

EVENTS/CAUSES

## Milan Design Week provides luxury brands platform for creative storytelling

April 15, 2016



*Dior Homme sets designed by M/M*

By SARAH JONES

As Milan Design Week brings a global creative community to the Italian city, luxury brands are leveraging the extra foot traffic through artistic installations and events.

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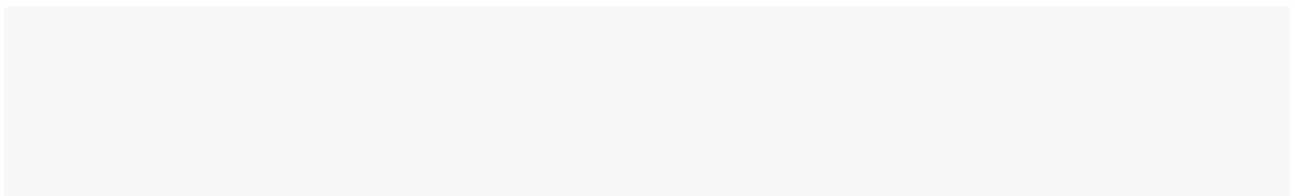
Comprising the milestone 55th annual furniture fair Salone del Mobile and the city-wide Furiosalone activities numbering more than 1,000, Milan Design Week has attracted participants from both the interior space and other design-centric categories, including jewelry, automotive and apparel. With 400,000 attendees from five continents descending on Milan this week, it offers a chance for brands to start a discourse on innovation and style.

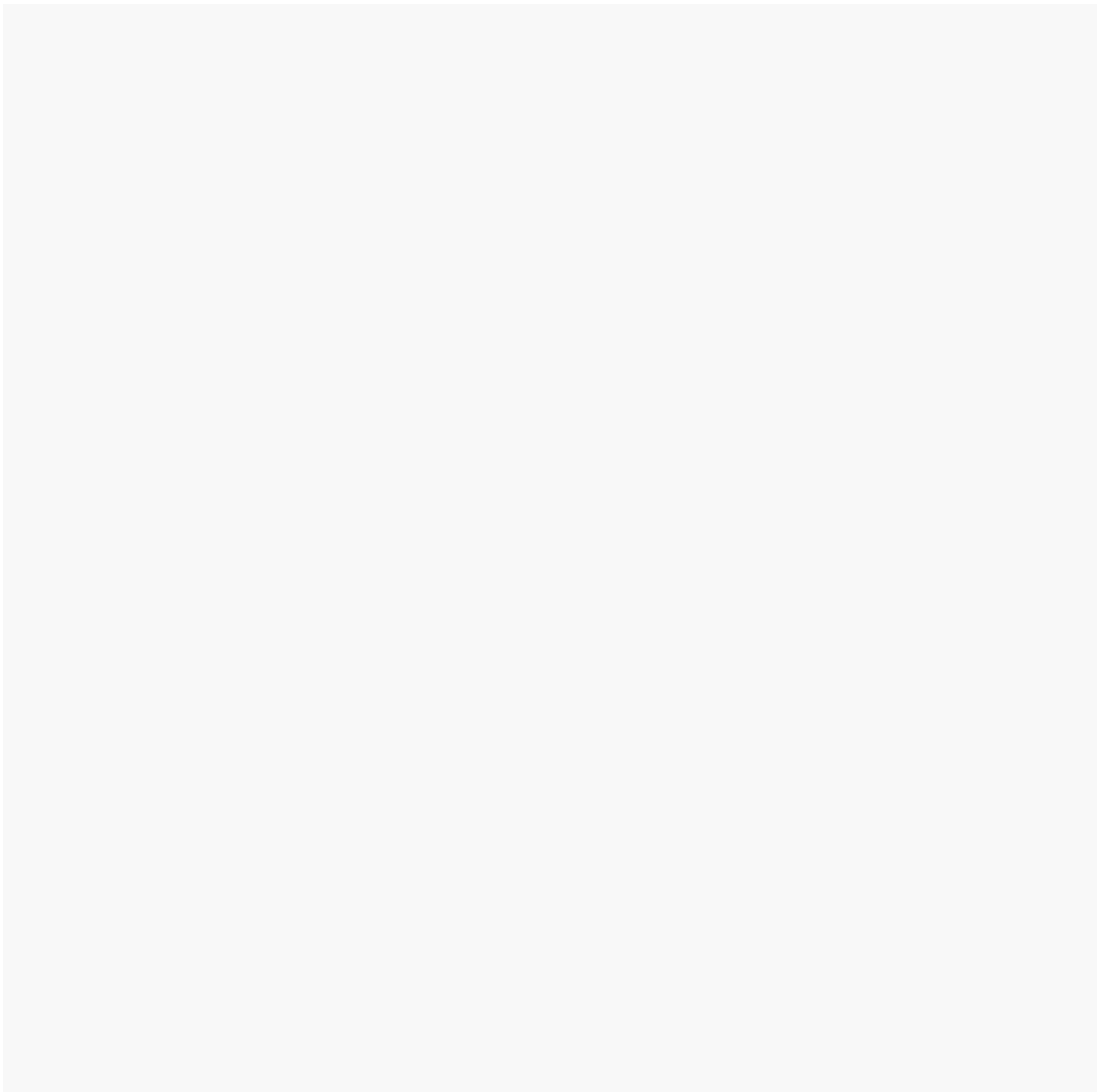
"Brands who intend to be seen or known as innovative and collaborative often do so by honoring good design and the artisans, creating a strategic advantage with their client base who align with this attribute," said Rebecca Miller, CEO of **Miller & Company**, New York. "By maintaining a presence in Milan during the week of Salone del Mobile where 400,000 visitors from 160 countries come to discover what is new in the world of design from furnishings, art, fashion to food they have the opportunity to enjoy unprecedented exposure to buyers, enthusiasts and the press.

"Collaborations are in full gear connecting experiences with all of the senses, often reimagining iconic shapes in new mediums, taking what may have traditionally been interior products for body and home and scaling them in various mediums to be enjoyed outdoors renewing the sense of tradition with innovation," she said.

### Creative approach

Playing off its iconic apparel, Spazio Missoni built "Knitown," a city of knitwear buildings depicted through patterns. Envisioned by artist Aldo Lanzini and creative directed by Angela Missoni, the installation is hosting live performances.





2/2 Postcards from #Knitown: images from Missoni's #MDW16 installation.

A photo posted by Missoni (@missoni) on Apr 12, 2016 at 1:04pm PDT

This is running concurrently with Missoni's display at Salone del Mobile, which highlights its Fireworks collection made of flameproof fabrics, as well as its showroom focus on its waterproof outdoor collection Floral Galaxy.

At the Accademia di Brera, Baccarat is hosting an exhibit titled "Lumieres: Out of the Box," in which new collaborations with designer Marcel Wanders, lighting designer Hans van Bentem and artist Arik Levy are displayed within giant shipping containers, a reference to the wooden boxes that have carried Baccarat chandeliers to global destinations throughout its 250 years. The collection contains a number of firsts for the brand, including its first spherical chandelier, the first almost 8-foot vase and its first time using precious stones in a lighting design.



*Baccarat's "Lumieres out of the box"*

Vitra, which produces furniture, translated a 10-year research project into a vibrant installation at its temporary pop-up CasaVitra. "Color Machine" draws from the Vitra Color & Material Library, the result of designer Hella Jongerius' insights into the brand's hues, with color wheels and spinning tops.



*CasaVitra*

Dior is celebrating the relationship between M/M and its menswear creative director Kris Van Assche, who has tapped the duo to design the sets for Dior Homme runway shows. Elements of the sets, including spring 2014's primary colored rectangular structures and the high stools of spring 2015 are on display at Milan's Plusdesign gallery.

At its boutique, Pomellato is staging a window display commissioned from artist Uros Mihic, which depicts an interior scene complete with miniature chairs through the medium of paper.

Valextra similarly staged an installation at its Milan boutique, teaming with artist Lorenzo Vitturi on "Inside Out."



*Valextra's Inside Out*

Bulgari took inspiration from its B.zero1 collection for an installation in the gardens of its hotel in Milan. Oversize rings in gold are linked to form a triangle in the display designed by NaNa Architecture.



*Bulgari installation*

Aston Martin is complementing a display of its licensed furniture crafted by Formitalia at the show with a private event celebrating its DB11 at the Rosa Grand Hotel. The automobile is the first designed under the brand's new "Second Century" initiative.

The automaker is also staging an AM37 powerboat exhibition at the Larusmiani concept boutique on Via Montenapoleone, the heart of Milan's high-end shopping district ([see story](#)).

"The collaboration with Formitalia on the Aston Martin furniture collection is a beautiful mix of design, technology

and style," said Marek Reichman, Aston Martin chief creative officer, in a brand statement. "I'm looking forward to the reaction to the DB11 in Milan, a city famed for its love of design."

Yoox.com, along with Fondazione Cologni del Mestieri and Living, is paying tribute to artisanship by pairing 16 designers with 16 craftspeople, creating a dialogue between the two interwoven fields through the production of 16 masterpieces. "Doppia Firma," which translates to double signature, brings to light rare Italian skills and materials, including rust printing and lustre glazed ceramics.

#### *Doppia Firma: a tribute to Italian creativity and craftsmanship*

The result of these collaborations are on display at the Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana, and project sponsor Yoox.com is featuring the creations on its Web site.

"Milan is the design capital of the world," said Luca Martines, president off-season, Yoox Net-A-Porter Group. "To participate in Milan Design Week is a great point of pride for our brand, and we are especially proud of this year's partnership with the Fondazione Cologni dei Mestieri d'Arte and *Living*. The Doppia Firma project is a testament to Yoox.com's dedication and commitment to supporting the Italian traditions of artisanal craftsmanship and innovative design.

"Since the launch of the design area in 2006, Yoox.com has always placed great importance on establishing ourselves within the design community," he said. "The Doppia Firma project allows us to support highly talented designers and local artisans while celebrating our Italian heritage. We hope this serves as a reminder that Yoox.com is one of the world's greatest resources for art and design, in addition to fashion."

Even those who do not traditionally create home goods joined in on the fun to commemorate Salone del Mobile's anniversary.

Berluti worked with wooden furniture maker Ceccotti on a line aimed at the modern gentleman, including a Paraventi dressing screens.



*Berluti Paraventi screen*

Also bridging fashion and furniture is Fratelli Rossetti, which is presenting "Waking Light," a project designed by Servomuto, a brand that makes handmade lampshades. Against the backdrop of the bright installation, the shoemaker is highlighting a limited-edition pair of sneakers, which use a style from the spring collection as a canvas for fluorescent paint.

This is part of Fratelli Rossetti's New Artisan initiative, which showcases up-and-coming craftsmen in the brand's Milan boutique ([see story](#)).





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