Works
Fall 1997/Spring 1999

edited by Alessandra Capuano

Cornell in Rome at Palazzo Lazzaroni, Via dei Bambini 6, Rome,
Italy; tel: 0039/06/6970760 fax 06/69193227, e.mail:
cornell@mail.roma.it

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE:
Chairman Mark Geltzer, Academic Coordinator of the
Rome Program
Jeffrey Blanchard, Administrative Director of
the Rome Program
Anna Rita Fiati
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Instructors: A. Capuano, A. DeFede
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Finally, I would like to dedicate this book to Colin Rowe, in gratitude for his inspiration as a brilliant and enthusiastic scholar of Rome.

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LANDSCAPE AND ARCHITECTURE
Together with this stratified identity, Rome features an incredible variation in the natural landscape. Evidence of it is clearly still visible in certain areas of the urban fabric, in which nature is preserved almost untouched and where a crucial and valuable flux in the configuration of the city, raw views of this original landscape of the Roman countryside, almost pristine, are preserved as fragments in a museum within the urban texture. Landscape and architecture can be identified as two key words for investigating Roman architectural remains. They can both be understood as a broad sense. Architecture is not merely made of Ancient Rome but a genuine evidence of the past landscape can be seen in the presence of natural elements in the city. The city of Rome can be read as the link between landscape and building. Here, architectural and natural elements are strictly connected and produce a continuous and fascinating condition.

Within these two themes students were asked to elaborate on issues or categories of investigation such as: topographical modeling, stratification, border line, space. Condition to all these four categories is the question of the section. The architectural section in parts of Rome reveals its specific character of a city built on mass, plasticity, spaciousness, etc. Since the sites to be considered are in central areas of the city of Rome, the Borgo Vittorio, adjacent to the Foro Romano; the Colosseum; the ancient old town, the Capitolina, close to the Colosseum, these areas are some of the enclaves of natural landscape above mentioned, at the border of densely built neighborhoods. Students in Rome had to develop in design projects engaged in the design process and participate in both.

CONCEPT: The design process involves engagement in the urban context and the landscape and had to develop a balance between natural elements and architectural elements. They are public, semi-public, and private and from outdoors to indoors, in outdoor. Such elements could be atriums, courtyards, circulation, terraces, etc.

PROPOSAL: The peculiarity of the assigned site characterized by the dialectic of contrasting conditions, natural and artificial, residential and cultural uses, social and disorder, stability and instability, serves as point of departure of the design rationale. The ground had to represent physically and functionally the understanding of the site as intersection between public and private, inside and outside, above and below, etc. Therefore, the project had to consider the ground and the surrounding environment and the main areas of research. The ground and the base of the building represented connection, spatial continuity, transition, relationships, etc.

The section represented one of the most important means of control of the project, according to its location (a hill) and according to the importance given to the modeling of the surface.

PROGRAM: All programs had to be small institutional structures of 2000 sq.m. excluding all outdoor spaces. Students had to define a work and an assembly pattern of the buildings, taking into consideration the above mentioned issues as well as introduction in the architectural definition of the dialectic, cultural, local, local, Rome in a specific condition and as interpretation of a perception of reasonable, archetypes of the architectural tradition, locally meaningful (i.e. walls, beekeders, stairs, mass, space, etc.) and the "world" as reference for new landscape and community, new technologies, homogeneity, etc. The interpretation of the archetypes is therefore subject to invention.
THE WALL / THE FACE / THE MASK

As an introduction to Rome and issues relevant to the street and public space, the exercise was to investigate and analyze some of the more popular Roman façades and to work with the concept of transformation. There were a variety of issues to be learned-discovered, not the least of which is to learn to use the resources of this great city. Although not occurring as frequently in modern or contemporary objects, fixed architecture-the façade's role, where it is used as an architectural device, has not changed substantially over the years. Yet its content has! It's primary role is still the public face of a building, a prophecy theater about the building itself: it simply contains the culture and time in which it exists, and last, but not least, the skill and knowledge of the architect. Perhaps in no other place are the creations of buildings more literal, and knowledge more than in a well crafted facade. The exercise was not about designing facades. It was not a methodology for making architecture. It was about learning how to learn about architecture and one of the most powerful aspects of architecture-the façade as a divider of public and private domains, the border of the street, the mask of memorable spaces, the symbol of cities. The beginning upon which we etch our culture.

Requirements for students: directed documentation and drawing of the façade, relief model, plans, elevations of major changes, sections at areas of major changes, proportional analysis, street formal analyses (e.g., field and figure, centrality, and recanting, local symmetries, layering, mental vs. phenomenal depth, etc.). Planning plane-reversed division transformation model (the pedagogical value of the D/P model lies largely in the translation of a theoretical model. These models could be understood as the masks of the original façades.)