

Italian Design Week 2005

A Review of
Contemporary
Furnishings

November
12-19, 2005

When it comes to design, Italy is always on the cutting edge.

Italian Design Week – taking place simultaneously in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Vancouver – showcases Italian ingenuity in furnishings and design. Join us in celebrating all things beautiful and Italian from November 12 to 19, 2005.

This remarkable event is sure to delight your senses, broaden your horizons and stir your own inventiveness.

Take part in Italian Design Week by visiting participating showrooms near you in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal or Vancouver. For more information, visit www.italiandesignweek.com.



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Alitalia

AZURE



On the occasion of Italian Design Week, we are pleased to present two emerging designers, Raffaella Mangiarotti and Matteo Bazzicalupo of deepdesign.

by Josephine Minutillo

In the decade since partnering, Matteo Bazzicalupo and Raffaella Mangiarotti, collectively known as deepdesign, have tackled design challenges for clients as diverse as Coca Cola and Whirlpool. From their street-level studio in the heart of Milan, the pair heads a team of associates in developing everything from self-produced objects and furniture pieces to specially-commissioned, highly technical household products and appliances.

Bazzicalupo and Mangiarotti trained as architects during the late 80s and early 90s at the Politecnico di Milano, where both are also currently professors. It was in 1994, however, a year prior to graduation, that the like-minded designers were brought together, thanks in part to the late Almerico De Angelis, the renowned critic and founding member of the Italian Institute of Design.

What began as a loose alliance working together in design competitions eventually grew into friendship and mutual esteem. "We are good friends, and partners professionally only," the two point out. "That is probably the reason our collabora-

tion has lasted as long as it has," Bazzicalupo jokingly adds.

Conscious of their differing design sensibilities, most easily described as masculine versus feminine, Bazzicalupo and Mangiarotti unite technical and aesthetic considerations into objects that have universal appeal. It's an approach, the pair says, that is increasingly recognized and appreciated by their clients.

If there is one prevailing theme in their work though, it is something the pair refers to as organic minimalism. "We are really fascinated by organic forms and processes," Bazzicalupo explains. "In the architecture of Buckminster Fuller and Antoni Gaudi for instance, there is a 'structural intuition' that is born from structures that exist in nature. This same approach can be taken in design – a perfect economy of form where nothing is wasted."

The human body was the inspiration for deepdesign's Pulse, a concept design for a centripetal rather than centrifugal washing machine. Attempting to reproduce the beating of a heart and inflating

of lungs, it houses surprisingly few elements within its rounded, rigid shell.

The most obvious example of their 'organic minimalist' approach is Dandelion, a light fixture whose fine, transparent structure mimics the quiet weightlessness of its namesake flower. The pair are drawn to simple, straightforward technology. In their Steel Collection for Mandarin Duck, they use chemical machining to create a series of small office products from thin sheets of steel, which can be folded, cut and rolled, giving the objects their function and durability.

Deepdesign has moved beyond objects. Their portfolio includes exhibition spaces and installations, and the partners hope to one day express themselves architecturally as well.

A selection of work by deepdesign is included in the exhibit "Art of Italian Design" (October 8 to November 20) at the Megaron Plus gallery in the Athens Concert Hall in Athens, Greece.

Dandelion (2004) In Dandelion, high power LED's form the central light source while 31 clear plastic, cone-shaped diffusers make up the structure. Available as a ceiling or floor fixture in satin aluminum or clear white. Dandelion was included in the Design Yearbook 2005 edited by Marcel Wanders.

