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PROJECTS & DOCUMENTS

Interview to Mauro Vismara (MAEKO)

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Born from the ability to observe and look to the future, MAEKO was born in 1998 from Mauro Vismara's need to look beyond the times and in full expansion of new handmade fibers to return to a naturalness that at the time was already being forgotten.

The well-being of individuals is an integral part of Mauro Vismara's holistic vision, who stops working on people's bodies in order to provide them with the best possible textile substrates for their comfort and health. This professional transformation, even though it seems distant, is supported by the same philosophy and ethics, of safeguarding the environment and its territory, and the deep desire to preserve people and their millenary culture.

MAEKO promotes bio-based yarns for the textile and fashion sectors, but also interiors and architecture, where it shows the various dimensions of manufacturers and carries out experiments that highlight their main assets. MAEKO presents itself today as a vertical industry capable of executing and, above all, controlling and certifying the entire production cycle. The following logic of sustained ethics is integrated with the environment, starting from the choice of fibers to spinning, dyeing and weaving. The company is at the technological and social forefront, presenting products of high technical quality and social responsibility.

Q: How was the MAEKO idea born and for what needs?

A: Our business was born in 1998 when I understood the characteristics and possibilities given by hemp, dedicating myself to its cultivation with the aim of extracting fibers to create yarns and fabrics. When we started we were pioneers and visionaries and we had already noticed an interest in the fashion sector, which needed to grow in a more sustainable way, to raise awareness.

Q: How is MAEKO organized?

A: In small steps, MAEKO has transformed itself into a verticalized company with the entire textile production line. We made investments in agriculture to be able to control the quality of the fibers and cultivation. That's what we needed on our territory, with a spinning, weaving and dyeing process, for hemp, nettle and other fibers.



At the moment we are dedicating ourselves both to the intermediate phase, from the field to the transformation into fiber, and to the continuous research to use all the waste to work in a circular economy. Our search for raw materials is directed and prefers to use fibers that are closer and closer to us to decrease the production of CO2.

In 2019 we acquired the historic worsted spinning company Filarte which has become an integral part of MAEKO, incorporating the entire Filarte team and all its know-how.

Q: Taking into account the current challenges imposed by the emergence of Covid-19, how does MAEKO think it can help companies in their responses and what are the new chances for fashion?

A: The pandemic emergency did not create major problems, on the contrary we have noticed a greater awareness of respect for the environment.

MAEKO's business develops on the experience gained over the years, giving each customer the opportunity to create their own product. We create an exclusive relationship with the clients, being able to let them choose about: the composition, the weave of the fabric and the desired color.

The constant goal is to enhance the natural characteristics of the fibers, ennobling them through the use of alternative finishing treatments, to increase the tactile characteristics without distorting their naturalness.

Q: What does the transparency of companies mean today as a key-factor for the final user's consciousness?

A: Without a doubt, the certifications we follow are an important step for the transparency and awareness of our customers. They may buy a product that complies with all the sustainability rules, knowing that environmental protection is strongly certified. MAEKO in collaboration with Colorsystem, has developed a special space dedicated to the Dyeing phases; a space that is useful and mandatory for us to spread widely the use of GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard) certified dyes. This activity aims to maintain strict control of the entire production chain and to observe the directives dictated by the REACH Regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals is a European Union).

Q: Territorial production and its sustainability are among the greatest challenges for companies at the moment. Companies produce in national territories, use non-renewable local resources such as energy, water and raw material to export the product exclusively abroad; leaving locally waste and polluted common resources, with externalities to the community. What is the current role of companies in the social, cultural and identity valorization of their territorial geography?

A: Today, through dynamic and constant growth, MAEKO produces high quality natural fabrics with a controlled supply chain, participating in the development of a sustainable economy that is friendly to nature and respectful of the environment and the individuals. MAEKO produces many of the fibers it uses and in the most sustainable and organic possible way. It works in a circular process, reusing production waste

and leftovers and most of its agricultural production, constantly looking for ways to reduce the environmental impact on the local territory and community.

The yarns of hemp, nettle, soy, crabyon, bamboo, linen, organic cotton, yak and certified wool, are, some of them, processed by expert technicians in a historic weaving mill in the province of Turin; the other ones are certified production chains by GOTS. Italian craftsmanship is part of our culture, identity and our manual skills and the way we live. MAEKO wants to pass on ancient knowledge as a legacy and in custody to future generations, without sacrificing innovation. Sustainable local development is absolutely in our interest, even if, unfortunately, we realize that some types of fibers are difficult, if not impossible, to cultivate or raise. MAEKO's business develops on the experience gained over the years, giving each customer the opportunity to create their own product in a more sustainable way.

Q: What will be the future in the vision of MAEKO?

A: Our goal is to create an even more dynamic and diversified structure which is the exact opposite of large industries, where it is very difficult to make changes in production, if not impossible. This dyeing department, for example, is aimed at focusing attention on the services most requested by the companies themselves, such as the Lab Dip, an indispensable tool for studying samples, or dyes for more limited productions, starting from a few meters. The research for new forms of conscious production that respect personal experience and the materials offered by the territory, is MAEKO's mission for the construction of a better future.

The transparency of production, the respect for the environment and people has always been what distinguishes us from most international textile productions. We want to continue to improve our work to safeguard the territory and our techniques and traditions, ensuring that, in the midst of increasingly pressing globalization, our identity is not lost and can continue to guide future generations.

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V

BIOGRAPHIES

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Before she studied Design and Communication at University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli - Department of Architecture and Industrial Design (DADI) and successively she finished her studies with a Master's degree in Design for Innovation at Department of Civil Engineering Design Construction and Environment (DICDEA) in March 2018.

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Outside of the academic environment, she is a designer enjoying philosophy and politics readings from all over the world, with a strong attention to their related languages, be they carved in stone or posted on social media.

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Gina Nadal Fernandez

Gina Nadal Fernandez is a final year PhD student in the Design Department at Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University. Her doctoral research is by practice, and investigates how emotional experience can be designed into digital jacquard woven textiles during a co-design process by using digital coding.

She takes a multidisciplinary approach that embraces design theory, textiles, digital coding, consumer behaviour and mass customisation in her weaving practice using a TC-1 loom and natural yarns.

Gina has presented her research at the PhD by Design workshop at the Design Research Society Conference 2018, at the Global Fashion Conference 2018 and 2020. She is also a member of the Textile Society and Design Research Society. She holds a master's degree in Fashion Graphics from Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University that looked at the relationship between digital jacquard textile practice and emotional value using digital coding.

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Debora Giorgi

PhD, Architect, she is a Design Researcher at the Dipartimento di Architettura DIDA of the University of Florence. Since 1991 she works on Sustainable Local Development and the social implications of the project starting from the Cultural Heritage. For over 20 years she worked in projects in Ethiopia, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen, Jordan, Haiti, with the most important national and international donors – as WHC - UNESCO, UNCCD, European Commission. Since 2011 she has been collaborating with the DIDA UNIFI especially in projects around Maghreb countries and in the social field promoting Social Design projects and workshops using co-design methodologies. She is professor of Service Design at DIDA UNIFI, professor of Design for Cultural Heritage in the License Course in DesignS at Ecole Euro-Méditerranéenne d'Architecture Design et Urbanisme de l'Université Euro-Méditerranéenne de Fès EMADU – UEMF in Morocco and visiting professor in some universities in Mediterranean countries.

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Beata Hamalwa founded Fashion Design Diploma at College of the Arts, Windhoek, Namibia, and Fashion Design Certificate at City Varsity, Cape Town, South Africa, and co-founded the Heroes Primary School - all became imperative in employment creation. Her versatile educational background from Poland, Namibia and South Africa in arts and fashion design has provided a valuable foundation for her career in several art training programmes. She holds a Master of Technology in Design. Her Master's thesis, titled 'Beadwork and its impact on contemporary fashion in South Africa,' investigates the cultural wealth contribution to decolonizing fashion. She believes that modern arts and trends do not imply the demise of indigenous culture. Her latest endeavour is to investigate the possibility of sustainability in the current fashion industry in Namibia, which led me to PhD research at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. As an artist, Hamalwa has showcased at premier fashion events in Namibia, Portugal, Germany, France, Poland, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Botswana, and Reunion Island.

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Degree in Textile Engineering at University Center of FEI (1987), Master in Mechanical Engineering at State University of Campinas (2001), Ph.D in Mechanical Engineering at State University of Campinas (2006) and Postdoctorate in Design at University of Lisbon (2016).

She started her academic career in 1995, was the coordinator of the undergraduation course in Textile Engineering at University Center of FEI (2001 to 2006), was the coordinator of the undergraduation course in Textile and Fashion at University of Sao Paulo (2010 to 2012), was the coordinator of the Master's Degree in Textile and Fashion at University of Sao Paulo (2012 to 2016).

She has been a professor at the School of Arts, Sciences and Humanities since 2006 and has been an associate professor at the University of São Paulo since 2011. She researches in the areas of textile materials, knitting technology and textile design.

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She has experience in Mechanical Engineering with an emphasis on Mechanical Design and in Textiles and Fashion with an emphasis on product design methodology, sustainable product development, Brazilian natural fibers, knitting technology and Industry 4.0. She is currently Assistant Professor II at Nossa Senhora do Patrocinio University and Coordinator of the Fashion Design Course.

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Chiara Scarpitti

Chiara Scarpitti, designer and PhD, is Researcher at the Department of Architecture and Industrial Design of the University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli". Since 2006 she has been working in the field of design and jewellery at an international level, obtaining numerous awards and exhibiting her works in museums and galleries including Triennale Design Museum in Milan, MAD Museum of Art and Design in New York and HOW Design Center in Shanghai.

Member of the Board of Directors of AGC - Association for Contemporary Jewellery, she taught jewellery design at IED Moda in Milan and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Naples.

In 2018 she has published the monograph "Multipli Singolari. Contemporary jewellery beyond digital" with ListLab, Barcellona, in double edition (ita/eng), and in 2020 "Oggetti pensiero. Storie di design, organismi e nature plurali" with Lettera Ventidue, Siracusa. Her theoretical research is characterized by a speculative hybridization between digital technologies and manufacturing excellence linked to contemporary design and fashion.

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Degree in chemistry from the University of Mogi das Cruzes (2004), Master in Industrial Processes from the Technological Research Institute of the State of São Paulo (2013) and Chemical Production Engineer from Faculdades Oswaldo Cruz (2017). He is currently responsible for the Technical Textiles and Protective Products Laboratory and for the Shoes and Protective Products Laboratory of the Technological Research Institute of the State of São Paulo.

He mainly works on the following topics: technical fabrics, characterization tests and performance evaluation of textiles and PPE's, weathering and microencapsulation applied to textiles.

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Renato Stasi

Renato Stasi has been involved in the creation of clothing and accessories collections for the fashion segment for almost thirty years, as a designer and responsible for the development of the collection, he has worked for several companies including the LVMH Group, Redwall, Hettabretz. He is an adjunct professor at the DIDA - UNIFI Department of Architecture, in the CDL in Industrial Design and CDLM Fashion System Design. Lecturer at IED, where he is the coordinator of two three-year courses. He has carried out supplementary teaching activities at the Politecnico di Milano for several years.

He has held seminars and workshops in various universities. Stasi is Coordinator of the Steering Committee of the Master's Degree Course in Fashion System Design of the University of Florence - School of Architecture - DIDA.

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Designer, PhD in Design. Currently a research fellow at DIDA (Department of Architecture) of the University of Florence (Italy), Design Campus section. The PhD thesis, with the title "future heritage and heritage futures. An exploration on meanings of the digitized Cultural Heritage" aimed at investigating the role that the digital archives of Cultural Heritage can have in the contamination between the culture of the past and contemporary creativity. Her research interests concern the heritage/creativity sphere within the digital evolution; thus, the application, impact and opportunities that lie in the relationship between digital technologies and cultural heritage. She is currently working on a research project titled "Living archive. Disseminating and reusing the Fashion cultural heritage" founded by Regione Toscana.

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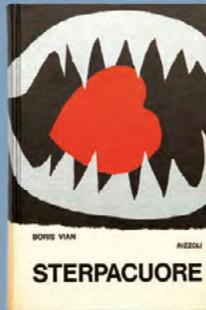
Since 2008 she coordinates (with P. Ranzo e M.A. Sbordone) the Design for Peace Lab activities. The creative lab was established following the draft agreement signed by the Province of Naples - Councilorship to Peace and International Cooperation - and the Department with the purpose of sharing experiences and best practices in the field of international cooperation and the management of humanitarian emergencies.

She teaches from 2013 to now Social Design and Design for Cosmetic - Design for Innovation Degree Course at University of Campania 'Luigi Vanvitelli'.

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