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CA' BRÜTTA¹⁹²¹

GIOVANNI MUZIO OPERA PRIMA

Curated by Giovanni Tomaso Muzio and Giovanna Calvenzi

Castello Sforzesco, Milan
Sala del Tesoro – Sala Viscontea

15 April – 10 July 2016
9.00 am–5.30 pm from Tuesday to Sunday
Admission free

From 15 April to 10 July 2016, the Castello Sforzesco in Milan will host “Ca’ Brütta 1921 – Giovanni Muzio Opera Prima”, an exhibition conceived and produced by Giovanni Tomaso Muzio, director of the Muzio Archives, and Giovanna Calvenzi, on the occasion of the first restoration of the building for the purposes of conservation, which has returned it to its original appearance. An intertwining of areas of expertise that opens a window onto society and raises questions about the nature of the community in an expanding city.

Founder of the “Architectural-Urbanistic Movement of Renewal in Lombardy”, Giovanni Muzio designed more than 50 buildings in Milan over the course of the 20th century that left a deep mark on the city, introducing a new vision into its fabric. From the Catholic University in the context of Bramante’s courtyards to the Palazzo della Triennale, all his works answer to the principle to which Muzio would remain faithful all his life: “There is no architecture without town-planning”.

Ca’ Brütta, between Via Moscova and Via Turati, was not just his first work, but the first manifesto of a coherent vision of the relationship between building and city. The exhibition, in a dialogue between plan, drawing and photograph, is split into two sections. The first – presented in the Sala del Tesoro – offers a broad historical interpretation of the work, as an ideal synthesis of the relationship between “small town” and “big house”, supplementing the documentation in the Muzio Archives with materials from the Archivio Storico Civico and Biblioteca Trivulziana, the Civico Archivio Fotografico and the Civica Raccolta delle Stampe “A. Bertarelli”.

The second – in the Sala Viscontea – takes the form of a grand photographic album containing the results of a new and unprecedented undertaking that has seen 30 photographers, from Gianni Berengo Gardin to Giovanni Gastel, engaged in the task of re-examining and interpreting Ca’ Brütta as a whole and in its infinite wealth of detail, on the outside and the inside, from the perspective of those who live in it or pass through it and allowing the public to grasp the poetics that the building is still able to convey today. A guiding thread to the exhibition is provided by the pictures of Ugo Mulas and Gabriele Basilico, who have photographed Giovanni Muzio’s building, a work of architecture symbolic of the Novecento movement in Milan, on many occasions over the course of the years.

In the exhibition, a video retraces the history of the intervention that has restored Ca’ Brütta to its original splendour. The team effort between the clients, those responsible for the management of the works and their artistic supervision and the contractors ATI Teicos – Gasparoli – Formica has made it possible to re-create the original colours of the building, giving Milan back an icon of Novecento architecture.



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During the exhibition, a map of Milan produced in collaboration with Milan Polytechnic will be available (download free from www.cabrutta.it). It will present an itinerary that will allow anyone who so wishes to explore the city in search of Muzio's works, discovering a century of its history.

The exhibition has been preceded by the Instagram Challenge #MuzioMilano, staged in collaboration with Milan Polytechnic, the Association of Architects of Milan and its foundation, the Fondazione Ordine degli Architetti di Milano, and the magazine Casabella: an invitation to photograph all the buildings designed by Giovanni Muzio in Milan. Over 1,600 pictures have been received in response and will be projected as the culmination of the route through the exhibition.

"[...] Ca' Brütta is a building that is still "looked at", and this is no longer true of many of its contemporaries," Giovanni Muzio wrote. "But, while it fills me with satisfaction, it is a work of compromise (in the best sense of the word); it is not a work of architecture that establishes the identity of an archetype: it represents the end of a certain period, and is an example of a form, not of eclecticism, but of fragmentary composition. There are parts of it that still satisfy me: the absolute assurance and clean way in which each element enters the architectural language [...]."

"Once construction work began, Giovanni Muzio decided to go and live in Ca' Brütta, where he then spent the rest of his life," writes Giovanni Tomaso Muzio, in charge of the Muzio Archives. "For Muzio that house, which is not a block of flats, never constituted the exception that it appeared to be in other people's eyes in 1922. But, simply, the natural summing up, the end of a first stage in the search for an idea of architecture in dialogue with the city."

"We called it "Operation Ca' Brütta", an invitation made to a group of thirty photographers from Milan or at least resident in Milan to take on the challenge of representing one of the city's "noble" buildings," writes Giovanna Calvenzi. "Almost all of them were familiar with it, very few knew its history and all were or have become fascinated by it. The photographers have different backgrounds, different interests and belong to different generations, and it is with this spirit that they were called on: to carry out a sort of exercise in individual perspective that would be translated in the sum of the images into a lesson of vision. Thus Ray Banhof, Giorgio Barrera, Settimio Benedusi, Gianni Berengo Gardin, Riccardo Bucci, Maurizio Camagna, Luca Campigotto, Marina Ballo Charmet, Marisa Chiodo, Sabina Colombo, Luca Contino, Alessandra Ferrazza, Cristina Fiorentini, Giovanni Gastel, Giovanni Hänninen, Marco Introini, Cosmo Laera, Delfino Sisto Legnani, Davide Monteleone, Gianni Nigro, Cristina Omenetto, Simona Pesarini, Matteo Piazza, Pietro Privitera, Efrem Raimondi, Francesco Radino, Laura Rizzi, Claudio Sabatino, Alessandro Scotti, Toni Thorimbert and Paolo Ventura have freely interpreted Ca' Brütta, depicting it in its details, as a whole, in its colours and creating, as was hoped, a sample of the many possible interpretations that contemporary photography offers."

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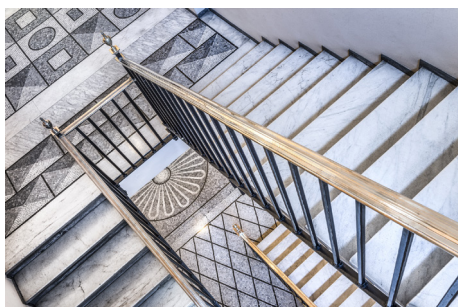
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IMAGES

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