

From June 1968 Pietro Consagra immersed himself in an unexpected and impassioned work: considering the city as a plastic theme. Designing buildings, he employed the maximum thickness utilisable in the field of bifrontal sculpture and clarified in detail his new aesthetic-anthropological undertaking in a text entitled *The Frontal City*, published by de Donato in February 1969. The scale models of the *Frontal Buildings* (1968) in stainless steel, with two identical transparent facades, have a “continuous curved plane” profile and appear as enveloping, welcoming habitable sculptures in which curved planes, slopes and differentiated levels would determine active behaviour by stimulating the imagination of the *Internal Author* (into which Consagra envisaged each inhabitant would be transformed) who “will find himself in a provocative space-level, whether working, meeting or resting”. The necessary objects (chair, bed, table, wardrobe) would therefore, in order to adhere, avoid rigidity of forms and materials, while the ramps for moving around would correspond to the inclinations of the load-bearing structures. All this was motivated by the need to determine new human values generated by inhabiting a “mobile, provisional, transparent, paradoxical” space open to the mutability of choices.

Frontal Architecture, as opposed to the cubic structure of the skyscraper which has darkness at the centre, will be full of sun and light, transparent and always in relation to the line of the horizon. From a building one will see, through a building, the next and the next building, through the glass of the building itself and through the structure of the edifices which, being frontal, are of a reduced thickness. Moreover, setting each building opposite the other, at a distance of 40 metres, it will be possible to develop a town plan of long strips which will be like a loose-knit fabric that protects and provides breathing space.

The *Frontal Buildings* were exhibited for the first time at the Galleria dell’Ariete in Milan in March 1969 and in the same year at the Marlborough Galleria d’Arte in Rome, put into relation with a *Horizon Line*, materialised on the wall in steel wire: the horizon transformed into frontal sculpture.