

PROPERTIES OF PIAZZA TEVERE



Aerial View of Piazza Tevere, 2015 composed from 'Bing'

THE SITE

Dimensions:

The rectilinear site is equal in dimension to the ancient arena - the Circus Maximus: 560 x 103 m

- Length: Bridge to Bridge - 560 m
- Height: Embankment walls - 12m
- Width: Water Surface - 84 m
- Width: Wall to Wall - 103m
- Width: Walkways - Left and Right Bank - approximately - 9m

Two bridges frame the rectilinear site:

- Ponte Sisto - built 1473-79 (*South - longitude 12°28'14" E, latitude 41°53'32" N*)
- Ponte Mazzini - built 1904-08 (*North o longitude 12°27'57" E, latitude 41°53'46" N*)

Properties of the Site:

- Pedestrian Site Access: from five staircases above (one on each corner and one in the center on the left bank)
- Vehicular Site Access: only the right bank is accessible to bicycles, cars and trucks
- Paved Bicycle Path: on the right bank
- Embankment Walls: made of tightly dressed travertine blocks open to the sky at an angle of 97°
- Light: the right bank is in sunlight in the early morning and the left bank is in sunlight in the afternoon
- Vegetation: the left bank is overgrown and not regularly maintained
- Sound: parallel "rivers" of traffic move in opposite directions above, flanking the site
- Sound Levels:
 - Above: 60 to 65 dB - center of Ponte Sisto / Walkway 70-75 dB
 - Below: 55-60 dB
- Sound: Travels: 1.6 seconds between Ponte Sisto and Ponte Mazzini (560 meters)
- Sound Delay: Perfect synchronicity of sound on site is not possible
- Time and Space: are acoustically interdependent



THE TIBER RIVER



Aerial View of the Tiber River – the spine of the City of Rome with Piazza Tevere at the center and an outline of Circus Maximus

Properties of the River:

- Water Depth: 8m in center / 3m along the edges
- Current: flows southbound (from Ponte Mazzini down stream to Ponte Sisto)
- Speed of current: varies between 1 - 2 meters per second (similar to a walking pace)
- Regulation of the current: often regulated from upstream dam at Castel Giubileo
- Flooding: occurs yearly between December – February and may occur as early as November and as late as April
- Turbidity – Visibility: 10cm (a Siena colored silt is suspended in the water)
- Reflections: the water surface offers dramatic reflections viewed from the opposite bank
- River Bed: there are no important archaeological remains
- Central Corridor: must allow the passage of intermittent daily river boats and recreational rowers
- Navigation: the more than 3 meter drop in height near the Tiber Island cuts the river off from access to the sea
- The Tiber: travels 406 km from its source upstream at Monte Fumaiolo to the Tyrrhenian Sea at Ostia

Properties of the Travertine Embankment Walls:

- The embankment walls are built of travertine from local quarries
- The tightly dressed blocks are approximately 70cm high and vary in length 100 - 120 cm
- The travertine stone is not porous but is quarried in different densities and appears to be lighter or darker
- The travertine is host to the living growth of biological fungus and lichen that combine to make a black ‘patina’ across the entire wall
- The ‘patina’ variation from light to dark of the wall is due to a combination of the amount of rain, moisture and sunlight
- When the ‘patina’ is removed by high pressure hot water cleaning, it takes 5-7 years for the biological growth to repopulate the wall
- Vegetation grows from the tight seams between the blocks, small weeds, as well as larger caper and even fig trees seeking water and light

Right Bank Friezes:

- [She Wolves: A Tribute to Rome](#), 2005, by Kristin Jones was the inaugural work on the Piazza Tevere site. Jones developed the power washing technique: called by the Roman community “La tecnica Michelangelesca di Kristin Jones.
- [Triumphs and Laments: A Project for Rome](#), 2016, by William Kentridge is the most recent ephemeral work produced under Kristin Jones’s artistic direction.

Left Bank Wall:

- Due to the fact that there is more sun on the left bank and no vehicular access, there is much graffiti and overgrowth - this side of the river is ‘the wild side’.
- Together with the ever changing layers of graffiti, one can still see the remains of [Wolf Light](#), a parade of more than 40 life-size silver she wolves created by Kristin Jones in 2009 to draw the public down to the derelict left bank. The figures were created with perforated aluminum foil backed paper, pasted with Vinavil glue onto cleaned travertine wall. Here is a [view](#) of the figures after a decade.
- There is a grand double staircase on center of the left bank where a monstrous triple high derelict barge is docked, blocking the view of the river and breaking the line of access.
- Under the Ponte Mazzini bridge there is often an encampment of homeless individuals with dogs.