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Moscow's Palisander Gallery Celebrates Italian Design

By Maria Michela D'Alessandro

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The mosaic entrance to the Venice headquarters of the Bisazza Foundation, designed by Carlo Dal Bianco. **Alberto Ferrero / Bisazza Archive**

As part of Italian Design Day 2018, promoted worldwide on March 1 by the Italian Foreign Ministry, Moscow's Palisander Gallery is celebrating Italian design with a singular exhibition.

The show, which was organized together with the Italian Embassy in Moscow, is dedicated to the history of Italian design from the 1950s, and it includes works by a plethora of designers, from the architect Giò Ponti to contemporary artists.

Alina Kovalyova, curator of the exhibition, art director and owner of the gallery, has made design pieces not just something to buy, but works of art to admire. "It is not that common to collect design items as works of art in Russia, and that's why we [as a Gallery] are trying to promote this trend among Russian collectors," she told The Moscow Times.

In the late Soviet period, socialist realism was the approved style of art, and abstract art was not officially permitted. Today, Palisander Gallery is a gallery in central Moscow where abstract art meets collectible design from the 1950s up to the modern period.

Thanks to the Italian Embassy in Moscow, Kovalyova had a chance to exhibit many pieces of her own collection together with different design items that were brought in from Italy for the show. "Alina Kovalyova has arranged such a sophisticated exhibition showing her expertise and knowledge of this sector that it would be hard to find something similar in terms of level anywhere else in Russia," Italian Ambassador Pasquale Terracciano told The Moscow Times.

A Design-Lover's Dream

The exhibition showcases Franco Campo & Carlo Graffi's solid teak armchair and Ico Parisi's serving table with ceramic inserts, both from the 1950s, along with vases and a lamp made by the famous Ettore Sottsass.

It also exhibits works of the Italian architect and designer Carlo Dal Bianco. To mark the second edition of Italian Design Day 2018, Dal Bianco was chosen by the Italian Foreign Ministry as one of 100 Ambassadors of Italian Design.

Dal Bianco received his academic degree in the history of architecture and then worked in the redevelopment of industrial spaces. That was how he met Piero Bisazza, owner of the international luxury brand that specializes in glass mosaic tiles.

Set up in 1995, the Bisazza company was part of the search for new construction materials, transforming itself from a small operation that made glass tiles by hand into a high-tech manufacturer. Working with Bisazza since 2001, Dal Bianco has designed many mosaic and cement tiles collections, but he has also worked on several renovations and interior design of private houses, offices and stores in Italy and abroad. Winner for two years of the Elle Deco International Design Awards, Dal Bianco also collaborates with various design companies.

"For a designer, there might be a school to follow, but it is always the approach to the project that makes an architect a designer. I do the same thing. I always start projects looking at the past. That is why I find myself close to Giò Ponti, who had a classical education and who introduced neoclassicism to design," Dal Bianco told The Moscow Times.

The works made by Dal Bianco displayed in Moscow are diverse and include mosaic wall panels, a porcelain service from 2009, and a model car decorated with houndstooth (pied-de-poule).

The exhibition is organised by the Palisander Gallery in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute of Moscow and will run until April 20.

Palisander Gallery. 15 Ulitsa Rochdelskaya, Bldg. 17-18. Metro Ulitsa 1905 Goda.
www.palisandergallery.com

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