



the architecture & interior design international magazine | middle east

DESIGN BLENDING FORM AND FUNCTION

Focus:
New trends
in Italian design



Special
Ten years
of Compasses

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Ivan Paradisi
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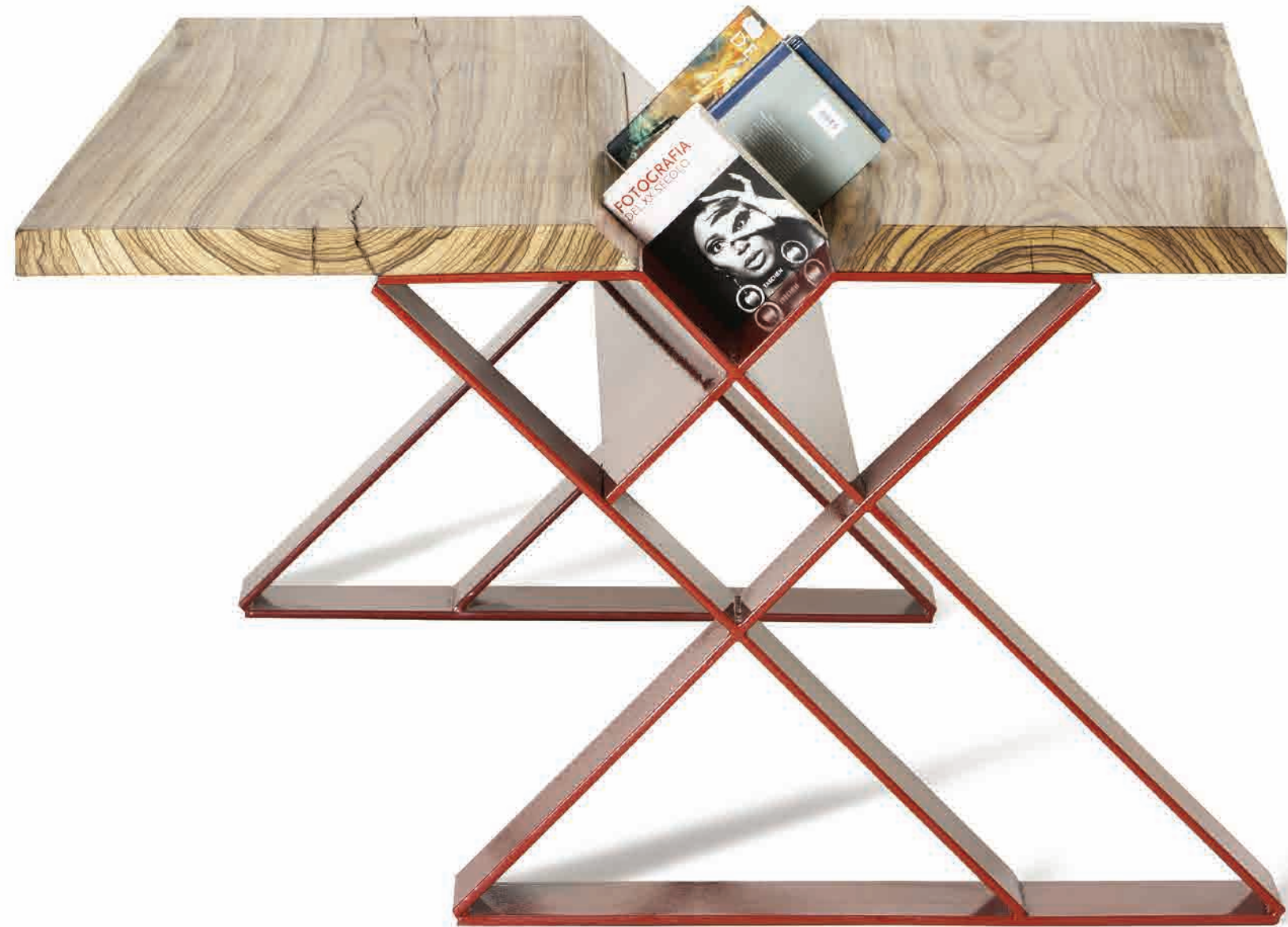
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A[C]ross design: Mario Pagliaro's philosophy



All the images are courtesy of Mario Pagliaro



Mario Pagliaro's approach to design may be fully synthesized in Bruno Munari's quote «Progress is achieved simplifying, not complicating». Certainly, fulfilling such a purpose requires a hard work and a long research process over time which totally involves the designer's mind and lifestyle. Sitting at his desk as an architect, Pagliaro's thinking flows directly through his pencil. Throughout his sketches one can perfectly retrace every step which finally leads to an accurate definition of his creations. Practicality and aesthetics are the two main features his works aim to, which are actually accomplished, thus together with a good dose of personality that marks every piece of design he brands. Mario Pagliaro was born in Naples in 1981. Growing in the beautiful island of Ischia, in deep contact with nature, he slowly developed the appreciation for simple things which over time stimulated his creativity and capability of "arranging", taking the best from



them. As a child he has always stood out for his extreme inventiveness which he directly poured into his notebooks, designing any fantastic conception of reality. It was soon clear that he would have become an architect. His university studies in fact gave him all the necessary instruments and skills in order to be able to shape every idea of his. Today he has reached a total balance between creativity and competence.

Pagliaro puts into design all his energy, his heart and soul. It is not just a matter of making objects, but of transposing his idea of daily living into them, molding materials – especially wood – with his own hands: «I orient my research in creating the right object rather than inventing new necessities. A fair price for a real need». All his pieces definitely represent the result of this approach. Furthermore they are all ennobled by a fine personality and recognizability which however never overwhelm their function: «These products are designed according to the aesthetics given by reason, therefore without any style. The final shape of the object is the outcome of a design process which aims at solving all the components of a project in an optimal way».

One of Pagliaro's most unique creations is the Rotating translating Cross. That is a patented joint which allows to assemble and disassemble – without the use of any other utensils – a piece of furniture made up of one single material and cut throughout one single technique, thus lending to it at the same time a sort of dynamic touch. Obviously he could have used a metallic hinge to achieve the same purpose, but that of course wouldn't have provided the same aesthetic idea he wanted to suggest through his work. Apart from the design effect obtained, the advantages of this joint given by the ease of assembling the pieces of furniture are efficaciously shown in videos on his website. The idea is applied to a wide range of products, from tables to stools, from chairs to desks and from bookcases to chaise lounges, all characterized by the same, clear design.

Another interesting piece of design is the Gym Ball; that is a fauteuil which offers a healthy sitting to customers. It is made of a simple, yellow steel structure to which two gym balls have been fixed with the use of a red wire. The idea came from the observation



of daily life experiences, as always in Pagliaro's work: one day he was visiting a friend of his, a graphic designer, who was sitting on a simple gym ball while working at the computer. In fact, his friend's orthopedist had prescribed it to him so that he could keep a correct posture while working. However that could have been made more comfortable, and from that challenging thought came the idea. Pagliaro immediately bought one of these plastic balls and started the creative process. Moreover, the reuse of an object already widely produced and commercialized, offered the advantage of avoiding resorting to the tailoring of pillows, the disposal of which one day would be quite difficult. So practical needs, design and sustainability are kept together in the Gym Ball. However, one of the most famous pieces of design is the Wheelbarrow. Inspired as in the previous case by this “ready-made” trend, Pagliaro created a modern reinterpretation of a rocking chair. A simple metallic wheelbarrow supported by an S-shaped iron element allows to gently swing while sitting. As in all his works, also this chair is easily disassembled simply removing the three bolts holding together the two basic elements.

The Honeycomb Wall instead, definitely represents Pagliaro's versatility. Far from keeping anchored to one single material, in this piece of design, cardboard is used to devise a system of partitions, easily movable, to create spaces of any shape or dimension. This system is formed by a base of waterproof MDF which supports alveolate mould resistant cardboard “beams”. No adhesives are used, in fact these are assembled inserting the beams onto wooden elements that bind them together. Honeycomb is also fire resistant, as requested by safety regulations.

Starting from people's common needs and using objects of daily use, these modern pieces of design are capable of holding together usefulness and practicality, without renouncing to aesthetics. All the elements and materials used, which range from wood, to metal up to cardboard, are transformed with simplicity, yet brilliance, into captivating objects, the common trait of which definitely is their designer's imprint. Mario Pagliaro certainly succeeds in bringing the Italian renowned creativity to a higher level right into the future.

