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MONDADORI

DESIGNWINDOW





Il deck davanti al fronte vetrato del soggiorno, lo spazio in pietra del living all'aperto e la piscina, che si proietta a sbalzo sul paesaggio roccioso del parco nazionale delle Cumbres (le vette) di Monterrey.

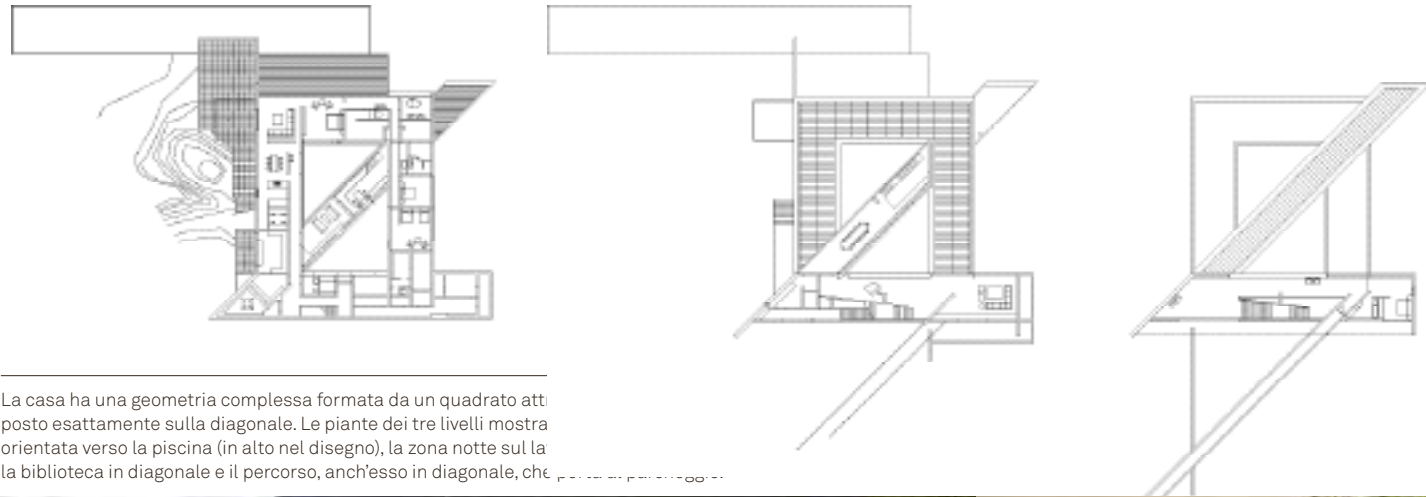
ANDO SOPRA MONTERREY

GEOMETRIA ABITABILE: CEMENTO *a vista* e PARETI *trasparenti*, PANORAMI *spettacolari* e una VASCA D'ACQUA *sospesa sopra Monterrey*. Questo è il PAESAGGIO MESSICANO *secondo Tadao Ando*

progetto di
TADAO ANDO ARCHITECT & ASSOCIATES;
TADAO ANDO, KAZUYA OKANO

foto di Edmund Sumner
testo di Alessandro Rocca

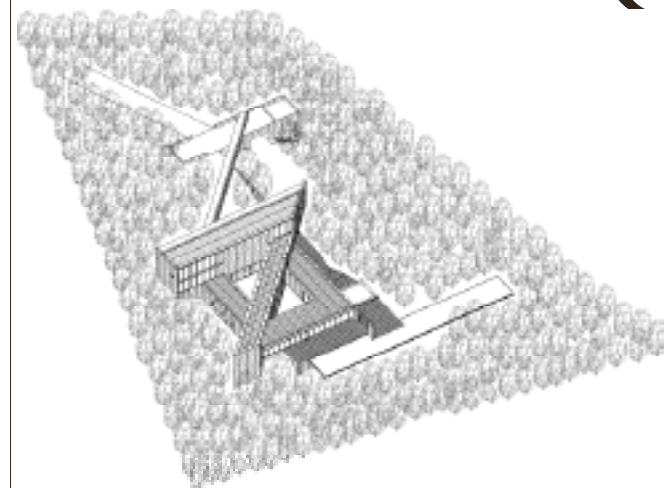




La casa ha una geometria complessa formata da un quadrato atteso esattamente sulla diagonale. Le piante dei tre livelli mostra orientata verso la piscina (in alto nel disegno), la zona notte sulla biblioteca in diagonale e il percorso, anch'esso in diagonale, che



Veduta della piscina con il soggiorno all'aperto, definito da un portale in cemento e ombreggiato dalla pensilina posta davanti alla porta finestra del soggiorno interno. Un dettaglio del raccordo con la rampa che conduce al parcheggio e all'area di accesso alla proprietà.



Oggi Tadao Ando, 73 anni, a, dopo aver costruito in tutto il mondo, aver attraversato diverse fasi e aver guadagnato una nuova notorietà, Ando è uno dei maggiori protagonisti della scena contemporanea, almeno dall'inizio degli anni Ottanta, le sue opere furono pubblicate sulle pagine di "Casabella" che, in modo sistematico, dedicò allo stesso oggetto un intero quaderno speciale. È stato un architetto precoce e inquieto, che si è affermato come un campione del postmodernismo e che ha poi intrapreso una ricerca di novità, di originalità e di audacia che lo ha portato a risultati che spesso hanno diviso il giudizio della critica. Nelle sue diverse stagioni ha sperimentato il gusto acre della materia bruta, si è sottoposto all'ascesi del minimalismo più rigoroso e ha

esplorato una nuova monumentalità basata sui solidi geometrici ma adesso la rincorsa verso nuovi traguardi sembra finita. Forse, si è liberato dall'obbligo di essere innovativo e sorprendente a tutti i costi e adopera il suo talento senza inibizioni né ideologie, puntando al miglior risultato possibile. E forse riesce proprio così, grazie a questa nuova freschezza, a essere più innovativo e contemporaneo di quanto lo fosse negli anni inquieti della sua maturità. Il risultato di questo Ando recente è molto positivo per tutti: per i suoi clienti, che si possono godere ottimi spazi organizzati in modo sorprendente, e per i critici, che non sono più costretti a lambiccarsi il cervello per interpretare gli intellettualismi di un maestro che, peraltro, è famoso per parlare molto poco e per non scrivere affatto.

Questa bella casa sulle alture di Monterrey, in Messico, conferma questa tendenza recente alla semplificazione, alla composizione per volumi liberi, alla concatenazione degli spazi.



Un angolo monumentale all'incrocio tra il volume del soggiorno e il corpo in diagonale.



Ando pratica una libertà d'invenzione che unisce la forza plastica, di lontana origine lecorbusiana, a una capacità di controllo della visione che è molto teatrale, negli interni, e che negli esterni ha una chiara ispirazione paesaggistica.

Il Centro Roberto Garza Sada, un edificio universitario appena costruito da Ando nel centro di Monterrey, sviluppa in pieno questi caratteri con un'energia che rasenta la brutalità, con una specie di ostentata e scultorea forza muscolare. Nella casa che presentiamo qui si ritrovano la stessa energia e la stessa determinazione, nell'accostare volumi apparentemente estranei in accoppiamenti forzati, ma usate con maggior grazia, con tutta l'attenzione necessaria per non mettere a rischio il comfort, l'eleganza e la capacità di accoglienza che si richiedono a un ambiente domestico. Certamente, i virtuosismi non mancano, anzi, ma si svolgono su un piano di maggiore leggerezza, enfatizzano la dimensione spettacolare, che è importante in una villa di gran lusso, ma si preoccupano di raccordare con cura ogni spazio, ogni scorcio e ogni materiale in un racconto continuo in cui le differenze e le discontinuità, alla fine, si compongono in un'immagine unitaria. Un racconto punteggiato di emozioni, di momenti spettacolari, come lo è la lastra trasparente della

piscina che si slancia, come una incorporea lama di luce, oltre il ciglio della collina, per restare appesa nel vuoto sopra il panorama della città di Monterrey. Ed è sintomatico, dell'arte di Ando, il modo in cui è circoscritto e riparato il soggiorno all'aperto affacciato sulla vasca della piscina: da una parte, con un elegante portale in cemento tassellato dai fori della carpenteria, una vera e propria firma dell'architetto giapponese e, dall'altro lato, dalla visiera che si protende sulla porta finestra che dà accesso al soggiorno interno. Elementi architettonici liberi, autonomi, disegnati secondo il lessico asciutto del modernismo, che si presentano come oggetti scultorei che non rivelano immediatamente la propria funzione.

La casa stessa, nel suo insieme, è pensata come un conflitto tra figure e volumi contrastanti, tra uno schema generale fondato sul quadrato e il volume diagonale che lo trafigge o lo oltrepassa ancorandosi al ciglio del costone soprastante. Il problema del raccordo tra le due figure diventa il tema del progetto: all'interno, la corte è tagliata in due triangoli che sono trattati in modi opposti, uno spazio diventa un rigoglioso giardino verde e l'altro un giardino grigio, senza natura, composto solo di una vasca d'acqua, che lo rende inaccessibile e che riflette la luce proiettata dalla parete vetrata e dai

Il corpo in diagonale ospita gli spazi più rappresentativi, come il lunghissimo tavolo da pranzo che si affaccia sulla corte triangolare interamente occupata da uno specchio d'acqua.

Il bagno e la camera da letto principale che si affacciano sulla corte triangolare verde, simmetrica alla corte d'acqua.

Nella pagina a fianco, il piano terra del corpo diagonale con la libreria e la vetrata affacciata sullo spazio della corte d'acqua; la scala libera sale al lungo soppalco, una galleria sospesa al centro della casa, dove si trova la sala da pranzo. In primo piano, sedute Wishbone Chair di Hans Jørgen Wegner per **Carl Hansen & Son**.

muri in cemento a vista. All'interno, il corpo in diagonale raccoglie gli ambienti a funzione speciale che utilizzano lo sviluppo in lunghezza del volume. Al piano di sotto una grande biblioteca, le cui scaffalature si inerpicano a sfruttare l'intera altezza libera, e una scala che vola nello spazio fino ad ancorarsi alla soletta del piano superiore, dove si accede a uno spazio, occupato dal lunghissimo tavolo da pranzo che, attraverso la parete completamente vetrata, traguarda la corte interna e abbraccia il panorama selvaggio delle Cumbres de Monterrey.

evolved concrete, a light gestures in spite of its material, full of personality. This winning formal and functional solution has been invented by the historic Brazilian studio Bernardo-Jacobsen Arquitetura (active since the 1990s), to connect three buildings awaiting conversion in the historical center of Rio: the former police offices, the old bus station and the Palacete Dom João VI, an elegant work of architecture dating back to the early 1900s. "It was a real challenge" to join three buildings with such different architectural characteristics," says Bernardo Jacobsen, born in 1960, who since 2012 has become a partner in the studio of his father Paulo, together with Ken Vargas (today the studio is called Jacobsen Arquitetura). "The goal indicated by the municipality of Rio was double: to create a new museum for the artistic heritage of the city, which was lacking, and to invent new functional spaces for a famous visual arts school, the 'Escola Do Olhar'." No sooner said than done in the historic building, thanks to the high ceilings and elegant spaces, the designers decided to put the rooms of the new museum, while the former police offices got an image update with a new translucent glass facade (while the volume was also revised by one level, to match the height of the adjacent building), to contain the school facilities, multimedia spaces and administration areas for both the school and the museum. A multitasking public project, all in the name of culture. But also reestablishment, as Bernardo Jacobsen explains: "Once we had determined the functions for the different spaces, we thought about how to create a relationship between the school and the museum. The idea was to create a plaza on the roof of the former police building, shaded by a long canopy, a sort of fluid, light blade that would simulate the waves of the sea, extending from one roof to the next." Below, protected from the sunlight, a cafe and a relaxation area for free time offer new open-air spaces for the community with a great view of the city and the ocean. But the link between the two institutions is further emphasized by a passage suspended between the two, allowing visitors to move from the plaza to the museum entrance. Unexpectedly, the visit to the art collections starts from the top: an elevator in the modern building takes you directly to the roof (see the diagram at the start of the article), and from here a flight of steps leads to the passage-bridge to the exhibition spaces in the older building. The museum itinerary proceeds from the upper level to the ground floor, amidst images, works, displays, photographs and memories, revisiting the past and present of Rio de Janeiro. Because the city, this gigantic metropolis on the Tropic of Capricorn, is the true protagonist, the complex is dedicated to Rio and its inhabitants, as Arch. Jacobsen points out: "Conserving and 'adapting' existing historical structures can contribute to safeguarding the memory of a city, its historical and cultural heritage. In terms of sustainability, conservation of existing sites is a bit like recycling materials that would otherwise become waste, and be lost forever. From this standpoint, the project definitely has a positive impact. But above all," he concludes, "we need to make use of historical precedents to establish a fertile relationship between past and present, generating visual and spatial counterpoints thanks to contemporary interventions." Exactly what happens with the Museu de Arte.

- pag. 20 Old and new meet in the design of this museum complex, which also contains a visual arts school and an auditorium (see diagram on facing page). On the far right, the building containing the school: the roof features an outdoor plaza, sheltered by a pale undulating canopy. **- pag. 23** The section above clearly reveals the layout of the complex on the right, the building with a contemporary style, updated thanks to a new skin in translucent glass (photo to the side); on the left, the period building set aside for the art museum (photo, left); the canopy spans over the roofs of the two buildings, supported by slender white pilots. Above, two evocative images of the open-air plaza that contains a cafe and a large lounge area for free time, down to all. The flight of steps at the center leads to the museum entrance, through a passage-bridge, in the adjacent historical building. **- pag. 24** Right, another image of the sheltered 'plaza' with the various relaxation areas on the roof. The pale surfaces form a contrast with the stone of the neighboring museum. Below and on the facing page, the exhibition spaces of the museum: the liberating winds through the levels, connected by an elevator and a staircase (below).

INSIDE TURIN pag. 26

project **ANDREA MARCANTE, ADELAIDE TESTA UDA ARCHITETTI**
with Giada Mazzerò, Eirini Giannakopoulou
photos Carola Ripamonti - text Alessandro Rocca

AN INTERIOR that interprets the discreet charm of the PIEDMONT BOURGEOISIE in a sober, sensorial style, evoking elegant disquiet, MODERNIST FRAGMENTS and TRADITIONAL MATERIALS revisited with precise architectural control.

Turin is known as an elegant, reserved and rather mysterious city, where memories tower of two great architects of the recent past, the composed and benevolent figure of Roberto Gabetti, and the more experimental and disturbing, at times even idiosyncratic figure of the brilliant Carlo Mollino. In this apartment of about 150 square meters facing Piazza San Carlo and redesigned by Andrea Marcante and Adelaide Testa Uda Architetti, these two legacies meet up with a third important historical request, that left behind by the Mussolini government in the 1930s with the project of urban renewal of Via Roma done by Marcello Piacentini, the official representative and activator, in many Italian historical centers, of the architectural policies of the regime. The work of Uda behind the two thermal windows of Piacentini interprets this mixture of memories and traditions in an original way - factors that are far from homogeneous - coming up with a modernist approach that reflects the aristocratic elegance of the city with precious but not ostentatious materials, the stylized sensuality of diagonals, the richness of ton-on-ton shadings, incorporating typical acento-garlic pieces, like the Zig-Zag chairs by Gerrit Rietveld, diluting their conceptualism in a bourgeois decor that remains welcoming, but always with measure, without too much emotion. As the designers say, "It is an apartment on the mezzanine level of a building facing the square that is the symbol of Turin, that Piazza San Carlo destined by the Dukes of Savoy and particularly by Christine Marie of France. It becomes, thanks to its spaces and furnishings, the updated theater of a performance of a certain idea of the affluent bourgeoisie, that of the Turinese professional middle class, a combination of measuring engineered precision and subtle undercurrents of restlessness." The organization of the space roughly follows almost obligatory choices, with the entrance offering direct access to the living area, lit by the two windows of Piacentini, placing the three bedrooms and baths in the parts of the volume of less depth. A space that without the ample size of the living area is far from abundant, but seems

to grow thanks to the careful design of a series of furnishing objects, of micro-spaces that populate the house, soberly offering their services and determining the colors and perception of the spaces. Made in limba wood, these micro-spaces become the protagonists of the home, framing views and luminous reflections, implementing functional options, bordering the areas of influence of different activities. One of these items, for example, indicates the borderline between the living area and the kitchen zone, bursting with its mass lightened by the limba wood frame and deep diagonal carving onto the stage like a character in a metaphysical play. Another similar element borders the route that from the entrance leads directly to the bedroom zone, or can open to reveal small secret offices. A major design effort, though perhaps less evident, involves the attention with which the architects have manipulated spatial perception, also through the use of materials and their textures. The boards in dark gray stained oak, the wide grain of the limba wood, the narrow veins of black marble, the dim reflection of gray glass underlined by a shelf in burnished iron, are all tools applied to transform the available volume into a complex sensorial experience that amplifies the importance of the space, dematerializing it, introducing perspectives and tactile temptations. In the virtual continuum of movement through the house, this multiplicity of textures interweaves and overlays in a flow of discreet patterns that, in the subtlety of their ton-color, transform the geometry of the space into a landscape of always interesting movement, always enhanced by a detail, a reflection, an unusual overlay. This effect expands the space, multiplying it like a mirror that even without light extends the real space through a virtual window. The graphic dominant of the floor and walls is somehow thickened, as if in a 3D rendering, in the ceilings, where a floating plane in white is hung over the gray ceiling to double and again dematerialize the volumetric effect of the rooms. The suspended ceiling, passing from the living area to the hall, becomes an important tool also in the vertical dimension to create an illusory backdrop and, at the same time, a technical space, containing the hood and the lights, while providing an ornamental system that underlines the unity and dynamic balance connecting the various areas of the apartment.

- pag. 27 View of the living area seen from the entrance door, with the double thermal window facing Piazza San Carlo: D70 sofa, P40 armchair and T1 and T2 tables designed by Davide Borsari for **Tecno**; TMM wooden stem lamp by Miguel Mila, produced by **Santa & Cole**; on the stained oak floor, a Berber rug. View of the kitchen counter, next to the living area. Kitchen block in steel by **Boffi** and Masstris lamp by Denis Santachiana. Plan of the apartment, with an area of about 150 square meters, composed of a living room with a large kitchen zone, three bedrooms and respective baths. **- pag. 29** The open kitchen with the impressive limba wood cabinet designed by Marcante and Testa and produced by **Materia Design**, the Aeago & Vender of **Pallucco** with the historic Zig-Zag chairs by Gerrit Rietveld, produced by **Cassina**, and the 14.14 chair/table by **Bocci**. **- pag. 31** The bathroom of the master bedroom, completely in limba wood. The cabinet in limba wood: the custom furnishings designed by the architects are produced by **Materia Design**. Lamp by Mario Pandiari - Sm Studio. On the facing page, image of the office-unit, custom made, in limba wood, matte black Marquina marble and gray glass, custom shelf in burnished iron with the sculpture *Domina seduta* by Piero Gallina (Galleria Marco Cappello).

ANDO ABOVE MONTERREY pag. 32

project **TADAO ANDO ARCHITECT & ASSOCIATES;**
TADAO ANDO, KAZUYA OKANO
photos Edmund Sumner - text Alessandro Rocca

LIVING IN GEOMETRY: EXPOSED CONCRETE and transparent walls, spectacular views and a pool of water, suspended over Monterrey, this is the MEXICAN LANDSCAPE according to Tadao Ando

Taday Tadao Ando, 73, with a studio in Osaka, after having built works all over the world and passed through different stylistic phases, seems to have achieved a new kind of happiness. For some time now he has been one of the main protagonists of the contemporary scene, at least since the beginning of the 1990s, when his Rukko Houses were published in the magazine "Casabella", which later based an entire special notebook on that project. He was precocious and restless, emerging as a champion of modernism, who has then devoted decades to the pursuit of novelty, originality and new perspectives, leading to results that have often been controversial among critics. In his various periods he has experimented with the arid taste of brute material, the rigors of the strictest minimalism, exploring a new monumentality based on geometric solids, but now the pursuit of new effects seems to be inhibited. Maybe he has finally been liberated from the need to be constantly innovative and surprising at all costs. He now applies his talent without inhibitions or ideologies, to achieve the finest possible results. And maybe this is precisely a way, thanks to the freshness of the approach, to become even more innovative and contemporary than he was in the past. The production of this recent Ando is very positive for all, for his clients, who can enjoy excellent spaces organized in a surprising way, and for the critics, no longer forced to rack their brains to interpret the intellectual flights of a master who is also famous for being a man of few words, spoken or written. This fine house on the heights of Monterrey, in Mexico, confirms this recent trend towards simplification, composition through free volumes, concentration of spaces. Ando practices a freedom of invention that combines the plastic form originating long ago in Le Corbusier with a capacity to control vision that is very theatrical, in the interiors, with a clear landscape inspiration in the exteriors. The Centro Roberto Garcia Sada, a seniority building just built by Ando in the center of Monterrey, fully develops these characteristics with an energy that borders on brutality, with a sort of exhibited, sculptural muscular force. In the house shown here, we can see the same energy and determination, combining apparently exorbitant volumes in forced boldness, but used with more grace, with all the care needed to avoid compromising the comfort, elegance and sense of welcome necessary for any domestic space. Of course there are virtuoso touches, but they happen on a plane of greater lightness, emphasizing the spectacular dimension, which is important in a villa of great luxury; and they remember to carefully connect every space, every view, every material in a continuous narrative, in which differences and changes come together in the end to form a unified image. A narrative punctuated by emotions, spectacular moments, like the transparent slab of the swimming pool that extends, like an ethereal blade of light, over the crest of the hill, suspended in the void over the panorama of the city of Monterrey. The way the outdoor living area is circumscribed and

shellered, facing the swimming pool, is symptomatic of Ando's art: on one side, by an elegant concrete portal, patterned by the marks of the formwork, a true signature of the Japanese architect; on the other, by the vision that extends over the glass door leading to the living room inside. Free, independent architectural elements, designed with the basic lexicon of modernism, that appear as sculptural objects, not immediately revealing their function. The house itself, as a whole, is conceived as a conflict between contrasting figures and volumes, an overall scheme based on the square and the diagonal volume that pierces and surmounts it, fastening onto the edge of the ridge above it. The problem of connecting the two figures becomes the project theme: inside, the courtyard is cut into two triangles treated in opposite ways. One space becomes a flourishing green garden, the other a gray garden, without nature, composed only of a pool of water, that makes it inaccessible and reflects the light projected by the glazed wall and the exposed concrete walls. Inside, the diagonal volume contains the spaces with special functions, using the entire length of the volume. On the level below, a large library has shelves that rise to expose the entire height, while a staircase rises in the space to fasten to the slab of the level above, where one reaches a space occupied by a very long dining table, offering a view, through a completely glazed wall, of the internal courtyard and the wild landscape of the Cumbrès de Monterey.

- pag. 32 The deck in front of the glazed living area, the stone space of the outdoor lounge and the swimming pool, which extends in an overhang over the rocky landscape of the Cumbrès de Monterey National Park. - pag. 34 The house has a complex geometric design, formed by a square crossed by a volume placed exactly on the diagonal. The plans of the three levels show the living area, oriented towards the swimming pool (above, in the drawing), the bedroom zone on the opposite side, the library on the diagonal and the patio, again diagonal, leading to the parking area. View of the swimming pool with the outdoor living area, bordered by a concrete portal and shaded by the canopy placed in front of the glass door of the internal living area. Detail of the connection with the ramp leading to the parking area and the access to the property. - pag. 35 A monumental corner at the intersection of the volume of the living area and the diagonal volume. - pag. 36 The ground level of the diagonal volume with the library and the glazing facing the space of the water court, the free staircase rises to the long lift. A gallery suspended at the center of the house, containing the dining area, in the foreground. Washbone Chairs by Hans Jørgen Wagner for Carl Hansen & Son. - pag. 37 The diagonal volume contains the most representative spaces, like the long dining table that faces the triangular courtyard, entirely occupied by a reflecting pool. The bath and the main bedroom facing the green triangular courtyard, symmetrical to the water court.

INSIGHT/INScape

RELIGION AND SECULARISM pag. 38

by Andrea Branzi

In the overall framework of INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, the RELIGIOUS QUESTION has come back to the fore, pushing DESIGN TOWARDS a 'new dramaturgy' that comes to grips with the ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEMES overlooked by modernity

Christianity was the early use of the great aesthetic needs to extract representation of its dogmas, the sacred scriptures and the lives of the saints to art, thus favoring great development of masterpieces of the faith in the Occident, with which our secular civilization can still fully identify. But modernity and the Catholic tradition, as we know, have taken different, often conflicting paths. Plus ça change, plus ça change. In 1907, took an official position against the moral and social impact of new technologies, secularism, rationalism, which in pursuit of a new humanism and new moral and formal values pushed modernity away from Catholic orthodoxy. Like all contemporary art movements, the Milan Triennale and the Venice Biennale have always been important laboratories of secular modernity, places where architecture, art and design are used to record changes not only in the creative culture, but also in our way of looking at and understanding the world outside (if not against) religious tradition. The 20th century imagined that the religious question would vanish, replaced by the logic of industry and materialism, to guarantee a future based on reason and equality. Today we are seeing that this model of secularism has failed, just as the free market economy is failing: instead, the religious question has returned in the overall framework of international politics, pushing design to create a 'new dramaturgy' capable of coming to grips with those ancient anthropological themes that were always overlooked by modernity: the sacred, death, destiny, life, history. Even. In recent years the Church has established a new relationship with contemporary art, even welcoming its most extreme expressive forms. The presence of a Vatican Pavilion at the Venice Art Biennale 2013 is proof of this: but the doubt remains as to whether the artists involved were believers, or whether they were using antique Christian imagery as a metaphor for 'something else'. The question is important because, in this case, the ingress of the sacred would not coincide with a conversion but just the opposite, with a more radical assertion of secular culture, indifferent to the complex theological and moral themes involved in faith. So every cultural institution, today, can be one of the laboratories of this new but apparent period, welcoming not one but 'all' the religions of the world. In the era of globalization artistic culture has become a 'mass profession' in which new generations, new commitments and new ideologies converge. Can we only hope that the 21st century will offer the chance to get beyond useless and reciprocal prejudices, cooperating on a historic reconciliation between secular culture and religious culture? My impression, instead, is that this is simply a phenomenon of appearances, where the Church ceases to do battle against modern art out of indifference, seeing it as innocuous imagery, and art, with similar indifference, ceases to see religious iconography as untouchable. So instead of a new alliance, this looks more like a reciprocal surrender.

- pag. 39 On this page: Andrea Branzi, Croci e cerchi, 2011. On the facing page: Giulio Iacchetti, Cruciale - 20 croci + 1, 2012.

INSIGHT/INarts

MUNARI FROM A TO Z pag. 40

photos David Zanardi - text Laura Ragazzola

In the spaces of GALLERIA PEGASO, THE 'FANTASTIC' LETTERS of the great Milanese artist and designer. After almost 30 YEARS, during the fuorisalone it was possible TO SEE THEM UP CLOSE. To continue to play with their inventor

"I was ten and I couldn't wait to grow up," was a famous saying of Bruno Munari (filled with other thoughts in the 1994 little book *Verba scribit, Ciceroni Edizioni*). Actually, so sure like this Milanese designer (and artist) however managed to conserve intact the spirit of childhood, the curiosity to know things, the joy of understanding, the desire to communicate, translated into marvelous inventions and endless projects full of poetry. Like his 'Fantastic' alphabet. The occasion was to celebrate the 60 years of activity of his friends, the Lucini typographers," says the collector Leo Signoroli, who during the Fuorisalone showed the complete alphabet in his space in Milan, Galleria Pegaso. "Munari imagined the letters made of many different things, with suspended parts, in motion, a bit in disorder. And definitely not in alphabetical order. The drawings, though, remained in his desk for almost 30 years, until the letters were made for an important retrospective organized in February 1987 at Palazzo Reale in Milan. At the same time, the Lucini print shop was celebrating its 60th birthday, and for the event they published a beautiful book with all the drawings of the letters and the explanations on how to make them. For the event, Munari also invented some snacks, made by Giulio Iacchetti. After the show, everything was packed up and the letters remained 'born' for almost thirty years," Carlo Vitarini tells us, who since 2001 has worked with Signoroli in the management of Galleria Pegaso. "Until we decided to purchase the alphabet (pure instinct, as happens with all beautiful things, to 'reconstruct' it and show it in public was sure) but how? Signoroli explains: "Munari had written down everything, with his poetic and practical way of doing things, on his drawings (also on display at the gallery, n.d.). So it was easy: almost child's play: for example, you can read that two bicycle wheels should be hung on the wall to represent the O and the Q, the M, which is a strip of cloth draped over an iron bar, had to be at the entrance, while the V inside of polystyrene pellets, is yellow (is hung about 30 cm from the ceiling, like a chandelier); then there is the family of D B F H (Munari put them together because they are relatives in terms of shape), made with light bamboo sticks tied by green ribbons; the K, which is hard and heavy like 'maestro' wanted it to be in cement, had to be on the floor, while the T, which is very light because it is in perforated sheet metal, is hung on the wall like a painting... The S is travertino, sketched on the window in white paint, like a sign that announces that a horse has just been built... In short, every letter tells a story, and for us there is always the pleasure of discovery. Here lies the beauty of Munari's art: to connect play and poetry. It's a pity the letters are now back in their boxes," Signoroli says. "But in our gallery that hosts important pieces of historical design by the Milanese masters, we don't have enough space for a permanent show. We hope someone will come along to save the day (a museum?), so that everyone can experience the fantastic alphabet of Bruno Munari."

- pag. 40 Overall image of the main room of Galleria Pegaso, with an exhibition on the alphabet of Bruno Munari. Hanging from the ceiling, the main letters A, I and V, while the N finds its natural position on the wall. On the facing page, above, the two-tone R, in the background, hanging on the wall, the C and the L in copper, the J inside with a strip of sandpaper, and the T in perforated sheet metal. Extreme right, the K in cement, on the floor; the suspended M and Z in pink ribbon. - pag. 42 Left, some of the drawings of the alphabet with handwritten instructions by Munari, with all the indications for its construction, including the materials. Below, the letters W, Y and X, in paper, hung from a bamboo rod. The D B F H family is made with flexible bamboo cane tied with ribbons and attached to a beech plank to place on the floor.

A POLYTECHNIC PERSONALITY pag. 43

text Stefano Caggiano

The fine exhibition held by the MUSEO DEL NOVECENTO on Bruno Munari, until 9 SEPTEMBER, illustrates the care with which the graphic artist of design, the designer of art, the artist of graphics knew how TO LIGHT UP the face of OBVIOUS THINGS

Bruno Munari is to design as Italo Calvino is to literature: both reacted in the 'gravity' of the 20th century by concentrating on what remained of lightness in the everyday world, focusing not on the weight of things but on their figure and essence, called forth in an infinite series of disorienting - but also reassuring - gestural inversions. The exhibition 'Munari Politecnico' curated by Marco Santovich for the Museo del Novecento illustrates the agile way this graphic artist, designer and artist from Milan implemented his own personal path of amusing exploration of culture, even coating technique into play, as Santovich explains, simply to use it for the evolution of his own visual language. "The technical civilization, for him, offers ongoing stimuli to develop intuitions, to transform studies into aesthetic visions." As in the 'Useless Machines' in which he frees the technical project from the sole results of function. Or in the famous 'Fucks' where he brings out a living spirit that simply needed activation. A refined juggler of visual grammars drawn firsthand from the historical avant-garde, Munari was 'polytechnic' in the etymological sense of the term, an artistic magician capable of combining *techné* and *arté* in a wide range of media, proposing a single mode of creative comprehension that runs parallel, without contradictions, to rational comprehension. An orderly anarchist, capable of getting his hands into everything without ever getting them dirty, Munari always kept faith with his characteristic seriously superficial approach, with which he playfully transfigured every sign of the short century and which - though it was simultaneously his sharpest weapon and his most unmissable limit - never prevented him from moving with that speed, lightness, precision, visibility, multi-