

43**“Little Magazines”
of Twentieth Century
Architecture****Lamberto Amistadi
Enrico Prandi**

FA(little)Magazine and the “little magazines” of twentieth century architecture

**Enrico Bordogna
Anne Marie Brennan
Claudio D'Amato
Mauro Marzo
Marco Francesco Pippione
Luciano Semerani
Guido Zuliani**Zodiac, from Adriano Olivetti to Guido Canella
Perspecta and the mediatic manufacture of a postmodern american architecture
Controspazio as a “little magazine”
Lotus. The first thirty years of an architectural magazine
Vittorio Gregotti's Casabella (1982-1996)
Phalaris, an architectural journal
Oppositions 1973-1984



**Magazine del Festival
dell'Architettura**

ricerche e progetti
sull'architettura e la città

research and projects on
architecture and the city

FAMagazine. Research and projects on architecture and the city

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c/o Università di Parma
Campus Scienze e Tecnologie
Via G. P. Usberti, 181/a
43124 - Parma (Italia)

Email: redazione@famagazine.it
www.famagazine.it

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FAMagazine is a scientific e-journal in the areas of the architectural project (Anvur disciplinary areas: 08/C - Design and technological planning of architecture, 08/D – Architectural design, 08/E1 – Drawing, 08/E2 - Architectural restoration and history, 08/F - Urban and landscape planning and design) that publishes critical articles compliant with the indications in the [Guidelines for the authors of the articles](#).

FAMagazine, in compliance with the Regulations for the classification of journals in non-bibliometric areas, responding to all the criteria on the classification of telematic journals, was considered scientific journal by ANVUR, the National Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Scientific Research.

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For the purpose of the publication, the contributions sent to the editorial staff are evaluated with a double blind peer review procedure and the evaluations of the referees communicated anonymously to the proposer. To this end, FAMagazine has set up a special [Register of reviewers](#) who operate according to specific [Guidelines for article reviewers](#).

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Two issues per year, out of the four expected, are built using call for papers that are usually announced in spring and autumn.

The call for papers provide authors with the possibility to choose between two types of essays:

- a) short essays between 12,000 and 14,000 characters (including spaces), which will be submitted directly to the double blind peer review procedure;
- b) long essays greater than 20,000 characters (including spaces) whose revision procedure is divided into two phases. The first phase involves sending an abstract of 5,000 characters (including spaces) of which the Direction will assess the relevance to the theme of the call. Subsequently, the authors of the selected abstracts will send the full paper which will be submitted to the double blind peer review procedure.

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NEXT ISSUE

number 44 April-June 2018

Ignazio Gardella, other works of architecture

The life of Ignazio Gardella (1905-1999) spanned a century of architecture, and many of his works became benchmarks for international debate, and have been the subject of important critical interpretations that established points of view on history, contexts, and the city, which are still relevant today.

The research project *Ignazio Gardella, other works of architecture*, launched in 2016 through the research programme of the Study Centre and Communication Archive (CSAC) of the University of Parma, including research campaigns of Vietti, Menghi and Ricci, has proved an important occasion to reopen the critical debate on the work of this Milanese master.

It has been carried out by a group of young researchers from various universities coordinated by Carlo Quintelli (UNIPR) and Angelo Lorenzi (POLIMI), and is based on the extraordinary archive of drawings, photographs, and documents of Gardella's studio conserved at the CSAC. The research has focused on three themes: internal space; the teaching of design, and international relations; the construction of architectural imagery through photography, essays, and publications.

The goal is to investigate areas of Gardella's work that are seemingly "minor", but in reality are merely less known and often unpublished, proposing a different point of view that also offers an opportunity to rethink his work as a whole. The issue of «FAMagazine» dedicated to the research project *Ignazio Gardella, other works of architecture* has been conceived as an illustration of the work in progress at the CSAC of Parma.

CALL FOR PAPERS

number 45 July-September 2018

Architecture and narration: the architect as *storyteller*?

Since we are deeply involved in the era of communication, the growing interest in the relationship between architecture and forms of narration is not surprising. amongst the many declinations in which the relationship can be interpreted (architecture and its story through critical comment, the theoretical text, the project report, or the discovery of narrative structures in architectural projects, to mention just a few examples) it can be enlightening to approach architecture in terms of a concept which is key to contemporary communication: *storytelling*. The practice of telling stories as a strategy of persuasive communication has spread in formative, political, economic and business area before being considered as a useful tool for the architect: through the practice of *storytelling* the project is communicated, disclosed, explained and marketed. The architecture becomes the subject of the story that is being told. for the architect and the student/researcher of architecture, *storytellings* widens and updates the traditional tools of representation, description and transmission of the discipline: first, by furnishing new relationships with agents of environmental transformation; secondly to satisfy a demand, which goes beyond that of multi-disciplinarity, for dialogue between architecture and other forms of media.

Architecture and narration maintain, however, a deeper bond: seemingly distant and irreconcilable in the materials with which they operate – stone and words, space and time, the heaviness of the one and the lightness of the other – they share various significant similarities if we consider them in terms of the boundaries they create between humans and the real world. Studies of the two disciplines of architecture and the human sciences have extensively analysed the associations between literary texts and the architectural imagery contained therein or, vice versa, between architectural texts and the literary imagery that inspired it. In doing so, they have uncovered narrative structures in architectural projects, and literary works whose matrix is an architectural form. But, beyond the mutual influence or even the resultant structural analogy, architecture and narration are intimately united by comparable motives. Cultural psychologists, anthropologists, semiologists, and linguists have described the very human approach to organizing experience in a narrative form in order to create collective meaning: a predisposition based on the very human need to bring shape and meaning to personal actions, by correlating the past, present and future transforming what has happened into a story.

The call is addressed to researchers who wish to question the relationship between architecture and narration, between construction and story, in those examples described here and in other possible intersections.

Full text of the call in the ANNOUNCEMENTS section

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This issue was conceived and edited by Lamberto Amistadi and Enrico Prandi. The articles by Marco Francesco Pippione and Mauro Marzo were submitted to the Double Blind Peer Review procedure. The authors of the remaining articles are well-known figures of the international academic world invited to propose essays written for the occasion.

Lamberto Amistadi, Enrico Prandi FA(little)Magazine and the “little magazines” of twentieth century architecture

Abstract

In a sort of self-reflective mirroring, the Editorial of Issue 43 of «FAMagazine» addresses the theme of 20th-century architecture magazines by identifying in the kind of independent publications developed during WWII known by the term “Little Magazines”, the form through which the journalism of architecture sought to emancipate itself from the conditionings of the building market and professional practices to become organs of study and research on the project and the city.

Starting from the transformations of the editorial context determined by the digital revolution, «FAMagazine» – a scientific Open Access e-Journal – evokes the “Little Magazine” tradition, inserting it into the framework of the new demands from the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research Systems.

Keywords

FAMagazine — Little Magazine — Piccole riviste — Digital Revolution



Fig. 1

Exhibition Clip/Stamp/Fold 2: The Radical Architecture of Little Warehouses 196X - 197X, Canadian Center for Architecture, 2007.

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A few days ago arrived Nicola Di Battista’s reflection on the role and function of printed architecture magazines in the context of the change in direction of «Domus», to which retorted a Michele de Lucchi who lent himself, along with Carlo Cracco and Lapo Elkann, to pose for the cover of «AD - Architectural Digest» (December 2017) in a new joint project designed by the same scion of the Agnelli family – *Garage Italia* – which transformed a post-war AGIP service station designed by Mario Bacciocchi in Milan’s Piazzale Accursio into an Italian-style hub: with food, cars, and design.

Battista argued that “a magazine must certainly be able to see and know the projects, products, and thoughts that our time produces but, above all, to tell the stories that make them possible, the stories that underlie them.”¹

That is what we have tried to do in this inaugural issue of «FAMagazine», which is not inaugurating the magazine – already born back in the distant 2010 – but its new graphics and Open Journal Systems platform, together with a new web address www.famagazine.it.

The story we wished to tell in this Issue 43, is that of certain Italian and US architecture magazines that determined the architectural debate in the final quarter of the last century, and the story of the transition from the world of magazines on paper to the digital ones, «FAMagazine» included.

The decision to open this new season of «FAMagazine» with an issue on architecture magazines is in itself an explicitly self-analytical reference. Among these are many “little magazines” so that, if initially the epithet was attributable mainly to the format and to a limited circuit of influence, which were often the outcome of independent, niche, or non-commercial publishing, with the passing of time it has ended up denoting some characteristics that make these magazines particularly interesting for architectural research as an im-

pulse to experiment, the leaning (or better, the bias) of the editorial board in directing the thinking, and in the desire to plough new research roads, give voice to new, less common, and avant-garde disciplinary languages. A sort of experimental laboratory of ideas.

The Little Magazine phenomenon, born in the 1920s in the context of the American literary current and much explored in the United States, especially after the Second World War, ended up intruding in a disciplinary sense – as often happens among the different arts – and affecting architecture, so that, as we were reminded by Claudio D’Amato, at the *Little Magazines Conference: After Modern Architecture*, 3-5 February 1977 organized by the IAUS New York, it was joined by many of the protagonists of the architectural debate who at that moment were proposing to relaunch deliberation on architecture, theory and criticism through the tool of the magazine: «Architese» (Bruno Reichlin, Stanislaus Von Moos), «Arquitectura Bis» (Oriol Bohigas, Federico Correa, Rafael Moneo), «AMC-Architecture Mouvement Continuïté» (Jacques Lucan, Patrice Noviant), «Controspazio» (Alessandro Anselmi, Claudio D’Amato), «Lotus» (Pierluigi Nicolini, Joseph Rykwert) and many other interested parties starting from the organizer himself, Peter Eisenman, and friends of New York’s Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies such as Edith Girard, Mario Gandelsonas, Anthony Vidler, Stanford Anderson, Livio Dimitriu, Alessandra Latour, Lluís Domènech, Peter Blake, Kenneth Frampton, Robert Gutman, Colin Rowe, George Baird, Peter Marangoni, Diana Agrest, and Suzanne Frank.

Authentic “Little Magazines” in architecture were the avant-garde ones of the 1920s which attracted ideological currents and their groups of promulgators, when not born specifically as a tool to disseminate their values: «G» (1923-26) and «Bauhaus» (1928-1933) in Germany, «Sovremennaiia Arkhitektura» (1926-30), «Lef» (1923-25) and «Veshch» (1922) in Russia, «Wendingen» (1918-1931) and «De Stijl» (1917-31) in the Netherlands, «L’Esprit Nouveau» (1920-25) in France, and all the Futurist magazines in Italy such as «Valori plastici» (1918-21), «Lacerba» (1913-15), and «Noi» (1917-20 and 1923-25).

An analogous phenomenon was seen in the second half of the twentieth century when the historical conditions enabled a return not so much of the historical avant-garde, as an attitude of breakage, the neo-avant-garde, of course, which, between the Sixties and Seventies, produced the phenomenon of the second season of Little Magazines, with an exhibition organized at the Canadian Center of Architecture by Beatriz Colomina and Craig Buckley entitled *Clip/Stamp/Fold 2: The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines 196X-197X*.² It is interesting to note that the characteristic of the second season of the Little Magazines in architecture was that they emerged from inside the Schools of Architecture, where it was the students, rather than the teachers of the first season (suffice to think of Le Corbusier and «L’Esprit Nouveau») who represented the voice of cultural change. It is no coincidence therefore that «Perspecta» was a student magazine and that «Casabella» published, in that same period, the Florentine radicals who, still at their school desks, launched their offensive on conservatism, rather than the youngsters of the AA School, Rem Koolhaas, Zenghelis, Hadid, or Archigram.³

This phenomenon did not pass unnoticed by the intelligentsia of architecture of the period, who between 1966 and 1972 came out with articles on the topic by historians and critics, noting that also magazines which could not properly be defined as “little” had at that time gone through a “little” spell (as in the case of «Casabella» and «Architectural Design»)⁴. Among these, Denise Scott Brown in the «Journal of the American Institute of Planners» in 1968⁵, Peter

Eisenman in «Architectural Forum» in 1969 and in «Casabella» in 1970⁶, Chris Holmes in «Architectural Design» in 1972⁷, while Reyner Banham in «AAQ-Architectural Association Quarterly», commended the student zines, and Robin Middleton towards the end of his direction inaugurated the “little magazine” period of «Architectural Design»⁸.

The reason for the interest in little magazines was to be found in the climate of great cultural vivacity that was establishing itself in the worlds of art and architecture: Denise Scott Brown, in her *Little Magazines in Architecture and Urbanism*, wrote that “little magazines [...] provide good guidance with regard to new trends in the profession and are an indicator of what we can expect in subsequent years.”⁹ While Banham highlights that in those years rather than constructed buildings it was the projects published in some [little] magazines that marked architectural theory. In his opinion, these magazines, through the projects, were able to report a thinking about architecture that was constantly updated, unlike the buildings which rose already obsolete.¹⁰ That this was a period of great cultural change is indisputable as is the fact that the cultural climate and fervour managed to seduce even notoriously orthodox historians and critics.

The Little Magazines were the protagonists of a *little revolution*.

Starting off from this point of view, the best magazines could not help playing a polemical role, tried to keep their guard up and block the lethal blows that the world of profit and quantitative logic craved to throw, not so much against them – of no interest to them – but against architecture; which was able to respond with a few well-aimed salvos of its own made up of good ideas that sometimes even succeeded in exerting a beneficial influence on that same world.

Not without some forcing, we have gathered some of these magazines - «Zodiac», «Perspecta», «Controspazio», «Lotus», «Casabella», «Phalaris», «Oppositions» – under the common label of “little magazines” not just because they are directly attributable to the concept of the avant-garde or were all born within student movements – but for the courage, freshness and even unscrupulousness with which they advanced a speech on architecture that to them was coherent, more or less complacently franked by the logic of profit, while gathering around themselves affectionate communities of young architects, scholars, and readers.

Even if the relations of these magazines with the avant-garde and history, continuity and discontinuity, was quite different, especially between Italy and overseas, their degree of kinship, their entanglements and borrowings were so unexpectedly numerous that instead of foundations, we should speak of re-foundations and continuous re-emergences of points of view, themes, and architecture magazines. To the point that, in some moments, it seems to us that all of them belonged to a single great collective cultural adventure, one that encompassed authors, editors and – for Bataille, at least – the only possible community, that of readers.

Guido Zuliani tells us of Peter Eisenman’s passion for the “little magazines” of the European avant-garde – «De Stijl», «Mecano», «L’Esprit Nouveau», the «Casabella» of Pagano, Moretti’s «Spazio» – or his debt to British magazines of the ’60s such as «Architectural Design» and «Architectural Review» or the double number 359-360 of «Casabella», whose publication of the work of the Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies under the title of “The City as Artifact” anticipated the birth of «Oppositions». And of how the origin of the birth of «Oppositions» harboured a certain intolerance of a world of journalism that was rather intractable to ideas and somewhat subservient to

commercial practice.

Not very different were the motivations from which arose «Perspecta», nor was its debt to Italy any less. “The first reason,” wrote Norman Carver, one of the editors of the first number, «was our frustration due to the lack of exciting projects and the fatal absence of content that characterized the commercial architecture magazines of that time.» While «Perspecta» owed a debt to Italy for its historical-critical tradition while, more directly, its most famous issue – the no. 9-10, characterized by the well-known White/Gray debate – was inspired by Issue 281 of Rogers’ «Casabella Continuità» entitled “Architettura USA”. This ratio of continuous exchange, of *quid pro quo* between America and Europe, is also the theme as well as the title of Issue 13 of «Phalaris», “the architecture newspaper” – as it styled itself – directed by Luciano Semerani between 1988 and 1992. Semerani wrote in his editorial: “They come and go across and over the Atlantic from Europe to America and from America to Europe, flocks of migratory ideas, perhaps always the same ideas, but each time they return from a trip they have changed because they are not eternal ideas, or perhaps they are tracks, routes, and points of departure and arrival that are always identical, but the journey and the travel time, by themselves, will change them; in appearance at least.” And he published projects by Frank Gehry, John Hejduk, Steven Holl, plus an extraordinary article on the Elvis Presley myth.

Even Claudio D’Amato re-evoked the “little magazine” image to define the form of these journals of research, theory, and criticism, “produced outside the great editorial circuits” and advanced almost exclusively by university lecturers. «Controspazio» too, like «Perspecta», was born within the political passion of a student movement, and like «Perspecta», was the vivid reaction to a feeling of powerlessness in the face of the massacre that professional practice and urban speculation were inflicting on the suburbs of Italian cities. The polemical vein of «Controspazio» – directed by Paolo Portoghesi from 1961 to 1981 – was however already included in that “contra” accompanying the Italian term for “space”, which recalls another affiliation (or counter-affiliation), the one with the magazine «Spazio» directed by Luigi Moretti.

A blood relation of «Phalaris» and «Controspazio» – as Enrico Bordogna defined it – «Zodiac» also ranks among the research journals. In this case, the bond with America and New York is inscribed in the graphics of Massimo Vignelli. «Zodiac» too was a “re-emergent” magazine, or the fruit of a re-foundation, whose roots lay deep inside the Italian cultural tradition, starting from the «Comunità» publishing house of Adriano Olivetti and their first series of «Zodiac». This link with Olivetti was stated explicitly in the 1988 colophon which reads as follows: “New series. International architecture magazine founded in 1957 by Adriano Olivetti.” The Steering Committee too was the expression of a “trend” and a “continuity”, boasting figures like Carlo Aymonino, Ignazio Gardella, Aldo Rossi, Gianugo Polesello, Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co and foreigners of the calibre of Richard Meier, Rafael Moneo, James Stirling, and Kurt W. Forster.

Some phases of «Casabella» can also be ascribed to this tradition of research journals, or at least to some of those preceding the rather bombastic dimension of the time. The «Casabella» that Gregotti directed between 1982 and 1996, for example, insisted on a radical programme, according to which the transformation of the city and territory should involve architects, planners, and engineers in a complex, integrated, multidisciplinary process. The magazine also sought to open a debate involving the world of professionals and lead them hand in hand towards a good practice of architecture. The important

thematic section dedicated to building innovation and sponsors is indicative in this sense, just as there is a significant difference between the concepts of “city as artifact” of Alessandro Mendini’s «Casabella», and that of the “architecture of modification” of Vittorio Gregotti’s «Casabella».

Lastly, «*Lotus* was of another kind still, designed as it was in 1963 by a car racing fan – Bruno Alfieri – as a yearbook of architecture. Starting from Issue 3 it too became an international magazine of critical investigation and its Issue 7 on “Architecture in the formation of the modern city” went down in history.

«FAMagazine» is not really a trendy magazine (perhaps we are not snobbish enough!). Without a doubt – as described even more clearly in the new blue masthead designed by Carlo Gandolfi – it is a magazine of research, on architecture and the city.

In terms of approach, its editorial staff is very much akin to those strange communities of gold miners narrated in National Geographic documentaries: whole communities who, with the help of ingenious and sometimes unlikely machinery, dredged tons upon tons of water and sand in those endless rivers of the Yukon in search of a few grams of gold. What comes out are issues and themes that are unexpectedly but unquestionably interesting, some more *à la page*, others extraordinarily *demodé*. In the period 2010-2013, «FAMagazine» published articles on/by figures of international architecture such as Asplund, Lewerentz, Mart Stam, Mendes da Rocha, Artigas, and Bogdanovic, and Italians such as Rogers, Samonà, Muratori, Quaroni, Aymonino, Semerani, Isola and Polesello. Schools of Architecture in Italy and Europe, the Brazilian “Paulista School” and some of its members, the relationship between architecture and crises, accounts of events like the 2010 Venice Biennale and the 2012 Biennial of Public Space in Rome, problems relating to the condition of the contemporary city, from the experiences of the INA-Casa neighbourhoods to today’s regeneration processes for historical cities (from densification to the valorizing of empty urban spaces) and the suburbs (the case of Tor Bella Monaca). In addition, more specific issues such as the restoration of the Modern, and the role of ruins in an architectural project. It has addressed topical theoretical issues in the disciplinary debate such as the role of morphology or infrastructures in the processes of transforming the land, and the theme of Designing the Built, applied to Italian and German cases (*Bauen im Bestand*). Starting from 2014, the issues became strictly thematic and the output quarterly. The titles are self-explanatory: *The Spectacularization of Dismission* no. 42, *Report on the State of the Former Psychiatric Hospitals in Italy* no. 41, *Amnesty for the Existing* no. 40, *Law and Heart. Analogy and Composition in the Construction of Architectural Language* no. 39, 2017; *Architectural Pedagogies. Worldviews* no. 38, *Building and/is Building Ourselves. The complex relationship between architecture and education* no. 37, *Character and Identity of the Work* no. 36, *Madrid Reconsidered* no. 35, for 2016; *University Campus and City* no. 34, *Smart Design for a Smart City* no. 33, *The Orderly City. Dispositio and Forma Urbis* no. 32 *Epiphenomena*, no. 31, 2015; *Six Italian PhD Research Works on Architectural and Urban Design* no. 30, *2004-2014 Ten Years of the Festival of Architecture* no. 29, *Impossible Research. Imagination in the Architectural Project*. no. 27-28, *Intensive Teaching for the Project* No 8. 26, *Oscar Niemeyer: Architecture, City* no. 25, for 2014.

But even in the digital field, not all that glitters is gold.

Since undertaking an online magazine today – certainly less burdensome and costly than a printed one – is fairly simple (just a web address, a director enrolled in the order of journalists, and an ISSN), we are seeing a certain

quantity of active magazines that is not less than those dormant or decommissioned ones within much shorter time-spans than in the past. Without speaking of the confusion generated by hybrid forms including simple websites, blogs, e-zines, and everything else in between, as demonstration of an attitude, that of architecture magazines, which is extremely variable though undermined on the one hand by a persistent and chronic lack of investment in scientific publishing (and more in general in research and in its instruments of dissemination) and on the other by the clumsy attempt of the ministerial bodies to regulate everything. Hence the basic misunderstanding of transferring the value of the container (magazine) to the content (single item) in qualitative evaluations.

We, who have always believed in this form of communication in architecture and its critical thinking, are preparing for a substantial revamp. In the Manifesto founding the magazine (which we invite you to read) we compared the magazine to a “free (and welcoming) space” for the comparison of different stances. Well this area, today, has a new guise. Since “you can’t judge a book by its cover”, the adoption of an international platform specifically designed for scientific journals allows many advantages: from workflow management (the steps that accompany an article from when it reaches the editors to the time of its publication are many and complex) to the final look, and the safeguarding of the archive with the relentless tracking of addresses and a guarantee of perennial consultation. If libraries were once the guarantee of preserving their valuable content of disciplinary knowledge over time (the famous public granaries to amass reserves against the winter of the spirit within Yourcenar’s meaning), today much of that “grain” travels in an immaterial inconsistency through the ether, in that World Wide Web which represents our greatest opportunity. If the task of «FAMagazine», referring once again to the Manifesto, is also that of a “mnemonic device to remember”, it is necessary that the memory is kept alive constantly, without any risk of “memory loss”. If Victor Hugo saw a great danger for architecture in Gutenberg’s revolution – the invention of the printing press and books as the killer of architecture, what might he write today in the face of this further revolution that sees on one side printed paper giving way to that far more volatile digital paper, and on the other those contemporary stone monuments (far less often in stone, and fewer and fewer monuments in Rossi’s sense of the term) witnesses of phenomena that are no longer secular but as short and transient as they are precarious? “In the form of printing, thought is more imperishable than ever; it is volatile, elusive, indestructible. It blends with the air. In the time of architecture, it became a mountain and took forceful possession of an age and a space. Now it becomes a flock of birds, scatters to the four winds and simultaneously occupies every point of air and space.”¹¹ Hugo’s metaphor of printed thought is now paying the price of a further revolution, the digital, one of whose greatest merits is the widespread dissemination of information, but among whose greatest defects is the multiplication of this so that it does not always readily make the information sought available, with the result that we rely on the most popularized, superficial information (waiting for the Big Data managers to invent agile information management systems).

Let us now turn to what lies behind the renewed guise of «FAMagazine». As always, a moment of transition is the occasion for a stocktake, in our case limited to the period 2014-2017: 4 years, 17 issues, 116 articles, (to be added to the previous 3 and a half years and a further 122 articles). If it is true that the numbers are not important (in an era in which even quality is reduced to a number, as demonstrated by the logic of the National Agency for the Evalua-

tion of University and Research – ANVUR) it is the contents that offer the scientific community a valid tool to critically evaluate the work of our magazine. Perhaps it is useful to summarize our story. The “Magazine of the Festival of Architecture” was born in September 2010: at that time ANVUR carried out its first VQR (in which «FAMagazine» did not appear among the list of scientific journals). In 2012, in the first suitable timeslot to apply for recognition, we explained our reasons, and in 2013 we received scientific recognition. In the same judgement, *excusatio non petita, accusatio manifesta*, ANVUR responded that initially «FAMagazine» was not deemed to be scientific but merely an informative newsletter. Glossing over this, by 2014-15, with ANVUR regulations in hand, we discovered that we possessed a score well beyond the threshold required to be in Class A.¹²

We awaited a suitable timeslot to present our second petition for recognition (this time for Class A) and just shortly before, thanks also to the debate on anomalies in the lists of scientific journals for those non-bibliometric areas, a new regulation was issued (Regulation for the classification of magazines in the non-bibliometric areas – Criteria to classify magazines for the purposes of national scientific accreditation) which tightened the screw to such a point that it cast doubt on the legitimacy of most of the journals already contained in the lists. As the saying goes, “closing the stable door after the horse has bolted”. Following the lively debate from those who had not seen the access door to Class A considerably restricted (especially when inside there were magazines that did not meet the criteria, or were no longer published, and so forth), ANVUR decided to caution the directors of scientific journals with the announcement of periodic checks on the requirements, and if unjustified, the revocation of the description “scientific” or of the magazine’s Class A status. Thus, indications on the frequency when a particular magazine was considered “scientific” began to appear in the final version of the list of scientific journals currently available.

We look forward to the next timeslot to make a formal application for Class A recognition, and in the meantime, we are continuing to “dredge” and accumulate numbers and themes thanks chiefly to a vast community of enthusiastic scholars, mostly young and extremely knowledgeable, and a no less extensive international community of readers. Whom we thank.

Notes

¹ *Congedo da Domus*, in «Domus» 1019, December 2017, p. X, XI

² Beatriz Colomina and Craig Buckley, eds., *Clip, Stamp, Fold: The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines, 196x - 197X* (New York, NY: Actar, 2010), 451.

³ In the summer of 1971, the magazine «AAQ» published the results of a survey of the “zines” of architecture schools, bringing to the fore the trends of the time from *Focus* to *Archigram*. See Neil Steedman, *Student Magazines in British Architectural Schools*, in the Architectural Association Quarterly, Summer 1971.

⁴ See Steve Parnell, *Architectural Design, 1954-1972. The architectural magazine’s contribution to the writing of architectural history*, PhD Thesis in Architectural History, University of Sheffield School of Architecture, 2011. Parnell defines by “littleness” this character that invests

⁵ Denise Scott Brown, *Little Magazines in Architecture and Urbanism*, in the Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Volume 34, 1968 - Issue 4 223-233, [published online on 26 Nov 2007 <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366808977811>] DOI

⁶ Peter Eisenman, *The Big Little Magazine: Perspecta 12 and the Future of the Architectural Past*, in Architectural Forum, New York, October 1969, republished in «Casabella» 345 January 1970, p.

⁷ Chris Holmes, *Small Mags*, in «Architectural Design», September 1972. 80

⁸ See the article by Beatriz Colomina, *Little AD* (presented for the 80 years of AD (1930-2010), R.I.BA, London, June 29, 2010) and Steve Parnell, «Architectural Design», op. cit.

⁹ Denise Scott Brown, *Little Magazines in Architecture and Urbanism*, op. cit., p. 223

¹⁰ Reyner Banham, *Zoom wave hits architecture*, in *New Society*, 3 March 1966, now in Reyner Banham, *Design by Choice*, (Penny Sparke, ed.), Rizzoli, 1981

¹¹ Victor Hugo, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* Translated by Isabel F. Hapgood

¹² Based on the regulation for the classification of scientific journals in force in 2015, «FAMagazine» possessed sufficient points to be included in Class A.

Enrico Prandi (born in Mantua, 1969), Architect; he graduated with honors in Architecture at the Milan Politechnic with Guido Canella with which he has performed research and teaching activity. He also received his PhD in Architecture and Urban Composition at the IUAV in Venice in 2003. He is currently an Associate Professor in Architecture and Urban Design at Department of Engineering and Architecture of the University of Parma and Director of FAMagazine.

His publications include: *L'architettura della città lineare* (FrancoAngeli, Milan 2016); *Il progetto di architettura nelle scuole europee* (in *European City Architecture*, FAEdizioni, Parma 2012); *Mantova. Saggio sull'architettura* (FAEdizioni, Parma 2005).

Lamberto Amistadi, architect; he graduated with honors in Architecture at the IUAV University of Venice with Luciano Semerani with which he has performed research and teaching activity. He also received his PhD in Architecture and Urban Composition at the IUAV in Venice in 2003. He is currently an Assistant Professor in Architecture and Urban Design at Department of Architecture of the University of Parma and Deputy Director of FAMagazine.

His publications include: *Convention and Symbols of the New England Masque* (in *Soundings: John Hejduk, Aión*, Florence 2015); *La costruzione della città* (Il Poligrafo, Padua 2012); *Paesaggio come rappresentazione* (Clean, Naples 2008).

Enrico Bordogna Zodiac, from Adriano Olivetti to Guido Canella

Abstract

In the summer-autumn of 1988, the publisher Renato Minetto asked Guido Canella to direct the new series of Olivetti publications called «Zodiac». The issues, which came out at intervals of six months, were deliberately 21, the same number as those of the first series which had been published between 1957 and 1972. Monographic and miscellaneous numbers alternated almost equally. In turn, the monographs dealt with typological themes (theater, museum, university, courthouse), or contextual themes (Latin America, California, Holland), or specific themes such as “That third generation of Giedion”. All the numbers, monographic or miscellaneous, were introduced by an editorial of strong theoretical commitment and by one or more historical-critical essays, followed by a review of projects and architectures of the protagonists of international contemporary architecture, accompanied by a generous documentation described by the authors themselves without any outside comment, with the idea that the works and projects could speak for themselves, leaving personal judgement up to the reader without any editorial mediation apart from the choice to publish or not.

Keywords

Zodiac — Guido Canella — Adriano Olivetti — History — Criticism — Project

After «Hinterland», personally designed and founded in 1977, «Zodiac» was the second magazine directed by Guido Canella, substantially “re-founded” when, in the summer-autumn of 1988, Renato Minetto, a publisher and long-time friend, asked him to direct this new series of Olivetti publications. Together with Bruno Alfieri, Minetto had taken it over from the publisher «Comunità», acquired previously in 1985 by Mario Formen-ton’s Mondadori.

This original tie-up with Olivetti was explicitly stated in the colophon which read as follows: “New series. International architecture magazine founded in 1957 by Adriano Olivetti. Published twice a year” – bearing the name, beside that of Bruno Alfieri, of Renzo Zorzi, right-hand man for Olivetti’s cultural activities, who, after the sudden death of Adriano in 1960, had taken over the direction of «Comunità» and the eponymous magazine, and hence also the direction of the last issues of the first series of «Zodiac» (from no. 18, November 1968). By unanimous desire, but especially on the part of Canella, Zorzi was asked to chair the Steering Committee, and he would then invite some of Canella’s closest Italian associates to join – Carlo Aymonino, Ignazio Gardella, Aldo Rossi, Gianugo Polesello, Manfredo Tafuri, and Francesco Dal Co – along with a group of international architects and historians, especially thanks to the contacts of Tafuri and Dal Co – Richard Meier, Rafael Moneo, James Stirling, and Kurt W. Forster. Completing the editorial side of the new series was the name of Massimo Vignelli – recommended chiefly by Alfieri – the creator of the magazine’s sober and elegant graphics, with the signal choice of a cover in a deep saffron yellow, identical for the front and back cover and uniform from issue to issue, and the layout of the internal pages with



Fig. 1
Cover of the number 1 of the new series of «Zodiac», February 1989.

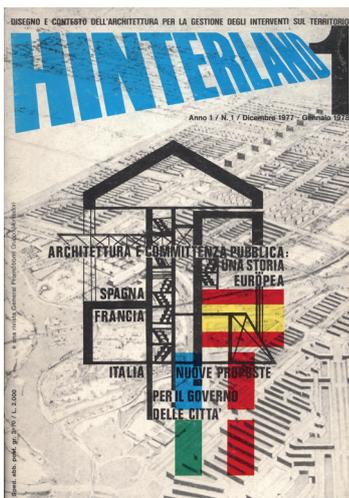


Fig. 2
Cover of the number 1 of «Hinterland», December 1977-January 1978, dedicated to *Architecture and public commissioning: a European history*.

an ordered classical composure.

Tafuri was to leave the Steering Committee for personal reasons in part linked to disputes over the proposal of Venice as the seat of the Universal Exposition of 2000 (from issue 4, September 1990), while from issue 5 (March 1991) Lionello Puppi was called to join.

The first five issues came out in a double identical volume, respectively an Italian version and an English version, while all subsequent ones were entirely bilingual, with the English text facing.

After the second issue, Minetto took over Alfieri's share of the magazine, remaining its only editor and including the magazine in his Abitare Segesta publishing company.

So far only demographic data. But what was the nature of this new series of «Zodiac»?

In the first issue, after an editorial by Zorzi that recalled the planning intentions explained by Adriano Olivetti in Issue 1 of the first series, Canella, at the end of a dense editorial, summarized the reasons that persuaded him to accept to “resurrect this glorious publication”: not a trendy magazine – “since, also for reasons of age, together with those whom we asked to help orient it, we will not succeed in building an ideologically or poetically homogeneous formation” – but, said Canella, the desire to “restore some history to criticism, today so rambling”, contributing to “making the commissioning of works of architecture less precarious and incompetent [...] increasingly conditioned by an ambiguous public-private relationship”, and in particular to the need to “privilege the principle of authenticity against the functional and formal counterfeiting of design [and] entrenching the international comparison in the context of every typological and figurative experience,¹” objectives that were however substantially similar, Canella added, to Adriano Olivetti's intentions of thirty years earlier.

Browsing the indexes of the 21 issues in the second series (intentionally the same number as those of the first series between 1957 and 1972 and they too published at six-monthly intervals), what stands out is the recurrent layout of every issue, each about 200 pages, faithful to the policy objectives set out in the re-foundation editorial: monographs and miscellaneous numbers alternating in nearly equal measure, all introduced by an editorial with a strong theoretical commitment and by one or more historical-critical essays, followed by a review of projects and works of architecture from the main players of contemporary international architecture² accompanied by generous documentation described by the authors themselves without any outside comment, with the idea that the works and projects could speak for themselves, leaving personal judgement up to the reader without any editorial mediation, apart from the choice to publish or not.

The monographic issues were divided in turn: some dedicated to a specific architectural category (theatre, museum, university, law court), split organically into editorial, typological analysis essays and achievements or relevant projects; others dedicated to the relationship between architecture-city and themes of an urban and settlement nature (such as no. 5/1991, on *Who designs the city?*, or no. 13/1995, on *The spread of the centre*); still others were long contextual monographs, with essays and projects dedicated to specific “regional” architectural cultures (Latin America, no. 8/1993; California, no. 11/1994; the Netherlands, no. 18/1998); and finally, others dedicated to specific individual themes, such as restoration in architecture (no. 19/1998), architects who had won the Pritzker Prize, from the year

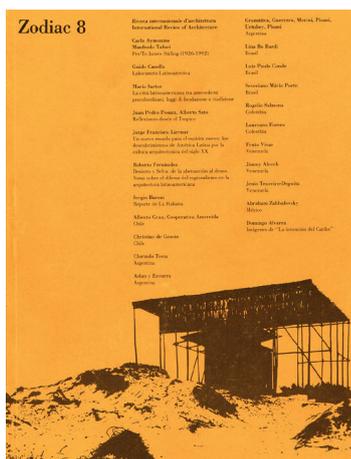


Fig. 3
Cover of the number 8 of «Zodiac», n.s., October 1992, dedicated to the *The Latin American Laboratory*.

Fig. 4
Cover of the number 11 of «Zodiac», n.s., March 1994, dedicated to *Architecture in California*.

of its foundation to 1994 (no. 12/1995), the generation of architects born around 1920 (no. 16/1997), with original writings from Peter Blake, Denis Sharp, Alison Smithson and Bruno Zevi, to contemporary criticism of architecture (no. 21/1999).

The monographic nature and the sheer bulk of each issue (which was substantially a book) were in part tied to the six-monthly periodicity, necessarily different from monthly or bi-monthly ones. However, this also corresponded to Canella's desire to produce a "slow" magazine, remote from the fashions of the time, anxiety over the latest novelty, or passively reduced to a repertoire of ready-to-go upgrades.

It is difficult to retrospectively reconstruct the contents of the individual issues and their editorial processing. One issue of decidedly particular affection was the one devoted to the *Laboratorio Latinoamerica*, namely, no. 8/1993, compiled for the five-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America. An exceptional issue also for its length, over 280 pages, with an editorial by the Director and five incredibly dense historical-critical essays (together occupying the first 185 pages of the issue) by Mario Sartor, Juan Pedro Posani with Alberto Sato (Venezuela), Jorge Francisco Liernur and Roberto Fernandez (Argentina), Sergio Baroni (Cuban), with joint agreements being made for authors and works to be published as most representative of the individual national situations, rising up the continent from south to north, from Chile to Mexico. This issue had the very definite merit of bringing to the attention of Italian culture the extraordinary richness, in terms of composite and diversified traditions, of the architectural situation in Latin America. Alongside established names such as Oscar Niemeyer, Carlos Raúl Villanueva, Luis Barragán, Rogelio Salmons, Mario Pani and Enrique del Moral, Eladio Dieste, Amancio Williams, Clorindo Testa, were lesser known or publicized experiences but of extraordinary vitality and destined to be widely studied later, namely the Brazilian works of Lina Bo Bardi, the Cuban art schools of Garatti Gottardi and Porro, or the singular experience of the Amereida Cooperative of the Open City at Valparaíso, perhaps the first time this had been presented in an Italian publication. An issue that indicated, in line with Canella's intention, the incredibly rich experience of the Latin American subcontinent as the most convincing response to the degeneration of International Style and the uncertainties of contemporary international architecture, yet capable as a whole of providing useful guidelines and fruitful terms of comparison with current design research in the West, be it European or North American.

Equally dense were issues 6/1991 and 7/1992 on the Museum and the University respectively, the former introduced by an editorial on "*Certain deviations from the museum archetype*", and the latter by an editorial on the "*University and the city*", immediately followed by an almost complementary essay by Antonio Acuto on the "*University and the territory*". To probe the typological side, the issue on the museum also featured a long essay by Kurt W. Forster *Shrine? Emporium? Theater? Reflections on two decades of American Museum Building*, and a text of critical and poetic reflection by Robert Venturi *From Invention to Conventions in Architecture* to accompany the recently completed Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery in London, probably not yet publicized in Italy at that time. This issue concluded significantly with the Monument to the Unknown Soldier in Baghdad realized in 1980-1982 by Marcello D'Olivo, who sadly passed away just after publication, and was remembered with affection and admiration by Canella as: "one of the most original (and perhaps for this reason

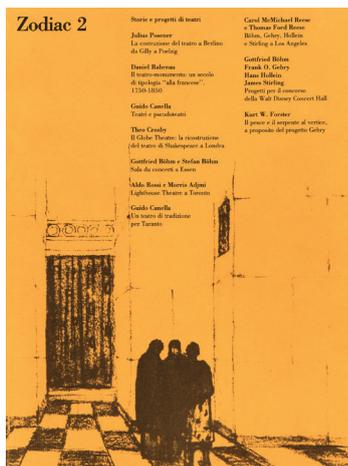


Fig. 5
Cover of the number 2 of «Zodiac», n.s., September 1989, dedicated to *Theatre history and design*.

Fig. 6
Cover of the number 6 of «Zodiac», n.s., October 1991, dedicated to *Su certain deviations from museum archetype*.

Fig. 7
Cover of the number 7 of «Zodiac», n.s., April 1992, dedicated to the *University and the city*.

neglected) personalities of Italian post-war architecture.”³³

Among the typological themes, the theatre building certainly occupied centre stage, not only because it was the subject of a special issue, no. 2/1989, but also because, being a theme of particular affection and study on the part of Canella, it cropped up several times as the central theme among the works published during the whole of the second series.

Issue 2, on *Theatre stories and projects*, with its 223 pages in the Italian version alone, had two long essays, by Julius Posener (*The construction of the theatre in Berlin from Gilly to Poelzig*) and Daniel Rabreau (*The theatre-monument: a century of the “French” style*) on theatrical types between the nineteenth and twentieth century in Germany and in France, and a “transverse” essay by Canella (*Theatres and pseudo theatres*), more directly and operatively focusing on design, drawing on his many years of study into the “theatrical system”. As suffrage for this historical-critical section, the project documentation reported on the four projects of the competition for the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles (Hollein, Böhm, Stirling and Gehry, the winner), the Lighthouse Theatre of Aldo Rossi and Morris Adjmi on the shores of Lake Toronto, Canella’s project for a traditional theatre in Taranto to be included in the northern courtyard of the former City Hall (the project was accompanied by summary images to recall the many *pseudo-theatres* made or planned by Canella and accompanied by a fascinating diagram of the multi-purpose centre planned for the former *Fiera del Mare* area, designed as an outpost of the future *theatrical system* of Taranto), but above all devoted ample space to Theo Crosby’s extraordinary project to reconstruct the Globe theatre in London, thus completing the issue’s investigations into type, from the theatre to Italian-style stages, to the “reformed” Franco-German room (from Soufflot to Schinkel at Bayreuth’s Wagnerian theatre), to the wholly original pattern of the Shakespearean theatre, experimentation on the theme by the modern avant-garde, the opera house and contemporary multi-purpose halls. Throughout the life of the magazine, Theo Crosby’s project had the good fortune to be published again, this time after being built, in issue 19/1998, dedicated to the complex theme of *preserving and reconstructing*, with a polemical theoretical essay by Paul Marconi on the alleged and unlikely practice (for the author) of rebuilding “where it was, as it was”, and reconstruction projects (or expansions) of historic theatres such as the Globe Theatre in London, La Fenice in Venice by Aldo Rossi, the Liceu in Barcelona by Ignasi de Solà-Morales, the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona by Oscar Tusquets.

It must be said that all the issues, even the miscellaneous ones, did reflect an explicit critical intent in their specific approach, with respect to the architectural trends momentarily most in vogue and literature on the most popular works of architecture. However, the last of the second series was dedicated monographically to the theme of criticism, perhaps not by chance, Issue 21/1999 with its editorial by Canella on *Architecture critics after Zevi*, and some intense essays by Carlo Olmo, Jean-Louis Cohen, Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Stanislaus von Moos, Michela Rosso, Francesco Tentori, all turning, albeit with accents and different points of view, around the programmatic objective stated in the first issue, of operatively restoring history to criticism and the project, in an attempt to reinstate a cognitive basis in an architecture magazine, and not one that was merely hagiographic or illustrative. The essays were followed, almost in the form of an affectionate farewell, by works and projects by authors who were

Per/To James Stirling (1926-1992)

Carlo Aymonino
Manfredo Tafuri

Caro Jim,
quando il tuo angelo (verde la sua camicia) ti ha preso per mano,
una stretta al cuore.
Cos'altro dire al "mondo che abbiamo conosciuto così piccolo", cui
— con la tua lingua —
hai rivolto parole crudeli?
Eironéia. Fra le burle, l'inganno sulla tua nascita
(caccia e pettegolezzi sono aperti).
Così hai rimescolato questa folle età di mezzo.
Già troppe parole. La nave, oggetto dei tuoi pensosi sarcasmi,
rimane affidata a pochi
nocchieri severamente privi di rotte — La grande pausa.
Un ultimo, provvisorio sussurro.

Venezia, 15 settembre 1992 Manfredo

Dear Jim,
and so your angel (green was his gown) took your
hand, our heart's hand-grasp.
How else address "the world we knew so small",
for which — in your language —
your words came cruel?
Eironéia. Amid trammels and trickery
of your birth (the hunt is on, slander walks abroad).
Thus did you stir strife in a transitory age's insanity.
Too many words already. The ship, your long-seasoned
sarcasm's target, is still steered
by helmsmen bereft of bearings — The great pause.
One last, provisional whisper.

Venice, 15 September 1992 Manfredo



Caro Jim,
quando il tuo angelo (verde la sua camicia) ti ha preso per mano,
una stretta al cuore.
Cos'altro dire al "mondo che abbiamo conosciuto così piccolo", cui
— con la tua lingua —
hai rivolto parole crudeli?
Eironéia. Fra le burle, l'inganno sulla tua nascita (caccia e pettegolezzi sono aperti).
Così hai rimescolato questa folle età di mezzo.
Già troppe parole. La nave, oggetto dei tuoi pensosi sarcasmi, rimane affidata a pochi
nocchieri severamente privi di rotte — La grande pausa.
Un ultimo, provvisorio sussurro.



Venezia, 15 settembre 1992.

Per/To Aldo Rossi

(8 maggio 1931-4 settembre 1997)
Carlo Aymonino
Ignazio Gardella
Philip Johnson

Ricordo con affetto Aldo Rossi: un caro amico e
un grande architetto.
Ma forse è meglio (e credo che lui preferirebbe)
dire semplicemente che era un architetto (gli
due sempre come chi era un architetto (gli
architetto, architetto, come pochi), un architetto
che amava profondamente l'architettura e che saba-
tono le classifiche di passato, moderno, post-
moderno e così via.
L'architettura di Aldo è certamente una
architettura di oggi, ma ha quella sottile e
misteriosa qualità che hanno tutte le vere
architetture per cui nel momento in cui
nascono esse esprimono il proprio tempo e
rispondono ad una destinazione d'uso, ma
continuano poi a darci le stesse emozioni
indipendentemente dalla epoca e dall'uso.
Ignazio Gardella

Aldo Rossi was one of the greats. He was cut off just at the peak of
his work. The latest I am familiar with is the office building for
Disney at Celebration in Florida. He was master of the difficult art
of mixing classical and modern. Familiar and new. Better than
any he could use massive columns with modern fenestration,
monumentality with regularity. Celebration is a difficult but
highly successful mixture, pleasing me at one extreme and the
Disney clients at the other.
We architects shall all miss him.
Philip Johnson

Ricordo con affetto Aldo Rossi: un caro amico
e un grande architetto.
Ma forse è meglio (e credo che lui preferirebbe)
dire semplicemente che era un architetto (gli
architetti autentici sono pochi), un architetto
che amava profondamente l'architettura e che
rifiutava le classificazioni di passato, moderno,
postmoderno e così via.
L'architettura di Aldo è certamente una
architettura di oggi, ma ha quella sottile e
misteriosa qualità che hanno tutte le vere
architetture per cui nel momento in cui
nascono esse esprimono il proprio tempo e
rispondono ad una destinazione d'uso, ma
continuano poi a darci le stesse emozioni
indipendentemente dalla epoca e dall'uso.
Ignazio Gardella



Caro Guido, mai avrei im-
maginato di trovare
di Aldo un disegno "in
realtà",
Carlo -

Aldo Rossi era uno dei grandi. È stato
stravolto all'apice della sua attività. È la più
recente, una realizzazione che ben conosco: è
l'edificio ad uffici per Disney, a Celebration, in
Florida. Egli era maestro nella difficile arte di
unire classico e moderno, consueti e nuovi.
Meglio di ogni altro era in grado di combinare
colonne imponenti con una disposizione
moderna delle finestrate, monumentalità e
regolarità. A Celebration è stata raggiunta con
successo un difficile equilibrio, che riesce a
soddisfare ad un estremo me e all'altro
i clienti di Disney.
Tutti noi architetti ne sentiremo la mancanza.
Philip Johnson

Carlo Aymonino, ritratto di Aldo Rossi.
Carlo Aymonino, portrait of Aldo Rossi.

Fig. 8
Testimony for James Stirling by Carlo Aymonino and Manfredo Tafuri, in «Zodiac», n.s., n. 8, October 1992, pp- 4-5.

Fig. 9
Testimony for Aldo Rossi by Carlo Aymonino, Ignazio Gardella and Philip Johnson, in «Zodiac», n.s., n. 18, November 1997, pp- 4-5.

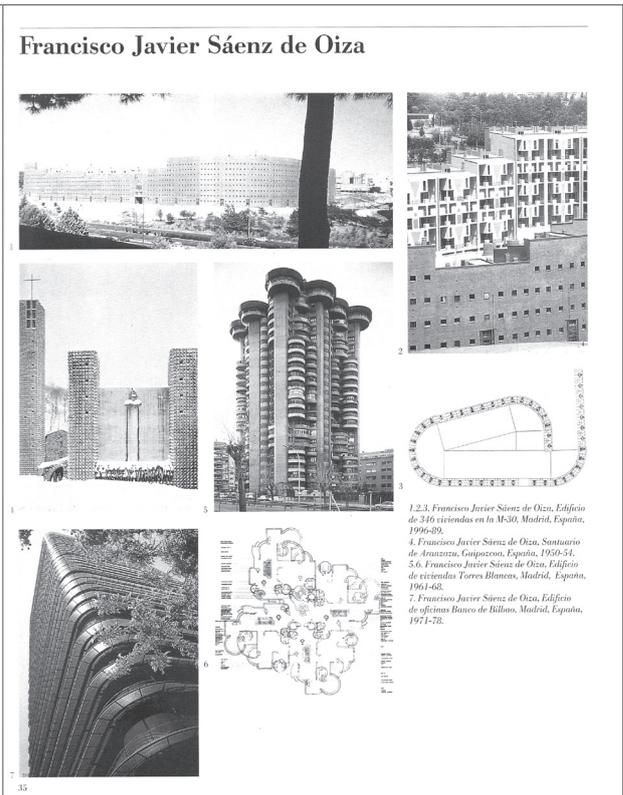
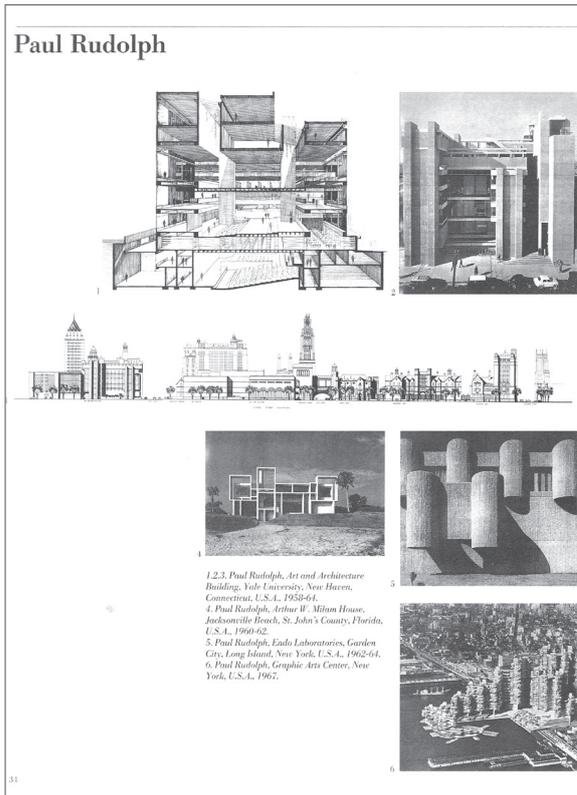
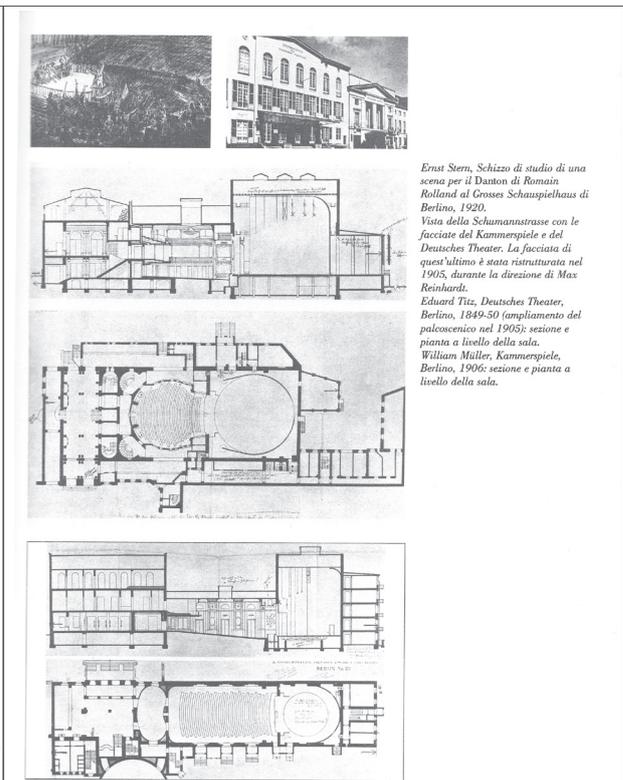
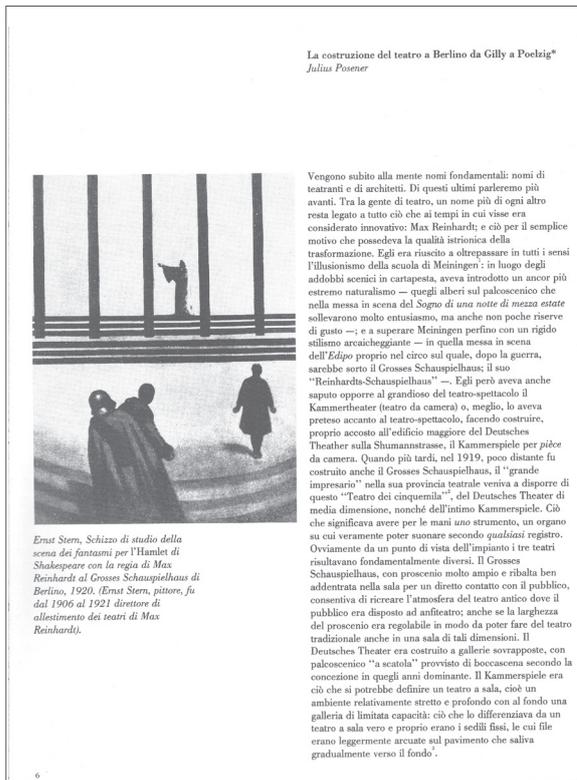


Fig. 10
Initial pages of the essay by Julius Posener *Theater construction in Berlin from Gilly to Poelzig*, in «Zodiac», n.s., n. 2, September 1989, pp- 6-7.

Fig. 11
Two pages of regesto in the issue dedicated to the generation of architects born around 1920, in «Zodiac», n.s., n. 16, November 1996, pp- 34-35.

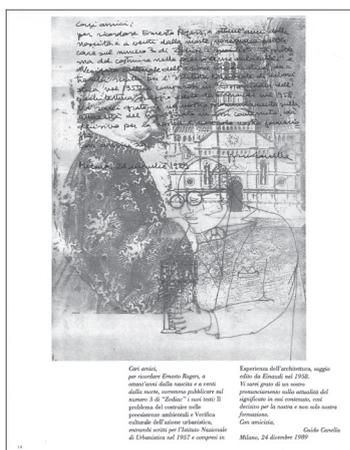
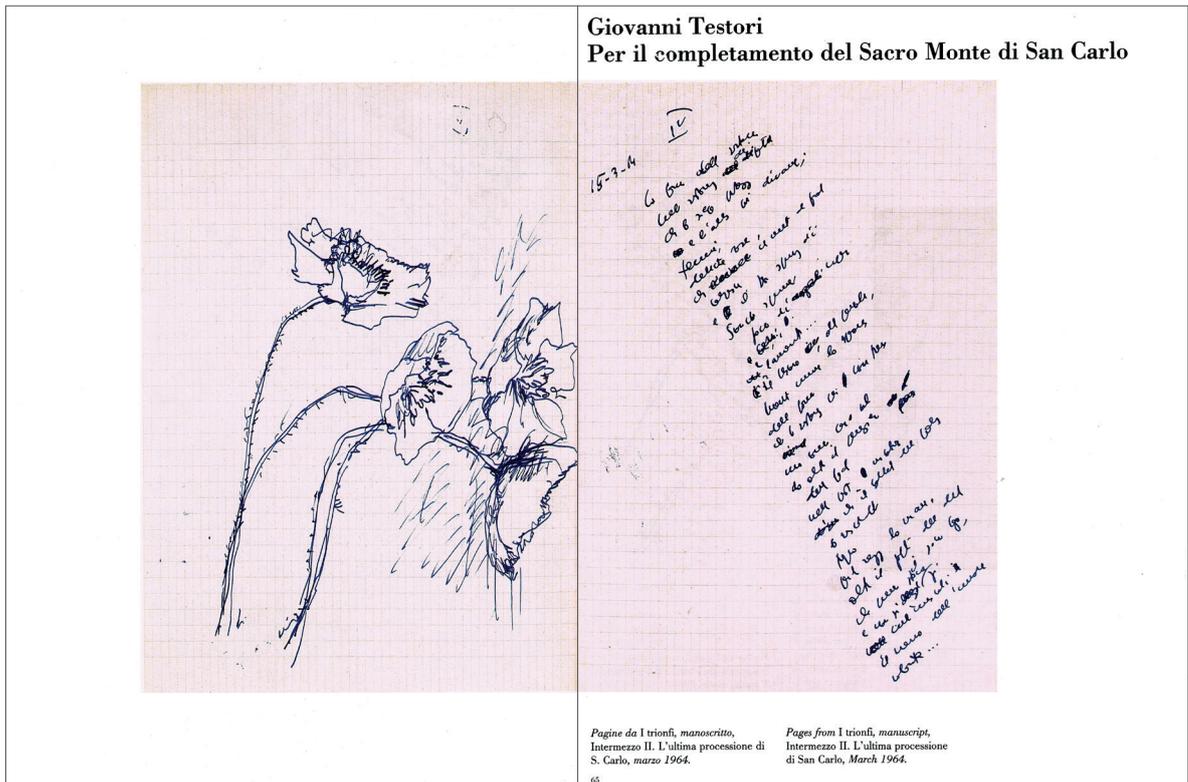


Fig. 12

Guido Canella, Letter of invitation to remember Ernesto N. Rogers twenty years after his death, in «Zodiac», n.s., n. 3, April 1990, p. 14.

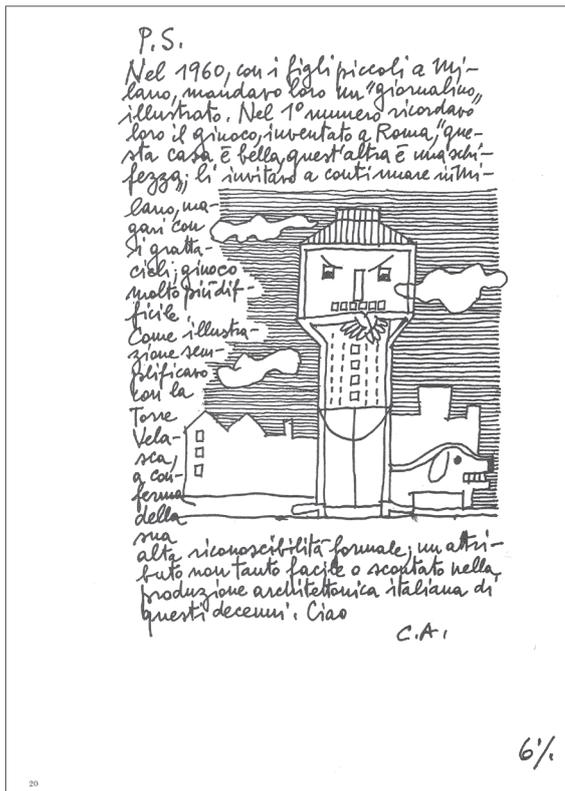
friends of the magazine, published several times during the decennial of the second series, from Robert Venturi to Clorindo Testa, from Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola to Gustav Peichl, from Luciano Semerani and Gietta Tamaro to Gottfried Böhm, from Carlo Aymonino to Gianugo Polesello: authors, as we can see, impossible to group into “an ideologically or poetically homogeneous array”,⁴ but grouped and comparable according to that discrimination of authenticity which the magazine always tried to pursue. This “authenticity” was a criterion which, although difficult to define, did allow, as an example, the publishing in the same miscellaneous issue (10/1994), alongside the modernist and state-of-the-art architecture of the Vitra in Weil-am-Rhein (with works by Siza, Zaha Hadid, Tadao Ando), the Max Reinhardt Haus by Peter Eisenman in Berlin, together with the works and the figure of the Turkish architect Sedad Eldem (with writings by Eldem himself, Luciano Semerani, Antonella Gallo, and Suha Ozkan), and the extraordinary project of Ridolfi and Frankl for the city hall in Terni, accompanied by a passionate comment by Christoph L. Frommel of the Biblioteca Hertziana in Rome. Canella dwelt on this criterion in the editorial policy of the first issue, because of its importance in the planning of the whole magazine, establishing an unexpected parallel between seemingly distant personalities like Adriano Olivetti, Piero Gobetti and Edoardo Persico, which he linked under the sign of that “religious secret” which all three of these personalities referred to when talking about the organization of the factory, one on Ford’s entrepreneurial spirit, the others on the new German architecture at Celle or Frankfurt. And so to conclude by quoting his long reasoning on this point: “In 1957, he [Adriano Olivetti] like Persico more than twenty years earlier, did not set out to raise a question of conformity either in favour of or against a given expression of modern architecture, but intended to establish a *discriminant factor of authenticity* [my italics], as testified by the collection of works gathered in Ivrea between 1934 and 1959, i.e. as long as he could personally supervise them: from the linearity of the first to the organic unity of the last interventions of Figini and Pollini; from the vibrant transparency of Gardella’s canteen to the constructivist expressionism of Ridolfi’s nursery school. (With our regret for the only exclusion he insisted on – as Silvia Danesi pointed out: the multi-function hotel designed by Cesare Cattaneo in 1942)”⁵ A reflection to which we might add a reference to Longhi’s “criticism of the eye”, just as indefinable as the “religious secret” concept or “authenticity” (save for the formulaic characteristics of rigour, consistency, originality, and the like), yet clearly indispensable in the difficult task of valorizing works and authors. So that if, as was observed, and not without some foundation, in a national newspaper by an almost contemporary colleague, the magazine was the expression of a group of friends, which is certainly true, in the sense of a group of personalities bound not by any corporate motive but by a marked propensity to comparability and above all by the mutual ability to recognize precisely the value of “authenticity” in research and positions that were differentiated and also distant from one another, who never yearned to rise to poetically and ideologically homogeneous trends or to the coagulation of a generic internationalism.

As has already been said, it is not possible to recall the contents of the individual issues here. What is obligatory is to at least recall the highly lucid critical and historical contributions of the personalities who honoured the magazine with their presence, such as Christof Thoenes (in the unparalleled translations of Giuseppe Scattone), Lionello Puppi, Daniel Rabreau,



Pagine da I trionfi, manoscritto, Intermezzo II. L'ultima processione di S. Carlo, marzo 1964.

Pages from I trionfi, manuscript, Intermezzo II. L'ultima processione di S. Carlo, March 1964.



Caro Guido,
 Ho riletto con commozione i due interventi di Ernesto Rogers per la passione e l'intelligenza con cui affrontò, allora, problemi che ci riguardano ancora oggi. (Probabilmente la contemporanea esperienza di progettazione della Torre Velasca ha contribuito a definire l'ambiguo del contendere, chiamandolo nelle sue implicazioni teoriche e operative).
 Non so far altro che elencarti alcune "considerazioni", naturalmente in relazione alle esperienze compiute in questi anni.
 Ho detto allora (1957): dopo 33 anni — la vita di Cristo, quattro in meno di quella di Raffaello o di Van Gogh — il tema è identico, a meno di alcuni ottimismi sulla pianificazione, soprattutto sulla razionalità delle diverse scale in cui dovrebbe articolarsi. Rogers entra subito nel merito: "chi, esercitando quotidianamente l'architettura, ha il compito di porre il problema del come poter fare piuttosto che quello del come non fare".
 Ancora oggi siamo costretti a leggere, con tristezza, delle nostre intenzioni di "lasciare a ogni costo il segno" (è un peccato mortale? e perché?) di "indifferenza all'eredità storica", sino alla barzelletta che "la parte più moderna della città contemporanea è il centro antico" (Benevolo, Cederna, ecc.).
 Allora: Rogers, da intelligenza anche ebraica che era (con la capacità di "annusare" i possibili program, per fortuna solo culturali), precisa: "sta per sorgere una nuova demagogia... che, con lo sproloquio di articoli, incita all'inazione in nome di una bellezza cui non dà nessun contenuto, non solo affinché si perpetui, ma neppure perché validamente si mantenga".
 (Sembra la campagna di stampa a favore dell'incredibile piano per il centro storico di Palermo.)
 È quindi con soddisfazione che mi accorgo oggi, che ho un'età superiore alla vita di Ernesto, di aver praticato e, mi auguro, portato avanti anche i suoi insegnamenti.
 Due casi esemplificativi: il Palazzo di

Giustizia di Ferrara e l'Assessorato per gli interventi nel centro storico di Roma. Nel primo, una "casa per esercizi spirituali dei Gesuiti" del Diciassettesimo secolo trasformata poi in caserma e infine in complesso scolastico massacrando l'impianto originario, ho realizzato quanto avevo tentato nel concorso per il Teatro Paganini a Parma (dal 1954; l'area è ancora oggi irrisolta); il nuovo intervento non ha valore in sé, come "segno", ma come occasione concreta per completare una parte della struttura urbana, utilizzando il nuovo per quelle destinazioni d'uso che non possono essere inserite nell'edificio storico (nel caso specifico le grandi aule delle udienze), recuperando questo nel suo aspetto originario mediante un restauro scientifico.
 Un'operazione complessa, "un linguaggio attuale, inserito come immagine nella continuità della tradizione: cioè interamente creato" dice Rogers. Operazione definita da Cervellati, sul "Resto del Carlino", "Troppi delitti restano impunibili".
 Concetti, o teorie, sviluppati in seguito nei quattro anni di Assessore al centro storico di Roma.
 Non altro era il programma di "completamento" del centro storico, in particolare con la progettazione dei 18 così detti "buchi", ossia delle aree rimaste incompiute architettonicamente per demolizioni o sventramenti interrotti, crolli, programmi lasciati a metà.
 La posizione culturale era chiara: l'intervento con nuove architetture è l'unico strumento operativo che ho per risolvere un problema incompiuto quando manchino disegni, rilievi, documenti per una ricostruzione filologica, il tutto confrontato da una conoscenza materiale della struttura urbana.
 La sola alternativa era quella da sempre indicata dal fronte "del non fare": una serie di giardinetti o aiuole in nome della mancanza di verde in centro storico; alternativa possibile quando i giardinieri prenderanno il potere... e tutto sarà risolto!
 (Fanno ridere le vesti stracciate, gli

appelli, le dichiarazioni che allora, ma ancora oggi, difesero un centro storico immaginato e mai conosciuto.)
 Credo che questa sia stata l'applicazione più coerente del caso per caso inteso come progetto che di volta in volta assume, nella sua definizione formale, tutti gli elementi in gioco; come sempre per quei progetti che vogliono "proprietare" la soluzione di un qualsiasi problema urbano.
 "Conservare e costruire sono atti creativi"; peccato che Ernesto Rogers sia morto così presto e nessuno l'abbia sostituito.
 Carlo Aymonino
 P.S.
 Nel 1960, con i figli piccoli a Milano, mandavo loro un "giornalino" illustrato. Nel primo numero ricordavo loro il gioco, inventato a Roma, "questa casa è bella, quest'altra è una schifezza"; li invitavo a costruire in Milano, magari con i grattacieli; gioco molto più difficile. Come illustrazione semplificavo con la Torre Velasca, a conferma della sua alta riconoscibilità formale; un attributo non tanto facile o scontato nella produzione architettonica italiana di questi decenni. Ciao.
 C.A.

Fig. 13 Giovanni Testori, Initial pages of the contribution *Project for the completion of the San Carlo Sacro Monte*, in «Zodiac», n.s., n. 9, June 1993, pp. 64-65. For that number, Canella had invited some architects and friends of the newspaper to make some proposals for the completion of the Sacro Monte di San Carlo in Arona, which remained unfinished. Testori, then in the hospital, had contributed with a portrait of San Carlo and some excerpts from his *Triumphs*. Carlo Aymonino, Ignazio Gardella, Philip Johnson, Gianugo Polesello, Aldo Rossi and Luciano Semerani had joined in the invitation of Canella.

Fig. 14 Carlo Aymonino, Testimony for Ernesto N. Rogers twenty years after his death, in «Zodiac», n.s., n. 3, April 1990, pp. 20-21.



Fig. 15
Cover of the number 21 of «Zodiac», the latest in the new series, December 1999, dedicated to *Architectural criticism after Zevi*.



Fig. 16
Steering Committee for the setting of numbers 5 and 6 in the residence of the Renato Minetto editor in Sestri Levante, 28-29 July 1990: we recognize Carlo Aymonino, Guido Canella, Ignazio Gardella, Renato Minetto, Renzo Zorzi.

Julius Posener, Christoph L. Frommel, Marina Waisman, Peter Blake, Dennis Sharp, Alison Smithson, Bruno Zevi, George Baird, and many others. Canella's editorials on the other hand, merit a quite separate discourse, in that, placed in sequence, they constitute a magnificent monograph on architectural criticism and theory, today more necessary than ever, with an index of the type: *Authenticity and falsification, today; Reflecting on functionality and figuration; Architecture critics after Zevi; That "third generation" of Giedion*; and so on, ending with editorial twenty-one (whose collection in a volume, together with those of «Hinterland», the undersigned already expressed the hope to see some years ago).⁶

To close this brief overview, and to render in a flash the character of the second series of «Zodiac», perhaps an anecdote would serve: a rapid and sporadic exchange of pleasantries with Vittorio Savi who, at the beginning of the Nineties, after the publishing of the first issues (perhaps two or three), observed amicably that the new editorial undertaking of Canella seemed a little snobbish. He knew Canella well and only a few years earlier had curated a highly appreciated exhibition of his, with Mario Lupano, at the Palazzina dei Giardini in Modena), the equally amicable retort to which was, that one might consider «Hinterland» snobbish, but for the new series of «Zodiac» it would be more appropriate to qualify it as "elite", in its greater interest in and curiosity for diversified researches and poetics. It would be fascinating to discuss the relationship between «Hinterland» and «Zodiac», and more specifically the character of «Zodiac» compared to other more or less contemporary architecture magazines, not only the bombastic «Domus» and «Casabella», but also those more to do with research and, so to speak, with known consanguinity, such as «Contropazio» or «Phalaris», but perhaps some other time.

Notes

¹ G. Canella, *Fondazione e ripresa di una testata*, in «Zodiac», no. 1, first six months of 1989, pp. 6-10; this and the previous quotes are on p. 10.

² Ibid., p. 9.

³ G. Canella, *Su certe devianze dell'archetipo museale*, in «Zodiac», no. 6, March-August 1991, p. 10

⁴ See Note 1.

⁵ G. Canella, see footnote 1, pp. 8-9.

⁶ See the Preface to the volume by Guido Canella, *Architetti italiani nel Novecento*, Christian Marinotti, Milan 2010, pp. 10-11.

Enrico Bordogna (Como 1949) since 1995 he is Professor of Architectural Composition at the Politecnico di Milano. Under the direction of Guido Canella he was editor of «Hinterland» (1977-1982) and editor-in-chief of the new series of «Zodiac» (1989-2000). Since 2007 he has been an academic of the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, class of Architecture.

AnnMarie Brennan
**Perspecta and the Mediatic Manufacture of a Postmodern
 American Architecture**

Abstract

The journal that would have the most lasting impact in establishing a coherent movement of Postmodern American architecture was a student-edited journal named «Perspecta», no. 9/10, published by the Yale School of Architecture and edited by Robert A.M. Stern. Stern, accomplished architect and former Dean of the School of Architecture at Yale University, assembled a cadre of author-architects to contribute to the journal, a group who would go on to shape the U.S. architectural scene for the next 20 years. His editorial objective was to present new emerging 'talent,' which consisted of young architects who defined a new American movement in architecture. Three significant contributors of this particular «Perspecta» issue were 'undiscovered' Robert Venturi, Charles Moore, and, most interestingly, Romaldo Giurgola, who was an Italian architect and academic but had immigrated to the U.S. after receiving the Italian Fulbright scholarships. Looking back at this moment, it is intriguing to discover what defined the work featured in these magazines as 'American,' especially since one of its central figures, Giurgola, established his reputation as an educator teaching architectural history and theory subjects based on Italian precedents and treatises at the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University.

Keywords

Postmodern American architecture — Architecture magazines —
 Perspecta: Yale School of Architecture Journal — Media

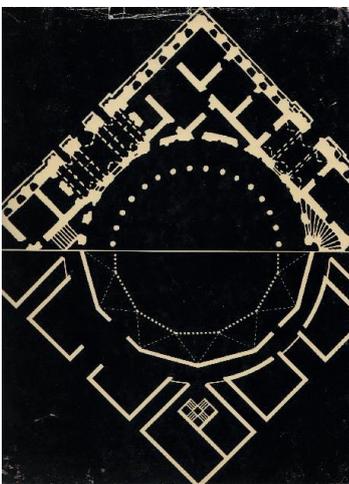


Fig. 1
 Cover of «Perspecta» Journal
 of the Yale School of Architecture
 9/10, 1965. Edited by Robert
 A.M. Stern.

Introduction (Fig. 1)

To understand the significance of a single issue of a student journal, one must understand the environment from which it sprang. Founded at the Yale School of Architecture in 1952, «Perspecta» is the oldest and longest running student-edited architectural journal in the United States. What set this journal apart from other architectural periodicals is that it was one of the first to approach the topic of design from artistic, historical and theoretical vantage points. And in many respects, the journal could be cited as the venue in which architectural theory disembarked onto American shores via Italy.

The journal is produced by Yale architecture graduate students, who solicit and edit articles from distinguished scholars and professional practitioners. The architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock, a contributor to «Perspecta» 6 stated in 1960: “*Perspecta* has never offered the last word on any subject, but quite often it has uttered what (in the context, at least) was the first word. This is a service which the professional journals, burdened with other intellectual responsibilities, have in our country been reluctant to perform, and one which the scholarly journals, by their very nature, are vowed not to attempt.”¹ Years later, as Dean of the Yale School of Architecture, Robert Stern claimed that «Perspecta» “marked the beginning of a new kind of critical discourse about architecture. Although *Perspecta* was never a mass-market publication, its impact on the field has belied its numbers. The journal was – and continues to be – an intellectual showpiece for the Yale School of Architecture and an important presence in the design community.”²

In a publication celebrating the 50th anniversary of the «Perspecta», Stern

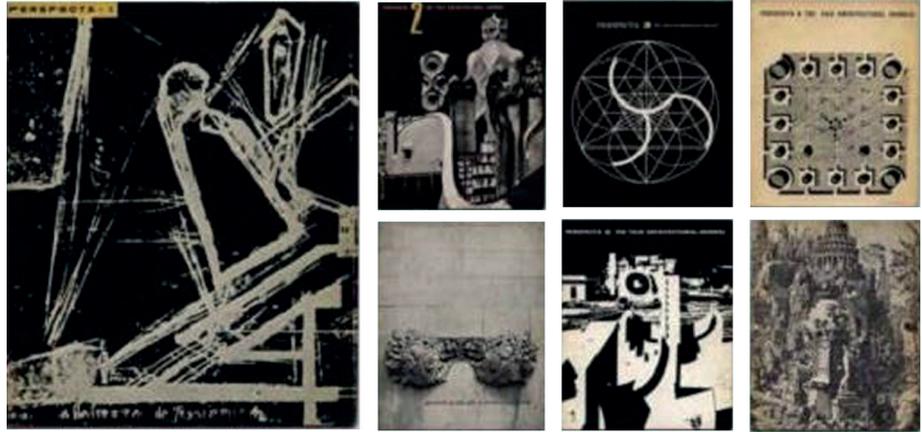


Fig. 2
Covers of early issues of *Perspecta* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

remarked that the idea of the journal came to the architect George Howe after he was appointed Chairman of the Yale Department of Architecture in January 1950. Paraphrasing Howe's introduction to *«Perspecta» 1*, he notes "Yale's students, though professionally inexperienced, were nonetheless clear-sighted observers of the contemporary architectural scene. He believed that students, and not the establishment, were able to seize upon new ideas and to interpret the work of the past and present as a single continuity."³ (Fig. 2)

However, Norman Carver, one of the editors for the inaugural issue of *«Perspecta»*, along with Joan Wilson and Charles Brickbauer, refuted the notion that the journal was the idea of Howe. "The first reason [for the journal,]" writes Norman Carver, "was our boredom with the commercial architectural magazines of the time – their lack of stimulating projects and their total absence of intellectual content. "The second reason," Carver continues, "follows from the first in that we were enjoying, and [...] taping, the stimulating lectures, discussions with visiting critics, and informal studio debates with prominent figures such as Lou Kahn, Phillip Johnson, and Bucky Fuller. While most of this interesting material was ephemeral, some of us found it to be a most significant part of our architectural education and we felt it should be preserved and disseminated in a more useful form."⁴

Italian architecture was always an underlying influence in American architectural pedagogy. However in the immediate aftermath of World War II, with an influx of European émigrés architects espousing the principles of a modernist architecture and eliminating architectural history classes from the curriculum. Slowly, historical pieces on Italian Renaissance appeared in the journal.

For example, some issues are theoretically driven by a particular Italian architect or historian/critic. Peter Eisenman, with his study of Giuseppe Terragni's Casa del Fascio, along with radical utopians Paolo Soleri and Manfredi G. Nicoletti, contributed to *«Perspecta» 13/14*. Issues from the late 1980s and early 1990s have a distinct viewpoint toward Italy and the Venice School, with volumes 23 soliciting articles from Francesco Dal Co and George Teyssot discussing the historiography of architecture and the origins of program in the discipline. These articles, accompanied by American authors and historians such as George Hershey, Jennifer Bloomer, and Robert Segrest, elaborated on Italian topics such as Vitruvius, Piranesi, and Filarete. Despite this common thread of Italian historical architecture studies, along with an early 90s infusion of Continental theory

from Venice, Manfredo Tafuri never contributed to the journal, and his name was rarely cited in any of the journal's first fifty years of existence. It is not until later, with «Perspecta» issues published at the beginning of the 21st century is he referred to in the text. With the uncanny absence of Tafuri aside, there is one issue of «Perspecta» in particular which aimed to establish an American Architecture movement, yet was inspired by another magazine of Italian origin.

Significance of «Perspecta» 9/10

«Perspecta» 9/10 was a significant issue as it was the journal's first double issue. Edited by a young Robert A.M. Stern, it assembled a line-up of authors who would go on to shape the architectural scene for the next twenty years, leading to what has become known as the White/Gray Debate and, most importantly establish what Kate Nesbitt has termed “postmodern historicism.”⁵ This paper endeavours to explore «Perspecta» 9/10 and its background in an attempt to demonstrate that through the selective curatorial acts of an “editor,” this student journal intended to define an American postmodern architecture movement; one analogous to the rise and success of post-war American Art. While early Modern Architecture quite often paralleled many of the theoretical and conceptual ideas of Modern Art, for Postmodern architecture, the gaze was elsewhere, perhaps inward. Nevertheless, it is evident that the field of post-war architecture was not looking at the *content* of post-war American Art. Rather, it is more likely that these young architects, under the tutelage of Modern Art and Architecture guru Philip Johnson, were mentored and coached on how to promote themselves as the height of American culture within the post-war environment, much like their art world counterparts.

«Perspecta» 9/10 sets the foundation for many of Stern's polemical texts that would later follow in his career as the spokesperson for “the Grays,” or rather, an American postmodern historical architecture. Such publications include the exhibition and catalogue for *40 Under 40: An Exhibition of Young Talent in Architecture* (1966), *New Directions in American Architecture*, (1969), “Gray Architecture as Post-Modernism, or Up and Down from Orthodoxy,” (1976) and “New Directions in Modern American Architecture: Postscript at the Edge of Modernism,” (1977).⁶ All of these publications serve as a sort of retroactive editorial for *Perspecta* 9/10 by reiterating the major themes of its author/architects and re-publishing their work.

During the mid-1960s and early-1970s, there was a series of similar publications which chose to focus on the historical development of American architecture, such as Vincent Scully's *American Architecture and Urbanism* (1969), Edgar Kaufmann Jr.'s *The Rise of an American Architecture 1815 – 1915* (1970), as well as the themed journal issues of «Casabella Continuità» published in 1963 and «Architecture d'Aujourd'hui» in 1965 dedicated to contemporary American architecture. (Fig. 3-4)

Unlike previous issues of the journal, which published interviews and articles from established architects who were teaching at the school, Stern's editorial line looked to publish articles from architectural historians Vincent Scully and George Hershey and searched to discover young architects who would come to define a new movement. The issue did not include an editorial statement or introduction; however, the suggestion of a new movement in American architecture is deciphered from the curated table of contents listing the names and a brief biography of each contributing author/architect.



Fig. 3
Cover of USA-themed issue of Casabella Continuità, edited by Ernesto N. Rogers, 1963.

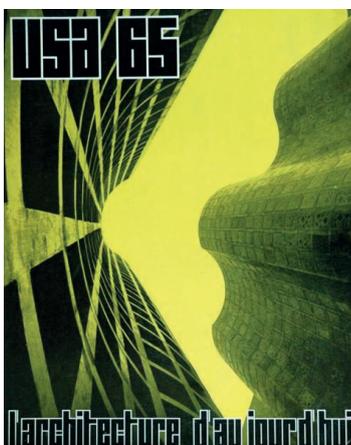


Fig. 4
Cover of USA-themed issue of l'architecture d'aujourd'hui, 1965.

Soliciting Authors: the Philadelphia School (Fig. 5)

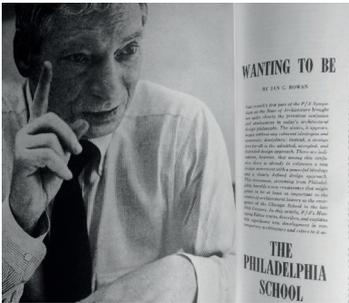
Robert Venturi, Charles Moore, and Romaldo Giurgola were three architects contributing articles to «*Perspecta*» 9/10; they also happen to be short-listed for the position of Dean at the Yale School of Architecture, filling the position left vacant by Paul Rudolph. According to Stern, “these architects were largely unknown except for «*Perspecta*» 9/10.”⁷ According to Stern, the manner in which he learned of these new young architects was by way of a series of introductions and chance encounters by friends, teachers, and other architects.

Denise Scott Brown claimed in the article, “Team 10, *Perspecta* 10 and the Present State of Architectural Theory,” described the contents of the issue and advocated for this new American group of architects as one that best defined this shift in American architectural values, which included Venturi, Moore, Giurgola, and Kahn. *Perspecta*, according to Scott-Brown, “catches the spirit of a moment in what may or may not be a new point of departure for American architecture.”⁸ While not an official group, these architects were a “series of individual heads of small firms and part-time teachers whose work has something in common.”

The use of architectural history within the architectural pedagogy during this post-war moment was treated in a very different way. For example, schools such as the GSD at Harvard under Gropius did not have architectural history classes as part of the curriculum. Venturi, as a recipient of the Rome Prize and attended the American Academy for two years, from 1954 – 56, had a deep appreciation for the history of Italian architecture.⁹ At that time he studied the architectural masterpieces of Michelangelo and Borromini. Charles Moore was very well-travelled, and he would also visit Italy to conduct research for his Ph.D. at Princeton on “Water and Architecture.” For these figures, Italy became an eye-opening experience providing insight into how history brings *meaning* to architecture. Whereas Giurgola, as an Italian, already valued architectural history within the historically-rich environment of Italy, and therefore an appreciation for history and tradition was part of an innate sensibility, a prerequisite to making what he would later describe in another student journal *Precis* as an ethical approach to architecture.¹⁰

Stern claimed that he discovered the work of Charles Moore through an article by Donlyn Lyndon published in the American themed issue of «*Casabella*», and it is here, within the pages of this 1963 issue, where we can see what was perhaps the fount of inspiration for Stern, and connect the thematic and theoretical threads with «*Perspecta*» 9/10. In 1965, Lyndon, who was a partner with Moore in the architectural firm Moore Lyndon Turnbull Whitaker, wrote the lead article titled, “Philology of American Architecture,” which called for a new type of architecture that rebelled against the accepted norms of previous generations, specifically a watered-down and demoralized modernism that used a “facile, glib vocabulary,” and functioned as a type of “slang;” communicating with other architects, but failing to “explore significant patterns of living.” Lyndon, pointing out the vital relationship between architects and the media of architectural discourse states, “The International Architectural Press keeps professionals more in touch with each other than with their society and its problems, and there is a consequent tendency to develop in-group languages of form that are significant only to the like-minded.”¹¹

In a reproach to the inherited, prevailing modern architecture of post-war era, Lyndon claims that this new generation of young architects

**Fig. 5**

A 1961 Progressive Architecture article on the architectural phenomenon known as “The Philadelphia School,” picturing Louis Kahn.

featured in his article share a growing dissatisfaction with the majority of contemporary architecture, which has, “too easily to have formalized its approach, applying thoughtless canons.”¹² The architects he described were “heretical” as their work was viewed as a protest against both the concepts and forms of the previous generation; an architecture of empty modernism which had led to “ineffectual ends.”¹³

Two Americas in One

Lyndon’s overview of the current state of architecture in the U.S. presented many of the same architects and projects that Stern would feature in his «Perspecta» issue. Similar architects described in both Lyndon’s article and Stern’s «Perspecta» include Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi, Philip Johnson, Mitchell Giurgola, Kallman, Mc Kinnell, and Knowles (both on the Boston City Hall project), and Charles W. Moore. Moreover, the «Casabella» issue contained an enlightening editorial by Ernesto N. Rogers, which perhaps planted the seed, and foreshadowed the White/Gray debates that would follow in the 1970s. Titled, “Two Americas in One,” Rogers states the following, “Americans no longer think only about their present and their future; they have been trying to grasp a tradition on which to construct, through its multiple words, a unified language, a language capable of expressing an autonomous reality owing nothing to others.”¹⁴ Despite this search for a unified language, Rogers notes that two different Americas succeed in coexisting, and in fact, the country is rich in “dialectical clashes.” However despite this success, they are unable to discover a “figurative” environment, or language to express its diversity. He claims,

This society is attracted by two opposite poles: on the one hand there are the problems of a metropolis sprung of the industrial development of the country, both those met in dealing with the big themes of its practical needs and those arising from the technical instruments of the same organisms; on the other hand, opposition to the metropolis calls for small, modest architecture built in wood and other simple materials.¹⁵

Many years later, in the article “New Directions in Modern American Architecture: Postscript at the Edge of Modernism,” Stern would continue Lyndon’s “philology” of architecture, by calling for a communicative architectural language embedded with cultural meaning.¹⁶ Like his previous writings, Stern cites Venturi and Moore as the originators of postmodern historicism, signaling a change from an autonomous modern formalism to a new mode of architectural design that premised cultural meaning. This conversion was accomplished through the façade, as viewed in the work of Venturi, and in the spirit of Giurgola’s work, the city context, followed by the idea of cultural memory. These three issues were synthesized by Stern as contextualism, allusionism, and ornamentalism.

Conclusion

Stern was drawn to architects Venturi, Giurgola, and Moore since he considered them designers who understood the value of architectural history in design practice. He states, “These were cultivated people who could speak about architecture, not just in terms of nuts and bolts or the current work of the day, [or simply in] reference to Mies or Le Corbusier or Wright, but in reference to Michelangelo, urbanism, and context. This was in contradistinction between the self-referential architecture of those days.”¹⁷ And not unlike Soane, or Alberti, or Palladio, these architects

were beginning, again, to write about their work in a self-reflective, systematic way.

It is important to note that when many of these young architects were coming of age during the early 1970s, the U.S. economy was in decline and there was an urgent need to find work. There was also time to polemicize the contemporary moment, and fully utilize the medium of the magazine to proselytize their architectural beliefs. As Stern commented on that moment, “We wrote a lot. . . . We had polemics about the collapse of, or the seeming collapse of, what we had called modern architecture, a seemingly dead end in big, anonymous, corporate office buildings. And so, young architects like myself or Peter Eisenman and others systematically tried to undermine the prevailing establishment – not deviously, but by challenging its belief on the basis of what I think is correctly said to have been a wider view of what architects’ responsibilities and possibilities are.”¹⁸

If architectural theory can be understood as a self-reflection of a design process on the part of the architect, combined with the ability to provide a textual and visual explanation, then this issue of «Perspecta» 9/10 and the articles by these three architects accomplish that. With the architect as a selective collator of information and editor, we witness the origins of an American architectural theory in the U.S., via Italy, through the medium of the magazine.

Notes

¹ Henry-Russell Hitchcock, “Food for Changing Sensibility,” «Perspecta» 6, 1960.

² Much of the information gathered for this paper was from an interview with Robert A.M. Stern in his Manhattan office in June 2011. Also see recent publication, Robert A.M. Stern and Jimmy Stamp, *Pedagogy and Place: 100 Years of Architecture Education at Yale* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 239.

³ Robert A.M. Stern, Peggy Deamer, and Alan Plattus, eds. *Rereading Perspecta: the First Fifty Years of the Yale Architectural Journal* (Cambridge, M.A.: MIT Press, 2005), xvi.

⁴ Norman Carver, email correspondence with author, February 11, 2000.

⁵ Kate Nesbitt, ed., *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture. An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965 – 1995*, (Cambridge, M.A.: MIT Press), 26. For a discussion of the White/Grey Debate, see “White and Gray,” *a + u: Architecture and Urbanism*, 4 (52) (1975): 25-80; and in this periodical, Emanuela Giudice, “The Architecture Between ‘Whites’ and ‘Grays’ Tools, Methods, and Compositive Applications,” «FAMagazine», 30, Nov-Dec. 2014.

⁶ Robert A.M. Stern and the Architectural League of New York, *40 Under 40: An Exhibition of Young Talent in Architecture* (New York: Architectural League of New York, 1966); Robert A.M. Stern, *New Directions in American Architecture*, (New York: George Braziller, 1969); Robert A.M. Stern, “Gray Architecture as Post-Modernism, or Up and Down from Orthodoxy,” «L’Architecture d’aujourd’hui», 186 (August-September 1976); Robert A.M. Stern, “New Directions in Modern American Architecture: Postscript at the Edge of Modernism,” *AAQ*, 9, (2-3) (1977), 66-71.

⁷ Stern and Stamp, *Pedagogy and Place*, 239.

⁸ Denise Scott Brown, “Team 10, *Perspecta* 10 and the Present State of Architectural Theory,” «AIP-Journal», vol. 33, no. 1 (Jan. 1967), 42-50.

⁹ Denise R. Costanzo, “‘I Will Try My Best to Make It Worth It,’ Robert Venturi’s Road to Rome,” «Journal of Architectural Education», 70:2, Oct. 2016: 269-283.

¹⁰ Romaldo Giurgola, “Notes of Architecture and Morality,” *Precis II*, Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, (1980): 51-52.

¹¹ Donlyn Lyndon, “Philology of American Architecture,” «Casabella Continuità», no. 281, 1963: 8.

¹² Lyndon, “Philology of American Architecture,” 8.

¹³ Lyndon, “Philology of American Architecture,” 8.

- ¹⁴ Ernesto N. Rogers, "Two Americas in One," «Casabella Continuità», no. 281, 1963: 1.
- ¹⁵ Rogers, "Two Americas in One," «Casabella Continuità», 1.
- ¹⁶ Robert A.M. Stern, "New Directions in Modern American Architecture: Postscript at the Edge of Modernism," *AAQ*, 9, (2-3) (1977), 66-71.
- ¹⁷ Robert A.M. Stern, interviewed by author, June 2011.
- ¹⁸ Nicholas von Hoffman, "Professionals: Robert A.M. Stern. The making of a Legend in the World of Architecture," «Architectural Digest», March 31, 2004. <http://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/stern-article-042004> (Accessed March 26, 2017).

AnnMarie Brennan teaches architecture and design history and theory subjects at the University of Melbourne. Her research focuses on 20th and 21st century architecture with a strong interest in machines, media, and the political economy of design. She was co-editor of «Perspecta» 32: Resurfacing Modernism (MIT Press), and *Cold War Hot Houses: Inventing Postwar Culture from Cockpit to Playboy* (Princeton Architectural Press). She received graduate degrees from Yale and Princeton and has published articles in journals such as «AA Files», «Journal of Design History», *Candide: Journal of Architectural Knowledge, Interstices*, and *Inflection: Journal of the Melbourne School of Design*. She currently is an editorial board member for the *Journal of Architectural Education* and has served as an Associate Editor for the journal. In addition, she has curated and organized many exhibitions and conferences on design topics and figures.

Claudio D'Amato Guerrieri Controspazio as a “little magazine”

Abstract

«Controspazio» edited by Paolo Portoghesi, was published from 1969 to 1981 with a total of 60 volumes. Three have been the editorial boards. The first one worked in Milan from 1969 to 1972 and edited 26 volumes; the second (1973-1976) and the third (1977-1981) in Rome, and each of them produced 17 volumes. The main topic of the Milanese season was the autonomy of architecture: at that time the magazine spread the knowledge of urban studies elaborated in Venice and Milan, and in particular of the theoretical and design work of Aldo Rossi and the so-called Tendenza. The first Roman season dealt with a critical review of post-war Italian architecture, focusing on the work of masters such as Ridolfi and Gardella, and on the legacy of the Modern Movement. Two interpretations clashed: that of neo-rationalism; and that of the expressiveness of architectural languages and to the return to history. In the last season, the editorial board dealt with directly the topic of architecture coming out from Modern Movement and were anticipated the topics of First International Exhibition of Architecture “The presence of the Past” of Venice Biennale.

Keywords

Politics and architecture — Autonomy and pluralism of architecture — Drawn architecture

The “little magazines” in the sixties and seventies of the twentieth century

Starting from the sixties of the twentieth century a typical form in which architects have discussed about theory and criticism of architecture was that of the “little magazines” edited outside the major editorial circuits.

It was a typical European phenomenon (Italy, France, Spain) and North American (New York, San Francisco), in opposition to the world of magazines backed by advertising.

Their life was short, their release uneven. But they have changed the way to think architecture, drawing attention to research rather than to professional practice. Their privileged audience was that of the university world, from which almost all their editors came.

They gave voice to the phenomenon known as “drawn architecture”, which saw protagonists, especially in Italy, intellectual architects, detached from the professional world, and devoted to the teaching and the exercise of criticism.

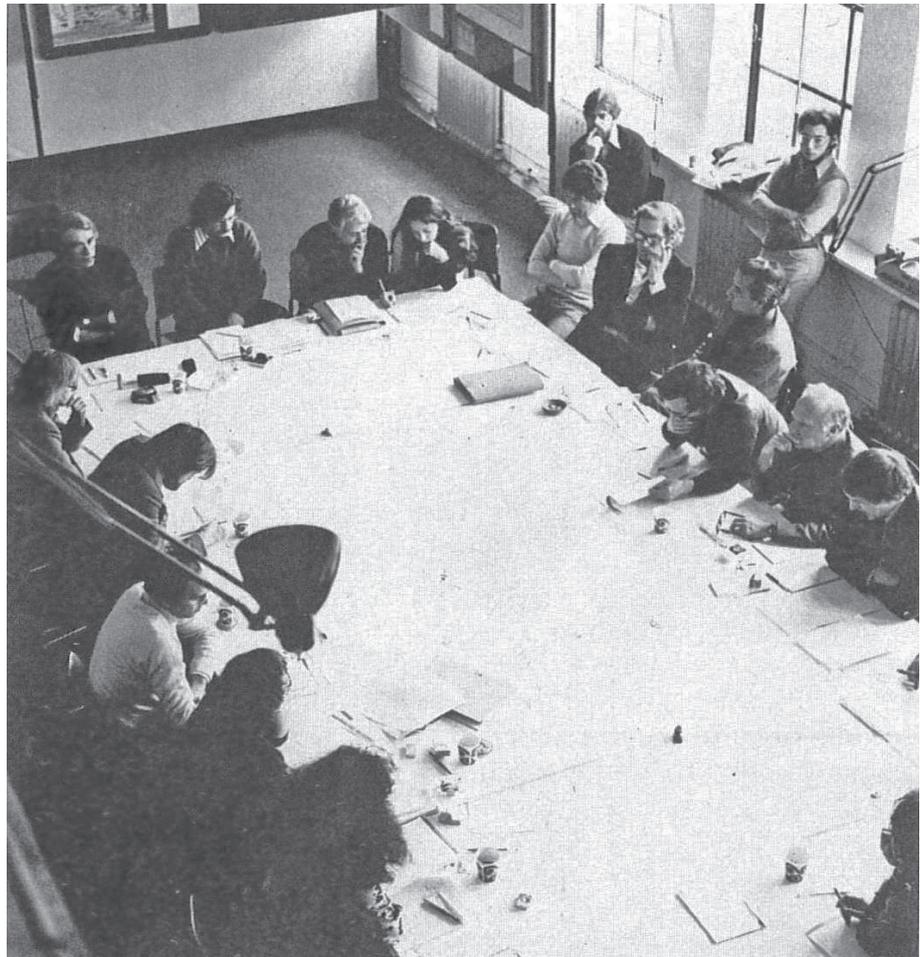
In 1977, from 3 to 5 February, there was a significant debate between these little magazines promoted by Oppositions and MIT Press in New York at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies directed by Peter Eisenman, on the topic “After Modern Architecture” (Figg. 1 -2).

To the meeting was invited «Architese» (Bruno Reichlin, Stanislaus Von Moos), «Arquitectura Bis» (Oriol Bohigas, Federico Correa, Rafael Mo-neo), AMC, « Architecture-Mouvement-Continuite» (Jacques Lucan, Patrice Noviant), «Controspazio» (Alessandro Anselmi, Claudio D'Amato), «Lotus» (Pierluigi Nicolini, Joseph Rykwert)¹.

Two years later, in May 1979, on the occasion of the decennial of

Fig. 1

Little Magazines Conference: After Modern Architecture, New York, 3-5 February 1977. From the left to the right: Edith Girard, Jacques Lucan, Mario Gandelsonas, Anthony Vidler, Stanford Anderson, Peter Eisenman, Livio Dimitriu, Alessandro Ansemi, Alessandro Latour, Lluís Domènech, Oriol Bohigas, Federico Correa, Rafael Moneo, Peter Blake, Kenneth Frampton (photo by Oscar Israelovitz).

**Fig. 2**

Little Magazines Conference: After modern Architecture, New York, 3-5 febbraio 1977. From left to right: Rafael Moneo, Peter Blake, Kenneth Frampton, Robert Gutman, Colin Rowe, George Baird, Peter Marangoni, Diana Agrest, New York, Suzanne Frank, Edith Girard, Jacques Lucan, Mario Gandelsonas, Anthony Vidler (photo by Oscar Israelovitz).





Fig. 3

Decennial of «Controspazio» at the National Academy of San Luca, Rome, Thursday, May 10, 1979. From left to right: Aldo Rossi, Carlo Aymonino, Claudio D'Amato, Paolo Portoghesi, Mario Ridolfi, Roberto Gabetti (photo by Francesco Cellini).

«Controspazio», similar issues were dealt with in a debate coordinated by Paolo Portoghesi with Mario Ridolfi, Carlo Aymonino, Aldo Rossi, Roberto Gabetti² (Fig. 3). These two meetings - one informal, the other academic³ - marked symbolically the transition to the significant changes of the eighties.

The beginning of «Controspazio»

«Controspazio»'s gestation period (1968) was all “Roman” and grew in the cultural climate of student and workers’ struggles very followed in the School of Architecture of Rome from 1963 (Fig. 4) to 1968, till to that point of radical break that was the so-called “Battle of Valle Giulia” (March 1, 1968).

Paolo Portoghesi, young teacher of “Italian literature” (history of criticism)⁴ since 1962, was the reference of a group of students, self-called “group of the Fifty one’s”, who was writing on a little magazine of Architecture (*Finalità dell'architettura*), edited by one of them, Michele Pinto. The alliance between Paolo Portoghesi and many of those students will consolidate in the following years when, in 1968, he called many of them to work for the *DAU, Dizionario Enciclopedico di Architettura e Urbanistica*, 6 volumes, edited by the Institute Editorial Romano between '68 and '69 (then re-edited by Gangemi Editore from 2005 to 2007).

For the first volume of *Controspazio* (never released) the Roman Editorial board proposed to Portoghesi a presentation scheme that exalted the role of “politics” as the true purpose of architecture. In it architecture should have been cathartically dissolve:

“What are the fundamental nodes today for who that thinks to architecture as a political problem? There is no need to explain what ‘political’ means: there is no problem in the architect’s profession, there are no proposals and solutions, there is not any educational problem that somehow does not sink its roots in the overall social contradiction to which every day we are more violently called to attend. [...]

“Why then this magazine? Because at this point the only or at least the most immediate thing to do is create a tool that breaks the particular kind of ‘noisy silence’ that has been created around all this; a tool that stands as a service of a process that is beginning here and there in the Roman neigh-



Fig. 4
Rome, School of Architecture, student assembly in 1963. Top: Andrea Silipo (Rome, 1942), second from left. He was one of the extensors of the declaration elaborated for the number 0 of *Controspazio*; Renato Nicolini (third from left); Alessandro Anselmi (fourth from left).

borhoods and popular districts of Milan and ... in the hundred Italian cities scarred by public and private buildings.

“The only interesting information about architecture and its social problems is now being entrusted to the second and last pages of some so called left daily newspapers. On the contrary the big magazines and their editorial boards have been only adapted to increase the ornamental activities of the city and the territory.

“Certainly this problem can not be solved in a magazine: ... But postponing everything to the ‘day after the revolution’ can not only be dangerous but wrong ...” (Unpublished document)

Faced with an unrealistic approach, Portoghesi decided that the editorial board ought to be in Milan, where, since 1967, he covered the chair of Architecture History and was also the Dean.

The name «*Controspazio*» was an invention of Portoghesi, capable to intercept the rebel sentiment that youth culture expressed at that time⁵, combining the values of the ‘space’ that the cult magazine *Spazio* of Luigi Moretti⁶ had exalted, with the history of ancient and modern architecture. The publisher of «*Controspazio*» was Raimondo Coga (Edizioni Dedalo, Bari) who at that time qualified himself as one of the leading publishers of non-parliamentary culture (his magazine «*Il manifesto*» favored the split of Natoli, Rossanda, Magri et al. from the Italian Communist Party).

Tabloid format, ‘stick’ font in cover, hand paper and popular price (500 lire = 2.5 €) were the factors that caused the immediate success among the students of the Italian schools of architecture. Brilliant market answer to the glossy paper magazines (Fig. 5).

The «*Controspazio*»’s seasons and its editorial boards

«*Controspazio*», rivista di Architettura e Urbanistica”, was edited by Paolo Portoghesi from 1969 to 1981. In it there are three identifiable seasons: a

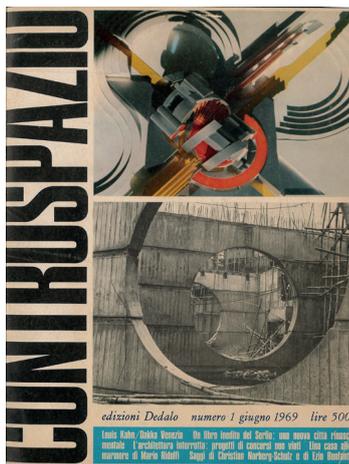


Fig. 5
Cover of «Controspazio», vol. 1, June 1969.

Milanese one and two Romans, linked to so many editorial boards, all composed of young architects-researchers. Their ambition was in designing and writing at the same time. All of them had graduated before the end of the sixties, when the schools of architecture were still structured with the curricula provided by Gustavo Giovannoni in their the very beginning during the twenties (37 examinations); and for them, although with different accents, knowledge of history of architecture was the indispensable foundation of design.

The magazine, though articulated into sections (theory, design, history, etc.) considered architecture a unitary set. And so it proposed a good mix of projects, theoretical ideas, essays of architecture history, establishing a real continuity with the magazines that had come out in Europe between the two wars.

The first season (1969-1972) was the Milanese one. The editorial board consisted of Ezio Bonfanti, chief editor (Milan 1937-1973) and Massimo Scolari (Milan 1943). Along with them: Luciano Patetta (Milan 1935), Virgilio Vercelloni (Milan 1930-1995), Maria Grazia Messina, Benigno Cuccuru. They brought to the renown the Aldo Rossi's "tendenza" in Milan and revealed to the Italian schools of architecture the phenomenon of urban studies that had their stronghold in Venice. It produced a total of 26 issues⁷. After the death of Ezio Bonfanti, Portoghesi moved the editorial office to Rome: this season (1973-1976) produced 17 issues⁸ and saw Renato Nicolini (Rome 1942-2012) editor in chief, in place of Bonfanti. With him Controspazio became mostly the voice of the "Tendenza". In 1973 they were part of the editorial board, with Renato Nicolini, Gianni Accasto (Cuneo 1941), Giampaolo Ercolani (Rome 1946), Vanna Fraticelli (Rome 1942), Giorgio Muratore (Rome 1946-2017); and there continued to be in the new editorial board Antonio Monroy, Luciano Patetta and Virgilio Vercelloni of the old Milanese editorial board.

To them were added from 1974 to 1976 Maurizio Ascani, Alessandro Anselmi (Rome 1934-2013), Claudio D'Amato (Bari 1944), Daniela Fonti, Guglielmo Monti (1941), Livio Quaroni (Rome 1942), Giuseppe Rebecchini (Rome 1942), Duccio Staderini (Rome 1941), Laura Thermes (Rome, 1942). Following the ideological tradition of the PCI, a "study center" was created, managed by the hard wing of the "Tendenza": Salvatore Bisogni (Naples 1932), Rosaldo Bonicalzi (Milan 1944), Raffaele Panella (Foggia 1937-2016) Uberto Siola (Naples 1938). The ideological disagreement between communist Nicolini and liberal-socialist Portoghesi came to light in occasion of the first of the two monographic volumes dedicated to Ridolfi. Since 1977 Portoghesi decided that the composition of the editorial board ought not appear in the colophon.

In the last season (1977-1981) Anselmi, Thermes, Staderini and D'Amato take part of the editorial board together with Francesco Cellini (Rome 1944): 17 issues⁹ came out, anticipating the themes of First International Exhibition of Architecture "The presence of the Past" of Venice Biennale directed by Paolo Portoghesi (Fig. 6).

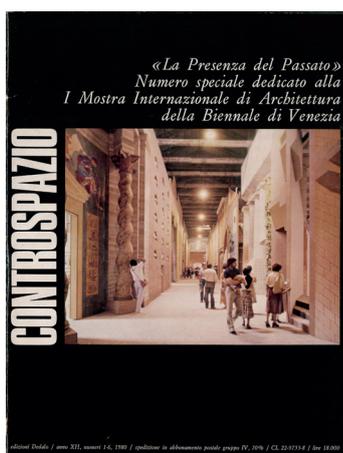


Fig. 6
Cover of «Controspazio», vol. 1-6, January-December 1980, special issue dedicated to the First International Exhibition of Architecture at the Venice Biennale.

«Controspazio», autonomy and pluralism of Architecture

In the history of the "little magazines", «Controspazio» was the one, in its very beginning, who more theoretically considered the relationship between politics and architecture, which saw the heteronomy conception of architecture in the service of politics opposite to the autonomous one of the architecture that claimed its artistic specificity.

Not casually, in 1963 - at the beginning of the occupations of the Italian Schools of Architecture - two texts imposed themselves in left-wing youth culture. They represented those two souls of the movement well: on the one hand, the speech that Che Guevara held in 1963, at the First International Congress of teachers and students of Architecture in Havana; on the other, *La critica del gusto* of Galvano Della Volpe¹⁰.

In the following two seasons, Paolo Portoghesi opposed the attempt of intellectual elites who had in «Casabella» their reference, to impose a “single thought” flattened on the orthodox interpretation of modernism

On these topics I interviewed in 2008 Paolo Portoghesi¹¹:

“[...] The magazines I have edited had born from the “listening”: after all, when I started *Controspazio*, you know the initial adventure, what did we want to do? We wanted to give voice to the many objections born within modernity, to deepen to its self-criticism.

“At first, we’ve fully involved politics. Then, after I went to Milan, we realized that this would be damaging because we would ultimately have been forced to adapt the architecture to the ever-changing conditions of political discourse without recognizing the minimum autonomy that architecture always has to have.

“*Controspazio* was in a certain sense the theater of an excess of autonomy claimed by some, and vice versa of a conscious heteronomy developed by others. And I believe I have given to your generation basically – anyway to the generation of my first students– a stage from which each one could make his sermon. And in this way I did not refer myself to my own architectural idea, but I accepted the magazine like the place of confrontation, requiring only the coherence in the commitment in the discipline. On the contrary there was someone who thought that policy could replace discipline and that, therefore, architecture was good because it was done with good intentions.

“I remember that we fought the famous “engaged buildings”, those made by the precedent generation, who was very busy in politics, but whose architecture was of series B or C, thinking that this sacrifice of quality had great political significance. Like Ridolfi, I was completely contrary to this series C architecture made with very good intentions, but also extremely easy to do. And then the spontaneous question was: “Would they be able to do a series A architecture?” And probably they were not.

“I solved the generational conflicts by giving the word to the generation after mine, and I do not regret it. At that time some people thought that *Controspazio* was not a magazine directed by me. Gregotti said, “this is more the magazine of Scolari or Nicolini than the magazine of Portoghesi; but I think it has been right to do in this way, also because my generation had not have any message to give [...]”

The end of «Controspazio»

«*Controspazio*» was therefore the magazine of the generation between that who still represented the class of practitioners who had contributed to post-war reconstruction (the generation born in the 20s and 30s) and that who would be mostly represented by the under-occupied and unemployed architects born after the 1950s.

It was the magazine that gave voice to a conscious generation of the transformation of its role, a generation that was the ultimate result of the academic school founded by Gustavo Giovannoni in the 1920s. His legacy, in the short term, could not be captured by anyone, because the cultural conditions that generated it had completely disappeared¹².

Notes

¹ Many other architects, that wrote on those magazines, were present at the meeting, because they were already in New York or here expressly arrived : Edith Girard («AMC»); Mario Gandelsonas, Anthony Vidler, Diana Agrest, Suzanne Frank, Stanford Anderson («Oppositions»); Alessandra Latour («Controspazio»); Lluís Domènech, Federico Correa («Arquitectura bis»); Peter Blake, Kenneth Frampton, Robert Gutman, Colin Rowe, George Baird, Peter Marangoni, Livio Dimitriu. See «Controspazio», IX, n. 1, June 1977, p. 62

² See «Controspazio», XI, n. 3, pp. 63-64. The integral transcript of the introductory intervention of Portoghesi is located at C. D'Amato, *Studiare l'architettura*, Roma, Gangemi editore, 2014 (ISBN 978-88-492-2980-6), chap. VIII, Appendix C, pp. 149-153.

³ The celebration was held in Rome on Thursday, May 10, 1979 at the National Academy of San Luca, whose President at that time was Mario Ridolfi.

⁴ Paolo Portoghesi (Rome, 1931), graduated from the School of Architecture in Rome in 1957, began his academic career as assistant of Guglielmo De Angelis D'Ossat at the chair of “Caratteri stilistici dei monumenti”. From 1962 to 1966 he taught “History of architectural theory and criticism”. In 1967 he won the chair of “Architecture history” and was called to the Politecnico di Milano.

⁵ Of course, there was also a certain suggestion made by the magazine, all political and ideological, «Contropiano», edited by Alberto Asor Rosa (Rome 1933) and Massimo Cacciari (Venice 1944), in collaboration with Mario Tronti (Rome 1931) and Antonio Negri (Padua 1933), printed in Florence from 1968 to 1971 for the types of La Nuova Italia. The title (as Asor Rosa said in an interview in 2001) resumed that of “a Soviet film of the 1920s or 1930s, describing the efforts to realize a development plan of the Soviet Union different from the traditional one ».

⁶ The magazine «Spazio», edited by Luigi Moretti (Rome 1906 - Capraia Island 1973), was published between 1950 and 1968 (from 1953 with irregular periodicity).

⁷ In 1969 (1st year, monthly) 5 issues were released: vol. 1-June; vol. 2-3, July-August; vol. 4-5, September-October; vol. 6, November; vol. 7, December.

In 1970 (2nd year, monthly), 6 issues were released: vol. 1-2, January-February; vol. 3-4, March-April; vol. 5-6, May-June; vol. 7-8, July-August; vol. 9-10, September-October; vol. 11-12, November-December.

In 1971 (3rd year, monthly) 7 issues were released: vol. 1-2, January-February; vol. 3, March; vol. 4-5, April-May; vol. 6, June; vol. 7-8, July-August; vol. 9-10-11, September-October-November; vol. 12, December.

In 1972 (4th year, monthly) 8 issues were released: vol. 1-2, January-February; vol. 3-4, March-April; vol. 5-6, May-June; vol. 7, July; vol. 8, August; vol. 9, September; vol. 10 October; vol. 11-12, November-December.

⁸ In 1973 (5th year, monthly), 6 issues were released: vol. 1, June; vol. 2, July-August; vol. 3, September; vol. 4, October; vol. 5, November; vol. 6, December.

In 1974, (6th year, monthly), 4 issues were released: vol. 1, September; vol. 2, October; vol. 3, November; vol. 4, December.

In 1975 (7th year, monthly), 4 issues were released: vol. 1, September; vol. 2, October; vol. 3, November; vol. 4, December.

In 1976 (8th year, irregular), 3 issues were released: vol. 1, January-February; vol. 2, March-April; vol. 3, November-December.

⁹ In 1977 (9th year, bimonthly), 5 issues were released: vol. 1, June; vol. 2, July-August; vol. 3, September; vol. 4-5, October-November; vol. 6, December.

In 1978 (10th year, bimonthly), 4 issues were released: vol. 1, January-February; vol. 2-3, March-June; vol. 4, July-August; vol. 5-6, September-December.

In 1979 (11th year, bimonthly), 4 issues were released: vol. 1-2, January-April; vol. 3, May-June; vol. 4, July-August; vol. 5-6, September-December.

In 1980 (12th year, bimonthly), only 1 issue was released: vol. 1-6, January- December.

In 1981 (13th year, quarterly), 3 issues were released: vol. 1, January-March; vol. 2, April-June; vol. 3-4, July-December.

¹⁰ The speech that Che Guevara delivered on September 29, 1963, is in Italian translation with the title *Questa è una generazione di sacrificio* in E.C. Guevara, *Opere*, vol. III, tomo II, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1969, pp. 98-106. They were part of the Italian delegation of FGCI (Federazione Giovanile Comunista Italiana), Alessandro Ansemi and Renato Nicolini. The meeting took place at the same time of the International

Union of Architects' (UIA) Annual Congress, which had chosen Havana as the venue that year.

The first edition of the *Critica del gusto* di Galvano della Volpe, dates back to 1960 for types of Feltrinelli, Milan. In 1963, students of the School of Architecture of Rome, on a proposal by Renato Nicolini, invited Galvano della Volpe to talk about the “specificity” of architecture.

¹¹ See C. D'Amato, *Studiare l'architettura*, Roma, Gangemi Editore, 2014, pp. 84 et seq.

¹² In 1982 «Controspazio» became a publicly funded magazine: Edizioni Dedalo sold it to University of Reggio Calabria, which appointed Marcello Fabbri as chief editor.

Claudio D'Amato Guerrieri was born in Bari on December 22, 1944. He lives in Rome since 1959. Here he graduated in Architecture in La Sapienza University in 1971, where he worked in research and teaching until 1986. From 1987 to 2015 he was full professor of Architectural design at the University of Reggio Calabria until 1990; and then at the Polytechnic University of Bari, where he founded the School of Architecture, of which he was the first and last dean. From the second half of the sixties of the twentieth century to 2014, he produced more than 300 publications. He has been in the editorial board of Controspazio magazine from 1974 to 1981. His design production, as author or co-author, is represented by about one hundred works (projects and realizations) carried out from the second half of the seventies. In 2014 he was awarded with the Prize “Presidente della Repubblica per l'Architettura” of the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca.

Mauro Marzo

Lotus. The first thirty years of an architectural magazine

Abstract

Imagined more as an annual dedicated to the best works of architecture, urban and industrial design, during the first seven issues, the magazine «Lotus» shifts the axis of its purpose from that of information and professional updating to one of a critical examination of the key issues intrinsic to the architectural project. This article identifies some themes, which pervaded the first thirty years of «Lotus» life, from 1964 to 1994, re-emerging, with variations, in many successive issues. If the monographic approach set a characteristic of the editorial line that endures over time, helping to strengthen the magazine's identity, the change in the themes dealt with over the course of the decades is considered as a litmus test of the continuous evolution of the theoretical-design issues at the core of the architectural debate.

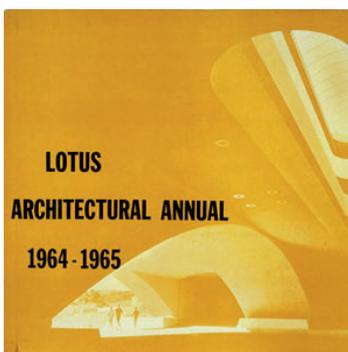
Keywords

Lotus International — Architectural annual — Little Magazine — Pierluigi Nicolini — Bruno Alfieri

The year 1963 was a memorable one for the British racing driver Jim Clark. At the helm of his Lotus 25 custom-made for him by Colin Chapman, he had won seven of the ten races scheduled for that year. The fastest lap at the Italian Grand Prix held at Monza on 8 September 1963 had allowed him and his team to win the drivers' title and the Constructors' Cup,¹ with three races to go before the end of the championship. That same day, Chapman did “the lap of honour astride the hood of his Lotus 25”.²

This car, and its success story, inspired the name chosen for what was initially imagined more as an annual dedicated to the best works of architecture, urban and industrial design, rather than a traditional magazine. It was Bruno Alfieri, the son of a fine art publisher and a fan of motor racing,³ who established “Lotus” in Venice in 1963.

For the compilation of the first edition of the annual, published in Italian and English in 1964,⁴ he availed himself of the advice of Sigfried Giedion and the observations of Henry Russell Hitchcock for the East Coast of the USA, Esther Mc Coy for the West Coast, Jürgen Joedicke for German architecture, and Giulia Veronesi⁵ for the Italian and French situations. “*Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura, Annuaire de l'architecture 1964-65*, edited by Giulia Veronesi and Bruno Alfieri, Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1964”, announces the frontispiece of the first bountiful volume. The published works were selected based on their “high level of artistic achievement”,⁶ or based on their ability to spot “new ground in the experimental stage”,⁷ including the defects of the experimental. The arduous task that the annual set itself was to draw “a picture of the world situation as objectively as possible”,⁸ as Alfieri wrote in the Introduction, inviting designers and critics of architecture from every corner

**Fig. 1**

Cover of «Lotus. Architectural annual/Annuario dell'architettura/Annuaire de l'architecture, 1964-1965», 1964.

of the world to indicate works to be considered for the next edition. In the pages that followed, Veronesi stated that the objective was not to take stock, but before anything else, to make it possible to carry out what any “critical examination”⁹ requires, namely, basic knowledge of the works. If it was not yet time to express evaluations, it was still possible to highlight some “outstanding traits”¹⁰ on the international scene that emerged from this annual. From the pages of what was presented as a tool for information and work emerged the conclusion of the process of assimilating the two “vastly influential”¹¹ and “opposite”¹² aesthetics of the century, that of Frank Lloyd Wright and that of Le Corbusier. And this therefore implied that the “frantic search for structural, technical, or aesthetic novelty has now been given way to a thoughtful elaboration and adoption of these secure premises, which in themselves might be considered a «basic vocabulary» which the architect’s new, original syntax will mould, into plastic coherent speech”.¹³ As highlighted by Alessandro Rocca, the first edition of the annual outlined: “a scenario dominated by the masters of the first generation with a major American presence, a good seventeen works out of thirty-eight”,¹⁴ among which appeared two projects by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Rubbing shoulders with Wright, Le Corbusier, and Mies van der Rohe were Alvar Aalto, Josep Antoni Coderch, Eero Saarinen and, among the Italians, Angelo Mangiarotti, Giovanni Michelucci, Pier Luigi Nervi, Nicola Pagliara and Gino Valle. The almost square format of the volume (24 x 25cm), the clarity of the layout and the first-rate picture quality, due to the experience gained by Alfieri in the field of fine art publishing, accompanied presentations of the works that were more descriptive than critical-interpretive, focusing on the “formal and technological innovations”¹⁵ of the projects. Small modifications appeared in the subtitle of the second edition of 1965 – “Architectural annual” was flanked by the words “of today” and associated with the adjective “contemporary”, while the merely descriptive register of the articles remained unchanged. However, the gradual process of transforming the annual had begun, as corroborated both by Veronesi’s essay, and the Introduction, with Alfieri’s expressive title *A New Lotus*. These laid emphases on the loss of meaning of the subdivisions between organicism, rationalism, and neo-neo-classicism by then overwhelmed by the fresh, no-longer-postponable objectives that the social and economic changes of the moment posed. The very figure of the architect had changed, assuming the role of a “social planner”¹⁶ and a technician called to solve problems that did not relate exclusively to the scale of the building, but extended to embrace the neighbourhood, the city, and the region. “The world itself it goes on its way, faster and faster. Architects are required to plan airfields with more runways, to take part in town-planning enterprises that affect the lives of millions, to design factories [...] and seaports [...]”.¹⁷ Even while “as we look, with unstinted admiration, at the drawings of Carlo Scarpa [...] or the entrance bridge to the Fondazione Querini Stampalia [...], we cannot help being disturbed by the thought that far greater and urgent necessities are demanding our attention elsewhere”.¹⁸ In his essay, like Alfieri, Veronesi analysed the theme of the great changes that could be observed in the world of architecture, tackling them from a point of view that lay more within the discipline, however. In the generation which followed that of the *maestri*, “recent trends”¹⁹ were being defined, in which there was no longer a net opposition between the rational and the organic, but an “attempt at a reconciliation” set in motion by the technique. In the current “ideological confusion”²⁰ that



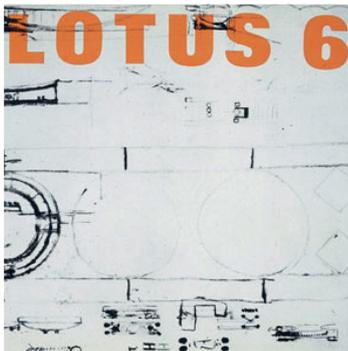
Fig. 2

Cover of «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine 1966-1967», n. 3, 1966.

crossed and confused the various trends, and the multiple languages that the annual limited itself to reflecting on, the eclecticism could reach a form of redemption only in that “technical and scientific preoccupations which underlie the researches of architects all over the world”.²¹

No further modifications came, but substantial alterations were made to the editorial initiative the following year, when in the subtitle the noun “annual” was replaced by the word “review”: *LOTUS 3. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1966-67*. The name of Giulia Veronesi also disappeared and at the helm of “Lotus” remained Alfieri alone. The annual’s formula had revealed all its shortcomings, both in terms of the completeness of its contents, and in terms of the illustration of the works; space requirements and impartiality had imposed the use of “minimum common denominators of layout”²² creating a sense of visual boredom for the reader. With the abandonment of the pretence of an all-embracing catalogue, came a way to restrict the scope of the investigation and give ampler room to the comparison between the ideas and the presentation of “research and design phenomena that could provide useful indications on the architecture and design of tomorrow.”²³ But it was in an essay on architecture’s search for new relationships by Alberto Rosselli – a designer and university lecturer for whom planning was seen as a “decision-making process” – that it became clear how the magazine intended to restrict the field of its own interests. If the most questionable aspects of contemporary architecture coincided with a loss of awareness of its own nature, and a consequent tendency to succumb to the influence of other collateral disciplines, it became vital to question the role that research could take in the profession’s world. It was essential, wrote Rosselli, “to know how to see a certain reality” and “to know how to interpret it”,²⁴ in order to find answers to the problems it posed, to reinstate continuity between the culture of architects and the operative tools at their disposal. It became necessary to investigate the nature of the phenomena, recognizing their internal structure and relationships with the outside world since architectural design was by now engaged precisely “in this world of relationships”.²⁵

With issue 4 of «Lotus» there came a refinement of the process that led the periodical to shift the axis of its purpose from that of information and professional updating to one of a critical examination of the key issues intrinsic to the architectural project. The objective of «Lotus» was clearly defined in the introduction to this edition, written by Alfieri. The launch of the new version allowed a continuation of the discourse that had begun in the pages of the international magazine «Zodiac», desired by Adriano Olivetti and founded in 1957 by Edizioni di Comunità on Alfieri’s initiative. The result was those reflections “interrupted by the practical difficulties in which the staff [...] gradually became involved after the death of [...] a distinguished man [...] who imposed his personality on the cultural rebirth of Italy in the fields of sociology, architecture, town planning and industrial design, after the last world war”.²⁶ The selective process at the base of the annual’s idea inevitably led to the imposition of a critical discourse that was elucidated in an article by Rosselli. The construction of the modern city had not failed out of a lack of theories and visions, but through an inability to understand a situation that was becoming increasingly complex, in addition to a shortage of operational tools fit for the new scale of the issues. The role of the architect in the next decade seemed to be “condi-

**Fig. 3**

Cover of «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», n. 5, 1968. Gulliermo Jullian.

Fig. 4

Cover of «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», n. 6, 1969.

tioned by the passage from one state of «a view of the world» to another of ‘the interpretation of reality’ in all its nuances”.²⁷ If the genuinely original phenomenon that architects must learn to deal with was represented by the “new scale of the problems”,²⁸ the questions that they would face ranged from a shortage of housing, hospitals and schools, to urban sprawl and a need to “control the landscape and re-establish the environment”.²⁹

Issue 5 of the magazine, published in 1968, marked another significant step. «Lotus» had an editorial board of a high level, consisting, beyond Alfieri himself – the periodicals editor and director, of the American architectural historians Esther McCoy and Henry Russell Hitchcock, the art historian Giuseppe Mazzariol, the then director of the Fondazione Querini Stampalia in Venice, Abraham Rogatnick, professor of architecture at the University of British Columbia, already in contact with Mazzariol, and finally, Robert Venturi. The latter, together with Denise Scott Brown, published in this edition a lengthy article entitled *A significance for A & P Parking Lots; or Learning from Las Vegas*,³⁰ while Philip Johnson opened the magazine with *Why We Want Our Cities Ugly*. But it was the whole edition that displayed a clear leap in quality compared to its predecessors. Esther McCoy, an expert connoisseur of Californian architecture, wrote about Rudolph Michael Schindler,³¹ to whose work was also dedicated a second article entitled *Ambiguity in the Work of R.M. Schindler*.³² Mazzariol painted an overview of a project by Guillermo Jullian de la Fuente,³³ also author of the sketch on the front cover of this edition, and an article on the language of Arthur Erickson,³⁴ while Rogatnick penned *EXPO 67: The Past Recaptured*.³⁵

But it was not until two editions later that the magazine reached the definition of a clearer thematic orientation. «Lotus» 6 and 7, 1969 and 1970, addressed the issues posed by the relationship between architecture and the city that had entered the Italian debate, also following the publication of two fundamental books on the theme: *Origine e sviluppo della città moderna*³⁶ by Carlo Aymonino, published in 1965, and *L'architettura della città*³⁷ by Aldo Rossi which went to press the following year.

The indexes of these two numbers were structured in four parts. In the first part of «Lotus» 6, a project of Louis Kahn offered Mazzariol the opportunity to reflect on the image of the city of Venice;³⁸ the second part³⁹ examined the theme of the project on an urban scale through an article on the design of the city by Angelo Villa, professor of design at the IUAV and editor of «Lotus»,⁴⁰ and some case studies: The Municipal Master Plan for Bari (with comments by Carlo Aymonino, Ludovico Quaroni and Antonio Quistelli), a competition project for the centre of Plovdiv, Bulgaria (Giancarlo De Carlo), the redevelopment of Midtown Manhattan (James Stirling, Geoffrey Baker), a competition for a new centre in Moscow. The third part presented projects which, by their sheer size or function, imposed themselves as figures on the urban or territorial scale: these included large hospitals, universities, and airports designed by Carlo Aymonino, Constantine Dardi,⁴¹ Giancarlo De Carlo, Arata Isozaki, Cesar Pelli, and James Stirling.

The fourth part, entitled “Studies and Notes”, closed the issue with an article by Abraham Rogatnick on the decline of the architect’s profession in North America.⁴² «Lotus» 7 was introduced by a long essay on urban structure seen as a “parameter of judgement (analysis) and invention (project) for the architectural intervention”,⁴³ by Angelo Villa, who had become a member of the editorial board in the meantime. In the first part,



Fig 5

Cover of «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», n. 7, 1970.

writings, and projects by Carlo Aymonino,⁴⁴ Guido Canella,⁴⁵ Aldo Rossi,⁴⁶ Constantine Dardi, Gianugo Polesello and Luciano Semerani⁴⁷ offered the opportunity to reflect on the relationship between the architectural project and the city in the Italian experience. The comparison between some of the methods through which teaching tackled this issue was the subject of an article *La progettazione nelle facoltà di Milano, Roma, Venezia*⁴⁸ which closed this first section.

The second part, on “the architectural project and the urban dimension”, presented works by Denys Lasdun and Geoffrey Copcutt.⁴⁹ The third part, on “the formation of the modern city” illustrated two situations abroad, London and New York, and two Italian situations: Bologna with the P.R.G. and the project of Kenzo Tange,⁵⁰ and Venice with an article by Gianni Fabbri,⁵¹ professor of design at the IUAV, who just a few years later would publish, together with Aymonino and Villa, a volume on *Le città capitali del XIX secolo. Parigi e Vienna*.⁵² Finally, the fourth part “Studies and Notes” contained an article by Gillo Dorfles on the need for a “re-semanticization of urban planning”.

After issue 7, an ample volume of over 400 pages, «Lotus» suspended publication. As Pierluigi Nicolini wrote, this number represented the “maximum compendium” of the first formula imagined by Alfieri but also “his waning”.⁵³

With respect to the year when «Lotus» was born,⁵⁴ the panorama of Italian periodicals dedicated to architecture had been significantly amended, enriched by numerous new publications.

The two historic publications, «Casabella» and «Domus», both founded in 1928, nevertheless retained positions of absolute importance in the periodical scene, both for their authority and distribution, and for following quite distinct roads. The former, directed by Ernesto Nathan Rogers from December 1953 to January 1964, added to its title the concept of “continuity” which in turn implied the idea of a “mutation in the order of a tradition”.⁵⁵ To fully understand the conditions and the sense of architectural events post-war, in order to imagine future possibilities “we must examine the reasons for the Modern Movement, distinguishing between those that arose for contingent reasons [...] from those that might aspire to a longer *durée* since they involve essential contents,”⁵⁶ wrote Rogers. The editorial board, through the contribution of many of the future protagonists of Italian architecture,⁵⁷ addressed key issues of the architectural debate and imposed them at an international level. Their critical reflections ranged from unexplored horizons represented by certain figures of the history of relatively recent architecture, to the situation of urban planning in other countries, to the theme of inserting contemporary design into environmental remains. «Domus», directed uninterruptedly by Gio Ponti from January 1948 to July 1976, and marked by a certain ecumenism in the selection of the architectural works it published, favoured “the mature work of an international architectural *koine*”,⁵⁸ with articles that described “projects identified according to the logic of the author’s object”.⁵⁹

Many magazines were born during the '50s, driven by “rather different motivations and work programmes”.⁶⁰ «Spazio», founded in 1950 by Luigi Moretti, ended its experience after only seven issues in 1953; «Prospettive» directed from 1951 to 1963 by Carlo Enrico Rava, who many years earlier had led the activities of Gruppo 7; «Edilizia Popolare», a mouthpiece of the council housing association *Associazione Nazionale Istituti Autonomi Case Popolari*, began in 1954 as did «Stile Industria», dedicated

to industrial design, directed by Alberto Rosselli with the collaboration of Alfieri (who in turn would invite Rosselli to collaborate with «Lotus»); «L'Architettura: Cronache e Storia», founded in 1955 on the initiative of Bruno Zevi who would direct it uninterruptedly for 45 years. Finally, in 1957, thanks to Edizioni di Comunità, «Zodiac» saw the light, a half-yearly publication distributed internationally, which, like «Lotus», shared the singular destiny of being named for a car, according to Alfieri,⁶¹ who was its first director. And it was precisely after resigning from directing this magazine that Alfieri decided to return to Venice and found «Lotus».

The phenomenon of the flowering of architectural periodicals, which began in the '50s, continued with particular intensity, both in the decade when «Lotus» was born and in the next. Although known in certain cases for its continuity and cultural proximity with existing periodicals, the approach of magazines born in the 1960s displayed a logical progression in addressing issues that evolved together with social and political phenomena. In particular, one influence on the Italian debate would be the unfolding of events connected to the objections raised by university students that, after the first episodes of Milan in 1963, was set to escalate into the protests of 1968.⁶²

It was starting precisely from 1963 that we can see the opening of certain magazines towards a debate no longer sitting between strict disciplinary fences, but “willing to discuss issues inherent in any form to architecture”.⁶³ In 1963, Eugenio Battisti founded “Marcatré”, a bulletin on contemporary culture aimed at renewing research methodologies through an interdisciplinary approach, divided into thematic sections devoted to different dimensions of art – from literature to music, from the visual arts to architecture – with contributions from, amongst others, Umberto Eco, Gillo Dorfles and Vittorio Gregotti. That same year, under the direction of Franco Isalberti, the magazine «Edilizia Moderna» resumed publication that, in some special issues edited by Gregotti, dealt rigorously with issues ranging from industrial design to the form of the territory.⁶⁴ Then, in 1964, “Op cit.” appeared, under the direction of Renato De Fusco, which owed its title to the particular way each theme was addressed “like a composition of selected parts of essays on aesthetics, of criticism and poetics which, quoted textually”⁶⁵ were then led back to a unitary discourse. In 1969, Paolo Portoghesi founded the magazine «Controspazio» of which, as suggested by Francesco Tentori, it is possible to recognize two editorial periods: the first “a prevalently Milanese direction” until 1972, the second “a prevalently Roman direction”⁶⁶ developed from 1973 to '81. In the first period, a key role was entrusted, until his premature death, to a young pupil of Rogers, Ezio Bonfanti, whose article on the autonomy of architecture⁶⁷ was a real “opening gambit”⁶⁸ of the magazine. Reflection on the perceived need for a fresh relaunch of the discipline was addressed through a reinterpretation of the work of some Italian *maestri* – Mario Ridolfi, Giuseppe Samonà and Ludovico Quaroni – through recognitions in the world of university teaching, but also through analysis of “interrupted works of architecture”,⁶⁹ i.e. those planned works which, while never built, offered the possibility to explore the wealth of design research. In 1970, «Parametro» appeared, a magazine directed by Giorgio Trebbi in collaboration with Carlo Doglio and Glauco Gresleri, hinging on analyses of themes relating to architectural design on urban and territorial scales. In conclusion, to give a single example linked to the university world, the IUAV established the “Quaderni di progettazione” of the “Gruppo Architettura”, publishing, between

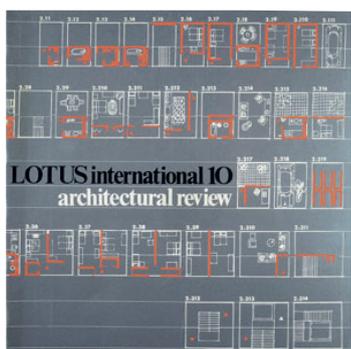
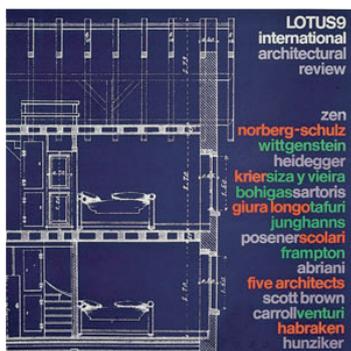


Fig. 6
Cover of «Lotus international»,
n. 8, September 1974.

Fig. 7
Cover of «Lotus international ar-
chitecture», n. 9, February 1975.

Fig. 8
Cover of «Lotus international»,
n. 12, September 1976.

1970 and 1975, research, seminar proceedings, and theses on the relationship between dwelling, services, amenities, and the city, with essays from, amongst others, Aymonino, Canella, Dardi, De Feo, Fabbri, Nicolin, Panella, Polesello, Semerani, and Villa.

It was precisely on the theme of the house that «Lotus» focused its attention in issues 8, 9 and 10, after four years of suspended publication. As a result, in September 1974, the periodical gazed onto a scene of architectural journalism that was much changed with respect to its year of foundation. On the one hand, there was the feeling of a saturation in the editorial space, on the other, a radical change could be spotted in the themes dominating the national and international debates.

“From 1963 until now much has happened and it seems to me that it was well worth while for the magazine to take up its course, duly renewed and revitalized”.⁷⁰ By issue 8, the periodical had resumed its path with issues that were no longer annual but half-yearly until issue 11, and subsequently, quarterly. The frequency was not the only aspect to change: the name of the magazine was transformed into «Lotus International. Rivista di architettura»; the format became larger (26 x 26cm); the graphic layout and the composition of the covers were entrusted to Diego Birelli,⁷¹ who by issue 10 was listed in the colophon as “art director”; the head office also moved from Venice to Milan. Finally, the editorial board and its members changed. Working together with Alfieri, who remained at the helm of the magazine until issue 13 of 1976, was a board consisting of figures of major cultural and scientific importance: Gae Aulenti, Vittorio Gregotti (until 1981), Christian Norberg-Schulz, Lionello Puppi (until 1977) and Joseph Rykwert. The new editor was Pierluigi Nicolin who had to “undertook the task of welding the heterogeneous material which reached the editorial offices into a harmonious whole”.⁷² With issue 14 in 1977, the baton passed fully to Nicolin who would lead «Lotus» to become one of the most influential magazines of European architecture ever, despite being, as Rocca wrote, restricted to the dimension of a “minority magazine reserved to a small audience of loyal readers, professors and students, but also professionals thirsty for culture”.⁷³

Also simply browsing the indexes of these first three issues dedicated to the theme of the house, emerges a set of designers, architectural critics and historians that attests to the cultural weight of the editorial operation set in motion by Alfieri on resumption of publication in 1974: Oriol Bohigas, Charles Correa, Denise Scott Brown, Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves, John Hejduk, Rob Krier, Alvaro Siza, James Stirling, Oswald Mathias Ungers, and Robert Venturi, but also Kenneth Frampton, Massimo Scolari, and Manfredo Tafuri. The theme of dwelling was addressed through a historical reinterpretation of certain experiences during the Modern Movement period, and through contemporary projects that offered critical-operational interpretations of that tradition or which openly entered “into conflict” with it.⁷⁴

Even if the occasion of three successive issues based on a single theme would not be repeated, the tendency of the magazine to assume a monographic approach appears evident. In relation to this aspect, during the period when «Lotus» was still directed by Alfieri, two issues acquired particular significance: 11 and 13. The first defined “an area of interest – neither definitive nor complete – through some projects accompanied by critical comments” which, viewed as a whole, enabled an exploration of the composite world of contemporary architecture. Gregotti, for example,

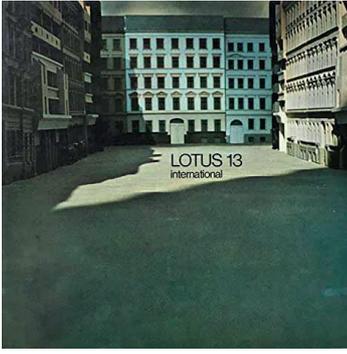


Fig. 9
Cover of «Lotus international», n. 13, December 1976.

presented the figure of Ungers and he, in turn, explained his design criteria. In addition, of this German architect was published a submission to the “Roosevelt Island Housing Competition”, flanked by another developed for the same competition by OMA. Vittorio Savi commented on the work of Aldo Rossi of whom some competition entries for Trieste were shown; Antoine Grumbach introduced some projects by the Krier brothers; Nicolín interpreted the works of Aldo van Eyck; while Francesco Dal Co, with an article on “The necessity of architecture”, dealt with some projects by Gino Valle. Issue 13 of «Lotus», the last one directed by Alfieri – who would subsequently direct «Interni», from February 1976 to September 1979, and “Casabella” from May to December 1976 – is worth mentioning not only for the contributions of Tafuri (who published his famous essay *Ceci n’est pas une ville*), Bernardo Secchi (who wrote on historical town centres) and Norberg-Schulz (who investigated the question of the *genius loci* more widely dealt with in the monograph published three years later by Electa), but above all, because the issue opened with publication of the table of Aldo Rossi’s *The Analogous City*.

The same year that Pierluigi Nicolín, a Graduate in Architecture from the Politecnico of Milan under Franco Albini, and a founding member of Gregotti Associati, took over the direction of «Lotus», the Italian magazine situation had changed further. In January 1977, the baton of «Casabella» – after the run of Alessandro Mendini, who had opened the magazine to the Italian neo-avant-garde, and a brief spell under Bruno Alfieri – passed to Tomás Maldonado. An Argentine artist and designer, a lecturer, and later the Rector of *Hochschule für Gestaltung* – the Ulm School of Design, Maldonado accompanied architecture, the periodical’s traditional focus of interest, with analyses of the problems of contemporary culture. The interaction of various disciplines – not least that of Semiotics which Maldonado had introduced as a subject at Ulm – along with the monographic slant of the issues, became unmistakable traits of this phase of the magazine. The monographic formula was also a feature of «Hinterland», whose subtitle announced: “the design and context of architecture for the management of territorial interventions”, and whose first issue came out in December 1977. This periodical, bimonthly and thereafter quarterly, directed by Guido Canella with the collaboration of Enrico Bordogna and Gian Paolo Semino, had an international sweep thanks to the quality of its contributions and the translations in English and French. Through various monographic issues, the focus of the magazine addressed not a survey of the objective nature of the buildings, but the identification of new analytical and operative tools aimed at establishing closer connections between the architectural project and an idea of the context, where the construction contributed to territories’ settlement processes, stories and specific characteristics, the “dynamics of the political and economic phenomena”.⁷⁵

The monographic formula that characterized «Casabella» and «Hinterland» in those years – that had previously characterized some issues of «Edilizia Moderna» and would return in the magazine «Rassegna» directed by Gregotti from 1979 – became one of the salient features of «Lotus», together with the critical rigour of its articles, the quality of the images, and its square format of 26 x 26cm (which would grow to 28 x 28cm from January 2014). Rocca is therefore correct in affirming that the magazine: “was born an adult and in the following thirty years retained an editorial physiognomy that was substantially unchanged”.⁷⁶

If the monographic approach set a characteristic of the editorial line that

would endure, helping to strengthen the magazine's identity, the change in the themes dealt with over the course of the decades was a litmus test of the continuous evolution of the theoretical-design issues at the core of the architectural debate. On the «Lotus» website,⁷⁷ the history of the magazine is divided into four stages, all except for the first identified on the basis of the homogeneity of the topics dealt with, but also in relation to the succession of the various publishers: for the first step, as already seen, Bruno Alfieri was both director and editor of the magazine; in the second, «Lotus» was published by Industrie Grafiche Editoriali (later Gruppo Editoriale Electa); in the third, the edition passed to Mondadori; in the last step there was again a connection between the figure of the director and that of the publisher, thanks to the foundation of Editoriale Lotus.

If the first season of the periodical, from 1963 to 1970, coincided with the gradual transformation of the annual-catalogue into a magazine, the second – with which this article's survey will conclude – lasted from 1974 to 1994. In this period, the investigations of «Lotus» concentrated on certain issues: the relationship between project and context, the inseparable binomial formed by 'architecture and the city', the value of the relations with university research and with what was being designed and built in architectural and urban spheres around the world. The third phase covered the period 1994-2001 and featured a broadening of the magazine's interests. A reconnaissance began around certain themes – from minimalism to high-tech, from neo-casual to deconstructivism, from researches into the immaterial to those into the landscape – which, if we exclude landscape, appear eccentric with respect to the foci of interest of the previous phase and their overall heterogeneity. However, in a process of opening the magazine to "post-ideological thinking",⁷⁸ this operation assumed the precise objective of building a map of the composite trends recognizable in the architectural culture of the time. Finally, in 2002, the fourth and last stage began. In the face of the magnitude and speed of the transformations taking place in globalized society, «Lotus» cautioned the need to investigate the nature and character of these changes, since only by becoming familiar with the issues and problems, would appropriate design responses become possible. The division into periods proposed on the website outlines a relationship between temporal phases and convincing changes in thematic horizons, if we exclude the location of Issue 80 dedicated to the city of Berlin, which seems more consistent with the topics tackled during the second phase of the periodical's evolution; however, ultimately, this is a marginal element. The more interesting aspect here is that, despite the transformations recognizable in thematic horizons, the propensity for in-depth investigations of certain questions, the scientific quality of the contributions, the ability to select projects and works based on their relevance with the foci of interest of individual issues was to remain unchanged over the forty years⁷⁹ of being directed by Pierluigi Nicolini. The critical commitment of «Lotus» was thanks to his "intellectual vivacity"⁸⁰, as was the preservation of the independence in cultural choices with respect to the logic of the publishing market, plus the unswerving interest in the evolution of architectural thinking.

The issues addressed by the periodical during the Seventies and Eighties intertwined tightly with the key issues of the international debate in which Italian architecture assumed a role of absolute primacy: the critical rereading of the tradition of the Modern, the interpretation of the past, the relationships between project and the context, the relationship between



Fig. 10
Cover of «Lotus international»,
n. 21, December 1978.

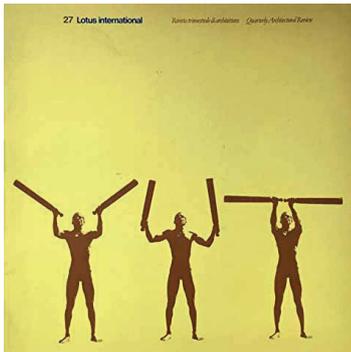
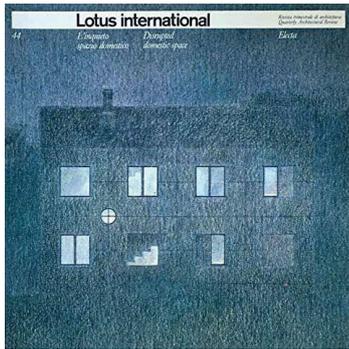


Fig. 11
Cover of «Lotus international»,
n. 27, February 1980.
Photo by Berengo Gardin.

architecture and the city. These are themes which pervaded the whole of this second season of «Lotus», re-emerging, with variations, in many successive issues, admittedly at times linked together in the form of a diptych: suffice to think of the issues dedicated to critical investigation of early twentieth-century architecture, to those on teaching in European and American universities, or to those dedicated to the relationship between architecture and construction. The two issues “from the archives of modern architecture”, published in 1977 and 1978, dealt with a critical examination of architects far-removed from one another: Mel’nikov, Taut, Oud, Libera, Mollino, and Terragni – about whom Tafuri published his well-known article, *The subject and the mask. An introduction to Terragni*.⁸¹ There is no history of modern architecture, Nicolini claimed in the editorial to the 1978 issue; we can only perceive “a series of indistinct and decoded files from which each of us has to draw according to his own private guilt-prone procedures”.⁸² Returning to look at modern architecture through approaches that can relativize, break up or even disrupt established theories, does not mean wishing to write the umpteenth revised history. It means starting the construction of one’s own personal archive, moving through personal transcriptions “prominent figures to background positions [...], or eventually, outflanked by our own manoeuvres, hit on some new explanation by pure chance”.⁸³ Investigating the Modern, disassembling it, recomposing it, means thinking that it is still possible to learn from that period of the history of architecture, as long as it is extricated from time-worn historiographical interpretations. To this end, the presentation of different approaches to the teaching of architecture in European and North American universities is of unquestionable importance. The two issues 21 and 27, published in 1978 and 1980, constitute a diptych that is not limited to investigating the general fundamentals of the didactics of design, but considers that the “architectural production” elaborated in university classrooms identifies “a particular area of design research, having established its own rules and conditioning factors, which do not correspond to those of professional practice or of work done for a purchaser or for a market”.⁸⁴ The conditions of the schools of architecture in the countries examined – Austria, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Switzerland and Italy – were profoundly different from the point of view of both content and approach, but also from the point of view of quantity; ranging from the 20,000 enrolled at the Faculty of Architecture in Rome to the 40 students of the Department of Architecture at the Royal College of Art in London. Although it is possible to detect a great methodological heterogeneity, one element does seem to link the various cases examined: ten years after the unrest of ‘68, it appears that everywhere the myth of “creativity” and the illusion “concerning the thaumaturgic capacity of politics to generate an ‘alternative’ architecture”⁸⁵ have vanished. Issue 27 opened with an intense introductory article by Kenneth Frampton and Alessandra Latour that outlined the historical evolution of the teaching of architecture in the main schools of the United States. The insights given with respect to the current situation were limited to three cases: those of Columbia University, the Cooper Union, and Cornell University. Rafael Moneo and Robert Slutzky described the teaching method of the Cooper, the former focusing on the work of John Hejduk, the latter explaining how the “pedagogy of form” was dealt with at the New York school. The section dedicated to Cornell University focused on teaching in the Graduate Studio of Urban Design directed by Colin Rowe, who, together with Fred Koetter, had published *Collage City*

two years earlier. The maestro from Ithaca would also publish the text of a conference on the teaching of architecture in America⁸⁶, in which a clear distance is taken from those schools where courses on Sociology or Economics assumed ever-greater weight, in the unfounded belief that a project can derive from a summation of individual disciplinary contributions. In fact, it was precisely on this same aspect that Nicolin, in an issue dedicated to the teaching in European universities, had criticized the excessive “sociologization of many faculties”⁸⁷ and the “abandonment” of architecture as a focus of interest.

Instead, the themes addressed by «Lotus» in this period always revolved around questions directly related to the project in its diverse scales of operation. Some issues programmatically focused on the analysis of small-scale works interpreted in opposition to the “destructive clumsiness of large scale architecture” and taken as a more suitable scope for reflection to explore “strictly architectural matters and techniques”.⁸⁸ Meanwhile, Issue 22 from 1979, for example, was dedicated to interpreting some “small works”⁸⁹ in which Nicolin saw the start of processes to relativize the concept of typology, searches for “pertinence” compared to settlement models, and evidence of adaptation to the morphological structure of the contexts. The projects of Bohigas, Grassi, and Ungers presented in this issue concerned housing, but alongside these were interventions that reasoned over the question of limit: the “square by the sea at San Sebastián” by Luis Pena Ganchegui with the works of Eduardo Chillida and the “marginal squares” at Lauro by Francesco Venezia, which were said to constitute an “indirect criticism of the senseless spread of towns across the countryside”. The theme of the small-scale returned in Issue 66 of 1990, dedicated to American lofts, which told of the origin of this phenomenon of reuse in the SoHo neighbourhood of Manhattan, determining relationships between the “concept of home” and “that of habitability”. In fact, in the loft we can identify all the elements of the traditional house but in the form of fragments, of “traces freely arranged and continually capable of creating new significances”.⁹⁰ However, the issue that managed to weave the dialogue of greatest intensity between the theme of housing and the questions posed by small scale was number 60 of 1988. Titled “Living in architecture”, it presented works by Libera, Le Corbusier, Rietveld and Ponti. Among the articles, all bona fide essays – suffice to think of that by Vittorio Savi on the “orphic, surrealistic” Casa Malaparte⁹¹ or that of Bruno Reichlin on La Petite Maison⁹²; equally worthy of mention, the writings of Fulvio Irace⁹³ and Giovanni Chiamonte⁹⁴, which constitute a diptych of remarkable methodological interest. The points of view of the architectural historian and the photographer focused on the same architectural object – the Villa Planchart by Gio Ponti in Caracas, bringing a twofold interpretation. The fact that in the same issue photographs were published of Villa Malaparte taken by Paola De Pietri and La Petite Maison taken by Paolo Rosselli is no coincidence. In the ‘80s, and more precisely starting from Issue 41 of 1984, the insight came to build an intense dialogue in the pages of the magazine between working drawings, critical texts, and photographs, seeing the latter not as mere images accompanying the text but as explorations of the very meaning of architecture. This resulted in a cooperation with Gabriele Basilico, Olivo Barbieri, and Luigi Ghirri (to whose work on Italian landscapes would be dedicated one of the “Lotus Documents” in 1989), Paolo Rosselli and Chiamonte, not only on the house, but on the constructed space in general, on the scale of individual buildings, the city,

**Fig. 12**

Cover of «Lotus international», n. 41, January 1984.
A. Siza, Building in Berlino, detail
Photo by Giovanni Chiaramonti.

Fig. 13

Cover of «Lotus international», n. 44, April 1984.
Kinney House, Ricardo Scofidio and Elizabeth Diller.

and the landscape.

However, before tackling the theme of the project in relation to the city at least another two issues dedicated to housing should be recalled: the first was number 44 of 1984 in which the “restless domestic space” was investigated through projects – by, among others, Steven Holl, John Hejduk, and Juan Navarro Baldeweg – which were not destined for that “standardized inhabitant” created by the architectural research into minimum building standards for accommodation, but were built around an “occupant transformed into personage”.⁹⁵

In Issue 41, published that same year, the theme of housing was addressed in relation to the central areas of the city in which the phenomenon can often be observed of an exasperated characterization of contemporary buildings that creates, “to paraphrase Milizia [...] a big tumult in details within the disheartening modesty of the whole”.⁹⁶ However, observing a plan of Herculaneum, “the subtle play of meditations that develops between the form of the town and the form of the houses as it appears in this or that part, an active or passive element in the articulation of space [...]”⁹⁷ can help. It can even urge us to think that we can reach a solution for the problems posed by the inclusion of contemporary buildings in central areas of the city, by adding to the Vitruvian triad *firmitas*, *utilitas*, and *venustas*, “a fourth term that can help us understand how buildings should be set together to speak to each other: what we need is a theory of rapport – *propinquitas*”.⁹⁸

If the relationships between architectural design and the urban form were one of the main thematic nuclei addressed by the magazine between 1974 and 1994, the analysis of the historical city, the suburbs, areas characterized by decommissioning phenomena, and spaces for infrastructure systems were some of the specific approaches that this thematic core assumed in various issues. The city was studied through its form, its history, its most significant works of architecture, present or recent. The demarcation of the scope of the investigation, the attribution of a title to the issue, the selection of projects taken together constitute the assumption of a main point of view that could bring out similarities, differences, and linkages between the various design approaches, or between different urban situations. If Issues 50 and 51 from 1986 were devoted to the study of American and European cities, other issues examined specific cities: Vienna (no. 29, 1981), Milan (no. 54, 1987), and Berlin (no. 80, 1994). The magazine had already shadowed the latter several times between the Seventies and Eighties, for events linked to its International Building Exhibition. Other issues concentrated on large-scale urban transformations. Issue 67 of 1990, for example, was divided between a historical-critical reinterpretation of the E42 project in Rome, and analysis of contemporary interventions such as the recovery of the Docklands in London, or the Olympic Village of Barcelona. Just a few months after the end of the Olympic Games, a large section of issue 77 from 1993 was dedicated to a debate on the results of the action to redevelop the Catalan city, attended by Mario Botta, Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Jacques Lucan, Jose Luis Mateo, and Franco Purini. Two numbers were also dedicated to the relationship between the city and technical infrastructures. Issue 56 of 1988, entitled “Space, time and architecture”, opened with an article by Semerani on the Moll de la Fusta project in Barcelona by Manuel de Solà Morales, and closed with an essay on American parkways by Christian Zapatka who, in 1995, would be the author of one of the “Lotus documents” dedicated to the American landscape. The relation-

ship between technical infrastructure and urban identity was addressed by Issue 59 in 1988 through examination of certain projects – Plečnik’s riverfront for Ljubljana⁹⁹ presented in an essay by Alberto Ferlenga with the photographs of Luigi Ghirri, the renovation of the Atocha station in Madrid,¹⁰⁰ or Navarro Baldewg’s restructuring of the windmills in Murcia¹⁰¹ which, acting through points or lines, launched larger-scale urban redevelopment. Closing the issue was an article on the station in Stuttgart designed by Paul Bonatz¹⁰² who, like Plečnik, worked on the theme of infrastructure in relationship to the identity of the site, and like the Slovenian architect, was one of the figures who belonged to the so-called “alternative modern”.

Again on the relationship between the city and architecture, mention must be made of Issue 64 from 1990, significantly entitled “The other city planning”, in which were published Siza’s projects for the Chiado in Lisbon, the Diagonal block by Moneo for Barcelona and, looking at a more recent past, Perret’s project to rebuild Le Havre. This issue opened with an essay by Manuel de Solà Morales¹⁰³ who identified an urban project tradition altogether different from the official one of the CIAM. “Another modern tradition” whose history was studded with the works of Berlage and Oud in Holland, Fisker in Copenhagen, Plečnik in Ljubljana, and Folguera in Catalonia. “Urban design means taking the geography of a given city, with its demands and suggestions, as a starting point, and introducing elements of language with the architecture to give form to the site”,¹⁰⁴ which means taking into account the complexity of the urban structure more than a simplification and, conversely, working according to an inductive process that allows a generalization of what is particular and local, according to the Spanish architect. Generated by complexity and overlapping, the urban project “shows itself to be the most suitable, rich, variable opportunity [...] for the planning of the modern city”.¹⁰⁵

To this theme were dedicated another two issues that addressed the questions raised by the city block (no. 19, 1978) and the neighbourhood (no. 36, 1982) seen as cornerstones of the city’s form. In both numbers, the task of introducing the projects of contemporary architecture was entrusted to essays of a historical nature: in number 19, Enrico Guidoni and Manuel de Solà-Morales tackled respectively the theme of the road and the city block from the Middle Ages to the 18th century and the analysis of urban expansions in the 1800s; in Issue 36, Jacques Lucan analysed the neighbourhood as a form for constructing the city, through examples drawn from the history of 20th century French town planning and projects by Le Corbusier. The different keys to interpreting the relationships between architecture and the historical city correspond to different design methods, or so it says in the editorial to Issue 18 of 1978,¹⁰⁶ dedicated to presenting some projects by Giancarlo De Carlo – who that same year became director of the magazine «Spazio e Società» – as well as Stirling, Van Eyck, and the Saals’ experience in Oporto illustrated by Gregotti. If it is true that a city is formed through heterogeneous stratifications, if we can assume that each urban settlement is in fact a city-collage that “combines historic times and spaces in an exiting and inextricable kaleidoscope where everything can happen”,¹⁰⁷ then we can speak of a city which builds on itself, a design seen as a superimposition of different systems. It is equally true, however, that if we accept the idea of a city made up of homogeneous parts, defined according to a process of the additive type, it will tend to “confirm in space the expectations of time, through a sharp distinction of conservational op-

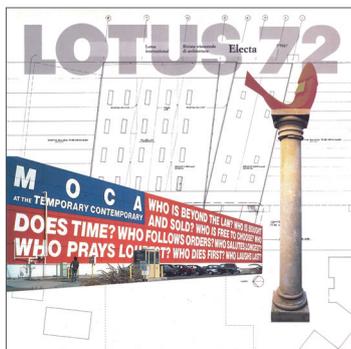
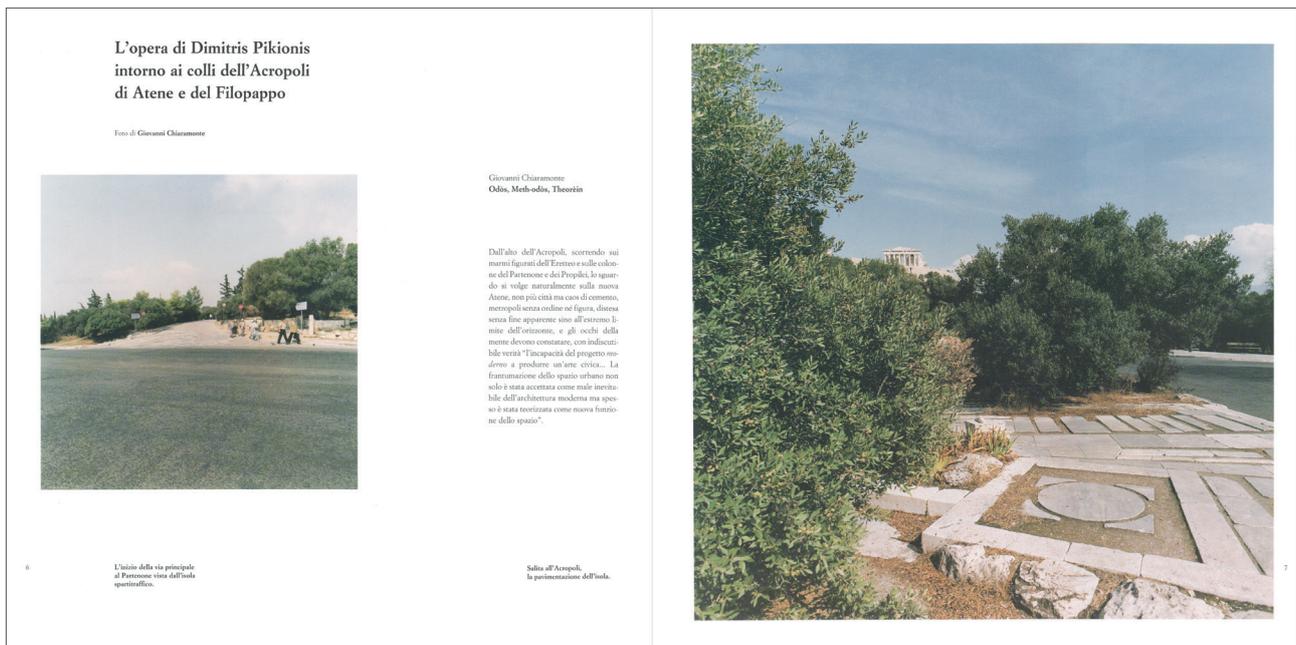


Fig. 14

Pages 6 and 7 of «Lotus international», n. 72, May 1992.

The work by Dimitris Pikionis around the hills of the Acropolis of Athens and the Philopappus: the beginning of the main street to the Parthenon seen from the traffic island; ascent to the Acropolis, the paving of the traffic island. Photos by Giovanni Chiaramonte.

Fig. 15

Copertina di «Lotus international», n. 72, maggio 1992.

Frank O. Gerhy, Temporary Contemporary, Moca, Los Angeles; Barbara Kruger, senza titolo, Moca, Los Angeles; Frank O. Gerhy, 360 Newbury Street, Boston; Osald Mathias Ungers, Kubushaus, Colonia.

erations and recycling, and to make sure that the new is not confused with the old”¹⁰⁸.

Examination of the many ways through which a design can relate to the pre-existing is a theme that resurfaced several times in this season of «Lotus», and demonstrated a certain interest in its ability to raise questions that interact on both the urban and architectural scales.

“The shift from an attitude where the new intervention is seen as being in contrast to the architecture of the past to one which avails itself of analogy”¹⁰⁹ is, for example, the topic that forms the backdrop to Issues 46 from 1985 and 72 from 1992 which analysed the different types of relationship that the contemporary project could establish with ancient artefacts that it found itself close to. Emblematic with respect to this question is, in Issue 72, the presentation of the Athenian interventions of Dimitris Pikionis around the mound of the Acropolis and the Philopappos monument, in a twofold interpretation consisting of the photographs of Giovanni Chiaramonte¹¹⁰ and an essay by Yorgos Simeoforidis.¹¹¹ Equally paradigmatic appears the selection of projects submitted in Issue 46: Asplund’s expansion of the Palace of Justice in Gothenburg, Grassi’s renovation of the Roman Theatre of Sagunto, and Moneo’s Museum of Roman art in Merida, each developed from a particular “con-text” inside which the contemporary project must relate to a “pre-text”.

Representative of the various relationships that the project can entertain with history and with the very idea of the context, are the works of Navarro Baldeweg and Stirling presented in an issue significantly entitled “Transcriptions” (no. 58, 1988). If the Spanish architect blurred “samples” and “rewritings” of the Iberian context “almost by stealth, echoes of classicism (Soane) or the modernism (Aalto, Siza)”¹¹² the British architect achieved outcomes that were completely different. He “does not carry out his opposition in line with the contrast between the old and new which the modern movement had accustomed us to: his process falls entirely in a hermeneutic dimension of architecture”, that of heresy. In this he showed that he had learned one of the main lessons of his mentor and friend Colin Rowe who, encouraging his students to have faith in modern architecture, had nonetheless always stressed the importance of being critical of it, of being ready

to disassemble it, reassemble it, subvert it, ultimately to be well-disposed towards heresy.¹¹³

For Nicolín, “the impossibility of conceiving the foundation and marking direct reference to general ideas, the propensity to link the single part only to a “virtual” whole, care to avoid short-cuts towards facile generalizations”,¹¹⁴ focused the “attention on the concepts of place, of region on specific cases and on the ability of the individual architect”.¹¹⁵

It is not marginal, then, that Issue 62 of 1989 imposed its reasoning around that complex interweaving of contextual characteristics and individual talents which the published projects provide some examples of. Entitled “The Weak Project” in a blatant paraphrasing of Gianni Vattimo’s expression, and opening with an essay by Colin Rowe on ‘talent and ideas’,¹¹⁶ this issue presented some “regionalist” works – those of the Portuguese Alcino Soutinho, the Spaniards Cruz y Ortiz, and the Italians Cino Zucchi, Pasquale Culotta, Giuseppe Leone and Marcello Panzarella (the last three professors at the Faculty of Architecture in Palermo) – which brought to light the multifaceted character that the interweaving between individual paths of design research can assume; a local context and an international debate. In Issue 25 of 1980, emphasis had already been placed on these aspects, following the evolution of the formal research of some architects: Stirling who, as Nicolín wrote,¹¹⁷ “from the machinist collages of the first manner” went on to assume “fragmentary” positions; Ungers who, by that time distant from the premises of Team 10, referred to “a pluralism inspired by Schinkel”; and then the personal trajectories of Krier, Rossi, Van Eyck, Linzasoro, Zaha Hadid and Koolhaas. As was stated in the previous issue on “unity and fragments”, in contrast, individual authors’ projects and research on the city “show with a certain degree of clarity the fact that urban architecture no longer constitutes the premise of a unifying address [...] even if all agree in their criticism of the city of the CIAM.” “Contextualism” itself – the subject of the debate published in Issue 74 of 1992, with contributions from Derossi, Grassi, Gregotti, Lucan, Portughesi, and Scott Brown – while being “an attitude so diffused as to practically involve a large part of contemporary architecture”,¹¹⁸ featured such a wide range of positions remote from one another as to be considered a sort of “convention to implement the peaceful coexistence of differing options within the disillusionment of the current pluralism”.¹¹⁹

Also Issue 70 from 1991 would return to examine the variety of methodological approaches and options in language that characterized the various projects, through the outcomes of some major competitions for European cities.

If it is true that the “weak project” leads to the impossibility of relying on conventions established once and for all, and if it is true, as some argue, that at least in part the reasons for the “instability in the frame of reference should be sought in the technology itself [...] in search of incessant innovation”,¹²⁰ for the architect it becomes crucial to question the “uncertain and provisional character of the results of constant technical and scientific development”,¹²¹ and to reflect on that theme of construction which is at the centre of so many issues of «Lotus». Number 28 from 1981, on the “Romanesque and Byzantine”, published a series of projects – including those of Mario Botta, Vittorio Gregotti, Richard Meier, Aldo van Eyck, Carlo Scarpa and Francesco Venezia – which had “the merit of revealing [...] an unveiling of the material conditions through which buildings are actually constructed”.¹²² If, in most cases, the buildings result in a forgery,

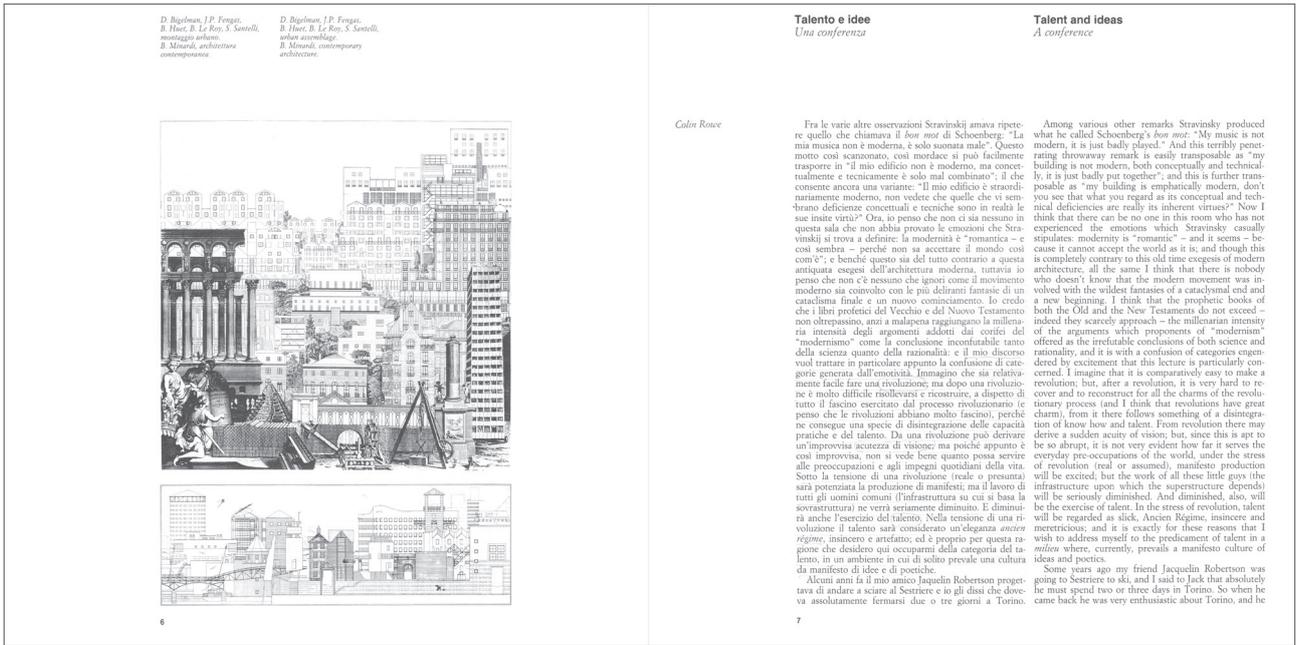


Fig. 16
 Pages 6 and 7 of «Lotus international», n. 62, February 1989.
 D. Bigelman, J.P. Fargas, B. Huet, B. Le Roy, S. Santelli, urban assemblage.
 B. Minardi, contemporary architecture.

Fig. 17
 Pages 60 and 61 of «Lotus international», n. 70, October 1991.
 Rafael Moneo, Project of the design competition for The Kursaal Auditorium and Congress Centre of San Sebastián, 1990.

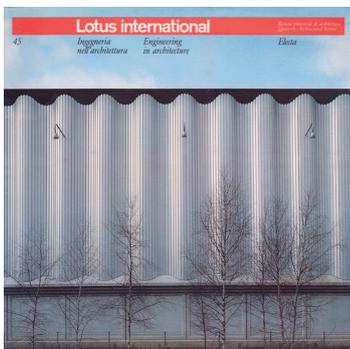
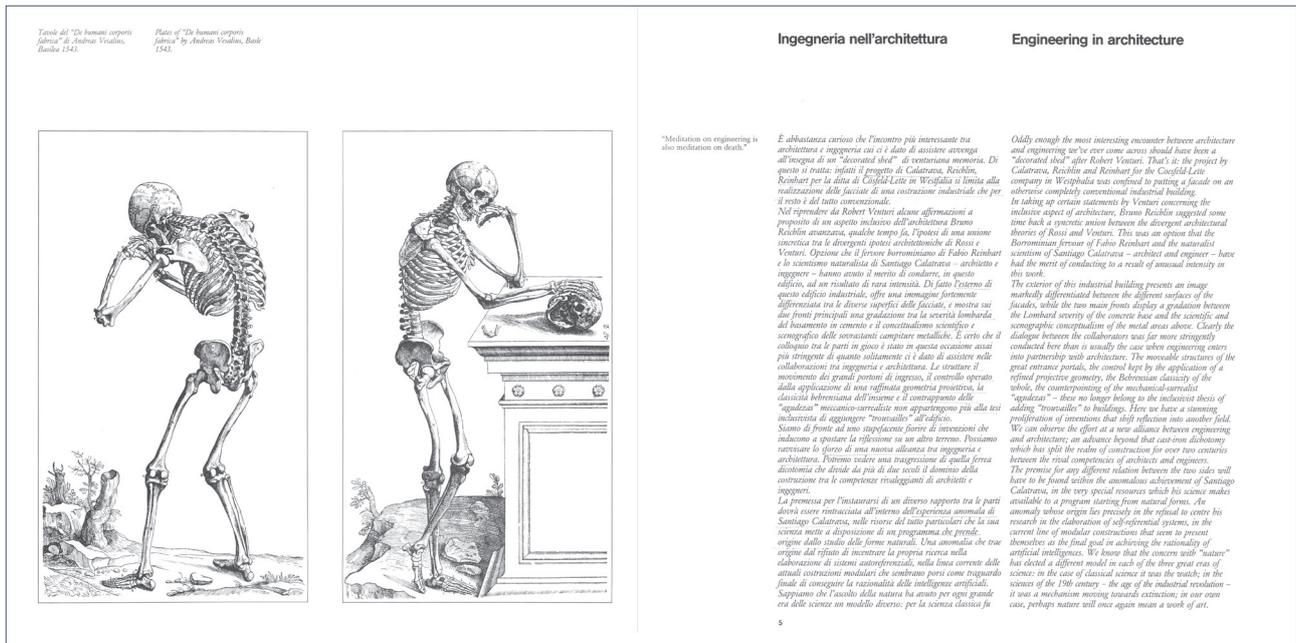


Fig. 18

Pages 4 and 5 of «Lotus international», n. 45, January 1985. Plates of “De homini corporis fabrica” by Andreas Vesalius, Basle 1543.

Fig. 19

Cover of «Lotus international», n. 45, January 1985. S. Calatrava, B. Reichlin, F. Reinhardt, Ernsting factory, detail of facade. Photo by Paolo Rosselli.

manifesting an equipoise “between architectural grammar and constructive capacity”, or expressing the scarcity of means, staging a sort of “aesthetics of the poor”, the most significant works seem to belong to other categories at the extremes of which arise the Romanesque and Byzantine. If Botta’s “Romanesque” works, far from representing examples of an *Arte Povera* made available to a consumerist society, “aspire to richness while yet working with the poverty of the architectural means available to us”¹²³, in Scarpa’s “Byzantine” works, “a craft culture of age-old tradition celebrates its gilded twilight. [...] The world has moved on. The creation of a grand opera is an increasingly rare event”¹²⁴ wrote Nicolini.

The theme of construction featured heavily in several other issues. In one dedicated to “Construction: routes and discourses” (no. 37, 1983), the works of Ridolfi were interpreted by a pair of essays by Francis Cellini and Claudio D’Amato, while the works of Siza were commented on in a pair of articles by Roberto Collovà and Francesco Venezia. Another example is provided by two issues entitled “Engineering in Architecture” (no. 45, 1985) and “Architecture in Engineering” (no. 47, 1985); the former opened by two articles of Werner Oechslin and Luca Ortellì on Santiago Calatrava; the latter publishing the outcome of the competition for the new Accademia bridge, with articles by Portoghesi and Rossi, accompanied by the famous passage of Georg Simmel on *Bridge and Door*.¹²⁵ Finally, the diptych consisting of the issues on “Technical Applications” (no. 78, 1993) and “Intelligent Buildings” (no. 79, 1993), showed different ways to approach the issues of construction: at one extreme, projects that work through a process of assembling components and place the focus on the system of connections – as in the works of Nicholas Grimshaw and Renzo Piano; at the other extreme those projects with a “plastic and all-embracing approach” in which the tendency is “to involve placing a general *Gestalt* ahead of any other consideration, so that the form of the individual element is deprived of its autonomy by its essential subordination to whole”¹²⁶ – as in the works of Nervi, Torroja, and Calatrava.

It is impossible to follow over the twenty years of «Lotus International» from 1974 to 1994, the richness and critical calibre with which the various themes were addressed: those on museums (Issues 35 from 1982, 53



Fig. 20

Cover of Manuel de Solà. *Designing Cities*, edited by Mirko Zardini, «Lotus Documents», n. 23, November 1999. Manuel de Solà-Morales, scheme for the port of Badalona.

Fig. 21

Cover of *Lotus international*. The archives of an architectural review, «Lotus Documents», 1985. Luigi Ghirri, Bari 1982.

and 55 from 1987), those linked to green spaces (Issues 14 from 1977, 30 and 31 from 1981, 52 from 1986 and, relating to infrastructure, number 56 from 1987) prefatory with respect to the landscape issues that would gain ever-greater importance in the subsequent phases of the magazine's life; those relating to specific regions such as Catalonia (no. 23, 1979) or India (no. 34, 1982).

Certainly, the jaded debate on some of the key issues that had marked the previous decades, such as reflections on the urban project or the debate around the post-modern, induced «Lotus», in the period between 1991 and 1994, to gradually move its main foci of interest towards other content. Here ends our discourse, since, if it is true that the magazine's approach remained monographic, if it is true that the themes of housing, the landscape and the city would continue to be addressed, it is equally true that the change in the general contents marked a new chapter in the magazine's history. In the face of the four decades' continuity of Nicolin's directorship, over time not only were the thematic horizons of the magazine and its graphics transformed,¹²⁷ also the members of the steering committee¹²⁸ underwent numerous changes, as did the editorial staff, which from 1980 to 1994 featured, amongst others, Georges Teyssot, Daniele Vitale, Italo Rota, Luca Ortelli, Alberto Ferlenga, Mirko Zardini, and Alessandro Rocca.

While its number of members remained restricted, the editorial staff would continue to change in subsequent years; the single fixed point in these variable geometries was and is Nicolin, the true soul of the magazine.

Before closing our discourse on the first thirty years of the life of «Lotus», we should look again at three important stages in its history.

The first stage coincides with the launch in 1982 of the series «Lotus Documents», whose twenty-third and last number would be published in 1999. The documents had the same format as the periodical of which they constituted an offshoot, defining two areas of investigation: on the one hand, an in-depth look at matters already dealt with in the «mother» magazine; on the other, the presentation of theoretical research and design by some of the leading figures in the Italian and international architectural debate. Among the documents on the first sphere, of note here are those already mentioned on *L'architettura del paesaggio americano* by Christian Zapatka (no. 21, 1995), *Designing Cities* by Manuel de Solà (no. 23, 1999) and *Interior Landscapes* by Georges Teyssot (no. 8, 1987). Among those on the second sphere, we can only recall a few here: *Oswald Mathias Ungers. Architetture as Theme* which opened the series, *Aldo Rossi. Three Cities. Milano, Perugia, Mantova* (4/1984), *Álvaro Siza. Poetic Profession* (6/1986), *Giorgi Grassi. Architecture Dead Language* (9/1988), *Franco Purini. Seven Landscapes* (12/1989), *Vittorio Gregotti. Five Necessary Dialogues* (14/1990) and *Luciano Semerani. Passaggio a nord-est* (16/1991). The second phase coincided with an exhibition in 1985 at the Fondazione San Carlo in Modena. The idea of organizing an exhibition in which «Lotus» presented the work of the «its own workshop»¹²⁹ – formulated by Pierluigi Nicolin, Vittorio Savi and Rossella Ruggeri, then director of the Poletti Library in Modena – was related to the decision to deposit archival materials from the periodical's twenty-three issues (consisting of photographs, letters and drawings, many of them unpublished) at the library, whose funds came from a bequest by the Modenese architect, Luigi Poletti. Alberto Ferlenga and Luca Ortelli edited the catalogue and designed the exhibition which constituted a «taking stock»¹³⁰ and, at the same time, a re-appropriation of the work carried out by the magazine. The exhibition

was divided into three sections: the first, mounted in the Corridor of Honour of the Fondazione San Carlo, represented the promulgation of a virtual number of «Lotus»; the second exhibited, on three sides of the Cardinals' Hall, the magazine's archival materials donated to the library; the third consisted in a wooden room built at the centre of the Cardinals' Hall housing an analytical index and a selection of photographs.

The third phase coincided with the foundation in 2000 of a new magazine "Lotus Navigator". While outside the period examined here, it is important to note that this stage represented the moment when the process of strengthening the interest of «Lotus International» in the landscape project reached maturity, as witnessed by its issues on "Uncultivated land" (no. 87, 1995) and "The Two gardens" (no. 88, 1996). The new four-monthly bilingual periodical would not last beyond nine issues. Its format (24 x 32 cm), graphics (by Andrea Lancellotti) and structure, were profoundly different from those of the "mother" magazine, while characteristics common to the two periodicals were its monographic format and the working group: Pierluigi Nicolin at the helm, Alessandro Rocca, Giovanna Borasi and Lorenzo Gaetani doing the editing. Each number, open to explorations of various disciplines, from architecture to design, from photography to the visual arts, consisted of an opening essay that defined the critical-interpretative approach to the theme, and a broad review of projects and works. Although favourably welcomed, "Lotus Navigator" failed to achieve economic self-reliance, and was forced to suspend publication. On the other hand, ever fiercer competition from online publishing was joined, from the end of the Eighties, by a condition of overcrowding of the publishing panorama by architectural magazines that "fished in the same waters".¹³¹ From 1982 to 1996, Gregotti directed «Casabella», while in 1989 he helped the rebirth of «Zodiac» under the direction of Canella. In 1989, appeared "Materia" directed by Portoghesi, while between 1989 and 1991, Semerani published "Phalaris". From 1989 to 1992 Marco De Michelis directed "Ottagono" and from 1992 to 1996 Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani headed the direction of «Domus». Between the Eighties and the mid-Nineties, "the sector magazines started to become a haze, following a veritable mass of editorial initiatives promoted by the most disparate institutions – industry associations and professional orders, companies variously involved in the market of architecture and design, university departments – characterized by a plethora of guidelines."¹³² In the face of a scenario combining saturation of the publishing market, economic criticality, and a general dulling of the cultural impact of architectural periodicals, «Lotus» began a profound rethink about its structure, objectives and image. As already said, the depletion of certain thematic strands that had marked the history of the magazine from 1974 to the end of the '80s imposed a decisive change of route. The change in direction began with Issue 68 of 1991 and continued until 1994, when the contents of the magazine were profoundly renewed, and the axis of the reasoning was already reset to the coordinates of the countless fresh trends in the world of architecture. This reading of the evolution of «Lotus» ends here, and we shall not venture into the changed cultural terrain of the successive phases. Before concluding, however, it makes sense to linger for a few lines on Issue 68, not only because this was the moment when «Lotus» started to tackle new thematic horizons, but also because it might arguably be numbered amongst the most beautiful issues ever published by the magazine. Titled "the eye of the architect" and enriched by contributions from Kenneth Frampton, Vincent Scully

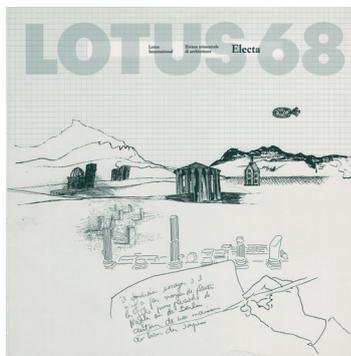


Fig. 22

Pages 54 and 55 of «Lotus international», n. 68, March 1991. Architectural travel drawing by Louis Kahn.

Fig. 23

Cover of «Lotus international», n. 68, March 1991. Sketches by Alvar Aalto, Aldo Rossi, John Hejduk, Gunnar Asplund, Louis I. Kahn, Rob Krier, Ettore Sottsass, Alvaro Siza with a text by Le Corbusier.

stile. Fu una svolta che sottrasse l'entrata alle piazze urbane delle città d'Italia, per ritornarne l'attenzione alle colonne campeggianti nel paesaggio greco e, soprattutto, ai gruppi delle piramidi egizie. Non era più adesso la pittoresca architettura popolare a focalizzare il suo interesse, come all'epoca del precedente viaggio, bensì il costruire in grande, le cose imponenti.

Vorrei che in Italia il suo pastello di Assisi suggerisse un ritorno ai larghi tratti della matita da carpentiere impiegata all'epoca del primo viaggio, ma in generale Kahn si rivela a più ampie superfici cromatiche intese a definire vuoti urbani rigorosamente rettangolari. Il suo *Roma* è un pastello alla maniera di De Chirico, ma i pastelli di Siena, benché minori del vuoto surrealistico delle piazze di sogno dichiarichiane, sono cosa intrinsecamente personale. Il colore è aggressivo e tabulato, lugubre, il rivestimento toscano di marmo verde e bianco, prefigurando alcuni dettagli della tarda maniera architettonica di Kahn, e alla destra nell'oscurità delle piazze. Un'ombra rosso sangue macchia il giallo del campo senese come un pigmento cromatico che lo inonda a partire dal rosso dei suoi mattoni, mentre le torri della piazza si ergono più oltre nella morbida luce verde della sera. In Venezia il convenzionale impressionismo del primo viaggio diventa un tardo Monet, nel momento in cui tratti cromatici scelti a straordinaria ampiezza danno forma a una realtà viva che allude al modello originario, ma che passa anche una struttura monumentale intrinseca. La stessa cosa vale in gran parte a proposito della Grecia. Kahn ne rende il colore più caldo e più greve di quanto in realtà esso sia: lo libera,

per costruire le forme forti che ne vengono proiettate dalla mente dell'artista su colonne e paesaggi. Il verde-grigio di Delfi diventa terra-cotta e calore lavico, le colonne del tempio di Adriano sottostanti l'Acropoli di Atene diventano verdi e arancioni. In un altro disegno, le mura brunastre dell'Acropoli gravano pesantemente sul bianco appena schizzato della roccia sotto di esse. Ciascuna colonna del tempio di Apollo a Corinto, ritratto in un disegno che fa tra i prediletti di Kahn, assume un diverso colore: chiaro, profondo, ardente, mentre in un altro disegno il tempio si staglia dorato contro l'azzurro caldo di un cielo da cartolina illustrata.

Credo che in Grecia Kahn andasse creando i colori che più intensamente lo commuovano. Li trovò poi rivelati dalla luce possente dell'Egitto, tappa successiva del suo itinerario di viaggio. È così che, in un altro disegno da lui particolarmente amato, egli trova modo di dotare le colonne chiuse a gemma di pagano dell'Egitto del Nuovo Impero di tutta la massa e il peso che esse possiedono e del calore e della morbidezza vaganti che esse suggeriscono. Le colonne egizie sono per lui le più grandi fra tutte le colonne, le colonne archetipiche. Equivalente in termini plastici della sua osservazione dei primi anni cinquanta: "Considera il grande evento in architettura, il momento in cui il muro si divide e la colonna fa".

In altri disegni Kahn usa le colonne egizie e i loro capitelli già pretesti per studi di trame rotonde e di masse piatte, laddove le superfici triangolari degli anni quaranta sono disposte attraverso una massa arrotondata come nello studio per una sala ipotetica a Karnak. Adesso, final-

mente, Kahn era pronto per la piramide. Aveva in precedenza studiato la forma quale trasparenza senza peso. Ora ne aggrediva la realtà nel paesaggio e la solidità imponente della massa. Ma egli scorgeva anche il magico paradosso della piramide egizia, che si determina nel momento in cui la vista frontale di una delle superfici ne suggerisce totale assenza di peso, sospesa, nel grande gruppo di Giza, piatti triangoli simili a raggi solari dipinti possono scorrere l'uno dietro l'altro a scala continentale. Quindi Kahn inizia a muoversi intorno alle piramidi e l'ulteriore superficie appare: suggerisce allora la piramide la percezione ottica delle sue altre due superfici, comportandosi come due delle facce di un cubo? Non è così. Essa continua a venir letta come un tetraedro: e sembrerebbe essere nata a questo punto un'altra fondamentale indicazione allusiva alle piastre terracediche di calcaturato della Galleria d'arte di Yale. Infine, come tutti coloro che hanno amato Giza, Kahn innalza il punto di osservazione sino a dimensione eroica di altezza e volge in giù lo sguardo attraverso il gruppo, sino a lui stesso forse l'Edo. E in quello che a me sembra il più piccolo tra tutti i disegni, quello piccolo in basso a destra degli *Stadi di piramidi*, Kahn allinea a ritmo di marcia le sue scure piramidi lungo la china del mondo e, tangenzialmente ai loro vertici, dispone un'unica faccia di una forma piramidale adalata in lingue di fuoco. Infine, in *Piramidi*, esse appaiono in lontananza come montagne di aria colorata, che aprono e chiudono in dislocazione da sagome corpose a bagliore di superfici, dal sole alla terra, alla pioggia e al cielo. Ecco fatto, dunque. Nelle piramidi

and Anthony Vidler, this issue published sketches and drawings that some architects had made during their travels: Le Corbusier, Asplund, Aalto, Kahn, Krier, Siza, Hejduk, Sottsass and Rossi. In the editorial, Nicolín updated readers on the changes taking place in the magazine: the choice to publish two different editions, one in Italian and one in English, which would afford more room for texts and images, the change of the editorial staff¹³³ and the management committee¹³⁴, the renewed graphics.¹³⁵ Not only that: each number would be divided into two sections: a "Focus" centred around a particular theme, and a "Forum" dedicated to a comparison of multiple points of view on specific issues (clients, competitions, criticism, the relationships of architecture with the visual arts or the media) in order to make the periodical an arena for discussion increasingly open to diverse positions. It was indeed believed that "to a proliferation of attitudes, a replacement of the unique visions of architectural phenomenon with an unprejudiced use of language [...], the destructuring/dispersion that has affected our discipline"¹³⁶ it was necessary to respond with "appropriate communication tools". What we were seeing, wrote Nicolín, was a transformation of the *Zeitgeist* and, as far as contemporary architecture was concerned, "a paradigm shift with respect to the previous approaches, comprehensible only with the changing of the horizons that occurred in the Eighties"¹³⁷. Publishing sketches from the travels of some masters just when "Lotus" was embarking on a new road took on a value that was both metaphorical and instrumental. This permitted observation of "the nature of different beginnings"; predisposed reflection on what had caught the eye of some great architects"; let us imagine that, as in Le Corbusier's case, travel sketches might become useful material for the construction of future projects.

Notes

¹ For further information, see the following web pages, last consulted in December 2017: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Chapman; https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Clark; https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gran_Premio_d%27Italia_1963

² P. Ferrini, *Ecco dov'è finita la Lotus di Jim Clark*, in «La Repubblica», 6 Decem-

ber 2013; http://www.repubblica.it/motori/sezioni/classic-cars/2013/12/06/news/dov_finita_la_lotus_di_jim_clark_-69299627/?refresh_ce

³ In 1979, Bruno Alfieri's passion for motor racing led him to leave Electa and found the publisher Automobilia, specializing in the history and image of the car, that would go on to work with some of the most prestigious car manufacturers including: Alfa Romeo, Lamborghini, Maserati, Mercedes, Porsche and, in particular, Ferrari, thanks to the personal support of Enzo Ferrari.

⁴ Some authors give 1963 as the date of publication of the first volume of "Lotus". In reality, the annual was founded in Venice in 1963, but its first edition came out in 1964. To check the correct date, beyond that on the volume itself, see: <http://www.editorialelotus.it/web/item.php?id=1>

⁵ Giulia Veronesi, art historian and critic of art and architecture, collaborated with the magazine «Casabella» under the direction of Giuseppe Pagano and Edoardo Persico. Winner of the "Olivetti Prize" for architecture critics in 1957, she edited the complete writings of Edoardo Persico for Edizioni di Comunità, which came out the same year the first edition of the «Lotus» annual went to press. She authored the following publications (amongst others): *Joseph Maria Olbrich*, Il Balcone, Milan 1948; *J. J. Pieter Oud*, Il Balcone, Milan 1953; *Difficoltà politiche dell'architettura in Italia, 1920-1940*, Politecnica Tamburini, Milan 1953 (reprinted by Marinotti nel 2008); *Josef Hoffmann*, Il Balcone, Milan 1956; *Luciano Baldessari architetto*, CAT, Trento 1957; *Edoardo Persico. Tutte le opere (1923-1935)*, Edizioni di Comunità, Milan 1964; *Ascesa e caduta delle Arts Déco*, Vallecchi, Florence 1966.

⁶ B. Alfieri, (untitled), «Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura, Annuaire de l'architecture, 1964-65», Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1964, p. V.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ G. Veronesi, (untitled), In «Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura, Annuaire de l'architecture, 1964-65», Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1964, p. XI.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ A. Rocca, "Lotus", in M. Biraghi – A. Ferlenga (ed.), *Architettura del Novecento. Teorie, scuole, eventi*, vol. I, Giulio Einaudi Editore, Turin 2012, p. 567. Reference should be made to the entire essay, published on pp. 566-570, for a concise and fascinating history of the «Lotus» annual.

¹⁵ S. Micheli, *Le riviste italiane di architettura. Il luogo logico del dibattito architettonico*, in M. Biraghi, G. Lo Ricco, S. Micheli, M. Viganò, *Italia 60/70. Una stagione dell'architettura*, Il Poligrafo, Padua 2010, p. 129.

¹⁶ B. Alfieri, *A new Lotus*, in «Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura d'oggi, Annuaire de l'architecture contemporaine, 1965-66», Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1965, p. 3.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁹ G. Veronesi, *A Panorama*, in «Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura d'oggi, Annuaire de l'architecture contemporaine, 1965-66», Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1965, p. 11.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 12.

²¹ Ibid., p. 11.

²² B. Alfieri, (untitled), in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1966-1967», no. 3, Bruno Alfieri, Milan Venice (undated) [1966], p. 1.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ A. Rosselli, *L'architettura ricerca nuove relazioni*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1966-1967», no. 3, Bruno Alfieri, Milan Venice (undated) [1966], p. 2.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 3.

²⁶ B. Alfieri, *A letter from the editor*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue interna-

tionale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1967-1968», no. 4, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice (undated) [1967], p. 5.

²⁷ A. Rosselli, *The role of the architect in the next ten years*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1967-1968», no. 4, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice (undated) [1967], p. 10.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ R. Venturi, D. Scott Brown, *A significance for A & P Parking Lots; or Learning from Las Vegas*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 71-91.

³¹ E. McCoy, R. M. Schindler, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 92-105.

³² D. Gebhard, *Ambiguity in the work of R.M. Schindler*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 92-105.

³³ G. Mazzariol, *La Feria a Valencia di Guillermo Jullian*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 34-62. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

³⁴ Idem., *Il linguaggio di Erickson*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 161-187.

³⁵ A. Rogatnick, *EXPO 67: The Past Recaptured*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 12-33.

³⁶ C. Aymonino, *Origine e sviluppo della città moderna*, Marsilio, Padua 1965.

³⁷ A. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, Marsilio, Padua 1966.

³⁸ G. Mazzariol, *Louis Kahn: progetto per Venezia*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 1-39. The title is that in the Index; instead, the title on p. 1 is *Un progetto per Venezia*. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

³⁹ The second part was on «The designing of the city».

⁴⁰ A. Villa, *La progettazione della città*, «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 96-101. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

⁴¹ On the figure of Constantino Dardi, in the same number, see: M. Tafuri, *Dardi*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 163-169; C. Dardi, *Lettura di James Stirling*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 122-133. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

⁴² A. Rogatnick, *The Decline and Fall of the Architectural Profession in North America*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 266-270.

⁴³ A. Villa, *L'architettura nella formazione della città moderna*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 6-11. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

⁴⁴ C. Aymonino, *Progetto architettonico e formazione della città*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 20-41. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

⁴⁵ G. Canella, *Un'architettura di architetture*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 42-61. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

⁴⁶ A. Rossi, *Due progetti di abitazione*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 62-85. The title here is that in the Index; instead, the title on p. 62 is *Due progetti*.

⁴⁷ A. Villa, *National competition for the historical centre of Trieste: Dardi, Polesello, Semerani*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 86-117. The title here is that in the Index; instead, the title on p. 86 is *Il concorso per il centro storico di Trieste*; below, the initials A. V. refer to the editor, Angelo Villa

⁴⁸ Rossi, *La progettazione nelle facoltà di Milano, Roma, Venezia* in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 130-172. This title only appears in the Index; from p. 128 to p. 172 there is a series of Degree Theses with different titles; in fact, the section devoted to the theses begins on p. 128 and not on p. 130 as written in the Index. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

⁴⁹ A few years earlier, Manfredo Tafuri had judged three experiences as “very positive” for their open form and for the fact that instead of “cancelling the architecture in their urban planning process they relocated the constructions to a fitting context and exalted their semantic autonomy”. These were: Quaroni's project for the San Giuliano sandbanks at Mestre, Geoffrey Copcutt's studies for the surroundings of Glasgow, and Kenzo Tange's plan for the new Skopje. M. Tafuri, *Architettura, town design, città*, in “d'Ars Agency: bollettino trimestrale”, nos. 36-37, 1967, p. 9.

⁵⁰ Vv. Aa., *Bologna: il P.R.G. ed il progetto di Kenzo Tange* in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 354-409. This title only appears in the Index; from p. 354 to p. 409, there is a series of articles by various authors, with different titles. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

⁵¹ G. Fabbri, *Venezia: ipotesi sulla città e strumenti progettuali*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 280-297. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

⁵² C. Aymonino, G. Fabbri, A. Villa, *Le città capitali del XIX secolo. 1. Parigi e Vienna*, Officina, Rome 1975.

⁵³ P. Nicolini, *Introduzione*, in *Lotus international 1974-88. Indici Indexes*, Supplement to «Lotus international», no. 61, Electa, Milan, 1989, p. 6.

⁵⁴ On the panorama of Italian architectural magazines, see: S. Micheli, *Le riviste ital-*

iane di architettura..., op. cit., pp. 125-138; M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura. Costruire con le parole*, in F. Dal Co, *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il Secondo Novecento*, Electa, Milan 1997, pp. 430-443; F. Tentori, *L'Architettura contemporanea. In dieci lezioni (dividendo per undici). Zibaldone e bibliografia sull'architettura, l'arte italiana e le riviste del Novecento*, Gangemi, Rome 1999, pp. 117-121, 131-135. While Silvia Micheli and Marco Mulazzani referred to «Lotus», Francesco Tentori did not mention the magazine.

⁵⁵ E. N. Rogers, *Continuità o crisi?* in «Casabella-continuità», no. 215, April-May 1957, p. 3.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ The editorial board featured in various ways and at different moments: Marco Zanuso, Giancarlo De Carlo, Vittorio Gregotti, Gae Aulenti, Guido Canella, Aldo Rossi, Giorgio Grassi, Luciano Semerani, Carlo Aymonino, Aurelio Cortesi, Silvano Tintori, and Francesco Tentori.

⁵⁸ M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura...*, op. cit. p. 436.

⁵⁹ S. Micheli, *Le riviste italiane di architettura...*, op. cit., p. 126.

⁶⁰ M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura...*, p. 435.

⁶¹ This was Ford's «Zodiac». On the story of Bruno Alfieri and on the history of the magazine until 1974, see: O. S. Pierini, *Zodiac*, in M. Biraghi – A. Ferlenga (eds.), *Architettura del Novecento. Teorie, scuole, eventi*, vol. I, Giulio Einaudi Editore, Turin 2012, pp. 949-954.

⁶² See: S. Micheli, *Le riviste italiane di architettura...*, op. cit., pp. 127 and 129-130.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 127.

⁶⁴ This topic was addressed in the double issue 87-88 in 1965, whose contributions included some from Eugenio Battisti and Christian Norberg-Schulz on landscape, and Salvatore Bisogni and Agostino Renna on urban design in the Naples area.

⁶⁵ R. De Fusco, in «Op. cit», *Editoriale*, no. 1, September 1964, p. 6.

⁶⁶ F. Tentori, *L'Architettura contemporanea...*, op. cit., p. 131.

⁶⁷ E. Bonfanti, *Autonomia dell'architettura*, in «Controspazio», no. 1, June 1969, pp. 24-29.

⁶⁸ M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura...*, op. cit. p. 440.

⁶⁹ «L'architettura interrotta» (*Architecture interrupted*) was the name of the column edited by Luciano Patetta in «Controspazio».

⁷⁰ B. Alfieri, (*untitled*), in «Lotus International», no. 8, 1974, p. 2.

⁷¹ With regard to Diego Birelli's contribution to the graphics of «Lotus International», Michele Galluzzo wrote in a booklet (p. 22) published for the exhibition «Diego Birelli Graphic Designer», mounted at the IUAV University of Venice, Archive Projects, 21.05-12.06.2015: «To emphasize the change of direction and the permeability of the editorial container, Birelli conceived the covers of the individual issues in an uncoordinated manner with titles that changed from time to time, and included both stick characters of a Swiss pattern – albeit graceful, hieroglyphics or lettering designed *ad hoc* as in the case of issue eight.»

⁷² B. Alfieri, (*untitled*), op. cit., p. 2.

⁷³ A. Rocca, «Lotus», op. cit., p. 566.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 3.

⁷⁵ S. Micheli, *Le riviste italiane di architettura...*, op. cit., p. 137.

⁷⁶ A. Rocca, «Lotus», op. cit., p. 568.

⁷⁷ www.editorialelotus.it, consulted in December 2017.

⁷⁸ www.editorialelotus.it

⁷⁹ Pierluigi Nicolin became director of «Lotus» in 1977 and is still at the helm of the magazine today (January 2018).

⁸⁰ A. Rocca, «Lotus», op. cit., p. 568.

⁸¹ M. Tafuri, *The subject and the mask. An introduction to Terragni*, in «Lotus international», no. 20, 1978, pp. 5-31.

⁸² P. Nicolin, *From the archives of the modern architecture*, in «Lotus international», no. 20, 1978, p. 3.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ P. Nicolin, *Architecture in the University: Europe*, in «Lotus International», no. 21, 1978, p. 3.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁸⁶ C. Rowe, *Architectural education in the USA: issues, ideas, and people. A con-*

- ference to explore current alternatives, in «Lotus International», no. 27, 1980, pp. 42-46.
- ⁸⁷ P. Nicolín, *Architecture in the University...*, op. cit., p. 3.
- ⁸⁸ P. Nicolín, *Small works*, in “Lotus International”, no. 22, 1979, p. 3.
- ⁸⁹ “Small works” was the title of Issue 22 of «Lotus» in 1979.
- ⁹⁰ P. Nicolín, *American lofts*, in «Lotus International», no. 66, 1990, p. 5.
- ⁹¹ V. Savi, *Orphic, surrealist. Casa Malaparte in Capri and Adalberto Libera*, in “Lotus International”, no. 60, 1988, pp. 7-17.
- ⁹² B. Reichlin, “*Une petite maison*” *Lake Leman. The Perret-Le Corbusier controversy*, in «Lotus International», no. 60, 1988, pp. 59-83.
- ⁹³ F. Irace, *Correspondences. Villa Planchart by Gio Ponti in Caracas*, in “Lotus International”, no. 60, 1988, pp. 85-105.
- ⁹⁴ G. Chiaramonte, *Villa Planchart. Three rules and the ever-present Duchamp*, in “Lotus International”, no. 60, 1988, pp. 107-111.
- ⁹⁵ P. Nicolín, *Disrupted domestic space*, in «Lotus International», no. 44, 1984, p. 5.
- ⁹⁶ P. Nicolín, *Living in the city*, in “Lotus International”, no. 41, 1984, p. 5.
- ⁹⁷ P. Nicolín, *Architecture and Grand Style*, in «Lotus International», no. 42, 1984, p. 10.
- ⁹⁸ P. Nicolín, *Living in the city*, op. cit., p. 5.
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in G. Simmel, *Saggi estetici* (edited by M. Cacciari), Padua 1972.

¹²⁶ P. Nicolín, *Intelligent buildings*, in «Lotus International», no. 79, 1993, p. 39.

¹²⁷ Over the years, for its graphics, the magazine availed itself of the guidance of various designers: Diego Birelli, Pierluigi Cerri and F. G. Confalonieri, Alessandra Dal Ben, Lioba Wackrnell, Andrea Lancellotti and Gaetano Cassini.

¹²⁸ Below is the evolution of the editors and steering committee from 1980 to 2002. Among the editors, in 1980 Georges Teyssot joined Daniele Vitale and Italo Rota (no. 28); in 1981 joined by Luca Ortelli (no. 30); in 1982 (no. 34) Alberto Ferlenga became part of the editorial staff and Teyssot left, in the next issue assuming the role of editorial coordinator; that same year, the committee of experts was joined by Mario Botta, Francesco Dal Co, Jacques Lucan and Franco Purini (no. 34); in 1984, the committee of experts was joined by Marco De Michelis, Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Bernard Huet, Werner Oechslin, and Georges Teyssot (no. 41); in 1988 Mirko Zardini joined the editors (no. 56); in the same year (no. 58) Teyssot was no longer editorial coordinator for some issues, but would return later to finally switch to the management committee; in 1990 (no. 65) Ferlenga and Ortelli left the editorial staff and Alessandro Rocca entered; in 1999, Mirko Zardini left and Giovanni Borasi arrived (no. 101); that same year an external editorial board was added, consisting of, among others, Ignasi de Solà-Morales and Georges Teyssot; in 2000, Lorenzo Gaetani arrived; in 2002 (no. 112) Mirco Zardini joined the external editors, and the following year (no. 118) Rocca left the editors.

¹²⁹ R. Ruggeri, *Foreword*, in Vv. Aa., *The archives of an architectural review*, Electa, Milan 1985, p. 7.

¹³⁰ P. Nicolín, *Introduction*, in Vv. Aa., *The archives of an architectural review*, Electa, Milan 1985, p. 10.

¹³¹ A. Rocca, “*Lotus*”, op. cit., p. 569.

¹³² M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura...*, op. cit. p. 443.

¹³³ The editorial staff consists of Mirko Zardini, Alessandro Rocca, Rita Capezzuto and Gail Swerling.

¹³⁴ The Management Committee consists of Mario Botta, Ignasi de Solà Morales, Adolfo Natalini, Franco Purini, Vladimir Slapeta, and Georges Teyssot.

¹³⁵ The graphics are by Gianluca Poletti.

¹³⁶ P. Nicolín, *L'occhio dell'architetto*, in «Lotus International», no. 68, 1991, p. 2.

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Mauro Marzo, architect, PhD, is a researcher in architectural and urban composition at the IUAV University of Venice, Italy, as well as a member of the Architectural Composition Curriculum Board at the IUAV PhD School, and teaches architectural design at the Architecture and Arts Department. He has worked as a lecturer at the University of Parma in Italy, and the Bochum University of Applied Sciences in Germany, and held a mono-thematic seminar for the Architecture PhD course at the National University of Rosario in Argentina. Chief Science Officer for the Intensive Programme “Cities of Art and Tourism” in Venice, Italy, creator and co-founder of the international network of schools of architecture called “Designing Heritage Tourism Landscapes” (www.iuav.it/dhtl), director of the series of monographs “Figure” published by LetteraVentidue, editor of the “Festival dell’Architettura Magazine”, an author of articles and essays, and a consultant for various books, international seminars and conventions.

Marco Francesco Pippione
Vittorio Gregotti's Casabella (1982-1996)

Abstract

The journal «Casabella», founded in 1928, shaped the architectural debate in Italy throughout the 20th century. In the years 1982-1996 «Casabella» was edited by the Milanese architect and educator Vittorio Gregotti. Gregotti's editorship produced a dense and seminal corpus of architectural theory. The reason of the interest of Gregotti's Casabella twofold. Firstly the articles published by the journal span over a wide range of theoretical position, thus offering a vivid representation of the richness as well as the acrimony of the architectural debate in the post-modern era. Secondly as to the method Gregotti had the ambition to create a "monopolistic" palimpsest in order to achieve his cultural and political project: the architect as the individual who is responsible for the modification of reality based on the interpretation of the context and on the specific technical knowledge. This essay takes into account the fundamental features of the journal, by focusing on its editorial staff and analyzing the theoretical core of «Casabella», that is, even today, its greatest legacy.

Keywords

«Casabella» — Gregotti — Critique

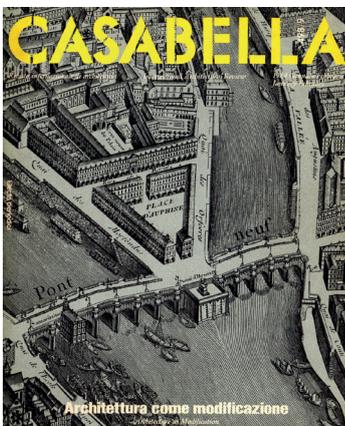


Fig. 1
 498-499 double number cover
 (January-February 1984) "Architettura come Modificazione".

Introduction

From number 478 (March 1982) to the number 630-631 (January 1996), the architecture journal «Casabella» was edited by Vittorio Gregotti. In his long and passionate direction Gregotti builds around the journal a true cultural project on architect role in the transformation of the city and the territory, involving colleagues and scholars from different disciplines. This cultural project builds on themes and authors able to move and re-center the architecture contemporary debate, in Italy and in Europe. Among the most significant issues raised by «Casabella» is the relationship with the modern movement project, the convergences between architecture, urban planning and engineering, the "progetto urbano", the attention for the environment and for the modification of the existing. The architects mainly published in the journal Gino Valle, Mathias Ungers Oswald, James Stirling, Tadao Ando, Hans Kollhoff but especially Alvaro Siza, whose intervention in Evora occupies the front pages of the inaugural issue of march 1982.

The journal

The specific point of view on contemporary architecture also involves a precise and rigorous formal organization. Already in the choice of the print media, it is evident the criticism that «Casabella» addresses to other journals. For inside pages, instead of coated paper, it is chosen a thick paper, ivory-coloured, particularly suited for the publication of technical drawings and designers sketches but much less effective for photographic reproductions. A confirm of a clear hierarchy between architectural design and its representation is the choice to publish

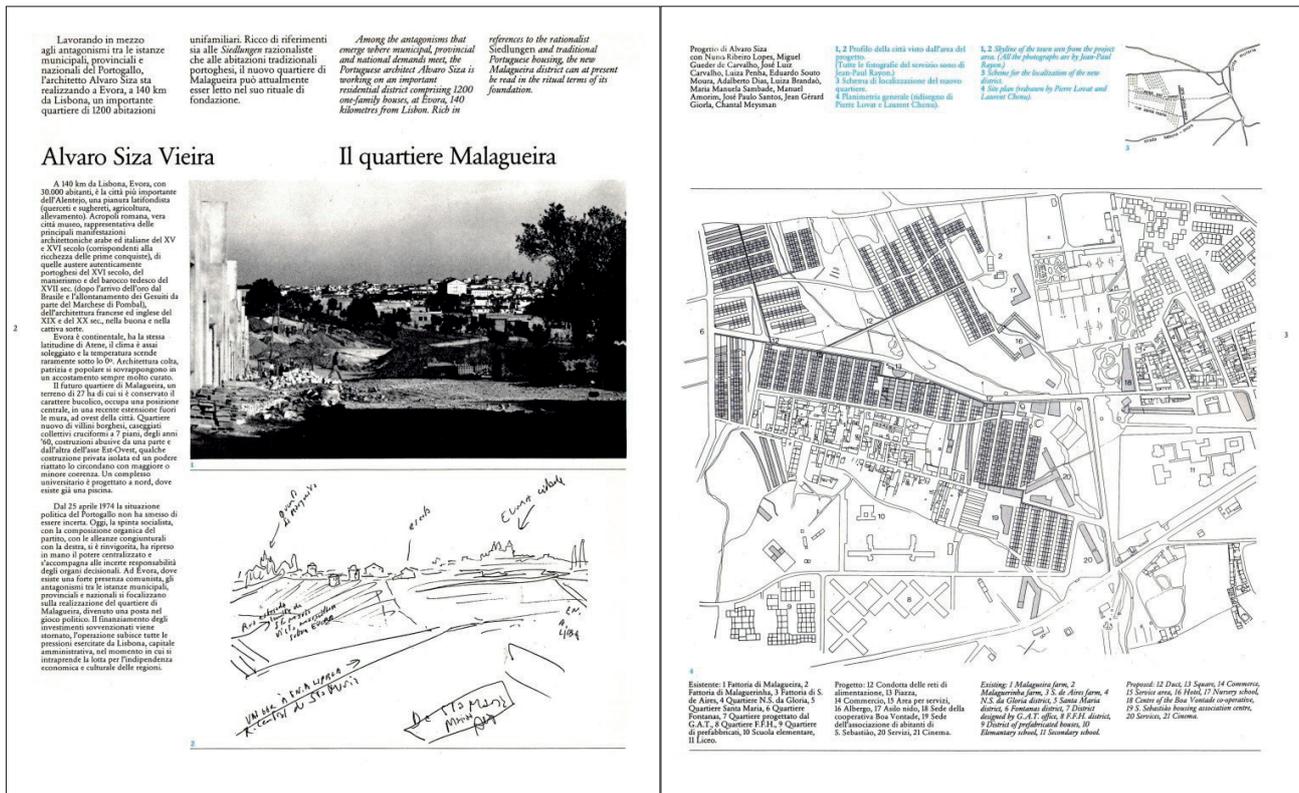


Fig. 2
The article on Malagueira quarter in Evora by Alvaro Siza, published in the first issues Vittorio Gregotti's «Casabella», n.478 march 1982

the drawings (even those executive) in large format, full pages, relegating photos to the sidelines.

Another peculiarity of «Casabella» during those years is the prevalence of texts on the images, fact quite unusual for an architectural journal. The anomaly is justified in the accuracy and level of detail of published contributions (especially those historical-critical), which reduces the space for pictures and images, often printed in small and infra-text; there is also a prominence of critical analysis on drawings of presented architectures. The main projects of each number are always published with a text signed by editors or well-known critics that it's never merely descriptive. The graphic design, by Pierluigi Cerri, emphasizes the scanning of the internal structure with the distribution of text in columns, which thicken and widen according to the sections. The result is a smooth and orderly layout, as an architectural facade partition, with symmetries, pauses, “intercolumns” and “pillars.”

Another evident choice of «Casabella» is to present itself as a “news magazine” and not thematic. The monthly publication does not allow a timely review; however the absence of a specific theme leaves the editorial staff greater freedom in the selection of projects and reviews to be published. This fact leads also to precise ideological implications: for a thematic journal is easier to have a strong political direction - even in a more narrow sense - as it had been such the precedent «Casabella», that of Tomás Maldonado. Gregotti believes instead that his journal should be directed to a professional audience, who intends to keep current with last projects and the most interesting architectures, without that they must relate to a specific theme. The thematic model is not altogether abandoned: it is proposed through “double numbers”, special issues published at the beginning of the year, which give depth and solidity to the cultural project promoted by the journal. Among the most significant “double numbers” we remind *Architettura del piano* (1983) *Architettura come Modificazione* (1984), *Il*

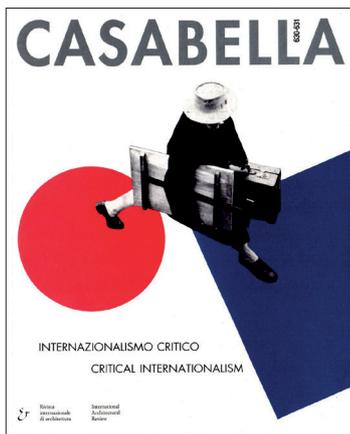


Fig. 3
630-631 double number cover
(January-February 1996) "Inter-
nazionalismo critico".

disegno degli spazi aperti (1993) e *Internazionalismo critico* (1996).

Advertisements, which serve to economically support the high distribution costs of a widely distributed magazine, do not interfere with articles and presentations, but are collected between the cover and the summary. They are printed full-page, on coated paper, in color or in black and white, and constitute a sort of separate dossier from the journal. This is not an unusual choice for a specialist periodical; much less usual is the advertising section that named "Innovazione edilizia" and published at the bottom of the magazine. This is an advertising section where the accurate systematization explicit a pedagogical intent: each issue addresses a specific theme, ranging from 'isolation and waterproofing' to 'professional studio equipment'. The brief introductory text, edited by a Casabella collaborator, frames the theme from a normative point of view and typological classification; the following pages were dedicated each to a specific product of different companies. The product-cards are subdivided into "owner data", "general characteristics", "morphological-dimensional characteristics" and "technical-performance characteristics". The images supplied are often detailed drawings, technical tables, or diagrams that explain the operation of single components.

The editorial staff

The editorial staff of «Casabella» consists mainly of young critics and architects (Pierre-Alain Croset, Giacomo Polin, Mirko Zardini, Sebastiano Brandolini, Silvia Milesi, Antonio Angelillo and Chiara Baglione), accompanied by an "external" editorial staff, which was composed, in several years, by Bernardo Secchi, Jean-Louis Cohen, Jacques Gubler, Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Massimo Scolari, Giorgio Ciucci, Marco De Michelis, Boris Podrecca, Richard Ingersoll and Carlo Olmo. Some "external" editors are also assiduous collaborators: Bernardo Secchi intervenes in almost all numbers with an opinion article; Jean-Louis Cohen writes numerous articles and critical essays; Jacques Gubler signs, besides the famous appendix - the "Postcard" to Mrs. Tosoni - many pieces.

The work of the intern editors requires a full-time commitment and they often follow personally the printing layout and the collection of published drawings. In evaluating the architectures to be published the direct experience of the artifacts is taken into large account. The intention of the editors is to present a "critical narrative" of the works published: through the precise selection of images and technical drawings they intend to reproduce, as faithfully as possible, the experience of a direct comparison with the architecture represented. The frequent abroad missions to visit the architectures and gather the most significant drawings and images directly from design studios also become important to expand contacts network and discover young talents still unpublished.

European geographic areas are subdivided by the editors of Casabella according to specific language skills: skills essential for a job that continuously requires the translation of texts and correspondence with the various published foreign authors. There are also «Casabella» news correspondents: since 1986, the contributions from Jean-Claude Garcias from Paris, Martin Pawley from London and Reyner Banham from New York appear regularly under the heading "Argomenti". The articles of the correspondents constitute a lively and sharp criticism of events affecting French, English and US architectural culture.

The "exclusion strategy", which brings the journal, on the model of the

avantgarde journals of the beginning of the century, to publish only the authors in line with the cultural project of «Casabella», is partially hindered by young editors. In fact they push to publish works and architects in contrast to director's choices, especially in the last period. Starting from n. 610 of March 1994, were published a series of critical essays on the undisputed protagonists of the architectural debate of those years - but often absent from the journal's debate - such as Rem Koolhaas, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, Peter Eisenman, Jean Nouvel, Santiago Calatrava, Philip Johnson and Arata Isozaki. These articles, that contraddict the exclusion principle expressed on several occasions by the same Gregotti, testify to the maturation, even professional, of young editors and a change in the internal equilibrium of the editorial staff.

If, therefore, in defining the theoretical setting of the journal cultural project, the Vittorio Gregotti's editorials play an unmatched role compared to other contributions, it should always be considered that «Casabella» is constructed, even materially, by a much wider working group, which intervenes - through the selection of contributions and architectures to be published - in a non-neutral way.

Over the years young editors acquires a remarkable autonomy that makes their contribution to the journal more conscious and involved, in a single word more "critical". The persuasive power of the pedagogical project of «Casabella» demonstrates its effectiveness first and foremost towards its interior, towards its own staff.

«Casabella» and the value of criticism

All the features analyzed so far in the journal clearly show the consistency of the critical attitude promoted by «Casabella», an attitude that only marginally has to do with controversy about the postmodern style, that took hold in Italy in the early 1980s.

The cultural project of «Casabella» has its foundation in the critical attitude of the subject - the architect - facing the world and the tools - the project - with which reality can be modified. Significantly, the latest issue of Vittorio Gregotti's direction is dedicated to 'Critical Internationalism', presenting itself as a kind of legacy of the editor to his readers.

But what are the characteristics of that design strategy called (using the words of another famous double number) "architecture as modification"? What are the contact points among heterogeneous authors and projects presented over the years on journal pages? What links, for example, Ungers, Stirling and Siza's projects - protagonists of that «Casabella» season? First, figurative heterogeneity excludes that the answer may be sought in the question of language. The "architecture as modification" does not require formalistic membership; The rigid grid of the Ungersian projects, the eclectic forms of Stirling's projects, the poetic freedom of Siza's architecture, are not a contradiction. This is coherent both with the youthful reflections of Vittorio Gregotti and the Italian post-war architectural culture (let's think of "Neo-Liberty" controversy, the programmatic refusal of adherence to a modern language that had characterized the early works of Gregotti himself) both with the criticism to the concept of style so often expressed in the pages of «Casabella».

Second, the diversity denies the deductive approach of the method. This does not mean a rejection of the methodological consistency within the project, but the denial of the possibility of defining a rule or set of rules, which, as a priori, can ensure the quality of the final result. This aspect is also evidently opposed to certain assumptions that animated in those

years disciplinary research on urban analysis. The starting point for the “architecture as modification” are the conditions of the context; there is no possibility of appealing to autonomous compositional rules, nor even applying experimented recipes.

The “architecture as modification” has some characteristics that are not measured on the strictly formal plane. It is not denied the possibility of figurative similarities (think of the similarities between some Ungers’ and Gregotti Associati’s projects, between the Frankfurt Fair and the Bicocca Quarter in Milan), but they are the result of parallel reflections and not the result of a rigid linguistic program.

What matters, however, is the centrality and irreducibility of the design act, the full assumption of the responsibility of the “modification” of the “real”. Adherence to specific rules or languages is refused precisely because it would tend, on the contrary, to de-responsibilize the designer in favor of an abstract method, a “program”.

The verification of the “architecture as modification” is therefore moved to the point of view of ethics: both the poetic architecture of Siza and the rigidly schematic design of Ungers give shape to a precise idea of transformation that is not dictated by external contingencies but arises from the individual as response to these contingencies. The mechanisms for constructing that response are internal to the individual and therefore not known and non-codifiable. Only the contour conditions can be known. However, the “project” cannot be limited to the reproduction of such conditions, but is called for their reinterpretation. The designer have to employ his “critical look” in order to express in the project “what is not in any way present”, taking Gregotti’s words.

Conclusion

In March 1996 is published the number 632 of «Casabella». The new director is the architectural historian Francesco Dal Co, who had already collaborated with Gregotti’s journal. The editorial staff include Antonio Angelillo and Chiara Baglione. Yet the discontinuity with the previous season is clearly visible from this first number. It changes the format, which is closer to the almost square of the origins. It changes the paper support, where thick coated paper is preferred for photographs, illustrations, and a less drawn layout. But it is on page 22 of the same number that the break becomes apparent and almost controversial. In fact, eighteen pages are published on the Aldo Rossi project on Schützenstrasse in Berlin.

The “exclusion strategy”, which had an illustrious and main victim in the Milanese architect, is permanently archived. With it also ends the setting of Casabella as a trend journal and as a specific point of view oriented to the debate and contemporary reality. The change is also evident in the choice of double numbers themes that Dal Co decides to continue to publish in the beginning of the year in continuity with the previous direction: they will be dedicated to Sacred Architecture (1997), Factories (1998), Single Family Houses (1999), the Schools (2007), the Libraries (2008).

What is missing, beyond the changes of content and forms, is the fundamental orientation, the will - rooted in Gregotti’s «Casabella» - to present the journal as cultural project of recomposition.

The sunset of ideology, described by Dal Co as well as by Gregotti in their editorials, necessitates as a consequence the inversion of the path that Marx had inaugurated more than 150 years earlier with Theses on Feuerbach: from the attempt to modify the reality, to its mere description.

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Marco Francesco Pippione, born in 1987, received a Master's Degree in Architecture and Building Engineering from the Politecnico di Torino in December 2011. At the same institute he held a Ph.D. in Architectural Design from 2012 to 2015 (XXVII cycle) with a thesis entitled "Themes and boundaries of a cultural project. Casabella 1982-1996".

Luciano Semerani
Phalaris. An architectural journal

Abstract

The invention of a Journal of Architecture appears to us as the story of a great intellectual adventure, which consists of travel insights, art, literature, cinema, theater and architecture. Above all architecture, which presents itself in the often provocative and sometimes strange forms – designs and models – put on display at the Masieri Foundation’s “Architecture Gallery”: at beginning from the Lambrate railway station of Ignazio Gardella and ending with a “great mechanical hand” immersed in the waters of the Grand Canal of Santiago Calatrava, passing through Henselmann, Manuel de Solà Morales, Bob Venturi, “The Italian School” and “The other modern” by Bogdanovic, Pikionis, Gustav Peichl and John Hejduk and and not too many others.

Keywords

Phalaris — Journal of Architecture — Luciano Semerani — Magazines

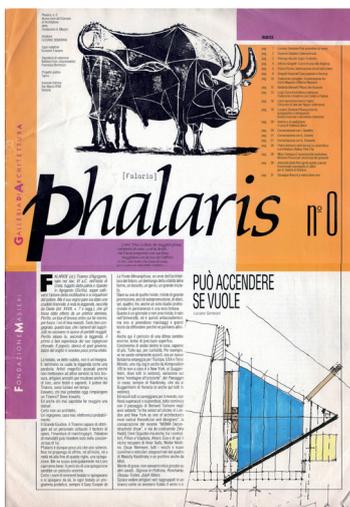


Fig. 1
 Cover of the number 0 of «Phalaris».

In Vienna, the year I taught at the ABK, I saw, in foyers, but also in small specialized bookstores, some unusual magazines and newspapers, out-market and trendy, that mixed shows and exhibitions with current events; publications that I hadn’t yet seen in Italy. So later, as I holed up like a cuckoo in the unused spaces of the Masieri Foundation, *in volta de canal*¹, I found the money to create a first magazine. I thought about a few pages of news put together with documentation, in large format, of projects exhibited in the “Gallery of Architecture” that in the meantime we had set up in the Masieri Foundation. 24 projects were exhibited between 1987 and 1989, including original sketches and specially-made models.

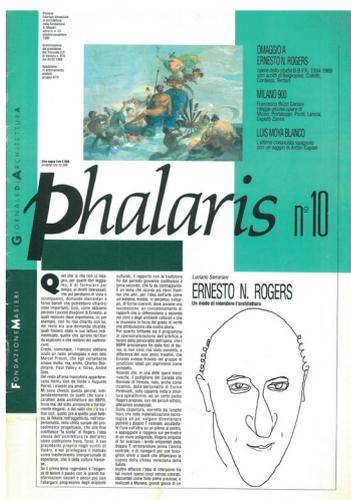
We began with the “Lambrate Railway Station”, by Ignazio Gardella, and ended with a “great mechanical hand”, a white pasta armed supported by an internal device, immersed in the waters of the Grand Canal, by Santiago Calatrava.

The activity involved me, and alternatively the teachers and researchers of the Department, and above all, two graduate technicians: Anna Tonicello, who started a first nucleus of what became later the IUAV Archive of Projects, and Gianni Testi, for the realization of the wooden models.

“*El Mol de la Fusta*” by Manuel de Solà Morales, and the Sainsbury Wing of the New Gallery “ by Bob Venturi were among the first works to be published.

Manuel and I were friends since the days of St. Sebastian; Bob thanked me a lot for the lunch at the Locanda Montin and, above all, for not having bored him speaking of architecture.

Tapiro, the graphic designer, mixed with an monochrome once acid green, once violet, once blue, texts and images so that they resulted illegible, both



the words and the drawings; but the giant format did justice and at the end, thanks to the format and to the high quality of the typographic Venetian tradition, the reading of the projects was perfect.

Not according to Massimo Vignelli.

Massimo and Lella invited us for dinner, I was with Giovanna in N.Y., and I showed him with pride the first issues of the magazine: "...a publication as this belongs to the underclass of reading, a newspaper must be dark, if it is a newspaper". Said Massimo, who had just won the "Reagan Prize" for the graphics of the USA parks, a sort of Nobel in his field.

We tried to rethink the Journal. It still needed to be colorful, but with a precise structure: my editorial on topical subjects, debates, interviews, foreign correspondents, theater, cinema, poetry, visual arts, graphics, design and not only architecture, comments on customs and daily life, as in the magazines of architecture in the '30s, Ponti's "Domus", Bontempelli and Bardi's "Quadrante".

Meanwhile, in '88, Gigetta Tamaro, Marco Pogačnik and I went to Berlin. The "Stalin Allee" was for us, since the days of our trips with Carlo Aymonino and Aldo Rossi in DDR, an absolute model in fact of urbanism and, despite all the perplexities of the "modern" on both sides of the "wall", we succeeded in publishing it in the first year.

We became great friends of Hermann Henselmann, a communist full of humanity and of joy of life. He was the author in the "Stalin Allee" of "Strausberger Platz". To convince Erich Honecker, President of the DDR, of his "Tower of Television", while they were sitting at a table, he demonstrated by sliding an orange onto a knife.

A great friend of Hermann was Jurgen Treder, an important theoretical physicist who lived into a woods only a short walk from the Tower Einstein in a house suspended on stilts, built by Konrad Wachsmann for another famous physicist, Albert Einstein.

Maybe he didn't like the house, or simply, as it happens with the mathematicians and the theoretical physicists that are genial but also crazy, he didn't like us, so he got carried away to sustain the superiority of the onanistic orgasm over that of couple; then he went on to insult the architects that, he sustained, should have been submitted to the treatment that the Tyrant of Akragas (now Agrigento) had reserved for his Athenian architect.

That architect had been forced to be the first to test one of his commissions, a habitable sculpture, a Taurus. Inside the hot bronze, the cry became a bellow and echoed across the whole lowland.

Henselmann smiled amused, but we and the nanny hardly succeeded in hiding our unease. Treder was struggling in silence because he couldn't recall the name of the Tyrant.

The nanny had prepared the tea with biscuits but, because of this kind of talk, the visit had been saddened.

We said finally goodbye and Marco started the car. It was right then, after we had almost left that, unexpectedly, Treder went out of the wooden house suspended on the wachsmannian stilts, with a scream that melted away in the woods: *Phalaris....* The name so long pursued had come back to the mind.

With that name and that motto, 20 issues of the magazine were published, unusual in its search of themes and images able, above all, to avoid the usual funereal and authoritarian tone of the architecture and to force the readers to reflect more on the sense of things.

It was particularly to the credit of Enrico Camplani, one of the two part-



Fig. 4 - 5

Covers of the newspaper of the Architecture Gallery with the first and last exhibition that took place at the Fondazione Masieri in Venice: Ignazio Gardella, Lambrate railway station; Manuel de Solà Morales, "El Mol de La Fusta" in Barcelona.



ners of *Tapiro*, and of Giovanni Fraziano who was, among my assistants, the right person for the role of editor-in-chief if this moral demand was going to be transmitted with the lightness of play.

Each issue was built on a subject, partly suggested by an exhibition, articulated in the ten sections of the magazine (correspondence, short essay, investigation, etc.) as dictated by reality.

In the columns, very important names in the theater (Bernardi, De Incontrera) poetry (Zanzotto, Universo) and even gourmet cooking (Cipriani, Danieleto), were alternated as collaborators or as authors of the projects, to capable people destined to become someone. An original idea was that of the double page indifferently destined to painting (Gillo Dorfles, Miela Reina, Felicidad Rodriguez), photography (Leo Castelli) and architectural drawings (the giraffe/house by Frank), etc.

For the architecture, the red threads were two: "The Italian School" (BBPR, Figini e Pollini, Gardella, Canella, Portoghesi, Rossi, Polesello, Semerani e Tamaro, Grassi, Monestiroli) and, in the discovery or rediscovery, "The other modern" (Luis Moya Blanco, Bogdan Bogdanovic, Dimitri Pikionis, Sedad Eldem, Josef Frank, Gustav Peichl, John Hejduk, Boris Podrecca, Vojtech Ravnikar).

Only two among the guests, perhaps the most important, George Grassi and Rafael Moneo, gave me one drawing of theirs.

The illusion was also to form, through a discussion free from commercial comparisons, an aware public opinion and a different responsibility in the schools of architecture not only towards the Local Authorities or, worse, the mechanisms of success.

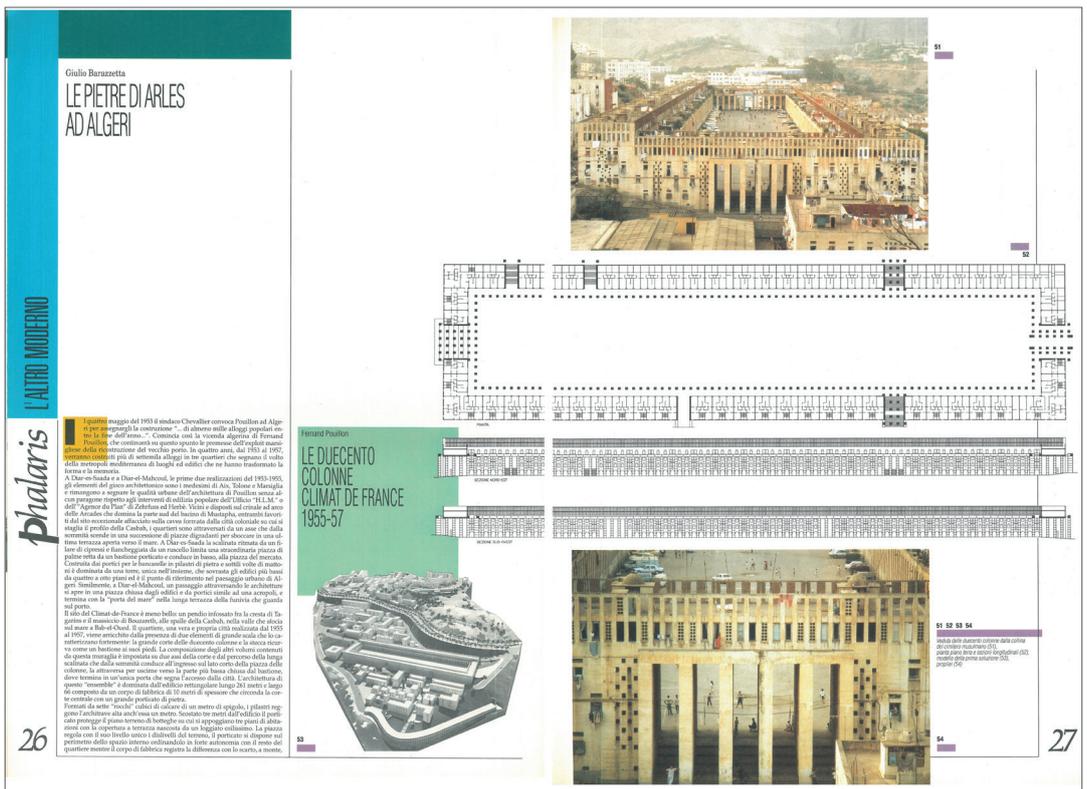
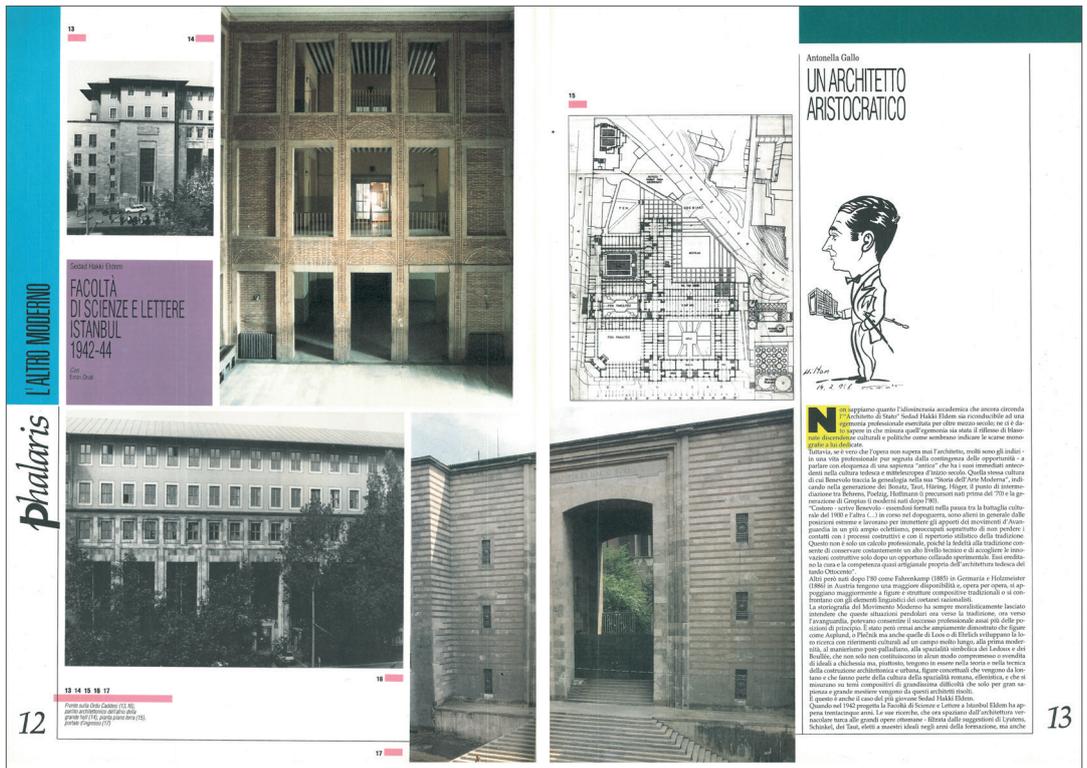


Fig. 6 - 7
Two double internal pages of the «Phalaris» number 16 on Mediterranean architecture.

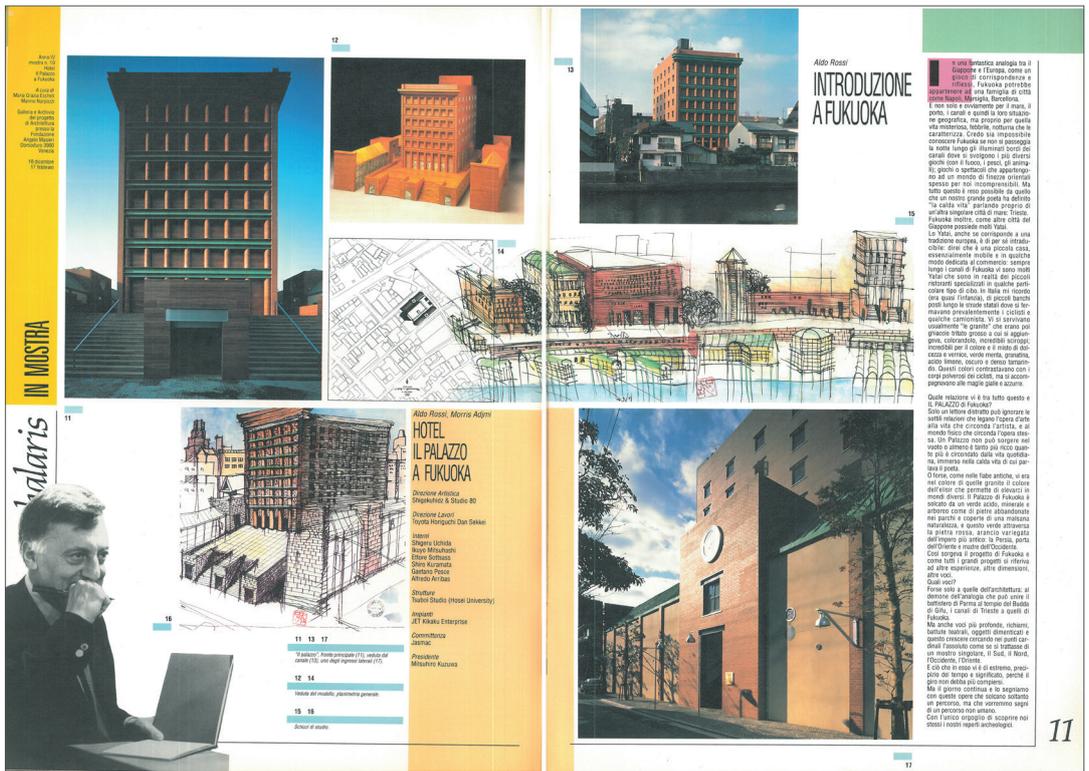


Fig. 8
An internal double page of the «Phalaris» number 11 on the “pleasure architecture”: amusement parks, cafes, hotels.

Fig. 9
A double internal page of the number 2 of «Phalaris».

Both the publisher of the first ten issues (*L'Arsenale*) and the second publisher (*Marsilio*) found in the University and in the two sponsors, *Bonifica*, from the IRI group, and Italcementi, a generous and illuminated commitment accompanied by the success of the magazine sales and subscriptions. The enthusiasm made us believe that there would be some economic recognition also for the collaborators.

I was with Barbara Ernst, the first secretary, at the hotel Bauer to wait for Andreotti for a meeting, born from his idea that «Phalaris», also published in English, acquired an international diffusion spreading through the architecture and the design made in Italy, the know-how of the whole productive sector.

But that day, the helicopter didn't land in Venice.

It happened that in just those days the history of his kiss with Riina was published in the daily paper. Tangentopoli also arrived and the president of Bonifica, a good person and the president of Italcementi, also had some significant judicial issues. A season of ambitious ideas escaped from the control of mediocrity, was ended. Not only «Phalaris».

Notes

¹ In Venetian dialect in the text, this expression refers to the curve of the Grand Canal N.d.T.)

Luciano Semerani leaves significant works of architecture for the history of the Italian city. Author of important cultural events ("KF Schinkel" in Venice and in Rome in 1982, "Trouver Trieste" in Paris in 1985, "Lina Bo Bardi" in Venice and in San Paolo between 2004 and 2006, "Tu mi sposerai" in Trieste in 2017) he directed the Architecture Gallery of the Fondazione Masieri in Venice and the «Phalaris» newspaper from 1988 to 1992. Present in all the major international architecture exhibitions his personal exhibitions of drawings were made in Florence, Mantua, Parma, Turin, Trieste, Venice. Academician of San Luca, a member for three years of the "Gestaltungbeirat" of Salzburg, he taught architecture and urban planning in Trieste, Venice, Vienna, New York. Coordinator of the Ph.D. in Architectural Composition of Venice from 2002 to 2012 he directed the research towards a formal analysis of the composition practice. He is one of the founders of "Stazione Rogers", the cultural center that in Trieste, with the recovery of a petrol station, has carried out since 2008, in the name of a friend and Maestro, an architectural dialogue with other disciplines.

Guido Zuliani Oppositions 1973-1984

Abstract

In 1973, from the rooms of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS) of New York, came out the first issue of «Oppositions», a magazine intended to be, in the '70s, an agent of radical transformations and a point of reference for US architectural culture that could generate a theoretical debate on architecture and its internationalization.

Directing it from 1974 to 1982 was an editorial committee consisting of the American architect Peter Eisenman, the Argentine architect Mario Gandelsonas, and the English historian Kenneth Frampton. The committee was joined later by the historians Anthony Vidler and Kurt Forster.

Keywords

Oppositions — Little Magazine — IAUS — Peter Eisenman

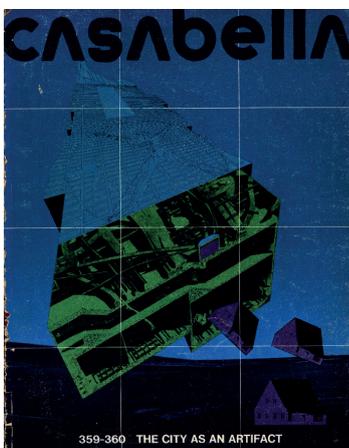


Fig. 1

Cover of the n. 359-360 of «Casabella» The City as an Artifact - December - January 1971.

In the winter of 1971, the Italian magazine «Casabella» published a monographic double issue 359-360, entirely produced by the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, better known by its acronym IAUS, titled *The City as an Artifact*.¹

That issue of «Casabella» introduced to Italian architectural culture, and to Europe in general, the New York Institute founded in 1967 by Peter Eisenman together with Arthur Drexler, the then director of the *Department of Architecture and Design* of the *Museum of Modern Art* in New York, and the historian and critic Colin Rowe at the time teaching at Cornell University, presenting its statute and a list of all its affiliates. With hindsight, that issue of the Italian magazine can be interpreted as a fundamental step towards the future publication of the Magazine «Oppositions», destined to become the '70s agent of radical transformations for American architectural culture and, at the same time, an initiator and a reference point – then the only one – for the unfolding of the theoretical debate on architecture and its internationalization.²

The first issue of «Oppositions» would emerge from the rooms of the Institute, to whose vicissitudes the magazine would be inextricably tied, in September 1973, proposing a project to review architectural culture to bring it into line with the response to the socio-economic transformations of the two previous decades and to the political and cultural unrest that in the preceding years had questioned the Modernist precepts for architecture and the city alike.³

At the time, the magazine was directed by an editorial board consisting of the American architect Peter Eisenman, the Argentinean architect Mario Gandelsonas, and the British historian Kenneth Frampton. Between 1974 and 1982, and with the subsequent addition to the editorial board of the historians Anthony Vidler and Kurt Foster, the first issue would be fol-



Fig. 2

Members of the IAUS football team version. On the shirt the logo of the Institute with the Vitruvian Man by Cesare Cesariano. From «Casabella» n. 359-360.

lowed by another 24. Issue 26, published in 1984, and considered apocryphal by many of the IAUS members, was to quietly close the series and also mark the definitive closure of the Institute.

The issue of «Casabella» which publicly presented a first summary of the general themes that underlay the discussions conducted at the Institute on the urban environment and the role of architecture in the processes of its construction, thereby highlighting their shared theoretical premises, appeared as the crucial point of passage and a clarifier for the intellectual history behind the publication of its magazine «Oppositions». Likewise, that monographic issue represented the first concretization of the long-pursued ambition of IAUS' founder and director, Eisenman, of introducing himself into the rich annals of avant-garde magazines, the so-called *Little Magazines*, an ambition that it may be useful to bear in mind.⁴

At the beginning of the '60s, during his stay in England and his direct contact with magazines like «Architectural Design» and «Architectural Review», innovative journals deeply involved in the cultural changes in post-war anglophone society, as well as with the publications of groups engaged in the review and contestation of the principles of the Modern Movement such as Team 10 and Archigram, and the extremely animated contexts of the Architectural Association and the Independent Group, Eisenman immediately became aware of the necessity for American architectural culture, characterized as it was by professional pragmatism on the one hand and by the cultural isolation of academia on the other, to have an arena for critical discussion which, like the British situation, might institute a productive relationship between theoretical and historical research, new pedagogical models, and new forms of professional practice in relation to the design of the city, which in the United States was trapped within processes of quantitative planning unable to tackle – when not being their direct cause – the dramatic socio-economic contradictions that the American city and the extra-urban territory were experiencing in those years.

Eisenman's conviction of the importance for architectural culture, America's in particular, to define an independent group dedicated to research based on the Team 10 model, and at the same time of the vital necessity for a publication as press organ to disseminate research and debates on the example of the monographic issues of «Architectural Design» or «Le Carré Blue» dedicated to the work of Team 10, was reinforced during the two journeys that he made to continental Europe, and in particular to Italy, in the company of his Cambridge colleague and mentor Colin Rowe. It

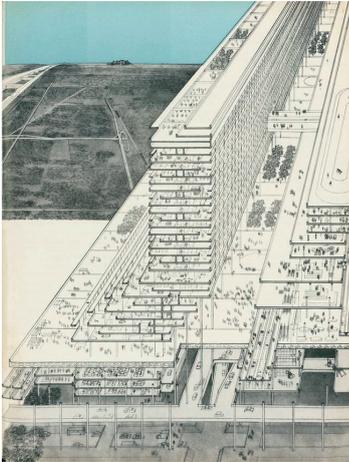


Fig. 3
P. Eisenman, M. Graves, The Jersey Corridor Project – 1965.

was during these trips that Eisenman discovered the European avant-garde schools and, more importantly, their magazines, like «De Stijl», «Mecano», «L'Esprit Nouveau», but also Pagano's «Casabella» and Moretti's «Spazio». Fully understanding the polemical role that these magazines had played in the dissemination of Modernist culture between the two world wars, Eisenman would become an insatiable collector of them.⁵

In 1963, back in the United States, with a position as Assistant Professor at Princeton, Eisenman began to work with his colleague Michael Graves on a project for a linear city aggregated around the infrastructural system connecting Boston to Washington, and of which they would design the segment between New York and Philadelphia. The project would take the name “Jersey Corridor” and in its experimental form was intended to test architecture as a specific practice of spatial definition in relation to the scales of intervention traditionally characteristic of territorial planning. With substantial interdisciplinary contributions, as well as considerable financial support for the project from the school, Eisenman had the opportunity to muster a certain number of young architects at the beginning of their career.⁶

What characterized this group was, as in Eisenman's case, an awareness on the one hand of the insufficiency of the current form of professional practice, which was tendentially technocratic and acritical, and on the other, of the contents of university teaching whose discussions appeared to be isolated from the real events of urban transformation in tackling the problem of the built environment. The outcome was the establishment of a working group that took the name “CASE”, an acronym of *Conference of Architects for the Study of the Environment*.⁷ The group's intention, in the context of a series of conferences, eight of which took place between Princeton, MIT and MoMA, and through public presentations of concrete projects, was to discuss those issues regarding the role of architecture as a practice to define the physical form of the built environment in relation to planning processes; its theoretical formulation, and its political function in tackling the problems of the contemporary American city, in those years particularly pressing because of both the unchecked suburban sprawl and the social tensions present in the often degraded urban centres; a review of pedagogical models together with a redefinition of the relationships between architectural culture and professional practice, while dealing with questions of perception and the psychology of form.

Certain of the necessity for a channel to communicate and discuss CASE's production, with money granted by the university for research tied to the Jersey Corridor and with the offer of a teaching post, Eisenman “imported” from England the historian Kenneth Frampton, met during his stay overseas and at the time technical editor of «Architectural Design», with the specific objective of setting up a magazine to become the official organ of CASE. This magazine, which was to have had the significant name of *Re:form*, because of differences between Eisenman and Frampton – the latter proposing an editorial board which did not include the American architect – would never see the light of day.

Many of the themes concerning the specific role of architecture in the transformation of the city that were central to CASE's development would remain the same in the first years of *IAUS*'s activities, and they formed the experience that the essay published in «Casabella» would emerge from. But among these, one in particular, still not as much in evidence in the issue of the Italian magazine as it was in «Oppositions», and often overlooked by critics, would outline what was to be a fundamental trait of the *IAUS* group's cultural project, and at the same time a consolidating structure of the magazine. This theme was the result of the converging of two positions in the formation of CASE. At one extreme, the historical-critical

model defined in the late '40s by Colin Rowe, who had been a member of CASE from the very beginning, and who had been a student of Wittkower at the Warburg Institute, in his essays *Mathematics of the Ideal Villa* and *Mannerism and Modern*, together with the theoretical elaboration of the model that Eisenman was developing as a follow-up to his PhD thesis, and the early development of his work on Terragni. At the opposite extreme, the positions of two other founding members of CASE, Stanford Anderson and Henry Millon, both history professors at MIT, a position that emerged out of a discussion that took place during the famous Cranbrook Teachers' Seminar in 1964, where the conjunction of History, Criticism and Theory was proposed as historically necessary as a foundation to review both the structure of education and the practice of architecture, in explicit opposition to the tradition of the Modern Movement.⁸

As already mentioned, this triangulation of Criticism, History, and Theory would be, for Eisenman and his fellow travellers faithful to the IAUS idea, seen as a place "to condense teaching, research, and design into a single process" with the intention of "bridging the gap between the theoretical world of universities and the pragmatic one of urban planning bodies"⁹, and conceived as a research centre where a small community of professionals engaged in theoretical, disciplinary, historical, and critical fields, as well as students, collaborated in research and practical projects in which the architectural discipline was practised on real urban themes proposed and financed by public institutions such as the federal agency of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or the Urban Development Corporation (UDC), an agency of the State of New York, all under the patronage of the MoMA Department of Architecture and Design. Above all, this triangulation would become the framework around which the production of the Institute's future magazine would be arranged.

Despite the first magazine project failing, first CASE and then, later, the IAUS, would succeed in producing several exemplary publications of the group's activities with a certain cultural impact, at least for the American scene. The initial work hypotheses of CASE on the theme of the urban project found a first tangible definition in the catalogue of the exhibition *New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal*, in which members of CASE presented projects of urban reformulation for the entire northern sector of the island of Manhattan produced by working groups set up within their respective universities.¹⁰

It was in the wake of this exhibition, and as Eisenman's response to the rejection of his candidacy to the Princeton chair, that the Institute would take shape, continuing the work begun by CASE and unwaveringly pursuing the goal of publications with a strong research content. The publications by the IAUS that preceded the publishing of «Oppositions» included the research work *New Urban Settlements* commissioned in 1968 by the New York City Planning Commission and only partially published the following year; *Another Chance for Housing: Low Rise Alternatives* from 1973, the catalogue of the homonymous exhibition held at the MoMA presenting the project results of research and design work on new residential typologies begun in the late '60s and commissioned by the New York State Urban Development Corporation, of which some examples would be realized in the following years and, perhaps the most important among them, the intensive study directed by Stanford Anderson, exemplary for the wealth of its imported multidisciplinary contributions, on the theme of urban streets and which would not be published until 1978 as *On Streets*, edited by Anderson himself, with fundamental essays mostly produced by members of the IAUS such as J. Rykvert, A. Vidler, T. Schumacher, D. Agrest, and K. Frampton, but also with important contributions from sociologists and anthropologists such as R. Guttman. To this must be added the publication

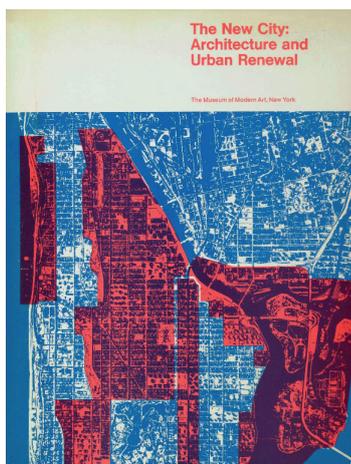


Fig. 4
Exhibition catalog *The New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal*. Museum of Modern Art in New York - 1967.

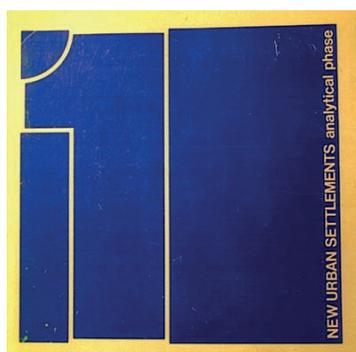


Fig. 5
Cover of the first volume of *New Urban Settlements: Analytical Phase* designed by Robert Slutzky - IAUS, 1971.

in 1972 of the volume *Five Architects*, the outcome of the last meeting of CASE at the MoMA, and the catalogue of the first exhibition organized at the Institute, dedicated to Constructivism and curated by K. Frampton and the painter R. Slutky.¹¹

It is in relation to this panorama of different research projects and publications by subject and format, that the role and importance it would have for the Institute emerges, not to mention Eisenman's ambitions, still geared towards a magazine project that emulated those of the historical avant-garde, with the monographic issue of «Casabella» as a recap, and at the same time with the international exposure, not so much of individual research and specific case studies, but, much more importantly, to define the common theoretical background from which such specific research originated and the background it could be framed against.

To obtain a paragon that is certainly not exhaustive but perhaps sufficient to understand the context of and implicit reasons behind the monographic issue of «Casabella», it is equally essential to take into account the changes that were taking place within the IAUS itself in the late '60s and in '73, and how these, by broadening and multiplying the horizon of themes and perspectives questioned in the activities of the Institute would contribute to a transformation and expansion of the critical-theoretical contents which «Casabella» can be considered the first attempt at a summary of, and «Oppositions», the mature and at the same time more problematic one.

The initial group, immediately expanded to include the historian Stanford Anderson, the Argentine architect and liaison with the MoMA Emilio Ambasz, and the painter Robert Slutzky, in '71 was to be permanently enriched by some culturally quite different figures with the arrival of K. Frampton, who looked at architecture from positions critical of consumer society that were close to the neo-Marxism of the Frankfurt School and the stances of Hannah Arendt, Joseph Rykwert, the architect T. Schumaker, and the sociologist and anthropologist Robert Gutman. This was an important addition that introduced themes linked to structural anthropology, and above all by the Argentine architects Mario Gandelsonas and Diana Agrest, recently arrived from Paris where they had attended the courses of R. Barthes at the École Pratique des Hautes Études and the post-structuralist intellectual circles that gathered around the magazine *Tel Quel*, to recall here only some of the many arrivals, with various responsibilities in the activities of the Institute.

Not to be underestimated either was the contribution, by this time offsite, of A. Vidler, who brought to the Institute a vision of history informed by Foucauldian thought. The arrival of these new figures corresponded, and was made possible in part, to the growing popularity of the Institute and the consequent growth in the numbers of affiliated schools, which resulted in a significant increase in the fees being paid by a growing number of students. Following this growth, the Institute moved to a much larger space which included, in the two floors occupied, an exhibition space, a library, a conference room, and other spaces available for sundry activities in addition to teaching, and that allowed the management of the numerous new cultural activities which began to take shape autonomously at this point.

In this new context, the issue of «Casabella» should have offered an opportunity to respond to a necessary formulation, beyond specific research and planning opportunities, of potential general conceptual principles shared by the various questions that began to emerge within the Institute.

This conceptual background was to find explicit expression in the title given to the magazine issue: the concept of the "City as an Artifact" applicable by extension to the entire anthropic environment, just as the conceptual hypothesis, the philosophical position underlying not only the essays presented but more in general the cultural attitude of the Institute, was



Fig. 6
Dinner at IAUS about 1974.
Among those present were P. Eisenman, M. Gandelsonas, M. Vriesendorp, R. Koolhaas, J. Bloomfield, A. MacNair, A. Vidler, R. Meier, K. Frampton, D. Agrest.

reduced to the single work of architecture, with all its ramifications. In this regard, the brief initial fragment of the essay *A Dialectical Aspect: The City as an Artifact* was eloquent. In it, the historian and critic S. Anderson effectively summarized the general implications of this assumption. The American historian opened his essay by stating that “A primitive village reveals not only the materials and technologies available to the individuals who built it, but also [...] the cosmology of that society. This is no less true in an ‘advanced’ technological society.” The refusal to discuss such metaphysical content amounted to Anderson to obscuring “the most significant task of architecture: to establish an ever-greater correspondence between our values and our physical environment. [...] Architecture - like any other objectification of human knowledge - is not limited to pure ‘expression’ or ‘communication’. It produces statements of truth that are constantly verified by the continuous evolution of the metaphysics of the subject, and by the limitations and possibilities posed by the world of things and individuals.”¹²

For Anderson, what was fundamental was the recognition – shared in forms and accents that were different from the other authors – of the intentional, whether conscious or unconscious, and at the same time dialectically complex form of the city, its architecture and spatial organization and what was summarized in these few lines, assumable, as we have said, on a conceptual basis of the work and writings of the other members of the Institute. This saw architecture, and with it the entire anthropic environment, as a complex cultural object, directed between, on the one hand, the specificity and autonomy of its objectives – the research into nature, the role and significance of physical form in architecture and in the construction of the city – and its specific tools, namely its nature as a specific and autonomous technique not only in its means but also in its content. On the other, its nature was as a plural, porous, stratified object, in some sense “polyglot”, placed at the intersection of historically determined dialectical processes that link subject and reality and in which architecture is simultaneously a product and an agent.

This was the twofold meaning of architecture as the primary agent in the construction of the physical environment that for the members of the Institute would place it within the field of humanistic disciplines, thus linking it to contemporary developments in subjects such as linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and urban geography, and their contemporary developments with the conceptual and theoretical implications that this brought

and which, as we shall see, was to mark «Oppositions»' story.

In the «Casabella» issue, these two polarities, still latent and in tension between one another – the coexistence of autonomy and heteronomy as the dual nature of the architectural object as a cultural object – manifested firstly in Eisenman's essay *Notes on Conceptual Architecture – Towards a Definition*, dedicated to the primacy of conceptual content in determining the laws within the formal definition processes of the architectural object, and secondly in Frampton's sociopolitical critique, influenced, as we said, by the thinking of the Frankfurt School, of the inclusivist urbanism veined with populism of D. Scott Brown and R. Venturi.¹³

These two essays defined the extremes of a spectrum of potential positions along which would be placed not only the various critical-methodological essays published in the Italian magazine, but would also constitute the implicit poles within which the whole history of the debate would develop to characterize the American magazine, especially in its first issues.

It should be noted that, defined in this way, as a complex cultural object, the architectural artefact and its function in constructing the human environment are ontologically positioned in antithesis to the modernist idea of *object-manifesto*, the emblem of an ideally hypothesized future, and that of a *technical object*, a product, to use the words of K. Frampton, of the “totalitarianism of the technique” and of its assemblage in urban form and this, together with the position that indissolubly linked Criticism, History, and Theory, clearly showed the IAUS group the need for a kind of publication of which the «Casabella» issue was a first attempt, but which would need to find its own specific form, fundamentally distancing itself from the models originally provided to Eisenman and his group by the magazines of the historical avant-garde movements. In fact, it was to be the tension produced by this research that would be the vital thrust of «Oppositions», the dynamism and richness of its cultural project.

As the historian J. Ockman¹⁴ already pointed out, the awareness of the historicity of this need would be clearly expressed only later, in 1974, in the editorial with a decidedly programmatic tone introducing the second issue of the magazine, where the three original editors, Eisenman, Frampton and Gandelsonas, declared that “It must have occurred to the readers of our first issue that OPPOSITIONS present itself in a similar vein as the so-called ‘Little Magazines’ of the twenties and thirties, and it is scarcely an accident since the editors continue to be admirers of such polemical journals as *De Stijl* and *L'Esprit Nouveau*. At the same time, it is patently obvious this is hardly an opportune moment for the spontaneous emergence of that kind of polemical magazine; the time for this kind of polemical discourse has passed and we have no interest in resurrecting it.” To this condition the three editors responded by stating that in practising an active critique of the contemporary conditions of design, the project pursued by the magazine would consist of “a new polemical form which is dialectical in nature rather than rhetorical”, no longer a militant magazine-manifesto then, but a forum open also to polemically divergent positions.¹⁵

But let us return briefly to our account. The «Casabella» issue would be followed the following year by an attempt to respond in an anglophone context with a monographic issue of «Architectural Design», rejected by the publishers who, in addition, literally amputated various parts of an article by Eisenman dedicated to the Smithsons' project for the Robin Hood Gardens¹⁶. It would be these rejections that would prompt Gandelsonas to suggest the publication of his own magazine, whose title he also proposed, produced entirely within the Institute, and edited by Gandelsonas himself together with Eisenman and Frampton.

The first issue of «Oppositions» contained five essays, almost all written previously, and produced by as many members of the Institute: Rowe pub-

lished the essay *Neoclassicism and Modern Architecture* written between '56 and '57; Eisenman presented *From Gloden Lane to Robin Hood Gardens*, a full version of the text censored by *Architectural Design* with the passages suppressed by the editors of the English magazine in bold type; Frampton published *Industrialization and the Crisis of Architecture*, based on a conference on his studies of the work of the German philosopher Hannah Arendt; Vidler a critical essay on the regressive nature of contemporary architectural utopias entitled *News from the Realm of No-where* [sic], while Gandelsonas and Diana Agrest published *Semiotics and Architecture: Ideological Consumption or Theoretical Work*, a summary of their semiotic approach to the critique of the relationship between ideology and theory in architectural practice.

For the three editors, the problematic dialectic between positions that assumed the nature of a cultural object of architecture began from quite distinct cultural contexts and concerns, and that they intend[ed] “discuss and develop specific notion about the nature of architecture and design in relation to the man-made world” appears immediately evident: in the opening editorial, the three editors emphasized three different areas of debate underlining that “[...] our respective concerns as individuals for formal, sociocultural and political discourse will make themselves felt in our joint editing of OPPOSITIONS. The opposition alluded to in the title will first and foremost begin at home.”¹⁷

This reference, in part directed to broadening the debate inside the Institute, expanded with the arrival of Frampton, Agrest and Gandelsonas, but not only. It was directed above all to the contents of the three essays representing the positions of the three editors – the analysis and conceptual critique of form in Eisenman’s essay, the analysis and critique of the relationship between architecture and cultural industry in the late-capitalist context of Frampton, the analysis and criticism from the semiotic point of view of the ideological nature of the theoretical praxis in architecture of Agrest and Gandelsonas – which by immediately triangulating the debate within the magazine between autonomy and heteronomy outlined the thematic terrain on which a variegated constellation of critical contributions would settle over time. And if the choice of the word “opposition” as the title of the magazine intended to delineate, on the polemical lines of the avant-garde magazines so dear to the group, a position and a common programmatic line of criticism in the contemporary practice of architecture, it was the plural, but not neutrally pluralist, version of the word, with the addition of the final “s”, that confirmed the potential contents it would contain, as would the observation and acceptance that analysis and criticism of architecture as a cultural object could only reproduce its multiple, coexistent, and occasionally antithetical natures.

And yet, significant evidence of the internal discussion on the nature and meaning of the magazine came from the graphics chosen by Eisenman for the draft cover, which with the first P of «Oppositions» made transparent, (a choice that would significantly last only for the first two issues), suggested an alternative reading of the title as “O POSITIONS”, suggesting on the one hand the idea of a neutral container, a *forum* in the words of the publishers, willing, at least in part, to accept different contents, and on the other, as already noted, proposing a clear reference of a Barthian ancestry to zero-degree thinking on architecture, i.e., to a moment to re-think and re-establish the ontological bases of the theoretical discourse on architecture.¹⁸

As a side note, it should be noticed (a far from irrelevant fact especially regarding not only the evolution of the international profile that the magazine would soon assume, but also the changed composition of affiliates at the Institute), that the authors, with the exception of Eisenman, and unlike the

«Casabella» issue, were all of European origin, either directly or through specific cultural influences, as in the cases of Gandelsonas and Agrest.

The attempt at a solution to summarize this problematic dialectic, the need to find a form in the relationship between divergent and indeed polemical positions, found an answer in the second issue in the formula of a conceptual grid that would denote the different sections of the magazine's palimpsest, and which, as programmatically recognized in the editorial again co-written by the three editors, now explicitly introduced the Criticism-History-Theory triptych as a framework of its structure: "In short, what we are striving for is the inducement of a number of specific discourses; namely, the critic of built work as a vehicle for ideas; the reassessment of the past as a means of determining the necessary relations existing between built form and social values; the establishment of a spectrum of theoretical discourses linking ideology and built form." As a corollary and support for this thematic framework they added "the documentation of little known archival material as a means for advancing scholarship and thought in the field as a whole; and finally, the publication of reviews and letters that have a direct bearing on the discourses at hand. As to the last they seem to us to be primarily twofold: firstly, an ongoing discourse on the place of physical form in architecture and planning today; and secondly, the indivisible ideological and socio-political implications of architectural production as a whole."

The titles of the various sections, which would remain the same throughout the magazine's life, were respectively *Oppositions*, specifically dedicated to *Criticism*, *History* and *Theory*, followed by *Documents* and *Reviews and Letters*.¹⁹

Consistent with this programmatic definition, the second issue opened up to external contributions that were very different from one another, such as those of Stuart Cohen, *Physical Context/Cultural Context: Including it All*, dedicated to concepts in inclusion and contextualism, or of C. Rowe on *Character and Composition*, and *The Fountainhead* by art critic Rosalin Krauss dedicated to Minimalism, and also saw, in the *Documents* section, together with a text by R. Koolhaas on Leonidov's *Narkomtiazhprom*, the debut as editor of an extensive reasoned bibliography on the Smithsons by Julia Bloomfield, who was to become the technical editor of the magazine from the next issue, and from then on would be unanimously recognized as an indispensable figure for the compilation and success of the publication. The third issue of «Oppositions», published in May '74, marked another decisive and fundamental step in the evolution of the debate among publishers on the critical contents of the magazine in the face of the aeological counterpoint between autonomy and heteronomy. Having clearly stated that "[...] we are more than commonly aware of the need to justify the existence of a magazine, which persists in attempting to offer a critical discourse on a subject matter whose essence and meaning are only too marginal to the basic interest of the society at large. A prevailing skepticism obliges us [...] to ask ourselves what, if anything, is the common factor in our editorial position", the three publishers continued to note that "It has gradually become clear that we are sharply divided as to the importance which each of us attaches to the relationship of architecture and society. [...] our respective positions as editors are of more consequence for the way in which they differ than for what they have in common. In short, we have become increasingly aware of the impossibility of writing a joint editorial with the result that we have come to the resolution that this will our last common effort."²⁰

From the words of Eisenman, Frampton and Gandelsonas, far from describing a simple personal polemic but rather a testimony of the critical condition in which the architectural culture found itself in the '70s to be

observed directly in their debate, a clear awareness emerges of the irreducibility to a dialectical summary of the different languages for reading and critically interpreting the processes of constructing the physical environment, seen outside the technical determinism of modernism, and of contemporary neo-modernism, as well as a univocal reading and the role and nature of architecture within them.

Paradoxically, it would be this recognized and accepted impossibility, this acknowledged “failure” to build the magazine of a “movement”, equally fashionable as those of the various historical avant-garde schools, expressed so clearly by the editors, together with the steadfastness of the structure of its palimpsest, that would determine the fortune and longevity of the magazine, which right to the end would successfully continue to be a container for the most important voices and contributions of international debate, and would indeed be the main architect of this internationalization. In confirmation of the awareness of this condition, and realizing that in the face of the historical impossibility of fusing movements, the path to follow would be that of the albeit rather selective multiplication of the voices recorded in the debate, in this same issue, the essay *L'Architecture dans le Boudoir* by Manfredo Tafuri, which introduced the position of the Italian historian to English-speaking readers, and with it that of the Institute of History of Architecture in Venice, on the state of architecture of those years, thus adding further contents of the discussion and directing attention towards Italian critiques that were particularly dear not only to Eisenman but also to Gandelsonas and Agrest, the latter being responsible for inviting Tafuri to Princeton, and the consequent meeting between the Italian historian and the group of the Institute.²¹

As announced, the next three issues of «Oppositions» would be introduced by three separate editorials, added with their own titles as organic parts to the magazine's index and each written by a single editor— in Issue 4 *On Reading Heidegger* by K. Frampton; in Issue 5 *Neo-Functionalism* by M. Gandelsonas; in Issue 6 *Post-Functionalism* by P. Eisenman – in which the respective lines of research were reaffirmed and which was followed, in Issue 7, by the editorial *The Third Typology* written by A. Vidler, a new addition to the editorial group starting from this issue.

At the same time, the spectrum of contributions expanded, and with them the content that would find a place in the magazine's pages. Among the most significant ones, and indicative of the wide range of positions that would find a congruous space in the publication's pages thanks to its approach, it is worth mentioning in Issue 5 of the summer of 1976 the essay by R. Moneo Aldo Rossi: *The Idea of Architecture and the Modena Cemetery*, Rossi's project presented under its original title *The Blue of the Sky*, along with the somewhat critical texts, although from opposing sides, of the personal positions of the group of editors, such as that of Tafuri on the work of the NYFive *American Graffiti: Five x Five = Twenty-five* and that of D. Scott Brown *On Architectural Formalism and Social Concern: A Discourse for Social Planners and Radical Chic Architects*. Then, in Issue 6, an important text by Agrest *Design versus Non-Design*, an acute analysis of semiotic nature of the conceptual tension between disciplinary autonomy and heteronomy, together with three essays, respectively by C. Rowe, C. Moore and V. Scully, dedicated to the work of R. Venturi and his project for the Yale Mathematics Building; in Issue 7, together with an essay by J. Rykwert *Classic and Neo-Classic*, the essay by B. Tschumi *Architecture and Transgression*.²²

Marking the discontinuity resulting from the closure of this other cycle of the magazine's life, a closure that would be recognized in the Editorial of Issue 9, the last to be signed by the editors, Issue 8, defined as a “Special Issue”, was a monographic edition edited by A. Vidler entitled *Paris under*



Fig. 7
Tafuri at Princeton with P. Eisenman, M. Gandelsonas and A. Vidler, 1974.

the Academy: City and Ideology as a critical response to the essential conventionality of the exhibition *The Architecture of the École des Beaux-Arts* staged at MoMA at the end of 1975.

This first monographic version of the magazine was followed by three others, all considered as real separate volumes: the two abundant double issues 15/16 of 1979 and 19/20 of 1980 both edited by K. Frampton and dedicated respectively to the work of Le Corbusier before and after the war, and Issue 25 of 1982 entitled *Monument/Memory* edited by the Swiss historian K. Foster, who joined the editorial group starting from «Oppositions» number 12 in the spring of '78.²³

The editorial introduction to Issue 9 which was, if we exclude the isolated case of the one written by Vidler in Issue 17²⁴ the only real essay, was dedicated to the critical confrontation between nineteenth-century Historicism and Post-Modernist neo-historicism. Being the last of the series produced collectively, the editors took stock of the first four years of publications, pointing out with good reason the role played by *OPPOSITIONS* in defining the place and grounds for the development of a high-level theoretical-critical discussion, on the one hand promoting and animating the debate between critics and architects, and on the other, that between Europe and America. The authors then reaffirmed the basic research objective committed to, defining the “[...] the ontological bases of contemporary architecture: the nature of its practice and the foundations of its formal and technical production” and how this would continue to be exercised on the three levels of Criticism, History, and Theory, i.e. through maintenance of the original sections of the magazine, examining the nature of concepts such as “Formalism”, “Realism”, “Modernism” and “Post-Modernism”.²⁵ With the intention of continuing in their simultaneous role as promoters of and actors in the discussion, both within the magazine and through it, the editors, having abandoned the form of the “Editorial”, would represent themselves from here on. In addition to soliciting and selecting the essays to be published and to writing a sizable number themselves, they would comment on the contributions in the sections “Oppositions” and “Theory” with extensive critical introductions defined first as “Commentary” and subsequently “Postscript”. This new form of intervention would begin to

wane within a few issues and then disappear altogether to underline in part the cultural changes that were taking place in the early '80s with the emergence of post-structuralist currents which, by launching a profound criticism of some of the cultural categories from which «Oppositions» had emerged, began to re-orient the interests of some of the main actors, who were so stretched and so diversified that they were now living for the necessity of an articulate life of their own inside the Institute, with the arrival of figures such as R. Moneo, R. Koolhaas and B. Tschumi, A. Rossi, M. Scolari and G. Ciucci, to mention only a few. To this must be added reasons relating to the editors' own concerns and commitments. Although still engaged in the production of the magazine, they were increasingly involved in academic and design activities outside the Institute.

And if the latter editorial which simultaneously addressed the final word, albeit minimal, on the future programme, and was in a certain sense a farewell, marked the end of the magazine's internal debate focused on the great effort of defining the specific disciplinary nature of the architecture and its theoretical definition in unitary terms, in the following 16 issues, «Oppositions» would not see any reduction in its function as an arena for the most advanced positions and discussions that the architectural culture of the '70s and early '80s expressed.

The programmatic stance critical of the practice of architecture and the structure of the sections that the magazine would continue to be divided into, was linked, we repeat again, to a hypothesis of the fundamental relationship between Criticism, History, and Theory, through whose filter, to use the final words of the latter editorial, «Oppositions» would continue to question “[...] the fate of the humanist legacy in a modernist epoch; the specific nature of ideology and its role in the creation of culture; the problematic nature of architecture and urbanism subject to the impact of accelerating industrial production and consumption; and, finally, the nature of linguistic operations in the generation and assimilation of non-verbal art”, and would continue to frame the most significant contributions advanced by the architectural culture of the decade.²⁶

Here is not the place to go into the details of the individual contributions nor the different positions and schools of thought that would find space in the magazine's pages, but it is perhaps necessary to mention the names of some of its most significant authors to render the idea of the cultural horizon that continued to converge in the magazine. In its pages, together with the numerous essays of the editors, in particular Frampton and Vidler who continued to develop their own critical lines, room was made for the interventions of historians from different schools such as the aforementioned M. Tafuri, who, between '74 and '79 published the main sections of *The Sphere and the Labyrinth*, including the introduction *The Historical “Project”*, to which must be added the long essay by Giuseppe Terragni: *The Subject and the Mask*, and those of other exponents of the Venetian school such as F. dal Co, G. Teyssot, G. Ciucci, R. Masiero, alongside S. Anderson, A. Colquhoun, K. Foster, and also S. von Moos, I. Sola-Morales, and H. Yatsuka, to name just a few of the best known, in addition to the early writings of an emerging female roster of historians such as Mary McLeod and Joan Ockman. Among the architect “designers”, empowered by the editorial staff to express theoretical-critical positions rather than projects, in addition to the aforementioned Eisenman, Agrest, Gandelsonas, Moneo who continued to publish their essays, we ought to mention completely different figures, from D. Libeskind to P. Johnson and G. Grassi, from H. Fujii to O. Bohigas, and L. Kier.

In the '80s and '90s, with the consolidation of the academic careers of the founders and many of the authors associated with the magazine, the discussions that had animated the pages of «Oppositions» would relocate

to the academic world: at MIT Anderson established the PhD in History, Theory and Criticism in Architecture, Art and Urban Form which he directed from 1974 until 1991; Eisenman taught at the Cooper Union and at Princeton; at the Cooper Union he also taught Agrest and, for a short period, Tschumi; at Princeton, where Gandelsonas was also teaching, Vidler became Chair of the PhD programme dedicated to the Theory and History of Architecture until the early 1990s; in the early '70s Frampton began teaching at Columbia where he went on to direct the PhD programme in Theory and History of Architecture for many years; Columbia's teachers also included the historians Mary McLeod and Joan Ockman, and the latter would become the director of the Buell Centre for the Study of American Architecture, remaining there for a long time, as well as B. Tschumi who in 1988 would become its Dean.

As a witness of the theoretical discussion on architecture and to fill the cultural void that the closure of «Oppositions» had left, came the magazine *Assemblage*, directed for 41 issues, from 1986 to 2000, by the historian Michael Hays, who had trained under the guidance of H. Millon and later of S. Anderson, and by Alicia Kennedy. The members of the initial Advisory Board included M. Gandelsonas, S. Anderson and M. McLeod.²⁷ *Assemblage* was to carry on in the footsteps of the cultural project set up by the Institute's magazine, expanding its horizons with a distinct and greater awareness of the themes and ambitions that had supported the debate both inside and outside it, and opening up to the new generation of critics, historians, and designers that was emerging in the late '80s.

Describing in the editorial post to the introduction of the first issue the notion of *Assemblage* as a concept that “It suggests borrowed and transformed material, form history, literary criticism, philosophy, politics; it suggests heterogeneity, collision, incompleteness” but “as distinct from passive, all-accommodating pluralism”, the editors defined the magazine as “*is a format for oppositional knowledge*” and directed their attention directly to the question of the unstable confine between autonomy and heteronomy not only in architectural practice, but also in those of history and criticism, recognizing that “Normative standard of practice can be coercive as well as productive; and disciplinary boundaries are all too often designed to maintain the status quo” and that therefore, “Dealing adequately with architecture and its worldly condition must often involve crossing institutionally defined disciplinary boundaries.”

, thereby investigating, so to speak, that initial triptych on which the «Oppositions» project had been established.²⁸

These would be the themes that would confront the educated generation in the academic institutions to which the members of the Institute had moved, or that they influenced through the international dissemination of «Oppositions», which would extend the theoretical-critical discussion on architecture, under the pressure of new forms of interpreting society, to include themes that increasingly addressed a critical reading of the cultural and political significance of the work of architects, historians and critics as intellectual practices inexorably inscribed within complex mechanisms of social production and of the various forms of power that act in it. The pages of *Assemblage* would bring visibility not only to the new intake of critics and historians, from Stan Allen to Jennifer Bloomer and Catherin Ingraham, from Beatrice Colomina to Marck Wigley, Felicity Scott, Jeffrey Kipness, Sanford Kwinter, Mark Rakatansky, Sarah Whiting, and Robert Somol, but also young designers such as Enric Miralles and Carmen Pinos, Herzog and Demeron, Will Arets, Jesie Reiser and Nunaho Umemoto, Preston Scott Cohen, and Greg Lynn.

The words that the historian Michael Hays placed at the end of his reflection on the story of «Oppositions» clearly illustrate the phase of genera-

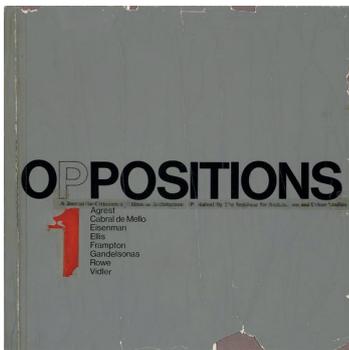


Fig. 8

P. Eisenman, study for the cover of the first issue of «Oppositions», 1973.

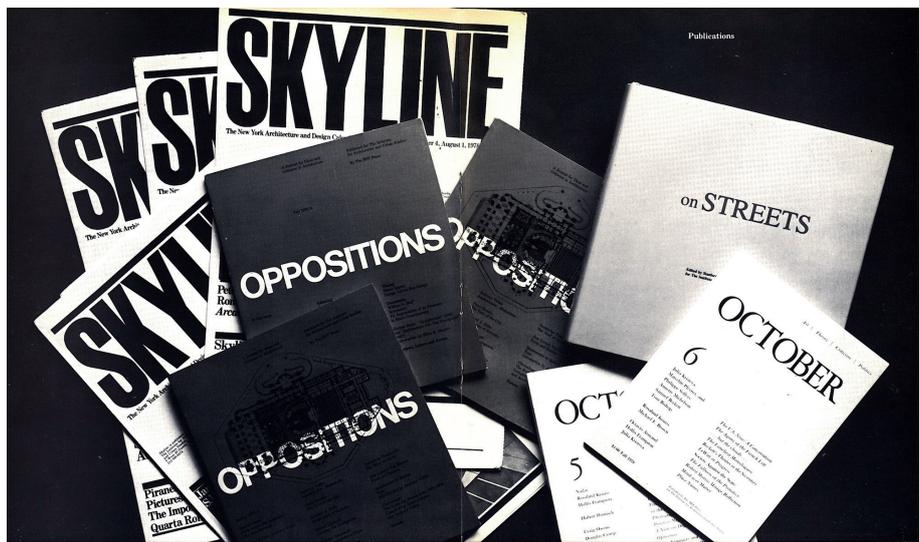


Fig. 9

The IAUS publications. Image taken from a presentation brochure of the 1979 Institute.

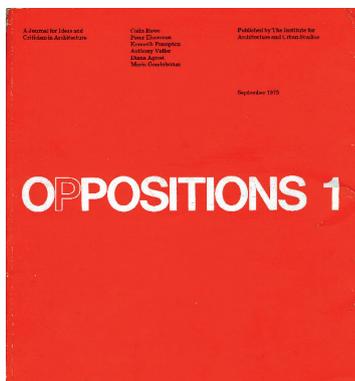


Fig. 10

«Oppositions» n. 1, 1973.

tional transition that *Assemblage* represented: “While the theorization of the autonomous working of architecture was never really abandoned by the generation that took up OPPOSITIONS’ discourse, new textual strategies, based on those forged by OPPOSITIONS’ discourse, began to fold architecture into constructions of themes that were never part of OPPOSITIONS’ repertoire – subjectivity and gender, power and property, geopolitics, and others” increasingly using, in these processes of transcoding, techniques derived from deconstructivism, psychoanalysis and theoretical criticism. Hays concluded: “Though by the middle of the ’80s architectural theory had begun to partition itself differently from the Oppositions model, the theoretical project still had the similar effect of enlarging architecture’s social and cultural domains and, indeed, expanding its genuinely practical power.”²⁹

But the true link with «Oppositions» remained the great mass of critical material deposited in its pages, a legacy that testified to one of the richest debates in the history of architecture on the nature and function of the discipline, its autonomy, and its complex link with political, economic and social processes, as an intellectual activity invested with values and objectives that transcend the pure and simple technological response to practical needs and demands. A legacy of particular importance in times when, using the concise words written by K. Frampton in the review in Issue 7 of «Oppositions» of the volume by R. Banham *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, “[...] the greatest happiness of the greatest number is seen in terms of rationalizing human welfare through technique; an anti-art polemic that welcome the determination of “culture” through consensus; the realization of human destiny not through politics but through the processes of the manipulated market”, times in which it remained fundamental to remember that “in the end, a ‘technological a priori is a political a priori,’ however far removed it may seem to be from the field of immediate power”.³⁰

Notes

¹ «Casabella» nos. 359-360: *The City as an Artifact* - December 1971, Editrice Casabella. This issue of the magazine was produced entirely by K. Frampton, who, for the occasion, moved for a brief period to Milan to work in contact with the magazine’s editorial staff.

² Frank, Suzanne: *IAUS: An Insider Memoir*, AuthorHouse AuthorHouse, - 2010; Förster, Kim: *The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York, 1967-1985: Networks of Cultural Production*, gta Verlag, ETH Zurich - 2017. A fundamental testimony on the *Institute* is a documentary produced by Diana Agrest: *The Making of*

an Avant-Garde: The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies 1967-1984 – 2013. See also: Rispoli, Ernesto-Ramon: *Ponti sull'Atlantico. L'Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies e le relazioni Italia-America (1967-1985)*. Quodlibet - 2013.

³ The magazine «Oppositions»: *Journal for Ideas and Criticism in Architecture* is only one, albeit the first, of several editorial initiatives that would be undertaken from 1973 by the *Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies*.

The Institute's magazine *October* came out in 1976 edited by the art critics R. Krauss and A. Michelson, and is still available today.

In 1978, under the initial guidance of A. McNair, the monthly tabloid *Skyline* was launched, dedicated specifically to events that animated both the cultural life of the *Institute* and the New York scene, complete with announcements, reviews, brief essays, and a calendar of events.

That same year, publication began of a series of catalogues dedicated to exhibitions organized by the Institute. A total of 16 would be published and among these it is worth mentioning those dedicated to M. Scolari - the first of the series, with an introduction by M. Tafuri, to A. Rossi, the Texan houses of J. Hejduk, and to I. Leonidov, or those dedicated to collective exhibitions such as *Idea as Model* and *New Wave in Japanese Architecture*.

From '81 to '82, the *Institute* began publication of «Oppositions» *Books*. Five of these would be published: the volume *Essays in Architectural Criticism* by A. Colquhoun, the *Scientific Autobiography* (the very first edition), and *The Architecture of the City* by A. Rossi, *Spoken into the Void* by A. Loos and a translation of the writings of M. Ginzburg, *Style and Epoch*. Among the volumes planned were a second collection of essays by Loos, *In Spite of*, the collected essays of T. van Doesburg, K. Frampton, M. Cacciari and A. Isozaki, and *The Sphere and the Labyrinth* by M. Tafuri.

Like «Oppositions», the graphics of all the Institute's publications were by M. Vignelli.

⁴ See B. Colomina, G. Buckley: *Clip, Stamp, Fold: The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines 196X to 197X*, Actar - 2011. The volume contains a conversation and interviews with P. Eisenman, K. Frampton, M. Gamdersonas, and A. Vidler.

⁵ The rich collection of magazines assembled by Eisenman, including pamphlets and original avant-garde documents, from the early 1920s to the 1960s, is now preserved at the Beinecke Rare Books & Manuscripts Library of Yale University. See the catalogue published for the exhibition of the collection by the Library itself: *Architecture in Dialogue: The Peter Eisenman Collection at Yale*, Beinecke Rare Books & Manuscripts Library of Yale University – 2012.

⁶ For the Jersey Corridor project, see P. V. Aureli, M. Biraghi, F. Purini: *Peter Eisenman. Tutte le Opere*, Electa – 2007, pp. 56 – 57.

Also: <http://www.architectmagazine.com/videos/michael-graves-new-jersey-corridor-project>.

⁷ S. Anderson, *CASE and MIT: Engagement*, in *A Second Modernism: MIT, Architecture, and the 'Techno-Social' Moment*, (Vv.Aa.) edited by A. Dutta, MIT Press - 2014 pp. 578-651.

For the story of *CASE* see also the acts of the congress *Revisiting CASE*, held at the MIT in 2015. Part of the acts can be consulted at:

<https://architecture.mit.edu/history-theory-and-criticism/event/revisiting-case>

⁸ C. Rowe: *Mathematics of the Ideal Villa* in *Architectural Review* no. xx, March 1947; *Mannerism and Modern Architecture* in *Architectural Review* no. xx, May 1950; both now in C. Rowe: *La matematica della villa ideale ed altri scritto*, edited by P. Berdini, Zanichelli Editore – 1990.

P. Eisenman: *The Formal Basis of Modern Architecture. Dissertation 1963*, Lars Müller – 2003; Italian translation by P. Eisenman: *La base formale dell'architettura moderna*, Pendragon – 2009.

Vv.Aa.: *The History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture. Papers from the 1964 AIA-ACSA Teacher Seminar*, edited by M. Whiffen. The MIT Press - 1965.

The volume contains essays by P. Collins, B. Zevi, S. Chermayeff, S. Moholy-Nagy, S. W. Jacobs, S. Anderson, and R. Banham.

⁹ Mentioned in: Frank, Suzanne: *IAUS: An Insider Memoir*, AuthorHouse- 2010;

¹⁰ Vv.Aa.: *The New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal*, The Museum of Modern Art in New York - 1967.

¹¹ Vv.Aa.: *New Urban Settlements no. 1: analytical phase*, Institute for Architecture

and Urban Studies - 1969; Vv.Aa.: *Another chance for housing: low-rise alternatives; Brownsville, Brooklyn, Fox Hills, Staten Island: an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art*, The Museum of Modern Art in New York - 1973; Vv.Aa.: *On Streets: Streets as elements of Urban Structure*, edited by S. Anderson, MIT Press - 1978 ; Vv.Aa.: *Five Architects*, Wittenborn Art Book, Inc. - 1972. 1972.

¹² S. Anderson: *L'ambiente come artefatto: considerazioni metodologiche* in: «Casabella» nos.359-360: *The City as an Artifact* - December 1971, pp. 71-77, Editrice «Casabella». It is perhaps interesting to note how interest in the relationship between cultural facilities and the construction of the physical environment expressed by Sanford Anderson crosses, albeit in quite different forms and with other objectives and results, a significant part of the architectural culture of the '50s and '60s, from an interest in the anthropology of the members of Team X like the Smithsons, A. Van Eyck, G. Candillis and S. Woods, to the theme of collective memory in the writings of Aldo Rossi and Vittorio Gregotti, heirs of the urban analyses of Saverio Muratori and the thinking of Ernesto Rogers.

¹³ P. Eisenman: *Appunti sull'architettura concettuale - Verso una definizione*, pp. 48-57; D. Scott Brown: *Il "Pop" insegna*, pp. 14-23; K. Frampton: *America 1960-1970. Appunti su alcune immagini e teorie della città*, pp. 24-38; D. Scott Brown: *Risposta per Frampton*, pp. 39-46, in: «Casabella» nos. 359-360: *The City as an Artifact* - December 1971, Editrice Casabella.

¹⁴ J. Ockman: *Resurrecting the Avant-Garde: the history and program of OPPOSITIONS in Architecture Production, Revision no. 2*, edited by Beatriz Colomina, Princeton Architectural Press - 1988, pp. 181-199.

¹⁵ P. Eisenman, K. Frampton, M. Gandelonas: *Editorial statement* in «Oppositions» no. 2, The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies – January 1974.

¹⁶ P. Eisenman: *Robin Hood Garden London E14*, Architectural Design no. 42 - September 1972, pp. 73 - 92.

¹⁷ P. Eisenman, K. Frampton, M. Gandelonas: *Editorial statement*, in «Oppositions» no.1, The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies – September 1973.

¹⁸ On this topic, see J. Ockman: *Resurrecting the Avant-Garde: the history and program of OPPOSITIONS in Architecture Production, Revision no. 2*, edited by Beatriz Colomina, Princeton Architectural Press – 1988, p. 182.

¹⁹ P. Eisenman, K. Frampton, M. Gandelonas: *Editorial statement* in «Oppositions» no. 2, The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies – January 1974.

²⁰ P. Eisenman, K. Frampton, M. Gandelonas: *Editorial statement* in «Oppositions» no. 3, The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies – May 1974.

²¹ In reality, Tafuri, only a few years earlier had already published a critical essay in English in the catalogue of the exhibition dedicated to the architecture of Italian Radicalism, mounted in the summer of 1972 at the MoMA by E. Ambasz and entitled *Italy: New Domestic Landscape. Achievements and problems of Italian Design*. M. Tafuri: *Design and technological utopia in Italy: New Domestic Landscape. Achievements and problems of Italian Design* edited by E. Ambasz, The Museum of Modern Art in collaboration with Centro Di – 1972.

²² Browsing through the indexes of these 4 issues of «Oppositions» gives an idea of the amazing, and at the same time disorienting, variety of positions expressed in the magazine's pages.

«Oppositions» no. 4, Wittenborn Art Book, Inc. - October 1974: October 1974 Editorial by K. Frampton: *On Heidegger*; P. Eisenman: *Real and English: Robert A.M. Stern: Yale 1950-1965*; Mimi Lobell: *Kahn, Penn, and the Philadelphia School*; E. Ambasz: *A Selection from Working Fables*; A. and P. Smithson: *The Space in between*. In the Documents section: *Karel Teige's Mundaneum, 1929 and Le Corbusier's In Defense of Architecture, 1929, Introduction by George Baird; Luigi Moretti: The Values of Profiles, 1951; Structures and Sequences of Spaces, 1952, Introduction by Thomas Stevens; Paul Rudolph: Alumni day speech: The Yale School of Architecture, February 1958*.

«Oppositions» no. 5, MIT Press - Summer 1976: Editorial by M. Gandelonas: *Neo-Functionalism*; R. Moneo: *Aldo Rossi: The Idea of Architecture and the Modena Cemetery*;

A. Rossi: *The Blue of the Sky*; M. Tafuri: *American Graffiti: Five x Five = Twenty-five*; A. Vidler: *The Architecture of the Lodges: Ritual Form and Associational Life in the Late Enlightenment*; D. Scott Brown: *On Architectural Formalism and Social*

Concern: a discourse for Social Planners and Radical Chic Architects. In the Documents section: *The magazine Veshch/Gegenstand/Object. Commentary, Bibliography, and Translation by Kestutis Paul Zygas*.

«Oppositions» no. 6 MIT Press - Autumn 1976: Editorial by P. Eisenman: *Post-Functionalism*; C. Rowe: *Robert Venturi and the Yale Mathematics Building*; C. More: *Conclusions*; V. Scully: *The Yale Mathematics Building: some remarks on Sitting*; K. Frampton: *Constructivism: The Pursuit of an Elusive Sensibility*; D. Agrest: *Design versus Non-Design*; in the Documents section: *William S. Huff: Symmetry: An Appreciation of its Presence in Man's Mind*; *Gruppo Sette: "Architettura" (1926) and "Architettura (II): The Foreigners" (1927) – Introduction by Ellen R. Shapiro*.

«Oppositions» no. 7 MIT Press - Winter 1976: Editorial by A. Vidler: *The Third Typology*; W. Seligmann: *Runcor: Historical Precedents and the Rational Design process*; M. Pawlwy: *"We shall not bulldoze Westminster Abbey": Archigram and the Retreat from Technology*; J Rikwert: *Classic and Neo-Classic*; B. Tschumi: *Architecture and Transgression*. In the Documents section: *The 10 - Commentary, Bibliography and Translations by Suzanne Frank*.

²³ «Oppositions» no. 8, *Paris under the Academy: City and Ideology* edited by A. Vidler - Spring 1978, MIT Press; «Oppositions» nos. 15/16, *Le Corbusier 1905-1933* edited by K. Frampton – Winter/Spring 1979, MIT Press; «Oppositions» nos. 19/20, *Le Corbusier 1933-1960* edited by K. Frampton – Winter/Spring 1980, MIT Press; «Oppositions» no. 25, *Monument/Memory* edited by K. Foster – Fall 1982, MIT Press.

²⁴ A. Vidler: *Editorial – After Historicism* in «Oppositions» no. 17 – Summer 1979, MIT Press.

²⁵ P. Eisenman, K. Frampton, M. Gandelonas, T. Vidler: *Editorial*, in «Oppositions» no. 9 – Summer 1977, MIT Press, p. 1.

²⁶ P. Eisenman, K. Frampton, M. Gandelonas, T. Vidler: *Editorial*, in «Oppositions» no. 9 – Summer 1977, MIT Press, p. 2.

²⁷ The vicissitudes of the magazine *Assemblage*, and in particular those that would lead to its voluntary closure, became intertwined starting from the '90s with the debate on the emergence of digital technology, and deserve a thorough analysis that is yet to be made. The same goes for the editorial products – the magazine, conferences and books – on that cultural operation, also begun in the early '90s, that went under the name of ANY, and which, although directed by Cynthia Davidson, had the direct input of Eisenman behind it. *ANYONE Corporation* is still operational, and still under Davidson's direction and continues to publish the magazine *LOG*, and the series for MIT Press, *Writing Architecture*.

²⁸ M. Hays, Alicia Kennedy: *About Assemblage* in *Assemblage* no. 1 - October 1986, MIT Press, pp. 4-5.

²⁹ M. Hays: *The Oppositions of Autonomy and History* in «Oppositions» *Reader: Selected readings from a Journal for Ideas and Criticism in Architecture 1973-1984*, edited by M. Hays - 1998, Princeton Architectural Press, p. XIV.

³⁰ K. Frampton: *On Reyner Banham's The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, in «Oppositions» no. 7 – Winter 1976, MIT Press, pp. 86-89.

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Guido Zuliani is Professor of Architecture at the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture at the Cooper Union of New York, where he has been teaching since 1986. He has collaborated both at an educational and professional level with architects Abraham and Eisenman. Since 1999 he has collaborated with Eisenman with whom, as a project architect, he designed the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris and, more recently, the new Pompei station, and the masterplan for the coastal area of Pozzuoli.

Lamberto Amistadi
Gigetta Tamaro, an architect and a woman

Title: *"Tu mi sposerai"*

Subtitle: *Opere di Gigetta Tamaro*

Language: *Italian*

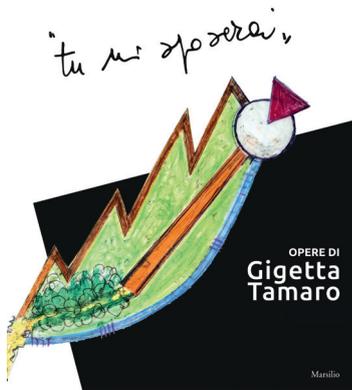
Publisher: *Marsilio, Venice*

Edit by: *Luciano Semerani, Giovanna Semerani*

Characteristic: *dimension 24x28 cm, 178 pages, paperback, color*

ISBN: *9788831728034*

Year: *2017*



In April last year, at the Magazzino delle Idee in Corso Cavour, Trieste, an exhibition took place of works by Gigetta Tamaro (1931-2016), entitled “Tu mi sposerai” – “You will marry me”. The exhibition – curated by Luciano Semerani – remains available a nice catalogue published by Marsilio with essays by Carlo de Incontrera, Alberto Ferlenga, Giovanni Fraziano, Giorgio Grassi, Lorenzo Michelli and Boris Podrecca. But above all, it contains numerous drawings, some previously unpublished, and photographs of works – projects built or not, models, paintings, assemblages, *décollages*, bricolages – and people.

The catalogue itself is so rich it is sufficient to browse the table of contents to grasp the light tone and reflective nature of some of Gigetta’s writings from the titles: “You will marry me”, Trieste, a City for the Old, Yes/No, Artistic Training, Friends, Meetings, Exhibitions, Beautiful Confusion: “Beautiful Confusion is the very paradigm of stylistic freedom in a way of working, or of enjoying free time, in hospitality, clothes, collections of objects, in the way of writing and teaching, at once light and intense, participating in architectural construction as a game...” (Semerani, on p.17 of the catalogue).

The catalogue itself is a work which tells the story of works that tell of people’s lives, of what is and what was imagined by the architectural project. People and life take turns at the centre of a game in which they are thrown back and forth between architecture and narration. In the presentation for a first-rate conference on the relationship between architecture and narration (Architecture), organized in Bologna some time ago, we can read: “If, in its creative and operational practices, the modern architectural project has chosen representation through images as a privileged instrument, confining writing to the contexts of theory or bureaucracy, the fact remains that a narrative dimension cannot be eliminated by the creative process of architecture, given that, in contending with possible beneficiaries and proposing the life of concrete human beings as a measure, it is forced to imagine the life, past or future, that flows and takes shape through it.”

Gigetta’s creativity was precisely of this type. The story and the writing (in the material and concrete sense of the written words that accompany the project sketches) on the one hand, and the architectural forms on the other, play with the task of expressing an architecture that is dense with meaning. This meaning – which is not the case for other architects – has very little of the abstract, and would like to be discovered within a concrete and emotional core. I remember her exquisite article (the entry “Façade”

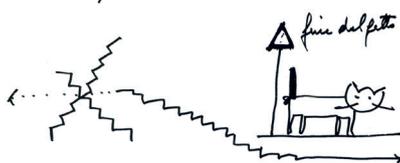
in Dizionario critico illustrato delle voci più utili all'architetto moderno) where the intentions of architecture are clarified in the circle in which “body” and “desire” chase one another: i.e. making architecture a place of encounter (Encounter is also the title of a splendid essay on John Hejduk, another architect who understood architecture and narration) between its form and our desires, between the form of a house and how we would like a house to be. Certainly, we cannot deny that there are many types of desires satisfying different psychological characters, but Gigetta circumvented the problem with a delightful leap back towards the place where the measure of the authenticity of the relationship between body and desire is assigned to the world of childhood, play, and the fairy tale. This considers architecture a game in which a narrative takes shape that allows Gigetta to make all her own the different transfiguration techniques, the artifices that literature possesses, and the different rhetorical figures, from metaphor to allegory. I remember the lightness with which – in a design competition entry that does not appear in this catalogue – a ribbon unwound across a bridge and curled into two rolls that lay at the opposite end on a river bank, greatly resembling two giant ionic capitals.

The same lightness, the same irony, and the same emotional core are to be found in Gigetta's relations with people. One of the things in the catalogue that cannot leave us indifferent are the photographs of people, which tell us of Gigetta's public dimension. Because Gigetta was a public figure: in defiance of Bauman and the loneliness of the global citizen, she shared everything – intelligence, courage, sympathy and food...

Regarding the ludic nature of her way of communicating and her linguistic diversity (and the same goes for her architecture) I would like to conclude with another example that does appear in the catalogue. As a great tool of education and the transmissibility of know-how, I always recall the example where, in Passaggio a Nord-est, Luciano Semerani spoke of the base and the capital as the beginning and end of the column. This same concept in Gigetta's drawing becomes a magical/surrealist question whereby the question students are asked becomes: “A cat which lifts its tail declares: the end of the cat! What does a stair do?”

Let the memory of her smile give us strength...

*Un patto che oltre le code
di destra: fine del patto!
Una reale pace lo fa?*



Giovanni Furlan
L'Eutopia della città

Title: *Eutopia Urbana / Eutopia Urbanscape*
Subtitle: *La riqualificazione integrata dell'edilizia sociale / The combined redevelopment of social housing*
Language: *Italian / English*
Publisher: *LetteraVentidue, Siracusa*
Edit by: *Barbara Angi*
Characteristic: *dimension 16,7x22 cm, 448 pages, paperback, color*
ISBN: *9788862421904*
Year: *June 2016*



The research and materials collected in this book try to anticipate future scenarios and are, through a study of the most advanced European experiences, as a tool towards ways of doing today in the contemporary city.

The value of this publication allows you to trace a semantic map of strategies and reflections on areas less normate investigated and architecture, on side considerations that work on the imprecision and arbitrariness margins, spaces no prescription where today you can recognize quality the buildings.

Studies tell of projects that have had opportunities for comparison with real constraints, compromised by social and political contexts at various levels and closely linked to economic limits, discussing issues relating to different application fields such as history, architectural and structural design the technological analysis, socio-economic implications and the landscape environment relationship and the city.

Eutopia Urbana, remodelage, references, adaptive maintenance, adaptive Exoskeleton, Rural Urban are the key words that accompanied the research work of several interdisciplinary teams that responded to the multiple degrees of inadequacy of the buildings surveyed.

The analyzes carried out have made it clear that, if the urban regeneration operations are addressed in a coordinated manner with more skills, generating new systems of production and consumption of real estate assets, including in Italy could actually become a new driving force for the economy.

Urban regeneration is therefore not just a hope, a non-existent place, but a reality that can mutate into a utopia "eutopia" (eu-topos), transforming slums, housing sprawl, sprawl, in "good places" to intervene on the concrete with suction and ideological position of a better world.

The operation of remodelage or adaptive maintenance is intended as an integrated method capable of operations, from a technological point of view and typological, to improve and update the architectural objects through the use of practices and interchangeable construction systems able to anticipate future contexts long-term development.

The adaptive Maintenance is thus combined with the concept of integration at a structural level, energy quality, the plant level, type-morphological, and to the concept of "riestetizzazione" (or ready made) existing building. Another keyword in the search investigated Exoskeleton is adaptive, ie the possibility of rehabilitating the buildings by adopting a sort of prosthesis to be used outside and in addition to improve the earthquake resistance

can allow new typological and functional arrangements also be developed over time in relation to the needs of users, extending the life cycle of the building and reducing the environmental load effects at the restoration.

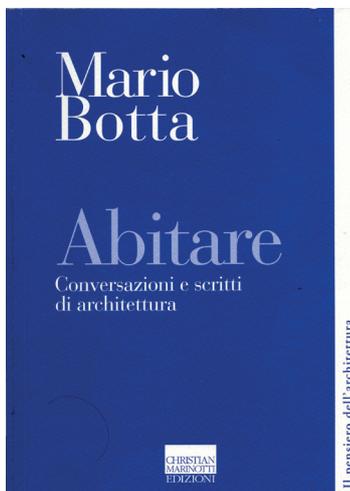
The introduction of the concept of Rural-urban integration like urban and agricultural areas, and provided to address effectively the problems related to the closure of the ecological and climate change cycles where the urban area can be designed as an ecosystem in which regulate the consumption of resources and anthropogenic processes, promoting proximity farming, renewable energy and short production chains between producers and consumers.

Significant part of the research is ultimately the design experiments intended as "pragmatic visionary" expressed with images that evoke suggestions maneuvers where the coded language of architecture is related to the context, generating new ways of thinking and structuring the architectural form.

The publication was produced by the research unit of the University of Brescia within the National Interest Research Project (PRIN) New design practices for sustainable redevelopment of social housing complexes in Italy coordinated by Marina Montuori.

Umberto Minuta
The living of Mario Botta

Author: *Mario Botta*
Title: *Abitare*
Subtitle: *Conversazioni e scritti di architettura*
Book Series: *Pensiero dell'architettura*
Language: *Italian*
Publisher: *Christian Marinotti, Milan*
Characteristic: *dimension 17x24 cm, 183 pages, paperback*
ISBN: *9788882731649*
Year: *2016*



The volume of Mario Botta is a successful attempt to retrace, through writings and reflections, fifty years of work. The author draws the reader's attention to his most cherished topics of architecture, from the space of living, to the spaces of the sacred, from the importance and the beauty of the European city to the urban contradictions of our time.

He also hints at his commitment to the foundation of the Academy of Architecture and the theatre of architecture in Mendrisio. Above all, however, we can read the long and articulate chapters in which the author explicitly acknowledges the influence of the Masters: people like Le Corbusier, Carlo Scarpa and Louis I. Kahn, who had accompanied him in his architectural work.

Through detailed arguments and clear and linear reasoning, his writing deals mostly with the themes of living. He explores the link between light and architecture, the relationship between the work and the cosmic values of the surroundings, between the architectural project and the project of the public space, as central issues in the progress of architecture and as a technical answer to the non-material needs of a community.

The lessons he learned from the Masters are reinterpreted and filtered. Carlo Scarpa, for example, is mentioned in the dialectic between history and project, and Mario Botta, in the end, affirms the nonexistence of restoration without pure invention.

His work is a constant tribute to the Corbusian architecture, which become able to grasp the future towards a new beauty of the living space, and the cooperation with Louis Kahn in Venice, a forerunner of the limits of technological progress.

The work is structured around precise reflections on the author's dearest themes. In the chapter Light and Gravity, Mario Botta emphasizes the importance of light in any architectural work: light generates space, without light there is no space.

The space generated by light becomes the soul of the architectural work. Light is a natural entity existing beyond the architectural fact, which in comparison with the built work finds its *raison d'être* in the passage of time.

Light is both the visible sign of the relationship between the work and the cosmic values of the surroundings, and the element shaping the work in the specific environmental context. It joins architecture and context.

In the chapter about Public Space, the culture of the project together with

the urbanistic thought must come to terms with the critical conditions presiding over the space of human life, struggling with the disturbing environmental crisis.

The architectural thinking will have to question the ethical dimension of collective life by asking to face the civil dimension of the project according to the canons of spaces and architecture such as to define authentically civil social contexts.

Marginalization, negativity and lack of identity models underlie the unverified relationship between public space and associative life. However, the architectural and urban traditions of the entire Western world are made great by this combination, which has become a memory of tradition in our cities.

In a delicate historical moment in which a process of loss of identity and globalization prevails, the author deals with the theme of the European City. The search for a possible identity goes through the sense of belonging to a territory, and therefore to a natural reference to the image of the city. Today the city, as a reference point within a physical territory, rediscovers some traits of its own history. The condition of the urban center, which collects both history and memory, suggests to the citizens some intuitions that help them feel reassured in rediscovering much of their identity. The space around us becomes a territory of memory, with a history that belongs to us and we recognize it as part of our being.

According to Mario Botta, the city becomes a great lesson in architecture as it offers the teaching that it is not possible to live without a past, and that the territories of memory become an essential condition of living in the present.

When writing about the sacredness of space, the author refers to those experiences starting from the post-1968 climate in which a process of desacralization of space was opposed to the traditional sacredness of the rite. Interpreting the divine home within the fabric of a man's house becomes a task that every architecture of the sacred has always faced.

The theme of the sacredness of a place different from any other becomes a condition of expression of symbolic values, compared to the everyday urban pattern. The history of the sacred places is also the story of an architectural space that evokes incommensurable emotions that are capable of giving rise to new emotions. A special case is the completeness of the monastery, which in the tradition of the European city used to enjoy centrality with respect to the buildings of the surroundings.

In the final part of the essay, the author addresses the Masters. In the era of computer design the virtual line can no longer communicate sensitivity and express any differences.

The work of the present generation is totally detached from the Scarpa tradition, according to which construction stems from the artisan knowledge that influences images, forms materials, skills and poetics of space. Carlo Scarpa's design is cognitive, ours is miserably representative.

Two totally different worlds, two different approaches.

Talking about Carlo Scarpa, the author underlines his sensitivity to the materials, able to draw the best from even the poorest, like great architects such as Borromini, Michelangelo and Raffaello. Knowing how to do architecture was a way of serving humanity.

Mario Botta was a boy from Le Corbusier's workshop, in his atelier in Venice for a new hospital project.

Interpreting and creating new proposals able to capture the future and shape it in a new spatial order, traditionally starts from transformations in progress and allows the Corbusian architecture to become a point of references in the architectural culture of the 20 century.

Finally, a tribute to the relationship with Louis Kahn who suggested inter-

preting architecture through the most secret aspects. Architectures speak through silence, prompting man to rekindle other men's memory. Botta's architecture inherits the new visions of Louis Khan along with his ability to go beyond the problems and the intuition of the limits of technological development.

In these days of happy decline and slow time against global hypervelocity, despite nostalgic images of a lost time and peaceful visions of attractive TV spots, history and tradition remain caretakers of a certain primacy of architecture.

Precisely, architecture and its composite elements remain the absolute witnesses of spaces capable of resisting the globalization process and its loss of subjective self-identity.

Beyond these two extreme offers, the social purpose of building through the growing approval of its main characters, as well as the formal and material, but also theoretical, artistic and utopian specificity, of having to reinvent the background for a social ritual, as ancient as the history of the city, seem to vanish.

The author therefore pushes forward the desire to foreshadow renewal strategies in the debate on architecture, retracing and reviewing through writings and reasoning, his fifty years of work.

Together with didactics and research of the Mendrisio Academy, Botta intends to further strengthen the debate on discipline and give visibility to the new transdisciplinary interests that influence and determine the architectural project and the social role of architecture itself.

Taking the past and putting it into perspective for the future is a fundamental question.

In the themes tackled by Mario Botta, the desire to involve the city, history, and memory is part of the architectural composition itself. Architecture plays a fundamental role in affirming the concept of identity and, at the same time, it gives the chance to spread the values of architecture, the ability to create heritage alongside the old and not over the ancient.

Identity research between history and project, but also balance between urban typology and morphology, appear indispensable in a nowadays context, appear necessary to suggest new interpretations for the project of future urban landscapes, to invent unique places, in the face of urban areas, which are characterized by social decay, dispersion and lack of identity.

Francesco Primari
The notion of lucus and the architecture of Gianugo Polesello

Author: *Ildebrando Clemente*

Title: *Lucus*

Subtitle: *Intorno al significato nell'architettura di Gianugo Polesello*

Book Series: *Saggi di architettura*

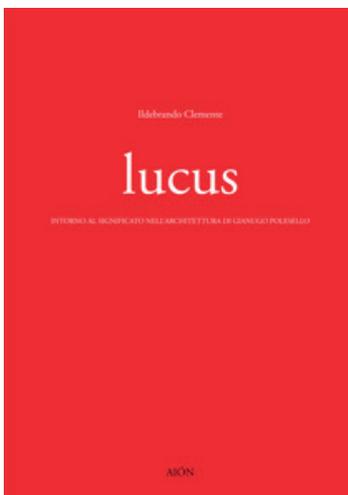
Language: *italian*

Publisher: *Aion, Florence*

Characteristic: *dimension 17x24 cm, 254 pages, paperback, color, b/w*

ISBN: *9788898262434*

Year: *2016*



This book deals with the forms and meaning in the architecture of Gianugo Polesello, from an apparently eccentric view of the discipline, but precisely because of this, determining a remoteness of vision that discerns fundamental issues and problems in architecture as a whole.

Not here will the reader find all-encompassing discursive narratives of the historiographical tale, nor a mere “pure visibility” reportage of the formal quality of the work of this architect from Friuli. On the contrary, the theoretical-formal node that the architecture of Polesello wove undergoes the scrutiny of an investigation that focuses on the reasons for its occurrence: firstly, by rescuing it from a reductionist interpretation of the role of abstraction in gestating the forms; the geometric beauty of pure volumes, the strict system of the vacuum and its urban spaces, the metric ostinato repeating figures already given, these are incidences identified as the opening moves in the jigsaw of the composition and the beginning of a game that carries us towards the mythical and emotional core of Polesello’s architecture. Thus, the story unfolds in a journey toward a possible prehistory of pure forms revolved to archetypes; and it is precisely the archetype of the lucus, the grove/glade that the author identifies as a dialectical image through which volumes and spaces are removed from the blinding glare of laconic abstract poetics, and ascribed to the unutterable enigma of the symbolic sphere. The lucus therefore stands at the centre of this book and rightly gives it its name; the significance of this archetype proceeds from the image of the forest, which was already the origin of the city in Vitruvius, constituting the wellspring of urban space and the start of the potential of architectural forms; the impenetrable grove is therefore closely accompanied by the otherness of the glade, as an act of deforestation that conveys light into the inner recesses of the lucus. The symbolic space of the grove/glade is therefore the interpretative mirror of Polesello’s architecture.

Ildebrando Clemente explains this research hypothesis through a reasoned presentation that is far from Cartesian; the references to myth, the history of ideas, philosophy, etymological chains and the genealogy of forms advance hand in hand, stratifying without fearing any obscurity, and allowing some deliberate omissions; however, the enigma of pure forms in Polesello’s architecture, if not divulged, is undeniably brought to light in this way and swathed within a rich constellation of sense. Above all, the opening into the symbolic sphere which this study proposes is able to justify the intimate civil essence of his design approach. The original act of

space-making, which is the glade, and the beneficium in providing a habitable place for the life of man – finally protected from some harshnesses of nature – legibly latches onto the centrality of the order of the vacuum of his projects, of space-making as monuments. Consequently, also the importance and peculiarities of Polesello's experience within the great urban study season can be grasped, the ways in which he understood the possibility of recognizing and preserving a community; at the same time, in the sophisticated otherness of the geometric shapes with respect to the non-fabric of the suburbs, we catch a glimpse of a different possibility of land use. An ethical instance therefore goads the attempt to avoid a total reification of the earth as a pure object of consumption, to reconsecrate it to man.

These are some of the themes we seemed to discern in this book, which, as we press forward around the meaning in Polesello's work, open and raise still current questions on the founding conditions of architecture and cities. Is it possible to propose a design as an illusion of dominating reality even now? Or does the unquenchable implication with the sacred dimension that man-craftsman carries in himself not lead us back towards the fertile opening with the risk of an *indomitable space*?

