

## THE EVOCATIVE FORCE OF ARCHITECTURE

### Call for a Monument-memorial project

*Edited by Gentucca Canella*

#### INTRODUCTION

FAM magazine is pleased to support and collaborate in a broad cultural project structured on the theme of the Monument-memorial composed of

- A) a design competition;
- B) the publication of a monograph issue of FAM containing the materials of selected projects (project reports, drawings, photographs of scale models, etc.);
- C) a potential project exhibition;
- D) a study day at the Politecnico di Torino;
- E) the publication of the study day proceedings in the *Italian architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century* series, published by FrancoAngeli.

As far as regards FAM, it is an experiment intended to gather, through a *call for proposals* or *call for projects*, young students of Architecture doctoral students, both Italian and foreign, to develop a design proposal with the mandatory participation of a sculptor.

The experimental part that the magazine promotes involves selecting projects (through a dedicated committee) and publishing their different materials (drawings, diagrams, models, captions, reports, etc.), thus making them comprehensible and communicable.

Thus, we undertake to directly confront the project theme as a specific product of architectural research.

#### ABSTRACT

The call is intended to prompt reflection on the theme of the *Monument-memorial* by re-proposing some structural constants: moral commitment, critical content, but also an indissoluble link between architecture and sculptural elements, present in some emblematic cases of the Italian 20<sup>th</sup> century, by supporting the contributions of Italian and foreign scholars and researchers with a design competition, open to Architecture Doctoral students (individually or in groups) with the mandatory participation of a sculptor.

We wonder, in fact, if it shouldn't be considered useful, or even necessary (especially in an emergency situation like the current one), to again dwell on a theme: the Monument, which is little practised in its contextualised memory. This theme is to be understood, therefore, first in its relationship between sign and ideological intention, among elements of composition and plastic tension of the arts and construction

techniques, until imagining a new role of collective condenser that is wholly practicable in its entire breadth.

On the other hand, if it is true that the task of an architecture magazine is also that of promoting new directions, new lines of inquiry, we believe that involvement in a graduate-level design competition may enable experimentation with a trend reversal trying to strengthen, at least in this case, the design phase with research.

### CALL

In *L'Espresso* of 30 December 1962, in an article entitled *Il monumento di Cuneo. Dieci interpretazioni della Resistenza* ("The Cuneo Monument: Ten Interpretations of the Resistance"), Bruno Zevi, with profound engagement, commented thus on the conclusion of the first round of the Competition: (*"In delivering the judgement of the first-round competition to the mayor, the members of the committee were visibly moved.*

*The whole force of Italian art had responded to the call for the monument to the Resistance: 62 projects drawn up by hundreds of architects and sculptors comprised an unprecedented participation in a competition: from the most established figures to the youngest, everyone had enthusiastically given their best...In Cuneo, the monument isn't just evocative, it signals the link with the new Resistance in the context of a political recovery".*)

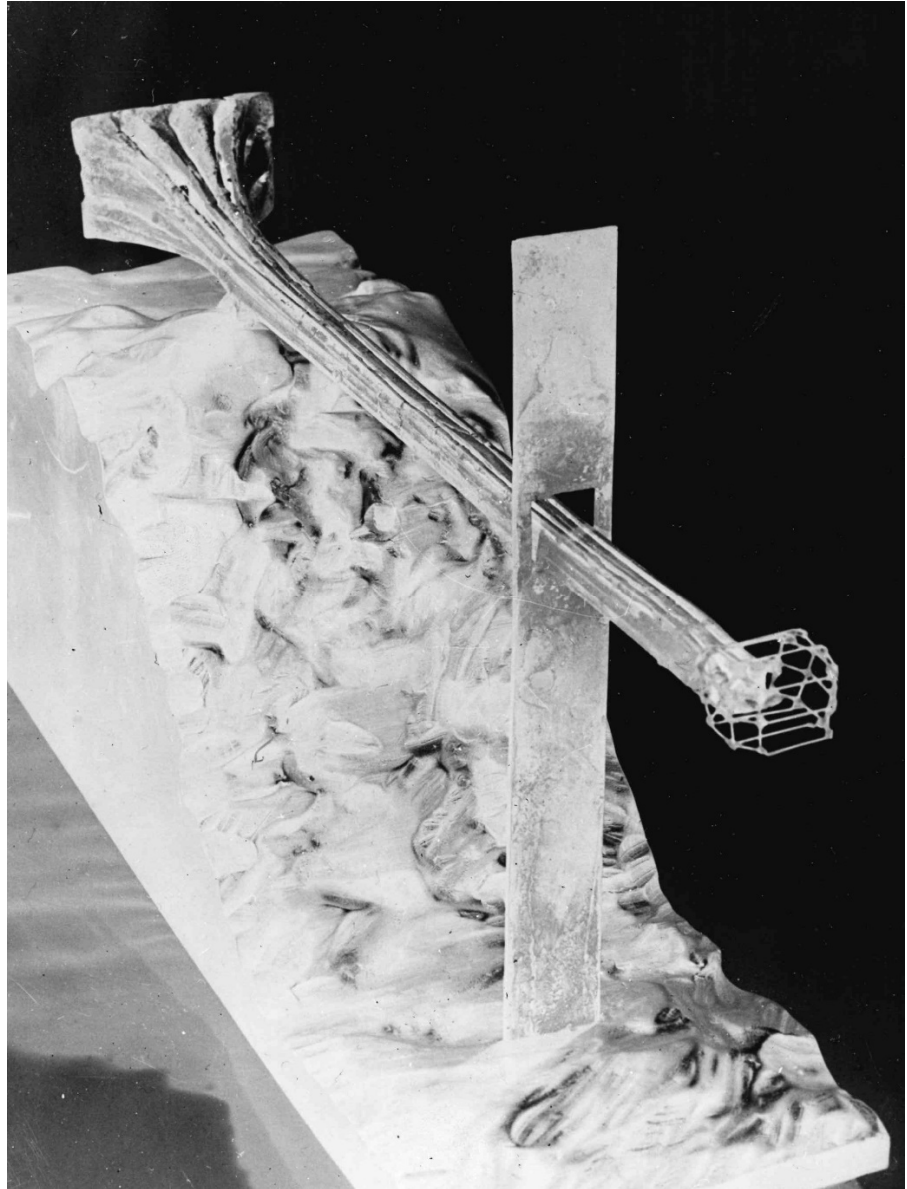
The call proposes the theme of the Monument-memorial in architecture understood, in particular, in its intention of suspended and celebratory "ascent" with reference to some emblematic cases, which were mainly unrealised, of young leaders of the Italian 20<sup>th</sup> century, highlighting how constructive solidity and technical approaches are combined with the ideological intention of political and moral reawakening, expressed through plastic tension and the work's figurativeness.

The reasons that still make a thoughtful estimate of the stages of the *Design competition of the Monument to the Resistance of Cuneo, 1962-63* - taken as a guideline for this FAMagazine call - current and, perhaps, of the deviations proposed, are, we believe, still recognisable in the same archival documentation (correspondence, papers, project reports). This documentation testifies to how much the extraordinary labour of hundreds of architects and sculptors, "from the most established figures to the youngest", corresponds with the ideological response to the theme of the monument-memorial, the expression of the most original figurative culture of the Italian post-war period. This is not, thus, a contribution of merely symbolic exaltation, nor of pure sculptural-construction expressiveness in purely typological terms, nor attributable to an urban context.

The projects commemorating the Cuneo Resistance intentionally go beyond the limits indicated by the competition call and the urban scale, as though the moral emphasis - “had designed and sculpted by a non-instrumental impulse, almost to re-think the gesture, the fallen friends...the hopes that seem to be re-embodied after twenty years” - , should escape the confines too through an exorbitant production, unusual in our days, of papers expressed in several variants and solutions (sketches, models, floor plans, figurative and decorative elements, construction details, economic estimates, material loans, but also special systems for consolidating and fixing structures).

On the other hand, the passionate involvement first, in the concept phase, of Lionello Venturi, then of an exceptional Jury presided over by Giulio Carlo Argan, with the substantial contribution of Bruno Zevi, who confirms, in years still marked by strong theoretic and ideal commitment, the counter-cultural propensities and attitudes of a working architect, in an experimental vision of the theme of the “memorial” straddling political prototype and sculptural tension, is entirely unique in the Cuneo competition.

In this sense, the solution “*Di Piastre*” (“Of Plates”) for the second round, by Roberto Gabetti, Aimaro Isola, Franco Garelli, sculptor, and Giuseppe Raineri, for the structures, seems not just, as Bruno Zevi writes, the most committed in terms of landscape, but also immediately readable in terms of compositional, technical, and construction choices. These are expressed through “static difficulty” and “risk of equilibrium” in the horizontal development of the wholly practicable off-scale journey, in a poetic fusion of function and figure, where the effort to rise, going beyond the structural limit, is emphatically “extended to infinity”.



Roberto Gabetti, Aimaro Isola, Franco Garelli (sculptor), Giuseppe Raineri (structures), *Design competition of the Monument to the Resistance of Cuneo*, 1962-63. "Di Piastre" project. View of the model (Archivio Gabetti e Isola)

The issue of FAMagazine will publish the projects submitted to the design competition.

The participants - Architecture Doctoral student/s (group leader/s) and sculptor - are asked to develop a project proposal for a Monument-memorial by choosing from among the five themes/contexts\* listed below:

- *A monument-memorial for the architecture of the "Three worlds"*  
Havana, Cuba. From the literacy campaign to Art Schools (ENA),  
1961-63, by Ricardo Porro, Vittorio Garatti, Roberto Gottardi

*- A monument-memorial for the wars of liberation*

Asmara. Eritrea. National independence and rebuilding of the social system and education in the “Zero School”, 1970

*- A memorial in the “Monument”*

Algiers. Climat de France. The large square of the “two hundred columns”, 1955-57, by Fernand Pouillon

*- A monument-memorial for the “unfinished” by the author*

Milan. Baggio. L’Istituto minorile Marchiondi-Spagliardi, 1953-57, by Vittoriano Viganò

*- A monument-memorial in the Mediterranean*

Lampedusa. 3 October 2013: the massacre of 368 migrants

*\*For information only, a page will be prepared on the FAM platform where you can download some preliminary materials and useful information for a contextualised and symbolic proposal*

## PARTICIPATION

The call is reserved for doctoral students in Italian and foreign architecture schools who may participate individually or in groups: the presence of one sculptor per group is considered mandatory.

The call is divided into two stages:

1. A **first stage** (proposal of design abstract for the Monument-memorial) in which the participants will need to upload a Word file containing the following materials to the platform:

- *an abstract (of the project report) of 3,000 characters;*
- *an explanatory image of the project proposal (sketch/study design/montage/study model photo)*
- *a short biography of the authors (max. 800 characters spaces included).*

For the first stage, the participants may submit a design proposal on several of the five themes indicated.

Each proposal must have a distinctive “motto” as its title.

2. A **second stage** (final project proposal for the Monument-memorial) following the selection of the abstracts, in which the participants will need to upload the following materials to the platform:

- *Preparatory drawing or sketch (300 DPI JPEG);*
- *Photographs representing the physical model including details of any sculptural element (made of wood, vegetable cardboard, etc.);*

- *Critical essay-project report of max. 12/15000;*
- *Images representing the project (300 DPI JPEG, 10cm base, at least 5 images)*
- *Free figure with montage/views/perspectives/cross-sections (in UNI A2 format, in pdf no bigger than 10 MB, also sent in separate files);*

You can submit the project abstract in one of the two magazine languages (Italian or English): in any case, since FAM is a bilingual magazine, the final project proposal will also need to have the texts translated into the second language.

The selection will be carried out by a highly qualified Committee.

### **EXPIRY DATES**

The project abstract needs to be uploaded by and not after **30 April 2023**. For successive expiry dates, see the summary time table.

### **PUBLICATION**

The editors of the issue, in conjunction with the direction, will select abstracts following the criteria of originality and relevance to the theme, organic nature of the issue and size of the submission. If there are suitable submissions, this issue may increase, at the discretion of its direction.

Publication will occur in 2024.

### **SUMMARY TIME TABLE**

15 February 2023	launch of call for projects
30 April 2023	final date for sending project abstracts with sketch and biography;
30 May 2023	final date for communicating selection of project abstracts;
1 September 2023	final date for sending project materials in Italian and English.

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