# MIAW

# 2023

# Archives of Memory

**Politecnico Di Milano**

**School of Architecture Urban Planning Construction Engineering**

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MIAW 2023

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## MIAW

The MIAW-Milan International Architecture Workshop is the international intensive programme at the Politecnico di Milano, School of Architecture Urban Planning Construction Engineering, that provides an international design forum for schools, teachers and students, but it is also an informal platform to discuss issues and share ambitions that education implies. Its aim is to stimulate cross-over thinking between researches and practitioners in the design field, involving different scales and encouraging an interdisciplinary approach towards design problems. Each class has an international guest professor of high profile whose activity and interests are related to the different study courses and disciplinary areas characterising our School.

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# 01. INTRODUCTION

# Miaw 2023

*Andrea Campioli*

Dean of the School of Architecture Urban Planning Construction Engineering

MIAW 2023 is the eleventh edition of the Milan International Architecture Workshop, the intriguing di-dactic experiment providing, since 2010, the students of our School enrolled in different programmes the opportunity to discuss a challenging topic through an intensive teaching method, the workshop, within a broad and rich training context represented by the visiting professors coming from different places all over the world.

The didactic activity of the workshops involves students, teachers and tutors for eleven consecutive work-ing days, and it is entirely devoted to deepening the topics investigated. This experience allows the stu-dents to focus on a specific topic, overcoming the boundaries between theoretical studies and design ex-perimentation: during the workshops, reading, studying, teaching, researching and designing occur all at the same time and in the same place. Moreover, the workshop allows direct and continuous interactions between teacher and student and between student and student, growing up a community without barriers between teachers and students and triggering particularly virtuous learning mechanisms.

The confrontation between different cultures, different experiences and different design approaches char-acterized the climate of MIAW due to the articulated team of visiting professors invited to lead the work-shops: Paolo Cascone from London, Eduardo Pesquera from Madrid, Antje Friesleben from Berlin, Hel-der Casal Ribeiro from Porto and Felipe Magales from Porto too.

Their intense teaching activity offered at an international level, their professional commitment in very dif-ferent contexts and their various research traditions enabled the investigation of the proposed theme from several points of view, enriching both our students' cultural and cognitive backgrounds.

The challenging theme proposed for MIAW 2023 was "archives of memory".

The design experience carried out during the workshop aimed to find the balance between memory and archives.

Thanks to the support of the Comune di Milano with its Department of Digital Transformation and Civic Services and the Department of Culture, the workshop had the opportunity to focus on significant cultural realities in Milan as Triennale di Milano, Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano, Corriere della Sera Foundation, Palazzo Morando Museum. The five *ateliers* worked on a contemporary idea of a museum capable of interweaving the archival issues. Places of memory conservation in which the exhibition can become a device for a more profound knowledge of the city and its culture.

The idea was to clarify and implement the concept of a widespread museum in the territory of the city of Milan, as identified by Fredi Drugman, professor of exhibition design and museography in the Faculty of Architecture of the Politecnico di Milano in the seventies, with a double aim. Firstly, developing the close relationship between a territory and the heritage preserved in its museums; secondly, highlighting what the museum institution must be able to weave with the inhabitants of that territory, building a network in which physical and virtual merge and contaminate.

Special thanks to the colleagues who thought about coordinating this Milano Internation-al Architetcture Workshop edition, especially Domenico Chizzoniti and Massimo Ferrari; thanks to the school Office staff, especially Cristina Agazzi; thanks to the visiting professors and the tutors who ani-mate the workshops; thanks to the students who welcome with enthusiasm the challenge of MIAW 2023.

# MIAW 2023

**MILAN INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE WORKSHOP 5-16 JUNE**

# ARCHIVES OF MEMORY

# A New Course

*Massimo Ferrari*
ABC Department, Politecnico di Milano

At the core of the MIAW (Milan International Architecture Workshop), a well-known, prestigious, intensive international event organised for over ten years by the School of Architecture, Urban Planning, and Construction Engineering at the Politecnico di Milano, lies the profound value of *critical dialogue*. This dialogue, enriched by the global perspective of the design seminar, has long been one of the most powerful tools for advancing disciplinary knowledge in Architecture. A more impactful and nuanced dialogue, fruit of the well-established relationship between the Municipality of Milan and the Politecnico, it fosters a rich intellectual experience through collaboration between students, tutors, and Italian professors, alongside a highly skilled international faculty. Each year, this dynamic is expressed through the reimagining of urban design, consistently demonstrating a proven ability to interpret emblematic Milanese themes chosen for their significance.

In this way, Milan and the Politecnico find points of intellectual convergence and food for thought that equally reflect the interest of both the host city and the grateful guest, as they envision precise solutions to ideal needs. These are realised through projects that often anticipate or suggest needs that have already emerged in the city. The international dialogue, along with the role of Visiting Professors chosen for the intersection of their unique skills and the high profile of their ongoing personal research — often rooted in distant parts of the globe — brings a high level of complexity to this productive relationship based in Milan. This complexity goes beyond merely discussing case studies and practical experiences from other urban contexts, or even other regions and continents, and instead fosters a primarily theoretical and interpretive dialogue — the heart of our discipline. On one hand, this approach broadens and stimulates the curiosity of

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students in relation to their specific research programmes. On the other hand, it offers a fresh interpretative framework, revealed through the proposed solutions, in which diverse and expert perspectives enrich the collective debate on urban themes. This, in turn, fosters greater representativeness and social engagement by recognising the complex forms and meanings inherent in the city.

At the other end of the spectrum, the preparation and drafting of these promised results demand the full dedication of the faculty at the Milan School of Architecture who guide researchers and professors in producing instructional materials. These are presented as operational briefings and, more precisely, as in-depth explorations of sociological, geographical, and cultural themes, laying the groundwork for, and supporting, the hands-on work in the field carried out by the appointed professors. A necessary cultural hospitality, which allows the documentation provided to be freely interpreted by the diverse sensibilities of international guests, it both shapes and introduces the design research, aligning expectations with the AUIC School's approach to interpreting spaces and historical timelines, seamlessly interwoven with contemporary contexts.

The responsibility for the proposed choices, shared within a cohesive Scientific Committee, has led us, in these recent years of MIAW research, to envision an in-depth, complex exploration centring the cultural project around the ideal theme of memory. This iconic work aims to define and highlight the historical wealth and the necessary, fundamental contributions that everything preceding us — even with its constant contradictions and revolutions — can still offer to contemporary society. It provides the essential guidance for a steady approach that, through continuous interpretation, refines adherence to a shared research direction. A memory of stories and objects that primarily identifies the city of Milan in its transformation toward a modernity achieved through difficult transitions and narrow constraints, which are not always easy to navigate. Today, it is more important than ever to remember and revisit these experiences in order to envision a conscious path toward progress.

The 20th century, which has just ended, has often been regarded as the century of accumulation, a time of archiving knowledge which, emerging from 19th-century positivism, clashed with the complexities of modernity. The current century is tasked with making this inherited wealth accessible, much like the digital possibilities that emerged at the dawn of the 2000s with classificatory

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and quantitative aims. This legacy should be carefully selected and presented through critical and creative methods that have the power to inspire emotions before they educate. Archives and new archives, museums, and newly imagined exhibition spaces are needed to fully and effectively convey the proposed content. Unknowingly, this content enters our minds through these architectures, shaping our ability to interpret the future and remaining with us indefinitely. An original interpretation of the theme, which in its essence identifies the archive as a physical and literary icon of the layered culture passed down to us, and the museum as the space where its contents unfold.

Starting this year and for several upcoming editions, the chosen theme, in its complex interpretation, places at its core the continuity — or discontinuity — of a place's cultural history. This is achieved through the ability to decipher, translate, and interpret, ultimately promoting a virtuous *step forward* for a community which, through new institutions, concretely defined by constructed projects, urban spaces, centres or peripheries,actively participates in a forward-looking vision, enriched by a solid foundation firmly rooted in the memory of the past.

Thus, following MIAW 2022, which sought to generate suitable proposals for new-generation spaces and structures that could identify the best conditions for the educational environments of the near future, MIAW 2023 aimed to explore a theme balanced between memory and the archive. Thanks to the support of Milan's leading cultural institutions, the five Ateliers explored a contemporary concept of the museum, capable of intertwining the themes and resources to which architecture can offer a new home. Places for preserving memory, where the act of *exhibiting* can become a tool for improving our understanding of both our culture and the city of Milan.

Previous pages and opposite page:
photos of the Bologna Film Library (photo by Luca Andreoni from the series *My nights are more beautiful than your days*, 2016)

# Memory and its Tomorrow

*Domenico Chizzoniti*

ABC Department, Politecnico di Milano

Often, in the aftermath of an intensive workshop experience such as MIAW, one wonders if the results have lived up to the program one has set, whether the work has been more or less useful to the students' growth and whether the setting of an intensive project succeeds in shifting the focus on such a fascinating topic as *Memory. Archives of Memory* could be that banner that, as a *réclame,* appears in the form of display advertising, "sudden pop-up to be clicked," during the buzzing navigation, on this one an unexpected world opens up, different corners of Milan, little known to most, that show repositories of memory that possess the value of a real museum: from that of the *Archives of the City of Milan to the Triennale*, from the *Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo* to the *Corriere della Sera*, repositories dense with memory in which architecture offers itself as but mediator of a discovery of the city that is unprecedented, authentic, innovative.

The intent of the work seemed to me exemplary in wanting to understand how this collective appropriation of an experience made within unseen places could generate new points of view on the city's history.

The experience of this specific architectural theme on memory proposed here stands to investigate specific techniques of "re-sanitization" from certain practices that, for example, in the literary sphere and beyond have been taken up experimentally when the work of critical writing "makes it easier to find operationally a solution to the eternal problem of the relationship between historicity and universality of literary texts, their functional belonging to a precise historical system of communication and, simultaneously, to a broader, and also historical, system of aesthetic values."

So, the adoption of this point of view in reporting a different narrative

in architecture, not so much of the literary techniques as specifically of the experimental procedures engaged in those modes of rewriting, redeems that microcosm of linguistic discard (or archival resignation if you will) otherwise neglected and abandoned, and brings back its sense of an ideological choice, with more evidence, in every material detail, for a historical transformation, of an architecturally unprecedented, aesthetic, therefore literary and also historical image: archives, repositories, catalogues.

Unlike the other arts in architecture, this intention is made explicit not only in recombining but from the beginning in recomposing the basic semantic structures recognizable as elements in the general structure of the city.[1]

Rewriting is thus the possibility of breaking down and recomposing the accumulation as a resource are not the elements of language with which it is substantiated, even though these belong to a conceptual dimension that is inherent to the good, connotes it, and defines its essential and underlying elements. On the other hand, the operation required within this edition of MIAW seemed closer to a literary connotation (where literature is an Oulipian operation par excellence) that rearranges a narrative of already given sequences of those conceptually concluded elements, original configurations endowed with a strong identity that perhaps extrapolated from the original context and inserted into new narrative mechanisms lend themselves to be combined with the original elements and conform new semantic structures.

What binds architecture and literature in this specific passage is that procedure that takes elements of clear order from a hypo-text (or context; the whole fabula: disguise; the peculiar core of style: parody), through a dialectical progression with a critical reworking of invariants, both literary and architectural, from which it draws saps its will for semantic transformation linked to reinvention rather than invention from scratch: differently, then, from the other arts in architecture this intention is made explicit not only in recombining but from the outset in recomposing the basic semantic structures recognizable as elements in the

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**1**   Focillon, H. (1943), *Vita delle forme*, Torino: Einaudi- Whyte, L.L. (1962), "Atomism, Structure and Form. A Report on the Natural Philosophy of Form" in G. Kepes (a cura di), Structure in Art and Science, Massachusetts:The MIT Press, p. 20. - Thom, R. (2006), Morfologia del semiotico, trad. it. Fabbri, P. (a cura di), Sesto San Giovanni: Meltemi).

general structure of the city.

The reference to experimental practices invalidated in the school of architecture in Milan, a legitimate ambition of the project if the experimental search for innovative aspects also crosses the didactic formula of the intensive workshop, there precisely where many authoritative interpreters of that school, were persuaded that one cannot profitably apply oneself to didactic work, with the pretension of infusing any maieutic artifice, without possessing the aptitude for learning. «… It is futile for an educator in design to project his own subjective sensations into the student's mind. All he can do successfully is to develop his teaching on the basis of realities, of objective facts common to all of us. But the study of what is reality, what is illusion, requires a fresh mind, unaffected by the accumulated debris of intellectual knowledge … The initial task of a design teacher should be to free the student from his intellectual frustration by encouraging him to trust his own subconscious reactions, and to try to restore the unprejudiced receptivity of his childhood. He then must guide him in the process of eradication of tenacious prejudices and relapses into imitative action by helping him to find a common denominator of expression developed from his own observation and experience…»[2].

It often happens that some of Ernesto N. Rogers' reflections on the role of design in Architecture Schools recur, particularly on the incisiveness of design culture, and some considerations on the need for a dialectical relationship in the education of students. This dialectic is perhaps still of some use in cultivating the diverse interests among those approaching the practice of architecture. Renunciation of this dialectical confrontation, albeit in different roles, runs the risk of mechanically transferring the convictions of influential architects, here in this workshop convened to impart an experimental impulse, to interlocutors who are still in training a useful conditioning to the project.[3]

The point of view of architectural design, specifically architectural composition, on the subject of Memory, is traditionally problematic, sometimes asymptotic compared, for example, to those more properly engaged in Asset Preservation. So that, in order to shy away from yet another attempt, perhaps in vain, to trace

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**2** W.Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture*, Collier Books, New York, Fourth Printing 1970, pp.32-33

**3** E.N.Rogers, *Problemi di una Scuola di Architettura*, in *Esperienza dell'Architettura*, Torino 1956, p.74.

the reasons of one back to those of the other, it seemed that the idea of having students work on the authentic object, on the artefact as the central element of the project, could hold together some aspects related to the design of the space, looking for an interpretative key between the reasons of preservation, construction and enhancement of the historical artefact.

It seems to me helpful to point out some points of reflection after this work, which has seen everyone involved among some of the most relevant realities of the city of Milan, Milanese cultural realities and with a marked social character: the "Triennale di Milano", "Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano", the "Corriere della Sera Foundation", and the "Municipality of Milan", committed to an innovative and unconventional idea of a museum, able to weave the themes of the archive with the places of the preservation of memory in which the exhibition can become a device for a novel knowledge of the city and its culture.

To get straight to the core of the topic, the first question to underline is the one related to the relationship between memory, which is the object of design action, and narrativity, which is the action that generates in conceiving, designing, representing, and thus making the space that memory celebrates.

The iconic nature of the work of art, so pregnant, for instance, in the Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo with its extraordinary repositories and accumulations from the single architectural artefact to the most elementary sculptural artefact, is linked to the memory of its source that inspired its contents and forms, deduced or assumed from the cultural context in which the sources took on a symbolic (iconological or iconographic) value, sometimes even crystallized in forms that have risen to reference.

Mind you, how in a given historical succession the permanence of symbolic elements seems to have interacted positively with artistic and architectural findings. In the absence of possible references, architectural culture has always revealed a critical value of its own that, beyond direct sources, proceeds by experimental juxtapositions that place the question on a less empirical, let us say more inductive, level, aimed at a possible interpretation of the semantic understanding of iconic reality.

This second aspect is more related to a certain creative, experimental and therefore particularly fruitful attitude than the deductions of simple preservation, invoking a more complex approach that leverages design action aimed at the

valorization not only of the single artefact but of the entire context, and on this see the attempts driven in relation to the work on archives that in an almost marginal condition rise to a "polo-genetic" role in the suburban framework through the exaltation of memory as a collective resource.

Central to this theme remains an essay, Architecture and Narrative, (Triennale di Milano, Milan, Electa, 1996). Paul Ricoeur takes up the general question of Memory taken from a famous text by Aristotle, which has as its title precisely Of Memory and Reminiscence:

«Suppose there is in our souls an impressionable wax, in some more abundant, in others less so, purer in some, more impure in others.... It is a gift, we say, from the mother of the Muses, Mnemosyne: all that we wish to retain in memory of what we have heard, seen or conceived is impressed on this wax which we present to sensations or conceptions. And of that which is engraved we preserve the memory and science as long as the image lasts.» (Plato, Teeteto, 191).

Having clarified the question of the object, i.e., memory, let us return to the instrument, i.e., narrativity, which is defined as the action that is produced in conceiving, conceiving, representing and thus constructing the space that memory celebrates.

Putting anteriority into the narrative is not just about remembering it. We need how to put it into action, not only in narrative, as testimony, but to make it tangible through what Ricoeur calls configuration. Now, in constructing this parallelism between architecture and narrativity, it happens that architecture is to space what narrativity is to time.

Having cleared the field from the misunderstanding of the passive regeneration of these places, from the question of a simple reconstruction and even from the cases of the trivial analogy, up to the paralyzing philologism of "where it was, how it was," or moving into a more strictly conceptual dimension regarding the meaning of the collection by reasoning about the factors that link architecture and narrative, we realize the importance and centrality of the user-user. On the other hand, if we move the factors that link architecture and narrative, thus time to construction and space to memory, then the analogy would no longer be sufficient to return an image, consistent for example, between accumulation and container.

Ricoeur proposes to apply the same parameters for the art of building as

for storytelling, for example, the concepts of prefiguration, configuration and reconfiguration.

The narrative acts on time by configuring it to return an accurate picture of facts. Similarly, architecture acts on space to determine its deeper meanings. Both have the capacity to create memory. In the project experience for these central places and almost marginal places in Milan, the steps that this intensive work experience synthesized moved, it seems to me, from three essential aspects that intersected narrative and composition.

The first passage referred to prefiguration. In the field of literature, prefiguration represents the collection of oral accounts that are made spontaneously and without literary pretensions. We could say that the architecture of this stage is strongly characterized by its archaic references, and probably this process, following an established definition by now of the concept of architectural preservation, constitutes the actions and interests concerning the recovery, restoration, maintenance and restitution of historic buildings. Thus, this phase of prefiguration in the design process represented a kind of philological reconstruction that starting from the existing parts would at least virtually complete the missing ones. The second step was related to configuration. For the project it is necessary to create a plot of the events that make up a "synthesis of the heterogeneous" (the initial intrigue), to try to "clarify the inextricable" (the intelligibility), and to create a relationship with all the other elements that interfere with the work (the intertextuality). In devising new entities these three steps are identical: first the discernment of heterogeneity of forms with composition (intrigue); then achieving of legibility from a context that by definition is inseparable from its place (the city, the territory) to cope with all that has been built derived from architectural history (intertextuality).

Finally, the third and final stage that of reconfiguration. The project is not concluded in the act of construction but continues its life. The creative act is a subjective and selective act: the subjectivity of the project is a given, as is the discrimination of its basic constituent elements that intervene to regenerate the idea of accumulation as a resource. The man who dwells there can revise the act of building, revise the meaning of the project, in other words, can re-determine the conceptual structure of space.

# Show Memory!

*Massimo Ferrari, Claudia Tinazzi, Annalucia D'Erchia*
ABC Department, Politecnico di Milano

> Every rereading of a classic is as much
> a voyage of discovery as the first reading
> Italo Calvino[1]

> To me photography functions
> as a fossilisation of time.
> Hiroshi Sugimoto[2]

"Show Memory" captures our attention with its deliberately concise and provocative slogan, juxtaposing two opposing sentiments. This polite oxymoron, particularly relevant in today's era, contrasts an exhibition concept designed for the masses, increasingly sensationalised, with a slow and jealous guardianship reserved for the few. For a long time, the museum and archive have embodied this dichotomy between extroversion and introversion — between a need to display and desire to create memories — urge to exhibit and necessity to protect. Up until the last century, they have traced two parallel paths that rarely intersect, both striving towards the unattainable goal of defining a space that is most appropriate and true to their purpose, fixed once and for all.

We might not stray far from the truth if we attempted to show how certain moments of the last century, the *century of accumulatio*n, have transformed re-evaluating its deeper meaning and, above all, its social and political role. Initially,

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**1**  Italo Calvino, *Perché leggere i classici,* Mondadori, 1981, p.18-19
**2**  Goswin Schwendinger, *Interview with Hiroshi Sugimoto,* AA, London 2014

this idea of the museum was held hostage by a static and formal appearance, unable to convey the authentic and critical value of content and container. Subsequently, there emerged a potential dialectical openness towards the concept of critical cataloguing as a memory "of a society, a culture, or a civilisation" [3], suggesting a possible intersection of the two previously mentioned parallel paths.

Distinct moments and a well-defined chronology today trace a necessary and surprising journey to transition the 20th century into the new Millennium. These include small typological revolutions and sharp cultural battles over spaces and objects, languages and words, methods and practices, contents and containers. Early reflections on the future of artworks "in the age of its technical reproducibility"[4] highlight the inherent impossibility of freezing the exhibition experience, where every artwork «is prey, bought, captured, deported, excavated, stolen, corrupted, exchanged, taken»[5].

In 1930, George Howe and William Lescaze were tasked with envisioning the new *Museum of Modern Art* in New York. Their project stood out among many, featuring an ideally infinite series of overlapping rooms and galleries silent, introverted boxes stacked one atop the other. This design seemed to demonstrate a balance, affirming numerous compositional singularities illuminated solely by zenithal light. A column of "containers" that suggests cataloguing the works within, rather than guiding the measured path that connects one work to the another.

In 1939, Le Corbusier designed a museum "without a facade and with unlimited growth" for an unspecified location. This building, constructed as a square spiral, appears to offer visitors the freedom to navigate the rooms and create their itineraries. A constantly evolving museum distinguished by its potential for unlimited expansion, in terms of its physical structure and number of artworks: «I believe that such a museum would captivate the interest of viewers, artists, and producers of all kinds. With a visionary director at its helm, this museum could broaden its scope to encompass a wide range of contemporary objects, evolving into what I term the "Museum of Knowledge." This would serve as a

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**3**  M. Foucault, L'Archéologie du savoir,1969 (first Italian edition L'archeologia del sapere 1971)

**4**  Refers to Walter Benjamin's thought and work 'The Work of Art. In the age of its technical reproducibility', 1935 (first Italian edition 1966)

**5**  G. Manganelli, *Lager di squisitezze*, in *La favola pitagorica*, Adelphi, 2005, p.57-58

"Survey by the Art & Language Institute". Documenta 5, Kassel, 1972. Courtesy of documenta archiv. © documenta archiv

true educational tool, an essential modern facility, as vital to a community as a gasworks or power station. A new civilisation in search of its identity, will find the means to discover and express itself»[6].

In 1968, Marcel Broodthaers launched his personal *Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles* in Brussels. This imaginary museum served as a tangible critique and re-evaluation of knowledge systems within the institutional framework. The *Section XIXème siècle*, arranged in his studio, functioned as a temporary repository for artworks stored in 30 crates. The descriptive labels and transport instructions on these crates, like clues to be deciphered, enabled visitors to learn about their contents without seeing them. The following year, a new section of this imaginary museum emerged on the sands of Le Coq beach in Belgium. It featured a detailed plan, complete with signs and prohibitions, serving as a guide for hypothetical visitors. Vanishing a few hours later with the rising tide and becoming physically inaccessible, much like the works stored in the crates in Brussels, all that remained of this new section was the *Section Documentaire*. This consisted of photographs of the museum taken by the artist's wife. Among the other sections that followed until 1972, the *Section des Figures*, featuring the collection entitled *The Eagle from the Oligocene to the Present* at the Kunsthalle in Düsseldorf, definitively blurred the lines between the imaginary museum and the real exhibition. The accumulation of more than 300 works from museums and collections—or archives—crossing figurative arts, anthropology, ethnography, and history made it nearly impossible to distinguish between the two.

In 1972, during the fifth Documenta in Kassel, curator Harald Szeemann's project, titled *Investigation into Reality,* aimed to definitively revolutionise the concept of the exhibition, at least for the German event. By shifting the focus away from the dominance of individual works, the exhibition centred on a collective of selected artists, regarded as refined collectors. This approach encouraged reflection on a specific theme, with the clear objective of offering practical insights into the identity of the present through the interplay between image and reality. The archive, archiving and the need to redefine its meaning linked to the exhibition concept, manifest in various forms that permeate and

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**6** F. Tentori, R. De Simone, *Le Corbusier*, Laterza, Bari, 1987, pp. 215-216

Ole Worm's cabinet of curiosities, from ''Museum Wormianum'', 1655
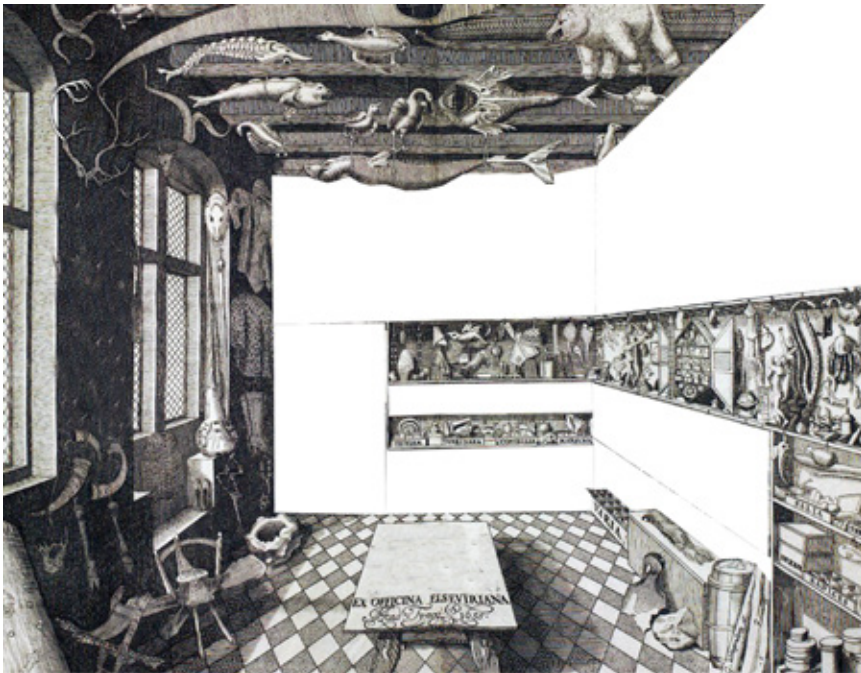

Massimo Ferrari, Claudia Tinazzi, *For a Wunderkammer idea* (study collage, 2022 )

animate the five-yearly event. Edward Ruscha's catalogue is deliberately designed as a collection of administrative documents housed in a binder, resembling a file extracted from the exhibition archive. Taking a step further, it is equally valid to highlight with critical confidence how the 21st century has embraced the most intriguing reflections and experiments regarding the archive's active role. This shift in perspective has transformed the archive into a source of artistic experience and typological and social critique. This clear vision owes much to certain avant-garde characters who recognised this essential transition at the end of the last century.[7]

In the writer's opinion, contemporary art critic Okwui Enwezor, who died prematurely in 2019, played a pivotal role. Beginning with his curatorship of the 11th *Documenta* in Kassel, which he described as "a constellation of public spheres," Enwezor introduced a "documentary" approach to major contemporary art exhibitions. This was essential for redefining artistic hierarchies and geographies based on reality and history. Enwezor's numerous pioneering exhibitions have consistently sought to liberate the museum and archive from political domination. By challenging the absolute value traditionally ascribed to these institutions, he included works and artists who had been excluded from the art system for reasons unrelated to their artistic merit. This approach has gradually transformed the archival practice of conservation coinciding with exhibiting, marking a shift from viewing the archive merely as a keeper of documents to recognising it as an activator of stories and memories.

One of Okwui Enwezor's most significant exhibitions, *Archive Fever. Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art* in 2008, brought together prominent contemporary artists who integrated archival materials into their works. This exhibition resulted in a comprehensive catalogue featuring «physical archives organised by unique cataloguing methods, imaginary biographies of fictional characters, collections of found and anonymous photographs, filmed versions of

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**7** In particular, reference is made to the thought and work of Michel Foucault and later Jacques Derrida, considered by critics to be his follower. In this regard, we refer to M. Foucault, *L'Archéologie du savoir* op.cit. and J. Derrida, *Mal d'archive. Une impression freudienne*, Paris, Galilée, 1995 (first Italian edition *Mal d'archivio. Un'impressione freudiana*, Napoli, Filema, 2005)

M. Ferrari, C. Tinazzi with A. D'Erchia e P. Escoriza Torralbo, *Drawings for the Gonzaga wunderkammer*, Mantova 2022

photo albums, and photomontages of historical photographs»[8].

Upon closer examination and deviating from the more institutional history of display art, an ideal prototype of the museum as an archive — and vice versa — emerges in the form of the 16th-17th century *Wunderkammer*. These spaces, dedicated to scientific, natural, and artistic knowledge, were filled with rare, precious, and curious objects, embodying the potential to generate new possibilities and meanings.

The *Wunderkammer* — a "true machine of wonders" aims at being the intersection of subjective choices and the universal desire for knowledge inherent in every person. These precious places, often described to us through words and engravings, embody the essence of spaces designed to surprise with their ordered objects. These meticulously catalogued objects, serve as central characters in stories that balance between reality and imagination.

The art of amazement steered knowledge through curiosity in these places of wonder. Created by cultured individuals, these spaces were not only for the pleasure of collecting but to exhibit to stimulate thought and preserve memories.[9] From the Veronese pharmacist Francesco Calzolari to the Bolognese naturalist Ulisse Aldrovandi, the *Wunderkammer* experience captures traces of explorations, travels, friendships, passions, and obsessions within a single room. This setting offers a glimpse into the intertwining of *Naturalia and Artificialia*, reflecting a world interpreted through the collector's eyes and choices. In these spaces created without any obvious exhibitory intent, one can observe a variety of materials: diverse objects displayed on walls and shelves, actual or supposed fragments of animals, plants, minerals, archaeological finds, artworks, and ingenious creations. These are arranged on the walls and suspended from the ceilings until every available space is filled, effectively eliminating any sense of hierarchy in a continuous archival expansion.

The concept of immersion bordering on estrangement gradually transforms

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**8**  Okwui Enwezor (ed.) *Archive Fever. Uses of the Document in Contemporary Photography*, Steidl ICP, Göttingen, New York 2008

**9**  In this sense we refer to the meaning of the word '*mostrare*'. In the Italian language, the etymon of the word 'mostrare' refers to the Latin word *MON strare* from the root MON (= MAN *pensare*) found in *monère avvertire, far sapere, ricordare*, which is equivalent to 'to make think' *(far pensare).*

M. Ferrari, C. Tinazzi with A. D'Erchia e P. Escoriza Torralbo, *The Gonzaga wunderkammer at the Ducal Palace*, Mantova 2022 (photo F. Mazza)

the nature of these spaces. They shift from being mere collections of individually precious objects to becoming rich, serial compositions. The journey through these spaces is enhanced by unconventional relationships and arrangements, with real, presumed, or imagined stories influenced by the unique experience.

It is the narrative—the ability to arrange a series of interconnected choices— that serves as the best and most viable key to interpreting these examples, which still have much to convey to the present day that seeks to "create memory." This story is composed of words that underpin actions and occasionally evoke emotions, not deliberately sought but often discovered in unexpected closeness or anticipated distances. A story extended along an endless path, without a preferred order of observation, interprets the possibility of living immersed in a unified space defined by the uniqueness of each object, which has diligently earned its place within this representation. Each player, conscious of their individual historical-symbolic, cultural, and figurative traits, embraces this multi-voice dialogue. The richness of character makes it challenging to listen to these voices separately; it forms a synchronised chorus that can be overwhelming at times, a marvellous chatter occasionally misunderstood, and that only the red thread of time binds together across such diverse genres. An unconventional museum, an uncommon archive. For a long time, it has been a source of significant figurative inspiration, possibly giving rise to an exhibition style that has, perhaps unintentionally, become a model to this day.[10]

The museum created by Ettore Guatelli in Ozzano Taro, within an old 18th-century manor farm, not far from Parma in the valley named after the river, closely resembles the concept of a modern *Wunderkammer*. Located in the municipality of Collecchio, it has become an iconic reference for shaping the ideal perspective of this MIAW2023.

The museum features an apparently endless series of wonder-filled rooms, preserved within the simple, measured volumes of the farmstead's architecture—

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**10** These reflections arise from a research opportunity for the project of the 'Wunderkammer dei Gonzaga' permanently set up from 2022 inside the Ducal Palace in Mantua. S. L'Occaso, *Naturalia e mirabilia. La galleria delle Metamorfosi e il suo riallestimento* (2022) in S. L'Occaso (ed), *Naturalia e Mirabilia. Scienze alla corte dei Gonzaga,* Palazzo Ducale, Mantova 2022

comprising a farmhouse, stable, and barn.[11]

Born in 1921, Ettore was an elementary school teacher who was spared from working in the fields due to his health issues. Educated from a young age by observing the peasant culture that had long shaped this landscape, he became Emilia's silent chronicler of the everyday lives of ordinary people. This region, a crossroads since the Middle Ages and a key stop along the Via Francigena, had long witnessed the passage of travellers from distant lands. Around 1943, Guatelli became friends with Attilio Bertolucci, and it was through the poet's influence that he developed the desire to transform his home into a space where the story of everyday life could be told. This was achieved through the gradual collection of simple objects, often worn by time, with the aim of teaching through "showing." A place to showcase memories by caring for them.

What is now a museum, was originally an archive, a workshop, an extension— or rather, a necessary annex to the classroom. To the Emilian teacher, the traditional schoolroom was too limited to encompass the many stories, meanings, and objects of a vibrant rural world that needed to be passed down to future generations. A clear educational philosophy, rooted in direct experience and testimony, has often led historiographical critics to compare Ettore's "didactic collecting" with the work of Don Milani and Mario Lodi. His approach—"a collecting of adding, removing, and reinventing"[12]—aligns him with the self-taught creations of Bruno Munari and the concept of "one thing leading to another"[13] a principle essential to the creative process and ability to design thoughtfully.

Guatelli was "simultaneously a collector, museographer, researcher, museum theorist, and exhibitor," as anthropologist Pietro Clemente aptly put it. However, it is perhaps his identity as a "peasant teacher," as he liked to call himself, that best captures the essence of his artistic journey and the development of Ettore, the archivist. A pedagogical art that, through found objects, retrospectively

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**11**  For more in-depth information: C.Magni, Mario Turci (ed), *Il Museo è qui. La natura umana delle cose. Il Museo Guatelli di Ozzano Taro,* Milano, Skira, 2005 and https://www.museoguatelli.it/ettore-guatelli/bibliografia/

**12**  P. Clemente, E. Guatelli (ed), *Il bosco delle cose*, Parma, Ugo Guanda editore, 1996

**13**  B. Munari, *Da cosa nasce cosa,* Laterza, Roma-Bari 1981

Ettore Guatelli Museum, Ozzano Taro, Parma, photo by Enzo Ragazzini

Ettore Guatelli Museum, Ozzano Taro, Parma. Detail of the set-up, photo by Enzo Ragazzini

reconstructs stories and meanings. Over time, this art has refined its aesthetic potential within a multidisciplinary vortex, drawing in artists like Christian Boltanski, filmmakers such as Werner Herzog, and writers like Giorgio Soavi, all connected by the concept of "active archiving." It is this remarkable vision, so simply conceived by Ettore Guatelli and eloquently captured over time by numerous scholars, artists, and writers, that continues to let us experience these humble rural spaces with the wonder of a renewed childhood. The sheer abundance of objects, displayed without any selective filter, contrasts with their individual modesty in a figurative oxymoron that tangibly embodies the value of memory.

Memory stands out as the primary and most acknowledged attribute of this consistent collection. These everyday objects, which pertain to the professional and personal spheres, symbolise an era that has since faded. At the same time, by envisioning their uses, they reflect the quality of life of the successive generations that coherently emerged throughout the 20th century, before the onset of contemporary schizophrenia. The repetition of these objects and their comprehensive display, unbound by notions of importance or gender hierarchies, adds to the richness of this sophisticated modern Wunderkammer. It elevates the everyday to a realm of wonders, showcasing ordinary life as a source of enchantment that acknowledges and reflects the passage and significance of time. In the obsessive repetition of similar materials, we can observe the endless micro and macroscopic variations of tools that exemplify their uses. These objects reveal their purposes through their design, collectively conveying the most accurate interpretation of the concept of "type." This retrospectively describes the relationship between an object and the myriad ways in which a recognised and effective formal expression meets various existential needs. However, upon closer examination, this rational depth ultimately pales in comparison to the profound emotion experienced while navigating the adorned spaces. One can't help but appreciate Ettore Guatelli's extraordinary talent for organising, arranging, and composing a diverse array of materials displayed on walls, ceilings, and shelves. Every available space is filled with a continuous interplay of combinations and parallels, showcasing a genuine artistry. This is a widely acknowledged skill that can be felt within the museum's rooms, which have recently been designated as art, drawing comparisons with American "pop" and "wall drawings."

Ettore Guatelli Museum, Ozzano Taro, Parma. The room of Hector, photo by Enzo Ragazzini

*"I keep gathering everything that occurs, including the smallest objects, even those from today, as they will soon become yesterday's. And if you don't capture them while they're present, you risk losing them and forgetting that they ever existed or how they appeared. Objects provide meaning to everyday life. These humble items, even when displayed, would not have drawn attention or been noticed. I tried to arrange them thoughtfully, animate the walls with drawings created from the simplest, most ordinary, and abundant items—things that are typically overlooked because they seem so obvious. I started by organising all the objects related to a specific activity into monographic groups. However, there wasn't enough space to create "beautiful drawings," and I lacked the necessary experience. People didn't linger there; they only admired the most beautiful walls. I was so committed to the principle of creating "beauty" to draw attention and encourage people to observe the objects used in the drawing. With experience, justifying a criterion and developing theories becomes easier. Constantly evolving and never definitive. Is this exhibition method educational? In my view, based on my experience guiding visitors, it is at least as educational as scientific, traditional, and highly rational exhibitions, which, however, may lack emotional impact. When something brings joy or evokes emotion, the impact becomes more immediate, encouraging participation. After all, objects are there, and anyone—whether educated or not—can observe them for themselves. (…) It involves a continual process of revising, adjusting, and starting over, often feeling frustrated when things don't turn out "right. There are moments of giving in and retracting – of fixes and failures. But mostly it's about decantation: time reveals what is right or wrong. We must constantly consult relatives, friends, or visitors who often suggest more joyful solutions than what we might have come up with ourselves. (…)[14]*

Approximately 60,000 items are now artfully stored and sorted, including scythes, axes, hammers, horseshoes, knives, keys, clocks, wheels, rusty scrap metal, metal jars, earthenware jars, glass, different wooden tools, musical instruments, shoes, puppets, toys, darned socks, stuffed animals, suitcases, looms, carpets and so on. As many items are stored "unsorted" in temporary container-archives, awaiting a clearer understanding of their fate through the demonstrated significance of the memories and stories they embody.

Is this not the same fate we hope for many of our archives?

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**14**  From Ettore Guatelli, *Ho preso tutto* in V. Ferorelli, F. Niccoli (ed.) *La coda della gatta, Scritti di Ettore Guatelli: il suo museo, i suoi racconti (1948-2004)*, - Bologna, 1999

# 02. CONTRIBUTIONS

# Jigsaw Puzzle.
# Architectural Archives

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As Jorge Luis Borges wrote in *Otras Inquisiciones* in 1952: «[O]bviously there is no classification of the universe that is not arbitrary and speculative. The reason is quite simple: we don't know what the universe is. […] We must go even further and suspect that there is no universe in the organic, unifying sense of the ambitious word. If there is, then we must speculate on its purpose; we must speculate on the words, definitions, etymologies, and synonyms of God's secret dictionary. The impossibility of penetrating the divine scheme of the universe cannot, however, dissuade us from planning human schemes, even though it is clear that they are provisional»[1].

It is precisely the intention to "plan human schemes", knowing that they are interim, that drives the work of scientists and artists in attempting to generate a universally accessible structure of knowledge – and thus of its immaterial and material contents. This endeavour has its origins in the mists of time but has been scientifically structured since the systematisation of encyclopaedic thought in 18th century France.

Considering the ongoing and past endeavours, the words of Jorge Luis Borges serve as a clear denunciation of the inevitable conventionality and transient nature of any attempt at categorisation, as well as of the knowledge itself. Knowledge, along with language, turns out to be hopelessly hypothetical and conjectural but fatally necessary. Regardless of the many possible combinations, classifying and systematising thoughts and works, as well as arranging them in "archives", be they physical or mental, cannot exhaust the complexity of reality.

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**1**   J.L. Borges, *Selected Non-Fictions*, Penguin, New York 1999, p. 231.

Nevertheless, they should at least be capable of orienting knowledge, revealing the characteristics of the objects under examination, and highlighting their deviations, inconsistencies, and divergences from the chosen analytical apparatus.

In this sense, we can interpret the current tendency to conceive archives as something living, which, as a complex entity, actively participates in the fruition process of the archived components, but simultaneously becomes a place of relationship between the materials it preserves and the materials themselves with their users. Thus, the archive cannot merely store the materials it conserves, but must be practicable: it has to induce memory, activate remembrance, and build connections. That is the only way the archive can become a memory and, as such, "operate" the present and, above all, the future.

If this is the background that characterised the projects of the *MIAW – Milan International Architecture Workshop 2023 edition* – which confronted the theme of *Archives of Memory*, albeit in a transversal way, we here intend to analyse the issue from a point of view which is tangential, yet undoubtedly of specific interest for architectural practice and for the increasingly widespread tendency to transform it into a "narrative". In other words, to develop a narrative that can "archive" architecture, giving buildings a "topological" value within various classificatory modes that they would not have if evaluated individually.

The issue regarding the object's position within a plurality of objects or a set, as it were, in mathematical terms, within a cluster of items identified through one or more specific characteristics, is in some way related to the substance of the object; nonetheless, it also depends closely on the parameters assumed to determine the individual set and, to go further, on the rules of relations between two or more different sets. Refocusing this reflection on architecture, there are instances where a form of "design excess" is produced – as seen in the works of Palladio or Le Corbusier – which is accompanied by a tendency to reflect on one's work. That involves using reflection and resulting narratives to extract significance from experiences, to order, communicate, and consider alternative uses for them: reflection for ordering, narration for producing new orders, and exhibition for triggering further projects.

In terms of this matter, Le Corbusier's written work stands out as a flawless example, particularly due to his unwavering commitment to his publishing, essay writing, and editorial pursuits alongside his project work. In a way, that

activity becomes the *alter ego*, if not, in many cases, it runs through and contributes to projects that are still far from being conceived in architectural terms. It is no coincidence that Le Corbusier declared himself to be a *homme de lettres* on his identity card, thereby underlining the structural role that the relationship between writing, communication, and design takes on within his work.

Reflection, narration, ordering, classification, and re-presentation become "creative grammars" propelled by a desire to develop "exercises" that enhance one's own (the designers') and others (that is, individuals who attend an exhibition, peruse a book, or consult an archive) creative and compositional abilities within memory archives that are overabundant.

Some architects view the archives, in which they store and organize their projects, as well as the books in which they showcase their work, along with the act of exhibition and the exhibition space, as "creative" media. They employ them for "narrative" purposes in order to convey their concept of architecture and articulate their vision of the world. In this context, acknowledging the unstable, transient nature of these cognitive constructs, as clearly illustrated by Borges, usually proves to be beneficial rather than obstructive to the development of such operations. Indeed, perhaps not too unexpectedly, it is liberating in terms of the claim to reconstruct "God's secret dictionary" and intelligible "divine schemes".

However, since the world defies any attempt of the mind to grasp it, thoughts ought to be or become increasingly self-critical. The central issue is not indeed provisionality as such, but the awareness of the provisionality and the consequent critical process it generates, no less than the necessary disenchantment with this condition. In this regard, Umberto Eco talks about the "vertigo of lists", referring to that «uneasy pleasure that makes us feel the greatness of our subjectivity, capable of wishing for something we cannot have»[2].

Furthermore, he argues that an archive, a museum, a collection are "lists of materials" that have roots in medieval collections and Renaissance *Wunderkammer*, where reliquaries and *mirabilia* mingle with extraordinary and extravagant objects. The essence of these collections lies in their arbitrariness, as demonstrated by Borges' classificatory chaos in *El Idioma Analítico de John Wilkins*.

A recent example is the *Herzog & de Meuron* exhibition held at the Royal Academy

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**2** U. Eco, *The Infinity of Lists*, Rizzoli, New York 2009, p. 17.

Rosamond Purcell, *All Things Strange and Beautiful*, 2011, installation inspired by Ole Worm's Museum Wormianum, Geological Museum, Natural History Museum of Denmark, photo by Jens Astrup.
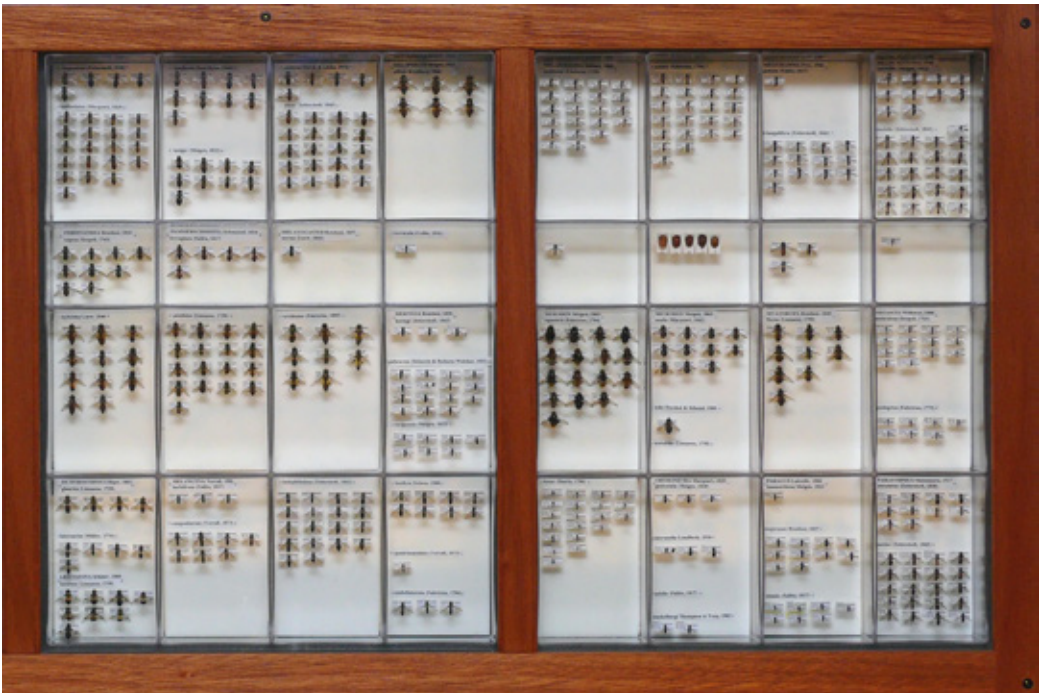


Fredrik Sjoberg, *Hoverfly collection*, Danish & Nordic Pavilion, 53th Venice Biennial of Art, 2009.

of Arts in London from July to October 2023. Curated in close collaboration with the architects, the exhibition aimed to provide visitors with an immersive tour of their work in order to "find out how their projects come together".

While the exhibition's short number of rooms that housed it may have failed to fully satisfy expectations, the curators' aim was to design an exhibition that would "show architecture" in attempting to define and present the work of Herzog & de Meuron as an archive of projects, rather than as the sum of individual buildings, albeit many in number. The whole concept, namely the archive as a collection of objects and its manifestation as a physical place, is, in fact, more than the sum of its parts, since it has properties that go beyond those of the individual parts or their sum. They are difficult to predict by analysing the individual components, as they are linked to the "complex relationships" that are triggered when the components, in this case, the buildings, are brought into relation to each other, as within a city in the absence.

Philip Warren Anderson, Nobel Prize winner in Physics in 1977, wrote a significant text on the subject entitled *More is different*: «The behavior of large and complex aggregates of elementary particles, it turns out, is not to be understood in terms of a simple extrapolation of the properties of a few particles. Instead, at each level of complexity entirely new properties appear, and the understanding of the new behaviors requires research which I think is as fundamental in its nature as any other»[3].

In London, the archives of design models were displayed physically, and virtually, leading the visitor to explore spaces of buildings constructed worldwide in a simultaneous and permanent manner. This approach aimed to emphasize the "topologic principle" and bring the exhibited objects on the same plane, eliciting a certain sense of strangeness. As a matter of fact, at the exhibition «H&dM has created a smartphone app that playfully brings together the physical gallery exhibits with complementary virtual models through augmented reality. This combination is a further evolution in its constant experimentation with spatial perception and its exploration of how the human body and architecture relate in real-life situations»[4].

In a kind of phantasmagoric synecdoche, the aim, which did not entirely

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**3**  P.W. Anderson, *More is different,* in «Science», n. 4047, August 4, 1972, p. 393.

**4**  From the *Gallery guide* by Royal Academy of Arts, London 2023.

Ursula Stalder, *Glyfada*, Wall Composition, 2015.



*The 387 Houses of Peter Fritz (1916-1992), Insurance Clerk from Vienna*, preserved by Oliver Croy and Oliver Elser (1993-2008), from *The Keeper exhibition*, New Museum, New York, 20 July - 25 September, 2016. Images courtesy of New Museum, New York, photo by Maris Hutchinson / EPW Studio.

Herzog & de Meuron, Exhibition at Royal Academy of Art, London, 14 July - 15 October 2023, photo by Francesca Belloni.

Herzog & de Meuron, Exhibition at Royal Academy of Art, London, 14 July - 15 October 2023, photo by Francesca Belloni.

succeed but was no less significant in critical and cognitive (not to mention epistemological) terms, was to abolish the here and now, even the time it takes to move from one building to another.

That was in favour of an "ensemble", which as such proved more valuable than the individual components since it was capable of triggering the "vertigo of lists" and the "uneasy pleasure" that Eco talks about. In addition, the tools used in the process of generating the projects were displayed as if they were exhibited "works" themselves: photographs, films, models, material samples, mock-ups, drawings, and 3D technologies, as well as the unexpected relationships between them, revealed different possibilities of aggregation along with multiple directions from which to view the projects.

Thus, the «exhibition itself [was] an opportunity to test ways of representing architecture and the thought construct that goes with it: since architecture itself cannot be exhibited, H&dM is constantly looking for what it describes as "substitutes"»[5].

And all this with a certain amount of irony. It is something like a game of mirrors and cross-references. Or rather, a game in the literal sense of the word, since in the section dedicated to the project for the new Children's Hospital in Zurich (under construction), the augmented reality – experimented as a tool in the design process – was used to take the visitor inside the hospital, allowing them to explore its spaces, which were used to build the scenario for an interactive children's video game.

However, more than any other element of the exhibition, whether material or virtual, the presence in London of part of Herzog & de Meuron's *Kabinett* suggested the miracle of accumulation and the "archival euphoria"[6] that emerged from it.

Part of the Basel *Wunderkammer* was recreated in London through the display of various objects including models, drawings, samples, prints, and clips from a diverse range of projects: «Herzog & de Meuron's Kabinett is a repository of creativity. Part-archive, part-laboratory, part-studio, part-display, it documents more than 450 of over 600 projects designed since the office was founded in

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**5**  Ibidem.

**6**  C. Baldacci, *Archivi impossibili. Un'ossessione dell'arte contemporanea*, Johan & Levi, Milan 2017, p. 7.

1978». Quoting Jacques Herzog: «That's why we call it the Kabinett. It's a cabinet and not just an archive. We want to see these things in a certain context and we want to keep them together. That's why we built a new building rather than refurbish an old one. We wanted to make it a space, a physical space»[7].

Akin to the Kabinett in Basel and the exhibition in London, the publishing activity of the Herzog & de Meuron studio – in some ways analogous to that of Le Corbusier – has the characteristics of a "complex system" that produces – employing terminology borrowed from the natural sciences – "emergent behaviours" as a function of the interactions of the individual components with each other and with the system as a whole. Working around these concepts, *Herzog & de Meuron 001-500*[8] exaggerates the richness implicit in the concept of the list and amplifies the value of enumeration. Without hierarchy and with cold objectivity, forty years of project activity were presented through a list of the first 500 works, each with a single image, the title of the project, the location, and the year. That is, nothing more than a list. Nevertheless, as in a dictionary, this meagre index enables references, identifies analogies and lines of research, and constructs narratives. It is all in the hands of the reader.

A different kind of cross-reference, in this case with marked material accents, is provided by Miller & Maranta[9] in an exhibition held in Mendrisio in 2017 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the practice.

If an exhibition can "produce theory", the way they displayed their projects was certainly a concrete manner of posing the question of what architecture is and how it can be transmitted, and therefore – by extension – taught. In fact, when visiting the exhibition, it seemed that the possibility of producing a theory could arise from the sum of the projects themselves. The exhibition was neither a catalogue nor a review but rather a description of the complex thought process that underlies the architect's craft, emphasising the paratactic value of composition and operating it to recreate the atmosphere of a *cabinet de*

**7**  R. Burdett, *Making Windows in Sandcastles*, in *Herzog & de Meuron*, RA Exhibition Catalogue, 14 July - 15 October 2023, Royal Academy of Arts, London 2023, p. 15.

**8**  *Herzog & de Meuron 001-500. Index of the Work of Herzog & de Meuron 1978-2019. A Tribute and a Celebration,* Simonett & Baer, Basel 2019.

**9**  *Miller & Maranta,* Accademia di architettura Gallery, Mendrisio, 24 February - 2 April 2017.

*curiosités*. A long anatomical table held exhibits of all kinds, inevitably forcing the visitor to work backwards from the particular to the general, from the single tile to the entire building: «With this exhibition, we wanted to describe a "way of thinking", which is always found in the "middle of everything" and does not have a linear development: every thought is in fact at the centre of a complex system of connections. […] The exhibition represents an attempt at shaping this stratification of thought, and not just architecturally: a continuous interweaving of spaces, memories, references»[10].

The arrangement of elements (and projects) resulted in a coherent and sequential narrative structure, akin to that of a collection of short stories. Although the representation of the architectural world and its objects is inevitably a "transposition of things", in the presented case it tended to coincide with the items themselves. That coincidence produced a narrative plot within which it was possible to "exercise" one's subjectivity and the critical arbitrariness of the cognitive (and creative) process.

Within the same relationship between production, archiving and exhibition, and above all based on the fact that «[a]ny architectural exhibition offers knowledge transfers between practice and theory, mediated through the graphic reproduction and textual interpretation of built projects»[11] the exhibition *David Chipperfield Architects Works* was set up at the Basilica Palladiana in 2018[12], presenting a selection of approximately twenty recent and ongoing projects in all their development phases. Quoting Chipperfield: «All exhibitions of architecture must start from this simple understanding. Photographs and images of completed projects are no compensation. We have therefore tried to give more insight into the process of design, showing it not as an act of individual genius,

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**10**   F. Belloni, *If memory has a future. Interview with Quintus Miller*, in «Architettura Civile», n. 20-21-22, March 2018, p 60.

**11**   I. Davidovici, *The Autonomy of Theory Tendenzen – Neuere Architektur im Tessin, ETH Zurich, 1975*, in *Architecture thinking across boundaries: knowledge transfers since the 1960s*, R. Heynickx, R. Costa Agarez, E. Couchez (ed. by), Bloomsbury visual arts, London 2021, p. 70.

**12**   *David Chipperfield Architects Works*, Basilica Palladiana, Vicenza, 12 May - 2 September 2018.

but as a collaborative and iterative method that is messy and unpredictable»[13].

Thus, in Vicenza, an Englishman, traditionally considered to be rather "anti-modern", gets involved *vis-à-vis* with an extraordinary place and, implicitly, with its architect: the *Palladian Chipperfield* – as Fulvio Irace titled his essay in the exhibition catalogue – is the direct expression of a way of thinking about architecture as a craft and a sedimentation of knowledge, of physical materials and culture, of projects and objects. If Palladio was first to open the door to the ancients, especially Vitruvius, placing himself on the same level as his predecessors, that is, conceiving his projects from Vitruvius and then trying to explain them, Chipperfield accepts to measure himself against the Basilica. That has led him to adapt his architectural archive and how he presented it to the image of the exceptional place where he was exhibiting his projects.

Not by chance, «[t]he material exhibited varied from concept sketches and models relating to the beginning of the design process, to detail design and construction drawings, to film and photography of completed works»[14]. All of this contributes to reconnecting the threads of that constitutive relationship between *fabrica* and *discorso* – as Daniele Barbaro translates the Vitruvian expression *fabrica* and *ratiocinatione* – that makes the deposit of elements produced by the practice of architecture operable.

To a certain extent, the *Wunderkammer* already exists in Vicenza – it is the Basilica – and it is already partially occupied by the memories of architecture. It is a matter of filling it, of giving form to the archive, of constructing a kind of Warburgian *Bilderatlas*, whereby, starting from the archive, we return to it through its staging.

Not only in Vicenza but also in London or Mendrisio, the archive coincides with the final act of the exhibition. It is no longer the intention to conceive an exhibition or to set it up, but rather to activate memories through the "transposition of things" within a given system of reference.

Herzog & de Meuron, Miller & Maranta and David Chipperfield, somewhat contradicting themselves, shuffle the cards to imagine and realise a narrative that,

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**13** D. Chipperfield, *David Chipperfield Architects Works 2018*, from the catalogue foreword, Electa, Milan 2018.

**14** Cfr. https://davidchipperfield.com/exhibitions/david-chipperfield-architects-works

from the projects as such and from their living materials, defines the structure of an imaginary archive of architecture, an architectural plot.

How? According to the prevailing thought at the time. In the same way that Vladimir Nabokov used to write his novels, non-sequentially, on scattered 3"×5" notecards, which he rearranged according to the narrative plot whenever he felt like it. He accumulated syntagms and semantic units ready to be used, believing that «[i]t is not the parts that matter, it is their combinations»[15].



Miller & Maranta, *Exhibition at Accademia di architettura Gallery,* Mendrisio, 24 February - 2 April 2017, photos by Francesca Belloni.

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**15**   V. Nabokov, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight,* Penguin Modern Classics, London 2001, p. 176.

Miller & Maranta, *Exhibition at Accademia di architettura Gallery,* Mendrisio, 24 February - 2 April 2017, photos by Ruedi Walti.

*David Chipperfield Architects Work*s, Basilica Palladiana, Vicenza, 12 May - 2 September 2018, © photos by Simon Menges

*David Chipperfield Architects Work*s, Basilica Palladiana, Vicenza, 12 May - 2 September 2018, © photos by Simon Menges

# The Architecture of the Archive: Memory, Typology, City

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In 2013, the Venice Art Biennale was inaugurated by a project conceived by a self-taught Italo-American artist named Marino Auriti. In 1955, Auriti had filed a project with the United States Patent Office for his "Encyclopedic Palace," an «imaginary museum intended to house all the knowledge of humanity, collecting the greatest discoveries of mankind, from the wheel to the satellite» (Gioni 2013, 18). This project was represented by a large-scale model that Auriti created in his garage, located in the countryside of Pennsylvania. It depicted a building with one hundred and thirty-six floors, towering at seven hundred meters in height, and occupying the space of sixteen city blocks in Washington (Fig. 1). Naturally, this endeavor remained unfinished, but the utopian spirit behind this oversized architecture, along with the desire to gather humanity's universal knowledge in one place capable of constructing an image of the infinite variety and richness of the world, can serve as a starting point for reflections on the role of the archive in contemporary times.

Today, in the deluge of information, these attempts to structure knowledge, and more importantly, to preserve and valorize it, appear even more necessary. The issue of the loss of collective memory, increasingly fading due to the volatility and onslaught of images, the paradigm shift characterizing our era, and the condition of new generations living in a «permanent present lacking any organic connection with the historical past of the time in which they live» (Hobsbawm 1995, 14) are all factors that a society in transition cannot ignore. Added to this is the criticism raised by Adriano Prosperi about the «little care dedicated to libraries, archives, and museums, considered useless and unprofitable entities, affected by continuous staff, resource, and tool reductions» (Prosperi 2021, 6-7)

and the consequent challenging preservation and accessibility of documents, long treated as «a voice now reduced to silence» (Foucault 1971, 10).

All these phenomena necessarily have a physical and spatial dimension, not only in the construction of cities but also directly involving the role of the architect as a designer. As Deleuze writes, archives are situated «at the edge of the time that surrounds our present» (Deleuze 2019, 30).

Etymologically, the word "archive" derives from the Greek word *arché*, «which moves within the semantic field of "beginning," "origin," and "domain," as well as "authority" and "public office." The irreducible ambiguity of the term has been emphasized by Derrida, noting the connection between *commencement* and *commandment*. The definition of an archive includes two semantic components: that of a "substrate" and that of a "residence," as well as the institution of custodians who oversee the law, recall it to memory, and interpret it» (Assmann 2015, 381).

A dwelling, a residence of high magistrates, as well as the complex of documents produced and stored in that location, suggests a close and essential relationship with space and place, and therefore with architecture. As such, they cannot exist without a spatial support that marks the institutional transition from private to public.

The interest in the archive arises from the undeniable responsibility that this particular typology has in preserving a past that, «although already filtered and shaped by the very time from which it springs, must be saved in its contextualized integrity» (Volacchi 2021, 81).

Therefore, it involves preserving that document, which, as Foucault argues, «is not the happy instrument of a history that is itself and rightfully memory; history is a certain way that a society has of giving status and elaboration to a documentary mass from which it does not separate» (Foucault 1971, 10-11).

But it also involves valorization because the archive is the «place where order is given» (Derrida 1996, 13), due to its public, invasive, and multifaceted charm, acting as a «storehouse of collective knowledge that serves various functions» (Assmann 2014, 382) and a place capable of structuring knowledge.

The archive can thus become a museum, a library, an urban theater, a public place for study and contemplation, as well as accessible knowledge for everyone.

Looking at typological issues, that of the archive, perhaps never considered

among the noble types by historiography as, for example, theater, museum, or library, has nonetheless been present for over a century, even in classical manuals. However, it has not received adequate attention, at least in terms of architecture, often being more dependent on issues related to document preservation instrumentation rather than architectural and figurative aspects that, as with other typologies, have often had linguistic and formal resonances capable of characterizing their figure.

From archaic Greece, considering the *archéion*, to the Roman *tabularia* for the classification and preservation of documents, to the private archives of families in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the typology of the archive acquires an identity value, still present today, starting only from the nineteenth century. In this period, the archive was no longer conceived as a private collection but as a common good, assuming a value in relation to the context that hosts it because it represents the memory and narrative of a society, triggering the significant proliferation of documents in the twentieth century.

In modern treatises, among the first manuals in which the archive appears as a typology distinct from the library, it is important to mention the 1925 work by Daniele Donghi, where the motivation for comparing the archive to the library is clearly illustrated. This comparison arose from the historical needs common to both functions, as they required spacious places to store folders or books: «libraries and archives, both for their purpose and for the kind of premises they need, resemble each other so much that in the past they were often housed in the same building or had a single administration» (Donghi 1925). The manual highlights a fundamental aspect of the archive type, namely that furniture and folders' containers are elements that define the internal space's configuration, from distribution aspects to minimum dimensions.

In relation to this theme, consider the "utopian" project promoted by Henri La Fontaine and Paul Otlet in the early 20th century in Brussels, the *Mundaneum*. They aimed to preserve all the knowledge of the world in various available forms (books, newspapers, manifestos, postcards, etc.) and classify them using an innovative system they specifically created, the Universal Decimal Classification (Fig. 2).

Having made this introduction, it is useful to cite and briefly describe some recent examples where aspects of valorization and preservation have been

Fig. 1 Marino Auriti and The Encyclopedic Palace, 1955.



Fig. 2 Photograph of the staff of the International Institute of Bibliography, writing and classifying records.

fulfilled. In these cases, the role of the architect has proven crucial in shaping and conceptualizing these spaces, in relation to both the preserved heritage and the more formal and linguistic aspects examined in connection with the city and the hosting context.

The recent history of the archive typology, in broad generalization, can be summarized in several categories that unite them for the role they play within the urban fabric.

One category involves archives built in relation to pre-existing structures, where the architectural organism integrates with the existing artifact and engages with the city. This often involves the restoration of historical-monumental buildings found in total institutions such as hospitals, prisons, convents, abbeys, castles, historical palaces, or even disused factories, buildings whose configuration can be easily adapted to the needs of an archive for various reasons.

To cite a few examples, consider the State Archives of Turin and Giorgio Raineri's 1983 project within the ancient San Luigi Gonzaga Hospital designed by Giuseppe Talucchi in 1818 with a cruciform plan. The four arms housed infirmaries, and at their intersection, a central "panoptic" and polygonal space reaching full height was intended for the church. Raineri placed the main study room of the archive in the center, restored the 19th-century aisles altered over the years, equipped them with walkways, and created a new conservation and study device.

Another case worth mentioning is Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione (CSAC), a research center at the University of Parma founded by Arturo Carlo Quintavalle in 1968. From its early years, it found placements within historical buildings, such as a wing of the Pilotta in Parma. Later, from 2007, it established its headquarters at the Abbey of Valserena, a few kilometers from the city. This move involved a comprehensive restoration of the monastic spaces and the church. The archive, which collects art, photographs, architectural drawings, design, fashion, and graphic materials, has also become a museum, a guesthouse, a place of hospitality, and a hub for cultural activities open to the community as well as researchers.

Changing the context, we cannot overlook the Centro Documental De La Comunidad De Madrid, a result of a competition organized by the General Directorate for Cultural Heritage in Madrid in 1994. The aim was to redevelop

an old brewery and its surrounding area in the historic outskirts of Madrid. The competition was won by the Spanish architects Mansilla and Tuñón, with a project that engages with the existing context and the city by creating a center for the conservation, storage, and dissemination of the historical documentary heritage of the region. The archive, composed of three separate modules, each with a different function (reception, storage, and public services), incorporates the existing structures transformed into the new Regional Library. It redefines industrial spaces, acting as a silo for numerous historical documents, and the old cellars are repurposed as exhibition halls (Fig. 3).

Another noteworthy Spanish case is the Archivo Real y General de Navarra, located *intra-moenia* in the historic district of Pamplona, a few meters from the Museum of Navarre, in front of the Basilica of San Fermín de Aldapa. Architect Rafael Moneo integrates and completes the original structure of the Palacio de los Reyes de Navarra after decades of abandonment. The new building has three floors and houses the storage and conservation rooms for documents. The extension maintains the masonry character of the existing structure, strengthened by the absence of openings in the facade for material coherence. The actual archive, with eleven floors, four of which are below ground level, features a typological invention in which three rectangular volumes rotate around a large central void illuminated by a skylight in the roof. Internally, it is characterized by a long ramp that runs the entire height, serving the various levels containing the archived documentation (Fig. 4).

Alternatively, in a more recent example, we have the Archives de Bordeaux Métropole in France, completed in 2015 by the Belgian architecture firm Robbrecht en Daem. The architects, winners of a competition, crafted an architecture that seeks to reconcile modern conservation principles with the restoration of a historic building near the right bank of the Garonne River, in proximity to the city center. The new architectural complex is situated in the old Halle aux Farines, a nineteenth-century structure originally built for flour storage. The architects salvaged the structure of the old warehouse, partially damaged by a fire, while preserving the original spatial distribution. The storage rooms are conceived, through meticulous sectional work, as a series of structurally independent staggered boxes that detach from the external envelope of the pre-existing building, which is preserved and restored. Other functions,

Fig. 3 Mansilla + Tuñón Arquitectos, Centro Documental De La Comunidad De Madrid, Madrid, Spain, 1994-2002.

Fig. 4 Rafael Moneo, General and Royal Archive of Navarre, Pamplona, Spain, 1995-2003.

including exhibition and conference halls and workshops, are located on the ground floor of the new building perpendicular to the historic one. This building houses staff offices and a small guesthouse for researchers on the upper floor. The two structures partially define the external courtyard space, transforming it into a public and community-accessible area, fostering interaction between the neighborhood's residents and the archive spaces (Fig. 5).

A second category involves the archive as a typological device of new construction capable of performing diverse functions, addressing issues related to document preservation and valorization. In this category, the primary challenges associated with archival practices are often skillfully resolved by designers who incorporate a series of integrated functions linked to the urban context and, consequently, the city. This characterizes the urban landscape as monuments to collective memory, assuming a symbolic role within the urban environment, thanks to their distinctive forms.

Among these, a significant case is the Rouen Archives in France, a tower building housing the departmental Archives of Seine-Maritime. Inaugurated in 1965, designed by architects Raoul Leroy and Rodolphe Dussaux, the 27-story building stands at a height of 89 meters, making it the second tallest point in Rouen after the cathedral. The windowless structure is entirely made of reinforced concrete and clad in Burgundy stone. It features two symmetrical volumes with a central vertical distribution that creates a sort of cut along the entire vertical span of the building, casting shadows on the long facades. The two shorter facades are pierced by a grille that follows the entire vertical development, characterizing the elevations (Fig. 6).

A more recent case is the State Archive of North Rhine-Westphalia in Duisburg, Germany, designed by Ortner & Ortner. This building, partially incorporating an existing granary from 1936, consists of a tall, blind tower reaching 76 meters in height, preserving archived materials with various types of furnishings, from traditional shelving to compactus systems. Another building stretches horizontally for about 160 meters with a sinuous shape over five floors, housing administrative spaces, research areas, an auditorium, and consultation rooms. The intervention, especially the tower component, carries strong symbolic significance, serving as a clearly recognizable visual reference in the urban fabric and the surrounding landscape. It features a pure, archetypal form highlighted

Fig. 5 Robbrecht en Daem Architecten, Archives de Bordeaux Métropole, Bordeaux, France, 2015.



Fig. 6 Raoul Leroy and Rodolphe Dussaux, Archives de la Seine-Maritime, Rouen, France, 1965.

by a dynamic brick weaving pattern with repeated rhomboidal decoration on all four facades (Fig. 7).

Finally, the Archives de l'État in Ghent, Belgium, is designed, like Bordeaux, by Robbrecht en Daem, winners of a competition to relocate the state archive to a more spacious and technologically suitable structure. The volumetric articulation is carefully designed to integrate it well among the surrounding buildings, with the corner section rising to five stories. The archival rooms, partly underground and partly within the blind tower volume, play a significant urban role, especially on the ground floor, where a double envelope allowing light passage accommodates a large hall/auditorium in the basement (Fig. 8).

A third, more challenging to classify, category can be termed as a pseudo-archive, which includes foundations, certain museums, libraries and structures seen as disseminators of knowledge "containers".

To illustrate, consider the Bauhaus-Archiv near Tiergarten, the zoo, on the banks of the Landwehrkanal in Berlin. Inaugurated in 1976, based on Walter Gropius's original 1964 design for the city of Darmstadt, it was completed by architects Alex Cvijanovic and Hans Baudel. The building is characterized by two parallel volumes slightly offset from each other, connected by a transversal element that serves as the entrance to the exhibition spaces. Outside the entrance, a long pedestrian ramp extends, traversing the building over its roof between the tower-like bodies of the sheds, linking two parts of the city. The archive houses a significant portion of Bauhaus history, a large number of objects, and artworks, functioning as both a museum of avant-garde artistic memory and a public study center for permanent and temporary exhibitions, as well as scholarly research. It's a hybrid archive equipped with a museum, public library, conference hall, offices, studios, and a cafeteria (Fig. 9).

Another building assuming a role as a significant container with a strong urban character is the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale in New Haven, built in 1960 by Gordon Bunshaft with the Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM) firm. This building, housing an invaluable collection of rare books, becomes a large case made of thin marble slabs that allow diffused light to filter through. It is supported by four large pillars within a slightly recessed square compared to the ground level. A library-archive where the contained object defines the architecture of the internal space, creating an urban space

Fig. 7 Ortner & Ortner, State Archive of North Rhine-Westphalia, Duisburg, Germany, 2013.



Fig. 8 Robbrecht en Daem Architecten, State Archives, Ghent, Belgium, 2010-2014.



Fig. 9 Walter Gropius with Alex Cvijanovic and Hans Baudel, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, Germany, 1976.

around it for the Yale community (Fig. 10).

A more recent example is the new Public Library and Regional Archive designed by Inês Lobo in Angra do Heroismo, a small town located on one of the nine islands that make up the Portuguese archipelago of the Azores. The building is a large complex that stands out within the historical fabric of the city while respecting its identity, harmonizing with its form and topography. It essentially consists of two superimposed volumes: a U-shaped one that creates a public square paved to the south, and a second composed of a more plastic form that defines the limits of the garden to the north. The project also relates to the historic palace, from which the library takes its name, Luís da Silva Ribeiro, closing the complex's lot to the north. The present functions include a library, laboratories, and an extensive archival storage located in the basement aimed at preserving and enhancing a documentary collection for the community, serving as a socio-educational and cultural reference for the community (Fig. 11).

In conclusion, in the examples mentioned, it is clear how the comprehensive program of activities can adapt over time, attempting to meet the needs of society by actively involving diverse communities, from archival sector operators to neighborhood and city residents, local communities, as well as scholars and researchers who need to use these spaces and consult the preserved documentary heritage.

At the same time, it is possible to affirm that the archive typology is capable of triggering, through the preservation of cultural heritage, transformations aimed at redeeming certain parts of the city itself, and all these cases demonstrate it. The archive can weave bonds made from human testimonies, assuming the role of an urban cornerstone on which to organize and qualify the city's image «as a link to a time, to a phenomenal horizon, to a "worldview"» (Canella 1968).

In all these buildings, the architectural project becomes a driver of urbanity and knowledge, establishing new conditions of centrality within an existing situation that possesses a hidden structure, «a real and proper resistant framework over time to support, as long as it can, cartilages and connectives» (Canella 1995, 4), avoiding the image of the city as "urban decoration" and the stylized and hyper-functionalistic architecture often found in large urban interventions characterizing our era.

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Fig. 10  Gordon Bunshaft with Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM),
Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale, New Haven, USA, 1960-1963.

Fig. 11 Inês Lobo Arquitectos, Public Library and Archive Luís da Silva Ribeiro, Angra do Heroismo, Azores, Portugal, 2006 - 2016

# The Idea of Conservation and its Relationship with Hypogean and Underground Spaces

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The conservation of objects, documents and works of art has led to accumulating these materials in underground, protected and often inaccessible spaces. A custom that has led the architectural project to choose settlement strategies that operate deep into the ground. The idea of conservation and protection, as opposed to dispersion and loss, implies the desire to maintain works of art, products and objects that must guarantee long-term durability. The text proposes a point of view that combines conservation with spatial structures that establish a principle of form generated by the subtraction of material to create protected interiors, spaces understood as inviolable treasure chests. Architectures excavated into the ground are then selected and investigated, creating underground spaces to organize, monitor and conserve objects and works of various kinds for long-term use, enjoyment and re-reading.

The underground, investigated and inhabited through an excavation action, has been inscribed in history in powerfully contradictory metaphors: on the one hand, the underworld and prisons are places of terror and punishment; on the other, the maternal womb or original refuge, therefore, on the contrary, the places of safety and protection (Eliade M., 1967). A hypothesis of antinomy that anthropology (Rikwert J., 1976) has referred to the symbolism that the subsoil bears concerning the two extreme events of human existence: life and death. From the myths of origin to the founding rites, contact with the earth and the relationship with what lies beneath generate and nourish the definition of signs of permanent symbolic meanings expressed in forms that become original archetypes. The subsoil is the place to maintain and protect, where to build underground cells by subtraction, where the constant temperature and the minor, or no, thermal excursion allow processes of conservation, maintenance,

or seasoning of materials and products of various kinds, including foodstuffs. In the ageing cellars, for example, maturation and flavouring processes give additional qualities to various food products.

The underground has also always been a burial place, inducing the construction of significant and extraordinary forms of archetypal underground spatiality, full of narratives (Eliade M., 1967). The ancient underground cemetery areas, created by the Jewish and Christian communities from the end of the 2nd century, create a network of tunnels dug into the predominantly tufaceous rock, sometimes divided into several overlapping levels. The burial niches are created in the walls or flooring. In the cemetery galleries, accesses occasionally lead to private rooms, the cubiculi, often decorated with frescoes and intended for wealthier families or groups.

The subsoil excavation has also characterized, in several cities of Greco-Roman origin, the complex network of aqueducts and rainwater cisterns to create impressive infrastructures responsible for water reserves to supply fountains and houses above. Basements are often used as shelters during periods of war and bombing.

Underground cavities are perfect in this protective intention, in the necessity to defend and repair something or to defend and repair someone. The term museum, the temple of the Muses, taking us back to Greco-Roman mythology and the nine goddesses who protect the Arts and Sciences. At the same time, the Latin 'crypta', contains the symbolism connected to the underground cavities, recalling the idea of spaces where deposit objects.

Different kinds of protected and underground, or semi-underground, places each time are endowed with specific spatial implications. In the case of the Christian basilica, the crypt takes on the specific meaning of the vaulted underground cell intended for burial, for the safekeeping of relics, sometimes with the function of a chapel. Therefore, from the point of view of the spatial and physical structure, these underground spaces, from the labyrinths of the catacombs and their complex underground systems to the scale of the city, composed of narrow cubicles gradually enlarged and connected, take on typological specificity in Medieval churches

**Living In The Thickness Of The Soil**

In contemporary times, as in the history of disciplinary knowledge, numerous transformative operations can be found aimed at establishing a principle of form generated by interference with the soil, by the relationship with the land that hosts and makes itself available for conformation with artifice. Building and living in the soil and the earth's movements indeed involve multiple cultural conditions that have influenced, and still influence, contemporary architectural design.

The MIAW 2023 project, Archive of Memory, involves rethinking the places intended to collect and conserve art objects, ancient costumes, documents, sacred sculptures, and design products. This architectural design research traces and underlines the close relationship between the earth and the subsoil, focusing on the association between conservation and underground spatiality. Going beyond the idea of a 'cavernous' or primitive underground architecture, I briefly recall some substantial implications: on the one hand, the connective and relational, as well as utilitarian and engineering role of the metropolitan infrastructures, of tunnels - the Eurotunnel and the underground metros such as the London Tube (Rassegna 66/1996), or Moscow Metro (Casabella 678-679/2000) or those of Athens or Naples (Abitare 464/2006) or Rome (MetroLine C, the T3 section is the subject of specific museum enhancement projects), allow us to underline permanent relational aspects, extraordinary ruins and geological stratifications. On the other hand, it is possible to evoke the Tunisian Matmata and the Gravine of Matera, but also the hypogea of Petra, the Syrian archaeological stratifications, and the surprising routes of Fethiye in Lycya, or the mythical rock churches of Lalibela in Ethiopia, as emblematic cases capable of generating extraordinary spaces matrices interpretable in the contemporary project. They are examples of human settlements and specific use of spaces built in the soil thickness. The cave house and the village are designed by an essential need in those arid areas: to obtain, conserve, and exploit every drop of water offered by the condensation of nocturnal humidity and the rare annual rains.

With this interpretation, it is possible to recall some emblematic contemporary underground architectures as a synthetic expression of an extended idea of conservation.

Therefore, the search for rooting in the earth and the investigation into the subtraction of soil opens up an architectural and design action capable of building physical and spatial relationships characterized by a marked conceptual density: the excavation, physically and metaphorically, searches for anchors and signs connected to the genetic matrix of the territory in which the project intervenes and to which the project attributes shape and meaning.

In the contemporary world, there is a renewed interest in the historical and ancient relationship between sacred places and artistic expression, together with the link established between underground spaces and the idea of conservation.

### The Contemporary Archetype

Among the sacred underground articulations, we recognize the physical and spatial density of the crypt in the Convent of Sainte Marie de la Tourette, an underground place linked to worship, prayer, and spirituality controlled and animated by subtle vibrations. The volumes enter the ground and take shape by it. The 'canons à lumière' summarize the relationship between inside and outside tension in the single front of the opaque and impenetrable convent. Le Corbusier created introverted and evocative interior spaces in which the material textures of the walls and the colours favour the perception of a timeless spiritual dimension. In the same way, archives and museums, built through architecture with rigorous geometry, are essential in the measured precision of plastic and, at the same time, highly expressive gestures. In this context, Frank Lloyd Wright in the Kaufmann House established a relationship with a design approach that started from the soil movement. The spatial continuity of architecture with nature realizes an inextricable interpenetration between internal and external space. Despite the programmatic difference between Le Corbusier and Wright, the architectural figures move from topographical conditions in both cases.

Among these extremes, it is possible to distil some design themes: the impenetrability of the Chichu Museum by Tadao Ando, the silent and immobile abstraction of the Belèm Documentation Center by Carrilho Da Graca, the interpenetration of internal/external spaces in the Kitakami Canal Museum by Kengo Kuma, the hypogeum simulated in the casket of the Archive of the Avant-Garde by Nieto Sobejano. The keywords used focus on the interpretation of the relationship with the soil and the subsoil, in the obsession with the
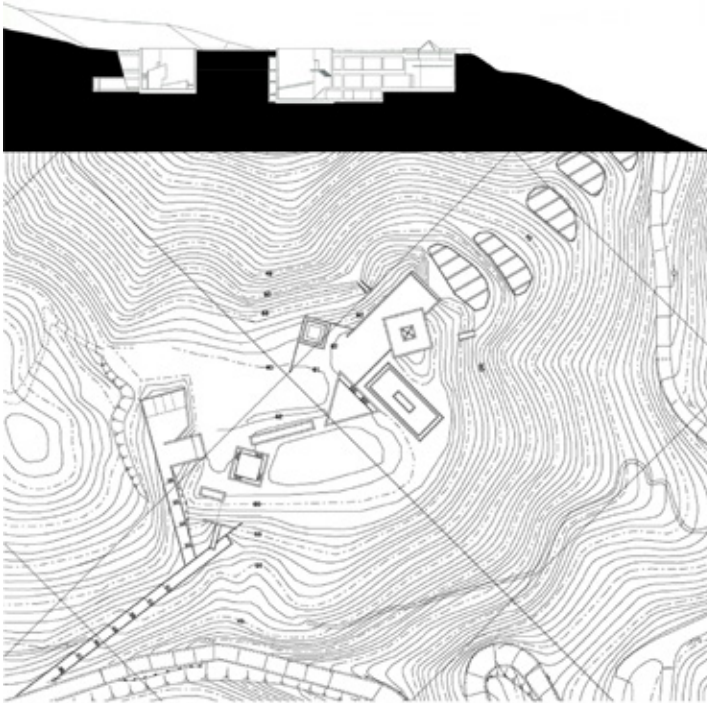
IMPENETRABILITY | The Chichu Art Museum, Tadao Ando
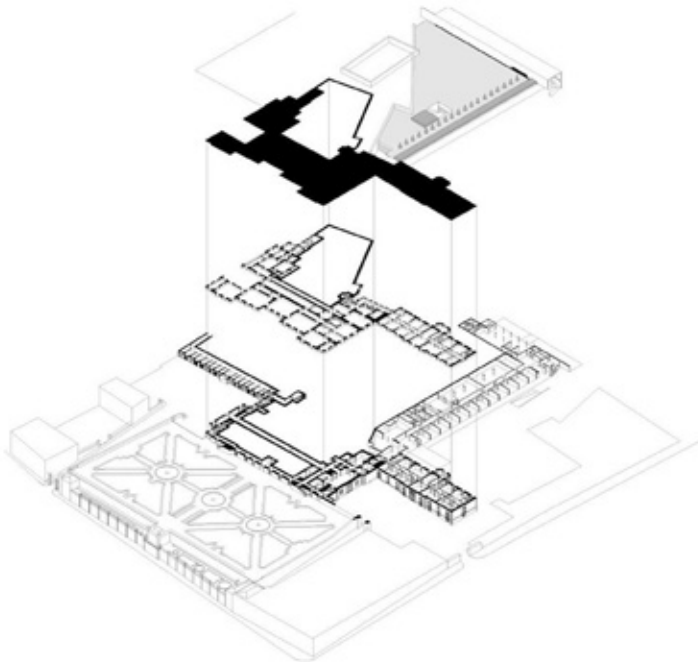


ABSTRACTION | Documentation Center, J. L. Carrilho da Graça
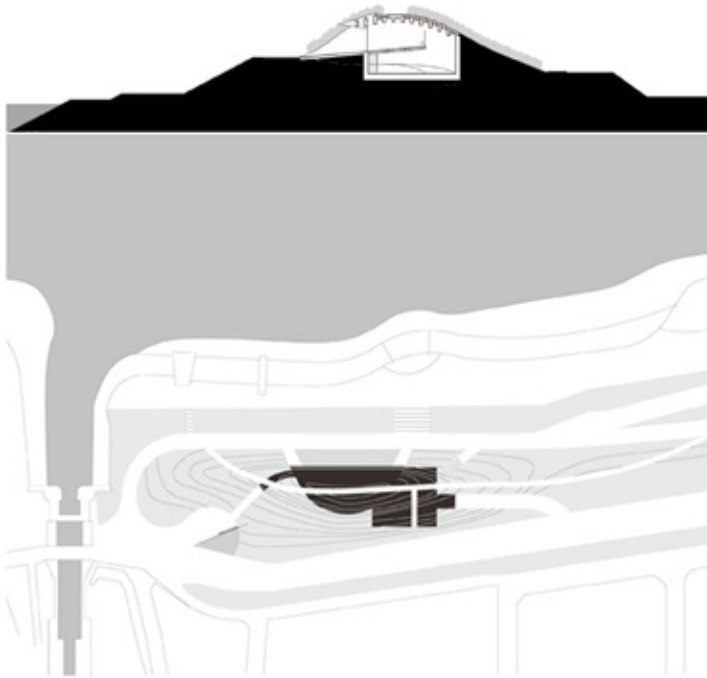
COMPENETRATION | Kitakami Canal Museum, Kengo Kuma
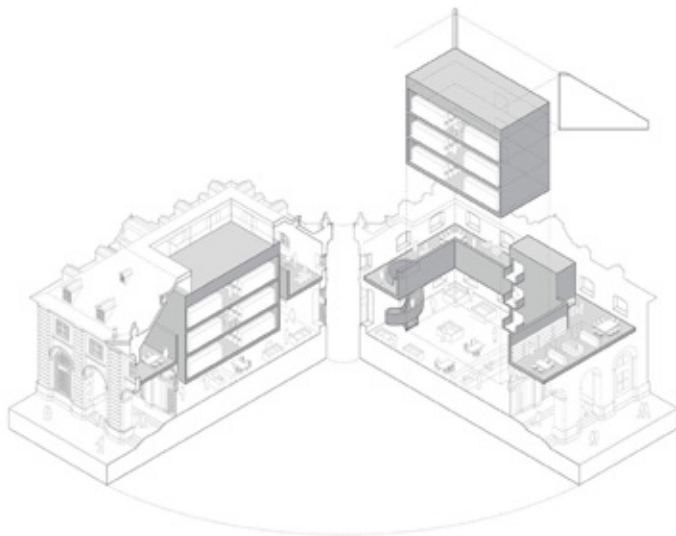


SIMULATED HYPOGEUM | Archive of the Avant-Garde, Nieto Sobejano

construction of the void, an obsession with giving body to an absence in the forms of the underground spaces.

### Impenetrability
The Chichu Art Museum, completely hidden within the earth, on the island of Naoshima (1999-2004), is located on a hill and develops in totally underground spaces; only the light wells of the galleries organized around the two courtyards emerge on the ground. Two open excavated courtyards structure the underground exhibition spaces. These are properly in-between spaces. The museum comprises three dedicated rooms and hosts permanent installations by three artists, Claude Monet, Walter De Maria, and James Turrell, each in an autonomous space. Each underground museum area creates small and intense spaces that work differently on the relationship between light and sky, structure and natural landscape, establishing precise relationships with the artworks.

By working on the relationship architecture-nature, the artifice becomes a measure of the natural, and the architecture becomes the instrument of the signification of the surroundings, contaminating the natural landscape and simultaneously integrating the dimension of nature. The interpretation of the forms of contact between the natural elements and geometry are summarized both in the roofing, which remains on the surface of the earth, and in the perception of being under the sky, underlined and exalted in the cut portions of the excavated internal courtyards. The wind and rain enter them directly, giving shape, with elementary gestures, to the materiality of the architecture, which designs and fills the overall articulation of the spaces with poetry.

### Abstraction
In the Documentation Center of the Belèm Palace in Lisbon, the architect Joao Luis Carrilho da Graça intervenes through an excavation and the drawing of a void and its edges. Introducing an ordering element in the complex sequence of open spaces, gardens, and pre-existing buildings that make up the presidential citadel brings order between the parts. This new order is given by the white and impenetrable background wall, which creates an exact sign, updating the overall identity of the place. The wall is the extreme abstraction of the two-dimensional plane, smooth and white; it is a horizontal sign that

determines a new horizon line. It unites, separates, closes and frames at the same time. The wall is detached from the building; it denies itself as a façade to become an independent screen suspended from the ground. The difference in level existing in the garden generates and contains the new underground archives. The patio opens onto the grassy surface of the garden, dug into the ground, which reveals the existence of the building below, provides light to the library and archives and allows one to read the section. The small skylights, alternating with plant elements, naturally illuminate the corridor below. In a close mutual relationship, each project component is fixed and determined for the overall design. Overall, a dispositional accuracy emerges that involves the open space, the underground built spaces and the internal spaces with the pre-existing Belèm palace, to which the new complex connects directly.

### Compenetration

The Kitakami Canal Museum by architect Kengo Kuma is an exhibition space designed partially underground to make the site and the walk along the water canal that laps it directly connected and extended within the underground space. The interpenetration between internal and external spaces is the dominant characteristic of a path determined within nature. The external ground level enters the internal space through an inclined plane and overlooks the double-height underground space, mutually interpenetrating the inside and the outside in an inseparable unity. Through the construction of a contemporary ambiguity of the physical border between architecture and landscape and between nature and artefact, Kengo Kuma realizes the idea of the dissolution of the project underground, of identifying architecture through its burial and its cancellation: «this structure represents a clear embodiment of our concept of negating boxes which are cut off from the environment, which we call Anti Object» [https://kkaa.co.jp/en/project/kitakami-canal-museum]. The museum roof, connected to the ground level, is covered with earth and vegetation in continuity with the external park, demonstrating the museum's presence exclusively through the crack in the glass window facing the water. The museum acts as a connecting element because the building follows the contours of the land, sinking into the earth but at the same time rising and opening up to the landscape.

**Simulated Hypogeum**

The Archive of the Avant-Garde, Dresden, Germany 2023, by Nieto Sobejano, is interesting because it orders and arranges the archive space inside an eighteenth-century building. The archive of the 20th-century avant-garde is not placed underground but is a treasure chest hidden inside another pre-existing volume. The quality of the new space focuses on the interior; the fronts and external elevations remain those of the ancient villa, with its specific architectural characteristics. A simulated hypogeum is, therefore, intended to be that space with a specific identity not created within the ground but shaped inside another building: «The Blockhaus is one of the most significant buildings in the historic city centre of Dresden, located on the banks of the Elbe River. Built in 1732, it underwent multiple transformations over time mainly after the 2nd World War. The project, with an area of 2,000 m², responds to the desire to open the archive to visitors, specialists, and the general public in order to make accessible the valuable and heterogeneous Marzona legacy that includes works of art, objects, drawings, plans and furniture from the different artistic currents of the avant-garde of the 20th century: Futurism, Dadaism, Constructivism and Surrealism, through institutions such as the Werkbund, the Bauhaus, the HfG of Ulm or the Black Mountain College. The project arises from a dialogue between memory and the avant-garde - represented by the building itself and its collection- which translates into the inclusion of the archive in a suspended cubic volume, freeing the entire ground floor as a flexible public space for meetings, exhibitions, seminars and lectures. The provocation implied by the institutional name is understood as the starting point in this project. A large volume of concrete floating inside the Blockhaus constitutes the centrepiece of the archive, a hidden treasure, like the inevitable presence of the past.» [https://www.nietosobejano.com]

To conclude, inhabiting the thickness of the soil means understanding the earth as a place of encounter between the reasons of architecture, the uses of the space and those of the specific site. It is the privileged place of the relationships that establish the artificial and natural components, the place of physical and cultural design actions.

The cases selected always seek a privileged relationship to the discrete traces and archetypal signs that form the basis of the design choices. Discontinuous

traces in space and time, but also genuinely secret traces, means original signs which, intentionally loaded with sense and meaning, become generative within the entire design system.

With this interpretation, a selection of emblematic contemporary architectures represents a synthetic expression of an extended idea of conservation.

The most promising sections of the MIAW 2023 project, Archive of Memory, create architectural systems that do not rest indifferently on the ground but dig into its thickness, highlighting its role as a base and physical and conceptual foundation. Projects in which the conformation of the soil acts as a determining and generative element of the overall system. Architectures in which the soil articulations, through earth moving, excavation and filling, containment, and corrugation operations, intentionally artificialize the places, becoming the principle that orders and arranges the elements in the landscape.

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# Memory *à rebours*

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**EM**: Behind the title of this edition of MIAW seems to be hidden, if one wants to see it, an extremely fascinating conflict between two of the major metaphors that have historically always helped to describe memory: that of the "storage" and that of the "wax tablet". If the first, as Weinrich says[1], concerns the thing remembered and thus the position it occupies among other memories, the second relates to the process of remembering, or rather, describes, by giving us very precise indications of the precariousness of the medium, the way in which this recording takes place. I speak of precariousness, rather than reversibility, because it seems to me that the possibility of restoring the tablet to its original smooth surface, through voluntary erasure[2] entails a shift of the entire theme towards territories of a science of forgetting, which, although it has never ceased to fascinate mankind[3], is also of a very evanescent nature. Certainly more elusive

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**1** Harald Weinrich, *Metaphora memoriae* (1964), in Id., *Sprache in Texten*, Klett, Stuttgart 1976, pp. 291-294; themes later taken up in part in Id., Lete. *Arte e critica dell'oblio* (1997), tr. in Italian by F. Rigotti, il Mulino, Bologna 1999..

**2** Maurizio Bettini writes: «The word *obliviscor* "forget" seems to be precisely composed of the preposition *ob-*, which in Latin indicates not only movement "towards" something, but also a hostile disposition "against" something; and of the root *lew-*, the same root also found in the Latin adjective levis "smooth" and in the Greek adjective *léios*, with the same meaning. Thus, the act of "forgetting" is properly that of one who "smooths", erasing a surface. It is evidently a matter of smoothing a surface marked by "signs": *vestiges, notae, stigmata*, in short, *signa* destined to communicate a certain message by activating the memory of an observer, who in this way "recognizes" its meaning». In Maurizio Bettini, *Miti di memoria. Fra J.-P. Vernant e la cultura romana*, in AA.VV., *L'histoire comme impératif ou la "volonté de comprendre". Hommage à Jean-Pierre Vernant et Pierre Vidal-Naquet,* Publications du Centre Jean Bérard, Napoli, 2011, pp. 20-21 from online version; tr. in English by the authors.

**3** Claudio Magris, *L'impossibilità di inventare l'oblio*, in «Corriere della Sera», friday 22nd May, 2015, p. 46.

than that art of memory which, through ingenious combinatorial tables, had for centuries practiced in devising obscure machines of remembrance. In this regard, it seems to me that Eco was right[4]. A science of forgetting cannot exist, because in semiotic terms all signs produce presences and not absences.

Thus, it is still the memory that we must reckon with, relying on a term that can clarify its nature only in the presence of metaphors. However, the implications of these two metaphors are profoundly divergent, and forcing memory onto the image of the archive is only one of the possibilities.

Now, what differentiates man from animals is that he has placed his memory outside of himself, in the social organism, replacing a purely genetic transmission of behavior, which is typical of the animal world, with what we might call *tradition*, or, using Leroi-Gourhan's terminology, the memory of the *operational concatenations* that characterize him as an individual belonging to a specific social group[5]. In short, as again Leroi-Gourhan says, is «the break of the link between species and memory»[6] that has led to rapid and continuous evolution of the human race.

There are two types of behavior or operational chains that need to be passed on to subsequent generations, those of a mechanical order and those of an extraordinary type. The mechanical ones concern the immediate responses to a whole series of ordinary situations such as eating, washing, how to behave on everyday occasions, reflecting the ethnicity and social group from which the individual comes. They are elementary programs, that we usually learn through imitation during childhood and perform most of the time without direct intervention of our consciousness. However, it is precisely their deep registration in our memory that ensures the possibility of intervening exceptionally should the need arise, through an increase in consciousness and lucidity.

Extraordinary operational concatenations, on the other hand, involve the exceptional events of a social group, techniques, rituals, accounting, the memory of past events. These are heavily reliant on language. It is this memory, crucial for

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**4**  Umberto Eco, *Sulla difficoltà di costruire un'Ars oblivionalis*, in «Kos», n. 3, 1987, pp. 40-53..

**5**  Cf. André Leroi-Gourhan, *Il gesto e la parola. La memoria e i ritmi,* vol. II (1965), Einaudi, Torino 1977, pp. 257-277.

**6**  Ivi., p. 269.

Giulio Camillo Delminio, *The Theatre of Memory,* 1519-1544.

Giambattista Piranesi, *A fantastical representation of the Via Appia with sepulchre*s, from Le Antichità Romane di Giambatista Piranesi Architetto Veneziano Tomo Secondo. Contenente gli avanzi de' monumenti sepolcrali di Roma e dell'agro Romano, tav. II, 1756.

the identity and survival of a social group, that could only be transmitted orally before the advent of writing.

When looking to the question from this perspective, appears evident the convergence between the process of *externalization* of memory undertaken by our ancestors and the *spatialization* that characterized the entire art of memory, from antiquity to the Renaissance examples, the peculiarity of which is in the ingenious system of *loci* and the images assigned to them, which were used to fix concepts and words, and that found in the palace, but above all in the theatre, the places on which to hinge, formalizing this system[7].

If what has been said so far is correct, for the purposes of our discourse, it is necessary to distinguish between the social memory of a society, of which archives, museums and libraries (but also universities, cinemas and theatres, why not? ) constitute the most accomplished expression, taking on the task of preserving and handing down through external devices the identity and techniques of a society, and that faculty of remembering, which, once freed from the task of retaining information essential to the survival of the species, is proposed, despite the precariousness of the medium - or perhaps precisely because of this lability - as one of the most characterizing and powerful instruments of our conscience, capable of producing us unequivocally as individuals.

Well, this faculty concerns the ideational dimension of the architectural project, because it relates to the ways in which the images deposited in our memory are able to resurface in our consciousness. Both recent and distant images, from our childhood and beyond.

The ways of organizing and displaying objects that retain memory is, instead, a design theme for the architect. A fascinating and extremely delicate one, because it works with that measure of meaning contained within objects. That measure, despite the inertia of what we call tradition, is never defined once and for all, and societies, like people, are used to continually modify the value of what is conveyed by different objects. Among the images that Massimo Ferrari has shown to us and to visiting professors as a preliminary explanation of the theme was that of Ettore Guatelli's museum. And I think it is not difficult to recognize how in this case the display and organization of the exhibition contribute to

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**7**  Cf. Frances A. Yates, *L'arte della memoria* (1966), Einaudi, Torino 1979.

detaching the objects from their ancient instrumental function, leaving them as if suspended in an entirely aesthetic, formal space, where the content of memory is almost sublimated.

**RM:** It is interesting to reflect about the detachment from memory and history that the display creates. You look at objects, records that are never more in the time and place to which they belong to. An alienation from immaterial value that in the past they have contained, an oblivion perhaps. This break from memory and *locus* of belonging creates a sort of melancholy of past time around these objects, that we often confuse with the emotional resonance of remembering. Here I want to refer to one of the two metaphors that you mentioned before, to the idea of memory in "storage". There is a tension in phrases to exhibit or to store the memory that in ordinary language we take no notice of. And this is probably because of the stated emotional confusion that makes us pass by that syntactic contradiction. Probably that same oblivion and alienation is behind the idea of archive. We still continue to believe that *drawers, chests and boxes* are the best places to preserve the memory, but in reality all what is getting locked inside that huge apparatus called archive are merely physical objects, because after actions such as *to accumulate, to organize* and *to classify* their intangible essence is lost. As Derrida says, the archive is *hypomnesic*. It comes to happen on originary and structural breakdown of the memory. It always necessitates a certain exteriority, a place of consignation[8]. But this is not the same spatialization that Latin *ars memoriae* has had. Inside that infinity of drawers and categories all the objects are of equal importance and this *hypomnesic* machine has relatively nothing in common with the Palace of Memory. There is no sensitivity for association when allocating an object, but precise logic of organization, as here the order reigns. In *Archive Fever* Derrida speaks of «a priori forgetfulness»[9] that is in the heart of this monument. And yet that is true, as all the drawers are in a deep oblivion till the moment when some historian starts to have an *archive fever* in search of the document locked in the drawer N.222.

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**8**  Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, tr. in English by E. Prenowitz, The University of Chicago Press, 1996, pp. 11-12.

**9**  Ibid.

Same symptoms has had the archeologist Hanold in the novel by Wilhelm Jensen impressed by bas-relief of Gradiva in Rome. «She who steps along» (from Latin), why especially her? When entering to Chiaramonti Museum of Vatican City today you will barely notice her in the long gallery filled with uncountable number of statues, and if you are not in *archive fever* to find out that today she is stored under the number 1274, you will certainly pass by. Perhaps today Gradiva is in the same oblivion as the objects in the aforementioned exhibition.

This fever is about desire of deconstruction of that order and organization that these immense storages have, break of that stillness in which all the elements of that linear repetition of shelves are. And this destruction happens without notice, as the act of memory is always unrehearsed. There is something spontaneous and alive about the instant of remembrance, a kind of abruptness in recalling exactly a certain image or a phrase. The way the selective forces of our mind bring to the surface certain truths and hide the others in the depths of our unconscious has a very weak connection to the logic with which memory gets stored in archives. We have limited control over the choice happening in mind, whereas the *arkhe* of archive names at the same time two words as *commencement* and *commandment*[10]. And so there is a precision and are certain laws with which this "storage" works.

**EM:** What you say brings me back to an old text of Gianni Celati, *Bazar archeologico*[11]. It is the bazaar, and not the museum, that most effectively describes our all-modern disposition towards what comes from the past. And this is because in the bazaar, objects are organized according to a «floating taxonomy» that is sheltered from history, classification and other authorities of institutionalized meaning[12]. In the bazaar, the forgotten object «emerges as the waste or detritus of a context that has sunk, and whose history cannot be

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**10**  Ivi., p. 7.

**11**  Gianni Celati, *Il bazar archeologico,* in Id., *Finzioni occidentali. Fabulazione, comicità e scrittura*, Einaudi, Torino 2001.

**12**  On the theme of "collector" compare also Walter Benjamin, *Eduard Fuchs, il collezionista e lo storico* (1937), in Id., *L'opera d'arte nell'epoca della sua riproducibilità tecnica* (1955), Einaudi, Torino 1991; but also Id., Charles Baudelaire. *Un poeta lirico nell'età del capitalismo avanzato*, edited by G. Agamben, B. Chitussi, C-C. Härle, Neri Pozza, Vicenza 2012.

told»[13]. Archaeological objects, therefore, are not the objects of History. Although the distance does not so much concern the nature of the objects - both share the condition of fragments – it is the point of observation that matters. The historian is interested in reconstructing the internal reasons and relationships that govern the fragments of past perceived as a totality. In short, the historian claims to place these fragments in the correct sequence, imposing a direction on them. The collector, on the other hand, takes them from a context to which they no longer belong, in order to subject them to a process of estrangement. This allows to use them as images of his own contemporaneity, according to a principle of difference, of otherness.

Thus for the historian, the importance of the object is relative to the order in which it participates: the order is more important than the individual parts. In contrast, for the collector, the value of the object lies in the object itself. Indeed, it is precisely its readiness to participate in another order of discourse that the collector but also the flâneur seek. It is precisely the status of fragment, of incomplete trace, that produces the reappropriation and reassembly typical of art, which history is not able to produce.

Now, if, as Bachelard states, we humans belong more to the world of images than to the world of ideas[14], then it seems to me that the relationship we have with the images deposited in our memory is closer to that of the collector with fragments of the past rather than that of historian. It is precisely the progressive loss of contextual information, the discontinuity, the condition of trace, the incompleteness of the image that favors the possibility of employing it beyond the fabric of relations of which it has been part of and alienating it from that fabric, according to a principle of difference and not a teleological one.

Archives, on the other hand, are for historians. So are archives of memory. They require an order - however arbitrary it may be - in order to find singular objects. It is the order that guarantees the retrieval of archived elements and their *meaning*, allowing temporary oblivion of the individual item, because is the same order that holds instructions for recalling it.

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**13**  Gianni Celati, *Il bazar*…, cit., p. 198.

**14**  Cf. Bachelard, Gaston, *Dormeurs Eveillés. La Rêverie Lucide* (19.01.1954); tr. in Italian from transcription of the radio broadcast, in Gaston Bachelard, *Causeries (1952-54)*, il melangolo, Genova 2005.

This is perhaps why I was always suspicious about the great architectural constructions of the art of memory. What can I do with an immense, ordered machine capable of recalling everything in its exact position? Instead, as an architect, I am interested in reasons by which certain images, even outside of morphological homologies, bring other ones to the surface of the mind.

**RM:** We see images, we reproduce images, we retain images in our memory as Bachelard once stated[15]. I also agree that we all belong to their world. Of images without sequence and order, detached and disconnected one from another. Always distant, and yet occasionally very close. There are no numerations or alphabetical orders in our mind, no precise laws for organization as in case of archived objects. As you stated before there are *internal reasons* that determine the distance and sequence of our memories.

When speaking of images my mind recalls Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas*, that was mapping *the afterlife of antiquity*. Perhaps, this is another art of memory, a truthful demonstration of the process within our minds. Black panels with hundreds of frames telling a particular story when together. A synthesis of Warburg's studies on "images of great symbolic, intellectual, and emotional power"[16]. The very essence of these panels is anachronism, as within it's unifying black frames it makes possible conversation between elements that appertain to different moments of time past. It is about stillness and motion at the same time, as it at once unifies and fixes and yet allows for imperishable recombination and reinterpretation. An endless interplay of images. Connections to be made, unmade, reconsidered anew. Warburg was constantly cutting the photographs of his panels in search of other possible configurations. As Georges Didi-Huberman has noted montage of this images together is "a heuristics of thought itself"[17]. Perhaps has to be remarked that more than figures within these panels, what creates the resonance and sometimes tension between the images is the

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15   Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space (1958),* Beacon Press, Boston 1994, cit., p. 33.

16   Christopher D. Johnson, *About the Mnemosyne Atlas, Mnemosyne: Meanderings through Aby Warburg's Atlas*, Cornell University, 2013-2016.

17   Georges Didi-Huberman, *Atlas: How to Carry the World on One's Back?*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid 2010.

correlation of their distances – the break in between the elements. Are not the homologies of depicted elements to determine the connections of different frames but the black canvas appearing in between.

In this migrating and never fixed fragments, in their connections and gaps is the memory. Discontinuities and differences of all the images from our experience are what we carry in our thoughts. We can recall all of a sudden images from two distant realities extracting them from the flow of time, they came to appear one next to the other on the black panel inside us. Our unconscious establishes new connections between the fragments of different narratives that we have gone through. There is always potential for interpretation, experimentation, sometimes also a necessary failure to restart. In this infinite recombination and play is the art of memory. Perhaps it is also an interesting reference for creative act that we have to make use of. And why not to turn this abstraction into the matter for construction? Returning to the idea of "wax tablets", has to be remembered Plato's *Theaetetus*[18], where Socrates says that these were the gifts of Mnemosyne (who besides being the goddess of memory was also the mother of muses) to mortals, to imprint whatever they wish to remember, to write it down and to impress it onto the surface. Perhaps, the metaphor of "wax tablet" encourages to reflect on how the memory takes shape, gets impressed and imprinted. In every second rewriting, the trace of previous one silently commands and influences the formation of new inscription, something of past is always visible in between new letters.

**EM:** Warburg brings us to the concept of the *engram*, which, although its functioning in biological terms still remains quite mysterious to our science, can be summarized as the organic ability for storing a certain amount of information in our biological tissue. In short, it is the link between memory and organic matter, and thus, inheritance that the term engram describes. The term was first formulated by the physiologist Richard Semon[19] in the early 1900s and concerns not only the cerebral imprint, the *inscription* produced by experiences of a physical

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**18**  Cf. Plato, *Theaetetus*, Plato in Twelve Volumes, vol. 12, tr. in English by H. N. Fowler, William Heinemann Ltd, London 1921.

**19**  Cf. Richard Semon, *The Mneme* (1904), tr. in English by L. Simon, George Allen & Unwin, London 1921.

Aby Warburg, *The Mnemosyne Atlas*, Photograph of the panel 31 from penultimate version of the atlas, Warburg Institute Archive, London, August/September 1928.

Mirtha Dermisache, *Diario nº 1: Año 1*, published by Centro de Arte y Comunicación (CAyC) in Buenos Aires, September 1972.

order, but also, and this is of interest to our discourse, the physical modification that occurs in our tissue as a result of stimuli of a psychic order. Semon writes that every human being is endowed with an inherited and a subjectively acquired engrammatic legacy, and that once the engram has been inscribed in our brain tissue, it goes through a state of latency until it is reactivated by an appropriate stimulus. This process of reactivating and resurging the mnemonic trace Semon called *ecphoria (Ekphorie)*.

This is of course of great interest to Warburg, as it explains the reappearance, the *nachleben* of distant figures in recent works. It is not only a matter of culture, not only are the exchanges between men and artists or historical research that explain the reappearance of figures that have disappeared or belong to the past: they reappear because they are inscribed in our organic fabric.

The characteristic of this inscription, however, is that it preserves the morphological dimension in terms of energy, of imaginal potential. Thus, residing midway between an evolutionary-progressive and a typological, and therefore ahistorical, structure. For Warburg the engrams become *dynamic symbols* capable of releasing their energy into expressive values in subsequent epochs when adequately awakened, stimulated.

Now, back to us, what holds the wax tablet and the engram together is the action of leaving a trace, the writing, the *gramma*.

This proximity between images inscribed in us and the action of writing or engraving something in order to be able to remember suggests a substantial contiguity between artistic figuration and writing. Before these were separated or took different paths, at least in our Western culture, there was no difference. At the origin, writes Leroi-Gourhan again[20], figurative art is not connected to the real, but to language, it is closer to writing than to the work of art. The graphism of the origins is organized over thousands of years in sequences of rhythms, of spaced signs we might say, it is fundamentally abstract (also the statements of Worringer were not too different)[21], symbolic and multidimensional. The strength of writing, as we know it, is that it has forced this multidimensional

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**20**   Cf. André Leroi-Gourhan, *Il gesto e la parola. Tecnica e linguaggio,* vol. I (1964), Einaudi, Torino 1977, pp. 221-254.

**21**   Cf. Wilhelm Worringer, Astrazione e empatia (1908), Einaudi, Torino 1975.

graphism into the linear progression proper to the phonetic sequence, in fact subordinating it to latter. The reasons for this must be sought in the logocentrism and phonocentrism of our culture, in short, in the pre-eminence accorded to verbal language over the written one. These are things that Derrida in Of *Grammatology* insists on. After all, Plato doubted images as much as writing, and precisely because only the word was a direct expression of the logos, it was necessary in antiquity to set up those prodigious mnemonic machines that we know.

From this perspective we understand why the introduction of writing, insofar as it opened up enormous possibilities, presented innumerable risks. The texts would have travelled alone, they were to become detached from the control of the reason that produced them. Think of the role of writing in our religions....

I say these things because among the topics our students and visiting professors have worked on is the archive of the Corriere della Sera, which is basically an archive of texts, of writings, of memories inscribed on paper. Of course, from a design point of view, organizing an archive of texts is different from organizing an archive of objects, of costumes, of statuary, and yet, with respect to the theme of memory, perhaps it is only out of typological habit that we continue to distinguish between archive, museum, library, periodical library. I think the theme of this MIAW has made this clear.

In any case, the contradiction between a memory that must be organized and thus *fixed* within a sequence of complete meaning, a historical taxonomy, and the mobility which instead allows each object, image, text or writing to recompose itself, to *migrate* from its context, to produce a new meaning elsewhere, always remains in the background.

In other words, it is the possibility of liberating the signifier from the yoke of the original and historically shared meaning that I see unfolding in what we commonly call memory. Memory, which also, keeping in balance between the polarities of an art of remembering and an art of forgetting, one could try to read *à rebours*, upside down, against the tide, as the process that loosens the "vertical" connections between signifier and signified in favor of the horizontal ones proper to "textuality". And so, to employ memory to recall the correct arrangement of meanings, organizing them according to narrative or historically coherent chains, is to force it into a task that perhaps does not belong to it.

What engram and writing retain, leaving everything else to dissolve, is in the end only the signifier, it is only the signifier that remains imprinted as a trace. And perhaps the energy of which Warburg speaks is precisely the infinite readiness of the signifier to be reactivated, reassembled in successive configurations in order to be produced in a new sense, in accordance with the sensibility of successive epochs. It is the *disposition to excitation (Erregungsdisposition)* that the signifier shares with the engram. After all, when Barthes speaks of *the pleasure of the text*, doesn't he speak precisely of the energetic readiness inherent in every text to emerge from its collocation of meaning, from the archive in which it is located?

**RM:** Undoubtedly, Barthes rejects the significance as the site of bliss, that the theory of the text usually designates. He recognizes the necessity to give a shock to this assertion, the need of an oblique, drag anchor to disrupt the centered system of the theory of the text, that tends to become philosophy of meaning. He states that the essence of *pleasure* is in being *non-site, anachronic, adrift*[22]. The pleasure is in the possibility of interpretation, in individual understanding, perhaps at times also in refuge from the order of the text. It resides in spontaneous engagement with the writing without presence of the author, as he no longer exercises over the work. As W.G. Sebald once said, we find Stendhal's heroes in the place where he left them long ago. The text, when in ones hands, is already free from all the connections to its author's social or political views, it is devoid of specific consignation, it is present out of any place and any significance. It no longer belongs or has connection with any "archive", till the moment when the image-reservoir of the language starts to operate over it. It is the instant when our imagination hand to hand with memory starts to find and create connections with past experiences.

The text of bliss always discomforts and unsettles the reader's tastes, values, memories and brings to a crisis it's relation with language[23]. Is this crisis, perhaps, that awakes the creative force of our mind, that makes us to enjoy the moment when we succeed in retrieving our own meaning of what has been read.

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**22**   Cf. Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text,* tr. in English by R. Miller. Hill and Wang, New York, 1975, pp. 62-63.

**23**   Ivi., pp 14-15.

A frame from the final scene of Jean-Luc Godard's *King Lear,* 1987.

This pleasure is not throughout the entire text but in its fragments, as Barthes notes introducing the concept of *tmesis* (that is cut, a separation of parts of a compound word by the intervention of one or more words) as a source or figure of pleasure. «What pleasure wants is the site of a loss, the seam, the cut, the deflation, the dissolve that seizes the subject in the midst of bliss»[24].

In these cuts and those fragments is memory, and the latters are the engrams inscribed in us. What do we remember from books that once gave us that pleasure? Perhaps what we recall are just some parts of the narrative, some images that our consciousness retrieved, when we took up the head from the linear progression of the text to imagine the scene, or we remember just some phrases that have been etched on the "wax tablets" of mind after multiple readings. Whatever we retain is a piece of a whole, the rest fades into forgetfulness. And this is because the pleasure is in *tmesis*, in the very rhythm of reading, in looking up, listening something else and not necessary being captivated by the text. This feeling is subtle, complex, tenuous and almost scatterbrained[25].

Arises a question; why do we recall images when thinking of texts of pleasure? There is always a translation from what is read into what is retained in mind, an *intersemiotic translation* as Barthes explains. Language and memory build within us an infinite reserve of images, any text without these associations is nothing but a collection of letters, their repetition. And during the moment of *ecphoria*, the mind delights in winning back the images to the surface and not the sequence of sentences. This transformation from linear organization of letters into a never fixed image brings back to the idea of multidimensional graphism, that is in the core of the art of remembering.

I want to return to your point, that memory is against its nature, or perhaps we have mistaken its role from the start. It never allows us to recall the complete energy of past, but brings back just a specific section of it and yet there is also a little bit of *interpretative force* in conjunction. British artist Emma Kay's works exemplify the selective and creative nature of memory. Her tools are personal remembrances. She writes down whatever she recalls from the texts of her pleasure, or from the history, sometimes tries also to remember the future from

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**24**  Ivi., p 7.

**25**  Ivi., pp. 24-25.

theories of the world change. An interesting example is the series of works called *Shakespeare from My Memory.* A framed half blank page, several paragraphs of rewritten narrative, some quotes. This is what gets encoded in memory after reading "King Lear", "Hamlet" or other plays. The conversation of king and his daughters is gone, leaving only king's response to Cordelia's phrase that «nothing will come of nothing». While this may seem primitive and unworthy of discussion, it makes obvious the contradiction of memory with the contiguity of narrative. Those short paragraphs are no more what the book has within its pages, but instead what Kay has encoded in her mind, possibly even not matching with author's original intentions.

Memory rejects all the rules of narrative art. It ignores the sequence, the established order, it extracts the elements from old chains to make new ones. And this *power of reconstruction*, this creative force to rebuild is what we have to harness as architects. We have to recourse to countless surging images of our mind, to turn them into a matter and to gain a great use of them. The secret is in memory's constant transition, momentary and spontaneous translation, in interpretation of the present condition, sometimes in abstraction form it. In being atopic (without *topos*), free and without constraints. It is anachronic and fragmentary, but maintains its unique relationship with time. New images are continually added, rearranging the order and the disposition of old ones, some even causing the latters to fade, but never disappear, as the traces on "wax tablets" of Mnemosyne that are never entirely erased and certainly influence the ongoing process of rewriting.

In this constant transformation, deconstruction and recreation is where we encounter the conflict with the metaphor of "storage". Order goes against the nature of memory. The initial mistake was attempting to confine it within the "drawers". This metaphor brings back to Bachelard and his affirmation that we are *great dreamers of locks*[26]. Seems that as architects we have nothing to do with syntactic tension in the phrase "storing memory". In reality, it is our responsibility to confront the spatial dimension of this mistake, to find new *poetics of space* to hold the memory not against its nature, but leaving it a certain freedom to be reorganized, recreated, reshaped.

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**26** Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics…*, cit., p.110.

# Contemporary archives. How to preserve memories, documents and projects

*Giulia Setti*
DAStU Department, Politecnico di Milano

The transformation of the contemporary archive is an increasingly topical issue in the practice of architectural design; in today's society, more and more assets are immaterial, digital or virtual, which is why we need to rethink the archive as a place capable of accommodating, preserving and sometimes displaying not only physical but also intangible assets (Arrhenius et al. 2014; Borgherini and Mengoni 2016; Colomina 1994). In other cases, the archive represents a place to store precious materials for the future of humankind, as in the case of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault on Spitsbergen Island, Svalbard archipelago, which is an original and valuable artefact where over 40,000 seeds are stored for ensuring and preserving, in the case of a calamity or extreme event, the diversity of the world's crops and species. It is an underground vault about 120 metres below ground level and embedded in the slopes of a sandstone mountain; the extreme climatic conditions, characterised by usually frozen ground, allow the seeds to be stored as if inside a cold storage cell.

Externally, the building looks like a wedge set into the ground. It is a contemporary, automated archive, made entirely of concrete to withstand any nuclear war or aircraft crash, and was designed to protect species, catalogue them and preserve them. The seed bank is just one - extreme - example of the need to actualise and reason about the forms in which the contemporary archive can be translated.

What does it mean to design a space for the cataloguing and display of assets, works of art or materials intended to be kept for a long time, and what will we have to store and preserve in it in the near future? A different but equally fascinating example is the archive built by Cesare Leonardi and Franca Stagi

around the 1980s: a 'drawn archive' containing 374 drawings of 211 species, plus drawings of particulates, leaves and fruits, and descriptions of each individual species. Each card describes the territory of origin, the adaptation to the urban environment and the different climatic conditions that each species can withstand.

This archive designed by Leonardi and Stagi was later collected in a book *'L'architettura degli Alberi'* (*The Architecture of Trees*), which describes the marvellous forms of nature and over the decades has become an indispensable tool for designing greenery and learning about tree species (Leonardi, Stagi 2019).

The archive can, therefore, take very different forms and its design is today a central theme in architecture as it means understanding how to adapt an established typology to the innovations and changes of contemporary society.

### Musealisation of archives

The theme of the 2023 edition of the MIAW workshop - *Archives of Memory* - tried, therefore, to reason about the newness of this theme through five possible sites, linked to as many archival forms: the archives of Triennale, those of the Municipality of Milan, the museum of Corriere della Sera, the museum of Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo and, finally, the costume museum at Palazzo Morando.

In past years, the MIAW workshop used to focus on topical issues for the future of the city of Milan, observing the changes and projects underway and interacting with local administrations and actors[1]; this year, the idea of working on the relation between the contemporary museum and the archive allows us to develop a reflection on the relation between past and present and on ways of preserving memories and materials. The sites chosen for this edition reflect on the forms of preserving memory by building museums and devices capable of narrating and showing, fostering a deeper knowledge of the city and its culture.

The musealisation of archives is a subject rich in design suggestions and emblematic examples that have marked different periods and ways of displaying

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**1**   Reference is made in particular to MIAW 2021, with the theme 2026 *Olympic Games and the City.* The challenge urban regeneration of Milano Porta Romana Railyard, and MIAW 2022 - *Inventing Schools*, which worked on the theme of updating and redefining the school building heritage.

preserved materials. The design of *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, realised by Dominique Perrault from 1988 to 1998, is one of the largest libraries in the world and defines a new type of space for study and research, as desired by the initiator of the international competition, the President of the French Republic François Mitterand.

The library houses the historical and literary archives of the entire nation and has become, over the decades, a true monument and institution devoted to study and research.

Perrault's design overturns the conception of space by realising a large luxuriant garden which is hypogeal and hidden from external view and is overlooked by the spaces for researchers and the public. The garden was conceived as a secret and protected space, located below the ground floor and practically inaccessible, while the spaces for the archives and the collection of volumes consist of four angular towers, each with 24 storeys and an L-shaped plan, which open towards the central public space, reminiscent of an open book.

The towers delimit the large central square, which is about 400 metres in length and sits below the level of the Seine. Perrault's work is fascinating because it picks up on the typical layout of monastery cloisters, silent and intimate spaces where one can devote oneself to study and prayer (Perrault 2015).

The idea is to define a natural space, a forest, that protects researchers and creates an almost timeless, suspended atmosphere emphasising the monumentality and sacredness of learning and research, the ancient books and the spaces intended for their preservation and use, and protecting from the hectic life of Paris.

However, the opportunity to rethink ways of designing an archive, displaying collections of artefacts or paintings or parts and architectures comes ever more frequently in the form of exhibitions.

From this point of view, the theme chosen for Biennale Architettura 2014 by Rem Koolhaas was emblematic. The title "*Fundamentals*" emphasises a return to the origins of architecture and the study of the foundational and constituent elements of architecture and building construction. Kolhaas' intention was to reflect critically on the elements of architecture through a sort of working archive that was revealed in the Central Pavilion, entitled "*Elements of Architecture*". Here, the curator maniacally analysed the fundamental elements of our buildings, used in different ways in the different eras and places. It was a story tracing the global

history of every single element that makes up a building, through a substantial catalogue made up of 15 volumes that describe: balcony, ceiling, corridor, door, elevator, escalator, facade, fireplace, floor, ramp, roof, stair, toilet, wall, window (Koolhaas 2014). It was the construction of a veritable archive that led us to reflect on the influences, variations and similarities of the compositional elements that make up the architecture of our cities; elements that span time and, changing in language and style, construct every place in which we live. In the Biennale exhibition, Koolhaas created a specific room for each architectural element, comparing ancient, past, present and future examples, thus defining an archive that could be said to be finished but to be in continuous, and rapid, expansion.

The second revolution proposed by Koolhaas as the curator of Biennale 2014 was the invitation to the participants of national pavilions to work on a single theme, which transformed the Biennale into a single, great research laboratory. The theme '*Absorbing Modernity: 1914-2014*' asked each pavilion to recount the last 100 years of its country's history with reference to the idea of modern and contemporary architecture. Koolhaas built a true challenge. He had the strength and the vision to turn Biennale into an archive, a selection of parts, pieces, architectural elements with no more divisions between nations and styles and united by the idea of outlining the evolution of architecture.

### The experience of Archives at Politecnico di Milano: Archivio Piero Bottoni and Fondazione Renzo Piano

Many collections gathered and preserved in archives around the world are not usually available for consultation and are only displayed in exhibitions or special events. The idea of musealising an archive, which is the theme of this MIAW, is interesting precisely because it imagines 'opening' the archive space to the public by transforming it into a permanent exhibition space.

Politecnico di Milano hosts Archivio Piero Bottoni and Fondazione Renzo Piano, which are two archives of great value and with two very different stories. The projects of building these archives and the choices made on the way their contents can be displayed and used are particularly significant and delicate.

Archivio Piero Bottoni has a long history linked to the Bovisa Campus of Politecnico di Milano and is considered one of the most important collections

held at Politecnico, with over 90,000 documentary units[2]. It was established in 1983 by Giancarlo Consonni, Lodovico Meneghetti and Graziella Tonon. In 1999 their heirs confirmed the donation of the entire archive to Politecnico di Milano, which entrusted it to the Department of Architecture and Design (DiAP) and then, in 2012, to the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies.

The Archive documents and collects the entire activity of Piero Bottoni, with architectural designs and urban planning projects realised in the 20th century and also including drawings and original documents by other well-known authors such as Le Corbusier and Terragni. The Archive preserves various materials such as drawings, photographs and more than 30,000 written documents, as well as books, magazines and journals, rare brochures and a rich press collection of about 10,000 items. Finally, the Archive collects films, tape recordings, panels, posters, models, furniture and objects.

This is a heritage of great value and interest and in 2019 was declared to be of 'particularly important historical interest' by the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities (Mibac) and the Archival and Bibliographic Superintendence of Lombardy. The Archive includes reading rooms and several showcases with models of Piero Bottoni's works.

Fondazione Renzo Piano is much more recent and since 25 November 2022 it is housed on the the first floor of Building 14 'Nave', designed by Gio Ponti. The Fondation houses 'Archivio Renzo Piano Architetto 1964-1977' and a library. The new Foundation and the Archive donated by Renzo Piano are part of a larger transformation project that redesigned the open spaces between the Trifoglio and Nave buildings and with the planting of several trees and the construction of two new buildings by Renzo Piano (Setti, 2022).

Fondazione Renzo Piano has a long history and tradition. It was established in 2004 when Renzo Piano decided to create a non-profit institution for collecting the drawings and design materials of RPBW firm and to promoting architects'

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**2**  For more information see https://www.dastu.polimi.it/archivio-piero-bottoni/ and the website: https://www.archiviobottoni.polimi.it/ which is, however, being updated as of the date this essay is published. Archivio Piero Bottoni is located at Bovisa Campus, via Durando 38/a; contact professors are Giancarlo Consonni, Renzo Riboldazzi and Graziella Tonon.

education[3]. The Foundation was established in Vesima, Genoa, at the foot of the Renzo Piano Building Workshop; it preserves archive materials, trains young generations and disseminates architecture as a technique and art of building. The construction of the archive began between 1990 and 2000, out of necessity for exhibitions and dissemination activities, after which the Foundation started to build a more structured programme for the preservation of archive material. The Foundation is the memory of the RPBW firm as it collects sketches, drawings and models from the early designs of the 1960s onwards, which is why the archived materials do not only tell the story of the RPBW's projects but also tells its working method. It is an enormous amount of material, which, to date, amounts to more than 5,000 models, about 100,000 hand-made sketches and drawings, more than 1,500 linear metres of documentation and more than 12 terabytes of digital documentation. There is also a photographic collection of 500,000 traditional media (slides, plates, prints and exposure films) that are related to designs developed between 1960 and 1999[4]. One can well understand the great resource that the archive represents in preserving information, and above all drawings, models and materials that can tell the stories of different projects over time (Ciccarelli 2017).

The Foundation is also a living space with visits and educational workshops for students. For university students and teachers, the Foundation offers visits that allow them to get to know and discover RPBW's working method and the history of its most significant projects. The visits are often guided by RPBW architects who share their experience or describe certain designs in more detail according to the requests of students and professors.

### Archival Aptitude in Architecture Exhibitions

An archival attitude can also be seen in some particular exhibitions that try to display daring objects or use archival strategies as a design tool (Gigliotti 2015; Nelson 1953; Pelkonen, Chan and David Andrew 2015). I am referring to two recent exhibitions held at Fondazione Prada in Milan. The first is *'Cere Anatomiche.*

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**3**  For more details and information see: https://www.fondazionerenzopiano.org/it/

**4**  Reference to the Method section of Fondazione Renzo Piano's website: https://www.fondazionerenzopiano.org/it/page/il-metodo/

*La Specola di Firenze di David Cronenberg'* (Anatomical Wax Sculptures. La Specola di Firenze according to David Cronenberg), which collected a selection of the anatomical wax sculptures preserved at La Specola, one of Europe's oldest science museums. Specola is a kind of archive of anatomical wax sculptures (around 1,400) made between the 18th and 19th centuries, which constituted a true scientific treatise, illustrating the anatomy of the human body with no direct observation of corpses. The archive is put on display in the Foundation's spaces with a selection of thirteen wax sculptures and a series of copies of anatomical drawings collected in a series of showcases, showing the most intimate aspects of the human body and, at the same time, their scientific roots. No less significant in terms of the relation between archive, display and selection is the exhibition currently running at Fondazione Prada entitled *'Paraventi. Folding screens from the17th to the21st Century'*. Here, in contrast to the previous case, it is the exhibition itself that builds an archive, collecting a fine selection of screens, curated by Nicholas Cullinan, which traces the contaminations between East and West in the design of these artefacts. The exhibition layout designed by SANAA traces the history and the artists who, over the centuries, have imagined the evolution of screens, designing models and prototypes. The display alternates between a series of curved plexiglas elements housing a contemporary selection of screens and a chronological sequence on the upper floor, which brings together fine examples designed by artists and architects. The exhibition thus becomes a sort of open archive that can be visited and is capable of showing the evolution of a precious object. As is the case in many exhibitions, the selection actually allows an archive to be built around an element or theme and defines the way to observe and learn.

The journey into archives and their projects is often a journey into the life of each architect or the institution that decided to preserve the materials; the archive is also a place that allows us to get to know a work or the activity of an institution and, therefore, has a value in terms of dissemination and transmission of knowledge. Designing an archive today means considering very different aspects: the need for protection and care of the materials as well as the possibility of creating flexible spaces that can open up to the public.

In this MIAW2023 edition, therefore, the choice was made to imagine and design the future of archives, starting with some of the central institutions for

the city of Milan, which increasingly need to collect, preserve and organise a large quantity of documents and materials. The title of this edition highlights that the archive means preserving memory. It is also important to recognise that contemporary archives have a certain aptitude for transformation and increasingly opening their doors to become places of exchange and research.

This reflection on the different forms and themes of the archive, which is not only a collection of drawings or designs as in the case of Triennale, has been made possible by five sites and sponsors: Municipality of Milan, Corriere della Sera, Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo, Museo del costume di Palazzo Morando. This series of projects describes different ways of interpreting the theme of the contemporary archive and provides a new perspective on the approach to an urgent and interesting design issue.

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MIAW 2023 Workshop students visiting the Corriere della Sera Archives

MIAW 2023 Workshop students visiting the Corriere della Sera Archives

Museo del cantiere Marmisti della Veneran

Museo Archivi alla Triennale di Milano

# 03. PROJECT SITES

*edit by Raffaella Cavallaro, Annalucia D'Erchia,*
*Pedro Escoriza Torralbo, Houssam Mahi, Francesco Martinazzo,*
*Ruzanna Meliksetyan Michele Porcelluzzi*



Museo Archivi Comune di Milano

nda Fabbrica del Duomo

Museo del Corriere della Sera

Museo del Costume a Palazzo Morando

# Palazzo Morando
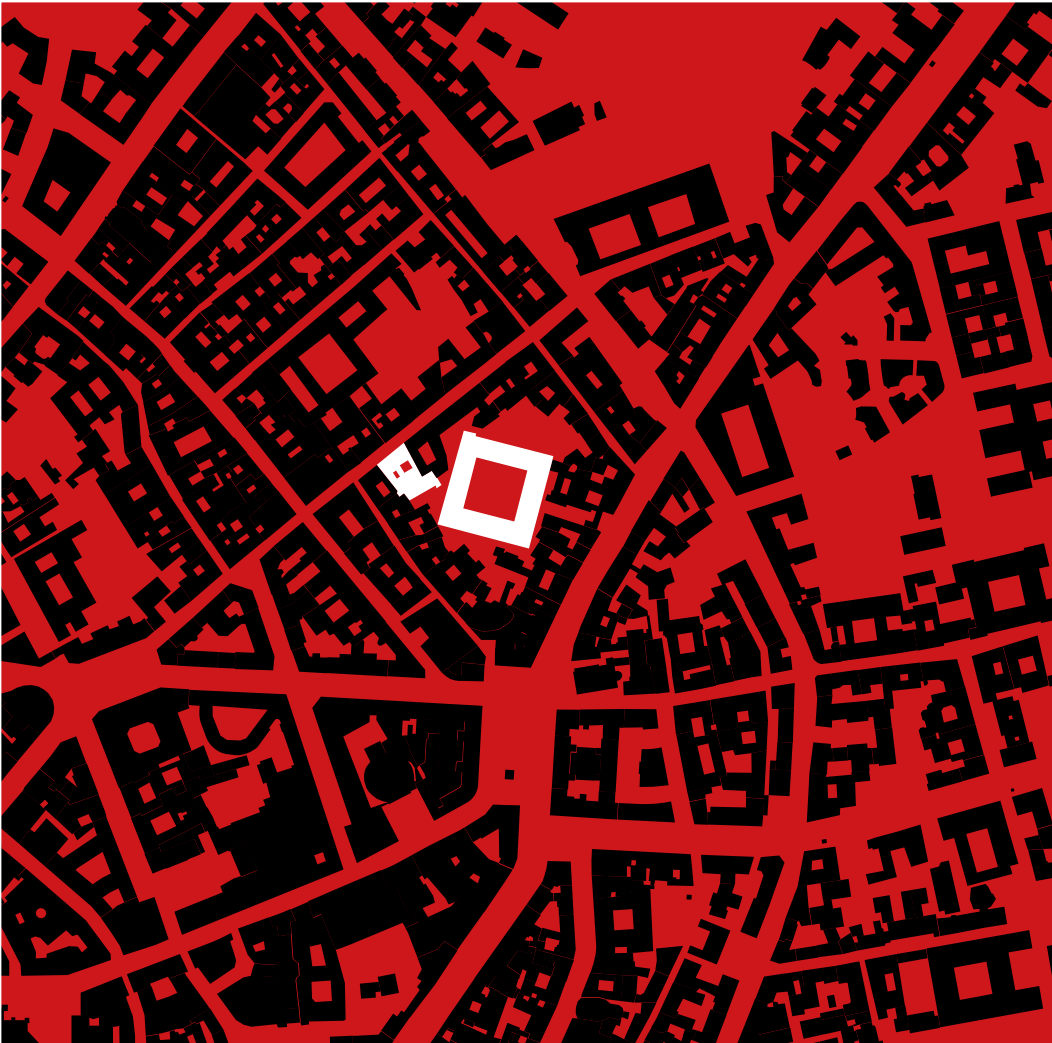
# The site



Carta degli Astronomi di Brera: *Pianta della città di Milano* (1814)
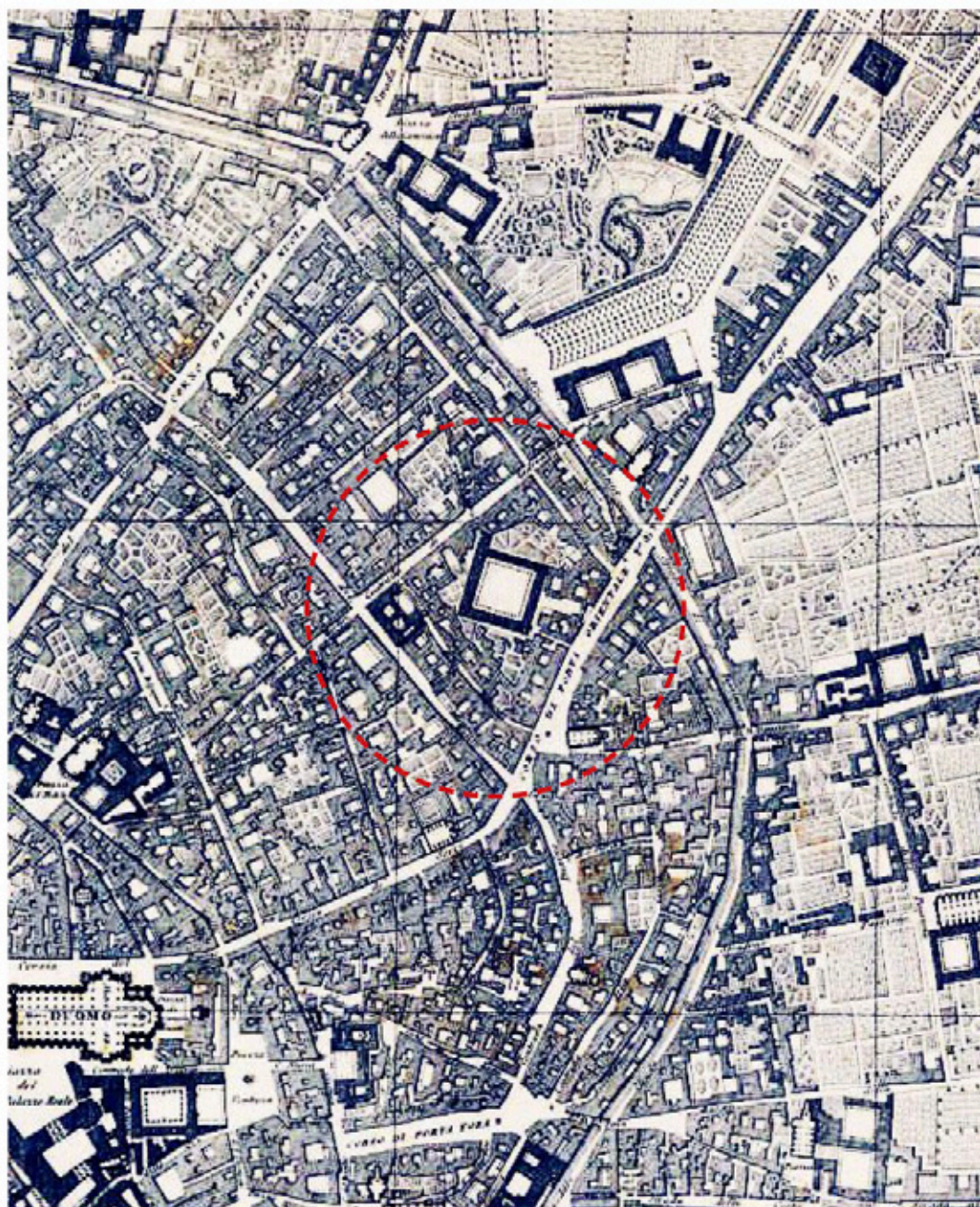
Brenna Giovanni: *Pianta della città di Milano* (1826)

# The building
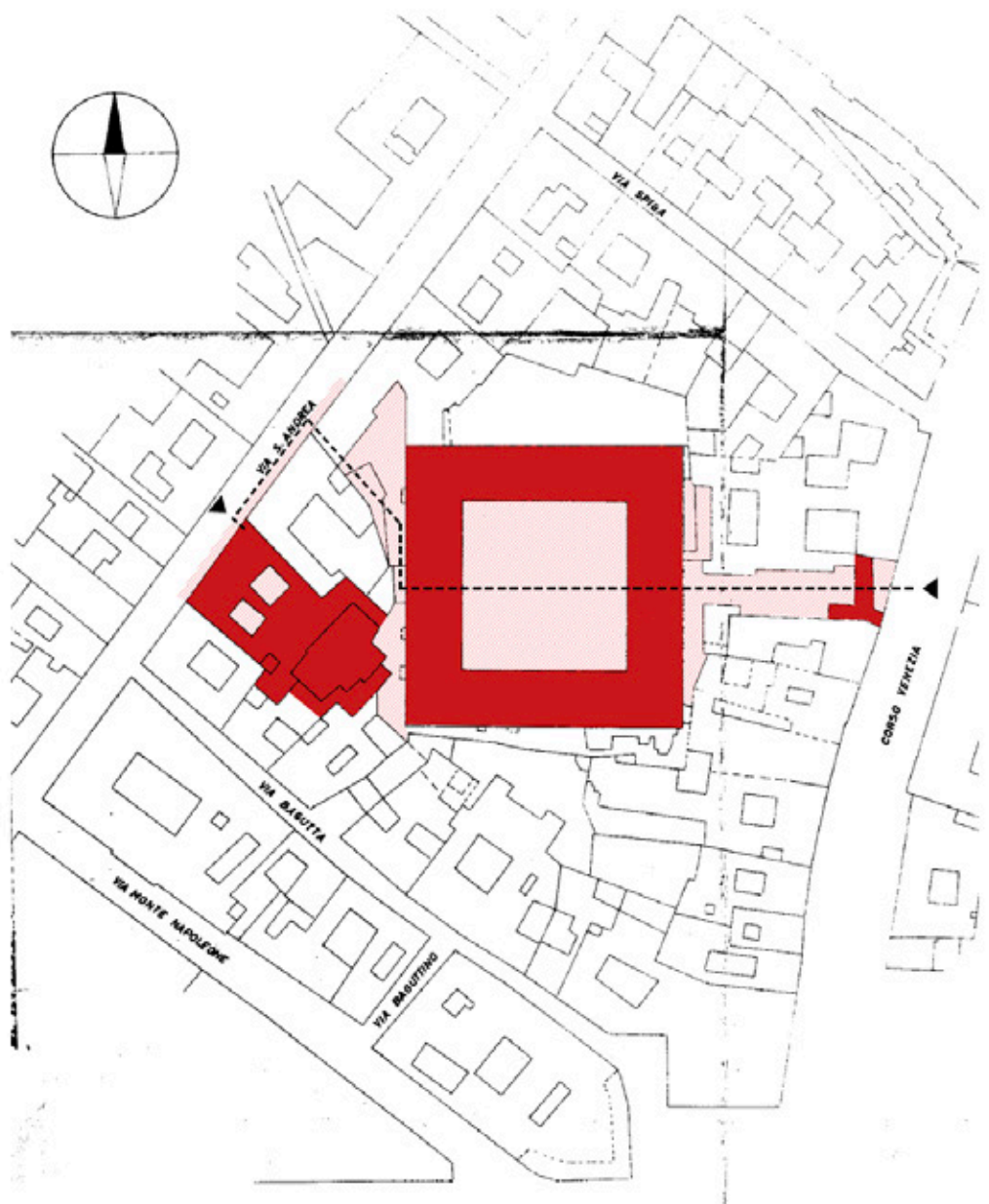


Main volumes and access (Corso Venezia, via S. Andrea)
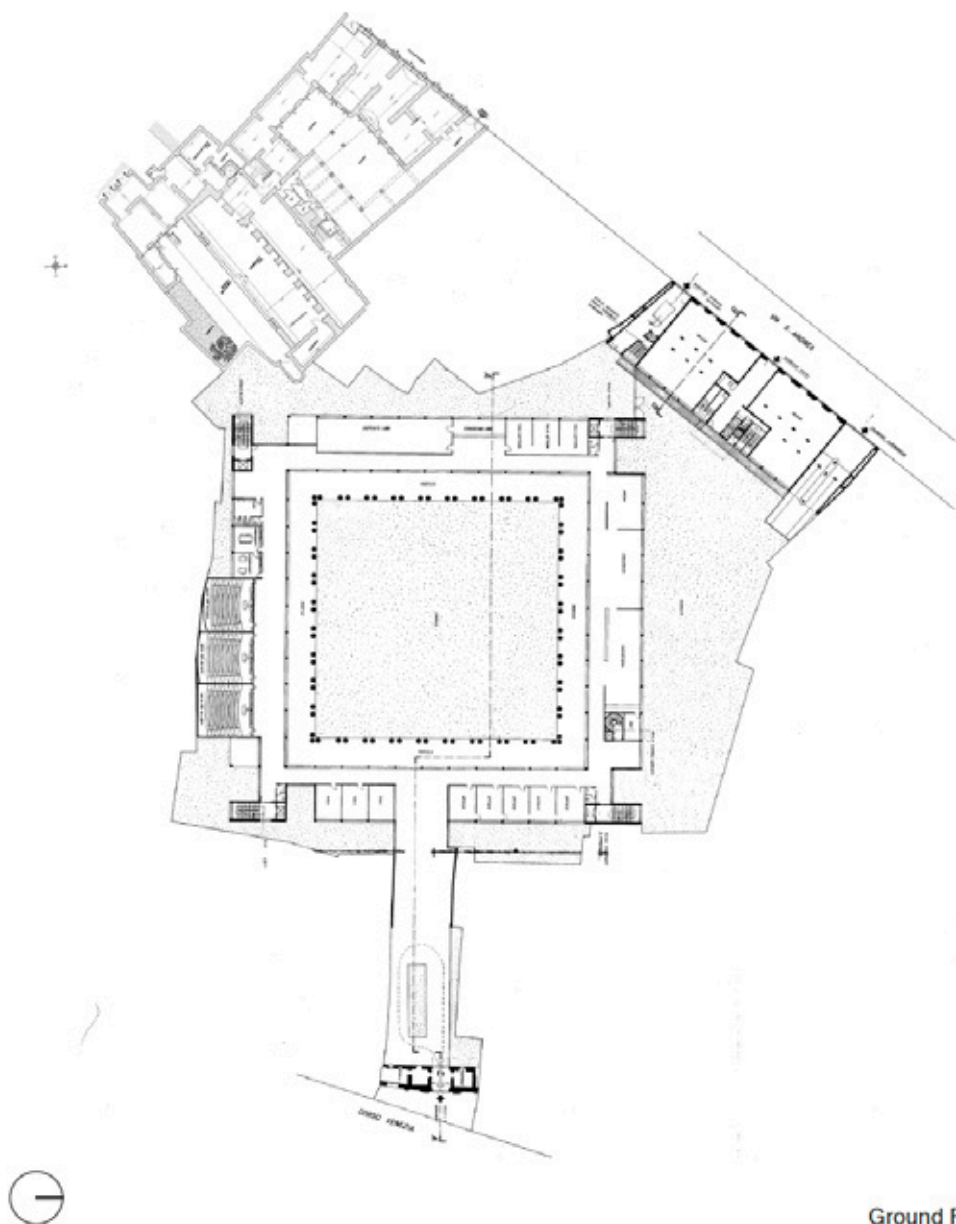
Ground Floor
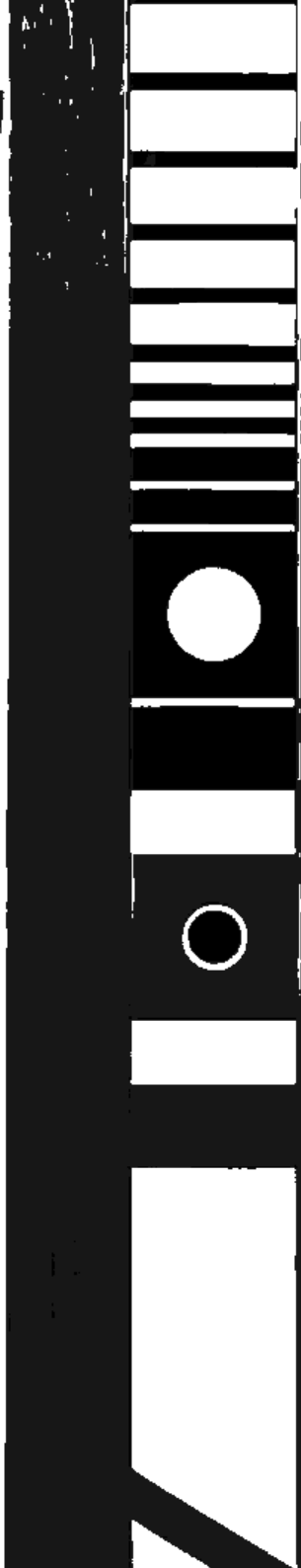
# Triennale di Milano

# The site



Cesare Beruto, 1884
Draft of the first version of the 1884 Master Plan

Cesare Beruto, 1884
Second variant

# The building
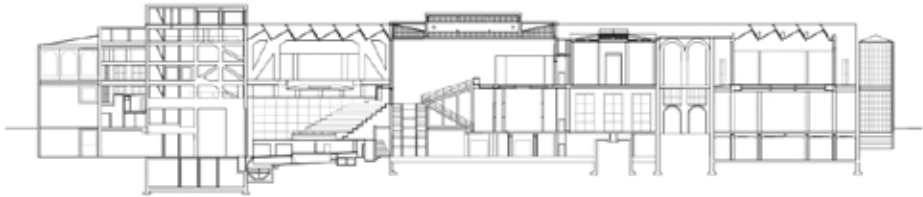
Longitudinal section
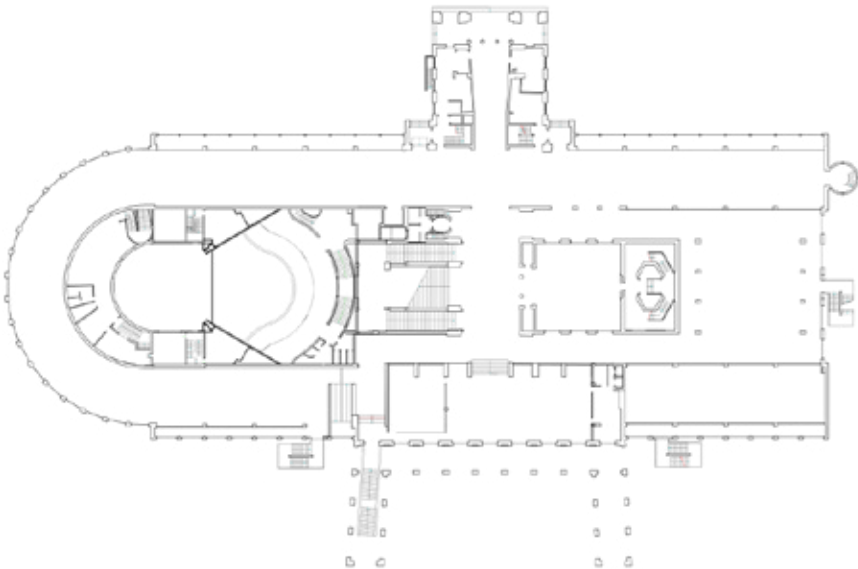
Ground floor plan

Cross-section

First floor plan

Giovanni Muzio, 1932/33
The Palazzo dell'Arte, current state
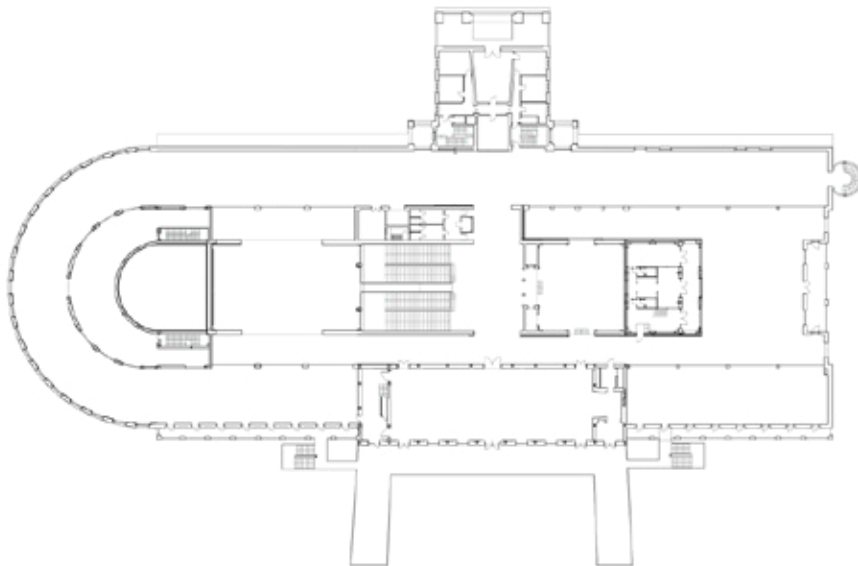
# MI.MA Milano Metropolitan Archive
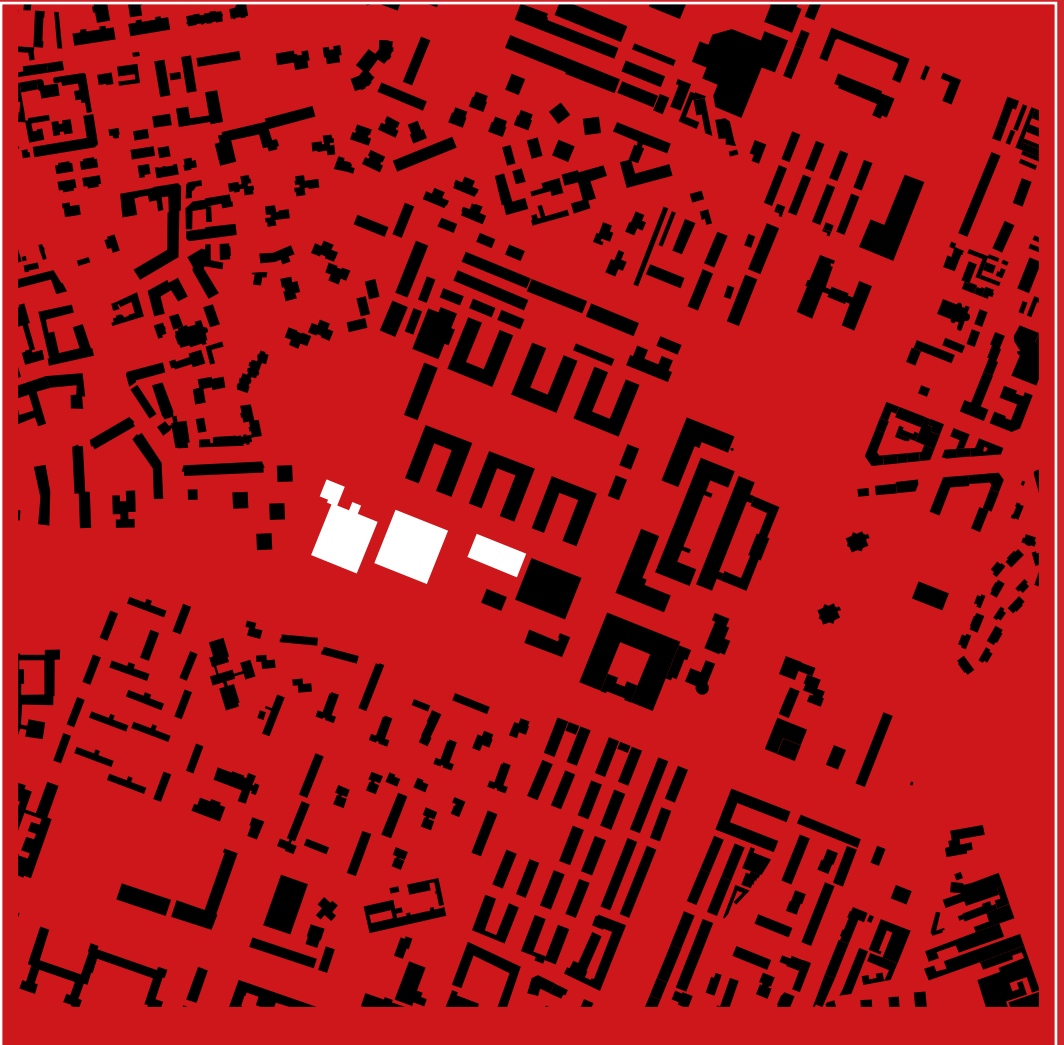
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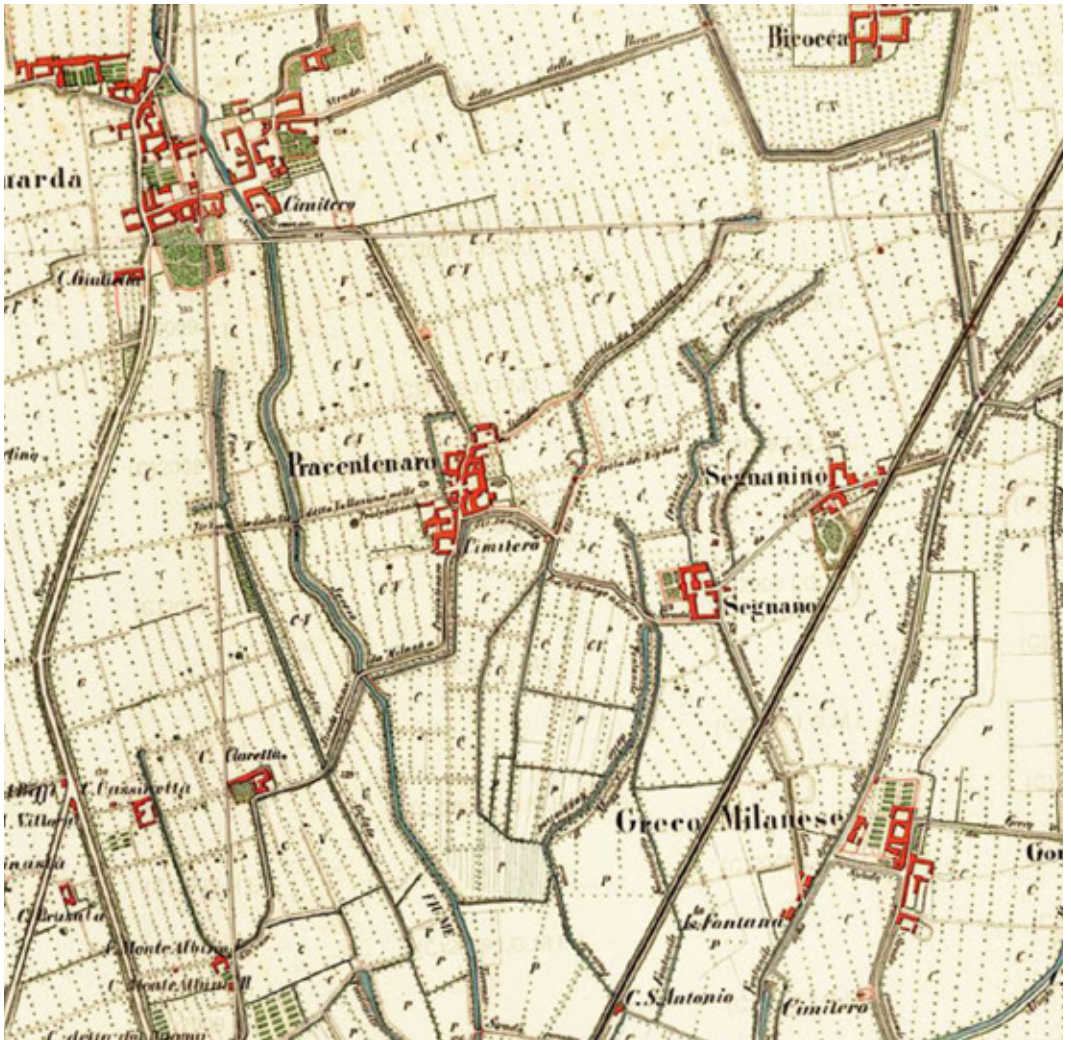


IGM, 1878 Carta manovra dei dintorni di Milano, Map of Milan, detail

CTC, 1956 Carta Tecnica Comunale di Milano, Map of Milan, detail
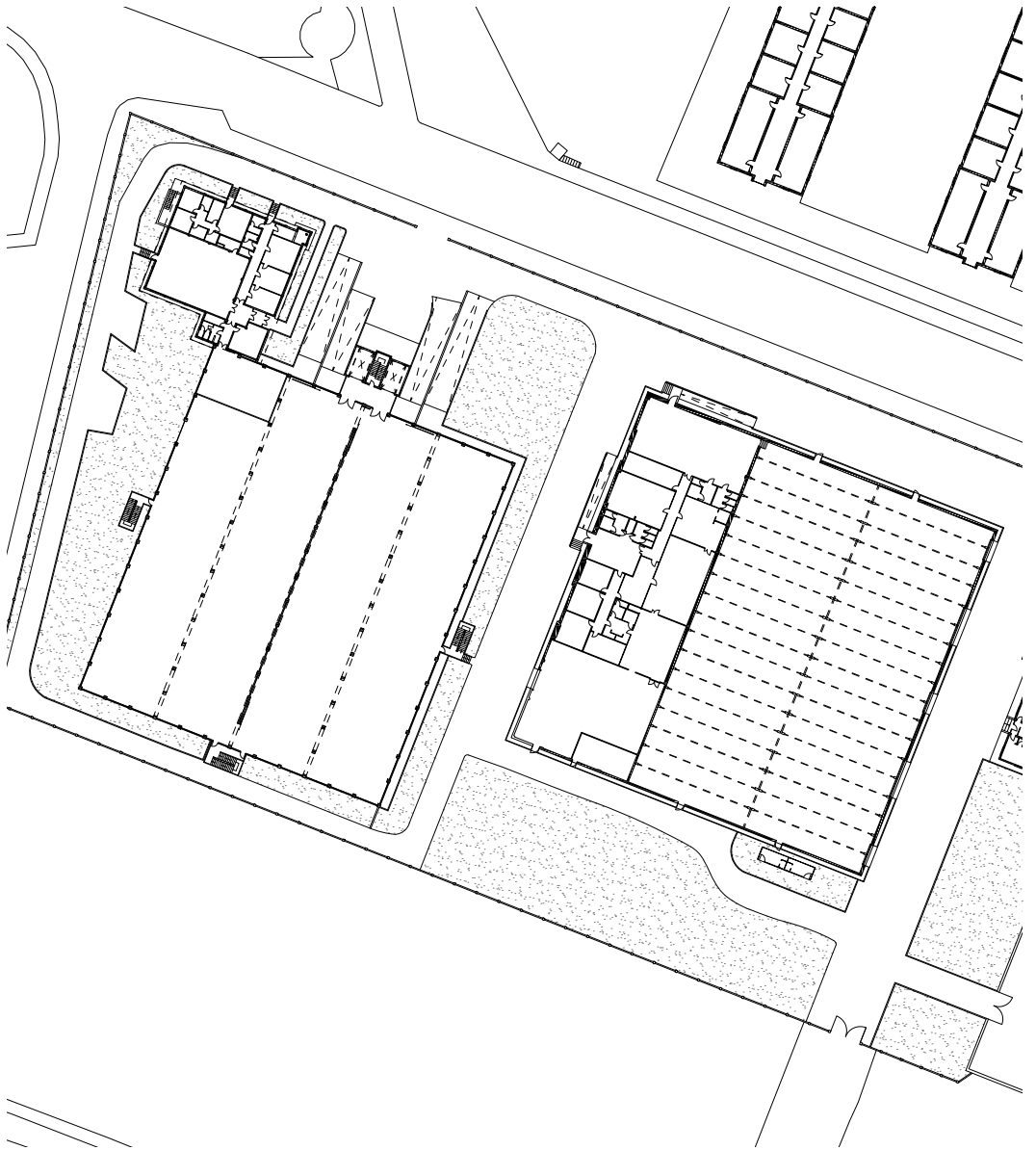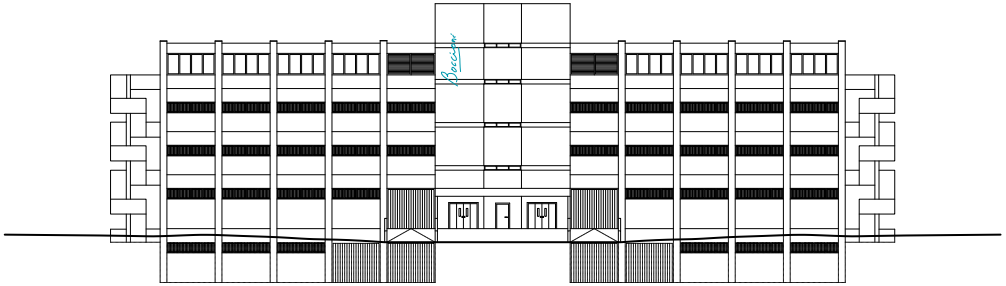
# The building

North elevation
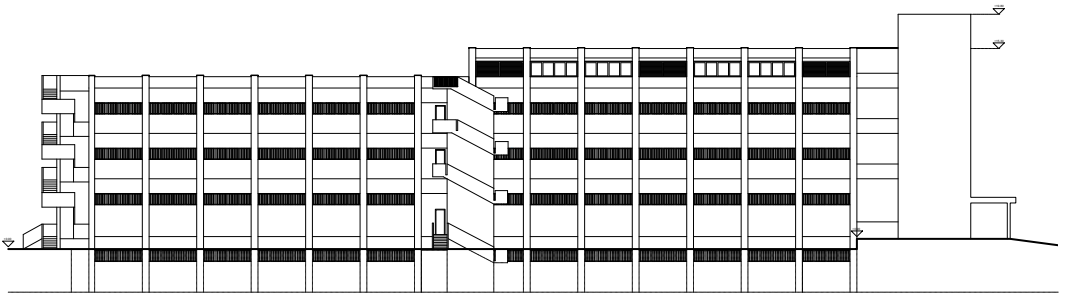


East elevation
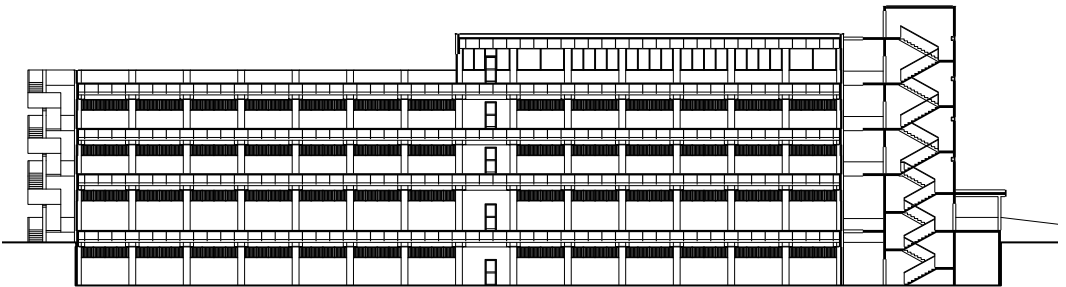


Longitudinal section
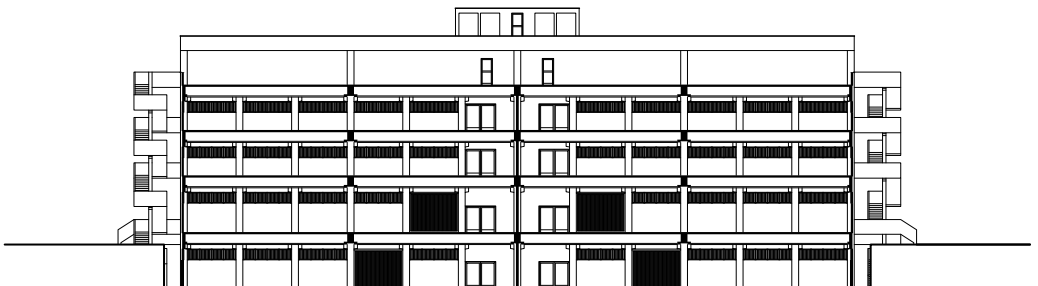


Section

# Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo

# The site

Carta Tecnica Comunale 1972

# The building

# E' nata la Republi

## Umberto partirà sabato dopo la consegna dei pote
## nuovo Stato - Volontà di cooperazione di tutti i p

## TREGUA NAZIONALE

## I RISULTATI DEL "REFEREND

# REPUBBLICA 12.182
# MONARCHIA 10.362

ROMA 5 Giugno.

Il servizio elettorale del Ministero degli Interni ha ricevuto finora dai prefetti, i risultati del referendum istituzionale, dall'che si riferiscono allo scrutinio di un 113 sezioni su un totale di 35.134.

Da ciò risulta che la Repubblica ha avuto una percentuale del 54.84 (rettamente, 12.182.855 voti) e la Monarchia del 45,96 (voti 10.362.709 voti), il distacco è di 1.820.146 voti.

Ecco i risultati:

**PIEMONTE** — Sezioni scrutinate 3472 su 3529: Repubblica 1.217.756; Monarchia 919.011.

**LIGURIA** — Sez. 1466 su 1470: Repubblica 632.313; Monarchia 264.160.

**LOMBARDIA** — Sezioni 4713 su 5241: Repubblica 1.975.906; Monarchia 1.145.758.

**VENEZIA TRIDENTINA** (esclusa Bolzano) — Sezioni 465 su 465: Republ. 191.450; Mon. 33.778.

**VENETO** — Sezioni 3511 su 3636: Repub. 1.346.562; Monarchia 923.008.

**EMILIA** — Sez. 2927 su 2928: Repubblica 1.506.838; Monarchia 454.589.

**TOSCANA** — Sez. 2781 su 2781: Repubblica 1.286.624; Monarchia 506.358.

**MARCHE** — Sezioni 1120 su
Monarchia 213.621.

**UMBRIA** — Sezioni 631 su 6
Monarchia 117.255.

**LAZIO** — Sezioni 1857 su 2
Monarchia 677.201.

**ABRUZZI e MOLISE** —
Repubblica 347.378; Monar

**CAMPANIA** — Sezioni 271
430.441; Monarchia 1.208.

**PUGLIE** — Sezioni 1841 su
'Monarc^' · 954.734.

**LUCANIA** — Sezioni 394 su
Monarchia 158.210.

**CALABRIA** — Sezioni 1906
332.404; Monarchia 505.4

**SICILIA** — Sezioni 2806 su
Monarchia 1.792.000.

**SARDEGNA** — Sezioni 844 s
Monarchia 313.040.

Mancano soltanto i risultati
47 della Campania, 51 della Calabr
Sardegna, 76 del Piemonte, pare
Lombardia.

## La grande giornata a

I risultati ufficiali del referendum comunicati da Romita · Un
Gasperi col Re   Riunioni di ministri e capi di partito al Vimi
Chigi · La proclamazione della Repubblica fissata per sabato

# Corriere della Sera

# The site
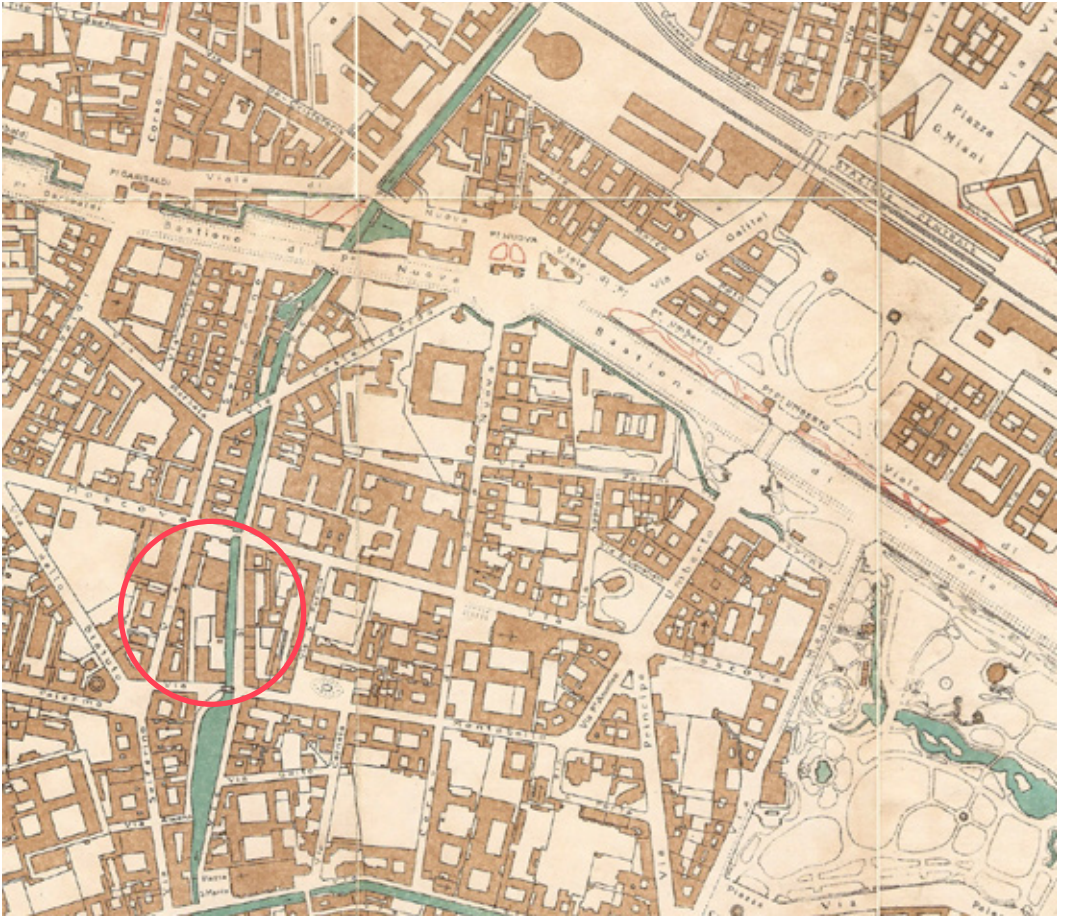


**Sacchi, 1906**
Città di Milano, Map of Milan, detail

**CTR, 1965**
Città di Milano, Map of Milan, detail
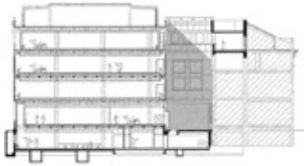
# The building



Section 1-1
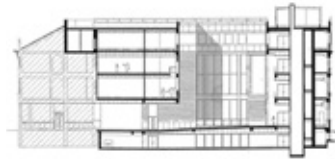


Section 2-2
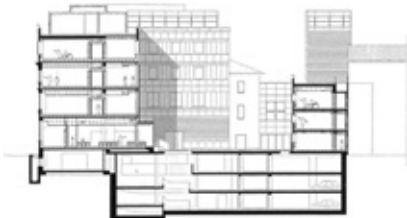


Section 3-3



Section 4-4



Ground floor plan | 2006

Prospetto su via San Marco
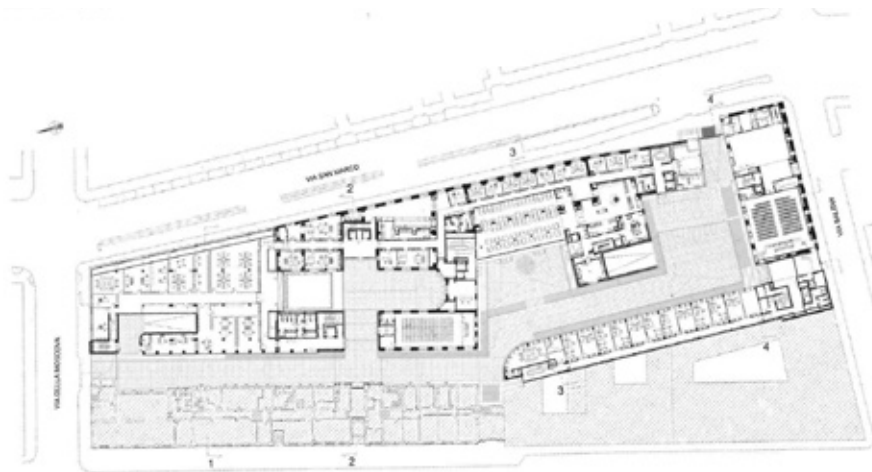
Elevation | via San Marco



Sezione e prospetto interno degli edifici di via San Marco
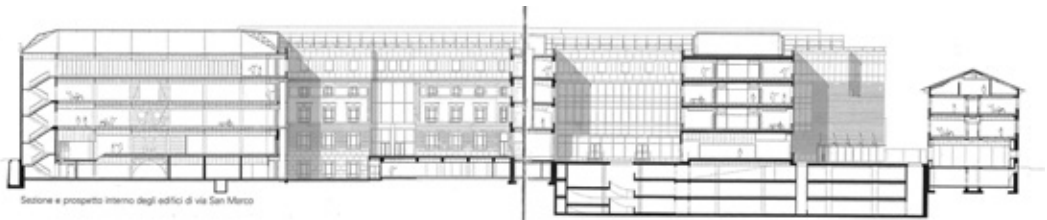
Section | Interior elevation of the buildings in Via San Marco
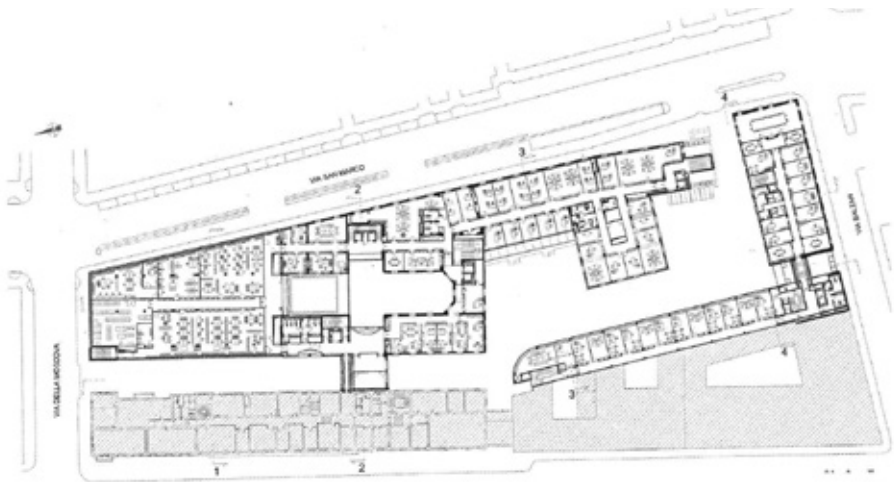


Floor plan | 2006

# 04. WORKSHOPS

# WS.A
# Paolo
# Cascone

# WS.A

## Paolo Cascone

**Tutor: Houssam Mahi**

Participants

Jamali Mohammadamin
Cadoni Chiara
Cassis Margherita
Cichy Aleksandra
Agarwal Kanika
Alptekin Sevval
Bayrak Hilal
Bulbul Busra
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Sanchez Pinela Jhower Emanuel
Tselishcheva Iuliia

# PRODCUTIVE ARCHIVES

Working on the archive of Palazzo Morando is a tremendous opportunity to be confronted with the history of fashion industry of Milan. If the collection of the museum is showing the very strong legacy with the city and its network of artisans and manufacturers, the position of the building inside of the quadrilatero della moda emphasizes its strategic role in evolving the so-called luxury industry. For the above-mentioned reasons, we have investigated on the John Cage's notion of "living archive" as a knowledge platform, this with the aim to hack the existing site according to the need for additional space and for making the whole collection more accessible to the public. At the same time, beyond the fetishist culture of the object, the archive becomes an urban device conceived as a space of production surpassing its frozen role of storage and exhibition space. Therefore, such living infrastructure is designed as a hybrid architectural typology to generate new critical knowledge: learning from the histories of the different production chains according to the material systems, the traditional techniques and the people involved in the fabrication process.

The result of such investigation has generated three possible complementary solutions based on a multi programmatic agenda alternating manufacturing laboratories, exhibition spaces and catwalks for fashion shows. Such three approaches are sharing similar principles in connecting the palazzo Morando with the surrounding and colonizing available slots: from the underground to the network of interstitial courtyards and roofs of the existing buildings. The projects explore different tectonics based on the notion of scalability and incrementality generating open systems able to respond to the possible future expansion of the museum archive over time. The architectural proposals deal with the question of performative envelopes and flexible spaces able to respond to the different climatic conditions and ergonomic requirements.

The Productive Archives project aims to contribute to the debate on the new cultural role of museums as well as the consequences of the deindustrialisation process and the growing luxury culture in our society.

AXONOMETRIC PLANS

Group 1. HYPOGEUM GROUP | Masterplan

Group 1. HYPOGEUM GROUP | Views and section

Group 1. HYPOGEUM GROUP | study of light

Group 1. HYPOGEUM GROUP | Perspective cutaway

Group 2. VERTICAL GROUP | Concept
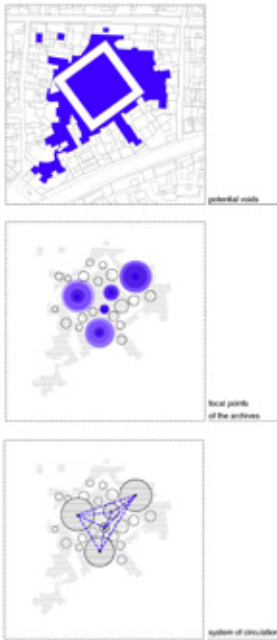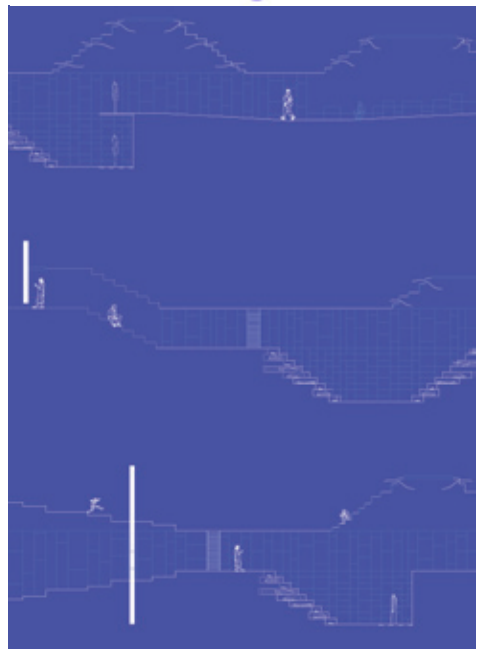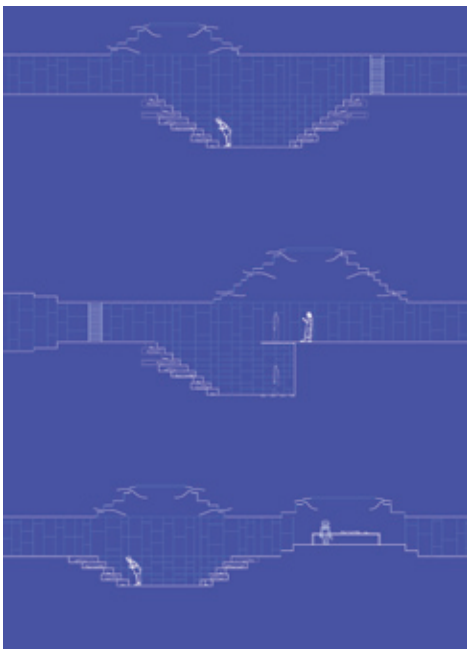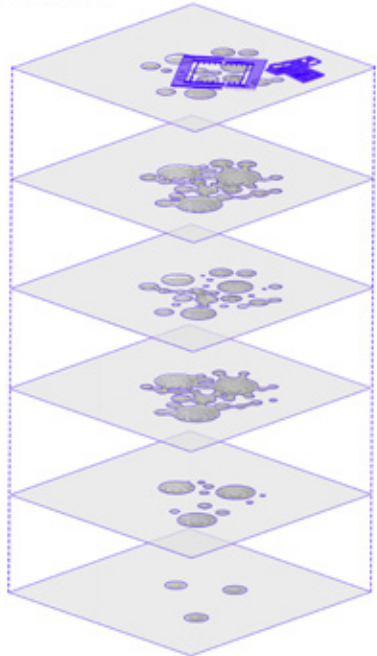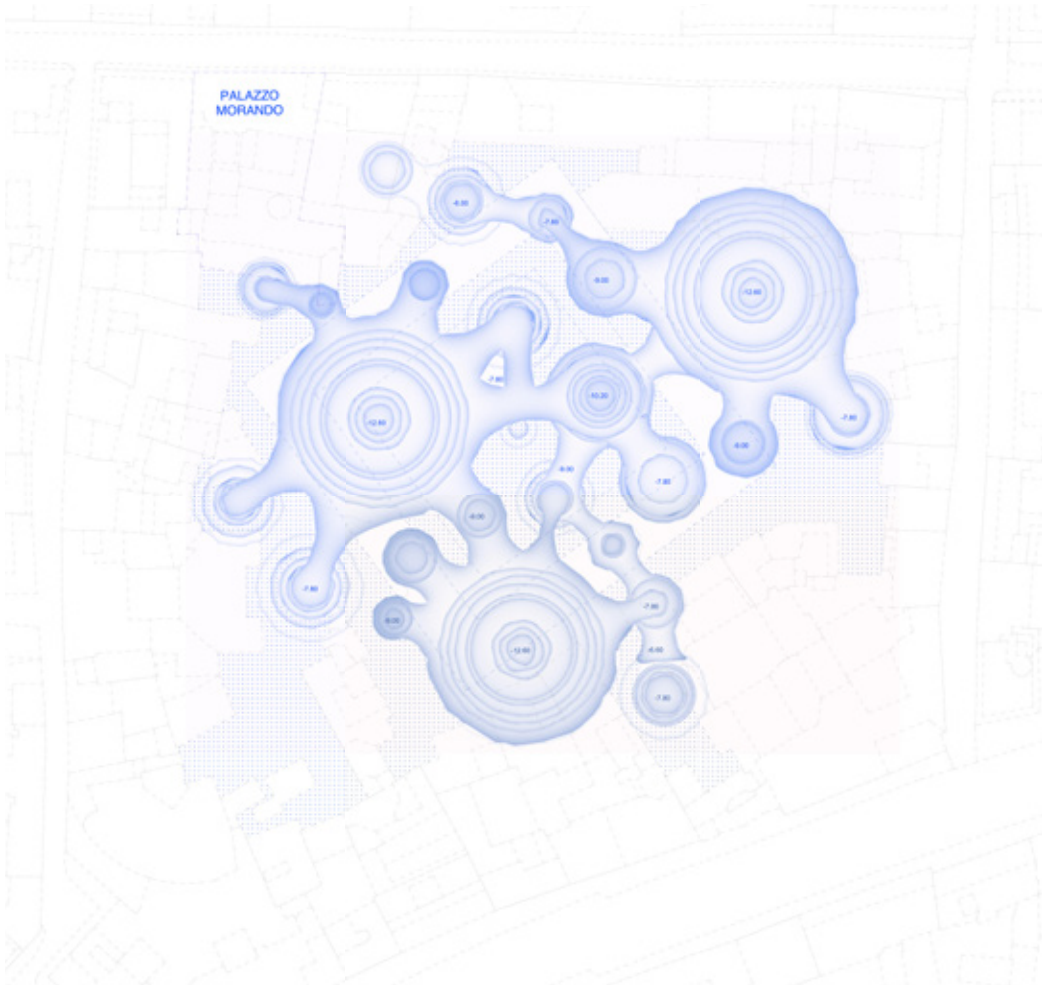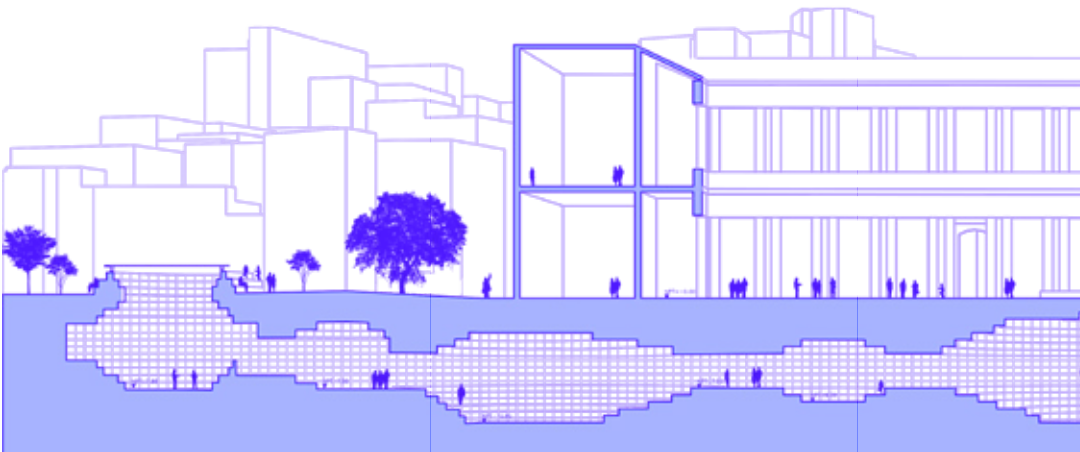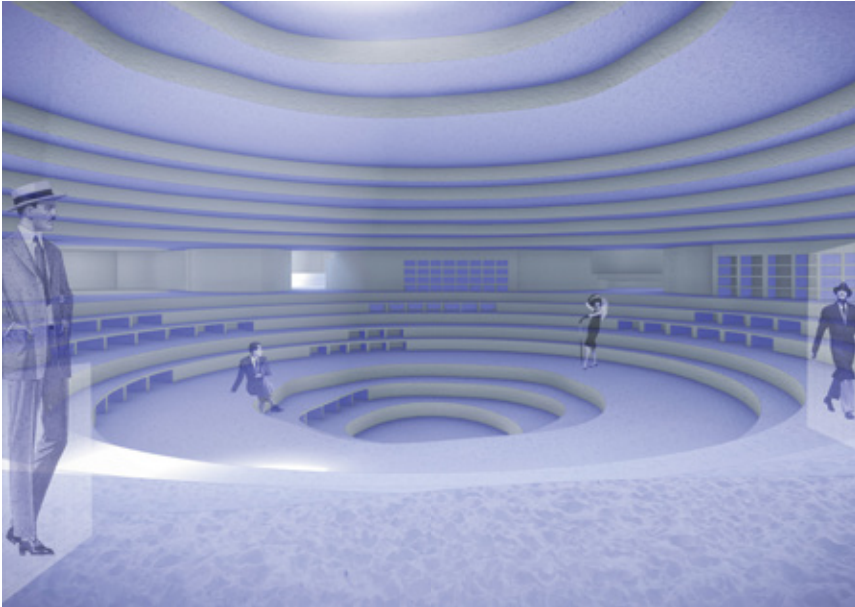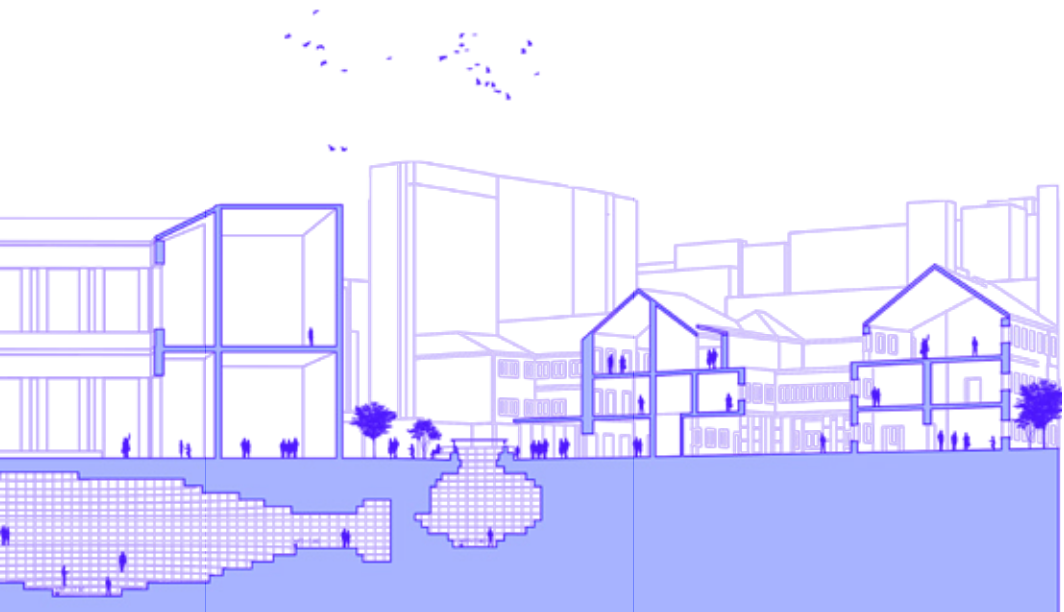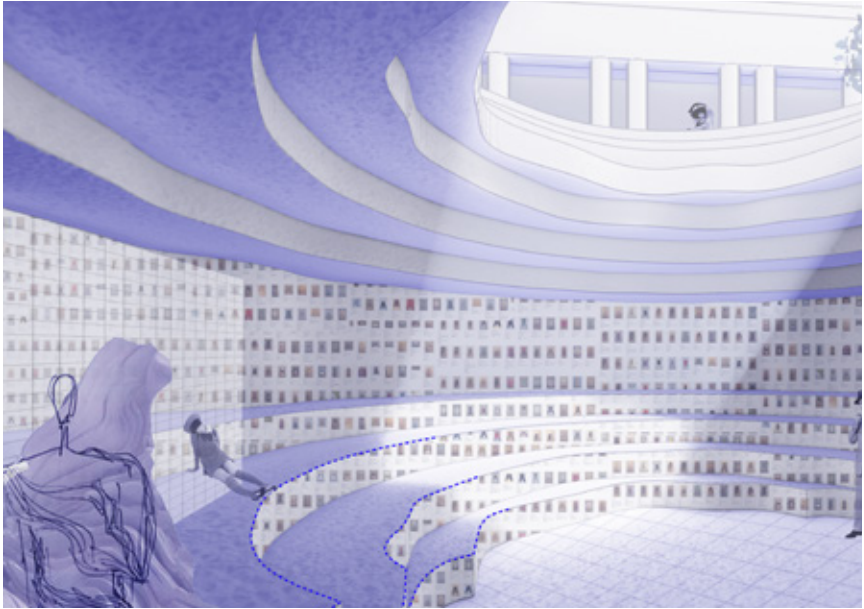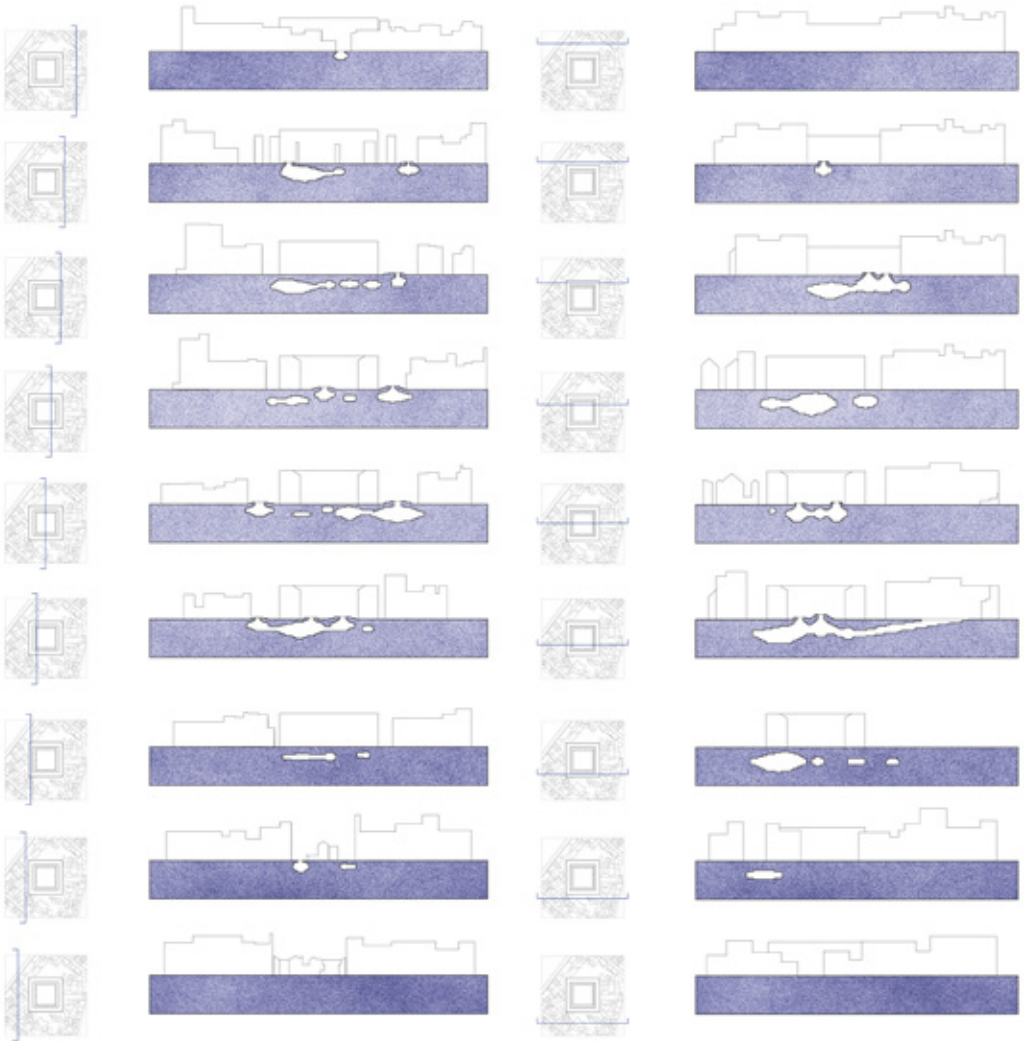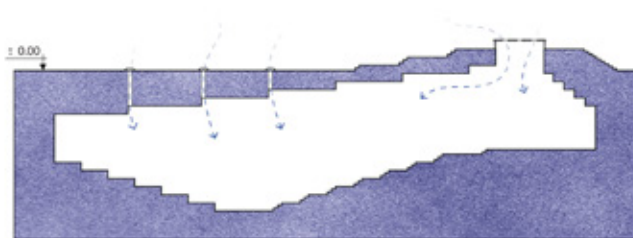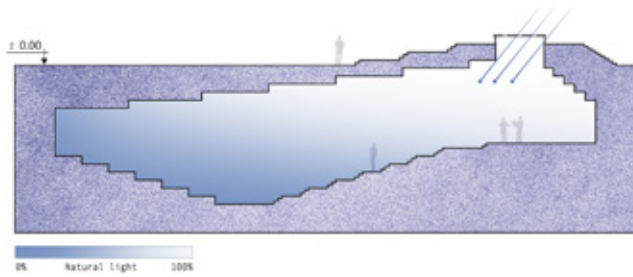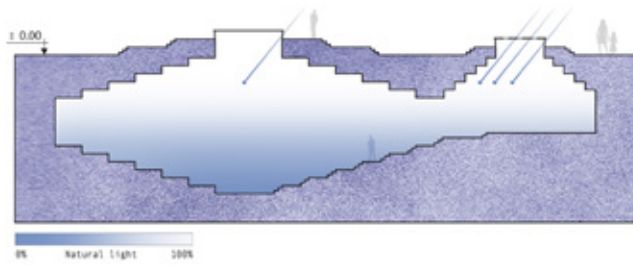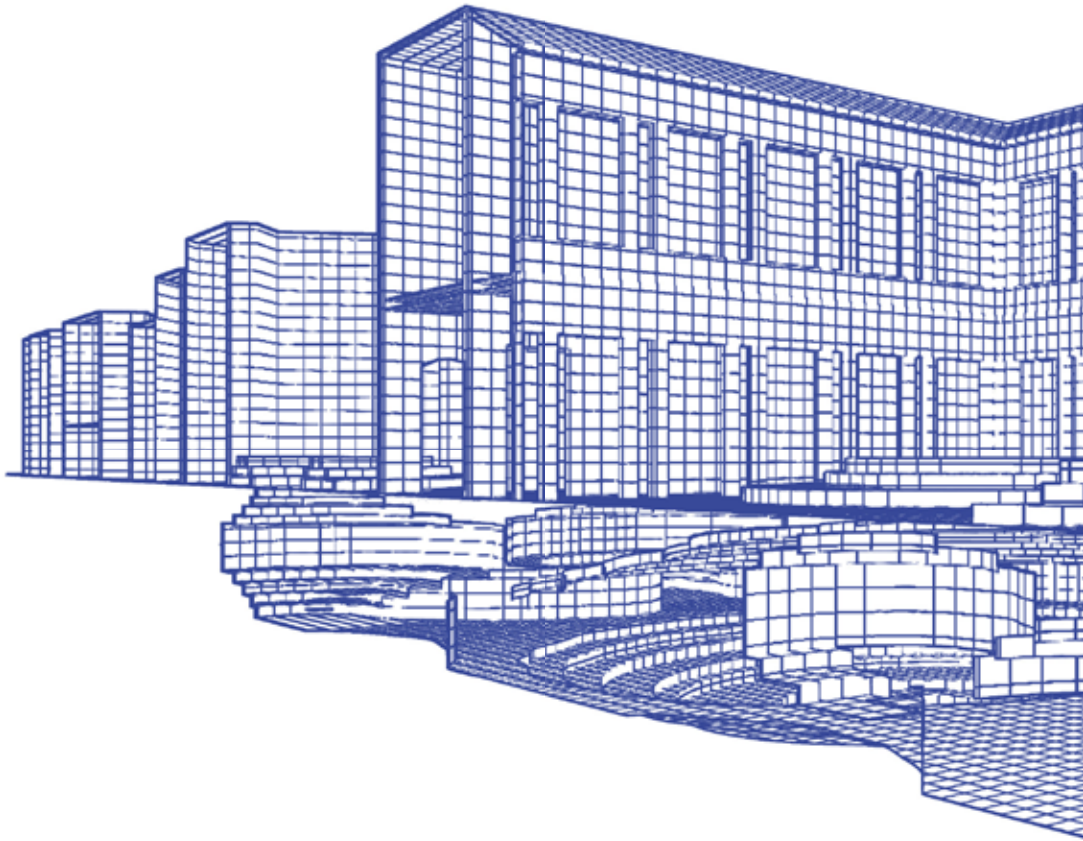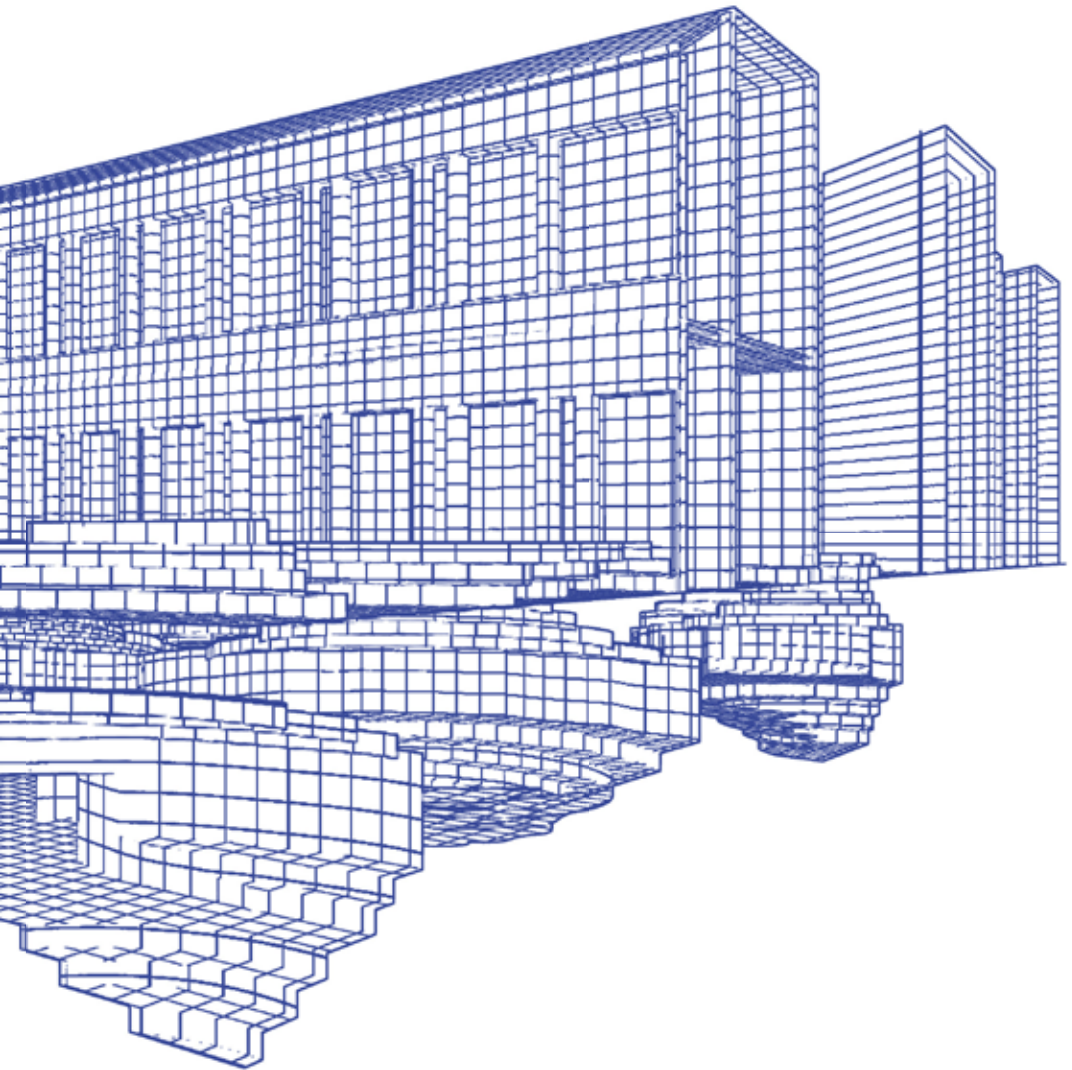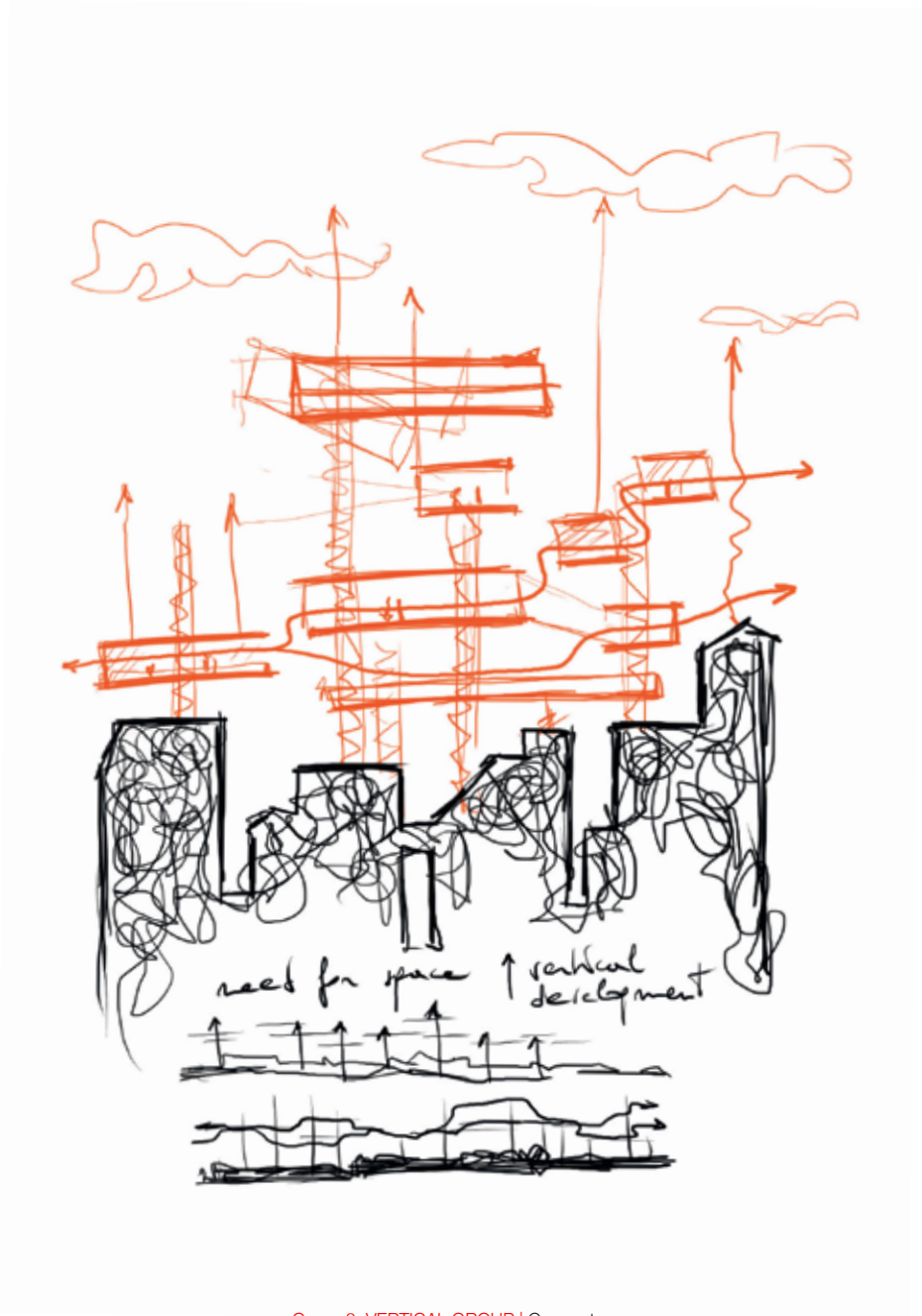
URBAN FABRIC



ACCESSIBILITY



Group 2. VERTICAL GROUP | Plan

Palazzo Morando
Grid
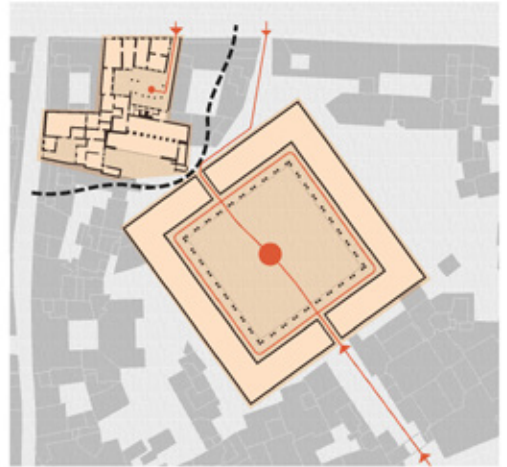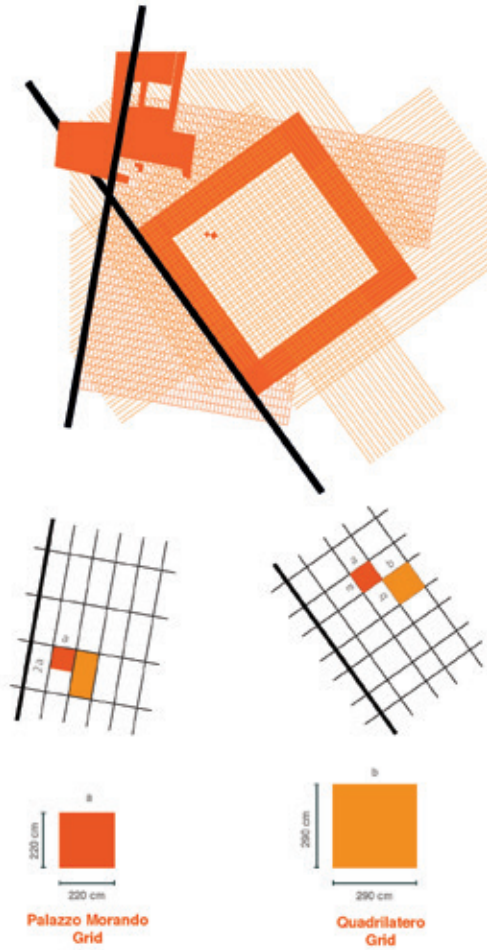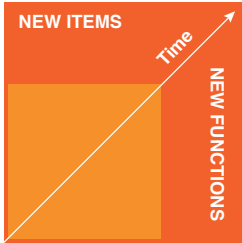
Quadrilatero
Grid

**PROJECT INCREMENTATION**
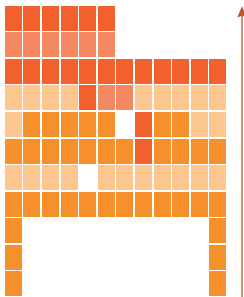


**VERTICAL GROWTH**
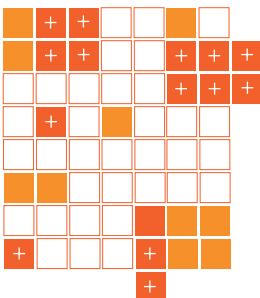


**DENSIFICATION**

**FASHION WEEK _ FEBRUARY 19-25**
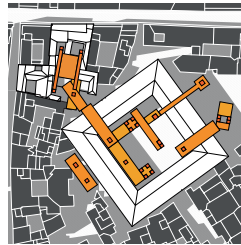


PROGRAM :

- RUNWAY SHOWS
- EXHIBITIONS
- FASHION WORKSHOPS

LAYOUT :

- LIBRARY ←→ QUADRILATERO
- ARCHIVE ←→ QUADRILATERO

**DESIGN WEEK _ APRIL 8-14**
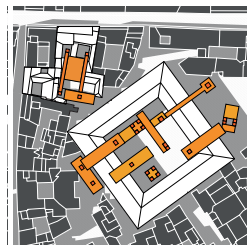


PROGRAM :

- EXHIBITIONS
- MOVIES
- LECTURES
- DESIGN WORKSHOPS

LAYOUT :

- LIBRARY ←→ QUADRILATERO
- ARCHIVE →— QUADRILATERO

**FOOD WEEK _ MAY 20-26**



PROGRAM :

- FOOD BASED EVENTS
- MOVIES
- LECTURES
- COOKING WORKSHOPS

LAYOUT :

- SQUARE SHAPED (COURT)
- LIBRARY —→ QUADRILATERO
- ARCHIVE —→ QUADRILATERO

**FASHION WEEK _ SEPTEMBER 9-15**



PROGRAM :

- EXHIBITIONS
- MOVIES
- LECTURES
- DESIGN WORKSHOPS

LAYOUT :

- SHADOWED COURTYARD
- LIBRARY —→ QUADRILATERO
- ARCHIVE ←→ QUADRILATERO

Group 2. VERTICAL GROUP | Diagrams and study designs
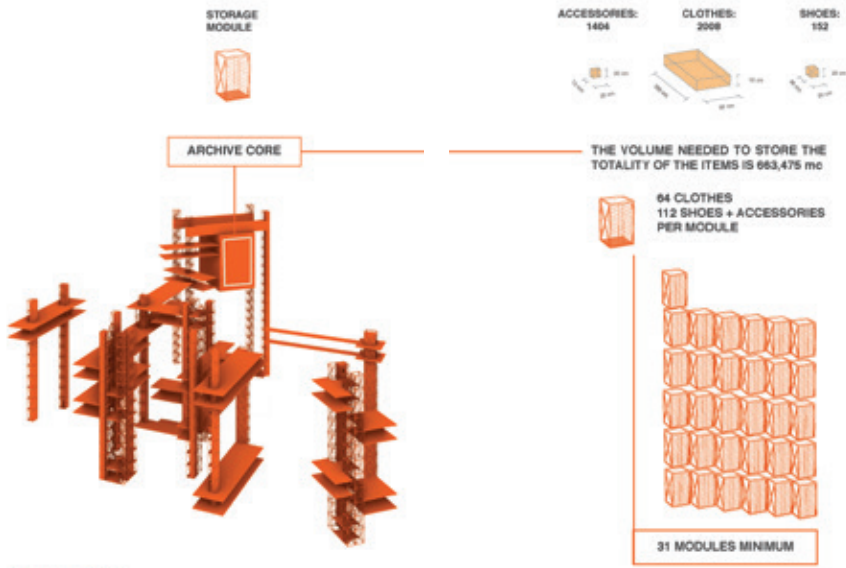
ARCHIVE SYSTEM



Group 2. VERTICAL GROUP | Archive system ad section of space

Group 2. VERTICAL GROUP | Bird's eye view

Group 2. VERTICAL GROUP | Perspective section
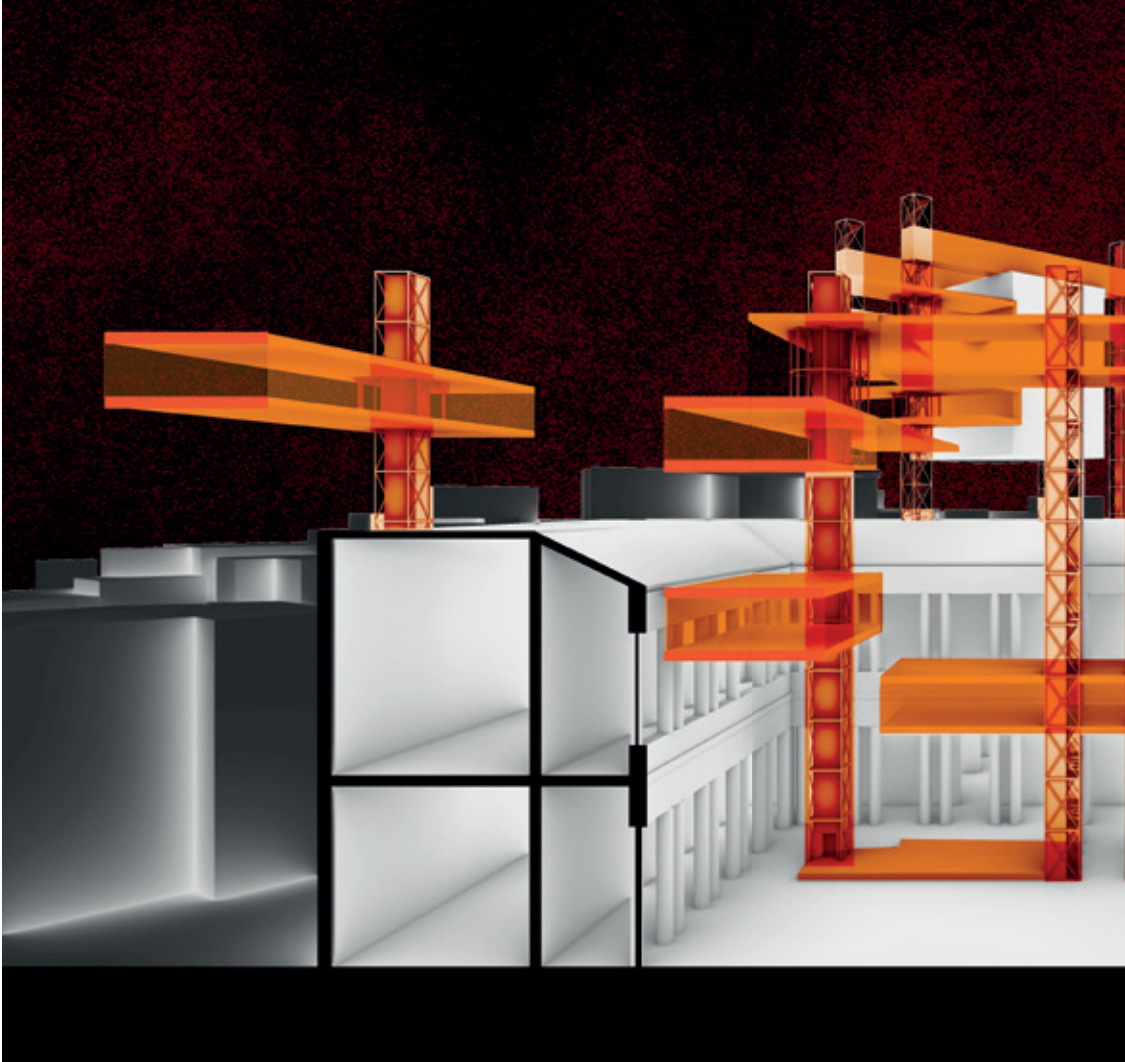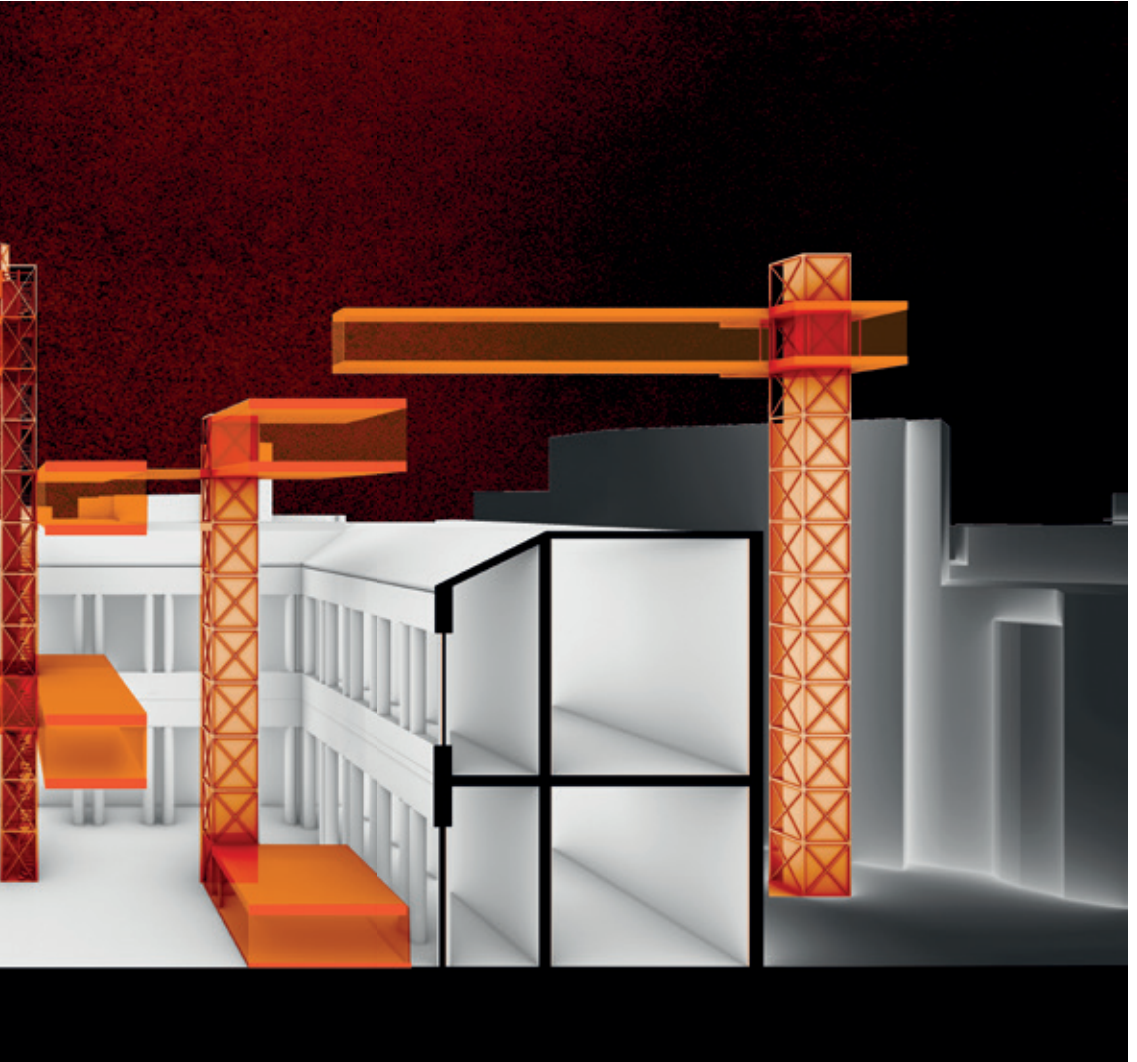
Group 3. CELLULAR GROUP| Axonometric view
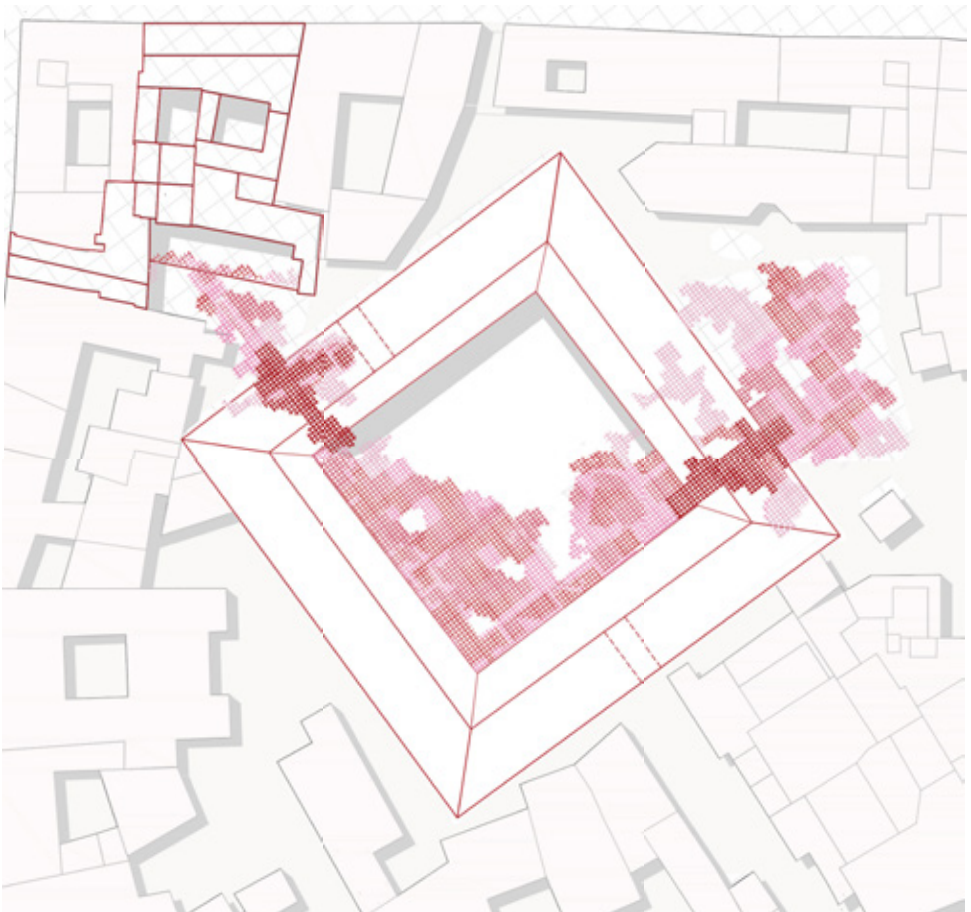
**CORE PARTS**

**FLEXIBLE PART**

**EXTERNAL CIRCULATION**

**INTERNAL CIRCULATION**

Group 3. CELLULAR GROUP| Functional plans

Group 3. CELLULAR GROUP| Concept and project phase studies

SECTION B-B

DISPLAY

STORAGE

DISPLAY

DISPLAY

STORAGE
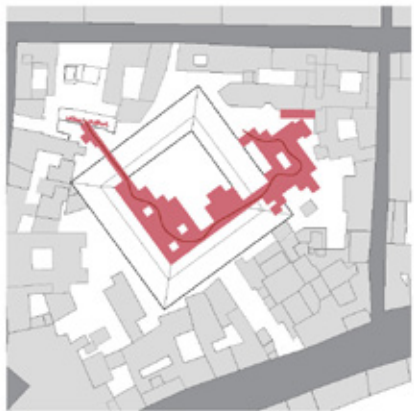
DISPLAY

Group 3. CELLULAR GROUP| Section
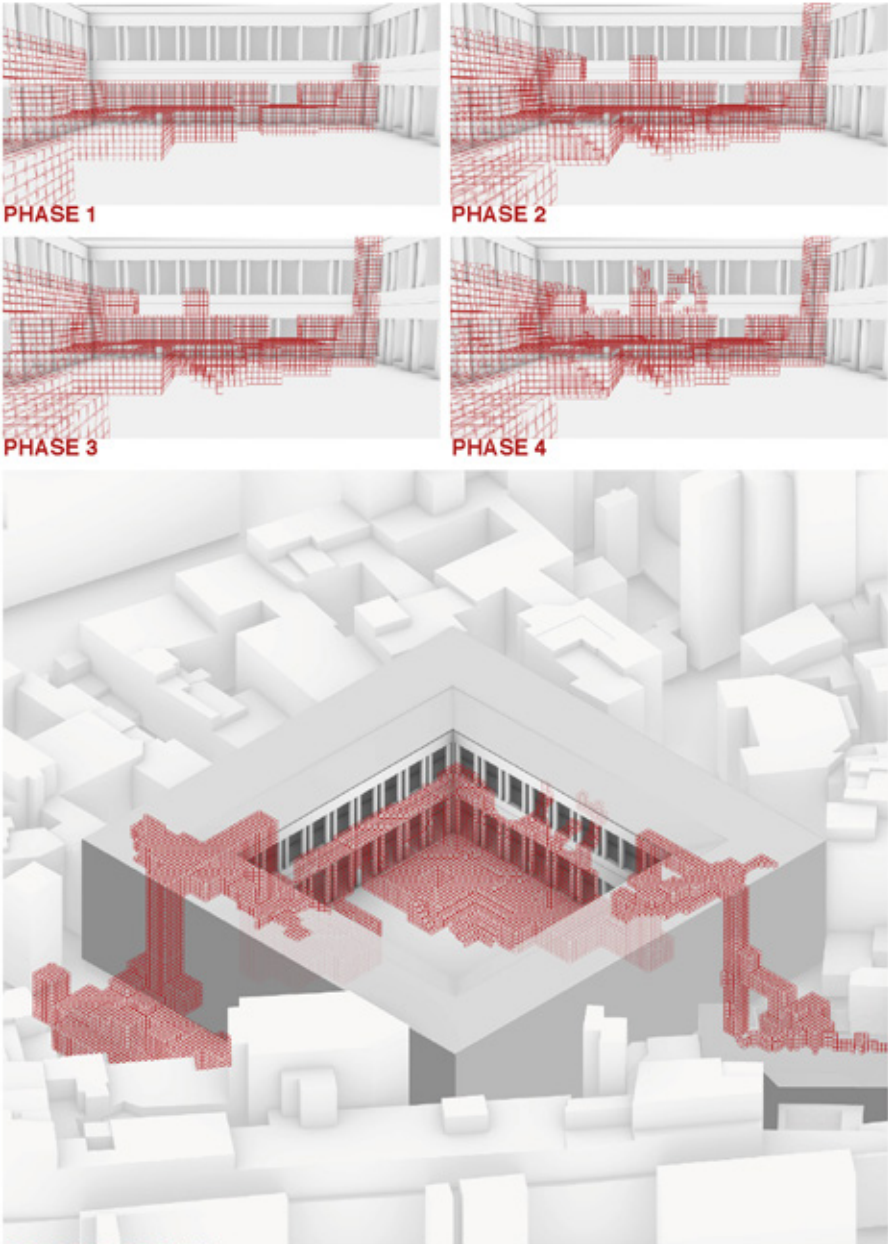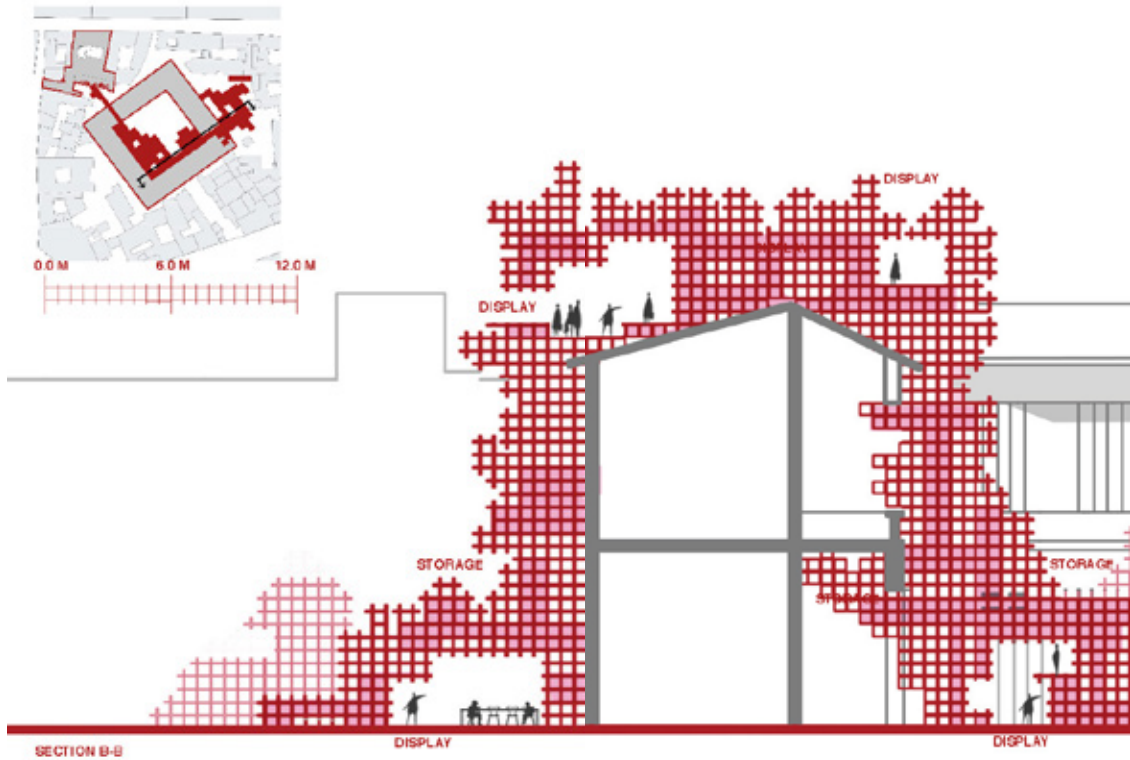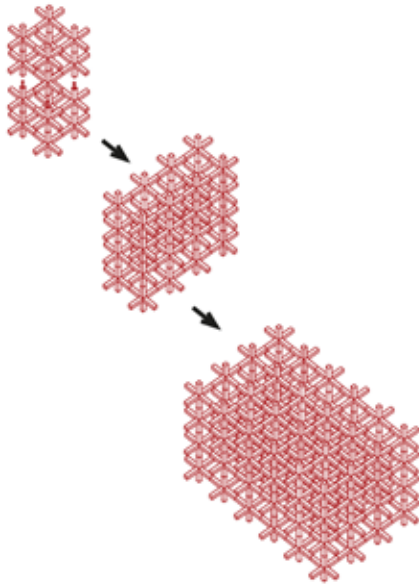
CELLULAR INCREMENTATION

SINGLE CELL 60X60X60 CM

CELLULAR CONNECTIVITY

RESEARCH

DISPLAY

WORKSHOP

Group 3. CELLULAR GROUP| Studies of the cellular system
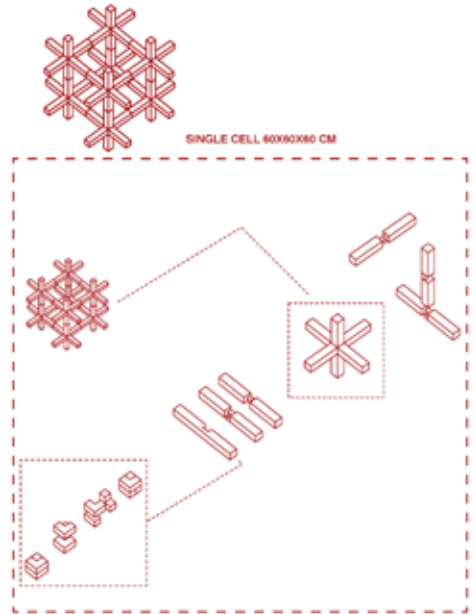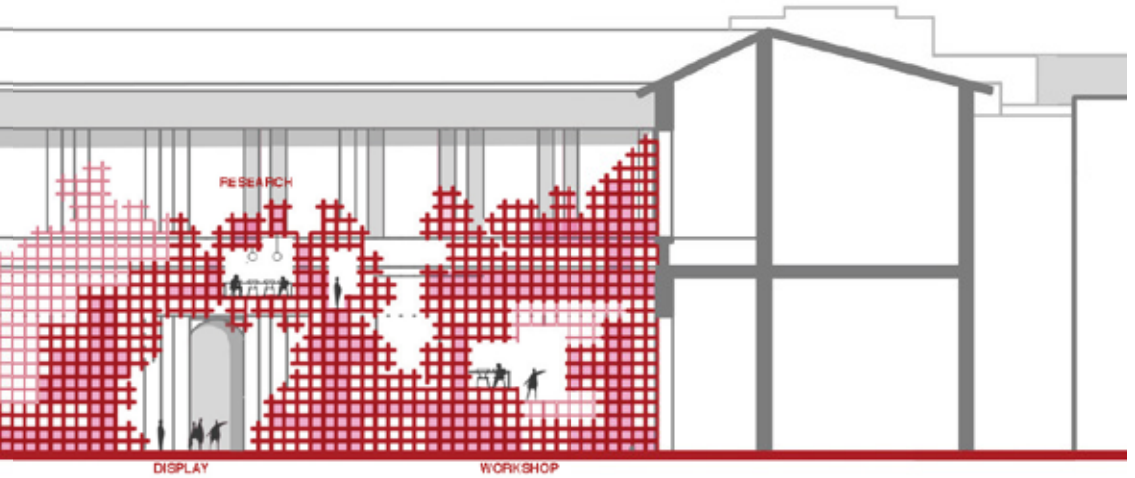
WS.B
Antje
Freiesleben

# WS.B

## Antje Freiesleben

Tutor: Francesco Martinazzo

Participants

Abdi Iyad Idris
Abouelezz Janna Hani Mohamed
Amiri Sarina
Bonatti Elisa
Bordigoni Cristian
Brkovic Isidora
Dedic Lara
Fiorini Francesco
Guo Xueyuan
Hamzaj Bytyci Riola
Mahmoudi Shaghayegh

Mantica Caterina
Min Jae Hee
Mirkovic Kristina
Morelli Leonardo
Onofrei Serghei
Ramirez Rugel Eimy Nicole
Sharma Harshika
Tschechne Albert Martin
Valenti Alessia

# COLLETTIVO ARCHIVIO

An archive for the Triennale, perhaps 6.000 sqm in size.
That is our task.
The house is big, famous, listed.
It has been converted several times and has suffered badly.

We decide:
No further additions should be made to the house: not underground,
not on the roof, not in the garden; all these solutions will bring more
problems than they solve.

We study the surroundings:
Parco Sempione is beautiful and every tree worth preserving.
Torre Branca to the west, Castello Sforzesco to the east, both
exemplary archetypes.
In front of the entrance: a large green island, a T-shaped traffic junction.
The stem of the T is the major axis, leading south-west across a bridge
into the Quartiere Conciliazone.
And very close to the bridge, a tower stands out, Torre Magistretti, living
with a view - another archetype in our collection.

Now we have arrived at the bridge, centrally aligned with the Triennale:
Its span is at least 60m and is almost 30m wide. Below it, the tracks for
trains that end or start at the Gae Aulenti terminus, Stazione Cadorna.
Isn't this the right place to act?
We can use the bridge, its proximity to the museum and its good
infrastructure. The collected things can be brought by train or truck,
collaborators can come on foot, by metro or by bike, it seems to us an
ideal place.

Together we are developing different typologies in different places.
At the same time, to launch this comprehensive research project, we
also listed alternatives. These are catalogued and spread around the
exhibition.

So, on the one hand, we are creating new spaces- ARCHITECTURES-
that offer the archive additional performance spaces and, on the other
hand, we are
creating an ARCHIVE OF PLACES.

And then we dedicated ourselves to another task:
We walked through the city with open eyes, or simply around the
Politecnico grounds. We found elements of Architecture that were
forgotten, thrown away or just left behind.
We want to bring them back to life, reuse them, incorporate them
into our archive, step by step, just like in former times - and thus
generate an ARCHIVE OF ELEMENTS – to be used for an ARCHIVE OF
OBJECTS.

We were working on groups and all together.
We understand our contribution as a collective input.
And:
We did not buy any Materials, all Models are all done by reusing
Materials, leftovers from others.

Group 1. Archive of Places | Collage of postcards from the places archive

Group 2. The Big House_on the bridge | Masterplan and urban section

Group 2. The Big House_on the bridge | Building sections and model

Group 3. The Circle | Scheme and model
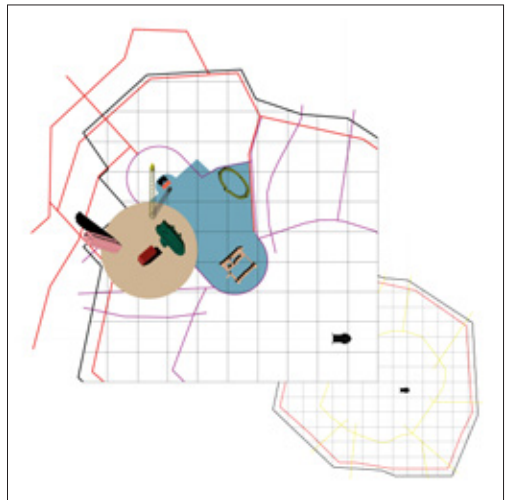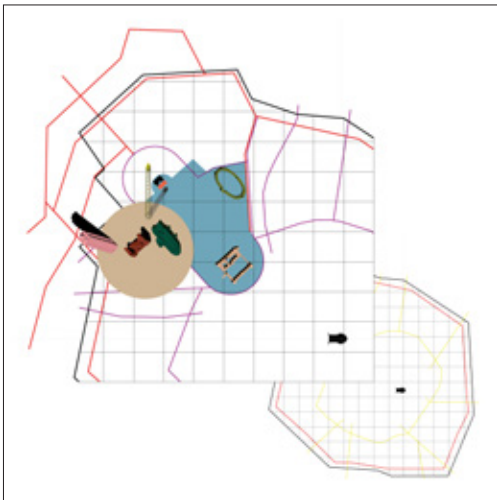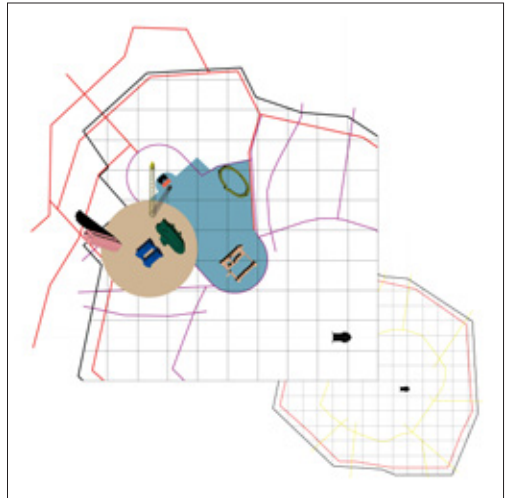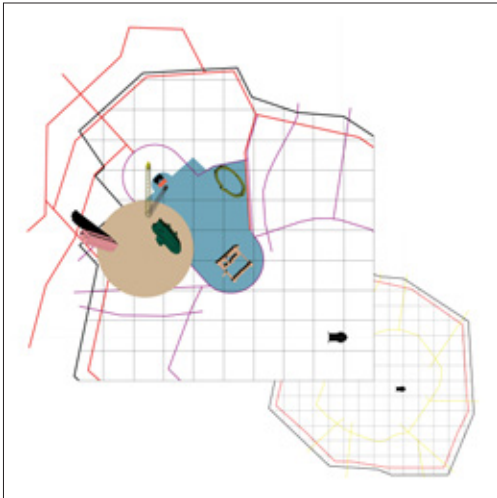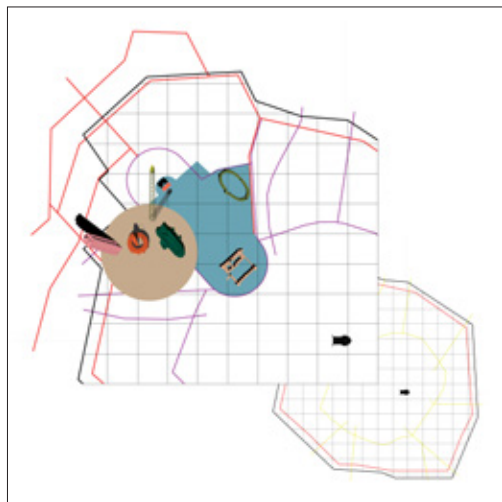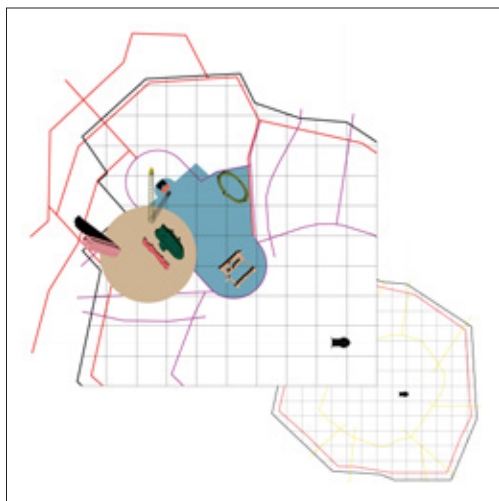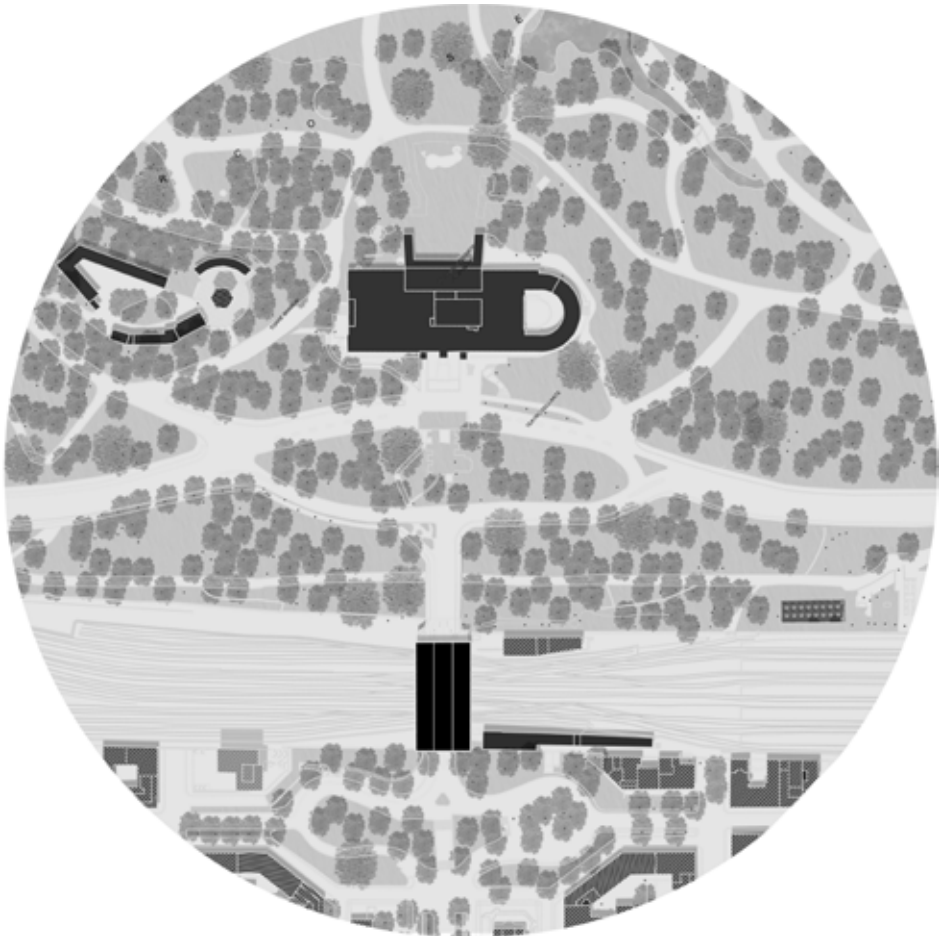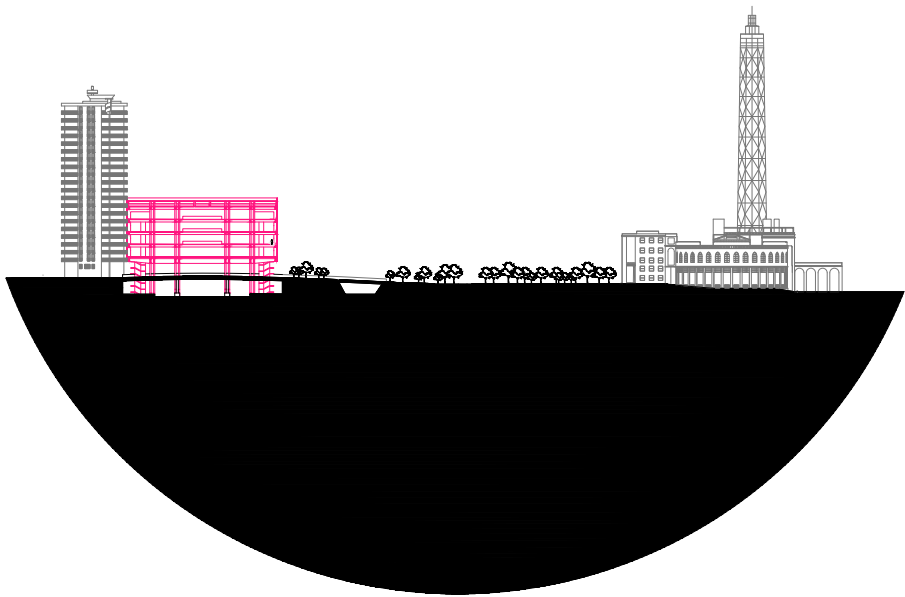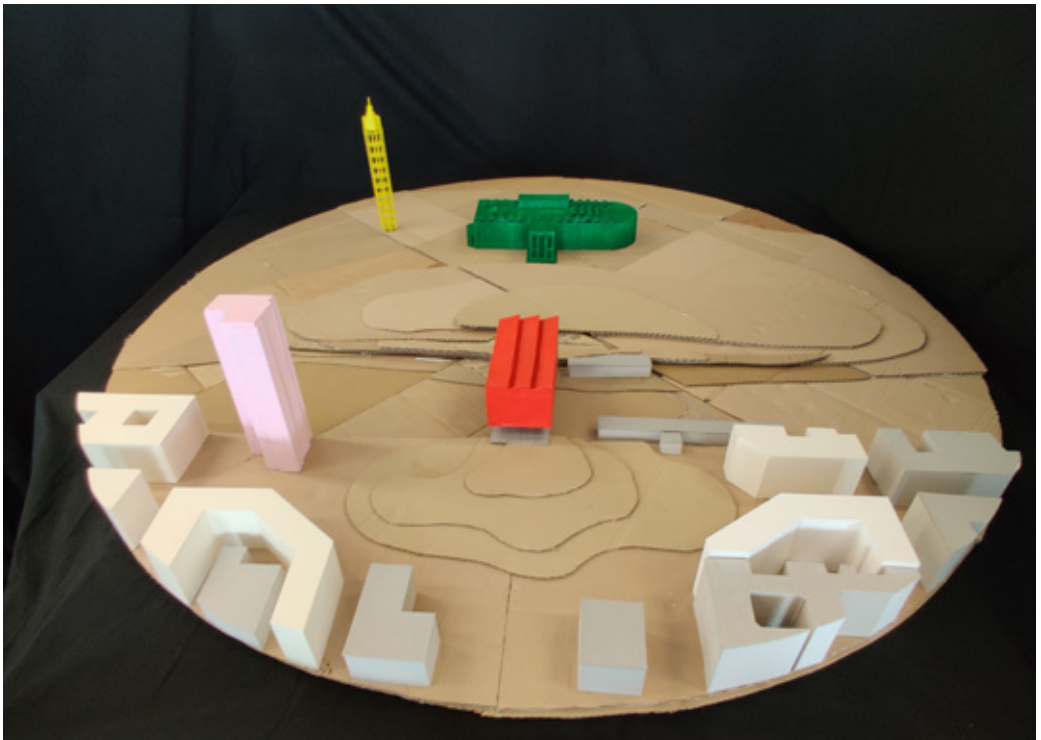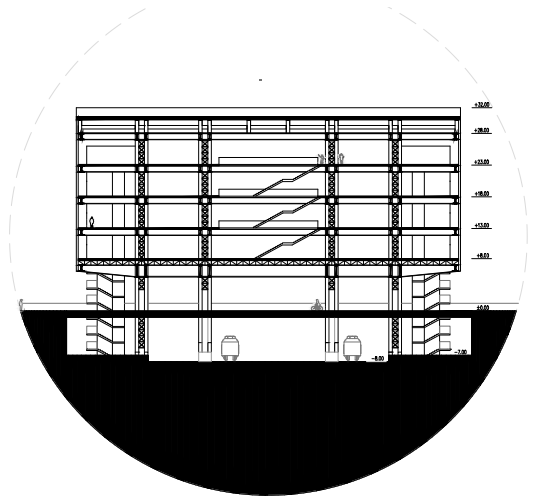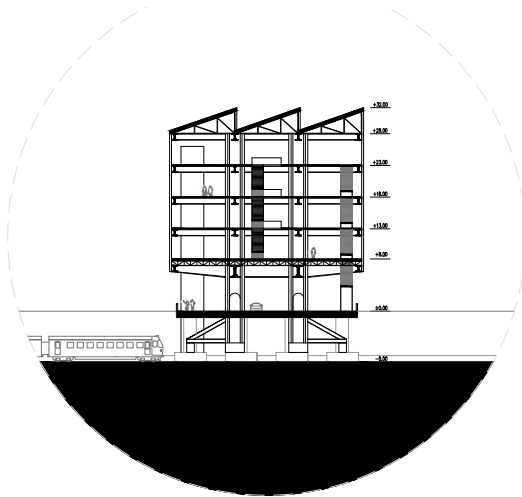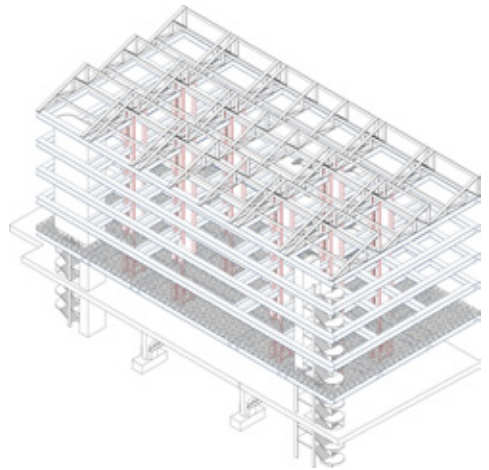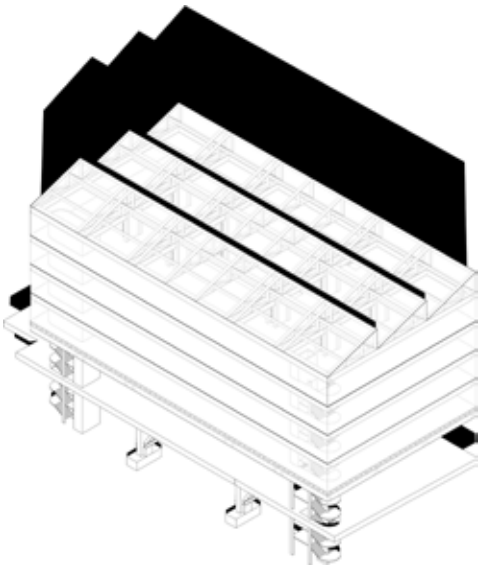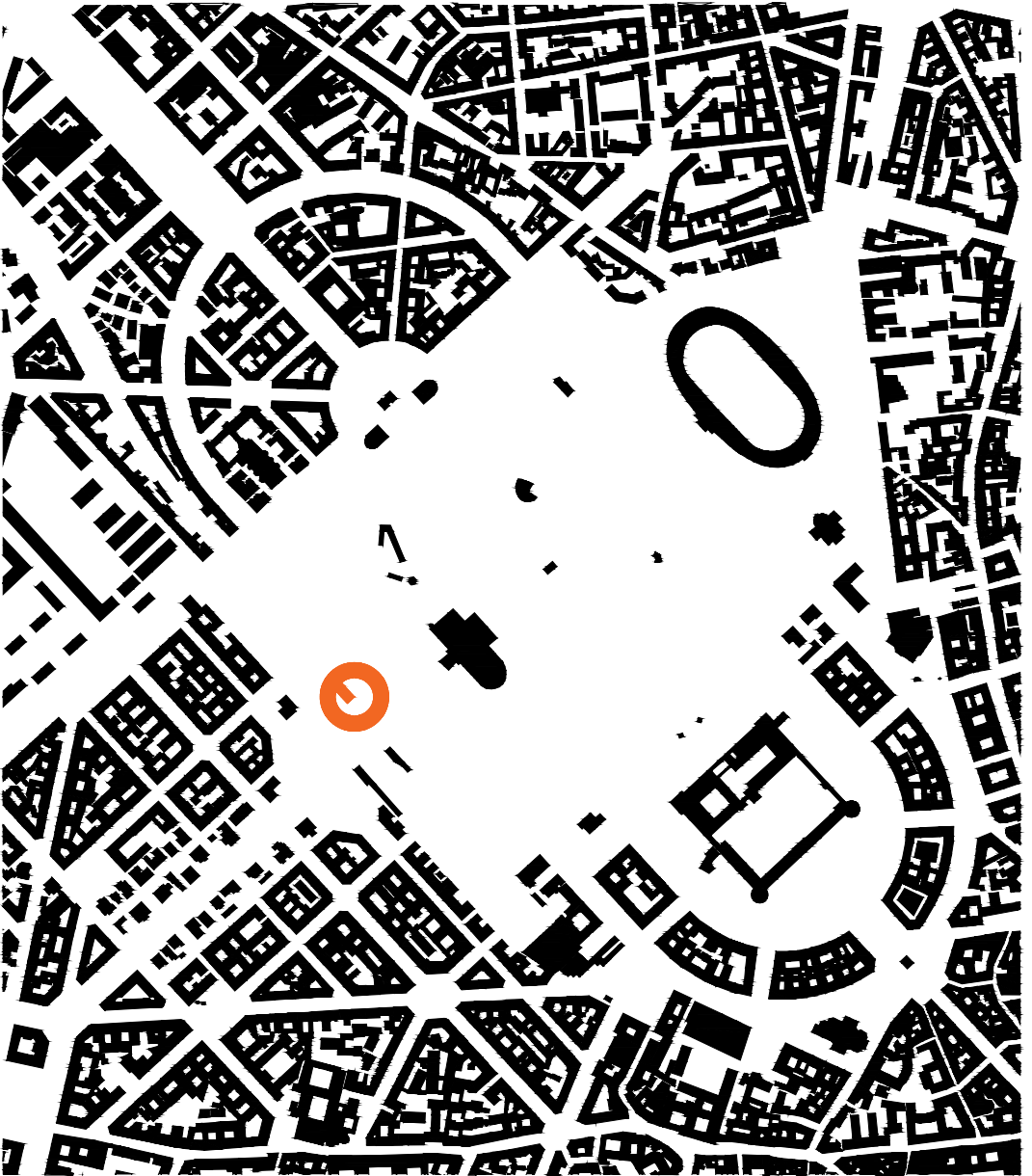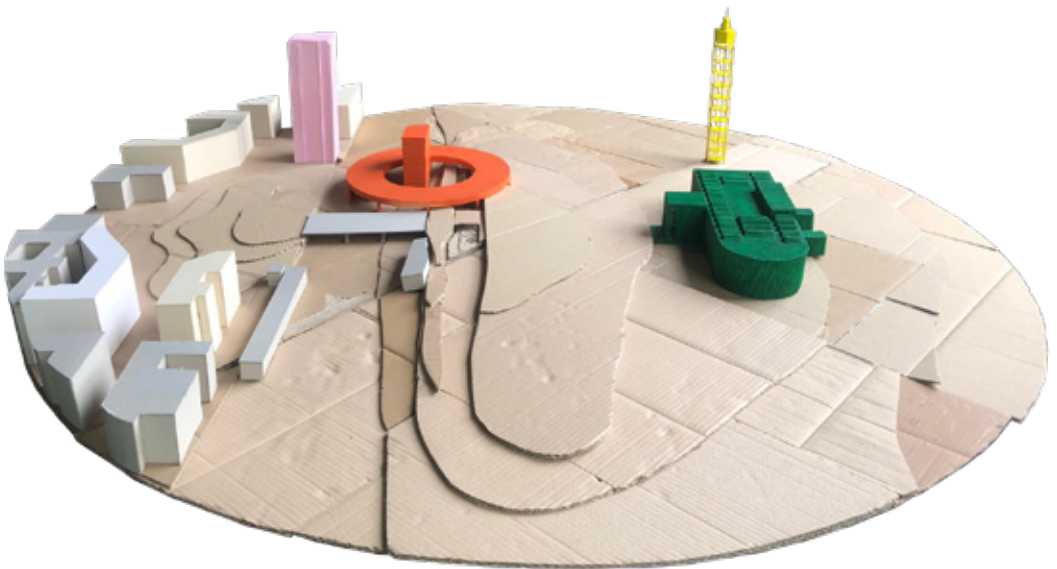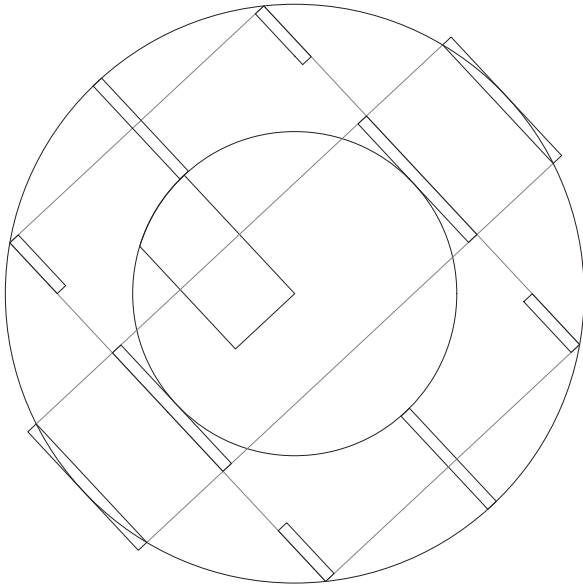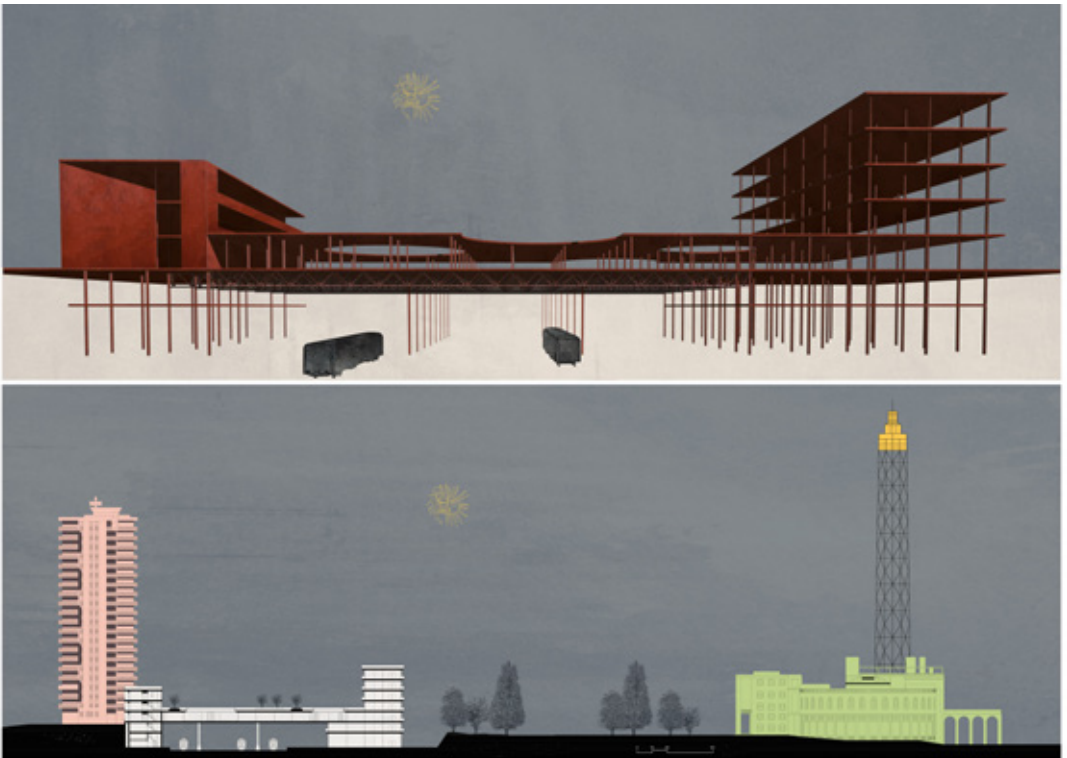
Group 4. The Hybrid Bridge_bridge extention | Perspective section, urban section

Group 4. The Hybrid Bridge_bridge extention | Site plan

Group 5. The Long House_along the railroad | Site plan
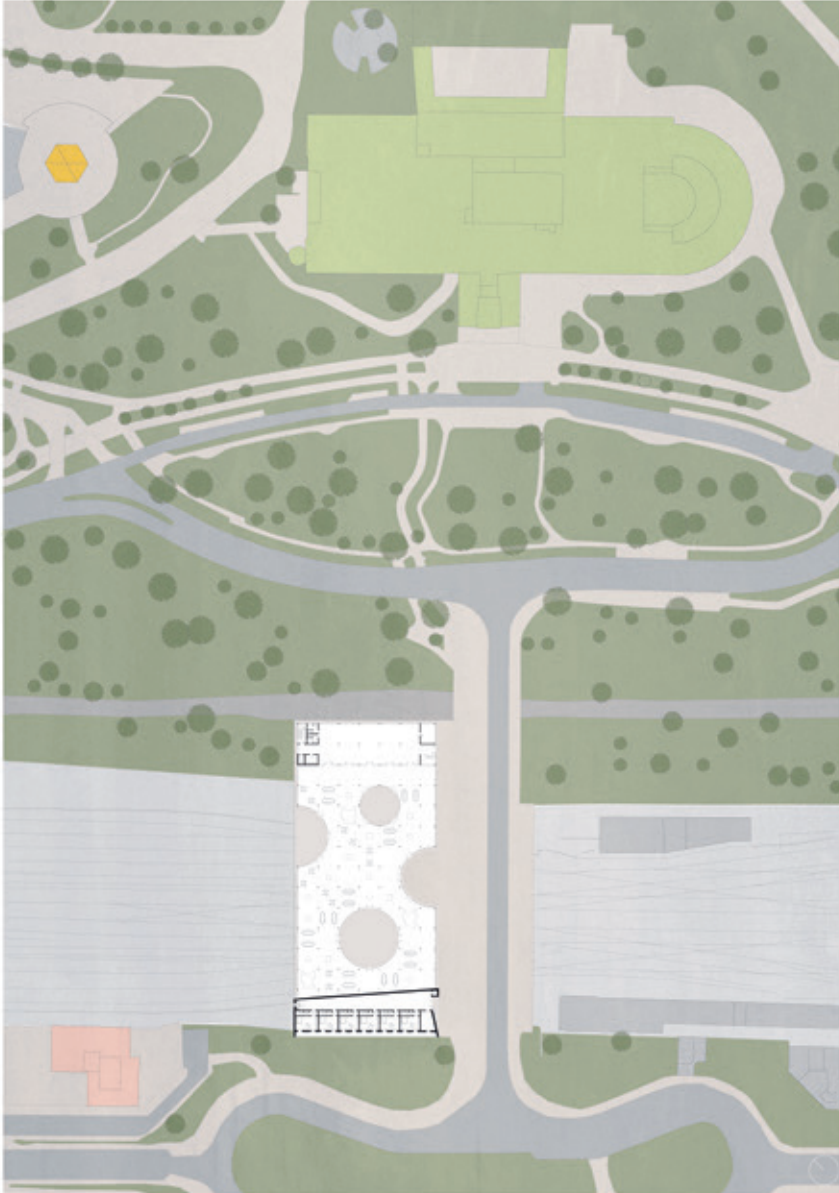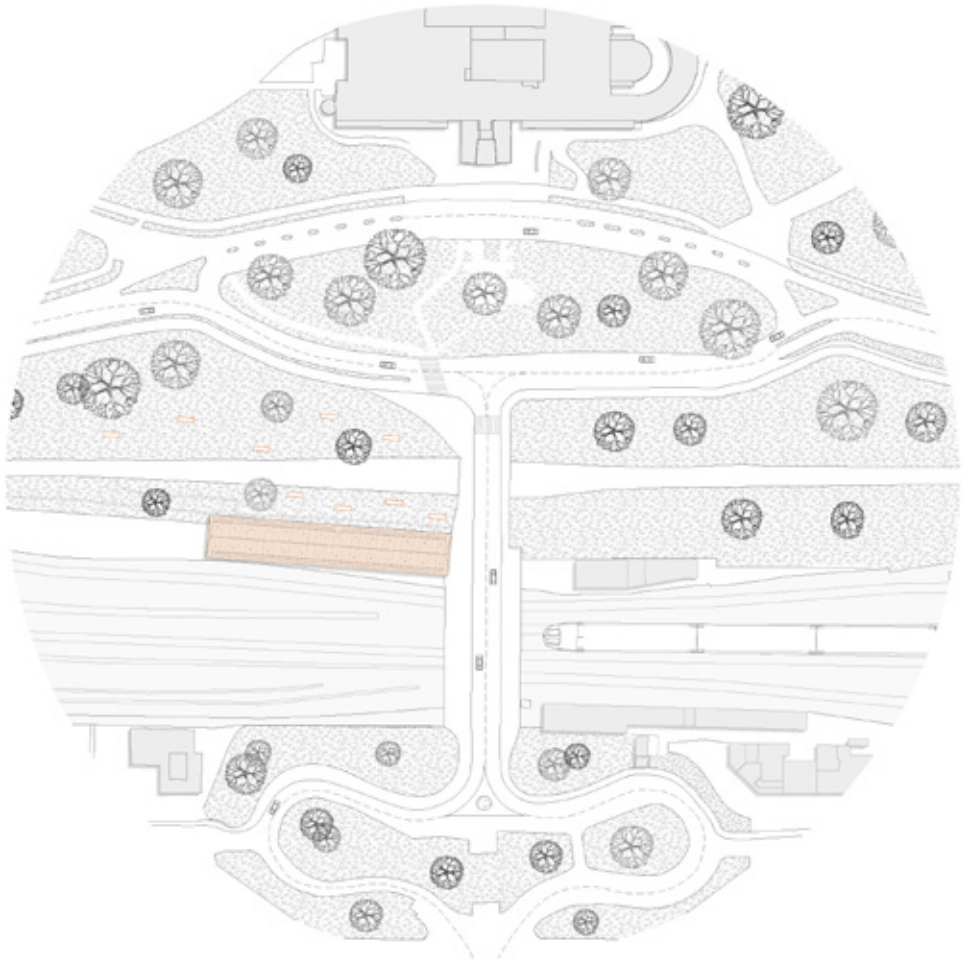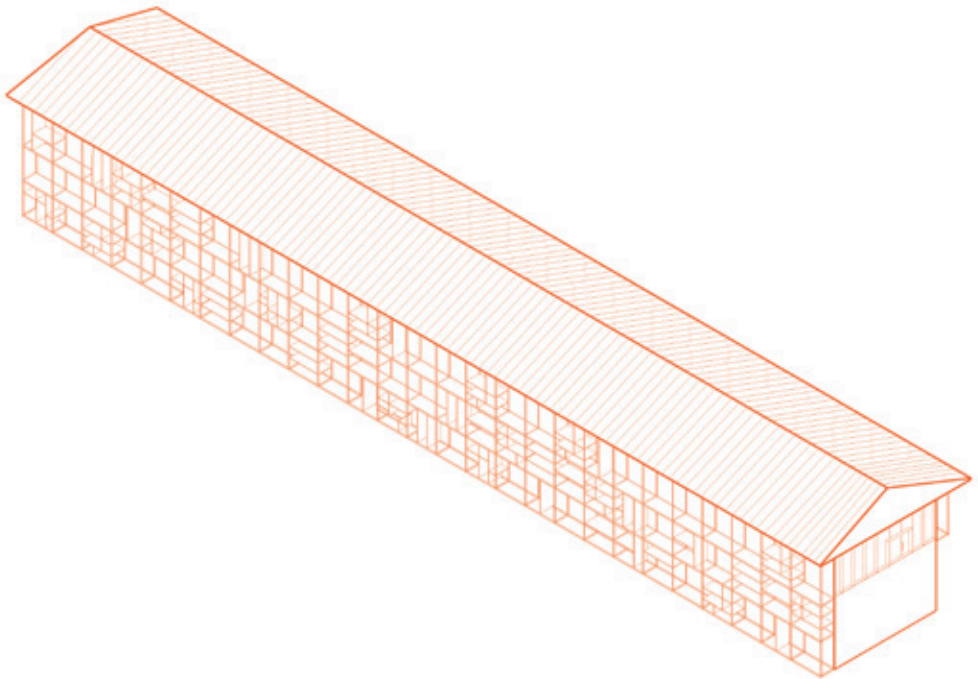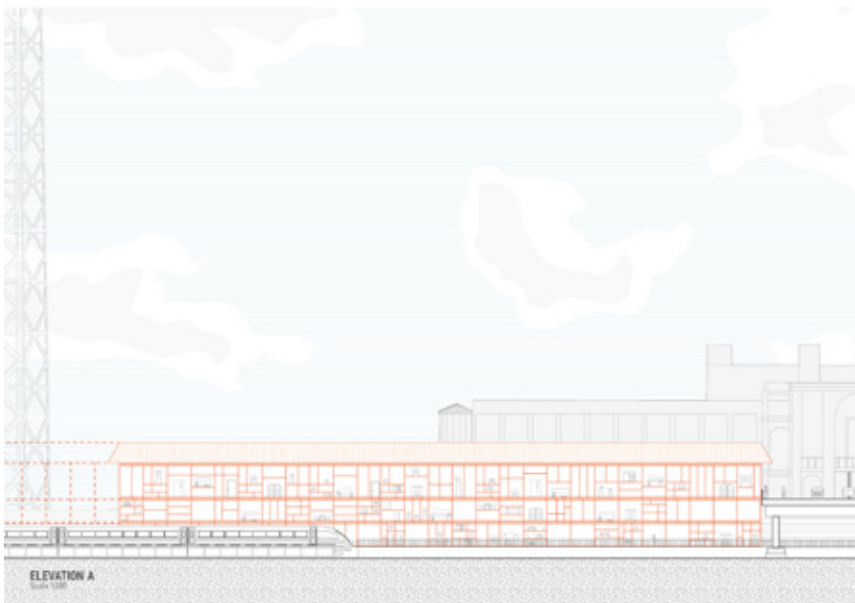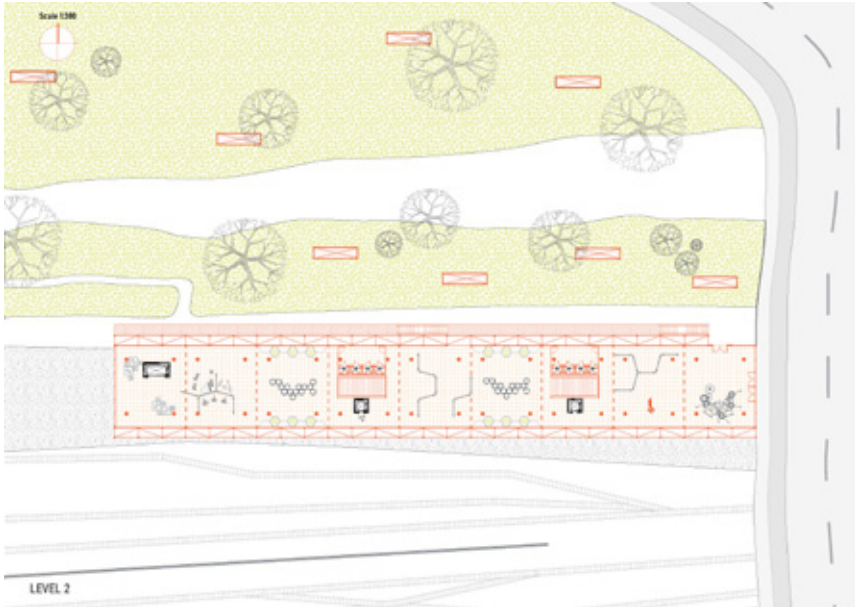
LEVEL 2



ELEVATION A

Group 5. The Long House_along the railroad | Plan level 2 and elevation
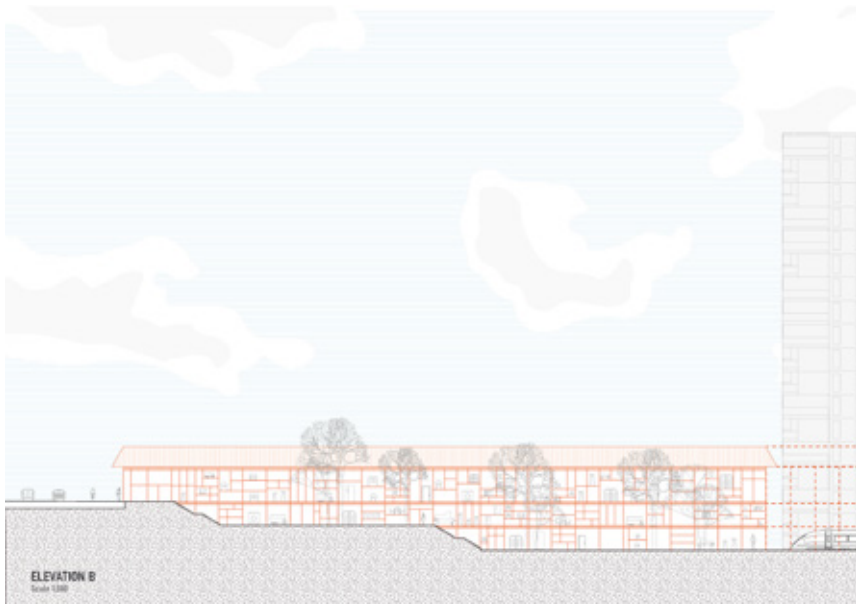
Group 5. The Long House_along the railroad | Section and elevation

THE SERPENTINE

THE SERPENTINE

Group 6. The Long Pavilion_with the morphology | Perspective Section and site plan
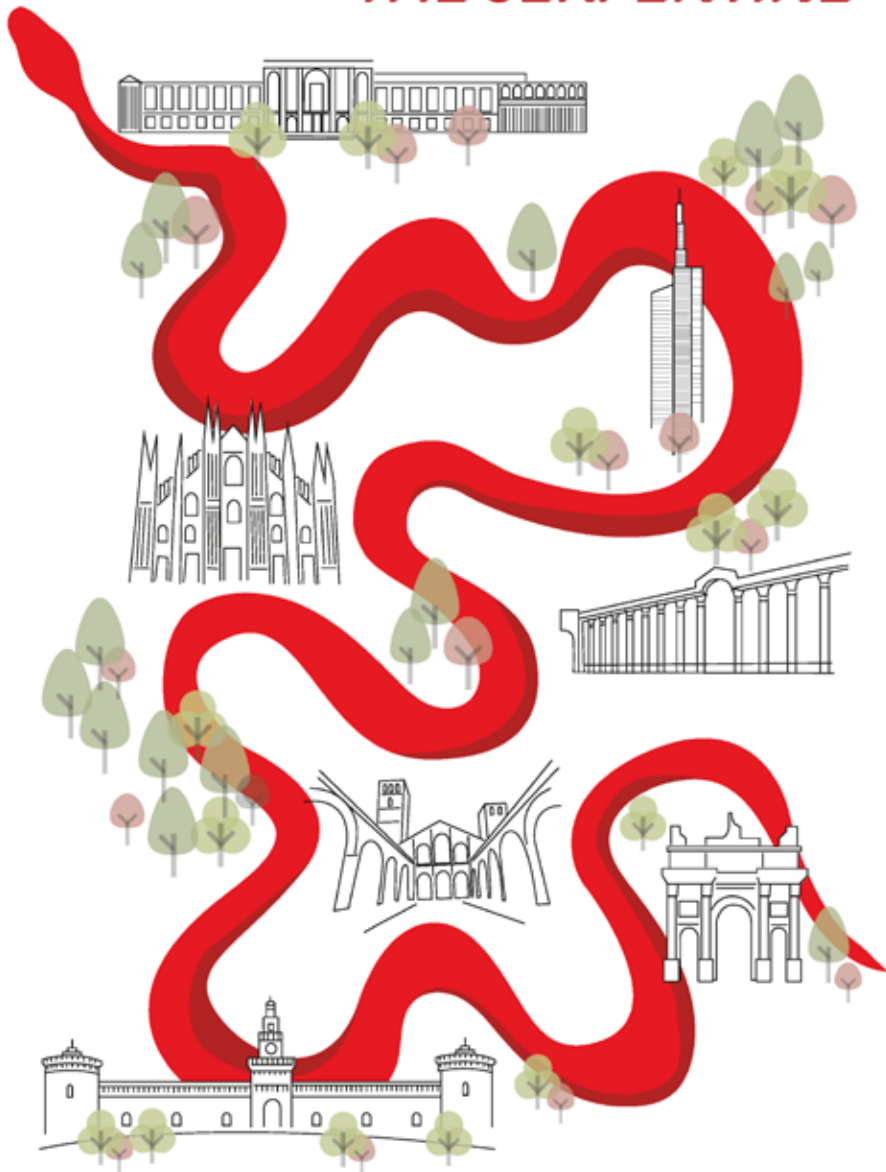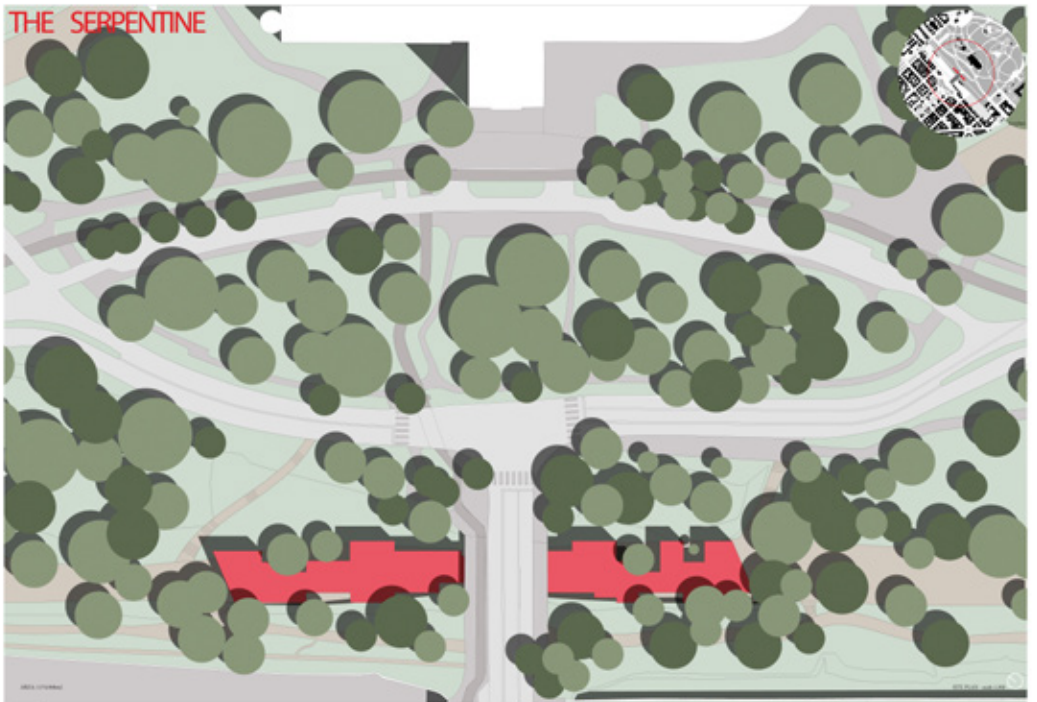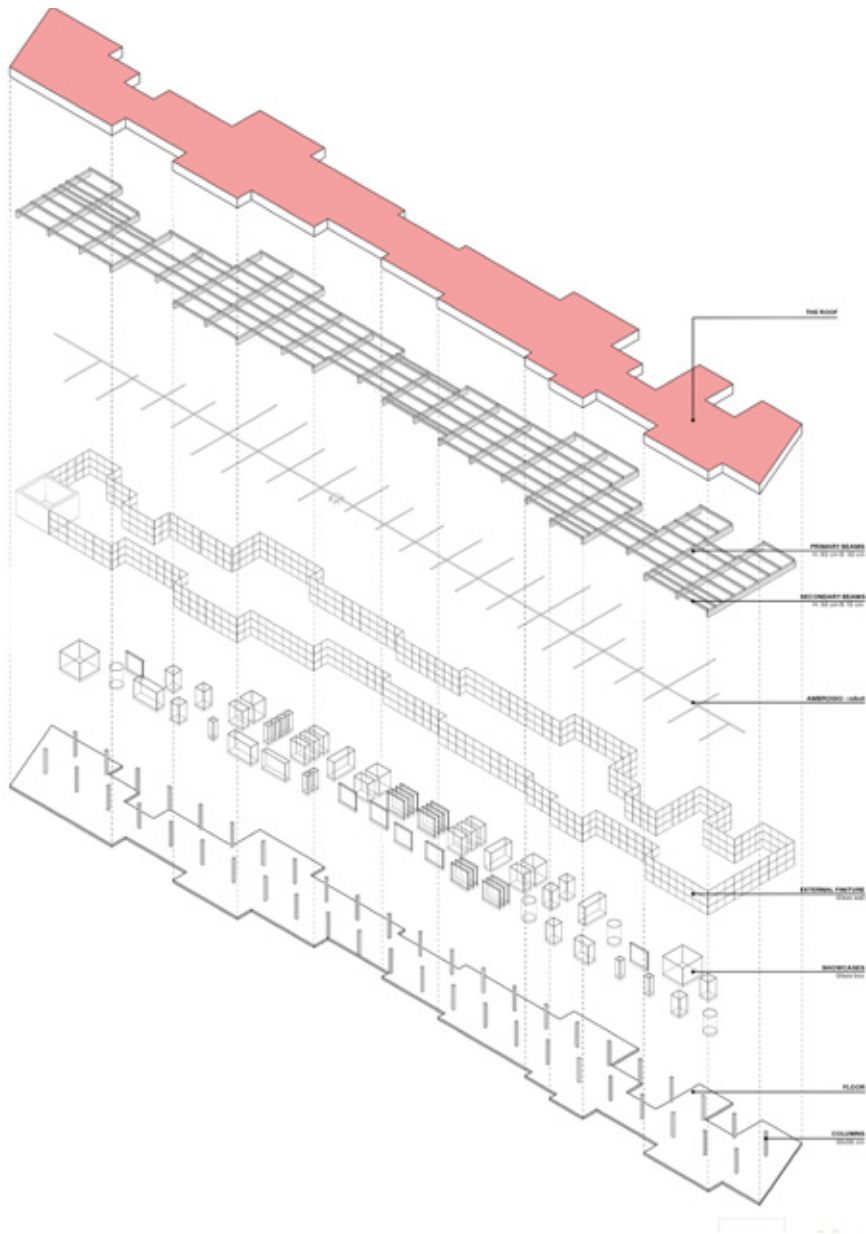
Group 6. The Long Pavilion_with the morphology | Axonometric exploded view

Group 6. The Long Pavilion_with the morphology | The archive and exhibition space

Group 7. The Long Structure_along the railroad | Masterplan and urban sectio
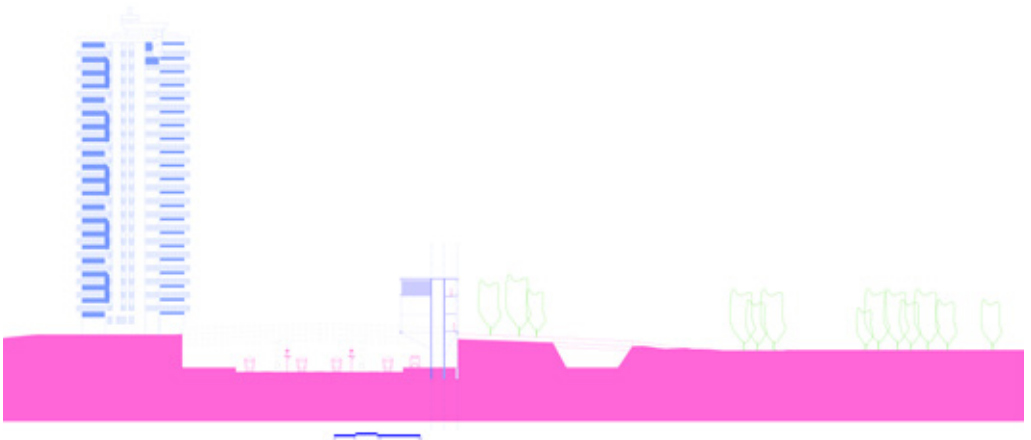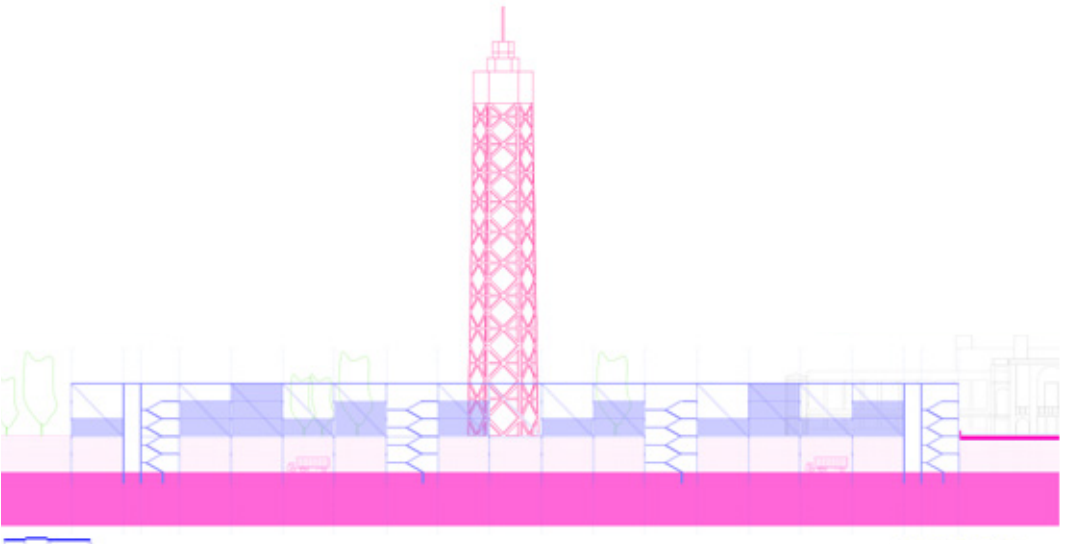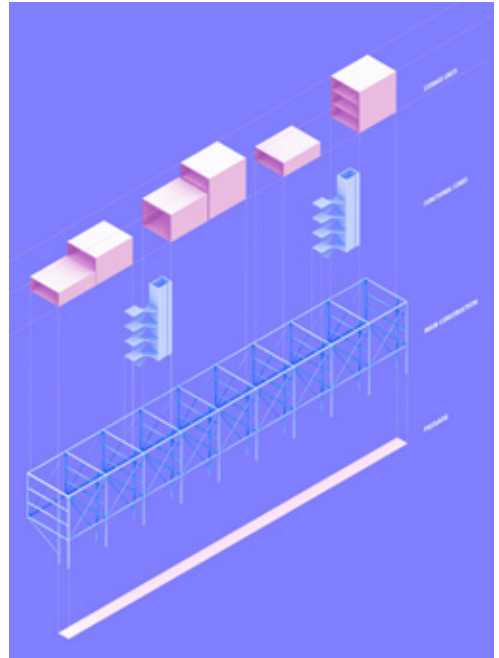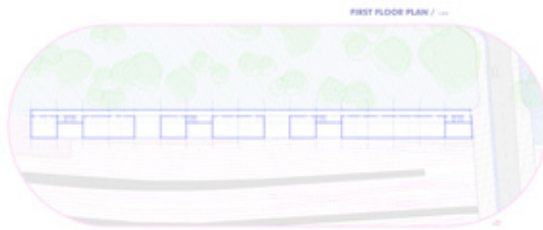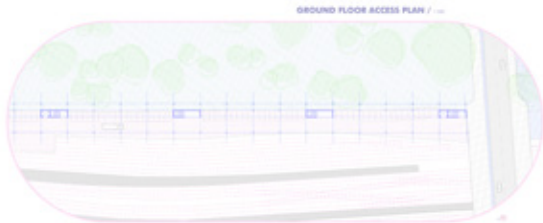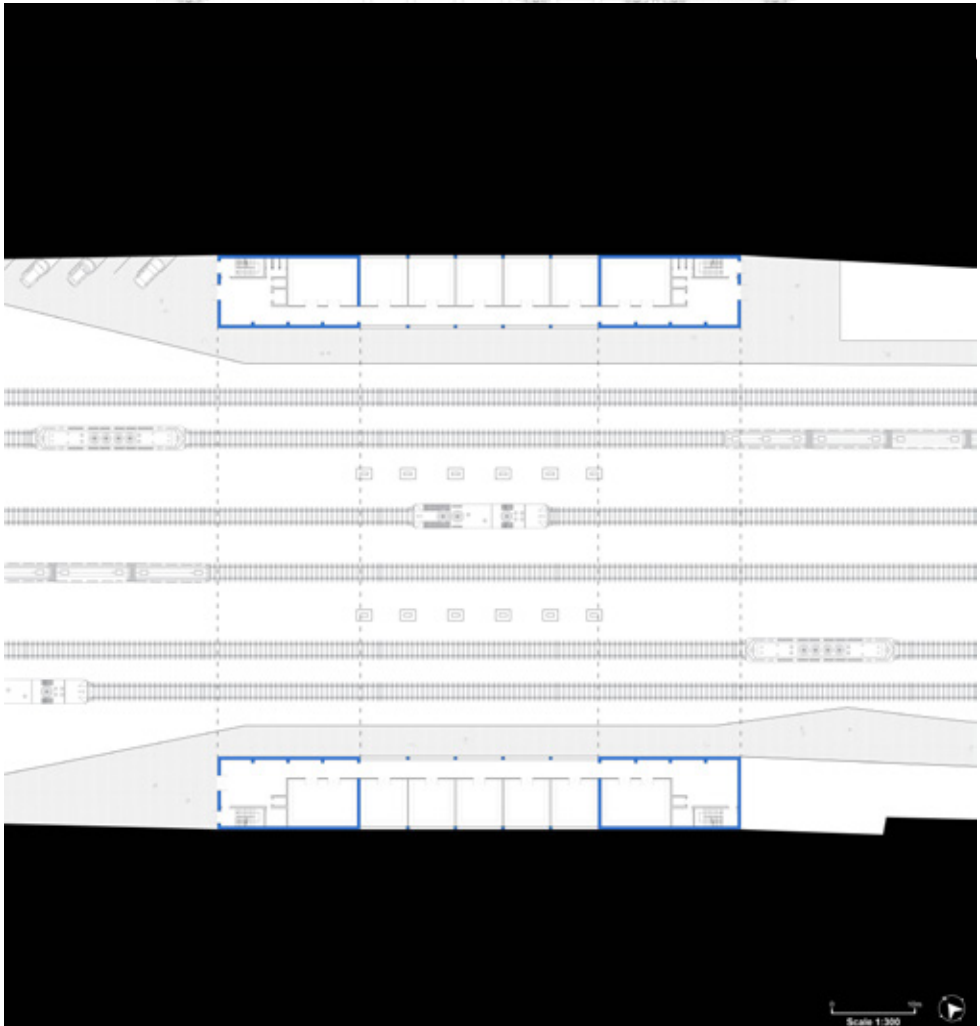
Group 8. The Parallel Double-slab_along the bridge | Section and plan along the bridge

Group 8. The Parallel Double-slab_along the bridge | Section and plan of the building on the train tracks

# WS.C
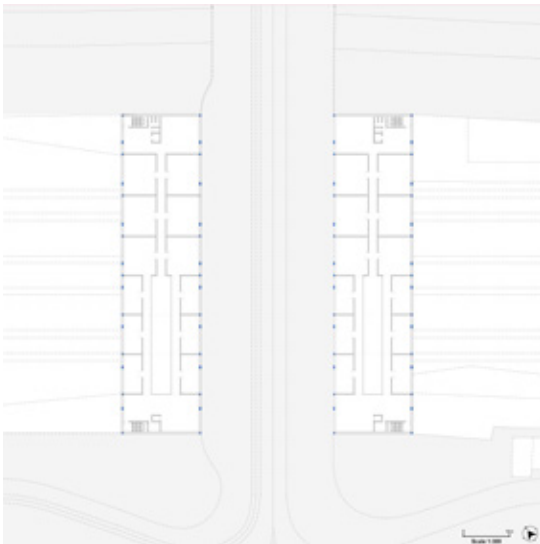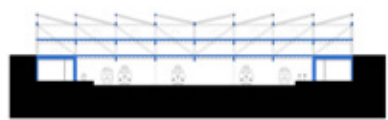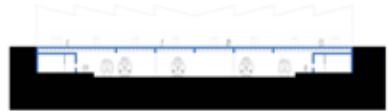
Eduardo Pesquera González

# WS.C

## Eduardo Pesquera González

Tutor: Pedro Escoriza Torralbo

Participants

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Alesia Tukach
Xi Wang
Hui Wang

# PALIMPSESTO

Architecture is a work in progress that is always being updated, each new project is built on the traces of the past, making Architecture the Archive of Memory. The aim of the call for this new edition of MIAW 2023 is precisely the archive of memory, on different spaces and institutions that house the memory of Milan. Our Atelier has been assigned to work on the Archive of the Comune di Milano.

The transformation of the archive system - thanks to technical progress - turns the current Cittadella degli Archivi di Milano into the Milan Metropolitan Archive (Mi.MA.). This process of change is an opportunity to propose different intervention strategies in the space that archives the memory of the city of Milan.

Each group of the Atelier has developed a strong and diverse idea of transformation on the Mi.MA., which addresses the different inputs introduced by our contemporary society. They speak of the introduction of nature, public spaces, technology, routes or architecture itself as a collective memory to be preserved and disseminated. The proposed programme is in line with the demands of both our society and the desires and needs of the Mi.MA. After the introduction of the robotised archive system, with the Eustorgio robot as another Milanese, the spatial organisation of the Cittadella

is optimised and the opportunity is opened up to propose a new future both to the building known as the Multipiano and to its surroundings. Opening up the memory of Milan to its inhabitants, continuing the work of linking contemporary art with the archives it contains, linking this former industrial facility with the neighbouring Niguarda, are some of the objectives for activating and transforming the Cittadella into the new Mi.MA.

The proposed programme is based on these requests, but freely adapted to the ideas of each project.

Ateliers and residencies for artists, exhibition spaces, meeting spaces, ...for collectives or students, public spaces for pedestrian connection or incorporating the new tramway are proposed. All this for the Mi.MA as well as for the residents of Niguarda. And new archive spaces for future needs or for the works produced in the Mi.MA itself.

Each group with a strong idea, developed in just two intense weeks, demonstrate the propositional and optimistic capacity of architecture and, above all, add another layer of their time to the memory, a small gift to the process of updating architecture.

In short, different intervention strategies on the archive of Milan's memory.

Rails have been added to the structure to enable the movement of the modules, allowing for varying configurations to accommodate the changing needs of the building.

These added modules can be shaped based on their position using attachable-detachable components.

Moreover, these modules can also be divided into smaller components, thereby accommodating smaller functionalities as well.

Since the general configuration is composed of components, the contents of the archive can be expanded or reduced as desired.

The modules may also include inter-floor connections, enabling a fully flexible floor plan configuration to be achieved.

By aligning several modules together, larger functionalities can be obtained.

Group 1. ECHELON STEPS | Axonometric exploded view

Group 1. ECHELON STEPS | Study model and masterplan

Group 2. IN BEETWEN MEMORIES | Axonometric exploded view
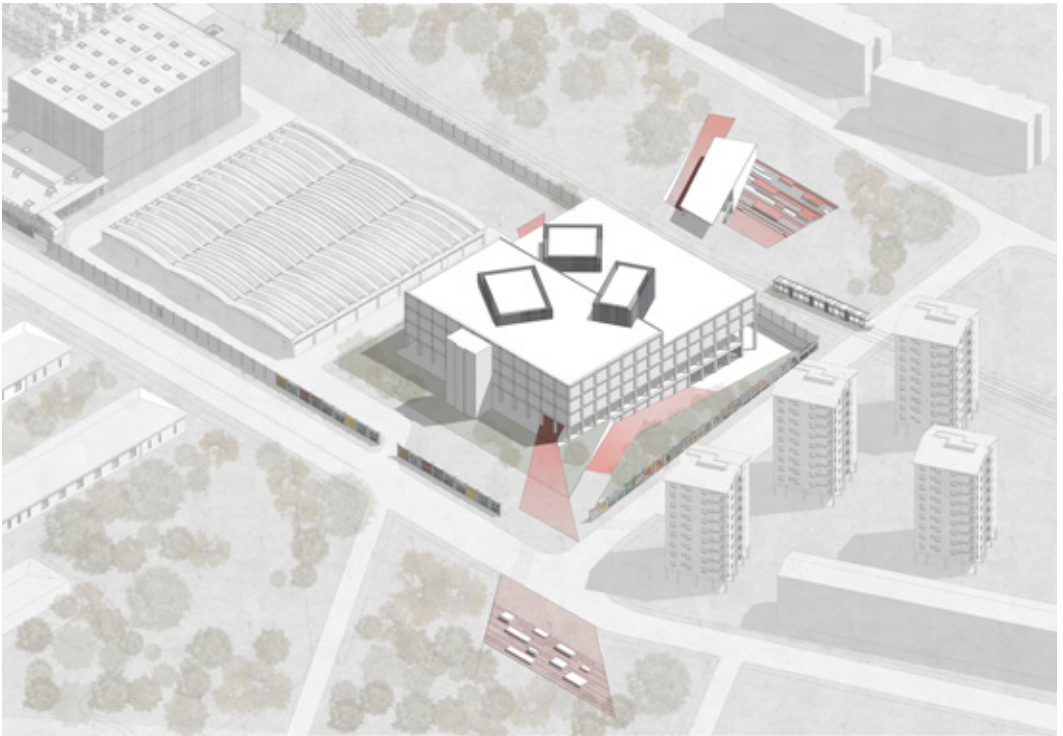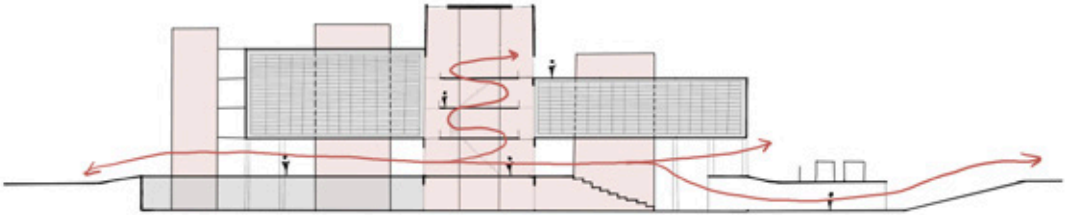
Group 2. IN BEETWEN MEMORIES | Section and axonometric view
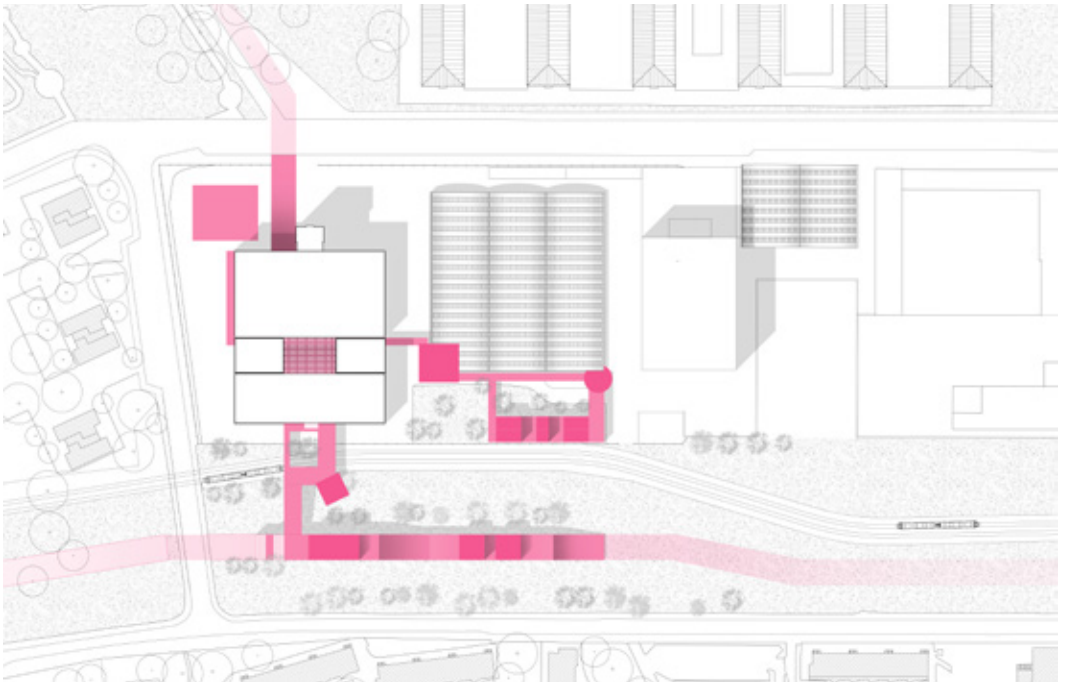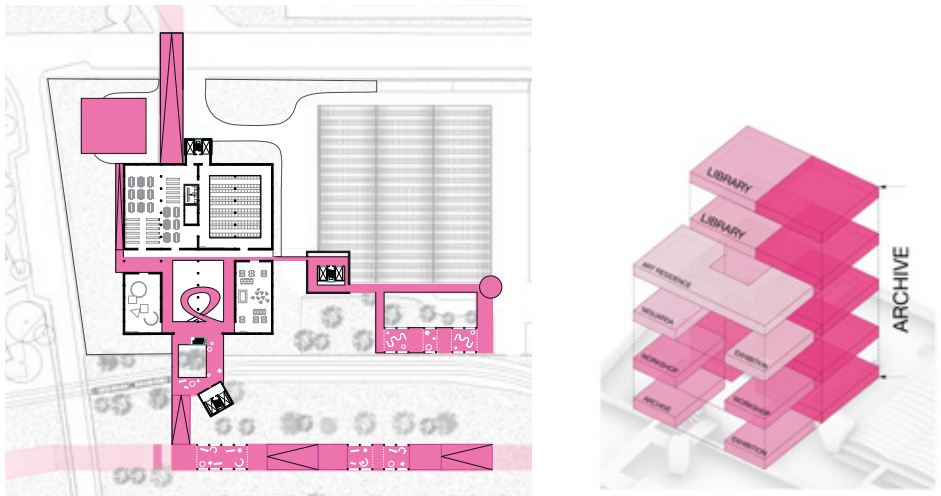
Group 3. A WALK TO REMEMBER| Plan, axonometric scheme and masterplan

Group 3. A WALK TO REMEMBER | View of the entrance to the citadel of archives, axonometric view

Group 4. CONFLICTED SHELL | Axonometric view, internal view
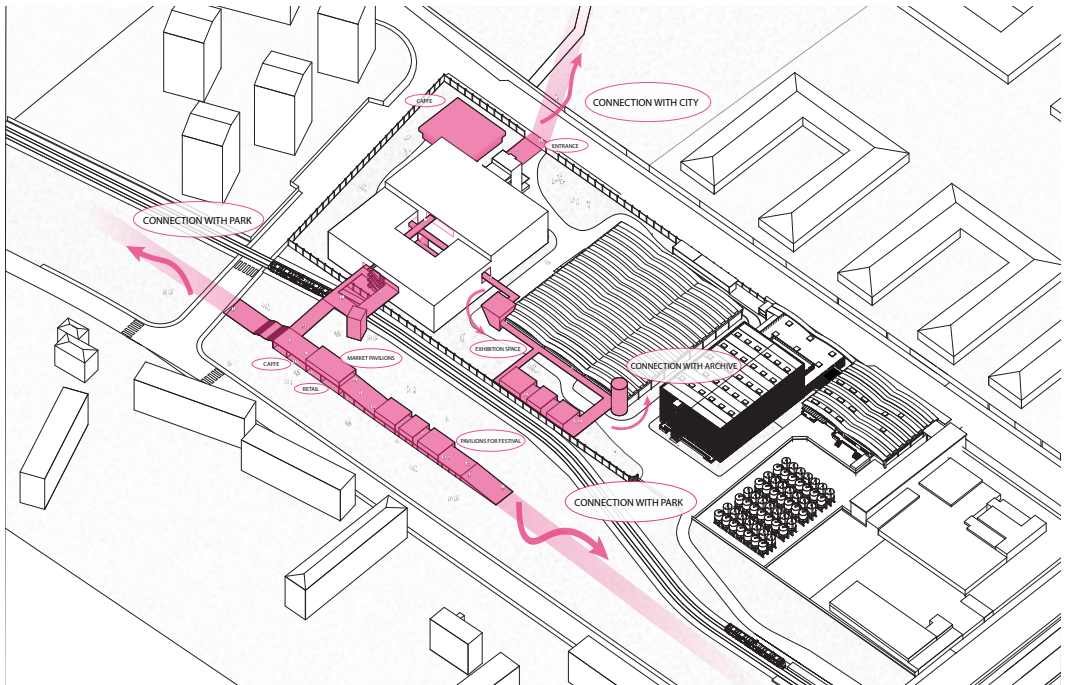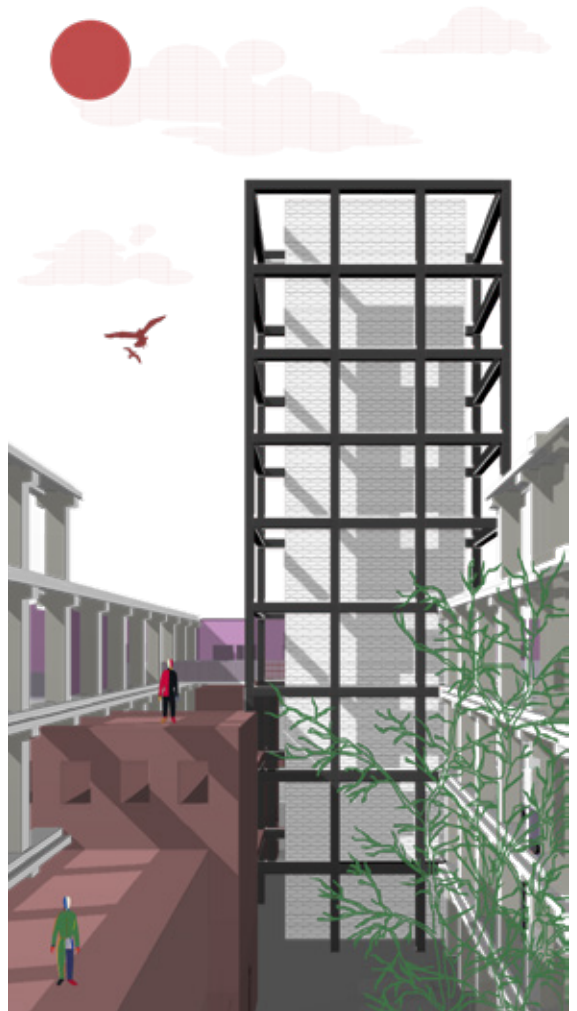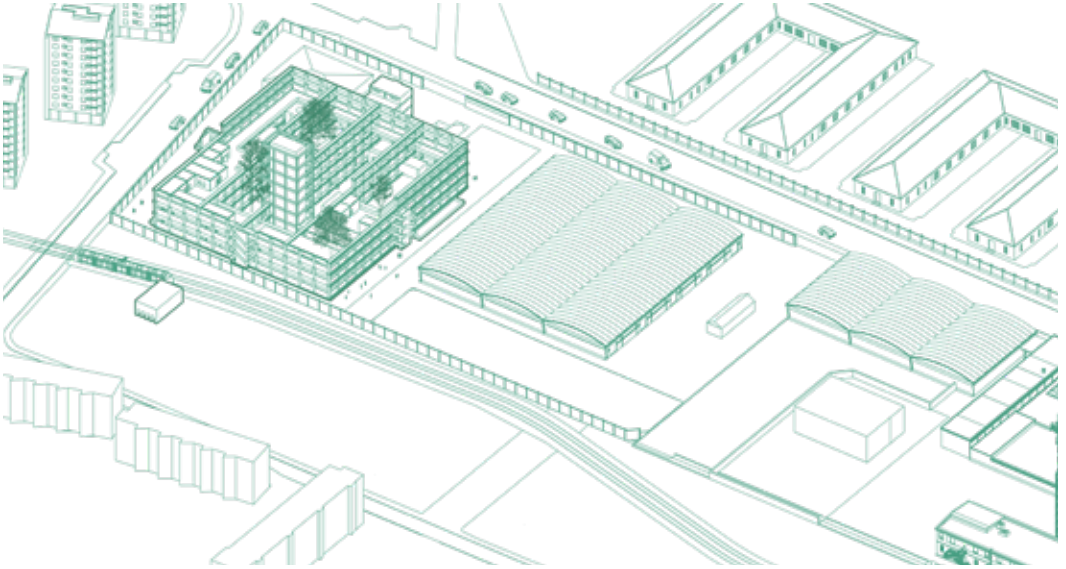
# VOLUMETRIC



# FUNCTIONAL



# URBAN
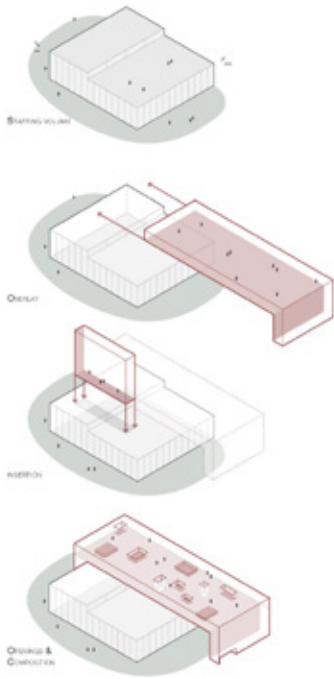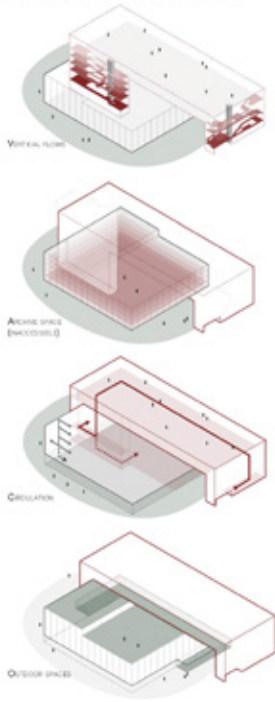




Group 5. BEYOND AND OVER | Schemes and masterplan
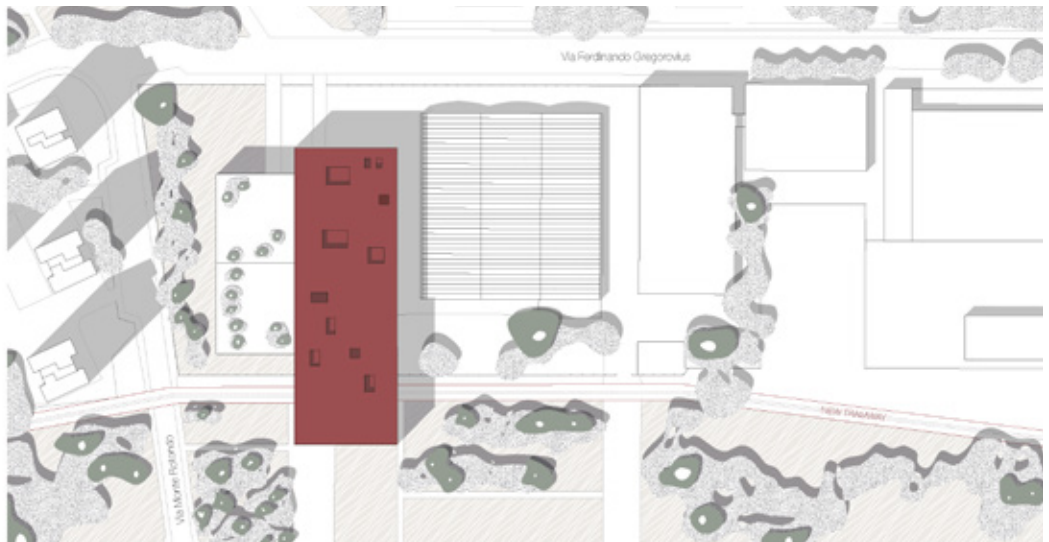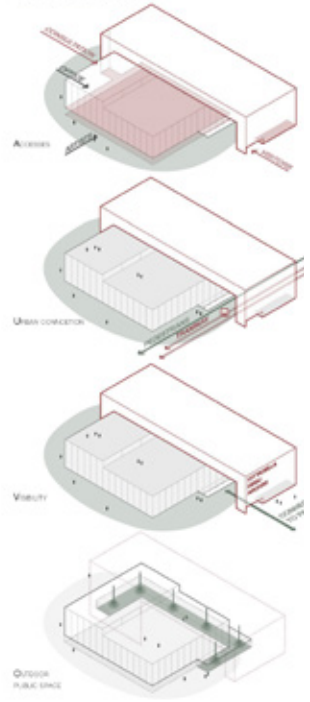
Memory space
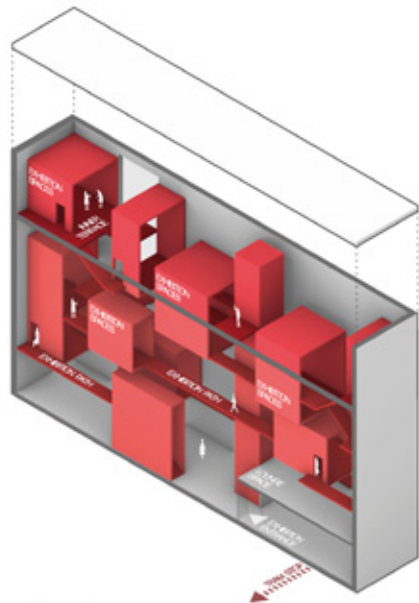




Experimental Exhibition Space

Group 5. BEYOND AND OVER | View and axonometric view

Group 6. GREEN-VASION | Urban section and axonometric view

Group 6. GREEN-VASION | View of the courtyard

RESTAURANT

EXHIBITION

LIBRARY
ARCHIVE

WORKSHOPS
OPEN WORK SPACE

ARTISTS
RESIDENCE

THEATER
MULTIFUNCTIONAL HALL
STORAGE

ART BOOKSHOP

Group 7. THE ROBET TOWER | Axonometric exploded view

Group 7. THE ROBET TOWER | Axonometric view and masterplan

Group 8. MEMORIES OF THE FUTURE | Axonometric exploded view and plan

Group 8. MEMORIES OF THE FUTURE | Perspective section and internal view

Group 9. ENGULFING THE CITADEL | Axonometric and external view
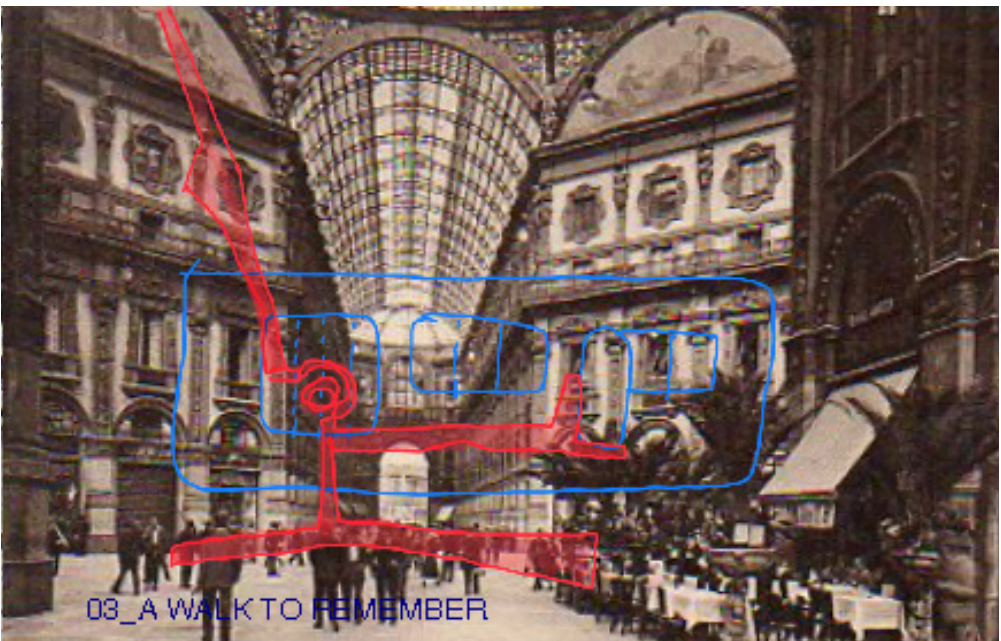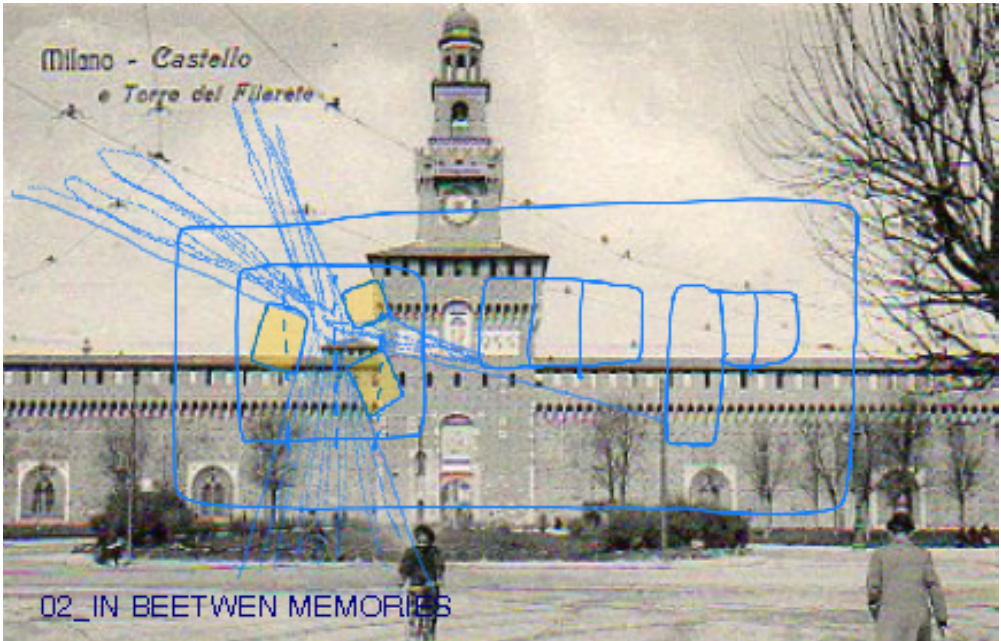
02_IN BEETWEN MEMORIES



03_A WALK TO REMEMBER

Un saluto da Milano

05_BEYOND AND OVER



06_GREEN-VASION

MILANO - Basilica di S. Ambrogio (fine del secolo IV)

08_MEMORIES OF THE FUTURE



09_ENGULFING THE CITADEL

# WS.D
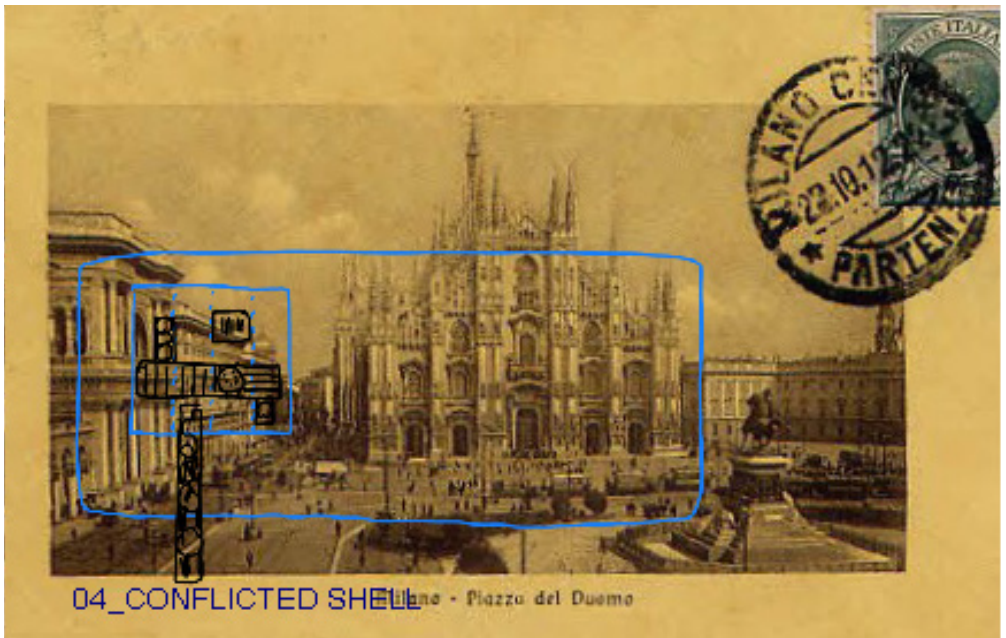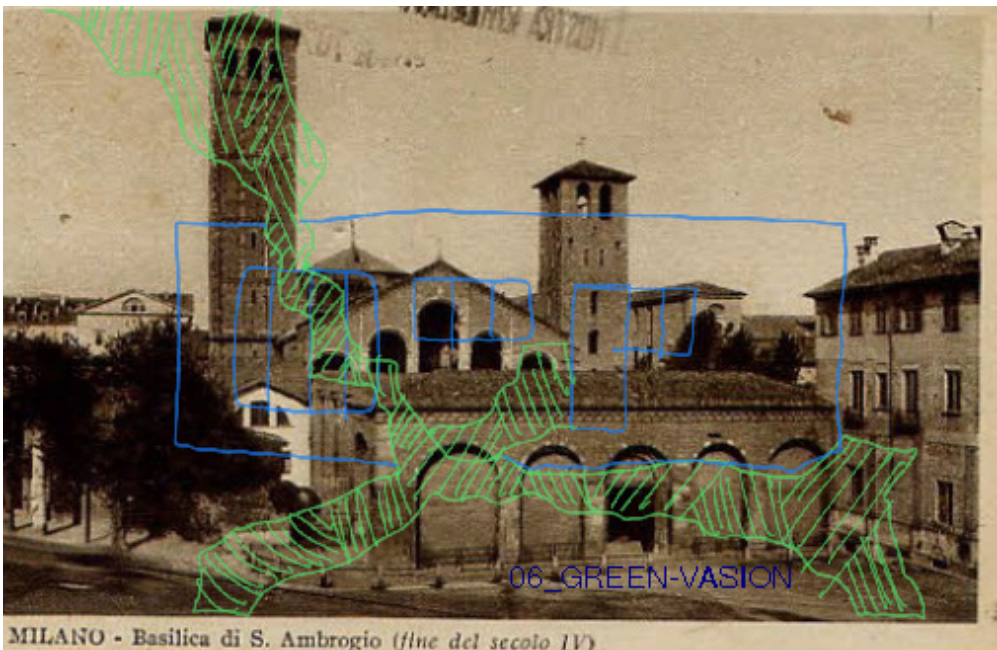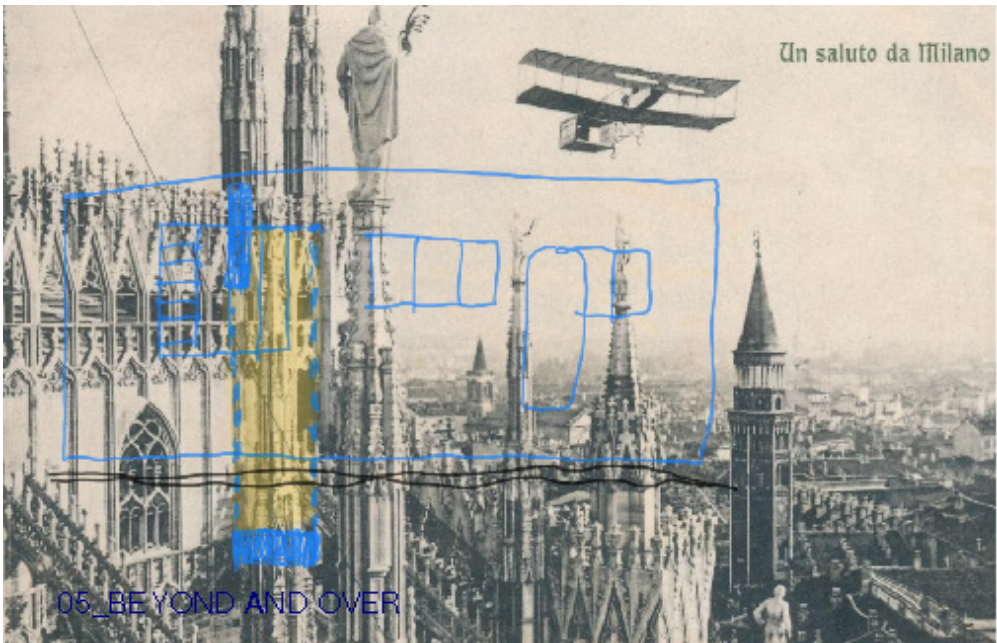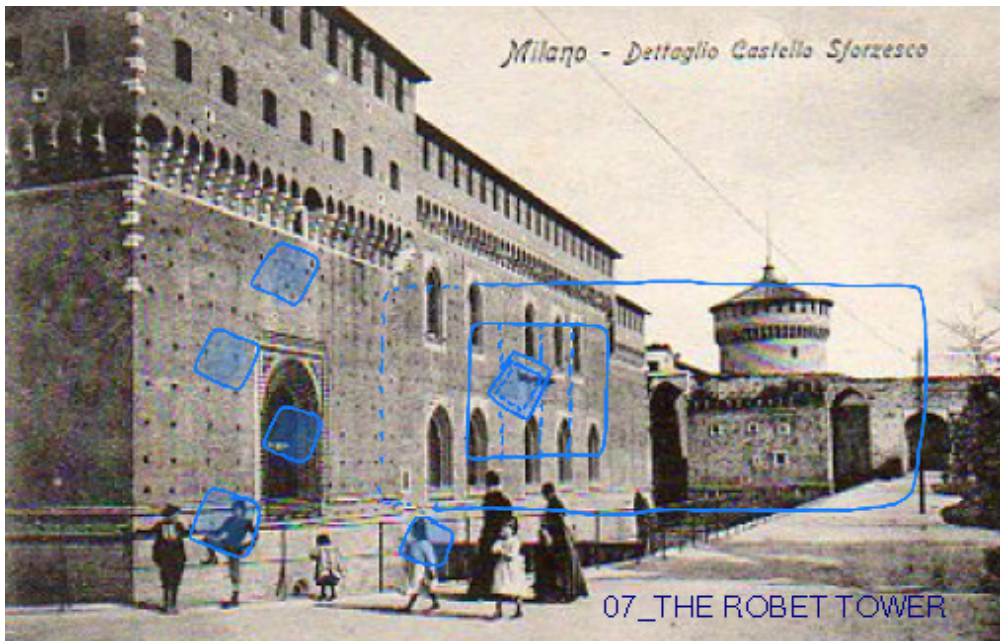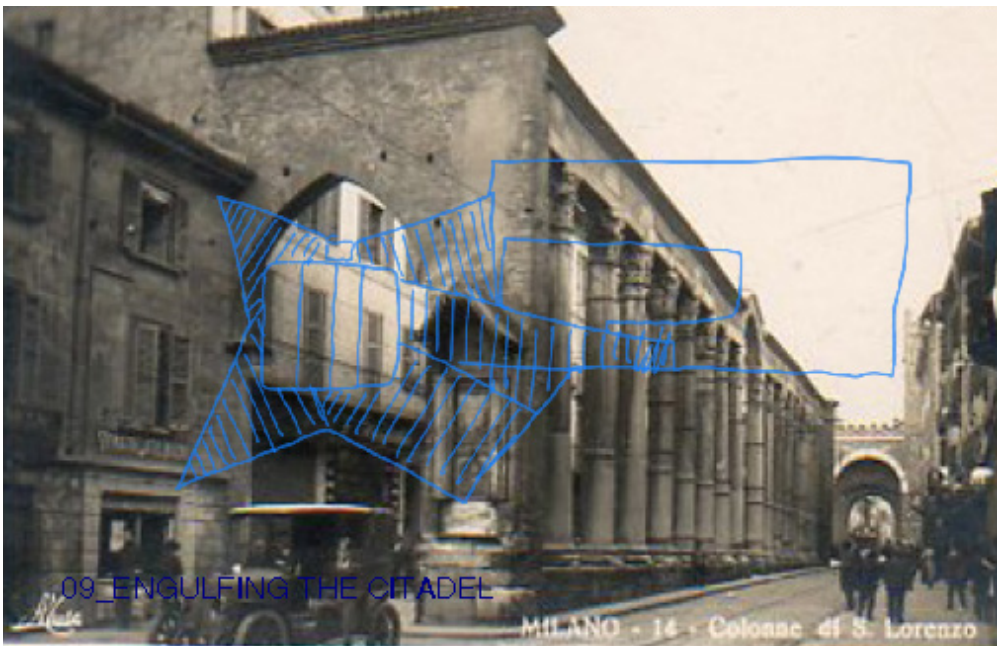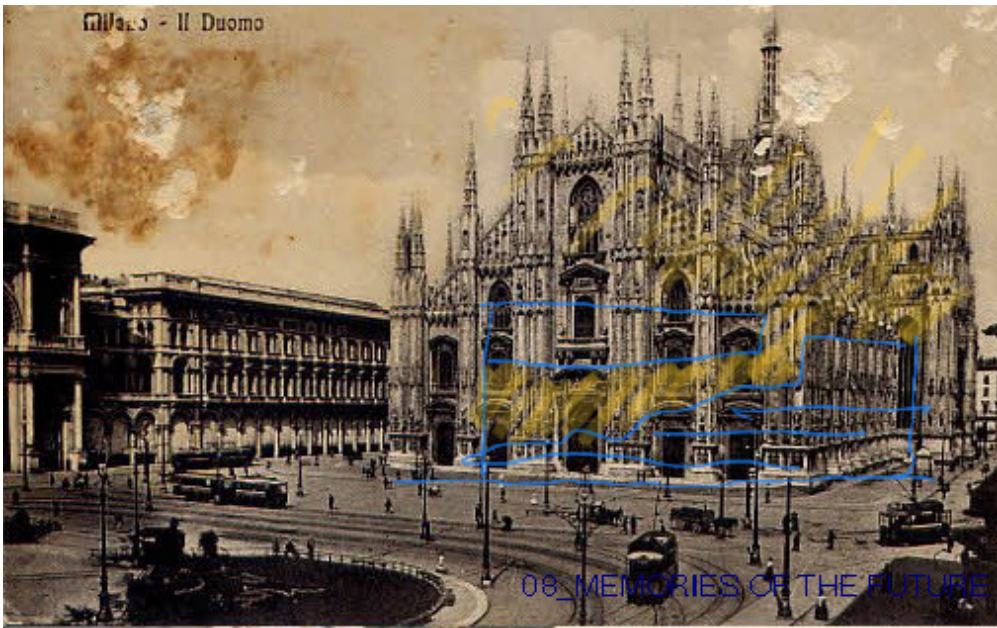
# Helder Casal Ribeiro

# WS.D

## Helder Casal Ribeiro

Tutor: Michele Porcelluzzi

Participants

Abedi Yeganeh
Andretta Carlo
Castelli Giulia
De Pasquale Paolo
Di Donna Annachiara
Emirbayer Emir
Francioli Luca
Giannini Giulia
He Hongli
He Weili
Kovacevic Laura

Licciardi Gabriele
Mi Qi
Pareek Dilip
Pavlov Kirill
Poli Valentina
Rohrich Davide
Scoglio Arianna
Sulo Paola
Tom Albert
Yang Ziyi
Yaraghi Yasamin

# CHARGED VOID
# A QUEST FOR A NEW
# IDENTITY

Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo's Cantiere Marmisti preserves the legacy of the craftmanship and the knowledge behind the construction of the Duomo through the continuous production of new elements and the storage of over 200 marble human-figure statues and 350 architectural ornamental elements. A living archive of craftmanship and distinctive artifacts that have lost their place in Duomo, due to their material degradation, but not their intent and social relevance as Milanese collective memory.

The productive sector is taken as an infrastructure to be preserved and imbedded into the interpretation of place as a multi-layered context.

The site's peculiar spatial condition set on an exceptional length of 235m and an average width of 30 m, gives the plot an unexpected Milanese breath and open purpose.

The (re)reading of the site, motivated by the meaning of memory archive, addresses the inclusion of an architectural device as the inception of a new charged void portrayed within a poetic circumstance.
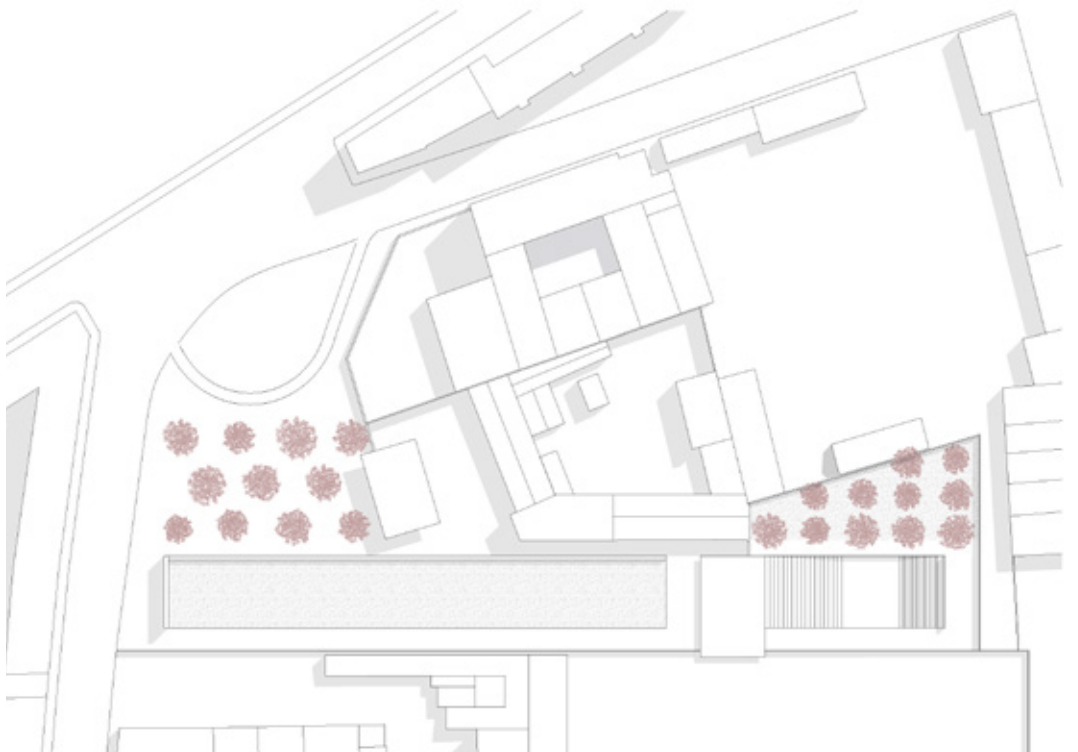
A void interpreted as a sequence of spaces where collective memory can be expressed, beyond functional exhibition spaces, evoking the notion of home for the statues and the ornamental elements: the experience of the visitor unfolds through perceptions hinged on architectural promenade concept.
The pursuit of a new home for the retired statues and elements triggers a spatial narrative set on clear design themes and notions, recognising architecture as a built idea.
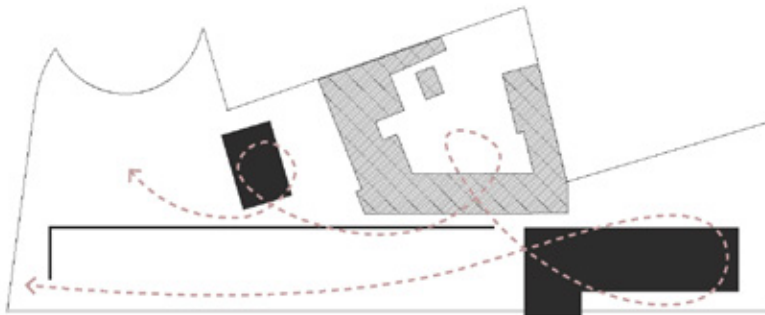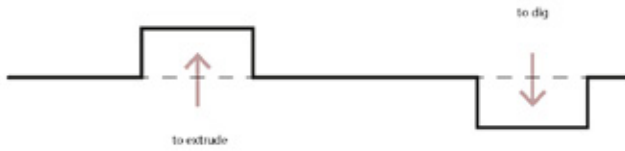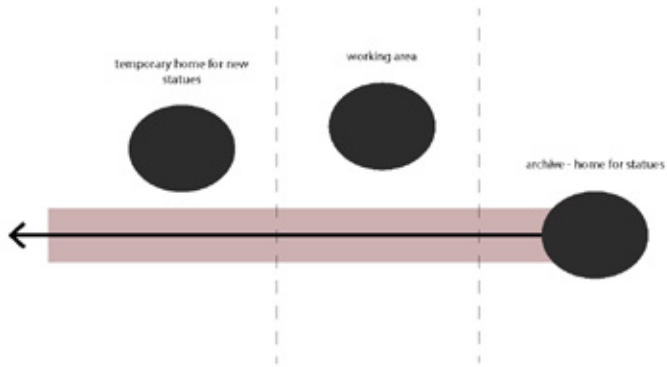A home where the spatial syntax is seen as a collection of different atmospheres that complement the main archival spaces.
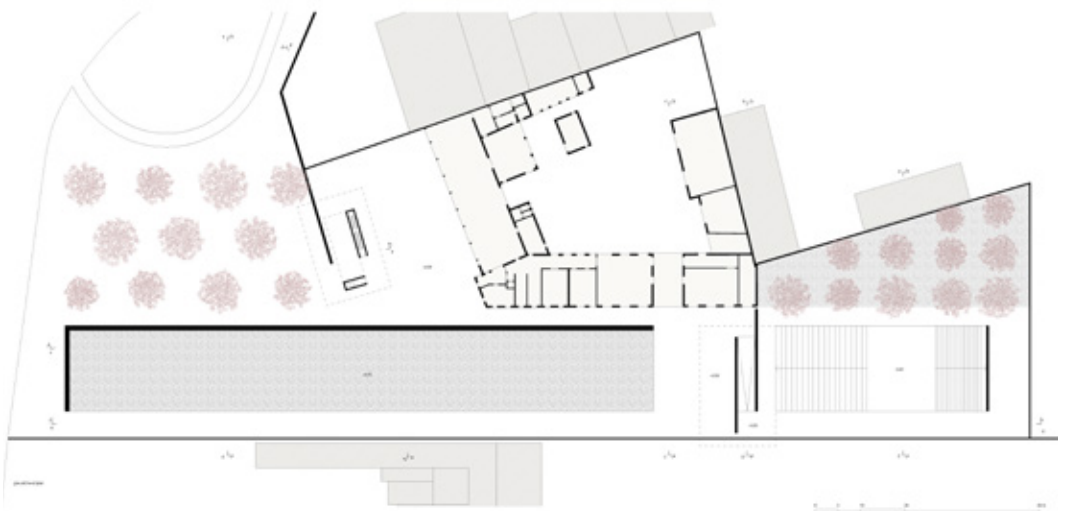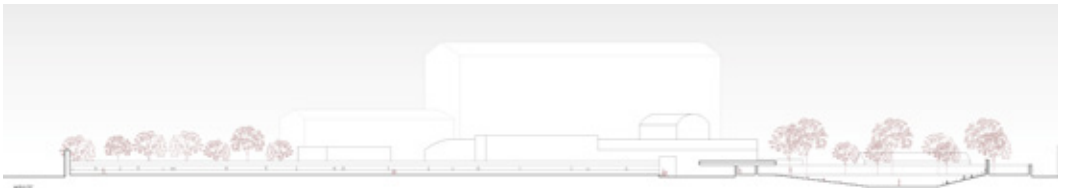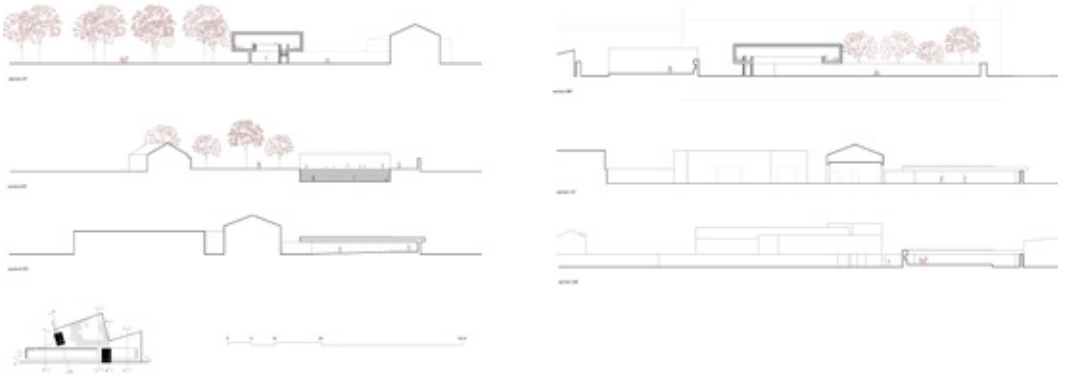Space, structure and material are perceived as a harmonic triad depicted by a consistent open dialogue between structural, formal and material (tectonics), allowing for a clear concept that empowers a set of spatial sequences within a built poetic circumstance.
The physical model, interpreted as a means and not an end, structures and inspires the design process through conceptual readings and volumetric relationships: scale, proportion and rhythm.
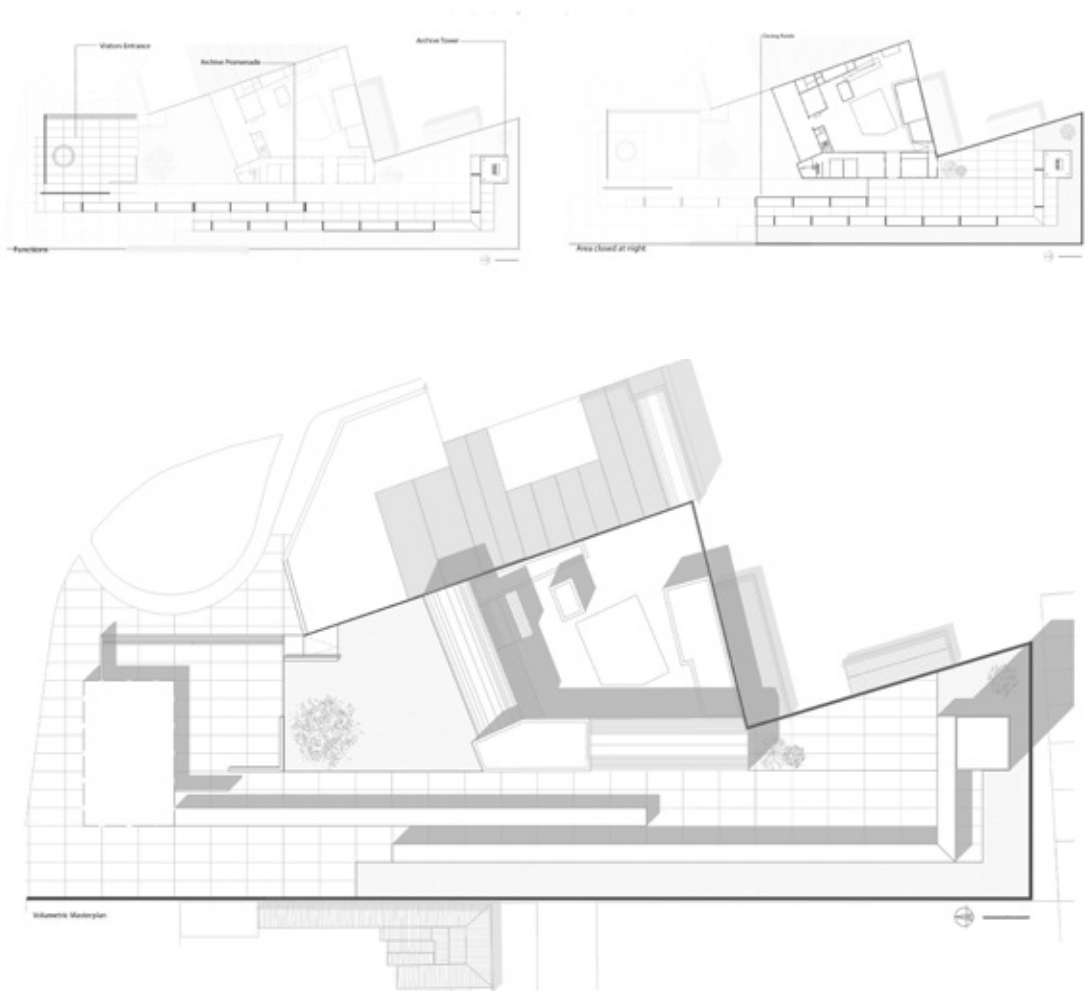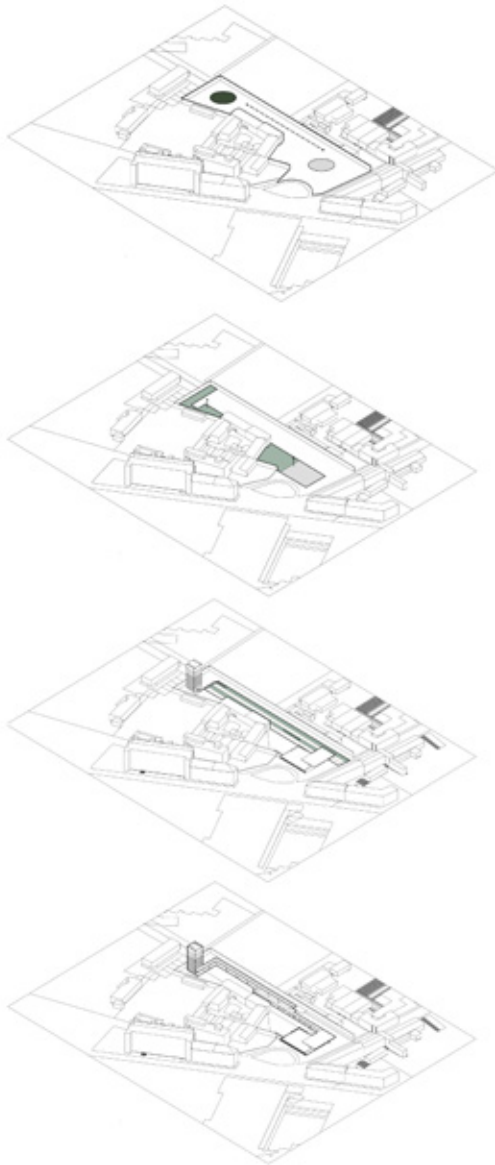
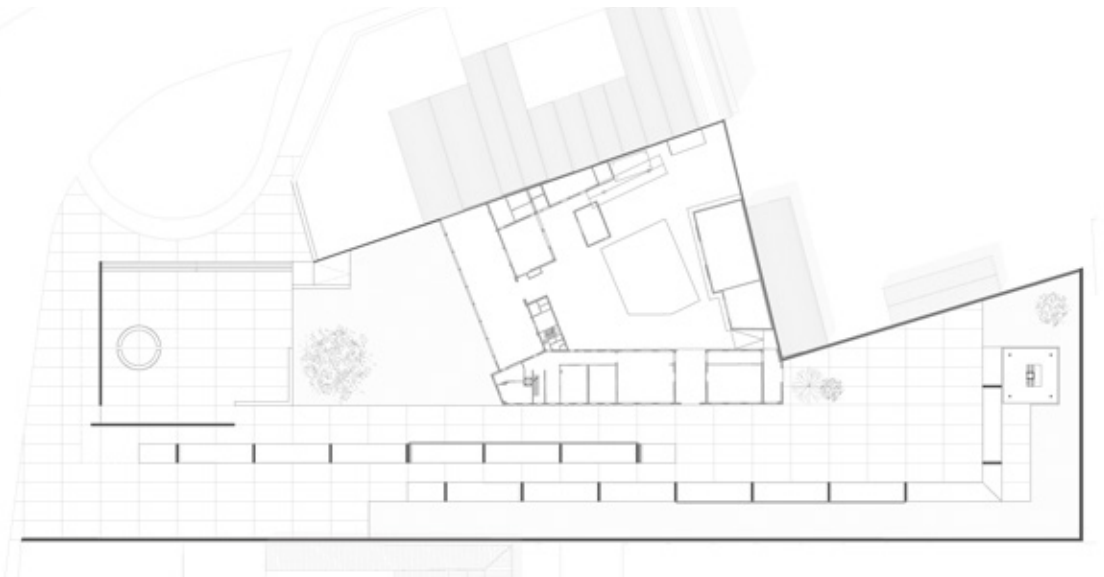Group 1. MISE EN SCENE | General plan

temporary home for new
statues

working area

archive - home for statues

to dig

to extrude

Group 1. MISE EN SCENE | Sections and ground level plan

Group 1. MISE EN SCENE | Views

Group 2 | Axonometric exploded view of the Tower, general plan

roof

stairs and elevator

floors

main body

support beams

support base

Group 3 | Axonometric exploded view

Group 3 | Typical floor plan and first floor plan

Group 4. MARBLED MEMORIES | Diagrams

Group 4. MARBLED MEMORIES | Volumetric masterplan

Group 4. MARBLED MEMORIES | Views, section and ground floor plan

Group 4. MARBLED MEMORIES | Views, section and first floor plan

Group 5. ARCHIVE OF MEMORY | Siteplan and first floor plan

Group 5. ARCHIVE OF MEMORY | Views

# WS.E
# Filipe
# Magalhães

# WS.E

## Filipe Magalhães

**Tutor: Raffaella Cavallaro**

Participants

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Aria Arvin
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Biacca Alessandro
Buonfantino Alessandra
Cillo Margherita
Colombo Giulia
Crisopulli Alessia
Giannarelli Nicola
Guarracino Mariaconcetta
Hassanpour Shiva
Hormozzadeh Yasaman
Hwang Hyunjin
Kasthuri Srinivasan Akshaya
Lusverti Alessia
Mastrangeli Sofia
Melnic Maria

Nafisi Ghazaal
Pecchi Greta
Perfetto Simone
Rainone Maria Teresa
Sun Yifei
Tanyous Androw Fouad Alfy
Fouad
Taravati Fatemeh
Tarfanelli Sofia
Tigdemir Elif Nur
Zhang Yuyun
Zhang Zhaochen
Zhou Tong
Chen Xiwen
Belousov Nikita
Di Guardo Chiara
Wen Yijun

# I WILL NOT MAKE ANY MORE BORING ART

Kazuo Shinohara wrote "The Autonomy of House Design" in 1964.
Le Corbusier died in 1965; Mies in 1969.
Robert Venturi published "Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture" in 1966. Sol Lewitt wrote "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" in 1967.
Great times.

"An architect is both a thinker and a maker".[1] The maker puts together into harmony a series of signs, for translating thoughts into the world. Long before that, the thinker reflects on the world itself, allowing the maker to be intentional and precise in his decisions. Today, several decades after the last truly decisive disciplinary thinking period architecture was faced with, architects seem to have forgotten their role as thinkers. They execute. They draw. They produce images. They say words (that "without thoughts never to heaven go"[2]).
Heritage is a contemporary problem that blooms in this absence of "thoughts". "Memory", and all that comes with it, seems to overrule all logic and common sense. Its romanticized weaponization, mostly through autistic, touristic and exportable perspectives, guides societies (and their architects) to universally accepted common places never truly discussed publicly. Little or no questions raised. "Heritage is good, period!", it seems. If before, structures like the Pantheon in Rome were the ones in question, today all goes, regardless of any tangible value.
Yes, this is a first world problem, mostly affecting intellectualized societies of the western world. One could argue it doesn't really

matter, and no one cares, anyway. Still, it is a problem that MIAW raises, creating the opportunity for a short but intense discussion.

"Minimalist in means, maximalist in intentions".[3]

For a few days, the class focused on the Corriere della Sera city block. Questions were asked, problems were underlined, proposals were made. A daily discussion, through the form of words, drawings and other mixed techniques, was achieved. The groups changed daily, with the authorship of the eight proposals being diluted amongst all the students. Ideas have no ownership and, starting from a rhizomatic Deleuzian idea of what a philosophical concept is, provocations were deliberated in detail, and are now presented with their apparent, yet misleading, architectural imprecision.
From the realm of artists, we ventured into the realm of paper collages. From the realm of an inconspicuous building, we delved into grander themes. From the confines of the workshop, we aspired to conquer the world, or so we hope. We confronted the melancholic abyss of a sunken archive and the seemingly inconsequential yet "prestigious" edifice. The workshop served as a pretext, a vessel to provoke the students to ponder upon what "a certain memory appears to be" or what it "could or should be." Above all, it implored them to grapple with the fundamental, yet forgotten, disciplinary query: "Why?"

[1] Raphael Zuber, 2013
[2] William Shakespeare, 1601
[3] Carlos Prata, 2023
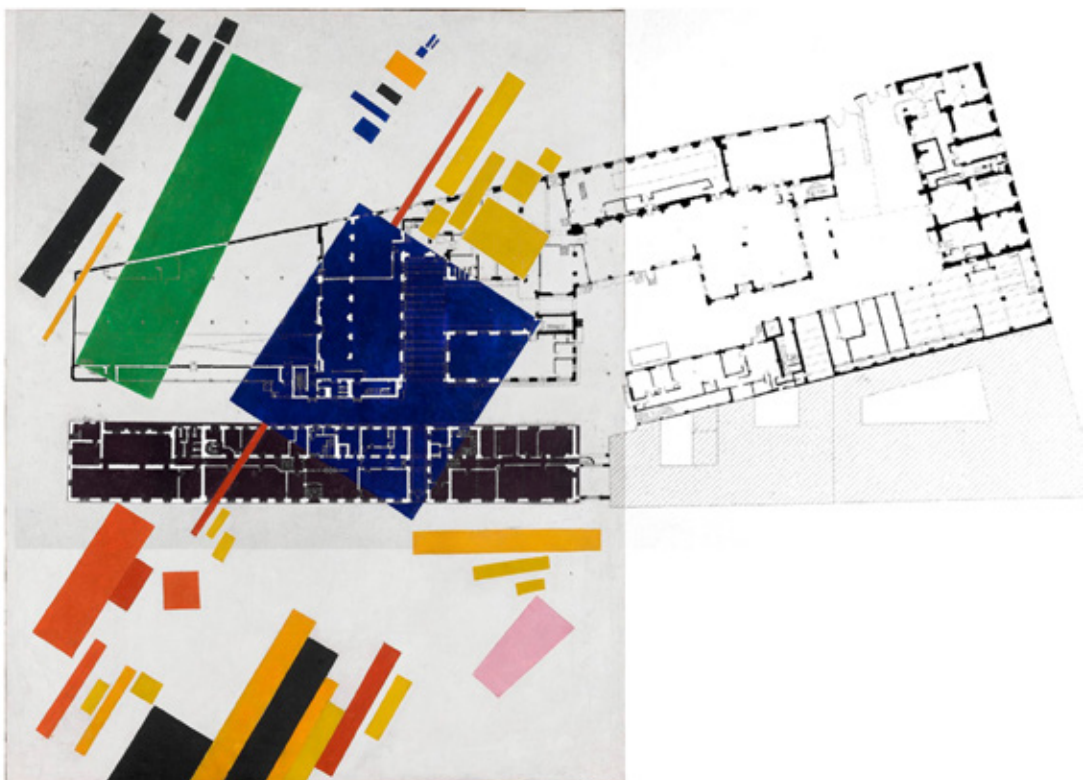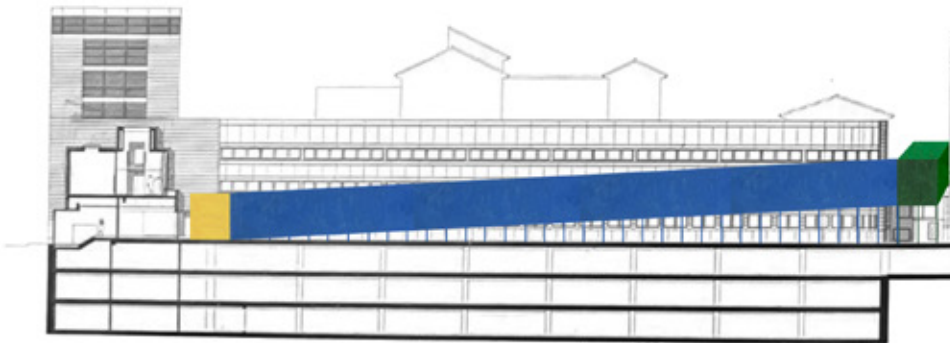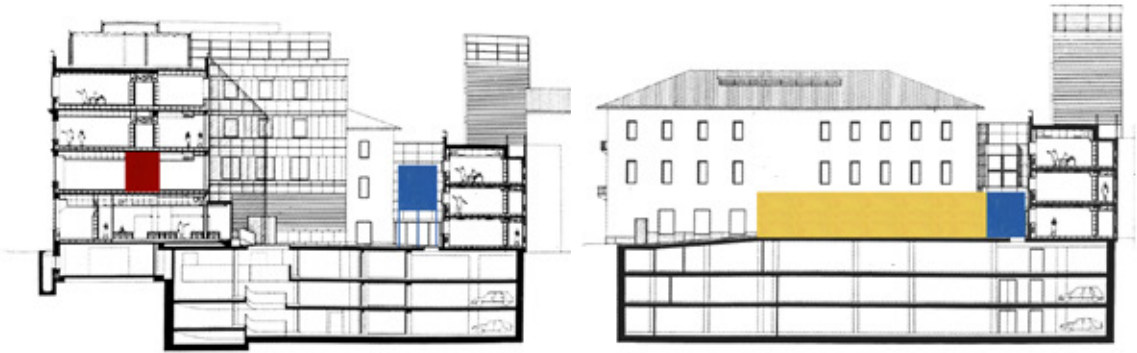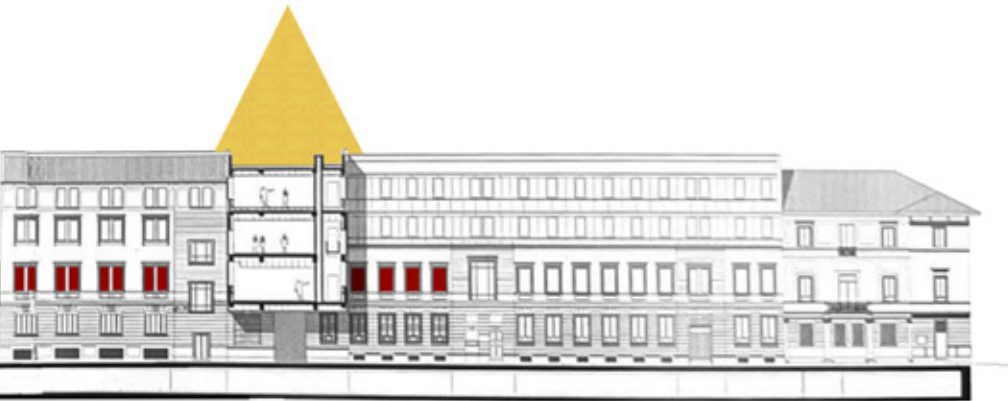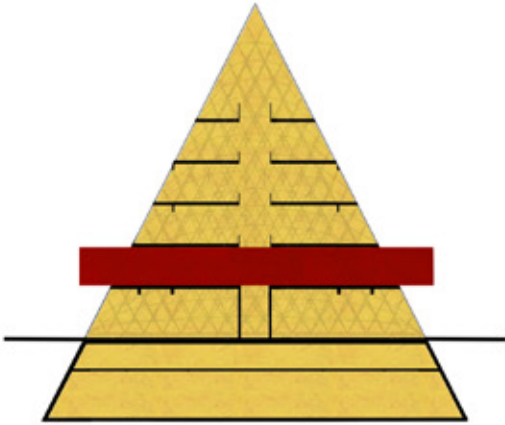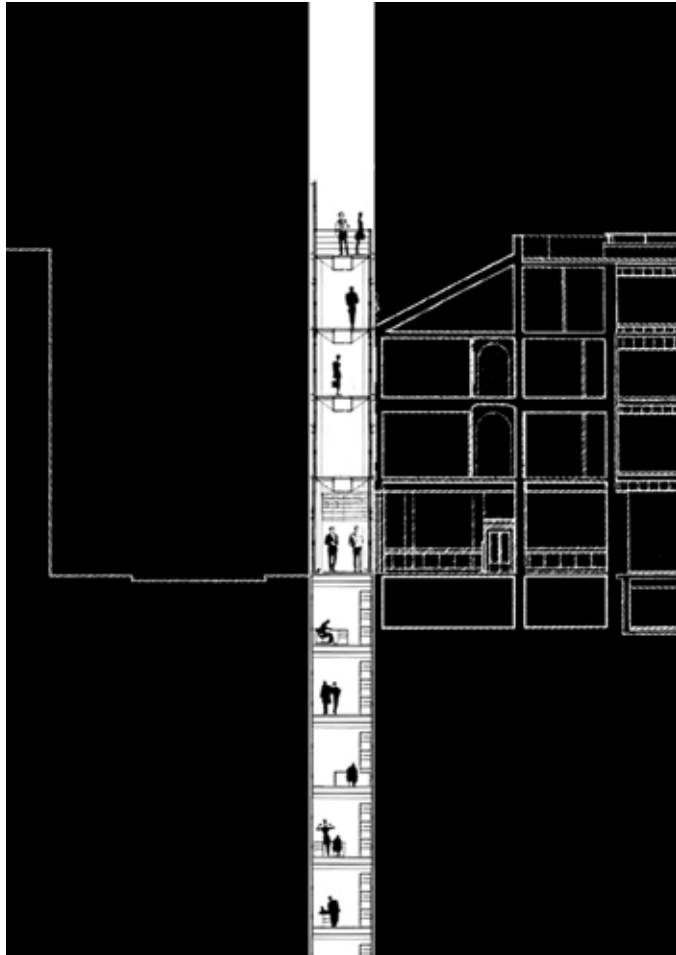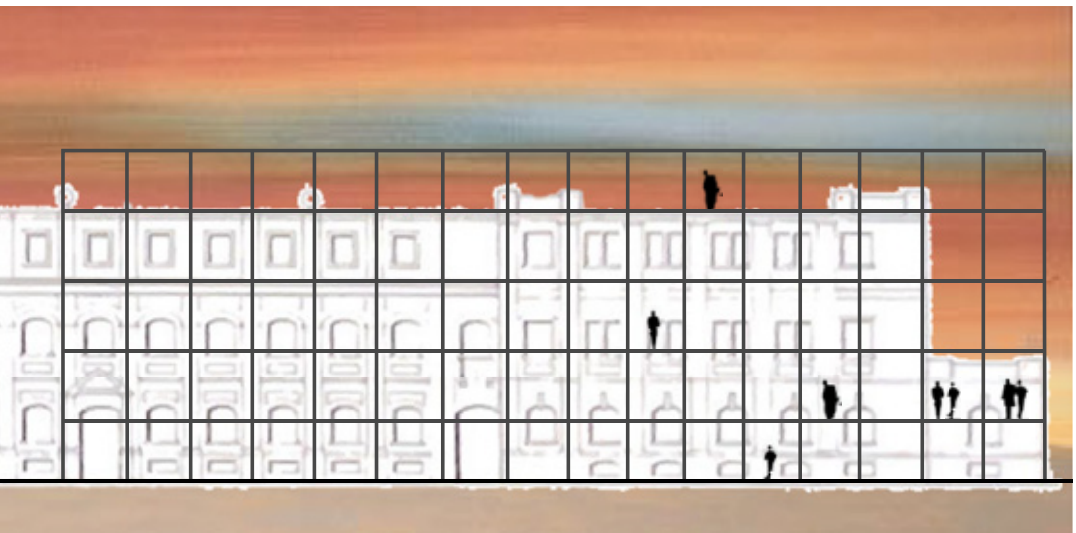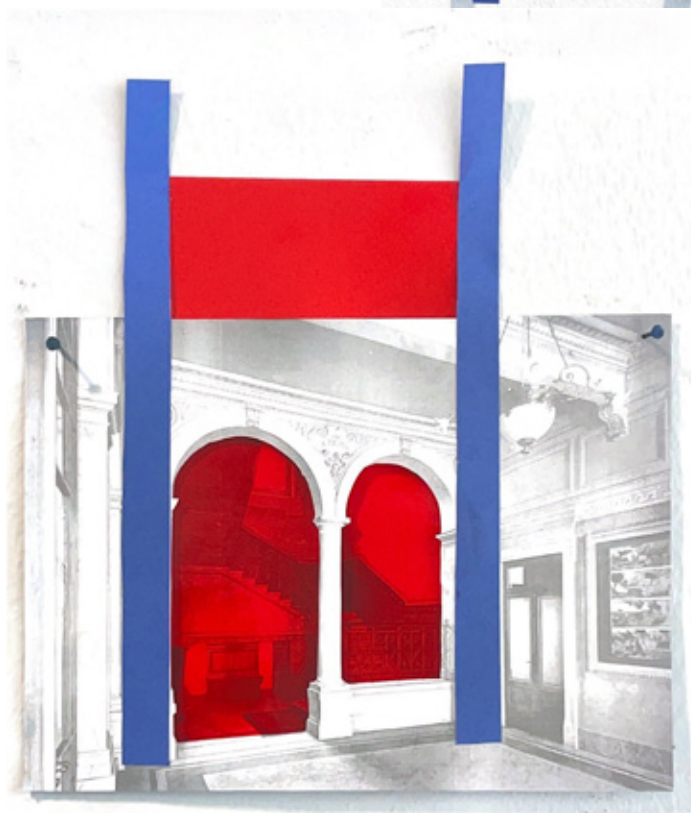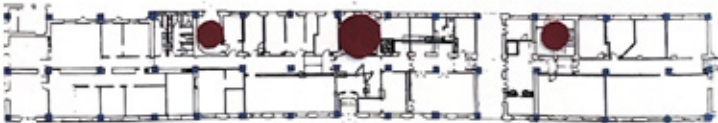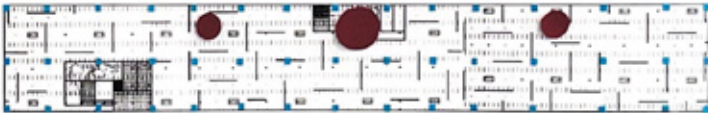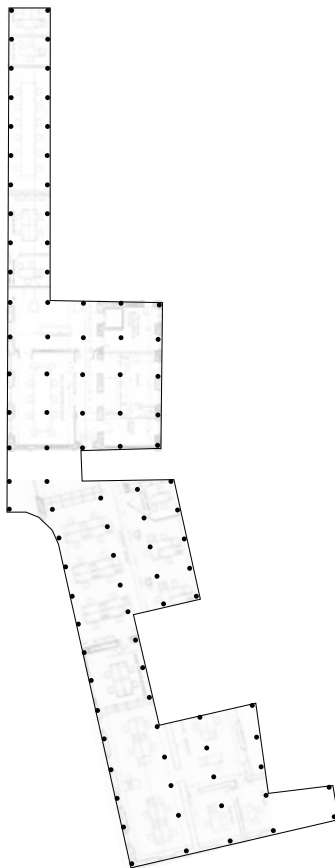
Ceci n'est pas un bureau.
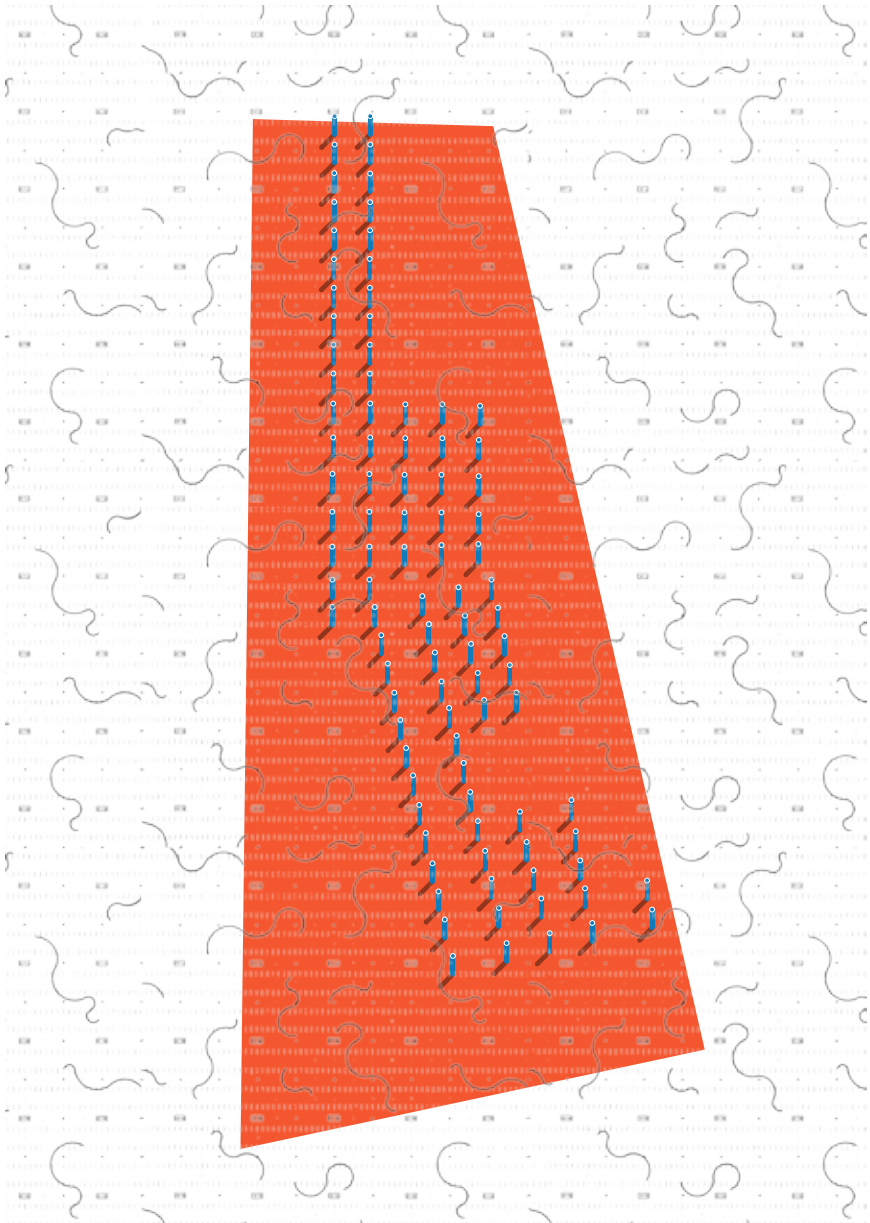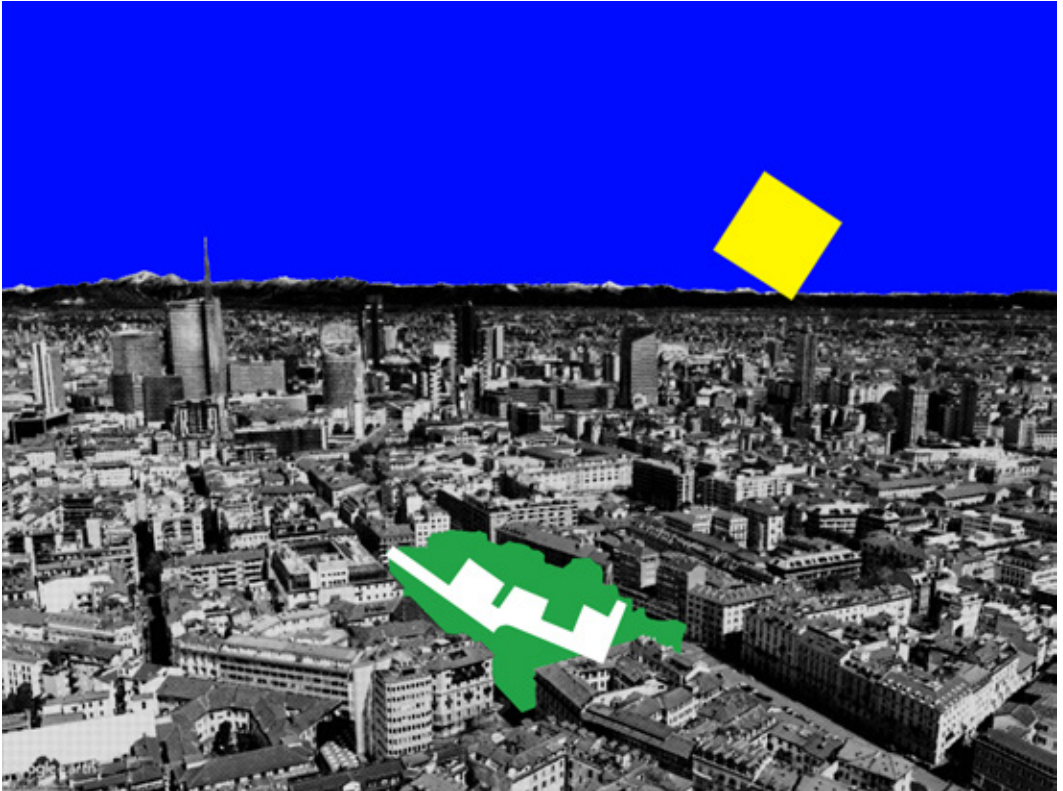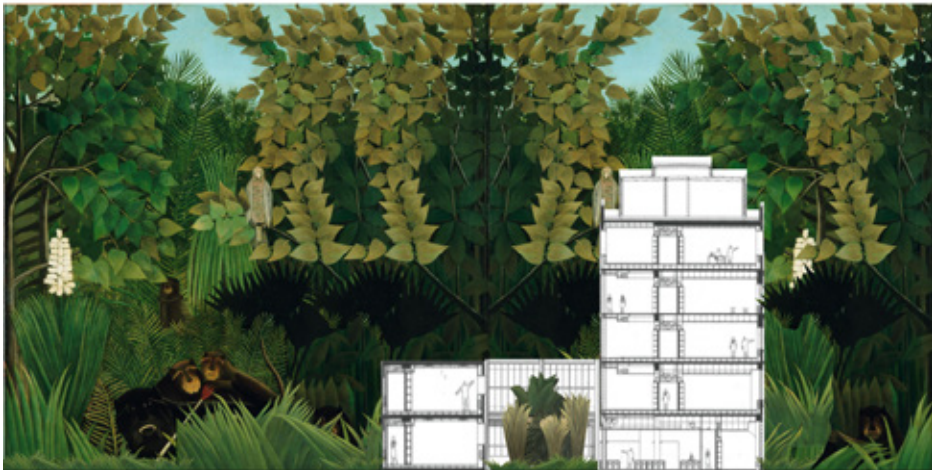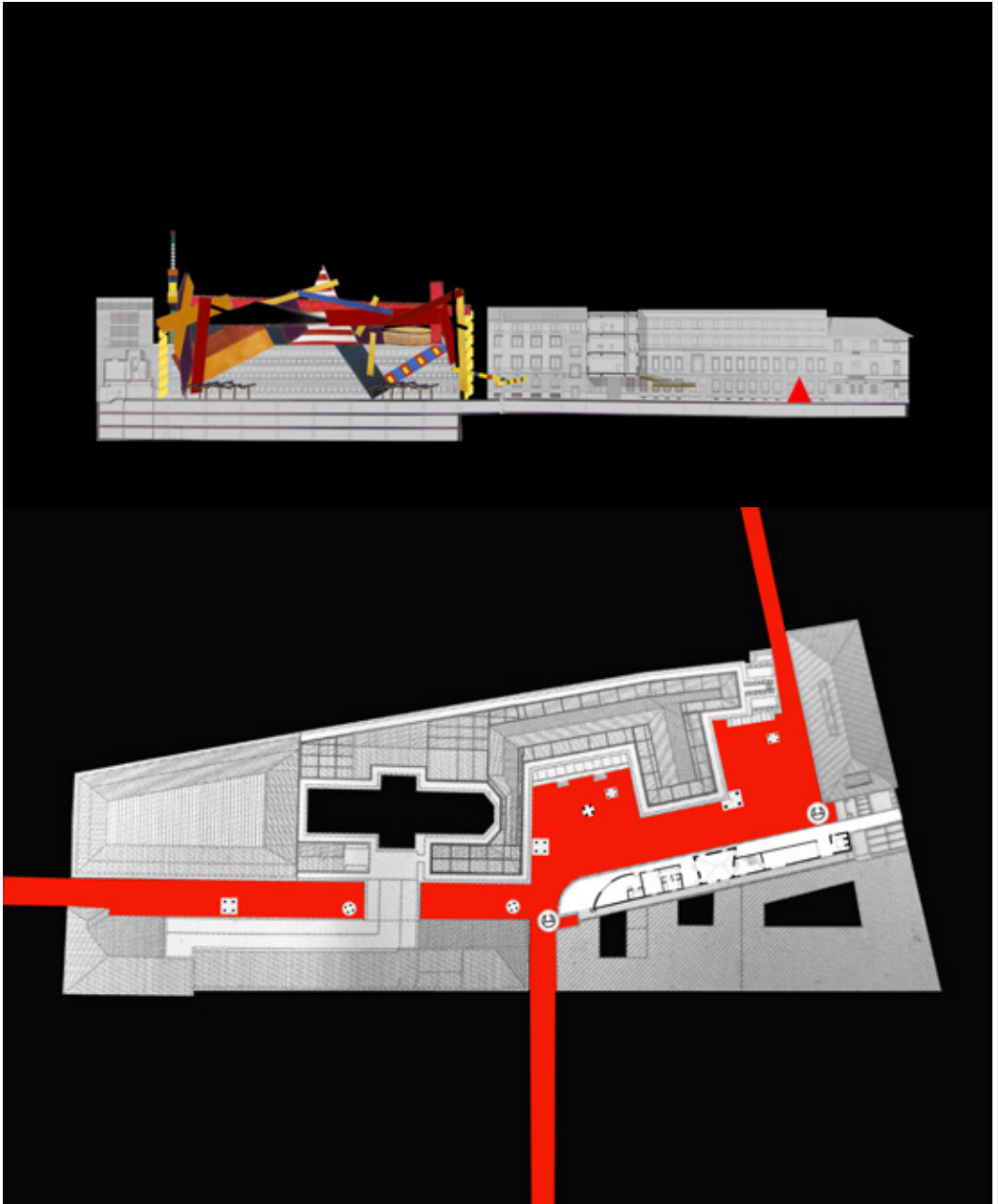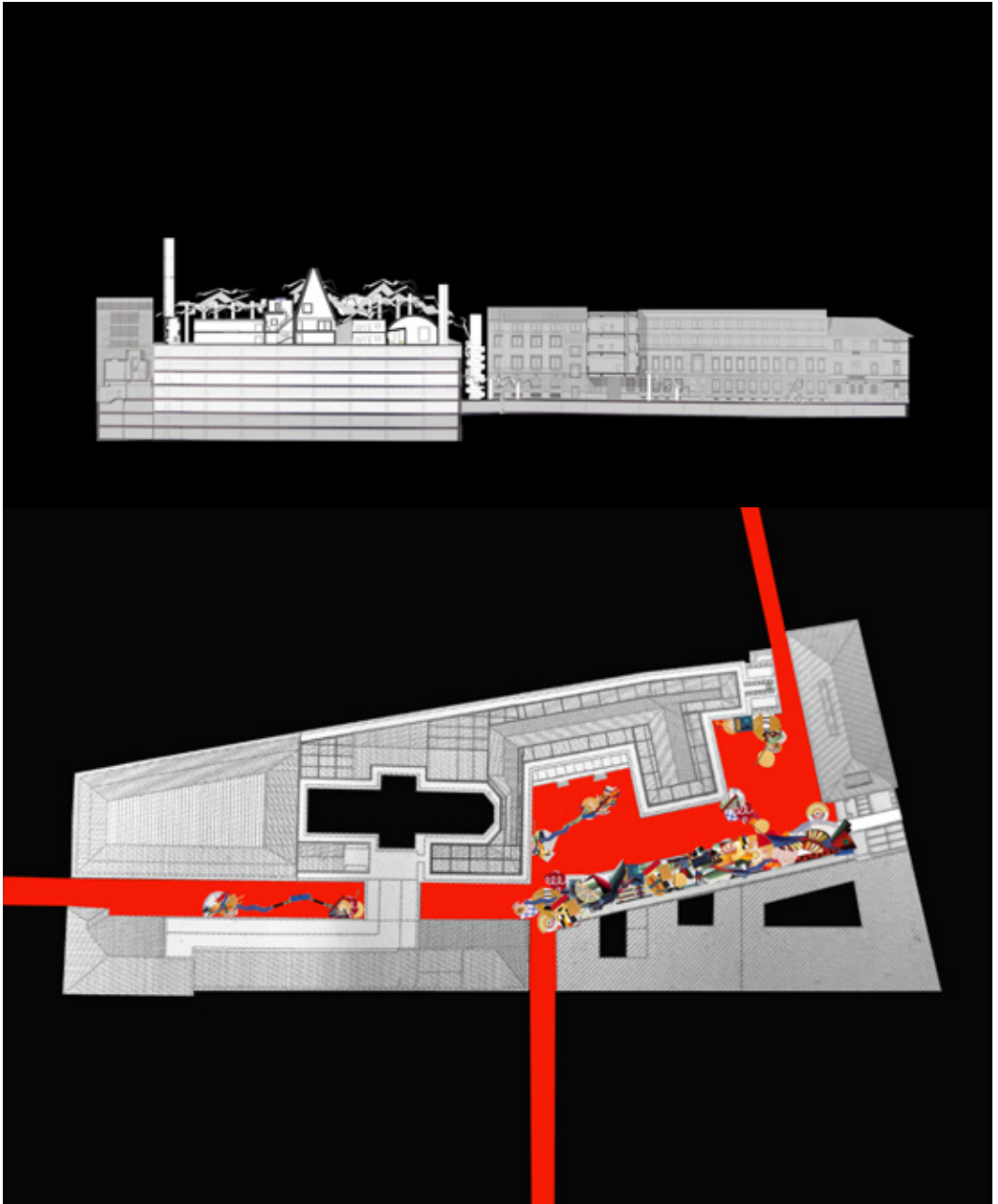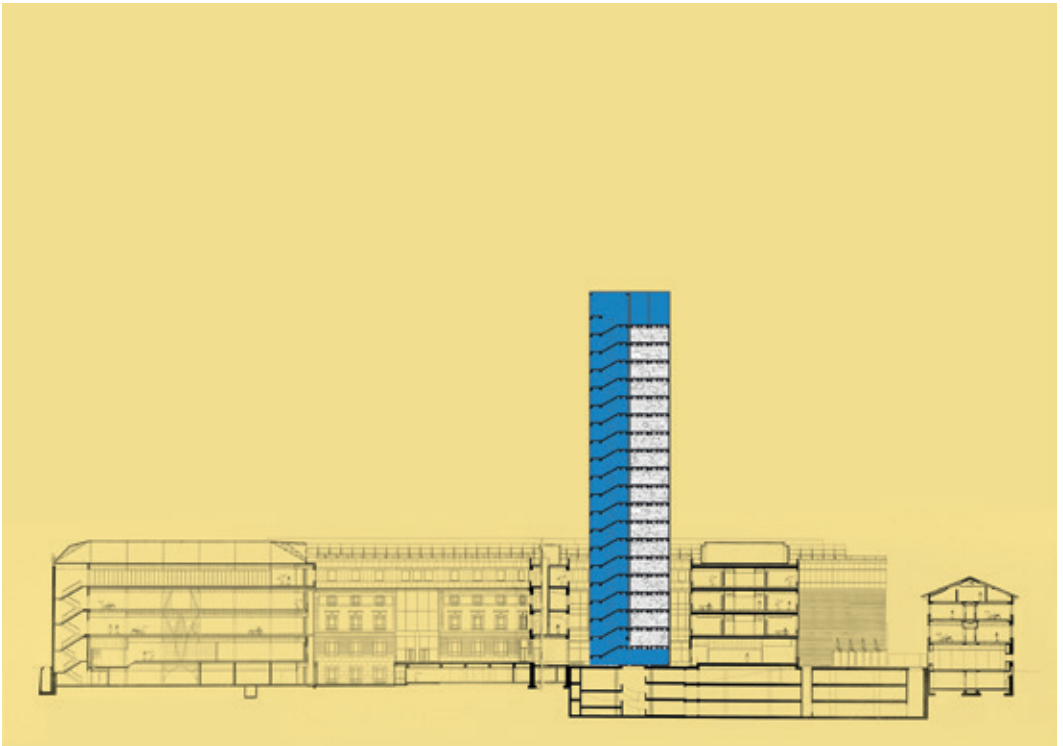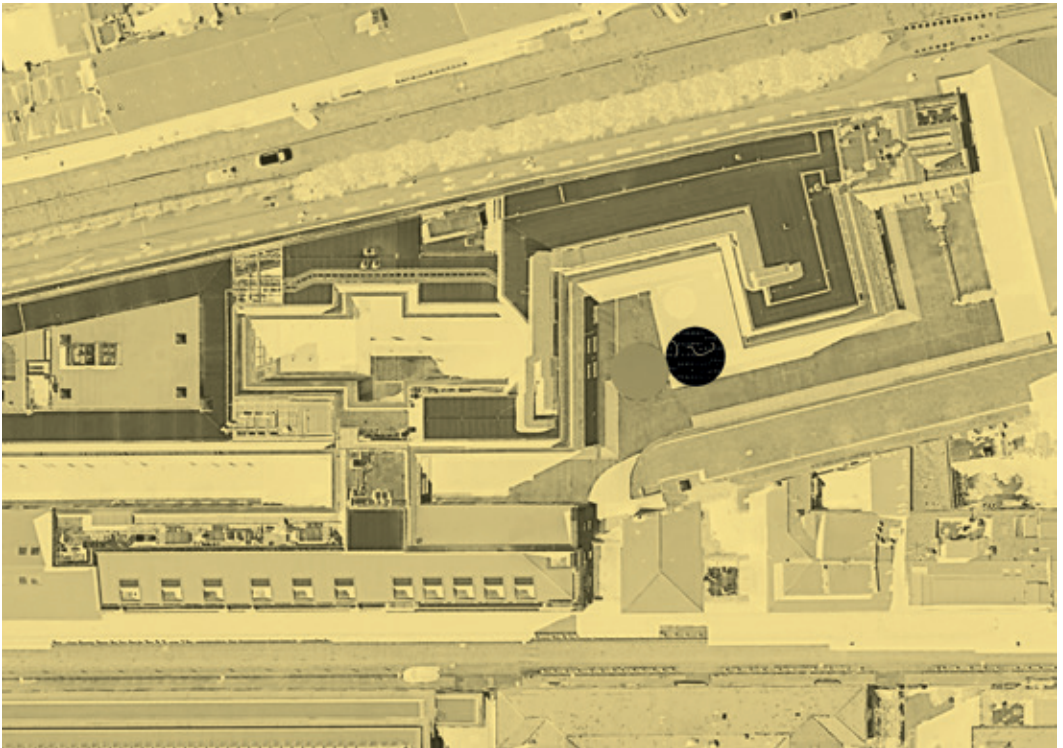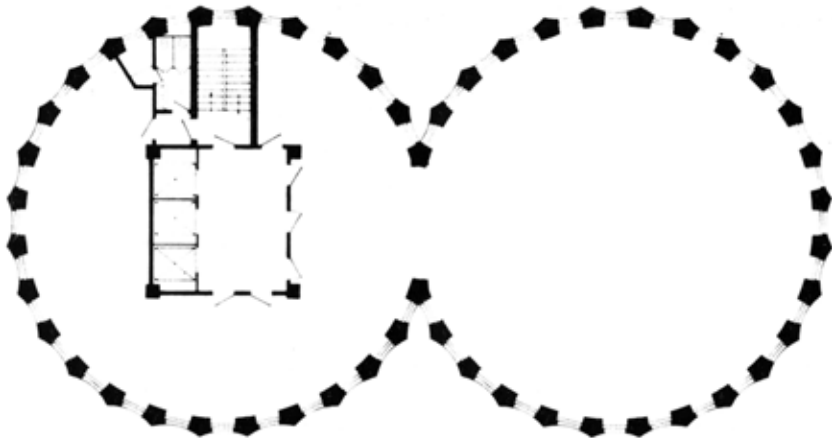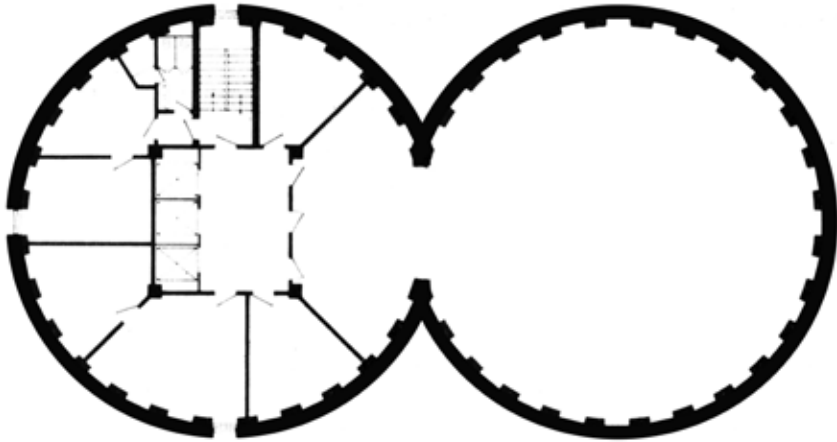
# 04. STAKEHOLDERS

# Palazzo Morando | Costume Moda Immagine. An introduction

*Ilaria De Palma*

Conservation, Historical Collections of Palazzo Morando Costume Moda Immagine

In this talk I will present an institution of the City of Milan, Palazzo Morando: the building, the collections and some issues concerning its potentiality.

Palazzo Morando is an Eighteenth-Century building set in the so-called Quadrilatero della Moda, beside the shop windows of the Fashion major maisons.

Donated to the Municipality of Milan by the countess Lydia Caprara Morando Attendolo Bolognini in 1945, this building was transformed in a museum that showed immediately a still visible double identity: on one hand there is the Museum of Milan, a gallery composed by Milanese views that show the social and urbanistic evolution of Milan between the second half of the Seventeenth and the early Twentieth Century; on the other hand, there is an evocative path through noble apartments which testify the Eighteenth-Century taste with typical furnishings and decorations.

In the past palazzo Morando hosted some of the main Milanese aristocratic families. In the early 20th Century, it was acquired by the Morando Bolognini family, and in 1945 the Countess Lydia Caprara Morando Attendolo Bolognini donated it to the Municipality together with her extraordinary collection.

Thanks to the latest restoration efforts, the palace now features the elegant exuberance of the Rococo style in the façade on via Sant'Andrea, in the courtyard, in the grand staircase and, finally, in the luxurious aristocratic apartments. The series of rooms include the Chinese Gallery, which shows Lydia Morando's passion for Eastern art, the Olimpus Hall and the Golden budoir: not only one of the oldest rooms in the palace, but also one of the best preserved.

In 2010, after the establishment of Palazzo Morando | Costume Moda Immagine, the clothes and accessories conserved in the civic collection, dated between the Seventeenth and the Twenty-first Century, found home in this building. Palazzo

Morando started exposing this collection in rotation in the rooms of the Museum of Milan. We know that clothes and fabrics must be exposed in rotation, because they need long period of darkness after the display.

With regard to the clothes and accessories belonging to the City of Milan, this particular collection was born from the idea of a group of entrepreneurs in 1874, when an extraordinary private heritage was revealed on the occasion of the Historical Industrial Art Exhibition (the birth of the collection is similar to the case of Victoria and Albert Museum in London).

Since that Exhibition several collectors decided to donate their antiquities to the Municipality.

This collection of clothes, fabrics and accessories had been exposed at the beginning of the Twentieth century at the Sforza Castle, in the supposed Ludovico il Moro's bedroom. On the right, we can see the so called "silver dress".

In another picture of the same hall, over the silver dress we can see a rich robe à l'anglaise, nowadays one of the most important specimen of the museum.

In 1934 the City of Milan bought the painter Pompeo Mariani's collection from Maria Caronni Lomazzi. It consists of about 260 textile items, most of all coming from the painter Mosè Bianchi's collection (Bianchi was Mariani's uncle).

This purchase was not an isolated act in order to get a simple enrichment of the civic collections, but a strategic decision of cultural policy: the ambitious project of creating the Museum of Milan at Palazzo Sormani in 1935. A building entirely dedicated to the history of the City.

Inside this Museum, a lot of space had been dedicated to the image and costumes of the City during the Eighteenth Century. Recently, I have picked the Andrienne belonged to Mosè Bianchi out on an old picture of a showcase in Palazzo Sormani. Bianchi wanted his model to wear it to compose his neo-rococo style paintings.

Unfortunately, as we all know, Palazzo Sormani was severely damaged during the Second World War and, after the rebuilding, it was destined to host the main municipal library. Therefore, clothes and accessories went back to the Sforza Castle. The Museum of Milan reopened at Palazzo Morando in 1958, but without clothes.

During the post war rebuilding of the Sforza Castle, the display project excluded clothes and accessories collection. Since 1972, this collection gained new importance thanks to the scholar Grazietta Butazzi.

She built up a net of relationships that guaranteed a continuous dialogue between

international and Italian museum directors, specialized restorers and sector-based Institutes such as the Italian Centre for the Study of the History of Fabrics.Her activities were focused on special care for material and for asset data. Her systematic and ordered methodology led to the first catalogue of the collection. Buttazzi also curated several exhibitions about fashion and laid the foundations for the creation of the never realized Milan Fashion Museum. Those years the realization of this museum was a lot discussed. This debate continues at present.

In 2010 the naming of Palazzo Morando Attendolo Bolognini – Museum of Milan changed, and it became Palazzo Morando | Costume Moda Immagine. This new name was due to the move of costume and fashion civic collection from Sforza Castle to Palazzo Morando.

The Palazzo Morando | Costume Moda Immagine project aimed to display in rotation clothes placed on specific platforms inside the Museum halls without any case, looking for a dialogue with paintings and the general interior setting.

I have been the curator of Palazzo Morando since 2015.

Since 2016, I decided to better protect this fragile collection displaying it (always in rotation) in a dedicated area of the Museum, the so called "Ala Nuova". In this area natural light has totally been shielded and artificial light has been arranged by using LED spotlights. In 2020, I took further action to align the Museum with international standard: a part of the Ala Nuova has been equipped with updated display cases.

The last years, visitors started considering Palazzo Morando a place where the costume and fashion civic heritage is displayed. This fact had a double effect: on one hand, an increase in public; on the other hand, an increase in donations and in loans for Italian and international exhibitions.

Considering the three "souls" of Palazzo Morando – a noble Eighteenth Century palace, the permanent collection of the Museum of Milan and the heritage of costume and fashion – I targeted a possible way to value them for my 2021 MBA dissertation, Business School of Management of Politecnico di Milano. The core is the city of Milan, the real element bringing together all these three souls: a typical Milanese building, a collection of views of Milan and Milan as Capital of fashion.

The link between Palazzo Morando and Milan requires a new naming of the Museum and a policy of rebranding to recover the connection between Palazzo Morando and its public as well as becoming attractive to different stakeholders.

Cultural tourists who visit Palazzo Morando are different: the art and fashion

specialists; very motivated visitors, usually looking for exhibitions; occasional visitors we can call "proximity public" such as people going shopping.

Considering the main topic of this conference I will focus on the enhancement of the costume and fashion collection. If we compare the governance of Palazzo Pitti in Florence to the management model of Palazzo Morando in Milan, we realize that a private partner is necessary to enhance a costume and fashion collection when a public institution can't afford to do it. For example, Palazzo Morando can't have an internal restoration laboratory for bureaucratic reasons. The continuous rotation of the textile heritage means handling clothes to set them up on mannequins. This activity must be done by highly qualified staff.

The stable presence of a laboratory would allow to activate managerial leverages: knowledge related to the care of the cultural heritage could be a real advantage for other economic sectors.

Palazzo Morando internal restoration laboratory could become a reference point for high professionals who operate in the fashion industry. Think about the apparel coming from the fashion archives of the maisons that cannot be reproduced for technical reasons (impossibility of producing a certain fabric or embroidery), that need conservation and restoration.

A further issue is the relationship with numerous fashion schools operating in Milan. If we do not consider Palazzo Morando a simple exhibition place or objects container, but source of inspiration and a place where the creative knowledge of the past is able to guide the creativity of the future, we can activate a second leverage, namely the social leverage. This would mean an enlargement from an essential artistic or aesthetic demand, to a social, cultural and educational one.

Finally, I would like to show you the complexity of the Palazzo Morando building but also its opportunities. Usually, ground floor is used for events and temporary exhibitions. The Museum of Milan, the aristocratic apartments and fashion collection are hosted on the first floor. Palazzo Morando obviously includes spaces used as storage and offices on second floor. When we transport artworks (painting, clothes, sculptures) through the museum rooms or from the museum to storage we concretely experience the complexity of the building: narrow doors, gaps between floors, narrow stares, etc.

A new idea of Palazzo Morando, as a Fashion Museum, forces us to deal with the complexity of the building and to think a repurposing of all spaces available.

# Mi.M.A.
# Milan Metropolitan Archive

*Francesco Martelli*

Document Management and Digital Preservation, Comune di Milano

The 2023 edition of the M.I.A.W. – Milan International Architecture Workshop – provided a valuable opportunity to rediscover the existing relationship between archival spaces and the preservation and transmission of memory. This rediscovery was not only theoretical, disconnected from an already existing reality, but practical, focused on institutions (and their related architectural complexes) currently engaged in the archival process of historical documentation preservation.

Specifically, the Cittadella degli Archivi benefited significantly (and gained numerous points for reflection) from the work carried out by teachers and students, who carried out projects for the redevelopment and the improvement of spaces of Via Gregorovius 15 complex, where the archival center of the Municipality of Milan is located, also in anticipation of the construction of the new storage facility Mi.M.A. (Milan Metropolitan Archive).

Within the workshop led by architect Eduardo Pesquera Gonzales, centered on the theme of the transformation of archival spaces, the Cittadella identified key points from the outset that students should address in their architectural projects.

In particular, they were tasked with designing archival spaces aimed at a participatory enhancement of the documentary heritage: not only storage and preservation rooms suitable for such purposes, but also environments capable of facilitating accessible document consultation.

Even more important, these spaces were intended to enable public interaction with the preserved heritage in the Cittadella. Here, the documentation not only needs to be protected over time and made accessible to researchers and scholars, but this documentation must also serve as inspiration for the creation of future public artrworks and projects. For the archive – to truly become a place of valorisation for

its archival heritage – its spaces must be structured in order to allow this dialogue between documents and the City.

Moreover, another essential aspect of effective redevelopment of archival spaces is their re-design to allow the architectural complex to interact with the surrounding urban

environment and community. The Niguarda District and its residents should be in a position to consider the Cittadella degli Archivi as a lively cultural hub, engaging in dialogue even without being scholars or researchers: a dialogue capable of reconnecting citizens to what the documentation reveals about the past and what that same documentation can tell about the present.

These were the requests made by the Cittadella to the students who participated in this year's edition of M.I.A.W. The results of the work, thanks to the coordination of architect Eduardo Pesquera Gonzales, were extremely satisfying.

In line with the manifesto of the workshop's intentions, «each group of the Atelier has a strong and diverse idea of transformation on the Cittadella degli Archivi». «The introduction of the robotised archive system […] optimised the spatial organization of the Cittadella, and the opportunity opened up to propose a new future for archival constructions».

«Opening up the memory of Milan to its inhabitants and continuing the work of linking contemporary art with the archives: these are some of the targets for activating and transforming the Cittadella degli Archivi».

In just two weeks of work, students, guided by architect Eduardo Pesquera Gonzales and coordinated by tutor Pedro Escoriza Torralbo, managed to develop nine innovative projects for the redevelopment of the Cittadella degli Archivi, reshaping the concept of archival spaces for public use and the effective valorisation of the preserved heritage.

Specifically, some projects reconfigured the internal spaces of the building, designating specific areas for consultation activities, others for artistic studio work – in "direct contact" with the documentation – and still others as a project laboratory for the production of new works based on previous consultations and studies.

Other areas were allocated for residential accommodation for artists, envisioning a transformation of the archival center into a "living organism" where art could consistently engage with the documentary heritage.

These dynamic spaces are capable of stimulating the creativity of students, researchers, and artists who want to undertake the challenge of rediscovering tools for contemporary art within a seemingly "dusty" past, as commonly imagined for archives.

On the other hand, other student groups delved into the theme of the physical (and social) integration of the Cittadella into the Niguarda District, envisioning it as a genuine cultural and associative hub close to the community and in communication with it.

This resulted in projects for actual physical paths radiating from the archive to the City and the other way round. These "walks" put the residents of the district in a position to visit the Cittadella, thus "visiting" their own past, history, and memory.

These projects addressed the contemporary need for an archive: to reach people because it is, in itself, the history of the people.

The proposed paths included areas for exhibitions, collections of historical memories of the Niguarda District, as well as spaces for socializing, cafes, and open areas.

There were also projects capable of turning the Cittadella itself into a contemporary public entire artwork, with bold forms that overturn the conception of the archive, even in its architectural structure. These projects were also able to encompass the already mentioned elements of spatial reorganization for the public valorisation of the documentary heritage and the integration of the archival facility into the surrounding urban fabric.

A completely new conception of what it means to preserve a documentary heritage, which visually emerges even before setting foot inside the archive.

In conclusion, the 2023 edition of M.I.A.W. was an opportunity to discover new forms of valorisation for the Cittadella degli Archivi, fully in line with the requests made to the students.

However, the reflections offered by the nine presented projects go well beyond the Via Gregorovius site. The redevelopment of archival spaces, as proposed, has significance that surpasses the specific case of the Cittadella. The students demonstrated their ability to fully grasp the inputs provided, and, thanks to the coordination of Pedro Escoriza Torralbo, they were able to turn these ideas into concrete projects that would have otherwise remained only on paper.

These ideas, in turn, were adapted and developed – in relation to the specific case of the Cittadella degli Archivi – by the architect Eduardo Pesquera Gonzales, to whom thanks are due for the work done, a sign of remarkable professionalism and sensitivity to the addressed issues.

A first-rate thanks go to Politecnico di Milano – specifically to prof. Massimo Ferrari and prof. Tommaso Brighenti – who identified in the workshop not only an opportunity for students to engage with contemporary challenges of unquestionable relevance but also an opportunity to make architecture a proactive solution to present problems and difficulties.

The Cittadella degli Archivi found not only a professional dialogue in the "Archives of Memory" edition but also commendable attention to the theme of valorising an often forgotten heritage, regarding which much still needs to be done but is already capable of offering exceptional satisfaction to those who have the desire and passion to engage with it.

# VFD
# Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo

*Elisa Mantia*

Cultural Affairs, Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano

It's no easy feat to summarise in a few lines what Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano is, that is the historic institution that has overseen the construction, maintenance, restoration and management of the Duomo monument since 1387. This would mean summarising more than 635 years of the monument's history - from when construction began in 1386 to today - and the history of the city of Milan itself in just a few lines. In fact, there is no architectural monument linked to its city in such a symbiotic way as the Duomo is, whose construction history and more depends on the *History* - with a capital 'h' - of Milan. The periods of political instability, economic prosperity and peace faced by the city correspond to the periods of greatest acceleration and wealth in the construction and decoration of the site; political crises, on the other hand, and numerous wars with resulting famines and plagues have obviously caused moments of real stalemate during construction. It is really fascinating to discover that among the papers of the continuous archive of the Fabbrica del Duomo, you can *'read'* the history of the evolution of the city of Milan. For this reason, we can rightly consider the Duomo itself as an 'archive' of the city's historical memory.

The Duomo was born first and foremost from a dream: from the will of an Archbishop, Antonio da Saluzzo, who wanted a bigger and safer church for his followers, and from the ambitions of the Lord of Milan at the time, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, in his search for approval and prestige. The latter, in an almost visionary manner for the time, wanted his court and city to compete in wealth and importance with the most important European capitals, especially France. For this reason, a new style was chosen for the construction of this immense new cathedral, which was to unify and physically 'incorporate' the two early Christian basilicas of

Santa Tecla and Santa Maria Maggiore with their respective baptisteries, on the ruins of which it was built. The Gothic - or rather, late Gothic - style of northern cathedrals was unprecedented in the city in 1386, and was so little known that in the first decades even workers had to be brought in from outside Italy. This convergence of foreign personalities, of different hands, of foreign and Italian stonemasons meeting and influencing each other in a melting pot of languages and cultures, is still very interesting for to try and picture.

In actual fact, it is very easy to explain what the Fabbrica del Duomo was in the 14th century. Imagine a typical gothic fabbriceria [church council], created to organise, on a very practical level, the work of architects, workers and stonemasons, founded to carefully manage donations from the community which, even to this day, are fundamental for construction. The Fabbrica ensured there was a highly efficient network of accountants to manage the supply of resources and materials needed to develop a construction site that was becoming increasingly troubled with structural and architectural problems that needed solving. For example, suffice to mention the thorny issue of the construction of the tiburio at the beginning of the 15th century, that being, how to close off the immense space created by the intersection of the naves with the transept. It was mind-boggling stuff, for the time!

It is more difficult to explain what is needed at the Duomo today, a Fabbrica. In fact, we can consider the construction of the monument as having been completed at the beginning of the 20th century; so, what is the use of such a complex structure, organised across three construction sites, with around two hundred employees including specialised workers, custodians and clerks, organised in the various areas of competence, from the technical to administrative and cultural to fundraising? In reality, we all carry on that crazy, visionary dream inherited from Gian Galeazzo and still continue to be a gothic fabbriceria, albeit updated to 21st century technology. And, even if today, marble is no longer transported on water through the navigli canal system, but by road, and to move statues we use cranes and hoists and ultra-modern scaffolding - masterpieces of engineering in themselves - our work and commitment to the monument actually remains very similar to that of the past.

We could perhaps even point out that our many activities over the centuries have instead expanded.

In fact, we welcome followers on a daily basis, guaranteeing the opening and the liturgical life of the monument, which never stops; I believe that the Duomo is the only the cathedral in the world that manages to make both religion and tourism coexist in a difficult daily balance. We also welcome tourists that visit every year: in 2023 in particular we reached almost three million visitors, for whom opening the monument's doors is certainly not enough. We ensure there are guards and a permanent presence inside the cathedral, on the terraces and inside the Duomo Museum, with the often difficult task of managing the security of a site deemed 'sensitive' and therefore subject to anti-terrorism regulations and supervised by the public security authorities.

We bring to life all the cultural activities that are the heart of our work and that revolve around the Duomo Museum, some 2000 square metres of a true archive of the construction history of the monument, in the Fabbrica Archive, which I have already mentioned, and the Musical Chapel. And I could mention the concerts, exhibitions, conferences, presentations on restoration works, the publication of specific editions, the study and collaboration with restorers, scholars, the university and research world, from the Politecnico to the various universities in Milan.

Thanks to the work of the three sites - Cava Madre in Candoglia, the stonemasons' workshop on Via Brunetti in Milan, and the Cathedral - we are able to independently manage both regular and specialised maintenance of the monument. Work is planned and scheduled for many years to come, be it through periodic safety checks, or specialised restoration works, in what is a never-ending task. It is difficult to image the Duomo not covered in scaffolding! The very material it is built from, Candoglia marble with its delicate and recognisable pinkish colour, is both beautiful and fragile, and needs continuous and relentless maintenance. Just as in the 14th century, marble is still quarried in Candoglia, the same the Cathedral was originally built from, but in a much smaller quantity than in the past, about 300 cubic metres a year, which is the same quantity quarried in Carrara in two days. Even today, statues and ornamental elements are still made, through the manual and creative skills of stonemasons and ornamentalists, to create identical reproductions of sculptures and elements that for conservation and safety reasons can no longer remain on the monument. The pieces that have deteriorated are remade and replaced with new ones, in a constant task of recovery and continuity, of ceaseless care for the monument, so that everything is always

in order, so that everything is always safe, so that everything is always balanced. Works that have completed their lifecycle on the monument are gathered in a magical and poetic place which, at the Fabbrica, in a perhaps unglamorous way, we call a 'cemetery', where infinite mute figures have settled over the centuries: an archive, once again, of the memory of what has been.

From this archive of history, however, a successful fundraising idea was born in recent years: the *Adopt a statue* project, which grew out of the decade-old and much more financially demanding *Adopt a spire* project.

A number of disused statues in storage are restored and loaned to private individuals for a maximum of about three years, for a fee that then supports work on the monument. This is an interesting form of synergy between the Soprintendenza Archeologia, belle arti e paesaggio per la città metropolitana di Milano [Milan's Cultural Heritage Department], the Fabbrica del Duomo and private companies which, with an unexpected awareness, welcome a piece of the Duomo into their spaces. It is also a clever way for statues destined to remain in storage with no use, to return to tell the story of the monument even outside the Duomo itself. An archive that once again opens up and tells a centuries-old story.

# The historical archive of Fondazione Corriere della Sera

*Francesca Tramma*

Historical Archives, Corriere delle Sera

The participation of Corriere della Sera historical archive at MIAW 2023 (entitled "Archives of Memory") was an extraordinary opportunity to meet other organizations like ours, but above all, to look at our cultural heritage from a totally different point of view.

The architectural project designed by Filipe Magalhães and his team perfectly conveyed the vision and perspective of our heritage and history into the context concrete physical reality.

Indeed, the environment imagined has deeply understood the meaning and value of our memory, proposing a transparent tower which, from the past (underground) through the present (courtyard), projects towards the future (upper floors), in a line of continuity of ideas and projects, but also in a more strictly archival line of succession for the preservation, inventory, and use of the documents we safeguard.

This is the future's perspective I hope for our archival material and we have been working to for a long time, especially in the latest period, in anticipation of the major goal of the 150th anniversary of Corriere della Sera, and we are ready to lead our history into a new and digital future.

Fondazione Corriere della Sera was founded in 2001, in order to manage the historical and cultural heritage of the newspaper. The archival material is a documentary treasure of inestimable value: it is composed by thousands of letters, editorial documentation both in draft and published form, magazines and newspapers collection, over 100.000 original drawings and over one million photographs. This material occupies a 2 km long surface and covers a period from 1876 to 2000s.

In order to promote this archival heritage properly, it is important to make it

available to all users, both researchers or generic, and to ensure the best preservation in the long term.

To reach this goal, Fondazione adopted since 2004 a specially-designed intranet database, which has always been updated to the newest one, but last year it became obsolete. Therefore, we started to migrate all the stored information in a new platform, conceived to describe and manage different typologies of materials as well as digital objects.

This web platform uses an open-source software to collect data and metadata referred to analogic and digital materials and it complies with national and international standard of archival sector, moreover the harvested resources are accessible and interoperable with other IT systems.

This database will also make it possible to share the thousands of digital objects that were previously generated in recent years on the basis of an organized, systematic digitization project of different archival fonds, and following consolidated rules and guidelines of digitization procedures.

Indeed, our main goal has always been to retrieve, preserve and make accessible all documentary and iconographic materials, and at the same time we have looked for new ways of arranging this cultural heritage and linking it to the present time. This purpose will allow the Corriere della Sera company to consolidate its brand identity over time while looking to the future. Our historical archive becomes dynamic and it is perceived as a company asset creating cultural and economic value and becoming a true social attractor.

For this reason, to ensure that the archival material remains relevant and maintains its value for the future, it must face the new digital world that is establishing itself ever more rapidly and is significantly changing society.

First of all, we must focus on what makes us unique. We are a newspaper archive, we produce information that becomes memory.

Faced by this rapid digital transformation and the proliferation of millions of online archives, data, information and images always available to all users in an eternal present, we must relaunch our archival materials and we must become the key players of this process, because we have an important tradition and a prestigious history, so we are able to build the culture of tomorrow at the service of the company, by spreading and making accessible our very relevant cultural heritage.

We have a deep knowledge of our archive, therefore we focus on its added value as documentary complex, composed by papers, image materials and objects closely connected and combined each other as embedded and verified resources. These archival resources guarantee trustworthy searches, and they are not only a deposit of dusty papers, but they become a cultural system in which each object intertwines with the information preserved in the documents.

The original documents tell, enrich and contextualize the drawings and photographs related to them, and allow to create new forms of experimentation without losing their significance and value thanks to the rich contextual documentation.

The spreading of large digital databases—which promotes the use of symbolic and abstract images increasingly removed from any context, more engaging but semantically lacking and whose evocative power can easily be adapted to new meanings and purposes—further underscores the special value of our archive in which materials remain closely tied to their original fonds to provide sense to the historical memory with precise references to time and place.

In a world increasingly inundated with ethereal information arriving from sources that are not always verifiable, the material nature of our archive, together with the correct design of the future digital archive, are a powerful antidote to data manipulation, thus guaranteeing the preservation of the authenticity, reliability and authoritativeness of the information provided and which will become our memory.

The real revolution is opposite to this trend and focuses on original resources. It is essential that the document, representing the company's history, be reset in a contemporary context based on quality and credibility.

Furthermore, IT applications offer an excellent tool because of their ability to represent enlarged systems, to simplify and to broad complex and cross researches, that will open our archive to new and unexpected directions which could become the basis of new ideas for tomorrow and reveal the social value of historical memory.

The challenge, today, lies in being able to develop usability of the archive, to have it become the prospect through which to build story-telling and open multiple pathways of ideas and creativity. A world teeming with memory, values, identity and belonging in which the archive will be perceived as an asset for all and increasingly accessible to users, the local area and the community.

This is the cultural and collective involvement we aspire to and which we intend creating, one that will allow people to evolve from being culture consumers to becoming builders of a shared cultural project.

It must be reminded that, for a long time, newspapers were the only major means of mass communication that brought the news to the farthest reaches of the country, their pages becoming a place people could identify with and where they could build their own community. Our materials bear witness to an era, to a world, to a social fabric in which entire generations of Italians can identify, because they are sources which are reliable, authoritative, believable and verified.

Corriere della Sera has always paid great importance to its readers. Indeed, back in 1876, in his first editorial, "Pubblico, vogliamo parlarti chiaro" [People, we want to be clear with you], chief editor Eugenio Torelli Viollier knew exactly who his audience was: people connected to the city with shared interests and shared political and cultural aspirations. And the newspaper has never stopped evolving and changing with the times, bearing clearly in mind this relationship which we, custodians of our historical memory, must recover in archival terms of integrity, authenticity and accessibility.

# 06. AUTHORS PROFILES

**Francesca Belloni** is an architect with a PhD in Architectural Composition (2007). Currently, she is researcher in Architectural and Urban Design at the ABC Department, Politecnico di Milano. She is the author of several articles and essays and of some books. Beside her research activities, she is a designer of several architectural proposals and has taken part in numerous competitions.

**Tommaso Brighenti** (Parma, 1985), architect, PhD, Researcher in Architectural and Urban Design at the Department of Architecture, Built Environment and Construction Engineering (DABC) of the Politecnico di Milano.

**Helder Casal Ribeiro** is a Portuguese architect graduated from FAUP in 1992 where obtained also his Ph.D. (2013). Since 1999 he lectures in Design Studio of FAUP and is currently an auxiliary professor and head professor of 1st year Design Studio in Master Course. He is also a visiting professor at Politecnico di Milano in Mantova campus and in ABC Ph.D programme of Leonardo Campus. He develops professional activity since 1992. Has received National Award IHRU 2008_Construction for Social Housing Project in Porto.

**Paolo Cascone** is an AA-trained architect with a Ph.D. at the intersection of environmental engineering and sustainable architecture. He is the founding director of CODESIGNLAB and Senior Lecturer in Architecture and Environmental Design at the University of Westminster in London, where he is also leading research on eco-digital construction and off-grid housing solutions. His work has been exhibited and published widely. He is the scientific director of the African Fabbers project

**Raffaella Cavallaro** is an architect and PhD candidate in Architectural, Urban and Interior Design at Politecnico di Milano, where she has been researching and supporting teaching since 2019. Her research focuses on architecture for education, exploring models and strategies for innovative learning spaces.

**Domenico Chizzoniti** is an architect who holds a PhD from the Università IUAV of Venice. Since 2022 he is a full professor at ABC Department, Politecnico di Milano. He has taught in different universities across Italy, including the Faculty of Architecture of Parma, and Politecnico di Milano. He is the editor in charge of TECA Books Collections "Teorie della Composizione Architettonica". He has published more than 150 scientific papers in the field of Architectural Design and Theory. He took part as an author in several books and his work has been published in international journals and magazines.

**Barbara Coppetti** is Associate Professor in Architecture and Urban Design at the DAStU Department, Politecnico di Milano. She develops her research on the project of open spaces in public buildings with specific attention to educational areas and sustainable architecture. She participates in international conferences and design competitions; she's curator of exhibitions, author of books and articles published in specialized magazines.

**Ilaria De Palma** Conservator of Cultural Heritage at the Historical Museums Service of the Municipality of Milan

**Annalucia D'Erchia** is architect, PhD in Architecture, Built Environment and Construction Engineering at Polimi, and Phd candidate at Università di Bari, field of interest Architectural Composition related to Archaeology. Since 2014 she is tutor of Architectural Design studio at the same Institution in Milano and Mantova.

**Pedro Escoriza** is an architect and engineer, holder of an assignment of research fellowship at the Politecnico di Milano since 2021. His research activity focuses on architectural composition and its relationship with cultural heritage. He has been an assistant in several courses at the Politecnico di Milano.

**Massimo Ferrari** is an architect, PhD Architectural Composition, Associate Professor in Architectural and Urban Design at the ABC Department, Politecnico di Milano. Since 2017 he has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Scientific Society Icar 14 PROARCH. He is curator of publications on architecture and art and directs his research mainly to urban design and the relationship between form and structure.

**Antje Freiesleben** born in Sulzbach-Rosenberg, studied architecture at Hochschule der Künste of Berlin from 1985 to 1993. In 1994 with Johannes Modersohn she founded the Modersohn & Freiesleben studio. Since 1995 she has been a member of the Chamber of Architects of Berlin and from 1998 to 2004 collaborated with the Department of Urban Planning and Design of UDK. She has been an invited professor in various prominent institutions such as the Bauhaus University in Weimar and University of Siegen.

**Filipe Magalhães** (Porto, 1987) graduated in architecture at Faculdade de Arquitectura do Porto. He collaborated with Harry Gugger in Basel and Sanaa in Tokyo. Filipe co-founded Fala in 2013 and is currently a phd researcher at FAUP. Besides his current teaching positions in Lisbon and Milan, Filipe is regularly invited as a teacher, guest critic and lecturer to various international schools and institutions. Fala's work has been exhibited and published widely in biennials, single and collective exhibitions and printed media.

**Houssam Mahi** is a PhD candidate in Architectural and Urban Composition at Politecnico di Milano. His research focuses on exploring the concept of hybridity, with particular attention to the hybridization of architectural composition processes. He is also engaged in professional practice and research with ARGON, which he co-founded in 2017, and with the FLATTEN collective, founded in 2023.

**Elvio Manganaro** (1976), Ph.D. in Architectural Composition, is a researcher in Architectural and Urban Design at the ABC Department of the Politecnico di Milano. His main research fields concern composition, investigated both in its theoretical and procedural structures and in the educational traditions, with a particular focus on the Italian geography of the schools of architecture.

**Elisa Mantia** Coordinator of the cultural area of the Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano

**Francesco Martelli** Director of the Citadel of Archives of the Municipality of Milan

**Francesco Martinazzo** is an architect and PhD (2024) in Architecture, Built Environment and Construction Engineering from Politecnico di Milano. He is a contract professor in Architectural Design and a researcher in design education. Since 2019, he is also a co-founder of Libreria Potlatch in Milan.

**Ruzanna Meliksetyan** (1999), is an architect, holds a Master's degree in Architecture and Urban Design form Politecnico di Milano. Previously studied in National University of Architecture and Construction of Armenia. Since 2022, has been actively collaborating with ABC Department as a teaching assistant and for other research activities.

**Eduardo Pesquera González** born in Santander in 1964, architect, graduate of E.T.S Madrid (Madrid University) in 1989 with honours. Grant holder of the Spanish Academy of Fine Arts in Rome in 1994/95. Since 1991, partner and co-founder of « dMPU arquitectos » with Jesús Ulargui and Sergio de Miguel until 1999 when he founds « up arquitectos ».
Associate Professor of the Department of Architectonic Projects of the Madrid E.T.S since 1995.

**Michele Porcelluzzi** is an architect and PhD candidate in Architectural, Urban and Interior Design at Politecnico di Milano. His research activity is focused on the concept of collectiveness in architectural and urban design. He is a member of ILA&UD – International Laboratory for Architecture & Urban Design – and a founding member of the research project Assume There's a Landscape.

**Giulia Setti** is an architect, PhD, Assistant Professor of Architectural and Urban Design at DAStU Department, Politecnico di Milano. Her research focuses on design strategies to reuse industrial or productive architectures, and to the contemporary public spaces, with particular interest in the design transformations underway in Milan.

**Claudia Tinazzi** (Verona 1981) architect, Ph.D. in Architectural Composition, is a researcher in Architectural and Urban Design at the ABC Department of the Politecnico di Milano. Her research activity concerned the figure of Aldo Rossi, since 2015 she has been dealing with the topic of the architecture of schools.

**Francesca Tramma** Head of the Historical Archive of the Corriere della Sera Foundation

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