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 The image shows a minimalist interior. In the foreground, a white rectangular table holds a book with a portrait on the cover and a small green bowl. Behind the table, a large, light-colored wooden wall features a tiger sculpture surrounded by other animal figures. To the left, a vertical wall has several small, dark, rectangular light fixtures. The ceiling is dark with several recessed circular lights. The overall atmosphere is clean and modern.

project

JOHANNA GRAWUNDER

photos Santi Caleca

text Antonella Boisi

TOTEM OF LIGHT and MIRRORS

IN ROME, THE HOME
OF THE gallerist-collector
rossella peruzzi: A SMALL
OPEN SPACE IN THE olympic
village, A DENSE PROJECT
OF ARCHITECTURE AND LIGHT
BY Johanna Grawunder,
AMERICAN BY BIRTH
AND TRAINING, BUT ITALIAN
BY CHOICE



THE GIOLIGHT LAMP SCULPTURE, A TRIBUTE BY JOHANNA GRAWUNDER TO GIO PONTI, MADE AS A LIMITED EDITION IN 2008 FOR THE BABUINO NOVECENTO GALLERY IN ROME. IN PERSPEX WITH LED AND STAINLESS STEEL, IT REFLECTS ON THE LUMINOUS TABLE IN GLASS AND MIRRORS.

VIEW OF THE CUSTOM DINING TABLE DESIGNED BY JOHANNA GRAWUNDER, AND THE KITCHEN PRODUCED BY **MODULNOVA**. THE MAGIC BOX COFFEE TABLE IN STEEL AND MIRRORS, DATING BACK TO THE SEVENTIES, IS A CREATION BY GABRIELLA CRESPI. ALUMINIUM POT BY ETTORE SOTTSSASS.

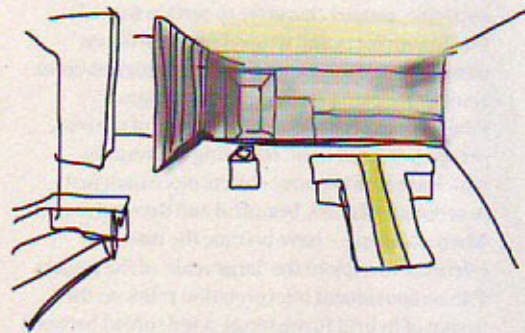
FACING PAGE: THE ENTRANCE AREA MARKED BY A LUMINOUS PANEL SUSPENDED FROM THE CEILING, ANOTHER CUSTOM PIECE. THE CAKE STOOL BY THE CAMPANA BROTHERS FOR **DILMOS**. PIVOTANT WALL LAMPS BY CHARLOTTE PERRIAND, REISSUED BY **NEMO**. GREEN AND GOLD GLASS ASHTRAY FROM THE CARLO SCARPA COLLECTION.



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he object most often narrated in fables, the mirror, becomes design material in this home interior, together with light, the ideal connective tissue to transfigure, sculpture and redesign geometric solids of great architectural value and their reflecting surfaces. Of course it takes talent to create a surreal atmosphere made of luminous games and projections, and thus to 'give form to the material of dreams' in a very small open-plan layout, 50 m², but with windows on three sides, in the enviable context of the Olympic Village in Rome, the experimental neighborhood built according to the paradigms of modernist architecture at the time of the Olympic Games in 1960 by Vittorio Cafiero, Adalberto Libera, Amedeo Luccichenti, Vincenzo

Monaco and Luigi Moretti. But Johanna Grawunder, the American architect and designer from San Diego, with studios in San Francisco and Milan, and the partner of Ettore Sottsass until 2001, is certainly not short on talent. The situation was also based on an established working relationship with the client - the gallerist Rossella Peruzzi, a partner of Galleria O. in Rome, with Roberto Giustini and Stefano Stagettti - making it possible to create an unconventional enclosure rich in surprising effects, establishing a tactful, quiet dialogue with the architecture and a legacy of outstanding protagonists: the fine collection of furnishings and objects, of historic Italian design, especially from the Fifties, that is a part of the everyday life of Rossella.



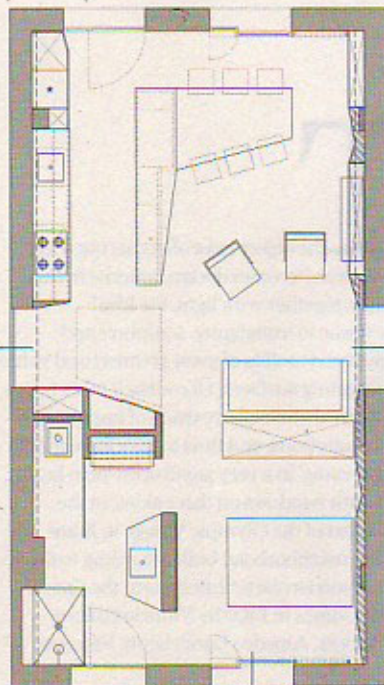


THE PASSAGE FROM THE ENTRANCE AREA TOWARDS THE BEDROOM ZONE, WITH VISIBLE SHOWER STALL. THE WOODEN CONSOLE IS A PIECE BY GIO PONTI, MADE IN 1950.

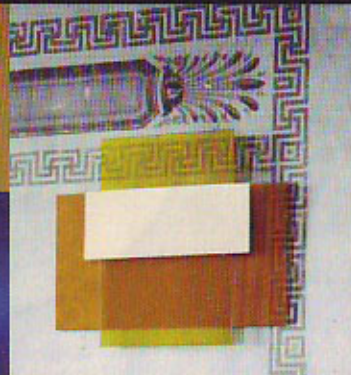
FACING PAGE: AN ARCHITECTURAL TOTEM IN ALUMINIUM AND MIRROR THAT COMBINES LIGHTS AND THE SABBIA WASHSTAND BY NAOTO FUKASAWA FOR **BOFFI**, ON ONE SIDE, AND THE SUPPORT FOR THE TELEVISION OF THE BEDROOM ON THE OTHER. THE STOOL WITH THE RED SEAT IS A PIECE FROM THE FIFTIES BY CARLO MOLLINO. HANGING FROM THE CEILING, A LIGHT SCULPTURE - PANEL BENT TO FORM AN L UNDERLINES THE PRESENCE OF THE BED BY **ORIZZONTI**. 600 TABLE LAMP BY GINO SARFATTI FOR **ARTELUCE** (1966).

"I was given carte blanche," Johanna explains. "and the architectural theme of the open plan, as a result of radically clearing away what was there before, lent itself nicely to my research on the integration of natural and artificial light in spaces. In this case, light becomes significance and signifier: to respond to the need to virtually dilate the small available space, but also the need to give a specific, gauged character to certain zones." Inside a uniform and neutral frame, without partitions or doors, with floors in semigloss resin, water-base painted walls in white or gray, Johanna's experimental lamps made of mirrors, perspex, colored light, reflecting aluminium - which are architectural objects more than just functional volumes, beautiful and decorative even when not in use - have become the matrix of reference to explore the 'large scale' of the project. The compositional interpretation relies on the design of hybrid furnishings, a red thread between the daytime and nighttime areas. As the element that integrates, in a unified structure, the washstand-bath and the support for the television

of the bedroom, with lights on both sides. Or the luminous table that is also the light source for the dining area, whose glass top with mirror and translucent portions projects the reflections of objects onto surfaces. Or the wardrobe that separates the bedroom zone from the living area, also with mirrors. Likewise, the luminous panel suspended from the ceiling in the entrance space redesigns it, projecting its image on the floor. "A series of design devices," Johanna explains, "to pace the space, giving all the functional zones a continuity of perspective, but also to make a dimension of floating presences more tangible, whose mirrored or shiny surfaces meet the light, overlap and double, producing mutable visual perceptions."







Johanna Grawunder

She lives in Milan and San Francisco, bringing Italian design know-how to the world. Due to her training as an architect and designer, Johanna Grawunder ranges seamlessly from architecture to interior design, from the design of objects to installations for the contract market. She was a partner of the studio Sottsass Associati from 1989 to 2001, an experience that is reflected in her careful approach to materials, and in objects often characterized by the juxtaposition of basic geometric forms. She has worked with Flos since 1997, creating catalogue products and large luminous installations for the Light Contract division. The latest are inside the Robert restaurant of the Museum of Art and Design in New York and in the Singapore Freeport. Another long-term collaboration is with Glas Italia, including a collection of tables and containers in glass, and a colored mirror. Grawunder knows how to bring out the best in the technology of industrially worked glass, giving objects the movement and magic of mutable colors obtained by the use of layers. But glass is not her only material. With Marzorati Ronchetti, the 'tailoring shop' of metal, and for Imda Paris she has made custom pieces. For the Carpenters Workshop Gallery she has also designed the limited series Big Sky, produced by the Italian manufacturer BBWL: microsculptures that play with the refractions of metal and the projection of indirect light. (VC.)

FROM THE TOP: PORTRAIT OF JOHANNA GRAWUNDER; WAN SUSPENSION LAMP FOR DIRECT LIGHT, PRODUCED BY **FLOS**; THE COLOUR ON COLOUR SERIES OF MIRRORS FOR **GLAS ITALIA**; THE CIRCLE NIGHT COMPOSITE SUSPENSION LAMP PRODUCED BY **IMDA PARIS** AND CRAFTED BY **MARZORATI RONCHETTI** (PHOTO THOMAS MAILAENDER); IN THE BACKGROUND: THE BOXY GEOMETRIC CONTAINER FOR **GLAS ITALIA** WITH COLORED MIRRORS AND A BUILT-IN LIGHTING SYSTEM.