

HOME FURNISHINGS

Fornasetti contrasts modernist furniture with classical art in Roman museum

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The exhibition juxtaposes Fornasetti's design sensibilities with classical art. Image credit: Fornasetti

By DANNY PARISI

Italian decorative arts company Fornasetti is combining the elegant majesty of ancient and classical artworks housed at the Museum of Palazzo Altemps with the modern, surrealist style of brand's furniture.

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Fornasetti's Citazioni Pratiche, or Practical Quotes in English, will see the atelier's contemporary design interacting with the ancient artwork that the museum specializes in. The combination is yet another example of the symbiotic and natural relationship that can form between art and luxury goods.

"No matter how Athena, Ares, or even a less hieratic Bacchus, drunk and supported by a Satyr, may seem to come from a planet far away in space and time, and no matter how alien we may appear to their eyes, it is unquestionably here that the roots of our culture are still to be found today," said **Barnaba Fornasetti**, son of Fornasetti founder Piero Fornasetti and designer of the exhibition. "Bringing here the fantasies and creations of my father and myself, exposing them to the gaze not only of contemporary visitors, but also of these great classical works, Valeria and I felt it necessary to maintain a respectful distance and establish the exhibition in that space between familiarity and unfamiliarity that marks our relationship with the past of classical art, attempting to use this space to build a dialogue articulated across a spectrum of transgressions and respectful thoughts."

Practical quotes

The relationship between art and luxury goods has always been a close one and the distinction, especially over time, between the two can get blurred.

Fornasetti is making this comparison even more explicit through a collaboration with the Museum of Palazzo Altemps in Rome.

The museum is home to a number of classical works of art ranging from ancient Roman sculptures to timeless Renaissance paintings.



Some of the art on display at the Museo di Palazzo Altemps. Image credit: Fornasetti

Among this prestigious and old collection, Fornasetti is positioning its modernist take on furniture design, allowing the two styles to contrast and interact before visitors' eyes.

The Fornasetti pieces are drawn from the entire breadth of the atelier's history, including designs by founder Piero Fornasetti and his son Barnaba, who also designed the staging of the exhibition.

In a move meant to encourage people of all economic classes to experience the unique but related styles of art on display and to celebrate the 20th year of the museum's opening to the public, the first day will have free admission for all who wish to see the art.

Citazioni Pratiche was curated by Silvana Annicchiarico of the Triennale Design Museum and Alessandra Capodiferro, head of Museum of Palazzo Altemps.

Art and design

Collaborations between luxury brands and art collections have been quite popular this year.

For example, U.S. fashion label Calvin Klein has been granted unprecedented access to Andy Warhol's archives through a multi-year partnership with the late artist's foundation.

PVH Corp.-owned Calvin Klein has entered a partnership with The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, which will see the fashion brand financially support Mr. Warhol's namesake organization's endowment. The Andy Warhol Foundation uses its endowment to distribute grants to support the creation, presentation and documentation of contemporary visual art ([see story](#)).

Private aviation firm VistaJet, known for its partnerships with various travel brands to create unique guest experiences, is flying into new territory with a partnership with auctioneer Christie's.



Some of the art on display at the Museo di Palazzo Altemps. Image credit: Fornasetti

Sponsoring a special art exhibit, Vista Jet is looking to Christie's to bring an immersive experience for art fanatics. The Collection of Peggy and David Rockefeller, collected by the namesake philanthropists, features a range of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works of art that will travel around the world and be auctioned off for charity by Christie's ([see story](#)).

Despite an overall decline in the art market over the past two years, sales remain strong in the top three nations for art consumption: the United States, the United Kingdom and China.

This information comes from UBS, which released a research report on the state of the global art market in collaboration with Art Basel Miami Beach, Dec. 7-10. Slight but significant drops in sales of art over the last year combined with strong showings in a few top countries show that the global art trade is consolidating into a few key epicenters ([see story](#)).

By collaboration with the art world, luxury brands are able to elevate their own products to the status of art and draw attention from the wealthy consumers who regularly shop for art and high-quality design for their homes.

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