

Promoting the Made in Italy Brand: 1948–60 (Milan, 16–18 May 23)

Milan, Italy, May 16–18, 2023

Deadline: Feb 12, 2023

Chiara Faggella, Politecnico di Milano

Promoting the Made in Italy Brand (1948-1960). Histories of Italian craft and design for the 21st century.

This 3-day international conference is organized as part of the VO Project – Voices of Objects. Italian Design from Museum to Home, a FARB 2021 project funded by the Department of Design at the Politecnico di Milano.

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1950s marketing campaigns disseminated through exhibitions, trade fairs, conferences, events, movies, and press publications, attest to the Italian government's many efforts to support national economic recovery after WWII. New Italian crafts, design, and industrial production, displayed on the world stage, marked a new beginning for Italy in the wake of its political, economic, and industrial reconstruction.

These initiatives testified to the emergence of a vibrant Italian creative universe entrenched within its cultural heritage and fueled by an interwoven network of artisans, manufacturers, artists, craftspeople, designers, and architects. Through their support for the growing demand for Italian products, they promoted the Made in Italy brand among foreigners, while forging a collective consciousness and a renewed national pride among Italians.

Today, national and international decorative arts and design museums and exhibitions highlight items (manufactured between 1948 and 1960) in their shows, turning them into Italian design icons. Most narratives emphasize their designer name and their aesthetic features, but overlook their value as "semiophoric" objects of a broader interconnected scenario of skills and practices. In the wake of the growing stature of 1950s Italian design at auctions and building upon seminal exhibitions such as "Il Design Italiano Degli Anni '50" (Milan 1981), "Anni Cinquanta" (Milan 2005) and "Il Modo Italiano" (Montreal-Toronto-Rovereto 2006-2007), the conference "Promoting the Made in Italy Brand (1948-1960)" will reflect on the meaning of 1950s Italian design on a global scale and from a multi-disciplinary perspective. It aims to highlight the presence of an Italian creative heritage spanning all aspects of design (including architecture, fashion, furniture, product and graphic design, and transport). It will examine the many ways to experience Italian design both inside and outside the museum through the lens of a post-pandemic world.

This conference aims to enlarge the research perspective of the Italian creative universe and to

go beyond the existing emphasis on individual narratives concerning applied arts, decorative arts, craftworks, and design.

We invite proposals that address the following:

- archives and museums policies to promote and communicate their holdings;
- exhibition displays or practices addressed to visitor involvement and interaction inside and outside museums;
- decorative arts, crafts and design collectors and collections;
- ICT technologies for knowledge and leisure addressed to promote Made in Italy narratives;
- curatorial transferring of 1950s products from the Physical to the Virtual World;
- policies and practices addressing to the protection, preservation, and conservation of 1950s objects;
- 1950s stories of craft and industry impacting local communities and the way shared memories of a lost past are kept alive;
- narratives concerning applied arts, decorative arts, craftworks, and design as tourism marketing tools;
- copyright issues and the use of digital tools;
- raise questions on gender issues.

The Research Team encourages proposals by academics, Ph.D. students, independent scholars, and museum and archive professionals. It welcomes contributions from different disciplines and fields of study within the humanities and social sciences, design and architecture, and media, with particular attention to new praxis and research topics and the use of innovative methodologies and interdisciplinary approaches.

In doing so, the Research Team aims to nurture insights into the structures and dynamics that govern overstudied creative industries or unknown case studies and examine new ways to map, analyze and

promote them at both local and global levels and explore the challenges of the use of innovative narratives (including physical, digital and/or virtual experiences).

The conference will be held in person. Applicants are invited to send their proposals for a 20-minute presentation by e-mail in a single Word file as an attachment to voproject-design@polimi.it. Contributions are welcome in English and Italian.

Proposals should include:

- the title of the proposal, together with an abstract (maximum 1,500 characters, spaces included);
- 5 keywords;
- a short biography highlighting activities and publications related to the conference's theme (maximum 800 characters, spaces included).

The deadline for applications is 12 February 2023.

Notification of acceptance will be given by 20 February 2023.

e-mail: voproject-design@polimi.it

IG: [voprojectfarb2021](#)

Twitter: [VoProjectFarb2021](#)

Reference:

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