



UN VUOTO RIVESTITO. GONÇALO BYRNE, PATRÍCIA BARBAS, DIOGO LOPES: TEATRO A LISBONA

MARCO MULAZZANI

Hic mores hominum castigantur, ammonisce il fregio bronzeo sul portico del teatro realizzato nel 1842 a Lisbona, nella Quinta das Laranjeiras, dall'architetto Fortunato Lodi -autore, negli stessi anni, del teatro nazionale Dona Maria II, in piazza del Rossio. Intitolato alla musa della commedia (ma anche della satira), il Thalia è voluto da un committente peculiare -Joaquim Pedro Quintela, secondo barone de Quintela e primo conte de Farrobo- appassionato, oltre che di feste e di caccia, di musica e teatro e promotore, nel 1820, della costruzione di una sala all'uopo dedicata, adiacente al palazzo familiare. Le "festas do Farrobo" sono descritte in cronache dell'epoca come avvenimenti magnificenti, per l'eminenza degli invitati e la ricercatezza degli ambienti, ornati da grandi specchi in cornici dorate, raffinate decorazioni dei soffitti, grandi lampadari che dal 1830 -con vent'anni d'anticipo rispetto alla sua diffusione nella capitale-

erano alimentati a gas. Dopo il restauro e il rinnovamento operato da Lodi, il Thalia continua ad ospitare opere e rappresentazioni teatrali di livello internazionale, improvvisamente interrotte, il 9 settembre 1862, da un incendio avvenuto durante i lavori di manutenzione. I rovesci economici del conte, morto qualche anno dopo in povertà, consegnano i resti dell'edificio a una lenta consunzione che si protrae per quasi centocinquanta anni -una condizione aggravata, nel 1978, dalla demolizione quasi integrale delle coperture con il conseguente indebolimento delle strutture verticali. In questo arco di tempo, parte della Quinta das Laranjeiras viene ceduta al giardino zoologico (1905) mentre il palazzo del conte, dopo diversi passaggi di proprietà, è acquistato nel 1940 dallo Stato e adibito a sede di uffici ministeriali. Al Ministero della scienza, tecnologia ed educazione, insediatosi nel palazzo nel 2005, si deve l'iniziativa di recupero del

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-vista interna del teatro verso lo spazio della scena
-interior view of the theater towards the stage space

Gonçalo Byrne,
Patrícia Barbas,
Diogo Lopes

Recupero del Teatro Thalia, Lisbona, Portogallo

fotografie
DMF

Gonçalo Byrne (Alcobaça 1941) si è laureato presso la ESBA di Lisbona. Nel 1975 apre un proprio studio e nel 1991 fonda lo studio associato GB Arquitectos (byrnearquitectos.com). Ha insegnato in numerose università, in Portogallo e all'estero. Sin dagli esordi Byrne ha contribuito, con il suo lavoro, al rinnovamento e all'affermazione internazionale dell'architettura portoghese, individuando quali ambiti privilegiati interventi a scala urbana e paesaggistica e di recupero e trasformazione del patrimonio storico -tra i più recenti, la pouxada nella cittadella di Cascais (con J. Gois e D. Sinclair) e il museo nazionale Machado de Castro a Coimbra. «Casabella» ha presentato opere di Byrne nei nn. 643, 695/696, 700 (2001/2002), 775 (2009), 785 (2010), 798, 803 (2011); Electa ha pubblicato due monografie: *Gonçalo Byrne. Opere e progetti* (1998 e 2007).

Patrícia Barbas (Luanda 1971) e **Diogo Lopes** (Lisbona 1972) si sono laureati presso la FAUTL di Lisbona; lavorano insieme dal 2003, altresì collaborando con altri studi di architettura. Nel 2006 hanno fondato lo studio Barbas Lopes Arquitectos e hanno realizzato edifici pubblici e privati, allestimenti e interni (barbaslopes.com).



Thalia, con un programma che prevede la realizzazione di una struttura polifunzionale, utilizzabile per conferenze e seminari ma anche per ricevimenti, concerti e rappresentazioni teatrali.

Il teatro ottocentesco era un organismo costituito da parti chiaramente definite, giustapposte o innestate l'una nell'altra: il portico, il foyer, la scena e la platea. A fronte di un impossibile (comunque improbabile) ripristino della situazione originaria degli ambienti -con l'eccezione del frammento del portico sud, oggetto di un accurato restauro filologico- il nuovo intervento si prefigge l'obiettivo di reintegrare quella che si potrebbe definire l'"impronta spaziale" dell'edificio.

Ciò che più impressiona del rudere del teatro è, infatti, nelle considerazioni dei progettisti, la dimensione dello scheletro costruttivo superstite: maestoso nella sua verticalità -l'invaso della scena si eleva sino a 23 me-

tri di altezza- come nella sua materialità, esso appare come una rovina in senso proprio, fortemente evocativa della perdita drammatica provocata dall'incendio. I paramenti murari della scena e della platea sono stati ripuliti -meglio: scarnificati- portando i due ambienti, in precedenza distinti in ragione del loro diverso uso, poi ridotti allo stato di maceria, a un'inedita unità e continuità, sia spaziale sia materica. La volontà di restituire con il massimo di evidenza questa "nuova" condizione, di preservarne l'unità e l'autonomia, si è tradotta nella decisione di portare "all'esterno" tutti i necessari interventi di consolidamento delle pareti esistenti, avvolgendo il rudere in un guscio di cemento armato che contrasta le spinte orizzontali e sostiene la nuova copertura. Il nuovo involucro color terracotta, volutamente privo di dettaglio architettonico e con la superficie trattata in modo da attenuare i segni delle casseforme,

assume un carattere astratto che esalta la geometria elementare dei volumi del teatro e consente di leggerne la composizione. A questo risultato contribuisce la demolizione di alcuni corpi di fabbrica di modesta fattura annessi al teatro e i due nuovi padiglioni a un piano, in metallo e vetro, che li sostituiscono, incorniciando la costruzione e definendo una sorta di basamento trasparente verso la strada e una piccola piazza aperta verso il giardino.

Rovina come metafora di un vuoto -di una perdita- e frammento evocativo; ma anche come interlocutore paritetico e in dialettico confronto con il "nuovo": sulla sensibile integrazione di questi modi differenti di percepire e assecondare le molteplici suggestioni di una rovina si fonda l'intervento di recupero del teatro Thalia, mostrando come sia possibile conservare la storia di un edificio prendendosi cura del suo corpo martoriato e facendone rivivere la memoria.

Marco Mulazzani

2, 3, 4
-vista esterna
e interni del rudere
del teatro
-exterior and interior
views of the
ruin of the theater



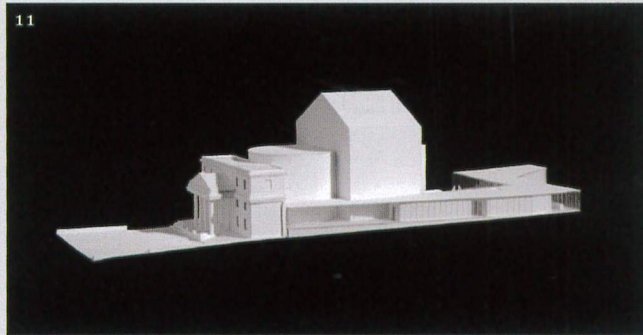
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-il fronte principale sud-est dopo il restauro
-the main southeast facade after restoration
6
-il fronte verso la strada
-the streetfront



7
 -il fronte sud-ovest
 verso il giardino
 -the southwestern
 facade towards the
 garden
 8
 -vista del fronte
 nord-ovest
 -view of the north-
 west facade
 9
 -scorcio da sud del
 fronte verso il
 giardino
 -view from the south
 of the facade to-
 wards the garden

10
 -aerofotogrammetria
 con l'area di inter-
 vento in evidenza
 -aerial survey show-
 ing the project area
 11
 -vista del modello
 -view of the model
 12, 13
 -sezione longitudi-
 nale e pianta del
 piano terreno
 -longitudinal sec-
 tion and ground
 floor plan



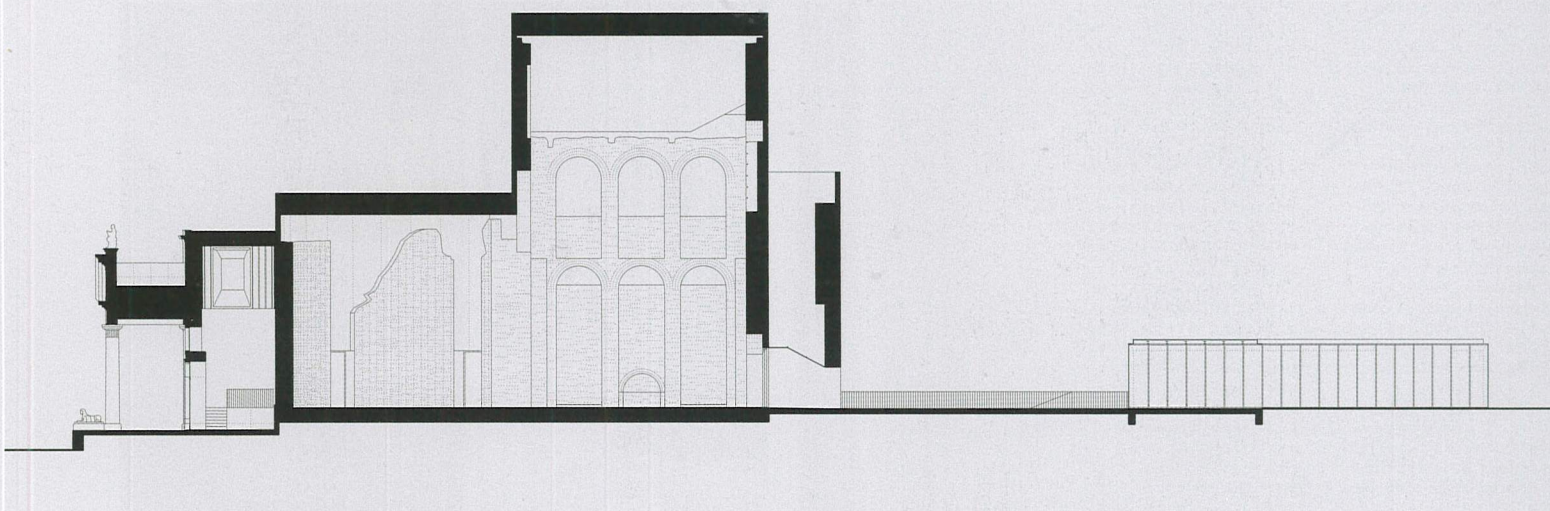


DATI DEL PROGETTO

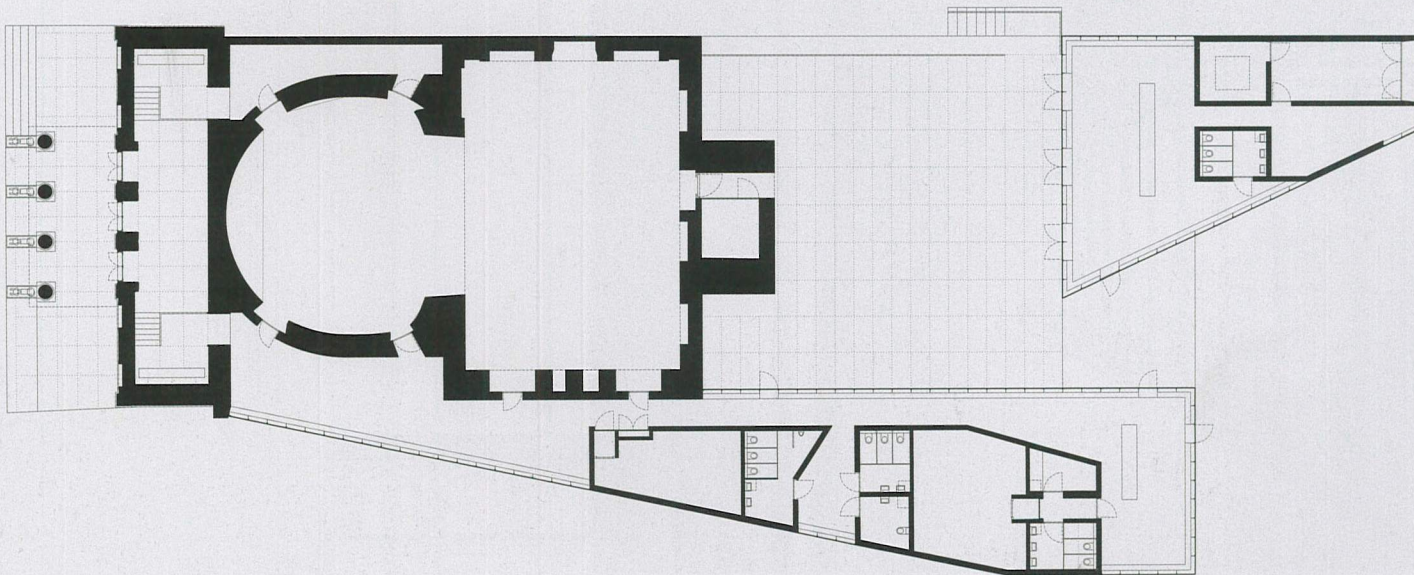
- PROGETTO ARCHITETTONICO**
Gonçalo Byrne,
Patrícia Barbas,
Diogo Lopes
- COLLABORATORI**
Hugo Ferreira, João
Neves, Lígia Ribeiro,
Luca Martinucci,
Tânia Roque
- PROGETTO STRUTTURALE
E INGEGNERIA**
AFAconsult, Natural
Works
- IMPRESA**
ACF, Lisbona
- COMMITTENTE**
Ministero dell'educazione e della
Scienza, Portogallo
- DATI DIMENSIONALI**
1.600 mq superficie
complessiva
- CRONOLOGIA**
2008-12: progetto
e realizzazione
- LOCALIZZAZIONE**
Estrada Laranjeiras 205, Lisbona,
Portogallo



12



13

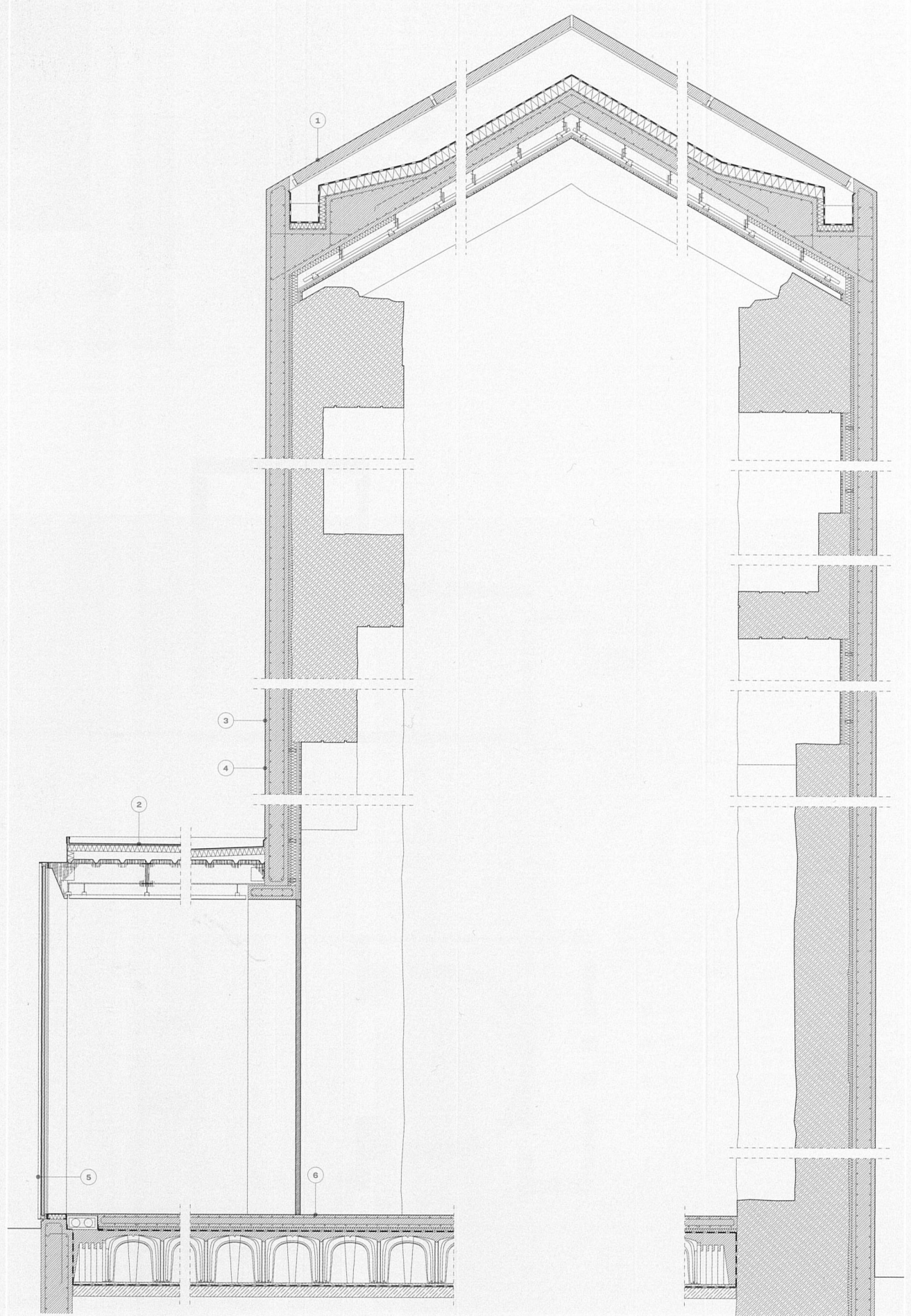


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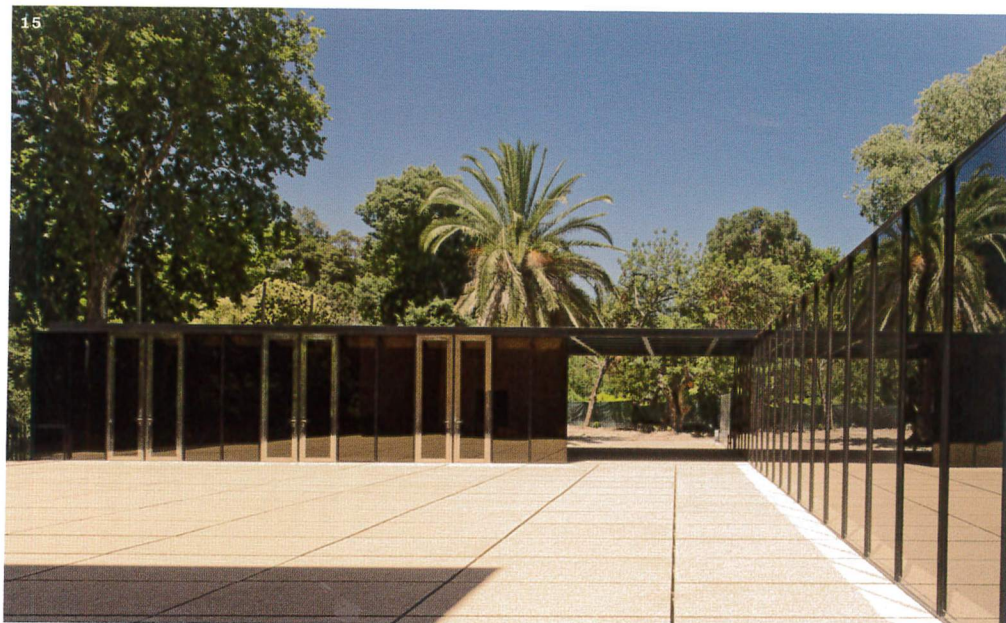
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-particolare della sezione trasversale.
 Legenda -1- nuova copertura: calcestruzzo disattivato prefabbricato pigmentato 100 mm, guaina sigillante in pvc, isolamento termico 100mm, sigillante liquido in plastica, calcestruzzo armato 200mm, cartongesso 12,5mm+12,5mm, fibre acustiche a spruzzo 19mm -2- copertura padiglione: guaina sigillante in tpo, isolamento termico 100mm, calcestruzzo cellulare in pendenza 30-100mm, lamina di rivestimento in acciaio profilato 35mm, trave di acciaio ipe 200, fibre acustiche a spruzzo 25mm, soffitto di alluminio lucidato
 -3- involucro I: calcestruzzo armato disattivato prefabbricato pigmentato in opera 220mm, isolamento termico 30mm, parete in muratura esistente
 -4- involucro II: calcestruzzo armato disattivato prefabbricato pigmentato in opera 220mm, isolamento termico 30mm+40mm, cartongesso 12,5mm+12,5mm, fibre acustiche spruzzate 19mm -5- facciata padiglione: lamina di acciaio profilato 245mmx270mmx6mm, profilo di alluminio verniciato, vetro isolante e di sicurezza 10+10 cavità + 10mm, sezione saldata acciaio inox lucidato 190/72mm -6- pavimento: lastra di calcestruzzo armato pigmentato in opera con finitura a cera opaca 150mm, isolamento termico 30mm, sigillante liquido in plastica, sistema a perdere per fondazioni in calcestruzzo su platea in plastica riciclata 450mm, calcestruzzo

cellulare 100mm, guaina sigillante in pvc
 -cross-section detail. Legend -1- roof construction I: 100mm precast deactivated pigmented concrete, pvc sealing membrane, 100mm thermal insulation, liquid plastic sealant, 200mm reinforced concrete, 12.5+12.5mm plasterboard, 19mm sprayed acoustical fibres
 -2- roof construction II: tpo sealing membrane, 100mm thermal insulation, 30-100mm cellular concrete laid to falls, 35mm profiled steel floor decking sheet, steel beam ipe200, 25mm sprayed acoustical fibres, suspended polished aluminium ceiling
 -3- wall construction I: 220mm in situ deactivated pigmented reinforced concrete, 30mm thermal insulation, existing masonry wall
 -4- wall construction II: 220mm in situ deactivated pigmented reinforced concrete, 30+40mm thermal insulation, 12.5+12.5mm plasterboard, 19mm sprayed acoustical fibers
 -5- facade construction: 245x270x6mm profiled steel sheet, coated aluminium profile, insulation and security glass 10+10 cavity +10mm, 190/72mm polished stainless steel welded section
 -6- floor construction: 150mm in situ pigmented reinforced concrete slab with matte wax finishing, 30mm thermal insulation, liquid plastic sealant, 450mm recycled plastic sacrificial void forming system for concrete raft foundations, 100mm cellular concrete, pvc sealant membrane



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-vista dalla nuova piazza verso il giardino con i nuovi padiglioni di servizio
-view from the new plaza towards the garden with the new service pavilions
16
-dettaglio del fronte nord-ovest e dei nuovi padiglioni
-detail of the north-western front and the new pavilions
17
-vista interna del padiglione verso il giardino
-interior view of the pavilion towards the garden
18
-vista interna del padiglione verso la strada
-interior view of the pavilion towards the street



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19, 20
-vista generale e
dettaglio dello spa-
zio della platea
-overall and detail
views of the seating
area





21
-dettaglio dello
spazio della scena
-stage detail

The available area measures about 20x70 meters, with Japanese cherry trees and pines, to host a simple project, a cottage that attempts to activate a close relationship with nature. Though uninhabited for long periods of the year, it is designed to offer comfort in all seasons.

It may not be simple, but it might be satisfying for readers to imagine the landscape around the Daisen House in the winter, covered with snow. This effort conveys an idea of the intense exercise conducted by the architects, observing nature and its behavior, establishing a precise relationship between architecture and landscape. The result coincides in design terms with a process of scattering of the form, fragmenting it along the pattern of the tree trunks. The famous writer from Kyoto, Haruki Murakami, takes a similar approach in literature. In the novel *Norwegian Wood* he sets up a relationship of empathy between nature and the characters. As they intercede in settings completely wrapped in snow, their skin shivers, sensitive to the cold, a physical sensation that is accentuated by the writer in order to amplify the emotional tension between the protagonists. This same technique can be seen in the project for the cottage, which transfers a very scientific but also intuitive interpretation of the natural circumstances into architectural design, generating the same kind of vibrant tension in space.

One of the conditions set for the construction was to conserve the largest possible number of trees, to avoid weakening the natural identity of the territory. The designers realized that the density of the vegetation varied and that the “zones surrounded by pines were ‘vertically’ clean”. Before designing the volumes, they identified the position of each tree, making a diagram with the heights of the trees and the spread of the branches. This diagram revealed the empty spaces in which construction could take place. Cutting down the trees and making the terrain more level would have altered the identity of the area, damaging it, and an artificial, slender frame of trees around the construction would have been merely an inappropriate citation of a nature that had been denied. In technical terms, the studio opted for a raised construction supported by reinforced concrete pilotis, a solution that protects the construction from humidity and snow, guaranteeing ventilation for the lower level and organizing the main spaces on the first floor.

The designers carefully traced out seven areas where it was possible to construct living spaces, imagining the connection of the different func-

tions by means of short passages. It is clear that every part of the construction was made in keeping with precise measurement of the relationships between the area and height of the zones surrounded by trees. Following the preliminary design, these relationships were also tested by using ropes to create a full-size model of the volumes.

As the architects explain, “in some ways the decisions regarding positioning and the nature of the sections of the building were left up to the trees, the legitimate inhabitants of this land. The procedure is different from the traditional approach, in which the position and form of spaces are designed first”. The pitched roofs are oriented based on the extension and directions of the branches. Everything is varied and moved based on the free spaces and the positioning permitted by direct sunlight. The result is a complex composition, based on a cellular cycle that frees up new elements by separation, making them independent, allowing them to vibrate here, suspended in the woods.

* Haruki Murakami, (Kyoto, 1949) is a Japanese novelist, translator and essayist. Citing the song by the Beatles from 1965, *Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown)*, in 1987 Murakami published the novel *Norwegian Wood*.

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 ☉ page 33
Cladding the void. Gonçalo Byrne, Patrícia Barbas, Diogo Lopes: theater in Lisbon
 Marco Mulazzani

Hic mores hominum castigantur, warns the bronze frieze on the portico of the theater built in 1842 in Lisbon, in the Quinta das Laranjeiras, by the architect Fortunato Lodi – creator, in that same period, of the Teatro Nacional Dona Maria II, on Rossio Square. Named for the muse of comedy (but also of satire), the Thalia was ordered by a particular client – Joaquim Pedro Quintela, the second Baron of Quintela and first Earl of Farrobo – a lover of parties and hunting, but also of music and theater, and the promoter in 1820 of the construction of a hall for those purposes, adjacent to his family’s palace. The “festas do Farrobo” are described in chronicles of the day as magnificent events, for the position of the guests and the refinement of the spaces, adorned with large mirrors with gilded frames, elegantly decorated ceilings, and large chandeliers that starting in 1830 – twenty

years before the rest of the capital – were already lit by gas. After the restoration and renewal done by Lodi, the Thalia continued to host operas and theater performances on an international level. The programming was brusquely interrupted, on 9 September 1862, by a fire that started during maintenance work. The economic difficulties of the Count, who died in poverty a few years later, condemned the remains of the building to slow decay, which continued for nearly 150 years – a condition that was aggravated, in 1978, by the almost complete demolition of the roofing, thus weakening the vertical structures. During this time span part of the Quinta was granted to a zoo (1905), while the Count’s palace, after changing hands several times, was purchased in 1940 by the State and set aside for ministerial offices. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Education, installed in the palace in 2005, is responsible for the initiative of renovation of the Thalia, with a program calling for the construction of a multifunctional facility, ready to be used for conferences and seminars, but also for receptions, concerts and theater performances.

The 19th-century theater was an organism composed of clearly defined parts, juxtaposed or grafted together: the portico, the foyer, the stage and the seating. Instead of an impossible (or at least improbable) restoration of the original situation – with the exception of the fragment of the external portico, which has been accurately restored – the new project set out to re-create what might be called the “spatial footprint” of the building.

The most impressive thing about the ruin of the theater, according to the designers, was the dimension of the surviving constructed skeleton: majestic in its vertical rise – up to 23 meters over the stage – and in its material character, like a true ruin, forcefully evoking the dramatic loss caused by the fire. The facings of the walls of the stage and the audience area have been cleaned – or, more precisely, stripped – putting the two spaces, previously separated due to their different uses, then reduced to rubble, into an unusual state of unity and continuity, in both spatial and material terms. The desire to emphasize this “new” condition, to conserve its unity and autonomy, has led to the decision to bring all the necessary reinforcements of the existing walls “outside”, wrapping the ruin with a shell of reinforced concrete that stands up to the horizontal thrust and supports the new roof. The new enclosure, with a terracotta color, intentionally free

of architectural details and with a surface treated to soften the signs left by the formwork, takes on an abstract character that enhances the basic geometry of the volumes and permits clear interpretation of the composition. This result is also facilitated by the demolition of certain modest constructed volumes connected to the theater, and by the two new one-storey pavilions in metal and glass that replace them, framing the construction and forming a sort of transparent base towards the street and a small plaza open to the garden.

The ruin as the assertion of a void – of a lack – and as an evocative fragment; as an equal counterpart, in a dialectical face-off with the new: these are the different ways of interpreting the idea of the ruin behind the restoration of the Thalia theater, capable of consolidating the history of a place and a building, allowing its memory to live on in a new work of architecture.



☉ page 42
Tadao Ando: building with light, thinking about light. Marginalia
 Jean-Marie Martin

Flashes and reflections of a tradition whose roots go back to Plotinus and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, and then even reach Paul the Silentiary, as we will see, emerge in the passages cited below in which contemporary architects of different backgrounds discuss the importance and the meaning of light for architecture.

To offer even a dim glimpse of the vastness of the tradition and the context in which any reasoning done in the present on the theme of “light-architecture” has to be placed – reflections similar to those Tadao Ando has made, commenting on two of his recent works presented herein – we have decided it is worthwhile to provide a few suggestions on interpretation.

This decision was prompted by what Ando has said in the short essay *Spaces and light* published here, stating that the San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane of Borromini is one of his most cherished models, while also pointing to the myopia of the clichés critics usually deploy to describe his work. On this terrain, it is also curious to notice how what Ando writes reveals an unexpected consonance with what Giulio Carlo Argan asserts in a passage of his small book on Borromini in 1952. It is no coincidence that these pages of Argan also attracted the attention of

Hans Sedlmayr, to whom we owe the most original studies on the roles assigned to light in occidental art and on the ways in which modern artists and architects have made use of the effects produced by light. Sedlmayr, in fact, remarked on how Argan had understood that the treatment applied to light in San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane was different from that used by Bernini or by Pietro da Cortona, given the fact that Borromini had demonstrated his capacity to transform «universal light into particular light, thanks to the type of profile imprinted on his works, the model given by the surfaces and the alternation of open and closed surfaces» (Sedlmayr), because «for architecture light is an external factor the artist cannot modify. But if he cannot act on the source, he can act on the screen, i.e. he can study the profiles and exposures of the forms to a given effect of light» (Argan). For those interested in further exploring the study of the theme Ando addresses here, the references indicated thus far are practically pleonastic. The literature to which they belong is boundless, and to identify its extremes, as we were saying, it is necessary to go very far back in time and to examine, for example, classical texts like the Description of Santa Sophia by Paul the Silentiary (520-575). Silentiarius wrote this extraordinary ekphrasis by order of Justinian, in honor of the second inauguration (562) of the Megale Ekklesia of Constantinople. Recently Maria Luigia Fobelli, who has translated and annotated the poem by Paul the Silentiary, has demonstrated the importance in the Description of the discussion of the various manifestations of light in Santa Sophia. She reminds us, among other things – and it is worth focusing on this detail for a moment here – that the effects of light are interpreted by Silentiarius as generators of a perception of space in which “the eyes of the intellect” merge with those “of the senses”. Which, to confirm the fact that in an approach to this argument a certain tolerance for recurrence is advisable, reminds us of the not totally different expressions with which Pavel Florensky, in spite of the fact that 1400 years had passed since the writing of the Description of Paul the Silentiary, explained to the students of the VChUTEMAS, in the second decade of the 1900s, the meaning of the idea of the “psychophysical perception” of a work of art. Having said this, it would truly be naive not to emphasize the enormous differences between what Silentiarius was able to observe and what we will now address, between the motivations and aims of his