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# Territorio



# WS03 Politecnico arcipelago

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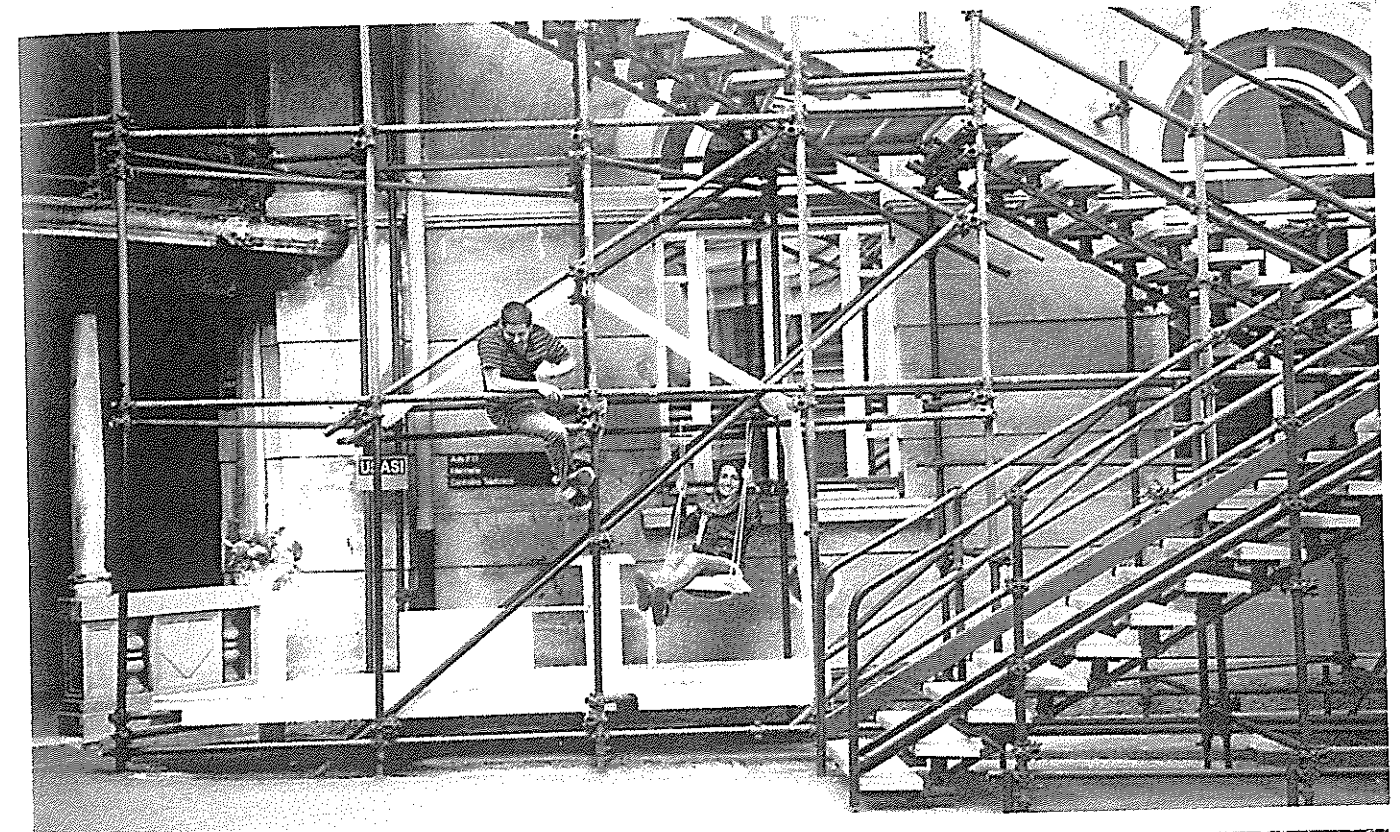
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The idea behind ConstructLab's practice is to rediscover a constructive intelligence in materials themselves, to design at the same time as we handle the material. It is not about technical prowess but rather finding a common sense approach whose building techniques can be appropriated and used by everyone. ConstructLab is more about the approach to, rather than the method of, building. ConstructLab's work integrates environmental awareness from conception to realisation. Projects includes recycled materials and are designed and built with future re-use of the raw materials in mind. ConstructLab workshop aim was to build new places through fiction becoming reality and playing 'games' or storyboards that can be new rules for spaces democracy. Re-appropriating spaces at Politecnico Campus wanted to encourage student creativity, reflexion and renew social behaviours. Considering space as made by dynamics of exchange, the workshop pushed students to be the architects of their world. Workshop's interventions were directed through a transdisciplinary field, combining construction with video, graphic design, photography, designing a space for interaction, freedom, sharing, informality and unpredictability. The result was a kind

of open source architecture, to be left at Politecnico to be shared, re-used, transformed by the users themselves, offering a framework for a direct interaction between people and space.

The workshop moved through: 'Site detection' choosing sites that were not regulated by direct Politecnico administration control, and 'in situ actions' even using almost the same materials as for Milano Film Festival like scaffolding, textiles, wood, none of the projects will be a reproducible products but is a site-specific project, as they were designed and built in the specific site with a precise location, place and participants.

The ConstructLab is in situ. It is a collaborative construction practice established with the students during the Miaw. Unlike the conventional architectural process in which the architect designs and the builder builds, in ConstructLab we bring together conception and construction: the designer builds, and continues to design on site. The construction site is no longer the place of uncertainty where the design contends with reality, but the context in which the project can be enriched by the unexpected opportunities that occur on site. For this ConstructLab at Miaw we collaborated with Esterni from



Milano, in a double degree: during the Milano Film Festival we proposed the students to participate on the setting-up of the festival as a 'learning by doing' option and then at Politecnico we re-used part of the Film Festival materials to produce new 1/1 interventions in the Campus most secrets spaces.

ConstructLab has been the 'nave', for a journey to the island of Politecnico, the paradise of sciences and knowledge. Politecnico is the ultimate study destination, set on the sandy shores of Piazza Leonardo da Vinci in beautiful 'arcipelago' of Milan and surrounded by lush landscaped buildings. With two amazing food providers, superb library on the street front or private car-parking (under construction), laboratories and students activities, there's no better study park to escape within your youth! There's always learning to be get at Politecnico so there will be plenty of smiling faces.

Students will love learning in the large Politecnico classrooms, whirling down the stairways, having a shaping workshop and joining the study with the students from the international exchange program.

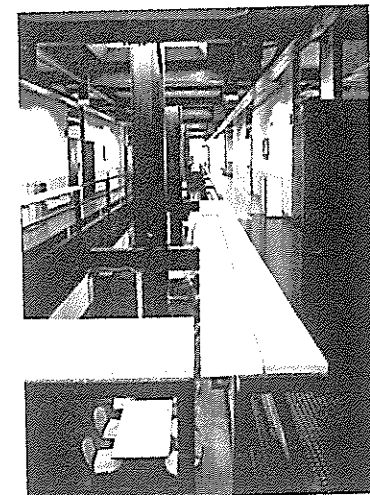
Foreign students don't miss out either with the fantastic learning potential.

In September 2010 Politecnico di Milano was voted number 1 Politecnico in «The 100 best Politecnico's in Italy» by the Italia architects/engineers Magazine.

Find the hidden potential of this beautiful jewel in the archipelago of Milan!

The Hunt!

Investigation, discovering, site detection and discussing situations! Backyards, 'in-between spaces' forgotten or unimaginable to use. If cave or mountain peak, corridor or stairway, studying eating, believe, break and rest.





What is the place, why it's inspiring?  
 What can we do?  
 What would I like to do?  
 Conspiracy!  
 Talk-shop or workshop?  
 An intervention in order to question the use and consideration of the place and present the site potential!  
 Transformation!  
 This little extension of an existing situation allows to use and re-appropriate, from observation to adaptation test the ideas, no fear of try and error with little knowledge or construction but astonishing results!

Politecnico interventions were part of a collective temporality and in the given Politecnico campus territory, taking the form of temporary installation. Student's projects left the site specificity, while context become a support for the project. Designing an architecture through actions, charging the architecture of life, using multiples and diverse use express architecture as a medium to promote encounters and exchanges. Temporary installations, self-built wooden and inhabited by the same students, tried to express questions about the context, the place and its use, through the principle of re-appropriation. Cream was a lightweight wooden device to represent an oasis in the middle of crowded spaces in the faculty for a short intimate and hidden experience, whispering a secret or screaming. Casa Caffè was a prosthetic installation to the main faculty building and transforming it into a shared space for people to rest, read or take coffee. A wooden horizontal module was set up just framing with accuracy the existing steel profile, without hacking the structure but enhancing and expanding uses. Legend was the definition of a sort of 'Doors of perception' device installed in the main underground tunnel connecting main Politecnico areas, promoting a counterbalancing interaction with holiness, non-fictional, superstition world just in the middle of Politecnico, Temple of fiction and scientific knowledge. Marium was an intervention in a leftover space in the campus, where students transformed a concrete rooftop in a lush solarium for student's

pauses in-between hard studying time at Politecnico. Sun shading and building orientation transformed a site in a space for resting and meeting. Le clandestin was a re-appropriation of a scaffolded staircase to be transformed in a singular and kind of 'domestic' space for students. Scaffolding constituted a structure for resting, balancing, growing flowers and eating in a tiny pavilion facing a public passage in the middle of monumental Politecnico Campus. Magnolia 191 was the appropriation of one of Politecnico's natural spaces, the great magnolia tree in a courtyard. The naturally open space covered by the magnolia branches was transformed in a secret place for lovers, gathering friends enhancing the marvellous sunlight filtered by leaves and surrounding Politecnico buildings. Magnolia was an intimate and carefully designed wooden bench around the magnolia bark to get a rest also for Politecnico's official parties in the courtyard. Love Meeting was a picturesque minimal pavilion placed in the middle of the Leonardo da Vinci park just in front of Politecnico, re-appropriating this natural space for students to find a covered but open space where taking a rest, chatting, smoking, eating.

**Notes**

1. Alexander Römer has started the idea of ConstructLab due to the professional background as carpenter, journeyman and architect. He is involved in collective Exyzt's projects: *Southwark Lido* (London), *City Eco Lab* (Saint Etienne Design Biennale, 2008), *Metavilla* (Venice Biennale of Architecture, 2006). WS03 has been edited by Alexander Römer with Giancarlo Floridi (Politecnico di Milano, Dipartimento di Architettura e Pianificazione) and Lorenzo Castellini and Anna Spreafico (Esterni). Participants to 'Miaw Treasure island 2010': Boat: ConstructLab; Pirates: Massimo Adami, Elisa Boscarato, Klodeta Krasniqi, Arcangelo Mazza, Marina Meloni, Elisa Meroni, Giulia Molino Lova, Nicola Petaccia, Chiara Pieri, Ilaria Quirico, Silvia Rota, Elena Soltesova, Dhu Yang, Yezi Zhang. Stowaways: Maddalena Scarsella, Paolo Ceresatto, Chiara Ferrario. Mermaids: Izabel Rainer Harbach, Juliana Gouilla. Captains: Alexander Römer, Giancarlo Floridi, Lorenzo Castellini (Esterni), Anna Spreafico (Esterni).

