

ORTICOLA DI LOMBARDIA

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History, knowledge, experience, commitment, evolution ORTICOLA DI LOMBARDIA

Orticola di Lombardia (the Lombard Horticultural Society), is a nonprofit organisation, **acting for the benefit of the Milanese community** through socio-cultural initiatives and projects financed by **proceeds from the Orticola Flower Show**.

Since 1854 the heritage of horticultural knowledge, records of historic Lombard nurseries, the intention to pursue the culture of the beautiful and the protection of the natural territory are transmitted through the management of **specialised archives** and socio-cultural activities such as tours, conferences, periodic meetings and a consultation service for members.

Count Francesco Pertusati and a group of his friends, all young Milanese citizens, set themselves the goals of exchanging news and knowledge about flowers, plants and the beauties of nature in 1854, the year in which Francesco Pertusati founded the magazine "I Giardini" (Gardens). Orticola was born with this first venture and the botanical magazine became the official organ of the Lombard Horticultural Society. On December 16th 1865, the act for the foundation of the "Società Orticola di Lombardia" was signed in Milan.

This new association, a European prototype modelled on the "Société d'Horticulture de France", was favourably received in Milan and elected protagonist of city life, with appreciation for its contribution in diffusing an interest and love of plants and gardens. Today, after more than 160 years, Orticola is still one of the foremost Italian institutions to promote the awareness of plants, garden art and spontaneous landscape.

"Terrestria Sidera Flores"

"In the mid nineteenth century, a group of young Milanese men met in the garden of Arcadia around "**Anthophilous, the flower lover**", Count Francesco Pertusati. The aim of this "green movement" of yesteryear was to promote horticulture, the study of botany and landscape design. In 1854, the same year as the invention of the internal combustion engine and Japan's opening to the West, in a Risorgimento climate, already cosmopolitan, the first edition of "I Giardini" was issued, a magazine illustrated with superb engravings of flowers and fruit. A few years later, after the Unification of Italy, **the Lombard Horticultural Society** was founded on the **16th December 1865**. Since then the members have never relinquished their search for the most beautiful flowers, in parks and glasshouses all over the world, as well as in courtyards and small vegetable patches in the city.

At the beginning of the new millenium Orticola has much to tell and, with its motto "**Terrestria Sidera Flores**", brings to mind many vicissitudes in Milanese and Lombard history through its best-loved gardens and reminiscences of the people who brought them to life.

If flowers are stars on earth, Orticola and Milan are at the centre of that firmament".

Since May 1996, a committee within the Society has been organizing the "Orticola" Flower Show, held in May each year in the Public Gardens of via Palestro. The aim is to present first-rate horticultural production, as well as to raise funds for public greenery for the city of Milan, along with the patronage of the city's Municipality. It is a festive and cultural occasion, an "investment" for the benefit of the community.

The Lombard Horticultural Society has its headquarters in Milan, in via Montenapoleone 8.

Philanthropy – A traditional Vocation of the Lombard Horticultural Society

"The philanthropic actions of the Lombard Horticultural Society are made possible by the profits from the Orticola Flower Show through the commitment of its councillors and volunteers. The overall proceeds of the show are destined for socio-cultural initiatives and projects for improving the city's green spaces in collaboration with Milan Municipality. The price of the ticket makes the organisation of such an event possible. The councillors of the Lombard Horticultural Society work free of charge, as volunteers, in the

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programming, conception and creation of the show. The knowledge, experience and ethical commitment of the Lombard Horticultural Society is completely at the service of the community and urban open spaces”.

— Gianluca Brivio Sforza – President of the Lombard Horticultural Society.

Over the years

Orticola has always been active in promoting the culture of gardening, and intends to continue the work of raising awareness and lending a hand, not only in open spaces in general, but particularly those in the city. At the same time it tries to arouse a civic sense in the Milanese, by making them aware of the need to live in harmony with nature. Orticola's commitment to the city's open spaces remains constant.

Our interventions on behalf of the community have been implemented:

- for the flowerbeds in front of the **Natural History Museum**
- for the **Sormani Library** gardens
- for the **Fine Art “Green Shades” Photographic Exhibition** with free admission
- for the **Perego gardens** for five editions of Orticola. After the first intervention in 2006 when the flowerbeds were completely replanted with a collection of acidophilous plants consisting of camellias, rhododendrons and other shrubs, Orticola continued to intervene in other parts of the gardens, particularly the areas dedicated to children
- for a **futuristic playground** in the **Perego gardens**
- for the **Urban Horticulture Project**, with the creation of an urban vegetable garden in the Christian Protestant Church in via Marco de Marchi 9, Milan
- for improvements to the Brera **Botanical Garden**
- for the **Orticola Outdoor Prize** which awards a young Italian designer
- for the **Fine Art “SmallGARDEN” Photography Exhibition** with free admission
- for a logistic intervention for the **MiColtivo Orto a Scuola** (Vegetable Cultivation in School) project, in partnership with the Catella Foundation. A pilot project to install vegetable patches in schools
- for the **Lavinia Taverna Prize** from 2011 to 2014. An annual conference with free admission
- for the **Study Days** of the Lombard Horticultural Society from 2012 to 2015. An annual conference with free admission
- for the **Indro Montanelli Gardens**, maintenance of the lake surrounds and in 2015 for the project “let's look after our historic garden” involving volunteer gardeners with Milano Altruista
- for the beds of **Piazzale Cadorna** and **Piazza Meda** in agreement with the Municipality of Milan
- for the **Orticola's Viridarium** inspired by roman gardens, bringing back in public parks a courtyard of the Royal Palace. The project integrates for the first time a botanical path at the Royal Palace, to complement the remarkable exhibition “Myth and Nature” – from Greece to Pompeii
- for the **Futurist Boccioni Garden** project, inspired by the art of the Master, at the Royal Palace
- for the flowery meadow sown in the medians of **Piazza Monte Titano**, one of the entrances of the city.
- for the vegetable **Flowery Garden** of **CityLife** made in collaboration with Orticola di Lombardia and Cascina Bollate Nursery
- for the improvement and maintenance of the **Perego Garden** (2017-2020)
- for Milan's **Royal Palace Garden**, a definitive project expected to remain in place until 2022
- for the second cycle of the **Study Days (2017)** of the Lombard Horticultural Society taking place from 2017 to 2020. A calendar of annual conferences with free admission.
- for the expansion of the vegetable **Flowery Garden** of **CityLife** made in collaboration with Orticola di Lombardia and Cascina Bollate Nursery
- for the **spring and autumn 2017 educational meetings** at the Giardino Perego and at the Orti Fioriti CityLife for citizens who want to learn more about plants, the art of the garden, the vegetable garden and the landscape
- for the **Flowerbed of the fawns**, in front of the Milan **Civic Museum of Natural History**, with the help of the Cascina Bollate Nursery
- for the **Garden of the Palace of Art - Triennale Design Museum** in Milan
- for the **Infant School in via Savona 30**, an art project in the permanent staging of the work "Where are you, Where do you live" by **Claudia Losi**, for the Orticola Arte project

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- for the second cycle of the **Study Days (2018)** of the Lombard Horticultural Society taking place from 2017 to 2020
- for the rearrangement of the **information boards** placed at the entrances to the **Public Gardens** of via Palestro
- for the **garden design project and furnishings** of the Villa Reale's entrance court, home of the **Modern Art Gallery in Milan**
- for the **spring and autumn 2018 educational meetings** at the Perego Garden for citizens who want to learn more about plants, the art of the garden and the landscape
- for the "**Matrix Planting**" flowerbed at the **Perego Garden**
- for the second cycle of the **Study Days (2019)** of the Lombard Horticultural Society taking place from 2017 to 2020
- for the **Elementary School Dante Alighieri** via Mac Mahon 100 in Milan, an educational approach to an art project and the permanent staging of a work by street-art artist **PAO** and the students, for the Orticola Arte project
- for **The Mulberry Pergola** constructed **in the Cortile delle Armi of the Sforza Castle** just a few metres from the Leonardo's original painting, a "**Leonardo500**" **celebration project** by Orticola di Lombardia

Orticola for Milan

The Lombard Horticultural Society and Milan Municipality, working side by side for years on the development of green areas in the city, have signed a three-year agreement providing for investment of the proceeds from the historic show in the Montanelli public gardens in projects for public open spaces.

In May 2014 Gianluca Brivio Sforza, President of the Lombard Horticultural Society, and Chiara Bisconti, Environment Councillor for Milan Municipality, signed a three-year agreement providing for the investment of the proceeds from the historic show in the Montanelli Public Gardens in projects to provide new public open spaces and to improve existing ones.

"This is an important agreement", declared Chiara Bisconti, "which could become the model for future collaboration with other private parties. Orticola is a historic show, we have recognised its cultural value and with this agreement we give precise guarantees to the organisers of the shows for the next three years, especially 2015 which will be particularly important due to its concurrence with Expo. I would like to thank President Brivio Sforza and the Lombard Horticultural Society for the awareness demonstrated as well as their passion for this city which they have lavishly dispensed for twenty years. In the agreement we predict increased collaboration in all the many cultural events linked to the environment together with the municipal museums".

The use of the Montanelli Gardens is guaranteed to Orticola for three years under the same conditions as at present. Any profits from the show will be invested in the enhancement and maintenance of Milanese public open spaces, by proposing specific projects of sponsorship to the Municipality following the procedure already in use for all the adoption programmes and care of the city's green areas. Orticola will also guarantee a series of discounts for admission for the next three years, while admission will be free for school children and under 16s. The agreement is of great importance to both parties, in that it could become the model for future collaboration between public and private entities of recognised cultural worth.

Orticola online

Spanning generations and anticipating its era, the Lombard Horticultural Society is present on-line with an institutional site, and also appears on the main social network platforms, with news regarding the socio-cultural and philanthropic activities that it offers to the city. It also published articles on the blog "IO e Orticola" hosted by the women's magazine IO donna from the "Corriere della Sera" Group.

The Lombard Horticultural Society

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