



Series Off Series

National Museum of China, Beijing
25 April - 25 July 2017

Series Off Series, curated by Andrea Branzi together with Triennale Design Museum, is promoted jointly by the General Directorate of Museums and Fondazione La Triennale di Milano.

The project is the fourth significant Italian commitment to the bilateral collaboration between Italy and China sealed on October 7, 2010, when a Memorandum was undersigned about the bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the cultural promotion through thematic exhibitions. The project is also part of the context of excellent cultural relations that have existed for many years now between our countries, sealed by the Memorandum underwritten with the Minister of Culture of the People's Republic of China Luo Shugang on July 20, 2016.

Through a selection of 120 works, *Series Off Series* illustrates the contemporary scene of Italian design, which starts from experimental research to get to mass markets, using handicraft materials as well as sophisticated technology, and from start-up companies to get to the big global corporations.

The title stands for the extremes of a dynamic loop in which industrial production is fuelled by the most advanced, independent experimentation of independent research, and vice versa the latter feeds on a productive fabric that also includes the custom-built prototype or the one-off piece.

The ordering of this exhibition is based on four principal categories: **Research, Small Series, Large Series**, and **Off-Series** product besides their various subcategories. These areas correspond to design-production modes that often have their gradations and nuances, made up of many exceptions and imprecisions, with vast intermediate or gray areas defying exact definition. And so it is not a matter of scientific ordering, but rather a description of a complex and dynamic molecular system.

The intent is not to catalog or put into order a complex, contradictory production system, but rather to seize upon one of the most significant structural aspects of Italian design, one that provides, better than any other, information on the internal operating mechanisms of an activity fulfilling an important economic role for the country and that represents a significant historic aspect of this. In fact, to understand Italy, it is important to understand its design. And to understand "What is Italian Design" one needs to understand the workings of the country that expresses it.

The exhibition design by Antonio Citterio is made with Corian screens assembled and fixed in continuous ribbons that define conceptual areas by simply "fencing in" a sequence of tables, and serving as blank sheets upon which to write descriptions. The tables group the objects and bring them to the right height for observation, but they also function like laboratory tables, upon which objects are laid out for the visitor's inspection. The exhibition arrangement is rational. The sole concession to the scenic effect is the sophisticated drilling work in the Corian that allows us to see, like an underskin, a graphical decor.

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