

SOME KIND OF ROM ANCE

OODA

WITH WORDS
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OODA

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This book is a singular body with two expressions, whichever side you begin from. It is not intended as a technical monologue from architects to architects, but as an open narrative, inviting each reader into a shared and immersive experience. Because this philosophy does not belong to a closed discipline. It belongs to life.

What follows is a bifurcated journey through fifteen years of OODA, unfolding as a dream-state dialogue between *Any Kind of Existence* and *Some Kind of Romance*: two mirrored reflections of a practice shaped between memory and projection, from Porto to the world.

On the side of Existence, we walk the grounds of Portugal. Here, the narrative is one of persistence and care, where time itself is treated as a plasticity and building material. It is a *protopian* exploration of heritage — regenerating the legacy of the past to shape a conscious future, grounded in the granite and mist of Porto (mainly, but not exclusively) or in the lightness of Lisbon (mainly, but not exclusively). Conversely, Romance chronicles our transformative affair with Albania — a venture that began in Tirana with a brief episode of dissonance and evolved into a profound, structural love with the country. It is the story of risk turned into belonging, where the friction of a new culture sparked a vital, emotional expansion of who we are.

Read together, these volumes are less about buildings than about a way of being in the world. They celebrate a sense of becoming by treating projects as acts in a larger narrative — existential and passionate, layered and open-ended — that closes, in whichever direction you read, with a beacon of light, of hope, and of return for many more years to come.

TIRANA 2022 MIXED-USE			
TIRANA 2025 INFRASTRUCTURE			
LUSHNJË 2025 INFRASTRUCTURE			
TIRANA 2022 OFFICE			
TIRANA 2024 MIXED-USE			
TIRANA 2023 MIXED-USE			
TIRANA 2024 RESIDENTIAL & HOTEL			
TIRANA 2025 RESIDENTIAL			
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VLOREË 2025 RESIDENTIAL & HOTEL			
TIRANA 2025 MIXED-USE			
RADHIMË 2026 RESIDENTIAL & HOTEL			
VELIPOJË 2025 RESIDENTIAL & HOTEL			

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A geometry of emotions:

is belonging formed by what is, or by what never was?

In the arithmetic of any act of building there are always two kinds of numbers at play: the risk of failure and the (great) possibility of beauty. Unconsciously, that math spills over into us when we head towards a new country, meet its people, step into a culture and wait to see how it will receive us. The calculus of care vs. tone vs. active listening vs. the identity we bear and carry within.

Traveling, in the back and forth, you start to develop feelings, a relation with places, a town, a foreign element that becomes closer to home. Sometimes it's a bad breakup with a city, other times it's just a love affair. We are sure we arrived in Tirana as witnesses to a beginning we could not yet name. It was there, almost visible at the edge of our expectations: a beginning with as much risk of failure as its promise of beauty.

What does a city smell like on the first evening
– warm stone, petrol, figs?

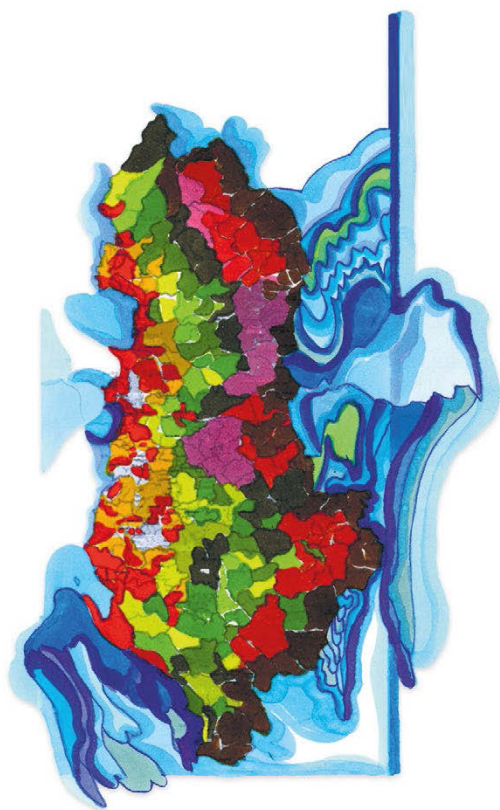
Even with all the calculated risks, we never plan the moment we fall for a place — do you? It begins somewhere small: the first breath after rain; the weight of light on a façade; the sense that the ground shifts to receive us, just as its people do. Somewhere between recognition and surprise, the pulse changes. Belonging, that incremental state of connection, starts right there as a restless physical fact that suddenly takes over.

Are we allowing ourselves to dream bigger?
To immerse ourselves there?

As we start to fall for something — or someone — simple thoughts surface. The math expands into probabilities. Some are hesitations or naive questions; others are more considered, shaped by fear of what comes next or curiosity about what came before. There is always a brief vertigo before the first word in an unfamiliar language — that instant when desire and uncertainty share a single breath. So, coming to Tirana was less about arrival, and more about a major adjustment: of pace, of expectation, of vocabulary, and a radical sense of openness and possibility against all that calculus.

The city didn't wait or refrained its compass, it continued to rush — loud, bold, sincere — and we got to learn from its tempo, its shortcuts, its interruptions, its sudden generosity (maybe making us more generous to ourselves too).

The first weeks were all translation — of gestures, of habits, of light. We drew fast, erased often, spoke little, looked more. It was in that silence between intention and response that the story started. A constant state of arrival, that we'll try our best to describe in feeling, more than as a realistic project description.



Architecture carries other places within it, places we learned from: the stubborn precision of our own streets, the discipline of gravity our heritage taught us, the quiet insistence that every design begins with a question and ends, if we're lucky, in a form of empathy strong enough to sustain regeneration for a long time. We came with that inheritance, yes; and yet the city made room for so much more, so fast. Our own, smaller "tale of two cities": one, the harbour we know almost by muscle memory; the other was this inland sea of hills and cranes, still a little out of focus. They sit on opposite edges like two points on a compass, with different climates and histories but a similar restlessness, each in its own "best of times and worst of times," each working through layers of ruin and promise all at once. Between them, our line is drawn: a diagonal of attention, a vector of affection. Belonging, we realise, is rarely a single address, it stretches between places.

Is my chest beating loudly?

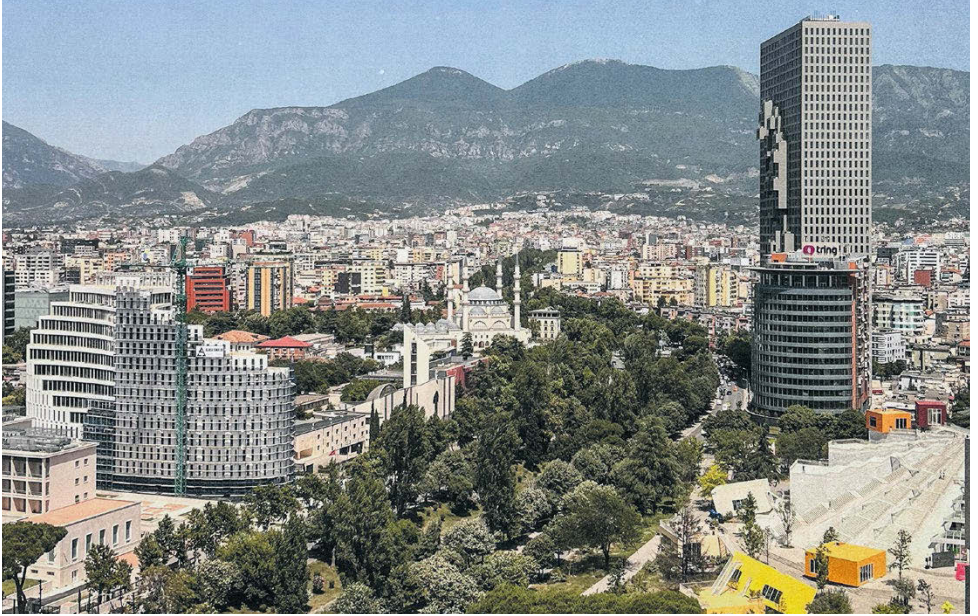
Will this last?

The unsettling butterflies that came with Tirana's excitement might just be another name for probabilistic uncertainty — for the negotiation in-between: what we imagine and hope vs. what the world allows; how we think things should stand vs. how they actually rest; the urge to try everything new vs. the commitment to stay grounded. One thing always leading to another. Hesitations, hopes and expectations stretching their necks towards something new, tangled like When Harry Met Sally... a friendship quietly seeded to become more. And as it happens in that story and so many others, romance really asks only this: that we stay long enough to misunderstand, to fail, to create more room within, and still return.

So every sketch we've drawn here tries to understand that tension. To balance desire with responsibility, impetus with patience and learning with new meaning. Like many beginnings, we thought we came to design buildings, instead we were building a way of seeing differently.

To look at a place and call it beautiful is easy. To look again and understand 'why' is harder. That is where love begins its work: refining perception, revealing how every wall, every grade of plaster, every void between buildings holds more history than any map can bear.

The work we do, whatever form it takes, begins the same way: by acknowledging that to build is first to feel the resistance of what already exists — not as obstacle, but as partner (and growing factor, for that matter). It's a malleable plastic moment: that's when you can make things happen. Prone to falling in love, you see?



Love, said Rilke, is two solitudes
that protect and greet one another.

Cities, too, depend on that fragile distance. Too close, and we impose; too far, and we disappear. So, we hover — between translation and invention, between what we know and what might still surprise us. The balance is delicate: to change enough to matter, but not so much that memory becomes flattery — probabilities and outcomes we slowly surrender to.

Somewhere between stone and light, we recognise ourselves. We dream of more. We came to draw, we did. But mostly to stay available to wonder.

How much structure can still leave room for surprise?

And what is it, after all, that makes us stay
– the work we do, or the feeling of being invited
to continue?

Perhaps that is what the geometry of emotion really traces: a figure drawn partly from what stubbornly 'is' and partly from what never quite happened but lives on as question. Perhaps that's all a romance ever needs: a question held long enough that it begins to answer itself.



Tirana is not quite a city. And it's not quite something to rationalise.

This organism, I think, gets to be more.

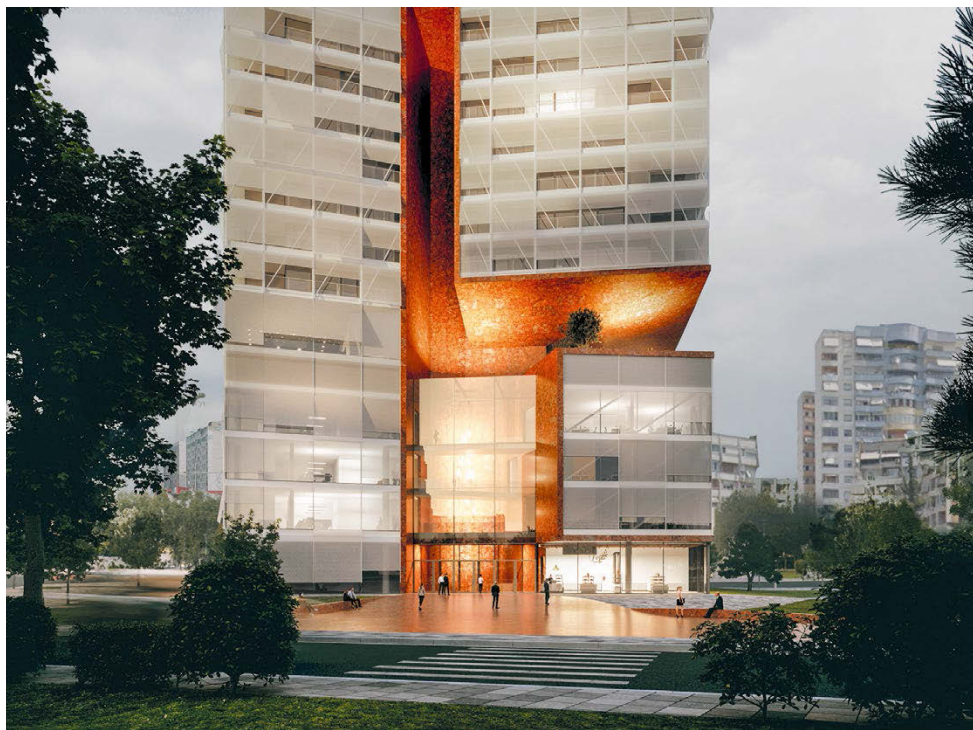
And I'm welcoming it.

Act 0

The Entry Point



Closing my eyes, I can almost feel a summer evening in Tirana, and that the air is filled with contrasts. It's September. In Skanderbeg Square, elderly men's laughter crackles over a heated game of dominos, while nearby, at New Bazaar, peaches glow like small suns lighting the children who weave through its stalls in carefree sprints — just as we used to by the river. My lungs suddenly fill with a striking sense of home.



Yes, evening unlocks the city by degrees. The square exhales, the lake holds the last light. Young couples linger as dusk falls, and on the rooftop of the once-infamous Pyramid (a symbol of cultural rebirth, now transformed into a technology beacon for youth and hope), tourists gaze out in wonder at a skyline punctuated by construction cranes that seem to dance overhead like gentle giants.

And what post-war gentle giants they are, working on dreams while touching the clouds. With metal and air, with strength and delicacy, she introduces herself.

The city's paint fades into concrete, old stone meets the inexplicable sophistication of new glass, while balconies refuse uniformity, speaking only in the dialect of plants — I think I saw this before, and if not, I must have dreamt it, wished for it. The contrasts rush all around, telling of past and future as I lay my hand on a wall, maybe to feel Tirana's pulse, to match it with mine.

Walls keep their dents like medals, holding the temperature of my palm and so many others laid here before; and what's new gives off an already-inhabited sense of vigor and hope. I breathe it all in, our heartbeats slowing as one.

Tirana in the 2020s is a city actively forging a new identity. What was once known as a drab Balkan capital has become a playground for architectural experimentation — a place where a formerly pyramid-shaped museum can be reborn as a tech hub, where bold new towers by international and local firms alike, punctuate the skyline. In this context, every significant new building carries an almost symbolic weight: will it add to the city's emerging narrative or feel like a discordant note?

I think it's impossible to put a face to it,
I couldn't even if I tried.

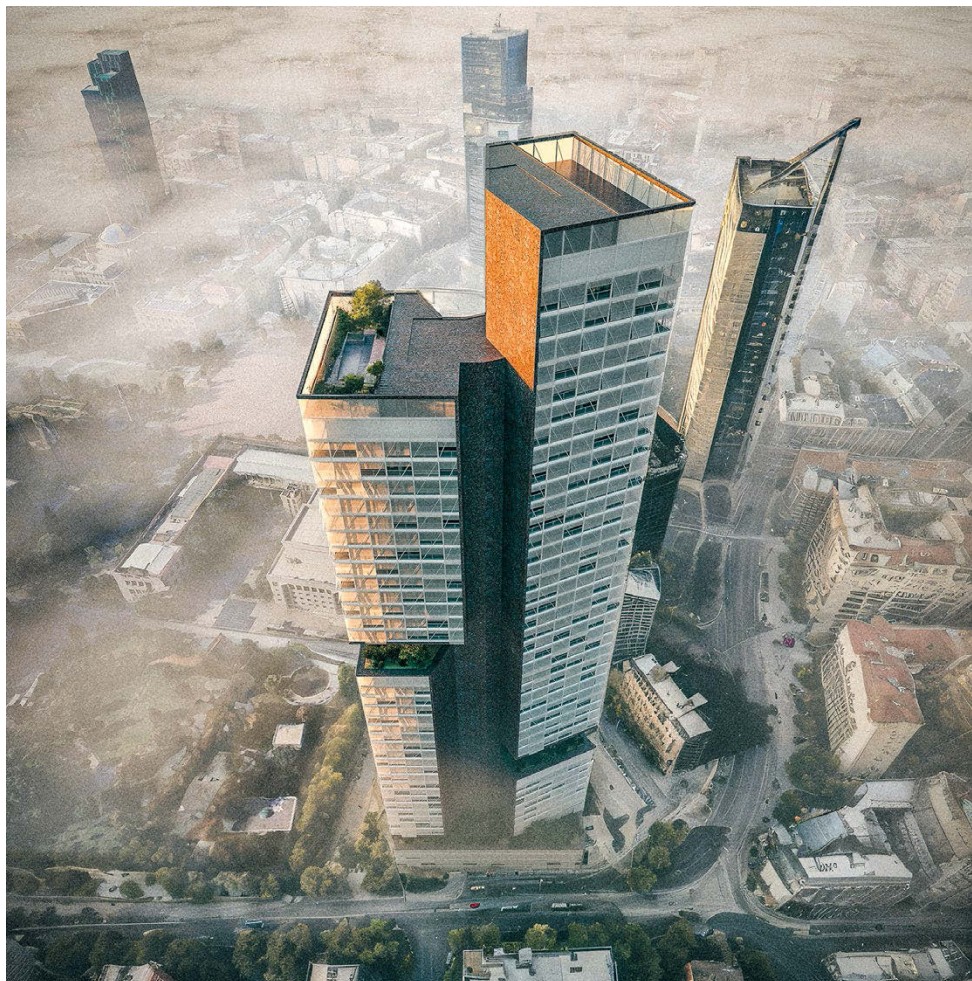
It is a page overwritten many times — Ottoman traces, Italian lines, socialist grids, the impulsive handwriting of the present. The city's matter speaks with a strangely gentle conviction: contrast and asymmetry fall into rhythm, giving the city its pulse, its texture, its way of becoming whole. Even the weathered walls seem to whisper stories: their fading colorful paint and patchwork materials carry the synthesis of a plural identity, where every scar and hue speaks of memory and possibility. No, Tirana today is not just a city. It's a state of mind that has become latent within me.

Can it see me?

How does it's context turn into form?

How can a city deepen memory and possibility?

What will it tell of past, present and future for generations to come?



Tirana's exhilarating pace layers its timelines, pulling me in, reworking me, letting me belong. The city becomes intimate, becomes profound, so nothing, no project, no presence, can be carved from a formula. This is what draws me so deeply as if we had already met, and yet everything keeps bursting with newness.

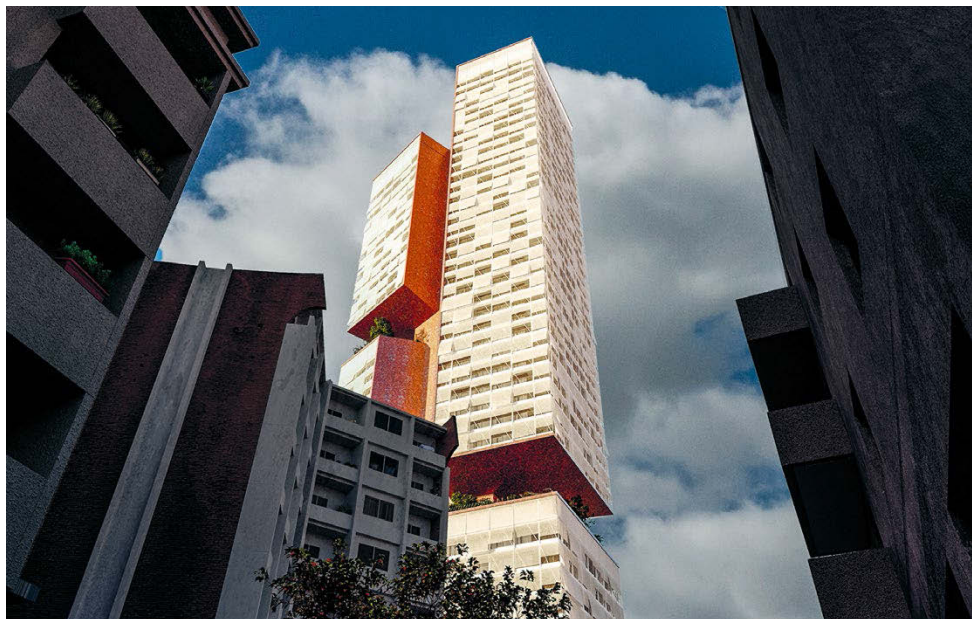
By day the tempo tightens. Traffic braids itself into improbable accords. Horns tapping a courteous percussion that never quite becomes anger. Scooters drift like commas; pedestrians edit each sentence as they please, yet it all still holds its coherence by the end (for all). Color runs along facades of both fading and flashing patina alike, over patched stairwells, and under bridges where the Lana mutters against pylons. Cafés exhale steam, the city argues tenderly with itself. Modern and unfinished, it rehearses its progress while moving, dancing.



Perhaps, that's it: a city is not built but rehearsed, so many times. Memory opens to possibility. Streets remember the choreography of feet. Here the "xhiro" — the evening stroll — draws a slow circle that binds the day: neighborhoods become audience and stage for one another, and architecture is evaluated not by theory but by whether a threshold invites a pause, whether a bench is exactly in the wind's lee, whether people will live and love and create here just intensely, today and tomorrow. Progress happens in increments: a repaired step, a fresh metal screen that both cools and ornaments, a balcony stitched to a wall like a second thought that proves wiser and more generous than the first.

And a narrow gap between volumes becomes a draft
that saves a bit of Summer before the season changes.

This is a city reinventing itself in real time,
an urban palimpsest where difference and originality
become strengths and exuberant optimism replaces
the gray uniformity of another (not so distant) era.



From outside looking in, it quickly becomes a luminous beacon of hope in a world that too often mimics itself and settles into sameness — a place where the improbable is possible and the impossible, once built, proves it was worth daring to be different. This charged atmosphere of change runs through the skin and leaves its imprint. It becomes me. It becomes us.

Albania has become a fertile ground for architectural renewal, attracting investment and internationally ambitious design. Among the many arriving into the capital's rebirth, we found our certainties quietly undone as the city awakened questions — then met them with patient kindness.

If I once thought I was only passing through,
I know now, as I close my eyes, that Tirana lingers
within me — long after I go, long after we've left.

What if the first passion is the one that never quite happens?

Act 1

Curiosity and Detour

Driving from the airport gives me time to look. Inside and out. From the back of the car the country arrives pane by pane: a plastic water bottle rolling under the seat, the driver's arm hanging out of the window, the radio tuned to a station I don't yet understand. Warehouses, billboards, hills with no names, a skyline pricked with cranes. My forehead rests on the glass and, almost without noticing, I start doing that old trick of the daydreamer in the backseat: sliding other cities over this one, tracing familiar street grids on top of unknown ground, trying to trace a path through the new road by borrowing the memory of another.

Albania's democracy is a recent one, and that tracks with convulsion, and with sudden changes of scenery as my window passes through. I remember reading about these new generations thrust into a world without safety nets to recreate themselves from scratch. An (re)edification of a society as self, whose translation I could not yet imagine. And yet, something took root in this precarious ground that has held so many civilizations in the mediterranean bay.



It shows on the road. What grew out of the cracks was not a united movement but a porous, ever-evolving ecology of resistance, experimentation, and quiet audacity. My forehead rests on the glass and, in that moving frame, I start to notice the friction between buildings that feel slightly out of sync — one too tall, another half-finished, a third painted over twice. I find myself wondering how they all ended up here, what kind of notes they are, what rhythm they beat just off the road. Maybe it's the sway of the car, the same exercise I stretch whenever I look at clouds and fit lives into shapes that aren't really there. But it's that exercise that comforts me most: trying to understand what is already here, imagining how it arrived, and what else might quietly fit. One more piece, one more drawing traced with a loose finger on the fogged blurry window glass.

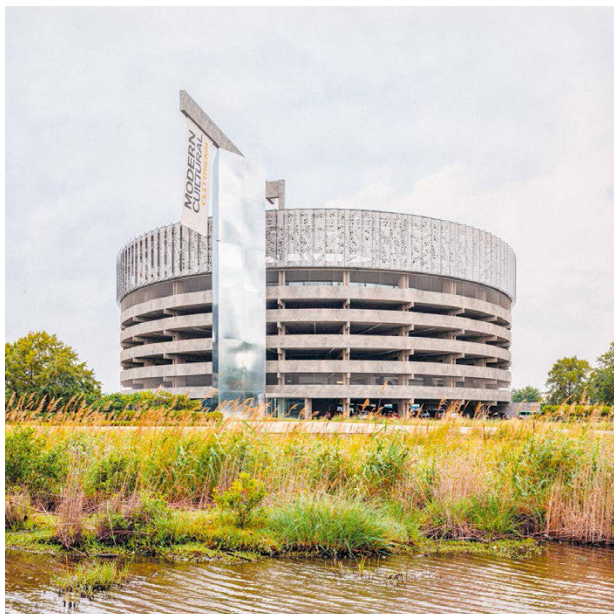
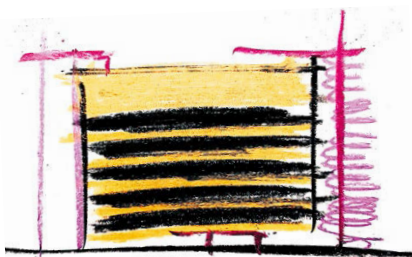
Have I drawn you or did I dream you?

In my mind a cylinder, a little too composed, is already standing in the middle of a square. I've drawn it, felt it, understood it, believed it could have a place there... placed it on the move. Oh, the expectations we put on a first arrival, to create something right off the bat — perhaps not here, not yet, perhaps further along the road.



It would be... Smooth, glass-skinned, rising as a narrow body that blossoms into a soft funnel lip. It settles in beside the opera like a note the orchestra hasn't yet reached. For a while it almost belonged there: spoken about, measured in words and images, entertained as a possible future right there. And then, very simply, it didn't. And it stings. I wonder how different it would all be, if it did.

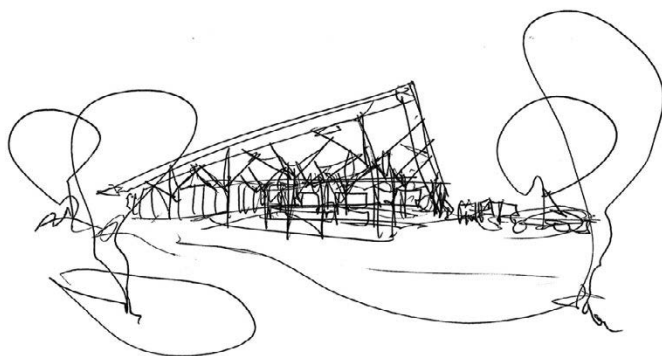
"If you're going to try, go all the way. Otherwise, don't even start.",
some solace can come (almost always) from Bukowski.



Can we build from scratch, from thought, from dream?

Can we stay here together still?

Like a child fogging up the car window with sighs, I drew it and the moment passed. There is no landscape for it anymore; it's gone. And it won't happen. A sort of superior mirage that I must have believed to be true. And there is a particular weight and ache to things that almost happen.



They leave a sharper outline than things that fully arrive. The tower that never rose still marks out the square more fiercely than any stone actually standing there. It teaches you about the distance between projection and place, the way a romantic scene cut from a film can go on haunting all the scenes that remain. The option was real, then closed; what is left is a kind of charged emptiness. We cross that void as if stepping through a ghost figure, something that was and eclipsed — something that never really gets the chance to fail or to age, and so stays with us precisely because it does not exist.

The tiny things are heavier.

And, all of a sudden, a very simple 'no'
can help make space for the right thing to come in.

NMS

PORTUGAL

NUNO MELO
SOUSA

NUNO MELO
SOUSA

PORTUGAL

To do, to do, to do, to do.
It is immensely difficult.

Perhaps it gets easier with each passing day because what we do already carries with it what we have already done before.

We come to know more and understand better what we are, what we want and what moves us.

Doing is always harder than not doing.
It is harder than writing from afar,
without the weight of those who do, just because
we can, without doing, to simply just write
and think about what should be done.

The vertigo of doing, lies in what is and could have been more,
more and more. Because Friday night's choreography is millimetrically
different from Friday afternoon's dress rehearsal.
Or tremendously different, even.

And because the ten cars in front dovetail into the same
staircase of one second, the good ones always want
to wear the helmets and enter the fast trance of passion.
Run harder. Faster. Sharper. Riskier. Greater.

On my first trip to Albania, on the penultimate day of rain and fog,
sitting in the passenger seat on the way to Vlora, I saw a structure
that emerged from the grey and the streams of water running down the
windows of the black car I was travelling in. It was a bare structure,
next to the road, which started low and ended high. A grid.

It had already begun, but it was not yet finished.
It already contained space.
It already contained an idea.
It already was, even before being.
The authors did not even know that it even existed.

NUNO MELO
SOUSA

PORTUGAL

EMBT

ITALY

**BENEDETTA
TAGLIABUE**

BENEDETTA
TAGLIABUE

ITALY

Letter from Benedetta

Diogo,

I know you mainly throughout that very unusual group created by that amazing person who is the best Artist among the Prime Ministers or the best Prime Minister among the Artists..

That group is very special and someone called it
"Arch Army"..

At first I didn't like so much the name "Army".. I am not in love with the military world..but little by little I started to feel proud to be part of an "Army" of people trying to make a better society using the only weapons of Art and Vision to offer to society a better inhabitable environment..

I sometimes suffered that illness that often affects people of our profession (architects): enormous ego!!

and that illness could bring me to love more my production than the ones of the others...thinking "beautiful..but..I could do better"!..

or

"oh no!!..this undesired competence!"

..and this bad attitude can create an horrible subtle diffidence that makes it difficult to really know each other..

but the "Arch Army" is precisely training us in forgetting these feelings..

aren't we here precisely to multiply this incredible capacity of transformation of Architecture?

Aren't we here to celebrate the intent of transforming the world in a better place, through beauty, innovation, creativity??

We feel like soldiers of the good cause, high priests offering supreme ideals to society..

We also met joyously in an amazing wooden structure in the Center of Tirana celebrating together the Art of Architecture..

And when I opened my eyes I could discover how Other Architects Projects are also amazing!!!

So many fantastic projects around me... and, look at this book.. a surprising two towers which fuses into one through a strange movement..one of them gently leaning on the other.. isn't it incredible?..like a gigantic urban message of mutual support and titànic delicacy..

BENEDETTA
TAGLIABUE

ITALY

..or inhabitable spaces disappearing under earth,
like a future primitive refuge..

but who is imagining all this?

is this OODA??

where do they come from?

A sort of wind transports me to the land of Portugal..
the flavor of an ancient nation, historical cities
full of hints and culture..I capture first attemptive
corauegous transformations..an old house surmounted
by an unusual tiled volume, abstract concepts entering
a multilayered world..

And from here again to a gas Station in our promised land of Albania..
A powerful structure sustaining modules in a sloped pergola..
an essential masterpiece which I have fallen in love with..

...then I see smiling faces of people who produce this work..
young people, young families, shared ideals in their eyes...

All of this I found and you will find in the pages
of this new book by OODA,

thank you Diogo for introducing me into your world by asking
this article for your new monograph, thank you Arch Army
for reinforcing the bond we all share together...

OODA I enjoy your capacity and I am proud to participate with you in
celebrating your creations.

..we have a common aim..

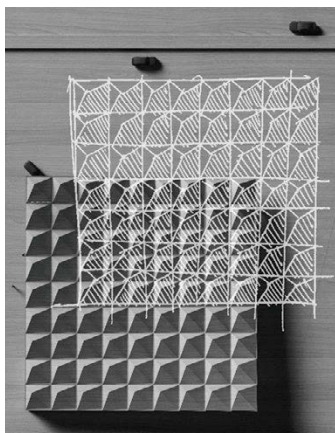
And please.. let's not stop the investigation!!!!

Benedetta Tagliabue,
Tirana, 10 october 2025



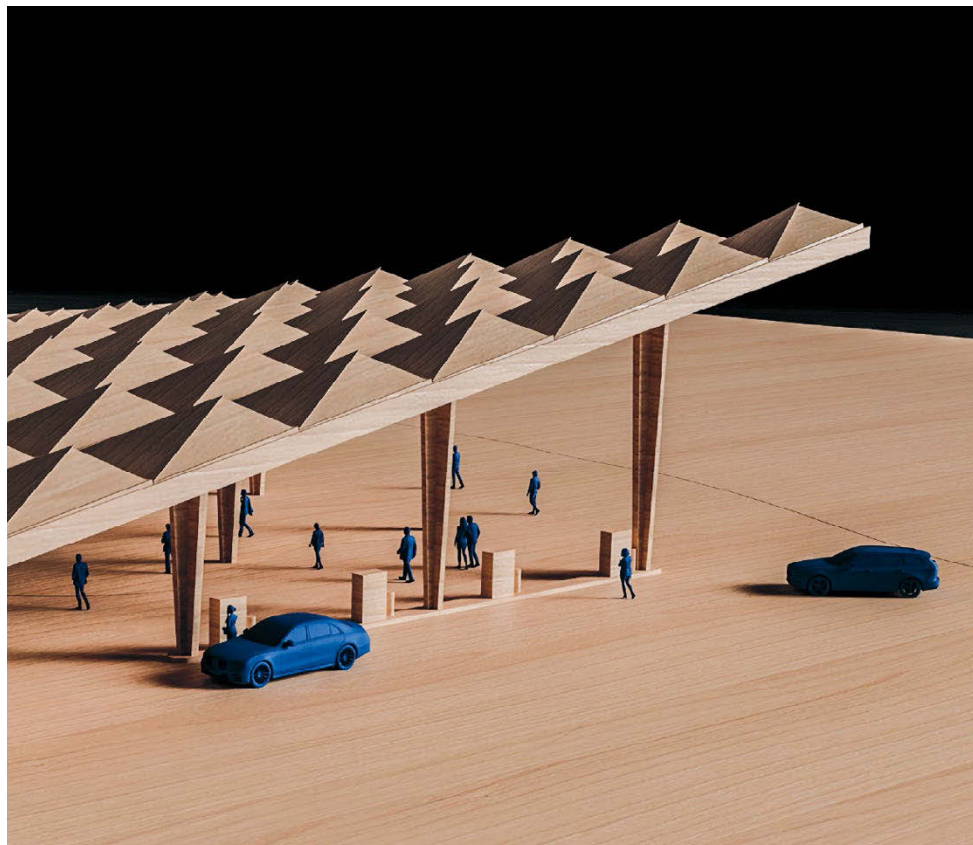


The road keeps going. The car doesn't stop for our disappointment. You need to move forward. "Nothing behind me, everything ahead of me, as is ever so on the road," Kerouac wrote in his "On The Road", and the line feels oddly literal here. The motorway widens, the city's façades thin into fields and low houses, our attachment to that unbuilt cylinder stays behind like an exit we have already missed. I'm still in the back seat, still measuring distances, when the landscape offers something else: a slice of asphalt, a rectangle of concrete, a cluster of pumps, a thin roof catching the light. A gas station.



About an hour south of Tirana, on the road to Lushnjë, the motorway lets go of the city and the roof appears: low, concrete, a double curve held on thin columns, like a piece of mountain pressed flat and lifted into the air. Pumps line up under it; a small shop sits in the shade. Cars and trucks slide in, slow down, and leave again. Nothing monumental, just a pause drawn with care.

Most days nothing “special” happens here. Still, it stirs a kind of nostalgia. People refuel, buy coffee, stretch their backs, check their phones. And yet these are exactly the places the body keeps: the little islands where the engine stops and the air smells of petrol and hot dust, mixed with oranges and crisps; the patches of brightness that broke up childhood journeys from the back seat. You never plan to remember a gas station, but years later you can still picture the colour of the light under the canopy. The rush to the shop, the counting and pointing out of each new colour of car, the pause itself, and the simple chance to play — and to rest.



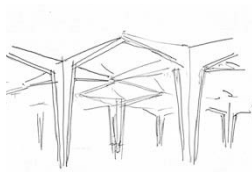
An argument paused, a joke that only lands once everyone is standing on the forecourt. You never think of these sites as destinations, yet they end up carrying whole chapters of a life that need to be sheltered, cataloged and homaged.

Apparently, there's nothing grand to hold onto in a gas station. Yet, these very same spaces are the ones that realign how we experience the social fabric that makes us who we are. The exchanges we have, the slow moments of fun and indulgence we allow ourselves. The rhythm of arrivals and departures, the brief choreography of cars finding a slot, the shuffle of feet between pump and counter. Rekindling that sense of adventure on the open road.



Maybe that is what a road teaches: along the way there will be possibles and impossibles, meetings we imagine and meetings we never thought to look forward to. The passion that never happened fixes itself to the marble of the square as a perfect outline; the modest roof over a few pumps, almost by accident, begins to collect real time and real lives, day after day.

On the way back, the road feels different, yes.



The empty sky over Skanderbeg and the GEGA canopy both travel with me, taking turns on the rearview mirror. One belongs to what might have been; the other to this small roadside stop where I suddenly feel we could stay, take another stop (another chance).





How do you throw a tower?And can you grow as one?

Words, images and gestures only mean what they mean because of where they land. From the beginning, humans have invented fables, myths and stories to explain, frighten, comfort or inspire, and in doing so we've given events, creatures and places new weights to carry, new echoes of interpretation.

Act 2

We started a Dance

Through these efforts, various occurrences, beings, or events earned new connotations, often becoming symbols. But those symbols shift as their cultural or historical setting shifts; they never mean exactly the same thing everywhere. For the same reason, we don't stay fixed either: our sense of ourselves, the way we appear and are read, keeps adapting and evolving. And here I can feel the city has held my pulse strongly enough to move it a little — to change me.

I catch myself letting this bright, restless curiosity settle on a bench, scanning for a strip of green that might steady this anxious urge to make something here. I am a tower, I need to centre myself like one. May I use my ego as my sword, cutting through the noise to find that center.

The tempo narrows into a clear line: a forecourt cut into the slope, a band of trees cooling the light, steps you can sit on without asking permission. No ceremony — just a workable pause.

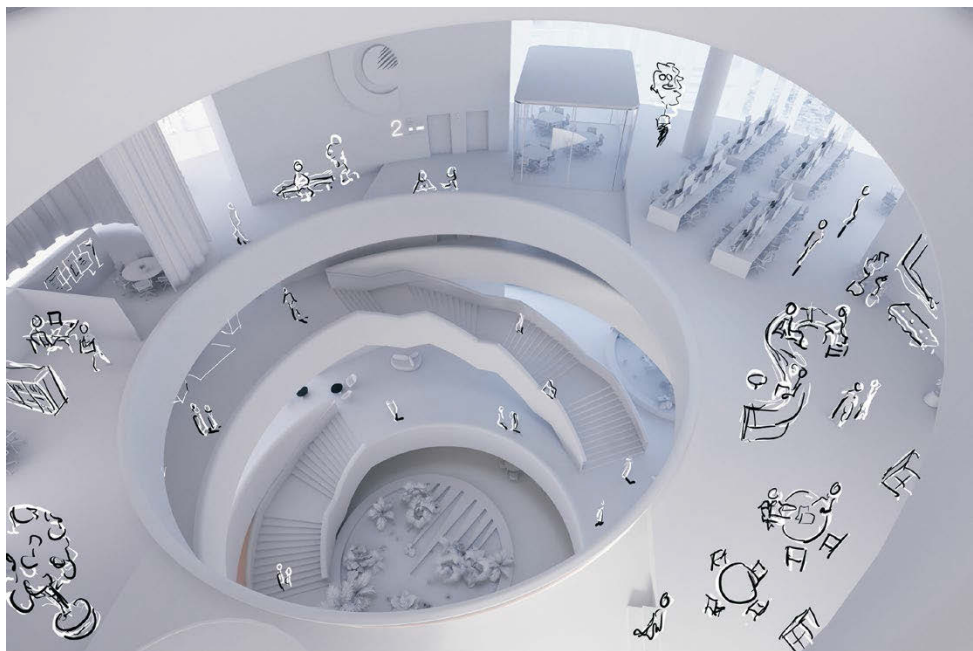
I carry a picture in my head, I play it like a movie: a vessel emerging from clay, turning itself on an invisible wheel without the intervention of human hands. It was a narrow cylinder, glass-glazed, reflective of all my states and the states of the world. As the cylinder grew, it blossomed out, leaving a funnel lip. It was a beautiful shape...



I am not a potter. I have never thrown a pot.

Yet this image gives me a sense of sequence,
of method, that feels unexpectedly liberating now.

Everything in the cosmos is spinning. Always.



WE STARTED A DANCE

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Out there, revolutions gather in rings. Even the sun spins.
Heavenly bodies turn, some clockwise, some counterclockwise.
Nature seems endlessly drawn to vortices and loops. And I keep
returning to the thought that perhaps there is something about
learning through a vortex, mastering through its pull,
that lets us brush another dimension.

Can I stand here?

I'm spinning – or am I already dancing?

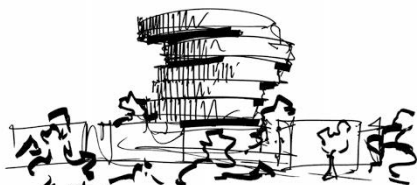
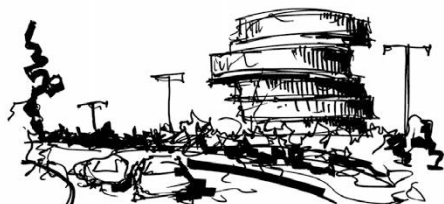
Am I trying to settle so I can feel this new ground
that keeps turning beneath me?



From all heavens to firm ground, road looping, floors turning, a bright drum listening in place, call it a civic vortex if you like, a rotation made useful, attention given precise form. I stand within the spin long enough for meaning to settle, long enough for it to become something more permanent, long enough for something transformative to begin echoing outward, across range and distance, carrying to the world this vivid news: this place is rushing through me and I can't stop it.

Should I wait, listen more?

I remind myself that, if a headquarters has a posture, mine should lose the stiffness the word suggests. Here, as I throw my tower, it leans forward, slightly, almost unnoticeably, the way a body does when it wants to understand before it speaks. The gesture is small but deliberate, a form of readiness, as if the whole structure were listening for its cue, prepared to understand before it answers, looping back and lifting like sound.



Round and round, before I echo from the top.

How much quiet does listening need
before it becomes silence?

How to shape a welcome before words do?

How close must we stand to hear one another clearly?

Can architecture hold a pause the way a body does before it speaks?

What is the weight of a whisper
when it turns into light?

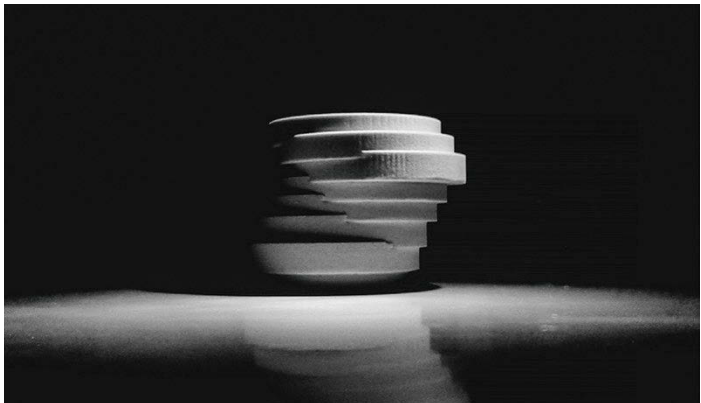
Every new relation dreams of reciprocity — of being spoken back to, of mattering. My tower answers with patience. It knows that cities, like people, require a refuge when words run out. So it waits, as I do here: for the next voice, the next story carried on the wind.

Round and round, I settle, hoping for a dance that will let this thrown tower keep growing — not just higher, but more attentive — and carry me further in. The spin may just turn into dance.

WE STARTED A DANCE

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WE STARTED A DANCE

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Who teaches a tower to dance?

High above the traffic two tall bodies learn a step older than stone. One inclines, the other gently answers, and between them a pause opens, just wide enough for swifts and weather. At a distance they read like straight figures, almost exclamation points. Nearer, a gentler truth appears: two forms listening to one another, leaning, keeping time, promising to stay in a slow dance while the city hurries past. Two partners mid-twirl, spiraling upward in a ballet pose.

Memory, Sebald hints, prefers oblique angles. Perhaps cities do as well. Face-to-face can be a fight. A slight turn, an endless conversation.

The pair meets in a plié, as if rehearsing grace before attempting greatness. There is boldness in the restraint: you can imagine two lovers spinning, joined hands lifted toward the stars. Even the mountains seem to tilt the sky so clouds know where to rest and reshape. At the foot of height, that same gentle tilt is felt — a nod to proximity and communion. The touch is not literal, yet the city senses it. From across Dritan Hoxha Avenue, the upper floors appear to pivot and bow, catching the last light as if music were playing somewhere inside and the structure had decided to sway.

"Take a bow please. And the floor is yours."

None of this is monumental in the old sense. Monumentality once meant weight. Here it means commitment: balance kept, sightlines restored, the future held open so others may step into it. There is, in fact, a moral arithmetic in height. Hannah Arendt described the city as the ground on which we appear to one another, the field of encounter. Honest height must answer to that ground; it cannot hoard attention and give nothing back.

