

PERMESSO

FOR GENOVA

“The Genoese particularly know their city but are not ready to share its secrets. Only whom they see as trustworthy, they are ready to entrust their stories.”

- Natasha Pyataeva

CONTENTS

1

2

4

13

24

35

45

67

107

113

117

119

‘Permesso’ is a film that started as a personal investigation into my relationship with Genoa. As I met different inhabitants, characters of the city, I gradually realized that I saw myself in them. Their reciprocal understanding of a city, similar to a human relationship, resonated with my understanding of what, against any movement of globalization, characterizes a city and its identity, and the way its history and culture impacts a locally specific domesticity.

From an intuition, I chose to use film as a process to identify, isolate and develop the causes of this personal echo, as an attempt to find the universal resonance within them.

The film argues that only by enabling ourselves to regain a position within the inside, can we tackle the complex intersecting impetus defining and refining the character of a city. Hence, as a reaction in constant transformation, this observation from an absolutely “present” position also prevents a romanticized, nostalgic standpoint.

One old Genoese once told me that one
only becomes part of this urban society if
one gets invited home.

So, I asked for 'permesso'.

OLGA



**“Genoa has two faces, one facing the mountains,
the other one facing the sea.**



It abounds in the strangest contrasts;



things that are picturesque, ugly, mean,
magnificent,



delightful



and offensive.



It is a city of darkness and lightness, balanced
between two forces, with one escape, the sky."



MARGHERITA



“For the last 10 years

I have lived in a double relationship with my city.



After doing an exchange Semester in America, I started to realize that there was an entire world outside of these walls.



I became polemic with the Genoese way of living,



torn between the love for my heritage;



my family



and the stagnant mentality of this city.



The city that has no space for recreation. I left.
Waiting.”



CATE



I see Genoa as a foster mother, that I am now fighting with.



I feel left alone by her,



through the lack of connections,



opportunities and financial stability.



I ask myself, if I decide to leave,



is it to escape the walls of my home,



the city



or myself?



NATASHA



"I found the shelter of my rebellious soul for a certain period of time. Disappointed by certain ideas of life formed throughout life in Russia.

Genoa became my hope.



She gave me shelter,



accepted me,

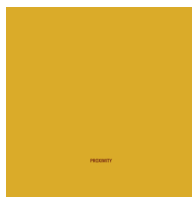


didn't abandon me in a time of most vulnerability.



Home is a place of belonging. It's a twinge in my heart."





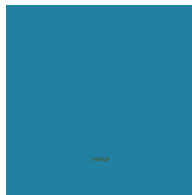
1

Sound: Inside moving train

Time: 2"

Movement: No

Reference: Proximity = the Plain + the narration;
as with each character the proximity is getting closer



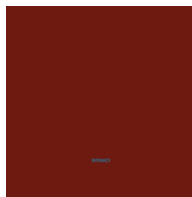
2

Sound: Inside moving train

Time: 2"

Movement: No

Reference: Privacy = the Seaside + precious in
cities; only chosen once will know muchh about you



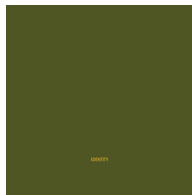
3

Sound: Inside moving train

Time: 2"

Movement: No

Reference: Intimacy = the Highway System + what
lies beyond a facade; architecturally and humanly



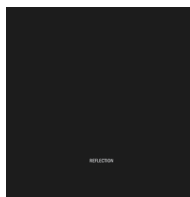
4

Sound: Inside moving train

Time: 2"

Movement: No

Reference: Identity = the Foothills + affective
bond between people and place

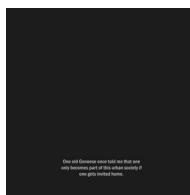


5

Sound: Inside moving train

Time: 3"09"

Movement: No



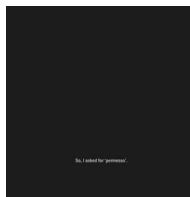
6

Sound: Inside moving train

Time: 9"02"

Movement: No

Reference: How can we get access to a city from
the inside?



7

Sound: Inside moving train, Rain on window

Time: 3"15"

Movement: No



8

Sound: Inside moving train, Rain on window,
Waves crashing on shore

Time: 5"

Movement: No

Reference: Yellow; air, the plain, proximity



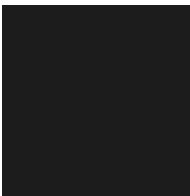
9

Sound: Inside moving train, Rain on window,
Waves crashing on shore
Time: 5"
Movement: No
Reference: Yellow; air, sanguine, Olga



10

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea
Time: 14"19"
Movement: Yes, Level 3
Reference: Genoa is a mountain city on the
Mediterranean, cramped and vertical



11

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea
Time: 4"05"
Movement: No



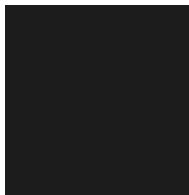
12

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea
Time: 8"19"
Movement: Yes, Level 6
Reference: Genoa had a long history of trading
with the Middle East



13

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea
Time: 15"
Movement: Yes, Level 2
Reference: Trade, shipbuilding, and banking
helped Genoa to become a powerful navie



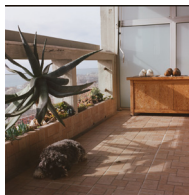
14

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea
Time: 3"
Movement: No



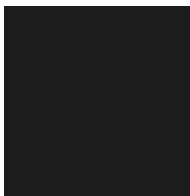
15

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Heavy rain
Time: 4"14"
Movement: Yes, Level 6
Reference: "Genuensis ergo mercator"but the
Genoese were skilled sailors and warriors



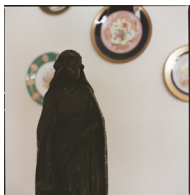
16

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Heavy rain
Time: 5"10"
Movement: Yes, Level 7
Reference: No space for great churches or
squares, with only one means of escape, the sea



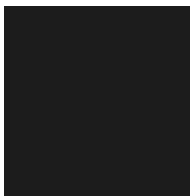
17

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea
Time: 3"04"
Movement: No



18

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Heavy rain, Storm
Time: 17"01"
Movement: Yes, Level 3
Reference: Medieval Genoa was a major player in the slave trade



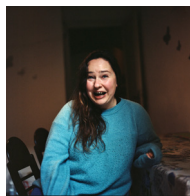
19

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Heavy rain, Storm
Time: 2"
Movement: No



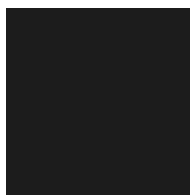
20

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Heavy rain, Storm
Time: 21"07"
Movement: Yes, Level 4
Reference: Female immigrants are changing the face of the work force



21

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Heavy rain, Storm
Time: 15"12"
Movement: Yes, Level 4
Reference: The demographic countertrend in recent years can be attributed to migrant women



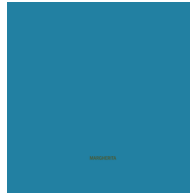
22

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Boat moving
Time: 3"
Movement: No



23

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sailing boat
Time: 5"02"
Movement: No
Reference: Blue; water, the sea side, privacy



24

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sailing boat
Time: 4"22"
Movement: No
Reference: Blue; water, phlegmatic, Margherita



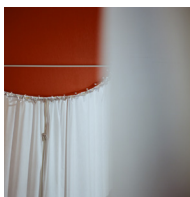
25

Sound: Sailing boat

Time: 16"

Movement: Yes, Level 1

Reference: In their most intrepid period Genoese could be found everywhere from the Crimea to Cadiz



26

Sound: Sailing boat

Time: 8"04"

Movement: Yes, Level 3

Reference: The sea was not accessible to women



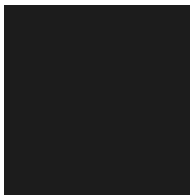
27

Sound: Sailing boat, 8am church bells

Time: 10"

Movement: Yes, Level 2

Reference: Christopher Columbus was Genoese



28

Sound: 8am church bells

Time: 1"16"

Movement: No



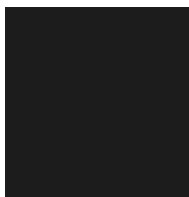
29

Sound: 8am church bells

Time: 15"16"

Movement: Yes, Level 4

Reference: A leitmotiv of Genoese history was arguably secrecy and individualism



30

Sound: 8am church bells

Time: 1"21"

Movement: No



31

Sound: 8am church bells

Time: 8"13"

Movement: Yes, Level 1

Reference: Genoese have a strong family clannishness



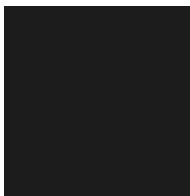
32

Sound: 8am church bells

Time: 6"08"

Movement: Yes, Level 3

Reference: In Genoa, people valued family life but tended not to cooperate well outside the family

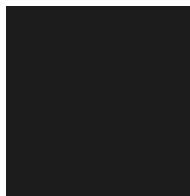


33

Sound: 8am church bells

Time: 2"02"

Movement: No

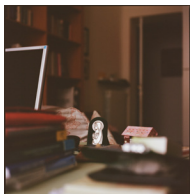


37

Sound: 8am church bells, Church chair moved

Time: 2"

Movement: No



34

Sound: 8am church bells

Time: 5"01"

Movement: Yes, Level 1

Reference: A strong religiosity, especially in old Genoese families



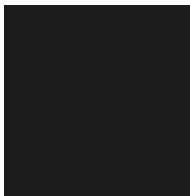
38

Sound: Priest talking during Sunday mass

Time: 18"22"

Movement: Yes, Level 6

Reference: The number of women with a higher school diploma is above the Italian average



35

Sound: 8am church bells, Church chair moved

Time: 2"

Movement: No



39

Sound: Priest talking during Sunday mass

Time: 13"03"

Movement: Yes, Level 6

Reference: Genoese women play a significant role in the population decline



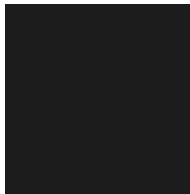
36

Sound: 8am church bells

Time: 8"01"

Movement: Yes, Level 3

Reference: Old Genoese families still have today power in Genoa



40

Sound: Church bells after Sunday mass

Time: 14"09"

Movement: No



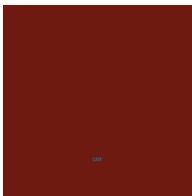
41

Sound: Traditional Genoese elevator

Time: 5"

Movement: No

Reference: Red; fire, the highway system, intimacy



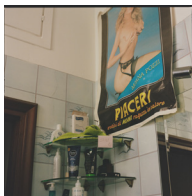
42

Sound: Traditional Genoese elevator

Time: 5"

Movement: No

Reference: Red; fire, choleric; Cate



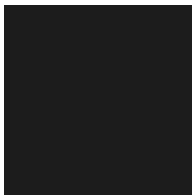
43

Sound: Traditional Genoese elevator

Time: 16"06"

Movement: Yes, Level 6

Reference: There is an increase in the number of co-habitations, especially among young people

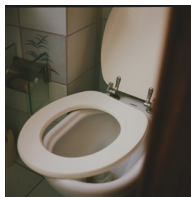


44

Sound: Traditional Genoese elevator

Time: 3"09"

Movement: No



45

Sound: Traditional Genoese elevator

Time: 2"05"

Movement: Yes, Level 6

Reference: Poor management of existing housing is leading to housing isolation and residential segregation



46

Sound: Traditional Genoese elevator

Time: 3"16"

Movement: Yes, Level 6

Reference: New housing has not been built since 2001



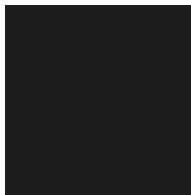
47

Sound: Traditional Genoese elevator

Time: 4"02"

Movement: Yes, Level 5

Reference: The economy is sputtering and the job market is stagnant

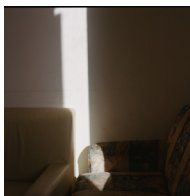


48

Sound: Traditional Genoese elevator, Boiler

Time: 4"

Movement: No



49

Sound: Boiler

Time: 8"12"

Movement: Yes, Level 2

Reference: Italy has the third highest unemployment rate among young European



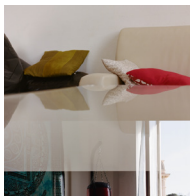
50

Sound: Boiler

Time: 4"

Movement: Yes, Level 2

Reference: The youth unemployment rate is nearly 4 times as high as adult unemployment



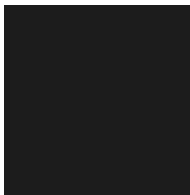
51

Sound: Boiler, Birds in the morning

Time: 3"

Movement: Yes, Level 1

Reference: In Italy, alone in 2017, twenty-five thousand graduate students moved abroad

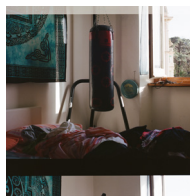


52

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea

Time: 3"

Movement: No



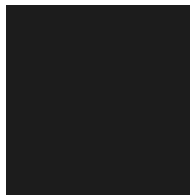
53

Sound: Birds in the morning, Stove fire

Time: 8"

Movement: Yes, Level 3

Reference: Ageing and suburbanization are seen as main causes for population decrease in Genoa



54

Sound: Birds in the morning, Stove fire

Time: 3"

Movement: No



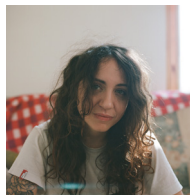
55

Sound: Birds in the morning, Stove fire, Making coffee

Time: 17"19"

Movement: Yes, Level 4

Reference: In Genoa there is an unwillingness to cooperate with one another, especially outside the 'family'



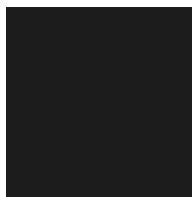
56

Sound: Making coffee, Stove fire, Smoking

Time: 24"17"

Movement: Yes, Level 4

Reference: temporary contracts accounted in 2010 for 50% of the youth in Italy



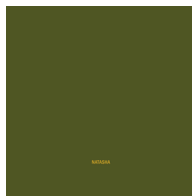
57

Sound: Making coffee, Breath out smoke
Time: 1"01"
Movement: No



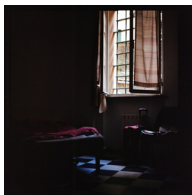
58

Sound: Natasha playing piano
Time: 5"
Movement: No
Reference: Green; earth, the foothills, identity



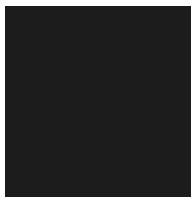
59

Sound: Natasha playing piano
Time: 5"
Movement: No
Reference: Green; earth, melancholic, Natasha



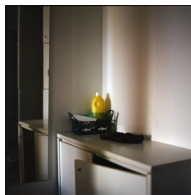
60

Sound: Natasha playing piano, Teacher talking
Time: 14"01"
Movement: Yes, Level 2
Reference: The city's modern name may derive from the god Janus meaning "door" or "passage"



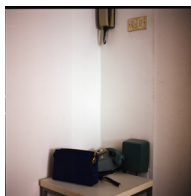
61

Sound: Natasha playing piano, Teacher talking
Time: 3"23"
Movement: No



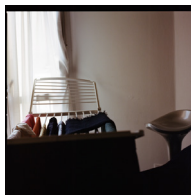
62

Sound: Teacher talking
Time: 3"
Movement: Yes, Level 1
Reference: Genoese cultural was rich and complex, that thrived in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of a great port



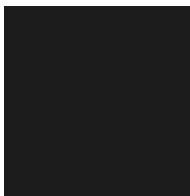
63

Sound: Natasha playing piano, Teacher talking
Time: 3"
Movement: Yes, Level 6
Reference: What Genoese lacked in visual arts they would make up in their vibrant literature



64

Sound: Natasha playing piano in class, Teacher talking
Time: 3"
Movement: Yes, Level 6
Reference: Genoa employed painters but did not produce them

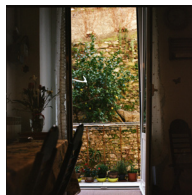


65

Sound: Natasha playing piano

Time: 3"

Movement: No



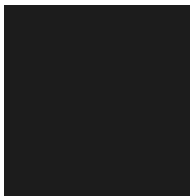
66

Sound: Natasha playing piano

Time: 3"06"

Movement: Yes, Level 3

Reference: Genoese have a propensity to coopt successful or promising newcomers



67

Sound: Natasha playing piano

Time: 1"16"

Movement: No



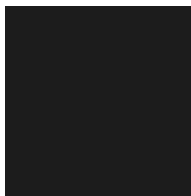
68

Sound: Natasha playing piano

Time: 7"

Movement: Yes, Level 1

Reference: Practical, detailed, eclectic – these are the distinctive traits of the Genoese culture



69

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea

Time: 2"

Movement: No



70

Sound: Natasha playing piano

Time: 17"19"

Movement: Yes, Level 3

Reference: Genoa has left an extraordinary impression on many noted personalities



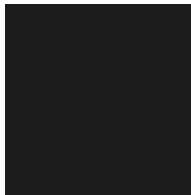
71

Sound: Natasha playing pianos

Time: 24"19"

Movement: Yes, Level 3

Reference: Richard Wagner: "I have never seen anything like this Genoa! it is something indescribably beautiful"

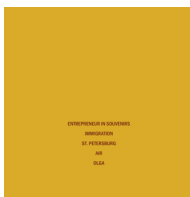


72

Sound: Waves crashing on shore, Sea

Time: 7"

Movement: No



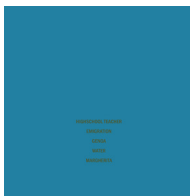
73

Sound: Via Assarotti (street that I lived in)

Time: 7"

Movement: No

Reference: Migrant women are changing the face of the work force



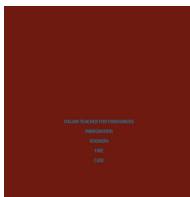
74

Sound: Via Assarotti (street that I lived in)

Time: 7"

Movement: No

Reference: Educated young people are leaving Genoa in search of better opportunities



75

Sound: Via Assarotti (street that I lived in)

Time: 7"

Movement: No

Reference: A growing number of young people are actively trying to reform the city threw cultural events



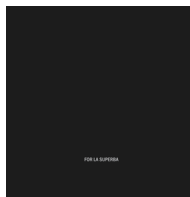
76

Sound: Via Assarotti (street that I lived in)

Time: 7"

Movement: No

Reference: Genoas Universities are trying to attract more foreign students



77

Sound: Via Assarotti (street that I lived in)

Time: 4"

Movement: Yes

Reference: Genoa has been nicknamed la Superba ("the proud one") due to its glorious past

68

72

86

98

4 Elements

Air
Water
Fire
Earth

4 Temperaments

Sanguine (Socially useful)
Phlegmatic (Getting)
Choleric (Ruling)
Melancholic (Avoiding)

4 Ecologies

The Plain
The Seaside
The Highway System
The Foothills

(Inspired by 'Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies' by
Reyner Banham)

4 Portraits

Olga Novikova
Margherita Musso Piantelli
Caterina Re
Natalia Pyataeva



Air

Temperament: Sanguine (Socially useful)

Ecology: The Plain

Reference: This paradoxical mountain city on the Mediterranean, cramped and vertical, with no space for great churches or squares stretches along the coast for about 30 kilometres.



Fire

Temperament: Choleric (Ruling)

Ecology: The Highway System

Reference: Much of the highway system is built on the hillside, with a series of viaducts and tunnels. Strada statale 1 Via Aurelia builds a wall, separating the sea and the city.



Water

Temperament: Phlegmatic (Getting)

Ecology: The Seaside

Reference: Being a windy city helped Genoa to become a commercial fleet and powerful navy that dominated the Mediterranean for over 100 years, and making its mark for 500 years on the Mediterranean, its territory ebbing South to Piedmont, Sardinia and Corsica, West to Nice, further afield to Greece.



Earth

Temperament: Melancholic (Avoiding)

Ecology: The Foothills

Reference: The different districts of Genoa were developed on different elevations. Since the late 19th century, a system of funiculars and elevators, both public and private, have been in place to ease commuter access.

Why Genoa

For my last film I chose a city that became my home, during the course of one year, while living in it. A word that had no prior meaning to me. Coming from Switzerland, Genoa seemed warm, but for its Italian context, Genoa is famous for being aloof. My last project, not just for this year, but as a conclusion of my architectural education, I wanted to portray a city and its gates that changed the way I perceive a city. It is a personal investigation into a city that became human to me. That left me truly heart broken when I left and kept revisiting both physically as well as in each project at the AA. With the utmost level of intimacy, I wanted to reveal the heart of a city.

The city has an energy I never feel anywhere else. It's in the light, the sound, the smell, and the rhythm; it brings a depth of texture and flavors of its conflictual history. It tells a story. Genova is a city that wants to speak.

Genoa – An overview

This paradoxical mountain city on the Mediterranean, cramped and vertical, with no space for great churches or

squares, had one means of escape (at least for men). The entire sea was a home to the Genoese, and in their most intrepid period they could be found everywhere from the Crimea to Cadiz.

Genoa led in the rise of capitalism, slavery, colonization in the Middle Ages and international public finance in the 16th century. In this last century Genoa was a strong early center of fascism and later communism.

Today, Genoa's population is aging and dwindling. Jobs are scarce and cargo volumes passing through its historic port are a fraction of what northern European peers handle. Police shot and killed a protester during violent clashes in the 2001 G-8 summit, leaving the image of a chaotic city in flames. Mudlines surged down the overdeveloped hillsides in 2011, killing six, and flash floods followed three years later, angering residents as rescue and coordination was mishandled. At one point in 2017, the city was so overrun by wild boards that authorities invited Genoese to shoot them. On August 14th 2019, within minutes, the Morandi bridge

Genoese characteristics

collapsed, killing 43 people and splitting the city in half. ^{1,2}

Liguria is arguably the most isolated region of Italy, along with Sicily and Sardinia. The Genoese tend to go their own way – in their view, ahead of their fellow Italians, to whom this simply confirms the reputation of the Genoese for being arrogant and aloof people. Still today the leading port of Italy, Genoa remains its cool indifference to outsiders, be they Asian or Africans, Sicilians, or people from nearby Milan.

There seem to be four themes of Genoese history:

1. A strong religiosity that brooked no church interference in practical affairs
2. Irrepressible individualism
3. Family clannishness
4. A propensity to coopt successful or promising newcomers

This spirit of individualism in Genoa manifests itself most clearly in the unwillingness of the Genoese to

cooperate with one another. Just as the city frequently found itself without allies, individual Genoese, while loving their hometown, often expected to make their own way in the world.³

Genoese culture

Practical, detailed, eclectic – these are the distinctive traits of the Genoese culture.

Genoese culture was mercantile, its richest citizens were merchants, and the business of the city was trade. Thousands of men had seen the rest of the world.

Much of Genoa's distinctive painting appeared in frescoes on the faces of palaces. This common style of exterior decoration was popular in the Quattrocento, but almost no example has survived. Thus between the coastal weather attacking the frescoes and the vicissitudes of war from the sixteenth century forward. Any look at Genoese art should begin by taking stock of how war and urban renewal have buffeted the city's buildings and their contents;⁴

Genoa Name

- On 30th-31st May 1522 an imperial army sacked Genoa
 - In 1684 Louis XIV's fleet bombarded Genoa
 - During World War II naval and especially aerial attacks by the Allies damaged or destroyed many villas, palaces and churches
 - Urban clearing for the new places of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries
 - The great building boom of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, while planned, also destroyed many buildings and entire neighborhoods, changing the city's face.
- The city's modern name may derive from the Latin word meaning "knee" (genu; plural, genua) but there are other theories. It could derive from the god Janus, because Genoa, like him, has two faces: a face that looks at the sea and another turned to the mountains. Or it could come from the Latin word *ianua*, also related to the name of the God Janus, and meaning "door" or "passage."⁵

Housing

Genoa housing is characterized by two main factors: ⁵

- low investment in the construction of new houses
- poor management of the existing housing spaces, leading to housing isolation and residential segregation

Genoa in 2008, of which 280,095 were vacant (90%). It is harder to get an estimate of the noninhabited houses, but one can get some idea by considering that the Tax Register data shows in 2007 104.403 houses had not been inhabited for at least two years. Therefore, new housing has not been built since 2001.

- 35.12% of the housing in Genoa is occupied by single people
- 31.91% is occupied by two people.

Genoa's case clearly shows that depopulation does not necessarily lead to oversupply of housing. The joint effect of rise in the number of families and high stock of owned houses, can lead to an underusage of the housing stock and to rigidity of the supply.

Migration

During the fifties and sixties the migration rate was extremely positive because migration from other regions of northern Italy came in addition to the population movement from southern Italy. When the economic situation of Genoa's labour market became worse in comparison to other northern metropolis, migration from the south stopped. Genoa became an economy strongly concentrated on tertiary activities, with a strong presence of the public sector and various sorts of consumer services. Part of these tertiary activities were in the form of jobs in qualified productive services directed at the recovery of the port economy. These new jobs were precluded to migrants, who have instead been employed in the various consumer services, also in growth during the same period.

Migrant women

Although the nationality variable is not available, the correspondence between rising employment and the increased proportion of foreign women among the residents leads one to suppose that most of the employment rise is due to migrant

women prevalently employed in care services for elderly people, or in workingclass services jobs.

It is particularly interesting to underline this point, because essentially the whole demographic countertrend seen during recent years can be attributed to migrant women.⁶

Population Decline

⁷ Three factors are usually identified as causes of shrinkage; demographic reasons, external migration connected to economic trends and settlement patterns. In Genoa these three factors are present in different combinations at different times.

Three factors are usually identified as causes of shrinkage;

- demographic reasons
- external migration connected to economic trends
- settlement patterns

In Genoa these three factors are present in different combinations at different times.

Overview for population decline:

- Negative natural balance and low fertility index (especially due to the reproductive behavior of Genoese women)
- Maternity in later age (Maternity in later age)
- Family instability (high percentage of marriages break up)
- Progressive ageing of the population
- Improvement of the migratory movement thanks to the migration from the third world and south America migration since the 1990s
- High percentage of inhabitants, especially over 65 moving out of the city center either to go back to the place of origin or to move in the province.

Since 2004 the young age of migrants and the female element (see Migrant women) has exceeded the male one and have had positive effects on the natural balance in terms of birth rates.

Port of Genoa

The port of Genoa has always enjoyed the advantage of being the best and most convenient point for the arrival for the raw materials necessary for great manufacturing industry of northern Italy.

Since the 1970s there was a shift in the flow of world trade towards Northern Europe. Railways connections from the Netherlands to Northern Italy and Switzerland made it more convenient for many commodities to avoid Genoa completely.

Women

In the past there was a stark division of labor between men and woman. On the fringes of the maritime economy some woman worked in the trades that prepared provisions for ships or the cotton for the canvas sails. But the sea, which granted so many chances for Genoese men to make their way in the world, must have struck many woman, seeing and smelling it every day, as the walls of a prison, a wall even more impassable than the mountains to the north. Working woman particularly domestic servants, had to compete with slaves (which were a big part of Genoa's rise as

an economic power) as over 80% of the slaves were female.⁸

Today for reasons that are difficult to identify, Genoa shows a greater family instability and a different degree of freedom for women, compared to other Italian cities. Since the 19th century Genoese women arrived later at marriage and a higher proportion of them remained unmarried. Data also shows not only a low number of marriages (coexisting with an increase in the number of co-habitations, especially among young couples), but also the high percentage of separations and divorces out of the total number of marriages. This female biographical cycle has obvious implications on reproductive performance.⁹

The point is that greater autonomy for women was not necessarily assisted by a greater presence in the labor market. What is certain is that the number of women with a higher school diploma is above the Italian average.

A higher level of modernization, in

some way connected with a solid urban environment, may have been a basic factor for Genoese women's condition. Other cultural influences could be also be attributed to the proximity of enlightened metropolitan France, or to the historical role of a port city enjoying the presence of visitors from different continents. Women with a marked sense of autonomy, but with little chance of employment on the labor market are more likely to delay their first child.¹⁰

Analogue Photography

Analogue photography slows down my perception of time. It allowed me to fully focus on the subjects, both space and human, rather than 'hunting' for the right moment while trying to be present in the ongoing conversation with the subject. As the end result won't be revealed till later in the process, it allows both the filmmaker as well as the subjects to concentrate on the conversations rather than being occupied by the performance and the end result. It allows both parties to be present in the moment.

Direct observation

Direct observation at a 1:1 scale aims to produce a personal analysis resulting from an embodied experience in order to deeply root thought and practice of the architect in a concrete and immediate relation to the urban environment.

"By changing the scale of observation from a conceptual and global approach to precise and concrete situations, the city will turn out to be made not of flows and masses but of individuals, relationships and emotions, revealing how strongly political the urban space is and how much it determines and conditions our lives." ¹¹

Geography of emotions

“The meaning of relational (cognitive) space is that space and place are intrinsic parts of our being in the world – defined and measured in terms of the nature and degree of people’s values, feelings, beliefs, and perceptions about locations, districts, and regions.”

Yi-Fu Tuan’s idea is that place is an emotional bounded area, often the dwelling-place, to which an individual or a group has a strong emotional relationship. I focus on two aspects of Geography of emotions;¹²

- Topophilia:
describing the affective bond between people and place
- Identity:
the sense that people make of themselves through their subjective feelings based on their everyday experiences and wider social relations

Human

Genoa is not a typical Italian city that is open to visitors. It’s hard to get invited to someone’s personal space, which is in fact the reflection of their souls, which in reality is the soul of the city.

Once you’ll finally make it through the doorstep, inside, there are different degrees of privacy. The place to really talk, open up, is the kitchen and the living room. Only there I could collect the thoughts of the city.

In the center of this unit lies the human. The human in relationship with a city, with another human and oneself.

Interview

Nell Dunn’s Book ‘Talking to Woman’ published in 1964, inspired me in the way I framed my conversations with the four women in the film. Her approach was firsthand observation, recording and transcribing her conversations, in the homes of 9 friends, over a bottle of wine about sex, work, money, babies, freedom and love. In order to get something, one

Home

One old Genoese once told me that one only becomes part of this urban society if one gets invited home. So, I asked for ‘permesso’.

	<p>has to give. In the context of the text written for the film, a combination of letters and information gathered through conversations, I had to open up on an intermittent level. The themes were; work, family, money, home, future, freedom and love. Love for Genoa.</p>	Medium Format Camera	<p>The medium camera demands time and focus. It forces the person behind the lens to imagine the finished image in his or her own mind before even taking out the camera. The limitation of the 12 frames per film became my self-imposed limit for each person I visited and interviewed.</p>
Intimacy	<p>Intimacy in this film is the distance between me and the subject. Physically and mentally.</p>		<p>I found that the Hasselblad was the least intrusive medium of documentation. The tool, the camera, asks to be looked in from above and allows therefore a perfect horizontal line between eye and lens when the subject is seated. As the process of taking an image takes time, the subject starts to relax, and a dynamic appears where one can talk to the subject eye to eye while waiting for the right moment.</p>
Interior	<p>The interior represents both the physical as well the mental space of both the city and its inhabitants. It is also a reflection of the history of a city.</p>		
Language of Observation	<p>The combination of photos, sound, text and time are the key elements of this film in translating my personal observation into a readable language. One that is aiming to reach an audience beyond the walls of the AA and the circle of architecture. A language that aims to democratize the discourse of architecture and asks for deliberation.</p>	Methodology	<p>The film is mainly based on fieldwork observation, small scale case study approach and an empirical process.</p>
		Microhistory	<p>Microhistory can bring to light the experiences of everyday people in big, well known historical events, sometimes</p>

in ways that challenge the common wisdom.

It sets up an investigation around singular, unique objects, not patterns or “cases.” ¹³

National Identity

Montserrat Guibernau sees national identity as composed of five key elements: ¹⁴

- Psychological: consciousness of forming a community
- Cultural: sharing a common culture
- Territorial: attachment to a clearly demarcated territory
- Historical: possessing a common past
- Political: claiming the right to rule itself

Nostalgia

The film explores the notion of Nostalgia. Using still images as a reference to how we store memories, emphasized through the lack of voice.

“It’s delicate...but potent. (...) in Greek nostalgia literally means the pain from an old wound. It’s a twinge in your heart. Far more powerful than memory alone.

Presence

This device isn’t a space ship. It’s a time machine. It goes backwards, forwards. It takes us to a place where we ache to go again.” ¹⁵

During the filming process I was asked to fully be present in the moment and actively engage with the subjects. The same is asked from the viewer. The film allows to overcome proximities and gives the rare opportunity to observe a stranger. The potential uncanny comes from the viewer himself, as the subjects are giving their promise.

Privacy

“Privacy is precious in cities. It is indispensable. Perhaps it is precious and indispensable everywhere, but in most places you cannot get it. In small settlements everyone knows your affairs. In the city everyone does not — only those you choose to tell will know much about you.” ¹⁶

Proximity

This film explores the relationship of individuals with their immediate environment and in the way they occupy it. One by one, I got closer to the subject, pushing the boundaries of privacy.

Privacy in combination with Intimacy become the two leading themes for me, recurring in each project. I would like to define 'privacy' in what lies beyond a facade. Both architecturally speaking as well as humanly.

Sound

The sound reflects both the immediate physical environment of the character, each sound taken in close proximity of the individual homes, as well as part of Genoa's History.

Reciprocal

"Reciprocal describes something that's the same on both sides. The word mutual is a near synonym in most uses: reciprocal/mutual friendship, describing, a relationship in which two people feel the same way about each other, or do or give similar things to each other." ¹⁷

It could be seen as the walls of the building/film. The sound also gives an idea of the area of the city, a sense of location.

In chapter 2, the sound comes from the church that is neighboring Margherita's home. The chapter transitions from the sound of the sea to the sound of Sails, represents both the history of Genoese men leaving the city and exploring the world, often not returning home and Margherita's world view changing when she went for 2 months for an exchange to the USA, referencing the Genoese Christopher Columbus.

Reinventing documentary

Allan Sekula in the chapter: "Dismantling modernism, reinventing documentary" of his book of 1984: "Photography against the grain" mentions that photographs should not be treated as privileged objects but as common cultural artifacts, openly bracketing the photographs with language, using texts, sound and rhythm to go beyond the meanings offered by the images themselves. ¹⁸

Who are the women

The women in the film are friends that I met while I was living for a year in Genoa. They were essential people that influenced my perception of the city and inspired the topic of this film. The two elements that link all four with each other is me, and their love for their city.

The fact that the 4 characters are woman is secondary. But as I am myself a woman and needed to explore the emotional connection of the characters with the city and ask therefor very personal questions for hours on end, I found it easier to enter the headspace of my female friends.

The component of friendship is important, as it gave me access not just to their homes but also gave me their trust, needed for an intimate exploration of their most private spheres.

Architecture

The structure of the film can be compared to a building or more precisely to an apartment. It starts with Olga, a text that is descriptive and is representative for a the 'public zone' that could be compared with the 'foyer'. An overlook, a first impression. Margherita's chapter is the 'social zone', the 'dining room', that allows an insight to the interior but keeps a comfortable distance. Cates chapter is the 'personal zone'; the 'living room'. It is a proximity that allows raw emotions to be conveyed. The film ends with Natasha, the 'intimate zone'; 'the bedroom'. A space that only a few selected will have access to.

With each chapter a new door is opened, one that allows the audience deeper into the interior, both metaphorically as well as emotionally.

Beginning and End

I start and end with water, as Genoa's character is dominated from its relationship with the Mediterranean Sea. It is the element that build the city. It is also the one that will determine, in the long term, the faith of this city.

Blacks	Moment of pause and request to remember the previous image in order to prepare the viewer for the new image.		Cross Dissolve: The cut is used mainly for the portraits at the end of each chapter. It signifies the passage of time.
Book vs. Film	<p>For me, the main difference between a book and a film lies in the control the reader/viewer has. In a book the reader decides on the past and duration of each page/image, whereas in a film the director decides for the viewer.</p> <p>A film additionally has the power of sound. It becomes in the case of my film the physical walls of each frame.</p> <p>Through the rhythm and sound of the film, underlined by text, the images become objects accessible by a wider audience.</p> <p>A film allows the images to become common cultural artifacts rather than privileged objects.</p>	Devices	<p>J or L Cut: The L cut is used when an audio from clip A continue when clip B comes in. The J cut is the opposite, where the audio from clip B comes in when we're still seeing clip A. It plays a significant role in indicating that all layers are interwoven with each other in the city and represent not just an individual but a wider community.</p> <p>Blacks Cuts Sound Still Images Text Timing</p>
Colors	<p>Each color represents one element.</p> <p>The colors are taken from details of each chapter.</p>	Editing	Through the editing the narration comes to live. It is the soul of the film, the main element differentiating itself from a book, or even PowerPoint presentation. The editing aims to allow the viewer to feel as he or she would sit in front of each character. Through the images, sound,
Cuts	<p>Hard Cut: The most common cut in this film puts two images together. It evokes a similar language as a PowerPoint presentation.</p>		

	<p>text, timing, cuts and use of a traditional 'subtitle', the film aims to let the viewer imagine the characters to speak to them.</p> <p>In short; the editing aims to create an intimate proximity between viewer and the characters in the film.</p>	<p>Length of photos</p> <p>Factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Length each photo needs to be read - Importance of the photo - Synchronization with sound - Time that the subtitles need to be read <p>The length and editing of the portraits are inspired by La Jetée, a film by Chris Marker that is constructed almost entirely from still photos in which the image rests for 26" when the female lead is introduced in the first minutes of the film, and the BBC series Normal People by Element Pictures that plays with moments of long transitions.</p>
Font	<p>Franklin Gothic is the only font used in this project, referencing amongst other things Yoko Ono and John Lennon's 'The War Is Over!' complain for peace. On December 15, 1969, a series of billboards, leaflets, posters, newspaper ads, and radio announcements were released in 11 cities worldwide with a simple and immediate message: WAR IS OVER! IF YOU WANT IT.</p> <p>It was a common typeface for newspapers throughout the 20th century that, along with the capitalization and exclamation point, gives "WAR IS OVER!" the intended feeling of a breaking news headline.¹⁷</p>	<p>Letters</p> <p>I asked each woman to write me a letter, describing their relationship with Genoa. Specifically, as if she was human, a woman.</p> <p>Love</p> <p>This film is a portrait of love.</p> <p>Photo Essay</p> <p>The film plays with the same techniques as a photo essay. By openly bracketing the photographs with text it allow to go beyond the meanings offered by the images themselves.</p>

Pillars	In Genoa, the four elements; of Water, Earth, Air and Fire stand for the pillars that make the city.	Shaking image	The shaking brings dynamic to the film by tricking the mind in thinking that the photo could indeed be a still frame, and that movement could appear at any moment. Each photo has a different variation of movement.
	Water = Sea Earth = Mountains Air = Humans Fire = Infrastructure	Subtitles	The film uses text in form of subtitles in order to allow the viewer to imagine the words written are being spoken out loud.
Reflection	Reflection references three aspects of the film:	Still Images	Still images represent in this film the way we remember the past. They also allow the viewer to focus on details without being guided.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The city is a reflection of ourselves - The women in the film as a reflection of myself - A reflection of the filmmaking process itself 	Square format	The square format reinforces the concept of a portrait of Genoa.
	Through the editing of the film, I aim to put the viewer into the position of the filmmaker. In the same way I approached the subjects, in a close proximity both physically and emotionally, I ask you, the viewer to listen, to observe, to read with your full attention. Imagine that you are listening to the next 10 to the people, as if they were in front of you.	No Voice Over	The film works with still imagery, written words and sound. The four characters are representatives for a wider range of Genoese society. The goal was to allow the viewer to experience the voices of the individuals in his/her own mind. In the beginning the film treats each character as a local. Just at the very end the film reveals that only one of four is an Genoese.

69	4 Ecologies
69	4 Elements
69	4 Portraits
69	4 Temperaments
99	Architecture
70	Air
87	Analogue Photography
99	Beginning and End
100	Blacks
100	Book vs. Film
100	Colors
100	Cuts
101	Devices
87	Direct observation
71	Earth
101	Editing
71	Fire
102	Font
88	Geography of emotions
73	Genoa – An overview
75	Genoese characteristics
76	Genoese culture
77	Genoa Name
78	Genoese culture

89	Home
78	Housing
88	Human
89	Interview
90	Intimacy
90	Interior
90	Language of Observation
103	Length of photos
103	Letters
103	Love
91	Medium Format Camera
91	Methodology
91	Microhistory
79	Migration
80	Migrant women
92	National Identity
92	Nostalgia
105	No Voice
103	Photo Essay
104	Pillars
80	Population Decline
82	Port of Genoa
93	Presence
93	Privacy
93	Proximity

94	Reciprocal
104	Reflection
94	Reinventing documentary
95	Sound
105	Shaking image
105	Subtitles
105	Still Images
105	Square format
104	Title
70	Water
95	Who are the women
73	Why Genoa
82	Women

- 1 https://www.ufz.de/export/data/400/39020_WP2_report_Genoa.pdf
- 2 <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2019-02-19/this-city-once-ruled-the-mediterranean-now-it-s-eyeing-a-comeback>
- 3 Genoa and the Genoese, 958-1528: 958--1528, Epstein, Steven A., 2001
- 4 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Genoa
- 5 https://www.ufz.de/export/data/400/39020_WP2_report_Genoa.pdf
- 6 https://www.ufz.de/export/data/400/39020_WP2_report_Genoa.pdf
- 7 https://www.ufz.de/export/data/400/39020_WP2_report_Genoa.pdf
- 8 Genoa and the Genoese, 958-1528: 958--1528, Epstein, Steven A., 2001
- 9 https://www.ufz.de/export/data/400/39020_WP2_report_Genoa.pdf
- 10 https://www.ufz.de/export/data/400/39020_WP2_report_Genoa.pdf
- 11 HOMO URBANUS brief, Bêka Ila, Lemoine Louise, Merin Gili, 2019
- 12 Space And Place: The Perspective of Experience, Tuan Yi-Fu, 2001
- 13 <https://sites.duke.edu/microworldslab/what-is-microhistory/>
- 14 The Identity of Nations, Montserrat Guibernau, 2007
- 15 Mad Men, Season 1, Eposide 13
- 16 The Death and Life of Great American Cities, Jacobs Jane, 1961
- 17 <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/reciprocal>
- 16 Photography Against the Grain: Essays and Photo Works, 1973-1983, Allan Sekula, 2016
- 16 <https://fontsinuse.com/uses/1159/war-is-over-if-you-want-it>

This film should be seen both as a standalone piece as well as the beginning of a longer investigation. An opening for a discussion into the idea that only by enabling ourselves to regain the position inside the city, we can tackle the complexity that defines and refines the character of a city.

Making this film has been the most rewarding experience in my architecture education, allowing me to find in this final project a language that I am hoping to push forward long after my time at the AA.

None of this would have been possible without my family that has believed in me during years of struggle and have pushed me to follow my biggest passion next to architecture; photography. I want to especially thank my mom who has bought me my first camera and has ever since been my biggest supporter, Chris Forby for being the first teacher that took my passion seriously and encouraged me to apply to the AA with a focus on my photography, my dad for asking the right questions and allowing me therefor to reflect deeply on my decisions and actions and my grandmother for supporting me all the way.

I want to thank Gad, my best friend and partner who has stood by my side since the beginning of my pursuit of analogue photography, four years ago, and who has since then become my harshest and most sincere critic. I want to thank Quentin

for not just believing in my skills and pushing me to take my work serious but also to move to the medium format, which has enabled not just my photography but my perception of the urban environment.

I'm eternally grateful to my sister who has been my biggest emotional support during self-isolation in the last months of my Masters, allowing me to finish this project with a clear mind and heart. I would also like to thank Lynn, Saif, Aoi, William, Russell, Shaha, Sara, Matthew and Paulina for keeping me virtual company week in and out, never letting me fall into the dark corners of my mind.

To Yoni, Theodora, Vasav and Meaghan who have endlessly offered their time and mind, allowing me to believe in my vision. To Gleb, Kasia, AaroHi, for reading every version of the Introduction repeatedly, allowing me to verbalize the thoughts I believed could only been conveyed through the film itself.

A very special thanks to Ale, Cate, Francesco C., Francesco T., Lorenzo, Margherita, Natasha, Natalia, Olga, Sofia, Valter and Victor for opening me doors to the city that I now call home and offering their time and trust not just during the years of friendship but also for a project that they inspired.

And last but not least I want to thank everyone in Dip 16, making this unit a safe space allowing not just for friendships but partners, critics and inspiration.

