

ALTAROMA

A.I. PROVE TECNICHE DI TRASMISSIONE

A.I. Artisanal Intelligence

6 – 9 July 2017

Guido Reni District

Via Guido Reni, 7

Curated by Clara Tosi Pamphili and Alessio de' Navasques

An open but layered environment celebrates the need to keep on trying, reinventing scenes and costumes to give sense again to daily life and to transmit other signals.

“Prove Tecniche di Trasmissione” (lit. broadcasting tests) was an experimental programme which, in the early Seventies, showed images designed to test the chromatic effects of the new colour TV. Today, it is also the title of the 14th edition of **A.I. Artisanal Intelligence**, which, for the first time, promotes not only the work of young fashion designers and artisans, but also of costume designers who studied in Rome.

In collaboration with the **Accademia di Costume & Moda**, which was founded in Rome more than 50 years ago and which was the first academy not to separate fashion and costume in its training programmes, with two famous **theatrical tailor’s shops**, Luigi Piccolo’s **Sartoria Farani** and **the One**, and with **Pompei** for the shoes, this year A.I. focuses on the dimension separating tests and actual programmes.

The exhibition challenges a commonly accepted idea of chronology and definition of what is finished as beautiful: tests are no longer a passage, but a state of perfection, because they are still linked to studying, experimenting and the infinite. It is also the space where fashion and costume blend in a typically Roman creative dynamic.

Everything will be designed as a fluid place, where tests represent a temporary, non-definitive decision, where the programme is the ideal screen in which a project to be shown to others is checked.

The work of artist **Isabella Ducrot** opens the exhibition, which focuses on the various stages of preparation, from the artist studying the dress to the designer working on it on the worktable. The exhibition continues with the costumes by **Farani** for the last black-and-white television programme and for the dance routines of the first colour television programmes of the Italian State television. The last part of the exhibition focuses on the costumes by **Gianluca Falaschi**, which were made by Sartoria Farani and the One for “*L’Italiana in Algeri*” and “*Ciro in Babilonia*” – winner of the Abbiati prize for costumes – at the Rossini Opera Festival. The **Pompei** shoes for these creations represent the linkage between dress and costume and they anticipate contemporary trends.

Fashion becomes the tool that celebrates the importance of time, execution and practice with the work of seven Italian brands and three foreign ones, which were selected for their capacity to combine vision with the concrete ability of execution. For the accessories, three very different examples of craftsmanship and design have been selected: **Wali Mohammed Barrech**, **Trakatan** and **Roberto Scarantino**. Experimentations and reinvention of the sartorial approach are instead visible in the works of **Marie Louise Vogt**, **Bav Tailor**, **Fase Factory**, **Alisée Yin Chen**, **Apnoea**, **Giuseppe Buccinnà** and **Asciari**.

Rome is the theatre-city par excellence, but it is also the place where fashion and costume follow the same creative dynamics: invention, fused with the artisanal dimension, is the same for both fashion and costume houses, which have always collaborated.

The exhibition focuses at the same time on the dimensions of testing and programme broadcasting interpreted as representation, maintaining that dresses are also stage costumes and that they are one of the most powerful means of communication.

ARTIST:

ISABELLA DUCROT

Isabella Ducrot’s work is a perfect synthesis of the message which A.I. has tried to send for years: the value of reworking and reinterpreting archives, textile and artisanal research, the relationship between fashion and art with the ultimate goal of sharing knowledge. These are the principles followed for the selection of the works of this artist, who was chosen to symbolically mark the access to the stage of the exhibition. The

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painted paper of the “Abiti” (Dresses) series and the large backcloth prepared in 2016 by Marcello Panni for the opera “Hanjo” immediately invite visitors to think about the idea of “unfinished”, of an open artwork, of something which is poetically perfect in its undefined and test-like nature. The structure, texture and lightness of certain fibres give the artist endless possibilities for painting experimentations, in an osmosis of space and sign. It is an impalpable, ethereal type of painting which travels on the three dimensions of the fabric through shades of emotions and memories. Her work originates from a vast collection of ancient fabrics, coming mostly from the East, which Isabella has found during her many trips to China, India, Turkey and central Asia. Dismantled and analysed, the fabrics are then put back together in a new artistic form which sees no borders between the different materials and textures. Her passion for Eastern cultures, in particular for the Indian one, gives Isabella the freedom to combine different forms of art, from fashion to painting, without the need for any category or border.

Isabella Ducrot has exhibited her works in several galleries and museums in Rome, Naples, Milan, Paris, Berlin, New York and Delhi.

She has also worked for theatres, creating backcloths for the stage, for concerts and ballets, such as Filarmonica di Roma, Balletto del Sud di Lecce and Teatro Palladium.

COSTUME DESIGNER:

GIANLUCA FALASCHI

A leading personality in the new generation of costume designers, Gianluca Falaschi has studied in Rome at the Accademia di Costume & Moda. He has been chosen for this exhibition because his work is very representative of this period, in which fashion and costume influence each other without limits. His refined work is based on the importance given to making things in close collaboration with the artisans who work in of tailor’s shops and who make accessories. He has worked with some of the most renowned contemporary directors, contributing to the success of international shows. The two works on display have been chosen to describe the artistic and artisanal skills of Falaschi, who closes the exhibition with a “finished” but unreal work, i.e. garments designed to play a part. At the end of the exhibition, vision becomes real in the other theatre, which is opposite and equal to the one of Isabella Ducrot. The two works by Gianluca Falaschi, with their references to early 20th-century fashion, to Beardsley’s black-and-white, to Poirot’s coats and to the coloured ones inspired by the Seventies, are a perfect – sewn – synthesis of the ideas of testing and programme broadcasting.

DESIGNERS:

MARIE LOUISE VOGT

Born in Herford, in Germany, she has graduated from the University of Applied Sciences of Hamburg. Her activity is marked by the constant research and experimentation of artisanal techniques, with an aesthetic approach that is clearly visible in the luxurious and multicoloured pieces of crochet. New silhouettes are defined by a careful attention to materials and colours. The SOFT EDGES collection is characterized by hand-knitted tops, corsets, viscose raffia pullovers and skirts, lurex and wool yarns, using mainly black, white, silver, red, light blue and light pink.

BAV TAILOR

Born in London of Indian origins, she is a nomad in the spirit. Because of her upbringing and her family’s travels, she has lived in different continents, thus getting to know various cultures and religions and developing an innate sensibility towards the whole of mankind. Bav Tailor launches her eponymous brand of sustainable luxury fashion, intended for the next generation, which will be well-aware of ethical issues. Blending the best materials to be certified as natural and recycled, her collection is marked by geometric silhouettes inspired by Eastern design, architecture and philosophies. The products of the BAV TAILOR brand are 100% made in Italy and environmentally sustainable – two distinctive aspects of its ethos.

WALI MOHAMMED BARRECH

Born and raised in Karachi, in Pakistan, Wali moved to Germany when he was 14. After earning a master’s degree from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Antwerp in 2012, the next year, in Copenhagen, he founded

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his eponymous brand of clothing and accessories, Wali Mohammed Barrech. The WMB FRAMESERIES is a combination of memories, models and references which take the material form of bags: the ideas of travelling and displacement are visible through graphic signs in the collection which create an artistic, but also functional and convenient mood. Every WMB collection is marked by a strong mix between the passion for artisanal techniques and the experimentation of new shapes: every bag is the result of a careful combination of luxurious leathers and rarely used technical materials such as foam and plastic.

FASE FACTORY

The brand name is intended to celebrate the value of the different phases in the creation of a fashion item: a garment is indeed closely related to its place of birth and to the production chain, which is organized in phases. This street-casual line is marked by a cutting-edge technological innovation entirely made in Italy. This new brand has been conceived, developed and produced by La Rocca, an Italian company specialized in luxury sportswear, and by Flavia Grazioli, an emerging designer in this sector. The technical skills acquired at the Politecnico University by the young designer, inspired by Japanese fashion and culture, combine with the experience of a company with a long manufacturing and specialist tradition to create a new story based on the knowledge of techniques and fabrics and on the contemporary vision of style.

ALYSÉE YIN CHEN

Time and its dimension are celebrated by sculpted, soft and thin shapes, designed to move, deconstructed and re-contextualized to show the importance of change. The design is guided by a psychological journey which finds a model of reference in nature and in the constant organic changes that occur in every instant all around the world. Born in Taipei, in Taiwan, Alysée now works in Figeac, in France, where she creates sophisticated pret-à-porter collections capable of giving a new shape to femininity.

APNOEA

*“Here and there
his brown skin hung in strips
like ancient wallpaper,
and its pattern of darker brown
was like wallpaper”*

These verses by Elizabeth Bishop, taken from the poem “The Fish”, have been the inspiration for the SS18 collection by Apnoea. Apnoea is a suspension, a combination of innovative materials and artisanal work entirely made in Italy. Apnoea is a new way to conceive our second skin. It is the result of teamwork – something unique considering the individualism that dominates the sector – as young, yet experienced talents have created a new, refined, avant-garde brand. The minimalist design focuses on shape to put the fabrics together in an alternative way: gabardine, poplin, organza and crêpe de chine, but also PVC, chosen as a representative material of the Apnoea mood.

GIUSEPPE BUCCINNA'

A fashion designer based in Milan, thanks to his degree in Civil Engineering from the Politecnico University and to his diploma in pattern-making and sewing from the Istituto Secoli, Giuseppe makes his creations by combining strictly technical elements with large-volume, harmonious shapes. His research is based on the study of the light absorbed and reflected by the individual fabrics, which are then knitted as a combination of layers. His work expresses an endless return to the asymmetric shapes typical of human nature, accompanied by shades inspired by the works of Nicola Samorì and Alberto Burri. The soft silk is decorated with pleats and nuances that fade towards black, the colour of darkness, an oneiric element which gives harmony to the whole collection.

ASCIARI

Asciari was founded with the goal of creating an essential and timeless style, based on precise aesthetic and cultural canons – a set of values cherished by its founders, two siblings and their mother. Immersed in the aesthetic, creative and cultural charm of Sicily, Federica, Pietro and Marta maintain that the balance and good taste of well-done things are the foundations for artistic and artisanal action. In archaic Sicilian, the verb *asciari* means “to meet up, look for, create a meeting”. The brand Asciari intends to express an essential nature and aesthetic purity through high-quality materials and a careful attention to the details of geometric and minimalist shapes, which are created through natural fabrics and the expert touch of Italian tailors.

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TRAKATAN

Trakatan is a way of being, a philosophy which, with artisanal technique, design and high-quality materials, intends to give value again to the manual work of human beings. Time ensures the unique implementation of a creative process that starts from an idea, but which progresses along an unforeseeable path linked to constant checking: every bag is treated like a sculpture which originates from a sign and then becomes a shape. Design adds to the creative artefact versatile characteristics which make it unique and undefinable. Every item can be customized and gives the person who wears it the power to complete a process which reaches aesthetic harmony through sharing.

ROBERTO SCARANTINO

The accessories by Roberto Scarantino, a young creative and Roman artisan with a passion for art and haute couture, are marked by winding volumes, similar to the ones found in Zaha Hadid's architecture. More than 60 years of work are needed to hand-make every item by putting together stripes of fabric to create enveloping and whirling shapes. This meditation exercise takes haute couture techniques to extremes in order to create seductive and precious accessories. Different spatial planes and concentric circles create silhouettes that appear to constantly move because of light refraction. The indefinite shapes of spirals give a sense of dynamism, like the petals of a flower that is about to open, thus celebrating that moment of tension.