



GREEN ISLAND 2017

BOTANIK at Isola District Milano

A project by Claudia Zanfi

PRESS CONFERENCE + OPENING MONDAY 3 APRIL 6pm

At Studio Showroom Riva Viva Milano

An eco-design itinerary is what is proposed this year in the sixteenth edition of **Green Island**, during the **Milano Design Week** (3-9 April 2017). The central focus is the **Isola Neighbourhood**, an area undergoing major cultural and urban expansion, presented in three stages, investigating the '**plant sculptures**' by the artist **EMILIA FARO**. The starting point is **Garibaldi Train Station** with a project staged in the shop windows of **TIGER**; then in via Pepe at the famous **Algranti Lab**, where the recycled materials are a 'must-have' for lovers of skilfully created furniture; right up to the heart of the event at the **RIVA VIVA** eco-furnishings showroom in Via Porro Lambertenghi, which will feature a new installation recreating a natural botanic garden, designed especially for the occasion. In fact, **BOTANIK** is the name given to the artistic project proposed by **Claudia Zanfi**, the real 'green soul' behind the **Milano Design Week in Isola District**, who states: "*ever since its pioneering launch in 2001, the GREEN ISLAND project has set out to bring the citizen back to a dimension of greater harmony between architectural and natural spaces; it aims to provide a moment of reflection and planning on urgent themes such as sustainability, urban green spaces and landscapes.*" GREEN ISLAND was the first project to bring design to the streets of the Isola Neighbourhood, creating a network of over 100 local entities for the valorisation of artistic and crafts workshops, introducing the **DID-Distretto Isola Design**: a unique element for the valorisation of the territory.

From the reappraisal of wild plants, the so-called 'weeds', to the urban allotments tended to by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, right through to the pioneering proposal of urban beekeeping, with the creation of the only ART HIVE PARK in the world – in the Vegetable Gardens of Via Padova, previously awarded the EXPO in Città prize – **GREEN ISLAND** has long developed strategies of cultural diffusion and promotion through the protection of the environment, offering creative learning on the theme of green areas and sustainability.

Also in this 2017 edition, **GREEN ISLAND/BOTANIK**, the protagonist is nature, of which largely the artistic and aesthetic aspects are underlined. The works of Emilia Faro feature vegetation trapped in its perfect beauty, embedded in volcanic sand and resins. These are genuine plant sculptures (Mediterranean flowers, agave leaves, aquatic plants, branches with buds, fragments of vegetation) covered in fine lava dust, which crystallises them. The black dust of the volcano, a wonderful fertiliser, regenerates and restores new life to

the flower because it is pure energy, for it comes straight from the bowels of the Earth and has the power of fire within it.

A source of inspiration – for the artist from Catania – is certainly the Etna volcano, which covers everything in soot during its eruptions, like a dark cloak, after which the wind is enough to bring everything back to the light. Thus, the works of Emilia Faro are jewels that are ‘reborn’ in another form, becoming eternal. They are both poetical and nostalgic, for the perfection of nature, if halted in time, may become highly poignant.

The works featured in **GREEN ISLAND/BOTANIK** make reference to various agricultural techniques, transferring them into the world of art. For example, ‘*Innesto*’ is a base of solid wood into which a number of cherry branches are inserted, covered in resins and thus blocked during the budding stage, branches pruned from plants to renew them when they no longer give fruit or have aged. The result is an evocative object of incredible beauty, extraordinarily romantic. The interesting reflection gives a positive message: new fruits may arise from the wounds in the Earth, just as from a cut, life may start again even stronger and more vigorous than before.

Hence we are thinking here of rebirth. **Let’s follow the GREEN ISLAND/BOTANIK itinerary, with green leaves painted onto the pavements of the Isola Neighbourhood**, and let us be enchanted by the power of nature, of art and of eco-design.

The project is in collaboration with public and private institutions, such as: Comune di Milano, Legambiente, Polidesign, Legno Urbano, Atelier del Paesaggio, Le Stanze in Fiore. With relevant partner: Artribune, Zero, Gardenia. With the support of DUSTY; CARIPO Foundation.

GREEN ISLAND is ***Pet&Bike friendly***.

PRESS OFFICE: Studio Valeria Zanoni, cell: 393.0552272, email: valeria@tree-ideas.it

INFO: czanfi@libero.it/ press@amaze.it/ www.amaze.it

Over 16 years of commitment to the urban and social landscape:

GREEN ISLAND (www.amaze.it) program is founded to promote a cultural investigation on contemporary urban landscapes, providing a dialogue between community and territory. It is created out of the need to bring citizens back to a dimension of greater harmony between the city and the green public space. GREEN ISLAND sets out to provide a moment of reflection, as well as giving space to planning energies addressing key themes such as sustainability, urban green areas and the landscape as a whole. The project has been operating since 2002 in the Zona Isola Milano, between Garibaldi train station and the centre of the city, involving a large network of arts and crafts workshops, design and architecture studios, as well as proposing site-specific installations created especially for the occasion. Among the projects developed by GREEN ISLAND there is an important editorial activity, with publications dedicated to spontaneous weeds (*Flora Urbana*), to artists gardens (*The Mobile Garden*) and to new forms of urban landscape (*The Gardens of Piet Oudolf*). Green Island has won various international awards.

Claudia Zanfi, art historian, cultural promoter and gardens’lover. She founded the cultural agency aMAZElab and MAST (Museo di Arte Sociale e Territoriale). Among other cultural and editorial projects she curated: *A Ticket to Bagdad*; *Sofia Photographic Biennial*; *Cyprus Day*; *Re-Thinking Beirut*; *Going Public*; *Communities and Territories*, ongoing projects on public art and contemporary life. She conceived the international programs *GOING PUBLIC*, an ongoing project on public space and contemporary society *GREEN ISLAND* (for the Milano Design Week), a program on art, urban green areas and biodiversity. She funded the group ‘Atelier del Paesaggio’ on landscape design. She is associated curator for *PortCity* project at Arnolfini, Bristol. She taught on the *Master in Visual Arts* at Brera Academy of Arts in Milano. She’s lecturer at the International Master *Urban Vision and Architectural Design* at Domus Academy, Milano and at the Middlesex University of London. She collaborates with *Unesco Heritage* and *Council of Europe* ‘European Landscape Convention’.