

## **“DESIGNING A BENCH” Competition of ideas**

The theme of the competition has been inspired by the book:  
**“Sulla panchina – Percorsi dello sguardo nei giardini e nell’arte”**  
di Michael Jakob

In consideration of Varese’s historical reputation as Garden City, **VareseDesignWeek 2017**, in the section devoted to green design, has set up a competition of ideas dedicated to the theme of the bench.

The target is to revitalize some outdoor areas of the city, which boasts a special bond between art and nature with the presence of important parks and villas since eighteenth century.

The Cultural Association **Wareseable** has therefore organised this competition aimed at proposing new typologies of outdoor benches, with innovative shapes and materials, reasoning upon the role they have in parks, urban space and in the more intimate private space.

*“When we are sitting on a bench seeking a moment of rest or enjoying the view of a landscape, hardly ever do we realize to which extent this object, apparently banal and insignificant, functions as a real visual machine, «intelligent and visionary», which enables us to understand the reality we inhabit. Obeying a simple but effective visual strategy, the bench, while averting from the flux of the world, creates particular situations and landscapes, teaches, arouses, quotes. It orients our vision and shapes our state of mind.” Michael Jakob*

The competition theme has been inspired by the book by **Michael Jakob “Sulla panchina”** published in 2014 by Einaudi, in which the writer guides us on an enthralling journey through gardens and ages, from Renaissance Tuscany to France in the eighteenth century, from Russia in the twenties to the industrial landscapes of the contemporary age, attempting to reconstruct the numerous lives of an ancient entity: from the «street benches» of Florence or Pienza and the extravagant ones of Bomarzo, to the literary (Rousseau, Stifter, Sartre), artistic (Manet, Monet, Van Gogh, Liebermann) or cinematographic (Vertov, Antonioni) benches. A scholarly and refined essay on visual culture, accessible – for the appeal of its themes, the originality of its approach, the elegance of its style and the richness of its iconographic apparatus – also to a curious reader.

Michael Jakob is Professor (Chair) of Comparative Literature at Grenoble University and is Professor in History and Theory of Landscape at Tech (*hepia*) of Geneva and at EPFL of Lausanne. He is the founder and director of *Compar(a)ison*, international magazine of comparative literature; he directs the series «di monte in monte» (Tarara’ Publisher, Verbania). He has recently published *Sulla panchina* (Einaudi, Turin 2014), *Ritorno a Ermenonville* (Tarara’, Verbania 2014), *The Swiss touch in Landscape Architecture* (Ifengspace, Beijing 2015) and *Cette ville qui nous regarde* (b2, Paris 2016).



The Competition is open to persons aged 18 or over and is addressed to persons who work as designers and/or within creativity and design field and/or who possess qualifications related to this orientation and finality.

Entrants can be individuals or groups.

A maximum of three project tables can be submitted; project tables will have to contain:

- technical drawing of the bench with plan view and at least two perspective drawings of the object;
- renders or representative sketches providing the final idea of the object;
- an outline of construction or assembly details, by way of technical drawings and/or sketches;
- a report describing the project concept and inspiration, use, materials, construction method, dimensions and colours, as well as the product name.

Entries will have to be submitted WITHIN AND NOT LATER THAN **20/02/2017**, to the email address **segreteria@varesedesignweek-va.it**

**The prizes awarded to the first three projects selected will be:**

1<sup>st</sup> prize: 1,000.00 euro cash prize

2<sup>nd</sup> prize: a prize with a retail value of 700.00 euro

3<sup>rd</sup> prize: a prize with a retail value of 300.00 euro

Furthermore, a 3D mockup and a video interview will be made for the first three projects selected. The video interview will be published in the section of the website devoted to the Competition. The first ten projects selected will participate, besides, in a special exhibition, organized in the months following VareseDesignWeek 2017.

The Competition Jury will be composed by eminent figures of the design and culture sector. The official composition of the Jury will be communicated within 28/02/2017 on the site.

**The Call for Entries can be viewed and downloaded from the site: [www.varesedesignweek-va.it](http://www.varesedesignweek-va.it)**

