

19



COMMUNICATION DESIGN APART



PAD. Pages on Arts and Design

International, peer-reviewed,
open access journal
founded by Vanni Pasca in 2005

Editor-in-Chief**Marinella Ferrara**

Design Professor, Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Advisory Board**Tevfik Balcıođlu**

Yaşar University, Izmir, Turkey

Murat Bengisu

Izmir University of Economics, Turkey

Isabel Campi

Design History Foundation, Barcelona, Spain

Eduardo Corte Real

UNIDCOM/IADE, Lisbon, Portugal

Antonio da Cruz Rodrigues

Universidad Lusofona, Lisbon, Portugal

Soumiya Mikou

Moroccan Design Association, Casablanca, Morocco

Vanni Pasca

Italian Association of Design History, Milan, Italy

Ely Rozenberg

RUFA, Rome University Fine Art, Rome, Italy

Mireia Frexia Serra

Gracmon, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

Andreas Sicklinger

Università di Bologna, Italy

Fedja Vukić

University of Zagreb, Croatia

Managing Editor**Chiara Lecce**

Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Editorial Assistant**Giorgia Bonaventura**

Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Editorial Board**Giuseppe Amoruso**

Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Helena Barbosa

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Stefania Camplone

Università di Chieti-Pescara, Italy

Roberto De Paolis

Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Cinzia Ferrara

Università degli Studi di Palermo, Italy

Francesco E. Guida

Politecnico di Milano, Italy

Ashley Hall

Royal College of Art, London, England

Elif Kocabiyik

Izmir University of Economics, Izmir, Turkey

Lia Krucken

Creative Change, Brazil and Germany

Carla Langella

Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Italy

Giuseppe Lotti

Università di Firenze, Italy

Tomas Macsotay

Pompeu Fabra University, Spain

Nicola Morelli

Aalborg University, Copenhagen, Denmark

Alfonso Morone

Università Federico II, Napoli, Italy

Raquel Pelta

Universidad de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

Daniele Savasta

Yaşar University, Izmir, Turkey

Rosanna Veneziano

Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Italy

Artemis Yagou

ICOHTEC, Munich, Germany

Li Zhang

Beijing Information Science and Technology University, China

Publishing Consultant**Vincenzo Castellana**, Architect, Italy**Art Direction****Francesco E. Guida****Correspondents****Amina Aguezny** (Morocco), **Hèla Hamrouni** (Tunisia),**Vesna Kujovic** (Montenegro), **Can Özcan** (Turkey),**Ana Perkovic** (Croatia), **Filip Roca** (Montenegro),**Azadeh Sabouri** (Iran), **Marco Sousa Santos** (Portugal),**Pascale Wakim** (Lebanon)**Reviewers**

Letizia Bollini, Alessandra Bosco, Maddalena Dalla Mura,

Davide Fornari, Beatrice Gobbo, Francesco E. Guida,

Luciana Gunetti, Oriol Moret, Alfonso Morone,

Francesca Piredda, Marco Quaggiotto, Gianni Sinni,

Marta Sironi, Claudia Tranti, Carlo Vinti

PAD

via Festa del Perdono 1 – 20122 Milano – Italy

via Roma 171 – 90133 Palermo – Italy

info@padjournal.net – editors@padjournal.net

Publisher**Aiap Edizioni**

via A. Ponchielli 3

20129 Milano – Italy

aiap@aiap.it

www.aiap.it

PAD © ISSN 1972-7887

#19, Vol. 13, December 2020

www.padjournal.net

PAD #19 | COMMUNICATION DESIGN APART**O. EDITORIAL #19****Communication Design Apart**

by Marinella Ferrara & Francesco E. Guida

006**I. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND WOMEN (UNDER) REPRESENTATION****Beyond Professional Stereotypes.****Women Pioneers in the Golden Age of Italian Graphic Design**

by Francesco E. Guida

014**Missing in Action. Women of Digital Design**

by Letizia Bollini

040**The First Female Professional Group of Graphic Designers in Catalonia
(1960s - 1970s)**

by M. Àngels Fortea

059**I am Cobalt. Thérèse Moll**

by Cinzia Ferrara

088**II. WOMEN IN ACTION****My Adventures with *Adventures in Menstruating*.****A Case Study of Feminist Zinemaking and Period Positivity**

by Chella Quint

110**Playing with Time and Limits.****Experiencing Ursula Ferrara's Animation Process**

by Elisa Bertolotti

145**The Role of Women in Technologies According to the Media.****How Communication Design Can React**

by Valeria Bucchetti & Francesca Casnati

170**HERstory. A Women Design Project in UAE**

by Anna Barbara

192

III. PROJECTS & DOCUMENTS

- Aiap Women in Design Award (AWDA). Short History and Perspectives** 215
by Cinzia Ferrara & Francesco E. Guida
- PINK. Representations of Women and Women Graphic Designers** 231
by Paola Ciandrini & Francesco E. Guida

IV. BIOGRAPHIES

- About the Authors** 249

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND WOMEN (UNDER) REPRESENTATION

Beyond Professional Stereotypes Women Pioneers in the Golden Age of Italian Graphic Design

Francesco E. Guida

Politecnico di Milano

Keywords

Women Graphic Designers, Italian Graphic Design, History of Graphic Design.

Abstract

Great histories of design and graphic design, both in Italy and internationally, reserve a secondary or minor role for women. Referring in particular to the so-called golden age of Italian graphic design – between the 1950s and the early 1970s – very few female figures have emerged. However, through accurate research on primary sources and original documents, it is possible to identify remarkable profiles, especially in the case of women practising independently or with their husbands, managing their businesses while playing the expected social roles. More than just a list of names and artworks, the paper aims to demonstrate how women designers *de facto* broke the stereotypes of a male-dominated working field such as graphic and advertising design in post-WWII Italy.

Another purpose is to underline how thoughtful use of sources and research methods may lead to a more inclusive rewriting of design history, mentioning less-known figures who have full rights to be considered pioneers and role models.

1. Introduction

During the last 20 years there has been a greater interest in exploring the presence of women in the history of Italian design. Starting from the late 70s Lea Vergine (1982) started her first research in the field of avantgarde arts, bringing to Italy some international issues hitherto little dealt with. At the same time Rubino (1979) published his *Le spose del vento* (“The brides of the wind”), dedicated to women designers. Regarding the field of graphic design, it was only in recent times that some publications have framed the question in a critical way, trying to understand the reasons of gaps and omissions (Kirkham, 2000; Pansera & Occleppo, 2002; Gomez-Palacio & Vit, 2008; Breuer & Meer, 2012; Piscitelli, 2015). However, concerning the so-called golden age of Italian graphic design, very few figures have emerged. Those are regarded more as exceptions than as the result of a contextualized and intentional historical research, a research which shifts away from the identification of masters and paradigmatic cases, based on fixed aesthetic values. As stated by Buckley (1986) there is a gender bias in classical historiographic methods which led to the establishment of hierarchies, giving priority to specific types of design, categories of designers, artistic movements and modes of production, which have served to exclude women from history (Ferrara, 2012).

Through a research on primary sources and original documents of the time as well as on secondary sources (e.g. interviews) it has been possible to identify remarkable profiles. In the following pages four profiles of Italian women graphic designers will be presented, focusing on those who practiced

independently or in couples. The aim is to emphasize their roles as practitioners and women in the evolving cultural and social context of post-war Italy.

In some publications (specifically magazines) it is inevitable to note that many of the female practitioners were confined within the areas of the artistic and pictorial approach. They were also described as exceptions in a male-dominated context. But the practice itself, documents and sources, return to us a more complex and multifaceted reality. Women graphic designers, just like their male colleagues, were dedicated to a variety of fields that go far beyond the design for a fashion house, a department store or any other product made for a female target. They used to work with clients pertaining to fields such as heavy industry, chemistry and pharmaceuticals. Producing not only posters, but also advertising campaigns, visual identities, exhibits, packaging, books. Thus, contributing to the development of the industrial culture that characterized Italian economic boom and the revival of the country. In terms of visual languages, the profiles under examination allow us to assert that women graphic designers were not exclusively linked to illustration and pictorial style (as some of them were encouraged to undertake artistic studies) but were also inspired by the most up-to-date trends.

2. Beyond Roles and Stereotypes

According to Proctor (1997), it was only during the 60s that Italian women artists “began to enter art training and the profession in numbers comparable to those of other European countries”.

It is possible to include graphic design in the wider field of arts, as testified by Aiap (Italian Association of Advertising Artists) in the name itself. The association was born in 1955 after the split of ATAP (Association of Advertising Technicians and Artists), remarking a sharp separation of the technical aspects from the artistic expression. The 70 “secessionists” who founded Aiap in 1955 also included four women: Umberta Barni and Brunetta Mateldi from Milan, Alda Sassi from Turin, Annaviva Traverso from Savona (Guida, 2018). Those were just a few of the many women designers active in the field, mainly based in Milan as recorded in the Aiap yearbook published in 1963: 199 members are counted, of which 13 are women. Of these, only seven sent their work for publication: Umberta Barni, Brunetta Mateldi, Claudia Morgagni, Elena Pinna, Annamaria Sanguinetti, Rosaria Siletti Tonti (originally from Naples but working in Milan at the time), Verbena Valzelli Guerini (Brescia). Among those names it is possible to identify some of the pioneers of the modern era whose careers and memory have been heavily conditioned by the context they lived in and the stereotypes around female figures.

The short career of Umberta Barni (Milan 1927-?) can be regarded as emblematic. After her studies at the Scuola d’Arte in Ferrara and the Scuola d’Arte Applicata del Castello in Milan, in 1947 she started working at Agenzia Ultra (Ultra Pubblicit. since 1959), where she contributed to the creation of more than 100 advertising campaigns. She was able to take the distance from the mere executive work which was usually required from women, as she had a decision-making role in the creative and design process (Dradi, 2016, p. 91).



Due to the quality of her production, she received several prizes, including a third place awarded by Agipgas brand in 1952. The distinctive feature of her work is the painting-like style, even though she also developed more complex compositions by adding photo-graphic elements to hand-drawn parts (Fig. 1). Active throughout the 1960s, after the marriage her professional activity decreased remarkably.

It is fundamental to notice how the career of a woman, yesterday as today, is irreversibly conditioned by cultural context and social expectations which lead to prioritise private life instead of work. As underlined by Breuer & Meer (2012, p. 41):

[...] the design career requires a full-time commitment. With its implicit demands on a person's entire and exclusive attention, design work presumes the consent of one's life partner and requires sophisticated management skills from both sides for the organisation of everyday life - as well as financial resources, which are often unavailable to young designers. At a first glance, this situation appears to be gender neutral; however, it is especially ambivalent for women. Frequently, they bear the greater burden in connection with the work-life balance.

Considering the context of the time means including some of the stereotypes in terms of competencies and skills. Dino Villani (advertiser, artist, first president of ATAP and long-time president of FIP, the Italian Advertising Federation) introduces the work of Claudia Morgagni as follows:

It is not easy to suppose for what reasons the number of women who dedicate themselves to advertising and graphic design is so modest and rare. Also among the poster artists there are no female signatures [...]: instead we find them among the ever more numerous fashion illustrators and this would demonstrate that they tend to deal with those activities that best match their character [...].¹

The strong cultural prejudice on suitable activities for women designers can be easily pinpointed from this excerpt. Those are also the years in which individual and professional emancipation is often commented in a naive and superficial way as in the article titled “Sono silenziose, ma sono presenti” (“They are silent, but present”), published in the trade magazine *La Pubblicità* (1970):

[...] men, stop pretending to write texts about bras or baby diapers; on products against cellulite or margarines, when you often do not even know how to buy a shirt [...]. You also have to stop pretending to have the happiest intuition in certain creations or advertising actions, you that, without leaving the house, move psychologically with elephantine grace in the world of children and women. Let’s also say certain truths.²

But from magazines, as well as from yearbooks or exhibitions catalogues, emerges a whole host of women designers, often eclectic, who worked at the same professional level as the many

1 Translation by the autor. Villani, D. (?), *Claudia Morgagni: sintetismo spinto sull’orlo dell’esperazione*, article found in the press review collected by Morgagni and kept in her Archive by the Aiap CDPG. Presumably the article is from the mid 1960s.

2 Translation by the autor: Sono silenziose, ma sono presenti (1970). *La Pubblicità*, 6 (XXIV), 10.

men mentioned. But of these women, there is almost no trace today. Designers who did not live in the shadow of bulky male figures, practitioners who had their own professional autonomy, who were extremely far from the “hobby” label they were usually categorised with. Figures such as Simonetta Ferrante, Ornella Linke-Bossi (Gunetti, 2018), Claudia Morgagni, Anita Klinz (Pansera, 2017) and others demonstrate an active and participatory presence in the field. Moreover than the professional practice, there are those who have carved out their own extra-space in teaching (like in the case of Morgagni), those who carried out their personal artistic research (Ferrante) and those who contributed to association activities (such the work of Linke-Bossi within Aiap, today the Italian Association of Visual Communication Design). All of these experiences were factual enrichments to the professional system, up to today mainly read and narrated in a male key.

3. Two Pioneers

In terms of professional autonomy, the case of Claudia Morgagni (Milan, 1928-2002) (Guida, 2016) is indicative (Fig. 2). Her work is repeatedly reported in magazines, catalogues and yearbooks. She studied painting at the Brera Academy, then followed courses in ceramics (in Faenza) and mosaic (in Ravenna) as well as graphic design in Paris. During her apprenticeship she was introduced to artistic circles of the time: in this context she first met Mario Robaudi, a Milanese sculptor who would later become her husband. She then separated from Robaudi at the end of the 1960s, after having three children. Morgagni opened her own professional activity in 1957, continuing to collaborate with advertising agencies and managing her own clients.



Figure 2. A portrait of Claudia Morgagni during a lesson at ITSOS, 1979, photo David Cerati. Courtesy of Aiap Cdpq.

Sources and documents indicate that she was able to exact very respectable fees, equal to those of her male colleagues, and that she had earned a good professional reputation:

Claudia Morgagni due her reputation among young Italian advertising graphic designers to her strict cultural education, to her vivacious taste, to the rich experience gained in these years of intense activity. The work of Morgagni is distinguished itself, in fact, for the measured control of expression tools and the effective characterization.³

Among her clients it is possible to find Esso, Orzoro, Kneipp, Pellizzari, Lanerossi, Ruffino, Ibm, Montedison, Decca (Fig. 3, 4).

3 Translation by the autor. In *Legatoria* (1961, November-December), 2, 18-19.



Figure 3. Claudia Morgagni, Esso Extra Motor Oil, poster, 1956. Courtesy of Aiap Cdpq.

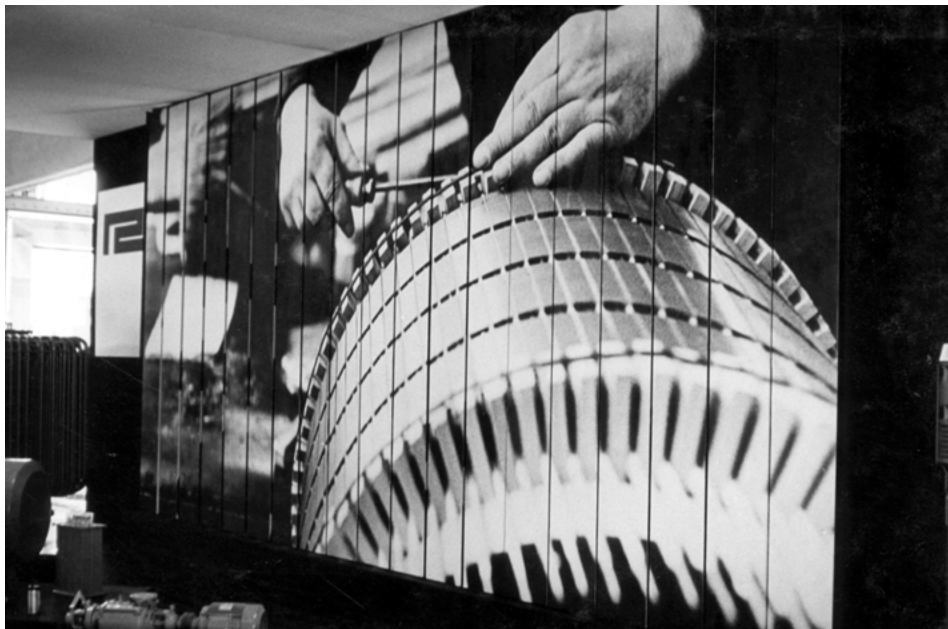


Figure 4. Claudia Morgagni, Pellizzari, Verona fair exhibit, 1968. Courtesy of Aiap Cdpg.

Her work is characterised by a rich production, from advertising to exhibit, from layout to illustration, extended over a period of time ranging from the mid-50s to the early 80s.

An economically and professionally independent figure, wife, mother and also educator, as she held teaching positions at the Brera Academy, at the Scuola Umanitaria and for a long time at ITSOS (today ITSOS Albe Steiner of Milan), responding to a dual necessity: practical and ideological. In fact, she was strongly committed to the formation of young people as a social duty.⁴ It is by no means an exaggeration to define her as a pioneer of the graphic design field: for this reason the latest edition of the Aiap Women in Design Award (AWDA 2019) dedicated the Lifetime Achievement Award to Claudia Morgagni.

Among the years it is possible to identify other figures like Simonetta Ferrante (Fig. 5), who is still active today as an artist and calligrapher (Guida et al., 2011; Cerritelli et al., 2016). Born in Milan in 1930 in a middle-class family (her grandfather Attilio Calabi has been both director and president of La Rinascente), she was educated in arts and music, getting her high school diploma in 1948.

After completing her studies at the Conservatory of Milan, she started a career as a teacher, a quite conventional activity for a woman at the time. Her wide-ranging education and family background arguably encouraged her to nurture an artistic and professional ambition.

4 As reported in a series of interviews made by the author to the son of Claudia Morgagni, Paolo Robaudi, between 2015 and 2016.



Figure 5. Simonetta Ferrante (center in the photo), on the right Cecil James Henry Collins, Central School for Art and Crafts, London, 1958. Courtesy of Aiap Cdpq.



Figure 6. Simonetta Ferrante, Esselunga, posters, 1967, photo Serge Libiszewski. Courtesy of Aiap Cdpq.

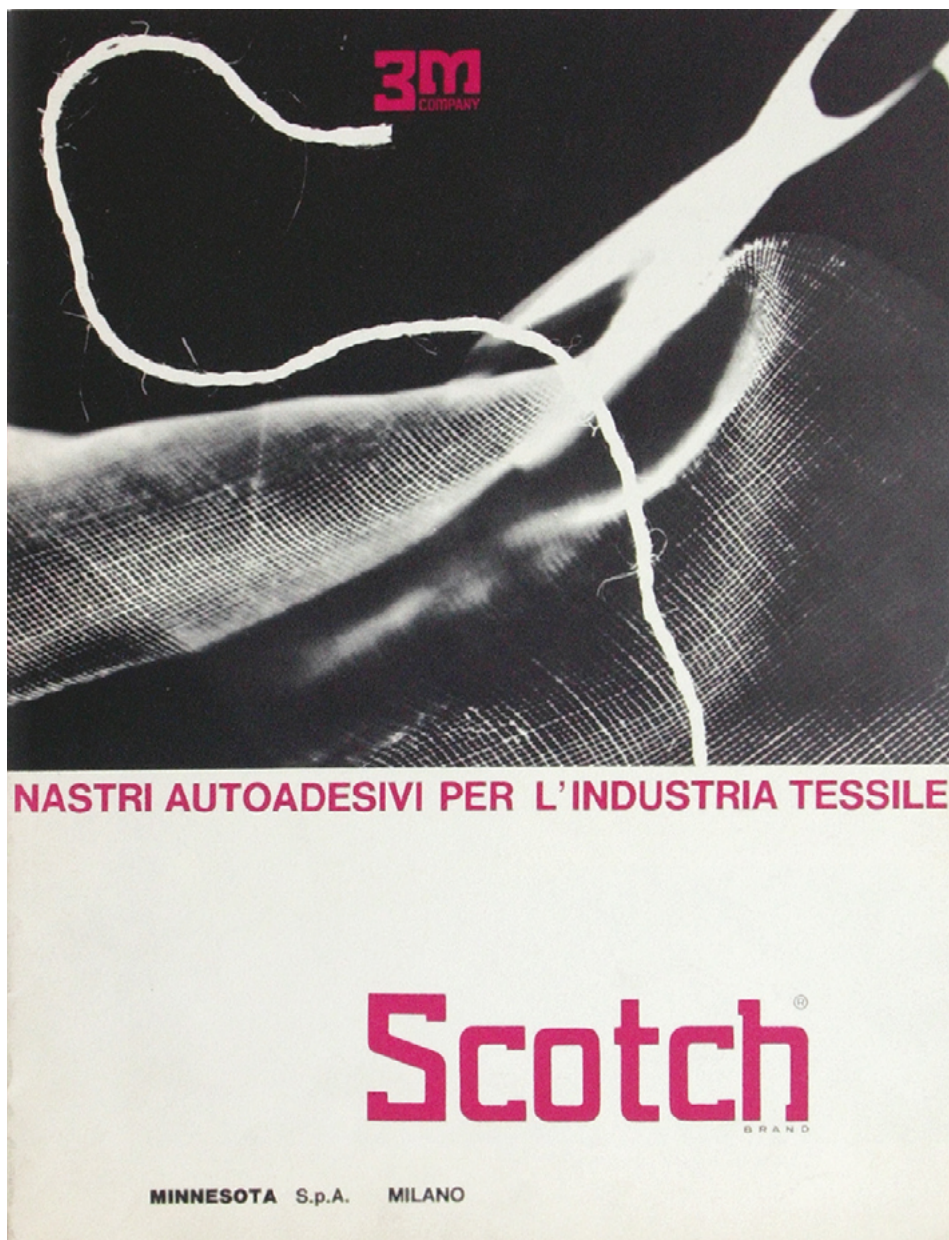


Figure 7. Simonetta Ferrante, 3M - Minnesota S.p.a., folder, 1961. Courtesy of Aiap Cdpg.

She soon started an apprenticeship programme with Max Huber. But it was Giovanni Pintori, who was working for Olivetti at the time, that encouraged her to go to London and study graphic design at the Central School for Arts and Crafts. After two years of attendance, in 1958 she obtained her diploma in Graphic Design, Painting and Drawing. Back in Milan she first collaborated with Max Huber, Pier Giacomo Castiglioni, Bob Noorda and Bruno Munari, then opened her own studio with Carlo Pollastrini and Giovanna Graf in 1961.⁵

Until the mid 70s she worked in the field of graphic design (e.g. Esselunga supermarkets, 3M, Mondadori, Rizzoli, DataControl) (Fig. 6, 7), while carrying out her own experimentations with painting and calligraphy. She effectively combined the two souls of her visual interest and research benefiting from her educational background: at the London school she absorbed less strict expressive and compositional rules than those which were common in Milan in the 60s.

Ferrante stands out not only for her distinctive career path, but also for being one of the first women to open her own professional activity, dealing with publishing, advertising and visual identity far beyond the stereotypes of the time. But it is also necessary to notice that, like others, she was born into a family of the Milan's progressive elite and she benefited of a "class and concomitant educational advantage [...] less bound by conventional cultural traditions and gender roles" (Rossi, p. 248).

⁵ As reported in the artist's website, <http://www.simonettaferrante.it/simonetta-ferrante-biografia.html>, and in a series of interviews made by the author in 2011.

4. Two Fellowships

Another professional condition to take into account is the one of studios and agencies headed by couples. The economic growth registered in Italy during the 60s defined the role of women mainly as mothers, wives, house managers and expert consumers (De Benedittis, 2001). In this scenario the opportunity to share the workplace with a partner and contributing to the family's incomes, the chance to organize a common time schedule and workflow, enabled the recognition of women in the professional context. "The trend for male-female partnership was one way women dealt with [the] minority status" imposed by the "legacy of fascist legislation and [the] continuing dominance of the Catholic Church" (Rossi, 2009, p. 245). To better understand the condition, it is useful to consider that fascist legislation confined "women to their maternal role and exclude[d] them from highly skilled employment" (Rossi, 2009, p. 246) and education. As a consequence, a male-female fellowship was one of the few chances women had to start a career even after WWII. It is a professional dimension that would require further investigation to better understand the inner dynamics of medium-sized studios or agencies, in which the daily economic and practical management is related to individual and family issues.

There are well-known fellowships like the one of Albe and Lica Steiner which started in 1939, just one year after their marriage, and lasted their whole life. Lica has always shared and supported Albe's political and cultural commitment, as well as his professional career in their studio named LAS (Lica Albe Steiner).

The role of Lica (1914-2008), not a graphic design practitioner in conventional terms, has been defined as “editor of active memories” (Gunetti, 2015) for her contribution to the daily organization of the archive now preserved at the Politecnico di Milano.

She has always been the one who, active memory, both in the years of the “professional symbiosis” – from 1939 to 1974 – and in the years of disclosure – from 1974 to 2008 –, organized the projects, the information and the documents. And this is also the “job of the graphic designer”: give the opportunity to dispose of past knowledge but also of new content areas, such as projects and theoretical-critical research carried out with Albe. (Gunetti, 2015)

This support role for her husband has been defined as “altruistic: exercising criticism, planning, managerial support, inspiration and creativity for the other” (Waibl, 2011), somehow “extra-ordinary”. If there was an inner hierarchy between Albe and Lica, it was not so obvious; but it is a fact that historiography only in more recent times started to consider Lica as an effectively active member of LAS (Steiner, 2015).

If the above-mentioned fellowship is considered as “extra-ordinary”, not much is known of other in “more ordinary” fellowships like those of Carlo and Maddalena Angeretti (Studio C + M Angeretti) (Castiglioni, 1964) and Iris and Bruno Pippa (Bonfante, 1960).

Carlo and Maddalena Angeretti, husband and wife, opened their own graphic design and advertising Studio in 1952. Further publications testify that the studio was certainly active

until the end of the 70s.⁶ Although the evolution of the Studio should be further analysed, the inner organization of the members in the 60s was just clear and simple as their visual language:

Carlo [...] deals with the technical, photographic, graphic and administrative part; Maddalena intervenes in the graphic and photographic part with the experience gained in years of work and years of study at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Zurich, which graduated her. (Castiglioni, 1964, p. 293)

Most of the clients belonged to the pharmaceutical and chemical fields, and the Studio designed packaging (Fig. 8), advertising campaigns, corporate identities awarded in several occasions: the Oscar and the Eurostar for packaging, the Gold Medal at the Milan Fair Award or the mention for the Compasso d'Oro in 1955. The workflow described by Castiglioni seems to foster the stereotype (as stated by Buckley, 1989, p. 5) in which it was more suitable for women to take care of the creative or “decorative” part, without burdening them with responsibilities in administrative and clients management. Maddalena studied in a prestigious school of the time that trained other protagonists of Italian graphic design, but her name, besides the exceptionality of the article mentioned, does not appear in any other sources found to date.

6 Their work appears in *Pubblicità in Italia 65-66* and *Pubblicità in Italia 70-71*. In *Pubblicità in Italia 78-79* the signature is reduced to Angeretti. Examples of their work is also in Studio Sironi (1972), p. 29.



Figure 8. Studio C + M Angeretti, Ansaplasto, countertop vendor awarded the Eurostar packaging in Paris, 1963. Courtesy of Aiap Cdpg.



Figure 9. Bruno & Iris Pippa, la Rinascente, SNIA event, 1956 ca. Courtesy of Aiap Cdpg.

Despite the lack of available sources, the collaboration of Bruno and Iris Pippa was described by Bonfante (1960, p. 337) (Fig. 9) as ones of the happiest work fellowships:

By now we don't know how much refined and subtle, how impetuous and peremptory we owe to one or the other of the two creators.

Both were self-educated and started to work in advertising and graphic design in the mid-50s. Iris (born Urso in Pola, 1927-?) started to practice with her husband Bruno (Vicenza, 1925-?) in 1956 (Huber et al., 1964). In the early 60s they used to publish in several editions of the annual *Pubblicità in Ita-*

lia exposing works signed individually or together.⁷ Starting from 1963 the name of Iris disappears and only the work of Bruno is registered until the end of the 70s. Bonfante (1960, p. 344) wrote of their common work as the result of a constant rebellion to a fixed scheme but also of a “a severe unity of style” that they pursued for various clients: pharmaceutical and chemistry industries, fashion houses and department stores like Upim or la Rinascente.

Those are two different cases of fellowships taken from the professional advertising and graphic design scene which demonstrate the presence of women with design roles within medium and small-sized organizations. Roles that were recognized, at least in part, and are witnessed in publications. If anything, the question to ask is why Maddalena and Iris have progressively disappeared from the scene? Why do their names no longer appear? Beyond the possible trajectories of their lives, on which further investigations will be needed, it is not possible to exclude that they left space to Carlo and Bruno to totally devote themselves to their families. Giving up the career and those professional satisfactions that the aforementioned premises suggest they would have deserved, as already highlighted in the case of Umberta Barni. Although these are currently hypotheses, it is not possible to discard them, considering the conditioning that very often women practitioners could suffer or to which they forced themselves, confining their roles to the ones deemed more appropriate at the time.

7 As it is in the editions of 1957-58, 1960-61, 1961-62 or 1962-63.

5. Conclusions

In the history of professional disciplines, like graphic design, emerges a need in detecting new role models. This lack, as already underlined, affects and conditions the ambition of generations of students and practitioners, besides the more obvious ones like motherhood, family and therefore of organization or support of the partner in professional paths (Guida, 2015, pp. 175-177).

As affirmed by Astrid Stavro (2012, p. 365):

[...] the absence of women “role models” in design history is one of the factors that explain [...] this apparent lack of ambition and confidence come from.

Breuer & Meer (2012, pp. 25-26) wrote clearly that

The historiography of design has also contributed to the limited visibility of female graphic designers. During their own lifetimes, many of the women mentioned were recognised within professional circles, and a considerable number of them enjoyed successful careers. However, few gained entry into the canon of design history, and those who did were reduced to the status of exceptions.

Therefore, a question to be asked with conviction is why women designers were less present in publications or in those occasions useful for the enhancement of their work. Rossi (2009, p. 246) points out that “the patriarchal conventions of the [...] design press also served to contain women’s existence in the profession”. And that “this marginalization

has further contributed to the male bias in design literature”. But, to avoid making a mere attempt at reconciliation or correction through list of forgotten women designers, it is necessary to contextualize the paths, without relying solely on a mere aesthetic evaluation, but rather rejecting this formalistic approach. New parameters need to be defined, making them actually inclusive.

One aspect that emerges precisely from the above-mentioned cases is the one of professional autonomy, of those practitioners who in the years following WWII started their own business, taking on responsibilities, covering different roles, interacting with clients and suppliers (as in the cases of Morgagni and Ferrante). Many of them worked and lived in a city like Milan, during a time of unprecedented social changes and economic growth. They undertook independent careers, in a male-dominated context where certain occupations and social roles were designated female (Buckley, 1986, p. 4). As reported in some of the interviews made by the author to the son of Claudia Morgagni, she was sometimes marginalized in some of the professional circles as she was more dedicated to carrying out advertising work. Despite having demonstrated the quality of her work also with significant economic results, it is to be assumed that her ability to manage independently her activity was considered as abnormal.

The multiplicity of roles is another factor. For a woman at the time, carving out her own independent professional business was indeed almost heroic. Especially if the profession had to be accompanied by conventional social and cultural roles: being a

wife, being a mother, taking care of the family home, looking after the offspring. At the time as it is today, the graphic design profession allowed flexible management of daily time, but independence could be relative if it was not possible to achieve economic results of a certain size. This multiplicity of roles evidently “weighs” for women, if not more, differently than for men. And as such it should be considered as an additional element of evaluation and enhancement.

In more general terms, to understand the evolution of a professional practice and its relationship with society, production and industry, considering authors currently absent from great histories can be used to re-read the contours of the profession with greater objectivity. Until now defined and transmitted in a predominantly male key which, however, only partially reflects the same practice and production reality and therefore the society of those years that have been defined as the golden age of Italian graphic design.

References

- Bonfante, E. (1960). Iris e Bruno 'i disobbedienti'. *Linea Grafica*, (9/10), 337-344.
- Breuer, G., & Meer, J. (2012). *Women in Graphic Design*. Jovis Verlag.
- Buckley, C. (1986). Made in Patriarchy. Toward a Feminist Analysis of Women and Design. *Design Issues*, 3(2), 3-14.
- Castiglioni, V. (1964). Studio C + M Angeretti. *Linea Grafica*, (11/12), 293-300.
- De Benedittis, A. (2001). *I lavori delle donne nella storia del '900 italiano: dal dopoguerra a fine '60*. <http://www.ecn.org/reds/donne/cultura/forma-donnelavoro900cont1.html>.
- Dradi, M. (2016). Brunetta, Giulia, Umberta. Primi profili. In R. Riccini (Ed.), *Angelica e Bradamante. Le donne del design* (pp. 185-191). Il Poligrafo.
- Ferrara, M. (2012). Design and gender studies. *Pad*, 7(8). <http://www.pad-journal.net/design-and-gender-studies/?lang=it>.
- Gomez-Palacio, B. & Vit, A. (2008). *Women of Design. Influence and Inspiration from the Original Trailblazers to the New Groundbreakers*. How Books.
- Guida, F. E. & Grazzani, L. (2011). *The unbroken sign. Simonetta Ferrante, graphics between art, calligraphy and design*. Aiap Edizioni.
- Guida, F.E. (2015). Associazioni di Design: avvio alla professione, parità di genere. In V. Bucchetti (ed.), *Design e dimensione di genere. Un campo di ricerca e riflessione tra culture del progetto e culture di genere* (pp. 163-177). Franco Angeli.
- Guida, F. E. (2016). *Claudia Morgagni. Commitment as a Professional Model*. Aiap Edizioni.
- Guida, F. E. (2018). Women in Aiap's early days. Professionals and pioneers. In C. Ferrara, L. Moretti, & D. Piscitelli (Eds.), *Aiap Women in Design Award, vol. 2* (pp. 14-21). Aiap Edizioni.
- Gunetti, L. (2015). Archivio Albe e Lica Steiner al Politecnico di Milano. In M. Begozzi, & L. Steiner (Eds.), *Lica Steiner* (pp. 7-9). Edizioni Unicopli.
- Gunetti, L. (2018). Ornella Linke-Bossi: the project and the research. In C. Ferrara, L. Moretti, & D. Piscitelli (Eds.), *Aiap Women in Design Award, vol. 2* (pp. 26-29). Aiap Edizioni.

- Huber, M., Micheletto, L., Montaini, L., Neuburg, T., Sironi, G. & Steiner, A. (1964). *Due Dimensioni*. Editype.
- Kirkham, P. (2000). *Women Designers in the Usa, 1900- 2000. Diversity and Difference*. Yale University Press.
- Margolin, V. (2001). Can history be corrected ?. *inForm*, 13(3), 11-16. <https://chicagodesignarchive.org/resource/can-history-be-corrected>.
- Pansera, A., & Occeleppo, T. (2002). *Dal Merletto alla motocicletta. Artigiane/artiste e designer nell'Italia del Novecento*. Silvana Editoriale.
- Pansera, A. (2017). *Anita Klinz*. In R. Riccini (Ed.), *Angelica e Bradamante. Le donne del design* (pp. 77-90). Il Poligrafo.
- Piscitelli, D. (2015). *Muoversi sulle sabbie mobili*. In C. Ferrara, & D. Piscitelli (Eds.). *Aiap Women in Design Award, vol. 1* (pp. 14-18). Aiap Edizioni.
- Proctor, N. (1997). Training and Professionalism, 18th and 20th centuries. Italy. In D. Gaze (ed.). *Dictionary of Women Artistis. Volume 1* (pp. 106-108). Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers. <https://archive.org/details/dictionary-ofwome01gaze/page/156/mode/2up>.
- Rossi, C. (2009). Furniture, Feminism and the Feminine: Women Designers in Post-War Italy, 1945 to 1970. *Journal of Design History*, 22(3), 243-257.
- Rubino, L. (1979). *Le spose del vento. La donna nelle arti e nel design degli ultimi cento anni*. Bertani.
- Stavro, A. (2012). Beyond the Glass Ceiling. An open discussion. In G. Breuer, & J. Meer (Eds.). *Women in Graphic Design*. Jovis Verlag.
- Steiner, A. (2015). *Licalbe Steiner. Grafici partigiani*. Corraini.
- Studio Sironi (Ed.) (1972). *Due Dimensioni*. Grafiche A. Nava.
- Vergine, L. (1982). *L'arte ritrovata. Alla ricerca dell'altra metà dell'avanguardia*. Rizzoli.
- Waibl, H. (2011). *Grafica al femminile*. In M. Begozzi, & L. Steiner (Eds.), *Un libro per Lica. Lica Covo Steiner (1914-2008)* (239-239). Istituto Storico della Resistenza e della Società Contemporanea nel Novarese e nel Verbano Cusio Ossola "Piero Fornara".

IV

BIOGRAPHIES

Anna Barbara

Architect and Associate Professor in Interior and Spatial Design at Politecnico di Milano. She has been visiting professor at Tsinghua University, School of Art and Design, Beijing (China); Kookmin University, Seoul (South Korea); Hosei University, Tokyo (Japan) and many other international universities. She was Canon Foundation Fellow 2000 in Japan. Awarded by Premio Borromini, selected by Archmarathon and ADI-Index 2019. Sense/time_based design is her main topic developed in education, conferences, publications, curatorship and professional works.

Author of *Storie di Architettura attraverso i sensi* (Bruno Mondadori, 2000), *Invisible Architectures. Experiencing places through the senses of smell* (Skira, 2006) and *Sensi, tempo e architettura* (Postmedia Books, 2012), *Sensefulness, new paradigms for Spatial Design* (Postmedia Books, 2019) and many other publications.

In 2021 she will launch with POLIdesign the first international course in Olfactive Spatial Design.

anna.barbara@polimi.it

Elisa Bertolotti

Elisa Bertolotti works with storytelling, moving image and communication design. With a Ph.D and postdoc from Politecnico di Milano, Elisa is currently teaching design at the University of Madeira, Portugal.

She is also co-curator of the Atlantic Wonder research program, focusing on alternative methods for learning outdoors and developing new ways to foster innovation between design and the natural sciences.

elisa.bertolotti@staff.uma.pt

Letizia Bollini

PhD in Industrial Design and Multimedia Communication (Politecnico di Milano). Associate professor of Communication/Interaction/Transmedia Design at the Faculty of Design and Art, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano.

Research and design topics since 1995: interaction, experience, multimodal interface design, visual, social and spatial representation, with a strong focus on tech evolution, and accessibility in the field of Cultural and Intangible Heritage and Archives. Previously researcher at the Department of Psychology of the University of Milano-Bicocca (Theory and Technology of Communication; Psychosocial Science of Communication), professor at the Politecnico di Milano and faculty member of the HEC in User Experience Design, the University of Bologna (Internet Science) and the Milan State University (Digital Communication).

Coordinator of the Commission "Theoretical, historical and critical research and editorial projects" of the ADI Design Index, preselection of the Compasso d'Oro Award.

letizia.bollini@unibz.it

Valeria Bucchetti

She is Full Professor at the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano where she teaches "Visual Communication" in the Communication Design Degree and "Communication Design and Gender Culture" in the Design Master Degree (School of Design); she is Chair BSc + MSc Communication Design.

Her interest involves visual and gender identities in communication design field. She studies theoretical aspects of identity systems and their communication components and developed projects of basic and applied research. She is a member of the Ph.D Design board and of "Centro di Ricerca interuniversitario Culture di genere".

She won the "Compasso d'Oro" Design Award as co-author of the project for the multimedia catalogue of the Poldi Pezzoli Museum (Milan, 1995) and received Honourable Mention, Compasso d'Oro ADI (XXV), for the project "WeMi. La città per il welfare". She is author of several books: *La messa in scena del prodotto* (1999), *Packaging design* (2005), *Altre figure. Intorno alle figure di argomentazione* (2011), *Anticorpi comunicativi* (2012), *Un'interfaccia per il welfare* (2017), *Progetto e culture visive* (2018).

valeria.bucchetti@polimi.it

Francesca Casnati

PhD Candidate at the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano, she works in the research area involving communication design and stereotypes concerning social discriminations, specifically gender discriminations.

After the master degree in Communication Design, with a thesis about gender stereotypes in the communication field, she joined the research group DCxCG (Communication Design for Gender Cultures) contributing to projects on gender issues

and supporting the teaching activity on some courses at the School of Design – Politecnico di Milano – including the Communication Design and Gender Cultures course of the master degree.

francesca.casnati@polimi.it

Paola Ciandrini

Archivist and record manager by training and profession, member of the DAP Digital Archives Perspectives group of the Università di Macerata, curator of the Ibridamente.it project. Contract professor in Università di Macerata for Master FGCAD, contract professor in APD School of the Archivio di Stato of Milan. Research lines: records management system design, historical archives valorisation.

p.ciandrini@unimc.it

Cinzia Ferrara

Architect and Visual Designer, Cinzia Ferrara holds a PhD in Industrial Design: she is Assistant Professor in the Department of Architecture at the University of Palermo, where she performs a series of duties such as conducting research on Visual Communication Design and holding courses for both the BA in Industrial Design and the MA in Design & Culture of the Territory. She's also the course leader for a series of masters and workshops, and an organiser of cultural events, conferences and exhibitions. From 2015 to 2018, she has been National President of Aiap (the Italian Association for Visual Communication Design) after serving as Vice President from 2009 to 2015. In 2017, she was one of 100 designers selected to be World Design Ambassadors for the Italian Design Day.

She's author of books and essays published on national and international journals: she's also part of editorial committees, observatories and European projects. She lives and works in Sicily, which is a continent, rather than just an island.

cinzia.ferrara@unipa.it

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 committees in international conferences, reviewer for international scientific journals, and research evaluator for academic research application in NL and PT.

marinella.ferrara@polimi.it

Maria Àngels Fortea

PhD in Design at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Barcelona University (UB) and Degree on Advertising and Public Relations in the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). She is titular professor of the Design Degree and Coordinator of the Master's Degree in Research and Design Experimentation of Design College of Barcelona.

In the research field, she is member of GREDITS (Design and Social Transformation Research Group). She has specialized on Historical and Historiographical Research of Design. Her research work is focused on Pop Art Design, and specifically on the development of graphical Pop Art in Catalonia and Spain as a result of her PhD thesis.

She is currently interested on research projects that seed to make visible the contribution of female graphic designers.

mangels.fortea@bau.cat

Francesco E. Guida

Assistant professor at Politecnico di Milano (Department of Design, School of Design, Bachelor in Communication Design), he is secretary of the BSc + MSc Communication Design Courses. PhD in Design and Technology for the Enhancement of Cultural Heritage, he has more than 25 years of experience as a graphic design consultant.

Board member of Aiap (the Italian Association for Visual Communication Design), actually he is coordinator of activities and researches for the Graphic Design Documentation Centre (Aiap CDPG). Since 2013 he is a member of the editorial committee of *AIS/Design. Storia e Ricerche* journal and since 2014 of *PAD. Pages on Arts & Design* journal.

Starting from 1997 his contributions on graphic design and visual communication are published in journals, books and conference proceedings.

His main research activities are in the fields of visual identities, speculative and experience design, and graphic design micro-histories.

francesco.guida@polimi.it

Chella Quint

She is a Brooklyn, US-born, Sheffield, UK-based designer, writer, performer, researcher and founder of the Period Positive movement. In between performing feminist sketch comedy and studying for an MA in Education, she coined the term 'period positive' to describe the zeitgeist of her zines, art and craftivism, and developed the concept into a well-known desing initiative and campaign to find long-term solutions to menstrual illiteracy. She launched the first annual Period Positive Week in May 2019.

She has recently joined Lab4Living's 100 Year Life and Future Home project at Sheffield Hallam University. Her doctoral research explores ways to navigate aging and lifecycle changes where embodied shame can be a barrier to agency in co-design. She co-hosts the annual Sheffield Zine Fest and her zines are held in a number of international zine libraries and collections. She performs and exhibits regularly at science, literary and comedy festivals.

chellaquint@gmail.com

TI SENTI POCO BENE? AIAP HA TUTTE LE SOLUZIONI PER TE. SCOPRILE.



Aiap CDPG, the *Graphic Design Documentation Centre*. Working to collect, catalogue, archive, enhance and promote any documents related to graphic design and visual communication. These documents (originals as well layouts of projects, books, posters, prints, catalogues, correspondence, photographs) help reconstruct the history of graphic design in Italy and support research and educational activities, as it is the CDGP's intention to make these documents widely available.



Aiap
via A. Ponchielli, 3, Milano
aiap.it
[@Aiap_ita](https://twitter.com/Aiap_ita)



CONSERVARE. VALORIZZARE. L'ARCHIVIO DELLA GRAFICA ITALIANA. SCOPRILO.

Aiap CDPG, the *Graphic Design Documentation Centre*. Working to collect, catalogue, archive, enhance and promote any documents related to graphic design and visual communication. These documents (originals as well layouts of projects, books, posters, prints, catalogues, correspondence, photographs) help reconstruct the history of graphic design in Italy and support research and educational activities, as it is the CDGP's intention to make these documents widely available.



aiap
CDPG



Aiap
via A. Ponchielli, 3, Milano
aiap.it
[@Aiap_ita](https://www.instagram.com/Aiap_ita)



PAD. Pages on Arts and Design

International, peer-reviewed,
open access journal
ISSN 1972-7887

#19, Vol. 13, December 2020

www.padjournal.net



AIAP

associazione italiana design
della comunicazione visiva