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Crowdfunding against mass tourism



Because the Italian government needs money, he auctioned today the island Poveglia before Venice. A citizens' initiative offers - so that no owner gets the contract.

Lorenzo Pesola has a terrifying vision: ". A city made of crystal - empty and locals" He is afraid for his home to Venice. The city is bursting at the seams, it is completely overrun by tourists. "We are at a point where there will soon be no more room here," he says. Every square inch is valuable, because building there is not. Therefore hoteliers prefer the surrounding islands. And that takes the Venetians the last inch free space. San Clemente, Sacca Sessola, San Spirito: A lot of the islands around Venice has already been paved over with hotels and leisure facilities.

This fate now threatens the island Poveglia, which is only few kilometers away from Saint Mark's Square. The Italian government has approved the ground lease of the island to the auction. The probability that a private investor will acquire the island for tourism purposes is high.

Lorenzo Pesola wants to prevent that. Together with about 20 other activists, the architect of the club Poveglia has established per tutti ("Poveglia for all"), therefore, within a few weeks, which has the goal to keep the island in the possession of the Venetians. About Crowdfunding the organization collects money to bid at the auction. The first step has been per tutti Poveglia: After a pre-selection round, only the initiative, as well as an unknown competitor have remained. The final decision will be made on Tuesday afternoon, the starting bid is around 500,000 euros. 99 euros it cost to supporters share an island. The response in the population is huge. Since an article about the Poveglia per tutti is published in the local press, the project has become a full-time job for the initiators. "People came first with cash in hand and wanted to participate," says Pesola. paid is now using an online system, donations come from all over the world.

Poveglia per tutti is organized as a small business. "We wanted to keep things as possible serious concern," says Pesola. Architects involved in the project, lawyers, town planners. They form working groups to meet and devise how to

restore the island and make economical at regular intervals. "When a tycoon, an oil magnate or an emirate puts a lot of money on the table, we can pack," he says. "A real paradox. We need to raise money to buy what actually already belongs to us." Lorenzo Pesola is a bright, talkative man, about 40, dressed casually, relaxed. A man who thinks deeply before he says anything. For the project, he can rest as an architect for several weeks his job. For this he earns a lot of sympathy in the population. "Well, you're confident? If there is more money come from?" A woman, nobly dressed to the 60, Pesola has grabbed the arm. You want to know how much it because in the meantime could already collect. He laughs and holds his index finger to his mouth. "I can not say. Competition is not finally know how much we have." On the Giudecca, the island on which he lives, Pesola can not cross a bridge without being asked by someone on the current status of the project. "Tomorrow at one is the French state television off tomorrow then the New York Times and then the British," he says into his cell phone. Again and again, he keeps his mobile phone to his ear, always it is about Poveglia, therefore, to make the project internationally known.

The island is approximately seven acres in size, and Poveglia per tutti has it already concrete plans. Green spaces are revived, restored the buildings, asbestos be removed. "All this is determined to take ten, twenty years," says Pesola. One-third to be built, a school campus is talking, docks for sailboats as well. The rest of the island will be accessible to all. A kind of park for all Venetians and tourists.

In the 19th century Poveglia served as a quarantine island. Since the eighties, it is uninhabited and is left to their fate. The wreckage of the 1979 closed geriatrics are overgrown with plants, antique deficiency machines rusting in front of him, a lot of stairs and walls have already collapsed in on itself. "No Entry" warns a sign. Ghosts are said to have a neurologist once driven to jump from the bell tower on Poveglia. This at least tells a legend. 25 meters high, the tower is reflected in the turquoise gray sea. Forfeited, weathered, a victim of decades. Behind a green jungle, in the middle of the lagoon of Venice. "I love this island," says Roberto Vianello. "There, I've already played as a kid, since I was three years old." Today he fishes around the island, sole, eel, crab. On Poveglia it to be haunted, some call it the most ghosts haunted island in the world. Today coming back ghost hunters who film their tour and then present on Youtube. The haunting began with an American trash TV series that Poveglia one of the "scariest places in the world", the "island of no return" explained. "That's all nonsense," says Vianello. He should know. Vianello lives in Malamocco, an idyllic located village on the Lido, just 500 meters from Poveglia away. "I for one have never seen a ghost there." According to legend, ghosts have a neurologist once driven to jump from the bell tower. | © Tobias Lang

In Malamocco Roberto Vianello rejects his rickety bicycle to a tree and looks at a small pub on the other side of the street. Fishermen there drink wine together. "All this here will be different when they are on Poveglia really build a hotel," he says. "The majority of people in the village is against the hotel. Except those who earn their money with tourism."

Back in Venice: On the Grand Canal, the main artery of the lagoon, blowing a poster in the wind. "The heart is not for sale" written on it in black letters. Here, too, should be privatized government buildings, palaces, hospitals, university spaces. More than two trillion euros of public debt of Italy at present. 127 percent of gross domestic product. In order to remove the mountain of debt that the Italian government wants to auction off state-owned enterprises, but also prestigious real estate. And Poveglia. A nationwide sell-off which will bring in about eight billion euros.

"One should not squander its cultural heritage," says Lorenzo Pesola. "Poveglia brings four, five million euros. New debt of Italy, however, is eight million. Per hour." He wants to deal with Poveglia per tutti also a sign against the sale. Perhaps he hopes "this is also a sign to the whole of Italy."