



Rome, or Roma, is growing towards having a fully developed creative centre within its region, and there are several challenges that hold it back from reaching this stage.

Being at the heart of Italy, Roma lies on the point of sharp contrast between North and South Italy. Such conditions set a certain stage or playing field for designers and architects that allow them to bring unification to a space through tools such as sharpening or dulling this contrast. This stage has attracted many great architects such as Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid, Piano Renzo, Richard Meier, (Wallpaper City Guide)<sup>1</sup> and Massimiliano Fuksas. For them, there lies the challenge of preserving the cultural and historical aspects of Roma, while establishing a modern aspect that brings it up to date with its rivals (i.e. Milano).

Creative people have been bringing modern architecture to areas of Roma where “rough edge” (Tom Rankin, tour 2006)<sup>2</sup> conditions attract them to do so. These conditions are set forth through the contrast between urban and suburban areas, which are “marginalized by the government” (Tom Rankin, tour 2006)<sup>2</sup>. This contrast can be seen as a conflict between aesthetic style, which has particularly attracted Zaha Hadid, for example, as a location for her MAXXI museum to be situated in. “[Zaha] Hadid does not seek to smooth over such conflicts; she revels in them. To Hadid, it is the collision between such aesthetic values that gives the city its cultural depth.” (Nicolai Ouroussoff, Los Angeles Times)<sup>3</sup>



The people of Roma have a great regard for their history and the great remnants thereof. This causes buildings such as the Colosseum to become very tough precedents for architects to out-do. Because of this, many new designs are rejected because the people do not feel that they can even compare to the great buildings of the past. "A new building has a great handicap, ... ' It is an effort to fill a black hole in the fabric of the city. But cities have a very slow metabolism. And the acceptance of new architecture takes time.' (Piano Renzo)" (Nicolai Ouroussoff ,Los Angeles Times)<sup>3</sup>

The great masters of the Renaissance are also a great challenge for current architects to consider as precedents. The reason being, is that placing a new building next to the Sistine Chapel, for example, would have to be extremely carefully planned out as not to damage the presence of the old building and the space around it, but rather to enrich it." 'To build in a place where you have Bramante, Michelangelo, Raffaello, Peruzzi, Giulio Romano, this is a great challenge, ' ... ' But there is also a beautiful expression of Isaiah Berlin — that the past is something that only lives when we inject our own blood into its exhausted veins.' (Dal Co, Architettura et Cronica)" ( Nicolai Ouroussoff ,Los Angeles Times)<sup>3</sup>

Another challenge is the limit of resources available towards funding a project. "Sometimes, it's impossible to build ... because in Roma we do not have the economical power that they have in Milano. " (Massimiliano Fuksas)<sup>4</sup>

Even with these challenges in place, the creative minds of some of today's most brilliant architects and designers will lead Roma down the path towards becoming fully developed as an innovative city with a creative centre at its core.



## References:

1. Wallpaper\* City Guide : Rome, 2007, PHAIDON
2. <http://www.sfu.ca/italiadesign/2006/infield/airc/tom.html>
3. [http://www.calendarlive.com/architecture/cl-ca-nicolai9feb09,0,5784460.story?coll=cl-architecture \)](http://www.calendarlive.com/architecture/cl-ca-nicolai9feb09,0,5784460.story?coll=cl-architecture)
4. <http://www.sfu.ca/italiadesign/2006/page/Fuksas.html>