

the
new city
italia-y-26
welcome to **VEMA**

Edited by Franco Purini
Nicola Marzot and Livio Sacchi

la Biennale di Venezia

10. Mostra
Internazionale
di Architettura



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e l'arte contemporanea

The Italian Pavilion
at the 10th International
Architecture Exhibition



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The New City Italia-y-2026. Welcome to VEMA

Italian Pavilion at the 10th International Architecture Exhibition

Exhibition

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The New Cities of the Italian 20th century

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edited by Franco Purini, Nicola Marzot and Livio Sacchi

VEMA first masterplan

Franco Purini with Francesco Menegatti, Sebastiano Giannesini

VEMA final masterplan

Franco Purini with Francesco Menegatti

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Illustrated Biographical Dictionary

by Dina Nencini. With Roberta Andreoli, Emiliano Auriemma, Giovanni Caffio, Riccardo Di Carlo, Loredana Landro, Alessandro Luigini, Lina Malfona, Massimiliano Mazzetta, Francesco Menegatti, Francesca Romana Moretti, Valentina Ricciuti and Stefania Suma

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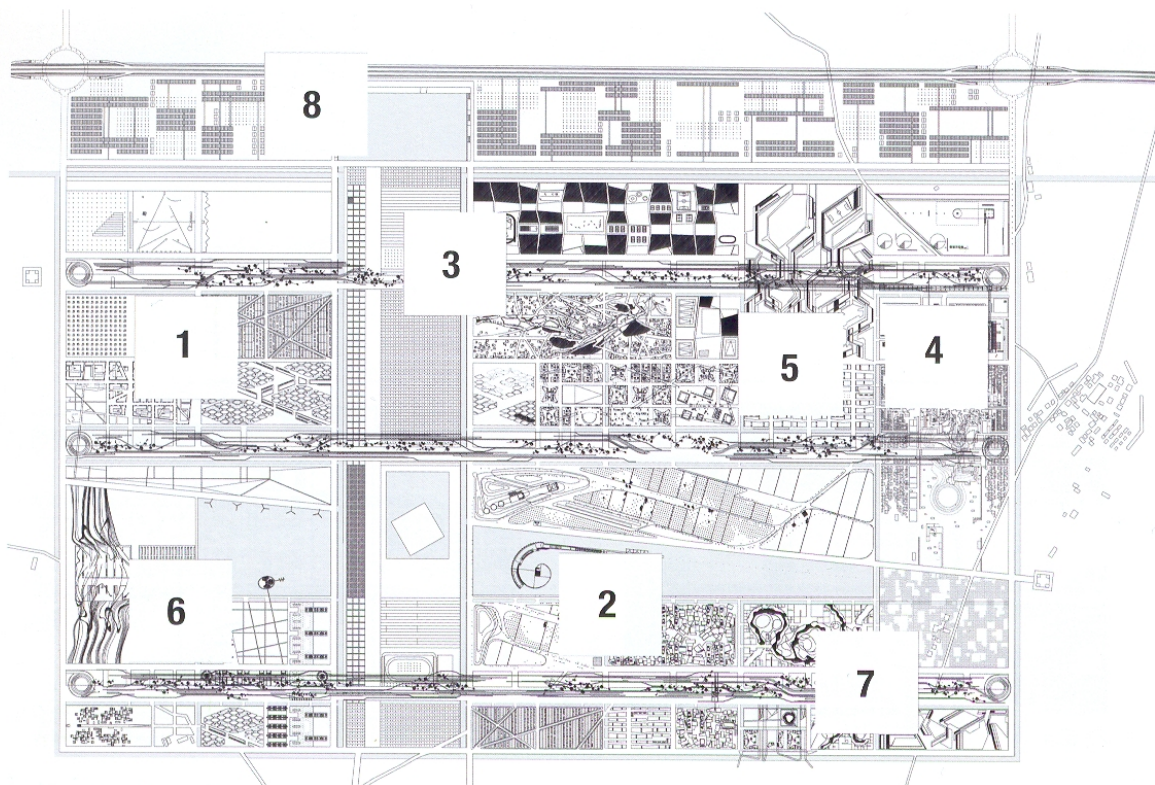
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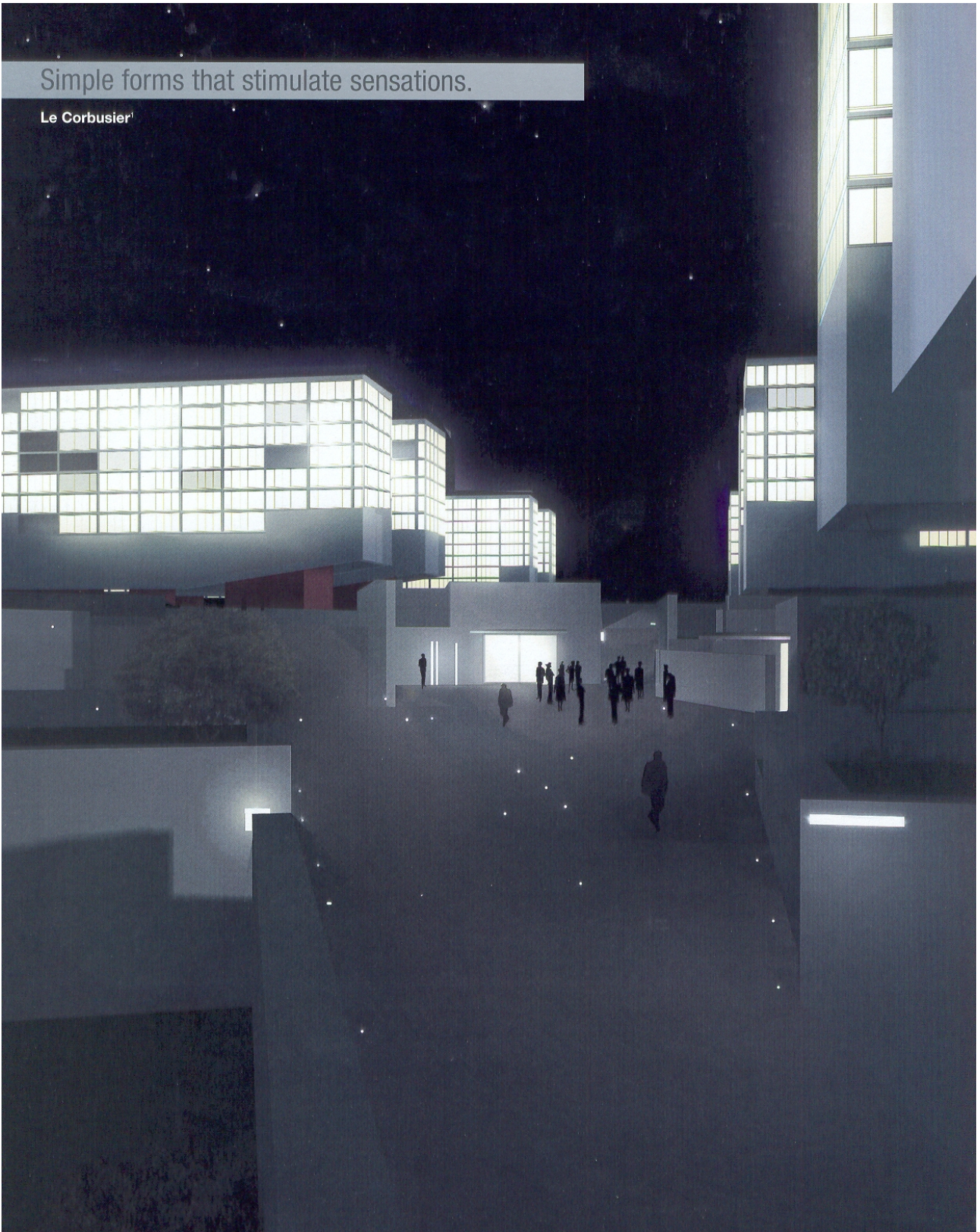


Above.
Diagram showing the selection of the eight plan components.

Right.
Plan component 1 (Pier Vittorio Aureli, Dogma | Office, liverani / molteni architetti, ma0 / emmeazero studio d'architettura, Moduloquattro Architetti Associati).
Plan component 2 (Masstudio, Tomaso Monestiroli and Massimo Ferrari).
Plan component 3 (Stefano Milani, Andrea Stipa).
Plan component 4 (Iotti + Pavarani Architetti, Gianfranco Sanna).
Plan component 5 (Antonella Mari, Masstudio, OBR Open Building Research, Alberto Ulisse).
Plan component 6 (Giuseppe Fallacara, Santo Giunta, studio.eu).
Plan component 7 (Avatar Architettura, Elastico spa + Elastico 3, Iotti + Pavarani Architetti, Alberto Ulisse).
Plan component 8 (Motorway, Energy slabs, Harbour).

Simple forms that stimulate sensations.

Le Corbusier¹



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Orti per VEMA
Invited specialist
Giuseppe Giunta (sociologist)

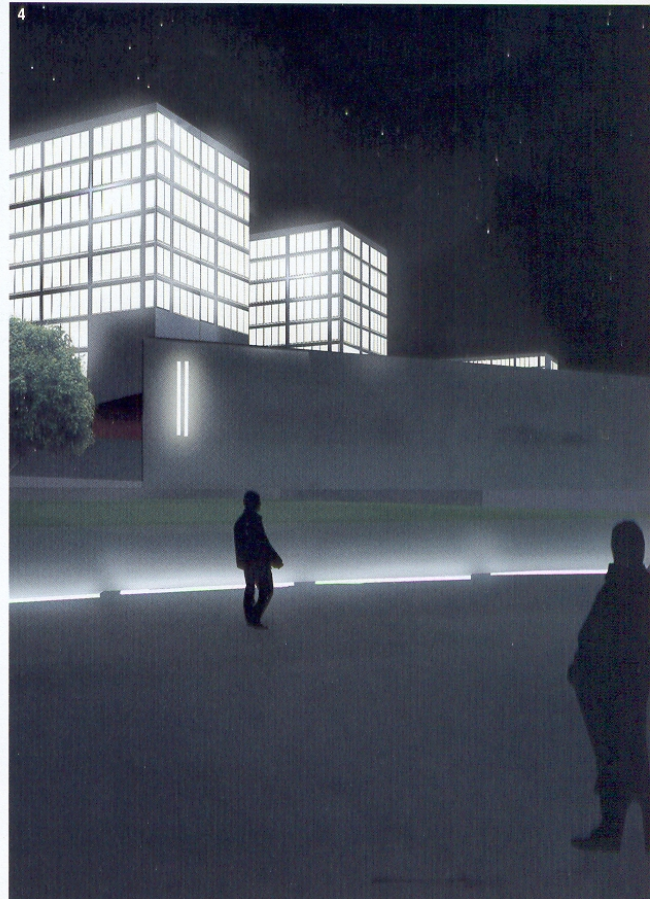
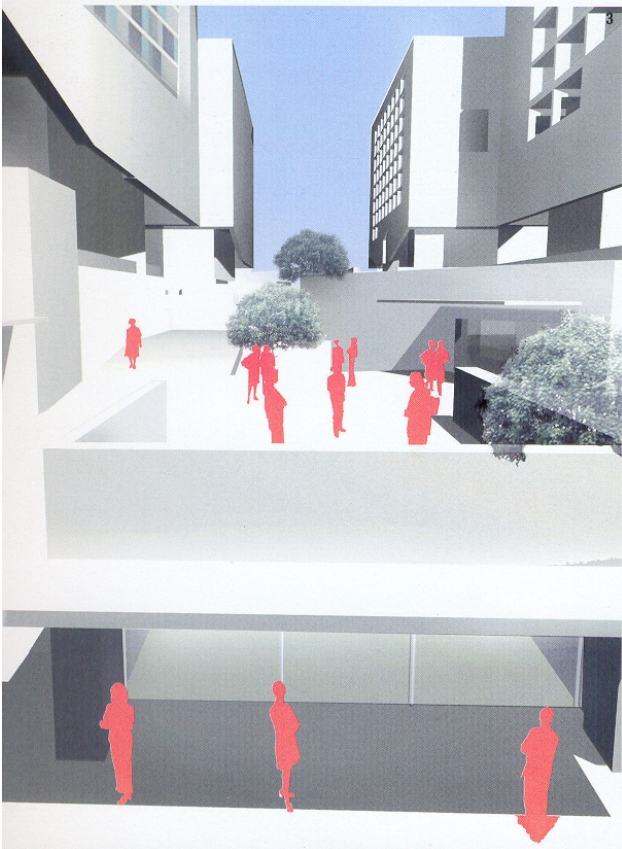
Perspectival view.



Santo Giunta

The gardens of creative sloth

Invited artist **Croce Taravella**



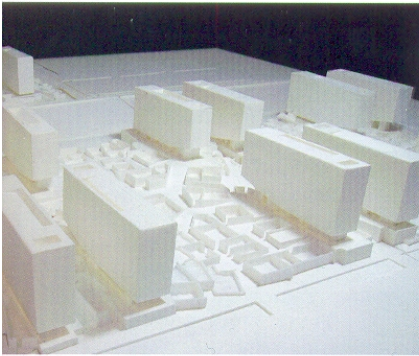
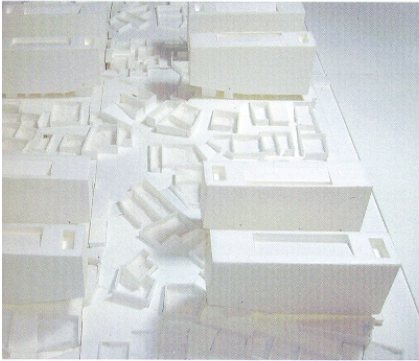
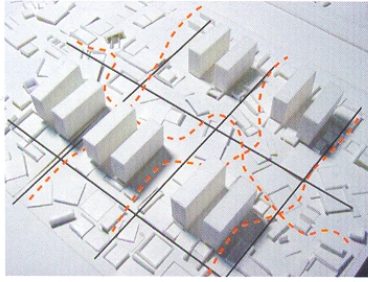
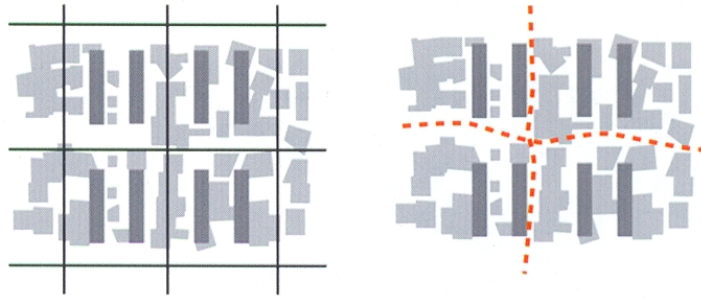


Photo of the model.



Hybridisation of habit tends to modify our way of life. We meet, enjoy ourselves and relax with new social rituals and practices, within individual spaces and locations linked to the necessities of living.

It is a paradoxical fact that we increasingly find ourselves taking a quick meal amongst cars and mopeds. Streets closed to traffic, pedestrian precincts and wide pavements form the venue for aperitifs. Spaces that are “modelled” by the people who live there, but, moving out of the urban centre to the district where we spend our nights, we decline into a profound state of desolation. We fall prey to the sensation of being in a no-man’s land.

From the *Ville Radieuse*, we imagine lawns between the buildings of the city. But how should they be designed? And run? And at what costs?

A strategy for the new unconstructed spaces of VEMA has to cater for the inhabitants’ interests, because they, like

everyone, will have some free time to dedicate to creative sloth².

By means of this strategy, which encompasses the new demands of living, the design creates locations that enable the collective values of urban space to be experienced.

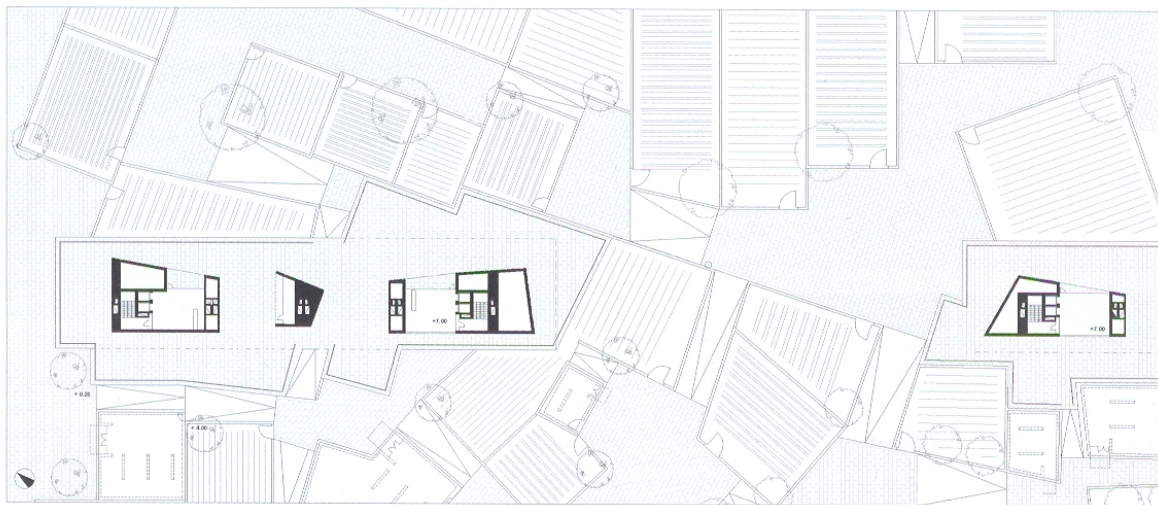
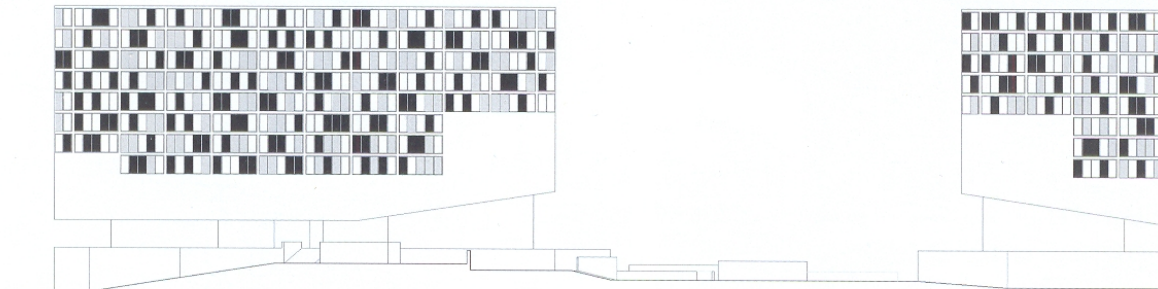
The union between living unit/office volumes and the ground is confirmed by the latter’s morphology, which climbs gradually towards the centre of the blocks by means of gentle slopes or shallow terracing.

Pedestrian continuity creates a network of paths amongst the gardens and the small business activities. A few electrical vehicles run in these areas, to transport food, provide assistance services, or to help the movements of differently abled people.

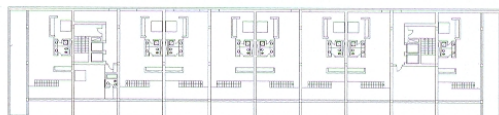
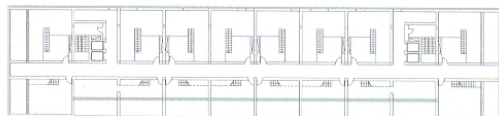
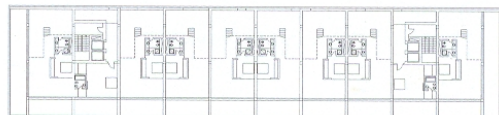
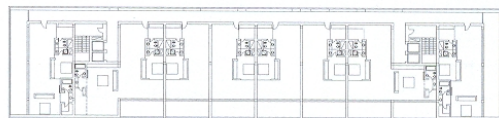
1, 2, 3, 4 Perspective views.



Settlement diagrams.

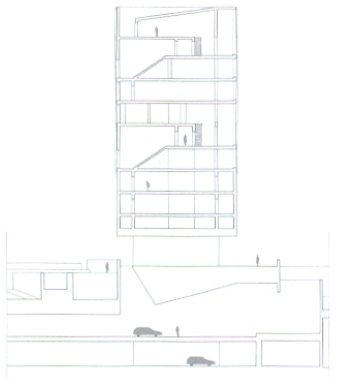


1



2

1, 2 Piante e prospetti.



The gardens define the public space, they delineate the paths on which to walk, pause, and read the paper. This is where the flux links various activities (such as that of the town hall) to the other parts of the city ("A" and "B"). This section of the city soil also contains the aeration and lighting conduits, and the structures for emerging from the car parks below.

Management of the gardens³ will be entrusted to the resident community. Policy documents specify reciprocal rights and duties, in order to create an "open" structure that, in "no-profit" terms, becomes a form of "property" to be nurtured and managed.

Onto this artificial territorial conformation, the rhythm of the buildings is determined by the grids structuring VEMA. This orthogonal order determines the recognisability of blocks, both on a geographical scale and on the scale of the pedestrian. Onto this order is superposed the heteronomic arrangement of all the elements comprising the ground level.

The prisms (the living/office units) were positioned with the idea of creating two different configurations of public space. The "nearest" prisms delineate the space of the business street, while the gardens are between those furthest away.

The sequence of prisms constructs the urban configuration and identifies the business route, with its independent services and workshops.

The continuous public areas are the location in which the values of ecology and sustainable living are experienced to the full.

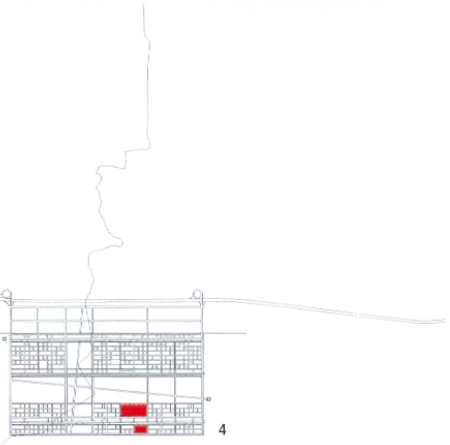
The policies linked to VEMA's *community gardens* comprise a privileged form of associative management, taking the real requirements of the local users into account. Anyone can plant trees, build lean-to roofs and tool sheds (which become lighting lanterns during the night) as long as the overall design concepts are maintained. The conformation of the territory defines a space in which one cannot be seen by those who are "being slothful" in the gardens. Imagining this sensation guided our design approach. We wanted to take this vision of alienation felt within these spaces to the extreme.

The relationships between homes, gardens and public spaces, in other words amongst the pivotal elements in improving the assigned area, are based on a design process that coordinates the different social scales.

The design of the system makes it possible to identify the state of exploitation and enhances the visibility of every presence or activity.

In the living/office units, the habitation (simplex, duplex, or multi-floor) is increasingly close to the idea of flexibility and fluidity in unconventional spaces, with particular attention dedicated to climatic factors and the economic considerations that these define within a conscientious design process.

We adopted a method designed to create forms of living coherent with contemporary society, comprising a hybridisation between public and private spaces, within a single design action that



includes the resources necessary to improve goods and services, in combination with other areas of knowledge.

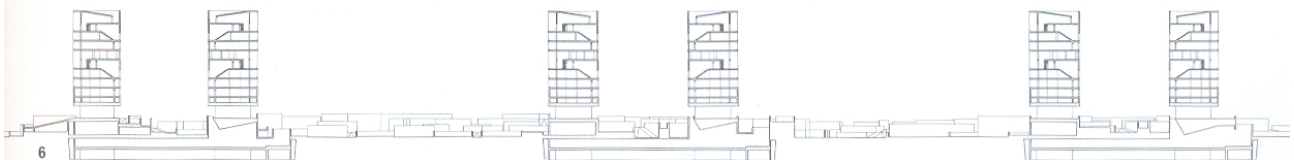
It is this sort of constructive combination that can yield locations of new identity in the continuously changing city, interweaving people, social interactions and aspirations.

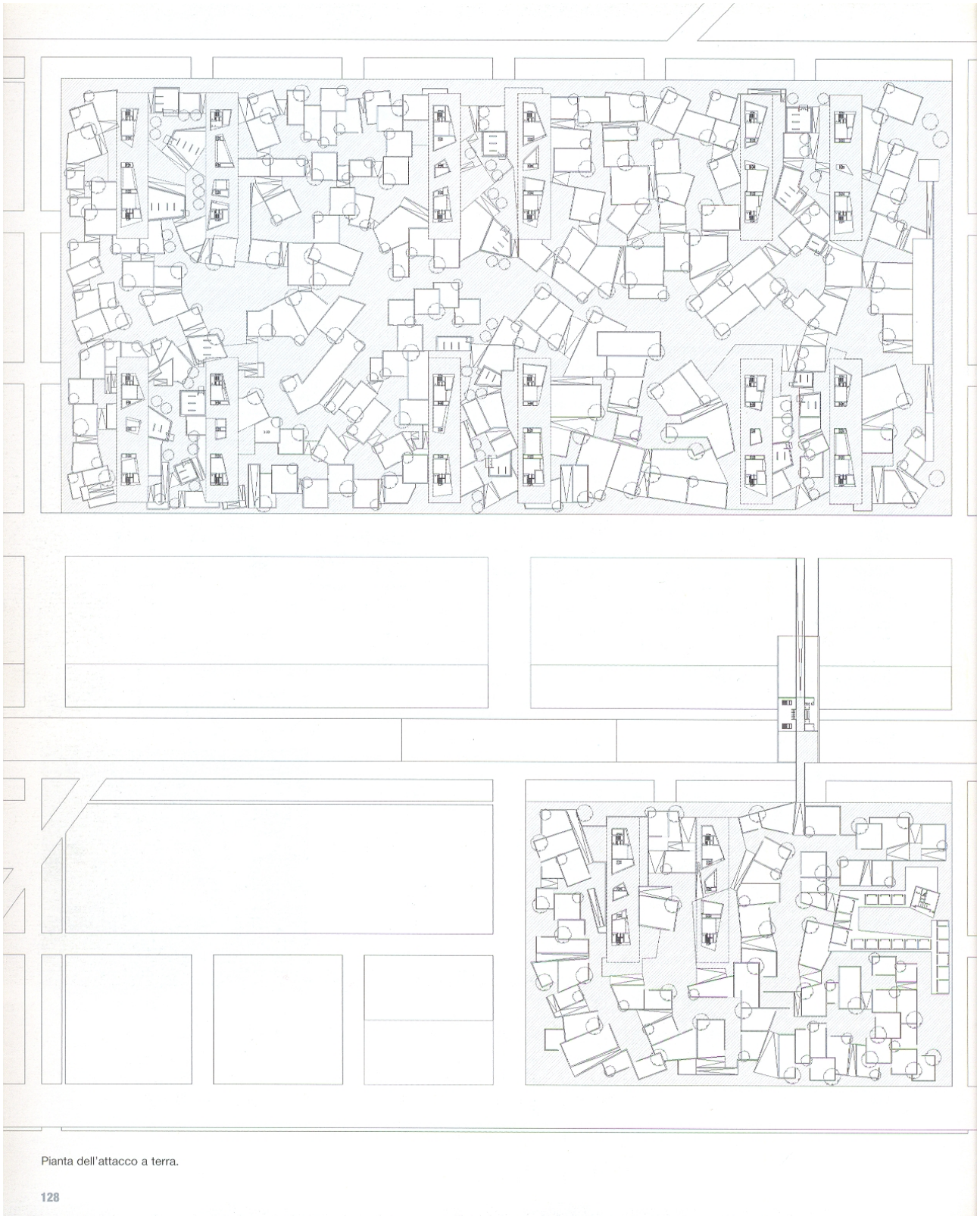
1 Amédée Ozenfant, Jeanneret Le Corbusier, *Sur la Plastique: 1. Examen des conditions primordiales*, in «L'esprit nouveau», 1920, 1, October, page 43.

2 As recently defined in studies by Domenico De Masi. Cf. Domenico De Masi, *Ozio creativo*, Rizzoli, Milan 2000.

3 Cf. The urban gardens created in Copenhagen in 1950 by C. Th. Sorenson. See Richard Ingersoll, *Sprawitown*, Meltemi, Rome 2004, pages 228-229.

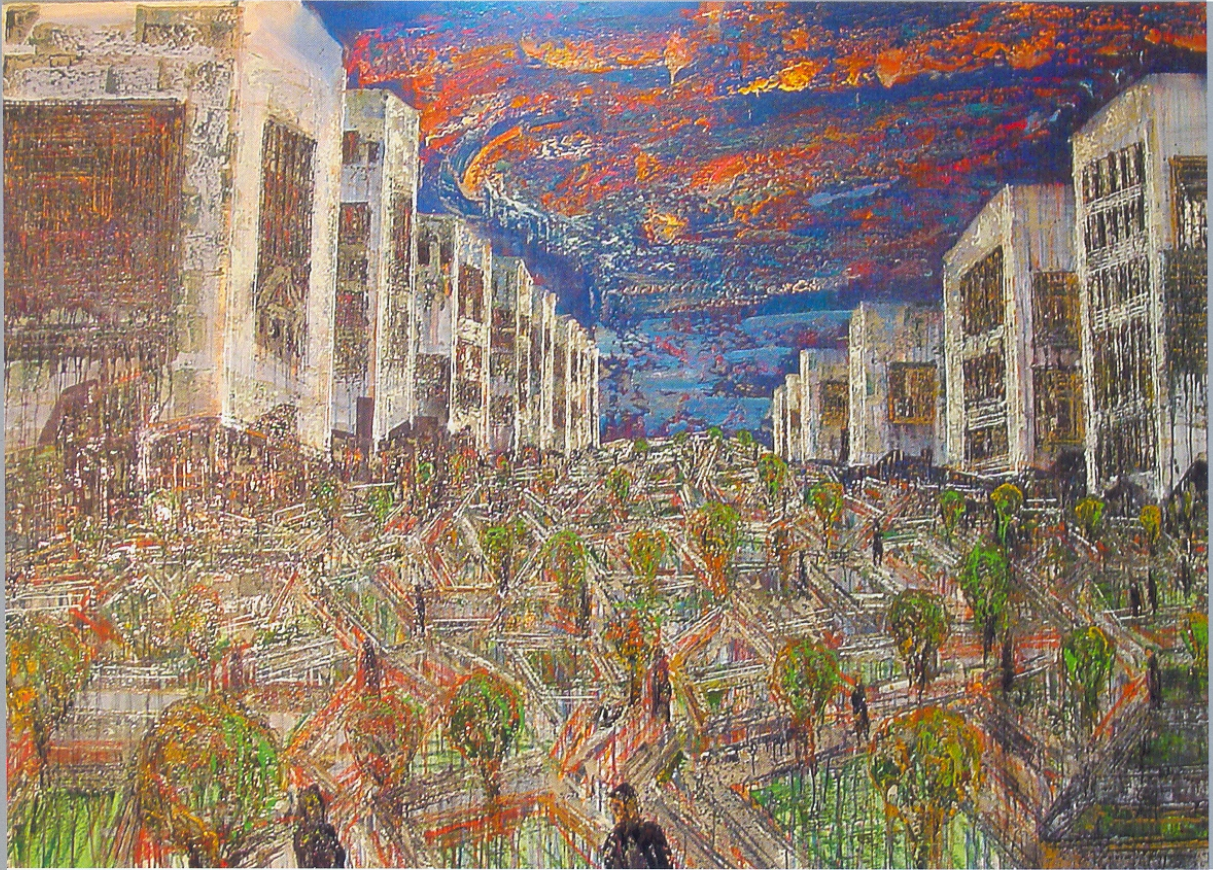
3 Cross section of a building.
4 Position in the urban structure.
5 Perspective view.
6 Cross section of the project.





Pianta dell'attacco a terra.

Croce Taravella Orti per VEMA



The space for gardens defines VEMA's connective tissue. This is a porous and labyrinthine system, ready for a process of progressive appropriation on the part of the future inhabitants. The open structure is a reinterpretation, brought up to date, of the park of Le Corbusier's *Ville Radieuse*. This space is combined with service micro-structures, that will increase the opportunities for interchange between individuals.

Edited by Dina Nencini with Roberta Andreoli, Emiliano Auriemma, Giovanni Caffio, Riccardo Di Carlo, Loredana Landro, Alessandro Luigini, Lina Malfona, Massimiliano Mazzetta, Francesco Menegatti, Francesca Romana Moretti, Valentina Ricciuti, Stefania Suma

Italian profiles

The biographical section at the end of the catalogue does not in any way provide exhaustive descriptions of the most important figures in contemporary Italian architecture. Such a section would have required much greater space and intentions different to those that exist in the programme of the Italian Pavilion, plus much broader knowledge and a different outlook to those expressed by the authors of this volume. More simply, the biographical section includes architects, historians, critics, writers and artists who

have constituted the reference horizon for the curator and collaborators during the preparation of this exhibition. For many reasons, this horizon too is only sketched out. Having stated these limitations, it can be said that, even in its declaredly partial nature, this exhibition of the ideal interlocutors of those who conceived and mounted "The New City, Italia-y-2026. Welcome to VEMA", offers a useful look at the practical side of Italian architecture and the cultural world it inhabits.

interior design projects have included the new E.N.P.A.C.L. building and the ACANTO well-being centre in Rome. Typical of the new wave of designers that now include interior design, their fashionable solutions often make use of more delicate and longer-lasting compositions.

Rosario Gigli

Cosenza, 1944

An architect and, from 1973, a lecturer in Architectural Design at the Architecture Department in Valle Giulia in Rome. His works include the Seafront at Gallipoli (2000), Ecotekne University in Lecce (1992), reconstruction of Piazza dei Caduti in Martano (2001), and Villa Antonica in Perugas (2000). He has won prizes for the San Mario parish complex at Anagnina in Rome (1990), the Services Area at Altamura-Gravina in Puglia (2002), and expansion of the Tourist Port in Otranto (2002). In June 2005 an exhibition of his projects from 1990 to 2005 was opened at the Valle Giulia Architecture Department, entitled *Idea e Scrittura*, of which a catalogue is being published.

Vittorio Gigliotti

Salerno, 1931

Decisive in the life of engineer Vittorio Gigliotti were his meetings with B. Zevi, with whom he founded Studio AZ Architetti e Ingegneri, and later with P. Portoghesi, with whom he worked for thirty years. Voted "Best European Engineer" in 1989, his best-known work is the Mosque in Rome (1989) with Portoghesi. His pays close attention to the *genius loci*, and the use of traditional materials and techniques combined with modern construction techniques.

Vittorio Giorgini

Florence, 1926

This multi-talented architect of numerous interests likes to experiment with innovative linguistic expressions and techniques. His research is illustrated in the books *Spaziologia* (1995) and *Vittorio Giorgini. La natura come modello* (2000), which include the zoomorphic Villa Saldarini in Baratti (1961), and his thirty-year experience at the Pratt Institute in New York. He attempts to draw on the formal references of natural structures in a utopian but material approach to construction.

Giorgio Giugiaro

Garessio (Cuneo), 1938

Giorgio Giugiaro's name is linked to the success of sales of famous sports cars. In 1967 he founded Italdesign to provide styling consultancy to car manufacturers, the international success of which brought him more than 130 clients. In 1981 he founded Giugiaro Design and extended the company remit from car design to transport design (for example, various high-speed trains), interior design, packaging, and multimedia communications. In 1984 Giugiaro was awarded the Compasso d'Oro for his career, which has been illustrated and recorded in



High-speed train for Fiat Ferroviaria.

many exhibitions and monographic works. The defining element of his designs – from cars to telephones – is the combination of ergonomics and technology.

Santo Giunta

Palermo, 1965

An architect, who since 1988 has carried out his profession as a planner and designer of local productive systems. From 2001 to 2003 he has been the regional co-ordinator for Nuove Generazioni IN/Arch Sicilia; at present he is a member of the SDI (Italian Design System) research unit in Palermo (2002). Still at the planning stage are the Town Hall offices in Castelvetrano (Trapani), a single family house in Mondello (Palermo) and he is planning the restoration and the re-functionalisation of the historical complex of the Istituto delle Croci in Via Libertà in Palermo.

Pier Francesco Gnot

Florence, 1965

A photographer whose works investigate abandoned areas, spaces and places that reveal their different uses and functions. His work has been exhibited at the Museo di Antropologia in Florence, the Archivio Fotografico Toscano in Prato, Stazione Leopolda and the Centro d'Arte Quarter in Florence.

Giorgio Goffi

Darfo Boario Terme (Brescia), 1957

Two of Giorgio Goffi's architectural designs are a residential complex in Brescia (2002) and an industrial complex in Gussago (2003). A member of the editorial group of the magazine *Il Progetto*, Goffi has always combined his practical work with theoretical aspects of architectural culture.



Industrial complex, Gussago, 2003.

Pierluigi Grandinetti

Milan, 1935

An architect and lecturer of Architectural Composition at the Architecture Department at Milan Polytechnic, Giorgio Grassi has worked on many projects and authored texts in several languages, including *La costruzione logica dell'architettura* (Padua, 1967) and *Giorgio Grassi, I progetti, le opere e gli scritti* (Milan, 1996). He has received various awards, one of which was the Heinrich Tessenow Medaille in Gold in 1992. Among his projects were the reconstruction of the Roman theatre in Sagunto in 1985 and a set of buildings in Postdamerplatz in 2001. A favourite feature of his architecture is the unremitting repetition of archetypal elements. Set within a severe theoretic framework strongly influenced by Neoclassicism, a feature of his works is an obsessive rigorism which, due to its extreme nature, results in an intense poeticism.

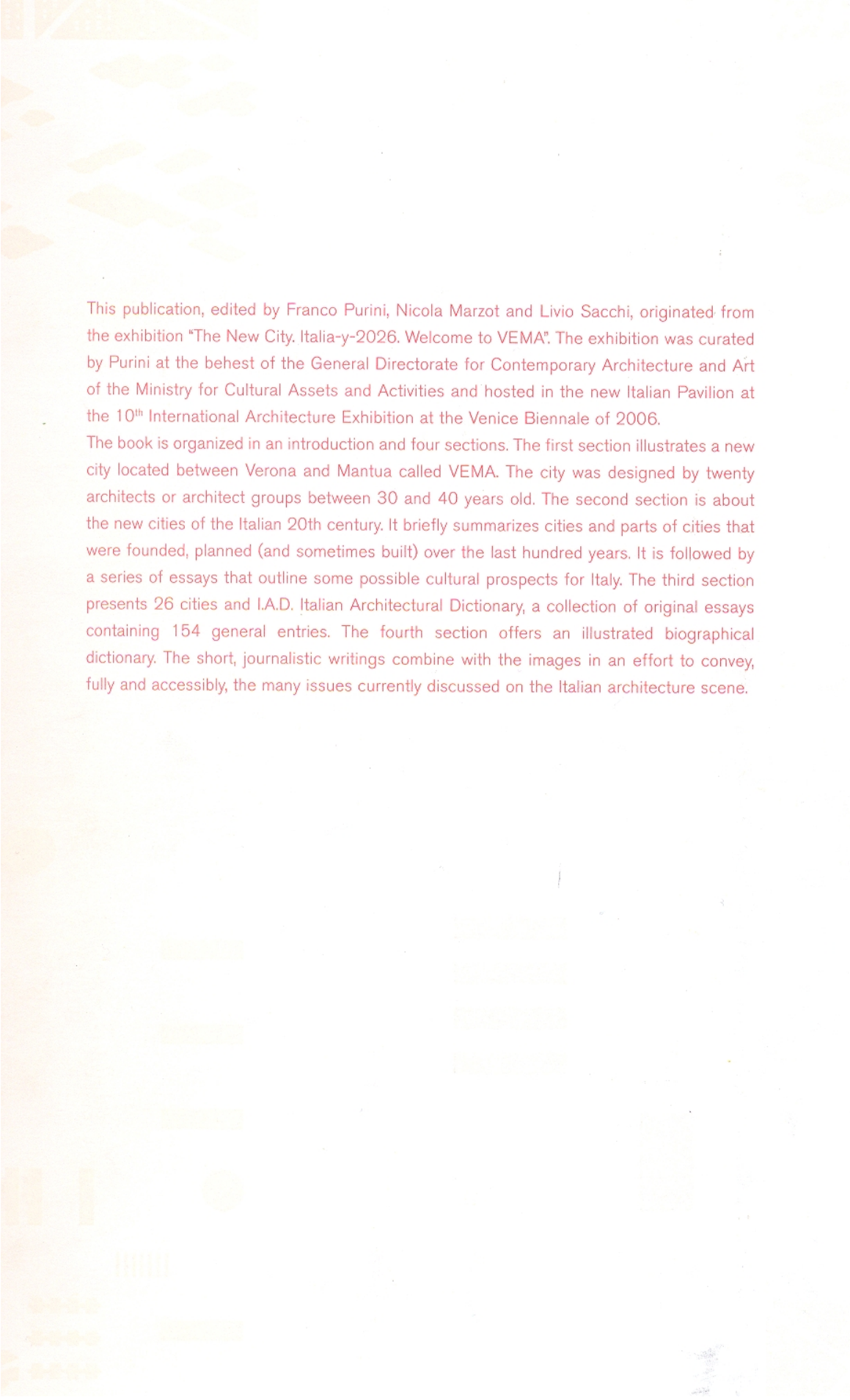
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Offices, Postdamerplatz, Berlin, 2001.



This publication, edited by Franco Purini, Nicola Marzot and Livio Sacchi, originated from the exhibition "The New City. Italia-y-2026. Welcome to VEMA". The exhibition was curated by Purini at the behest of the General Directorate for Contemporary Architecture and Art of the Ministry for Cultural Assets and Activities and hosted in the new Italian Pavilion at the 10th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale of 2006.

The book is organized in an introduction and four sections. The first section illustrates a new city located between Verona and Mantua called VEMA. The city was designed by twenty architects or architect groups between 30 and 40 years old. The second section is about the new cities of the Italian 20th century. It briefly summarizes cities and parts of cities that were founded, planned (and sometimes built) over the last hundred years. It is followed by a series of essays that outline some possible cultural prospects for Italy. The third section presents 26 cities and I.A.D. Italian Architectural Dictionary, a collection of original essays containing 154 general entries. The fourth section offers an illustrated biographical dictionary. The short, journalistic writings combine with the images in an effort to convey, fully and accessibly, the many issues currently discussed on the Italian architecture scene.