

Casa del Portuale

Minimum Documentation Fiche

Composed by regional working party of CAMPANIA, Italy

Picture of building



depicted item: main elevation
credits: photo by Fabrizio Vatiere
date: 2017

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1. Identity of building

1.1 current name of building

Casa del Portuale

1.2 variant or former name

Edificio dei servizi sociali per i lavoratori C.U.L.P. Napoli - Compagnia Unica Lavoratori Portuali

1.3 number & name of street

Interno Porto, Calata della Marinella

1.4 town

Napoli

1.5 province/state

Napoli

1.6 zip code

80133

1.7 country

Italy

1.8 national grid reference

40.84°N / 14.28°E

1.9 classification/typology

Administration/offices building

1.10 protection status & date

Not present

2. History of building

2.1 original brief/purpose

The building was commissioned in 1968 to Aldo Loris Rossi (1933-2018) by C.L.U.P. (Compagnia Unica Lavoratori Portuali), a cooperative holding which provides dockers services in the Neapolitan area. The building was completed in 1980 to house offices and administrative services, as well as serving as a training site for dockers. Today, its activity is reduced, but it is

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still used by the same company.

2.2 dates: commission/completion

1968 / 1980

2.3 architectural and other designers

Project architect: Aldo Loris Rossi

2.4 others associated with building

C.U.L.P. Napoli - Compagnia Unica Lavoratori Portuali

2.5 significant alterations with dates

Recent history of the building is really difficult to retrace in the many alterations that have been made over the years. In general, the massive interventions have been done inside, mainly in the area used by different tenants at different times. Moreover, the whole internal layout has been alternated by partition walls made of aluminum and plastic, in order to redistribute the internal space according to different requirements. Fixtures and frames have not been replaced. The outside is still the same, without any kind of alteration.

2.6 current use

Today, the building partially houses the offices of the CLUP. The main part of the building is not used. It is empty and in a state of abandonment.

2.7 current condition

Not good, almost abandoned. The state of the outside reveals a general lack of maintenance of the building, with signs of general damage with superficial usage and ordinary efflorescence caused by the climatic events.

Internally, a recent restoration of the upper plans has completely altered the inside design of the building. The remaining part is only partially used, and it is in a state of general deterioration.

3. Description

3.1 general description

The building is situated in the East part of the Porto di Napoli. Easily recognizable from the outside, its silhouette rises from containers and port facilities. The building is articulated into two different bodies. Despite the use of concrete, it is characterized by a sort of space-age aesthetic, with some colorful part and elements.

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3.2 construction

The building is composed of an interplay of vertical and horizontal structural elements, characterized by different forms and material, obtaining an extraordinary cohesion of different architectural languages. Starting from a topological study, the construction relies on a number of independent structural nuclei defined through 12 large hollow pylons, used simultaneously as main structural elements of the building and as containers of all the vertical infrastructures (e.g. staircases, lifts and power lines). This solution was exceptionally technically experimental at that time, as was the use and combination of the materials. The pylons are independent from each other, so that their expansion depends on the section of the building and the resulting needs.

On the other hand, the whole building is defined by overlapping circular terraces of raw concrete in high vertical glass block walls.

A lower part of the building is spread in the east side, defining a side wing raised from the ground, which serves also as parking area.

3.3 context

The building is located in the East zone of the Port of Naples, within the commercial area characterized by port facilities of different type and purpose (e.g. silos, warehouses) and really close to the sea. The area is private, accessible only by operators of the port.

4. Evaluation

4.1 technical

High value. Like the whole architectural production by Aldo Loris Rossi, the design of Casa del Portuale is a mix of a structural and functionalist issues, producing at the time also a remarkable example of figurative novelty in the international panorama.

4.2 social

Low value. The building had been realized for a private company, under whose ownership it still remain.

4.3 cultural & aesthetic

High value. The building represents one of the most significant architectural designs of the Aldo Loris Rossi Neapolitan production. Moreover, it should be considered a really notable example of the structural, material and functionalist attempt to move beyond the post-war architectural

production.

4.4 historical

The project was published in "Domus" in 1981, few months after its completion, well described by the Italian critic Gillo Dorfles with the label neo-baroque, referring to a certain type of freedom in the design process as figurative, structural and functional output, despite the Italian architectural production. The building – and the architectures by Loris Rossi in general – have been published several times by Bruno Zevi in the Eighties, and it has been part of the exhibition "Gli Architetti di Bruno Zevi" at Fondazione MAXXI (Rome, April-September 2018).

On the other hand, recently, many young researchers are carrying on a re-interpretation of the Loris Rossi's legacy, and the building has been widely published in online journals and blogs, to the point that it has also been used as set for international TV series and music videos, as well as location for fashion campaigns and spots.

4.5 general assessment

Despite the general lack of maintenance and the partial use, the building is quite faithful to the original design by Loris Rossi. It is still effective in its site, and it plays an important role in the on-going general reorganization of the Port.

5. Documentation

5.1 Principal references

- ZEVI Bruno, *Opere di Aldo Loris Rossi*, in «L'architettura. Cronache e Storia», n. 11, march 1970;
- DORFLES Gillo, *Barocco napoletano on the waterfront*, in «Domus», n. 617, may 1981;
- LOCCI Massimo, *Aldo Loris Rossi: la concretezza dell'utopia*, Torino: Testo & Immagine, 1997;
- LORIS ROSSI Aldo, *Eco - Neapolis: il ridisegno del waterfront*, Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2012;
- DE RIENZO Diego, *Il regno tangibile dell'illusione. La Casa del Portuale di Aldo Loris Rossi*, in «AWM», n. 3, June 2016;
- POLI Matteo, *Fronte del porto*, in «Icon Design», May 2017;
- *Aldo Loris Rossi*, «Cameracronica Magazine», n. 19, July 2019 (monographic issue).

5.2 Archives

- Centre Pompidou Digital Archive, Paris, France;

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- Frac Centre, Orléans, France.

5.3 Visual material attached

01_ Casa del Portuale. First draft (pencils, colored inks and graphite on paper, 29,0x42,5cm), March 1968 [Courtesy of Centre Pompidou]

02_ Casa del Portuale. General draft (colored pencils and inks, pink felt-tip pen and graphite on paper, 29,0x42,0cm), September 1968 [Courtesy of Centre Pompidou]

03_ Casa del Portuale. Plan and north façade (makers and colored pencils, graphite and India ink on paper, 28,5x44,5cm), December 1971 [Courtesy of Centre Pompidou]

04_ Casa del Portuale. Maquette, date unknown [Courtesy of Centre Pompidou]

05_ Internal view, 1981. Photography, unknown author [in DORFLES Gillo, *Barocco napoletano on the waterfront*, in «Domus», n. 617, may 1981]

06_ Internal view, 1981. Photography, unknown author [in DORFLES Gillo, *cit.*]

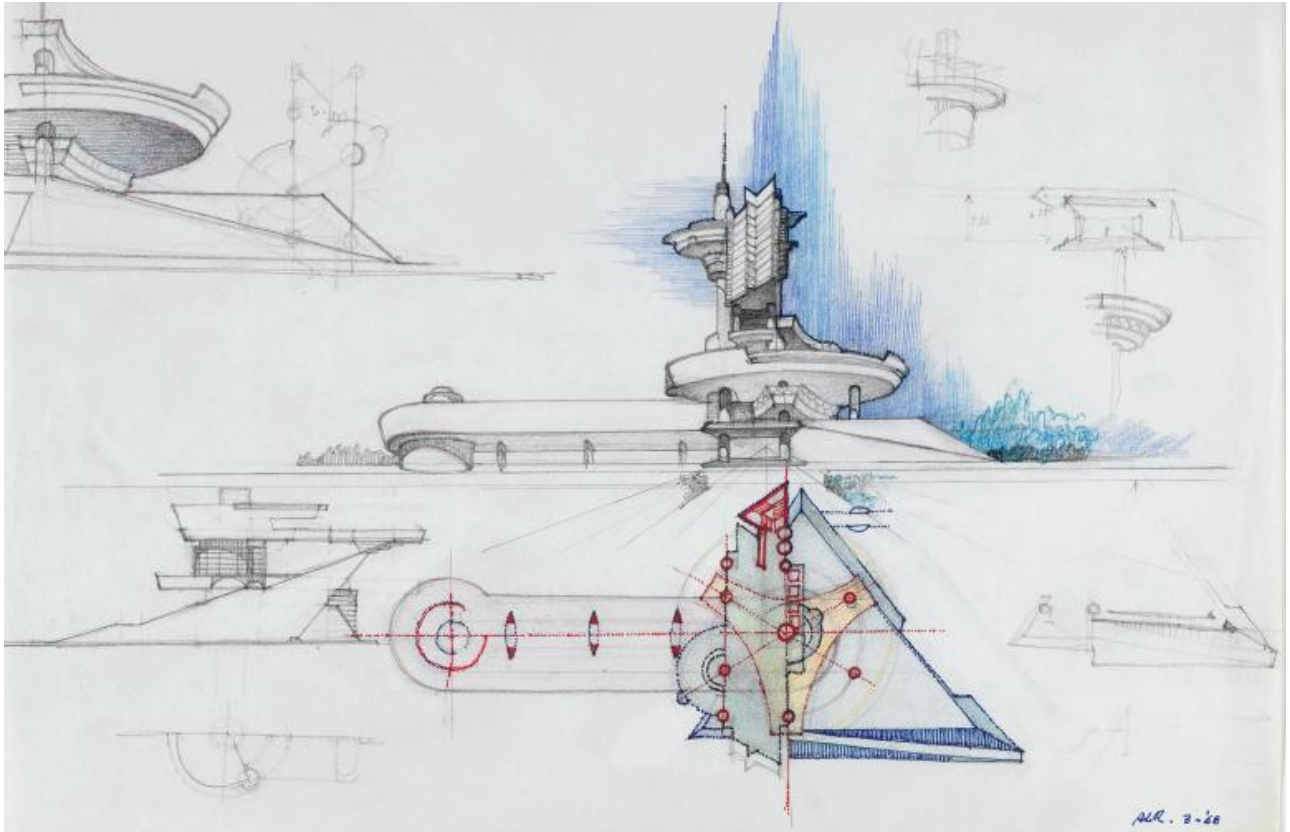
07_ Aerial view, 198. Photography, unknown author [in DORFLES Gillo, *cit.*]

08_ Aerial view, 1981. Photography, unknown author [in DORFLES Gillo, *cit.*]

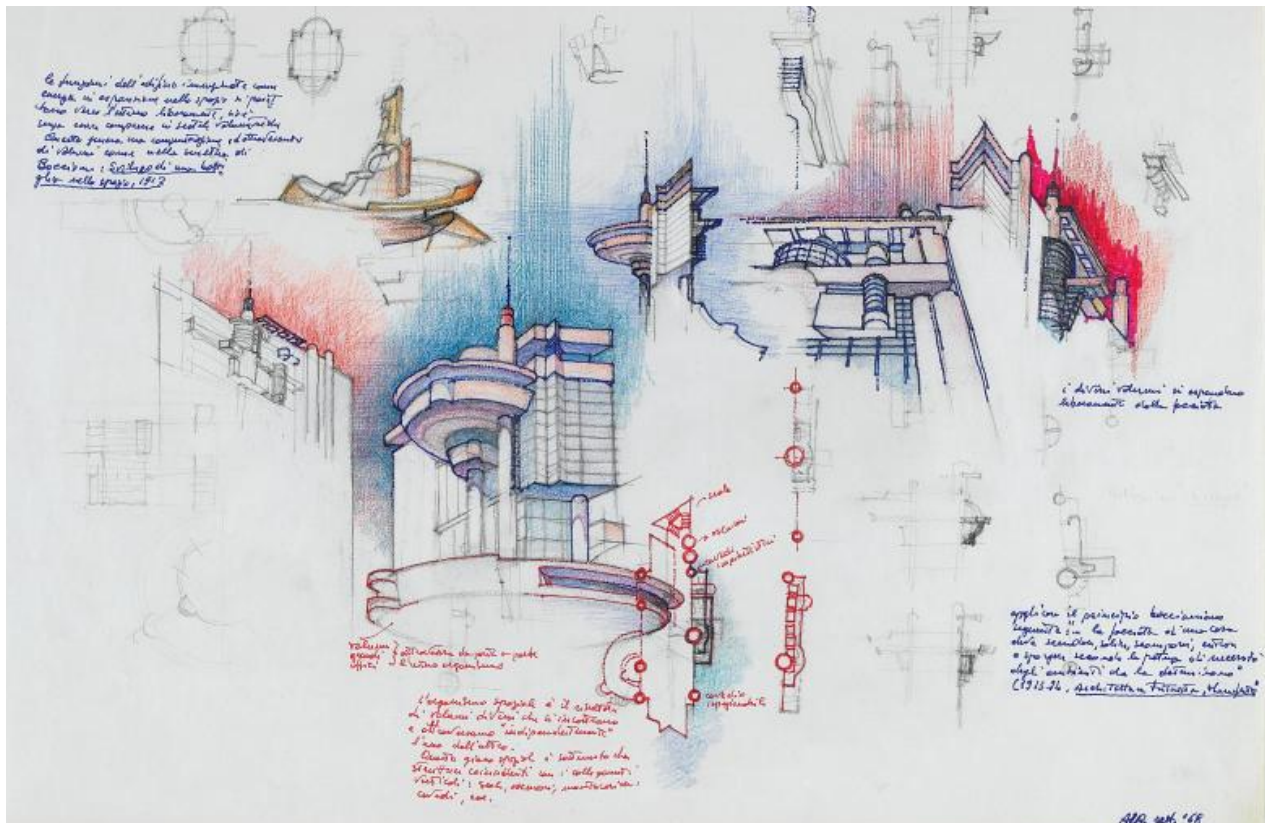
09_ The secondary façade for the south-East view in a dialogue with the Mercato Ittico designed by Luigi Cosenza on the right-side. Photo by Fabrizio Vatiéri, 2017

10_ South view. Photo by Fabrizio Vatiéri, 2017

11_ West-side entrance. Photo by Fabrizio Vatiéri, 2017



01_First draft, March 1968



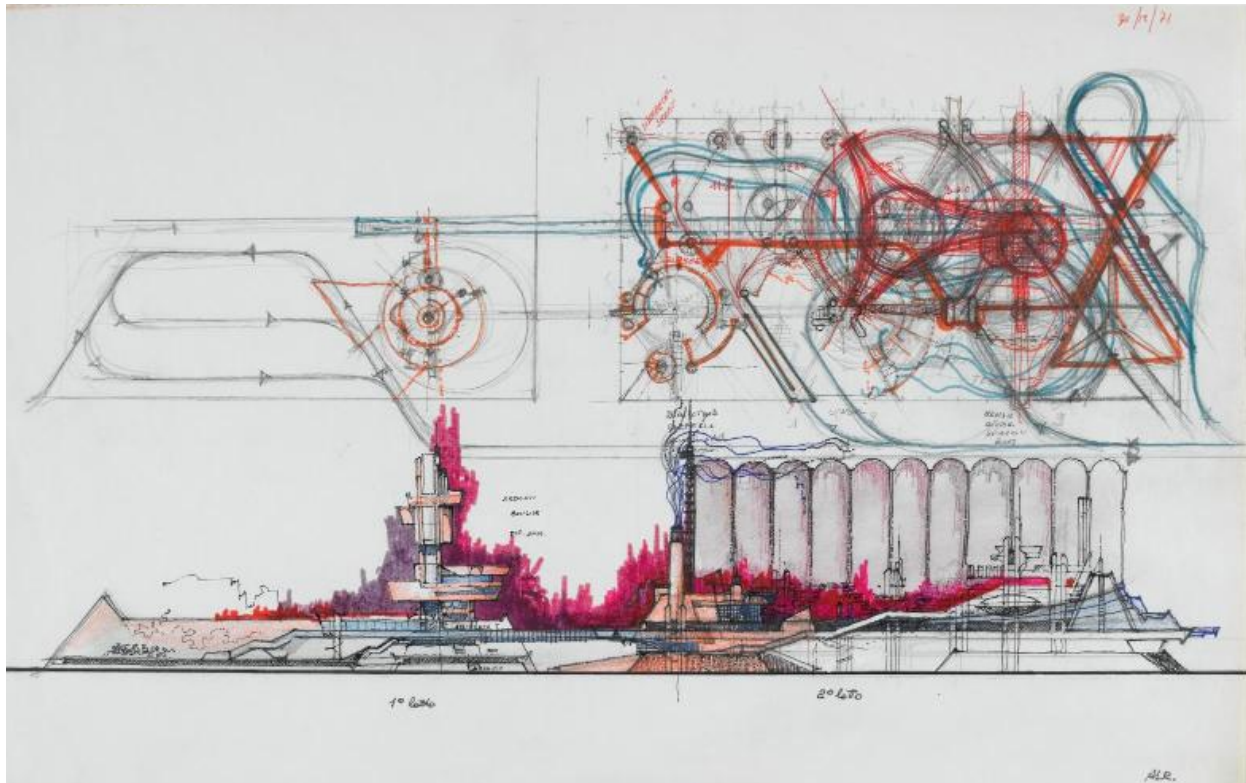
02_General draft, September 1968

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03_Draft, December 1971

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04_Maquette, date unknown



05, 06_Internal view, 1981

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07, 08_Aerial view, 1981



09_ The secondary façade for the south-East view in a dialogue with the Mercato Ittico designed by Luigi Cosenza on the right-side, 2017

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10_ South view, 2017

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11_ West-side entrance, 2017

5.3 Rapporteur/date

Aurora Riviezzo, February 2021

6. Fiche report examination by ISC/R

name of examining ISC member:

date of examination:

approval:

working party/ref. n°:

NAI ref. n°:

comments:

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