RIFUGIO DIGITALE

MAGGIE'S CENTRE
The Therapeutic Power of Architecture
An exhibition to celebrate the organization's 30th anniversary

28.11.2026 - 09.01.2027

From **28 November 2026** to **9 January 2027**, Rifugio Digitale presents the exhibition ***Maggie's Centre: The Therapeutic Power of Architecture***, curated by **Caterina Frisone** and **Diego Alejandro Teixeira Seisdedos**, promoted by the **Promoting Committee for the Establishment of Maggie's Italy**, with artistic direction of **Laura Andreini** and in collaboration with **Forma Edizioni**. The exhibition opens on **Saturday 28 November at 6.00 pm**, preceded by a **press preview at 5.00 pm**, attended by the curators and the artistic director.

The exhibition at Rifugio Digitale follows *Maggie's: Architecture that Cares*, curated by Meredith More and held at V&A Dundee (UK) from 1 March to 1 November 2026. The project aims to introduce Italian audiences to the **unique world of Maggie's**, a **British charitable organisation** celebrating its **thirtieth anniversary** in 2026.

By reflecting on the journey taken thus far, the exhibition explores the **person-centred architecture** that defines the **open**, **welcoming spaces** of Maggie's Centres, where people with cancer find in the architecture a **form of care** for the mind that helps the body to respond.

The exhibition presents images of **Maggie's Centres**, ranging from preliminary sketches to completed buildings. These are accompanied by exclusive interviews with internationally renowned architects and people impacted by cancer, who share how these spaces offer support throughout their treatment journey, fostering a **more active** and **informed approach** to living with the disease. By resonating deeply with Maggie's visitors, the immersive environment of Rifugio Digitale succeeds in recreating atmospheres that evoke the **emotions** and **feelings** experienced in a physical centre, prompting observers to move and transforming them from mere spectators into protagonists within the space.

Maggie's, therefore, encourages us to consider non-clinical spaces to be just as important as – if not more important than – clinical ones, and to bring this model to Italy. Indeed, the ultimate goal of the exhibition is to support the **Promoting Committee for the Establishment of Maggie's Italy**, with the goal of setting up, in a initial phase, the third-sector entity (E.T.S.) Maggie's Italy, wich aims to create the Maggie's Centre in Italy, and hopefully centres in the future. At a time when the **subject of health** is highly topical, the aspiring Italian charitable group **offers businesses** the opportunity to contribute to the creation of therapeutic spaces for people impacted by cancer and those close to them, rediscovering the **value of beauty** within the healthcare environments.

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Florence, via della Fornace 41
28 November 2026

5.00 pm
Press preview with Artistic Director Laura Andreini and curators Caterina Frisone and Diego Alejandro Teixeira Seisdedos, at Rifugio Digitale.
Booking required. Please RSVP by emailing info@rifugiodigitale.it.

6.00 pm
Public opening at Rifugio Digitale, 41 Via della Fornace, Florence.

MAGGIE'S CENTRE
The Therapeutic Power of Architecture
28 November 2026 - 09 January 2027
Wed.-Sat. 11.00 am - 7.00 pm

Rifugio Digitale
via della Fornace, 41
50125 - Florence (FI)

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Maggie's Edinburgh, 1996 (Richard Murphy, RMA). Night view of the centre.
For those impacted by cancer, a Maggie's centre is like a lantern in the darkness.
© Alan Forbes, 1996.

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Maggie's Edinburgh, 1996 (Richard Murphy, RMA). A view from the internal staircase, which incorporates seating and bookshelves, allowing people to find some seclusion while remaining within earshot of the rest of the centre.
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Maggie's Glasgow, 2011 (Rem Koolhaas, OMA). View of the room intended for individual consultations, featuring a skylight that allows one to glimpse the sky and perceive the changing of the seasons.
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Maggie's Oldham, 2017 (Alex de Rijke, dRMM). External view of the building, raised off the ground to make space for a garden underneath, accessible to all hospital visitors
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Maggie's Barts, 2017 (Steven Holl, SHA). View of the central space and the kitchen, characterised by a sense of openness and movement.
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Promoting Committee for the Establishment of Maggie's Italy

Is a nascent Italian charitable organisation inspired by the well-known British organisation "Maggie's" – founded in Edinburgh in 1994 by Maggie Keswick and her husband Charles Jencks to provide psychological, practical, and lifestyle support to people impacted by cancer, as well as their families and friends. Much like its UK counterpart, the aspiring Italian charitable group champions high-quality architecture for its centres, upholding the belief that non-clinical spaces are just as important – if not more so – than clinical ones. With the help of Italian companies willing to embrace this opportunity and build an authentic identity rooted in a culture of care, the Promoting Committee for the Establishment of Maggie's Italy will be able to turn a dream into reality and the Italian public will be able to rediscover the value of beauty in healthcare environments typical of our past. In this way, art and architecture become tools for dialogue among the public, the local community, and the business sector, forging a meaningful connection between committed companies and universal values such as humanisation, inclusion, innovation, and a person-centred approach.

Maggie's

Originally known as Maggie's Cancer Care Centre, today Maggie's, is a well-known British charity that helps people live with cancer by offering psychological, practical, and lifestyle support, integrated with high-quality architecture. The first centre was Maggie's Edinburgh (1996), intended for people with cancer at a hospital in the city. It was conceived by Maggie Keswick and her husband, Charles Jencks, following Maggie's diagnosis of advanced breast cancer in 1994. Although Maggie never saw the centre, as she passed away in 1995, Charles, Marcia Blackenham (Maggie's best friend), and Laura Lee (Maggie's oncology nurse and now CEO of Maggie's) have continued to champion Maggie's philosophy that "architecture is a form of care". Over the years, they have extended this vision, first to hospitals across Scotland, then to England and Wales, and finally internationally, to Hong Kong, Tokyo, Barcelona, and the Netherlands. Today, the organisation operates 31 centres – 27 in Great Britain and 4 abroad – with plans for further expansion across the UK and Europe.

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Caterina Frisone

She is the founder and director of the Master programme in Architecture and Health at the University Iuav of Venice – a course established in 2023 following her five-year experience (2017–2022) gained within the British healthcare system. After meeting Charles Jencks in 2015, she decided to focus her doctoral research at Oxford Brookes University on the Maggie's Centre, a centre of psychological support for people impacted by cancer. To validate her research hypotheses, she spent four months across three different centres, analysing the therapeutic role that high-quality architecture can play for its visitors. She is the author of *Maggie's Centres: On the Road* (Forma, 2022) – the pocket book that guides visitors to the centres – and *The Therapeutic Power of the Maggie's Centres* (Routledge, 2024), a book that reveals the secrets hidden behind the Maggie's Centre.

Diego Alejandro Teixeira Seisdedos

Following more than a decade of design experience at the firm Foster + Partners, Diego first met Dame Laura Lee DBE, Maggie's Chief Executive, in 2012 when work started on the design of Maggie's in Manchester. Diego worked as Project Architect on the design. He then joined Maggie's in 2016 as in-house architect. Since then, he has been responsible for the design and interior curation of the centres, as well as managing the organisation's art collection and the display of its significant artistic heritage. His daily work involves collaborating with museums, galleries, artists, and architects to help create the truly unique atmosphere that distinguishes every Maggie's Centre.

Marco Caselli Nirmal

He is an Italian photographer in the fields of music, theatre, dance, architecture, and industrial design. He has collaborated with leading Italian and international artists. Since 1990, he served as the official photographer for Maestro Claudio Abbado, an experience through which he explored the "capacity to reveal the orchestra as a photographic apparatus". This connection to the theatre, understood both as an event and as a physical stage, takes on a distinct expressive identity in his recent project on the Maggie's Centres, developed in collaboration with Andrea Placidi and Caterina Frisone. Here, Marco Caselli Nirmal's photography, able to encompass and transcend various layers of representation, brings to light the theatrical and performative nature inherent to the Maggie's Centres; a quality that allows individuals to feel like protagonists on a sort of stage, helping them find the strength to respond to illness.

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

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28.11.2026 - 09.01.2027

A PROJECT BY
Associazione Rifugio Digitale E.T.S.

PROMOTED BY AND WITH THE SUPPORT OF
Promoting Committee for the Establishment of Maggie's Italy

IN COLLABORATION WITH
Forma Edizioni
Maggie's

ARTISTIC DIRECTION
Laura Andreini

CURATED BY
Caterina Frisone
Diego Alejandro Teixeira Seisdedos

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Alan Forbes
Maggie's

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Ester Menichelli

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EXHIBITION TEXTS
Caterina Frisone

TRANSLATIONS
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Sarah Beard, Maggie's
Samantha Booth, Maggie's
Roberto Preciosa, Maggie's
Andrea Placidi, Oxford Brookes University
Marco Caselli Nirmal

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Forma Edizioni

Is an editorial (publishing) initiative developed in order to allow the dissemination and knowledge of avenues and experiences belonging to the world of art, architecture, photography and more generally, to promote the best research in production and technology, following the changing lifestyles and contemporary living.

Since its foundation in 2010, the catalogue has grown with about twenty titles a year giving "form" to the expressive traces that animate today's cultural debate, deepening both specific areas of knowledge already known to the public, and investigating those intellectual and artistic areas considered, for various reasons, revealing new points of observation of reality. A common feature of each project is the high quality of the product, images, printing, typographic or IT processes used, as well as a targeted diffusion and distribution in places of use, such as specialized bookstores, museum bookshops and exhibition sites, which they add to the normal availability on the net that necessary and indispensable presence in the "sites" where opinions and evaluations of merit are built.

The publications range from important monographs dedicated to contemporary and renowned architectural works, such as *Cantina Antinori. Chronicle of the construction of a new landscape*, research and insights related to university study issues, catalogues of important exhibitions, such as the one hosted at the Cini Foundation of Venice *EST. Italian travel, city and architecture stories* curated by Luca Molinari or the monographic exhibition hosted at the MAXXI Museum in Rome *Gio Ponti. Love architecture* in 2019.

Exhibitions and events expand the cultural enhancement process that Forma sets out to offer to a refined and attentive public. The publishing house is in fact involved in the creation of volumes relating to the exhibitions annually hosted at the Forte di Belvedere in Florence and at the Stefano Bardini Museum and to the monographic exhibitions hosted in private galleries dedicated to artists of the calibre of Alighiero Boetti, Arnaldo Pomodoro, Lucio Fontana and Alberto Burri. There is no shortage of photography and design texts, such as the important monograph dedicated to the work and life of Karim Rashid, or the overview of contemporary Milanese design T*he Design City. Milan city laboratory*. The *On the road city* architectural guide series is currently under construction. Mainly focused on contemporary works, each volume investigates the peculiar aspects of the most important cities in the world, proposing a critical reading of future scenarios. The publishing house has counted important collaborations with personalities of high intellectual depth and international fame such as the late Adolfo Natalini, founder architect of Superstudio, Bruno Corà, Luca Massimo Barbero and Sergio Risaliti, art critics and historians, Luca Molinari, architecture critic.

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Rifugio Digitale

Is an exhibition space in a former bomb shelter tunnel repurposed as a site devoted to the promotion of digital art, where architecture, design, photography, cinema, literature and all the other multiple forms of art and visual expression find their dimension and interact with one another. It was built on the foundations of an old anti-aircraft tunnel that served from 1943 as a bomb shelter in World War II. It was known as the "Rifugio della Fornace" a safe haven during the tragedy of the war, and now it has been rechristened as the Rifugio Digitale, a place of rebirth, where technology meets art, offering a contemporary space where people can explore creativity through the modern language of technology.

The requalification project, handled by Archea Associati, will house digital expressions of every kind, with an eye always on the future and on the new vanguards. In collaboration with the publisher Forma Edizioni, it will house exhibitions, but also events and performances related to art, architecture, photography, literature, cinema and other initiatives linked to the digital world. It will show original views and more on the 16 screens positioned along the 33 meters of the tunnel, a new idea for Florence where the connection between art, people and technology generates an intense visual experience, unexpected and interactive. It is a space designed for constant change, always dynamic, with a new and exciting speed that distinguishes it from a traditional art gallery.

Rifugio Digitale occupies an area of 165 square meters and is a versatile structure ideal for organizing exhibitions, events, presentations, but also debates, lectures and simple discussions. It is expected to appeal to a vast public desirous of indulging their interest in ideas and novel cultural experiences right in the heart of Florence.

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Archea Associati, Rifugio Digitale, Florence, 2022
ph. Pietro Savorelli e Associati

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