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*The village of Monterinaldi, 1949-1961: Casa Ricci. (Photo Dario Borruto)*

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# Happy birthday Leonardo (Ricci)

Matteo Zambelli

In 2018 not only is Leonardo da Vinci being celebrated but so is Leonardo Ricci: a star of post-war Italian architecture, still to a great degree undervalued

In 2018 there are celebrations for the centennial of the birth of Florentine architect – but also painter and existential philosopher – **Leonardo Ricci** (1918-1994), author of important works of Italian post-war architectural inquiry, but not much talked about in the history books. The Comitato Nazionale Ricci 100 is organizing several initiatives to study and promote him, which will culminate in an international conference, a catalogue and a monographic exhibition in Florence.



## Summer at the Campus

through 14 October

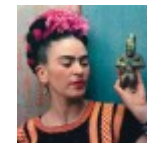


## The Architettura of the former Yugoslavia

15 luglio 2018 – 13 gennaio 2019



## The photos of Basilico in Aosta



## Frida Kahlo's Wardrobe



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Different phases can be seen in the career of Leonardo Ricci. The first corresponds to the Agàpe Ecumenical Centre in Prali (1947-1951), done for the Waldensian Evangelical Church. The complex, built using local materials and with clear references to the Piedmontese building tradition, is an expression of architectural neo-realism and contextualism. Influenced by the Prali centre is the village of Monterinaldi, near Florence (1949-1961); the settlement is made up of fifteen houses that, created without a unifying plan, appear “born” from the earth due to the use of stone quarried directly from the site, which is counterbalanced by the white plaster of the surfaces. The result is a masterpiece of Italian neorealism with overtones of Wright’s organicism.





↑ Villa Balmain, 1958. (Photo AFM Elisabetta Pieri)

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In the mid-1950s there was the expressionist-organicist turning point of Villa Balmain on the Island of Elba (1958): based on the curvilinearity of the ellipse, it has a sculptural and dynamic appearance. The social experiment of the Monte degli Ulivi village in Riesi (1963-1967) for the Sicilian Waldensian community was born out of the roundness of Balmain, combined with the styles from the Monterinaldi experience and references to the Sicilian baroque; here, unfortunately, the church was not built, but instead there is a powerful archisculptura containing an ancestral and primordial sacred space. The 1960s were the brutalist and macrostructure years, with the construction in Sorgane (Florence, 1962-1968) of the so-called "Ship", a 260-meter-long building containing housing for 1,500 inhabitants, shops and offices. The 1970s proceeded with macrostructures and with the adoption of a hypermorphological methodology that "turns to a more complicated compositional formula, with powerful polygonal interconnections and solid volumes in the geometric images and in the obliquely cut and intersecting linear paths" (Corrado Gavinelli, *Ricci e Agàpe nel pensiero e nelle opere*, in Mirella Loik, Gianni Rostan, Corrado Gavinelli (edited by), *L'architettura di Leonardo Ricci. Agàpe e Riesi*, Claudiana Editrice, Turin 2001, p. 24). An example of this phase is the Palazzo di Giustizia of Savona (1977-1981), a portion of a megastructure whose styles can also be found in the Palazzo di Giustizia of Florence (1988) which, built posthumously (2000-2012), caused such controversy.



↑ *Palazzo di Giustizia of Florence: project 1988; built posthumously 2000-2012. (Photo Dario Borruto)*

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Between the past and the present

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# ABITARE

Founded in 1961 by Piera Peroni Abitare magazine has crossed the history of costume, architecture and design, international, following in its pages the evolution of our ways of life and how we inhabit places



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