

YOUNG AND DEFENSELESS
**SERVICE STATIONS IN ITALY: ABANDONMENT,
DESTRUCTION, USE CONVERSION. THE STATE OF
PRESERVATION**

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The gas station, can be charged with intensely evocative meaning, suggesting a dense play of relations with the surrounding place, context and landscape. The service station expresses in its recognizability a notion of intangible space transformed into a new idea of environment and landscape and thereby contributes to remodeling the identity of modern society. It is an architectural genre that has involved the languages of all the arts. To recognize the significance that underlies the lasting worth of the highway landscape leads us to appreciate the need for a project that will give our heritage of road architecture the value it deserves.

The almost complete lack of safeguard measures give good reason for undertaking a process to trace and catalogue the vast service stations heritage in Italy. A disperse heritage that only a meticulous and careful investigation could make it re-emerge from the state of oblivion it has suffered till now. A state of oblivion for a long time justified for being a “minor” architecture, or better still, “young and defenseless”, but not for this reason less remarkable for the definition of an architectonic culture and a historical memory, and not only in our country. A real contribution to the comprehension of such a heritage seems even more necessary considering the rapidity this heritage risks to disappear for the loss of its function of for the consequent deterioration.

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