

ITALIANA Italy Through the Lens of Fashion 1971 — 2001

22.02 — 06.05.2018
Palazzo Reale, Milano
Piazza Duomo 12

A project conceived and directed by
Maria Luisa Fuisa and Stefano Tonchi

Exhibition Press Office

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ITALIANA. Italy Through the Lens of Fashion 1971-2001: an exhibition promoted by the **City of Milan - Culture - Labor Policies, Business, Fashion and Design** - **Palazzo Reale** and the **Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana** with the support of the **Ministry of Economic Development** and **ICE Agenzia**, thanks to YOOX-NET-A-PORTER GROUP, the main partner, and in collaboration with Pomellato and La Rosa Mannequins.

Italiana. Italy Through the Lens of Fashion 1971-2001 is a project in the form of an exhibition and a book, conceived and curated by Maria Luisa Frisa and Stefano Tonchi, whose aim is to celebrate and tell the story of Italian fashion during a seminal period, focusing on the gradual definition and assertion of the *Italian fashion system* in the grand season of the Made in Italy style. It was a marvelous period of cultural creativity that consolidated relationships and exchanges among the exponents of that Italian generation of artists, architects, designers, and intellectuals that paved the way for international culture. The exhibition also intends to celebrate the important sixtieth anniversary of the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana (Italian National Chamber of Fashion). The narrative of *Italiana* proceeds by concepts and visions along a sophisticated design landscape. An imaginative and rigorous creative kaleidoscope that sees the communication between objects, styles, and atmospheres that define Italian culture, as well as the actors, protagonists, and all those who worked with them and made up the choral fresco of Italian fashion.

The curatorial gesture is conceived as the action of a system: assembling a mythology based on all those events that witnessed the leadership of Italian designers, industries, cities, and districts for a wealth that is unique in the world.

The year **1971** symbolically marks the watershed between high fashion and the start of Italian ready-to-wear fashion: it should come as no surprise that it was the year when Walter Albini chose Milan for the first fashion show of the line that would bear his name, the so-called “unitary collection.” And it was also the year when the Women’s Liberation movement got underway in Italy. The year **2001** is instead an emblematic end date: the transition from one century to another was the moment when Italian fashion shed its skin and became a global phenomenon that still hasn’t been studied enough as concerns creation, production, and communication. It is also the year when the international system—already shaken by the geopolitical changes of the 1990s—is radically and definitively called into question by the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

The exhibition at Palazzo Reale in Milan is not organized chronologically, but is instead centered on a constellation of **themes—Identity, Democracy, Logomania, Diorama, Project Room, Bazaar, Post-Production, Glocal, The Italy of Objects—**based on a **critical interpretation capable of bringing together the different features of culture and fashion over the 30 years examined here.** There are nine rooms, each one of them different, in which the theory of concepts intends to render Italian fashion in its most significant manifestations and in its most characteristic qualities. The selection of extremely representative objects (fashion, art, design, photography, publishing) iconically determines the way the exhibition unfolds. On display we have artists like **Michelangelo Pistoletto, Maurizio Cattelan, Elisabetta Benassi, Luciano Fabro, Francesco Vezzoli, Vanessa Bee-craft, Luigi Ontani, Alighiero Boetti, Giulio Paolini, Ketty La Rocca, Gino De Dominicis**, who bear witness to the creative and social complexity of Italian art in the final decades of the century, and shed light from an unprecedented perspective on the quality of Italian fashion through their gaze and practices; the designers of the **Valvoline** group: **Daniele Brolli, Giorgio Carpinteri, Igort (Igor Tuveri), Marcello Jori, Jerry Kramsky and Lorenzo Mattotti**; and the photographers **Gian Paolo Barbieri, Alfa Castaldi, Aldo Fallai, Fabrizio Ferri, Giovanni Gastel, Paolo Roversi, Oliviero Toscani,**

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to name just a few, whose images bear witness to the strength and experimental and visionary capacity that characterized Italian fashion photography in that period. A catalog published by Marsilio will accompany the event, an excellent tool capable of expanding on the exhibition itself through a series of texts that have never before been published, an anthology of the fashion literature written in those years, and images extracted from the major magazines at the time.

Italiana is therefore a journey that tells the story of Italian fashion via a multiplicity of gazes, akin to a polycentric phenomenon capable of liaising with know-how and knowledge of varying kinds.

Here is a list of just some of the names involved in the exhibition: Alberta Ferretti, Allegri, Antonio Marras, Archizoom, Aspesi, Basile, Benetton, Best Company, Biancaebly, Blumarine, Bottega Veneta, Bruno Magli, C.P. Company, Closed, Diesel, Emporio Armani, Etro, Cadette, Callaghan, Calugi e Giannelli, Carpe Diem, Cesare Fabbri, Cerruti, Cinzia Ruggeri, Complice, Costume National, Dolce & Gabbana, Enrica Massei, Enrico Coveri, Fay, Fendi, Ferragamo, Fila, Fiorucci, Franco Moschino, Fratelli Rossetti, Fuzzi, Genny, Gian Marco Venturi, Gianfranco Ferré, Giorgio Armani, Gucci, Hogan, Iceberg, Krizia, La Perla, Laura Biagiotti, Luciano Soprani, Mario Valentino, Marni, Max Mara, Missoni, MiuMiu, Moncler, Naj-Oleari, Nanni Strada, Pomellato, Pour Toi, Prada, Roberto Cavalli, Romeo Gigli, Sergio Rossi, Sergio Tacchini, Sharra Pagano, Stone Island, Tod's, Trussardi, Valentino, Versace, Walter Albini, Zegna.

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Milan, Palazzo Reale

Open to the public: February 22 – May 6, 2018, during the hours and on the days Palazzo Reale is regularly open.

Monday 2:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday 9:30 am to 7:30 pm

Thursday, Saturday 9:30 am – 10:30 pm

The ticket office is open until one hour before closing

Ticket: € 5

Revenue from ticket sales will be handed over to CNMI Fashion Trust, which in turn donate the money to initiatives and projects of a social nature.

Curators

Maria Luisa Frisa, critic and curator, is a full professor at Università IUAV in Venice, where she directs the degree course in Fashion Design and Multimedia Arts. Her publications include: *Le forme della moda* (Il Mulino, 2015).

Stefano Tonchi has been the director of *W Magazine* since 2010. Previously, he directed *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, and he was also the creative director of *Esquire* and *Self Magazine*, and the fashion editor of *L'Uomo Vogue*.

Together they have curated *Uniforme. Ordine e disordine* (2001), *Excess. Moda e underground negli anni '80* (2004), *Human Game. Vincitori e vinti* (2006), *Belissima. L'Italia dell'alta moda 1945-1968* (2014-2016).

Associate curator

Gabriele Monti is a research assistant at Università IUAV in Venice. His research focuses on fashion and visual culture, fashion curating, and fashion design theories. His publications include *In posa. Modelle italiane dagli anni cinquanta a oggi* (Marsilio, 2016).

Exhibition Design and Artistic Direction

Annabelle Selldorf,

SELLDORF ARCHITECTS

with

Baschera Brigolin Mocchi

Design Studio

Graphic Design Services

bruno – Andrea Codolo

and Giacomo Covacich

Lighting Partner

FLOS

Direction and Production and catalog

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Useful Beauty

Maria Luisa Frisa
Stefano Tonchi

To interpret is to impoverish, to deplete the world—in order to set up a shadow world of “meanings.” It is to turn the world into this world. (“This world”! As if there were any other.) The world, our world, is depleted, impoverished enough. Away with all duplicates of it, until we again experience more immediately what we have.
Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation*, 1966

It's not in the passion, nor in the forced play. It is in the category of sobriety, of useful beauty. You do something because it's useful, not for the applause.
Beppe Di Corrado on Andrea Pirlo, 2017¹

Italiana: Italy Through the Lens of Fashion, 1971–2001 is a project in the form of an exhibition—supplemented and commented on by a book—whose title is already a declaration of intent. *Italiana* is an adjective, turned here into a noun to indicate the complex set of traits, styles and atmospheres that define Italian culture in all its forms and expressions. It is followed by a subtitle, which in Italian, *L'Italia vista dalla moda* (literally, “Italy as Seen from Fashion”), evokes “The Earth as Seen from the Moon,” Pier Paolo Pasolini's acerbic fable that was one of the episodes of the film *Le streghe* (*The Witches*, 1967), to suggest that fashion is the point of view privileged by the narration and at the same time to highlight the need for an alternative vision, one capable of going in a new critical direction, moving away from stereotypes and old categories. Like with the rhetoric of Made in Italy, to which people constantly resort without ever really asking themselves what meaning it might have today, it is the story that is told which needs updating.² This should be adapted to the different forms of production but also respond to comments and criticisms often stemming from a partial understanding of the history of Italian fashion, at the source of which often lies an underestimation of the value of the cultural actions to be carried out at the political level to construct the mythology of Italian fashion.³

I called it *De Italia* because it seemed to me that it was treated as an argument.
Luciano Fabro, *Vademecum*, 1981

The book is a risky and contingent document and lives a precarious life in a dicey artistic and social situation.
Germano Celant, *Precronistoria 1966–1969*, 2017

It is fundamental to get something clear straightaway. We are aware of the fact we have adopted a posture of militancy—an attitude that might make people smile today—in tackling a project that aims to present an image of Italy through fashion over the very long period of thirty years. A period that was crucial because it was the theater in which the processes of challenge to the global balances so laboriously established after World War II were made manifest. The activist posture derives from the desire to make our fashion, Italian fashion, speak, to present it as an argument, to tell its story without necessarily any hagiographic intent, but above all to assert once and for all its unique identity and importance in the international panorama. And to show the extent to which the Italian fashion system is an advantageous viewpoint from which to grasp the distinctive traits of our country's culture.

We are very well aware that the premises of this project are highly ambitious (for instance the effort to convey in the exhibition and the book the immense variety of actors who have given rise to the whole system) and that it is extremely difficult to put them into effect. But if this is the case it is precisely because Italy has chosen over time not to assign to fashion the cultural role that would have allowed us today to hold a dialogue of equals with the great

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museums and important institutions that devote their attention to fashion in other countries.⁴ A few small museums—none of which has the term “national” in its name or declares its mission to be the preservation and promotion of Italian fashion—scattered around the country, hardly ever in communication with one another;⁵ too many trade associations, often with no relationship with one another; a multitude of private collectors who fortunately have decided to treat their wardrobes as archives but who receive no institutional recognition; a very small number of universities that have decided to consider fashion a rigorous and serious discipline to be explored also through workshops and that one which, even before being taught, ought to be defined by a Ministry of Universities and Research which has proved deaf to all appeals.⁶

The Italian scenario is characterized by a constitutional lack of cultural policy with regard to fashion, which has not been utilized explicitly as a means of forging an identity, even though it has represented and still represents one of our strongpoints from the economic perspective. In an increasingly globalized panorama it is necessary to reactivate the silent and little known narrative of Italian fashion and to introduce fashion departments into the museum system along with specialists in the museology of fashion. Because by now it is distinctive content and values that make the difference. Of course these are complex undertakings. It is going to take time. But we need to get started, or to pick up the threads. Twenty years ago the first Florence Biennale was held (September 1996–January 1997). Entitled *Il tempo e la moda*, “Time and Fashion,” it was curated by Germano Celant, Luigi Settembrini and Ingrid Sischy; Franca Sozzani was one of the people behind it. A sort of festival made up of a series of exhibitions that brought the city map back to life. For Settembrini the goal was “to explore and present the contiguity, affinity, mutual influence and creative relationship between the universe of fashion and the visual arts, design, architecture, cinema, photography, music, costume and communication of our time, in the conviction that fashion is one of the most popular and significant expressions of mass culture, but also one of the most underrated in its complex and innovative values for the world of common sensibility.”

It appears that in Italy institutional and cultural reflection has repressed these words, along with all the rest. In fact the absence of a state policy on fashion and its cultures has led to the dispersion—for the most part abroad, to museums like the Victoria and Albert in London, when not through auctions, again on the London market—of an extraordinary heritage of artifacts produced by the galaxy of designers and companies that have molded the great dream of Italian fashion. This loss is undoubtedly one of our most searing defeats, and we have had to reckon with its consequences during our research. Embarking on this project has meant for us responding first of all to the urgent need to survey and define, even if only partially, Italian fashion over the thirty years in which it made its mark internationally. Above all, though, it has meant making the conscious—and perhaps simultaneously reckless—decision to attempt something that is deeply rooted in the present but which can become a manifesto for the future. If we have set ourselves the task of identifying the defining traits of Italian fashion over those three decades, we have at the same time tried to look at it from as many different perspectives as possible, in relation to and comparison with design and art, in order to be able to recover that common ground of dialogue in which fashion has always acted in response to a diverse range of stimuli.

Every conception of history is invariably accompanied by a certain experience of time which is implicit in it, conditions it, and thereby has to be elucidated.

Giorgio Agamben, *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience*, 1993

It is a period we have lived through, experienced at first hand, in which autobiography is mixed up with the events of the time. So we have looked at ourselves, thought about the clothes that we bought and wore. The fashion that

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has been for us in the first place an interest, a place to frequent because that was where things happened, with the awareness that it represented a privileged observation post from which to reflect on contemporary life, and which ended up becoming our job.

The year 1971 symbolically marks the break with high fashion and the beginning of the period of Italian ready-to-wear: it was the year in which Walter Albini chose Milan for the first show of the line that bore his name, the so-called “unified collection.” And it was the year in which the women’s liberation movement emerged in Italy. The date 2001 is one of emblematic closure—the following year, after making its debut on financial markets in 1999, the euro would enter into circulation. The turn of the century was the moment when Italian fashion sloughed its skin and turned into a global phenomenon whose forms of creation and production are still little studied today. It was also the year in which the international system—already shaken by the geopolitical changes of the 1990s—was radically and definitively disrupted by the attacks of 9/11.⁷ The network of contemporary fashion is an intricate system made up of different directions, in all of which, however, it was already moving during the controversial and vital decade of the “harsh, cynical, creative, elegant, chaotic 1980s.”⁸ Preceded by what has been described as “the long decade of the short century,” with all the utopias that pervaded it and of which fashion was an interpreter and accomplice—the decade that Marco Belpoliti, Gianni Canova and Stefano Chiodi, in their project devoted to the 1970s, rightly had begun with the landing on the moon,⁹ for it is often necessary to go to another world in order to discover your own. And followed by those 1990s that stamped out the excesses of the previous decade and dragged us toward a world in which global macro-tendencies and local resistances are inevitably intertwined. Our fashion started to move outside the country’s borders, and if it remained *italiana* it was because it tried to hold on to the position it had gained in the previous decades, emphasizing what it considered to be the strengths it had developed: quality of production, the ability to invent an image for itself, the speed with which it was able to shed its old skin and put on a new one, fraternizing uninhibitedly with emerging cultural phenomena. But the desire, or the real (or presumed) need to be international often coincided with a renunciation of its own language and an abdication of the responsibility to promote a new generation of creatives, from designers to stylists to photographers, who disappeared from the international radar. Other countries, meanwhile, took up the challenge of globalization, seeking to highlight their own distinctive traits with political interventions in the system.

Italiana amounts to a sort of dystopian utopia. That of being able to give form and value—through facts, dreams, visions, creators, prima donnas, second leads, chance passersby—to a story of Italian fashion over those thirty seminal years that saw it define itself in a symbiotic relationship with the social, political and cultural history of our country and take on a leading role at an international level. In an exploration that proceeds by concepts and visions, the narration of *Italiana* aims to draw simultaneous attention to all the players who, in different ways, make up the vivid and many-voiced story of Italian fashion. It is a journey that the curators have made almost solo, so as not to let themselves be distracted, but in close contact with a team of scholars, journalists, writers and researchers who have contributed the many texts that in various formats compose the book—a work group characterized by sometimes contrasting viewpoints, but guided by the desire and determination to arrive at results all could agree on. The journey has not been an outing, an expedition or something of that kind: it has been an experience of interpretation and decipherment in which every new discovery interacted with the memories we carried with us or shook up our preconceived ideas.

This journey, like any journey, has not touched all the places on the map. It has entailed the exploration of a mental geography couched in the erratic and rhabdomantic dimension that stems from an open-minded, almost tentative research, one that responds to the stimuli of the always present tense of

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fashion. A research in which clues, traces, discoveries, stumbling blocks and wrong turns have determined the steps, guided by the desire to understand. To get to the bottom of the success of the Italian look which Silvia Giacomoni analyzed so well in her book *L'Italia della moda*, in which she observed: "Pucci's prints and Gucci's shoes didn't make an Italian look. They were just accessories made in Italy, little distinctive gems, memory, nostalgia or hope of a marvelous journey, one of those that American movies were presenting to the world: stories of men and women entranced for a period by the incredible climate of Rome, young and decadent accomplices or enterprising Latin lovers." But "the Italian look is something else. Its success signifies that there are people in the world who decide to make a major purchase on the basis of the overall image they wish to present of themselves: this is all the more difficult to understand because the Italian look has not gelled into certain precise forms and functions that are stable over time, such as American jeans, the English blazer, Austrian loden. The Italian look is protean. It is aimed at different segments of the market, touches in succession on all sectors of clothing. It changes every year. It owes its popularity to an image of Italy that often seems obscure and bizarre to us Italians."¹⁰

This journey through three decades of Italian fashion is not a timeline of events and actors, but an exploration of a number of themes that are capable of summing up and explaining its common traits and that have led us to hark back ideally to the "Italian categories" of the title of a book by Giorgio Agamben. In the foreword to the new edition of 2010 Agamben writes that his aim was to "grasp the fundamentals of Italian literary culture," adding that "what is new, instead, with respect to the initial project is the concern, shown today even by the youngest of critics, with redrawing the maps of twentieth-century poetry that have been handed down to us."¹¹ And it is precisely a "redrawing of the maps that have been handed down" that has served as the compass for our journey. To reach that territory in which tradition and revolution are no longer opposite poles, but two factors at work in the same field of inquiry, in which are set those narrative *topoi* that become part of a pilgrimage, stemming from the realization that we have ended up in a present devoid of memory.

So it is necessary to dig up the past, to reconstruct both its successes and its failures¹² and missed opportunities, in order to find the courage to put aside the old paradigms of Italian fashion, conscious of the need for a new approach—or perhaps it would be better to say a new interpretation of Italian identity in relation to creativity, business, culture and communication on the map of the international trajectories of fashion. To come up with a response to the radical changes that the system has undergone globally in recent years. Among these it is certainly necessary to take into consideration, particularly with the future in mind, the sale of many of the most important Italian brands to major luxury multinationals like Kering or LVMH or foreign investor groups. While on the one hand these transfers of ownership were in many cases inevitable in order to keep the brand going and thus save jobs too, they are on the other actions that need to be balanced with cultural and political projects at the level of the system to reassert the personality and the distinctive aspects of Italian fashion within the new situations.

A series of choices has shaped our critical approach—through the questioning and rewriting of a history that has not yet been digested, in which each important artifact compels us to reevaluate everything that came before it—and suggested themes and titles with which to organize still incandescent materials, bringing together, between visions and pragmatic acts, the qualities and the shortcomings, depending on the point of view, that make the blurry picture of Italian fashion. Materials that in the exhibition at Palazzo Reale are clearly organized by the sequence of rooms, while in the iconographic atlas that takes up a substantial part of this book, bringing it to life, they are arranged in a sort of mood board, a melting pot that fuses and regenerates forms, acting by analogy and contrast. Identity, Democracy, Logomania, Diorama, Project Room, Bazaar, Postproduction, Glocal, The Italy of Objects: these themes are set out as a sort of open inventory, with bridges linking them in many different

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directions. For while these conceptual areas that we have isolated are shared with the history of fashion in other countries, with an older tradition of study of the subject than ours, it is in the research conducted by Italian designers that these definitions have made a linguistic break with all the rest and found a perspective able to pick up and respond to the needs of society. We focus on three of these conceptual areas, because we see them as linchpins in any description of the period from 1971 to 2001 and as fundamental to conveying a fluid image of the evolution of Italian fashion and the development of its characteristics.

Mine is not a mannish woman. She is simply a woman who has adopted the intelligent and functional formulas of male attire. Not because she wants to look like a man, but because at eight o'clock in the morning, with an hour to get dressed and washed, it's nice to know that with a jacket, a shirt and a pair of pants the problem is solved.

Giorgio Armani, 1980

If we don't tackle the question of homosexuality, and the eternal game of hide-and-seek it plays with cross-dressing, we are not going to understand what fashion has been, up to now, and the way it places itself under the protective wing of creativity in order not to admit its fundamentally sexual nature.

Silvia Giacomoni, *L'Italia della moda*, 1984

The image-manifesto of *Italiana* is a photograph by Oliviero Toscani taken from the feature "Unilook. Lui e lei alla stessa maniera" (Unilook. Him and Her in the Same Manner), published in the December–January 1971–72 issue of *L'uomo Vogue*. The black and white picture is part, along with the other photos in the feature, of an account of how fashion can be an impression of society. That couple, both with long hair, both dressed in gray double-breasted jackets, almost the same height (thanks in part to her heels), holding hands and gazing straight at the lens, does not speak of a woman rejecting her femininity and imitating the man. Or of an effeminate man. They speak of the great conquests of feminism, of the utopias of equality and freedom pursued by post-war generations, of a different male awareness of gender stereotypes, of the changes taking place in the relationship between man and woman. Of a desire to eliminate all differences. And it was Giorgio Armani who, in tune with these social and political changes, moved farther and farther away from dressing the woman as a man and toward the specification of masculine and feminine elements in fashion for both genders.

Giorgio Armani's "radical gender"—to use Giusi Ferré's definition¹³—is undoubtedly one of the most telling turning points in the construction of the narrative of Italian fashion. Telling because it emerged out of a precise social reality. A precise and urgent need: to accentuate the strong qualities of women, which acted as a complement to the courage of men displaying sensuality and tenderness. If Walter Albini, the great unrecognized trailblazer, looked to the flapper of the 1920s, to the androgynous physique of a period that he found congenial, Armani focused on change. Male and female were not just genders that identified two different bodies and mentalities, but seen as propensities in dress that no longer entertained the division between the genders and their difference, but mixed the characteristics of both. The result was a new a-sex style that, far from being basic, combined opposing characteristics and dressed a body that had culturally lost the attributes of gender itself.

With clarity, incisiveness and visual control, Italian fashion—in the ethical, rigorous, dimension in which design is carried out—reinvigorated the actions of many leading actors in the field, stimulating them to interpret the new necessities. The figure changed, new proportions were studied and became a shared syntax able to articulate new narratives. The disintegration of distinctions was not linked to a single moment, a single designer, but was an integral part of one of the directions taken by Italian fashion, which encountered the now with a series of dialectical images and formed a constellation in motion.

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Yet the theme of identity also reveals a woman who asserted her femininity with pride, to the point of deliberately exaggerating its traits. Awareness and passion. Delight in at last having the possibility to consummate desire on a par with men. While men's fashion was a revolutionary qualification of Italian origin, whose codification started out precisely from a consideration of male attire not as a uniform of renunciation of the pleasure of appearances but as a wearable manifesto of a new definition of virility. It was Condé Nast's *L'Uomo Vogue*—which joined *Vogue Italia* in 1967 and was the first “fashion” magazine for men that succeeded in establishing itself internationally on a lasting basis—that shattered the old schemes for good and proposed with huge success the image of a man who followed fashion and used it without prejudice.

At last heaven has fallen to earth: the revolution.¹⁴

We all have a great desire to love each other and tell one another so continually. We have a great desire to look at one another, it doesn't matter whether naked or dressed, but always masters of ourselves and of the grass and the clouds and our mental space.

Every action (covering, uncovering, swapping, giving, receiving) naturally becomes an act of love: this is the only subject of the Fashion we are talking about: yourselves and your relations with others.

Superstudio, “Superstudio à la mode,” 1972

Italian fashion is democratic, the place for an explicit and conscious reflection on the possibility for everyone to being “well-dressed.” The clothing industry, through the contribution of that wholly Italian figure of the *stilista*, an untranslatable term,¹⁵ rapidly became, from the late 1960s onwards, a privileged sphere for the production and distribution of garments of quality (in their materials and their makeup) intended for distribution on a large scale. It was at this moment that “Italian style” became synonymous—around the world—with knowing how to dress with a degree of good taste. The industry evolved and grew stronger, taking possession of the sartorial tradition in its own way and turning it into a shared heritage, within the reach of all (this is a phenomenon to which we can apply the concept of mass avant-garde, proposed by the art critic Maurizio Calvesi to define the union between avant-garde experimentation and the mass dimension of society). *Stilismo* was cultivated in industrial situations appreciative of innovative approaches and experimentation: Zamasport, Genny, Gibò, Miroglio and GFT were the locations of a cultured production where figures like Walter Albini, Gianni Versace, Romeo Gigli, Giorgio Armani, Gianfranco Ferré and Dolce & Gabbana were not only given a space to put their own ideas into concrete effect, but involved, through company brands created ad hoc, in projects of innovation and experimentation that conveyed an—absolutely unexpected—image of industrial production as a realm of imaginative freedom. Emblematic of this is Zamasport's brand Callaghan, which saw Albini, Versace and Gigli take responsibility one after the other for shaping its style. Or Genny's brand Complice, which was created precisely as an expression of the complicity between the manufacturer and the *stilista*, in this case Donatella Girombelli and, at the outset, Gianni Versace (but then Claude Montana too—a sign of the central role enlightened Italian production has played in the promotion and support of creativity abroad).¹⁶

To better explain the nature of fashion design in Italy and its momentous significance, we borrow the words of the critic Francesco Manacorda. Writing about Italian art and design, he observed: “The most surprising works produced in Italy seem to be those that start off on one side of the dichotomy and then tend toward the other. Industrial design is a field in which form is free of the burden of expression, being directed mainly at the future application of the artifact. In this sense, use-objects become the purest expression of form—especially after the Modernist revolution had stripped away ornament in favor of the dominion of function. Given the way objects are codified within our culture, there seems to be an inseparable—almost ontological—divide between the

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forms produced by design and those identified as belonging to visual art. In opposition to this norm, certain works within Italian culture seem to be the fruit of a clandestine invasion of the territory from one discipline to the other.”¹⁷

“In fifteen days in April we sold 700 military shirts. The camouflage overalls are sold out, the gray-green safari jackets are running out fast. Demand is always very high,” reported Pia Borghini from the Fiorucci store in *Panorama* in 1971. It was Fiorucci, the great visionary and utopian, who first pick up on the desire for fashion and continual change that should be within everybody’s grasp. Fiorucci adapted fashion to the world. In his stores, which spread from Milan to New York and Los Angeles, customers found a fashion that mixed novelty and transgression, curiosity and role play, made up of objects selected from all around the world or conceived in response to a stimulus of the moment. A short-circuit of irony, communication and soft porn. Which also drew on the more radical experiments of a wholly Italian *designing design*: Archizoom Associati’s project *Dressing Is Easy*—which intertwined the uninhibited culture of the body that had emerged so powerfully in the 1970s with the quest for a simplification in the procedures of clothing design—was promoted and funded by Fiorucci, always ready to debunk and deconstruct the obsessions of fashion, precisely in order to underline its importance.

A false wall divides a room in two / proposing two different / focal points // You are asked to go / to only one of the two / halves // You can complete what is missing from your viewing // through what others tell you / or / remain with an incomplete / experience.

Eva Marisaldi, *Ragazza materiale (Material Girl)*, 1993

The actions evoked are those of sampling, reactivating, rearranging in completely new ways—between the aggressiveness of bad taste and the minimalist dematerialization typical of the 1990s. This uninhibited view of the creative act, as a mix of appropriation, citation and postproduction, found expression through clothing and objects which call to mind the atmospheres of an exotic elsewhere that in reality was often only imagined and desired, with a spirit that overcame anthropological rigor with the pop gestures of mass tourism; through materials that reactivated a heritage by redesigning it or even invented a completely new one; through clothing that played in an explicit manner, somewhere between nostalgic act and mischievous satire, with the stereotypes automatically associated with an idea of the Italian spirit that we ourselves use to present ourselves on the international scene.

So there is room to connect Prada’s concept of the antigraceful—which celebrated the good taste of the bourgeois drawing-room, while sully and killing it—with the absolutely international allure of Tom Ford’s interpretation of the Gucci universe, an emblematic case for understanding the consecration of the creative director, a mythological figure able to reinvent a brand by turning it into the object of desire of an entire generation of fashion victims not even aware of the wholly Italian history of the brand. And there were also niche experiences of design: from the sophisticated regionalist explorations of Antonio Marras to the uncompromising approach of Maurizio Altieri, who with the brand *Carpe Diem* reinvented the pattern-marking tradition through obsessive research into extremely hard and dark materials.

This creative fragmentation—which was also the mark of a flexible production, not afraid to reconfigure itself—was how Italian fashion responded to the demands of globalization, choosing to confirm its role as an experimental laboratory able to reconcile the most complex industrial dimension with the existence of small-scale producers scattered around the country’s provinces and districts.

It is evident, from this approach, that *Italiana* does not intend to carry out an objective (objectivity is a false consciousness) and global analysis of a phe-

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nomenon and that it has no ambition to rewrite the history of the Italian fashion of a particular period. It is a subjective reconnaissance, carried out from the observation post of the present in which we are living, without any nostalgia or regret but out of curiosity about the aesthetic territory in which its images exist. And it aims to explore, in a conspiratorial manner, the extraordinary fabric that—through an approach to design rooted in a “making that invents a mode of making,” to borrow an idea of Luigi Pareyson’s—has shaped the highly personal language of Italian fashion, a perfect synthesis of the inventive short-circuit between the artisan who is more of a philosopher than a mere adept, the designer/creative director, the company able to give expression to a project, image makers and the publishing world that selects, redesigns, communicates and amplifies all this.

Our attempts to organize a series of materials around a word or a concept do not claim to be exhaustive. They are not meant to put things into boxes, but are a way of making room. They are supposed to provide a basis of comparison, to be a laboratory of analysis. Each of these words and expressions marks out a territory and presents a selection of clothes, images, objects and artworks that make up a sort of atlas of Italian fashion as reconstructed by the exhibition’s curators. A map of some of the possible routes to its understanding, perhaps the most obvious ones with respect to the enormous complexity of the subject, which ranges from production to consumption, from creation to communication, from culture to marketing.

In *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things*, George Kubler wrote: “Every important work of art can be regarded both as a historical event and as a hard-won solution to some problem. It is irrelevant now whether the event was original or conventional, accidental or willed, awkward or skillful.”¹⁸ We quote his words because in our choice of objects we too have asked ourselves whether each one was a precise representation of a particular need at a particular time. Not whether it was ugly or beautiful, but whether it was right. Right for the moment in which it was created. If it was a significant element in that history of an Italian fashion so attentive to giving clothing and style, of untrammelled quality, to the women and men of the late 20th century.

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1 B. Di Corrado, "Io sono il calcio," *Il Foglio* (November 11–12, 2017).

2 A definition of "Made in Italy" on which we can agree is this: "The quality of [things] made in Italy . . . does not stem solely from the skill that goes into their execution but is also, if not above all, founded on the conception of formal solutions and on the entire process of invention of the object: the Italian factory, from this point of view, is not just a factory of things, but also a factory of ideas" (L. Fortunati and E. Danese, *Manuale di comunicazione, sociologia e cultura della moda*, vol. 3, *Il made in Italy* [Rome: Meltemi, 2005], p. 47).

3 Vanessa Friedman, immediately after the September 2017 shows in Milan, wrote in *The New York Times*: "Milan has never really been an intellectual fashion city; leave that to the deconstructionists and conceptualists of Paris and London. It's more about the immediate gratification of extraordinary fabric and high-voltage cleavage." (V. Friedman, "Does Milan Matter?," *The New York Times*, September 24, 2017 <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/24/fashion/milan-fashion-week-versace-bottega-veneta.html>)

4 Such as the V&A in London, the Met in New York and the MoMu in Antwerp.

5 In the 1980s, when Italian fashion made such an influential mark on the world, Alessandro Mendini pointed out "how interesting it could be today to set up and design 'museums of fashion,' organisms that should not be confused with a few items of clothing draped over mannequins like ghosts" (A. Mendini, "Musei della moda?," *Domus moda*, supplement to *Domus*, 621, October 1981, p. 1). Mendini's words show awareness—deep-seated at that moment in time—of the importance of providing a cultural underpinning for a system of potent complexity, capable of representing the best of a country that, by making clear the quality of its style, could have confirmed its role as a unique laboratory of creative experimentation (cf. M.L. Frisa, "Alla moda spetta un vero museo," *Il Sole 24 Ore*, June 30, 2017).

6 Only the Ministry of Economic Development has looked at the question of teaching fashion in Italy, but on a level that made no distinction between public and private education.

7 The year 2001 was also one of elections: Silvio Berlusconi returned to power, seven years after the short-lived government of 1994. "The game's over, Berlusconi wins by a landslide with the Casa delle Libertà. Turnout of 81.4%, Forza Italia is the biggest party with almost 11 million votes and 29.4%. The DS [Democrats of the Left] get just over 6 million votes (16.6%)" (E. Deaglio, *Patria 1978-2008* [Milan: Il Saggiatore, 2009], p. 509). It was also the year of the G8 summit in Genoa.

8 A. Piccinini, *Fratellini d'Italia. Mappe, stili, parole dell'ultima generazione* (Rome: Theoria, 1994).

9 See *Annisettanta. Il decennio lungo del secolo breve*, catalogue of the exhibition curated by M. Bel-politi, G. Canova and S. Chiodi at Triennale di Milano, October 27, 2007–March 30, 2008 (Milan: Skira, 2007).

10 S. Giacomoni, *L'Italia della moda* (Milan: Mazzotta, 1984), 9.

11 G. Agamben, "Avvertenza alla presente edizione," in id., *Categorie Italiane. Studi di poetica e letteratura* (Rome/Bari: Laterza, 2010).

12 Although, as Teresa Macri has written, "failure emerges where there is risk and, wherever it is necessary to take risks, there is experimentation, rupture, discontinuity. Irrefutable foundations for the creation of the work and of the condition of art" (T. Macri, *Fallimento* [Milan: Postmedia, 2017], 29).

13 G. Ferré, *Giorgio Armani: Radical Gender* (Venice: Marsilio, 2016).

14 This ("Finalmente il cielo è caduto sulla terra: la rivoluzione") was the title of the newsheet launched in March 1977 by the editors of *Atraverso* and those of *Zut*.

15 Sonnet Stanfill writes in his introductory essay to the book *The Glamour of Italian Fashion since 1945*: "The Italian word *stilista* is more nuanced and multifunctional than either the English translation 'designer' or 'stylist' suggest. It came to refer to someone who mediated between the practicalities of industry, the requirements of retail buyers and the needs of the public, while also being aware of the importance of the press" (S. Stanfill, "Introduction," in Stanfill (ed.), *The Glamour of Italian Fashion since 1945* (London: V&A Publishing, 2014)).

16 In the words of Donatella Girombelli herself, quoted by Michael Gross in *New York* in 1991, "between Genny and the designer there is a complicity" (the article, which appeared in the issue of the magazine published on March 11, 1991, was entitled "A Portrait of Genny and the Woman Who Runs It").

17 F. Manacorda, "While Form May Disappear, Its Roots Remain Eternal. The Revolt of Poets and Inventors," in *Italian Art between Tradition and Revolution 1968-2008*, edited by F. Bonami, catalogue of the exhibition at Palazzo Grassi, Venice, and Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 2008–09 (Milan: Electa, 2008), p. 57.

18 G. Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 30.

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The support that the Ministry of Economic Development has decided to give *Italiana* is part of a comprehensive effort to draw attention to the Italian fashion industry and the strategic role it plays in the promotion of Italian manufacturing. This choice does not stem solely from the sector's economic importance and crucial contribution to exports, which has effectively sustained the country through the years of depression; it comes also and above all from an awareness that "interpreting" fashion in its manifold forms means to some extent understanding Italy. And that in turn Italian fashion cannot be separated from an analysis and evaluation of the vicissitudes, evolutions and travails of Italian society.

The three decades covered in the exhibition start from the year it all began, 1971, symbol of the "democratization" of excellence in clothing with the growing popularity of ready-to-wear, and culminate in the historical watershed of 2001, with the attack on the Twin Towers that represented the West's "loss of innocence." First came the effervescent and liberating 1970s, which paved the way for the quantum leap of the 1980s, with their cultural reaction, the rampant triumph of hedonism and consumerism, before moving on to the changed world of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the finance-based economy, globalization and the internet.

Fashion was deeply involved in all these processes, going along with them, affected by them, sometimes even fostering them. This is as true for the emancipation of women as it is for the liberation of men's fashion from the gray uniformity of the power suit. The broadening of the customer base required unprecedented crossovers, proposed new inputs, opened up new horizons. And while it fell into line with changes in patterns of behavior, it also developed a system of relations—between designers, manufacturing regions, cities, artists—that ended up becoming a worldwide model of excellence.

Despite the rigorous character of its treatment of the past, *Italiana* is not a nostalgic retrospective, but a return to the sources: a fascinating and carefully conducted investigation of the foundations of the Made in Italy phenomenon, of that incomparable mix of creativity, ancient skills and sense of beauty that has made our industry such a strong and proud force. Conscious of the sturdiness of its roots and ready to draw on them to meet the new and demanding challenges, from sustainability to training, that await it in the near future. The Ministry's support for this exhibition is a stimulus for everyone to continue working together to overcome them.

Undersecretary to the Ministry of Economic Development

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Italiana is a feast for the eyes: thirty years of great Milan fashion at Palazzo Reale, from the 1970s to the beginning of the twenty-first century, are on display in the heart of Milan to coincide with Fashion Week. The City of Milan and the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana are offering the people of Milan, fashion buyers and lovers of beauty and of Milanese and Italian creativity the best of an exceptional history, one that is both profoundly Milanese and open to the world. Exploring the thematic sections of this exhibition one discovers the polycentric nature of Italian fashion, the variety of its languages and its creations, but at the same recognizes its underlying unity: that Italian touch which makes us proud of what we are able to achieve in the aesthetic field. This survey stops at 2001, before the great financial crisis. Today we can say that fashion has withstood that crisis, overcoming it and relaunching itself through the very assets it developed in those crucial decades: the capacity to innovate, a strong and bold internationalization, attention to quality and a continual effort to improve. This exhibition speaks of Milan as a city of creativity, of excellence and of openness to the young. A story that merits our engagement.

City of Milan Mayor

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In the framework of Novecento Italiano, the program that the City of Milan devotes to the artistic, cultural and social expressions that animated the last century in Italy throughout 2018, Palazzo Reale hosts an exhibition covering the timespan that saw the emergence and development of Italian creativity and style in fashion.

The title of the exhibition, *Italiana: Italy Through the Lens of Fashion, 1971–2001*, points to the importance of the creative talent and production system associated with the country's fashion industry which, thanks to a unique and unmistakable style, have spread beyond its borders and come to represent Italy in the world.

A selection of examples of the period's fashion, design and art are on display in the exhibition spaces, exploring themes that represent the capacity for invention entailed in the act of giving form to elegance and showing the way styles evolved over a particularly fertile three decades.

Fashion is the vantage point from which the story is told of a precious aspect of our culture, one whose protagonists continue to impart value to an expression of creative thinking that is a fundamental resource for development of our city.

City of Milan Councilor for Culture

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An Exhibition

PALAZZO REALE



Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana

With the Support of



Main partner

YOOX
NET-A-PORTER
GROUP

Project in collaboration with



Mannequins

LA ROSA
mannequins since 1922

Coordination and catalogue

Marsilio

Milan and fashion are inseparable allies: fashion often dictates some of the city's collective rituals and events. It has redesigned its urban character. The fashion district, of course, but also the city's shopping streets and a number of its inner suburbs, deindustrialized areas that fashion and its operators have been able to rehabilitate and exploit in a creative manner. Creativity is a distinctive trait of our city, shaped by its traditions of good taste and attention to quality, research and craftsmanship. This is why we are convinced that it is important for institutions to support and promote the world of fashion, without letting it become a "parallel city." We must ensure that it remains an integral part of Milan. The Department of Labor Policies, Business, Fashion and Design, together with the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana and operators in the sector, is committed to making the most of an area in which Milan and Italy excel and that finds expression not just in the cultivation of beauty but also in a system, that of fashion, which plays an active part in the economic development of the city and the entire country.

By hosting the story of the evolution of this creativity, in the form of the exhibition *Italiana: Italy Through the Lens of Fashion, 1971-2001*, in one of Milan's most representative venues, Palazzo Reale, we offer all lovers of the beautiful and the well-made a different vantage point from which to explore and understand the dialogue between the fashion world, Italian society and Milan. An exhibition that does not only take an artistic perspective, but also a historical and political one and that reflects on the mythology of Italian fashion through the events, products and protagonists of the golden age of the Made in Italy phenomenon. Thirty years made of extraordinary relations and exchanges between the leading figures of the Italian generation of artists, architects, designers and intellectuals who, thanks to their personal vision and ability to anticipate trends and tastes, exerted their influence on culture and style all over the world.

City of Milan Cabinet Member for Labor Policies,
Business, Fashion and Design Municipality of Milan

ITALIANA Italy Through the Lens of Fashion 1971 — 2001

22.02 — 06.05.2018
Palazzo Reale, Milano
Piazza Duomo 12

A project conceived and directed by
Maria Luisa Frisa and Stefano Tonchi

Exhibition Press Office

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For the last twenty-five years, Palazzo Reale has devoted part of its programming to an attempt to understand contemporary life through fashion, at first in a somewhat sporadic manner and then, more recently, on a more structured and strategic basis.

Of course we have always focused—it could not have been otherwise—on the cultural and symbolic aspect of fashion, acknowledging the extraordinary contribution it has made to our city in terms of its highly recognizable image, so familiar and evident that no further comment is needed.

Our commitment is clearly reflected in our history of collaboration with the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana. We have also worked closely on the staging of this exhibition, which is fully in keeping with that vision of fashion as culture of which I spoke above.

This exhibition recounts the evolution not just of fashion but also of Italian society over the period from 1971 to 2001. It can thus be seen as a follow-up to a similar exhibition held at MAXXI in Rome three years ago, focusing on the period from 1945 to 1968.

The time span is perfectly suited to the subject. The starting point is 1971, the year in which Walter Albini's legendary show at the Circolo del Giardino marked a revolution in Italian fashion, has been taken as the starting point. The end point is 2001, a symbolic date representing the beginning of a new world, that of globalization.

Over those three decades the market caught the attention of new consumers, while incomes and spending increased, to the extent that the 1980s and the early 1990s saw a second economic boom, an expansion of the market segment sitting between high fashion and quality ready-made clothing and the establishment of a typically Italian manufacturing system, consisting of small to medium-sized enterprises characterized by considerable knowhow and flexible production models. The driving force behind these profound changes was provided, undoubtedly, by the *stilisti*, fashion designers with great creativity and an immense capacity to interpret and anticipate the tastes of the time. The privileged setting in which all this took place and from which it propagated was the city of Milan, which from that time on took on the role of capital of fashion for which it is known all over the world.

The exhibition's curators, Maria Luisa Frisa and Stefano Tonchi, have chosen to tackle this complex and multifaceted subject diachronically rather than synchronically, preferring an overarching approach to a predictable and straightforward chronological one. The result is a comprehensive and authoritative vision that brings out one of the most characteristic aspects of fashion, the fact that it is a synthesis of different languages.

Domenico Piraina
Director of Palazzo Reale

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The Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana is focusing its activity on crucial matters, conscious of its role and its responsibilities in the face of the great challenges posed to the Italian system by a globalized dimension in which fashion, in all its aspects, plays a potent part on the international scene. Training, new creators, sustainability and the digital are some of the key areas on which we are concentrating our attention, through specific projects involving a range of expertise.

This year, in addition, marks an important anniversary: sixty years since the foundation of the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana. This anniversary is an opportunity to celebrate the significance and value of Italian fashion. I am convinced that the past helps us to understand the future, by feeding our imagination. And I know how important it is for new generations to have access to the story of Italian fashion's recent past. A past that has defined the quality and the image of Italian fashion. A past that can become an aid to interpreting and understanding the present, so that we are able to plot new courses, take on new challenges.

For these reasons the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana has decided to promote—with the support of the Ministry of Economic Development and the Italian Trade & Investment Agency and in collaboration with the City of Milan and Palazzo Reale—*Italiana: Italy Through the Lens of Fashion, 1971–2001*, a project in the form of an exhibition accompanied by a book filled with images and texts that analyze and explore the themes and ideas highlighted in the exhibition. For this project we have chosen two outstanding curators, Maria Luisa Frisa and Stefano Tonchi, who have not only already organized exhibitions of great significance for Italian fashion, but are also firmly embedded in the contemporary fashion system. Frisa runs a degree course in Fashion Design at the Luav University in Venice, while Tonchi is editor of the Condé Nast monthly *W*.

Exhibitions are extraordinary narrations that present objects, images and concepts and, in the case of projects of a systematic character like this one, are capable of painting a vivid and many-voiced picture that sheds light on the many protagonists of the world of Italian fashion: *stilisti*, designers, creative directors, industries and manufacturers, photographers, fashion editors, journalists. They define the terms of a productive reflection on our fashion, on its qualities, on its international role. So that we can imagine together the next sixty years of the Italian fashion system.

Carlo Capasa

Chairman of Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana

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The exhibition *Italiana: Italy Through the Lens of Fashion, 1971–2001* visually celebrates for the first time the central role played by fashion in Italy's economic growth and the crucial contribution it has made to projecting the image and the values of the Italian way of life at an international level.

Italiana is the fruit of a collaboration between the Italian Trade & Investment Agency (ICE) and the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana aimed at publicizing Milan Fashion Week. A collaboration that began with the exhibition, curated by Franca Sozzani, *Crafting the Future: Stories of Craftsmanship and Innovation* (MUDEC, September 21–October 13, 2016), and continued with The Green Carpet Fashion Awards (Teatro alla Scala, September 24, 2017), the prize dedicated to the values of sustainability in fashion.

The exhibition is part of the promotional program drawn up by the Comitato della Moda e dell'Accessorio (Fashion and Accessory Board) of the Ministry of Economic Development that, by coordinating the main actors in the Italian fashion system, has defined the priority interventions. Such interventions are implemented by ICE, which, thanks to a multichannel promotional strategy, contributes to boosting the visibility and recognizability of Italian fashion in the world, partly through the organization of strictly cultural activities.

This exhibition covers the three decades that saw the birth and rise to international success of the Italian ready-to-wear industry, and the contributions made by its designers to the evolution of style, manufacturing and production techniques. It offers visitors an insight into the roots of the worldwide popularity of Italian fashion and the factors that, then as now, have made it unique and inimitable.

Michele Scannavini

President of the Italian Trade & Investment Agency

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Italy is almost entirely defined by its visual culture. We have the heritage, the manufacturing base, and the creative DNA to build fashion houses with staying power and global reach. Our unfaltering self-confidence has enabled us to forge our own path, rather than follow the lead of New York, London or Paris.

Italians refuse to take their cues from elsewhere, some may say this has held us back, but I believe it's this strong belief in our country's aesthetics that has led us to become the arbiters of international elegance and home to many of the world's most recognisable designers and houses.

When I invented YOOX in 1999, I was an outsider. I had very few contacts within the industry, yet designers from Giorgio Armani to Valentino opened their doors and got on board. The e-commerce concept was in its infancy but these businesses had a vision, they knew the future was global and they jumped on it—busting the mistaken belief that the industry is closed or that Italians remain in the past.

But we should not forget the past—it has been instrumental in shaping our present and 1971 to 2001 was indeed a seminal period for Italian fashion. In April 1971, Walter Albini debuted the first Ready-to-Wear collection the world had ever seen. The show ushered in a new era of self-expression and sparked decades of social and industrial change.

From this point onwards, both men and women became free to engage with fashion and over the next 30 years Made in Italy became the hallmark of fashion manufacturing globally.

This period incidentally also marks the creation of both YOOX and NET-A-PORTER in 2000—another and most recent game changer within the luxury industry.

Sure, we may look to the past for our futuristic vision, who wouldn't when we have such a glorious one to mine? Yet our glances are far from nostalgic. Today we work harder than ever to promote young talents, inspired by the legacy of the late Franca Sozzani—a visionary in Italian fashion who kick-started a new wave of home-grown successes—building an even stronger ecosystem for the talents that call Italy home.

Federico Marchetti

Chief Executive Officer of YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP

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What a lovely story *Italiana* has to tell! When Maria Luisa Frisa and Stefano Tonchi, the curators of the exhibition, described the project to me, I felt at once that Pomellato was an integral part of it. For the company had made its own contribution to the renaissance of design in Milan. When Pino Rabolini founded Pomellato in 1967, he brought into the world of jewelry an unconventional point of view, one that in fashion had made Walter Albini, Mariuccia Mandelli and the Missoni into the leaders of the Italian aesthetic revolution.

These were years of great social change. Women were asserting themselves in life and in work and it was to these protagonists that Milanese designers were offering new clothes and new jewelry with which to tackle their new roles. It was during this period that Milan became the Italian capital of fashion and one of the locomotives of the fashion system, consolidating its natural role as a center of cultural ferment, a city open to innovation, whether in art, in production, or simply in life.

This quest for the new was ahead of the times, as we are well aware of today, and it embraced change, making it a characteristic both of the city and of Pomellato's personality. A company that has itself been capable of innumerable shifts in direction while maintaining the traits of spontaneity and independence on which it has relied since the start.

It is no accident that the project coincides with Pomellato's fiftieth anniversary, and thus helps us to rediscover the historical context out of which sprang the creativity and the attention to fine craftsmanship that has allowed Italian style to stand out on the international scene.

Italiana: Italy Through the Lens of Fashion, 1971-2001 looks at the changes in a country and a culture from a perspective that involves us all and turns us into protagonists through the choices we make. Our sponsorship of the exhibition is an expression of what Pomellato has believed and continues to believe in, without nostalgia. It is not a way of recalling the past of a brand we love, but of underlining our identity in the present.

Sabina Belli
Chief Executive Officer of Pomellato Group

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La Rosa has been supporting Italian fashion and excellence in Italian manufacturing since 1922. A leader in mannequin production, recognized for its aesthetic research and close ties with the world of fashion and creativity, it is a point of reference for luxury goods makers, fast fashion giants, curators and international museums, which choose it in part due to its exclusive archive of mannequins from 1922 to the present day. Its ability to make products to measure and the fact that its manufacturing is carried out entirely in Italy, ensuring a design capacity and level of quality that are hard to match, have carved out a role of primary importance for the company in the birth of ready-to-wear and the success of Italian fashion in the world. Gigi Rigamonti sculpted mannequins that represented the iconic style of Gianni Versace, Giorgio Armani, Gianfranco Ferré and Valentino in the windows of boutiques and their first flagship stores, paving the way for the company's international success.

La Rosa is an example of family business typical of Made in Italy: our family, at the helm of the company since the Seventies, has transformed an artisan reality into an industrialized company with an innovative production process and an integral approach to environmental sustainability which is unique in the industry.

La Rosa is honored to be one of the sponsors of Italiana and to support Maria Luisa Frisa and Stefano Tonchi in the staging of this new and important exhibition. Being part of Italiana means underlining the role that La Rosa has played in the emergence of the Made in Italy phenomenon and in the spread of the Italian style in the world. It is also an opportunity to reassert its esteem for the important work of cultural promotion of Italian fashion that Frisa and Tonchi are carrying out.

Mattia Rigamonti,
Managing Director La Rosa Mannequins 1922

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Flos is proud to pay tribute to fashion and the leading lights of Italian culture, by bringing cutting edge lighting design skills and technology to the exhibition *Italiana. L'Italia vista dalla moda 1971 - 2001*.

Lighting the displays curated by Maria Luisa Frisa and Stefano Tonchi, which feature a huge variety of content, was a delicate and stimulating task. In partnership with exhibition designers and artistic directors Selldorf Architects and Studio Baschera Brigolin Mocchi, Flos developed the lighting design for the exhibition and supplied the innovative, high performance systems and light sources used.

The UT Spot from the Flos Architectural collection represents a highly efficient and reliable choice, featuring a sophisticated, minimalist design mounted on a three-phase track system. The spotlight discretely enhances the texture, colour and manufacture of the outfits displayed on mannequins and favours the colour reproduction of the artworks, photographs, drawings and other objects on show, without altering or damaging them. Special accessories like lenses and anti-glare filters provide better optical control and comfortable light shaping by reducing glare to a minimum for visitors. All the lights have dimmers so that the light can be adjusted to the right level for each object or outfit and to enhance the atmosphere and theatricality of the exhibition design.

Established in 1962, Flos grew significantly in the extraordinary period on which the exhibition focuses, adopting lighting research and innovation as its corporate mission and cultural commitment, as well as making a significant contribution to the popularity and success of the *Made in Italy* system worldwide. Today, Flos is the only company to offer a universe of fully integrated lighting solutions. It exports to over 70 countries and has single brand stores in Rome, Milan, Paris, Lyons, New York, Stockholm and Hong Kong. Its creations have received numerous international awards and many are featured in the permanent collections of leading art and design museums.

Lighting Partner
FLOS

ITALIANA Italy Through the Lens of Fashion 1971 — 2001

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*A project conceived and directed by
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GENERAL INFORMATION

Venue

Palazzo Reale, Piazza Duomo 12, Milan

Dates

February 22 - May 6, 2018

Opening hours

Monday 2:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday 9:30 am to 7:30 pm
Thursday, Saturday 9:30 am – 10:30 pm

Exceptionally open on

Monday April 2 9:30 am - 7:30 pm
Monday April 30 9:30 am - 7:30 pm
The ticket office is open until one hour before closing

Information

palazzorealemilano.it
italiana.cameramoda.it
#italianaexhibition

Information and reservations

+39 02 89709022
(Mon-Fri 9 am-6 pm; Sat 9 am-1 pm)
ticketone.it

Tickets

Revenue from ticket sales will be handed over to CNMI Fashion Trust, which in turn donate the money to initiatives and projects of a social nature.

Individual ticket: € 5

Free admission for: Children under 6 years of age | Accompaniers for the disabled in need | One chaperone per group | Two chaperones per school trip | One chaperone and one guide for each FAI or Touring Club group | Members of the staff of the Soprintendenza ai Beni Architettonici in Milan | Official Members of ICOM | Tour guides (upon presentation of card showing license to practice) | Staff of the Servizio Mostre di Palazzo Reale (upon presenting card with name) | Members of the Commissione Vigilanza e Vigili del Fuoco (upon presenting card with name)

Journalists: The journalist who wishes to visit the exhibition for work purposes will be admitted free of charge, after they have collected their ticket directly at the ticket office, following a formal request to the exhibition press office, indicating the title of the publication and the day of the visit. Otherwise, for access to the exhibition journalists must purchase a ticket

Administration fee for advance ticket sales for groups and individuals

1,5 euros

Administration fee for advance ticket sales and ticketone

1 euro

Catalogue

Marsilio

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Cataloghi Marsilio

A book conceived and edited by
Maria Luisa Frisa, Gabriele Monti and Stefano Tonchi
two editions, in Italian and English
432 pp., format 22.5 x 29.5 cm, hardbound
exhibition price 48.00 euros, bookstore price 55.00 euros

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Stefano Tonchi

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The Italy of Objects

illustrations by Riccardo Miotto
texts by Bianca Cappello,
Vittoria Caterina Caratozzolo,
Ornella Cirillo, Elda Danese,
Eva Desiderio, Giusi Ferré,
Gianluca Lo Vetro,
Cristina Manfredi,
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Federica Vacca,
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Written Fashion

AN ANTHOLOGY OF ITALIAN
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