

Abstract

Montemaggio mountain colony, once a lively place for kids related activities, lost its importance due to the fall of the Fascist Regime; as the years are passing by it is fading in the memory as a place of meeting and growing. The building is now in decay and is well known in the Scrivia Valley, as well as its twin, the colony in Renesso, as a neglect place, house for homeless and gypsies.

The main aim of the design is to make the colony great again, making it a new hub for local activities, by mixing two functions in the old structure; a secondary school with a turistic vocation, a hostel with a restaurant, which is directly managed by the students of the school itself.

To achieve this aim, the design of these two functions was developed in two different moments.

The first one, the architectural approach, is defined by a precise intention of mantaining the original reading of the exterior look of the building, by not touching the exterior shell of the colony, the only expection is the entrance staircase, which is reshaped due to functional needs.

The second step is a study on the

qualities of the interior space itself, tailored on the differences of the functions inserted in the building.

The School design is shaped on the ideas of Dewey of the Learning by Doing.

Teaching spaces are designed to be flexible, in order to have different ways of arranging the rooms, according to the subject.

Students are challenged to practice the subjects they study in class, in other places, such as the cultivation fields and the restaurants of the hostel.

The hostel is designed studying different ways of using the public and the private space, creating different situations in which private and public dwellings are mixed, creating rooms tailored on the need of specific customers.

The cultivation fields, the restaurant and the hostel are the link between the building and the local activities, related to cultivation, cattle growing and the hiking related activites in the area.