



HOF LAB

IODICE ARCHITETTI

DANILO LISI

SANDRO RAFFONE

MASSIMILIANO RENDINA

SCAU STUDIO

TUZZOLINO+MARGAGLIOTTA

[7] ITALIAN ARCHITECTS IN AMMAN

edited by

Ali Abu Ghanimeh and Mario Pisani



Il Formichiere

A meeting with Italian architecture in Amman.

Since some years, with friends and colleagues Pisani, Raffone, Tuzzolino, Vecchio, Zazzara and Micara, we try to increase and develop a true and sincere dialogue between Italian and Jordanian architects, by meetings, guided tours, workshops and exhibitions.

This exhibition – organized at the AL HUSSEIN CULTURAL CENTER, it's a great growth opportunity for the dialogue that - we hope - will also involve other Arab cities and, at the same time, it's the occasion to introduce the logo of FAM /MAF (Mediterranean Architects Forum) representing architects from Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine Egypt and Italy.

There are many years that Amman tries to reach an important role as a Capital of Culture in Arab World and to become "a cultural bridge" for the architectural ideas between Mediterranean countries and Italy.

In this exhibition, every architect (or architects studios) shows four realized projects ranging from private houses to public and sacred buildings: a different, interesting point of view of Italian architecture made in recent years, far from buildings realized by the famed architects Piano, Portoghesi, Gregotti, Rossi etc. also known by the Jordanians.

This exhibition, where Italian architects will be present, is an important occasion for our Jordanian young architects and students. Our purpose is to create a huge opportunity of real interest in discussing, dialogue and enrichment of the Jordanian and Italian architectural worlds, making the two cultures increasingly closer to each other for history, climate and similar environments, united in the Mediterranean its wonderful beauty.

In this way, they will feel even closer.

We're all waiting for September 24th - the day of exhibition opening, under the patronage of the Minister of Public Education prof. eng. Omar Razaa - ; Jordanian architects and students are looking forward with enthusiasm and joy to meet the seven Italian architects with sympathy and happiness, wishing the exhibition a huge success as has already happened for past meetings between Italian and Jordanian architects.

The fascination of the architecture of seven Italian designers

Beauty is the very perceptibility of the cosmos, it is its having tactile qualities, tonalities, flavors, its attractive being

James Hilmann

When my dear friend Alì Abu Ghanimeh offered me to organize an exhibition of Italian designers, I accepted the invitation with sincere interest. It was about the state of the art in our country, that after a long, not just economic, crisis, due to the rumors that began with the collapse of the United States and ended up in cascade around the world.

Today, finally, with the slowness that young people may seem to be experiencing, we begin somehow to get out. This is perceived by the constant, linear recovery in our field. We can not claim to be completely out of the difficulties that have long since overtaken the country, but there are, and are evident the signs of change highlighted by this initiative as well.

What did we want to propose to Amman, the capital of Jordan that with great interest opened the halls of the prestigious cultural center to Italian architecture?

Not the work of the usual stars such as Piano or Fuksas have been known all over the world for the elaborate works they have made. Not even the generation of masters who formed the young generations from Rossi to Gregotti, from Portoghesi to Valle, from Anselmi to Purini, from Cellini to Pagliara. We propose, however, that without emphasis, but we can consciously define the new, unseen face of Italian architecture.

We have tried to identify the characteristics of a group that has many similarities with many other designers present in our territory whose work deserves to be better known.

For many of them, like Belardi of HofLAB, Lisi, Rendina, Raffone and Tuzzolino, there is the fact that they are among the university research and the world of the profession aware of the energy charge needed to spread the practice of good architecture, intended stimulus from young students. The contiguity with the university world is a feature that goes through the work of the Iodice and Scau studios. Holders are promptly invited to hold seminars and lectures at academic locations. More generally, in all the invited studies, the important practice of professional apprenticeship completes the training of the young designer and contributes to creating that fertile exchange between different points of view and real analysis.

A second element that unites the "magnificent seven" is to look out of the national horizon. In their works, the culture of the world is expressed by the most stimulating protagonists, who are often not the stars. They also participate and often win international competitions, as has been the case for Iodice architects, Raffone and Tuzzolino.

What we can call cultural nomadism has always characterized the work of Italian designers. Just think of the architecture of St. Petersburg designed by Rastrelli, Rossi and Quarenghi. Today, this practice of life is backed by the presence of young people in Italian universities and active in major international professional studies, thanks to the success of the Erasmus ex-

perience. Numerous Italian teachers teach in famous foreign universities and most of the many works carried out testify the value of our architecture. I quote for all the Palazzo Italia at the Shanghai Expo.

Obviously, the seven of our show have peculiar features that are worth emphasizing. In the Hof studio, attention is drawn to the legacy of the past, also reconsidered and expressed in the pursuit of the postmodern style and, more generally, the observation of classical language combined with the minimalism that in their works is conjugated outside of that excess of rigor that does not belong to Italian culture.

For Iodice architects, the search for beauty combines with the attention to the place where the work arises and lies, the refinement of the details, the discovery of how light can become an essential element of the practice of building. Their work shows the full awareness that "globalization pollutes recognizability and identity" to say it with Carlo Truppi in his: Defending the landscape for a policy of beauty.

For Danilo Lisi sacred space represents the essence of its building on earth and under the sky conjugated with different nuances that do not exist to mix the materials to achieve astonishing effects and able to convey emotions.

Sandro Raffone after having successfully experimented with minimalist and classic backgrounds almost in response to the abundance of materials and colors in the great architecture of the Naples School seems to come back with a sure sign to that iron architecture that marked the "high" by Nicola Pagliara.

In the project "The House of Abraham" the sacred space destined for the three monotheistic religions is to evoke the note of Albert Camus when he states that: "Whenever a doctrine has met the Mediterranean basin, in the upsetting of ideas it has come to it, to remain intact is always it was the Mediterranean, the place that won the doctrine."

In the architecture of Massimiliano Rendina, it is evident that the very idea of living contains in itself the fact that they do not feel stranger and totally indifferent to the place where the work is being performed. This is a condition that can be realized through the ability to integrate architecture with what surrounds it.

In the work of the SCAU studio, the plain awareness of the fact that the designer is not only the creator of the forms in which the warm life of man flows, but the builder of new conditions in which it lives. Their construction is therefore strongly anchored to the ground, responds to needs, to social needs.

In the works of Tuzzolino Margagliotta explores the search for a particular spirit of architecture: the one that allows to create places where a certain intimacy is felt. There are places totally alien to our feelings and others that remain in us and accompany us forever, help us to get out of indifference, from apathy to buying one's own identity. That historical, cultural, of the territory that wants to go back to say that Italy is the country of beauty.

Mario Pisani

LGR HOUSE

Giarre (Catania)

Lrg House is located in the town of Giarre, at the foot of Etna. It is a single family house on two floors and takes a modern perspective on the traditional courtyard house common in Sicily.

The patio which is dominated by a large olive tree, becomes the heart of the whole house, visible from both the ground floor and the upper floor through the large windows. The house is organized on one level except for a lounge area which is accessible through the master bedroom and the library/study which looks onto the living area.

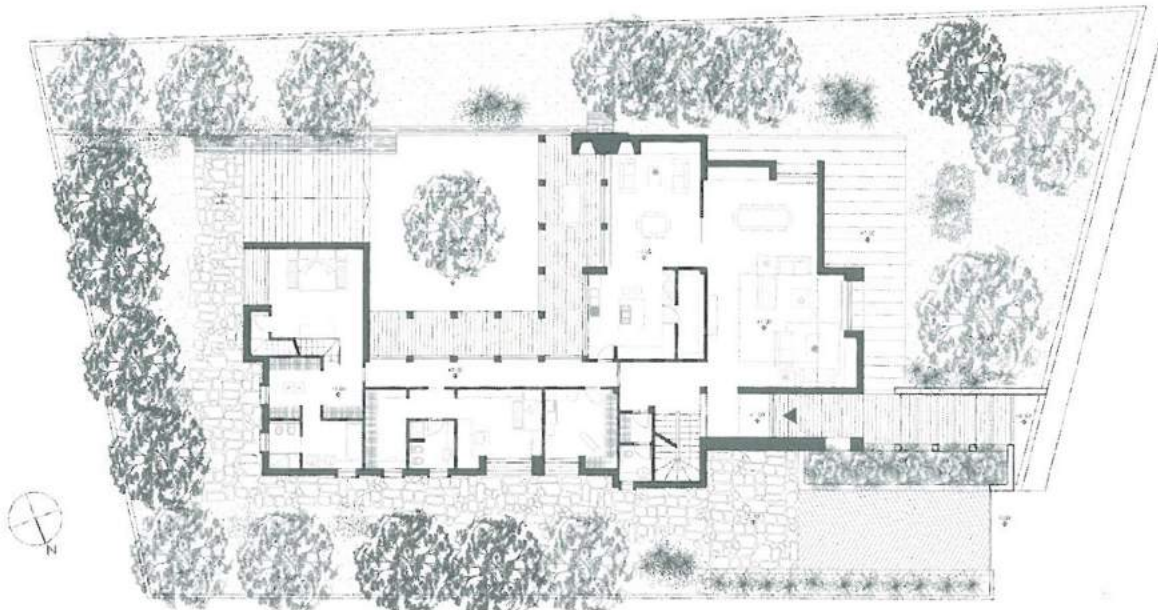
The entrance, is reached from the road, passing through a long pergola within the private garden, the feature of a long, high single pane of glass shows off the height of the day area with its spacious salon.

The kitchen and a part of the sleeping area are covered by a pitched roof which slopes towards the courtyard while the rest of the roofing is flat.

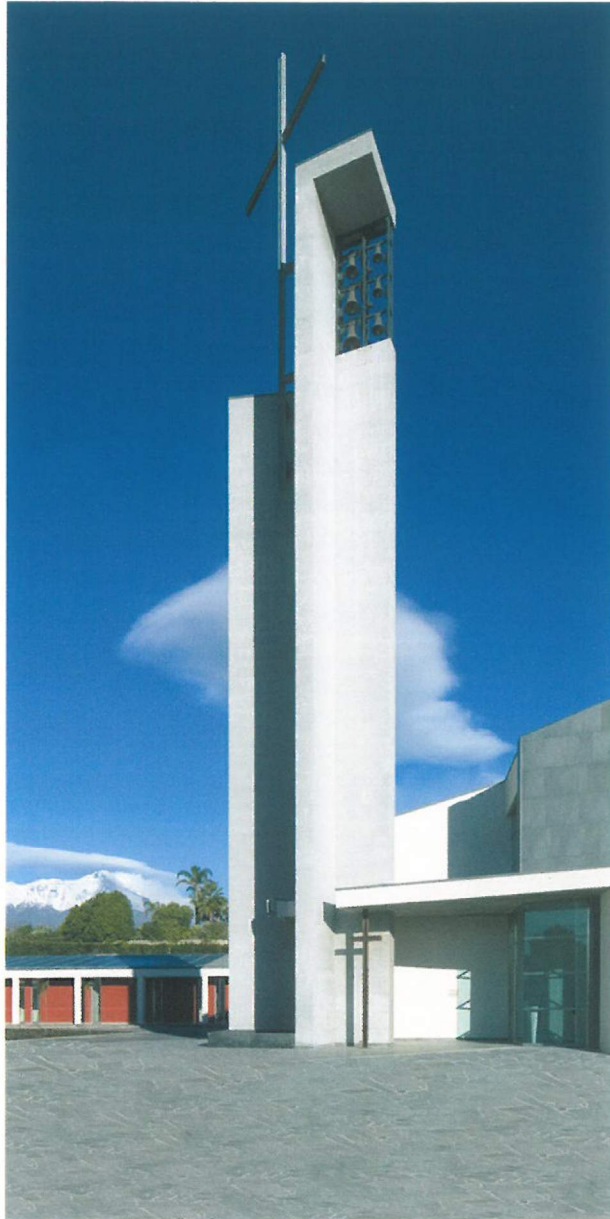
In the basement which is accessible by a ramp there is a large garage, a cellar, a storeroom, a bathroom and a Spa. The external spaces are organized into gardens on different levels, connected together by wide steps with water channels at the sides which follow the fall of the steps.

The materials employed to furnish and refine the building are contrasting in both feel and look and they underline the play between the full and empty spaces.









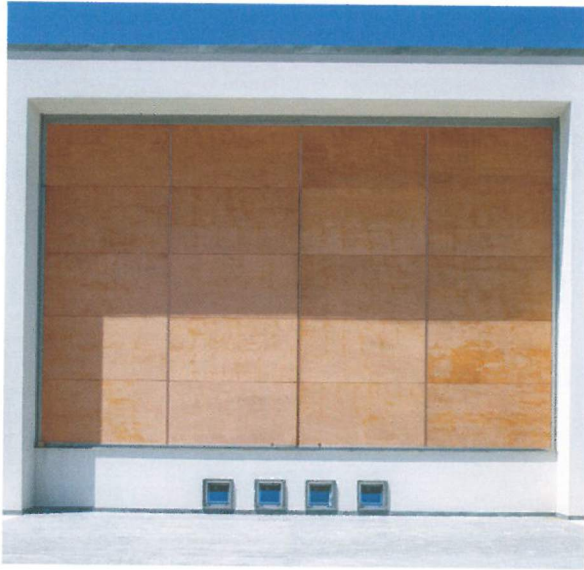
CHURCH OF SAINTS COSMA AND DAMIANO

Acireale (Catania)

The parish complex in Acireale dedicated to Saints Cosma and Damiano is the outcome of a winning completion entry. Its position on the outskirts of the urban area, makes it a gateway to the hamlet of San Cosmo.

Two Saints: Cosma and Damiano. Like twin drops that merge into one ...*inter se congruunt et in una confunduntur...*

The idea behind the project is shaped by dualism rather than unity. The entire parish complex is oriented on a double directional alignment: first on an east-west axis, and the second following the natural shape of the plot of land. The geometrical matrix which generates the planimetric framework takes shape and converges on the church, which originates from the intersection of two square-based elements rotated on each other, from which two main lines branch off and on which the bell tower rises, symbol of the sacred, reference point of the community. The parish complex is structured around the cloisters, a sacred quadrangle, representing a pause in the buildings and a place of reflection and reception, enclosed by the two sections of the buildings which are connected by the arcades, but each with its own specific functions. On the



South side lies the parish hall, the rooms for catechesis on the Northwest side, and the church on the East side.

The parish hall is characterized by the double-fronted stage that opens through a large removeable window onto the Cloister offering outside space during summer events. The canonical house has a more sheltered position on the North side of the complex, and it is linked to the sacristy by an external path that emphasizes its private nature.

The church is conceived of as a single space where believers can gather owing both to its layout and the effects obtained by the use of materials and luminous transparency. The block ends in a double, sloping, single-pitch cover that underlines the overall plan. From the inside, the ceiling increases in height and marks the way towards the altar. The longitudinal axis of the hall is positioned according to the traditional east-west orientation from which the poles of liturgy fan out; the Baptistry on the southeast side, place of regeneration; the Confessional chapel on the northwest side, place of conciliation.

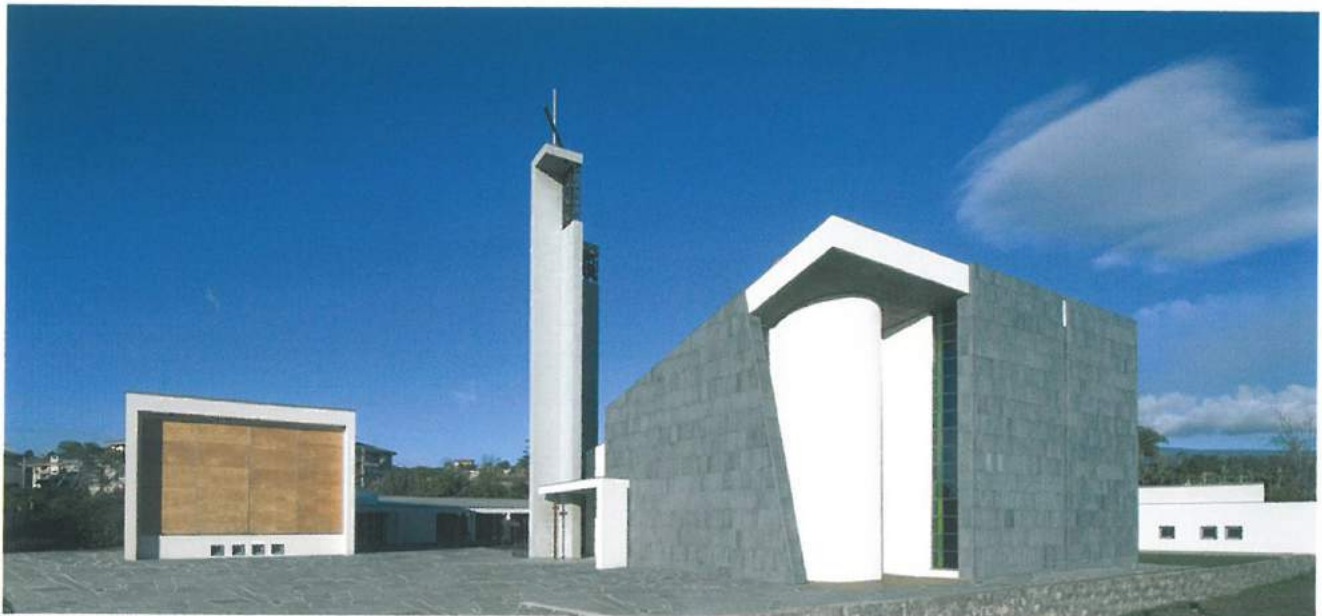
The main entrance can be reached through the cloister on the West side; the other entrances are diametrically opposed to each other and located on the North and South sides. The congregation forms a choir around the two central liturgical poles: the altar and the ambo.

On the northeast side, the Chapel of the Adoration is separated from the liturgical area by a sloping, plastered wall and by a second wall faced in lava stone; the two walls are staggered forming theatrical wings. Between them, a walkway leads right into the presbytery of the liturgical hall. Though the Chapel fills a well-defined and intimate space, it allows the faithful to take part in the services.

Special attention has been given to the diffusion of natural light in such a way as to create an impression of space. In

the presbytery from the large, full-length, vertical window that opens to the east and is hidden from sight by a wall curtain, the light comes in and slips through the openings between the walls, and the large cross at the back is illuminated by beams of light. The altar, focal point of the congregation, is lit up from above by a skylight set in the roof. The cylindrical shape, where the Baptismal Font is placed, not only lets the light in from the above, but is also illuminated by high, stained glass windows. Luminous loops have been placed in the points of intersection formed by the rotation of the two basic squares.

The outside has been created to form a continuous processional route starting from the church and leading to the outside altar, back through the cloisters and along the covered way that divides the hall from the sacristy.



CARNIVAL FOUNDATION OFFICES

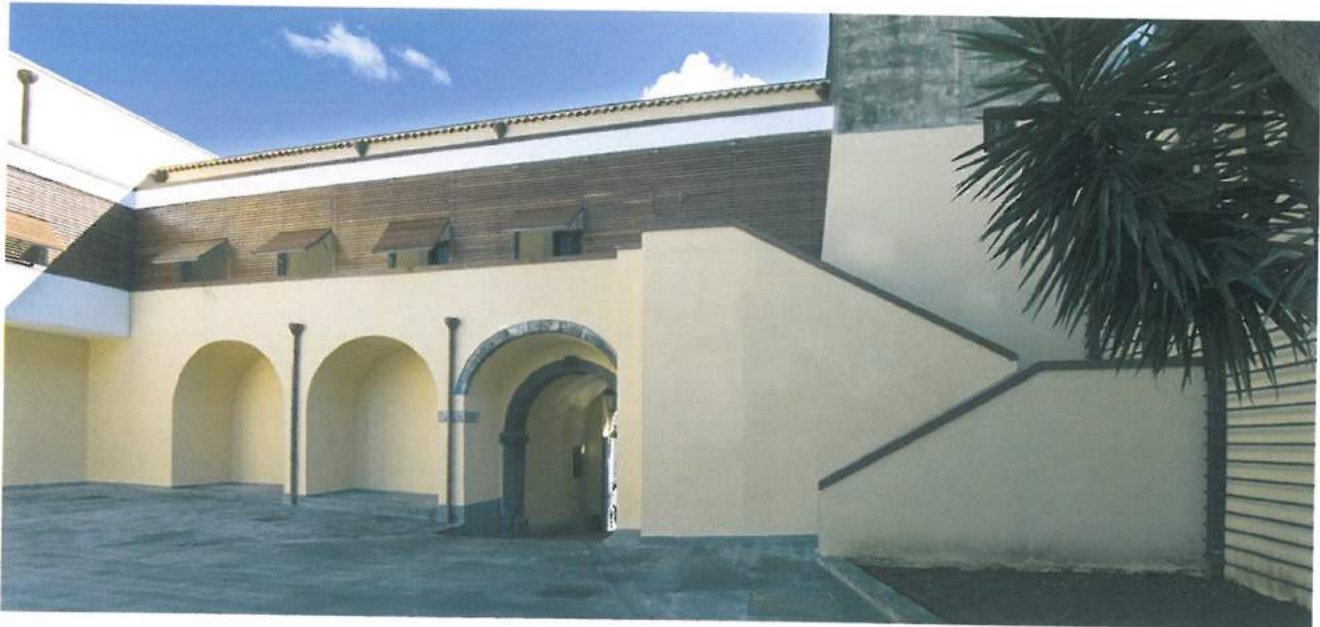
Acireale (Catania)

Located in the heart of the old town of Acireale, the project to renovate the building as the Offices of the "Fondazione del Carnevale Acese" were undertaken with a view to making it more suitable for public use and to improve access while also recreating the original layout and recovering the historical image of the architectural complex.

The old courtyard has been recovered thanks to the restoration of the arches of the original arcade and refreshed through the design of the paving in lava stone and with contemporary touches which are easily distinguished and help to give an impression of space: the introduction of a canopy roof above the pre-existing first floor balcony has been enlivened by a wooden sunbreak so as to open up the space with a language of purposeful autonomy, or also the aired wall built in lava stone which give a different architectural connotation to the whole building creating a dialogue between the original colours and materials.

Finally the elimination of the additions and extensions on the first floor has permitted the original proportions of the building to emerge, the ceiling vaults are fully visible while the modern open space offices and areas separated by glass panels respect the visual perspectives.









REPIN

Acicatena (Catania)

The building is composed of a long prism-shaped building in which the offices are located, besides this there is another cylinder shaped structure with an elliptic base designed as the waiting room.

This second structure seems to float on the water. The block housing the offices is distributed over two levels with a central corridor off which the technical and commercial offices open on the ground floor, while the management offices are on the upper storey. Here too, the services are concentrated in a structure which is turquoise blue. The whole structure is defined architecturally as a solid with a rectangular base in re enforced concrete, completely emptied of material, and supported by circular pillars and enclosed by large windows protected by a system of wooden sun-blinds. The office block gives the impression that it is floating above the ground. The roof of the block is flat and features two circular holes which open onto two internal gardens in the shape of trapezoids. So the overall image is that of an architectural object completely suspended above a lawn and a water basin backed by the skyline of Etna.



