

SALONE DEL MOBILE 2012 – New horizons

Living Divani, the dynamic family-run firm with its **signature upholstery**, presents a new collection born of curiosity and the drive to experiment, to instil new genres, materials and balances into its geometrical world full of light, comfortable furniture.

In recent years it has followed a path of international openness and talent scouting among the new generation of designers, and in 2012 the firm is further extending its range of action, turning its eye towards distant horizons, seeking contacts, inspirations and key ideas from around the globe, for the evolution of its habitat. Enlightening relations grow stronger, such as that with Art Director **Piero Lissoni**, but we also see old favourites returning, as well as new discoveries: relations, cultures, sensitivities and experiences interweave in the new products, which emanate a blend of magic and desire, lightness and a cocoon effect.

Holding the reins in these new relations is **Carola Bestetti**, the second generation of Living Divani, bringing her enthusiasm and people skills to carry forward an important tradition, getting to grips with the dynamics of a market in a constant state of flux. An injection of femininity, aesthetic sensitivity and openness towards new regions of the globe, conveying the drive to capture new trends as they emerge and to establish new partnerships in strategic locations, particularly in Asia, which is currently one of the most fruitful areas for design.

This year, the greatest interpreter of the Living Divani style, **Piero Lissoni** extends the family of upholstered pieces from the brand with the new **Rod** sofa, with its distinctive slender back and light, airy shell, lined with inviting cushions. Raised up on 12 mm wide chrome-plated steel feet, screwed into the frame, Rod comes in set dimensions, as an armchair, bench and two- or three-cushion sofa, available in two different depths. Its distinction lies in the possibility of choosing different coverings for the shell and cushions – enhanced with quilted details and bold buttons – mixing finishes with striking two-tone and two-material effects and captivating leather/fabric combos.

For the night zone, Piero Lissoni brings us the new **Chemise Bed** and **Chemise Sofa-Bed**, which both echo the soft, enveloping lines and reassuringly classic design of the sofa from which they derive, created in 2010. In these products, minimal shapes are accompanied by maximum visual comfort, for those who do not wish to be parted from the harmonious softness of Living Divani even at night, and in their dreams.

The Milanese designer **Francesco Rota**, who skilfully balances neo-bourgeois touches with a more informal sense of relaxation, is the creator of the charming **Hinge** family of stools, with a slender metal structure that exudes measured elegance. Four light legs, joined together horizontally to provide comfortable footrests, topped by a slightly curved rectangular upholstered seat, in a range of colours, represent the ideal extension and complement for the Hinge family of tables, presented in 2010.

Living Divani renews its collaboration with **Nathan Yong**, the Asian designer whose work derives from a process of heartfelt thought, influenced by society and by Singaporean culture, and rooted in his childhood experiences. **Off Cut** bookcase is made by piecing together bits of solid walnut or oak, the off-cuts from processing larger wooden boards used to create other pieces of furniture. A light, ethereal construction, defined by what is removed, a subtle weave upholding invisible glass shelves and giving new life to material that would otherwise have gone for pulping, with a view to recycling and treating the environment with respect. **Stack Table** coffee tables on the other hand, focus on texture; comprising a set of three stackable containers of different heights, with a trestle structure and colourful shelves, which are lots of fun to rearrange, until you find your own favourite configuration.

The Rabbit and Tortoise collection alludes to the world of childhood and cartoons, to the stylised shapes of animals drawn by children. This family of occasional tables of various heights is designed by the young duo Timo Wong and Priscilla Lui, alias **Studio Juju**, also from Singapore. Seven tables, each a different shape and size, to be arranged so as to create flow within their space, making for

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constantly new ways of interacting, an experimental experience to be shared with the people who sit around the curves and use them in their everyday life. While the Rabbit model is shaped like a little bunny face, with two long ears pointing upwards, the cute Tortoise model depicts a head and shell, and the three Round tables A, B, C and two Long tables A and B, with different heights and dimensions, complete the range, offering a vast array of possible configurations.

2012 sees the continuation of the collaboration with emerging designer **Victor Vasilev**, born in Bulgaria, raised in Israel, trained in Denmark, and now working in Milan, who renews the success of Bukva bookcase with his new **Coffee Table B2**, which encloses magazines and other objects in an interplay of moving layers, with panels of different heights and sizes set over a square base. Available in a single 84 x 84 cm version that can stand alone or in multiples to create a larger composition, B2 seems like a miniature architectural structure, offering different perspectives according to the viewpoint.

From the imagination and creativity of **Giopato&Coombes**, the young designer duo - she Italian, he British - comes the armchair **Kiru**, with its name derived from the root of the Japanese word kimono, which means 'to dress'. Refined, with impeccable bearing and grace, it has soft, broad shapes and distinctive sartorial details in the fabric that folds over on the sides and back, like an haute couture dress. A bold, decorative look, that arose from a rethink of the construction technique: the internal structure consists of a tubular steel insert with polyurethane foam padding, meticulously wrapped in a simply pleated fabric, without any visible stitching.

Among the new finds for 2012 is the young Italian designer **Mario Ferrarini**, born in 1978, who shapes the unbroken line of his stool/table **Kalè** using Crystalplant, a cutting-edge technological composite material. An object that brings to mind celestial worlds, a space-age habitat made of purified forms developed around the simple geometry of a circle. Softened with a round cushion, which sits asymmetrically on the splayed seat, it transforms into a handy stool. Kalè can be used alone or to enhance an existing setting, and is particularly attractive in small groups, forming a constantly evolving imaginary floral landscape.

These are the ten new designs from Piero Lissoni, Francesco Rota, Nathan Yong, Studio Juju, Victor Vasilev, Giopato&Coombes and Mario Ferrarini, which will all feature at the Living Divani stand at the Salone del Mobile, alongside the best-loved products in the existing catalogue. The architectural showcase, designed by Lissoni, creates a scenario with a highly seductive cosmopolitan look, where the brand's sophisticated, contemporary proposals fit in seamlessly, proposing settings where home meets contract, as the firm reaches out to both sectors simultaneously.

The two large twin spaces, separated by Porro's Ex-Libris bookcase, feature Piero Lissoni's new Rod sofa in neutral tones, and in its various shapes and sizes. The 3-cushion sofa, on display in its two depths - 86 or 106 cm - and in the new sand-coloured linen fabric, is accompanied by the armchair and bench, both presented in dove-grey leather. Completing the scene are two Chromatic sofas with a black-tinted wooden frame and dove-grey linen fabric, the new Rabbit and Tortoise coffee tables from Studio Juju, and rugs Ceci n'est pas un baroque and Arabian Geometric. Part of the rug collection by Harry&Camila presented last year, they come in a new version created especially for this year's Salone del Mobile, with a range of orange tones and a stone-washed finish, making for uneven colouring and a pleasingly aged appearance.

In the back, a succession of 3 settings are separated by 6 new Off Cut bookcases by Nathan Yong, displayed in the two finishes walnut and oak, with their ethereal weave, which allows for visual contact between one area and the next.

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The first area is dedicated to NeoWall, an unmissable element in the Living Divani collection, featuring a pleasing asymmetry formed by assembling modular elements of different heights. 2 compositions in ice-blue linen fabric are complemented by Victor Vasilev's B2 coffee tables and 3 Confident armchairs in dark brown leather, with their rounded lines and their seat shell that gives shape to the back and arms, offering the snuggest of comfort.

The central area focuses on Ile Club, with two sand-coloured leather sofas and a dove-grey linen chaise longue, in which the slender metal frame delicately supports the big, cosy upholstery above, for the ultimate in comfort.

The last area to the right plays on the bright colours of a multicoloured Extrasoft composition in woollen cloth, where each piece is proposed in a different shade of orange or purple. Around it are the new Kalè stools by Mario Ferrarini, with cushions that echo the same colours, and two Kiru armchairs by Giopato&Coombes in woollen cloth.

Alongside the reception, which features Francesco Rota's Hinge stools in the high version, a staircase leads to the upper floor, an ideal location for one-to-one meetings with clients.

Here, the first lounge area sets two Chemise sofas alongside a Chemise XL in light-coloured fabric, with soft cushions that offer maximum comfort, and three reassuringly-shaped Chaffeuse armchairs in white Loden fabric, while in the centre are Stack modular coffee tables by Nathan Yong.

A more playful and informal meeting area is provided by 3 specially-created tables, surrounded by Cabrio coloured vinyl chairs on wheels and Hinge stools by Francesco Rota in the low version, proposed with total white frame and covering; 4 leather Reader chairs, in the armchair and bergère versions.

This is the Living Divani presentation for the Salone del Mobile 2012: a story told by multiple voices, a sequence of pieces to be endlessly combined, coordinated and configured, featuring carefully designed geometries, clean lines and pure proportions, for a living space that is minimal, but abounding with atmosphere and superlative quality.

What's more...

The balanced, essential design of Living Divani features in the **stands of some of Italy's most prestigious furniture names**, including Porro, Lema, Gallotti&Radice, Res and F.lli Fantini, completing and complementing their settings, and it is also an indispensable presence at the hothouse of new talents that is the **Salone Satellite**, with prototypes created in 2011 as part of the ComOn project, an event organised by Confindustria Como to bring together young creatives from the design, art and fashion sectors with some of the best industrial players in Brianza. Alongside the relaxing Oneida chair with its refined leather weave creating a star pattern, we find Ply armchair, with the cushioning of its backrest divided into sectors, suggesting carefree combinations that are all about comfort and freedom: two designs arising from the collaboration with Azzurra Pontiggia and Matteo Muci, young students from the Faculty of Design at Milan's Politecnico university.

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Finally, Living Divani would never miss the lively fringe event **Fuori Salone del Mobile**, positioning itself in a number of key points around the city centre. 28 Family Chairs and 1 white Bolle table will bring their delicate poetry to the Clicq-Nic Designstore designed by Ilaria Marelli and curated by Cristina Morozzi for the Maison Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin in the Brera quarter; Piero Lissoni's new Rod sofa will feature in the Porro installation "Home Sweet Home" in via Durini 15; an Extra Wall sofa and tables will complete the open-air relaxation area at the Rimadesio showroom in via Visconti di Modrone 26; the subtle proportions of Living Divani upholstery will furnish the Nespresso lounge area designed by Piero Lissoni at the Torneria in via Tortona 32; a Chemise bed, and Living Divani sofas and chairs will help make the settings at the Boffi showroom and apartment in Via Solferino 11 even more inviting, and a set of Family Chairs will represent the brand at the Condé Nast exhibition "La casa degli italiani 1861-2011 AD. 30 anni di stile" [The Italian home 1861-2011 AD. 30 years of style]. Finally, a number of outdoor pieces will customise the terrace at the Teatro Nazionale in piazza Piemonte, which will host an exhibition of Piero Lissoni projects and models, from architecture to design to graphics, while new 2012 pieces such as Francesco Rota's Hinge stools and Nathan Yong's Stack coffee tables will be reproduced in luxurious ostrich leather from the firm Klein Karoo* - becoming limited edition pieces - as part of the Interni Legacy event in the courtyards of Milan University.

Contaminations, reinterpretations and combinations illustrate the extreme portability of Living Divani designs, which, with their neutral forms, can adapt to and define any setting, from the severe and essential to the more decorative and eclectic.

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