



# POLYCENTRIC PAVILION: NEW IDEA OF ACTIVE AND PARTICIPATORY PUBLIC SPACE

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nARCHITECTS is one of fourteen international firms invited to participate in the *Architecture as Art* exhibit at the XXIst Triennale di Milano International Exhibition (XX1T), entitled Design After Design. Participants were asked by the curators to build full scale architectural installations as “the architectural equivalent of entries in a possible dictionary, such as Portico, Entrance, Rehabilitation, Roof, Shelter, Pavilion, etc.”



nARCHITECTS' Polycentric Pavilion responds to the curators' challenge to “unlock the expression of architectural ideas with regard to new paradigms, such as the new idea of active and participatory public space...”







Polycentric Pavilion is conceived of as both an area for passive lounging, and a model for a more active and multi directional theater. The varying relationship between the vaults, the deck and the void allows performers and audience to decide whether the decking serves as a stage, seating, both or neither, resulting in multiple performance configurations. Sound – either emanating from a performance, from the vaults moving with the wind, or elsewhere in the Bicocca grounds – is projected by the aluminum vaults in unfamiliar ways, heard by a mobile public.





The vault – historically erected over social gathering spaces, such as thermae, amphitheaters, and basilicas – is one of the most fundamental elements of architecture. While traditionally built with massive load bearing masonry, and expressing solidity and strength, the aluminum vaults in nARCHITECTS' pavilion are as thin as possible – 5mm – making their connection to the environment more tenuous, as they respond to external forces such as the wind. Departing from historical vault types such as the Barrel, Groin, Rib and Fan vaults, nARCHITECTS' exploration proposes new types: the Skewed, Split and Reverse-Split vaults, which address varying spatial and structural needs.



Polycentric Pavilion builds upon the firm's ongoing design research of Almost Buildings – incomplete or dynamic structures that are open to landscape and to their environment, and to appropriation or completion by others. The pavilion hosted at the Pirelli HangarBiocca, opened on April 2, 2016 and ran through September 12, 2016.



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