



## International Seminar 2024 – September 19th, Bergamo

Italian/English simultaneous translation

### Program:

9.20 > 9.25 Introduction of the event by Mauro Crescini

9.25 > 9.30 Introduction of the event contents/speakers by Giacomo Guzzon

We will start talking about public spaces from a city-level dimension with Ton, move to a public park dimension with Jason, and finish with a planting area dimension with Cristobal.

### 9.30 >10.20 First Speaker **Ton Muller**

**Greening our cities: creating and guiding long-lasting plantings in urban environments.**

How should we green our cities on a large scale in a way that is climate-proof, sustainable, manageable and biodiverse? Working in the public realm means dealing with the challenging conditions of our densely built cities, which are full of disturbance, climate extremes, low maintenance, and many restrictions and regulations. A different approach is needed, both in strategy and choices made about plants, soil, construction and maintenance. Nature is the inspiration for habitat-based planting design.

I will discuss projects in Amsterdam, such as rain gardens, urban parks, green infrastructure schemes, and the future of our streets. Examples include selecting resilient, robust plants, different planting strategies for shade and sunny habitats and their evolution, and the essence of woody plants for our cities. And i will share the ongoing learning process with the successes and failures of working with plants.

### 10. 20 > 11.20 First Round-table Maintenance and Stewardship

**In the first-round table, we will explore the role of maintenance and stewardship in public urban projects.**

When designing planting schemes for public landscapes, one must consider how and by whom they will be maintained. The designer must consider such factors as legibility and grouping while designing them to achieve realistic maintenance goals and predict natural succession and growth for long-term success. New aesthetics will have to become more widely accepted, allowing spontaneous vegetation to be part of the urban context, summer dormancy to be expected in areas with a Mediterranean climate, and a wilder look celebrated to support wildlife and minimize mowing to reduce the embedded carbon footprint.

Moreover, since planting areas, trees, rain gardens, and parks have many scientifically proven positive environmental effects in cities, why is there often a struggle to source funding to maintain them? Why is the maintenance of green infrastructure perceived as less critical than other city infrastructures? Does it always need to be 'low-maintenance'? Instead, should we not be bolder and more vocal in advocating for such spaces and the gardeners' important role and need for acceptable remuneration?



## 11. 20 > 11.40 Coffee Break

### 11. 40 >12. 40 Second Speaker, **Jason Siebenmorgen**

#### Complex Horticulture: Towards Resilient Urban Parks

Based on a selection of projects in North America, I will discuss the increasingly crucial role of rich and diverse planting in the long-term resilience of urban parks. From the early design and innovative construction to the ever-important role of gardeners in maintenance and stewardship, public parks must continuously evolve in response to their environment.

Using case studies -- from coastal flooding to wear and tear due to large crowds -- I will present both failures and successes to inform future projects: Public parks that become dynamic landscapes, providing passive and active recreation for people just as much as ecologically rich habitats for a range of wildlife.

## 11. 40 > 14.00 Lunch

### 14.00 > 15.00 Second Round Table

#### Plants and Biodiversity

**The second round table will focus on plants and their role in supporting biodiversity.**

We will explore species selection and procurement for public projects when the availability of plants in large numbers can be challenging, as well as the importance of building relationships with nurseries and continuously exchanging information. We will discuss the role of species' resilience and adaptability to withstand harsh urban conditions, the importance of attentive habitat creation, and the provision of sufficient soil volume for their success. We will also discuss the role of plants on roofs, rain gardens, and street plantings in supporting biodiversity and what strategies can be implemented to meet both the needs of biodiversity and be in tune and appropriate for urban contexts and the harsh environmental conditions in the era of climate change. There is a need to experiment and introduce new species in urban areas to respond to pressing climatic challenges.

### 15.00 > 16.00 Third Speaker, **Cristobal Elgueta Marinovic**

#### Working for a better green.

The city ecosystem is complex and has elements that plant material has never faced before. In the talk, we will analyze the use of different types of plant communities with plants from the Mediterranean, steppe, and semi-arid systems, as well as their results, aesthetic contributions, ecosystem services, and maintenance requirements.

### 16.00 >16.30 / 16. 45 Conclusive Round Table with Nigel

#### Dunnett Lesson learned

In the last round table, we will draw the conclusions of this exploration day by trying to single out the ultimate lesson learned in designing and nurturing public landscapes. We will highlight particular successes and failures stories, valuable strategies for dealing with vandalism, the public and the challenges of climate change, and pragmatic techniques adopted for maximizing ecosystem services and creating rich and diverse plant communities

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