

# >DEPART FOUNDATION FOR THE DISCUSSION EXHIBITION AND PRODUCTION OF ART



ROMA  
CAPITALE

Assessorato  
alle Politiche Culturali  
e della Comunicazione



PROVINCIA  
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Rome, July 5, 2010

## PRESS RELEASE

The DEPART Foundation and the Istituto Svizzero di Roma (ISR) present

### WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO ITALIAN ARCHITECTURE? CRITICAL POSITIONS ON THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE

A symposium at the Istituto Svizzero di Roma, October 15–16, 2010,  
curated by Reto Geiser

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO ITALIAN ARCHITECTURE, the first installment in a series of planned biennial symposia that aim to explore the productive intersections and overlaps between art, architecture, and design, will take place at the Swiss Institute in Rome October 15-16, 2010. This two-day symposium will bring together emerging and established voices to discuss the current state of Italian architecture.

In the second half of the twentieth century, such singular figures as Aldo Rossi, Vittorio Gregotti, or Manfredo Tafuri, and collaborative practices such as Archizoom or Superstudio, not only shaped the architectural culture within Italy, but also took a prominent position on the stage of international discourse. Italian architecture gradually disappeared from the limelight as commercially driven forms of building replaced politically motivated manifestos and bold architectural visions in the advent of post-modernism. How has Italian architecture since developed? What does Italian architecture mean today? What is the background against which architecture is currently produced in Italy?

An inherent part of every society, architecture works as an indicator of political, economic, and cultural conditions, as well as their transformations over time. It is consequently a goal of the symposium to consider the architectural production in Italy and the role of the architect with respect to a larger socio-cultural context. Architects, architectural historians, and critics from both Italy and abroad, will come together at the Swiss Institute in Rome (ISR) to present and debate their intellectual positions and practical approaches to Italian architecture from the past to the present.

Alberto Alessi, Sandy Attia, Pippo Ciorra, Fabrizio Gallanti, Francesco Garofalo, Filip Geerts, Joseph Grima, Mark Lee, Elli Mosayebi, Matteo Scagnol, Paolo Scrivano, Martino Stierli, Pier Paolo Tamburelli, and Mark Wasiuta will look at the last sixty years of Italian architecture, considering contemporary developments and positions in order to debate future potentials.

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The first part of the symposium will be dedicated to exceptional initiatives, institutions, and projects that evolved from the early to the late twentieth century. The second part will offer a platform to discuss the work of emerging voices in Italian architecture. In a concluding roundtable discussion, participants will consider the interrelations between design and policy, specifically focusing on the future role of the architect. Participants will frame their discussion within a larger historical and international context, comparing current Italian architectural production to developments worldwide. From tracing socio-political and cultural characteristics of contemporary Italian architecture to uncovering the political realities that serve as the backdrop of the country's cultural production, it is the goal of this two-day symposium to foster critical discourse and enable open exchange about contemporary Italian architectural culture.

The symposium will be held at:

Istituto Svizzero di Roma  
Via Ludovisi 48  
00187 Rome

Admission is free. For a detailed schedule, please visit:  
[www.departfoundation.org](http://www.departfoundation.org) or [www.istitutოსvizzero.it](http://www.istitutოსvizzero.it).

This symposium is made possible by the support of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and develop<sup>RE</sup>.

The DEPART Foundation is an emerging arts organization dedicated to the development and support of contemporary artists whose work and careers are departing from their previous endeavors or predecessors. DEPART Foundation actively supports the fields of research, artistic production, education, and acquisition, encouraging the growth of these artists through the promotion of a residency program for artists, laboratories, symposia, and grants for research; it plays an active role in the field of urban development through architectural planning and design and cultural development through programs and initiatives aimed at the community.

The Istituto Svizzero di Roma (ISR) is a private foundation instituted by the Swiss Confederation in 1947 with the goal of promoting scientific and artistic exchange between Switzerland and Italy. To that end, each year twelve "members," including artists and scholars from Swiss universities, are invited to reside in Rome for the entire academic year. ISR also organizes conferences and meetings, book presentations, exhibitions of contemporary art and photography, concerts, performances, and dance festivals, and participates in the organization of important national exhibitions. With its three institutes in Rome, Milan, and Venice, today the ISR is the principal Swiss cultural center in Italy and offers an important opportunity for the development of emerging scientists and artists. In Rome, the Institute is located at Villa Maraini, which was given to the

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Confederation in 1947 by Carolina Maraini-Sommaruga a countess of Luganese origins.  
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