

Salini - Kennedy Grove national country park | St. Paul's Bay, Burmarrad

commissioner **Ministry for Public Works and Construction, Malta**

planning period **1997**

program **park with facilities, parking lot, protection of garrigue and salinas area**

commission **design**

The design develops from four different topographic items the site features. The Salini are left untouched, but their reflection is taken up abstractly by a grid on the highest level of the site mainly characterised by soil and slopes.

The medium level rocky area is left bare as it is, with its tiny structures forming a contrast to the rest of the park that is grown with trees. The lower area close to the sea is quite flat, its saltmarsh edge grown with shrub, a moist depression covered with trees.

These existing structures are taken to create a kind of "Nature Disney" that features walk-through images of the Mediterranean landscape. On the upper park level the landscape images are created in variety and identified within the borders of a rectangular system that breaks up towards the slopes. When leaving the upper level the frame system is left behind and via the raised walkway a new scenery of nature is entered. The visitor discovers allusions to steep rocky valleys and enclosed gardens, water tracks and groves. Together with the landscape images come plants adapted to the specific conditions or helpful for painting the image. The scattered cypress do not obstruct the view but frame it. Their column shape will make the movement visible. Where there is plenty of water, quite naturally moisture-loving trees are found, as in the grove depression. Further up the hill, more pines come up, showing that the soil becomes drier. In shady places where the water comes to the surface, as it is the case at the spring within the grove, ferns and moss might grow all over. Within the little valley fruit trees are planted. A sturdy carob tree is put on display on its plateau. The grid of the palm plaza marks a meeting spot, old road trees, olive garden ...

As water is of great importance in the Mediterranean landscape, the water topic is handled in the park design in different aspects. The saltmarsh is taken into the park as the end of the freshwater-course coming from further up the valley leading to Chadwick Lakes. A retaining pond will be constructed for collecting and handing over the freshwater flow, thus forming a borderline between the salt- and the freshwater. A small watercourse is running along the retaining wall. The water comes up in an artificial spring within the grove which is supplied with constant moisture. The water coming up in the spring had disappeared into the ground in the old quarry, where it was led by a small channel supplied by the drainage of the upper level (plateaus) that leads into a reservoir. The parking lot area is well drained with the waterflow heading - partly underground - towards the sea.

