

## GRAHAM FOUNDATION

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Environments and Counter Environments.*

*"Italy: The New Domestic Landscape," MoMA, 1972*

September 18 - December 14, 2013

Chicago, August 27, 2013 — The Graham Foundation is pleased to present *Environments and Counter Environments*. *"Italy: The New Domestic Landscape," MoMA 1972* curated by Peter Lang, Luca Molinari, and Mark Wasuiuta. This exhibition highlights the lasting significance of MoMA's groundbreaking 1972 exhibition, *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape*. Presented for the first time in the United States outside of New York, the Graham Foundation iteration of *Environments and Counter Environments* highlights both the dynamic context of radical Italian design and architecture in the 1970s, as well as the innovative exhibition that first presented this work in America.

Curated by Emilio Ambasz in 1972, *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* showcased the forefront of Italian design and commissioned a series of experimental domestic "environments" and attendant films by the most vibrant Italian architects and designers of the period: 9999, Archizoom, Gae Aulenti, Mario Bellini, Joe Colombo, Gruppo Strum, Ugo La Pietra, Gaetano Pesce, Alberto Rosselli, Ettore Sottsass Jr., Superstudio, and Zanuso/Sapper. Utilizing a unique organizational method, works in the exhibition were separated into two distinct categories: *Objects*, which were subdivided into three groups—reformist; conformist; and contestatory—and *Environments*, which were divided into design as postulation; design as commentary; and counterdesign and postulation.

Contrary to convention, the *Objects* were displayed in the natural setting of MoMA's sculpture garden, while the *Environments* were shown within the institutional spaces of the museum's galleries. This curatorial decision provoked consideration of the architectural properties of the *Environments* and that of their museum setting, as well as the contemporary mutability of the term 'environment' as it had gained currency across a range of fields, including the environmental design movement, the social and behavioral sciences, biology, cybernetics, the defense industries, and ecology.

To accompany the installations, each designer was asked to produce a film that would demonstrate their environment's alterability. Together the environments and films refined the potential for domestic spaces to fundamentally influence inhabitants' thoughts and actions.

Presented for the first time since 1972, *Environments and Counter Environments* brings together these important, previously lost films and returns to the original exhibition, not as a reconstruction, but as an analytical project that attempts to reassess the visionary possibilities of architecture and design. Also on display will be a selection of materials on the prototype *Environments*, as well as many of the original documents, working drawings, renderings, and primary source images, photographs, and models that went into the making of the MoMA exhibit.

A forthcoming catalogue featuring previously unpublished archival materials and images from all the venues will be published by Actar in early 2014. The publication was supported by a Graham Foundation grant in 2010.

## CURATORS

**Peter Lang** is currently a professor in the Department of Architecture History and Architecture Theory at the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm. He holds a bachelor's degree in architecture from Syracuse University (1980) and a Ph.D. in history and urban studies from New York University (2000). From fall 2001 to spring 2009 he served as Texas A&M faculty at the Santa Chiara Center in Castiglione Fiorentino, Italy. In 2009 he was appointed associate professor at Texas A&M in College Station, Texas, where he taught graduate courses and directed Ph.D. students. He writes on the history and theory of post-war Italian architecture, with a focus on Italian experimental design from the sixties. Lang also has been actively involved in urban field research principally related to the understanding of informal cities and underprivileged communities.

**Luca Molinari** is associate professor of the history of contemporary architecture at the Faculty of Architecture, Naples. His awards include the Ernesto N. Rogers Prize (2006) and the UIA Jean Tschumi Prize for architectural criticism (2008). Molinari's curated and designed exhibitions include *Gold Medal for Italian Architecture* (Triennale Milan, Rome, Naples, Singapore, and Guangzhou), *Check-in-architecture* (UIA Congress Turin; Architecture Biennale, Venice), and *Sustainab.Italy* (London, Singapore). His publications include *Barcelona: Architetture e Spazi Urbani, 1975-1992* (1993), *Massimiliano Fuksas, 1970-2005* (2005), *Continuità: A Response to Identity Crises. Ernesto Nathan Rogers and Italian Architectural Culture after 1945* (Delft, 2008).

**Mark Wasiuta** teaches at the Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation, Columbia University where he is the Director of Exhibitions and Co-Director of the Masters of Science in Critical, Curatorial and Conceptual Practices in Architecture (CCCP). He studied at the University of British Columbia, Princeton University, and Harvard University. His research focuses on postwar environmental design, an area of shared interest at the base of his collaborative office, the International House of Architecture. He is the recipient of recent grants from the Graham Foundation, the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and the Banff New Media Institute. Recent curated and designed exhibitions include, *Tony Oursler, UFOs and Effigies, No Longer Art: Salvage Art Institute, Collecting Architecture Territories*, and *Operators' Exercises: Open Form in Film and Architecture*. He is co-editor and co-author of *Dan Graham's New Jersey*, and has recent articles published in *Domus*, *Art Lies*, *Praxis*, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, and *Explorations*.

*Environments and Counter Environments* was originally produced by GSAPP Exhibitions at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation in the Arthur Ross Architecture Gallery before travelling to the Swiss Architecture Museum (SAM), Basel; the Disseny Hub Barcelona (DHUB), Barcelona; and the Arkitekturmuseet, Stockholm.

## OPENING RECEPTION

Wednesday, September 18

6PM - Discussion with curators Peter Lang, Luca Molinari, and Mark Wasiuta

6:30-8:30PM - Opening Reception

For more information about this and other events, visit: [grahamfoundation.org/public\\_events](http://grahamfoundation.org/public_events).

## ABOUT THE GRAHAM FOUNDATION

Founded in 1956, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts makes project-based grants to individuals and organizations and produces public programs to foster the development and exchange of diverse and challenging ideas about architecture and its role in the arts, culture, and society.

The Graham Foundation was created by a bequest by Ernest R. Graham (1866–1936), a prominent Chicago architect who was a protégé of Daniel Burnham.

## THE MADLENER HOUSE

Since 1963, the Graham Foundation has been located in the Madlener House, a 9,000 square foot Prairie-style mansion located in the historic Gold Coast neighborhood of Chicago. The work of architect Richard E. Schmidt and designer Hugh M. G. Garden, the house was built in 1901–02. In its compact, cubic massing the house is related to the German neoclassical work of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and his followers in Berlin, but in many of its details clearly reveals the influence of Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright.

## EXHIBITION LOCATION, HOURS & ACCESSIBILITY

Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts  
Madlener House  
4 West Burton Place  
Chicago, IL 60610  
[grahamfoundation.org](http://grahamfoundation.org)

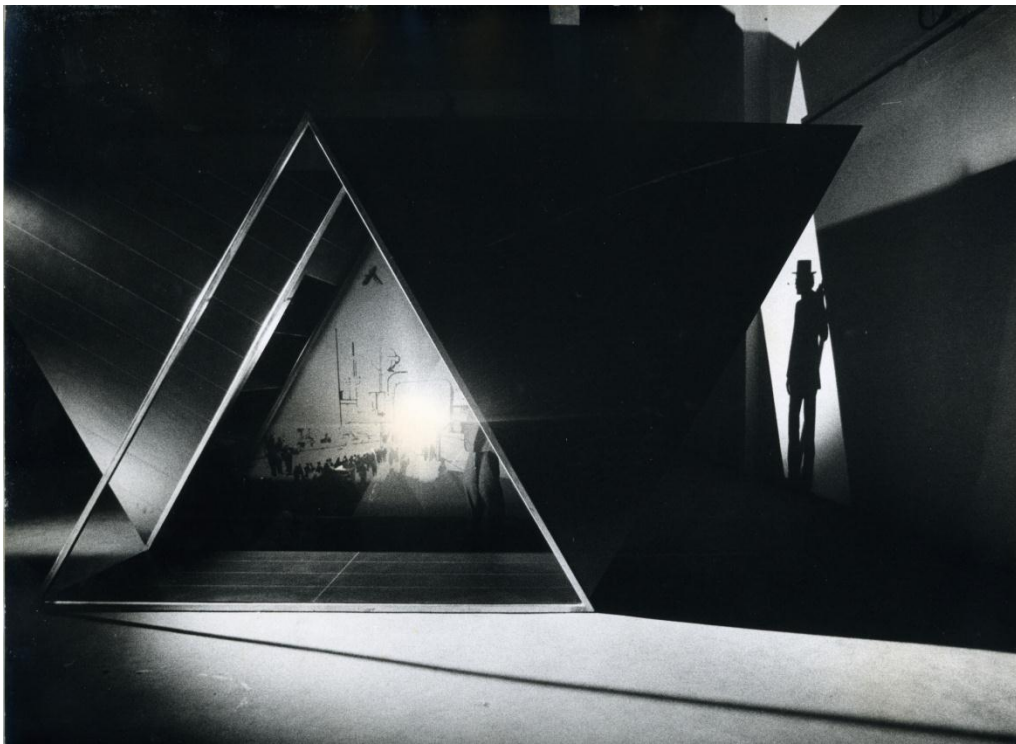
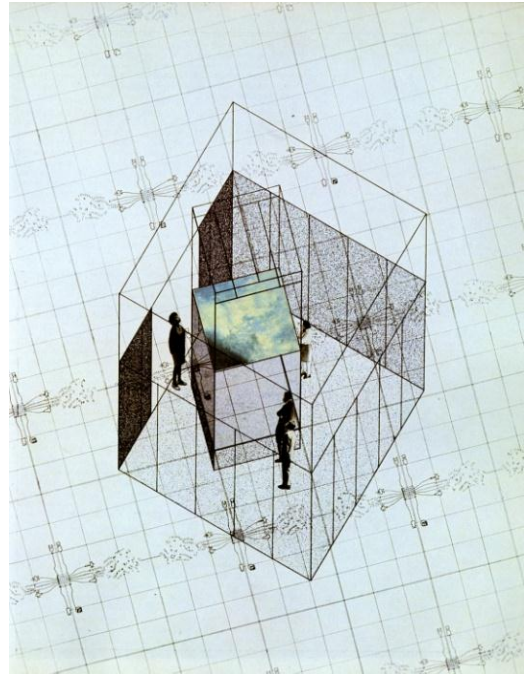
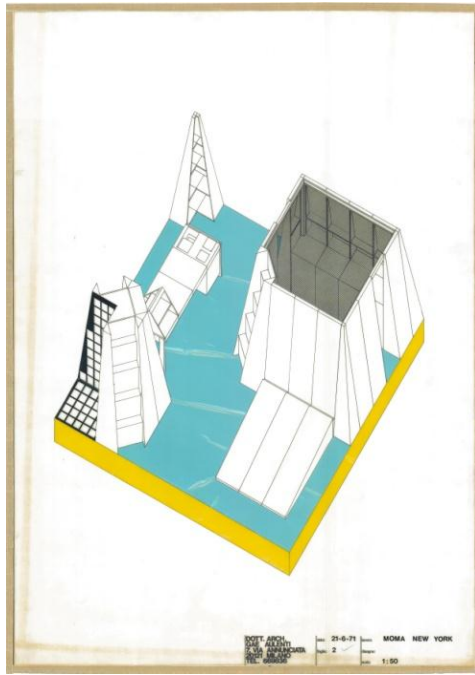
Gallery Hours: Wednesday to Saturday, 11AM to 6PM  
Admission: Free

The Graham Foundation will offer public tours of *Environments and Counter Environments* every Saturday at 2PM and by appointment. Saturday tours do not require reservations and are free and open to the public. Tours begin in the foyer on the first floor and last approximately 30 minutes.

Accessibility: Galleries are located on the first, second, and third floors of the Madlener House. The second and third floors are only accessible by stairs. The first floor is accessible via an outdoor lift. Please call 312.787.4071 to make arrangements.

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For all press inquiries, to request images, or for information about private tours, please contact Pat Elifritz: 312.787.4071/[pelifritz@grahamfoundation.org](mailto:pelifritz@grahamfoundation.org).



Images (Top Left) Gae Aulenti, Axonometric of "Three Elements" environment, 1972. Courtesy of Gae Aulenti Studio. (Top Right) Superstudio, Axonometric of the project for "Italy: The New Domestic Landscape," Museo Pecci, Prato. © Beatrice Lampariello, courtesy of Superstudio Archive. (Bottom) Ugo La Pietra, "The Domicile Cell" environment, 1972. Courtesy of Ugo La Pietra Archive.