

Modern architecture articulated itself in specific centers of propulsion, revision and critique during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The case of Milan is exemplary: Terragni and Razionalismo, the reconstruction with Ponti, Moretti, Viganò, the Tendenza of Rossi, product design, up to the current research. MCM traces this history from several contributors' points of view.



MCM  
Milan  
Capital  
*of the*  
Modern

Edited by Lorenzo  
Degli Esposti

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EXPO BELLE ARTI  
BY VITTORIO SGARBI  
PADIGLIONE ARCHITETTURA  
GRATTACIELO PIRELLI - MILAN

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Capital  
*of the*  
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Edited by  
**Lorenzo Degli Esposti**

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PADIGLIONE ARCHITETTURA  
GRATTACIELO PIRELLI – MILAN



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MILANO 2015 LOMBARDIA

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## THE IDEAL CITY

HOMAGE TO GUGLIELMO MOZZONI

Architecture Pavilion

**Expo Belle Arti by Vittorio Sgarbi**

---

May 5<sup>th</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Exhibition curated by

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Exhibition Production

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**Sara Daniele**

**Gregorio Pecorelli**

Photographs

**Archivio Mozzoni, Varese**

**Maurizio Petronio**

**Daniele Zerbi**

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**laboratorio.quattro**

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## ARCHITECTURE

Architecture Pavilion

**Expo Belle Arti by Vittorio Sgarbi**

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October 22<sup>nd</sup> – December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Exhibition curated by

**Maddalena d'Alfonso**

**Lorenzo Degli Esposti**

Exhibition Production

**Degli Esposti Architetti**

Coordination

**Sara Daniele**

Photographs by

**Matteo Cirenei**

**Marco Introini**

**Marco Menghi**

**Maurizio Montagna**

**Maurizio Petronio**

**Filippo Poli**

**Giada Ripa**

**Filippo Romano**

**Claudio Sabatino**

**Daniele Zerbi**

Exhibition Layout

**Maddalena d'Alfonso**

**Degli Esposti Architetti**

Photographic Prints

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**LINKE.**

**spazio//biennale**

**Studio GM di Mario Govino**

Panel Prints

**Multimedia Publishing**

Transports

**CLT Service**

MILAN, CAPITAL OF  
THE MODERN

Architecture Pavilion  
**Expo Belle Arti by Vittorio Sgarbi**

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May 5<sup>th</sup> – November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Convention cycle curated by  
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**OPEN Belvedere Preview**  
on the occasion of  
**Salone del Mobile Milano 2015**  
April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Photographs by  
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**Fondazione Centro Sperimentale  
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**Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera**  
**Domus Academy**  
**IED - Istituto Europeo di Design**  
**Istituto Marangoni**  
**NABA - Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti Milano**  
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# O.C. International Summer School Politecnico di Milano

GUYA BERTELLI, MICHELE RODA

GRATTACIELO PIRELLI, 11.09.2015

**Guya Bertelli.** *Piacenza-Milan, "nourishing" and communicating an innovative training course of excellence*

Bringing to Milan an important moment from the OC-OPEN CITY International Summer School, like the first critique of projects, had a double meaning:

- On the one hand, it was a particularly fruitful discussion in which the scientific and educational initiative of the Politecnico di Milano, now in its 6<sup>th</sup> edition, was inserted into what, in 2015, was the cultural event of greatest innovation and significance in the architectural field;

- On the other hand, it allowed, through the succession of the students' contributions, to confront under different points of view a thematic aspect of great current interest, like the impacts that the food cycle (production, distribution, consumption) have on the physical and spatial structure of our territories, thus becoming factors of transformation of landscapes and territories.

*OC-OPEN CITY, from an ambitious idea to a consolidated tradition*

Since 2002, the Piacenza campus of the Politecnico di Milano has hosted the three-year degree in Environmental Architecture and, since 2007, the Master's degree in Architecture (which beginning in 2015 assumed its own autonomy with the new International Master's in Sustainable Architecture and Landscape Design). The profile of the teaching aims to train a designer who develops a particular sensitivity to issues of Architectural Design, in the three-year degree, and of Landscape and Sustainable Design, in the two-year Master's. Among the key offerings in the sphere of post-graduate and internationalization training, is the establishment of the OC-OPEN CITY International Summer School, oriented toward the design of open space at multiple scales of intervention, from that of the transformation of the landscape, to that of the design of public space and of specific architectural components. Aimed at undergraduates, graduates, and doctoral students coming from Schools of Architecture, Planning, Design, and Engineering, both Italian and foreign, the School aims to maintain an open dialogue between the different design competencies called on to confront the emerging issues of current settlement transformations, thus assuming the character of a place of debate and of a laboratory of ideas on broader development prospects of contemporary inhabited areas. The broad consensus that this event is obtaining inside and outside the academic world is ensured in equal measure through the scientific reputation enjoyed by the Politecnico di Milano in Italy and abroad, through the experimental interest of the adopted formula, and through the cultural allure of the host city.

Piacenza is in fact the ideal place to host an initiative dedicated to architectural, urban, and environmental issues, for the consistency of the landscape and artistic-monumental heritage, for the wide range of study subjects offered, and finally for the

solid traditions of the building sector. Located in the attractive spaces recuperated from the former city slaughterhouse (Campus Arata), OC-OPEN CITY hosts dozens of students, tutors, and teachers each year, called in from all over the world to discuss the themes of design at different scales, with particular attention to issues of sustainability and the landscape. The high scientific value is confirmed by a dense schedule of lessons and lectures, all open to the city, with the highest caliber names in the international architecture and urbanism debate.

It is a three-week-long event in which the moments of cultural studies (with an intense program of communications and lessons) overlap with design experimentation on places in the city of Piacenza involved in the transformative dynamics of the urban, suburban, and natural landscape. The first OC-OPEN CITY International Summer School was held in 2010. Since then, the initiative has emerged as a fixture, becoming – both from a quantitative point of view and qualitative one – one of the most interesting laboratories internationally.

These are the titles and the themes developed in the course of the first five editions: 2010 edition - *Between the City and the River. Architecture of Urban Relations*; 2011 edition - *Living the Street. Landscape and Public Space in the Places of Metropolitan Infrastructure*; 2012 edition - *Landscape in Sequence. Dwelling the Wall*; 2013 edition - *Nature in the City*; 2014 edition - *Architectures for a Creative City. Piacenza Towards Expo*.

In conjunction with Expo 2015, OC-OPEN CITY decided to tackle the challenges posed by the event in Milan, proposing a pronounced focus on the themes of landscape and agriculture, summarized in the title *Feeding (the) Landscape. A New Green-Active Museum for Agriculture*. The design workshop had 130 participating students (selected from over 200 applications, of 21 nationalities); 11 architecture lectures were held, in addition to a panel discussion and the screening of two films. In all, around 42 lecturers took turns at the lectern. Along with them, 51 critics enlivened the 3 different commissions. Thanks to the 30 tutors who assisted, the project works were presented – at the end of the three weeks – 12 projects (3 urban masterplans, 9 architectural designs at the local level), displayed in 4 different exhibitions. On the last night, on the great lawn of the Arata Campus, a theatre performance was staged, dedicated to the period of modern Milan. For the first time, in 2015, 30 students enrolled at the Advanced School of Architecture (ASA) of the Politecnico di Milano also participated in an additional training course, which took place parallel to the Master's courses and which sought to strengthen and develop the figure of the architect-designer, through project activities that put it face-to-face with the complexity of the phenomena now taking place in various European and non-European realities. The title, *Feeding (the) Landscape*, has a double meaning alluding to an innovative form of landscape,

looked after and fed but at the same time that it looks after and creates nutrients for the territories. In this optic, Piacenza and its territory are read and interpreted as exemplary case studies. The cultural background involved 3 different types of *-scape*:

*Food-Scape*: the objective is integration into Piacenza's urban system of the 3 pillars of the food cycle: production (in urban gardens and agricultural parks), distribution (through markets, also capable of moving through mobile devices), and consumption (in the new generation of restaurants).

*Expo-Scape*: points to the reinterpretation of the title of the Expo *Feeding the Planet* through a standpoint oriented more toward the disciplines of space, precisely of architectural and urban design.

*Land-scape*: the landscape is observed, in different rooms for interaction and with different hierarchies, through a new point of view that sees land as an active and precious resource, capable of modifying the production system and of reactivating entire urban environments, today abandoned or underused.

The sponsorship of the Expo Milano 2015, by the Scientific Committee of the University for the Expo and by the ATS (Associazione Temporanea di Scopo - Temporary Purpose Association) "Piacenza Expo 2015" (in addition to the support of organizations and civic institutions) reinforced the specific identity of the design task that students concentrated into 3 particular urban sections of the city of Piacenza, with a view toward a process of enhancement and regeneration, arranged in sequence along the countryside-city-river axis:

Section 1 (south) - Lying between the last strata of the urban periphery and the first fragments of the sprawling city, positioned between the southern bypass road and Besurica district. Functional vocation: agricultural production and innovative research in agriculture.

Section 2 - A multiple threshold between the consolidated city and the first suburban settlements, along ancient traces of Farnese's walls, a sequence of public spaces identifiable as large artificial rooms, partly inhabited (Cavallerizza) and partly on the way to functional deactivation. Functional vocation: a site suitable for distribution and retail commerce, linked to local artisanal products and agricultural production, introducing traditional uses of space for important innovative functions.

Section 3 (North) - It corresponds to the section of settlement between the northern edge of the dense city and the park marked by the presence of the Po River, now profoundly impeded by the infrastructural system of land routes (highways) and rail (railways). Functional vocation: a site suitable for the co-presence of spaces dedicated to knowledge and exhibition.

As is evident from the aforementioned functional vocations, the objective of the workshop was the design of a new museum of Piacenza agriculture – a green, active, and dynamic structure – understood as a dispersed ensemble of

interactive spaces and places (both at the physical/spatial and social/cultural levels) that confer onto the traditional exhibition function a series of further vocations (and therefore functions): research, experimentation, spread-out hospitality, paths for tourism use. Functions that are aimed at giving shape to urban sites, through different networks that interact. Global-local is just the first dialectical pair with which students were urged to work, the other two are: tradition-innovation and identity-difference.

**Michele Roda.** *Speaking about architecture, landscape and agriculture in the year of Expo: the reasons for a choice*

*Feeding the Planet*, the theme of Expo Milano 2015, has its own distinct specificities and identity linked to the spatial disciplines. Agriculture is a determining factor – in the historical development of the territories as well as in contemporary reality – in the design of places, in an interrelated complexity that surpasses traditional scalar divisions, permeating the territorial structure, the design of the city and the landscape, the technical and material details. Precisely in a period of history that overwhelms categories, creating new meanings for them, and directing its interest toward productive land, this means in essence:

- recuperating territorial identities;
- promoting sustainable and compatible models of agriculture (and therefore of life);
- approaching the issue of land in an innovative way (a resource to be defended but, precisely and only because of the quality, can it become an active factor in territorial policies);
- looking at the landscape as the only inter-scalar instrument of integration of the different elements of the territory: the city, infrastructure, open space.

In this sense, some of the words contained in the "Milan Protocol," signed by thousands of citizens and government officials on the occasion of the Expo ([www.milanprotocol.com](http://www.milanprotocol.com)), need to and will need to orient and direct the actions of those involved in space, in a complex logic and interrelated with other disciplines, which can no longer be evaded: "The 'Milan Protocol' will unite citizens and institutions in order to address the problem of food sustainability with three objectives: to promote healthy lifestyles and combat obesity, to promote sustainable agriculture, and to reduce food waste by 50% by 2020. The document was also drafted to make evident to everyone the level of complexity of the situation, also in light of the global economic and demographic pressures, and of the extraordinary variety of local needs. The land available to us is not infinite and therefore should be distributed among the different needs, recognizing those that are essential and those that can be contained. Global and complex interventions are needed to create sustainable patterns of consumption and production, capable of reconciling respect for the planet and

the well-being of its inhabitants.”

The city of Piacenza and its territory are in many ways an emblematic case of Italian agricultural areas and of its impacts on the landscape. Their very location identifies their characteristics: an area characterized by the presence of the largest Italian river, the geographical hub between south Milan and the Po valley, a transition – in a hypothetical north-south section between the plains, hills, and mountains (with the valleys). For this reason, the work of the OC-OPEN CITY Summer School was intended and proposed as absolutely central in the contemporary debate.

*Agriculture as the key factor of our landscape*

Within the framework of a progressive redefinition of European urban society and its limitations, it is possible to speak of a new “pact,” “between city, nature, and agriculture, where urban culture confronts the change of its plans for growth, combining it with the rethinking the traditional agricultural structure starting with the areas in proximity and in marginal territories until the review of the agro-alimentary market models and its distribution,” to borrow the words of Angelo Monti, in AL 499 (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2014), dedicated to issues of urban renaturalization.

In this context, among the possible feasible actions, some are closely linked to the reality on which the students of the Summer School have been called to work:

- redesign of peri-urban landscapes;
- defense of constructive and settlement weaving in the agricultural landscape;
- redevelopment of agriculture toward a multi-functional dimension that is increasingly integrated into urbanized and metropolitan contexts;
- re-naturalization policies for the public city.

It is evident how a design discourse applied to these issues could be closely connected to one of the key issues of architecture, like the very idea of beauty and its research. In this, recalling the Camaldolese Rule of 1520, on the issue of sustainable forestry, sounds like a fascinating reference and not at all obvious: “And when there is nothing to be cut, the custodian procures to be present, so that they may be cut in those places, and those firs, that do not diminish the wilderness, and that do not take away from its beauty and grace.” Thus, man’s role in the transformation of the landscape is introduced. A question that, also because of new technological applications in agriculture, has seen significant acceleration in recent decades. With a pace still destined to increase, in overwhelming fashion. Therefore, wondering about the future of the countryside, as do Beppe Croce and Sandro Angiolini in the book *La terra che vogliamo. Il futuro delle campagne italiane* (The Land that We Want: The Future of the Italian Countryside, Edizioni Ambiente, Legambiente, 2013), is an operation closely connected

to the making of architecture and the making of landscape: “The extreme variability of our landscape is essentially due to human labor, to the different agricultural systems that man has activated to produce food and other raw materials for his survival, such as, for example, wood to build houses. In this sense, each agrarian landscape is both the result of an economic process and an important factor in providing a cultural identity to a territory and to its inhabitants.”

This is the conceptual framework with which students from OC-OPEN CITY were called to work, using an expansive, complex, and articulated vision. A vision capable of overcoming traditional categories and disciplines, as demonstrated by the words of a biologist specializing in landscape architecture, such as Anna Zahonero Xifré, interviewed – in the same issue of AL mentioned earlier – by Antonio Angelillo, Director of ACMA, Centro Italiano di Architettura, one of the lecturers of OC 2015: “There exists a very clear line with which to rebuild the relationship between these two elements (city and countryside), rethinking the urban transition towards the countryside, but above all how the countryside might bring cultural and environmental improvements to the city. [...] Through landscape architecture, it is necessary to begin to rationalize and rebalance such a relationship. There is a physical space of relating: the urban perimeter extends out over the territory, while the rural develops within it. Presumably, designing with biodiversity within a context built from metropolitan areas is one of the most urgent and important issues that landscape architecture faces today.”

*Openings*

After investigating these issues, in the 2016 edition, OC-OPEN CITY will continue the line of focus on the landscape and on its countless spatial implications. Piacenza is also proposed as an exemplary case study, and perhaps above all, by virtue of its condition (almost unique) of being a liminal city, overlooking (even if it is a relationship with so many contradictory and paradoxical ways) Italy’s largest river. Thus, an overlapping and interaction of different forms of landscape emerge with force: fluvial, agricultural, productive, and urban. In line with the most recent and innovative disciplinary research, the problematic framework proposed as a background arises from the integration between global settings (to which European cities are invited to respond following the shift in social, economic, and environmental equilibriums) and the local architectural transformations, necessary for the revival of obsolete, abandoned, or under-used areas. In this sense, it is the concept of landscape itself that is the subject of a radical rethinking, as the complex product of multiple, variable, and dynamic events, which every time appears both as a result of a complexity of interfering gazes, and as an extreme synthesis of heterogeneous and sometimes contradictory project materials.

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Editor

Lorenzo Degli Esposti

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Editorial Coordination

Degli Esposti Architetti  
Ricardo Devesa

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Stephanie Carwin

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Distribution

Actar D Inc.  
New York  
440 Park Ave. South, 17<sup>th</sup> Fl  
New York, NY 10016  
T +1 212 966 2207  
F +1 212 966 2214  
salesnewyork@actar-d.com

Barcelona  
Roca i Batlle 2  
08023 Barcelona  
T +34 933 282 183  
eurossales@actar-d.com

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