

Giulia Pannochia

GeM Scholar 2018

My name is Giulia Pannochia , I am 25 and live in Leghorn – the most important Port in Tuscany. Perhaps this is why I like a lively and multicultural lifestyle, but also relaxing walks overlooking the sea in the off-season.

I first studied architecture at the University of Florence where I studied the design of new buildings. However I have always been fascinated by historic buildings and for this reason, after my bachelor's degree, I decided to leave Florence and take a Master's degree at IUAV, Department of Architecture, Construction and Conservation. There I attended classes on the conservation and re-use of old buildings, focusing on both structural and architectural aspects. Everytime I have to deal with old building I try to understand the history of its design and construction methods. This understanding is a vital first step. Moreover because of my educational background, my primary interest is in the delicate relationship between the New and the Old, that I always try to juxtapose in a kind of dialogue where one never prevails over the other.

My thesis project at IUAV in fact aimed to discuss sustainability in the conservation and adaptive re-use of the Marconi Radiotelegraphic Station at Coltano, a rural area between Pisa and Livorno. It was the Guglielmo Marconi himself, awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics, who wanted the station to be built, the first of its kind in Italy as well as one of the first in the world. Its activities were brought to an end after bombing during World War II. Having been totally neglected since the 1970s, it now stands in ruins.

My proposal suggested the transformation of the Station into a Radiocommunication Museum with the aim of re-transmitting its history. The project would become then a sort of tale where even the traces of abandonment add to the richness of the signs engraved into the historic fabric. The restoration proposal in fact has nothing to do with forcibly bringing the building back to its original state – which has gone for forever and would be counterfeit.

I decided to apply for the GeM award because it seemed a great chance for a young architect, and the experience will offer time to both work and study in London. Working abroad will broaden my hoizons. Of course, I hope to have the chance to gain practical experience where I can beging to put education theory into practice. I would also like to take part in a not too complex design, so as to understand the process. Moreover I hope to have the opportunity for the first time to gain hands-on practical experience of repair methods of old buildings and to learn more about British architecture with its eclectic combination of styles.