



Pomo della discordia/Bone of contention

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Per conoscere



ABITARE inaugura una serie di allegati pensati quasi come "instant book" per dare con la maggior immediatezza possibile conoscenza di progetti controversi al centro della cronaca e del dibattito. Progetti di cui i quotidiani parlano polemicamente con costante approssimazione, senza mai dare immagini che in qualche modo soddisfino la curiosità del lettore che resta così estraneo osservatore di accadimenti e decisioni politiche che direttamente lo coinvolgono. Non si tratta di sposare l'una o l'altra delle posizioni dialetticamente contrapposte, ma di offrire ai nostri lettori, con la maggiore neutralità e onestà possibile, i termini di conoscenza per assumere una propria non ignara posizione, nella consapevolezza che i termini di forma architettonica, pur non essendo i soli in gioco, non sono secondari per una civile decisione.



The need to know. This is the first in a series of occasional supplements designed, like instant books, to provide essential background information as promptly as possible on controversial projects currently attracting widespread debate and media attention. Newspaper coverage of these projects invariably conveys the heat rather than the substance of the debate, effectively denying justifiably curious readers the factual and photographic material they need to avoid being excluded from events and political decisions which involve them directly. Our aim is not to come down in favour of one side rather than another in any given controversy, but to offer our readers, as honestly and impartially as we can, the background information they need to make informed judgements of their own. Architecture per se may not be the only issue at stake, but we believe that familiarity with the architectural issues involved is essential nonetheless to a discriminating appraisal of the facts.



Scala 2001

Milano Bicocca

progetto/project Gregotti Associati International

Project background, debate and controversy

Milan, 1996: essential refurbishment (technical modernisation, widening of stage, extra seating) requires that the opera-house will have to close from 1999 to 2001, the year in which the centenary of Verdi's death (Milan, 27 January 1901) will be celebrated. The decision to move La Scala to temporary premises is made possible by the following three projects: 1) restoration of Piermarini's original building; 2) construction of a new auditorium (opening no later than October 1998) as one of the public buildings already envisaged by the Bicocca redevelopment scheme (the competition mounted by the Pirelli Group, which owns the Bicocca site in the immediate outskirts of Milan, was won by Gregotti Associati International in 1989); 3) conversion of the former Ansaldo complex, now municipally owned, into a rehearsal and

workshop facility. Forecast investment: \$96.6 million approx. In a single resolution last September, Milan City Council proposed approval of a special tripartite agreement between Pirelli, the Board of La Scala and Milano Centrale Servizi (Pirelli Group) which will make Milano Centrale Servizi responsible for coordinating the preliminary, final and executive stages of the three related projects, and award Pirelli the contract for building the new auditorium. The cost of \$1.6 million approx. will be deducted from urbanisation costs for the Pirelli-Bicocca site owed to the City of Milan by the Pirelli Group. The City of Milan will pay for interior refurbishment of the new Scala 2001 opera-house as well as, naturally, the contractual and executive cost of renovating the original Piermarini opera-house (with help from the Cariplo Foun-

dation) and converting of the former Ansaldo complex. The Scala 2001 site is municipally owned and lies 100 metres from Greco railway station, which will probably be integrated with a new station on the east-west metropolitan railway linking Precotto underground station to the metropolitan line on Viale Fulvio Testi (commencement of work scheduled for 1997). There will also be a 25,000 square metre three-level car park. The project and the agreement have been strongly criticised by the Milan and Lodi Architects Association, arts administrators and sections of public opinion. The Association has challenged both the lack of public competitive bidding for the project (although open competitions are not legally required for private commissioning of this sort in Italy) and, most of all, the less than transparent tri-

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Historical note

Milan, 15 June 1776:

a decree by Maria Teresa, Empress of Austria and Hapsburg ruler over the Lombardy and Veneto regions, authorises the building of a "large opera-house" on the site of the destroyed church of S. Maria alla Scala. The Teatro alla Scala project – a horseshoe auditorium with a majestic proscenium arch, a stage of unusual width and depth and 3000 seats in five tiers of boxes plus an upper gallery – is commissioned to Giuseppe Piermarini in July.

3 August 1778:

the opera-house opens with a performance of Antonio Salieri's L'Europa riconosciuta.

15-16 August 1943:

La Scala is destroyed in a bombing raid.

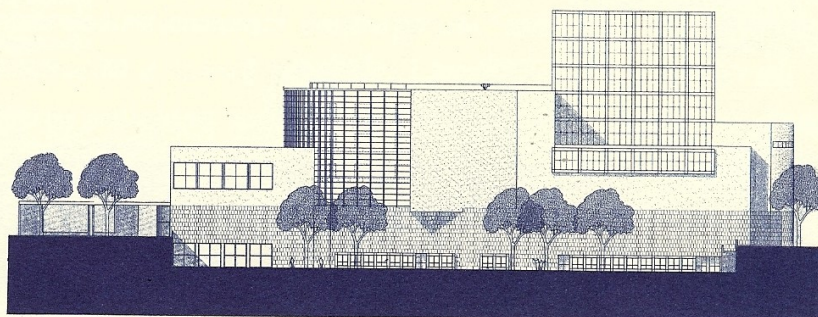
May 1945:

Mayor of Milan Antonio Greppi appoints Antonio Ghiringhelli extraordinary commissioner in charge of rebuilding the bombed opera-house exactly as it was. Luigi Lorenzo Secchi is appointed overseer of works.

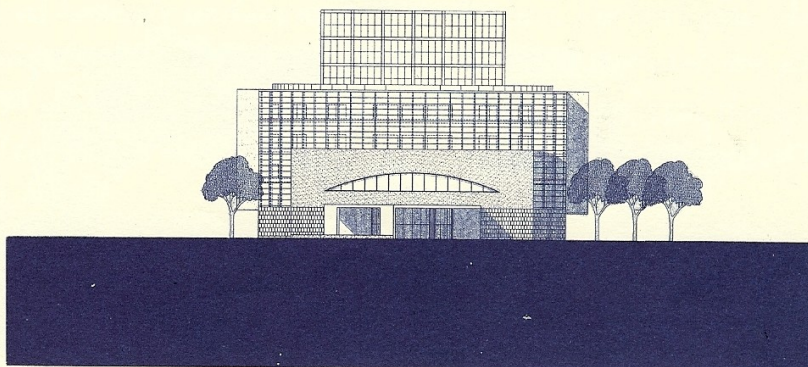
11 May 1946:

the opera-house reopens with a performance of Rossini's The Thieving Magpie conducted by Arturo Toscanini.

prospetto ovest
west elevation



prospetto nord
north elevation



partite agreement itself. In a submission to CORECO (regional auditing board) and the State Audit Department, they claim that a single City Hall resolution, approving what in effect is not one but several major projects, illegitimately subverts basic Italian and European contracting procedures, and should be over-ruled. They also question the ethicality of a private agreement for the execution of three public works, of awarding general contracts and appointing officers without formal ratification, and of agreeing to finance the three projects from non-existent public funds without formally modifying the official urban plan and with no official justification. In response, CORECO has interpreted the City Hall resolution as a provisional planning document only and has therefore declared it legally valid, subject however to approval from the competent municipal planning and public works departments. Arts administrators and a section of public opinion object that the decision seems an over-convenient way of

helping Pirelli to redevelop its own site at the expense of the other municipally-owned Porta Vittoria sites (which are more central and better served by public transport) originally earmarked for the new university complex now being built at the Bicocca. They also object that the new plan saddles Milan with far too much expense.

Project

The auditorium on a triangular lot is rotated 30° in relation to the existing Bicocca site plan. The design is that of a traditional Italian opera-house: a horseshoe auditorium (height 22 metres) with 28 boxes ringing the stalls and four circle tiers (each 5.4 metres deep), providing a total of 2500 seats. The double back wall of the circle tiers houses six double staircases accessed by balconies. The proscenium arch is 16 metres wide and 12 metres high, as at La Scala, to accommodate the opera-house's existing scenery and

stage machinery, and has a movable partition to close off the back of the stage for symphony concerts. Two basement levels house rehearsal rooms and services. The entrance is on two levels: the ground level has a bar-bookshop and a box office accessible from the street when the opera-house is closed, while the naturally lighted upper-level foyer (680 square metres) delimited by flattened reinforced concrete arches and has been acoustically designed as a venue for lectures and concerts. The area is visible from the outside through a large window (height 20 metres) above the stone plinth, which delimits the foyer volume. The stage tower (32x27 metres) is clad in metal insulating panels. A lowered garden plaza in front of the opera-house roofs over the technical installations and the car park for opera-house staff.

progetto/project Gregotti Associati International

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Communs Acoustic Workshop

diffusione elettronica del suono

electronic public address and music systems

AGON Acustica Informatica Musica

impianti meccanici ed elettrici

electrical and mechanical systems

Amman Progetti

progettazione strutturale/structural design

BCV Progetti

impianti scenografici/technical stage design

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progetto della sicurezza/safety design

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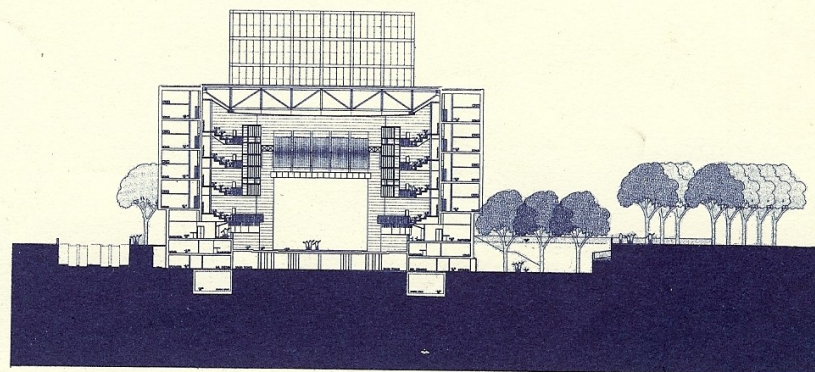
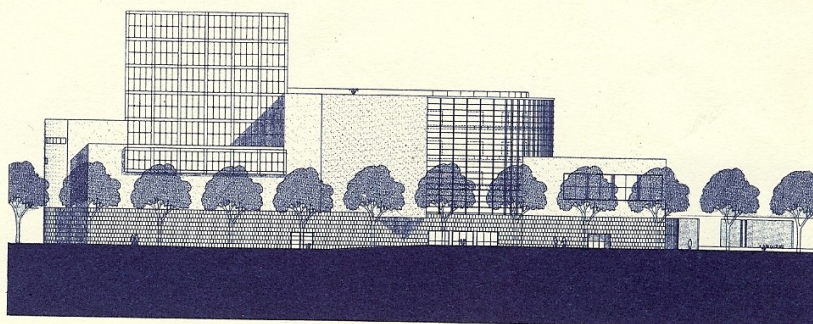
computi metrici estimativi/metric estimates

AICOM

coordinamento progetto/project coordination

Milano Centrale Servizi

prospetto est
east elevation



sezione trasversale sulla sala
cross-section on auditorium

