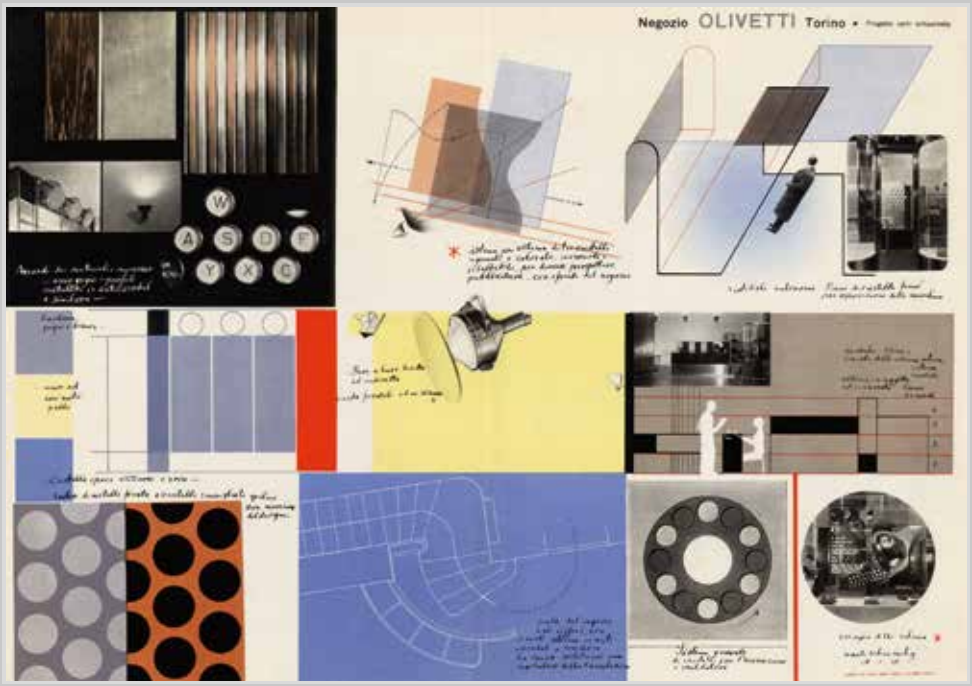
Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages 1933–1983

edited by Davide Fornari and Davide Turrini



Triest

front cover
Negozio Olivetti Torino (Olivetti showroom in Turin),
design Xanti Schawinsky, gravure printing,
33.3 × 47 cm, from *Domus*, 92, 1935.

Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages 1933–1983

edited by Davide Fornari and Davide Turrini

Triest

Contents

Abbreviations

AAMCM	Archivo de Arquitectos Mexicanos, Facultad de Arquitectura, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Ciudad de México
AASOI DCUS DSSS	Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea / Direzione Comunicazioni Ufficio Stampa Direzione Sviluppo Servizi Sociali
ACSR	Archivio Carlo Scarpa, Collezioni MAXXI Architettura, MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Rome
AFAFHM	Archivio Franco Albini-Franca Helg, Milan
AGAM	Archivio Gae Aulenti, Milan
AHCOACB	Arxiu Històric del Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya, Barcelona
ALCM	Archivo Legorreta, Ciudad de México
ANCS	Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya, Sant Cugat del Vallés
ASBM	Archivio Silvana Bellino, Milan
ATMM	Archivio Tomás Maldonado, Milan
AWBM	Archivio Walter Ballmer, Milan
AZM	Archivio Bazzani Zveteremich, Milan
BAB	Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin
BGGP	Biblioteca Giovanni Gronchi, Pontedera
CSACP	Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione, Parma
FJVBDM ASD	Fondazione Jacqueline Vodoz e Bruno Danese, Milan / Archivio storico del Design
FRL ACLR	Fondazione Centro Studi sull'Arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, Lucca / Archivio Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti
MfGZ	Museum für Gestaltung Zürich
MoMAANY	The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York
SIAW	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington

Walter Ballmer, One of the Bs in Olivetti

Chiara Barbieri
Davide Fornari

From the mid-1950s to the early 1970s, Swiss graphic designer Walter Ballmer (Liestal 1923 – Milan 2011) worked as an art director at Olivetti. There he designed posters, advertising and various types of printed matter. His work ranged from graphic design to exhibition design, including typography and photography. Ballmer's work appeared in monographs and also featured in exhibitions on Olivetti and Italian graphics in general, but his presence in the literature was often limited to the mention of his name. His role in the design of Olivetti's identity and the impact the company had on his career deserve a closer look. Drawing on the records held in Ballmer's private archive and the Olivetti Historical Archives Association, as well as on a series of interviews with associates and assistants undertaken by the authors, this case study reveals some previously unexplored aspects of Olivetti's history. The investigation shifts the focus from the individual designer and his most representative works to explore the daily life of the Advertising Office, in order to provide a more comprehensive idea of the working environment in the company, reconstruct the complex network of actors involved in the design process and explore the relationship between designer and client from several points of view.

Like many other fellow countrymen who came to the city before and after him – Xanti Schawinsky, Max Huber, Aldo Calabresi and Bruno Monguzzi, for example – Ballmer began his Milanese career at Studio Boggeri, where he worked from 1947, the year he moved to Italy, to 1955.[1] As early as the 1930s and throughout the years of the economic boom, Milan was a popular destination for Swiss graphic designers who moved there, attracted by the work opportunities it offered and the Italian cultural climate.[2] Thanks to their training at the design schools in Basel and Zurich and the growing international reputation of Swiss graphic design, these professionals found a favourable working environment in Milan. His association with Studio Boggeri introduced Ballmer to the Milanese scene and launched his career under the best auspices, placing him in contact with the major clients of the time. In 1956, he was hired by Olivetti, where he worked for about fifteen years. In 1971 he left the company and opened Unidesign, his own graphic design studio in Milan, specialising in logos and visual identities for clients such as Valentino, Colmar and Nava.

Ballmer was not the only one working on corporate identity at Olivetti. In an article that appeared in the international graphics and advertising magazine *Gebrauchsgraphik* in the summer of 1962, author Raimondo Hrabak described the organisation of the Advertising Office:[3]

> The Olivetti publicity is designed by four different teams, the first of which is under the direction of Giovanni Pintori, the leading creative artist of Olivetti. He is entrusted with the design of hundreds of sales brochures and of the advertisements which appear in newspapers and magazines of the whole world. The other three groups, which in addition to the graphic work for the various departments of the firm are entrusted with the important planning of publicity buildings such as sales rooms or fair and exhibition stands, are directed by Egidio Bonfante, Franco Bassi and Walter Ballmer. These four main publicity teams are independent of each other and only responsible to the management.[4]

When Pintori left the company in 1968, the so-called "Bs" remained at Olivetti: Bonfante, Bassi and Ballmer – already mentioned by Hrabak in his article – to which must be added the "B" of Italo Bellosta. The art directors were independent, if not in competition with each other, and answered to the head of the Cultural Relations, Industrial Design and Advertising Department: Engineer Renzo Zorzi. Each sub-group had its own field of action: Italo Bellosta was responsible for the graphic design of manuals, Bassi for that of financial statements, Ballmer for the advertising of typewriters, photocopiers and office furniture, and Bonfante of trade fairs, company exhibitions and points of sale. In reality, the distinction of tasks was not so clear-cut and sometimes the roles overlapped: Bassi designed advertising posters, while Ballmer often produced decorative panels for trade fair stands and exhibitions.

Olivetti offered its art directors unparalleled national and international media exposure. From the mid-1950s onwards, Ballmer's work and, to a lesser extent, his name appeared regularly in trade magazines and the general press. At the beginning of the 1970s, the design of the new Olivetti logotype put the Swiss graphic designer in the spotlight of the international press,[5] and it does not seem far-fetched to surmise a link between the simultaneous admittance of Ballmer and Bassi to AGI (Alliance Graphique Internationale) in 1970 and the media attention Olivetti received during those years. But working for such a famous client can have its drawbacks. If on the one hand, Ballmer contributed to building the company's identity, on the other his professional image was inseparable from Olivetti to the point of being overshadowed by it. Ballmer's presence in specialised literature and the collections of design museums is still limited to his work – mainly posters – designed while he was art director at Olivetti.

Ballmer himself was aware of the media power of the Olivetti name and he made sure to use it as a platform to promote his career as an artist. The advertising brochure for the Copia 105 photocopier is an example of Ballmer's personal use of Olivetti's representational potential over the years. He added his abstract works on the cover and inside the brochure so that the aseptic office environment was enlivened by the geometric shapes and saturated colours typical of Concrete Art. A comparative analysis of the works Ballmer designed at Olivetti seems to suggest that this strategy of self-promotion was carried out with the company's approval. Indeed, the same abstract geometric shapes reappear in various Olivetti prints designed by the Swiss art director. A similar language is used for the decorative panels of trade fair stands – such as those designed with his studio assistant Paolo Segota for the 1961 *Stile Olivetti* exhibition in Zurich or the Olivetti stand at the *Interorgtechnika* trade fair (Moscow, 1966) – where primary shapes are combined in modular patterns animated by alternating colours. The artist Ballmer officially obtained Olivetti's institutional endorsement when in 1976, five years after leaving the company, the Cultural Services dedicated an exhibition to him in Ivrea, along with a catalogue edited by Zorzi.[6] Not all attempts at self-promotion were successful, however, as demonstrated by the draft of a monographic publication presented to Zorzi together with a likely request for funds and institutional support, which emerged from the Olivetti Historical Archives. This is the mock-up of a catalogue entitled *Walter Ballmer. Un designer tra arte e grafica* (Walter Ballmer. A designer between art and graphics), which can be read from both sides: one is dedicated to Ballmer's artistic work, the other to his work as a graphic designer, and includes a selection of projects designed at Unidesign, allowing the draft to be dated to the late 1980s. (figs. 100, 101, 102)

The relationship between Ballmer and Olivetti is a complex one that demonstrates how clients not only provided work and financial support, but also played a decisive role in building the professional image of designers, both during and after their period of actual employment. The relationship between designer and client did not end in 1971 with the opening of Unidesign, and Ballmer continued to work as an external consultant for Olivetti and its foreign subsidiaries even after his resignation. Olivetti was also a silent presence at Unidesign: a focal point in the studio's network of national and international clients. The company was often the missing link between

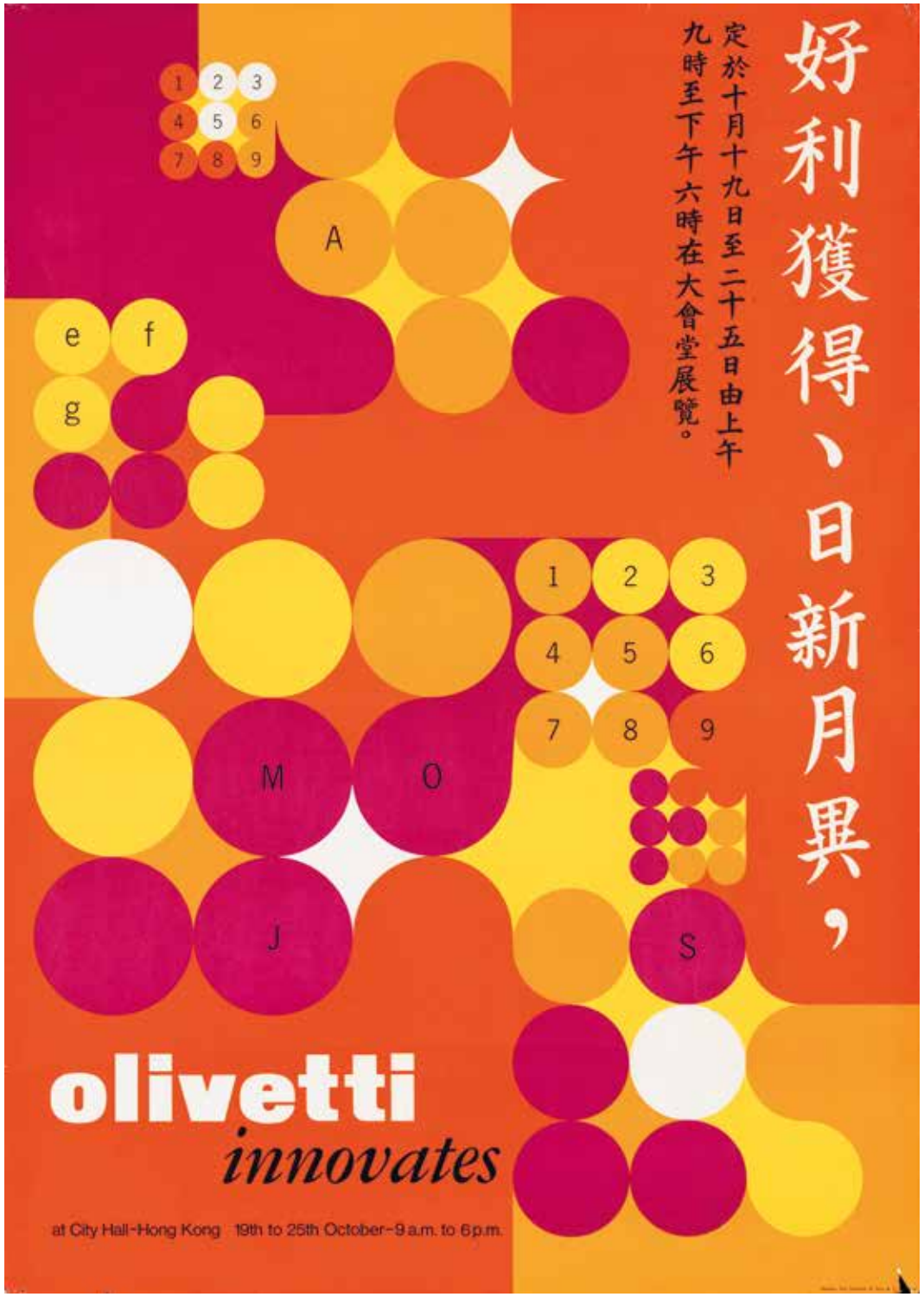
1 Monguzzi 1981; Fossati and Sambonet 1974.
2 Fornari 2016; Georgi and Minetti 2011; Richter 2007; Galluzzo 2017.
3 Vinti 2007.
4 Hrabak 1962: 7.
5 Zorzi 1971–1972.
6 Zorzi 1976.

100 *Olivetti Copia 105 Desktop Copier* advertising brochure; graphic design Walter Ballmer.

101 Walter Ballmer (right) with Paolo Segota, *Interorgtechnika*, Moscow, 1966. Photographer unknown.

102 On the previous page, front and back cover of the double-sided mock-up of the monographic catalogue *Walter Ballmer. Un designer tra arte e grafica*, graphic design Walter Ballmer, late 1980s. Photo by Niccolò Quaresima.

103 Walter Ballmer in his Olivetti office, with Paolo Segota (assistant) and Mrs Diotti (secretary), early 1960s, Walter Ballmer Archive, Milan. Photographer unknown.



104 On the previous page, *Olivetti Innovates* exhibition poster, Hong Kong, 1966, graphic design Anna Monika Jost and Walter Ballmer.

105 *Copia II* photocopier advertising brochure, 1970; graphic design Urs Glaser and Walter Ballmer.

Ballmer and his clients and this was the case of the Wertheim warehouses – one of Olivetti's distributors in Spain – and ISTUD (Istituto Studi Direzionali) – a business school that counted Olivetti among its shareholders.

Starting with the "B" of Ballmer, the authors have reconstructed a network of Italian and Swiss assistants who succeeded one another in the Advertising Office. The interviews have revealed new details about Olivetti and Ballmer seen from the viewpoint of the young assistant, who remained anonymous and has often been forgotten by the literature. The use of oral history as a research method has made it possible to give voice to minor and hitherto marginalised figures in Olivetti's history and to enrich factual information with connotations derived from the personal experiences of the individual interviewees.[7] The conversations focused on everyday work, human relations and power dynamics within the office, advantages and disadvantages of working at Olivetti. (fig. 103)

The advantages are somewhat predictable. "When I was at Olivetti," recalls Swiss graphic designer Anna Monika Jost, "they had a lot of money." Company finances allowed Ballmer and his assistants to commission countless proofs in multiple colours. "It was only later on," says Jost, "that I learned to calculate the cost of all this."[8] Marziano Pasquè echoes her: "There was no control over the budget, we worked for the best and had no accountability issues. Things were done and re-done countless times without worrying about the budget. At Olivetti, you learned how to design, maybe not how to survive on the market!"[9] Both underline the almost unlimited funds available to art directors. At the same time, they note that Olivetti was an unrepeatable experience and that, once they left the company, they had to adapt to the rules of the market. Fulvio Ronchi, another young assistant to Ballmer, points out two other advantages of working at Olivetti: the opportunity to travel and the chance to come into contact with big names in international graphics, photography and illustration:

> The great thing about Olivetti was the power of the industry and especially the subsidiaries. [...] I was 22 years old and I was travelling the world doing advertising campaigns and posters for Olivetti subsidiaries, and it was fantastic! [...] At Olivetti there was this incredible thing that went beyond your personal characteristics, because you were allowed wonderful illustrators and photographers. The best photographers and illustrators in the world would come by and show you their work and you could have it done by the next morning. And above all photographers, great photographers: from Ugo Mulas to Ezio Frea and Libis. Ballmer did a lot of posters with Libis.[10]

For a young graphic designer, becoming an assistant at Olivetti was an extraordinary experience: the company offered economic, technical, social and professional benefits that were hard to match, especially in the eyes of a 20-year-old at the start of their design career.

Ronchi's words also underline another aspect of studio life, that of freelancers, which illustrates the reality of the profession in contrast to an outdated approach to the history of design as a story of isolated pioneers. While assistants have so far remained largely anonymous and thus ignored in the literature, freelancers did not go completely unnoticed, often being internationally renowned figures. This is the case of the Swiss photographer Serge Libiszewski, known in Italy as Sergio Libis.[11] Like Ballmer, Libis moved to Milan after the war (1956). "In the 1960s, it was not so obvious that photography would feature in advertising," Libis explains:

> On a few rare occasions [Ballmer] came to me and said, "You do it" and I did. He had total confidence in me. In my work, I already had a clear approach to photography, which was mainly based on the object and the light, as I had learned at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Zurich. I did some great work for him and he appreciated it. He realised immediately that it was worth it, and I was happy because he wasn't the kind of graphic designer who would take the scissors and cut everything. There was a time when photography was too rigid, you had to boost it with graphics, with some eye-catching points and colours. In this case, however, there was no need: the photo itself became a poster and [Ballmer] had the good taste to put some good typography on it without moving anything. There was a great understanding between us, mutual respect and trust.[12]

Libis describes Ballmer as an exception in the field of Italian graphics of those years: a graphic designer who understood the communicative potential of photography in advertising and who managed to balance the illustrative elements with the typographic ones.[13] Implicit in Libis' memory is the photo-graphic tradition of the Swiss school.[14] They both shared this approach to visual communication, having trained at Swiss art and design schools: Ballmer in Basel and Libis in Zurich. It is no coincidence that Ballmer was often referred to as "the Swiss Man at Olivetti," a nickname that referred not only to his nationality but to a design methodology and an approach to graphic design that distinguished him from the other "Bs" at Olivetti.

Turning to the sore points, two negative aspects emerged from the interviews with the assistants: on the one hand, the uncertain contractual conditions in the company, and on the other, the unfair balance of power between art director and underlings. Ronchi's account shows that "in Olivetti, despite all the social commitment," graphics assistants were not given contracts and could be fired at any time: one wrong word and you risked losing your job.[15] With no job guarantees from a contractual point of view, young graphic designers were subject to the will of the art directors. "There was this curious thing at Olivetti," Ronchi recalls, "the graphic designers had a very unusual contract. [...] I answered directly to Ballmer, independently of the company unions, something that was already operational at Olivetti. In fact, you didn't punch a time card like all the other employees in the building, but you were bound by the art directors' whims!"[16] Jost's recollection confirms Ronchi's statements: "When [in 1968] I told Zorzi that I was leaving, he was amazed to discover that I had never been hired, and said: 'It's a disgrace, because we're the most socially aware company in Milan and the whole of Italy, and you've been here for over two years without a contract!,' and he gave me 200,000 lire to compensate for the treatment I'd had to put up with."[17] A few years later, Ballmer and Jost met again in Lausanne. Ballmer tried to convince her to return to Olivetti, but his attempts at reconciliation fell on deaf ears, even though he claimed the working conditions in the company had changed: "[Ballmer] told me it wasn't like before, that then the young people were unionised and went on strike, and I told him that I would have gone on strike too if he had treated me the way he had treated me!"[18] Both stories, although partially subjective, offer an image of Olivetti that is perhaps unexpected, given that we are used to the unanimous and all too often uncritical celebration of the company for its social commitment.

The second criticism raised by the assistants concerns the limited public recognition, due to their anonymous contribution to the Olivetti identity. At the time, it was common practice for graphics assistants not to be able to sign their work. At Olivetti, art directors themselves did not sign most of their work. Nevertheless, the practice created a certain amount of discontent, fuelling tensions within the office. To get around the rule and claim the maternity or paternity of their ideas, some assistants resorted to curious visual gambits that plunge us back into the everyday life of the studio once again. This is the case of the poster for the *Olivetti Innovates* exhibition in Hong Kong designed by Jost in 1966 and an advertising brochure for the Copia 2 photocopier designed in 1970 by Swiss graphic designer Urs Glaser. Jost hides her initials on the poster: the capital letters A, M and J are strategically placed within three circles along a slightly off-centre vertical line that follows the overall asymmetry of the composition. The ploy used by Glaser to "sign" his brochure consists instead of including one of his letters among the objects chosen to demonstrate the accuracy of the Copia II photocopier. (figs. 104, 105)

7 Sandino 2006.
8 Jost 2015.
9 Pasquè 2017.
10 Ronchi 2017.
11 Bianda and Ossanna Cavadini 2010.
12 Libiszewski 2017.
13 Galluzzo 2020.
14 Hollis 2006.
15 Ronchi 2015.
16 Ronchi 2017.
17 Jost 2015.
18 *Ibid.*

Working with Olivetti facilitated the Swiss graphic designer's career in Italy and influenced his professional image on an international level. The relationship between designer and client extended beyond the Advertising Office, as demonstrated by his ability to use the Olivetti name to promote his career as an artist and secure a network of clients for the graphic design studio Unidesign. Interviews and archival research have confirmed the benefits of working at Olivetti. At the same time, this case study has given voice to some hitherto unheard figures, offering access to the everyday life of the Advertising Office, exploring its power dynamics, conflicts and fruitful collaborations. In doing so, it has revealed a complex image of a company, with its merits and flaws, that undermines some of the mythographic aspects surrounding Olivetti.

Oral Sources

Jost 2015
Anna Monika Jost in conversation with Davide Fornari, Paris, 7 December 2015.

Libiszewski 2017
Serge Libiszewski in conversation with Chiara Barbieri, Milan, 4 October 2017.

Pasquè 2017
Marziano Pasquè telephone conversation with Chiara Barbieri, 17 October 2017.

Ronchi 2015
Fulvio Ronchi in conversation with Davide Fornari, Milan, 6 January 2015.

Ronchi 2017
Fulvio Ronchi in conversation with Chiara Barbieri, Milan, 19 April 2017.

References

Bianda and Ossanna Cavadini 2010
Alberto Bianda and Nicoletta Ossanna Cavadini, edited by, *Serge Libiszewski. Sergio Libis fotografo a Milano 1956–1995*, Capelli, Mendrisio 2010.

Fornari 2016
Davide Fornari, *Swiss Style Made in Italy: Graphic Design Across the Border*, in Robert Lzicar and Davide Fornari, edited by, *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland*, Triest Verlag, Zurich 2016, pp. 152–180.

Fossati and Sambonet 1974
Paolo Fossati and Roberto Sambonet, edited by, *Lo Studio Boggeri 1933-1973. Comunicazione visuale e grafica applicata*, Amilcare Pizzi, Cinisello Balsamo 1974.

Galluzzo 2017
Michele Galluzzo, "GGKMilano: Are Graphic Designers Still Lead Players?," in *Progetto Grafico*, 31, Spring 2017, pp. 139–144.

Galluzzo 2020
Michele Galluzzo, "'Perché voi non lo sapete come sceglie una cucina la gente vera'. La fotografia tra grafica e art direction nel made in Italy," in *AIS/Design. Storia e ricerche*, 14, December 2020, pp. 61–90.

Georgi and Minetti 2011
William Georgi and Tommaso Minetti, edited by, *Italian Design is Coming Home. To Switzerland*, Polyedra/Actar, Otfringen/Barcelona 2011.

Hollis 2006
Richard Hollis, *Swiss Graphic Design. The Origins and Growth of an International Style. 1920–1965*, Laurence King, London 2006.

Hrabak 1962
Raimondo Hrabak, "Olivetti World-Wide Graphic Advertising Art," in *Gebrauchsgraphik*, 6, June 1962, pp. 2–13.

Monguzzi 1981
Bruno Moguzzi, edited by, *Lo Studio Boggeri, 1933–1981*, Electa, Milan 1981.

Richter 2007
Bettina Richter, edited by, *Zürich-Milano*, Lars Müller Publishers, Baden 2007.

Sandino 2006
Linda Sandino, "Oral Histories and Design: Objects and Subjects," in *Journal of Design History*, 19, 4, 2006, pp. 275–282.

Vinti 2007
Carlo Vinti, *Gli anni dello stile industriale 1948–1965*, Marsilio, Venice 2007.

Zorzi 1971–1972
Renzo Zorzi, "Milan: Olivetti – Portrait of an Industrial Corporation," in *Graphis*, 156, 1971–1972, pp. 346–381.

Zorzi 1976
Renzo Zorzi, edited by, *Walter Ballmer*, Servizi Culturali Olivetti, Ivrea 1976.

Authors

Alessandra Acocella
University of Parma

A researcher in Contemporary Art History, she has undertaken studies on the history of exhibitions, public art and the relations between visual arts, architecture and design. She is co-founder of *Senzacornice*, a digital magazine and research and training laboratory for contemporary art. She currently contributes to the scientific activities of the Museo Novecento in Florence and the Archivio Luciano Caruso. She is the author of the monograph *Avanguardia diffusa. Luoghi di sperimentazione artistica in Italia 1967–1970* (Fondazione Passaré / Quodlibet, Macerata 2016). Her recent contributions include *Convergenze. Il design e le avanguardie milanesi degli anni cinquanta e sessanta*, in *Il design dei Castiglioni* (Corraini, Mantua 2018).

Chiara Barbieri
HKB Bern University of the Arts
ECAL/University of Art and Design Lausanne (HES-SO)

She is currently working with ECAL in Lausanne on two research projects on Xanti Schawinsky's Milan years and on the sources of Jan Tschichold's New Typography. Former researcher (2016–2020) at the Hochschule der Künste Bern as part of the research project "Swiss Graphic Design and Typography Revisited" she presented a case study on Walter Ballmer and Unidesign. She teaches Design History at the Royal College of Art in London and the University for the Creative Arts in Farnham. In 2017 she obtained a PhD in History of Design from the Royal College of London with a thesis on the professionalisation of graphic design in Italy from the 1930s to the 1960s.

Renata Bazzani Zveteremich

An architect, she keeps the family archive that includes materials relating to the partnership between Renato Zveteremich and Olivetti, the focus of her publications.

Marco Giorgio Bevilacqua
University of Pisa

Associate professor of Design at the Department of Energy, Systems, Land and Building Engineering, University of Pisa. He obtained his PhD in Science and Techniques for Civil Construction at the University of Pisa (2008). His research interests are focused on the field of historical architectural heritage and are mainly related to architectural and urban survey. He is involved in numerous national and international research projects.

Paolo Bolpagni
Fondazione Centro Studi sull'Arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, Lucca

Director of the Fondazione Centro Studi sull'Arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti in Lucca since 2016. Former director of the Museo Collezione Paolo VI – Arte contemporanea in Concesio, Brescia. Contract professor at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. As a scholar, he has addressed the relations between painting and music in the 19th and 20th centuries, Italian and European art in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Abstractionism, up to Kinetic and Programmed Art, Italian and French art in the 1950s and 1960s, including its links with design, "visual scores" and verbal-visual research in the neo-avant-garde movements, relations between art and the sacred in the 20th century.

Alessandro Brodini
University of Florence

He teaches History of Architecture at the University of Florence. He holds a degree in Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Milan and a PhD in History of Architecture and Urban Planning from the IUAV University of Venice. Between 2008 and 2016 he obtained postdoctoral fellowships and research grants. His research interests concern the history of modern and contemporary architecture, in particular the relationship between architecture, engineering and museography.

Alessandro Chili
Associazione Olivettiana, Bologna

An entrepreneur and a top manager, he spent almost twenty years at Olivetti, where he was involved in personnel training and management, marketing and sales services, up to the management of the network of systems dealers, the first Italian personal computer sales network.

Graziella Leyla Ciagà
Politecnico di MIlano

Tenured researcher and adjunct professor in History of Architecture and Design at the Department of Design, Polytechnic University of Milan. She holds a PhD in Conservation of Architectural and Environmental Heritage and a specialisation in Restoration of Monuments. Her teaching and research activities concern two areas of study: the enhancement of cultural heritage in its various forms, from monumental and landscape complexes to documentary ones, and the history of Italian design and architecture in the 20th century. She works with the Archival Superintendence and CASVA, Centro di Alti Studi sulle Arti Visive (Centre for Advanced Studies of Visual Arts) of the City of Milan, taking charge of the census of design, graphics and architecture archives in Lombardy. She has over forty scientific publications to her credit.

Alessandro Colizzi
Politecnico di Milano

Associate professor at the Department of Design, Polytechnic University of Milan. A former professor at the Ecole de design of UQAM, Université du Québec in Montréal from 2005 to 2019, and visiting professor at the Design Academy Eindhoven. He holds a PhD in History of Design from Leiden University, with a thesis on Bruno Munari. He is mainly interested in the history of graphic design and type design, the subject of his publications and lectures.

Galileo Dallolio
Associazione Olivettiana, Bologna

With a degree in Sociology from the University of Trento, he worked for Olivetti from 1960 to 1991 as a manager in the sales area and responsible for personnel selection, management and training. Owner of a consulting and training firm until 2012, he co-founded the Associazione Olivettiana established in 2001. He has contributed to *Storia e storie delle risorse umane in Olivetti* (Franco Angeli, Milan 2004), *Adriano Olivetti: il lascito. Urbanistica, Architettura, Design e Industria* (INU, Rome 2011).

Elena Dellapiana
Politecnico di Torino

Associate professor at the Department of Architecture and Design, Polytechnic University of Turin. She deals with the history of contemporary architecture and design with particular attention to the overlapping and dialogue between the two through exploration of the different cultures of design, the methods of transmission in education and communication. She contributed to the volumes *Made in Italy. Rethinking a Century of Italian Design* (Bloomsbury, London 2013) and *Atlas of Furniture Design* (Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein 2019). Also, among her publications: *Il design della ceramica in Italia 1850–2000* (Electa, Milan 2010), *Il design degli architetti italiani 1920–2000* with Fiorella Bulegato (Electa, Milan 2014), *Una storia dell'architettura contemporanea* with Guido Montanari (UTET, Turin 2015).

Amparo Fernández Otero
University of Valladolid

Doctoral candidate at the Department of Architectural Theory and Architectural Projects at the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Universidad de Valladolid. Since 2007 she has been teaching Interior Design at the Department of Projects and Research of the Escuela de Arte y Superior de Diseño in Zamora, Spain.

Ali Filippini
Politecnico di Torino

Adjunct professor of History of Communication and Design at the Polytechnic University of Turin and Contemporary Design Criticism at the University of the Republic of San Marino. He holds a PhD in Design Sciences from the IUAV University of Venice. As a freelance journalist, he has worked for over a decade with specialist magazines (*Abitare, Auto & Design*) and on editorial projects in the field of design and archive research.

Caterina Cristina Fiorentino
University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Caserta

Associate professor at the Department of Architecture and Industrial Design of the University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli. She has published a series of articles and two monographs on Olivetti: *Millesimo di millimetro. I segni del codice visivo Olivetti 1908–1978* (Il Mulino, Bologna 2014); *Congegni Sapienti. Stile Olivetti. Il pensiero che realizza* (Hapax, Turin 2016).

Davide Fornari
ECAL/University of Art and Design Lausanne (HES-SO)

Associate professor at ECAL/University of Art and Design Lausanne, where he has led the Research and Development sector since 2016. He received his PhD in Design Sciences from the IUAV University of Venice in 2010. He has conceived and coordinated research projects on Kinetic and Programmed Art, the history of Swiss graphics, and the history of architecture and design. He co-edited the magazine *Progetto Grafico* (2015–2017) and, among others, the volumes *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland* (Triest Verlag, Zurich 2016) and *Carlo Scarpa. Casa Zentner a Zurigo: una villa italiana in Svizzera* (Electa, Milan 2020).

Lucia Giorgetti
University of Pisa

Adjunct professor of Architecture and Architectural Composition at the University of Pisa. Her studies mainly focus on industrial archaeology between the 19th and 20th centuries, Tuscan architecture in the 1960s and 1970s and contemporary Dutch architecture. She is part of the research group "Olivetti@Toscana.it Territorio, Comunità, Architettura nella Toscana di Olivetti" (Olivetti@Toscana.it Territory, Community, Architecture in Olivetti's Tuscany), curator of the exhibition of the same name held at the Museo della grafica in Pisa (20 December 2019 – 20 April 2020).

Josefina González Cubero
University of Valladolid

She has been an associate professor in the Department of Architectural Theory and Architectural Projects at the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Universidad de Valladolid since 1999. She graduated in Architecture (1986) and obtained her PhD in Architecture (1996). Formerly a university researcher at the Centro de Estudos Arnaldo Araújo, Escola Superior Artística do Porto, Portugal, since 2007. Her research focuses on modern and contemporary architecture, and on the transversal relations between architecture, visual arts and figurative arts.

Stefania Landi
University of Pisa

Professor of Restoration at the University of Pisa. She has an international PhD and has been awarded two research grants in the field of restoration at the Department of Energy, Systems, Land and Building Engineering of the University of Pisa. She explored the theme of 20th-century heritage conservation also through international research activities. Curator of the study "Olivetti@Toscana.it Territorio, Comunità, Architettura nella Toscana di Olivetti" and of the exhibition of the same name held at the Museo della Grafica in Pisa (20 December 2019 – 20 April 2020).

Lorenzo Mingardi
University of Florence

Contract professor and research fellow at the Department of Architecture, University of Florence. He obtained his PhD in History of Architecture and Urbanism at the IUAV University of Venice in 2016. In 2018 and 2019 he was a scholarship holder at the Fondazione Centro Studi sull'Arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti in Lucca. He is particularly interested in the history of twentieth-century architecture: he has written, among others, essays on Antonio Sant'Elia, Leonardo Savioli and Giancarlo De Carlo, of whom he also edited the monograph *Sono geloso di questa città. Giancarlo De Carlo e Urbino* (Quodlibet, Macerata 2018).

Santiago Miranda
King & Miranda

After completing his studies at the Escuela de Artes Aplicadas y Oficios Artísticos in Seville in 1971, Santiago Miranda moved to Milan and in 1976 founded the King & Miranda Design Studio together with Perry A. King. He was a consultant to the Olivetti Corporate Image Department from 1973 to 1979. He has been a member of the scientific committee of the IED, Istituto Europeo di Design in Madrid and of the Master's course in Design at the Pablo de Olavide University, Seville. In Spain he received the Premio Nacional de Diseño (1989) and the Premio Andalucia de Diseño (1995).

Elisabetta Mori
Middlesex University London
University of Lille

Doctoral student in History and Philosophy of Informatics at Middlesex University London and researcher at the University of Lille, in the interdisciplinary laboratory UMR 8163 Savoirs, textes, langage. Her research focuses on the European history of computing in the 1950s and 1960s. She is a member of the ANR PROGRAMme project. She works with the Museum of Computing Machinery at the University of Pisa, LEO Computers Society and Archives of IT in the UK. She studied architecture in Eindhoven and Florence, where she graduated with a thesis on the history and design of the first Italian commercial computer, Olivetti ELEA 9003.

Pier Paolo Peruccio
Politecnico di Torino

Associate professor of Design at the Polytechnic University of Turin. He is a design historian, architect and holds a PhD. He is director of SYDERE, Systemic Design Research and Education, based in Lyon and Turin, and co-director of the Design studies course at the Polytechnic University of Turin. He researches in the field of design history, systemic thinking and innovation in education. He has authored books on the history of design and articles on design and visual communication published in international journals. He curated the exhibition *Olivetti Makes* (Mexico City, 11 October 2018 – 13 January 2019).

Niccolò Quaresima

An artist and photographer, he trained at the Accademia di Brera and the NABA, Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti, Milan. He has worked with Fondazione Prada, Fondazione Carla Sozzani, ECAL/University of Art and Design Lausanne. He was artist in residence at Futurdome, Milan.

Paolo Rebaudengo
Associazione Olivettiana, Bologna

Holds a degree in Sociology from the University of Trento and a diploma from the Senior High School in Dodge City, Kansas, and the Sprachenkolleg in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. He began his career at Olivetti in the Corporate Relations Department, working in personnel management in Ivrea and in sales personnel training at the school in Florence. He is a founding member of the Associazione Olivettiana. He has published several contributions on topics relating to work and industry, including *Storia e storie delle risorse umane in Olivetti* (Franco Angeli, Milan 2004) and *Adriano Olivetti: il lascito. Urbanistica, Architettura, Design e Industria* (INU, Rome 2011).

Raimonda Riccini
IUAV University of Venice

Full professor at the IUAV University of Venice. She teaches Theory and History of Design and is responsible for the area of Design Sciences at the School of Doctorate Studies, of which she is co-director. Active in theoretical and historical research, she has been involved in design and business history. She has curated exhibitions, including *Copyright Italia. Brevetti, marchi, prodotti 1948–1970* (Rome, 25 March – 3 July 2011); *Storie. Il design italiano*, 11th edition of the Triennale Design Museum (Milan, 14 April 2018 – 20 January 19). Since 2013 she has been editor of the online magazine *AIS/Design. Storia e ricerche*. Her research interests range from the relationship between technological innovation and design history to that between design and digital culture, to the literary and cultural aspects of everyday things, on which she wrote *Gli oggetti della letteratura. Il design tra racconto e immagine* (La Scuola, Brescia 2017). After working with Tomás Maldonado in research and teaching, she has edited his writings in the book *Bauhaus* (Feltrinelli, Milan 2019).

Dario Scodeller
University of Ferrara

Associate professor at the Department of Architecture, University of Ferrara, architect and design historian, coordinator of the degree course in Industrial Product Design. Author of numerous publications on the culture and history of design, including: *Livio e Piero Castiglioni, il progetto della luce* (Electa, Milan 2003); *Negozi. L'architetto nello spazio della merce* (Electa, Milan 2007); *Design spontaneo* (Corraini, Mantua 2017); *Il design dei Castiglioni. Ricerca sperimentazione metodo* (Corraini, Mantua 2019). His work has also been published in the magazines *Casabella*, *Abitare*, *Domus*, *MD Journal*, *DIID*, *AIS/Design. Storia e ricerche*.

Azalea Seratoni
IED Istituto Europeo di Design, Milan
SPD Scuola Politecnica di Design, Milan

An art historian, she graduated from the University of Milan. She combines curatorial practice with critical, theoretical and research activities. She focuses on contemporary art and combines it with historical reflection, with a particular interest in the topics of temporality and the body in art, image theory and visual culture, the boundaries between art and design, and the question of design theory. She also writes and collaborates with universities. She contributed texts to *Il Verri* and *Progetto Grafico*.

Daniela Smalzi
University of Florence

Architect and PhD in History of Architecture and the City, she conducts studies on the modern era, with particular reference to the study of archival sources for the history of monumental complexes and the city from the 15th to the 20th century, topics that she has explored in numerous scientific essays and monographs, including: *Giulio Parigi Architetto di Corte: la progettazione dell'ampliamento di palazzo e piazza Pitti*, in *Architetti e costruttori del barocco in Toscana* (De Luca, Rome 2010), and *Palazzo dei Visacci: XV-XX secolo* (Polistampa, Florence 2012).

George Sowden

Born in Leeds, UK, he trained at Glouchestershire College of Art. In 1970 he moved to Milan, where he opened his own design and product development studio in 1979. In 1981 he was one of the founding members of the Memphis Group, and in 2010 he created SOWDEN, his own brand. Throughout his career he has worked as a designer and product developer for numerous companies worldwide. In the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s he worked as a consultant for Olivetti, initially alongside Ettore Sottsass, working on the design of computers, printers, fax machines and telephones.

Elena Tinacci
MAXXI Architecture, Rome

Coordinator of the Architecture Department of the MAXXI Museum in Rome, where she carries out research and curates exhibition and publishing projects. An architect and historian of architecture with a PhD, her activities for MAXXI include organising the exhibitions *L'Italia di Le Corbusier* (18 October 2012 – 17 February 2013); *Superstudio 50* (21 April – 4 September 2016); *Gio Ponti. Amare l'architettura* (27 November 2019 – 27 September 2020), and curating *Carlo Scarpa e il Giappone* (9 November 2016 – 17 April 2017), as well as *Dentro la Strada Novissima* (7 December 2018 – 29 September 2019). Author of numerous contributions and publications, including *Mia memore et devota gratitudine. Carlo Scarpa and Olivetti 1956–1978* (Edizioni di Comunità, Rome 2018).

Caterina Toschi
University for Foreigners of Siena

Researcher and lecturer in Contemporary Art History at the University for Foreigners of Siena. She holds a PhD in Contemporary Art History from the International Doctoral School in Europe's Founding Myths in the Arts and Literature at the Universities of Florence, Paris (Paris IV Sorbonne) and Bonn. She is co-founder of *Senzacornice*, a digital magazine and research and training laboratory for contemporary art. Author of the volumes *Dalla pagina alla parete. Tipografia futurista e fotomontaggio dada* (Firenze University Press, Florence 2017) and *The Olivetti Idiom 1952–1979 / L'Idioma Olivetti 1952–1979* (Quodlibet, Macerata 2018).

Elisabetta Trincherini
University of Ferrara

Professor of Design Theory and Criticism for the degree course in Industrial Product Design at the University of Ferrara. She obtained her PhD in Semiotics at the University of Siena. She has worked with museums and cultural institutions, including the Fondazione Centro Studi sull'Arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, Swiss Radio and Television, the Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, and the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montréal. She is in charge of the Historical Archives of the Poltronova Study Centre for Design.

Marcella Turchetti
Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea

An art historian, since 2001 she has worked at the Olivetti Historical Archives Association, curating and organising numerous cultural projects and initiatives, including the exhibition for the centenary of the Olivetti Company, *Olivetti 1908–2008. Il progetto industriale*. She contributed to the catalogue *Ettore Sottsass 1922–1978* (Silvana, Cinisello Balsamo 2017) and the exhibition *Ettore Sottsass. Oltre il design*, curated by CSAC, University of Parma (18 November 2017 – 23 September 2018), to mark the centenary of the designer's birth. In collaboration with CAMERA – Centro italiano per la fotografia, Turin, she curated the exhibition *1969. Olivetti formes et recherche, una mostra internazionale* (6 December 2018 – 24 February 2019).

Davide Turrini
University of Ferrara

Associate professor in Industrial Design at the University of Ferrara. He has conceived and coordinated research projects on design in Tuscany from the 1950s to the present, on the influence of Renaissance culture on 20th-century arts and the design of Giuseppe Terragni. He has worked on the sorting and publishing of project and product archives; in this context, he was head of the project for the dissemination of the archives of the Manifattura degli Artieri dell'Alabastro in Volterra, which was financed by the Direzione Generale Archivi of MIBACT (Directorate General of Archives, Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and of Tourism). He has curated exhibitions at Casa Buonarroti in Florence, the Galleria Civica in Modena and the Ragghianti Foundation in Lucca, and is co-director of the editorial series *Presente Storico. Narrazioni e documenti di architettura e design* (Edifir, Florence).

Denise Ulivieri
University of Pisa

Associate professor of History of Architecture at the University of Pisa. She contributed to drafting the General Plan of Livorno and Lucca, coordinated by Gregotti Associati and Italo Insolera respectively. She has managed projects relating to local seismic practices and collaborates with the European University Centre for Cultural Heritage in Ravello. She is responsible for the research "Olivetti@Toscana.it Territorio, Comunità, Architettura nella Toscana di Olivetti" and for the exhibition of the same name held at the Museum of Graphics in Pisa (20 December 2019 – 20 April 2020).

Carlo Vinti
University of Camerino

A researcher at the School of Architecture and Design of the University of Camerino. He obtained his PhD in Theory and History of the Arts (SSAV, 2006). His research interests focus on the history of design and graphics, with particular attention to the role of industrial clients. His publications include: *Gli anni dello stile industriale 1948–1965* (Marsilio, Venice 2007); *L'impresa del design: lo stile Olivetti. Una via italiana all'immagine di impresa*, Loccioni, Angeli di Rosora 2010); the catalogue of the 5th edition of the Triennale Design Museum, *TDM5: Grafica Italiana*, with Giorgio Camuffo and Mario Piazza (Corraini, Mantua 2012); *Argomenti per un dizionario del design* by Ugo La Pietra (Quodlibet, Macerata 2019) and *Campo Grafico* (Tipoteca Italiana, Cornuda 2019).

Stefano Zagnoni
University of Udine

Associate professor of History of Architecture at the Department of Humanities and Cultural Heritage of the University of Udine, he has also taught and researched at other universities (Bologna, Ferrara, Milan) and worked with public and private organisations. His research focuses on the history of Italian architecture in the contemporary age, with case studies regarding the national territory, the Mediterranean basin and former colonial possessions. His publications include: "International Style" and "Razionalismo in Emilia Romagna: 1920–1940," in *Parametro*, 94–95, 1981; "I negozi di Adriano Olivetti. Coerenza di stile e immagine non-coordinata," in *LUK. Studi e attività della Fondazione Ragghianti*, 23, 2017.

Scientific Committee and Reviewers

This volume contains a part of the contributions delivered during the international study conference *Identità Olivetti. Spazi e linguaggi / Olivetti Identities. Spaces and languages 1933–1983*, held in Ferrara, Venice and Bologna, 12–14 December 2019, promoted by the University of Ferrara, ECAL/University of Art and Design Lausanne (HES-SO) and the School of Doctorate Studies of IUAV University of Venice.

The conference was conceived and curated by Davide Turrini (University of Ferrara) and Davide Fornari (ECAL/University of Art and Design Lausanne), with the secretariat of Daniela Smalzi (University of Florence).

The conference scientific committee included Paolo Bolpagni (Fondazione Centro Studi sull'Arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti), Graziella Leyla Ciagà (Politecnico di Milano), Beniamino de' Liguori Carino (Fondazione Adriano Olivetti), Davide Fornari (ECAL/University of Art and Design Lausanne), Raimonda Riccini (IUAV University of Venice), Dario Scodeller (University of Ferrara), Caterina Toschi (University for Foreigners of Siena), Marcella Turchetti (Olivetti Historical Archives Association), Davide Turrini (University of Ferrara), Carlo Vinti (University of Camerino), Stefano Zagnoni (University of Udine).

The editors of this volume are sincerely grateful to the scholars who volunteered their time for the double-blind review of the contributions published in this book.

Alfonso Acocella
University of Ferrara

Massimo Botta
SUPSI University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland, Mendrisio

Alessandro Brodini
University of Florence

Stefano Bulgarelli
Galleria Civica, Modena

Giorgio Busetto
Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Serena Cangiano
SUPSI University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland, Mendrisio

Matteo Cassani Simonetti
University of Bologna

Lorenzo Ciccarelli
University of Florence

Emanuela De Cecco
Free University of Bozen-Bolzano

Emanuela Ferretti
University of Florence

Gianluca Frediani
University of Ferrara

Antonello Frongia
Roma Tre University

Michele Galluzzo
Free University of Bozen-Bolzano

Francesco Ermanno Guida
Politecnico di Milano

Luciana Gunetti
Politecnico di Milano

Matteo Iannello
Università della Svizzera italiana, Academy of Architecture, Mendrisio

Sandra Lischi
University of Pisa

Andrea Maglio
University of Naples Federico II

Federica Martini
EDHEA The Valais School of Arts (HES-SO), Sierre

Roberta Martinis
SUPSI University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland, Mendrisio

Giancarlo Martino
Sapienza University of Rome

Anna Mazzanti
Politecnico di Milano

Jonathan Mekinda
University of Illinois, Chicago

Lucilla Meloni
Academy of Fine Arts, Carrara

Paola Nicolin
Bocconi University, Milan

Gabriele Oropallo†
New York University, London

Anty Pansera
IULM University, Milan

Jonathan Pierini
ISIA Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche, Urbino

Antonio Pizza
Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona

Carlos Plaza
University of Seville

Francesca Pola
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan

Ramon Rispoli
University of Naples Federico II

Massimiliano Savorra
University of Pavia

Silvia Sfligiotti
University of San Marino Republic

Eleonora Trivellin
University of Ferrara

Denis Viva
University of Trento

Francesco Zanot
NABA Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti, Milan

Acknowledgements

Lucia Alberton
Benno Albrecht
Giovanni Anceschi
Atto Belloli Ardessi
Emanuela Bonini Lessing
Daniela Bruno
Monica Centanni
Manuela Cirino
Beniamino de' Liguori Carino
Gaetano Adolfo Maria di Tondo
Alberto Ferlenga
Alexis Georgacopoulos
Núria Gil Pujol
Alessandro Ippoliti
Perry King†
Raffaele Laudani
Francesca Limana
Michela Maguolo
Roberto Masiero
Antonio Perazzo
Luciano Perondi
Marta Sironi
Anna Maria Viotto

A/I/S/Design-Associazione Italiana degli storici del Design
Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti
Associazione Olivettiana
Danese Milano
FAI-Fondo Ambiente Italiano, Negozio Olivetti
Fondazione Adriano Olivetti
Fondazione Centro Studi sull'Arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti
Fondazione degli Architetti di Ferrara
Fondazione Innovazione Urbana
Fondazione Jacqueline Vodoz e Bruno Danese, Milan
Olivetti Spa
Ordine degli Architetti Pianificatori Paesaggisti e Conservatori della Provincia di Ferrara
Università IUAV di Venezia, Scuola di Dottorato
Università degli Studi di Ferrara, Dipartimento di Architettura

Image Credits

Courtesy

Archivio Bazzani Zveteremich, Milan
89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94

Private archive Hollein, Vienna
58

Archivio Tomás Maldonado, Milan
113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125

Archivio Nazionale del Cinema d'Impresa, Ivrea
126

Archivio Carlo Scarpa, Collezione MAXXI Architettura, Fondazione MAXXI, Rome
135, 137, 138, 139, 140

Archivio Grazia Varisco, Milan
159

Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya, Sant Cugat del Vallés
37

Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 36, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 56, 57, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 68, 71, 72, 73, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 95, 97, 98, 99, 102, 104, 131, 132, 133, 134, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 151, 152, 154, 155, 163, 164, 167, 168, 169, 191, 201, 203, 204, 206, 207, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225

Federico Barbon
back cover

Silvana Bellino
165, 166

Casabella
53

Seymour Chwast, The Pushpin Group
168

Domus
front cover, 29, 52, 57, 61, 190

Mario Dondero and Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia
157, 158

Estate of Walter Ballmer and Archivio Walter Ballmer, Milan
18, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105

Estate of Egidio Bonfante
76, 77

Estate of Rolly Marchi
21

Estate of Roberto Pieracini
81

Estate of Giovanni Pintori
97

Fondazione Franco Albini, Milan
69

Fondazione Centro studi sull'arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, Lucca
127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134

Fondazione Jacqueline Vodoz e Bruno Danese, Milan
153

King & Miranda, Milan
17, 62, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 180, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, back cover

L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui
58

L'Architettura italiana
30

L'informatore sociale della Valdera
147

La Vetrina
54, 55

Ottagono
74

Xanti Schawinsky Estate, Switzerland
front cover, 29, 52

Ettore Secco d'Aragona
89

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington
160, 161

George Sowden
192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 208

Toni Thorimbert
191

Clino Trini Castelli
81

Davide Turrini, Marco Manfra, Igor Bevilacqua
43

Renato Zveteremich
31, 35

Photographer unknown
75, 96

© Simona Bellandi / Università di Pisa, Dipartimento di Civiltà e Forme del Sapere, Laboratorio fotografico
148, 149

© Gianni Berengo Gardin / Contrasto
88, 169

© ECAL / Gianluca Manganiello
32, 33, 34

© ECAL / Niccolò Quaresima
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 29, 36, 57, 79, 95, 98, 99, 102, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 159, 162, 172, 181, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225

© Estate of Hans von Klier
85

© Amparo Fernández Otero
38, 39

© Alberto Fioravanti
82, 84

CC BY SA Fondo Paolo Monti / Civico Archivio Fotografico / Fondazione BEIC – Biblioteca Europea di Informazione e Cultura, Milan
66, 67, 70, 106, 112, 136

© Fons Fotogràfic F. Català-Roca – Arxiu Històric del Col·legi Oficial d'Arquitectes de Catalunya, Barcelona
26, 40, 41, 42

© Griffith Institute, University of Oxford / Harry Burton
179

© Edgar Hyman
138, 139, 140

© Andrea Leone / Archivio Frediani, Massa
150

© Armin Linke
107, 108, 109, 110

© Elisabetta Mori
111

© Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York / Scala, Florence
front cover

© Tommaso Pellegrini
188

© H. Schnaars
86, 87

© Studio Crabb
83

© The Trova Studios, LLC
20

© The Trustees of the British Museum
178

© Vitra Design Museum, Estate of George Nelson
19, 48

Imprint

Olivetti Identities.
Spaces and Languages 1933–1983

edited by
Davide Fornari
Davide Turrini

editorial coordination
Daniela Smalzi

contributors
Alessandra Acocella
Chiara Barbieri
Renata Bazzani Zveteremich
Marco Giorgio Bevilacqua
Paolo Bolpagni
Alessandro Brodini
Alessandro Chili
Graziella Leyla Ciagà
Alessandro Colizzi
Galileo Dallolio
Elena Dellapiana
Amparo Fernández Otero
Ali Filippini
Caterina Cristina Fiorentino
Davide Fornari
Lucia Giorgetti
Josefina González Cubero
Stefania Landi
Lorenzo Mingardi
Santiago Miranda
Elisabetta Mori
Pier Paolo Peruccio
Niccolò Quaresima
Paolo Rebaudengo
Raimonda Riccini
Dario Scodeller
Azalea Seratoni
Daniela Smalzi
George Sowden
Elena Tinacci
Caterina Toschi
Elisabetta Trincherini
Marcella Turchetti
Davide Turrini
Denise Ulivieri
Carlo Vinti
Stefano Zagnoni

translations
Isobel Butters
(Italian to English)
Daniela Tanner Hernández
(Spanish to Italian)

editing
Milena Archetti

graphic design
Federico Barbon

papers
Fedrigoni Sirio Grigio Perla 290 g/m²
Lessebo 1.3 Rough White 100 g/m²
Magno Gloss 135 g/m²

typefaces
Magister, Aldo Novarese (1966),
Omnitype 2015
Rima, Simon Mager,
Omnitype 2016

lithography
Carsten Humme, Leipzig

printing and binding
Grafiche Veneziane, Venice

ISBN 978-3-03863-060-9

Triest Verlag receives a grant for the years 2021 to 2024 from the Federal Office of Culture as part of the Swiss publishers' subsidies.

This publication was produced
with the support of
ECAL / University of Art and Design
Lausanne
HES-SO / University of Applied Sciences
and Arts Western Switzerland
Università degli Studi di Ferrara

back cover
Crystal diagram describing the complex domain of Olivetti's activities, for the exhibition *Design Process. Olivetti 1908–1978*, design King & Miranda, 1979, graphic redesign Federico Barbon, 2021.

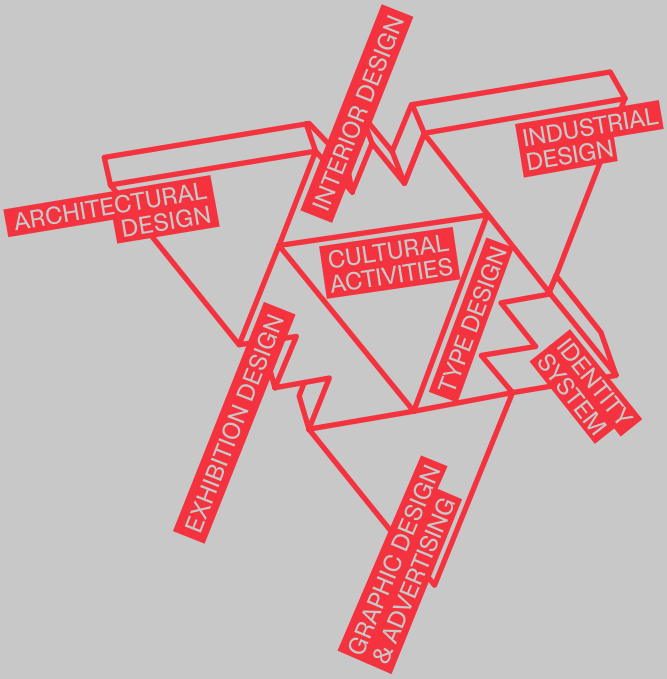
Olivetti's world-famous typewriters epitomise the company's industrial legacy and visible identity, which was both innovative and complex, material and immaterial. These identities are at the heart of an interdisciplinary research project carried out by ECAL/University of Art and Design Lausanne and the University of Ferrara, in collaboration with the Olivetti Historical Archives Association in Ivrea.

Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages 1933–1983 presents the results of this research, with contributions from 37 authors, analysing the Olivetti phenomenon as a whole and paying particular attention to corporate evolution and the approach of designers such as Xanti Schawinsky, Carlo Scarpa, Ettore Sottsass, Hans von Klier, Egidio Bonfante, and Walter Ballmer, among others.

The book examines the development of Olivetti's corporate identity, from the opening of the Olivetti Advertising Office in 1933 to that of the permanent Olivetti pavilion at the Hannover Fair in 1983, seen as the final step in a particularly efficient corporate identity strategy.

Divided into four sections, the work covers showroom and exhibition design at trade fairs and expos, as well as the languages that shaped the corporate vocabulary: visual communication and interaction design, cultural and promotional activities.

Designers Santiago Miranda and George Sowden, along with former Olivetti sales and training employees, add their own personal accounts in the final section, while two visual essays of published and unpublished documents from the Olivetti Historical Archives complete the book.



ISBN 978-3-03863-060-9