



Franco Purini

Born in 1941 in Isola del Liri (Frosinone), **Franco Purini** is Professor of Architectonic Composition and City Planning at the Valle Giulia Faculty of Architecture of the La Sapienza University in Rome. In 1966 he set up a studio with Laura Thermes. Together they have dealt with city planning problems and with issues of architectural language, following an experimental line characterized by a highly rational component but also based on figurative suggestions belonging to classical tradition. This research resulted in a consistent number of projects, including numerous national and international competitions, extensively documented on the most important Italian and foreign publications. As well as devoting his time to this sphere of activity, Franco Purini is also very interested in the so-called "architettura disegnata". Some of his plates are kept at the Projects Archive of the I.U.A.V., at the Museum of Architecture of Frankfurt, at the Museum of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires, at the A.A.M. Archive in Rome and in some private collections, including the Della Costanza-Turner collection in Atlanta.

Franco Purini has set forth his ideas on architecture during cycles of lectures and seminars and during workshops at many Italian and foreign universities. In 1983 he received the Silver Plaque from the U.I.D. (Unione Italiana per il Disegno, or Italian Union for Design) and in 1984 the Argentinian Art Critics Association Award. Since 1985 he has been Honorary Professor of the C.A.Y.C. (Centro de Arte y Comunicaciòn) of Buenos Aires and since 1989 he has been a member of the National Academy of San Luca.

The Purini/Thermes studio took part in the following editions of the Biennial Exhibition of Venice: in 1978; in 1980, building one of the twenty facades of the "Strada Novissima"; in 1985, with the project for the Accademia Bridge, which won the "Leone di Pietra" International Award; in 1988; in 1990; in 1991 and in 2000, with an installation which was part of the "Less aesthetics, more ethics" exhibition, the theme of which was the city of the future. The projects of the studio also appeared at the Triennial Exhibition of Milan in 1979, in 1987 and in 1995. In 1998 Franco Purini's work was exhibited at the Centro de Arquitectura y Urbanismo in Rio de Janeiro.

Among his projects, besides those designed with Vittorio Gregotti such as the Zen area in Palermo and the University of Calabria in Cosenza, particularly noteworthy are the following:

- in Gibellina: the Pharmacist's House (1980), the System of the Squares (1982) and the Pirrello House (1990);
- in Naples: a residential project for which he was awarded the IN ARCH 1991-92 National Prize;
- in Poggioreale in Sicily: the Chapel of S. Anthony of Padua (1984), the bell tower and the church courtyard (1987), and a small pavillion (1987).

He is also part of the group that is finishing the Science Department of the University of Florence for which he has designed the lecture halls. He is also currently finishing the restoration of the former Scuderie Medicee of Poggio a Caiano, while he has just started working on the church and parish centre of San Giovanni Battista in Lecce and on an office building in the Anic area of Ravenna.

He has published many books, including

- the monograph "Luogo e progetto", Magma, Rome, 1976 (second edition Kappa, Rome, 1981);
- the book of drawings "Alcune forme della casa", Kappa, Rome, 1979;
- "L'architettura didattica", Reggio Calabria, 1980, a collection of the lectures he gave at the I.U.S.A.R.C. in Reggio Calabria from 1977 to 1979;
- the book of architectural drawings "Around the shadow line: beyond urban architecture", Architectural Association, London, 1984;
- the selection of writings and projects "Sette paesaggi", Electa, Milan, 1989;
- the collection of theoretical writings "Dal progetto", published by Edizioni Kappa in 1992;
- "Esercizi di composizione", Libria, Melfi, 1993;
- "O que està feito astà por fazer. Anonimato, fragmento, descontinuidade", the catalogue of the exhibition of the same title in Rio de Janeiro;
- "Dittico siciliano", Libria, Melfi, 1999; "Comporre l'architettura", Editori Laterza, Bari, 2000,
- a collection of the lectures he gave in Venice between 1994 and 1999;
- the monograph "Franco Purini", Electa, Milan, 2000; "La città Uguale", Il poligrafo, 2005.

He was a member of the research centre and part of the editorial staff of Controspazio of the Lotus International Scientific Committee and of the Projects Archive of the I.U.A.V.; he is currently part of the scientific committee of the magazines "Modo", "Rassegna di Architettura e Urbanistica", "XY", "Abitacolo". Since 2000 he has been a member of the Arts and Design Academy in Florence. In 2003 he was awarded the Grotta di Tiberio Prize for architectural essays.



Laura Thermes

Italian architect and theorist. She studied at the University La Sapienza, Rome, and her early collaboration with FRANCO PURINI on an urban project (1966; unexecuted) for the bank of the River Tiber, Rome, led to a long partnership between the two.

As a theorist, Thermes attempted to unite the legacy of 20th-century Rationalism, particularly the experiments of the Russian Constructivists, the elementarism of the early Le Corbusier and the work of the Italian Gruppo 7, especially Adalberto Libera and Giuseppe Terragni, to the wider history of architecture. Her approach was also indebted to the essay *Comment j'ai crit certains de mes livres* (1935) by Raymond Roussel (1877-1933).

Her plans and projects exhibit qualities of excess and rhetorical complexity, reminiscent of Piranesi, in a search for an imaginative synthesis of her sources of inspiration. Her most successful designs relate to the theme of the house and its ability to restore a metaphorical dimension to urban life. These include the Casa des Farmacista (1980), Gibellina, Sicily; a residential block of 65 flats (1983) in Naples; and housing (1983) for archaeological excavations at Testaccio, Rome, all executed in collaboration with Purini. She also designed the chapel of S Antonio, Poggioreale, Sicily, and was professor of architectural composition at the Università La Sapienza, Rome, from 1971, and a contributing editor to *Contraspazio* (1974-80).



SOME WORKS







