



## Underground

International Landscape Study Days  
Treviso, 14th, 20th, 21st February 2025

### abstract and lecturers' short biographies

> [online preview, Friday 14th February 2025](#)

ROBERT MACFARLANE

Writer, Professor of Literature and the Environmental Humanities in the Emmanuel College,  
Università di Cambridge.

#### **Underland**

**Robert Macfarlane** is internationally renowned for his writing on nature, people and place. His bestselling books include *Underland*, *Landmarks*, *The Old Ways*, *The Wild Places* and *Mountains of the Mind*, as well as the book-length prose-poem, *Ness*. His work has been translated into more than thirty languages, won many prizes around the world and been widely adapted for film, music, theatre, radio and dance. He has also written operas, plays, and films including *River* and *Mountain*, both narrated by Willem Dafoe. He has collaborated closely with artists including Olafur Eliasson and Stanley Donwood, and with the artist Jackie Morris he co-created the internationally bestselling books of nature-poetry and art, *The Lost Words* and *The Lost Spells*. As a lyricist and performer, he has written albums and songs with musicians including Cosmo Sheldrake, Julie Fowlis and Johnny Flynn, with whom he has released two albums, *Lost In The Cedar Wood* (2021) and *The Moon Also Rises* (2023). In 2017, the American Academy of Arts and Letters awarded him the E.M. Forster Prize for Literature, and in 2022 in Toronto he was the inaugural winner of the Weston International Award for a body of work in the field of non-fiction. He is a Fellow of Emmanuel College, and Professor of Literature and the Environmental Humanities at the University of Cambridge.

> [first day, Thursday 20th February 2025](#)

MATTEO MESCHIARI

Associate professor of Geography, University of Palermo

#### **One thousand and one caves. Darkness and sleep of Time**

What structure links a limestone cave with painted horses and bison, the Minotaur's labyrinth, coal mine tunnels filled with gas, Ghost Dance underground areas destined for the storage of radioactive waste, the cave crevice which becomes a mortal trap, a small prehistoric world at the centre of the Earth, a continent of oil compressed by millions of cubic metres of rock, a rabbit burrow and a shaman's tomb? Is it a negative space or are we in the presence of an idea of time, a different time, which runs like an anomaly and in which the echo of another cavity - that of the cranium - reverberates, an inverted tower of Babel which penetrates deep into the brain of the species? William Morris published *The Hollow Land* in 1856. Jules Verne published *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* in 1864. Both Morris and Verne sensed early on the fundamental connection between underground world and temporal anomalies. In Morris's book chthonic time is at a standstill, but those who escape it, break away from it, will find themselves old and unhappy. In Verne's book, however, the time pocket has preserved the remotest time and the leading figures enter a suspended bubble, coming out of it seemingly the same yet changed. Then there are another two books - *Cyclonopedia* by Reza Negarestani in 2008 and *Underland* by Robert Macfarlane in 2019 - in which the compressed and invisible space of the underground world becomes deep time. In the first it is an obscure and apocalyptic cosmology; in the second, among many other things, it is a lesson on slowness compared to the turbulent current that is sweeping our present towards the Anthropocene. Because the underground

world is this: a trap for the imaginary world in which scenarios where space and time fall asleep can be investigated.

**Matteo Meschiari** is a geographer, anthropologist and author. He has taught in various French universities and has been professor of Geography at the University of Palermo since 2015. For years he has been studying the landscape in literature and space as perceived and experienced both in Europe and elsewhere. His publications include: *Artico nero. La lunga notte dei popoli dei ghiacci* (2016), *Geoanarchia. Appunti di resistenza ecologica* (2017), *Disabitare. Antropologie dello spazio domestico* (2018), *La grande estinzione. Immaginare ai tempi del collasso* (2019), *Geografie del collasso. L'Antropocene in 9 parole chiave* (2021), *Landness. Una storia geoanarchica* (2022), *La fabbrica dei mondi. Geografie immaginate e Territà* (2024).



ALEXANDRA ARÈNES

architect and researcher at Shaā

### **Terra Forma. Giving depth to the surface**

How to give depth to the cartographies depicting only the surface and that we most often use for landscape representation or design? How do we make invisible agentivities visible, whether because they are inaccessible - too distant without the right tools - or because we choose not to represent them on our maps?

These questions are important because they determine how we understand the world around us (including or excluding certain entities), and within which we live and build. One proposal is to draw on the new natural sciences that study the earth's critical zone and its cycles, in deep spatial and temporal dimensions. This talk will explore some possible maps - speculative or potential - that capture the critical dimensions of landscapes observed in critical zone observatories. These maps emerge from the fields where scientists study the damaged part of the earth and, in so doing, contribute to the instauration of more cosmopolitical relations with the elements.

**Alexandra Arènes** is a graduate architect (2009) and holds a PhD in Architecture (University of Manchester, 2022). Her research and practice focus on understanding and representing landscapes in the context of climate change, at S.O.C (Société d'Objets cartographiques) and Shaā, studio for architecture and urbanism ([www.shaa.io](http://www.shaa.io)). The studio designed an installation at the ZKM museum in Karlsruhe for the exhibition *Critical Zones. Observatories for Earthly Politics*, curated by Bruno Latour. She is co-author of *Terra Forma, a book of speculative maps* published by MIT (2022). Her new book *Gaïagraphie. Carnet d'exploration de la zone critique* (B42, 2025) features the fieldwork in the critical zone and fosters a collaboration with the earth scientists at developing maps of the Earth's cycles at the IPGP (Institut de Physique du Globe de Paris). Her work can be seen here: <https://gaiagraphie.com> and here: <http://s-o-c.fr>.

MARIABRUNA FABRIZI and FOSCO LUCARELLI

Architects, curators and associate professors, EAVT Paris-Est

### **Imagineries from the underground**

Because it is hidden and little-known, over time the underground has taken on the form of a true subconscious of the earth, leading to the belief in incubi and utopias fostered by the unexplored potential under our feet. It has also gathered - and continues to gather - parallel worlds to those built above the earth's crust, developed for climatic, ritual or logistic reasons and giving life to unusual and otherwise inconceivable forms of dwelling. Based on research carried out through the online atlas Socks-studio, we examine the formal, visual and conceptual occurrences of some underground worlds, their life interwoven between reality and fantasy and the paths through which the representations of the underground have influenced designs and works of art.

**Mariabruna Fabrizi** and **Fosco Lucarelli** are architects and curators (Microcities practice) based in Paris. They are associate professors at the EAVT Paris-Est faculty of architecture. Their current research topics are concerned with the spatialization of mental processes, the relationship between architecture and information, permanence in the imageries of the built-up environment and of the territory and the evolution of domestic space. Their work and research take on different forms ranging from projects and installations to exhibitions and publications. Editing the online atlas Socks-studio is carried out alongside their research and design activity. Exhibitions that they have curated include: *Inner Space* at the Lisbon Architecture Triennale 2019 and *Database, Network, Interface, the Architecture of Information* for the Archizoom gallery in Lausanne 2021. They have published the book *Inner Space* with the publishing house

Poligrafa (Barcelona) and *Database, Network, Interface, the Architecture of Information* with Caryatide (Paris).

MICHAEL JAKOB  
Academy of Architecture in Mendrisio  
**'Behind' vs 'under' the landscape**



**Michael Jakob** teaches Comparative Literature at the University of Grenoble and Landscape Theory and Aesthetics at the Academy of Architecture in Mendrisio. He also collaborates with the GSD (Harvard University) and directs the series "di monte in monte" (Edizioni Tararà). Writer and essayist, he has published in recent years in Italian: *Sulla panchina. Percorsi dello sguardo nei giardini e nell'arte* (Einaudi 2014); *L'architettura del paesaggio* (Milano 2020); *La capanna di Unabomber* (Siracusa 2020); *La finta montagna* (Milano 2022); *Le origini tecnologiche del paesaggio* (Siracusa 2022); *Rara Herbaria*, catalogue of the exhibition of the same name at the Accademia dei Lincei (Milan 2023); the novel *La scomparsa di Leda* (Milan 2024). He is the author of documentaries and curator of international exhibitions in which he addresses landscape themes from a very broad perspective. These include "Silvicoltura. La foresta in biblioteca" (Library of the Academy of Architecture of Mendrisio, 3 December 2024-7 March 2025).

GALAAD VAN DAELE  
Researcher, ETH Zürich  
**Geoarchitectural Histories**

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Architecture is extractive, and construction relies on the sourcing, transformation and assemblage of terrestrial substances, such as rocks, metallic ores, clay, sand or petroleum. Yet this geological dependency is barely ever acknowledged in design practice or in the way architectural history is written.

The Grotta Grande, in Florence, is a prime example of this lack of consideration for the material aspects of built objects. Commissioned by Francesco I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, to architect Bernardo Buontalenti, it is one of the grottoes erected in the Boboli Gardens in the 16th century. A building which presents a familiar Renaissance composition, with its temple-like façade and vaulted interiors, but which also creates an unusual geological expression with its cladding of raw calcareous concretions harvested from the surroundings of the city. But although the grotto has been investigated by numerous art and architecture historians, its rocks have remained neglected, and the way this building manifests a fundamental earthly anchorage at work in architecture hasn't been addressed.

Yet, the use of such geological ready-mades to produce architectural objects raises many questions. Questions of design and intentionality, as the expression of those buildings is largely shaped by forms that pre-existed in the geosphere; questions of historiography, as those unaltered rocks contain rich terrestrial histories of their own, for now left untold; and questions of signification and interpretation, as those rocks that appear both formless and suggestive seem capable to ceaselessly receive new meanings.

Starting from the porous rocks of the Grotta Grande, the talk will place this building in relation with a broader material culture relying on the expressiveness of rocks, in the crafts and arts of the same period. But it will also look beyond the Renaissance, all the way into the present, as well as back into the deep past, to reflect on the history and temporalities of the concretions of the Grotta Grande in relation with the intense geological life of the Tuscan territory. Together, those ventures in time and space will sketch out the way 'geoarchitectural histories' could help describe some of the continuities and dependences at work in architecture, between the cultural realm of humans and the geological realm of the Earth.

**Galaad Van Daele** is an architect, editor and researcher active in Paris and Zurich. His research interests gravitate towards ambiguous spatial objects that challenge the nature-culture boundary, which he approaches by means of writing – between history, science, fiction – and photography.

After some years of practice in Brussels, he teaches architectural design since 2017 at the Chair of Affective Architectures – Studio An Fonteyne at ETH Zurich. Since 2020 he is a doctoral candidate in that same school, with a research project focusing on the Grotta Grande – a cave-like building erected in Florence in the 16th century. In parallel, he is also one of the editors of Brussels-based architecture and art magazine *Accattone* since 2018.

Starting from a focus on landscape studies for some time, his research endeavours now tackle the possibility of writing a history of architecture that acknowledges the various layers of geological presence inside built spaces. Creating dialogues between architecture, the sciences

and the humanities, he seeks transversal modes of thinking about spatial productions and architectural historiographies, beyond the dissociation between the human and the terrestrial. He has developed teaching formats allowing to introduce young designers to geo-centric questions, with courses such as research and design module “Geoarchitectural Histories – A Research Practice” (Design Academy Eindhoven, 2023-24) or with travelling seminar “Geocentric Driftings”, taught between Italy, Sardinia and Iceland (ETH, 2022-23). Recently, he has been a visiting fellow at the Kunsthistorisches Institut (Florence, 2024), and a resident at c/o Bardi (Florence, 2024), and as well as at the ‘Architecture and Landscape’ program of Académie des Beaux-Arts – French Academy of Fine Arts at the Cité Internationale des Arts (Paris, 2022-23).



MARCO RESTAINO

President of the Società Adriatica di Speleologia, Trieste

### **The search for water at Trieste and the discovery of the underground river Timavo**

Trieste has always had to deal with the peculiarities of a karst terrain and throughout its history has tackled the problem of finding and managing its own water resources. Of these, the subterranean river Timavo is one of the most fascinating yet still relatively unknown hydrological systems. After plunging deep underground in the Skocjan Caves in Slovenia, the river continues to flow approximately 40 kilometres before resurfacing at San Giovanni di Duino, in Italy.

It was a historic moment on 23 March 2024 when, after 24 years of excavations in the “Luftloch” cave, the Adriatic Speleological Society celebrated an important discovery regarding the subterranean course of the Timavo. The exploration carried out at three hundred metres below the surface, gave them access to new enormous underground caverns, confirming the presence of galleries and passages that are fundamental for understanding the dynamics of karst waters. Although this discovery is the culmination of the work of generations of cavers and divers, it represents the beginning of new research with the cooperation of geologists, biologists and other scholars of the subterranean world.

The history of the search for water at Trieste will be told during the conference and details of the discovery will be presented together with the latest news regarding the most recent research on the Timavo.

The discovery of this new stretch of the subterranean Timavo is a historic event that highlights the importance of preserving the delicate equilibrium of the karst system. It combines science, technology and the passion for exploration, offering new possibilities for the sustainable management of the territory’s natural resources and the protection of its most precious element: water.

**Marco Restaino** is a skilled worker with long experience in speleology and biospeleology having gained years of experience working with the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale of Trieste and the Museo Speleovivarium. Since 1999 he has devoted most of his time to speleology, taking part in many projects of research, popularization and preservation of the subterranean heritage. In cooperation with the University of Trieste, he has contributed to the study and tracking of the karst waters of the Timavo/Isonzo hydrogeological system. Together with the Municipality of Trieste, he has been engaged in the renovation of some important historic hydraulic structures, such as the Theresian Aqueduct.

His activities include exploration of the karst underground, science outreach and participation in international projects such as the Luftlocher Project and the Timavo System Exploration. After twenty years of work, in March 2024 a historic objective was reached: the discovery of a new cave, which leads to the subterranean waters of the river Timavo.

In 2021 he became President of the Società Adriatica di Speleologia APS.

He has taken part in a number of documentaries, including “Alla ricerca del fiume nascosto” by National Geographic, and dozens of television broadcasts and transmissions such as “Voyager” (RAI 2) and “Under Italy” (RAI 5). He has also participated in national and international congresses, had articles published in major daily newspapers such as «Corriere della Sera» and «Il Piccolo» and is the co-author of some scientific publications as well as being quoted in internationally distributed books.

Thanks to his years of experience, he continues to encourage the appreciation and protection of the karst and hydrogeological heritage, with special attention paid to the territory of Trieste and its rich subterranean system.

> second day, Friday 21st February 2024

PAOLA BONFANTE

Professor Emeritus of Vegetable Biology, University of Turin

## Invisible landscapes: the underground connections between roots, fungi and bacteria

Running through a field of flowering clover, climbing up a woodland trail between surface roots, walking along the edges of a wheat field: invisible, different landscapes stretch out beneath our feet all the time. In fact the soil is considered our most biodiverse habitat and this underground life mainly develops around roots.

Since plants colonised the Earth about 500 million years ago, they have never lived in isolation. They share their dark recess with a myriad of microorganisms – microbiota – consisting of bacteria, archaea, viruses, fungi, protists and invertebrates, which together give life to an intricate system of invisible connections. Meta-sequencing techniques have shed light on this extraordinary biodiversity, which includes approximately 70% of known species. One constant fundamental aspect, however, has emerged: almost all plants are associated with beneficial fungi, called mycorrhizae, setting up stable symbioses that benefit both partners and have a positive impact on a global ecological scale. It has also been recently discovered that mycorrhizal fungi host their own microbiota, a bacterial population associated with their mycelium, which complements their metabolic functions and creates a continuity between the different kingdoms of the living organism. This biological continuum, however, is not an exclusive area of cooperation. All partners involved in these symbioses feel the pressure of the Darwinian fitness of the individual, which constantly determines their dynamics.



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**Paola Bonfante**, Professor Emeritus of Vegetable Biology at Turin University, has been a pioneer of research on plant-microorganism interactions since the '70s. She has studied the genetic, cellular and molecular bases of communications between plants, fungal symbionts and bacteria for the purpose of assessing their impact on the growth of cultivated plants and on natural and agricultural ecosystems. She discovered a group of endobacteria that live inside symbiotic fungi, thereby opening up a new field of research (fungi-bacteria interactions). Her research team has provided important theoretical knowledge in the field of plant-microbes and her students are teachers and researchers in many national and international institutions. She is a member of several national and European Academies, including the Accademia dei Lincei. She is one of the world's most cited researchers and is among the Top Italian Scientists (Natural and Environmental Sciences); Wired Italia (2023) included her name among the twenty Italian scientists who are revolutionising the world of research. In 2019 she was awarded the title Commendatore for scientific merits by Italy's President Mattarella. She has received prizes and accolades, including the Adam Kondorosi International Award and the Chiancone Medal. She is the author of *Una Pianta non è un'isola* (also available in English) and *Piante, Ambiente, Società* (also available in English) in which she talks about scientific topics that fascinate her most.

ELENA ANTONIOLLI

Architect and PhD in Landscape Architecture

### **In a hole in the ground there lived... a bee. Journey among inhabitants of the underworld**

By analysing the nesting methods of ground bees, this contribution offers possible approaches to knowledge of soil macrofauna in order to empathise with other-than-human lives and with the invisible biodiversity that this undervalued ecosystem protects. The paper concentrates, through photography and illustration, on the ethological habits and temporalities tied to the life cycle of solitary bees. As a matter of fact not all bees live in hives like honeybees. Around 77% of the 20,000 known species of bees in the world nest in the ground and need protection during this crucial period in their life. The survival of the bees therefore depends on the availability of suitable nesting sites. Recent research has shown the magnitude of the threats, such as chemical substances and deep tillage, to which ground-nesting pollinators are exposed. Their nests can extend from 30 to 60 cm reaching down as far as 3 metres in depth. The entrance is often revealed by a small mound of earth - the only visible trace of a series of underground tunnels that run below the surface. The bee deposits an egg in each underground brood cell together with a mixture of nectar and pollen so that the future larvae will have food and complete their metamorphosis.

Recognising these traces could change our way of thinking about the life that moves around under our feet and extend our perception of the landscape towards a broader community of life. One that is open to the interconnectedness of the world of darkness where these premature insects lay and the world of light in which they will fly as adults. One that is open to the interconnectedness of their long stasis in the earthy matter and their short life after emerging. The aim is to reanimate the landscape through the visualisation of this often ignored microcosm, to encourage exploration of the multispecies potential that lies sleeping in the soil.

Despite the absence of the organism, its trace on the ground allows you to become aware that inhabiting is always a living together with other forms of life, because the habitat of one living being is none other than a construction created by other living beings. In the field of landscape research, this method of tracing co-dependency relationships can have a positive effect on the way in which places appear in the awareness of persons and in projects to look after those places.

**Elena Antonioli** is an architect with a PhD in Landscape Architecture. She was awarded her Master's Degree in Landscape and Garden Architecture at IUAV Venice University and has worked with CZstudio Associati. In 2017 she became assistant in the scientific-disciplinary area ICAR/15 and ICAR/14 at IUAV Venice University, combining the activity of freelance professional with participation in national and international competitions for the design of open spaces and urban regeneration.

Under the 2017/2018 six-month scholarship scheme of Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche, she investigated the relationship between contemporary design and historic garden connected to the subject area "Landscape project". The research, entitled *Modifying to preserve*, analysed the theoretical and design contribution of two European landscapists: Pascal Cribier and Michael Van Gessel.

In 2024 she was awarded her PhD *cum laude* in "Sustainability and Innovation for the Design of built environment and system product" at the University of Florence, with a dissertation entitled: *Selvatico, Selvatici. Immaginari e pratiche sull'incontro tra vita animale e idea di progetto nel paesaggio*. The research explores the potential of an approach to urban wildlife able to sustain a fertile cohabitation between the reasons for biodiversity and the demands of sociality, focusing on the capacity of adaptive management to valorize ecologies of interconnection between the different communities of life, both human and more-than-human. Her recent publications include: *Alter-azioni. Forme e temporalità della decomposizione nel progetto* (in «Ri-Vista. Research for Landscape Architecture», 20, No. 2, 2022: 50-63) and *Thinking-with Dead Wood* (in «Antennae: The Journal of Nature in Visual Culture», 63, No. 1, 2024: 65-82).



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**PAOLO BÜRGI**  
Professor, landscape architect, Camorino  
**'I feel it under my shoe'**

CERN's sites in Geneva are visited by around 120,000 people every year and it is quite exciting to see the buses with so many young enthusiasts from all over Europe driven by curiosity coming here to get close, learn, see and discover.

How do you convey to those crossing this new emblematic square that there is something exceptional underground?

100 m underground is the LHC, the Large Hadron Collider, a particle accelerator, the largest and most powerful built in the world to date. On rare occasions you can access its sophisticated detectors from four different stations. What we discovered, after crossing various checkpoints and taking the elevators that descend deep into the earth, were enormous machines that bring together millimetric precision in construction and the astonishing size of the whole installation, which is particularly evident when seen in relation to the human scale of the people working there.

In Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) the protagonist turns to his girlfriend Catherine immediately after crossing the border into Switzerland and entering a safe country, now far away from the war, and exclaims «I love the way it feels under my shoes!» to convey the strength of a thought that you can only have when walking on the ground, placing your foot on the land.

Starting with this idea, we conducted lengthy research, evaluating all the materials and possibilities known up to this point, because the aim was to put forward something new and unseen, that would arouse curiosity without providing immediate answers. The design of a large magnetic field that covers the 7,000 square metres area of the Esplanade, where 1628 brass plates depicting a magnetic field are inserted, is not graspable in its entirety, but becomes a stimulus for the imagination, for a quest that may leave different traces in each of us.

Leaving a place with unanswered questions will increase the desire and pleasure of discovery within us.

**Paolo L. Bürgi** carries out his activity as landscape architect at his practice-office in Camorino, Switzerland. He has taught at the School of Design in Philadelphia, at IUAV Venice University and at the Polytechnic in Milan. He has also been a Visiting Professor at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria, the School of Architecture of Columbus in Ohio, and the UPC Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya in Barcelona. His international activities include seminars



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and studies for the cities of Philadelphia, Columbus and Hannover, the Alpine Village of Bosco Gurin in Ticino; in Italy, for the cities of Genoa, Padua, Venice, Pesaro, Montecatini and the island of Torcello in the Venice Lagoon. Paolo Bürgi has held lectures and seminars in Canada, USA, Cuba, Columbia, Argentina, Chile, Korea, China and in Europe; his work has been published many times in Switzerland and elsewhere.

His work abroad has enabled him to become acquainted with other cultures. Various meetings with the architect Luis Barragan had a huge impact on his design activity and have continued to influence his work, which concentrates on the planning of public areas and spaces in relation to the architecture in the public and private sector, both in Switzerland and abroad. Just to give a few examples of such projects: “*Venustas et Utilitas*. Aesthetics of urban agricultural landscapes” in Mechtenberg, Germany, the Espace Auguste Piccard in Sierre, the plaza by Lake Constance in Kreuzlingen and the project for the Cardada mountain above Locarno.

His practice has taken part in national and international competitions winning several prizes, including 1<sup>st</sup> prize for the design and subsequent creation of the ‘Museo all’aperto sul Carso Goriziano’; 1<sup>st</sup> prize awarded by CERN of Geneva, for the design and subsequent creation of an esplanade and emblematic public entrance area; 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize in the competition for the Redesign of Piazza Barche in Mestre (Venezia); joint 1<sup>st</sup> prize for the ‘Brückenschlag’ in Aachen, Germany, and 1<sup>st</sup> prize for the design and subsequent creation of ‘Piazza Castello at Lugano’.

In 1988 he received the Aspan Award for the reclamation of the Motto Grande Quarry at Camorino and in 1999 the JMG Prize of Excellence ‘Our visual landscape’ for the project ‘Osservatorio geologico Cimetta’. In 2003 his project ‘Cardada, Reconsidering a mountain’ was selected out of more than 300 entrants to win the first ‘European Landscape Award’ at Barcelona; the same year he was also awarded the prize ‘Die Besten 03-bronze’ for the project ‘Piazza a Lago di Kreuzlingen’. For the Deutscher Landschaftsarchitektur Preis 2011 he received a mention for the project ‘*Venustas et Utilitas*, Zur neuen Ästhetik urbaner Landwirtschaft, Landschaftspark Mechtenberg’. The project ‘San Michele Museo all’aperto’ on Gorizia’s karst was selected and presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale of Architecture, Italian pavilion. [www.burgi.ch](http://www.burgi.ch)

HENRY BAVA

Landscape Architect DPLG, co-founder of Agence Ter

#### **Underground water and gardens**

The spa towns of Bad Oeynhausen and Löhne launched an international competition in September 1997, for the design and staging of the Landesgartenschau (regional garden show) 2000. The winning project, Aqua Magica Park by Agence Ter, integrates the event dimension (a six-month-long exhibition) and the dimension of durability (the creation of public spaces).

On the basis of a geological analysis of the land, that it is criss-crossed by a large underground fault that supplies thermal water, the authors of the project chose to release this water to celebrate its qualities in the open air by means of a ‘crater’.

The journey to the underworld begins with a spiral pathway, which is the backbone of the park. It is designed to highlight the subterranean fault lines of the landscape and to give visitors a free view of the whole scenery. It leads to a staircase winding **18 meters** down to the bottom of the fountain. Wire baskets with boulders (gabions) support the cut-rock walls, while water falls right at the source, into the ground. While slowly approaching the crater, the mystic atmosphere draws the visitors through its spell. Simmer. Hiss. Then stillness. This is how it is possible to sense the immense might of water. Going deeper and deeper, sounds grow louder, light gets weaker, water comes closer and vapor surrounds people.

And then, at the heart of the crater, suddenly the hissing gets louder again. Water suddenly springs with all the pressure of the earth’s core, and in this particular moment, one can only hold the breath and contemplate. It is possible, actually, feeling the water.

**Henri Bava** is a co-founder of Agence Ter, creating the company with his associates Michel Hössler and Olivier Philippe in 1989. The name of the Agency unites these “three” (*ter* in Latin) with the working of the soil (*terre* in French) and the base of all humanity, the “Earth” (*La Terre* in French) signifying engagement for the planet. Agence Ter, which has been in business for 32 years, deals with challenges of the construction of the city and the territory from the landscape, in a collective and international approach.

Graduating from the École Nationale Supérieure de Versailles in 1984, Henri Bava first collaborated with celebrated landscape architect Michel Corajoud before creating Agence Ter. Initially, with Olivier Philippe he led Agence Ter in Paris, while Michel Hössler developed an antenna in French Guiana, then, in 2000, he opened an office in Karlsruhe where he responds to projects for the development of large transnational territories, requalification of industrial wastelands and major public spaces in Germany. Currently, under the direction of all three partners, Agence Ter are developing projects in France and abroad with three new branches in

Barcelona, Shanghai and Los Angeles. They experience urbanism through the landscape and participate in building territorial ecosystems and living environments in the city.

Henri Bava teaches, directs research, chairs numerous juries and leads conferences around the world. He created the "City and Landscape" Institute at the University of Karlsruhe in Germany and is President of the National School of Landscape in Versailles. Deeply involved in the development of the profession, he is president of the French Landscape Federation where he accompanies the evolutions of the exercise of the profession as well as the diffusion of the landscape project in France.

Henri Bava and his partners received the Grand National Prize for Landscape in 2007 for the Parc de Cormailles in Ivry and the Grand Prix National de l'Urbanisme in 2018 for the body of work of Agence Ter.



CATHERINE MOSBACH  
mosbach paysagistes, Paris  
**Inside out, outside in**

If we consider that the human species is one of many living beings, then it is one of the 'agents' capable of making these 'assets' available and effective in the environment in which it evolves alongside other species and abiotic formations. Composing or associating the forces at play requires special attention, patience and a quest to bring about what is not immediately visible, in what is embodied. Micro and macro are the extremes between which we 'navigate'.

This expanded spectrum is a prerequisite, a postulate for any "agent" who activates the mutations of a place. We create hybrid formations - mineral, vegetal, animal - as well as niches for welcoming fellow creatures and "others", for co-habitation and co-construction, if not coordinated. We create environments to welcome and "open" tomorrow's gaze. The exercise of landscape design - for it is only through practice that we come to terms with the "course" of reality - opens us up to the spatial and temporal dimensions that shape and welcome us.

Through a dialectic of exploration, how to interrogate what is upstream of any place in the spatio-temporal spectrum of formations, as well as that of biological resurgences subject to survival conditions, initiates the downstream reconfiguration of a program.

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