



Salone del Mobile.Milano 2022 – Overview

The furnishing of tomorrow: combinations of functions, ethical and sustainable approaches, purity and simplicity of content.

While most of us have been “banged up” at home for almost two years, the same situation, on the other hand, has accelerated the evolution of design and furnishing. Homes haven’t stopped. In fact they’ve seen so many movements, reflections, awarenesses, revelations – at times stunning – emotions, new ambitions and different reasonings that they were absolutely bound to come out of it transformed, more open and stronger and, significantly, on a more “human scale.” Their constraints have, as always, broadened and amplified the brands’ and designers’ powers of creativity, giving them a single aim: to make the available space more **comfortable, convivial and functional**, be it indoor, outdoor, small or large. The upshot has been a wide range of design solutions and looks, from fluid furnishing to a return to classic style, from a quest for naturally inspired purity and lightness to quite the opposite, architecturally inspired, right up to a conscious reflection on retrieving artisan skills and techniques. Obviously, crosscutting efforts towards a **green, respectful approach** to materials and the environment can be seen right across the board. Inside each strand there are designers from different cultural and geographical contexts who have moved around a global market, mostly virtually, during this time. The **Salone del Mobile.Milano** marks a return to real meetings, to physicality, to actually being able to see the ensuing products. Despite the different paths taken, evident at the fair, the rehabilitation of the **narrative value of objects** is clear, with their ability to create an **ambiance**, to **stoke emotions** and make the space **resonate with the personalities of the people** who inhabit it. The furnishings we see on the stands aren’t just neutral presences – they illustrate who we are and what our world is like. The variety of forms is huge, from **less is more** to **extrabold** – while never **over the top**, from **organic** to **sculptural**. Without compromising **comfort, efficiency and functionality**. The colour palettes are varied too, although the seductive power of **natural, soft nuances** is striking. Materials are environmentally-friendly, be they **reclaimed wood, rare or sophisticated, recycled plastic or new compounds**. **Finishes are precious and precise, the fabrics enveloping** and extremely **tactile**. The 2022 furnishings are begging to be caressed, with the eye, but especially with the hand and, as never before, are just asking to be put into actual, real, not decorative use.

The **transversality** of furnishing is one of the most common themes at this edition of the Salone. There are a great many examples. **Arper (Pav. 16 | C23 D18)** interprets it as a family space-contract space equation with, for example, the **Shaal sofa** by **Doshi Levien**. While structured, it also embraces and wraps around the sitter, conveying tactility and warmth throughout. Its design is made to measure, soft, generous, lightweight – suitable for any environment. **Desalto (Pav. 05 | C12)** has come up with **Calum**, a new collection designed by **Simon Pengelly**, for residential, office or contract use, capable of fitting naturally into any type of space, thanks to the varied and wide range of finishes, materials and colours. **Giorgetti (Pav. 05 | G07 H10)** narrates a vision of fluid, crosscutting living. The paradigmatic **new Borealis screen**, designed by **Roberto Lazzeroni**, is suitable for both living rooms and bedrooms, brings character to spaces with its design, creating temporary intimate areas. **Meet Up** by **Fantoni (Pav. 20 | E23 F18)** is a collection born of these

times, which has absorbed the design changes and varied socialisation needs of the inhabitants of the office world. It's hard to categorise these furnishing pieces, which represent the evolution of the executive space, increasingly less individual and more meeting-gearred, with a new functional and essential remit. These are pivotal spaces that lend themselves to team meetings, inspired by the comfort of the residential world with **height-adjustable tables** that lend themselves to many different functions, underscoring the hybrid nature of spaces. At times, transversality becomes **multifunctionality**. One such example is **BLA STATION (Pav. 16 | C27)** with **Ping-Pong Mini** by **Johan Lindau**: a small but solid object, perfect as a coffee table, small bench or that extension to the dining table that always seems to be missing when we have friends to supper. It is completely customisable, in wood or brass. **Wittmann (Pav. 05 | C09)** and **Sebastian Herkner** have reflected on how furnishing pieces should be and what they should encompass these days in order to be described as **smart and multifunctional**. Their answer is the **Marlow sofa and chair collection**, intelligent because they integrate and interact effortlessly with our spaces. Delicate curves, soft coverings, maximum sitting comfort: Marlow is welcoming and communicative, compact and versatile. There's a compartment under the arm cushions for storing magazines or work papers, fitted with a plug and two USB connectors. Fluidity also means **furniture that goes out and furniture that comes in**: in this sense, the **Ria Soft** collection by **Fast (Pav. 16 | B16)**, which includes sofas and a comfy armchair with ultra-soft cushioning, is perfect for residential and contract spaces, indoors too, and even in winter. **Gervasoni (Pav. 07 | F11)** appears to have assimilated **inclusive transversality and cultural crosscutting**. Among its new outdoor creations, Oriental and exotic inspiration has gone into the **Hashi** collection designed by **Federica Biasi**, which consists of a modular sofa and a rocking chair. Literally meaning "chopsticks" in Japanese, Hashi is based on a system with a minimal, rigid structure that is reminiscent of the Oriental tool from which it takes its name, making for products characterised by a mix of different styles, tastes and cultures, in a dynamic dialogue between two different worlds.

Clearly **custom-made** is no longer seen as just a service or a trend, but as an established concept in post-Covid homes. Changes of perspective, unexpected directions and fresh opportunities: the **Glide doors**, *design Piero Lissoni + Iaco Design Studio* turn homes, into a constantly evolving, dynamic mosaic **Porro (Pav. 07 | D15 D21 E14 E18)**. Perfectly integrated into the design of the systems, these doors are the new essential ingredient of Porro design and the connective element, in which traditional spaces are expanded and reconfigured in a whole new way.

Less is more is a theme narrated and interpreted by many of the brands, albeit in different ways. For **Lema (Pav. 07 | B15 B21 C20 C24)**, **Piero Lissoni** again blends lightness and versatility with his addition of **a stool** to the **Ombra** chair collection. Available in two different heights, it stands out for its powerful industrial character, minimal design and the ease with which it fits into the domestic space, despite having been conceived with the contract area in mind. **Living Divani (Pav. | 07 | C11 D16)** has extended the Aero family by the **Shibuleru studio**, with the new **Aero D desk**, perfect for the home office: the piece is the upshot of steady formal paring-back to the essential. The parallel shelves dialogue with the



structure in a play of alignments that invite different, customisable uses and possibilities. For **Sam Hecht and Kim Colin** purity is almost archetypal. They have come up with **Bodoni** for **Kristalia (Pav. 20 | A05 B06)** a collection of tables, their thick vertical lines and slender horizontal ones inspired by modern typography. Architecture plays an essential part, with four robust legs that support a lightweight fixed or extendable top, in the manner of pillars. Even more architectural and sculptural, the essential lines of the **Cucina 36e8 Glass** from **LAGO (Pav. 16 | C19 D14)**, designed by **Davide Lago**, is the upshot of an endeavour to change the face of the brand's kitchens, deconstructing them and making way for the transparencies and deep visual reflections of the glass. The undetectable tops, doors and handles blend together in a single suspended monolith which, thanks to paring back the materials, contains the Glass containers and forges a perfect dialogue with the N.O.W. larder.

The projects that channel a more composed **classicality**, on the other hand, feature connected details, soft and sinuous, pleasing to the touch. One such example is the **Eliseo** collection by **Antonio Citterio** for **Flexform (Pav. 05 | E05 E11 F02 F08)**, distinguished by its formal elegance, sense of proportionality, attention to detail and simplicity. The enveloping lines and soft padding make for a high level of comfort and transmit a feeling of high craftsmanship. The **Blyn family of chairs** by **Oscar and Gabriele Buratti** for **Frag (Pav. 16 | D19)**, composed of a chair and small armchair, was inspired by classic shapes and boasts clean, essential lines. Entirely covered with leather, legs included, Blyn is characterised by a padded, comfortable and generously sized convex backrest. Equally suspended in time and eternity, the **Bergere** from **Salda Arredamenti (Pav. 04 | D09 D11)** is a cherrywood armchair, with padded seat, and fixed sides and backrest. The latest projects from **Gebrüder Thonet Vienna (Pav. 20 | D02)** are a blend of tradition and contemporary creativity. An example of this is its original collaboration with **Serena Confalonieri**, designer of the **Arcadia** pouffe. The balance of sinuous forms and movement defines the round pouffe, visually light and playful, drawing on one of the company's classic styles, the curved wooden arches on the base conferring a new, contemporary look. The new **Cattelan** collection (**Pav. 10 | A15 B18**) harnesses the ideal classic mix of soft sensual shapes and geometric elements: the absence of excess leaves room to focus on the role of natural materials and hand-crafted finishes, as in the **Costes sideboard** designed by the **Tosca Design** studio, with its lean, clean lines. **Turri (Pav. 01 | A07 B06)** combines classical inspiration with the typical geometrical experimentation of **Monica Armani**, who has designed a new dining area for the brand and has started turning her thoughts to the bedroom area. Both spaces express her concept of contemporary design, based on eliminating the superfluous in favour of purity of content. For **ETRO Home Interiors (Pav. 04 | B12)**, classic means a balance of exotic reminders and contemporary allure, '50s-style design and sophisticated references to tradition. **Mekong** is a large, welcoming and comfortable sofa, an invitation to relaxation and conviviality. The sage green velvet cover brings a touch of luxury reminiscent of the Parisian patisseries and cafés of the late 19th century: a delicate reminder of classicality, brought up to date by the presence of original decorative elements.

A range of different types of furnishing, accessories in particular, are adopting an **organic quality**, looking to Mother Nature as a source of inspiration. Thus, a natural landscape



sketched out by greenery and plants, showcases the coloured animals from **Bosa (Pav.16 | B31)**, which narrate the project embarked upon by the firm in 2020, devoted to endangered species. The **Margot sea turtle**, designed by **Alessandra Baldereschi**, is the latest arrival in this family. It illustrates and carries the entire habitat in which it lives on its shell: algae, corals and little fish become both decoration and suggestion. This *Caretta caretta* thus makes inroads into our homes to remind us of the fragility of the environment that surrounds us, and that we are all called to commit to its preservation. The power of the volcano has inspired the new **The Floor Is Lava** rugs from **Carpet Edition (Pav. 06 | E33)**, a collection designed by **PLAC&E**, design editor of experimental pieces, in open dialogue with contemporary art and culture. Six unconventionally-shaped models of the reaction to and transformation of surfaces after the eruption of magma and lapilli, interpreted in a Pop and bichromatic key.

One aspect that many of the “narrative thrusts” of contemporary design have in common is the **rediscovery of artisan techniques and skills**, a desire to blend **craftsmanship and industry**. These days it is the quality of the materials, the attention to detail and the cleverness of the processes that count most. One such example is the two **new benches** in the **MO Collection** from **Ritzwell (Pav. 05 | D10)**, designed by **Shinsaku Miyamoto** which both boast a wooden structure and a seat that plays on a weave of precious leather. Atavistic memories of “craft skills” of times gone by meld with essential lines that define the contemporary quality of these pieces, which can be used both as seating and as useful tabletops. **Gabri** is the new model from **Bolzan Letti (Pav. 10 | C06)**, designed in the manner of a tailored garment by **Matteo Zorzenoni**. Classic as regards materials and finishes and contemporary in style, Gabri is a piece that underscores the artisan remit of the Veneto-based company and the centrality of coverings throughout its history. The new collection of **Nodi** rugs, di **Ethimo (Pav. 10 | D20)** and **Paola Navone**, is informed by the enchanting tradition of artisan weaving. Soft and thick, the rugs are made from macro yarns in different colour shades. The grain weaving creates geometrical and abstract patterns in the weft. The poetic and slightly distressed outdoor effect conveys the sense of living inherent in the Mediterranean soul. Skilfully hand-woven, with macro yarns specially treated to make for a ‘warm,’ soft, woolly effect, **Rete**, **Punto Croce** and **Camouflage** bring different, sophisticated colour shades reminiscent of the colours of the Mediterranean together in a simple and elegant mix.

Milan, 6th June 2022

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