

INTERVIEW WITH RENATO RIZZI

The architect handling the restoration of Fortunato Depero's studio speaks to us about the project. An exceptional and detailed preview of the excavations, construction technology and objectives of the project in rapport with the centre of Rovereto.

Architetto Rizzi, speak to us about this restoration. What are your objectives?

The project has three requirements. The first concerns exhibitions, the second plant, and the third regulations. The problem is that the building is full of architectural barriers. Our approach must be very serious because this is a public building. For example, we had to reconsolidate all the floors, fit in a lift and emergency stairs and equip a building that did not even have central heating or lavatories with all the latest plant.

Casa Caden, a building next door that was demolished because it had no architectural value, was used to provide all the features enabling the barriers to be removed. For the digging at Casa Caden, we had to build an underground wall, which we architects call "Berlin"; it required the insertion of 26-metre-long reinforced concrete beams underground.

How will the Casa Museo Depero be, compared to the past?

The ground floor will be practically identical to when Depero lived here. The basement floor is where we'll put in all the new services, such as the boiler room, cloakroom, bookshop and cafeteria. The ground floor will be restructured philologically. We have to remember that this floor was already refurbished in 1994. The two upper floors will change a lot, on the other hand, as they need to be modified to enable Depero's large tapestries to go on display.

It was never possible to display the tapestries on the upper floors because the ceilings were too low. So we had a chance to rebuild a setting which Depero always drew in his pictures and which in some way corresponds to his intentions for the museum.

A particularly delicate theme is that of the relationship with the town

Of course, and note that the relationship is a complex one. First of all, there's the question of the relationship with the residents, which is very important. The historic entrance will remain on via della Terra, but we'll open a new one also in via Portici, which will be overlooked by the bookshop, cafeteria, and public services; all the new services welcoming visitors.

But there's also a project by Gabriella Belli foreseeing the inclusion of a frame on the second floor to house collections of crafts and artistic products.

Another important question to bear in mind is this: Futurism has denied the relationship with history, being an avant-garde of a revolutionary bent. Turning to industrial progress mean breaking completely with the past. Depero had thus planned the construction of a new building, but he was obliged to use an old one, which was a paradox for him.

The restoration will call into play the relationship between Futurism and history. We are in one of the most important locations for the urban history of Rovereto. Just down the road, we have the Castle of Rovereto. The Castle, which rises vertically, over time led to the growth of the town, which spread horizontally. It was the Castle that controlled the system of canals; the cities main lines of energy.

Anyone climbing from Casa Caden to the floors of the museum will become aware of this vertical theme in a concrete manner. In other words, in this building, it will be possible to set up a dialectic relationship between the language of Futurism and that of history.

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