



BIANCA FELICORI

ITALIAN POP NOSTALGIA:
BETWEEN PLEASURE TIME
AND HYPER-WORK



HOLIDAY COMPLEXES
COMPLEXES TOURISTIQUES





1-2-3
Holiday village with 1,100 beds, complete with common sports and recreation facilities, such as reception, club house, restaurant, discotheque, gaming-rooms, etc., built near Bari

Village touristique de 1,100 lits, completé par des équipements communs, sportifs et récréatifs, tels que réception, club house, restaurant, discothèque, salles de jeux, etc., construit près de Bari.



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HOLIDAY COMPLEXES
COMPLEXES TOURISTIQUES





1 Club with snack-bar and swimming-pool, built in one 20 m diameter and one 15 m diameter structure.

Club avec snack bar et piscine, construit avec une structure de 20 m de diamètre et une de 15 m de diamètre.

2 Residential-holiday complex with one-family and two-family villas, built in 12 and 15 m diameter structures

Ensemble résidentiel-touristique avec villas pour une famille et pour deux familles, bâti avec structures de 12 et 15 m de diamètre.

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Flushed and sweaty people are chilling on the beach, covered in badly smeared cream that stays white on parts of their body and greases the skin. Children are playing on the shoreline, building sandcastles with their plastic buckets. A few fathers occasionally go to check on them. A mother blows the nose of her son, who has seawater up his nose. The lifeguard is flirting with a girl who has just been stung by a jellyfish “the only solution, in this case, is to pee on it. Pee is the best cure”. He tells her winking. She chuckles. The old ladies under their umbrellas are complaining about the hot temperature. They can barely breathe. They are always wearing make-up, even on the beach, and their family’s jewellery, they never take it off “Oh my god, what about the increase in tourists over the weekend? Crazy. The amount of umbrellas on the beach is shocking”, they say while flipping through gossip magazines. At the bar, a group of girls drink Coke Zero and  while looking at their mobile phones as they wait for their fish dishes. Sitting next to them, four old friends, as Gino Paoli used to sing, are playing *briscola* while drinking a *bianchino* and swearing at each other. This is how you can imagine Italy during the summer, like a postcard from the past, and the best thing is that it has never really changed. The world changes as society evolves, yet some realities remain fixed in time as if that national Mediterranean dimension is a persistent leitmotif from which we cannot free ourselves and which, in some world belongs to us.

The story of this Italy brings us back in time, one that is much more political and social than it might first appear. It takes us back to a post-war nation immersed in the economic boom and the oncoming of mass capitalism. Everyone can have everything; citizens can access every good: TVs, refrigerators, and computers enter Italian homes, as they do all over Europe and America. Products are transformed, to quote the art critic Mario Amaya, by the big machine of commercial advertising, even before they reach the consumer,

‘bread becomes WONDERLOAF, cereals become SNAP, CRACKLE, POP. Everything is packaged: our work, our thoughts, our dreams, our love of life’

All of this spills over inevitably into architecture, town planning, and landscape morphology. In fact, in the post-war period, with the increase in demand for goods, a new idea of tourism was born: no longer an elitist tourism dedicated to the higher social classes, but tourism within everyone’s reach. Just as everyone can have a consumer product at home, everyone can enjoy a well-deserved rest after a long period of work. A new idea of ‘leisure architecture’ was born, responding to the emerging needs of a society that separates labour from free time. Free time was an ‘exclusive privilege of the West’ wrote the French critic Pierre Restany in a 1980 edition of *Domus*; the time we take away from work, duty, and any other daily toil.

The real estate and construction industry responded to the needs of this newborn society, and entrepreneurs began to

invest in large operations that spread like wildfire across the territory. It gave rise to new models of tourism, which in architecture was translated into the design of tourist villages built predominantly on the coast or in the mountains.

In Southern Europe, in particular, where seaside and mountain tourism traditions are more marked, large-scale operations of villages with integrated services that function as self-sufficient cities have been created. They undermine the hotel market, which are weakened by their spread. The success of this typology is through the rise of prefabrication, a construction process that allows individual housing units to be built quickly and cheaply. Architecture was moving towards a concept of ‘seriality’ linked to the principles of modern industry, which in holiday villages translates into the design of prototypes that can be infinitely reproduced in space, generating giant holiday resorts.

For over half a century, this tourism embodied the idea of a ‘fake’ holiday heaven, becoming dominant and leading to the construction of multiple villages in Europe, especially in France and Italy, and the United States. It led entrepreneurs to constantly search for architects who could best interpret market needs by designing villages with the most extravagant forms, even if they became alienating and far from any architectural and landscape principles. The countless problems of these complexes led to a crisis in the tourist model itself and to a subsequent reinterpretation of the theme in new forms more akin to those of hotel tourism, such as resorts, places to stay where there are shops, restaurants, spas, entertainment areas, and so on.

Nostalgic images of a world that no longer belongs to us, many of these resorts remain on the Italian coasts like shipwrecks, evoking years of misinterpretation of the needs of civilisation, of economic and social well-being, of urban planning and design errors, as these large holiday structures often lacked any osmosis with the surrounding landscape.

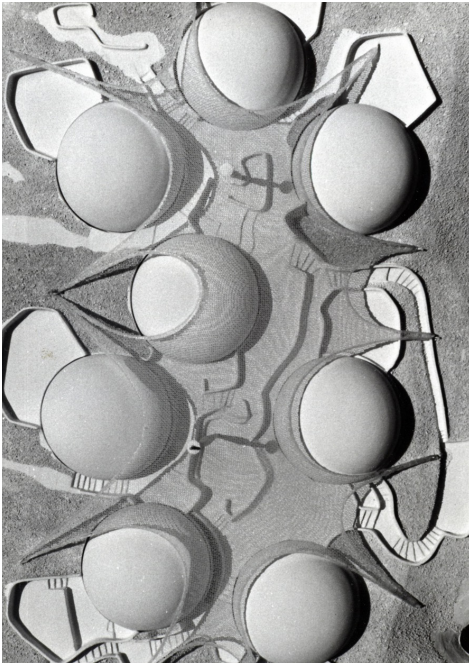
Today those images from the past are more powerful than ever, because they make us aware that we can no longer distinguish the time of work from the time of pleasure. Submerged in a hyper-ultra-super-mega-technological dimension, we live in a society where we feel ‘boxed’ and ‘packaged’ like in one of the two hundred different types of cereal available at the supermarket. To adopt an image from the ‘pop’ aesthetic of Adolfo Natalini, member and founder of Superstudio, we live in a world where everything is a consumer product: ‘the house is the wrapping of family members, the city of urban behaviour’. Today, that myth of well-being has been reduced to a nostalgic image of a past that no longer belongs to us; we wish we could read a book on the beach without receiving an email notification. We are controlled and, in control, we are always on call, and we can no longer imagine ourselves living a dimension of pleasure, even if it’s constructed. If it’s true that our time is stuck in a dimension of

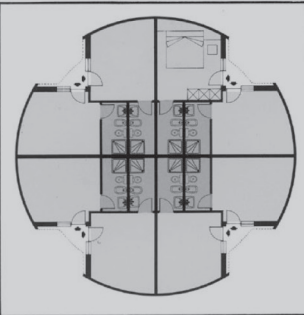
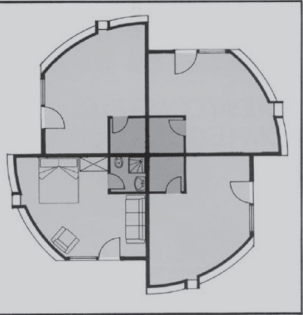
acceleration, overwork, and lack of specific boundaries between the moment when we ‘monetise’ and the moment when we ‘enjoy what we have earned’ what future can we imagine for our society?

Dear reader, I would like to picture you standing free in front of the sea, with a fruit cocktail in your hand, asking yourself this question. Perhaps somewhere in the world, maybe right on the Mediterranean coast, waiting for your beloved to return from the toilet.

You look at the sky, the sun is going down, and you don’t know the answer, but you are happy.

The phone is in your hotel room.







1 Internal partition of one 15 m diameter dome. Eight residences having an area of about 20 sq. m each are obtained. Each residence has an independent bathroom.

Disposition intérieure d’une coupole de 15 m de diamètre. On obtient huit logements ayant chacun une surface d’environ 20 m² et doté de toilette avec douche indépendante.

2 Internal partition of one 12 m diameter dome in four residences. Each residence has an area of 26 sq. m and is provided with an independent bathroom.

Disposition intérieure d’une coupole de 12 m de diamètre en quatre logements. Chaque logement a une surface de 26 m² et est doté d’une salle d’eau indépendante.

3-4 External and internal views of the bungalows.

Vue intérieure et extérieure des bungalows.

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3-4 Holiday Village
Villages de vacances

5 Snack-bar
Snack bar

6-7 Discoteque - Night Club
Discothèque - Night Club







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