
Giovanni Carli

Postmediolanum 1981—1985. Architecture and Power of Milan in the pages of *Domus Moda*

Abstract

The essay proposes a reading of the image of the city of Milan in the early Eighties seen through the lens of architecture and fashion, disciplines of design interpreted as powerful activators of urban discourses open to significant change. This change intersects the pages of *Domus Moda* published in 1981 and 1985 as special issues of the famous architecture and design magazine founded by Gio Ponti in 1928 in Milan, directed between 1979 and 1986 by Alessandro Mendini. Occupying a central position in Italian Postmodern theory, Mendini exercises his power as an architect and as an editor, giving back to the audience the ironic and hedonistic component of architecture, obscured by the modernist masters. The essay interprets *Domus Moda* as the editorial synthesis of Mendini, where the past political experiences of *Casabella* are collected and updated, and the future pop experiments of *Ollo*, the irreverent magazine “without message”, are glimpsed. The playing field is Milan, city of experimentation by its very nature (the Latin name *Mediolanum* means “middle-land”), open to transformation and contradiction. With the aim of defining a visual urban narrative, in the issues Milan is represented as a “Collage City”, overwhelmed by a creative force led to highlight how the architecture of places and the architecture of dresses can constitute the post-modern syntax of contamination.

Keywords

Postmodern, Milan, Architecture, Alessandro Mendini, *Domus Moda*