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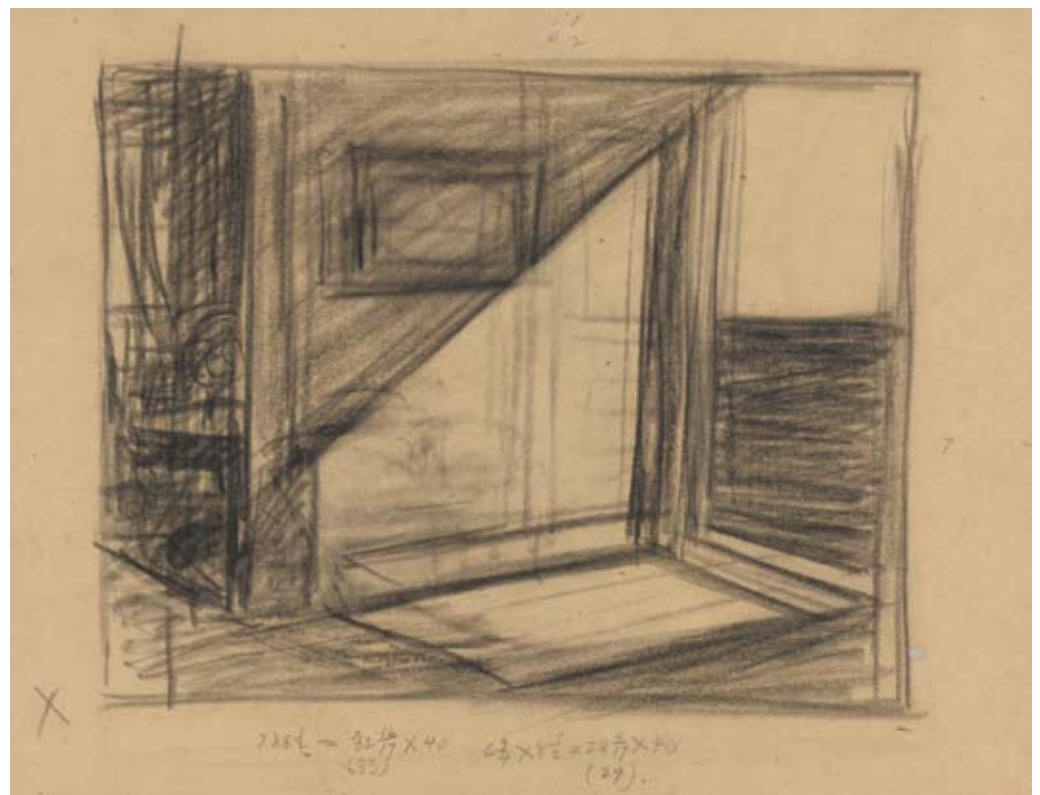
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# FIRENZE architettura

1&2.2014



Periodico semestrale  
Anno XVIII n.1&2  
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## luce e materia

In copertina:  
Edward Hopper,  
Tow studies for Rooms by the Sea (recto), 1951  
Carboncino su carta  
Katharine Ordway Fund  
2008.144.1  
Photo Credit: Yale University Art Gallery



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# FIRENZE architettura

1&2.2014

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## Riverbero tra i canneti

Bao Gang Wu Liu è un piccolo lotto in Shanghai: succube e immerso in una caotica area industriale in velocissima trasformazione; sbarrato da un enorme fascio di binari, quasi introvabile nel labirinto di corsi d'acque, affluenti dell'immenso estuario dello Yangtse River.

Recuperare e trasformare spazi esistenti, mediante demolizioni quasi obbligate; costruire piccole architetture, le sole necessarie alla sua nuova destinazione di Wine World. Piccoli innesti l'idea sottesa al nostro lavoro.

Alle demolizioni è, infatti, affidato il compito di dare forma, sia ai vuoti esistenti che quelli ottenuti dalle demolizioni di capannoni obsoleti, in un geometrico disponibile ad accogliere quel bosco di bambù che, si dice, essere in Cina simbolo di lunga vita: certo per una eleganza unita ad una sua virtuosa disponibilità alla costruzione.

Nell'area pensata come sineddoche del mondo del vino, il visitatore sarà accolto in edifici immersi nel verde e nell'acqua: temi che il progetto assume per la loro capacità di avvicinare oriente ed occidente. Le terre coltivate a vigneto hanno da sempre caratterizzato il paesaggio di appartenenza, in cui l'esaltazione di una geometria essenziale si trasforma nella morfologia di terreni collinari, costruendo l'aspettativa dell'architettura quale sigillo finale.

Elemento principe di tutta la composizione è la strada coperta -Wine Gallery- che, con andamento est/ovest, unisce trasversalmente entrambi i confini dell'area.

L'ombra che in oriente sembra avere una sorta di equivalenza con la luce, è la ragione della schermatura della strada/galleria mediante un *brise-soleil*

costituito da una struttura in legno di bambù che trasmette e infonde allo specchio d'acqua da cui sorge una sorta di teorema di luce.

La strada/galleria, abitata da parallelepipedi in vetro accidiato, è segnata dalle grandi aperture che ne segnano il carattere di distribuzione, compresa la scala che porta alla cantina sotterranea. A sua conclusione lo spazio "wine bar" si specchia in una grande vasca d'acqua, in cui il ritmo degli esili legni moltiplicano le loro ombre e il riverbero dell'acqua moltiplica i disegni della luce.

A filo d'acqua un bianco cubo accoglie e protegge un piccolo ristorante.

La strada/galleria distribuisce, a sud, la *Main Hall*: un edificio esistente la cui destinazione ad uffici viene in parte confermata, ad eccezione del piano terra, destinato a spazio commerciale, e dell'attico disponibile a sala conferenze. Il progetto prevede di avvolgere l'edificio in una maglia di acciaio *corten*, intagliata da grandi scritte pubblicitarie. La nuova "maschera", superando in altezza tutti gli edifici dell'intera area, può essere vista dalla concitate strade liminari al lotto, dalla ferrovia e di notte divenire un luminoso faro.

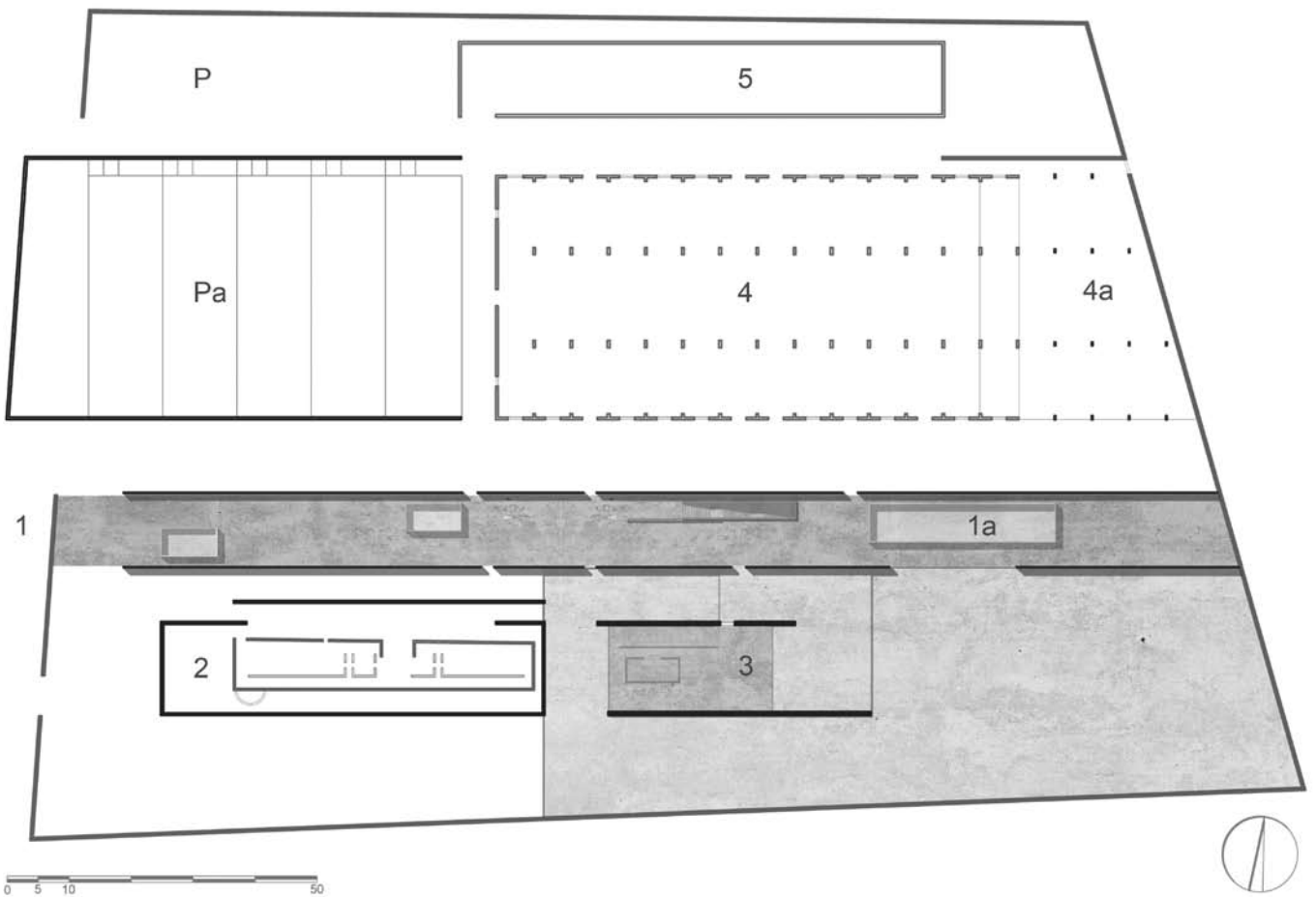
A nord della Wine/Gallery, lo spazio per eventi viene ricavato nel grande *hangar* in cemento, uno spazio tripartito da una ordinata selva di pilastri che la luce, filtrando dall'alto, trasforma in una affascinante rovina del moderno. L'atmosfera *délabré*, sarà abitata, in un voluto contrasto, dai nuovi bianchi prismi a contenere la molteplicità delle destinazioni.

In fregio alla strada Jiangyang South Road, l'accesso a un parcheggio underground, anch'esso coperto dal canneto.

Progetto di riconversione di un'area industriale in Wine/World  
Shanghai  
2013

*Progetto:*  
Maria Grazia Eccheli  
Riccardo Campagnola  
Alessandro Cossu

*Collaboratori:*  
Marco Nicoletti  
Serena Romiti



1\_WINE/GALLERY 2\_MAIN HALL 3\_RESTAURANT ON THE WATER 4\_HANGAR 4a\_GREENHOUSE 5\_WAREHOUSE Pa\_UNDERGROUND PARKING P\_WAREHOUSE PARKING





panels, displays its tectonic character, rising from the ground and binding itself to the immateriality of the sky to capture the changing light, like a pergola of Japanese bamboo or the dome of a Turkish bathhouse punctured by a swirl of bright stars.<sup>3</sup>

There is a clear reference to some traditional techniques common both to Spain and China in the production of manufactured intertwined items. But isn't textile art one of the distant origins of architecture? At least according to the Semperian *Mysterium der Transfiguration*.<sup>4</sup>

The research on the package and its structure is, of course, one of the strongest trait d'union with the previous pavilions and their undisputed "modernity": from the lesson of Tessenow and Poelzig – which Lacasa brought to Spain from Dresden and which took the form in Paris of a pavilion that fit its measurements to the standard sizes of available materials and experimentation – to the limit of Spanish technical abilities in the late fifties, brought to Brussels by Ramón Vázquez Molezún and José Antonio Corrales. Picasso and Calder no longer speak of the atrocities of the war between Guernica and Almadén, and the days when Spain sought isolation from more advanced European countries are gone. In Shanghai, as in Zaragoza, there is evidence a deeper awareness of the country's own identity in a globalised world.

An old stereoscopic photograph shows the German Pavilion by Mies van der Rohe at the 1929 Barcelona Universal Exposition.

In the mundaneness of a rainy autumn afternoon, the building dissolves into infinite reflections: in the marble-covered walls, those of the trees and pavilion towers; in the surface of water, placed by Mies and swelled by the rain, those of the clouds and the people that populate the building.

The photographer captures the characters at the moment when they are about to leave the pavilion, suggesting, apparently, that its "time and its place" have already passed.

In reality the shot forever captures one of the rare moments in which architecture, building on the principle of the ritual of inviolability, attains its highest beauty and its absolute perfection.<sup>5</sup>

In the past two centuries the ephemeral lights of many exhibitions have been extinguished. From Paris to Shanghai Spain shows that she has fully understood the fundamental Miesian lesson: that architecture is not ready to disappear with them.

*Translated by Arba Baxhaku*

<sup>1</sup> See: Juan Miguel Otxotorena, *Utopía o nostalgia, tradición o traición. Sobre Javier Carvajal y el Pabellón español de la Feria Mundial de 1964 en Nueva York, in 1964/65 New York World's Fair. The Spanish Pavilion*, Pamplona, T6 Ediciones 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Kazimir Severinovich Malevich, *La Lumière et la couleur: textes de 1918 à 1926*, Lausanne, L'Age d'homme 1981.

<sup>3</sup> See: Bernard Rudofsky, *Vernacular virtuosity*, in Id., *Architecture without architects*, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1964.

<sup>4</sup> See: Gottfried Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten oder praktische Aesthetik ...*, Vol. 1: *Die Textile Kunst ...*, Frankfurt am Main, Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1860; vol. 2, *Keramik, Tektonik, Stereotomie, Metallotechnik*, München, Friedrich Bruckmanns'Verlag, 1863<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> See: Juan José Lahuerta, *Mies popular*, in Id., *Humaredas. Arquitectura, ornamentación, medios impresos*, Madrid, Lampreave 2010, pp. 287-339.

## Laura Andreini - Archea

*Light, Matter, Architecture* by Laura Andreini

(page 90)



To understand that light, matter and architecture are absolutely inseparable it is not necessary to resort to Le Corbusier's famous definition of architecture as the result of the skilful play of volumes brought together in

light; it is sufficient to reflect on the fact that in the absence of light - or in other words in total darkness - there cannot be any conscious perception of space, nor the minimal conditions for living in it. And regardless of how sublime the existence of something we cannot see may appear to us, also our imagination depends on images and thus on light.

We might object that matter, materials and thus architecture is independent from this condition, as they intrinsically express an individual consistency, texture and thus tactile quality; but while we may manage to understand the form and characteristic of a domestic object by bodily contact, this is impossible in most cases when it comes to architecture. If this is so, then it is necessary to study the way architecture - not as the final result of a creative process but as its design - can, or rather must, use light as a constitutive element of every composition. It is, in other words, necessary to discuss and analyse light, not as accidental and ineluctable condition of architecture, but on the contrary interpret it as a means for an intentional construction and definition of both the architectural space and its plastic and formal characteristics. As is often the case, words cannot compare to experience, and least of all to the simple and mystical one of visiting the Pantheon, where the light conquers a physical substance and a material consistency which is more powerful than the self-same architectural shell, designing on the wall not just the dilated projection of the skylight on top of the building but the unmistakable representation of the divine presence and, with it, the idea and image of the temple. The pulsation inspired in the observer is wholly exhaustive and pervasive; it occupies the imagery of the onlooker beyond any imaginary limit, unveiling the rules of existence, the laws of physics as gravity and the relationship between the solar system and its planets, the alternation of day and night and thus of the rotation of the earth, the changing of the seasons, the relationship between natural and artificial, the value of ephemeral and real things; in the final analysis, the cycle of life and the ultimate meaning of our life on earth. Fascinated with such a sight, which is as amazing as it is common, we have always sought in our everyday work as architects to consider light - whether natural and thus dependent on the time of day or artificial and thus protagonist of the nocturnal hours - as one of the principal components of the art of building, the most precious material, the most efficient instrument of every narration and every creative process. And within the context of the arts - which have always been related and influential to architecture as tautology of creation, we have always looked attentively to those figurative expression which - and it is not a matter of play with words - have renounced figurative expression in favour of light and space, from Lucio Fontana's cuts and holes to Castellani's vibrant surfaces, from Bonalumi's concavities and convexities to Scheggi's envelopes, to Dadamaino's serial voids, to remain in a completely Italian and sufficiently recent creative territory, while we would have to, and could, return without hesitation to the origins, and thus to Brunelleschi and Michelangelo, who have derived the sense of their universal message from light and geometric rigour, as well as naturalness.

## Maria Grazia Eccheli Riccardo Campagnola

*The glare of the reeds*

(page 106)



Bao Gang Wu Liu is a small site in Shanghai: it is placed long a chaotic industrial area in fast transformation, closed by a huge beam of binary, almost impossible to find in the maze of rivers and waters, tributaries of the immense estuary of the Yangtse River.

The purpose of the project is Retrieve and transform existing spaces, with almost forced demolitions, build small architectures, only necessary to its new destination of Wine World. The idea behind our work are small grafts.

The demolitions mold the existing that become available to accommodate the bamboo forest, the China symbol of long life: symbol of elegance and strong attitude to construction.

The area is designed as a metaphor of the world of wine. the visitor is welcomed in buildings surrounded by greenery and by water: elements that the project takes for their ability to approach East and West. The vineyards have always characterized the landscape; they build a geometry that transforms the morphology of hilly, they mold nature into architecture.

The order element of the whole composition is a covered road with course east / west -Wine Gallery-, that it pass across the limits of all area. The shadow is the reason of the shielding of the gallery, realized by a *brise-soleil* wooden frame of bamboo, that born and reverberates itself from the water, because the shadow in the East seems to have an equivalence with light. The road / tunnel, inhabited by parallelepipeds glass, is marked by large openings that show the distribution, including the staircase leading to the underground cellar. At the end of the tunnel is located the "wine bar" which is reflected in a large tub of water, in which the infinite sequence of wood elements multiplies the shadows; the water glare multiplies the designs of light. To the side of the tub of water is located a small restaurant the south side of the road / tunnel distributes the Main Hall: an existing building in which are located the offices, commercial space, and a conference room. The project of this building is to cover the build with corten steel, in which are engraved large advertising signs. The new "mask", surpassing in height all the buildings of the whole area can be seen from the hectic streets, from the railway and at night can become a bright beacon.

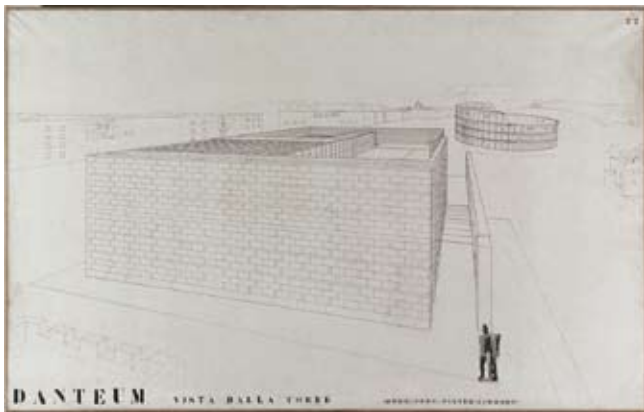
North of Wine / Gallery, is located the space for events, that is recovered from the large hangar existing concrete, a tripartite space ordered by a forest of pillars, it becomes a fascinating ruins of the modern.

Long the Jiangyang South Road is placed access to underground parking covered by reeds.

*Translation by Alessandro Cossu*

## Danteum – Light takes form by Francesco Collotti

(page 118)



In the construction of the nation, Dante was used in an often distorted patriotic revival key, called on to legitimize the construction of a mythical Italy from epitaph to headstone, populated by heroes, navigators, poets.

The use and abuse of the great poet had its political apotheosis during the fascist era, when the tension of the entire epic poem, not without clashes between opposing sides, became drawn towards that eagle which symbolized the monarchy (or the empire?) and its saviour and guide, prophesized by Virgilio the first canto of Hell as a starting point for the ascent. An entity which, according to a prophetic-political reading, was supposedly personified by Benito Mussolini.

Stripping the Divine Comedy of all this ideological apparatus, time and again a victim of circumstance, we are left with the extraordinary construction of Dante Alighieri which is a highly symbolic analogous world, whose numerous meanings recall a journey of initiation addressed to those who know they ought to search.

It is in this sense that the Poet's work seems untouched and great. Is Beatrice maybe not a mortal being/woman but sophia/wisdom? The whole Comedy still an awesome theatre of analogies through which to read the world? What we certainly know is that the dialectics between light and darkness lies within the journey gradually unravelling through the canticas. It is struggle and tension, not a quiet description. Sequence of phases of transition maybe only comprehensible through esoteric and alchemic approaches? Does Lingeri's and Terragni's Danteum manage to hold all this within its pure form? The assignment comes from the project creator Rino Valdameri, President of the Royal Academy of Brera (at the time Lingeri's friend and enlightened commissioner for many projects, amongst which the Isola Comacina houses and the sequence of projects together with Giuseppe Terragni for the Brera Academy of Milan). Soon there was a dis-

pute between the enterprising Valdameri, actively involved in modern architecture and art, and minister Bottai's restraining entourage. The idea does not consider the palace or the museum but rather borrows the figure of the temple (the library, with all the editions of the Opera and the illustrations, will be put in a crypt and be the only part open to the outside).

According to an accurate and reliable reconstruction (Schnapp 1996), Lingeri contacted Terragni while the whole of the political supporters included a Milanese count, mainly sponsoring the initiative, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Finance, as well as Ugo Ojetti, Giovanni Gentile, Massimo Bontempelli e Vittorio Cini. First rate names for the initiative evaluation, but still of distant views, who would bring to the project to implosion.

After the two great roman competitions for Palazzo del Littorio (first in 1934 in Via dell'Impero and then, in 1937, on the Aventino) and for Palazzo dei Ricevimenti e dei Congressi at E42 (1937-1939), Lingeri e Terragni arrive in Rome for the laic temple created around the great three landscapes recalled by The Poet.

The perfect construction of the Divine Comedy takes shape in the Danteum leaning, with a certain viscosity, against the unnatural gesture represented by the Via dell'Impero in Rome. Aligning itself to the prior ruins rather than the new trace of the Road, the Danteum chooses a slower time compared to the latest violent demolitions of the regime.

The sequence of golden proportions lies within the roman roots of Masenzio's Basilica but, due to a sensible in depth-analysis on Lingeri's part, it seems to slide more into a Greek, rather than Roman, classicism.

Lingeri's work for the Danteum is, furthermore, intrinsically linked with Bardi's and Bontempelli's research (even of internal opposition) first in "Quadrante" and after in "Valori primordiali".

It is a long journey for Lingeri and Terragni. It is a dazzling light whose motion arrives in Como from Barcelona, Alger, Athens to stop in the long prospective of the snow covered mountains that enclose the Northern area of the lake. Here it is, the cursive script nr. 40 in Quadrante: "...will the Mediterranean people be able to bring, in the near future (...), a further contribution to the development of European architecture? We consider strictly necessary a revision of certain Nordic elements of Rationalism. The climate modifies the functions and shapes of external walls (We feel that the emotional relationships between full and empty of some rustic houses in the South are right; people living along the Mediterranean coast – probably because of their poverty as well – always had a sense of essential precision – Quadrante 1933)".

The calm landscape that can be admired between Villa Leoni and Ossuccio, a terrace of vines and olive trees, a monumental harbour rooted in the stone of this lake shore at the foot of Madonna del Soccorso (Lingeri, 1938-1944), or the ambitious view of the ceiling beams of the Casa del Fascio di Terragni, remind us of a *mythic atmosphere, transcendent customs, intellectual fashions: a whole of primordial forces, operating in reality and in the spirit*. The light in the eyes of the Masters of Como recalls primitive Mediterranean scenarios, deeper than the mere roman translation "in the mass" of the wall, that the contemporary architects pursue. The Danteum, a gesture in stone, iron and glass, almost a dry stone construction in the style of a temporary pavilion, a deep admiration for classical abstraction, implicitly against classical approach which often, in Rome and in the most eager provinces, fell in the parody of Baroque?

The Danteum is absolute volume, with just an hint of chiaroscuro due to the low-reliefs that reinforce the wall. Light, more than numbers, allow the translation of the Divine Comedy into a built shape.

Risen through consecutive degrees from the opaque colour of travertine columns in the Dark Woods, eight meters high and one meter in diameter (and ceiling made of glass blades alternated with giant cubes placed as capitals of the columns), going through the spiral described by the seven different columns of Hell, to the solar Paradise articulated in 33 columns, seven meters high and eighty centimeters in diameter, erected in grinded glass bricks. In the Danteum light is a building material, as well as the shade which is its inseparable *daimon*.

The *big plant/map*, the Raumplan, the section which accompanies us on the journey, the chess board effect in the space, are all devices of a narrative sequence which evolves for degrees and stations.

The same way Dante's work is an extraordinary analogy which lives in the theatre of light and shade memory, also the space organization gives depth and space to the initiation journey towards the light.

State transitions through sensitive places that mark these passages, staggered floors, steps, the proportion of the spaces you are introduced to.

With the poor architectural instruments, without special effects.

As it always should be. The impenetrable map of its section is here implemented with a unique programmatic coincidence. On the map choices are made and the weights of the built shape are distributed. It is in the section, though, that I can understand how light and shadow become building material. Section proportion that proposes a place where I can live, so breathing becomes deeper, a hallway to walk down, a place to pass through not to stay. The Poet's text takes shape, selects hierarchies and places, spaces following a precise order.

All spaces are in progression, not only inside each ambient, but in the relationship of the ambients between each other. The map is here creator and sign of coherent volumes. Geometry is not the aim but the means of controlling ideas in order to reach accomplished unity.

