

MEMORIAL TO THE HOLOCAUST OF THE ROMA AND SINTI IN BOHEMIA

Shrouded in mystery, the culture of Roma is very particular yet undiscovered. It is ephemeral, transitory and variable. We wish to propose a design in line with Roma identity and create spaces that evoke certain emotions and impressions. The memorial is a metaphor, it talks about forgotten holocaust, prejudice, ignorance but also about memory and hope. The inconceivable events should not be forgotten nor dissembled. A place with such complex and strong history needs a powerful response.



research on mineral crust, mainly iron oxide by Joel Zimmerli at the ETH

The entrance zone alludes to the surroundings - the lush vegetation, damp ambiance of the Lipse pond grasslands and woods. In this location the car park for visitors is provided within greenery and mineral surfaces. This zone is directly connected with the visitor centre and retreat area next to the pond.

Visitor centre is divided into five pavilions which allows freedom of movement and different time of implementation. The destined proposal is divided according to the programme as shown in the drawings.

The architecture of the visitor centre draws inspiration from nomadic lifestyle peculiar to Roma. The outer layer of the pavilions in their form refers to a tent, something provisory and temporary. The structure of metal looms imitating weaving techniques of textiles is raised from the ground to emphasise the expression of transience. Light penetrating the looms and height of the space creates dense and mysterious atmosphere. The inner pavilions are constructed with rammed earth reusing the soil from the excavation of the “crater”. The architecture is made with archaic materials, that do not indicate any sense of time. The culture is timeless.





Through dry, meadow-like vegetation the visitors reach the memorial. It takes shape of a site-specific land-art, a shallow concave spherical form. It is a metaphor that could be seen in many ways. Circular plan of the memorial refers to the culture of Roma, not only because of the symbolic meaning of caravan wheel, but above all – strong sense of community, family, social bonds, caravan settlement with a big pyre in the middle. The expression of the memorial can bring also astrological connotations. The land-art can seem like a crater, a deep scar in the landscape. Its overpowering scale should cause emotions such as solitude, emptiness, isolation. When being in the centre, one can lose the perception of the outside. The abstract space provides for the immerse experience. It can be seen as a burned landscape, fire being another important element in the culture of Roma. The shape of the memorial can be compared to an amphitheatre, in line with theory of memory theatre where the spectator is in the centre. The concave form of the crater suggests possibility of various use of the space as a place for gatherings, cultural events and acts of commemoration. Necessary paths and amenities for such programme are provided. The finishing material of the “crater” is blend of the post-pig farm construction waste with mineral and poured surfaces.

The pig farm standing in this particular location is an act of ignorance and therefore should be demolished. However, every layer of history creates identity of the place. For this reason we decided to keep the foundations of some of the barracks emerging from the ground. They are a symbol of prejudice and ignorance, a warning reminding us that once it grew into something bigger. We would like to reuse the materials from the demolition of the farm as finishing material for the memorial and the existing reservoir as filtering pond and retreat area near the visitor centre.

We find the location of the cemetery fairly scenic and enchanting, it somehow reminds us that we are part of the nature. Therefore we propose a subtle form to mark the area of the graves. The ribbon-like shape symbolises a roof above the burial area and provides place for the plaques where the victims can be mentioned with their names.

The Roma have always cultivated their “own garden”. Regardless of difficult circumstances, they stood by their culture, traditions and language. They cultivated their distinctive identity. In their core values they have found fulfilment and solace. Thanks to these foundations they survived the tough times of despair and sufferance. We propose to create such garden of hope in place of the so-called Gypsy camp to symbolise rebirth, irresistible strength of the culture.

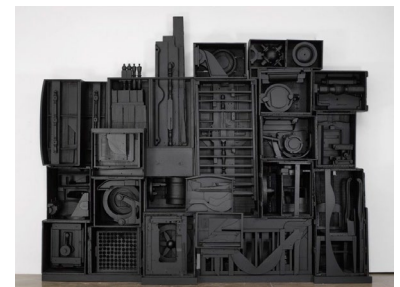
The project proposes vegetation palette developed within three typologies. Selection of plants sources in local species and different habitats support biodiversity. The year-round attractiveness of the plants is designed in detail.



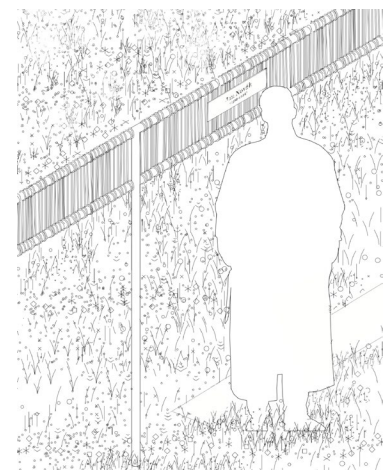
Richard Long, Hoggar circle, 1988



astronaut Charlie Duke's family portrait, left on the Moon in 1972



Louise Nevelson, Sky cathedral, 1961



## SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES



construction waste

### Reuse of materials

The reuse of the construction waste not only is a symbolic gesture that creates desired aesthetics, but also highly sustainable solution in line with the principles of circular economy. The same applies to the reuse of excavated soil forming the rammed earth pavilions.

### Reuse of rain water

The design proposes ecologically sensitive solutions on sustainable water drainage system. We maximise areas of permeable surface allowing for natural water retention. In the parking lot we propose a system of rain gardens that extend possibilities of natural infiltration, as well as bring an aesthetic value to the entrance space. Car polluted water runoff is treated by special hydrophytes vegetation. The water surplus is pumped towards the filtration pond.



filtration pond

### Filtration pond

We propose reusing the concrete reservoir for water storage and phytoremediation purposes. It collects the water runoff from semi-permeable surface of the crater and the water surplus from the parking area. The aquatic vegetation rehabilitates affected water by purification and enhancement of water soil and air. The water is reused for irrigation in the ornamental garden. Additionally, by water precipitation from the pond influences local microclimate and cools down during the summer high temperatures.

### Low-cost vegetation maintenance

The majority of the vegetative area is dry, meadow-like habitat that we proposed no maintenance for (only minimal checkout maintenance in the first two seasons). The chosen species are resistant to drought, so there will be no need for extra watering solutions.

### Landscape sensitive solutions regarding wildlife

Site location in the wild, natural environment encourages taking into consideration local animals. The vegetation palette involves shrubs with edible fruits attractive for birds and perennials for insects like bees and butterflies. Local, small scale water elements increase the site biodiversity providing water source for all kinds of animals.

## QUESTIONS FROM THE JURY

### X. How was the “crater” size calibrated?

The estimated size of the memorial was primarily based on the size of the outlines of the camp area, the circle was circumscribed on its shape. We introduced a dominant and arbitrary form in order to create a new situation, completely detached from the layout of the barracks that determine the current conditions of the site. In the second phase of the competition, after analysis of cost and sustainability factors, the size of the land-art was optimized. For these same reasons the sides of the “crater” were made convex, which means less excavation and easier drainage system without compromising on the visual expression of the memorial. We feel that a land-art should have a decent scale to provide certain experience. It draws the attention to the problem that wants to be seen and remembered.

Accommodation of the programme of the visitor centre in separate pavilions helps to divide the project into stages. In the first phase we propose to construct the main pavilion with entrance facilities and multifunctional spaces for visitors, maintenance facilities pavilion and the toilets. In further stages, missing pavilions could be added or also temporarily just the “tent” structures providing a space for workshops or other outdoor activities. Other elements that should be completed within the first phase are: carpark, main road networks, the garden, cemetery, “crater” (at least partially – excavations and finishing of the surfaces), filtration pond and basic landscaping in the areas of implementation.

Considering the budget, we propose planting seedlings of modest size. In chosen species dominate the perennials, which reach the desired size within 2-3 years. Some of the shrubs take time to reach the destined volume in 5 years and some trees 7-10 years but their amount is not significant.

The plantations are rather low-cost, especially the dry vegetation in the central area surrounding the “crater” and paths. The meadow-like habitat that we proposed requires almost no maintenance (only minimal checkout maintenance in the first two season after plantation). The species can be planted sparsely (bigger distances between the plants) and we expect the natural succession to interfere in this area over time, so the border between what is newly planted and the surrounding disappears. The chosen species are resistant to drought, so there will be no need for extra watering solutions.

The chosen solutions include pure materials that are rough and traditional and will age well. The aging is considered in the aesthetic choice. The construction is very low-tech and simple in order to minimize the maintenance. The architecture of the memorial is something that should last and be a memory for the future. It will become part of the context in organic way. Architecture is almost a natural element that reacts to its surroundings underlying the importance of the place without continuous need of technological efforts.

Our proposal for the outdoor and indoor exhibitions is fairly initial and indicates certain artistic direction. As we understood, the research on the topic is ongoing, therefore the chosen solutions are not rigid or definite, but allow modifications and further extension. The proposal is flexible and provides certain system and good exposure of various materials in line with the aesthetics of the memorial and architecture of the visitor centre. In further design phases the exhibition design can be adjusted to match the curatorial guidelines and we are open for such collaboration. At the moment we consider 3 possible locations for exhibition contents:

**(1) visitor centre** – destined exhibition pavilion, initially and partially in the main pavilion.

There is a potential for using digital technologies in order to provide legible and interactive exhibition system. We are attracted by the strong contrast of mixing two extremes – digital technology and artisanal material. We see the inside of the exhibition pavilion as a landscape formed by rammed earth elements. The screens hidden in such surfaces could be a digital library of memories presented in various forms. Some could be more informative (ie. a person sharing memory so that the individual stories can be heard and empathise with) or interactive. Rammed earth could create also podiums for possible physical exhibits as well as tribune in a projection area.

**(2) the land art element**

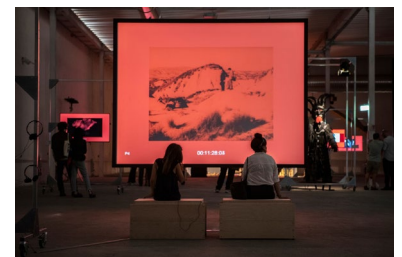
There are abstract metal sculptures distributed in the “crater”. They represent the victims and prisoners and tell individual stories. Some plaques could be placed in the landscape with textual information. Additional audio guide material could be possible for individual tours.

**(3) walls surrounding the ornamental garden**

We thought of using the walkways of the garden as a place of the stories of the survivors.

1. In your designs you have the possibility to submit a proposal for gradual implementation so that the limit of investment costs for the first stage of the construction of the memorial is kept. The design of the monument is closely connected with the solution of the connected landscape, with the design of a new landscape. For these reasons, the proposal will change significantly over time. What will the territory look like after the implementation of stage 1 – after the opening of the monument? How will the design look after 10 and 20 years?

2. The memorial project will be coordinated with the exhibition project. What is your idea of working with the team that will form the exposition of the memorial? To what extent do you consider it possible to amend the proposal on the basis of this cooperation?



Formafantasma, *Visione unica* exhibition, Matera, Italy 2019



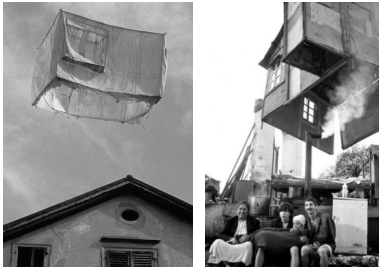
David Smith, exhibition *Voltri VII*, Spoleto, Italy 1962



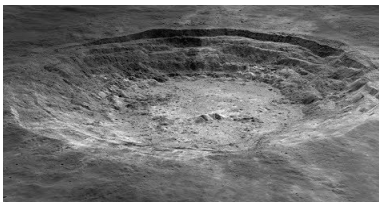
3. In which parts of the submitted area solution should the individual themes of the memorial contained in the tender documentation be presented?



Heidi Bucher - *Ahnenhaus (House of ancestors)* ca. 1980



Heidi Bucher - *Ahnenhaus (House of ancestors)* ca. 1980  
Dom za vešanje, 1988



Aristarchus Crater, Moon



David Smit, exhibition *Voltri VII*, Spoleto, Italy

Both the topic and the context of the site are very complex, hence the permeation of the themes of the memorial. The project consists of many symbolic gestures, some of them are very direct and informative, almost figurative in their form and expression, while some are implemented by using more subtle means. The overall meaning of the memorial and the way of dealing with the existing conditions of the site refer to tragic events during the Second World War as well as the prejudice and ignorance towards Roma ethnicity in general context. We do not see it as a downside, that people will perceive and read the memorial in a different way, based on their own life experiences. On the contrary, it leads to a deeper reflection, evokes emotions, awakens the interest and triggers discussions. The memorial in addition to being a place of dignified memory becomes an occasion for dialogue and reflection.

### Situation of the Roma and Sinti from the First Republic to the end of World War II

As for this theme we understand the presence of Roma culture connotations and symbols in the overall proposal. The life of the Roma and Sinti in Bohemia was associated with territorial movement. The architecture of the visitor centre draws inspiration from tents and nomadic lifestyle. The double layer of the pavilions can be also read as the seeming isolation of people of Roma ethnicity as the response to the prejudice they have been dealing with. Cultivating their traditions and strong sense of community became an asylum in the unsettled reality. We imply the theme as an introduction and propose to present its contents within the exhibition in the visitor centre. It could refer to the general topics of Roma identity and illustrate the problems and social environment leading to further tragic events.

### So-called Gypsy camp

On the arrival, the visitors see the picturesque, almost idyllic landscape which does not bring any negative connotations. However, the landscape remembers some heart-breaking events of the past. When approaching the memorial, we all stand above an enormous, unexpected deep scar in the landscape - an anomaly. Its scale illustrates to what inconceivable acts the growing prejudice and standing of anti-Roma attitudes in the society lead us to. When going down, the abstract and dreamlike space should cause the overpowering sense of solitude and emptiness.

We believe that a memorial should merge the overall tragic message with the focus on the individual cases. Many of the universal ideas rooted in our society treat people as one amorphous mass. This way of thinking grows away from the perception of the individuals. When we lose the perception of a human and their unique individuality, we often face distortions, inequity and damage. If it is aimed at an anonymous mass, we see the illusion of impunity.

The sculptural elements in the crater identify with the prisoners and victims of the camp and tell their stories. They do not only describe the tragic events of the camp, but mainly focus on them as individual people with their stories, personalities and aspirations. We were moved by the fact how many children were among the victims of the camp and would like to communicate it by introducing some forms associated with children (i.e. a swing). Additional information could be added with plaques in the landscape and, if necessary, also in the visitor centre.

The victims of the camp are commemorated with reverence place where they can be mentioned with their names. We propose to indicate the location of the graves with a ribbon-like element and provide a place for laying flowers and sitting area for the visitors. We would like to introduce some Roma symbols into the ribbon element, however in this sensitive location we would like to consult it with the representatives. In order not to compete with the fragmented form of the Monument of Zdenek Hula, we proposed a linear, continuous form designed in similar aesthetics to the visitor centre, so that the cemetery becomes part of the memorial complex.

## Situation after the return of the surviving Roma

Despite what happened, the disgraceful acts were never appropriately recognised. It is indeed the forgotten holocaust. As a result, the society is still tolerating acts of ignorance. Raising a pig farm in this location should never have happened. However, we do not want to distort the history of the place. Leaving some of the remains of the pig farm in form of ruins of the foundations hidden in vegetation makes the project more complete. The situation after the return of the surviving Roma is described in the walkways of the garden.

Starting over after such loss and oppression must be incredibly difficult especially when the social environment does not help. However, ability of preserving own distinctiveness and adaptation to unfavourable environment is deeply rooted in the culture of Roma and enables the survival of community. In the location of the prior so-called Gypsy camp we designed a blooming ornamental garden with colourful and healing plants as a symbol rebirth, hope and eternity.



Hortus conclusus depicted by Meister des Frankfurter Paradiesgärtleins



During the design process we tried to make acquaintance with the culture of Roma in order to draw our inspirations. We see great chance and potential in working with the survivors which could lead to even more personal and meaningful project. First-hand information and possibility to consult our proposal would be highly appreciated. We would value suggestions mainly on the general symbolism and identity contents and the didactic elements, such as plaques with the stories of individuals, sculptures inside the memorial and elements of the cemetery. The cooperation could take form of workshops and consultations. We would like to keep the main guidelines of the proposal, certain level of abstraction of the memorial and some universal supracultural symbolism legible for wide audience. However, it is important for us to create a project that the community could identify with and see the area of the memorial as their place.

4. When working on the project of the territory (in the phase of project preparation and implementation), the Contracting Authority will require intensive communication and close cooperation with the survivors' representatives. How do you envisage working with the survivors? Where do you see the greatest scope for cooperation with them? Which concrete elements, architectural details would you like to consult with the survivors?

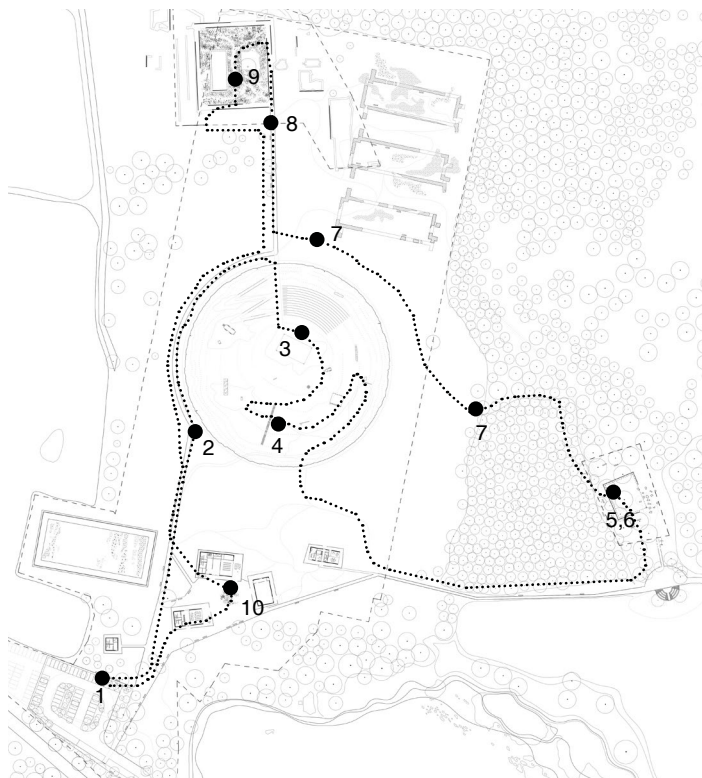


5. In the light of the proposal you have submitted, what is your idea of the course of the annual acts of commemoration in the territory?

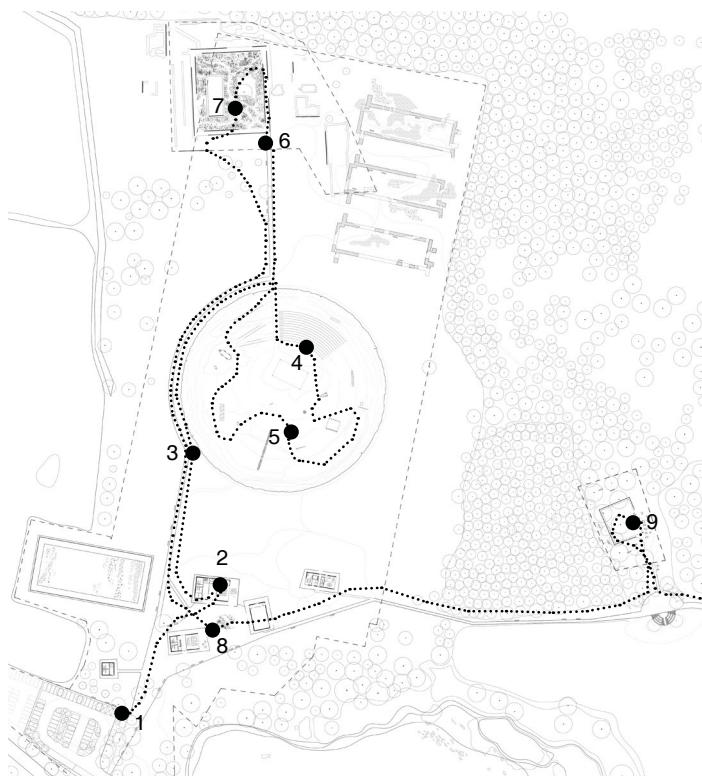
The proposal provides spaces that allow many possibilities for acts of commemoration. The element of the project that could host the widest range of events is the “crater” thanks to its concave form and scenery. The form resembles an ancient theatre and can be both stage and background for many events, cultural activities, gatherings and even rituals. We like the idea that the memorial is not just a monument, but also a place for community, education and promotion of Romani culture – of course it is a place of remembrance so the events need certain level of dignity. Wide programme of activities can be held also within the visitor centre. The garden is a space of reverie that could as well be a place for an intimate concert, discussion and reminiscence.

We suggest a possible scenario for a commemoration event and regular visit:

- (1) arrival to the site, verdant entrance zone with retreat area of Lipes pond.
- (2) view from above the crater – unexpected deep scar in the landscape
- (3) tour of the memorial, remembering the victims
- (4) gathering at the amphitheatre followed by introduction, lecture and concert of Romani music
- (5) visit to the graves of the victims
- (6) commemoration speech, laying flowers and common prayer
- (7) walk through the woods, local landscape and the ruins of the so-called Gypsy camp
- (8) following square-shaped path with stories of survivors
- (9) gathering in the garden, remembrance and common meditation
- (10) refreshments served in the visitor centre



- (1) arrival to the site, verdant entrance zone with retreat area of Lipes pond.
- (2) introduction and history lesson in the visitor Centre
- (3) view from above the crater – unexpected deep scar in the landscape
- (4) introduction to the space in the amphitheatre
- (5) tour of the memorial
- (6) following square-shaped path and learning about the situation of Roma after WWII
- (7) visit in the garden, common discussion and reflection
- (8) workshops and refreshments in the visitor centre.
- (9) visit to the graves of the victims





EXPERT INVESTMENT COST ESTIMATE - FIRST PHASE OF CONSTRUCTION					
	unit	number of	cost per	cost in total	
<b>new building facilities</b>					
<b>Visitor centre building</b>					
					6.338.640 Kč
	architectural volume (pavilion)	m3	1445	2.970 Kč	4.291.650 Kč
	outer structure (metal tent)	m3	1568	675 Kč	1.058.400 Kč
	equipment	m2	299	3.100 Kč	988.590 Kč
<b>Staff building</b>					
					2.196.250 Kč
	architectural volume (pavilion)	m3	525	2.970 Kč	1.559.250 Kč
	outer structure (metal tent)	m3	600	675 Kč	405.000 Kč
	equipment	m2	145	1.600 Kč	232.000 Kč
<b>Service - visitor restrooms</b>					
					830.110 Kč
	architectural volume (pavilion)	m3	183	2.970 Kč	543.510 Kč
	outer structure (metal tent)	m3	280	675 Kč	189.000 Kč
	equipment	m2	61	1.600 Kč	97.600 Kč
	total				9.365.000 Kč
<b>landscaping and vegetation</b>					
	landscaping (excavation of the 'crater')	m3	12818	59 Kč	756.262 Kč
	vegetation - trees	pcs.	58	2.650 Kč	153.700 Kč
	vegetation - low vegetation	m2	22503	147 Kč	3.307.941 Kč
	rain gardens	m2	829	502 Kč	416.158 Kč
	total				4.634.061 Kč
<b>infrastruktura</b>					
	road network	m2	1724	1.050 Kč	1.810.200 Kč
	parking	m2	2477	1.050 Kč	2.600.850 Kč
	additional parking (netturf grass)	m2	923	725 Kč	669.175 Kč
	other paved areas	m2	5200	590 Kč	3.068.000 Kč
	drainage system	pcs.	1	475.230 Kč	475.230 Kč
	lightning system	pcs.	1	1.295.000 Kč	1.295.000 Kč
	total				9.918.455 Kč
<b>cemetery of the victims of the camp</b>					
	small architecture	pcs.	65	4.750 Kč	308.750 Kč
	artworks, interventions	pcs.	1	42.000 Kč	42.000 Kč
	low vegetation recultivation	m2	88	120 Kč	10.560 Kč
	total				361.310 Kč
<b>reminder of the so-called Gypsy Camp</b>					
	small architecture (walls)	m2	420	269 Kč	112.799 Kč
	artworks, interventions	pcs.	1	29.543 Kč	29.543 Kč
	vegetation - ornamental vegetation	m2	2010	325 Kč	653.250 Kč
	vegetation - tree	pcs.	1	2.650 Kč	2.650 Kč
	greenery irrigation system	m2	2010	16 Kč	32.160 Kč
	furniture	pcs.	10	4.740 Kč	47.400 Kč
	total				877.802 Kč
<b>pig farm area</b>					
	working with the remains of the pig farm	m2	6600	48 Kč	316.800 Kč
	artworks, interventions	pcs.	13	46.500 Kč	604.500 Kč
	crater-semipermeable surface	m2	13273	790 Kč	10.485.670 Kč
	total				11.406.970 Kč
<b>other not specified above</b>					
	Filtration pond	m2	2372	835 Kč	1.980.620 Kč
	furniture	pcs.	20	4.740 Kč	94.800 Kč
	total				2.075.420 Kč
<b>TOTAL</b>					
<b>38.639.018 Kč</b>					
EXPERT INVESTMANT COST ESTIMATE - SUBSEQUENT PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION					
	unit	number of	cost per	cost in total	
<b>new building facilities</b>					
<b>Workshop pavilion</b>					
					3.288.640 Kč
	architectural volume (pavilion)	m3	680	2.970 Kč	2.019.600 Kč
	outer structure (metal tent)	m3	1080	675 Kč	729.000 Kč
	equipment	m2	170	3.100 Kč	540.040 Kč
<b>Exhibition pavilion</b>					
					3.123.200 Kč
	architectural volume (pavilion)	m3	765	2.970 Kč	2.272.050 Kč
	outer structure (metal tent)	m3	858	675 Kč	579.150 Kč
	equipment	m2	170	1.600 Kč	272.000 Kč
	total				6.411.840 Kč
<b>landscaping and vegetation</b>					
	landscaping	m3		0 Kč	0 Kč
	vegetation (low vegetation)	m2	21000	147 Kč	3.087.000 Kč
	total				3.087.000 Kč
<b>infrastruktura</b>					
	road network	m2		0 Kč	0 Kč
	parking	m2		0 Kč	0 Kč
	other paved areas	m2	3500	590 Kč	2.065.000 Kč
	utilities	bm		0 Kč	0 Kč
	other - please specify			0 Kč	0 Kč
<b>TOTAL</b>					
<b>2.065.000 Kč</b>					

### (1) Ornamental garden

It is created with a majority of edible, aromatic and healing species in reference to herbal medicine developed by Romani culture. Two meaningful colours - red and black are chosen for the blooming. We propose planting of an apple tree, symbol of eternity, new origin and rebirth.



01  
*Malus domestica*



02  
*Papaver orientale*



03  
*Monarda hybrida*



04  
*Valeriana officinalis*



05  
*Veratrum nigrum*



06  
*Scabiosa „Chile Black”*



07  
*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*



08  
*Sambucus nigra*



09  
*Rosa sp.*



10  
*Iris luisiana*



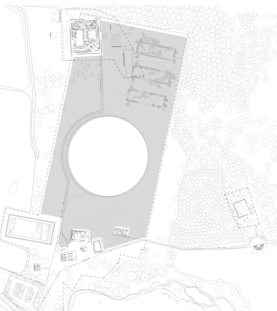
11  
*Malvae arborae*



12  
*Anethum graveolens*

### (2) Meadow-like vegetation

The plants create habitat that is blurring into the local landscape. Mainly lower vegetation is proposed. The plants are local species that do not need extensive maintenance. The vegetation is introduced in a top layer of gravel allowing walking between the groups of plantation using informal paths.



01  
*Sambucus nigra*



02  
*Hippophae rhamnoides*



03  
*Myrica gale*



04  
*Luzula nivea*



05  
*Carex umbrosa*



06  
*Briza media*



07  
*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*



08  
*Betula nana*



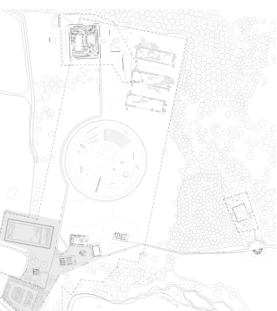
09  
*Prunus padus*



10  
*Carpinus betulus*

### (3) Rain gardens and the pond

The vegetation is proposed evenly between the parking places creating green and shaded entrance to the site. Species palette of hydrophytes and aquatic plants were chosen for the filtration pond.



01  
*Iris luisiana*



02  
*Carex alba*



03  
*Carex hirta*



04  
*Osmunda regalis*



05  
*Athyrium filix-femina*



06  
*Lobelia cardinalis*



07  
*Viola palustris*



08  
*Juncus effusus*



09  
*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*



10  
*Alnus glutinosa*



11  
*Alnus incana*



12  
*Salix cinerea*



	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
Papaver orientale												
Monarda hybrida												
Valeriana officinalis												
Veratrum nigrum												
Vaccinium vitis-idaea												
Anethum graveolens												
Scabiosa Chile Black												
Rosa sp.												
Iris louisiana												
Malus domestica												
Alcea rosea Nigra												
Sambucus nigra												

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
Myrica gale												
Briza media												
Betula nana												
Luzula nivea												
Carex umbrosa												
Vaccinium vitis-idaea												
Hippophae rhamnoides												
Sambucus nigra												
Prunus padus												
Carpinus betulus												

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
Carex hirta												
Carex alba												
Iris louisiana												
Viola palustris												
Osmunda regalis												
Juncus effusus												
Sisyrinchium angustifolium												
Lobelia cardinalis												
Athyrium filix-femina												
Alnus glutinosa												
Alnus incana												
Salix cinerea												