



# EDITORIAL

San Rocco is a magazine about architecture.

San Rocco does not solve problems. It is not a useful magazine.

San Rocco is neither serious nor friendly.

San Rocco is written by architects. As such, San Rocco is neither particularly intelligent nor philologically accurate.

San Rocco is serious. It takes the risk of appearing naive.

San Rocco will not last forever. There will be no more than 20 San Roccas over the course of the magazine's five-year plan.

San Rocco is the name of a place in Monza that is not a nice one. In 1971, Giorgio Grassi and Aldo Rossi engaged in a design competition for San Rocco. In the end, the project they designed was not built; ordinary housing blocks were built instead.

A few negligible drawings of the San Rocco project have survived in old monographs, along with a black-and-white photograph of the competition model. It is a picture taken from above of the white plaster model. Close to the buildings there is a large label that reads "MONZA SAN ROCCO scala 1:500" and whose lettering is in such high relief that it casts dramatic shadows.

San Rocco was the product of the collaboration of two young architects. The project did not contribute to the later fame of its two de-

signers. It is neither “typical Grassi” nor “typical Rossi”. Somehow it remains between the two, strangely hybrid – open and uncertain, multiple and enigmatic.

The purity and radicalism of the design does not involve any intolerance. San Rocco suggests an entirely new set of possibilities. It seems to represent the beginning of a new type of architecture, or the first application of a new – and promising – design method that has never been developed further.

San Rocco proposes the possibility of reusing architectural traditions that lie outside of individual memory (contrary to Rossi’s usual approach) without erasing individual contributions (contrary to Grassi’s usual approach). In San Rocco, common does not mean dry, and personal does not mean egomaniacal. San Rocco seems to suggest the possibility of an architecture that is both open and personal, both monumental and fragile, both rational and questioning.

This kind of situation has arisen in other moments in the history of architecture. It would be possible to compile a list of examples of this unlikely, generous, vulnerable and innocent architecture.

Innocent architecture is not utopian architecture, nor is it architecture de papier. Innocent architecture is always meant to be built, and sometimes it is. In its innocence, innocent architecture is serious.

Innocent architecture is not experimental. Innocent architecture is not open-ended. It is precisely defined and yet strangely generous. Its results are evident, but at the same time they are not entirely applicable.

Innocent architecture is not completely effective. Somehow it does not work; it is neither ripe nor stable. It is unfinished, either literally (like the Olympeion) or conceptually (like the Villa Garzoni). If built, it can easily be destroyed (e.g. Toyo Ito’s White U). It is both more promising and more disappointing, more daring and more incomplete, more dangerous and more paradoxical. What is discovered is not immediately present, but rather displaced or somehow postponed. Its formal resources are not immediately available.