

World Design Capital 2014 brings New Italian Design exhibition

The New Italian Design, a travelling exhibition, will come to South Africa as part of the World Design Capital 2014 events from 5-25 October 2014 at the Lookout, V&A Waterfront.

Presented by the Triennale Design Museum (mariapina.poledda@triennale.org), the show is a rich and multifaceted overview on contemporary Italian design, with 288 projects by 133 Italian designers curated by Silvana Annicchiarico and Andrea Branzi. The works range from self-produced prototypes to large-series products, from works of art to industrial artefacts.

With this exhibition, the organisers hope to give an overview of the contemporary Italian design in order to open the discussion about the profession and the role of the contemporary designer. They would like to create a bridge between Italy and South Africa to share experiences and knowledge.



Worldwide exhibition

It was presented for the first time at the Triennale di Milano in 2007 and then in Madrid (2007), Istanbul (2010), Beijing and Nantou (2012), Bilbao, San Francisco and Santiago, Chile (2013). The exhibition is the result of a survey on a national scale. Roughly, 600 designers entered the data bank, of which 140 were invited. The others presented themselves as candidates.

The selection committee was headed by Andrea Branzi and Silvana Annicchiarico, along with Alba Cappellieri, Arturo Dell'Acqua Bellavitis, Carmelo Di Bartolo, Anna Gili, Cristina Morozzi, Stefano Maffei, and Mario Piazza.

At the different venues, several institutional partners such as ITA/ICE - Italian Trade Agency, consulates, embassies, universities and design centres, have supported Triennale. In 2014, ITA is the main partner of Triennale in order to promote Italian design during World Design Capital Cape Town 2014.

First time in SA

The New Italian Design exhibition, curated by Silvana Annicchiarico and Andrea Branzi, will for the first time present Italian design in South Africa, explaining the links to the economic, political and technological changes that occurred over the past century. In those days, design culture aimed to create finished, functional products, whereas today - in what in a certain sense has become a 'mass profession' - design generates processes more than products, and appears primarily as a form of self-representation of the designer's ability to imagine, create and innovate.

Today's new designers are neither the heirs nor the pupils of the various Munaris, Magistrettis and Castiglioni. They are something else. Insisting on thinking of them as 'little' masters means to continue forcing them parasitically into twentieth-century paradigms that no longer hold true. It means doing an injustice to them, to their diversity and originality, as well as to the design system as a whole.

Finding one's way around the new, ever-changing world of Italian design, which is made of team effort and horizontal movements more than individual, vertical actions, requires no nostalgia for a golden age that has had its time. What is needed is a new ability to explore and take risks, and possibly even lose one's way, only to find it again.

The aim of the exhibition is to analyse, value and promote the new Italian creativity worldwide in order to share skills,

information, technical expertise, points of view and improve knowledge and discussion about this discipline strictly linked to our lives.

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