

IL CENTRO STORICO LA CITTA NUOVA

*New Organizational Strategies For The
Periphery Of An Old City.*

THE PAVEMENTS OF ROME FOR THE PEOPLE OF ROME

The pavements of Rome are the literal and conceptual ground of the Centocelle Park Project. The material and affective registers of Roman paving are used to reinvest the abandoned site and its surface remains with the gravity of Roman public space.

SCALING OPERATIONS:

From the Center to the Periphery.

From Pavement Pattern to Urban Fabric.

From Surface to Volume.

From Mineral to Vegetal.

ROMAN PATTERN

A fragment of the paving pattern from Santa Maria in Trastevere, scaled to the site and in relation to Roman public spaces from the *centro storico*, is put to work as compositional and programmatic code, as a factual protocol, and as a marker of past and future occupation.

THE COMPETITION BRIEF

The brief for the Centocelle Park Ideas Competition asked for a large new park on the southern outskirts of Rome. The site offered is a geographically undistinguished parcel of treeless scrub surrounded by enormous post-war housing blocks and working-class neighborhoods.

The archeological remains of two Roman villas under excavation, the remains of the tarmac and hangar buildings from Rome's first airfield, and the earthworks of a nineteenth-century fort give the site a historical and cultural valency.

More recently, a substantial quadrant of the site was taken over by the military to build a residential complex. This walled-off base leaves the park with an ell-shaped parcel and abrupt twenty-foot high walls.

The program asked for an urban park with diverse cultural, botanical, recreational, and sports components.

It called for an integration of the existing archeological remains into the activities of the park and emphasized the importance of rearticulating the perimeter of the park.

The brief asked for a system that would allow for multiple, and open-ended, building, planting, and phasing strategies for a park that could grow in stages.

GROUND WORK

The project provides a flexible armature, open to formal and programmatic elaboration. The 'pattern' provides the ground-work for suturing the scales of architecture, landscape, and infrastructure: from the layout of sub-surface systems, to the paving of the surfaces, and their extrusion into programmable spaces.

COMPOSITION

The composition is both systemic and figural. From scale to scale it shifts registers, moving between object and infrastructure: from the architecture of curbs, thresholds, walls, and joints, to the geography of the city, its housing projects, and its monuments.

SECTION

The project follows the existing grade as the elements of the pattern -- at the scale of the site -- can easily accommodate changes in section through stippage, shearing, and segmentation. For instance, the raised fields alongside the base take advantage of the central plateau, while the scalloped parterres negotiate the change in grade.

CIVIC IDENTITY

The proposal aims at both a local and a metropolitan identity. The pattern inflects at the perimeter to accommodate local social and spatial conditions. Yet its significant characteristics speak to the history and civic identity of the *Comune di Roma*.

PROGRAMMED SPACES

Along the perimeter of the park, *Disc-shaped Plazas* and *Circular Allées* reestablish a Roman scale to the arterial highways and provide the neighborhoods across from them with public 'rooms' of their own. To the east they open to views of the *campagna*.

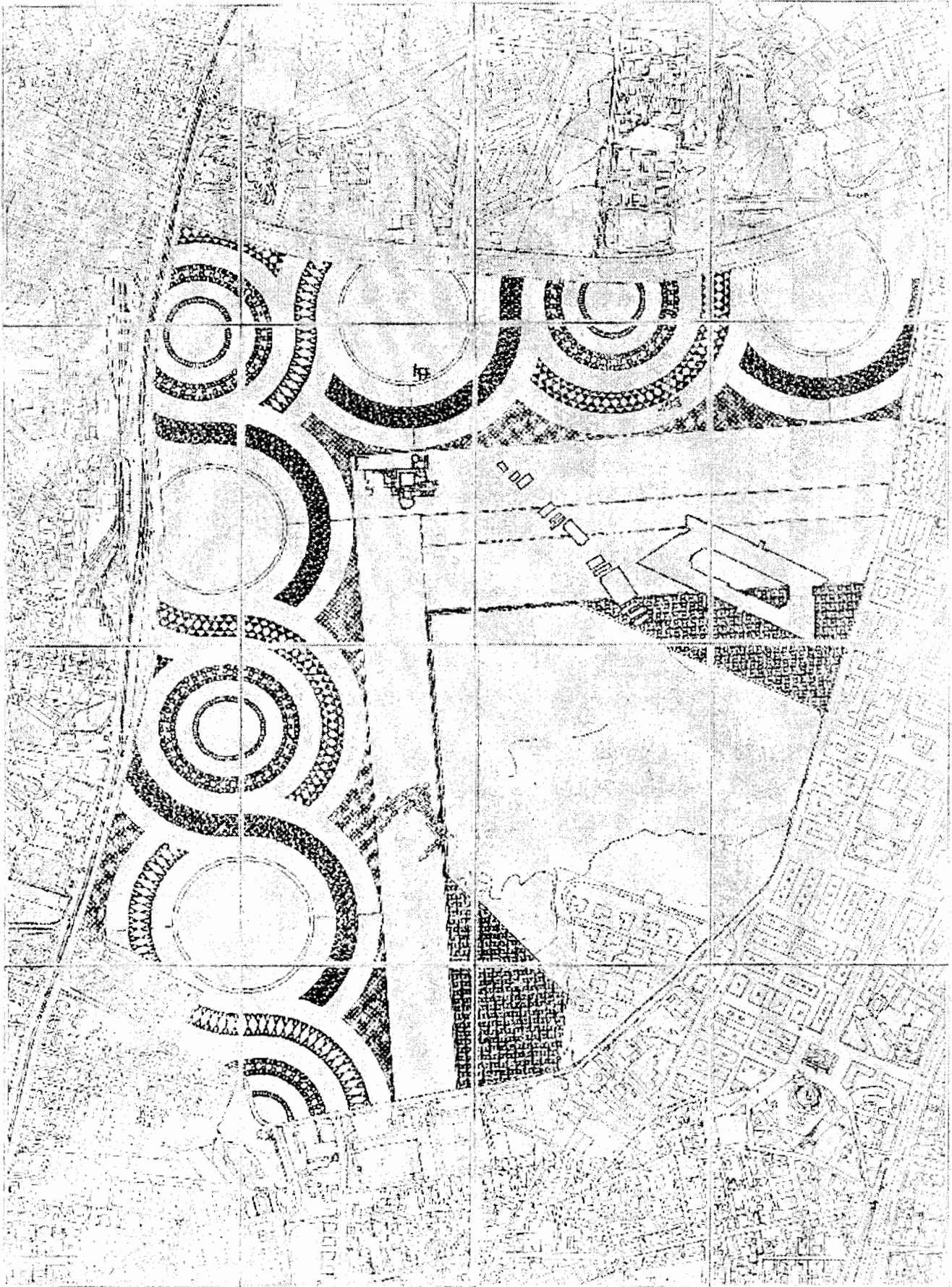
The *Planted Rings* within the *Circular Allées* are scaled to the *Pantheon* and are planted with rows of low hedges and flowering shrubs. The *Disc-shaped Plazas*, scaled to the *Colosseo*, can either be paved or left as meadow, and can be used for a range of organized and informal activities.

As one moves down the gently curving grass walks between the *Serpentine Walls* into the interior of the park, the space opens up dramatically against the enclosed military base and the eight-storey wall of housing along the southern edge.

The *Serpentine Garden Walls* are formed by low walls within which a variety of outdoor rooms provide spaces for a range of uses. The spaces within the walls are formed by walls, trees, planted gardens, and sheds, located according to different in-fill patterns.

A *Plinth*, edged with *Terraced Parterres*, wraps the military base. Upon this raised ground are sports fields, a long pool, and the primary archeological sites.

Parking Orchards fill the spaces between the *Plinth* and the wall of the military base.





A Fabric of Fields and Floors

Sample swatches taken from Santa Maria in Trastevere and a median strip in EUR.



Cutting the Pattern

A system of recombining elements. Adjusted to suit varying materials and programs.

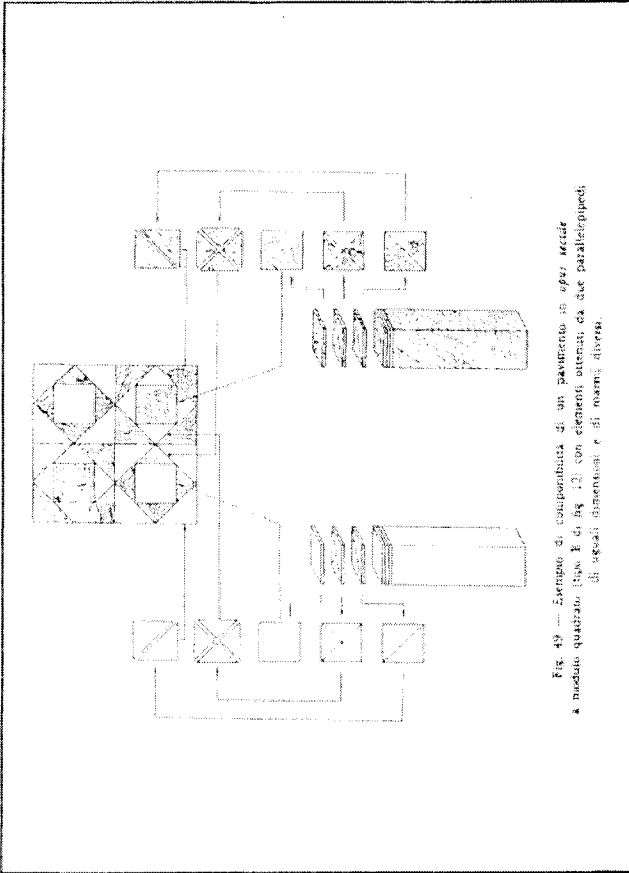
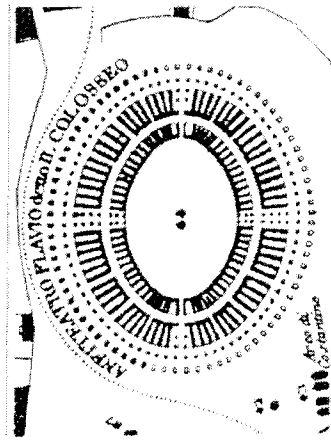
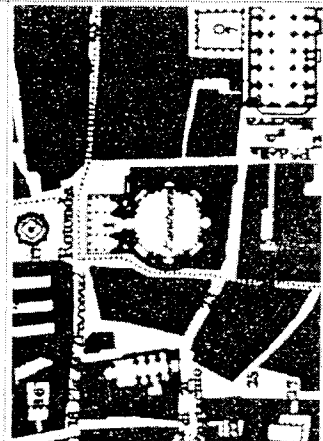


Fig. 49 — Esempio di compatibilità di un pavimento in *opus sectile*. A moduli quadrato (Fig. 3 di Pg. 12) con elementi ottenuti da due parallelogrammi di uguali dimensioni e di norme diverse.

BESPOKE URBANISM

Made to Measure

Paving in recursive magnifications. Landmarks within the city determine the project's scale.



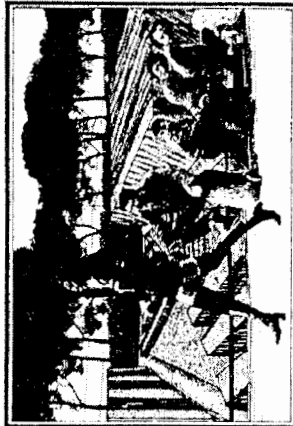
Serpentine Walls

Within the undulating garden walls, outdoor rooms provide spaces for varied uses: botanical gardens & greenhouses, work yards & sheds, secret gardens, supervised play areas, stables, cafes, vegetable patches, family picnic spots, park & community offices, restrooms & exhibition halls.



Circular Allees and Planted Rings

Circular allees of umbrella pines and platforms of hedges and flowering bushes define quiet spaces the size of the Pantheon.



The Fields and the Pool

Grassy fields provide a platform for the primary archeological remains, the fort, and the old hangar buildings

A kilometer-long pool evokes the tarmac of the old airport. Crisply defined channels and drains link the plateau to the other regions of the park.



Parterres and Terraces

Long, lacy parterres edge the plateau. At the tangent points, steps link the serpentine walks to the raised fields.

