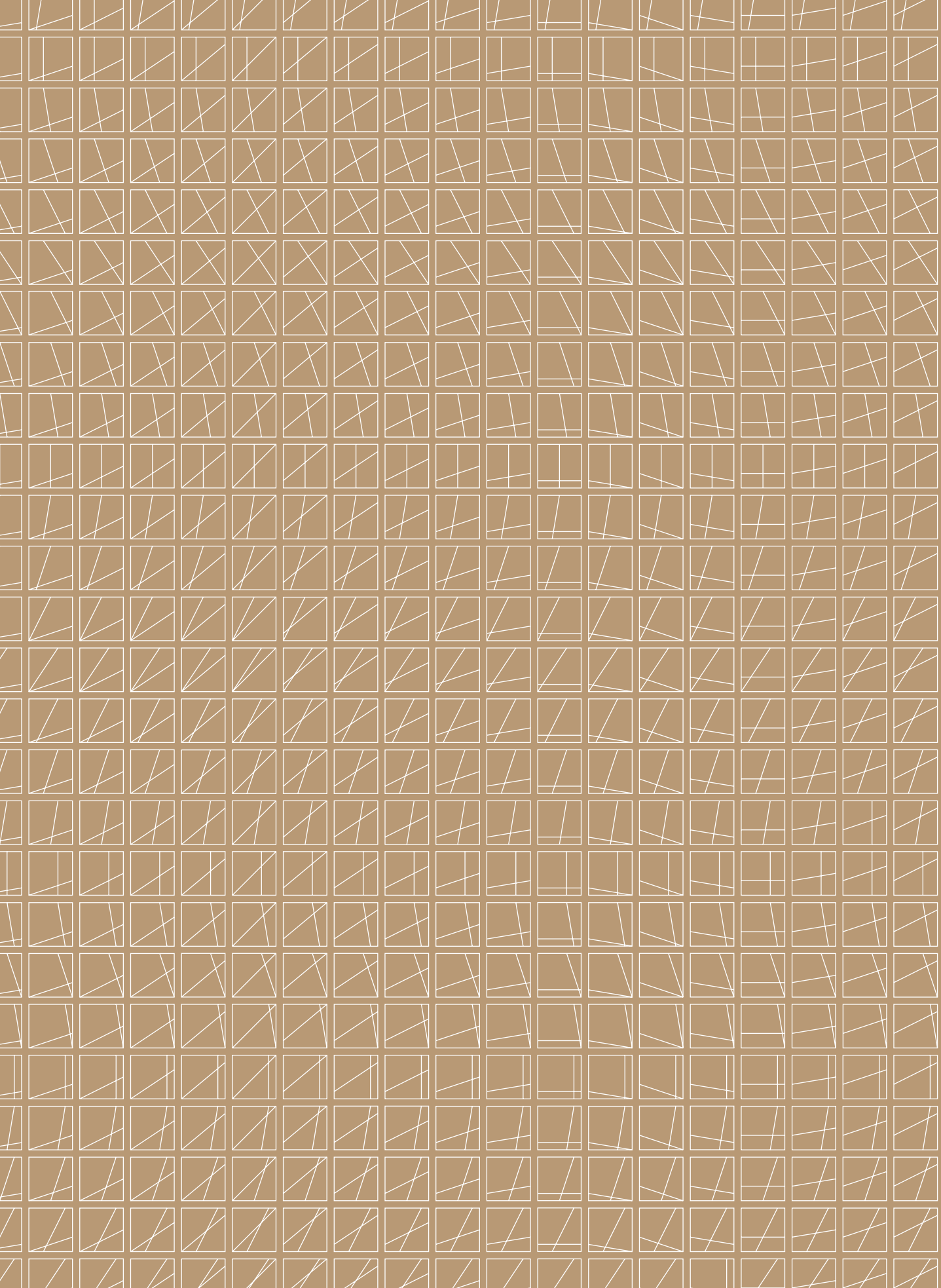


An abstract, low-angle photograph of a ceiling or architectural structure composed of numerous parallel slats. The slats are arranged in a grid-like pattern, creating a series of diamond-shaped openings. The slats are primarily a deep blue color, but some sections are a bright, metallic gold. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, emphasizing the three-dimensional quality of the slats. The overall effect is one of depth and geometric complexity.

**Priceless**





# Priceless

by Park Associati

Client  
MasterCard

Address  
Travelling project in Europe

Location  
Milan

Year  
Project and realization: 2015

Area  
sqm 150

Professional Service  
Project  
Site supervision

Contractor  
Fourproject

Event Concept  
4wards.eventsì

# To return

**Whereas Park Associati's first travelling restaurant The Cube paved the way for a new type of construction, Priceless is its successful evolution, as well as an indication of the maturity acquired by the practice in this field.**

Retracing one's steps to attempt to change actions, thoughts and behaviours is not as easy as it might seem. In life, as much as in architecture, 'going back' means being able to assess the past objectively, to analyze weaknesses and insecurities, to admit to any errors and to know how to put them right.

This is what Park Associati have been able to do. Three years after the experiment of The Cube, the studio has been called upon to create a new temporary and touring eatery with MasterCard's Priceless Milano. Proving that they are able to address the 'retrospective' challenge, Park Associati have designed a new architectural object.

Whereas The Cube paved the way for a new type of construction, Priceless is its successful evolution, as well as an indication of the maturity acquired by the Milanese practice in this type of operation. The concept's greater definition, as well as the self-assurance and safety gained in managing the complexities of a construction site poised between earth and sky, are reflected in the ephemeral quality of the building, which is thus more 'efficient'.

In fact, Priceless is easier to assemble, more transparent, more enjoyable, lighter and - above all - more recognizable. The glass box amplifies the dinner-with-a-view experience, and the golden metal canopy that covers it casts a glow by day that increases by night, and draws everyone's attention, provoking wonder and admiration.



In terms of both architecture and communication, Priceless Milano is the outcome of a mindful retrospective.

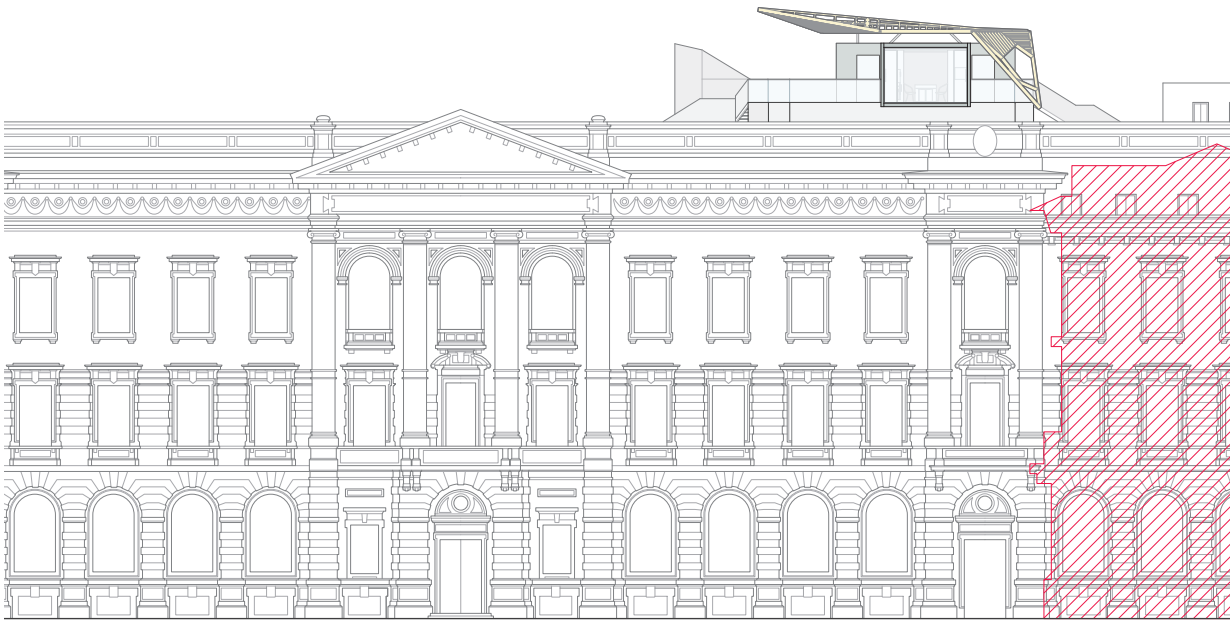
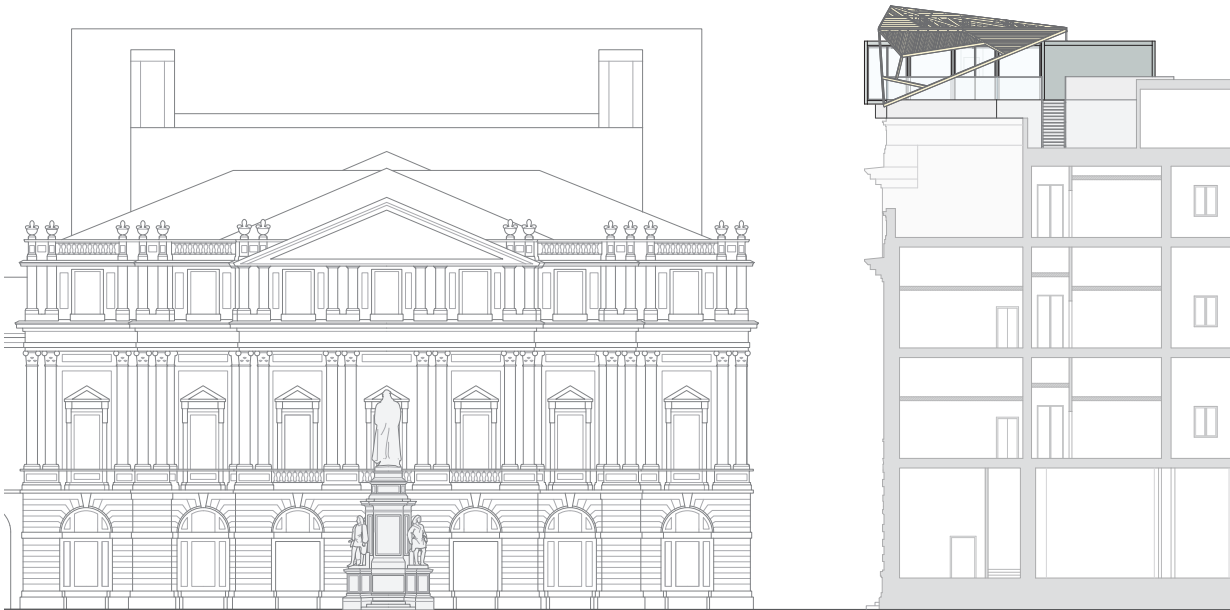
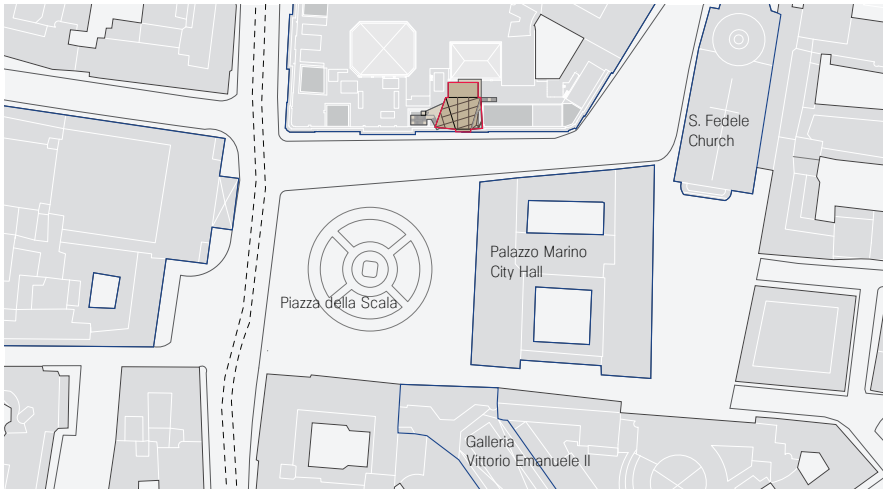




# Piazza della Scala challenge



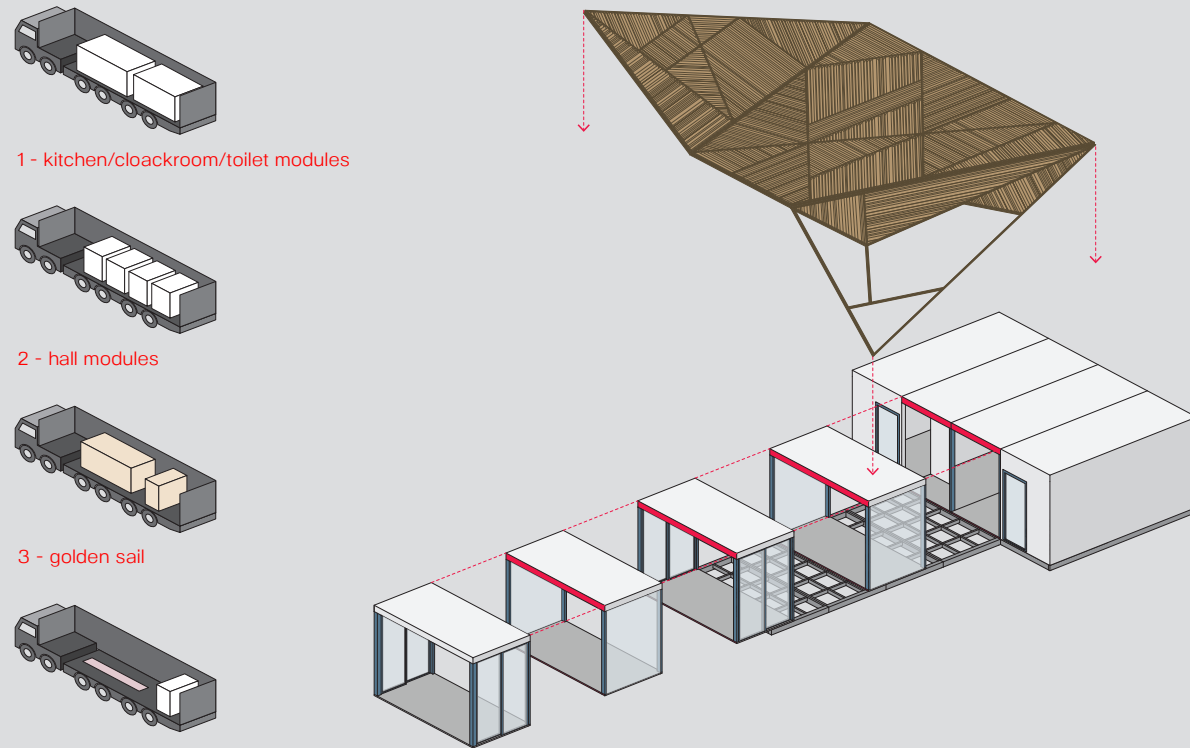
Surrounded by the neo-Gothic spires of the Duomo and the vertical reflection of the Porta Nuova skyscrapers, the narrow pavilion managed to cast a physical and conceptual look at the symbols of old and new Milan, blending them into one unique glance.



Milan, May 2015, food. A place, a date and a theme that immediately bring back memories of Expo 2015, the national pavilions and their temporary interpretation of global food concept. However, for the many tourists who flocked to Milan's historic center these three words also conjure up something else. They mean Priceless temporary architectural structure that materialised on the roof of the former Banca Commerciale Italiana, in conjunction with the inauguration of the Expo. From the moment it 'perched' on top of Intesa San Paolo's Gallerie d'Italia's museum complex, the MasterCard-sponsored restaurant; a glass pavilion protected by a golden canopy, took visual possession of the place.

Characterised by the transparency and lightness typical of temporary buildings, Priceless appeared to be almost a response to the colossal weight and bulk of the marble façade by Luca Beltrami. The structure's bare and almost 'shameless' architecture broke the neo-Renaissance harmony of the surroundings, altering the formal and rarefied conformation desired by the famous Milanese architect Luca Beltrami at the beginning of the 20 century, and bringing the public space into the new millennium, giving it a breath of fresh, contemporary aesthetics. For the duration of its short stay - it was dismantled at the end of 2015 - Priceless Milano became a new icon of the city.

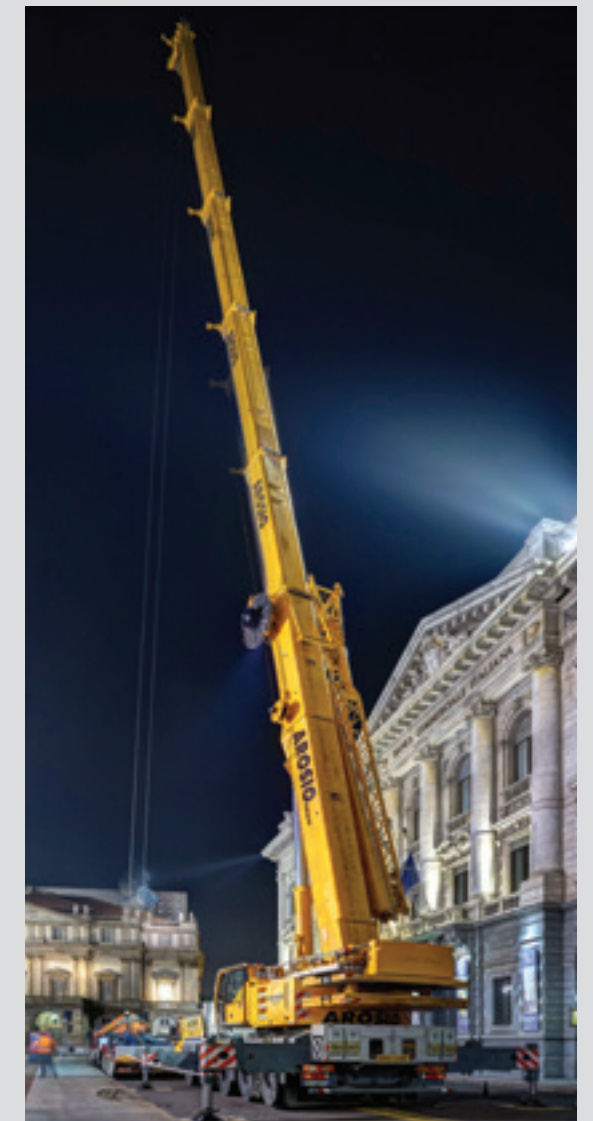
# All in two night



The construction system of Priceless Milano arose from the need to reduce the structure's realisation times and to streamline its transport system. The individual components of The Cube, which followed a design based on microelements, were assembled piece by piece. This resulted in a building site of great complexity. The experience taught the designers that the cost of moving materials was the element that most impacted the entire construction process delays.

The design of the Priceless structure is based on macro-modules. Its T-shaped structure comprises 8 workshop-built, box-shaped blocks that are assembled on site following an almost industrial process. The kitchen and cloakroom-toilet are made up of 4 modules and the remaining 4 modules make up the hall. Transportation of all materials (furnishings included) requires only 4 trucks.

Priceless can be mounted in just two nights. Firstly assembling the modules that make up the actual building, the following night installing the canopy.





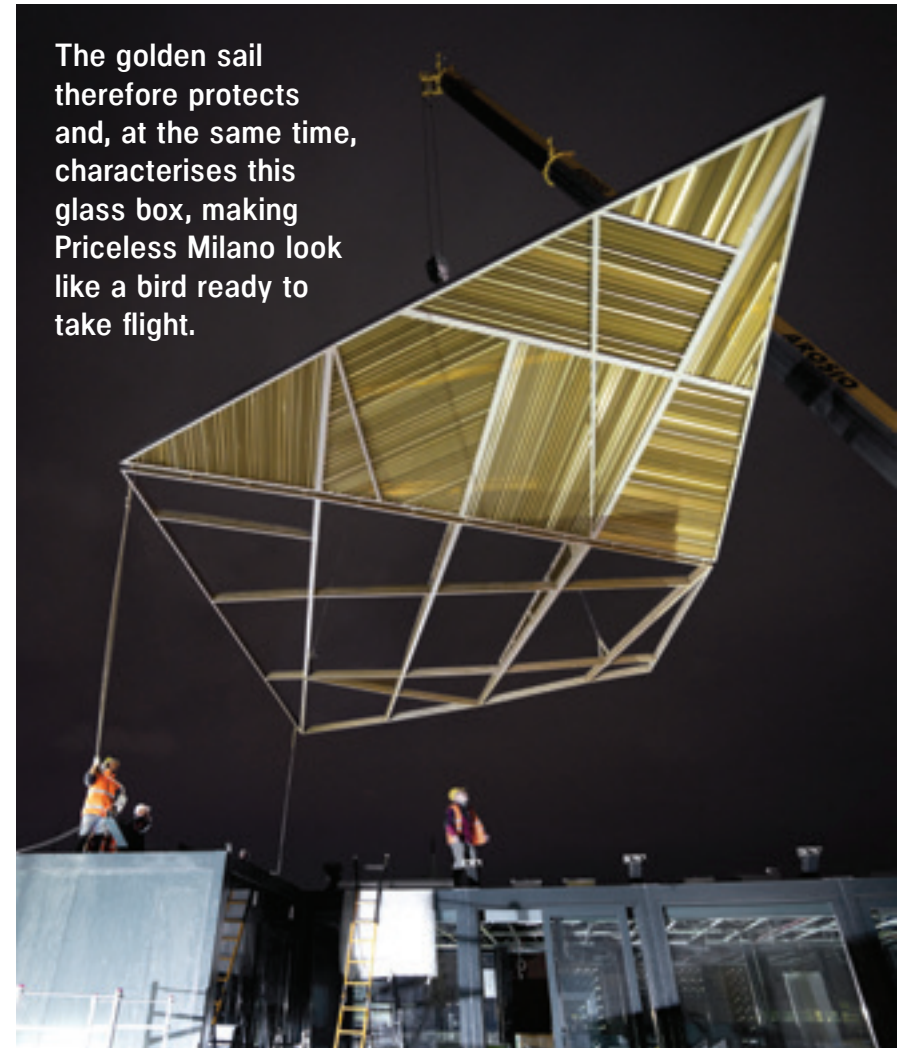




## Priceless Milano: the Golden Sail



The golden sail  
therefore protects  
and, at the same time,  
characterises this  
glass box, making  
Priceless Milano look  
like a bird ready to  
take flight.



Thanks to its golden sail, Priceless Milano has been immediately recognisable within the context of Piazza della Scala. The project's identity relies on the press-formed, perforated aluminum sheet cover, that has been anodized with shades of gold. The element comprises a fixed trapezoidal section and two triangular wings that can be moved depending on the weather conditions and the building's orientation. Its main purpose is to maximise the comfort of the restaurant and to reduce sun exposure inside.

Whereas The Cube was characterised by an inward-looking architecture, Priceless is a totally transparent building. Large, fixed and sliding French doors, with high energy performance glass, contain the internal area, contributing to wellbeing and the restaurant's atmosphere.

The doors expand the room's environment, connecting it directly to the side terraces and giving guests sweeping, panoramic views over the rooftops and the city below. —





# The flying restaurant

The idea of a place where people could get together to enjoy the cuisine offered for six months, in turn, by 35 young, prize-winning chefs, immediately appealed to me. First of all the idea. Before the project, before the undertaking, before the workers. The reason for this dates back a few years ago, to one evening around dinner time, when I found myself walking alone in via Manzoni, Milan. Two very young American backpackers, were standing waiting at the tram stop. After a moment's hesitation, they approached me and asked me where they could find a place to dine nearby. I looked first right, then left; nothing. The city was deserted, dead, empty. From the beginning of the last century, the whole area of the centre that runs from Piazza Cavour through to Piazza degli Affari, which is so important for the city's life energy, has been a cold territory, completely dominated by banks Headquarters. Obviously I could never recommend a restaurant of that standard to the two hapless American backpackers, but at least I could tell them a story. Almost a fairy tale, the story of a 'flying' restaurant, a cloud, resting on the roof of one of the buildings by the famous Milanese architect, Luca Beltrami.

Better than just disconsolately shaking my head and confessing in English: "I'm sorry guys, there is nothing here, you must go further that way, towards Brera." Then, in May 2015, the restaurant envisioned by MasterCard became a reality; tourists and travelers coming to Milan, as well as the Milanese themselves, started talking about it. The modular structure with a sail hoisted on top, the small details such as the table that comes down from the ceiling thanks to a clever system of thin, steel cables, where guests can eat together, all this must be given credit for livening up the area, and the whole city. And even though it was only a temporary experience, we all remember it as one of the great, simple and surprising works of Milanese architecture.



*Text by  
Michele Lupi  
Journalist and men's collection visionary for TOD'S*

**Only 150 square meters,  
but an important work  
for the city.**





# The Architect

**ADV:** The Priceless concept is based on notions of ephemerality and impermanence of time. The communication strategy itself is entirely focused on this idea of intangibility and transience. By nature, architecture, even when it is temporary, originates from and exists in a longer-lasting time. How did you relate the speed of communication and expression required by the concept with architecture's 'slowness'?

**Filippo Pagliani:** We blended the way we design a fixed building with the times of an exhibition stand, creating a touring space that is here today and will be elsewhere tomorrow, and with the quality of a real architectural object, where materials and details convey the idea of permanence.

**ADV:** An exhibition stand or a pavilion is contextless, whereas Priceless sits in close contact with the surrounding environment. How did this affect the project?

**Michele Rossi:** Priceless changes cityscapes, even though temporarily, and creates new perspectives. We have been aware of this from the very beginning, even when we had no idea of the context.

The challenge was to design a building that, while having no defined space, would create a relationship with its surroundings. We avoided creating a self-celebratory architectural structure and aimed instead at realising a valuable, open, transparent but formally neutral building. Perhaps even alienating with regard to the language of the old city centre. Placed on top of Palazzo Beltrami in Piazza della Scala, Priceless is the full demonstration of this concept. With its aesthetics totally clashing with the underlying building, it gives rise to a series of reactions, either positive or negative, with the result that it can not go unnoticed. The structure stands out, it sticks out and is always in the limelight.

**ADV:** In your opinion, what is the strength of this project that has the power to generate such hype?

**MR:** I think it has to do with its flexibility. Compared with the Cube, Priceless has a broader field of use. We paid particular attention to the flexibility of its space, so that as well as serving as a restaurant, it also functions as an exclusive and unique room for events, meetings or presentations. From this point of view, Priceless can potentially function 24 hours a day.

**FP:** In addition, Priceless is characterised by a unique expressive value, in that the project is reborn every time, and wherever it 'lands', the reactions, feelings and images are always different.

**With its aesthetics Priceless Milano totally clashes with the underlying building, it gives rise to a series of reactions with the result that it can not go unnoticed.**





Photos:  
Andrea Martiradonna  
Carlo A. Sigon

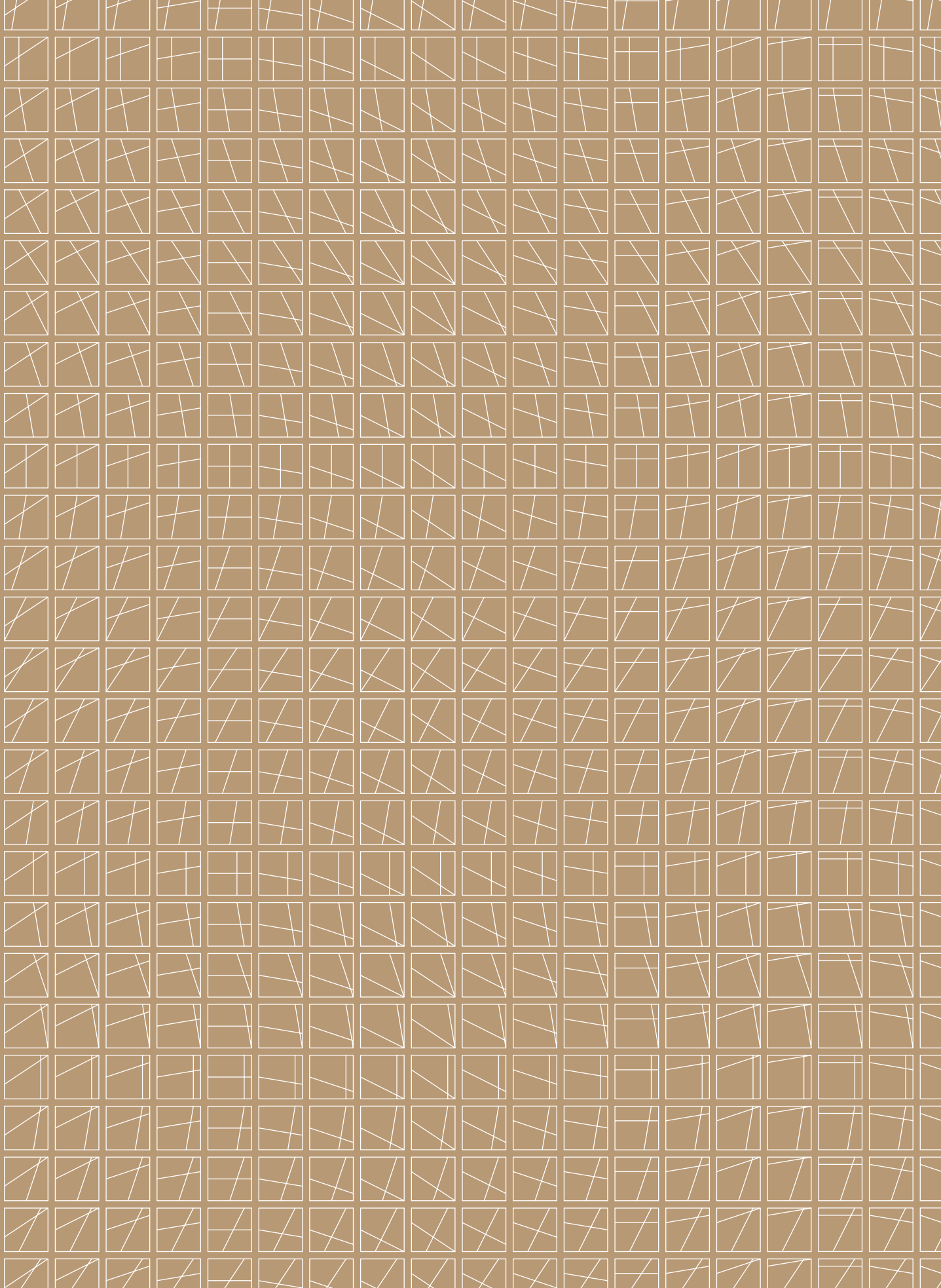
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Marinella Ferrari

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