The term *trama* in Italian has its own significant and engaging transversal, indicating both the narrative storyline of a work, with its characters and events, as well as the structure of threads or lines in fabrics, lattices and patterns that affect the different areas of fashion, art, architecture and graphics. An inclusive theme, therefore, in Mondrian with “permeability” of knowledge promoted by XY and further strengthened in its new edition.

*Trama* or plot in a narrative sense constitutes the beginning of a work, its basic idea. Then, later, it focuses and delves further into scenarios, characters, backdrops, and space–time relationships. Moreover, the same etymological meaning of the word “text” comes from the Latin *textum* which means “fabric”, but which can also be understood as the thread of a discourse. The “plot” is the synthesis that appears in the lapels of a book; or it describes the intertwining of a film and what we use when we intend to illustrate or remember its contents.

From a temporal point of view it is a ‘before’ that coincides with the upstream conception of a work; but it is also an ‘after’ that coincides with the memory devices. The Italian term *trama* also has another meaning: it evokes the textile weave of the thread “which is normally arranged along the warp” (DELI, Etymological Dictionary of the Italian Language by Manlio Cortellazzo and Paolo Zoli). This idea involves two different areas. It alludes to the textures of a garment, the world of fashion and the combination of orthogonal arrangements. The former boast a ‘deviation’ from the rigours exhibited by the latter; ‘deviation’ that gives them a marked dynamic and personal character. In these works, despite their exhibited two-dimensionality, there is an underlying temporal dimension, a ‘before’ and an ‘after’, like that in the drawings of the stratigraphic excavations of archaeologists.

A theme that is evident in the structured textures of Giulia Napoletano and Maria Lai, two artists who were the subject of two recent Roman exhibitions, respectively at GNAM and MAXXI. Napoletano expresses herself through the weave of differently oriented geometric lattices; Lai focuses on the textures of embroidery on cloth that have the appearance of real textile books to be read and interpreted by the public. In all the works mentioned, some lattices are given as an original track, a kind of ‘logical antecedent’, to which additional lattices are superimposed in a summoned space–temporal sequence. In this case the term *trama* is understood in its double meaning of ‘fabric’ and ‘narrative outcome’. In these compositions the overimpression of different marks creates a temporal depth that interacts with the two-dimensionality of the canvas, subverting it in depth. In the specific area of architecture, the *trame* or threads of a project cover several aspects. Some refer to the city and its historical palimpsests. Others, however, to the facades of buildings that in the contemporary world claim a radical liberation from the orthodoxy of the Modern Movement and its rigid principles, both ethical and aesthetic, linked to the narrow dependencies external/internal, form/function. In the post-modernity the exterior is no longer the result of an interior and decoration is no longer a crime. The textures of architecture, also taking their cue from the various contributions that are illustrated here, cover the following themes in detail.

1. *Threads as a city*

The term *trame* understood as ‘text’ or ‘fabric’, indicates the identity par excellence of a city. The city, and the modern one in particular, is the result of a long narrative linked to the different conflicts between dreams and realisations, desires and defeats, utopia and dystopia.

The term *trama* possesses a significant and congruent transversality, indicating both the intreccetto narrativo of one sweater, with its conspecifics and vicinities, and the configurations of protagonists. In these works, despite their exhibited two-dimensionality, there is an underlying temporal dimension, a ‘before’ and an ‘after’, like that in the drawings of the stratigraphic excavations of archaeologists. A theme that is evident in the structured textures of Giulia Napoletano and Maria Lai, two artists who were the subject of two recent Roman exhibitions, respectively at GNAM and MAXXI. Napoletano expresses herself through the weave of differently oriented geometric lattices; Lai focuses on the textures of embroidery on cloth that have the appearance of real textile books to be read and interpreted by the public. In all the works mentioned, some lattices are given as an original track, a kind of ‘logical antecedent’, to which additional lattices are superimposed in a summoned space–temporal sequence. In this case the term *trama* is understood in its double meaning of ‘fabric’ and ‘narrative outcome’. In these compositions the overimpression of different marks creates a temporal depth that interacts with the two-dimensionality of the canvas, subverting it in depth. In the specific area of architecture, the *trame* or threads of a project cover several aspects. Some refer to the city and its historical palimpsests. Others, however, to the facades of buildings that in the contemporary world claim a radical liberation from the orthodoxy of the Modern Movement and its rigid principles, both ethical and aesthetic, linked to the narrow dependencies external/internal, form/function. In the post-modernity the exterior is no longer the result of an interior and decoration is no longer a crime. The textures of architecture, also taking their cue from the various contributions that are illustrated here, cover the following themes in detail.

1. *Threads as a city*

Il termine “trama” possiede una sua significativa e congruente trasversalità, indicando sia l’intreccio narrativo di un’opera, con i suoi personaggi e vicinze, sia le configurazioni formali presenti in tessuti, reticoli e pattern che riguardano i diversi distretti della moda, dell’arte, dell’architettura e della grafica. A tema, dunque, che inneggia in sinergia con quella “permeabilità” dei saperi promossa da sempre da XY e ulteriormente rafforzata nella sua nuova edizione. La “trama” intesa in senso narrativo costituisce l’intreccio di un’opera, la sua idea di base. Poi, in un secondo momento, si mettono a fuoco e si approfondiscono ulteriormente scenari, personaggi, fondali e coordinate spazio–temporali. Del resto lo stesso significato etimologico del termine “testo” deriva dal latino *textum* che significa “tessuto”, ma è anche inteso come trama di un discorso. La “trama” è la sintesi che compare nei riveditori di un libro; oppure quella che descrive l’intreccio di un film e che noi impieghiamo quando intendiamo illustrare o ricordare i relativi contenuti. Dal punto di vista temporale è un “prima” che coincide con l’ideazione a monte di un’opera; ma è anche un “dopo” che coin-cide con i dispositivi della memoria. L’termine “trama” ha, inoltre, un altro significato: evoca l’intreccio tessile del filo “che si dispone normalmente all’ordito” (DELI, Dizionario Etimologico della Lingua Italiana di Manlio Cortellazzo e Paolo Zoli). Questa figura chiama in causa due ambiti diversi. Al-lusione diretta alla trama di un discorso è testimoniata al mondo della moda e alla combinazione di stoffe, colori, ricami e disegni stampati. Ma nello stesso tempo indica l’ordito costituito da reticoli geometrici diversamente orientati e sovrapposti. Questi due ambiti, diversi per linguaggi e significato, convergono tuttavia nella comune rappresentazione di un ordine complesso che esula dai canoni della semplice ortogonalità: la sua forma si basa sulla comprensione di reticoli messi tra loro in tensione attraverso l’azione di slittamenti, compenetrazioni e rotazioni.

Nel’arte questa morfologia è presente in quelle composizioni geometriche che si appa-rentano più di tutti agli articolati reticoli di Paul Klee, Sol Le Witt, Bice Lazzari e Piero Dorazio, che non con il composto ordine di Piet Mondrian, legato a configurazioni ornamentali. I primi vantano una “deviazione” rispetto al rigore esibito da quest’ultimo; “deviazione” che imprime loro una accentuata caratterizzazione dinamica. In queste opere, pur nella loro esibita bidimen-sionalità, è sottesa una dimensione temporale, che si pone in un modo di leggere i disegni degli scavi stratigrafici degli archeo-logi. Tenta che appare evidente nelle articole-tate esibizioni di Giulia Napoletano e in quelle di Maria Lai, due artiste fatte oggetto di due re-centi esposizioni individuali, rispettivamente alla GNAM e al MAXXI. Napoletano si esprime at-traverso la dissolution incrociata di reticoli geometrici diversamente orientati; Lai è tesa alle trame di ricami su stoffa che hanno l’aspetto di veri e propri libri tessili offerti alla lettura e interpretazione del pubblico. In tutte le opere citate alcuni reticoli sono dati come una traccia originaria, una sorta di “antecedente logico”, alla quale vengono sovrapposti ulteriori reticoli in una evocata successione spazio–temporale. In questo caso il termine “trama” è inteso nel suo doppio significato di “tessuto” e di “esito narrativo”. In queste composizioni la sovrain-pressione di diverse scritture crea una profon-dità temporale che interagisce con la bidimen-sionalità della tela, sovvertendola nel profondo. Nello specifico settore dell’architettura le tra-me del progetto riguardano diversi aspetti. Alcuni riferiti alla città e ai suoi palinsesti storici. Altri, invece, alle facciate degli edifici che nella contemporaneità rivendicano un radicale affermazione dall’ortodossia dell’Movimento Moderno e dai suoi rigidi principi, sia etici che estetici, legati alle strette dipendenze esterno/interno, forma/funzione. Nella post–modernità l’esterno non è più il retaggio di un intuito, e la decorazione non è più un delitto. Le trame dell’architettura, prendendo anche spunto dai vari contributi che sono qui illustrati, riguarda-no soprattutto i seguenti temi.

1. *Trame come città*

Il termine “trame”, inteso come “testo” e come “tessuto”, indica l’identità per eccellenza di una città. La città, e quella moderna in partico-lare, è il luogo di una lunga narrazione legata ai diversi conflitti tra soggetti e realizzazioni, desi-
disenchantment that have occurred in the different historical phases. In Speranze per la città di domani (Hopes for the City of Tomorrow) Ludovico Quaroni refers to the modern city as an intertwaving of ‘signs’ and ‘social communications’. ‘I believe in the city as a means of mass communication, as a ‘field’ in which the many signs are intertwined’, I believe in the fundamental importance, for man, of this ‘field’ of social communications; it is the basis of that all–human fact that is culture. So I believe in the city and I believe in the modern city, I believe in the Metropolis of tomorrow that we do not know how it will be, that we know only will be ‘different’ but certainly wonderful, tremendous, overwhelming and sweeter” (Quaroni 1968, in La Città fissa, 1981, edited by A. Terranova). To the text of these intangible interweavings must be added, when interpreting a city, the ‘physical’ fabric of the layout of streets, squares, gardens and blocks that have been configured over time.

2. Threads as essence

It coincides with the initial idea of the project; they are the preliminary declarations of intent with respect to the theme and context entrusted to an ideogram, often a simple sketch on a random piece of paper. Equally it is also the drawing in a notebook of the main lines of a building or monument, seen directly or in the images of a book, in which one tries to fix the ideas that guided the original choices.

3. Threads as palimpsest

A project is always the result of a study of a place where it is decided, depending on the case, how much to concede to the existing traces and purposes and how much, instead, to symbols and the need for the new. From these choices comes the planimetric organisation of the project as a palimpsest and synthesis of different concepts and layouts. This preliminary phase determines the purpose of the plan as a fundamental act of architectural design. This theme today is underlined by digital instruments that favour the immediacy of three-dimensional structures entrusted to rendering devices. On a personal note, the projects I have developed for different sensitive areas of Rome rely on designs and patterns overlaid and intertwined differently, as can be seen from some fragments published here.

4. Threads as fabric

The textile origin of architecture, theorised by Gottfried Semper as an archetypal act of the lining of the primitive hut, finds wide implementation in the skin of contemporary buildings that exhibit a complete and radical autonomy from any constraint related to their internal organisation. In Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan Rem Koolhaas sees, in the skyscrapers of the 1920s and 1930s, the epiphany of a radical separation between the outer casings of Manhattan’s skyscrapers, made of sandstone and Art Deco, and their internal functional content, whose supporting structure is made of steel beams. This separation, which Koolhaas calls ‘sebottomy’, or the surgical separation of the two lobes of the brain once used to treat schizophrenia, is seen as a manifest, albeit ‘retroactive’, of contemporary buildings whose skin is, alternately, opalescent, interactive, multimedia. This ‘orientalisation’ of architecture, expressed through the luminence of pixels and electronic images, is present in numerous scenarios of futuristic films: from Blade Runner to Skyfall where the facades of buildings have the appearance of a bright dress completely extraneous to the body they covers.