

Editorial

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The Present of Architectural Drawing is the theme proposed by Paolo Belardi and Massimiliano Campi for this issue of the journal *disegno* and welcomed by the Editorial Board for several reasons. The first of these reasons concerns the close relationship between ideation, drawing and design, terms linked by a bond that is both theoretical and concrete; the second relates to the personalities of the two editors, who have always been interested in the themes of drawing projected towards design, exploring its theories and techniques of representation.

In this Preface, I would like to refer to an incipit by Franco Purini, about architectural drawing as an anticipator of future topics and how it can be considered more of a theory than a mere technical device: "An architectural project is in itself the anticipation of a normally near future" [Purini 2019]. This also clarifies the theme of this issue, which deals with a 'present' drawing, a present representation that is practiced on the central theme of architecture in the age of sustainability and digital transition. Issue 13 of *disegno* proposes a vision that takes into due account a complexity that necessarily transcends disciplinary barriers to bring forth a theory of 'social' architecture design, which cannot limit itself to the mere description and investigation of the state of the art, but wants to exert itself to make a critical contribution to participate in its necessary transformation process.

Project activities, at the different scales of architecture and the city, have always been inextricably linked to the community that animates them for a dialogue based on a cross-reference of questions and answers; interpretations and common values develop in the social sphere and form the basis for architectural culture expressed by a 'present,' between image and realization, since drawing is not just a

simple tool "but is first and foremost the native place of an idea, to then become the memory of the design process and finally the communication of the choices made" [Purini 2019].

The contributions that unfold in this issue, starting with the Cover designed by the editors, are also an opportunity for reflection on the development of the tools of drawing and representation of architecture, from analog to digital, where the sketch remains the indispensable element of continuity in the heuristics of the project. But, if it is true that architecture expresses its own time, the one we are going through requires the ability to measure itself with aspects related to the digital transition. Design has always been the result of contaminations related to place, cultural and social context and to building technology. We have now entered the digital age more than 30 years ago, and it is necessary to understand the degree of influence in the work of architects who in the present are called upon to design buildings that are increasingly adaptive and flexible, capable of responding to the changing needs of users and the place in which they are inserted. The now-established digital tools for representation, such as BIM (Building Information Modeling) and rendering, do not, however, nullify the desire to keep theoretical research on architectural design active in parallel, and with this there remains alive a component of draftsmen who refuse to bind the project to the exclusive purpose of its realization.

In this regard Marco Gaiani writes for Treccani: "The introduction of digital has substantially changed the media representation schemes of architectural design, since the devices developed for the operations of input and output have altered the relationship of *mnème*, that is, the ways in which the operator practically realizes his figuration. The

conditions of imitation offered by the computer are, in fact, very different from those of manual operation, since technological innovation transfers hitherto real processes into the virtual, considerably altering the relationship between reality itself and the imaginary" [Gaiani 2010].

The question concerns the role of the techniques of representation of the architectural project, an extremely varied field that must be considered in a context animated by rapid changes, and the editors of this issue have decided to unravel the subject across a range of interpretations, considering as a premise the pervasive use of visual and graphic media that more often than not does not clarify communication but makes it superficial and redundant.

The common goal is to reconsider the role of drawing as a strategic tool both for the purpose of organizing and coordinating all the information for the management of the project at different levels and in its different specifications, but, again to use Franco Purini's words, "a drawing is not just a simple tool but is first and foremost the native place of an idea, to then become the memory of the design process and finally the communication of the choices made. All in the conviction, certainly minoritarian today, that architecture is an art that must, or should, result in a beauty capable of renewing itself epoch after epoch. That beauty that for Stendhal was a promise of happiness" [Purini 2019].

The issue opens with the editors' *Cover* and continues with a fantastic axonometry by Massimo Scolari, entitled *L'incontro* (The Encounter), commented by Roberto de Rubertis.

Just as we did for No. 11 in 2022 with Mario Trimarchi's text, we wanted to also include in this context a *Special Column*, taking the opportunity of the presence of Riccardo Florio, who was keynote speaker at the 44th International Conference of Representation Disciplines Teachers - Congress of the Unione Italiana per il Disegno, entitled *Transizioni / Transitions* which took place on September 14, 15 and 16, 2023 in Palermo and whose subject seemed to us very much in tune with the theme of this issue.

The three Topics defined with the editors open with the invited contribution of a figure chosen among the protagonists of the architectural debate in Italy in recent years.

Topic 1, titled *Media and Languages*, is opened by Alessandro Melis, curator of the Italian Pavilion at the 17th Venice Biennale in 2021 and two-time Ambassador of Italian Design (ADI). For topic 2, *Practices and Poetics*, an intervention by Gianandrea Barreca, an expert in architectural design with a focus on morphological and compositional issues, always related to relationships with context, sustainability and natural elements. For topic 3, titled *Theories and Research*, Nicolò Ornaghi, co-founder of *Raumplan*, a web platform on visual arts, producer of exhibitions and events, and editor of *San Rocco* journal, was invited to propose a text taken in part from the last issue of this architectural magazine, which was closed in 2019.

The response to the call for Issue 13 of *diségno* was considerable and characterized by the presence of several scholars from the area of drawing, a circumstance desired by the editors and the Editorial Board, which has already, for several issues, been intending to promote an exchange with disciplinary fields close to Drawing.

For the *Readings/Rereadings* column, given the theme of the journal, Fabrizio Agnello proposes the text by James S. Ackerman, entitled *Architecture and Drawing. Representation from Vitruvius to Gehry*, a seminal collection of writings by the eminent architectural historian, published in 2001.

The journal is completed by the usual columns on reviews of a few recent volumes of particular interest to our discipline and on the most significant events of the recent months.

Finally, a look at the *UID Library* and the plaques and prizes awarded at the UID 2023 Convention.

As always, I would like to conclude with a preview of Issue 14 of our journal that is currently in the works and will be dedicated to Analog Models and edited by Alberto Sdegnò and Pedro Manuel Cabezas Bernal. An issue intended for scholars of this particular tool of representation that has always flanked the work of the architect.

My heartfelt thanks go to the authors of the contributions, the editors, the reviewers, the Editorial Board and the Editorial Staff, while not forgetting, in particular, the Journal Manager who coordinated the issue. I wish everyone a good read.

Reference List

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Purini, F. (2019). Il disegno come teoria. In *Rivista di estetica*, No. 71, pp. 19-37. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/estetica.5452>.