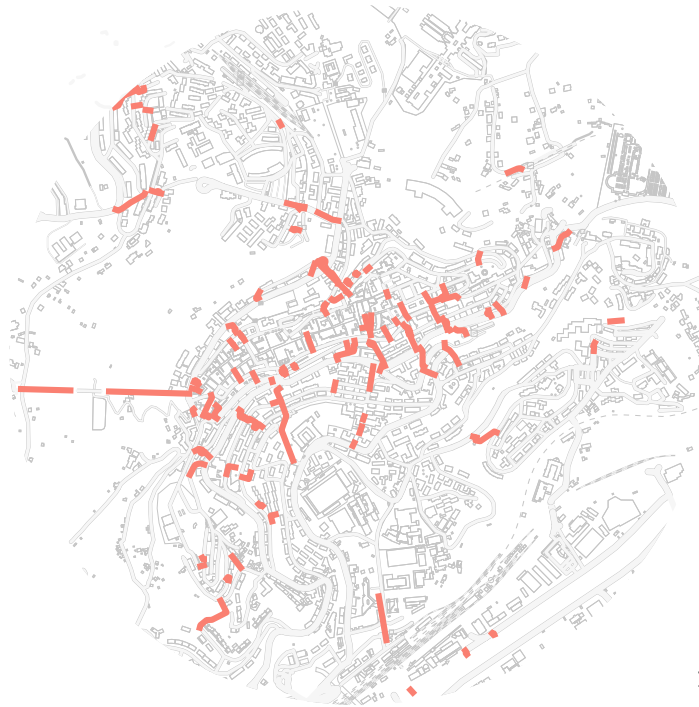


Despite any rhetoric of "peace and love", *polis* and *polemos* share the same root: city means, intrinsically, conflict.

Isolating functions, assigning a two-way and permanent correspondence among places, activities, and users, is the fast-track to delete the bursting strength inherent in the encounter of differences. On the contrary, we should look at conflict as a condition of creativity, adopting an empathic and playful attitude, enabling people to meet with their own bodies in public spaces as platform of coexistence and inclusion.

The 2016 edition of the *Città delle Cento Scale* Urban Art Festival assigned us a keyword – the Italian in-debito, that is 'undue' – and one of the hundreds public stairs dotting Potenza. Stairs are forcedly pedestrian and a so huge equipment of places without cars makes Potenza a special city; nevertheless, they are quite desert, because of the strain and the bleakness. We wandered: What if the stairs were something more? What if they were also squares, gardens, playgrounds, markets, and so on, all climbing?

According to the keyword, we made the stairs misappropriated by the *parterre bas de l'Orangerie* in Versailles. The *parterre*, a par excellence plain device, broke into 120 strips, as many as the steps, and a new conflicting space, born by contradiction and mixing, finally appeared: no more just stairs, neither a *parterre*. It invited to move up and down, because you couldn't recognize the layout from the bottom and had to go upstairs to finally realise it. We also set some chairs for a rest, on steps and not on landings, cutting their legs to size, to enhance the effect of paradox and conflicting situation. Other chairs, instead, kept all their legs, allowing people to move them and choose their favorite position, staying alone or joining friends.



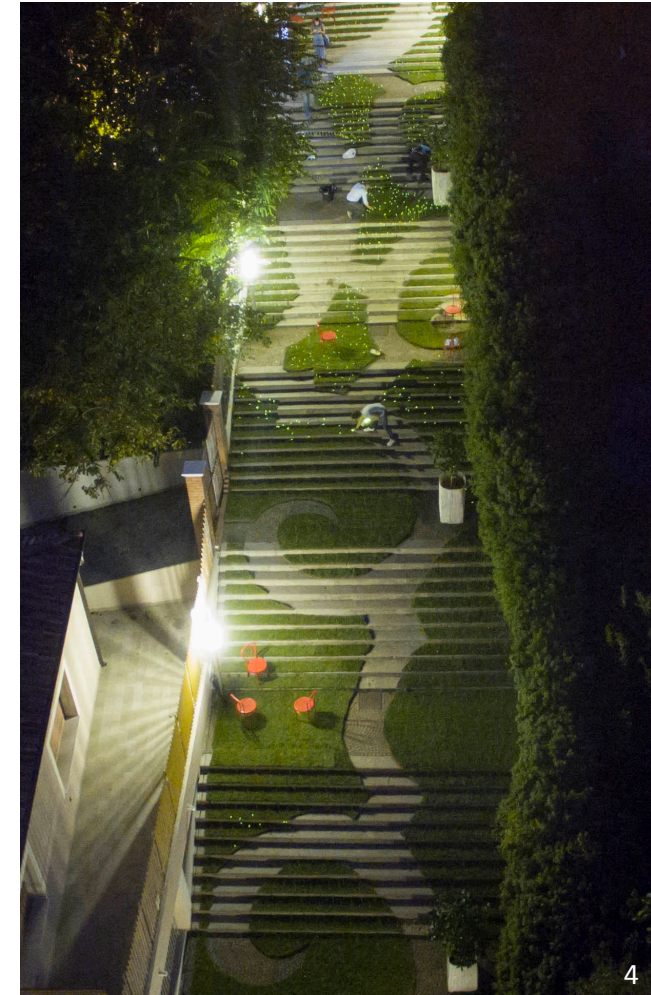
1



2



3



4

1. The core of Potenza, dotted by hundreds public stairs.
- 2 + 3. The stairs prior to the intervention and the climbing gardens subsequent to the intervention, from the same standpoint.
4. The climbing gardens in a photo from above.