

Project description “Hortus - Officine Culturali” – Gravina in Puglia



The design idea of **Hortus** stems from the need to return to the city a green space owned by the Municipality of Gravina in Puglia with a surface area of about 7000 square meters now abandoned and inaccessible. The area is inserted in the context of the ravines, small canyons dug in the rock of the Bradanica pit, which crosses Puglia and Basilicata up to the Ionian Sea. Like all the ravines, the Gravina's ravine, which overlooks the garden and the rock habitat that contains it, presents itself as a surprising variation of the surrounding Murgia territory, which is predominantly arid.

The project is part of a program of regeneration and recovery of the environmental and architectural heritage of Gravina, a network of interventions already carried out or under construction that are developed on different spheres (social, historical, tourism, economic, urban) and which intervene distinctly on different parts of the ravine. **Hortus** is the hinge between the margin “La Gravina” and the built city, and is strategic because it reconnects the urban environment with its landscape context on which the city has conformed. The city of Gravina has a shortage of public green spaces equipped and easily accessible, because most of the spaces have been privatized, abandoned and left to neglect over the years. The idea of a controlled landscape transformation and in line with the criteria of landscape protection, allow us to change the perception of places and the ways of enjoying places. The cultural association **underGRA**’ with Il Grillo editore, managers of the Urban Laboratory “Officine Culturali”, proposes the enhancement and redevelopment of the "green lung", close to the ravine and the Fondovico district, one of the oldest districts of Gravina

The planned activities are:

1. Sensitization of citizenship and social inclusion: to the knowledge and respect of the garden, to its attendance, to education towards new forms of *modus vivendi*, to a greater contact with nature, in a slow, eco-sustainable and environmentally friendly life. The garden will be the means of urban regeneration and purification, an instrument to trigger a new process of social inclusion and creation

of new professional figures, in a moment of economic crisis. These aims are intended to raise awareness among the stakeholders involved in participation, belonging to the territory and the assumption of social responsibility through the creation of a common space based on collective practices and forms of autonomous management of the land.

2. Recovery and redevelopment of the site: the work of recovery and redevelopment was carried out, as well as safety measures; the extraordinary and ordinary cleaning works, preliminary and in progress to the realization of the project, will be carried out also through the laboratory activities (dry stone walls, adjacent vegetable garden, botanical garden, etc.). The construction works will use non-invasive methodologies, and will be aimed at preserving the architectural, structural and constructive characteristics with the preexisting materials.

3. Re-functionalisation of spaces: the re-functionalization of the complex starts with a re-symbolization of space, from abandoned and privatized space, to a place where you feed yourself with what you cultivate. The heterogeneity of the interventions and activities planned, the different sectors of activities involved, the different uses and times of use of the place, will finally allow the place to express its potential revealing its inherent connotation, an Open Air social space.

4. Realization of laboratories and programmed cultural events: the workshops will have the function of introducing a multidisciplinary teaching in which the garden becomes the tool for the activities of food education but also for those of environmental education and knowledge of the territory. Making small consumers of co-producers, citizens of Gravina aware of their purchasing choices: educating to sustainable development and conscious consumption. Learning to read reality as a set of phenomena perceived through the senses, to increase one's memory and capacity for sensory perception, to appropriate a lexicon and a grammar of taste.

Laboratory Hortus_Accanto

The society in which we live is the consumer society, everything is done to be consumed quickly and thrown just as quickly. The messy and hasty way we feed ourselves fully reflects this lifestyle: no one takes more time to ask questions in front of a supermarket shelf or in front of an already prepared dish. As if our daily actions did not affect the mechanisms of the market, they did not have repercussions on our health, they did not represent an important part of our culture. The trend taken with the OrtoAccanto Laboratory is that of “eating well”, of the recovery of old knowledge and traditional dishes. The intent to involve adults, but especially children who still have a world to discover: change our daily eating habits trying to bring them closer to the concepts of good, clean and fair.



Archaeological Laboratory

The laboratory foresees the participation in the Simulated Excavation campaign on the site of our rupestre adjacent to the Lab_Orto garden. The garden is located above the rock complex, San Michele delle Grotte, all excavated in the tuff, the largest rock basilica in the area. The workshop is divided into a series of lectures between theoretical and practical, which will be attended by a limited number of students. The purpose of the archaeological laboratory is to bring the participants to the management of an archaeological excavation site, which starts from the preliminary investigations to the excavation and arrives until the first publication of the data obtained in the excavation and documentation campaign.

Ceramic laboratory

The COLAcola laboratory was born from the desire to find a meeting point between art and craftsmanship, from the pleasure of transmitting beauty through the small objects that accompany our daily life and the desire to trace the sign of the hand in each of them. Of the passage of man. The laboratory is also a teaching center for ceramics offering various types of courses through which to transmit the passion for ancient and always new techniques that allow children to make their imagination with_CRETA. The workshop will have a special section dedicated to the Cola, a traditional terracotta whistle, symbol of Gravina. «COLA_cola» is called in dialect a type of bird very widespread in the woods of the Murgia, similar to the stylization of a rooster or a hen. As artifacts, they occupy an area of popular culture that is located between expressive figuration and ceremonial use. Their function is that of a whistle, a poor toy, which was bought for their children by pilgrims who went to the Sanctuary of the Madonna di Picciano in the month of May, between Gravina and Matera. The masters able to realize these typical whistles, are now a rarity and this laboratory has the intent to spread the correct method for the realization, in fact the process, not really simple can be considered concluded only when the cola cola « whistle ».

Cine Orto

A film festival entitled CINEORTO UNDER THE STARS will be organized. Review that in addition to the screening of the film will see the participation of directors and actors to involve them in thematic debates. For a total duration of two months a year completely embracing the summer period. Beyond the screening will be organized a competition for short films divided into thematic sections but with reference to the abandoned public areas.

Music garden

Great importance will be given to the possibility of performing live concerts within the event space. A musical festival will be organized to stimulate youth aggregation. This festival aims to stimulate Italian composers who are beginners, and therefore not known to the general public, to develop original artistic productions that promote free creativity. The Award aims to offer a fair recognition and an opportunity for young artists to showcase all their creative abilities, their artistic sensibility and their desire to express themselves. The idea also wants to become an annual event without barriers or labels or prejudices against music in its most diverse expressions. Year after year the event will mark the evolutionary stages of the world of juvenile light music, the most unknown but also the most fascinating, with the aim of bringing together different musical cultures. Through this contest the LAB_ORTO will offer the opportunity to young singers to compete in an authoritative context as the event will be a prestigious showcase and a springboard for those young people looking for visibility.

Interested? Contact us: link@linkyouth.org