

## GOOD CONSERVATION AND RESTAURATION PRACTICE FICHE

Composed by working party of:

Italy

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### 0. Palazzina Rizzi, Udine



Depicted item: Palazzina Rizzi, before and after renovation  
Sources: Pietro Valle – Studio Valle / Giuseppe Dall'Arche  
Dates: before 2019 /after 2023

## Other images or documents

### Data for identification

current name: Uffici Inter-rail  
former/original/variant name: Palazzina Rizzi  
address/ number(s) and name(s) of street(s): Viale Duodo 6-8-10  
town: Udine  
province/ state: Udine  
post code: 33100  
country: Italy  
geographic GPS coordinates: 46°03'21.6"N 13°13'45.1"E  
current typology: Offices at ground level and basement, residential apartment at first level  
former/original/variant typology: Commercial, offices at ground level, storage in basement, residential apartment at first level  
comments on typology:

### Status of protection

protected by: Udine Municipality  
grade: Listed as one of the important buildings of 1900 in the city master plan  
date: 2011  
valid for: building  
remarks: The building is not listed among the protected monuments by the Italian state

### Accessibility

Renovated ground floor and basement open 9 to 5 during office hours, the first level apartment is currently closed. Both are visitable by appointment

## 1. History of building

### Chronology

Commission/ competition date:  
design period (s): 1949-50  
start of site work: 1949  
completion/inauguration: 1950 opening of current building, Intended residential tower above base never completed due to death of client/ designer Angelo Masieri in 1952

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## Summary of important changes after completion

type of change: 1960s subdivision of ground floor in three distinct commercial/office spaces with enclosure of all ground floor windows with roller shutters. Abandonment after the 1980s

date(s): 1960-1990

circumstances/reasons for change: death of original owner / designer Angelo Masieri in 1952

effect of changes: decay of building components

persons/organizations involved: multiple owners from 1950 to 2021

## 2. Summary of restoration

### Summary of important changes after restoration

type of change: renovation and conversion to offices

date(s): 2021-23

circumstances/reasons for change: abandonment for 30 years, decay

effect of changes: Re-use of three separated commercial/office spaces into a single open space,

reuse of storage basement as additional open space

persons/organisations involved: Studio Valle Architetti Associati. Pietro Valle chief architect

### Current use

of whole building/site: office building, residential apartment

comments: Used since construction.

## 3. Evaluation of restoration/conservation

*Give the scientific reasons for selection for Docomomo documentation.*

### *Intrinsic value*

#### Technical evaluation:

The building designed by Arch. Angelo Masieri in 1949 was built in 1950 and is an important example of post-World War II modern architecture in Italy, influenced by both Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier. The building remained unfinished due to Masieri's premature death in 1952 in a car accident in the USA, where he had gone to visit Wright to commission the headquarters of his Foundation in Venice.

The Palazzina Rizzi is a two-storey building plus a basement built flush with the street at the intersection of Viale Duodo and Via Gaeta. The building once had a very extensive appurtenance which in recent times has been affected by a new multi-storey residential tower construction project. Quoting Masieri's monograph "the existing building is the realization of the first lot of the Masieri project. the original idea envisaged the demolition of the nearby Villa Rizzi and the construction of a building intended for commercial activities (shops, offices and warehouses) which extended from the corner of Viale Duodo with via Gaeta to the corner with Via Volturmo. This low body would have been completed in counterpoint by a six-storey trapezoidal residential building, thus forming an 'organic volumetric device' in Masieri's own words".

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Since the residential building was not built, the existing part is a fragment, which is distinguished by a marked adherence to the language of modern architecture and which results in contrast with the surrounding buildings. The compositional aspects highlight the characteristic elements of Masieri's poetics that appear in the building: the free plan, the spatial continuity of the interiors and the relationship of continuity with the exterior, the careful choice of materials, the large terraces.

The facade towards Viale Duodo is divided between the continuous glass of the commercial spaces which end in the chiaroscuro of the corner portico and the large plastered surface of the first floor without eaves overhangs, in which a rectangular slot opens which allows see the back pillar which can be interpreted as a reference to Le Corbusier's Ville Savoye.

The facade towards Via Gaeta is broken up into several volumes and heights. The rear facade has a ribbon window, a continuous opening along the entire front and some windows of different sizes.

Made entirely of reinforced concrete, the building underwent modifications after the premature death of Masieri in 1952 which prevented the completion of the initial project. Among them, the division of the original single space on the ground floor into three shops/offices and the closure of part of the windows on the street.

In the last three decades, the commercial spaces on Viale Duodo and the office space on Via Gaeta have remained unused, as has the apartment designed by Masieri for himself on the first floor. This has ensured that the ground floor, originally transparent, was shielded by rolling shutters left closed, giving an opaque image of general abandonment of the building.

As already mentioned, the conservative restoration intervention envisaged the reduction of the real estate units on the ground floor. In this way a single building unit for executive use has been created. This operation therefore also provided for a reorganization of the internal spaces functional to creating a single large open space in which numerous workstations are located. The unification of the real estate units does not represent a distortion of the typological structure of the building but rather a return to the intentions of the original project and in any case lends itself to a functional and distributive flexibility which certainly does not distort the spatial configuration.

The new internal distribution involved the demolition of the freight elevator serving the basement warehouse and the little spiral staircase that allowed access to the basement, which, due to its reduced size and helical shape, was functionally limited. In place of the two artifacts, a new staircase with two flights cm wide has been built. The basement, previously used as a warehouse, has been renovated for office use and contains a main open space and three sub-spaces: a technical room, a meeting room and a kitchen-toilet unit.

The issue of protecting the image of the building has the fundamental point in the replacement of the windows. The project interprets protection by setting itself the primary objective of safeguarding the design of the windows grid and their chromatic finish. On Viale Duodo the original shop windows have been re-proposed with the same grid and transom window with new double glazing panes. Here the shutters added in the 1960s have been eliminated. On the rear courtyard, the windows have been re-proposed in metal in their characteristic dark red color, with the original distribution of the bipartite, tripartite and quadripartite grid in height, with the fanlights and the false fixed parts that can be opened. The building has thus maintained its original image.

### **Social evaluation:**

The renovation has given new use to a building that was abandoned for three decades and rendered opaque on the public space of the street by the added shutters and metal grills that have been removed. The present office use has a totally transparent interior open to the street and visible through the large window panes. The office use does not prevent public visit that has been guaranteed by the owner, the Inter-rail company and is possible by appointment.

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### **Cultural and aesthetic evaluation:**

The renovation of Palazzina Rizzi gives back to Udine the only non-residential building designed and built by Angelo Masieri, an important figure in the development of post-World War Two architecture whose premature death prevented him to pursue an already promising career. Angelo Masieri was born in Villa Santina (Udine) in 1921. Despite the plans of his father who would gladly see him continue the family business, Masieri moved to Venice to attend the School of Architecture, earning his degree in 1946. The extraordinary atmosphere experienced by the Venetian university, in the immediate post-war period, will be later recalled by Giuseppe Samonà with particular emotion: «that exchange of fresh thoughts, that enthusiasm of the discussion that brought us together the elderly and the younger ... all together with the head bent over some books, examining a building, discovering a form, revealing a structure and discussing a world, a society that we deluded ourselves could also be formed with our contribution ».

Among the teachers of those years, Masieri intensified his visits with Carlo Scarpa, with whom the relationship of friendship and mutual respect will continue during the first assignments that the young architect receives in the Friulian environment, establishing a lively relationship of collaboration between student and teacher. The professional activity will develop over a five-year period, during which Masieri created fifteen works that testify his interest in modern architecture and draw particular inspiration from the organic architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright. His works include: the headquarters of Banca Cattolica del Veneto in Tarvisio, Villa Bortolotto in Cervignano, Villa Romanelli, Casa Giacomuzzi and Tomba Veritti in Udine.

In 1951 F. L. Wright was in Italy to receive an honorary degree from the Venetian university and to attend the inauguration of an exhibition dedicated to him in Florence. During the Venetian stay, Masieri had the opportunity to meet the American architect personally, to whom he proposed the intervention for his home on the Grand Canal. In the same year, in fact, Masieri and his young wife Savina Rizzi decided to move their residence to Venice, in the building owned by the family in the "Volta di Canal Grande", commissioning the project to Wright himself. In June of the following year Masieri and his wife were traveling in the United States, together with their friend Gino Valle, to visit numerous works of contemporary architecture and, above all, to define with Wright the project of their own Venetian house. On the return journey from Taliesin West (home of Wright's summer home-studio), where they went to meet the master, who was also temporarily absent, on 28 June 1952 Angelo Masieri lost his life in a car accident.

It will be his wife, later, to confirm the assignment to Wright by asking him to design rooms designed to accommodate needy and deserving students of architecture.

In 1954, a double issue of the *Metron* magazine was dedicated to the Masieri Memorial and to the works of the young missing architect.

## **4. Documentation**

### **Archives/written records/correspondence etc: (state location/ address)**

Gallerie del Progetto di Palazzo Morpurgo – The Municipality of Udine, via Savorgnana 12, 33100 Udine

### **Principal publications (in chronological order):**

Massimo Bortolotti (curator), *Angelo Masieri Architetto 1921-1952*, Udine 1995

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Francesco Tentori, "Friuli anni '50" in *Friuli Venezia Giulia, Guida Critica all'Architettura Contemporanea*, curated by L. Semerani and S. Polano, Venice 1992, pp.147-155

"Metron" 49-50, year IX, January – April 1954, pp.44-48

**Visual material (state location/ address)**

**original visual records/drawings/photographs/others:**

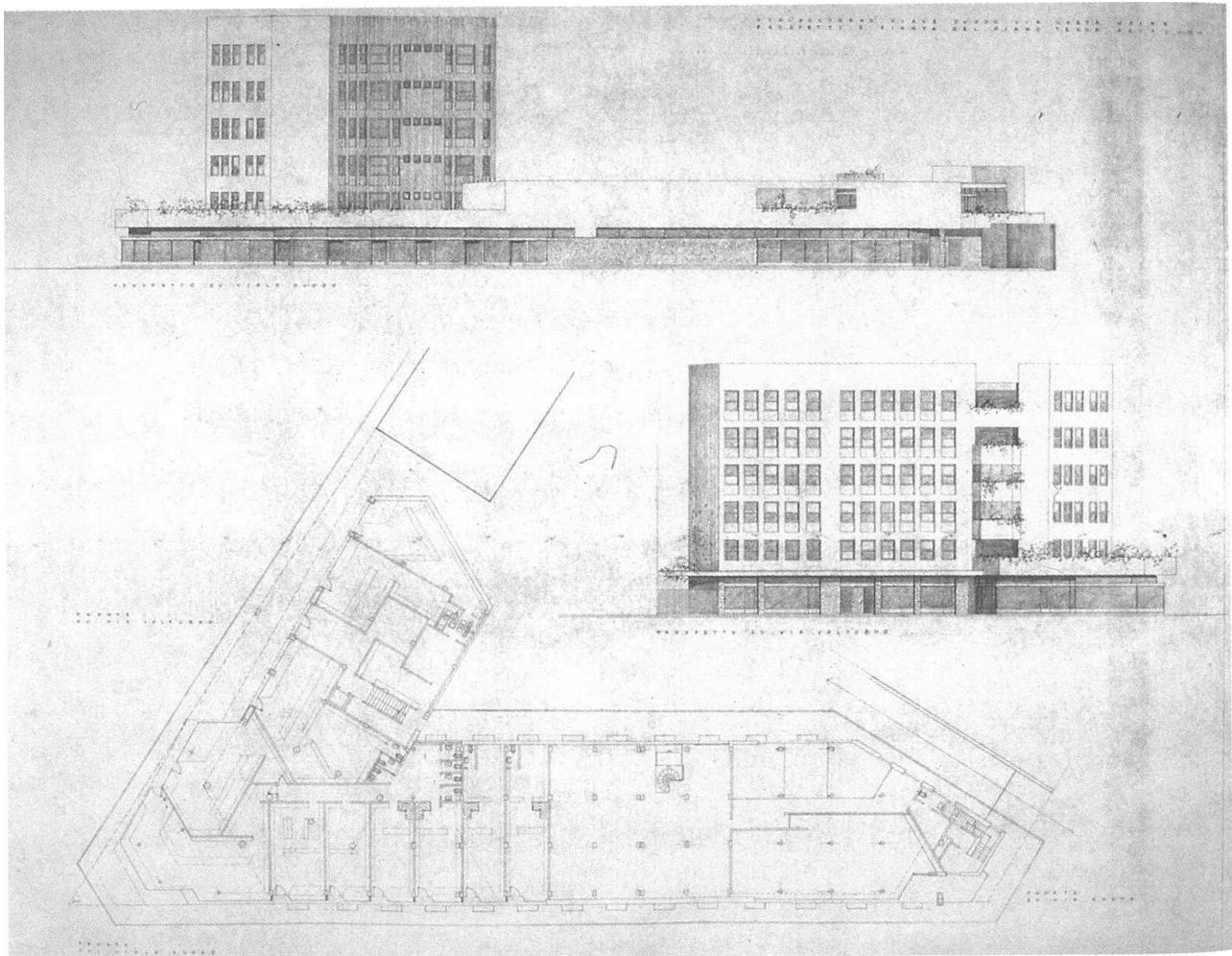
Gallerie del Progetto di Palazzo Morpurgo – The Municipality of Udine, via Savorgnana 12, 33100 Udine

Post restoration photographs and survey drawings:

Studio Valle Architetti Associati archive, Udine

Pietro Valle, Giuseppe Dall'Arche (post-renovation photos)

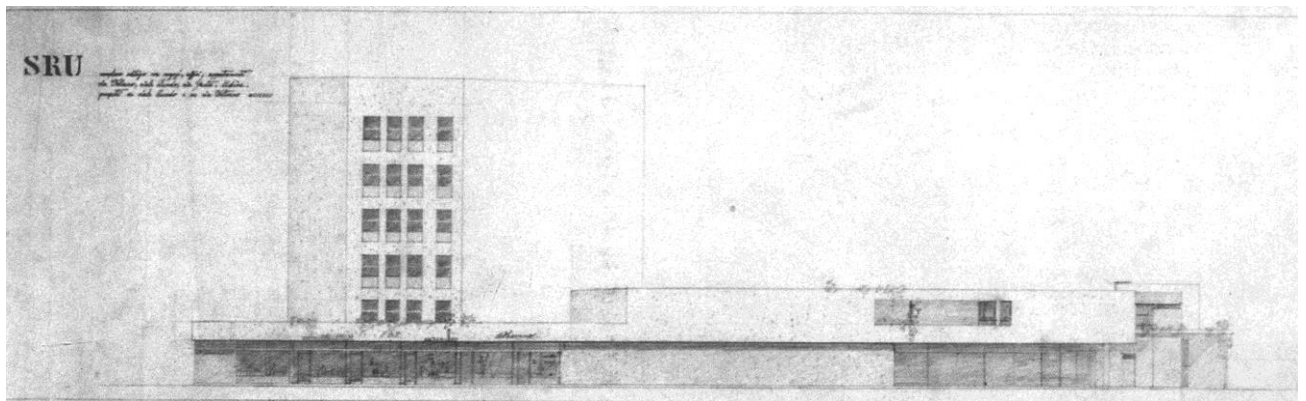
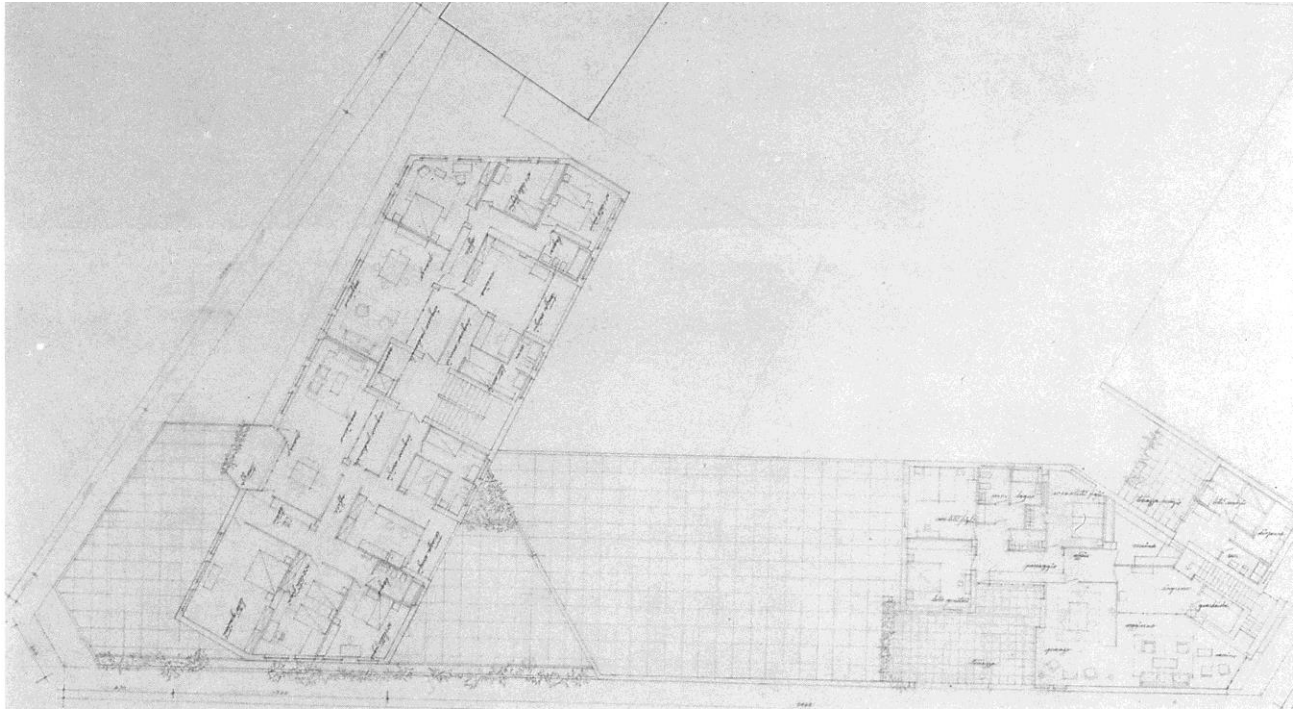
**1 DRAWINGS OF INITIAL PROJECT AND PHOTOS OF ORIGINAL BUILDING**



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## 2 DRAWINGS AND PHOTOS OF BUILDING BEFORE RENOVATION



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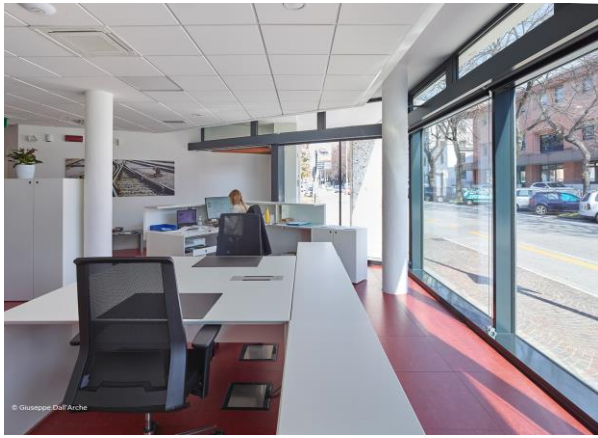
### 3 DRAWINGS AND PHOTOS OF BUILDING AFTER RENOVATION



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## Fiche report

rapporteur: Pietro Valle, Studio Valle Architetti Associati  
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date of report: May 7, 2023

### Examination by DOCOMOMO national/regional section

approval by working party co-ordinator/registers correspondent (name):  
sign and date:

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### examination by DOCOMOMO ISC/R

type of ISC Registers/Urbanism/Landscape/Gardens:  
name of ISC member in charge of the evaluation:  
comment(s):  
ISC approval:  
Sign and date:

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Working party/ID n°:  
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