

Superstudio 50

a major retrospective on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of one of the most influential groups in radical Italian architecture

21 April – 4 September 2016

www.fondazionemaxxi.it

#Superstudio50

Superarchitecture is the architecture of superproduction, of superconsumption, of superinduction to superconsumption, of the supermarket, of superman and super petrol.
(Archizoom and Superstudio, 1966)

Rome 20 April 2016. Transverse, metaphysical, indefinable, ever-new, ever *outré*, **Superstudio** is one of the most influential groups in Italian *radical architecture*, founded in 1966 by **Adolfo Natalini** and **Cristiano Toraldo di Francia**, who were later joined by **Gian Piero Frassinelli**, the brothers **Roberto** and **Alessandro Magris** and **Alessandro Poli**.

50 years on from its foundations, MAXXI is devoting a major retrospective to the group: **SUPERSTUDIO 50** (from 21 April through to 4 September 2016), an exhibition conceived by Natalini, Toraldo di Francia and Frassinelli themselves, together with the curator **Gabriele Mastrigli**.

"This exhibition pays homage to an extraordinary group of creative talents, celebrated by international critics – just a few days ago The New York Times devoted a beautiful article to them- who have contributed to the the history of architecture, influencing the collective imagination and anticipating themes that are topical today, in such an impressive and almost prophetic way"- says **Giovanna Melandri** President of Fondazione MAXXI. Embedded in the MAXXI's DNA is the study and promotion of contemporary artists but also of all the great masters who have influenced creative projects, and Superstudio is without a doubt one of these".

"This exhibition - says **Margherita Guccione** Director MAXXI Architettura - is the most in-depth and comprehensive retrospective ever organized, a true exploration of the regions of Superstudio. A journey through space and time, through the images and the architecture, the utopias and the dystopias of the most influential group of Italian radical architecture."

"The visions of Superstudio are rhetorical expedients used to demonstrate *ad absurdum*, the possibilities and the limits of architecture as a critical instrument of modern society – says **Gabriele Mastrigli**, curator of the exhibition. In the collages and the drawings, in the installations and the films, what we learn from Superstudio is that architecture is not merely an object but a way of thinking about the world."

Known for the strength of its images and for the extreme variety of its output, the work of *Superstudio* has always evaded clear, identifiable labels; this exhibition brings together and presents **over 200** pieces, ranging from **installations to objects, from graphic works to photographs and through to publications** covering the entire career and development of the group, materials largely drawn from its own archives, some never previously displayed and many of which will progressively enter MAXXI's architecture collection.

An exhibition on Superstudio by Superstudio – which for the occasion is producing a **special exhibition design project** – a kind of scientific autobiography that reviews fundamental chapters in its history, from the exhibition **Superarchitettura** (1966), in which together with Archizoom, the group proposed for the first time a radical rethinking of architecture and design, replacing the traditional domestic images with a world of alienating objects and visions.

SUPERSTUDIO 50 is an exploration of the universe of one of the most influential groups in 20th century architecture, at the dawn of the image of what today we call contemporaneity.

SUPERSTUDIO 50 presents, among other works, the most important drawings, photomontages and installations from *The Continuous Monument* series (1969), the *Architectural Histograms* (1969-70) and *The Twelve Ideal Cities* (1971), projects through which the group demonstrated the possibilities and the limits of architecture understood as instrument of a critique of society.

Alongside this material, will be installations such as *The Wife of Lot*, presented at the Venice Biennale in 1978 and *the entrance to the Superarchitettura exhibition* from 1966 and design objects such as the *Bazaar* and *Sofa* settees (both 1968, produced by Giovanetti and Poltronova respectively) or the *Gherpe* and *Passiflora* lamps (1967 and 1968, both produced by Poltronova) and the well-known *Quaderna* series of tables (Zanotta, 1970).

Part of the exhibition is devoted to the group's videos, including the **previously unseen *Continuous Monument***, a project from 1969 of which only the storyboard existed and which has been produced by MAXXI for this exhibition with direction by the videomaker Lucio La Pietra.

Also screening will be the **five films of *The Fundamental Acts*** (Life, Educations, Ceremony, Love, Death, 1972-73), *Superstudio's* most ambitious attempt to tackle the relationship between life and design, which while on the one hand proposes an anthropological and philosophical refoundation of architecture, on the other progressively free the individual energies of the group which officially broke up in the early Eighties. The retrospective therefore comprises material such as **posters, publications** and a wide show of **"backstage" photographs** that the group realized since the beginning of its activity.

SUPERSTUDIO 50 is moreover completed by the work of a number of artists who have given specific interpretations of *Superstudio's* work – from the videos of **Hironaka & Suib** and **Rene Daalder**, through to the documentary research of the photographer **Stefano Graziani** - helping us appreciate the freshness and currency of the message.

On the occasion of the exhibition the publisher Quodlibet is presenting ***Superstudio. Opere 1966-1978***, edited by Gabriele Mastrigli and collecting for the first time in an annotated form, the works, the texts and the projects of the celebrated group, from the best-known to the most extreme, generously illustrated with an vast quantity of images and previously unpublished documents, the fruit of long and painstaking archival reconstruction.

The press kit and images of the exhibition can be downloaded from the Reserved Area of the Fondazione MAXXI's website at <http://www.fondazionemaxxi.it/area-riservata/> by typing in the password **areariservatamaxxi**

MAXXI – National Museum of XXI Century Arts

www.fondazionemaxxi.it - info: 06.320.19.54; info@fondazionemaxxi.it

opening hours: 11.00 AM – 7.00 PM (Tues, Weds, Thur, Fri, Sun) | 11.00 AM – 10.00 PM (Sat) | closed Mondays,

Admittance free for students of art and architecture from Tuesday to Friday.

MAXXI PRESS OFFICE +39 06 324861 press@fondazionemaxxi.it