon, students will not only appreciate the extent of the reclamations which occurred over time to form today's Venice archipelago, but will also be asked to work on the two boundaries of the lagoon now in dire need of concrete proposals. Instead of isolating the discussion of Venice's 'high water phenomenon' and rising sea levels to the water management projects located on the Adriatic boundary (including the MOSE project), students will be asked to examine the effects of the mainland's port infrastructures on the lagoon ecosystem. Such projects include the petro-chemical port of Marghera, the general cargo port, the Venice airport and the passenger terminal.



Detail of a reproduction of Acqua Alta, Berengo Garden

AA Prospectus 2015-16

