

## *A concourse of Outstanding Places*

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### *Origin, framework, objectives*

As its scientific and experimental work on the knowledge, design and management of landscape has evolved, *Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche* has increasingly felt the need to investigate the universal links between place and the human condition and to encourage local people, communities and schools to become involved.

With this in mind, at the end of 2006 the Foundation devised a new initiative, a concourse of *Outstanding Places*, conceived as an ideal complement to the International Carlo Scarpa Prize for Gardens, the most important and the most prestigious of its activities in the field of landscape. The Prize, awarded for the twenty-third time in 2012, consists of an annual awareness-raising campaign focussed on a particularly significant place designated by an international Jury because it embodies characteristics that are consistent with the aim of increasing public responsiveness to the culture of the governance of landscape and places in a context in which the role that nature and memory have played in the different civilizations and historical phases in the past is now undergoing permanent transformation.

Inspired by the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ratified in Italy through Law no. 14 of 9<sup>th</sup> January 2006), *Outstanding Places* takes the form of a direct appeal to the general public in which they are asked, explicitly and very simply, to nominate and describe a place (or places) that they believe to be of outstanding value and to explain why; the invitation is therefore for everybody to identify and to appraise “their” landscapes and to express their aspirations for the environment in which they live, and in so doing to put into concrete practice the contents of the Convention. The focus of the concourse is therefore on the point of view of the individuals and communities that live and work in these places, with their different social and cultural backgrounds, the daily needs, their aspirations and their feelings.

People take part in this cultural project, a genuine exercise in collective research in which they agree to get involved in open discussion with specialists and experts, by responding to a

public announcement and completing a form on which they name and describe their *outstanding place*. The announcement is published annually, so far five times, and welcomes submissions from anyone and everyone in the Province of Treviso; it contains full information about the aims and objectives of the initiative and how to participate, and is widely distributed. On the five occasions on which the invitation has already been issued, responses have been received from over 500 individuals or groups, ordinary citizens, property owners, students, teachers, civil servants and many others; their reasons for taking part are varied and many do not have the knowledge, the sensitivity or the taste of the experts in the field, but their submissions are illuminated with the light of people who live in these places and who are part of them.

It was clear that the time was right for an experiment such as *Outstanding Places* from the many projects launched over the last few years to do with exploring perceptions of people's immediate environments, their awareness of place, their alertness to the role they could play in the decision-making processes concerning territorial issues within a cultural framework that was the product of a slow evolution that finally found expression in the European Landscape Convention and in the consequent "revolution" in the idea of landscape. Another observable factor was a growing desire on the part of ordinary people in some way to retake control of the places where they led their lives and of their personal or collective relationship with those places in the light of a broader sense of their value.

The quantity and quality of the responses to the first announcement took the organizers by surprise; promising new lines of investigation began to emerge and the Foundation felt encouraged to follow up the collection of nominations and to broaden the aim of the research to seek an answer to the question "what is it that confers value on a place for those who live there?" Many of the participants documented their nominated places and the value that made them "outstanding" not only by completing the submission form but also with a variety of other materials, including photographs, written texts, drawings, audio-visual aids and maps, a real treasure chest of information and an unexpected demonstration that a considerable part of society was able and willing to make a real effort in field that may appear to be far from people's daily concerns but which in fact are deeply felt as urgent, current and even central to our civilization.

The idea that the organizers should in some way express their approval of nominations or discuss the criteria applied by those who submitted them by selecting or ordering the places, the reasons or the materials presented by the participants was immediately seen to be incompatible

with the richness of the results and above all inconsistent with the experimental aims of the project. It was therefore decided that the so-called “concourse” would not include the concept of acceptance or rejection of nominations nor the proclamation of winners; all the places nominated, observed and described from the personal viewpoint of those who live or work there constitute, in their extreme variety of form, size and character, an indispensable resource for any attempt to identify and understand the needs, the modes of expression and the tastes of the community. And they can be of help too in creating better conditions for the safeguarding and informed appreciation of our places, for the quality of our life and for the future prospects of the new generations. The term “concourse” should therefore be understood as *cum currere*, or *running together*, bringing together, in the same place, thoughts, reflections and contributions.

#### *Project organization*

As mentioned earlier, the concourse was launched as a simple gathering of nominations but it has gradually been enhanced with other elements that have now become part of a tradition, to which the people of the Province of Treviso have become very attached.

To start with, once the closing date for nominations has passed, all the nominators, together with those responsible for the places nominated, especially the mayors of the municipalities involved, are personally invited to a public meeting. Year by year, these meetings have provided an opportunity to present the latest response to the annual invitation and, in general, the accrued results of the research project; but above all they establish direct contact between the organizers and the participants and enable the latter to meet each other and exchange experiences about their mutual interest in places. The meetings are important too as a source of comments and suggestions about how to develop the concourse; participants speak freely and lucidly about how “their” places are managed and what they expect of them, creating the strong impression that these aware and responsible members of society already had very clear and cogent opinions and were simply waiting for an opportunity to express them.

The importance of direct contact with interested people, confirmed through these public meetings, and of “physical” acquaintance with the places led us to organize visits to the “outstanding places”, involving first of all the people who had nominated them, but also their owners, administrators and all the other precious witnesses who in one way or another are involved in the life of the place, those who live there, those responsible for managing it, those who experience it every day; from all we want to find out what is it that connects them to the

place and how they perceive its value. Naturally it has not been possible to visit all the places nominated but we have chosen over sixty (in five years) as in some way emblematic and so able to represent all the others with the aim, year by year, of coming to grips with all the issues raised by the nominations as a whole. These visits to the places themselves have also yielded more precious documentation in the form of interviews, video footage, photographs and a variety of other materials.

The richness and interest of the material submitted along with the nominations and collected afterwards and, at the same time, the enormous quantities involved, its variety and the inevitable difficulty in making it available for consultation, led us, right from the first year, to organize an annual exhibition, admission free, for about three months, on the premises of the Foundation. All the material received with the submissions is therefore reordered and set out so as to be not only comprehensible and comparable with other items but also, as far as possible, to be attractive and interesting for all. At times we add, for example, an orientation map but we never exercise any censorship and try always not to alter the original spirit of the material. Each annual exhibition also contains documentation of meetings held in the “outstanding places” with photographs and short video clips of each interview. The exhibition layout is always carefully designed to offer visitors different ways of viewing and understanding the material, depending on how interested and involved they may be in the subjects illustrated and, in general, in the project.

So far visited by almost thirteen thousand (in the first five years), the exhibitions have naturally been an invaluable opportunity to involve more people in the approach pursued by the *Outstanding Places* project and also to see whether the “need for place” expressed by the participants was shared by the visiting public, who are not necessarily interested in such issues nor anxious to become directly involved. In an attempt to engage everyone actively we tried out the simplest of all solutions and asked all visitors to express a preference for one of the places illustrated in the exhibition and to leave comment on their choice or on the project in general. Everyone is given a card for this purpose on entering the exhibition, together with a leaflet commenting briefly on each of the submissions. Of course the visitors’ comments and preferences are not solicited in order to grade the places or to acclaim winners; since they now number several thousand (all transcribed and ordered) they do nevertheless represent further useful material for the research project.

After running the concourse for two years and having acquired several hundred nominations and as many direct contacts with interested, motivated people, we decided to take advantage of

this substantial network by putting a number of much more specific and direct questions to them, questions that the participation card had deliberately avoided in order not to discourage anyone from taking part, conscious as we were of the risk the project would run if we started to “reduce” the points of view and opinions of the nominators, hitherto expressed in total freedom, to some form of box-ticking. We therefore prepared a double questionnaire, which was sent to all the nominators (and later to all those participating in future years) with questions relating to personal details, in order to get to become better acquainted with those who had responded to our appeal and to the place or places nominated.

All the data, the information and the opinions assembled through the nominations, the interviews and the questionnaires was digitalized and inserted into a database devised especially for “outstanding places” and easily accessed with any search word. This gives anyone interested a general view of all the material collected and the statistics derived from it, in short to read both the documents and the interpretation of them. The framework for the creation of this first data bank was the Foundation’s stated aim of promoting the construction of an open archive of *outstanding places in the Province of Treviso*, with a view to helping to ensure that they are better known, safeguarded and appreciated, also by involving local authorities, associations, schools and society in general as “trustees” of the heritage they represent.

And finally, the first five years saw the organization of a large number of public meetings and, in particular, three Landscape Study Days devoted to issues directly connected to the project (*Outstanding Places. Outstanding Values*, 2009; *The Concept of Place*, 2010 and *Place and community. From mobilizing action to protect a place to taking responsibility for governing it*, 2011), and a cycle of “Dialogues about *Outstanding places*” with key figures on the cultural and political scene, in pursuit of specialist points of view with which to enrich the interpretation of the results produced by the concourse.

#### *Notes about results and their interpretation*

In the first five years, 630 different places have been nominated in 686 submissions sent in by over 500 people; the places are located in 91 of the 95 municipal areas within the Province of Treviso. The total number of visitors to the annual exhibitions (the fifth is still open) amounts to 12.700, over 5,000 of whom made an active contribution by expressing their preference for a place and in many cases adding useful comments and suggestions.

All the material collected constitutes an invaluable resource to be studied, analyzed and interpreted. So far, the annual calendar of the project, which has become richer and more complex year by year, has not left much room for sedimentation, nor time for reviews of first impressions or in-depth study. It is however possible and proper that we should attempt to share some considerations on the contents and the results.

Even a quick glance at the list of participants shows that they belong to every social rank, live in every part of the Province (and even elsewhere in a few cases), and represent every cultural condition; it also supports the hypothesis that place is not something that exists “around” people and communities, it is not an optional context; on the contrary it is an essential component of our sphere of life, necessary to the human condition, so much so that at least one place, and often more than one, appears to be part of the heritage that informs every individual’s history and existence. To the point, in not uncommon cases, where the traumatic transformation of a place may cause a person to suffer as if the loss were of part of him- or herself.

The relationship of the nominator to the nominated place also varies considerably. Sometimes it is the owner, the designer or the person responsible for the site or it may be a civil servant, a scholarly expert or a group of schoolchildren; but perhaps the most significant element is the participation of citizens who have no role or direct responsibility for the places they nominate; people who, individually or together with others, want nevertheless to have their say, to enter actively into the “circle” of those who are concerned about places, with an objective that often goes beyond simply knowing and sharing and extends, more or less explicitly, to participating in decisions as to their use, protection and modification.

If a place is experienced and described as a sort of blend of nature, memory, social tension, human condition, invention, care (or neglect and decay), all elements that together give rise to a recognizable form and life in an identifiable territorial framework, what is it that constitutes the *value* of that place? One can sense that it is something universal that every place, no matter which, expresses its gravitational energy towards someone; there is always an individual, a small group, a community that recognizes the place as somehow its own, that feels it to be a constituent part of its being. And it seems to be that this energy comes especially from the memory, from knowledge accumulated over time by previous generations and passed on to today’s witnesses. Memory and knowledge can also take the form of suggestions, emotions, affection, but essentially they are and remain memory and knowledge, and therefore closeness and familiarity with the form and life of the place, with everything that is and everything that is

known or sensed to have been in the course of time, the age-old time of geology, the long perspective of historical transformation and the fleeting viewpoint of current tensions.

That value resides in the close and intimate cognitive relationship between place and person also seems to be demonstrated by the meticulous spatial awareness and topographical precision with which the places are nominated. A house, a school, a church, a tree, a particular route, a recognisable open space, a natural environment. More often than not, the relationship and therefore the value is constructed in punctiform stages, in microcosms. If the opportunity is offered, people are happy to speak of all these things; they are pleased too to discuss them with the others, and this generous-spirited participation, in itself and altogether, constitutes a cultural gesture of dimensions and significance that are worthy of special attention.

The variety of the means used to speak of the places and to explain why they are judged as outstanding reinforces the idea of universality in the relationship between person and place, a relationship that appears to be independent of possession of tools to express it. Everyone loves, in their own way, to recount a personal relationship with a place that has a special meaning for them and we have the impression that participation in the concourse has become a way in which many nominators have been able to recreate a connection with the places that had dulled or blurred over the years, or it has provided an opportunity to bring the connection to the surface and with it the realization that it implied passion and commitment; in both cases it demonstrated how the “need for place” exists but needs stimulation and proper “cultivation”. The variety of the means used to respond is connected to the still greater, though less unexpected, variety of situations, stories, dimensions, functions and conditions of the places nominated: stretches of agricultural landscape, natural areas and man-made experiments, places with water; squares, church forecourts, town walls and fortifications; large-scale environments and routes, eco-museums; public and private, urban and school parks and gardens; country houses, hamlets and historical settlements; memorials and sepulchres, churches, convents and monasteries; archaeological sites of antiquity and modernity; artistic places and places of social gathering. With all its richness and variety, the list contains almost no monuments or monumental sites, though well-known and well-loved examples of both abound throughout the Province, including those associated with the names of Palladio and Carlo Scarpa, which were expected to figure large.

It is not easy to answer the often-asked question «what “types” of places have been nominated?»; indeed it may actually be impossible because “outstanding places”, as we mentioned earlier, shun typological sub-divisions and objective classifications and when we try



in any case to define them we can never shake off the relationship the nominators had with these places, the ways they perceived and experienced them; that relationship itself becomes part of the connotation and “type” in a complex and unrepeatable fusion of formal attributes, functions and subjective points of view.

The subjective judgement of the value of a place does not generally derive from its prestige or from the accumulated historical, artistic, cultural or natural importance attributed to it by critical tradition and acknowledged as a general perception; rather it is the product of the sedimentation of personal memories, of events experienced or recounted, of the evidence of change introduced by previous generations; it is due, in short, to a complicated array of factors, many of them personal, almost never easy to pin down, that culminate in a sense of being part of the long-term process that has made the place what it is.

Though we cannot go so far as to say that the more “traditional” values – those which in theory are more objective and easily shareable, almost “universal”, i.e. those relating to historical or artistic, environmental, natural or didactic qualities – are ignored or underestimated by the nominators, it is nevertheless remarkable that they choose such unusual, even surprising, ways of interpreting them. Thus, to cite a recurrent pattern amongst the submissions, we see that the sense of the sacred, of the need for meditation and prayer is not (or not only) translated into nominations of the numerous examples of monumental religious architecture in the Province but rather they become the key to understanding the value of smaller things, tiny country churches, wayside altars, little signs of devotion scattered around the countryside. Similarly, the attachment of special value to nature or landscape is not confined to parks and gardens or areas managed with the stated purpose of nature conservation; more especially it concerns places of botanical or agricultural experimentation, sites whose exceptional “naturalness” is only apparent because it is the consequence of abandonment and decay, and fragments of the *third landscape*. And again, nominations tend to cite small historic towns and “minor”, little-known country houses rather than the heritage sites for which the Province of Treviso is famous throughout the world; small country graveyards and not the sepulchres and memorials designed by world-famous architects; places associated with work only if they recall the past and belong to cultures clearly perceived as more “man-centred”; places that are apparently devoid of “objective” qualities but able to attract groups and communities and to satisfy to their need to meet and spend time together; places that become important at the moment it becomes clear that their fragility and weakness exposes them to the threat of decay or destruction.



So in the construction of the person-place connection a central role is played by all the factors associated with the sphere of personal experience and knowledge, of familiarity and other relations, whether personal or shared at the small community level; equally central, however, are the factors associated with “identity”, a recurrent term in nominations, and although it is perhaps too loosely used it must nevertheless be acknowledged that it plays an important role as a “warning light” indicating an ever-more-common sense of unease and disorientation consequent on the homogenization of places and the cancellation of variety and difference that has characterized the transformation of our Province in recent decades, devastating landscapes and feelings.

Another thing the nominations show very clearly is that the “need of place” is also felt by the very young, a fact that supports the idea that we can and must start from schools in trying to restore quality to our surroundings and our landscapes if we are to have some hope of triggering a reform in our ways of living and travelling.

Finally, and it is worth underlining the fact once again, many of the nominations can be seen as spontaneous and generous gestures made by a society that intends to play a part in the work of understanding and governing its places and whose attribution of value also expresses a willingness to contemplate planning, action, change. Enthusiasm for planning is often expressed with unexpected vigour, though of course it needs to be underpinned by carefully prepared cultural competence. Education and training are therefore (or *should be*) “pre-conditions” if it is agreed that the people involved are the mainstay of any definition of landscape and that looking after places must take account of their recognized characteristics and of the values attributed to them, always with the participation of the local communities and always taking their aspirations into account.

### *Today and the future*

At the same time as the sixth invitation for the submission of nominations (with a call for nominations, open until May 2012, which has been completely renewed so to start, in some way, a second phase of the project) the Foundation is launching new initiatives connected with the project. The first concerns the possibility of setting up a workshop dedicated to one or more concrete situations with a view to identifying the characteristics of a defined and responsible community which identifies with one or more places, with their various forms of significance and with the values it expresses in terms of natural or historical heritage or of present tensions. The aim would therefore be to penetrate more deeply into the material and

spiritual composition of person/place and society/place relationships, into their universality and their mutability, in order to formulate concrete, constructive and regulatory indications that can help to innovate methods and practices for the design and governance of places.

Another working hypothesis concerns the collection of information regarding the perception and knowledge of place being developed here, in our landscapes, by the communities of immigrants that now live there.

Treviso, November 2010

(updated Apr. 2012)

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### *Appendix 1*

The scientific and cultural policy governing the *Outstanding Places* project is set by the Jury of the International Carlo Scarpa Prize for Gardens, composed of Luigi Latini, Domenico Luciani, Monique Mosser, Lionello Puppi, José Tito Rojo and Massimo Venturi Ferriolo (honorary members Carmen Añón and Thomas Wright), with a working group coordinated by Simonetta Zanon with the supervision of Domenico Luciani and contributions from the Consultative Scientific Committee of the Foundation.

Each year, the Jury comments on and evaluates the results in a written statement (those issued in the first four years of the project – 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 – are reprinted below; the 2011 Jury Report is not yet available).

#### *Outstanding Places 2007, 1<sup>st</sup> year – Jury Report*

The Jury of the International Carlo Scarpa Prize for Gardens and of the Outstanding Places project has examined the materials submitted to illustrate and support the one hundred and forty sites put forward, now the subject of an exhibition organized by the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche in palazzo Bomben.

The Jury expresses its warmest appreciation of the quality and effectiveness of the material submitted and of the enormous efforts made by the staff of the Foundation to mount the exhibition and produce the audiovisual, photographic, cartographic and editorial back-up resources.

The experimental approach adopted throughout the past year has focused on the universal connections between people, nature, historical memory and propensity for change in an unexplored and particularly fertile terrain. The collective research project is taking place in the spirit of a maieutic dialogue between society in general and the specialist experts involved and constitutes a necessarily long-term scientific and cultural operation at a widely acknowledged level of excellence.

The Jury therefore unanimously rejects any system of meritocratic judgement and attributes the status of “outstanding place” to all the sites submitted. They have all been observed, described and highlighted with the subjective eye of those who live or work there and in their extreme variety of shapes, sizes and characters become indispensable vehicles and indicators of the needs, the communicative idioms and tastes of the community and thus provide the best possible conditions for safeguarding and enhancing our environment and the quality of our lives and for the future projects of new generations. The Jury has chosen the “paediatric oasis” of the Ca’ Foncello Hospital of Treviso to be the mascot of the “outstanding places” project, a standard-bearer for those already nominated and a lucky charm for others to come.

*Carmen Añón, Domenico Luciani, Monique Mosser, Lionello Puppi*

Treviso, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2007

(on the occasion of the public meeting with the members of the Jury, entitled *One hundred and fifty outstanding places*, organized in connection with the exhibition of submissions for the first concourse of *Outstanding Places*, 16.X.2007-3.II.2008).

## *Outstanding Places* 2008, 2<sup>nd</sup> year – Jury Report

The Jury has examined the materials submitted in response to the second invitation to nominate Outstanding Places and displayed in the ongoing exhibition; it has studied the replies to the questionnaires sent to all participants asking for further details concerning the places nominated and the people involved; and it has followed the Study Days on the subject of *Outstanding Places. Outstanding Values*, during which the Foundation's initiative was examined in the light of several other experiences and discussed by those taking part, and which concluded with a highly relevant cultural and moral focus on the teaching of Lucio Gambi.

First, the Jury wishes to express its sincere thanks to the 227 people who have taken the trouble to participate in this vast exploration, over 70 of whom have (so far) responded also to the supplementary questionnaire. Such figures offer clear evidence of a freely espoused willingness to work together within the framework of a scientific investigation focused on the cultural and social conviction that knowledge of a place is the fundamental prerequisite for its safeguard and appreciation. Probing deeper into the connections between people and places means coming to terms with the universal relationship between the quality of individual and collective life and the organization and nature of the space that provides the framework for that same life. These are not distant, abstract topics. They are close and concrete aspects of the human condition today and of the state of the historically accumulated natural and cultural heritage in which a community finds its anthropological reference and for which it is responsible to its own and future generations. This collective research is taking place in a locally defined dimension and demonstrates the potential of inclusive and involving cultural processes that are capable of developing maieutic energies in the social body, of enhancing awareness, of bringing about positive change in the collective mentality, of equipping citizens, from their earliest childhood years, with an appropriate store of critical knowledge. From this point of view, the participation of schools and the variety of effort and commitment it represents is symbolically the most significant of this second round of nominations.

In looking forward to following the third round of nominations, the Jury appeals to participants to find ways of widening the area of social involvement in the initiative. At the same time it calls on those who have administrative responsibility for the territory, in particular on the Local Authorities, to open a constructive dialogue with the scientific community and with all those involved in this experience, with a view to exploiting the endorsements and ideas that have emerged from these Study Days in developing new ways of enhancing awareness and appreciation of the places concerned, drafting regulations and legislative measures and devising actions to be taken.

The Jury knows it can count on the constancy and the scientific rigour of the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche, and fully endorses the proposals made during the Study Days that the initiative be extended, that the experience emerging from it be ordered and publicized and that the documents accompanying nominations of "Outstanding Places" be organized into a consultable archive.

*Carmen Añón, Domenico Luciani, Monique Mosser, Lionello Puppi, Massimo Venturi Ferriolo*

Treviso, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2009

(on the occasion of the Landscape Study Days entitled *Outstanding Places. Outstanding Values*, 5-6.II.2009 and of the closure of the exhibition of submissions for the second concourse of *Outstanding Places*, 25.X.2008-15.II.2009)

### *Outstanding Places* 2009, 3<sup>rd</sup> year – Jury Report

In its first three years, *Outstanding Places* has grown in size and standing to become a cultural project of considerable importance and of far-reaching collective research. Such are the quantity and the quality of the information and opinion testifying to person/place and community/place relationships, to the state of the places themselves and to the essential details of their form and their life that we are now in a position to make a first, albeit provisional, critical assessment.

Altogether, the first three annual invitations to the citizens of the Province of Treviso have prompted over 400 people to nominate 490 places; these submissions have been followed up by three campaigns of interviews and site visits, and the three subsequent exhibitions of the materials collected have attracted over 8,500 visitors. Then two of the Foundation's annual Landscape Study Days have been dedicated to issues directly connected with the interpretation and definition of the *values of place* (2009) and the *concept of place* (2010).

What has emerged most strikingly, and with growing clarity as time goes on, is the universal character of the "need of place" felt and expressed by people of every social and cultural background; it is also clear from the growing participation of schoolchildren and students that this "need" develops and is being cultivated at a very early age.

Over the years the research has expanded its horizons to investigate the nature of the person/place and community/place relationship in a whole range of contexts and in a variety of anthropological contexts and civilizations and through imaginative and extremely useful debate involving specialists in widely differing disciplines such as geography and neuroscience, anthropology and architecture.

The time is now ripe, we think, to progress to a new phase of the project; even as we are collating and analyzing the results produced in the first three years and the response to the fourth invitation during 2010, we have already started to set up an experiment designed to explore, in one or more situations, the life, the form and measure of a community and its relationship with a place and its natural, historical and dynamic values.

The project continues therefore to investigate the material and spiritual make-up of the person/place and society/place relationship, its universal qualities and its susceptibility to change. And to establish a charter – theoretical and practical, ethical and legal, a framework balancing conservation and planning for the future – for every patch of territory that possesses characteristics and dimensions corresponding to the settlement of a recognizable and responsible community, organizing workshops involving relevant community figures and specialists with a view to devising concrete, constructive, regulatory indications that can help towards the formulation of innovative methods and practices for the design and governance of places.

*Carmen Añón, Domenico Luciani, Monique Mosser, Lionello Puppi, Massimo Venturi Ferriolo*

Treviso, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010

(on the occasion of the Landscape Study Days entitled *The Concept of Place*, 5-6.II.2010 and of the closure of the exhibition of submissions for the third concourse of *Outstanding Places*, 30.X.2009-7.II.2010)

*Outstanding Places* 2010, 4<sup>th</sup> year – Jury Report

*Outstanding Places*, far from flagging, continues to surprise, to question, to generate the passionate involvement of experts and the general public and to arouse Europe-wide interest in devising similar initiatives.

With the response to the fourth annual invitation for submissions, the data universe, or rather the wealth of knowledge thus created has reached dimensions of size and variety of content that the results themselves are beginning to prompt further investigations and lines of enquiry.

*Outstanding Places* is no longer so much a collection of nominations (though at that level too the initiative continues to stimulate growing interest) as a real cultural campaign that has developed over the four years of its existence through site visits, interviews, highly popular exhibitions, detailed replies to questionnaires, projects devised and carried out by working groups, international study days, presentations and discussions at conferences.

This fourth year has also seen the construction of an interactive data base containing factual profiles of the places nominated and their nominators and also the appraisals that can be inferred from the answers to the questionnaires. This latest product of the project will prove of great use to the communities involved – both the general public and the scientific experts – in developing the dialogue between them in a number of directions.

On the one hand it will facilitate the involvement of the various specialist disciplines, anthropology, history and geography, that deal with the structure of places, social behaviours and the cognitive and perceptive mechanisms of individuals and communities. On the other, closely interconnected with the former, it will help to promote the participation of the communities associated with the places nominated, seeking channels and frameworks for the construction of higher levels of grassroots responsibility, and for contact with decision-making bodies at the various levels, from the smallest hamlet to the wider region.

We therefore wish to express our encouragement for the scientific work being undertaken; we are highly appreciative of the moves to enhance accessibility to the wealth of information acquired; and we consider it a matter of urgency that a debate be organized to appraise the ideas and experiences that in recent years have explored the relationships between the individuals and institutions of civil society, the knowledge and experience of scientific experts and the responsibilities of public authorities.

*Carmen Añón, Domenico Luciani, Monique Mosser, Lionello Puppi, Massimo Venturi Ferriolo*

Treviso, 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2010

(on the occasion of the closure of the exhibition of submissions for the fourth concourse of *Outstanding Places*, 23.X.2010-9.I.2011)

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### *Appendix 2*

**Public announcement, *Outstanding Places 2010, IV year*** (the following will be translated)

**1.** The **Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche**, in the framework of its cultural activities dedicated to the knowledge, design and governance of landscape, wishes to foster the participation of local people, communities and schools in research into and consideration of the universal link between place and the human condition.

**2.** Participation in the project, called a “concourse of **Outstanding Places**” is open to all. It is inspired by the European Landscape Convention (Italian Law no. 14, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2006) and is conceptually associated with the annual attention-raising campaign, usually focussed on a site in Europe, called the International Carlo Scarpa Prize for Gardens.

**3.** The project consists of an invitation to submit nominations, each of which should include a description of a place and an explanation of what makes it important to the participant.

**4.** The places nominated may be publicly or privately owned.

Public places may include, for example:

- places for which a public authority, such as the State, the Region, the Province, Municipalities, Park Authorities, etc., is responsible; such places may include parks, gardens, squares, city walls, cemeteries, riverside paths, roadside paths, road junctions, waste areas, etc.;
- places for which other public bodies, such as the State Railways, Land Reclamation Consortia, schools, parishes, hospitals, prisons, barracks, boarding schools, etc., are responsible;
- places that are not necessarily publicly owned but are used by the public or by a community; these may include car parks, sports and other leisure facilities, reused quarries, etc..

Private property may include, for example, places of any size or character, provided they are clearly identifiable, from large parks to small gardens, courtyards and terraces; from urban vegetable gardens to large-scale farming enterprises (vineyards, orchards or other types of cultivation, woods, pastures, etc.) and to spaces belonging to factories, service industries, etc..

**5.** As in the previous three years of the concourse, the present announcement, concerning **Outstanding Places, 2010**, invites nominations **only of places situated within the Province of Treviso**.

**6.** Nominations may be submitted by private citizens, individually or in groups, by schools, by public bodies, especially local authorities, and/or any other kind of body, whether they are responsible for the place nominated or whether they simply know it and can describe its characteristics. Anyone who participated in 2007, 2008 or 2009 may also nominate places in 2010, provided their submission concerns somewhere different. Every participant may, individually or in association with others, nominate a maximum of five places.

The nomination must include:

- the name (or a short definition) of the place nominated;
- the address of the place nominated;



- a short description and basic information concerning the characteristics, size, use and current condition of the place;
- basic photographic documentation (at least three pictures);
- name, address and telephone number of the nominator;
- if possible, the name, address and telephone number of the owner and/or person responsible for the place.

The appropriate form should be used to submit all nominations. The form should be completed in all its parts and accompanied by any materials that the nominator considers useful (maps, photographs, historical information, other documentation). Printed copies of the form are available from the Foundation's offices or it can be downloaded as a "pdf" file from the Foundation's web-site [www.fbsr.it](http://www.fbsr.it). The form can also be completed and submitted directly via the web-site [www.fbsr.it](http://www.fbsr.it) (see Article 7 below for instructions). The materials submitted will not normally be returned and may be used, wholly or in part, in actions designed to bring the project to the attention of the public, including exhibitions and publications. Nominators are deemed to have authorized such uses by virtue of their participation in the concourse.

**7. Nominations and the associated documentation must reach the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche no later than 6 pm on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2010.** If the documentation presented is in printed form and if it is accompanied by CDs or DVDs containing attachments in digital formats, it can be delivered by hand or sent to: Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche, concorso Luoghi di valore, via Cornarotta 7-9, 31100 Treviso (the office is open from Monday to Friday, from 9 am to 6 pm).

Any printed photographs submitted must be of good quality and if possible printed on photographic paper. If the digitalized nomination form is completed and sent via the web-site [www.fbsr.it](http://www.fbsr.it), it may be accompanied by digitalized attachments, following the instructions on the form; otherwise, supporting materials (in printed form, CDs or DVDs) can be delivered by hand or sent, as described above, with clear indications of the nomination form to which they refer. All texts in digital form should be formatted either as Word or PDF documents; images should be submitted in JPG format with a resolution of at least 300 dpi for dimensions of 10 cm x 15 cm. For further information, please contact: Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche, via Cornarotta 7-9, 31100 Treviso, tel. 0422.5121, fax 0422.579483, [www.fbsr.it](http://www.fbsr.it), [luoghidivalore@fbsr.it](mailto:luoghidivalore@fbsr.it).

Nominations submitted before the deadline will be subjected to a preliminary inspection in order to check, if necessary with a site visit, that they comply with the rules set out in this announcement.

**8. La Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche undertakes to:**

- organize a **public exhibition of all nominations** in Autumn 2010 and follow-up events, open to all;
- promote the construction of an **archive/observatory of Outstanding Places in the Province of Treviso**, with a view to making them better known, safeguarding them and raising awareness of their value;
- involve local authorities, associations and schools in the project with a view to **"entrusting" society with responsibility for the places nominated.**

**9. The scientific and cultural policy underpinning the project is established by the Jury of the International Carlo Scarpa Prize for Gardens**, composed of Carmen Añón, Domenico Luciani, Monique Mosser, Lionello Puppi and Massimo Venturi Ferriolo, with the contribution of the Consultative Scientific Committee of the Foundation and of a specifically constituted working group. Having examined the materials displayed and conducted an overall review of the project's first four years, the Jury will issue a report of the progress achieved and will explain and debate its findings in public.