

LA PISTA 500. A GARDEN RUNS THROUGH IT

BENEDETTO CAMERANA'S GREEN ARCHITECTURE DESIGN TURNS FIAT'S FORMER FACTORY ROOF INTO EUROPE'S LARGEST HANGING GARDEN.

OPENING: 22ND SEPTEMBER 2021

A park runs luxuriantly along the historic test track on the roof of Lingotto. Nature has taken the space (and time) to grow and flourish, and now it invites the public to join. The ambitious La Pista 500 project renews the model of New York's High Line, as envisaged by Ginevra Elkann.

FOR A CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE OF THE CITY

Today, "making a city" entails symbolically and physically bridging the gap between nature and the built environment. Benedetto Camerana, an architect and landscape designer who is considered one of Italy's Green Architecture pioneers, has created a big green graft on the rooftrack of a major structure in Turin, Italy's historic industrial capital.

La Pista 500 transforms the old Fiat plant's rooftrack into a sustainable oasis: a big linear garden with almost 40 thousand small trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants coexisting with the residents. The project promotes contemporary environmental principles by presenting solutions in the areas of ecology, energy conservation, and social responsibility. The park turns a private property into a public space where people can gather, exercise, meditate, and enjoy a spectacular view of the city and the surrounding crown of the Alps. On Lingotto's rooftrack, nature is gradually reclaiming places abandoned by man and creating



“THE PARK LANDS ON THE ASPHALT,
AS IF CARRIED BY THE WIND”

BENEDETTO CAMERANA

what Gilles Clément calls “The third landscape”.

With this project, the past gives way to the future, and an element of industrial archaeology becomes a breeding ground for sustainability and inclusion.

NEW LIFE FOR AN IDENTITY LANDMARK

Turin has always been a centre of invention and technology, as well as

a European leader in the automotive industry. Its cathedral was Lingotto, the historic headquarters of FIAT, which operated from 1923 to the early 1980s.

In 1994 the former factory reopened to the public as a large multifunctional structure, thanks to a recovery project by Renzo Piano. The new Lingotto offers work spaces, hospitality, commercial activities, events and cultural activities. A space that reclaims a prominent position, this time in the regeneration of

former industrial areas. Within the building, La Pista 500 stands out as the pinnacle of this process. The project boldly returns to Piano's original concept of incorporating nature inside reinforced concrete, which he pioneered in one of the inner courtyards. In the words of Benedetto Camerana, "The park lands on the asphalt" as if carried by the wind and colours the space at the centre of the test track with the nuances of the season. Just as it did on New York's High Line, nature is already taking up residence among the exposed blue industrial pipes, by attracting dragonflies, hummingbirds and butterflies, thus creating a new wished-for biodiversity.

INNOVATION AND CARE: THE PARK'S SPACES

La Pista 500 extends for 27,000 square metres of the rooftrack, with

natural installations covering over 6,000 square metres, divided into twenty-eight green "islands". These gardens of lush greenery and wild flowers blossom in large planters forming a naturalistic patchwork of colour, with seasonal variations as designed with Il Giardino Segreto. Over 300 indigenous types take root in and around the ring, selected based on ecological criteria: the majority are herbaceous perennials that grow swiftly without requiring much water. Hazelnut trees, dyeing plants, and edible species alternate with areas for fitness, meditation, yoga, whereas the blue resin running track winds through the garden's thematic regions and trails. Lighting by iGuzzini and infographics on Turin's landscape and monuments further enrich this place — a legacy of the Agnelli family.

The memory of the test track for Fiat vehicles from the 1920s and 1930s lives on in the name of the project and in the kilometre loop

with the two iconic parabolic curves, which will become a track for electric propulsion vehicles, as well as for bicycles and scooters.

With his most recent project, Benedetto Camerana renews his commitment to bringing nature back into the city: the *fil vert* which ideally connects his Environment Park dating back to the 1990s, an experimental research centre built on former industrial land along the Dora river, with La Pista 500. A vocation that spans time and offers new meaning to one of Turin's landmarks.



La Pista 500 Project Credits

Design Benedetto Camerana (landscape design, architectural design and coordination, concept and artistic direction)

Client Stellantis Group

Location Torino, Via Nizza 262

Procedure Direct assignment

Functions Hanging garden, public park

Collaborators Mattia Greco (project manager), Alberto Domini, Laura Acito, Gabriele Rossi, Antonio Pangallo, Andrea Tomasino.

Consultants Arch. Cristiana Ruspa (botanical design)

DROMO Engineering Architecture and Landscape (Dekra specialist advice and certification)

Guarino - Gierregi Ingegneria (mechanical systems design and structural consultancy)

P.I. Alberto Richiero - Gierregi Ingegneria (electrical systems project)

Ing. Massimo Pasquero - Pi Greco Engineering (fire protection consultancy)

Contractor D'Engineering srl

Chronology Project Phase (Dicembre 2019), completion (September 2021)

Dimensional data total area 27,000 sq m; hanging garden 7,000 sq m; over 100 species; 45,000 plants planted; 20,094 linear metres of irrigation and dripline pipes