

## Minimum Documentation Fiche



### 01. Picture of building

Depicted item: Palazzo del Mezzogiorno  
source: Alberto Muciaccia  
date: 2016

### 1. Identity of building

1.1 current name of building	Palazzo del Mezzogiorno
1.2 variant or former name	
1.3 number & name of street	piazza Vittorio Triggiani
1.4 town	Bari
1.5 province/state	Bari / Puglia
1.6 zip code	70123
1.7 country	Italia
1.8 national grid reference	41°08'.03"N 16°50'37"E
1.9 classification/typology	Congress and exhibition building
1.10 protection status & date	Restored

## 2 History of building

2.1 original brief/purpose	Congress and exhibition building
2.2 dates: commission/completion	1951/1961
2.3 architectural and other designers	arch. Pietro Maria Favia
2.4 others associated with building	
2.5 significant alterations with dates	Multiple alterations removed after restoration
2.6 current use	Seat of the Apulia Film House (dal 2013)
2.7 current condition	Excellent condition (restored by architect Mauro Sàito (RTP group leader), architect M.Pignatelli, engineer M.Quarta, engineer N.Stefanelli)

## 3. Description

### 3.1 General description

The building was built as an exhibition pavilion for the Cassa del Mezzogiorno next to the south-eastern entrance to the Fiera del Levante. Built in the early 1950s, it stands in place of a previous exhibition building, called the "Arab village", which was later demolished. It was built to equip the trade fair, in the expansion phase, with a new and modern conference and exhibition center, flexible and accessible.

### 3.2 Construction

The project was signed in 1951 by the architect Pietro Maria Favia, former head of the Bari Municipal Technical Office, who also completed it in 1961. In the archive documentation, there are some original sketches / design drawings and autographed drawings of the completion that provided for a further appendix of the rooms to the south, not built in 1961. The building has a total area of approx. 2000 square meters and spread over two floors, both double height. On the plan, two bodies with a rectangular and trapezoidal shape, of different sizes, are joined by a glass and curved entrance gallery that functions as the distribution hinge of the complex.

The entrance hall is composed of a continuous glass facade which contrasts with the limestone masonry on which the reinforced concrete staircase rests. The structure of the two rooms on the ground floor is made with shaped reinforced concrete pillars closed outside by windows. The upper part, after the expansion of the 1960s, proposes two rooms of identical size to those below. A trapezoidal shaped service block is located between the two stone walls that define the hall. The original project was not fully implemented due to lack of funds. The building had a reduced system equipment without heating. The large room on the ground floor had beams decorated with abstract paintings by the artist Amerigo Tot. A cardboard painted by Raffaele Spizzico dedicated to the work was placed on the curved wall of the staircase. The upper west room was equipped with a pleated false ceiling. Under a pair of external pillars, covered in stone as a bastion, a pond had been dug which was filled during the fairs. An iron safety staircase wraps around a pillar. A braced metal structure supported the word CASSA DEL MEZZOGIORNO on the entrance canopy.

The restoration designers (2013-16) have formulated a proposal aimed at restoring the distinctive features of this "modern monument", that is the multifunctionality and transparency, strongly altered by a sequence of tampering and additions due to the plant adaptation, despite the building had been constrained since 2008. In addition to the recovery of the elements lost during the first sixty years of use, the restoration work was carried out on the building for the purposes of the seismic and technological structural adjustment. The completion of the original parts, not made at the time of construction, was carried out through a philological study and re-design process based on archival documentation and on the analysis of construction materials, re-interpreting the original intentions of the author.

### 3.3 Context

The building stands to the side at the south-eastern entrance of the Fiera del Levante, characterized by four luminous pillars built at the beginning of the 20th century, conceived as the entrance wing of the internal access path. The transparency of the continuous windows characterizes it, making it, especially in the night version, the modernist icon of the fair complex, its showcase of excellence.

## **4. Evaluation**

### *4.1 Technical*

The load-bearing structure is made of reinforced concrete beams and pillars, with flat brick and concrete floors. The facades of the entrance gallery consist of continuous windows in ferro-window profiles. The base exhibits the load-bearing structure closed by continuous or alternate windows between the pillars. The upper facades are plastered and illuminated by strip windows. Limestone and recycled stone walls characterize the internal facades of the hall and the external ramparts.

### *4.2 Social*

The building was originally designed as a modern congress and exhibition center for the Fiera del Levante. Until 2013, the opening ceremony of the trade fair at the beginning of September was held here. From 2016 the restoration of the building and the transformation of the interior spaces to the headquarters of the Apulia Film Commission was completed with destination at Apulia Film House.

### *4.3 Cultural & aesthetic*

The building is representative in Bari after the Second World War of an epochal synthesis between typical elements of modern architecture combined with Mediterranean construction practice. The planimetric composition is original, concentrating the spatial interest in the dynamism of the distribution node of the curved entrance tunnel. The structure of pillars and beams formally exhibits static tensions. The designer called well-known artists of the time to decorate parts of the building (Tot, Spizzico).

### *4.4 Historical*

The architecture of the Palazzo del Mezzogiorno has been published in newspapers and magazines (see *La Tecnica del Mezzogiorno*, 1951). For years, the building has been the reference point for congresses, events and exhibitions, also at national level, at city and regional level.

### *4.5 General assessment*

The new destination of the building at Apulia Film House, following the restoration and internal refunctionalization, reaffirms the multifunctionality of the structure and the centrality of the urban role of complex intended for culture and art. The inclusion in the context of the Fair has been improved by the creation of a rear area intended for an arena for outdoor performances and by the creation of the "pedestrian street" in front of the entrance that connects it with other parts of the Fair.

## **5. Documentation**

### *5.1 Principal references*

F. De Facendis, *Progetti e realizzazioni. Il padiglione della "Cassa del Mezzogiorno" alla Fiera del Levante del dott. arch. P. M. Favia*, in *"La Tecnica nel Mezzogiorno"*, II, 1951

M. Dilio, Fiera del Levante: 1930-1986, Bari, 1986

Angela Colonna, Architettura a Bari nel ventennio fascista, Lecce, 1997

Carmelo Calò Carducci , Bari e la sua Fiera del Levante : 1939-1956, Bari, 2006

Massimiliano Gattoni, Scenografia della progettazione. Il simbolo dell'architettura moderna a Bari, riadibito a nuovo spazio culturale, in "Progetti Bari 11", novembre 2017

Antonello Pagliuca, Mauro Sàito, (a cura di) Catalogo della Mostra 9 itinerari x 100 architetture del '900. Basilicata e Puglia, Roma 2019

### *5.2 visual material attached*

Fig.01 – Vista della facciata principale (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)

Fig.02 – Vista notturna (1951- Consorzio Fotografi Fiera)

Fig.03 – Foto dell'ingresso (1951 ca. archivio Scionti)

Fig.04 – Disegno autografo P.M.F. pianta I livello

Fig.05 – Foto hall d'ingresso (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)

Fig.06 – Foto sala Tridente (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)

Fig.07 – Vista notturna fronte anteriore (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)

Fig.08 – Vista notturna Hall (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)

Fig.09 – Vista prospetto posteriore con arena (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)

Fig.10 – Vista prospetto Est di completamento (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)

### *5.3 rapporteur/date*

Mauro Sàito, Aprile 2020

## **6. Fiche report examination by ISC/R**

name of examining ISC member: date of examination:

approval:

working party/ref. n°: NAI ref. n°:

comments:



Fig.01 – View of the main facade (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)



Fig.02 – Night view (1951- Consorzio Fotografici Fiera)



Fig.03 – Photo of the entrance (ca. 1951 Scionti archive)

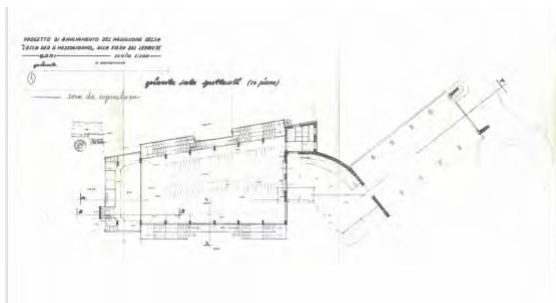


Fig.04 – Autograph drawing P.M.F. plan I level



Fig.05 – Photo of the entrance hall (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)



Fig.06 – Trident room photo (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)



Fig.07 – Night front view (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)



Fig.08 – Night view Hall (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)



Fig.09 – Rear elevation view with arena (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)



Fig.10 – East elevation view of completion (Alberto Muciaccia 2016)