

Dear Readers,

Green living is certainly one of the hottest trends these days and indefinitely a necessary trend which has withstood the test of time. Thanks to state of the art water recycling technologies, manufactures and designers are working hand in hand to create complex products with technological advancements that can guarantee that materials and resources can be recycled.

For instance, the futuristic Microbial Home project, part of the Philips Design Probes program, views the home as a biological machine to filter, process and recycle the waste generated in households. The insights gained from these concepts are used as future innovation for the company. Besides, if these concepts become a reality, I will definitely need one right at home.

Before I leave you to read the light hearted interviews of the award winning designers, Sandro Meneghello and Marco Paoletti, and of our very own home-grown multi-talented chef Willin Low and of the Transformers' star, Minimal USA, I wish you all a happy Earth Day and urge you to take a minute or two of your time today to do a little something extra for the planet.

With that, I see you in the next glamorous issue of BKT!



V. Krishna Veni
The Editor



A design isn't finished until somebody is using it.

— Brenda Laurel



exclusively with **SANDRO MENEGHELLO & MARCO PAOLELLI**

Young, talented and handsome, Sandro Meneghello and Marco Paoelli, both born in 1979, are internationally well-known for their electrifying, unique design concepts. After graduating in Design from Politecnico di Milano in 2004, both of them partnered and started their own design studio, Meneghello Paoelli Associati, in Milan in 2006. Specialising in the bathroom and furniture areas, both the product designers have since collaborated with several Italian and foreign companies including EO-N, Antonio Lupi, Artceram, Emoh, Fima Frattini, and many more.

Currently based in Milan, Sandro came from around Venice and Marco from around Rome. During their five years of collaboration, they have received several international recognitions, including three Red Dot Design Awards, three Young&Design awards, two Design Plus awards and one Good Design Award.

For more information, visit
www.meneghellowpaoelli.com



How and when did you both get your big break in the world of design?

We feel that we still need to get our big break into the world of design. We are still very young and we have more to achieve. Besides, we have big ideas for the future. In fact, in our office we have a huge sticker that says "big idea"!

Who are your biggest critics?

Being partners, we are the critics for each other.

What is it about bathroom that fascinates the both of you?

We had the chance to work on the bathroom area thanks to a project, whose design theme was directed by Roberto Palomba and manufactured by Antonio Lupi. Having got the chance to design toilets, we kept on working seriously hard. Now, we can say that we love bathrooms! It is an environment full of materials, shapes, technology, and objects like ceramics, hi-tech resins, furniture, accessories, lamps, bathtubs, texture and many more. These are all the different elements that comprise and complete the bathroom.

Which is most important to you and why? Design, function, client satisfaction, or the end users' preferences?

The easiest answer would be client satisfaction, and not about our personal interests as it seems. When dealing with a client, satisfaction is most important, as it assures that there has been a good balance between design, function, and users' preferences. Moreover, in the end, all the factors that you have mentioned go hand in hand towards the same result.

Do you both have your own "stamp" or a signature style on a design?

Every project leads to a different aesthetic. We have our style for sure, but it is mainly a process that brings the final product out. That's the reason why, on our portfolio, you can find objects that look very different from one another. Our approach to design can be described as a mix between two elements. On one hand, we work very hard on the formal aspects of the product, trying to find a balance between clean lines and character and on the other hand, we find possibilities of improving the function of objects further. We feel that today, the market looks ready to accept some serious innovations, not only formal but also typological innovations.

What was your most disastrous experience as designers?

We haven't had a disastrous experience yet. At the end of the day, being a designer is a very safe job! Of course, sometime things don't turn out as we expect, like projects that go on for ages and at the end, nothing happens. This is part of our work, annoying, but not a big deal.

Could you tell us a bit about your design process from vague concept to actual product?

We begin a project by making a preliminary study of many different concepts. These concepts are visualized through 3D modellings and renderings which enable our clients to see a complete overview of them. This preliminary study will be completed when one of the concepts has been selected for further development. We are in charge of the design phase and the proposal of structure manufacturing, while the client company deals with the engineering and developing phase. During the development process, together with our client, we go through the illustrations, technical drawings, 3D files and refine the concepts until they are ready for industrial production. We are not engineers and hence during the developing phase we work closely with the factory engineers to incorporate all our design propositions to the production stage. When it is necessary, we make some prototypes and together with the client, we check them to rectify any problems that may surface after the production.

REALITY BITES

What is the next project you are working on?

At the moment, in the bathroom area, we are working a lot around the washbasin space, studying some new and fresh systems that can combine the washbasin with the faucet, accessories, mirror, cabinet, shelves and lights. We are also working on new bathroom and shower concepts that include furniture, shower trays, column-systems and faucets. Outside the bathroom sector, we are designing tables, chairs, and sofas with different companies for the Milan Furniture Fair in April 2012.

Globalisation is increasingly decreasing space and cultural differences in the world. On that note, what is your perspective on Asian and European design trends?

We don't know. It is really difficult for us to comment on this subject. In the beginning, it seemed like the Asian trends were following the Western ones. However, now we find that globalisation is also underlining the differences between the cultures.

What are the big design trends of bathrooms for 2012?

In our opinion, there are three tendencies, already well known, which will become more consistent in 2012 and will influence the configuration of the bathroom and its components. The first is the use of alternative materials. In the last few years, in addition to ceramics, there are other materials such as structural polymer, composite of aluminium pigments and acrylic resins that have been developed. Until recently, these have been mainly used for washbasins but they could be used for sanitaryware as well.

The next trend is the integration of water and technology. Electronics is already incorporated in many bathroom systems. For example, it is used to regulate the temperature and flow of water and also used for hydro massage functions. Potentially, electronics can also be incorporated with water movements, light, and sound.

Lastly, it is the efficient use of water as water shortage is one of the biggest problems that we will face in the near future. The bathroom is the place in the house where we waste the most water. Lots of concepts have been developed and some solutions are already in place, such as the dual-flush toilet. In addition to these, the reuse of grey water that a household generates such as from the shower, basin, washing machine to flush the toilets will be improved and we believe these improvisations will be soon seen in bathrooms.

What is your vision of interior design in 10 years time?

Interior design in 2022? For sure, there will be more developments. We will either live in smaller places or we will have more common spaces. In both scenarios, the design of the space will be hybrid, including different styles and functions that will coexist in the same area.

In future, when the next generation look back, what would you expect historians would say about the both of you?

We hope the next generation will look more forward than backwards! However, we would like them to focus in each of our products that we have created, even studying the small and fine details that make the products innovative during that historical period. At the same time, we're sure that the next generation will critic our work, as it always happens in between the different generations.

Q: Who is Sandro Meneghello?

A: I swear, it's me!

Q: What you are not?

A: I'm not a designer.

Q: You cannot live without?

A: People, even if I consider myself quite selfish!

Q: Time is?

A: An excuse to sell watches!

Q: A perfect day?

A: Drink Sangria in the park!

Q: Beauty?

A: Harmony between elements!

Q: A sinful indulgence?

A: A weekend abroad!

Q: A miracle?

A: To speak all the languages!

Q: Carbon footprint?

A: I think I live quite light. I don't like to own and collect objects, even though I like to design them!

Q: Fame & Fortune?

A: A film and a magazine!

Q: Who is Marco Paoelli?

A: A young guy who would like to gain the respect of the world but in actual fact this guy couldn't even manage to gain his cat's respect!

Q: What you are not?

A: A bullshit!

Q: You cannot live without?

A: My pair of glasses!

Q: Time is?

A: Life! Enjoy it!

Q: A perfect day?

A: An "only one" in a great Par 3!

Q: Beauty?

A: (laughs) Is me?! Maybe, not yet!

Q: A sinful indulgence?

A: Eating a lot every day without a thought about a slimming diet!

Q: A miracle?

A: An "only one" in a great Par 3!

Q: Carbon footprint?

A: Too much!

Q: Fame & Fortune?

A: You can't have one without the other! I think fortune is fundamental in our lives!