



100 YEARS BAUHAUS

What interest do we take in Modern Movement today?

16th DOCOMOMO Germany
3rd RMB Conference

1st March 2019 | Berlin

M. Melenhorst, U. Pottgiesser, T. Kellner, F. Jaschke (EDs.)

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Preface

Prof. ir. Michel Melenhorst; Prof. Dr.-Ing. Uta Pottgiesser

The International Conference in Berlin takes the 100th anniversary of the Bauhaus as an opportunity to discuss the significance of modernity in the 21st century: 'What interest do we take in the Modern Movement today? The conference focus lies on the concepts, visions, and impulses emanating from Modern Movement and how they can be related to today's social, economic, cultural and in particular creative issues.

The 2019 DOCOMOMO Germany Conference in Berlin continues the tradition of the Karlsruhe DOCOMOMO Germany Conference and is this year co-organised by the Hochschule Ostwestfalen- Lippe and 'RMB', an initiative to design an educational framework of common definitions on a European level on the reuse of Modernist Buildings. This cooperation resulted in a new conference format: a combination of invited keynote speakers and selected scientific lectures.

The keynote speakers, David Chipperfield, Fernando Romero and Wiel Arets report from their respective professional practices in architecture, research and education on their involvement with Modern Movement architecture and modernism in general. In the call for papers we posed the following questions:

Are the social, spatial and constructional concepts formulated by modern movement and post-war modernism still sustainable today?

What role do cultural and climatic conditions play in the preservation, renovation, and transformation of spaces, buildings, and modern movement sites?

How can the basic ideas of classical modernism be continued 100 years later and thus contribute to solving current challenges?

What contribution can be expected from academic and professional education, and which learning formats are suitable for this?

In this conference proceedings, you will find the complete program and the papers. For some of the papers, you will only find the abstracts

The contributions at the conference, both from the keynote speakers as from the papers presented in 9 paper sessions and two poster sessions, show an overwhelming landscape of positions and opinions, from different professional and geographical backgrounds. Originally the sessions were organized according to the different workgroup topics in Docomomo:

We selected them for a special Docomomo Germany publication, to be published after the Conference. Also the Keynotes lectures you will not find in the Proceedings. In a special issue of Docomomo International Journal, dedicated to RMB and this Conference theme, we will publish transcripts of the lectures and the podium discussion, as well as interviews with the three Keynote speakers.

Education + Theory (about programs, concepts, and approaches)
Register (about buildings, typologies or architects/planners)
Urbanism + Landscape (about building ensembles, outdoor spaces, and policies)
Technology (via components, materials or techniques)
Interior Design (about interiors, extensions, and atmospheres)

Enjoy the conferences and the proceedings

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Uta Pottgiesser, OWL University of Applied Sciences,
Vice Chair Docomomo Germany

Prof. ir. Michel Melenhorst, OWL University of Applied Sciences,
Coordinator RMB

However, themes such as politics, mass housing, and standardization and actually re-use have become increasingly important in the discussion on the documentation and conservation of modern movement. To make clear the shift in the debate and the topics that are brought in at the conference we decided to rename some of the sessions. By this renaming, we already partly reveal some of the answers to the conference question: 'What interest do we take in the Modern Movement today?

Gonalo Canto Moniz

Sara Di Resta, Elena Lemma, Davide Tassera, develop research on the hidden modern architecture, built out of the cities for the industrial activities. The map of this modern “cathedrals” is putting in discussion the reuse of functional buildings that are today symbols of modern identity, spanning the concept of heritage. The legacy of Piero Portaluppi’s electric architecture - Valdo power station (1919-1923) case study – is not only a “cathedral” of the modern times but also an infrastructure that reorganize the territory and the landscape.

100 years after the opening of Bauhaus, modern education is also being reinvented in worldwide schools with tools and methods imported of other knowledge areas from art to social sciences to face contemporary needs and complexity.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Susanne Clemente

Architect and Engineer; PhD Candidate
University of Rome



Susanna Clemente, Architect and Engineer, is a PhD candidate in Architecture and Construction at La Sapienza University of Rome. She participated with Brocchetta in "Objects", section of the 13th Prague Quadrennial curated by Tomáš Svoboda. She recently won the call "Inhabited Landscapes", Italian Pavilion, 14th Architecture Biennale, Venice, and the first edition of "Terme di Chianciano Garden Festival" with UnderWaterGarden. She collaborated with Teatro dell'Opera di Roma for several scenic projects. She participated in World Stage Design 2013, Cardiff, and, as a member of the jury, in the second edition of the Rome Film Festival and for the prize David Giovani.

Alessandra Capanna

Architect; PhD, Researcher-Assistant Professor in Architectural Design
University of Rome



Alessandra Capanna, Architect, Researcher-Assistant Professor in Architectural Design, since 2000, as a component of QART, Laboratory for the Study of Contemporary Rome, took part in the drafting of Chart of Quality for the Contemporary Town and conducted the research "School reform and its significance in school regulation and typology". Component of the scientific committee of PhD school in Architecture and Construction, since 2005 she is the author of the items of numerous Roman architects of the twentieth century in the Biographical Dictionary of Italians and, among numerous publications, of the book *Le Corbusier*. Padiglione Philips, Bruxelles, Torino 2000.

Notes

[illegible]

TAC Office Rome.

From interviews with the protagonists.

Abstract

The Architects Collaborative (TAC), founded in 1945 by Walter Gropius and seven colleagues from the prestigious university institution of MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was one of the most influential and prestigious names in the international architecture field of the twentieth century. The TAC worked for 50 years, closing definitively in 1995. In the 1960s they opened an office in Rome, which mainly dealt with projects in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. Our research deals with this experience, little-known, but fundamental for the experimentation of a method that acknowledged a great role in the collaboration between peers and to the rejection of individualism in the project. The research began about a

year ago, interviewing some witnesses participating in the projects developed in the TAC Office in Rome. The heritage which we take from the Modern Movement today is one of the consequent remarks that can be followed in the exposition of the interviews which we propose to present in the conference celebrating the 100 years from the foundation of the Bauhaus and the 50 from the death of Gropius. Through the witnesses collected, we will then analyze the methodological aspects of the collective work in architectural design, which today are not only sustainable but at the basis of the training for the modern professional.

Introduction

In 2014 the USA pavilion at the 14th Biennale of Venezia¹ exhibited a catalog entitled OfficeUS; among these, the TAC² dossier briefly showed the numerous achievements that over time involved the architects of the various offices, opened as an emanation of the Boston-based architecture company. The seat of Rome was the largest, after that of Cambridge (Massachusetts), and was active for ten years, from 1960 to 1970. The research presented, therefore, began by putting into practice recent studies on the Heritage of the Modern Architecture in Western Europe and the encounters with the Roman architects who were hired as collaborators of the TAC Office in Rome. The interviews that are currently been made are Arch. Piero Moroli, who worked for the Roman TAC Office from 1960 to 1966; Arch. Piero Sartogo, from 1960 to 1961; Arch. Marco Peticca from 1965 to 1969. From the list of architects and collaborators inserted at the end of the book that Gropius and his partners published after the first twenty years of activity (TAC 1945-1965)³ and from the memoirs of the architects already interviewed, who referred to other designers present in the study after 1965, it was possible to trace other collaborators with whom more meetings are scheduled. An important testimony was given by Mrs. Maria Rivalta, who at the time was a member of the Panero-Weidlinger-Salvadori Company, and her husband, the architect Richard Brooker, who was the president and CEO of the TAC Office in Rome, since 1962. Dick and Mimi Brooker nostalgically recall those years in Rome. Panero was an Italian-American engineering company that had offices in New York, Boston, Washington, San Francisco and at the time of the “Italian Boom of the Sixties”, for a short time, even in Rome: for this great engineering studio many young surveyors and architects worked and were then

recruited by Gropius and his associates for the executive design activities of the buildings for the University of Baghdad, Tunis, Lagos, whose stories, long and complex, are currently in an early stage of the present research.

The interviews with the witnesses of the time as a tool, not only allows to know the facts from the historiographic point of view, in the absence of adequate publications but is also useful for critical analysis of the cultural heritage that years later those protagonists claim to have acquired. It also becomes a means to share an analysis of the project as a product of the architect's profession, between thought, professional practice and decoding of contemporaneity.

An interview with Marco Peticca

The interviews conducted so far have been structured around constant themes, focusing primarily on the organization of the study, the working method, the techniques of drawing, the role recognized to Walter Gropius and, finally, the particularity of the Office in Rome. From the comparison of the experiences, it was possible to obtain a fairly faithful reconstruction, even more, precious thinking of the lack of publications related to this spot experience in Rome. Finally, for each of the testimonies, thanks to the collaboration of the architects involved, aspects and influences were investigated at an individual level.

Among the interviews conducted so far, we chose to report that one with Marco Peticca⁴. His direct witness allows us to highlight the main methodological aspects characterizing the TAC Office in Rome, in particular, those ones related to the collaboration between peers and the rejection of individualism in design and planning. As we will see later, Peticca was classified as an architect even though he was

still a student and he was part of a medium-sized group of peers, in which the tasks could be carried out with some interchangeability.

What are your first memories related to your professional experience at the TAC Office in Rome?

The office around the mid-60s was located between Corso Trieste and Via Nomentana (precisely, after the first year in Via Nomentana, 126, it moved to Viale Gorizia, 24c – Ed.). It consisted of two apartments inside an ordinary building. In addition to the real workplaces and administrative offices, there were also a library and a storage room for stationery materials, kept by an office boy. I had many peers even younger than me. I remember the executives Richard Brooker and Cliff Morse, and my friend Bob Barnes. At the studio I had recognized the qualification as an architect, even though I was not yet graduated; there was no academic aspect and the qualification was defined by the managers, as well as the job descriptions. You were framed on the basis of your real skills.

How did you arrive at the TAC?

I was contacted by Cliff Morse, who met me in an Italian studio with international orders, called Panero, where I worked, at Parioli in Rome. There were mainly designed mosques for Saudi Arabia. I was contacted together with other people on the occasion of the opening of the Roman office. Basically, the recruitment took place through known studies in which young people like me were selected.

What were the main projects carried out at the time in the Roman office?

The University of Baghdad, obviously some buildings because of the vastness of the campus; the University of Tunis, to which I have not participated, however, and the laboratories of Mali. These were the main projects that were carried out while I was there. I have worked for a long time and I have designed a lot especially for the University of Baghdad project. TAC showed some of these works in an exhibition in Cesena, from October 16th to November 6th, 1993, entitled "Through architecture". I have always understood architecture both as a space to cross and as a means. In particular, I have dedicated to the experience at the TAC Office in Rome a real "chapter" entitled "Training Paths", which established a direct relationship between those years spent in the TAC and my personal approach to the profession of the following years.

How many employees were in the office?

The majority were represented by designers applied to the executives, there were Italians from Tunis who spoke French and Arabic, languages useful for the projects of Mali and Baghdad; many were the professional designers older than me, Italians, who had worked on numerous orders. I remember a colleague named Sorrentino; there were also several young Americans, coming from various parts of the United States. Among the main figures represented: graphic designers, interior designers, architects, engineers, business consultants

How did you draw?

In pencil, never in pen, the drawings were deliberately very much trodden. Common materials were used, from the bell to make the tip, to the blade, from the steel masks to the brushes with glass tips to reconstruct the paper on which you draw, from the soft, hard, less hard rubbers, to the parallel with the adjustable square instead of the drafting table. It was drawn on flat boards, lined with dust-paper and white plastic, which was stretched out, very smooth, anchoring it with the stapler. The lining was made by the office boy. Paper was rather robust, edged. Above all, there were drawings of an executive level, mostly on a scale of 1:50, with dowels to contain the construction details in the most appropriate scales. Architectural, structural, plant, hydraulic and electrical tables were drawn, and numbered perspectives, often linked in volumes or constituting entire rolls.

How was the work organized?

We were controlled and directed, there was no space for invention. I met Gropius, he was the one who decided how the drawings should be made. The sketches, the real projects were conceived and carried out by others. It was, therefore, the code, the mode of representation, the essential element of identification. Each sign had its graphic code which made it unequivocal; for example, the dot-like stroke indicated the weft of the pillars, the axes. Then there was a very wide catalog from which it was possible to choose, copy and insert the construction details. It was absolutely not necessary to think about how to represent, for example, a spiral staircase; it was already done. There was alternation on the drawings, the representation code was made to continue the work ensuring the interchangeability of the operator and not to make the diversity of the hand appreciable.

In Rome no drawings were made that today we would call "rendering", probably not even in the American office; the designers of perspectives and three-dimensional views were external consultants. That kind of design was completely out of our code, of our work setting.

Why was Rome chosen?

Due to the proximity to the Middle East, to the functionality of the connections, because of the airport. In Rome, it was possible to find extremely qualified personnel, given the ancient tradition of La Sapienza University. Rome is a town that is not comparable to any other, it was certainly a strategic choice. Rome allowed access to important tasks, which however hardly ever materialized. False departures were recorded, such as the design competition for the enlargement of the Chamber of Deputies. I took photos myself, but it was never started, because of the lack of probability it could be realized. Even Argan had great respect for Gropius and was constantly in contact with him. The office was therefore supportive, however, it had a rather long activity. The Boston office closed in fact in 1995. (As a matter of facts, Mrs. Mimi Rivalta Brooker answered to this question affirming that the presence in Rome of the Panero firm, as a starting logistic support, was as well, a strong motivation – Ed.).

Where are the archives related to the activities of those years kept?

Probably at Harvard, where they had returned; the headquarters were that of the office, at 42 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

What role did Gropius play? How were his visits?

Gropius visited the studio on average once a month when he had to go to Germany he also passed from Italy, but he was not regular in his travels. He did not review the projects directly, but always together with the structure managers. He allowed himself to have brief conversations with the employees, he was interested in what you did, what you were doing; I experienced the great emotion of meeting this living monument.

Did you follow the construction sites? The implementation phase?

Absolutely not, those who did the projects did not go to the construction sites, there was personnel who took care of the contracts, of the execution, but those ones were particular tasks that had little to do with the design, the project. Of course, the design was an integral part of the contract; in case of errors, it was paid for personally; the work proceeded calmly, it was never convulsed; to avoid mistakes, deadlines were set in advance. The estimative metric computations were also performed in Rome.

Conclusions

The activity of the "TAC - Società per Azioni", which was set up in Rome "with the social purpose of assisting the underdeveloped countries of North Africa through the provision of projects for public works at lower costs than those that would have had to be sustained if they were carried out in the USA", as one of the first articles of the Association states, played a very important formative role on those young architects who, some students, others recent graduates, were employed at TAC.

As confirmed by Pietro Sartogo, whose U.S. license allowed him to practice in the United States of America, the collaborators in the TAC Office in Rome had the opportunity to acquire skills that were not taught at Sapienza University courses, which were not organized with internships on the training of the architects.

The rigorous setting of the work that required to stick to codes that precisely identified the construction details, so different from the Italian practice whose approach was largely handicraft, was a testing ground that young people now declare to have transferred in their professional practices also in terms of figurative reference. About 10 years had passed since the start of the first phase of the Great Reconstruction in Italy. The architects had abandoned the main road of rationalist architecture for a neorealist declination of the image of the city. Now "the Americans", as the members of the TAC were called in Rome, for the worldwide commitments put forward a less homologated form of International Style and a direct derivation from the Modern Movement as Gropius and the architects of the Bauhaus made explicit. In the sixties, this renewed adherence to the reinforced concrete construction and its architectural form was certainly partly a consequence of the changed economic conditions, but that in the young Roman collaborators had a particular derivation from the architectures that they drew in the TAC Office Rome. After the interviews, we are in fact about to face this analysis on the works.

In conclusion, it was not only the actual heritage of the Modern Movement through a realistic practice of architecture that Gropius developed in the TAC period that influenced the young architects in Rome. This cultural heritage took advantage as well of the concept of collaboration, which Gropius had wanted to express even in the name of the American society, of which he was the co-founder and which

was also a kind of design philosophy since the Bauhaus years.

The concept of collaboration was added to the concept of “integrated architecture”⁵ (that is a sort of educational total architecture) extending its boundaries. In Italy in the midst of the revival, thanks to government policies for post-war reconstruction, this American lesson by The Architects Collaborative, which over the years had become one of the most prestigious in the international arena, provided the young Italian collaborators a textbook example of organization for their future activities of designers.

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Notes

[1] “*Fundamentals*” appointed to Rem Koolhaas

[2] *TAC is the acronym for: The Architects Collaborative, the association founded by Walter Gropius with Jean and Norman Fletcher, John and Sarah Harkness, Louis McMillen, and Benjamin Thompson in 1945.*

[3] *In W. Gropius, J.B. Fletcher, N.C. Fletcher, J.C. Harkness, S.P. Harkness, L.A. McMillen, B. Thompson (edited by), The Architects Collaborative, 1945–1965, Niggli, Teufen, 1966*

[4] *Marco Peticca (Rome 1941) is architect living and working in Cesena, near Bologna. After the collaboration with Panero and other international firm in Rome he was called to work at TAC Office Rome; he then collaborated at the faculty of Architecture of Rome Sapienza and was awarded of a fellowship at IUAV in Venice. In Cesena, since the year 1973 he is architect and urbanist with many important works in his portfolio.*

[5] *W. Gropius, Architettura integrata, Mondadori, Milano, 1959 –. First Edition: Scope of total Architecture, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955*

Editors



Franz Jaschke (*1955) is a graduated Dipl.-Ing. Architect who studied at the Technische Universität Berlin, Germany. Since 2002 he is a managing partner of BRENNE ARCHITEKTEN Gesellschaft von Architekten mbH in Berlin. He is a member of Association of German Architects (Bund Deutscher Architekten BDA), German Association of Craftsmen (Deutscher Werkbund Berlin DWB), Bauhaus Archive Berlin, Baudenkmal Bundesschule Bernau, Association for the Monument Trade Union School in Bernau (Baudenkmal Bundesschule Bernau), Ernst May Society Frankfurt, German National Committee ICOMOS and a Founding member of DOCOMOMO Germany.



Uta Pottgiesser (*1964) is Professor of Interior Architecture at the Faculty of Design Sciences of the University of Antwerp, Belgium, since 2017, teaching in the master program of interior architecture and is a member of the Henry van der Velde Research Group. From 2004-2017 she was Professor of Building Construction and Materials at OWL, University of Applied Sciences (HS OWL), Germany. She was trained as an architect at TU Berlin, Germany, and graduated in 1991. After her degree, she worked as a practicing architect, for office, administration and public buildings. Her academic career started as research assistant at TU Dresden where she obtained her PhD in 2002 with the topic “Multi-layered Glass Constructions. Energy and Construction”. She is internationally active as a board member and reviewer of international journals, in PhD commissions and organiser of several conferences and seminars. As Chair of the DOCOMOMO International Scientific Committee of Technology (ISC-T) she is concerned with the protection and adaptive reuse of Modern Movement Architecture. She is a co-founder of the European Facade Network (efn).



Michel Melenhorst (*1964) studied architecture at Delft Technical University and worked for Wiel Arets (1991-1995) and OMA (1995-1999) before starting his own office in 1999. In 2005, he became a partner in DAAD Architects. In 2012, he switched to Detmold Germany to hold the chair for Contextual Design at the Hochschule Ostwestfalen Lippe, where he coordinates the Master's in Architecture. Michel Melenhorst has extensive experience in teaching and lecturing at institutions such as TU Delft, Design Academy Eindhoven, Lasalle University Bogota, HCU Hamburg, Aarhus school of Architecture, University of Antwerp and K'Arts Seoul. He is a member of Docomomo international and is active in Docomomo Deutschland Workgroup education. At the HS-OWL he is coordinating the Master in Architecture, he is a member of the Researchgroup Urban Lab and co-organises the Universities annual workshop week and Conference ‘Detmolder Räume’ Since 2016 he leads ‘RMB’, an europewide initiative to start a specialized, two years master studies on reuse of modernist buildings



Theresa Kellner (*1984) is scientific and teaching assistant at the Detmold School of Architecture and Interior Architecture, a department of OWL University of Applied Sciences (UAS OWL) since 2014. She is an Interior Architect and Social Pedagogic, who studied at the UAS OWL, Germany, strike at the University of Florida, USA and at the Otto-Friedrich-University in Bamberg, Germany. She holds a Master Degree in Interior Architecture and a Diploma in Social Pedagogy. Since 2014 she is working as a research assistant at the International Office and the Department 1 of UAS OWL and is managing several international third-party funds projects together with various partner universities. The focus of her professional work lies on topics such as: perception and space, the phenomenology of architecture, participative architecture, modern movement and heritage.

DOCOMOMO Germany with the Detmold School of Architecture and Interior Architecture, Ostwestfalen-Lippe University of Applied Sciences (OWL UAS) and the EU project 'Reuse of Modernist Buildings' (RMB) invite you to the 16th DOCOMOMO Germany and 3rd RMB Conference. The International Conference in Berlin takes the 100th anniversary of the Bauhaus as an opportunity to discuss the significance of modernity in the 21st century. The conference focus will be on the concepts, visions, and impulses emanating from Modern Movement and how they can be related to today's social, economic, cultural and in particular creative issues.

Are the social, spatial and constructional concepts formulated by modern movement and post-war modernism still sustainable today?

What role do cultural and climatic conditions play in the preservation, renovation and transformation of spaces, buildings, and modern movement sites?

How can the basic ideas of classical modernism be continued 100 years later and thus contribute to solving current challenges?

What contribution can be expected from academic and professional education, and which learning formats are suitable for this?

The 2019 DOCOMOMO Germany event will move from Karlsruhe and be held for the first time in Berlin, Neukölln at the Werkstatt der Kulturen. It continues the tradition of the Karlsruhe DOCOMOMO Germany Conference. This year the conference is co-organised by 'RMB', a project that is funded by the EU and coordinated by the OWL University of Applied Sciences. RMB initiates a pedagogical framework on a European level on the reuse of modernist buildings based on common definitions, methods, and approaches. RMB prepares a Joint Master on Reuse of Modernist Buildings. This cooperation of DOCOMOMO Germany and RMB resulted in a new conference format: a combination of invited keynote speakers and selected scientific lectures under the theme of 'What interest do we take in the Modern Movement today?'

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