



This publication collects the results of the Call for Visions |23  
*New public space for Contemporary Iranian Cities* organized by Iran\_Lab

Thanks to John J. Parman a Berkeley-based writer-researcher on urban issues who  
advised on the translation



**IRAN\_LAB**  
Department PDTA Internationalization Unit



**SAPIENZA**  
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

## **CALL FOR VISIONS | 23**

### **New Public Spaces for Contemporary Iranian Cities**

#### **The results**

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# CALL FOR VISIONS | 23

## THE RESULTS

### NEW PUBLIC SPACES FOR CONTEMPORARY IRANIAN CITIES

*edited by*

**ALESSANDRA DE CESARIS**





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## Table of contents

<b>IRAN LAB</b>	p.	7
<b>THE CALL</b>	“	11
<b>VISIONS</b>	“	13
<i>Tehran's Valiasr street   Arezoo Izadyari Aghmiuni, Cyrus Bavar, Parisa Alimohamadi</i>	“	16
<i>The Fusion of Courtyard and the City. Isfahan</i> Mahnush Arbabi, Ghazaleh Eslami	“	28
<i>Abshar Grenways   Somayeh Harati</i>	“	40
<i>Reflections  Fatemeh Behrooz</i>	”	48
<i>Micro-Urban Agriculture</i> Shayan Baranian Kasir, Nazanin Ommi	“	56
<i>Cultural Roofs</i> Fatemeh Behfar, Maryam Merajoddin	“	64
<i>“Kushk” Redefining the Iranian Garden in contemporary cities</i> Arezoo Izadyari, Nojan Mahdavi, K. M. Alizadeh Samani	“	70
<i>Entrance of Tarbiat Modares University</i> Arezoo Izadyari Aghmiuni, Sara Shahivand	“	72
<b>REFLECTIONS</b>		
<b>The inevitable need for public space</b>		
<i>What public space for Tehran, capital of the Islamic Republic of Iran</i> Alessandra De Cesaris	“	79
<i>New Public Space for Contemporary Iranian Cities. Challenges between Tradition and Innovation: A Journey through Iran_Lab's Call for Visions   23</i> Elham K. Hassani	“	89
<i>The challenge of public space in Iran: between lack and recovery</i> Saggiad Behrooz	“	97
<i>Archetypes of Iranian public space between tradition and innovation</i> Marsia Marino	“	103





## **Iran-Lab | Shared Research and Education**

### **Sapienza PDTA Internationalisation Unit**

**Scientific responsible**

**prof. arch. Alessandra De Cesaris**

#### **IRAN\_LAB**

Relations and cultural exchanges between the Iranian Schools of Architecture and the Faculty of Architecture at Sapienza University have a long tradition. A large number of professors and scholars, who have left important studies on urban planning and architecture in Islamic territories, have trained within our school. Our libraries preserve a large number of specialised volumes on Islamic architecture and urbanism that constitute an important and valuable reference for students and researchers from both countries. Our degree courses welcome many students every year, some of whom continue their academic training in the doctorate; as a whole, every year they produce studies and works of considerable interest, which are not always valued and whose traces are often lost.

IranLab, in keeping with the PDTA Department's cultural project, is part of this strand of cultural exchanges between scholars, researchers, PhD students and students in the fields of design, technology and urban regeneration, with the aim of coordinating, directing and enhancing research and studies on Iranian architecture, experimenting, where possible, with forms of contamination between the two cultures.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Iran\_Lab aims to:

- Carry out study, research and training activities in the field of Architecture and related disciplines, with regard to the promotion, development and dissemination of Iranian architectural culture with particular regard to the relationship between Italian and Iranian culture.
- Coordinate the studies and researches of the students of the three-year and master's degree courses of the various degree courses that pertain to the department, as well as the theses and researches of the doctoral students that have Iranian architecture as their subject.
- Systematise the knowledge and know-how of Iranian students and researchers in a data archive.
- Experiment ways of contamination/integration

between specific knowledge on Persian architectural culture and our methodologies of analysis and research.

- Promote and organise, within the framework of the Internationalisation Unit's activities, national and international meetings in the form of seminars, study days, conferences.
- Coordinate its activities with the teaching and research programmes of the University and other institutions through special agreements.
- Encourage initiatives aimed at defining agreements and conventions with public and private organisations, for the dissemination of studies and projects related to architectural production and related disciplines, and encourage the establishment of joint master's degrees with Iranian universities;

## **FIELDS OF INTERESTS**

### **Cultural Heritage**

- Iran is a country with an immense architectural and cultural heritage. A heritage that concerns as much the material aspects from works of art to systems of objects as the intangible aspects. Preservation and valorisation operations are therefore a priority objective, operations that are able to foreground a reflection on the future of these assets, both tangible and intangible, and know how to correctly interpret the relations between the individual asset and the territorial and/or urban context in which it is located.

- Iran is a country with a cultural and material heritage that is both rich and less invested in mass tourism. This represents an opportunity not only for the wealth of its cultural heritage but also for the possibility of setting up a virtuous system of sustainable tourism capable of regenerating the assets present in the territory (network of caravanserais, minor villages, etc.).

### **Urban Regeneration**

- The regeneration of suburbs built according to the schemes of the Modern Movement, totally unsuitable for housing the social classes for which they were intended at the time (lack of open spaces and gardens).

- The search today for the modernisation of certain aspects of traditional Iranian domestic space, (aspects that have fallen into oblivion due to too rapid a modernisation of living spaces). A modernisation that fatally has to confront the cost of land, with problems of building density.

- Research into the definition of new types of public space that are able to meet the needs of today after the period

of the Revolution that saw public space retreat into (more protected) private space.

- The role of the qanat network in the regeneration of densely built-up tissue.

### **Green Building Approach, Green City Approach**

The Persian architectural tradition boasts a heritage of passive energy systems for air conditioning that deserves to be reinterpreted in the light of contemporary requirements.

### **Design and Exhibit Design**

In this area, study and research activities concern the history of decorative arts, handicrafts, the ceramic tradition, and the many aspects of contemporary Iranian design: product, graphic and multimedia, exhibit design in particular exhibition and museum spaces, and design for public space. In fact, there is a young generation of architects in Iran that was formed after the Revolution in search of ways to reinterpret elements of the architectural tradition with newly produced designs and materials in a contemporary key, without lapsing into nostalgic formulas.



**IRAN\_LAB**

Unità per l'Internazionalizzazione PDTA Sapienza

**CALL for VISIONS 23****NEW PUBLIC SPACE FOR CONTEMPORARY IRANIAN CITIES**

Challenges between tradition and innovation

**THE CALL**

The call is the first initiative of Iran\_Lab|Shared Research and Teaching (scientific coordinator A. De Cesaris) created in December 2022 within the Internationalization Unit (scientific coordinator prof. Federica Dal Falco) of the PDTA Department, Sapienza University of Rome. The call is part of the debate and experimentations of new forms and figurations of public space between tradition and innovation. In particular, visions capable of configuring new public spaces to provide answers to the new needs of contemporary life of Iranian cities considering that the integration of architecture, urban planning, arts and design is an inescapable matrix of Iranian culture.

Call for Visions is addressed to all students, architects, artists and designers who intend to bring innovation in the theme of public space with reference to the reality of Iranian cities.

Call for Visions also targets all those - Iranian and non-Iranian, with a view to sharing views from different cultures - who are interested in the search for new forms of public space for the contemporary city.

**Keywords**

Empty spaces | In-Between spaces | Drosscapes | Regeneration Cells | Inhabited Bridges| Inhabited Roofs| Hydroinfrastructures | Multitasking Gardens|Metro Stations | Junctions | Interchanges.

**INFO**

Submissions to the call should include text and images that will be subjected to a jury.

Proposals should be sent to the email address [iran\\_lab.ptda@uniroma1.it](mailto:iran_lab.ptda@uniroma1.it)

by no later than 30 June 2023

For the submission are required :

- Title and subtitle of the proposal
- Author and affiliation
- Keywords (max 5)
- Text, in English, (min 500 words - max 700 words). The text may be accompanied by drawings
- Maximum 5 tables A3 pdf format

Authors of selected proposals will later be asked to send the material in 300 dpi tiff format for an exhibition and a publication.

**FOR MORE INFORMATIONS**

email to [iran\\_lab.ptda@uniroma1.it](mailto:iran_lab.ptda@uniroma1.it)



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# CALL FOR VISIONS

## NEW PUBLIC SPACE FOR CONTEMPORARY IRANIAN CITIES

### Challenges between tradition and innovation

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For the submission are required :

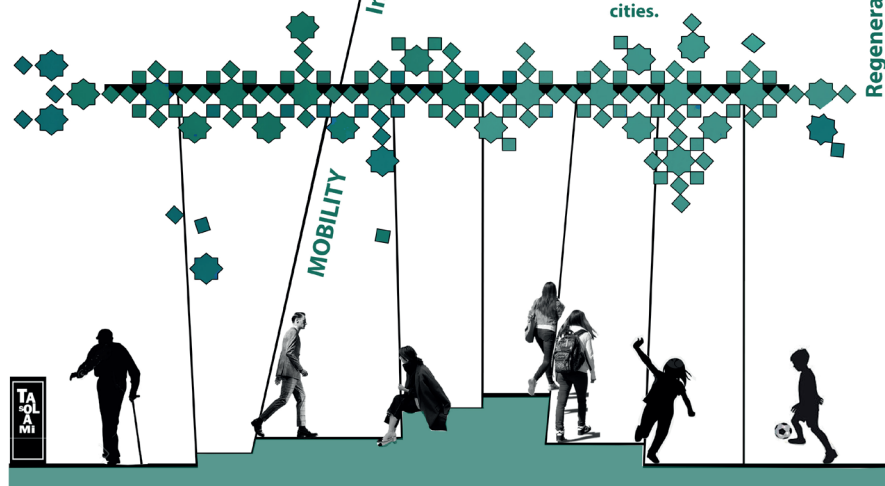
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SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:

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Laura Ricci, Donatella Scatena, Fabrizio Tucci.



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Regeneration Cells | Hydroinfrastructures | Multitasking Gardens | Inhabited Roofs

**VISIONS**

## BRIEF GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FROM JURY

The task of defining a gradation of quality in the wide range of beautiful projects produced by Alessandra De Cesaris' interesting Iran Lab initiative was as difficult as ever to fulfil.

I therefore proceeded to identify at least three proposals that seemed to me, although similar to the quality of many others, capable of expressing lines of tendency for public space that responded to the appropriateness, topicality and contextualisation of the project. Three equals, therefore, with respect to three themes of equal fundamental importance in contemporary urban design: Kushk and Valiasr by Event Studio and Reflections by Fatemeh Behrooz.

I would also like to add a special mention and acknowledgement: an acknowledgement to the Isfahan Courts project, so close to our European sensibility and our focus on sustainable transformation. The study of urban fabrics at the time of intervention has long since become an indispensable must in our parts. Even a sometimes frankly redundant requirement. To see it proposed with great dedication, in a country whose cultural traditions and history are in any case different from ours, is a remarkable fact, not because of the usual Europe-centrism, but because the issue of protecting the fabrics of the pre-existing city, even in the project of innovation, today has universal value. A special mention goes to Abshar Greenways for its global symbolic significance, in the days of COP 28 in Dubai.

### **Roberto Cherubini**

Public space is a space where citizens of any class, age, race and profession have the right to enter and frequent without any restrictions. Until now, urban planning experts in Iran have not paid sufficient attention to the value and importance of these spaces in shaping urban society. Of course, research has been done, which mainly concerned the definitions and characteristics of public spaces from an urban design perspective. Therefore, the importance of public spaces in shaping civil society has been less discussed; on the contrary, it has