Venice is a city with a long and proud history, maintaining independence rule for centuries because of her naval might. The city is resplendent with evidence of this former glory, yet in this modern age Venice has become infected by the disease of tourism. Engorged and bloated from the thousands who visit every day, she sits and rots while travellers marvel at her “quaint” or “novel” ways.

The concept for my project dealt directly with handing Venice back her independence, one step at a time. Wishing to address the issue of importation and exportation, in full knowledge that her main export is tourism, I wanted to provide a facility that would enable Venetians to reclaim their city as a self-sufficient state.

Working within her historical background I chose to design a hydroponic farm with an attached horticultural school to give all citizens the opportunity to learn about hydroponic growth techniques and their applications in modern agriculture. In doing so, I hope to establish a precedent for modern cities to produce their own foodstuffs and provoke investigation into the feasibility of cities becoming entirely self-sufficient.

My design had two major considerations: to deal with solar radiation within the different spatial zones of the building and to direct all focus to the growing area at the centre of the project. The first involved cladding in a conscientious manner with materials that would allow different amounts of radiation to penetrate; the second ensuring that engagement with the growing cell was not only possible but inevitable.