

GIOVANNI POLAZZI

After graduating in architecture with top marks from the University of Florence, Polazzi obtained his PhD in architectural and urban planning at the same University with a dissertation titled “Raffaello Fagnoni Florentine Architect – Analysis of a career divided between teaching and professional activities”. In 1988 he founded the *Archea* firm, conducting planning and research in the fields of architecture, town planning and industrial design.

Didactic activities

In the course of the years Polazzi has been professor under contract at the architecture faculty of the University of Genoa where he has taught interior architecture, and at the architecture faculty of Parma where he has taught architectural planning. At present he holds a professorship at the architecture faculty of the University of Florence, heading ‘architecture planning workshop I’. His didactic activities are developed through a close relationship between theoretic lessons and development of design in the classroom, with the purpose of investigating the relationship between the compositive idea and the architectural theme. The courses aim to reach, together with the student, the definition of an architectural project in every part, representing it from the scale of the landscape to the details.

Professional activity

Together with his firm he has participated in very important national and international architecture competitions and consultations, obtaining numerous recognitions and prizes: from the first prize in the competition for the business and shopping centre of Calenzano in Florence (with Ipostudio and Di Franco) in 1998, to the third prize in the competition for the new headquarters of the Architecture Faculty of Venice in 1999, to the first prize in the competition for the expansion of the port of Savona (with 5+1 and Pellegrini) in 2003 and that in the competition for the design, upgrading and adaptation to new standards of the Michelangelo Camping in Florence in the same year, and in the international competition by invitation promoted by Pirelli Re and Morgan Stanley – together with Michael Maltzan Architecture – for the former Ansaldo complex in Milan, in the Greater Bicocca area in 2005.

In the last few years he has participated in the design of numerous wineries: in Italy with the expansion of the Antinori Winery in San Casciano Val di Pesa and in China with the Shangri-la Winery in Penglai, currently in construction, the Guizhou Winery complex and the Changli Winery. These projects have been followed by the design of the Sports Village for the Asian Games held in Doha in 2006 and the Li Ling World Ceramic Art City in China, currently in construction. Since 2006 he has participated in numerous competitions in China, including the one for the Meixi Lake Cultural Centre in Changsha, designed on the basis of the master plan prepared by the New York-based KPF firm, and the one for the master plan of the new district of the Chinese city of Zhengzhou in 2011. In 2011 he has also participated in the competition by invitation for a hotel in Doha, Qatar, won by the firm.

Most of the architectural works have been reviewed on an international level in important magazines and books (Abitare, Casabella, Domus, Controspazio, L'Arca, in Italy, A&V and Disegno interior, in Spain, AIT and Detail in Germany, etc.) and invited to participate in important architecture events and exhibitions. In the sector of industrial design he collaborates intensely with manufacturers of parts and the construction industry with the purpose of concretizing a real and constructive cooperation between the culture of design and that of production.

Research activities

He has, in the course of the years, combined his activity as a designer and his didactic career with an intense work of in-depth study and critical reflection on the themes of architecture, publishing treatises and texts in books and magazines in Italy and abroad. He is editor of the international architecture magazine Area and is frequently invited to lecture for numerous bodies and institutions.

In 1996 he was invited to participate in the Italian section of the VI International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale with the project for the Entertainment Centre of Curno (BG). In 2002 his design of the Leffe House was chosen for the international exhibition on Stone Architecture and the exhibition of Italian architecture in Tokyo titled "From Futurism to the possible future". He has also participated in the extranext event "Lonely living" within the context of the VIII International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale; in 2003 the Biennale also entrusted him with the realization of the entrance to the 50th edition of the exhibition of figurative arts, in the form of the itinerant work The Cord, designed by Archea Associati and C+S.