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THE WOMEN'S MAKING



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FORERUNNERS

The Art of Daily Life Objects

Charlotte Perriand and Clara Porset

Dialogue with Tradition

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Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II

Keywords

Tradition, Renovation, Furniture Design, Art, Anonymous Object.

Abstract

The article wants to be a contribution to the understanding of the methodology for the renovation of anonymous popular object that in the middle of the second world war Charlotte Perriand carried out in Japan and Clara Porset undertook in Mexico. Porset, following her expulsion from the island of Cuba because of her radical political positions, moved to Mexico and pursued her interest in furniture design. In particular, she collaborated with Luis Barragan, designing several objects for his architectures. While, Charlotte Perriand, who collaborated with Le Corbusier, moved to Japan in 1940, when the Ministry of Industry invited her to define new guidelines for the Japanese industrial production. Both of them have undertaken in-depth studies on material and immaterial local culture, taking into account people's history and way of life, analyzing craft products, raw materials and local processing techniques. They were able to merge local crafts and culture with the architectural thought of the moment, showing that there is no break between true tradition and modernity. They believed that beauty is in the harmony of popular objects, which are closer to people needs.

1. One Foot into Tradition to Go in the Future

For many decades, the role women have played in design and architecture has not received the consideration it deserved. The creative contribution and the influence of women was only partially recognized: their presence was overshadowed by the prominent professionals with whom they collaborated and their contribution was often completely ignored. The society relegated female architects to a supporting position, even when they held the same role as the male partner, or marginalized in the field of interior design because it is considered frivolous and feminized, compared to architecture that was defined as male and therefore worthy of serious consideration (Vignelli, 2014). Even within the Bauhaus, the most progressive art and craft school in Twentieth Century, equality between men and women was never fully achieved. Although school enrolment was open to everybody, without any type of sexual discrimination,

Gropius's vision was, at heart, medieval, if apparently modern, and he was keen to keep women in their place – at looms, primarily, weaving modern fabrics for fashion houses and industrial production. He believed women thought in two dimensions, while men could grapple with three (Glancey, 2009).

In the early of 1940s, although in adverse social and cultural conditions, two women managed to stand out in the international panorama thanks to their research in the field of furniture design: they are Charlotte Perriand and Clara Porset, who respectively did an important job in Japan and Mexico. Japan had begun an imitation process with the West between

the late 1800s and early 1900s under the Meiji dynasty, with the aim of conquering the foreign market. “In the aftermath of the First World War to increase exports, tried to target and coordinate private initiatives in such a way as to quickly bridge the distance with the West”¹ (D’Amato, 2005, p.183). While in Mexico, the post-revolutionary reform of the 1920s-30s introduced the architecture of the Modern Movement within the country, that

had helped to remove the persistent influence of the Beaux-Arts and to emancipate the culture formed by deafening European models associated with foreign political control [and] was instead absorbed into the Mexican image as a vaguely universalizing force, significant [...] for the achievement of rapid technological progress (Curtis, 2006, p.493).

The transition to modern architecture in Mexico and the Westernization process in Japan had produced a contrast between deeply rooted local traditions and foreign models. Despite the different historical and geographic context in which they operated, Charlotte Perriand and Clara Porset shared a unity of purpose in carrying out their research, due to their similar cultural education in the Europe of the 1920s, namely: the democratization of good quality furniture for all social classes, the fusion between traditional culture and modern revolutionary thought, the skilful encounter between

1. «All’indomani del primo conflitto mondiale per incrementare le esportazioni ha cercato di indirizzare e coordinare le iniziative private in modo tale da colmare rapidamente le distanze con l’Occidente», D’Amato, G. (2005). *Storia del design*. Bruno Mondadori.

artisan and new industrial production techniques and, finally, the passion for anonymous objects of popular culture.

The work done by the two architects on the objects for daily life has allowed the values and meanings of the cultures and traditions of the past to continue to live over time and not to succumb to the Japanese and Mexican identities with the advance of modern transformations of the society, increasingly dominated by the economic dynamics of a globalized and unified market in its representations.

2. Japan Sensitivity meets Europe Lifestyle

Charlotte Perriand approached Eastern culture long before she landed on the coast of Japan. In 1934, when she was still working in Le Corbusier's studio, she met Junzo Sakakura. The two had made a strong friendship, together with Pierre Jeanneret and Josep Lluís Sert, and Sakakura gave to Perriand *The Book of Tea* written by Kakuzo Okakura (1906). The pages of this text, that she used several times during her oriental experience, allowed her to get to know the cult of tea, the theism, "a real adoration of beauty among the petty facts of everyday life" (Okakura, 2017, p.11). She also got to know the emptiness consistently present within Japanese culture.

On the threshold of the Forties of the Twentieth Century, Charlotte Perriand had the opportunity to deepen the knowledge of Japanese culture closely and directly. Advised by Junzo Sakakura, the Imperial Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MITI) invited Charlotte Perriand to spend a year in Japan as design consultant for the export and improving the quality of daily life objects that have to be sent in the West.

On the 12th June 1940, two days before Nazi Germany's invasion of Paris, Charlotte Perriand left France from the port of Marseille towards Kobe, where she arrives two months later.

Starting from 1868 Japan had started an industrialization process aimed at catching up with other political and economic world forces. In this perspective of expansion, Japan tried to develop artefacts to be exported. Nevertheless, the differences in culture and lifestyle didn't allow western citizens to understand those objects. Japan history and way of life were different from Western ones. At that time, there were no furnishings inside Japanese houses, their architecture was empty compared to Western ones. Over the years, the ministry had decided to encourage students to travel abroad to study new materials, new construction techniques and models of recent western furnishings. As a result, sterile copies of objects in style, hyper decorated, ugly and useless were produced, defined by foreign *japoneserie*.

Upon her arrival in Japan, Charlotte Perriand found a country where the design had multiple tensions: between vernacular and mass production; excellent craft techniques and new relationships with industry; tradition and innovation. In the first months of her stay in Japan, she toured the whole country, visiting important architectures and minor works, from the Imperial Palace to the Katsura Villa, from museums to factories, from shops to restaurants. Perriand studied people's life carefully, living with them to better understand the spirit and sensitivity of Eastern culture.

Perriand was particularly impressed by the *Mingei Kan* museum, abbreviation for *Minshuteki Kogei* that laterally means "folk art made by people for people".

The museum was founded in 1936 by Soestu Yanagi, father of Sori Yanagi, who assisted Charlotte during her entire experience in Japan. The museum collection included a series of anonymous everyday objects, produced by humble Japanese artisans and peasants. The beauty of these objects lays in their functionality, economy and honesty, their forms were a true expression of people's uses and needs. For Perriand, the anonymous object symbolizes the true art because, as she said, "is done with simple means and the extreme simplification is the highest level of art" (Barsac, 2015, p.34). Perriand shared the same ideas as the Mingei group, like the safeguard of local artisan production and the desire of introducing beauty into everyone's daily life.

Perriand realized that there were two necessary actions necessary to solve the paradox inherent into the export phenomenon which consisted of delivering everyday objects to the West without being familiar with their way of life. The first of these actions was making the Japanese understand the western lifestyle, uses and customs so different from the oriental ones. It was important not to copy the west. A long study of western culture, ways of living, eating, sleeping and carrying out the activities throughout the day had to be lead before the project. The aim of Perriand's research was to preserve craftsmanship using a production entirely based on local materials and techniques. This choice was due to the fact that the Second World War prevented the use of materials such as steel, used for war artefacts, but also considering that Japanese craftsmanship had a very important tradition and quality. We can say that Charlotte Perriand transformed the limits of the war into benefits for Japanese production.

By carrying out these operations, it was possible to make the transformations that were felt as necessary for the western ways of living, going “from tradition to the future in boldness” (Barsac, 2015, p.38) as well as maintaining the sensitivity of Japan without damaging it. In this way it was possible to carry on the tradition, enriching it with the memories of the past and the contingencies of the present.

The entire work done by Charlotte Perriand resulted in an exhibition in which all the objects necessary to furnish a hypothetical house were collected with particular attention on dining room, living room and bedroom. The exhibition *A Contribution to the Interior Furnishings of a House in the Year 2601. Selection, Tradition, Creation* opened in Tokyo on March 1941 and two month later was moved to Osaka. Perriand specified the chosen title at the entrance of the exhibition to make visitors understand the basis of her great work:

Selection, of good examples of everyday object taken from currently production and directly usable for European life.

Tradition, through photographic examples of the purest works from the past: everyday objects, architecture, showing that even if there is rupture in the contributions of modern era, there is also continuity. The spirit of truth that led to these works is an eternal spirit. All that really changes is lifestyle and technological expression, consistent with time.

Creation. True tradition does not mean copying, even faithfully, but creating in one's own time subject to the same eternal laws. Creation is therefore part of tradition (Barsac, 2015, p.79).

Within the exhibition, there were two projects that specifically represented the synthesis of Perriand's work in Japan: a Bamboo bed and a Cantilever chair.

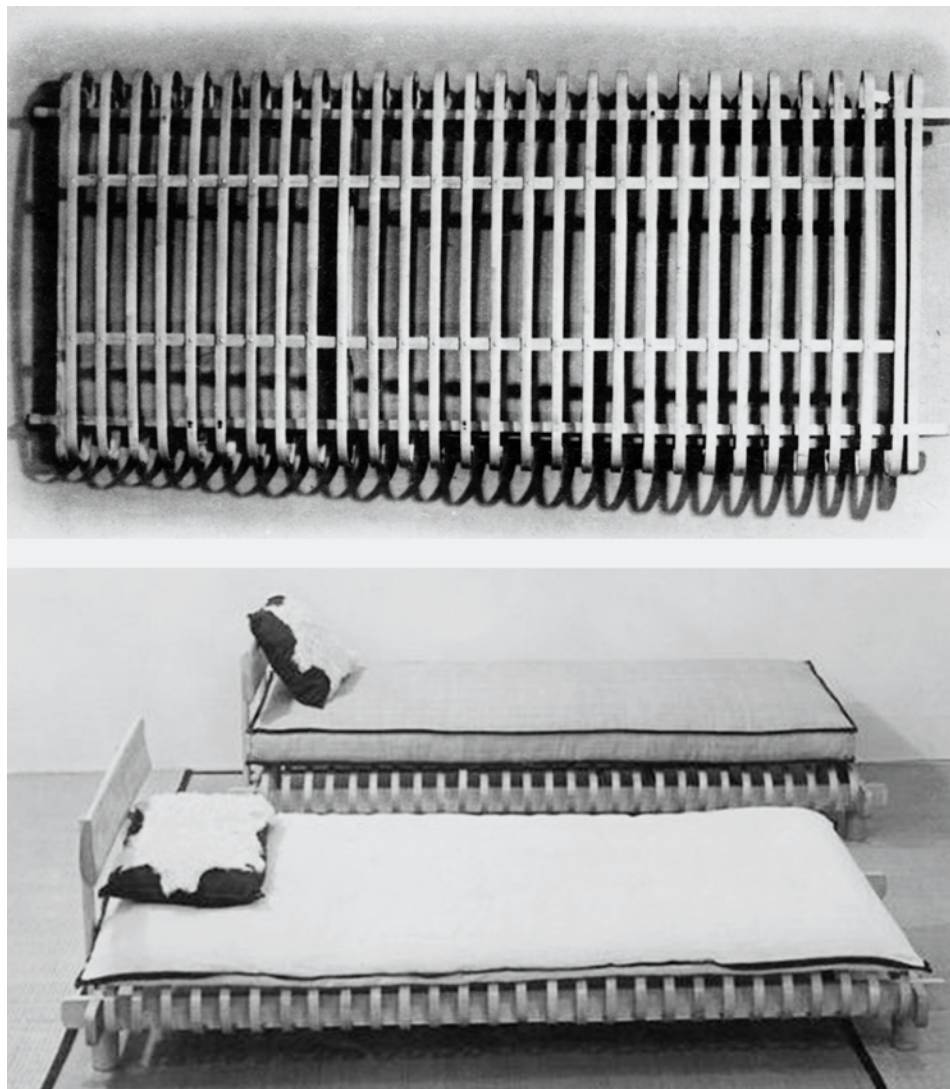


Figure 1. Charlotte Perriand, Bamboo bed, *Domus*, 219, May 1947, 56.

They were the true union of traditional craftsmanship, use of local materials and modern western lifestyle toward which the country was approaching.

The main theme was the Japanese gesture and philosophy of life. These two issues became the immaterial element that linked innovation and tradition.

The Bamboo bed (Fig. 1) was based on the same technique and aesthetic of Charlotte Perriand's Chaise longue bamboo (Fig. 2), redesigned, for the exhibition, with a Japanese essence and using natural materials. It was made of a bamboo frame that supported thin slats, parallel to the short side, on which the mattress – for westerners – or the futon – for Japanese people – rested. A structure that adheres perfectly to the human body and to its movements giving the impression of sleeping suspended. The material features were exploited at their maximum and its flexibility managed to give more comfort than the western nets.

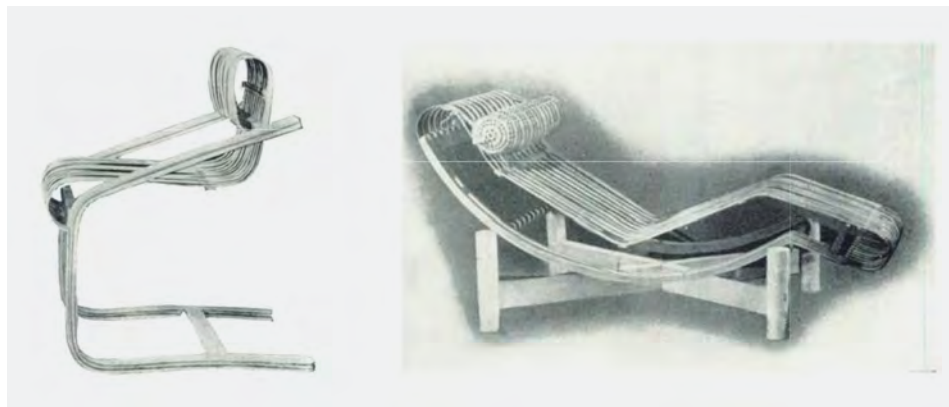


Figure 2. Charlotte Perriand, Cantilever chair (on the left) and Chaise longue bamboo (on the right), *Domus*, 219, May 1947, 55.

At that time beds did not exist in Japan yet. Therefore, Charlotte Perriand had to meet at the same time the needs of western people and the demand of local people who used to sleep on the floor, on a tatami mat in a multipurpose room. With this project, she managed to create an object that can be used in both cultures, without distorting the Japanese approach. Indeed, the traditional Japanese house was made by a wooden frame with the floor placed at a higher level than the ground, tatami was placed on the wooden frame with people sleeping on the ground, suspended between earth and sky. The same feeling was proposed in the Perriand's bamboo bed project as an intangible element of tradition that continues to persist over time.

The second example analyzed is the Cantilever chair (Fig. 2), clearly inspired to the Paimio chair (1931-32) designed by Alvar Aalto. The chair was designed by Kidokoro Umonji using curved plywood for the supporting structure and parallel bamboo slats for the seat. Charlotte was impressed by the object but she made some changes to make the most of the elasticity of bamboo. In this manner, the weight was evenly distributed over the whole chair while the latter, like the bed, could adapt itself to the human body movements, giving a new feeling of sitting. Bamboo changes shape according to people weight and not to their body, that allowed the object not to be blocked in a rigid form. It was an object born from the gesture and the study of oriental people body during their daily life. Indeed, the shape of the chair and its movement recalled the way of sitting on the knees of the Orientals (*seiza*), who swing with their bodies while carrying out activities on the *tatami*.

From this experience we can clearly understand the approach of Charlotte Perriand to the design, the philosophy she carried out throughout her whole life “[to] industrialize the impeccable and impersonal utilitarian forms, [to] lower costs and [to] leave to revived craftsmanship the task of humanizing by complements. To create furnishings as subtle, complex, and sensitive as the human body. That is our task” (Barsac 2015, p.11).

3. Mexican Popular Tradition joins Modern Thought

During the Second World War, there was another figure who worked hard to integrate the traditional culture with the modern sensibility: Clara Porset.

She was born in 1895 in Matanzas, Cuba, and thanks to her wealthy family, had the opportunity to travel all over the world, so after the graduation at Columbia University, went to Europe. In 1928 spent three years in Paris where she studied architecture and furniture design in the Henri Rapin’s atelier and attended the course of art at *École des Beaux Arts* and aesthetics at *Le Sorbonne*. Porset was interested in the theories and practices of the *Bauhaus* and had the opportunity to study furniture design at the Black Mountain College in North Carolina where she met Josef Albers, a former teacher at the school founded by Walter Gropius.

Exiled from Cuba in 1935, due to her opposition to Carlos Mendieta government, Porset decide to seek refuge in Mexico that was then living a period of economic, cultural and intellectual ferment inspired by Mexican Revolution. During this time, Porset managed to advance her architectural ideals with her political thinking, performing prominent roles within the *Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios* (LEAR), a group

made up of socialist artists, writers, intellectuals and architects who believed in the social function of art as an active militant, with the aim of democratizing cultural production and with an anti-imperialist political perspective.

Within the LEAR she met her future husband, Xavier Guerrero, a founding member of the Mexican post-revolutionary Muralist Movement, who aimed at the re-foundation of the Mexican identity through the discovery and recovery of an authentic national culture rooted in indigenous and popular traditions. Thanks to Guerrero's knowledge of Mexican folk art, Clara Porset had the opportunity to deepen the Mexican popular culture and increase her skills on the country's traditional techniques and materials for the construction of furniture. For this reason, in 1940 Porset e Guerrero, together, took part in a competition called *Organic Design for Home Furnishing*, organized by the Museum Of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York. They obtained one of the four prizes thanks to a collection of what Porset herself called *Rural Furniture*. It was the first results of the research she carried on during her entire life in Mexico. Her inspiration came from the vernacular, combining industrial and handmade artefacts steeped in the craft tradition. She firmly believed that contemporary Mexican design should be rooted in the country's rich artisanal history. Porset's faith in both craft and industry along with her conviction that one could inspire the other, stemmed from her international education as well as her years of research into Mexico's folkloric heritage (García, 2014). She aimed at making the furnishings and the art of daily life objects accessible to everyone.

Clara Porset carried on her investigation even designing furniture for both Mexican manufacturers and modernist architects such as Max Cetto, Mario Pani and Enrique Yáñez. The best collaboration was with Luis Barragán: she designed various chairs for the residences he built such as *Casa Gálvez* (1955) or *Casa Estudio Barragán* (1948). The most noteworthy furniture was known as *Butaque*, that was used by Barragán in several houses projects, so frequently that for many years the authorship of the project was wrongly attributed to him instead of Clara Porset. This furniture is the symbol of the mission carried out in Mexico by Porset, aimed at erasing social and economic differences through good design and with elements accessible to everyone. The *Butaque* is an anonymous chair, found in the Mexican and Caribbean rural dwellings, which comes from Spain. It was absorbed and adapted to life in Mexico becoming an authentically Mexican popular and cultural expression. *Butaque* was a real *mestizo* piece of furniture, produced in every region of the country with small variations by each local craftsman and it was a low-slung chair, realized with wooden frames made by hand in tiny labs (Marín, 2019).

For many years, she strove to reinvent *butaques* (Fig. 3) studying different types to identify the sturdiest, most comfortable shapes, as well as forms of upholstery.

Some of her finest versions were designed for the *Mexico City Country Club* and the *Pierre Marqués Hotel* in Acapulco.

In this way, Clara Porset aimed to combine traditional Mexican construction techniques and materials with a functionalist emphasis on simplicity in the design and the use of industrial series production techniques.



Figure 3. Clara Porset, Butaque, traditional version (see first photo above left) and modern version of Porset, *Domus*, 281, April 1953, 50-51.

Moreover, she selected mainly rustic and natural materials for its furniture, associated with rural life in Mexico. She asserted that the use of materials such as “palm, tulle weaves, Mexican pine and red cedar wood provided a further psychological affinity between inhabitant and furnishings due to the regional Mexican character they have” (Sheppard, 2015). Porset hoped that the result of this combined effort would satisfy in a coherent object both the human need for function

and beauty, and, at the same time stripping away non-essential elements to embrace simplicity.

In the pages of important architecture and art magazines such as *Arquitectura México* and *Espacios*, she argued that the industrial development of design should be considered as an integral part of the larger project of the Mexican state. According to Porset, the acceleration of Mexico's economic development would lead to increase industrial productions rather than craftsmanship, compromising the cultural identity of the country.

Therefore, she invited state cultural organizations and private technical schools to manage this transition between craftsmanship and semi-industrial or industrial production, preserving the popular arts.

Porset argued that Mexico had to draw on its traditional plastic arts to give to Mexican industrial design its unique character. In 1952 she was invited to take part in the exhibition *El arte en la vida diaria* at the *Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes* in Mexico City. Curating the exhibition was an irresistible opportunity to present a dynamic and inclusive vision of modern Mexican design that embraced both the industry and craftsmanship. At a time when many designers believed that craftsmanship could only be modernized by replacing hand-craftsmanship with mechanization, Porset valued both disciplines for their distinctive qualities and urged their practitioners to do the same. She commissioned a photographer to fill the building with giant photomontages of the evolution of Mexican crafts and industry to explain how and where the exhibits were made. In the exhibition, a selection of handcrafted objects such as furnishings, tissues and tools picked up by

Porset around Mexico was showed. At the same time, she promoted the good design for all people, selecting well-designed industrial daily furnishings and raising the standard of living. Through this event Clara Porset appealed to the Mexicans to accept the power of modern technology, adapting to the mass production the popular aesthetic sensitivities expressed by craft objects. Furthermore, the development of industrial-scale design would also have contributed to the formation of a unified and independent Mexico, both economically and culturally.

Within the exhibition catalogue, she expressed her doubts about the lack of support from Mexican industrialists, stating that they preferred to focus on foreign designs rather than original Mexicans ones.

The only real occasion to raise popular living standards was the ambitious residential building project *Centro Urbano Presidente Alemán* (CUPA) designed by Mario Pani in 1949 in Coyoacán, Mexico City. The residential complex included over a thousand apartments distributed over a group of six buildings. Clara Porset was commissioned for the design of low-cost furnishings, suitable for the interior spaces, to be offered for sale to new residents.

In Porset's thought such a project would have raised "general living standards, bringing efficiency and art into the daily circumstances of everyone" (Sheppard, 2015) thanks to the potential of industrial design. Her furnishings had the ability to aesthetically capture a symbolic reverence for the natives and combine it with the modernization process of the post-revolutionary Mexican state. Despite her good intentions, her furniture remained largely ignored and irrelevant to the daily life

of the new inhabitants, because the country's government and industrialists did not encourage it. Both did not really believe in the Cuban architect's project for social and cultural change.

Her innovations within tradition embody the very ideals of the Modern Movement and at the same time, she can be considered as one of the pioneers of Regionalism, taking into account not only the elements for the production of furniture but the complete scope of total interior design (Noelle, 2012, p.59).

Today, her approach would be considered timely and intelligent, but over sixty years ago, when the crafts were routinely derided in design circles as clumsy and archaic, it was dazzlingly visionary.

4. Conclusion

From the experience of Charlotte Perriand and Clara Porset it has been possible to deduce that a renewal of the traditional objects of everyday life is possible, but only if accompanied by a deep analysis of the place and the people.

In fact, before they could design, they investigated the history, culture, customs, and traditions of people, paying particular attention to the gesture and rituals of daily life, to natural and local materials. They deepened the techniques of the artisan tradition in order to merge them with the new industrial production that in those years was becoming increasingly dominant in the field of architecture. Therefore, it is clear that what is traditional is not immutable, but becomes a vehicle of principles and values even at the cost of adapting to the technologies and languages of the new times.

The very term of tradition derives from the Latin *traditio-onis* which means delivery, teaching, narration, but it also derives from *tradere* which indicates betrayal, therefore in its meaning of delivery, it implies the passage from one generation to another through a process of interpretation, conservation and, at the same time, innovation. Only by adjusting what one means with traditional, permanent values can persist over time.

The value of the mission carried out by Perriand and Porset is twofold: on the one hand, it is seen as knowledge and research useful for understanding the intrinsic values of the object, of the material and immaterial culture of a given country; on the other, it is a tool capable of re-proposing its use through a process of adaptation to the contingencies of modernity. With this operation, the two designers have pursued an important goal: to disseminate and understand the cultural values of man-made products over time, highlighting, as George Kubler says, “a design that was not visible to those who were part of it and that was unknown even to his contemporaries”² (Kubler, 2002, p.22).

2. «un disegno che non era visibile a coloro che ne furono parte e che era ignoto anche ai suoi contemporanei» Kubler, G. (2002). *La forma del tempo: la storia dell'arte e la storia delle cose*, Giulio Einaudi editore. (Originally published in 1972).

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BIOGRAPHIES

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Ph.D. Student in Design at Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade de São Paulo (FAU-USP), Brazil (research supported by Fapesp). Currently, she is attached to École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Ehess-Paris) for a doctoral internship. Her current research is concerned with: women's history, gender history, design history, textile artifacts, Brazilian modern design.

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Shujun Ban

Shujun Ban is a lecturer of Department of Product Design at School of Arts and Design in Qingdao University of Technology. She is an experienced and welcomed teacher in industrial design for 16 years, with continuous enthusiasm in innovation and follow-up interactive guidance of teaching. She has taught more than 50 subjects, averaging 360 in-class hours annually. She keeps on exploring interdisciplinary in design and arts, focusing on traditional handicrafts research. She is good at planing, designing and promoting cultural brands. She has self-created a media brand, "Second Air". She is an expert judge of industrial design competition in Shandong Province and an excellent instructor in design competitions and workshops. She graduated from Nanjing Forestry University with a master's degree of Mechanical Design and Theory with specialization in Industrial Design in 2004. She will be a visiting researcher at Politecnico di Milano.

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Roberto de Paolis

Graduated *cum laude* in architecture at the Politecnico di Milano in 1983, and gained a Ph.D. in Industrial Design in 1996. Assistant Professor at the School of Design since 2001, conducts research in Department of Design, focusing on furniture design, textile design, interior design, and history of design. He has published essays and reviews in magazines, book contributions and international conference papers, and has participated in national and international research programs.

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Umberto de Paolis

After completing his classical studies at the "A. Volta" High School in Como, he took composition at the "G. Verdi" Conservatory in Como, studying the cello and the piano. At the same time he undertook historical, archival and documentary research studies on authors and performers of Italian artistic, musical and performance culture between the late nineteenth and twentieth century, rediscovering and enhancing figures representative of an eclecticism often neglected by official historiographic critics. Since 2012 he has carried out independent research and historical-critical in-depth study for the purposes related to the progress of current research, coming into contact with academic figures of reference in the scientific-disciplinary fields of relevance, conducting research in archives and cultural institutions such as the State Archives in Rome, Bibliothèque National de France in Paris, Patrimoine de la SBM and Archives du Palais Princier in Monaco, Archive of the Teatro Regio in Turin, and The National Archives in London.

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Marinella Ferrara

PhD, associate professor of product design in the School of Design of the Politecnico di Milano. Since 2014 she has been the head of MADEC, the Research Centre of Material Design Culture in the Department of Design. Her researches are mainly focused on design-driven innovation, design for materials (advanced and smart materials), news technologies integration in product and interior design, Future Design Scenarios. With her research, she has made a significant contribution to methodologies of Design for Materials and historiographical work. Moreover, she deals other research topic like the design in Mediterranean countries, gender issues in design and Design History. Co-founder of *PAD. Pages on Arts & Design* journal, since 2011 she has been the PAD editor in chief. Since 2015 to 2017 she has been a member of ADI's executive board, and currently coordinates the technical-scientific committee for long-life professional training of design professionals. Since 2019 she has been a member of the executive committee of *AIS/Design. Storia e Ricerche* scientific journal. Authors of more than 140 scientific publications, she is a member of scientific committee in international conferences, reviewer for international scientific journals, and research evaluator for academic research application in NL and PT.

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Debora Giorgi

PhD, Architect, she is Researcher in Design at the Dipartimento di Architettura of the University of Florence (DIDA-UNIFI). Since 1991 she works on the issues related to 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 WHC - UNESCO, UNCCD, World Bank, European Commission, WMF, AICS... 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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Melanie Levick-Parkin

Dr. Melanie Levick-Parkin's research is focused on visual communication and design & making practices in relation to intangible cultural heritage, heritage and archaeology, framed by Design Anthropological approaches. Most of her work is about the agency of visual and material language and informed by a feminist lens. She is particularly interested in how gender manifests in/ affects how meaning is made within the public sphere, both materially and visually and how power circumscribes who is able to make meaning and give form in different spheres. She is currently the MFA Design Programme leader at the Sheffield Institute of Arts, Sheffield Hallam University, and also supervises doctoral candidates across Art & Design and for the Research England funded, Lab4living 100 Year Life Project.

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Vittorio Linfante

Art Director and Professor of Fashion Design, Branding, Communication Design, Curation at the Politecnico di Milano, University of Bologna, Poli.design and Milan Fashion Institute. Curator –with Paola Bertola – of the exhibition *// Nuovo Vocabolario della Moda italiana*, Triennale di Milano (November 2015–March 2016).

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Cathy Lockhart

Cathy has a PhD in Design and a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education. She has undertaken course and program leadership roles within the Faculty of Design, Architecture & Building at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia, including Industrial Design, Interdisciplinary Studies and Product Design. She has overseen program reaccreditations and renewals to address the global readiness of graduates. Her role as senior lecturer concentrates on introducing design process and methods for first year students; and facilitating industry projects to assist senior students in the transition from education to practice. Cathy worked for many years as a professional designer including her own consultancy business and she is a Member of the Design Institute of Australia. Her research explores the gender mix of the student population in industrial/product design education. In particular, she is interested in the educational experience for students and their transition into the profession.

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Maria Cecilia Loschiavo dos Santos

Philosopher and Full Professor of Design at Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo da Universidade de São Paulo (FAU-USP), Brazil. She coordinates the Workshop of Social Design at the Institute of Advanced Studies (IEA-USP). Her work encompasses Brazilian design, discarded products, design, homelessness and recyclable material collectors.

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Virginia Marano

Virginia Marano obtained a Master's degree in Contemporary Art History at the University of Siena. She is currently in her second year of her PhD at the University of Zurich under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Tristan Weddigen. Her studies are funded by the Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship (ESKAS). Her dissertation topic is on Alberto Giacometti and the

Post-war sculpture in New York. She did a four-month internship at Mumok (2017, Vienna) and a three-month internship at Artipelag (2018, Stockholm) and is a committee member of the Fondazione Centro Giacometti in Stampa.

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Anna Mazzanti

Assistant Professor in History of Contemporary Art, at Politecnico di Milano –Department of Design. PhD (Venice) and research fellow (Siena, 2000-2011) her specific fields of research circulate around the XIX to XXI centuries artistic culture, as well exhibitions and relationship between art and design. She has curated various exhibitions including: *Mondi a Milano. Culture ed esposizioni 1874-1950* (Milano, 2015) when she worked about the “thread designers” (Papini, 1923) between the two wars. She studied and wrote about Anita Pittoni, Rosa Menni Giolli, Marcello Nizzoli. She is responsible since 2017 for the group of research D.E.SY (Designing Enhancement Strategies and Exhibit SYstems for the Italian House Museums and Studios) at the Politecnico di Milano.

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Marianne McAra

Dr Marianne McAra (PhD, MDES, BA, PG Cert) is the Creative Engagement Research Fellow at the Innovation School at The Glasgow School of Art and works in the areas of youth engagement and creative education. Her research practice is underpinned by human-centred and Participatory Design approaches, with an interest in experimental methods and an expertise working in ethically sensitive research contexts. Marianne teaches and supervises on the Master of Research and Doctoral programmes at GSA.

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Lynn-Sayers McHattie

Professor Lynn-Sayers McHattie (PhD, MBA, BA, PG Cert, FRSA) is Programme Director for Research at the Innovation School at The Glasgow School of Art. Lynn's research foregrounds questions around “crafting futures” in the creative economy. Her research explores craft and textile practices that connect to the indigenous landscape and culture of island communities and the role innovation can play in socio-cultural. She works extensively in the Highlands & Islands of Scotland and S.E. Asia. Lynn is involved in supervising doctoral and M.Res. students whose interdisciplinary inquiries blur the boundaries between addressing contextually located social and cultural challenges and design innovation practice.

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Tiziana Menegazzo

Artist and teacher. She lives and works in Turin. She trained in Florence where she graduated in painting at the Academy of Fine Arts followed by a master's degree in Modern Literature, with a thesis in visual anthropology on photography as a mode of self construction. She is currently completing a master's degree in Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology. Always interested in the contamination between different artistic languages, she alternates projects of participatory art, with a particular attention to the female condition, investigated through photography, narration and performance, to a research with an intimate and dreamlike character. She develops her artistic research in the field of gender studies and visual anthropology.

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Alfonso Morone

Associate Professor in Industrial Design, at the University of Naples “Federico II” Department of Architecture. Scholarship visiting student at Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Création Industrielle “Les Ateliers” of Paris. He was selected for the 20th “Compasso d'Oro” award, for the section Theoretical Researches and Design Studies, and he gained the Eco_Luoghi 2013 Contest launched by the Italian Environmental Ministry. His research, supported by many essays and writings, is especially concerned with Nature Based Solutions for devices able to face air pollution using natural systems through a combination of plants, phytoremediation mechanisms and bio-filters containing bio-absorbent nanomaterials and in the historical relationship between local manufacturing systems and industrial design. He is leading, as Principal Investigator, the AURA: industrial research and experimental development project for designing a new generation of green & smart

urban furniture supported by the Italian Ministry of Economic Development (2019-2022). In 2017 he wrote *La Fabbrica dell'Innovazione. Gli arredi del Palazzo delle Poste di Napoli 1936*, published by LetteraVentidue, Siracusa.

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Susanna Parlato

Architect and PhD student in design at Sapienza University of Rome. Received the bachelor's degree in Architecture at the Federico II University of Naples (2013) and the master's degree in Architecture for sustainable project at Politecnico di Torino (2016). Since 2017 she has been active within the Architecture Department of Federico II University of Naples being design teaching assistant, exam and degree committee member. She has been a research fellow at the CESMA of the Federico II University (2018-2019). From 2018 she started a collaboration with the Fondazione San Gennaro, an organization that promote social innovation, as a member of the ReMade lab research team whose purpose is to experiment innovative technology to recycle urban waste (plastic and metal) on a local scale. Her main research interests are in the areas of design for social innovation, design for territories, design for sustainability.

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Vera Renau

PhD Student in the programme Society and Culture: History, Anthropology, Arts and Heritage at University of Barcelona (Spain). Her doctoral research analyses the process of recognition of a selection of Catalan visual artists of the early twentieth century (1900 – 1930), and thus the operation of Spanish and Catalan modern art system. She focuses on clarify how art value is constructed by the interaction of different intermediaries in the visual arts field: the mechanism of building their reputations, identify phases, protagonists and dynamics that form part of the process, from an interdisciplinary approach. Member of the Gracmon Research Unit – History of Art & Contemporary Design Research Grup at UB, she holds a master's degree in Art History from the University of Barcelona. Her main research lines are art history, sociology of arts and culture and design studies. She has collaborated with cultural institutions as Direcció General de Patrimoni (Generalitat de Catalunya), Modern Art Department at Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya or Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna di Roma.

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Antonio Stefanelli

Architect, PhD student in Philosophy of Interior Architecture at Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II". He takes a degree in Architecture at the Department of Architecture of Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II" in 2017. He is part of several research group in the same University and he collaborated in the production of scientific publications and published essays and articles in trade magazines.

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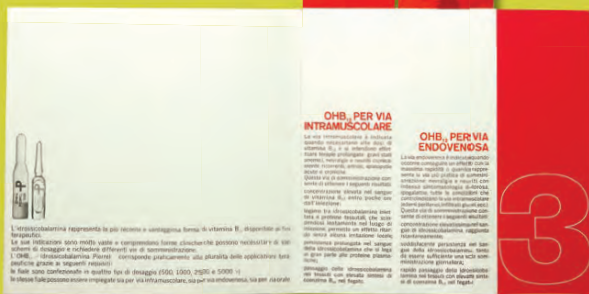
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