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Interiors & architecture
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Le FABBRICHE DEI SOGNI
AL TRIENNALE DESIGN MUSEUM

INdesign

ATTORNO ALLA TAVOLA
LED INNOVATION
La nuova età DELLA PIETRA

WITH COMPLETE ENGLISH TEXTS

Have a seat PLEASE DESIGN
KONSTANTIN GRČIČ

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ON THE COVER: ON THE COVER: AVUS, THE CONTRACT SEATING DESIGNED BY KONSTANTIN GRIC FOR PLANK, CONCEIVED AS A REWORKING OF THE CLASSIC LOUNGE CHAIR AND MADE WITH AVANT-GARDE TECHNOLOGIES BORROWED FROM THE AUTO AND SPORTING EQUIPMENT INDUSTRIES. THE BASE AND CHASSIS ARE IN PLASTIC; THE FILLER WITH COVERING IN NATURAL LEATHER, MADE WITH A SINGLE PIECE, IS IN FLAMEPROOF POLYURETHANE FOAM.

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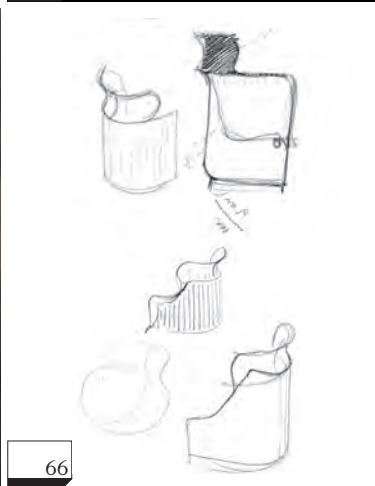
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*foto di Derek Swalwell
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28 WEST COAST GROVE:
materiali PREZIOSI,
continuità FLUIDA
DI GRANDI *ambienti* SOFT
CON *luci filtrate* E LA *natura*
CHE PARTECIPA
DA *protagonista*. SPAZIO
E COMFORT, INTIMITÀ
E PROTEZIONE, NEL *clima*
tropicale DI *singapore*

*progetto di Ong & Ong
design team Diego Molina e Maria Arango,
Camilo Pelaez*





IL PROFONDO PORTICATO DAVANTI AL SOGGIORNO.
IL PAVIMENTO È IN TRAVERTINO AVORIO E IL SOFFITTO
IN DOGHE DI LEGNO. DI FRONTE, IL GIARDINO AQUATICO KOI.
DIVANO CELLINI, TAVOLO E SEDIE **MODERN LIVING**.





I LISTELLI DI LEGNO FILTRANO LA LUCE DELL'AMPIO PORTICO, CHE OMBREGGIA IL SOGGIORNO E NE RADDOPPIA LO SPAZIO UTILE; LA PARETE VETRATA CONSENTE LA MASSIMA CONTINUITÀ VISIVA TRA INTERNO ED ESTERNO. COFFEE TABLE E PANCA PORTA TV DI **OM**.

U

nire il moderno al tradizionale, le tecnologie avanzate e quelle consuete, la meditazione metropolitana della spa domestica a quella millenaria del giardino d'acqua, abitato dalle coloratissime e gigantesche carpe giapponesi koi. A Singapore, teatro di un futuro ultramoderno nell'Estremo oriente antico e tropicale, si moltiplicano i segni di una nuova *koiné*, cioè di un nuovo linguaggio che comprende, include e mescola elementi di provenienza diversa. E spesso succede, come in questo caso, che dall'impasto di ingredienti disparati prenda forma una fisionomia originale e la *koiné* diventa una nuova lingua. D'altronde si sa, e capita di frequente, che le novità nascono quando le tradizioni perdono purezza e si corrompono e le idee scaturiscono da processi di contaminazione e ibridazione, di mescolanza, di sovrapposizione. L'architettura dello studio Ong&Ong si trova spesso a sperimentare una specie di nuovo stile internazionale adattato alle esigenze e ai gusti della clientela d'oriente. Nata nel 1972 a Singapore, la firma è cresciuta fino ad avere, oggi, oltre 500 impiegati distribuiti tra Singapore, Malesia, Vietnam, Cina, India e New York, ed è in



IL PORTICO DI INGRESSO, CON LA PAVIMENTAZIONE IN GRANITO NERO FIAMMATO E LUCIDATO; IL DIAFRAMMA, LA LUCE FILTRATA E LA CONTINUITÀ VISIVA TRA INTERNO ED ESTERNO SONO I TEMI PRINCIPALI DEL PROGETTO.

LA SCALA CON I PARAPETTI DI CRISTALLO, E IL PANNELLO IN LEGNO DI SANDALO, È UN VOLUME LIBERO CHE CONSENTE ALLA LUCE NATURALE DI ILLUMINARE LA PARTE PIÙ INTERNA DELLA CASA.



grado di eseguire, chiavi in mano, progetti di ogni tipo, dai parchi ai grattacieli, dai quartieri residenziali alle ristrutturazioni di lusso come quella di 28 West Coast Grove. Considerata la dimensione del gruppo, è sorprendente la cura che i progettisti di Ong riescono a dedicare ad alcune realizzazioni, raggiungendo una qualità che di solito si riserva agli studi di piccola e media dimensione dove l'attenzione al dettaglio, sviluppato anche grazie al rapporto diretto con clienti e fornitori, sono la regola e il tratto distintivo del loro lavoro.

Ong pratica dunque, insieme a altri protagonisti della vastissima scena orientale, un modernismo modificato innanzitutto per questioni climatiche, in cui la gestione delle correnti d'aria e della luce naturale diventa di primaria

importanza. Se infatti il modernismo classico ha riempito i Paesi caldi di costruzioni sigillate, dove la climatizzazione artificiale è necessaria per il cento per cento del tempo, oggi la sfida della sostenibilità, nei climi caldi e umidi di queste zone, impone di cercare alternative naturali e gli architetti tornano a studiare gli edifici tradizionali non più in termini vernacolari o storicisti, ma per riprodurre quei semplici accorgimenti tecnici, *low tech* e *low cost*. L'obiettivo è il controllo del microclima interno, attraverso la mitigazione dell'impatto solare e la gestione attenta della circolazione dell'aria per ottenere il raffrescamento naturale degli ambienti. Nella trasformazione della casa tradizionale di West Coast Grove i designer di Ong - Diego Molina e Maria Arango - hanno realizzato un progetto che non è più solo



confortevole ed elegante ma è anche decisamente più sostenibile. Il primo obiettivo del progetto è stato l'aumento consistente della luce naturale che, grazie all'apertura di numerosi lucernari, si diffonde all'interno filtrando attraverso gli schermi in legno di sandalo e, nel portico, scivolando negli interstizi della trama fine delle doghe di legno. Il piano terreno è interamente occupato dal grande soggiorno, dove si trova il tavolo da pranzo, con le pareti a soffietto che, quando sono completamente aperte, permettono di entrare in continuità perfetta con il laghetto "infinity kol" e il piccolo giardino. La zona più lussuosa è la suite padronale composta da camera da letto, stanza da bagno con ambiente dedicato alla vasca e palestra, portando all'interno della casa il comfort di una spa.



LA CUCINA INTERAMENTE SU DISEGNO DI ONG&ONG. IL BANCO È IN PIETRA "CAESAR". TUTTE LE LUCI DELLA CASA SONO DELLA SERIE RECOLITE DELL'AMERICANA **RICHARD'S LIGHTING**.

AL PIANO SUPERIORE LA CAMERA CON PAVIMENTO IN ASSI DI TEAK, LETTO KING SIZE E RIPIANI SU DISEGNO, MANTIENE UN RAPPORTO DIRETTO CON L'ESTERNO E CON IL GIARDINO SOTTOSTANTE.

PAGINA A FIANCO, LA GRANDE VASCA IN MARMO RINFORZATO DI PRODUZIONE **TOTO**, COME TUTTE LE RUBINETTERIE E I SANITARI. PAVIMENTO IN TRAVERTINO COLOR CREMA, IL VETRO SCHERMATO RIVELA IL GIARDINO PENSILE.



large windows formed by rectangular casements, climbing the slope and pouring into the multifunctional outdoor level sheltered by horizontal extensions of the roof. United but divided, the two lungs of this young work for young people breathe toward the west, where three semicircles formed by stone seating observe the figure of a wooden parallelepiped. A lookout turret and landmark, extending the gaze beyond the borders, offering a view below of the tents in which youngsters grow up. - **Caption pag. 10** The two pavilions conceived as a new gathering place inside the scholastic park, between the promontory, the canal and the woods. - **Caption pag. 12** The stepped interior facing toward the totally glazed facade, featuring rectangular casements, like an absolute frame for the view of Chilean nature. Overall view of the two volumes clad with plywood boards and interrupted by opens for light that underscore the continuity of the architectural wrapper. A two-storey space used as a workshop. Note the precise correspondence of the inner mastic skin, in blanched wood, with the exterior. - **Caption pag. 14** The multifunctional outdoor zone sheltered by horizontal extensions of the roof. The internal courtyard redesigns the figure of the architectural volumes and extends the gaze beyond its borders. On the facing page, three semicircles composed of stone seats, and a wooden parallelepiped that functions as an observation turret, form an uninhabited installation in the outdoor space. Lateral view of the two large wooden volumes in relation to the slope of the woods.

House and tower p. 16

project **Giorgio Zaetta**
photos **Alberto Ferrero**
text **Virginio Briatore**

In Rovinj, Istria, the restructuring of an 18th-century stone house, fully maintaining the original walls. No new structures contaminate the approach. The sober tower dwelling plays at revealing history and concealing technology. For those arriving by land, the best view of the tower house comes by descending from the Mons Rubineus, the 'red mountain' that seems to be the source of the name of the city, Rovinj, now in Croatia. The house, built on what was a fortified island until the 19th century, is a typical local structure with a vertical layout to take advantage of the space of the lot. Now known as Maison M, it has four levels facing the sea, and functions as a summer home for a French couple. The restructuring work supervised by the architect Giorgio Zaetta makes it a unique, minimalist space, where the design effort avoids altering the historical image. The excellent results are also due to the extraordinary relationship of trust established over the course of two years between the architect and the client. Giorgio Zaetta, with a degree from the IUAV in Venice, a native of Feltre, where his office is located, knows this coastline very well, thanks to his passion for sailing. The renovation project began by cleaning up and protecting the original walls, adding no new structures. An opening for light runs along the entire perimeter of the slabs, as if they were independent of the stone masonry that rises from the rocky coast to the roof. To stabilize the tower and improve its seismic resistance the original wooden slabs have been reinforced with lightened concrete, while metal reinforcements have been inserted in the thick stone walls, then sealed with ecological lime. The almost obsessive attention to detail focuses on the shiny finishings in stainless steel. The cantilevered staircase, supported by a reticular steel structure, is concealed by the paneling of the technical spaces on all levels. The risers and steps, in stainless steel with a thickness of just 1 cm, have a special interlock to permit assembly without welding. The handrail shifts from a rectangular to a square section, always offering a perfect grip. The electrical controls are hidden, set into the steel of the sides of the stoves, or inserted in the tables and bookcases. The rigorous linear design of the interiors is varied by the contrast between light and dark tones. At the level of the sea, accessed directly by means of a boat, an outdoor space has been created with a sink and a barbecue area for cleaning and cooking fish, closed by a grate in Cor-ten steel. This level is entirely set aside for guests, with a large kitchen that has been custom designed, like the furnishings, while the chairs and stools have been selected from the Luna series produced by Gandia Blasco. Excavation of the rocks by the sea, of limited depth to avoid penetrating below the water line and protected by a steel basin, contains the shaft for a special elevator that serves the entire house. The entrance to the house, with a wooden door from the early 1900s, restored and kept in its original color, is located along the Santa Croce road, and leads to the ground floor that contains the main kitchen and living area, opening to a balcony overlooking the water. This balcony replaces its predecessor, made at the end of the 1800s in masonry, with a new reinforced concrete slab and a light Cor-ten railing. The kitchen with its furnishings and table have been made by Italian craftsmen in oak and stainless steel, all designed by Giorgio Zaetta, who having worked for many years in the studio of Luciano Bertoni in Treviso has in-depth knowledge of the furnishings system. This is undoubtedly the warmest space, in which the minimalism of the technical furnishings is balanced out by the wooden table and the seating by Hans J. Wegner, produced by Carl Hansen, and the Hanahana planter by Driade, designed by Kazuyo Sejima. The floors are in pressed cement, with micro-lighting using LEDs concealed in the border. Passing to the first floor one enters an atmosphere that is clearly more private, for study, work or relaxation. The open space is equipped with a large desk and custom cabinets; the bookcase has been designed to conceal the books on the back, becoming a support for a video installation by an Italian artist, while the TV screen is hidden when not in use

by a low white container from which it can emerge. The second floor (the fourth starting from sea level) is set aside for the bedroom area, with a fine view of the roof with its wooden beams and trusses, now painted in pearl gray, windows of different heights and flooring in rigatino oak, selected plank by plank prior to cutting. The bed, with headboard and shelves, is in white painted wood, with a custom design, like all the bath accessories in DuPont Corian®. From the tub you can see the Adriatic, and realize how good it is to live, study and rest, soothed by the sound of the sea and the thousand stories the shores, small streets, churches and stones of the old town tell to those who know how to listen. - **Caption pag. 16** Sunset seen from the balcony facing the sea, on the entrance level, with a wooden door on the opposite side, made in the early 1900s and now restored (facing page). An evocative interior view. Zelight Lamp by Miki Astori for Driade. - **Caption pag. 18** The custom kitchen is equipped with built-in appliances by Miele, and has a Boffi exhaust hood. In all the spaces the micro-lighting, with LEDs concealed at the edge of the concrete floors, bathes the walls with light. The ceiling lamps are the Model O94 System by Mario Nanni for Viabizzuno. Below, the tower-house seen from the sea. On the facing page, the dining area forms a continuum with the kitchen. The custom table by Giorgio Zaetta is accompanied by seating by Hans J. Wegner produced by Carl Hansen. In the background, the Hanahana planter by Kazuyo Sejima for Driade. Below, the living area on the first floor, with the custom bookcase, the Polder divan designed by Hella Jongerius and the Eames Lounge Chair, all produced by Vitra. The video installation is a work by the Italian artist Luca Rento. - **Caption pag. 20** The floor at sea level is entirely set aside for guests, with a large custom kitchen and armchairs and stools from the Luna series produced by Gandia Blasco. - **Caption pag. 21** Above, another view of the convivial kitchen island for guests. To the side, the cantilevered staircase that does not interfere with the original stone masonry, and is supported by a concealed reticular structure in steel. The risers and steps in stainless steel have a thickness of just 1 cm and a special interlock for assembly without welding. The handrail shifts from a rectangular to a square section for a perfect grip. Raggio built-in lamps by Claudio Silvestrin for Viabizzuno. To the right, the outdoor space by the sea, with a stone sink and a barbecue, connected to the guest kitchen. - **Caption pag. 22** Below, the windows at different heights frame views of the sea from every corner of the bedroom zone. A soft atmosphere with wooden beams and trusses, painted in pearl gray, and floors in rigatino oak. The bathroom forms a spatial whole with the zone of the master bedroom: fixtures from the Link series by Flaminia, with Vola faucets and Spoon XL tub by Benedini Associati for Agape. Shower and tub from the Minimal collection by Boffi, electric radiator by Thermal Technology. The custom parts are in DuPont Corian®. In the background, the bed with headboard and shelves in white painted wood. On the facing page, the landing of the elevator on the upper level, for the bedroom area with bath.

tropical mix p. 24

project **Ong & Ong**
design team **Diego Molina and Maria Arango, Camilo Pelaez**
photos **Derek Swalwell**
text **Alessandro Rocca**

28 West Coast Grove: precious materials, fluid continuity of large soft spaces with filtered light, nature that plays a leading part. Space and comfort, intimacy and protection, in the tropical climate of Singapore. Combining the modern and the traditional, advanced and habitual technologies, the metropolitan meditation of the domestic spa with the age-old atmosphere of the water garden, inhabited by gigantic Japanese carp. In Singapore, home of an ultramodern future in the ancient and tropical Far East, the signs of a new *koiné* seem to multiply, a new language that includes and mixes elements of different origin. As often happens, the mixture takes on an original physiognomy, and the *koiné* becomes a new tongue. After all, we know that new things often appear when traditions lose their purity, and ideas arise from processes of contamination and crossbreeding, mixtures, overlaps. The architecture of the studio Ong&Ong often experiments with a sort of new international style suited to the needs and tastes of oriental clients. Founded in 1972 in Singapore, the studio has grown and now has over 500 staffers in Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, China, India and New York. It can handle projects of all kinds, from start to finish, parks and skyscrapers, housing developments and luxury renovations like that of 28 West Coast Grove. Considering the size of the firm, it is surprising how much care the Ong designers manage to put into certain projects, achieving levels of quality usually seen only in works of small and medium-sized offices where attention to detail, also developed in direct relationships with clients and suppliers, can be a rule and distinguishing characteristic of the work. Ong practices, then, together with other architects on the vast oriental scene, a modernism that has been adapted above all to questions of climate, where the management of air currents and natural light become true priorities. While classic modernism filled warm countries with sealed constructions, where artificial climate control was required 100% of the time, today the challenges of sustainability, in the warm, humid zones like these, impose a search for natural alternatives, and architects have gone back to studying traditional buildings, not out of interest in vernacular and historical styles, but to reproduce simple low-tech, low-cost solutions. The objective is control of the interior microclimate through mitigation of the sun's impact and careful management of air flow to cool spaces naturally. In the transformation of the traditional house on West Coast Grove the designers of Ong – Diego Molina and Maria Arango – have created

a project that is no longer just comfortable and elegant, but also decidedly more sustainable. The main goal was to increase natural lighting, through the opening of many skylights, letting it enter the entire house through screens of sandalwood. In the portico it slides through the spaces in the dense pattern of wooden slats. The ground floor is entirely filled by a large living area, with a dining table and folding partitions that can be opened to create a perfect sense of continuity with the "infinity Koi" pond and the small garden. The most luxurious area is the master suite, composed of the bedroom, a bath with areas for a hot tub and fitness space. - **Caption pag. 25** The deep portico in front of the living area. The floor is in ivory Travertine, the ceiling in slats of wood. In front, the Koi aquatic garden. Cellini divan, table and chairs from Modern Living. - **Caption pag. 27** The wooden slats filter the light from the large portico, adding shade to the living area and doubling its useful space; the glass wall offers maximum indoor-outdoor visual continuity. Coffee table and TV bench by OM. - **Caption pag. 29** The entrance portico, paved with black polished sunburst granite; the diaphragm, the filtered light, the visual indoor-outdoor continuity are the main design themes. The staircase with glass parapets and the panel in sandalwood form a free volume that allows natural light to penetrate the innermost zone of the house. - **Caption pag. 30** The kitchen, entirely custom designed by Ong&Ong. The counter is in 'Caesar' stone. All the lights in the house are from the Recolite series by the American company Richard's Lighting. On the upper level the bedroom has teak flooring, a kingsize bed and custom shelving, and maintains a direct relationship with the outside and the garden. Facing page: the large reinforced marble tub produced by Toto, like all the faucets and bath fixtures. Floor in cream-colored Travertine; the screened glass reveals the roof garden.

Italian sign p. 32

project **Stefano Gallizioli and Francesca Simen**
with the collaboration of **Giovanna Cabibbe**
photos **Gionata Xerra**
text **Antonella Boisi**

At the gates of Milan, a house with a decisive design featuring extroverted spaces, materic-expressive impact and attention to detail, for a domestic setting of refined rigor and soft comfort. Without concessions to seductive, ostentatious gestures. "I want to feel a desire to get back home, where I can relax". This expectation of the client for a 300 m2 house on a single level (space doubled by combining two apartments in a newly constructed building) has been fulfilled in a convincing way by Stefano Gallizioli and Francesca Simen, partners of the Milan-based studio ANG 42, who together with the client have developed a custom project: a welcoming yet extroverted shell, a container with definition but without ostentation, ready to be subdivided without losing the impression of unified continuity, and bringing the aspects of furnishings and decor straight into the architectural sphere. "We worked on the geometric definition of the interior space", the designers explain, "following the layout suggested by the structure of the building and its openings. So the architectural composition has a symmetrical approach that underlines the itinerary of the two perpendicular perspectives, developing the living area in the sequence entrance-living-dining along the main axis and the kitchen-dining-studio along the crosswise axis, with a 'custom' breakdown of the compositional pattern for the bedroom area". This reworking of the internal layout based on orthogonal views that reflect the specific design culture of Milanese modernism, based on a balance between luxury and understatement, lightness and sturdiness, a single chromatic sign of reference of neutral tones with rich materials (oak floors, white stucco walls, pale stone in the bathrooms, leather for the fixed furnishings) blends the various spaces. With discreet hedonism, lit up by a series of contrasting details of great expressive impact, like niches painted in glossy black, the chromium-plated custom handles and the black stone of the kitchen counters. The fluidity of the space of the house, the luminosity of the spaces and an essential atmosphere can be immediately perceived at the entrance, which after a small niche set aside as a corner for reading, opens to the living area, the place of socializing par excellence, that communicates in turn with the dining zone and the large, convivial kitchen and study. The only separation between these zones is represented by full-height doors inserted in the wall paneling, which permit the option of closing to create functional subdivisions when required. On the opposite side the bedroom zone is more private, in a specular design but one more highly developed in independent episodes, integrating two large bedrooms with closets and baths. There are no concessions to seductive ostentation. The approach reflects the balanced collaboration between architecture and design, combining materials and details with great technical mastery and aesthetic sensitivity. Along with selected furnishings and lighting, a sort of cultured anthology. In keeping with the finest tradition of Italian interior architecture. - **Caption pag. 33** Facing page: the living area seen from the entrance, with the Happy chaise longue by Flexform in the foreground. View of the kitchen. The seating from the Bertoia Side Chair collection by Knoll International join a custom table in solid oak with stainless steel structure. - **Caption pag. 34** The TV-fireplace wall in ebony stone, sand-blasted, with upper segment in plasterboard finished with smooth stucco. Flexform chaise longue, Nodus carpet, table with wheels by Gae Aulenti (1980) for FontanaArte. In the drawing, planimetric of the apartment, 300 m2 on a single level. The custom kitchen is made by Boffi, with matte white lacquer doors and a counter in black Zimbabwe granite, like the polished floor. - **Caption pag. 35** The dining area. Table and chairs by Cassina, chandelier by Gino Sarfatti for Flos, 1958. The custom furnishings in oak and black lacquer

form a sort of boiserie, in harmony with the blanched oak flooring. - **Caption pag. 37** Facing page: the closet organized with custom full-height wardrobes, whose doors are clad in sand-tone leather with contrasting stitching, featuring built-in chromium-plated handles. Spotlights by Buzzi & Buzzi. Construction details of the surfaces of the shelves and the wardrobe door with built-in handles. One of the two bedrooms, looking toward the closet, accessorized with custom cabinets in oak and leather. The doors closing the room are inserted at the back of the cabinet. - **Caption pag. 38** A guest bathroom. Agape washstand, custom mirror and soap niche in polished stainless steel. Walls finished with smoothed stucco. Below, detail of one of the main bathrooms. Sink counter and walls are in rusticated and polished Caliza Capri stone. The custom cabinet in Indian rosewood has a top that opens to reveal a small container for make-up. Vola faucets. Facing page: view of the studio space. Custom oak cabinet, chair by BPA International, frames by Gennaro Avallone. All the custom furnishings were made by Arredamenti Ripamonti of Cantù; stucco wall treatment by Pilotta Group, Varese.

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text **Francesco Massoni**
photos **Fabrizio Marchesi**

Enlightened, visionary, 'paradoxical' entrepreneurs, lovers of risk and breaking the rules. The ones who have generated the Italian Design phenomenon, to whom Alberto Alessi dedicates the exhibition "The Dream Factories", the fourth edition of the Triennale Design Museum. Andrea Branzi tried psychoanalysis, with accomplices Peter Greenaway and Italo Rota (The Seven Obsessions of Italian Design, 2007). Then Antonio Citterio illustrated its industrial and extra-industrial versions (Serie Fuori Serie, 2009), followed by Alessandro Mendini who turned it all upside-down, together with Pierre Charpin, affectionately investigating repressed things in a generous 'transdisciplinary' excursion (Quali cose siamo, 2010). The subject matter? Design Made in Italy, of course. Now it's the turn of Alberto Alessi to answer the fateful question "What is Italian design?" His reflections give rise to the fourth edition of the Triennale Design Museum, with the exhibition "The Dream Factories" installed at the Palazzo della Triennale in Milan, with exhibit design by the Catalan designer Martí Guixé. The title already indicates the idea that the Italian Design phenomenon would never have spread around the world had it not been for the 'factories' with their proud leaders, the 'paradoxical businessmen', as Alessi calls them, or 'captains courageous', as Silvana Annichiarico, director of the museum, puts it. Because everything started in these factories, workshops, basements, garages where entrepreneurs with a vision, often designers themselves, more often pestered by architects and designers impatient to transfer their creativity into innovative products, gave form to a dream. A dream that was anything but fleeting, if we consider the fact that some of these illustrious personalities were already on hand at the first edition of the Salone del Mobile in Milan, now celebrating its 50th birthday. Cosmit, the fair's organizer, is one of the supporters of the new interpretation of the Triennale Design Museum, in fact. But why, specifically, the title "The Dream Factories"? "Because the challenge posed by the Triennale", the curator explains, "was a chance to consolidate and express, in greater depth, my personal vision of the phenomenon, giving it a definition I had invented in 1997 for Alessi; but I am convinced that it can be extended to all my businessmen and colleagues of the 'Factories of Italian design'. The expression can be interpreted in different ways. On the one hand, we might think about the histories of these companies as the fulfillment of an individual entrepreneurial dream. On the other, and this is my take on it, the central element of the activity of these factories is the fact that they address the imagination of the public: we businessmen, together with the creative talents who work for us, try to provide an expression for that imagination". A dream, then, but perhaps something more as well, an entrepreneurial, creative, contagious, fertile energy that advances, feeding on intuitions and emotions. Is this the right recipe to give new driving force to Italian industry? "Only by operating in the dimension of the dream, grasping the imagination of the audience, can the industry of durable consumer goods - because that is what we are talking about - conquer new margins for growth. A lesson that cinema and fashion have shown they understand, but it is still not fully grasped in our sector", Alessi says. Maybe this is why he has decided to exhibit no more than about fifty 'factories', which put together account for sales of about 1600 million euros each year, while the total of the macrosystem of Italian furnishings approached sales of 21 billion last year. So this is a niche, an avant-garde, an elite, which in spite of its size knows how to experiment, to take risks, welcoming borderline languages and practices, applying formal and expressive codes with archetypal matrices, rooted in collective memory and imagination, transferring and inventing new technologies, developing unconventional models of communication and conquering audiences and markets at all latitudes. To narrate and illustrate all this, Alberto Alessi has gathered and organized reflections on the controversial meaning of the term 'design' and the variety of languages and schools that represent it, investigating the functional, semantic and symbolic role of objects in the society of consumption, but above all identifying those who in this wider