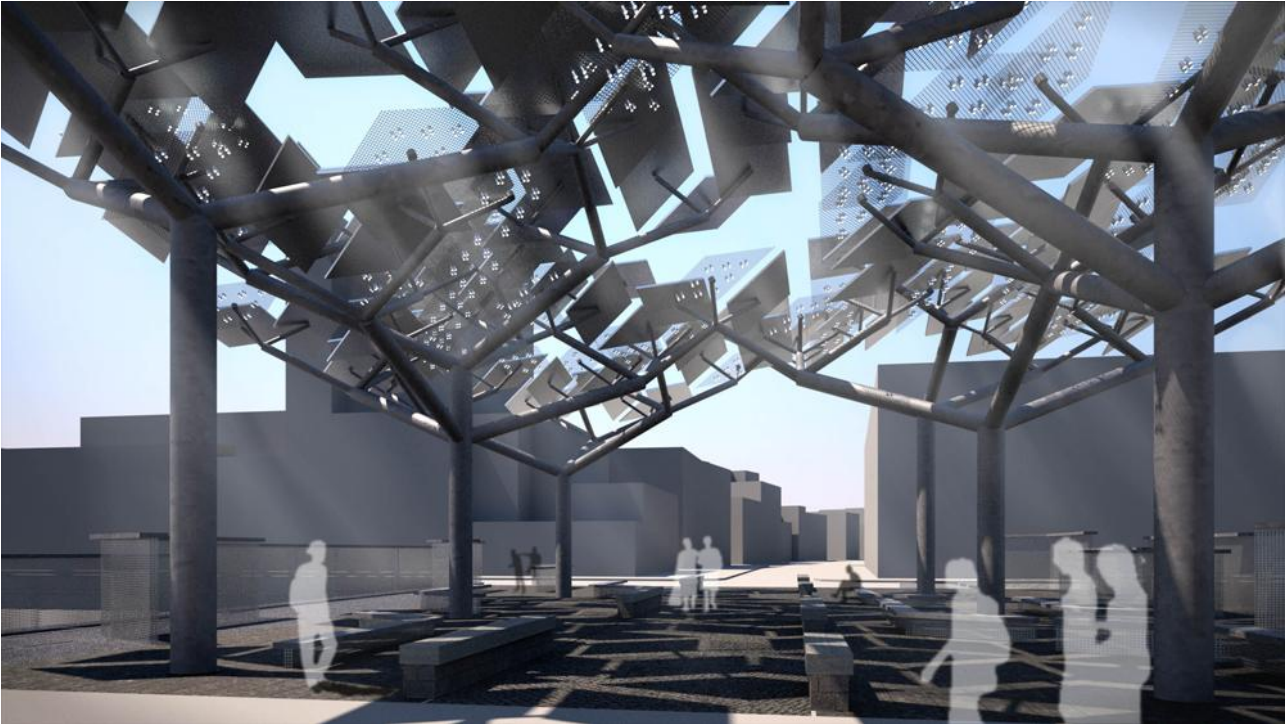


## PINI@PIGNETO: GOMMAdesign's proposal for a sustainable urban space under photovoltaic Pinetrees



*Rome - Italy  
30 January, 2010*

The goal of the [PontèPigneto competition](#) was to gather ideas for a public space which could be energetically self-sufficient (through an intelligent use of form and technology) and elastic (capable to respond to fast urban transformations). The pedestrian bridge in Pigneto neighborhood - Rome, already an important node for the area, was chosen as the project's location for his capability to become one of the iconic symbols of the neighborhood through a careful redevelopment.

The neighborhood's name "Pigneto" comes from the presence of a long row of Maritime Pine trees, planted by the Caballini family along the wall of the eighteenth-century "villa Serventi".

In order to recall that image deeply carved in Pigneto's historical memory and toponymy and integrate the project with continuity in the neighborhood's imaginary, the "Maritime Pine tree" was chosen as the formal and structural inspiration for [GOMMAdesign's](#) proposal, considering also that nature can provide the best inspirational role-models for energetically and socially sustainable design solutions.

Once identified the symbol around which people could aggregate, the main strategy was to promote the strengths and the most valuable features of the neighborhood.

The cozy and intimate ambience of Pigneto, which looks more like a little village, rather than a piece of Roman suburbs, facilitates a sense of conviviality and sociality which is still one of the main trait of social life there.

For this reason, the square proposed here defines an intimate space, and takes inspiration from the image of a "yard" more than from the typology of "urban square".

The necessary safety barriers, on the edges of the square which overlook onto the railway, become the walls of this "urban room" and, although being visually permeable, suggest a more intimate use of the space.

The sensibility for a sustainable life-style appears in neighborhood's daily activities: the widespread use of bicycles as means of transportation; the small-scale entrepreneurship naturally oriented toward efficiency, reuse and sustainability; the variety of events organized to spread the knowledge about these topics.

The most iconic elements of the project, the photovoltaic Pinetrees, catch this vibe and are built with simple and reused materials that can be largely found in the surrounding urban landscape: pylons along the railroad, lampposts, poles and even bicycles, share the same cylindrical shape and metallic material.

A mere mimesis through materials is clearly not enough, hence the goal was to create a new "simple complexity" obtained by rearranging the elements identified so far, combining, with a few basic assembly techniques, modular elements made of a few parts that are always the same. The aim was to witness the sensibility for an environmentally-sustainable life-style that pervades the area.

In addition, the "leaves" of the photovoltaic trees, designed not to hinder each other from the sunlight, add a functional layer more than a merely symbolic one, as they provide a large surface of photovoltaic panels, that could supply energy for the lighting of the square. At the same time they offer the sun-shading necessary to fully enjoy the square.

The lighting effect is the most visible expression of this simple-complex organization of the elements and gives to the square a mesmerizing new aspect in the night time: the unique atmosphere and the catchy visual effect is intended to become a landmark and the iconic focus of the crowded nightlife of the district, while at the same time ensuring the necessary illumination for the square to be safe and enjoyable.

A side of the square is reserved for a three-meters-wide bike path with an adjacent bicycle parking area, so that the new square could also become the start and the end point of possible routes and an exchange node between pedestrian and bicycle mobility systems.

With the aim to promote bicycles as non-polluting and socially healthy means of transport, the project proposes to prohibit motor vehicles from crossing the square, as they can easily take advantage of the existing closest driveways.

## **PROJECT INFO**

TITLE: Pini@Pigneto

TYPE: public square

LOCATION: Pigneto - Rome, Italy

YEAR: 2010

STATUS: competition entry

## **CREDITS**

GOMMA design

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**GOMMA design** is an architecture and design studio based in Rome, mainly focused on the investigation of new design strategies, advanced and at the same time sustainable, through the strict integration between cutting-edge digital tools, technologies, processes, materials and ecologic strategies for environmentally-aware design. ([www.gommadesign.com](http://www.gommadesign.com))

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