

POLITECNICO DI MILANO



GENNARO POSTIGLIONE: IDENTIFICATION PROFILE

COORDINATING AND PROMOTING RESEARCH ACTIVITY

- Promoter and coordinator of the project "**European Museums and Libraries in/of the Age of Migrations**" (**MeLA**) Granted (June 2010) by FP7 with 2.700.000,00 euros.

Adapting the concept of *contact zone* formulated by M. L. Pratt, the Proposal reconsiders the identity of Museums and Libraries as a historical theme, tackled on the basis of new cultural productions and new relations. Consequently, considered as 'contact areas', their organizational structure becomes a topical historical, political and moral relation: an exchange of power relations. In a manner that is in some aspects utopian, museums and libraries are being reconsidered as public venues for collaboration, shared control and complex translation; places of power turned into places of cultural integration; places of complex hybrid multi-cultural representation of identity (different layers of identity); places of knowledge; places of conservation; places of meeting and mutual understanding on the free ground of cultural research. The purpose of MeLA program is to develop basic multi-disciplinary resources necessary for investigating and comparing the major public structure of Museums and Libraries, as created historically and responding to contemporary challenges of globalisation, European integration, and new media.

To fulfil the overall task, the project has been divided into 6 themes and in several actions performed through specific WPs. This should lead both to a better investigation and to stronger networking.

- Promoter and coordinator (2005-06) of the project "**The Atlantic Wall Linear Museum**".

The AW was one of the last major defense lines of this century. The infrastructure, which is a unique example of its kind, is of great value for many reasons. The architectural quality of its vast building system, the ability of these objects to define a new aesthetic canon for modernity, the relationship they have established with their natural and or urban contexts → becoming essential elements for interpreting the cultural landscape.

Granted by EU Commission, programme "Culture 2000", the research was developed together with the Raymond International Center for Conservation in Louven and the GRAI at Versailles. Actions developed: international seminar, traveling exhibition, catalogue publication and web site edited.

connected publications:

The Atlantic Wall Linear Museum, ed by G. Postiglione, Milano 2005; Bunkers along the Atlantic Wall, ed. by G. Guidi, Milano 2006.

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- Promoter and coordinator (2000-02) of the project "**One-Hundred houses for one-hundred European Architects of XX century**"; an action to safeguard and highlight the neglected heritage of architects' own houses of the XX century. Developed together with other 27 institutions involved 10 partners and 15 countries, the project was Granted by EU Commission, programme "Culture 2000".

Actions developed: international seminar, travelling exhibition, catalogue publication and web site edited.

connected publication:

100 HOUSES, G. Postiglione et. al, Taschen GmbH, Kolon 2003 (English, German, French and Italian editions).

RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Between 1991 and 1997 different research periods were spent in Norway for investigation on Scandinavian architecture (home design, modern tradition, museums); studies were developed under the tutoring of Christian Norberg-Schulz.

The work produced has been along the years diffused through out seminars, traveling exhibitions, publications and lectures. Following a list of main subjects and products.

- Investigation around two masterpieces of Norwegian architecture: Arne Korsmo villa in Planetveien 12 and Knut Knutsen hytta in Portoer. Theme: Traditional culture of dwelling, with the task to draw a short history of house design in Norway and to identify archetypes.

Connected publications:

Arne Korsmo- Knut Knutsen a cura di N. Flora, P. Giardiello e G. Postiglione, Officina Ed., Roma 1999.

- Investigation on Oslo architecture between the two WW. Topic was the study of what has been called "Regionalism of Internationalism" deepening the local contribute to the construction of internationalism.

Connected publications:

Funzionalità norvegese. Oslo 1927-40, a cura di G. Postiglione, Officina ed., Roma 1996; Scandinavia Anni '30, numero monografico di "Rassegna n. 77", a cura di G. Postiglione, 1999.

- Investigation on the work and the thought of Sverre Fehn, collecting all his production built and un-built to draw the Norwegian contribute to the Third Generation of Modern Masters.

Connected publications:

Sverre Fehn. Opera completa, C. Norberg-Schulz, G. Postiglione, Electa Milano/Monicelli Press, N.Y./Orfeus Oslo, 1997.

- Investigation were developed on the work of the Swedish master Sigurd Lewerentz, a neglected figure of contemporary historiography. The study had the ambition to divulgate the quality and the relevance of his work full of inspiration for a certain kind of contemporary architecture.

Connected publications:

Sigurd Lewerentz, 1885-1975. Opera completa N. Flora, P. Giardiello, G. Postiglione, a cura di, Electa, Milano 2001/Monicelli Press, NY2002.

- Responsible, together with Kenneth Frampton, of a research digging into the work and the thought of Panos Koulermos, a master of Greek architecture and an influent personality of contemporary architecture during the 70s and the 80s.

Connected publications:

Catalogo delle opere di Panos Koulermos, in Panos Koulermos opera completa, K. Frampton and G. Postiglione (eds.), Mendrisio 2004.

- Investigations on the relationship between "Traditional dwelling, domestic architecture, modernity", to dig into the sense of built form and cultural conditioning. Studies on the work of authors such as A. Korsmo, K. Knutsen, J. Utzon, S. Fehn, G. Murcutt.

Connected publications:

Tradizione Natura Modernità, in conference proceedings “Il progetto di Architettura”, Roma maggio 1998; Though this earth lightly, in Glenn Murcutt. Otto case a cura di N. Flora, P. Giardiello e G. Postiglione, CLEAN, Napoli 1999; Arne Korsmo Eget hjem. La casa di Arne Korsmo, in Arne Korsmo- Knut Knutsen a cura di N. Flora, P. Giardiello e G. Postiglione, Officina Ed., Roma 1999.
Case d'autore, a cura di, L. Andreini, N. Flora, P. Giardiello e G. Postiglione, Motta Ed., Milano 1999

- In relation with the research about Sigurd Lewerentz work, investigations were developed in the field of landscape and the role of nature in Nordic countries.

Connected publications:

Il cimitero Est di Malmö. Sigurd Lewerentz architetto, in “Casabella” n. 659, settembre 1998; G. Postiglione, Nordic Thirties Architecture, LITOGI', Milano 2002.

TEACHING ACTIVITY

Approach & areas of interest

With a specific tradition of studies within Interiors, from the very early beginning of my teaching activity in Architecture, I have always tried to identify and focus some characteristic elements of Interior discipline which I would have used also working within other frameworks: as in my courses in Architectural design there was no express request for interior themes. With this specific task in my mind, I tried to transform practice into methodology, identifying design behaviours able to give deeper meaning to architectural space and bringing what I had always thought to be the core of Interiors.

In this framework, a fundamental parameter to recognize whatever project as characterized by an approach within the field of Interiors is the evidence of human presence in the design process. Not only in terms of human scale metrics, from the use of inches and foot to more sophisticated golden section and so on, but in terms of the project to be capable to show existing relationships between space, that we prefer to call “place”, gesture use and meaning. This also explains why, working with Interiors at school, the self-dimension is often called in evidence: the reflexive action of involving “yourself” in the design process is almost the only strategy both to avoid extreme generalization and to give depth of meaning to design choices. Shape and gesture in the interior are strictly connected and this topic represents the basic specificity of interior culture. Therefore, Interiors represent, rather than an operative field in itself, an approach to design focused on the relevance of gesture, considered as the action building the place .

The Architecture of Interiors leads to over come the concepts of dimension, context and building typology: no matter if you are inside or outside, in a open or closed space, in a room or in a shopping mall, since they are all considered as “place of the gesture”, produced and signified by the action of inhabiting. Interiors as discipline makes architecture concentrate on the crucial question of “dwelling through actions”, transforming the abstract space into a “place-to-be” .

This theoretical interpretation underlines the role of Interiors in contemporary architecture debate as the discipline whose validity relies in the methodology of shaping spaces, building relations and meanings between man needs and the places where they live. The practice of interiors, in this view, is addressed and suitable both to new design and to intervention on/around existent since it takes care of relationship between gesture and space, with the help of objects. However, “working on the existing” is paradigmatic for the discipline: the already existing constructions are the place where space has to be thought around the subject, where new gestures need to “find home”. It is the place where hospitality investigation between actions and shapes are more deeply developed because of the reduced freedom connected with the existing boundaries.

Design Studio arrangements

Design Studios are arranged with lectures (both theoretical and specific to the course theme: using slide show, readings, case-studies presentation), practical investigations (learning by doing exercises), design work studio & revision (individually and in seminar for mid-term revision and final delivering). Usually the work-site as always a strong problematic as a strong character, and the first session of the class is devoted to sightseeing and

survey: re-presentation (describing, giving "name" to things, etc.) of material and un-material aspects of the work-site is considered a fundamental step for a worth design. Second step is devoted to help each student to identify his work-site main characters and to re-present it/them. This "conceptual representation" (drawing or maquette or slide show) will be the departure point for the project: will be the leading thought to give interpretation at the functional program planned for the site. This first half of Design Studio is usually presented in the mid-term revision: students without a clear organization of those two steps will be invited and helped to work again on them. The others will start the real design work. The second half of the course will be mainly focused on work individual revision with deepening on site planning, form, construction, materials, etc.: much attention is devoted in the relationship between shape & gesture involving also furniture and light. Usually, along the semester, guest lecturers are invited in relationship their knowledge of the year-theme or of specific topics.

Along the years I have been teaching at the Faculty of Architecture in Naples (where I graduated and where I worked as tutors within Design Studios of Interior), at the Politecnico di Milano, where I work; at the Faculty of Architecture in Siracusa as Visiting Professor (2003-05). Besides main teaching, every year I have been involved in International Workshops of Architecture around in Europe and in South America; from 2005, I have been leading every year an Intensive Workshop at Domus Academy in Milano. As stated above, working sites or subjects have always been chosen with attention at the "transformation of the existent" and at the "self-dimension", even the size of subjects has been very different, from the small Le Corbusier window in the Marseille Unité to the wide dimension of The Martesana Canal in Milano or at the Sulac-sur-mer bunker site in France.

From 2005, a blog for didactic activity was launched (www.lablog.org.uk): used as a teaching tool, it contains slide-shows, case-studies, lectures, working programmes and calendars, site basic survey, etc.. It also presents collection of the work done by students through the "year report book" (see: "pages"), but even mid-term presentation or "learn-by-doing" exercises.

LIST OF PUBLICATION 2005-10

2010

POSTIGLIONE, G. (general Ed.), *Unplugged Italy*, Lettera22, Siracusa, 2010 (Italian/English)
FLORA, N., POSTIGLIONE, G., *Norwegian talks*, Quodlibet, Ascoli Piceno 2010
POSTIGLIONE, G. et al (Gen. Ed.s), *Interior worl[ld]ds*, Allemandi, Torino 2010
LUPO, E., POSTIGLIONE, G., *Temporary Active - Actions as Urban re-appropriation strategies*, in MEADE, T., *Occupation*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2010 (Call for Papers)

2009

POSTIGLIONE, G., *Sulle orme di Sverre Fehn?*, Ordine Architetti Palermo, Palermo 2009
POSTIGLIONE, G., *Sverre Fehn. Tra tipo e costruzione*, "Area" 106/2009
PADOVANI, G., POSTIGLIONE, G., *Il "Muro dell'Atlantico". Geografie sottocutanee*, in AA.VV., *Il backstage del Paesaggio*, Ordine Paesaggisti di Gorizia, Gorizia, 2009 (Call for Papers)

2008

POSTIGLIONE, G. (general Ed.), *One hundred houses for one hundred architects*, Taschen GmbH, Koln (Germany) 2008 (2nd edition); separated eds.: English and Italian
POSTIGLIONE, G., *Atlantic Wall: bunker and architecture*, in International Conference DOCOMOMO Iberico, Cadiz 2008, (paper accepted and published)
POSTIGLIONE, G., *The Roof and the Precint*, in "il Giornale dell'Architettura, Maggio 2008
POSTIGLIONE, G., *Sigurd lewenz. The Paradox of Construction*, in LINAZASORO, J.J., *Premio di Architettura Sigurd Lewerentz*, Madrid 2008

BASSO PERESSUT, L., POSTIGLIONE, G., et al Eds, *Places & Themes of Interiors. Contemporary research world wide*, Milano 2008

2007

- POSTIGLIONE, G., *Humac village in Croatia: phenomenology as key-method for understanding/designing "the place"*, in International Conference Architecture & Phenomenology, Haifa, 2007 (paper accepted, presented and published)
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *The Architecture of Interiors as re-writing of space: the centrality of gesture*, in CORNOLDI, A. et alt., a cura di, *Gli interni nel progetto sull'esistente*, Il Poligrafo, Padova 2007 (conference call, accepted and published)
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *Intervenire sull'esistente: il paradosso dell'autentico*, in MINUCCIANI, V., VAUDETTI, M., *Temi e strategie di ricerca nell'architettura degli interni*, Torino 2007 (paper accepted 2006, and published)
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *The Architecture of Interiors as re-writing of space*, in HOLLIS, E., et Al., *Thinking inside the box*, London (paper accepted, presented and published)
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *La casa: storia ed evoluzione; Intervenire sull'esistente*, in AA.VV., *Personal Manager*, Università Bocconi-La Repubblica, Milano
- CORNOLDI, A., POSTIGLIONE, G. e alt, a cura di, *Gli interni nel progetto sull'esistente*, Il Poligrafo, Padova 2007
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *Residenze per studenti e vuoti urbani (progetto)*, in AA.VV., *Annuario delle tesi di laurea 2005-06*, Roma

2006

- POSTIGLIONE, G., *Sigurd Lewerentz: il paradosso della costruzione*, in AA.VV., *Otras Vias 2: Omage to Lewerentz*, COAC, Avila (Spain) 2006 (paper presented on request)
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *C.R. Mackintosh: dimora propria vs dimore per la committenza*, in AA.VV., «Dispar et unum», Acts of Congress, Palermo (Italy) 2004 (paper presented on request)
- LUPO, E., and POSTIGLIONE, G., *The Atlantic Wall Linear Museum*, in International Conference "Media&Heritage", Oslo 2006 (paper accepted, presented and published)
- POSTIGLIONE, G., LUPO, E., *Rural heritage and sustainable tourism: Humac village in Croatia*, in, *Manors & Villas: Cultural Heritage as a generator of economic development*, a cura di M. O. Scitaroci, Zagreb University Press, Zagabria 2006
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *Atlantic Wall Linear Museum*, «ANANKE» (Italy), 47, January 2006.
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *AW-bunker: some thoughts*, «COVIEK» (Zagreb), 12, 2006.
- POSTIGLIONE, G., *Introduzione*, in GUIDI, G. (ed.), *Bunker. Guido Guidi* (ex. catalogue), Electa, Milan (Italy) 2006.
- Casa CN*, FGP studio, in *Architetti italiani*, a cura di G. Mulazzani, Electa, Milano 2006, pp. 74-80
- Casa Nardi*, FGP studio, in *La Casa*, La Biblioteca di Repubblica-L'Espresso, Federico Motta, Milano, 2006, pp. 96-100