

POLITECNICO DI TORINO  
FIRST SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE  
Master of Science in Architecture Construction City  
**Honors theses**

---

**The Redevelopment of the “Manifattura Tabacchi” in Turin: from industrial complex to new headquarters of DAMS (University of Art, Music and Performing Arts)**

by Mattia Grosso

Tutor: Gustavo Ambrosini

Co-tutors: Mauro Berta, Pierre-Alain Croset

The path of the thesis takes place within the “Joint Studio 2013” between the Politecnico di Torino and the Tsinghua University of Beijing, which saw the collaboration between Chinese and Italian students.

The work was carried out following various steps, starting from a historical study to understand the importance that this complex has always had within the city, both as an industrial site as a city landmark.

The ultimate goal of this process of redevelopment, is to return to the city of Turin, the possibility of using this area, that is rich of potential, and having it take on the role of engine for the renewal of the whole portion of the city that surrounding this zone.

From these assumptions, the idea was born to not only treat the Factory as the new home of the Faculty of DAMS (Discipline of arts, music and performing arts), but to make it a center of culture and art, completely open to the city and permeable at any time of the day, in contrast with the image of closed barrier that the complex possesses today, and making it able to attract not only the inhabitants of the area, but the entire citizenry.

The design work started with a phase of study of the area, where we went to investigate different aspects of the Manifattura and the surrounding area, analyzing the infrastructure, services, green areas and water supply system present. This analysis has been accompanied by a historical study of the various buildings that make up the complex, classifying them by period of construction and architectural features.

The work of analysis led to the guidelines that have given rise to the master plan of the project.



Project's Plan

It has been maintained the system of three courtyards that make up the core of the "Manufattura", giving each of them a different function: the first is mostly dedicated to public functions (library, museum, auditorium), the second, is the one with most historical significance, and houses the administration and representation spaces of the University (bureaux, departments and secretariats), while the last, which is home to two buildings designed by Pierluigi Nervi, hosts all the locals for teaching. These three courtyards, are connected by the track of the old binaries, which is still present and enters within the Manufacture from the large carriage entrance and runs throughout its length; it was decided to emphasize its presence and use the path as main route within the complex, covering it with a green shelter that accompanies users in all the three courts.



Views of the Manifattura's Courtyards

The centerpiece of the project is represented by the system of the two auditoriums in sequence, one indoors and one outdoors. The first is grafted on the facades of two existing buildings, and, on the ground floor, the other two sides are fully glazed, creating a sort of covered plaza that represents the foyer. On the upper floor there is the hall, which has the peculiarity of having the wall behind the stage entirely transparent (darkened in case of need by a system of movable brise-soleil panels and blackout curtains), leaving the sight free on the Turin's hill topped by the Basilica of Superga, which assume the role of "natural scenography" of the auditorium.

The open air auditorium is instead made up of a tiered system who races through the slope that separates the park from the "Manifattura". It is attested to the shore of an artificial stretch of water fed by the branch ducts of the Dora river, restored and present in the area since the eighteenth century. In the middle of this lake there is the stage of the auditorium, which also assumes the role of a square in the absence of shows and is the hub of one of the three paths that allow to cross the water.

It was decided to use this element to emphasize the centuries-old relationship that the factory has had with water, from the earliest periods of its activity; but also it is wanted to use the water to highlight the transition between the built city and the natural environment, represented by the Colletta Park, the River Po and the Meisino Park.



Section of the Auditoriums and View from the Water's Stage

On the opposite bank of the lake, there is the area of the "ex FIMIT" factory, it has been redesigned in order to become an integral part of the Colletta Park, which at present is interrupted just in correspondence with this area. Have been maintained some of the structures present here, transforming them into places for the exhibition, multi-purpose spaces, a youth hostel and equipped areas for the organization of music festivals.

For further information, e-mail:  
Mattia Grosso: [mattia.grosso88@gmail.com](mailto:mattia.grosso88@gmail.com)