

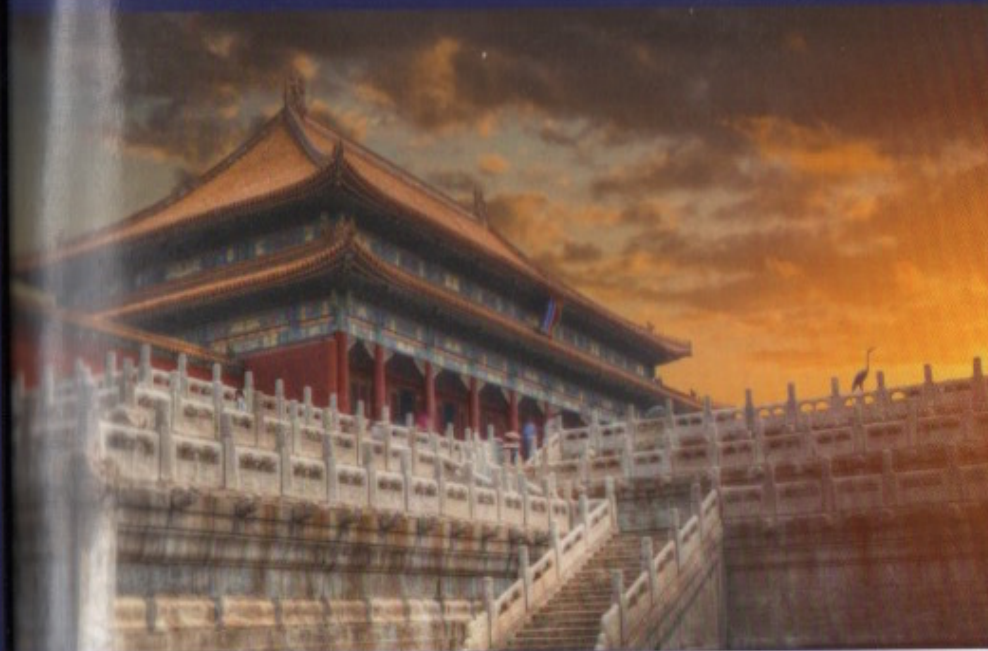
Architecture Literature are two objectively different areas but in reality they are much closer than can appear. It must be considered that if there is a relationship between architecture and literature it must necessarily be traced back to the origins of man, since they can both be traced back indirectly to the same faculty of individual; that is to say, to that particular capacity which has enabled the human being to relate to the context through the construction of tools and linguistic symbols. Therefore, if there is an undeniable connection between language and tools, given the fact both relate to the same mental ability of man, the same principle applies to literature and architecture as consequences of the same prerogative. But the affinity between literature and architecture, for Borges, goes even further, to the point where they can be considered the same thing, as it happens at the end of The Dream of Coleridge, where he says the Poem and the Palace are essentially the same; because, as it is written in the subtitle, Architecture and Literature solve the perspicuity of the differences in the evocative capacity of the narration.



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Gianfranco Guaragna

"The POEM and the PALACE are ESSENTIALLY the SAME"

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differences in the evocative capacity of narration

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of design and form are intertwined in the book in a way that is not only interesting but also enlightening. The use of formal design concepts in the analysis of literary texts is a welcome development, especially in the context of the current debate on the relationship between architecture and literature.

Literature and architecture are both in fact in the same position: they have an identical structure that allows them to relate to the world by using signs and linguistic symbols.

"The POEM and the PALACE are ESSENTIALLY the SAME"

Architecture and literature resolve the perspicuity of differences in the evocative capacity of narration

and the parenthetical reflections. However, as French architect writes, "it is not without a label because it would be like a house without a foundation. The label can be a thousand times more fascinating and appear to be the dominant word of the work, explains Morici, the story however will remain in any case the decisive element, but visible, but far more subtle". It is true then that almost all the literary movements of the twentieth century, observes Antonio Ghisla, "disdained plot and narration according to greater importance to style, to the observation of daily details, to characterisation and the quality of feelings", but fabula and plot remain the two fundamental elements of the narrative structure.

What characterises some architectural monographs, such as those cited by Giovanni Conzatti in his interesting little volume *Lo spazio abitato*, is precisely the fact that a series of images (such as New London, Mexico, Kuala Lumpur, Foreign Office, Scotland, Soriano and Palazzo, San Fajimato, Sibiana Dru and Alexander Todorci at London), each in their own way, to illustrate their projects within their respective monographs, seem to resort to the idea rather than use the fabula. Naturally, in the context of architectural publications, this choice will undoubtedly be an original fabula, since in general in the monographs the sequence of the reproduced works is explained starting from the first works and then proceeding according to the chronological order of the projects: the fabula, precisely. However, what interests us is not the relationship between literature and architecture, but rather the link between architecture and narrative in general: two fields apparently different but actually much closer than it may appear.

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CHAP. 1

Poetry and Language, Architecture and Tool

'Linguistic evolution goes hand in hand with the technical progress of a civilization, since they have an identical structure that allows man to relate to the world by forging utensils and linguistic symbols.'¹

Umberto Galimberti

In architecture, as in literature, theme, construction, and of course protagonists are important, but in general what matters most is the story and its structure. As is known, the story consists of a *fabula* and a plot. The *fabula* is the fundamental scheme of narration, the logic of actions and the syntax of the characters, the temporally ordered course of events. Substantially, the set of elements that make up the narrative content of a work. The plot is instead the story as it is told, as it appears on the surface, with its temporal dislocations, the leaps forward and backward, the descriptions, the digressions and the parenthetical reflections. However, as Franco Moretti writes, there is no plot without a *fabula* because it would be like a house without a foundation. The plot can be a thousand times more fascinating and appear to us as the dominant aspect of the work, explains Moretti, the story however will remain in any case the decisive element; less visible, but far more solid². It is true then that almost all the literary movements of the twentieth century, observes Amitav Ghosh, disdained plot and narration attributing ever greater importance to style, to the observation of daily details, to character traits or to the nuances of feelings³, but *fabula* and plot remain the two fundamental elements of the narrative structure.

What characterizes some architectural monographs, such as those cited by Giovanni Corbellini in his interesting little volume *Lo spazio dicibile*⁴, is precisely the fact that a series of architects (such as Rem Koolhaas, Mvrdv, Bjarke Ingels, Foreign Office Architects, Soriano and Palacios, Sou Fujimoto, Stéphanie Bru and Alexandre Thériot of Bruther), each in their own way, to illustrate their projects within their respective monographs, seem to resort to the plot rather than use the *fabula*. Naturally, in the context of architectural publications, this choice will undoubtedly be an original formula, since in general in the monographs the sequence of the reproduced works is organized starting from the first works and then proceeding according to the chronological order of the projects: the *fabula*, precisely.

However, what interests us is not the relationship between literature and architecture referred to the "narrative structure" of the story, but rather the link between architecture and narrative in general; two fields objectively different but actually much closer than it may appear.

On the other hand, we must not forget that architecture and writing have always been linked together. Ever since writing was invented, Joseph Rykwert reminds us, the inscriptions have always been part of the surface of the buildings: from the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians and the Hittites, to the cuneiform texts of Assyrians and Babylonians, to the Greek inscriptions⁵.

A close bond that naturally does not change over the centuries, just think of the compositional value of the inscription crowning the Albertian temple in the Rucellai chapel or, to get closer to us, to the strength of those verses engraved by the BBPR on the tomb of Rocco Scotellaro, the poet and intellectual from Basilicata, loved by Visconti and Rogers, to whom Rogers, as well as having designed the tomb, a few months after his untimely death, he dedicated an editorial touching to it on the pages of "*Casabella - Continuità*"⁶.

However, proceeding in order, we must consider that if there is a relationship, as we undoubtedly believe exists, between architecture and literature it must necessarily be traced back to the origins of man, since they can both be traced back indirectly to the same faculty of individual; that is to say, to that particular capacity which has enabled the human being to relate to the context through the construction of tools and linguistic symbols.

We believe, beyond any doubt, there is a correlation between literature and architecture, a connection that traces back to the origins of man since both relate to that human ability to interpreting, describing, imagining and modifying the context.

Gottfried Semper's remark that it is generally possible to determine the cultural stage and characteristics of a civilization by examining the production of crockery⁷ was pushed even further by Adolf Loos, who noticed that an Egyptian vase, or a Greek one, could potentially unveil the topography, the hydrography, and thus the whole scenery of the places they belong to⁸. Rocco Scotellaro (whose tomb, designed by the BBPR, helps keep his memory alive) applies similar interpretations to language. He alludes to a consideration of Carlo Levi, who said that the dialect of a region could be used as a measuring system for the landscape, for the people, and also for the region⁹. This becomes a sort of corollary for the assertion that a specific language – as Darwin says in *The Descent of Man* – cannot have two different places of origin.

Both these considerations, despite they may seem unrelated, express similar concepts, since they highlight how tools and language maintain tight connections to man's environment; their structure hints to the place where they were born and the way they developed. They precisely point out a very important aspect, confirming Leroi-Gourhan's thought: 'not only is language typical of man as much as his tools, but both are unique expressions of man's capacities'¹⁰. After all, it is known that a culture expresses its content in its language. According to Umberto Galimberti, 'there are no linguistic materials that do not act as symbols of real meanings. That happens because linguistic evolution goes hand in hand with the technical progress of a civilization, since

they have an identical structure that allows man to relate to the world by forging utensils and linguistic symbols'¹¹.

Therefore, if there is an undeniable connection between language and tools, given the fact both relate to the same mental ability of man, the same principle applies to poetry and architecture as consequences of the same prerogative. The latter two, besides correlating with language and tools respectively, must accordingly connect one to another. We could say that architecture represents to utensils what poetry is to language, thus we know that architecture and poetry are closely related, just like utensils and language.

This analogy is better observed in the Imperial Gardens of the Old Summer Palace in Beijing, where lines of poems were translated into real landscape architecture¹². The same connection comes up again, in a different and more incisive form, in the words of the Catalan writer and poet Joan Maragall, not only because he claims Gaudi's Sagrada Familia 'is not architecture, it is poetry of architecture,'¹³ but because of the union between the mystical delirium of religious fundamentalism and uncompromising Catalan independentism, which makes the Sagrada Familia a reflection of Maragall's poetry and vice versa.

This means that temple and poetry are reflections of one another, mainly because the Catalan poet, indirectly, was the creator of this Barcelona's place of worship¹⁴. These statements are supported by the 'anti-material' attitude typical of Gaudi's work, but it must not to be confused with an aversion against matter, since it is mostly a continuous resistance to its seductiveness – incarnation of sin – thus it could be read as a search for emptiness. In his works he creates such configurations that seem able to tame and mould air into rigorous, physical shapes¹⁵, therefore it is the very nature of his architecture, where materials cease to be as such, that aspire to an exchange with the incorporeal nature of poetry.

Borges also trusts in this analogy when, in *Parable of the Palace*, narrates of a poet who, when finding himself in front of the Emperor, recites a short composition: his poem contains the whole palace complete with all its lights, shadows, majolica, and all the moments of dynasties of mortals, dragons and gods that inhabited the place¹⁶. But the affinity between poetry and architecture, for the Argentinian writer goes even further, to the point where they can be considered the same thing, as it happens at the end of *The Dream of Coleridge*, where he says poetry and the palace are essentially the same¹⁷. And Boullée too, though in a different way, manages to eloquently translate into architecture a symbolically similar idea to Borges' concept, elaborating in a more concrete form a project where books and the building that houses them are one and the same: printed and built volumes virtually coincide: 'Boullée thinks of a library', according to Aldo Rossi, 'and the volumes are the library, they are the weight, not only static, that defines it; it is exhausted in this space'¹⁸.

However, as a simple side note, it may be pointed out that if Boullée's remains an idea, MVRDV, two centuries later they will build a library in China that closely resembles the

concept. Even if it does not have the regular structure and the rigid geometries conceived by Boullée but sinuous and captivating shapes, inside it is entirely covered with books which, following the curvilinear shape of the walls, become the cladding themselves, making content and container are the same thing.

Étienne-Louis Boullée's majestic library would have been enjoyed by La Croix du Maine, who, towards the end of the 16th century, according to Foucault, 'envisages a space that would be at once an Encyclopaedia and a Library, and would permit the arrangement of written texts according to the forms of adjacency, kinship, analogy, and subordination prescribed by the world itself.'¹⁹



BBPR Tomb of Rocco Scotellaro 1957



BBPR Tomb of Rocco Scotellaro, Part.

The Dream

Borges again points out literature is made of dreams, reminding us that everything begins with a dream¹. It would seem Stevenson dreamt the central scene of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and built the story around it². Architecture too is built around a dream, since the dream is not necessarily tied to a precise psychological state: you can dream while awake³. A dream is nothing more than the vision of an incorporeal image, and architecture has the primary power of making it come true, therefore turning an image, an idea, a dream, into matter⁴.

The English word project, as we know, comes from Latin *proiectum*, that means 'something thrown forth', and in fact, what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees, as Marx wrote in *Das Kapital*, is the fact that the former 'raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality.' This means the artefact was only an idea in the mind of the designer before being built; an intangible image only architecture can forge into something concrete. More than any other artistic field, architecture has the peculiar capacity to operate on the reality of a place transforming it, by working on a subjective vision, in a reality objectively different; thus completing a metamorphosis of the existing. But this metamorphosis is nothing but the concretisation of an image, a vision, just a dream.

It can only be the fruit of a dream, for example, Jože Plečnik's Ljubljana that, through a series of architectural interventions in the first half of the past century (between 1921 and 1957, the year he died, to be precise), he 'invented' a city that only existed in his fantasy, where memories of Italy and Florence were blooming, where ancient Rome and Renaissance met Baroque and Slovenian typical architecture, and the knowledge and professional experiences he had in Europe⁵. Vienna in particular, where he worked in Otto Wagner's office, and Prague, where he intervened beautifully on the Castle with a highly symbolic architectural approach⁶. In order to forge this 'dream', Plečnik moves from the urban scale to architectural details, dealing with various themes of civilian and religious architecture. He takes on the issue of the monument and manages brilliantly the coexistence of architecture and vegetation. The Slovenian architect attributes to architecture a meaning tied to the concept of collectivity, and tries to restore a social and psychological dimension by recovering symbolic elements of local architecture.

This intervention takes place within a master plan for the extension of the old city designed by Max Fabiani. The two shores of the river are treated as urban spaces. Plečnik transformed the levees in an original way repurposing them as pedestals for the buildings on the street level. Besides the many artefacts soaked in evident symbolic values, he designed bridges of extraordinary beauty, a dense web of open spaces, a series of urban furniture objects of high quality, placing statues, fountains, obelisks and colonnades in a whole plan where every little architectural gesture gets a sense of

completeness, also on a urban scale⁷. Even vegetation finds a role thanks to the careful choice of arboreal essences that goes as far as planting weeping willows with their branches pointed toward the water in the same spots where the river arches into a curve. Thanks to a detailed work on composition, Plečnik manages to shape a peculiar *promenade architecturale*⁸ articulated into a harmonious string of spaces and paths that will soon become the city's main walk.

If a dream was the starting point for Plečnik's Ljubljana, Gaudi's Barcelona, with its lavish architectures, transports us directly into the dream. This is obviously mostly due to that 'material fury' Tafuri spoke about⁹, which leans toward a sense of total petrification. Lahuerta says this is one of the most eloquent effects of Güell park¹⁰, something that, in a similar fashion, characterizes housing complexes such as Casa Milà. (Frampton saw in La Pedrera the image of a rocky wall eroded in time¹¹, and Semerani defined it as rocky and Wagnerian)¹². All of his other buildings are peculiarly shaped into sinuous forms that, topped with sculptural shapes, create an effect of strong emotional impact. In fact, Gaudi's houses – with their fantasy-like appearance, their sense of petrification or an opposite, polychromic, kaleidoscopic, richly shaded cladding of the façades – seem to be taken right out of a dream and, just like in a fantasy tale, they show scaly surfaces, theriomorphic shapes, and interiors animated by plastic objects and grotesque deformations that create a sequence of surreal and phantasmagoric environments.

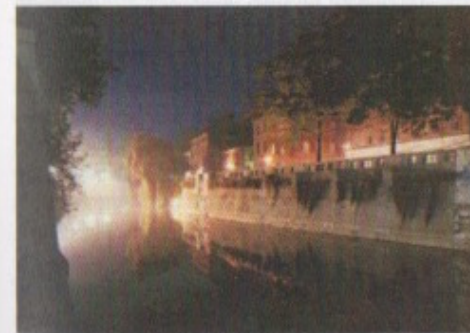
For example, House Batlló, realized between 1904 and 1906, despite being a work of renovation of an existing building, urges the same emotional response as the projects he made from scratch. The old building is heavily transformed, especially the façade and most of the internal distribution, to the point it acquires a completely new and extremely expressive configuration. The balconies take on the appearance of unsettling masques, the façade is dressed with a mosaic of varied ceramic fragments; the entire building is adorned with decorative and architectural elements inspired by the animal or vegetal world, geological and organic shapes, fossils, dragon backs and snake scales. However, the dream could come close to being a nightmare when fantasy forms and petrified images accompany the sense of magic, of myth, as it can be seen in the 'informal and delirious'¹³ arrangement of the Güell estate, where pillars become trunks and trees petrify: the real trees Gaudi planted in the garden of the park are weeping willows, poplars and elms, all of which are trees that Esperide's daughters were turned into in Jacint Verdaguer's poem *La Atlantida*, dedicated to Antonio Lopez¹⁴.

Architecture, dream, poetry and tale thus cross their paths, they penetrate into each other, fuse and exchange roles to settle the perspicuity of the differences of narration's capability to evoke. Plečnik's Ljubljana is accordingly a sort of tale, a narration. Sergio Polano uses this term when saying Plečnik builds compositions on the urban scene 'by the narration imprinted on places along the flow of water, the unfolding of the streets, the pauses of the squares'¹⁵. And also Paolo Portoghesi, describing the cemetery of the Slovenian capital – where Plečnik designed every single detail, from the benches to the

uniforms of the funeral service workers –, compares his little constructions to the words of a tale¹⁶. Just like in certain novels, Plečnik's 'tale' also contains various architectural and decorative elements that pave the way to the creation of a language with different levels of understanding, as highlighted by Burkhardt, Arvois and Von Eybesfeld¹⁷.



Antoni Gaudi, House Batlló



Joze Plečnik, Ljubljana

The Fabulous World of John Hejduk

This idea of a story however, although under a different aspect and with a different meaning, is a concept we find often also in John Hejduk's architecture.

The universe of Hejduk's thought, as Renato Rizzi points out, is a unitary and undivided 'reality' of a trinitarian form, where poetry, painting, and project are interconnected and undistinguishable worlds¹. His is a deeply dramatic architectural universe; a sort of reliquary inhabited by angels and demons and adorned with fantasy characters, animals, machines and anthropomorphic figures. A world completely infused with a poetic soaked of a profound sense of the sacred, where word and image become the two pieces of wood of a cross².

This tight connection between architecture and literature, in addition to marking his entire work, is also a way of relating to the teaching activity at the Cooper Union school, whose classes required the study of both architecture and literature. This connection can be traced to the experiences made during his teaching in Austin alongside Colin Rowe³, who was a passionate supporter of a humanistic and historically aware approach to architecture, and even back: Hejduk, before becoming a teacher and then the principal, was a student at the Cooper Union, where, already at that time, aesthetic-philosophical experiences informed the approach to design⁴. Therefore, for him writing and architecture were combined in a unitary form.

The House of the One Who Refused to Take Part, for example, is a 1979 project for Venice⁵, accurately described in all its parts and functions, and contrived as a sort of tale in which images and writing become complementary. In this project, the theme of 'showing' is completely different from the concept that characterised the main aspects of the Modern Movement. Namely it has nothing to do with the idea of transparency tectonically conceived, where, as Dal Co remarks, the harmony of inhabiting takes form by showing itself⁶. On the contrary, many years before the TV show *Big Brother* and many years after the appearance of the modern on the international architectural stage, the unveiling, in Hejduk's Venetian project, translates dramatically into a sort of pillory for the inhabitant, who, placed in a room specifically thought for this function, is implacably doomed to show himself in a mirror placed on the façade of the facing tower, which reflects outside his image.

The House of the One Who Refused to Take Part is not an isolated project but is part of a personal quest the New York architect conducts on his own inner contrasts, which finds in Venice the incentive and the depth that help him to examine a multitude of themes through this sort of literary architecture. In fact, it connects directly to three previous projects where we can see concentrated a certain amount of considerations on duality: between 'Europe and America; abstraction and historicism; individual and collective; freedom and totalitarianism; the colours white, black, and grey; silence and

speech; clear and ambiguous; narrative and poetry; observer and observed'⁷. Reading this detailed enunciation of themes, just as we cannot not notice narrative and poetry being mentioned, we also cannot deny how the names chosen for the projects evoke on some level the world of novels or poetry. *The Cemetery of Ashes of Thought* (1975), *The Silent Witnesses* (1976), and the *Thirteen Guarding Towers of Cannaregio* (1979), are in fact titles of other Venetian projects, perfectly represented in a series of drawings and coloured models. They complete, together with *The House of the One Who Refused to Take Part*, the entire cycle of the Venetian tetralogy. This latter, furthermore, repropose Hejduk's Wall House in one of its many re-elaborations; an architectural type already present in the project for *The Cemetery of the Ashes of Thought* that, besides the anthropomorphic idea of architecture, it represents undoubtedly another peculiarity of his work.

If on the one hand Étienne-Louis Boullée's project for the National Library was an explicit homage to the *School of Athens*, and to culture and erudition, John Hejduk's *Cemetery of the Ashes of Thought* is the celebration of literature. This is not just because of the specific function it is destined to, but because of the peculiar use of text that in all of his works transcends its merely pedagogic role. He strictly describes the intervention, indicating the colours of the walls, the size and height of the holes for housing the transparent cubes containing the ashes, the position and the material of the bronze plates with the names of authors and works.

On the other hand, the project involves the construction of an artificial island in the lagoon on which a home for a single inhabitant will be built. The lone resident will live there only for a limited time and will look at the graveyard. No one else will be allowed to live on the island during his stay⁸. Just as we have seen in *The House of the One Who Refused to Take Part*, Hejduk takes on again, in his own way, the theme of solitude. He intentionally puts aside the established role of the architect to assume a different one. He overpasses the typical function of the designer who, responding to a hypothetical need, develops a living space for a client. Hejduk thinks of a house for a lone person, interpreting the nuanced meaning of the term and of the condition it describes. In fact, as a director or a writer, he decides where and how a lonely man's house should be, but most of all he establishes the role the inhabitant takes on inside this tale, where architecture becomes literature. And if the one who 'refused to take part' was forced to show himself, the man on the island is doomed to watch. Watching appears to be the only action allowed to that one inhabitant whom, even though immersed in the muffled silence of the lagoon, seems to become a guilty man, condemned to atone his punishment kept in forced solitude. It is undeniable that these lonely men, doomed to watch or to be observed, seem to be placed there in order to expiate for a fault not so well defined and that takes us back to a Kafkian unconscious guilt of the guiltless guilty.

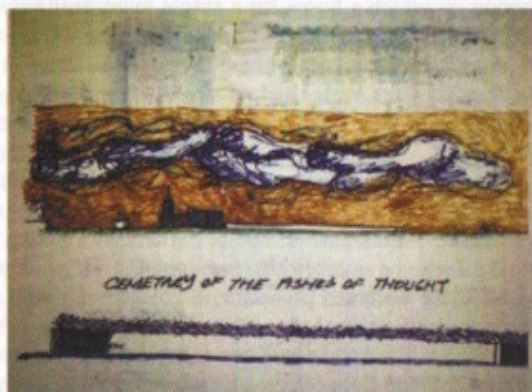
The way Hejduk develops the project issues and elaborates its representation makes it clear this is not an occasional approach for him, in the sense that it is not aimed to a specific theme. Since *The Cemetery of the Ashes of Thought* is thought as the place

where architecture and literature intertwine, for Hejduk it becomes an opportunity to express his own idea of architecture. For example, when he talks about the consistency of space in Proust and Gide, what he refers to, as he himself states, is not the consistency of space as described in texts, that is dense in the former's view and rarefied in the latter's, but to the consistency of thought as such⁹.

The Cemetery of the Ashes of Thought cannot be reduced therefore to a mere functional object, even though it performs a function. It is not only a tribute to important literature authors, as a rhetoric pantheon consecrated to literary thought. It also represents the will to turn thought into matter. It is the supreme space that celebrates thought, a thought able to go beyond a specific discipline.



J. Hejduk, The House of the One Who Refused



J. Hejduk, The Cemetery of Ashes of Thought

Rossi and Borges: When Architecture becomes the Protagonist of the Story

It must be acknowledged that behind every function of use in architecture, there is always a deeper meaning that transcends the purely functional purpose.

In a passage from his *scientific Autobiography*, in fact, Aldo Rossi writes: "I could have indifferently named this book *Forget Architecture*, because I could talk about a school, a cemetery, a theatre but it is more precise to say life, death, imagination¹. Affirming this, Rossi does nothing but highlight the hidden meaning of those places that we absolutely cannot consider as simple containers, thus reducing their essence to mere function, but as architectures that express highly symbolic values that represent life, death, imagination.

Therefore, the school, the cemetery, the theatre, must evoke feelings, express spirituality, and arouse emotions because, to paraphrase Eduardo, it is not the actor who must cry but the audience, and certain architectures manage to move by reason of their intrinsic and formal contents precisely because, as Joseph Rykwert reminds us in the preface of *Words in the Void*, architectural activity is essentially evocative. A peculiarity that is excellently condensed in the few lines of the by now abused - yet not worn out - Loosian concept, which explains:

"If in a forest we find a mound, six feet long and three wide, arranged with a pyramid-shaped shovel, we become serious and something inside us says: here someone is buried. This is architecture"².

Its intrinsic value, as Antonio Monestiroli points out, naturally does not derive from practical function (from its purpose) but from its evocative purpose. And that becoming serious in front of the mound, he specifies, is linked precisely to its proportions, to the evocative quality of its form³.

On the other hand, the architecture of Aldo Rossi, by resorting to archetypes and through the repetition of a few elementary geometric solids, undoubtedly shows in the composition of those forms, a clearly evocative character. Just like the still-lives of Morandi, in which a few simple objects, almost always the same ones, manage to become deeply evocative when they are carefully calibrated in the balance of the composition.

As for the Tolstoy of *War and Peace*, or the Melville of *Moby Dick*, even in Rossi there is perhaps the will to supplant and incorporate previous forms⁴. But, the use of archetypal forms, elementary geometries, materials reduced to their zeroth degree and colours with muted hues, if on the one hand they evoke a latent historical memory, then on the other they can only stimulate the imaginary, because, as Manfredo Tafuri explains, Rossi's architecture "is placed fearfully in the balance: its reality, never denied, is perversely conjugated to the unreal"⁵.

But the 'Venetian' historian warns that "the imaginary is a new collective need for a universe that tends to expropriate the making of fantastic individual qualities. But whomsoever today is immersed in it [Tafuri specifies] is forced to cancel space and time, to make them sink into the void of the 'literary space'. (...) Yet Rossi [adds finally] has the courage to contemplate that 'nothingness', projecting the impalpable signs into a magic urn, mirror of a dream told in public"⁶.

And so the words of Tafuri on Aldo Rossi, in which we speak again of literary space, dream and story, by virtue of what has been said above, can only lead us back to Borges. However, it should perhaps be pointed out that, in our opinion, if there is a link between Rossi and Borges, it is not dictated exclusively by the fact that although they work in different fields they both move between the literary and the architectural space. We believe, in fact, that a point of convergence perhaps even more significant between the two can be undoubtedly identified in the role attributed to architecture; just to the extent that it is evident that in Rossi's design activity, as well as in Borges' literary activity, it becomes their own way of seeing the protagonist of the story.

But perhaps there is more, since, without going so far as to claim that it could be a complete reversal of roles, which would probably be excessive, it cannot be denied that architecture plays a prominent role in Borges's work. Just as in the architecture of Aldo Rossi the poetic rather than the purely technical or functional sense prevails.

In other words, architecture for the two is not only the fixed scene of the human story; because in reality, although they move in different environments, both make it go beyond this objective condition, transposing it into a different dimension; no longer simply passive, if we may say so.

Borges, as is noted, does not limit himself to using the existing architectural context to set the events of his characters, but this scene transforms it by restoring it to its own memories, as it does when it reconstructs the vanished neighbourhoods of Buenos Aires. And so, for the Argentine writer, architecture is not simply the place where the action of the story takes place, but the Pampas, the city, the courtyards and the houses themselves become the interpreters, the protagonists of the narration. Just think, for example, of *Death and the Compass* in 1944 and the meticulous description that Borges makes of the villa in which the culminating action of the story develops⁷. Or *Fervour de Buenos Aires*, where there are squares, streets, *patios*, pink or blue walls, but no inhabitants⁸.

On the other hand, it should be noted that although in a completely different way, even in the work of Aldo Rossi architecture takes on a leading role when the building becomes almost indifferent to its specific function.

Indeed, as we have already had occasion to write elsewhere⁹, if architecture can be considered the fixed scene of the human story, when Rossi states that the scene is stronger than the story¹⁰, not only does he highlight the prominent role of architecture, but perhaps suggests that his architectures, poised between reality and the unreal, as Tafuri stated, are even indifferent to the presence of man, since they are themselves the protagonists of the story. His architecture is like the immobile actors of a metaphysical

scene. They are silent architectures, that despite the tranquillizing pastel-colours with which they are represented and realized, in reality they are profoundly dramatic. And they are in the etymological meaning of the term precisely when they are proposed as the scenic action, like *dráma-atos*, in fact.

Architectures similar to silent actors are staged in a representation in which they are the main interpreters; and just like in Rossellini's cinema, their 'silences' become the dramatic content of the action itself¹¹.

However, they are characters who do not 'play' on physiognomy like those of John Hejduk, but who claim, with obvious and vibrant eloquence, a lineage in direct line from the archetypes of classical language.

And this among the archetypes is another element that unites the two, because, despite Borges working on the word and Rossi on [physical] substance, both make use of archetypes.

Borges, for example, speaking of Buenos Aires, sometimes replaces reality with a sum of generic ideas, of archetypes. His procedure is clearly shown in *Cantoni*, a text that illustrates two photographs in which two corners of Buenos Aires are taken, which Borges, now blind at the time of writing, almost certainly ignores what they are and therefore, in describing them, as he himself states, he makes use of the archetype¹².

In any case it must be recognized that it is difficult to establish how much one moves within the literary space and the other within the architectural space, because in them, the boundary that delimits the two areas is extremely unstable or even non-existent.

In some passages by Aldo Rossi, in fact, sometimes images of cities and architectures are outlined in strictly literary terms, as in the short passage taken from his *scientific Autobiography* (which we report below); for example when he speaks of the silence of a summer in the city and a hypothetical house project:

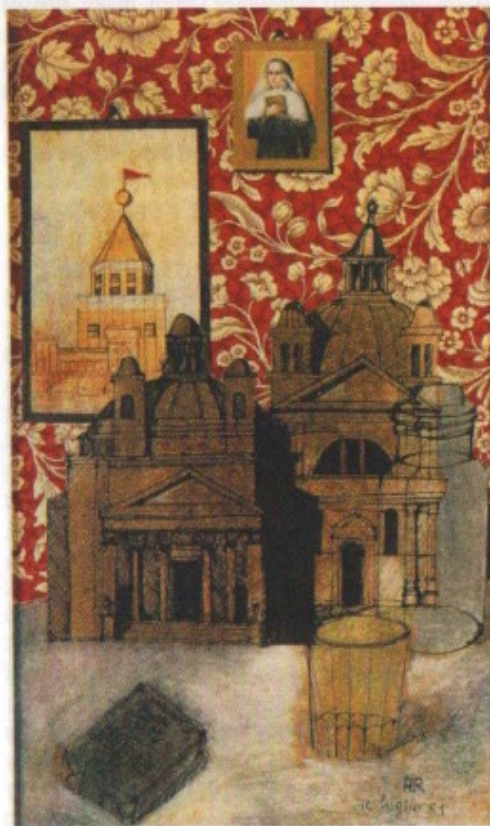
"As when looking at a ruin, even in the city the contours of things are faded. In the exaggerated silence of a summer in the city I caught the deformation, not only ours, but of objects and things. Perhaps there was a certain numbness in looking at things, and the more precise they were, the more they blurred. So you could try this project: for example, a house.

"Try a project, or a novel, or a film that stopped at this house, with a paved courtyard, and then the entrance to another small courtyard separated from the garden with a gate; and beyond the garden, or in the garden, other houses, or a hospital. And place the house on two levels, with intermediate steps. Or it could be one-story in the garden with brick factories behind. It is certain that this indifference to form was identified with a sort of malaise due to the situation"¹³.

But also when he talks about the now famous 'overhanging room'¹⁴, wondering if a project of this type could be represented beyond memory and experience, if on the one hand in this vision the memory of houses destroyed by the war might emerge while they show portions of their interiors and remains of floors suspended over the void, and on

the other they describe a hypothetical architecture that, as he himself states, ends up falling inevitably back into literary space.

However, this Rossian idea of the precipice, which in spite of itself is forced to remain confined within the literary space, is in some way brought back by Borges to a purely architectural dimension. The Writer, in fact, recounts the experience lived during the visit to the Guggenheim in New York, then recently inaugurated, describing precisely the sensation felt in the circular route of the museum, and recalls that during the journey he kept asking himself, worried, whether everything would end suddenly in the void in which it would have precipitated¹⁵.



Aldo Rossi

Gehry and Singer: The use of what is despised

In Frank Gehry's works, we naturally cannot find the sort of intrinsic relationship that linked Aldo Rossi's idea of architecture to Borges's literary thought, nor the narrative aspect that instead characterizes the entire work of John Hejduk. However, despite the objective differences, at least on one occasion Gehry surely approaches the world of hejdukian storytelling more than can be imagined.

When, for example, in 1983 he proposed a glass pavilion in the shape of a fish and another in the form of a coiled snake as part of an exhibition on architectural *follies* staged at the Leo Castelli Gallery, in certain ways his idea recalled very closely in some respects those stories of solitude, of segregation, of observers and of the observed told by Hejduk only a few years earlier. Gehry, in fact, in what remains perhaps one of the very rare occasions in which he lets himself go into a semblance of narration, imagined the snake as a private prison, while the pavilion in the shape of a fish was the observation point from which the recluse could be monitored.

Excluding this episode, which we may certainly consider a fortuitous coincidence, his world has nothing to do with hejdukian literary architecture; but even we could say with literature in general. Indeed, it is well known that he had always been more interested in painting, sculpture and the whole universe that revolves around contemporary art rather than the literary world.

Nonetheless, there is certainly a hidden bond that is transversally linked to this world. That is to say, an understanding based on that conceptual analogy capable of indirectly bringing us back to literature through the parallelism between what Gehry realizes in architecture and the role carried out by the Singer brothers in Yiddish fiction.

Gehry, like the Singers, hails from a family of Polish Jews.

He was born in Toronto on 8 February 1929 under the name of Frank Owen Goldberg and only in 1954, yielding to pressure from his wife Anita, does he change his surname to Gehry.

According to Gehry himself, he does so with some reluctance, since, considering himself a leftist engaged in *liberal* causes, he did not look favourably on such a decision, which seemed to him as yielding to the pressures of anti-Semitism rather than resisting it¹. However, by transforming the search for a new name into a complex design exercise, he succeeded in making an unpleasant issue more palatable².

As Frank Owen Goldberg, however, he moved in 1947 with his parents and sister to California, where he later graduated in architecture. After some work experiences in the United States and Europe - apparently negligible but which in reality would prove to be fundamental to his professional training because, according to him, they would help him understand both what he wanted to design and what he would avoid at all costs - he returned to Los Angeles to open his own studio.

The architecture created using the contribution by the artist couple Claes Oldenburg and his wife Coosje van Bruggen, whose works characterize many of Gehry's works, although we would like to be able to read them as a sort of return in the guise of Pop to that ancient tradition in which the sculpture covered a legitimate function within the architectural work, in fact highlight his great interest in Pop art, which in a certain way he interprets through architecture.

The works of the two authoritative protagonists of this artistic trend, such as the cyclopic binoculars containing the two meeting rooms in the portal at the *Chiat Day Building* in Venice, California³, or the gigantic hammer with pliers and screwdriver at the *Vitra Design Museum* in Weil Am Rhein, in Germany, not far from Basel, of course unequivocally explain Gehry's association with the world of American Pop art. Moreover, Frank himself would attest to having spent more time with artists than angeleni architects; however, this would have been during previous works, before reaching the majestic "inhabited sculptures" that made him widely popular. In other words, in the period preceding the large, deformed and elegant geometric solids and those sinuous architectures that in plastic form seem to transcend utility to offer themselves exclusively as a spectacle belonging to this world - which later will be increasingly delegated to the mere presence of gigantic objects - in this phase the use in artistic style that he makes of ordinary materials is clearly manifested, employing them according to principles certainly in line with Pop art.

When, for example, in the expansion of his home in Santa Monica, California, Gehry relies on the use of those impoverished materials that characterize the American suburbs, such as metal fencing, plywood or corrugated sheets (already used on other occasions), through the exhibition of unexpected pairings he raises insignificant objects and inferior materials to a highly emotional artistic condition. And this, of course, can only bring him closer to what is the essence of Pop Art. Moreover, Roy Lichtenstein affirmed that the characteristic of the latter is first of all the use it makes of what is normally despised; and Gehry, it is interesting to note, had always evinced the feeling that without Rauschenberg, he might not have had the courage to bring wire nets and untreated plywood into his buildings⁴.

After all, he had learned a lot from the angeleni artists who he began to meet with regularly in the mid-sixties. At that time, there were some among them, for example, who continually transformed their works, and such occasions they loved to often leave portions of exposed structures and parts of walls unfinished or in the rough.

It is curious to think that Anne Lacaton and Pierre Vassal, after almost half a century, would do exactly the same thing when, with their intervention, they stripped the interiors of the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, tearing away marbles and false ceilings, to lay bare the installations and the structure of the monumental and somewhat rhetorical building of the thirties.

However, leaving this note aside, Gehry remembers being very impressed at the time by how Larry Bell, for example, had peeled off a portion of his studio wall to expose the

uprights he then covered with glass. He very much liked those wooden beams because they were like painting.

Billy Al Bengston, another artist who occasionally erected dividing partitions in his studio and then knocked them down when a new idea matured, even though he admired Gehry deeply, he loved to scold him, and once called him 'the best thief ever', for how he had succeeded in integrating the ideas of artists into his work⁵. But he also called him "the greatest artist in the contemporary world"⁶.

"I wanted people to bring their own furniture, make their homes their own and interact with what I did," Gehry once said, admitting that the confusion was something he found agreeable⁷. However, he never considered himself an artist. Indeed, he was repeatedly forced to reiterate that he was an architect, and to better clarify the concept on one occasion he stated that "some artists are offended if you define 'art' as a construction in which there is also a toilet"⁸. And although he found a key component in sculptural principles to solve architectural problems by way of a plastic solution, he was never interested in sculpture as an end in itself⁹.

Therefore, it is manifest that although artistic techniques are clearly appropriated, they are always used for the purpose of responding to what he believed should be the fundamental requirements of architecture.

Gehry, in fact, throughout his life pursues a lucid personal research in order to create a new architecture. An architecture capable of fulfilling its functions with surprising shapes, without being merely spectacular. This of course makes it difficult to be able to approach it fully within an architectural trend.

On the other hand, just as he does not recognize himself in the postmodern, which in spite of himself comes to touch on the project for Loyola Law School, he much less believes that the principles of *Deconstructivism* can form a part of it either. In fact, when in 1988 the design of his house was included in the *Deconstructivist Architecture Exhibition*, organized by Philip Johnson at the Moma in New York, Gehry found the experience problematic, because while admiring some of those other architects, he did not want to be included in their group, as he did not believe that his work challenged the assumptions of order and harmony, but was in fact the opposite. What he believed he was doing rather consisted in the search for another order, demonstrating that harmony could be achieved through something other than the classical tradition¹⁰.

However, the old two-storey building had been topped by a new carapace of heavily sloping corrugated sheet with protruding corners and slanting windows which, however, being lower, left the original house visible in the middle of the enlargement.

The interior of the existing house had also undergone a complete reconfiguration, creating a distribution system capable of creating a sort of continuity with the external space incorporated into the new structure. Many of the walls and ceilings had been removed or "torn" to the frame, while the small pre-existing rooms had been opened to create a larger and more flowing living room; moreover, in the new kitchen obtained from the increase in living space, even an asphalt floor had been laid down.

There is no doubt that after the interventions the house certainly acquired a more functional and spacious environ. It should be remembered, in fact, that in 2012 Frank and Berta Gehry agreed to host the cellist Yo-Yo Ma at home for a small-scale concert in support of Obama's presidential campaign. And Gehry on that occasion wanted the concert to be performed inside the house and not in a marquee that was to be installed in the garden, just to show how the new living room, with wooden slatted ceiling, would work well both from the acoustic and spatial point of view, succeeding, with personal satisfaction, in arranging more than seventy people in the room emptied of furniture and furnished with folding chairs.

It is certainly true that with the advent of the Modern, architecture had already exposed the "skeleton" of the building and the substance of the materials: yet to sublimate its essence. Gehry, on the other hand, when he completes his house does not show the skeleton but exposes "bones" piled up. He does not display refined, selected materials implemented with meticulous care, as does Adolf Loos, when in opposition to the ornamental mockery he uses chromatic qualities in a decorative and perceptive function of space. Nor does he "use current writings to make ancient truths speak"¹¹ as Carlo Scarpa does through skilful combinations of precious materials. Gehry, on the other hand, by assembling miserable materials, uses the slang of black ghettos to make current truths speak. He does not use cultured language but the slang of the slums.

Miserable materials, destined for precarious constructions, are no longer relegated to secondary roles but brought into view and assembled with mock haphazardness; a refined and - borrowing Semerani's words when describing the work of Josef Frank¹² - "very Jewish imposition of sloppiness", which makes them rise to the role of protagonists.

Moreover, it is not difficult to imagine that many high minded people, at the sight of his first works, may have reacted exactly like the two characters in *Shadows on the Hudson*, one of the novels by the youngest of the Singers, where precisely in a passage extracted from the dialogue between Dr. Solomon Margolin and Herz Grein, the first addresses the other and says:

"...In my opinion all modern art has taken this path and is progressing slowly. In today's novels, topics are addressed and words are used that a generation ago were used only in the shallows."

'Modern culture is shallow. I've known it for a while', interjected Grein¹³.

The clear allusion to the indignant reactions that aroused the contents of his first novels, makes us understand just how much these were similar to the reactions that punctually accompanied the projects of Frank Gehry. Indeed, with regard to the latter, they were probably even worse.

Suffice it to say that when, in 2002, the Geryos bought land in the south of Venice to build a new home to where they thought they would move, while they were waiting for building permits, the neighbours began regularly dumping garbage as a clear sign of their little liking the idea of having a house designed by Gehry nearby. And it was not

enough to put a fence and hire a gardener to ward them off, since they continued undaunted, so much so that in the end the couple decided to finally give up the project, preferring instead to sell the land¹⁴.

In addition to all this, even in 2012, Justin Shubow, in a report of one hundred and fifty-three pages for the *National Civic Art Society*, regarding the project for the commemorative monument dedicated to Eisenhower that had been entrusted to Gehry a few years earlier, came to write that the latter was even driven by the desire to destroy Eisenhower's legacy, adding that his early avant-garde works, because they only celebrated chaos, danger and disorder, were antithetical to anything representing Eisenhower; and furthermore, that his values were not only antithetical to the orderly and harmonious style of the Monumental Core and Capitol, but even to the order and balance of the American form of government¹⁵.

It is true that the *National Civic Art Society* was a private group with conservative political inclinations; however, the feeling of deep aversion that some come to nurture towards him, as those of Singer, is naturally aroused precisely by the peculiarity that characterizes the works of both and which conceptually is what unites them in some way. That is to say, the audacity to put into play with coherent lucidity, in different fields, unconventional topics and materials; so much so that we can say that the latter does in architecture what Singer had done many years before in literature.

In fact, even if Gehry, sublimating, inserts "trash" into his works, we cannot forget that it was precisely the Singer brothers who introduced into Yiddish literature, which was always characterized by moral teaching and a romantic vision of the Ashkenazi Jewish world, with uncomfortable themes such as sex, criminals, and the outcasts of society.

The descriptions of Isaac Bashevis Singer's characters, writes Henry Miller, are short, cut with an axe, carved with vitriol. Furthermore, he adds:

"One always has a sense of fulfilment, whether through love or lust, murder or sacrilege. Singer is not afraid of anything, of any topic, not even of menstruation. As for sex, it is always strong and tasty, like a generous wine, and sometimes it is accompanied by love, sometimes it does without it, but it is never hidden or disguised. It would seem that it comes from the pages of the Old Testament ..."¹⁶

Even his older brother (Israel J. Singer 1893-1944), perhaps unjustly overlooked and overshadowed by Isaac's fame, as well as having introduced innovative and characteristic elements of his style, such as the different levels of textures, the wide breadth of the events, the continuous overturning of the plans and points of view, or the splendid galleries of the characters, in 1921, in Warsaw, he joins the small group of writers called *Khaliastra* (literally "the band"), who stood precisely opposed to the social realism and romantic descriptions of the life of Polish Jews.

However, although Yiddish had also been used to spread ideals of progress and to support the socialist and workers' movement among the Jews of Eastern Europe, when in 1933 Isaac Bashevis Singer (who in 1978 would be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature), publishes *Satan in Goraj*¹⁷, his first novel, the choice of Yiddish for a story of

magic and *qabbalah* will appear provocative. In fact, the telling in Yiddish of old stories of superstition will be seen by many as a paradox.

But if Singer's novel had aroused these reactions, even Gehry's house in Santa Monica will appear no less paradoxical and provocative to any of his neighbours than to see the old Dutch colonial dwelling surrounded by trapezoidal additions of plywood and corrugated sheet metal; they felt offended, even pretending that it was torn down because it constituted an affront to their quiet suburban street¹⁸.

In any case, the Singer brothers will remain a literary point of reference for the whole group of second-generation Jewish-American writers who, with the due distinctiveness that distinguishes them, goes from Henry Miller, to Bernard Malamud, to Philip Roth, only to name a few¹⁹. Although, it must be said, in reality Malamud did not like to be called a Jewish writer, but wanted to be called an American writer²⁰, and Roth preferred to call himself an American-Jew; indeed, a "Jew of Newark". However, we cannot forget that when the latter in 1969 published *Portnoy's Complaint*, the book that, thanks to the obsessive presence of sex, had given him great notoriety, he was accused of misogyny and anti-Semitism. Accusations to which the writer replied that he had never thought that Jews should be given only pitiful and apologetic representations, and that he did nothing but tell America as it was, with its women and its Jews.

Paradoxically, even Gehry, during the construction of the Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, an institution that was headed by the Jesuits, was even accused of blasphemy for the playful and openly non-denominational character of his project²¹.

Of course, these were not his intentions, just as he absolutely did not want to provoke irritation when he used wire mesh in his homes. While he repeatedly stated that his intent was, rather, to affirm that although the wire mesh was an omnipresent material, most people did not notice it until the context in which it was viewed changed²².

"Yet the hand of a great author can be seen precisely in his ability to bring the expressive means he uses to the limit" writes Giulio Busi, when he talks about Isaac Bashevis Singer²³. And once again this sort of analogy is evident between Singer as writer and Gehry as architect. In fact, when the latter uses ordinary materials to make deformed geometries charged with great emotional strength, in his way he too stretches to the limit the expressive means he uses.

His first buildings were, almost without exception, designed for people on a modest budget, and he was known precisely for his passion for using poor and ordinary materials, such as plywood left unfinished and unpainted, wire mesh, and the corrugated sheeting that soon became a kind of trade mark in the formative years of his career²⁴. Gehry, in fact, originally built his reputation on what he liked to call *cheap skate architecture*, literally lousy architecture, precisely because of the materials used²⁵.

But the idea of showing what one would have liked to have kept quiet, is a reality that, however regrettable, could not be divorced from the Jewish world, and obviously would be represented later also in the cinema. For example, as in *Crimes and Misdemeanours*, the 1989 film by Woody Allen, in which the philanthropist Judah, a noted eye surgeon

who has been cheating on his wife for a while, when threatened by his lover is forced to turn to his brother Jack, an inveterate and unscrupulous criminal who he tasks with having her killed by a hit-man.

On the other hand, even in the 1969 *Take the Money and Run*, despite being portrayed in a humorous way, the protagonist Virgil Starkwell, the inept and unfortunate would-be thug played by Allen himself, is a young American Jew. Unforgettable are the hilarious scenes in which Starkwell's parents are interviewed, hiding behind false moustaches and noses for shame of being recognized.

At any rate, although in the case of *Crimes and Misdemeanours* everything happens within the respectable and wealthy environment of upper-class US society, while in *Take the Money and Run* we find ourselves in certainly a more modest family context, the world is always that of the quiet family of American Jews.

All this naturally shows that although we avoid talking about it, finding ourselves with this kind of kinship, though understandably it may be embarrassing, is not an abnormal condition, nor a rare exception.

In fact, we find there were some criminals also in Gehry's family. One of his father's brothers, for example, was a bartender who worked for a gangster named Mikey Cohen; and even an aunt who sold nylon on the Detroit black market had married an alleged gangster²⁶.

Nevertheless, perhaps it is *Once Upon a Time in America*, a masterpiece by Sergio Leone shot in 1984, which might help us discover through the story centred on the bond of friendship between Max and Noodles, that the mafia were not only Italian. The difference, as Rich Cohen explains in *Mafia Jews*²⁷, is that unlike the latter - whose sons, generally, drawing on their lineage, followed in their parents' footsteps - the Jewish mobsters schooled their offspring as lawyers, doctors or engineers, thus 'cleaning up' in one generation.

Naturally, Cohen does not fail to emphasize that the moment he started to write, he himself had to face the dissent of his own family and the implied reproof of many members of the local Jewish community who considered it unreasonable, or at least inappropriate, to divulge such regrettable contexts.

On closer inspection, however, portrayal of criminality and not so much of what is good, in reality is an ancient discourse that takes us far back in time. Luke the Evangelist also liked criminals, prostitutes, tax collectors, collaborators, the handicapped and the rejected²⁸.

Yet at the same time Luke, according to Emmanuel Carrère, is one of the greatest novelists. In him, in fact, one recognizes the taste for the concrete and an interest in men rather than ideas, so much so that it made him the first ancient author to present a religious movement, exposing not its doctrine but its history²⁹.

Among all the Evangelists, continues Carrère, Luke was the only cultured one. While the others were poor Jewish fishermen, he was an educated doctor steeped in Greek language and culture. The Greek in which his books are written, in the opinion of

eminent Greek scholars, is the most elegant of the New Testament³⁰, and although founded largely on copies of texts already written, according to Carrère, is undoubtedly the only account written by one person.

Moreover, as specified by the French writer, Luke was not a follower of Jesus. He did not know him, while he was certainly a follower of Paul. But if Paul "was a genius who flew far above ordinary mortals"³¹, and the Acts of the Apostles are largely his biography, Luke was merely a chronicler; a writer who for Carrère becomes a prism through which to represent the art of the story, as Carlo Chatrian explains well³².

The art of storytelling, however, is a prerogative that undoubtedly belongs to Bernard Malamud (1914-1986), one of the most extraordinary New York writers of the 20th century.

With his³³ profound knowledge of the torments that plague the soul, writes Francesco Longo, Malamud is a narrator of Jews destined to suffer, and the family environment in which Gehry grows in some ways seems to belong totally to this world.

The story that Malamud tells, says Alessandro Piperno, is always the same: that of Job; and the biblical character, also recounted by Joseph Roth, seems to materialize in the life of Gehry through the paternal figure in which, in fact, the unfortunate *Malamudian* character stands out perfectly.

Frank's father, Irving Goldberg, was a sickly man who died at the age of sixty-one and was a source of sadness and frustration for his son throughout his life.

Going back over his history, which is perhaps worth mentioning briefly, it will not be difficult for anyone who has read some story by Singer or Malamud to immediately identify a surprising familiarity with the descriptions, settings and vicissitudes that feature among the characters of those novels.

Even its existence, in fact, as if springing from the pen of the great American author, had been a succession of missed opportunities and continuous failures, and curiously, considering this aspect, we discover that not only the work, but even the same biography of Gehry somehow tends to wedge itself into the world of these writers.

Gehry's maternal grandfather, Samuel Caplan, just as might happen in one of these stories, had a bulky hardware store in the small neighbourhood where Toronto's local Jewish community lived.

The life of its inhabitants was polarized around a street that was in fact the urban square of the neighbourhood, characterized by a disorderly succession of stalls selling fish, meat, fruit and vegetables, in addition to the many banks of books and religious artefacts. Moreover, in the streets around there, one could encounter numerous small synagogues, shops, delicatessens and community centres³⁴.

Samuel Caplan, who was the rector of the neighbourhood synagogue, like many other lay people, went to functions regularly, studied the Talmud, and refused to work on Saturdays. His grandfather, recalls Gehry, would give him a favourable impression of Judaism, showing it as a religion that continually asked questions and which appeared certain in at least maintaining that the question was as important as the answer³⁵.

Probably, this is the only link he maintains with the religious sphere, since although he was very sensitive to anti-Semitism and frequently tended to make indirect references to his Jewish heritage, often linked to anxiety and fear, he never felt particularly at ease in a synagogue³⁶; and, "his infatuation with Judaism", the Californian architect recounts, ended abruptly in his teenage years, immediately after his *bar mitzvah*³⁷.

In any case, this teaching, which Gehry later described as "one of the most significant things we can derive from being Jewish"³⁸, proved to be fundamental to the approach he would later have towards his work.

His paternal grandfather, on the other hand, immigrated to New York from Poland, was a tailor, and when he died, leaving his family in a state of extreme poverty, Frank's father, Irving, was nine years old. Forced to leave school, he found himself mostly living on the street trying to make do by performing small jobs in grocery stores, funfairs and wherever he could pick up some change to take home to help his mother and brothers. "Industrious, curious, stubborn and indefatigable, all qualities that he would pass on to his son ..."³⁹, even as an adult he did not stop getting by moving between different occupations without ever being able to find a job that could bring him satisfaction and the economic reward he desired in vain.

At various times he ended up managing a fruit and vegetable stall, led an activity in the slot machine business, became a van driver, a boxer, designed and built furnishing items, and worked in a liquor store. Meanwhile his health was deteriorating and along with his frustration with his failures, his relationship with Frank also deteriorated, against whom he often lashed out violently.

The last job Irving found, at an alcohol beverage store a few blocks away from the modest two-room apartment he occupied with his family, he lost due to an episode that, according to his son, was certainly the result of a gesture of anti-Semitism perpetrated against him by the policeman who "stuck" him. Gehry, among other things, claims to have suffered discrimination related to his Jewish origins on various occasions during his life. Moreover "if you forget you are Jewish, there will always be a *goy* who will remind you", laments a character in a short story by Bernard Malamud⁴⁰.

However, at the time Irving Goldberg worked until two in the morning and, as Frank remembers, he also got into the habit of drinking. When one of the officers on duty chatted cordially with him after closing time and asked if he could buy spirits, Irving, not realizing that it was a trap, sold him a bottle of liquor a few minutes after the time allowed. As a result the store license was suspended for two weeks, while Gehry's father not only lost his job but was also arrested and put in a cell⁴¹.

In the figure of this poor *shlimazl* (the Yiddish epithet meaning jinxed, haunted by misfortune), one can immediately see a clear resemblance to the many characters created by Malamud. How can we forget, for example, the protagonist of one of his short novels, Nat Lime, owner of a liquor store in Brooklyn who at a certain point in the story, reflecting sadly, says to himself "This is how things are: I give my heart and they kick

me in the teeth"⁴². It is not difficult to imagine that the elderly Goldberg, faced with the umpteenth injustice of life, must have felt exactly like him.

Of course, it is needless to say how much Gehry suffered due to his family situation, but his greatest bitterness will surely always be the fact that his father - by whom he had always been accused of being "a dreamer without art or part" and by whom on more than one occasion as a boy he had been beaten violently for trivial reasons⁴³ - could not envision him achieving the fame and success that undoubtedly made him one of the most authoritative protagonists of the contemporary international architectural scene. With a universally recognized reputation to be valued, he nonetheless expressed extreme disappointment with the nickname *archistar*, a term that Gehry, although not disdainful of fame, had always hated from the beginning, as he said it completely miscast his architecture, suggesting that it entailed nothing but flashy and showy forms⁴⁴.

In reality, Gehry had always pursued an idea - namely that of being able to conceive a new way of configuring space and creating original forms⁴⁵ - but above all, he says, he had tried to find a way that allowed him to express feelings through three-dimensional objects⁴⁶.

He had thus created a completely new architectural language, and in every new building, writes Goldberger, he used that language to say something in a slightly different way⁴⁷.

Moreover, even if Gehry recalls taking up the use of wire mesh in his projects because he believed that most people denied the mediocrity that surrounded them⁴⁸, we must recognise that with the realization of the Guggenheim in Bilbao, a swirling curved structure coated in titanium, not only did it make the architecture innovative, but also managed to make it appealing even to that general public that normally would have shown little interest in this kind of thing.

On the other hand, if Isaac Bashevis Singer, who although he had become an American citizen would never depart from his initial choice, living all his years in the United States would continue to use *Yiddish* to write his stories, even Gehry, for his part, although apparently it does not seem so, with the same perseverance would remain faithful over time to his initial idea of architecture.

It is true that his first houses with wire nets and unfinished materials appear very far from the titanium plates that cover the sinuous shape of the Guggenheim, or the scenographic stainless steel covering of the Walt Disney Concert Hall; but on closer inspection it appears not to be so.

Paul Goldberger, for example, rightly points out that when Gehry completes the headquarters of the Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris, inaugurated on October 20, 2014 in the presence of the then president of the republic François Holland, the desire to showcase the "bowels of the building" certainly refers to his first works; and from many points of view, the American critic affirms, he shows himself to be consistent with the basic idea that governed them.

On that occasion Gehry was granted full freedom with regard to the architectural configuration the building would take, the only constraint placed by the client being that

the project should include a large amount of traditional exhibition spaces, with rectangular rooms and white and straight walls.

Passionate about boats, Gehry had always thought that sails were capable of creating an architectural space⁴⁹ and perhaps now he had the opportunity to demonstrate it. Therefore, using a particularly elaborate engineering support, he conceives a sort of spectacular sailing ship, the achievement of which would, however, make it necessary to build a complex structural system made of concrete and steel, with huge reticular elements, beams, pillars and support trusses, grafted at an angle into the ground, and nicknamed the "tripod" by the engineers.

To put it in a schematic way, the building essentially consists of a series of box-shaped concrete elements, intended to house the exhibition galleries, and twelve enormous floating curved glass sails that act as roofs and cladding walls.

To make the galleries, 19,000 concrete panels were used, and although they were roughly regular spaced as required, more than half of the panels, to adapt to the imperceptible geometric variations of the rooms, had to be modelled with slightly different shapes.

The sails, on the other hand, are divided into a system consisting of 36,000 glass panels, each with different curvatures, then mounted on a secondary structure of iron and wood connected in turn to the same "tripods".

The result would be that of obtaining a juxtaposition of elegant surfaces and rough structures, thus reconciling a deliberate coexistence between the pure and refined object and the work that still seems to be under construction. A combination of this, which together with the elements of the galleries, defined as "icebergs" that in a certain way evoke the composition of boxes stacked in an apparently random manner as in many of his earliest projects, seems to link conceptually to his first houses and the passion for the unfinished.

Despite his prestige and established international reputation, even in this case however, as happened in almost all his projects, things went slowly and, due to a long bureaucratic process caused mostly by the objections raised by the inhabitants of the area, Gehry would have to wait almost twelve years to see his finished work.

According to Goldberger "... it is not an exaggeration to say that while he was designing, Frank was able to wrap the first Gehry and the middle Gehry into the late Gehry, managing to look at the past of his career and at the same time project it into the future"⁵⁰.

That of the Louis Vuitton Foundation, in fact, is a mature Gehry who, however, has not lost the taste of "playing" with his customers, as he liked to define the purposeful relationship that was created with the client in the design phase.

Just a few years earlier he had built an apartment tower in Lower Manhattan, and on March 19, 2011, Bruce Ratner, the project developer, decided to inaugurate the building by organizing a party for his architect's eighty-second birthday and for the occasion he had prepared a huge cake that represented a playful simulacrum of gehryan architecture.

The reception was held on the top floor of the building, a large loft that enjoyed a spectacular view of Manhattan, and Gehry, after Ratner's speech, the ritual toast, and the applause that followed, took the floor. He thanked Bruce Ratner, and without any polemic allusion reminded those present that the building in which they were located, due to a series of vicissitudes, not least the economic recession, had been reduced in height and therefore was lower and more squat compared to his original idea. However, he did not fail to praise Ratner who, despite economic uncertainty, had not given up the project; then, pointing his finger towards midtown Manhattan, said: "Here we are not far from where my father was born, and here it is difficult for me not to think of him". Then, with his voice broken with emotion, he added:

"If only he could be here to see what I built in the city where he grew up. My father never saw my buildings, and he thought I was just a dreamer. I think he would have been proud of me. If he could see this building. I would like to think that if he had seen this building he would have felt that I had done something good"⁵¹.

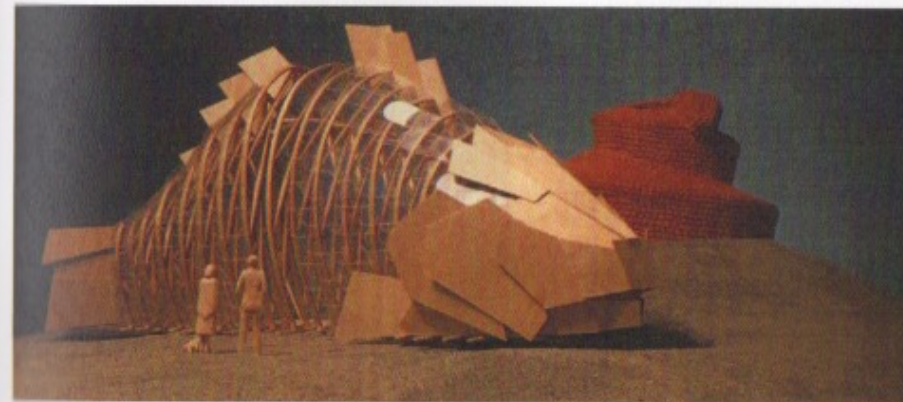
It must be said that Frank Gehry had often tried in vain to look for reasons to be proud of his father⁵², yet in spite of everything he never held any grudges against him, because in the end he realized that he was not bad but only a man tried by the adversities of life, just like certain characters of Malamud.

What is certain is that regardless of what their relations were, Gehry first visited his father's grave only thirty-two years after his death, on the occasion of the burial of his mother Thelma, going to the funeral at the cemetery together with his four children who only rarely met all together. While there, one of the boys, who had brought a small fish-shaped sculpture with him that day, placed it on his grandfather's tombstone. Fish was an important symbol for Gehry, not only because *Fish* was the nickname that Frank had as a child⁵³, but above all because the fish, present in the most varied forms, materials and dimensions in many of his projects and design objects, had now become an icon that represented the symbol of his success.

That gesture, relates Paul Goldberger, struck Frank deeply. "It was a significant gesture because it made it clear to Irving, who had always thought of himself as Goldberg, the full scope of being a Gehry, and gave him the post-mortem role of patriarch that he had never fully assumed in life"⁵⁴.

In conclusion, we would like to recall *The Assistant*, another splendid novel by Bernard Malamud, which describes a scene in which Frank Alpine, the protagonist of the story, "to fight nervousness, picked up a book he was reading. It was the Bible. Sometimes Frank thought that certain parts he could have written himself"⁵⁵.

Probably even Irvin Goldberg, retracing the episodes of his life with his mind, at least sometimes might have had the same thought.



Frank O.Gehry, The Prison Project



House of Gehry



Frank O. Gehry, Louis Vuitton Foundation, Paris



Guggenheim Bilbao

PARERGA and PARALIPOMENA

The purpose of this book is to provide a comprehensive overview of the architectural and design processes involved in the creation of the Louis Vuitton Foundation and the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. The book is divided into two main sections: the first section focuses on the Louis Vuitton Foundation, and the second section focuses on the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. Each section provides a detailed account of the architectural and design processes, from the initial conceptualization to the final construction. The book is written in a clear and concise style, making it accessible to a wide range of readers. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in contemporary architecture and design.

The Thirteen Letters of Josef Frank

When Luciano Semerani appropriately observes that the narration constitutes for Frank the practical model in which to dissipate creative paradoxes and the aporias connected with the temporal notion itself, and that through the narration he brings the experience of relativistic time inside the language of architecture¹, he clearly underlines the prominent role of the narration inside the entire Frankian work.

Nevertheless, although underlining the close connection between architecture and narration, Semerani maybe neglects that for Frank the language of architecture is not only a metaphor of the narration but could also become language in the strict sense; even to the point of substituting written text, as it happens for example in a singular correspondence exchange with a woman.

Considering that private letters represent an essentially disappeared genre, that had for centuries a crucial importance in European culture, the theme of correspondence, of course, is an important topic of literature

However, it has to be specified that the topic we refer to is not the hypothetical relationship between architecture and the literature genre of epistolary novel, neither is that type of correspondence having architecture as a topic, namely exchange of letters among architects. The letters we refer to are instead those in which architecture, or better, its graphic representation, substitutes words to concretely undertake -not only conceptually- the value of prose, of the written text. Architecture that can sometimes even become an idiomatic means of seduction, as it happens to a certain extent in the thirteen letters that Josef Frank sent to Dagmar Grill in 1947.

Indeed, thirteen letters could seem to be a negligible number compared with the three hundred sixty seven that Ungaretti, already eighty-four years old, wrote to Bruna Bianco, a brilliant twenty-six years old lady he met in Sao Paulo of Brazil in 1966 after an University lecture². From that encounter an intense correspondence, will begin in which, although being a private collection of letters, Ungaretti does not renounce to a varied and modulated literary style, in which, even if dissimulated in a variety of themes, the inner rules of his poetry and the vision supporting it, never succumb. In this multitude of letters the recurrent theme is happiness. A happiness that, according to the Ungarettian thinking, is bound to the secret of poetry itself, but that for Frank, in a certainly less touching way, it is maybe hidden in the secret of architecture. While Ungaretti entrusts his feelings to an impeccable literary prose, Frank, in the letters he sent to Dagmar Grill, in order to convey the same feelings, entrusts the tools that are proper to him, expressing itself, so to speak, in a poetic form that uses different idioms.

However, to better clarify what we are taking about, it is probably necessary a brief introduction, to remember who Josef Frank was and to understand the nature of the letters we refer to.

Josef Frank (1885-1967) certainly occupies a prominent place in the central European architectural scenery of the early twentieth century.

The furniture and objects of furniture that he produces in Vienna at the beginning of the 1920s, born on the idea of English furniture from which he takes inspiration to reinterpret the models and adapting them to new needs, perhaps throw a new light over the origins of the kind of furniture that we generally consider "Scandinavian".

His furniture, in fact, had already been presented at the *Exposition internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels* of Paris in 1925, but when in 1934 he exhibited them in Stockholm, where he had moved the previous year, they had an extraordinary success and besides being appreciated, the Austrian architect recalls, they were soon also imitated; thus completely revolutionizing the concept of Swedish furniture that before then was generally in style, ie shaped on historical models without major variations³.

His work is entirely devoted to living and, of course, in addition to having designed furniture, furnishings and beautiful fabrics, Frank designs and creates architectures.

He designed Siedlung but above all houses. Original items imbued with a strong Mediterranean character, where the Loosian Raumplan develops in paths where the spaces follow one another according to a helical sense that gradually winds to lead us to the rooms above and ends up in the terraces.

Among its many projects, there are thirteen houses dedicated to a woman who, however, can not be considered just as simple architectural works, but must be interpreted as a true gesture of love.

In 1957, in fact, after the death of his wife, Frank will definitely move to Stockholm with the wife's cousin, Dagmar Grill, to whom ten years earlier he had sent thirteen letters accompanied by as many projects. Those are thirteen houses that in some way follow a 1926 project for an ideal contextualized house in one of the islands of the archipelago located to the east of the Swedish capital, where Dagmar lived at that time.

The two had known each other since 1914, when the Grill had moved from Stockholm to Vienna to practice her profession of physiotherapist at the Strömberg-Palm Physical Education School, for which the Viennese architect had designed the interiors in 1910⁴. Later, around the twenties, Dagmar will leave this job to go to work in the furniture company Haus & Garten, founded by Frank himself along with Strnad and Wlach.

Probably it is during this period that their relationship is born or strengthened, in any case, between July 22nd and August 15th, 1947, Frank will send to the woman the thirteen aforementioned letters. Each missive contains a series of architectural sketches made up of plants and prospects of a hypothetical single-family house, accompanied by some brief commentary notes.

The different projects, each marked with a progressive number associated with the word house, will later be collected by the Austrian architect and the drawings, although

arranged in a different order than the initial numbering, will be placed on three sheets of transparent paper. Furthermore, in the following years he will also realize magnificent watercolour drawings⁴.

Given this, it cannot go unnoticed that Frank, when writing the letters to his beloved one, replaces the words with the language of architecture.

If the poet expresses his love in verses, Frank communicates his feelings through the architectural vocabulary. Architecture becomes a word. The drawing replaces the word, the sentence, the speech; but this should not be understood in a metaphorical sense, nor exchanged for cheap rhetoric. Frank, in fact, in one of his letters, as Christina Kruml points out, defines these projects with the Swedish term of *Krånglig* which means complicated, intricate, but could also be translated into seductive⁵, and that of Frank is indeed a work of seduction in which architecture becomes the logos in its etymological meaning.

The psychoanalyst Aldo Carotenuto asserts that in seduction the subject renounces to his subjectivity to become a phantomatic object, because in the seduction no one exists, as the other becomes something that has activated my world under the pressure of my needs. Moreover, Carotenuto points out, the seduction stems from the absence of clearly decipherable signs and so I am allowed to give my images to that reality, and although in seduction there is still an evident aspect that allows to explain in part the charm of the seducer, there is also an ever-present hidden aspect.

"The seducer is such because he lets himself be guessed, he does not speak or his words are cryptic and they need to be interpreted"⁶.

Now, although we know that sexual selection, as Darwin intuited, concerns our sense of beauty which activates certain areas of the brain, how can one think of seducing a woman, who is not even an architect but a physiotherapist, with some simple architectural drawings?

Naturally, it would be easy to find an answer by deeply exploring the endless Freudian symbology, from which we could certainly extrapolate the whole series of elements that somehow refer awkwardly to a latent sexual appeal: from the relevance attributed to the chimneys, always in evidence, up to the composition based entirely on the overlap; thus on the dualism between horizontal and vertical, male and female, actor and spectator.

However, although an interpretation of this kind could probably please an intelligent "provocateur" like Slavoj Žižek, we know well that it would be an interpretation in some ways also intriguing but to say the least superficial, since the seductive message, if it exists, should not be sought in these obvious signs but it is a hidden message, less evident.

On the other hand, the fact that the message is latent, naturally does not mean that it does not exist, on the contrary, in our opinion it is very strong; and it is so precisely to the extent that it refers to the concept of beauty. Let's be careful, however, because we are not talking about a generic concept, but thanks to neuroaesthetics⁷, perhaps we could discover that it is even biological beauty.

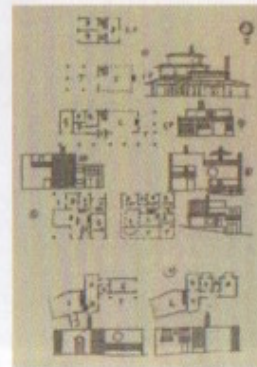
In fact, Semir Zeki, the founder of this discipline, to give a scientific answer to a question related to beauty, namely what are the neural mechanisms that allow humans to experience beauty, claims for example that mathematical beauty belongs to the category of biological beauty; pointing out to us that Einstein's theory of relativity was also widely accepted, thanks to the extreme beauty of his mathematical formulations⁸.

Not only. Vincenzo Barone, speaking of Einstein and of his real or presumed errors, observes that after the American astronomer Edwin Hubble discovered in 1929 that the cosmos was not static, the cosmological constant contained in the Einstein equation to demonstrate the theory of relativity was no longer needed, and the mathematical formula, "free of an unnecessary tinsel, could return to shine in all its beauty".

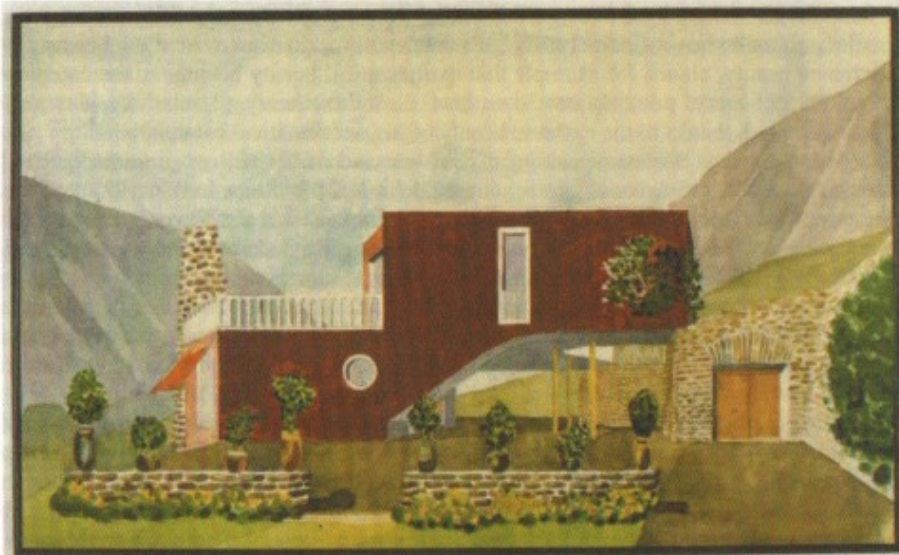
Moreover, he adds that in 1915, convincing Einstein of the correctness of the recently obtained gravitational field equations, was not only the fact that they explained a very small and known phenomenon (the anomaly of the orbit of Mercury), but its formal elegance⁹.

Moreover, Benedetto Croce had already explained that logical thinking can be not only true but also beautiful, therefore a theory or a book, even if sometimes wrong, are judged not only according to the logic but also according to aesthetics¹⁰.

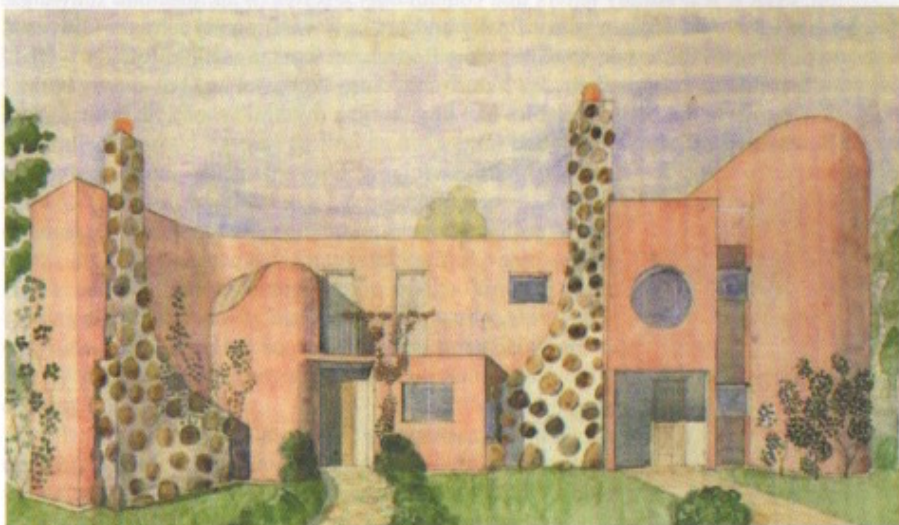
Thus, as demonstrated by these recent studies, the principle is valid for mathematical formulation, it is not bold to think that even architectural beauty can belong to the same category. Were it so, of course, it would clarify many things, since not only would it allow us to understand the reasons why, in Frank's case, we can even talk about seduction, even if it is simply letters that contain only a series of architectural drawings, but above all it would explain scientifically and not only emotionally why, as Giovanni Fraziano points out, for Frank, "a cloth, a candlestick, a carpet, a wall, a floor, as well as a door, a fireplace, a stool, a chair, are like Architecture itself, not just but simply human things, analogous to the body, variables like breathing, a rhythmic sequence, a beating of wings. Reasons that escape the logic of time ..."¹¹



Josef Frank, Houses 7, 9, 11, 8, 6, 5



Josef Frank, House 13



Josef Frank, House 4

The Essential Role of Architecture in the Relationship Between Cinema and Novel: The Classic Example of "Psycho" by Alfred Hitchcock.

A notorious close connection between cinema and architecture exists, as between cinema and literature, however we are convinced that architecture plays a central role in this context.

In other words the relationship between cinema and literature can hardly ignore the connecting role of architecture inside this triad, since the link between movies and novels cannot be disregarded.

We know that the "scenario" usually allows the stories to unfold, thus the relationship between "scenario" and action is just as close as the one between stage and theatre play, as written by Amitav Ghosh.

Ghosh also adds that we enter into the "scenario" a little at a time until it appears real to us and we become a part of it.

This is why the "sense of place" is notoriously one of the great magic aspects of novels¹.

Architecture, which is the ultimate "scenario", either depicted in the pages of a book, or shot in a movie sequence, represents an essential element of storytelling.

However, when a story is told through the movie technique, architecture shows its imperative role.

We only need to think of movies such as "Le Mèpris" (based on the novel by Alberto Moravia and entirely shot in the Villa Malaparte on Capri, by Jean Luc Godard, starring Michel Piccoli and Brigitte Bardot; or "Il processo" by Orson Welles, from Kafka's novel, shot mostly at the Gare d'Orsay which at the time was decommissioned; or of "Blade Runner" by Ridley Scott, inspired by Philip K. Dick's novel, where in a dystopian Los Angeles Sebastien, the designer of replicants, lives in Ennies House by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Architecture, as well as movies, obviously disregards being faithful to novels. When Francois Truffaut, in a paper written in 1958, covers the literary adaptation to cinema, he clearly states that between faithfulness to what is written and faithfulness to the spirit, no rule is possible and every case is particular. He adds that everything is allowed except for trivialisation, impoverishment and sweetening².

Luchino Visconti used to interpret very freely the novels from which his movies originated, so much so that during the shooting of "Lo straniero", in 1967, when he was obliged to strictly adhere to the literary text, he admitted that the movie – that makes use of Marcello Mastroianni's impeccable acting- was one of his less successful films³.

The movie is inspired by a work by Albert Camus and it is the result of a compromise with Camus' widow. While giving up her ownership rights she required absolute allegiance to the literary text. She even imposed the presence of two French scriptwriters she trusted.

According to David Lynch a book, or a script, are nothing but a skeleton to which one must add flesh and blood⁴. This is true if wanting to adhere to the novel as well as if wanting to interpret it more freely.

In this respect naturally architecture, as well as being the place for the setting, also inevitably plays a strong symbolic key role that concentrates the hidden elements and the psychological implications of the plot.

These topics are easily identified in Alfred Hitchcock's vast filmography which shows that allegiance to the novel is a false problem to him⁵, and that architecture is fundamental in order to create the atmosphere the director wishes to obtain to infuse further emotions to the story. Truffaut points out that Hitchcock in many of his movies uses the same principal of exposure, moving from far away to nearer. At first you see a city, then a building inside the town and then a room inside the building⁶.

Even "Psycho" starts the same way. In fact, before showing us the central place where the whole story will develop, the film starts with a long overview, then moving closer to the building and framing the window that will bring us inside the room where the first scene takes place.

While the images of the town flow in motion, a writing at the bottom of the screen appears by which we understand that the town is Phoenix, Arizona. We then see date and time on the screen: it is seventeen minutes before three in the afternoon, this apparently marginal detail is used by the director to suggest a possible clandestine relationship between Marion and Sam, even before they appear on the scene⁷.

No doubt Hitchcock through the editing, the shots and the course of actions, provides the movie with what lacks in the conventional narrative of the novel the movie is taken from.

The director manages to enhance the audience's emotional involvement also thanks to the architecture chosen as frame of the plot. He actually states: "I have chosen this house and this motel as I realised that the story would not have had the same effect in an ordinary bungalow; this kind of architecture was appropriate for the atmosphere"⁸.

Many like to think that the idea for the house in "Psycho" originates from a painting by Hopper, but even though Norman mother's house is very similar to the one in Edward Hopper's picture *House by the Railroad*, painted in 1925, Hitchcock clarifies that it is in fact an exact replica of an existing house. His intention was not to recreate the atmosphere of a classical horror film, but to go beyond the film fiction in order to give a sense of authenticity to its narration. The mysterious atmosphere is partly accidental because, as the great director points out, the Californian Gothic style of this house is found in many isolated houses of Northern California.

Even though the *House by the Railroad* belongs to a quite normal typology, it is wrapped in an atmosphere of such neglect and isolation that it causes a feeling of insecurity and even fear in the spectator. In the painting the building expresses a condition of underlying mystery, emphasised by the clean cut of the railroad that crosses

horizontally the whole surface at the bottom of the painting, and conceals a part of the volume of the house at the bedrock's height.

We are not, obviously, so much interested in the similarity between the two houses, as we know it is a very common typology, and it could be a fortuitous coincidence, but in the conceptual analogy between the composition of the elements in the painting and the architecture present in the movie.

What Hitchcock, talking about "Psycho", calls the composition of the vertical block and the horizontal block, namely the squareness between lines and figures we also found in Hopper.

As in the American artist's painting, the verticality of the house is opposed to the horizontality of the railroad, so that Norman mother's house is opposed to the horizontal block of the motel.

Maybe this "contrast" between geometries, even more pronounced in the second case by the antithesis between the motel's bear formal block look and the austere style of the home somehow adds to the slight sense of tension and raises a latent sense of concern.

Slavoj Zizek even blames the contrast between the two buildings for the mental distress of the lead character in the film. He writes: "... one can consider Norman as having a personality split between the two houses, the modern and horizontal motel and his mother's modern gothic house. He tirelessly moves between the two, never finding his own place. The unheimlich feeling of the end of the film signifies that Norman, who totally identifies with his mother, has finally found his heim, his home"⁹.

Zizek even uses the example of the point of intersection which signals the union between the preexisting building and the expansion, implemented by the architect in the famous Gehry House in Santa Monica, California¹⁰. He indicates the union between the preexisting building and the expansion made by the architect, he also underlines how Fredric Jameson identifies in the room of the intersection between the two spaces the place where the antagonism between the two subjects resolves itself. Which means the room itself is the place where the mediation between two opposites takes place.

This brings him to a peculiar conclusion. A hypothesis which is as weird as it is intriguing: the Slovenian philosopher concludes that if the Bates motel had been designed by Gehry, Norman would not have needed to kill his victims as "he would have been relieved of the unsustainable tension that forces him to run between the two places. He would have had a third place as a mediation between two extremes"¹¹.

Even without sharing Zizek's theory, one cannot deny that the two simple artefacts play a crucial role in the narrative structure of the story. So much so that the whole story can be synthesised by two single images: the house that stands over the motel of the homicides and the scene of the killing in the shower.

Truffaut suggests that there are no good stories, just good movies. The latter are all based on a deep idea which can always be summarised in a single word¹².

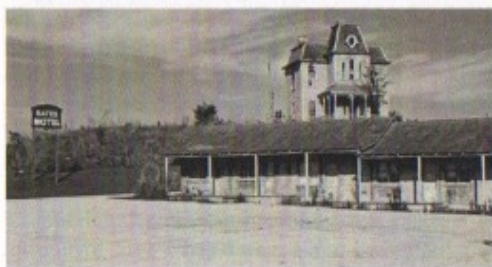
Even though the plot in "Psycho" cannot be summarised in one word, it certainly resolves itself around these two images, without the great French critic and film director's thought being altered.

Everyone knows that Truffaut adored Hitchcock and that he included him within the greatest film directors, and probably considered him the greatest.

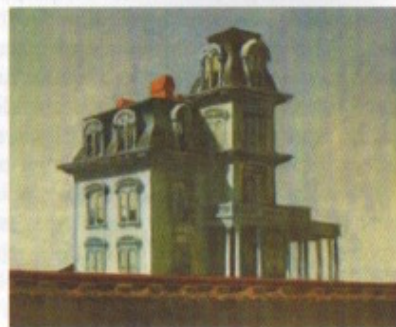
"Hitchcock, from the beginning of his career, understood that if one is able to read a paper with one's own eyes and one's own mind, one is also able to read a novel with one's own eyes and with a pounding heart. A film should be watched in the same way one reads novel"¹³.



F.L.Wright, Ennis House, Los Angeles, 1923-24



Bates Motel, Location of *Psycho*



Edward Hopper, House by the Railroad, 1925

NOTES

CHAP. 1

Poetry and language, architecture and tool

- 1 See note 11.
- 2 Franco Moretti, *Il romanzo di formazione*, Einaudi, Torino, 1999, p.19
- 3 Amitav Ghosh, *La grande cecità Il cambiamento climatico e l'impensabile*, Neri Pozza Editore, Vicenza 2017, p.34
- 4 Giovanni Corbellini, *Lo spazio dicibile architettura e narrativa*, LetteraVentidue, Siracusa, 2016, pp. da 29 a 35
- 5 Joseph Rykwert, *L'architettura e le altre arti*, Ed. Jaca Book, Milano, 1993, pag. 14
- 6 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, *La responsabilità verso la tradizione*, Casabella-continuità n.202, agosto-settembre 1954, pp.1,2,3
Rocco Scotellaro [Tricarico (MT)1923 – Portici (NA) 1953] poet, intellectual and southernist, he was a member of the City Liberation Committee, actively working for the renewal of politicaland democratic life in post-war Basilicata. The tomb, built in 1957 on a BBPR project, consists of a simple stone block wall that opens in the central part in a sort of gash created by staggered ashlar and arranged in overlapping rows. The hole in the wall, without closing, tightens upwards framing the valley where the Basento river flows. Finally, on the stones of the funerary monument, the last verses of *Sempre nuova è l'alba* are engraved, one of his poems from the collection *È fatto giorno*, published posthumously in 1954 by Carlo Levi, and which will win the Viareggio award in the year following.
- 7 Gottfried Semper, *Lo stile* (Bari: Laterza, 1992), pp. 195-196.
- 8 Adolf Loos, *Parole nel vuoto* (Milan: Adelphi, 1984), pp. 41-42.
- 9 'Carlo Levi has rightly explained the influence of the ideophoneme in the setting of other civilizations. The language of Lucania, in its current state, has also given a certain cadence to his *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli*, because that language is the measure of all the landscape, the men and the things of that region.' Rocco

Scotellaro, *L'uva puttanello. Contadini del Sud* (Bari: Laterza, 1972), p. 263. This and the other following translations from non-English texts are mine.

10 André Leroi-Gourhan, *Le geste et la parole* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1964).

11 Umberto Galimberti, *Il corpo. Antropologia, psicoanalisi, fenomenologia* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1983), p. 92.

12 'The old Summer Palace was in fact a complex of palaces begun in the early eighteen century and added to over 100 years. [...] Landscape gardens celebrated the diverse sceneries of the empire, among them rice paddies of the Yangtze Valley, noted for the peach flowers and bamboo groves and meandering brooks in their midst. In one, after a poem by the eight-century poet Li Bai, a waterfall was created falling into a pond of chiselled stones, making music as the force of the water varied.' Jung Chang, *Empress Dowager Cixi: The Concubine Who Launched Modern China* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2013), p. 31.

13 'Maragall calls the Sagrada Familia a "stone blossom", and says: "that portal is something wonderful. It is not architecture, but poetry of architecture. It does not look manmade. It looks like earth, the ropes that try to lose the passiveness.'" Juan José Lahuerta, *Antoni Gaudí 1852-1926* (Milan: Electa, 1992), p. 273.

14 The admiration that D'Ors [Eugeni D'Ors wrote in *La Veu de Catalunya*, organ of the Lliga Regionalista] had for Maragall, perhaps against his will, has much to do with the association between poet and temple, because it was Maragall the one who created the building that frightened him, that monument that, as only few others, waits, in its glory, to be used.' Lahuerta, p. 258, my translation. More about Maragall, in relation to the Sagrada Familia, in chapters V-VI of the same volume.

15 Juan José Lahuerta, 'Spazio e vuoto', in *Antoni Gaudí 1852-1926*, pp. 239-240.

16 Jorge Luis Borges, 'Parabola del palazzo', in *Antologia personale* (Milan: Longanesi, 1981), pp. 96-97.

17 'Perhaps an archetype not yet revealed to mankind, an eternal object (to use Whitehead's term), is gradually entering the world; its first manifestation was the palace; its second, the poem. Whoever compares them will see that they are essentially the same.' Jorge Luis Borges, 'Coleridge's Dream', *Selected Non-Fictions*, ed. by Eliot Weinberger (New York: Viking, 1999), vol. 3, p. 372.

18 Aldo Rossi, *Autobiografia Scientifica* (Parma: Pratiche, 1990), p. 57.

19 Michel Foucault, *Le parole e le cose*. (Milan: Rizzoli, 2010), p. 52.

CAP. 2

The Dream

1 'Namely I believe it is a mistake thinking literature might be made out of words. No, it is not made of words; I mean, it is also made by words, but mostly by images, dreams [...] and the past is also a dream.' Borges in conversation with Alberto Arbasino, in Jorge Luis Borges, *Antologia personale*, p. VI.

2 'I remember a famous case: Stevenson dreamt the central scene where Dr. Jekyll becomes Mr. Hyde; then he had to make up all the rest. But [...] the central scene was a present of the dream.' *Ibid.*, p. VII

3 'I think it always starts with the Dream, it starts with the Muse, it starts with the Holy Ghost, with the King, with God, for Jews with the Bible, and then these materials must be reworked. [...] It starts with a dream and imagination, which is the same thing. To dream: it does not matter if you are asleep or awake, no!' *Ibid.*

4 'There must always be two elements: the first is imagination, the dream, the image [...] and then the reason must be put to work. They need to cooperate, they are not foes. *Ibid.*, pp. VII-VIII. 'Dreams are real, like being awake; dreams are real and fantasy is real; my past is real; my past and memory, the story is real, and the story is a dream for us [...] or, as Schopenhauer well put it, *Die Welt als Will und Vorstellung*, The World as Will and Representation: our will and the dream are one and the same.' *Ibid.*, p. VIII.

5 'In 1921, with the construction of the building for the newly born Technical School of Ljubljana and the starting of its architecture class, Plečnik seems willing to take on an active role inside Slovenian culture. The architect gets set to transform Ljubljana into a capital city: the search for a suitable language of shapes for the current artistic-cultural reality is pursued neglecting the folkloric repertoire, and drawing from the archaic and classic wells of the Mediterranean architectural patrimony and from the inventions of a few select Italian Renaissance masters. With the architecture of the Slovenian capital, Plečnik intends to shape thoughts that sink their roots in the times of his trips to Italy, when the young architect had matured the certainty that Slavs "will still must go searching in Rome" for their own "original force."' Sergio Polano, *Lubiana. L'opera di Jože Plečnik* (Milan: Stella Polare, 1982), p. 9.

- 6 'The process of working on the Castle – symbol of the city – engages the architect for more than a decade, from the early 1920s, in an ideal comparison with his experience in Ljubljana. [...] He wants to infuse the Castle in Prague with the value of the place people identify with, transforming it from a regal manor into an ideal bastion of the new republic, born after the eclipse of the Austro-Hungarian constellation.' *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.
- 7 This occurs for instance in the two obelisks realized in 1929 and 1938, the former marking the beginning of an organized street, that ends with propylaea, the latter, 'an enormous pillar that takes inspiration from the Tuscan order of Vignola and that replaces an old monument placed in St. Jacob Square. [...] A similar role is attributed to the Pyramid of Zois, of 1927; he used it to mark the breaking point of the street axis, and at the same time to visually interrupt the inclination of the terrain towards the Ljubljana.' Damjan Prelovšek, 'Il mestiere e la vita di un uomo', in *Jože Plečnik Architetto 1872-1957* (Rocca Borromeo: Centro culturale di arte contemporanea internazionale, 1988), pp. 73-74.
- 8 Polano, *Op. cit.*, p. 10.
- 9 Manfredo Tafuri, 'L'architettura del Romanticismo nordico e il "Modernismo" catalano', in *Architettura Contemporanea*, ed. by Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co (Milan: Electa, 1976), vol. 1, p. 77.
- 10 Lahuerta, *Op. cit.*, p. 138.
- 11 Kenneth Frampton, *Storia dell'architettura moderna* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1982), p. 68.
- 12 Luciano Semerani, 'Continuità e discontinuità', *Iuav*, 65 (April 2009), *Elogio dell'architettura. Omaggio a Ernesto N. Rogers*, p. 4.
- 13 Tafuri, *Op. cit.*, p. 77.
- 14 Lahuerta, *Op. cit.*, p. 43.
- 15 Polano, *Op. cit.*, p. 10.
- 16 'Plečnik's most important work might be the Cemetery of Ljubljana, the Yugoslav city where the architect was born and where he was active between the two World Wars. The small cemetery, that opens with a colonnade, inhabited only by light, and made of small constructions in human scale, tied to one another by a relation

of continuity, like the words of a tale.' Paolo Portoghesi, 'L'architetto degli anni Ottanta', in *Jože Plečnik Architetto 1872-1957*, p. 4.

- 17 Plečnik 'does not hesitate to add to his architecture decorative elements that allow for the creation of a language with many levels of reading.' François Burkhardt, 'Moderno, postmoderno: una questione di etica?', in *Jože Plečnik Architetto 1872-1957*, p. 107. 'This will be the side where we will offer a second reading key for Plečnik's work: the side of the culture of the city conceived as a "big shape" that places itself in history through a sure and reverent knowledge of "small architectural shapes", allowing the continuous counterpoint orchestration of the city.' Alain Arvois and Cristina Conrad von Eybesfeld, in *Jože Plečnik Architetto 1872-1957*, pp. 29-30.

CAP. 3

The fabulous world of John Hejduk

- 1 'The universe of Hejduk's thought is always a unitary, undivided "reality": a trinitarian form made of poetry, painting, project. They are interconnected, undistinguishable worlds arranged according to a specific hierarchy like the angelic orders in order to bridge gaps otherwise impossible to bridge. Those contained between universal and peculiar, between contemplation and compassion.' Renato Rizzi, *John Hejduk Incarnatio* (Venice: Marsilio, 2010), p. 20.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 3 'With the arrival of Colin Rowe at Austin, Texas, a radical change in the way architectural education and research are conceived occurs. By stressing a re-reading of the Modern Movement and especially the issues raised by Cubist painting, Colin Rowe proposes a shift in the architectural process: the *idea* takes the central stage in making architecture. The theme of the *idea* is replete of philosophical contents, from Plato onwards, and Panofsky's observations ought to be mentioned too. But what is the *idea* for Colin Rowe? It is that that constitutes the "autonomous" content of every architectural object.' Francesco Semerani, *John Hejduk. Dalla forma alla figura all'archetipo*, PhD thesis (Trieste: Università degli Studi di Trieste, Dottorato di Ricerca in Progettazione architettonica e urbana XIX Ciclo, 2008), p. 5.

- 4 Giuseppina Scavuzzo, 'John Hejduk: Or the Passion to Learn', in *John Hejduk*, ed. by L. Amistadi and I. Clemente (Florence: Aión, 2015).
- 5 *10 immagini per Venezia*, ed. by F. Dal Co (Rome: Officina, 1980), pp. 66-76.
- 6 It is in fact', Francesco Dal Co writes, 'the nostalgia of inhabiting a harmonious place, therefore, where life can openly be fulfilled, in the designed continuity of interior and exterior, where the most profound intimacy does not exclude a Scheerbartian luminosity, where comfort is not a synonym for a mere process of objectification. Utopia, ultimately, of a technically conceived transparency, where the harmony of inhabiting materializes by showing itself.' Francesco Dal Co, *Abitare nel Moderno* (Bari: Laterza, 1982), p. 4.
- 7 'Since 1974, Venice has been a precursor for the essence of my work. It is the forum of my inner contrasts. Thoughts refer to Europe and America; abstraction and historicism; individual and collective; freedom and totalitarianism; the colours white, black and grey; silence and speech; clear and ambiguous; narrative and poetry; observer and observed.' *10 immagini per Venezia*, p. 67.
- 8 'The Molino Stucky Building's exteriors are painted black. The Molino Stucky Building's interiors are painted white. The long extended walls of the Cemetery for the Ashes of Thought are black on one side and white on the other side. The top and end surfaces of the long extended walls are grey. Within the walls are one-foot-square holes at eye level. Within each one-foot-square hole is placed a transparent cube containing ashes. Under each hole upon the wall there is a small bronze plaque indicating the title, and only the title, such as *Remembrance of Things Past*, *The Counterfeiters*, *The Inferno*, *Paradise Lost*, *Moby Dick*, etc. Upon the interior of the walls of the Molino Stucky Building are small plaques with the names of the authors of the work: Proust, Gide, Dante, Milton, Melville, etc. In the lagoon on a man-made island is a small house for the sole habitation of one individual for a limited period of time. Only one individual for a set period of time may inhabit the house, no others may be permitted to stay on the island during its occupation. The lone individual looks across the lagoon to the Cemetery for the Ashes of Thought.' John Hejduk, *Mask of Medusa: Works 1947-1983*, ed. by Kim Shkapich (New York: Rizzoli International, 1985), p. 80.
- 9 'The central theme is the consistency of space, not that described by the literal text, but the literary space, rarefied as in Gide or dense as in Proust. It deals with, then, a consistency of thought.' Scavuzzo, *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

Rossi and Borges: when architecture becomes the protagonist of the story

- 1 A. Rossi, *Autobiografia scientifica*, *Op. cit.* p. 98
- 2 Adolf Loos, *Parole nel vuoto*, *Op. cit.* p. 225
- 3 Antonio Monestiroli, *Il mondo di Aldo Rossi*, Ed. LetteraVentidue, Siracusa, 2015, p. 27 e p. 34
- 4 "As for the vision that Tolstoy had of what he was preparing to do, it was he himself who said that War and Peace 'is not a novel, still less a poem, let alone a historical chronicle', its intent was to supplant and incorporate previous forms, an ambition that can also be found in Melville's *Moby Dick*." Amitav Ghosh, *La grande cecità Il cambiamento climatico e l'impensabile*, Neri Pozza, Vicenza 2017, p.87
- 5 Manfredo Tafuri, *Storia dell'architettura italiana 1944-1985*, Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi, 1997, p. 170
Manfredo Tafuri, *Il 'caso' Aldo Rossi*, in *Storia dell'arte italiana Il Novecento*, Giulio Einaudi Editore, Torino 1982, p. 544
- 6 Manfredo Tafuri, *Il 'caso' Aldo Rossi*, in *Storia dell'arte italiana Il Novecento*, Giulio Einaudi Editore, Torino 1982, p. 544
Manfredo Tafuri, *Storia dell'architettura italiana 1944-1985*, Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi, 1997, p. 169
- 7 J. L. Borgs, *La morte e la bussola* in *Antologia personale*, *Op. Cit.* p. 12
In addition, Cristina Grau, with regards to architecture that becomes the protagonist: "... But it is in the stories in which the labyrinth is the intermediary between the world and the viewer, between Borges and the reader, that the spatial images become more complex, more architectural. The understanding of this architecture used as a frame in the stories, which in many cases takes on the role of protagonist, helps the understanding of the text, attributing new meanings to it." Cristina Grau, *Borges e l'architettura*, *Op. cit.* p. 41
- 8 "In Fervour de Buenos Aires the poet's position is external; he is an impartial narrator not of facts - since these poems are not narrative - but of objects. The city is perceived as through a dream or a memory. There are squares, streets, patios, pink or blue walls, the sun, light and night; there is, in summary, a city of other

times totally uninhabited. Its inhabitants are absent or dead. Borges, with the intention of recovering the Buenos Aires of the beginning of the century, creates a ghost town, unreal, like a museum, without the presence of man." Ibidem p. 16

- 9 Gianfranco Guaragna, Aldo Rossi Ora questo è perduto Ed. il prato, Padova 2017, p. 8
- 10 "I've always said that places are stronger than people, the fixed scene is stronger than the story. This is the theoretical basis not of my architecture, but architecture; essentially a chance to live." Aldo Rossi, *Autobiografia Scientifica*, Op. cit., p. 63
- 11 Rossellini is not interested in why but how. Traveling in Italy for example, by inserting the two characters out of their context, causes why to become less important than how and when. The soundtrack and the background voices are sometimes more important than what the characters are named.
- 12 "Here there will be the image of any canton of Buenos Aires. They won't tell me which. It could be the one between Charcas and Maipiù, where my house is;... It could be the garden that was your paradise. It could be that of a pastry shop in Once... It could be from the Almagro Sur library,... It could be any of those that make up the scattered chessboard. It could be almost all corners and is therefore the archetype never seen." Cristina Grau, Op. cit., p. 39
- 13 *Autobiografia scientifica*, Op. Cit. pp. 26-27
- 14 Ibidem P. 29
- 15 Cristina Grau, Op. cit., pp. 57 e 58

CHAP. 5

Gehry and Singer: the use of what is despised

- 1 Paul Goldberger, *Building Art, Vita e opere di Frank Gehry*, Safarà Editore, Pordenone, 2018, p. 91
- 2 "... Anita and her mother suggested Geary, or some variant of it, and then Frank had the idea of writing it G-E-H-R-Y. His motivation for this spelling was something that only an architect or graphic designer could conceive. He wanted a surname whose letters had a profile similar to Goldberg, which has ascending letters in the centre and, if written in lower case, both begin and end with a

descending letter. In Gehry the 'h' replaces the 'l', the 'd' and the 'b' raise the profile in the middle of the name, while at the end the last letter 'y' lowers the profile, like the 'g' at the end of Goldberg. In making the change of surname become a design exercise, Frank made the whole matter somewhat more acceptable." Ibidem. P. 93

- 3 The binoculars had already been used by Oldenburg and Van Bruggen for a library-theatre project together with a piano-shaped office building, during a design seminar organized by Germano Celant for his students at the Milan Polytechnic in May 1984, for which the two had been invited along with Gehry, and whose theme was a new neighbourhood for Venice.
As for the Chiat Day office portal, Gehry claims to have almost jokingly proposed binoculars as a solution, placing the object he had in the studio in front of the model under construction in the project, simply so as to respond to his client's insistence and friend Jay Chiat, who during a meeting urged him to find a solution for the building portal. Faced with the latter's enthusiasm for the idea of binoculars, Gehry recalls being a bit perplexed, also because he knew that the Oldenburg projects were conceived as *site-specific* and therefore thought that he would hardly have allowed it to be realized in a another place and with another function, but when it was finally proposed, he willingly accepted. Ibidem, pp. 258 e 262
- 4 Ibidem p. 163
- 5 Ibidem pp. 148-149
- 6 Ibidem p. 26
- 7 Ibidem p. 180
- 8 Ibidem p. 26
- 9 Ibidem p. 242
- 10 Ibidem p. 267
- 11 Manfredo Tafuri, *Storia dell'architettura italiana 1944-1985*, Torino, Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi, 1997, pag. 142

- 12 In reality Luciano Semerani uses this expression when talking about Josef Frank in the introductory essay *La casa isolata Dalla tautologia alla banalità*, a cura di Giovanni Fraziano, Cluva Editrice, Venezia, 1989, p.9
- 13 Isaac B. Singer, *Ombre sull'Hudson*, Longanesi, Milano, 2000 p.487
- 14 Paul Goldberger, *Building Art, Vita e opere di Frank Gehry*, Op. cit. p.371
- 15 National Civic Art Society, *Reporter on Frank Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial*, febbraio 2012, in Goldberger, Op. cit. p. 425
To tell the truth it must also be said that Hillary Clinton in 2014 instead mentions architecture by Gehry as a metaphor on international relations, stating that the big institutions, alliances and treaties, like the Greek Parthenon, have lines and rules clear and solid pillars, but time wears out even the most grandiose buildings and "our new world imposed a new architecture, more inspired by the deconstructivist style of Frank Gehry than the formal one of Greek classicism".
Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Scelte difficili*, Sperling & Kupfer, Milano, 2014, in Goldberger, Op. cit. pp.452-453
- 16 Henry Miller, Isaac B. Singer, back cover of *I due bugiardi*, Longanesi, Milan, 1965
- 17 The story is set in 1648. The lament for the massacres perpetrated by the Cossacks of Bohdan Chemel'nitskij against the Jews had not yet subsided, when the fame of a mysterious Jew originating in Smyrna named Shabbatai Tzevi spreads and declares himself capable of achieving the long-awaited miracle. The most dangerous teaching of this obscure character, however, is that transgressions can hasten redemption, and that precepts must be fulfilled through denying and violating them. Everything that was forbidden to the pious Jew becomes lawful in a spiral of self-destruction.
Isaac Bashevis Singer, *Satan in Goraj*, Adelphi, Milan, 2018
- 18 Paul Goldberger, Op. cit., p. 69
- 19 "... Of course, there are American Jewish writers who come from different backgrounds and who, at different levels, could share in their narrative a common fund of Jewish life ..."
Bernard Malamud, *Per me non esiste altro La letteratura come dono, lezioni di scrittura*, a cura di Francesco Longo, Minimum fax, Roma, 2015, p. 107
- 20 In fact, Malamud affirmed that his link with Jewish literature was secondary to the link with American literature, which was instead to be considered primary.
Ibidem, p. 106
- 21 Paul Goldberger, Op. cit. p. 238
- 22 Ibidem p. 203
- 23 Giulio Busi, *Il sole* 24 ore, 29/07/2018
- 24 Paul Goldberger, Op. cit. p. 28
- 25 More precisely, for *cheapskate architecture* means that type of architecture that provides simple solutions using common and cheap materials, applied in a context in which they are perceived differently.
- 26 Paul Goldberger, Op. cit., p. 64
- 27 Rich Cohen, *Ebrei di mafia La malavita a New York: anni 1920-30*, Baldini&Castoldi, Milano, 2000
- 28 Emmanuel Carrère, *Il Regno*, Adelphi, Milano, 2016, p.392
- 29 Ibidem p. 330
- 30 Ibidem p. 108
- 31 Ibidem p. 330
- 32 Carlo Chatrian, writes precisely that {1The Kingdom, by Emmanuel Carrère, "... is a book about a writer. Or rather, a reporter, a writer of true stories who through his own efforts finds a particularly extensive and inviting one. It is a book about a writer who firmly believes in what he writes, who despite knowing that he cannot meet his character starts out on his search. A little like a film maker might do as regards the surveys and inspections for a film yet to be made, knowing that the presence of a man always leaves traces and that these can be more revealing than the direct encounter. Read in this perspective, Luke the Evangelist becomes more a prism than an alter ego through which to represent the art of the story, according to Emmanuel Carrère".
Carlo Chatrian, *Il regno del racconto*, in *Emmanuel Carrère Tra cinema e letteratura*, Ed. Bietti, Milano, 2015, p. 18

- 33 Francesco Longo, in *Bernard Malamud, Per me non esiste altro. La letteratura come dono, lezioni di scrittura*, Ed. minimum fax, Roma, 2015, p. 9
- 34 Paul Goldberger, *Building Art, Vita e opere di Frank Gehry*, Op. cit., p. 37
- 35 Ibidem, p. 43
- 36 Ibidem p. 431
- 37 Ibidem p. 50
- 38 Ibidem p. 43
- 39 Ibidem p. 35
- 40 Bernard Malamud, *Il nero è il mio colore preferito*, in *Tutti i racconti 1963-1984*, Einaudi, Torino, 1997, p. 52
- 41 Paul Goldberger, Op. cit., p. 63
- 42 Bernard Malamud, *Il nero è il mio colore preferito*, p. 56
- 43 Paul Goldberger, Op. cit., p.55
- 44 Ibidem p. 27
- 45 Ibidem p. 457
- 46 Ibidem p. 456
- 47 Ibidem p. 27
- 48 Ibidem p. 455
- 49 Ibidem p. 169
- 50 Ibidem p. 454
- 51 Ibidem p. 34
- 52 Ibidem p. 25

- 53 "... Frank whose religious name was Ephraim, and Fish the derisory nickname he had as a child." Antonino Saggio, *Frank Gehry Architetture residuali*, Universali di Architettura, Torino 1996, p. 7
- 54 Paul Goldberger, Op. cit. p. 289
- 55 Bernard Malamud, *Il commesso*, Einaudi, Torino, 1962, pp. 270 - 271

CHAP. 6

The thirteen letters of Josef Frank

- 1 Luciano Semerani, *Dalla tautologia alla banalità*, in *La casa isolata Dalla tautologia alla banalità*, Venezia, Cluva Editrice, 1989, p. 18
- 2 Silvio Ramat, *Giuseppe Ungaretti Lettere a Bruna*, Mondadori, Milano, 2017
- 3 Viktor Matejka, *Dodici domande a Josef Frank*, in *Josef Frank 1885-1967 Vita activa*, Lint editoriale srl, Trieste, 2011 pp.158, 159
- 4 Christina Kruml, *Tredici case per Dogmar Grill*, in *Percorsi accidentali Scritti e progetti di Josef Frank*, Lint editoriale srl, Trieste, 2011 pp.128 a 161
- 5 Ibidem p.128
- 6 Aldo Carotenuto, *Eros e pathos Margini dell'amore e della sofferenza*, Ed. Saggi Bompiani, Milano, 1993, pp. 49-55
- 7 "Neuroaesthetics help in the knowledge of human brain in accordance with a unique perspective, one of body and of thought embodied by the experience of art and, generally, of beauty. This discipline can also help us understand why art has become so important for human species and how it can be interpreted, in an evolutionary key, as an experience capable of transmitting, in fiction, emotions that are useful for survival..." Anna Livigni, *Caravaggio fa scattare l'empatia*, Il sole 24 ore, domenica 28/10/2018
- 8 Even though for many it was difficult to understand Albert Einstein's theory of relativity (published 1915/1916), at first it was widely accepted thanks to the extreme beauty of its mathematical formulations. Paul Dirac, English physicist, wrote in 1933: "What makes the theory of relativity so acceptable by physicists, even though it works against the principle of simplicity, is its great mathematical

- beauty". Semir Zeki, *Sesso bellezza ed equazioni*, Trad. di Elisabetta Sirgiovanni, in *Il Sole 24 Ore* 23/4/2017
- 9 Vincenzo Barone, *Errori veri e presunti di Einstein*, *Il Sole 24 Ore*, 30/7/2017, p.24
- 10 Even logical thought, as well as science, as it expresses itself, becomes feeling and fantasy. Which is the reason why books about philosophy, history or science can be not only truthful but also beautiful. They can be judged not only according to logic but also according to aesthetics. Sometimes they say a book is theoretically or critically or historically wrong, but it remains – because of the affection of the soul it expresses – in its capacity of work of art. Benedetto Croce, *Breviario di Estetica, Aesthetica in nuce*, Adelphi, Milano, 1994, p.224
- 11 Giovanni Fraziano, *Joseph Frank 1885-1967 Vita active*, Lint editoriale srl, Trieste, 2011 pp.10,11

CHAP. 7

The Essential Role of Architecture in the Relationship Between Cinema and Novel: The Classic Example of "Psycho" by Alfred Hitchcock

- 1 Amitav Ghosh, *La grande cecità. Il cambiamento climatico e l'impensabile*, Neri Pozza Editore, Vicenza 2017, pp. 67,68
- 2 "Anything goes except low blows. Infidelity to the letter or to the spirit is only tolerable if the director is only interested in one of them and if he managed to do a) the same thing, b) the same thing, in a better way, c) something else, better done. Trivialisation, impoverishment and "sweetening" of the text are unacceptable." Francois Truffaut, *L'adattamento letterario al cinema*, from *La Revue des Lettres modernes, summer 1958*, in *Il piacere degli occhi*, by Jean Narboni and Serge Toubiana. Ed. Minimum Fax, Rome, 2010, p.279
- 3 Nearly all Visconti's movies are inspired by novels, but the director never adhered to the literary text.
- 4 "... A script is, so to say, a skeleton. One must provide it with flesh and blood. The director is an interpreter. He translates the images into the script. This applies to all ideas that originate from a script or from a book. The idea does not belong

to you, you received it just like the images, the sounds and the atmosphere that radiate from the script. As well as the other variable issues such as the shooting locations, the choice of the actors and so on..."

David Lynch, *Perdersi è meraviglioso*, Ed. Minimum Fax, Rome, 2012, pp.331-332

- 5 "My greatest satisfaction is when a film has an effect on the audience, this is what I most cared about. In "Psycho" I am not extremely interested in the subject or in the characters, what really matters to me is the editing, the photography, the music and all the technical aspects that may make the audience shout. Using cinematic arts to create a mass emotion is a great satisfaction. We were able to do it in "Psycho". It is not a message that interested the public. It wasn't a great interpretation that shocked the audience, it wasn't a great play that gripped the public. What moved the audience was the pure film." F. Truffaut, *Il cinema second Hitchcock*, Ed. Il Saggiatore, Milano 2014, p.233
- 6 Ibidem, p.224
- 7 Ibidem, p.225
- 8 Ibidem p.227
- 9 Slavoj Zizek, *Hitchcock: E' possibile girare il remake di un film?*, Ed Mimesis, Milano-Udine, pp.45,46
- 10 Casa Gehry, Santa Monica, California, 1977-78, 1991-94
 "In 1977 Frank and Berta Gehry bought a pink two storied bungalow with a mansard roof. It had been built around 1920 and was located on a corner block. The building was completely renovated, with a relatively low expense. Gehry chooses materials he has used before - corrugated metal, multilayer, wire mesh- in order to explore its possibilities and to elaborate on the use of rough wooden frames. As for the models, he draws from the "sketches in wood" of the Wagner, Familian and Gunther houses, trying to install them with an expressive vitality equal to that of the study drawings. Once again playing with perspective and movement, and thanks to numerous axonometric drawings, he assembles a collage of customary materials equipped with new connotations. Gehry wanted to encase the building inside a casing through which one could still see the old house; so that new and old could converse and enrich each other..." F. Dal Co, K.W. Forster, H.S. Arnold, *Frank O. Gehry Tutte le opera*, Electa, Milan, 1998, p.151

- 11 Slavoj Zizek, Op. cit. p.47
- 12 "There are no good stories, just good movies. The latter are all based on a deep idea which can always be summarised in a single word. Lola Montès is a movie about overexertion, Eliana e gli uomini is about ambition and flesh, Un re a New York about delation, L'infemale Quinlan about nobility, Ordet about grace, Hiroshima mon amour about original sin. Francois Truffaut, *Il regista, colui che non ha diritto di lamentarsi*, "Cinema, universe de l'absence?", Collectif, 1960, in *Il piacere degli occhi*, Op. cit., p.21
- 13 Truffaut, ibidem, p. 97

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INDEX

CHAP. 1	Poetry and Language, Architecture and Tool	p. 1
CHAP. 2	The Dream	p. 5
CHAP. 3	The Fabulous World of John Hejduk	p. 8
CHAP. 4	Rossi and Borges: When Architecture Becomes the Protagonist of the Story	p. 11
CHAP. 5	Gehry and Singer: the use of what is despised	p. 15

PARERGA and PARALIPOMENA

CHAP. 6	The thirteen letters of Josef Frank	p. 30
CHAP. 7	The Essential Role of Architecture in the Relationship Between Cinema and Novel: The Classic Example of "Psycho" by Alfred Hitchcock	p. 35
	Notes	p. 39
	Bibliography	p. 55

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