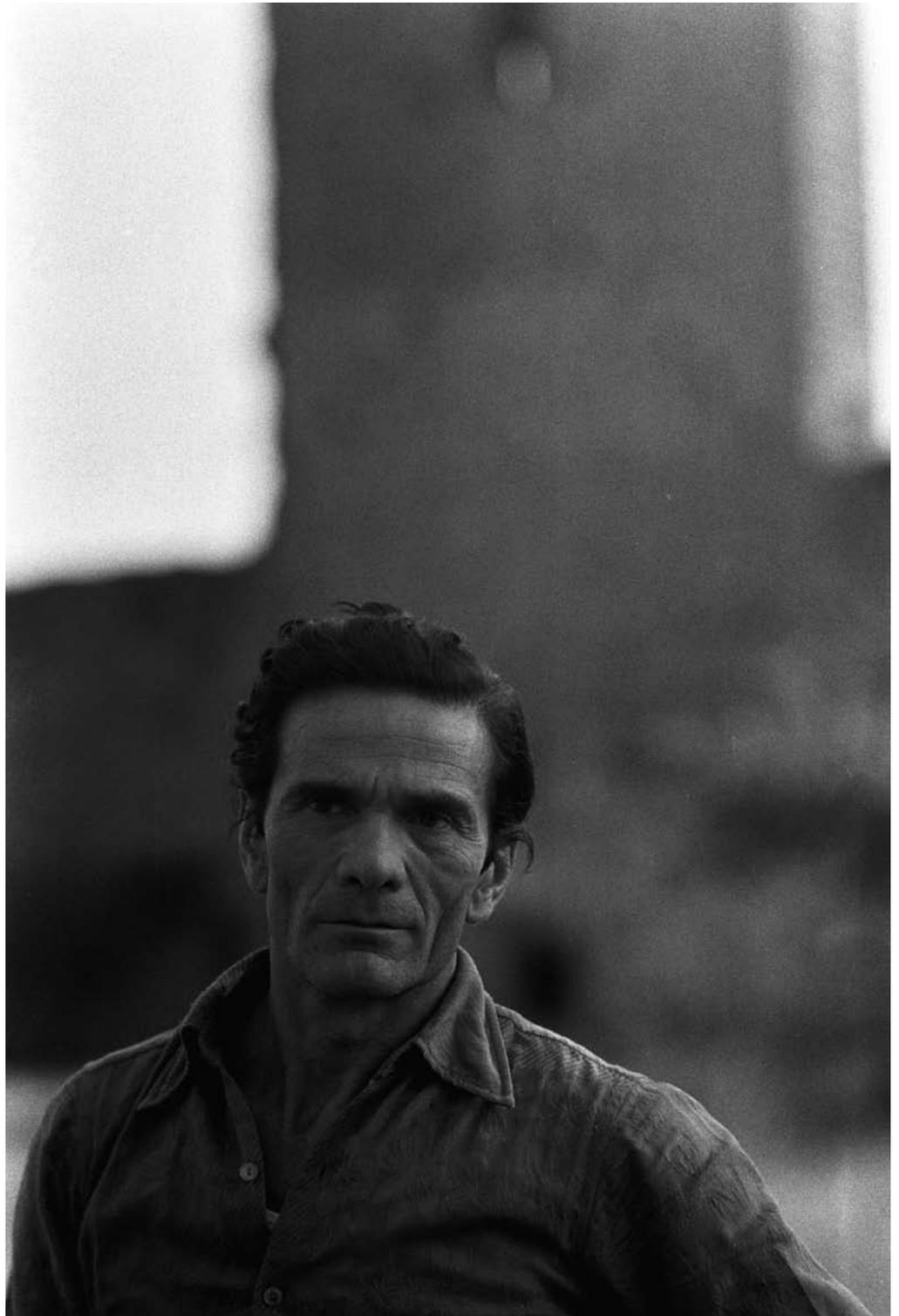


# FIRENZE architettura

1.2015



## costruire con poco



Periodico semestrale  
Anno XIX n. 1

Spedizione in abbonamento postale 70% Firenze

In copertina:  
Pier Paolo Pasolini a Torre di Chia, 1974  
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## L'infinito abita a Chia La casa/castello di Pier Paolo Pasolini

Maria Grazia Eccheli

Dai profondi solchi boschivi del Fosso del Rio e del Fosso di Fontana Vecchia, due orridi botri civilizzati da mano etrusca, s'innalza un brano di terra di forma triangolare il cui vertice, al confluire dei due rivi, è il virtuale centro dei due semicerchi che tracciano le geometrie difensive del medioevale castello di Colle Casale.

Inarcata tra ciglio e ciglio delle convalli, i due murali allineano al loro centro due torri pentagonali - altissima la prima (42 metri), mozzata la seconda - a segnare l'ideale percorso.

Un pertugio, a lato della prima torre, mette in comunicazione il fitto bosco trattenuto dal primo muro con l'ampio prato, una *spianata*, dove i due apparati difensivi s'affrontano e, come in un campo di torneo, sono visibili.

Emergente da un fossato - dalla quota inferiore a cui si trova rispetto all'orizzonte - la torre mozza è l'ingresso all'ultimo e segreto *hortus conclusus*: una corte sospesa sul precipizio.

Il mistero è nello sguardo, in quel traguardare sui ruderi vicini, sul lontano paesaggio visto nella luce piena del mezzogiorno, trascelto, si direbbe, dallo stesso arcuarsi delle mura: Bomarzo, Mugnano, le terre della Val Tiberina... Una Tuscia costruita di strade, di sentieri, di grotte etrusche e di enigmatici "altari piramidali". Un luogo alto sulle profonde convalli dove la Mola scorre, improvvisando cascate... come quella di Fosso (o del Castello) che l'immaginifica trasposizione/osmosi di PPP delle leggendarie topografie palestinesi in paesaggi italiani, trasforma in scena fissa per il Battesimo di Gesù nel *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*.

La capacità di vedere il mito in luoghi diversi, quasi che il *genius loci* di un sito possa migrare in luoghi impensati, è for-

se alla base dell'idea di PPP di trasporre un CASTELLO - un edificio senza interni e tutto rappreso nella sua muta essenza militare da ridursi quasi a mero simbolo araldico, imm modificabile a prima vista - in un'ABITAZIONE... Leggendarie del resto le "visite" dell'allievo di Longhi al mondo di Piero in Arezzo...<sup>1</sup>.

Per questo la CORTE/STANZA - il prato come pavimento e per tetto le fronde degli alberi - diviene l'*impluvium* di una casa immaginata. Al murale di pietra senza interni, s'aggiunge una semplice addizione in legno (larghezza meno di quattro metri e tre di altezza) a raddoppiarne l'andamento falcato nel mentre riceve misure e forma dalla torre centrale che lo divide e unisce ad un tempo. L'abitare si svolge così in due ali (costruite in tempi diversi negli anni settanta). L'accesso diretto dalla corte dona il senso di stanze passanti, l'una dentro l'altra, a retaggio di un vivere antico, forse rurale e contadino.

Uno sbrigativo ponte in legno con andamento a baionetta - limite tra la spianata e il privato del poeta - permette di entrare nel parallelepipedo in pietra posto alla base della torre mozza. Lì, come nelle fiabe, s'aprono, quattro porte: due individuano l'asse del castello e della casa - l'interno e l'esterno delle mura: il nord e il sud - le altre due porte contrapposte, sono al centro dello svolgersi dell'abitare: a est, la camera, il bagno e lo studio; a ovest, la camera della madre Susanna che un bagno e un cucinotto dividono dall'ampio soggiorno. Rispetto a quell'addossarsi al tracciato di pietra, il soggiorno presenta un improvviso scarto: approfittando di una breccia esistente, si allontana dal sedime delle mura per inventarsi padiglione senza pareti, tra corte e alberi, lo spazio è do-



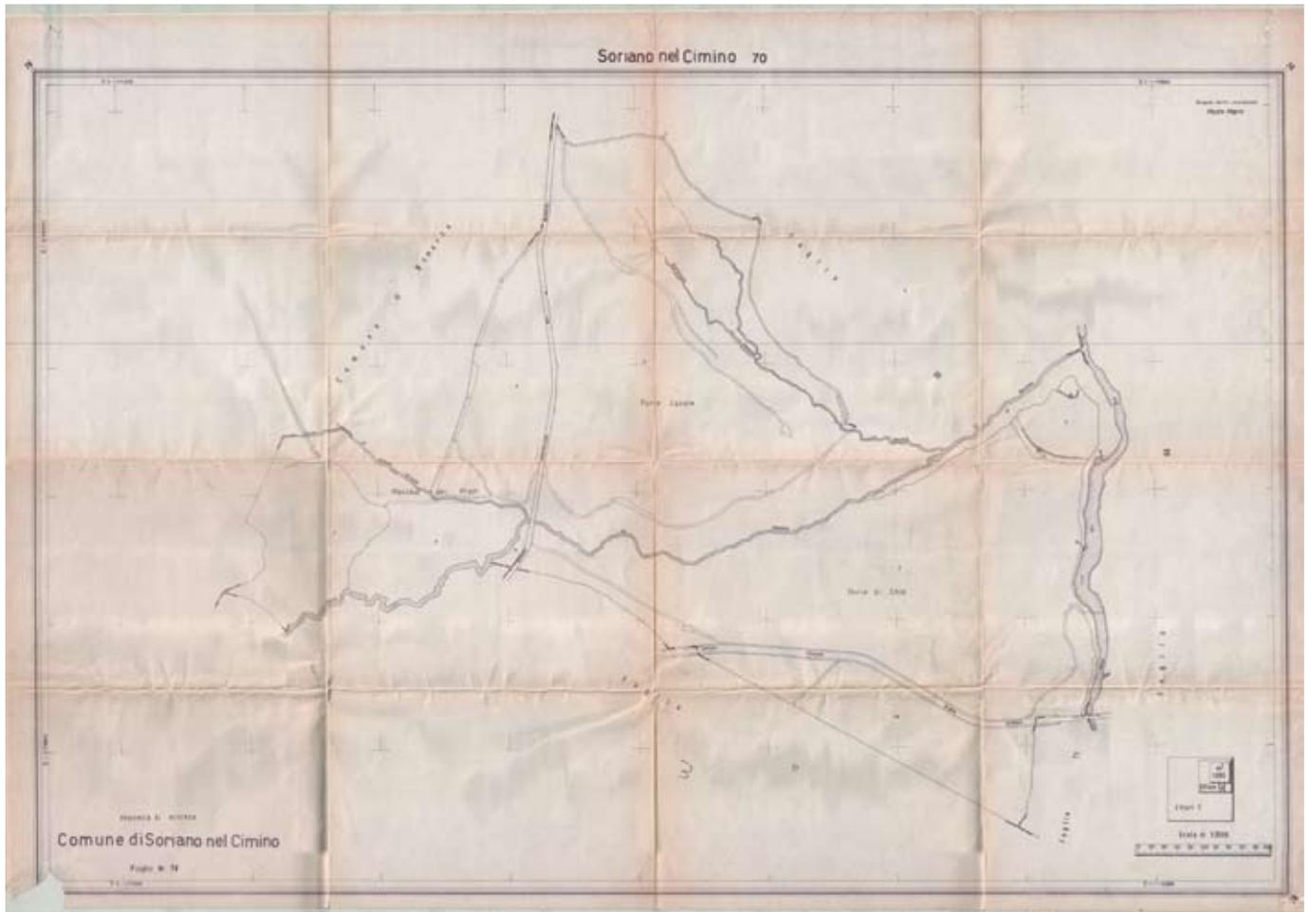
1  
Veduta aerea del castello di Colle del Casale. Foto della collezione di Silvio Cappelli, per gentile concessione dell'autore e di Vecchiarelli Editore

2  
Torre di Chia, Catasto Terreni, Comune di Soriano nel Cimino, foglio n.70

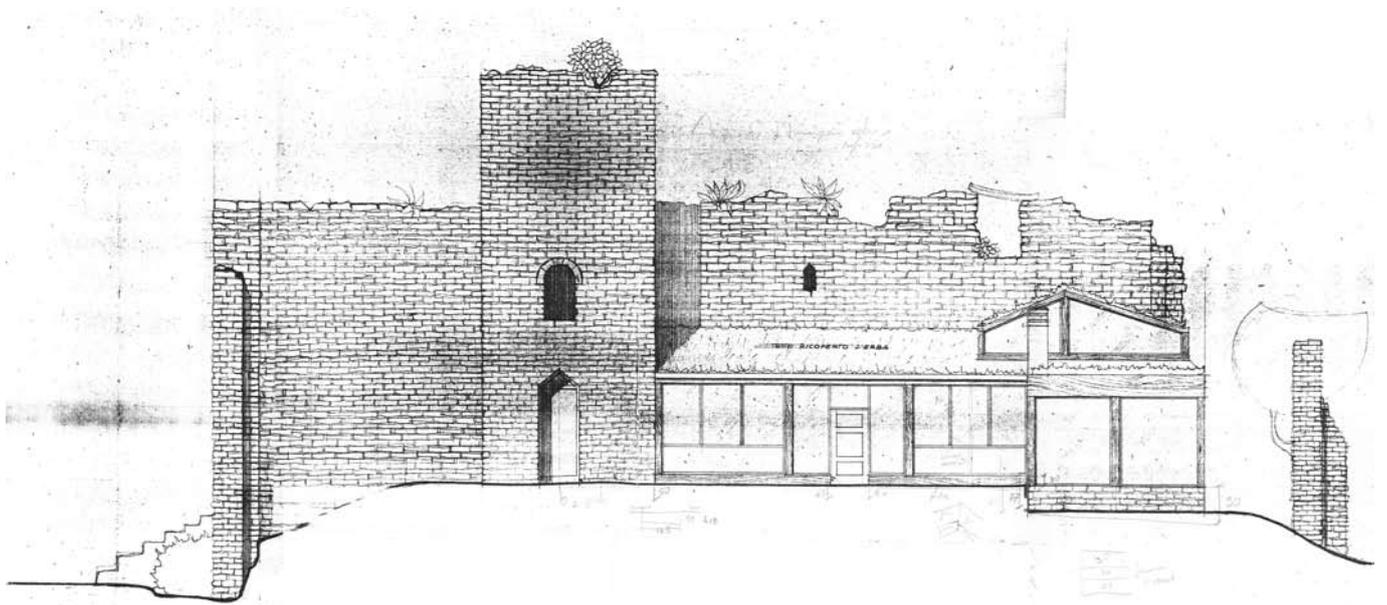
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Disegno del prospetto nord della casa con la sola ala ovest, progetto di variante a seguito delle osservazioni della Soprintendenza ai Monumenti del Lazio. Il progetto originale, firmato dall'architetto Ninfo Burruano, fu presentato al Comune di Soriano del Cimino il 25 Marzo 1971

Pagine successive:

4  
Planimetrie catastali della casa



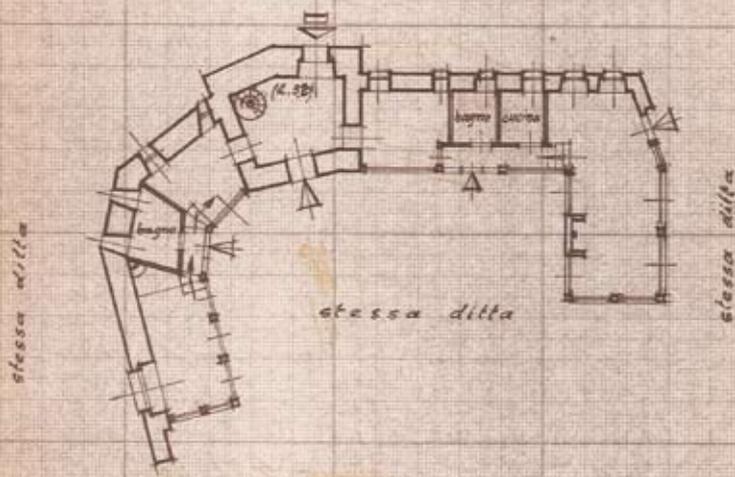
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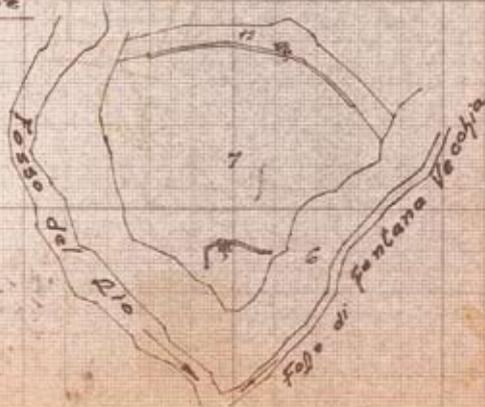
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piano terreno.  
(h. variabile)

terreno proprietà stessa ditta



planimetria generale  
scala 1:2.000.  
Foglio di Mappa 70.



ACCERTAMENTO GENERALE  
DELLA PROPRIETÀ IMMO-  
BILIARE URBANA

Legge 11 agosto 1939, n. 1249,  
modificata con D.L. 8 aprile 1946,  
n. 514

COMUNE

di SORIANO nel  
CIMINO

RICEVUTA  
DI DICHIARAZIONE DI  
un'attività immobiliare urbana

La ditta (1) \_\_\_\_\_

PASOLINI  
DIER PAOLO

scuola a  
BOLOGNA  
il 5/5/1972

La presente dichiarazione

della unità immobiliare sita  
SORIANO nel  
nel Comune di CIMINO

Località TORRE di  
CHIA

Via SS. ORTANA

N. di unità \_\_\_\_\_ Sola \_\_\_\_\_

Piani \_\_\_\_\_ N. di interni \_\_\_\_\_

Da stamparsi a cura del distrettuale. - La dichiarazione obbliga il  
dichiarante a tutte le norme della legge 11 agosto 1939, n. 1249.

(1) Seguire i dati anagrafici del solo primo intestatario.

Data di presentazione

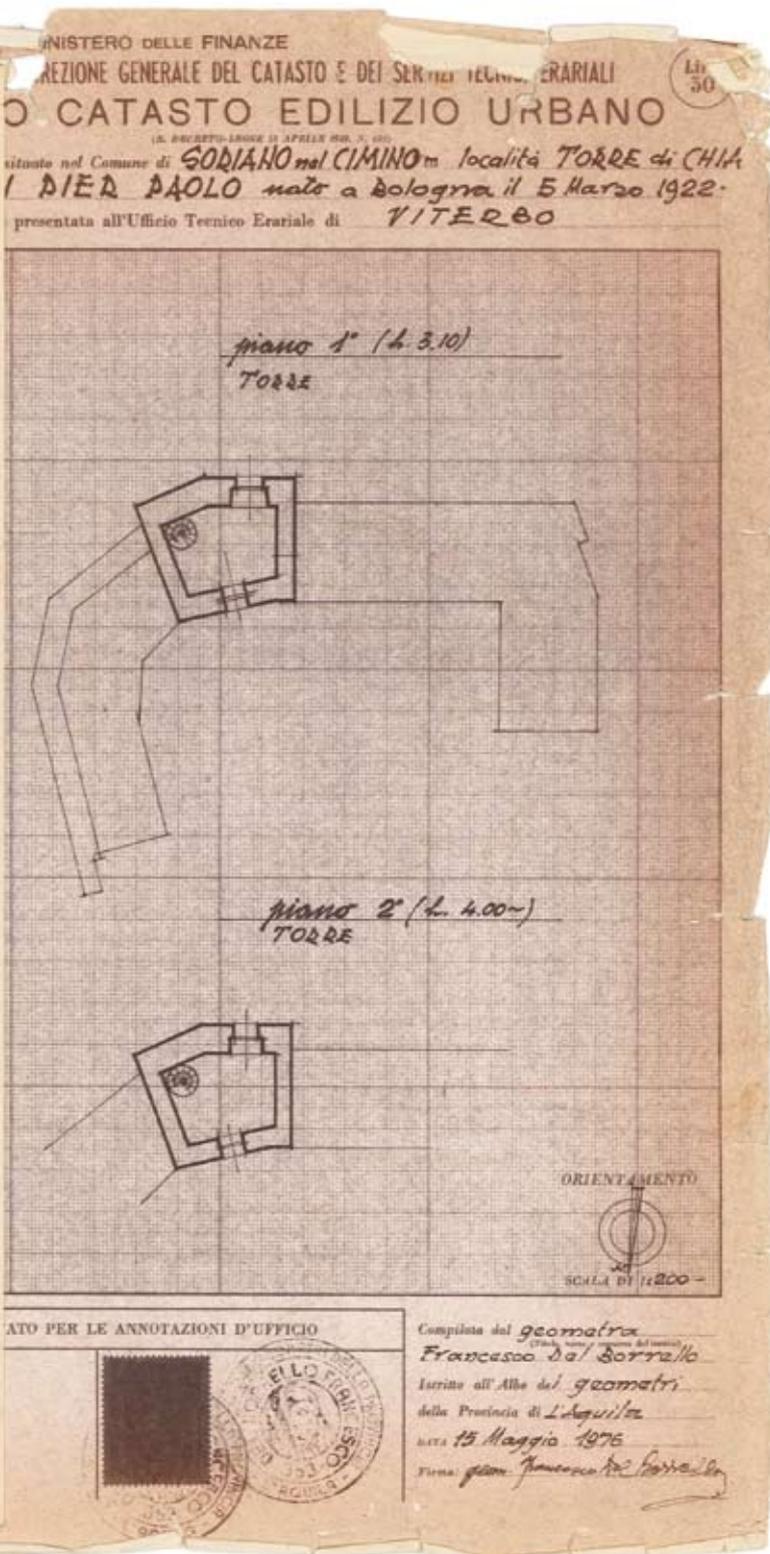
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3290

IL FUNZIONARIO  
RICEVENTE





4

minato da un grande camino che, quasi a carattere eponimo, lo redime da ogni corriva filiazione.  
 Le stanze poggiano su un basamento in sasso che accoglie i dislivelli naturali del luogo; negli interni scorre la narrazione delle pareti in pietra ritmate da strette fenditure a catturare il sole del sud. Verso la luce atona del nord, invece, le pareti a struttura di legno sono scandite da grandi vetrate che dilatano lo spazio verso l'infinito.

Il CASTELLO/CASA è una sorta di teorema della luce: annidata nella eterna ombra originata dalla concavità murata, assume il ruolo di lucreziano spettatore rivolto alla piena luce della scena di paesaggi lontani, quando il "[il primo raggio di mero sole] distribuisce... agli edifici... le apparenze di abitato involucro, ch'essi sono, del gesto e della vita"<sup>2</sup>.

La "casa come me" da PPP voluta, perseguita, "disegnata" insieme a un giovanissimo Dante Ferretti, realizzata dalle stesse maestranze che approntavano le esigenti scenografie dei suoi film, è di una modernità senza tempo.

Nelle stanze amate dal p(ro)fo(eta) si respira ancora il silenzio di sguardi lontani, di letture e parole scritte in laboriosa quiete; di abili pennellate su mille bianchi fogli, di presenze e assenze...

Il viso assorto, le mani a correggere una risma di testi battuti con la lettera 22, il corpo indifeso in stanze di essenzialità francescana: soggetti immortalati, nella seconda settimana d'ottobre 1975, dagli scatti di Dino Pedriali...<sup>3</sup>.

Nella stanza/studio, verso l'infinito, PPP aveva disposto un tavolo in legno, il Valmarana di Scarpa, e una comoda poltrona in pelle, "...vicino al camino, su un sasso squadrato reso piano da un vetro, Pier Paolo raggruppava dei libri, quelli necessari, perché - racconta Graziella Chiarocossi Cerami - portava da Roma solamente quelli che gli servivano per scrivere..."<sup>4</sup>.

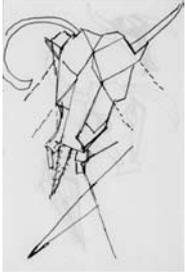
<sup>1</sup> "in settembre, con Bassani al volante della sua automobile, fa un delizioso viaggio nell'Italia Centrale, spostandosi a tappe sulle orme di Giotto e di Piero della Francesca: Firenze, Arezzo, Perugia, Todi, Spoleto..." in Nico Naldini, Pasolini, una vita, Tamellini edizioni, Albaredo d'Adige (VR), aprile 2014 [Einaudi, Torino, 1989], p.208.  
<sup>2</sup> Roberto Longhi, Piero della Francesca, 1923

<sup>3</sup> Le fotografie di Dino Pedriali sono pubblicate in: Pier Paolo Pasolini, Fotografie di Dino Pedriali, John&Levi ed, 2011

<sup>4</sup> Un frammento dei racconti di Graziella Chiarocossi Cerami durante il viaggio Roma-Chia. A Lei un infinito grazie per averci regalato l'emozione di percorrere le stanze amate dal cugino PIER PAOLO e per averci permesso di consultare preziosi documenti.

## Some questions regarding "junk" by Luciano Semerani

(page 3)



One asks oneself, when visiting the last Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale, after ascertaining that quite a few televisions sets and films have finally disappeared, but also that the hundred year old *avant-gardes* are now justly confined to the initiatives of touristic-artistic institutions, one asks oneself, I repeat, why contemporary art, although being in essence dramatic, dark, necrophiliac and obsessed by a desperate sexuality, why despite all this apparent expressive commitment it is void of emotions. Surrealism's absurd, Dada's intellectual paradox, the anti-bourgeois punch in the stomach, and even totalitarian triumphalism sought to create a diversity of moods, reactions of disgust or appeal which left everlasting traces in our memory. All of this is gone, because at least in the pieces placed on the market by the art galleries chosen by the Commissary, there is only the trace, maybe, of a not very high-brow intellectualism that is substituted by an industrious artisan effort lacking in ideas, and therefore hopeless, yet technically very elaborate, sometimes refined in its recovery of folklore, and paranoid regarding an ability that derives from an obsessive backdrop, a profuse, boring, extremely long and difficult process of collecting, welding, repainting and dematerialising junk. The question interests architects because it concerns as well the re-utilisation, recycling, and recovery of artifacts, buildings, and obsolete territories which we undertake in architecture.

There is no lack of interest for form in the pieces exhibited at the Venice Exhibition. Morphology.

Precious *herbari*, endless displays of books, infinite expanses of objects are Venice's hymn to morphology.

Morphology is the classification of objects (plants, animals) according to their formal properties.

But what are the formal properties that concern a work of art, or an architectural project?

First of all, in my opinion, the evocative properties, those that prefigure a future for the object.

Regarding the tragic dimension, which characterised our artistic expression in the century that I lived in, it was often the case of a critical judgment on a "missed future", on an "ideal failure", on a "lost love".

Reason was often lost in dreams because the narrative potential prevailed over the other semantic elements.

The woods, the river, the house and the mountain in the paintings by Cézanne, Kandinsky and Rousseau were not only elements of a "collective imaginary" but were also, thanks to a "morphological specificity", *that wood, that river, that house, that mountain*, and thus in their specific structure they each assumed an identity. But this is exactly the opposite of a morphological classifying practice, which is also a process of massification. Favouring identity is in opposition to the didactic dimension of scientific knowledge.

Is this concept of "identity" a "potential that is immanent to the object"?

I believe it is, I think that recognising this "potential of latent energy" that is deposited in a landscape, in a fragment, a ruin, in an obsolete building, is to put into consideration a "desire of a future" that is latent in the landscape, the fragment, the ruin, or the abandoned industrial structure.

The "desire for a future", that is for life, which artistic intentionality tends to reveal. This is what stands behind the success of the so called "*arte povera*". And also of "*l'objet trouvé*".

The "project" is the unveiling of what is essential in the object, the essential elements and not the whole reality of the object which becomes the object of the project, not only regarding the form of the object, but also because of its capacity to be a "*topos*" in the communication between the artist and the public, as a chargeable sign of an emotional tension, of a mood as well as of a logical support. It is well known that the notion of "project", with the mechanisms of the "abstract project" which characterises our species in its current evolutionary phase, is associated with the notion of "architecture". Yet the answers to the questions regarding the aims of the architectural project are different. "Project of what?"

The interpretation, taken from Le Corbusier's writings, which considers the architectural project as the project of an "*outil*", project in other words of a necessary instrument for the carrying out of other instruments (dwellings, hospitals, prisons), did not satisfy Le Corbusier himself, who later in life compared the compositional act to the "alchemical fusion of Marriage", to an amorous encounter, therefore recognising the irrational dimension of empathy, the reciprocal attraction of signs, the hermetic potential that icons have in the conceptual process of the project.

There is no single intelligent and responsible way when it comes to ret-

tribution, health or education which can dictate the physical and spatial properties of a prison, a hospital or a school, without becoming a vaster "prefiguring of the future" and "remembrance of the past", as ideal horizon of the fact that is realised through the project in question.

The "presence" of life both in the place and in the things, not as "preexistence" to the project, but as "coexistence", in the signs of the architecture, of the "consciousness of what is memorable and of what is a part of a possible future in the life of mankind".

In "that" place and "now".

It is from this intention that stems the analytic capacity to recognise the parts that form the existing object, the nature of the intrinsic and extrinsic relations that the said parts have with each other, in other words "morphology" becomes an exercise of experimentation of the transplants, montages, collages and metamorphoses possible with the materials accepted as worthy of a future life. The intentionality of the project is thus mainly that of building desire through emotions, and through enthusiasm, of Baudelairean memory, overcoming the objective dimension of the "traces" found, carrying them into the future, in a horizon of intuited sense, hoped for and desired, that language reveals.

What did Lina Bo Bardi, John Hejduk, Guido Canella and Aldo Rossi find so attractive in gasometers, in old crumbling factories, that is so important as to influence their language?

If they found vulgar gables, metallic trusses, the various and varied residues of a "*social comedy*" that is gone or dying, as *significant*, both in the suburbs of Sao Paolo and of Milan, it is certainly not because they had developed a taste for the "*bric-à-brac*", nor were they moved by the didactic imperative of industrial archaeology. Instead, I believe that they were moved, in that "*popular working-class*" world, by the absence of glitter, of the banality of every-day life, of the material nature of existence, and by the "*need for freedom*" that invention generates in the intellectual-architect. The "*many dreams*" of the people, of the masses that were brought to the cities by "*progress*", although now vanished, constitute the *humus* of those places that are the "*back shops*" of the contemporary metropolis, on the periphery of which is deposited the obsolete refuse of technological progress together with "*a certain type of humanity*". Whoever has read the chapter "*The cellar*" in Thomas Bernhard's *Autobiography* understands what I am saying. "*Scherzhauserfeld*", the non-place that was so loved by the young Bernhard because of its authentic state of perdition, is a category of the spirit, it is "*the place of humanity*" that is present in the folds and the sores on the body of the city.

We probably need to make space in the future of architecture and of the metropolis to a vision of the contradictions that is inclusive and not exclusive, that is narrative and not refuse.

It means living with these problems, not resolving them.

It is not a question of technology but of language. The essence, as always, is language.

Translation by Luis Gatt

## Pier Paolo Pasolini

### Return to Chia by Nico Naldini

(page 6)



We adored everything about our villages: the countryside with all its different crops and the peasants in their Sunday best, with the lingering smell of the stables as an inherent part of their very existence.

Every village had its irrigation channel, or more than one, all intersecting, with little bridges connecting the courtyards and the kitchen gardens, flowing by the most secret recesses of the houses. The ducks would float motionlessly where the current was strongest, their feet paddling away underwater. On the banks, the turkeys were taken out to pasture by the younger women, whose eyes were already seeking to understand the world. What with their work in the fields and stables, boys had little time, but Sunday would eventually come round and the smell of incense from the Mass would cling to their clothes. We used to cycle from one village to another along a single dusty, stony track. There were few cars in those days, and when one went by we would get down into the ditch to let the cloud of dust waft past.

We loved our villages and life appeared to be one of eternal youth, with a future without variation other than that of the seasons, which would burst into our lives and change our timetables and habits.

The only interruption of our impassioned contemplation of nature came once a year, with a journey to Rome. The word 'Rome' was always pronounced triumphantly at the railway ticket office. We took the Vienna-Rome train,

which stopped for a few minutes at Casarsa, but as soon as we were at the first bend, we already felt homesick for what we were leaving behind. We travelled through the night and dawn broke at Orte, which dominated from on high. The smiling Etruscans on their sepulchres welcomed us and the ode to country life started up again to the notes of Virgil's *alma tellus*.

Our cousin Pier Paolo was twenty-seven when he moved to Rome. Pursued by a recent scandal, he dreamt of a more radical escape, setting his sights on an imaginary East, only to slide back into the humiliation of hearing himself called a '*Rimbaud without talent*'. Out of work and maintained by a relative in a rented room, all he had going for him was the freedom of the penniless. Even though with some desperate moments, he took advantage of this and treated it like a holiday, for his room gave onto the Tiber, where crowds of cheerful, open-minded young Romans would pass by. The days went by and he wanted to take that world in, rather than just watch it from the outside. The young man of letters, all introspection and inner dialectic, was swept away by the real world of the people, which tore the drapes off him. Rushing wildly about, he penetrated the world of popular humility and when reality came together in a universe of dreams, he began to describe this world of the people with the echoes of its age-old gaiety. Mockery, derision and irony poured down from the great, unattainable Belli. The Pier Paolo who came to the banks of the Tiber was a pure young man who lived through the extraordinary nature of his perceptions.

But the Tiber had a king of its own, the poet Sandro Penna, whose only aim in life had for years been that of walking along the Lungotevere, surrounded by the young people with whom he mingled.

They naturally soon became friends: '*You're Penna.*' '*And you're Pasolini.*' With the assistance of his new friends in Rome, and especially of Giorgio Bassani, Pier Paolo began working on the very bottom rungs of local cinema as a script editor. He also worked with Fellini, who gave him a second-hand Fiat Seicento, with which he began to expand his range of action as far as the outer suburbs, where the kids packed into the same old criminal bar, ready to mock any new arrival but also to strike up immediate friendships.

The lure of the unknown gave wings to the Seicento, in which the stench of the kids' feet condensed from one day to the next and which Pasolini seemed to appreciate as much as De Quincey did his opium. He also continued his literary and cinematographic career, in a strange, unprecedented osmotic form, in a parallel of Roman stories between *Ragazzi di vita* and *Accattone*. But what is the finest story ever told over the millennia? The answer came instantly to the soul of Pasolini the unbeliever: *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*.

Making a film requires a project, a subject, a screenplay, and a selection of actors and of places where it is to be shot. There was no problem for the actors, for Pasolini had always had them right before his eyes: they were hustlers, from the Citti brothers, Sergio and Franco, to Balilla (who would die on the cross in the film *La ricotta*) and countless others.

The locations were those he had wildly frequented in his car and on foot. He also went to Israel on reconnaissance, but he did not like the modernity of the new state and he came across no traces of the ancient world in it. He found what he was seeking not where Christ had lived but in Italy, and he found it in the South, and in Matera in particular. One scene that sets the whole film alight is that of the baptism of Christ, with the water pouring from the hands of Saint John the Baptist.

Pasolini used no megaphone and gave no peremptory orders, nor did he let himself go to hysterical scenes at the slightest hitch. Maybe he recalled an ancient maxim of the classical world, which encapsulates the energy of any crucial act: '*Equitare, arcum tendere, veritatem dicere*'. He was always calm and quiet, always concentrated, and he thought like a strategist before giving even the simplest instruction. The baptism of Christ. Orte was perfect, with its special conformation and pristine Roman countryside all around. Pier Paolo went through it, attracted by a tall tower that appeared to rise up on its own. As he approached, he found it was part of an ancient defensive wall enclosing a vast space with many ruins – the complex known as the Torre di Chia. Up against the walls is a brook with primeval sink holes and massive boulders that rolled down in distant geological eras. These ancient stones had been part of the world long before man arrived, and their sacredness convinced him to make this the setting for the baptism of Christ.

I may not remember well but I believe a passionate desire to purchase this place simply swept over him, with those towers and ancient walls symbolising a safe haven for life. While the highest tower and the area around it were to remain intact, the ruin, possibly an old guardhouse, was to have two modern extensions, with vast, extremely modern windows. These two wings were to enclose an even more secret place, where Pasolini would have his body buried, with Ninetto beside him.

A studio bedroom in one wing and a sitting room with leather sofas and a fireplace in the other. The childish joy of building sandcastles.

For his future work as a writer, however, he needed an even more secluded place – a vast wooden pavilion painted green, blending in with the nature around it, with two sofas, a table and, next to the table another one of unusual proportions. A work table, he called it, but what work would that be? Possibly a mix of written pages, graffiti and photos, of which only the written pages would survive – about six hundred typewritten sheets that would be published some years after Pasolini's death, under the title *Petrolio*.

The happiness of New Year of 1974 around the sitting-room table, with the fire crackling in the hearth and then lunch at the nearby trattoria, followed by more glasses raised in the sitting room with its huge windows giving onto the brook and its erratic boulders. Pier Paolo perceived some negative signs that evening. Nobody wanted to notice, but simply filled their glasses, and yet his superstitions, which he cultivated with that sprite, Sergio Citti, were well known. Pier Paolo was worried, but we knew how Elsa Morante had extended two fingers across his forehead and banished his gloom the way one shoos away an insect.

Pier Paolo announced to his guests: '*Next year will be one of famine.*' A rather too Biblical comment for our then rather blurred minds.

But by a quirk of fate, the perfect isolation of Chia was not that perfect after all, for it had a slight flaw. From one corner of the walls, the view stretches out over another person's land. We did not know who the owner might be but, like in so many other places, there was always the threat that some industrial shed might rise up and ruin the carefully studied isolation forever. Suspicion can be a snare. So Pier Paolo was much relieved when I offered to go a find the owner of that plot and make him an offer for it, for no other reason than to keep that natural backdrop intact.

There were warm greetings and much joy when the first guests arrived. Mimi and Guido Piovene, Moravia, who was at home here, and Guido Davico Bonino, who was about to conclude the move of Pier Paolo's works to Einaudi. A caretaker, Troccoli, was hired from the nearby village and Pasolini took to his teenage son, who appeared in a number of scenes in the film *Salò*.

Pier Paolo spent much of his time in Chia but in the evenings he would return to the home of his mother, whose life was for him both in his presence and in his absence.

Translation by Simon Turner

### *The infinite inhabits Chia. Pier Paolo Pasolini's house/castle* by Maria Grazia Eccheli

(page 12)



From the deep wooded furrows of Fosso del Rio and Fosso di Fontana Vecchia, two ravines civilised by the Etruscans, rises a triangular piece of land whose vertex, at the meeting of two river banks, is the virtual centre of two semi-circles that trace the defensive geometries of the Medieval castle of Colle di Casale.

Arched between the margins of the vales, the two walls hold two aligned pentagonal towers – one very high (42 meters), the second one broken – which signal the ideal itinerary.

An opening next to the first tower communicates the dense woods, which are held by the first wall, with a wide lawn, a *spianata*, where the two defensive structures face and, as in a tournament field, are visible to each other. Emerging from a moat – from its position below the horizon –, the broken tower is the entrance to the last and secret *hortus conclusus*: a courtyard suspended over the cliff.

The mystery is in the view, in that overlook on neighbouring ruins, on the faraway landscape seen in the full light of noon, chosen, one would say, by the very curving of the walls: Bomarzo, Mugnano and the lands of the Tiberian Valley. A Tuscia with streets, pathways, Etruscan grottoes and enigmatic "pyramidal altars". A place high above the deep dales where the Mola flows, improvising waterfalls, such as the one known as di Fosso (or *del Castello*) which in the fecund imaginary transpositions/osmoses of the legendary Palestinian topographies into Italian landscapes that PPP undertakes, becomes the backdrop for the scene of the Baptism of Jesus in *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*.

His capacity to see myth in different places, almost as though the *genius loci* of a place could migrate to unexpected locations, is perhaps at the bottom of PPP's idea of transposing a CASTLE – a building without interiors and congealed within its muted military essence, almost to the point of becoming a mere heraldic symbol, apparently inalterable – into a DWELLING. Then again, the "visits" of Longhi's pupil to Piero della Francesca's world in Arezzo were legendary<sup>1</sup>.

Thus the COURTYARD/ROOM – the lawn as floor, and for a roof the leafy branches of the trees – becomes the *impluvium* of an imagined house. A simple wooden structure (less than four meters long and three meters high) is added to the stone walls, which have no interiors, in order to double the width of the scythe-shaped layout, and obtains volumes and form from the central tower that both divides and unites it. Dwelling thus takes place in

two wings (built at different moments during the Seventies). Direct access from the courtyard gives the sense of rooms of passage, one within the other, recalling an ancient, perhaps rural or peasant way of life.

A cursory wooden bridge with bayonet railings – boundary between the flatland and the private space of the poet – serves as entry into the stone parallel-epiped at the base of the broken tower. There, as in fairy-tales, are four doors: two placed at the axis of the castle and the house – the spaces at the interior and exterior of the walls: north and south – the two other opposite doors are at the centre of the dwelling spaces: to the east the bedroom, the bathroom and the studio; to the west his mother Susanna's bedroom, divided from the spacious living-room by a bathroom and a kitchenette. In contrast to the rest of the structure, which is placed against the wall, the living-room presents a sudden break: taking advantage of an existing breach, it distances itself from the base of the wall to invent itself as a wall-less pavilion, between the courtyard and the trees, in which the space is dominated by a large fireplace.

The rooms stand on a stone base which accommodates the uneven nature of the ground; in the interior spaces the flow of the narrative of the stone walls is punctuated by narrow gaps which allow the sunlight from the south, whereas towards the languid northern light the wooden walls are characterised by large windowpanes which dilate space towards infinity.

The CASTLE/HOUSE is a sort of theorem of light: nested within the eternal shadow which originates in the walled concavity, it assumes the role of the Lucretian spectator faced towards the full light of faraway landscapes, when "[the first ray of mere sun] distributes... to the buildings... the appearances of inhabited shells, which they are, of gesture and of life"<sup>2</sup>.

The "house like myself" which PPP wanted, pursued, that he "designed" together with a very young Dante Ferretti, and realised with the same mastery with which they dealt with the demanding set designs for his films, is characterised by a timeless modernity.

In the rooms that the *prophet* loved one can still breathe the silence of faraway gazes, of readings and words written in industrious quiet; of skillful brush strokes on a thousand white sheets of paper, of presences and absences. His visage absorbed, the hands busy correcting a ream of texts typewritten with *letter 22*, the body defenseless in rooms of Franciscan simplicity: subjects immortalised, in the *second week of October, 1975*, by the camera of Dino Pedriali<sup>3</sup>. In his room/studio, facing infinity, PPP had placed a wooden table, Scarpa's *Valmarana*, and a comfortable leather armchair, "(...) next to the fireplace, on an uneven stone made flat by a glass pane, Pier Paolo would gather some books, those necessary, because – Graziella Chiarocossi Cerami recounts – he would bring from Rome only those that he needed for writing"<sup>4</sup>.

Translation by Luis Gatt

<sup>1</sup> "in September, with Bassani at the wheel of his automobile, he went on a wonderful trip around Central Italy, following the footsteps of Giotto and Piero della Francesca: Florence, Arezzo, Perugia, Todi, Spoleto..." in Nico Naldini, *Pasolini, una vita*, Tamellini edizioni, Albaredo d'Adige (VR), April 2014 [Einaudi, Torino, 1989], p.208.

<sup>2</sup> Roberto Longhi, *Piero della Francesca*, 1923

<sup>3</sup> Dino Pedriali's photos are published in: *Pier Paolo Pasolini, Fotografie di Dino Pedriali*, John&Levi ed, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> A fragment of Graziella Chiarocossi Cerami's stories during our journey from Rome to Chia. A heartfelt thank you to her for giving us the opportunity of visiting the rooms that her cousin PIER PAOLO loved, and for allowing us to consult precious documents.

## A story of emotion. Travelling towards Pier Paolo Pasolini's hermitage in Chia by Andrea Volpe

(page 16)



The appointment was in Piazza Mazzini at 10.30. The taxi was late, brief pleasantries were exchanged. It was early May in Rome and there was already hot African weather. "You get the car, you drive it..." Graziella smiled but decisively handed me the keys while I feigned nonchalantly<sup>1</sup>. Inside however I felt like exploding, from emotion, from the responsibility.

We departed. Direction Chia. But first we had to get out of Rome's *Foro Italico*, and *Ponte Milvio*, then the notorious *Ponte Flaminio* designed by Armando Brasini; the bridge on which Nanni Moretti in an episode of *Caro Diario* must pathologically pass over on his Vespa scooter at least twice a day. It's a scene that precedes a few minutes before another scene, which is accompanied by the music of Keith Jarrett's *Köln Concert*. As Nanni Moretti says in this scene, it is a journey towards "the place where Pasolini was killed".

Perhaps it's the most beautiful homage to Pasolini: dry, heart-breaking,

without rhetoric and in jealous naivety I even did it myself, obviously on a Vespa, during those days of my life in Rome.

I was thinking about this while I followed Graziella's directions for the *Autostrada del Sole*. And so another pilgrimage with scattered fragments of memories and disorder but at the same time there was a conscious effort of having to stay morally clean. After all we were not going to Lourdes.

Why then was this childish emotion trying to dominate me? Was there an unconscious desire for a miracle? Was I expecting some revelation or prophecy? In the meantime, the windshield revealed the damaged skyline of Orte, one of the set on "*La forma della città*"<sup>2</sup>. The incongruous condo that troubled Pasolini so much was inevitably multiplied and turned into faux-rustic neighbourhoods with neat rows of industrial prefabricated buildings, which assaulted the hill and plains below. Yet it is still the most ancient and remote Tuscia that welcomed us. Despite the building of so many scars, that landscape for us hypersensitive motorway travellers is still the one described in the finale of Pasolini's confessional poem *Poeta delle Ceneri*<sup>3</sup>.

Indeed, at the River Jordan and the Middle East's *Gospel according to St. Matthew* one can find a few kilometres from the road at Torre di Chia the ancient early medieval fortification bought by Pasolini in 1970 where he wrote his final novel as a hermit.

I thought to myself that it was actually a bit difficult not to expect a sacred experience from this tour, or at least another baptismal rite. After all, we were heading towards the Palestine of Viterbo, renowned thanks to the movie and the mythology on which we grew up on<sup>4</sup>.

First though, with a little of tension in the air we stopped at a motorway service. Graziella couldn't find the keys to the house, which consequently lead us to the fear of a wasted trip. However, once past the gate that separated the forest from the large open space inside the ring of walls the feeling disappeared. A theatre company warmed up on music and songs. They came out of the wooden pavilion next to the medieval castle restored by Pasolini along with the young Dante Ferretti<sup>5</sup>. The poet used to draw in the pavilion.

The sun was up, the air hot, the light was too strong and the shadows were too dark, surely the worst time to take photos. But these issues were now irrelevant. The problem laid elsewhere. How could you reasonably record being there? How could you think of taking more photographs after those shot by Gideon Bachmann, Deborah Beer and Dino Pedriali, the last witness to the intimacy of the home of Chia<sup>6</sup>?

And then there was a presence, an absence so strong. Forty years have passed since the death of Pasolini and very few from that of Vincenzo Cerami. The house is still closed, hidden by the great wall that protected the ruins. It was inaccessible despite a wooden bridge with surprisingly Japanese characters, past the front rampart, on the plateau where we silently stood. And then there was the passageway to a narrow entrance.

To understand the place we carefully studied detailed records of black and white photographs: Pasolini posing before the walls, before the high tower of Chia, waiting at the front door as an enigmatic guest that still benevolently welcomed us. His spirit will live forever over that threshold. Transfigured in his home between the landscape, he is framed, protective looking.

Some of his last verses in dialect from *La nuova gioventù* (The New Youth) came to my mind. They illustrate nostalgia for rural culture in Friuli, where a similar humble beauty was turned into cinematic experience in the style of Chia Mountains. Caught in a sequence of windows, like frames of a long sequence shot, they turn north following the trail of ancient walls as if to embrace the distant Apennines.

"(I) The sun gilds Chia with its pink oaks and the Apennines know of hot sand. I am a dead man here, who returns today in a day of celebration March 5, 1974. [...] Peasants of Chia! Hundreds of years or a moment ago I was in you. But now, from the time the land is abandoned you are not in me..."<sup>7</sup>

The door was finally opened here. Feelings of denial, desire, were fulfilled by the miracle of crossing the threshold of this house, which is both a poem and a narrative film made of space, light and shadow. It was therefore a pure architectural fact. P.P.P. believed it to be an apodictic demonstration of the possibility of construction of the new by virtue of the profound dialogue with tradition. It was architecture literally supporting the old, to the *strength of the past*. It was time to go. We moved away from a house whose character "more modern than any modern" house<sup>8</sup> was ultimately for us architects, too prone to enthusiasm, one of the most authentic self-portrait of Pasolini.

translation by Michael Phillips

<sup>1</sup> These brief notes seek to describe the atmosphere of the journey made to Torre di Chia last May 9, made possible thanks to the kind availability of Pier Paolo Pasolini's nephew Graziella Chiarocossi Cerami.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to "*Pasolini e...la forma della città*", a short film directed by Paul Brunatto in the autumn of 1973 for Rai, an episode of *land...tv* show, curated by Anna Zanoli, a former student of Roberto Longhi. Roberto Chiesi includes this short film in Pasolini's body of work, *Lo sguardo di Pasolini la forma della città, un film di Pier Paolo Pasolini e Paolo Brunatto* in [www.pasoli.it/articles/pasolini.htm](http://www.pasoli.it/articles/pasolini.htm), where he essentially puts together the suggestion by Naldini, Contini and Laurencin of the real possibility of inclusion in PPP's official filmography of Rai's episode which employed Brunatto as their established director.

<sup>3</sup> *Ebbene ti confiderò prima di lasciarti che io vorrei essere scrittore di musica, vivere con degli strumenti dentro la torre di Viterbo che non riesco a comprare, nel paesaggio più bello del mondo, dove l'Ariosto sarebbe impazzito di gioia nel vedersi ricreato con tanta innocenza di querce, colli, acque e botri, e lì comporre musica l'unica azione espressiva forse, alta, e indefinibile come le azioni della realtà"* Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Poeta delle Ceneri*, Archinto editore, Milano, 2010 (revised edition based on the typewritten original document).



