



# ARCHILABO

Milan, Italy

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*Category*  
Roof garden

*Year*  
2012

*Area*  
Entrance: 30 m<sup>2</sup> (320 sq. ft.)  
First floor terrace: 45 m<sup>2</sup> (480 sq. ft.)  
Fifth floor terrace: 30 m<sup>2</sup> (320 sq. ft.)

*Landscape Architecture*  
Cristina Mazzucchelli

*Architecture*  
Archilabo – Luca Salmoiraghi

*Photography*  
Matteo Carassale

The series of three terraces at Archilabo make an intriguing roof garden with a striking post-industrial ambiance full of rich, contrasting textures. The building houses both private accommodations and the architect's studio.

The entrance is an exciting journey on circular concrete stepping stones that appear to be floating over a shallow pool engulfed in verdant textural foliage-rich planting of weeping birches that create a green tunnel. Underwater lights create dancing patterns of light during the evening.

The first floor terrace is an intimate space for the staff of the studio. A wall of cut-faced natural stone clearly bears the marks of quarry drilling, complementing the industrial feeling of the building. Japanese maple and bamboo provide height to the planting, while an overhanging neighboring tree lends its shade to the space.

The private fifth floor terrace is a moderately-sized deck surrounded by galvanized steel planters full of delicate-leafed herbaceous and woody perennial plants such as sweet fennel, Chinese fountain grass, and Mexican feather grass. The space includes a concrete kitchen area that is not only practical but also reinforces the industrial theme.

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*Opposite:* The stepping stones over the pond create an exciting and dramatic entrance space through the weeping birch and Chinese fountain grass.

*Below:* The communal space for the architect's office creates a quiet oasis among the bamboo and Amur maple.











Previous page and left: The fifth floor concrete kitchen and the galvanized steel drums used as tree planters, reinforce the post-industrial aesthetic of the building.



Fifth Floor Terrace



First Floor Terrace



Entrance



#### Climate

USDA Zone 9a (-6.7 to -3.9°C / 20 to 25°F)

#### Plants

Amur maple (*Acer japonicum*)  
 Chinese fountain bamboo (*Fargesia nitida*)  
 Chinese fountain grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides*)  
 Confederate jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*)

#### Dragon's claw willow

(*Salix babylonica* var. *pekinensis* 'Tortuosa')  
 Horsetail (*Equisetum hyemale*)  
 Mexican feather grass (*Stipa tenuissima*)  
 Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis* 'Majorca Pink')  
 Sweet fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)  
 Young's weeping birch (*Betula pendula* 'Youngii')