

# THE GARDEN OF THE RIGHTEOUS IN THE WORLD

MONTE STELLA, MILANO

MILANO 13 - 21 SEPTEMBER 2012

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INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN

In collaboration with GARIWO, LA FORESTA DEI GIUSTI, MILANO

## Scientific Committee

Lorenzo Consalez (School of Architecture and Society, dep. DIAP)

Gabriele Nissim (writer, president of Gariwo)

Alessandro Rocca (School of Architecture and Society, dep. DIAP)

Gianni Scudo (vice-dean of the School of Architecture and Society, dep. BEST)

Stefano Valabrega (architect, Gariwo)

## Open Lectures

Francesco Bonami (art critic, Milano – New York)

Kathryn Gustafson (Gustafson Porter Landscape Architecture, London)

Gabriele Nissim (writer, president of Gariwo)

Vittorio Emanuele Parsi (International Relations, Università Cattolica, Milano)

## Visiting Professors

Marco Bay (landscape architect)

Davide Dong Sub Bertin (Yellow Office)

Giancarlo Floridi (Politecnico di Milano)

Antonio Perazzi (landscape architect)

## Professors

Lorenzo Consalez (Politecnico di Milano)

Alessandro Rocca (Politecnico di Milano)

Antonio Ferrante (agronomist, Università Statale di Milano)

Stefano Laffi (sociologist, Università Milano – Bicocca)

## Tutors

Alessandro Altini, Ettore Bergamasco, Marta Geroldi, Camilla Vecchi

## Coordinators

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## **How to participate**

The workshop expects the participation of thirty designers, students and graduates of Architecture, Landscape and Industrial Design, and is open to national and international candidates.

The workshop will be held from September 13<sup>th</sup> to September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012, in the premises of the School of Architecture and Society. The official languages will be both English and Italian.

The candidates have to send the curriculum to: [giardinodeigiusti@gmail.com](mailto:giardinodeigiusti@gmail.com), up to July 10<sup>t</sup>, 2012. The selection criteria will take note of your experience and curriculum, and the list of the admitted participants will be sent to all the candidates up to July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

The participation to the workshop is free of cost, except for a contribute of € 30 (thirty Euros) for administration costs.

## **Schedule**

July 10<sup>th</sup> – Inscriptions deadline

July 15<sup>th</sup> – Definition of the list of participants

September 13<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am – Workshop opening day

- Greetings to the participants and lecture by Gianni Scudo, vice-dean of the School of Architecture and Society.
- Presentation of the themes by Gabriele Nissim, president of Gariwo
- Guided visit to the area of Giardino dei Giusti and formation of the working groups.

September 14<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> – Start of the design process in classroom, integrated with conferences by guests and lectures by professors.

September 21<sup>st</sup> – Final Presentation and workshop closing day

October 30<sup>th</sup> – The participants design proposals will be displayed in an exhibition and collected, together with preliminary and collateral documentation in a printed volume.

## **University Formative Credits (CFU)**

Politecnico di Milano concedes to the participant students a total of 4 credits (4 CFU).

External participants will receive a Certificate of Participation, which can be used to ask to their respective universities the recognition of the formative credits.

## **Aim of the Workshop**

Starting from the desire and the real transformation possibilities of the Garden of the Righteous in Milan into a space of higher architectural and landscape value, the workshop plans to propose to the Gariwo Association and the Comune di Milano, a series of transformation hypothesis of the garden which are effectively viable and able to satisfy the commemorative and communicative qualities the garden must have, which nowadays it has not been able to achieve. On the base of comprehension and reflection on the current shape of the garden, a series of design groups will be formed which, during the workshop must produce original projects for a radical transformation of the space.

## **Program**

Giardino dei Giusti in Milan, opened in 2003 on the slopes of Monte Stella, a park built during the post-war years by Piero Bottoni on the collection site of the debris caused by the war. The first planted trees, twenty-two blackthorns nowadays, were dedicated to the inspirers of the first Gardens of the Righteous: Moshe Bejski for Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Pietro Kuciukian for the Armenian genocide in Yerevan and Svetlana Broz in Sarajevo for the righteous which opposed to the ethnical persecutions in the former Yugoslavia. Since November 2008, it has been entrusted to the association for the Garden of the Righteous of Milan, founded by the Comune di Milano, the Italian Jewish Communities Union, and the Foresta dei Giusti committee – Gariwo, which is the founder and curator and launched the idea of giving the garden a more consistent and communicative design.

In this way, a discussion on the ideas and objectives inspiring the new project is established. Through the reflections collected by the promoters, Gabriele Nissim, president of Gariwo, and the architect Stefano Valabrega, the longing for a higher communicative impression, more direct and effective, can be understood, because the garden's philosophy is not oriented towards celebration, but towards dialogue and recognition of the different cultures and values that meet and live together in the name of Good and the defense of the injured humanity.

It should then, pass through unusual paths, going beyond the XIX century model of the memorial garden and look for the results that can intrigue and surprise. The garden should be imagined not only as a space of remembrance, but also as a new space of relationship, encounter, exchange and knowledge. Lectures and conferences by Italian and international scholars and designers, and the contribution of professors and tutors are meant to provide all the ideas and the necessary information, and to drive and stimulate the design process.

*... memory, fragments of the past that penetrate into the present in an explosive and uncontrollable way, represents the principal mean through which the individual can resist the hegemony of history...*

Walter Benjamin

## **Project Themes**

The garden is a spatial organism in which, through the collaboration between architecture and nature, a high expressive value is realized, which represents our relationship with the world. In the field of the project culture, I believe that there is nothing having an equivalent sensorial and philosophical strength, and on the other hand, there is nothing as fragile, ephemeral and mutable as a space organized in base of its natural components. The idea of celebrating the heroes and anti-heroes of the Good through a Garden of the Righteous utilizes these potentials, and at the same time, we are challenged to imagine projects corresponding to the specific identity of this particular type of garden.

### **1. The Never-Finished**

The non-finished condition of the garden is the first topic that must be faced in the project. Garden of the Righteous is an atypical memorial because it is a monument in progress, it is a mnemonic device ready to register facts that already occurred, but which have not yet been revealed, and other facts that belong to the future, which have not yet occurred.

### **2. The Image**

The second topic is the representation, the image, the problem of shaping a principle, the one of Good, which has no symbols or emblems, and is a perfectly abstract absolute concept. How to represent Good? Certainly nature, the most representative elements of the natural environment can be considered as the most authoritative of the vital principle, of its sacrality and also of its fragility. For every new tree there is a ceremony, there are ritual speeches, there is the commemoration of a specific event, the apposition of a plate with the name of the "Righteous", and the gesture of planting. The tree joins the forest as a man joins the crowd, that is, in informal casual terms, which do not correspond to a definite design but rather follow the principle of contingency.

### 3. The Word

The Garden of the Righteous, is based on the word, on the testimony, on the story, on the possibility and the capacity to report, to listen and to understand. If Image is often the most effective vehicle to an immediate communication, only the Word is able to expand the reasoning beyond the sphere of emotions and feelings, and to build a complex and strong system of relationships open to dialogue and resistant to the usury of the time. The Righteous exist thanks to the story that identifies them, to the words needed to explain and remember the occurred facts.

### 3. The Movement

It is not a case that the Garden of the Righteous in Jerusalem is not a closed space but an esplanade, a path offering the visitor a landscape in movement, in a sequence which has no hierarchical nor punctual elements hard enough to create real discontinuities. Perceiving a space following a precise direction is a specific condition: the consistence and regularity of the soil we are walking on, the direction we must follow, the optical target changing as we walk, the fatigue. The axial view, stationary, is linked to an absolute dimension that seems less compatible with the articulation and the cultural and social diversity of the contemporary world. The sight in movement, as the Japanese Zen garden also demonstrates, is the only capable of catching a reflection of the overall vision, collecting fragments, instants, views, that would never be able to generate a final conclusive image. As the axial monumentality of the gardens of Versailles was the expression of the absolute thought of a single man, the king of France, the Garden of the Righteous should perhaps be the contrary, an inclusive, multiple, place, that can express values shared by everyone through the sum of stories and relative, partial, points of view, that have the objective of adding a testimony and do not pretend to put an end to the topic.