

Press Release

**The Italian Pavilion
at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition
la Biennale di Venezia
THE FOUR SEASONS**

**Architecture for the 'Made in Italy' system, from Adriano Olivetti to the Green Economy
curated by Luca Zevi**

Venice, Tese delle Vergini at the Arsenale, from 29 August to 25 November 2012

This year is not like others. The Italian Pavilion at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition, the Venice Biennale, must put itself at the centre of this difference and become an occasion for reflecting on the relationship between economic crisis, architecture and land. It must be a space where a project for our country's growth can be imagined, the 'common ground' must be translated into a solid, visionary project in which culture and economy enter into a new agreement.

This is the 'due premiss' of **Luca Zevi**, chosen by *General Direction for Landscape, Fine Arts, Architecture and Contemporary Art* of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities as the curator of the Italian Pavilion at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition.

The project unfolds like the account of a possible meeting, the rewriting of an 'agreement' - shared place and possible space - in which the rationale of architecture, the land and the environment communicate with that of economic development. A 'common ground' between business and architecture as inescapable requisite for recovery.

The story describes the 'four seasons' of architecture for the 'Made in Italy' system along its bumpy and fertile pathway, in search of a virtuous relationship between architecture, growth and innovation.

1st season: Adriano Olivetti nostalgia for the future

It is a pathway that can only begin with Adriano Olivetti's work in postwar Italy as the paradigm of a development model in which industrial politics, social politics and cultural promotion come together to propose an innovative direction for planning changes to the land. It was a unique experience for the times and the context, which because of its relevance induces a positive 'nostalgia for the future'.

Olivetti was an innovator in the way he did business and in his vision of the world, his choices and his principles. He was convinced that 'doing business' cannot stray from an ethical and responsible attitude to the workers and the area that houses the factories. A lover of the avant-garde in art and architecture, he involved all the most talented architects and designers of the 1950s, making every industrial complex into a work of art. Ivrea became the place for testing a virtuous 'factory city', considered an experimental module of a possible regional development.

The Pavilion opens with this story because Olivetti's vision - which kept architecture, economics and the land together - may become the key point on which to begin rewriting the future of the country.

2nd season: the assault on the land

Starting from the 1980s, with the widespread entrepreneurial fervour following the loss of major industries from Italy, there was a kind of 'assault' on the land by projects that were very vigorous in terms of production, but wholly disinterested in any form of architectural expression or appropriate insertion in the landscape. This was the period of production 'in the stair cupboard or warehouse, often dressed up with a house in Swiss chalet style', the zero point of architecture for the 'Made in Italy' system.

3rd season: architecture for the 'Made in Italy' system

In the last 15 years some 'Made in Italy' companies - marked by an 'Olivetti typology' in dimension and specialised production - have decided to build their factories and head offices to

first class architectural designs. The result is buildings that pay heed to the poetics of the places and the objects, to the lives of people and to environmental sensitivity, documented - and 'narrated' - in the exhibition. Doing 'virtuous' business also in imagining the production places and marketing is helping to create new landscapes.

The exhibition is transformed into a pathway of discovery, knowledge and reflection on architectural and planning works for the 'Made in Italy' system. The sense of the perspective lies in their action: industry that asks architecture for the outline of the places, the everyday, its own identity.

4th season: reMade in Italy

The challenge of the 'fourth season' - the systemisation of 'Made in Italy' companies in the direction of a Green Economy - is fated to meet the challenge of Expo 2015 'Nourish the Planet', which will be an extraordinary opportunity for reflecting on the relationship between land and environment, city and agricultural production, and the sense of 'design' in the north and south of the world. Nutrition, which will be the hub of Expo 2015, prompts further analysis of the sustainable community concept: the relationship between city and countryside, industrialisation and agricultural production.

The Italian Pavilion thus becomes a place where designers, businessmen and politicians begin to seriously look at the questions of living, in anticipation of an era when the obsession with the megalopolis must leave room for new rules inspired by the community, in which nourishment, moving and living become functions of the same equation.

Some recent Italian experiments that move in this direction will be illustrated: upgrading of towns by inserting new-generation production activities; rethinking of public spaces aimed at a city on a child's dimension, which become the parameter of the quality of life in urban spaces, in an attempt to rethink the city as an eminently public place.

A sustainable Italian Pavilion

The Italian Pavilion does not restrict itself to asserting a new way of living, but tries to offer a kind of prototype of a different type of housing, which keeps together the culture of the environment and the Green Economy. The Pavilion will thus be turned into an energetically self-sufficient and environmentally welcoming place. Multimedia tools and innovative technology will allow the visitor to interact with the story, to ask questions, to virtually meet the main characters in the story being told. Interaction with animated elements - holograms, virtual people and videos - will mark every stage of the narrative. Conversations, interviews and performances will occupy the space every day.

ITALIAN PAVILION PRESS CONFERENCE

Tuesday 28 August, *time to be decided, communication to follow.*

Please send an email to chiaralunardelli@gmail.com

Access to the exhibition spaces at the Arsenale requires accreditation from the Biennale.

press releases and images available at the following link:

<https://sites.google.com/site/padiglione2012/>

USER: pad.italia2012@gmail.com

PW: italia2012

OPENING OF THE ITALIAN PAVILION

Tuesday 28 August, 5 pm

Italian Pavilion 13th International Architecture Exhibition

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