COLLAGES OF MEMORY
A FASHION WEEK AT VILLA ADRIANA

FASHION AND HERITAGE

Collages of Memory
A Fashion Week at Villa Adriana

Faculty of Architecture and Design

Master's Degree in
Architecture for Sustainability
Architecture and Construction city

Supervisor
Pier Federico Caliari
Co-supervisor
Greta Allegretti

Students
Mahya Asgari
Neda Rahmani

A.A. 2025/2026

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ABSTRACT

Our thesis investigates the relationship between fashion and heritage by means of temporary fashion events held at UNESCO World Heritage sites, with a unique site as case study.
The complex known as Villa Adriana, in Tivoli (Rome, Italy) which was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999, is a one-of-a-kind institution that combines elements of architecture, history, nature, and memory.

The project's name is "Collages of Memory".
The purpose is to host seven days of fashion shows that will be presented in various locations throughout the villa. These events would reinterpret the villa's complex history and memory through the medium of water.
"Collage of memories" is the perfect and ideal expression to represent Villa Adriana: it is a combination of time, geography, history and our sentiments. It is the combination of different aspects of time, space and identity to produce a new meaning.

In our project, Villa Adriana will host a fashion show that will take place over the course of seven days in the following seven primary locations: Piazza d'Oro, Tre Esedre, Tempio di Venere, Teatro Marittimo, Tempio di Apollo, Giardino and Grandi Terme.
It was with the purpose of demonstrating the villa as a continuous spatial and symbolic structure that these areas were chosen to be displayed. This is because every location possesses its own distinct architectural language, which consequently enables every location to offer a one-of-a-kind scenographic and sensory experience.

Regarding our thesis, we will be concentrating on two of the seven days. Maison Margiela and Giorgio Armani are the two designers whose fashion shows are the focal point of this project.
Each of these shows explores distinct aspects of identity and memory through the medium of water. As if it were a curtain, water conceals identity on the very first day of working with Maison Margiela. As the second presentation unfolds, water transforms into a mirror, reflecting and illuminating one's identity.
The show, as a collage of short moments between forgetting and remembering, revolves around this contrast between concealing and disclosing information from the audience.

When everything is said and done, the villa transforms into a living stage, a place where time, water, fashion, and architecture all come together, and where every movement and reflection adds a new layer of memory.

An exploration of the idea of filtered identity was the subject of a fashion show that we designed for Maison Margiela and presented at the Tre Esedre. The use of a water curtain wall, which is conceived of as a permeable boundary that partially reveals and conceals space, is what defines the intervention. The visual narrative of the presentation is further explored through a series of collages that are influenced by the conceptual approach that Maison Margiela takes. Carlo Scarpa's pavilion architecture served as a source of inspiration for us when it came to the structural concept. In particular, we were impressed by his sophisticated utilization of overlapping surfaces and precise construction details.

Our thesis demonstrates how fashion events can act as tools for the valorization of cultural places by conducting theoretical research, conducting site investigation and developing design concepts. In the final project, master planning, scenography, technical solutions for temporary installations and techniques to integrate ephemeral interventions while still respecting the protected status of the villa are all included.

CONTENT

1. HERITAGE

1.1 CONSERVATION AND VALORIZATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

As members of a community, individuals acquire a variety of things, including information, beliefs, art, morals, laws, conventions, and other skills and habits. "Culture" is the culmination of all of these things. Culture does not remain unchanged; rather, it is continuously produced and reshaped by the acts of humans.

"Heritage" refers to something that has been handed down from generation to generation through the medium of tradition from the past. It plays a significant role in the formation of cultural identity throughout generations. It possesses both tangible and intangible qualities that influence the way in which individuals recall things.

The term "cultural heritage" refers to the extensive collection of tangible and symbolic signals that have been passed down from generation to generation by every civilization and, finally, by mankind as a whole. Due to the fact that heritage plays a significant role in the formation of identity, continuity, and communal values, its preservation and exhibition are crucial components of any cultural strategy.

In the context of this discussion, the term "archaeological heritage" refers to the fraction of the material legacy that is studied using archaeological methods and which yields the most important data. The remnants that make up this structure are delicate and non-renewable, and they require careful understanding, protection, and appropriate reuse in order to be properly utilized. [1]

A worldwide framework for the protection of cultural items that are of high universal interest was established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1972. According to UNESCO, cultural heritage includes monuments, groupings of buildings, and locations that are significant for reasons related to history, art, science, aesthetics, or anthropology. [1]

Archaeological sites, when viewed from this perspective, are not only ancient things; rather, they are cultural landscapes that are still alive.

Ivan Allegranti, in his article titled "Fashion Shows at Archaeological Heritage Sites," describes how contemporary activities such as fashion shows and artistic performances may be utilized to interpret and reactivate historic sites. [2]

A great deal of visual power is possessed by fashion shows, which may attract new people to historical locations and provide funds for the preservation of those locations.

The most critical aspects are having a clear mind and having a purposeful intention. The use of historical locations as venues for fashion events results in the transformation of cultural heritage into a commodity. The utilization of events that are innovative cultural programs that take the significance of the location seriously, react to the physical and historical characteristics of the place, and contribute to the promotion of history is something that may be undertaken.

1. "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage", UNESCO World Heritage Convention, adopted on 16 November 1972, https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext

2. Ivan Allegranti, "FASHION SHOWS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE SITES", *Design/Arts/Culture* 1 (2020), https://doi.org/10.12681/dac.25910

1.2 VILLA ADRIANA: HISTORY, ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE

Hadrian probably chose this site as the location of his residence because of its sweet but irregular landscape, abundant with woods and green fields, free from buildings, a saltus in which he used to go hunting and riding. Back at the time of the roman emperor the bend of the river was still visible, as well as the travertine quarries along its banks. In the background there were the high and beautiful hills, that with their unusual shapes still are the setting for the whole. Therefore a place not only attractive in itself, abundant with water, extraordinary for the surrounding landscapes, but also not far from hot springs.

The hill is in fact embraced by surface waters coming from the north and the south, meeting near the hot spot where waters come from the depths, this way generating a very rare "triple confluence". Therefore the place had to be very abundant with trees, meadows, rare species of flowers and surrounded by cultivations and forests, thanks to all the surface waters flowing into the place.

The Villa Adriana is the paradigm of a landscape built with the arguments of time and memory as materials of the architectural project through an elaborate system of platforms, artificial valleys, walks, buildings, patios, arcades, gardens, water, defining a complex architectural topography that thrills by its rigor and its naturalness, despite the great artifice it contains. The memory of Hadrian, the memory of the places he visited, of the landscapes he loved, the memory of all the classical Mediterranean culture, is inscribed in each fragment of the majestic ruin that we contemplate today: touring the Villa is an exciting walk through time and memory, made sublime architectural matter, through an intelligent succession of gardens at different scales In fact, the Villa Adriana is a garden of gardens, with its own architectural model, designed and built on the ground. Intentionally, Hadrian did not devise a compact whole, but a series of architectural episodes connected to each other, in a seemingly natural dialogue with the ground, making us believe that it is adapting, when in reality it alters it completely, converting a rural landscape into another extremely cultured and refined, in which every space finds its proper disposition. [3]

HERITAGE

3. Luca Basso Peressut and Pier Federico Caliari, *Piranesi Prix de Rome. Progetti per la Grande Villa Adriana* (In edibus, 2019).

VILLÆ   VILLA ADRIANA
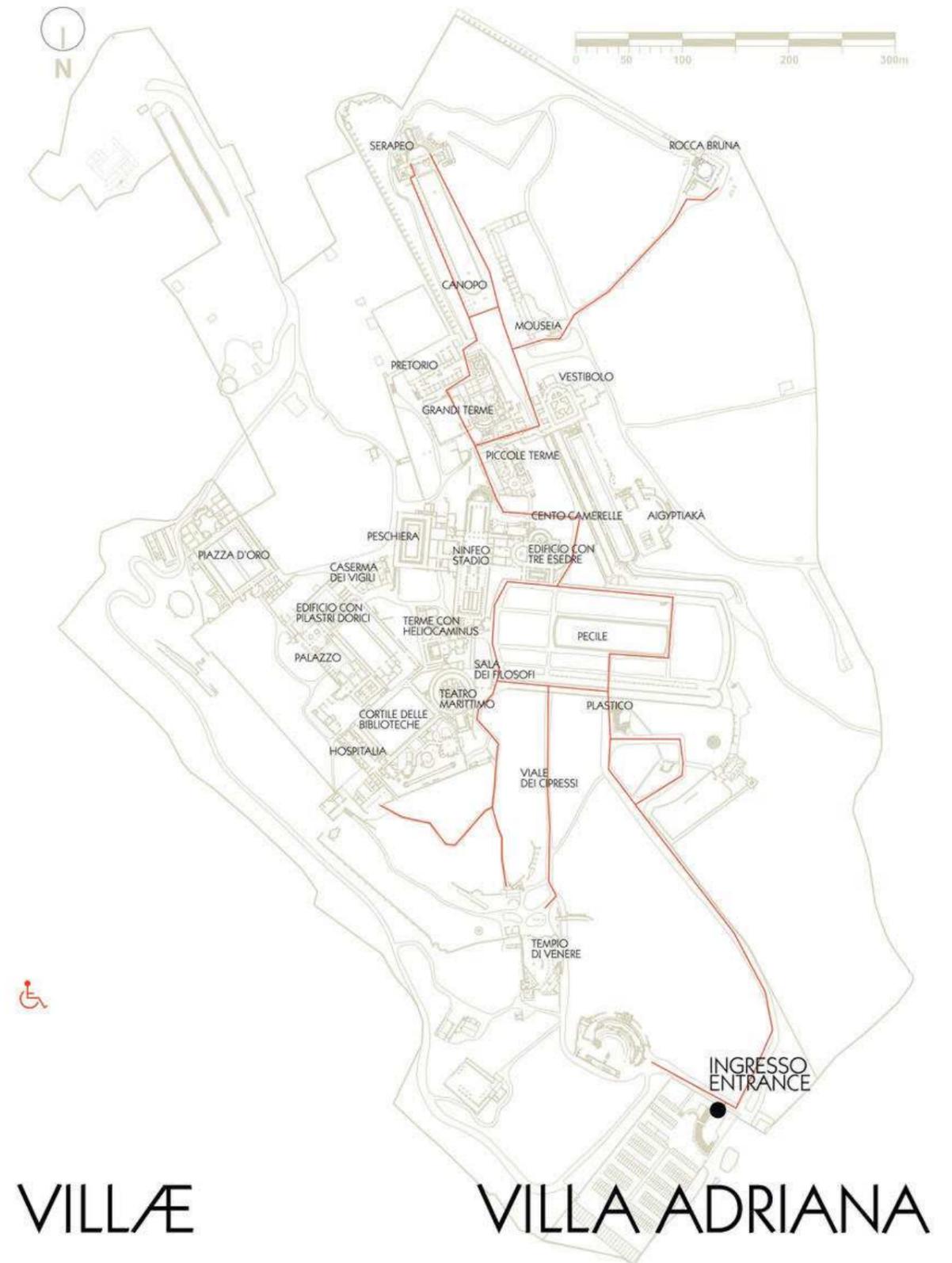
«The villa that I own in Tibur is the most perfect representation of everything that I am.»

Yourcenar, Memorie di Adriano

RILIEVO TOPOGRAFICO DI VILLA ADRIANA

SCVOLA DECLI INCECNERI DI ROMA

CIVCNO MDCCCCV

Villa Adriana masterplan
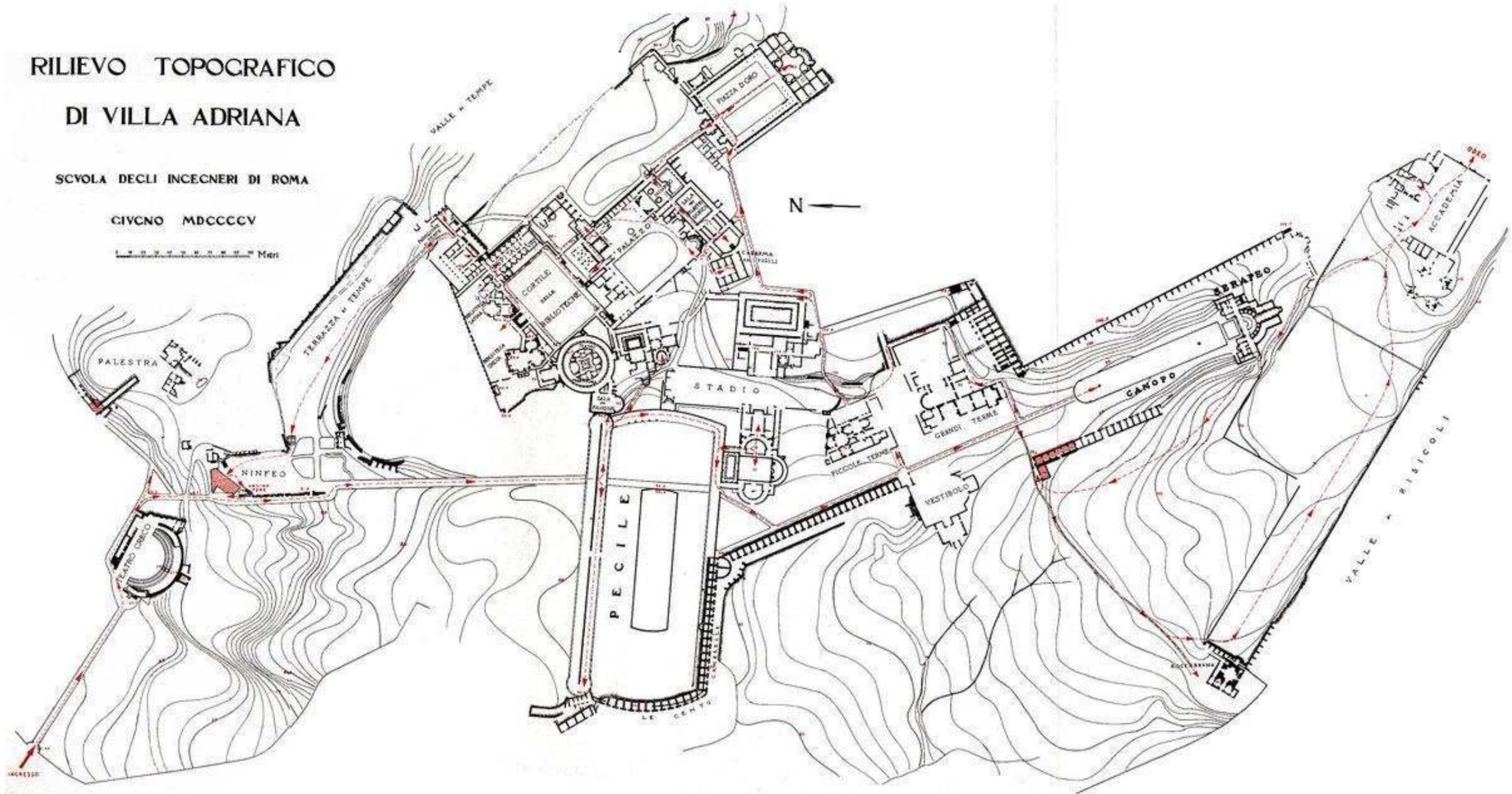
«The villa that I own in Tibur is the most perfect representation of everything that I am.» [4]
These are the phrases that Emperor Hadrian used to characterize the close relationship that existed between his persona and Villa Adriana.
Memory, travel, and intellectual curiosity were the driving forces behind the creation of the villa, which was not just conceived of as a house but more as a personal and cultural statement.

As a result of his profound fascination with architecture, philosophy, and the civilizations of the Mediterranean world, Hadrian was able to transfer his experiences into the form of spatial composition. Villa Adriana became the location where recollections of Greece, Egypt, and Rome were reconstructed into an architectural palimpsest, so translating human recall into material that could be built upon.

When Hadrian was nearing the end of his life, he composed a little poem that he addressed to his own soul. The poem read, "You will go to a pale, rigid, naked place, and you will no longer give me the typically joyful experiences." The concept of Villa Adriana as an emotional shelter and a representation of the emperor's inner world is reinforced by the fact that many academics interpret these "joys" as a reference to Villa Adriana. [5]

The strong identity that exists between man, architecture, and nature is one of the factors that adds to the everlasting attraction that surrounds Villa Adriana. This relationship positions Villa Adriana as both a historical monument and a setting that is highly symbolic.
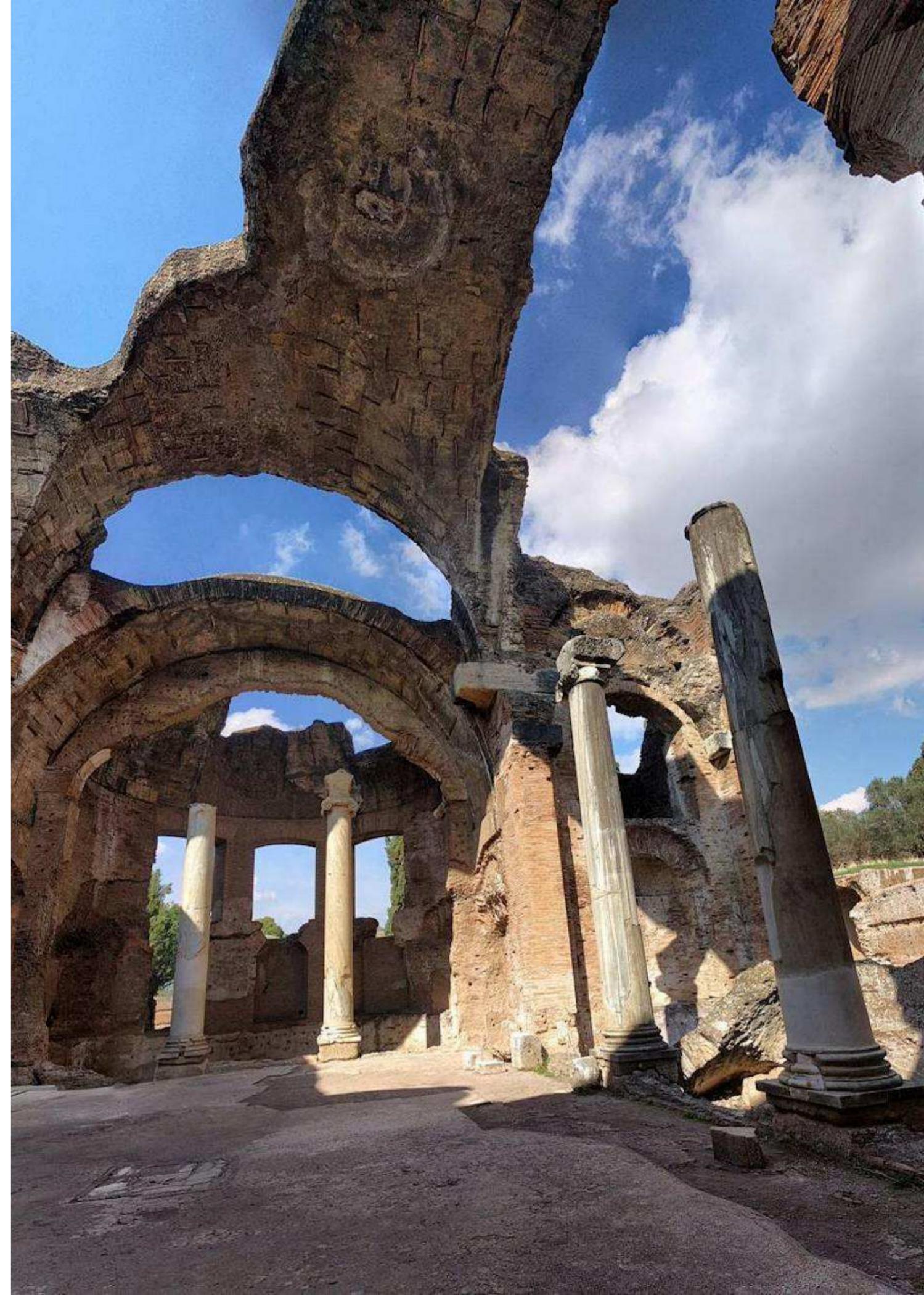
4. Marguerite Yourcenar, *Memorie Di Adriano. Seguite Da Taccuini Di Appunti* (Einaudi, 2014), 145
5. Allegranti, "FASHION SHOWS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE SITES."
Photo on the Right: Villa Adriana

These sentences is part of what created the long-lasting myth and fascination surrounding the villa. Since the Renaissance, Villa Adriana has been an essential stop for artists, architects, and scholars traveling through Italy.

But the fascination with the villa also reveals a gap between what is real and what has been imagined. Over the centuries, artists and architects have tried to reconstruct Hadrian's world—sometimes accurately, sometimes through their own fantasies—creating an idealized version of the villa that does not always match archaeological reality.

Reaching Villa Adriana from Rome once meant leaving the busy city behind and entering the open countryside between the capital and Tivoli. Visitors would walk through fields with grazing animals and scattered ruins, creating a three-dimensional Arcadian landscape. This peaceful setting sparked the imagination and shaped the idea of Villa Adriana as a perfect, idyllic place.

What remains today?

Inside the boundaries of the villa, much still survives. But just beyond it, the contrast becomes clear: the tension shifts from reality vs. imagination to place vs. non-place.

This project seeks to bring the territory of the "Great Villa Adriana" back into focus, protecting it from the spread of the surrounding "non-places" and restoring its identity within its own landscape. [6]

6. Basso Peressut and Caliari, *Piranesi Prix de Rome. Progetti per La Grande Villa Adriana.*
Photo on the right: Hadrian Empreror

Photos of Villa Adriana captured by students during survey
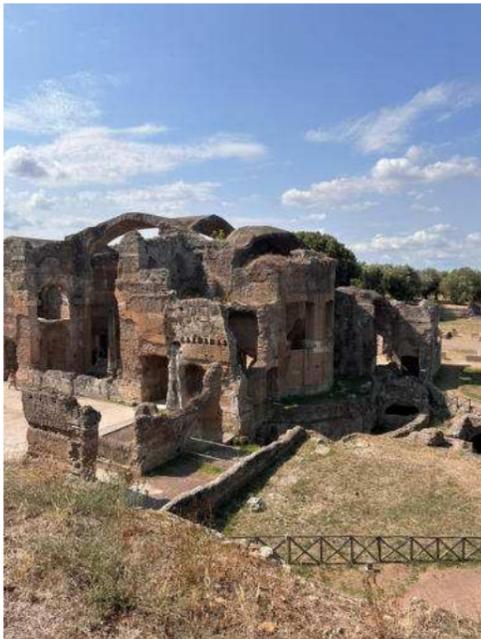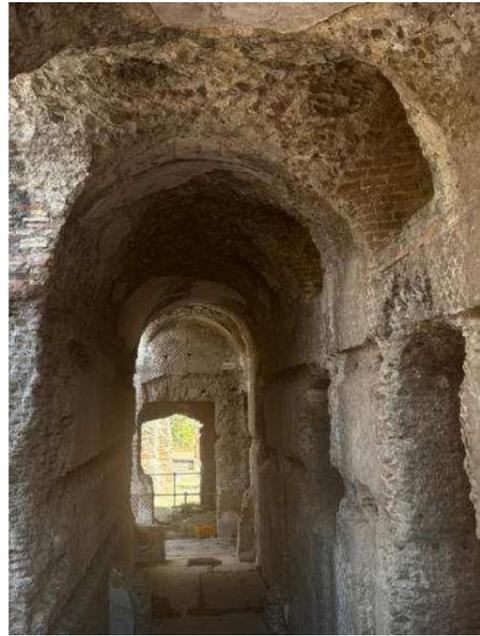
In 1999, Villa Adriana was acknowledged as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It was constructed between the years 118 and 138 AD, in close proximity to Tivoli (ancient Tibur), in a location that was rich in both vegetation and water. There are the ruins of more than thirty buildings scattered over the complex, which encompasses an area of more than 120 hectares.

Scholars have recognized three key phases of building as being the most important. In the first phase of the project, which lasted from 118 to 122 AD, the drafting of the project, the computation of metric units, the purchasing of materials, and the construction of the first residential structures were all carried out.

During the second phase, which takes place between 123 and 125 AD, the primary focus was on the activation of large building sites in the central area, ranging from the Pecile to the Grandi Terme. The remaining structures were finished during the third phase, which lasted from 125 to 138 AD. This phase lasted until the end of Hadrian's tenure. [7]

The villa functioned as an articulated system throughout its whole, including its living quarters, baths, gardens, nymphaea, pavilions, and service facilities. These components were connected to one another by a massive underground network in addition to surface paths, which allowed for efficient transportation while preserving the visual and symbolic elements of the environment throughout the process.

HERITAGE

7. Eugenia Salza Prina Ricotti, *Villa Adriana. Il Sogno Di Un Imperatore.* (L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2000).
Photo: Villa adriana

As studied by many experts, in Villa Adriana six different landscapes are created, each one identifying a theme of Hadrian's life.

The Greek garden symbolized by the creation of a contemporary stoà. There will be represented: the urban space, the perspectives towards the green, the chromatic effects of the vegetation and the marble and the promenade porticos (between a tree and a spring, the man communicates with the Divines).

The Roman garden: with an amphitheatre open to the congress hall, connected to the gardens through a cypress path. Inside there are the elements of the Roman garden – fruit trees along with the "edible" species (the model of Sallustio, which creates a spectacular imperial park, continuing a 300 metre long portico, a circus, a Tempio di Venere and various pavilions surrounded by statuary groups.

the Thracian garden: a low-vegetation reticulum, bordered by tall, coniferous trees. The lawn, geometrically defined, becomes a place of silence and spiritual consciousness.

The "inner city": a circular space that narrates the cultural and artistic life of the emperor, designed with medium and low vegetation. This environment presents a conglomerate of feelings, sensations and experiments, based on memories of inner drama.

the Egyptian garden: which resumes the concept of the channel, using the natural disaster.

The "outer city": a garden located in the ancient entrance of the Villa, re-proposed as a new passage between the Horti, the Villa and the Domus Agricola. The shape of the path takes up the compositional gesture of the seam and tends to connect, through various axes, the urban area to the services of the Villa. [8]

8. Basso Peressut and Caliari, *Piranesi Prix de Rome. Progetti per La Grande Villa Adriana.* Photo of Villa Adriana captured by students

The villa known as Villa Adriana is home to a breathtaking combination of architectural and natural beauty. The location was chosen by Hadrian due to the presence of hills in the surrounding area, hot springs, an abundance of water, and a landscape that was irregular yet harmonious. Due to the natural conditions, it was feasible to establish a one-of-a-kind "triple confluence" of rivers, which allowed for the cultivation of a wide range of garden types and a plethora of lush vegetation.

There are times when people refer to the villa as the "ideal city." It is a villa that integrates architectural characteristics from countries such as Egypt, Greece, and Rome. In the realm of architecture, there are four basic kinds of structures: ceremonial and cultural buildings, imperial and court houses like the Teatro Marittimo and Piazza d'Oro, bath complexes, and supplementary elements like gardens, towers, and academies.

Rather than imposing a constricted design on the terrain, Hadrian envisioned the villa as a sequence of architectural events that were woven with the landscape surrounding it. The combination of platforms, man-made valleys, gardens, porticoes, and water features results in an architectural topography that is complex, highly controlled, and appears to be natural. The house, which is transformed into a "garden of gardens", is a place where memory, time, and scenery are transformed into architectural elements throughout the construction process. [9]

There are six metaphorical landscapes that have been recognized by researchers within Villa Adriana. These landscapes include the Greek garden, the Roman garden, the Thracian garden, the inner city, the Egyptian garden, and the outer city. Each of these settings represents aspects of Hadrian's life and cultural imagination. Overall, they tell a tale about identity, culture, and place. This is true when the complete thing is considered.

After being abandoned for several decades following Hadrian's death in 138 AD, Villa Adriana was discovered in the year 1461. Beginning in the Renaissance, the site had a great impact on the development of intellectuals, artists, and architects, which in turn influenced the formation of Baroque and Renaissance architecture.

As time went on, Villa Adriana went from being a made-up setting to becoming a real one. In the process of attempting to reconstruct Hadrian's domain, artists and architects usually mixed their own interpretations with facts obtained from actual archaeological sites. In the process of carrying out this technique, a romanticized vision of the villa was developed, which occasionally deviates from the actual reality.

There is a tension between place and non-place in the surrounding region, despite the fact that a significant amount of the villa is still standing today. By highlighting the need of efforts that bring continuity, meaning, and cultural identity back, the "Great Villa Adriana's" greater surroundings is in risk of losing its integrity as a result of the rise of modern metropolitan areas. [10]

Its remarkable achievement in design continued to exert significant influence on notable architects and designers of the modern era.
Villa Adriana is a masterpiece of its own and a perfect example of heritage. Perfect location for honoring all the history that holds.[11]

10. Basso Peressut and Caliari, *Piranesi Prix de Rome. Progetti per La Grande Villa Adriana*.
11. "Villa Adriana (Tivoli) - Unesco Beni Culturali," Ministero Della Cultura - Ufficio Unesco, accessed December 20, 2025,
https://unesco.cultura.gov.it/projects/villa-adriana-tivoli/
Photo of Villa Adriana by Renato Serra

HERITAGE

1.3 PIAZZA D'ORO

HADRIAN'S VILLA RESTORED PLAN
MICHAEL R. YTTERBERG

0   50   100 METERS

n. 8 - Piazza d'Oro   ©MDF-ProgettoAccademia
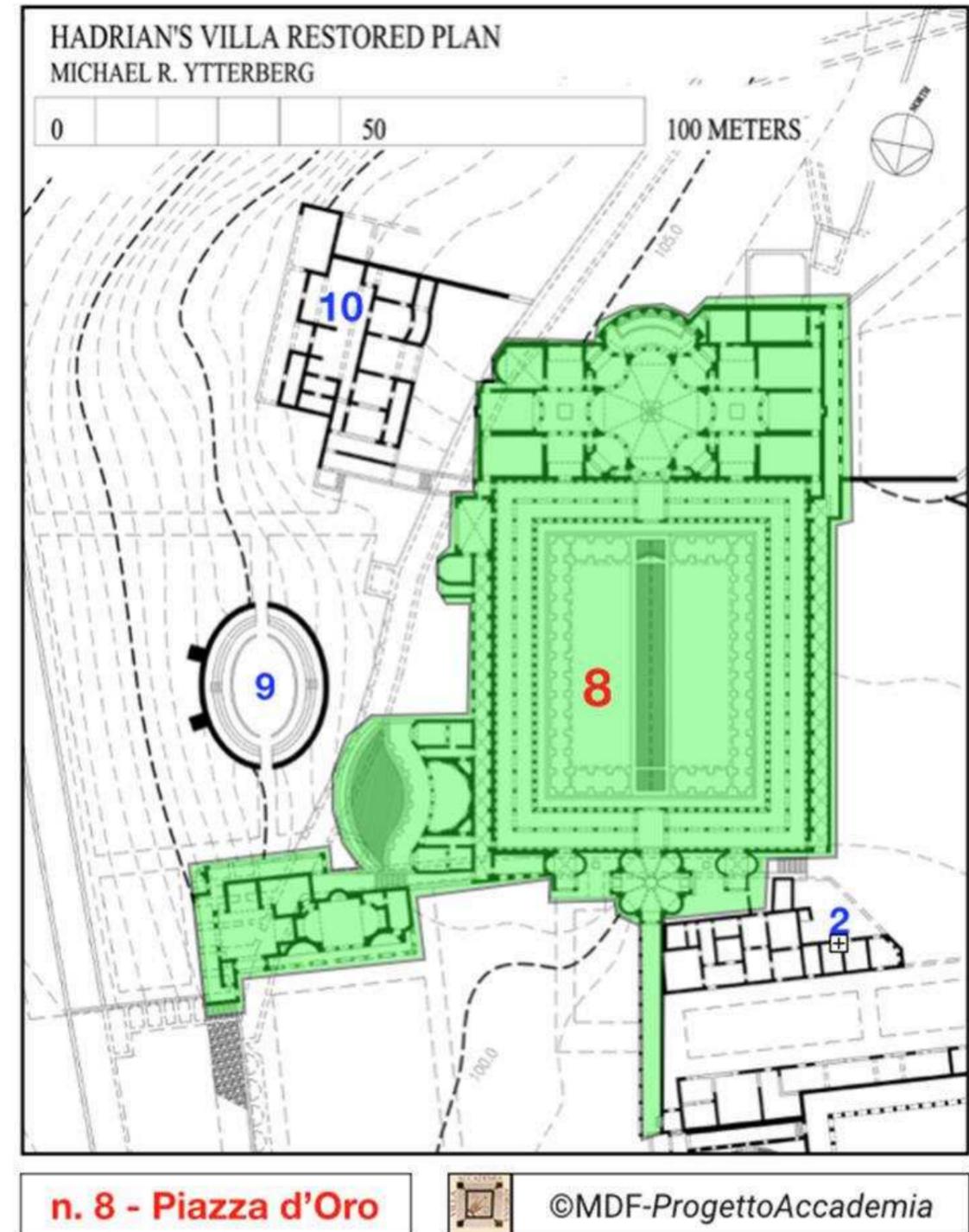
PHOTO VILLA ADRIANA, PIAZZA D'ORO IL GRANDE TRICLINIO PO42

From the perspective of the spatial hierarchy of Villa Adriana, the Piazza d'Oro has a special and significant location. This structure, which serves as the primary geometric and symbolic core of the villa, is comprised of a massive quadriportico, a quadrilobate hall, nymphaea, and other buildings that are associated to it.

According to the research conducted by Prof. Pier Federico Caliari, the Piazza d'Oro is linked to a number of significant complexes, including the Tempio di Venere Cnidia, the Palazzo d'Inverno, Tre Esedre, the Grandi Terme, and the Tempio di Apollo, by a series of radial axes that emanate from the center of the quadrilobate hall. Visual and spatial interactions that occur over long distances are grouped along these axes, and they commonly occur over significant elevation changes.

As a consequence of this, Piazza d'Oro serves as a morphogenetic nexus that offers the possibility of organizing the central and peripheral components of the villa. Due to the fact that it is a relationship generator, it is an ideal starting place for the fashion event that was suggested. It incorporates qualities of order, authority, and representation, which makes it an ideal starting point. [12]

HERITAGE

12. Pier Federico Caliari, Angelo Torricelli, and Luca Basso Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: la forma trasparente di Villa Adriana* (Edizioni Quasar, 2012).
Photo Villa Adriana (piazza d'oro)
"Villa Adriana Tivoli - Piazza D'Oro", VILLA ADRIANA di Marina De Franceschini, accessed January 2, 2026. https://villa-adriana.net/edifici-dettaglio.aspx?id=79&idCat=41&d=PIAZZA+D

The modern name itself is indicative of the complex's rich architectural and sculptural décor, which for this very reason was systematically stripped of its coverings and repeatedly excavated, starting in the 16th century, in the often fruitful search for "treasures." Numerous famous marble sculptures and architectural elements have come from the site and have been incorporated into the collections of various museums and collections abroad. The importance and prestige of this wing of the villa, during the Hadrianic era and even after the emperor's death, is further underscored by the discovery of imperial portraits of Sabina, Marcus Aurelius, and Caracalla.

The building features a large central garden, longitudinally traversed by a long rectangular pool flanked by a symmetrical series of flowerbeds and pools, surrounded by a grandiose portico with pilasters and attached brick semi-columns. The covered space was divided into two naves by alternating cipollino and green granite columns, spaced twice as far apart as the pillars facing the garden. Brick pillars with half-columns are repeated on the rear wall of the portico, which is embellished with small arches on pilasters.

Along the longer sides, two corridors parallel to the portico lead to the various rooms. The building is accessed via a porticoed corridor, open on the eastern side and with a flat roof, as can be deduced from the holes for the roof beams visible on the wall bordering the portico. The high wall erected on this side separated the entrance to the reception area from the Casa Colonica, the remains of which are visible behind the northern portico of Piazza d'Oro. This building from an earlier period features mosaic floors of modest quality, suggesting it was intended for the villa's staff.

The typology of the rooms, the presence of water features, the exclusive use of opus sectile for all the floors of this building - with the exception of the two rooms to the sides of the vestibule, which nevertheless featured a refined mosaic, and the rectangular room near the triclinium, paved with coarse mosaic as it had no roof - and finally the extensive use of wall coverings in marble slabs, deduced from the numerous holes for the fixing clips, confirm the hypothesis that this area of the villa was closely linked to the public functions of the palace, even if located in a secluded position.[13]

Photo Villa Adriana (Piazza d'Oro)

13. "Piazza d'Oro - Villa Adriana", Area Archeologica di Villa Adriana, archived April 2, 2022, at
https://web.archive.org/web/20150402091942/http://www.villaadriana.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/135/piazza-doro
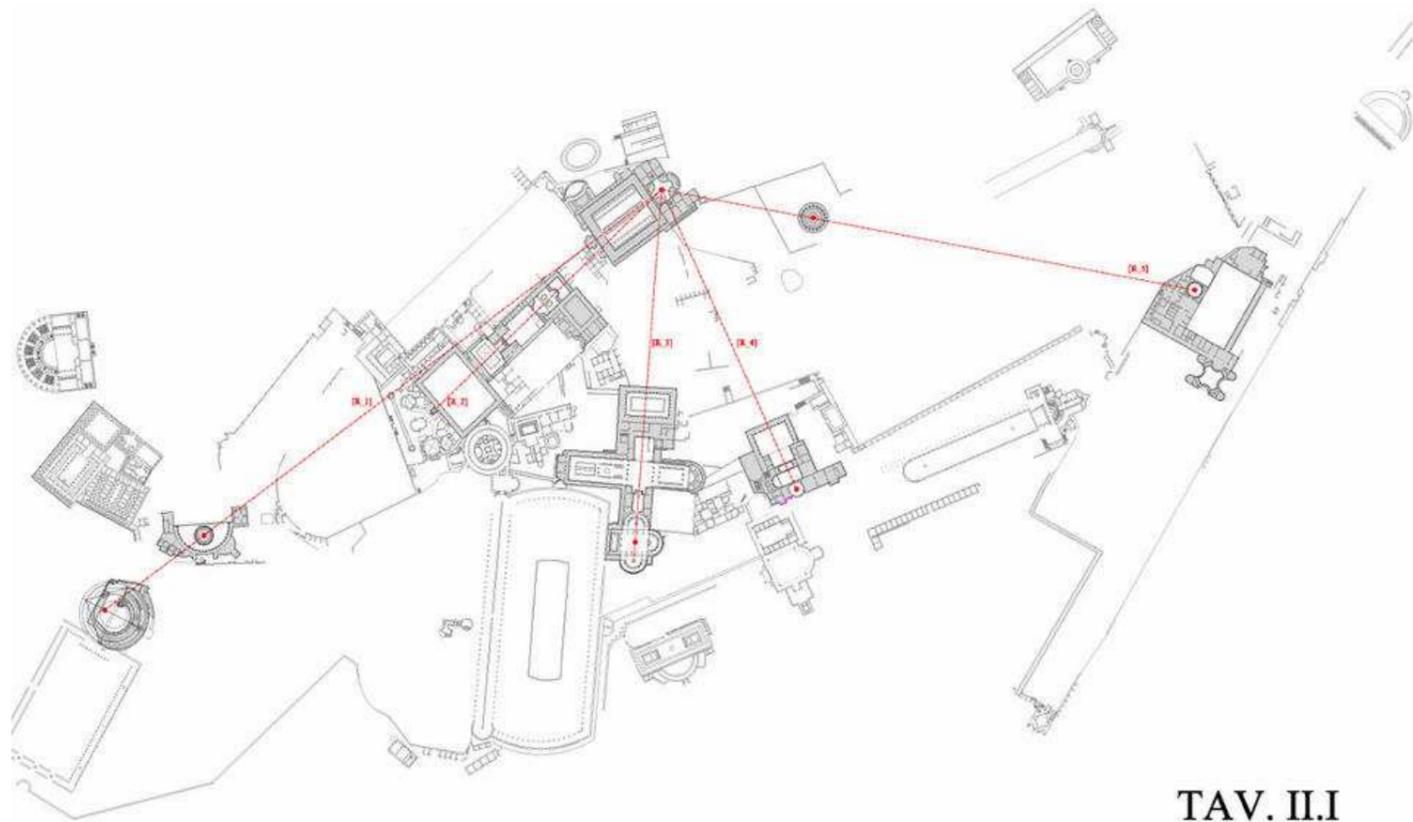
TAV. II.I

The Tractatus by Prof. Pier Federico Caliari dives deep in the geometry of Villa Adriana and the spaces we will see in this thesis and the final project.

The Piazza d'Oro complex is a topos of considerable importance in the hierarchy of Villa Adriana's centrality. It consists of the main building, the famous quadriportico, contained between two central elements, the entrance tholos covered with an umbrella vault and the so-called Quadrilobata hall (perhaps an open cross-shaped courtyard), a large nymphaeum facing the Valley of Tempe and located in the north corner of the quadriportico, and the so-called Gladiatorial Arena, located on a terrace built on a counter-ridge east of the quadriportico at an intermediate height relative to the valley floor. There are four centres in the Piazza d'Oro: the centre of the Quadrilobata hall, the centre of the Quadriportico, the centre of the north nymphaeum and the centre of the Arena Gladiatoria.

From the centre of its Quadrilobata hall, six segments radiate outwards, three of which give rise to the location of the most important central complexes of the Villa (the Imperial Domus complex, the Palatium complex, the nymphaeum, stadium and Tre Esedre, and the Grandi Terme complex), two of which connect the upper suburbs (Tempio di Apollo on the Accademia) and lower suburbs of the Villa (Teatro Nord and Tempio di Venere Cnidia al Pantanello), creating unexpected relationships between elements of the composition located at a considerable distance in terms of linear dimensions, and, finally, one that, unlike the first five, does not organize architectural symmetries, but describes the location of a connecting path with the Great Vestibule and the hypogea of the Grandi Terme.

The first segment that develops from the center of the Quadrilobate Hall, called [R_1], joins Piazza d'Oro with the monumental pair composed of the Tempio di Venere Cnidian and the Teatro Nord; the second segment joins Piazza d'Oro with the Nymphaeum of the Republican Domus and is called [R_2]; the third, [R_3], with the building with Tre Esedre; the fourth, called [R_4], with the Grandi Terme; and the fifth [R_5] joins Piazza d'Oro with the Tempio di Apollo, on the Accademia, passing through the center of the Tholos in the Park (Table II.I). [14]

14. Caliari, Torricelli, and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana.*
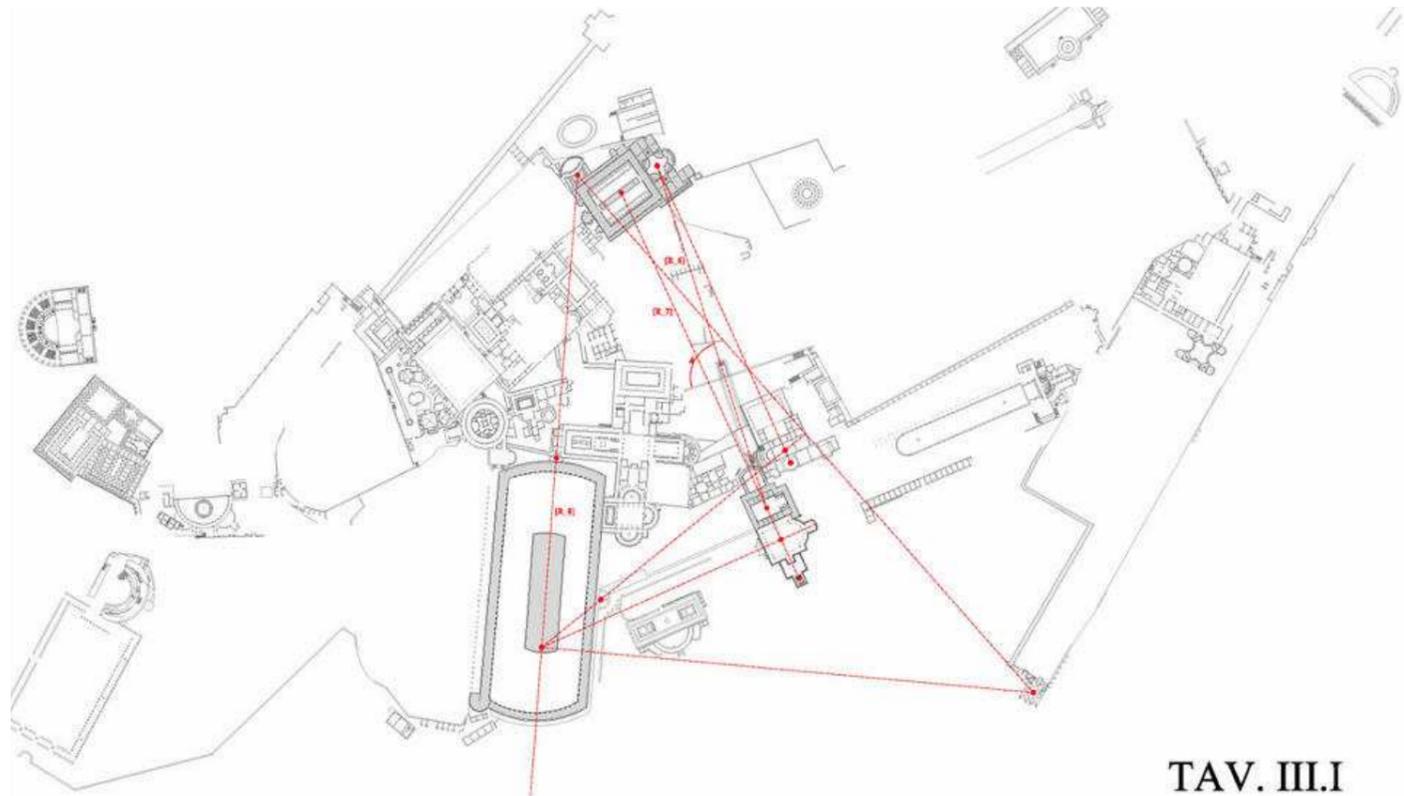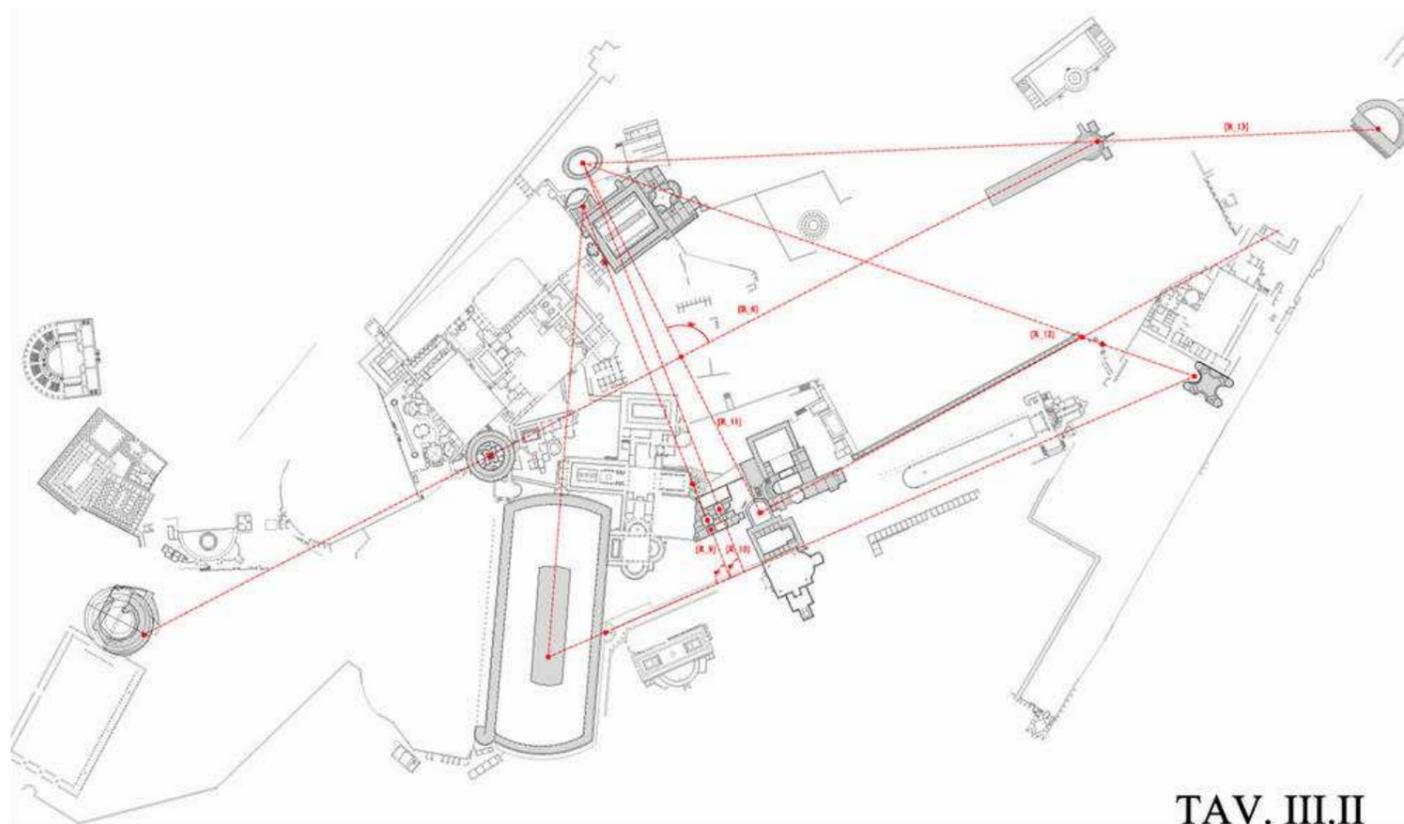
TAV. III.I

TAV. III.II

The sixth segment, labeled [R_6], describes the section of the Villa from Piazza d'Oro to the Great Vestibule, threading it through underground passages (Table III.I).

Moving to the other three centers of the Piazza d'Oro complex, the axis of symmetry of the entire Great Vestibule complex [R_7] unfolds from the geometric center of the rectangular quadriportico, and two radial lines develop from the center of the northern nymphaeum: the first, labeled [R_8], originates the S-shaped symmetry of the Pecile.

This axis also constitutes one of the three sides of an isosceles right-angled triangle whose vertices are the center of the exedra of the North Nymphaeum itself in Piazza d'Oro, the center of the Tholos of Roccabruna, and the point of intersection, located in the Pecile basin, with the axis of symmetry drawn from the Great Vestibule (see in particular Table III.I). The height of this triangle, perpendicular to the hypotenuse extending from Roccabruna to Piazza d'Oro, is constituted by a segment that passes through a series of centers identifiable in the hinge of the Hundred Chambers, in the axis of symmetry of the Grandi Terme near the diaphragm between the palaestra and the frigidarium, and in the axis of symmetry of the center of the southern colonnade of the Summer Palatium.

The second originates the segment called [R_9] that passes through the main rooms of the Piccole Terme (Table III.II), developing in parallel with another axis that unfolds from the center of the Gladiatorial Arena [R_10]. Both relate to the thermal building, penetrating it from the east, inserting all the openings present in the rooms ranging from the eastern courtyard to the pool on the west side, and dimensioning the eastern courtyard itself, simultaneously defining the position of one of the side courtyards and the axis of symmetry. Both axes end orthogonally with the axis of the Canopus and with the position of the last segment of the Hundred Chambers. [15]

15. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*

The first segment [R_1] that winds from the centrality of the Piazza d'Oro is precisely the one that, constituting the axis of symmetry of the building itself, reaches the center of the tholos of the Tempio di Venere Cnidia and then stops at the center of the orchestra of the Teatro Nord. Observing this axis starting from the latter, one also gets the opposite impression: that Piazza d'Oro has a location determined by the centrality of the Teatro Nord.

What interests us is one unequivocal thing: that there is a symmetrical axis of one of the most important buildings of Villa Adriana that extends from a remote center, located approximately fifty meters lower in altitude and six hundred meters away as the crow flies.

It is now also appropriate to introduce two further observations regarding the relationship between the residential block and the Piazza d'Oro. From the first observation, it can be deduced that the latter is adjacent to a series of masonry structures that have the same alignment as the residences, except for one that exhibits a different inclination, adhering to the axis of symmetry of the Piazza d'Oro. There is therefore a joint, located near the vestibule with an umbrella vault, from which the naked eye can see the difference in inclination of the walls between the extension of the Domus and the Piazza d'Oro.

The second observation, equally important in the triangulation with the Tempio di Venere Cnidia, is that the residential block (including the Hospitalia) has a masonry structure with a different planimetric inclination compared to the section comprising the Imperial Triclinium and the Pavilion of Tempe. These have walls angled between them at 89-91°, while the residential block has an angle of 87-93°. This difference will be important when we analyze the centrality of the Tempio di Venere Cnidia-Teatro Nord pair.

Analyzing further the centrality of the Quadrilobate Hall, we can note that the second segment [R_2], which extends for approximately 280 linear meters, is the one that ends in the pre-existing Republican nymphaeum located at the center of the wall separating the terrace from the Courtyard of the Libraries. The segment has the characteristics of an axis of symmetry, present both in the original configuration of the pre-existing Villa and in the post-construction configuration of Hadrianic transformation. This is a fact of notable importance because it means that this axiality is also confirmed with the creation of the Piazza d'Oro, which intervenes in the previously established composition, while remaining external to the location of the Domus.

Or, conversely, it is also possible to imagine that the Piazza d'Oro was positioned in this way, with its quadrilobate hall as the terminal of the pre-existing axis, and in triangulation with the tholos of the Tempio di Venere Cnidus. Here too, archaeologists can establish stratigraphies and temporal sequences. The axis passes through a sequence of regular spaces, all strongly characterized: the so-called Courtyard of the Libraries, the peristyle of the private library, a second courtyard, an exedra surmounted by a half-dome, a pair of oval fountains, and a terminal nymphaeum. Of all these "gates," the only one accessible is that of the Esedra with the half-dome. The axis is essentially not so much an organizer of paths, but above all an organizer of elements, exhibiting its essentially syntactic nature. [16]

16. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*

While the first two radial segments described above address the syntax of the pre-existing buildings, the third and fourth organize the layout of the large monumental buildings in the public part of the Villa.

The third segment [R_3], approximately 320 meters long, constitutes an axis of symmetry and, at the same time, a support line for the orientation of four very important buildings located in the monumental center of the Villa, arranged at two different altitudes. The first building to be penetrated by the axis radiating from the Piazza d'Oro is the Palazzo d'Inverno, along with the sequence of the Quadriportico with Basin and the Palatium itself. At a lower level, the axis continues as a symmetry, cuts through the Nymphaeum Stadium building and ends in the Tre Esedra complex, aligning the centers of two of the three exedras and that of the geometric center of the complex.

The fourth segment [R_4], radiating from the Piazza d'Oro, is approximately 280 meters long and organizes the syntax of an extraordinary series of buildings. First of all, the Grandi Terme, where the axis, cutting them symmetrically, finds its precise terminal in the center of the circular *domed sudatio*.[17]

17. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*
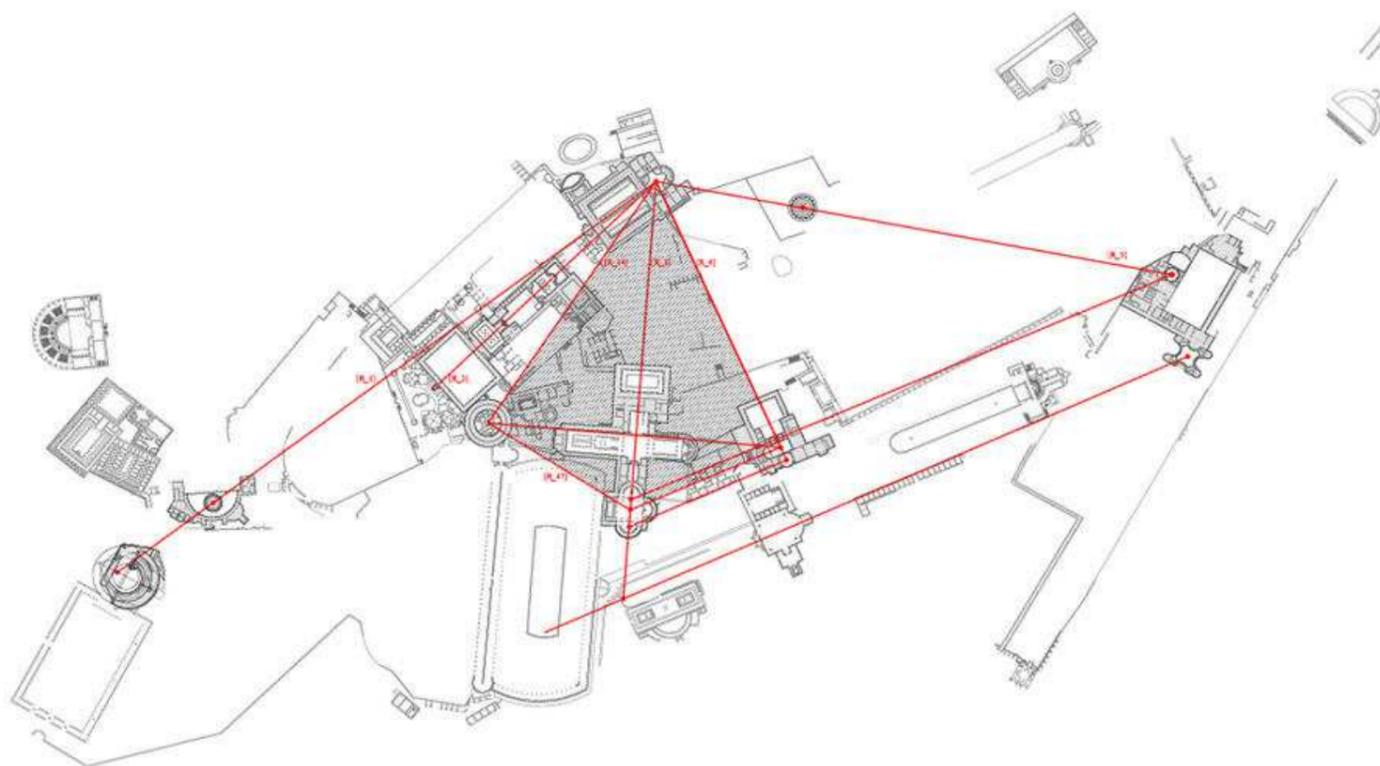
TAV. II.II

A further level of syntactic complexity is articulated here: by connecting the center of the frigidarium of the Terme with that of the four-sided portico of the building at the Tre Esedre, we obtain an axis arranged orthogonally to that radiating from the Piazza d'Oro, which completes a large right-angled triangle at the vertices of which are the Grandi Terme, the Tre Esedre and the Piazza d'Oro. This triangle constitutes the geometric figure that orders the majority of the buildings of the Villa and in particular the monumental system that from the Tre Esedre (and the Antinoeion) develops up to the Great Vestibule, whose axis of symmetry is arranged in adherence and parallelism to the short side of the triangle described above, defining the position of the second thermal building, the Piccole Terme, and in perpendicularity with the axis radiating from the Piazza d'Oro up to the Grandi Terme.

If we mirror this triangle considering the segment [R_3] as the axis of symmetry, we obtain a geometrically concluded figure that can be defined as a rhombus, whose fourth vertex is constituted by the centre of the Teatro Marittimo, which is placed in a reciprocal position with respect to the centre of the frigidarium of the Grandi Terme. The two centres can be joined with an orthogonal axis to [R_3]. Here we see another ray, which, joining the center of the Teatro Marittimo with the center of the Sala quadrilobate, closes the rhomboid shape in a clockwise direction. We will call this segment [R_14].

As can be deduced from the description thus far, the center of the Quadrilobate Hall of the Piazza d'Oro appears to be a point of decisive importance in the topography of Hadrian's Villa, capable of organizing and connecting the most conspicuous part of the elements that make up the complex architectural system of the Villa, both at the level of the central quarters and at the level of the peripheral elements. [18]

18. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*

The fifth segment [R_5] is also of great importance because it establishes a syntactic connection between the original part of the Villa and the Accademia, which all sources indicate as the last neighborhood built, but which above all takes the form of a kind of separate diacropolis, located in the topographically highest part of the entire complex and with a composition and sequence of architectural structures that make it "other" than the system described so far. Furthermore, this segment also establishes a first relationship with one of the peripheral elements of the Villa's composition, known as the Tholos (or Tomb) of the Park. With millimetric precision, the segment radiates once again from the center of the quadrilobate hall of the Piazza d'Oro, extends towards the Accademia, passes through the center of the Tholos, and ends in the center of the circular hall of the so-called Tempio di Apollo.

An unmistakable relationship, which involves not only two parts that appear to be true extremities in the composition of the villa, approximately 470 linear meters apart, but which, once again, together with the Grandi Terme, forms a right-angled triangle whose third vertex is located in the pool east of the frigidarium of the baths.
Here too, we can make a further observation. If we extend the segment that from the Tempio di Apollo to the triangular axis of symmetry of the Grandi Terme, it ends in the building of the Tre Esedre near the center of the eastern colonnade (a point we have never considered generative). This segment, considered together with the one parallel to it that originates the first triangle described above (Piazza d'Oro, Calidarium, Grandi Terme and Tre Esedre), generates the dimensional register of the building of the Piccole Terme. The two segments, in fact, run parallel and constitute the support of the perimeter walls to the east and west, that is the two fundamental fronts for the management of the thermal building.

These five segments may have a biunivocal character, implying a relationship of double gaze between the Piazza d'Oro and the other five terminals (Tempio di Venere, Nymphaeum of the Domus, Tre Esedre, Grandi Terme and Tempio di Apollo). However, the fact that these five buildings all find their organizing principle in the Piazza d'Oro alone suggests that it was the primary element in the design of the plan commissioned by the emperor.
This does not mean, mind you, that the Piazza d'Oro must have been built first with respect to the other buildings, since in fact the architecture of the Piazza d'Oro may have been completed or built from scratch, right around or on top of a topos that may have functioned as a peg, that is, a triangulation point (especially with regard to the third, fourth and fifth segments).

Finally, the sixth storage room, called [R_6], joins the Quadrilobate Hall with the center of the covered pavilion of the Great Vestibule (the one aligned with the Canopus) and, in the space between the two centers, acts as an axis of symmetry respectively for the exit stairway of the cryptoporticus adjacent to the Grandi Terme, for the cryptoporticus that extends next to the gymnasium of the Grandi Terme (explaining its different orientation with respect to the latter), and for the stairway that emerges from this onto the terrace that joins the Winter Palatium with the Summer Palatium. Finally, segment [R_6] orthogonally meets, right in the vicinity of the aforementioned staircase, segment [R_38], which joins the centre of the Teatro Nord with the Praetorium, drawing, as we will see, the position of the wall separating the thermal area and the gardens behind it which extend towards the Piazza d'Oro, behind the Winter Palatium, and at the same time, the change in height with the Summer Palatium.[19]

19. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*

1.4 TRE ESEDRE

Photos of Villa Adriana (Tre Esedre) captured by students
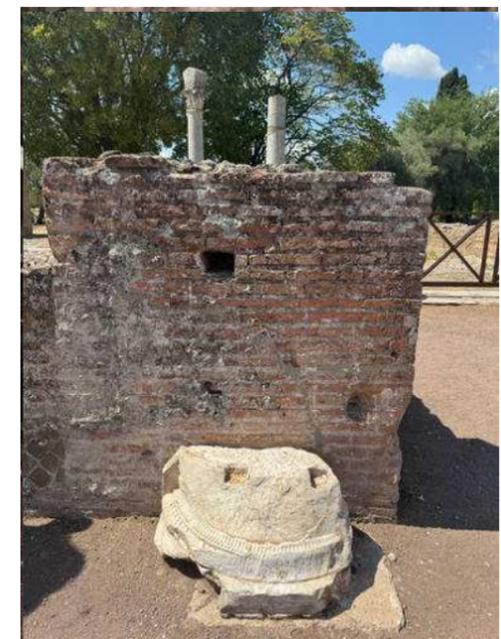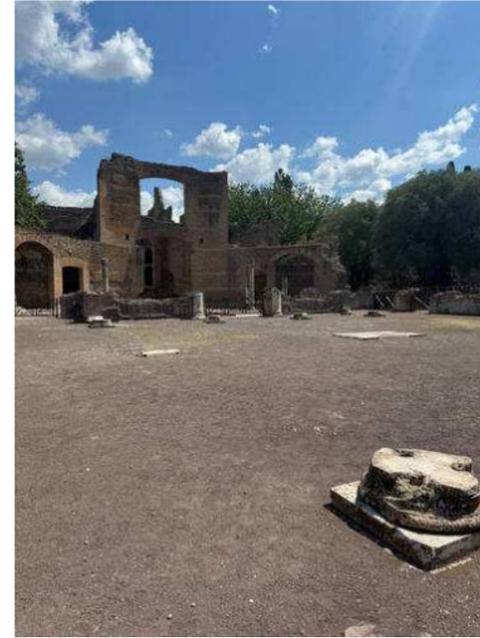
Located along one of the principal axes that emanates from Piazza d'Oro, the complex of the Tre Esedre is created in a manner that is symmetrical. Its composition is defined by the alignment of various centers, which is decided by the dynamic interplay between geometry, movement and perception. This interplay is what gives it its composition.

Through the utilization of a system of mirrored axes and triangulations in the construction process, Tre Esedre establishes connections with the Grandi Terme, the Teatro Marittimo, the Antinoeion, and the gardens that are situated in the surrounding region. As a consequence of these geometric processes, which make it possible for many principles to coexist and interact with one another, a coherent order that is not totalitarian is generated.

The region that is referred to as Tre Esedre evolves into a location that is not just transitional but also physically spectacular. Architecture serves to frame vistas, movement and the experience that is shared by the community. It is a moment of climax and reflection within the context of the seven-day fashion event, putting a focus on the dialog that takes place between the body, architecture, and nature. [20]

HERITAGE

20. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*
Photos of Villa Adriana captured by student
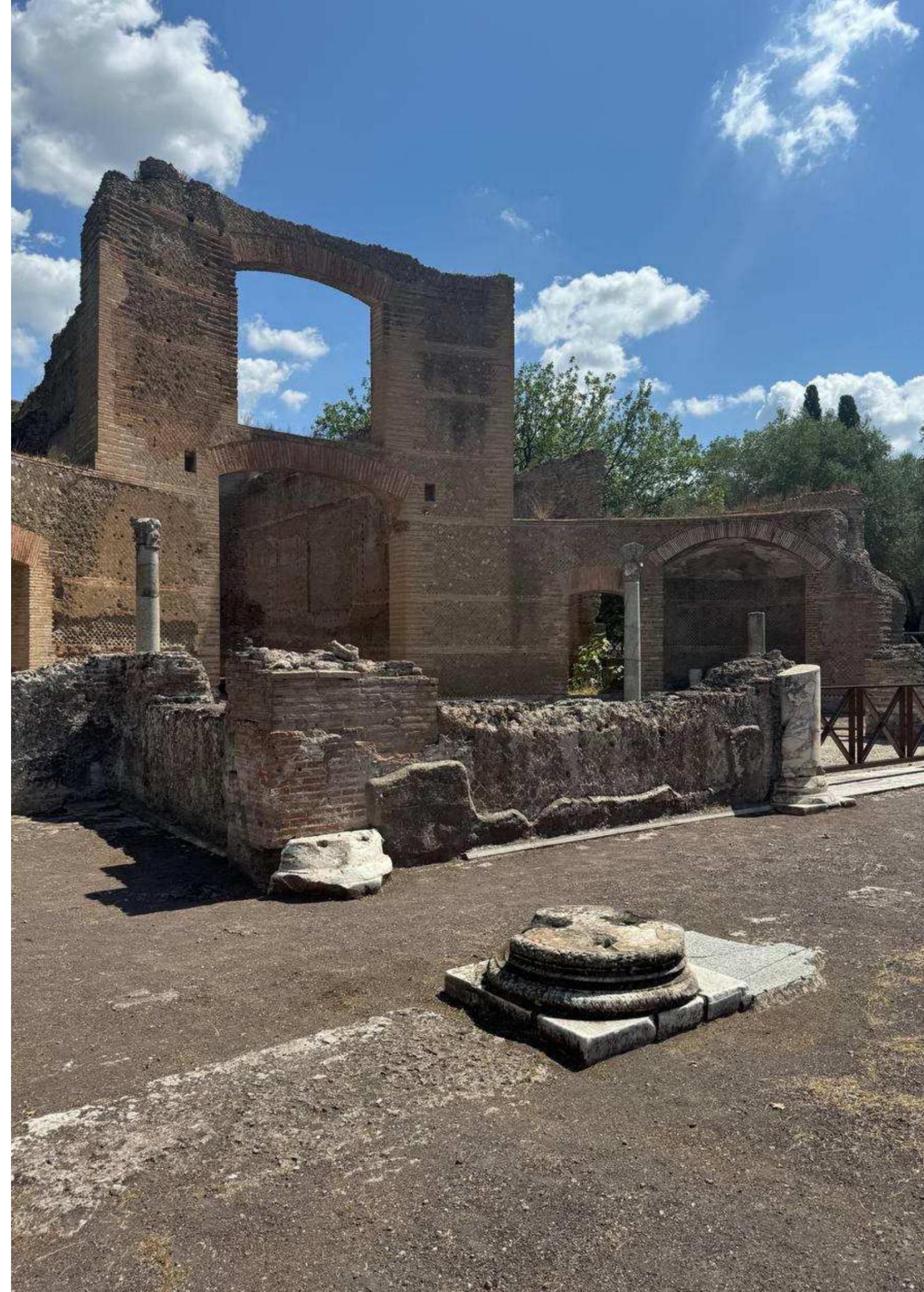
We have already seen, when discussing the Piazza d'Oro, how the building with the Tre Esedre is organized symmetrically on the segment [R_3] hypothetical to it, and forming part of the main register of the central area of the Villa. This axis of symmetry not only gathers and arranges at various points an important series of other segments (partly generative, partly register-related) but also constitutes, precisely for these latter, an axis of mirroring, generating further formal relationships.

If we consider the passage of segment [R_3] through the Three Exedras building, we note that it intersects three centers: that of the east Exedra, that of the Quadriporticus, and that of the west Exedra, to the point of suggesting that, from a syntactical perspective, the Three Exedras function similarly to that of the North and South Theaters, distributing the radiation centers across multiple points spaced apart and positioned on the same line.

If we create a segment, which we will call [R_52], we make it start from the centre of the square patio, direct it towards the centre of the frigidarium of the Grandi Terme (perpendicular to the cross vault) and extend it, this stops precisely in the centre of the apse of the small nymphaeum located between the Canopus building and the buttressed structures of the Altura. The position of another peripheral element, although very small, but very interesting for its configuration, a scale copy of the Canopus nymphaeum - has been clarified. If we then draw a segment [R_53], which develops parallel to [R_52] set on the centre of the west Exedra, we can see it flow beyond the Piccole Terme, registering in its line the west façade, pass through the centre of the garden with exedra of the Great Vestibule and end in the centre of the tholos of the calidarium of the Grandi Terme. This segment, trilateral with [R_3] and [R_4], defines a right-angled triangle that is extremely significant in the syntactic strategy of the central part of the Villa. [21]

TAV. VII

21. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*
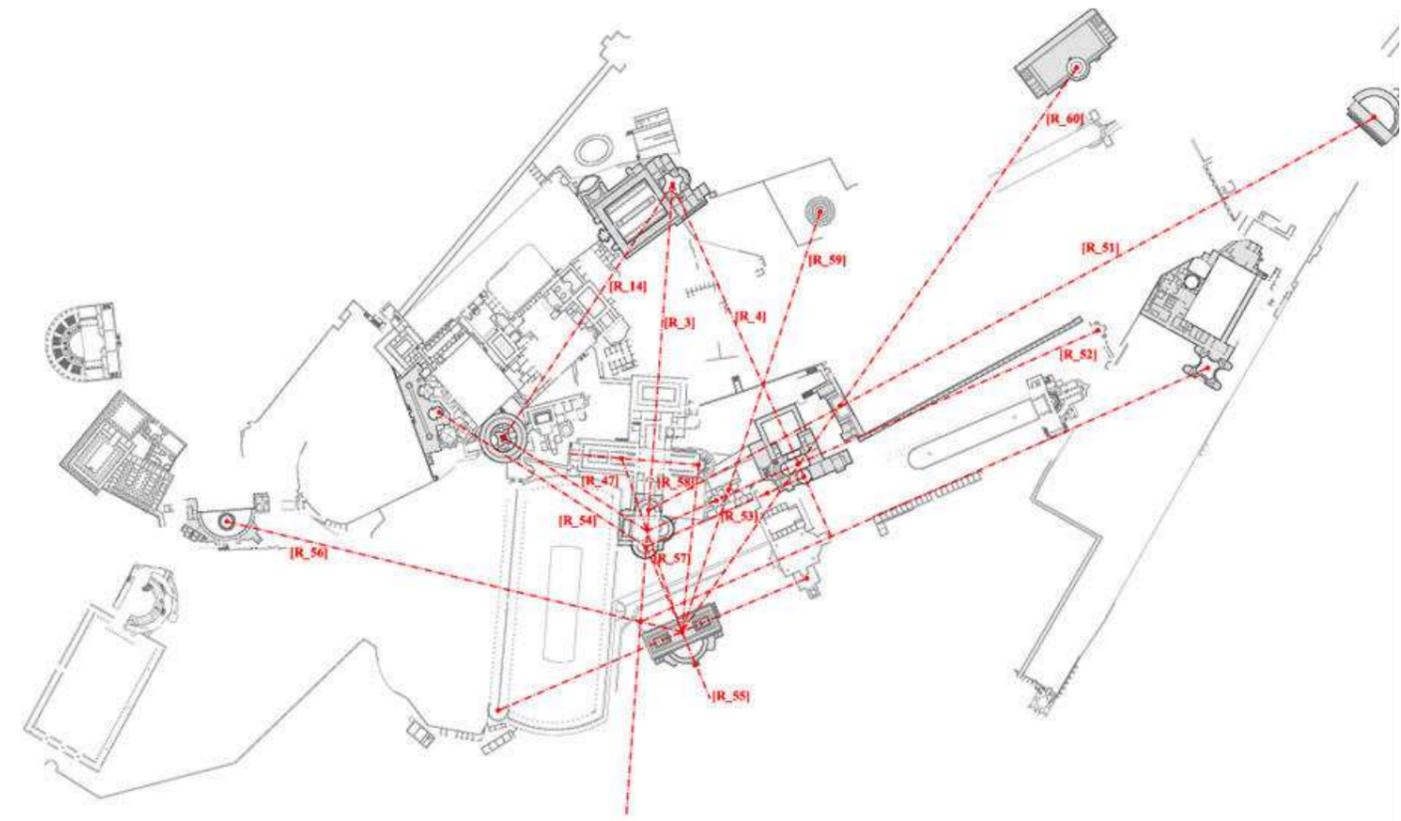
Having established the generative role of segments [R_52] and [R_53] within the syntactic structure of the central area, we can now observe how their mirroring with respect to [R_3] reveals a higher-order geometric matrix.

If we now consider the segments [R_52] and [R_53] and mirror them with respect to [R_3], we can notice that the two mirrored segments, respectively [R_47] and [R_54], end one in the center of the Teatro Marittimo and the other in the center of the fountain at the center of the Terrazza delle Biblioteche. In particular, if we concentrate on [R_47] we can realize that we are once again faced with the question of the geometric figure capable of holding together the composition of the villa. If we join [R_4], [R_14], [R_47] and [R_52] a regular rhomboid shape like a kite appears, composed of two right-angled triangles whose hypotenuses lie along the segment [R_3]. The geometric figure, understood as the main matrix, composes a kind of temenos that encompasses the entire complex of the Winter Palatium, with the Nymphaeum Stadium and the Building with Tre Esedre.

It is worth underlining the presence of a further radius [R_55] that, from the center of the west exedra, winds like an axis of symmetry of the so-called Antinoeion, with respect to the entrance and the terminal exedra. Focusing on the relationships experienced in this area of the Villa, it is interesting to observe how the geometries of the Antinoeion are closely related not only to the Tre Esedre, but also to the head of the Pecile wall and the Lararium of the Great Vestibule. Furthermore, the Antinoeion itself is not only an important element of the topography affected by the passage of radialities originating from other centers, but also how it itself is configured as a true morphogenetic center, capable of "collaborating" with the Tre Esedre, making its radialities more significant as they are confirmed by intersections generated by the Antinoeion itself. [22]

The first ray [R_56] further intensifies the relationship with the Tempio di Venere of Cnidus. The two rays [R_57] and [R_58] generate a triangulation with the axis of symmetry of the nymphaeum stadium. A right-angled triangle in which the hypotenuse passes through the centre of the quadriportico of the Palace with Tre Esedre, the larger side follows the diagonal cut of the Piccole Terme in parallel and the smaller one cuts as an axis of symmetry from the southern exedra to the northern niche the orthogonal structure which makes up the transept of the Palatium complex.

More unexpected misrelations are those established by rays [R_59] and [R_60] that pass through the frigidaria of the Piccole and Grandi Terme, respectively, before ending in the centers of the tholos of the Park and the Plutonium. In particular, [R_60] intersects [R_4] and [R_52] exactly under the crossing of the Tepidarium of the Grandi Terme and [R_51] in the center of the great hall of the Summer Palace above the Praetorium. [23]

22. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*

23. Caliari, Torricelli and Peressut, *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: La Forma Trasparente Di Villa Adriana*

The architectural system of Villa Adriana reveals a design approach that is founded on approximation, tolerance and accepted geometric deviation. All of these concepts are essential to the design process. The underlying desire to create, which is the mental logic that regulates the relationships between centers, axes, and spaces, is more essential than the perfect accuracy of geometry. This is because the exact precision of geometry is not what is significant.

Whether or not Hadrian was directly involved in the building of the structure, the villa demonstrates an extraordinary capacity to deal with complexity through overlapping networks of links. This is the case regardless of whether or not Hadrian functioned as the architect of the project. In terms of its structure, it serves as a palimpsest, in which no single principle is totally dominant and in which every piece is a participant in a number of different meaning networks.

This method is quite contemporary in nature and provides a wonderful reference for activities of this kind. It is a compelling example for contemporary design practices that aim to combine history, landscape, and new cultural expressions without reducing complexity or imposing tight hierarchies. [24]

24. Basso Peressut and Caliari, *Piranesi Prix de Rome. Progetti per La Grande Villa Adriana.*

2. FASHION

2.1 RUNWAY: SPACE, SCENOGRAPHY AND AUDIENCE

In the context of post-digital fashion in the age of social media, nothing is too spectacular for a brand to secure the attention of journalists, buyers, and lately influencers, who all follow the frenetic rhythm of a fashion calendar that has been accelerated by the globalization of the luxury industry and impacted by fast fashion.

Increase of use of "other spaces" to display collections in the main fashion capitals, as well as the growth in "cruise" or "resort" collections, in which the desire for escape through exotic scenery projected through the choice of place, setting, and architecture, have become a mainstay of fashion imagery today.

Colin McDowell, fashion journalist and writer, considers that "high" fashion strives constantly to frame its creative design in order to reinforce the immaterial or symbolic value of the brand through advertising imagery in magazines, window displays, and fashion films, to take the most obvious examples.

Pairing brands with highly recognized heritage sites can help to reinforce the perception of the brand. [25]

FASHION

25. Silvano Mendes, "The Instagrammability of the Runway: Architecture, Scenography, and the Spatial Turn in Fashion Communications," *Fashion Theory* 25, no. 3 (2019): 311–38, https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704x.2019.1629758.
Photo on the right, Spring Summer 2024 collection of Prada.

2.2 FASHION BRANDS AND SPATIAL NARRATIVES

According to Foucault's spatial formula, heterotopias can also have an illusory function in relation to other spaces, or can function as idealized or perfect spaces in themselves.

Examples of this idea trans posed to the runway would include Chanel ready-to-wear S/S 2019, which recreated a life-size beach in the Grand Palais, and Louis Vuitton A/W 2019, for which the designer Nicolas Ghesquiere staged an architectural reproduction of the modern Pompidou Centre in the classical Cour Carree of the Louvre Museum—an ambitious piece of staging that went beyond the mise en abyme of the museum inside the museum to engage with Foucault's understanding of heterotopic illusion and perfection.

The aim is therefore to create maximum impact through disruption, the term currently used to denote the shaping of contemporary design practice by image and communications.

Foucault took the examples of transitory "chronic" heterotopias such as festivals and fairs that repeatedly modify a place once they set up camp.

Thus fashion weeks alter the everyday configuration of a city by temporarily transforming an environment through the event, and the social and commercial interaction of the guests and pubic with their surroundings.

A striking example of the transformation of the cityscape would be the Saint Laurent F/W 2019–20 show in February 2019, when the house occupied the esplanade opposite the Eiffel Tower for 15 days with some 600 tons of scaffolding to erect a giant box in which to stage the show.[26]

FASHION

2.3 MAISON MARGIELA

Martin Margiela is widely regarded as one of the most influential and intellectually rigorous figures in contemporary fashion. His work has challenged traditional notions of authorship, luxury and visibility, reshaping fashion as a conceptual and cultural practice rather than a purely commercial one. He is considered to be one of the most influential fashion designers in recent history for his iconic deconstructed, upcycled aesthetic and oversized silhouette.[27]

This chapter traces Margiela's personal trajectory and the evolution of Maison Margiela, highlighting key moments, philosophical principles, and institutional transformations that define his legacy.

Martin Margiela has maintained a low profile, refusing to grant face-to-face interviews or be photographed. Since leaving fashion in 2008, he has emerged as an artist, exploring the themes that made him an iconic figure in fashion.

Photos Ronald Stobbes
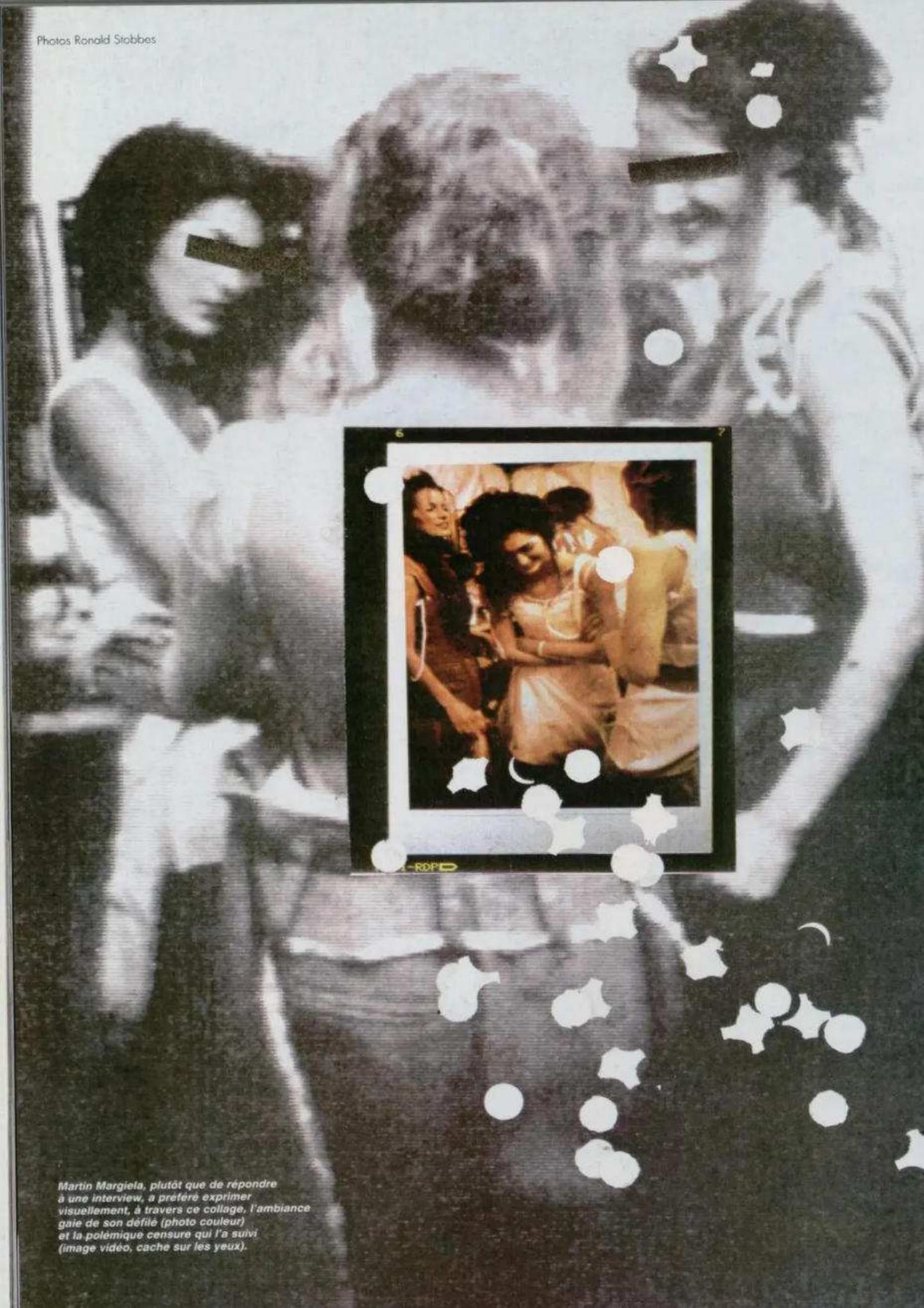
Martin Margiela, plutôt que de répondre à une interview, a préféré exprimer visuellement, à travers ce collage, l'ambiance gaie de son défilé (photo couleur) et la polémique censure qui l'a suivi (image vidéo, cache sur les yeux).

Martin Margiela Documentaries
Of the few sources on Martin Margiela, the documentaries dedicated to him are among the most reliable. Among the most famous are the short film "The Artist is Absent," the documentary "We Margiela," which tells the story of the French fashion house through the figures of the designer's close collaborators, including Vicky Roditis, Deanna Ferretti Veroni and Alda Farinella, and the latest documentary, "Margiela In His Own Word," directed by Reiner Holzemer.

In "Martin Margiela: In His Own Words", the designer maintains his anonymity by never showing his face, only allowing his voice to be heard. His audio is accompanied by various other historians and fashion experts, and is more than enough to understand Margiela's creative vision.[28]
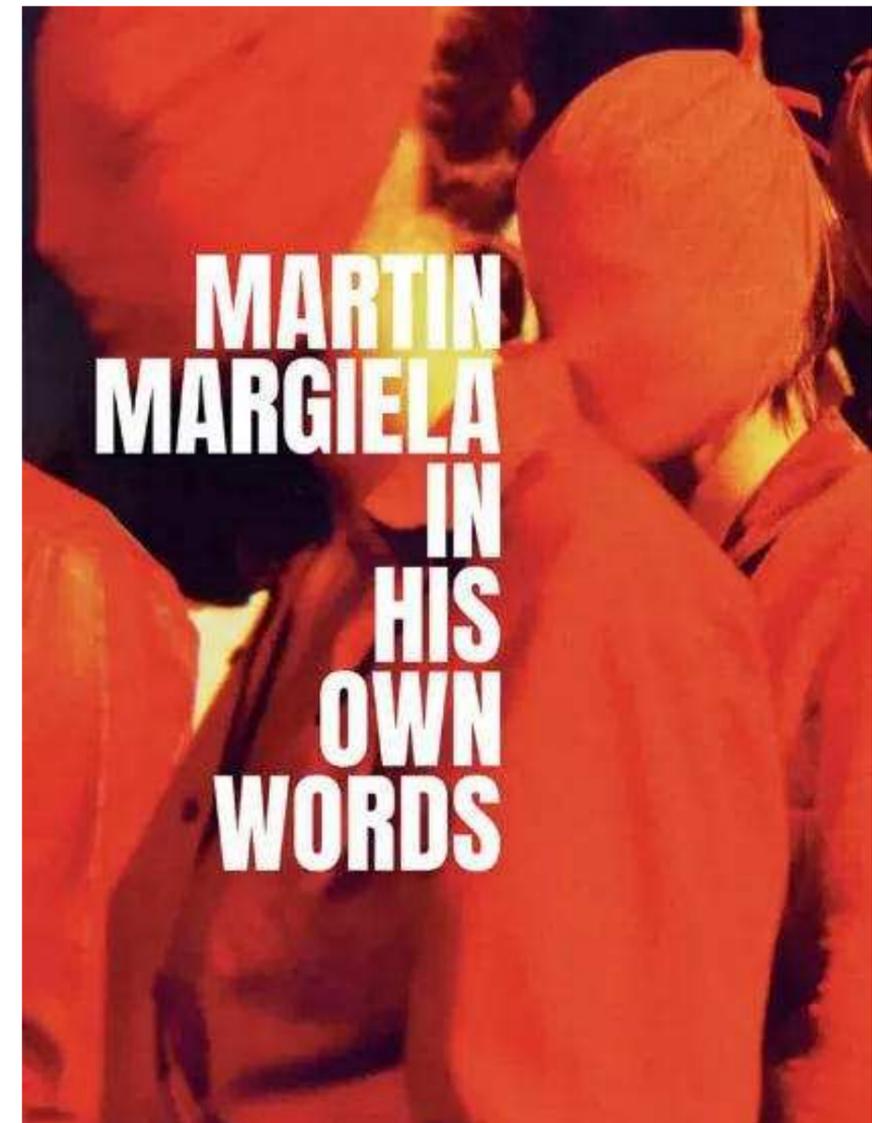
Early life and Education (1957–1979)

Born on 9 April 1957 in Genk, Belgium, Martin Margiela developed an early fascination with fashion through television programs featuring designers such as André Courrèges and Paco Rabanne. He later enrolled at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, graduating in 1979. Although often associated with the so-called 'Antwerp Six', Margiela was not formally part of the group, a distinction that underscores his singular and independent trajectory within Belgian avant-garde fashion.

Formative professional years (1984–1987)

After completing his studies, Margiela moved to Paris, where he worked as an assistant to Jean-Paul Gaultier. This period proved crucial in shaping his technical knowledge and understanding of fashion as both spectacle and critique, while also reinforcing his desire to pursue a radically alternative creative path.[29]

Founding of Maison Martin Margiela (1988–1990s)

In 1988, Margiela founded Maison Martin Margiela in Paris together with Jenny Meirens. From its inception, the house rejected conventional luxury codes, embracing anonymity, deconstruction, visible seams, recycled garments, and white labels devoid of logos. The launch of the Tabi boots in 1989 exemplified this ethos, transforming historical references into subversive design icons. Throughout the 1990s, the Maison gained a cult following for its experimental runway formats and conceptual rigor. (Del Pino, "History of a House: Martin Margiela.").[30]

Hermès and Institutional recognition (1997–2003)

Between 1997 and 2003, Margiela served as Creative Director of womenswear at Hermès. This appointment marked a significant moment of institutional recognition, as Margiela applied his minimalist and intellectual approach to one of the most established luxury houses in the world. Rather than disruption, his work at Hermès emphasized restraint, craftsmanship, and timelessness.[31]

Expansion and Corporate integration (2002–2009)

In 2002, Maison Martin Margiela was acquired by the OTB Group, founded by Renzo Rosso. Despite corporate ownership, the brand retained its unconventional identity and continued to expand internationally. In 2009, Margiela formally stepped away from both the fashion industry and the house that bore his name, bringing an end to one of the most radical authorial presences in modern fashion.

Post-Margiela era and Creative transitions (2009–2025)

Following Margiela's departure, the Maison operated under an anonymous in-house design team until 2014, preserving the founder's principles of collective authorship. The appointment of John Galliano as Creative Director in 2014 introduced a new narrative and theatrical dimension, while maintaining the brand's conceptual foundations. In 2025, Glenn Martens was named Creative Director, signaling yet another phase in the house's evolving identity.[32]

Margiela's turn to Art

After leaving fashion, Margiela redirected his creative practice toward visual art, producing installations and works centered on transformation, impermanence, and material flux. This shift reinforces the continuity between his fashion practice and broader conceptual concerns.

FASHION

29. Catalina Del Pino, "History of a House: Martin Margiela". *L'Officiel Ibiza*, March 8, 2022, https://www.lofficielibiza.com/fashion/a-white-tale-the-story-of-la-maison-martin-margiela.
30. Alessandro Masetti, "Martin Margiela, the One and Only," *The Fashion Commentator*, March 4, 2018, https://www.thefashioncommentator.com/2012/11/martin-margiela-one-and-only.html

31. Giulia Di Giamberardino, "Martin Margiela Da Hermès: Gli Anni Indimenticabili Di Una Direzione Creativa Dimenticata," *Vogue Italia*, August 8, 2025, https://www.vogue.it/article/gli-anni-dimenticati-di-martin-margiela-alla-direzione-creativa-di-hermes
32. "Maison Margiela", OTB Group, accessed January 5, 2026. https://www.otb.net/en/maison-margiela

A/W 1995
Shown in a circus tent in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris. Model faces were covered with a black muslin veil. During the finale, the women removed their veils and carried fuchsia balloons.

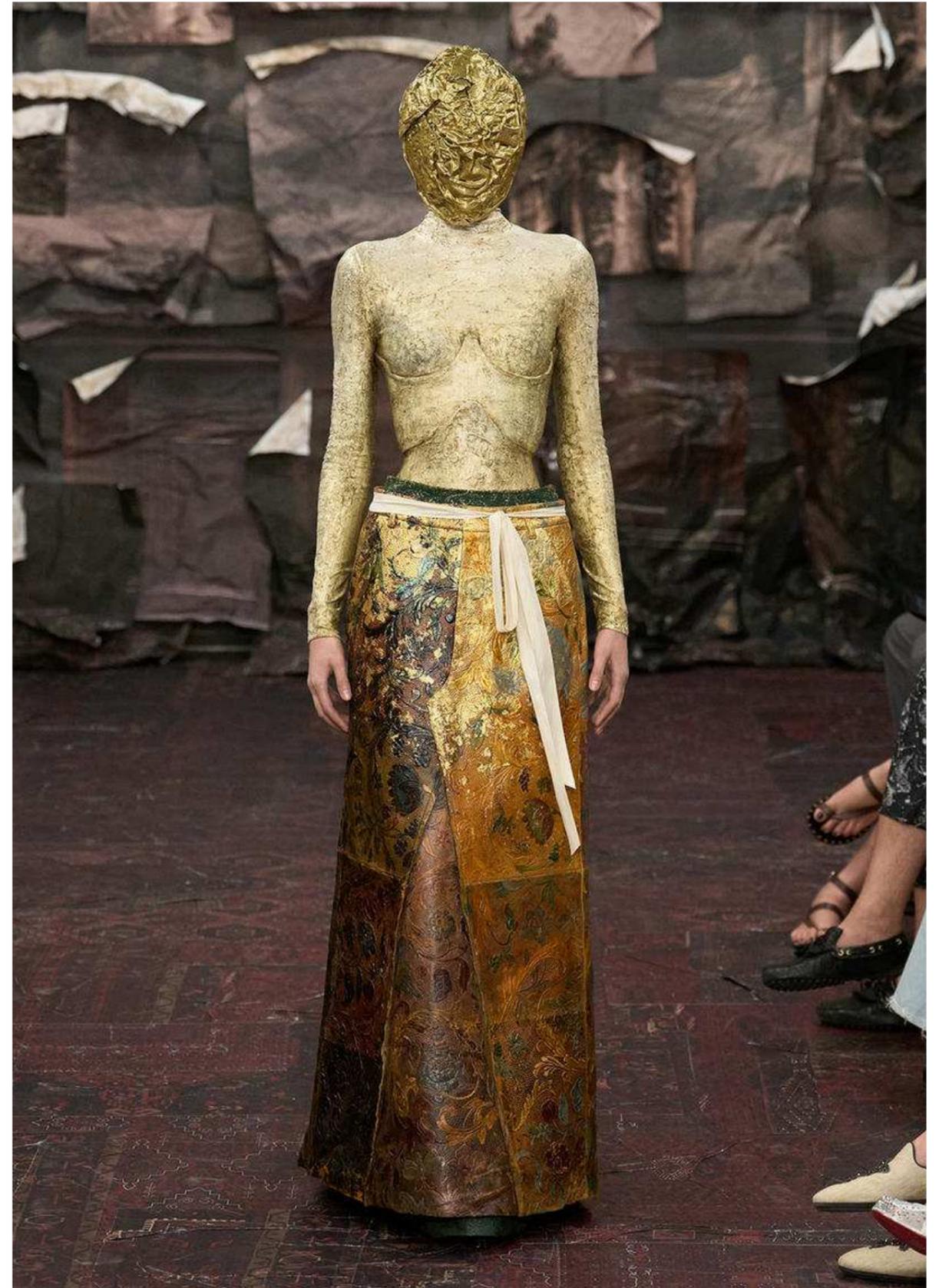*Photos, Artisanal Collection 2025 of Maison Margiela*

The Artisanal 2025 Collection by Maison Margiela draws inspiration from the architectural structures and silhouettes of Flanders and the Netherlands. The sculptural shapes evoke the sacred figures found on the façades of Gothic churches, where simple and reclaimed materials are repurposed.
The walls and floors of the show space are covered with printed-paper collages depicting six different palace interiors reminiscent of Northern European Renaissance residences.

The verticality and volumes of the silhouettes recall the structure of towers, contrasted with corsetry, draping, and optical illusions that accentuate anatomy and sculpt the body. Burnished plastic, hand-painted wallpapers, and still-life compositions are assembled and cut into three-dimensional forms, transforming the body into a canvas. Recovered materials, lining fabrics, vintage leather, plastic, paper, and metal are recycled to create garments and masks, enhancing the Maison's codes of anonymity and highlighting craftsmanship.[33]

33. "Maison Margiela Artisanal 2025 Collection | Maison Margiela," Maison Margiela, accessed January 5, 2026, https://www.maisonmargiela.com/en-us/mm-artisanal-2025.html.
Photo on the right, Artisanal Collection 2025 of Maison Margiela

Photos, Artisanal Collection 2025 of Maison Margiela

«Elegance is not about being noticed,
it's about being remembered.»
Giorgio Armani
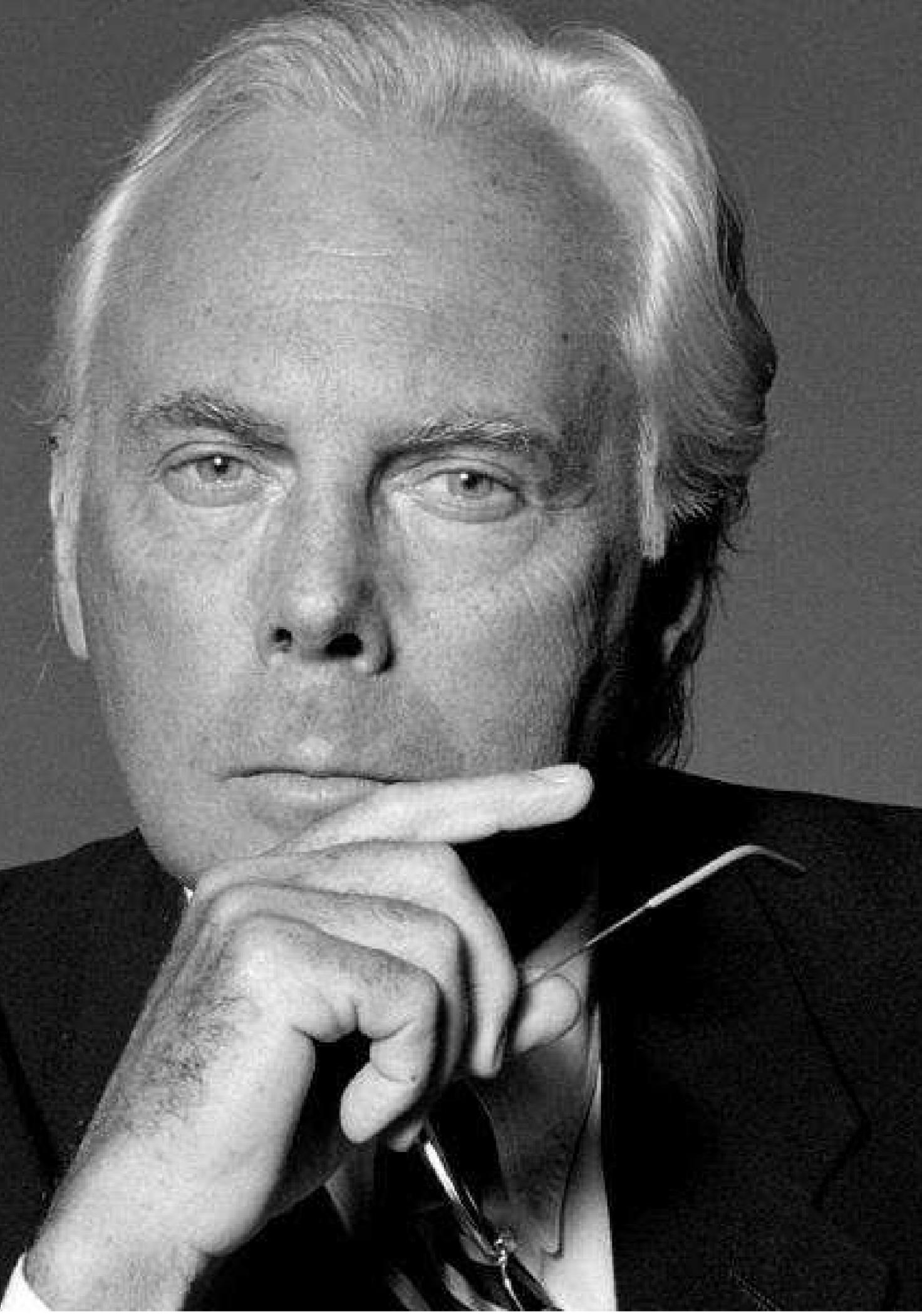
Giorgio Armani was an Italian fashion designer and founder of the Armani luxury fashion house. Widely regarded as among the most influential designers in contemporary fashion, Armani initially gained recognition for his work with fashion house Cerruti 1881, before founding his own label in 1975. He became known for minimalist, deconstructed silhouettes, especially his jackets and suits, which are said to have redefined masculine and feminine elegance in a contemporary form.[2] Armani also played a pivotal role in shaping celebrity style, particularly red-carpet fashion. By the early 2000s, he was recognized as the most successful Italian designer, with his brand expanding into music, sport, and luxury hotels.[34]

34. Vanessa Friedman, "Giorgio Armani Changed the Way People Dress. Twice," *The New York Times*, September 4, 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/04/style/giorgio-armani.html.
Photo of Giorgio Armani

FASHION

1934
Giorgio Armani was born on 11th July in Piacenza.
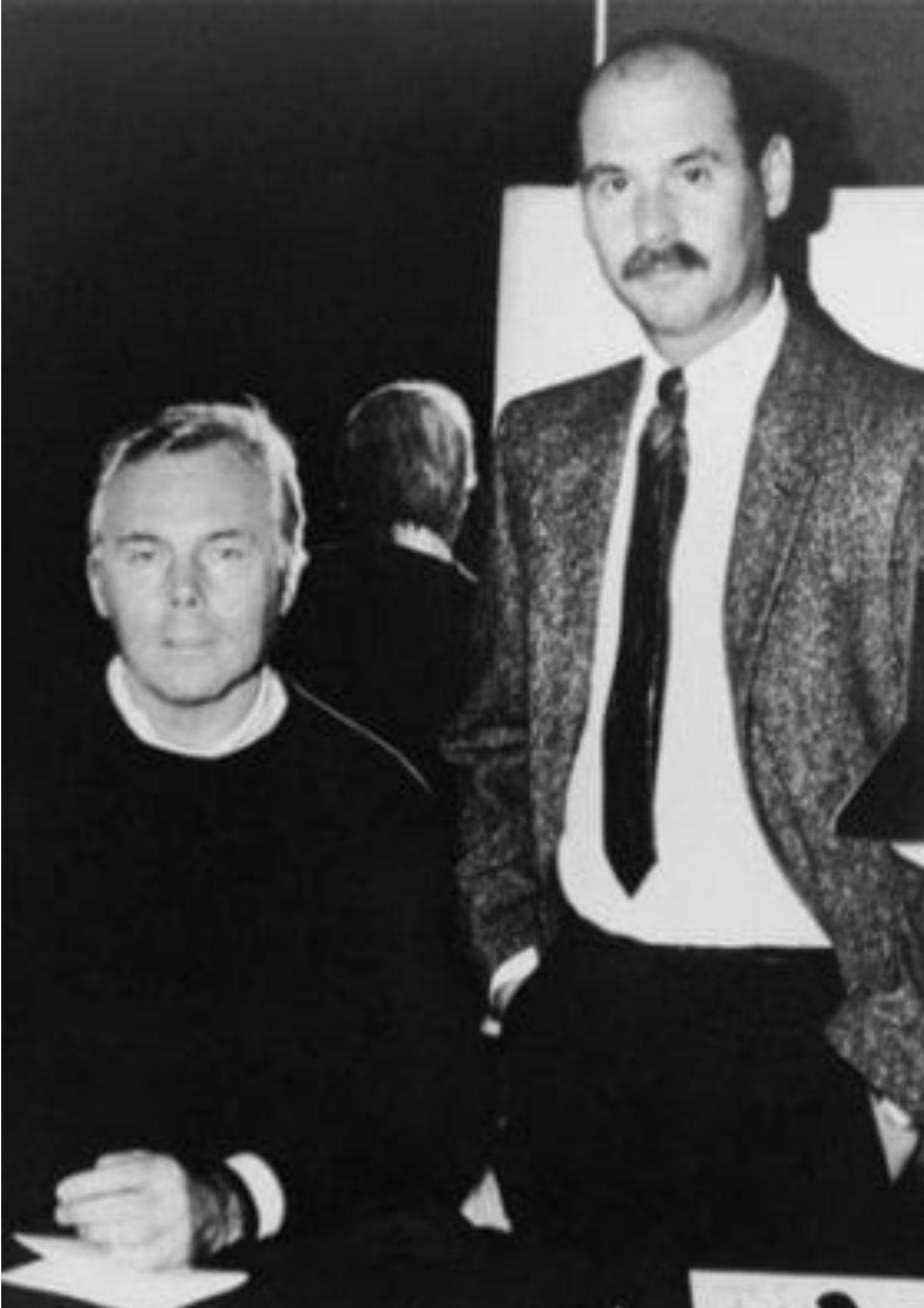14 years later, the family moves to Milan.

1957
At the age of 23, he starts working for La Rinascente, until 1963.
His professional path begins by being as photographer assistant. He also coordinates the window showcase.
Armani soon becomes buyers coordinator and supervisor in the office Man Fashion Style.
He finds the yellow English wool sweater, already big trend in London, as the best product to propose to young Italian people. His choice shows to be very successful.

In **1964,** Nino Cerruti, Italian fashion businessman, is looking for a stylist for men collection of Hitman, the company he founded in 1956.
The word "stylist" is still not known. It represents a new role in fashion.
Both Cerruti and Armani believe that men's clothing needs to be innovated, through lightening of traditional garments. Until then, it was rigid and lacking of creativity.
Armani starts working for Hitman, as stylist, on this. The professional relationship will continue until 1970.

In **1966**, in Forte dei Marmi, Armani meets Sergio Galeotti, that convinces him to start an indipendent path.
While still designing for Hitman, he starts to work also as a freelance for several companies.

In **1971**, for the first time, Armani designs a women's collection for Tendresse.[35]

35. Tony Di Corcia, *Giorgio Armani. Il Re Della Moda Italiana*, (Cairo, 2019)
Photo on the right, Giorgio Armani E Sergio Galeotti

In **1973**, Armani and Galeotti start a stylist consultancy office in Corso Venezia 37, Milan.

1975 – Armani is 41 years old. He keeps consulting. Among the clients we find: Gibò, Montedoro, Ungaro, the Spanish brand Loewe and Ermenegildo Zegna.

On 24th July, Armani and Galeotti found Giorgio Armani SpA, with company capital of 10 million lire, and headquarter in Corso Venezia 37, Milan.

It is the beginning of a stylistic revolution destined to redefine the way we conceive clothing. Characterized by a sober yet innovative language, Armani inaugurates a "timeless" aesthetic—rooted in tailoring precision, the simplification of forms, and the idea of clothing as a natural extension of personality, beyond seasons and fleeting trends.

In the same year, he shows his first men and his first women collection, both for spring/summer 1976.

The men collection, presented in July, with his deconstructed jackets, redefines the concept of masculine elegance and marks a turning point in fashion.

The women collection, presented in October at the Hotel Palace in Milan, is inspired both by the feminist movement and her sister Rosanna, who used to wear men jackets.

The women collection proposes a reinvention of this garment, immediately adopted as essential fashion item by working women.

The following year, in **1976**, the brand Giorgio Armani debuts in USA, with immediate success.

In **1978**, a license agreement is signed with GFT – Gruppo Finanziario Tessile (Textile Financial Group) in Turin, for both production and distribution of Armani designed fashion.

In the same year, "Le Collezioni" (The Collections), a more economic masculine line, is launched.[36]

At Academy Awards, Dian Keaton wins the Oscar as best actress for Annie Hall. She takes the prize wearing a sporty cut Armani jackets.[37]

36. Di Corcia, *Giorgio Armani. Il Re Della Moda Italiana*.
37. "La Living Legacy Di Giorgio Armani | Archivio Armani," Archivio Armani, accessed January 5, 2026, https://archivio.armani.com/it.

Photo: Diane Keaton with her best actress Oscar for 'Annie Hall' in 1978.

FASHION

In **1979**, The women's collection Le Collezioni and Mani are born.

In **1980**, Richard Gere is the main character, dressed by Giorgio Armani, of American Gigolo. The movie has a great impact on the aesthetic of the decade that just began: a man can be languid and sensual even while wearing a jacket. Armani clothes become a status symbol.
In the same year we see the signature of contract with L'Oréal for the production of Armani perfumes.

1981
Launch of Emporio Armani: the collection for young people. Also Armani Jeans and Armani Junior are launched.

1982
The iconic magazine Time dedicates the cover page to Giorgio Armani: before him, the only stylist to receive this recognition was Christian Dior, and the only Italian was the Nobel Prize Luigi Pirandello.
In the same year, the first feminine perfume is launched. Two years later the first masculine perfume is launched.

On 13th August **1985** Sergio Galeotti passes away. He was just 40.
Armani both designs his collections and takes charge of the finance of the company. This event deeply marks Armani's emotional state.

Between 1985 and 1987, Armani is awarded the honors of: Commander of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, Grand Officer of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic and Grand Knight of the Order of Merit of the Republic.[38]

In **1988**, Giorgio Armani sings with Luxottica for the production of glasses designed by Armani.

In **1990**, at Venice Film Festival is presented "Made in Milan", the documentary about Giorgio Armani, realized by Martin Scorsese and Jay Cocks.

In **1994**, in Washington, the President of USA gives Giorgio Armani the Lifetime Achievement Award for the Arts and Fashion, by the National Italian American Foundation. Armani turns 60.

In **1995**, the new women's fragrance, Acqua di Giò, is launched. The following year, men's version is released.

In **1999**, at Venezia Film Festival is presented "Il mio viaggio in Italia" (My Voyage to Italy) by Martin Scorsese, a documentary about the history of Italian cinema between 1914 and 1962, produced by Giorgio Armani.

In the same year, the powerful luxury businessmen Bernard Arnault (LVMH) and Francois Pinault (Kering) compete for acquiring the brand Armani, but the designer declines the offers. He wants to stay the owner of the company that holds his name.

In **2000**, to celebrate Giorgio Armani's 25-year career, Guggenheim Museum of New York dedicates an impressive retrospective.[39]

38. Di Corcia, *Giorgio Armani. Il Re Della Moda Italiana.*

39. Di Corcia, *Giorgio Armani. Il Re Della Moda Italiana.*

In **2001**, we see the opening of the space Armani/Teatro, in via Bergognone. Designed with the architect Tadao Ando, it's the new location fashion shows of Armani's brands. In several occasion, it's put at disposal of young stylists or emerging brands.

In **2003**, the exhibition Giorgio Armani reaches the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, and, then, the Royal Academy of Art in London.
Armani receives the Rodeo Drive Walk of Style in Beverly Hills, and on the sidewalk of Rodeo Drive a plate is put, for celebrating the contribution of the stylist to fashion and show.

In **2004**, the retrospective exhibition about the creative work of Armani comes to Rome at the National Roman Museum (Museo Nazionale Romano), at Diocleziano's Baths, evocative location for the first Italian stop of the exhibition.
In the same year, the sportif line EA7 is released.

In January **2005**, in Paris, Armani Privé, the first haute couture collection is presented.

2006
One Night Only debuts in London: it's a special event that proposes a fashion show, an exhibition of historical garments by the stylist and an exclusive party.
The President of Italian Republic Giorgio Napolitano gives Armani the award Leonardo 2006 as representative of the Italian quality abroad.[40]
At the 2006 Winter Olympics opening ceremony held in Italy, his artistic direction and costume designing came together to produce the uniform of the Italian flag bearers.
Armani himself was also among the selected torchbearers for the Olympics and he was seen joyfully carrying the Olympic torch through fashion capital Milan as the torch made its way to Turin with crowds of people celebrating his presence.[41]

40. Di Corcia, *Giorgio Armani. Il Re Della Moda Italiana.*
41. 10Magazine, "On Giorgio Armani's 90th Birthday, We Look Back at 10 of His Most Monumental Moments", *10 Magazine*, July 15, 2024.
Photo on the right, Giorgio Armani Olympics 2006.

In **2008**, Armani is awarded the Légion d'Honneur by the French president Nicolas Sarkozy.
In Milan, in Via Montenapoleone, the world's biggest Giorgio Armani boutique opens.
In the same year, Armani is named honorary member of Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

In **2009**, in addition to the constant opening of new boutiques around the world, there are also the inaugurations of the concept stores in New York and Dubai: Armani/Fifth Avenue and Armani/Dubai.

In **2010,** Emporio Armani is the first western fashion brand to open an e-commerce website in China.
In the same year, the first Armani Hotel is inaugurated in Dubai, in the world highest skyscraper.

In **2012**, One Night Only Beijing celebrates 10 years of the Armani Group in China.
At Armani/Teatro is released Eccentrico: clothes and accessories made between 1985 and 2012 investigate the dialogue between fashion and design.
The exclusive license agreement with Luxottica provides the design, the production and the distribution all over the world of eyeglasses and sunglasses Giorgio Armani, Emporio Armani and A/X Armani Exchange.

In **2013**, the event One Night Only arrives in Rome, at the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana (Palace of Italian Civilization) in EUR: 110 dresses parade from the 3 Armani colelctions (Privé, Emporio and Giorgio Armani). The exhibition Eccentrico is set and 700 guests attend the party.
Armani is also guest in Quirinale by the President of the Italian Repubblic, Giorgio Napolitano.
On 24th October, Michael Bloomberg, the major of New York establish the Giorgio Armani Day: a stage over 80 meters long is set at SuperPier in Manhattan.
Armani starts supporting Milan's basketball team, active in the basket Serie A (the main national professional championship): the name of the team becomes Emporio Armani Milano.[42]

42. Di Corcia, Giorgio Armani. Il Re Della Moda Italiana.
Photo on the top leftGiorgio Armani won the Légion d'Honneur by the French president Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008
Photo on the bottom left Giorgio Armani by Stefano Guindani/SGP

FASHION

2014

Giorgio Armani turns 80 years old. He organizes One Night Only Paris.

In the same year, he is awarded the Compasso d'Oro for Lifetime Achievement by the Italian Association for Industrial Design "for revolutionizing the world of prêt-à-porter through the creation of products for wider consumption and easier use, which have influenced the entire production chain and contributed to the global spread of the Made in Italy image."

This prestigious recognition highlights the industrial, cultural, and social significance of his approach to fashion.

In **2015**, Giorgio Amani SpA celebrates 40 years of activity. The anniversary is celebrated also through the opening of Armani/Silos, an exhibition space in Via Bergognone. What once used to be a silos of Nestlé, now shows Armani's most representative creations.

Armani is entitled Special Ambassador of Expo Milano.

In **2016**, Armani Group commits with Fur Free Alliance for the complete abolition of animal fur from its products starting from Autumn/Winter 2016-17.

In **2017**, the brands of Armani Group are reorganized: the reference brands now are Giorgio Armani, Emporio Armani and A/X Armani Exchange.

On 20th September **2018**, in the airport Linate, there is the event Emporio Armani Boarding. Over 2.300 guests, after the check-in, assist to the fashion show of the collection man and woman Emporio Armani for Spring/Summer 2019 and a performance by Robbie Williams.[43]

In **2019**, Giorgio Armani is honoured with the Outstanding Achievement Award at The Fashion Awards by the British Fashion Council, recognising his profound impact on global fashion and his timeless contribution to style and creativity.[44]
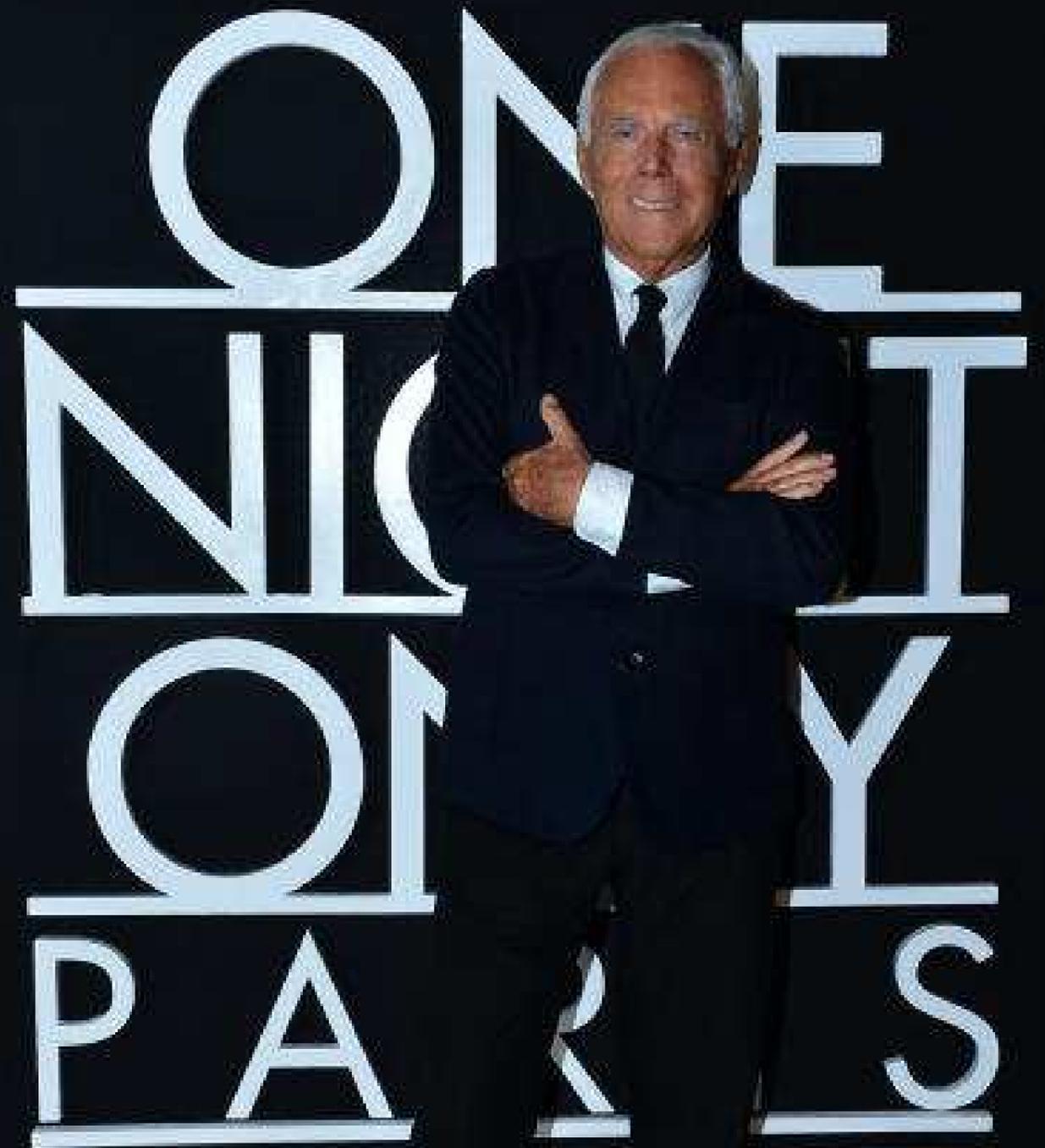
43. Di Corcia, *Giorgio Armani. Il Re Della Moda Italiana.*
44. "Giorgio Armani to Be Honoured With the Outstanding Achievement Award at the Fashion Awards 2019," *British Fashion Council,* September 17, 2019, https://www.britishfashioncouncil.co.uk/pressreleases/Giorgio-Armani-to-be-honoured-with-the-Outstanding-Achievement-Award-at-The-Fashion-Awards-201.

Photo on the right, Giorgio Armani by Stefano Guindani/SGP

GIORGIO ARMANI

per amore

Rizzoli
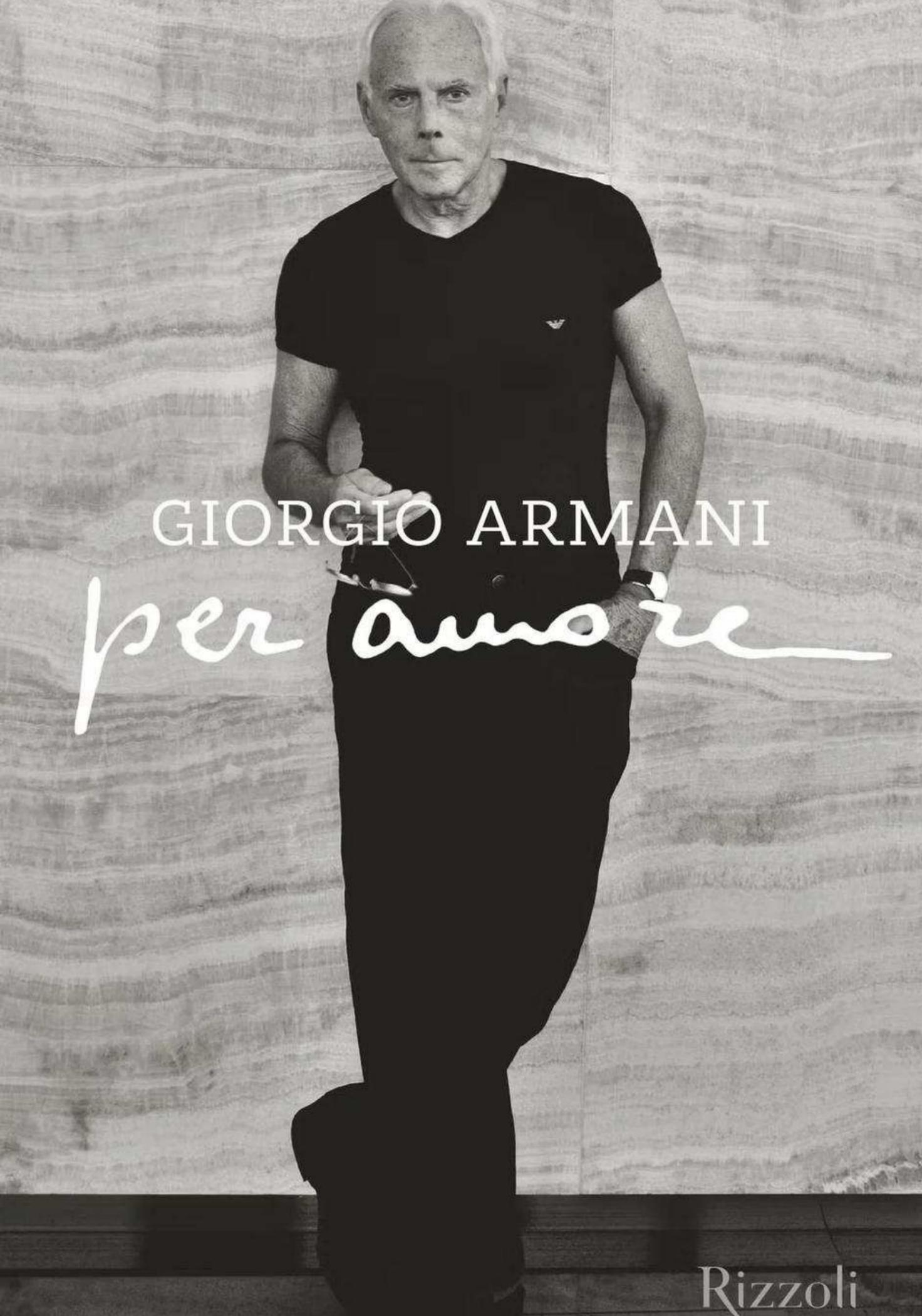
2020

COVID-19 pandemic spreads, and Armani leads the way for both initiatives and for the way of working.

On the last day of Milan Fashion Week, when the virus is a threat but restrictions are not introduced yet, the Autumn/Winter 2020-21 collections is presented via digital video from Armani/Teatro, without audience in the venue, to protect guests and associates from any risk

During the pandemic period, he donates totally € 3 million to intensive care units in several cities in Italy and supports hospital staff with masks and disposable gowns produced by the Armani Group.[45]

The stylist also reflects on resilience and the future of fashion in a public letter, emphasizing the moment as "an opportunity to slow down and realign everything, to define a more meaningful landscape".[46]

In the same year, Giorgio Armani is appointed ambassador for responsible tourism by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

In **2021**, The Armani Group announces its goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), approved by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

Giorgio Armani announces the commitment to cease the use of angora wool from all collections and receives recognition at the 2021 PETA Fashion Awards.

In **2022**, during Milan Fashion Week Giorgio Armani decides to show his collections without music as a sign of respect towards the people involved in the Ukrainian conflict.

In the same year, "Per amore", Giorgio Armani's autobiography, offers an intimate and measured portrait of the designer, weaving together personal memories, reflections on his craft, and private moments. The book gives voice to a reserved man who is deeply aware of his cultural impact. Through essential stories and carefully chosen words, Armani reflects on the passions, vulnerabilities, and determination that have shaped his extraordinary career.[47]

45. "Armani / Values | Emergenza Covid-19," Armani / Values, April 22, 2022, accessed December 27, 2025, https://armanivalues.com/it/prosperita/comunita/emergenza-covid-19/
46. Luisa Zargani, "Giorgio Armani Writes Open Letter to WWD," *WWD*, April 3, 2020, https://wwd.com/fashion-news/designer-luxury/feature/giorgio-armani-writes-open-letter-wwd-1203553687/.
47. Archivio Armani, "La Living Legacy Di Giorgio Armani"
Photo on the left, "Per Amore - Rizzoli Libri," *Rizzoli Libri*, Book Cover

FASHION

In **2023**, on the occasion of World Environment Day, the Armani Group announces the Apulia Regenerative Cotton Project, a new project in collaboration with the Sustainable Markets Initiative (SMI) Fashion Task Force in partnership with the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance – both founded by His Majesty King Charles III – for the development of agroforestry-based cotton production in Puglia.[48]

Giorgio Armani receives from the Mayor of Venice, Luigi Brugnaro the Golden Lion in Murano glass as 'a gesture of recognition for a figure and a brand with an international dimension'.

On **11th July 2024**, Giorgio Armani turns 90, with festivities including Armani/Silos exhibits and New York events.
On 17th October, the stylist inaugurates the new 12-floors building on Madison Avenue in New York, a complex housing boutique (including Giorgio Armani and Armani/Casa), a restaurant and luxury residences. The opening was celebrated with a fashion show of the spring-summer 2025 collection, followed by a show and an exclusive gala, confirming the stylist's historic link with the city that helped establish him internationally.

48. "Apulia Regenerative Cotton Project | Giorgio Armani," Giorgio Armani, accessed December 28, 2025, https://www.armani.com/it-it/giorgio-armani/experience/cotone-rigenerativo/
Photo Giorgio Armani with Luigi Brugnaro the Mayor of Venice.

Photos, Tagwalk - Collection Womenswear Giorgio Armani Spring/Summer 2024.

2025

To celebrate the brand's 50th anniversary, Giorgio Armani opens his archive to the public for the first time. The initiative offers an unprecedented glimpse into half a century of fashion through iconic garments, original sketches, photographs, and previously unseen materials. The archive becomes a tool for knowledge, memory, and inspiration, telling the story of the brand and the journey of a designer who transformed the language of elegance.[49]

Pinacoteca di Brera Hosts Giorgio Armani's Fashion Exhibition, featuring 133 archival looks.

In Armani/Silos is also presented the exhibition for 20 years of Armani Collection 2005-2025.[50]

On **4th September 2025**, Giorgio Armani passes away, in its home in Milan.

At the age of 91, Armani was still creative director, CEO and sole shareholder of the company, describing his approach to work as characterised by meticulous control over all aspects of the creations.

About the continuity of the company, he outlined a gradual succession plan, entrusted to long-standing collaborators, including Leo Dell'Orco, members of his family and the internal team, with the aim of ensuring an organic transfer of responsibilities and guaranteeing stability for the company.

49. Angelo Ruggeri, "Giorgio Armani 2025 Exhibition at Pinacoteca Di Brera," Istituto Marangoni, October 1, 2025, https://www.istitutomarangoni.com/en/maze35/industry/giorgio-armani-2025-exhibition-pinacoteca-brera-milan
50. "Mostra Armani Privé 2005-2025," Armani/Silos, accessed January 2, 2026, https://www.armanisilos.com/it/mostra/armani-prive-2005-2025/

Photo on the left, Armani Silos

FASHION

Two important places in Giorgio Armani's world: Milan, the city of modernity and work, and Pantelleria, the Mediterranean island at the border between Europe and Africa, a land of exotic suggestions and wild nature. The Spring Summer 2026 Collection, the last on which Giorgio Armani personally worked, somehow represents a testament of style and the closure of a cycle, so that new ones may open.[51]

It takes place in the Pinacoteca di Brera, in the heart of the district where the designer has always lived and worked, and broadens the horizon to Pantelleria, a land of contrasts, volcanic rocks and dark fields surrounded by the endless blue of the sea. Everything appears fluid, light, as if ready to yield to the island's winds; everything is conceived to seduce with energy, following Armani's idea of purity as harmony between garment and person.

51. "Women's Spring/Summer 2026 Fashion Show," Giorgio Armani, accessed January 2, 2026, https://www.armani.com/en-hu/giorgio-armani/experience/fashion-show-spring-summer-women/
Photos on pages 111, 112, 114, 115, 116 Armani Women's Spring/Summer 2026 Fashion Show.

FASHION

"The mark I hope to leave is one of commitment, respect, and genuine care for people and for reality. That's where everything truly begins."
Giorgio Armani

3. FASHION AND HERITAGE

3.1 The Intersection of Fashion, Architecture and Art

3.2 Fashion Events as a Medium for Cultural Valorization

   3.2.1 Fendi – Trevi Fountain, Rome (2016)

   3.2.2 Dolce & Gabbana – Valle dei Templi, Agrigento (2019)

   3.2.3 Dior – El Badi Palace, Marrakech (2019)

   3.2.4 Valentino's show – Spanish Steps, Rome (2022)

3.3 Fashion and Visual Exhibition

   3.3.1 Armani Silos

   3.3.2 Christian Dior

   3.3.3 Alexander McQueen

3.1 THE INTERSECTION OF FASHION, ARCHITECTURE AND ART

First and foremost, fashion is a means by which human beings can protect themselves from the elements. This includes ancient climate shifts and the frigid chill of a long Arctic night, as well as the burning heat of the tropical sun and the shifting sands of the desert. People have, over the course of history, turned to clothing not only for the purpose of survival but also as a way of self-expression. This has enabled individuals to experiment with various roles and display themselves in accordance with their own thoughts. In this sense, fashion becomes a method of evaluating mood, culture, and identity. It is one that is passed down from one generation to the next, while also varies from country to country and area to region.[52]

Concurrently, the fashion industry has developed into a global enterprise that is a major force in the political, cultural, economic, and social realms. As a result of globalization and modernization, the circulation of trends has been increased, which has resulted in fashion rapidly spreading across boundaries and appearing in a variety of different ways, including clothing, footwear, accessories, makeup, hairstyles, and lifestyle choices. A person who is able to keep up with these ever-changing forms is frequently referred to be "fashionable," which means that they adhere to what is seen to be acceptable and appreciated at a certain period and location.[53]

Additionally, there is a strong connection between fashion and architecture. Both fields of study seek to give a safe haven and a sense of comfort, thereby molding the way in which people interact with their surroundings. It is possible to view the body as a form of building or vehicle, and the act of dressing it defines a personal space in a manner that is comparable to how architecture defines collective space.[54]

52. Allegranti, "FASHION SHOWS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE SITES."
53. Mendes, "The Instagrammability of the Runway: Architecture, Scenography, and the Spatial Turn in Fashion Communications."
54. Mashal, S., Rehman, M. F., & Ahmed, Y. (2022). An investigation to study the intersection of fashion and architecture through translating community's fashion trends and culture in architectural realm. Journal of Development and Social Sciences, 3(4), 38–50. https://doi.org/10.47205/jdss.2022(3-IV)05
Photo on the right, Iris Van Herpen, architectonics collection

As a means of reflecting taste, culture, and social values, both respond to the same currents of globalization and consumption through the use of materials, technology, and aesthetics. On the other hand, fashion is typically more fleeting and driven by the market, whereas architecture is frequently grandiose and geared toward longer-term stability.

As a result of this more comprehensive context, fashion also becomes spectacle. As a result of the drive for visual impact, fashion designers and marketers are turning the runway into a stage by borrowing from the performing arts, particularly theater. "Freeing the fashion show from its strict utilitarian and commercial purpose" was the goal of André Courrèges in 1965, when he had models strike bold, innovative poses while moving to avant-garde concrete music. This conversion of the runway into pure image was accomplished by Courrèges. On the calendars of the major fashion weeks, unexpected venues began to appear beginning in the 1980s. Katherine Hamnett presented a collection in a car park in West London in 1984, Issey Miyake took over a Paris metro station in 1989, and Jean-Paul Gaultier showed his collection in a boxing ring, all of which resulted in the transformation of ordinary spaces into dramatic backdrops for fashion.

In this sense, fashion functions simultaneously as a form of protection, expression, industry, and performance, so influencing how individuals perceive themselves as well as how societies conceptualize space, time, and identity.

Photo on the left, Iris Van Herpen, architectonics collection

3.2 FASHION EVENTS AS A MEDIUM FOR CULTURAL VALORIZATION

The last two decades have seen a proliferation of performative and communicative experiences that join the fashion world to the image of historical-architectural cultural heritage, both in the Italian and international context.

The biggest haute couture maisons increasingly seek aesthetic and symbolic links with places of great charm and significance, including them in advertising campaigns, photo shoots and, above all, fashion shows, which become major media events with meaningful implications both for the brands and for the enhancement of cultural heritage.

Architectural heritage (palaces, archaeological sites, historic squares) has opened up in recent decades to communication and enhancement activities that link it to other forms of art and culture, and it has found in high fashion an exceptionally good counterpart.

The historical, aesthetic and cultural qualities of a location, but also the intangible values associated with it, are recognized as an essential contribution to the success of the event, thanks to the sensory and contextualizing impact they have on the audience.

The choice of places as setting for an event (usually for the presentation of a new collection) is an integral part of the communicative project, which uses the performative characteristics of the space to emphasize the constituent characters of the collection, whether it is a historic building, an ad hoc set design, or a neutral environment.
The choice of cultural heritage representative places does not depend on reasons of territorial rootedness, but of thematic connection with the proposed collection.[55]

55. Greta Allegretti, Amath Luca Diatta, and Sara Ghirardini, "Moda E Patrimonio: Fashion Show Per La Valorizzazione Di Una Reciproca Bellezza," *AND Rivista Di Architetture, Città E Architetti* 42, no. 2 (2022): 38–45, https://www.and-architettura.it/index.php/and/article/view/590/546.

Photo on the left Fendi fashion show at Colosseum 2019.

3.2.1 Fendi – Trevi Fountain, Rome (2016)

It is generally agreed upon that the Trevi Fountain in Rome is not only one of the most well-known Baroque constructions, but also a powerful emblem of the historical and cultural character of the city. Fendi held their haute couture show on the Trevi Fountain in 2016, which was a direct presentation location. In order to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the company, the event was organized, and Fendi made a significant contribution to the restoration of the fountain, which was finished in the year 2015. Moreover, the event was conducted in order to commemorate the occasion. When it was first envisaged, the runway was supposed to be a platform made of translucent plexiglass that would be situated right in front of the lake. It was done in this manner in order to create the appearance that the models were strolling on the surface of the water, while at the same time insuring that the monument remained entirely visible and untouched. The emotional effect of the area was intensified as a consequence of water being transformed into a physical and symbolic medium. Additionally, the discourse between fashion, architecture, and urban memory was significantly strengthened as a result of this transformation. One of the most significant achievements was that the monument was able to keep its original shape as a result of the architectural decision that was made.[56]

Through the transformation of the Trevi Fountain into a living stage, the event was able to get greater attention from the general public as well as international attention. This was accomplished without directly competing with the monument itself in any way. A well-known illustration of how fashion events may function as vehicles for the aim of cultural valuing is the presentation that took place at the Trevi Fountain. Respect, sponsorship, and site-specific design are the foundations around which it is built, and it serves as an example of how fashion events may function as instruments. This fleeting action did not destroy the past; rather, it strengthened the sense of history, so generating a layer of meaning that is both fleeting and strong inside the fabric of history. A fashion show that has been meticulously prepared may serve as a mediator between modern innovation and historical tradition, as demonstrated by the example that has been provided here. As an extra advantage, it provides a model that is particularly relevant to policies that are centered on the process of producing history through the medium of fashion.[57]

56. Lauren Alexis Fisher, "Inside Fendi's Breathtaking Couture Show at Rome's Trevi Fountain," *Harper's BAZAAR*, July 8, 2016, https://www.harpersbazaar.com/fashion/fashion-week/news/a16573/fendi-couture-show-at-trevi-fountain/.
57. "Fendi Models Walk on Water in Rome's Trevi Fountain," *Fashion Network*, July 8, 2016, https://be.fashionnetwork.com/en-be/news/Fendi-models-walk-on-water-in-rome-s-trevi-fountain,711858.html.

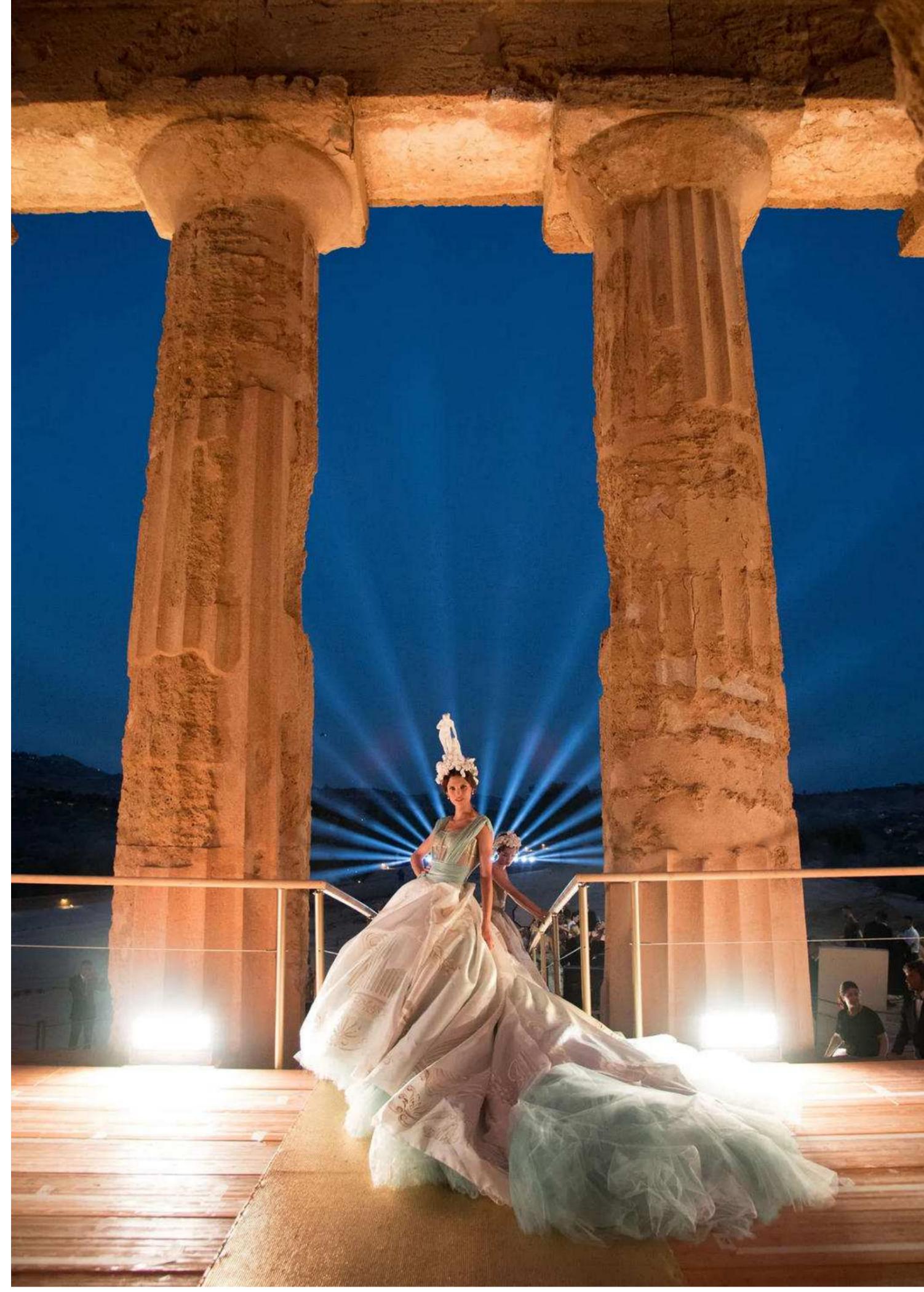Photo of Fendi fashion show, Trevi fountain (2016)
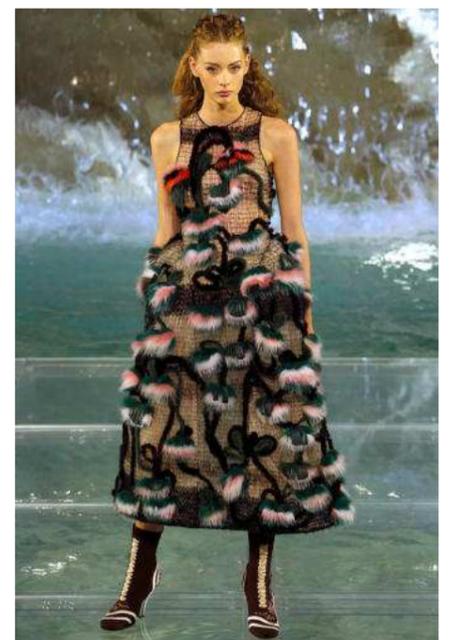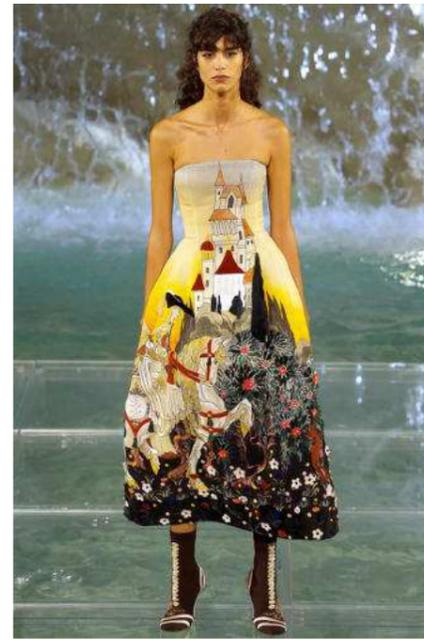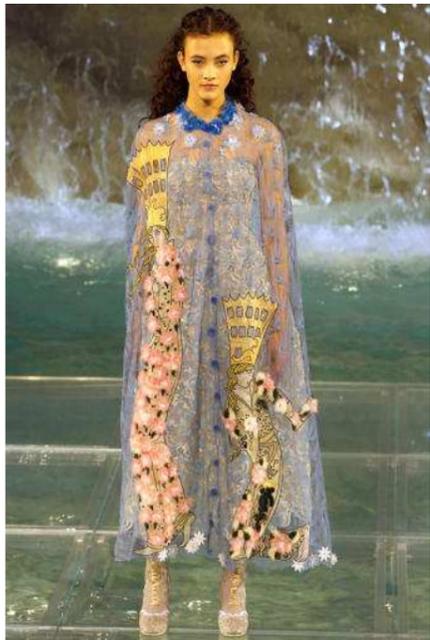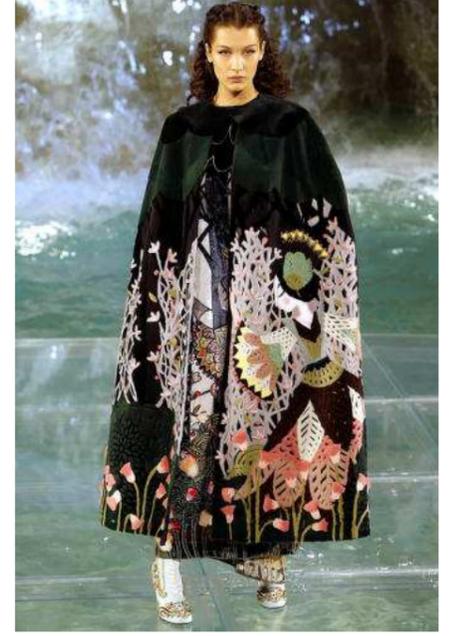
FASHION AND HERITAGE

Fendi's show - Trevi Fountain, Rome (2016)
Photo: Monica Feudi / indigitl.tv

3.2.2 Dolce & Gabbana – Valle dei Templi, Agrigento (2019)

Let's see an interesting case study about how to properly balance both the need of the brand to create an impressive fashion show and the need of the site to be kept safe and not damaged, since its historical value: it's fashion show by Dolce & Gabbana at the Parco Archeologico della Valle dei Templi in Agrigento (Italy).
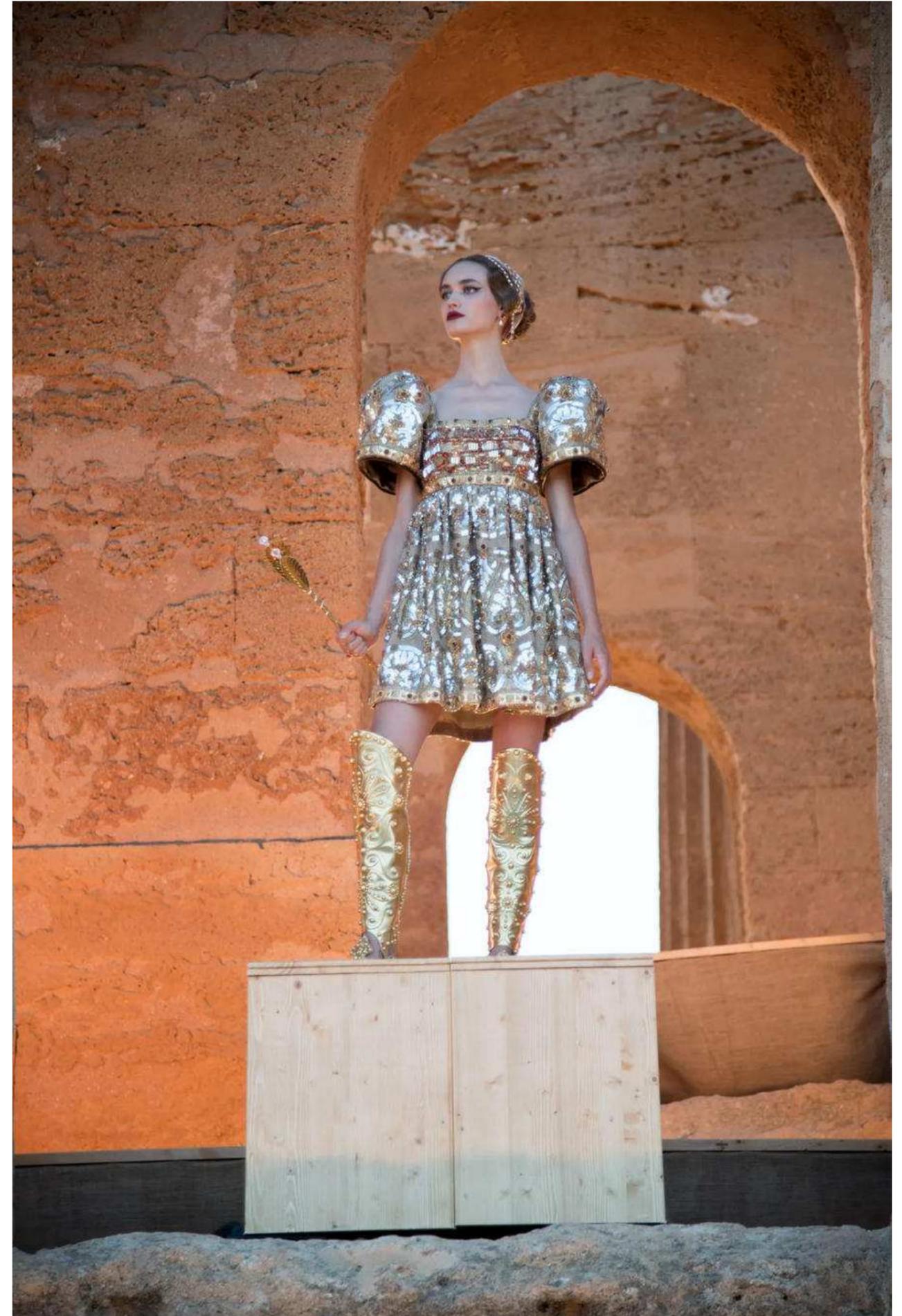
The inner space of the temple, considered 'sacred ground' and generally not accessible to the public, was occupied, but not touched, by a slightly elevated catwalk, designed for the runway show of the models but also for the site visitors who, in the following one and a half months, had access to the temple, in safe conditions, without barriers or transitions.

The wooden catwalk, which crosses the temple and extends outside it, is equipped with a narrow staircase to overcome the difference in height and allows the models to move both close to the public and inside the sacred place, placing themselves in a spectacular way in the space of the intercolumniums; the spectators, on the other hand, are positioned on the large scaffolding erected in front of the temple's west elevation.[58]

58. Allegretti, Diatta, and Ghirardini, "Moda E Patrimonio: Fashion Show Per La Valorizzazione Di Una Reciproca Bellezza."
Photo Dolce & Gabbana Alta Moda fashion show, Agrigento (2019)

Photos of Dolce & Gabbana Alta Moda fashion show, agregento 2019

Photos of Dolce & Gabbana Alta Moda fashion show, agregento 2019

3.2.3 Dior – El Badi Palace, Marrakech (2019)

The El Badi Palace (Marrakech) is a Saadian construction that goes back to the 16th century and is regarded to be one of the most significant historical sites in Morocco. In 2019, this residence served as the venue for the display of the Dior Cruise 2020 collection, available to the general public. El Badi Palace has been reduced to gigantic ruins in recent years. It is a depiction of a variegated past that includes beauty and abandonmentand, commemorating those who have gone away. This history is reflected in the palace's current state. The selection of the location was not only done for the sake of scenography: rather, it was interpreted in a manner that was deeply significant.[59]

Dior's contribution demonstrated a sense of love for the old structure by using a runway system that was both lightweight and reversible. Additionally, the runway system was carefully positioned within the courtyard.
The palace's stark walls, open sky and reflecting surfaces, which constituted an active component of the exhibition, contributed to make the collection and its fashion show memorable. All of this, without inflicting any harm to the historic fabric or making any changes to it.[60]

This event is more than simply a show in and of itself: it is a significant demonstration of how fashion can be used as a vehicle for the purpose of reaching cultural advantages. Throughout the course of the show, which was coordinated by Maria Grazia Chiuri, a number of different connections with African artisans were included. Additionally, allusions were made to the skilled workmanship of the members of the community. A narrative that was founded on geographical place, personal recalland personality was reinforced as a result of this, and it contributed to the story's overall strengthening.

A fashion event that is only present for a little period of time has the potential to improve people's impressions of a historic location, so creating a new layer of meaning that exists between the past and the present. In order to accomplish this goal, it is necessary to engage in careful planning and design. At the moment, there are a variety of approaches that are being used in order to combine fashion, architectural designand cultural heritage.[61]

59. Nerisha Penrose, "What You Need to Know About Dior's Cruise 2020 Show," *ELLE*, April 30, 2019, https://www.elle.com/fashion/a27319126/dior-cruise-2020-show/.
60. Lauren Alexis Fisher, "Dior Jets to Marrakech for Resort 2020," *Harper's BAZAAR*, April 30, 2019, https://www.harpersbazaar.com/fashion/fashion-week/a27321038/dior-marrakech-resort-2020-show/.
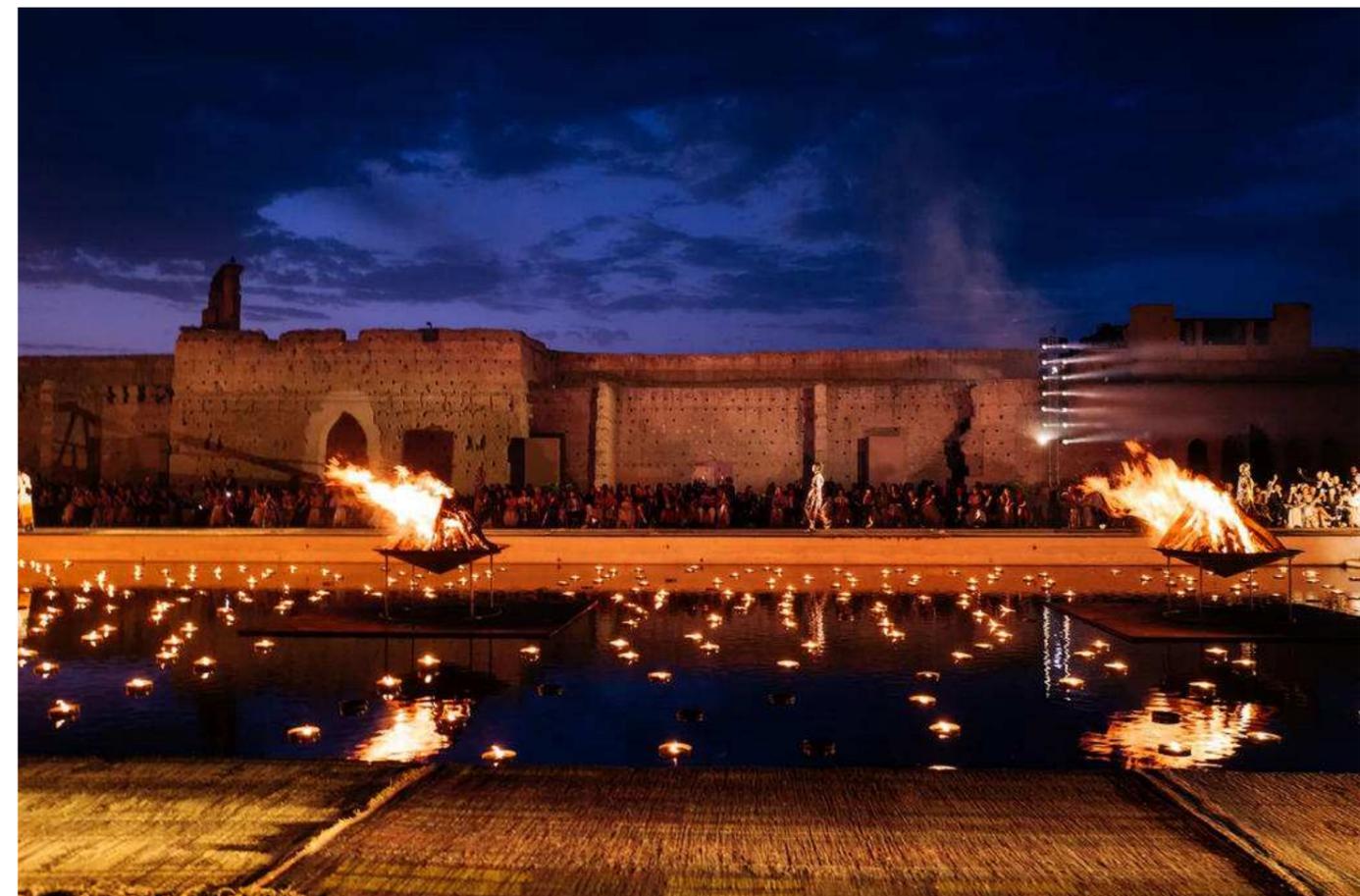61. Allegretti, Diatta, and Ghirardini, "Moda E Patrimonio: Fashion Show Per La Valorizzazione Di Una Reciproca Bellezza."
Photo on the left, Dior fashion show (2019) El badi palace

From the analysis of the aspects highlighted in the previous paragraphs, it emerges that the relationship between fashion shows and historical-architectural heritage is a rapidly expanding but highly complex phenomenon.

While fashion houses are increasingly interested in linking their image to artistic excellence for the construction of a brand narrative as an expression of the highest culture, the management of cultural heritage is opening up to a new conception of heritage as an expression of a living cultural fabric, which needs the interchange with the present in order to enhance the testimonies of the past.

The project, understood in its broadest sense, from the set design to the direction of the entire fashion show, assumes the role of an intermediary between fashion and heritage: an ephemeral layer that has the potential to unite the two spheres in a common narrative, binding them through the common thread of beauty to enhance the exceptional qualities of each.[62]

«The aesthetics of the ephemeral aims at the description and fixation of the moment, the distinction of historical thresholds; it does not imitate the existing but draws it as an autonomous fact in dialectical relationship with what the project proposes; project and existing are two autonomously readable entities that are perceived by difference».[63]

62. Allegretti, Diatta, and Ghirardini, "Moda E Patrimonio: Fashion Show Per La Valorizzazione Di Una Reciproca Bellezza."
63. P. Federico Caliari, *La Forma Dell'effimero: tra allestimento e architettura; compresenza di codici e sovrapposizione di tessiture* (Lybra Immagine, 2000).
Photos of Dior fashion show (2019) El badi palace

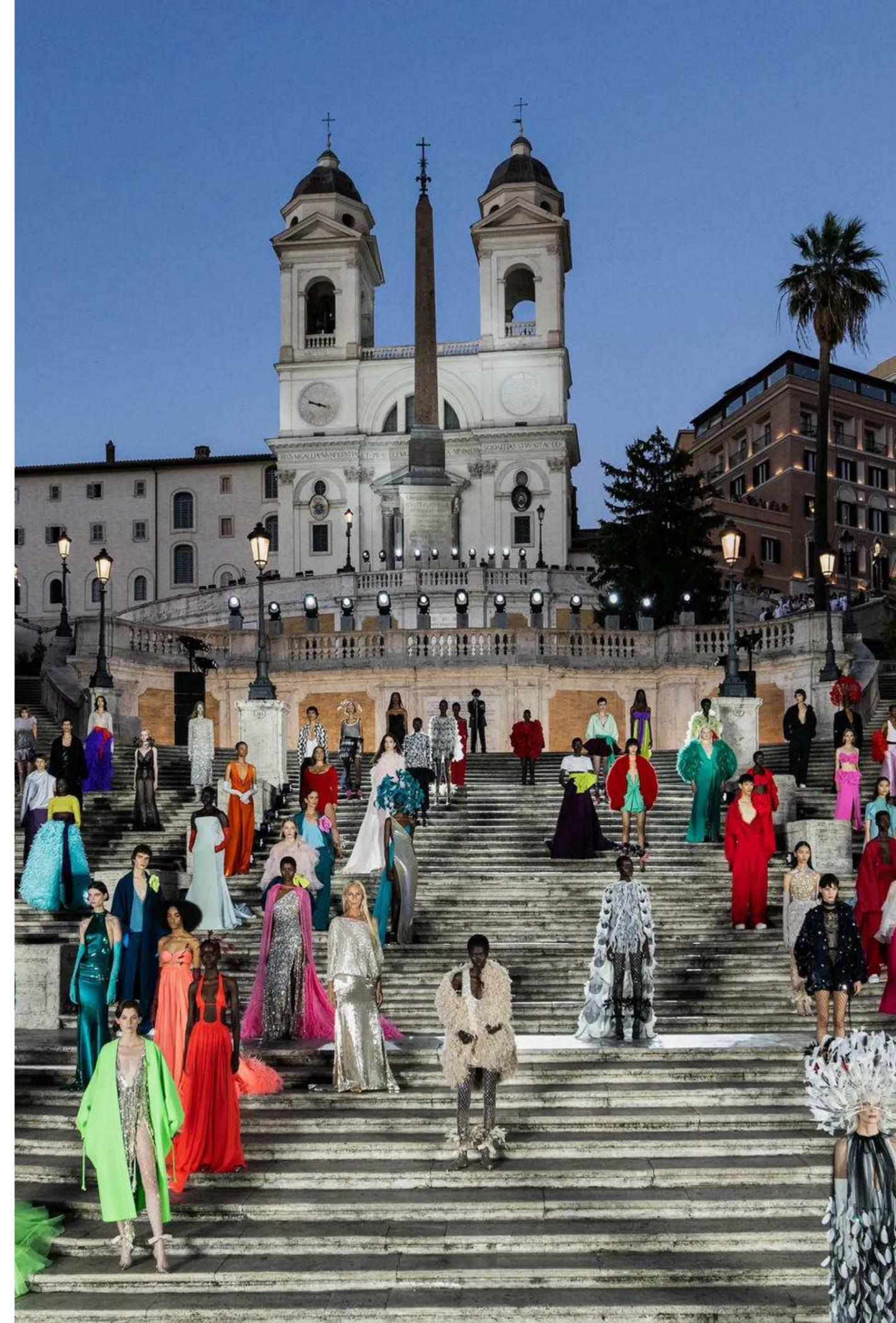## 3.2.4 Valentino's show - Spanish Steps, Rome (2022)

The designer Pierpaolo Piccioli is at ease in the world of haute couture, and he has added yet another remarkable undertaking to his portfolio with the Valentino presentation that took place in the fall of 2022 on the Spanish Steps in Rome. In addition to being rich in history, importance, and meaning, the setting functions as a meta-entity that is suited for heritage engagement that is driven by fashion. For its beauty and to establish a connection between Valentino's history and the city, Piccioli chose it.

During a press conference held before to the show at Valentino's offices in Piazza Mignanelli, Piccioli noted that this collection is really personal because it focuses on the legacy of the company. The maison was established in 1959 by Valentino Garavani and Giancarlo Giammetti, and the first atelier was located in Via Gregoriana, a narrow passageway paved with cobblestones that leads down from Trinità dei Monti on the Spanish Steps. Piccioli referred to the descent of the 136 travertine stairs inside Palazzo Mignanelli as "the closing of a circle," and he wanted models to make the descent before the presentation officially began. In doing so, it became a ritual of return, bringing together contemporary fashion with the architectural and emotional past of the city.

In an effort to create a sense of contradiction, the collection was given the moniker "The Beginning." After working with Valentino for twenty-three years, Piccioli endeavored to understand the equilibrium that exists in his personality between himself and Valentino. As an alternative to expressing his joy, he referred to the concert as "an ideal conversation with the house's lexicon," which was performed with greater intention. "But that's the way I feel, because every beginning brings this idea of promise and the future," he added. "Having a conversation about beginnings may sound like an oxymoron."

A quote attributed to Piccioli states that "Couture is a continuous beginning," meaning that one must always begin again, without any predefined patterns or maps. Through the use of this concept, couture is shown as a dynamic and ever-evolving cultural history rather than a static record, as different individuals may interpret the same design in different ways years later.[64]

64. Tiziana Cardini, "Valentino Fall 2022 Couture Collection," *Vogue Runway*, July 8, 2022, https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2022-couture/valentino.
Photos on the right, Valentino fashion show, spanish steps (2022)

145

Valentino's show - Spanish Steps, Rome (2022)
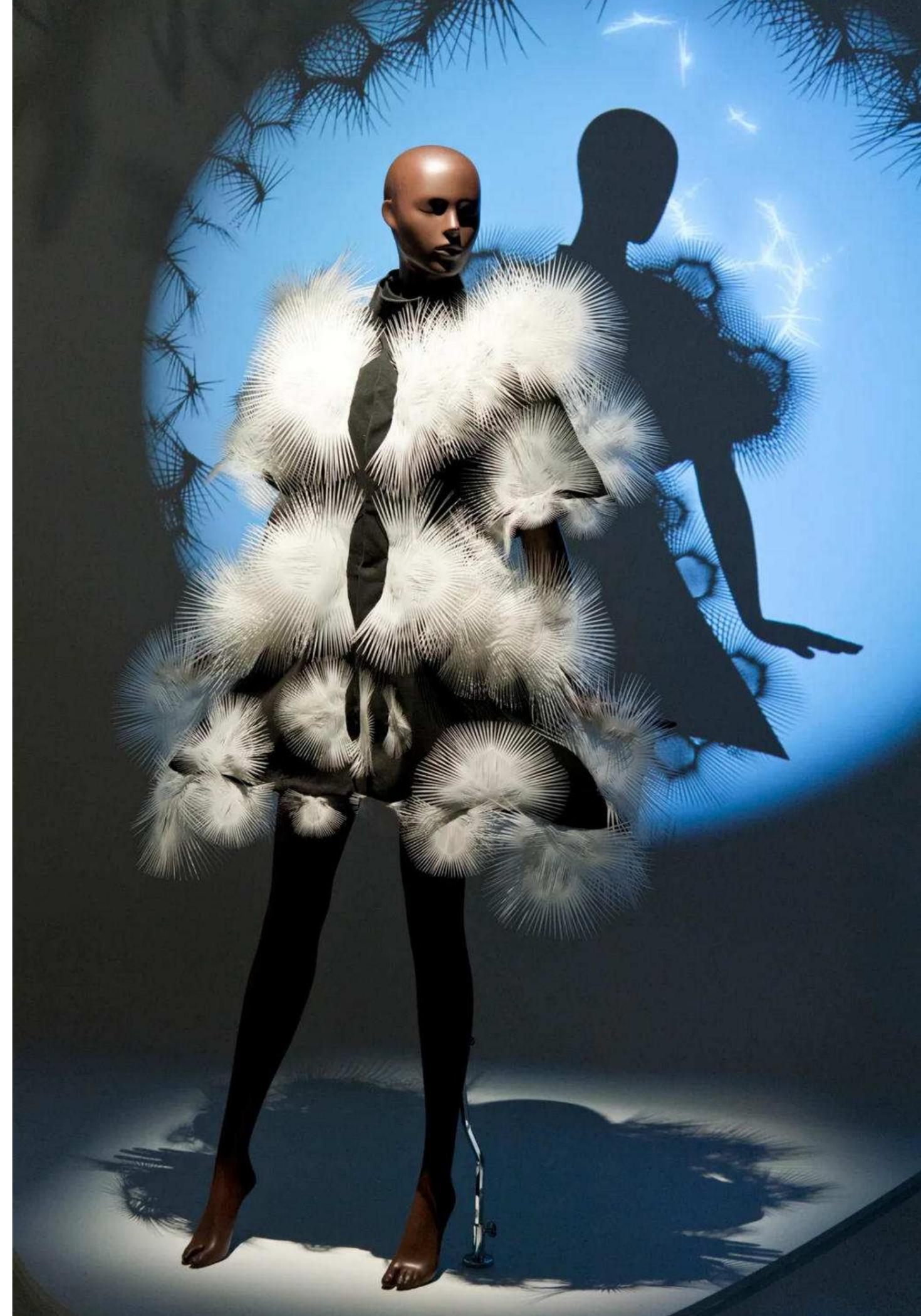Photo: Salvatore Dragone / Gorunway.com
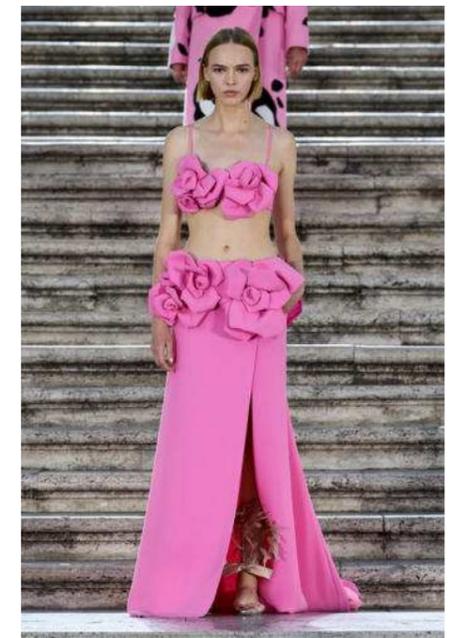
3.3 Fashion and Visual Exhibition

Fashion exhibitions are an area where fashion design and architecture meet and influence the other. When clothing is exhibited within a building, it is part of a larger space that interacts with the surrounding architecture to shape the way it is viewed. A similar thing happens in other exhibition spaces. The environment plays a significant role in shaping how the audience views the garment. The way in which the garment is displayed helps develop a deeper connection to the audience by allowing them to interact with fashion on a different level than through visual appeal. The way the architect has used the exhibit space creates an atmosphere that affects both the interpretation and emotional response to the clothing. Therefore, the design of an exhibition is crucial in establishing the overall mood and directing how a garment is perceived.

The way a garment interacts with the architectural space impacts the conceptual intentions of both disciplines. The presentation and selection of garments will also influence how the audience views them; therefore, architectural venues are defined by their location, structure, and identity; they will create different experiences for the audience. This is why the two fields (fashion and architecture) come together to create a more robust and coherent cultural narrative. One way that this takes place is through the application of architectural strategies in exhibition design. For example, lighting, spatial organization, and material choice will have a significant impact on how garments are exhibited in museums.[65]

149

3.3.1 Armani Silos

THE EXHIBITION presented for the first time in 2005 in Paris, the capital of haute couture, the Giorgio Armani Privé collection immediately emerged as a new expression of Armani style, both complementary to and distinct from prêt-à-porter, yet unified by the pursuit of a linear, elegant, and refined signature style.

This exhibition brings Giorgio Armani Privé to Milan, the beating heart of the Armani universe, offering a chance to admire these creations up close and appreciate their exquisite craftsmanship. The collection stems from a vision of modern creativity, expressed in refined lines, precious materials and techniques, and jewel-like embroidery created by skilled hands. With haute couture, Giorgio Armani allows himself to experiment and imagine freely yet never loses touch with reality, offering a surprising perspective on his style. He embraces new adventures, drawing on faraway places and atmospheres, crafting a serene and seductive allure, in a tale told in the present. Because, when they are authentic, fashion creations are timeless.

The exhibition is displayed across all four floors of the museum.[66]

«I've experimented with Haute Couture, while staying true to the essence of my personal concept of style. Experimenting illuminates me, that is why my creations are full of light.» – Giorgio Armani

© Stefano Guindani

66. "Mostra Armani Privé 2005-2025."
Photo of Giorgio Armani and the models captured by Stefano Guindani

Photo Armani Silos Exhibition
Captured by Delfino Sisto Legnani

Photo Armani Silos Exhibition
Captured by Delfino Sisto Legnani
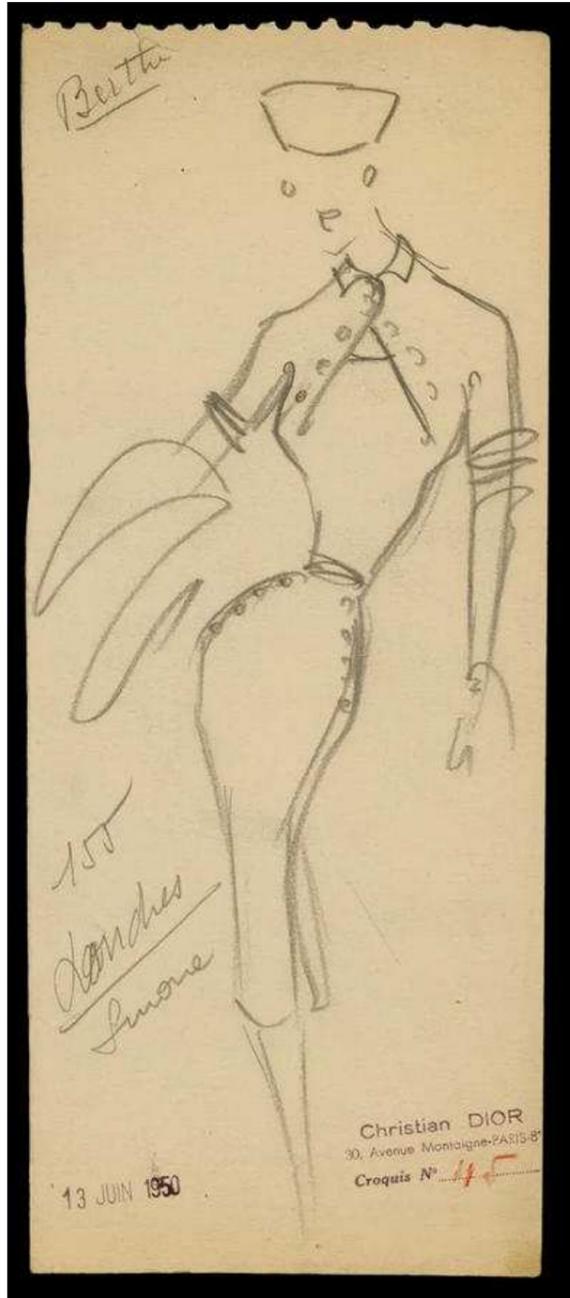
3.3.2 Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams

Designer of Dreams is a major retrospective exhibition dedicated to the history, identity, and creative legacy of the House of Dior. First presented at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris in 2017 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the maison, the exhibition has since traveled internationally to cities such as London, Shanghai, Tokyo, Doha, and New York, each time adapting its scenography to the host context. The exhibition narrates Dior's evolution through haute couture garments, sketches, archival documents, and immersive installations, presenting fashion as a cultural system rooted in memory, craftsmanship, and artistic dialogue rather than as a purely commercial product.

Photo: Dior Exhibition

A defining aspect of Designer of Dreams is its strong relationship between fashion, architecture, and scenography. Each section is conceived as a spatial narrative, where dresses are displayed within environments inspired by gardens, mirrors, ateliers, and historical interiors. The exhibition design transforms garments into elements of a broader architectural composition, encouraging visitors to experience fashion as a sequence of spaces rather than isolated objects. Through its ability to adapt to different cultural and architectural contexts, Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams demonstrates how fashion exhibitions can function as tools of cultural valorization, creating a dialogue between heritage, contemporary design, and collective imagination. In this sense, the exhibition aligns with strategies that treat fashion as an ephemeral yet meaningful layer capable of reactivating historic spaces through memory and storytelling.

Photo: Dior Exhibition

FASHION AND HERITAGE

"Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams," *Vogue Italia*, August 29, 2018.

3.3.3 Alexander McQueen Savage Beauty Exhibition

Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty is a landmark fashion exhibition that explores the work of the British designer through a powerful combination of garments, scenography, sound, and visual narration. First presented at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 2011 and later at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London in 2015, the exhibition transformed fashion into a deeply immersive and emotional experience. Rather than presenting clothing as isolated objects, Savage Beauty framed garments as part of a complex visual and spatial narrative, drawing on historical references, craftsmanship, and theatricality to evoke memory, identity, and transformation.

The exhibition design played a central role in translating McQueen's vision into space, using dark rooms, mirrors, soundscapes, and dramatic lighting to create a sequence of environments that functioned almost like architectural interiors. This curatorial approach positioned fashion as a form of cultural expression closely connected to art, history, and performance. Savage Beauty demonstrates how fashion exhibitions can act as powerful tools for cultural valorization, capable of engaging collective memory and reinterpreting heritage through contemporary creativity. By merging fashion, visual storytelling, and spatial design, the exhibition exemplifies how ephemeral installations can generate lasting cultural impact—an approach that resonates strongly with strategies for integrating fashion within historic and symbolic contexts.[67]

67. Lorelei Marfil, "Alexander McQueen Savage Beauty Exhibition," *WWD*, March 13, 2015, https://wwd.com/fashion-news/designer-luxury/gallery/alexander-mcqueen-savage-beauty-exhibition/alexander-mcqueen-exhibit-london006/.

4. THE PROJECT:
COLLAGES OF MEMORY

4.1.1 Deca Urban Garden – São Paulo, Brazil | Alex Hanazaki | 2017

Located in São Paulo, Alex Hanazaki's Deca Urban Garden features a large wooden pergola where 33 ceiling-mounted Quadrado showers with Red Gold finish create an illusionary water curtain, allowing a partial view of the garden. This feature introduces sound and movement to the space through the cascading water, enhancing the sensory experience for visitors. The water curtain is strategically integrated into the pathway of the garden, forming a dynamic transition between the reflecting pool area and the scenic interactive garden. By using Red Gold-finished fixtures and a carefully controlled water flow, the installation provides both visual drama and auditory relaxation, contributing to the overall immersive atmosphere of the garden

Photo on the right Yuri serodio
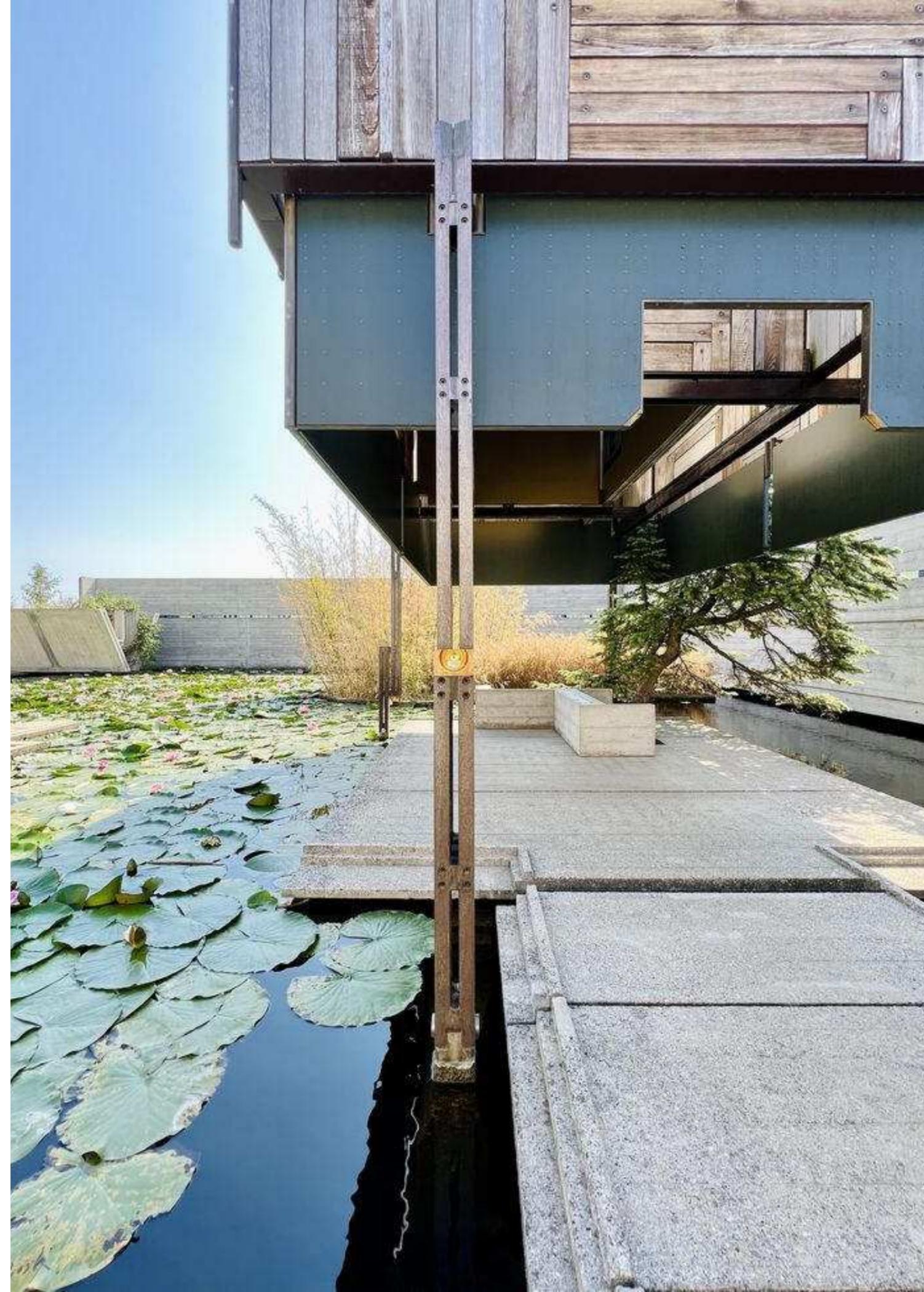DECA Urban Garden in Sao Paulo / Hanazaki Paisagismo | ArchDaily
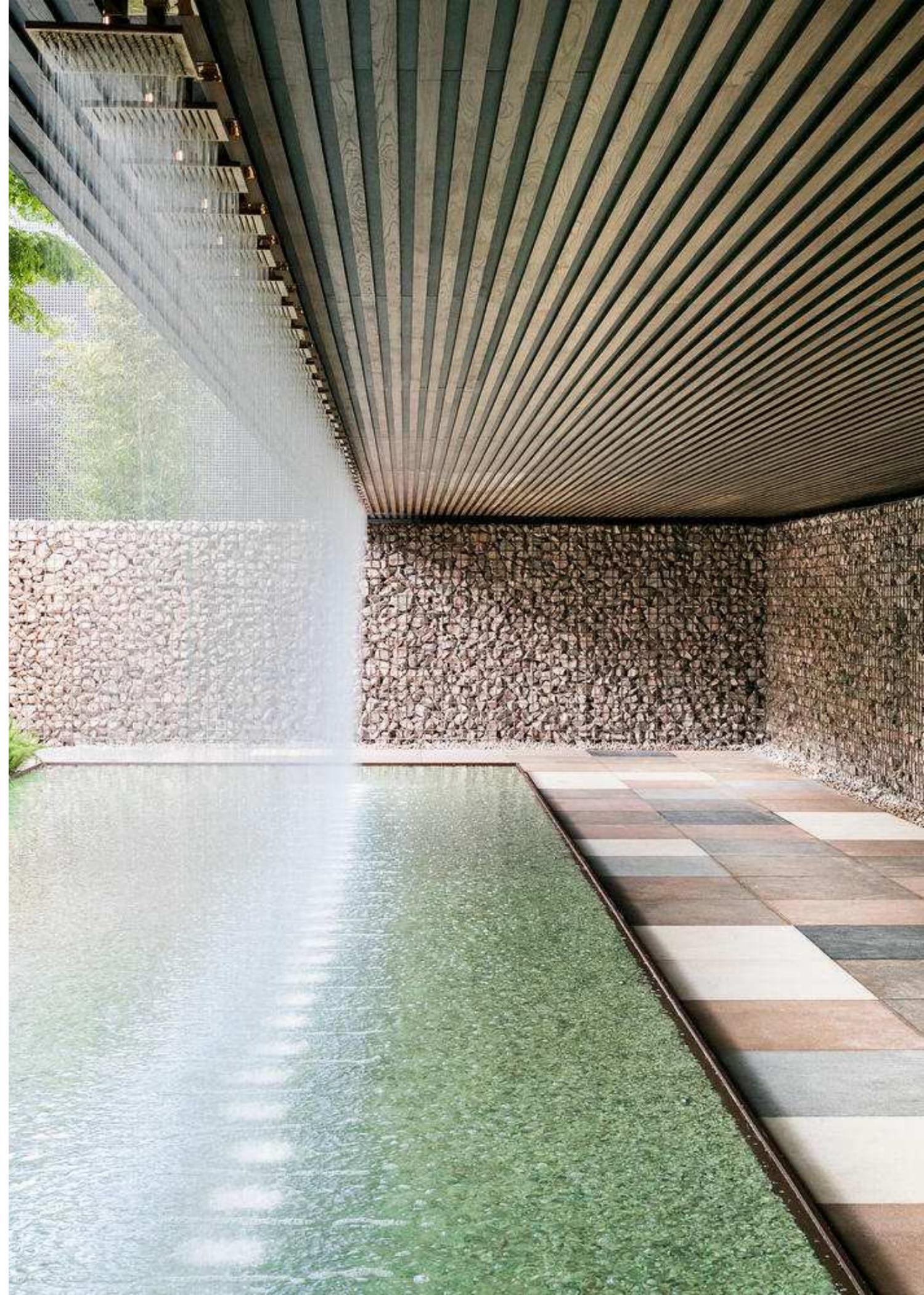
4.1.2 Tomba Brion, Carlo Scarpa's Masterpiece

The tour of the complex begins at the cemetery entrance: a path leads to a weeping pine tree that envelops the entrance. Here we are greeted by what has become the Tomb's most powerful icon: two intersecting circles , symbolizing Yin and Yang , opposites meeting, a man and a woman romantically united, merging into a single soul .
From here you can choose whether to go right or left: the invitation to "get lost" and then find yourself again and the search for the self are, in fact, another constant in the project.

On the right, the corridor leads to a crystal gate that rises and lowers thanks to a mechanism that makes it emerge from the water, symbolizing the beginning of a cathartic journey of initiation . This side of the work rests, in fact, on water, an emblem of rebirth that finds its apex in the Zen Garden , an island adorned with splendid water lilies with a pavilion dedicated to meditation at its center.[68]

68. Lavinia Colonna Preti, "Tomba Brion, Il Capolavoro Di Carlo Scarpa," *Veneto Secrets*, March 2024, https://venetosecrets.com/arte-stile/tomba-brion-il-capolavoro-di-carlo-scarpa/
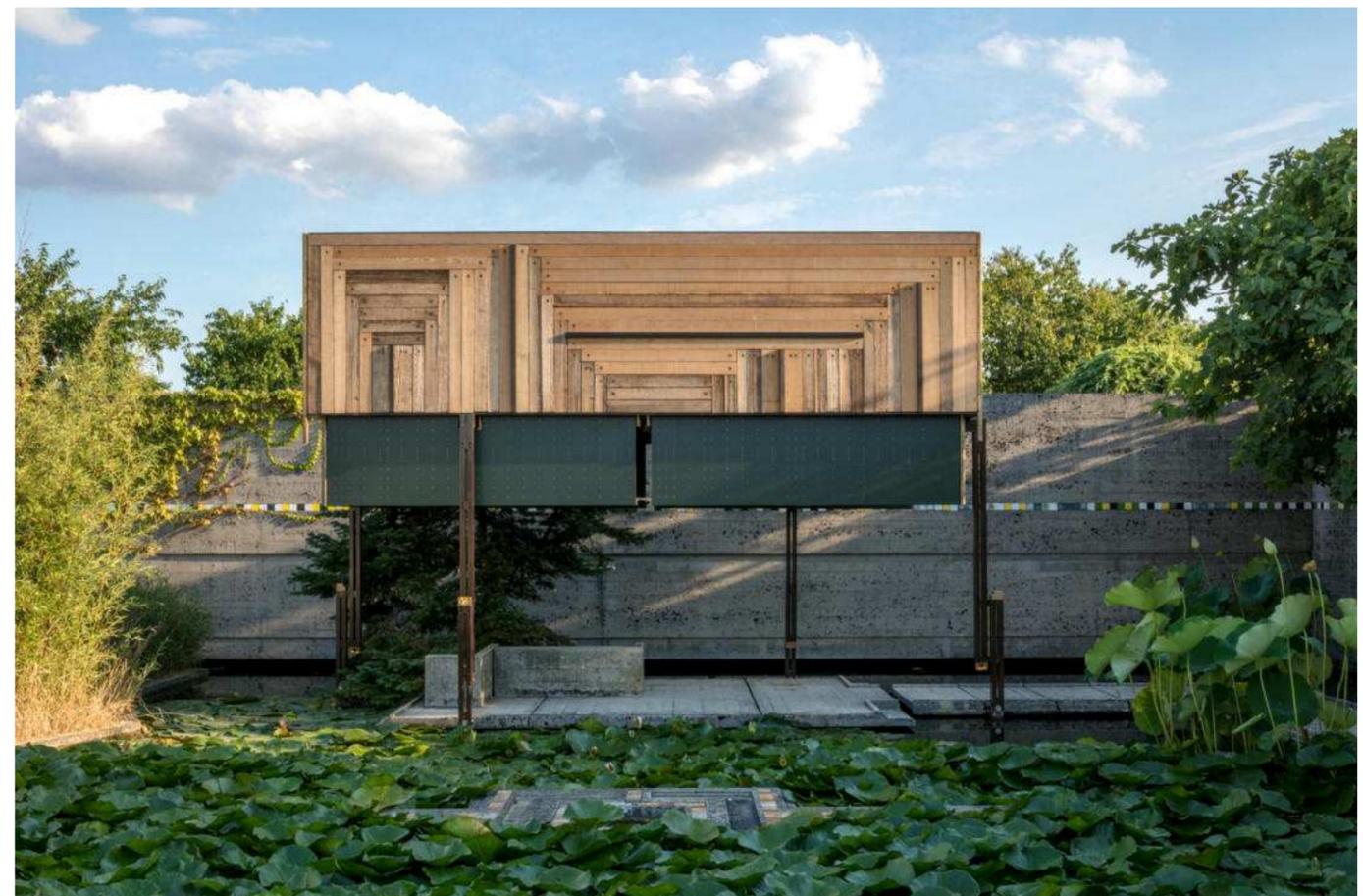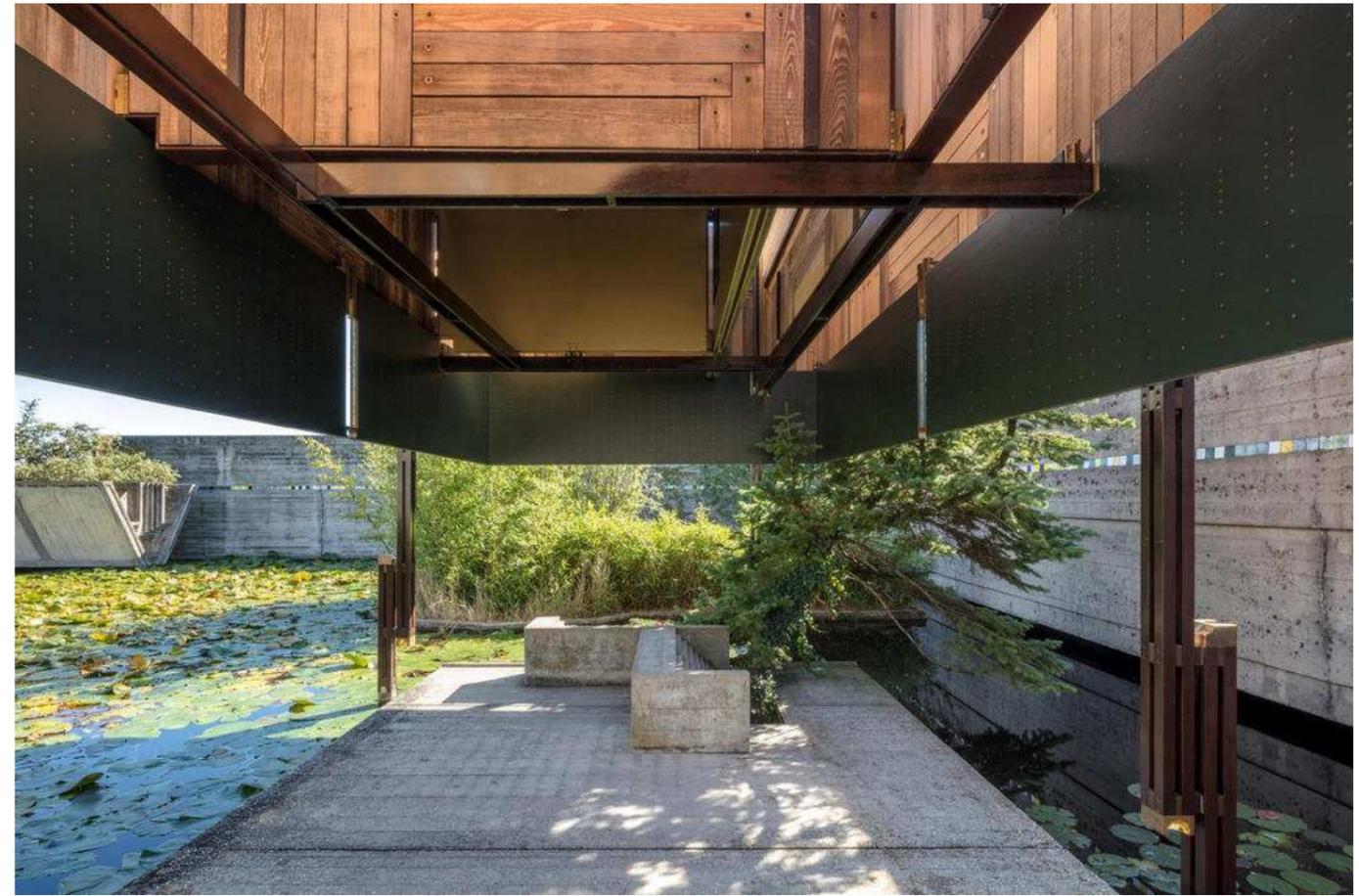Photo Brion Tomb - Carlo Scarpa

Just by looking at any detail , it's clear that everything here has meaning and was created by master craftsmen . It's the overwhelming sense of harmony that contrasts with the complex's avant-garde architecture that reveals Scarpa's genius: thanks to his immense culture and love of history, the architect engages in a dialogue with the ancient, inventing piece by piece, putting his immense creativity at the service of the search for Truth and Beauty , a goal he achieves here thanks to his study of Eastern philosophies combined with his mastery of construction techniques and materials.[69]

At the other entrance is the chapel, almost completely submerged in water, made of raw concrete, and flooded with natural light. It is accessed through a small triangular atrium connected to the square floor plan. The entire structure is organized in a series of oblique views. The path continues through a corridor tangent to the chapel, lit by slits.

The adjoining meditation pavilion reveals its strong influence by Japanese architecture, surrounded by ponds in which water lilies float and set apart from the rest of the elements of the ensemble.

Turning to the right of the entrance pavilion, a narrow concrete corridor with a ceiling decorated with small ebony tiles leads to another building, the Meditation Pavilion, whose roof of metal, larch wood, and marine plywood seems to levitate suspended on three slender steel columns. From the pavilion, the gaze glides over a body of water populated with water lilies, past a meadow to rest on an arched structure.[70][71]

69. Colonna Preti, "Tomba Brion, Il Capolavoro Di Carlo Scarpa."
70. Mili Sánchez Azcona, "Architecture That Hides Stories: A Look at the Brion Tomb by Carlo Scarpa," *ArchDaily*, January 16, 2023, https://www.archdaily.com/991218/architecture-that-hides-stories-a-look-at-the-brion-tomb-by-carlo-scarpa.
71. "Brion-Vega Cemetery and Brion Tomb," *Architecture History*, accessed December 28, 2025, https://architecture-history.org/architects/architects/SCARPA/OBJECTS/1969-1972,%20Brion-Vega%20Cemetery%20and%20Brion%20Tomb,%20San%20Vito%20d'Altivole,%20Italy.html
Photo on top by Federico Covre

THE PROJECT:COLLAGES OF MEMORY

"Linda Fregni Nagler «Per comandare all'aria»", *Bonack Aesthetic Engineering*, Accessed December 29, 2025.

4.1.4 ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA
FASHION SHOW AT PALAZZO MONDADORI

Ermenegildo Zegna has chosen Palazzo Mondadori for the fashion show of the men's summer collection 2019
Ermenegildo Zegna has chosen Palazzo Mondadori for the fashion show of the men's summer collection 2019 The long runway between the reflecting pools in front of Palazzo Mondadori, one of the most important achievements of the Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, was the evocative location for the fashion show of the men's collection for spring/summer 2019 of Ermenegildo Zegna. This extraordinary, monumental yet evanescent work of architecture, seeming almost to float in the context, became an ideal backdrop for a collection that combines a sense of impalpable lightness with forceful, functional lines.

photos Ermenegildo Zegna fashion show of the men's summer collection 2019

4.1.5 MANUS X MACHINA EXHIBIT AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, New York, NY (2016)

THE PROJECT:COLLAGES OF MEMORY

4.2 COLLAGES OF MEMORY

In our project, Villa Adriana is interpreted as a collage of memory, a place where time, space, history, and emotions overlap. The villa is not perceived as a static archaeological site, but as a living landscape shaped by layers of presence and absence. Based on this interpretation, the design concept of the project is defined as a "collage of memory," in which fragments of time, space, and identity are combined to generate new meanings.

The project proposes a fashion week articulated over seven days, seven locations, and seven brands, each representing a different dimension of memory. For the purpose of this thesis, the focus is placed on two of these seven days, highlighting two fashion shows that explore the role of water as a spatial and symbolic element, used in different forms and with distinct meanings.

Through contrast between hiding and revealing, opacity and reflection, water becomes the central narrative device of the project. The villa is transformed into a living stage, where architecture, fashion, water, and time interact, and where each movement and reflection generates a new layer of memory.

A seven-day fashion extravaganza is suggested to be held at Villa Adriana at the following seven main sites: Piazza d'Oro, Tre Esedre, Tempio di Venere, Teatro Marittimo, Tempio di Apollo, the Giardino and the Grandi Terme. These are the seven key venues.

The selection of these locations was done with the intention of demonstrating the villa as a continuous spatial and symbolic structure. By combining them, it is able to gain an understanding of the fundamental axis of the villa, as well as its geometric relationships and the variety of capabilities it offers.

This is because each place has a particular architectural language, which might include things like center, symmetry, introspection, ritual, movement, or group gathering. This allows each location to provide a unique scenographic and sensory experience.

By extending out the event over a period of seven days, the effort transforms Villa Adriana into a narrative that unfolds in sequence. Therefore, visitors are encouraged to consider the site as a cultural setting that is interrelated rather than as a collection of ruins that are not connected to one another.

4.3 FIRST DAY: MAISON MARGIELA SHOW AT TRE ESEDRE

Plan of Tre Esedre during the fashion show
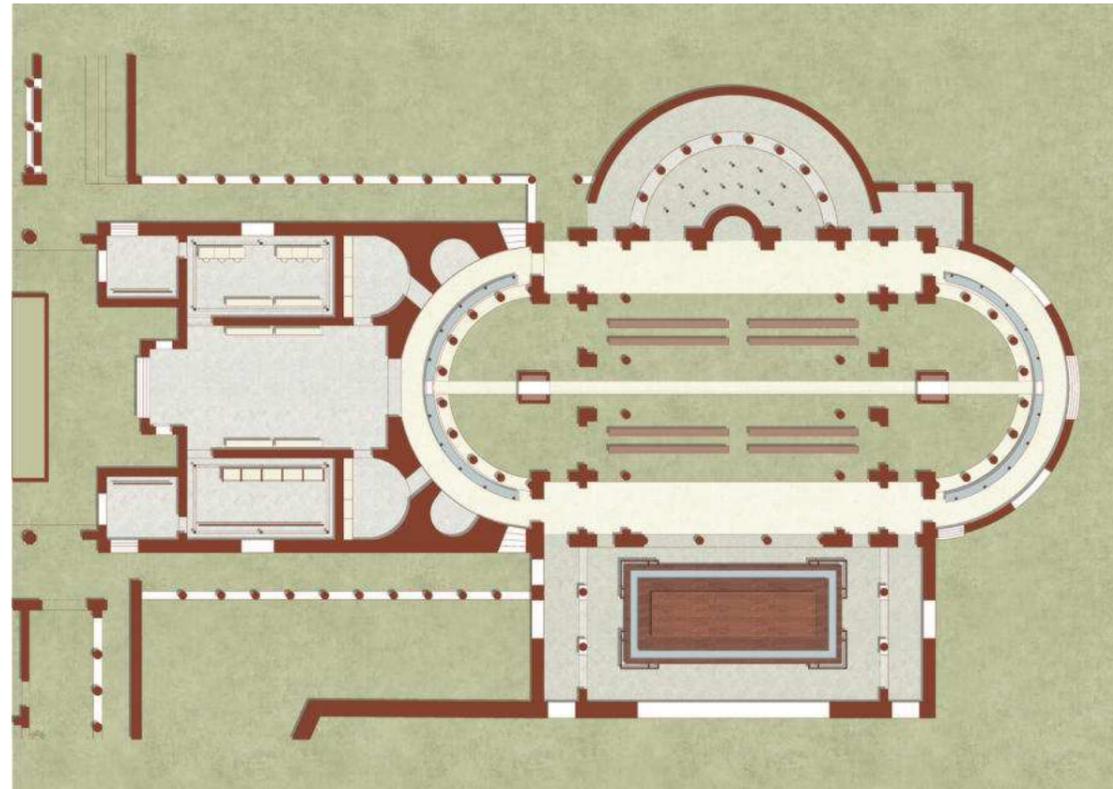
Plan of the roof of Tre Esedre during the fashion show
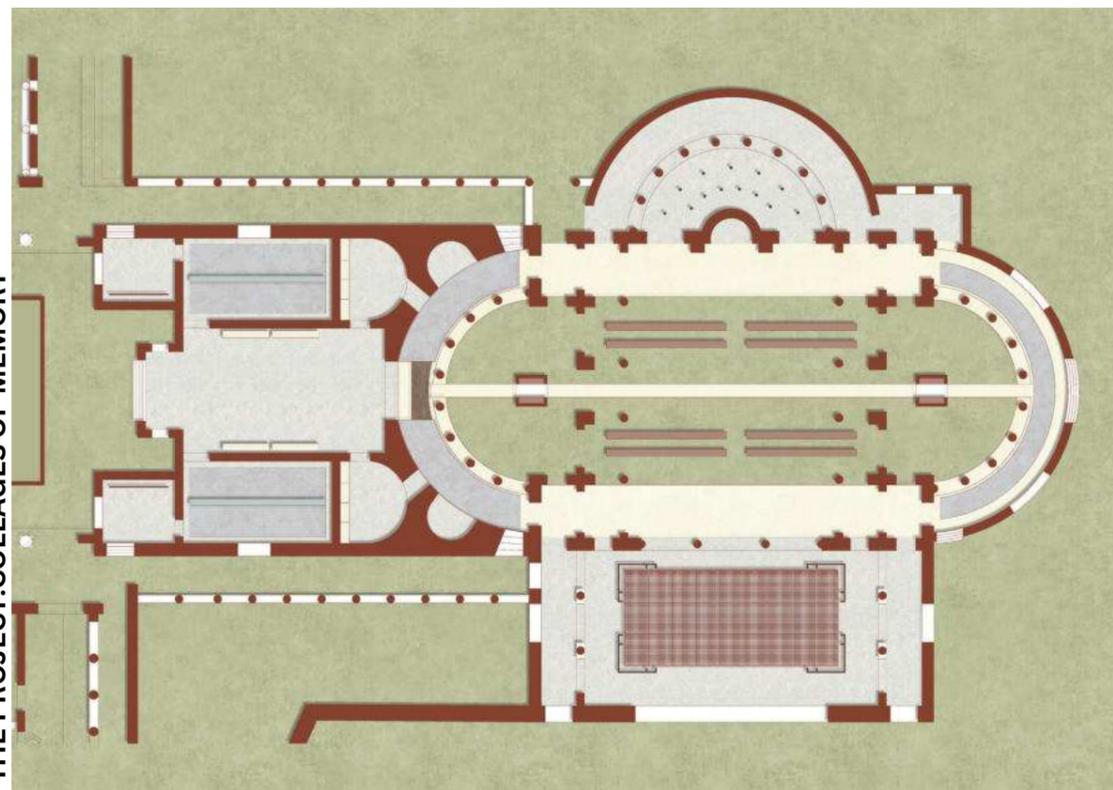
Memory as Disappearance and Filtered Identity

At the Tre Esedre, the fashion show is designed for Maison Margiela and is centered on the concept of memory as disappearance and anonymity. Inspired by the brand's approach to identity, often expressed through the concealment of faces and the rejection of individual recognition, the project interprets memory as something fragmented, filtered, and never fully accessible. Identity, like memory, does not appear as a fixed image, but as a layered and unstable condition.

The spatial strategy is organized around the idea of filtering perception. The fashion show area is placed at the center of the Tre Esedre, where both the runway and the audience seating are concentrated, reinforcing a condition of proximity and immersion. This central space is framed on both the left and right sides by curved water curtain elements, which follow the geometry of the site and act as permeable boundaries. Through the movement of water, the architecture and the bodies of the models are partially revealed and concealed, transforming vision into a continuous process of appearance and disappearance.

Audience access is organized from the lower part of the plan, where visitors enter through a pavilion-like structure located in correspondence with an existing fountain. Rather than altering or covering the archaeological remains, the intervention is conceived to protect and enhance them, allowing the presence of water to re-establish a historical continuity with the original function of the site. Before reaching the seating area, spectators are invited to experience this transitional space, where architecture, water, and movement introduce the conceptual narrative of the fashion show.
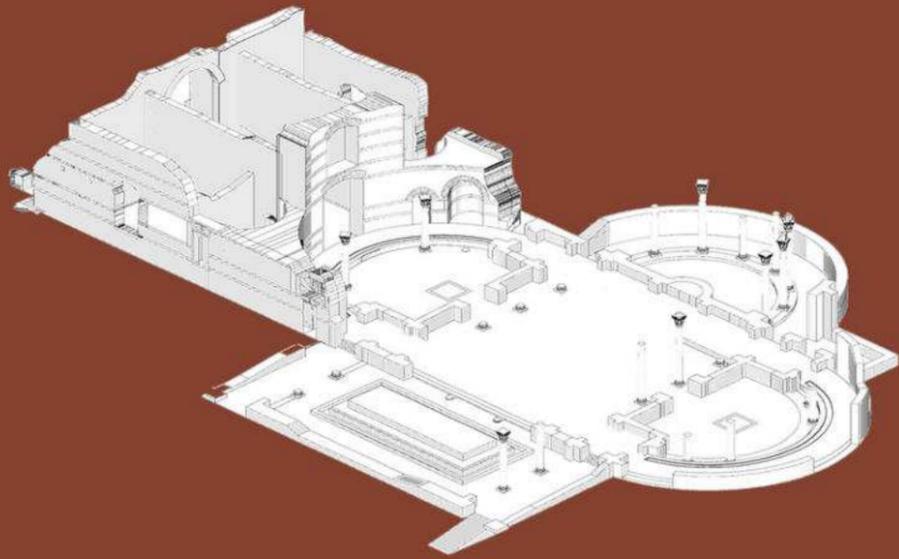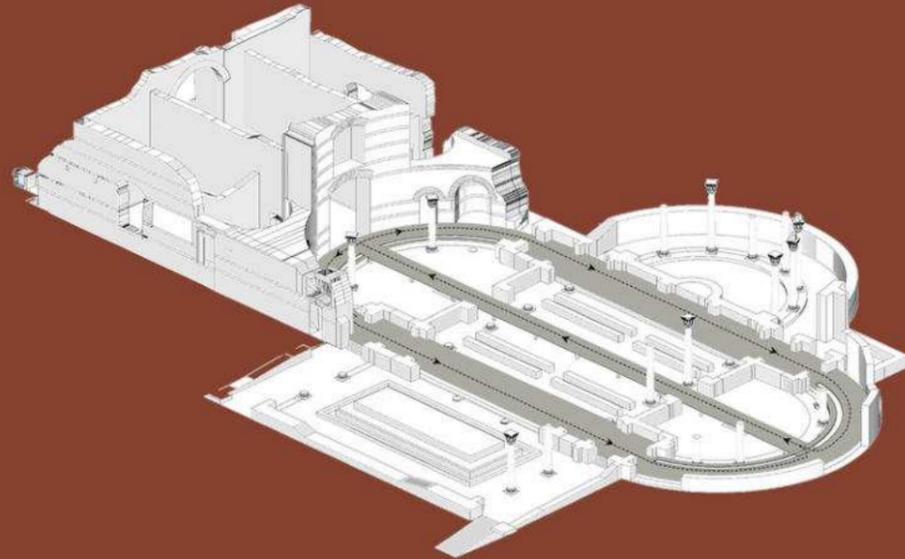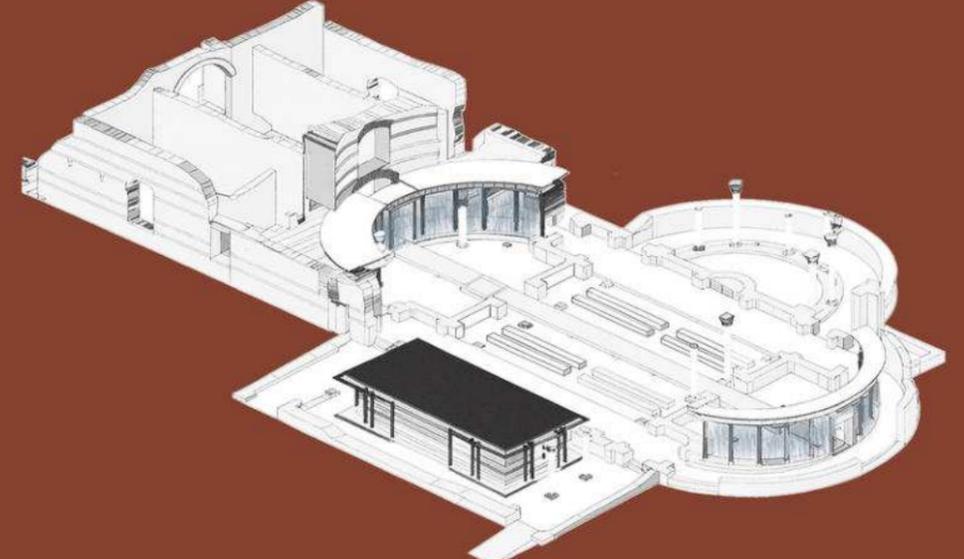
STEP 1 – ANALYSIS OF EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

STEP 2 – INTEGRATION OF THE RUNWAY

STEP 3 – DESIGN OF THE WATER CURTAIN AND FOUNTAIN STRUCTURE

The main architectural element of the intervention is a water curtain, which acts as a permeable filter between the audience, the models, and the surrounding architecture. This curtain partially conceals bodies and spaces, blurring visual perception and transforming identity into an unstable and shifting presence. In this way, water becomes a tool for translating the Margiela concept into space, allowing identity to dissolve and reappear through movement.

The water layer interacting with the ancient structure creates a collage-like visual effect, where architecture, body, and reflection overlap. Memory is no longer linear or complete, but composed of fragments and interruptions.

Models enter the scene from a raised stage and cross the space through the water curtain. A solid surface interrupts the flow of water at specific points, allowing the models to pass through the curtain, reinforcing the tension between concealment and revelation. Light positioned above the structure enhances reflections and shadows, intensifying the ephemeral quality of the experience.

The backstage area is positioned on the left side of the plan, ensuring a clear separation between public and operational functions, while maintaining a fluid connection to the runway. Above this area, an arched roof structure is introduced, hosting a photographic exhibition inspired by Maison Margiela's visual language. This exhibition further reinforces the idea of collage and fragmentation, extending the narrative beyond the runway and into a spatial sequence of images and reflections.

In the upper portion of the plan, lighting elements are placed between the columns, emphasizing the rhythm of the ancient structure and interacting with the water curtains. Light becomes an additional filtering layer, enhancing shadows, reflections, and movement. In this configuration, the runway is no longer a simple linear path, but a spatial device where body, architecture, water, and light collaborate to transform memory into a lived and perceptive experience.

Cross-section of the fashion show.

Longitudinal sectionsof the fashion show.

The entrance to the intervention is conceived as a transitional and contemplative space, where spectators are invited to slow down and engage with the structure before the fashion show begins. This area corresponds to the location of a former fountain, which is carefully preserved and protected by the new pavilion-like intervention. Rather than altering the archaeological remains, the project safeguards their integrity, allowing water and architecture to re-establish a subtle continuity with the historical function of the site while enhancing its spatial and symbolic presence.

The design of this structure draws direct inspiration from Carlo Scarpa's work, with particular reference to the Tomba Brion. Scarpa's architectural language—defined by precision, layered compositions, and a deep sensitivity to context informes both the spatial logic and the material articulation of the pavilion. Overlapping planes and carefully calibrated junctions create a sense of stratification, echoing the idea of memory as a layered and fragmented condition.

The upper part of the structure is characterized by two intersecting surfaces that overlap and define the space above the runway, generating a feeling of lightness and suspension. These elements are supported by slender metal columns, selected for their minimal visual impact and their ability to maintain a respectful dialogue with the archaeological context. Through this structural strategy, the pavilion appears as a temporary and reversible presence, hovering lightly above the ruins rather than resting upon them.

After this initial spatial experience, spectators are guided toward the seating platforms facing the runway. The transition from exploration to performance is gradual, reinforcing the narrative sequence of the fashion show and allowing architecture, movement, and perception to work together in preparing the audience for the scenographic experience that unfolds at the center of the Tre Esedre.
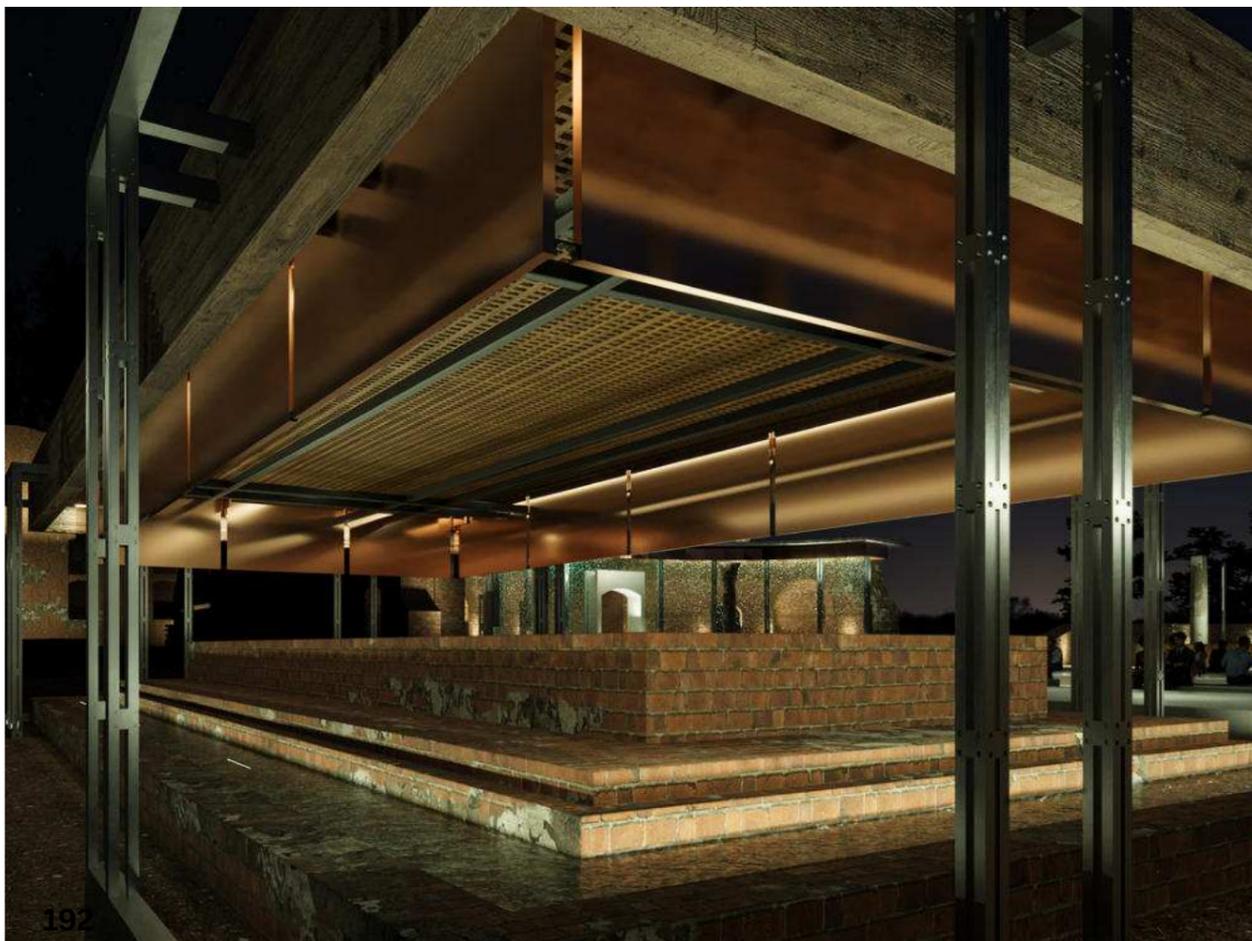
4.4 SECOND DAY: GIORGIO ARMANI SHOW AT PIAZZA D'ORO

Memory as Reflection and Clarity
The intervention at Piazza d'Oro is conceived as an island-like structure, with the runway placed at its center and the audience positioned on both sides. This spatial configuration emphasizes symmetry, balance, and clarity, echoing both the geometric order of the site and the core values of the Armani brand, which are rooted in simplicity, precision, and timeless elegance. The central position of the runway transforms it into the main axis of the intervention, reinforcing a clear and legible spatial hierarchy.

The movement of the models follows a linear and controlled sequence. They enter the runway from the right side of the plan, where the backstage area is located, ensuring a clear functional separation between preparation and performance. This directional movement strengthens the sense of order and continuity, guiding the viewer's gaze along the central axis and reinforcing the formal clarity of the composition.

Before entering the fashion show area, the audience is guided through an exhibition space designed as a moment of pause and anticipation. Here, spectators are invited to spend time engaging with the displays before the performance begins, establishing a gradual transition from observation to participation. This sequence reinforces the idea of memory as recall, allowing visitors to consciously move through space and time before encountering the reflective and performative core of the fashion show.
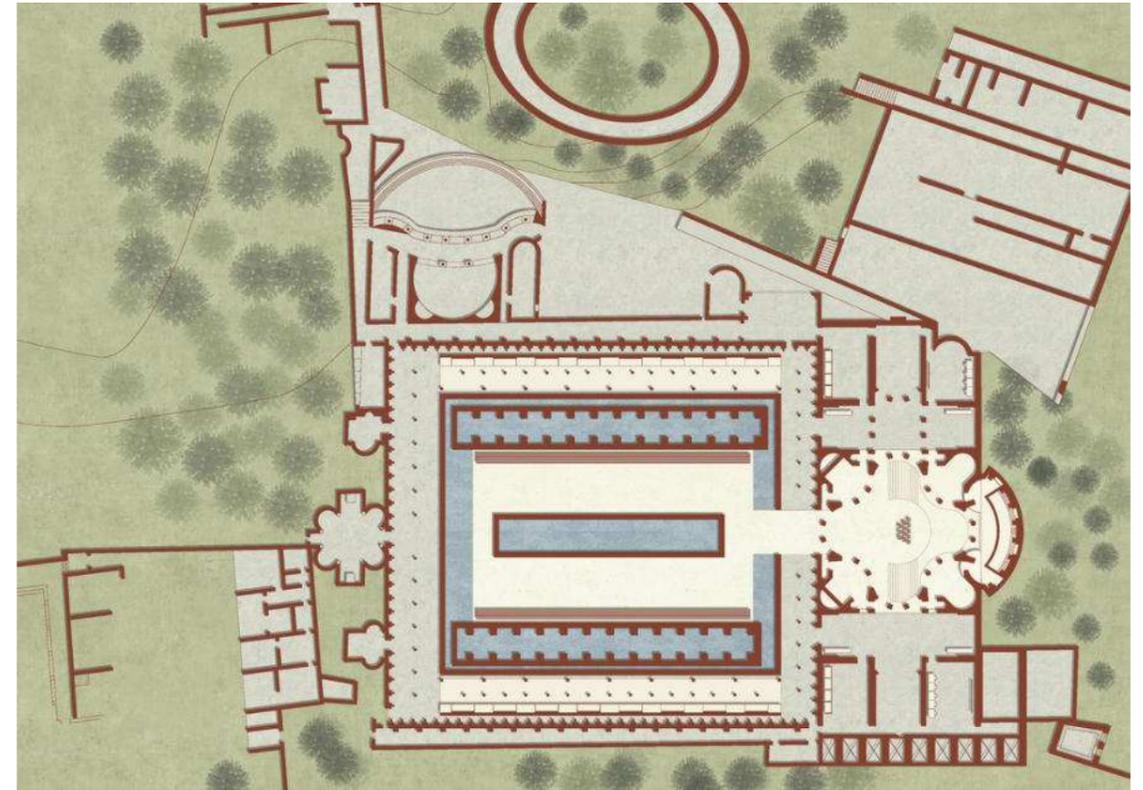

Plan of Piazza d'oro during the fashion show
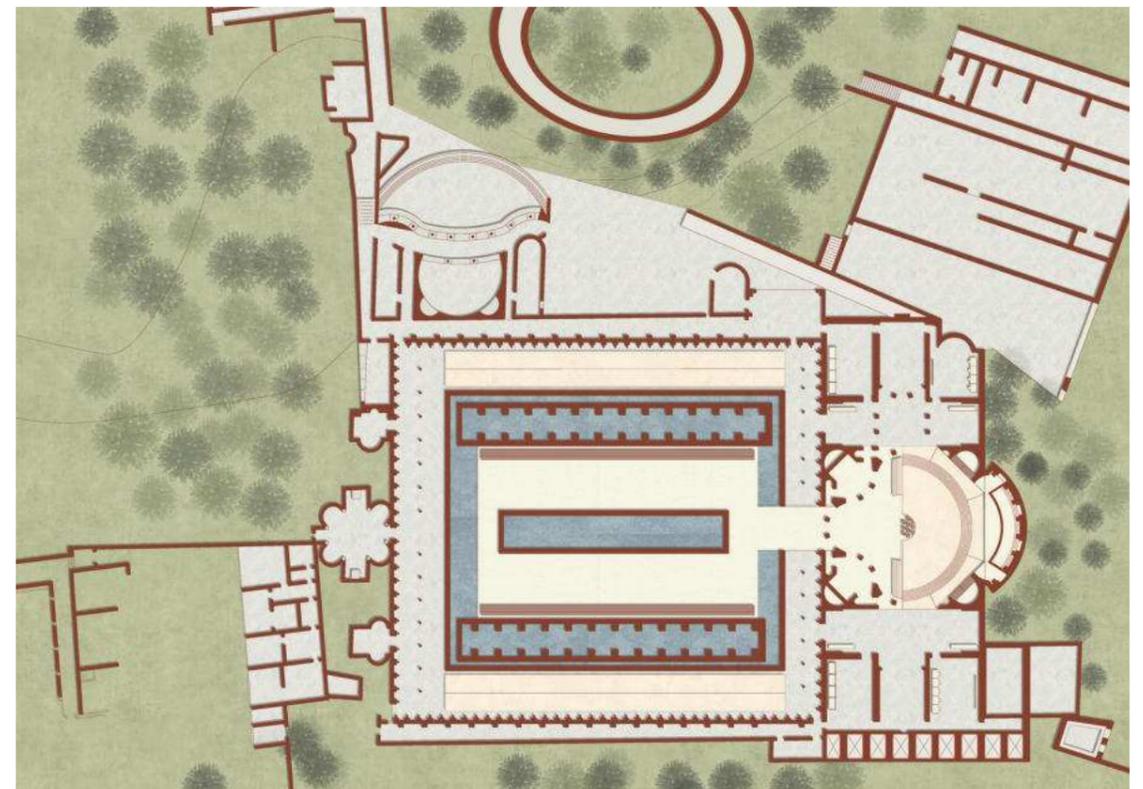
Plan of the roof of Piazza d'oro during the fashion show

THE PROJECT:COLLAGES OF MEMORY

Adjacent to the runway, on the middle-right side of the plan, the stage for the live music performance is positioned as an elevated element. The presence of the band contributes to the atmosphere of the show while remaining visually integrated into the overall composition. A system of stairs connects the different levels, allowing smooth circulation and reinforcing the layered yet coherent spatial organization of the intervention.
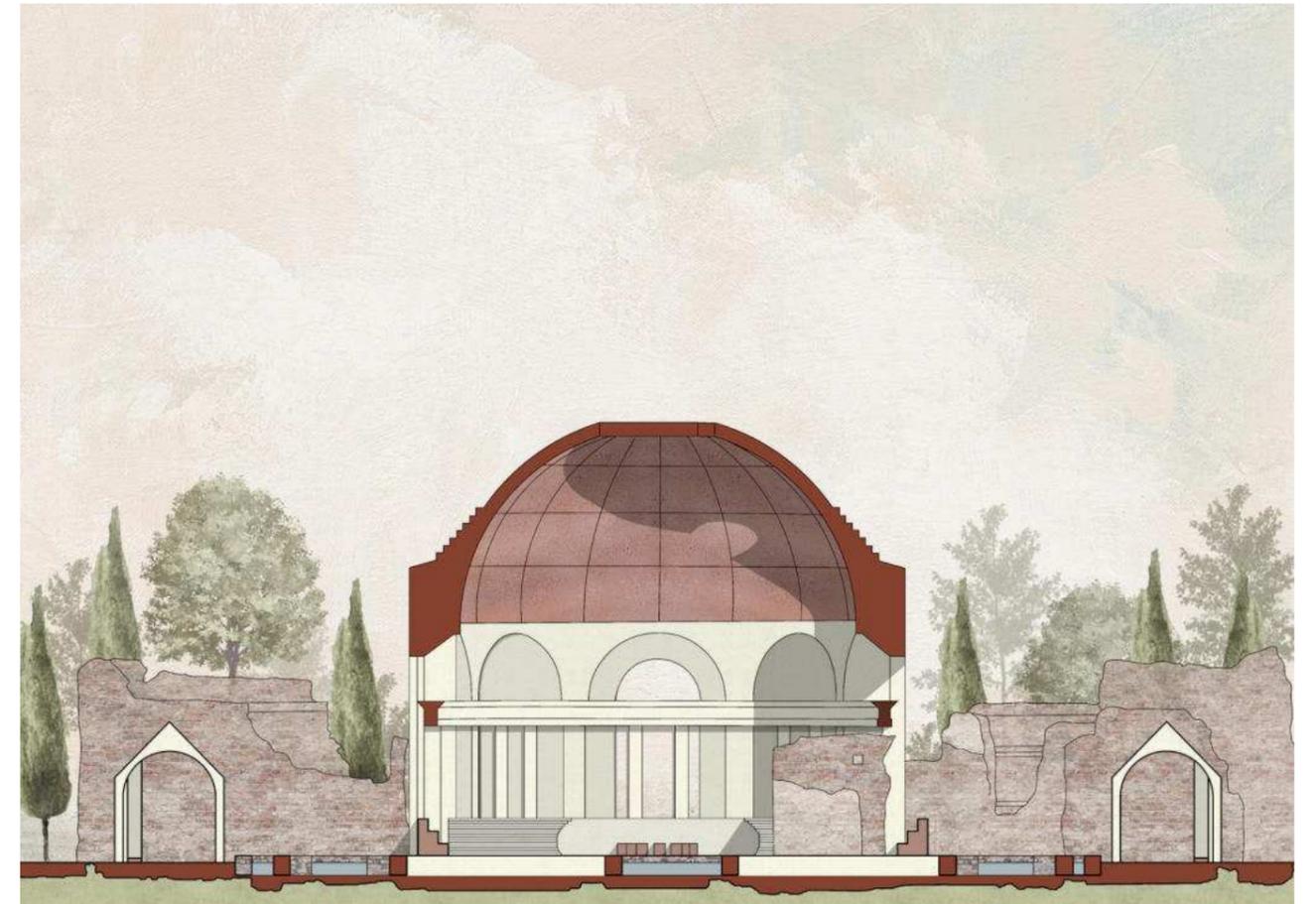
Cross-section of the fashion show.
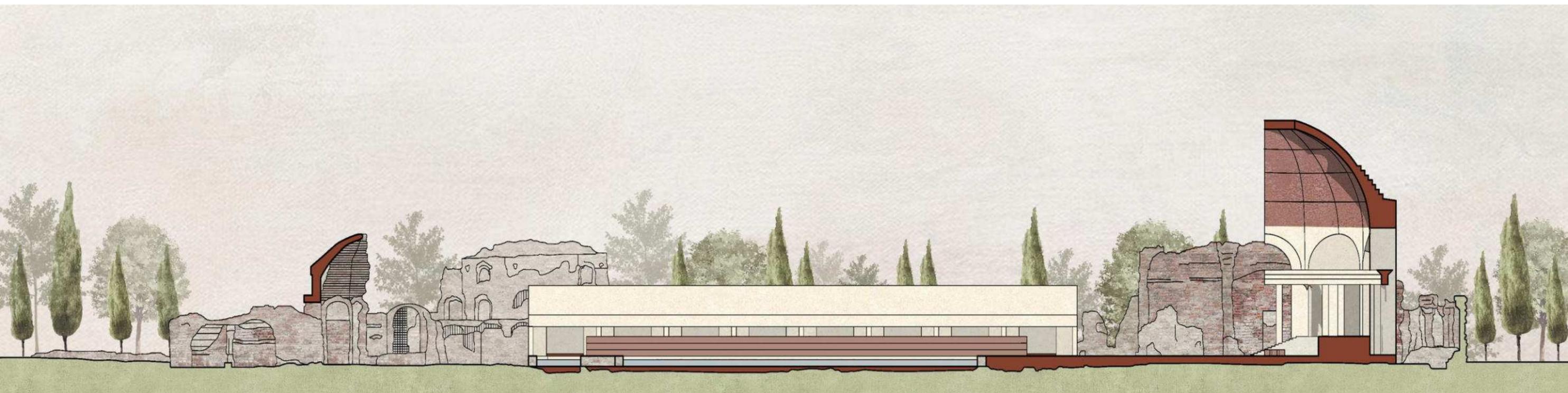
Longitudinal sectionsof the fashion show.

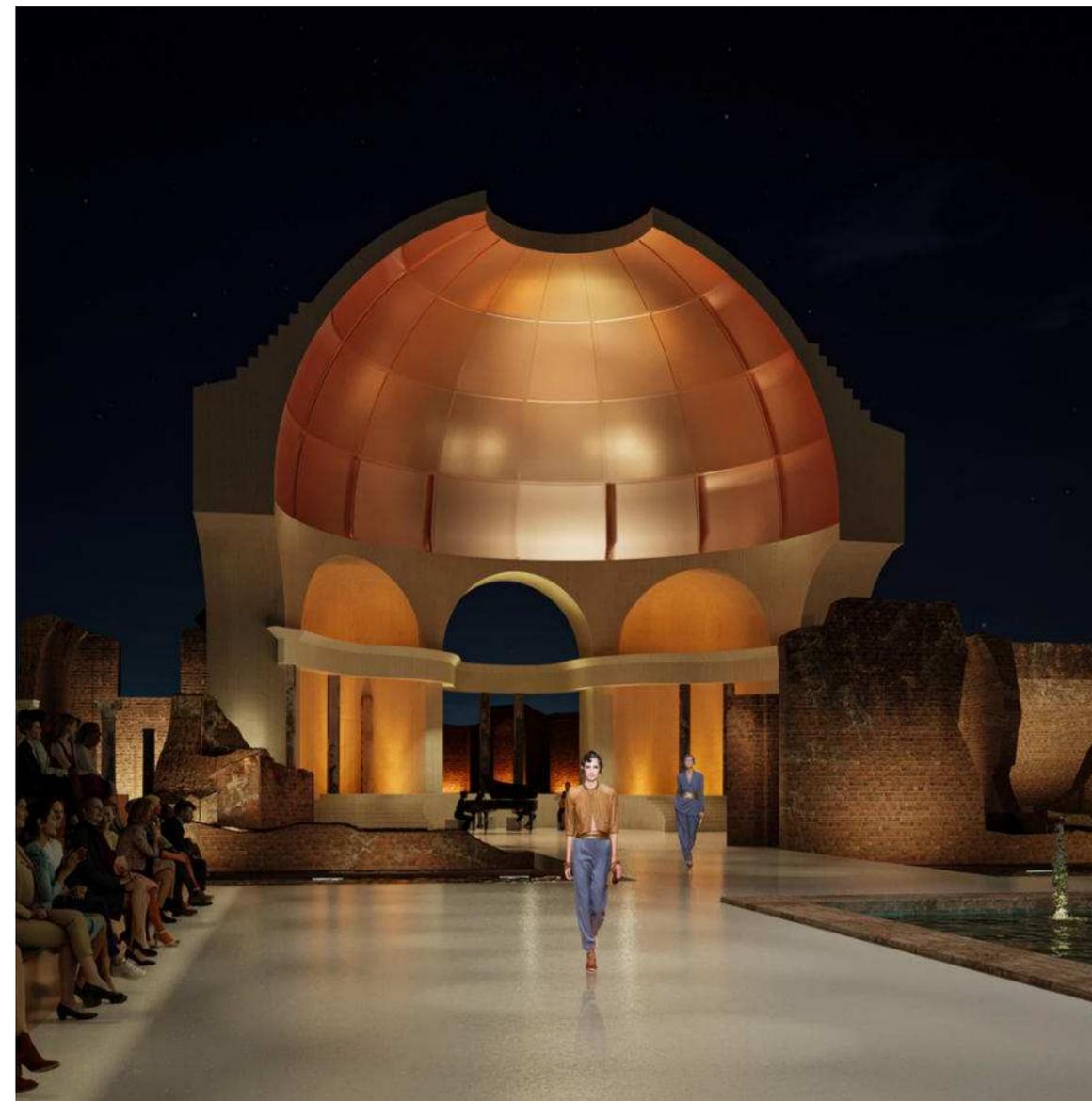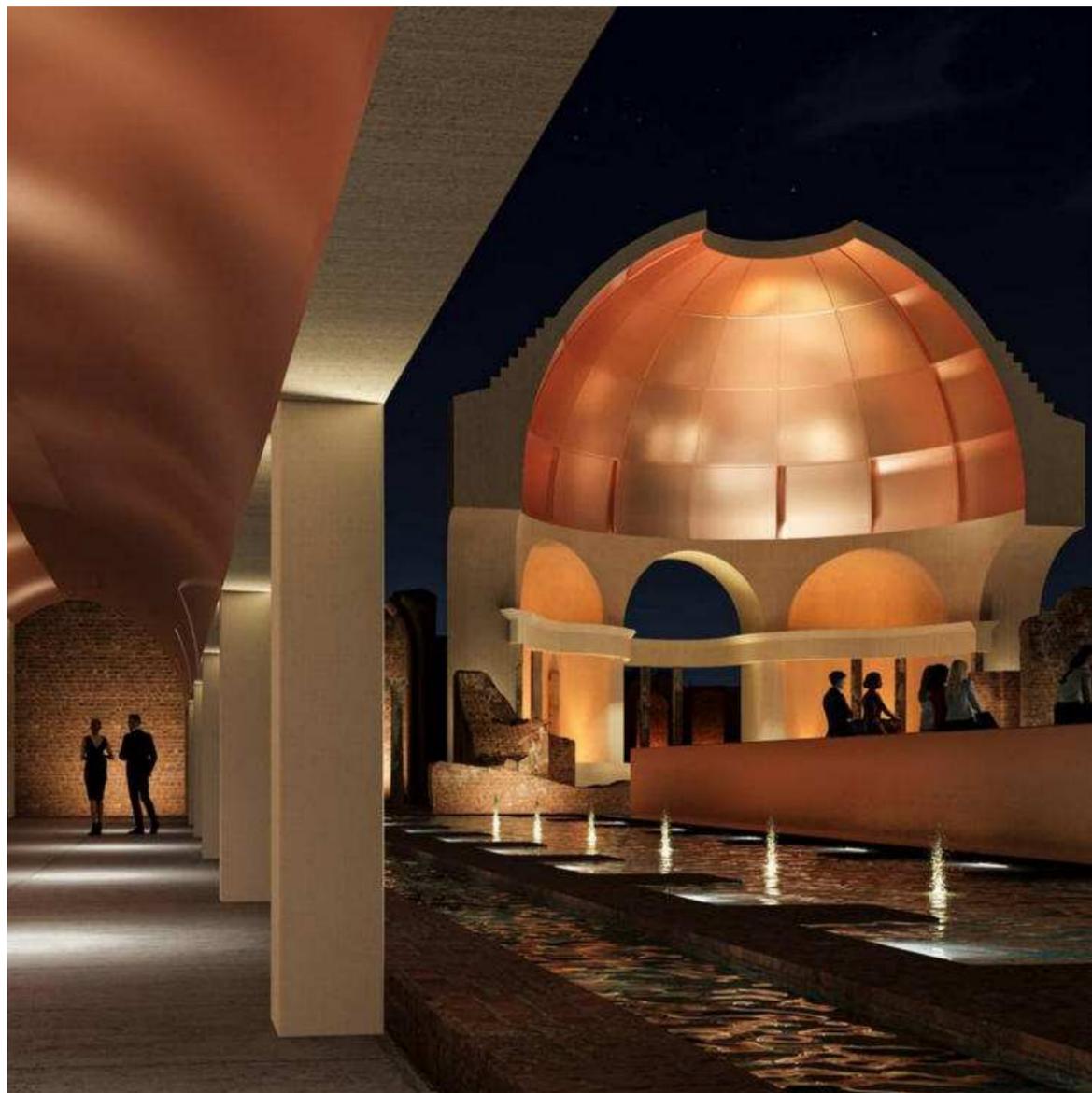Before entering the fashion show area, spectators pass through lateral galleries where Roman sculptures are displayed, creating a gradual transition between history and contemporary performance. This process reinforces the idea of memory as recall, allowing visitors to consciously engage with the past before encountering the present.

5. Conclusions

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has explored the relationship between fashion, architecture, and cultural heritage through the reinterpretation of Villa Adriana as a living and dynamic landscape. Rather than approaching the site as a static archaeological complex, the project has investigated its potential as a contemporary stage, capable of hosting temporary and reversible interventions that reactivate its spatial, symbolic, and narrative dimensions.

By interpreting Villa Adriana as a collage of memory, the research has highlighted how time, space, history, and identity coexist through layers of presence and absence. The proposal of a seven-day fashion event, articulated across seven significant locations of the villa, has allowed the site to be read as a continuous and interconnected system, rather than as a collection of isolated ruins. Each selected location contributes a specific architectural language and sensory quality, reinforcing the idea of the villa as an experiential sequence unfolding over time.

Within this broader framework, the two detailed case studies at Tre Esedre and Piazza d'Oro have demonstrated how water can be employed as a spatial and symbolic tool to translate different dimensions of memory into architectural experience. At Tre Esedre, water acts as a filtering element, expressing memory as disappearance and anonymity, while at Piazza d'Oro, reflective water surfaces evoke memory as clarity and recall. Through this contrast, memory is revealed as an active and mutable process, shaped by movement, perception, and bodily experience rather than by static representation.

The project confirms that fashion events, when approached as architectural and cultural practices, can become meaningful tools for the contemporary activation of heritage sites. By relying on temporary structures, reversible materials, and a careful dialogue with the existing ruins, the interventions proposed in this thesis aim to respect the integrity of Villa Adriana while offering new ways of engaging with its spaces.

Ultimately, this research suggests that the intersection of fashion, architecture, and art can open alternative scenarios for the preservation and interpretation of cultural heritage. Through ephemeral design strategies, it is possible to create new narratives that do not overwrite the past, but instead allow memory to be experienced as a living, evolving, and shared condition.

Bibliography

Basso Peressut, Luca, and Pier Federico Caliari. *Piranesi Prix de Rome. Progetti per la Grande Villa Adriana*. In edibus, 2019.

Caliari, Pier Federico, Angelo Torricelli, and Luca Basso Peressut. *Tractatus Logico Sintattico: la forma trasparente di Villa Adriana*. Edizioni Quasar, 2012.

Caliari, Pier Federico. *La Forma Dell'effimero: tra allestimento e architettura; compresenza di codici e sovrapposizione di tessiture*, Lybra Immagine 2000.

Di Corcia, Tony. *Giorgio Armani. Il Re della Moda Italiana*. Cairo, 2019.

Granata, Francesca. *Experimental Fashion: Performance Art, Carnival and the Grotesque Body*. I.B. Tauris, 2017.

Martin Margiela: In His Own Words. Reiner Holzemer Film, 2019.

Ricotti, Eugenia Salza Prina. *Villa Adriana. Il Sogno Di Un Imperatore*. L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2000.

Yourcenar, Marguerite. *Memorie Di Adriano. Seguite Da Taccuini Di Appunti*. Einaudi, 2014.

Allegranti, Ivan. "FASHION SHOWS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE SITES." *Design/Arts/Culture* 1 (2020). https://doi.org/10.12681/dac.25910

Allegretti, Greta, Amath Luca Diatta, and Sara Ghirardini. "Moda E Patrimonio: Fashion Show Per La Valorizzazione Di Una Reciproca Bellezza." *AND Rivista Di Architetture, Città E Architetti 42, no. 2 (2022): 38–45.* https://www.and-architettura.it/index.php/and/article/view/590/546.

Granata, F. "Deconstruction Fashion: Carnival and the Grotesque." *Journal of Design History* 26, no. 2 (November 27, 2012): 182–98. https://doi.org/10.1093/jdh/eps050.

Mendes, Silvano. "The Instagrammability of the Runway: Architecture, Scenography, and the Spatial Turn in Fashion Communications." *Fashion Theory* 25, no. 3 (July 4, 2019): 311–38. https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704x.2019.1629758.

Tasin, Nezihe Arzu, and Azra Defne Eroglu. "How can contemporary exhibition design, fashion influences, and innovative storytelling techniques be integrated to enhance the cultural heritage and public engagement of Villa Adriana, while preserving its historical and architectural significance?" MA Thesis, Politecnico di Torino, 2025. https://webthesis.biblio.polito.it/34482/.

Sitography

10Magazine. "On Giorgio Armani's 90th Birthday, We Look Back at 10 of His Most Monumental Moments." *10 Magazine*, July 15, 2024. https://10magazine.com/on-giorgio-armanis-90th-birthday-we-look-back-at-10-of-his-most-monumetal-moments/

Architecture History. "Brion-Vega Cemetery and Brion Tomb." Accessed December 28, 2025. https://architecture-history.org/architects/architects/SCARPA/OBJECTS/1969-1972,%20Brion-Vega%20Cemetery%20and%20Brion%20Tomb,%20San%20Vito%20d'Altivole,%20Italy.html

Archivio Armani. "La Living Legacy Di Giorgio Armani | Archivio Armani." Accessed January 5, 2026. https://archivio.armani.com/it.

Area Archeologica di Villa Adriana. "Piazza d'Oro - Villa Adriana". Archived April 2, 2022, at https://web.archive.org/web/20150402091942/http:/www.villaadriana.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/135/piazza-doro

Armani Values. "Armani / Values | Emergenza Covid-19." Published, April 22, 2022. Accessed December 27, 2025. https://armanivalues.com/it/prosperita/comunita/emergenza-covid-19/

Armani Values. "Armani / Values | Our History". Accessed December 27, 2025. https://armanivalues.com/overview/our-history

Armani/Silos. "Mostra Armani Privé 2005-2025." Accessed January 2, 2026. https://www.armanisilos.com/it/mostra/armani-prive-2005-2025/

Azcona, Mili Sánchez. "Architecture That Hides Stories: A Look at the Brion Tomb by Carlo Scarpa." *ArchDaily*, January 16, 2023. https://www.archdaily.com/991218/architecture-that-hides-stories-a-look-at-the-brion-tomb-by-carlo-scarpa

Bonack Aesthetic Engineering. "Linda Fregni Nagler «Per comandare all'aria»." Accessed December 29, 2025. https://bonack.de/portfolio/linda-fregni-nagler-daredevils-and-suicide-jumpers/

British Fashion Council. "Giorgio Armani to Be Honoured With the Outstanding Achievement Award at the Fashion Awards 2019," *British Fashion Council*. September 17, 2019. https://www.britishfashioncouncil.co.uk/pressreleases/Giorgio-Armani-to-be-honoured-with-the-Outstanding-Achievement-Award-at-The-Fashion-Awards-201

Cardini, Tiziana. "Valentino Fall 2022 Couture Collection." *Vogue Runway*, July 8, 2022. https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2022-couture/valentino.

Colonna Preti, Lavinia. "Tomba Brion, Il Capolavoro Di Carlo Scarpa." *Veneto Secrets*, March 2024. https://venetosecrets.com/arte-stile/tomba-brion-il-capolavoro-di-carlo-scarpa/

Del Pino, Catalina. "History of a House: Martin Margiela". *L'Officiel Ibiza*, March 8, 2022. https://www.lofficielibiza.com/fashion/a-white-tale-the-story-of-la-maison-martin-margiela.

Di Giamberardino, Giulia. "Martin Margiela Da Hermès: Gli Anni Indimenticabili Di Una Direzione Creativa Dimenticata." *Vogue Italia*, August 8, 2025. https://www.vogue.it/article/gli-anni-dimenticati-di-martin-margiela-alla-direzione-creativa-di-hermes.

Fashion Network. "Fendi Models Walk on Water in Rome's Trevi Fountain," July 8, 2016. https://be.fashionnetwork.com/en-be/news/Fendi-models-walk-on-water-in-rome-s-trevi-fountain,711858.html.

Fisher, Lauren Alexis. "Dior Jets to Marrakech for Resort 2020." *Harper's BAZAAR*, April 30, 2019. https://www.harpersbazaar.com/fashion/fashion-week/a27321038/dior-marrakech-resort-2020-show/.

Fisher, Lauren Alexis. "Inside Fendi's Breathtaking Couture Show at Rome's Trevi Fountain." *Harper's BAZAAR*, July 8, 2016. https://www.harpersbazaar.com/fashion/fashion-week/news/a16573/fendi-couture-show-at-trevi-fountain/.

Sitography

Friedman, Vanessa. "Giorgio Armani Changed the Way People Dress. Twice." *The New York Times*, September 4, 2025. https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/04/style/giorgio-armani.html.

Giorgio Armani. "Apulia Regenerative Cotton Project | Giorgio Armani." Accessed December 28, 2025. https://www.armani.com/it-it/giorgio-armani/experience/cotone-rigenerativo/

Giorgio Armani. "Women's Spring/Summer 2026 Fashion Show." Accessed January 2, 2026. https://www.armani.com/en-hu/giorgio-armani/experience/fashion-show-spring-summer-women/

Istituto Villa Adriana E Villa D'Este. "Villa Adriana e Villa d'Este." Accessed December 25, 2025. https://villae.cultura.gov.it/en/

Maison Margiela. "Maison Margiela Official | Clothing, Shoes & Accessories." Accessed January 5, 2026. https://www.maisonmargiela.com/.

Marfil, Lorelei. "Alexander McQueen Savage Beauty Exhibition." *WWD*, March 13, 2015. https://wwd.com/fashion-news/designer-luxury/gallery/alexander-mcqueen-savage-beauty-exhibition/alexander-mcqueen-exhibit-london006/

Marson, Michael. "Prada SS24" *Behind The Blinds*, September 24, 2023. https://www.behindtheblinds.be/btb-show-report/prada-ss24.

Masetti, Alessandro. "Martin Margiela, the One and Only." *The Fashion Commentator*, March 4, 2018. https://www.thefashioncommentator.com/2012/11/martin-margiela-one-and-only.html.

Ministero Della Cultura - Ufficio Unesco. "Villa Adriana (Tivoli) - Unesco Beni Culturali." Accessed December 20, 2025. https://unesco.cultura.gov.it/projects/villa-adriana-tivoli/.

OTB Group. "Maison Margiela". Accessed January 5, 2026. https://www.otb.net/en/maison-margiela.

Penrose, Nerisha. "What You Need to Know About Dior's Cruise 2020 Show." *ELLE*, April 30, 2019. https://www.elle.com/fashion/a27319126/dior-cruise-2020-show/.

Quick, Nan. "The Treasures of Tivoli, Italy. Part One: Explorations of the Archaeological Complex at Villa Adriana" *NanQuick*, February 18, 2018. https://nanquick.com/2018/02/18/the-treasures-of-tivoli-italy-part-one-explorations-of-the-archaeological-complex-at-villa-adriana/

Rizzoli Libri. "Per Amore - Rizzoli Libri," May 10, 2023. https://www.rizzolilibri.it/libri/per-amore/

Ruggeri, Angelo. "Giorgio Armani 2025 Exhibition at Pinacoteca Di Brera." *Istituto Marangoni*, October 1, 2025. https://www.istitutomarangoni.com/en/maze35/industry/giorgio-armani-2025-exhibition-pinacoteca-brera-milan

Tagwalk. "Tagwalk - Collection Womenswear Giorgio Armani Spring/Summer 2024." *Tagwalk: The Fashion Search Engine*. Accessed January 3, 2026. https://www.tag-walk.com/en/collection/woman/giorgio-armani/spring-summer-2024

UNESCO World Heritage Centre. "Villa Adriana (Tivoli)." Accessed December 20, 2025. https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/907

UNESCO World Heritage Convention. "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage". Adopted on 16 November 1972. https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext

VILLA ADRIANA di Marina De Franceschini. "Villa Adriana Tivoli - Piazza D'Oro". Accessed January 2, 2026. https://villa-adriana.net/edifici-dettaglio.aspx?id=79&idCat=41&d=PIAZZA+D

Vogue Italia. "Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams," August 29, 2018. https://www.vogue.it/galleries/gait93663

WWD. "Inside Iris Van Herpen Retrospective in Paris," Accessed January 8, 2026. https://wwd.com/fashion-news/designer-luxury/gallery/inside-iris-van-herpen-retrospective-paris-musee-des-arts-decoratifs-1235957334/.

Zargani, Luisa. "Giorgio Armani Writes Open Letter to WWD." *WWD*, April 3, 2020. https://wwd.com/fashion-news/designer-luxury/feature/giorgio-armani-writes-open-letter-wwd-1203553687/

Iconography

Page 36, 37, 39,40
https://villa-adriana.net/edifici-dettaglio.aspx?
id=79&idCat=41&d=PIAZZA+D

page 71
https://www.behindtheblinds.be/btb-show-report/prada-ss24

page 73
https://www.vogue.com.au/fashion/news/whats-it-like-to-have-attended-
chanels-chanelbythesea-beach-show/image-
gallery/a77b18c7618e5f49b3b706d4becf33e1
https://www.vogue.co.jp/suzymenkes/2019-03-06/paris-fashion-week-
autumn-winter-2019-louis-vuitton

page 75, 82,83, 85, 86, 87
https://www.maisonmargiela.com/

page 93
https://torinocronaca.it/news/tendenze/551891/giorgio-armani-e-sergio-
galeotti-l-amore-che-ha-forgiato-un-icona-della-moda.html

page 94
https://www.vogue.it/article/diane-keaton-morta-a-79-anni-stile-armani-
film-oscar

page 99
https://10magazine.com/on-giorgio-armanis-90th-birthday-we-look-back-
at-10-of-his-most-monumetal-moments/

page 100
https://allsteim.wordpress.com/2008/07/05/giorgio-armani-receives-
legion-d%E2%80%99honneur/
https://www.vanityfair.fr/galerie/giorgio-armani-plongez-dans-lalbum-
secret-du-signore-de-la-mode-italienne

page 102, 106, 109
https://armanivalues.com/overview/our-history/

page 103
https://www.rizzolilibri.it/libri/per-amore/

page 107, 108
https://www.tag-walk.com/en/collection/woman/giorgio-armani/spring-
summer-2024

page 111, 112, 114, 115, 116
https://www.armani.com/en-hu/giorgio-armani/experience/fashion-show-
spring-summer-women/

page 122, 123
https://www.irisvanherpen.com/collections/architectonics/behind-the-
scenes-10

page 117, 118
https://www.newsweek.com/giorgio-armani-dies-fashion-luxury-
company-live-updates-2124458

page 129, 130
https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2016-couture/fendi

page 128
https://www.elle.com/it/moda/ultime-notizie/news/g1366111/fendi-
fontana-di-trevi/
https://www.vogue.it/galleries/gait49743

Page 125
https://www.expatwoman.com/ewmoda/fashion/fendi%E2%80%99s-
latest-fashion-show-was-roman-celebration-shadow-colosseum

pages 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138
https://www.vogue.it/moda/gallery/dolce-and-gabbana-alta-moda-look-
sfilata-nella-valle-dei-templi

pages 139, 142, 143, 144
https://www.vogue.it/moda/gallery/dior-cruise-collection-2020-sfilata-e-
party-a-marrakech

pages 146, 147, 148
https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2022-couture/valentino

Iconography

pages 150
https://wwd.com/fashion-news/designer-luxury/gallery/inside-iris-van-herpen-retrospective-paris-musee-des-arts-decoratifs-1235957334/

pages 161, 162
https://www.vogue.it/galleries/gait93663

pages 171
https://www.archdaily.com/938523/deca-urban-garden-in-sao-paulo-hanazaki-paisagismo

page 174
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/789607747211305379/

pages 176
https://divisare.com/projects/383354-carlo-scarpa-federico-covre-il-padiglione-sull-acqua

page 177
https://bonack.de/portfolio/linda-fregni-nagler-daredevils-and-suicide-jumpers/

page 179
https://www.internimagazine.com/agenda/passerella-architettonica/

page 182
https://newmatworld.com/completed-projects/manus-x-machina-exhibit-2016-ny/

page 184
https://www.crash.fr/mademoiselle-prive-an-exhibition-by-chanel/