

Davide Fornari, Davide Turrini (Hrsg.)  
**Olivetti Identities.**  
**Spaces and Languages 1933–1983**

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Interdisziplinäres Forschungsprojekt, das von der ECAL/ Universität für Design und Kunst Lausanne und der Università degli Studi di Ferrara in Zusammenarbeit mit der Vereinigung für die historischen Archive von Olivetti in Ivrea durchgeführt wurde.

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Neuerscheinung Januar 2022

## Visuelle Identität und Markenbildung bei Olivetti

- Beispiele aus Showrooms, Messen, Weltausstellungen
- Kulturelle Aktivitäten und Werbemassnahmen des weltweit einzigartigen Unternehmens

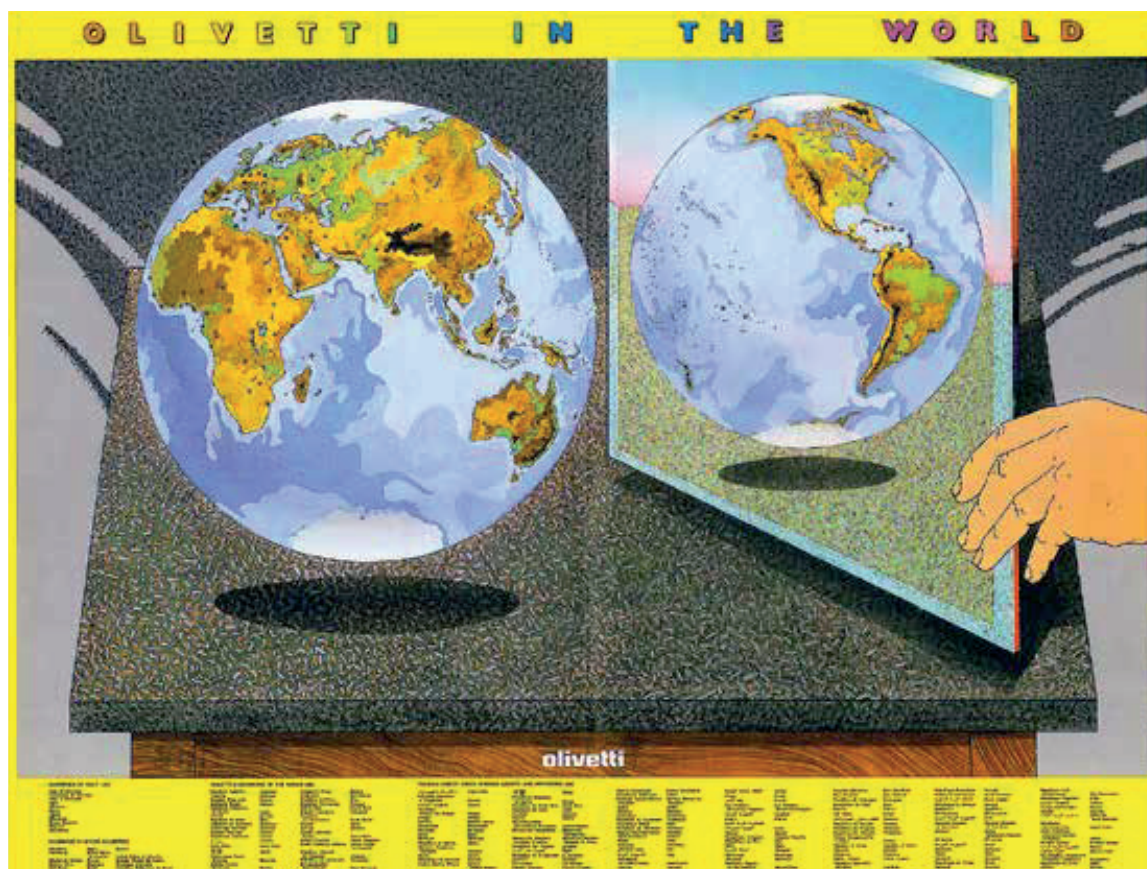
Die Schreibmaschinenklassiker sind der bekannteste Ausdruck des industriellen Vermächtnisses und die sichtbare Identität von Olivetti, die sowohl innovativ als auch komplex, materiell und immateriell war.

*Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages 1933–1983* erforscht diese Identitäten und zeigt, dass das Olivetti-Phänomen als Ganzes zu analysieren und dabei besonderes Augenmerk auf den Kontext der Unternehmensentwicklung und die Ansätze von Designern wie Xanti Schawinsky, Renato Zveteremich, Ettore Sottsass, Hans von Klier, Egidio Bonfante, Walter Ballmer u. a. zu legen ist.

Dies reicht von der Einrichtung des Olivetti-Werbebüros 1933 bis zur Eröffnung des permanenten Olivetti-Pavillons auf der Hannover Messe 1983, der als letzter Schritt in einer besonders effizienten Strategie der Corporate Identity gedacht war.

Das Buch ist in vier Abschnitte unterteilt, die sich mit der Gestaltung von Showrooms, der Ausstellungsgestaltung von Messen und Expos, der Analyse von Sprachen, die das Unternehmensvokabular sowie die visuelle Kommunikation und das Interaktionsdesign geprägt haben, sowie Aktivitäten im kulturellen Umfeld und Werbemassnahmen befassen.

In einem letzten Abschnitt werden die Referenzen der Designer Santiago Miranda und George Sowden sowie ehemaliger Mitarbeiter von Olivetti in Vertrieb und Schulung zusammengefasst. Zwei Bildessays mit teils unveröffentlichten Dokumenten, die im historischen Archiv von Olivetti aufbewahrt werden, ergänzen den Inhalt.

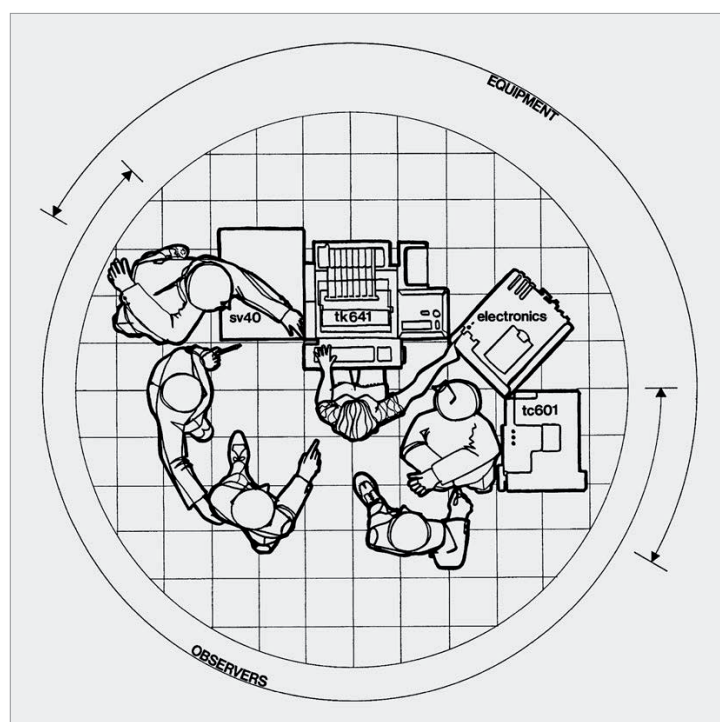


Plakat «Olivetti in the World», Gestaltung: King & Miranda, 1978.  
Courtesy King & Miranda and Associazione Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea.

## Über die Herausgeber

**Davide Fornari** ist ausserordentlicher Professor an der ECAL / Universität für Kunst und Design in Lausanne, wo er den Bereich angewandte Forschung und Entwicklung leitet. Er hat eine Reihe von Publikationen zum Thema Design verfasst, bearbeitet und künstlerisch geleitet, darunter *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland* (2016), *Bianca e Blu Monica Bolzoni* (2019), *Carlo Scarpa: Casa Zentner a Zurigo* (2020).

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architecture corporate image contemporary art Adriano Olivetti Gian Antonio Bernasconi



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Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages

1934

1970



24

On the previous page, Olivetti showroom in Lyon, design Gian Antonio Bernasconi and Bernardino Coda, 1954. Photographer unknown.

25

Olivetti showroom in São Paulo, Brazil, rua Brigadeiro Tobias, design Giancarlo Piretti, 1957; decorative panel by Bramante Buffoni. Photographer unknown.

Spaces: Showrooms

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Bauhaus Turin Xanti Schawinsky Renato Zvettermich Adriano Olivetti

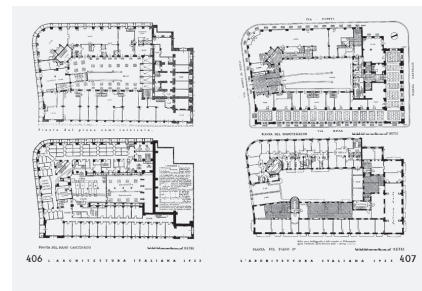


29 The Olivetti showroom in Turin published in *Domus*, 92, August 1939. Photo by Niccolò Quaresima.

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Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages

1934 1935

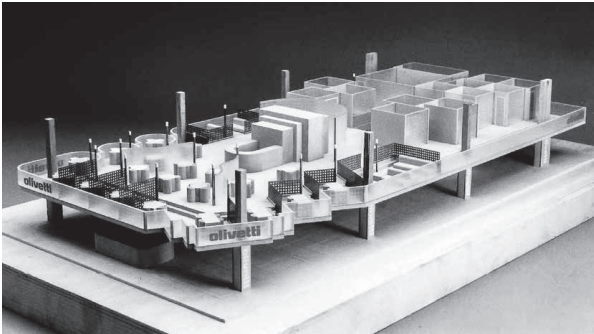


30 Plans of the basement and ground floor of the San Emanuele block in Turin, design Armando Mella de Villa and Giovanni Bernocco (1933-1935). The rooms in the lower left corner of the block housed the Olivetti showroom designed by Xanti Schawinsky.


Spaces: Showrooms

65

technical exhibitions    integrated design    Design Process    Hans von Klier    Perry King




63 Model for the exhibition *Design Process. Olivetti 1908-1983*, Hannover Messe, 1983. Photographer unknown.



64 Olivetti permanent stand at the 1983 Hannover Messe, which also hosted the exhibition *Design Process. Olivetti 1908-1983*. Photographer unknown.

128 Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages

1952    1983



65 Exhibition *Design Process. Olivetti 1908-1983*, Hannover Messe, 1983. Photographer unknown.

Spaces: Technical Exhibitions    129

technical exhibitions    exhibition design    Interorgtehnika    Egidio Bonfante    Pier Luigi Nervi

### Egidio Bonfante's Displays in Olivetti Exhibitions, from Moscow 1966 to Madrid 1972

Elisabetta Trincerini

Egidio Bonfante's work for Olivetti was multifaceted, and one can try to encompass it in two main areas: corporate graphics on the one hand, and exhibition design in various contexts on the other. Bonfante held various positions for over forty years – it is no coincidence that Renzo Zorzi described Olivetti as Bonfante's "single, tyrannical and insatiable client"<sup>1</sup> – but he had a monopoly on a sector within the company in that he would only be defined later as "spherical architecture."

This refers to the design and installation of stands and pavilions (at times even the related graphics) at events that accompanied and promoted Olivetti's success in all international markets.

The scheduling of numerous trade fairs (or, as they were also called, "technical exhibitions") during the forty years that Bonfante spent overseeing this sector, made his job an immersive, stressful and competitive one. As Silvio Coppola noted – showing a series of successful exhibitions, including Bonfante's *Interorgtehnika 66* and the one for the Hannover Messe 69 – "trade fairs and specialised expositions are treacherous training grounds in which it is very easy to dissipate corporate images."<sup>2</sup>

Olivetti's objective was not only to present and promote production growth (which in Italy was central for many companies in the years of the economic boom), but also to make the diversity of the applicative solutions developed

immediately comprehensible for the visitor, in terms of product innovation. This had to be communicated together with the high quality of design capable of beating the competition. Last but not least, the fundamental role of research had to be highlighted.

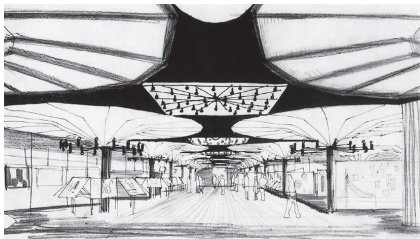
The definition "ephemeral architecture" is interesting because it is based on the staging of an idea, regardless of the usual tools of construction. Ephemeral architecture, indeed, can be understood as a sort of abstraction, a mental process, in some ways disenchanting, through which the concept of architecture itself is isolated and expressed with tools that tend to refer to the world of art. Moreover, the fact that Egidio Bonfante, although trained as an architect at the Polytechnic University of Milan, had always been an artist (his only activity outside the work for the "tyrannical client" mentioned above) may not be accidental in relation to the interchangeability of the tools of art and architecture and their respective alphabets.

It is not easy, at present, to draw up a comprehensive catalogue of the exhibitions designed by Bonfante. The Olivetti Historical Archives dedicated an exhibition and a short catalogue to him in 2003, but no specific funds has yet been set up. Among the dozens of events that Bonfante was responsible for, the Moscow exhibition *Interorgtehnika* in Sokolniki Park in September 1966 is the best described in the Ivrea Archive, thanks both to the written documentation of various kinds – press releases, telexes on the presentation of the event, a draft of President Arrigo Olivetti's speech for the inauguration – and to a double series of pictures by Ugo Mulas and Aldo Ballo.<sup>3</sup> It is unthinkable to analyse the Moscow exhibition, though certainly distinctive, separating it from a series of subsequent stylistically similar exhibitions (for which we refer to the images). Even though *Interorgtehnika* deserves particular attention for the reasons that will be outlined below, we are not dealing with an exhibition like the more

1 Zorzi 2003: 6.  
2 Coppola 1971: 73.  
3 AAADQ, Fondo Renzo Zorzi, Mostre ed eventi, Archivio Renzo Zorzi-Mostre ed eventi, 17, 80-82, 1966.

144 Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages

1966    1972

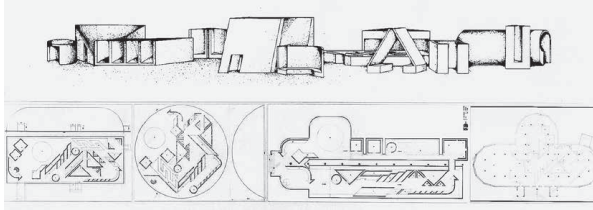


71 Project sketch by Egidio Bonfante for the *Interorgtehnika* trade show, Moscow, 1966.

Spaces: Technical Exhibitions    145



exhibitions    exhibition design    Formes et recherche    Gae Aulenti    Giorgio Colombo



80    Composition modules, floor plans and sections for some stages of the exhibition Olivetti formes et recherche, design Gae Aulenti, from the book Design Process. Olivetti 1908-1983, pp. 128-133.

81    On the following page, poster for the exhibition Olivetti formes et recherche in Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs (20 November 1969 - 1 January 1970); graphic design Cino Trini Castelli with Roberto Pieracini, 70 x 50 cm, 1969.

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Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages

1969    1971



**Olivetti**  
**formes et recherche**

MUSEE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS 107 RUE DE RIVOLI PARIS  
DU 20 NOVEMBRE 1969 AU 1 JANVIER 1970. TOUS LES JOURS SAUF LE MARDI  
DE 12 H. A 18 H. LE DIMANCHE DE 11 H. A 18 H.

Spaces: Technical Exhibitions

161

communication design    corporate image    Design Process    public relations    Hans van Kler



95    Cover of the catalogue of the exhibition Olivetti: Design in Industry, MoMA, New York; graphic design Leo Lionni, 1952. Photo by Niccolò Guaresima.

96    Olivetti advertising installation on the motorway; design Giovanni Pintori, 1960s. Photographer unknown.

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Olivetti Identities. Spaces and Languages

1950    1977



Languages: Visual Communication and Interaction Design

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