

A photograph of a bar interior. The background features a wall of shelves filled with various bottles of alcohol. Below the shelves is a tiled wall with the word 'INSTITUTE' in large, black, block letters. In the foreground, there are two high-top bar stools with green seats and metal frames. The overall lighting is dim and moody.

BEHIND BARS

Design for cafés & bars

ET INSTITUTE

FRAME

03

*Luca Braguglia
Casina delle Rose
Rome, Italy*

Touches reflecting the influence of traditional Roman architecture blend easily with contemporary materials such as metal, glass and MDF



Casina delle Rose

Luca Bragaglia's concept for Cine Caffè Casina delle Rose in Rome – a bar and restaurant that accompany the city's striking House of Cinema – is based on guests as actors who walk on stage and choose between two roles, each represented by a distinctive atmosphere. What part shall I play today?

*Text by Monica Zerbini
 Photography by Beatrice Pediconi*

'I considered the ephemeral dimension of film,' says architect Luca Bragaglia of his design for Cine Caffè Casina delle Rose, 'the full range of actions and ever-changing lighting. But I was also deeply influenced by the location of the bar, the world-famous park of Villa Borghese.'

The starting point for his work was the ground floor of a neoclassical 19th-century villa, previously used as a private residence in the midst of lush greenery. Since 2005, the historical building has hosted the Cinema Museum, a recent bead in the chain of public institutions that the mayor of Rome has designated as cultural venues.

Not surprisingly, converting the building into a museum with hospitality functions involved an extensive programme of changes. The main challenge was a floor plan that needed to be stripped of its existing row of rooms and cabinets and transformed into an airy open space. The intervention also necessitated a façade with sufficient fenestration to offer patrons in the bar a wide view of the park. In warm weather, guests can enjoy the spacious outdoor terrace while seated beneath a portico or the foliage of the centennial trees.

'To achieve our goal, we opted for a modern design,' says the architect, who also brightened the interior with red and black – 'the colours of cinema' – for a dramatic effect. Touches reflecting the influence of traditional Roman architecture blend easily with contemporary materials such as metal, glass and MDF. Existing elements of the building, such as stone floors and a row of neoclassical columns, have been preserved and integrated into the new design.

Following the client's brief, Bragaglia began by designing the café, an elongated space that occupies a narrow section of the interior. One year later he completed the restaurant, combining it with the





THE ROUNDED LINES OF THE BALCONY ENCAPSULATE THE MEZZANINE,
A MORE PROTECTED AREA MOSTLY DEVOTED TO SPECIAL EVENTS.

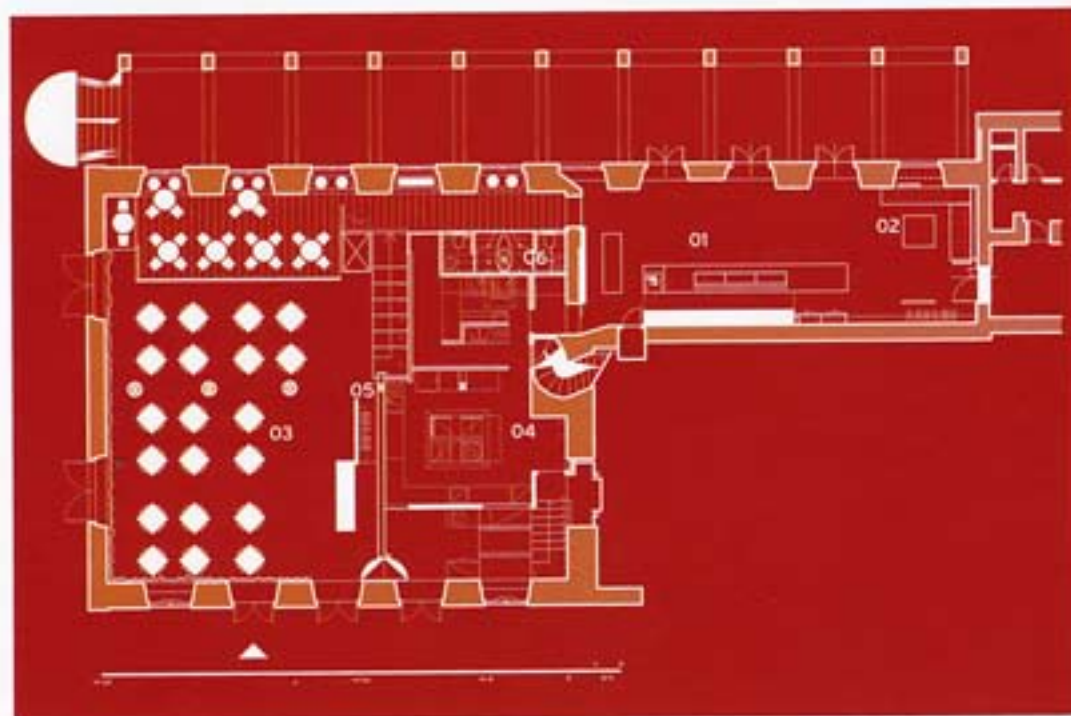
café to achieve a fluid synthesis of spaces. In the café, a 7-m-long bar along one wall sports a red Corian countertop above a base wrapped in mahogany. Lining the bar are high stools with backrests in the same vivid shade. Off to one side, the architect has created a cosy corner furnished with custom-designed sofas and tables.

A short corridor leads to the restaurant, which is located at a lower level. A smooth connection between the two areas has been achieved by a steel staircase with treads in dark wenge. Awaiting diners in the restaurant is a series of visual surprises. 'I tried to avoid creating a place where guests would arrive, eat and go. I wanted people to explore the room and find different places of interest,' says Bragaglia. Part of his plan for the restaurant was a giant counter for the pastry cook: a sculptural block wrapped in glazed bricks made from lava stone. Positioned next to the counter is a structure of wood and steel that stretches from floor to ceiling. This striking megalith hides the cloakroom and emphasizes the extraordinary height of the room. The majority of the dining tables are in the main (lower) area of the restaurant, but a suspended platform that also lends access to the café provides seating for intimate dinners or private parties. The architect says that his main concern was to create flexible, interchangeable spaces that could be used not only for drinking and dining, but also for all sorts of events, such as plays, concerts and dances, including those with a live DJ, just like a movie set.



LEFT: THE INTERIOR IS BRIGHTENED BY RED AND BLACK, THE COLOURS OF CINEMA, FOR A MORE DRAMATIC EFFECT
RIGHT: THE BAR IS MADE FROM A CASE WRAPPED IN MAHOOGANY AND SPORTS A RED-CERBIAN COUNTERTOP





PREVIOUS ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS, SUCH AS MARBLE FLOORINGS AND NEOCLASSICAL COLUMNS HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE PROJECT.
FLOOR PLAN: 01. BAR | 02. LOUNGE | 03. DINING AREA | 04. KITCHEN | 05. CLOAKROOM | 06. LAVATORIES



A SERIES OF SUSPENDED LIGHTS PROVIDES DIRECT LIGHT ONTO THE SURFACES BELOW



Luca Braguglia

Luca Braguglia's architecture firm has been operating from its offices in Rome for a full 15 years. A diverse portfolio includes, among other things, designs realized for public and private clients, entries submitted to architecture competitions, numerous preliminary studies and furniture designs. The highlight of the office is a team of young people with a variety of educational and professional backgrounds. Their work ranges from the interior design of private apartments, shops, offices, bars and restaurants to that of motorboats and yachts. Along with these activities, the office is also involved in the design of furniture and industrial design for retail franchises. The main focus of Luca Braguglia, however, is the design of public buildings, such as the recently completed extension of the Lamezia Terme Airport, located in southern Italy, and Circolo Canottieri Aniene, a swimming complex in Rome.

Information

Client: Palombini Ricevimenti
Design team: Emanuela Di Pasquale, Emanuela De Leo, Gianluca Graziani and Cristiane Sarapo
Consultant: Luciano Stignani (lighting)
Manufacturers: Stignani Illuminazione (lighting), Di Francesco e Paternò (floor), Cappellini and Poltrona Frau (furniture), Brancalab and Valentino Ragarzoni (metalwork) and Barchetti Arredamenti (woodwork)
Total floor area (m²): 350
Total cost (€): 130,000
Duration of construction: 5 months
Opening: November 2005

Designer

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Project

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