

Introduction
MODI OPERANDI 01
Stefano Milani,
Marc Schoonderbeek

SPACES, POETICS AND VOIDS

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This new publication series, *Modi Operandi*, aims to become an influential platform for a new generation of architects through its presentation and critical examination of innovative ideas regarding the conception and elaboration of the architectural project. The series is based on an attempt to understand the practice of architecture today, with a particular focus on ground-breaking approaches to the architectural project, which is currently in need of reconsideration, not only with respect to many of its instruments, but also the specific knowledge on which it is 'constructed'. The intrinsic relationship between analysis and design, which is consistently yet variably embedded in the architectural project, will be examined via the explicit elaboration of theoretical and historical **traces**, exploratory techniques and new forms of architectural expression. The emphasis on the 'modus operandi' of a project implies a clarification of its embedded methodological or procedural apparatus in close relation to the chosen means of expression. Both aspects will be addressed in each publication through a careful examination of the various disciplinary techniques operational within the architectural project.

At the same time, the *Modi Operandi* series plans to encourage collaboration with the new generation of architects by engaging in an academic debate at a time when the architectural project as a whole — its research and design approaches, its disciplinary knowledge and, last but not least, its educational procedures — are undergoing radical transformation as they head towards as yet unknown territories in terms of both intent and extent. Consequently, the *Modi Operandi* publications do not intend to take a prescriptive position or follow a particular tendency in architectural style, but rather to participate in the challenge and the struggle to map a range of approaches to architectural research and design, the processes involved in their elaboration, the theoretical reflection they give rise to, and the idea of architecture inherent in them.

In addition, the graphic design and publishing format will give particular importance to the presentation of **representational** constructions, images, maps and drawings, etc. acknowledged here as a privileged field of architectural study.

Modi Operandi 01 presents '**Spaces, Poetics and Voids**', a project for a prison in London by Archiprix 2009 and Archiprix International 2011 award winning architect Simone Pizzagalli. In the book, Pizzagalli's project is '**framed**' by the contributions of scholars familiar with the topics raised. Nicolò Privileggio elaborates the relationship between architecture and **language** by emphasising the **void** as an appropriate design technique for an architectural construct. Privileggio argues that the analogy between architecture and **language** is not necessarily located in **representation**, which he considers more or less obsolete.

Language can operate as a tool for architectural design and result in a personal, yet extremely relevant, architectural formal language grounded in relationships. Marc Schoonderbeek discusses overlapping themes that relate to the topics inherent in Pizzagalli's project and those of the Border Conditions graduate studio at the Faculty of Architecture of Delft University of Technology, within which the project was developed. Rather than present an introduction to the project, Schoonderbeek has chosen to examine four of its themes: 'city', 'poetics', 'prison' and 'body'. In doing so, he calls for a general reconsideration of the architectural project, by relating the radical differentiation at the basis of contemporary readings of the city to the human body, for which architecture intends to provide space.

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Stefano Milani, Marc Schoonderbeek
Modi Operandi Series Editors

Space
Language
Grammar
Framing
Voids
Sequences
Places
Erasures
Borders
Repetition
Rhythms
Correspondence
Silence
Representations
Traces
Notation
Narrations
Fragments
Poetics