

HOME FURNISHINGS

Made in Italy: Milan's interior design renaissance

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Press conference for Salone del Mobile Milano 2017. Image courtesy Salone del Mobile. Milano

By [Ana Andjelic](#)

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Next week, designers of all stripes will gather in Milan, Italy, for the 56th annual Salone del Mobile Milano exhibition. In itself, this would not be a noteworthy development since design gatherings happen around the world all the time.

But this is the country that gave us Rinascimento, la bella figura and the expression "sanza tentazioni, senza onore." It also gave us some of the most stylish people in modern history, and an enduring fascination of everyone else with creativity, beauty and the uniqueness of Italian lifestyle.

"Creativity is about artistic vision, crafting vigor and exuberant vitality: all natural traits of Italians," claims Umberto Angeloni, chairman/CEO of Raffaele Caruso, in WWD.

Everything that is happening in Italy when it comes to design is noteworthy.



DeLightful. Image courtesy Salone del Mobile. Milano April 12-17, 2016

Preview video of Salone del Mobile. Milano April 4-9, 2017

By design

Milan itself has always been known for its highly crafted and handmade products that are at the same time contemporary, creative and innovative.

In fashion design only, the city has been seen a recent boom, with Milan Fashion Week 2015 being the most prosperous ever.

When it comes to furniture design, Milan benefited from the renaissance in the 1980s and early 1990s when The Memphis Group defined the era's postmodern lines.

Now we are seeing a new renaissance, with the values of inconspicuousness, transparency, sustainability and meaningful consumption.

There is a generational turnover in interior design, with new, young and fresh generation of designers infusing creative vitality, curiosity and innovation in the industry and garnering fans and recognition in the process.



A joyful sense at work. Image courtesy Salone del Mobile.Milano

This discussion with Cecilia Maresca, who along with her sister Elena comprises the creative duo behind London-based [Maresca Interiors](#), uncovers what makes a modern interior designer and design trends on the eve of [Salone del Mobile.Milano April 4-9](#).

1. Why do you love design?

Getting into the world of [interior] design happened to us as a natural step on our career path.

Like most Italians we have ingrained in our culture and upbringing a very defined sense of aesthetic. The attention to the design's world and the devotion for details was furthermore inherited from our mother's side, an archaeologist and restorer of Japanese lacquers.

Whilst the passion for Brazilian modern furniture is fueled by our family's ties with this land, in which our ancestors immigrated at the beginning of the 1900s.

2. Creativity is today regarded differently than 10 or even five years ago. Where would you think that today's most creative ideas come from? How is this different than in the past?

To be creative is the ability to observe, reflect on the observations and then make meaningful connections.

In today's world, more than ever before the only way to separate oneself from the rest is not with the fancy resume or GPA one has attained. It is how well one thinks for themselves and actually uses their own creativity to separate themselves from everyone else.

Creativity today has changed not just in terms of accessibility, but in the way that is considered a major asset and is highly valued in the corporate world.

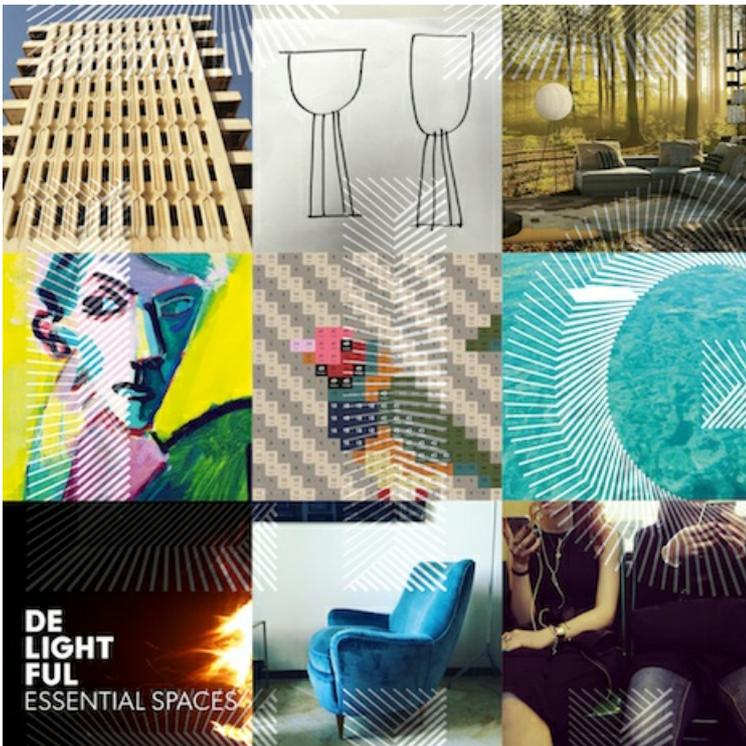


Cecilia (left) and Elena Maresca, founders of London-based Maresca Interiors

3. What do you think are the most exciting things happening right now on the global design scene right now? Who is leading them? Who has the most power?

Due to the influence from multicultural exchange, global economical flows and communication technologies, the new ways of architectural and urban organization are by far the most interesting and exciting things happening in terms of design today.

The raising of new eco-cities and the reshaping of [the] big metropolis into socially harmonious, environmentally friendly and resource-efficient places to live opened a new dimension into the design world. Different players are on the forefront like Norman Foster, BIG, Steve Holl.



DeLightful essential spaces. Image courtesy Salone del Mobile.Milano April 12-17, 2016

4. If you'd have to describe your business in three words, what would you say?
Timeless. Sophisticated. Fun.

5. These days, one can be a food critic without working for New York Times or a collector without having millions of dollars. What would you say is a good marketing strategy in the world with so much creative output? How does a creator find an audience? How does an audience find a creator?
Find your niche and work your way into mainstream from there, or not.

6. What are modern design connoisseurs willing to pay for today? What are they looking for?
Quality. Design. Uniqueness.

7. What are you offering to the global design connoisseurs that they can't find elsewhere?
Our studio specializes in designing, directing and implementing interiors for residential houses and sourcing midcentury Brazilian furniture.

Having worked for years in the fashion and design field, myself (Cecilia) as PR for some of the top fashion brands and ecommerce such as Vivienne Westwood and farfetch.com and my sister Elena as interior designer for London's coveted firms Waldo Works and Russell Sage Studio, Maresca Interiors epitomize our DNA: a mix of exotic elements of Brazilian modernism fused with the timeless elegance of Italian design.

We bring a new aesthetic on the table that is influenced by our wild Italian-Brazilian roots and our passion for midcentury furniture that we source from both countries.

DeLightful essential spaces - a project by Ciarmoli Queda Studio

8. Is there a common thread that connects the products they make? Is there an underlying current reflected in them all?

The rich and sensually textured hardwoods, the grace and simplicity of the design and their overall uniqueness.

9. How do you see your business evolving?

Our goal is to become a point of reference in Europe for Brazilian modern design's dealing as well as to create a very solid trademark style. And who knows maybe one day make our own furniture.



Kitchen designed by Maresca Interiors for a flat in London's Chelsea district

10. What do you personally fall in love with when it comes to design? What makes for a coveted design product? Quality. Design. Uniqueness.



Ana Andjelic

Ana Andjelic is senior vice president and global strategy director at [Havas LuxHub](#), New York. Reach her at ana.andjelic@havasluxhub.com.