

# A10



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## Start

- Housing complex, Milan
- School and day care centre, Helsinki
- Museum extension, Riga
- Public square, Lodi

## Ready

- Faculty extension, Groningen
- Education centre, Porto
- Music school, Granville
- Media design office, Steyr
- Two houses, Jaén
- Student housing, Helsinki
- Hydroelectric power station, Kempten
- Housing, Dublin
- Villa, Palanga
- Hospital entrance building, Florence

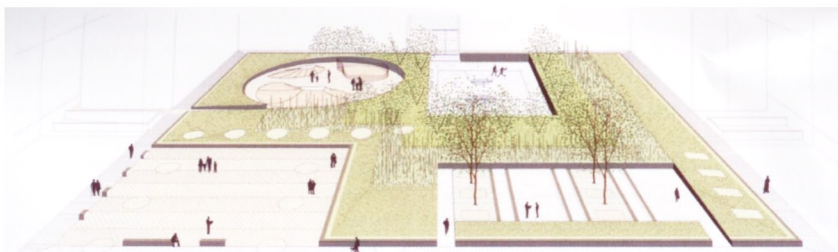
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- Interview: Kersten Geers and David Van Severen
- Is Finland still on the architectural map?
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## Public square, Lodi

*'Zero volume' values and linguistic sobriety characterize Spedstudio's competition entry.*

ITALY — TEXT: LUIGI PRESTINENZA PUGLISI

Spedstudio is a design team composed of Andrea Ambroso, Enrico Dusi, Saverio Panata and Silvia Zini. The architects, all born between 1977 and 1978, graduated in Venice after studying with professors Aldo Aymonino and Valerio Paolo Mosco, who are longstanding proponents of so-called 'zero volume architecture', in other words design opportunities that allow for interventions in the existing built fabric in the form of works that improve the quality and impact of public space, without adding quantities of function – for example new cubic metres of residential, commercial or tertiary space – that would radically alter the urban character or importance. Mosco, a militant architecture critic, has for many years been busy promoting and justifying the aesthetic of 'New Simplicity' which is opposed to the extraordinary iconic buildings of the Star System and focused on a more sober pragmatism.

Zero volume values and linguistic sobriety characterize Spedstudio's competition entry for a public square in the town of Lodi. And with positive results, given that the design, after convincing the jury with its diagrammatic simplicity, was awarded first prize.

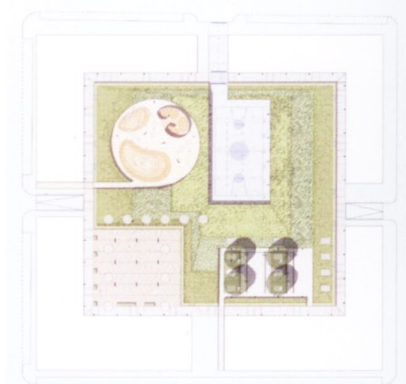
The proposed square is approximately 80 x 80 metres and is enclosed by four corner buildings, ranging in height from five to seven storeys, from which it is separated by a 3-metre-wide perimeter road that manages traffic flows. The two environments are in turn separated by a bench that, apart from functioning as a virtual fence, also marks a change in level: the plaza is raised some 40 centimetres above the level of the street. The functional motivation behind this move is that it made it possible to insert earth for plantings above the slab of the plaza (the lower space is used as underground parking). The formal justification is that the plaza resembles a solid out of which four rooms can be carved, each with its own specific function. One, with an encircling form,

is a children's play area. A second, rectangular space, shaded by four trees, is designed as a meeting point for the elderly. The third, whose paving features the lines of a basketball court, is designed to be used for small-scale sports, as a market (on certain days of the week) and, when necessary, as parking. The final space, located at the corner, was designed without a specific functional programme.

Although the four rooms have been described as being carved out of the 40 cm mass of earth, this is the depth at the edges only; in fact, the depth increases towards the centre. The changes in level render the perception of the entire project both pleasurable and lively. This is a small concession to the psychological needs of the users, even at the cost of upsetting the diagrammatic rigour of the composition. It is a sign of the pragmatic approach that characterizes the search for a new simplicity pursued by this group of Italian architects. An approach different from the more formalistic one adopted by Japanese super-minimalism, to which the plan is, in any case, in some way indebted. ←

### ALBAROLA QUARÈ, COMPETITION 2010

First prize: Spedstudio (Andrea Ambroso, Enrico Dusi, Saverio Panata, Silvia Zini)  
 Client: Municipality of Lodi  
 Info: [www.spedstudio.com](http://www.spedstudio.com)



↓ By raising the square 40 centimetres above street level, earth for planting could be inserted.

