Spaces of experience

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To Anna Rosa and Giovanni for exactitude,
to Giorgio and Anna for lightness,
and to the words of Italo Calvino which taught me to give values a name.
Abstract

The framework of this work is situated between the typological issue about the epistemological definition of art spaces, and their role as consequence within the city, and a personal interest in the kind of attention art demands in space for a specific engagement. It is in the place where art is displayed that the knowledge about it is produced.

Within the art system, a distortion in the value of art has been staged by the increasing significance of the role of private collectors in investing in contemporary art and legitimating their collections through the echoes of certain art spaces' typologies. As consequence, private collectors become the accepted ‘manager of consciousness,’ and the former distance between collectors and museum is confused, and the museum academic capacity is being replaced. Here, the question of how a private collection is presented to the world became particularly urgent.

In response to this context, the construction of two specific narratives embedded in two contemporary art spaces for two private art collections has been delineated not in a deconstruction of values, but contextualised in-culture within the realm of architecture and its position towards the system.

Seeking a condition of nearness to the art world has been necessary in order to trace the encounters, or relationships which would construct the notion of place for contemporary art, and the values of the prelude to it. A certain alertness and respect towards the other and the world can be achieved in the art gallery that is otherwise often elusive, since what the art gallery as site does that 'real life' does not is that it forces the issues of attention – towards the space, the place and the other. Especially in this context, "considerations of where implies more than an ontology of position."[1]

The fiction of the art space started from the definition of the collection as first assemble to relate art to places and spaces, since the structure and identity of it became fundamental. A section through two collections and their collectors tries to trace the ways and rules which define the different spatial implications of art, in order to relate different specificities to the word, to find them a place within the world.

The role of architecture has been a negotiation between narratives, the one of the existing place which I found as connected to the specificity of the two collections I was dealing with, and the one of the artwork within the collection itself. And in measuring the one with the other, a staged uncertainty would lead to a certain awareness of the place one is in, and how does it relate with the collection itself, and with the world. I believe architecture has to offer a framework that should elicit reactions – it cannot be, as consequence, neutral.

I do think that the role of architecture in relation with art it is not so different from the one of storytelling in "establishing the rights of intensity" of encounters. Since eventually, everything become visible through relationships.

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What is the role of architecture in relation with art? What is the agency of architecture in giving a place to art within the world?

Art and the viewer | Art collection and the architect | Architecture and the “Spaces of experience”

Relevance_ The Typology of the art space and the contemporary Art System

Definition

Which one is the epistemological definition of contemporary art spaces within the art system and what is the role of architecture when displaying art?

Structure_ Definition, role and influences

2. The art system and the role of private collectors

- The market and the distortion of values;
- Influence of new values both the way collections are constructed and the spatial implications of the collections themselves

- artists, gallerists, collectors, curators, institutions, public -

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- Logic and narratives within collections, qualities, implications, desires
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- The White Cube and its sacrality, as found environments, consumption environments, etc.
- The Italian post-war “revolution of the art space”:
  - Margherita di Barbante at Palazzo Bianco - Albini, Cangrande della Scala at Castelvecchio - Scarpa, Pietà Rondanini at Castello Sforzesco - BBPR

After the theoretical framework and the relationships among the actors within the system has been traced, a certain awareness come from an empirical understanding of all the tensions around the definition of an art space was necessary. I wanted to observe art spaces and the world around them, and I tried to understand what I saw. I have been all about experience.

Experience of spaces _ Awareness

5. Specificity of two collection

- Structure and values;
- Spatial implications.

6. Agency of architecture in contemporary art spaces

- Role of the space;
- From as found environments to the agency of architecture.

I understood all the discourse was in the end about a many different kind of physical and non-physical relationships among the viewer, an art collection and the world.

Proximity_ Disassemble

Defined as “Nearness in space, time or relationship”

7. Space

- Bodily relations of the viewer with the artworks
- physical dimensions - proportions and geometry - the dimension around the object and the understanding of the object - presence or lack of filters/barriers between the two

about La Congiunta and the Museum Isol Homborich

8. Time

- The time of the places, the one of the specific spaces, and the contemporary time of the viewer and the collection happening simultaneously.

about Galleria Continua and Castello di Rivoli

9. Relationship

- Deconstruction of a series of connections happening between an art collection and the world

Landscape - Collection
- Athens, ‘The Theatre of Disappearance’

City - Collection
- Milano, Museo del Novecento

Street - Collection
- Torino, Castello di Rivoli

Building - Collection
- Giornico, La Congiunta

Room - Collection
- San Gimignano, Galleria Continua

Collectors - Collection
- Milano, Casa Museo Boschi Di Stefano
As long as I used the definition of proximity as tool to analyse my experience and control the associations which happen between art and the world, I will then use it to sustain the identity of the two specific collections I'm working with in a precise place in the world.

This network of encounters has been to me also a tool to interpret through a spatial method the “network” of the art system (Allo way, 1972) and to bring it back to the realm of the physical - even before than conceptual - space around art and the viewer.

**Proximity_ Assemble complexity**

10. Relationship

These relationships are working at different scales and all together at the same time. In my work, I started with the scale closest to the collection, understanding the nature of this first “assemblage,” and with smallest scale which relates the collection with the landscape through its distance in time and space, with the city throughout the prelude it might need, and the fictionalised experience I wanted to construct with my choices.

**Collection as first “Assemblage”**
- Structure, Dimensions, Consistency, Role

**Collection - Collectors**
- Personal affinities, intentions, time of acquisitions

**Collection - Room**
- Proportions and geometry, light, controlled or minimally controlled environment

**Collection - Building**
- The choice of the building in relation both with the world and with the collection. Definition of the intervention in relation with what will stay there

**Collection - Street**
- About the way the collection relates with the world - Threshold

**Collection - City**
- About the imagery and specific cultural environments

**Collection - Landscape**
- Place out and Place in - Relation with a certain territory and certain distances

11. Time

Lack of neutrality in time: the time of the place and the time of the collection. Role of the past of the building in defining its inner narrative (mutual relations and implications), honesty.

12. Space

Lack of neutrality in space and minimally controlled environment.

Within the structure which has been traced at the beginning, and in a condition where the contemporary art system defines certain kind of spaces, I’ve tried to position the role of architecture, and myself, in a condition of nearness to that system to trace the encounters, or the specificities, which contribute to epistemologically define what an art space is. This last chapter should be no more about my gestures and my decisions, but about the pure experience of the space and of the collection, to establish the intensity of their encounter.

The assemblage of this network, which starts with an assemblage in itself that is an art collection, defines the fiction of an art space as total experience, which tries to give a “kind of home” to the narrative of the collection and to make one aware of his/her place and time in the world, since “difference is more easily accepted in reflections on work of art than elsewhere.” And “this means that a self-awareness and awareness of the other can be achieved in the gallery that is otherwise often distant.” (Klonk, 2009)

**Spaces of experience_ Specificity**

13. Storytelling of a Collection

Implication of the story and the way in which the story should be told. How the structure has been translated in a collective experience.

14. The fiction of the art space

Aura of the place and its relation what the city
Staging the Threshold in space and time
Intentions and decisions in working with the two different art spaces

**Reflections_ about my attitude and the position of architecture**

15. About the agency of architecture and the agency of the architect in understanding identities

16. Values according to which an art space should be designed
The Theoretical Framework describes the Art World as a System, focusing on how art spaces are designed and consumed. The Art Experience is enabled through architecture, engaging with the city and its spaces. Contemporary art in Italy has evolved through the agency of the architect, from found environments to the contemporary art spaces. Artworks and their logic and aims are displayed in different collections, which in turn affect the city. The Social Role of Art and the Contemporary Society involves the display of art and its implications on the art world and its relation with the viewer. Artworks' logic, aims, and environment play a role in defining the way the viewer relates with the world. Artworks' logic, aims, and environment contribute to the distortion of the value of art. The consumption sphere and the distribution of art as output are influenced by this distortion. The presence of similar others and others' consciousness industry affects the role the collectors will have for the city. The spaces these collections will have in the city and their presence in the city can be related to the world defines the way the viewer relates with the world. Art, landscape, city, building, room, and viewer are all interconnected through the Art World as a System, with spaces and places being a key component. Spaces of experience provide a narrative within the Art World, influencing the art world's typological issues and providing a basis for the first assemblage of art resources. The typological issues of the Art World, such as the construction of art spaces, are influenced by the agency of the architect and the role these spaces will have in the city. The Art World as a System is a network of: Artist, Gallery, Collector, Curator, Public exhibition, Museum, and the Public.
Research report

"Fino al momento precedente a quello in cui cominciamo a scrivere, abbiamo a nostra disposizione il mondo – quello che per ognuno di noi costituisce il mondo, una somma di informazioni, di esperienze, di valori – il mondo dato in blocco, senza un prima né un poi, il mondo come memoria individuale e come potenzialità implicita, e non vogliamo entrare da questo mondo un discorso, un racconto, un sentimento: o forse più esattamente vogliamo compiere un’operazione che ci permetta di situarci in questo mondo.”

Italo Calvino, “Cominciare e finire” in Lezioni Americane, 1985

Introduction/ kind of attention

In my research and projects, during the past year, I’ve been dealing with two private art collections, and their collectors, to find a place attached to them within the world.

I’ve been doing it to contextualize and ground my interest in the spatial implications of contemporary art, and the agency of architecture in staging its encounter with the viewer.

In 1967 Carlo Scarpa was asked to stage the Italian Pavilion within the context of the Universal Exposition in Montréal, and his approach shows and represents at the same time a certain “culture of staging” within the Italian post-war panorama, and the extreme specificity “in space” architecture can get to when it relates with art. The precision and the arbitrary Scarpa staged there represent to me the kind of attention I started my research with. My interests at the time were mainly spatial, I was absorbed in the specificity of the space around art to establish as consequence a certain intensity in its relations with the viewer.

Within the context of this narrative, I will give an order to the way I’ve been seeking for that extreme specificity, and how my understanding of the role of architecture within the system has been shifting towards ‘another kind of attention’.

1. Visibility of the work of art

Awareness of the other/ issue of attention

To try to tell the story from its very beginning, I might start referring to the painting by Samuel F.B. Morse’s Gallery of the Louvre (1831-1833)3 that Brian O’Doherty used in 1976 to open the first of his three articles written for Artforum and then published in a book titled “Inside the white cube,” Charlotte Klonk will use a similar painting from 1886 The National Gallery - Interior Room 32 by Giuseppe Gabrielli in the last chapter of Spaces of Experience. Both the authors refer to the past of art galleries to locate in space the claim for the “respect of difference and dissent in aesthetic reception.” Klonk specifically writes that “a level of self-awareness and awareness of the other can be achieved in the gallery that is otherwise often elusive.”

This means the configuration of the spaces should be able to engage with the development for the viewer of this kind of awareness. Both the writers are bringing here art back to the world and away from the idea of a sacred contemporary art space the White Cube is a product of.

“What the art gallery at a site does that “real life” does not is that it forces the issues of attention.”

Mark Pimlott, ‘In conversation with Tony Fretton’, Studiols, 1995

It is probably the one which can make one most aware of the space, the place, and the other. And to become conscious of the value of this alertness, or “preparedness,” set me free for a certain period of time from a strict architectural realm.

My interest focused then in trying to understand which ones are the factors that might influence this alertness. I’ve been able to construct within this new ground different kind of relationships with different actors of the art system, in order to map the various influences they could have in construct a specific experience of art. I became quickly aware that at the end all these encounters would have had a role within these spaces I wanted to construct, or more precisely to learn how to construct.

To understand the “subject matter”4 I wanted to address, I needed to position myself – and the role of architecture, in a condition of nearness to the context contemporary art is part of.

Awareness of the context/ private collectors and the art system

Private collectors’ role in investing in contemporary art and legitimating their collections and social role throughout the echoes of certain kind of art spaces’ typologies is getting more and more significant within the art system. They become the “new” holders of the cultural capital - the private collectors, and no more the museum as Haacke wrote in 1996, are nowadays the accepted “managers of consciousness,” and the museum’s academic capacity has been replaced at the same time. There is a distortion in the value of art, while private art collectors are investing in art as commodity and then building art spaces which reflects this distortion. Than these spaces pretend to have a role in the city which they have not. Here, the problem around how a private collection is presented to the world is particularly urgent within the art world and within the city. The relevance of the problem around the contemporary space for art within the architectural discourse, and about the role of architecture in particular, become manifested as particularly urgent. This situation led to a typological problem around the epistemological definition of art space within the contemporary art system.

To respond to this distortion, the constriction of a specific narrative embedded in two projects hasn’t been delineated in a deconstruction of values, engaging a critique of the system in itself. The process which has been followed tried instead to contextualize the problem within the realm of architecture, defining the position architecture might take towards this undeniable typological issue.

As a critique to the institutional value of the museum, this work is about the construction of values in-culture, in a specific context and system.
A awareness of the space: how a work of art can be visible?

In this sense, the research started from the context around contemporary art spaces to define the “subject matter” (the content and its nature) that a certain kind of space for art should be able to stage. I decided to define my position through an extreme specificity, to work in an environment where attentions to those many directions were acute. The two private art collections, their role within the art system and as first “assemblage(s)” to relate with the world.

Villa Panza is, obviously, an example of the kind of specificity I’ve been longing for in my doing. Giuseppe Panza di Biumo, widely recognized as one of the most important collectors of Postwar American Art, had a fundamental role for the development of contemporary art in Italy. Within his diary, he tells a story about the “discovery of infinity”9 which goes back to his childhood that he uses to explain the reasons behind the choice of the Villa, Villa Panza di Biumo, as place and space to display his collection to the world. The Villa di Biumo has its value for Panza in the way it sits between the ground and the sky, with the horizon visible from the garden in all directions. It made one feel as he/she could enter in the essence of nature, becoming part of it, and that kind of freedom relates in Panza’s memories with a place he was visiting in the evenings when he was staying in the countryside with his grandparents during the summer holidays, where “quando la ferrovia era stata costruita aveva tagliato un’antica strada in salita, che era rimasta inutilizzata; era costruita molto bene con ciotoli, ripida, più in alto faceva una curva, e finiva contro il cielo. Non si vedeva altro, solo il cielo blu; era un taglio netto, di qua la terra, di là siente, solo il colore blu intenso del cielo mediterraneo. […] Una cosa al di fuori d’ogni possibilità, che non si poteva né raggiungere, né definire. Avevo scoperto qualcosa di completamente nuovo, sentivo che avrebbe avuto una grande influenza sulla mia vita futura; quell’emozione avrei voluto sempre rivivrà.”10

Many years later, in 1973, Robert Irwin’s site specific “Varese window view” become substantial in relating with this. Robert Irwin, looking at the city and its different spaces, and the different openness of the city, in a certain way, was trying to bring a landscape inside the building. The installation has its value for Robert Irwin in the way that it made him feel as he/she could enter the city, as he/she could enter the sky. The awareness and attention of the collectors defined a precise way of collaboration, to relate with the world. And within the lack of a precise structure, it has been my experience of the collection in spaces and towards the space ended up being filtered from all these relationships. And critical about them at the same time.

2. Collection(s)

The specificity of the two collections, and my relationship with their collectors, become to me a measure to test the degree of proximity art can have with the world, seeking for the values in nearness Villa Panza is exemplification of.

An analysis of the two within the same sort of framework would be in this context necessary to stress how the different qualities of the collections would relate to and ask for different spatial implications. However, it should be clear the structure here defined has been established a posteriori to fulfill a profound analysis and subsequent understanding of those specific implications, and particularities which define the subject as impossible of categorization are broader then the specific academic structure here presented.11

Una Storia Privata: About consistency

The first collection, the “I Cotronei” collection, is a collection of photography and contemporary art. It is strongly embedded with the idea of “patrici” between the contemporary and the mythical Italian landscape. An extremely precise structure both from the chronologal and logical point of view seems to have been constantly present during the development of the collection, from its very early interest in XVII-XVIII century paintings to photography and then artist who interpreted the photographic medium. It started with a place, Napoli, and it keeps coming back to it.

The awareness and attention of the collectors defined a precise way of collaboration12, every conversation and meeting has been widely recognized as one of the most important collectors of Postwar American Art, had a fundamental role for the development of contemporary art in Italy. Within his diary, he tells a story about the “discovery of infinity”9 which goes back to his childhood that he uses to explain the reasons behind the choice of the Villa, Villa Panza di Biumo, as place and space to display his collection to the world. The Villa di Biumo has its value for Panza in the way it sits between the ground and the sky, with the horizon visible from the garden in all directions. It made one feel as he/she could enter in the essence of nature, becoming part of it, and that kind of freedom relates in Panza’s memories with a place he was visiting in the evenings when he was staying in the countryside with his grandparents during the summer holidays, where “quando la ferrovia era stata costruita aveva tagliato un’antica strada in salita, che era rimasta inutilizzata; era costruita molto bene con ciotoli, ripida, più in alto faceva una curva, e finiva contro il cielo. Non si vedeva altro, solo il cielo blu; era un taglio netto, di qua la terra, di là siente, solo il colore blu intenso del cielo mediterraneo. […] Una cosa al di fuori d’ogni possibilità, che non si poteva né raggiungere, né definire. Avevo scoperto qualcosa di completamente nuovo, sentivo che avrebbe avuto una grande influenza sulla mia vita futura; quell’emozione avrei voluto sempre rivivrà.”10

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The specific relation of the collection with Napoli then could be explicated through the “Vista da Castel Sant’Elmo” by Mimmo Jodice as first photo which became part of the collection, one of the many which experience the issues of representation of a city where different souls tend to be ungraspable in their complexity.13 It is a relation which might be very clearly explicating showing diagrammatically how the greater part of the photos within the extensive photography collection talk about Napoli,14 but it is meant to be ineligible at the same time for a stranger. It has to do with the origins of the collection itself, and the private story of their collectors at the same time.

AGI Verona: Collection: About spontaneity

The AGI Verona collection, on the other hand, has its inner quality specifically in the lack of an a priori structure, in the kind of randomness and in the spontaneity and “lightness”15 of a cumulative approach which is longing for the excitement of discovery, and an extreme directness in the ways of doing. This directness comes from the warm intimacy and familiarity which are embedded in the way the collection has been assembled by Anna and Giorgio Fasoli16. And it is present already in the story of the first acquisition of Giorgio, which could represent a moment of acknowledgment of a most basic instinct in collecting contemporary art, and which is at the same time a story of friendship, relationships, intimacy and nearness. Capogrossi’s etching within the art-book “L’usso del mio tempo” by Sommaruga17 marks the moment when the collection, and the need to collecting, became evident.

That basic instinct and spontaneity which marked afterward all the acquisitions of the AGI Verona collection made clear from the beginning the impossibility to define a logic, however the more I was re-searching around specific relationships among the artworks the more it at a fundamental pattern was getting visible, naturally hidden exactly in the need of being contemporary. It is a pattern of “collecting by year” in a way, a process of selection marked exactly from that excitement of the discovery which endorses the whole collection. With these premises, my role towards the collection and in relation with the collectors has been strongly empirical, base on various experiences which included me within Giorgio and Anna’s world.

During the year I’ve been working on the collection, I’ve been able to see the collection in two exhibitions, to talk with the curators who took care of them, and to discuss with Giorgio about the way the artworks specifically and the image of the collection as a whole had been displayed. All my decisions to wards the space ended up being filtered from all these relationships. And critical about them at the same time. And within the lack of a precise structure, it has been my experience of the collection in spaces and

9 B. Laroux, Re-assembling the social, 2005 (p. 2)
10 G. Panza, Ricordi di un Collezionista, 2005 (p. 24)
11 G. Panza, Ricordi di un Collezionista, 2006 (p. 26)
12 Plate IV
13 Refer to Appendix 5 for an alternative analysis of Una storia Privata and AGI Verona collection.
14 I. Calvino, Six Memos for the Next Millennium, 1988 (p. 55 - 80)
15 Plate VIII: a
16 Plate VI: a
17 Plate VII: a
18 Plate V: a
19 Plate IX: a
20 I. Calvino, Six Memos for the Next Millennium, 1988 (p. 3 - 30)
21 Plate VIII: b
22 Plate V: b
23 Plate VI: a
the values of a specific place the mean to ground the ineffable features of the collection to the world. The proximity made an a posteriori analysis of the structure of the collection possible, and the detachment from any bond to a precise place in the world which is embedded within the collection undermines the main concern of the collection in being in the contemporaneity of time, which happens in a so-structured way which deserved to be mapped.

Eventually, everything becomes visible through relationships. I’ve been careful to the specific features of the two collections as a whole (with all the relationships it involves) and to the specific characteristics of the works of art within them. While my awareness of the “subject matter” developed, I engaged with the choice of a site which seemed to be sympathetic both to the collections and my understanding of the city where they should be displayed.

3. Resonances
How does one look at a work of art? Which prelude does each assemblage need?
In research of the place, my agency has been about staging an encounter of a collection with a landscape, and with a city, to find a place where works of art and the narrative which structure their assemblage could enter one’s consciousness. As Ursula Meyer wrote in Conceptual art about the work of Mel Bochner “...what if we were to think only about the place from which works of art enter our consciousness? Considerations of ‘where’ implies more than an ontology of position.”

Place in the model of the case
The “i Cotenente” collection, as said, is strongly related with a city – Napoli, and all the contradictions the city gathers, its specific environment, and it is at the same time collecting together different times and interpretations of this environment. There is a coexistence of simultaneity of temporalities of the city within the collection, which is in this sense constructing a precise and broad imagery of it. I’ve been discovering these different souls of the city the collection witnesses to while I was “measuring” both the city and the collection, and I’ve been than looking for a place able to respond to this very specific and profound bound between the two. Lost in the experience of the city, I encountered a place with a layered imagery of the city in time and it seems to be separated from it in space. It is opposite to the time of the collection another stratification of time, which existed before the time of the collection and simultaneously. It is a ruin of something which has never been finished, it stays there between the hills of Posillipo and the sea while framing the contemporary city from distance. It is imprecise in the sense that it is opposing to the collection certain tensions, another narrative about time.

The ambiguity of this position would define a precise narrative the city offers to who wants to reach it, as said, is strongly related with a city – Napoli, and all the contradictions the city gathers, its specific environment, and it is at the same time collecting together different times and interpretations of this environment. There is a coexistence of simultaneity of temporalities of the city within the collection, which is in this sense constructing a precise and broad imagery of it. I’ve been discovering these different souls of the city the collection witnesses to while I was “measuring” both the city and the collection, and I’ve been than looking for a place able to respond to this very specific and profound bound between the two. Lost in the experience of the city, I encountered a place with a layered imagery of the city in time and it seems to be separated from it in space. It is opposite to the time of the collection another stratification of time, which existed before the time of the collection and simultaneously. It is a ruin of something which has never been finished, it stays there between the hills of Posillipo and the sea while framing the contemporary city from distance. It is imprecise in the sense that it is opposing to the collection certain tensions, another narrative about time.

The theme of the ruin has already a certain effect, especially here in the impossibility to define the part of it which has always been a ruin and the part which has never been finished. There is then darkness of the grotte of the Palazzo and the blinding light of the sea when the sun reflects on it, which acquires a specific figure when it breaks into the space. And there is also the sound of the sea, of the waves against the stone, which does not need to be softened.

The grotte represented and contained all these stories, the privacy and intimacy of a place within the image of Palazzo Donn’Anna.

What is quite noticeable about a case that it has a limit from the inside, where the hollow meets the rock, and that behind it is not another space, but a non-space, namely the amorphous mass of the rock, something in which there is simply no space.”

O.F. Bollnow, Human Space, 1963

This archaic relation with the cave does not exclusively reconnect the experience of the collection with one of the inner traditions of the city – its relationship with the ground and death, and the volcano as cause and consequence, but also with an intimate experience of the space. The choice of a case underlines a concrete experience of space which very aptly clarifies a certain relationship with the intimate idea of one’s dwelling, a kind of unity of the negative, kept safe by meters of non-space. The fiction of the art space here is about darkness, penumbra, the contrast between light and shadow, black and white, and the consequent presence of light as a figure within the space. The implication of the material and the tradition to that nearness, and again the consequences the material has in the inner nature of certain spaces.

Place out: the role of nature
Confronted with the peculiar structure of the AGI Verona Collection, the relevance of the idea of a place seemed even more urgent, since the lack of “points of reference” asked for a specific effort in defining a place able to witness the collection without grounding it too strongly to a space. The lightness of the way the collection relates with the world needed to be preserved.
The idea of place has embedded here also the idea of distance from specific coordinates. I started from the city the collection is coming from trying at the same time to impose a boundaries between this city, Verona, and the collection. I’ve been focusing on the idea of the walls which define a within to be able to oppose it the freedom of being without. In nature, I found the memories of a place outside Verona’s walls.

The distance in space that the collection could gain from a place out” generated powerful tensions with the extreme need of being in the present and having a role in it embedded in the story of the collection. In being without the walls, out of the city, the collection would claim itself free from a certain kind of negotiation with the art system and its rules. This need of freedom has to do with the accessibility to the collection which Giorgio offers, and its spontaneous and generous advertisement in a sense.

The detachment from the contemporary city within nature suggests a sense of community though the collective experience of the natural landscape and without the city. In the place out, differently, tensions would increase by the journey towards it, throughout an experience of nature and the landscape and the distance, with the viewer which will be asked to lose his usual “points of reference” within this experi-
ence. A valley, Valdobbia, tries to reach the city from north, bringing nature extremely close to Verona. The city is not visible from the valley, and the reality of this Valley seems impossible from the city. There is an ‘intimate immensity’ which exist only in distance, in nature, and relates with nature’s different sense of time. 

Within this Valley, the ruin of a Villa is positioned in the center, and a wild garden in front of it opens towards the city apparently without acknowledging its very presence. Apparently lost in nature and physically extremely close to Verona, the impossibility to define the relationships between the two seemed perfect to relate the AGI Verona Collection to the idea of a place. The survived walls of the Villa are taken over by nature, lost far in time from the city. Here the encounter with the collection seemed able to keep a certain intimacy and familiarity which are embedded in both the context and the content.

**Ruin/ Impartiality in time**

Within the selection of precise space in the world another narrative to measure with the one of the collection has been selected, and from that moment on I’ve tried to relate “built narrative” – what Scarpa called “tatto costruito” – with a collection and the world. I was interested in the tensions that the two narratives merged together could generate, which represented to me the “architectural matter” I used to stage – Albioli would say organise, in a P4 presentation I should probably say “design.”

The choice of the two non-neutral spaces explicate the existence of a narrative of the place, which is in any kind of spaces, and constitute an inevitable prelude to the actual experience of an art space. It is setting the limits and provoking a certain in-depth reflection on the problem of the space for art, as “staging encounters and mediation.”

“There is a fundamental similarity to the act of curating, which at its most basic is simply about connecting cultures, bringing their elements into proximity with each other – the task of curating is to make junctions, to allow different elements to touch. You might describe it as the attempted pollination of culture, or a form of map-making that opens new routes through a city, a people or a world.”


**4. Experience of spaces**

The approach and the gestures towards art space which have been undertaken and the choices which will described from now on represent my attempt to define my position as an architect who wants to make the intimacy of this entrance, the place – and the other. The very personal relationships with artists Anna Rosa and Giovanni have many of my pictures, comforting witnesses of my way to frame these specific realities, have been strongly present through all my work, and are now necessary companions in this final text for the presentation of the projects. They are able to explain how I’ve been responding to two Places, trying not to damage their intimacies while doing so.

**Palazzo Donn’Anna**

The experience of the Palace will be told in between the way the experience of it has been constructed through time and through the trajectory of my personal wandering within. Many stories could take place, many ways to experience the collection could unfold, however it become necessary to describe the specificity of one experience to make it vivid, to tell one story. As Italo Calvino wrote in ‘Cominciare e Finire’: “l’inizio è questo momento di distacco dalla moltiplicità dei possibili,” suggesting the need to engage with one experience of the many possible in order to describe the narrative of the two collections, and the two places attached to them as consequence.

Until this moment, *Palazzo Donn’Anna* has always been deliberately showed as looking at the city from distance, to underline its very unique relationship with the times of Napoli. Here it will be about the experience of the palace from the city, to construct the way one might engage with it.

**Sequence: compression and expansion from the city**

*Palazzo Donn’Anna* can become clearly visible with its massiveness and presence on the coastline, its layers of time and its ideal of eternal ruin, even from the center Napoli in the moment one faces the bay looking towards the hills of Posillipo. It is its own witness of its presence within the city in this continency of time. And the ambiguity of this position would offer a precise narrative.

The access to the everyday life of the palace happens through its inner courtyard, as in the greatest number of the Palaces in Napoli. But the gates have also another entrance, the one fishermen always used at the time of Donn’Anna. To get there, a narrow stair carved out from the rosf as the Palace is would guide one below the street, and towards the sea. The intimacy of this entrance, and the way it relates with the image to the palace, is already subtly representative of a part of the story of the collection. It tells the part of the narrative which is about the privacy within the story itself. The very personal relationships with artists Anna Rosa and Giovanni have always been very fond of, and the condition of nearness those relationships represent for the collection. The scale of the threshold define a precise contrast with the image of the Palace, underlining the ambivalent presence within the collection of this dichotom. The stairs on the other side of the gate bring one in the depth and darkness of the ground, showing the city though its relation with the ground, and death. ‘They are doing so in a way which in the end it is not so different from the one the spiral staircase by Studio Rota offers a prelude to the Museo del Novecento while it engages with Piazz Duomo and Milano. In both cases, it is a representative relation with the city to be displayed.

Once one experienced the stairs in darkness, following them under the street and towards the sea, the entrance to *Palazzo Donn’Anna* is staged though precise gesture which engage with the bizarre singularity of the existent, while the horizon is framed towards the view of sea as point of reference. On the left a reflective glass in which a door is framed faces another door of a the probably illicit apartment building, and offers an alternative to the view of sea. It proposes another threshold, the last one, to the art space, and simute the viewer precisely in the particularity of the place.

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43 *Plau XXI*
44 *Plau XXIII*
45 O. P. Belknap, *Human space*, 1965
46 P. Zambros, *Thinking architecture*, 2010
47 *Plau XXIV*
48 *The beginning is this specific moment of detachment from the multiplicity of possibilities* as paraphrased by the author from “Cominciare e Finire” in I. Calvino, *Lezioni Americane*, 1984
49 *Plau XXVII*
50 *Plau XXVIII*
51 *Plau XXIX*
52 *Plau XXX*
53 *Plau XXXI*
54 *Plau XXXII*
55 *Plau XXXIII*
56 *Plau XXXIV*
57 *Plau XXXV*
58 *Plau XXXVI*
Archived / About the kind of artworks and the selection

Behind the glass, a series of spaces carved out from the tufo opens to the viewer.59 Within those existent spaces, the archive of the collection will open as first and last threshold to the exhibition spaces. The choice of staging the entrance throughout the archive is deliberately related with the very structure of the collection, and tries to explicate one of its strongest logic: it would make one aware of the number of stories which could be possible because of the huge number of artworks, due to the prevalence of photography within the collection and the fact that it is specifically collected by series. This quality of the collection gives it and incredibly consistency which needs to be understood. And witness to many stories60 which cannot be told simultaneously but asks for very specific choices which will every time define different experiences of it.

The art space opens to the viewer in an astonishing directness through its archive. It situates itself in between the world outside and the hidden intimacy of the Palazzo Domenichelli, and of the collection.

Aura / “Measuring”

The consistent logic of collection and the one of the palace61 defined extremely charged moments of tension. It has been an actual process of negotiation,62 and of choices. I will now underline some of them, and I will explain how this process has been staged through different scales, with an attention in modesty and precision in order not to compromise any of the two integrities.

My way to answer the question of “how to make spaces for art?” is to focus on the notion of attention. Attention given to the artworks, and to the other, and to all the relationships which are not directly visible.

The agency of architecture is a mediation among existing narratives, a moment which represents the common ground where they could meet.63 It has been about making spaces out of limits.

Magma / negotiation with the walls

The way Magma has been staged is explanatory of this approach.64 Magma is a series of 72 pictures by a Neapolitan photographer, Antonio Biasucci. It is talking about one volcano and many at the same time, and which picture represents one or the other is not meant to be understood.65 Within the collection the series is complete, and this completeness again represents one of the greatest features of the collection of Anna Rosa and Giovanni: an awareness of the process, which constitutes to them a way of understating a work of art. So, in photography this stays to the complete series as a painting is made of different layers of colour, or a sculpture of different pieces.

All the 72 photos within the series are simultaneously present within the same room, as first actual room of the experience of the art space.66

This room is the one the actual experience of the Palace will start with, because of the artworks inner relations with the city, its connection with the earth and death. This series can relate with the sense of the experience of the art space.

The attention to the directions of the wall67 this drawing is already showing here, and especially the way the “accidental arbitrary” these directions happened to have will influence the way the artwork will be experienced, and their mutual relations. The way the pictures on the two sided of the cave will respond to each other is at the same time something which cannot be controlled a priori.68 As well as the actual position of them it is not. I decided to engage with the uncertainty of the material I was confronting with the collection, and to let tensions raise from their meeting. And this uncertainty embedded within the material.

The way an almost precise line of shadow has been dig here shows an interest in multiplying the shadows, and merging them at the same time, almost suggesting that it is the picture to merge with its background, with the stone it is, in a way, representing.

Distanz miracolo

A "regime of separation," the one of the frame, to construct, physically and potentially, all the other relationships of the artworks with the world.69 The frame70 became an extremely significant object then, which I had to engage with since necessary, and which I decided to charge of meanings as the one which is instead honest in its role. It became an object, which I tried to relate to artwork, the artist, and the compromises the grotte where asking for to make possible to look at work within. Its artificial presence, it should become the only element of the room charged by this value. Its role, then, it is not only to protect the artworks from the external environment, but also the one of make them visible, and to make one's presence in them visible at the same time.71

Similarity

To add to this simultaneity of times, and to compare with, I proposed a simultaneity of vision, which is again subject of the contingency of many realities, which has been engaged but not completely staged.72

The approach, it is a non-conclusive one.73

I’ve tried to be careful to make one conscious of the artworks and not to block his/her consciousness of the shape and presence of the room of the Palazzo. And its relationship with light, and the uncertainty of its.

In the center of all distances / About the mythical and contemporary landscape

The issue of the landscape has an incredibly aware presence within the collection. It has been a very Italian issue the one of the landscape, within the coexistence of the mythical and the contemporary one. And the collection of Giovanni and Anna Rosa witnesses to exactly that great moment when an entire generation of artists74 was asked to take responsibility for the contemporary landscape.75

Photographie, “disposing the myth of the ‘beautiful landscape’, of the idea of monument without losing the aesthetic values and deep relationship with art history, sensed as a living organism, was a strictly Italian problem.”76

“Cities first, and then metropolis, are the privileged breeding ground for photography, full of new symbols that deliberate modern areas of exploration. At this moment, photography is reading the great, painful awareness of being a view suspended between different ages, a subtle perception of worlds that are only now forming.”

Luigi Ghirri

Confronted with the complexity and contradictions of this research, the agency of architecture should be able to let the different voices within the collection to tell their story and relate with the stories of the

59 Plate XXXVII
60 Plate XXXVIII
61 Plate XXXIX
62 Plate XL
63 Plate XLI
64 Plate XLII
65 Plate XLIII
66 Plate XLIV
67 Plate XIX
68 Plate XLV
69 Plate XLVI
70 Plate XLVII
71 Plate XLVIII
72 Plate L
73 Plate LI
74 Plate LII
75 Luigi Ghirri, Une Scene Italienne, 2006
76 Luigi Ghirri, Una Scene Italienne, 2006
others. Leaving space to the uncertainty of the relationships which might happen. Within the simultaneous presence of different kind of landscape, which criss-cross the rigid narrative of the gesture, architecture would limit itself to provide the common ground and frame for conversations to take place.

Towards light/ domestication

Materia the two projects are dealing with, making space from the existing logics of handling the matter. Way of understanding the material which asked me other ways to think at it, to understand its relationship with both soft and light as matter.

Within my gesture of digging, I followed spatially and proportionally the one of the domestication of the palace76, but here the act of “making space” is done by “carving out”. It is one step less artificial in a way, as the space is made by the first constructive process of taking out material, which was then used to make bricks to build again. This “level zero” of making space here has been the one I was interested in.

The spaces have been carved out where it was necessary to measure (contrast) the narrative of the Palace with the one of the present of the collection. And even then, these spaces followed existing logics and the specificity of the other floors of the palace which has already imposed an organization of the material.

The most domesticated moment within the Palace respond to the moment of greatest light, which also represent Palazzo Donn'Anna as suspended within the imagery of the city, where the time seems to be stopped with the ruin of a space which has never been finished.77 In this moment of light, where the sky eventually shows itself 78, always blue, after the penumbra one has been to within the gesture, the relationship with he sea is staged with a wall that doesn’t permit to see the line of the horizon from the beginning, but which slowly unfold the darkness into light79.

Breakwater line/ protection and framing

This last moment of the experience I want to describe is the one when the experience of the palace eventually meets again Napoli.80

"Col capogiro distoglie lo sguardo dalla piccola Cina formicolante sulla spiaggia sotto i suoi occhi. Oltre l’ultima fila di cabine protesa nel mare come una barriera all’invadenza di quei bagnanti, in uno specchio d’acqua..."

To conclude now exactly where this narrative started, in the dichotomy between intimacy and image81, the shape and presence of the pier which frames the city and protect the realm of the palace would stay as the only manifested gesture without Palazzo Donn’Anna82. However, even in being without, the way it relates to the layers of the landscape reaching towards the sea is about framing and the intimacy of a wall. This very last moment of the story is symptomatic of a very specific approach towards the space which responds to the exactitude83 of the collection.84

Villa Amina

As the experience of the palace starts from its image, the one of the villa does it from the lack of it. In the place out, differently, tensions would increase by the journey towards it, throughout an experience of nature and the landscape and the distance, with the viewer which will be asked to lose his usual “points of reference” within this experience. The city is not visible from the valley, and the reality of this Valley seems impossible from the city. This prelude expanded in the landscape starts from a gate that physically even before then visually separates the Villa from the world85. It is positioned at the end of a small street which start right outside the walls of Verona and climbs towards the valley, surrounded by small apartments building in the first part of it, and from small family houses afterwards. Everything seems to stop once the steer reaches the gate, cars are not allowed afterwards, and suddenly there’s only nature around.86

The role of the threshold here is again extremely powerful in staging the encounter of the collection of Giorgio and Anna with the city, and with the world. And again, the quality of this threshold is something which I felt the need to keep as found. The place has a narrative, which integrity is a factor architecture should mediate with, and try to make explicit at the same time. The detachment the gate represent of the valley behind from the world is one of the quality I’ve been seeking for in my research, and which I found responding to the qualities of the collection for its clean honesty.

The Villa appears after while one has been walking along the path the gate frames from the city.87 It stays on the other side of a small stream, and the row of trees which surround it make the view of the villa almost impossible from distance.88 Time gain a role here, which strengthen the distance from the city with the walk needed to reach any signs of Villa Amina’s existence. And time would have then a specific role within.

For the unfolding of the experience, the first moment when the image of the Villa become vivid acquired a great tension89. Yet the Villa again doesn’t show its baroque facade, but a side, in which a small door frames the atrium. The ambiguity of this moment happened to be extremely coherent with the past of the Villa, and its conscious lack of a precise image. It is the result of an accumulation of times, as well as this prolonged threshold seems to play with an accumulation of filters between the art collection and the world90.

Threshold/ Discrete screen

The complexity of the threshold of the Villa91, which reminded me at the beginning of the very complex construction in time of the Castello di Rivoli’s atrium, is so composed by the accumulation of times the interventions, and the art within the spaces as consequence, had to deal with. The very first interest in this context has been trying to define all those different times, and the moment of connections between them, to map the ambiguous line between the old and the new. Within this complexity, also the collection will be displayed according to an accumulation of times, extremely contemporary times. This process is visible in the traces of this times and additions that the traces of the shape of the roof holds, and which I’ve engaged with.

Within these spontaneous spaces (rooms) which gets value within the assemblage of them, the facade acts as a “discrete screen” which impose itself as “artificial” in the attempt to give unity to this complexity: Extracting it as an element, the ambiguity it generates gave me option to make one aware of this way the construction of the Villa happened, and how this clear implication of time will be “measured” by the spatial implications of the collection instead, within a common freedom which represent the way both the realities have been assembled92.

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76 Plate LHI
77 Plate LX
78 Plate LXI
79 Plate LXII
80 Plate LXIII
81 Plate LXIV
82 Plate LXV
83 Plate LXVI
84 Plate LXVII
85 Plate LXVIII
86 1. Cahoon, Six Memos for the next Millennium, 1988 (p. 55 - 80)
87 Plate LXIX
88 Plate LXX
89 Plate LXXI
90 Plate LXXII
91 Plate LXXIII
92 Plate LXXIV
93 Plate LXXV
94 Plate LXXVI
95 Plate LXXVII
96 Plate LXXVIII
97 Plate LXXIX
98 Plate LXXX
99 Plate LXXXI
100 Plate LXXXII
101 Plate LXXXIII
From the entrance, Kader Attia appear in between two walls, simultaneously the room his artwork "belongs to," the other room which seems to be part of the atrium and yet it is not, the trees visible from the door one came from and his/her image reflected in the glass wall. This frame lies specifically in the middle of the atrium, dividing it in two parts. It is there to map one of those lines of time, and to manifest its position in contrast with the facade of the Villa as a whole and its role as discrete screen. The reflective glass which split the corridor asks for a certain engagement because of the ambiguity of its role, and within that engagement provide an answer to part of the story of the Villa. On the other side of the glass, part of the same image the viewer is in now, there is Gianni Caragazio’s "La stupore è nuovo ogni giorno" which adds to the times of the villa the ones of the artist, life, a draw from 1996 and a sculpture from 2003 of Berlinde De Bruyckere, and far away in the darkness of the oldest room of what is now Villa Amina, the constellation of Uriel Orlow "Unmade film: the closing credits" from 2013.

**Aural/ Cumulative approach**

The accumulation of times of the Villa is then contrasted and represented at the same time from the cumulative approach within the collection97. The parallelism has been of extreme interest to face the problem of a collection so heterogeneous and very spontaneous in the way it has been constructed. In this sense, the times and room of the Villa itself started to give an order to the collection, in a constant exchange of priorities between the collection and the space98.

At the same time, a specific interpretation of the principle of the "temporal room," historically among most basic rules of the chronological organization of spaces in a museum has been applied. In this accumulation of room, and accumulation of artworks, their merging tries to keep the values of the assemblage applying the most basic principle of organization, which declares itself as an "absence" at the same time99.

The result of this translation of the pattern within the collection are a series of room which are defined by the year of the artworks, and accumulation artwork which has been created and acquired by Giorgio in very same year. This process would lead to strong tensions in collecting those rooms of discovery where Giorgio’s interest in young artist would be explicated, and the way this interest has been carried on in years.

In the room of 2012101, for example, one would be confronted with extremely heterogeneous works as the stuffed birds of Vanessa Safavi’s ‘Each colour is a gift for you,’ the cable and wires of Pratchaya Phintong which necessary ask for a very different kind of engagement and the ‘Untitled #16’ plinth and painting by Haris Epaminonda which impose a different understating of the room.

This approach leads to a very strong freedom in the sequence of the rooms at the same time, since the year doesn’t really need to be also chronologically subsequent to be understood. Here, the quality of the Villa would offer a structure where the strong difference within the rooms would define itself as able to manifest its position in contrast with the facade of the Villa as a whole and its role as discrete screen. The artworks will be the freer to talk among themselves, to react to each other presence.

The assemblage of the Villa and its lack of boundaries opened the option to work with a constructed experience of the inside and the outside and a heterogeneity of spaces which, again, are an "embedded" implication of the heterogeneity of the collection. My choice, in situating this heterogeneity, was to work with its vague edge. My gesture to do so had been tracing its boundaries with the time of the new intervention and its materiality to enhance its inner complexity. And to engage with the "accidental axes" which result from that, and the spaces to rest and domesticated nature they have been able to define.102

"Of course, there are some spaces which should be flexible, but there are also some spaces which should be completely inflexible. They should be just there inspiration... just the place to be, the place which does not change, except for the people who go in and out."103

Louis I. Kahn, Light is the theme, 1975

These edges and the ambiguity in relating with them affects also the very limits of the projects. To face the valley and the street one arrives from, a very last building which straightens the edges of the villa as orthogonal to the facade and imposes an order in to the intervention and all the times before it.104 It provides a closure against which all the other times clash on.105 It does it not only in terms of direction, but also with its materiality, common to all the scales of intervention which has been applied but different from all the many already presents. As all "Materia,"106 matter to deal with, all combined to define the specificity of this landscape, and all suggesting a different scale of approach as reaction to the situation which brought to their existence.107 These qualities of the reaction is showed at the scale of the landscape, in the model, and at the scale of the detail, within the way in which the retaining the new construction will deal with the existing walls, interpreting its traces.108 In this sense, and within this context, the choice of the material for the new intervention happened. I thought in order to react to the simultaneous existence within the ruin and within the landscape of an incredible variety of materials, each one representing by itself a specific time and defined by its specific scale, choosing to work with one material, uniform in its colour but able to acquire different qualities according to the process in which it can be made, and without a scale in a sense, was the best choice to enhance the qualities of the existing and suggest a way to interpret then the complexity of the Villa.

This one material, concrete, has been than inflected in different forms according to the use of the space. For the archive, a concrete layer within the ruins of the original walls retraces their directionality and has embedded an active thermal insulation which keep a constant temperature within and insulate simultaneously.109 The space within results as a neutral container to be occupied by various artworks, with a vague edges.110 Liam Gillick’s intervention happens within the ruins of the original walls retraces their directionality and has embedded an active thermal insulation which keep a constant temperature within and insulate simultaneously.111 The space within results as a neutral container to be occupied by various artworks, with a necessary flexibility due to the tendency of the collection to be displayed and to move towards different places.112

**Intimate Imminence/ Ensemble**

Within the heart of the collection and the place attached to it, there is a moment which represents the...
greater part of all the others, a dialogue that informed all the other dialogue which are taking place. It can be said that when the Villa expands in the landscape, and deals with the collection in the dialogue with the time of nature, and with another small annex building above the hill the path leads one to. Here, the actual composition of the collection shows itself as it never happens in the exhibitions and traveling the artworks of the AGI Verona collection do, since the intimacy and distance between the two souls of the collection (the drawings of Anna and the contemporary art of Giorgio) has been never manifested outside the familiarity of their house in Verona, but it is fundamental in the acknowledgment of how one actually informs the other.

The two buildings works then as an ensemble, and the intimacy of the relationship between the two is staged though a covered path and a wall, where a single window frames another view of Verona.

Coming back towards the Villa, finally the facade would be visible and understandable as complete entity, while one would be already aware of the complexity behind it. The garden would frame it, while ideally stretching towards the city. The last view from the garden, looking at the glass within the arches, which differently from the glass of all the other windows and door are slightly reflective, one will see himself into them, with the garden on the background, and at the same time he/she will see the artworks though it, both in the garden and in the corridor he/she has been walking before, from which he was missing that garden, since as we know "nature has a different sense of time," which might situate contemporary art in another place.

To conclude, my attitude towards the two projects has been projective in engaging with certain conditions to construct a precise experience within the space, its nearness and intimacy. The places I chose raised certain tensions in the relation between the artwork and the space the viewer would have to confront, and to engage him/her with certain spaces will request him/her another level of attention. And this is my understanding of a space which is not neutral. I situated the role of architecture as mediation between narratives, the one of the existing place which is my understanding of a space which is not neutral. It can be situated when the Villa expands in the landscape, while ideally stretching towards the city.

Architecture has been a negotiation between the two, in order to let the identity of the two collections and the one of the two places, Palazzo Donn'Anna and Villa Amina, happen at the same time.

5. Reflections and values
A posteriori I would describe my work of the past year as an attempt to understand how the story of an art collection could be told. The way I did it has been though the mediation of architecture in staging the encounter of a specific collection with the world within a specific place and space. I do think that the role of architecture in relation with art it is not so different from the one of storytelling in “establishing the rights of intensity”.

“I don’t know what the meaning [of storytelling] is except to establish the rights of intensity. I think of that as the quality of fiction and storytelling, restoring the claims of intensity. Of intensity of feelings.”

Susan Sontag in conversation with John Berger. To tell a story. 1983

There is already a system which construct values, but how does it relate with the world is about a place, and a space within. The way it relates with the city is about architecture. While mediating the tensions of the encounter of art with a specific place in the world where it will become part of the public realm, the role of architecture is to establish and frame the rights of intensity of this encounter, since it is within the acknowledgment of it that the experience of art will happen.

With the definition of my attitude towards the construction of art spaces, also my understanding of the agency of the architect got refined. In dealing with the specificity of the two places selected and the tensions in “measuring” the realm of art and the one of architecture in relation with each other, I reflected about where the boundaries of the agency of the architect within this negotiation could and should be traced.

Within the specificity of the spaces I strongly admire by the architects which set the “revolution of staging” after the second World War in Italy, there is an omnipresence of architecture on display. The tensions between the space for art and the one of the existing are all handled by the arbitrary of the architect, and his often marvelous - as in the case of Carlo Scarpa - sensibility. The experience of the viewer results as precisely staged by architecture, in the same way art is staged. The staging of ‘La pietà Rondanini’ by Michelangelo is exemplary of this attitude, and to witness to what Duboy in his book about Scarpa’s works called “Museum revolution of the 50s in Italy” where the allies between architecture and museum directors and cultural functionaries shows us how only certain ‘kind of relationships’ could make possible a specific way to show art to happen, as in Milano the one between Costantino Baroni and the BBPR ( or in Verona Licisco Magagnato and Scarpa, or in Genova Caterina Marcenaro and Franco Albini).

My interest, as it has been stated widely during the previous chapters, shifted instead towards a non-conclusive approach in dealing with the encounter of art with a place. A kind of uncertainty and ambiguity among the place, the specific space and art could leave room for a certain awareness by the viewer of the way the experience of art is proposed, and constructed. And a certain freedom in the way different artworks could relate in different times with the place, framed by the specificity of the storytelling of a collection.
Awareness of the other issues of attention

Samuel F.B. Morse, Gallery of the Louvre, 1831-1833
Awareness of the other/ issues of attention

Giuseppe Gabrielli, *The National Gallery - Interior Room 32, 1886*
Awareness of the context: private collectors and the art system

prelude to the Fondazione Prada, Milano (December 2016)
Specificity / first “assemblage”

Robert Irwin and Villa Panza, Varese window view, 1973
Artworks "Una Storia Privata"

Mimmo Jodice, *Vista da Castel Sant'Elmo*, 1990
Domesticity: About exactitude

Lorenzo Palmieri, Casa Cotroneo, Roma, 2015
Structure/ Place

Relationships with Napoli
Giuseppe Capogrossi, *L'uomo del mio tempo*, 1963

Artworks | AGI Verona
Structure/Organization

Lack of structure
Structure/Organization

Lack of structure
Domesticity/ About lightness

Casa Fasol, Verona (April 2017)
Structure/ Time

Relationships with the contemporaneity of time
Place in Napoli

Heterogeneity and nearness
Place in/ Nearness

Palazzo Donn'Anna, Napoli, 1990 cs


**Place in Imagery**

Giovanni Battista Carafa, *Fidelissimae Urbis Neapolitanae*, 1629
Place in Imagery

Pietro Fabris, Il corto delle barche a Palazzo Donn'Anna, Napoli, 1780 ca.
Place in/Imagery

Achille Mauri, *Napoli in pens - Palazzo Donn'Anna*, Napoli, 1875
Place in/ the model of the cave

Intimate immensity within the grotte of Palazzo Donn’Anna
Grotto figure of light

Palazzo Donn'Anna, Napoli (December 2016)
Illustrations | List of figures

XVII
Resonances | Place in

Geometric figure of light
Unknown author, Palazzo Donn’Anna, Napoli, 1992
The significance of shadow within Palazzo Donn’Anna

Geotelled darkness

The significance of shadow within Palazzo Donn’Anna
The figure of light/the figure of space

Study model of the negative and form work for the positive of Palazzo Donn'Anna
Place out/ Verona

About the relationship with the valley
Place out/ Distance

About the relationship with the valley
Place out without Verona walls

Extract from the map "Magnifica Illa Civitas Verona"
Illustrations | List of figures

XXIII
Resonances | Place out

Place out / framing

Verona from Villa Amina, Verona (December 2016)
Place out the role nature

Villa Amina without Verona walls
Place out the role nature

Villa Amina, Verona (December 2016)
Place out the role of nature

Garden of Villa Amina, Verona (December 2016)
Sequence/ Presence

Etching of Palazzo Donn'Anna, Napoli, 1984
Sequence: Compression and expansion

Relationship with the bay
Sequence Stairs

Bagni Sirena, Napoli (April 2017)
Sequence/ Threshold

Intimacy of the gate, Bagni Sirena, Napoli (April 2017)
Artworks / Una Storia Privata

Mimmo Jodice, Ritratti, Lavori in corso, 1996

XXXI
Experience of spaces / Palazzo Donn'Anna
XXXII
Experience of spaces | Palazzo Donn'Anna

Sequence/Threshold

Palazzo Donn'Anna, Napoli (April 2017)
Artworks: Una Storia Privata

Claudio Abate, Giovanni e Anna Rosa nell’opera 700 di Sol Lewitt, 2006
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Experience of spaces | Palazzo Donn'Anna

Sequence/ Stairs

Bagni Sirena, Napoli (April 2017)
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Plan of the access to the palace through the existing stairs and the caved out archive, Palazzo Donn’Anna
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Bagni Sirena, Napoli (April 2017)
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Palazzo Donn'Anna, Napoli (April 2017)
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Experience of spaces | Palazzo Donn’Anna

Artworks: Una Storia Privata

Mimmo Jodice, Mediterraneo (Antro della Sibilla Cumana), 1995
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Plan of the current situation of the grotto within Palazzo Donn’Anna
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"Aura"– Measuring

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Experience of spaces | Palazzo Donn’Anna
Magma/ Negotiation with the walls

Gypsum model of Palazzo Donn'Anna and Magma

Experience of spaces | Palazzo Donn'Anna
Artworks / Una Storia Privata

Magma/ Specificity

Plan and section of the negotiation with the tufo

Experience of spaces | Palazzo Donn'Anna

I've tried to be careful to make one conscious of the artworks and not to block his/her consciousness of the shape and presence of the room of the Palazzo. And its relationship with light, and the uncertainty of it.
Magma: Uncertainty

Arbitrary of the *grotte* in the uncertain relationships defined among the artworks
Magma/ Uncertainty

Detail of the “regime of separation” between Magma and the room
"Accidental arbitrary" of the existing walls
Illustrations | List of figures

Magma/ Simultaneity

Detail of the ambiguity in carving the stone to make space for art
**Magma**

**Directness**

Detail of the "regime of separation" between Magma and the room.
Magma/ Directness

Contingency of realities through the frame
Magma / integrity

Section of the grotto of Palazzo Donn'Anna and the narrative within
Experience of spaces | Palazzo Donn'Anna

Magnam\textit{/} integrity

Gypsum model of Palazzo Donn'Anna and Magma
In the center of all distances the mythical and the contemporary landscape

Plan of the uncertainty of relationships among the collection’s narrative
In the center of all distances / The mythical and the contemporary landscape

In the center of all distances / The mythical and the contemporary landscape

Framing the ground for relationships to happen
Towards light | Domestication

Grotte of Palazzo Donn'Anna, Napoli (December 2017)
Towards light/ “A room with a view”

Plan and section of the relation of the domesticated grotto with the sky and the sea
Towards light! “A room with a view”

Untouched ruin since XVI century, Palazzo Donn’Anna (December 2017)
Towards light / Back to the city in distance

View of the pier, the wall, the city and the sea
**Breakwater line** Protection

Sketch on the directionality and role of the pier
Experience of spaces | Palazzo Donn’Anna

*Palazzo Donn’Anna and the Vesuvio, Napoli (December 2016)*
Breakwater line/ Directionality

Napoli and the sea
Illustrations | List of figures

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Breakwater line / Directionality

The bay of Napoli from Castel Sant'Elmo
Breakwater line/ Integrity

North elevation of Palazzo Donn'Anna from the sea
Breakwater line/ Integrity

The realm of the palace and the last row of bathing-huts
Villa Amina / absence

The gate as first threshold to Villa Amina, Verona (December 2016)
Place out/ Nature

Prelude to Villa Amina, Verona (December 2016)
Place out/ Threshold

Plan of the relationship of Villa Amina with the landscape and nature
Place out/ Threshold

Prelude to *Villa Amina*, Verona (December 2016)
Threshold: Crossing temporalities

First fieldwork sketch, Villa Amina, Verona (February 2017)
Threshold/ Against nature

Villa Amina, Verona (December 2016)
Threshold/ Discrete Screen

The space in between and the role of the facade, Villa Amina, Verona (December 2016)
Threshold/ Discrete Screen

Staging the threshold and the awareness of the space
Threshold: the times of the space and the times of the collection

Organization of the "subject matter!"
Aura: Cumulative approach

Layers of temporalities within Villa Amina, Verona (April 2017)
Threshold | About temporalities

Ground floor plan of the Villa and its times
Aura: Cumulative approach

Gypsum model of the collection of spaces within Villa Amina
Aura: Research room 2012

About the organization of time and artworks within the collection
Aura/ Simultaneity

About the organization of time and artworks within the collection
Without and within/ Vague edges

First floor plan of the Villa and the role of the space in between
Without and within/ Vague edges

Enclosures and axes
Without and within/ Hortus Conclusus

Beato Angelico, Annunciazione, Museo di San Marco, 1450 ca.
Without and within/ Hortus Conclusus

Beato Angelico, Annunciazione, Museo di San Marco, 1450 ca.
Without and within/ Hortus Conclusus

Beato Angelico, Annunciazione, Museo di San Marco, 1450 ca.
Without and within/ *Hortus Conclusus*

Without and within / Hortus Conclusus

Beato Angelico, Annunciazione, Museo di San Marco, 1450 ca.
Without and within/ Public archive

Detail of the controlled environment within the archive
Without and within Public archive

Detail of the controlled environment within the archive
Intimate immensity / En semble

Detail of the controlled environment within the archive
Intimate immensity / Landscape and nature

About the dialogue within the landscape
Intimate immensity/ Annexe and Anna

Ground floor plan of the controlled environment for drawings
Intimate immensity / The ensemble and the landscape

Section of the Valdonega in the direction of Verona
Intimate immensity / Drawings

Domesticity within Casa Fasol, Verona (October 2017)
Intimate immensity/ Drawings

Domesticity within Casa Fasol, Verona (October 2017)
Intimate immensity/ The ensemble and the landscape

Section of the Valdonega in the direction of Verona
Intimate immensity / The ensemble and the landscape

Section of the Valdonega in the direction of Verona
Intimate immensity/ The ensemble and the landscape

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Intimate immensity/ The ensemble and the landscape

Section of the Valdonega in the direction of Verona
Intimate immensity/ The ensemble and the landscape

Section of the Valdonega in the direction of Verona
The first part of my work relates with the agency of architecture within art space, seeking for a certain awareness of the role this agency could have.

The development of a certain attitude in looking at places, art spaces and places, has been the way I started to familiarize with the subject. I was spontaneously looking at things, taking pictures of what I was looking, reworking my pictures, in order to construct my view. I started in the simplest way possible, with the experience of spaces, and travelling. I wrote a list of places which were showing contemporary art in Italy, which increased with time and with my experience and I went there.

I will show just some places among the ones I’ve been to, this variety of experiences is collected in a booklet, and those experiences are ordered according to the agency of those spaces as the first filter I applied to my experiences. From as found environments as Villa Panza, where art is in dialogue with a space which was already there, but both came from a common sensibility of the collector – the villa informed the sensibility of Giuseppe Panza, the sensibility of Giuseppe Panza brought Klein there, to the Kroller-Muller Museum, where this dialogue is informed by the strong agency of the place, and nature. And then there are spaces where the agency of the curator takes care through particular associations that a collection will make itself stronger, to the point that with certain spaces around them the same limits of the space itself will disappear, as in the exhibition ‘Time is out of joint’ at the Galleria Nazionale or spaces where the art is defining its limits and its time through architecture. And in the end, there are the rare cases in Italy when architecture has the chance to create its own spaces, and the desire of the architect to be the only agent of the space, which makes architecture as consequence the only agent and there is no space for art within.

Then, I understood that the experience of art spaces wasn’t only about the spaces themselves, but also to the narrative which was taking to them. What I was looking for was how and with what tools certain experiences were produced. And how often certain environment which were not directly in contact with contemporary art but part of the general experience of the city in the process of getting to it were actually strongly influential in the encounter of it afterwards.
As found environment for the Collezione Panza, Villa Panza di Rionero, Varese (January 2017)
b/

Agency of art spaces

‘Time is out of Joint’ at the Galleria Nazionale di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Roma (December 2016)
d/

Agency of art spaces

Mart, Rovereto (October 2016)
e/

Agency of art spaces

The agency of architecture within the MAXXI, Roma (August 2016)
Engagement

Proximity of Encounters

Within the second part of my work, I tried to find a definition and a scale for these relations of proximity I encountered, and to understand what was driving the relations within those encounters, and how much the literal distance was affecting this behavior. This second part of my work is about proximity.

From the direct engagement with a work of art, which I started to observe in the MAXXI with the associations which were suggested between the drawings of the architecture archive and the art collection, to the way certain prelude to a space will affect its understanding, which can be a prelude constructed within the building as in the Museo del Novecento or without it, as in the Fondazione Prada where another Milano is imposing instead another fiction to art and the place.

Different relations took place among art, the viewer, the space and the place. I’ve tried to reconstruct them and then to analyses them from distance to nearness, to understand the condition which could be held in the construction of a space for art, the potential of the connections that an art collection as first “assemblage” the viewer engages with, and as first assemblage the city respond to.

Disassembling encounters:

- **Collection – Landscape**
  Athens, ‘The Theatre of Disappearance’

- **Collection – City**
  Milano, Museo del Novecento

- **Collection – Street**
  Torino, Castello di Rivoli

- **Collection – Building**
  Giornico, La Congiunta

- **Collection – Room**
  San Gimignano, Galleria Continua

- **Collection – Public**
  Siena, ‘Che il vero possa confutare il falso’

- **Collection – Collection**
  Milano, Casa Museo Boschi De Stefano

$7$

Proximity of encounters

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Collection - Landscape

‘The theater of disappearance’ by Adrian Villa Rojas, nature and the viewer, NEON Foundation, Athens (August 2017)
Proximity of encounters

Collection - City

Prelude to the Museo del Novecento by Italo Rota, Museo del Novecento, Milano (January 2017)
h/

Proximity of encounters

Collection-Street

Threshold to the Castello di Rivoli, Castello di Rivoli, Torino (January 2017)
i/ Proximity of encounters

Collection - Building

Relationship between Peter Markli and Hans Josephshon within La Congiunta, Giornico (August 2017)
I/

Proximity of encounters

**Collection - Room**

Staging within Galleria Continua, *Galleria Continua*, San Gimignano (July 2016)

Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, *I want to go back! (Reverso)*, 1996, Galleria Continua (July 2016)
m/

Proximity of encounters

Collection - Room

Staging within Galleria Continua, Galleria Continua, San Gimignano (July 2016)
The delineation of a non-neutral space for art will inevitably come out through the specificity of the collection, and the definition of its place in the world. In the way the collectors are involved in the process of art’s production and market and in the way the collection itself is still in process of construction, the relations among the artworks is charged of a plurality of meanings, from the one art is carrying to what the collection wants to represent and the role the collectors want to perform.

If a collection can be considered as a lens to look at contemporary art, an art space which engage a dialogue with the people behind this message, the reasons of its existence and the relevance of the collection in itself is active in the way it is charged with didactic and personal values at the same time. Going back to what Argan defined as the role of the museum respect to contemporary society, these art spaces will try to relate with “art as object of research,” in itself and in its relation with the viewer, so with the purpose of “stimulating the viewer’s consciousness” in relation with a specific time and place. The involvement of the Spectator with a collection in the way it has been constructed and in the way it is related with the world will provide him with a much more accurate sense of where he/she is, and he/she will as consequence be less a passive spectator as Brian O’Doerty would intend it in “Inside the White Cube,” and more an active presence in the space, and part of its fiction.

The collection is, again, the first “assemblage” to relate with the viewers, the space around them and its place in the city, and with the world. In this way, the relation between the collection’s identity and its place in the world should be constructed (or fictionalised) in order to make all the surrounding environment vibrate, explicating the tensions around these firsts “assemblages.”

The extremely different identities of the two collections analysed offer the opportunity to deal with the typological character of the art space and the personal relations around its definition which make that space happen. This character finds its implications in one conceptual project, declined in two ideal spaces for the two collections which will give the opportunity to express and analyse the different tensions around the episteme of the art space throughout the common dialogue of their agencies.

Since the two collection are opposite in nature, quite specific and opposite forms and locations will be necessary to represent the personal reasons and logic behind them, in order to explicate how the tensions around the definition of one collection or another ask for a personal way to relate with the space and a place, so how each collection would have very different and precise spatial implications architecture should deal with. For these reasons, an understanding of the system around the production of art, the collection of art, and the people who are part of this process has been fundamental to frame and construct an understanding of the logics behind the art world.
Un'istruzione privata

Reasons and qualities

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Among the staged artworks

Magma
[17/72]
Antonio Biasucci
1987-1995
Silver print
40 x 40 cm

Magma
[18/72]
Antonio Biasucci
1987-1995
Silver print
40 x 40 cm
Magma
[4672]
Antonio Biasiucci
1987-1995
Silver print
40 x 40 cm
Vista da Castel Sant'Elmo

Mimmo Jodice
1990

Silver print
56 x 30 cm

Eruzione del Vesuvio

Scipione Campagno
1631

Oil on canvas
220 x 170 cm
Los Angeles
Urban Landscape
Franco Fontana
1991
Chromogenic print
40 x 40 cm

Basilicata
Landscape
Franco Fontana
1975
Chromogenic print
40 x 40 cm
Napoli - Caserta
[02/04]
Gabriele Basilico
1996
Silver print
50 x 40 cm

Napoli - Caserta
[13/20]
Gabriele Basilico
1996
Silver print
50 x 40 cm
**Verso Sud**

Bruna Esposito  
2000

Monitor, 12 volt engine, VHS, stone, feather duster, photovoltaic panel, battery, pillow, electric wires

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**Sabaudia**

Beatrice Pediconi  
2005

Chromogenic print  
60 x 50 cm
Untitled XXIV

Beatrice Pediconi
2009

Chromogenic print
100 x 125 cm

Untitled

Beatrice Pediconi
2009

Video - Variable dimensions, colour, silent
7’00”
Frammenti con Figura

Mimmo Jodice
1968
Silver print
26 x 37 cm

La Tempesta

Vettor Pisani
1990
Chromogenic print
120 x 160 cm

Spaces of experience

Subject matter | Una Storia Privata
Giovanni e Anna Rosa nell'opera 700 di Sol Lewitt

Claudio Abate
2006

Chromogenic print
210 x 120 cm

Lavori in Corso

Mimmo Jodice
1996

Silver print
2,5 x 3,5 cm
Ritratto di Famiglia
Michelangelo Pistoletto
1986
Specchio con chromogenic print
125 x 235 cm

Un mattino
Giuseppe Caccavale
2011
Pastel on wall
60 x 80 cm
Il Carriolo Solitario

Luigi Ontani
2001

Chromogenic print, drawing and sculpture
300 x 170 x 60 cm


**Napoli**

The ‘i Cotroneo’ Collection is by definition, and in its origins, strongly related with a city, Napoli. The nature of the relation with the city is fundamental both to understand the collection and to understand the city. It - the collection - is so deeply rooted in the latter that what the collection is actually giving to the city is a certain awareness of itself. The “assemblage” is framing the city and it is part of the city at the same time. And *vice versa*, since the city is not only a prelude to the collection, but it is displayed within the collection. A certain degree of consciousness of the city will be communicated through the collection to the viewer, who will experience the city and the collection at the same time. In order to explicate and construct properly in space the existing relation between Napoli and the collection, it has been necessary to frame the issues of private art spaces in the city and the potentiality they can have within the latter. The reasons why the positioning of a private art space in the city are compelling is not only because of the relation between that city and its art space, but specially for the implications this gesture will open up.

These implications are about how a private collection can find its place in the city and how at the same time the relationships between the collection and the city are changing today. In general the problem is strongly related with the privatization of the spaces which are showing contemporary art. The institution as engine which wants to promote culture for the city, taking care of the public realm of the city at the same time, and of the citizens, and the role of the city in the international panorama, are no more able to be part of the art system systematically. At the same time the understandings of contemporary art as a commodity is leading to the existence of certain collectors who are investing a lot of money in art only in order to acquire a certain visibility from their collection. The result, is that big private collectors are making building which importance in the city – not role, since there is not public interest involved for them, but the kind of building and the public instead are the same – is getting closer and closer to the one of public institutions – museums.

This process is leading from a distortion of the value of art to a shift in who is than in charge of promoting contemporary art in the city. Private collectors are building their art spaces in the city, without any interest for the relation between the former and the latter. These intermediate typology, which is not the public museum neither the private gallery, but is the public gallery of a private collection, is the one it is relevant to explore. This typology is situated between the contemporary art panorama and the public, since it is the one which is making art accessible to the public. It is also the one which should be able to engage the public with contemporary art, and make the viewers part of it and aware of the relation that exists between him/her and the city, and other cities at the same time. Art should be able to make one conscious of one’s presence in the world. The way art is showed instead is distancing both the public and the city. In this contrast between who owns what and what is part of what, architecture should be able to operate a reconnection of what is getting more and more separated. The understating of the identity of a private collection and the one of the city this collection must be placed in, is fundamental to deal with all the tensions which are already part of the task of designing a place for art.

**Simultaneous processes**

In the ‘i Cotroneo’ Collection there is a precise and conceptually constructed awareness of the process of production, which is showed within the city since the city has always been involved by itself in the processes related with the definition of the collection in many ways. The city has been central for many of the collector within the collection, and through them the collection is telling a story about Napoli, while Napoli is teaching the viewers how to experience the collection. In this sense, the city will be central for the viewer, since it will constitute both the prelude and the identity the viewer will learn to see within the space and then compare it with the reality of the city without. Again, there is this tension between ‘reality and representation’ which is underlined and charged in the choice of Napoli and in the choice of a place in Napoli. The awareness of the decision-process and the actual making-process of the artworks and their relation with the city is constant in the collection, it can be maybe said that it is central in a sense. The entire way the collection is constructed is related with the relevance of the process, rather than on the artwork as final object to look at. This approach starts with the XVI-XVII-III paintings (most of them again about Napoli) the Anna Rosa and Giovanni started their collection with, which were close to the art they were used to when they were living in Rome and in love with their Sunday afternoons in Roman museums. As it happens with the painting ‘Erasione del Vesuvio’ by Scipione Compagnano, every artwork is constructed through a process, which can be either a conceptual or a very empirical one. This awareness influenced strongly the way they collected photography in the first place, since they are used to buy not only one picture but the whole series about a certain subject, since it is necessary, as they say, “to see all the process that drove the photographer to that picture in order to understand it completely.” When they talked about one of the photographer they are more interested in at the moment, Paolo Ventura, they related his way of constructing a scene for one single picture with the way a painter could construct a scene towards numerous attempt on the cartone preparatorio, looking for the perfect composition, and colours, etc. It is the consciousness of Paolo Ventura’s way of constructing every image that makes him representative in a sense of their collection. And it is exactly because of this awareness that the positioning of the collection in the city gives to the fiction from the city to the collection a precise meaning. The city became part of the process of understanding and experiencing the collection, the prelude Napoli is offering to the collection can be considered pedagogical in a way. And at the same time, coming back to the city after having experienced the collection will provide the viewer with a different awareness of being in it -the city, of being part of it, in a precise time and occupying a precise space.

**Awareness of the outside world**

The art space has to be intended as a “project of consciousness” in a sense. The ‘i Cotroneo’ Collection as displayed in Napoli will not deal just with the city and its origins in it, but it will place the viewer in precise condition towards both the city and its story showed through the collection. He/she will find himself/herself in a relation with the city both in its space and time meanings, which will stimulate the awareness of the connections happening at the same time with the identity of the city and the sense of time of it, always in relation with the viewer’s personal one. While being in Napoli and confronting the interpretations of the city within the collection, the viewers will develop a much more accurate sense of where they are, and it will make the environment vibrate, both as kind of palimpsest of all the city’s layers of time and as specific and constructed environment which will make them - the viewers - wonder about the place they occupy in the city and it will at the same time suggest ideas of the city in the particular time the artworks are representing. So, the reality of the city will dissolve in a way, and the viewers will then realize that they have seen a reinterpreted, remodelled, reshaped and re-seen image of the city they are coming from and they will go back afterwards, which by itself has been redefined generation after generation.

The ‘i Cotroneo’ Collection is in its nature highly specific in time and place. Displaying its deeply-rooted-in-space photography in Napoli will add another level of specificity, the viewer will be introduced in the same environment of the artist in a way, and the space will inevitably be overcharged. It is not only an exhibition in the city, since in a way it is also an exhibition of the city. Everything, in the same place and space, the art, its roots, the viewer and the collection. The viewer will be surrounded, and still himself...
This particularity of the condition of “nearness” among the collection and the city will at the same time open up questions about distance in time, and an interpretation of the city from different souls - artists. The event nature of the pictures as portrait of a precise moment which is then transposed somewhere else became of course particular with the exhibition in the same city, and the coexistence of a same place in a completely different time.

Impartiality of a place and space

Finally, questions about the coexistence of particularity and ubiquity should to be faced in relation to the selection of a precise spot on earth which could be referred to the soul of the collection, and the ways this place could affect the prelude to the collection as “assemblage” before, and to each single artwork consequently. Even in the struggle of defining a neutral, and impartial as consequence, space for art, of modern architecture, and again of modern art as consequence, the city, the nature, or the suburban around those places will be anyway charged of meanings.

The place a collection is located is by nature not impartial, but to what extent it is not impartial can be controlled. The connection between the collection and the place can be staged in a so precise way that the explanation, and the consequent understanding, of the personal and not so personal relations of the artworks within a certain collection can start before entering the actual art space. This process of understanding is in the end not so different from the understanding of contemporary art itself, which is asking for a certain knowledge or experiences in order to be interpreted, and at the same time the way it will be done is anyway subject to changes according to the diversity among those experiences. The awareness of this process is extremely conscious and explicit in the ‘i Cotroneo’ collection, as already said in the previous chapter. And at the same time, the presence of a so large amount of photographies about a specific city - Napoli in particular - would be susceptible to interesting and precise relations between the city outside and the art space inside. Specific connections will be triggered, and a precise awareness will come from the necessary visit of the city before and after the experience of the collection.

To a certain extent, also the way the photography collection of Anna Rosa and Giovanni is composed shows an interesting understating of the process. And this particularity of the condition of nearness among the collection and the city will at the same time open questions about distance in time, and in the interpretation of the city's different souls.

At the same time, the precise choice of buying only complete series of pictures in order to “embody the decision-making process through which they had come about” as approach relates strongly with a mature consciousness of the importance of the prelude also in the creation of a work of art. In his sense again presence of Paolo Ventura in their collection shows an understanding of the process and an attempt to compare their understanding of the XVII - XVII century painting with the clear process of doing that ends with a final product as compared with the process of creating a scene and the moment of taking the picture as last act of this creative process. This behaviour deserves in a way to be explicaded in staging the precise way in which the prelude the city can offer to the viewer of the collection in display. The selection of the building itself has to express the awareness of this process, and a certain understanding of Neapolitan photography will happen also through the building and its relation and position in the city both in time and space.

The prelude in Napoli is far from being mute, it is incredibly loud instead. It should be able to suggest the viewer’s mind a precise series of images which could constitute an imagery and a predisposition to understand in part the reasons behind and the way certain Italian, in general, and Neapolitan, in particular, photography developed.

This attitude to the space of art would leave the room to imagine an extremely significant fiction where in the same way in Ventura’s photos the last shot is nothing more than a final moment which could not happen without a previous construction, Jodice or Mariniello photography in the exhibition would be no more than the last act of a process throughout the city of Napoli. And the way this prelude has been constructed.

This approach to the position of the collection as first “assemblage” in the city come from the roots of the collection in the first place, from its consistency and the rigour of the logic behind it.
AGI Verona Collection/ Identity

Reasons and qualities

- passion
- instinct
- discovery
- sharing
- familiarity
- education
Among the staged artworks

knowledge

awareness

research

Anna

Tipico, Classico, Stiacciato

Paolo Icaro

1985

plaster
Paesaggio Orfico

Blu
Rodolfo Aricò
1964
Oil on canvas
190 x 190 cm

Paesaggio Orfico

Rouge
Rodolfo Aricò
1964
Oil on canvas
190 x 190 cm
This is new

Tino Sehgal
2003

This is something you will like to know about

Gundam Air
1991

Invisible
Variable dimensions
Arte per tutti ma capita solo da te

Pierre Bismuth
2003

White neon 8 mm on transparent plexiglass
41 x 60 cm

Phoenix

Giulio Paolini
1992

Screen prints
9 panels 50 x 70 cm each - total dimension 150 x 220 cm
Lo Savio’s halfpipe

Luca Trevisani  
2006

Resin, paraffin and gel  
Two elements 70 x 70 cm

Each colour is a gift for you

Vanessa Safavi  
2012

Stuffed birds  
Variable dimensions
#12 ‘La porta nel muro’ Milano

Vincenzo Castella
2012

C print
225 x 180 cm

Untitled

Pratchaya Phintong
2012

Wires
Variable dimensions
Untitled #12
Haris Epaminonda
2012
Wooden plinth, framed as found image
Variable dimensions

Narciso
Attia Kader
2012
Concrete block and mirror
80 x 130 x 212 cm
**Untitled**

Berlind De Bruyckere
1996

Watercolour and pencil on paper
48 x 32 cm

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**Animal**

Berlind De Bruyckere
2003

Fabric, wood, wool
135 x 75 x 152 cm
Lo stupore è nuovo ogni giorno

Gianni Caravaggio
2008

steel
120 x 100 x 40 cm

Unmade film: the closing credits

Uriel Orlow
2013

16 mm film projection and acetate for overhead projection
6’ 58”
**Trappole**

Diango Hernandez  
2005

installation, five television sets, electric wire and variable materials  
variable dimensions

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**Degrado 4U**

Cuoghi Corsello  
2009

7 balloons in silver foil, speakers, sound  
400 x 450 cm ca.
Rubber Coated Rocks (Horizon #2)

Nida Sinnokrot
2009

Stone and rubber
Variable dimensions

Paysage avec Poussin et Temoins Oculaires VI

Cornaro Isabelle
2014

Mixed media
Variable dimensions
AGIVerona Collection | Implications

Resonances of a collection in a place

Time

For the AGIVerona Collection, the choice of a place out of a certain reality cannot be considered free from the implications of the city it is taking distance from, or any city in general. It defines instead a narrative in the detachment from the city, and in the tension which are generated within this detachment.

The spatial implications of a space out are of course very diverse, but they underline narratives which keep the issue of the private art space very present, and even more compelling if compared with the existing examples of this approach and the problem of the artificiality often embedded in them. It is in the distance that the relation is constructed, where a moment of tension is generated between the viewer and the collection. The distance could be considered a prelude to the art space.

This choice is generated from the identity of the collection itself, which is at the same time identifiable with the figure of its collector, and the world of personal relationships with the artists, the galleries and all the people who contribute to his agency, and in what he believes should be the role of a collector in the art world. Giorgio Fasol seems to be free from any tensions in his choices related with needs of consistency or coherence related with an a priori vision of what his collection should be, he carefully moved himself far from that kind of limitations in order to be able to chose freely following the moment of intuition between an artwork and his soul. So he can do purely what he believes are the interests, as he is used to say, of "young artists and the possible role they could have in the contemporary art world." His research is endless, as long with the understanding of a contemporary art collection as an ongoing process, since a collection of contemporary art is not finished not only by definition, but also in the effort it asks for in being always craving for new discoveries in not-ordinary ways to look at the world.

In this context, in the distance in space that the collection could gain from a place out will generate powerful tensions with the extreme need of being in the present and having a role in it, which is what Fasol is constantly looking for.

The community type of the place out as environment far from the city which define in this distance a moment of creativity, and of artistic production, has many examples in history. It can represent an imposition to contemporary artists at the same time, who may prefer different environments to deal with. But even when the moment of creation of the artwork happens somewhere else in the world, its display in a certain environment will keep the tension between the place within the city and the one without extremely strong, maybe stronger because of the distance from its origins. The significance of this choice can lay on the gesture of "composing" the collection itself, which is in process of making, or of becoming. It is constantly changing, and also constantly travelling since the interest of Giorgio in proposing a certain awareness of contemporary art in Italy through constant exhibitions. The collection is something which is also in process, which is also being constructed. And in this parallel with a work of art, it needs a place to be constantly displayed and constantly in the process of being at the same time. And this place should also be able to involve all the figure around the collection, who takes care of making the world around it happen. It is a place of production of events in a way, the event within the environment and the ones without it.

Simultaneous Process

Within the AGIVerona collection, Giorgio has an experience and understanding of the process which is extremely relevant for the contemporary art world. And he is actually part of it in a sense. Embedded in the way his "assemblage" has been constructed there is his role in the art world, an understating of the art market, which works as a "system," and an understanding of the need of artists to be part of this system.

It is this system to be the one which is taking care of “bringing art outside,” making the artists produce work which will be possible for the viewer to see. Giorgio is involved precisely in making this process happen. His collection shows a strong awareness of the "sound board" art needs to happen, and of his interests in being part of it, and giving to the artists he believes in a way to become part of the art world and recognized but its figures. The process he is involved with is the one which comes after the artworks in themselves, he is more pragmatic in this sense. It may be that this approach is again symptomatic of the familiarity embedded in his collection, and the personal relations he is used to engage, but his role in making artwork suitable for being part of the art system, pushing the artists to find a gallery to take care of them, and understanding all the different phases of this process, is clearly recognizable. He is interested not only in making art happen, but also in making it public, and visible as consequence. For example, he organized an encounter of a very young Italian artist, whom work he was interested in, with a contemporary art gallery in Pistoia, then he helped the gallery to organize her exhibition and just at the end he bought her artworks. In this way the artists - Giulia Cenci - is now part of the system, and she has the tools now to find her way. Or, in a different way, he made a personal exhibition of an artists he believes in happen, but again in a very indirect way through his friendship with a curator. Giorgio is always operating behind the veil in a sense, since he is very strict in affirming that the dynamic behind the art world has to be respected in order to make it work in the first place. And his attitude is recognizable also in his interest in having his own art space in a place out where he won't get as much visibility as it would happen in Verona.

In this sense his relation with the process of art production is different because there is a different relation that the collection has with the art world, which exists with its own rules and it is necessary to make art public. But the process intended is still about the production of art, if we consider it valuable as art just in the moment when someone is looking at it, since as Giorgio stated during one of ours conversations "art needs the viewer to realize itself, and the process of making art visible is still part of this creation."

Giorgio sees this role as collector in the urgency to be involved in the process. He is a "patron" in an unique way in a sense, and so - unique - will need to be the spatial implications of the environment around its collection. The need of discovery, and of being involved so strongly into the system which can make the work of an artist visible is so closely related with an honestly declared lack of money to promote personally the artists he believes in. He is as consequence very used to deal with art galleries, or to exploit his personal system of friendships to make exhibitions happen. His attitude influenced clearly the nature of his collection, and viceversa. The spatial implications of a first "assemblage" of this kind cannot be limited to locate this set constructed around the figure of Giorgio out from the city, in order to give it the necessary distance and freedom to develop, and change, and reconsider itself constantly, but it will influence the internal relations among the artworks and the spaces of display, or of ‘art production’.

Awareness of the outside world

Again here, the art space has to be intended as a "project of consciousness." A different awareness of the viewer’s place in the world will be triggered by a place out, where a moment of intensity in the detachment from the city will take place. A reflection in the experience of this detachment inevitably happen, suggesting to the viewer a series of narratives around the experience of looking for a place without.

For the AGIVerona Collection, the definition of a space distant from the world will at the same time create a tension with the ‘sense of time’ of the collection, which is extremely closed to the viewer’s one. A different kind of connection with the viewer’s senses of space and time is staged with a place without the
city, where different senses of time and of the city will be simultaneously displayed and the viewer has to find his time within them.

In the place out tensions would increase by the journey towards it, throughout an experience of nature and the landscape and the distance, with the viewer which will be asked to lose his usual "points of reference." At the same time, this detachment is imposed to the "assemblage" of the collection, the artworks are moved far from the environment they are coming from - even if sometimes closer to the world they want to represent, as the work of Isabelle Cornaro referring to the landscape of Poussin's "Orione arrendu cherchant a odiar." The viewer is at the same time confronting an extreme closeness in time with the artworks, which are charged with their extreme contemporaneity as first meaning the collector is interested in, and the sense of an extreme need of challenging the state of art in his the research of non-ordinary ways to look at reality. Moreover, the absence of older pieces which has been sold in order to buy newer ones will inevitably ask the viewer for an effort in dealing with obsolescence, and the immediate feeling of defining when something can be considered already too old in a contemporary art collection - or society. A certain familiarity with the way the collection is constructed and the reasons of the absence which are far beyond the problem of time, and instead close to importance of giving young artist the space to express themselves and keep going, will have to be understood and special spatial implications will give room to this need. The process of definition of the collection needs to be showed, and a space which is able to develop with he collection and the insatiable desire of the collector of research and discovery. This space has to be able to grow with the collection and at the same time turn itself inside out as the collection does, since it is a collection which is not simply growing, but it is constantly renovating itself in the responsibility the collector feels of giving young artist space to express themselves. And if the price is to give up to older pieces of artists which has already managed to define their position in the contemporary art world, it will be paid.

It is interesting here to notice how art is actually an investment in the sense that the cheap work of younger artist is bought and then resold when its value increase. And how at the same time those investments are still made for the sake of art, for an interested in the future of the art world and an extreme position of responsibility in being part of it. It is the art production he is interested in, and the discovery, through young artists, of another way of looking at the world. As Giorgio is used to say, quoting Giuseppe Parza, "Se ami l'arte è l'arte che ama te; se sfrutti l'arte è l'arte che sfrutta te."

But the rhythm of this research is fast and endless, as a collection of contemporary art has to be, and the viewer in trying to find his place in this face is faced with the need of define his position towards this same endless time. He is asked to find his peace in the time of the collection, in order to be aware of his place in the world. And all of this is happening in a place which is acting as sounding board of this contemporaneity, in its attempt to be far from the contingency of the city. The viewer is inevitably involved in the time of the collection, his/her time is part of the time of the collection, he can almost remember what he was doing when a certain artwork was realized in another place far from where both - the viewer and the artwork - are now.

Impartiality of a place and space

Finally, questions about the coexistence of particularity and ubiquity should to be faced in relation to the selection of a precise spot on earth which could be referred to the soul of the collection, and the ways this places could affect the prelude to the collection as "assemblage" before, and to each single artwork consequently. Even in the struggle of defining a neutral, and impartial as consequence, space for art, of modern architecture, and again of modern art as consequence, the city, the nature, or the suburban around those places will be anyway charged of meanings.

The clear connection with a precise place in the world does not happen in the AGIVerona Collection, where the understanding of it would not be enriched from its relation with a precise city and the prelude in can offer, since the collection is not grounded in a place in this sense, nor in other senses actually. The understanding of space in the collection of Giorgio is strongly conceptual indeed. From Lucio Fontana to Giulio Paolini, until the work of Isabelle Cornaro who is representing a place other, also geometrically constructed by Poussin in a way, the "assemblage" is always free from actual spatial coordinates. It is not rooted to a precise spot in the world. This lack of real connections results very coherent, in the end, with the image of the collection which has been portrayed until now.

It has instead a precise sense of familiarity which come all from the collector, his humanity, his attitude towards the world. The collection is complex and very broad at the same time, and it needs some distance from the city in order to leave the viewer space and time enough to relate to it. Its relation with a precise space and place, and its soul, can be dangerous, since it will give the viewer "points of reference" others, which are not as difficult as the ones hidden in the collection to find, to identify himself with, as it happened in the exhibition 'Che il vero possa confutare il falso' at Santa Maria della Scala, in Siena.

The narrative of the art place out far from the city in the countryside as place to find another self, is well know, and its detachment from the city can provide an impartial context to the collection to deal with. Nature has been intended as something which function was "to reinvigorate a pathological and corrupted Culture" constantly in the Western Society. The natural landscapes are portrayed as idealised environments to "heal" the modern citizen, in the common being out of the city and surrounded by nature there is a "sense of community though the collective experience of the natural landscape" and the distance from the city.

The fiction which relates the collection with the city impose not only distance in space, but it will pre-scribe a different kind of engagement with the collection due to the distance imposed from the city and the feeling of being involved with others in the landscape.
It is a late November morning, but the light is so warm that it could be confused with a spring day if one is not used to the Mediterranean temperate climate. The light is a cozy point of reference here. In Napoli light has a unique meaning and consistency, it is something which is almost impossible to picture with the camera, and it is at the same time something which will not be forgotten afterwards, coming back home, or that will be confused with some other place in memory after a while. It is all a consequence of the extreme darkness in which the great part of the ground floor of the city lies during the day, since the streets are too narrow and the palaces too high to let the daylight reach who is walking in the historic centre during the day. But in some cases, when a street is long enough to give the chance to have a glance of the horizon, the intensity of the colour of the sky will suddenly become the protagonist of the scene, and the stone of the last floor of the palaces hit by the light will make those walking people wonder when they will be lucky enough to leave the shadow and walk in the sun. What the darkness is hiding from them is that when they will finally find the sun they will probably find also its reflections in the water, where the edges of the city unfold around the sea. And all the realities that are concealed now, in the narrow street or in the marvellous courtyard of one of the historical palaces which, through the small door of his gate decorated by frescoes, reward who is curious enough to enter with a piece of sky, will be suddenly visible at the same time, topping up each other. The almost blinding light, spread by the sun and the sea reflecting it, will show everything as clear as possible.

When the moment comes, suddenly, form the precisely measurable dimension of the streets the horizon line will be almost lost in the infinite, between the end of the sea and the Vesuvio, the tireless harbour and the nature growing on and fighting with the tufo of Posillipo, with Castel dell’Ovo in the middle of the two. When finally the eyes which stayed in the darkness will get used to the over abundant light, and explored the thousands of direction that are opened up from the nearness to the sea, Palazzo Donn’Anna will make its appearance loudly in the direction of Posillipo, close to the line of the horizon and diving in the sea at the same time. It takes still some time to cross the last congested strip of asphalt which separates the façades of Mergellina’s last line of palaces with a view of the sea to get to the fishermen selling mussels near their boat on the waterfront, which - the time - will inevitably be used to give the last glimpse to the narrow street everyone is coming from, that will frame by itself one of the many synthesis of the different Napoli’s elevation and souls. It is a city of contrasts, where the one between shadow and light became paradoxically the easiest to understand in the end.

Once the last chance to long for the darkness and its way to explicitly shaping the light is lost, then it will be only about the latter while walking between the city and the sea, next to the hull of the boats docked a few meters from the waterfront. The fishermen will still be selling mussels, which are kept provisionally in old light-blue plastic basin with some water in order to be cleaned and preserved, and their presence - the one of the fishermen - will help who happen to be there on any Sunday morning to relate himself or herself with the different dimensions of the city he/she will encounter looking for the line of the horizon. They - again the fishermen - are helpful not only for the picturesque image they are contributing to, but also in providing a scale for it. They make it easier to relate the complexity of what is visible in distance with the different realities of the city one has to pass trough to get to that panorama, and with the other scene which are happening behind the strip of land connecting the city with Castel dell’Ovo, where the harbour is, and of which we can distinguish just the moving top of some cranes, and again with the reasons why one happened to be there, in Naples, on that day of November, and with his/her body and its dimensions in relation with the simultaneous different dimensions of the city, starting of course from the one of the fishermen in front of him/her. And while all of this is happening, joggers are running on the sidewalk, and their presumed indifference to the stunning convergence of these realities one is dealing with makes him/her feel in the right place too, as part of the general fiction which is happening.

Leaving the eyes free to follow the edge of the city along the waterfront Palazzo Donn’Anna will still be there, closer than expected, waiting, as it always did, as it is always been there and it always will. And maybe that’s also not so far from the truth. But the palace will have once again to disappear before it will become concretely reachable, since this city is so many things at the same time and an extemporary car park has the same right to face the sea as everything else which can be considered part of it - the city. Its green fence, which is there to separate the chaotic life of the street here from the beach house behind it, will cover the view of the palace for a while, making the image of the latter even more desirable. In the end, the fence just happened to be there, but the experience it stages define a fiction of appearance and disappearance which seems carefully constructed. It will be necessary just to have faith while following the curve that the sidewalk does with the street because of the natural conformation of the cliff, without seeing the sea on the left or the palace in front of us, and when Palazzo Donn’Anna will materialize again he will already be so close to become the protagonist of the scene. It and its struggle with the waves of the sea.

It has all the features of a ruin, which is not part of the sea nor of the city, since it was there before both of them. Looking back now, the Vesuvio is visible from here with all its power, confronting the seeming eternity of the palace with the fragility of existence. The open side of that piece of stone state the relation between the unfinished and the ruin, the analogy in the common lack of function and scope if not as symbol of time and beauty. The thousands of layer of time which define Napoli seems to find their origin here, as they are suddenly all clear from here. And when it seemed that the image of the palace was going to stay the same forever, untouched from the so temporal and changing human needs of the present, one of the almost new window frame of the third floor of the eternal Palazzo Donn’Anna will open, and a woman will appear in the scene. The present seems to have conquered also this last spot of eternity, giving to the infinity of time, again, a human scale, and in the familiarity of the courtyard of the palace, with all the cars of the different residents parked, who are eating and laughing and reading and living while the viewer is looking at the endless sea in an endless space and place.
View of Napoli from the harbour of Mergellina in a November morning (2016)
Since the street originates where the Alps meet the flat countryside in the north of Verona, it will start heading up sharply in the moment it will cross the river, and it will be impossible to see what is waiting at the end of it while proceeding from that moment on. Low, not so interesting apartment buildings, are not so logically positioned on the two sides of Via Marsala, right outside the walls of Verona. They are four or five storey “palazzine” and some ordinary “villette” which make who’s looking at them wonder about how would be to open a discussion about boredom in the periphery of certain not so big Italian cities, since there does not seem to be absolutely anything to look at. This feeling gets even stronger because of the particular and unexpected way the translation from the historical centre happen towards the other side of the Adige, as from the picturesque borgo one suddenly finds himself/herself in a without-apparent-qualities street which could actually be everywhere in the Italian suburbia. Except for the slight difference the street is covering of course, which gives it at least some geographical coordinates.

The river act for the historical centre as an edge with a precise thickness, which is enough not only to define the limits of the medieval fabric but also to provide a certain distance to look at it as consequence. Moreover, this distance gains certain qualities from the fact that the city systematically starts to climb up the hills, and these favourable circumstances explain the reasons why the common imagery of Verona shows the city from above and from the north side of the river. The latter represents the boundary along which the city end and the countryside of the Pianura Padana starts, and the way the city is grow in the time is the consequence of this encounter. If it was not for the panorama looking back, there would not seem to be any other reason to leave the centre for the suburb that is getting quickly less and less dense. At least, this will probably be the general feeling until the moment when, without any previous warning, the street will suddenly stop, and an old gate partially open will stand in front of the viewer, hanged to the street will suddenly stop, and the way the city is grow in the time is the consequence of this encounter. If it was not for the panorama looking back, there would not seem to be any other reason to leave the centre for the suburb that is getting quickly less and less dense. At least, this will probably be the general feeling until the moment when, without any previous warning, the street will suddenly stop, and an old gate partially open will stand in front of the viewer, hanged to the street will suddenly stop, and the way the city is grow in the time is the consequence of this encounter. If it was not for the panorama looking back, there would not seem to be any other reason to leave the centre for the suburb that is getting quickly less and less dense. 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Without Verona at Villa d’Este in a December morning (2016)
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