

Remaking Milan



A super-qualified dozen of Milan's creative pace setters (all, and excuse the gender bias, women) are plotting standout events to coincide with this year's Salone del Mobile. In this remarkable portfolio, we take a look at what they have planned for the fair, and map out their pick of hidden treasures in a city notorious for glorious but concealed courtyards and other wonders

Photography Pierpaolo Ferrari *Writer* JJ Martin *Fashion* Francesca Cefis

CHIARA REPETTO, LEFT, WEARING COAT, TOP AND SKIRT, PRICES ON REQUEST, BY PRADA, AND FRANCESCA KAUFMANN, WEARING DRESS, PRICE ON REQUEST, BY PRADA, PHOTOGRAPHED IN THE LIVING ROOM OF CASA MUSEO BOSCHI DI STEFANO, IN FRONT OF J.S. CONRATTI/TORRTO, 1128, BY CROCCIO DE CHIRICO

Francesca Kaufmann & Chiara Repetto

Francesca Kaufmann and her sister Chiara Repetto bring youthful cool, beauty and brains to Milan's contemporary art scene. After working with the late Alighiero Boetti, Kaufmann opened her own gallery in 2000 and was joined by Repetto five years later. The Kaufmann Repetto gallery has gained a strong following with its ongoing focus on female artists from different generations, including Lily van der Stokker, Pae White, Larifa Echakhch and Thea Djordjadze. Though increasingly influential in the international art world, recently opening a new location in New York, the sisters are also deeply embedded in the design world. They represent Carlo Molino's estate, a plum assignment that sees them not only exhibiting design pieces but also personal effects, like a recent show of his often erotic polaroids. Milanese by birth, the pair are champions of the city's buried design jewels. One of their favourites is the little-known Casa-Museo Boschi Di Stefano, an 11-room apartment designed in 1929 by architect Piero Portaluppi for an Italian art-collecting couple and featuring furniture designed by Portaluppi specifically for the space.

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Housed in an early-1900s building with a sculpture garden, the Kaufmann Repetto gallery was restructured by architect Frank Boehm. During Salone, it will feature an exhibition of work by Pae White, a Los Angeles-based artist who frequently explores the ephemera of everyday life.

● Kaufmann Repetto,
via di Porta Tenaglia 7,
www.kaufmannrepetto.com

Location

The Casa-Museo Boschi Di Stefano is close to Bar Basso and the Salone activity around Porta Venezia. Open to the public since 2003, it was once home to Antonio Boschi and Mariada Di Stefano, who collected over 2,200 works of art during their 40-year marriage. On view is a small but well-edited selection of 300 pieces from the extraordinary collection, including works by Giorgio de Chirico, Mario Sironi and Giorgio Morandi.

● Casa-Museo Boschi Di Stefano,
via Giorgio Jan 15,
www.fondazioneboschidistefano.it

“Corbetta promises the same kind of grass roots energy for the Gate as she brought to Il Crepaccio, calling it ‘LA SCALA MEETS PLASTIC’, the former being the city’s refined opera house and the latter being the city’s grittiest and grooviest nightclub”

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CAROLINE CORBETTA WEARING COAT, Z11915; SWEATER, Z310; SKIRT, Z1150. ALL BY MIU MIU. PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE EXPO GATE CONSTRUCTION SITE

Caroline Corbetta

Caroline Corbetta built her reputation with Il Crepaccio, the guerrilla-style independent contemporary art shows that she began organising in the window of a Milanese trattoria in May 2012. An established critic and independent curator, she has also recently been named artistic curator for Expo Gate, the new twin metal pyramid space designed by Scandurra Studio for Milan's 2015 Expo. Currently under construction in front of Milan's historic Castello Sforzesco (pictured left), the structure will offer not only ticket sales for the Expo but also serve as a city centre hub for Expo-related events. Activity kicks off a year ahead on 10 May, when Expo Gate will be officially anointed with a large-scale party. Corbetta promises the same kind of grass roots energy for the Gate as she brought to Il Crepaccio, calling it ‘La Scala meets Plastic’, the former being the city’s refined opera house and the latter being the city’s grittiest and grooviest nightclub.

● Expo Gate, via Beltrami,
www.expo2015.org

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As an independent curator for international institutions such as Moderna Museet in Stockholm and Performa in New York, Corbetta has scoured such talent as Ragnar Kjartansson and Nathalie Djurberg. For Salone, Corbetta will present one of three new shows for Il Crepaccio. Put together by three emerging Milan-based curators, the series is entitled ‘La Catena di San Maurizio’. The first show opened during MiArt in late March, the second coincides with Salone, and the third’s date is yet to be announced.

● Il Crepaccio,
via Lazzaro Palazzi 19

Maria Cristina Didero

Maria Cristina Didero is part of a new generation of in-demand curators, capitalising on the surge in interest in design-led exhibitions. Apart from serving as director of the Bisazza Foundation, where she planned exhibitions on John Pawson and Richard Meier, she has also curated shows for Ross Lovegrove and Philippe Malouin, the latter of which was shortlisted by London's Design Museum as one of its top exhibitions of 2013. Radical design is her speciality. And the Galleria Post Design Memphis, a space dedicated to Milan's most famous design movement, is, of course, close to her heart. Not only has she written a book on Memphis co-founder Michele De Lucchi, but Didero was also a co-curator of the Desre Foundation's labyrinthine Dakis Joannou Collection show last summer in Athens. Next up? A show dedicated to the 50th anniversary of radical Turin-based design group Studio 65.

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A new book on the Dakis Joannou Collection, entitled 1968, will be unveiled featuring a preface by Didero and photography by Pierpaolo Ferrari (our photographer for this series of portraits) and contemporary artist Maurizio Cattelan. During Salone, the Galleria Post Design Memphis will show a new collection entitled 'Metropolis' by Giacomo Moor. A special collection of furniture designed by the historic Memphis design collective, meanwhile, will be on show at Galleria Gruppo Cred to Valtellinese in an 18th-century refectory at Corso Magenta 59. The gallery will also participate in an exhibition entitled 'Prototypes' at La Fabbrica del Vapore in via Procaccini.

● Galleria Post Design Memphis
via della Moscova 27
www.memphis-milano.it

“Radical design is her speciality. And the GALLERIA POST DESIGN MEMPHIS, a space dedicated to Milan's most famous design movement, is, of course, close to her heart.”



MARIA CRISTINA DIDERO, WEARING TOP, £1,930, BY MARNI, AND SKIRT, PRICE ON REQUEST, BY VIONNET, PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE GALLERIA POST DESIGN MEMPHIS, SITTING ON A 'ROMA' CHAIR BY MARCO ZANINI

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ALESSANDRA FACCHINETTI,
WEARING CAPE, JACON, BRACELET
AND TROUSERS, BOTH PRICES ON
REQUEST; SHOES, 430. BRACELET,
440. ALL BY TOD'S. PHOTOGRAPHED
AT THE FRAGILE DESIGN GALLERY



*With an exceptional roster
of 20th-century furniture
and jewellery housed within
a wildly exuberant interior,
FRAGILE is shaking up
Milan's stoic scenery – much
like FACCHINETTI herself*

Alessandra Facchinetti

The woman creating the biggest buzz on Milan's fashion scene right now is Alessandra Facchinetti, the newly appointed creative director at Tod's. Formerly at Gucci and Valentino, Facchinetti's high-fashion experience has electrified the classicism of Tod's traditional leather goods, bringing a modern yet feminine edge. A collector of rare antique jewellery and modernist furniture, this worldly and cool fashion insider is also a firm fixture on the city's sophisticated design scene. In particular, Facchinetti has her eye on Milan design gallery Fragile, with its bold new showroom by Alessandro and Francesco Mendini. With an exceptional roster of 20th-century furniture and jewellery housed within a wildly exuberant interior, Fragile is shaking up Milan's stoic scenery – much like Facchinetti herself.

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During Salone, Fragile is hosting a show entitled 'Il Design fa 90/Nineties astric Design', featuring 90 leading personalities of 20th-century Italian design, including Artemide, Zanotta, Braccasca, Frattini and Fontana Arte. Curated by Anny Pansera, it includes furniture, magazines and jewellery. The gallery will also host an exhibition of lighting objects by Stefano Galuzzi.

Fragile, via San Damiano 2,
www.fragilemilano.it

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'It seems like a spaceship from the outside,' says Baldassari of the church designed by GIO PONTI in 1963. 'There is great energy coming from this space-age cathedral,'

LAURA BALDASSARI WEARING DRESS, £190; SHOES, £75, BOTH BY HENDI. PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE GIO PONTI DESIGNED CHIESA DI SAN FRANCESCO AL FOPPONINO

Laura Baldassari

What do opera singing, painting and furniture design have in common? Practically nothing, unless you're Laura Baldassari, who regularly flies between all three. Classically trained at Bologna's Scuola dell'Opera Italiana, the soprano exercises her vocal chords every morning 'just like an athlete'. When she's not on stage at home or abroad (last year, the Sultan of Oman imported her for a private concert), Baldassari is painting in the Milan studio that she shares with her furniture designer/art director partner Alberto Biagetti.

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Baldassari and Biagetti have collaborated on a new collection of furniture and lighting, entitled 'Bonjour Milan', which explores the couple's home town of Milan. Mixing copper and plastic with discarded elements from aristocratic Milanese residences, it will be on show during Salone at Atelier Biagetti.

• Atelier Biagetti,
via Pasquale Paoli 5,
biagetti.net

Location

Biagetti introduced Baldassari to the Chiesa di San Francesco al Fopponino when she first moved to Milan seven years ago. 'It seems like a spaceship from the outside,' says Baldassari of the church designed by Gio Ponti in 1963. 'There is great energy coming from this space-age cathedral.'

• Chiesa di San Francesco,
via Paolo Giovio 31

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SVEVA CAMURATI WEARING TOP, Z400, SKIRT, Z400, BOTH BY VERSACE, AND NECKLACES, FROM Z284, BY SVEVA CAMURATI. PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE CASCINA CUCCAGNA

Sveva Camurati

Sveva Camurati is a costume jewellery designer who makes all of her fantasy-laden necklaces by hand in her Milan atelier. As a local, she is clued in to many of the city's quirkiest hidden gems, including the Cascina Cuccagna, a formerly abandoned 17th-century farmhouse: in the heart of the city that has been restored in line with its agricultural origins. The farm, and what goes on there, makes it a unique destination: organic vegetables are grown in the lush green garden, prepared at a farm-to-table restaurant and sold in a 'kilometre-zero market'. A bike shop provides repair lessons and services, a workshop offers carpentry classes, and spaces are dedicated to family activities, classes on recycling/re-use, and places for volunteers to congregate and plan their socially minded philanthropic activity.

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During Salone, Camurati will conduct an open studio day at her atelier, as well as present a special collection of new jewellery. Meanwhile, the Cascina is presenting a series of environmentally attuned projects aimed at galvanising resident and visitor participation. The sprawling farm's many rooms will be transformed into laboratories inspired by masters of design, and will feature objects, furniture and games for adults and children. A hostel with 16 beds opens later in the month.

● Sveva Camurati atelier,
via Cadore 40.
Cascina Cuccagna, via Cuccagna 2/4,
www.cuccagna.org





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OSANNA VISCONTI (LEFT), WEARING COAT, Z345, BY MAXMARA, AND MADINA VISCONTI (RIGHT), WEARING COAT, Z2170, BY MAXMARA, PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE FONDERIA ARTISTICA BATTAGLIA

Osanna & Madina Visconti

Osanna Visconti is well acquainted with what happens behind the thick stone walls of Fonderia Artistica Battaglia, a historic bronze foundry known for its antique casting technique. The 100-year-old Fonderia is celebrated for creating massive bronze works for artists such as Arnaldo Pomodoro, Alberto Giacometti and Alighiero Boetti, but Visconti was bold enough to convince the foundry to go micro for the first time three years ago for her burgeoning collection of bronze jewellery. Now she is using the earthy metal material for small tabletop items and furniture design. Last spring Visconti's daughter Madina began working alongside her mother to develop the business into a full-scale home collection, and helping design the interiors of the ateliers of Marco Zanini at Schiaparelli in Paris and Alessandra Facchinetti at Tod's in Milan.

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The mother and daughter team are presenting a new collection of cast bronze furniture, available at Dimore Studio's new showroom on via Solferino (see page 168) and the Osanna Visconti atelier.

Osanna Visconti,
via Santa Marta 13,
www.osannavisconti.com

Location

Since 1913, Fonderia Artistica Battaglia, located in the north of the city, has perfected its lost-wax casting technique, a very precise process that dates back over 5,000 years but is rarely used by sculptors these days. However, the foundry's attention to detail, its choice of over 100 different patinas and its 8m-high ceilings that allow for the production of even the most mammoth of artworks, have made it a favourite over the years of artists such as Lucio Fontana, Adolfo Wildt, Arturo Martini and Giacomo Manzù.

Fonderia Artistica Battaglia,
via Stillicone 10,
www.fonderiabattaglia.com

Michela Pelizzari

As a PR for emerging furniture designers and a design curator for the newly relaunched MiArt contemporary art fair in Milan, Michela Pelizzari often knows what's happening to young designers before they do. Together with her partner Federica Sala, Pelizzari has a keen eye for who's hot and who's not, not to mention areas of the city that are ripe with potential. Pelizzari has already identified 5Vie, the newest corner of Milan to be colonised for Fuori Salone activity, as a potential hot spot. This is one of the oldest neighbourhoods in the city and as such it offers much of Milan's best behind-the-scenes attractions. From private homes with inner courtyards to museums, churches and cloisters, most of the zone's hidden jewels will be on display on guided tours during Salone, including the 15th-century Chiostro delle Umiliate on via Cappuccio. Showrooms and stores along these ancient streets will also display new design products such as paper totems by Uros Mihic at Wait and See, while the Franco Albini Foundation will open its nearby doors at via Telesio 13, as well as host a conference on Albini.

● www.5vie.it

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In addition to 5Vie, Pelizzari is also promoting the 'Hot Fel in Love with Cold' installation designed by Benetton's Fabbrica for Daikin at Garage Milano, and a mini market at via Giovassino 3A, featuring wares by Danish design company Hay and new designs by Sebastian Wrong from his Wrong For Hay collection.

● Garage Milano, via Malocchi 5/7, www.garagemilano.it



TOP 5 AT 5VIE

01. Maarten Baas will transfer his atelier in the Dutch countryside to the Garage Sanremo space in via della Zecca Vecchia, where he will present an experiential show about his working processes.

02. Piazza Affari, home to Maurizio Cattelan's famous middle finger sculpture, will be revitalised during Salone thanks to Seletti's Souvenir di Milano event, which includes an open-air market featuring local food specialities from Lombardy, Seletti-designed snow globes, and a food truck organised by Maestro Martino. The duo behind ToiletPaper magazine, Maurizio Cattelan and Pierpaolo Ferrari, will also present a series of trays, towels, cups and teapots produced by Seletti, and a patterned butcher paper (which you can sample by buying a hot panino from the food truck stationed in the Piazza). See page 165 for more on Seletti.

03. Eighty artisans' workshops in the area will be open for guided public tours organised by the Fondazione Cologni dei Mestieri d'Arte.

04. BDDW, the American crafts furniture company, is opening the doors to its first Milan showroom at via Santa Marta 19A.

05. Riccardo Casiraghi and Stefano Paleari of Gnam Box will host by-invitation food events at Wait and See at via Santa Marta 14.

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MICHELIA PELIZZARI WEARING COAT #2150, BRACELET #440. BOTH BY MISSIONI. PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE CHIOSTRO DELLE UMILITE

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KARIN DOBBIN, WEARING COAT, £2,200, BY JE SANDRE, TOP, £640, TROUSERS, £945, BOTH BY ACONONA ZERO COLLECTION, AND EARRINGS, £400, BY FENDI. PHOTOGRAPHED AT MOSHE TABIBNIA GALLERY IN FRONT OF A RARE EXAMPLE OF ONE OF THE FEUILLES DE CHOUX TAPESTRIES, MADE IN SOUTHERN FLANDERS IN THE 16TH CENTURY AND PRICED AT €360,000

Karin Dobbin

While working as an expert in textile arts at Christie's in London 15 years ago, Canadian-born Karin Dobbin was wooed to Milan by one of her best clients, Moshe Tabibnia. Tabibnia is one of the preeminent dealers and collectors of rare carpets and wall tapestries in the world, and together the pair now run his prestigious gallery from a discreet location in Brera. Only known to art-world insiders and antique-carpet junkies, the gallery is a treasure trove of rare carpets dating from the 14th to early 19th centuries. The duo's deep knowledge of this rarefied field has made them the go-to experts for roughly 70 private clients as well as museums, for whom they curate highly specialised collections. The gallery's stock is of such high quality that it is the only carpet dealer allotted a stand at London's Frieze art fair – and its prices reflect that distinction. But there is more on offer than just €5m masterpieces. 'Sometimes the gallery appears intimidating, but architects and designers should feel free to come and see what we have,' says Dobbin. 'There are several well-priced pieces that are considered as valuable as art, but not as expensive as what you would buy at auction. Turkish kilim rugs, for example, have modern, bright colours that look amazing in contemporary living spaces.'

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The gallery works with many Milan-based architects all year round, but during Salone, it will have a special selection of carpets recently acquired from the Wher collection, one of the most important private collections of 17th-19th century tapestries in Europe.

● Moshe Tabibnia, via Brera 3,
www.moshetabibnia.com

“Moshe Tabibnia gallery's stock is of such high quality that it is THE ONLY CARPET DEALER allotted a stand at London's Frieze art fair”

FRANCESCA MOLteni, WEARING
COAT, £1,705; BRACELET, £280,
BOTH BY ACNOMA ZERO
COLLECTION. PHOTOGRAPHED
AT THE PLANETARIUM
FOR STOCKISTS, SEE PAGE 300

Francesca Molteni

As the daughter of one of Italy's most important furniture families, Francesca Molteni often collaborates with the Molteni & C brand on special projects, such as the well-received Gio Ponti reissues in 2011. However, she also operates Muse Project Factory, an independent creative lab where she curates and exhibits multimedia installations and produces historic documentaries, institutional videos and web television dedicated to design. Her activity during Salone, such as last year's 'Alik in Wonderland' production of Alik Cavaliere's metal and wood sculptures, or the 'Design Dance' show she produced the year before at the Triennale, is prolific and always eyebrow-arching in terms of original content. One of her most beloved locations is the planetarium, which she colonised in 2010 for a video installation during Salone.

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This year, Molteni conceived, curated and produced COSMIT's exhibition, 'Where Architects Live' (see page 161), which took her to the far corners of Japan and India to conduct personal video interviews at home with some of the world's top architects, including Zaha Hadid, Shigeru Ban, David Chipperfield, Mario Bellini, Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas, Marcio Kogan, Daniel Libeskind and Bijoy Jain/Studio Mumbai. The exhibition is organised in collaboration with Davide Pizzigoni.

● Pavillion 9 di Fiera Milano, Rho,
www.cosmit.it

Location

Not even the locals are that well acquainted with Milan's planetarium, one of Italy's largest, located smack bang in the middle of the city's Giardini Pubblici. Built by Piero Portaluppi in 1930 for the publisher Ulrico Hoepli, it offers astronomy education courses, as well as guided sky projects every weekend.

● Planetario di Milano,
Corso Venezia 57

