

Palermo, is a node in an *expanded geography* of global movements of people, data, capital, goods, seeds and germs that are largely invisible and beyond central control. Today and historically, the region is shaped by these flows and the ensuing journeys, networks and encounters, from Sub-Saharan Africa to Scandinavia; from South East Asia to Gibraltar and America.



Veduta di Palermo. Francesco Lojacono, 1875.

In Francesco Lojacono's 1875 view of Palermo's nature, nothing is indigenous. Olive trees came from Asia, aspen from Middle East and eucalyptus from Australia. Citrus trees were introduced to Sicily under Arab sovereignty and would later become one of the symbols of the island.

Manifesta 12 will look at Palermo as a garden, and explore its capacity to compose life out of movement and migration, to empower the individual, and to nurture co-inhabitation of the diverse. Palermo Botanic Garden - one of the main venues of M12 - was founded in 1779 as a laboratory to study, test, mix and integrate foreign species.

Today, gardening can be seen as a source of new models for tending the commons. Between grass roots and masterplan, gardens are living laboratories for syncretism where nature and technology merge; where different communities participate in forms of politics and living based on encounter, rather than exclusion and dispute. As globalisation progresses, Palermo as a living laboratory, take on a new urgency as an inspiration for Europe.