

TIRANA FAITH PARK

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MAIN AND SECONDARY ROAD - Paul klee - 1929

TIRANA FAITH PARK

Tirana shows itself as a city in constant renewal. A young city, that conveys a feeling of dynamism and ability to change. The impression you get strolling through its streets is that of an interesting contemporaneity of spaces. The large squares and palaces of the last regime, the long avenue, wanted by the previous one, and its buildings are flanked by contemporary architecture, lively streets and parks full of people... **a city made out of "pieces of time and not of slices of space"**¹. An extremely interesting urban scenery appears where, proceeding toward a progressive and collective appropriation of history, places and uses lay over other places and become, in the memory of the inhabitants, long lasting signs that latently inform the urban landscape and **build a web that weaves old and new**.

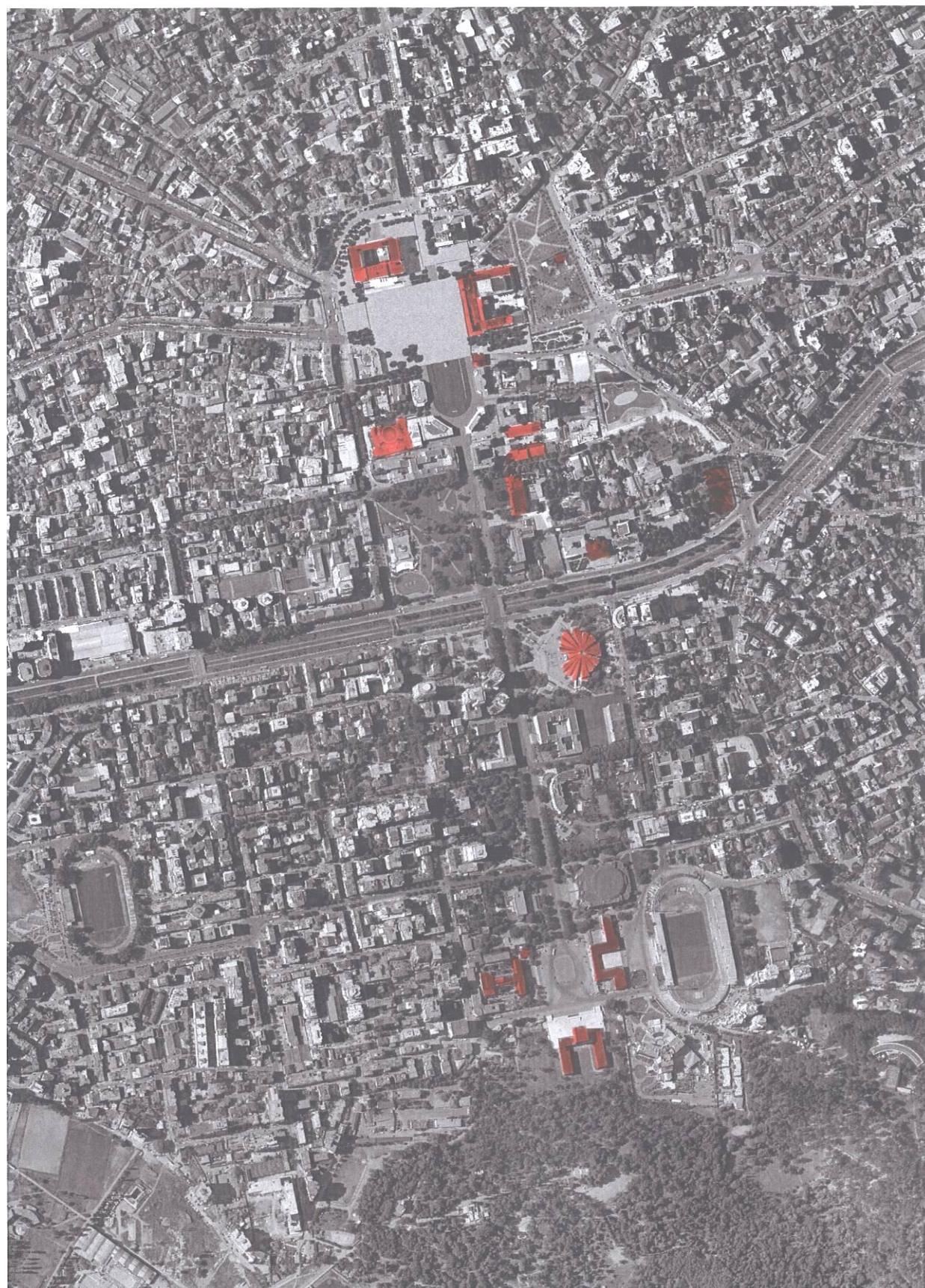
Curiosity in design and the contest subject compel us to closely observe this diversified **mosaic of urban situations** and to try gradually getting deeper into it, using the different sensibilities owned by each member of the design team. From time to time the memories of the young Albanian friends are intertwined with the interest and the amazement for this vibrant and dynamic atmosphere, that is expressed in the colours of the buildings facades, in the squares, in the new architectures and that is accompanied by still strongly Mediterranean modes in living the open spaces daily.

Crossing the centre of Tirana, the subject of the contest becomes even more interesting; it transform itself in a tool with which you can hold together these varied situations of the urban landscape, and **grasp "its lightings of image"**²: the crowd crossing the wide squares, the strolling along the boulevard, meetings and stopping in parks, the car traffic that clogs the great boulevard, the mixed feelings that shine through the events related to the possible interpretations of the Pyramid, the kind welcome in the mosque Haxhi Ethem Beu, the narration of a peaceful religious tolerance that weaves the story of the Albanians, the family history as well as the National one.

On the cover: "POESIE IMPOSSIBILI ROSSE" 2009 – Giorgio Milani

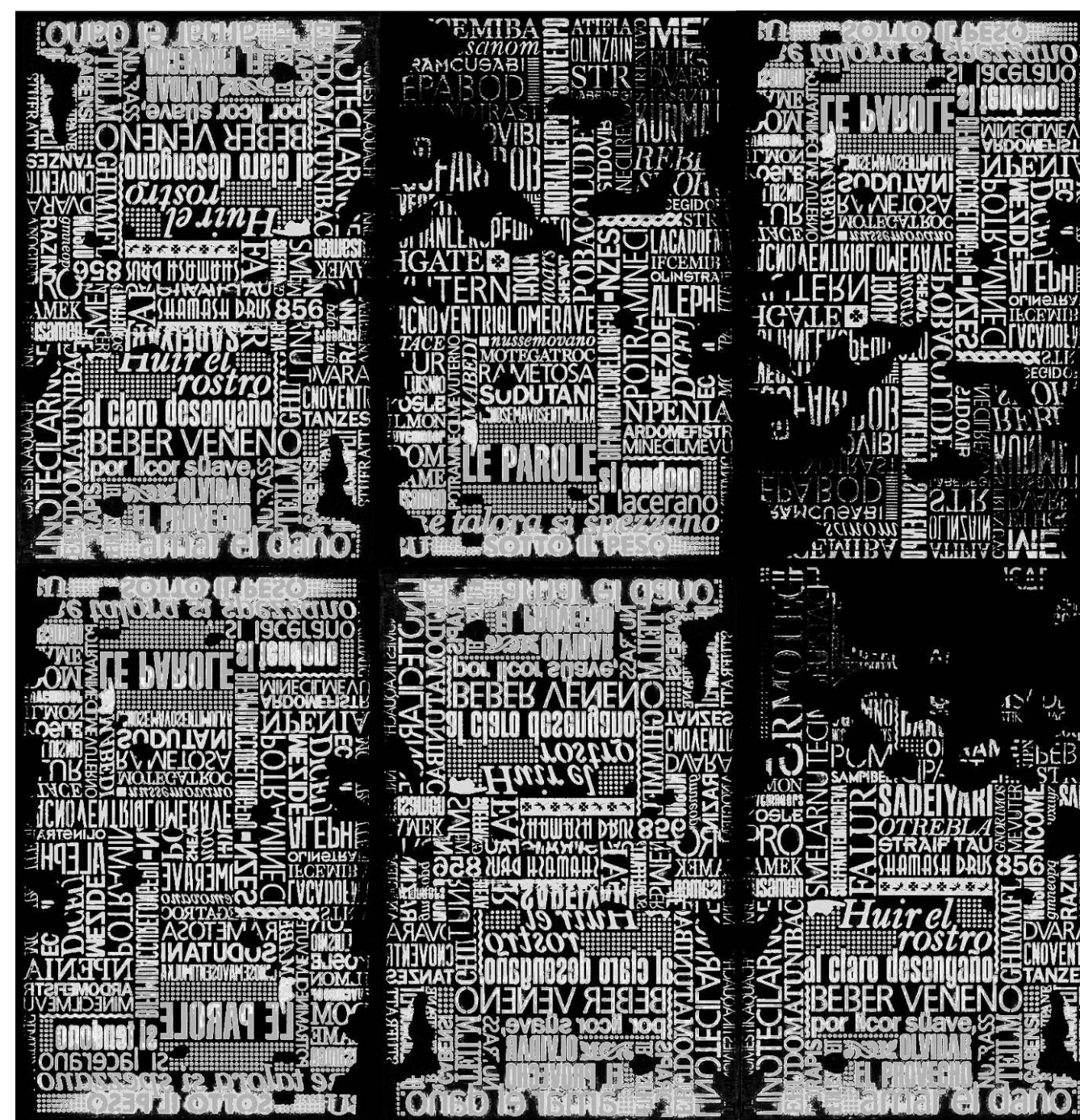
¹ Andrea Bulleri, *Tirana Contemporaneità sospesa*, Quodlibet Studio, 2012

² Paolo Rumiz, *Rumiz e i Balcani. Note bastarde che parlano al cuore dell'uomo*, luglio 2013



A NEW SCENE FOR TIRANA

The reflection that opens on the realization of Faith Park physically involves a large part of the city center and includes consolidated urban structures, green areas, representative and government buildings as well as monumental symbols of the recent past. The subject of the contest, open to inter-religious coexistence and to the values of hospitality and understanding, is dramatically made matter of topical by the recent events and becomes fundamental for both the Albanian and the European culture.



"ECO DI PASSI NELLA MEMORIA" 2011 – Giorgio Milani

The Faith Park design work questions the ability to bring together the different urban situations found in the portion of the city involved in it: *the monumental and the representative, the daily move and the presence of the most important religious buildings of the city, the remembrances and the memories stuck to the places, ... the desire for renewal and the need for conservation and attention to historical records*. Faith Park is envisioned as a thread that curls spaces otherwise connoted, gathering them together in a common story, which can be written using different alphabets, in order to put in relation the different places through urban landscapes, renewed or rediscovered uses and images.

The thread that draws the new urban web consists of **visual trajectories**, of **points of view**, of **plants and flowers** retrieved from the holy texts, of the **shadows** and of the **different forms of water** ... are the letters and signs that create this new alphabet and give shape to the words of the narration.

The issues investigated by the project concern the manner to introduce, within such a large portion of the town centre, a new urban landscape. What dialogue establishes between the often rhetorical monumentality of the past and the fragility of everyday life as well as the sweetness of personal memories? How does the new urban scene, the new "urban scale garden" face the historical route of the Boulevard and its government buildings?

The design proposal chooses to cross the places articulating a **direct confrontation between the site situation and the different ages that live in it**. New situations and different routes are built, connections and uses are rediscovered, new opportunities and new situations are suggested. The theme of cultural and religious freedom, innervating the cityscape, highlights previously latent connections and offers opportunities for the everyday use of the open spaces, that become available locations for meetings and events, both intergenerational and intercultural. The introduction of plants and flowers mentioned in the main Sacred Texts becomes a signal on an urban scale, it becomes a part of the public space, it brings quality, involves and moves, expresses fragrances, movement, sense of time.

Monuments and daily life are intertwined in the plot drawn by these suggestive vegetation quotes, a dynamic highlighting, which changes seasonally, bringing colour and variety, introducing small portions of time, made of night and day, sun and shadow, a time that can also play with the city's most controversial monuments, even with the Pyramid.

From the Pyramid the vegetation plot stretches in the different areas, creeps along the banks of the Lana, takes shape in water ponds, crosses the Boulevard and returns back to the Pyramid following trajectories that overlap existing routes or hint at new ones, often rediscovering routes remained in to the background of the official representative city. The Boulevard retains the structural power of its urban significance and simultaneously establishes an open dialogue with this garden that intrudes in the open spaces opened along the historically representative urban axis and modifies them.



PYRAMID

A problematic urban object - a symbol rather than a monument.

During the inspection it was reported a preservation order imposed on the external walls not including the external coatings which, over time, have been removed. As a result of the alternate feelings raised by this structure in the inhabitants of the city and perhaps of the whole Albania the interior has been restlessly transformed. His presence imposes a direct comparison with a past still too close, but the same request to adopt a conservative approach, implies that the Pyramid has been definitely accepted within the urban landscape. **People walk through its sloping walls that become viewpoints, places to chat, to read ... A place that attracts in despite of what it symbolizes.**



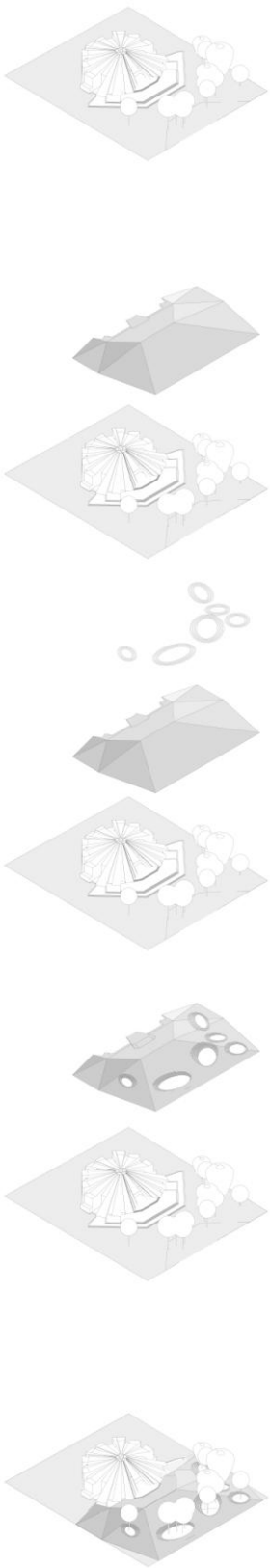
Then there is all that immense space in front of it, hard to walk, and so excluding.

Our reflection was centred on the questions raised by issues **speaking of memories conservation, collective history and new functions aimed** to transform this uncomfortable symbol in an inclusive urban structure, open to young people, willing and able to express concepts that we would really like to see becoming a cultural heritage in common with Europe - freedom of expression, sustainability, barriers elimination, including the architectural ones..

The design process has started from the external space, in order to identify the dynamic and planimetric relationships that could put in relation the Boulevard, the city level, with the inner space, designed as public area - square, winter garden, a place of performances and exhibitions, a gallery –

The proposal is expressed as **a land draft**, in search of a new morphology that would **connect the level of the main entrance of the Pyramid to the city one**. The **existing trees become the pivot points** of a morphing that, with gentle slopes, overcomes the level differences but opens in the presence of vegetation, finding the original ground level. The space around the pyramid becomes available to any kind of attendance, as well as daily meeting and small shows or events. The shadow of the existing trees marks the privileged places for staying, draws small green "ponds" in the pavement that invite to stop.

Turning around the Pyramid, open space gradually becomes green while pavement also enters directly into the lower building level, located at nearly the same height of the river bank. The theme given by the bond of conservation has been fully observed and the new morphology does not eliminate the basement levels that architecturally characterize the building, but connects them leaving them clearly readable.



Another issue to address is the relationship with the object itself, with its untouchable prospect. Which urban dialogue can be established what role, including physical and perceptive, can play the pyramid to the theme of Faith Park and the creation of a center of Europe in Albania?

The reflection conveys the values of cultural and religious freedom that innervate the proposal of Faith Park to take property of this object on an urban scale and cross it from outside to inside, climb on its sloping walls as citizens do today, and cover its surfaces with letters of all alphabets. **A celebration of dialogue** involving the various languages with which the Sacred Texts express themselves as well as the contemporary conversations, **the happy fantasy on the alphabet** by Bruno Munari, ... *fantastic, unexpected, with all letters in different sizes, shapes, material and colour; thrown in the air with joy ...* The Pyramid like the pages of a book on urban scale, a challenge to misunderstanding, a land art proposal coherent with the artistic research of Giorgio Milani, an Italian sculptor member of the design team, .

The languages evoked by the written walls are also flanked by those **expressed through the vegetable material**. One facade element becomes **the start of the narration composed with the plants and flowers mentioned in the Holy Books**. A cover of perennial herbaceous that stretches on the pavement gious of the square, "breaks" on the banks of the River Lana then continues within the green areas that flank t he Boulevard.

The pyramid becomes the starting point and the heart of Faith Park, a land mark visible from urban walks but also a vantage point of view over the city. We have foreseen a panoramic elevator that leads with no danger to the top of the pyramid with the view over the whole Faith Park. We tell the tale of this climb through the transparency of the alphabets, so they dissolve into the green trees and into the sky. So as to become a luminous sign in the night landscape of the city.

Getting inside this renovated urban element becomes simple, since the plan of the square slips inside and connects to the level of the riverfront the level of the side entrances as well as the level of the front entrance, facing the Boulevard.



The project proposal works, also **inside**, with the dual logic of **conservation and reinterpretation**. We imagine to preserve and recover the architectural structure and the Piranesi's look of flights of stairs and the intertwining of the balconies.



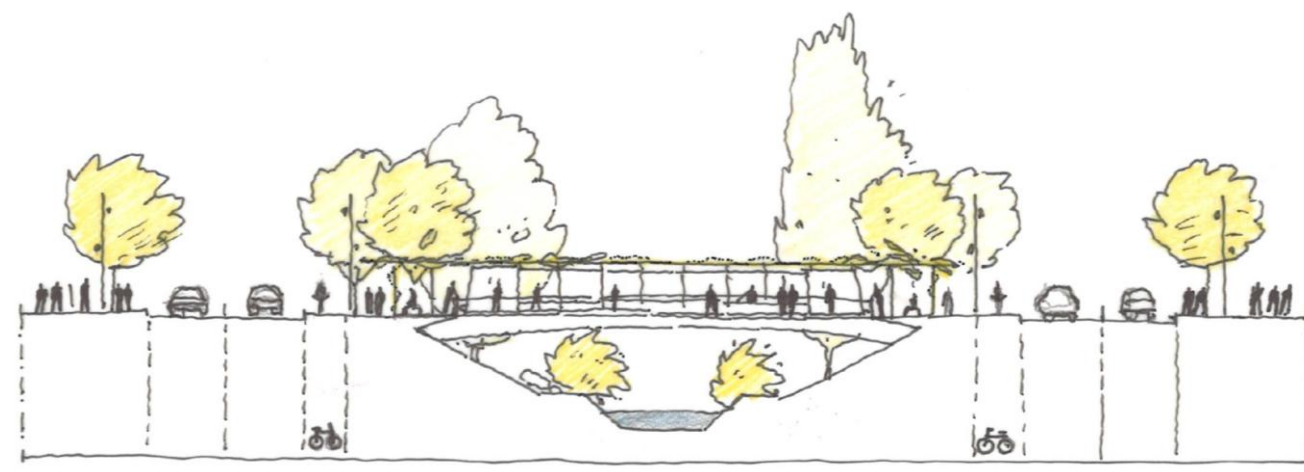
The centre is emptied, the slab that closes the basement and the little false dome that prevents the opening to the sky are removed. You get a bright interior with **light coming from above** and invests the structures and galleries' sides, opened to the central volume at full height, **as an indoor garden**. A rich space of greenery that directly receives air, rain and light.

The symbol is reversed, there is no one at the centre, replaced by vegetation that belongs to the community.



"TYPE THE SKY" 2011 – Lisa Reinermann

A **sustainable architecture** is then created, an architecture that "breathes", self-sufficient from an energetic point of view and of inexpensive maintenance, hosting open spaces for meetings that follow the transparent volumes hosting cafes, information spaces, places of art or reading, and forming areas available for music, pieces, exhibitions. A dynamic place, dedicated to young people who has to make it as a point for meeting and exchanging, that is called cultural centre, art centre, music centre ... words can vary because the ways of use can vary, as well as the time of the day or the light... It is important that any young, arriving in Tirana, knows that he is welcome in the pyramid, and can ask information, learn, find friends, breathe the young air that the city communicates...



RIVER LANA

The trajectories drawing Faith Park start from the Pyramid, from this so controversial and lively place, and branch along different routes, following the threads of the web that connects the main religious centres and the urban central spaces.

The river Lana first of all.

Today the image of the stream, cleaned of accretions and abuses which occupied the banks, is clear, and the water, when present, is rushing in the heavily channelled river bed and the banks are green and well maintained. The river flows deeply embedded between the two boulevards, placed on the right and on left bank. The presence of Lana **opens the view to the mountains on the east**, and suggests the **possibility of cross connections with the Boulevard of the Martyrs**. It allows to imagine a qualified path towards the new mosque on one hand and to the Park Rinia, "The Block" bridge and the area of the Three Brothers Frashëri on the other. So **interesting relationships can be identified**, reinforced by the presence of the complex of the Catholic church overlooking the boulevard that runs along the river.

The proposal is centered on the theme of a **cycle and pedestrian path along the river banks** and the crossings of the river: the river, with its banks, participates to and strengthens the construction of Faith Park as a complex urban structure.

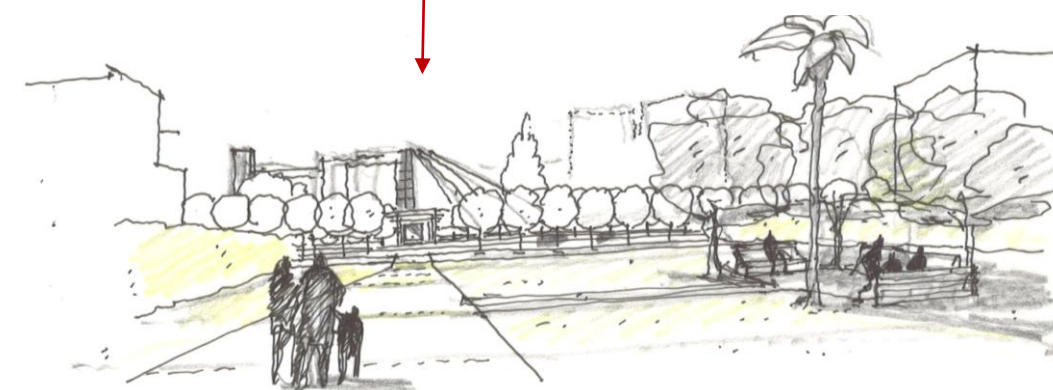
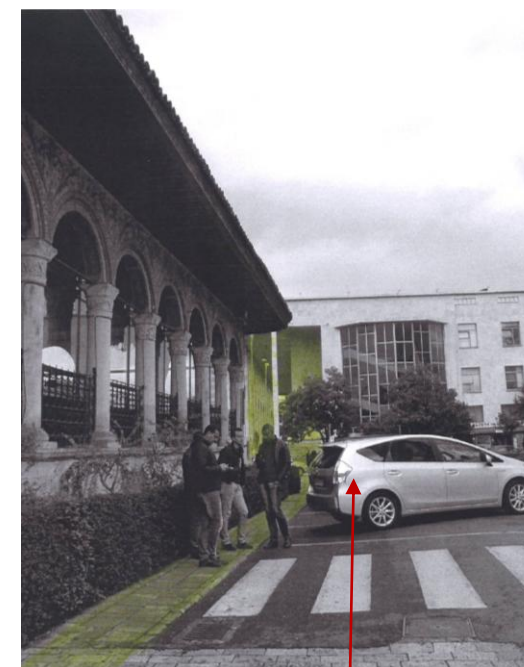
We imagine to realize, on both sides, **a walk shaded by a double row of trees**, overlooking the river and extended to accommodate equipped staging points: a long terrace surrounded by vegetation to allow the cycling path without causing interference with strolling pedestrians. Along the river banks existing plants are kept, introducing groups of willow shrubs to screen the overbuilding of the riverbed. The point, of utmost importance and environmentally necessary, of the requalification and of a different regimentation of the watercourse should be left to a deeper understanding of the place and the specificity of the entire hydraulic fluvial area.

In the river stretch involved in the Faith Park project, with the aim to strengthen the image of connection expressed by the promenade along the banks, we reflect on the enhancement of existing bridges by improving their use by pedestrian and cyclists and is assumed the creation of a **new pedestrian bridge, linking the two banks in line with an entrance to the Pyramid**. A bridge that takes a great idea to requalify the river axis as a symbol of an open and universal culture. **We imagine a bridge equipped with a central library**, an occasion that suggests the possibility of a stop to read during the river walk through Faith Park: the books entering the Pyramid...



ROUTE BETWEEN MOSQUE THEATRE ART

The description of this other route within the Faith Park **starts from the open space behind the Opera House and reaches the Pyramid**, a thread that joins some historically and culturally important buildings and brings up an urban system characterized by the presence of 'building of the Bektashi, the old mosque, the clock tower, the drama theatres, the art Gallery which, via the new bridge / Library, reaches the pyramid, the new centre of culture.



In this case the draft Faith Park allows us to bring out a wealth existing urban, accompanying and underlying it with the intertwining of history and memories, with some figures and plants in the garden / paradise (pairidaeze - Pardeš).

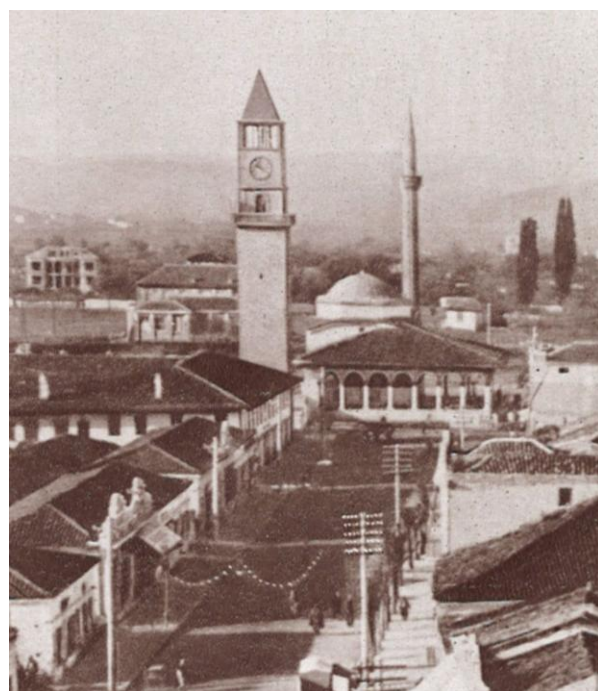
In this case the Faith Park project allows us to bring out an existing urban asset, joining and highlighting it with the intertwining of history and memories, with some figures and plants of the garden / paradise (pairidaeze - Pardeš).

The space behind the Opera House, directly connected with **Scanderberg square, for which we acknowledge the development proposed by the winning project**, is today a marginal place in spite of its very central position, lost in the multiplicity of urban elements that face it, different and strangers one to another ... Despite the uncertain nowadays appearance, the **historical memory brings us back to the presence of the old bazaar** of which only the large attendance of the open space remains. Today, it is primarily a place of fast switching, just a space to cross.

These thoughts have driven the design team to the quest for **a place that invites to stop**, which allows to configure a recognizable urban space, in which languages and architectural figures find their place: the contemporaneity of the tower that is going to be finished, the single monuments, the unresolved area behind the Opera, the petite delicacy of the mosque, the few houses of the past, the small building of the Bektashi.

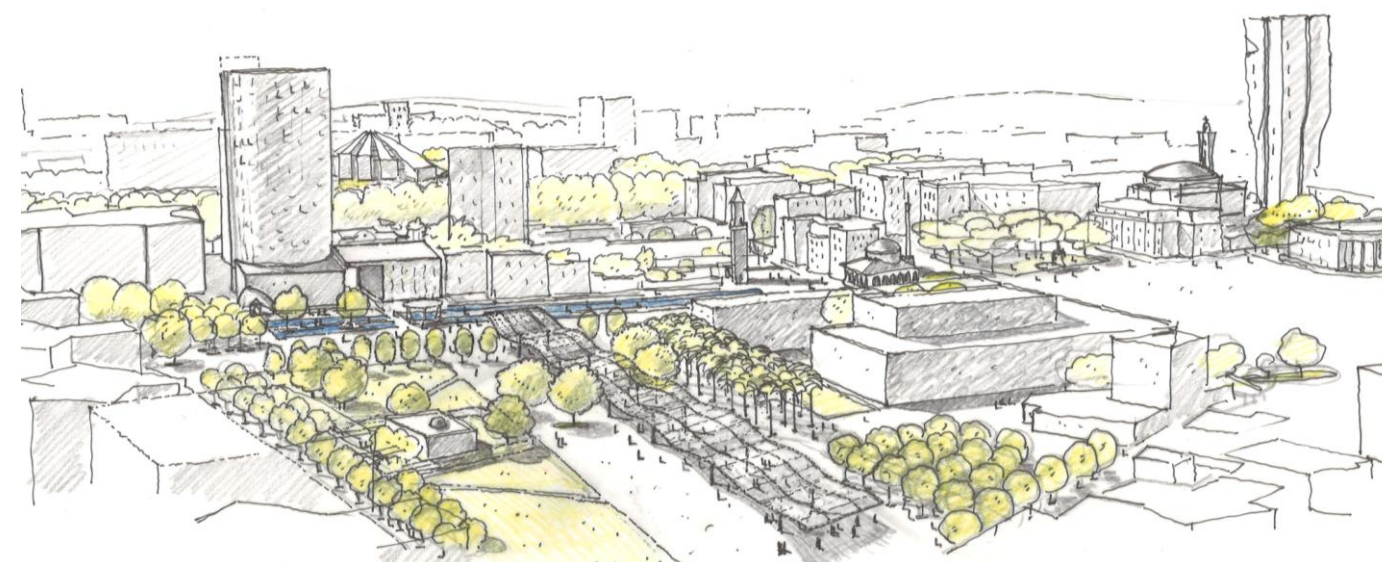
The proposal recalls the **Bazar memory, expressing it in a light structure**, a long pergola, which draws a range of shade available to set up a small market, to host sessions or even moments of meeting, lectures, evening shows perhaps related the presence of the Bektashi.

A structure made mostly of light and shadow and of the presence of people at different times of day, which relates the commercial fronts with new opportunities of urban crossing introduced by the project of the new tower and it measures the open space, redefined by the presence of trees' curtains: the existing rows along the trade routes to the east, the new tree structure composed of plane that collects the trees foreseen by the project of the Scandenberg square, the rapid pace of the palm grove that reassembles the area behind the Opera House, the existing magnolia rows.



The definite sign of the Pergola connects the large trees and leads this urban space to the area facing the mosque and marked by the clock tower, by the historical constructions, by the new tower and monuments: to Solejman pasha, to the Unknown Soldier, the Frienship monument, the Kapllan pasha tomb... the reference to the garden and the need to hold together elements so important and so heterogeneous, suggested to propose a pool of water, **a liquid parterre, crossed by directed paths, where a long line of lotus flowers leads to the mosque, the clock tower, the porch marking the front of the Opera House.**

The urban area defined by these three elements is very interesting. It not only marks an entrance to the Scanderberg square but it **identifies the beginning of the urban journey** that, symbolically, starting from the porch of the Palace of the Opera, connects the buildings of the drama theatre and crossing the walk Toptani, reaches the National Gallery of Art. **A journey through the places of culture production**, highlighted by the passage of a strip of water that is interrupted to mark the entrances and settles, with a small pool of water on the parterre of the Art Gallery.

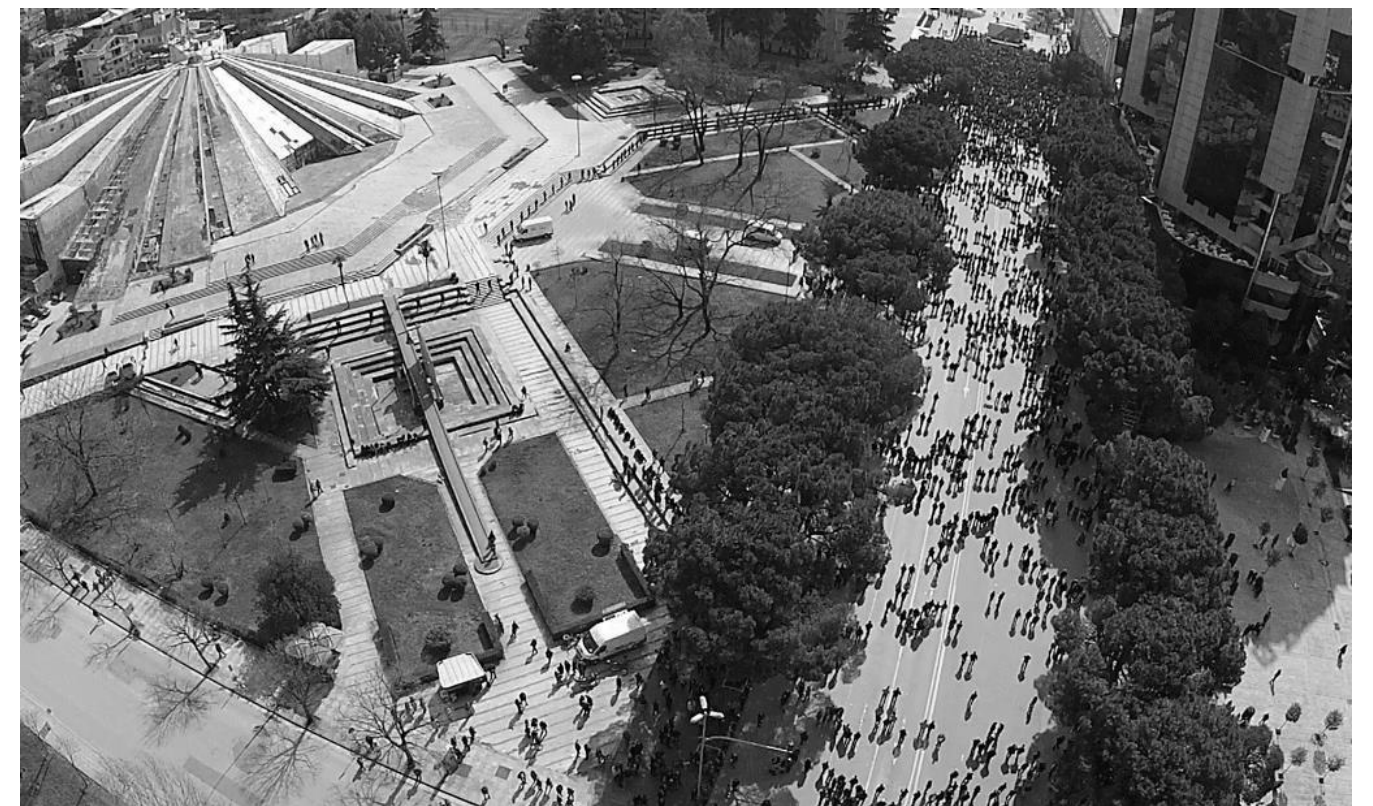
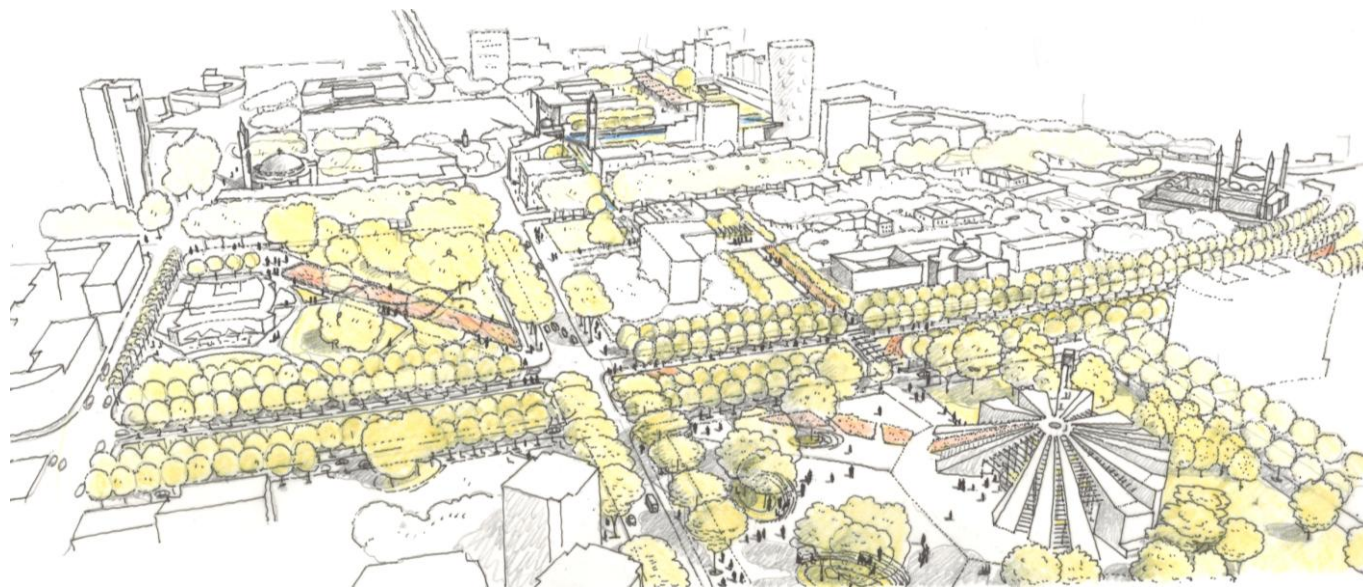


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The Art Gallery is included in the urban network designed by Faith Park. It marks an important stop at the very beginning of the Boulevard of Martyrs and becomes a joint that connects the Rinia Park, located on the top of the Boulevard, with a new promenade that leads to the Pyramid.

From the Art Gallery a beautiful promenade stretching existing routes Faith Park to the new mosque begins while, on the other side of the building exhibition, opens **a free green area**, nowadays forgotten between the Dajti Hotel's fence, the Catholic Church and the villa housing the former royal family . Albanians friends bind to this area sweet childhood memories: *"I went there as a child to take courses in painting and were also being held courses of various musical instruments, small concerts, sports and games in the field behind the Hotel Dajti"* . .. memories that unfortunately are still unable to reopen closed gates but measure the value of places that today the city does not live.

From the Art Gallery side **we can get off directly at the Lana river, find the new bridge/library and enter the Pyramid.** On the way we pass through this space today forgotten, we imagine it made up of small gardens that can enrich the narration of Faith Park and suggest the possibility of a peaceful stop to read, draw, rest.



THE BOULEVARD OF THE MARTYRS IN THE FAITH PARK

The Boulevard of the Martyrs and its inclusion in Faith Park has been the subject of many reflections. In the case of the boulevard we are dealing with an urban structure built during the 30s of 900, in the period of the Italian influence. An historical urban axis, very recognizable and strongly characterized in its spaces by the arboreal structures that accompany it and by the presence of the main government buildings. An infrastructure that transcends the urban scale, referring to the entire nation. A unified public space that connects Skanderbeg Square with Mother Theresa Square, from the equestrian statue of the national Albanian hero to the metaphysical void space surrounded by the buildings of the University and the Academy.

The question becomes how to articulate a conservative approach characterized by attention and safeguard of the existing, with the inclusion of new themes that tell of different uses of open spaces, a different way of moving, to observe and to stay.

Photographs of the car free Boulevard, made pedestrian and conquered by the crowd, talk about a different space, full of charm and potential. Certainly it remains, at least for now, a situation limited to a few days, possibly extended and made more definitive in some areas, today already more relaxed, such as the entrance to Scanderberg square or the final stretch, which starts from the Congress and includes the Mother Teresa Square. The issues of urban traffic remain in the background, they are currently just intentional although they clarify the possibility of promoting specific actions to slow down and decrease the car presence in favour of the pedestrian, bicycle and public transport. This would have an important influence on the values of sustainability of the urban ecosystem and the citizens quality of life.

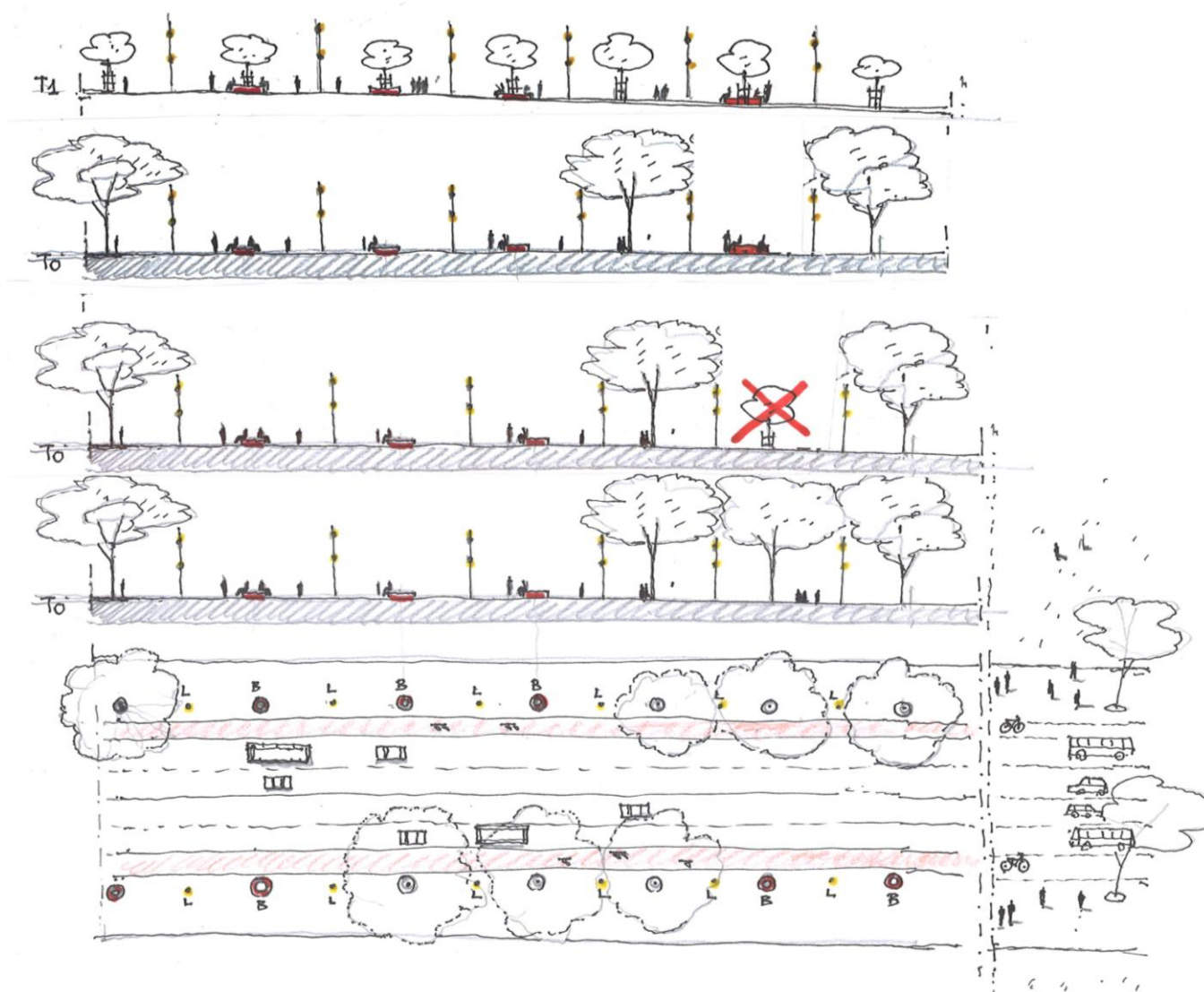
Another crucial issue, in the definition of interventions on this historical urban structure, responses to the need / urgency to **safeguard and preserve the tree structure composed of *Pinus pinea*** that belongs to the vegetation plant contemporary to the construction of the Boulevard. Concerning these trees, problems of shortages are evident, as well as the constraints of the root which brings to the need to **identify a specific program of maintenance and analysis of the plants health** that can promote, with competence and knowledge, the actions necessary to preserve and maintain this important tree heritage. In the first instance it should be noted, however, the need to operate an expansion of the free surface of the pavement near the roots.

The current situation of the rows of pines raises **an important reflection on how to implement the historical arboreal systems, both contemporary and homogeneous, in which, over time, some trees had been removed, leaving gaps in the continuity of the tree structure.** The replacement of individual plants to reconstruct the original spin brings many problems both for young trees planted between trees already formed and it also cheapens the overall look of the different sections of spin, so they lose their visual strength of a homogeneous system.

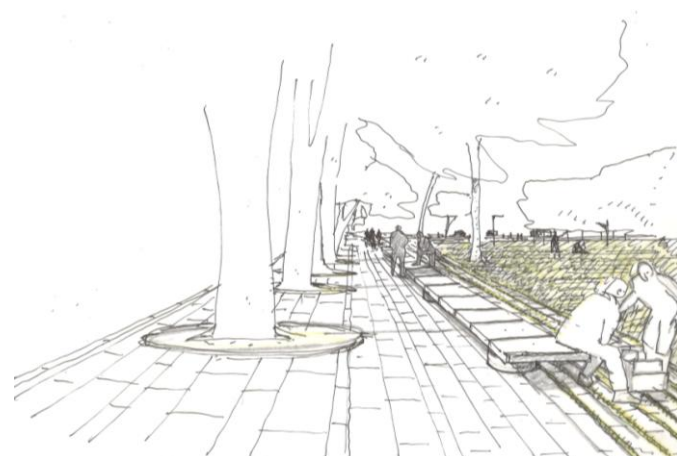
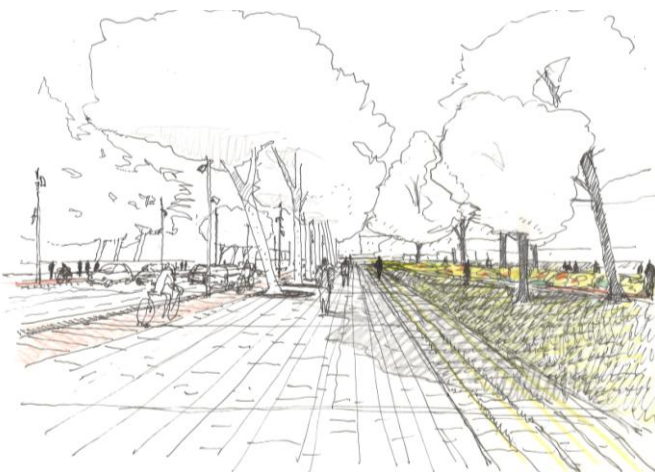
The design proposal suggests to highlight the lacking trees through the arrangement of benches of shape and size as the rims of the existing trees. When the stretch of tree-row will come to maturity you will instead proceed with a regular layout, reassembling the arboreal pace that accompanied the Boulevard in the past

The intervention on the Boulevard is therefore an action of restoration implemented by redefining the pedestrian zones and cycle paths, with actions of pavement and replacement of lighting fixtures, the redesign and expansion of areas around the trees.

Therefore, on the Boulevard the Faith park finds a break, a moment of silence as in a music score. The narration starts again in the green areas that open on its sides, where the Boulevard is connected to the restored existing parks. These are minute interventions of re-stitching and attention to details that create a **threshold zone**, a band where the grass alternates to the pavement: **the boulevard that slides in the park and the park entering the boulevard.**



Measures to promote pedestrian and bicycle - safety of bike paths – traffic of public transport and private cars
Actions to care and protection existing *Pinus pinea* – operation times for stretches of homogeneous avenue



PARKS

The Faith Park enters the green areas that open along the Boulevard with an attitude of attention towards the existing: the big trees and different monuments that characterize these areas are not being affected in any way. The new landscape is being designed by suggestions promoted by the references to the plant species mentioned in the Holy Books and by the quest for a new atmosphere bearing harmony and hospitality, **penetrates the existing parks following trajectories freed by the existing trees.** It also crosses them with physical or visual connections that branch off from the Pyramid, which, in this case too, plays a central and articulation role with respect to the proposals of new urban relations.

The considered **parks are highly frequented areas**, with recognizable dynamics: many crossings (we would say only pedestrian) while the rest of the people crowding the edges, on the walls that separate the green areas from the sidewalks. Here people chat, there are small exhibitions of objects, there's a fun daily use of public space.

The steps between the sidewalk and green area, although not fenced, are often characterized by elements of discontinuity. Within the areas new trees and shrubs rather scattered can be seen, in which it is difficult to recognize any form of relationship with the older trees already present which, by contrast, are configured as interesting groups of trees, that create pleasant shadow areas. The seats and children games, when present, are arranged in the most exposed, often along sunny paths, not always cosy.

The Faith Park project involves these green areas considering them as elements of great value to the scale of the boulevard and for the central area of the city. The intention is to safeguard the relationship between the place and the tiny daily fruition that we see through these parks.

We would like that **the proposed new landscape will enter without imposing itself on everyday use modes**, working to implement the comfort of being in the open space and adding colour and variety to a scene that remains fully available.

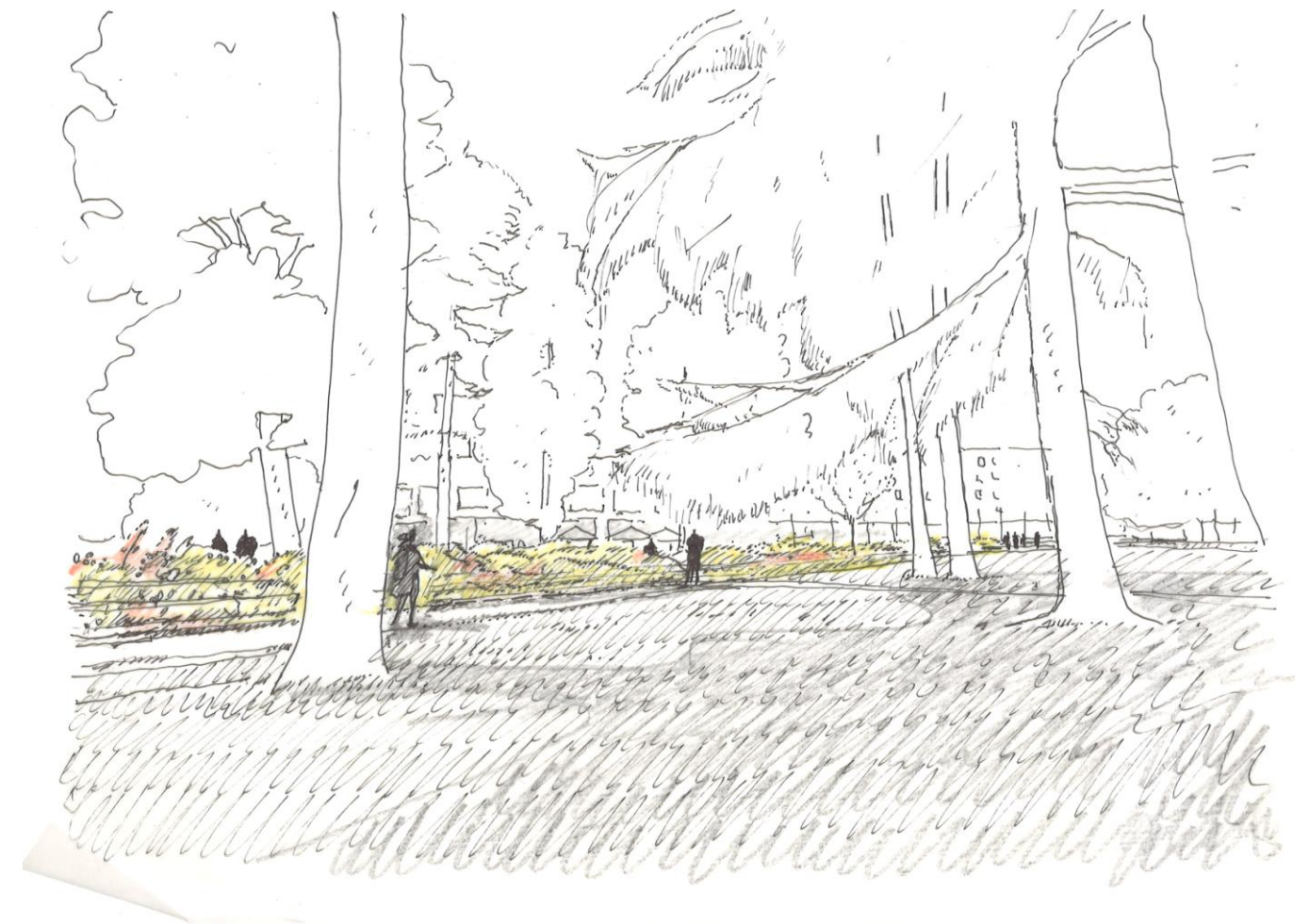
The proposed work acts on the redefinition of the edge of the green areas to the urban paths, always using two types of intervention that are repeated in different situations, so as to **create a common and recognizable language within the areas that define the Faith Park.**

A seating element, which simply reconfigures and reorders the relationship between the sidewalk and the green area thus making possible to facilitate the stop and staying that characterize the usual everyday fruition.

The other type, as described in the section of the Boulevard, works instead with the aim to create a visual continuity between the sidewalk and the green area, in order to define a threshold of connection between the open parks and the urban path, widening the sidewalk toward the park and vice versa the green area toward the sidewalk.

Within the green areas **gardening interventions** are assumed in order to carefully maintain and keep safe a large groups of trees, to recovery meadow areas, to reconfigure the paths, protecting, thanks to the tracking and the materials used, the root systems of plants, and intervening with vegetation ground cover to repair the areas under the canopy, where it is clear the difficulty of growth of the grass. We imagine a redistribution of seats arranged in function of the presence of the shadow of plants, creating meeting places but also of rest possibilities and tranquillity.

Safeguard actions in areas that are rather consolidated, in which **the introduction of grass and shrub vegetation belts suggest new landscape situations.** These continue the story of Faith Park and accompany the pedestrian crossing paths, linking the different parts of the city and the various religious presences in this central area. They speak of colours and scents today absent and introduce new visual perceptions. The different species are moving with the breeze bringing the perception of time, movements and dynamics now completely absent. A specific study on planting patterns and seasonality of plant material proposed allow to obtain different but always pleasant colours and aspects throughout the year.



FROM THE FAITH PARK TO THE GRAND PARK

The trajectories drawn by the proposed Faith Park are intertwined and involve the axis of Boulevard until one reaches Mother Teresa Square.

This place is completely told from the architecture of the buildings that make it up: a great void that can not be measured by the observer scale, it is hard to cross and, definitely, does not invite to a daily attendance. The reference to the metaphysical world becomes too easy and simplified.

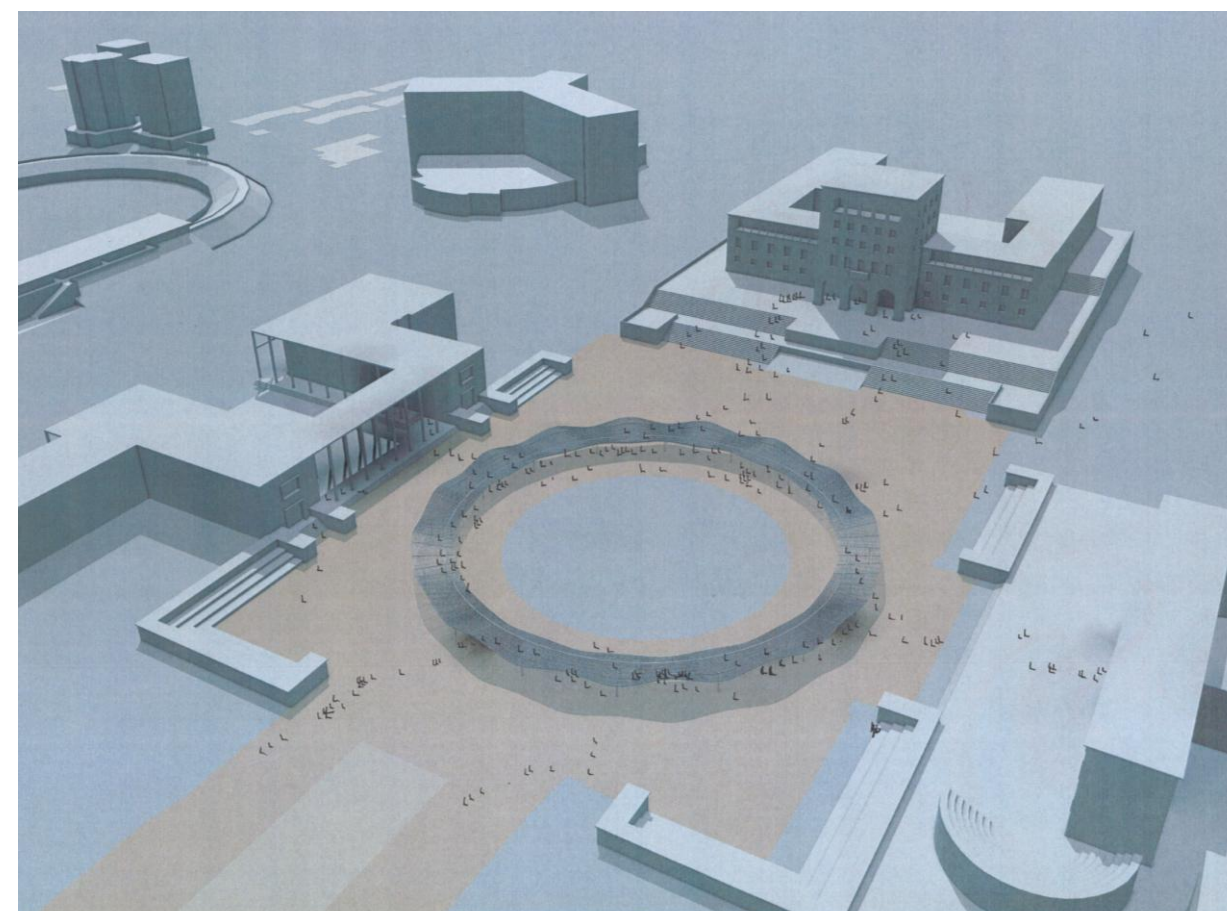
Once again, the situations of the places are interwoven with the memories of those who have always lived them: the presence of a pool of water as an element of coolness and as a meeting point in the summer evenings, the events related to student protests... Important moments of personal and common history.

The reflection is on how this space is lived by the inhabitants and what does it mean to combine the obvious rhetoric of fascist architecture with the spontaneity of daily visits.

The site also exists as a visual, prospective, functional end of the long boulevard. For this reason and purpose one can imagine the need to highlight, with the use of the same flooring, the belonging of the square to the head of the urban axis and the continuity with the pedestrian and cycling routes of the Boulevard

The square, which still can keep the driveway, already today rather small, is shaped, at its core, to form a small circular basin which is a low water tank but could also become an area available for events or shows. Around it we imagine a space equipped with chairs, shaded by a structure that provides a simple shelter from the summer sun. An arrangement that invites people, students to stop and find a place to spend an evening, to play, to chat. A stop along the routes of Faith Park.

The last tour, started from the Pyramid, then runs along the Boulevard, dwells in Maria Teresa Square and then raise up, next to the building of the university, to the amphitheatre that we can find, now almost destroyed, inside Gran Park.



VEGETATION

Faith Park becomes an **opportunity to propose a big "botanical garden" that is spreading throughout the city center, created from existing trees and new plant material planted** referring to the readings of sacred texts.

Vegetable aspects speak of coexistence between plants, between men and plants and then among men themselves. The biodiversity, that the Faith Park proposal enters, assumes a high urban value and becomes a symbol of attention, observation and knowledge.

A new map of greenways is built, and it will feature, just in the sense of religious cohabitation, the project. Within this **new "vegetable mesh" individual urban spaces can be identified as places of coexistence of different cultures and traditions** and made recognizable thanks to the introduction of specific plant species. The proposal of the Garden of Faith Park can also make use of **technological systems** that, through the use of multimedia systems (dedicated website, QRCode, iBeacon), enable anyone, by using a simple smartphone, to recognize the different plant species, know the botanical characteristics, access to information relating to the relationships between plants and sacred texts, set up an area where social exchange information, to enable communication with the citizens, to show the progress of the work, collect comments.

Plants and Holy Books

The advice of experts in theology and the comparison with the specialist botanist, has allowed the identification of species of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, representative of the Muslim culture as well as the Jewish Christian, suited to the climatic and soil conditions of Tirana.

The identified trees are differently articulated, based on their role within the project:

- **Arboreal structures** that define unit and recognizable systems: plataneto, palm trees, hedges of pomegranates; shrub mono species groupings;
- Structures with **plant with different sizes**, to configure more varied and less structured groups of trees or **isolated trees**;
- **Herbaceous vegetation zones**, identified as **connecting elements in urban scale**: herbaceous perennials, bulbs and grasses, herbaceous groundcover plants. The vegetable bands will consist of species with a high degree of biodiversity and a strong ability to settle and become naturalized: **they create recognizable places of contemplation of nature and observation of the changing seasons**. The choice of the species was suggested by the meanings and the cultural and religious values of which each one carries. The plants were juxtaposed to each other according to specific criteria, in keeping with their nature and function of vegetative ultimate expression of their ornamental characteristics.

These strips of plants become:

- reference elements and orientation in the city;
- places to go periodically to observe seasonal changes;
- knowable places through special information devices;
- job opportunities and specialization for green operators;
- material symbols of the spread of natural elements and the culture of respect for diversity, through the collection and distribution of seeds.

First list of plants from Holy Books :

We provided an initial list of plants found in the sacred texts, both Muslim and Jewish Christian culture. It is evident that, being in a Mediterranean area, there are many similarities and many species are repeated in the various writings.

For the choice of vegetable species, it is also interesting a reading of the paintings that decorate the walls of the Mosque Haxhi Ethem Beu.

Muslim culture:

Holy Quran

Olea europea, Phoenix dactylifera, Ficus carica, Punica granatum, Zingiber officinale, Majorana ortensis, - Argan - Vitis vinifera - Robinia pseudoacacia - Salvadora persica - Rhamnus alaternus - Tamarix - Citrus aurantium - Platanus orientalis

Jasminus nudiflorum - Ligustrum ovalifolium - pepper - Lavandula officinalis - Plantago lanceolata - Tulipa gesneriana (from turban) - myrtus - Nelumbo nucifera - Rosa (present only in some versions of Islamic culture) - Nigella sativa, fenugreek foenum- graecum

Jewish Christian culture

Biblical traditions: Hebrew Bible and Old Testament:

Olea europea - Ficus carica - Brassica alba - Cedrus libani - Fraxinus ornus, Triticum vulgare -Hordeum - Vitis vinifera -Cyperus papyrus - Pistacia Terebinthus - Punica granatum - Phoenix dactylifera, Hissopus officinalis - Hesperocallis undulata (Desert Lily);

Christian traditions: the New Testament and later texts:

Vitis vinifera - Tricum - Olea europea - Phoenix dactylifera - Rosa - Lilium

Finally we remember the lists of plants used in Islamic gardens and in sacred gardens (the convent), always in the Mediterranean area, which could be useful to complement and deepen the botanical theme running through Faith Park.

Rinia Park

matrix and calendar for grass and
perennial combination



From the Art Gallery to the Pyramid

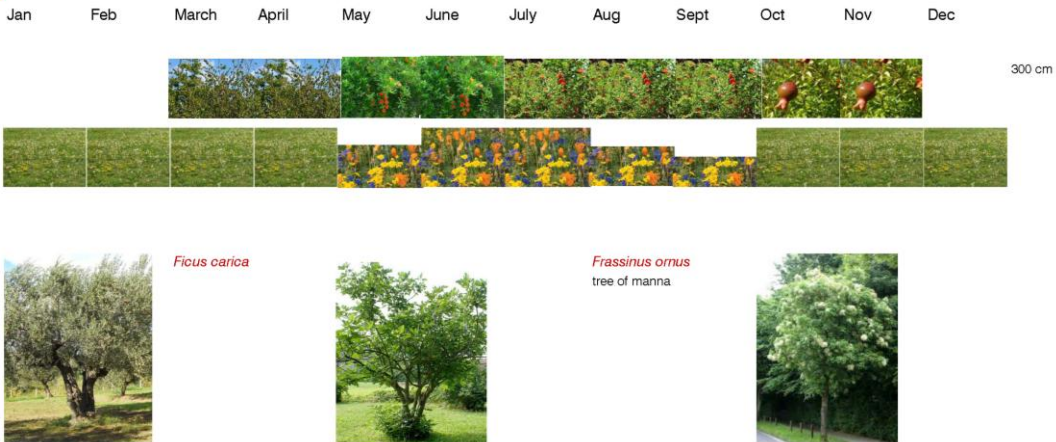
theme: small gardens and *Punica granatum*

Punica granatum
creation of hedges
the plant is common to all religious cultures

Flowery meadow

Clump of trees

Plants mentioned in the Quran and in the
Ancient Bible
Olea europea



Bektashi Center and Haxhi Ethem Beu zone

matrix and calendar for grass and
perennial combination

Sesleria caerulea - ground cover plant

Tulipa sp.

Panicum virgatum "Strictum compactum"

Gaura lindheimeri

Nigella sativa (annuale)

habbatul barakah (name in Arabic)
kazah (name in Hebrew)

Trees

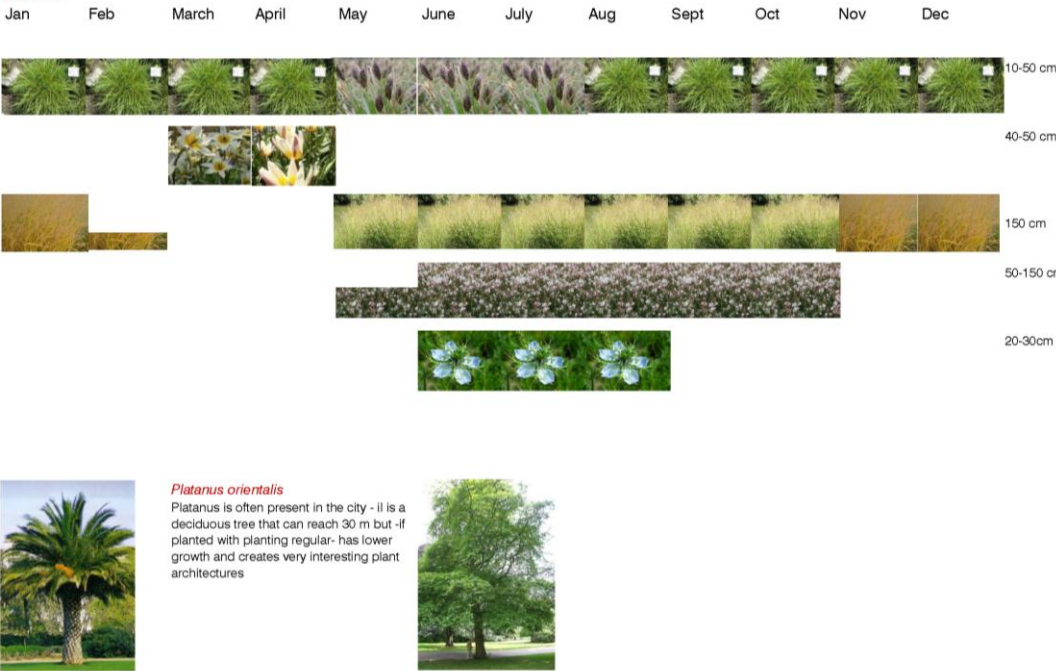
Plants mentioned in the Quran and in the
Ancient Bible

Phoenix dactylifera

the palms have been mentioned as evergreen
trees and columnar - reach a height up to 15
m

Platanus orientalis

Platanus is often present in the city - it is a
deciduous tree that can reach 30 m but - if
planted with planting regular- has lower
growth and creates very interesting plant
architectures



APPROXIMATE/ROUGH INVESTMENT COSTS ESTIMATION

The rough estimate of the costs of the proposed actions has been performed comparing parametric prices of similar work carried out by the design team.
The estimate is expressed for areas and for general categories of intervention with euro currency. It has not been considered the impact of any interventions to be performed on underground because we have no information that would enable any assessment about.

The economic evaluation must be accompanied by the identification of the effects that the proposed actions by the project may contribute to increased sustainability and urban biodiversity and, therefore, the assessment of how Faith Park intervene in a process that has, at its center, a proposed overall improvement in the quality of everyday life. Tirana is promoting, through the configuration of Faith Park, a proposal to renew and urban transformation expressed with the pedestrians and cyclists' slow pace, with the variety and dynamism introduced by the seasonality of the vegetation, the changing shadows and with calm water. Therefore the challenge is to use the tools of the landscape and the garden to rethink the city centre and make it available to a simple daily life.

The new landscape of Faith Park is built through:

- **The identification of a routes' network, pedestrian and cycle paths**, whose nodes consist of existing and new centrality: the Pyramid, the complex of buildings belonging to different religions; the system places the history, culture and art; the central system of urban open spaces (squares and parks);
- **The increase in pedestrian and bicycle safety**: construction of **14 km new paths**;
- The reorganization and enhancement of the existing plants and the **implement biodiversity within the city**;
- Attention to the construction of **freely accessible and barrier-free public spaces**;
- **Attention to the daily use modes of public spaces** and meanings that public places have for those who live the city;
- The proposal of an urban space that, through the overthrow of a bulky symbol of the past, is emerging as a new, attractive, dynamic, inter-generational place. **The pyramid has become an extraordinary urban resource and the Faith Park is the strategy through which it engages this process.**

FAITH PARK TIRANA - COSTS ESTIMATION		
DESIGN ELEMENTS	COST ESTIMATION	TOTAL COST
1 Bektashi Centre and della Haxhi Ethem Beu Mosque		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	1.700.000,00	
grassy areas - new vegetable plants - irrigation	28.200,00	
water pool	850.000,00	
pergola	900.000,00	
		€ 3.478.200,00
2 Mosque - Teatresi - Art Gallery - Pyramid path		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	346.500,00	
grassy areas - new vegetable plants - irrigation	16.100,00	
		€ 362.600,00
3 Pyramid - Europe Centre		
external works		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	1.350.000,00	
grassy areas - new vegetable plants - irrigation - exhistig		
manutenaince	30.000,00	
interior works - Europe Centre		
surface 12.800 sqm	12.200.000,00	
		€ 13.580.000,00
4 Path River Lana: new Mosque - Catholic Curch - Orthodox Church		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	850.000,00	
vegetable new plants: rows of trees and vegetation		
riverbank	33.450,00	
library/pedestrian bridge	350.000,00	
		€ 1.233.450,00
5 Parks along the Boulevard		
Rinia Park		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	480.000,00	
grassy areas - new vegetable plants - irrigation	17.000,00	
grassy areas and exhistig tree manutenaince	15.000,00	
Frashëri Brothers Park		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	320.500,00	
new vegetable plants - irrigation	12.000,00	
grassy areas and exhistig tree manutenaince	6.800,00	
Congress Centre path		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	285.000,00	
new vegetable plants - irrigation - exhistig manutenaince		
	18.000,00	
		€ 1.154.300,00
6 Boulevard and Mother Thereza Square		
Boulevard		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	1.800.000,00	
exhistig trees manutenaince	12.000,00	
Mother Theresa Square		
pavings - urban furniture - lights	950.000,00	
Pergola	600.000,00	
		€ 3.362.000,00
Total estimated cost		€ 23.170.550,00

MEMBERS OF THE DESIGN TEAM

bidder representative:

Alessandro MASSERA

TEAM:

A+C Architettura e Città' Studio Associato:

via Archimede 2 - 43123 Parma - Italy - info@assarch.it - www.assarch.it

Paola CAVALLINI, Stefano DELLA SANTA:, project architects

Ivano FIAMMA: architect

Michele MUSIARI, Andrea FRIGNANI: collaborators

Gazza Massera Architetti:

via Emilo Lepido 3 - Parma - Italy - www.gazzamassera.it

Alessandro MASSERA: project architect,

Daniela GAZZA, Federico ROLLI: architets

Jorida HATIBi, Antonio PIERGIANNI Jacopo MAESTRI: collaborators

EFA studio di Architettura e Consulenza:

Borgo Lalatta 10 - 43131 Parma – Italy – studio@emiliofaroldiassociati.it

Dario CEA, Pietro CHIERICI: project architects

Viola FABI, Andrea MANFREDINI, Matteo GRAMELLINI: collaborators

Emilio FAROLDI, Maria Pilar VETTORI (counseling and supervision)

M&J:

Tirana – Albania - matilda.pando@gmail.com

Matilda PANDO, Junilda KARANXHA: architets

SPECIALISTI:

Giorgio MILANI: artist

Gabriele VILLA (DEMETRA soc.coop): botanic and plant pathology and maintenance of green

Luciano MAZZONI - Thoma Çomën: theology

Alessandra OPPIO: Economic advisor

Luan Murtaç: Cost estimator

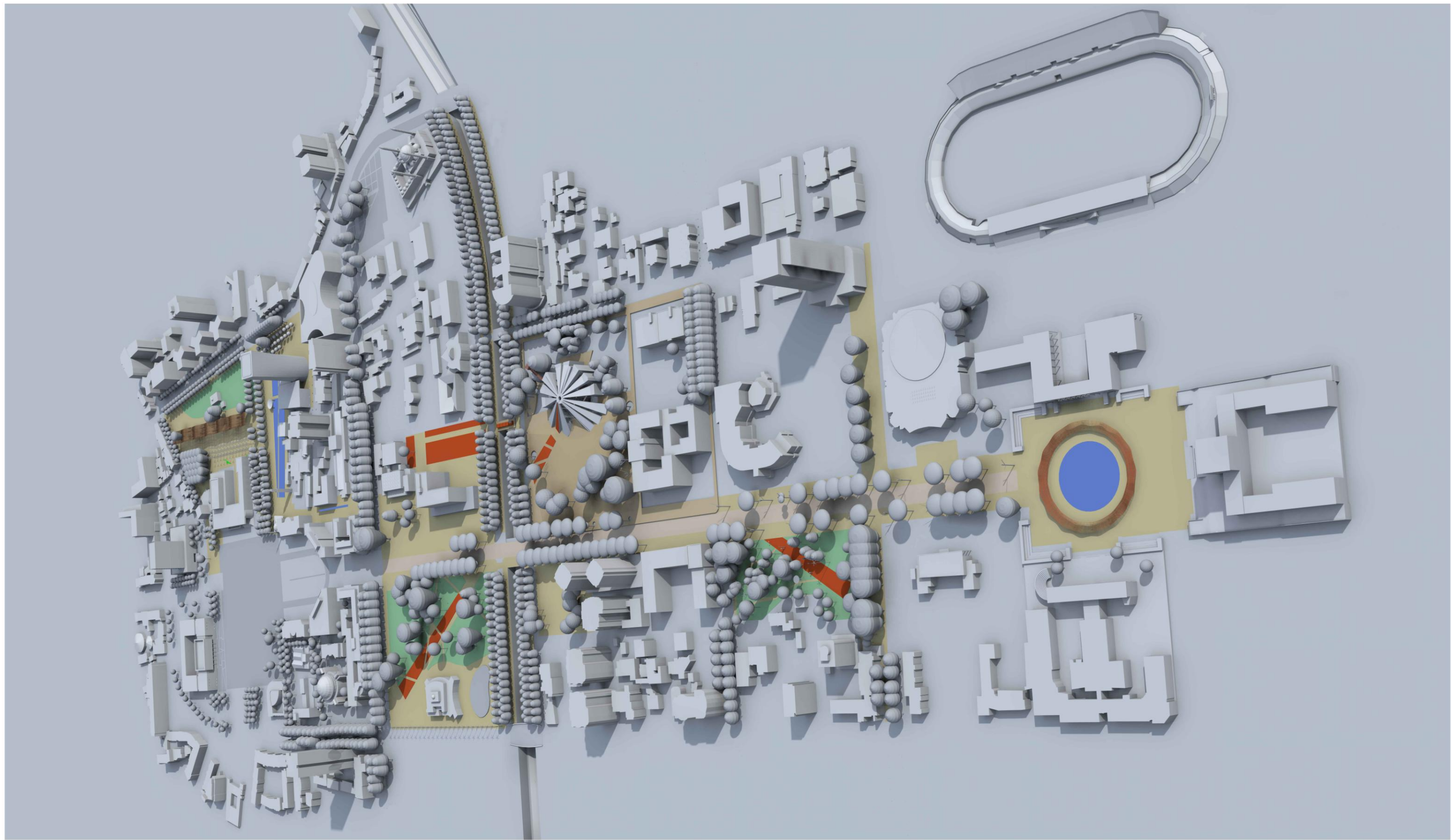
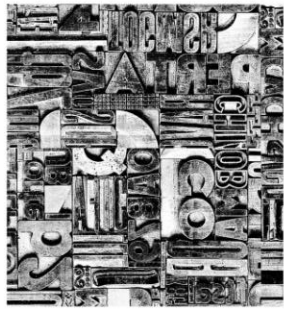
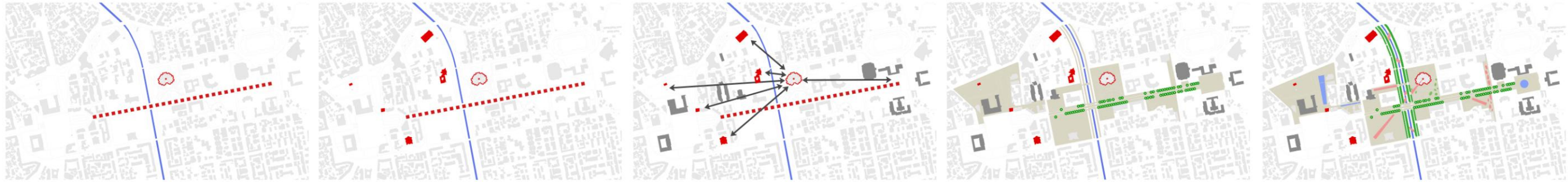
BIO-S OF THE TEAM

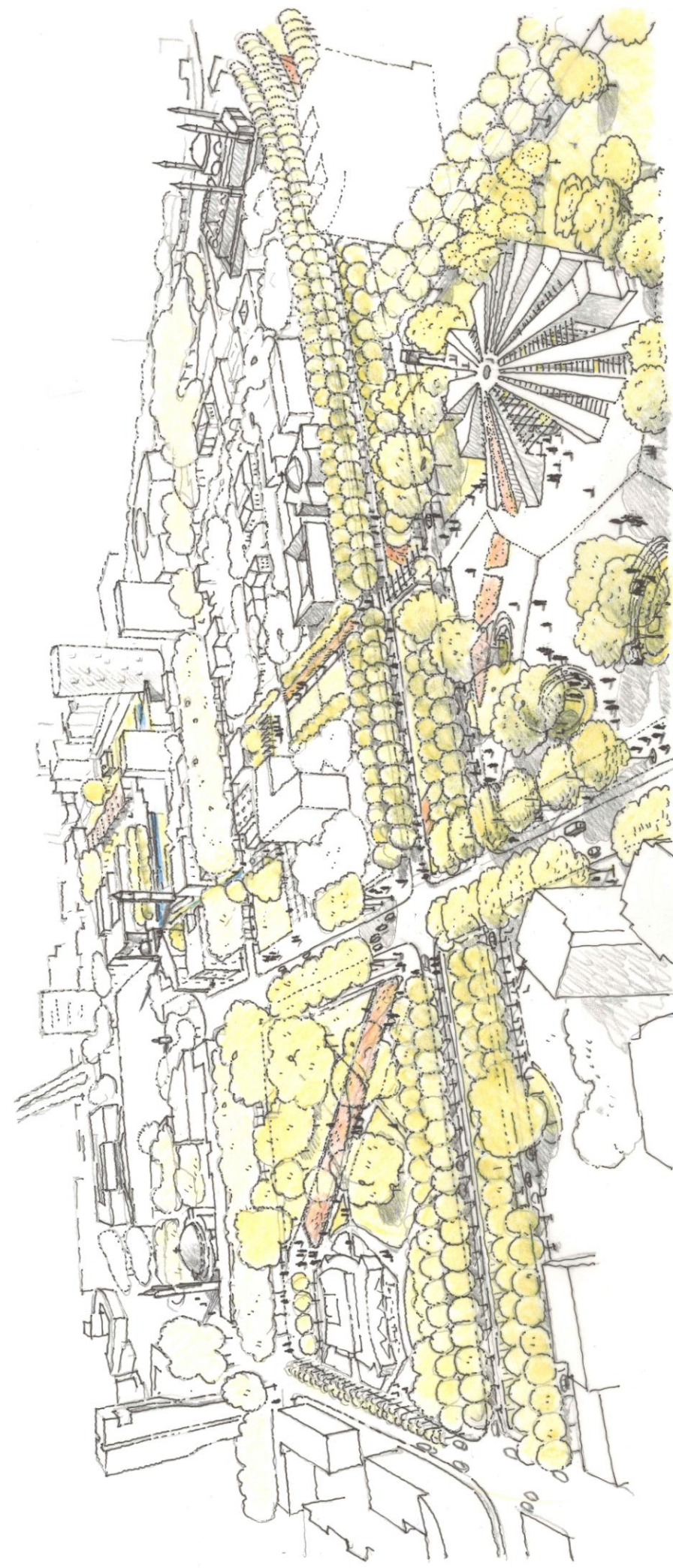
Since the beginning of 2015 has been established an international and multidisciplinary network coordinated by an association of professional firms, all interested in developing a common research and design work, with the aim to responds to the changing and complex markets, cities and cultural environments demands.

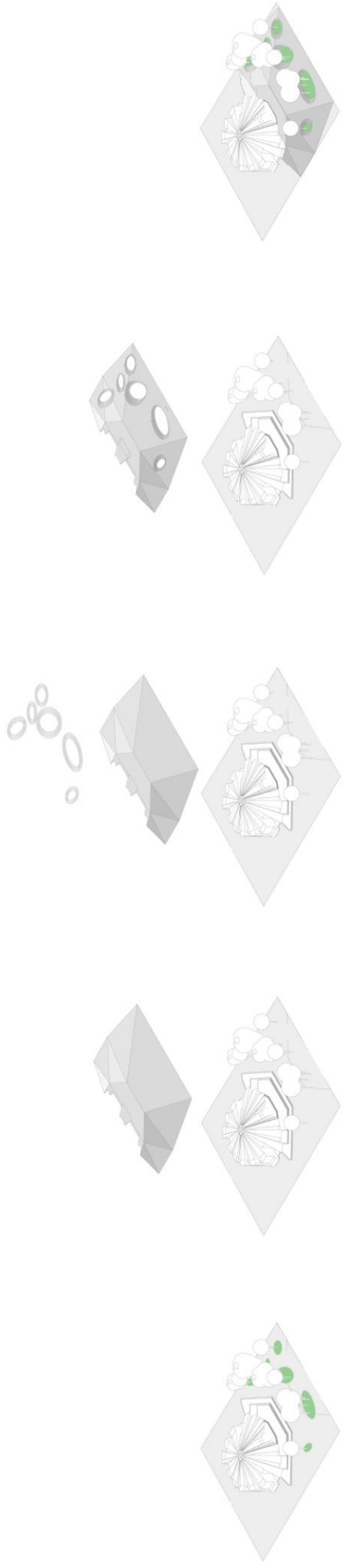
EFA studio di Architettura e Consulenza and **Gazza Massera Architects** (both based in Parma) combine professional multi-year research and university teaching at the Polytechnic of Milan and the University of Parma. The firm **A + C Architettura e Città studio associato**,based in Parma, combines the knowledge gained in the field of urban planning and architectural research and design with the themes of landscape design.

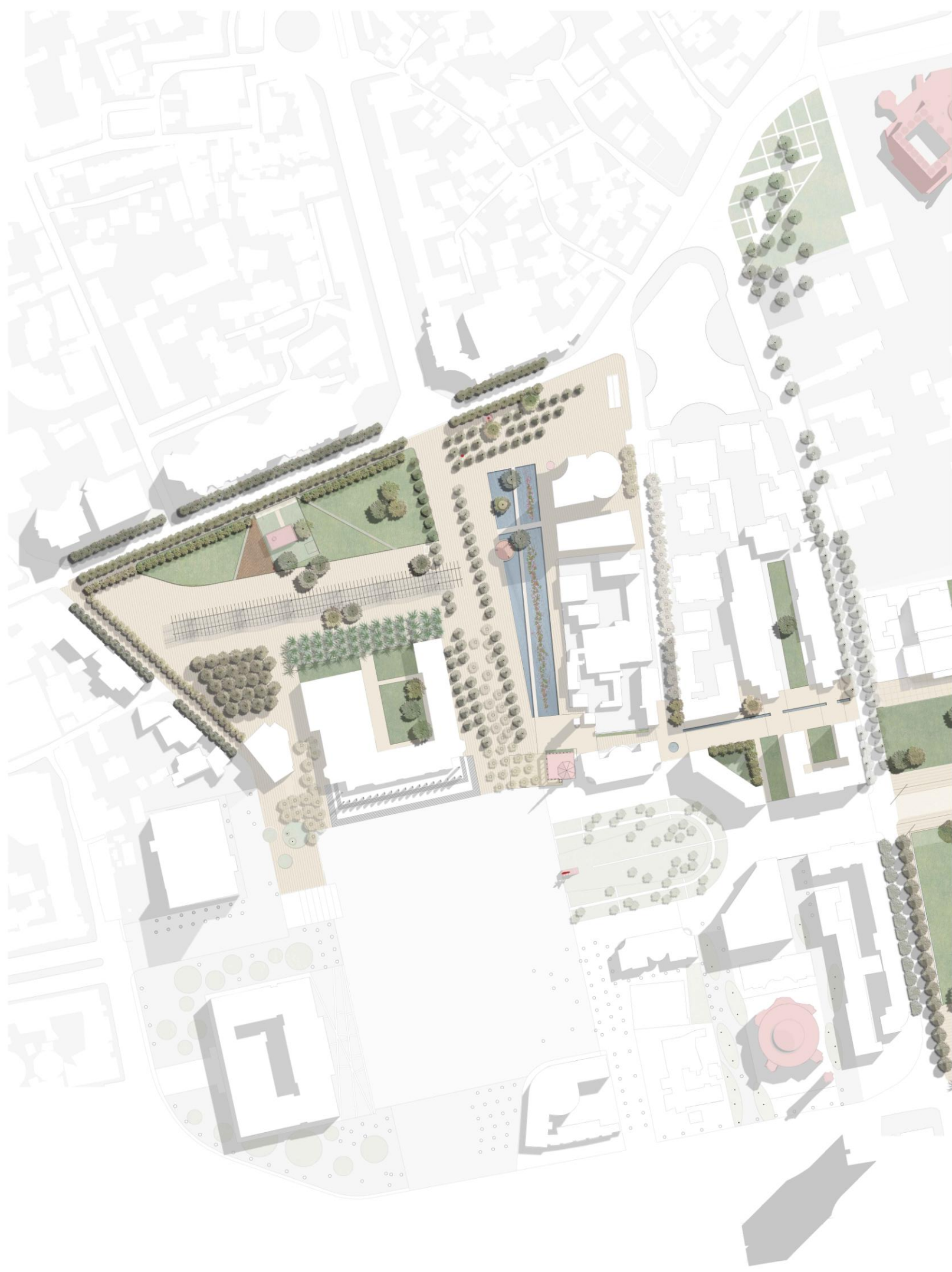
The office **M & J Arch-Studio** (based in Tirana) combines the expertise to design logistics coordination and the specific knowledge of the territory and of the Albanian culture.

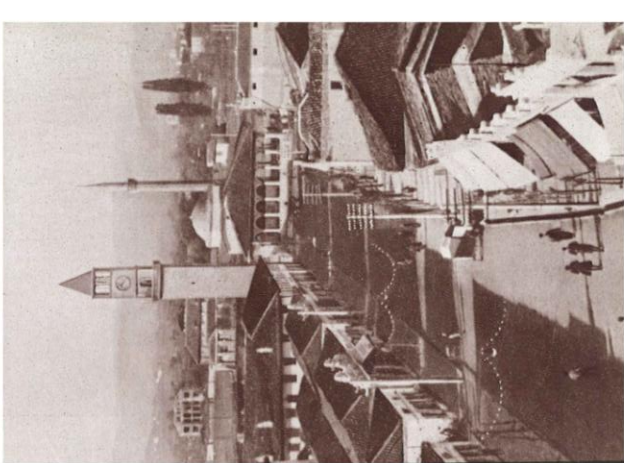
In relation to the different design themes the network uses specialized advisors, combining flexibility and expertise in the areas of engineering and sustainability, of botanic and plant disease survey, of cultural projects and curatorial management, of economic assessments and business planning.

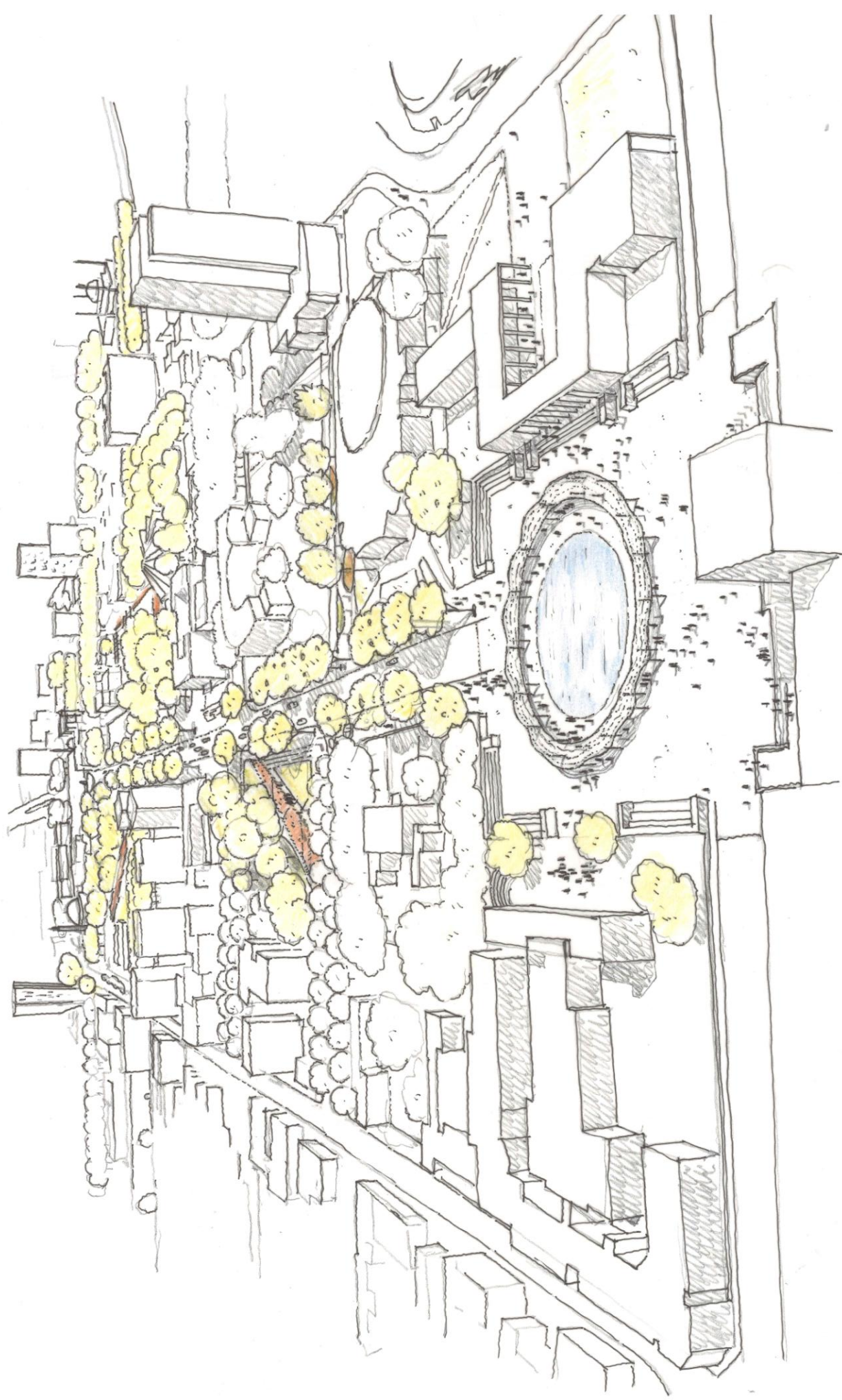


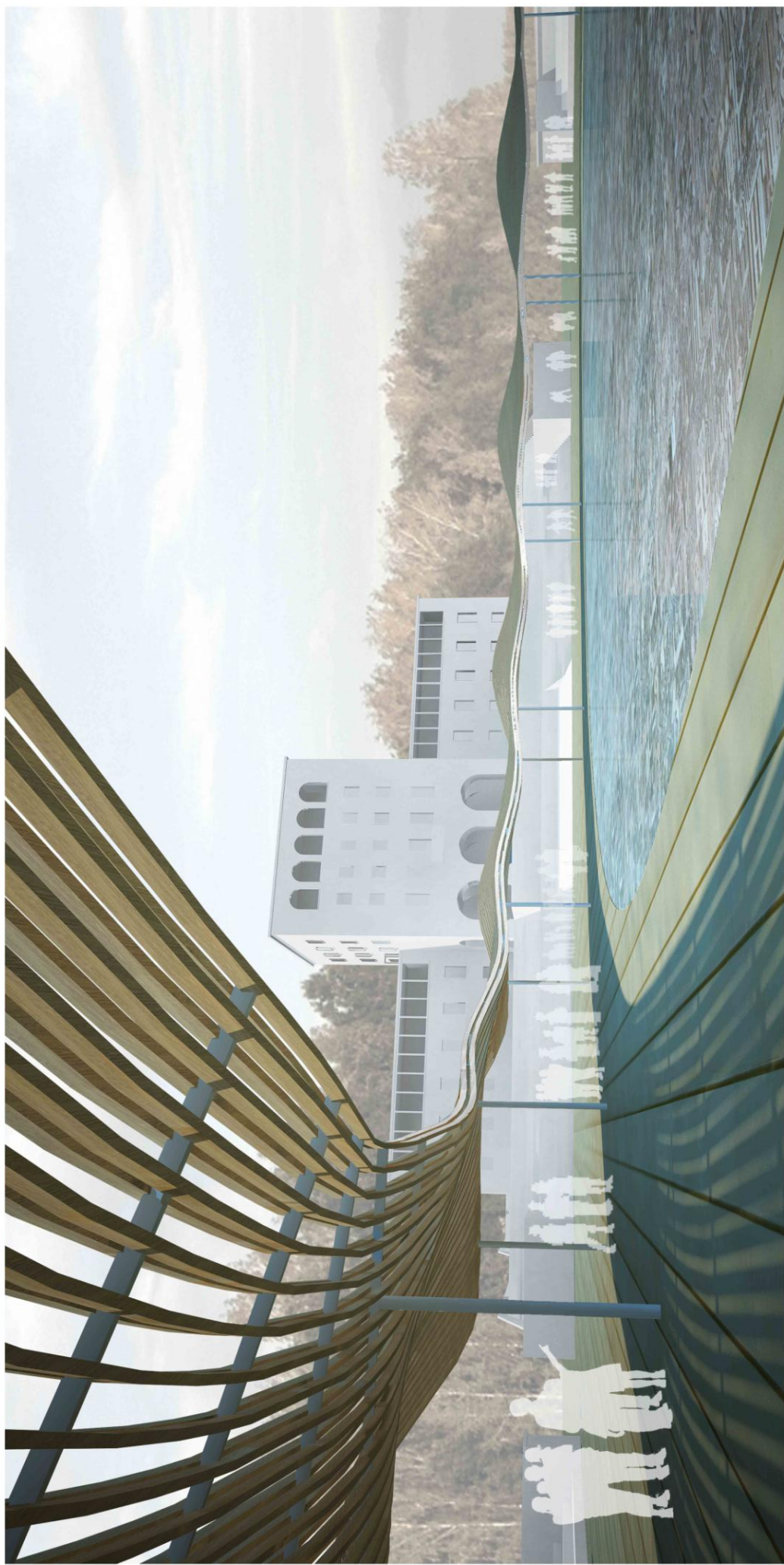


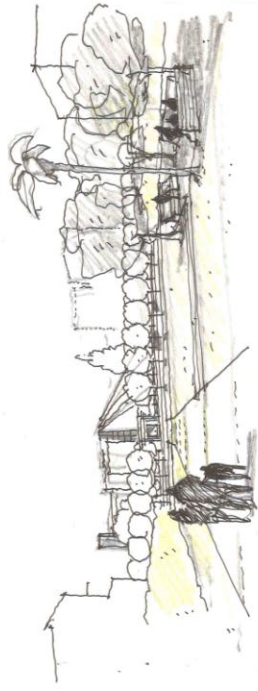




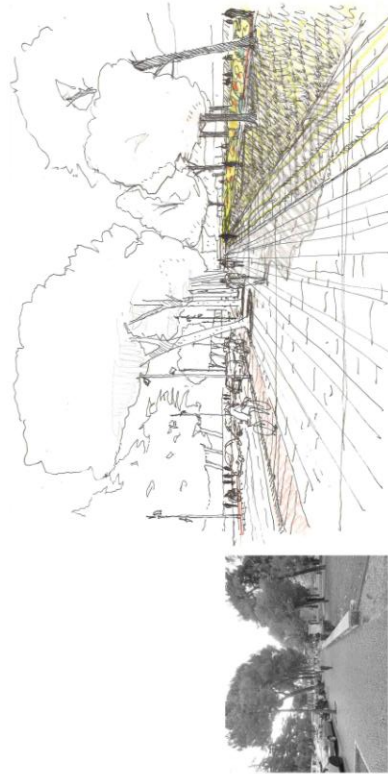




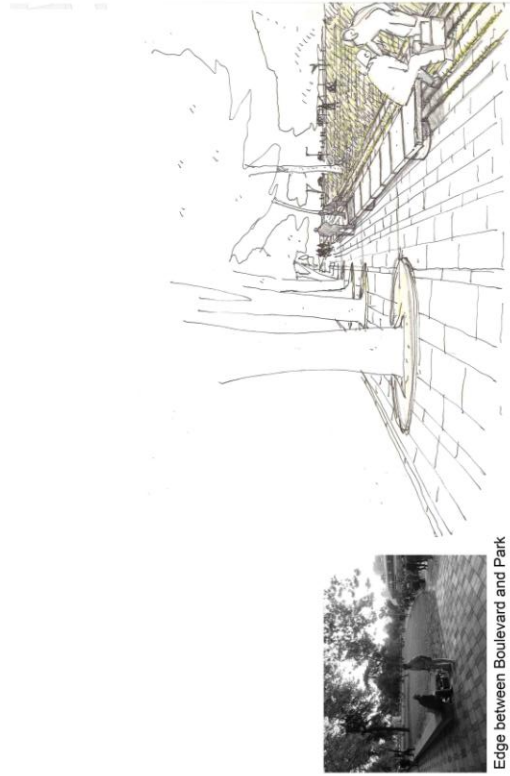




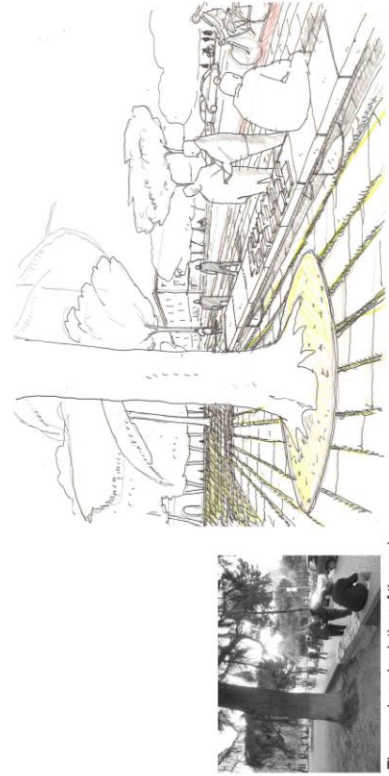
From the Art Gallery to the pyramid



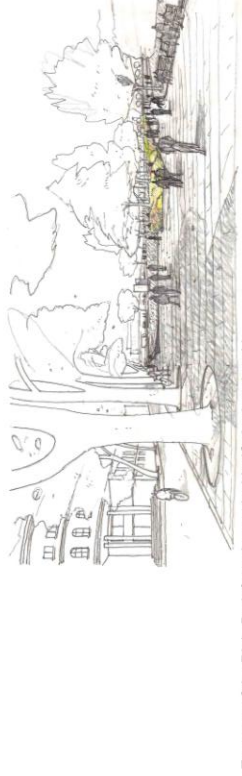
The proposed streetscape design plan for Boulevard Martyrs of the Nation



Edge between Boulevard and Park



The new board solution of the park



Entrance of the Rinia Park from the north side (Orthodox church)



The vegetable mesh in Rinia Park

