

Looking AROUND EVENTS

LEFT: THE COURTYARD OF SFORZA CASTLE, MILANO 2016 AT THE SFORZA CASTLE, MILANO; PATRIZIA RANZO, ROTUNDA VIEW OF SALA BERTARELLI DURING A READING

Patrizia Ranzo reads Ettore Sottsass

Architect, designer, urbanist, painter, photographer, writer, Ettore Sottsass crossed all these disciplines during the course of his life. Patrizia Ranzo (architect and designer) offered a 360-degree reading to narrate a personality that can be seen as 'magical' in certain ways, in his personal as well as professional relationship with beauty, design, technology and art. From writings by Sottsass like *Scritto di notte* (Adelphi Milan 2010), *Scritti* 1946-2004 (Men Pozza Milan 2002), *Oggetti come memoria* (in *Casabella* no. 366/1974), and many others, a profile emerged of a versatile artist, engrossed by everything that has to do with mankind and generates civilization and beauty, perceptible in all his projects. Ettore Sottsass explored different languages, techniques and materials in constant research, always approaching new challenges. "Sottsass created objects charged with civilization, fragments of existence. In him writing came prior to the project. At the same time, he used objects and images as if they were words," Patrizia Ranzo explained. "Sottsass always asserted the primary importance of words. In a cosmic idea of time, not linear, but where past and present are fused," she continued. "And he has left a 'heavy' legacy to every designer, who in his relationship with objects is called upon to generate new forms of civilization." ■

Donato Signorile



ARCHITECTS READ ARCHITECTS

Ettore Sottsass, Gio Ponti and Alessandro Mendini are the focus of three readings organized by Interni at Sala Bertarelli of the Sforza Castle during the latest edition of **Bookcity Milano** 2016 (18/20 November)



Stefano Boeri reads Gio Ponti

"Architecture is a crystal," Gio Ponti wrote in 1957. Because architects not only draw, but also write. Especially this great Milanese architect: his legacy includes 2500 letters, many essays, newspaper articles (Corriere della Sera), writings in magazines (he was the editor of Domus, which he founded in 1926), and books. Like Azzone (architettura), which the architect Stefano Boeri read for a large audience. Boeri talked about the literary generosity of Gio Ponti, organizing the readings in sections. He began by reading some pages that present architecture in a lyrical way, and then shifted to reflections on the relationship with Milan, winding up with Ponti's criticism of architecture and his praise for other architects. The red thread was clarity of style, the force of ideas to create projects that always seem new, promoting the creativity of Made in Italy. But Boeri also revealed a secret, nocturnal Ponti, who during wartime blackouts thought: "by day, in the city, the crowds and the activity distract us from architecture (...) while at night, the silence, the solitude, the closed windows (...) give architecture back all its beauty: she alone lives: her silence is a song (...) and architecture triumphs: isolated, alone, silent." ■ Laura Rognazzo



STEFANO BOERI LEGGE GIO PONTI
HEADS BOOKS BY GIO PONTI

Antonio Syxty reads Alessandro Mendini

The reading done by Antonio Syxty (theater director and artistic director) of excerpts from the book Scritti di domenica by Alessandro Mendini (Postmedia Books, 2016) revealed how the writing of the Milanese architect and designer "always takes on its own autonomy: it does not replace the project, it makes itself a project," as Lorenza Parmesani (art critic and historian) has explained. "Sunday is the day when everything seems to get interrupted, everything is suspended, the frantic everyday bustle stops," Parmesani continued. "The Sunday writings of Mendini become an ancient gaze, digging at the appearance of things. It is the time in which to reflect and to give form, in the quiet of a day of rest, to paths of design and writing that intertwine." Hence the sequence of memories, aphorisms, anecdotes that narrate walks, voyages, encounters, utopias, people (Ettore Sottsass, Frank O. Gehry, Tomas Maldonado), that narrate "a story that is not only about design, research, work, but also about sentiments, friendship, life."



Parmesani emphasized. A story that is often personal and private, revealing a less well known side of Mendini, a portrait in a state of everyday becoming. In the light of these writings, the question is whether Sunday, as a special day, still exists. According to Alessandro Mendini, the answer is yes. ■ Danilo Rognazzo



LEFT: LORENZA PARMESANI
AND ANTONIO SYXTY, ABOUT
ALESSANDRO MENDINI

