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| logo_BNB_2012 | LOGO_CENTO_AMICI_jpg CENTO AMICI DEL LIBRO | logo_testa_vita-cucina Braidense | *With the patronage of*  logo comitato scientifico Expo |

**BRAIDENSE NATIONAL LIBRARY**

**room Maria Teresa**

Via Brera 28 - Milan

**Il giardino è aperto/The garden is open**

**A bibliographical exhibition on the history of gardens from 1400s to today**

**and a presentation of the artist's book by Alessandra Angelini with texts by Paolo Cottini**

**5 - 27 June 2015**

**Thursday, 4 June at 6pm**

*grand opening* oftheexhibition on the books about gardens that have been published from the 1400s to today

*presenting* theartist's book by Alessandra Angelini with texts by Paolo Cottini

devised and made by the **Braidense National Library**

in cooperation with the **Cento Amici del Libro Association**

The exhibition is sponsored by “**Le Università per Expo 2015 – Comitato scientifico del comune di Milano/Universities for Expo 2015 - Scientific Committee of the Council of Milan**”

with

Laura Tirelli, *President of Cento Amici del Libro*

Mariella Goffredo, *Braidense National Library*

Paolo Cottini, *garden historian*

Alessandra Angelini*, artist*

Francesca Porreca, *art historian and curator of the City Museums of Pavia*

*press release, 16.04.15*

Among the events of Expo 2015, the Braidense National Library with the Cento Amici del Libro Association introduces the exhibition on the **history of gardens in Europe** from the 1400s to today. The idea of presenting this exhibition to the visitors of the EXPO comes from the artist's book by **Alessandra Angelini** **“Il giardino è aperto/The garden is open”** which will soon be shown to the public at the grand opening of the exposition.

Indeed *Nutrire il pianeta, energia per la vita/To feed the planet, energy for life* means not only to nourish the Earth, but also to feed it beauty and harmony, a balance that man tried to accomplish through the centuries, even by the ancient art of gardening, intended as landscaping.

Drawing from the vast book collection of the Braidense National Library, especially from the botanical section which belonged to the Swiss physician, naturalist and poet Albrecht von Haller (1708-1777), around thousand of works are put on display. Especially worth mentioning are: the translation of the Dioscoride codex by the physician and naturalist from Trentino, Pietro Andrea Mattioli (1500-1577), that was published in 1554, and the edition of 1713 of the work *Nürnbergische Hesperides* by Johann Christoph Volkamer (1644-1720), who was a writer and an expert in botany. In addition other books, equally important, find their place in the exhibition: the volume *Ville di delizia o siano palaggi camparecci nello Stato di Milano/Villas of delight or perhaps rural buildings in the State of Milan* by the engraver Marc’Antonio Dal Re, the two volumes of the romantic portable *Herbarium* of 1821, and the recent series *L’Ornitorinco/The Platypus* published by Rizzoli and curated by Ippolito Pizzetti.

The **artist's book** “Il giardino è aperto/The garden is open” was born **from the encounter between the artist** Alessandra Angelini and the writer and **garden historian** Paolo Cottini: through the perfect match between the original graphic works and never seen before texts, it tells of the **garden of Vico Morcote**, in the Swiss canton of Ticino, that **Sir Peter Smithers** planned, built and took care of in the last twenty years of his long and lively existence.

After a precise analysis of the texts by Cottini, who had the opportunity of spending time with Sir Peter Smithers, and several visits to the garden of Morcote during different seasons, Alessandra Angelini has made a series of graphical works, Indian ink sketches, photographs and computer layouts of the preparatory and executive phases of the creative process of the book, and those are all on display next to it.

For the making of the works within the book **“Il giardino è aperto/The garden is open”** the artist chose polymeric matrixes and un-inked block print: techniques and graphical languages able to express the character of Sir Smithers and his close connection with *the garden*, intended as a natural setting and also metaphor for life, a concept that Angelini was skillfully able to represent through her work.

**The incision of polymeric matrixes** (thanks to its technological and, at the same time, deeply creative aspects) has allowed the artist to transform photographs and drawings (made *en plain air*) into a graphical sign, sometimes combining a photograph and a drawing in a hybridisation process of the ways of expression which is extremely captivating.

**The un-inked block prints**, devised as a memory of the *materiality* of nature, accompany all the pages of the book, giving a rhythm to the images and the written parts. The colour, the white and green of the pages and texts, is lit up by passages that sometimes are slightly opalescent and that Alessandra Angelini perceives as *“in balance between the imaginary and the real, as a symbol of the transformations of nature, from the birth of a bud to its end; it is a journey that is not confined to the life of a flower or a plant but hints at man's journey on Earth”*.

The choice of the book format, printed by Daniela Lorenzi – Atelier 14 and hand-bound by CbdA of Cristina Balbiano d'Aramengo -, corresponds to the *golden ratio* between the sides and pays homage to the ethical and aesthetic lesson passed on by Sir Smithers: Harmony and Beauty, like plants and flowers, are able to transform everyday life in the *open garden* of our dreams.

At the peak of its blooming, at the end of May-June 2015, they planned a viewing, open to the public, to the “Smithers Garden” of Vico Morcote in the Swiss canton of Ticino. In addition new exhibitions of the project are going to be defined in prestigious venues in Italy and abroad.

In parallel to the artist's book a bilingual Italian/English pamphlet has been published, with texts by Alessandra Angelini, Francesca Porreca, Laura Tirelli, Patrizia Caccia, Cecilia Angeletti and a text by Paolo Cottini with its English translation by Amelia Smithers, the daughter of the founder of the garden of Vico Morcote.

**Details of the Artist's book**

**Title** IL GIARDINO È APERTO/THE GARDEN IS OPEN

**Graphical project** *by Alessandra Angelini*

**Text** *by Paolo Cottini*

**Incisions** *by Alessandra Angelini*

**Book curated** *by Alessandra Angelini*

**Print curated** *by Daniela Lorenzi – Atelier 14 – Milan*

**Binding and cases making** *by Cristina Balbiano d'Aramengo – CbdA – Milan*

**Printing press** *Rodolfo Campi*

*Technical sponsors*

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**Details of the exhibition**

**Title** IL GIARDINO È APERTO/THE GARDEN IS OPEN

**Venue** Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense - room Maria Teresa - Via Brera 28 – Milan

**Grand opening and presentation of the artist's book** Thursday, 4 June at 6pm

**Dates** 5 - 27 June 2015

**Opening hours** Mon-Sat 9.30am-1.30pm | Sunday closed

People wishing to visit outside those hours should contact:

Ph. +39 02 86460907 ext. 536 - [b-brai@beniculturali.it](mailto:b-brai@beniculturali.it)

**Entrance** free

**Info to the public** Biblioteca Nazionale BraidensePh. +39 02 86460907 - b-brai@beniculturali.it

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testi e immagini scaricabili da [www.irmabianchi.it](http://www.irmabianchi.it)