

# Design description

**Design Title: Stitching the city back to the canal, new life under the railway arches**

## **0. ABSTRACT**

The topic of this paper is to study how to reuse the abandoned space near the Milan canal and how to activate the vitality of the whole area after reconstruction. After investigation, we found that the connectivity of the site has been blocked by the railway, and the site has not been reasonably facilitated. Therefore, we intend to use the arch space under the bridge to enhance the connectivity between the canal bank and the site. And considering the characteristics of the canal, we hope to create a cultural district for artists to show themselves. At the same time, we also consider providing a place for students to learn about art. At the same time, we introduce elements of street culture into the venue. In addition, we have also transformed the natural ecological environment of the venue, hoping to provide excellent leisure places for the surrounding citizens. In addition, we have also added a small public activity area in the park, hoping to provide a place for the public to hold outdoor cultural activities.

## **1. Design background**

Our site is located in the southwest of Milan, close to the Milan Grand Canal. In addition, there is a polluted water system on the west side of the site and a railway line on the east side of the site. The north side of the site is cut off from the canal by a railway viaduct, while the south side is now a parking lot due to the unreasonable use of public space.

After investigation, we found that the site is basically abandoned, and the public green space and public activity space are also basically abandoned. How to make rational use of public space and green space is a problem we need to solve. And the ecological environment is not optimistic, because the water system is polluted, the ecological environment is also very bad. This is what we have to improve.

Although it is close to the Grand Canal, the connectivity between the site and the canal is poor due to the separation of fence and viaduct. Arcs, which should have played a role of interconnection,

has been abandoned due to the impact of poor environment. How to strengthen ties is a problem we need to face.

Through the understanding of the canal culture, we also found some problems. Although the flow of people along the canal is very large, it is mainly commercial restaurants. But there are many practitioners engaged in art and culture here. However, due to the constraints of the architectural texture and roads along the canal, the space on both sides of the canal is limited, so they can only sell their works on the street. It is an urgent problem for us to find a place where artists can show themselves and their works.

At the same time, we found that there are many schools around. After a questionnaire survey, we found that many students are interested in art and music. But after school, there is no place for them to provide art and music education. This is also the problem we need to face.

## **2. URBAN STRATEGY**

On the scale of 1 to 1000, by analyzing the characteristics of the site, we found that there are three atmospheres in this area, including commercial atmosphere, leisure atmosphere and creative atmosphere. This is due to the commercial culture of the canal, numerous open spaces and parks, studio and IULM University. We have created three new atmospheres. On the premise of cultural consensus and the behavior of communication, the psychological connection is formed, and the physical connection of space is made by the way of jogging track and bicycle lane. This will effectively activate the space and make the area lively.

## **3. SITE MASTERPLAN**

Through the analysis of mobility, land use and function, we have introduced critical map. Through the overall design, masterplan mainly solves three problems.

First, this area has low connectivity and numerous borders make it difficult for the site to attract crowds. We designed the bike lane and pedestrian path connecting the entire area including the school, design building and arch part. The light red concrete pavement is very guiding. Through some wall design, we have formed a highly connected space. On the wall, we made a specific

theme wall and DIY graffiti wall, which will focus the attention of the people.

Second, the existing function is single, and there is no space for students and residents to do creative things. By adding different functions, we provide diversity functions. Existing condition is many design studios and advertising, so we added auditorium, lab, exhibition, bar, etc. These functions provide diversity activities and fix the single function.

The third problem is the lack of more flexible space. The existing design only considers the basic needs of people now. Through the COVID-19 situation, we cannot predict the needs of people in the future. Therefore, in fixed activities, we have added a more flexible space, called a flexible street. This street is located in the main design building and is a main link between the arch and the academy. Through the combination with the wall, this street can be a place for holding large venues or a linear space.

#### **4. BUILDING DESIGN**

In terms of architecture, I don't want a single block placed in the site. I want to cater to the concept of street culture and create an art and cultural block in the site. According to our design purpose, I will divide a main building into three main parts. One is the cultural exhibition area, one is the art work area, and the other is the multi-functional cultural center.

The cultural exhibition area mainly plays the role of exhibition and retail. Artists can display their works here and sell their works through the exhibition.

The art work area mainly provides artists with three design studios where they can create art. The multi-functional cultural center provides an interactive space for residents, artists and students. You can also have art training or self practice here.

The architectural form, roof and facade are inspired by the existing buildings around the site. We hope to follow the form and facade of the surrounding buildings. This can better integrate into the surrounding environment.