

Small talk

- «I don't think we should go for a *manifesto*. Our shared working method doesn't come from a school of any sort: neither we have a specific assumption to respect nor Masters to follow. »

- ✕ «True. I think that this may also depend on a local factor: the fact is that we all studied in Genoa, where Architecture School is actually pretty lay, composed by a motley staff lacking of a main leading figure. »

- «That's true, in fact... what do you think about these few lines? "We come from a non-school. Our first common root is the defection of paradigm and super-ordinate interpretations, being it an absolute belief or corporate codes: so

far we do have a responsible approach open to critics and changes.»

- ✕ «It makes sense, but to me it sounds like the typical snobbish *curriculum vitae*... so conformist...»

- * «We have to admit that Genoa's factor strongly influenced us: The Faculty of Architecture is small but its intromission in the city fabric led to an extraordinary urban success. The school has been for all us a happy place where to hang out during university years and, above all, where to confront and discuss. That place surely trained our approach to the discipline, this continuous need of comparison that is still very vibrant today.»

- «It's clear that to join forces and collaboration for us is definitely more complicated. We are all complementary professionals, we don't differ much in competences. Yet this is a convenient way to free our mind from assumptions and aprioristic certainties.»

- ◆ «This I think is something important to be explained. Nowadays the act of creating a network of different professionals is a commonplace, to collaborate in a co-working is too often taken for granted as it was a kind of mandatory method to accomplish a complex process such as the architectural design.

We tend to the exact opposite: we all are overlapping figures, each one of us is an Architect. Teamwork for us does not simplify things but builds up a conflict of opinion and matters between each other's piece of mind. Moreover, we believe - and we happened to prove this in multiple occasions - that this conflict allows us to reach further goals, and that from such dialogues we achieve an otherwise unreachable synthesis. May this will to create a community of relations be our very common ground? Anyway, this is the inner sense of architecture itself, as any other medium is...»

● «Not another rant about *media*, please...»

* «I think this sounds more like “The whole is *other* than the sum of the parts”.»

◆ «In a sense, our opinion is antithetical to the *ideology of professionalism*, because architecture has to be first of all an intellectual activity. Don't get me wrong: not only theoretical speculation, but neither ordinary task-filling. The fact of always changing and adapting for any new commission, competition, graphic or design strategy, team composition... is a *non-professional* approach: a true professional optimizes until the right framework is found, and then repeats it.»

✕ «You know, giving an intellectual meaning to our work beyond use and quantity is the reason why we drain so much energy working

together. Although I don't deny: it's such an effort: nothing ever predefined, nor equal or repeated...»

* «If we have so much time to spend on discussion is because of economic crisis, isn't it?»

● «Seriously? Do we want to turn it on crisis talk? I agree with it, this is in fact a portrait of current times, but think about this: we start with localism, now crisis and lack of work... we'll end up with the *manifesto of depression*! »

◆ «Radicals and *La Tendenza* raised from 70s crises, in some way...»

● «Do you see the problem in keeping us too long in a locked room? Anyway... If you ask me to go for a specific topic, I would go for our love for drawings. In general. The meaning that we give to the representation of Architecture. »

• «We all agree on this.»

✕ «Drawing never *lies*.»

* «Are you serious? The entire history of Architecture is full of drawings that tamper reality, that doesn't match with it...»

◆ «That is not *lying*. That is meaning something more. Any drawing is representing something more than mere reality, but tells an idea which *differs* from reality. In this sense

drawing never lies on what is core: it can fake a dimension, but it honestly depicts the culture of its maker without uncensored, showing his capacity to handle details, to enhance graphical features, to never settle for an established aesthetic.»

● «*“Drawing is time.”* And I mean... the time spent on *drawing* is the same that you need to *understand* the project.»

◆ «We are talking about operative drawing, not a simple restitution, right? It has to be a tool to read the whole world; for that, it must not be an end in itself.»

✕ «That is what I fear the most: if we focus on our care for representation and its role in our group, we end up describing ourselves as *pencil-addicts...*»

◆ «Obviously not. *Hyper-professionalism* and *pencil-addiction* are two sides of the same coin, two contrapositive stereotypes on architects in general. The first refers to the world of international firms, bond in multi-disciplinary professional networks where different skills and specializations create astonishing designs of futuristic dream cities.

The second describes architects as useless highbrows in love with aesthetic matters which end up with bugged design solutions at their best. Or else: we don't even make buildings, but

drawing, talks, theories... for the sole sake of it.

We could in fact state that our relation with representation does not need to sound narcissist nor managerial...»

● «But, come on guys: let's say that we are having fun! It all sounds so sad...! »

✕ «Right. In the end, what do we usually do? We gather ideas, we have fun, we all lose competitions...»

◆ «Ok, I think we are almost there. On one hand, we have the location-based condition and the contingencies, on the other the centrality of representations, architecture as an intellectual matter - an oxymoron that contains the dual polemical nature of the design process. Now we just need someone to write it down and connect them all.

Do someone offer himself as volunteer to do this?»

● «I was wondering... Why don't we go with a *transcript*? It is actually the most honest way to describe our method: constructing a dialogue.»

✕ «That's it. In a sense that also *this* is a form of representation.»

◆ «It also proves that the *medium is the message*. In other words, the way you represent your idea is equally important as the idea itself.»

✕ «No, please: not *McLuhan*, not again...»

* «It is our *non-manifesto*... It's a dialogue, a stream of consciousness...»

• «Don't you think someone may have already done it?»

✕ «*Everything has already been done.*»

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false mirror office, gosplan, LINEARAMA, pia, and UNO8A are five
architectural firms based in Genoa. The founders of these firms
are born in the 80s and represent the new generation of
architects trained at the University of Genoa and still active in the
same city. As part of the box set “NEW ARCHITECTS 1”,
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