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“La Foresta dei Violini”: Piuarch's tribute to the lost forest

From the 8th to the 19th April 2019 at University of Milan, an evocative installation showcases the relation between nature and music, the spruces and the arts which from that wood give life to emotional instruments

University of Milan, *Interni Human Spaces* - During **Milan Design Week 2019**, Piuarch presents “**La Foresta dei Violini**”: an installation sponsored by **CityLife**, which aims at representing the value of the spruces wood of Fiemme Valley (Trentino Alto Adige, Italy).

On the 29th October 2018 a storm and a 200-km/h-wind ravaged a centuries-old natural balance, hitting more than 12 million trees on the Alps. Among these there is Paneveggio Forest, also known as Stradivari's Forest. A place renowned for the spruces growing there: their wood has extraordinary features, and it has been forever used to make the best acoustic violin sound cases, which master luthier Stradivari chose for his masterpieces.

Based on a concept by **Nemo Monti**, Piuarch designed an evocative installation which will stand out in the Main Courtyard of the University of Milan within the INTERNI HUMAN SPACES event.

The project is sponsored by **CityLife**, with the support of the Province of **Trento** and the **Magnifica Comunità di Fiemme (Magnificent Community of Fiemme)** as technical sponsors providing the wood used to build the installation.

CONCEPT

“*La foresta dei violini*” is an evocative sign of the lost forest, and its absence. A tribute to the territory, to the forests, to the nature; to the communities that create their crafts thank to that natural environment, as well as to the wood supply chain born on those territories; to the arts that create those wooden instruments and to the artists that those instruments play to give back emotional music.

Made of rough wood, using broken trees eradicated by the wind, “**La Foresta dei Violini**” represents a place of memories, witness of the violated nature, where architecture is both support and relief.

THE INSTALLATION

Two large spruce trunks emerge from the loggia of Main Courtyard of the University of Milan: the roots suspended in the void overlook a balustrade on the courtyard, supported by an architectural easel made of worked red spruce wood.

Disrupted trees, segments of memory, evidence of the infringed nature. Roots in the wind.

Architecture remains in between. The easel is an elementary support, the essential structure, which follows the work in all its stages.

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The artifact is a bridge between things and ideas: a geometric shape that lies in the wood carving, in the intersection of straight forms, it is the sum of singularities.

It bears the weight, connects different borders, has many names and functions in the human jargon.

For these reasons it is the simplest, most common and universal symbol of the ancestral relationship between technique and nature, between raw material and transformation.

Made of worked red spruce, it is the archetype of the craftsman work who repairs.

The dimensions are amplified, the roles turned upside down, the priorities acknowledged. Nature comes first.

“We want to celebrate the primordial architecture of the forest, respecting its structures and forms of intersection with the planet and its inhabitants. This project evokes the ability of nature to communicate with human beings, inviting them to tactfully observe its rules, taking care of it and following the natural order of the earth.”
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PANEVEGGIO FOREST, THE ACOUSTIC FOREST

Paneveggio Forest is renowned because is where the spruce trees used to make the most elegant and precious instrument, the violin, grow. Spruce trees are almost the 90% of the trees in the forest, associated with silver firs at lower altitudes, larch and Swiss pine to the upper ones, while the undergrowth is made up of a carpet of black and red blueberry.

And it is among these thousands of shades of green that master luthier Stradivari got lost looking for the most suitable trees for the making of his violins: the centuries-old red fir trees whose wood, thanks to its particular resonance capacity, provides the ideal raw material for the construction of sounding boards. This wood is characterised by a great elasticity that guarantees to better transmit the sound, and its lymphatic channels are like tiny organ pipes that create resonance. For this reason the trees are felled in the waning moon, between October and November, when in the trunk there is less quantity of sap.

The best ones can be recognised for the very thin and perfectly concentric growth rings with straight and fine fibers and few knots. It was in this forest that the greatest violin makers of Cremona reached the perfection of sound and many of the specimens made with the spruce of this forest are still kept today in the Violin Museum of the city.

LA FORESTA DEI VIOLINI

8 - 19 April 2019

INTERNI HUMAN SPACES

Università degli Studi di Milano - Ca' Granda ex Ospedale Maggiore

Via Festa del Perdono 7, Milan, Italy

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PARTNERS — FRANCESCO FRESA / GERMÀN FUENMAYOR / GINO GARBELLINI / MONICA TRICARIO

ASSOCIATI — CASTELLI / LAZZEROTTI / MANDELLI / MOLLO / PALLARES / SPAGNOLATTI

COD. FISCALE, P.IVA E N° REGISTRO IMPRESE MILANO 13139320157 R.E.A. 1621047 CAPITALE SOCIALE 10,000,00 I.V.

PIUARCHSRL VIA PALERMO 1, 20121 MILANO T+39 0289096130 F+39 02875506 STUDIO@PIUARCH.IT WWW.PIUARCH.IT

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Opening hours

8–14 April: 10.30 am –12.00 pm

15-19 April: 10.30 am –10.00 pm

Design Project *Piuarch*

Concept *Nemo Monti*

Sponsor *CityLife*

With the support of: *Provincia Autonoma di Trento, Magnifica Comunità di Fiemme*

Patronage *Università di Trento*

Photographer *Leonhard Angerer*

Partner Light service *L&L Luce&Light*

Partner Paint furniture service *ILVA*

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Founded in 1996 by Francesco Fresa, Germán Fuenmayor, Gino Garbellini and Monica Tricario, Piuarch works in the field of architecture, ranging from the design of office and retail buildings to the development of residential complexes and cultural recovery and urban renewal works, with attention constantly given to the values of environmental quality and the relationship with the context. Piuarch is internationally known for its collaboration with some of the major international fashion brands, including Dolce & Gabbana, Gucci, Fendi and Givenchy, alongside of which it has always experimented with social projects. The winner of the “2013 Italian Architect of the Year” prize and of two Gold Medals for Honorable Mention at the Milan Triennale, the studio has been exhibited several times at the Venice Biennale of Architecture and has obtained numerous publications and dedicated monographs. Recently Piuarch's Gucci Hub project has won the first prize in the *Mixed Use & Residential Buildings category* at the Archmarathon Awards 2018 and has been highlighted within the best *new architecture* of Milan Wallpaper Design Award for Best City.

www.piuarch.it

Nemo Monti

Nemo Monti Comunicazione is a PR and brand strategy agency for architecture, design, luxury, lifestyle, fashion, food and beverage industries. It was founded in Milan in 2010.

The agency activity ranges from press office, social media management, event organisation to content productions. President & CEO Monti is committed to implementing the sustainable development paths for every client.

Specialized in the storytelling of architecture and design, Nemo Monti collaborates with some of the major brands in the field, producing brand identity projects also for the hotel, food and fashion industries, often using design as a language to represent corporate values.

www.nemomonti.com

“La Foresta dei Violini”

If the spruce is the tree of sounds, the forest of Paneveggio is a large natural orchestra.

With this project Nemo Monti and Piuarch intended to narrate the life cycle of the precious Trentino firs, violently interrupted during a windstorm, on October 2018.

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Architecture, inspired by the natural drama, translates it into a sign, a massive sign in the heart of Milan, during the Design Week. Two large trunks of spruce trees are exposed in their raw and dramatic natural death: they show the roots, their strong and intimate previously invisible link with the mother earth, resting on a large easel made out of the same wood, giving shape to a suspended architecture. The exposed roots shout out the pain, the distress, the wound, the uncertainty; showing how a long life can be suddenly severed, on a dark and stormy night by violent and unpredictable gusts of wind. At the same time, they scream a complaint: the planet is in danger, and the wounded, altered, violated landscape is the dramatic evidence of it, the earth is no longer the safe shell of all time, not even for the large trees of Paneveggio forest. Architecture interprets the end, with an extreme gesture, but becomes the answer with new meanings, proposing other beginnings, other ways to experience the earth, live it, rethink it, regenerate it, starting from the roots and not from the top. A book from the 50s by Italian architect Luigi Figini comes to mind, "The green element and architecture", which initiates a detachment from the "diagnostic" rigidity of Rational architecture to get back to nature, which is rich in poetic perspectives. Figini expresses it through "architecture in direct dialogue with the surrounding nature and able to understand all its infinite aesthetic, material and spiritual potential".

Thus, in 2019, it seems that the roots of the two fir trees exposed to the eyes of the Fuorisalone visitors want to bring us back to the earth, to the violated nature, to make us reflect on it, but above all they want to take up a great lesson that about the sense of finding a green line of continuity, simplicity, naturalness for the future of Italian and international architecture.

G. Pino Scaglione, Lecturer of Urbanism and Landscape University of Trento

Press Office:

N E M O
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Via Milazzo 10 - 20121 Milano
+39 02 89070279
www.nemomonti.com

Giulia Benedetti
gbenedetti@nemomonti.com

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