



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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COURSE OF

Architecture Construction City

*Abstract*

**The Airbnb phenomenon and contemporary living**

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*by*

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The growth and global diffusion of the short-term rental platform Airbnb implies a strong impact on the urban and territorial level, determining threats and opportunities. The thesis aims to analyse the phenomenon by identifying which role the architect could have to solve, through an architectural artefact, some of the controversies related to it. The discussion is therefore subdivided into three parts: a first part of a socio-economic framework useful to contextualize the phenomenon in a wider system, a second one that specifically analyses the *Airbnb* portal, leader within its economic sector, whose positive effects and criticalities are identified, and finally a third one that includes both the meta-design study and the design. The first two sections are instrumental to the third, constituting the cognitive prerequisite and guaranteeing its consistency. The project site is in Marghera, Venice, in a plot currently on sale near the Venezia Mestre station, an area affected by a ten-year plan of both infrastructural and architectural interventions related to tourism. Venice is a reality particularly affected by the tourist pressure, so much so that the historical centre can be perceived as museified and unliveable, leading to a massive exodus of residents. The theme is therefore placed into a context where the urgency of an intervention is presented. The design idea arises from the rethinking of two use destinations such as accommodation and housing, whose standards are often obsolete compared to contemporary requests and habits. These are hybridized with each other and with other services in a multifunctional cluster whose compositional principles are able to maximize the paradigms of temporality, flexibility and the experiential component, themes that characterize the success of *Airbnb*, as well as the trends of contemporary living. The proposal is therefore that of a dense and hybrid residential project, which, thanks to an appropriate management scheme, can concentrate and control, normalizing it, the phenomenon of short-term rentals, without denying the fundamental principle of mix with residents and, consequently, the opportunity of meeting between the visitor and the inhabitant of the place. At the same time, the architectural device conceived is a tool to redevelop the district facing the station, now highly degraded, acting critically to avoid the risk of gentrification of the area.

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