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**Lotus. The first thirty years of an architectural magazine**

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**Abstract**

Imagined more as an annual dedicated to the best works of architecture, urban and industrial design, during the first seven issues, the magazine «Lotus» shifts the axis of its purpose from that of information and professional updating to one of a critical examination of the key issues intrinsic to the architectural project. This article identifies some themes, which pervaded the first thirty years of «Lotus» life, from 1964 to 1994, re-emerging, with variations, in many successive issues. If the monographic approach set a characteristic of the editorial line that endures over time, helping to strengthen the magazine's identity, the change in the themes dealt with over the course of the decades is considered as a litmus test of the continuous evolution of the theoretical-design issues at the core of the architectural debate.

**Keywords**

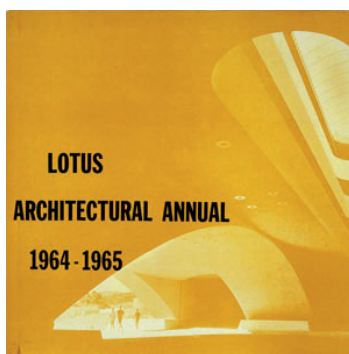
Lotus International — Architectural annual — Little Magazine — Pierluigi Nicolini — Bruno Alfieri

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The year 1963 was a memorable one for the British racing driver Jim Clark. At the helm of his Lotus 25 custom-made for him by Colin Chapman, he had won seven of the ten races scheduled for that year. The fastest lap at the Italian Grand Prix held at Monza on 8 September 1963 had allowed him and his team to win the drivers' title and the Constructors' Cup,<sup>1</sup> with three races to go before the end of the championship. That same day, Chapman did “the lap of honour astride the hood of his Lotus 25”.<sup>2</sup>

This car, and its success story, inspired the name chosen for what was initially imagined more as an annual dedicated to the best works of architecture, urban and industrial design, rather than a traditional magazine. It was Bruno Alfieri, the son of a fine art publisher and a fan of motor racing,<sup>3</sup> who established “Lotus” in Venice in 1963.

For the compilation of the first edition of the annual, published in Italian and English in 1964,<sup>4</sup> he availed himself of the advice of Sigfried Giedion and the observations of Henry Russell Hitchcock for the East Coast of the USA, Esther Mc Coy for the West Coast, Jürgen Joedicke for German architecture, and Giulia Veronesi<sup>5</sup> for the Italian and French situations. “*Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura, Annuaire de l'architecture 1964-65*, edited by Giulia Veronesi and Bruno Alfieri, Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1964”, announces the frontispiece of the first bountiful volume. The published works were selected based on their “high level of artistic achievement”,<sup>6</sup> or based on their ability to spot “new ground in the experimental stage”,<sup>7</sup> including the defects of the experimental. The arduous task that the annual set itself was to draw “a picture of the world situation as objectively as possible”,<sup>8</sup> as Alfieri wrote in the Introduction, inviting designers and critics of architecture from every corner

**Fig. 1**

Cover of «Lotus. Architectural annual/Annuario dell'architettura/Annuaire de l'architecture, 1964-1965», 1964.

of the world to indicate works to be considered for the next edition. In the pages that followed, Veronesi stated that the objective was not to take stock, but before anything else, to make it possible to carry out what any “critical examination”<sup>9</sup> requires, namely, basic knowledge of the works. If it was not yet time to express evaluations, it was still possible to highlight some “outstanding traits”<sup>10</sup> on the international scene that emerged from this annual. From the pages of what was presented as a tool for information and work emerged the conclusion of the process of assimilating the two “vastly influential”<sup>11</sup> and “opposite”<sup>12</sup> aesthetics of the century, that of Frank Lloyd Wright and that of Le Corbusier. And this therefore implied that the “frantic search for structural, technical, or aesthetic novelty has now been given way to a thoughtful elaboration and adoption of these secure premises, which in themselves might be considered a «basic vocabulary» which the architect’s new, original syntax will mould, into plastic coherent speech”.<sup>13</sup> As highlighted by Alessandro Rocca, the first edition of the annual outlined: “a scenario dominated by the masters of the first generation with a major American presence, a good seventeen works out of thirty-eight”,<sup>14</sup> among which appeared two projects by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Rubbing shoulders with Wright, Le Corbusier, and Mies van der Rohe were Alvar Aalto, Josep Antoni Coderch, Eero Saarinen and, among the Italians, Angelo Mangiarotti, Giovanni Michelucci, Pier Luigi Nervi, Nicola Pagliara and Gino Valle. The almost square format of the volume (24 x 25cm), the clarity of the layout and the first-rate picture quality, due to the experience gained by Alfieri in the field of fine art publishing, accompanied presentations of the works that were more descriptive than critical-interpretive, focusing on the “formal and technological innovations”<sup>15</sup> of the projects. Small modifications appeared in the subtitle of the second edition of 1965 – “Architectural annual” was flanked by the words “of today” and associated with the adjective “contemporary”, while the merely descriptive register of the articles remained unchanged. However, the gradual process of transforming the annual had begun, as corroborated both by Veronesi’s essay, and the Introduction, with Alfieri’s expressive title *A New Lotus*. These laid emphases on the loss of meaning of the subdivisions between organicism, rationalism, and neo-neo-classicism by then overwhelmed by the fresh, no-longer-postponable objectives that the social and economic changes of the moment posed. The very figure of the architect had changed, assuming the role of a “social planner”<sup>16</sup> and a technician called to solve problems that did not relate exclusively to the scale of the building, but extended to embrace the neighbourhood, the city, and the region. “The world itself it goes on its way, faster and faster. Architects are required to plan airfields with more runways, to take part in town-planning enterprises that affect the lives of millions, to design factories [...] and seaports [...]”<sup>17</sup> Even while “as we look, with unstinted admiration, at the drawings of Carlo Scarpa [...] or the entrance bridge to the Fondazione Querini Stampalia [...], we cannot help being disturbed by the thought that far greater and urgent necessities are demanding our attention elsewhere”.<sup>18</sup> In his essay, like Alfieri, Veronesi analysed the theme of the great changes that could be observed in the world of architecture, tackling them from a point of view that lay more within the discipline, however. In the generation which followed that of the *maestri*, “recent trends”<sup>19</sup> were being defined, in which there was no longer a net opposition between the rational and the organic, but an “attempt at a reconciliation” set in motion by the technique. In the current “ideological confusion”<sup>20</sup> that



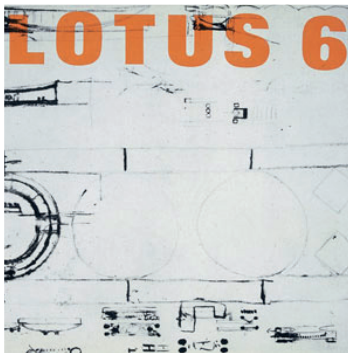
**Fig. 2**

Cover of «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine 1966-1967», n. 3, 1966.

crossed and confused the various trends, and the multiple languages that the annual limited itself to reflecting on, the eclecticism could reach a form of redemption only in that “technical and scientific preoccupations which underlie the researches of architects all over the world”.<sup>21</sup>

No further modifications came, but substantial alterations were made to the editorial initiative the following year, when in the subtitle the noun “annual” was replaced by the word “review”: *LOTUS 3. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1966-67*. The name of Giulia Veronesi also disappeared and at the helm of “Lotus” remained Alfieri alone. The annual’s formula had revealed all its shortcomings, both in terms of the completeness of its contents, and in terms of the illustration of the works; space requirements and impartiality had imposed the use of “minimum common denominators of layout”<sup>22</sup> creating a sense of visual boredom for the reader. With the abandonment of the pretence of an all-embracing catalogue, came a way to restrict the scope of the investigation and give ampler room to the comparison between the ideas and the presentation of “research and design phenomena that could provide useful indications on the architecture and design of tomorrow.”<sup>23</sup> But it was in an essay on architecture’s search for new relationships by Alberto Rosselli – a designer and university lecturer for whom planning was seen as a “decision-making process” – that it became clear how the magazine intended to restrict the field of its own interests. If the most questionable aspects of contemporary architecture coincided with a loss of awareness of its own nature, and a consequent tendency to succumb to the influence of other collateral disciplines, it became vital to question the role that research could take in the profession’s world. It was essential, wrote Rosselli, “to know how to see a certain reality” and “to know how to interpret it”,<sup>24</sup> in order to find answers to the problems it posed, to reinstate continuity between the culture of architects and the operative tools at their disposal. It became necessary to investigate the nature of the phenomena, recognizing their internal structure and relationships with the outside world since architectural design was by now engaged precisely “in this world of relationships”.<sup>25</sup>

With issue 4 of «Lotus» there came a refinement of the process that led the periodical to shift the axis of its purpose from that of information and professional updating to one of a critical examination of the key issues intrinsic to the architectural project. The objective of «Lotus» was clearly defined in the introduction to this edition, written by Alfieri. The launch of the new version allowed a continuation of the discourse that had begun in the pages of the international magazine «Zodiac», desired by Adriano Olivetti and founded in 1957 by Edizioni di Comunità on Alfieri’s initiative. The result was those reflections “interrupted by the practical difficulties in which the staff [...] gradually became involved after the death of [...] a distinguished man [...] who imposed his personality on the cultural rebirth of Italy in the fields of sociology, architecture, town planning and industrial design, after the last world war”.<sup>26</sup> The selective process at the base of the annual’s idea inevitably led to the imposition of a critical discourse that was elucidated in an article by Rosselli. The construction of the modern city had not failed out of a lack of theories and visions, but through an inability to understand a situation that was becoming increasingly complex, in addition to a shortage of operational tools fit for the new scale of the issues. The role of the architect in the next decade seemed to be “condi-

**Fig. 3**

Cover of «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», n. 5, 1968. Gulliermo Jullian.

**Fig. 4**

Cover of «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», n. 6, 1969.

tioned by the passage from one state of «a view of the world» to another of ‘the interpretation of reality’ in all its nuances”.<sup>27</sup> If the genuinely original phenomenon that architects must learn to deal with was represented by the “new scale of the problems”,<sup>28</sup> the questions that they would face ranged from a shortage of housing, hospitals and schools, to urban sprawl and a need to “control the landscape and re-establish the environment”.<sup>29</sup>

Issue 5 of the magazine, published in 1968, marked another significant step. «Lotus» had an editorial board of a high level, consisting, beyond Alfieri himself – the periodicals editor and director, of the American architectural historians Esther McCoy and Henry Russell Hitchcock, the art historian Giuseppe Mazzariol, the then director of the Fondazione Querini Stampalia in Venice, Abraham Rogatnick, professor of architecture at the University of British Columbia, already in contact with Mazzariol, and finally, Robert Venturi. The latter, together with Denise Scott Brown, published in this edition a lengthy article entitled *A significance for A & P Parking Lots; or Learning from Las Vegas*,<sup>30</sup> while Philip Johnson opened the magazine with *Why We Want Our Cities Ugly*. But it was the whole edition that displayed a clear leap in quality compared to its predecessors. Esther McCoy, an expert connoisseur of Californian architecture, wrote about Rudolph Michael Schindler,<sup>31</sup> to whose work was also dedicated a second article entitled *Ambiguity in the Work of R.M. Schindler*.<sup>32</sup> Mazzariol painted an overview of a project by Guillermo Jullian de la Fuente,<sup>33</sup> also author of the sketch on the front cover of this edition, and an article on the language of Arthur Erickson,<sup>34</sup> while Rogatnick penned *EXPO 67: The Past Recaptured*.<sup>35</sup>

But it was not until two editions later that the magazine reached the definition of a clearer thematic orientation. «Lotus» 6 and 7, 1969 and 1970, addressed the issues posed by the relationship between architecture and the city that had entered the Italian debate, also following the publication of two fundamental books on the theme: *Origine e sviluppo della città moderna*<sup>36</sup> by Carlo Aymonino, published in 1965, and *L'architettura della città*<sup>37</sup> by Aldo Rossi which went to press the following year.

The indexes of these two numbers were structured in four parts. In the first part of «Lotus» 6, a project of Louis Kahn offered Mazzariol the opportunity to reflect on the image of the city of Venice;<sup>38</sup> the second part<sup>39</sup> examined the theme of the project on an urban scale through an article on the design of the city by Angelo Villa, professor of design at the IUAV and editor of «Lotus»,<sup>40</sup> and some case studies: The Municipal Master Plan for Bari (with comments by Carlo Aymonino, Ludovico Quaroni and Antonio Quistelli), a competition project for the centre of Plovdiv, Bulgaria (Giancarlo De Carlo), the redevelopment of Midtown Manhattan (James Stirling, Geoffrey Baker), a competition for a new centre in Moscow. The third part presented projects which, by their sheer size or function, imposed themselves as figures on the urban or territorial scale: these included large hospitals, universities, and airports designed by Carlo Aymonino, Constantine Dardi,<sup>41</sup> Giancarlo De Carlo, Arata Isozaki, Cesar Pelli, and James Stirling.

The fourth part, entitled “Studies and Notes”, closed the issue with an article by Abraham Rogatnick on the decline of the architect’s profession in North America.<sup>42</sup> «Lotus» 7 was introduced by a long essay on urban structure seen as a “parameter of judgement (analysis) and invention (project) for the architectural intervention”,<sup>43</sup> by Angelo Villa, who had become a member of the editorial board in the meantime. In the first part,



**Fig 5**

Cover of «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», n. 7, 1970.

writings, and projects by Carlo Aymonino,<sup>44</sup> Guido Canella,<sup>45</sup> Aldo Rossi,<sup>46</sup> Constantine Dardi, Gianugo Polesello and Luciano Semerani<sup>47</sup> offered the opportunity to reflect on the relationship between the architectural project and the city in the Italian experience. The comparison between some of the methods through which teaching tackled this issue was the subject of an article *La progettazione nelle facoltà di Milano, Roma, Venezia*<sup>48</sup> which closed this first section.

The second part, on “the architectural project and the urban dimension”, presented works by Denys Lasdun and Geoffrey Copcutt.<sup>49</sup> The third part, on “the formation of the modern city” illustrated two situations abroad, London and New York, and two Italian situations: Bologna with the P.R.G. and the project of Kenzo Tange,<sup>50</sup> and Venice with an article by Gianni Fabbri,<sup>51</sup> professor of design at the IUAV, who just a few years later would publish, together with Aymonino and Villa, a volume on *Le città capitali del XIX secolo. Parigi e Vienna*.<sup>52</sup> Finally, the fourth part “Studies and Notes” contained an article by Gillo Dorfles on the need for a “re-semanticization of urban planning”.

After issue 7, an ample volume of over 400 pages, «Lotus» suspended publication. As Pierluigi Nicolini wrote, this number represented the “maximum compendium” of the first formula imagined by Alfieri but also “his waning”.<sup>53</sup>

With respect to the year when «Lotus» was born,<sup>54</sup> the panorama of Italian periodicals dedicated to architecture had been significantly amended, enriched by numerous new publications.

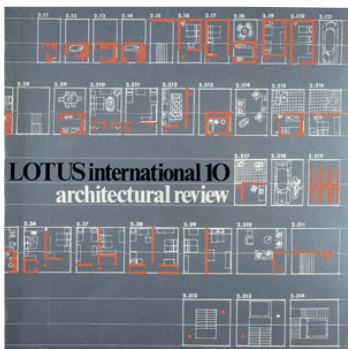
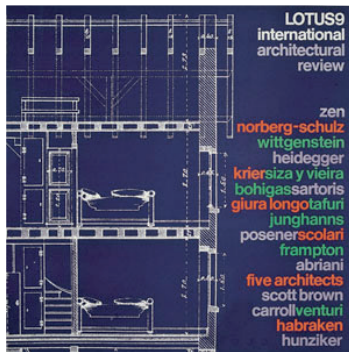
The two historic publications, «Casabella» and «Domus», both founded in 1928, nevertheless retained positions of absolute importance in the periodical scene, both for their authority and distribution, and for following quite distinct roads. The former, directed by Ernesto Nathan Rogers from December 1953 to January 1964, added to its title the concept of “continuity” which in turn implied the idea of a “mutation in the order of a tradition”.<sup>55</sup> To fully understand the conditions and the sense of architectural events post-war, in order to imagine future possibilities “we must examine the reasons for the Modern Movement, distinguishing between those that arose for contingent reasons [...] from those that might aspire to a longer *durée* since they involve essential contents,”<sup>56</sup> wrote Rogers. The editorial board, through the contribution of many of the future protagonists of Italian architecture,<sup>57</sup> addressed key issues of the architectural debate and imposed them at an international level. Their critical reflections ranged from unexplored horizons represented by certain figures of the history of relatively recent architecture, to the situation of urban planning in other countries, to the theme of inserting contemporary design into environmental remains. «Domus», directed uninterruptedly by Gio Ponti from January 1948 to July 1976, and marked by a certain ecumenism in the selection of the architectural works it published, favoured “the mature work of an international architectural *koine*”,<sup>58</sup> with articles that described “projects identified according to the logic of the author’s object”.<sup>59</sup>

Many magazines were born during the '50s, driven by “rather different motivations and work programmes”.<sup>60</sup> «Spazio», founded in 1950 by Luigi Moretti, ended its experience after only seven issues in 1953; «Prospettive» directed from 1951 to 1963 by Carlo Enrico Rava, who many years earlier had led the activities of Gruppo 7; «Edilizia Popolare», a mouthpiece of the council housing association *Associazione Nazionale Istituti Autonomi Case Popolari*, began in 1954 as did «Stile Industria», dedicated

to industrial design, directed by Alberto Rosselli with the collaboration of Alfieri (who in turn would invite Rosselli to collaborate with «Lotus»); «L'Architettura: Cronache e Storia», founded in 1955 on the initiative of Bruno Zevi who would direct it uninterruptedly for 45 years. Finally, in 1957, thanks to Edizioni di Comunità, «Zodiac» saw the light, a half-yearly publication distributed internationally, which, like «Lotus», shared the singular destiny of being named for a car, according to Alfieri,<sup>61</sup> who was its first director. And it was precisely after resigning from directing this magazine that Alfieri decided to return to Venice and found «Lotus».

The phenomenon of the flowering of architectural periodicals, which began in the '50s, continued with particular intensity, both in the decade when «Lotus» was born and in the next. Although known in certain cases for its continuity and cultural proximity with existing periodicals, the approach of magazines born in the 1960s displayed a logical progression in addressing issues that evolved together with social and political phenomena. In particular, one influence on the Italian debate would be the unfolding of events connected to the objections raised by university students that, after the first episodes of Milan in 1963, was set to escalate into the protests of 1968.<sup>62</sup>

It was starting precisely from 1963 that we can see the opening of certain magazines towards a debate no longer sitting between strict disciplinary fences, but “willing to discuss issues inherent in any form to architecture”.<sup>63</sup> In 1963, Eugenio Battisti founded “Marcatré”, a bulletin on contemporary culture aimed at renewing research methodologies through an interdisciplinary approach, divided into thematic sections devoted to different dimensions of art – from literature to music, from the visual arts to architecture – with contributions from, amongst others, Umberto Eco, Gillo Dorfles and Vittorio Gregotti. That same year, under the direction of Franco Isalberti, the magazine «Edilizia Moderna» resumed publication that, in some special issues edited by Gregotti, dealt rigorously with issues ranging from industrial design to the form of the territory.<sup>64</sup> Then, in 1964, “Op cit.” appeared, under the direction of Renato De Fusco, which owed its title to the particular way each theme was addressed “like a composition of selected parts of essays on aesthetics, of criticism and poetics which, quoted textually”<sup>65</sup> were then led back to a unitary discourse. In 1969, Paolo Portoghesi founded the magazine «Controspazio» of which, as suggested by Francesco Tentori, it is possible to recognize two editorial periods: the first “a prevalently Milanese direction” until 1972, the second “a prevalently Roman direction”<sup>66</sup> developed from 1973 to '81. In the first period, a key role was entrusted, until his premature death, to a young pupil of Rogers, Ezio Bonfanti, whose article on the autonomy of architecture<sup>67</sup> was a real “opening gambit”<sup>68</sup> of the magazine. Reflection on the perceived need for a fresh relaunch of the discipline was addressed through a reinterpretation of the work of some Italian *maestri* – Mario Ridolfi, Giuseppe Samonà and Ludovico Quaroni – through recognitions in the world of university teaching, but also through analysis of “interrupted works of architecture”,<sup>69</sup> i.e. those planned works which, while never built, offered the possibility to explore the wealth of design research. In 1970, «Parametro» appeared, a magazine directed by Giorgio Trebbi in collaboration with Carlo Doglio and Glauco Gresleri, hinging on analyses of themes relating to architectural design on urban and territorial scales. In conclusion, to give a single example linked to the university world, the IUAV established the “Quaderni di progettazione” of the “Gruppo Architettura”, publishing, between



**Fig. 6**  
Cover of «Lotus international»,  
n. 8, September 1974.

**Fig. 7**  
Cover of «Lotus international ar-  
chitecture», n. 9, February 1975.

**Fig. 8**  
Cover of «Lotus international»,  
n. 12, September 1976.

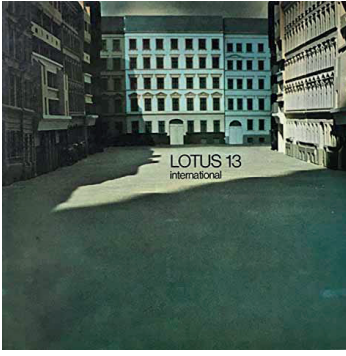
1970 and 1975, research, seminar proceedings, and theses on the relationship between dwelling, services, amenities, and the city, with essays from, amongst others, Aymonino, Canella, Dardi, De Feo, Fabbri, Nicolin, Panella, Polesello, Semerani, and Villa.

It was precisely on the theme of the house that «Lotus» focused its attention in issues 8, 9 and 10, after four years of suspended publication. As a result, in September 1974, the periodical gazed onto a scene of architectural journalism that was much changed with respect to its year of foundation. On the one hand, there was the feeling of a saturation in the editorial space, on the other, a radical change could be spotted in the themes dominating the national and international debates.

“From 1963 until now much has happened and it seems to me that it was well worth while for the magazine to take up its course, duly renewed and revitalized”.<sup>70</sup> By issue 8, the periodical had resumed its path with issues that were no longer annual but half-yearly until issue 11, and subsequently, quarterly. The frequency was not the only aspect to change: the name of the magazine was transformed into «Lotus International. Rivista di architettura»; the format became larger (26 x 26cm); the graphic layout and the composition of the covers were entrusted to Diego Birelli,<sup>71</sup> who by issue 10 was listed in the colophon as “art director”; the head office also moved from Venice to Milan. Finally, the editorial board and its members changed. Working together with Alfieri, who remained at the helm of the magazine until issue 13 of 1976, was a board consisting of figures of major cultural and scientific importance: Gae Aulenti, Vittorio Gregotti (until 1981), Christian Norberg-Schulz, Lionello Puppi (until 1977) and Joseph Rykwert. The new editor was Pierluigi Nicolin who had to “undertook the task of welding the heterogeneous material which reached the editorial offices into a harmonious whole”.<sup>72</sup> With issue 14 in 1977, the baton passed fully to Nicolin who would lead «Lotus» to become one of the most influential magazines of European architecture ever, despite being, as Rocca wrote, restricted to the dimension of a “minority magazine reserved to a small audience of loyal readers, professors and students, but also professionals thirsty for culture”.<sup>73</sup>

Also simply browsing the indexes of these first three issues dedicated to the theme of the house, emerges a set of designers, architectural critics and historians that attests to the cultural weight of the editorial operation set in motion by Alfieri on resumption of publication in 1974: Oriol Bohigas, Charles Correa, Denise Scott Brown, Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves, John Hejduk, Rob Krier, Alvaro Siza, James Stirling, Oswald Mathias Ungers, and Robert Venturi, but also Kenneth Frampton, Massimo Scolari, and Manfredo Tafuri. The theme of dwelling was addressed through a historical reinterpretation of certain experiences during the Modern Movement period, and through contemporary projects that offered critical-operational interpretations of that tradition or which openly entered “into conflict” with it.<sup>74</sup>

Even if the occasion of three successive issues based on a single theme would not be repeated, the tendency of the magazine to assume a monographic approach appears evident. In relation to this aspect, during the period when «Lotus» was still directed by Alfieri, two issues acquired particular significance: 11 and 13. The first defined “an area of interest – neither definitive nor complete – through some projects accompanied by critical comments” which, viewed as a whole, enabled an exploration of the composite world of contemporary architecture. Gregotti, for example,



**Fig. 9**  
Cover of «Lotus international», n. 13, December 1976.

presented the figure of Ungers and he, in turn, explained his design criteria. In addition, of this German architect was published a submission to the “Roosevelt Island Housing Competition”, flanked by another developed for the same competition by OMA. Vittorio Savi commented on the work of Aldo Rossi of whom some competition entries for Trieste were shown; Antoine Grumbach introduced some projects by the Krier brothers; Nicolín interpreted the works of Aldo van Eyck; while Francesco Dal Co, with an article on “The necessity of architecture”, dealt with some projects by Gino Valle. Issue 13 of «Lotus», the last one directed by Alfieri – who would subsequently direct «Interni», from February 1976 to September 1979, and “Casabella” from May to December 1976 – is worth mentioning not only for the contributions of Tafuri (who published his famous essay *Ceci n'est pas une ville*), Bernardo Secchi (who wrote on historical town centres) and Norberg-Schulz (who investigated the question of the *genius loci* more widely dealt with in the monograph published three years later by Electa), but above all, because the issue opened with publication of the table of Aldo Rossi's *The Analogous City*.

The same year that Pierluigi Nicolín, a Graduate in Architecture from the Politecnico of Milan under Franco Albini, and a founding member of Gregotti Associati, took over the direction of «Lotus», the Italian magazine situation had changed further. In January 1977, the baton of «Casabella» – after the run of Alessandro Mendini, who had opened the magazine to the Italian neo-avant-garde, and a brief spell under Bruno Alfieri – passed to Tomás Maldonado. An Argentine artist and designer, a lecturer, and later the Rector of *Hochschule für Gestaltung* – the Ulm School of Design, Maldonado accompanied architecture, the periodical's traditional focus of interest, with analyses of the problems of contemporary culture. The interaction of various disciplines – not least that of Semiotics which Maldonado had introduced as a subject at Ulm – along with the monographic slant of the issues, became unmistakable traits of this phase of the magazine. The monographic formula was also a feature of «Hinterland», whose subtitle announced: “the design and context of architecture for the management of territorial interventions”, and whose first issue came out in December 1977. This periodical, bimonthly and thereafter quarterly, directed by Guido Canella with the collaboration of Enrico Bordogna and Gian Paolo Semino, had an international sweep thanks to the quality of its contributions and the translations in English and French. Through various monographic issues, the focus of the magazine addressed not a survey of the objective nature of the buildings, but the identification of new analytical and operative tools aimed at establishing closer connections between the architectural project and an idea of the context, where the construction contributed to territories' settlement processes, stories and specific characteristics, the “dynamics of the political and economic phenomena”.<sup>75</sup>

The monographic formula that characterized «Casabella» and «Hinterland» in those years – that had previously characterized some issues of «Edilizia Moderna» and would return in the magazine «Rassegna» directed by Gregotti from 1979 – became one of the salient features of «Lotus», together with the critical rigour of its articles, the quality of the images, and its square format of 26 x 26cm (which would grow to 28 x 28cm from January 2014). Rocca is therefore correct in affirming that the magazine: “was born an adult and in the following thirty years retained an editorial physiognomy that was substantially unchanged”.<sup>76</sup>

If the monographic approach set a characteristic of the editorial line that



would endure, helping to strengthen the magazine's identity, the change in the themes dealt with over the course of the decades was a litmus test of the continuous evolution of the theoretical-design issues at the core of the architectural debate. On the «Lotus» website,<sup>77</sup> the history of the magazine is divided into four stages, all except for the first identified on the basis of the homogeneity of the topics dealt with, but also in relation to the succession of the various publishers: for the first step, as already seen, Bruno Alfieri was both director and editor of the magazine; in the second, «Lotus» was published by Industrie Grafiche Editoriali (later Gruppo Editoriale Electa); in the third, the edition passed to Mondadori; in the last step there was again a connection between the figure of the director and that of the publisher, thanks to the foundation of Editoriale Lotus.

If the first season of the periodical, from 1963 to 1970, coincided with the gradual transformation of the annual-catalogue into a magazine, the second – with which this article's survey will conclude – lasted from 1974 to 1994. In this period, the investigations of «Lotus» concentrated on certain issues: the relationship between project and context, the inseparable binomial formed by 'architecture and the city', the value of the relations with university research and with what was being designed and built in architectural and urban spheres around the world. The third phase covered the period 1994-2001 and featured a broadening of the magazine's interests. A reconnaissance began around certain themes – from minimalism to high-tech, from neo-casual to deconstructivism, from researches into the immaterial to those into the landscape – which, if we exclude landscape, appear eccentric with respect to the foci of interest of the previous phase and their overall heterogeneity. However, in a process of opening the magazine to "post-ideological thinking",<sup>78</sup> this operation assumed the precise objective of building a map of the composite trends recognizable in the architectural culture of the time. Finally, in 2002, the fourth and last stage began. In the face of the magnitude and speed of the transformations taking place in globalized society, «Lotus» cautioned the need to investigate the nature and character of these changes, since only by becoming familiar with the issues and problems, would appropriate design responses become possible. The division into periods proposed on the website outlines a relationship between temporal phases and convincing changes in thematic horizons, if we exclude the location of Issue 80 dedicated to the city of Berlin, which seems more consistent with the topics tackled during the second phase of the periodical's evolution; however, ultimately, this is a marginal element. The more interesting aspect here is that, despite the transformations recognizable in thematic horizons, the propensity for in-depth investigations of certain questions, the scientific quality of the contributions, the ability to select projects and works based on their relevance with the foci of interest of individual issues was to remain unchanged over the forty years<sup>79</sup> of being directed by Pierluigi Nicolin. The critical commitment of «Lotus» was thanks to his "intellectual vivacity"<sup>80</sup>, as was the preservation of the independence in cultural choices with respect to the logic of the publishing market, plus the unswerving interest in the evolution of architectural thinking.

The issues addressed by the periodical during the Seventies and Eighties intertwined tightly with the key issues of the international debate in which Italian architecture assumed a role of absolute primacy: the critical rereading of the tradition of the Modern, the interpretation of the past, the relationships between project and the context, the relationship between



**Fig. 10**  
Cover of «Lotus international»,  
n. 21, December 1978.

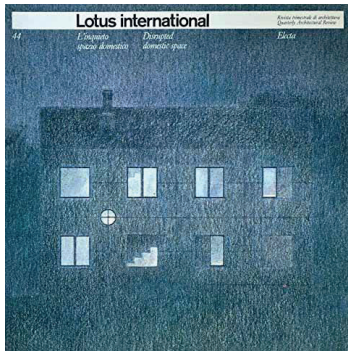
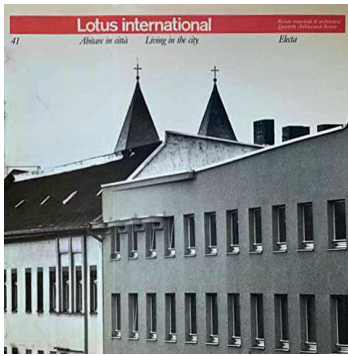


**Fig. 11**  
Cover of «Lotus international»,  
n. 27, February 1980.  
Photo by Berengo Gardin.

architecture and the city. These are themes which pervaded the whole of this second season of «Lotus», re-emerging, with variations, in many successive issues, admittedly at times linked together in the form of a diptych: suffice to think of the issues dedicated to critical investigation of early twentieth-century architecture, to those on teaching in European and American universities, or to those dedicated to the relationship between architecture and construction. The two issues “from the archives of modern architecture”, published in 1977 and 1978, dealt with a critical examination of architects far-removed from one another: Mel’nikov, Taut, Oud, Libera, Mollino, and Terragni – about whom Tafuri published his well-known article, *The subject and the mask. An introduction to Terragni*.<sup>81</sup> There is no history of modern architecture, Nicolini claimed in the editorial to the 1978 issue; we can only perceive “a series of indistinct and decoded files from which each of us has to draw according to his own private guilt-prone procedures”.<sup>82</sup> Returning to look at modern architecture through approaches that can relativize, break up or even disrupt established theories, does not mean wishing to write the umpteenth revised history. It means starting the construction of one’s own personal archive, moving through personal transcriptions “prominent figures to background positions [...], or eventually, outflanked by our own manoeuvres, hit on some new explanation by pure chance”.<sup>83</sup> Investigating the Modern, disassembling it, recomposing it, means thinking that it is still possible to learn from that period of the history of architecture, as long as it is extricated from time-worn historiographical interpretations. To this end, the presentation of different approaches to the teaching of architecture in European and North American universities is of unquestionable importance. The two issues 21 and 27, published in 1978 and 1980, constitute a diptych that is not limited to investigating the general fundamentals of the didactics of design, but considers that the “architectural production” elaborated in university classrooms identifies “a particular area of design research, having established its own rules and conditioning factors, which do not correspond to those of professional practice or of work done for a purchaser or for a market”.<sup>84</sup> The conditions of the schools of architecture in the countries examined – Austria, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Switzerland and Italy – were profoundly different from the point of view of both content and approach, but also from the point of view of quantity; ranging from the 20,000 enrolled at the Faculty of Architecture in Rome to the 40 students of the Department of Architecture at the Royal College of Art in London. Although it is possible to detect a great methodological heterogeneity, one element does seem to link the various cases examined: ten years after the unrest of ‘68, it appears that everywhere the myth of “creativity” and the illusion “concerning the thaumaturgic capacity of politics to generate an ‘alternative’ architecture”<sup>85</sup> have vanished. Issue 27 opened with an intense introductory article by Kenneth Frampton and Alessandra Latour that outlined the historical evolution of the teaching of architecture in the main schools of the United States. The insights given with respect to the current situation were limited to three cases: those of Columbia University, the Cooper Union, and Cornell University. Rafael Moneo and Robert Slutzky described the teaching method of the Cooper, the former focusing on the work of John Hejduk, the latter explaining how the “pedagogy of form” was dealt with at the New York school. The section dedicated to Cornell University focused on teaching in the Graduate Studio of Urban Design directed by Colin Rowe, who, together with Fred Koetter, had published *Collage City*

two years earlier. The maestro from Ithaca would also publish the text of a conference on the teaching of architecture in America<sup>86</sup>, in which a clear distance is taken from those schools where courses on Sociology or Economics assumed ever-greater weight, in the unfounded belief that a project can derive from a summation of individual disciplinary contributions. In fact, it was precisely on this same aspect that Nicolin, in an issue dedicated to the teaching in European universities, had criticized the excessive “sociologization of many faculties”<sup>87</sup> and the “abandonment” of architecture as a focus of interest.

Instead, the themes addressed by «Lotus» in this period always revolved around questions directly related to the project in its diverse scales of operation. Some issues programmatically focused on the analysis of small-scale works interpreted in opposition to the “destructive clumsiness of large scale architecture” and taken as a more suitable scope for reflection to explore “strictly architectural matters and techniques”.<sup>88</sup> Meanwhile, Issue 22 from 1979, for example, was dedicated to interpreting some “small works”<sup>89</sup> in which Nicolin saw the start of processes to relativize the concept of typology, searches for “pertinence” compared to settlement models, and evidence of adaptation to the morphological structure of the contexts. The projects of Bohigas, Grassi, and Ungers presented in this issue concerned housing, but alongside these were interventions that reasoned over the question of limit: the “square by the sea at San Sebastián” by Luis Pena Ganchegui with the works of Eduardo Chillida and the “marginal squares” at Lauro by Francesco Venezia, which were said to constitute an “indirect criticism of the senseless spread of towns across the countryside”. The theme of the small-scale returned in Issue 66 of 1990, dedicated to American lofts, which told of the origin of this phenomenon of reuse in the SoHo neighbourhood of Manhattan, determining relationships between the “concept of home” and “that of habitability”. In fact, in the loft we can identify all the elements of the traditional house but in the form of fragments, of “traces freely arranged and continually capable of creating new significances”.<sup>90</sup> However, the issue that managed to weave the dialogue of greatest intensity between the theme of housing and the questions posed by small scale was number 60 of 1988. Titled “Living in architecture”, it presented works by Libera, Le Corbusier, Rietveld and Ponti. Among the articles, all bona fide essays – suffice to think of that by Vittorio Savi on the “orphic, surrealistic” Casa Malaparte<sup>91</sup> or that of Bruno Reichlin on La Petite Maison<sup>92</sup>; equally worthy of mention, the writings of Fulvio Irace<sup>93</sup> and Giovanni Chiamonte<sup>94</sup>, which constitute a diptych of remarkable methodological interest. The points of view of the architectural historian and the photographer focused on the same architectural object – the Villa Planchart by Gio Ponti in Caracas, bringing a twofold interpretation. The fact that in the same issue photographs were published of Villa Malaparte taken by Paola De Pietri and La Petite Maison taken by Paolo Rosselli is no coincidence. In the ‘80s, and more precisely starting from Issue 41 of 1984, the insight came to build an intense dialogue in the pages of the magazine between working drawings, critical texts, and photographs, seeing the latter not as mere images accompanying the text but as explorations of the very meaning of architecture. This resulted in a cooperation with Gabriele Basilico, Olivo Barbieri, and Luigi Ghirri (to whose work on Italian landscapes would be dedicated one of the “Lotus Documents” in 1989), Paolo Rosselli and Chiamonte, not only on the house, but on the constructed space in general, on the scale of individual buildings, the city,

**Fig. 12**

Cover of «Lotus international», n. 41, January 1984.  
A. Siza, Building in Berlino, detail  
Photo by Giovanni Chiaramonti.

**Fig. 13**

Cover of «Lotus international», n. 44, April 1984.  
Kinney House, Ricardo Scofidio and Elizabeth Diller.

and the landscape.

However, before tackling the theme of the project in relation to the city at least another two issues dedicated to housing should be recalled: the first was number 44 of 1984 in which the “restless domestic space” was investigated through projects – by, among others, Steven Holl, John Hejduk, and Juan Navarro Baldeweg – which were not destined for that “standardized inhabitant” created by the architectural research into minimum building standards for accommodation, but were built around an “occupant transformed into personage”.<sup>95</sup>

In Issue 41, published that same year, the theme of housing was addressed in relation to the central areas of the city in which the phenomenon can often be observed of an exasperated characterization of contemporary buildings that creates, “to paraphrase Milizia [...] a big tumult in details within the disheartening modesty of the whole”.<sup>96</sup> However, observing a plan of Herculaneum, “the subtle play of meditations that develops between the form of the town and the form of the houses as it appears in this or that part, an active or passive element in the articulation of space [...]”<sup>97</sup> can help. It can even urge us to think that we can reach a solution for the problems posed by the inclusion of contemporary buildings in central areas of the city, by adding to the Vitruvian triad *firmitas*, *utilitas*, and *venustas*, “a fourth term that can help us understand how buildings should be set together to speak to each other: what we need is a theory of rapport – *propinquitas*”.<sup>98</sup>

If the relationships between architectural design and the urban form were one of the main thematic nuclei addressed by the magazine between 1974 and 1994, the analysis of the historical city, the suburbs, areas characterized by decommissioning phenomena, and spaces for infrastructure systems were some of the specific approaches that this thematic core assumed in various issues. The city was studied through its form, its history, its most significant works of architecture, present or recent. The demarcation of the scope of the investigation, the attribution of a title to the issue, the selection of projects taken together constitute the assumption of a main point of view that could bring out similarities, differences, and linkages between the various design approaches, or between different urban situations. If Issues 50 and 51 from 1986 were devoted to the study of American and European cities, other issues examined specific cities: Vienna (no. 29, 1981), Milan (no. 54, 1987), and Berlin (no. 80, 1994). The magazine had already shadowed the latter several times between the Seventies and Eighties, for events linked to its International Building Exhibition. Other issues concentrated on large-scale urban transformations. Issue 67 of 1990, for example, was divided between a historical-critical reinterpretation of the E42 project in Rome, and analysis of contemporary interventions such as the recovery of the Docklands in London, or the Olympic Village of Barcelona. Just a few months after the end of the Olympic Games, a large section of issue 77 from 1993 was dedicated to a debate on the results of the action to redevelop the Catalan city, attended by Mario Botta, Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Jacques Lucan, Jose Luis Mateo, and Franco Purini. Two numbers were also dedicated to the relationship between the city and technical infrastructures. Issue 56 of 1988, entitled “Space, time and architecture”, opened with an article by Semerani on the Moll de la Fusta project in Barcelona by Manuel de Solà Morales, and closed with an essay on American parkways by Christian Zapatka who, in 1995, would be the author of one of the “Lotus documents” dedicated to the American landscape. The relation-

ship between technical infrastructure and urban identity was addressed by Issue 59 in 1988 through examination of certain projects – Plečnik’s riverfront for Ljubljana<sup>99</sup> presented in an essay by Alberto Ferlenga with the photographs of Luigi Ghirri, the renovation of the Atocha station in Madrid,<sup>100</sup> or Navarro Baldewg’s restructuring of the windmills in Murcia<sup>101</sup> which, acting through points or lines, launched larger-scale urban redevelopment. Closing the issue was an article on the station in Stuttgart designed by Paul Bonatz<sup>102</sup> who, like Plečnik, worked on the theme of infrastructure in relationship to the identity of the site, and like the Slovenian architect, was one of the figures who belonged to the so-called “alternative modern”.

Again on the relationship between the city and architecture, mention must be made of Issue 64 from 1990, significantly entitled “The other city planning”, in which were published Siza’s projects for the Chiado in Lisbon, the Diagonal block by Moneo for Barcelona and, looking at a more recent past, Perret’s project to rebuild Le Havre. This issue opened with an essay by Manuel de Solà Morales<sup>103</sup> who identified an urban project tradition altogether different from the official one of the CIAM. “Another modern tradition” whose history was studded with the works of Berlage and Oud in Holland, Fisker in Copenhagen, Plečnik in Ljubljana, and Folguera in Catalonia. “Urban design means taking the geography of a given city, with its demands and suggestions, as a starting point, and introducing elements of language with the architecture to give form to the site”,<sup>104</sup> which means taking into account the complexity of the urban structure more than a simplification and, conversely, working according to an inductive process that allows a generalization of what is particular and local, according to the Spanish architect. Generated by complexity and overlapping, the urban project “shows itself to be the most suitable, rich, variable opportunity [...] for the planning of the modern city”.<sup>105</sup>

To this theme were dedicated another two issues that addressed the questions raised by the city block (no. 19, 1978) and the neighbourhood (no. 36, 1982) seen as cornerstones of the city’s form. In both numbers, the task of introducing the projects of contemporary architecture was entrusted to essays of a historical nature: in number 19, Enrico Guidoni and Manuel de Solà-Morales tackled respectively the theme of the road and the city block from the Middle Ages to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the analysis of urban expansions in the 1800s; in Issue 36, Jacques Lucan analysed the neighbourhood as a form for constructing the city, through examples drawn from the history of 20<sup>th</sup> century French town planning and projects by Le Corbusier. The different keys to interpreting the relationships between architecture and the historical city correspond to different design methods, or so it says in the editorial to Issue 18 of 1978,<sup>106</sup> dedicated to presenting some projects by Giancarlo De Carlo – who that same year became director of the magazine «Spazio e Società» – as well as Stirling, Van Eyck, and the Saals’ experience in Oporto illustrated by Gregotti. If it is true that a city is formed through heterogeneous stratifications, if we can assume that each urban settlement is in fact a city-collage that “combines historic times and spaces in an exiting and inextricable kaleidoscope where everything can happen”,<sup>107</sup> then we can speak of a city which builds on itself, a design seen as a superimposition of different systems. It is equally true, however, that if we accept the idea of a city made up of homogeneous parts, defined according to a process of the additive type, it will tend to “confirm in space the expectations of time, through a sharp distinction of conservational op-



**Fig. 14**

Pages 6 and 7 of «Lotus international», n. 72, May 1992.

The work by Dimitris Pikionis around the hills of the Acropolis of Athens and the Philopappos: the beginning of the main street to the Parthenon seen from the traffic island; ascent to the Acropolis, the paving of the traffic island. Photos by Giovanni Chiaramonte.

**Fig. 15**

Copertina di «Lotus international», n. 72, maggio 1992.

Frank O. Gerhy, Temporary Contemporary, Moca, Los Angeles; Barbara Kruger, senza titolo, Moca, Los Angeles; Frank O. Gerhy, 360 Newbury Street, Boston; Osald Mathias Ungers, Kubushaus, Colonia.

erations and recycling, and to make sure that the new is not confused with the old”<sup>108</sup>.

Examination of the many ways through which a design can relate to the pre-existing is a theme that resurfaced several times in this season of «Lotus», and demonstrated a certain interest in its ability to raise questions that interact on both the urban and architectural scales.

“The shift from an attitude where the new intervention is seen as being in contrast to the architecture of the past to one which avails itself of analogy”,<sup>109</sup> is, for example, the topic that forms the backdrop to Issues 46 from 1985 and 72 from 1992 which analysed the different types of relationship that the contemporary project could establish with ancient artefacts that it found itself close to. Emblematic with respect to this question is, in Issue 72, the presentation of the Athenian interventions of Dimitris Pikionis around the mound of the Acropolis and the Philopappos monument, in a twofold interpretation consisting of the photographs of Giovanni Chiaramonte<sup>110</sup> and an essay by Yorgos Simeoforidis.<sup>111</sup> Equally paradigmatic appears the selection of projects submitted in Issue 46: Asplund’s expansion of the Palace of Justice in Gothenburg, Grassi’s renovation of the Roman Theatre of Sagunto, and Moneo’s Museum of Roman art in Merida, each developed from a particular “con-text” inside which the contemporary project must relate to a “pre-text”.

Representative of the various relationships that the project can entertain with history and with the very idea of the context, are the works of Navarro Baldeweg and Stirling presented in an issue significantly entitled “Transcriptions” (no. 58, 1988). If the Spanish architect blurred “samples” and “rewritings” of the Iberian context “almost by stealth, echoes of classicism (Soane) or the modernism (Aalto, Siza)”,<sup>112</sup> the British architect achieved outcomes that were completely different. He “does not carry out his opposition in line with the contrast between the old and new which the modern movement had accustomed us to: his process falls entirely in a hermeneutic dimension of architecture”, that of heresy. In this he showed that he had learned one of the main lessons of his mentor and friend Colin Rowe who, encouraging his students to have faith in modern architecture, had nonetheless always stressed the importance of being critical of it, of being ready

to disassemble it, reassemble it, subvert it, ultimately to be well-disposed towards heresy.<sup>113</sup>

For Nicolín, “the impossibility of conceiving the foundation and marking direct reference to general ideas, the propensity to link the single part only to a “virtual” whole, care to avoid short-cuts towards facile generalizations”,<sup>114</sup> focused the “attention on the concepts of place, of region on specific cases and on the ability of the individual architect”.<sup>115</sup>

It is not marginal, then, that Issue 62 of 1989 imposed its reasoning around that complex interweaving of contextual characteristics and individual talents which the published projects provide some examples of. Entitled “The Weak Project” in a blatant paraphrasing of Gianni Vattimo’s expression, and opening with an essay by Colin Rowe on ‘talent and ideas’,<sup>116</sup> this issue presented some “regionalist” works – those of the Portuguese Alcino Soutinho, the Spaniards Cruz y Ortiz, and the Italians Cino Zucchi, Pasquale Culotta, Giuseppe Leone and Marcello Panzarella (the last three professors at the Faculty of Architecture in Palermo) – which brought to light the multifaceted character that the interweaving between individual paths of design research can assume; a local context and an international debate. In Issue 25 of 1980, emphasis had already been placed on these aspects, following the evolution of the formal research of some architects: Stirling who, as Nicolín wrote,<sup>117</sup> “from the machinist collages of the first manner” went on to assume “fragmentary” positions; Ungers who, by that time distant from the premises of Team 10, referred to “a pluralism inspired by Schinkel”; and then the personal trajectories of Krier, Rossi, Van Eyck, Linzasoro, Zaha Hadid and Koolhaas. As was stated in the previous issue on “unity and fragments”, in contrast, individual authors’ projects and research on the city “show with a certain degree of clarity the fact that urban architecture no longer constitutes the premise of a unifying address [...] even if all agree in their criticism of the city of the CIAM.” “Contextualism” itself – the subject of the debate published in Issue 74 of 1992, with contributions from Derossi, Grassi, Gregotti, Lucan, Portughesi, and Scott Brown – while being “an attitude so diffused as to practically involve a large part of contemporary architecture”,<sup>118</sup> featured such a wide range of positions remote from one another as to be considered a sort of “convention to implement the peaceful coexistence of differing options within the disillusionment of the current pluralism”.<sup>119</sup>

Also Issue 70 from 1991 would return to examine the variety of methodological approaches and options in language that characterized the various projects, through the outcomes of some major competitions for European cities.

If it is true that the “weak project” leads to the impossibility of relying on conventions established once and for all, and if it is true, as some argue, that at least in part the reasons for the “instability in the frame of reference should be sought in the technology itself [...] in search of incessant innovation”,<sup>120</sup> for the architect it becomes crucial to question the “uncertain and provisional character of the results of constant technical and scientific development”,<sup>121</sup> and to reflect on that theme of construction which is at the centre of so many issues of «Lotus». Number 28 from 1981, on the “Romanesque and Byzantine”, published a series of projects – including those of Mario Botta, Vittorio Gregotti, Richard Meier, Aldo van Eyck, Carlo Scarpa and Francesco Venezia – which had “the merit of revealing [...] an unveiling of the material conditions through which buildings are actually constructed”.<sup>122</sup> If, in most cases, the buildings result in a forgery,

D. Bigelman, J.P. Fengas, B. Huet, B. Le Roy, S. Santelli, montaggio urbano, B. Minardi, architecture contemporary architecture



6

Talento e idee Una conferenza

Calvin Rowe

Fra le varie altre osservazioni Stravinskij amava ripetere quello che chiamava il bon mot di Schoenberg: "La mia musica non è moderna, è solo suonata male". Questo motto così scanzonato, così mordace si può facilmente trasportare in "il mio edificio non è moderno, ma concettualmente e tecnicamente è solo mal combinato"; il che consente ancora una variante: "Il mio edificio è straordinariamente moderno, non vedete che quelle che vi sembrano deficienze concettuali e tecniche sono in realtà le sue insite virtù". Ora, io penso che non ci sia nessuno in questa sala che non abbia provato le emozioni che Stravinskij si trova a definire: la modernità è "romantica" e così sembra - perché non si accetta il mondo così com'è", e benché questo sia del tutto contrario a questa antiquata ossessione dell'architettura moderna, tuttavia io penso che non c'è nessuno che ignori come il movimento moderno sia coinvolto con le più deliranti fantasie di un cataclisma finale e di un nuovo cominciamento. Io credo che i libri profetici del Vecchio e del Nuovo Testamento non oltrepassino, anzi a malapena raggiungano la millenaria intensità degli argomenti addotti dai coristi del "modernismo" come la conclusione inconfutabile tanto della scienza quanto della razionalità: e il mio discorso vuol trattare in particolare appunto la confusione di categorie generata dall'emotività. Immagino che sia relativamente facile fare una rivoluzione; ma dopo una rivoluzione è molto difficile rievolverla e ricostruire, a dispetto di tutto il fascino esercitato dal processo rivoluzionario (e penso che le rivoluzioni abbiano molto fascino), perché ne consegue una specie di disintegrazione delle capacità pratiche e del talento. Da una rivoluzione può derivare un'improvvisa accuratezza di visione; ma poiché appunto così improvvisa, non si vede bene quanto possa servire alle preoccupazioni e agli impegni quotidiani della vita. Sotto la tensione di una rivoluzione (reale o presunta) sarà potenziata la produzione di manifesti; ma il lavoro di tutti gli uomini comuni (l'infrastruttura su cui si basa la sovrastruttura) ne verrà seriamente diminuito. E diminuirà anche l'esercizio del talento. Nella tensione di una rivoluzione il talento sarà considerato un'eleganza uncinet, indifferente e arcaico, ed è proprio per questa ragione che desidero qui occuparmi della categoria del talento, in un ambiente in cui di solito prevale una cultura da manifesto di idee e di poetiche.

Talent and ideas A conference

Among various other remarks Stravinsky produced what he called Schoenberg's bon mot: "My music is not modern, it is just badly played." And this terribly penetrating throwaway remark is easily transposable as "my building is not modern, but conceptually and technically, it is just badly put together", and this is further transposable as "my building is emphatically modern, don't you see that what you regard as its conceptual and technical deficiencies are really its inherent virtues". Now I think that there can be no one in this room who has not experienced the emotions which Stravinsky casually stipulates: modernity is "romantic" - and it seems - because it cannot accept the world as it is, and though this is completely contrary to this old time excess of modern architecture, all the same I think that there is nobody who doesn't know that the modern movement was involved with the wildest fantasies of a cataclysmic end and a new beginning. I think that the prophetic books of both the Old and the New Testaments, do not exceed - indeed they scarcely approach - the millenarian intensity of the arguments which proponents of "modernism" offered as the irrefutable conclusions of both science and rationality, and it is with a confusion of categories engendered by excitement that this lecture is particularly concerned. I imagine that it is comparatively easy to make a revolution; but, after a revolution, it is very hard to recover and to reconstruct for all the charms of the revolutionary process (and I think that revolutions have great charm), from it there follows something of a disintegration of know how and talent. From revolution there may derive a sudden accuracy of vision; but, since this is apt to be so abrupt, it is not very evident how far it serves the everyday pre-occupation of the world, under the stress of revolution (real or assumed), manifesto production will be excited, but the work of all these little gons (the infrastructure upon which the superstructure depends) will be seriously diminished. And diminished, also, will be the exercise of talent. In the stress of revolution, talent will be regarded as slick, Ancien Régime, insincere and meretricious, and it is exactly for these reasons that I wish to address myself to the predicament of talent in a milieu where, currently, prevails a manifesto culture of ideas and poetic.

Some years ago my friend Jaquelin Robertson was going to Sestriere to ski, and I said to Jack that absolutely he must spend two or three days in Torino. So when he came back he was very enthusiastic about Torino, and he

7

Rafael Moneo coll. L. Rao

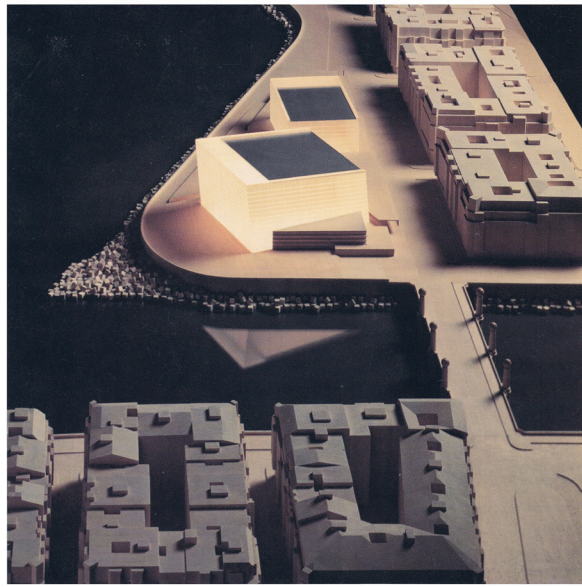


Planimetria generale e veduta del modello.

Relazioni come questa sono sulle giunzioni i progetti presentandoli come ragionevoli risposte a tutta una serie di circostanze. Accessi, vicine, volumetriche, programma ecc. vengono usati per spiegare la forma che l'edificio ha assunto, facendo sì che la responsabilità dell'edificio si diluisca nel trasformarsi in semplice intermediario fra i dati prelevati e il progetto. Non sarà così in questa occasione e confermeremo, senza difficoltà e direttamente, che questo progetto nasce prima di tutto dal modo di intendere il luogo, come risposta immediata e diretta allo straordinario sito in cui deve essere il complesso culturale che l'amministrazione di San Sebastian pensa di portare a termine. Dite che la bellezza di San Sebastian si deve, in buona parte, all'ambiente, al paesaggio; è poco più che un luogo comune. Di fatto, poche città dispongono di condizioni naturali più favorevoli. Il Cantabrico si adatta nella Concha, così che in un breve tratto di costa si producono tutti quegli incidenti geografici che figurano nei manuali. Baie, isole, spigoli, tratti di fronte che sboccano al mare, monti, e a unire tutto questo, la città. San Sebastian, che ha saputo rispettare nel corso della storia la geografia su cui si situa. La nostra risposta al sito del Kursaal è semplice: non si deve costruire un edificio che distrugga la presenza dell'Urna. Alcune delle proposte tentate negli anni hanno cercato di risolvere un sito così problematico come se si dovesse trattare di un nuovo isolotto del Berto di Gros e, sebbene non dubitavo che queste proposte potessero avere un qualche interesse urbano, ciò di cui stiamo sicuri è che, nel caso in cui esse fossero state realizzate, l'Urna sarebbe scomparsa, assorbito dall'architettura. La face del fiume su cui San Sebastian si situa deve continuare a essere visibile, la città, il complesso culturale che l'amministrazione si propone di costruire non la devono far sparire. Il sito del Kursaal è ancora oggi un incidente geografico. A mio vedere è necessario che continui a esserlo, che tale con-

ditione non si disperda con il trasformare il sito in città, perdendo così gli attributi naturali che ancora conserva. Da qui nasce la nostra proposta per l'auditorio e la Sala congressi, edifici che, nel complesso culturale che si sta progettando, intesi come due gigantesche rocce smentite all'imboccatura dell'Urna: non appartengono alla città, sono parte del paesaggio. Fatta questa premessa sul nostro approccio con il progetto, possiamo ora a spiegare il modo con cui il programma è stato interpretato e condotto. In primo luogo bisogna avvertire che, volendo mantenere il carattere di incidente geografico che il sito possiede, è necessario costruirlo in modo compatto, simmetrico. Così, solo l'auditorio e la Sala congressi si manifestano come volumi autonomi, isolati. La sala delle esposizioni, la sala riunioni, i servizi che tali usi implicano, i ristoranti ecc. verranno contenuti nella piattaforma che li da dovuta base al portamento che si pretende assumere non le masse cubiche dell'auditorio e della Sala congressi. La piattaforma solleva l'auditorio e la Sala congressi permettendo nella sala di ospitare la sala riunioni e la sala delle esposizioni, anche di guadagnare l'altezza sufficiente per godere della vista del mare. Ma l'uso della piattaforma implica altri vantaggi: essa rimane aperta sul Paseo de la Zurriola producendo un generoso spazio aperto sul quale convergono l'accesso all'auditorio, alla Sala congressi, alle sale riunioni e alle sale delle esposizioni. Descriviamo ora le "rocce arenate" e il modo in cui in esse si inseriscono l'auditorio e la Sala congressi. La prima "roccia arenata", ossia quella che contiene l'auditorio, è un volume prismatico di 66x48x27 metri, diminuito da una leggera inclinazione fino al mare, alla quale conferiamo quel carattere di "incisione quasi geografica" che vorremmo le costruzioni possedessero. La costruzione si risolve con una struttura metallica che dà luogo alla formazione di una doppia parete ricoperta, internamente ed esternamente, con blocchi di vetro

presento. La sezione mostra chiaramente il sistema di costruzione proposto che garantirà sia l'impermeabilità che il condizionamento, producendo uno spazio interno luminoso e aereo. Il cui contatto con l'esterno si produrrà solo nelle spettacolari finestre del foyer aperte sul mare. Pensiamo che il blocco di vetro sia un materiale adeguato per San Sebastian, data la posizione del Kursaal, tanto rispetto a venti carichi di salino. Daltra parte il blocco di vetro trasformerà il volume, durante il giorno, in una massa densa, opaca, riflettente e congiunta, mentre durante la notte diverrà un'atra e misteriosa fonte di luce. Sicuramente il blocco di vetro presterà datai alla costruzione la condizione aerea, diante che per esse abbiamo voluto. Due parole ora intorno al tipo di audiorio. La soluzione che qui proponiamo nasce sul modello di auditori che tanto tecnici di acustica quanto i musicisti, i direttori d'orchestra e gli interpreti ritengono migliori. Auditori decisamente rettangolari, con dimensioni larghezza/larghezza vicine al doppio quadrato, con soffitti piani e alette che garantiscono un volume pari a 10 metri cubi per spettatore. Ci riferiamo al Concertbow di Amsterdam, alla Musikvereinsaal di Vienna e alla Boston Symphony Hall. La novità che si offre qui consiste nella continuità della sala si può accedere a qualsiasi posto da qualsiasi porta, eliminando così ogni tipo di discriminazione. La capacità dell'auditorio progettato è di circa 2000 spettatori e riteniamo non sia necessario dilungarsi in maggiori dettagli sulle sue caratteristiche acustiche dal momento che questo richiede una precisa definizione di condizioni e materiali ancora non stabilite in questa fase del progetto.

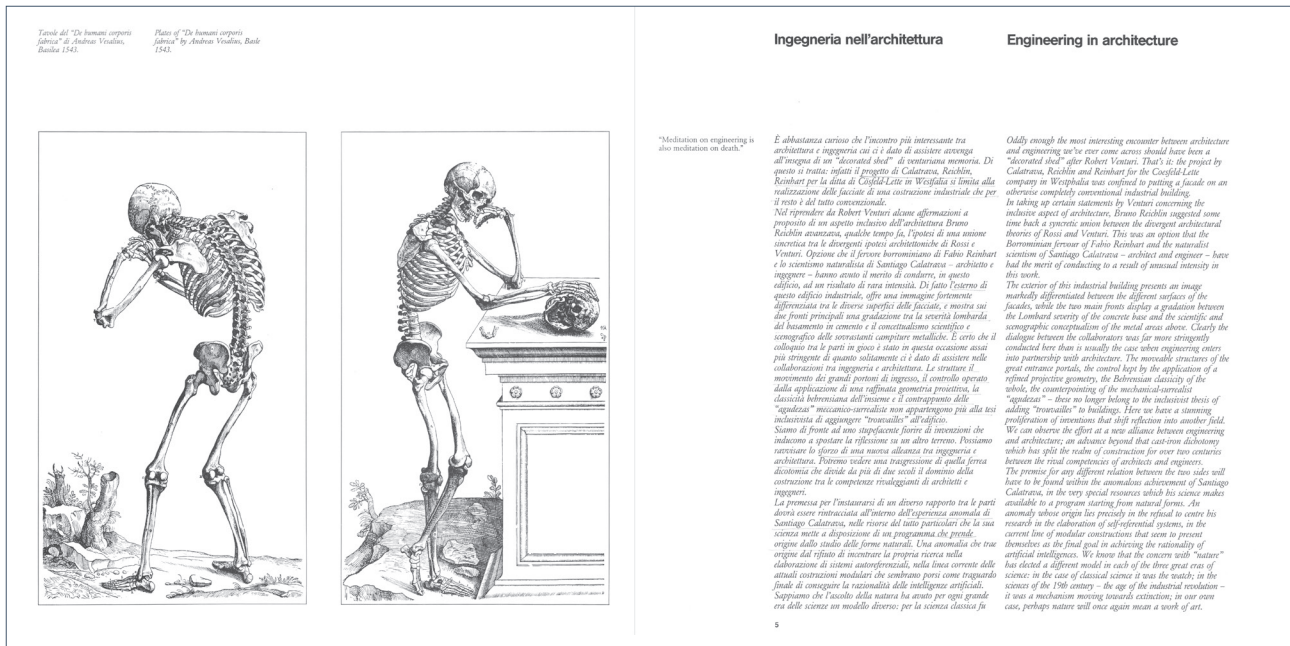


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Fig. 16 Pages 6 and 7 of «Lotus international», n. 62, February 1989. D. Bigelman, J.P. Fengas, B. Huet, B. Le Roy, S. Santelli, urban assemblage. B. Minardi, contemporary architecture.

Fig. 17 Pages 60 and 61 of «Lotus international», n. 70, October 1991. Rafael Moneo, Project of the design competition for The Kursaal Auditorium and Congress Centre of San Sebastián, 1990.





**Fig. 18**

Pages 4 and 5 of «Lotus international», n. 45, January 1985. Plates of "De homini corporis fabrica" by Andreas Vesalius, Basle 1543.

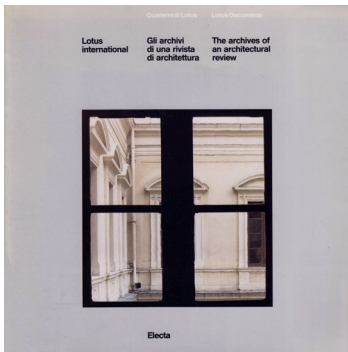
**Fig. 19**

Cover of «Lotus international», n. 45, January 1985. S. Calatrava, B. Reichlin, F. Reinhardt, Ernsting factory, detail of facade. Photo by Paolo Rosselli.

manifesting an equipose "between architectural grammar and constructive capacity", or expressing the scarcity of means, staging a sort of "aesthetics of the poor", the most significant works seem to belong to other categories at the extremes of which arise the Romanesque and Byzantine. If Botta's "Romanesque" works, far from representing examples of an *Arte Povera* made available to a consumerist society, "aspire to richness while yet working with the poverty of the architectural means available to us"<sup>123</sup>, in Scarpa's "Byzantine" works, "a craft culture of age-old tradition celebrates its gilded twilight. [...] The world has moved on. The creation of a grand opera is an increasingly rare event"<sup>124</sup> wrote Nicolini.

The theme of construction featured heavily in several other issues. In one dedicated to "Construction: routes and discourses" (no. 37, 1983), the works of Ridolfi were interpreted by a pair of essays by Francis Cellini and Claudio D'Amato, while the works of Siza were commented on in a pair of articles by Roberto Collovà and Francesco Venezia. Another example is provided by two issues entitled "Engineering in Architecture" (no. 45, 1985) and "Architecture in Engineering" (no. 47, 1985); the former opened by two articles of Werner Oechslin and Luca Ortellì on Santiago Calatrava; the latter publishing the outcome of the competition for the new Accademia bridge, with articles by Portoghesi and Rossi, accompanied by the famous passage of Georg Simmel on *Bridge and Door*.<sup>125</sup> Finally, the diptych consisting of the issues on "Technical Applications" (no. 78, 1993) and "Intelligent Buildings" (no. 79, 1993), showed different ways to approach the issues of construction: at one extreme, projects that work through a process of assembling components and place the focus on the system of connections – as in the works of Nicholas Grimshaw and Renzo Piano; at the other extreme those projects with a "plastic and all-embracing approach" in which the tendency is "to involve placing a general *Gestalt* ahead of any other consideration, so that the form of the individual element is deprived of its autonomy by its essential subordination to whole"<sup>126</sup> – as in the works of Nervi, Torroja, and Calatrava.

It is impossible to follow over the twenty years of «Lotus International» from 1974 to 1994, the richness and critical calibre with which the various themes were addressed: those on museums (Issues 35 from 1982, 53



**Fig. 20**

Cover of Manuel de Solà. *Designing Cities*, edited by Mirko Zardini, «Lotus Documents», n. 23, November 1999. Manuel de Solà-Morales, scheme for the port of Badalona.

**Fig. 21**

Cover of *Lotus international*. The archives of an architectural review, «Lotus Documents», 1985. Luigi Ghirri, Bari 1982.

and 55 from 1987), those linked to green spaces (Issues 14 from 1977, 30 and 31 from 1981, 52 from 1986 and, relating to infrastructure, number 56 from 1987) prefatory with respect to the landscape issues that would gain ever-greater importance in the subsequent phases of the magazine's life; those relating to specific regions such as Catalonia (no. 23, 1979) or India (no. 34, 1982).

Certainly, the jaded debate on some of the key issues that had marked the previous decades, such as reflections on the urban project or the debate around the post-modern, induced «Lotus», in the period between 1991 and 1994, to gradually move its main foci of interest towards other content. Here ends our discourse, since, if it is true that the magazine's approach remained monographic, if it is true that the themes of housing, the landscape and the city would continue to be addressed, it is equally true that the change in the general contents marked a new chapter in the magazine's history. In the face of the four decades' continuity of Nicolín's directorship, over time not only were the thematic horizons of the magazine and its graphics transformed,<sup>127</sup> also the members of the steering committee<sup>128</sup> underwent numerous changes, as did the editorial staff, which from 1980 to 1994 featured, amongst others, Georges Teyssot, Daniele Vitale, Italo Rota, Luca Ortelli, Alberto Ferlenga, Mirko Zardini, and Alessandro Rocca.

While its number of members remained restricted, the editorial staff would continue to change in subsequent years; the single fixed point in these variable geometries was and is Nicolín, the true soul of the magazine.

Before closing our discourse on the first thirty years of the life of «Lotus», we should look again at three important stages in its history.

The first stage coincides with the launch in 1982 of the series «Lotus Documents», whose twenty-third and last number would be published in 1999. The documents had the same format as the periodical of which they constituted an offshoot, defining two areas of investigation: on the one hand, an in-depth look at matters already dealt with in the «mother» magazine; on the other, the presentation of theoretical research and design by some of the leading figures in the Italian and international architectural debate. Among the documents on the first sphere, of note here are those already mentioned on *L'architettura del paesaggio americano* by Christian Zapatka (no. 21, 1995), *Designing Cities* by Manuel de Solà (no. 23, 1999) and *Interior Landscapes* by Georges Teyssot (no. 8, 1987). Among those on the second sphere, we can only recall a few here: *Oswald Mathias Ungers. Architetture as Theme* which opened the series, *Aldo Rossi. Three Cities. Milano, Perugia, Mantova* (4/1984), *Álvaro Siza. Poetic Profession* (6/1986), *Giorgi Grassi. Architecture Dead Language* (9/1988), *Franco Purini. Seven Landscapes* (12/1989), *Vittorio Gregotti. Five Necessary Dialogues* (14/1990) and *Luciano Semerani. Passaggio a nord-est* (16/1991). The second phase coincided with an exhibition in 1985 at the Fondazione San Carlo in Modena. The idea of organizing an exhibition in which «Lotus» presented the work of the «its own workshop»<sup>129</sup> – formulated by Pierluigi Nicolín, Vittorio Savi and Rossella Ruggeri, then director of the Poletti Library in Modena – was related to the decision to deposit archival materials from the periodical's twenty-three issues (consisting of photographs, letters and drawings, many of them unpublished) at the library, whose funds came from a bequest by the Modenese architect, Luigi Poletti. Alberto Ferlenga and Luca Ortelli edited the catalogue and designed the exhibition which constituted a «taking stock»<sup>130</sup> and, at the same time, a re-appropriation of the work carried out by the magazine. The exhibition

was divided into three sections: the first, mounted in the Corridor of Honour of the Fondazione San Carlo, represented the promulgation of a virtual number of «Lotus»; the second exhibited, on three sides of the Cardinals' Hall, the magazine's archival materials donated to the library; the third consisted in a wooden room built at the centre of the Cardinals' Hall housing an analytical index and a selection of photographs.

The third phase coincided with the foundation in 2000 of a new magazine "Lotus Navigator". While outside the period examined here, it is important to note that this stage represented the moment when the process of strengthening the interest of «Lotus International» in the landscape project reached maturity, as witnessed by its issues on "Uncultivated land" (no. 87, 1995) and "The Two gardens" (no. 88, 1996). The new four-monthly bilingual periodical would not last beyond nine issues. Its format (24 x 32 cm), graphics (by Andrea Lancellotti) and structure, were profoundly different from those of the "mother" magazine, while characteristics common to the two periodicals were its monographic format and the working group: Pierluigi Nicolin at the helm, Alessandro Rocca, Giovanna Borasi and Lorenzo Gaetani doing the editing. Each number, open to explorations of various disciplines, from architecture to design, from photography to the visual arts, consisted of an opening essay that defined the critical-interpretative approach to the theme, and a broad review of projects and works. Although favourably welcomed, "Lotus Navigator" failed to achieve economic self-reliance, and was forced to suspend publication. On the other hand, ever fiercer competition from online publishing was joined, from the end of the Eighties, by a condition of overcrowding of the publishing panorama by architectural magazines that "fished in the same waters".<sup>131</sup> From 1982 to 1996, Gregotti directed «Casabella», while in 1989 he helped the rebirth of «Zodiac» under the direction of Canella. In 1989, appeared "Materia" directed by Portoghesi, while between 1989 and 1991, Semerani published "Phalaris". From 1989 to 1992 Marco De Michelis directed "Ottagono" and from 1992 to 1996 Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani headed the direction of «Domus». Between the Eighties and the mid-Nineties, "the sector magazines started to become a haze, following a veritable mass of editorial initiatives promoted by the most disparate institutions – industry associations and professional orders, companies variously involved in the market of architecture and design, university departments – characterized by a plethora of guidelines."<sup>132</sup> In the face of a scenario combining saturation of the publishing market, economic criticality, and a general dulling of the cultural impact of architectural periodicals, «Lotus» began a profound rethink about its structure, objectives and image. As already said, the depletion of certain thematic strands that had marked the history of the magazine from 1974 to the end of the '80s imposed a decisive change of route. The change in direction began with Issue 68 of 1991 and continued until 1994, when the contents of the magazine were profoundly renewed, and the axis of the reasoning was already reset to the coordinates of the countless fresh trends in the world of architecture. This reading of the evolution of «Lotus» ends here, and we shall not venture into the changed cultural terrain of the successive phases. Before concluding, however, it makes sense to linger for a few lines on Issue 68, not only because this was the moment when «Lotus» started to tackle new thematic horizons, but also because it might arguably be numbered amongst the most beautiful issues ever published by the magazine. Titled "the eye of the architect" and enriched by contributions from Kenneth Frampton, Vincent Scully



**Fig. 22**

Pages 54 and 55 of «Lotus international», n. 68, March 1991. Architectural travel drawing by Louis Kahn.

**Fig. 23**

Cover of «Lotus international», n. 68, March 1991. Sketches by Alvar Aalto, Aldo Rossi, John Hejduk, Gunnar Asplund, Louis I. Kahn, Rob Krier, Ettore Sottsass, Alvaro Siza with a text by Le Corbusier.

and Anthony Vidler, this issue published sketches and drawings that some architects had made during their travels: Le Corbusier, Asplund, Aalto, Kahn, Krier, Siza, Hejduk, Sottsass and Rossi. In the editorial, Nicolín updated readers on the changes taking place in the magazine: the choice to publish two different editions, one in Italian and one in English, which would afford more room for texts and images, the change of the editorial staff<sup>133</sup> and the management committee<sup>134</sup>, the renewed graphics.<sup>135</sup> Not only that: each number would be divided into two sections: a “Focus” centred around a particular theme, and a “Forum” dedicated to a comparison of multiple points of view on specific issues (clients, competitions, criticism, the relationships of architecture with the visual arts or the media) in order to make the periodical an arena for discussion increasingly open to diverse positions. It was indeed believed that “to a proliferation of attitudes, a replacement of the unique visions of architectural phenomenon with an unprejudiced use of language [...], the destructuring/dispersion that has affected our discipline”<sup>136</sup> it was necessary to respond with “appropriate communication tools”. What we were seeing, wrote Nicolín, was a transformation of the *Zeitgeist* and, as far as contemporary architecture was concerned, “a paradigm shift with respect to the previous approaches, comprehensible only with the changing of the horizons that occurred in the Eighties”<sup>137</sup>. Publishing sketches from the travels of some masters just when “Lotus” was embarking on a new road took on a value that was both metaphorical and instrumental. This permitted observation of “the nature of different beginnings”, predisposed reflection on what had caught the eye of some great architects”; let us imagine that, as in Le Corbusier’s case, travel sketches might become useful material for the construction of future projects.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For further information, see the following web pages, last consulted in December 2017: [https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin\\_Chapman](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Chapman); [https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim\\_Clark](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Clark); [https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gran\\_Premio\\_d%27Italia\\_1963](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gran_Premio_d%27Italia_1963)

<sup>2</sup> P. Ferrini, *Ecco dov’è finita la Lotus di Jim Clark*, in «La Repubblica», 6 Decem-

ber 2013; [http://www.repubblica.it/motori/sezioni/classic-cars/2013/12/06/news/dov\\_finita\\_la\\_lotus\\_di\\_jim\\_clark\\_-69299627/?refresh\\_ce](http://www.repubblica.it/motori/sezioni/classic-cars/2013/12/06/news/dov_finita_la_lotus_di_jim_clark_-69299627/?refresh_ce)

<sup>3</sup> In 1979, Bruno Alfieri's passion for motor racing led him to leave Electa and found the publisher Automobilia, specializing in the history and image of the car, that would go on to work with some of the most prestigious car manufacturers including: Alfa Romeo, Lamborghini, Maserati, Mercedes, Porsche and, in particular, Ferrari, thanks to the personal support of Enzo Ferrari.

<sup>4</sup> Some authors give 1963 as the date of publication of the first volume of "Lotus". In reality, the annual was founded in Venice in 1963, but its first edition came out in 1964. To check the correct date, beyond that on the volume itself, see: <http://www.editorialelotus.it/web/item.php?id=1>

<sup>5</sup> Giulia Veronesi, art historian and critic of art and architecture, collaborated with the magazine «Casabella» under the direction of Giuseppe Pagano and Edoardo Persico. Winner of the "Olivetti Prize" for architecture critics in 1957, she edited the complete writings of Edoardo Persico for Edizioni di Comunità, which came out the same year the first edition of the «Lotus» annual went to press. She authored the following publications (amongst others): *Joseph Maria Olbrich*, Il Balcone, Milan 1948; *J. J. Pieter Oud*, Il Balcone, Milan 1953; *Difficoltà politiche dell'architettura in Italia, 1920-1940*, Politecnica Tamburini, Milan 1953 (reprinted by Marinotti nel 2008); *Josef Hoffmann*, Il Balcone, Milan 1956; *Luciano Baldessari architetto*, CAT, Trento 1957; *Edoardo Persico. Tutte le opere (1923-1935)*, Edizioni di Comunità, Milan 1964; *Ascesa e caduta delle Arts Déco*, Vallecchi, Florence 1966.

<sup>6</sup> B. Alfieri, (untitled), «Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura, Annuaire de l'architecture, 1964-65», Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1964, p. V.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> G. Veronesi, (untitled), In «Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura, Annuaire de l'architecture, 1964-65», Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1964, p. XI.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> A. Rocca, "Lotus", in M. Biraghi – A. Ferlenga (ed.), *Architettura del Novecento. Teorie, scuole, eventi*, vol. I, Giulio Einaudi Editore, Turin 2012, p. 567. Reference should be made to the entire essay, published on pp. 566-570, for a concise and fascinating history of the «Lotus» annual.

<sup>15</sup> S. Micheli, *Le riviste italiane di architettura. Il luogo logico del dibattito architettonico*, in M. Biraghi, G. Lo Ricco, S. Micheli, M. Viganò, *Italia 60/70. Una stagione dell'architettura*, Il Poligrafo, Padua 2010, p. 129.

<sup>16</sup> B. Alfieri, *A new Lotus*, in «Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura d'oggi, Annuaire de l'architecture contemporaine, 1965-66», Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1965, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> G. Veronesi, *A Panorama*, in «Lotus. Architectural annual, Annuario dell'architettura d'oggi, Annuaire de l'architecture contemporaine, 1965-66», Bruno Alfieri, Milan 1965, p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>22</sup> B. Alfieri, (untitled), in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1966-1967», no. 3, Bruno Alfieri, Milan Venice (undated) [1966], p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> A. Rosselli, *L'architettura ricerca nuove relazioni*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1966-1967», no. 3, Bruno Alfieri, Milan Venice (undated) [1966], p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> B. Alfieri, *A letter from the editor*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue interna-

- tionale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1967-1968», no. 4, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice (*undated*) [1967], p. 5.
- <sup>27</sup> A. Rosselli, *The role of the architect in the next ten years*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine, 1967-1968», no. 4, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice (*undated*) [1967], p. 10.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> R. Venturi, D. Scott Brown, *A significance for A & P Parking Lots; or Learning from Las Vegas*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 71-91.
- <sup>31</sup> E. McCoy, R. M. Schindler, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 92-105.
- <sup>32</sup> D. Gebhard, *Ambiguity in the work of R.M. Schindler*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 92-105.
- <sup>33</sup> G. Mazzariol, *La Feria a Valencia di Guillermo Jullian*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 34-62. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».
- <sup>34</sup> Idem., *Il linguaggio di Erickson*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 161-187.
- <sup>35</sup> A. Rogatnick, *EXPO 67: The Past Recaptured*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 5, Alfieri Edizione d'Arte, Venice 1968, pp. 12-33.
- <sup>36</sup> C. Aymonino, *Origine e sviluppo della città moderna*, Marsilio, Padua 1965.
- <sup>37</sup> A. Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, Marsilio, Padua 1966.
- <sup>38</sup> G. Mazzariol, *Louis Kahn: progetto per Venezia*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 1-39. The title is that in the Index; instead, the title on p. 1 is *Un progetto per Venezia*. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».
- <sup>39</sup> The second part was on «The designing of the city».
- <sup>40</sup> A. Villa, *La progettazione della città*, «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 96-101. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».
- <sup>41</sup> On the figure of Constantino Dardi, in the same number, see: M. Tafuri, *Dardi*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 163-169; C. Dardi, *Lettura di James Stirling*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 122-133. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».
- <sup>42</sup> A. Rogatnick, *The Decline and Fall of the Architectural Profession in North America*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 6, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1969, pp. 266-270.

<sup>43</sup> A. Villa, *L'architettura nella formazione della città moderna*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 6-11. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

<sup>44</sup> C. Aymonino, *Progetto architettonico e formazione della città*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 20-41. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

<sup>45</sup> G. Canella, *Un'architettura di architetture*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 42-61. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

<sup>46</sup> A. Rossi, *Due progetti di abitazione*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 62-85. The title here is that in the Index; instead, the title on p. 62 is *Due progetti*.

<sup>47</sup> A. Villa, *National competition for the historical centre of Trieste: Dardi, Polesello, Semerani*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 86-117. The title here is that in the Index; instead, the title on p. 86 is *Il concorso per il centro storico di Trieste*; below, the initials A. V. refer to the editor, Angelo Villa

<sup>48</sup> Rossi, *La progettazione nelle facoltà di Milano, Roma, Venezia* in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 130-172. This title only appears in the Index; from p. 128 to p. 172 there is a series of Degree Theses with different titles; in fact, the section devoted to the theses begins on p. 128 and not on p. 130 as written in the Index. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

<sup>49</sup> A few years earlier, Manfredo Tafuri had judged three experiences as “very positive” for their open form and for the fact that instead of “cancelling the architecture in their urban planning process they relocated the constructions to a fitting context and exalted their semantic autonomy”. These were: Quaroni's project for the San Giuliano sandbanks at Mestre, Geoffrey Copcutt's studies for the surroundings of Glasgow, and Kenzo Tange's plan for the new Skopje. M. Tafuri, *Architettura, town design, città*, in “d'Ars Agency: bollettino trimestrale”, nos. 36-37, 1967, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup> Vv. Aa., *Bologna: il P.R.G. ed il progetto di Kenzo Tange* in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 354-409. This title only appears in the Index; from p. 354 to p. 409, there is a series of articles by various authors, with different titles. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

<sup>51</sup> G. Fabbri, *Venezia: ipotesi sulla città e strumenti progettuali*, in «Lotus. An International Review of Contemporary Architecture, Rivista internazionale dell'Architettura d'oggi, Revue internationale de l'Architecture contemporaine», no. 7, Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, Venice 1970, pp. 280-297. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».

<sup>52</sup> C. Aymonino, G. Fabbri, A. Villa, *Le città capitali del XIX secolo. 1. Parigi e Vienna*, Officina, Rome 1975.

<sup>53</sup> P. Nicolini, *Introduzione*, in *Lotus international 1974-88. Indici Indexes*, Supplement to «Lotus international», no. 61, Electa, Milan, 1989, p. 6.

<sup>54</sup> On the panorama of Italian architectural magazines, see: S. Micheli, *Le riviste ital-*

iane di architettura..., op. cit., pp. 125-138; M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura. Costruire con le parole*, in F. Dal Co, *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il Secondo Novecento*, Electa, Milan 1997, pp. 430-443; F. Tentori, *L'Architettura contemporanea. In dieci lezioni (dividendo per undici). Zibaldone e bibliografia sull'architettura, l'arte italiana e le riviste del Novecento*, Gangemi, Rome 1999, pp. 117-121, 131-135. While Silvia Micheli and Marco Mulazzani referred to «Lotus», Francesco Tentori did not mention the magazine.

<sup>55</sup> E. N. Rogers, *Continuità o crisi?* in «Casabella-continuità», no. 215, April-May 1957, p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> The editorial board featured in various ways and at different moments: Marco Zanuso, Giancarlo De Carlo, Vittorio Gregotti, Gae Aulenti, Guido Canella, Aldo Rossi, Giorgio Grassi, Luciano Semerani, Carlo Aymonino, Aurelio Cortesi, Silvano Tintori, and Francesco Tentori.

<sup>58</sup> M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura...*, op. cit. p. 436.

<sup>59</sup> S. Micheli, *Le riviste italiane di architettura...*, op. cit., p. 126.

<sup>60</sup> M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura...*, p. 435.

<sup>61</sup> This was Ford's «Zodiac». On the story of Bruno Alfieri and on the history of the magazine until 1974, see: O. S. Pierini, *Zodiac*, in M. Biraghi – A. Ferlenga (eds.), *Architettura del Novecento. Teorie, scuole, eventi*, vol. I, Giulio Einaudi Editore, Turin 2012, pp. 949-954.

<sup>62</sup> See: S. Micheli, *Le riviste italiane di architettura...*, op. cit., pp. 127 and 129-130.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>64</sup> This topic was addressed in the double issue 87-88 in 1965, whose contributions included some from Eugenio Battisti and Christian Norberg-Schulz on landscape, and Salvatore Bisogni and Agostino Renna on urban design in the Naples area.

<sup>65</sup> R. De Fusco, in «Op. cit.», *Editoriale*, no. 1, September 1964, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> F. Tentori, *L'Architettura contemporanea...*, op. cit., p. 131.

<sup>67</sup> E. Bonfanti, *Autonomia dell'architettura*, in «Controspazio», no. 1, June 1969, pp. 24-29.

<sup>68</sup> M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura...*, op. cit. p. 440.

<sup>69</sup> «L'architettura interrotta» (*Architecture interrupted*) was the name of the column edited by Luciano Patetta in «Controspazio».

<sup>70</sup> B. Alfieri, (*untitled*), in «Lotus International», no. 8, 1974, p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> With regard to Diego Birelli's contribution to the graphics of «Lotus International», Michele Galluzzo wrote in a booklet (p. 22) published for the exhibition «Diego Birelli Graphic Designer», mounted at the IUAV University of Venice, Archive Projects, 21.05-12.06.2015: «To emphasize the change of direction and the permeability of the editorial container, Birelli conceived the covers of the individual issues in an uncoordinated manner with titles that changed from time to time, and included both stick characters of a Swiss pattern – albeit graceful, hieroglyphics or lettering designed *ad hoc* as in the case of issue eight.»

<sup>72</sup> B. Alfieri, (*untitled*), op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>73</sup> A. Rocca, «Lotus», op. cit., p. 566.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>75</sup> S. Micheli, *Le riviste italiane di architettura...*, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>76</sup> A. Rocca, «Lotus», op. cit., p. 568.

<sup>77</sup> [www.editorialelotus.it](http://www.editorialelotus.it), consulted in December 2017.

<sup>78</sup> [www.editorialelotus.it](http://www.editorialelotus.it)

<sup>79</sup> Pierluigi Nicolin became director of «Lotus» in 1977 and is still at the helm of the magazine today (January 2018).

<sup>80</sup> A. Rocca, «Lotus», op. cit., p. 568.

<sup>81</sup> M. Tafuri, *The subject and the mask. An introduction to Terragni*, in «Lotus international», no. 20, 1978, pp. 5-31.

<sup>82</sup> P. Nicolin, *From the archives of the modern architecture*, in «Lotus international», no. 20, 1978, p. 3.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> P. Nicolin, *Architecture in the University: Europe*, in «Lotus International», no. 21, 1978, p. 3.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>86</sup> C. Rowe, *Architectural education in the USA: issues, ideas, and people. A con-*



- ference to explore current alternatives, in «Lotus International», no. 27, 1980, pp. 42-46.
- <sup>87</sup> P. Nicolín, *Architecture in the University...*, op. cit., p. 3.
- <sup>88</sup> P. Nicolín, *Small works*, in “Lotus International”, no. 22, 1979, p. 3.
- <sup>89</sup> “Small works” was the title of Issue 22 of «Lotus» in 1979.
- <sup>90</sup> P. Nicolín, *American lofts*, in «Lotus International», no. 66, 1990, p. 5.
- <sup>91</sup> V. Savi, *Orphic, surrealist. Casa Malaparte in Capri and Adalberto Libera*, in “Lotus International”, no. 60, 1988, pp. 7-17.
- <sup>92</sup> B. Reichlin, “*Une petite maison*” *Lake Leman. The Perret-Le Corbusier controversy*, in «Lotus International», no. 60, 1988, pp. 59-83.
- <sup>93</sup> F. Irace, *Correspondences. Villa Planchart by Gio Ponti in Caracas*, in “Lotus International”, no. 60, 1988, pp. 85-105.
- <sup>94</sup> G. Chiaramonte, *Villa Planchart. Three rules and the ever-present Duchamp*, in “Lotus International”, no. 60, 1988, pp. 107-111.
- <sup>95</sup> P. Nicolín, *Disrupted domestic space*, in «Lotus International», no. 44, 1984, p. 5.
- <sup>96</sup> P. Nicolín, *Living in the city*, in “Lotus International”, no. 41, 1984, p. 5.
- <sup>97</sup> P. Nicolín, *Architecture and Grand Style*, in «Lotus International», no. 42, 1984, p. 10.
- <sup>98</sup> P. Nicolín, *Living in the city*, op. cit., p. 5.
- <sup>99</sup> A. Ferlenga, *Riverbank among the trees. A trip through the Lujana of Plečnik*, in “Lotus International”, no. 59, 1988, pp. 7-14; in the same number of «Lotus» see: D. Prelovšek, *Note on the construction of the riverbank. From the Austrian renovation to the Plečnik interventions*, in «Lotus International», no. 59, 1988, pp. 15-33.
- <sup>100</sup> M. Zardini, *New railway constructions. Rafael Moneo: renovation of the Atocha in Madrid*, in «Lotus International», no. 59, 1988, pp. 101-113; photos by Dida Biggi.
- <sup>101</sup> L. Ortelli, *Similarities and differences. The transformation of the Murcia mills by Juan Navaro Baldeweg*, in «Lotus International», no. 59, 1988, pp. 35-51; photos by Paolo Rosselli.
- <sup>102</sup> F. Werner, *The myth of the atemporal. History of the Stuttgart station*, in «Lotus International», no. 59, 1988, pp. 115-132.
- <sup>103</sup> M. de Solà Morales, *Another modern tradition. From the break of 1930 to the modern urban project*, in «Lotus International», no. 64, 1990, pp. 6-31.
- <sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 7
- <sup>105</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>106</sup> P. Nicolín, *Architecture in historic towns*, in «Lotus International», no. 18, 1978, p. 3.
- <sup>107</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>108</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>109</sup> P. Nicolín, *Interpretation of the past*, in «Lotus International», no. 46, 1985, p. 5.
- <sup>110</sup> G. Chiaramonte, *Odòs, Meth-odòs, Theorèin*, in «Lotus International», no. 72, 1992, pp. 6-19.
- <sup>111</sup> Y. Simeoforidis, *Un’opera di Pikionis nel contesto. Sorveglianza in atto*, in «Lotus International», no. 72, 1992, pp. 20-21.
- <sup>112</sup> P. Nicolín, *Transcriptions*, in “Lotus International”, no. 58, 1988, p. 5.
- <sup>113</sup> See: C. Rowe, *Architectural education in the USA: issues, ideas, and people*, op. cit.; M. Marzo, *Afterword*, in Ibid. (ed.), *L’architettura come testo e la figura di Colin Rowe*, Marsilio, Venice 2010, p. 260.
- <sup>114</sup> P. Nicolín, *The weak design*, in «Lotus International», no. 62, 1989, p. 5.
- <sup>115</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>116</sup> C. Rowe, *Talent and Ideas. A conference*, in «Lotus International», no. 62, 1989, pp. 7-17.
- <sup>117</sup> P. Nicolín, *The search for forms*, in «Lotus International», no. 25, 1980, p. 3.
- <sup>118</sup> Ed., *Contestualismo?* In «Lotus International», no. 74, 1992, p. 109. This footnote gives the Italian title of the article, since neither the title nor the article were translated into English in this issue of «Lotus».
- <sup>119</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>120</sup> P. Nicolín, *Architecture as Installation*, in «Lotus International», no. 77, 1993, p. 45.
- <sup>121</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>122</sup> P. Nicolín, *Romanesque and Byzantine*, in «Lotus International», no. 28, 1981, p. 5.
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 7.
- <sup>124</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>125</sup> G. Simmel, *Bridge and door*, in «Lotus International», no. 47, 1985, pp. 52-56; also

in G. Simmel, *Saggi estetici* (edited by M. Cacciari), Padua 1972.

<sup>126</sup> P. Nicolin, *Intelligent buildings*, in «Lotus International», no. 79, 1993, p. 39.

<sup>127</sup> Over the years, for its graphics, the magazine availed itself of the guidance of various designers: Diego Birelli, Pierluigi Cerri and F. G. Confalonieri, Alessandra Dal Ben, Lioba Wackrnell, Andrea Lancellotti and Gaetano Cassini.

<sup>128</sup> Below is the evolution of the editors and steering committee from 1980 to 2002. Among the editors, in 1980 Georges Teyssot joined Daniele Vitale and Italo Rota (no. 28); in 1981 joined by Luca Ortelli (no. 30); in 1982 (no. 34) Alberto Ferlenga became part of the editorial staff and Teyssot left, in the next issue assuming the role of editorial coordinator; that same year, the committee of experts was joined by Mario Botta, Francesco Dal Co, Jacques Lucan and Franco Purini (no. 34); in 1984, the committee of experts was joined by Marco De Michelis, Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Bernard Huet, Werner Oechslin, and Georges Teyssot (no. 41); in 1988 Mirko Zardini joined the editors (no. 56); in the same year (no. 58) Teyssot was no longer editorial coordinator for some issues, but would return later to finally switch to the management committee; in 1990 (no. 65) Ferlenga and Ortelli left the editorial staff and Alessandro Rocca entered; in 1999, Mirko Zardini left and Giovanni Borasi arrived (no. 101); that same year an external editorial board was added, consisting of, among others, Ignasi de Solà-Morales and Georges Teyssot; in 2000, Lorenzo Gaetani arrived; in 2002 (no. 112) Mirco Zardini joined the external editors, and the following year (no. 118) Rocca left the editors.

<sup>129</sup> R. Ruggeri, *Foreword*, in Vv. Aa., *The archives of an architectural review*, Electa, Milan 1985, p. 7.

<sup>130</sup> P. Nicolin, *Introduction*, in Vv. Aa., *The archives of an architectural review*, Electa, Milan 1985, p. 10.

<sup>131</sup> A. Rocca, “*Lotus*”, op. cit., p. 569.

<sup>132</sup> M. Mulazzani, *Le riviste di architettura...*, op. cit. p. 443.

<sup>133</sup> The editorial staff consists of Mirko Zardini, Alessandro Rocca, Rita Capezzuto and Gail Swerling.

<sup>134</sup> The Management Committee consists of Mario Botta, Ignasi de Solà Morales, Adolfo Natalini, Franco Purini, Vladimir Slapeta, and Georges Teyssot.

<sup>135</sup> The graphics are by Gianluca Poletti.

<sup>136</sup> P. Nicolin, *L'occhio dell'architetto*, in «Lotus International», no. 68, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

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