

# INSIDE OUTSIDE

PETRA BLAISSE

## GIARDINI DI PORTA NUOVA - BIBLIOTECA DEGLI ALBERI

### Competition phase

The 'Biblioteca degli Alberi' (Library of Trees) has been designed in 2003 by the team Inside Outside with Petra Blaisse, Michel Maltzan, Mirco Zardini, Irma Boom, Rod'or and Piet Oudolf. In 2004 the team won the first prize of an international competition initiated by the Municipality of Milan.

The park acts as urban connector, cultural campus and botanical garden. Paths are drawn from different areas (residential, commercial, governmental) around the site, creating a grid of paths that overlap and cross through one another. These paths, together with the irregular plots that are created in-between, can overcome height differences and underlying traffic tunnels; create sound-walls and bridge streets. The planting design for the plots is composed of a series of carefully selected species. Each plot offers a different type of growth and program. Circular forests are scattered over the site and will grow into roofs of foliage of different color and structure that float above the park. A series of cultural, educational, social and commercial buildings are placed in the park and along its edges, their program triggering interest and income for the area and thus securing a high-level maintenance program for the park.

### Design development

The 'Biblioteca degli Alberi' (Library of Trees) was designed in 2003 and realised between 2010 and 2018 by InsideOutside, with local partner Studio Giorgetta. It is a new form of public park that acts as urban connector, cultural campus and botanical garden. It is a collection of species and ecosystems that, in their variety, mimic and at the same time consolidate the surrounding heterogeneous cityscape. The complex natural, and yet very urban, landscape is in fact supported by cultural, social, commercial and transportation hubs scattered all along its edges, which trigger interest, encounters and contamination. The extensive surface (10 ha) is covered by a web of colliding linear paths, geometrical fields and circular forests. The paths strengthen existing urban axis, guide visitors through and across the park and provide botanical information and poetic inspiration to be discovered by the alert onlookers. They also define the ever changing fields of lawns, flower meadows, shrubbery, perennials and vegetable gardens, offering a parade of scents and colours. The round tree groupings form unique vegetal pavilions with foliage roofs floating above the park, and are thought to accommodate specific programs. 'Biblioteca degli Alberi' is a place of leisure, sports, learning and of beauty, where everybody is invited to act and interact, meet, enjoy and educate themselves.