A first project proposal for a global repurposing of the building for academic use was presented in 1987 by architect Enrico Davide Bona, who also coordinated the subsequent phases of the edifice’s renovation.

A preliminary long-term lease agreement between Istituto Brignole, the owner of the building, and the University was signed in 1991. Between 1994 and 2001, some spaces were transformed to serve the new function of the building, including the Great Hall and four new classrooms.

In 2001 the definitive agreement was signed, making it possible to start a more wide-ranging adaptive reuse project, whose implementation is still in progress.

The ongoing restoration involves an area of about 11,000 square meters and includes the construction of a 2,500 square metres library with 250 seats, five new classrooms, as well as outdoor recreational areas. 6,000 square metres will be devoted to research activities, and will comprise professors’ studies and multifunctional rooms for both students and researchers. Eventually, a grand total of about 15,000 square metres will have been renovated.

L’UNIVERSITÀ E IL RESTAURO DELL’ALBERGO

Una prima ipotesi progettuale di riuso globale per sede universitaria venne presentata nel 1987 dall’architetto Enrico Davide Bona, autore poi delle successive fasi d’intervento.


Nel 2001 fu stipulato tra Università e Istituto Brignole il definitivo atto di cessione di diritto di superficie, si poté allora progettare l’intervento di maggiore spessore e ampiezza, ancora in corso e in via di completamento, con la propensione a voler non solo utilizzare nuovi spazi per la didattica universitaria, ma ad enucleare i prospetti di quella che dovrebbe essere una globale e definitiva riuso-funzionalizzazione dell’intero complesso.

Il restauro in corso interessa una superficie complessiva di circa 11.000 mq e ha previsto la realizzazione di una nuova biblioteca di 2.500 mq con 250 posti a sedere, cinque nuove aule, spazi per la sosta all’aperto e circa 6.000 mq di spazi per la ricerca, con studi e sale studio multifunzionali per studenti e ricercatori. Si vedranno quindi completati circa 15.000 mq dei 60.000 globalmente disponibili.

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE RENOVATION OF THE POORHOUSE

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L’Albergo dei Poveri ha cessato la sua funzione assistenziale originaria solo alla fine del XX secolo, ed è stato acquisito nel 2003, in concessione cinquantennale, dall’Università degli Studi di Genova.

Con la sua struttura grandiosa l’Albergo si è inserito con forza, fin dall’avvio della sua costruzione a metà del Seicento, nel panorama urbano-stico della città divenendone un’emergenza visiva, situazione che conserva tuttora, specie arrivando per via di mare.

La tipologia di pianta, a croce greca, fu, in un certo senso, obbligata, evocava infatti le sofferenze di Cristo mentre la cappella, una vera e propria chiesa, come nella versione definitiva dell’Albergo al centro della crociera, ne era il cuore. Essa doveva essere vista da ogni lato in modo da permettere a tutti di assistere alle funzioni liturgiche.

Nel 1653 fu creata una deputazione per la basilica di Carignano. The stucco decoration reveals two phases, one from the seventeenth and the other from the eighteenth century.

La chiesa, sopraelevata di cinque gradini rispetto all’altezza naturale della Carbonara, si accede al luminoso atrio aperto sulla chiesa il cui fulcro era l’Immacolata Virgine. La tipologia di pianta, a croce greca, fu, in un certo senso, obbligata, evocava infatti le sofferenze di Cristo mentre la cappella, una vera e propria chiesa, come nella versione definitiva dell’Albergo al centro della crociera, ne era il cuore. Essa doveva essere vista da ogni lato in modo da permettere a tutti di assistere alle funzioni liturgiche.

Nel 1653 a deputazione was established for the construction of the new leper hospital whose protagonist and promoter was the aristocratic Emanuele Brignole. The choice of the location for the construction of the new complex fell on the Carbonara valley, positioned between the old and the new city walls, very steep and hence not of interest for property speculation, but provided with water and good air. The architects were Giovan Battista Ghiso, Gerolomo Gandolfo, Antonio Torriglia and Pier Antonio Corradi, who were already working for Emanuele Brignole in the new seminary.

The emergencies caused by the terrible plague that fell on Genoa from 1656 to 1657 meant that the decision was taken to bury the bodies of the plague victims in the Poorhouse’s foundations and to dedicate the complex’s church, whose first stone had been laid on April 28th 1657, to the Immaculate Virgin as a votive offering for an end to the plague.

From 1666 on, Emanuele Brignole took on the charge of managing the works and collecting funds, advancing or donating large sums of money. In August of that same year he commissioned to Pierre Puget the marble statue of the Immaculate Conception still found on the high altar, at his own expense. The planned works were only finished in 1740, while the west wing and western façade still had to be completed, and were subsequently terminated in the 1830s.

The church, standing five steps higher than the fore-church, is introduced by a large serlian window and has two altars on each side. The building is surmounted by a dome enclosed at the corners by four bell towers, a structure which recalls the solution adopted by Galeazzo Alessi for the basilica of Carignano. The stucco decoration reveals two phases, one from the seventeenth and the other from the eighteenth century.

The centrality, lying on the valley’s center-line, marks the north-south direction and the church became the point of arrival of a route aimed at public use, unlike the remaining parts of the complex. Its appearance is monumental and aspiring to a sober décor, yet one that is emotively incisive. The bright higher atrium, opening onto the church whose pulpit was Puget’s Immaculate Conception, could be accessed from the entrance via the grand staircase. This route, which Emanuele Brignole so strongly desired, featured statues of the benefactors: among them were the theatrical sculptures created by Giovan-ni Battista Barberini (1627-1692 ca.), reminder, model and stimulus of fac tu similiter.

za delle rimanenti parti della struttura. Qui tutto è monumentale e aspira ad un decoro sobrio ma emotivamente incisivo. Dall’ingresso attraverso i grandi scaloni, si accede al luminoso atrio superiore aperto sulla chiesa il cui fulcro era l’Immacolata del Puget. In questo percorso, fortemente voluto da Emanuele Brignole, trovarono posto le statue dei Benefattori, ricordo, modello e stimolo al “fac tu similiter”.