

MIAW

2017

Milano Farini Railway Just Like Starting Over

THE BIG ENSEMBLE
toward 10.000 new apartments for
Scalo Farini

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Oliver Thill (Karl-Marx-Stadt - East Germany, 1971) studied at the TU Dresden in Germany. He is a founding partner of the Rotterdam based firm Atelier Kempe Thill, which he directs together with André Kempe since 2000. The office has currently about 25 employees and is working on a variety of public building projects in the Netherlands, France, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland and Morocco. The office has received several international awards among the Bauwelt Prize (2003), Detail Award (2005+2009), Rotterdam - Maaskant Prize (2005), AM-NAi Award, NL (2010), the Dutch Architect of the year award, NL (2011) and the Ugo Rivolta Award (2013). In 2012 the German publisher HatjeCantz published the first monograph about the work of the office. In 2017 HatjeCantz published the book "Atelier Kempe Thill - Villa Urbaine".

Oliver Thill has been engaged as studio master at the Delft University of Technology, the Academie van Bouwkunst in both Arnhem and Rotterdam and the Berlage Institute Rotterdam and Delft. He has been an invited professor at the EPF Lausanne and the PBSA Düsseldorf. Currently he teaches together with André Kempe as a professor at the TU Berlin.

Oliver Thill has given more than 100 public lectures worldwide. He was a board member of the Jaap Bakema Foundation Rotterdam and writes on a regular basis for the European architecture magazine "San Rocco". Currently he is member of the advisory board of the Academie van Bouwkunst Rotterdam.





THE BIG ENSEMBLE

toward 10.000 new apartments for Scalo Farini

After a decade of huge transformations on the immediate outskirts of Milan's city centre the reflection in city planning for the upcoming years will inevitably focus on "how to deal" with the large voids of the railroad yards. In a city characterized by the extreme compactness of the urban fabric and by its strict radial logistics, these huge voids represent exceptions of unusual dimension and geometry, suggesting the possibility for radically alternative forms of urbanity as well as posing the challenge for their succesful and fruitful integration.

With its 600,000 square meters Scalo Farini is the largest of seven dismantled yards scattered around Milan - Farini, Romana, Genova, San Cristoforo, Greco, Lambrate and Rogoredo - and surely the most significant of these voids, not just for its scale but also for its strategic location. Crossing many of the most distinctive neighborhoods of the Northwestern quadrant of Milan - Mac Mahon, Certosa, Valtellina - the railway yard of Scalo Farini stretches from the formerly industrial district of Bovisa to the recently transformed neighborhoods of Isola and Garibaldi-Repubblica.

As of today, the main characteristic of Scalo Farini is given by its inaccessibility. With the exception of the two only points where a crossing of the area is made possible - the Ponte di Via Farini and the Ponte della Ghisolfia - the great void of the railway yard remains invisible at all its edges. Despite and because of this condition, the site is deeply embedded in the collective memory of the city, holding an almost mythological character, as significantly emerges from the work of filmmakers and writers such as Luchino Visconti and Enrico Testori.

The workshop aims at the development of a realistic masterplan for the site to be implemented during the next 15-20 years. The size of area, its emptiness and its centrality suggest the possibility for an intense and relatively fast upturn. With this ultimate goal in mind, the workshop will be organized in two highly interrelated phases.

By preliminarily fixing different density indices, as well as different ratios between public and private spaces, students will develop a multiplicity of site-specific, coherent and cohesive visions for the future of Scalo Farini accounting for the realization of up to 10.000 new apartments plus urban facilities by the years 2035-2040.

The workshop will then focus on the implementation of the first 5-year phase of these plans, setting different premises for the gradual development of the area. Our goal is to invent new forms of collective housing that could work as pioneering projects for the progressive organization of big ensembles serving the needs of the 21st century society. Within the workshop we want to discuss the very rich tradition of the Milanese housing and try to invent new urban prototypes that could give an answer on new demands by the future inhabitants of the area.

By working in groups of app. 4 persons, students are invited to experiment with the typological transfer on the site of housing schemes from different contexts as well as with the adaptation of typical Milanese typologies to the specific, unprecedented conditions provided by the site.

What kind of urbanity might emerge from the intersection of preexisting conditions and new demands? What could be the future of Scalo Farini? What could be its meaning for the city of Milan? How do the future inhabitants of Scalo Farini want to live?











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MIAW Milano International Architecture Weeks
February-March 2017