



Grids that work

There is no floating airiness about the architecture of Luca Scacchetti.

This young Milanese architect makes forceful use of mathematics and gravitational solidity. He bases his projects on a formal gridwork ideology, concentrating both on both receding space and protruding superstructure. The ornament comes from the structure itself.

In Rome at the AAM gallery (via del Vantaggio 12), an exhibition of architectural projects by Scacchetti demonstrates his reliance on a perfect rectangular vocabulary. He contrasts smooth, unadorned surfaces with sudden checkerboard areas of functional detail in an innovative and remarkable way.

Similarly, he combines building materials in unexpected ways. Sheer glass and refined iron grills are featured alongside rustic brickwork and polished timber. Separate parts of the architectural form are given striking colour schemes. Scacchetti compliments a deceptively simple style by dividing various elements into building blocks of

wright colour. Some of the designs exhibited represent Scacchetti's residential temples to modernism. A spiral staircase embellished with his recurring diamond motif casts its perfect shadow.

A project for a pavilion in Zurich is traced through its developing stages of design. The display begins with rough, coloured improvisations that grow into intricate floorplans; finally the glass and iron pavilion emerges as a shining scale model.

Scacchetti believes in calm symmetry and the subtle power of angular compositions. His forms and spaces are evenly matched and his architectural emotions are as boxed and stored as the compartmental cupboards that have become his trademark.

In his designs for furniture, Scacchetti accentuates the textures and grains of wood. In one well-researched illustration for an impressive wardrobe, he frames linear purity with the spontaneous gestures of sketchy Baroque cupids.

Miniaturized projects are displayed in an object resembling a high-tech doll's house. From his skyscraper standard lamps and pyramid light fittings to furniture designed as mobile pieces of architecture, it is clear that Luca Scacchetti is firmly entrenched as one of Italy's neo-modern masters of design.

by Jonathan Turner