



MUSEO NAZIONALE DELL'AUTOMOBILE DI TORINO IS CHANGING ITS LOOK: A NEW MISSION, A WIDER EXHIBITION AREA AND AVANTGARDE SCENOGRAPHY DESIGNED BY CINO ZUCCHI AND FRANÇOIS CONFINO

A 4-year work and an investment of over 33 million Euros.

Through a restoration and a renovation in setting, exhibition design and a creation of new areas, Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile di Torino aims at achieving three fundamental goals:

- a **repositioning** of the museum as a reference point at an international level;
- the **new issues** and the contents expressed by the collection and its new sets, "which cannot be simply positioning one car next to the other any longer";
- a **training-scientific mission**.

«From the very beginning our aim was to create a museum not only dedicated to specialists but also addressed to a wider public – explains **Rodolfo Gaffino Rossi, Director of the Museum**. We tried to get rid of the label of "dusty garage" and provide visitors with the knowledge by not only using the collection items, but also through a spectacular and stimulating setting, by François Confino, dedicated to different kinds of topics».

The museum wishes to be a place for culture and knowledge, but also a meeting place and an entertainment location. The premises have been transformed to let visitors spend their free time there, in such a way that they can feel involved and eager to spend both moments of relaxation and in-depth analysis. The historical library on automobiles, for example, is among the most complete in Italy and in Europe, with both Italian and foreign volumes ranging from 1885 until today. In the glass court, visitors can meet after their visit and confer while seated around coffee tables. The big square that welcomes visitors in the entrance of the museum can also be used to organise events, theme-based meetings, evening entertainment, etc. In the western area, a new building has been constructed and on the ground floor, the garage is open to visitors, where a repair shop for vehicle restoration will be created. The "old" theatre-auditorium area has been totally renovated and transformed into an innovative and technology based congress centre. The centre is divided into two rooms, a bigger one (Auditorium) and a smaller one (Sala 150), each holding 400 and 150 seats, connected to a terraced restaurant by a long corridor.

Architecture: futuristic project

Dating back to the end of 2004, the bidding for the project for the restoration and widening of the museum location took place, which saw 52 architecture firms coming from all over the world, with the total investment being equal to 22 million Euros.

In June 2005 the winning project was proposed by a team consisting of **Cino Zucchi Architetti S.r.l., Proger S.p.A.**

and **Recchi Engineering S.r.l.** In November 2007 the works were given to the temporary association of enterprises consisting of Piedmont's companies **Arcas S.p.A.** and **Bogetto Engineering S.r.l.**, by the **Siemens S.p.A.** from Milan and by the **D'Arcano Sergio** company from the Friuli area.



The museum's original building was broken into two separate parts, with the main one overlooking the Po river and Unità d'Italia avenue with a 114 long convex façade. The bidding required the addition of a new wing on Richelmy Street and the reorganization of the entry system, in order to conform to the most recent developments of European museums.

The new museum, having an estimated 250,000 visitors/year, together with an ongoing activity of congresses and training courses, will therefore become a driving force in the renewal of the southern area of the city. The pre-existent building's symmetric system has been "re-interpreted" by the new podium to comply with the different surrounding conditions, and enhance the connection with Fratelli Ceirano's little square. Lying beneath the horizontal lines of the river bank, the new ground floor has been made into a series of spaces welcoming the different public domains of the museum and its associated activities (*bookshop, merchandising, bar-cafeteria*).

The new façade is treated with different degrees of transparent glass and is aimed at unifying the side on Richelmy Street, renewing the museum's image while paying attention to the **relationship between existing parts and new ones**. The auditorium and the rooms for training activities overlooking Pettinati Street can easily be either independently operated or connected to the museum and the restaurant.

The pre-existing court has been transformed into a new original and futuristic space for events. At the bottom of this new square, an elevator and an escalator are located, which leads to the beginning of the museum itinerary. The new wing on the western side is integrated into the existing building surrounding its side, giving a sense of continuity to both "urban" projects.

Exhibition design: a combination between scientific and spectacle needs

The exhibition design project of the Museum, costing 11 million Euros, was given to art director François Confino together with the LL.TT studio in Torino. It works with and intensifies a series of **exhibition design solutions, becoming a combination between scientific and spectacle needs, both required by a contemporary automobile museum within a European and world arena**. Some of these solutions involve the choice of materials, their pairing and the right lighting system to create the best desired effect. The project also foresees the use of complex audiovisual and lighting technology, in order to create an aesthetically pleasing result that complies with the important story to be told. The main goal is to make the visitor aware of the meaning that the concept of the automobile has achieved throughout the years and how it has integrated in contemporary daily life.



«It is not enough, as in the past – François Confino explained – to present a series of automobiles in line with simple written captions containing the essential information relevant to each model: once upon a time these "automobiles" were exhibited "motionless" in the big exhibiting areas, in a situation of fundamental and paradox contradiction vis-à-vis their original function. In order to correct this motionless sensation, motion was introduced using museum and stage devices which seem to be very innovatory and life giving».

In November 2009 the execution of the exhibition design operations was awarded to a temporary team of enterprises consisting of Torino's companies: **Gruppo Bodino S.p.A., IM.FORM S.r.l., Acuson S.r.l.**, by the **Deltaimaging** from Biella, **Asteria Multimedia S.r.l.** from Trento, Roman **Doclab S.r.l.** and the **NI03 S.r.l.** from Milan.

The exhibition design project is focused on the creation of a new museum itinerary, developing on about 3,600 square metres on the second floor, about 3,800 square metres on the first floor and about 1,200 square metres on the ground floor, creating a total area of almost 9,000 square metres. The big spaces are broken down into 21 areas on the second floor and 8 areas on the first floor. On the ground floor

the space is mainly devoted to temporary exhibitions and to welcome areas, which are separated from the last museum area dedicated to the topic of automobile Design.



The journey starts on the second floor, totally dedicated to “**L’Automobile e il Novecento**” (Cars in the XX century). This floor has a teaching and information function, able to demonstrate the complex connection between cars and history, allowing visitors to dive deep into particularly important financial, political, social and art contexts – concerning the evolution of cars in the urban area. Once the second floor has been visited, we get to the first floor whose title is “**L’uomo e l’automobile**” (Man and the car), where visitors have the possibility to stop and identify with some

situations created by the symbolic power of cars, or to reflect on the social and environmental aspects linked to the expansion of the phenomenon of cars and mobility.

The last topic of the first floor is represented by a preview of the “Design” space, which continues in a complete way on the ground floor (“**L’Automobile e il design**” - Cars and design), ending the museum itinerary.

Technical Data

Main surfaces:

- exhibition: 11,443 square metres
- event areas: 840 square metres
- congress rooms: 450 square metres (401 seats) + 155 square metres (150 seats)
- document centre: 800 square metres

training centre: 360 square metre

garage: 1,960 square metres

cafeteria - bookshop: 950 square metres

restaurant and annex spaces: 400 square metres

administration offices: 335 square metres

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