

Editorial

EMPTY BEER BOTTLES CREATE DESIGN OPPORTUNITY

Design as a tool to tackle social and environmental degradation in public square, Milan.

Several public meeting areas in Milan are witnessing social and environmental degradation. It is a common problem for many metropolis. The Colonne di San Lorenzo is one of such areas situated in Corso di Porta Ticinese in Milan; it has a strategic position that is easy to reach. The area is a fashionable place where pubs, bars and restaurants surround a Roman monument consisting of ten columns in front of the Basilica di San Lorenzo.

In June last year the social and environmental degradation reached a critical point. The area residents complained about the hundreds of beverage bottles and glasses left and broken. The city mayor decided to implement several experimental measures to support the residents and protect the monumental site. For example; after 9:00 pm from the 6th of June to 31st of July all pubs and bars in the area were only allowed to sell drinks in plastic cups. Another measure involved closing the whole monumental area with metal barriers from 7:00 pm until 7:00 am. Unfortunately, the mayor's measures failed. Instead of resolving the problem frequent visitors to the area retaliated, organising several specific protests against the mayor's decisions.

"Beer Bottles nei luoghi pubblici" is an international design competition with the objective of developing independent creative solutions for the problem. All stakeholders representative of the phases in the product's life cycle should form part of the solution. This includes; bars, pubs, beverages local tradesmen, beverages street traders, area residents, and the groups of consumers.

The design problem should be resolved from a sustainable point of view. Designers are asked to develop creative solutions considering both minor environmental impact and major social appreciation and satisfaction. All submitted projects will be included and discussed in a research report and published on the competition website www.o2italia.org.

The research and design competition are a collaboration between O2 Italia, the local Italian group of O2 Global Network and Co-Creando, a research and design consultancy based in Milan. The Design competition will be launched in April as part of 'System Reload' an event that will celebrate the 20th Anniversary of O2 Global Network. This event will occur during Milan Design Week in the Nhow Hotel in Via Tortona 35, with the jury members are experts in social and environmental sustainability. The winner of the competition will be offered a free exhibition space and all the travel and journey expenses required to participate in Milan Design Week 2009.

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Image by Dr. Fatina Saikaly



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