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## Mapping Venice

Our Playmap began as a personal and intuitive way of navigating Venice, guided by our own experiences rather than fixed routes or landmarks. It highlights places we encountered as sites of play, interaction, and spatial appropriation, discovered through movement driven by curiosity and spontaneous engagement. Play served as both method and lens, a tool to explore public space through gestures that revealed resistance, openness, and connection. We didn't search by category but followed everyday activity: children drawing on pavement, people fishing from

windows, workers kicking balls with passersby. These moments became clues for spaces where shared life emerged. In some places, we initiated our own forms of play—planned or improvised—to test how such actions might shift dynamics or invite others in. From crowded tourist zones to quiet residential corners, we used play to observe, question, and reimagine the city.



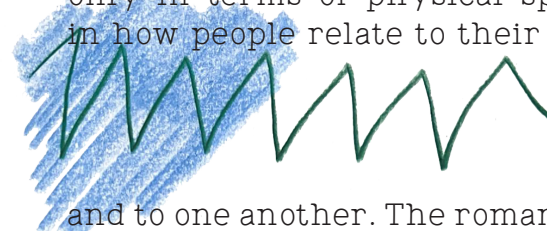
Rather than offering a tourist itinerary, the Playmap functions as a poetic archive, a collection of impressions, encounters, and possibilities. It proposes a different way of seeing Venice: as a living, negotiable space open to playful disruption and collective imagination.

As this Playmap illustrates our personal experience, we encourage you to explore your own ways to roam through this unique city and create your personal way to interact with its structures, building connections and friendships through playful interactions. It's your turn to resist!



## Introducing Venice

Venice is one of the most unique and beautiful cities in the world. When you think of Venice, you immediately picture romantic scenes: gondolas gliding through canals, golden light reflecting off the water, quiet alleys, and detailed architecture with a rich past. But what defines the city's current reality is very different. Overtourism, restriction of movement, control of the city, neglect of the inhabitants, alienation, reduction of rights. These forces have transformed everyday life in Venice, not only in terms of physical space, but also in how people relate to their environment



and to one another. The romantic narrative collapses under the weight of policies and pressures that prioritize spectacle over liveability.

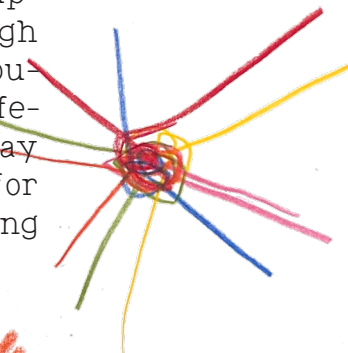
Our project explores ways to reclaim space within the city through playful and participatory means. Rather than proposing a generic intervention, we aim to create a space of exception—a temporary interruption of the dominant structures. Through the act of public playing, we want to encourage more interaction between the different participants of the Venetian everyday life. We see Public Play Spaces as tools for building social connections while claiming



Orologio Game, Burano 2025

back the space.

This form of public play becomes both an artistic and research method. It helps to make visible the restrictions in public space, encourages exploration of cultural and social differences across the neighbourhoods and islands of the Venetian landscape, and creates playful moments



Play Braid, Linz 2024

of exchange. Above all, it acts as a playful expression against the repression that increasingly shape the urban experience in Venice.





## Restricting Venice

Welcome to Venice! Did you pay your 10€ Access Fee already? Great, then you're ready to enter. Now, how do we navigate through this beautiful, unique city? Before we start, there are some things you must know. If we want to stay here, there are some rules we all must follow:

1. do not eat or drink

3. do NOT throw or leave litter on the street

5. do not feed pigeons or seagulls

\* do not camp or sleep outdoors

Oh, you think that's all? No, there are way more rules, but we don't want to bore you already. So here are only a few of the other ones:

It is forbidden to shake, beat, or dust clothes, rugs, mattresses, or similar items on public streets or from windows and balconies. But no worries, just put your alarm to 7am, it's allowed at that time, until 9am. During the holidays even until 10am. As

2. do not bathe, swim or jump into the canals

4. do NOT walk through the streets shirtless or in swimwear

6. riding bicycles or other two-wheelers, as well as pushing the vehicles by hand, is NOT allowed

long as you don't disturb pedestrians, vehicles, boats or businesses of course.

It is also forbidden to wash clothes, rugs, or similar items in public areas or on publicly accessible land. But I can understand, no? Just wash your clothes at home! Problem solved. Just don't hang them to dry if too many tourists pass through your street. Why? Because it is also forbidden to hang clothes on lines or to dry fabrics (on historic buildings) or in the following sensitive or highly visible public areas. Of course, we don't want to disrupt the aesthetic of this beautiful city. That's why, if the tide gets too high and the street gets wet, we must walk "carefully and not splash water".

## Playing Venice

But now, let's have some fun! Our project is about playing after all! Let's tell you about how we did it!

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### Imaginary Ballgames

Ball games are generally forbidden in most of the public spaces, but who says you need a ball for that? Just use an imaginary one. Trust us, its way more fun anyway! Kick or throw the ball to each other, use arches or columns as your goal posts and let your imagination do the rest. Just be careful not to kick the ball into the canal like we did ;-)

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### Jump Rope

Our favourite game to play, because everybody knows it and thus feel way more comfortable to join in. We brought our rope anywhere and once we pulled it out and started jumping, people from all parts of the world wanted to join. No matter the age, no matter the passport you had or which language you spoke, once the rope swings, you jump. Perfect to create connections and have fun together.

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### BONUS: Play Braid

A game we invented. Inspired by the braiding we did as children, we created it on a bigger scale with ropes and wooden cubes we can either swing to each other or just carry through. You can hang it where you want and start to braid together. The longer you braid, the closer everybody gets, starting to walk through each other's spaces at one point, creating a sense of closeness we wanted to achieve with this project.

**If you want to try out our game visit our courtyard at Hauptplatz 6, let's play together!**

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### YOUR Game

Finally, the most important game: Yours! Just be creative, stroll through the city and try to see it from a fun, playful perspective. Free yourselves from the restrictive nature of the cities guidelines and look for your own playful interactions and create your own games, connections and friendships! <3

All you need is:

- A 5-10m long rope
- Any textile you might have on hand (e.g. a scarf)
- Music (optional, but more fun)
- And most importantly: a good mood

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### Orologio

This is a game the local children from Burano showed us. "Orologio" means clock in Italian. One person in the middle holds the rope as close to the floor as possible and starts to spin. The other participants stand around the spinning person and have to jump whenever the rope comes your way. Very fun and very chaotic, just how we like it!



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### Limbo

Another one of our favourites. You just need two people to hold the rope tightly and all the others to lean backwards and pass under the rope. Remember: It's not about winning, if someone struggles just lift the rope a little! This worked really well in Burano, where local fishermen, children, teenagers, the older ladies coming from the church and us started to line up and try to get as low as we could. We tried it again in Fondamenta della Misericordia, where a lot of people from all parts of the world passed and wanted to join. Different friend groups encouraged each other to try, had fun and enjoyed our time together. Music highly recommended.

