



## Successful Solutions

# The Aquatech® ASN water mist system chosen by Zaha Hadid studio to protect the 5\* luxury hotel Romeo

Interview with Arch. Mariagrazia Lanza,  
Associate of Zaha Hadid Architects

In 2024 the Hotel Romeo in Rome will open to the public, a five-star luxury hotel housed in the Palazzo Capponi on Via di Ripetta, a 16th-century masterpiece, completely renovated with an avant-garde project signed by **Zaha Hadid Architects studio**.

The hotel consists of 74 rooms and suites with an average size of 42 square metres. Some of them are entirely frescoed on the mezzanine floor and offer private terraces with breathtaking views over the rooftops of Rome.

Image 1 | Romeo Hotel - External view



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**Tema Sistemi SpA was chosen to protect the entire hotel with its Aquatech® ASN high-pressure water mist system.** The nozzles with their discreet and elegant lines were selected by the architects of Zaha Hadid's studio for their ability to combine effective and sustainable protection with an unparalleled aesthetic impact.

In the December issue of the magazine, we already talked about the challenges to be faced for fire protection of luxury environments and how to overcome the traditional perception that everything about safety cannot also be aesthetically pleasing and harmonious.





**Image 2** | Romeo Hotel – Reception

Today we have the pleasure of talking about architecture and fire safety, with a special focus on the Hotel Romeo project, with **Arch. Mariagrazia Lanza, Associate of Zaha Hadid Architects.**

**Good morning Arch. Lanza, thank you for accepting our invitation.**

**Please tell us briefly about your professional history and what it means to you to contribute to raising the profile of such an important studio as Zaha Hadid Architects.**

**A:** My education in architecture began at the University of Naples Federico II, where I had the good fortune to learn attention to detail from the prestigious professor and architect, Nicola Pagliara and to collaborate with the esteemed dean of the faculty,

Benedetto Gravagnuolo. After graduation, together with my current husband, I started a phase of research and experimentation of fluid and dynamic forms in architecture by approaching the artistic thinking of Zaha Hadid and, thanks to a bit of resourcefulness, a few months later, we realised our dream of joining her studio. At that time, the office was a place of continuous experimentation and creativity, a dynamic and innovative reality of about 90 people, where no timetables or deadlines were kept to, but only passion and the desire to give one's all. Today, times have changed, the studio has transformed into a large international company and Zaha is no longer with us, but her spirit and vision still guide us. Every day, we try to honour her legacy, demonstrating our expertise, originality and dedication in every project.

**Let's talk about the design done for the 5-star Hotel Romeo in Rome. Could you briefly describe the project and the challenges you faced during the design phase?**

**A:** The project aims to create a dialogue between past and present,



**Image 3** | Romeo Hotel - Restaurant



**Image 4** | Romeo Hotel - Courtyard

fitting into a historical context of great value consisting of three buildings pivoting around an internal garden.

The rigidity of the 16th century architectural layout of Palazzo Capponi, located in the heart of Rome, along one of the branches of the Sistine trident, meets the fluidity and dynamism of Zaha Hadid's architecture, in an effort to reinterpret traditional vaults in complex forms, with a changing appearance depending on their function. It is particularly in the common areas that the intervention is best expressed through the use of innovative materials and technologies in order to offer a high level hospitality service, ranging from wellness to the Gourmet Restaurants, fired by the world's most starred chef: Alain Ducasse. As an architect, the biggest challenge was definitely having to adapt our concept of architecture,

**Image 5** | Arch. Mariagrazia Lanza, Zaha Hadid Architects





with its curved surfaces and the continuity of material veining, to the use of natural stone, marble and wood, as well as a series of plant, historical and functional constraints with a strong impact given the small number of structural interventions allowed.

**During the development process, what were the main fire safety considerations? What kind of solutions did you consider for the active fire protection of the structure?**

**A:** For fire safety, we followed the regulations in force (UNI EN 14972), safeguarded the artistic heritage and ensured safety, while trying to minimise the aesthetic impact through the use of state-of-the-art technology, such as the ASN water mist system. Through its elegant nozzles, ASN delivers a fine, breathable mist of water, gently protecting the furniture and ensuring rapid fire extinguishing. Its validity has been verified through full-scale tests, which have confirmed the effectiveness and safety of the innovative system.

**Talking about the ASN water mist system chosen for the hotel's fire protection... could you explain why you chose this solution over others?**

**A:** The ASN water mist fire-fighting system, unlike traditional systems, has a smaller footprint, due to a smaller amount of fluid and piping, which, given the limited space available for the systems, seemed the most appropriate choice for a project, such as ours, to convert an historic building into a public environment. In addition, its innovative technology, based on the atomisation of water, allows the rooms to be saturated, minimising the possible damage caused by the water itself on our interiors in the event of a fire.

**Did you experience any challenges in the installation and integration of the ASN system within the structure? How did you deal with them? How helpful was the support of Tema Sistemi technicians in this regard?**

**A:** In general, it was not easy to integrate the systems in an

historic and artistic context bound by the Superintendence and to guarantee the safety and comfort of guests and staff. Tema Sistemi SpA helped us work out the best strategies, reconciling the aesthetic requirements of our design with the most appropriate technical solutions on the market through prompt advice, assistance and a guarantee of quality and conformity. I am very satisfied with the work we did together with them.

**To conclude. Fire protection systems, and safety-related products in general, are often seen as disruptive to the architecture and harmony of structures. Do you think that with products like ASN this concept can be considered outdated?**

**A:** The products supplied by Tema Sistemi SpA responded to our need to minimise the impact of the installation on the aesthetic appearance, harmonising with it without altering the design, such as the nozzles with their clean and discreet lines, in steel, imperceptible on marble walls or retractable on the ceiling, readily concealed by caps that can be customised in colour and finish.

Image 6 | ASN nozzles



Image 7 | ASN installation example



Image 8 | Romeo Hotel - Suite

