

**Guido Canella**  
**On drawing, in an interlocking game\***

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**Abstract**

In 1997 Guido Canella, professor of Theories and techniques of architectural design at the Faculty of Civil Architecture of Milan Bovisa, held a lecture on drawing in Architecture. The Wednesday lessons had become the central moment of the newborn School that Canella had helped to found: an event that attracted the interest of students and the curiosity of teachers from other disciplines in the confirmation that the project is the central moment of training in Architecture.

Taking as a pretext the various types of drawing, in a narrow interspersed between text and image, as befits a university lesson, Canella leads the reader on a journey through architecture that dates back Baudelairean “from impressions to principles”. It is no coincidence that Canella calls into question the “true founder of modern criticism” who as an architect, teacher, director of important magazines, received in 1995 the CICA prize (Comité International des Critiques d’Architecture) at the VI Bienal Internacional de Arquitectura de Buenos Aires.

**Keywords**

Drawing — Criticism and Design — Architectural composition

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Today I will consider drawing in an interlocking game.

Last time I mentioned how ours is an oblique, diagonal, non-deductive reading, which tries to give an account of the impression we get from the works and images. I seem to have mentioned, again last time, Baudelaire, the French intellectual, poet, writer, art critic who is considered the true founder of modern criticism.

Baudelaire argued that criticism must be partial, passionate, political, in the sense of being exclusive but at the same time opening up to all possible horizons of knowledge. Baudelaire, always with regard to criticism, said that it must go back from impressions to principles. These principles are a bit like the theories we try to talk about, following Baudelaire’s procedure. Today we are dealing with the theme of drawing and you know that drawing in architecture is something different from drawing, from the sign in painting. The drawing for painting is structural, and I would say inherent in the birth and development of the work. There is the design of the music that is made on the musical scores and has its own trace, its own logic, its own coherence that translates into something else. Drawing is also present in the alphabets, in the signs of the language, with which the language is transmitted.

Drawing in architecture is something that can be similar to that of painting, sometimes precisely to that of music or language, in the sense that drawing in architecture is sometimes inside the construction of the work, while drawing is outside, contemplates it from the outside.

The drawing we are going to talk about today concerns the different genres of drawing that have to do with architecture, some of these, because they are many: there is the impression drawing, there is also a team design that

**Fig. 1s**

*Piazza del Popolo a Roma*, 1625.  
[Quaroni 1969, p.279].

**Fig. 1d**

Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832), *Roma da Porta del Popolo*, 1780 circa.  
[Femmel 1977, ill.1].

tends to the executivity of the work, there is an atmospheric design, which in some way wants to make up for reality and therefore describe together with the work, also the target context. There is a futuristic design, that drawing that portrays a perspective of a time to come. Then there is the drawing without erasures, that is an intuitive design that in my opinion is the most innate to architecture, it is the famous architectural sketch, which already contains in germ the genetic assumptions of the work of architecture.

Here, we will talk a little about these genres and improvise some impressions from the images and comparisons that we will tend to establish.

Here you can see an engraving of 1625 of Piazza del Popolo in Rome (Fig. 1s) with a sketch by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, made during the trip that this extraordinary character made to Italy in about 1780 (Fig. 1d).

If you notice, you see how in the engraving, Piazza del Popolo is surrounded by a building connective that does not appear in Goethe's drawing. The two points of view are different, but in both cases you can recognize the central obelisk (Goethe's vision was at a high altitude, so much so that you see the dome of St. Peter's), the Door is always that of Bernini and Vignola, yet in Goethe's sketch intervenes a sort of rarefaction for which the countryside predominates over the built.

We can attribute this vision of Goethe to what he personifies in the history of modern culture, that is, where Classicism, Neoclassicism tends to open up to Romanticism and therefore the naturalness of Goethe's vision involves a sort of archaeological enhancement of the architectures that are chosen to fit into this naturalness. It is what with a current term could be called an "early ruinism", "ruinism of ruin", that is, the fact of considering architecture in a sense, in an archaeological dimension. Think that the architectures that Goethe reproduces within his sketch are not so far from being considered archaeological finds. They are architectures that date back to 150 years before, yet he treats them in this way, the impression is this, the vision is panic, that is, overall, in which the architecture is reduced in turn by painting.

This is the architecture designed by Andrea Palladio, built in Vicenza by his pupil Vincenzo Scamozzi, in 1602 (Fig. 2s).

It is the portion of a palace, which there is nicknamed "Ca' del Diavolo", that Goethe still sketches and you can see it in this other image (Fig. 2d). Think that even in this case Goethe considers Palladio's architecture as something extraordinary, as the synthesis of a process that is that of the Renaissance. But we deduce from Goethe's sketch that he dwells on an

**Fig. 2s**

Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), *Ca' del Diavolo* (Palazzo da Porto Braganza), Vicenza realizzata da Vincenzo Scamozzi, 1602. [AA.VV., ill.129, p.111].

**Fig. 2d**

Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832), *Ca' del Diavolo*, schizzo. [Femmel 1977, ill.49].

aspect that particularly interests him, namely the combination of classical orders and the building's civil building purpose. In other words, Goethe extracts from Palladio's architecture, in this case but also in other cases, this domestic coefficient that is inserted within a courtly structure, within a monumental structure. This also underlines Goethe's vision of the transition from a classicist conception to a romantic condition. Another dimension intervenes which is the subjective dimension, the personal dimension, the dimension of a narrower and more subjective scope with respect to the scope, to the presumption of objectivity that Classicism brought with it.

Still talking about the impression drawing, I show a fairly famous painting. This framework has had several attributions. It was initially attributed to Giorgione and later to Titian. The subject is that of a country concert (Fig. 3s).

Here we are interested in considering the reason for these different attributions.

This painting is generally dated around 1510 which if I am not mistaken is the date of Giorgione's death. Titian is younger than Giorgione, both belong to the Venetian School that has its fundamental character in colorism, but the controversy arises on the fact of the predominance of color backgrounds over drawing.

In fact, Roberto Longhi, who is a critic I also spoke about last time, who is the antipole compared to Lionello Venturi, who is another critic to whom we will now refer, argues that the drawing that structures the painting is sufficiently strong to be attributed to Titian's youthful phase.

For Venturi, on the other hand, the predominance of the color backgrounds that dominate the structure of the drawing, is instead to be attributed to Giorgione.

This picture interests us in another respect.

An Italian critic, Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, on the mid-800, backpacking travels far and wide Europe and on a notebook, the so-called, "Parisian notebook", analyzes the different paintings, the different works of art, Italian and foreign, but above all Italian who are abroad redesigning them, reinterpreting them.

The drawing you see is precisely a redrawing of the Cavalcaselle of this Giorgionesque or Tizianesque country concert (Fig.3d).



**Fig. 3s**

Giorgione (1477-1510) o Tiziano (1490-1576), *Concerto campestre*, 1510.  
[Venturi 1957, p.102].

**Fig. 3d**

Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle (1819-1897), *Analisi e ridisegno del Concerto campestre*. Da Taccuino di viaggio parigino, 1852.  
[Moretti 1973, ill.87].

**Fig. 4s**

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), *Les grandes baigneuses*, 1906.  
[Cachin 1995, ill.219, p.500].  
[Argan 1990, p.187].

**Fig. 4d**

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *Les Femmes d'Alger*, 1907.  
[Argan 1990, p.328].

You see it is important because, I repeat, we are in the middle of the 800 and only in 1906 a great artist, a great painter, Paul Cézanne, paints this picture, *Les grandes baigneuses* (Fig. 4s) that somehow can remind us of the country concert we talked about.

If you notice, Cavalboxe's notes on the country concert are not so far from the approximation with respect to reality, to the truth with which Cézanne paints. Instead, Cézanne, you know well, is considered a great founder of modern art, of the figurative arts.

What runs between these two works, between these two reproductions of impressions received, half a century apart?

It is the different awareness of this interpretation and distortion of the picture. In Cézanne, there is now the full awareness of a revolution that modern art must accomplish that generally concerns the painting of the past, but even the impressionist painting in which Cézanne was trained.

Another Italian art critic, Enrico Thovez, a critic who was somewhat of an interpreter of Art Nouveau in Italy, argued that Cézanne was a failed painter. He said that he himself admits that he can paint better than he can. In fact, Cézanne, in some notes with which he accompanied his entire career as a painter, claimed that he could not paint more really than he did. His effort was, in fact, precisely to represent reality.

In this half century that goes from the mid-'800 to the early years of the

**Fig. 5s**

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), *Madame Cézanne aux cheveux dénoués*, 1890-92.  
[Cachin 1995, ill.138, p.347].

**Fig. 5d**

Roberto Longhi (1890-1970), *da Cézanne*. Da Taccuino: Piero della Francesca, Antonello da Messina.  
[Testori 1980, ill.27].

**Fig. 6d**

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *Femme aux Poires*, 1908.  
[Gomez de la Serna 1945, tav. X].



'900 (this is one of the last paintings painted by Cézanne), runs the awareness of modern art, modernity, runs the awareness of deformation, runs the awareness that reality is not necessarily the reproduction of the visible, but is instead what affects our ability to perceive. This sense of reality that is the basis of all modern art is represented in the works but also in the autobiography, that is to say in the notations with which Cézanne accompanies his painting.

This picture is a fairly well-known picture that you no doubt know. It is *Les demoiselles d'Avignon* by Picasso (Fig. 4d). Just think, it is a painting that is painted by Picasso a year after Cézanne's painting. Cézanne died in 1906, and this painting by Picasso is painted in 1907. See how quickly the trigger that starts from Cézanne's painting evolves.

Here we see another painting by Cézanne, painted around 1890, is *Madame Cézanne aux cheveux dénoués* (painted with loose hair) (Fig. 5s).

Roberto Longhi, that critic I was talking about, follows the path of Cavalcaselle and he too has a notebook on which he memorizes the paintings that interest him most. Then draw. Then impression drawing and through this drawing transfigure.

In Longhi's transcription of Cézanne's work, we could also derive the critical judgment he gives of Cézanne's painting. Under this sketch, under this redrawing (Fig. 5d), there are notes by Longhi that recall a phrase by Cézanne where he says: "Treat nature through the cone, the cylinder, the sphere. Put everything in perspective so that each side, each plane converges at a central point." This notation of Cézanne is made its own and incorporated into the considerations that Longhi makes and becomes the critical motif on which Longhi sets the rereading of Cézanne.

I told you that *Madame Cézanne* is from 1890, while this painting by Picasso that we see is *Femme aux Poires* (The Woman with Pears) from 1908 (Fig. 6d). You see that acceleration that I was talking about with what intensity it takes place in a decisive decade, which is the one immediately preceding and immediately following the First World War. These are fundamental years for the history of art in general and that in fact identify the birth of modern art.

A last work by Cézanne. It's a landscape. The title is *La Carrière de Bibémus* (The road of Bibémus) (Fig. 7s), also from the 90s of the nineteenth century.



**Fig. 7s**

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), *La Carrière de Bibémus*, 1895.  
[Cachin 1995, ill.138, p.365].

**Fig. 7d**

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *La bouteille de marasquin*, 1914.  
[Gomez de la Serna, 1945, tav. XIV].

When I quoted you just now the phrase noted by Longhi in his notebook, Cézanne's phrase, precisely, "to treat nature according to the cylinder, the cone, the sphere, so that each side and each plane converges at a central point".

The painting we see now by Picasso (you will no doubt have recognized him) is from 1914, and is entitled *La bouteille de marasquin* (The bottle of maraschino) (Fig. 7d). You can see with what acceleration and with what capacity of intuition triggering Cézanne grasps the principles of modern art.

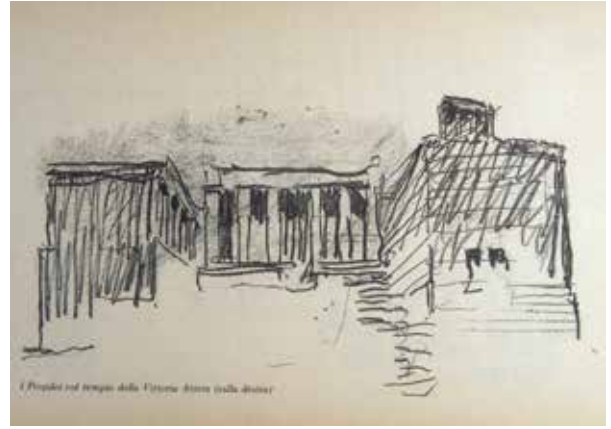
Here, finally let's talk about architecture. Impression drawing. You will have recognized the image of the Acropolis of Athens (Fig. 8s). You see in the central part (the Parthenon remains on the right) the Propylaea and, just next to it, the temple of Athena Nike.

What you see is a sketch by Le Corbusier (Fig. 8d). Corbusier around the age of 25, in 1911, made a journey and this trip gave rise to a book, *Voyage d'Orient*. Corbusier is impressed by the architecture that he sees in this journey to the East in the different countries of the Mediterranean. I would say that the Mediterranean is precisely the area in which Corbusier's poetics were born and developed. We will see this by comparison. But already now we can grasp with what look, with which eyes Corbusier looks at the architecture of the Mediterranean, the great architecture of Mediterranean antiquity.

In my opinion, Corbusier's regard enhances the presence of synthesis with which the architecture of the past imposes itself on the landscape. This synthesis is the constant of all the poetic development of Corbusier, which passes as for all artists different phases, but which remains the central core from which his poetics develops. So his vision is a vision that enhances the relationship between context, between surrounding surroundings and monument.

Vision of the Propylaea (Fig. 9s) and another sketch by Corbusier (Fig. 9d).

I would say that it should be noted already in this sketch, the decision with which Corbusier treats for example the columns, the decisive, peremptory way with which he even mentions the scaling, the shadow that highlights the individual elements of the composition. Yet the compositional phrase: column, beam, entablature and the different elements that make up the architecture, such as the capital, base, etc., these elements enter into a con-

**Fig. 8s**

*L'Acropoli di Atene vista da ovest, V sec. a.C.*  
[AA.VV. 1967, ill. 39].

**Fig. 8d**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *I Propilei col tempio della Vittoria Atterra* (sulla destra), 1911.  
[Le Corbusier 1965, p.179].

**Fig. 9s**

*I Propilei, V sec. a.C.*  
[AA.VV. 1967, ill. 40].

**Fig. 9d**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *I Propilei: sul fondo il Peloponneso*, 1911.  
[Le Corbusier 1965, p.180].

certation, which is precisely a synthetic concertation of Corbusier, as a value of synthesis. This is the important aspect that, to the young Corbusier who was born in 1887 and therefore, in 1911 he was around 25 years old, gives a point of view that through these impression drawings we will be able to confirm and see in the development of his future career.

Here, see this famous painting by Picasso that must be from 1922, *Deux femmes courant sur la plage* (La course), (Fig. 10s).

See also a sketch by Corbusier that is from 10 years later, from 1933, *Deux femmes nues assises sur des rochers en bord de mer* (Fig. 10d).

What I show you is the parenthesis of the speech I am making, to say that there is this progressive evolution in the career of an artist.

Picasso moves from the era of Cubism to the period that is called neoclassical, like other great artists. You know that Stravinsky also has a period called neoclassical. Much of the Italian painting of the '900, for example Carrà, in the immediate post-war period, follow this sort of watchword which is precisely the return to order. So from the explosion of Cubism, Futurism, etc., we return to a greater concentration and therefore to a deformation of a different order that involves, for example, the reintegration of the represented body, be it the human body, a still life, or a landscape.

You also see Corbusier who has a sort of poetic development quite parallel to that of Picasso, so much so true, and we will talk about it in a while, that an Italian critic, Edoardo Persico will establish a sort of equation, saying that Corbusier is to Cubist painting, as Gropius is to painting, to neoplastic poetics. Thus, it is the conclusion that Persico proposes, the new Italian architecture should look at metaphysical architecture. This is a parenthesis that I make to see how even in continuity and fidelity to one's own of understanding, feeling and depicting there are different periods in the development of an artist.

**Fig. 10s**

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *Deux femmes courant sur la plage* (La course), 1922 ca. [Gomez de la Serna, 1945, tav. XXIV].

**Fig. 10d**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Deux femmes nues assises sur des rochers en bord de mer*, 1933. [AA.VV. 1963, tav.XXXVIII, n.87].

We are faced with the Temple of Apollo in Corinth (Fig. 11s) which is prior to the Parthenon which is from the fifth century and at the same time we see an impression drawing by another great architect, Louis Kahn (Fig. 11d).

Unlike Corbusier who made his journey to the East in 1911, Kahn made it forty years later, in 1951, at the beautiful age of fifty. You know that Kahn is an architect who has matured, he has come to fame late.

At this point we are interested in defining the differences that exist between these two architects. They are both architects, uprooted artists, so to speak. You know that Corbusier was born in Switzerland, which he left to go to France. You know that he becomes a citizen of the world in the sense that he continues to travel from Latin America to North Africa, to India where he will have important assignments. Louis Kahn is Estonian by birth, but he also moved to the United States with his family in his early childhood. There takes place the incubation of his poetics that explodes precisely in Italy.

In fact, in these early 50s, in 1951, Kahn found himself with a sort of scholarship at the American Academy in Rome and from there he made a series of excursions in the Mediterranean basin, to chase the monuments of antiquity.

What is the difference between portraying Corbusier and portraying Kahn? I would say that in the case of Kahn we are completely outside what is Corbusier's Mediterranean climate. That bluish, that greenish, that orange, etc., which becomes stringy, as if they were fabrics, as if it lost the stone with which these architectural elements are built, lost its peremptory, its solidity, its integrity. It is like an electric shock that in portraying Kahn's pastel tends to consider the individual architectural elements for what they are, as if in Kahn's sensibility we always started from a geometric, abstract figuration, that is, distracted from the context, from the landscape in which it is located and in this abstract, mental figuration, there was a process that tends to establish the way to disaggregate the solid-geometric figure into elementary parts. This way of understanding that Kahn introduces in these representations comes from a culture so to speak technical, which Kahn had and which gives a constructive capacity of an almost industrial character, almost as if the precision, the perfection with which Kahn builds interlocking, as if there were no need for a binder, almost as if one element superimposed on the other, With a sort of magnetic cohesion, they stay together as if there were no need for mortar, or consolidation additives. Here, this interlocking way that Kahn has is precisely the one that starts



**Fig. 11s**

*Tempio di Apollo visto da sud ovest, Corinto, metà del VI sec. a.C.*

[AA.VV. 1967, ill.1, p.35].

**Fig. 11d**

Louis Kahn (1901-1974), *Colonne del Tempio di Apollo a Corinto*, 1951.

[AA.VV. 1979, ill.8, p.26].

from within the form and therefore his archaeological vision is a vision that is always inside the work, almost as if this archaeological vision, this detached vision, this diachronic vision, that is not contemporary, could even be found by going through his works, looking at his works from the internal space for example to another internal space, or from the external figures to the interior space. In this sense I would say that Kahn's compositional process is so to speak opposite to that of Corbusier, even if both these two great architects looked at the world of classical antiquity as an indispensable source of inspiration.

This is a temple of Ramesses in Thebes, (Fig. 12s) that as you can see Kahn redraws with that sketch (Fig. 12d). In the other sketch there are the famous pyramids of Menkaure and Chephren of the XXVI century BC (Fig 13s).

We conclude here provisionally the question of impression drawing, about which we have tried to understand through the eyes of the artist, the painter, the architect, the principles that guided its interpretation.

Here we are faced with another type of drawing, as you can see, it is the row and square drawing, the drawing that, started with the square, the parallel line and then passed to the drafting machine, arrived today on your table with the computer.

What is the line and square drawing for?

It is first of all that product that is destined for those who have to carry out the architectural work. But it is also that design that serves didactically not only to scholars of architecture, to lovers, as they say, but also for example to customers, and in general to those who must enjoy a forecast, something to see before the work is realized.

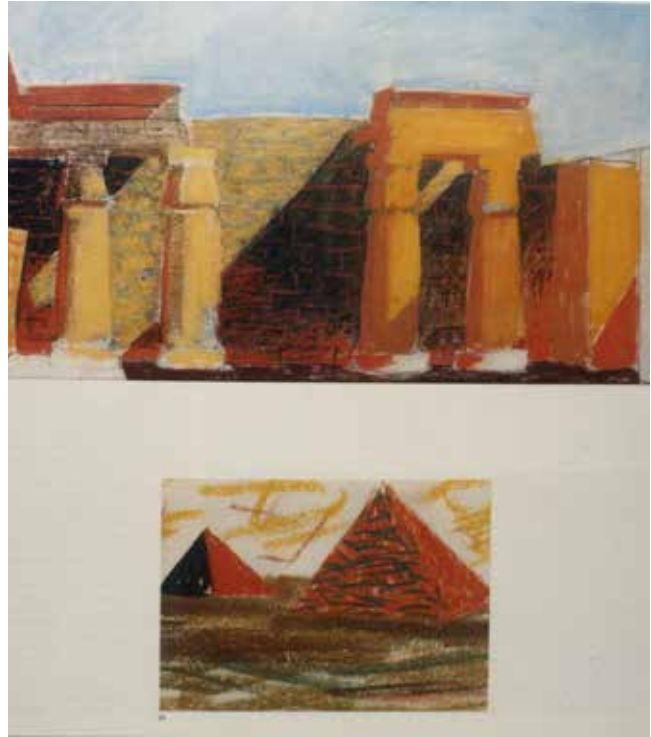
The drawing you see is a drawing made by Viollet-le Duc, (Fig. 14s) a famous scholar of architecture, author of several books, including the famous *Entretiens sur l'architecture*, which represents in summary the phrase of the Doric style. The work of Viollet-le-Duc is precisely that immersed in the culture of Positivism. The work of art, the work of architecture, the artefact of architecture are considered as the equal combination of different elements, almost as if the architectural composition had to correspond to a process by anastylosis. You know that anastylosis is the method by which the finds of a ruined, ruined monument are reassembled through



**Fig. 12s**  
*Tempio funerario di Ramesse II,*  
Tebe, XIII sec. a.C.  
[de Cenival 1964, p.109].

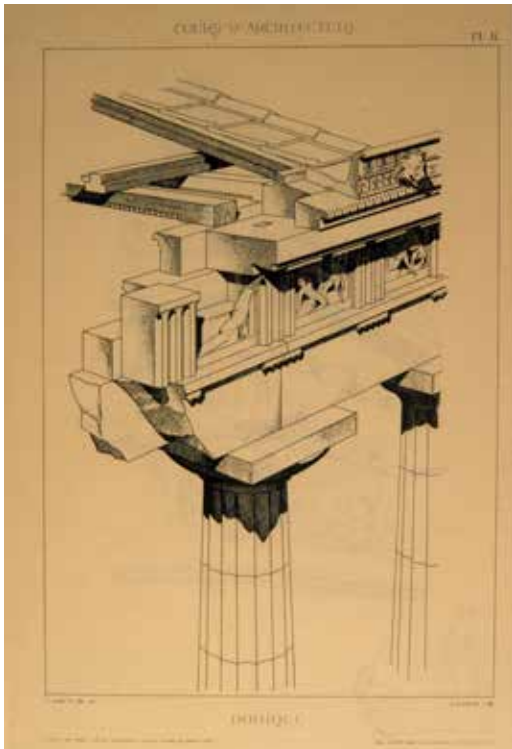
**Fig. 12d**  
Louis Kahn (1901-1974), *Ramesse a Tebe.*  
[AA.VV. 1979 III.9-10, p.27].

**Fig. 13s**  
*Piramidi di Micerino e Chefren,*  
*Complessi funerari di Giza, XX-*  
*VII-XXVI sec. a.C.*  
[de Cenival 1964, p.36].



original pieces. Viollet-le-Duc's conception, regardless of whether it has to do with historical artifacts from antiquity, is precisely this mechanics of construction. But, mind you, it is a mechanic that takes place with pieces that have a weight, therefore a typically architectural weighting. There is no mechanism in what we will later have the opportunity to deal with le Duc's conception, but a mechanic, something that uses juxtaposition, also because le Duc operates in a period of time in which the processes of industrial reproduction begin to assert themselves. So he generally conceives the destiny of architecture, as a destiny in which reproducibility tends to become a mystifying element; the architectural work will no longer be a unicum, but will tend to have to refer to some models and the models are those of Classicism.

I told you, these reasonings on architecture are about the middle of the last century and about ten years later, Camillo Boito, an Italian architect, draws this table for a work that he will be able to realize and it is the Municipal Hospital of Gallarate (Fig. 14d).

**Fig. 14s**

Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879), *Il dorico*. Da: *Entretiens sur l'Architecture*, 1863-72.

[Viollet-le-Duc 1977, pl. II].

**Fig. 14d**

Camillo Boito (1836-1914), *Ospedale Civico di Gallarate*, 1869.

[Grimoldi 1991, ill.8].



You see, however, that although only a decade has passed, Boitian positivism is cloaked in romanticism.

That is to say, from this Boitian drawing you can grasp how there is something that goes beyond the individual architectural elements and that although they are constructive drawings (it is a front and a section), it also focuses on the atmosphere.

Camillo Boito, as you surely know, is an architect called “neo-Romanesque”, who looks at the “neo-Romanesque” style as that style in which a sort of Lombard koinè must be found: we are in the years preceding the Unification of Italy, but regardless of the Risorgimento which is a phenomenon of national unification, in the case of Boito there is this desire to root modern architecture, Modern architecture for him, the architecture of his time, to certain contexts and one of these contexts is that of the Lombard Milanese. Boito has a formation partly Lombard, partly Venetian and the same things apply from another point of view in Padua, etc.

But there is a sense of umbratality in this Boitian design, which goes beyond the analytical restitution of the construction to rest even within an atmosphere. This atmosphere is the poetic conception that the architect has and therefore also his possible references to the history of architecture itself.

Let's go back to Corbusier. This perspective you see concerns a neighborhood designed by Corbusier around 1915, the Domino neighborhood (Fig. 15s). It is a district resulting from a technical process that aims to solve the problems of production and reproduction as is now the case in industrial systems.

These houses that you see are structured, they have a skeleton that is what you see in this other image (Fig. 15d): it is a system in which simply pillars, beams and stairwell groups leave the floors completely free, so the distribution arrangement inside the accommodation is very free.

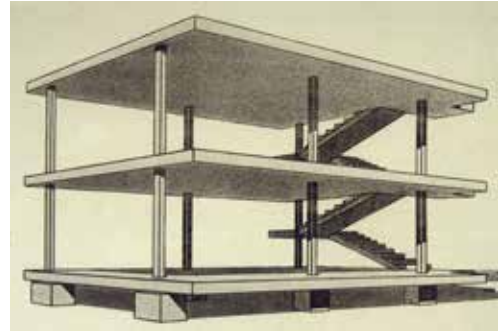
Here, in this regard, however, it is worth making a small digression. How important is machinism in Corbusier's poetics?



**Fig. 15s**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Prospettiva del Quartiere Domino*, 1914-1915.

[Brace Taylor 1972].

**Fig. 15d**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Struttura della casa Domino*, 1915.

[Boesiger, Stonorov 1948, p.23].

Corbusier is the architect who looks to the future and conceives the metropolis through a process of rarefaction and consolidation of tall buildings, the so-called Cartesian skyscrapers of Corbusier. He was accused, when he was still alive, but now also in our times, of being an architect who is strongly responsible for the appearance of today's cities.

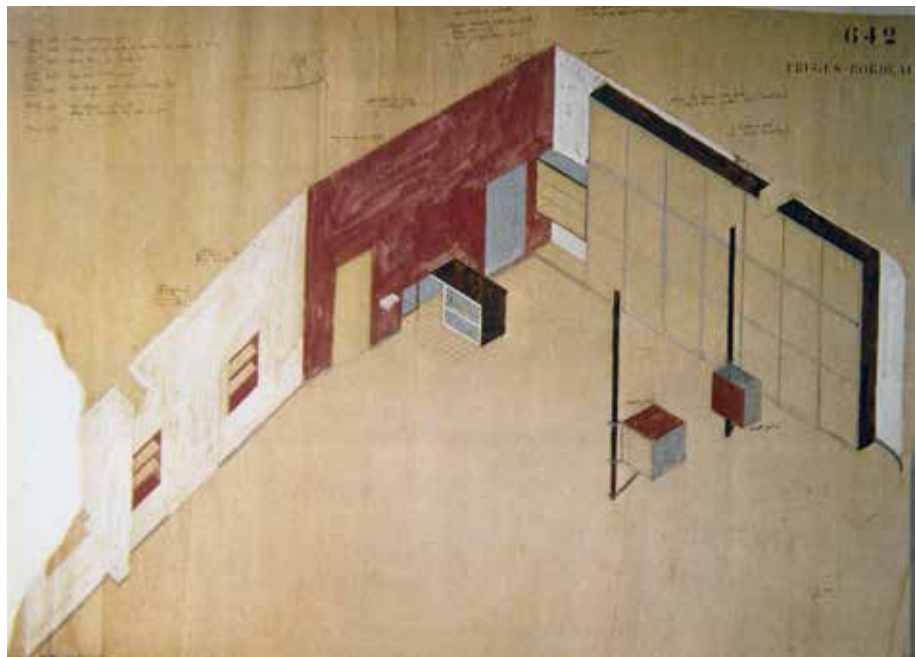
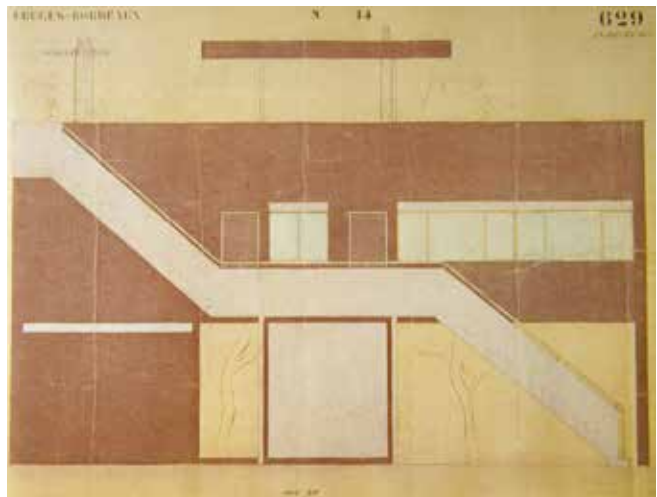
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In my opinion, Corbusier starts instead from that aspect of synthesis that makes him an artist on a par with Picasso, for example, or other artists of his time. He is truly an artist, he is first of all an artist, who then from time to time finds in worldly occasions, that is to say in what the society of the time offers him, the way to always reach this result of plastic synthesis that is what dictates to him inside the soul, the invention, the inspiration. Also in this case, where we are faced with an almost trilithic expression so to speak, of construction, which will then be taken up in many other versions (here we are in 1915, with the so-called prefabricated buildings that will fill the world, there will be a plethora of architects, design institutes that will deal with this problem: producing the house as the consumer goods of industry are produced, for example cars) I said, even in this case you can perhaps see, perhaps with some effort, the plastic intent that is inside this Corbuserian scheme: it will be given by the shading, it will be given by the proportions that the uprights have with respect to the slab, to the floor, it will be that staircase that is freed. There is always at the base of Corbusier's work this extraordinary sense of synthesis, this plastic capacity within which to reduce even the problems of architecture (because Corbusier is not a sculptor, he was also a sculptor as the painter did, but he is above all an architect); There is this capacity in which the laws that govern architecture and therefore oppose it being treated as a sculpture, but he always manages to find through these difficulties, of the architect compared to the pure artist, sculptor or painter, etc., this way of regenerating them plastically.

Then you see how the prospect of this Domino neighborhood is all in all a deception, that is, that sense a bit naïve, watercolor that you see, is a bit that captatio benevolentiae that Corbusier practices towards his customers and you know that Corbusier's customers constitute another aspect quite structured to his way of acting and also of designing.

This image is instead a work that Corbusier does with a sugar industrialist, Henry Frugès, who falls in love with Corbusier. You know that this aspect concerns not only Corbusier but many artists, in the past it is enough to remember Richard Wagner and the relationship he had with Ludwig II of Bavaria.

You know that the client, the client for the architect, but generally for the

**Fig. 16s**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Disegni per il Quartiere a Pessac per Henry Frugès*, 1925-1929.  
[Brace Taylor 1972].

**Fig. 16d**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Disegno per la casa 14 del Quartiere a Pessac*, 1925-1929.  
[Brace Taylor 1972].

**Fig. 17d**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Studio per l'ufficio di Henry Frugès*, 1925-1929.  
[Brace Taylor 1972].

artist is the decisive element, but this is even more so for titanic personalities such as Corbusier's personality.

These you see are polychromy studies (Fig. 16s) and this is the drawing of one of these houses, house 14 if I'm not mistaken (Fig. 16d).

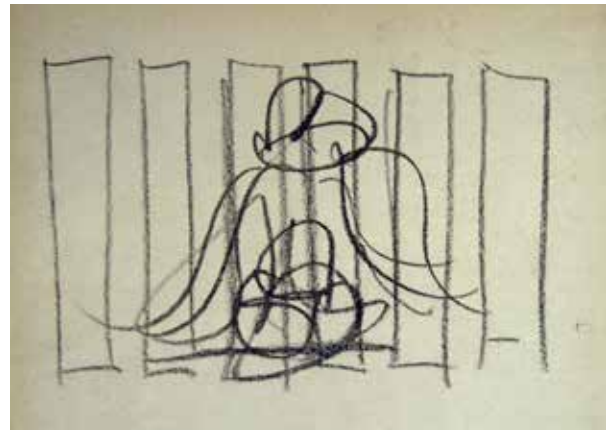
This is the interior of the studio of Henry Frugès (Fig. 17d), precisely the client. We can see how even in this phase that I would dare to call cubist, in Corbusier's architecture, this sense of plasticity remains, especially in this drawing that is a line and square drawing, with color backgrounds that could be the work of an abstract painter. You see how the same tonalities, the way in which it is composed underlie precisely this plastic sense that Corbusier's architecture has, which is never to be confused with an abstract conception of figuration.

Of course, Henry Frugès, after this experience with Corbusier, fails because this neighborhood in Pessac is not built and will end his years painting, plagiarized by the master.

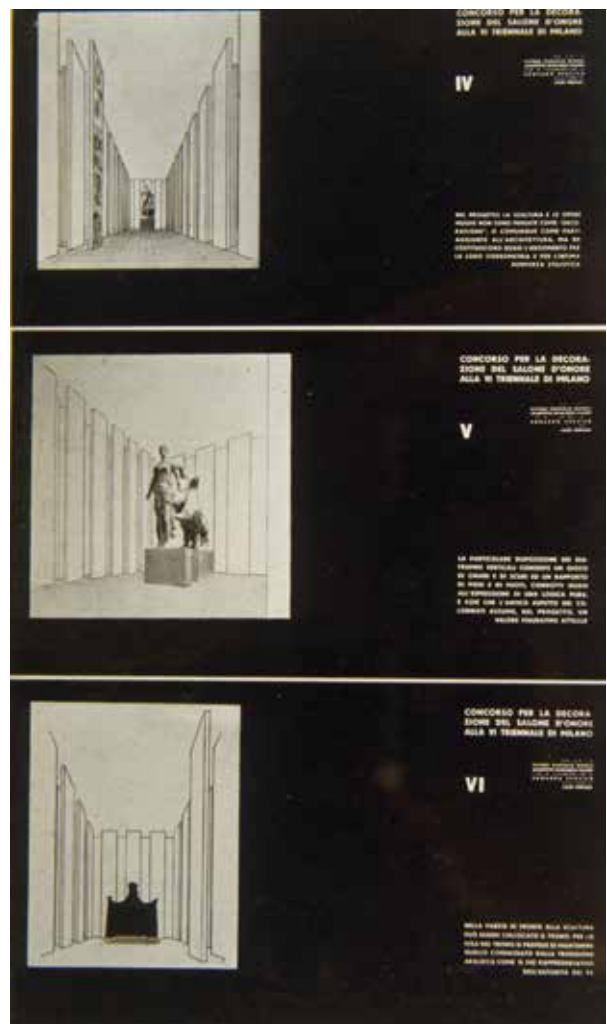
You will certainly have recognized the image we are seeing, it is a painting by Giorgio De Chirico, entitled *Melanconia* and is from 1912 (Fig. 18s). Do you remember that just now I mentioned Persico, this very important



**Fig. 18s**  
Giorgio De Chirico (1888-1978),  
*Melanconia*, 1912.  
[Benzi, Tolomeo Speranza 1992,  
p.103].



**Fig. 18d**  
Edoardo Persico (1900-1936),  
*Primo schizzo per il Salone d'Onore alla VI Triennale, 1935*.  
[Veronesi 1964].

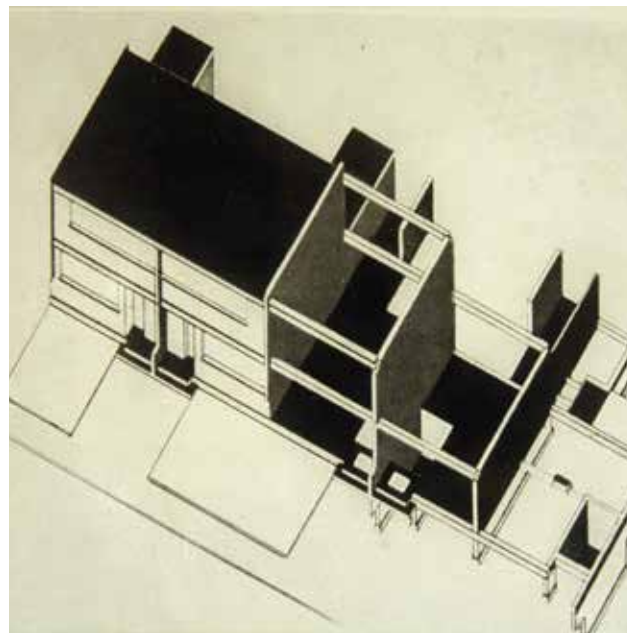
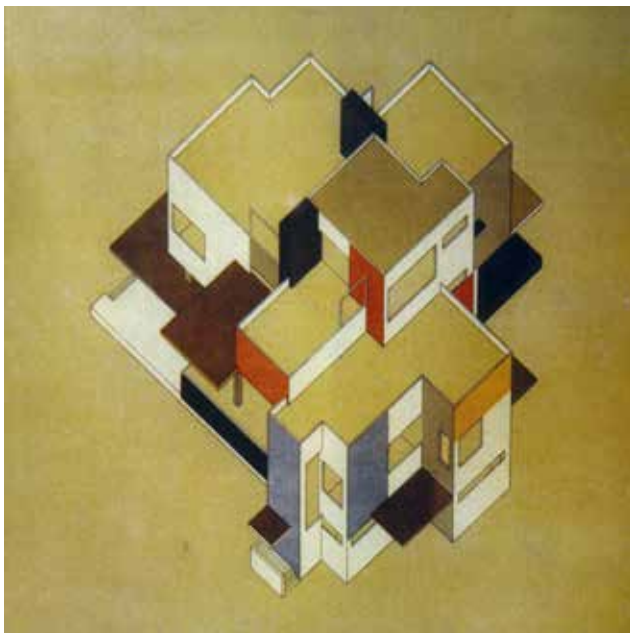


**Fig. 19**  
Edoardo Persico, Giancarlo Pianti, Marcello Nizzoli (grafico),  
Lucio Fontana (scultore), *Progetto per il Salone d'Onore alla VI Triennale, 1935*.  
[Veronesi 1964].

critic of the history of modern Italian architecture, who establishes those comparisons and equations: Cubism-Corbusier, Neoplasticism-Gropius, Metaphysics for Italian architecture (modern Italian architecture must look at Metaphysics).

Metaphysics is also the painting of De Chirico, of which he is the main exponent, at least the best known of the culture of his time and still today. The sketch you see is a sketch of Persico's hand, a sketch from 1935: Persico is preparing for a competition that is announced by the Milan Triennale for the preparation of the Salone d'Onore (Fig. 18d). It is a synthetic sketch, but he has already incorporated what will later be the execution of his work.



**Fig. 20s**

Theo Van Doesburg (1883-1931), Cornelis van Eesteren (1897-1988), *Progetto per una costruzione*, 1923.  
[Jaffé 1964 tav. 5].

**Fig. 20d**

Walter Gropius (1883-1969), *Siedlung Törten*, Dessau, 1926-28.  
[Argan 1951, ill. 43].

**Fig. 21s**

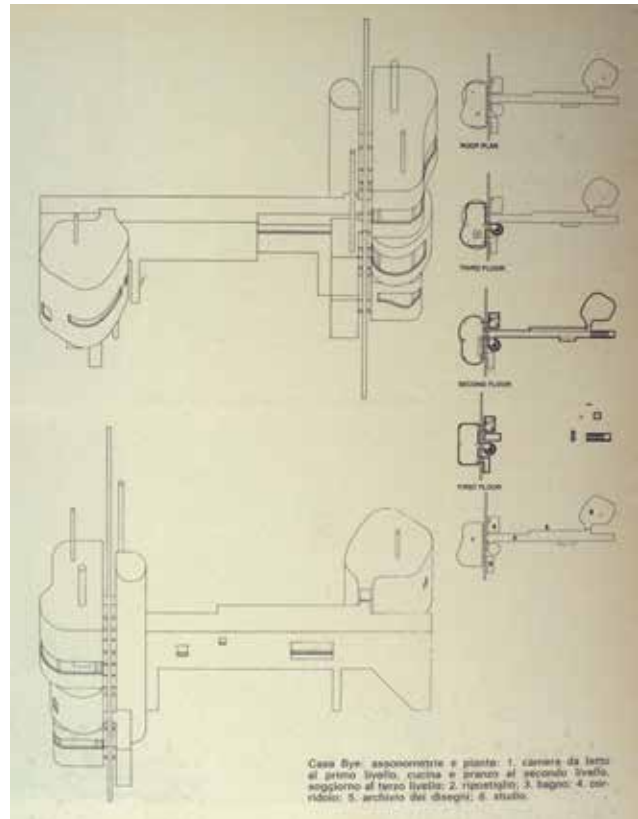
Fernand Léger (1881-1955), *Inventions-études*, 1918.  
[Lassalle 1989, n.74, p.141].

These are the executive tables that Persico presents at the competition, the sculpture is by Lucio Fontana, Giancarlo Palanti, who was the partner of Albini and Nizzoli as a graphic designer collaborates with him and this is the line that Persico traces and on which he invites young Italian rationalist architects to converge (Fig. 19). He will be followed, but we will talk about it another time, by some of the most promising and sensitive Italian architects of the time, to whom we will mention when we talk about Italian Rationalism.

Corbusier-Cubism equation, Neoplasticism-Gropius. Now I will make a parenthesis: see this project that Theo van Doesburg and Cornelis van Eesteren, as part of the neoplastic movement of which a painter like Mondrian is part, etc., realize in 1923 (Fig. 20s); then you see this project by

**Fig. 21d (nella pagina precedente)**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Due Bottiglie*, 1926.  
[AA., VV. 1963, tav. XXVI, n. 68].



**Fig. 22**

John Hejduk (1929-2000), *Casa Bye (Wall House 2)*, Ridgefield, Connecticut, 1973.  
[Gubitosi, Izzo 1976, p.67].

Gropius for Siedlung in Dessau (Fig. 20d), which suffers and is shown here for that form of equation that Persico mentioned.

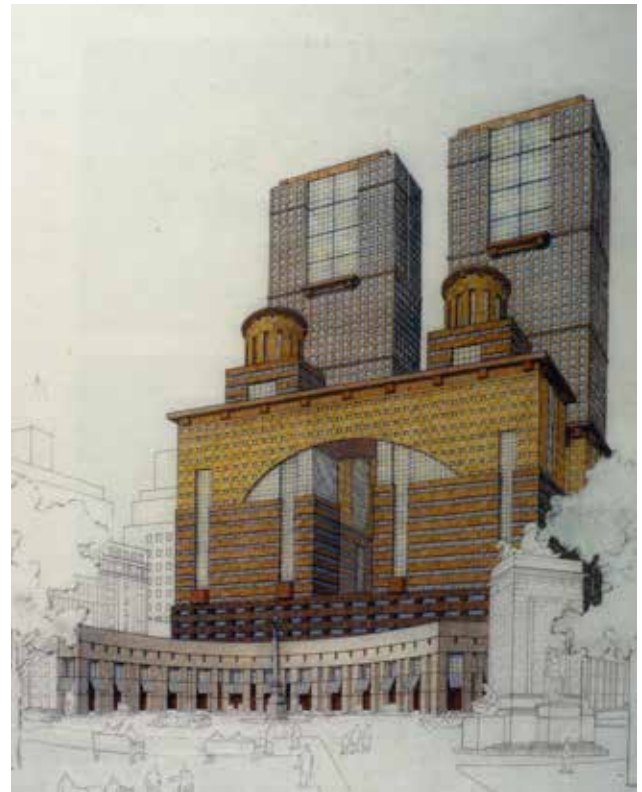
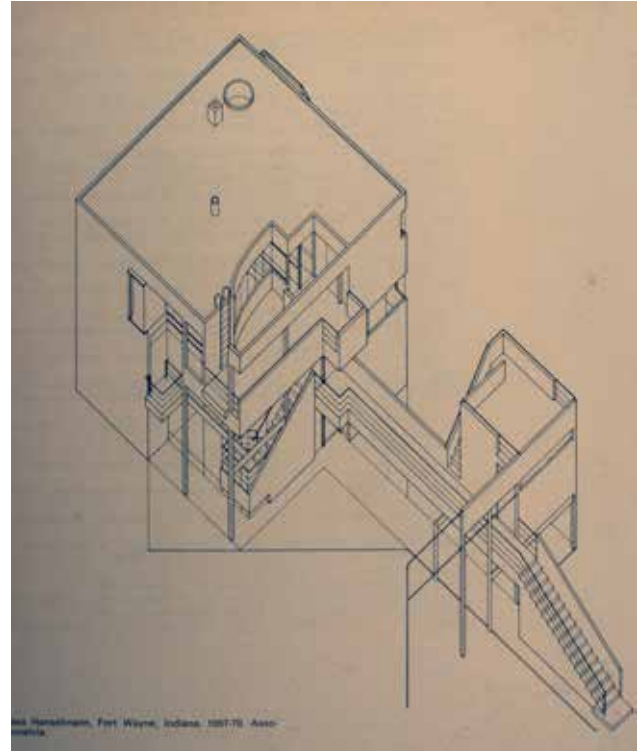
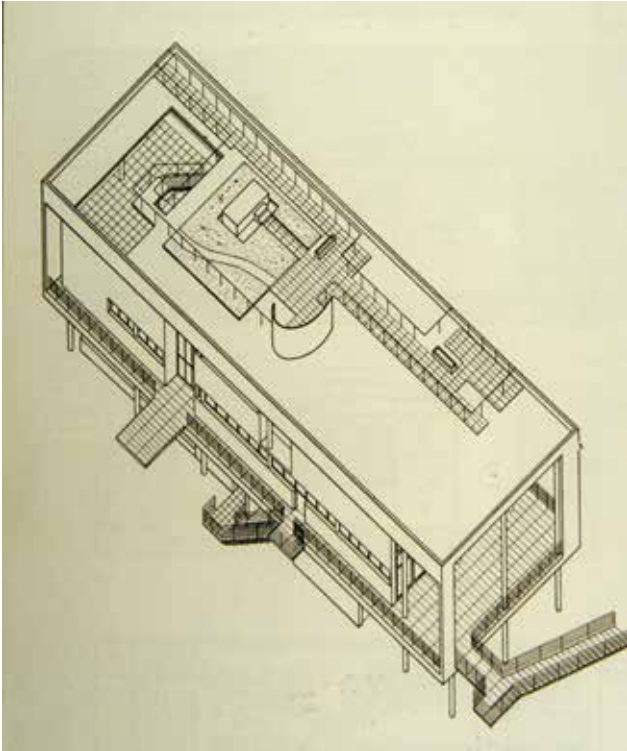
Again, the relationship between figurative art and architecture. You see a painting by Fernand Léger, a painting from 1918, called *Inventions-études* (Fig. 21f) and then you see a drawing, a painting by Corbusier, who was also a sculptor and painter, entitled *Two Bottles*, from 1926 (Fig. 21d). This awareness on the part of Le Corbusier with respect to the figurative movements of the time is a constant. We have seen the relationship with Picasso's so-called neoclassical period, now we see it in the purist aspect that has the painting of Léger on the one hand and the feeling of Corbusier on the other.

We were talking about row and square design.

This drawing you see is by a then young American architect John Hejduk, an architect who was born in 1928, this work seems to me to be around the 70s (Fig. 22).

Hejduk is one of those who at the beginning of his career were identified as Five Architects, which also included Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves and others. These Five Architects have particularly tuned in to a fairly European wavelength, contravening a bit the rules of the professional market in the United States, which are those of the large studio that perhaps then operates and establishes a network of production relationships that however end in a form of centralization. North American studies are very large and very powerful.

The Five Architects, on the other hand, operate in the opposite direction. They are, so to speak, sponsored by a form that is more that of the gallerist than the young painters, than that of the professional field. Their affirmation in many cases will be a statement destined to last over time even if individually, because this temporary association lasts a certain number of years and then each of them takes its own path. As I said, this way of theirs has a disruptive effect in the North American cultural and professio-



**Fig. 23s**  
Giuseppe Terragni (1903-1944),  
*Villa sul Lago*, 1936.  
[Schumacher 1992, p. 102].

**Fig. 24s**  
Michael Graves (1934-2015),  
*Centro Wexner per le Arti*, Ohio  
State University, 1983.  
[AA.VV. 1991, p. 98].

**Fig. 23d**  
Michael Graves (1934-2015),  
*Casa Hanselmann*, Fort Wayne,  
Indiana, 1967-70.  
[Gubitosi, Izzo]1976, p.84].

**Fig. 24d**  
Michael Graves (1934-2015),  
*Rivalorizzazione del Columbus  
Circle*, New York, 1985, vista da  
Central Park.  
[AA.VV. 1991, p. 167].



nal world. For example, their commission tends not to be that of the great American corporations, that is, office buildings, etc., but tends more to be that of the dwelling house, the villa and then, as their affirmation is consolidated, that for example of the museum.

Meyer is one of the Five Architects and you know that he is the author of numerous museums. These architects look at European architecture and I would say that their sensitivity is first of all figurative and therefore not very ideological, but above all figurative. In this relationship, for example, between rectilinear traces and the freedom of the curve, which is not a geometric shape, but is a deformed conical, there is this recovery of cubism that is the basis of the figurative research of Léger and in that period also of Le Corbusier.

These two images are one a project of a villa at Lake Terragni of 1936 (Fig. 23s) and the other is a project by Graves, also done around the years '70-'75, it is the first way of Graves, intended for the Hanselmann house in Fort Wayne, Indiana, '67-'70 (Fig. 23d).

Here, with regard to European architecture, in the case of Graves, but not only of him, also in the case of Peter Eisenmann and Meyer, there is this particular regard to Terragni. It will happen, but we will talk about it in more depth, for that excavation work that Terragni performs on the volume.

More than a neoplastic construction as we have seen in the case of the project of Theo van Doesburg and van Eesteren, that is, obtained by interlocking juxtapositions of planes, in the case of Terragni it seems that the procedure is that of excavation from the parallelepiped and therefore the strong shading is consistent with this in-depth work. Parallelepiped, if you want box in which parts are torn, in the case for example of Graves' project in the corner part, you see with that arbitrary cut that enters, and that constitute a poetic vein that has distinguished Mediterranean architecture.

The exegete of this Mediterranean architecture was Alberto Sartoris who is still alive for more than a hundred years (he wrote a famous work in three volumes, in which he divided modern architecture into Nordic architecture, Mediterranean, etc.).

In this climate in particular Terragni manages to feed a language that I would say is not at all personal. There is this radiance in Terragni that comes from a series of plots and concerns towards for example the architecture of Sant'Elia, the expressionist painting of Sironi etc., which make it a theme that we will try to address in depth next time.

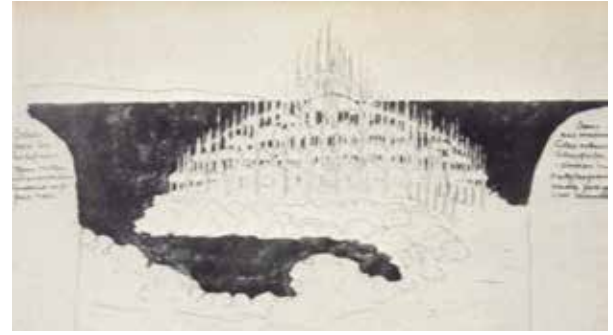
We are at the end of the row and square drawing and it is the latest version of Michael Graves (Figs. 24s, 24d), the author of the purist project that you have just seen and that we compared with the work of Terragni.

There is this development of Graves' personality, of what we could define today Postmodern, albeit with a certain organicity and with a certain approximation.

I would say that Graves' work is above all a "neodeco" work, that is, a presence of certain American architecture, the Chrysler building for example and others, it takes up that sense of decorated modernity, which has distinguished the most popular aspect of modern art of the 20s and 30s.

Here, we are not so much interested in the path of Graves, as to see how the architecture in line and square brought to a certain level of levitation, tends to become atmospheric architecture, that is, captivating enough that somehow manages to influence its own possible becoming.

In fact, speaking of atmospheric drawing we see an image, an engraving

**Fig. 25s**

Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778), *Dalla serie di vedute di Paestum*, 1777.

[Focillon 1967, ill. 143].

**Fig. 25d**

Bruno Taut (1880-1938), *Duomo di vetro a Portofino* (sopra) e *Cupola in reticolato di calcestruzzo sul monte Resegone* (sotto). Da *Alpine Architektur*, 1917.

[Caramel, Longatti 1987 cat. 300, p. 121].

that you surely know how to attribute: it is that series of Views of Paestum that Giovanni Battista Piranesi produces shortly before he died, in the middle of the '700 (Fig. 25s).

Think that Piranesi marks the transition from Baroque architecture to the wrinkling of classical architecture then, to Neoclassical.

These views are a bit counter-faced, we could say of a work instead written by Johann Winckelmann, who is considered the founder of neoclassical art, for writings that he published about ten years before these engravings by Piranesi and which were then spread in Europe, where Winckelmann fed the cult of classical art, denying the period of involution of Classicism of the Baroque and Rococo periods.

Here, vision of atmosphere, ruinism as we said at the beginning, and comparison of this moment of transition reproduced in this representation, with a series of drawings that a German architect, Bruno Taut, draws up in 1918 (Fig. 25d), just after the First World War, in a famous text, entitled *Alpine Architektur*.

This vision, this atmosphere that Taut builds through these drawings, is the result of a sort of sense of unraveling caused by the war and therefore the hypothesis of a necessary confinement in the utopia of any process of civil regeneration.

What you see above is a glass Duomo in Portofino and the one below is a dome in concrete mesh on our Mount Resegone.

*Alpine Architektur* of Taut: there is a component of Expressionism of which Taut is one of the main protagonists and representatives, which is also utopia, but we will deal with Expressionism in any case on another occasion more specifically.

What you see now is a famous drawing of St. Elijah, which is part of a series of drawings of the New Town (Fig. 26a). It is an intermodal station we would say today, which has, you see, an aircraft runway, a railway station, and on three levels the possibility of interchanging different transport systems.

The drawing of St. Elijah is a drawing that is backward, compared to his futurist vision. It refers, not directly, to Otto Wagner, to the Viennese Se-

cession, that is, to the Austrian pupils of Wagner; the illustrative aspect, almost cartoonish of Sant'Elia's drawings, combines this precision of drawing with visionary content, which involves certain types, extremizing them in a future context.

The figure of Sant'Elia, whom architecture has identified as the standard-bearer of modern Italian architecture and who almost always constitutes the image of introduction in all the period texts that have dealt with rationalist architecture, is actually a case that should be considered. It should be considered for certain aspects of a traditional nature that the drawings of Sant'Elia preserve, especially with regard to the architectural scores.

Different is the case we see now. This is the Walking City, by two architects who are part of the Archigram group (Fig. 26b).

This drawing-project is from 1963 and the authors are Ron Herron and Brian Harvey. This prediction of the future city is located in New York: you see the skyscrapers of Manhattan in the background. This capsular regime that their architecture proposes, tends to contradict the traditional type structure of architecture, that is, the classical phrase: support, pillar, beam. Thanks to plastics, this vision becomes disruptive.

That architecture that today goes by the name of High-tech, for example, in England, think of Foster, but also in Italy has some representatives, has received a certain impulse from this vision of the Archigram group, which constituted a turning point of a decisive type also in the Anglo-Saxon architecture of that period.

Perhaps the Archigram group was partly inspired by another group of then young architects, Metabolism. One of these architects Kiyonori Kikutake, Japanese, in 1960 designed this Marine City (Figs. 27a, 27b).

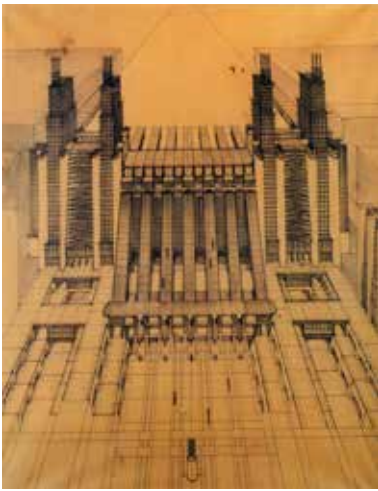
Also in this case, the recourse to organic forms, the renunciation of any survival that still smacks of a traditional conception of building, is evident. Perhaps it is precisely these Metabolisms that inspire the same Archigrams. I would say that the inspiration of this Japanese group is to be traced back a bit to the particular conditions in which Japan found itself after the Second World War: the collapse of a whole series of ideals and assumptions that in these architects had also determined a break with traditional architecture, even with the architecture of Japanese rationalist architects, architects like the best known, Tange. And think, it will be this coming and going of inspirations, it will be Tange to be inspired by the Metabolism group, when, for example, he will present that famous and grandiose project for Tokyo Bay.

We have concluded the futuristic design and we are going to conclude with the images.

Here I show you two images of Hadrian's Villa: the Canopus (Fig. 28s) that ends in this exedra, the mirror of water and so on.

Hadrian's Villa was built by Emperor Hadrian in 120 AD. Emperor Hadrian is back from a journey for him too, we could say of the East, whose notebook is not written, but put in stone. Adriano returns to Rome and at Tivoli he builds this villa that is made up of a whole series of places-memories. Each of these places-memories reminds him from time to time of the Canopus, which is this channel that branches off from the Nile to Alexandria in Egypt, Greece, because the Canopus as you see is surrounded by a series of statues of the classical Greek school. It is Hadrian's stone notebook. (Fig. 28d).





**Fig. 26s**

Antonio Sant'Elia (1888-1916),  
*La città nuova*, stazione, 1914.  
[Caramel, Longatti, 1987, cat.  
300, p. 121].

**Fig. 26d**

Ron Herron (1930-) e Brian Har-  
vey, *A Walking City*, 1963.  
[Banham 1980].

**Fig. 27s**

Kiyonori Kikutake (1928-2011),  
*Marine City*, Disegno, 1960.  
[Riani 1969, p.228].

**Fig. 27d**

Kiyonori Kikutake (1928-2011),  
*Marine City*, Modello, 1960.  
[Riani 1969, p.229].



**Fig. 28s**  
*Villa Adriana, Canopo*, 120 d.C.  
[Picard 1965, p.124].



**Fig. 28d**  
*Villa Adriana, Teatro Marittimo*, 120 d.C.  
[Picard 1965, p.125].  
[Canella 1991, p.6].

Why am I talking to you about this? Because it appears that Leonardo, the great Leonardo, visited at the end of the fifteenth century, Hadrian's Villa in Rome.

Leonardo, you know that he comes to Milan to work with Ludovico il Moro and in a panel that we now see, sketches a composition made up of two fortresses, circular in shape, but of different radius, which have a series of loopholes on the outside and instead a series of loggias inside. At the center there is a machine that is used for lifting weights, it could also be a military device, it is not clear (Figs. 29s).

Here, on this table there are also marked the plan of this Latin cross building that seems to be the S. Spirito by Brunelleschi, as well as the oratory of S. Maria degli Angeli always by Brunelleschi.

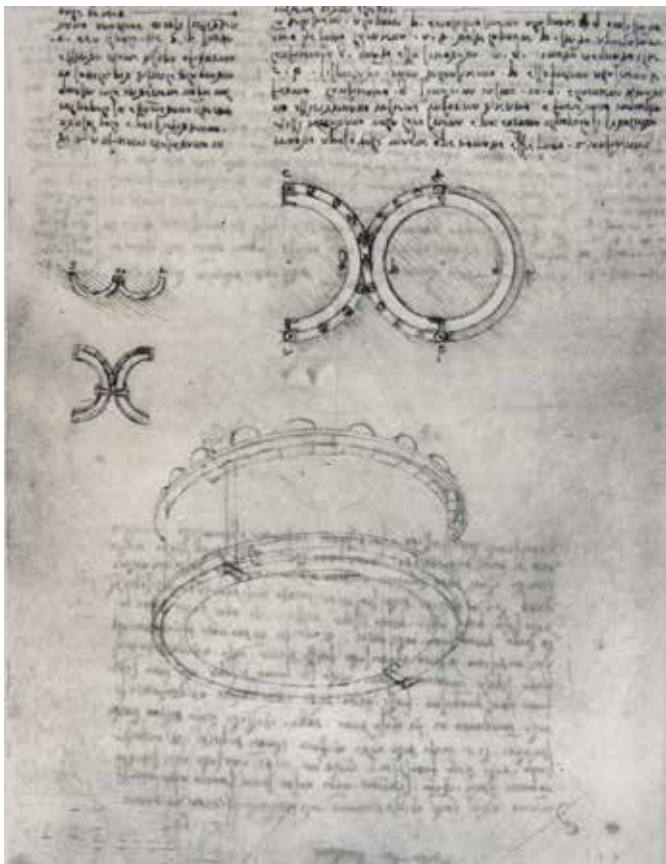
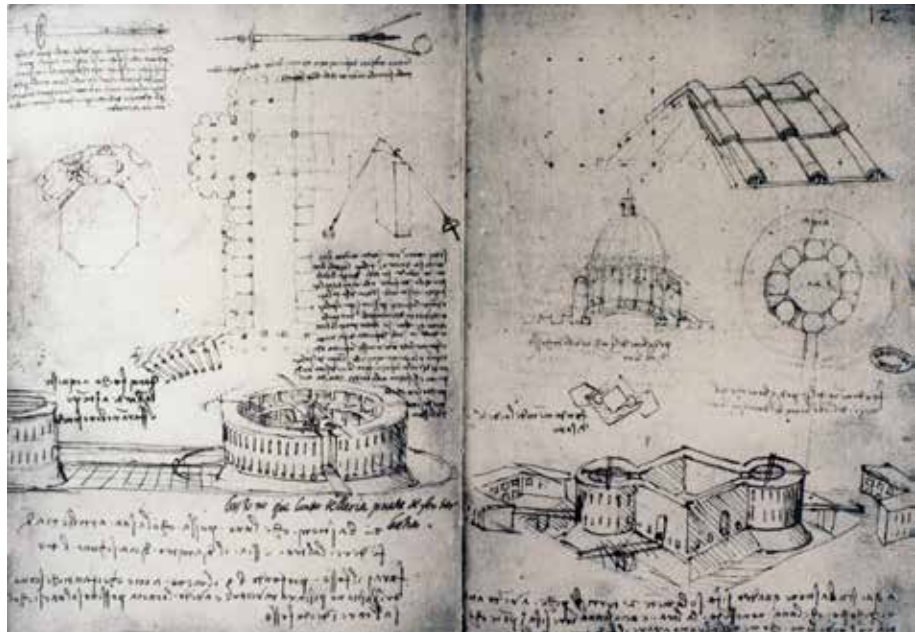
Perhaps you yourselves can see a contradiction between Brunelleschi's drawing in its purity and in its classical revolution, compared to Leonardo's sensitization to the moods, to the humidity of the Milanese, for which Leonardo who works after Brunelleschi and even after Leon Battista Alberti, seems in some way to close himself within a conception that makes a virtue of necessity, compared to the Lombard landscape of that period. Lombard landscape that is characterized by the abundance of water, that is, by the availability of water that guarantees wealth to the Duchy of Milan. It is almost as if Leonardo understood that in Milan in those years, there is no room for the language of the Italic center, the language of the Renaissance Italic center and therefore there is like a closing in a fortress architecture, which at the same time is also worldly architecture, perhaps even of delights. It may be that this fortress system is also an integral part of a complex, of a villa, perhaps a choral one. Hence Leonardo's exemplification, for example in the transcription of the Teatro di Curio (Fig. 29d): Leonardo reads Pliny, reads how the Teatro di Curio worked, with these two rotating elements that can from time to time combine in an introverted amphithetical form, or rotating with a complex system of chains, opening into two hemicycles. Here, they are exercises that Leonardo carried out in that period and that were not appreciated perhaps for the potential they have from the typological point of view.

The last drawing I show you of Leonardo is this so-called Preaching Theatre (Fig. 30).



**Fig. 29s**

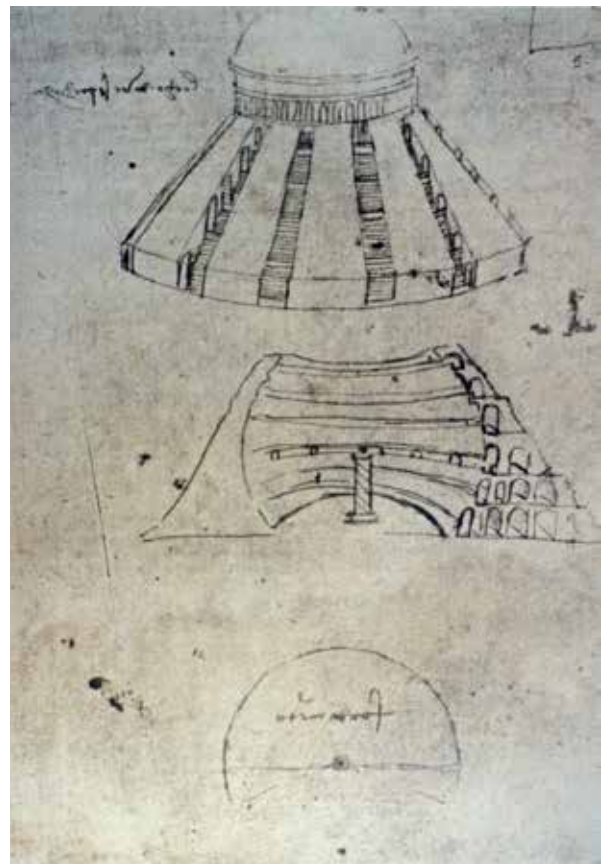
Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), *Ricordi di edifici brunelleschiani a Firenze* (Santo Spirito e Santa Maria degli Angeli) e *pianta e alzato del padiglione nel giardino del Castello a Milano*, 1490 ca. [Pedretti 1978, ill. 81, pp. 66-67] [Canella 1989, p. 74].

**Fig. 29d**

In basso a sinistra: Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), *Interpretazione del Teatro Mobile di Curzio descritto da Plinio*, 1497. [AA.VV. 1974, ill. 2, p. 270-271].

**Fig. 30**

In basso a destra: Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), *Teatro da predicare in un autonomo edificio conico, con al centro pulpito in forma di colonna tortile*, 1490 ca. [Firpo 1962, p. 60].



It is a grandiose building: you see the different orders of galleries, with a vertical hallway system given by bleachers that surround the building itself. The galleries overlook this twisted column, which would then be a pulpit. This form of extraordinary theater that Leonardo designed and described in his various codices is still a possible destination for the Lombard landscape of that period, that Lombard landscape that is not conceivable in Brunelleschi's square that the architects of Italic center training have in mind and therefore does not fit the fabric, the context of the Italian city center Italic, But that must instead lead on this humid plain, which is that of Milan.



41

- a riga e squadra**
- VIOLET BOITO**
- 14 D Eugène-Emmanuel VIOLET-LE-DUC (1814-1878), da Rappresentanti sull'architettura, 1863-72 interpretazione ROSSINI, Beggiani dell'antico
- 14 S Camillo BOITO (1836-1914), Ospedale Civile di Verona 1863 interpretazione UMBERTO come allusione al Romanticismo di Verdi, 3 laureandi alla prima Giocata, 1843, Edificio di T. Geronzi COSE DI FANTASIA LINGUISTICA
- LE CORBUSIER**
- 15 D LE CORBUSIER (1897-1965), Prospettiva del Quartiere Domini, 1914-1915 Neoclassico
- 15 S LE CORBUSIER, Ossatura standard del tutto indipendente dalla funzione della pianta della casa. Ossatura che porta semplicemente travi e scale. Grande possibilità di raggruppamento della casa.
- 16 D LE CORBUSIER, Disegno per il Quartiere Domini per Perac, 1925-1929
- 16 S LE CORBUSIER, Disegno per la casa n. 14 del Quartiere Domini a Perac
- 17 D LE CORBUSIER, Studio per l'ufficio di Perac industrialmente illuminato adattato proprio alla la porta al quasi galleggiante per la vista dal 1929 e si dedicò alla pittura

- a riga e squadra**
- DE CARRO PERSICO**
- 18 D Giorgio DE CARRO (1888-1978), Milano, 1912
- 18 S Edoardo PERSICO (1900-1936), Primo salotto per il Salone d'Onore alla VI Triennale 1933
- 19 D Edoardo PERSICO, Gravito PALANTI, Milano NIZZO (grafico), Lucio FONTANA (scultore), Progetto per il Salone d'Onore alla VI Triennale, 1933
- VAN DER ROEPER - GROPIUS**
- 20 D Theo Van Doesburg (1883-1931), con VAN EESTEREN (1897-1988), Progetto per una costruzione, 1923
- 20 S Walter GROPIUS (1883-1969), Wiedlung Tötter, Darmstadt 1926-28
- LEGER LE CORBUSIER HEIDUK**
- 21 D Fernand LEGER, Intuitions-Études (Intuitions-Études) 1918
- 21 S LE CORBUSIER (1897-1965), Due Cottiglie, 1926
- 22 S John HEIDUK, Casa BYE (Wall House), Ridgefield, Connecticut, 1973
- TERRAZZI GRAVES**
- 23 D Giuseppe TERRAZZI (1903-1944), Villa del lago, 1926
- 23 S Michael GRAVES (1934-), Gia Hausmann, Fort Wauke, Indiana, 1967-78
- GRAVES**
- 24 D Michael GRAVES (1934-), Conto per la Arch, Indiana University, 1983 Postmodernismo → Neo la riga e squadra con allusione cf. 1010 Perac
- 24 S Michael GRAVES, Rinascita del Columbus Club, New York, 1985 Ante da Giuseppe Perac

## PROSPETTIVA D'ATMOSFERA

- 25 D Giovanni Battista PIRANESI (1720-1778), dalla serie delle VEDUTE DI PIRELLA, 1777
- 25 S Bruno TAUT (1880-1938), Disegno di Monte Reisach e Cupola in rettilineo di costruzione sul Monte Reisach da Alpine Architettura, 1917 Realismo espressionista
- COMBINAZIONE DELL'ESPRESSIONISMO**

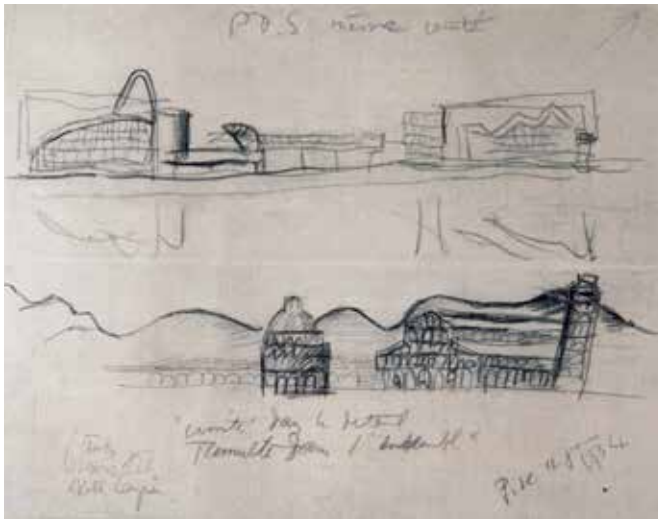
## FUTURISMO

- 26 D Antonio SANT'ELIA (1888-1916), LA CITTÀ NUOVA, 1914 Disegno Prospettiva
- 26 S Roy HERRON (1930-) e Brian HARVEY (Gruppo ARCHIGRAM), Wall City, 1963 di più calde progetto Archigram nella East Asia con la tema di Manhattan sulla spinta NOTIZIA DEL GIUGUINO PIRELLA TAUT
- 27 D Kiyonori KIKUTAKE (1928-), Moscow City, 1960 disegno Gruppo Metabolism
- 27 S Kiyonori KIKUTAKE (1928-), Moscow City, 1960 disegno Gruppo Metabolism
- Tempio della Rice a Moscow di K. Tange Primo per la Banca di Tokio di K. Tange Interazione metabolica di Alain Barbès 1958

## Sera cancellativa

- 28 D VILLA ADRIANA, 120 d. C., CANICO nel 120 km da Atene in Gr
- 28 S VILLA ADRIANA, 120 d. C., TEATRO MARITIMO di Caesare di punta del Gran Toro Mediteraneo di Adriano
- 29 D LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519), Disegno di edifici disegnati a Ferrara (Santo Spirito e Santa Maria dagli Angeli)
- 29 S LEONARDO DA VINCI, Interpretazione del Teatro Marino di Cosmo descritto da Piranesi, 1497
- 30 S LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519), Teatro di predicare in un autonomo edificio conico, con al centro pulpito sul grado di colonna tortile, 1490 c.
- 31 D LE CORBUSIER (1897-1965), Disegno del 1934 del titolo alla Stazione di Pisa, Primo del Herron e ricordo del Gruppo per la Barbès di Saint Spirit
- UNTA DEL REINAGLIO (ONITA A SCALA UNANA); TUNO DEL INCHIET; per porto da R'ABBE LEGER ac tempo di Luigi IV nella Bras sul l'architettura del 1753-1755 dove propone di allungare a indole funzioni del Reinagio Monastico a forma di edifici ed elegante ornamenti decorativi; con la forma di edifici monaci quella monastica curvatura della grac LE CORBUSIER, Moscow del Gruppo Barbès di Saint Spirit, Moscow 1934



**Fig. 31s**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Disegno dal treno alla stazione di Pisa; Piazza dei Miracoli e ricordo del Concorso per il Palazzo dei Soviet*, 1934.

[Boesiger 1952, p. 132].

**Fig. 31d**

Le Corbusier (1887-1965), *Modello del Progetto per il Concorso per il Palazzo dei Soviet*, Mosca, 1931.

[Boesiger 1952, p. 133].

What you see I would call drawing without erasures, drawing without repentance.

It is the way of noting the idea that we have seen particularly in Leonardo and now we see in Corbusier and it is present in all the drawings of notes that Corbusier delivers to his contemporaries: it is a way of drawing that already has in embryo the result of what will be architecture.

However, to conclude (these are the last two images that I show you), I want to refer to a retrospective drawing that Corbusier traces one day in 1934, in the station of Pisa, looking at the so-called Piazza dei Miracoli: there is the tower of Pisa, the Duomo, etc. (Fig. 31s).

Look at the Piazza dei Miracoli, write down on his notebook the sketch you see, baptistery, cathedral, tower ... and then above he redraws from memory, the project that he submitted to the competition for the Palace of Soviets in Moscow in 1931. But he adds at the bottom of pencil, unity in detail... Corbusier opens a parenthesis and says: "Unity and human scale all in the whole". It is the synthesis of how this complex of Pisa appears to him and it is also the synthesis that he compares with the project of the Palazzo dei Soviet.

This project of the Palace of Soviets (Fig. 31d) is an extraordinary work in the career of the Franco-Swiss master: he manages to sensitize himself with this project that if I were Boris Yeltsin I would have realized today, because I find it one of the most beautiful projects that have ever been done by modern architecture, it is a project that manages to synthesize the experience of constructivist architecture, that in the '20s in the Soviet Union was produced with great results, together with the plastic sense, the sense of synthesis that is typical of Corbusier's personality.

Although the project is the set of different parts that apparently appear to us as articulated, I do not know if you can see the capacity for synthesis that has this system conceived with two main bodies and with this correspond to different structures to tie rods, shelves, load-bearing arches, developed according to an attention that takes into account the efforts, etc. In this game of this wizard of architecture.

I would say that this return of drawing to recover something that, in fact, compared with a monumental piece of the city, perhaps better than anyone else, represents this phase of the drawing that I have defined without repentance and without erasures, as the ability to express synthetically and summarily the development and tradition in architecture.



\* The text published here takes up almost verbatim, with minimal corrections, the transcription, not revised by the author, of the lesson, with the same title, held by Guido Canella on October 30, 1997 at the course of Theories and techniques of architectural design, Faculty of Civil Architecture of Milan Bovisa.

The layout follows the criterion of projection with double projector, which Guido Canella often used to critically compare the different images. The latter are taken from the original slides of the lesson preserved at the Guido Canella Archive, Milan.

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Guido Canella, born in Bucharest in 1931 and died in Milan in 2009, was one of the most important and original protagonists of post-war Italian architecture.

A pupil of Ernesto Nathan Rogers and Giuseppe Samonà with whom, in Venice and Milan, in the early sixties he began an almost fifty-year university activity, Canella has always combined the practice of designer, author of recognized masterpieces of recent decades, theoretical reflection, cultural organization, university research and teaching, writing books and essays of profound culture, taking care of editorial series, promoting and directing magazines such as «Hinterland» and «Zodiac». Professor Emeritus at the Politecnico di Milano and president of the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca in the two-year period 2007-2008, his work as a teacher and architect testifies to a rigorous and intransigent attitude, with the publication of studies and writings that were central to the Italian architectural debate of the post-war period, and with the realization of works whose obstinate will to form becomes a vehicle for the moral and civil implications of architectural research.