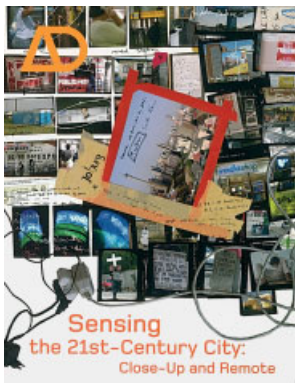
Italy

A New Architectural Landscape



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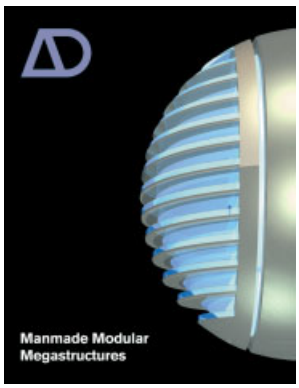

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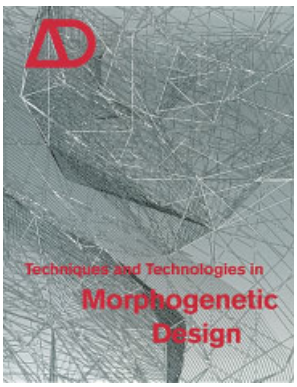

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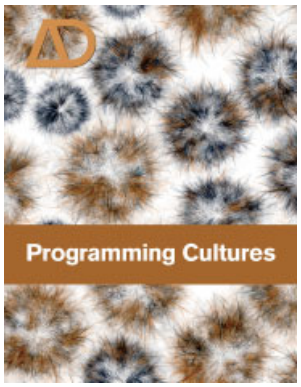

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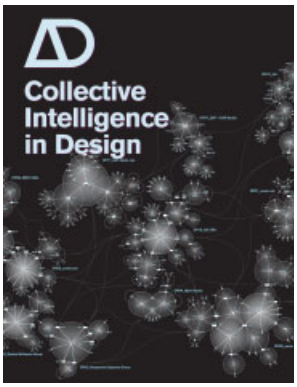

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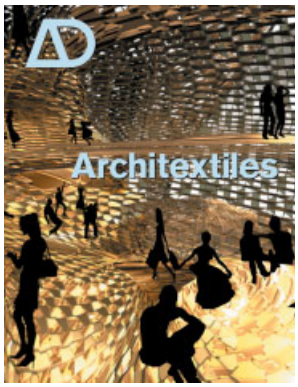

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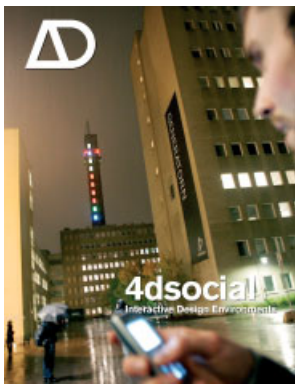


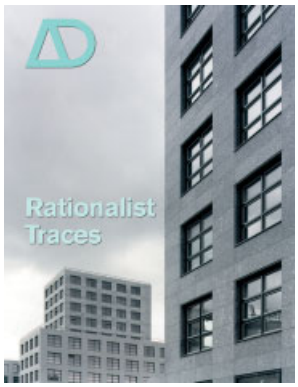
July/August 2007, Profile No 188

4dsocial: Interactive Design Environments

Guest-edited by Lucy Bullivant

A new breed of social interactive design is taking root that overturns the traditional approach to artistic experience. Architects and designers are responding to cues from forward-thinking patrons of architecture and design for real-time interactive projects, and are creating schemes at very different scales and in many different guises. They range from the monumental – installations that dominate public squares or are stretched over a building's facade – to wearable computing. All, though, share in common the ability to draw in users to become active participants and co-creators of content, so that the audience becomes part of the project.

4dsocial: Interactive Design Environments investigates further the paradoxes that arise when a new form of 'socialisation' is gained through this new responsive media at a time when social meanings are in flux. While many works critique the narrow public uses of computing to control people and data, and raise questions about public versus private space in urban contexts, how do they succeed in not just getting enough people to participate, but in creating the right ingredients for effective design?

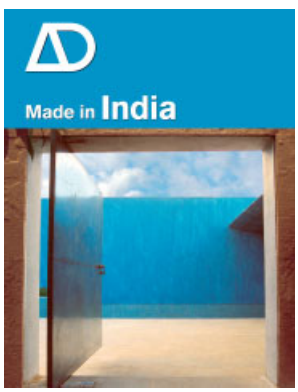


September/October 2007, Profile No 189

Rationalist Traces

Guest-edited by Andrew Peckham, Charles Rattray and Torsten Schmiedenecht

Modern European architecture has been characterised by a strong undercurrent of rationalist thought. *Rationalist Traces* aims to examine this legacy by establishing a cross-section of contemporary European architecture, placed in selected national contexts by critics including Akos Moravanszky and Josep Maria Montaner. Subsequent interviews discuss the theoretical contributions of Giorgio Grassi and OM Ungers, and a survey of Max Dudler and De Architekten Cie's work sets out a consistency at once removed from avant-garde spectacle or everyday expediency. Gesine Weinmiller's work in Germany (among others) offers a considered representation of state institutions, while elsewhere outstanding work reveals different approaches to rationality in architecture often recalling canonical Modernism or the 'Rational Architecture' of the later postwar period. Whether evident in patterns of thinking, a particular formal repertoire, a prevailing consistency, or exemplified in individual buildings, this relationship informs the mature work of Berger, Claus en Kaan, Ferrater, Zuchi or Kollhoff. The buildings and projects of a younger generation – Garcia-Solera, GWJ, BIQ, Bassi or Servino – present a rationalism less conditioned by a concern to promote a unifying aesthetic. While often sharing a deliberate economy of means, or a sensual sobriety, they present a more oblique or distanced relationship with the defining work of the 20th century.



November/December 2007 Profile 190

Made in India

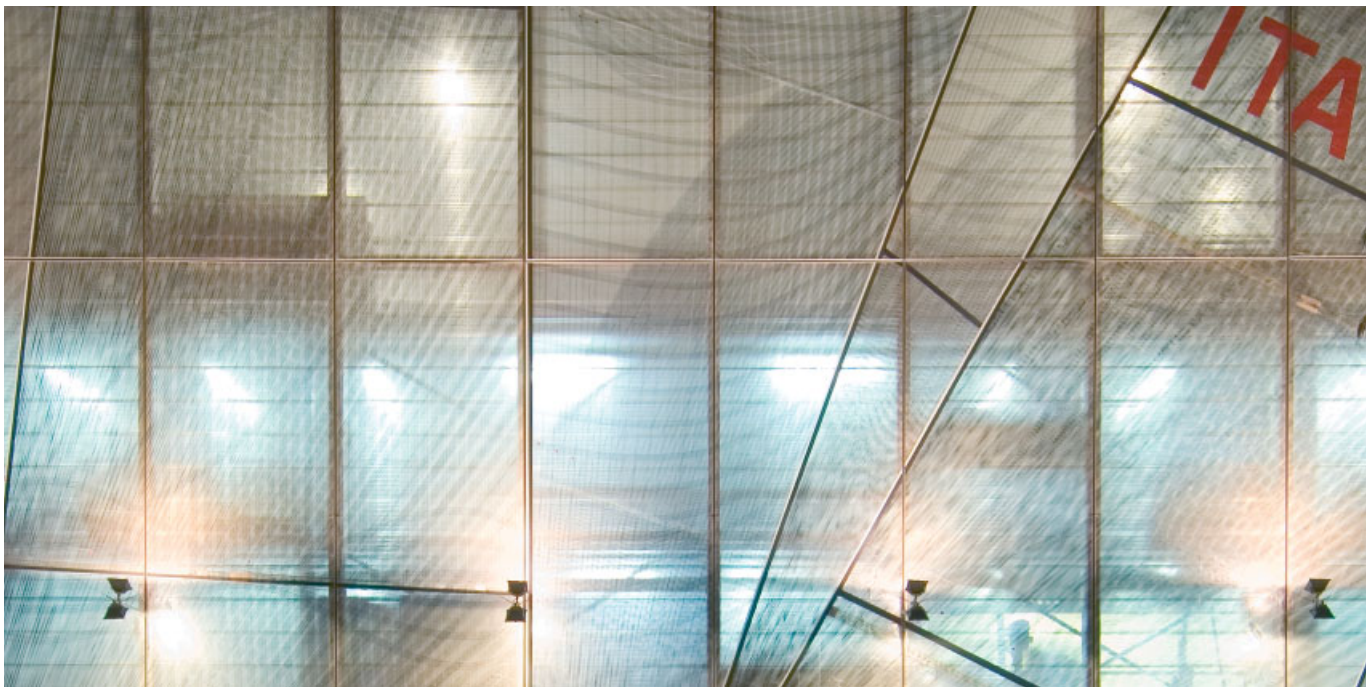
Guest-edited by Kazi K Ashraf

The Indian subcontinent is undergoing an exuberant cultural and social shift. So far-reaching are the changes underway that, alongside China, India is set to reorder the international status quo. Triggered by new economic policies, global media and technology, accelerated consumerism and a transnational dynamic, India is entering a decisive moment. Yet, as the political writer Sunil Khilnani notes, the world's sense of India, of what it stands for and what it wishes to become, seems as confused and divided today as is India's own sense of itself. India's strongest characteristic is its extraordinary diversity – no other country in the world embraces so many ethnic groups and languages, nor simultaneously advocates radical changes while also remaining entrenched in its ancient traditions and practices. This issue of *AD* presents a sense of that ongoing dynamic through a new and emerging architecture. Essays by Sunil Khilnani, Gautam Bhatia, Prem Chandavarkar, Anuradha Mathur and others chart the cultural, urban and architectural landscape of the emerging India. The new architecture will be presented through the works of Bijoy Jain, Rahul Mehrotra, Rajeev Kathpalia, Matharoo Associates, Samira Rathod, Kapil Gupta/Chris Lee and Mathew-Ghosh, as well as Tod Williams and Bille Tsien, Kerry Hill, Michael Sorkin and others.

Architectural Design
May/June 2007

Italy: A New Architectural Landscape

Guest-edited by
Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi



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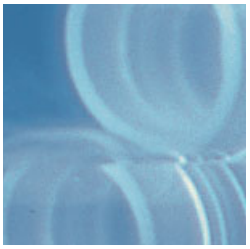

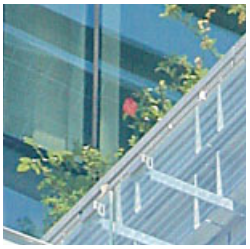

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Editorial

'Why Italy now?' might well be your immediate response to this issue of *AD*. Given even the most peremptory flick through, though, all your prejudices should be dissipated. Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi has put together a publication that is entirely compelling in its content. It delivers a portrait of a country that is currently unmatchable in terms of the architectural spectrum it offers. Who could be more different than its three leading figures: Renzo Piano, Massimiliano Fuksas and Antonio Citterio? It is a culture that is redolent of sophisticated elegance, as demonstrated by the polished work of Citterio in Milan or the perfected precision of Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo's interior spaces in Sicily, while simultaneously being one that seems to thrive on debate and even adversity, and is characterised in these pages by its polarity and an emerging generation of *radicali*. The protagonists of the Italian architectural scene all provide a definiteness of purpose, contributing their own unique visions. Within a few pages, the serious contextual thought of Stefano Boeri's architectural projects are juxtaposed with the *joie de vivre* of Italo Rota's colourful spaces and the dramatic glacial fins of Mario Cucinella's Sino Italian Ecological and Energy Efficient Building (SIEEB) in Beijing.

What is apparent from this title of *AD* is that Italy can offer the rest of the world more than just good-quality design, which it rightly has a reputation for. As an architectural culture, it has never lost its critical edge or its understanding that as a profession that shapes the built environment it should be held to account by its peers (as demonstrated by its prolific architectural media). In a globalised, consumer-led world where image and getting the job can be everything and the editorial content of leading magazines is heavily influenced by the products that are advertised within their pages, Italy provides an important counterpoint. Architecture is passionately discussed, and fought over, even to a debilitating extent within recent years, but it is not taken lightly as a new intervention in the natural landscape or historic context.

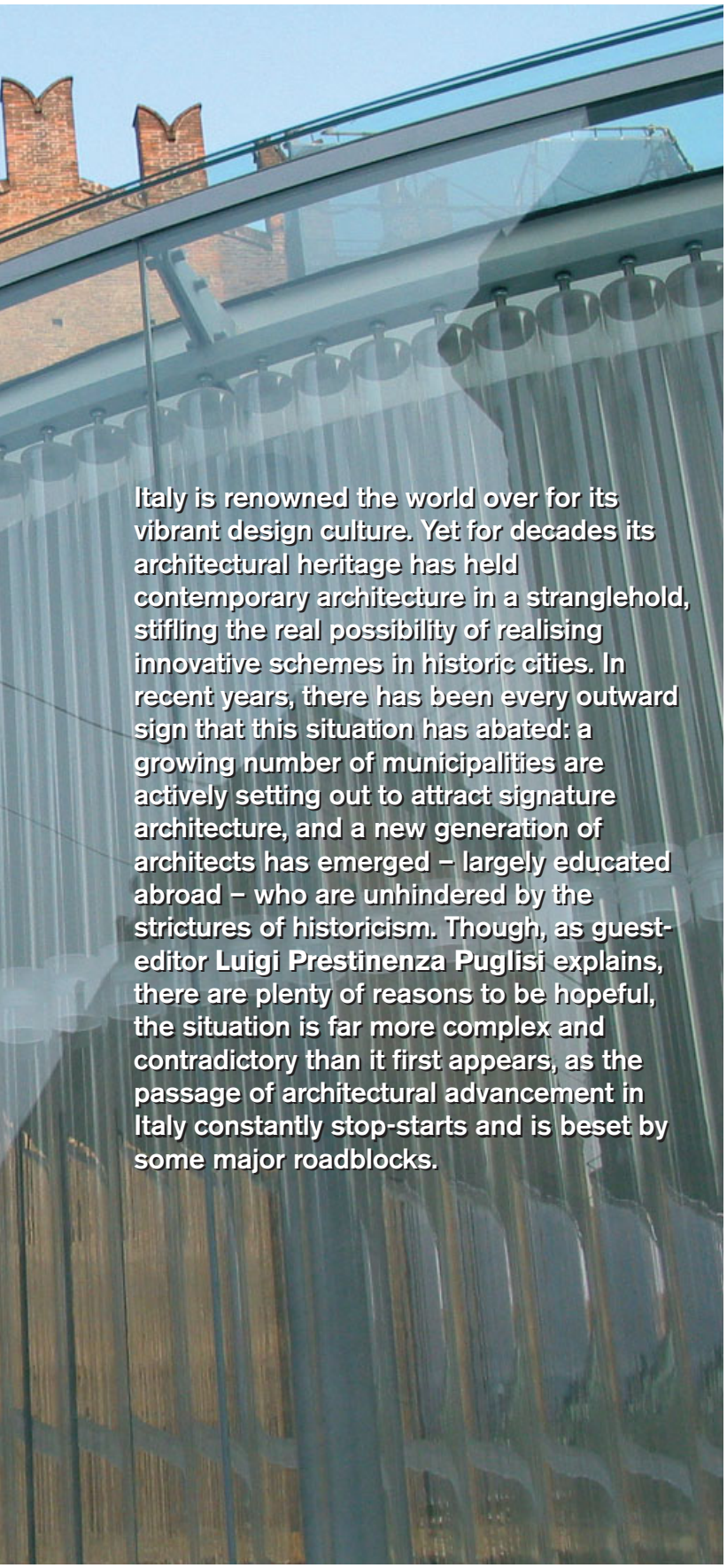
Italy is home to two of the most prestigious events in the international architecture and design calendar – the Venice Architecture Biennale and the Milan Furniture Fair. In this capacity it has done more than its fair share as a good host, deflecting attention back on its star-struck guests from abroad. What this volume does is put the emphasis squarely back on Italian architects and their work. It has a beguilingly simple structure, organising the architects according to generation and then providing further critical perspectives at the back of the issue. This clarity of form should not be mistaken as oversimplification in itself. It is a means of giving expression to what is often a complex situation, described with such insight by Prestinenza himself in his introduction. AD

Helen Castle

Dante O Benini & Partners Architects, New Torno Internazionale Headquarters, Milan, 2003
Benini & Partners' new building in Milan is emblematic of a new wave of Italian architecture that is set to change the existing urban fabric. In Milan, the likes of Renzo Piano, Massimiliano Fuksas, Mario Cucinella, Norman Foster, Zaha Hadid, Daniel Libeskind and Arata Isozaki are engaged on sizable public and private projects. The same process of renewal is also under way in Rome, Turin, Naples and Genoa. A younger generation of architects is also benefiting from the positive impact of this new cultural climate, where local municipalities are proving more receptive to commissioning innovative new buildings.

‘Complexity and Contradiction’

The Italian Architectural Landscape



Italy is renowned the world over for its vibrant design culture. Yet for decades its architectural heritage has held contemporary architecture in a stranglehold, stifling the real possibility of realising innovative schemes in historic cities. In recent years, there has been every outward sign that this situation has abated: a growing number of municipalities are actively setting out to attract signature architecture, and a new generation of architects has emerged – largely educated abroad – who are unhindered by the strictures of historicism. Though, as guest-editor Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi explains, there are plenty of reasons to be hopeful, the situation is far more complex and contradictory than it first appears, as the passage of architectural advancement in Italy constantly stop-starts and is beset by some major roadblocks.

Is it possible to speak of a new Italian architecture? If the answer is yes, is it sufficiently valorised by architectural critics, the mass media, the universities and public opinion? Answering these two questions is not that simple, as the following five episodes from the recent history of Italian architecture will demonstrate.

Episode One

In 2006, the mayor of Bologna, Sergio Cofferati, one of the great exponents of the Italian left, decided to remove the Gocce (Teardrops), a display pavilion designed by Mario Cucinella and commissioned by the previous municipal government to host the city's Infobox.[1] The Gocce are actually two oval pavilions made from transparent methacrylate tubes. With a pleasantly modern appearance, the structures were designed to cover a former underpass that once lay in a disastrous state of abandonment and decay and which, after completion of the project, was used to present video installations and information panels related to the urban renewal programmes then being promoted by the municipal government.

Installed in July 2003, the Gocce quickly became the subject of a violent media campaign: the pavilions were accused of ruining the purity of the architectural lines of the historic centre and disturbing, as a result of their 4-metre (13-foot) height and 15-metre (49-foot) diameter, the view of the Palazzo de Enzo, a medieval building that was restored based on a rather inventive reconstruction. Cucinella's Gocce were supported by only a few architectural critics who highlighted the contradiction that the decision to remove the project was made by a supposedly progressive government, and the undeniable fact that, prior to the project, the underpass was one of the city's most embarrassing spaces.

Episode Two

The recent international film festival held in Rome was also a celebration of the success of the Auditorium Parco della Musica designed by Renzo Piano and completed in December 2002, eight years after the competition jury's decision to award him the project. Notwithstanding the fact that it is not one of the Genoese architect's best works, the auditorium quickly became a point of reference in the city, making it easier to forget the immense problems that plagued its construction. The problems included the extension, beyond any reasonable time frame, of the period of construction, escalating costs, the legal battle with the builder, the 'stop work' order issued by the archaeological superintendent's office after the remains of a Roman villa were uncovered, and the threat of a shutdown by the Ministry of Public Works because Piano wanted to use laminated wood – a technology that was judged inadequate for the construction of a public project.

Mario Cucinella Architects, Le Gocce, Bologna, 2003
The Gocce were dismantled because conservatives considered their modern form to be a disturbing element in Bologna's historic centre.

Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Auditorium Parco della Musica, Rome, 2002
Since its completion, Piano's Roman auditorium has become one of the most frequently visited of the city's landmarks.

Episode Three

Massimiliano Fuksas completed the imposing complex of the New Milan Trade Fair in record time (approximately two years), inaugurating the project in March 2005. Located in the area known as Rho-Pero, in close proximity to Milan, and with a gross floor area of 530,000 square metres (5.7 million square feet) on a site covering more than 2 million square metres (21.53 million square feet), the Trade Fair is an imposing work of contemporary architecture characterised by a central circulation corridor covered by a somewhat blob-like glass canopy. Critical, public and media opinions were unanimous: it is considered to be one of the most significant buildings of recent years. The following year, Fuksas, by now a fully fledged member of the architectural 'star system', received the important InArch-Ance (Istituto Nazionale di Architettura e Associazione Nazionale Costruttori Edili) prize for his Ferrari building in Maranello. The award was presented by a somewhat embarrassed Vittorio Gregotti, an exponent of the traditionalist movement and long-time adversary of Fuksas.

Episode Four

Stefano Boeri took over as the new director of *Domus* magazine in January 2004. Boeri had worked with Rem Koolhaas on the 'Mutations' exhibition,[2] and has always sided with the most avant-garde research. The previous director, Dejan Sudjic, had produced a good magazine, though excessively weighted down by the star system. Under its new director, *Domus* returned to dealing with social issues, the rediscovery of architects who had been long forgotten, such as Giancarlo de Carlo and Ettore Sottsas, and the promotion of the work of promising young architects. However, after only the first few issues readers began to voice their

Richard Meier, Ara Pacis Museum, Rome, 2006
Meier's project in Rome has been strongly criticised both for its location in the historic centre as well as for its foreign superstar signature.

objections. The magazine became lost in discussion and provided only a few completed works. As a result the owners decided to remove Boeri from his position (there were rumours that the real reason was a drop in profits from sales and publicity, however, there are no official data and Boeri firmly denies such claims). His term ended in March, after three years.

The other historic Italian magazine, *Casabella*, is in a similar problematic situation. Many believe that the magazine sells ever fewer copies and that the traditionalist direction of Francesco Dal Co is leading it towards the precipice. In order to draw back its readers, Dal Co decided to publish, with growing frequency, architects who only recently had been looked upon with great suspicion: for example, Zaha Hadid, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Thom Mayne and Koolhaas. But the restyling of the magazine's contents was not convincing enough, and the only magazines that are currently enjoying an increasing readership are *Area*, a thematic and culturally eclectic bimonthly directed by Marco Casamonti that is, however, sensitive to new currents, and *The Plan*, a quarterly magazine that focuses on quality projects and publishes numerous construction details.

Episode Five

In June 2005, the group known as 5+1, in partnership with Rudy Ricciotti, won the competition for the new Palazzo del Cinema, organised by the Venice Biennale. Of all cities, Venice is the most difficult for architects. This costly discovery was made by Frank Lloyd Wright, who was not permitted to build one of his most beautiful buildings on the Canal Grande, and Le Corbusier, whose project for a hospital was rejected. The project by 5+1 and Ricciotti is largely below ground, in order to avoid any vetoes and objections. However, to date there has been no forward movement and many are beginning to ask whether this project will go the same way as another dead letter: the reconstruction of the Italian Pavilion in the Biennale Gardens that was awarded some 20 years ago to a young Francesco Cellini.

Let us now return to the question at hand: is contemporary architecture appreciated in Italy today? The answer, as we have seen, is not an easy one. On the one hand a growing number of cities are investing in contemporary architecture, partly because they have discovered that a shrewd building

5+1 and Rudy Ricciotti, New Palazzo del Cinema and adjacent areas, Venice, 2006
The winner of an international design competition, and notwithstanding its delicate contextual strategy, the project by 5+1 and Rudy Ricciotti is still a 'maybe' and there are no guarantees that it will be built.

Doriana and Massimiliano Fuksas Architetti, Ferrari Research Centre, Maranello, Emilia-Romagna, 2003
Fuksas' building for Ferrari has won numerous architectural awards, including the ANCA-INArch prize.

Nemesi Studio, Santa Maria della Presentazione, Quartaccio, Rome, 2003
In recent years the Catholic Church has built numerous interesting works of architecture. This project is undoubtedly one of the best.

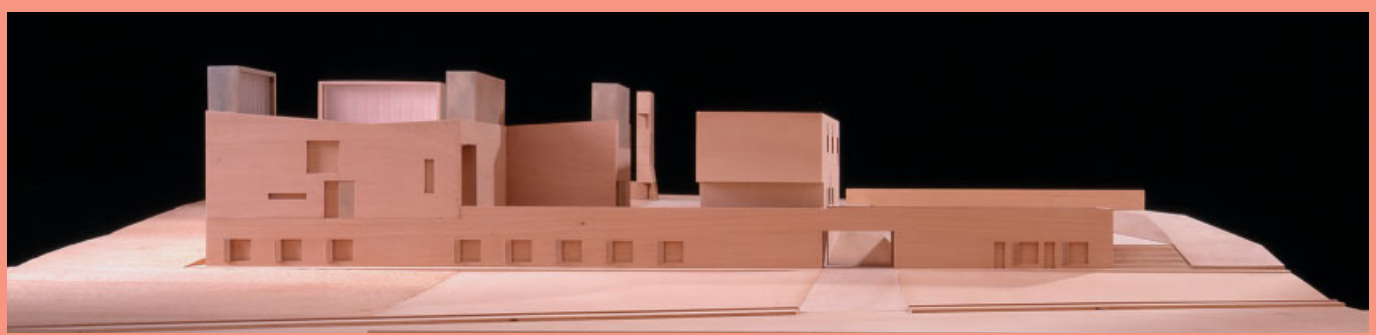
policy, supported for the most part by a largely conservative architectural culture (in Italy the figure of Aldo Rossi is still, for many, an object of veneration) acts as an obstacle to more courageous projects. This, of course, without mentioning the numerous roadblocks that hinder the completion of more courageous buildings raised by various levels of bureaucracy and one of the worst legislatures in all of Europe. Two of the most important works for the city of Rome are emblematic: the new congress centre by Fuksas and the MAXXI Museum by Hadid. The first is still in the design stages, while the second is under construction, though with significant delays and a constant problem of guaranteeing the financial resources necessary for its completion. There is also the Ara Pacis Museum designed by Richard Meier, which was only completed in 2006 following lengthy delays and heated debates (many in Rome are quick to note that the fastest and least criticised builder of contemporary architecture is a foreign state, the Vatican, with its intense programme of new churches, many of which have been entrusted to the best Italian and foreign architects currently in circulation).

Sartogo Architetti Associati, Sacro Volto di Gesù Church, Rome, 2006
Sartogo's office completed this church on the Roman periphery based on the symbolic values of the sphere. It is decorated with numerous works of art by contemporary artists.

Within such a complex and contradictory, though evolving, panorama, we are witnessing the birth of a new generation of architects, baptised the Erasmus generation, underlining the fact that many of them have studied abroad, far from the oppressive environment of the Italian universities that is still dominated by unchallenged figures from the old guard who, in turn, were educated in the more intellectual and traditionalist version of Postmodernism, the so-called Tendenza. (In the end they are simply the heirs to the neo-historicist approach that, already in 1959, had been stigmatised by Reyner Banham in his famous article entitled 'Neoliberty: the Italian retreat from Modern Architecture').[3]

It was during the second half of the 1990s that the Erasmus generation started to come to the fore, stimulated by a period in which masterpieces were being built around the globe, except in Italy. For example, in 1996 Koolhaas was working on Euralille, in 1997 Frank Gehry inaugurated the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, in 1998 Jean Nouvel completed his cultural centre in Lucerne, and in 1999 Daniel Libeskind opened his Jewish Museum in Berlin. The young architects, who had studied at the Architectural Association, the Berlage, Columbia and other foreign universities, were primarily responsible for the success – with sales of approximately 10,000 copies – of monographs on Hadid, Koolhaas, Gehry, Peter Eisenman and Libeskind published as part of the handy and inexpensive Universale di architettura series relaunched, with incredible timeliness, by Bruno Zevi. Zevi saw the Deconstructivist movement as a means to reaffirm his cultural leadership and to move beyond the ostracism forced upon him by an antiquated and rigorist culture that, at least in 1978, had relegated him to the margins of Italian debate.

In July 1997 the first issue of the magazine *Il Progetto* was published. The editing team was composed of, among others, Maurizio Bradaschia, Livio Sacchi, Antonino Saggio, Maurizio Unali and myself. The decision was made to put Peter Eisenman on the cover because, at the time, he was in a very creative period. The issue was distributed at the conference entitled 'Paesaggistica e linguaggio grado zero dell'architettura' (Landscape and the Zero Degree of Architectural Language) organised by Zevi in Modena in



Garofalo Miura Architetti, Santa Maria delle Grazie Church and Parish Centre, Rome, 2006
This project, by Francesco Garofalo and Sharon Yoshie Miura, while unmistakably contemporary, is more attentive to its environmental context than that by Nemesi.

Benedetto Camerana and Hugh Dutton Associés, Olympic Village Bridge, Turin, 2006
Camerana is also a member of the '40-year-old' Erasmus generation. He is the author of many works of architecture completed for the Winter Olympics in Turin and, with Dutton, the design of this elegant bridge.

September 1997. It was an event that must be read as the relaunching of justifications for experimentation in Italy, both because it represented an opening towards environmental issues and because it declared the end of research focused exclusively on the typical language of the 1980s. After much discussion, in the second issue, published in January 1998, the editors decided to place Massimiliano Fuksas on the cover. At the time Fuksas was not so well known, largely as a result of his ostracism by academic culture.

It was precisely during these years that a new critical movement was born, mainly outside of the universities. This was no doubt greatly assisted by the catalyst of the Universale di architettura books and the use of websites, one of the most frequently visited being Arch'it, created in March 1995 and directed by Macro Brizzi.

In 1998, *HyperArchitettura* was published as part of a new series by the Universale emblematically entitled La Rivoluzione Informatica (The Information Revolution). Coordinated by Antonino Saggio (the series, which now boasts more than 40 titles, translated in numerous languages, is still active), this was the beginning of the definition of an attitude that saw the digital revolution as the modern instrument for confronting a reality that was in continuous transformation: even at the cost of the blob and complex geometries that could only be dominated by the computer and Boolean algebra (the state-of-the-art was defined in 2003 in the book *Architettura e cultura digitale*, edited by Livio Sacchi and Maurizio Unali).[4] The break with the past became ever more defined. The presumed continuity with Italian tradition – relaunched by conservative architects in disturbing conventions about the theme of the identity of Italian architecture – was contrasted by the discontinuity of avant-garde research. Instead of the autonomy of self-referential language, which exhausted itself in the themes of

Studio Zoppini Associati/HOK, Oval Speed Skating Arena, Turin, 2006
Designed for the Turin Winter Olympics, the Oval is the work of a '40-year-old' architect from Turin. Zoppini's experience abroad and in Piano's office makes him typically representative of the Erasmus generation.

C+C04STUDIO, Residential building, Cagliari, Sardinia, 2005
Architects Pier Cerchi and Mario Cubeddu are part of the second generation of new architects because, other than having studied abroad, they also worked with Nemesi, an office of architects from the Erasmus generation. This building, located on the outskirts of Cagliari, consists of four flats. There is a calculated balance between the compact shape of the building and the transparencies of the common distribution spaces (hall, stairs, landings) that can be seen from the street through the metallic grid.

beautiful compositions, there was a preference for heteronomy, dirtying one's hands with the surrounding context and its technological results.

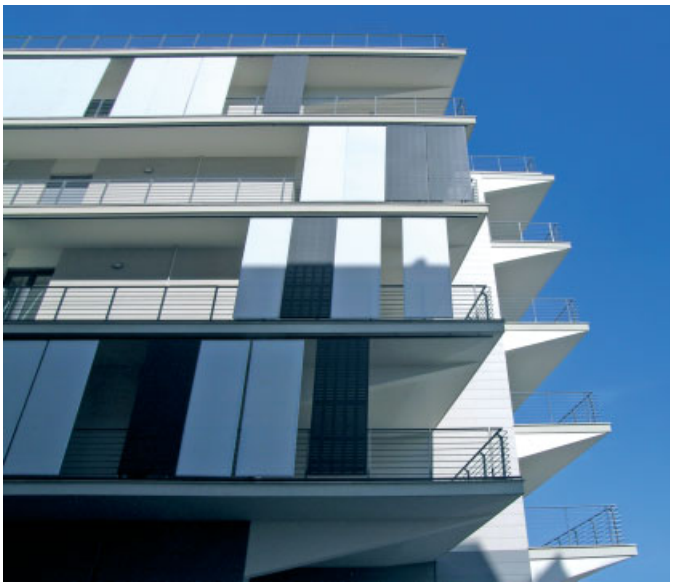
There was also a revision of historical opinions, but above all re-evaluation dealt with the radical movements of the 1970s and 1980s and the creative architects that the preceding Tafurian historiographic approach (Manfredo Tafuri, Giorgio Ciucci, Francesco Dal Co and the Venetian School in general) had in fact cancelled, from Leonardo Ricci to Vittorio Giorgini and Luigi Pellegrin to Maurizio Sacripanti, without forgetting other, less ostracised protagonists who were now looked at under a different light: Franco Albini, Luigi Moretti, Carlo Mollino and Giovanni Michelucci.

We should also mention here the innovative role of *Domus*, which in February 1996 came under the direction of François Burkhardt, who was known for his attention to innovation, and at the end of the century published a number of issues dedicated to the relationship between new technologies and architectural forms.

The definitive victory of the innovative and experimental front was marked by the 7th International Architectural Exhibition in Venice in 2000, directed by Fuksas who, with the captivating title 'Less Aesthetics, More Ethics' celebrated the attraction of projects that dealt with the aesthetics of chaos and complexity. Figures like Fuksas and Piano who had been kept at the margins since the first half of the 1990s in Italy (imagine – and this is a very unique and rare situation in Italian tradition – that these two architects, even while so well known abroad, have no university teaching position and, at the time, had completed no important works on national soil) began to boast a growing notoriety among students and the mass media.

At a certain point, however, the innovative wave began to slow down. This was confirmed by the change in direction at *Domus*, which in September 2000 came under the direction of Dejan Sudjic, who transformed this important publication into a beautiful, glossy magazine. One date that symbolically marks a moment of reconsideration for the experimental movement coincides with the destruction of the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001. The star system that had been consolidated during the 1990s seemed, each day, to rotate around a void, returning to a globalising model about which a large number of people began to raise some doubts (a model that, to be precise, emerges in all of its weakness in the very

Antonio Ravalli Architetti, House R, Ferrara, Emilia-Romagna, 2005
Ravalli is one of the most interesting of the '40-year-old' architects. This extension presented a particular challenge as building codes restricted the space available, and also dictated the use of bricks to retain the ancient characteristics of the area. However, Ravalli instead opted for coloured concrete, creating a contemporary yet contextual-looking building with thin walls and thus more space inside.



Alvisi Kirimoto + Partners, Residential building, Trani, Apulia, 2005
After learning the ropes in Piano's office, Massimo Alvisi formed a partnership with Junko Kirimoto. The office is currently completing very interesting buildings such as this one in southern Italy.

GAP Architetti Associati, O Espaço dos Sonhos multifunctional community centre, Rio Pequeno, São Paulo, Brazil, 2005
A growing number of Italian offices are seeking to broaden their horizons by working abroad. This community centre in Brazil is one of the most successful examples and demonstrates that, if Italian architects give up their historicist and academic approach, it is possible for them to produce, with a very low budget, buildings that are colourfully pleasant and appreciated by their users.

RicciSpaini, Interaction Design Institute Ivrea and Cliostraat, Project for an open-air museum, Cosenza, Calabria, 2005
This open-air museum is the result of a collaboration between an office from the middle generation (Ricci and Spaini) and two groups of younger and more experimental architects (Interaction and Cliostraat).

projects designed for Ground Zero in New York). Even the younger generation of Italian architects has begun to sense that something has changed, that a cycle has come to an end. What is more, a period of expansive architectural research generally seems to be being followed by a period of reflection and reorganisation – and the crisis of the star system could be the opportunity to move on to other experiments, for example the delicate themes of the landscape, environmental and energy consciousness and the low-tech. In the meantime, many projects have been completed, some of which are presented in this issue, resulting in a profound renewal of the Italian architectural panorama.

What will be the next steps? What will happen in the near future? It is difficult to answer these questions, largely because critics are no more privy to what is to come than others. What is certain is that it will be difficult to turn back. A new conceptual landscape has been created, and this is precisely what this issue of *AD*, dedicated to the Italian situation, has attempted to define. The presentation is divided into three sections. The first contains only three architects who, at present, are among the most well known and represent models of reference for many of their colleagues: Piano for his humanising use of technology, Fuksas for the energy of his designs, and Antonio Citterio for the elegance that results from his lengthy experience as a designer. The second section features five architects from the 'in-between' generation, characterised by their ability to define original approaches to research: Boeri for his attention to architecture as a means of resuscitating events, Cucinella for the ecological dimension of his work, ABDR for their attention to complexity, Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo for her ability to poetically reinvent themes tied to context, and Italo Rota for his Duchamp-like and post-Pop approach. The third section is dedicated to the younger generation of architects (in Italy an architect is young even after he or she turns 40) who show great promise for the future. And there are many – a sign that the situation is promising, and reason to nurture a degree of optimism about the future. AD

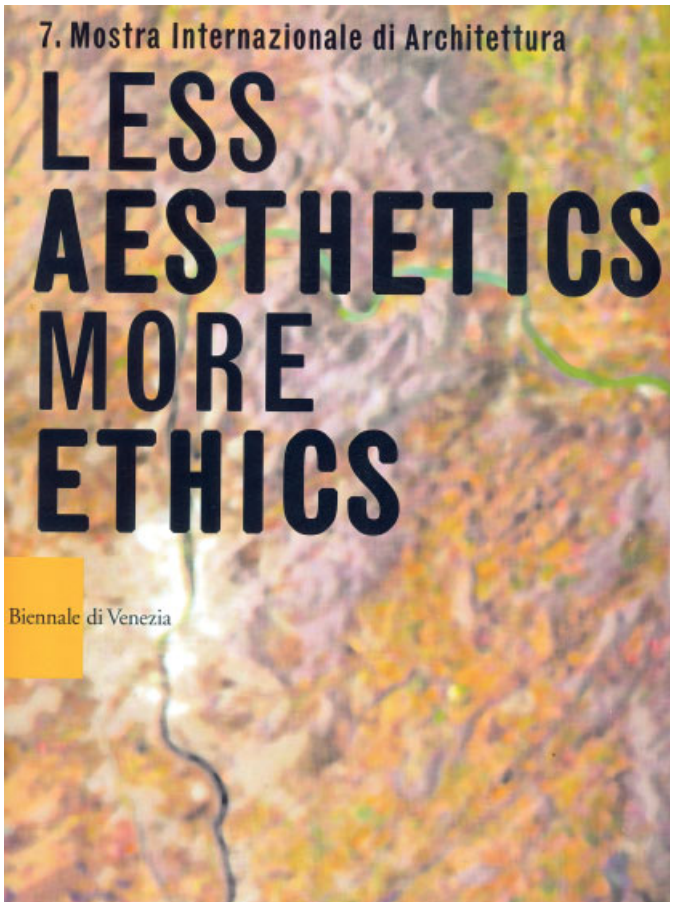
Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

Notes

1. Where members of the public can ask questions about the development of the city, and where exhibitions dealing with such projects are held.
2. Rem Koolhaas, Sanford Kwinter and Stefano Boeri, 'Mutations', Musee Arc En Rêve, Bordeaux, France and TN Probe gallery, Tokyo, Japan, 2002. 'For the exhibition Mutations (designed by Jean Nouvel) the Arc en Rêve architecture centre in Bordeaux, France, allowed a group of architects, photographers, film-makers and critics to record the current state of urbanism. Curators Rem Koolhaas, Stefano Boeri and Sanford Kwinter assembled a huge collection of images, sounds and data for the exhibition covering some 2,500 square metres. Accordingly, the exhibition can only be interpreted as a compilation of samples. Among the issues highlighted are the explosion of the Asian City, the strength of the African anti-city, the indifference of the American City, and the dynamism of occupation by small groups in the European City.' See http://www.classic.archined.nl/news/0102/mutations_e.html).
3. Reyner Banham, 'Neoliberty: The Italian Retreat from Modern Architecture', *Architectural Review*, No 125 , April 1959.
4. Livio Sacchi and Maurizio Unali (eds), *Architettura e cultura digitale*, Skira (Milan), 2003.

Between Pragmatism and Theory

For the last three decades, Italian architecture has been characterised by an extreme polarisation. At one end of the spectrum have been the neo-conservators, who are subsumed by Italy's history, and at the other end the avant-garde for whom innovation is the Holy Grail and the present is a clean slate. Francesco Proto outlines the current potential for steering a middle course that will afford a greater eclecticism, enabling a natural balance between pragmatism and theory.



Cover of *Less Aesthetics – More Ethics*, the catalogue of the 7th Mostra internazionale di Architettura, Venice, 2000
With the 'Less Aesthetics – More Ethics' Venice Biennale, Massimiliano Fuksas launched a completely different approach to architecture. The move was represented by a different way of sensing architecture, more in tune with contemporary artistic vanguards and their need to describe reality other than being simply reassuring or pleasant. Fuksas' Biennale therefore ratified a kind of architecture whose aethestic making is never disjuncted by the contamination and superimposition of a number of mediums and issues such as those brought to the fore by globalisation.

The Return of the Repressed

Something significant remains as yet unresolved in the recent history of Italian architecture. It is the mainstream's rejection of the tabula rasa proposed by the vanguard. Though this rejection lies behind Italy's lack of exposure on the international scene, it is also identified by some critics as the very essence and strength of the 'Italian paradigm'. Characterised by a series of fractures, caesuras and discontinuities from the recent past, it marks both theory and practice inasmuch as it has not yet been filled, hailed or overlapped.

Modernism, Postmodernism and Beyond

If, for example, in the first half of the 20th century Italian architecture was affected by the country's delayed industrialisation, a lack of national identity and the richness of a past artistic grandeur that was difficult – if not impossible – to overcome, the second half was instead typified by the iconoclastic rejection of Modernist tradition (1950s), an increasing but misleading interest in megastructures (1960s) solely interrupted by the experience of the 'Radicals[1] and, finally – as a consequence of the student rebellion – by the professors' withdrawal from practice in response to the 'suspicious' role of politics in architecture (1970s).

This situation is made all the more ambiguous and difficult to grasp if one takes into consideration the very fact that, while the posthumous acceptance of Modernist principles after the First World War was turned into such a positive feature by the former generations as to propel Italian Rationalism to unrivalled success, these same achievements were rejected at the beginning of the Second World War as unacceptably obsolete, demagogic or ideological.

In this respect, the birth of Postmodernism – later sanctioned by Portoghesi's *Strada Novissima* at the Venice Biennale in 1980 – only exacerbated a cultural climate dominated by Bruno Zevi's urgent need for innovation and Aldo Rossi's taste for symbolic historicism. The radical contraposition between Organicists and Rationalists, which inexorably immobilised the country's creative energies for the

Cover of Bruno Zevi, *Storia dell'architettura Moderna*, 1996 (first edition 1950)
Bruno Zevi is one of the most eminent theorists of Italian Rationalism. After graduating from Harvard with Walter Gropius, he established the Association for Organic Architecture (APAO), as well as the monthly magazine *Architecture - Chronicles and History* in 1955. His sensational withdrawal from academic teaching in 1979 was his way of denouncing the cultural degradation and excessive bureaucratisation of Italian architectural culture.

next decade, was emphasised by the emergence of a polarised critique of Modernism whose mouthpieces – Vittorio Gregotti and Francesco Dal Co – are both the heirs of high-cultured bourgeois understanding.

Winds of Change

In a suffocating atmosphere of sclerotic motionlessness, a breath of fresh air in 1996 was the advent of a brand-new generation of practitioners and scholars unwilling to accept the sterile polemics addressing the rise of the international 'star system' and ready, instead, to challenge and share the excitement and duties issued by global phenomena.

The so-called Erasmus generation – who escaped the short circuit of Italian academism via worldwide student exchange, as well as the diffusion of international magazines and paperback editions open to the unexplored topics of digital revolution – challenges the solipsism of a distorted interpretation of 'Italian tradition' in the name of a renewed interest in experimentation, creativity and research exemplified by the 'Less Aesthetics – More Ethics' Venice Biennale held in 2000 and curated by 'superstar' Massimiliano Fuksas.

The Novelty of Tradition/The Tradition of Novelty

Despite a stasis pinpointed and aggravated by the World Trade Center disaster in 2001, the current conflict between neo-conservators and vanguards is mediated by Franco Purini who, at the latest Biennale (2006), solicited the upsurge of an 'up-to-date eclecticism' by labelling the utopia of the foundation city of VEMA (VErona-MAntova).[2] The result – the 'ground zero' of Italian Urbanism – transforms the presuppositions of a telecommunicative society into the anachronistic rhetoric of the orthogonal grid.

If a crisis must be detected in contemporary Italian architecture, this crisis must therefore be acknowledged first as an unprecedented will to face 'modernity' as a concept never taken for granted, the latter being exemplified by the acceptance of the complexity of a peculiar artistic and technical heritage to be understood as a means of innovation rather than reactionary conservatism.

Marked by an innate instinct for form and proportion, and a genuine interest in urban environments as the living condition of social expressions, 'Made in Italy' architecture testifies to a constant equilibrium between the designer and his or her creation, a horizontal exchange which, in subverting any prefixed code or rule, stands in favour of the aware and, for this very reason, seductive balance between subject and object.

This, in the hope that a better contiguity between educational training and professional career, as well as a stronger corporate identity, may guarantee the talented – both those *in fieri* and those yet to come – a higher degree of professional dignity. AD

Notes

1. See the rise of Italian Radical design at the end of the 1960s, later celebrated in 'The New Domestic Landscape' exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1972, the Situationist-inspired spread of inflatable (architectural and urban) events and the irreverent work of architectural groups such as Archizoom and Superstudio, which challenged, echoed and brought to extremes the idea of happening in architecture first explored by Archigram in the UK and American 'Diagonalism' during the 1950s.
2. A utopian city halfway between Verona and Mantova, VEMA was recently exhibited in the Italian Pavilion at the 10th Venice Biennale di Architettura in 2006. At the crossing of the railway corridors ideally connecting Lisbon with Kiev, and Berlin with Palermo, VEMA synthesises and proposes a hypothesis of Italian architecture in 20 years time (2026) corresponding with the centennial of the debut of Gruppo 7 and the birth of the Modern movement in Italy. Both the city plan and model – an area of 2,260 x 3,700 metres (7,415 x 12,140 feet) for approximately 30,000 inhabitants and also incorporating pre-existing urban footprints – was realised by 20 young Italian architects on a 'grid' provided by the curators.

Pica Ciamarra Associati, The City of Science, Bagnoli, Naples, 2003
Ciamarra is one of the most experimental architects working in southern Italy. For this project he confronts a recurring Italian theme: the recovery of an existing industrial structure.

Dante O Benini & Partners Architects, New Torno Internazionale Headquarters, Milan, 2003
The main facade along Via Valtellina. The principle of sustainability was fundamental from the outset and affected the choices related to the structure, building envelope, finishes and building systems, which were resolved through the use of physical mathematical models.

The Superstars

Dante O Benini & Partners Architects, TAI Tower, Istanbul, Turkey, due for completion 2007
Northeast elevation. Benini's projects are a response to the client's requests, the relationship with context and above all, environmental, and functional requirements, with no hint of the nostalgia for traditional forms that belongs to so many other works of Italian architecture. This approach is the reason for the continuing international success of this practice.

Mario Bellini Associati (MBA), Cultural Centre, Turin, 2001
Bellini's recent projects demonstrate how this Milanese architect, also known for his important works of design, is moving towards a contemporary search for complex forms, filtered through an organic tradition and allusions to baroque architecture.

Canali Associati, Smeg Headquarters, Guastalla, Emilia-Romagna, 2004
Canali, one of Italy's most refined architects, is one of the few who manages to dialogue with the natural context and historical tradition without falling into the trap of mimesis or historical pastiche. In particular, the design of the new Smeg headquarters is a reinterpretation of the rural traditions of the Po valley.

Renzo Piano and Massimiliano Fuksas represent anomalies in the tradition that in order to become famous as an architect in Italy it is necessary to have at least one other type of job. From Marcello Piacentini, that is since the years of confusion and fascist government onwards, many of the leading protagonists of Italian architectural culture, in addition to practising architecture, were also important professors, directors of magazines, architectural critics or open supporters of this or that political party. This led to a strange mixing of roles which did not always generate buildings and did nothing to assist the transparency of the system. Because of this trend there is still a feeling that many architectural competitions are used to exchange favours (for example, university positions), that critical opinions are falsified by professional or academic interests, and that the management of some architectural magazines, rather than rigorously following cultural trends, is subject to this or that commission (some time ago, when a famous architect directed a famous magazine, his staff would bet on which of the projects included in each issue would become the office's next commissions).

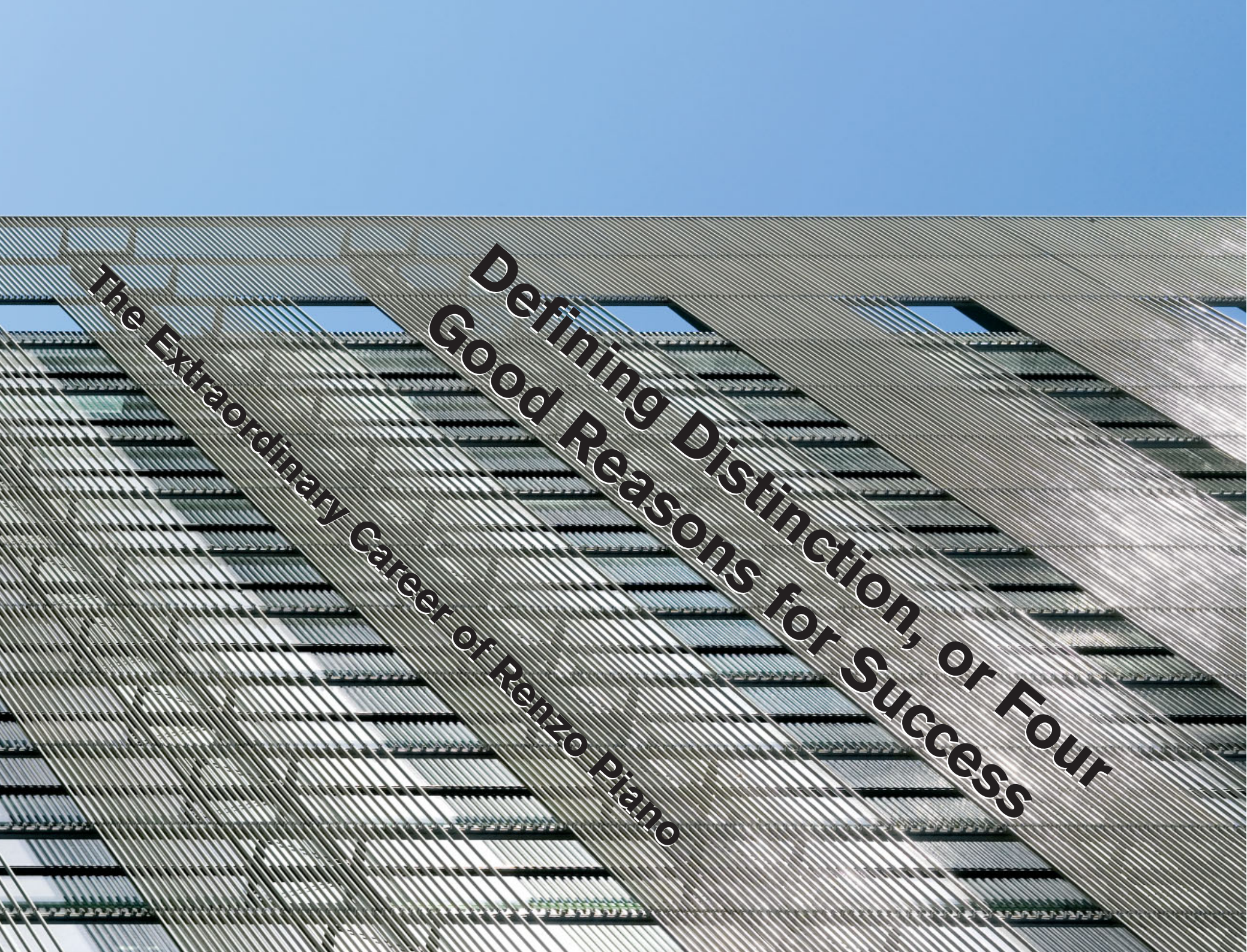
Having earned favour abroad, and only later in Italy, Piano and Fuksas have demonstrated to many young Italian architects that the road to innovation does not necessarily pass through the universities, magazines or political parties. They have also demonstrated that if Italian architecture wishes to renew itself and to rediscover the international attention it lost after the 1980s, it must become more international and represent the best testimonial to a transnational approach that belongs to the so-called Erasmus generation. Furthermore, many of the brightest stars of the new generation have earned their stripes working in the offices of these 'superstars': Mario Cucinella worked with Piano, and the members of Metrogramma have a close relationship with Fuksas' practice.

Antonio Citterio, another Italian architect who operates outside of the university and paper system, has a background in the field of product design. This testifies to the fact that the vital relationship that has tied architecture to design since the 1950s – producing such important figures as Gio Ponti, Vico Magistretti, Marco Zanuso and Angelo Mangiarotti – is still alive, and that it may once again produce important results in the near future.

There are now many others who are on their way to earning international fame. Particular mention should be made of Dante O Benini & Partners. Though active since the 1970s, it is only since the beginning of the 1990s that this practice has begun a phase of expansion that is as interesting as it is impetuous. Recently completed works include the Torno offices in Milan, a factory and a skyscraper in Istanbul and other projects under construction in Italy and abroad. Benini is characterised by his interest in new technologies, a constant attention to themes of environmental sustainability and a notable level of spatial creativity that can be seen, for example, in the use of microperforated sheet metal for the Torno project to create large sail-like forms.

Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore


Defining Distinction, or Four
Good Reasons for Success
The Extraordinary Career of Renzo Piano

For 30 years, Renzo Piano has been producing distinguished buildings and delighting the world with his innovation and sensitivity. Here, Livio Sacchi attempts to tease out some of the reasons behind Piano's sustained success. Having gained an almost unparalleled international profile during the last couple of decades, a period that has been notoriously difficult for Italian architects, Piano's career has an almost mythic quality. It boasts one of the most unlikely competition wins of all time that ceded one of the most prestigious sites in the world, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, to two completely unknown architects in their late 20s.

Renzo Piano's success can be attributed to a number of different reasons. First it must be said that his success is even more noteworthy precisely because he is an Italian architect who grew up in a country whose architectural culture has had considerable difficulties in affirming itself over the course of the 20th century, notwithstanding some exceptional projects whose only fault was that of not being easy to relate to principal trends. As the reference for an elevated level of trustworthiness at the international level, and the only Italian to have received the Pritzker Prize, Piano is now the only fully recognised architect in Italy and one who has realised important works in the principal countries around the globe.

The first reason for his success is probably to be found in the exceptional act of having begun his career with such a rare debut: the construction of the Centre Pompidou, the result of a fruitful partnership with a young Richard Rogers (also partly Italian). The true icon of the new, technological season of contemporary architecture, the Beaubourg owes much of its fascination to its violent contrast with the historical centre of Paris, a contrast that would not have been tolerated in Italy, certainly not in those years. Piano thus debuted internationally, beginning a lengthy season of architecture spectacle that has lasted, in the midst of a great many discussions, to this day. It is an inaugural gesture that coincides, however, with an immediate stepping back: no other building of his has ever sought such a visual shock, that figural recognisability that, more than anything else, seems to construct the invariable character of much of the production of the contemporary star system.

The second reason can be found in the constant attention to technological innovation, united with the unusual ability to join the old and the new, to root each built invention in the images that we inherit from history. A worthy example can be found in Piano's use of brick. One of the first projects to explore the possibilities offered by the coupling of a relatively traditional material with supports that are derived, instead, from the most advanced technologies, is the addition to the IRCAM in Paris. I am speaking, in particular, about the building that overlooks the Place Stravinsky, in direct visual connection with the Centre Pompidou. Here the cladding is composed of panels held up by baked enamel finished steel or stainless-steel frames, reinforced with steel profiles. These frames are then filled with dry-laid, solid brick masonry, anchored to a system of neoprene gaskets on steel rods fixed to the frames; the latter are then invisibly anchored to the reinforced concrete building structure.

Such experimentation is part of the attention Piano has always paid to more traditional materials – his work with wood, stone, and so on – with the explicit objective of increasing the range of contemporary construction techniques. It is patient

Renzo Piano Building Workshop, New York Times Tower, New York, 2000–
The new midtown Manhattan landmark tower is possibly the first, smart example of a new generation of high-rise sustainable office buildings. In a panorama crowded with lots of debatable, recently built examples, the New York Times Tower will stand as a quiet and almost classical architectural statement.

Renzo Piano Building Workshop, London Bridge Tower, London, 2000–
The London Bridge Tower is a powerful, elegant and sleek landmark whose spire – much taller than any of the many remaining Wren spires in the city – is intended to represent the vanishing point of a breathtaking perspective view. It is likely the building will overshadow any other in the increasingly exciting London skyline. Its shape is completely different from that of any other of the world's tall buildings, yet reminiscent of famous historical skyscrapers such as the John Hancock Building in Chicago. In a way also similar to its powerful American predecessor, the London Bridge Tower will almost certainly appear much taller than it actually is when viewed from the narrow, overcrowded streets below.

research which, through 'minor' projects – such as the housing complex in rue de Meaux, once again in Paris, or the headquarters of the Banca Popolare di Lodi in Milan (both 1991) – led Piano to the colossal intervention in Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz in Berlin. Here, terracotta elements in the form of drawn narrow tubes were specially built for the project and create uniform fields or alternating patterns similar to the effect of a Venetian blind. Where necessary, Piano also uses panels, once again in terracotta, to enclose or protect the bearing structure. The whole creates a true 'perforated skin': vibratile, breathing walls with light steel structural supports and a reassuring and substantial backdrop.

The third reason for Piano's success lies in his unexpected ability to engage in transcultural dialogue: one of the most heartfelt themes of the contemporary condition, but also, in general, one of the least happily resolved by architects. The most interesting building in this sense is the JM Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Nouméa, New Caledonia: an example of how design quality can be achieved through the hybridisation of typologies, technologies, function and style when it is accompanied by a deep understanding of diversity. The project is the result of a competition run by the French government of New Caledonia during the peace conference held after a series of revolts that took place between 1984 and 1988, culminating in 1989 with the murder of the Kanak leader Jean Marie Tjibaou.

The building, which occupies a site of extraordinary beauty, is modulated by a curvilinear path which, not unlike that which can be found in any Kanak settlement, constitutes the unifying element of a succession of otherwise disconnected episodes. Three recognisable nuclei thus contain, among other things, an amphitheatre, library, mediatheque, various display spaces and a series of didactic laboratories. The geometries of the various blocks, composed primarily of one level above ground and a basement service level, are based on the repetition of rectilinear buildings on the concave side of the curve, towards the lagoon, and curved elements on the convex side, towards the sea. The first present a simple, flat metal roof, while the second propose a typology based on a suggestive system of double screens – cylindrical on the inside and with a double curve on the exterior – specially designed in laminated wood and steel. These creatively reinterpret a relatively

Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Renovation and expansion of the Morgan Library, New York, 2006
The recently opened Morgan Library addition is a subtle and understated building that tactfully respects the celebrated New York City Beaux Arts masterpiece. The new wing appears almost invisible in the densely built-up neighbourhood of Murray Hill, neutrally and elegantly leaving the scene to the elaborate classical decoration of the stylish McKim, Mead and White American Renaissance historical example. Its author clearly demonstrates here that, in confrontation with classicism, less is certainly more.

Renzo Piano Building Workshop, New Team Luna Rossa base, Valencia, Spain, 2006
For the Luna Rossa building, Piano masterfully explores the eye-catching values of the fashionable wrapping technique in a relaxed, easy and appropriate way. The architect seems at ease with a relatively small, practical building, though not forgetting that it may eventually become the architectural backdrop of an international symbol: an America's Cup-winning vessel sponsored by a major Italian fashion designer.

This 'high-tech, soft-touch' approach manages to unite Western rationality and local tradition, set against the backdrop of an authentic respect for the natural environment.

widespread technology in the Pacific that captures the prevailing light winds to create an effective system of natural ventilation, while at the same time resisting strong winds and even typhoons. On the inside of this shell, highly indulgent to local culture, one discovers contemporary and minimally serene spaces, careful detailing, sober colours that match the tones of the materials (wood and steel), calibrated levels of natural and artificial light and a notable sense of museum design. This 'high-tech, soft-touch' approach manages to unite Western rationality and local tradition, set against the backdrop of an authentic respect for the natural environment.

We could go on, finding other reasons to take an interest in the work of this office. However, in summary the success of Renzo Piano appears above all to be the result of a level of quality that is extremely rare among the contemporary stars: an ability to work using a 'basic' language. That Piano is perhaps capable of operating so well in these terms was quickly made clear in the sober and contextual De Menil Museum in Houston (1986), accurately measured against the scale of a calm residential neighbourhood, and later demonstrated in countless, more recent projects – such as the Maison Hermès in Tokyo (2001), which is elegantly transparent and almost imperceptible against the chaotic backdrop of Ginza, and the Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome, a complex that has been widely applauded by the public. However, it is his New York Times Tower, currently under construction, and, above all, his addition to the Morgan Library, a project of taste and rare modesty, at the limits of the visible, in contact with one of the most sacred and sophisticated icons of the American Beaux Arts movement, that fully underline the extent of this superstar's ability. AD

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

The World's Biggest Sculptor

The Architecture of Massimiliano Fuksas

At the start of the new millennium, Massimiliano Fuksas was one of the most significant Italian architects working outside his home country. His reputation in Italy and abroad, however, was taken to a further level by his completion of the New Milan Trade Fair. **Stefano Casciani**, an ex-student of Fuksas, provides an insightful and intriguing account of his 'old' professor: a robust and seemingly contradictory figure who is capable of great voluminous expression and delicacy. Casciani also finds constancy in his unrelenting energy, freshness and wit.

Massimiliano Fuksas, Amplification of Bortolo Nardini Group, Bassano del Grappa, Vicenza, Veneto, 2004
The ramp descending to the auditorium is the original matrix of the canyon space. It can be used as an open-air platform, creating one big auditorium space to host larger events. The audience is surrounded by a landscape generated by the arrhythmic configuration of the inclined walls.

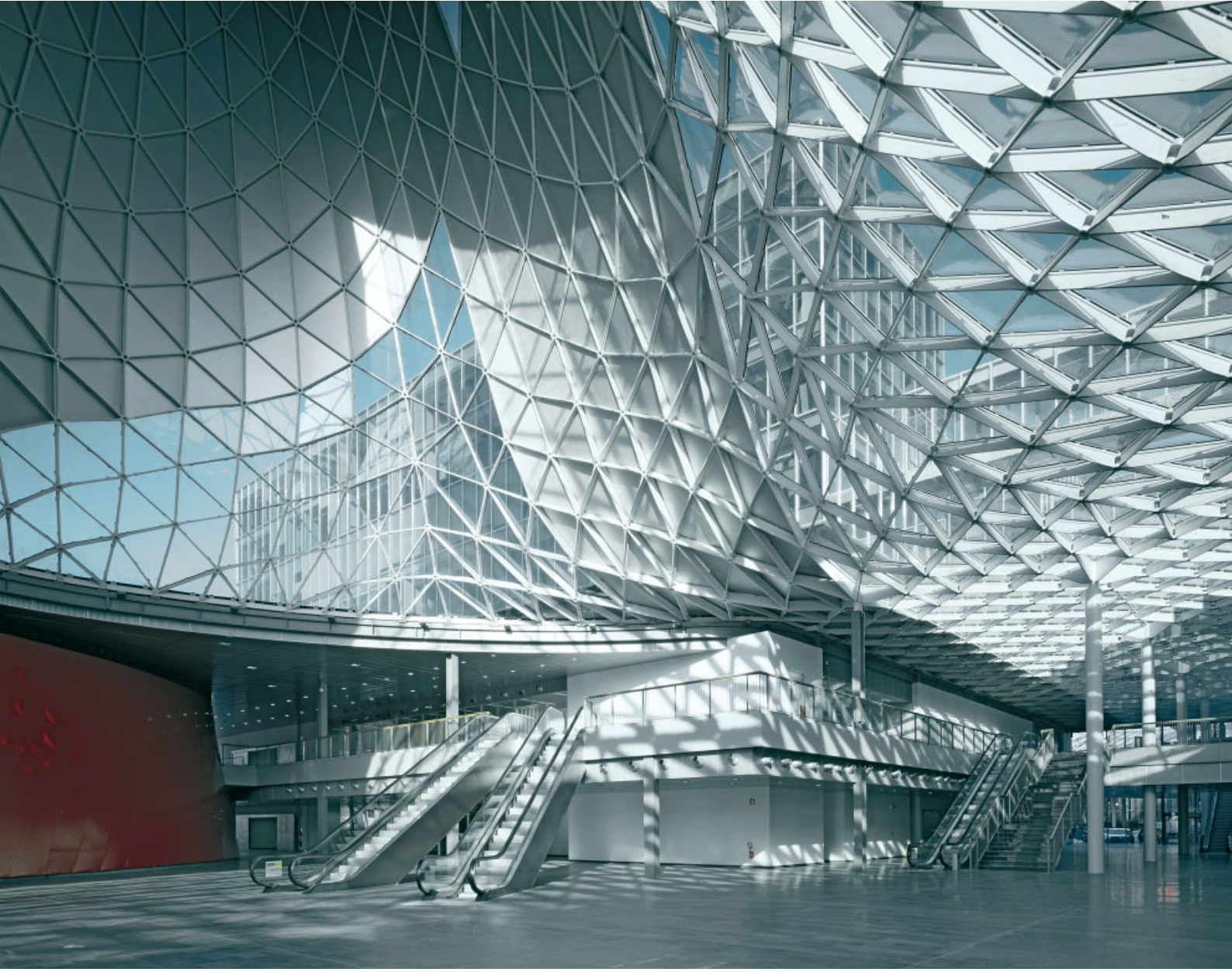
Massimiliano Fuksas, Amplification of Bortolo Nardini Group, Bassano del Grappa, Vicenza, Veneto, 2004
Two 'worlds': the first suspended, formed by two ellipsoidal transparent bubbles that enclose the laboratories of the research centre, and the other submerged, a space carved in the earth like a natural canyon accommodating an auditorium and a foyer.

In the world of contemporary architecture, the work of Massimiliano Fuksas presents us with the interesting enigma of belonging to a border zone. As part of the unstable equilibrium that defines his social and political aspirations, and in order to survive as an artist in the evolved system of Western capitalism, Fuksas chose to transform himself into a professional and continues to work as though architecture was an art. Educated in Rome in the midst of the crisis of the Modern movement in the critical school of Bruno Zevi, he began by building primarily public buildings: the town hall, the school and the cemetery, typologies that mark the passage of human existence. During the 1980s, in a gesture of refusal towards the mire of Italian culture, he sought refuge in France, where he confronted public architecture with the violence of a rigidly open and expressive approach.

Having declared the necessity of including art within his work, he was presented with the opportunity to confront the two benchmarks of Western capitalist architecture: the shopping mall and the skyscraper. In Salzburg, his Europapark Mall (1993–7) revolutionised commonly held notions about the decorated shed, and his Twin Towers in Vienna, as a result of their awe-inspiring lightness, led to talk of a 'Miesian' Fuksas. At the same time he began the project for the New Milan Trade Fair in Rho-Pero, Milan: political and institutional intrigue made this an incredibly complex project. The populations of the two municipalities, Rho and Pero, lived through the radical transformation of their territory caused by the landing of this giant UFO of global commerce. For the weary postindustrial economy of Milan it was a question of life or death, its future as the city of commerce was already defined. The result – the largest sculpture in the world – returned Italian architecture to the centre of discussion in global debate: however, for the inauguration of what, to date, can be considered his masterpiece, Fuksas carried out a coherent, though kamikaze, action. Motivated by ethical and ideological reasons he decided not to participate in the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which he left to the (now) former prime minister with a fixation for (his own) television channels.

Fuksas has since completed other projects, and begun still more: he has even become, despite himself, a member of the mediatic star system. Yet, as chance would have it, both of us were born and studied architecture in Rome, and we found ourselves, and we still do, talking about issues of design: nothing has changed since the time, very long ago, when Fuksas was a professor and I was a student and we began asking ourselves dangerous questions about the deeper issues of architecture. Is it an art? Is it a political or social mission? Is it a profession that can make you rich? Is the architect a militant or a builder? Questions that are not very easy to answer.

Even if the office (which Fuksas runs together with his partner Doriana Mandrelli and a group of collaborators as young as they are talented) has now become rather large, the number of projects is never exceedingly high: there are never any more than 20 at one time, compared to the hundreds being dealt with simultaneously in the large international



Massimiliano Fuksas, New Milan Trade Fair, Milan, 2005
The form of the veil is derived from constant altimetric variations just as they are found in the natural landscape – craters, waves, dunes and hills. As a natural landscape the shape is never repetitive, giving the visitor an animating, continuously varying perspective.

Is it an art? Is it a political or social mission? Is it a profession that can make you rich? Is the architect a militant or a builder?

The design of the New Milan Trade Fair chooses to make the longitudinal connection axis its main generator, becoming a spine that gives structure to the entire complex. This space, the 'central axis', represents the place of activities, the centre of information, the place of crossing and at the same time of being. These concepts are developed through the positioning of a series of buildings alongside the main axis, with connections at level 0,00 and at footbridge level +6.50.

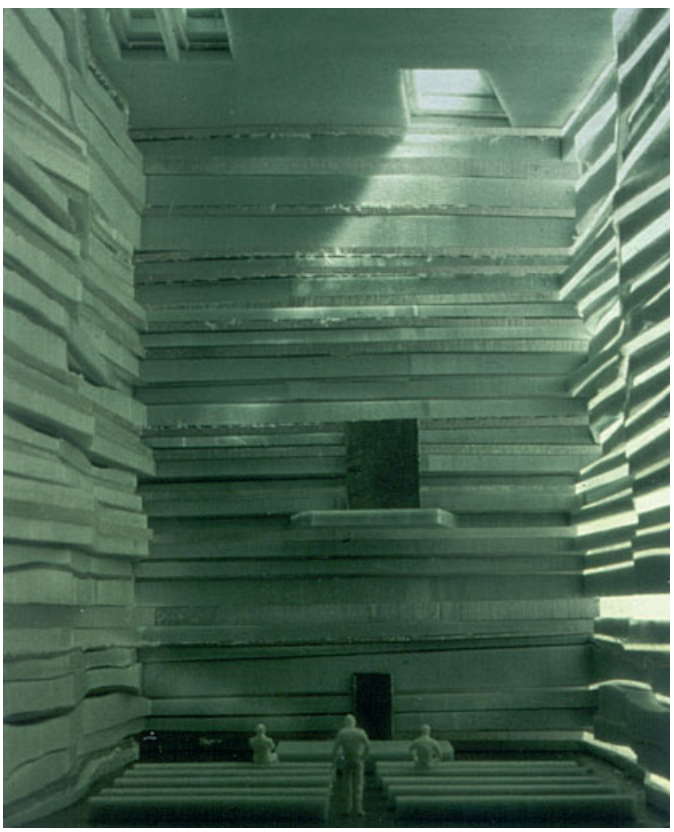
Massimiliano Fuksas, Congress Centre, Roma-Eur, Rome, 1999–2009
The building appears as a large, 30-metre (98-foot) tall, translucent container with a lengthwise development. Two squares, which open onto the district and the city respectively, are to be found on the transverse sides: the first is connected directly to the district and goes from Viale Europa to Viale Shakespeare, the second, a space that can be composed freely using movable structures, is for receiving congress members and conveying them to the various areas in the centre.

When the cloud, supported by a thick framework of steel ribs and suspended between the floor and the ceiling of the large congress hall, is illuminated, from a distance the building will look as if it is vibrating.

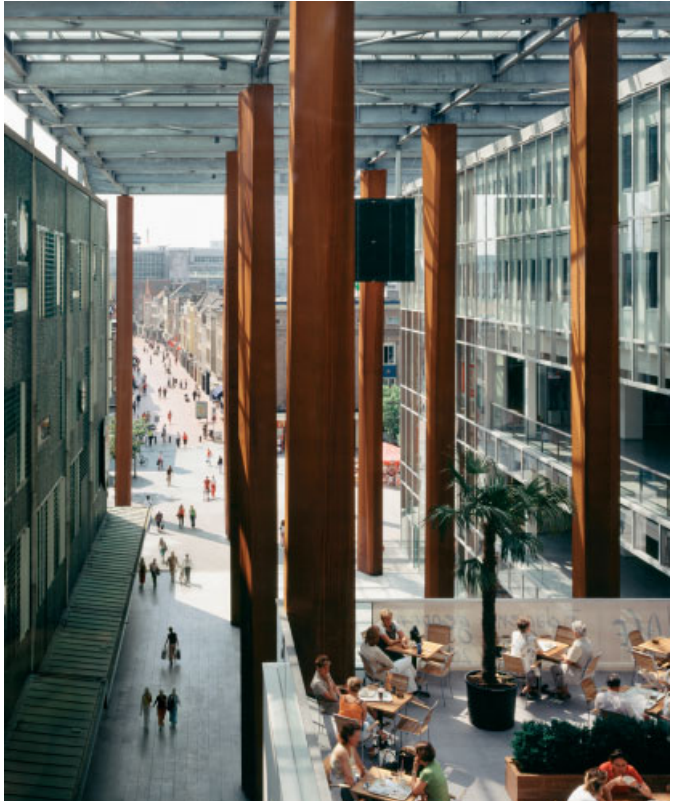
Massimiliano Fuksas, Exhibition Hall, Contemporary Art Centre, Turin, 2005
The intervention consists of the realisation of a five-storey building. There are two underground levels, one designated for car parking and the second one designed to host the plant rooms and technical spaces. The three levels above ground are allocated to commercial activities and a restaurant.

'factories' of architecture. Fuksas says that he needs more projects because he suffers from the anxiety of never having enough, the fear of concentrating all of his attention on only one project, which risks becoming 'the project of your life: this is a disaster because you fill it with all of your dreams, desires.' Dedicating too much attention to a single project means rendering it classical, too 'soft', devoid of energy and a strong focus. This can lead to a finished work that, while it may be interesting in anthropological terms, is 'of little interest as a place of emotions'. What may appear as discontinuity to some inattentive critic is, instead, a constant interest in diversity: every circumstance requires a different technique – drawing, material and form – in order to avoid the tired trap of linguistic repetition.

A recent example of Fuksas' self-critical attitude can be seen in the Church of San Giacomo in Foligno, now under construction. It represents one of the most delicate challenges for a contemporary architect, imagining a building for the faithful: a species facing extinction, faithful to the tormented spirit of the Catholic religion, impotent in the face of another prevalent religion – that of money. Undoubtedly laic, presumably agnostic, Fuksas was forced to confront the issue of a dialogue with divinity. The architect is called upon to give form to mystery, a reality for believers, intangible to everyone else: not the standard and incredibly banal virtuality that fills the mouths of critics and architects who have built little or nothing, but something much more virtual and elusive, a presence that exists only if it is sought out with the concentration that only the most faithful are capable of possessing. Fuksas thus reduces form to silence (apparently), or better yet he doubles it in two primary, concrete volumes: an



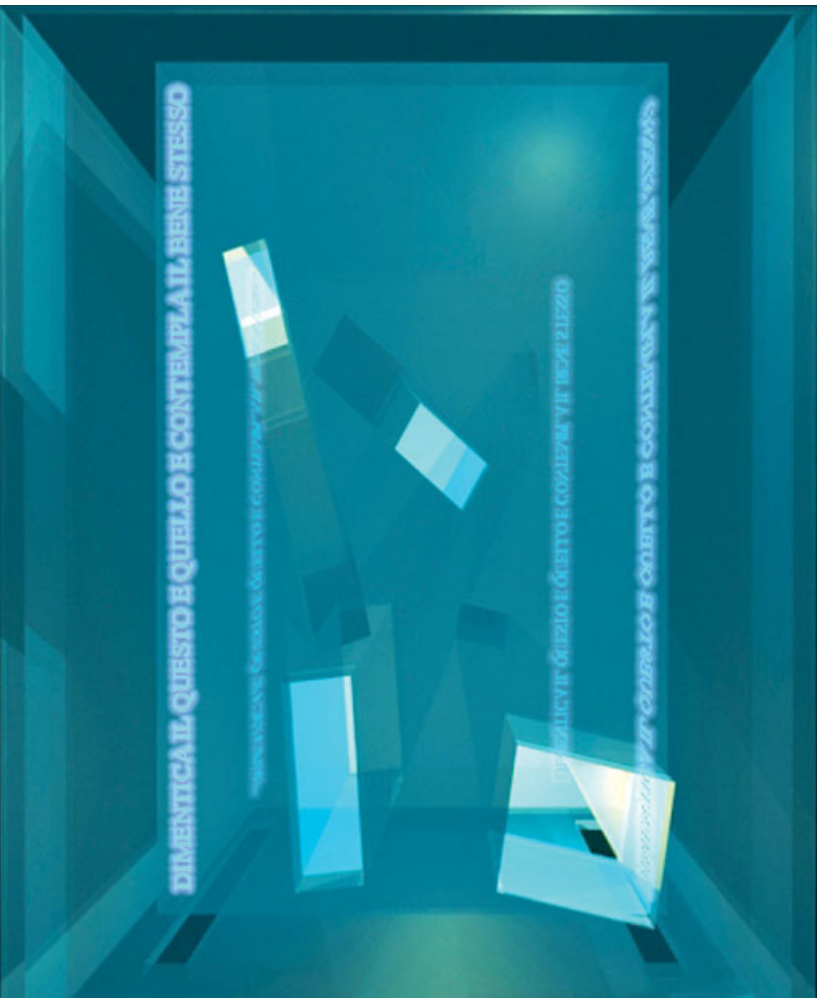
Massimiliano Fuksas, Peres House for Peace, Jaffa, Israel, 2006
The Peres Center for Peace is a parallelepiped, obtained by irregularly shaped green concrete and glass layers standing on a monolithic base. At one end of the building is the entrance to the park, on the other a pedestrian entrance that opens to the sea view in front. The surface becomes a big piazza, and stairs and the landscape that cascades down to the seashore cut it from east to west.



He prefers to distrust continuity, to believe in fracture: that the project functions based on a sort of theory of errors.

Massimiliano Fuksas, Media Markt large-scale electronics store, Eindhoven, the Netherlands, 2005
The passage from car park to shopping mall through the second storey of the electronics store ensures a large number of people on the upper levels of the shop. The connection of these buildings makes them function as one superbuilding reaching over busy streets with entrances at different points throughout the city.

The main volume of the building consists of a large box of blue ceramic tiles that is connected on one side with a bridge to the piazza shopping mall, and on the other to one of the major car parks of the city. The box is lifted from the ground, creating space for the entrance and shop windows.



Massimiliano Fuksas, San Giacomo Church complex, Foligno, Umbria, 2003–07
Fuksas' project is based on a strong shape: two parallepipeds, one inserted inside the other. Openings are cut out of the two solids, guiding natural light into the church. Artist Maurizio Nannucci creates an 'illumination' effect through neon lights quoting the Bible.

exterior parallelepiped and another, more internal one, both of which are perforated by irregular openings. The resulting shafts of light focus on the fundamental spaces of the liturgy, such as the altar: the overhead illumination catches the meditating faithful off guard, and continues to change throughout the day. However, from the exterior, from afar, in the midst of the mystic landscape of Umbria, the land of St Francis, this work of architecture transmits a sensation of mystery in all of its obscure impenetrability. It is thus precisely the opposite of the spectacular exuberance of the New Trade Fair.

How does Fuksas justify this difference of language? Faced with the desire for recognisability that currently torments so many architects, he does not appear to want to 'belong to a particular family' of formal language. He does not wish to resemble even himself, or the reading that has been made of his projects. He asks himself ironically: 'Where do I come from? Every now and again I ask myself the same question. The nice thing is, I don't know – I probably come from a literary architecture.' He prefers to distrust continuity, to believe in fracture: that the project functions based on a sort of theory of errors. The same errors that we inevitably make, in every project as in life, and which, if looked at in depth, can become the matrix of a new project. Fuksas considers the construction site to be a very important matrix of his work, a place for the observation of unexpected events, ready-made and *objets-trouvés* that can become the inspiration for a new project without giving in to emotion, to the spontaneous or to references to other architects, or himself. 'What remains is largely individual liberty. Architecture and creation are a part of this liberty; they are perhaps the broadest margins of liberty allowed to the imagination of the world, and the future.'

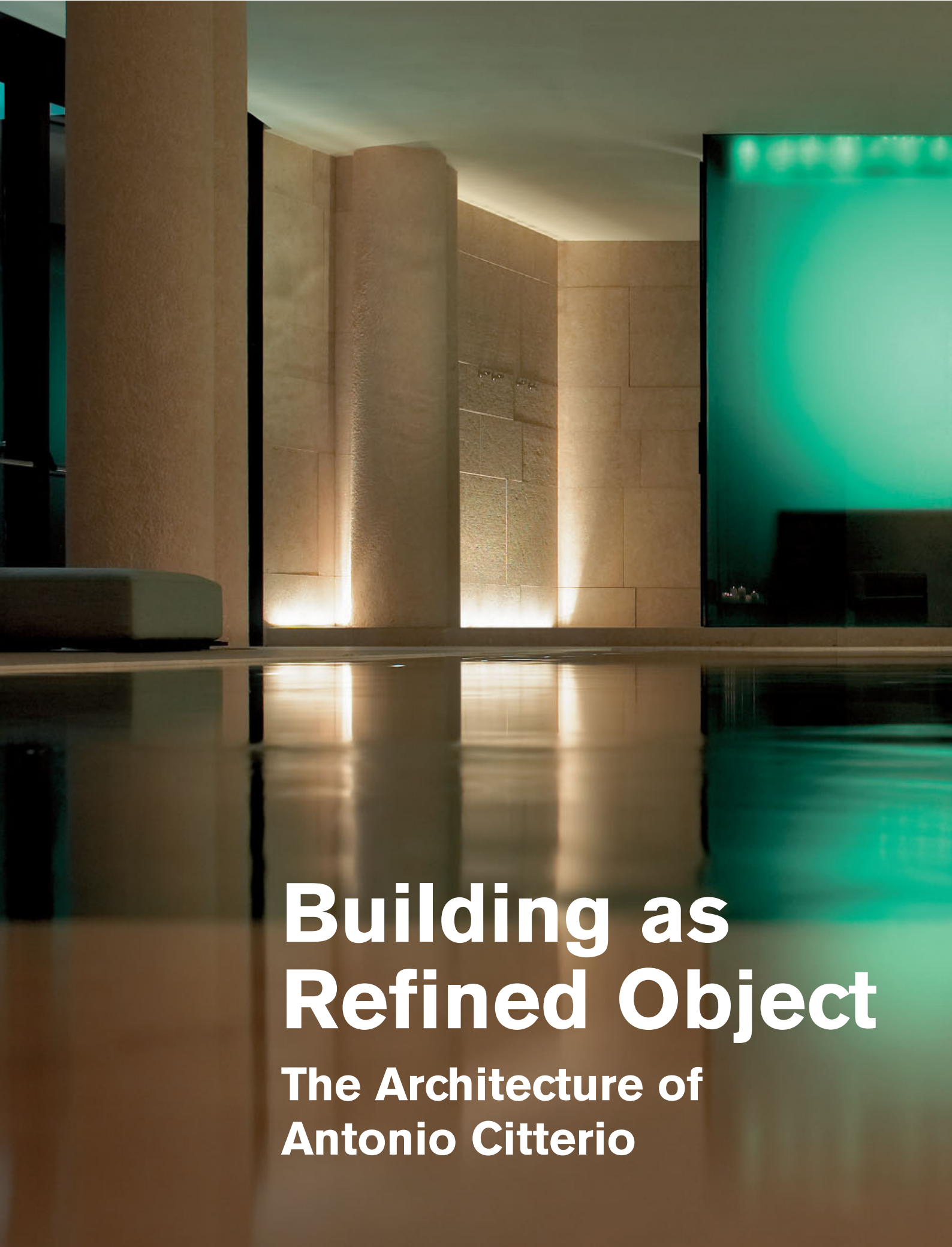
Returning once again to the massive undertaking of the New Milan Trade Fair, Fuksas speaks of the necessity of creating, as part of the relationship with the client, the builders, the very physical space of the project, a system of defence, of troop deployment, similar to a field of battle. 'The construction site is always a battlefield, where the true warriors are positioned. You have to decide where to place your forces, then you move them to where your adversaries have placed theirs ... the interior spaces, the finishes, the facade?'

As part of the metaphor of the battle (similar to the good old class struggle), the enemies are easy to identify – at least in Italy: bureaucracies, conservatism and an Establishment of octogenarian architects who have hindered and continue to attempt to hinder the development of a new architectural culture. Unfortunately, the first few years of the 21st century, which even seem to be witness to the realisation of utopias from the 1970s and 1980s, are creating even more confusion, as populated as they are by so many architects, or intellectuals, who resemble Julien Sorel, the protagonist of Stendhal's novel *The Scarlet and the Black* (1830). A failed priest, an unfaithful lover and unsuccessful murderer, Sorel simultaneously cultivates revolutionary ideas and middle-class ambitions; he wishes to obtain his objectives and, at the same time, to destroy them. A son of the French Revolution, he is unable to interpret its ultimate meaning and dies (like so many) leaving his head on the guillotine. The guillotine no longer functions, though one of the great risks for the author is that of using ideology (of the neo-capitalistic genre) to cover his own personal aims, speaking the language of the pseudo-avant-garde: the main culprit here is the mediatic system of which, inevitably, architecture is and will always be a part.

Fuksas appears to be capable of avoiding this ambiguity because his best works still speak the immutable language of architecture as art.

This is one battlefield upon which we expect to see him once again victorious. AD

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore



Building as Refined Object

The Architecture of Antonio Citterio

Antonio Citterio, Hotel Bulgari, Milan, 2004
The interior space of the pool, with its play of light.

Sebastiano Brandolini describes the work of Antonio Citterio who, despite a low-key personal presence on the Italian architectural scene and an architecture of quiet restraint, has gained an enviable international reputation for his elegant and 'impeccably well-made' buildings.

Antonio Citterio, at little more than 50 years of age, belongs to the in-between generation of Italian architects that is often accused of not attributing the proper importance to building. Citterio himself, probably for reasons beyond his control, has concentrated much of his attention on industrial design rather than architecture. His sensibility, by now Rationalist, and his professional approach to design have made him well known and appreciated. It is difficult not to share his taste for an elegance that is available to everyone, and which is both simple and linear. Less clear is Citterio's role in the world of architecture. This is the result of three things: to date he has completed few works of architecture, his participation in discussions and debates is limited, and it remains difficult to look at his architecture without forgetting his work as an industrial designer.

What is certain is that when he appeared on the scene some 10 years ago, almost out of nowhere, Citterio's tower-office on Via Cerva in the heart of Milan created some surprise. What was this somewhat Japanese, somewhat northern European office building with its Minimalist facade doing here? How had it been possible to realise the almost perfect concrete? Who built such slender window frames, with such simple profiles? It was all very shocking; to the mind's eye it appeared as something alien, and in no way typically Italian. In reality we all hid some deep level of jealousy; we all wanted to be the author of such a well-built and clean style of architecture. The building on Via Cerva should also have led us to some form of self-criticism, but this was not the case. Citterio continues to be considered a case apart, an Italian anomaly. To some he is a phenomenon of taste as opposed to substance.

Citterio's built works are almost exclusively for private clients. His most important client for many years was a furniture manufacturer who saw his factory as an extension of the objects he produced. However, things have changed. Having obtained recognition in Germany (he has completed two projects in Hamburg, one in the centre and one along the banks of the Elba River near Altona), Citterio returned to Italy with a level of credibility, ideas, a style and his own level of professionalism. To Citterio architecture is nothing more than the extension of design, though it remains an autonomous field of research.

His factories in Brianza, his private houses in Italy, Germany and Switzerland, the Hotel Bulgari in Milan, the two urban buildings in Hamburg and two more recent projects – a new nursery school and an office renovation – inside the property owned by a multinational pharmaceutical company in Verona, demonstrate that Citterio strongly believes in architecture as a combination of form and function, to which he adds his own style, a scenographic dimension and an attentive research into materials. His interiors are known for their refined elegance, with a dash of do-goodliness; inside his showrooms one feels both observed and judged, as if impersonating a theatrical character. The small nursery school in Verona, for all its utilitarian aspects, transmits an idea of the precious, of refinement and a delicacy that is so well presented that it almost becomes fragile; it is a nursery-courtyard that blurs the distinctions between inside and outside, comparing the life of its small inhabitants to those of a mini community. The courtyard, onto which the few rooms face, features a wall that is little more than a sheet of folded paper, much like the roof of the covered portico.

Antonio Citterio, Hotel Bulgari, Milan, 2004
The point of contact between the existing building and the new volume.

Citterio's architecture is made primarily of planes, making it difficult to distinguish the structure from the design – the building tectonics of the spaces dissolve in the beauty of the effects they produce. For him, elegance and modernity correspond with one another. If space for Citterio is a combination of different planes and effects, and if glass is the material that joins more than it divides, then the result is a space that is the chain reaction of a series of display windows. This can be seen in the pharmaceutical offices in Verona, a work that denotes both a level of maturity and a few problematic issues. Here the play of coloured glass, transparency and light produces a multiplication of the depth of field without, however, eliminating privacy, but rather adding a sense of belonging to a shared working environment.

Antonio Citterio, Nursery School for a multinational pharmaceutical company, Verona, 2005
Aerial view of the nursery showing the volume of the classrooms, the portico and interior courtyard.

One of the interior classrooms, overlooking the interior courtyard.

The materials, all rich and precious though of contrasting density, opaqueness and colour, are combined to create an atmosphere that presents itself as a true spatial intuition. The details are impeccable. The meeting rooms are islands that float in an almost surreal space.

Citterio conceives of his works of architecture as complete objects, as things. They are impeccably well made and once one enters one forgets what was outside. This is the case in the two projects in Verona, in the Hotel Bulgari in Milan, in his many private houses and in Hamburg. At Hamburg, each element is a piece of architecture: for example, the facade, the stairway, the living room, the corridor, the pool, the window, the portico, each of which is perfect yet isolated and separate from the rest. The sense of the organism, of articulation and progression through space and through the thickness of things does not appear to have any place here. Citterio works to neutralise the forces and the movements that make a building a complex entity in order to obtain an impartial balance. His parallelepiped forms, his solids and voids, the colours with their reflections and shadows balance one another in the final analysis. The materials are not used for their tectonic or structural possibilities, but as surfaces of cladding. In the building along the Elba River in Hamburg, the large, flat windows in no way define a volume.

In terms of Italian architecture, Citterio finds himself leading, almost on his own, a battle in favour of simplicity and linearity. His architecture is functional and direct and elegant without being trendy. His end game is certainly not that of producing spectacular and science-fictional images; his works are not monuments and they lack any transversal symbols or meaning. His visual references include the work of the latest generation of Spanish, Japanese and English architects who prefer anonymity to ubiquitousness, and non-form to formalism. AD

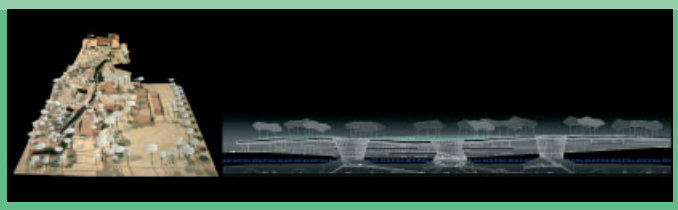
Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

Aldo Aymonino, Public plaza, Decima, Rome, 2000
Rather than constructing public buildings, Italian municipal governments prefer to renovate public plazas: it is simpler, quicker, and provides higher levels of public consensus at election time. Of the many projects for public spaces, one that stands out is this piazza by Aldo Aymonino, who is also the author of an interesting book on the design of 'zero-volume' spaces: built works that are not actually buildings, but which improve the urban context into which they have been inserted.

Studio Schiattarella with G Bulian and N Lucchesi, and Yetap Architects, Children's Museum, Kyonggi, South Korea, 2005
Children can climb up to the roof of the building, slide down the ramps and arrive in the display spaces, each of which is different from the other and dedicated to a different theme. The rendering shows the main hall and the coloured boxes.

Cino Zucchi Architetti, Building D, Giudecca Island, Venice, 2002
In equilibrium between tradition and experimentation, this project indicates an approach to the construction of tastefully modern buildings in very delicate contexts, in this case the city of Venice.

The Middle Generation



RicciSpaini, International design competition for the new high-speed train station, Florence, 2002
Even though Norman Foster won this competition, many believe Ricci and Spaini's project (with Frei Otto, Pippo Ciorra and Studio Associato Seste) to be the best as a result of its ability to join high levels of energy and environmental sustainability, ensuring the train station becomes a living part of the city.

Paola Rossi and Massimo Fagioli, Palazzetto Bianco, Rome, 2005
The result of a collaboration between a psychoanalyst and an architect, the 'white building' is a highly dynamic and welcoming structure that inserts itself within the urban context of the city in a rather unusual manner.

Who are the Italian architects of the 'middle generation'? The term has been used here to describe those architects who, if they are not yet famous, are well on their way. Five have been selected for this section: Stefano Boeri, Mario Cucinella, the group known as ABDR, Italo Rota and Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo. The choice was not an easy one because Italy is full of architects who, with respect to the aforementioned, are much better known. There is Cino Zucchi, whose recently completed group of buildings on Venice's Giudecca Island earned him a great deal of respect, and not only in Italy, because through his architecture and the conservation of a language that is cautiously contemporary he manages to be brilliantly contextual. Michele De Lucchi, already a very well-known designer (his Tolomeo lamp is apparently second only to Sapper's Tizio as the most sold design object in the world) is experiencing a moment of intense professional activity and is highly sought after by large clients (for example, the Italian postal company or the Intesa Bank) who want to change, in the most contemporary sense of the term, their institutional image. And there is also Marco Casamonti, the director of *Area* magazine, a tireless organiser of exhibitions and cultural events aimed at relaunching Italian architecture (above all his own), and a tightrope walker constantly in balance between the new and the old, opening branch offices throughout Italy and Europe and completing a growing number of projects.

There are others, even if not so well known, who certainly merit more than just a mention: Aldo Aymonino, Garofalo Miura, Aldo Cibic, RicciSpaini and Carmen Andriani. In addition to having designed interesting works (RicciSpaini's project for the new Florence train station is far better than the unfairly awarded project by Norman Foster), many of these architects teach with schools of architecture in Venice, Pescara, Genoa and Naples where they represent an alternative to traditional methods of teaching, contributing to the education of some of the younger architects included in the next section dedicated to new energies.

So why Boeri, Cucinella, ABDR, Rota and Grasso Cannizzo? The answer is that they represent five innovative directions that Italian architecture must pursue with greater energy in the immediate future: privileging heteronymous relationships and scale (Boeri), searching for a different relationship between technology and nature (Cucinella), focusing attention on the engineering of construction processes (ABDR), highlighting creativity and fantasy that go beyond any Functionalist inhibitions (Rota), and proposing a relationship with context that is neither mimetic nor nostalgic (Grasso Cannizzo).

Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi

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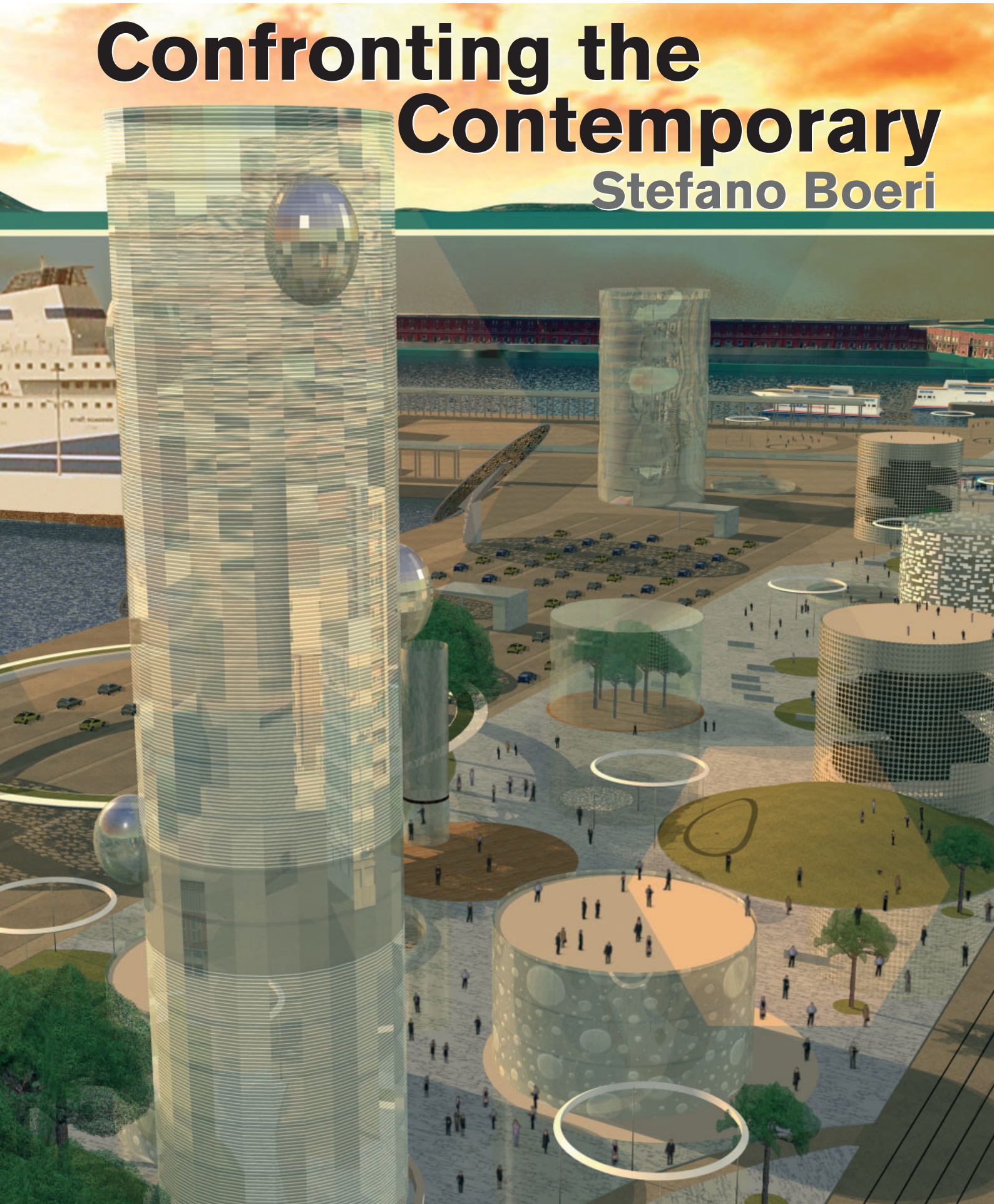
Confronting the Contemporary

Stefano Boeri



Diego Caramma describes Stefano Boeri's pervasive influence on architectural thought in recent years as editor of *Domus*, exhibition curator and founder of the Multiplicity urban research platform. As he explains, Boeri's significance lies in his ability to confront contemporary conditions for architecture rather than just the dissemination of current trends and ideas.

Looking at his biography, one has the impression that we are dealing with a professional who is busy on many fronts, which for the most part are the result of his varied investigations and interests. But if we were to draw up a list, without considering the fact that his studies and research deal with the investigation of urban territories and the forms used by a wide range of disciplines to observe, analyse and represent the city and the contemporary landscape, it would make little sense and would be useful only to a rather banal discussion.

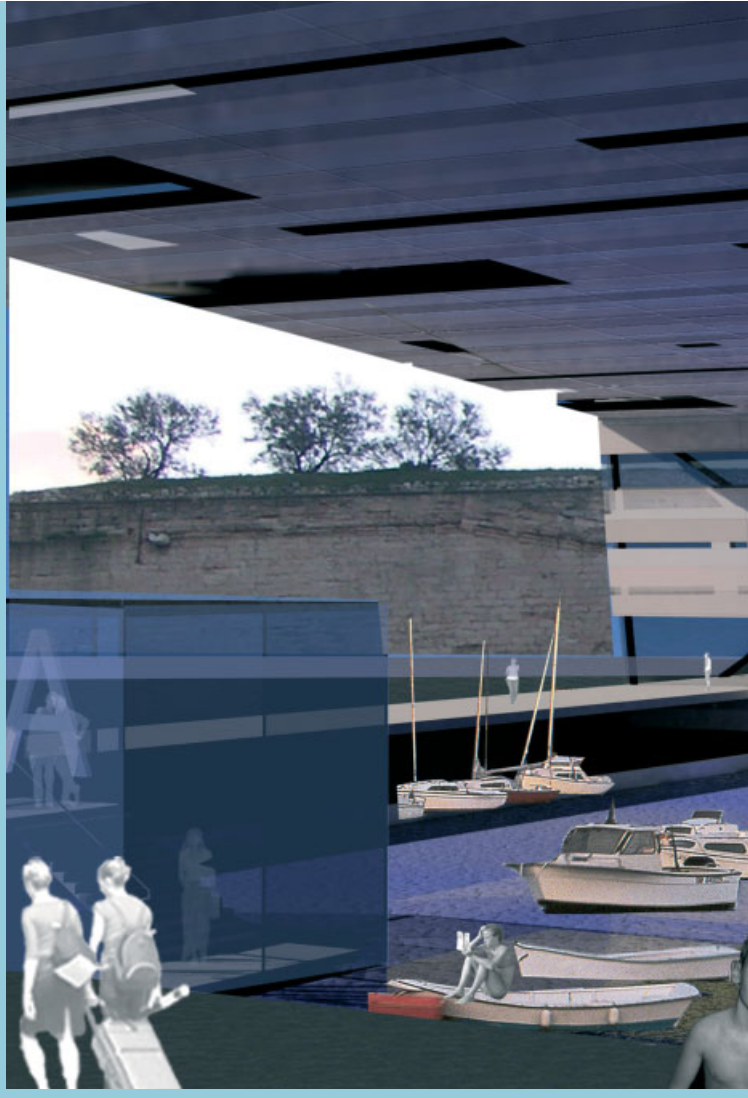
Stefano Boeri is not representative of that level of professionalism that sees 'cultural connections' everywhere (of philosophy, art, economy and technology *on* architecture) as real and separate spheres, as per the imagination and considerations of the academic world, and not only the Italian matrix. He contributed for 10 years to the cultural insert published by the *Il Sole 24 Ore* newspaper, in addition to curating the architecture sector at the Milan Triennale for which, in 2002, he completed 'USE: Uncertain States of Europe', his research into the future of Europe, which was documented in the publication *USE: Un viaggio nell'Europa che cambia*, published by Skira in 2003.

As the director of *Domus* Boeri offered an editorial approach that was decidedly more attentive to research and more incisive with respect to that of his predecessors (such as François Burkhardt and Dean Sudijc), though not immune to legitimate questions and criticisms that it would be impossible to deal with here. He relaunched the magazine in a decisive manner, declaring his editorial intentions in the cover photo of the very first issue, dedicated to Giancarlo de Carlo and the 1968 Triennale: an unequivocal affirmation of how the role of contemporary architecture need not exhaust itself in the built object, and of how it is necessary to believe in the social utility of the profession, not only for its intrinsic potential to modify space, but also for its ability to produce an awareness about the spaces in which we live.

This is, at its base, the line of research pursued by the Multiplicity research agency, of which Boeri is the founder, and through which he has realised installations for some of the most important architectural and contemporary art institutions, including Documenta in Kassel, the Venice Biennale, Kuntswerke in Berlin, Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris, General Foundation in Vienna and the TN Probe Gallery in Tokyo. With analogous intentions he has also curated numerous exhibitions in Bordeaux, Brussels, Kassel, Perth and Tokyo, and publications include *Mutations* with Hans Ulrich Obrist, Rem Koolhaas and Sanford Kwinter. He has also designed installations about the new urban condition for the Institut Français d'Architecture (IFA) in Paris and the Venice Biennale.

However, as it may now be possible to imagine, we cannot understand his research and his production without considering that the thin red line that connects and runs through them

Boeri Studio with Gruppo Suburbia, AI Engineering srl, AI Studio Associati and INROS Lackner AG, Mediterranean Environmental Deck Park (Med Park), Naples, 2005.



Boeri Studio with Gianandrea Barreca, Nicola Bianchi, Luca Bucci, Giovanni La Varra and Andrea Vigano, ENEL Bagnore 3, Santa Fiora, Grosseto, Tuscany, 2001
Along the slopes of the Amiata mountain, near Grosseto, the project called for the reduction of the visual and environmental impact of the geothermal plant, originally built by the ENEL electric company. Refusing the temptation of a mimetic approach, Boeri Studio proposed the transformation of the building into a landmark, restoring its quality as a 'useful machine' located in the Tuscan landscape. The large, suspended structure creates a relationship between the two buildings, making them appear as a single volume immersed in the sloping mountain landscape.

translates into an attempt to demonstrate that the question of architecture is, substantially, a question of 'knowing' and knowledge. As the most lively and productive philosophy teaches us, in the changing of symbols of knowledge there is also a change in the object; things change, as does the horizon of the world and, as a result, the sense of man who inhabits it. It is a given that the architect who faces up to this problem cannot, ultimately, avoid living in a condition of schizophrenia: there is the necessity, on the one hand, of analysing the problems that are strongly characterised by an inclusive theoretical approach and, on the other, the necessity of reaching a design synthesis that is by its nature much less inclusive with respect to the phase of analysis.

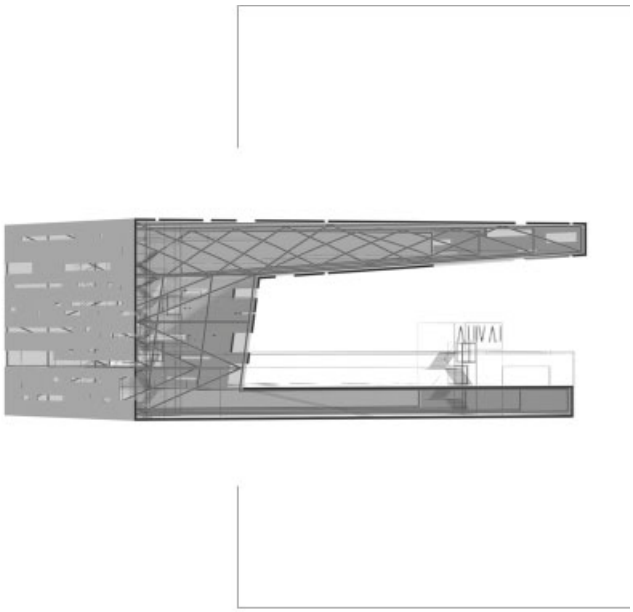
All of this must occur, inevitably, without the second being a direct consequence of the first, or avoiding the existence of a close relationship between the two. And this is demonstrated by those architects who, incapable of operating in an analytical terrain, resolve their more controversial problems and nodes using intuitions that lead to the realisation of masterpieces, and, vice versa, as attested to by the lack of, or pessimistic production of, professionals who instead reveal themselves to be acute analysts.

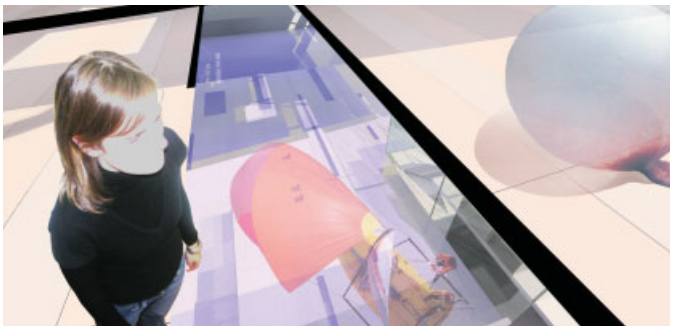
Besides this condition of schizophrenia, there is a second one that matures together with the constant attempt to elaborate a mental environment and to pursue a cultural project that does not translate into a doctrine, but into an 'in-progress' interpretative style – not an attempt to 'translate concepts', but, rather, to 'shift them'. Boeri provides an example when he invites us to think differently about borders that cannot be related back to walls or lines:

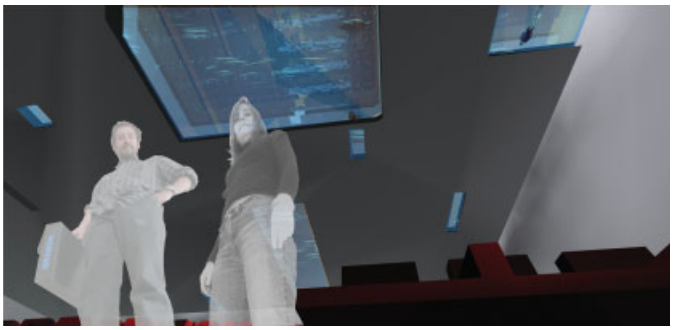
'If, once and for all, we stop believing that the more controversial and conflicting borders of today all have only the nature of long Walls interrupted by control Towers and check points. If we began to observe with the proper attention the variegated multitude of borders that break up and surround our daily life, the multitude of borders that fragment or shatter entire parts of our planet, we could perhaps understand that borders – whether we like it or not – are also sensors of the dynamics of the contemporary world. Dynamic and three-dimensional "instruments", pulsating with energy and friction that accompany – for better or worse – present history.'[1]

Projects such as Solid Sea, the master plan for the islands of Hoeksche to the south of Rotterdam, or for the city of Taranto, the ports of Genoa, Naples, Cagliari, Trieste and

Boeri Studio, The Sea in the Home of the Mediterranean, Marseille, France, 2004
This international competition-winning project for La Villa in Marseille includes the construction of a new 'home of the Mediterranean' along the banks of the historic port. The 7,000-square-metre (75,347-square-foot) multifunctional building will contain spaces for research and documentation related to the Mediterranean. Its perimeter is labile: the sea penetrates the horizontal planes of the building, creating a public space made of water that can accommodate fishing boats, sail boats, temporary exhibitions and performances or, more simply, be used as a pool.







Boeri Studio, The Sea in the Home of the Mediterranean, Marseille, France, 2004

More than recipes and solutions, Boeri's work raises questions, presents doubts and invites us to confront the contemporary conditions that existed at the turn of the last century and those that we are currently experiencing.

Boeri Studio with Gruppo Suburbia, AI Engineering srl, AI Studio Associati and INROS Lackner AG, Mediterranean Environmental Deck Park (Med Park), Naples, 2005
Designed for the competition for the requalification of the vast area of the port in Naples, the project reflects upon the nature of the space between the city and the port and identifies a new, intermediate environment that acts as an autonomous and finite element, with its own language and characteristics, different from the buildings and spaces of the port and those of the city. Med Park is dedicated to welcoming passengers and tourists from the sea and land. A new urban park that acts as a place of mediation between the city and the activities of the port, the environmental and technological values of the network of infrastructural elements and the reduction of energy consumption are the project's three primary ordering elements and characteristics.

Boeri Studio with Gruppo Suburbia, AI Engineering srl, AI Studio Associati and INROS Lackner AG, Mediterranean Environmental Deck Park (Med Park), Naples, 2005.

Salonika (which allowed the architect to elaborate his own geopolitical vision and obtain a key to reading urban space) are based on the conviction that the best angle for looking at the contemporary world is not that provided by even the most seductive explanations of numerous interpreters and scholars, according to whom the space that characterises the landscape has become 'smooth' or 'liquid' based on the free distribution of networks of communication and information and the trajectories that weave the relationships of a globalised economy with their incessant flows of goods and people. On the contrary, according to Boeri, space (at least in this part of the world), 'seems to have become a dense agglomerate of sub-groupings that corrugate the landscape, laying claim to their identity'[2] (for example, Solid Sea, which indicates how, when we delve into the Mediterranean, identities are inevitably and irremediably codified). Furthermore: 'Instead of a free flow, our movements increasingly assume the form of jolts and stops, a sequence of "stop and go", a ballet of passwords or ID cards. As much as the proliferation of borders can be interpreted as a reaction to the fluid movement of bodies and images, as a response to the multiplication of the possibilities or relationship or as a defence of ancient identities, the question that comes to mind is whether this is perhaps the best angle for observing the contemporary world. As if it were the borders, and not the flows, that are its true characteristic.'[3]

More than recipes and solutions, Boeri's work raises questions, presents doubts and invites us to confront the contemporary conditions that existed at the turn of the last century and those that we are currently experiencing. In the space of a thousand words, I have here attempted to speak about his work without ever analysing his works and projects. In the end, I have spoken of architecture without almost ever making reference to it. Even if on the surface this may appear to be a paradox, it appeared to me as the most coherent means not only to speak of Boeri's work, but also to follow up, and thus give another meaning to, the act with which, in July 2002, he declined the invitation from the Agenzia italiana d'architettura (Aid'A) and refused to participate in an exhibition in the Venice Biennale Gardens, denouncing the absence of a high-profile cultural project and an approach towards a shared architecture.[4] AD

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

Notes

1. http://www.archphoto.it/IMAGES/boeri/boeri2.htm.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. The collective exhibition called for a comparison of 20 architects dealing with the theme of urban solitude which, in reference to 20 heterogeneous clients ('a non-EU national, an elderly person or bearer of a handicap, a child, a bather, an alpine climber' etc) would have presented, within a fenced-off area 5 metres (16 feet) in height (!) their own works.

‘Shared Play’
Italo Rota

An enthusiastic collector of plastic toys and the kitsch, Italo Rota approaches architecture with a joyous sense of play. As Luca Molinari explains, for Rota architecture is a ‘game for adults’, offering opportunities for a colourful inclusion of elements yet also an essential *joie de vivre*.

Within the current realm of Italian architecture, Italo Rota represents an interesting resource and an important example. A resource because of the maturity with which he is progressively confronting the gorgon that is the relationship between history and Modern architecture, indicating a new approach that is free, above all, of the academicism that has crystallised around the central theme of the sterile contrast between a stylistic pastiche and Modernist opposition. An important example because he has constructed his own approach and made his fortune outside Italy, to which he returned only after a reconsideration of the design process and defining an operative approach that differs widely from national practices.

Born in 1943, Rota was educated at the Milan Polytechnic and, above all, in the diverse schools of Albini and Gregotti Associati. At a young age he moved to Paris to work with Gae Aulenti and follow the construction of the Gare d'Orsay. He quickly branched out on his own, completing residential projects and surprising exhibition displays. Two that warrant mention here are the exhibits for and with Bruno Fortier: 'La métropole immaginaire: Un Atlas de Paris' (1989) and 'Amate città' (1990), which were followed by competition-winning entries for the French painting galleries at the Cour Carrè at the Louvre, and the urban design of the centre of Nantes. From the beginning, Rota has cultivated personal obsessions that have translated into an obsession for collection: first of printed publications dedicated to 20th-century architecture (in fact, he is the most significant private collector in the world), and later of objects and symbols that nurture his Pop-glam universe, from science-fiction and space paraphernalia to the surprises found in Kinder eggs and any sort of simple toy.

In the mid-1990s Rota returned to Italy, dividing his time between Milan and Bologna. His first commissions revealed a universe of forms, languages and personal references,

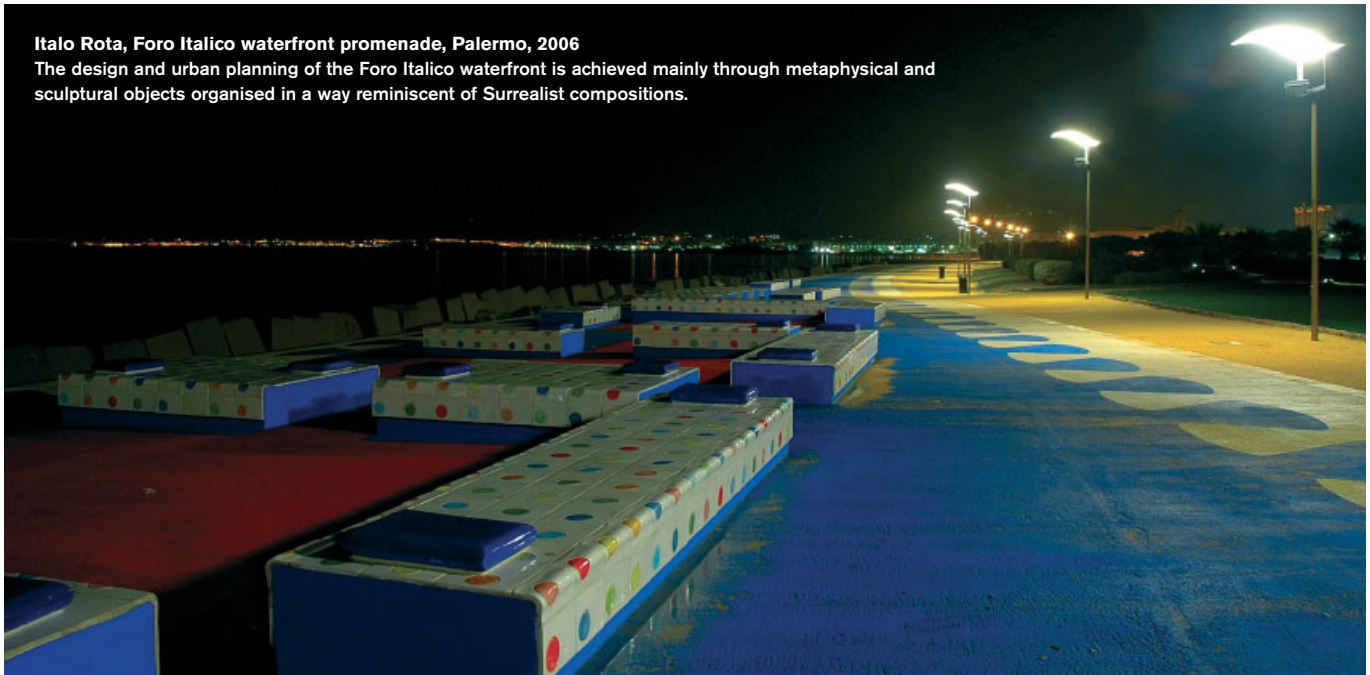
The library is articulated around a single volume, a large void overlooked by balconies and coloured boxes, marking an alternation between floors and islands.

A sequence of light-filled, colourful and continually changing spaces is joined by unusual and special circulation routes.

Italo Rota, Public library, Anzola d'Emilia, Emilia-Romagna, 2002
The public library in the city of Anzola d'Emilia is an example of Rota's joyful approach. It combines, in a convincing and innovative way, lighting, colour and a playful articulation of space.

Italo Rota, Public library, San Sisto, Perugia, Umbria, 2004
The new library looks like a UFO landed in the San Sisto landscape. With this odd form, Rota continues his research into a joyful, post-Pop architecture that attempts to create a new urban context rather than imitate the pre-existing one.

Italo Rota, Foro Italico waterfront promenade, Palermo, 2006
The design and urban planning of the Foro Italico waterfront is achieved mainly through metaphysical and sculptural objects organised in a way reminiscent of Surrealist compositions.



Italo Rota, Design for 'The Entertainers' exhibition, Stazione Leopolda, Florence, 2001
This exhibition celebrating 50 years of fashion in Italy attempts to give the sensation of a powerful and productive world based on ideas. Rota achieves this with a charming architecture that plays with the idea of lightness.

autonomous and provocatively transversal with respect to the stylistic fixity of the national scene. However, during the last decade his attention has been fixed on the febrile reconsideration of the idea of public space in all its possible variations, from museum exhibition design to fashion houses, from the redesign of public spaces to libraries, from brand-name bars to display pavilions. This is a challenge that remixes the idea of architecture as the production of forms and architecture as a place of emotion that is erotic, symbolic and complex.

Rota's architecture can be considered as a 'game for adults' in which he eliminates the pedagogical idea of architecture as the place of education and daily life and pursues, rather, the idea of space as a continuous and intelligent experience in which different images, forms and languages come together to create unexpected scenarios and visions and profoundly archaic collections of elements. Two of his projects in particular are representative of this vision.

The mediatheques in Anzola d'Emilia, near Bologna, and the San Sisto district of Perugia, built between 1998 and 2004, are objects that throw one off guard: the renovation of an existing building and a new urban object. Both play with few, well-used materials: natural light, colour and amazement. Both use architecture to create a focal point in contexts without their own force. Both are public spaces as a result of their ability to attract, to welcome visitors during the various hours of the day and night, to activate the dosing of colour and light in order to amaze, and generate curiosity. Both create a sequence of internal spaces as an active and mature experience of architecture.

Other noteworthy examples include the system of spaces for the new public transportation line in Brescia and the new waterfront in Palermo, completed between 2000 and 2006. Both of these projects deal with the need to reflect upon the nature of contemporary public space within heavily layered contexts, and were guided by Rota's experience in Nantes. At Brescia, Rota creates a sequence of light spaces that are colourful and ironic, different in physical and formal terms from their surroundings. Waiting for a bus becomes a curious intermezzo. A different story is that told in Palermo, where this waterfront city, separated from the sea, recovers its Mediterranean facade for the first time. Rota throws us off guard by creating a long, serene, open field of green grass – a void space at the edges of a dense city. Along the edges a system of off-kilter elements reconstructs the confines of the new space: a sequence of hundreds of brightly coloured anthropomorphic pylons in local ceramic give rhythm to the pedestrian path, pergolas and benches frame the view of the sea, light fixtures simulate a festive idea of shared play. Public space, in a city with serious problems of criminality, here becomes a liberating and playful experience. Δ

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

Nothing More than a Fragile Edge

Blurring the Boundaries with Mario Cucinella

The main focus of Mario Cucinella's work is an overlapping preoccupation with technology and the natural environment. In his hands buildings are transformed into complex climatic machines. **Anna Giorgi** explains how, when combined with an instinctive sense of place, these concerns allow Cucinella's buildings to remain open objects, fragments of a greater natural or urban system.

Mario Cucinella's cult of 'making' reiterates a few simple and apparently banal rules that are strictly tied to the act of building and guaranteeing environmental comfort. His is an emotion without spectacle, though it is derived from a shift in scale, relationships between mass and volume, textures and materials, variations between light and shadow and movements from warm to cold as one crosses a site. This may perhaps be the result of his training with Renzo Piano, a laic and concrete approach to the profession, critical attention to the demands of the market, and constant curiosity towards new materials and technologies without forgetting, however, emotion, sensations, perception – that extra something that architecture, in order to make history, must offer.

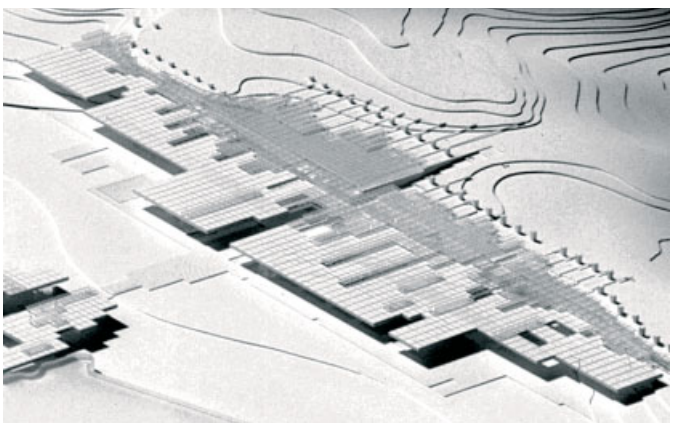
Cucinella was educated during the 1980s at the Faculty of Architecture in Genoa where he graduated under the tutelage of Giancarlo de Carlo, a figure who brought the grand themes of intervening in the city to the Ligurian capital, based on the theoretical and design experiences of Team X and CIAM (the International Congress of Modern Architecture). From his Parisian experience with Piano, Cucinella learned the concrete nature of design, of rigorous plans, and the sense of operating like a workshop, and an approach towards research, the use of technology in the practice of making architecture and a method and vision of construction. Two fundamental lines overlap in his work: an attention to the necessity of building developed around a new aesthetic of technology, and a research into the landscape, in which architecture metabolises with nature.

In 1992 Cucinella opened an office in Paris, and in 1999 his office in Bologna. The work of Mario Cucinella Architects (MCA) has since received numerous awards: an architectural award from the Akademie der Kunste in Berlin (1999), Outstanding Architect at the VIII World Renewable Energy Congress in Denver (2004), the Energy Performance+Architecture Award in Paris, and the Special Award for the Environment at the Cityscape World Architecture Congress held in Dubai.

MCA's work is underlined by a clear vision of the principles of Modernism; those that interpret architecture as a machine 'for dwelling'. The works of architecture are structured on a system of material and immaterial networks, transforming the building into a machine of connections that is capable of interacting with its context. Technology plays a central role for Cucinella, who uses innovation to resolve both environmental and spatial planning issues. The central aspect guiding his design work is curiosity, the ability to learn while making architecture. Contemporary design is an ever more integrated process that includes various disciplines, each of which works towards the positive completion and interpretation of a design, and for years now Cucinella has tested this interdisciplinary method, directing the various professionals with whom he works.

He dealt with the theme of renewable energy and energy savings in 1993 while renovating the Joint Research Centre (JRC) in Ispra, in collaboration with Ove Arup & Partners. This small project incorporates the research the architect was to develop further in the coming years.

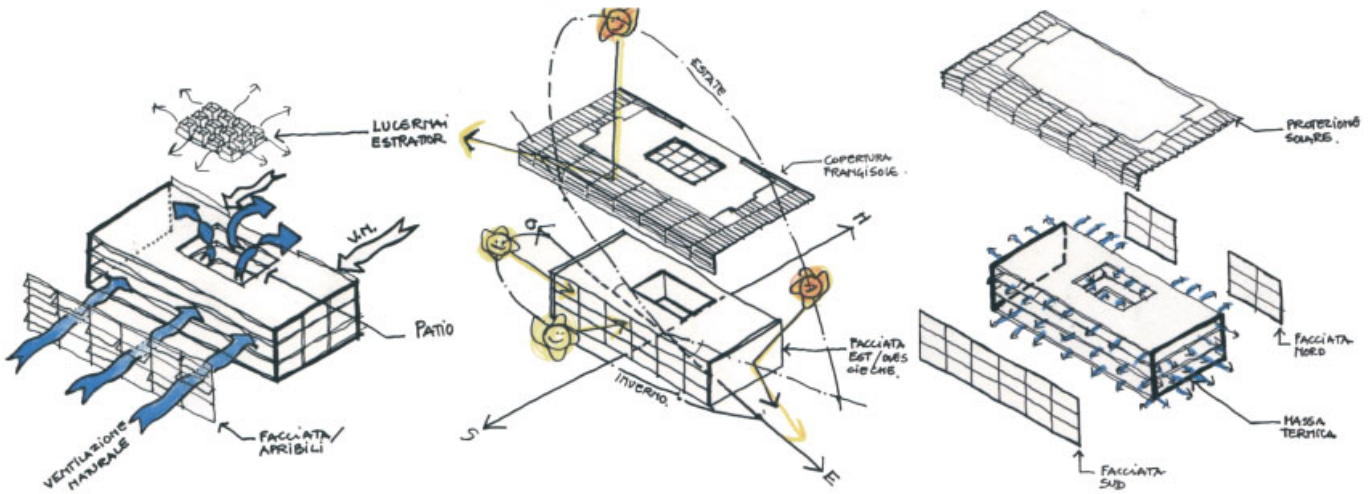
Mario Cucinella Architects, Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Lombardy, 1996
The project for the renovation of the Joint Research Centre focused on finding innovative energy-efficient and architectural solutions whose cost was offset by the energy saved by the complex over a maximum period of 15 years. The design phase concentrated on the study of the building and the necessary steps for taking maximum advantage of natural light and ventilation, while considering the existing volumes.



Mario Cucinella Architects, University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus, 1993
The master plan for the University of Cyprus interprets the insertion of the new campus as the creation of a new landscape integrated within the morphology of the existing context. The building, properly oriented, develops horizontally like a 'second skin' that extends across the landscape, taking maximum advantage of natural resources and providing the maximum reduction in energy consumption.

The office had already dealt with the environment, climate and renewable energy during the previous year in the competition for the master plan for the University of Cyprus campus in Nicosia, a 100,000-square-metre (1.08-million-square-foot) project located on a morphologically complex site.

Mario Cucinella Architects, Sino Italian Ecological and Energy Efficient Building (SIEEB), Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, 2006.



Mario Cucinella Architects, iGuzzini Lighting Company Headquarters, Recanati, Le Marche, 1997
The warm air from the iGuzzini offices is collected and emitted through ventilation grilles located on the sides of the skylights which, together with the control of the openings in the facade, are part of the cooling cycle during the interim seasons. The south- and north-facing facades are entirely transparent, and protection against solar heat gain is ensured throughout the building via a steel-fin roof that drops partially down over the facade, providing the necessary levels of shading/passage of the sun's rays at different times of the year.

Cucinella achieved international notoriety in 1997 with a highly publicised project that has become a manifesto for the work of MCA: the iGuzzini Lighting Company headquarters in Recanati. The project was commissioned after a generational change in the Guzzini family and thus the idea of marking a new company line. There are three design themes: the control of natural light, natural ventilation and the use of the existing thermal mass of the concrete structure. Transparency is used to introduce a new way of understanding the working environment. The Modernist machine, conceived of primarily as a space that guarantees the essential conditions for inhabitation, is transformed into a complex climatic machine that includes the outdoors and the interior space of the central atrium.

In 2003 MCA completed a project for the Unified Services Headquarters for the City of Bologna, which called for the unification, under one roof, of offices spread out in 21 different buildings. Cucinella here proposed an articulated spatial and philosophical concept based on a diagram of the fragmentation of a mass into three pieces, each with a different size and form. There is a desire, in this fringe condition located along a rail corridor, to create a new urban site with multiple paths and views. The strongest sign is the roof that rests on and models the volumes located at different levels, based on the principles of origami.

MCA reached the apotheosis of its research into the theme of energy and the environment in 2005 with the Sino Italian Ecological and Energy Efficient Building (SIEEB) at the Tsinghua University in Beijing. The project, promoted by the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Conservation, and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology, is the result of a collaboration between the BEST

Designed to house iGuzzini's administrative, commercial and managerial offices, the building pays particular attention to natural light, natural ventilation and the use of thermal masses. The offices are distributed on four levels organised around a central atrium that contains a mineral garden featuring fragments of stone and bamboo stalks.

Mario Cucinella Architects, Unified Services Headquarters, Bologna, due for completion 2008
A response to a competition held by the City of Bologna to design a new unified municipal services building, the intention here was to reunite, in a single functional and efficient building, various offices and more than a thousand employees who were previously spread out across 21 different buildings. Furthermore, the inclusion of commercial and service spaces for the neighbourhood contributes to the requalification of a portion of the city that needed to be reconnected to the city centre, restitching the fissure created by the location of the railway corridor.

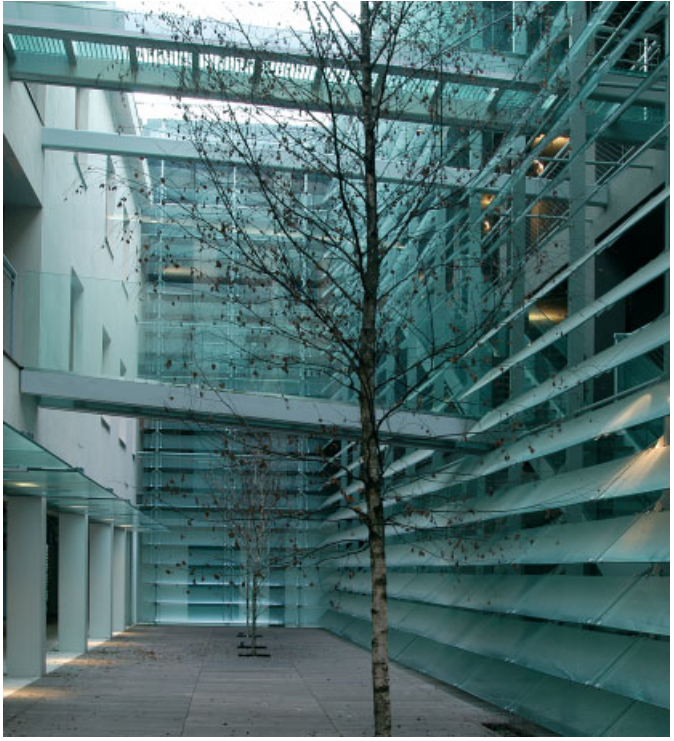
Department at the Milan Polytechnic and the Bologna-based office, both of whom worked with the directives issued by the Kyoto Protocol regarding the reduction of environmentally harmful emissions. It is an important result for this Italian office and justifies years of research into renewable energies and the environment. The building, on the university campus, features a complex programme that includes various departments, laboratories, an auditorium and a display space dedicated to Italian technologies. Conceived of like a leaf that uses and transforms sunlight, the new structure is characterised by south-facing terraced gardens that become green spaces, and a mimetic technology of 1,000 square metres (10,764 square feet) of photovoltaic panels that provide a substantial amount of the building's energy requirements. Technology becomes a service and the facade is equipped with a double skin whose external glazing has been treated with a special surface that attenuates the effects of the sun's rays and avoids problems of glare.

The difficult theme of the insertion of new works of architecture within a historical context offered the Bologna office the possibility to affirm its programmatic intentions. In Cremona, the office dealt with one of the city's most representative buildings, the former Casa di Bianco, which had been heavily transformed in the 1920s and during the second half of the 20th century. The symbolic value of the intervention was that of eliminating the historical falsifications that had been perpetrated over time. Cucinella operated with discretion, without altering the volumetric appearance, working from the inside and replacing the stereometric and modular 1970s facade.

Mario Cucinella Architects, Sino Italian Ecological and Energy Efficient Building (SIEEB), Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, 2006
The SIEEB building is the result of a collaboration between the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Conservation and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology as part of the Kyoto Protocol for the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions and a vast programme to deal with environmental issues. It contains various departments, laboratories, an auditorium and exhibition spaces dedicated to the presentation of Italian technologies.

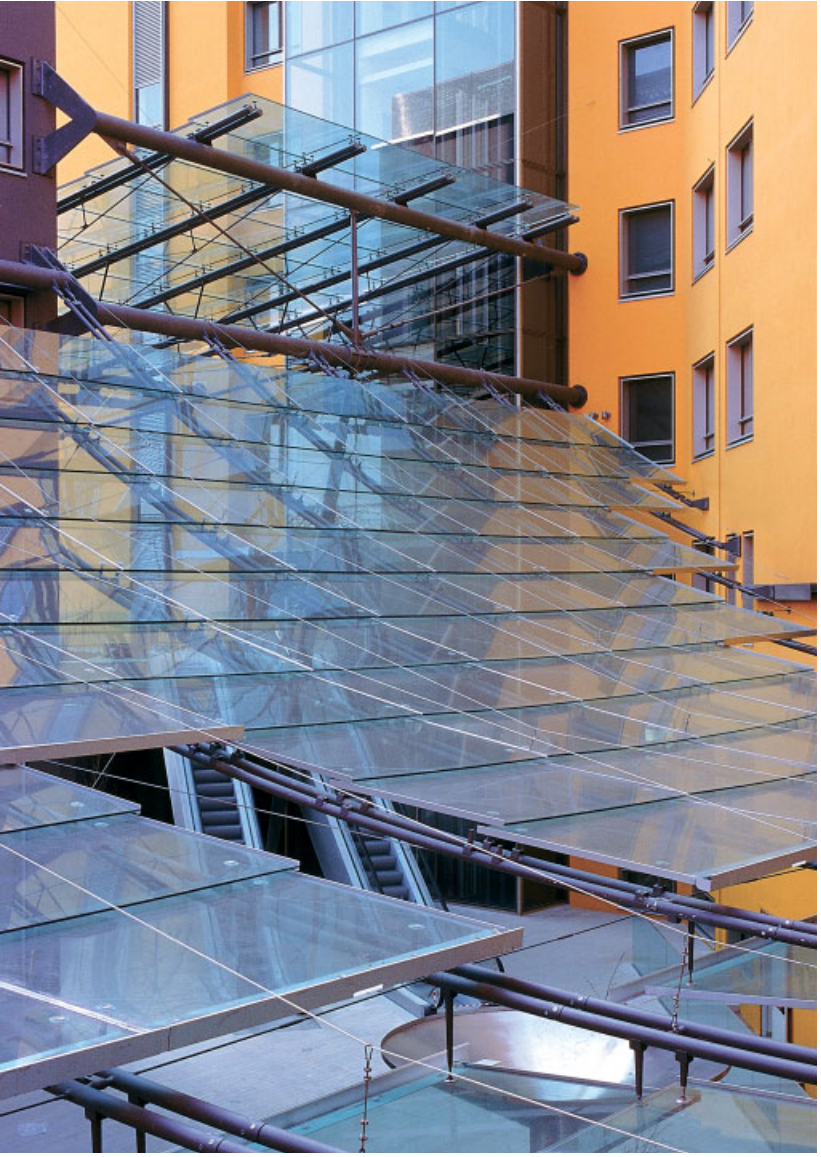
The building is designed like a leaf that transforms sunlight into energy. A series of south-facing terraced gardens is home to thick vegetation and more than 1,000 square metres (10,764 square feet) of photovoltaic panels that provide a substantial amount of the building's energy requirements. The horseshoe shape is in juxtaposition with the sun's movements, thus allowing for continuous natural illumination of the offices and reducing energy requirements.

Mario Cucinella Architects, Casa di Bianco, Cremona, Lombardy, 2005
Cucinella's proposal for the renovation of the Casa di Bianco calls for the restoration of the 16th-century facade, the renovation of the tower, and a more consistent intervention on the modern block in the search for a respectful relationship with the historic context. Local materials and elements typical of the area, in particular shutters and polychrome colours, are reinterpreted in a contemporary way.



A garden is created inside the historic patio, onto which face the balconies that provide access to the residences and offices on the upper floors. This internal courtyard is characterised by a continuous facade of glass sheets, fixed to fork-like elements and mounted on steel supports to protect the balconies used for internal circulation.

Mario Cucinella Architects, eBo Exhibition Pavilion, Bologna, 2003
Cucinella's project for the eBo urban centre meets the twofold need of presenting current and future projects and finding a suitable and visible location in which to house them. The site is located in the middle of the city centre and realised through the recovery of a subterranean space that functions as a connection with various surrounding points as well as providing access to the Piazza Re Enzo. Above ground, on a slightly raised surface, two transparent pavilions create an entrance and contain some of the display spaces.



Mario Cucinella Architects, Office building, Via Bergognone, Milan, 2004
The renovation of the office building on Via Bergognone was the result of an international competition promoted by the Hines real-estate company. Located in an area that is dense with industrial buildings currently being decommissioned, the project calls for the integral renovation of a complex of four buildings from the 1960s that create an internal courtyard. By interpreting the blocks as a single urban building, the intervention maintains the existing volumes, modifying their functions and modernising the design of the overall complex through the use of new windows, the opening of double-height spaces and the new design of the courtyard garden.

Still relevant to the aforementioned theme, we find one of Cucinella's most well-known projects, the eBo Exhibition Pavilion in Bologna, a contemporary intervention located on one of the city's most famous sites. Unfortunately the project was removed following opposition from traditionalists who did not understand the meaning of this small, contemporary display pavilion, immediately identifiable within the uniform context of the urban fabric, within the historical city of Bologna. The concept behind the precious object was the result of the desire to underline the role of the structure known as the 'urban centre', designed to foster discussion of urban transformations with the public. Cucinella focused on the topic of electronic information and created two elliptical forms, each with a surface area of roughly 200 square metres

Nothing more than a fragile edge separates the gesture from the sign, a building from a work of architecture, the future from history.

(2,153 square feet). The two ellipses were set beside one another and rotated until they reached a point of mediation, the space between them becoming the entrance to the pavilion, creating an element of tension with the site and its history, and defining the threshold and the symbolic point of access. This was a soft dialogue between the past and the contemporary in an area that had previously been mishandled and heavily transformed, creating a temporary and conceptual distance.

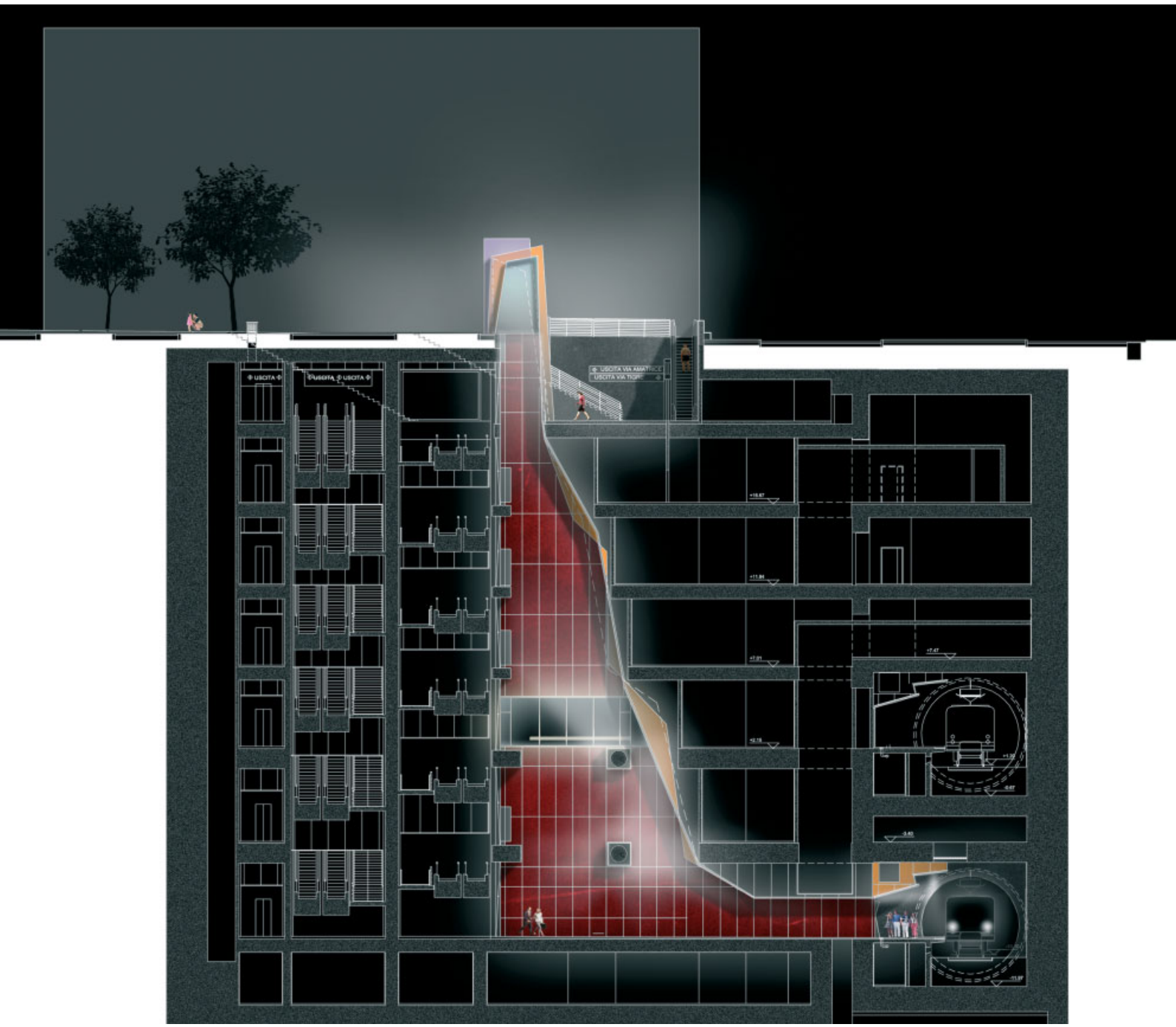
Something different can be found in the response to the requests made by the Hines Company regarding the renovation of its office building on Via Bergognone in Milan. This area, located between the Navigli, the ring road, and the periphery is characterised by the presence of industrial buildings that are currently being decommissioned. The complex is made up of four buildings originally used as offices and storage space by the Italian postal service during the 1960s and 1970s. The project is particularly complex because it calls for the maintenance of the existing volumes and the redesign of the entire site, coordinating it through a single material and spatial image. Cucinella's approach was to give greater importance to the new building, redesigning the facade with a transparent and highly technological envelope. Two fundamental steps were key to this intervention: the redesign of the external skin, with a clear desire to recover the modern identity of the industrial buildings, and the important and effective work undertaken in the interior courtyard, redesigned by demolishing part of the building to reinforce the internal views and perspectives.

Thus we find the key to the quality of Cucinella's work, which moves between the conscientious and modern application of a constantly evolving Rationalism and an attention to the emotion a space can generate. What is more, the space does not become the object of a self-referential definition that is all too evident and closed, but is transformed instead into a fragment, designed with care, passion and curiosity, part of an extended urban or natural system. Nothing more than a fragile edge separates the gesture from the sign, a building from a work of architecture, the future from history. It is already important that we move in this direction, and when the spell functions it creates poetry. Δ

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

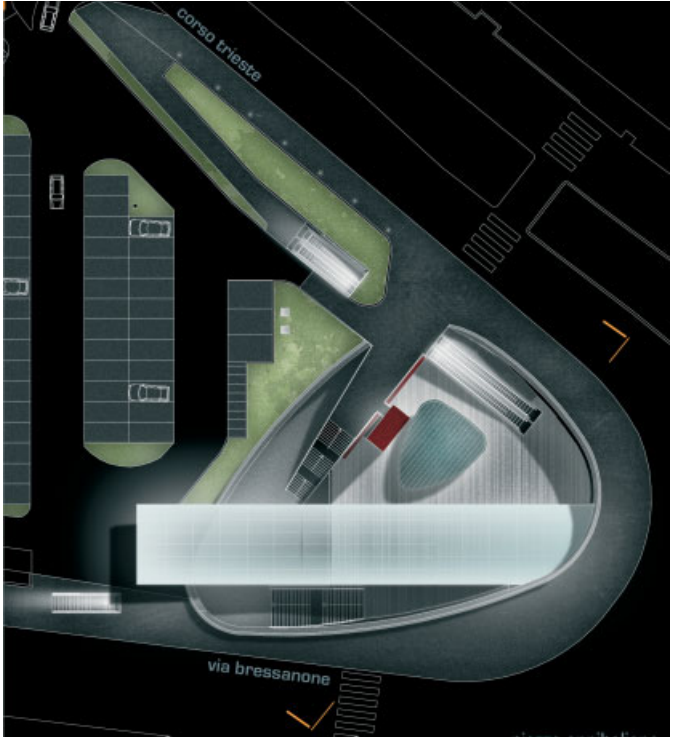
Arlotti-Beccu-Desideri-Raimondo

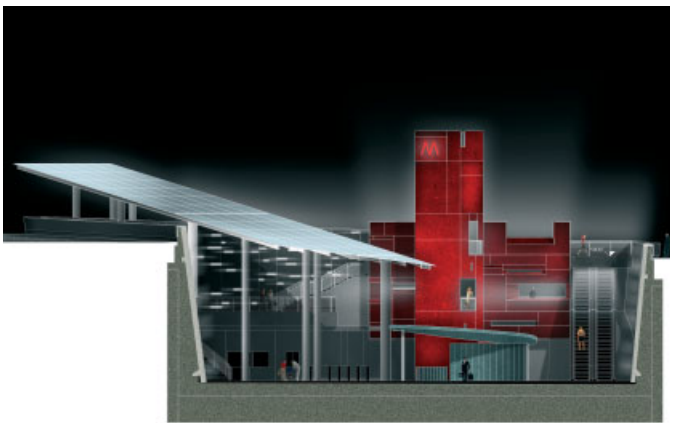
Currently one of the most active offices in Rome, Arlotti-Beccu-Desideri-Raimondo (ABDR) has seven major projects under way or at the point of completion. Massimo Locci explains why, despite being theoretically and methodologically rigorous, the practice's work cannot be readily categorised. Unique in its combination of a purist Modernist language with an aptitude for expressive informality, the office is also proactive in its adoption of bioclimatic technologies and its understanding of new communication models.



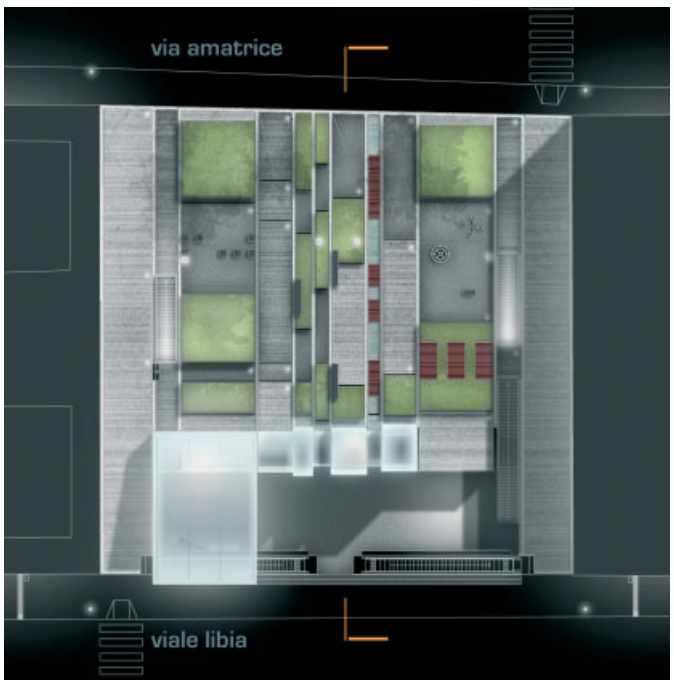
The work of Arlotti-Beccu-Desideri-Raimondo (ABDR), the result of 30 years of research, dating back to their university studies, is characterised by a mix of experimentation and construction. Their explicit objective is the creation of an architecture based on a disciplinary process, where technology has new ends: it is transformed into an instrument to be used during construction and to provide the expressive value of an architectural language. Formed in the 1980s as a professional association, the group initially dialogued with, and later entered into, a crisis in the Postmodern movement and the 'paper architecture' that was so prevalent in Italy at the time. Through their adherence to new international approaches they moved towards a closer relationship with, and integration of, morphological definitions, and building and construction systems, and through the advanced development of complexity converted their university-based approach, finalised in simple and abstract compositions, into a true process of spatial innovation.

By actualising the technological issues related to new materials, energy savings and bioclimatic design, ABDR has managed to create a new – at least in Italy – methodological synthesis between architectural experimentation and engineering. It is no surprise, then, that Paolo Desideri, the son of a professor of structural mechanics, collaborated with Sergio Musmeci and, as his first research project, published a monograph on Pier Luigi Nervi (1979).[1] Attraction to the traditions of Italian engineering, in particular the large postwar infrastructural and industrial projects, was the main focus during this period during which Desideri dealt with the





Plan and section of the entrance and public plaza of the Piazza Annibaliano underground station.



relationship between 'science and the art of building'. In his text, he highlighted his interest in professional competence over professionalism, and the necessity of focusing directly on construction, developing, within his own activity, a characteristic that Nervi himself supported 'by the conviction that obeying the laws of statics is, on its own, a guarantee of the aesthetic result'.[2] Architecture, furthermore, must resolve more than represent the issues at hand. This condition is not symptomatic of excessive certainties but, perhaps, of compositional reasoning and doubts that are reformulated within a system of references, even external to the specific world of architecture.

Difficult to place within a precise movement or school, ABDR can be directly connected to the roots of the Modern movement, the first period of Rationalism and 20th-century Italian architecture, precisely that of Mies van der Rohe,

ABDR with Maire Engineering and V Testa, B1 subway-line station, Rome, due for completion 2008
Plan and section of the Piazza Gondar station – a total of 30 metres (98 feet) of caved bioclimatic architecture.

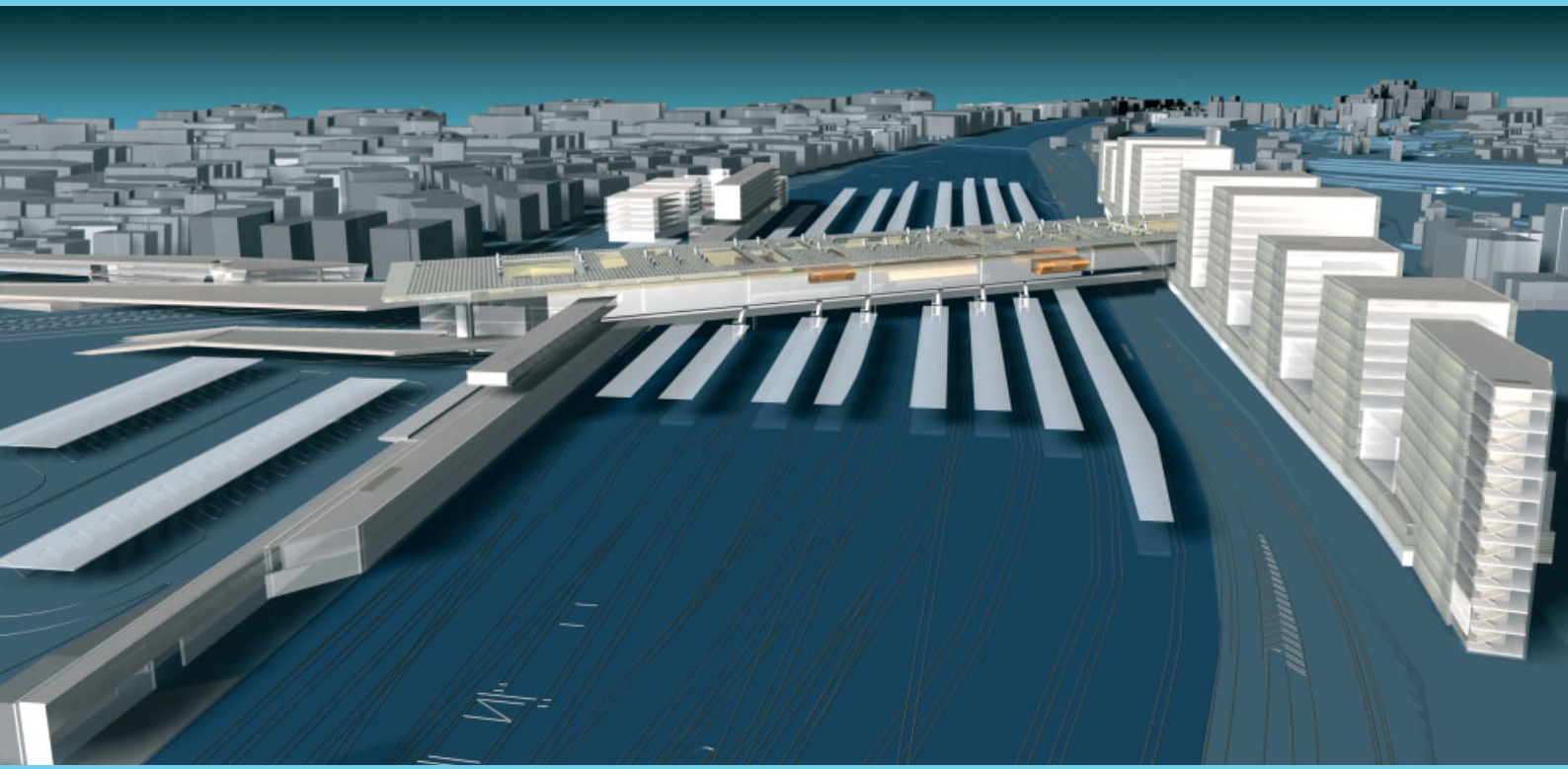
ABDR with SAC SpA and IGIT, Project for the reconstruction of the Serra-ex-Piacentini greenhouse, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome, due for completion 2007
Renderings of the glass volume for temporary exhibitions.

Johannes Duiker, Richard Neutra, Adalberto Libera, Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini, and Luigi Moretti. Simultaneously, the group has also been able to keep pace with the work of their elders (Renzo Piano, Constantino Dardi, Alessandro Anselmi, Massimiliano Fuksas and Franco Purini), as well as with more recent and important international experiences (Norman Foster, Herzog & de Meuron, Jean Nouvel, Rem Koolhaas and the Dutch School). ABDR are convinced that the language of architecture is solidly rooted in technique, materials and the culture of building, and it is possible to read in their work a plurality of approaches, not all of which are flaunted, but which are more methodological than stylistic: we cannot deny their adhesion to a high-tech and Minimalist language, the attraction to the expressive possibilities of the informal and the new paradigms of communication.

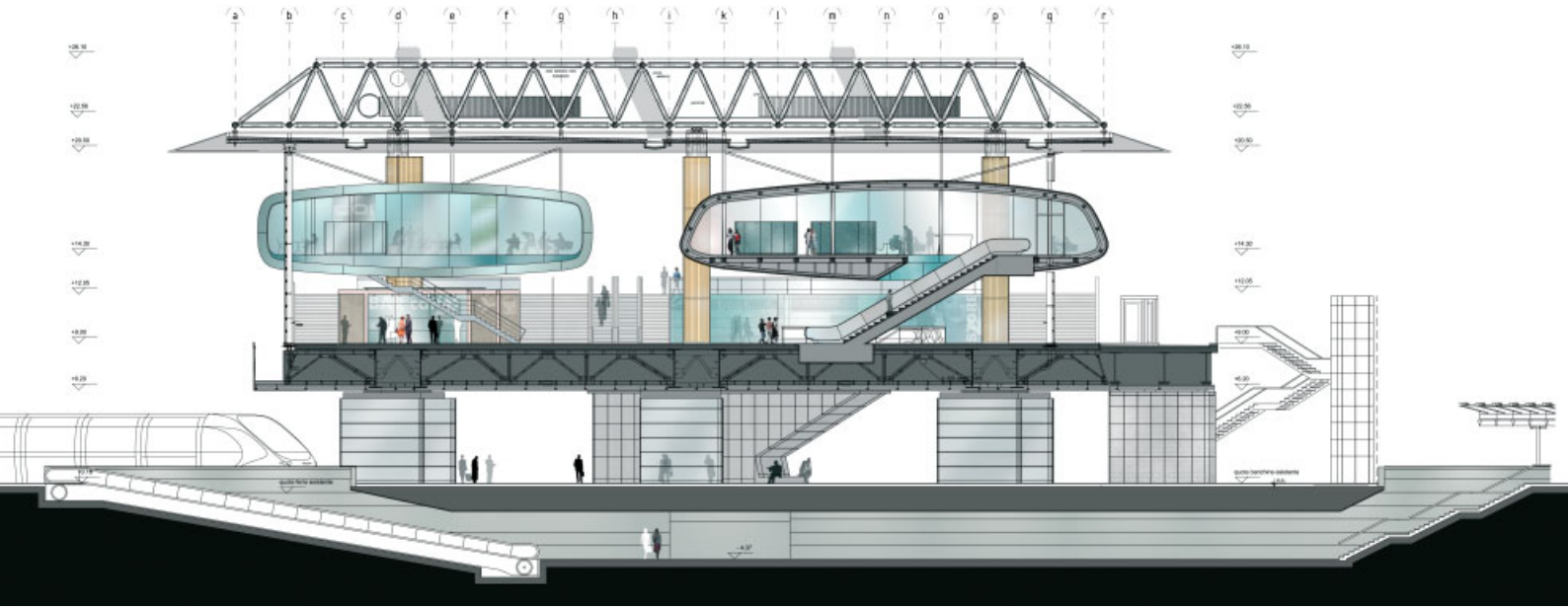
As part of their three-tiered involvement with practice, ABDR's experiments through design competitions and university research are, in any case, always rigorous in both theoretical and methodological terms. Extremely capable of managing the consensus resulting from a series of victories in important competitions, they are perhaps currently the most active office in Rome, at least in terms of the importance of their commissions. They have seven large projects under construction or recently completed in the capital, ranging from the new urban and railway infrastructures for the high-speed rail line, to the B1 subway-line stations, the

Extremely capable of managing the consensus resulting from a series of victories in important competitions, they are perhaps currently the most active office in Rome, at least in terms of the importance of their commissions.

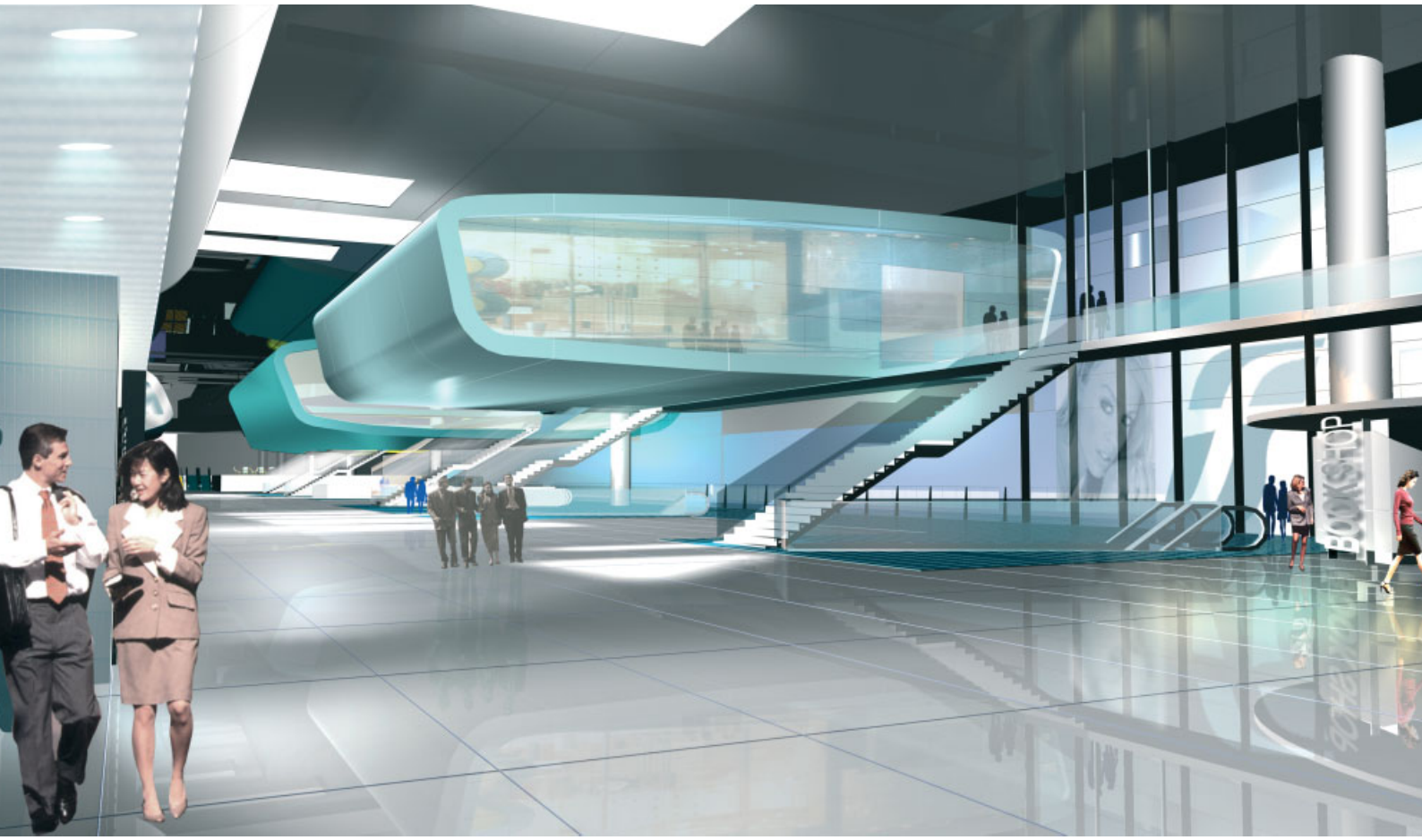
reconstruction of the Serra-ex-Piacentini greenhouse at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni, their display for the Lapidarium at the Palazzo Venezia Museum, new residential neighbourhood in Tormarancia, new office park on Via Tiburtina and the new parks plan for the EUR neighbourhood, without forgetting the projects for Lecce and Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto in Sicily, where they built their first works back in the 1980s. Each of these projects is effective in terms of its spatial value and the relationship between the formal mechanism and the use of technology; they are elegant and essential, without any

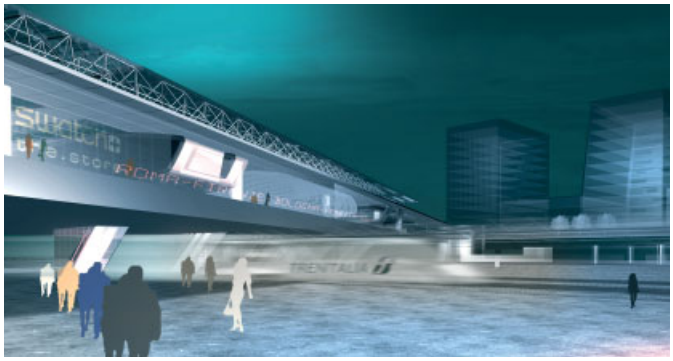


ABDR with N Cazzato, M Merlo and E Calabrese, Tiburtina High-Speed Rail Station, Rome, due for completion 2008
General view of 3-D model. The bridge of the new station will allow the restitching of two neighbourhoods divided by the railway strip.



ABDR with N Cazzato, M Merlo and E Calabrese, Tiburtina High-Speed Rail Station, Rome, due for completion 2008
Section, interior views and general view of 3-D model.





aesthetic frills, and vibrantly expressive and attentive to functional and bioclimatic requirements.

For the reconstruction of the former Piacentini greenhouse at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni, in order to avoid any direct confrontation with the historic language of the palatial building, the solutions adopted are marked by a general level of simplification through the techniques of subtraction, lightness and transparency, while simultaneously avoiding both re-propositions of historical models or the all too imaginable display of technological overstatement. The primary objective pursued is the functional and formal integration of the architectural organism originally designed by Pio Piacentini. However, the new greenhouse structure also represents an opportunity for the urban reconnection and requalification of this portion of the city.

Thanks to its linearity and volumetric simplicity, and the lightness of the structural solutions adopted for the suspension of the glazing, the result is a surprising luminous and symbolic inversion between day and night – from a fixed diamond it becomes a dematerialised and luminescent volume that acts as an 'urban lighthouse'. The design is particularly attentive to environmental and bioclimatic issues, resolved through the use of thermofluid building technologies and the modern characteristics of glass, as well as through morphology and the formal play of the building. The glass structure was constructed using large, structural glass sheets supported by a system of vertical guy wires and steel anchors, and the roof, once again in glass, with slender sun-shading devices, is hung by vertical rods from the structure of the exterior arched profile.

One of the design themes ABDR is most involved with is the redesign of the connective and functional fabrics of the city. The new Tiburtina High Speed Rail Station, like a two-faced Janus, recomposes the fracture in the urban fabric and creates a new level of architectural density between the Nomentano and Pietralata neighbourhoods, historically separated by the rail corridor. In addition to being a territorial infrastructure, it is also important at the urban scale because, via a structure of relevant public works, it represents an opportunity for the recovery of abandoned areas and the reconnection and valorisation of two areas, creating a new centrality where architecture is the protagonist. The large plate, which acts as the service structure and point of interchange for international passengers, is also a layer of the city that is superimposed on the rail tracks and, simultaneously, a commercial gallery and covered urban boulevard. The bridge building, through its layering, creates a co-presence of functions and spaces, each with its own formal and expressive character, an amalgam of microcosms that restores complexity and variation to a historical context. The image of the new infrastructure is strongly characterised by the immediate context and the urban landscape in its entirety. It improves and enriches it, creating a new principle of settlement based on the differentiation and the specificity of its parts. Playing with the density/fluidity of the connective fabrics and the accentuation of plastic values, hierarchy and the conflict between various figures, the project becomes emblematic of the new approach to Italian architecture, a manifestation of an uncompromising adherance to a contemporary language.

The same ordering principles and variations also inspire the two stations of the B1 subway line. The Piazza Annibalino station, in particular, creates a polarity within an insignificant area, a space that becomes important because it converts edge conditions into positive conditions (above all when a spatial configuration is lacking) and valorises unexpressed potential, in functional terms and relative to the perception of the important adjacent archaeological area. The large excavation allows for a reduction in the distance from grade to the track level – more than 30 metres (98 feet) – representing the characterising element of the context, an enclosed public square featuring a concentration of different activities and into which is set a large canopy, the heteronymous object, willingly out of scale and functioning as an urban marker.

ABDR's projects offer continuity, and qualitatively reinforce the positive process of the urban renewal of Rome that began with the construction of Piano's Auditorium and continued with the projects of other stars such as Zaha Hadid, Odile Decq, Richard Meier and Fuksas, all of which have contributed to making Rome one of the world's leading architectural cities. Δ

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

Notes

1. Paolo Desideri, Pier Luigi Nervi Jnr, Giuseppe Positano (eds), *Pier Luigi Nervi*, Zanichelli (Bologna), 1979.
2. Ibid, p 6.

Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo

Massimo Locci describes the work of Sicilian architect Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo, 'an obstinate perfectionist with a great deal of charisma' who works with 'functional rigour' and 'absolute formal abstraction'. He explains how, in the sensitive context of Sicily's historic urban centres, Grasso Cannizzo has taken early 20th-century buildings, cleaned up the exteriors and emptied the interiors, and rigorously inserted her own 'rarefied pieces'.

Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo, DPN Wine Cellar, Noto, Sicily, 2003
A minimalist volume (semihypogean) set discreetly into the rural landscape.

The work of Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo has three particular characteristics: the decomposition of space into architectural microcosms and their recomposition as a formal unity; a syntactic distinction and juxtaposition of the parts; and a reduction to the bare essentials of the matrix of design, composition, geometry, technology, material and meaning. These aspects are all interconnected and permeated by her adherence to a rigorous logical-conceptual statute and influenced by a profound sensibility to art, the history of place and the landscape. These are the strong points that, in the words of Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi, coincide with the 'listening to context and the existing, though without any concessions to a mimetic approach; a certain depersonalisation that leads to the refusal of a confused and intimate language and an attention to the world of art and the continuous confrontation with artists'.[1]

We can also speak of her original and cultured research, which is simultaneously lyrical, selective and concrete. She is an obstinate perfectionist with a great deal of charisma, enough to convince her clients to accept the principles of functional rigour and absolute formal abstraction. It is as if she wishes to carry on the mission set forth by Theo van Doesburg who stated that 'elementarism is a movement that proposes itself for the re-foundation of the world'.[2] She has certainly married the poetics of essential and minimalist expression, evident also in her methods of representing and communicating the contents of her projects.

After a lengthy and laborious process of re-elaborating the morphological, technological and constructive values of the Rationalist and Functionalist models of the 20th century, Grasso Cannizzo defined her own distinctive approach, coinciding with the force of the emotional value that integrates the principle of order, a work of antimimetic sedimentation, rarefied images and pathos. In synthesis, a hypercontrolled language that nurtures itself on influences and juxtapositions, and which lies somewhere between new intervention and existing elements, between geometric rigour and building systems, between the clarity of layout and the redundancy of decoration.

For Luciana Rogozinski, who introduced the first publication on this Sicilian architect: 'The architect shakes off her adversaries by seeking to create a constructive hinge using the paradox of the maximum control of logical and plastic tools in order to support the unforeseen.'[3]

Grasso Cannizzo was educated in the restoration courses held by Franco Minissi at the University of Rome, where she graduated in the mid-1970s. She initially moved to Turin to work for one of Italy's largest engineering companies, where she acquired the logic of realism and production, as well as the different keys to interpretation and strategies of communication used by the avant-garde artists whom she met in the salon of Celant. For 20 years now she has been working in Sicily and producing small works of great intensity, flexible spaces built of light, with no reverential reservations about confronting the best international examples. Many of these projects are internal renovations or additions to residential units (GNV, PLV in Vittoria, GNS in Scogliti and SPR in Ragusa) or commercial units (the former Italia Hotel in Vittoria, the PLC CafHé Mangiarebere in Catania) located in the historic centres of Sicily. In general they are small buildings from the early 20th century, characterised by a traditional language and moderately floral decoration. With great sensitivity, the architect empties the interiors, freeing up the space for new, more fluid configurations, saving the exterior, to which she adds new, rarefied pieces, interpreting the original lines of the facade. It is an operation of rewriting the urban image and internal space, using offset planes, suspended bridges, lightweight stairs, diaphragms and filters between the interior and the exterior. The process of fragmentation, even while belonging to perceptive virtualities and scenographic effects, is incredibly rigorous: it guarantees an absolute logical-functional clarity

Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo, PLC CafHé Mangiarebere, Catania, Sicily, 2003
The fluidity of the small, irregular interior space is broken by several box-shaped metal structures coated with traditionally decorated majolicas.

Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo, PLV House, Vittoria, Sicily, 1998
The extension connected to an existing apartment is a two-storey building clad in polished travertine. The stairs are the real core of the space.

Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo, RGV House, Vittoria, Sicily, 2006
Here, two volumes in reinforced concrete, with independent structures, organise interchanging spaces. The house has four levels with a total height of less than 6 metres (19.7 feet).

between the served and servant spaces and declares the statute of diversity in each and every one of its parts.

For the DPN Wine Cellar, emblematic of her means of seeing architecture as a space of movement, Grasso Cannizzo also deals with the theme of the relationship between architecture and landscape – specifically the countryside of Noto, which features few significant environmental elements, neither natural-morphological nor manmade. It is an agricultural site with a single farmhouse and a singular value: the view of the baroque city on the horizon. Her objective, in this case fully achieved, was that of transforming an almost anonymous context into a special site, applying a sensitive approach that was capable of avoiding the de-naturing of the site while simultaneously reinforcing its specific quality. The structure of the building responds to the modern methods of wine making, the various phases of which are organised on different levels. The new volume is largely underground, so that it is inserted with discretion in the landscape; from the roof of the prism set into the field it is possible to survey the entire property and the skyline of Noto. Notwithstanding the fact that the building is not yet complete, the logic of its insertion within the landscape and the organisation of the interior spaces are clearly legible. It is possible to evaluate the sequence of operations of modelling the terrain and identify the cultural references to underground architecture, a testimonial to an Italian and Sicilian tradition: a type of construction that involves excavation and the use of block material extracted from the earth (tufa stone) as well as the world of minimalist and environmental art. It is not difficult to observe, in the recomposition of the profile of the hill, a clear reference to the Land Art of Morris, Serra and Sol LeWitt.

A path begins in the upper area, in the vineyards and the rural building, dropping down into a narrow cut in the rock, penetrating the container and defining a lengthy belvedere that protrudes below, dissolving once again into the landscape

Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo, MFS House, Syracuse, Sicily, 2006
The shape comes from a prismatic reinforced concrete monolith from which some parts have been cut off. On the ground floor there is a glass volume and a porch, and the upper floor hosts an open-air space for meditation.

Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo, SPR House, Ragusa, Sicily, 2004
An intervention on an existing two-storey residence with garden, this project aims to simplify and redefine the volume using a reduction process.

of vineyards. The *promenade architecturale*, conceived of to explain the cycle of production, does not interfere with the technical spaces, but enters into sensory contact only at three points, marked by three objects positioned at different heights. Above, the path widens into a suspended volume in steel and metal mesh; at the level of the wine makers, there is the fibreglass volume of the workshops, inaccessible to visitors, but visible through transparent surfaces. Finally, in the cask storage area it crosses through a glass box that encloses the climate-controlled space for wine tasting.

Even this project works with the values of complexity and the structuring of space. However, the investigation of the elements of the landscape and contexts excludes a local identity, and rather adheres fully to historical and contemporary international orientations and languages. Among the historical references employed by Grasso Cannizzo we can mention the decomposition and measurability of Renaissance space, the polysemantic nature of the baroque, but above all there is an evident relationship with Michelangelo and his subtractive process of constructing form by 'layers of removal' as, for example, in the SPR House in Ragusa. The lightness, flexibility and the essential refer, vice versa, to Japanese culture and its tradition of constructing fluid and transparent spaces. Other ties can be traced back to contemporary trends and widely varying authors, from Loos to the Neo-Plastic movement, from Italian Rationalism to Chareau, from Mollino to Scarpa.

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

Notes

1. Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi, 'Casa monofamiliare a Ragusa', *Industria delle Costruzioni*. No 381, 2005.
2. Theo van Doesburg, *Grundbegriffe der neuen gestaltenden Kunst*, Munich, 1925.
3. Luciana Rogozinski, Introduction in *Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo*, Libria (Melfi), 2006, p 8.

Modus Architects, Children's Hospital, Bressanone, Trentino-South Tyrol, 2005
The new building by Matteo Scagnol and Sandy Attia is inserted within a highly consolidated natural context. Century-old conifer trees become solid elements of vertical architecture, observed horizontally from the ample glazed openings on the south facade. These generous openings are juxtaposed with the closure of the north facade, whose projecting steel volumes dialogue with the black fuel reservoirs in the heating plant.

LAN Architecture, 454 Projects for Paris, Pavillon de l'Arsenal, Paris, France, 2004
Benoît Jallon and Umberto Napoletano's 454 Projects for Paris interactive installation represented an opportunity for this Italian-French group to present its work to the general public. Simple mechanical movements in the interactive structure keep the images of the projects in the background, offering visitors an opportunity to interact playfully with the exhibit.

The Young Generation

***studio*ata, 31 Steps – Steel Vertical Connection, Montechiaro d'Asti, Piedmont, 2001**
*studio*ata is an association of young professionals who together work and carry out research in the fields of construction and design, graphics and Web design. Many of these graduates of the Faculty of Architecture at the Turin Polytechnic have also studied in various European universities. 31 Steps – Steel Vertical Connection is a connection between Piazza del Mercato in Montechiaro d'Asti and the town's historic centre. The project consists of a steel stair with three ramps that run parallel to the city walls of the public plaza.

urban future organization (UFO), New head office for Simone-Gatto sas, Milazzo, Messina, Sicily, 2005
UFO is a group of architects who collaborate though based in different countries. The primary objective of the project here, in the industrial area of Milazzo, was to create a new, three-storey building, based on the concept of folding, which can be read in its structural and organisational systems. The structure is organised in autonomous and almost independent strips that join together, creating a standard approach that later splits and moves in separate directions, generating a spatial and organisational vivacity in both plan and section. The result is a dynamic and fluid space that is articulated in the various public and semiprivate spaces of the building.

For some years now Italy has been holding design competitions and creating awards for young architects, writing books about young architecture, and opening exhibitions that display young talent. This focus on the younger generation has undoubtedly been positive: it has served to rejuvenate Italian architectural culture, dominated by an oligarchy of 70- and over 70-year-olds who, otherwise, would never have stepped aside to make room for what is more than simply a physiological generational turnover. Today, given that this renewal is more or less under way, the term 'young' begins to demonstrate all of its vagueness. Just who are these young architects?

For many they are the generation of 40-year-olds, while, and this is surprising, in *Casabella*'s almanac the limit reaches 50 years of age. Obviously such an elastic interpretation risks appearing ridiculous (at 50 years of age we have already lived roughly two-thirds of our lives), if it were not for the fact that many architects in Italy, even if of an advanced age, can boast very little building experience and thus, broadly speaking, they can still be considered young. This leads to a certain ambiguity that may be disorienting to the readers of this issue of *AD*: in fact, we have placed Mario Cucinella in the middle generation, even though he has only just entered the over-40 category, while this section, dedicated to young architects, features architects who are the same age as Cucinella, and still others who are a little older. The reason is simple and, to be precise, is to be found in the level of professional experience: while Cucinella can boast numerous completed projects, the others, as promising as they are, have perhaps only completed their first buildings.

A second reason for this ambiguity results from the grouping of such a large number of architects under the term 'young', causing us to lose sight of the specific differences between their research. Some are experimental, while others are decidedly sensual. Some are traditionalists and others reactionary.

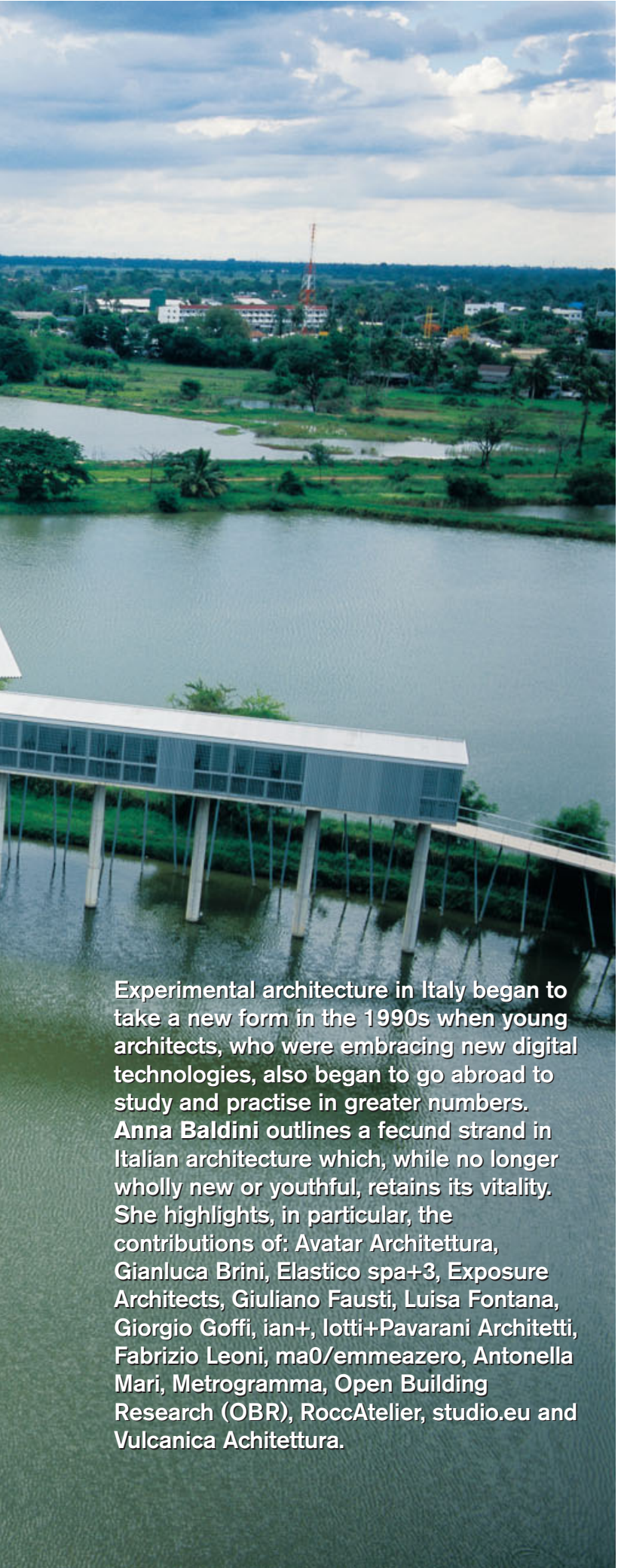
We will ignore the traditionalist and reactionary trends that are the least interesting because they produce works of architecture that fall into the trap of nostalgia, the picturesque or, worse yet, a monumentalism that willingly recalls the classicist works in vogue during the years of fascism. This leaves us with experimental works that confront the themes of ecology, diagrammatic architecture, the digital world, the definition of new forms that are suitable to new metropolitan realities, all in harmony with the most interesting research taking place across Europe. (It is interesting to note that today, more than ever, as a result of the growing reduction of geographical and cultural distances, we are moving towards a transnational type of production that overcomes the geographical borders of individual nations.) Finally, there are the phenomena, typically Italian, that I have baptised elsewhere with the name High Touch or the Supersensualists: architects who aim at producing highly formal works, using themes and inspirations taken from the best Italian traditions, without scorning the most contemporary research.

Together with two other essays, one on experimental architects and one on the Supersensualists, this section also includes an article on eight young Roman architects. The article has been dedicated to them for two reasons: because they testify to the vitality of architectural research in the capital and because, grouped together under the acronym RM8, they represent an interesting phenomenon of coordination between offices dealing with similar issues.

Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

The Young Experimentalists



Experimental architecture in Italy began to take a new form in the 1990s when young architects, who were embracing new digital technologies, also began to go abroad to study and practise in greater numbers. Anna Baldini outlines a fecund strand in Italian architecture which, while no longer wholly new or youthful, retains its vitality. She highlights, in particular, the contributions of: Avatar Architettura, Gianluca Brini, Elastico spa+3, Exposure Architects, Giuliano Fausti, Luisa Fontana, Giorgio Goffi, ian+, Iotti+Pavarani Architetti, Fabrizio Leoni, ma0/emmeazero, Antonella Mari, Metrogramma, Open Building Research (OBR), RoccAtelier, studio.eu and Vulcanica Achitettura.

New Italian architecture is not a phenomenon related to age: the architects making this type of architecture are not all young. Nor is it a recent phenomenon: for at least 15 years numerous architects have been experimenting with an architecture that emancipates itself from historicism and nationalism. It is a more rooted and solid reality than one would imagine, and not at all a trend, as it has been labelled by a few traditionalist critics.

New Italian architecture is the result of the awareness of a more receptive group of designers who, during the 1970s and 1980s in Italy, began to see a tired and ever more similar and provincial architecture that was, above all, closed to any new ideas. This awareness came to the fore largely during the 1990s, the years when the rest of Europe was building works by Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid and Daniel Libeskind – the Centre Pompidou by Renzo Piano, Richard Rogers and Gianfranco Franchini had been inaugurated more than 10 years earlier, and the high-tech revolution was calmly continuing. Foreign architectural magazines dedicated a great deal of attention to this movement. There was thus an impelling necessity for the Italian 'young experimentalists' to move beyond national borders in order to avoid remaining stuck in a provincial approach.

Many went abroad to work and study, even for brief periods, attending foreign universities and master programmes and collaborating with internationally famous offices, before returning to work in their home country. They participated in international competitions, creating transnational design teams, and activated foreign partnerships for single projects. They live in the era of globalisation, they are citizens of the world and, thanks to the Internet, they are able to do this from their own homes. They fully invested in the digital revolution, with all of its hopefulness and contradictions. They acquired skills and digital tools, and mastered the most sophisticated software though, after the initial euphoria, they became aware that a computer drawing is not the final objective of design but a means to a greater degree of formal and spatial liberty during the design process.

The current form of the city does not satisfy this group, and urban planning is seen as a means to unsatisfactory urban configurations, creating infinite dispersion across a given territory and vast pockets of residual land. These architects understand that the challenge is played out in the relationship between architecture, urban planning and nature: in the design of the landscape. They also understand that they must overcome the environmental ideology based on restrictions and privations (no building, no concrete, no urban planning) in order to imagine sustainable cities that accept both traditional and innovative materials, where it is possible to experiment with new technologies and within which natural elements become building materials, while electronic engineering is used to create a new ecology.

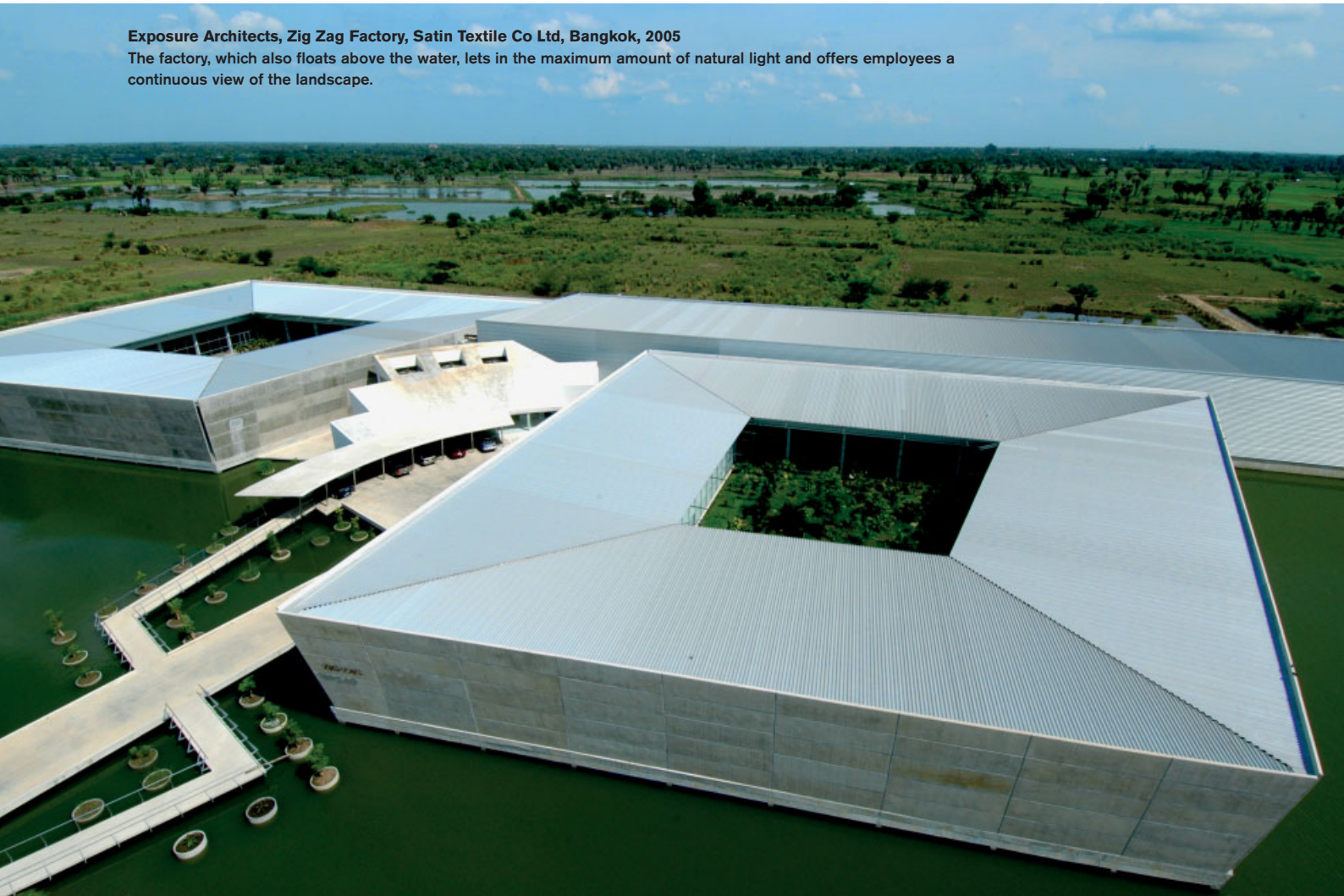
Exposure Architects, Octospider cafeteria, Satin Textile Co Ltd, Bangkok, Thailand, 2004
The cafeteria, set atop slender columns immersed in a pool of water, offers employees a relaxing view of the landscape during their lunch break.

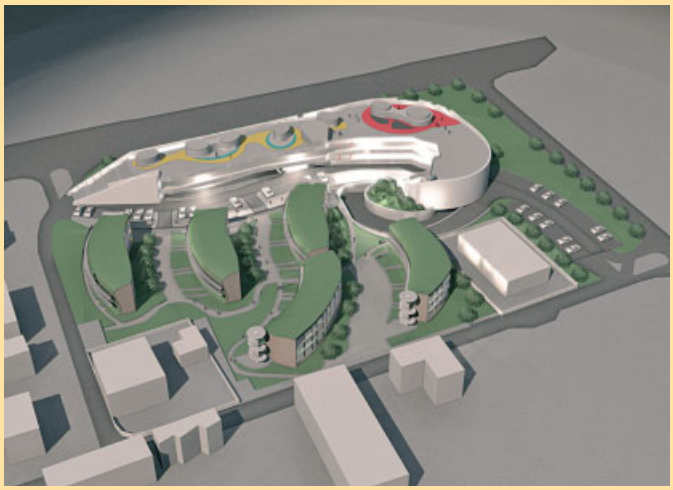
Exposure Architects (Oliviero Godi and Dorit Mizrahi) are known in Italy for their design of the Dalmine waste-to-energy and biomass facility, the brilliant result of a line of research that was begun during their studies at Columbia University. Following their important meeting with Schle Wood, a Thai businessman who wanted to build a model textiles factory, the group created its two most suggestive and poetic works: the Octospider employee cafeteria and the Zig Zag factory for the Satin Textile Co Ltd in Bangkok. The simplicity of the materials and the building technologies employed are juxtaposed against a refined conception of space. The cafeteria, raised on slanting columns with a somewhat Deconstructivist feel, creates a new horizon and raises its users above the ground plane to enjoy the view of the surrounding, ad hoc artificial and natural landscape. Inside the factory, the articulation of the architecture is for the benefit of the workers: the work space is articulated around two courtyards that provide natural light, while the view of the tropical garden improves working conditions.

Luisa Fontana, like her architecture, is immediate, direct and passionate. Her work begins with three fundamental assumptions: a ground-zero vocabulary, an openness to experimentation and a creative approach. This means avoiding the assumption of existing models, seeking out new and more appropriate technologies, even from other sectors, and colouring the whole with a fantasy that represents salvation from an excessive design rigour and technical approach. The operation is rendered arduous by the fact that Fontana continually deals with historically restricted buildings or locations adjacent to historical centres that are subject to the dictates of building commissioners. A homage to fantasy and playfulness can be found in the Mimetica House, in Schio, the renovation of a banal, existing building which, like a soldier at war, is rendered mimetic with the natural elements that surround it. In partnership with Arup, Fontana is currently completing an office park and 90 bioclimatic, zero-energy consuming residential units in Schio, approaching the project with a great deal of sensitivity to the problem of energy-saving research.

One group that has captured the attention of the public and critics alike is ian+ (Carmelo Baglivo, Stefania Manna and Luca Galofaro). These architects have understood how to create a consolidated image over time, participating in foreign competitions and working in partnership with foreign groups. The laboratories for the Tor Vergata University in Rome, their first built work, inserts itself within the Roman countryside using the typical red of local farmhouses, though it moves beyond this reference in its use of full-height windows on the principal and side elevations. The poetic touch is provided by the small perforations on the other side elevation. This motif

Exposure Architects, Zig Zag Factory, Satin Textile Co Ltd, Bangkok, 2005
The factory, which also floats above the water, lets in the maximum amount of natural light and offers employees a continuous view of the landscape.





Luisa Fontana and Arup, Central Park business park and bioclimatic residences, Schio, Veneto, 2004
Central Park is a housing and commercial complex in Schio, a small Italian town of 40,000 inhabitants in the upper Vicentino. Thanks to the synergy between the architects, engineers and the municipality, the complex is characterised by innovative bioclimatic solutions for housing.

is also found in their design for the Estonian National Museum where the roof, composed of sinuous elements, is made to glow through the use of small, luminous perforations. The relationship between light and transparency also informs their project for the new Tomihiro Museum in Japan, based on an alveolar structure of glass prisms that allows the landscape to come into contact with the building. The garden penetrates the museum via suspended patios that project into the display spaces, while the alveolar structure also allows for a variation in the configuration of the building. A different relationship with the environment can be found in the practice's project for a public square, currently under construction in the Falcognana neighbourhood in the Roman periphery. The services are here hidden below ground in order not to interfere with the natural elements, which remain intact. Only a small structure draws any attention and reveals what is hidden to the naked eye.

Fabrizio Leoni Architettura with Olindo Merone Architetto have built a small house, the O House, at the foot of the Massiccio del Sulcis in Sardinia. An open land characterised by fields, greenhouses and a low-density development is the geographical backdrop for this project for a young couple, which is reduced to its minimum components. The programme embodies the form of an inhabited macrocell, an organism which, out of a close relationship with the topography and landscape, modifies its longitudinal section according to the slope, bending its body among the trees, arching to lift itself off the ground and unfolding to frame consistent views. Its skin is used to emphasise its specific relationship with its surroundings, and even covers the roof, suggesting a massive block wrapped by a film, veiling its real tectonic.

With regards to the unresolved conflict between architecture and urban planning, we can discuss the research of the office known as Metrogramma (Andrea Boschetti and Alberto Francini). The office's more important works include an investigation carried out for the city of Bolzano. 'Habitat 2001' divides the territory into four zones and establishes, for each zone, the spaces dedicated to public use and private construction, leading to the idea of a city that is attentive to energy consumption and a proposal for new ecological approaches. For the Confederazione Nazionale Artigianato (CNA) they have prepared a research project entitled 'Super-Infrastructure: high-density manufacturing settlements', which they use to propose an industrial settlement that optimises the use of the ground plane by introducing three typologies: a tower, strip building and plate. The warehouses have different functions, from residential to commercial, recreational uses and dining facilities. The integration between functions is solidified in the mixed-programme building completed in Calliano that contains a library, elementary school, multifunctional space, nursery and gymnasium.

The architecture of RoccAtelier is both colourful and articulated. Laura Rocca's almost row houses in Ruginello are a Modernist revisitation of the traditional model in which new spatial solutions tied to the complexity and dynamics of modern society are tested. This is evident both in the proposal of a strongly dynamic plan as well as in the use of particular materials and technologies. We can speak specifically of the copper sheets that wrap the curved roofs and the upper levels of the small villas, and which overlap the more classically traditional stone walls, as well as the coloured windows, doors, downpipes and balcony railings. The firm's nursery school in Sesto San Giovanni demonstrates analogous themes.

Luisa Fontana, Mimetica House, Schio, 2004
This renovation of a banal 1940s building follows a strict set of rules: the beauty of the garden, characterised by valuable trees, including century-old cedars, suggests the possibility of offering the same effect throughout the building, which is camouflaged with natural elements.

RoccAtelier, Almost row housing, Ruginello, Milan, 2004
The houses use a sinuous form, a specially designed roof and innovative materials to propose an interesting revisitation of the row housing typology.

The design is based on the correct insertion of the structure within a public park and the dialectic between natural and artificial trees: the trees that surround the nursery are 'technological trees' that accompany children and parents through the public park to the entrance to the nursery and into the large interior plaza.

The formal experiments carried out by Vulcanica Architettura (Eduardo Borrelli, Marina Borrelli and Aldo di Chio) begin with the resolution of concrete issues. Each research project and every design can be traced back to four key terms: plans in e/motion, reflect, inside/outside and cut. For 'plans in e/motion', urban structures must involve the user and generate emotional responses. This can be seen in Vulcanica's project for the restyling of the Beverello wharf in Naples where the existing fragments are caged and forced into a single design. 'Reflect' architecture must be transparent and reflective in order to multiply views, for example in the addition to the Massa clinic in Somma, where a reflective glass box envelops a bright-red masonry volume. With 'inside/outside', there is no longer any distinction between inside and outside: the diaphragm of the wall collapses and what is inside is outside, and what is outside is inside. With 'cut', the architecture is no longer on display, but hidden, excavated. This can be seen in the new parking structure in Melfi, where Vulcanica have buried the building under a grassy plane to hide the cars from view: the parking structure becomes visible in the cuts used as pedestrian and vehicular entrances and exits.

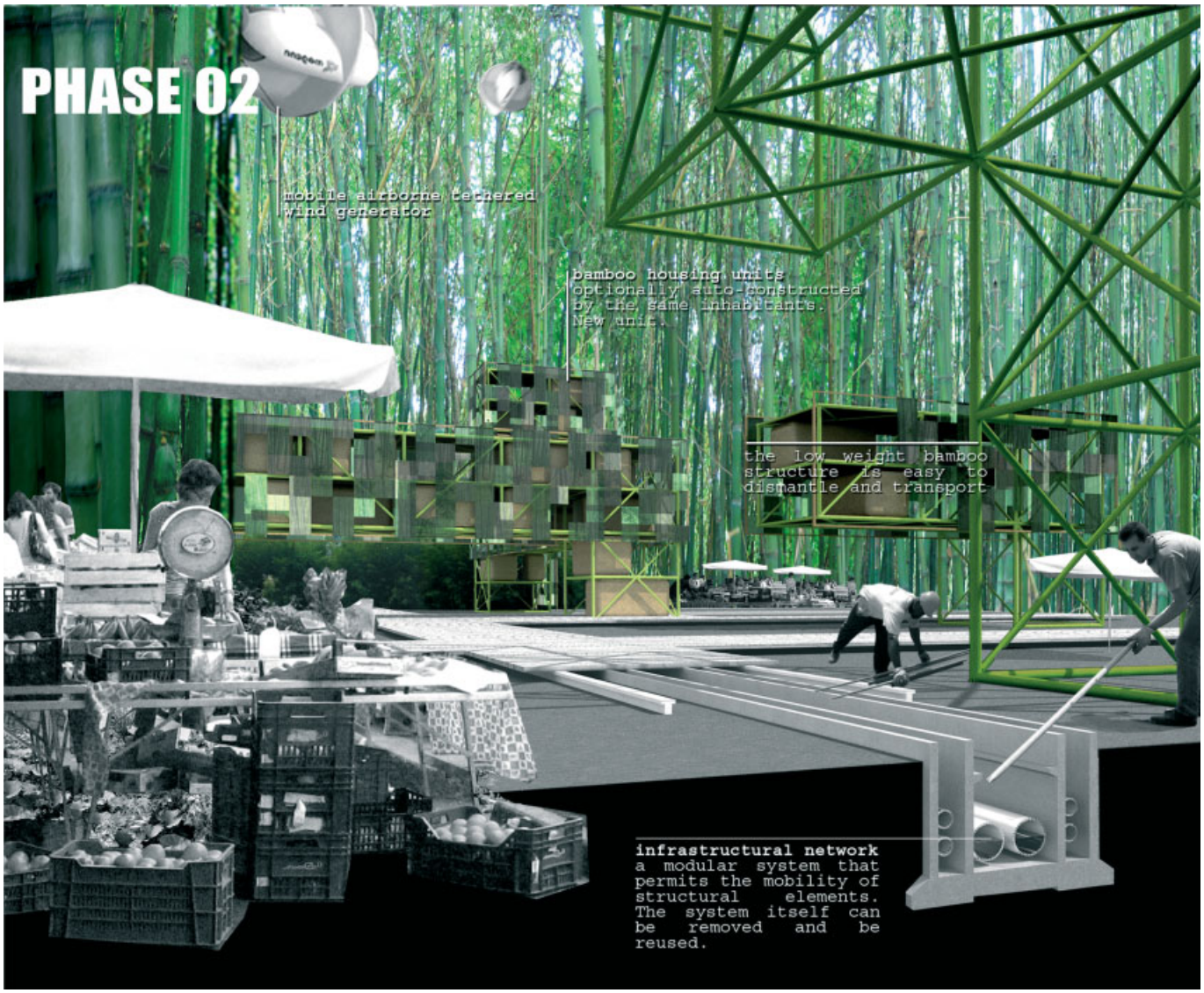
The theme of new ecology, landscape, the human-scaled city and sustainability abound in many of the projects displayed in the Italian Pavilion at the most recent Architectural Biennale. Here, various architects, who had already investigated these aspects in their own design research, reflect upon the anomaly of the contemporary city in order to propose a more functional model for the design of a piece of a newly established city.

Avatar Architettura (Nicola Santini and Pier Paolo Taddei) present an innovative design for the new city's market. Their project, entitled T.I.M.E.SWAP (Total Integral Market Experience), is more articulated than a simple market. It is a proposal for a self-sufficient city that is capable of auto-providing the necessary resources for its regeneration and survival through the use of bamboo. While this material is new to Italian culture, it is well known in the orient for its versatility and its economic, ecological and structural properties, so much so that it can easily replace classical construction materials. Santini and Taddei base their research on an architecture that continues to develop. For their 12 houses in Foligno in Perugia, the interaction between the residents, the site over time, understood as the alternation of the seasons, and the passing of time generates the possibility of increasing or decreasing the volume of the residential structures.

Elastico spa+3 (Stefano Pujatti and Alberto Del Maschio) use their design of an educational complex to reconsider the development of the city. A renewed ecological conscience allows them to contrast the indiscriminate consumption of the ground plane. In this way, the scholastic centre in Vema (the new city proposed in the Italian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale) is designed to be a geological movement that models the landscape and defines spaces of relationship, interaction and information. Upon this surface, similar to a hill, it is thus possible to distribute the litany of building speculation. They have identified five bridge-points – information, culture, education, lines and connections – as interactions that create relationships between concepts and forms in order to arrive at an architecture that contains the inherent question: What is the role of a school in society today?

The shopping mall designed by Iotti+Pavarani Architetti (Paolo Iotti and Marco Pavarani) represents the possibility for proposing a portion of the city that eliminates the occupation

Vulcanica Architettura, Addition, renovation and new operating wing, Nostra Signora di Lourdes Clinic, Massa di Somma, Naples, 2003
A transparent box of glass and steel elements wraps around the existing volume.



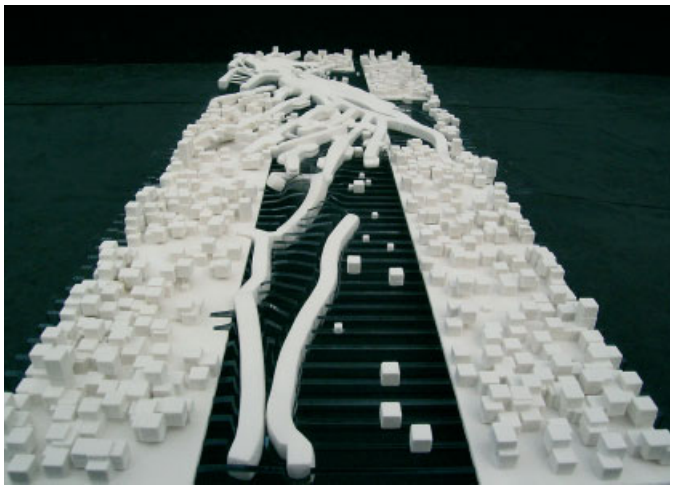
Avatar Architettura, T.I.M.E.SWAP (Total Integral Market Experience), Vema, 2006
The design of the market is used to propose a new city that can be self-constructed by residents using bamboo.

of a disperse and broken-up landscape. Slow Town Vema is a human-scaled city whose continuity and contiguity between the natural and artificial landscape means that the urban fabric penetrates the park, and vice versa, as part of a mutually respectful alternation: an 'intense city' is juxtaposed with the traditional 'dense city'. Their hope is for a new collective ecology that leads us away from the private automobile and towards the use of compact, lightweight and automated public transportation. These architects operate in a balance between two axes that they pursue simultaneously in their work: a more experimental approach that is attentive to signs and gestures and a more nostalgic one, anchored in the practice of good building. The first is surely the most interesting and produces innovative works such as the monument in Correggio, the Communications Tower and residences in Reggio Emilia, and the Siena Stadium.

The museum designed by ma0/emmeazero (Massimo Ciuffini, Ketty Di Tardo, Alberto Iacovoni and Luca La Torre) belongs to a concept of 'continuicity', where the integration between the urban elements that make up the city itself must guarantee the sustainability of urban phenomena. The city is based on three continuities: natural and ecological corridors with bicycle and jogging paths; pedestrian paths and the elimination of barriers that fragment public space; and vehicular routes that guarantee the opportune limits. The urban fabric is generated by a diagonal grid that allows for a crossing of the space without imposing a preferential direction. Public space is located on three levels, while the residences are located between the grids created by the network of paths and green spaces above the level of the public space, while those functions that have a relationship with public space but which do not require exterior facades

Elastico spa+3, The Routes of Speculation educational centre, Vema, 2006
The design of the school takes into consideration the portion of the city to which it is connected, within which land speculation is not permitted.

studio.eu, Flower Power energy park, Vema, 2006
The newly established city can capture all the energy it requires from the park and by making use of biomasses.



Antonella Mari, Fields of Psychological Turbulence hospital, Vema, 2006
The hospital, understood in its most modern definition, is the source of life, and the entire city can be designed from this base.

are located inside a double ground plane. The museum is also located inside the double ground plane and can be crossed at the level of access and the roof level. Three towers contain activities related to the museum and are located in correspondence with the entrance points, which also function as display spaces used to promote the museum's activities.

The design of a hospital can also be seen as a starting point for the reordering of public space based on an approach that is the opposite of what we are used to. Antonella Mari's Fields of Psychological Turbulence hospital proposes the use of a space that generally tends towards isolation as a central element in the urban fabric – an element that generates life. Precisely for this reason it is no longer a tower building divided into wards or clinics, but a structure that extends horizontally across the city, dividing itself into three psychological/functional areas that take into account the periods of use of the various spaces, the methods of care and the hypothetical physical and emotional conditions of the patients. The residential units also follow the same logic and are equipped with an additional module that allows for activities that normally take place outside, from work to the care of the body to in-house health services.

Their project for a sports complex offered a starting point for Open Building Research (Paolo Brescia and Tommaso Principi) to propose a new concept of the landscape. The project calls for a theme park and spontaneous gardens where two levels of organisation interact with one another, generating the territory in which the sporting activities take place. The theme park is composed of specific areas dedicated to sport, while the theme garden is a more creative space in which local residents can freely configure their own piece of the site. Even the urban blocks are the result of two levels of interaction: a public level contains cinemas and functions as an interactive space that creates relationships between film and spectators, while a more private space is dedicated to residential functions, part of an evolutionary organism that is organised according to the needs of the residents and the environment.

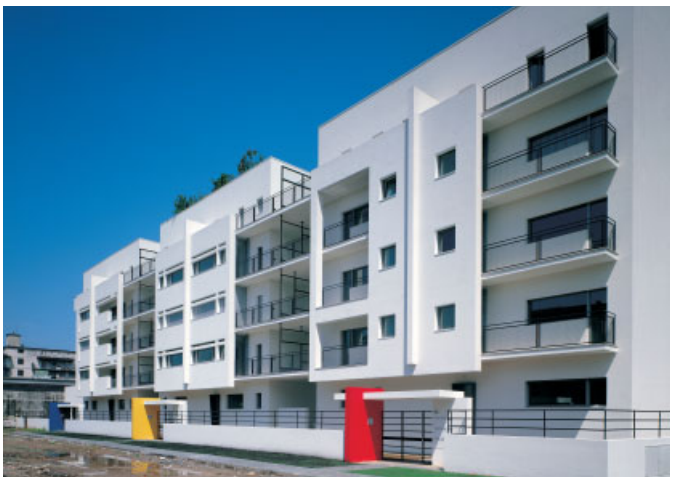
The production of energy represents another innovative element. In Flower Power, the project for an energy park designed by studio.eu (Paola Cannavò, Maria Ippolita Nicotera

Fabrizio Leoni Architettura with Olindo Merone Architetto, O House, Capoterra, Cagliari, Sardinia, 2004
This house, located in dense terrain, uses an extremely innovative approach based on the chassis of an automobile.

Gianluca Brini, Residential building, Via Zoccoli, Bologna, 2004
The building has a strong visual impact, resulting from the floor markers, projections and setbacks, that differentiates from those around it.

and Francesca Venier), the elements of the park represent the source of energy for the city. These renewable sources include the use of biomasses: organic and biological residue. By making the elements used to produce energy a compositional element of the park, the nature of these spaces becomes dynamic and in continuous mutation: they change according to the uses made of them. The easily managed residential units are also spread throughout the park, in order that the park itself absorbs and connects them, and can be assembled together to create larger structures as necessary.

Another type of formal experimentation is carried out by a group of architects that can be defined as the 'intermediate generation,' though this definition has little to do with their age. It is a type of architecture that is contextualised in three different geographical areas, assuming different characteristics in each. In the north of Italy it is purist,



Giorgio Goffi, Housing in Brescia, 2002
Goffi's housing units in Brescia recall the noblest traditions of Italian Rationalism.

Giuliano Fausti, Car dealership, Tirrena Auto, Rome, 2003
The building was designed to capture the attention of as many people as possible, and it was this objective that decided its form.

harking back to Le Corbusier and Rationalism, and rich with original and cultural references. The work of Giorgio Goffi and Gianluca Brini belongs to this tradition.

Goffi's housing in Brescia is made up of four buildings, containing 32 residential units in all. Of these units, 27 are organised in three detached buildings linked by suspended terraces to avoid a too extended and compact front to the public garden, and recreating the effect of big urban block aggregation through its integration of public and private spaces. Furthermore, the facade height and ground area of the buildings are restricted in order to relate the project, both planimetrically and altimetrically, to the urban texture. The fourth building has a reduced volumetric setting, lifted off the ground by pilotis to offer views from the street of the ample interior garden.

Brini's residential building on Via Zoccoli sits immediately outside the historic centre of Bologna. This void in the compact urban fabric of the 1960s and 1970s is a difficult site to deal with – an almost rectangular form, but with a clear prevalence of one dimension and a programme that is typical of new residential housing for the free market and in a prestigious location. Contrary to a tradition that calls for an even-tempered and reassuring architecture, Brini proposes an energetic and destabilising building ruled by asymmetry and with a highly articulated volumetric composition. The result is a four-storey residential building whose four facades are equal not in their dimensions, but in their expression: four different facades that are equally eloquent and, precisely for this reason, labelled using the names of the cardinal points towards which they are exposed.

In central Italy the architectural type assumes an eclectic aspect with a decidedly baroque taste and a mixture of references. The architecture of Giuliano Fausti demonstrates this approach.

In central Italy the architectural type assumes an eclectic aspect with a decidedly baroque taste and a mixture of references. The architecture of Giuliano Fausti demonstrates this approach. The Tirrena Auto Showroom in Rome is his response to a carefully considered commercial strategy. This can be seen in its angled position with respect to the Via del Mare, which means that it is difficult to miss for those who come to Rome by car from Ostia. The large, rectilinear store front, used to display the latest models, is raised slightly above street level, and followed by curvilinear glazing that encloses the most important model of the Volkswagen line. In addition, an underground garage can be viewed from outside through a hole in the facade. The automotive display space here is thus articulated with the same spatial dynamism as an art gallery, and can therefore host art exhibitions and also classical music performances. The result of this commercial and cultural union is clearly positive, even in economic terms: Tirrena Auto has increased its sales, and moved up considerably in terms of its position on the list of top-selling Volkswagen dealerships in Italy.

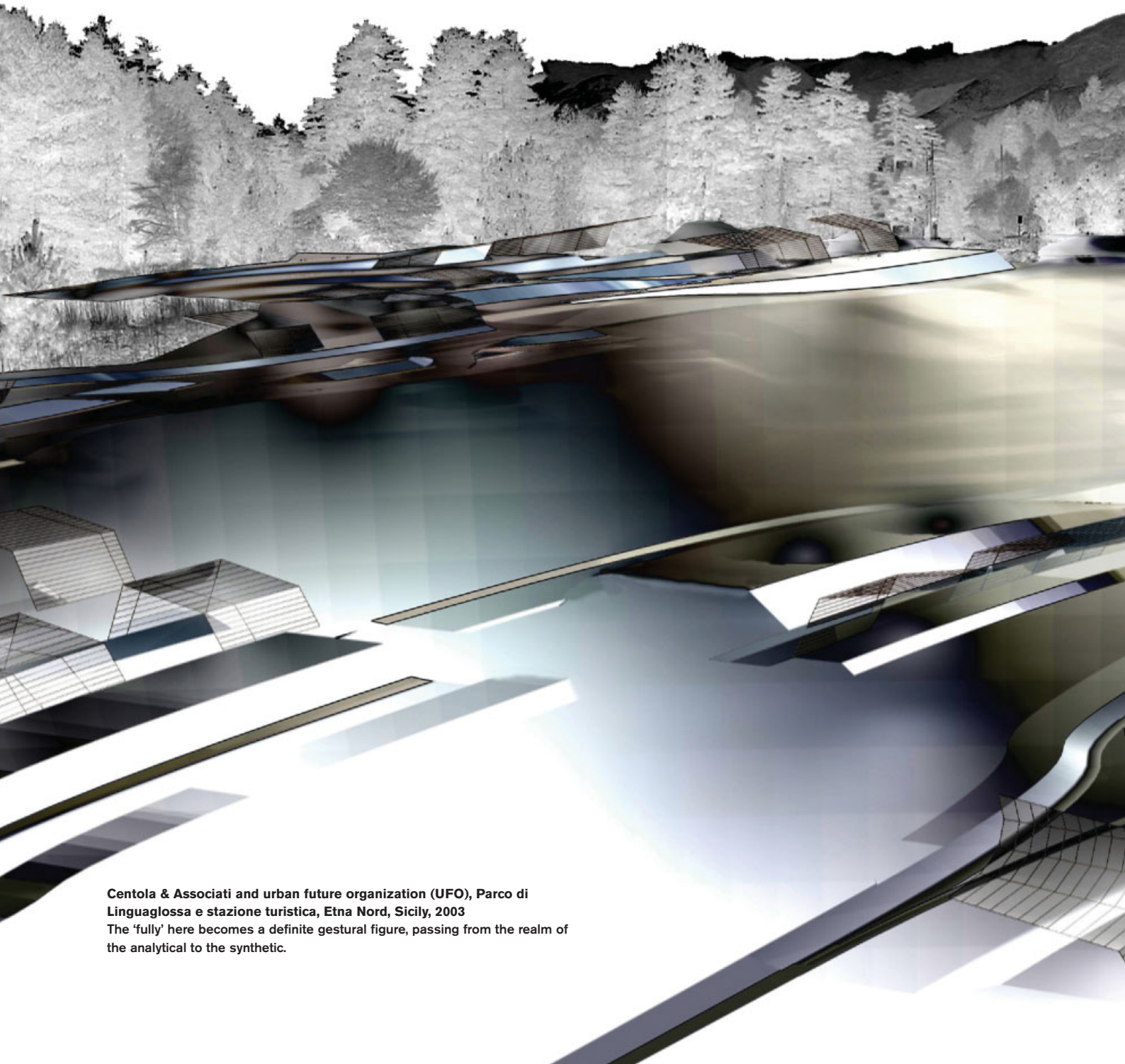
In summary, the projects, built works, ideas and theories covered here all demonstrate that many young Italian architects are now making real contributions to the creation of contemporary architecture that meets the needs of today's continually evolving society. AD

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

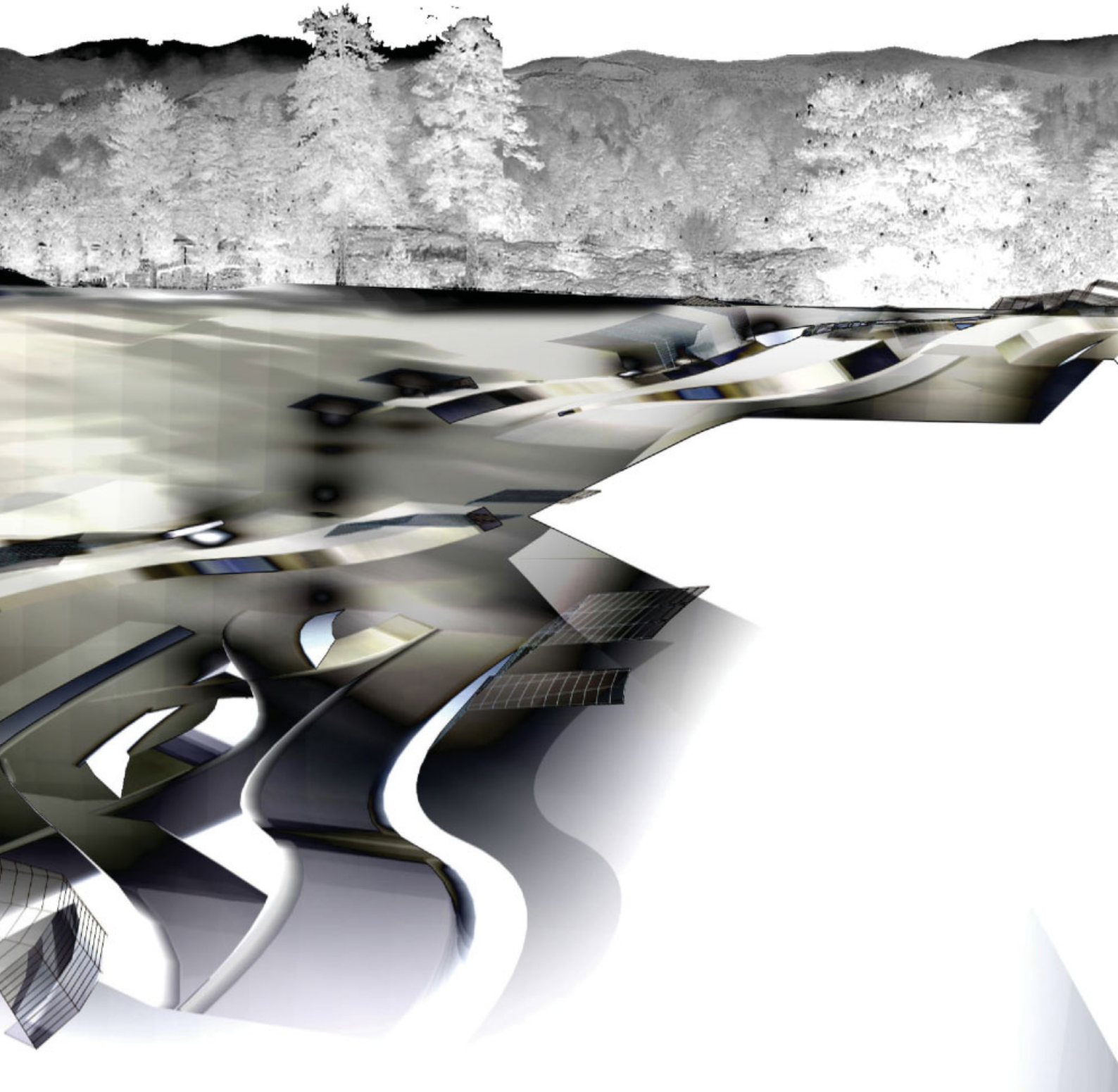
Young Romans

‘Fully, Not Partially Controlled’

RM008 is a loose grouping of eight young practices in Rome, encompassing: Centola & Associati, De Logu Associati, Giammetta & Giammetta Architettura, King Roselli Architetti, n!Studio, Nemesi Studio, t-studio and Labics. Valerio Paolo Mosco describes the various characteristics of this disparate but savvy group of young offices that have conjoined in a bid for greater visibility and publicity.



Centola & Associati and urban future organization (UFO), Parco di Linguaglossa e stazione turistica, Etna Nord, Sicily, 2003
The ‘fully’ here becomes a definite gestural figure, passing from the realm of the analytical to the synthetic.



Nemesi Studio, Waterpower renewal strategy for the Mulini Valley, Amalfi, Naples, 2006
Nemesi Studio fully expresses itself in an analytical way, piece by piece, following rules, searching for a more expressive urban architecture.

... fully, not partially controlled, in the search for completeness, for a system of intervening in any place, avoiding the neglect of uncontrolled elements.[1]

The extract above, stolen from Vincent J Scully, describes the distinctive (and perhaps only) characteristic of the generation of Italian architects who have recently turned 40, some of whom have come together to form RM008. This moniker identifies the eight Roman offices who work together on the difficult definition of shared strategies and visibility in the media. The result is in no way univocal, and thus the shared attraction for the 'fully' is developed in two different, and to some extent, opposing directions.

The first, the more convincing of the two, seeks to define the will to control through the principle of order, the logical sense of composition, basing design on analysis and successive steps that move from the simple to the complex. This results in works of architecture with clear borders, works that are compact and stereometric and which seek to export the given conditions beyond their limits, as if they wish to redeem context by their very presence. This is the case in the work of Labics, Nemesi and n!Studio and, to a lesser degree, that of t-studio and De Logu Associati. The other interpretation of 'fully, not partially controlled' is a diminished interested in procedures, which favours the sign, replacing the analytical approach with a synthetic one. In this case the result is bodies rather than works of architecture, which export not rules, but their image beyond their limits, as in the work of Centola & Associati, King Roselli Architetti and the Giammetta brothers.

These two situations coexist in a loosely defined space where the only cohesive material appears to be the awareness of what it does not wish to be. Both, because they seek the 'fully', have no love for the do-it-yourself, and fear, as their worst enemy, kitsch and the naif. Neither seems to be attracted (and this is positive) to the enticements of a convulsive Modernism that reigns in an ever more homogeneous manner in academies around the globe. As a result, there are very few virtual suggestions and at the same time there is an almost total indifference to sociological aspects. Perhaps, in an entirely conscious manner, they seek to carve out an alternative among those who still believe that architecture coincides with the art of making space and those who, on the contrary, repute this idea and think that it is about communication. What is certain is that they are clearly distancing themselves from the growing number who believe that the new frontier is a space that is exuberant enough to become communication on its own.

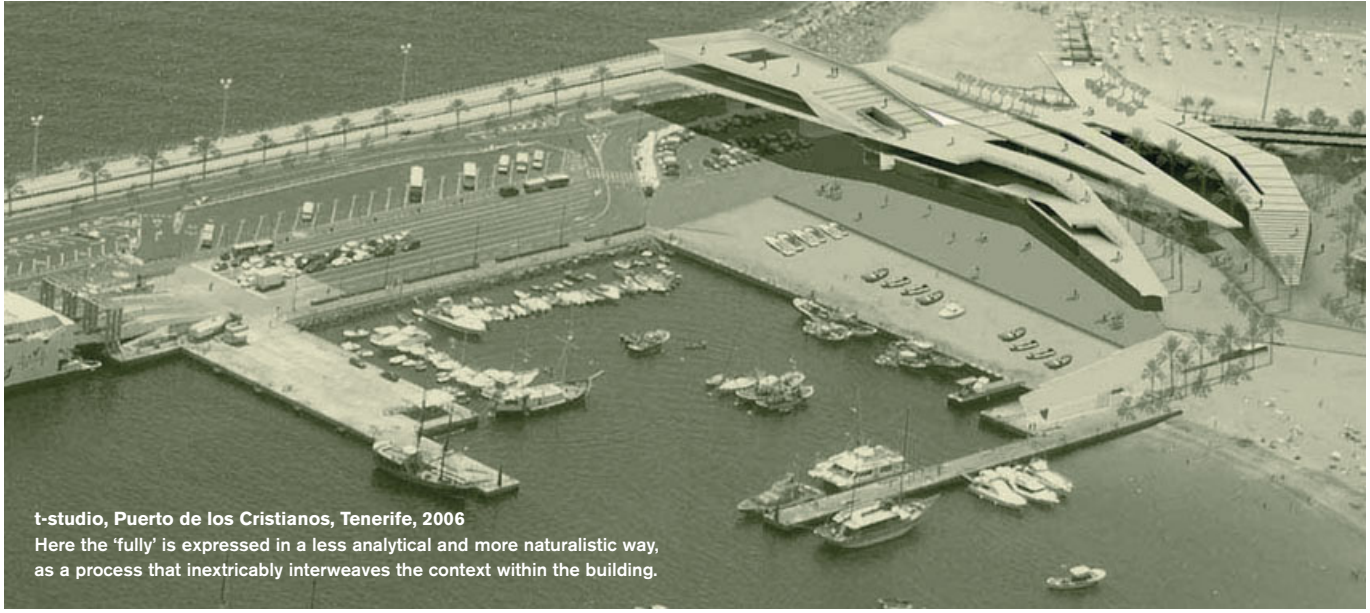
However, style is not created using the 'anti'. At the very least we cohabit, as we do today in Rome – a lively city that produces a great number of projects (perhaps affected by the syndrome of pleasantness), many possibilities for encounter (where, as elsewhere, we always run into the same people), a low level of critical awareness (silenced by the devious intolerance of the politically correct) and very few concrete possibilities to see one's plans implemented, and not only in the realm of architecture.

n!Studio, Waterpower renewal strategy for the Mulini Valley, Amalfi, Naples, 2006
In n!Studio's proposal, the 'fully' is more dynamic: the building is treated like an installation, with a responsive randomness that mimics local traditions.

Labics, Waterpower renewal strategy for the Mulini Valley, 2006
Labics' work is even more analytical than that of Nemesi Studio, following only one rule that simultaneously involves both architecture and landscape.

A recent group project represented an opportunity to see some of the members of RM008 working on a common theme. In 2005, Luigi Centola called upon a few European architects to study the requalification of a valley near Amalfi. Along the watercourse that runs at the base of the valley, Centola's master plan identified 11 critical areas, which were in turn entrusted to an equal number of designers, some of whom are members of RM008.[2] The theme is that of the landscape: in fact, the request was to make architectural objects that allow for the recovery of existing abandoned structures, set into the sloping landscape of the valley along the watercourse. Notwithstanding the naturalistic theme, Nemesi responded in a decidedly urban manner, organising a series of pure volumes and glazed objects based on a clear dialectic, where the principle that underlies the volumetric remains, even while articulated, is evident. The result is reminiscent of Carlo Scarpa's plaster museum, even if it is very different: more pared down, less descriptive and more abstract.

Nemesi's architecture is, in fact, once again an architecture that belongs to the city; this is demonstrated by opaque

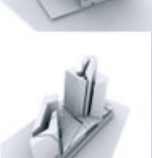


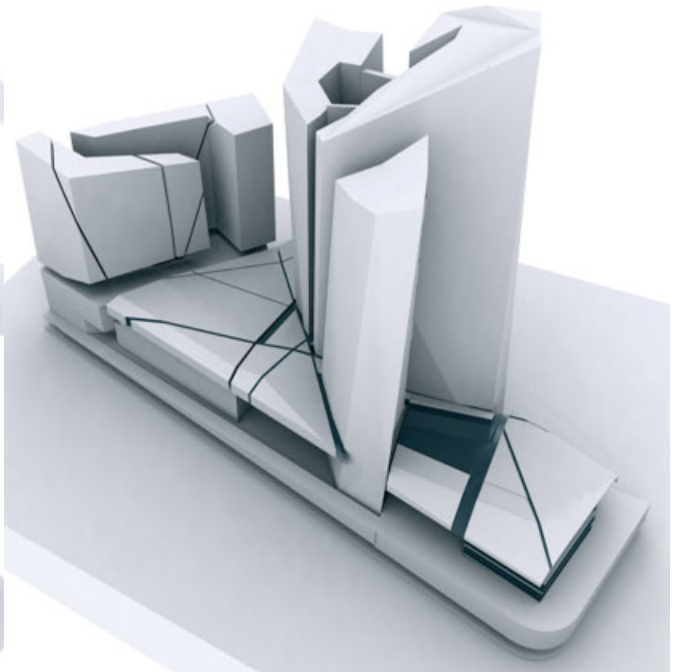
t-studio, Puerto de los Cristianos, Tenerife, 2006
Here the 'fully' is expressed in a less analytical and more naturalistic way, as a process that inextricably interweaves the context within the building.

volumes whose pristine purity contains the icon of the city *par excellence*, the regular grid of openings, simply cut into the wall à la Loos. The analytical process used by Nemesi becomes evident on two fronts: in elevation with the dialectic of the volumetric leftovers, and in plan through the organisation of the tight spaces, without any spaces of mediation. The section, with its contractions and dilations, is entrusted with the role of holding the entire composition together. In this project Nemesi Studio is at its best: when there is more than one clear and defined rule, when it is the space that commands, without allowing it to become a fetish, and when, in order to obtain all of this, one has the courage to use anonymous elements, such as the regular grid of openings.

The analytical process is even more evident in the project by Labics, where the rule becomes only one: a continual sequence of parallel strips that are unrolled along the valley, generating a rupture whose cracks are filled with running water. The same pattern of strips is then overturned in elevation to create a rocky architecture, which is also organised based on the principles of volumetric leftovers. In general, all of Labics' work is based on the search for a rule, or better yet upon the observation of what happens when a rule is applied equally to a work of architecture or a piece of the landscape. In order to render the analytical process even more evident, the project is pared down until it reaches a degree of the essential that is almost primitive – the architectural elements (with the exception of the stairs, always an icon of the 'sublime' in architecture) are hidden so that nothing takes away from the rule itself, its imposition as the generating element of both architectural form and landscape.

De Logu Associati, Novy Symboly Bank, Moscow, Russia, 2003
In De Logu's project the analytical approach disappears, the rule becoming just an instrument to organise a seductive and narrative object.





The same strip-like organisation can be found in the project by n!Studio, though interpreted in a different manner. In fact, in this case the pattern organises a series of buildings that look outwards with an unsettling movement that is willingly expressive. The peculiarity of the proposal by n!Studio can be found in the facades, a surface of layers that contain suspended glass cells. The last layer is a sequence of perforated 'canvases' that rest against the building like an installation, and with a studied casualness that mimics the off-kilter greenhouses built by the local farmers, reinventing them as abstract objects. Thus, if the rules used by Nemesi and Labics are imposed, here it would almost seem that they are deduced from context in order to be sublimated in an abstract form. This is even more evident in the project by another of the group of eight: t-Studio's proposal for the reorganisation of the Puerto de los Cristianos in Tenerife, where the building and its context appear to be inextricably stitched together as part of a mimetic process of overlapping and rarefaction. Thus from the application of the abstract and analytical rule within the landscape we move on to the use of the rule as an instrument, as the score used to organise a narrative. Thus the rule itself, as in the case of the project for the Novy Symboly Bank in Moscow by De Logu Associati, becomes accidental, ever closer to the sign and, through its metamorphosis, the icon acquires even greater importance.

The projects by Centola & Associati for the New Etna Nord tourist station can definitely be seen as gestural works. This can also be said of Giammetta & Giammetta's project for a restaurant along the coast in Sperlonga, near Latina. These

King Roselli Architetti, ES Hotel, Rome, 2003
The 'fully' expresses itself in this hotel not as a single piece, but as a sequence of design sets, as in a Modernist cinema.

projects mimic the landscape and substitute the compact gravitational static quality of the previous proposals with dynamism. From the reign of the analytical we definitively move on to that of the synthetic; from the construction of the project piece by piece to its condensation into a concept, a metaphoric scheme of reference at the limits of the graphic. Rendering the work of the group of eight even more variegated are the projects by King Roselli, the designers of the ES Hotel in Rome, a compact and defined building that contains a variegated sequence of spaces within which architecture almost disappears in the succession of objects of design.

The work of RM008 varies widely, though it appears to refer to at least three interpretations: the analytical, the synthetic, and one that lies between the two which, in Italy, a country that by its very nature tends towards compromise, could certainly not be left out. Yet they are all 'fully, not partially controlled' and 'fully' not by chance. However, there is an aspiration that is perhaps unconscious and shared by the majority of their national counterparts who belong to the Roman group. This aspiration goes beyond architecture and, as expressed by Pippo Ciorra in one of the most recent editions of *Casabella*, it is the expression of a more general ability of knowing how to sell one's wares. It is the aspiration to become a brand, an expression of the *Made in Italy*, and the possibility of being successfully exported.[3] Thus the objects are well defined in all of their parts, inspiring professionalism, and at the same time a velvety and colloquial elegance. This quality is difficult to disagree with, though if it is interpreted to the letter it debases that even-tempered provocative and ironic charge that, in the past, rendered Italian design so important, and which, still today, allows many national products to be unmatched.[4] Perhaps, or rather most definitely, the best ones. Δ

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

Notes

1. Vincent J Scully, 'Architecture, sculpture, painting: environment, art, illusion', in Vincent J Scully and Neil Levine, *Modern Architecture and Other Essays*, Princeton University Press (Princeton, NJ and Oxford), 2003, p 67.
2. The Waterpower project for Amalfi coordinated by Luigi Centola and winner of the 2005 European Holcim Award.
3. Pippo Ciorra, 'L'architettura italiana: una fotografia', *Casabella*, No 742, March 2006.
4. Emilio Ambasz, *The New Domestic Landscape: Achievements and Problems of Italian Design*, Museum of Modern Art (New York), 1972.

Giammetta & Giammetta Architettura, Restaurant and hotel, Sperlonga, Lazio, 2004
The architects have given movement to the 'fully', substituting the compact gravitational static with dynamism.

The Young Sensualists

Pino Scaglione perceives a new sensuality at play in Italy. He takes us on a tour that takes in the elegant and sober forms of +Arch's new headquarters for Dolce & Gabbana in Milan and the highly original new soccer stadium in Siena by Iotti + Pavarani. Heading south he highlights some remarkable new architecture in Naples, Sardinia and Sicily injected with a rare poetic sensibility.

Giovanni Vaccarini, New cemetery, Ortona a Mare, Chieti, Abruzzo, 2005

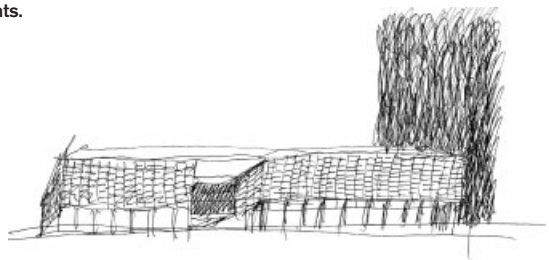
Things are currently rather lively in Italy. The current group of 50-year-olds has cleared the way for others as a result of their relationships, experiments and their formal and stylistic development, but above all through their new open and multidisciplinary approach to design, no longer seen as a closed and enclosed episode. There are many offices spread across the country. The north is considered to be more operative and the south more creative. Then there are those that are simultaneously inside and outside Italy, who have found that participating in competitions represents a new terrain for comparison and exchange, and who see foreign work experiences as important moments of growth and detachment from a more rhetorical and useless tradition.

The most exemplary approach can be found in the work of the group known as Corvino+Multari (Vincenzo Corvino and Giovanni Multari) who, together with others mentioned here, began with an attentive and interesting rereading of the Modernist lesson – beginning with their experiences in Naples, the city in which they live and which boasted a lively production during the important years of the Rationalist movement – and they are now producing architecture and projects that are a truly original and authentic transfiguration of contemporary images that have little, if any, links with a traditional past. The project for the Palaponticelli on the periphery of Naples, a difficult area in both social and urban terms, proposes the figurative redemption of its context by inserting a highly innovative piece of urban architecture that looks more towards the landscape, and effectively constructing a new one, rather than at the lessons of the past. What is more, it is precisely because of this lesson, later deformed by Rationalism, a movement that actually contributed to building inhospitable cities and peripheries, that the separation is so sharp: the colours, surfaces, forms, materials (hypercontemporary) and the deliberate out-of-scale dimensions of the Palaponticelli are a manifesto of a new scale of design for the office of Corvino+Multari, who also belong to a broader school of research that aims at comparisons with the European and international panorama. In this project they identify and trace a new approach for the coming years, which will undoubtedly yield interesting results. Very similar in this sense is the path taken by Carlo Cappai and Maria Alessandra Segantini of C+S Associati, though we can say that this partnership, operative mostly in the Veneto region, aims at a more rigorous search for continuity with the lessons of past Italian experiences.

The courageous, though intelligently fractured monolith (a form imposed by the master plan prepared by Leon Krier) of the university residences in Novoli, Florence, gives us a taste of their professional bravura and the control of the project at

Corvino+Multari, Palaponticelli project, Naples, 2005
While their initial work was elegant, though traditional, Corvino+Multari have recently begun to design projects such as this that are characterised by a more decisive figurative impact within their architectural context, in this case a fragment of the abandoned Neapolitan periphery.

C+S Associati, Student residences, Novoli, Florence, 2006
This university residence synthesises many of the architectural themes pursued by C+S: the simplicity of the plan, the juxtaposition of materials with different patterns and colours (in this case reinforced concrete and wood) and an attention to lighting, visible here in the use of screening panels on the exterior and skylights.



Camillo Botticini, Municipal pool, Mompiano, Brescia, Lombardy, 2005
Botticini's work is characterised by a taste for the modern that plays with elementary volumes interrupted by perforations or large glazed surfaces, as can be seen in the design of this pool project.

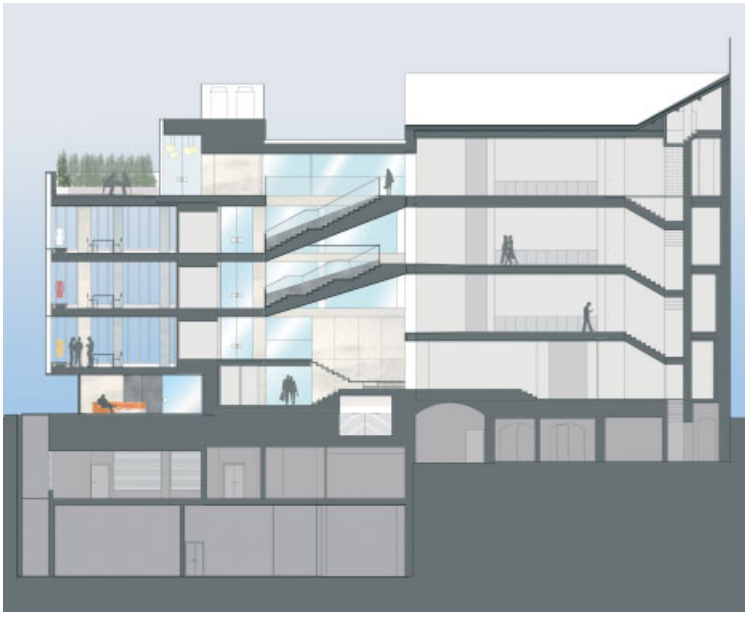
various scales. There is a level of coherence between interior and exterior, in the choice of expressive and lasting materials and the revisitation of past forms and their modernisation. Ample surfaces of glass block are supported by exposed concrete bases. The use of large coloured exterior walls and wood cladding in particular areas creates an architectural 'mosaic' that can be read at multiple levels and which demonstrates various threads of research, from the modern to the contemporary, from the artistic to the graphic and the macro to the micro, passing not only through the rich universe of figurative Italian design, but also the more recent interpretations of, above all, contemporary Spanish architects.

If we were to speak of a proper balance between research and innovation, with analogous expressive methods, then a fine example can be found in the work of Camillo Botticini, though he sets himself apart through his original stylistic approach and a particular coherence in the use of the suggestions and rigour of Nordic Rationalism, taken from the most interesting experiences of the masters, and infused with a satisfyingly contemporary and positive 'Italian' signature.

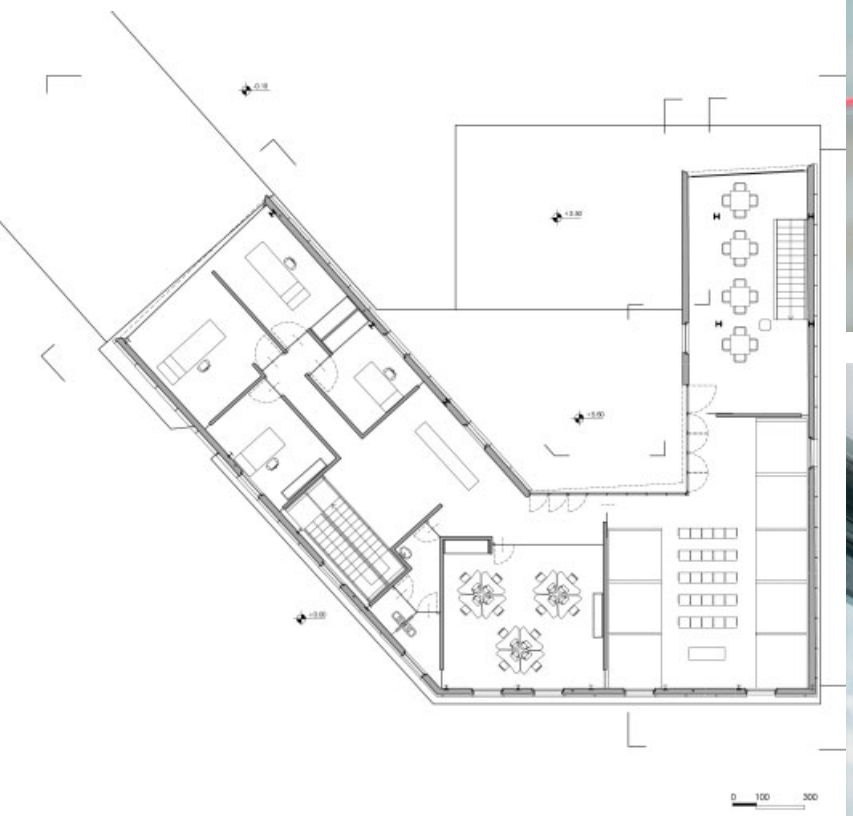
Botticini's project for a pool in Mompiano is an exemplar of this passage and his research: a skilful play of suspended volumes whose surfaces have been treated with a dense and elegant grey-black, tempered by the light glazing and reveals between the base and the upper volume. The interiors, devoid of vertical structural elements, give the space of the pool a sense of limitless, horizontal dilation, while the glazing offers an interrupted dialogue between the interior and exterior. Finally, the interesting relationship with context is marked by the volumetric mass that connotes the site itself.

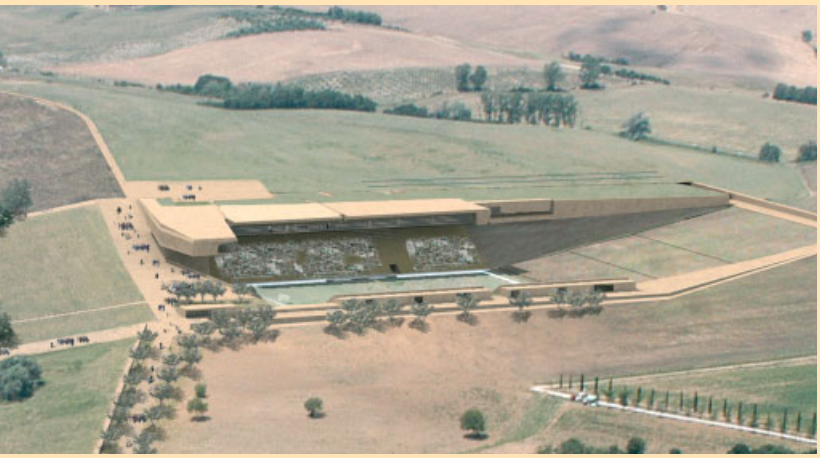
The Milanese group +Arch (Francesco Fresa, Germàn Fuenmayor, Gino Garbellini and Monica Tricario) have, for some time now, worked primarily on buildings for the fashion industry, a sector that in Italy has pushed for a strong contemporary image. Their most recent work is the new headquarters for Dolce & Gabbana, whose interiors were designed together with Ron Arad. This building is an exemplar of an attitude of courageous innovation that pushes the group to build works of architecture that are both solid and simultaneously Mediterranean and Nordic, elegant and sober and, above all, with an excellent control of form and space. Their work also boasts a perfect balance between materials and construction solutions, together with a refined, balanced and sober minimal-sensual play of white and grey-black. There are no excesses or contaminations between the interior and exterior, culminating in the interior courtyard, which in itself represents an interesting thesis in the construction of a contemporary microlandscape.

+Arch, Dolce & Gabbana headquarters, Milan, 2006
The projects of this Milan-based office are characterised by a refined elegance that results from an essential design, careful detailing and the use of precious materials. The architects have honed their skills in many of their projects for factories and offices, and stores for fashion designers Dolce & Gabbana.



UdA, Ilti Luce head office extension, Turin, 2002
The projects by this group from Turin are characterised by their transparency, immateriality and lighting effects. The building shown here features walls made of transparent panels and fibre-optic lighting that gives the panels different colours.





Iotti + Pavarani Architetti, Soccer stadium, Siena, 2005
Iotti + Pavarini are two 30-something architects who gained recognition after winning this important competition. Their solution was convincing for the masterful way in which the decidedly cumbersome stadium is brilliantly inserted within the delicate landscape of its site.

Still in the north, and in the realm of this suggestive play of transparent yet solid boxes similar to the buildings by +Arch, the work of the Turin-based office Ufficio di Architettura (UdA) is interesting for its Italian and original manner of dialoguing with context, in particular their conversion of a factory building from the 1950s, the home of Ilti Luce. The project includes the addition of an extra storey on the flat roof using a translucent and vitreous material to create a sort of giant lantern which, when illuminated, becomes airy and light. It is set atop the office building and becomes both a container and exhibition of the company's main product (fibre-optic lighting). It is an original method for resolving the theme of the building within a building, a courageous and intelligent choice and an attentive and inventive way of using technology and innovation to create a work of architecture with a strong visual and expressive impact, even considering its small scale.

Seen as operative, productive, advanced and closer to a European condition, it is in the north that we find the rapid echoes of changes in society and economy that confer new responsibilities upon the architect and architecture and the city and the landscape, the last being the true object of investigation and excavation and recent reconsiderations and rereadings for Italian architects.

Another interesting and original example of the measurement of architecture against the Italian landscape – typical and ironic by antonomasia – is the design of the new Siena soccer stadium by Paolo Iotti and Marco Pavarani (Iotti + Pavarani Architetti), which simultaneously measures the landscape and measures itself against the landscape. The architects here identified an original formula for the concentration of the entire stadium within a single block with chromatic finishes and edges, treated as though it were part of the Sienese terrain and maintaining the role of the landscape as the undisputed protagonist of the valley in which the building sits. The section re-proposes the stepped model of the city's Piazza del Campo, without altering the physiognomy of the site, but rather exalting it and redefining it through small and intelligent works of environmental engineering. The building is folded and shaped, like a large terracotta box, and made to match the forms of its context.

LFL Architects, Sports complex, Olgiate Molgora, Lecco, Lombardy, 2005
Despite having only a limited budget, LFL managed to renovate this existing sports centre and create a new building that contains the bar and changing rooms and two terraces protected by a canopy. One overlooks the soccer field, while the other offers a view of the public square designed to host special events.

Piero Luconi of LFL Architects, on the other hand, appears to be interested in converting technology into poetic-expressive forms, without renouncing its innovative impact. This can be seen in his sports complex in Olgiate Molgora. A large canopy runs along the building, overlapping it and functioning as both a 'blanket' and the expressive link in the interesting alternation of service spaces, solids and voids, transparency and materiality. The choice of materials, including wood, plaster and exposed steel fins, gives the architectural volumes a sense of both lightness and materiality. The flying canopy that overlaps the long building sharpens the outline of the entire complex and passes over the fence, acting as a decisive urban marker. This is a simple theme which has, however, been resolved in a very intelligent manner, transforming an ordinary service building into a monumental redemption of its surroundings. Once again, the lesson learned from other European experiences (mainly Spain) appears to emerge and represent a 'forced' source of icons from the Italian tradition, conferring a civic role upon this work of architecture.

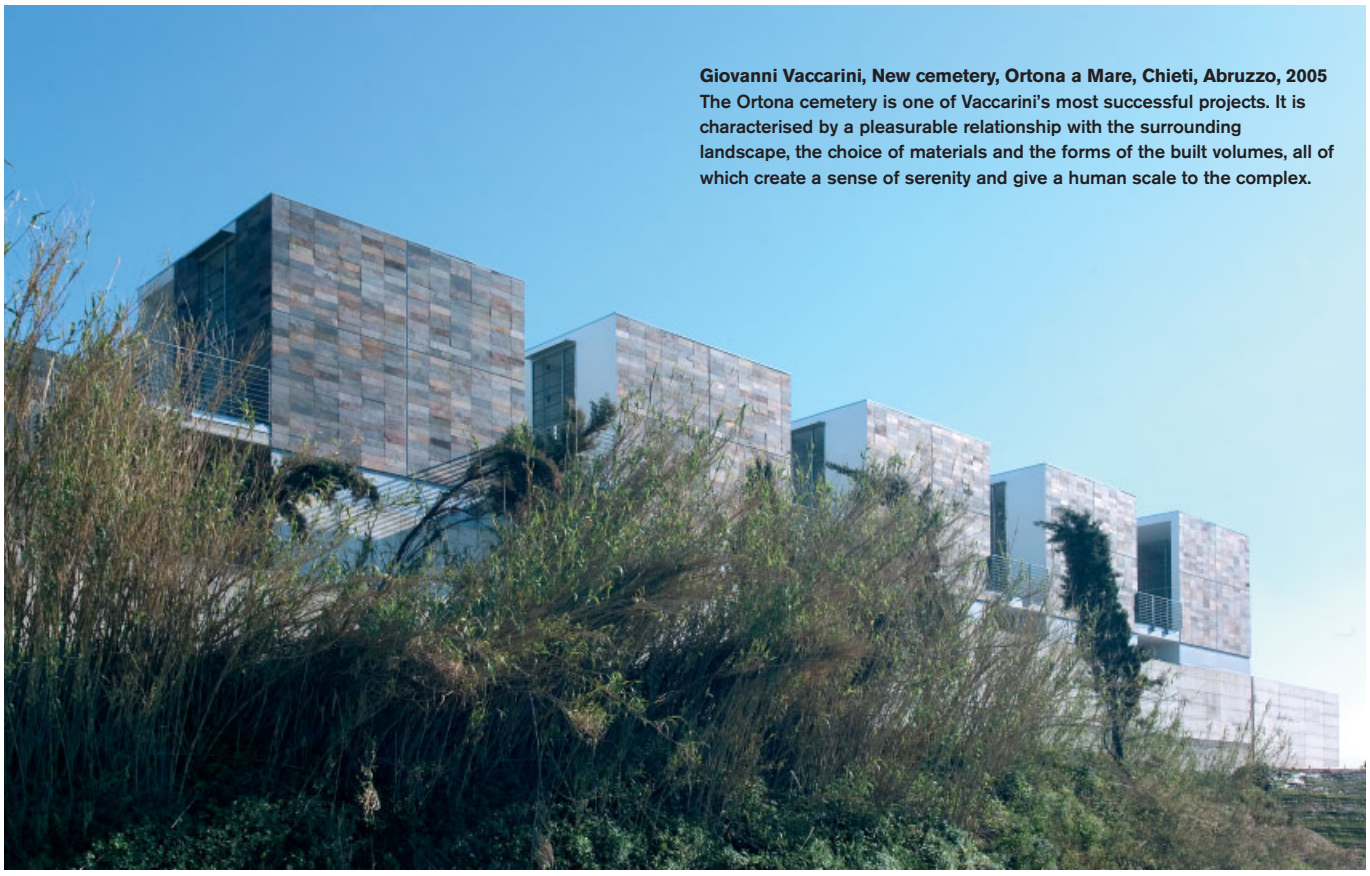
Three different experiences, which vary in terms of the architects' education and attitude, though analogous in terms of context, describe a new geography of signs and research in the south of Italy.

Giovanni Vaccarini and Giovanni Leoni live along a parallel geographical axis, in Abruzzo and Sardinia respectively, aligned between two meridians, though different in their attitudes towards design and its contemporary declinations. Leoni's work is pared down and essential, though without any form of renunciation, while Vaccarini's work is exuberant and expressionist. The houses by Leoni, who works between Barcelona and his native Sardinia, are a sort of revisitation of the theme of the row house, a banal theme that is often rendered even more banal by the economic constrictions of the market. In his O House project, (2004), a small block of row houses located in Capoterra, Cagliari, Sardinia, the theme is resolved with taste and sobriety and, above all, through a play of volumes that tends to confer tension on the built forms. Leoni uses the theme of the solid and the void and excavation to exalt light and shadow and subtract this group of buildings from any form of standardisation. Even the surfaces, a mix of masonry, steel elements and glazing contribute to the definition of the articulated volumes, creating a 'skin' that reacts with its context.

The cemetery in Ortona a Mare by Vaccarini is, instead, a sort of symbolic, 'votive' sculpture, an architecture path, a sequence of spaces that range from the sacred to the oneiric, creating a physiognomy that is played out through shadow, white and stone and sea and sky, which become part of the universe of architectural forms. Even in this case it is a volumetric game that guides the composition. Solids and voids alternate and follow one another, matter and light are intertwined, symbology and concreteness give life to an expressive, intense and original sequence.

Leoni and Vaccarini are both rooted in an articulated approach to research: the first with a highly refined residential project that represents a courageous and innovative scheme set in the heart of the Sardinian landscape, marking a turning point in his work, and the beginning of the incorporation of the research related to his Catalonian experience, while the latter, with a house in Abruzzo, brought his love for contemporary Dutch poetics to the extreme. Both projects feature evident signs of a dialogue with different cultures from the contemporary panorama, adding force and experimental weight to their work with space, form and language.

Even further south, in the extraordinary and dense story that is Sicily, between the fields of fruit trees and the baroque



Giovanni Vaccarini, New cemetery, Ortona a Mare, Chieti, Abruzzo, 2005
The Ortona cemetery is one of Vaccarini's most successful projects. It is characterised by a pleasurable relationship with the surrounding landscape, the choice of materials and the forms of the built volumes, all of which create a sense of serenity and give a human scale to the complex.

AtelierMap with Francesco Cacciatore, Baglio-Fallisi residence, Buccheri, Sicily, 2004
This single-family residence has received numerous awards, including an honourable mention for the 2006 Gold Medal for Italian Architecture promoted by the Milan Triennale. In particular the project has been applauded for its balance between the clearly contemporary image of the house and references to local traditions, such as the organisation of spaces around a central patio.

city of Modica, we find the work of AtelierMap (Gianfranco Gianfriddo and Luigi Pellegrino) perhaps the most representative of an attitude towards 'revolution', renouncing any connection to a particular school, seen here as a pure 'label'. Sicilian by education, European by condition, the work of this young partnership appears to be a happy synthesis of exuberance, rendered poetic by the Mediterranean and the use of new forms of innovation and expression, both in terms of architectural language and the formal and spatial results. Distant and detached from a particular brand of imported Minimalism that conditioned design in Sicily for years, Gianfriddo and Pellegrino challenge us with a proposal for a more contemporary dimension of the Mediterranean that is successfully realised in a beautiful private residence in Buccheri, where clean and regular walls, that are both closed and compact, alternate with open spaces and large windows that overlook internal and external landscapes.

The project is an attentive re-reading of the elements of the traditional residence which is, however, reined in and avoids any nostalgia or redundancies. It is simultaneously rich with expression and intensity, articulation and suggestion, memory and innovation, and force and sensuality. If a house can be assumed as a paradigm of this new approach, almost as a reference for positive signals, part of a theme that is as actual and assiduous as that of the residence in particular, the elements of this innovation would appear to inform not only the original house in Buccheri, but also, positively, all of contemporary Italian architecture. AD

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

What are the current perceptions of Italian architecture? In this section, articles by William Menking and Olympia Kazi, Fulvio Irace and Hans Ibelings help answer this question. Menking and Kazi have rediscovered, in the experiments of young Italian architects such as Stalker, ma0, A12 and Multiplicity, the themes that once distinguished the production of the Radical architects of the 1960s and 1970s. This observation is particularly important because it goes against the stereotypical image – though often present in international publishing – of a rigid and traditional Italian architecture whose gaze is continually focused on the past. Furthermore, we can think, for example, of the debt Koolhaas owes to Superstudio – it demonstrates how Italy, for more than 40 years now, has been home to the creation of operative hypotheses that are part of the patrimony of ideas related to a common architectural research. For Irace, who does not share this enthusiasm for the Radical phenomenon, Italian architecture, since the beginning of the 20th century, is similar to a two-faced Janus, where the examples of the Futurist avant-garde confront the more even-tempered examples of the metaphysical. For Irace the current scene is rich with Italian architects who, following in the footsteps of Renzo Piano, represent a sort of dolce stil novo,

Perceptions

a sophisticated, craftsman-like approach that considers the values of landscape and context. For Ibelings, the new and emerging generation of architects is replacing the old guard and moving in multiple directions: from the neo-ecological work of 2A+P to the Situationist Stalker, from the international style of Ian+ to the regionalism of Marco Navarra. As different as these three points of view may be – two American researchers who investigate the radical phenomenon, an Italian critic who is attentive to the new, but wary of the avant-garde, and a Dutch critic who investigates the new cultures and the different formal approaches that characterise the post-Erasmus generation – they are not necessarily in conflict with one another. These reconstructions, each from different approaches, provide us with a magma-like and contradictory reality that cannot be explained in a single formula. This can also be seen, furthermore, in the great vitality of publications in this sector. Italy is home to numerous architectural magazines, each of which is characterised by an original cultural project. In the concluding article to this issue Valentina Croci looks into some of the more important examples.

Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi

Translated from the Italian version by Paul David Blackmore

Radical Italian Architecture Yesterday and Today

In Italy there is a revival of the spirit of 1960s Radicalism. Fresh from university, young architects 'pick up a rock band name, enrol in an architectural competition or just invent their own research and project installations'. William Menking, who co-curated the 2003 exhibition at London's Design Museum on Superstudio – the supergroup of Italian *radicali* – and Olympia Kazi bring the new generation of young protagonists under scrutiny.

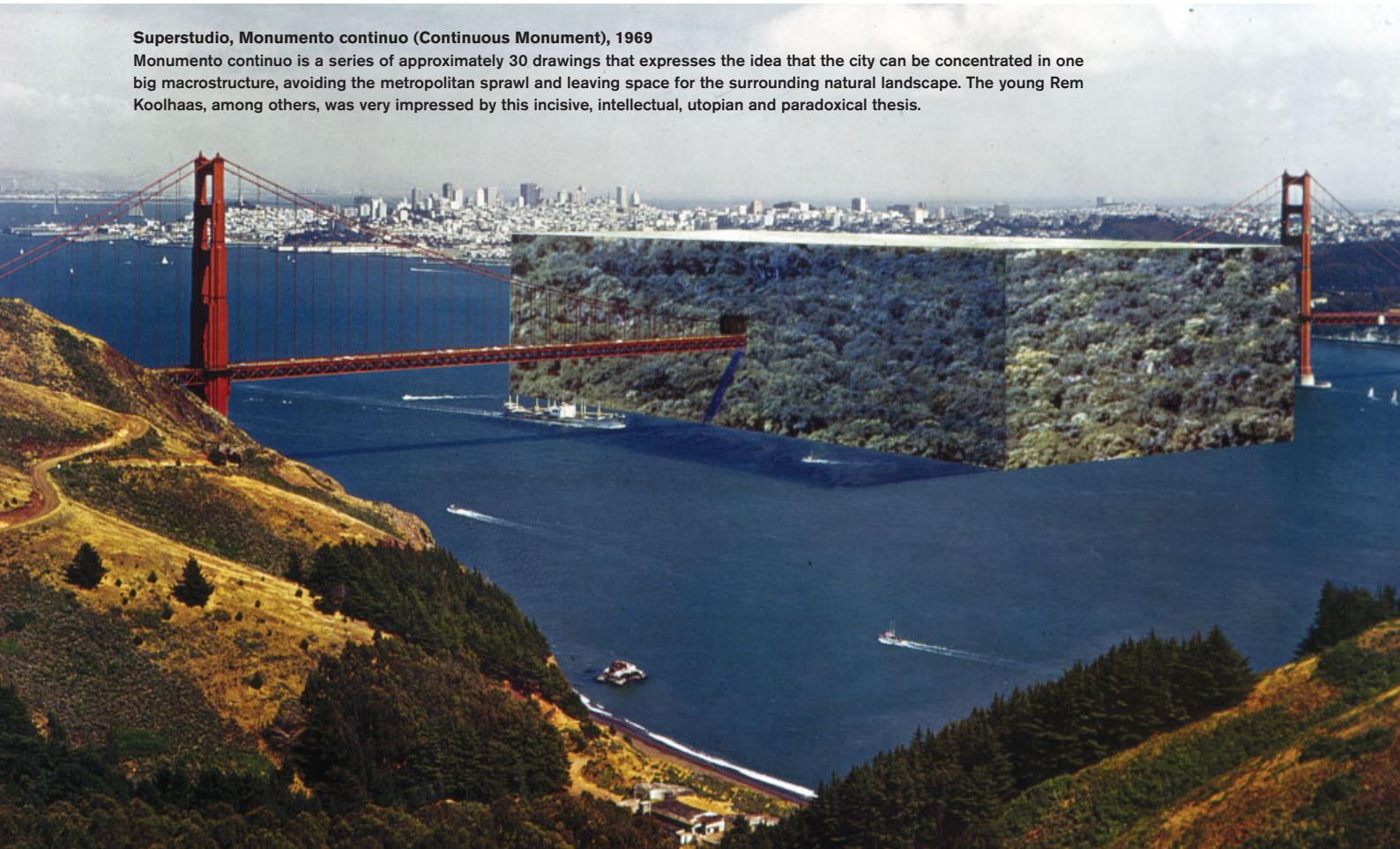
Superstudio, La moglie di Lot (Lot's Wife), Venice, 1978
This is one of the two works presented by Superstudio at the Venice Biennale in 1978. The title comes from the biblical tale of Lot's wife, who was transformed into a pillar of salt. Here the process is the opposite of this: on the table are five maquettes made of salt. A small container above slowly pours water on to the maquettes. Under the vanishing salty surfaces appear more stable models of the same buildings. The performance is a metaphorical reflection of the concept of permanence in architecture.

Today, when digital paths of communication spread ideas and images instantaneously across the globe, does it make any sense to speak of a contemporary radical 'Italian' architecture? Well yes and no! It is undoubtedly true that while the discipline universally seems freed from all sorts of confines and limitations it is nevertheless experiencing a global crisis. This crisis springs directly from the issues associated with information technology, globalisation and geopolitics. But the 1960s Italian counterculture movement known as the '*radicali*', facing the crisis of modernity, responded in a uniquely Italian manner that positioned the country as a centre of new ideas and visual representation.

Today something similar is happening in Italian architecture. It is witnessing the emergence of an array of alternative groups that deal with the urban space in a radically new way, a new set of practices that might be called 'the new engagement'.[1] A constellation of artists, architects, urbanists, sociologists, anthropologists, economists, programmers, hackers and all sorts of public advocates are collectively reimagining how we confront critical urban and social issues. Some of these groups (Stalker, ma0, A12, Multiplicity and many others) who are just out of university, pick up a rock band name, enrol in an architectural competition or just invent their own research and project installations around community development and other urban issues. Further, they discover and discuss new ways of negotiating and distorting contemporary social problems or knots in architectural research, echoing Cedric Price's words: 'You create architecture through distortion. You can create beneficial social conditions that hitherto are thought impossible.'[2]

Many of these groups draw inspiration from a renewed interest in the work of the *radicali* – the group of architects that coalesced around Italian universities in the late 1960s such as Archizoom, UFO, Strum and Superstudio. The rediscovery of the earlier Italian radicals is important for the younger generation of Italians, but many clichés of the movement have arisen from romanticising and distorting its radicalism and its perceived unified political commitment. In fact, the real value of these earlier groups for today is the diversity of opinion and disagreement that existed within the movement. Its protagonists still emphasise this. In a recent interview, Andrea Branzi claimed: 'For me Radical Architecture has the merit of not having built or produced a formal language: it produced a critical level, a crisis of the project, of the certainties of modernity throughout this period of continuous research.'[3]

Further, Ugo La Pietra claims that: 'At that time architects had three paths; self-castration, that is they refused to design for a wrong society and were waiting for a different society and these architects didn't do anything. Then there were those that had a position like Archizoom and Superstudio, that were working and designing for another society, utopia, a different society that didn't exist; they were imagining another type of society. The third position, which was also mine, of Riccardo Dalisi and others, was to work and design in



Superstudio, Monumento continuo (Continuous Monument), 1969
Monumento continuo is a series of approximately 30 drawings that expresses the idea that the city can be concentrated in one big macrostructure, avoiding the metropolitan sprawl and leaving space for the surrounding natural landscape. The young Rem Koolhaas, among others, was very impressed by this incisive, intellectual, utopian and paradoxical thesis.

this society but against society. That is, by highlighting the deformations, the mistakes, the dangers of a consumerist society, and thus an oppositional work.'[4]

Finally, Paolo Deganello: 'We were an irreverent generation, and were proud of that irreverence, it was the strength of our aggressiveness and that's why there were no sacred cows. We wanted to empty architecture of all architectonic value, that is, make it become something else. We wanted to empty architecture of its disciplinary identity and bring life into architecture.'[5]

But perhaps the most influential radical group for today's young Italian (and non-Italian) architects is Superstudio. The case of Superstudio is a special one among the radicals because of the power of its argument and the compelling images it produced of future worlds. Superstudio's career, which began in 1966, continuously attacked the hegemonic nature of modern architecture, which it believed served only to indoctrinate society into an irrelevant society of consumption. It sought to extract out of architecture all that encroached on man's ability to live a free life. Thus the group claimed that: 'It became very clear that to continue to design furniture, objects and similar household decorations was no solution to the problems of living and not even those of life, and even less could it serve to save one's own soul.'[6] Its response to this indoctrination was to subvert the culture of architecture and propose discarding the role of curator, designer and architect. But for architects this position is untenable and led to the group's own demise. In its Hidden Architecture (1970), for example, plans for an architectural project were encased in hermetically sealed covers to remain as only an object. But this and other projects forced the group into a philosophical bind from which there seemed little escape.

However, to its credit Superstudio attempted to work through the intellectual and professional conundrum it had created as architects who no longer believed in the profession, and this may one day have profound meaning for today's *radicali*. The architects' Venice Biennale installation of 1978, Lot's Wife, was not only in some ways emblematic of the Italian counterculture's response to modernity, but an attempt to work their way out of the group's zero-sum formula, life = architecture, which effectively eliminated one by one alternative theories or actions.

The Venice project, which featured a zinc table with five salt castings in the forms of architectural monuments, designed to erode under a dripping stream of water, affirmed for a final time the studio's belief that 'architecture exists in time as salt exists in water'.[7] Though an art installation and not a building, it reaffirmed the importance of the object and reclaimed a role for the architectural designer as author and creator.

The Italian radicals of the 1960s are arguably the last architectural avant-garde to question the very foundations of the discipline: they confronted architecture at its roots, re-examining afresh the problematics of dwelling, living, the use of objects, and so on. The wide range of responses they produced embodied different aspects of the crisis of the modern project. What began to crumble was the idea of Utopia, the Modernist project of the future. The radicals are among the first to elaborate strategies for understanding that crisis, representing it, coping with it – the most paradigmatic example of such experience is Superstudio's dystopic vision of the Monumento continuo. The new radicals, the collectives that emerged in the last decade, are the direct heirs of that tradition. They have inherited many of the strategies elaborated in the 1960s and 1970s, but also some of the very contradictions of radical architecture. Above all they take up the central legacy of Superstudio, Archizoom et al: the rethinking of the utopian paradigm. AD

Stalker, Scavalco: Stalker attraverso i territori attuali (Stalker crossing actual territories), Rome, 1995
The Stalker group of architects does not design buildings, but, rather, events, based on the idea that seeing the reality through an unconventional perspective changes the way we perceive the architectural environment more than realising new artefacts. Among the group's activities – consistently derived from Guy Debord's Situationist method based on the idea of *dérive* (ie drift, walking with no clear destination) – are strolling investigations into the unknown city: peripheries, degraded areas, no-man's lands enclosed by fences. Climbing a wall (in Italian: *scavalco*) during one of these investigations can be an act of opposing the freedom of the body against the coercion of the built environment.

Notes

1. The 'new engagement' is the theme of Olympia Kazi's current research project at the Independent Study Program of the Whitney Museum of American Art.
2. Taken from a CD accompanying the 7th International Architecture Exhibition, Venice, catalogue *Città: Less Aesthetics More Ethics*, Rizzoli (New York), 2000.
3. Interview with Andrea Branzi by Olympia Kazi, Milan, 13 January 2006.
4 Interview with Ugo La Pietra by Olympia Kazi, Milan, 30 June 2005.
5. Interview with Paolo Deganello by Olympia Kazi, Milan, 9 March 2006.
6. Superstudio, 'Histograms', reprinted in *L'Invenzione della superficie neutra. Elementi*, trans Peter Lang, Edizioni Print (Milan), 1972, p 19.
7. Peter Lang and William Menking, *Superstudio: Life without Objects*, Skira (Milan), 2003, p 214.

Italian Architecture from the Inside

Fulvio Irace focuses on the internal tendencies of Italian contemporary architecture. In his identification of national characteristics, he recognises the part that a consolidated approach to Modernism has played. Looking backwards as well as forwards, Modernism in Italy, in all its manifestations, has been simultaneously concerned with 'the exaltation of the new' and 'the obsession with memory'.

My professional bias keeps me from seeing today as something separate from the past, and I do not know how to evaluate the contemporary without considering history. When I look at the collection of new Italian architecture I cannot help but recognise the connections – even if accidental or perhaps simply undeclared – with long-lasting traditions and attitudes, which the contemporary condition has passed on to us in an updated linguistic form, though in substance it is not so different from historical attitudes and lasting obsessions.

This bias could not be opposed even by the deacon of modern historians Nicolas Pevsner who, in 1956, created a sensation when he accepted this fact while writing what is perhaps his most disputable work – *The Englishness of English Art*[1] – in which he sought to demonstrate the presence of a national characteristic in English art. Notwithstanding the fact that art history has since elaborated more complex and less deterministic strategies of interpretation, I began to believe in a less absolutist format than that adopted by Pevsner, that the thesis of a 'nationality' of artistic culture – though in reality also political and social – could still assist us in understanding something about the current scene.

In fact, by renouncing the deterministic claims of Pevsner's model, it is perhaps possible to consider the idea of a 'national character' in the more general terms of a tendency, a consolidated approach to Modernism that repeats itself, even in different historical ways, each time the new interrupts the scene, upsetting existing balances. If we reflect carefully, Italy was the only country to confront Modernism in the 20th century like a two-faced Janus, simultaneously looking towards the past and the future. On the one hand there was the futurist manifesto of FT Martinetti, on the other the metaphysical manifesto of Giorgio de Chirico: the exaltation of the new and the obsession with memory. From Futurist painter, Mario Sironi quickly became the cantor of the foreboding solidity of the metropolis, and Umberto Boccioni's 'city on the rise' is solidified in the solitary angst of the

periphery, where every movement appears to be blocked. In an analogous manner Carlo Carrà soon abandoned his forays into the decomposition of form in favour of the search for archaic forms that have all the makings of archetypes.

Even more paradoxical, and less than a decade later, is the birth of Italian Rationalism which, at the hand of the Gruppo,[2] aspired to be both modern and eternal at the same time.

In the years of the second Modernism, those of the reconstruction and the affluent society of the 1950s, the approach to the new involved the rediscovery of memory and tradition, allowing Richard Rogers to construct a theory of environmental pre-existences. There was certainly no lack of dissenting voices, that of Gio Ponti above all, whose Pirelli skyscraper was long considered the professional opposite altar of BBPR's Velasca Tower, and later that of Carlo Molino, re-dimensioned all the same by its forced location in a niche of eccentric provincialism. Or, more recently, that of Alessandro Mendini, tolerated in debates about design, or the younger Italo Rota – marginalised in turn by the apparent extravagance of an extreme research into communication.

These are all important voices who design, to this day, an emerging underground thread that remains of minor importance in the history of the culture of design that is aimed at mediation and working along the narrow margins between the new and the recurring.

Even in this case there is no lack of important examples: Giuseppe Terragni, first and foremost, who managed to be a Rationalist, a Futurist and a 20th-century artist, according to an amalgam that cannot simply be reduced to the sum of its components. However, in general the metaphysical vein that runs through the modern Italian adventure conditions the climate of design research that allowed Franco Albini to brush up against the restlessness of a conceptual Surrealism precisely when architecture appeared to be more Rational and Minimalist, while permitting Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini to oscillate between Functionalism and a Mediterranean approach.

The sole Italian example of adherence to the Neo-Brutalist movement can be found in Vittoriano Viganò's Istituto Marchiondi in Milan (1957), lost between the folds of a criticism that was more interested in revival than the construction of a new vision, while the technological investigation of Archigram was recognised only later on, and exclusively by the radical avant-garde who wrapped it, however, in a sort of autarchic declination.

Perhaps, then, we must consider this peculiarity, evaluating it as a force and at the same time a weakness in our architectural system. A weakness as a result of its inability to formalise, in an original manner, the ambiguities of Modernism, its oscillations between the particular and the general and between memory and forgetfulness. Due to its structural characteristics, Italian architecture is configured as the work of a highbrow and sophisticated intellectual craft, congruent with its elective terrain of application, the layered city and the manmade landscape. This hypothesis is also confirmed by isolated cases of recognised internationalisation, such as the work of Renzo Piano's office, which has the notable merit of attempting a translation of the traditional craft of formal procuration into an interpretation of technological humanism.

A relatively trustworthy reflection of this condition is offered by the awarding of the 2006 Gold Medal at the Milan Triennale, as decided by an international jury featuring Arata Isozaki, Jean Louis Cohen and David Chipperfield. A relatively compact generation, ranging from northern to southern Italy, appears to have understood the validity of this tradition, designing works that reflect an anything but banal awareness of the delicate environmental equilibrium of our cities: a *dolce stil novo* that perhaps will never reach the mediatic incisiveness of the Bilbao Guggenheim, but which may serve, more discretely, to help reduce environmental decay, reconnecting itself to the regional rather than the national matrix upon which Italian cultural identity has been founded. AD

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

Notes

1. N Pesvner, *The Englishness of English Art*, Architectural Press (London), 1956.
2. Established in 1926 by seven young Milanese architects (Ubaldo Catagnoli, Luigi Figini, Guido Frette, Sebastiano Larco, Gino Pollini, Carlo Enricio Rava, Giuseppe Terragni), Gruppo 7 (the Group of the Seven) is credited as the foundation stone of Italian Rationalism.

Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Santa Cecilia Concert Hall, Auditorium Parco della Musica, Rome, 2002
Tree halls, variously described as 'beatles' or 'upturned mandolins', are surrounded by a large green area that opens out into the amphitheatre. The individual halls have been designed for specific, independent purposes, as is reflected in their design.

Italian Architecture from the Outside In

Hans Ibelings, the Dutch editor of *A10: new European architecture*, provides a reticent but entirely perceptive account of the Italian architecture scene from a wider European perspective. Architectural culture in Italy may be nascent in comparison to some of its continental neighbours, but it is 'richer and more versatile' than it has been for many years. He emphasises the role that 'an intermediate generation' has played in smoothing the way for a more confident, emerging generation of designers.

There is a common belief that outsiders have a clearer view of things and events than those who are caught up in them, who are deemed to be too involved to be able to distinguish between cause and effect, major and minor issues, objective and subjective arguments, judgement and prejudice. I do not share this view. All outsiders, regardless of their specific circumstances, are by definition less than fully informed (otherwise they would cease to be outsiders). If even insiders, with all their first-hand knowledge, are unable to distinguish cause and effect, the odds are that all an outsider will see is an inextricable knot.

My perception of contemporary Italian architecture has been shaped by the media, by my chance acquaintance and friendship with several Italian architects and writers on architecture, and by everything that lands on my desk as editor of the magazine *A10: new European architecture*. All of this qualifies me as an outsider whose knowledge of Italian architecture is in every respect second-hand.

Based on this second-hand knowledge, I get the impression that Italian architecture today is richer and more versatile than it has been for many years, and that it also offers more opportunities than before, but that this has not yet led to contemporary architecture becoming a fixture in the urban landscape, as in Amsterdam, Basel, Barcelona, Vienna or Tokyo, to mention just a few of the cities where this is indeed the case. In this respect, there is a huge contrast between an overproduction of ideas, words and images (not to mention a legendary overproduction of architects) and an underachievement when it comes to built works. This seems not so much due to the architects, or to the availability of architectural talent, which appears to be present in abundance, as to the conditions in which architects have to work and manoeuvre.

My view of Italian contemporary architecture is rosier today than it was 10 or 15 years ago (when I knew even less about it than I do now, and was even less qualified to pass judgement). What I, an outsider, think that I see is an architecture in the process of change: new generations have arrived on the scene – architects in their 40s, 30s and 20s, ranging from 2A+P to Stalker, from Ian+ to Marco Navarra – who have proved capable of creating opportunities for themselves and of realising works of significance.

In the blissful ignorance of someone who is not part of the Italian architectural scene, it seems that the generation of old masters, who combine talent with powerful connections, is being progressively replaced by architects younger than 45. This is to a large extent due to the intermediate generation around 50 years of age. This generation has produced such distinguished figures as Mirko Zardini, Pippo Ciorra and

Stefano Boeri who, lacking commissions and opportunities, have been forced to prove themselves in other fields than as practising architects – writing, teaching, curating exhibitions, editing magazines. It is perhaps thanks to this generation of architects in their 50s that doors have been opened for the younger guard, rather as the oldest child in a family often smooths the way for his or her younger siblings, who never have to fight the same battles with their parents about pocket money, about how late they may stay out on a Saturday night, or when they can first go on holiday on their own. In so doing they have shielded their younger professional brothers and sisters, relieved them of a burden and made them independent; and, because they have implicitly or explicitly fought the battle against the fathers, offered the younger ones the opportunity to avoid conflict. The tragedy is that this intermediate generation has scarcely been able to enjoy the fruits of its struggles.

In 1998, the book *Young Italian Architects*, edited by Mario Campi and with a nuanced introduction by Pippo Ciorra (under the telling title 'Shared Loneliness') presented a selection of work by 12 architects or architectural practices. Unlike other volumes in the same series focusing on, among others, Germany, Spain and England, this book contained very little realised work and not a single coloured illustration. Among the 12 architects featured were four names with international resonance: Zardini, Boeri, Antonio Cittorio and Cino Zucchi. The first is currently director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, the second was editor-in-chief of *Domus*; only Cittorio and Zucchi are first and foremost practising architects.

Seven years later saw the publication of *Net.it*, a book which, whatever criticisms one may have of it, presents a much more colourful picture of Italian architecture at the beginning of the 21st century. From a distance of over a thousand kilometres, I see in this a significant development, from the sober black-and-white and the sombre title of the introduction of the 1998 volume, to today's far more straightforward architectural culture. And I do not think that the latter could have existed without the former. AD

Nicole-fVr/2A+P architettura, Round Blur, Corso Unione Sovietica and Via D Drosso, Turin, 2005
The Round Blur is a blurring of the ground plane from artificial to natural. Along the strips of the blurring, the concrete surface leaves spaces for the earth and vice versa. Through a hybridisation of the artificial and the natural, the perception of time and space, the alternation of day and night and the changing of the seasons all become malleable elements, manageable through a reasoned causality. Artificial elements, a fusion between reflectors and flowers, occupy the inert ground plane, while natural elements project from the earth. At night the public square is animated by the reflected light of the intense traffic that surrounds it. During the harsh seasons, when we await the flowering of the natural world, the square continues to appear like a luminescent maze of colours.

The Italian Architectural Press

The proliferation of architectural media in Italy is prodigious. Valentina Croci describes the history behind the plethora of printed magazines, outlining the background and approach of the most prestigious titles. What does the future hold for such a large number of specialist publications? Are they to be eclipsed by the numerous new electronic newsletters and websites?

There are currently more than 40 printed magazines in Italy that specialise in contemporary architecture. This does not include the periodicals, bulletins or annual publications of research centres, cultural institutions or the various departments of schools of architecture. Neither does it include the interior design, furnishings and home accessories magazines. There are also approximately 30 Italian websites dedicated to architecture and construction. So why this huge number of magazines in Italy? Why do we feel this need to write so much about architecture, what is the state of the current debate and who are its readership?

The first Italian magazines were born in Milan, the manufacturing and industrial centre of the postwar economic reconstruction. *Domus*, founded in 1926 by Gio Ponti and *La Casa Bella*, founded by Ernesto Nathan Rogers in 1928 (*Casabella* since 1953) presented the ideas of two distinct worlds, those of theoretical research and the reality of production, during an era of pioneering pragmatism and the economic and productive renewal of an entire country.

Italian architectural magazines became, above all in the 1960s and 1970s, the voice of the universities and the reflection of political upheaval, as well a fundamental instrument for the circulation of international ideas and design utopias. These were the years of the creation of *Controspazio*, founded in 1969 by Paolo Portoghesi, who was also its director until 1983, and *L'Architettura, cronache e storia* (1955–2006), founded and directed by Bruno Zevi until 2000. *Controspazio*, for example, was the principal go-between in Italy for the diffusion of Postmodernism. This and other magazines – such as *Rassegna* (founded and directed by Vittorio Gregotti from 1979 to 1998) and *Lotus* (created in 1963 and under the direction of Pier Luigi Nicolin since 1978) – demonstrated a precise editorial approach in the selection of topics dealt with and their own recognisable critical style.

The explosion of architectural publishing during the second half of the 1990s highlighted the fading of the critical recognisability of magazines in favour of an activity that was, for the most part, an exploration of architectural practice. This can mainly be attributed to the proliferation of information filtered by the media and the interference of sponsors and publicity inserts in the editorial market, pushing the majority of magazines to follow architectural events, to the detriment of an investigation of the relationship between the former and the context that generated them. There are only rare appearances of investigations of the effects of architectural projects after their completion or a discussion of the relationship of a project with its urban context. Furthermore, the methods of circulating information through the media and the rules of presenting the architectural object have favoured a tendency to select models that are often xenophilous and removed from common practice.

Yet magazines remain a point of reference for the transmission of new ideas and, above all, they are the indicators of the state-of-the-art in Italy. For example, the quarterly *d'A* (directed by Giovanni Leoni) is entirely dedicated to the Italian panorama, both in the sense of spatial design and the work of Italian designers, while the monthly *Area* (directed by Macro Casamonti) often focuses its attention on the work of local and, in many cases, lesser-known architects. An analogous example is Cesare Maria Casati's *L'Arca*, which dedicates ongoing attention to the work of young Italian architects as well as carrying out an accurate listing of Italian architectural competitions, making it a useful instrument for promoting and providing information about design activities. Other Italian magazines have their own precise approach: the Bologna-based *The Plan*, like its German counterpart *Detail*, selects works of architecture and publishes construction details, presenting itself as a tool for students and professionals alike. *Domus*, under the direction of Stefano Boeri, set itself apart, even with a niche readership, for its analysis of architecture as a multidisciplinary event, where the sources of analysis were not those of conventional practice, but photographic revelations, interviews, maps or diagrams of economic and social flows that condition the built environment.

What is amazing, however, is the attention focused on contemporary architecture during the last five years by women's and more generalised magazines – for example the *La Repubblica* newspaper's weekly *La Repubblica delle Donne*, or *Casa Amica*, the monthly interiors magazine published by the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper. This interest has grown exponentially to the point that these magazines not only feature the most important architectural events taking place in Italy, but have also constructed a new language with which to speak about architecture. Interviews with important Italian and international designers, as well as reports on the city that focus particular attention on new construction sites, have allowed architecture to come out of the closed environment of schools and design offices and present itself to a broader public. One accomplice in this process, though in this case

with beneficial effects, is the mediatic 'star system' made up of the most well-known international architects.

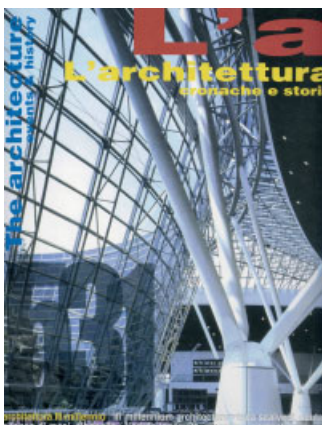
Instantaneous information – newsletters and Internet magazines – have also sharply increased in the last five years to the point that many paper-based magazines have had to introduce an online service. The Internet has changed the means of speaking about architecture by virtue of the free sharing of material, assisting different forms of visibility for architectural projects. For example, the sites www.architettura.it by Marco Brizzi, www.architecture.it by Furio Barzon and www.antithesi.info by Sandro Lazier and Paolo G Ferrara use 'intermittent' structures to collect news about current events, summaries and reviews of paper-based magazines, comments and discussions, providing a plurality of opinions.

Nonetheless, digital publishing has not yet outclassed its paper-based counterpart, nor has it imposed a radical rethinking of architectural communication that extends beyond a specialised group of readers. In fact, the 30 or so sites dedicated to architecture do not appear to have increased the number of readers. Perhaps this is the result of the relatively unattractive graphic interfaces or the complexity of finding information on these sites – elements that require patience and time that most readers do not have. Instead, the free formula of online newsletters seems to function – the weekly *PresS/Tletter* (www.presstletter.com) boasts a constant increase in the number of readers.

What is the future of specialised magazines in Italy then? It is difficult to say. The current panorama does not appear to resolve the issues related to the circulation of information, the scarcity of economic resources in the publishing sector and the 'mediatic' characteristic of architecture. The critical role of specialised magazines seems to have trouble overcoming the dimensions of belonging to a niche market. However, the new editorial environments – computer-based, general and 'free' – that are now dealing with contemporary architecture can, once again, provide the stimuli necessary for contemporary architecture to find new languages to present itself. Δ

Translated from the Italian version into English by Paul David Blackmore

With a provocative cover photo by Cesare Colombo that showed university students challenging Giancarlo de Carlo outside the Milan Triennale (1969), the monthly *Domus*, directed by Stefano Boeri, underlined the significant change and the multidisciplinary nature of his approach. Number 866 (January 2004) contained an interview with the sociologist Bruno Latour about the notion of modernity in architecture, Hans Ulrich Obrist's interview with Vico Magistretti about design in postwar Milan, and an analysis of the Forum 2004 in Barcelona by Mirko Zardini.



L'Architettura, cronache e storia was founded in 1955 by Bruno Zevi, who was also its director until 2000, the year of his death. In his last editorial (No 531, January 2000), Zevi underlined a hopeful beginning to the third millennium, whose architectural expression appeared to already have been outlined in the Deconstructivist, organic and 'ground zero' movement of architectural writing in the 1990s. Together with this edition, the magazine presented a change in its editorial structure, opening itself up to a multidisciplinary approach, computers and never-before-seen Italian and foreign projects. The monthly magazine, under the direction of Furio Colombo from edition number 532 onwards, closed in 2006.

The quarterly *Rassegna*, under the direction of François Burkhardt, has returned after a seven-year hiatus. The theme of the first issue (No 80, September 2005) was 'the architect-inventor' as defined through case studies of historical examples (Buckminster Fuller), contemporary works (the Matsumoto Performing Arts Centre by Toyo Ito) and future trends (the California Academy of Science by Renzo Piano). These methods of analysis are the characteristic structure of this renewed magazine which aims at juxtaposing different design and cultural approaches.

The Plan, published bimonthly, features case studies of international and Italian projects of varying architectural typologies, demonstrating a particular attention to technologies, materials and construction details. The first edition (September 2002) included the EDF Tower by Pei Cobb Freed & Partners (Paris), the San Biagio Cemetery by Marco Ciarlo (Finale Ligure, Italy) and the Biosphere Museum by Barkow & Leibinger Architects (Potsdam).

Contributors

Anna Baldini is an expert in contemporary architectural history and architectural criticism. She promotes an awareness of new forms of architecture and art for *presS/Tmagazine*, of which she is a director. She is also the editor of a number of online architectural magazines and collaborates on specialised technical publications.

Sebastiano Brandolini graduated in 1982 from the Architectural Association in London. He was chief editor of *Casabella* from 1984 to 1996. In 2003 he was a finalist for the Gold Medal for Architectural Criticism at the Triennale. Between 1999 and 2003 he completed the airport offices of Hertz and an energy-efficient house in Bergamo. He is the co-designer of the Palazzo del Cinema in Venice. He has published monographs on Gullichsen Kairamo Formala and Alberto Ponis, and in 2004 published a guide to contemporary architecture in Milan. He has taught at the London School of Economics and is currently a professor at the University of Genoa.

Diego Caramma is a practising architect, a director of Spazio Architettura, collaborator with *presS/Tletter* and *presS/Tmagazine* and a correspondent for *A10*. His Lugano-based office, DCArchitecture, is involved in architectural design and research, and urban design and planning.

Stefano Casciani is a writer, designer and artist. Born in Rome, he moved to Milan in 1979 to join *Domus* magazine as a freelance editor. He has been design editor of *Abitare* and deputy editor of *Domus* (2000–03), where since 2004 he has been consultant to the publisher and deputy editor again since February. Awarded the Compasso d'Oro (2001) and the Lighting for Tomorrow Prize (2003) for his design work and research, he is the author of around 20 books, mainly focusing on the relationships between architecture, design and art.

Valentina Croci is a freelance journalist. She contributes to *Ottagono*, the Italian monthly on industrial design and architecture, and is a member of the editorial staff of *Rassegna*. In 2001 she collaborated on the first issue of *OP* – a series of architectural monographs – writing about Santiago Calatrava. She graduated in 2000 from the Venice University of Architecture (IUAV), and in 2001 gained an MSc in architectural history from the Bartlett School of Architecture in London. She is currently a PhD student in product and communication design at the IUAV.

Anna Giorgi is a professional architect involved in urban planning and transformation, restoration, new construction, renovations and interior design, and works and lives in Milan. With Franca Helg, from the office of Albini-Helg-Piva, she was involved in teaching activities at the Faculty of Architecture at the Milan Polytechnic. In 1993 she completed her doctorate in interior architecture, and was a contract professor in architectural composition from 1998 to 2004. In 1997 she was the technical director of the Fondo Ambiente italiano (FAI) for the restoration and modernisation of monumental structures. She is a founding member of the Milan section, and vice-president of the managing council of the Lombard Section, of IN/ARCH (Istituto Nazionale di Architettura) and currently a scientific director of the City of Milan's Urban Center.

Hans Ibelings is an architectural historian. With Arjan Groot he is the publisher and editor of the bimonthly magazine *A10: new European architecture*, and is the author of several books on (contemporary) architecture, including *Supermodernism: Architecture in the Age of Globalisation* (Netherlands Architecture Institute, 1998).

Fulvio Irace is a professor of architectural history and a faculty member of the doctoral course in architectural and urban planning history at the Turin Polytechnic. He also teaches with the Faculty of Architecture, Urban Planning and the Environment at the Milan Polytechnic, and is a member of the Milan Triennale advisory committee and curator of its architecture section. His work features a special focus on the history and critique of 'modernity', focusing on European architects and architectural-artistic debate during the interwar and postwar reconstruction periods, and he has explored these themes over the past two decades in several exhibitions and a number of books. He was an editor at *Domus* magazine from 1980 to 1986, and is currently an architectural consultant to *Abitare* magazine.

Olympia Kazi is an architect and critic. After serving as junior curator for the Milan Triennale, she is now a fellow of architecture and urban studies at the Independent Study Program at the Whitney Museum of American Art. She also writes for *The Architect's Newspaper* in New York.

Massimo Locci graduated with a degree in architecture in Rome in 1978, under the tutelage of Ludovico Quaroni. He is a member of the national assembly of IN/ARCH, and a member of the editorial team of various magazines, including *AR*, *L'Architetto Italiano* and *Le CarrèBleu*. He is director of the 'Capolavori' section of *Universale di Architettura*, published by Marsilio Editore. Since 1983 he has been working and teaching, as a contract professor, with various Italian universities (Rome, Naples, Ascoli, Potenza) for whom he has taught design and the management of innovation and building processes. He has written various monographic texts and essays on architectural history and criticism.

William Menking is an architectural historian, curator, a professor at Pratt Institute and founder and editor of *The Architect's Newspaper*. He has curated exhibitions on the British and Italian visionary architects Archigram and Superstudio, and is on the board of directors of the Storefront for Art and Architecture and the LA Forum.

Luca Molinari is an architectural critic based in Milan. He is an associate professor of contemporary architectural history at the Faculty of Architecture, Naples Vanvitelli, and contributes to several national and international architectural magazines. He has curated and designed several exhibitions, and was the curator for architecture and urbanism of the Milan Triennale until 2004. From 1995 he was the architecture and design editor for Skira Publishers, and is a director of the School of Design, Naba, Milan. He has published various volumes on architectural history and theory, including *Atlas: North American Architecture Trends 1990–2000* (Skira, 2001), and *Massimiliano Fuksas 1970–2005* (Skira, 2005), and has been a guest-editor for both *2G* and *A+U*. He received the Ernesto Nathan Rogers Prize for best Italian architectural critic at the 2006 Venice Biennale.

Valerio Paolo Mosco is an architect and critic. He has taught at the universities of Rome, Pescara and Venice, and currently teaches at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. He is the author of various essays and articles and the following books: *Architecture Zero Volume, Contemporary Public Spaces* (Skira, 2006), *Valerio Paolo Mosco: Scritti* (Edilstampa, 2006) and *Quaranta anni di Ingegneria Italiana* (OICE Edizioni, 2007).

Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi is an architectural critic and a professor of contemporary architectural history at the La Sapienza University in Rome. He writes for *Domus*, *The Plan*, *L'Arca*, *Abitare* and *Architectural Design*. He is also the Italian correspondent for *A10* (Holland), *Monument* (Australia) and *The Architects' Newspaper* (US). He is the director of the weekly *presS/Tletter*, and curator of numerous exhibitions and events, including the Italian Pavilion at the Brazil Biennale, and a member of the IN/ARCH executive committee. Books include *Forme e ombre, introduzione all'architettura contemporanea, 1905–1933* (Testo & Immagine, 2003), *Introduzione all'architettura* (Meltemi, 2004), *Antonio Citterio* (Edilstampa, 2005), and *Dieci Anni di architettura: 1996–2006* (Prospettive Edizioni, 2006).

Francesco Proto is a researcher in architecture theory and design, visual culture and critical theory at the University of Nottingham. An architect and theorist, his interests lie in a multidisciplinary approach primarily combining psychology, philosophy and cultural aesthetics. His latest releases include a revised edition of *Mass Identity Architecture: Architectural Writings of Jean Baudrillard* (Wiley-Academy, 2006). He recently exhibited his work at the Venice Biennale and founded A_drome: (Office for) Architecture Syndrome.

Livio Sacchi is an architect and professor of architectural design with the Faculty of Pescara. He received the UID 'Targa d'Argento' and is president of the Lazio branch of IN/ARCH, manager of the architecture, urban planning and design section of the Istituto della Enciclopedia Treccani, vice-director of *Il progetto* magazine, and editor of *Op.Cit* magazine. He is currently completing the Korean Evangelical Church of Rome and a residential and commercial complex in L'Aquila. His published works include: *L'idea di rappresentazione* (Kappa, 1994); *Architettura e cultura digitale* (Skira, 2003) and *Tokyo, City and Architecture* (Skira, 2004). He was co-curator, with Franco Purini, of the exhibition 'From Futurism to a Possible Future in Contemporary Italian Architecture', 2002.

Pino Scaglione is an associate professor in urban design. He is a former director of the *Rivista Italiana d'Architettura* and a current director of the *Laboratorio Internazionale strategie urbane e progetto*. In 1996 he participated in the VI Architectural Biennale in Venice. He coordinates publications and exhibitions, and runs cultural meetings and assemblies to discuss design topics. He has played, and continues to play, a primary role in the research and promotion of connections between various environments and sectors of architectural design and urban planning in Italy, and between Italy and other European situations.

All biographies supplied in Italian translated by Paul David Blackmore

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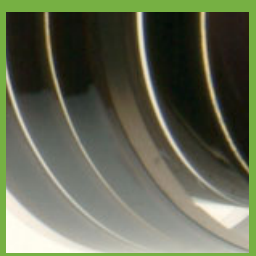
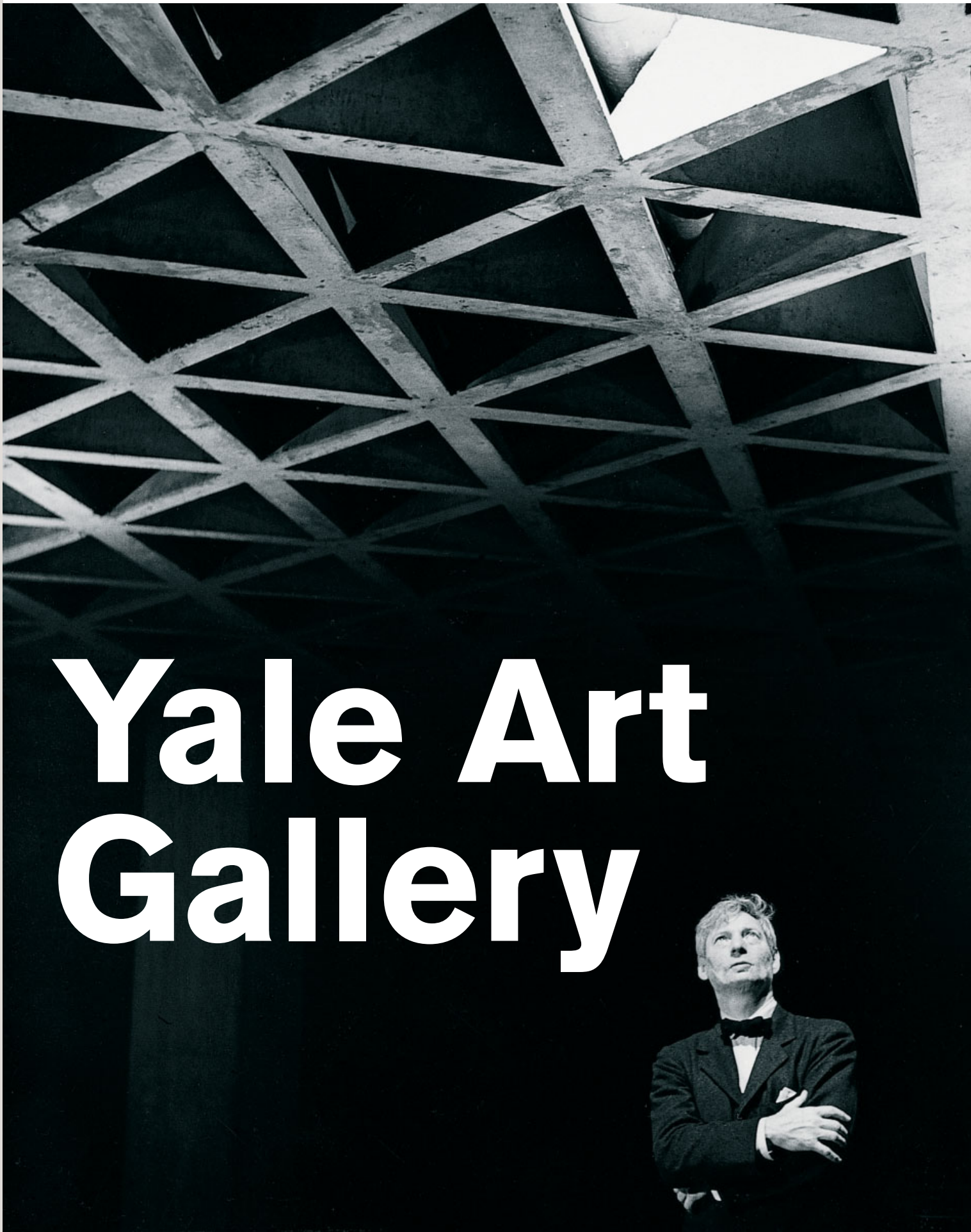




Yale Art Gallery

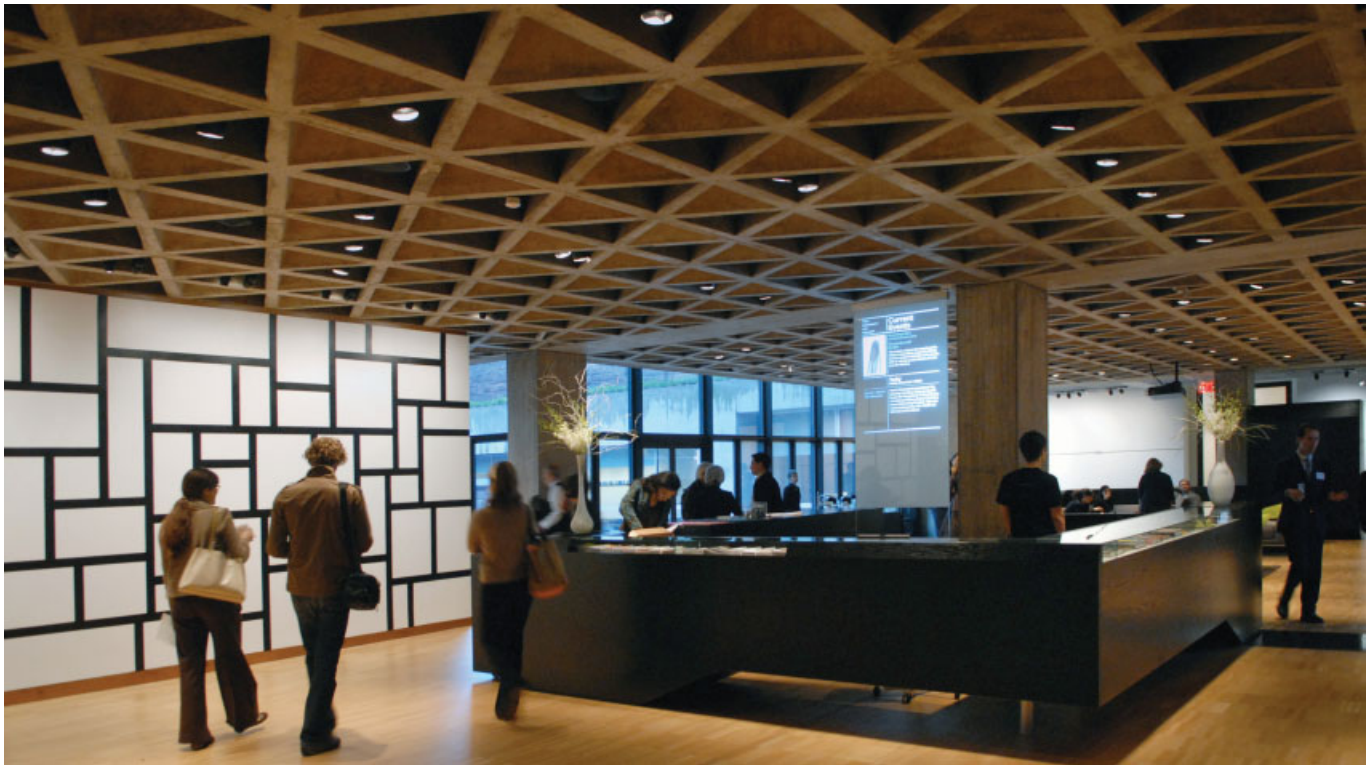
Rarely does the first major work of an iconic architect face his last major work, in the same building type, open to the public, free of charge, and in excellent condition. Louis I Kahn's seminal, recently restored addition to the Yale University Art Gallery is just across Chapel Street from his Yale Center for British Art. Jayne Merkel describes the interiors of these mid-20th-century modern masterpieces and the recent Herculean efforts to return them to Kahn's intentions while making them suitable for the preservation, study and exhibition of art according to 21st-century standards.

Even though the city of New Haven, Connecticut, settled in 1638, is one of the oldest in the US, with a perfect Renaissance plan, and Yale University, founded in 1701, is one of the country's oldest colleges with an extraordinary collection of buildings, none have a place in the history of art quite like Kahn's Yale University Art Gallery of 1951–3.

Kahn's gallery is notable as the master's first significant commission, the first modern building in New Haven, the first building anywhere with exposed ductwork (in a bare concrete tetrahedral ceiling), and the first major lighting track. It also has an early and especially refined curtain wall and an open plan with movable 'pogo' panels instead of fixed interior walls. However, all of these innovations were compromised over the years. Mechanical systems grew and changed. The curtain wall leaked, corroded and frustrated climate control. The pogo panels were altered. And since there was no freight elevator to carry art to the upper floors, temporary shows were held on the ground floor, crowding the entry, especially when the galleries were closed for installation.

Still, the building was considered a masterpiece, if a somewhat raw one with its open ceiling, exposed concrete block walls and plain brick facade. Despite the rugged materials and their direct expression, the building has a mysterious, almost sacred quality because of the way the materials are handled, proportioned and combined, and, most of all, because of the quality of the light inside.

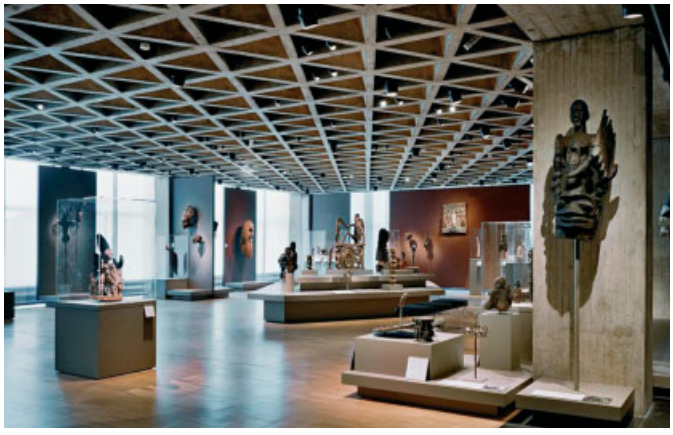
Kahn's first building at Yale was built as an addition to an existing Romanesque Revival art gallery, now called Swartwout after the architect Egarton Swartwout. Tracy & Swartwout built it in 1928. Swartwout is connected on the other (east) side by the curious High Street Bridge building to Street Hall, a Victorian Gothic structure of 1866 by Peter B



Now that a freight elevator makes it possible to hold temporary exhibitions on the upper floors, the first floor of the art gallery has been given a proper entrance with a freestanding, floating ebony desk designed by architect Joel Sanders, and a mural by artist Sol LeWitt.

Louis I Kahn, Yale University Art Gallery, Chapel and York Streets, New Haven, Connecticut, US, 1951–3.
Renovation by the Polshek Partnership, 2006
In a vintage photograph of 1953 by Lionel Freeman, Louis I Kahn (1901–74) looks up at the tetrahedral ceiling in his first major building.

Louis I Kahn, Yale University Art Gallery, Chapel and York Streets, New Haven, Connecticut, US, 1951–3.
Renovation by the Polshek Partnership, 2006
A welcoming new lounge that the students requested for the first floor was designed by faculty architect Joel Sanders and wired for electronic communications. For the reopening, a group of students from various Yale programmes and colleges selected the works installed here. They chose artists whose attitudes and values in one way or another reflect those of the architect.



The tetrahedrons in the ceiling of the Yale University Art Gallery inspired the installation of the new African art galleries on the second floor. Restored pogo panels serve as backdrops for masks and statues near the replaced curtain walls that admit natural light all around them.

Long, floating, movable pogo panels create intimate rooms within rooms in the Early European art galleries on the third floor. Since the fixed exposed concrete walls (in the background here) are made of small 10 x 15 centimetre (4 x 6 inch) blocks, they have a scale and refinement suitable for traditional works of art.

Wight that is home to the art history department. Some of Kahn's flexible open spaces originally housed the schools of art and architecture, which at the time were combined with photography and graphic design based on the Bauhaus model, in an attempt to modernise Yale's offerings in the visual arts.

The university's commitment to Modernism was so complete that, under President A Whitney Griswold, Yale commissioned what is probably the greatest group of mid-century modern college buildings in America – by Eero Saarinen, Paul Rudolph, Philip Johnson and, of course, Kahn, who like the others taught at Yale during those years. Rudolph designed the Brutalist concrete art and architecture building in 1963, just west of the Yale University Art Gallery on Chapel Street, freeing up studio space for the exhibition of art. But he also altered Kahn's pogo panels, closing the spaces above and below them that had made them seem to float, and blocking the subtle movement of light throughout the galleries.

In the recent $44 million renovation the panels, which stand on little cylindrical feet and plug into ceiling beams, were rebuilt to Kahn's specifications, but of sturdier materials. They are used not only as freestanding surfaces to display modern paintings, but as long, L-shaped walls to create rooms within rooms for the exhibition of late medieval, Renaissance and baroque art. (Here they are now painted in deep rich colours and work surprisingly well.)

One of the challenges of the renovation was the outdated exposed ductwork, because when the building was constructed the tetrahedral ceiling was cast first, and the mechanical services then inserted before the floor slab above them was poured, trapping the wiring beneath it. The innovative lighting track, originally in every other bay, has now been replaced and extended to every bay, and interior walls and flooring have been repaired throughout. But the most difficult task was the replacement of the beautifully proportioned early curtain wall without changing its appearance. The new one is double glazed and thermally broken; the inside metal is separated from the outside metal to prevent the condensation that had led to corrosion and prevented a practical weather seal.

However, in one area, on the outside of the drum that surrounds the triangular staircase on the fourth floor, the lead architect, Duncan Hazard of the Polshek Partnership (who had studied at Yale himself) has left the original concrete intact. This was where the architecture studios were in the 1950s and 1960s when James Stewart Polshek, Yale Dean Robert AM Stern, Norman Foster, Richard Rogers and many other architectural luminaries were students here. Thus the notes they made, sketches they drew, and phone numbers they wrote on the concrete surface of the drum have been preserved for the ages.

A sunken court on the corner of York and Chapel Streets has been reopened in the renovation which also replaced the curtain walls on the west and north sides. On the south, a solid brick facade defers to the building's neighbours in historical styles.

Louis I Kahn, Yale Center for British Art, Chapel and High Streets, New Haven, 1969–77
Fixed walls predominate in the interior of the Center for British Art. Those surrounding three- and four-storey courtyards are sheathed in oak, a warm material that contrasts exquisitely with the cool, satiny concrete frame. A grid of baffle skylights bathes the interior in an almost palpable icy light.

Kahn's last major building in the US faces the Yale University Art Gallery across Chapel Street, but it is sheathed in unpolished, dark stainless-steel panelling and glass, inserted within a smooth concrete structural grid. The entrance is tucked into a void on the southeast corner (shown here) where it leads to a four-storey skylighted courtyard, expressed by a break in the grid on the facade.

New, easily accessible storage areas for art have now been created in the basement and on the fourth floor, where works on paper are kept, so that the Yale collection is readily accessible to students, scholars and even the general public. Natural light now re-enters underground spaces as a roof later placed over a sunken sculpture court at the western end of the building has been removed. Yale MFA graduate Richard Serra's Stacks – two huge, steel, wall-like stele – have been installed in the underground courtyard. On the ground level (as well as a few steps up), the lovely sculpture court on the north side has been enlarged by incorporating the courtyard of one of the old Collegiate Gothic residential colleges (dormitory complexes). And since a big handsome freight elevator has been added, the ground-floor area now has welcoming facilities as well as a 'media lounge' sensitively designed by Yale faculty architect Joel Sanders.

Kahn devotees have only to cross the street to see how his thinking evolved over time. The Yale Center for British Art was under construction when he died in 1974, and was completed in 1977. Instead of the plain, horizontally banded yellow-brick wall that covers the facade of the art gallery in deference to the medievalising decoration on Swartwout next door, the Center for British Art is sheathed in mill-finished, bluish stainless-steel panelling and glass set within a gridded concrete frame with shops at the base. Vertical supports taper slightly as they rise to express the lighter loads they carry. Unlike the art gallery's broad staircase, which runs parallel to the sidewalk across the street, the entrance to the Center for British Art is tucked diagonally into a covered rectangular void extracted from the three-dimensional grid on the southeast corner.

Inside, instead of wide open spaces and movable pogo panels, visitors enter a four-storey skylit interior courtyard surrounded by formal galleries. There is also a three-storey court on the west side of the building rising from the first floor. Most of the interior walls are fixed and neutral. Some are sheathed in gold-toned oak panelling set within the satin-smooth concrete gridded frame in a way that makes both simple materials look rich, elegant and sensuous. Kahn hoped to create the feeling of a hall in an English country house, but in its urban setting, with stores on the street, it is more like an Italian palazzo.

There are two large elevators instead of one small one here, but the staircase with steps on three sides of a square, also contained in a concrete drum, resembles the elegant beloved one across the street. Both buildings are four storeys high with an underground level, have flat roofs and rectangular shapes, but the Center for British Art is more sumptuous and subtle than its predecessor, with perfectly proportioned spaces and natural light from the coffered concrete grid of skylights that make its interiors seem like the 'frozen music' architecture is said to be. (The outside windows, which began corroding as soon as the building opened, were replaced by Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates engineers in 1994. Four years later, Gregg and Weiss Architects and Larry Regan of Yale Facilities repaired all 56 skylight domes and added a slight slope to the flat roof to promote drainage, and in 2003, Peter Inskip + Peter Jenkins Architects of London began to develop a conservation plan for ongoing maintenance of the building.)

With the collections of the Center for British Art and the Yale University Art Gallery, Yale has one of the best, as well as one of the oldest, art museums in the US. The art gallery was the first college art museum in the nation and the third in the world, founded by the American history painter Colonel John Trumbull in 1832 (who, strangely, is buried here).

Yale also has the strongest group of graduate art departments in the US, excelling in theatre, art, music and architecture, all of which have recently received, or will soon have received, new or remodelled buildings as part of a $500 million building programme for the arts that the Polshek Partnership is supervising. In 2000, this included architecture faculty member Deborah Berke's transformation of the 1954 Jewish Community Center by Weinstein and Abramowitz (in which Kahn is said to have had a hand) into the School of Art's Greene Hall, which also has an experimental theatre for the School of Drama. In addition, Gwathmey Siegel is restoring Rudolph's art and architecture building for the School of Architecture, and designing a new art history building next door so that the art gallery can occupy Street Hall. Polshek is renovating Swartwout for the gallery, and Kiernan Timberlake is designing a new sculpture building. The School of Music buildings are also gradually being renovated and augmented. The entire Yale campus, in fact, is being renovated, restored and filled in. But it is the two museums by Louis I Kahn that will continue to be its most unique treasures. AD

Kaleidoscope

Kaleidoscope – Lewisham Children and Young People's Centre brings together 23 health, social and educational services under a single roof in southeast London. Jeremy Melvin describes how van Heyningen and Haward Architects, after winning a high-profile CABE competition, rose to the bureaucratic and architectural challenges of the project.

Kaleidoscope comes straight out of that shadowy world between purpose and image where architecture has to stake its claim as a contributor to public service. In this relatively small building on a busy and not-quite-nondescript radial street in southeast London, staff provide 23 services for children in the area who have varying degrees and conditions of disability or disadvantage.

The purpose of bringing them together under one roof was so obvious that the only reason why it had not already happened were the contingent irrationalities that have crept into the National Health Service and other social service providers over the last 60 years. New legislation, as well as changing social needs and expectations, had left their mark on the way services were delivered. Combined with short-term administration factors such as the availability of property, these created a patchwork of centres concerned with their own tasks, but little change in coordinating the various different services individual children might need. Thus the dream of creating a unified centre took 10 years to realise.

What eventually brought it to fruition was the decision by the client, the Lewisham Primary Care Trust (PCT), to bring in the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

Circulation is largely against the courtyard though the flexible plan means desks can be placed against the wall.

van Heyningen and Haward Architects, Kaleidoscope – Lewisham Children and Young People's Centre, Lewisham, London, 2006
The courtyard is the building's heart, an orientation space that symbolically places the children at the centre of the various departments.

Concept sketch of street corner view.

to organise a competition, which was won by van Heyningen and Haward Architects thanks to their shrewd understanding of how the purpose could be realised through a building with all the attendant issues of construction and cost.

The dream was that of Tony O'Sullivan who was appointed community paediatric consultant at the PCT in 1993. Lewisham may not be quite as deprived overall as neighbouring Southwark or Tower Hamlets, but like all inner London boroughs it has a diverse ethnic mix and some real poverty. From his vantage point, O'Sullivan saw that safeguarding children who were vulnerable for health or social reasons required coordination, as many of them need more than one social service. Providing a number of services in one building was not only more effective, but also far easier for parents and carers who would no longer have to negotiate their way to different locations.

Kaleidoscope includes separate agencies for mental health, child health, social care and health, and education. Some are overseen by the local council, others through the PCT and the local mental health trust, but between them they provide the 23 separate services that include behavioural support, physiotherapy, assistance with speech and language, and special-needs nursing. Placing these different agencies under the same roof, with their own managerial structures and sources of funding, is an achievement in itself – interweaving this with the different spatial needs for assessing, observing and treating children is an even harder task.

Responding primarily to functional needs, van Heyningen and Haward's architectural concept also creates an effective relationship with the urban context. This is important because Kaleidoscope's function is firmly tied to the local community, and if it gave the impression of being detached or forbidding it would send out the wrong signals. The main road, Rushey Green, widens slightly in front of the site to form a wedge of grass with a few well-established trees. The design brings this idea into the building in a courtyard with the accommodation arranged in a U-shape around it. It acts as an orienting device and focal point, and in summer, at least,

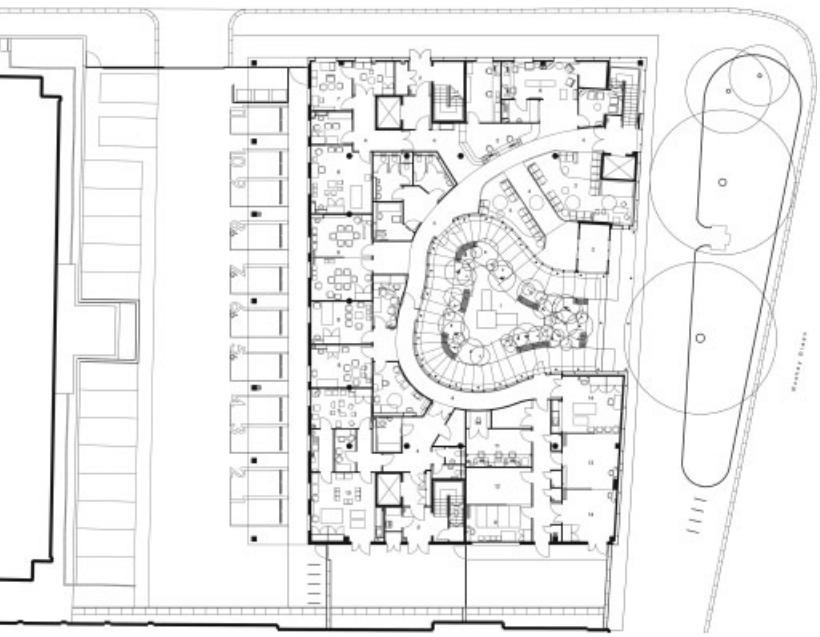
Kaleidoscope makes use of its urban context to give a sense of presence to the new institution.


20
ZONE
20
ZONE

The main entrance is a fluid form that responds to the shape of the courtyard while colour coding offsets the institutional feel and helps visitors to navigate the building.

Early concept sketch showing the relationship of the building to the courtyard and to the street.

Stressing the ground floor helps to prevent the building from overwhelming its context.



Ground-floor plan. The courtyard brings an organic element into an otherwise rectilinear plan.

is a welcome addition to the spaces for children to wait, symbolically placing them at the heart of the building. Here the design adapts context to function.

At five storeys, the building is rather taller than the terraced houses with ground-floor shops on either side. The architects' response was to emphasise the ground floor, echoing the shop fronts without being ashamed of the extra size. Indeed with its courtyard and single-storey base to break down the volume, the design turns its size into an asset, using a subtle colour scheme that really comes alive after dark to soften what might otherwise seem a rather austere office building. The colours also help to define the different zones, and to give identity to the building's different parts.

The design has an apparent simplicity that belies the complexity of its operations. Entering from the street takes visitors to a reception area, which has various zones for different ages of children to wait: a soft space for toddlers and an audiovisual room for teenagers as well as a café. A corridor winds around the outside of the courtyard past rooms of varying sizes and configurations to cater for one-to-one or group activities, to a gymnasium and physiotherapy suite. On the floor above – the only other floor accessible to patients and reached by a stair and lift from the waiting area – are various suites of rooms for interviewing and assessing children's mental and physical health needs.

Such needs pose tricky architectural questions. Received wisdom generally holds that rooms are more congenial when they have windows and views, but for children with special needs this may not be the case. Within an essentially simple form, van Heyningen and Haward have provided rooms of different sizes and shapes, varying levels of privacy, security and protection, partly to give the greatest number the greatest chance of feeling comfortable. The communal spaces, where parents might wait with their other children while a sibling is being treated, have a congenial and unthreatening feel to them. Colours and forms banish the usual dismal NHS environmental conditions.

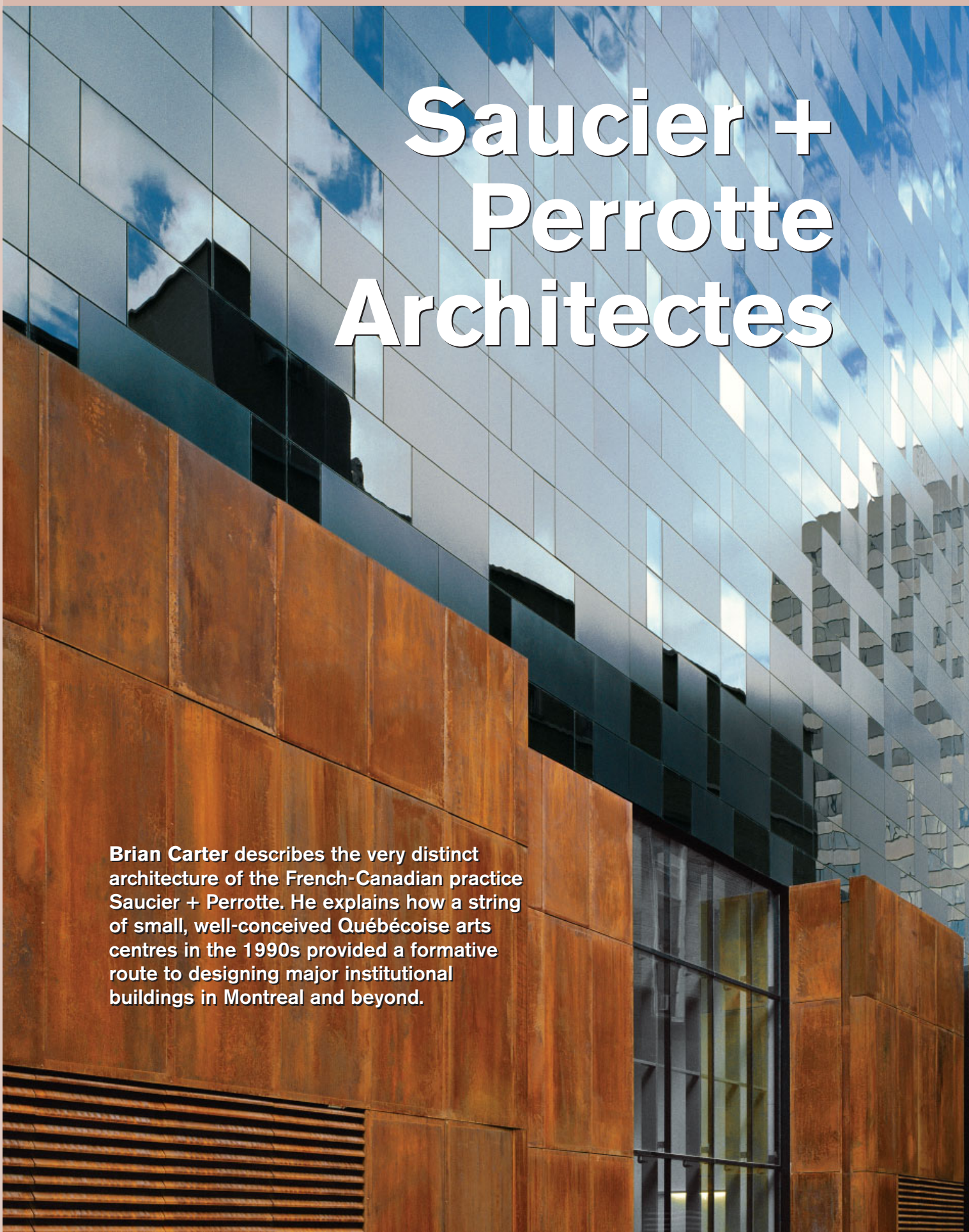
On the three upper floors are offices configured according to their team needs in a mix of cellular and open-plan layouts for a total of around 250 staff. And on the fourth floor a conference room opens into one large space.

The architects worked in consultation with Joanna Eley of office specialists Alexi Marmot Associates and, unusually for the public sector, the quality of the space, variety of configuration and ease of access to social or informal meeting areas means that high density does not feel oppressive here. Much of this is due to the essential plan form that avoids deep space and gives views into and across the courtyard, reinforcing the sense of unity between departments. This means that almost all circulation is against the courtyard, making in effect a single loaded corridor, though the judicious placing of meeting areas and open-plan workstations avoids expensive profligacy of space. Efficiency comes from understanding how the client works rather than an abstract pattern.

Joanna van Heyningen is very proud of the fact that the final cost worked out at less than £2,000 per square metre (10.8 square feet). Naturally this means using proprietary products and avoiding expensive finishes, but finding ways of making the ordinary sing through colour and light offsets any sense of cheapness. Plain finishes, too, help the environmental strategy worked out by Max Fordham and Partners. Exposing the underside of the floor slabs means they can be thermally active, with pipes cast into them that carry cool or warm water according to outside conditions. The water does not need to be very different in temperature to modify conditions to an extent that makes the interior feel comfortable, and the relatively low level of heating or cooling is energy efficient. Windows open on a building management system, and where they are adjacent to a noisy road there is an ingenious sound-dampening device.

Throughout, the design closely serves the purpose of the building, mediating between the need for space and other facilities, but providing it in a cost-effective manner that assists the staff in their tasks. But how does this amount to generating a new image, even a civic presence, for the new institution? O'Sullivan confesses that he did not think about the building's image. But the successful integration of the different services, the greatly improved experience for children and their families, and the building's subtle yet real presence in a highly visible location mean that, as he puts it, 'children with special needs now have a real presence here'. Δ

Saucier + Perrotte Architectes



Brian Carter describes the very distinct architecture of the French-Canadian practice Saucier + Perrotte. He explains how a string of small, well-conceived Québécoise arts centres in the 1990s provided a formative route to designing major institutional buildings in Montreal and beyond.

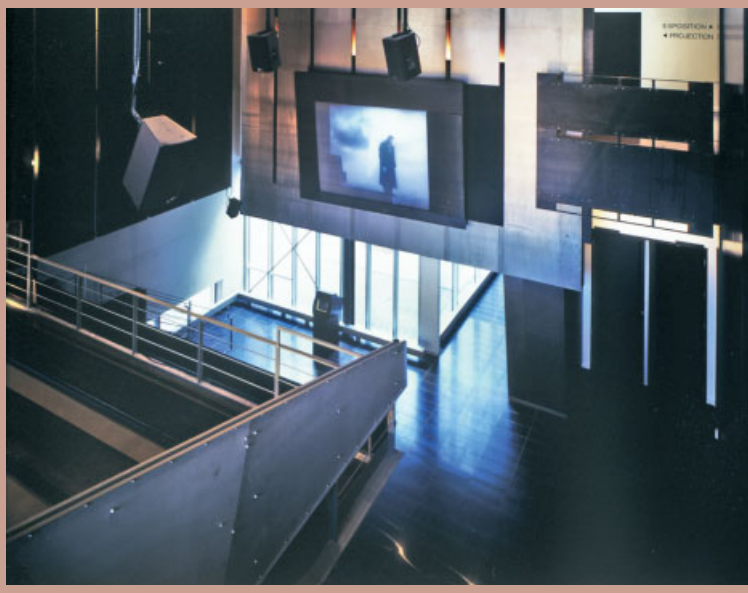
Gilles Saucier and Andre Perrotte, like many architects, founded their practice by working on modest projects. However, for these two young designers from Quebec this did not translate into tiny houses or summer cabins tucked away and out of sight, but instead the creation of civic spaces in full public view. Planned to establish centres for theatre, film and dance, with galleries, bars and restaurants alongside, these projects were funded by the provincial government as part of a focused effort to develop the arts and underline the importance of French-Canadian culture. Working with limited budgets, the architects planned these performance spaces within existing buildings. Consequently, they were extremely complex, for not only did they have to satisfy the demanding requirements of acoustics, lighting, codes and accessibility, but at the same time were required to create distinctive public places.

Completed in the early 1990s these venues quickly became part of Montreal's cultural landscape and, acknowledged by several architectural awards, prompted more commissions. The Cinémathèque Québécoise, required the renovation of a series of existing buildings and also the addition of new structures to house cinemas, galleries and a restaurant as well as a new film school, archive and offices on a confined site in the centre of Montreal. This provincial institution was planned as a 'light box' and defined by a screen of images drawn across the facades of both the old and new buildings along Boulevard de Maisonneuve. At the same time internal spaces were literally opened up in ways that confounded the familiar readings of the cinema as a closed black box. The entrance became a performance space planned around a network of cameras and screens that transformed the visitor into both actor and audience, and the overall plan of the building sought to explore the ambiguous territories between viewer and viewed.

Collège Gérald-Godin, designed about the same time, also represented the built manifestation of a larger political agenda. A part of the advancement of a French language-based higher-education programme in Quebec, it was planned around the reuse of a former Jesuit monastery. However, the scheme required a significant amount of additional space, and both the interiors and context of the existing building were transformed by connecting them to an ensemble of new spaces planned above and below ground. Unlike most of Saucier + Perrotte's earlier projects, which had been embedded within the dense built fabric of the city, this scheme was located on a large open site that gently sloped down to the river at the western edge of the island of Montreal. It was a setting that prompted the architects to re-examine the role of the natural landscape and reconstruct the site around a fictitious archaeology. This enabled them to integrate that landscape with both new and existing buildings in ways that created a strikingly open and completely new public institution.

These two substantial projects, completed between 1997 and 2000, introduced the work of Saucier + Perrotte to other educational clients, and as a result the practice was commissioned to design new buildings at the University of Montreal, McGill University, and on the University of Toronto campuses in Ontario. It was also asked to design an urban park pavilion in China and invited to participate in major competitions including the Grande Bibliothèque du Québec, where it was part of a group that included Zaha Hadid and Patkau Architects, and the Canadian Embassy in Berlin.

Cinémathèque Québécoise, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 1997
The facade connects both the new and renovated existing buildings with a screen composed of glass and moving images.



The main entrance space has been designed to serve both as a reception area and a cinema, which juxtaposes film and images of people within the building.

Faculty of Music, McGill University, Montreal, 2005
The external cladding here presents a smooth changing surface that reflects the urban surroundings.

In 2004 Saucier + Perrotte was nominated to represent Canada in the Venice Biennale. Thrust into this notable event, which collects up architectural ideas from sketchbooks, computer screens and sites around the world and re-presents them to a wider public, the architects were prompted to look again at their body of work. It was an exercise that identified new and important links between projects and the construction of a series of large-scale abstracted pieces prepared especially for the Biennale. These particular studies highlighted consistent preoccupations with space and enclosure developed in projects designed over a decade. Not only were these related to public buildings that advanced a particular political agenda through reconfigurations of civic space, they also projected ongoing explorations of pattern, materiality, repetition and variation.

At first sight these special studies appeared to be directed at the building skin. But on closer investigation they highlighted a series of preoccupations with built form and enclosure that engaged light and, prompted by the architects' recent experiences designing Collège Gérald-Godin, they also underlined an increasing curiosity about the relationships between landscape and architecture.

The Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, a new research institute that opened in 2004, bridges the controversial boundaries between landscape and architecture. The building is located close to the centre of Waterloo, a small city in southern Ontario that has been infused with commercial and economic energy generated by new digital technologies, most notably the development of the 'Blackberry'. Commissioned by a private client to create a

Collège Gérald-Godin, Sainte-Geneviève, Quebec, 1999
The radical transformation of a former Jesuit monastery in the village of Sainte-Geneviève into a college of higher education is underlined by the contrasting forms and materials of old and new.

Faculty of Music, McGill University, Montreal, 2005
Public spaces around the buildings have been linked while those within the new Faculty of Music are designed to capture views out and at the same time create abstract sculptural configurations that are visible from the street.

Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, Waterloo, Ontario, 2004
The skin of the institute explores pattern and shadow in framing views within a thick external wall that modulates natural light and forms a sculptural screen at the edge of the site. Individual offices for visiting scholars and researchers are clearly expressed and located over a large reflecting pool that captures the sky (opposite, top), and defines a generous central daylit hall (opposite, bottom left) that creates a significant meeting space at the heart of the building.

9th International Architecture exhibition, Venice Biennale, 2004
Responding to the invitation to represent Canada in the Venice Biennale, Saucier + Perrotte synthesised forms developed for recent projects into a series of large constructions placed in counterpoint to images of the country's dramatic natural landscapes. Large three-dimensional abstracted studies prompted the architects to advance spatial concepts that have in turn inspired subsequent architectural commissions.

centre for research and speculation, Saucier + Perrotte responded by extending a public park around an existing lake and weaving a series of landscaped spaces and pathways into the new building. Planned to overlap and enclose an inner core focused around a garden, public hall and lecture theatre, the new institute is consequently a place with a distinct civic presence. In its explorations of relationships between public and private space and the engagement of building and site, it recalls Louis I Kahn's Salk Institute (1966) and the Neurosciences Institute designed by Todd Williams and Billie Tsien (1995), both in La Jolla, California.

At Waterloo, Saucier + Perrotte has created clusters of places for individual contemplation and research while at the same time formulating a plan centred on spaces that foster open discussion and the exchange of ideas. The architects have furthered this plan through studies of reflection and transparency. A series of clearly articulated individual rooms have been grouped together and elevated above a ground plane that has been sculpted to create a tranquil pool. This reflective plane of water, one part of a new and extensive constructed landscape on the site and a distinct contrast to the informality of Silver Lake nearby, captures the broad expanse of the sky and brings it into the heart of this new community of researchers and scholars.

Acknowledging the potential of a place-making in the realm of discovery and ideas, the Perimeter Institute also explores light and lightness in the making of the building enclosure. Large glazed walls juxtaposed with folded and perforated metal-clad skins provide open vistas and framed views while directing natural light in ways that define places for the chance meetings that prompt discussion and debate. Focused around a series of open spaces that recognise both the individual and the collective, building and landscape, the Perimeter Institute is an outstanding new building that is clearly aimed at fostering collaboration and prompting the regeneration of this small Canadian city.

The Faculty of Music at McGill University, which opened in 2005, is in the heart of one of the country's largest and most historic cities. Located at a busy corner on Rue Sherbrooke, a major street in Montreal, it is adjacent to the Strathcona Building and the university's main concert facility. The new multistorey building, which provides studios, practice rooms, a library, faculty offices and a recital hall, forms a distinct marker at the southeastern corner of the campus. Acknowledging the impact of new media on the development of modern music, the building is defined by a multimedia studio. Almost five storeys tall and housed within a polished limestone block that is partially embedded in the ground, it anchors the northern boundary of the site. The new 200-seat recital hall and main entrance, planned alongside these spaces, are signed by a concrete plane that folds so as to apparently support the main body of the building above – a block housing faculty offices and teaching rooms organised between two thin, parallel walls of zinc and aluminium. The

building, an assertive addition to an ensemble of campus buildings that includes both old and new, and situated at the foot of Mont Royal, represents a further exploration of the fictional archaeologies that inspired Collège Gérald-Godin, yet here transposed into the built fabric of the historic city.

Albeit with about 8,000 registered architects working in a handful of cities set far apart and in a spectacular natural landscape that extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the development of Modern architecture in Canada continues to resist the considerable forces of commerce and the market that make much of the built environment of their neighbour to the south so generic and anonymous. Instead it reflects many of the ideas of critical regionalism identified by Kenneth Frampton. In this context the architecture of Saucier + Perrotte is distinct. It is also particular within Canada, for as well as being situated in one of the oldest parts of the country it has been developed as a response to a strongly held political viewpoint that is of both local and national significance. It has developed around an interest in making a civic architecture that is central to the definition of French-Canadian identity. At a time when it is difficult to find a Modern architecture not totally preoccupied by international style, momentary gratification and the creation of extraordinary form, it is encouraging to discover design ideas directed towards the formulation of both regional character and national identity. That these efforts are also being led by emerging architects is all the more impressive.

The work of Gilles Saucier and Andre Perrotte is clearly founded in this quest and continues to be developed energetically and with inspiration as they continue to search for and construct a new architecture that builds an identity for one of Canada's vital and unique communities. With new commissions for major buildings, this work is of increasing interest as these architects contemplate the translation of a particular regionalism within an increasingly international context. AD

Brian Carter, an architect who worked in practice with Arup in London, is the author of numerous books on architecture and curator of exhibitions on Peter Rice, Eero Saarinen and Albert Kahn. He has taught at the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Michigan, and is currently Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Resumé

Saucier + Perrotte Architectes

1988 Saucier + Perrotte Architectes founded in Montreal

1989 Finalist in the National Competition to design Kitchener City Hall, Ontario

1991 Award of Excellence, l'Ordre des Architectes du Quebec, for design of the Théâtre du Rideau Vert, Rue St-Denis, Montreal

1994 Canadian Architect Award of Excellence for the Faculty of Music, McGill University

1995 Canadian Architect Award of Excellence for Faculty of Design and Planning, Université de Montréal

Usine C Carbone centre for dance and theatre, Montreal, completed

1997 Governor General's Medal of Merit in Architecture for the Usine C Carbone centre

Faculty of Design and Planning, Université de Montréal, completed

Cinémathèque Québécoise, Montreal, completed

1999 Governor General's Medal of Merit for Architecture for the Cinémathèque Québécoise

Canadian Architect Awards of Excellence for the Montreal Exhibition Pavilion and park, Shanghai, and the Collège Gérald-Godin, Sainte-Geneviève, Montreal

Gilles Saucier and André Perrotte.

Collège Gérald-Godin completed

Finalists in the competition to design the Canadian Embassy on Leipziger Platz, Berlin

2000 First Nations Garden Pavilion, Montreal, completed

Canadian Architect Award of Excellence for the First Nations Garden Pavilion

2001 PA Award for the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, Waterloo, Ontario.

Finalist in the international competition to design the Grande Bibliothèque du Québec.

2002 Governor General's Medal in Architecture for the design of the First Nations Garden Pavilion

2004 Selected to represent Canada in the Venice Biennale

Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics completed

2005 Faculty of Music, McGill University, Montreal, completed

2006 Governor General's Medal in Architecture for the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics

Power Plants

The famed ecodesigner Ken Yeang files the first of his stories for a new series for *AD+*. Here he hails the introduction of an exciting new technology – a photovoltaic system – that imitates photosynthesis in nature.

A new environmentally friendly solar photovoltaic (PV) cell using natural dyes extracted from berries that was first developed by the chemistry professor Michael Gratzel from the Ecoles Polytechniques Fédérales de Lausanne in Switzerland in 1991, is now commercially available in limited production from Konarka of Lowell, Massachusetts, US. This biosolar cell is a new design that harvests light using inexpensive organic dyes, imitating photosynthesis in nature. Photosynthesis in plants is a chemical reaction that is the basis of virtually all food chains on earth and the source of all oxygen in the atmosphere.

The biocell will help reduce the cost of solar electricity production and offer a new-generation low-cost alternative to rival existent PV cells such as the silicon-based and amorphous-based PV cell systems. Thus it has far-reaching implications for our built environment, as current sources of energy to fuel our profligate high-energy consuming economies are derived almost entirely from fossil fuels.

An ecological approach to designing our built environment needs to be based on the imitation of the properties, structure and processes of ecosystems in nature, or ecomimesis. In ecosystems, the source of energy is derived entirely from the sun and not from any externally extracted source of energy, as in our existent man-made built environment. And the new biosolar PV cell is as close as we can get to imitating photosynthesis in nature, something that has been plaguing scientists for years. This discovery and its recent advancement now indicate the possibility of artificial photosynthesis becoming a commercial reality in a natural approach to producing electricity.

Current PV solar cells convert solar energy directly into electrical energy, but not in the way plants do it. The cells are made from silicon treated with various other chemical elements. When a photon (a particle of light) strikes the cell, it excites electrons, which are siphoned off by tiny conductors that gather them into useful quantities of electricity. The logical next step is to discover how to use sunlight to create free electrons.

Plants use free electrons to make carbohydrates using chlorophyll, which is a highly efficient converter. For example, almost all photons that strike a leaf are converted to energy.

Power PlasticTM prototype PV dye-cell showing its flexible characteristic.

In the semiconductor silicon PV cell, the silicon material absorbs light, but it also conducts the negative and positive charge carriers. An electric field is necessary to separate those charges, and all of this has to be carried out by one material – silicon – that has to perform at least three functions. As a result, very pure materials are needed, which results in a high cost of production.

The new dye-based PV cell instead uses a molecule to absorb light, like chlorophyll in photosynthesis. Chlorophyll is not involved in the transportation of charges. It simply absorbs light and generates a charge that is then conducted by inherent mechanisms – which is exactly what the new bio-cell PV system does.

The breakthrough in the development of the new biocell is the use of nanoscopic particles. Hundreds of particles are stacked on top of each other and covered with dye that absorbs the light, and the electrons are transferred to the nanoparticles. Not only are the raw materials and process equipment for this dye-cell technology cheaper; manufacturing is much simpler too. The organic dye can be made at home using chlorophyll and anthocyanin dyes, and a simplified solar-cell kit has been released by the American Chemical Society's Institute for Chemical Education. The conductive glass for the kit can be obtained separately from Hartford Glass Co Inc.

Current energy conversion efficiencies in the new PV cell are 10 per cent and can rise to 33 per cent. It is believed the cell will contribute significantly to renewable energy generation in our built environment by 2010, and also to a carbon-neutral future by reducing the use of fossil fuels and their subsequent effects on climate change.

Kenneth Yeang is a Director of Llewelyn Davies Yeang in London and TR Hamzah Yeang in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He is author of many articles and books on ecodesign, including *Ecodesign: A Manual for Ecological Design* (Wiley-Academy, 2006).

Milan From Inside Out

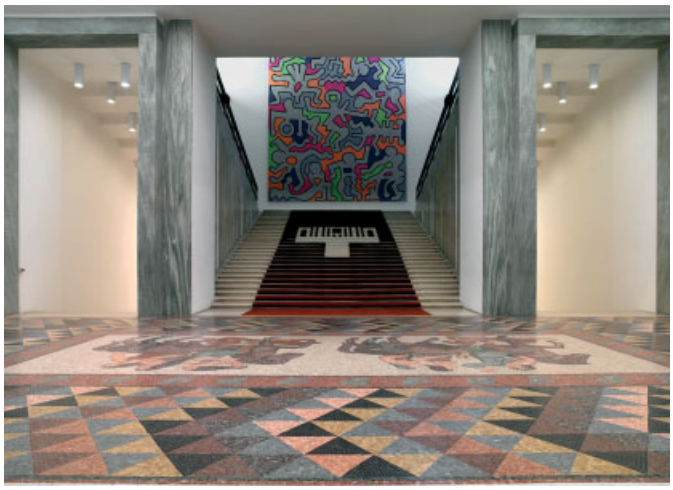
The second Prada boutique on Via della Spiga was designed by Roberto Baciocchi. The shop's design works with a subtle contrast between the bright green of the ceiling and the soft hue of its pink carpet, highlighted by the reflecting surfaces of the walls. The shop is a modern response to the display qualities of Prada's 1913 shop in the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele, which was recently renovated with utmost respect for the original.

Valentina Croci went to discuss with Cecilia Bolognesi, architect and lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture at Milan Bovisa, her new book on her home city: *Design City Milan*. Lusciously illustrated with new photography by Matteo Piazza, *Design City Milan* conveys a rich and vital visual portrait of the city. As Croci found out, while combining beautiful photography and graphic design, it also conveys a thoughtful and analytical account of the recent urban development of the metropolis through its interior spaces.

The urban fabric of Milan is undergoing reconstruction. Irreparable shifts in the city's economy, its industrial base and working patterns are requiring a level of change that has not been witnessed since the mid-20th century. Since the 1980s about 6 million square metres (64.6 million square feet) of abandoned industrial buildings and old railway yards have been turned into mixed-use complexes, exhibition spaces, creative laboratories and fashion or publishing headquarters. The city's current identity, synonymous the world over with fashion and design, dates back to the postwar period when the war-torn buildings of the severely bombed metropolis became the battle cry for the rebirth of newspapers such as *Corriere della Sera* and *Corriere Lombardo*, and magazines like *Pirelli* and *Milano Sera*. Small-business owners set to work building the future, risking everything they had to do so. Among such entrepreneurs were Giulio Castelli of Kartell, Cesare Cassina, Ernesto Gismondi of Artemide and Alberto Pirelli.

Significantly, *Design City Milan* opens with photographs by Gianni Berengo Gardin and Cesare Colombo, who were witnesses to the wholescale rebuilding of parts of the city in the 1950s and 1960s. This is not, though, a book about the history of Milanese design, but rather a comprehensive overview of the city's best contemporary architectural and interior design. By taking a leap back 60 years, the introduction contextualises the era in which Milan's present-day face has been moulded. For it was at that time that the industrial areas within the city were built, which are now the sites of the city's economic conversion from an industrial to a service industry economy. It was also in the latter half of the 20th century that the workforce became expert in the skills necessary for the production sectors of the economy – design and fashion – which are now Milan's prime industries. Even if Italian manufacturers are struggling in the price battle with the Asian textile manufacturers, Italy is still the leader in design – especially in Milan – where it is the superior skills of the workforce that make the difference in product quality.

Organised in sections by category, the book takes in the city's cultural spaces, architects' homes, stores and restaurant



The Triennale site was designed by Giovanni Muzio in 1933. Two recent additions include the Coffee Design (2002) and Fiat Cafè (2005), both designed by Michele de Lucchi. These dining spaces have contributed significantly to renewing the social quality of the building.

The conversion of the former Faema factory on Via Ventura 5, based on urban planning by Mariano Pichler and architectural design by Mutti&Architetti and Aldo Cibic (the latter for the interior of the Abitare Segesta publishing house), served as a catalyst for the functional conversion of the whole area, attracting design studios and artists' workshops to the complex. The building has thus become a breeding ground for new relationships.

spaces, as well as temporary installations. Each section opens with an introduction that explains the background to the processes that brought about particularly notable design events. In this respect it goes beyond the original intention of providing an attractive overview by developing a more analytical quality, outlining the path of change and giving a comprehensive view of the city; the likes of which have been lacking in recent literature on contemporary Milanese architecture. A pleasant surprise in this publication is the chapter about the private homes of Milanese architects. The homes of prominent Milanese figures, such as Mario Bellini and Fabio Novembre, were selected that link in various ways to the local architectural tradition. This chapter illustrates the lifestyles of people who have in turn informed lifestyles around the world.

A chapter on cultural landmarks opens the review of architectural projects. The Abitare Segesta, *Corriere della Sera* and *Il Sole 24 Ore* publishing headquarters, along with the Università Bocconi and the Palazzo della Triennale, were chosen here. Bolognesi explains that the decision to highlight publishing landmarks was inspired by Milan's close relationship to publishing, one of its major economic drivers. This connection is a catalyst for architecture's growth and the resulting architectural development of working spaces and the surrounding urban fabric. The newspaper *Il Sole 24 Ore*'s headquarters, built in a large block northwest of Milan's centre and designed by Renzo Piano, launched a new direction in organising work spaces. It is structured in large courtyards and fragmented, transparent areas. The architectural structure expresses the division of departments and the organisation of different professional responsibilities. A different, yet likewise significant, example is found in the Abitare Segesta publishing house on Via Ventura in the Lambrate area by Studio Mutti&Architetti. Abitare Segesta made its home in the premises of the former Faema factory. Part of a comprehensive project, the site is also home to architects' offices and cultural agencies, fuelling the area's functional makeover.

The Via Ventura project introduces approaches that affect the surrounding urban fabric and the city's flows in terms of economics and people, as do some other schemes, such as those in the Tortona area and in the former gasometer area of Bovisa – where the university area and the new temporary Triennale di Milano headquarters are set. It is in these abandoned industrial areas that Milan's future is being played out. They are the subject of the book's final chapter. The featured examples are the former Alfa Romeo area in Portello, the former Rogoredo Montecity area in the second urban ring southeast of the city centre, the former Falk steel mills in Sesto San Giovanni, and the urban gaps of the Garibaldi station (upcoming headquarters of the Città della Moda) and of Piazza Fontana. They are measures of Milan's vitality, of its processes of functional conversion into a service industry economy and its repair of the urban fabric in terms of real estate and infrastructures.

10 Corso Como was founded in the 1990s on the former site of a parking garage, and is accessible from the street through the courtyard. A concept store that embraces a 'slow shopping' approach, buying is sublimated in an experience of the surroundings. The combined impact of the details are deftly orchestrated by its art director, Carla Sozzani.

While discussing the selection of interior designs, Bolognesi recounts how when the book was being written new establishments and public spaces were opening in Milan, demonstrating the fervent functional changeover of its spaces, and the shortening of the shelf life of interior designs and any descriptions of them. This fast-paced turnover and obsolescence of design are part of the media nature of the fashion and design industries. Bolognesi notes that this constant transformation is not limited to places of 'consumption', like hotels, restaurants and shops; it also happens in cultural places, such as the Triennale, which has its spaces redone periodically to accommodate an ever growing number of temporary exhibitions and events. For the Triennale, she chose to publish the most recent expansions, leaving out the part that is still under renovation, set to house the permanent design museum at the end of 2007.

A phenomenon that has few parallels in the world is the knock-on effect of the New Milan Trade Fair and its related projects, such as trade show events during the design and fashion weeks. This accounts for the demand for event locations in Milan's centre and the great expenditure of energy to make temporary installations that stay up for only a few days. The book examines this situation, taking examples of certain installations, like those for the new trade show 'Expo Italia Real Estate', in which leading Italian developers' projects for the local area were exhibited with the same language and display grandeur as the installations for the Furniture Fair.

The book does not neglect the fashion phenomenon, which in Milan takes the form of catwalks in temporary locations and the design of retail spaces. For brands such as Armani, Dolce & Gabbana, Prada and Gucci, these spaces represent a specific marketing strategy diffused throughout the spaces of Milan. The Dolce & Gabbana example is instructive, demonstrating a kind of colonisation of the city's spaces through individual episodes of an architectural story: shops for menswear, womenswear and childrenswear and for the

Prada's shop in Galleria Vittorio Emanuele. Built in 1913, it was renovated in 2000 by Roberto Baciocchi without replacing the original furniture.



The daDriade shop on Via Manzoni, in Milan's fashion and design 'quad', was built from a combination of several spaces in the baroque Palazzo Gallarati Scotti. The display for the furniture and furnishings areas, designed by Antonia Astori, is marked by a simple, unadorned style to highlight the individual pieces and the building's architectural wealth. The showroom serves as an international showcase for Driade and a location for events and presentations.

D&G brand, its headquarters, the Gold restaurant, and the cinema Metropol in Viale Piave – the latter is the site of its own theatre – expressing D&G's identity through the image projected by the architecture.

Equally significant, though different, is 10 Corso Como. Launched in the early 1990s with a series of acquisitions, already based on a comprehensive idea, the multibrand store is a place for 'slow shopping' with a café, restaurant, art gallery, bookstore, clothes shop, accessories and furnishing, and, recently, a three-room hotel. A series of hybrid, multifunctional spaces in Milan – Habits Culti, Strato and 11 Store + 11 Club Room – 10 Corso Como does not fit into any conventional shop category. It was the brainchild of Carla Sozzani, former editor of *Elle*, who conceived the whole like a three-dimensional magazine, with theme-based areas – such as fashion, interior furnishings and spaces for relaxation – reflecting a unified approach and lifestyle.

Of course, as a book about the city that is home to the Furniture Fair, *Design City Milan* includes by necessity a good selection of Milan's main furniture shops (daDriade, Fontana Arte and Moroso). These spaces reflect this industry's entrepreneurial spirit, dominated by small- and medium-sized businesses and the strong personalities of their founders and designers, with optimal attention to crafting details.

The book's overall angle helps us understand a fundamental aspect of the role of architectural design for Milan's future. As Bolognesi emphasises, once the conversion projects in the urban gaps left by the industrial city are completed, Milan will come close to saturation point in terms of new buildings. In the future it will be the architectonic element of projects in development, and the calibre of town planning, that will determine the quality of the urban surroundings. But architecture and town planning are not, and will never be, the whole story of cutting-edge design. In Milan it will also be the city's interiors and its most private spaces that will retain its vibrant image – an image that has been nurtured gradually over time as developers build with ever increasing skill and a desire to 'do it well'. AD

***Design City Milan* by Cecilia Bolognesi, with photography by Matteo Piazza, is published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd, ISBN 978-0-470-02683-0. For more information see www.wiley.com.**

McLean's Nuggets

Skyhooks

A news update on the space elevator. The LiftPort Group (LPG) (http://www.liftport.com), a private US company, has recently raised a 1.6-kilometre long (1-mile) carbon ribbon above the Arizona Desert, as reported in *Future Materials* magazine (Issue 2, 2006). Elevated by three 4-metre (13-foot) diameter helium-filled spheres, the carbon ribbon allowed for the testing of the company's battery-powered robotic lifters, which are designed to travel up and down the carbon-reinforced fabric elevator. This was an early test, part of the 'LiftPort Space Elevator Roadmap', which will ultimately see a physical connection between an equatorial, ocean-based station and a counterweight approximately 100,000 kilometres (62,140 miles) above the earth's surface (or roughly a third of the way to the moon at its perigee). One of the biggest technological challenges the project faces is the speculative development of a ribbon material that has the requisite tensile strength. Carbon nanotube materials are being explored, and are described as one of the 'cornerstones of nanotechnology' in Peter Rana's excellent survey of nanotechnology in the University of Westminster's student newspaper *The Smoke* (28 November 2006). LiftPort says its mission is 'to provide cheap, safe and reliable access to space', and 'enable high-capacity, low-cost cargo transportation to earth's orbit and beyond'; it also hails the project as 'one of the greatest engineering projects in the history of mankind'. At the time of writing, LPG's countdown to lift was still almost 25 years away, scheduled for 27 October 2031.

LiftPort's latest test of the space elevator prototype, Arizona, 2006.

Immobility

Architecture can make you fat – apparently – although having read Paul Arendt's evocatively titled, but unfulfilling report in the *Guardian* newspaper (3 January 2007) I was not sure whether it was the practice or consumption (or should that be usage) of architecture that is threatening imminent obesity. The article focused on a recent Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) briefing document entitled 'Physical activity and the built environment'. Profusely illustrated with dog walkers, prams and happy cyclists the report encourages designers to reconnect our physical environment and our physical health. Quoting from Derek Wanless' report of 2004 – 'Securing good health for the whole population' – in which he made the case for the preventative approach to healthcare, CABE's report is short on practical measures directly related to our built environment, one of a few suggestions being that office stairs be better located and signposted. While I would agree that too many exquisitely detailed staircases become an architectural feature save only for fire drills or the real thing, this hardly seems like a strategy to deal with ill health. Cedric Price, writing in *AD Life-Conditioning* in 1966, declared that: "Chester will not be destroyed by a demolition order approved by the Royal Fine Arts Commission; it will die when the last antique-boutique operator and his clientele are bored with hobbling over the cobbles and move out' (For the RFAC read CABE). He is surely talking about mobility and one's ability to traverse our physical world, vertically or horizontally. Meanwhile, in another sector of the mobility business, CEO of Ryanair Michael O'Leary was described not only as 'the

unacceptable face of capitalism, but the irresponsible face of capitalism' by environment minister Ian Pearson who was attacking the airline's attitude towards climate change. With the tools of any regulatory or punitive tax scheme clearly lying with the government, it seems odd to attack such a successful mobility provider. O'Leary takes a more direct approach in a profile by Chris Blackhurst (*London Evening Standard*, 27 September 2006): 'An airplane is nothing more than a bus with wings on it ... The entire industry is built around added-complexity bullshit', while criticising everything from the pointless demarcation of the captain's uniform, baggage handling and the glass palaces of the modern airport. Elsewhere architects seem content to keep awarding themselves prizes for these retail opportunities with associated transport facilities while simultaneously indulging in a kind of high-minded Puritanism, where we are all supposed to be ashamed of the jet age and Elisha Otis' invention of the safety elevator of 1852. Let 'em walk – it will do them good is the message, where an out-of-service elevator becomes a nascent health initiative and where a more generally nonfunctioning mobility infrastructure becomes government policy, not negligent state. CABE's briefing document ends with the astounding statistic that the estimated cost of physical inactivity in England is £8.2 billion per year. So there is clearly no such thing as a cheap night in, and it seems only a matter of time before we see the start of a 'fat trading scheme' to counteract the ill effects of our increasingly obesogenic environment.

Plastic Chips

January 2007 saw the announcement that Plastic Logic, a leading developer of 'plastic electronics', will build the first commercial-scale manufacturing facility to print thin film transistors (TFTs) using semiconducting flexible polymer substrates. Peter Marsh, writing in the *Financial Times*, describes how, in a process similar to inkjet printing, this development may provide the cheap ubiquitous computing that finally dissolves the distinction between hard and software. Hermann Hauser, a director of Plastic Logic, says that 'it could lead to an era of truly cheap electronics in which intelligent circuitry is sewn in to your clothing'. This news announcement also means that the promise of electrophoretic or 'electronic paper' is a step closer. Originally developed by Nick Sheridon at Xerox's Palo Alto Research Centre in the 1970s, the breakthrough at Plastic Logic in association with the E Ink Corporation (www.eink.com) will allow the mass manufacture of thin, robust, active-matrix displays that have the visual qualities and flexibility of the paper book and newspaper. In October 2006, Plastic Logic unveiled its latest 150ppi flexible active-matrix display at the 'Plastic Electronics' conference in Frankfurt, which is close to matching the resolution of newsprint. Other benefits of this new E-paper are that due to its bi-stable properties, it only requires power to change the display image and not to continuously show the same image, and that text is easier to read than other backlit electronic displays with the substrate reflecting rather than emitting light. Plastic Logic's news announcement was simultaneously heralded by the website www.FoodProductionDaily.com, which recognised the potential for inexpensive electronic labelling (with plastic replacing silicon) and the benefits of changeable label graphics and information as part of new developments in 'active' packaging.

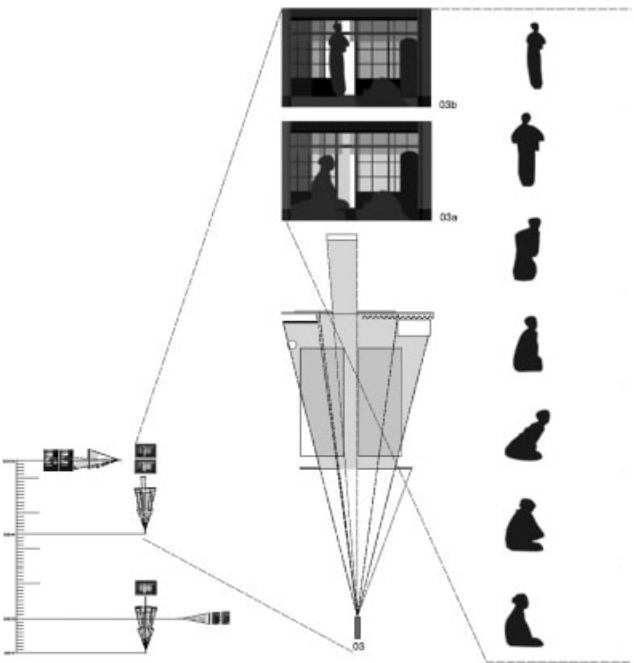
Sample of 'take anywhere, read anywhere' Plastic Logic flexible displays using E Ink® imaging film, 2006.

'McLean's Nuggets' is an ongoing technical series inspired by Will McLean and Samantha Hardingham's enthusiasm for back issues of *AD*, as explicitly explored in Hardingham's *AD* issue *The 1970s is Here and Now* (March/April 2005).

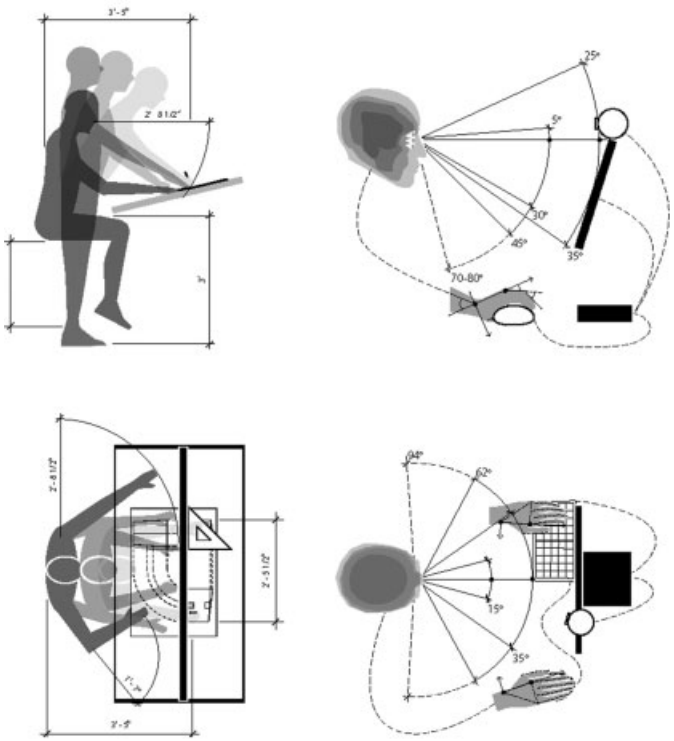
Will McLean is joint coordinator of technical studies (with Peter Silver) in the Department of Architecture at the University of Westminster.

Cinemetrics FAQ

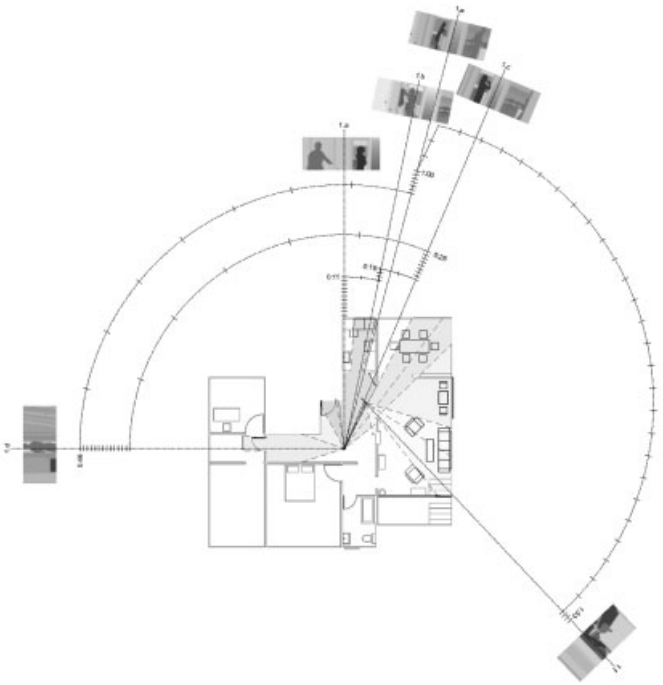
A new book by Brian McGrath and Jean Gardner questions preconceptions of the digital. Previously, working with computers has often been regarded as a simple matter of acquiring technical facility in particular software and techniques. *Cinemetrics: Architectural Drawing Today* argues that the full potential of digital lies not in technical finesse, but in a perceptual paradigm shift. This shift could be as seismic as the changes associated with the development of perspective in the early Renaissance. Here, McGrath and Gardner provide an FAQ on their innovative new drawing system, Cinemetrics. Inspired by cinema's visual treatment of matter-flux, this book is set to recast architectural drawing for the 21st century.



Brian McGrath with Mark Isarangkun na Ayutthaya and Stan Gray, 2006
Framing: The opening scene of Yasujiro Ozu's film *Early Spring* (1956) frames the act of a couple waking up in the morning through three 90° camera frames which never move within the shot. Analysis of each still frame, and their orthogonal relation to each other, allows us to examine the 'flowing matter flux' of domestic architecture in mid-20th-century Japan as 'immobile cuts' of duration.



Brian McGrath with Raymond Sih, 2006
From the drafting board to the screen: The act of drawing on a drafting board led to the mechanical architect. How can the sensori-motor schema of drawing on the computer screen create the cybernetic-organic architect?



Brian McGrath with Stan Gray, Pin Wei Dylan Kuo and Mark Isarangkun na Ayutthaya (2006)
Shooting: In Jean-Luc Godard's *Contempt* (1963), the camera pans back and forth through an apartment in Rome as a couple have an argument. The movement of the camera reveals the constantly shifting perceptions, affections, impluses, actions, reflections and relations in the scene as 'any-instants-whatever' rather than as privileged poses.

What happens when architectural drawing leaves the drafting board and enters the computer screen?
The tabula rasa of the drafting board created the servo-mechanical architect. *Cinemetrics* is your guidebook to becoming a cybernetic-organic architect. Architecture is no longer projected as an isolated object created by autonomous technical skills, but immersed in life. By abandoning an epistemology of certainty, the cybernetic architect loses perspective and the misconception that images represent reality. Instead, duration is found by pausing, framing, shooting and assembling within the open, fluctuating whole of matter-flux. Losing perspective and finding duration supports thinking cybernetically to model a critically conceived, systemic architecture addressing 21st-century challenges and opportunities.

What happens when movements are not in space and images not in our brains?
Scientific research indicates that the images we see are not in our brains and the movements we make are not limited to our changing positions in space. Both materialise out of the universal variations of matter-flux where there are no edges, no up or down, no right or left, no in or out. By framing intervals in the universal rippling, movement is experienced as a qualitative transformation in time rather than a measurable transposition in space.

How can an architectural drawing system be developed from the intervals in matter-flux?
Using digital technologies creates a new sensori-motor schema when perceptions, affections, impulses, actions, reflections and relations are framed from matter-flux as Cinemetric immobile cuts. These cuts are intervals in matter-flux that can be analysed with architectural plans, film stills and timelines to form the Cinemetric methodology for architectural drawing.

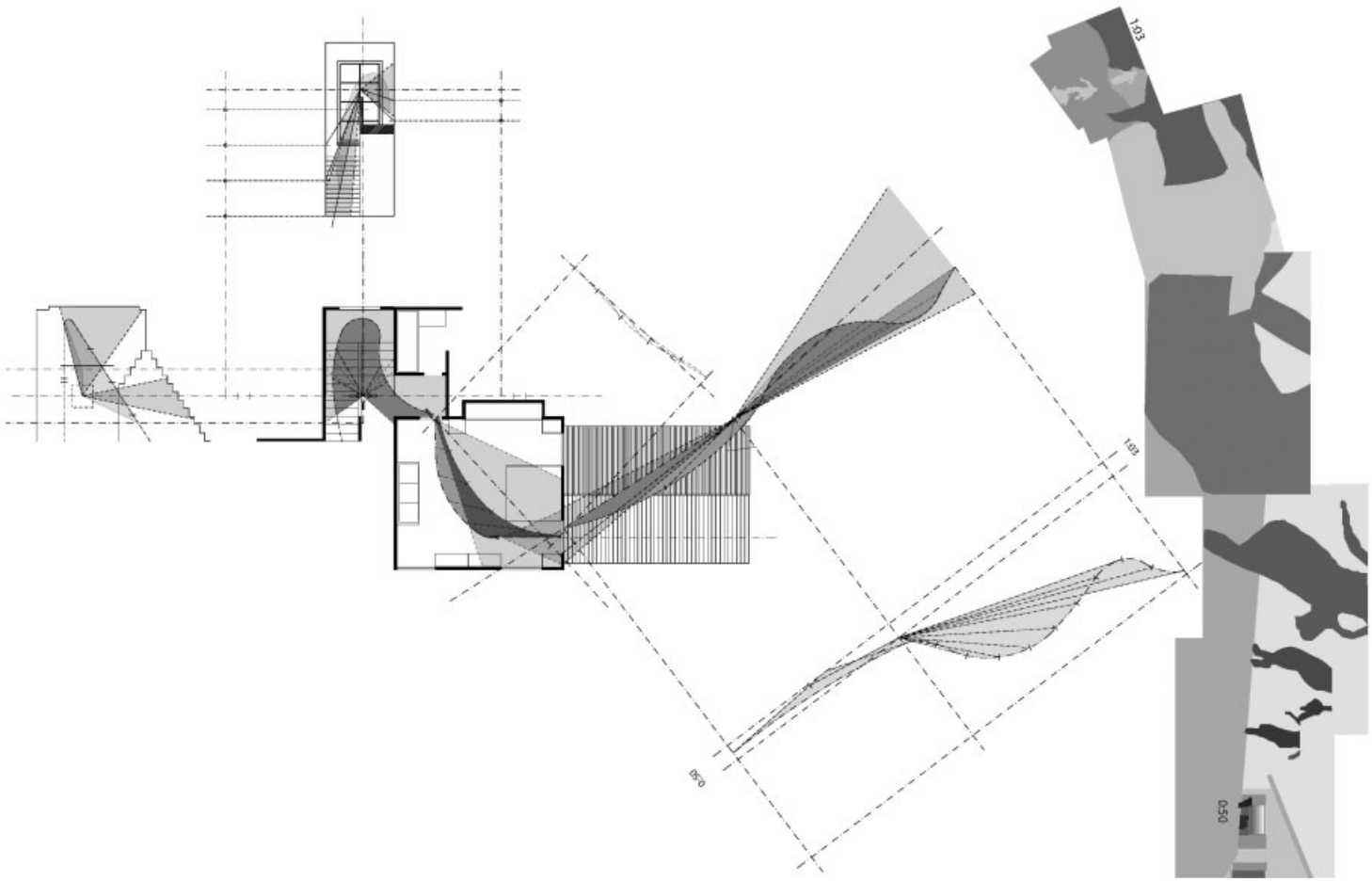
What happens when movement is related, not to privileged poses, but to any-instants-whatever?
Privileged poses actualise forms considered ideal, which in architecture are building facades and preferred views. Gilles Deleuze writes: 'Any-instant-whatever is an instant which is equidistant from another.'[1] Cinemetrics is a moving drawing system of any-instants-whatever in which architecture is not an autonomous object within a logic of privileged poses, but a relational field within flowing matter-flux. Developing a drawing system from any-instants-whatever is integral to addressing the social and ecological issues confronting architecture.

How can architectural space be generated through drawing any-instant-whatever?
When any-instants-whatever are experienced as cybernetic relations, the semiosis of Charles Sanders Peirce supports

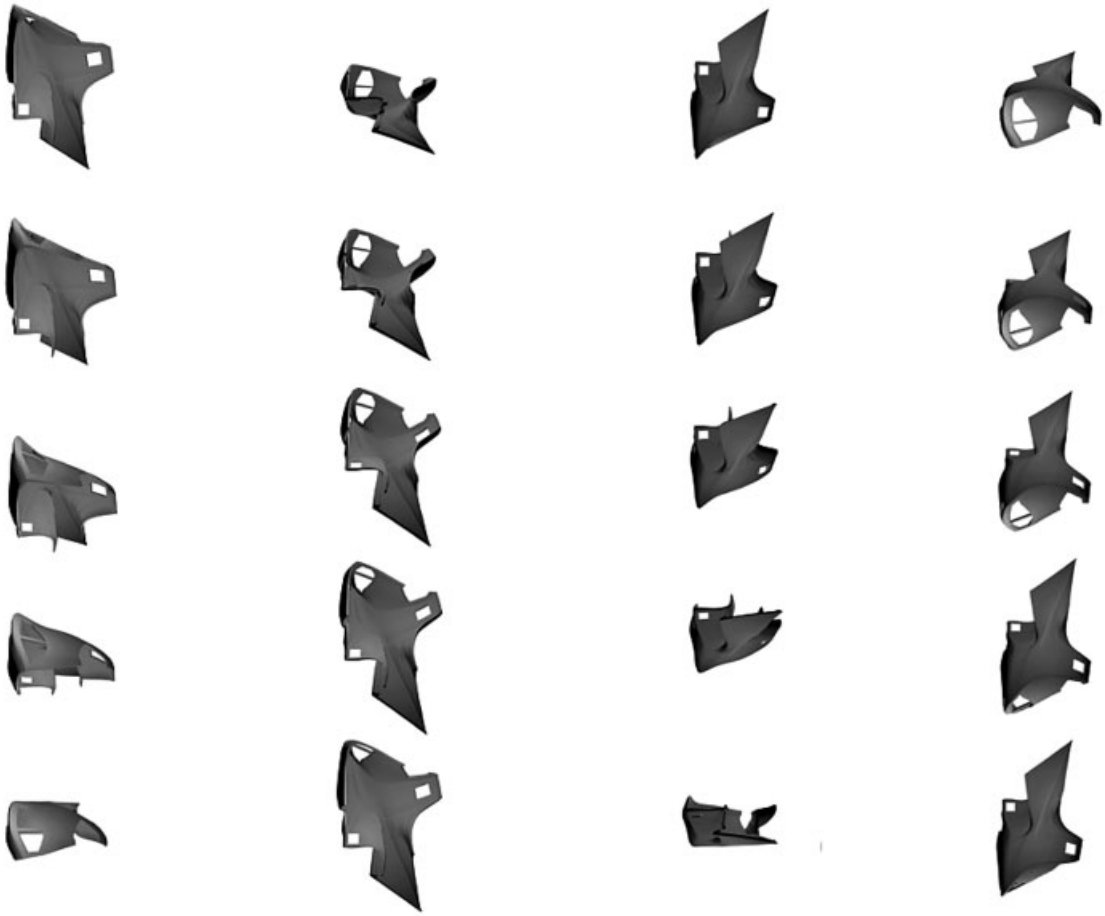
using computers as a generative drawing tool. Peirce's semiois is a system that can be used for classifying nonverbal body awareness of the autopoietic world. It helps develop an understanding of ourselves and architecture as signaletic matter which, as Gilles Deleuze argues, 'includes all kinds of modulation features, sensory (visual and sound), kinetic, intensive, affective, rhythmic, tonal, and even verbal (oral and written)'.[2] Space can be generated through an architectural drawing system that maps as any-instants-whatever the signs of the human sensori-motor processes and its relational implications for architecture and local ecosystems. The nature of space changes from a static emptiness filled with things in perspective to a generative moving medium in an expanded field of cultural and environmental relations.

What happens when the sensori-motor schema breaks down and perceptions no longer result in action?
Traditional editing entails linking shots in a linear sequence. Memory, however, complicates assembling images because it problematises both description and narration. It can even cause us to question what is true, breaking our habitual sensori-motor schema. Sonic and optic images emerge, which engage, not perception-in-space, but memory-in-time, leading us to time images. Dissolving the boundaries of linear thinking breaks the dominant sensori-motor schema, creating an opportunity for an architecture of continual 'newness'.

How can moving drawings generate spaces as cybernetic seeds of different worlds in the making?
Current ecological and cultural upheavals indicate not just a dramatic shift in our tools, but also in our relationships to the larger world. According to sociologist Ulrich Beck, we no longer look forward solely to the 'goods' of industrialisation but anxiously grapple with its runaway feedbacks – the 'bads'.[3] These events break into habitual sensori-motor patterns. They necessitate rethinking everything from social and ecological relations to building types and interior environmental systems. The challenge is to connect autopoietic knowledge of



Brian McGrath with Stan Gray, Pin Wei Dylan Kuo and Mark Isarangkun na Ayutthaya (2006)
Assembling: John Cassavetes uses a hand-held camera in the film *Faces* (1968). The camera is no longer tied to the Cartesian geometries of the spaces he films or the mechanism of the camera, but to topological relations between the camera eye and the bodies and faces of the characters he shoots. In the last scene we see the breakdown of the sensori-motor behaviour of everyday life for a couple in Los Angeles the morning after each has cheated on their spouse. The film ends with a pure optical image of an empty staircase.



KolMac Studio (1998–99), drawing by Brian McGrath with Mark Watkins (2006)
Cybernetic Seeds: Moving cybernetic drawings generate spaces that become seeds for new worlds in the making. Computer-generated model of the shell structure of the addition to the Raybould House designed as an organic hybrid derived from the topologies of the roof of the original house and the contours of the sloping site, yet maintaining its own formal identity.

these events to the larger social, economic and ecological processes involving architecture – imaging, material extraction, transport, construction, use, maintenance, retrofitting and recycling. The development of a drawing system linking these processes is a collective endeavour. Cinemetrics is a first step.

Prologue to what is possible

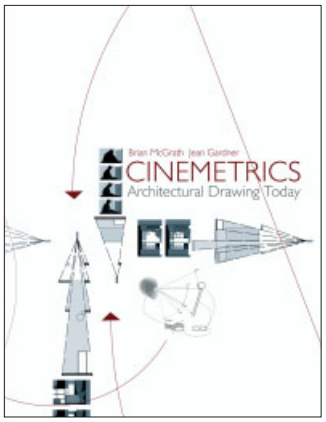
We are at the beginning of something new. The starchitect that the mechanical draftsman supported is being replaced by networked cybernetic-organic architects – a collective body joined through computer-generated drawing. Cinemetrics examines the sensori-motor shift from the mechanical to the networked architect. It helps us create a computer-generated drawing system based, not on static picture making, but on cybernetic recombinations and feedback loops. Cinemetrics focuses everyday image making towards current pressing issues where architecture plays a significant role. AD

Notes

1 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema I: The Movement Image*, trans Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, University of Minnesota Press (Minneapolis), 1986, p 6.
2 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta, University of Minnesota Press (Minneapolis), 1989, p 29.
3 Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, Sage Publications (London), 1992.

Brian McGrath is an architect and co-founder of urban-interface, which explores relationships between urban design, ecology and multimedia. He teaches at Columbia and Parsons in New York City, and Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. He was a Senior Fulbright Scholar in Thailand in 1998/99 and is currently a co-investigator with the Baltimore Ecosystem Study and is a New School Faculty Fellow with the India China Institute.

Jean Gardner is Senior Faculty, Department of Architecture, Interior Design and Lighting, at Parsons. Her course 'Issues and Practices in Architecture and Urbanism' received special recognition in the 2005 National AIA Ecological Literacy Initiative. Co-chair of the ACSA Task Force on Sustainable Design, she helped organise 'Sustainable Pedagogies and Practices' the 2003 ACSA/AIA Teachers' Seminar. With the Rockwell Group she exhibited the 'Hall of Risk' at the 2002 Venice Biennale.



Brian McGrath and Jean Gardner, *Cinemetrics: Architectural Drawing Today*, Wiley-Academy (John Wiley & Sons), April 2007, 304 pages. PB ISBN 978-0-470-02671-7 £26.99; HB ISBN 978-0-470-02669-4 £75.00. See www.wiley.com

Architectural Design

Italy: A New Architectural Landscape

Guest-edited by Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi

Every five or six years, a different country takes the architectural lead in Europe: England came to the fore with High Tech in the early 1980s; by the end of the 1980s, France came to prominence with François Mitterand's great Parisian projects; in the 1990s, Spain and Portugal were discovering a new tradition; and recently the focus has been on the Netherlands. In this ever shifting European landscape, Italy is now set to challenge the status quo. Already home to some of the world's most renowned architects – Renzo Piano, Massimiliano Fuksas and Antonio Citterio – it also has many talented architects like Mario Cucinella, Italo Rota, Stefano Boeri, the ABDR group and Maria Giuseppina Grasso Cannizzo, who are now gaining international attention. Moreover there is an extraordinary emergence of younger architects – the Erasmus generation – who are beginning to realise some very promising buildings of their own.

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