

Continuity and Discontinuity in Casabella and Spazio. The 1950's architecture magazines directed by Luigi Moretti and Ernesto Nathan Rogers

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1. Véase: MAGGI, Angelo, 'Moretti, i fotografi e la visione dell'architettura', en Reichlin, Bruno y Tedeschi, Letizia (eds.), Luigi Moretti. Razionalismo e trasgressività tra barocco e informale, Electa, Milán, 2010.

2. Ernesto Nathan Rogers retomó más veces en sus escritos la etimología de la palabra 'monumento', compuesta de moneo y memento, repretend y recordar.

3. REICHLIN, Bruno y JEHL-SCHULTE STRATHAUS, Ulrike, 'Parole di pietra. Architettura di parole', en Fogacnik, Marko (ed.), Il segno della memoria, 1945-1995, Triennale di Milano/Electa, Milán, 1995.

4. ROGERS, Ernesto Nathan, 'Le preesistenze ambientali e i temi pratici contemporanei', Casabella, núm. 202, Milán, 1954.

5. BUCCI, Federico, 'Parole dipinte', en Bucci, Federico y Mulazzani, Marco, Luigi Moretti, opere e scritti, Electa, Milán, 2000, pág. 136.

6. Véase: Rostagni, Cecilia, 'Matematica e la rivista Spazio', en Luigi Moretti. 1907-1973, Electa, Milán, 2008, pág. 74

7. VIATI NAVONE, Annalisa, La Saracena di Luigi Moretti, tra suggestioni mediterranee, barocche e informali, Silvana Editoriale, Mendrisio, 2012, págs. 57-61

8. MORETTI, Luigi, 'Trasfigurazioni di strutture murarie', Spazio, núm. 4, Milán, enero-febrero de 1951, pág. 7.

9. 'No consigo quitarme de la cabeza la imagen de la atmósfera de Roma con el sol a plomo en los solsticios de verano; y el joven Caravaggio, en su primer o segundo verano por las calles de Roma a pleno mediodía, entre las profundísimas sombras arrojadas sobre palacios e iglesias y, contra estas, los arrebatos imprevistos de luz, como apariciones, de un henchido de una columna, de una hoja de una cornisa. El sol a plomo romano hace desaparecer las formas en las sombras y su esplendor de luces no se conoce en ningún otro lugar [...]. La acentuación de las luces en algunos elementos plásticos que se exaltan de esta manera asumen un papel de indicadores de la sintaxis de la forma, haciendo estallar por primera vez las columnas ante la luz [...]. Así, el Barroco romano fractura el espacio estructuralmente y en coincidencia con la luz y la sombra'. Moretti, Luigi, 'Discontinuità dello spazio in Caravaggio', Spazio, núm. 5, Milán, julio-agosto de 1951, págs. 1-8.

10. Véase el conocido texto de Juan Navarro Baldeweg: 'Un objeto es una sección', en La habitación vacante, Pre-Textos, Valencia, 2000, págs. 43-44.

11. Del vocabulario Treccani: estereoscopia [comp. de stereo- y -scopia]. En biología, percepción del relieve de un objeto y, por tanto, de la distancia entre los objetos que se tienen debido a la visión binocular y que depende de la distancia del objeto que se observa (que disminuye al crecer esta) y del grado de iluminación que recibe el objeto, que disminuye fuertemente, y prácticamente se anula, si de pasa de la visión diurna a la crepuscular.

12. MORETTI, Luigi, 'Discontinuità dello spazio in Caravaggio', op. cit.

13. *Ibid.*

14. MORETTI, Luigi, 'Valori della modanatura', Spazio, núm. 6, Milán, diciembre de 1951-abril de 1952, pág. 8.

15. REICHLIN, Bruno, 'Figure della spazialità. Strutture e sequenze di spazi versus 'lettura integrale dell'opera'', en Reichlin, Bruno y Tedeschi, Letizia (eds.), op. cit., pág. 32.

16. MORETTI, Luigi, 'Forma come struttura', extractos de Spazio, Milán, junio-julio de 1957 (también en Bucci, Federico y Mulazzani, Marco, op. cit., págs. 182-184).

17. 'Recalcar la individualidad. Las molduras apaciguan o exaltan el elemento singular siempre en función de la estructura ideal que gobierna toda la representación arquitectónica y que levita, arruga y densifica las superficies mediante las cuales se manifiesta'. Moretti, Luigi, 'Valori della modanatura', op. cit., pág. 12.

18. Véase también: Pierini, Orsina Simona, 'Immagini per parole', en Baglione, Chiara (ed.), Ernesto Nathan Rogers 1909-1969, Franco Angeli, Milán, 2012, pág. 79; e 'Imágenes por palabras', Circo, núm. 182, Madrid, 2012.

19. ROGERS, Ernesto Nathan, Esperienza dell'architettura, Einaudi, Turín, 1958 (versión castellana: La experiencia de la arquitectura, Nueva Visión, Buenos Aires, 1965).

20. "Un proceso de formas posibles que se abren a nuevas relaciones". Paci, Enzo, Relazioni e significati, Lampugnani Nigri Editore, Milán, 1965. Es conocida la influencia en Rogers del pensamiento fenomenológico de su amigo Paci.

21. VECA, Salvatore, In ricordo di Enzo Paci, il filosofo e l'architetto, in QA15, Clup Città Studi, Milán, 1993.

22. De una entrevista a Cesare Macchi Cassia, alumno de Rogers, Matilde Baffa, una joven redactora de Casabella en aquellos años, las llamó 'formas alusivas', mientras que Giovanni Marras las definió como 'formas en proceso' (en La città come testo, Autonomia del linguaggio architettonico e figurazione della città, doctorado en Composición Arquitectónica, IUAV, Venecia, 1992).

23. ROGERS, Ernesto Nathan, 'Problemi: l'ornato', Domus, núm. 11, Milán, julio de 1946, pág. 17.

24. Este es el incipit de Rogers del artículo de 1964 sobre Le Corbusier, en Editoriali di architettura, op. cit.

25. Si las primeras dos expresivas portadas de la revista se muestran el edificio Seagram de Mies van der Rohe y un boceto de Le Corbusier; en la tercera, elección de Mario Ridolfi, se anuncia el enfrentamiento con la nueva arquitectura italiana.

26. 'Aquello que distingue la obra de Werner Bischof es esta cualidad de desvelar a través de los detalles el significado universal de las cosas en la acepción humana más densa: la continua participación del acto estético en la simpatía de todos los sentimientos, de modo que esa no es solo un álbum de hermosas imágenes, sino un documento de la historia de los hombres'. Rogers, Ernesto Nathan, 'Architettura e fotografia', Casabella-Continuità, núm. 205, Milán, abril/mayo de 1955.

Architectural Theory and Magazines

Can architectural magazines play a role in theoretical thought? What tools do they employ?

A comparison of two Italian magazines, Spazio and Casabella, published in Milan in the fifties reveals their importance. It also provides relevant insight into the tools architecture uses to communicate, the text-image relationship, and how architecture relates to other artistic disciplines and history itself.

The first architecture magazines of the twentieth century were closely tied to an idea of the contemporary and modernity that was well represented in manifestos and avant-garde art. After the war, however, the sense of what a magazine was changed direction. The peremptory affirmations and enthusiasm of 1920s writing gave way to criticism, doubt, and debate about the teachings of the Modern Movement. These were expressed in various European countries through the new tools of debate, editorials, and meeting places. In the Italian architectural community, Luigi Moretti and Ernesto Nathan Rogers are acknowledged masters, embodying the capacity to reformulate and articulate a new kind of architectural education, or at least intuit the need for a multiplicity of means to do so.

Certainly, neither of them set out to re-establish a systematic theoretical discourse on architecture. They did not attempt to distil their thoughts into some grand-unifying theoretical opus. Instead, for them, the magazine was their medium of transmitting criticism and open-minded inquiry.

For an analogous historical period we could look to Mannerism with its in-depth understanding of a language and capacity to critique itself from within, even ironically, while at the same time passionately seeking continuity and the advancement of the themes of modernity. The habit of drawing analogies with other historic periods can be found when leafing through the two magazines. Take for example the photographs of ancient architecture that populate Casabella-Continuità or the examples of the Baroque that fill the pages of Spazio.

We could therefore say that these two periodicals pioneer a new way of talking about architecture, one that is less direct and imposing and one that is more focussed on developing critical thinking with the reader finally playing an active role. This is an important moment in Italian history. These are the Reconstruction years but also the years when the concept of a new kind of professional was being formed, as much in universities as other institutions. Post-war architecture magazines are no longer the avant-garde manifestos of the elite they were between the wars. Instead, they now play an educational role, providing the reader with access to a profession that could have controlled and developed the Italian landscape.

It is no coincidence that Rogers was also a teacher and that a large number of the people working in the magazine's Centro Studi (Study Centre) were also teachers at the new, expanded university. Certainly, a strongly educational and theoretical discourse is a common thread in Moretti's editorials. Cognisant of the obvious differences between the two publications, with one comprising only seven issues and the other about 100, we still maintain that a comparison of the two masters and their abilities to interpret the overarching qualities of historical and contemporary architecture makes a useful contribution to the architectural profession and design.

Luigi Moretti ran the magazine Spazio from 1950 to 1953, and Ernesto Nathan Rogers the magazine Casabella-Continuità in Milan from 1953 to 1964. The differences between the two publications are evident at first glance. While Spazio was published in only seven striking issues, Casabella-Continuità set the standard for years in the development of a new architecture culture

in Italy and international debate. While Spazio was directed and laid out by a single individual, the architect and art collector with a strong personality Luigi Moretti, Casabella-Continuità was run by Ernesto Nathan Rogers, who acted as the catalyst for a diverse group of intellectuals of different ages and origins.

While the director of Spazio launched his publication immediately upon his release from jail where he had been sent due to his involvement with Fascism, the director of Casabella-Continuità returned to Italy from anonymity and forced exile during the war in Switzerland due to Italy's race laws. The very title Spazio embodies the theoretical thinking of a great architect-master builder. However, Casabella borrows its name from a 1928 magazine directed by Giuseppe Pagano that brought the Modern Movement to Italy. The addition of the word Continuità, alludes primarily to the need to re-forge the connections severed by war, and also more generally picking up on ties to tradition. The two publications emerge from two very different cultural contexts, personalities, and ways of making architecture.

Luigi Moretti was born in Rome in 1906. He had already had the opportunity to build a series of iconic buildings in Rome before the war. His work can be introduced with a single specific image, one enigmatic photograph of the Sala della Scherma built in 1933 inside the Casa del Balilla in Trastevere. The framing of the photograph accentuates and deforms the longitudinal space of the room, introducing an oblique diagonal line that both captures and drives the movement of the interior space. It is said that Moretti was very careful about how his works were photographed and personally accompanied the photographer on his photo shoots.¹ The attention to light from above forces us to reflect on the room in cross-section; it seems clear that the structure does not want to be exposed, that it should not intrude upon the form of the interior space and light that defines it, with everything turned outwards. Space, light, form, and structure: we will see how these words come to be used in the magazine in the years that followed.

Ernesto Nathan Rogers, was born in Trieste in 1909. He always worked in groups. The first of these dates back to his graduation in 1932; BBPR studio with partners Banfi, Belgioioso, and Peressutti. The studio lost Banfi to a concentration camp. In 1946, in memory of the camp victims, the studio built a simple tubular metal structure at the Cimitero Monumentale in Milan. It was a cube structure subdivided into a cross with several white and black infill panels that broke the figure down into abstract tensions; a precocious minimalist understatement that employed just a few carefully calibrated elements to create a powerful monument² to memory and public sentiment³.

After the war, Moretti built the Corso Italia complex and some house-hotels in Milan, experimenting with the sequence of urban spaces and cutting the dense Milan street wall to provide unexpected views. The most well-known image is a photograph by Giorgio Casali that gives us the sense of the violence of this large expressionistic space. Resting on the low street wall, the building sits crossways to the street looking out towards the powerful residential building at the end of the block. A few years later, in 1957, BBPR studio built the Torre Velasca in the heart of the old fabric of Milan; a medieval silhouette that changed the skyline and identified a new scale for the modern city. A photograph of this building made the cover of Casabella issue number 232. It was an image that would come to evoke Rogers' even more famous phrase '*environmental pre-existence*' from an article in one of the first issues under his direction, almost a sort of thematic manifesto.⁴

Editorial Approach

Even from these few introductory lines, it is easy to intuit the differences between these two figures and the need for further comparison in terms of their editorial

approach. As has been well described by Federico Bucci in the first book out since the recent critical rediscovery of Moretti⁵, Luigi Moretti does practically all the work on Spazio, including: cultural features on architecture, art criticism (both ancient and contemporary), selecting architecture, writing articles, selecting, framing, and cropping images, as well as designing and mocking up pages. He is mainly joined in writing by Agnoldomenico Pica. Only occasionally do we find articles by famous art historians, among them Toesca and Argan, and artists like Gino Severini and Ardengo Soffici.⁶ There are no big names from the international Modernism scene and the architecture mostly represents a collective work rather than highlighting the poetics of an individual architect. Each issue pairs the presentation of a work of architecture with a re-reading of ancient art, selected masters, and classical painters that are presented according to a specific point of view, i.e. the magnification of their details. Moretti's articles explore a material-descriptive re-reading of some of the great moments in art history including the Romanesque and the 17th century. They extrapolate the formal and abstract perceptual qualities of these periods and highlight their relevance and applicability to contemporary architectural design. This approach is reinforced by the sophisticated graphic design of each issue. In Spazio, the cover operates independently. The magazine was never issued as a monograph and the covers do not reflect the topics that are so clearly presented in the editorials. The one exception is the third issue where an abstract photograph accompanies an article on the Baroque. The other covers are by artists. Moretti personally designed the cover of the fifth issue; and, it is the only one where he lets his other design research shine through, namely a volumetric provocation that parallels Moretti's explorations in the house La Saracena, as described by Annalisa Viati Navone in her work.⁷ Starting with the fourth issue, Luigi Moretti began personally laying out the magazine and this change is clearly evident when leafing through all the issues.

The architecture published in the seven issues of Spazio is primarily Italian with a special predilection for the scale of the individual building and residential work. In contrast, right from the start Casabella-Continuità includes international work and addresses a wide array of issues, with a scale that ranges from regional design to the design of individual objects. The editing of Casabella-Continuità was carried out by a permanent work group that quickly adopted the name Centro Studi (Study Centre), a clear reference to its function as a locus of debate and research. The centre attracted young scholars eager to cultivate their own individual directions and poetics, individuals who would later become leading personalities in Italian architecture such as Giancarlo De Carlo, Vittorio Gregotti, Francesco Tentori, and Aldo Rossi.

The policy of publishing in-depth monographs would continue through the life of the magazine. In the first issues Rogers did mention a few authors of the Modern Movement, importantly not just the major ones but also (and especially) their predecessors, the primordial ancestors. Later, the urgency of post-war reconstruction, the homogenising effect of the economic boom, and the historical import of rediscovering certain authors would push the magazine towards other editorial decisions. Throughout its long history, Casabella's covers and graphic design evolved in step with these editorial decisions, telling a clear story: for many years the covers remained white, with a periodic change of the colour of the title Casabella and the way it intersected with the word Continuità. When the young editors assumed the role of vice directors, the covers began to change to reflect the specific issue contents. There was a move from a consistently mute non-imposing cover to one that made a statement.

Despite the obvious differences between the two publications, it is necessary to compare and explore

how these two publications used images, since in both cases they played anything but a secondary role in the editorial strategy. An attempt has been made to trace the resulting formal, figural, and educational consequences.

Discontinuity in Spazio

As already mentioned, Moretti personally participated in the graphic design of the entire layout, working on the images and how they were cropped. This art collector and future manager of an art gallery that would be named Spazio after the magazine, had a rich inventory of images at his fingertips; and, the role these images played in the individual issues, especially the editorials, is immediately obvious. Since they are so few in number, it is possible to examine and decode the entire series to detect the coherent graphic design strategy, its various alignments, imbalances, tensions, densities, concentrations of reality, and suspensions of materiality. The articles that open each of the seven magazines are not canonical editorials in the sense of introducing the issue contents. Rather, they can be read as excerpts from a longer treatise on architectural design that would come to fruition in the last issue, *Strutture e Sequenze di Spazi*.

It is often said that the magazine ceased publication abruptly, practically in midstride. It is true that in subsequent years Luigi Moretti would publish key essays on Michelangelo and Borromini, including *Forma come Struttura* as '*Estratti di Spazio*'. Nonetheless, when reading the seven essays together, there is a strong unifying thread which is further reinforced by the powerful and evocative layout of text and image. The gravitas of the essay titles, the photographs of architecture and materials, fragments of paintings, diagrams, and designs all compose a coherent indivisible whole that actually made subsequent re-publication rather difficult. Moretti describes architecture as only a few authors can, making us forget the specific position in history that a certain object may have previously acquired. He makes striking use of cropping, framing, enlarging, and fragmenting, while at the same time preserving a sense of unity. The process of abstracting shapes, explained so well by Moretti in his writing, is evident in the way he handles images, distancing them so much from the overall figure that they take on entirely different meanings. Each of these details is then carefully positioned on the page to generate relationships among the other elements.

In an essay in the first issue, *Eclettismo e Unità di Linguaggio* [Eclecticism and Unity of Language], Moretti introduces us to his working method. It is a search for a language that is on the one hand shared, current, and modern and on the other, richly personalised, with the most heterogeneous materials, tensions, and the power of a dense materiality through the perceptual reading of forms and fragments. In the second issue where he presents the text, *Genesi di Forme dalla Figura Umana* [Genesis of Forms Derived from the Human Figure], he addresses the theme of the figure and its development in the creative process through a re-reading of classical Greek sculpture.

While these two texts could be considered more general, starting with the third issue there is a strengthened descriptive capacity that unites the text and image in the article, *Forme Astratte nella Scultura Barocca* [Abstract Forms in Baroque Sculpture]. Moretti begins implementing the modern concept of abstraction, uniting text and image for a re-reading of historic architecture, specifically the Baroque. Through his analysis we learn to recognise the relationships between the different centres and unifying structures of Baroque art. The photographs of Bernini fountains and works by Michelangelo and Borromini take up almost the entire page, so closely cropped and fragmented as to be practically unrecognisable. Leafing through these pages, you are suddenly reminded of one of Moretti's most beautiful works, the Casa Girasole in Rome. Here, the

rusted base contrasts with the smooth areas, hinting at the author's passion for Arte Informale.

The fourth issue includes the essay *Trasfigurazioni di Strutture Murarie* [Transfigurations of Wall Structures]. Here text and image are engaged in a powerful play of contrasts between black and white. '*Transfigurations are like operations on a tectonic and utilitarian structure*,⁸ between rule and variation. The strongly symbolic use of colour, transfiguration, freedom of constructive honesty, combined with the fracturing of the perimeter wall cause the wall to lose its meaning as a constructive element; instead, it becomes an abstract element based on purely formal relationships, so much so that it is directly compared to a Mondrian painting on the very same page.

The fifth issue of the magazine includes an even more complex article, *Discontinuità dello Spazio in Caravaggio* [Discontinuity of Space in Caravaggio], in which Moretti compares the time and space connections of the Renaissance, its homogeneity, and the subsequent developments in Michelangelo and Caravaggio's work, passionately describing space as an articulation of light and dark. The images that juxtapose the text offer a controlled and balanced assembly of contrasting black and white photographs. The white columns fade into a black immaterial⁹ space of almost shapeless details taken from Caravaggio paintings together with a smaller closely cropped insert of Moretti's architecture - the house-hotel on Via Corridoni in Milan. The photos are laid out against a white background which becomes a figure in the composition.

In Moretti's clear and poetic words, '*The passage from this centering of interest in the whole form to the acute centering of interest in a section of the form*,¹⁰ *accepted as a condensation of the representational reality of the form itself [...] Reality, expanded and diluted across the entire surface of the painting due to academic and mannerist repetitions, tends to concentrate in pockets of sufficient vitality.*

*[...] Real kernels of inertia. [...] Terrible act of existence. [...] This vision derives from the hallucinatory density of reality in certain areas and from the absolute emptiness in others. I would say this stereoscopic¹¹ quality is laboratory proof of the fracturing of space. [...] Concentrating reality, these limited and summary areas become more powerful. In Caravaggio it is in the figures that are cut off, that the evocative power is condensed, more powerfully than in frontal figures. A cut-off shoulder stands for a whole human figure. Caravaggio use, s these cut-off figures, understanding their powerful inference [...] just as the architects of the late Baroque anticipate the sum and density of projections of a volume on its side, perforating space in the direction of the view and not blocking it with frontal obstacles. We moderns with our bladeliike edifices have understood this due to our mature heredity and precise needs.*¹²

At the same time it is impossible not to connect these words with the Milan projects Moretti was working on at that time such as the rotated volume of the Corso Italia and the previously mentioned house-hotel on Via Corridoni. The theoretical positioning of his writings always finds expression in a built application. In thinking about the built form, it is also important to bear in mind the significance that the terms time and space acquire in Moretti's writings; Michelangelo is also a key figure. Moretti sees him as the magnificent conceiver of works that allude to being constructed in different periods and indeed he credits Michelangelo with triggering his own historical awareness. Again, according to Moretti, '*Longhi evokes the drastic articulation of 'frames' where the direct and metaphysical meanings converge and disappear through time into a single unity with the spaces. 'Time' as expressed by Michelangelo, which constitutes the seventeenth-century antithesis to Renaissance stability, is expressed by Caravaggio in two superimposed*

modulations: one is the fracturing and discontinuity of space, and therefore of temporality; the other is the stellar palpitation of light-illuminating forms.¹³

Structure, form, figure, and space: Luigi Moretti's architectural lexicon is integrated with words and images. The sixth issue of the magazine includes a reflection on the relationships between distance, pauses, and the different parts. Moretti's initial insightful observation about the disconnection between the arrival of abstraction in the early 20th century and the simultaneous rejection of unique abstract architectural forms, i.e. mouldings, has to be pointed out. In *Valori della Modanatura* [The Value of Moldings] Moretti initially reads mouldings as tools for perceiving the architectural object, useful for sharpening the point of view, the gaze, and the figural lines of the composition. Subsequently, he celebrates the unique abstract forms, where everything hinges on the quality, size, and light and dark. '*Cornices are the spaces in architecture where the greatest reality is condensed not only because of their forms but because they alternate with the free spaces devoid of mouldings. [...] Crystalline reality due to their diminished density.*'¹⁴

It is fairly inevitable that, after the descriptions of discontinuity in Caravaggio and the different densities described, we should arrive at the last article, *Strutture e Sequenze di Spazi* [Structures and Sequences of Spaces]. The text systematically traces the history of architecture in terms of the linking of spaces, including their compression, expansion, and sequencing.¹⁵ However, in this instance the images dominate the text and are rightly allowed to express their eloquence. The photographs are largely of incredibly detailed plaster models made by Moretti himself in which he tried to represent the spatial density by extruding the void interior space of the architecture. The historical sequencing makes this a complex series, with design fragments, diagrams, and red and black backgrounds juxtaposed against the shadows and compression of space. This is the last Spazio magazine essay, the closing of the exploration into the analytical description of perceptual qualities that formed Moretti's sense of architecture. Concepts about figural words, form, structure, and space would always have corresponding applications in his architectural work in terms of density, expansion, and tension in the transformation of the immateriality of space into materiality. Structure and form are words that Moretti would continue to refer to frequently because his idea of material architecture, structure, and immateriality (i.e. space) were so interrelated and complimentary.¹⁶ In recent years, there has been much theorising (often quite abstract) about the connections to figural art. However, Moretti's writings draw no comparisons between art and architecture without providing concrete examples and precise descriptions of the actions and works in a continual transition from art to architecture and vice versa.¹⁷ The seven essays that make up the magazine's editorial body of work have such theoretical power, with each one addressing a different formal issue related to architectural design, that taken together they represent a veritable treatise on architectural composition. This certainly points to the pioneering and educational value of the architect Luigi Moretti's contribution to Italian society during those years.

Continuity in Casabella

Ernesto Nathan Rogers directs two post-war magazines: first, a few issues of *Domus*, and then, for about ten years starting in 1953, *Casabella-Continuità*. During this time he was also teaching three courses at the Politecnico di Milano's Architecture School, *Caratteri stilistici*, *Storia dell'Architettura* and *Composizione Architettónica*. In his writing, lessons, and magazines he always made careful use of images, also developing certain predilections and habits.¹⁸ We can theorise that Rogers used images rather freely to articulate specific

issues and mental concepts, in stark contrast to Moretti who used images for their visual materiality.

Navigating the vast editorial output of Ernesto Nathan Rogers, it becomes clear that the images used in each text facilitate a broader discourse, a kind of subliminal repertoire that offers different shades of reading. First there is the explicit meaning, then an implied one, and finally a network of relationships established among multiple images. These could be the two-coloured summary cards of Casabella-Continuità, or the delicate index graphic called '*textures*'. However, they could also be symbolic images used repeatedly over the years to accompany different texts, such as the Costantin Brancusi sculpture, *Le Commencement du Monde*, that appears in *Domus*, *Casabella* and finally in *Esperienza dell'Architettura*, the 1958 anthology of Rogers' published work.

The images are always laid out to suggest rather than impose '*relationships and meanings*'¹⁹ for the reader to pick up on. This has been well described by Salvatore Veca, a student of the philosopher Enzo Paci who was a friend of Rogers, and confirms Rogers' hallmark duality: the personal and the subjective, the rational and the objective²⁰. The unambiguous nature of the written word drives towards objective thought, while the freedom of the images feeds the subjective aspect.

Rogers' passion for the forms of the early 20th Century such as the Art Nouveau whiplash or the uncertainties of Proto-rationalism is interpreted as a focus on a precise moment in the design process. It was the point '*when there is a revolution in form*'²¹, highlighting the freedom and opportunity to learn from figures that were still in flux, still in development, and as such, not yet frozen into unusable icons but instead able to facilitate thinking about the new, the other.

Starting from the moment at the end of the war when Rogers took over the magazine *Domus* founded by Gio Ponti, his choice of images tells us a lot about his personality. It points to his commitment, his awareness, and at the same time his practicality in setting up a discourse based on "questions" by presenting topics through images. There is the worn out dirigible that demonstrates the fragility of technological progress as well as the ancient vase used to introduce the topic of ornament and its two lines where Rogers writes, '*What are those two lines? They would become complex braids, volutes, bulges leaves, dragons, and monsters [...] so as to transform the accidental into the substantial.*'²²

Rogers is a careful architect; he is precise and scholarly about the form and scale of design and its material-built possibilities. Above all however, he is a thinker who offers up the stuff of history to the poetics of future architects. It is no accident that the Acropolis in Athens is a beloved symbol that makes an appearances in both *Casabella* and *Esperienza dell'Architettura*. In his words, '*objects become antiquities when they have ceased being old, yet this is a quality that very few possess. By becoming antiquities they become current resources with practical daily use as objects of cultural consumption.*'²³

The earlier fragmented explorations find a more precise application in *Casabella-Continuità*. We have already mentioned the decision to publish the first 24 editions of *Casabella* with blank covers. The first illustrated cover is dedicated to the beloved Mies van der Rohe.²⁴

The title page was charged with building anticipation about the contents, so that the summary page could bear an image, often abstracted, reduced, and with a strong graphic quality, depicting an unrecognisable fragment from a beloved reference such as Sullivan, Perret, or some traditional Norwegian detail. *Casabella* was where the Modern Masters were introduced to the high culture of Italian architecture. However, its pages were also devoted to the heartfelt documentation of extinct traditions and cultures. Rogers did not

just express his Modernism by exploring the early modernists, but also by describing designs from a particular point of view, one that jumps from the general to the detail.

The images that document Italian production of those years show glimpses of buildings inserted within a context, alternated with zoomed-in images of façade details where the entire building is no longer legible. Two extremes, the overall view and the built detail.

The specific and the universal at the same time. Among Werner Bischof's²⁵ many fascinating photographs, Rogers chose the ones that celebrated both the detail and the general, two poles in tension, in this way resisting falling prey to the absence of perspective and the absence of a coherent whole. It is the abstraction of these architecture fragments that allows them to inspire new architecture. Yet a photograph is not a drawing, and Rogers uses photographic details to express a materiality that drawings so often lack.

For Rogers, the particular meaning of the modern artefact can be found in its specific time and place. Each moment is inserted in the drama of existence and cannot be considered an abstract entity with materiality the tool for representing a historic moment. So when he says, "In the case of the modern, we can talk about the process of stylisation," he is pointing to the moment when character finds formal expression in a specific culture through its materiality and the personality interpreting it. It is precisely the specificity of the built artefact that releases the form from the absurd banality of repetition and, it is the obligation of each new artist to discover new relationships between form, materials, and meaning.

Finally, despite their clear differences, Rogers' educational approach and methodology reminds us of Moretti.

Legacy for the future

We have compared how these two Milan magazines use images and theoretical criticism and highlighted some striking similarities. These include the strong communication skills of both magazine directors, especially when they manage to communicate a strongly proactive (one could even say theory-based) message without falling prey to the constraints of academia or formulaic essay writing.

In this they are helped by a shared passion for the explicit freedom of the photographic image. In Moretti's case, the figure is closely tied to the text, while for Rogers, the image is almost always an autonomous conceptual symbol. Both frequently crop images and place them into a larger compositional whole (whether figuratively or literally), both employing a clearly facile design sense. Certainly, the two masters also share a strong working knowledge of history; the Romanesque and Baroque for Moretti and the ancient and traditional for Rogers. Both authors use photographs in their articles, often as fragments or close ups abstracted from time and place to highlight the relevance of the forms and timelessness of their compositions so ripe for new interpretation.

Theirs is not a modernity in crisis, but rather a thoughtful reflection that allows for placement within a broader historic context, resisting reduction to a specific style or fashion.

Albeit quite different, both Rogers and Moretti seem to be aware of the roles they are playing in Italian Reconstruction and of the educational value of the magazines that would populate the shelves of Italian architectural studios for years to come. This idea of the studio - the workshop - is something both of them experienced in their professional lives and used for strikingly different ends. With Luigi Moretti, his iconic

architecture, while rarely published in the magazine, nonetheless remains in the back of our minds. In contrast, Rogers, ever the educator, seems to have entrusted the pencil to his friends and pupils.

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