

Cruising Pavilion
16th Venice Architecture Biennale
24 May - 1 July 2018

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Cruising usually describes the quest for sexual encounters between homosexual men in public spaces, but it cannot be reduced to neither men nor homos. This sexual practice generally takes place in public sites like parks, toilets, and parking lots, or in dedicated establishments like bathhouses and sex clubs.

From the 19th century Vauxhall pleasure gardens in London to the 80's Mineshaft BDSM club in New York, the Cruising Pavilion looks at the conflictual architecture of cruising. Somewhere between anti-architecture and vernacular, the spatial and aesthetic logic of cruising is inseparable from the one of the proper metropolis. Cruising is the illegitimate child of hygienist morality. Relegated to the realm of depravity, it feeds off its most structuring disciplinary features. In the bathrooms built for cleanliness and the parks made for peacefulness, and also through the figures of the policeman and the flâneur, the modern city is cruised, dismantled and made into a drag of itself. The dungeon becomes playful, the labyrinth protective, and the baths erotic. If "architectural discourse is a deodorizer", then cruising is the powerful human smell that haunts the dreams of Jean Genet.

The historical model of cruising is evolving and perhaps even dying. The contemporary combination of Grindr, urban development and the commodification of LGBT culture has emptied established cruising grounds and replaced gay bars with condos. Geosocial apps have generated a new psychosexual geography spreading across a vast architectonic of digitally interconnected bedrooms, thus disrupting the intersectional idealism that was at play in former versions of cruising. Today, class, race and gender might be as regulated by the erotic surface of the screen as the architecture of the city.

By featuring contributions from artists and architects, the Cruising Pavilion wishes to highlight the failure to consider *Freespace* as defined by this edition of the Venice Architecture Biennale, without questioning the hetero-normative production of space itself. Architecture is a sexual practice and cruising is one of the most crucial acts of dissidence.

The Cruising Pavilion is a project curated by Pierre-Alexandre Mateos, Rasmus Myrup, Octave Perrault and Charles Teyssou that will take place at Spazio Punch in Venice, Italy from the 24th May to 1st July, during the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale. It is produced in collaboration with Spazio Punch.

Since 2011, Spazio Punch is a non-profit Venetian organization on the Giudecca Island that promotes contemporary culture through events, exhibitions and talks.

For more information:

cruisingpavilion.com

[@cruisingpavilion](https://www.twitter.com/cruisingpavilion)

spaziopunch.com

Address:

Spazio Punch, Giudecca 800/o, Venezia 30133, Italia

Opening hours:

25th May - 1st July, from Tuesday to Sunday, 2-7pm.

Official opening reception: Thursday May 24th from 2-4pm.

Special event at the Cruising Bar Friday 25th May between 7-12pm.

(*) *West Side Club* font by Carlos Reyes on page 1.

Cruising Pavilion manifesto

The Cruising Pavilion made a few urgent revisions to the manifesto on “Freespace” made by the curators of the 16th International Architecture Exhibition, Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara:

CRUISING FREESPACE describes a generosity of spirit and a sense of humanity at the core of architecture’s agenda, focusing on the quality of architecture itself.

CRUISING FREESPACE focuses on architecture ability to provide free and additional spatial gifts to those who use it and on its ability to address the unspoken wishes of strangers.

CRUISING FREESPACE celebrates architecture capacity to find additional and unexpected generosity in each project – even within the most private, defensive, exclusive or commercially restricted conditions.

CRUISING FREESPACE provides the opportunity to emphasise nature’s free gifts of light - sunlight and moonlight, air, gravity, materials - natural and man-made resources.

CRUISING FREESPACE encourages reviewing ways of thinking, new ways of seeing the world, of inventing solutions where architecture provides for the well being and dignity of each citizen of this fragile planet.

CRUISING FREESPACE can be a space for opportunity, a democratic space, un-programmed and free for uses not yet conceived. There is an exchange between people and buildings that happens, even if not intended or designed, so buildings themselves find ways of sharing and engaging with people over time, long after the architect has left the scene. Architecture has an active as well as a passive life.

CRUISING FREESPACE encompasses freedom to imagine, the free space of time and memory, binding past, present and future together, building on inherited cultural layers, weaving the archaic with the contemporary.





