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Women · Architecture & Design Itineraries across Europe

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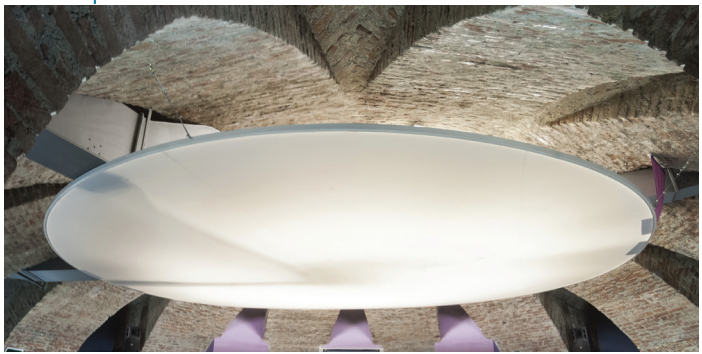

Via San Massimo, 24 - Torino

Emilia Garda, Paola Urbano
2002–2003

Closely related to the theme of the humanisation of care, the project represents one of the first examples of soft qualities within the hospital heritage in Turin. The space below the church, previously used as a pharmaceutical warehouse, was transformed into a multipurpose room dedicated both to care and to art exhibitions, conferences and performances. In this way a particularly evocative space was revived - an underground room dominated by a semi-circular brick vault with nails - surrounded by a circular passage through which the dead were taken to the mortuary.
Through a few careful interventions the space was returned to public use and set up as a meeting place between the hospital and the city, turning a place of death into a place of life.

The design choice wanted to respect the original features with minimal intervention through the use of light and colour as qualifying elements. For economic reasons it was decided not to replace the existing light installations but simply to screen them from view by introducing a bright *velarium* placed diagonally to the floor.
In order to allow the spatial perception of the room, characterized by unique aesthetic values, the *velarium* was designed not as a traditional false ceiling, but as a light element independent of the structures from which it is suspended by means of slender steel rods. The system creates a bright wraparound effect which highlights the profile of the vault.
E.G.

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