

THE BOOK OF HEALTH

A Book is not anymore the tree we cut and print onto. It is the tree we live with.

The Book of Health is a space conceived as a collective process. Large trees, wild species, traditional cultivars, local edible and non-edible species of plants are hosted inside a big permanent structure. The seeds produced by the plants are collected periodically, part of it replanted and part of it shared with anybody interested and willing to plant them elsewhere, including private people and institutions. Local cultural associations and registered groups of artists run the space cyclically.

Every third year The Book of Health is assigned to a new host who takes care of monitoring, general maintenance and programs cultural activities, including concerts, exhibitions, film screenings, workshops, public meetings and readings.

The assignation of the space to a new host is marked by a public ceremony with festivity, and at the same time the plant seeds are offered to those who made request.

The space is public and keeps being public also during the cultural activities; families, sport and yoga lovers, readers, and passers-by can at any time access the space and stay as long as they please. Only the host can perform night activities.

The aim is to merge the growth of the plants with the human intellectual activity, hopefully establishing the ground for collaboration with plants based on mutual compassion instead of exploitation.

CONCEPT

The Book of Health is a process collectively engineered to inscribe health care in a new set of shared priorities.

Building techniques, material and functions are presently under discussion because urban areas have ended up being predators toward the rural, the natural, and the uncontaminated. As a result the general health of the biomass is collapsing together with the loss of biodiversity.

Are pollution and destruction necessary features we can't default out of in any dense human aggregation?

Our knowledge of joining the tribal with the digital, the traditional with the cybernetic, probably has all the answers to realize cities where the co-habitation of the urban and rural, the wild and the domestic are no longer utopic.

A museum, a zoo, a botanical garden are traditionally places where different areas of life are catalogued and displayed. In The Book of Health those functions interbreed.

ETHICS

Space is a communal process; the era of intensive mono-use of urban and rural areas is over.

Gardening and forestry are the new methods for the planning and execution of urban spaces.

ACCESSIBILITY

The building is accessible with a local personal library card. Daily tickets for tourists with barcodes can be issued and printed by hotels, tourist points, and local kiosks. Each pass is personal.

MANTAINANCE

Building as a resource, not anymore as a subtraction.

The Book of Health is realized to use a minimum of energy resources to sustain its own environment. Temperature, ventilation, irrigation and humidity are maintained with a digital system fed mainly with solar energy stored during summers.

Three times a year gardeners and botanists are invited to check the general health of the plants. Interventions on the plants such as shaping, re-placing or any other modification are intended only to cure a plant in case of need. In no case interventions on the plants will be made in favor of aesthetic purposes.

The selection of plants is made with local permaculture experts and the introduction and installation of the plants inside the structure is done at several stages and different paces, initially. After the third year the space is left to its spontaneous growth.

The reproduction and the spreading of plants are monitored and seeds are taken away only in order to keep the populations at a certain density.

CONCLUSIONS

In the era of digital we might have the privilege to merge gentler with natural environment, instead of trying to order its presence around us.