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**IN CONVERSATION
WITH DESIGN DOYENNES**
PATRICIA URIQUIOLA
NINA YASHAR
ELISA OSSINO

**MILAN
DESIGN WEEK**

SHINING A LIGHT ON EUROLUCE 2023

**DES
VOIC**

SIGN CES

WORDS **Sophie Lewis**



Photography courtesy of Federica Biasi

FEDERICA BIASI

Federica Biasi established her design studio in Milan in 2015, working across product design, interior design and art direction.

You began your design career in Italy and spent years exploring Nordic design. How did this influence your work?

Purity and immediate simplicity define my work, while cleanliness in design and shapes are the Nordic influences that inform my work.

In 2015, you established your namesake studio. As a product designer and art director, does your approach to these two disciplines differ?

It is similar but different. When I work as a designer, I create something that represents me and, from my perspective, has a valid concept. As an art director, I work on the company's strategy and values, always trying to give my touch, but the basis must always be the brand's communication rather than the single product.

When we profiled you at Maison Objet Paris in 2018, you anticipated the impact of technology on design. What role does technology play in the way you design today?

I would still like to work with technology. However, it is still difficult for furniture design to relate to these topics and the metaverse, but sooner or later, the worlds will unite.

Have you observed an evolution in your approach to designing furniture and objects?

Designing is not just an evolution of one's work but an evolution of oneself. It's an ongoing process – so the answer is yes. I understand who I want to be and what I want to communicate better, and I'll try more and more to work to bring industrial processes into the industry, also with materials and ensure that products are not so distant from man.

You describe it as your mission to design 'gently' in a noisy world. Can you share an example of how your product designs cultivate quietness?

I always match harmonious colours and materials. I think the design doesn't always have to be 'extravagant', but I think there is an extreme difficulty in creating something that is both unseen and essential at the same time.

For Milan Design Week last year you collaborated with Italian design and craftsmanship brand Mingardo on a fundraising initiative – "A Flame For Research" – alongside industry leaders such as Jaime Hayon, Luca Nichetto and Patricia Urquiola. What was the importance of this collaboration to your studio?

Well, it was a great opportunity. It was very nice to participate, flanked by names making history in design. The most interesting thing was how each piece, in total freedom, strongly represented the author who designed it. In my opinion, having a sign is one of the fundamental foundations for creating one's own path.

You've said before that you value long-term collaborations. Why are these relationships integral to producing your best creative work?

I believe that to do the most incisive and effective job possible, there must be the human factor and the desire to get to know each other and grow mutually.

A year ago, I completed a five-year collaboration with Mingardo to follow a new path with Decoratori Bassanesi, a brand of coverings that are doing very inspiring things. Changing is equally important as changing perspective.

You've worked as a creative consultant forecasting colour, material and finishes for brands. As a designer, how do you anticipate these shifts – and shifts in lifestyle?

At the beginning of my career, I worked a lot in trend forecasting, and even now, it is a tool I use when doing artistic direction. The world is moving towards being more natural with sustainable colours and materials, in contrast with growing technology.

What did you present at Milan Design Week 2023?

I created a big installation for the historic brand Gervasoni1882 named *TAO*, where rooms of pure colours follow the rhythm of the natural world, leading the visitor on a journey, celebrating the past production of the brand while highlighting the new. The exhibition presented the new *Samet* sofa, *Hashi* and *Brisé* outdoor collections.

What do you do in your downtime?

I try to walk. As soon as I can, I escape to the mountains to be surrounded by silence.



Federica Biasi in her studio.
Photography courtesy of
Federica Biasi.

The newly-released
Samet sofa by
Federica Biasi for
Gervasoni.



And finally, your favourite:

Milan bar?

I generally love bars. I don't have a favourite in Milan, but one I'm most fond of is Bar Magenta, where I used to have breakfast every morning in high school. In the evening during design week, it's a great option.

Milan restaurant?

I am very passionate about cooking, and the best haute cuisine is at Contraste – where the chef Perdomo of Peruvian origin, creates a truly unique experience.

Milan showroom or store?

The Arabesque Milan Cult Store.