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**Gigetta Tamaro, an architect and a woman**

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Title: *"Tu mi sposerai"*

Subtitle: *Opere di Gigetta Tamaro*

Language: *Italian*

Publisher: *Marsilio, Venice*

Edited by: *Luciano Semerani, Giovanna Semerani*

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

ISBN: *9788831728034*

Year: *2017*

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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 But above all, it contains numerous drawings, some previously unpublished, and photographs of works – projects built or not, models, paintings, assemblages, *décollages*, bricolages – and people.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 (*Archiletture*), 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 d.d.era : fine del patto!  
Una reale pace lo fa?

