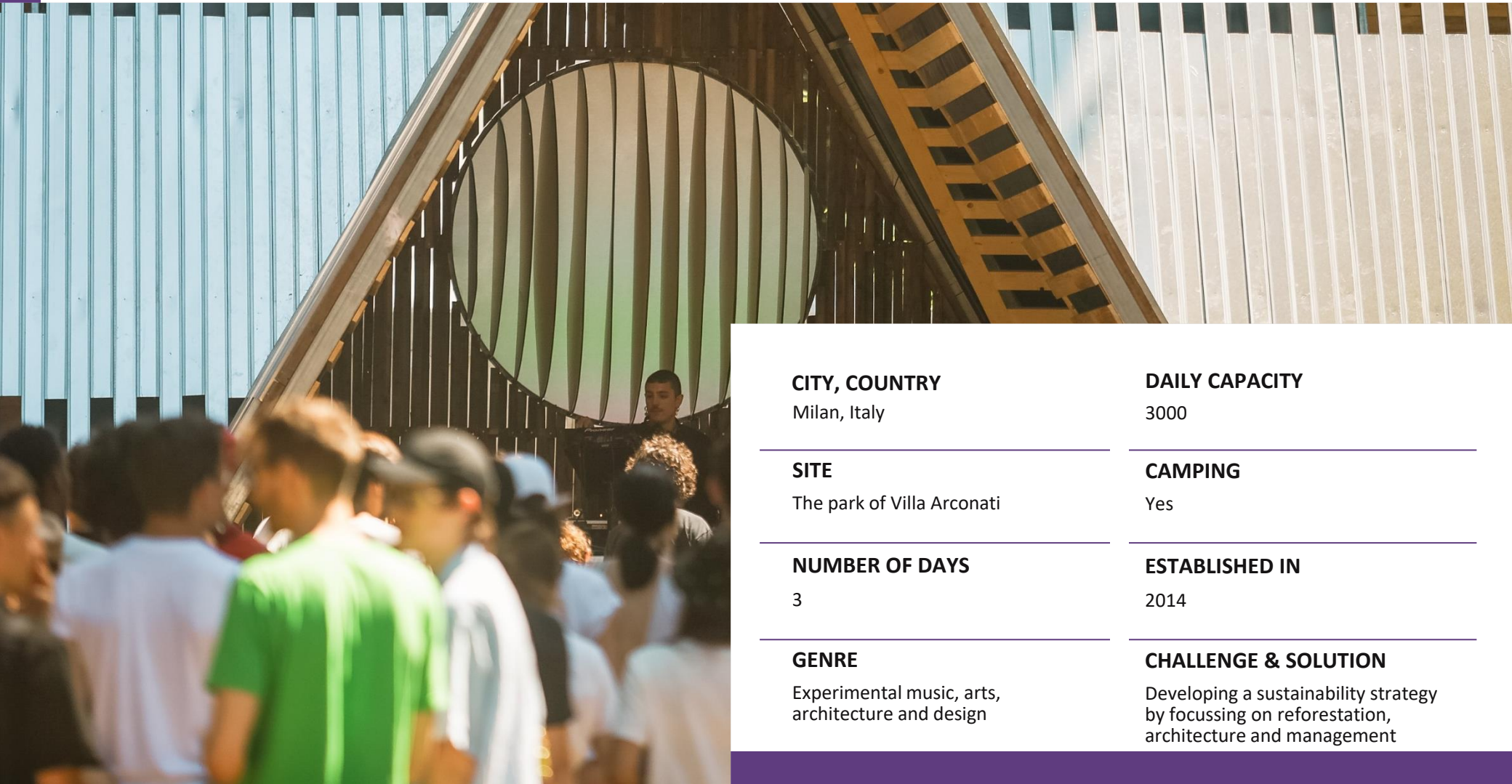


TERRAFORMA



CITY, COUNTRY

Milan, Italy

DAILY CAPACITY

3000

SITE

The park of Villa Arconati

CAMPING

Yes

NUMBER OF DAYS

3

ESTABLISHED IN

2014

GENRE

Experimental music, arts, architecture and design

CHALLENGE & SOLUTION

Developing a sustainability strategy by focussing on reforestation, architecture and management



EXPERIMENTAL FESTIVAL ON A CENTURIES-OLD ESTATE

As explained on the festival's website, Terraforma's name comes from the word 'terraform'; "the theoretical process in which life on a planet becomes possible through the creation of an atmosphere." The festival applies this process to music, using it as a catalyst for creative processes. "We imagined Terraforma as a living organism, constantly transforming itself and adapting to its surroundings as an ecosystem does in the natural world," says Ruggero Pietromarchi, founder and artistic director of Terraforma and its production agency Threes. As the festival visibly demonstrates the relationship

between event and impact, sustainability has been a natural part of Terraforma from the very beginning.

The festival combines music with artistic installations and workshops that include meditation and environmental aspects to "create an atmosphere that can stimulate the listener's senses to think about the present and the future in a new way." It takes place at Villa Arconati, just outside of Milan, at the beginning of July. Before the centuries-old estate was abandoned, it had once been so beautiful that it was called "little Versailles of Milan."

CLICK
TO VIEW





DEVELOPING A LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

For Terraforma, work on sustainability never ends. “In our opinion, environmental sustainability and sustainability in general are a mindset of continuous improvement in all our processes,” Pietromarchi says. This includes the design and planning of the festival as well as experimenting with specific new solutions in each activity and area of impact.

At the same time, the crew takes the role that a festival plays in raising awareness of social and environmental

issues within their community seriously. Therefore, according to the artistic director, the biggest challenge was getting into the right mindset. “This *modus operandi* forces your organisation to constantly challenge itself on how to do things better, not only artistically and financially but also in terms of impacts on the environment and the community. This can become stressful as you often find yourself unsatisfied with your results.”

“

Environmental sustainability and sustainability in general are a mindset of continuous improvement in all our processes.

*Photo by
Edoardo
Comba*

REFORESTATION AND ARCHITECTURE...

“When it comes to sustainability, the most important lesson we have learnt is to have a holistic and long-term strategy. This requires us to see every single action as part of a bigger picture. It takes time and resources, but it definitely pays back in the long run, and not just financially”, Pietromarchi says. Although their festival model has brought them “significant cost increases”, many investments have already been paid off and many projects were designed to last throughout the years. Terraforma focuses its sustainability efforts on three key areas: landscape restoration, architecture and management approach.

“First of all, we implement strategies to restore our landscape and surroundings,” Pietromarchi says. One of the main goals is to restore Villa Arconati’s historic garden. In 2018, after three years of work and with only old drawings as reference, they finished replanting a historical hedge labyrinth from scratch that was believed to have been present on the Villa grounds in the 18th century. The labyrinth now

features 500 hornbeam trees growing in several hedgerows, which form the circular maze.

“We also undertook an extensive reforestation program across our campsite area which resulted in the planting of about 100 trees,” Pietromarchi adds. This project was inspired by the work of architect Cesare Leonardi, author of “The Architecture of Trees,” in which he examines their configuration in relation to their shade. Terraforma’s gardening team also safeguards the territory through land recovery, grey water collection and extensive cleaning procedures.

Architecture is the second big focus of Terraforma. “We actively collaborate with professional architects to develop our distinctive facilities which are mostly made of sustainable materials such as wood and iron,” Pietromarchi explains. Excess materials are reused to create secondary facilities such as tables, sinks and showers.

THE SOLUTION



... AND LOW IMPACTS

“Last but not least, we aim to overcome the traditional event management approach by developing an organisational model that is able to measure, report and reduce our impact in terms of waste, mobility, energy and water consumption,” Pietromarchi says.

In 2019, Terraforma reduced the amount of litter per person by 35% and achieved a recyclability rate of 85% thanks to measures such as: recycling stations, green stewards, durable cups, 100% biodegradable dinnerware and cups, a plastic-free supplies policy for all beverage products and a no straws policy.

To reduce travel emissions, Terraforma uses electric vehicles for staff and artists. In 2018 and 2019, the electric fleet drove about 5200 km (3231 miles) in total, saving an estimated 650 kg of CO₂. The festival runs campaigns to raise awareness of sustainable travel and

assesses their effectiveness through surveys. It offers free shuttles from the local train stations to visitors who arrive by train and promotes car-pooling options. “In 2019, we estimated that about 28% of our visitors reached us by train and each car was occupied by an average of 3 people travelling together,” Pietromarchi says.

Furthermore, Terraforma built a low impact lighting system for its campsite made from recycled materials and powered completely by solar energy. The lamps on the entire festival site are either LEDs or low voltage bulbs. In 2018, the festival adopted a water control system with self-closing valves for showers and sinks which could reduce the amount of water consumed by up to 56 litres per person.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Terraforma plans to continue their sustainability work to hold their leading position in the field and to keep inspiring their audience. The next steps will include restoring and regenerating the small lake part of Villa Arconati's park.