



Casa dell'Energia e dell'Ambiente
piazza Po, 3 - Milan

LE CATTEDRALI DELL'ENERGIA

Architettura, industria e paesaggio nelle immagini di Francesco Radino e degli Archivi Storici Aem

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THE CATHEDRALS OF ENERGY

Architecture, industry and landscape in the images by Francesco Radino and the Aem Historical Archives

curated by Francesco Radino and Fabrizio Trisoglio

21 October 2016 - 27 January 2017

press release, 21.10.2016

With more than a hundred images the exhibition "**Le cattedrali dell'energia. Architettura, industria e paesaggio nelle immagini di Francesco Radino e degli Archivi Storici Aem/The cathedrals of energy. Architecture, industry and landscape in the images by Francesco Radino and the Aem Historical Archives**" tells about and describes the buildings, places and architectures of Aem, all dedicated to the production of energy in Italy from north to south.

It is displayed at the Casa dell'Energia e dell'Ambiente in Milan from 21 October to 27 January; the exhibition is devised and promoted by the Aem Foundation - A2A Group, and is curated by Francesco Radino and Fabrizio Trisoglio. It is laid out in **two** closely connected **sections** that highlight two views, two periods, and recall the history of the "energy cathedrals" from the early twentieth century to today.

The **unprecedented colour photographic campaign**, shot by **Francesco Radino** in **2016**, illustrates the iconic buildings of Aem, the new examples of the architecture of A2A Group, tracing the long path - testimony of contemporaneity - that goes from the power plants of Valtellina to Friuli and from the waste-to-energy plants of Lombardy to the splendid reservoirs of Calabria. They are all structures very different in appearance; they combine the useful with the aesthetic and create new balances with the surrounding natural environment. Consequently, the four natural elements, earth, air, water and fire, become of essential importance, as they are not only linked to the processes of energy production, but also are an active part of the union across two different domains, landscape and architecture.

The section dealing with the past holds a careful selection of black and white photographs, belonging to **the prestigious photographic assets of the Aem Historical Archives**. Through pictures by Vincenzo Aragozzini, Guglielmo Chiolini, Antonio Paoletti and Gianni Moreschi this section displays an overview of the industrial structures from the first half of the twentieth century. They portray majestic power plants, electric workshops, transmission substations and electrical monuments from Milan, Cassano d'Adda and Valtellina, as well as parts of machinery and control panels for the power lines and tram system.

Overall, the group of images shows a variety of buildings that are mostly characterized by historical or modern elements. For example, the hydroelectric plant of Raosco, designed by the architect Piero Portaluppi, that reminds the viewer of a medieval castle, the power plants from Grosotto and Fraele, of a Neo-renaissance and a Neo-romantic kind. Also, we can find an

obvious hint at the Gothic style in the thermal power plant of Monfalcone, with its wide naves, that brings up the theme of “cathedrals” from the title of the exhibition. More modern, geometrical - linked to an alternation between full and empty volumes - examples are the south transmission substation of Milan and the hydroelectric plant of Calusia in Calabria, designed by Giovanni Muzio.

Alberto Martinelli, president of the Aem Foundation - A2A Group - in the presentation says: “The selection of the *‘historical cathedrals’* of Aem, that are well documented by the precious photographs from the Historical Archives of the Foundation, combine with the wonderful contemporary images by Francesco Radino, who – together with Gabriele Basilico and Gianni Berengo Gardin - had had a prominent role already in the 1980s, with the great photo shoots for the Milanese municipal company.

Together with the historical places of Aem and the other institutions that are part of A2A Group, the new photographic campaign investigated the most modern power plants of the company and its new fields of development, that are no longer only based in Lombardy as before, but that have now for years been scattered all over Italy”.

The exhibition is accompanied by a precious **volume** of more than **150 images** of great historical and artistic value; they thoroughly examine the above-mentioned theme. In the book, curated by Francesco Radino and Fabrizio Trisoglio, we can also find formal introductions by Alberto Martinelli, president of the Aem Foundation - A2A Group, and Giovanni Valotti, A2A president, as well as important critical texts by Roberto Mutti, Francesco Radino, Ornella Selvafolta and Fabrizio Trisoglio. General coordination is by Luisa Toeschi, board member of the Aem Foundation.

Short biography. Francesco Radino was born in Bagno a Ripoli (Florence) in 1947. After studying Sociology, he became a professional photographer in 1970 and chose to work in a range of fields, which encompassed industrial photography, design, architecture, and landscape. Radino has always combined professional work with artistic research, and today he is considered to be one of Italy’s most influential contemporary photographers.

Since the 1980s, he has participated in a host of local public research projects including the photography campaigns *Archivio dello Spazio*, part of the Architecture and Environmental Heritage Project organised by the Province of Milan; *Osserva.Te.R* organised by Regione Lombardia; *European Eyes on Japan*; *Atlante italiano 2003* organised by Italy’s Ministry of Culture and *Trasformazione* for the Museum of Contemporary Photography of Villa Ghirlanda in Cinisello Balsamo (Milan).

Highly esteemed in Italy and abroad, Radino since 1984 has worked with Aem on several photographic campaigns which constituted one of the richest and finest section of the contemporary photographic Archive of Fondazione Aem. He also published a range of books and audiovisual works.

He exhibited in galleries and museums in Italy, Europe, Japan and the United States and his works are part of both public and private collections worldwide.

Exhibition details

Title LE CATTEDRALI DELL’ENERGIA. Architettura, industria e paesaggio nelle immagini di Francesco Radino e degli Archivi Storici Aem/ THE CATHEDRALS OF ENERGY. Architecture, industry and landscape in the images by Francesco Radino and the Aem Historical Archives

Curated by Francesco Radino and Fabrizio Trisoglio

Venue Casa dell’Energia e dell’Ambiente, piazza Po 3 - Milan

Dates 21 October 2016 - 27 January 2017

Opening hours from Monday to Friday, 9.30am – 5pm

closed from 24 December 2016 to 6 January 2017

Catalogue curated by Francesco Radino and Fabrizio Trisoglio

General coordination Luisa Toeschi

Entrance free

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