



Inspiring and promoting design excellence through education and cultural exchange between the United States and Italy

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AIA CONTINUING EDUCATION SEMINAR

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The Gizmos of Tom Kundig And What They Tell Us As Creatives

DOMENICO FERRARA, from Catania Sicily, graduated from Sapienza University of Rome in architecture. He moved to Paris in 2010 for a post-master degree in Urban Design. His research was on the heritage of Roman theatres, focusing on how these urban ruins influenced the development of historical cities. After graduating, Ferrara worked on construction sites of several large-scale buildings in France and Monaco. In 2016 he completed his Ph.D. in cooperation with the UW in Seattle and the Chalmers University in Gothenburg, with support from the C.M. Leric Foundation. His thesis is on the architecture of Tom Kundig, concentrating on a theoretical approach to Kundig's gizmos. Ferrara's research centers on the theory of the architectural scale of living buildings, large and small. His projects from several competitions have been awarded.

Ferrara currently practices architecture in Rome. From his Italian cultural background, Ferrara offers an international vision of the work of Tom Kundig. He presents an overall sketch of Kundig's education and apprenticeship, focusing on a few critical moments that impacted his growth, leading him to examine Kundig's native landscape, how the architect absorbed it, and ultimately influenced his creativity and imagination. Ferrara aims to understand Kundig's work through the idea of "romantic mechanics". This concept combines the aesthetics and the movements of the machine with an elemental naturalist sensibility. It allows Ferrara to describe Kundig's gizmos as "objets à action poetique". These devices involve the user to interact with the architectural space

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and explore the close relation between action and emotion. Placed at crucial points of his buildings, they answer to Kundig's pursuit of unexpected spaces, where he leads the user to spectacular "final curtains", which then open to the contemplation of nature and its forces.

Learning Objective #1:

Attendees will be able to understand how Kundig's biography impacted on his work: from the native Eastern Washington landscape to his passion for climbing and nature, from his education at UW to his apprenticeship with the artist Harold Balazs, from his interest for Scarpa and Chareau to the watershed of joining Olson/Sundberg architects.

Learning Objective #2:

Attendees will learn how the Pacific Northwest (PNW) tradition influenced Kundig's approach to architecture, to understand where his creative roots are, in what sense he is a PNW American architect, and what are his original contributions.

Learning Objective #3:

Attendees will gain understanding of Kundig's buildings, allowing them to analyze the space and identify the main characters they exhibit (recurrent topics, clear spatial sequences, interior-exterior relation, etc.).

Learning Objective #4:

Attendees will gain understanding of the possible meanings of Kundig's gizmos, and how they are a key to understanding what they tell us as practitioners and creatives.

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